



KHOTAN III. HISTORY IN THE ISLAMIC PERIOD

Islamization. While Khotan's pre-Islamic history has attracted extensive scholarly attention, its Islamic history remains poorly studied. An apparent paucity of sources led one scholar to assert that "[T]here was no indigenous historical tradition at Khotan, or if there was, the texts have been lost" (Hambis, p. 38). Indeed, it must be conceded that few known works can reliably be attributed to Khotanese Muslim authors until the 19th century. Nevertheless, Khotan, owing to its peripheral position in Chinese Central Asia, played a recurring role in Islamic history as the land beyond Kashgar and Yarkand and a site of resistance military invasions therefrom, as well as a base from which to strike back in that direction. Moreover, a Khotanese Islamic historical tradition has long existed in the form of legends related to the region's Islamization in the 11th century. By taking such sources into account, and by considering patterns in Khotan's relations with its neighbors, it is possible to make up for some deficiencies in available sources and reconstruct the region's history up to the formal end of independent Islamic authority in the 1950s.

As of the mid-10th century, Khotan was a buffer state situated between the Muslim [Ilak-khanids](#) (q.v.) or [Qara-khanids](#) (388-607/998-1212), Song China (960-1279), and Tibet. The *Ḥodud al-ālam* (written 372/982-83) places it "within the land of China" (*Čīnestān*) but "on the boundary of China and Tibet," while its ruler styled himself "Lord of the Turks and the Tibetans (*ʿaẓīm al-Turk wa'l-*



Tubbat)” (tr. Minorsky, pp. 85–86, 96, 260). The population of Khotan was majority Buddhist.

The date of Khotan’s conquest by the Ilak-khans ruling from [Kashgar](#) (q.v.) is a matter of debate. The earliest conflicts dated to the late 350s/960s at the latest, at a time when Khotan secured recognition from the Song court (Millward, pp. 155-56; Pritsak, 1953, pp. 25, 28). However, its conquest was completed during the reign of the co-*qağan* (see [KHAGAN](#)) Yusof Qāder Khan (d. 423/1032) and before 407/1016-17, when he had coins struck in his name at Khotan. The *Ketāb al-Yamini* (composed after 410/1019–20) by Abu Naṣr Moḥammad ‘Otbi (q.v.; d. ca. 427/1036) also refers to him as the “Khan of Khotan” at the time of his co-*qağan* Naṣr b. ‘Ali’s war with Maḥmud of Ġazna in 397/1006-7 (Barthold, pp. 273, 281; Pritsak, 1951, p. 295, n. 3).

The 407/1016–17 coins bear the title “King of the East and of China” (*malek al-mašreq wa’l-Šin*), where “China” reflected earlier Khotanese claims to be rulers of China (Biran, 2005, p. 99; Wen, pp. 334-36). This claim emerged during the power vacuum left after the T’ang dynasty’s (618-907) withdrawal of its garrisons from the Tarim basin in 755. Where the orientalist V. V. Barthold (q.v.; d. 1930) earlier regarded the persistent confusion between Khotan (*k.t.n*) and China (*š.y.n*) as a scribal error (Minorsky, p. 24), it is now understood as an assertion of identity, and one that has persisted in the depiction of Khotan in Chinese Turkestan through the present. Certain ruins near Khotan are still identified as the capital of the “Khan of Khans of Čin and Māčin,” indicating China and South China, respectively (Stein, p. 249).

In the geographical imagination as reflected in legends and historical writings from Chinese Turkestan, Khotan has since come to stand for Turan as depicted in the *Šāh-nāma* (q.v.), while the boundaries of Iran have been extended to Kashgar and Yarkand (Dawut, pp. 135-38; Thum, pp. 20-23). In legend, the conflict between the Persian world and the non-Persian land beyond has been mapped onto the Qara-khanid-Khotanese war between Muslims and non-Muslims. Not far from Khotan (in Bāštoğraq, Lop) is the alleged tomb of Siāvaš (see [KAYĀNĪĀN](#) vi), while the Qara-khanids themselves were known as the “house of Afrasiab” (*āl-e Afrāsiāb*). The drama of Siāvaš, the Iranian prince who, in the *Šāh-nāma*, is granted Khotan by the ruler of Turān, but is ultimately betrayed by him, plays out on the actual Khotanese landscape. Meanwhile, Siāvaš is now regarded locally as an Islamic saint, the son of the ruler of the “Seven Cities” of the Tarim basin, while Turān has been relocated in China. In the Khotanese version of the story, Siāvaš himself founded Khotan



for his wife, who was the daughter of the ruler of China. Siāvaš was eventually buried there, symbolically securing the place of Islam in Khotan.

The precise date of the Qara-khanid conquest, then, is less significant today than its reflection of how people conceived of Khotan's place in the world, as the events surrounding it have passed into legend. Mollā Musā Sayrāmī (1252-1335/1836-1917) described Khotan at the dawn of the 20th century as the "Land of Martyrs" (*šahidāna Kōtan*) on account of its many shrines where the heroes of Islamization are believed to be buried (Sayrāmī, pp. 329–32): Qum Rabāṭ Pādšāhim, also known as the "Pigeon Shrine" (*kāptār mazār*), marks a place where, according to legend, the Qara-khanid forces fell into an ambush by Khotanese Buddhists during an advance on Khotan at the end of the 10th century (Dawut, pp. 142–43, 146–47; Stein, p. 179). The Qara-khanid general Imam Šāker fell from his horse, and, rather than be captured, he thrust a knife into his own chest (or belly). A pair of pigeons flew from the wound, and the descendants of those pigeons continue an aerial circumambulation of the shrine to this day. The same flock, which was maintained by pilgrims' donations, was thought to guide pilgrims a further ten kilometers to the oasis of Ziba. (During the same battle, Imam Šāker's son also disappeared, and the site of his presumed death is marked with a simple shrine called "Only Son" [*Yalğuz Oğul*].) While Qum Rabāṭ Pādšāhim itself was flooded by the construction of a reservoir under the People's Republic of China, the memory of the conquest remains.

The "Legend of the Four Sacrificed Imams" (*Taḍkera-ye tört emām-e ḍabihlar*), also called "Legend of the Imams of Khotan" (*Taḍkera-ye emāmān-e Kōtan*), celebrates four imams who accompanied Yusof Qāder Khan but were killed in battle with the Khotanese (Thum, pp. 139–41). According to the story, Yusof Qāder Khan appointed as the shaikh of their shrine a man named Kežr Bābā, who was conceived in western Turkestan but born locally, confirming the interconnection between Khotan and Central Asia proper. The known versions of this legend date at the earliest to the 12th/18th century.

Despite the conquest, Islamization was slow. According to another legend, in 1026, seven imams, all of whom were brothers, and their daughters came to Khotan to complete its conversion (Dawut, pp. 144–45). They were instead defeated in battle by Buddhist leaders whom the legends call Čoqti Rašid and Noqti Rašid. A pair of shrine complexes—one for the imams, called Seven Imams (now called *imami āptāh* in Uyghur), and another for their daughters—became important pilgrimage and burial sites. (The shrine of



Qoçqar Ata has a similar legend but locates it in the 13th century [Tokhti].) The Khotanese language did not die out immediately after this occupation, either, and Maḥmud Kāšğari (fl. 464-76/1075-94) claimed that the people of Khotan at his time still spoke Turkic poorly (Golden, p. 17).

Other accounts assert that there were much earlier attempts at Islamization, notably in connection with a place bearing a Persian name, Kuh-e Mār “Snake Mountain” (Dawut, pp. 123-25, 139-41). Legend holds that a descendant of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī named Moḥebb Ḳvāja came from Arabia to spread Islam and, on his death, was transformed into a snake. Snake Mountain appears to have been sacred to the Khotanese Buddhists, as indicated in the account of Xuanzang (602-64), not unlike many sacred sites in Chinese Turkestan.

Such revelations of continuity in sacred sites across Islamization previously led scholars to reduce local Islamic practices to mere reinterpretations of Buddhism or other pre-Islamic religions (e.g., Stein, p. 247). However, modern scholarship understands such narratives as sites of contestation over an ancient past that remains very much alive (Thum). The repetition of the stories of Khotan’s Islamization either reflected patterns of conflict encouraged by its peculiar geographical position in relation to Kashgaria and China, or shaped how Khotanese people mobilized, or both.

Under the Qarā Ketay (q.v.) and Mongol empire. By 433/1041–42, the Qara-khanids were divided into two branches, and Khotan fell under the rule of the eastern one centered around Kashgar. By 1142, the Qara-khanids were vassals of the Qarā Ketay (Millward, 56-57). This period remains a murky one, as Khotan appears to have lost its former importance as an entrepot between Kashgar and Yarkand to the west and China to the east, such that it bore little mention in known sources.

In 1210, the Qarā Ketay leader Küçlüg (1156-1218) deposed his father-in-law the Gürkân (Ḥaydar, pp. 185-87; Jovayni, pp. 65-66, 70-73; Millward, pp. 59-60; Sayrāmi, pp. 329-32). Küçlüg then released the vassal Qara-khanid ruler of Kashgar, whom the Gürkân had imprisoned. However, the rulers of Kashgar and Khotan were not grateful to Küçlüg, but instead rose against him. Küçlüg conquered rebellious Khotan in 1213 and famously compelled its inhabitants to choose between dressing in the Qarā Ketay manner or abandoning Islam. Reportedly, the majority chose to change their manner of dress. Küçlüg then challenged the clerics of Khotan to a “debate” meant to prove the inferiority of Islam to his adopted Buddhism. One of them, Imam ‘Alā’-al-Din Moḥammad



Kotani, humiliated Küčlüg, who in retaliation tortured the cleric and had him nailed to a post outside his own madrasa. This story is repeated in several histories. According to Jovayni in his *History of the World-Conqueror*, the people of Khotan therefore welcomed the Mongols when, in 1216-18, they conquered Khotan and killed Küčlüg (Jovayni, pp. 66-68, 73-74), as Chinggis (Čengiz; q.v.) Khan's armies permitted the free practice of Islam.

Yet Mongol rule placed Khotan in a difficult position between different branches of the empire. In 1227, while the western Tarim basin fell under the Chaghatayid *ulus* (see [CHAGHATAYID DYNASTY](#)) centered around Central Asia, Khotan was technically part of the realm of the Great Khan who ruled China. The Great Khan Ögedei Qa'an (Üktāy Qa'an; r. 627–639/1229–1241) placed the Khwarazmian Maḥmud Yalāvač (d. 1254) in charge of the administration of Central Asia. Maḥmud's son Mas'ud Beg (d. 1289) succeeded him in 1241. Mas'ud Beg was compelled to leave the post after Ögedei's death during Töregene's regency but returned to it under the next Beijing-based ruler Güyüg Khan. In 1252, Möngke Khan (r. 1251-59) granted Mas'ud Beg the governorship of Khotan along with the rest of Central Asia as far west as Almaliq and Farḡāna (Biran, 1997, pp. 97–98; Jovayni, p. 597).

Khotan's place within the Mongol Empire thus remained in flux, as it often straddled the boundaries between these two administrations (Biran, 1997, pp. 34, 38, 42-44, 87). In 1266, the Chaghatayid Baraq (d. 1271) seized Khotan during a rebellion against the Great Khan Qubilai (r. 1271-94). A peace treaty followed, and in 1268, Qubilai apparently ceded Khotan to Baraq. Subsequently, however, Qubilai attempted to exert control in the Tarim basin by establishing postal stations, dispatching artisans, and levying taxes, which efforts included a 1271 census of Khotan. Weaving silk had been an important industry in Khotan for some time, but Marco Polo upon his visit in the early 1270s also noted that Khotan was a center for cotton production, possibly as a result of the Mongol development of the area (Polo, pp. 188-91).

In 1274-75, prince Hoqu rebelled, probably as a reaction to Qubilai's efforts, and in the process laid waste to Khotan. Subsequently in 1276, Qubilai established a garrison there and continued his efforts to develop and secure the region through the "pacification bureau" (Chinese *xuanweisi*). Clashes with Chaghatayid ruler Qaidu (ca. 1230–1301) at Khotan in 1281 and 1283 prompted Qubilai to extend the postal network across the southern rim of the Tarim Basin via Khotan, thus demonstrating its integration into the realm of the Great Khan. In 1287, Qubilai provided famine relief there, and then



established agricultural colonies. In 1288 and 1289, however, Qubilai's artisans, farmers, and soldiers all retreated from Khotan, effectively ceding control of it to Qaidu.

Duġlāt. While the events of the Mongol period in Khotan are relatively obscure, they established the model and precedents for Islamic rule there for the next several centuries. According to the *Tārīkh-i Rašīdī* of Mirzā Moḥammad Ḥaydar Duġlāt (1499/1500-1551), Khotan was part of the fiefdom that the Chinggisid Chaghatay Khan (r. 1226-42) granted to Ortu Börä, the progenitor of the Duġlāt clan and Ḥaydar's own ancestor (Ḥaydar, pp. 7-8, 188). This territory, which stretched from Khotan to the western end of the Farġāna valley, was called Manglai Suyā, meaning "facing the sun," and Ortu Börä's descendants retained it as their birthright. Because the Duġlāts descended from Mongols, that region became known as "Moġulestān."

According to legend, when the Chagatayid Esen Boqa Khan (r. ca. 1310-18) died without an apparent successor, one of Ortu Börä's descendants located his lost son, Tuġluq Temür Khan (1329/30-1363), who eventually rose to supreme power in the Chagatai *ulus* (Ḥaydar, pp. 7-8, 188). Power was thenceforth held in reality by a Duġlāt in partnership with a Chinggisid khan, who was usually relatively weak.

The Duġlāt amir Ƙodāydād (r. 765-850/1363 or 64-1446 or 47) later incorporated Khotan more firmly into the Moġul realm (Ḥaydar, pp. 37, 53-54). Ƙodāydād accomplished this in part by granting Khotan to his half-brother Ƙežršāh and making Khotan in turn subordinate to Kashgar and Yarkand, which Ƙodāydād placed under the rule of his own son. This hierarchy differed from the situation under the Qarakhanids, when Khotan appears to have held a separate but roughly equal status to Kashgar. This status is complicated somewhat by the *History of the Ming* (*Ming shi*), which obliquely notes Khotan's incorporation into Yarkand and Kashgar under Ƙodāydād. However, Khotan and Kashgar are treated separately as "tributaries." Khotan is mentioned as having sent emissaries or traders to the Ming court in 1406, and again in 1420, 1422, and 1424, before new restrictions on these "tribute" missions led to a decrease in formal contact (*Ming shi*, *juan* 332).

The subordination of Khotan to Yarkand and Kashgar lasted only until the reign of Moḥammad Ḥaydar Mirzā (r. 869 or 70-885/1465-80), under whom Ƙežršāh's descendant Khan Naẓar Mirzā and his brother Qol Naẓar Mirzā proclaimed their independence and that of Khotan (Ḥaydar, pp. 166-68; Stein,



p. 249). A pattern of military action and betrayal emerged that resonated in later conflicts and their narratives: First, the khan's nephew Abā Bakr Mirzā (d. after 920/1514), the son of the previous ruler, begged the khan's permission to lead forces from Kashgar and Yarkand to subdue Khotan. Abā Bakr made two attempts: The first attack ended in a truce. The second time, Abā Bakr tricked Khan Naẓar Mirzā into attending a peace conference, but instead assassinated him as he reached out to place his hand upon a Qur'an. Abā Bakr captured Khotan and put Qol Naẓar Mirzā to death. In 884/1479, Abā Bakr himself used Khotan much as the brothers had, as a base from which to launch his own conquest of Kashgar in 885/1480. Abā Bakr later sent successful expeditions against Tibet via Khotan. He reportedly also excavated ruins in search of treasure, as later corrupt rulers of Khotan were said to do.

Obscurity under the late Duġlāts and the Yarkand khanate. By the time that Mirzā Ḥaydar wrote in 954/1547, Khotan, despite being “among the well-known cities of the world,” had “nothing to write about” (tr. Thackston, p. 190). Indeed, in accounts of the era of Duġlāt rule, Khotan itself appears only as a minor political player, or as a place of temporary refuge from politics in Kashgar and Yarkand. The same was true under the Yarkand Khanate (920-1117/1514-1705). Khotan barely merits any mention in the major historical works from this period, not even in the chronicle (dated early 1080s/1670s) of Šāh Maḥmud Čuras (fl. 11th/17th c.). During this period, the Maḥdumzāda *k̲vājas*—descendants of the Sufi leader Mawlānā Jalāl-al-Dīn K̲vājagi Aḥmad Kāsāni Maḥdum-e A'ẓam (866–949/1461–1542; see [JUYBĀRIS](#); on the title *k̲vāja*, see [ALQĀB VA 'ANĀWIN ii](#))—established themselves across the Tarim basin and had leaders and adherents in Khotan. Eventually, in the 1680s, they in turn came to serve the khanate of the Zunghar Mongols.

The *Taḍkera-ye 'azizān* of Moḥammad Šādeq Kāšġari (fl. 13th/18th c.) recounts the role of Khotan in a rebellion among the Maḥdumzāda *k̲vājas* against their Zunghar overlords in the early 1750s, when Zunghar rule was weakening (Qāshqāri, p. 175). The Maḥdumzāda leader K̲vāja Šeddiq was forced out of Yarkand but fled with his forces to Khotan, where the people greeted him with open arms. Khotan once again played the role of a rallying point from which to attack Yarkand, as Šeddiq and his new Khotan-based army successfully expelled the Zunghar-aligned governor there.

That governor, Ġāzi Beg, was himself Khotanese, while the governor of Kashgar, Qoş Kifāk Beg, was also from Khotan. Qoş Kifāk Beg, who by this point was aligned with the *k̲vājas*, wrote to Ġāzi Beg, chastising him for ruining



the reputation of the Khotanese, which had remained suspect since the days of Yusof Qāder Khan's conquest. That is, Khotan had remained in legend the object of holy wars conducted from the Muslim cities of Kashgar and Yarkand, which marked it as a land apart from the rest of Moğulestān. Since Islamization, the Khotanese had therefore been obliged repeatedly to demonstrate their belonging to the Muslim community as well as their political loyalty. Ƙoř Kifāk Beg's criticism of Ġāzi Beg for serving non-Muslim masters, even when his fellow Khotanese had committed themselves to holy war, reflects a self-consciousness surrounding Khotanese identity.

Perhaps this awareness of Khotanese separateness contributed to the perception of the lack of a Khotanese historical tradition, compounded by Khotan's relative distance from Yarkand, a history of warfare between the cities, and maybe at this point the emergence of dialectal differences that now mark Khotanese Uyghur as distinct from other dialects (Yakup). Obviously, people wrote in Khotan, but their texts may have circulated locally, rather than to places where foreign travelers collected the manuscripts from Chinese Turkestan that are known best to scholarship today.

Qing. The Manchu-led Qing empire (1636/44-1911) defeated the Zunghar Khanate in the 1750s, and with it gained suzerainty over the Tarim Basin. This conquest eventually resulted in the displacement of the Maḳdumzāda *ḳvājas* from political authority and their replacement with Turkic Muslim officials called *begs* (q.v.), who in turn answered to the military administration in the Ili Valley. Khotan hosted an imperial agent (*amban*) and a tiny garrison of about 200 soldiers, reflecting the low emphasis that the Qing placed on this distant outpost (Newby, pp. 18–19). Khotan had been famous since antiquity for its jade, and now it became the source not only of jade for the market in China but also for the use of the imperial court (Millward, p. 103).

Under the *beg* system, traditional structures of patronage that had supported Persian-language writing seem to have broken down across the region, giving way instead to translation from Persian into Turkic (Thum, p. 60). For example, in 1190/1776, Ƙoř Kifāk Beg, now serving the Qing, commissioned a Turkic translation of the Persian *Taḍkerat al-awliā'* (q.v.; Mukhlisov, pp. 26–27). In 1267/1851-52, Moḥammad Niāz b. Ġafur Beg compiled a range of stories from Persian sources and translated them into Turkic in a book called the *Qeşař al-ġarāyeb wa'l-'ajāyeb*. He did so for the benefit of his patron, the ruler of Khotan, who according to the text was insufficiently literate in Persian to read the originals (Moḥammad Niāz; Sultanov, p. 27). Indeed, Khotan may



have been a more significant center of cultural production during this period than has been recognized, particularly with regard to translation. Another mysterious manuscript is a translation into Chaghatay of an unidentified Chinese novel copied in Khotan in 1859, apparently commissioned by a *beg* there (British Library, London, MS Or. 5329). More research is certainly needed.

During the so-called “Muslim uprisings” (Chinese *Huimin qiyi*) that broke out across Chinese Turkestan in 1864, Khotan became the center of one of several new Islamic states. Hodong Kim, triangulating between a number of conflicting accounts, has dated the Khotan uprising to 22 Rabi‘ I 1281/25 August 1864 (Kim, pp. 49–52, 60, 65–66). Sources indicate that the revolt began in part because news had reached Khotan of the revolt in Kucha that began on 4 June of that year. Local dissatisfaction with the Qing was already strong, on account of over-taxation, and Qing officials became suspicious of a man who had just returned from the *hajj* and was subsequently appointed chief judge of Khotan, Ḥabīb-Allāh Mofti Ḥāji. Ḥabīb-Allāh learned that the officials planned to arrest him, and so he fled to his son’s house. Meanwhile, a Badaḳṣāni (see [BADAḲṢĀN](#)) living in Khotan and his countrymen attempted to establish their own control over Khotan, but the locals would not accept an outsider as their ruler, and so they approached Ḥabīb-Allāh and asked him to lead them in a holy war. Ḥabīb-Allāh, who belonged to a sizable and prominent family, gathered his followers in nearby Qaraqash, whence he successfully attacked the Chinese garrison with the aid of foreign commanders from Afghanistan and the Farḡāna valley. Other challengers emerged to contest Ḥabīb-Allāh’s rule, including one Zakariya Iṣān from Ziba (the site of frequent battles, located between Khotan and Yarkand), but none succeeded. The international character of the violence points to Khotan’s continued importance as an entrepot for trade.

The main Khotanese source for this period comes from Moḥammad A‘lam (n.d.), a participant in the Khotan uprisings who completed a history of it on 18 Šaban 1311/17 December 1894 (Hamada; Hofman, Vol. 4, pp. 156–59; Kim, p. 50). A British traveler met with Ḥabīb-Allāh Ḥāji in 1865 (Johnson), and in the early 1890s, a French expedition collected a great deal of oral literature there (Grenard, 1899; Grenard, 1897–98, Vol. 1, pp. 47–59, 88–97). Nevertheless, the history of Khotan itself in this period remains relatively obscure, and we must rely in large part on Musā Sayrāmi’s account written in Kucha.

Ḥabīb-Allāh’s uprising differed from those in other places in that the Turkic-



speaking Muslims of Khotan did not only attack Chinese, Manchus, and other non-Muslims, but also the Chinese-speaking Muslims (Hui or *Dungāns*) who had played a key role in the rebellions elsewhere (Hamada, pp. 9-10, 12; Sayrāmi, pp. 113-17). Many non-Muslims, including those from the Chinese garrison, converted under threat of violence, but according to Moḥammad A'lam, Ḥabib-Allāh's commanders later found them to have converted falsely and therefore massacred them. Shaikh Naẓir-al-Din K̲vāja, a member of the Kucha K̲vāja faction, who was at the time ruling Yarkand, then asked Ḥabib-Allāh to submit to him but received a prideful refusal in response. According to Sayrāmi, Ḥabib-Allāh's rejection stemmed from the identity of Naẓir-al-Din K̲vāja's emissary, who had only a year before served the Qing as an interpreter, and who appeared Chinese to Ḥabib-Allāh in speech and in dress. Naẓir-al-Din K̲vāja then sent his son with a fighting force to conquer Khotan, and a familiar pattern was repeated: Once again, there was a battle at Ziba, wherein Naẓir-al-Din K̲vāja's son was killed. Soon Ḥabib-Allāh sued for peace, however, and offered his nominal submission to Kucha, giving as his reason their common cause and religion. Perhaps Ḥabib-Allāh's emphasis on Islamic identity, along with his rejection of people who presented aspects of being like the Chinese, was informed by an abiding self-consciousness of Khotanese identity.

Ḥabib-Allāh's rule ultimately could not withstand the conquests of Ya'qub Beg (1820–77), who was then consolidating power in Chinese Turkestan from his base in Kashgar. Initial skirmishes between Kashgarian and Khotanese forces were inconclusive. Moḥammad A'lam and Sayrāmi agree that Ya'qub Beg defeated Ḥabib-Allāh by trickery, much as Abā Bakr deceived Khan Naẓar Mirzā: In December 1866, Ya'qub Beg requested permission from Ḥabib-Allāh to visit the shrine of the Sixth Imam [Ja'far al-Ṣādeq](#) (q.v.) in Khotan and invited him for a feast at Ziba. The following January, when Ḥabib-Allāh arrived for the feast, Ya'qub Beg ambushed him and sent him to Yarkand for execution. His forces forged a letter of invitation bearing Ḥabib-Allāh's seal, which they used to trick the guards at Khotan's gates into letting them enter the city. Several days of violence followed.

The resulting popular resentment prompted Ya'qub Beg to appoint a “local” as the *ḥākem* of Khotan, and he chose the Yarkandi Niāz Beg (d. 1878). According to the sources, Niāz Beg also followed the model of Abā Bakr: Niāz Beg constructed a grand palace for himself in Khotan, in which he hid buried treasure extracted both from the local population and from his own



excavations of nearby ruins (Sayrāmi, pp. 270–80; Schomberg, pp. 148–52; Stein, p. 239). Supporters of Ya‘qub Beg later blamed his death on Niāz Beg, claiming that Niāz poisoned him. While this theory is almost certainly false (Kim, pp. 168–69), it raises an old question: Was it Khotan’s continued reputation as a site of treachery that made this story believable as a repetition or echo of the past, or was it Niāz Beg’s own actions facilitated by his powerful position in Khotan? Niāz Beg did choose to rejoin the Qing in 1877, and he found himself so widely reviled and bereft of opportunity that he killed himself. While Niāz Beg may have deserved a tyrannical reputation, he constructed shelters and waystations along the difficult desert road from Khotan to Yarkand and endowed Islamic institutions. Niāz Beg also patronized a versified account of Ya‘qub Beg’s conquests, the *Amir-e ‘āli* by ‘Ošur Ākund b. Esmā‘il b. Moḥammad Ġārebi, although it does not provide much detail about Khotan (‘Ošur Ākund).

The provincial period and the end of the Islamic era. In 1877, Ya‘qub Beg’s state fell to Qing armies. The occupying forces began the project to transform the region from a military protectorate into the province of Xinjiang, which it was declared to be in 1884. This marks the beginning of Chinese Turkestan’s “provincial period.” Khotan, following its final conquest in January 1878, was integrated into the province as a “directly administered prefecture” (Chinese *zhili zhou*), as its population was in the majority Turkic-speaking Muslim, and the provincial authorities considered it to be an especially sensitive and difficult area. Initially, it was garrisoned mainly by Hui forces who had joined the reconquering army in Gansu.

Over the following decades, Turkic-speaking Muslims remained the overwhelming majority in Khotan, at over 99% according to statistics compiled locally in 1908, while the imposition of Qing imperial and then Chinese political and judicial systems gradually brought about social and cultural change (Xie; Yi; Zhang Shicai et al.). Chaghatay-language documents indicate the persistence of Islamic law, as well as the gradual incorporation of Chinese terminology and units of measurement under the influence of taxation and of government-directed land reclamation, which intensified from 1900 (Guangxu 26) onward.

The transition from the Qing empire to the Republic of China in Xinjiang entailed little substantive change in the administration. However, from 1912, Khotan was part of the Kashgar-based administration of Ma Fuxing (1864–1924), a Hui military officer who held the rank of circuit intendant. In



1924, the governor Yang Zengxin (1864–1928) ordered the Aksu circuit intendant Ma Shaowu (1874–1937) to execute Ma Fuxing and seize power. Afterwards Ma Shaowu was reappointed head of the new Khotan circuit (*dao*), which was split off from the Kashgar circuit.

Many foreign travelers, particularly archaeologists, left memoirs of their visits to Khotan during this period, notably Aurel Stein. Otherwise, the historical record is scanty. The Khotan archives hold a number of manuscript sources produced there (Sulayman), but the manuscripts themselves, as well as records of local government, are inaccessible to researchers.

A rebellion against Chinese rule broke out in Khotan in February 1933. Moḥammad Amin Boḡrā (1901–65), who takes credit for the uprising's conception and early leadership, describes it in his general history of Chinese Turkestan (Boḡrā, pp. 399–408, 416–23, 433–35, 452–54; Shinmen, pp. 138, 140–42). While Boḡrā's role in writing his own history may assign him a larger-than-life role in the revolution, his family did play a major role, and he remained a significant leader for decades after. In Jumada I 1351/September 1932, Boḡrā established the “Khotan Organization for National Revolution” (*Ḳotan melli enqelāb taşkelāti*) with the aim of arming the people of Khotan and establishing an independent Turkic nation-state. However, with the return of the preacher Tābet Dāmollā (1883–1934, from Artush) from the *ḥajj*, the organization began to incorporate members with a religious, and in particular Sufi, orientation. During Ramadan, Tābet Dāmollā Ḥājji lectured on the Quran and took the opportunity to explicate passages on the importance of jihad. This brought an important local religious leader into the organization, Moḥammad Niyāz 'Alam Akhund, whom the organization elected as its official leader at a meeting on 5 Šawwal 1351/1 February 1933. An uprising had meanwhile begun in Qumul (Hami) and Turfan, which spurred the Khotanese revolutionaries to action. The armed revolution began twelve days later as the provincial government attempted to rally soldiers to capture the rebels.

On 15 August 1933, Sābet Dāmullā established an “Administration Office of the Khotan Government” (*Ḳotan edārası*) in Kashgar, and on 10 September the office created the Eastern Turkestan Independence Association (Shinmen, pp. 148–49). The East Turkestan Republic declared at Kashgar on 12 November thus joined the interests of leaders from several oases, and Khotan's influence was strong. Boḡrā, however, was soon forced to flee to India in early 1934 when Hui forces from Gansu, nominally aligned with the Republic of China, sacked Kashgar and decimated the soldiers led by his brothers, both of whom



were killed. That July, the Hui forces left Kashgar for Khotan.

From July 1934 to October 1937, the Hui commander of the Nationalist Army's 36th Division, Ma Hushan (1910–54), established an independent state in Khotan called “Dungānestan” (Forbes, pp. 125–35, 141–42). (The term *Dungān* indicates Chinese-speaking Muslims.) Its borders stretched from Qarǧiliq at the western edge of Khotan proper to Gansu province in the east. Insofar as anything is known about this short-lived country, it was nominally loyal to the Republic of China. Ma Hushan presented his state as a bulwark against the provincial government of Sheng Shicai (governed 1933–1944), who was at the time backed by the Soviets. Ma Hushan, whom his subjects called the *pādšāh*, led a military government but also one that observers characterized as “colonial,” as its leadership consisted of Chinese-speaking Muslims from Gansu who taxed local Turkic-speaking Muslims in coin but imposed upon them a flood of near-worthless paper money.

In spring 1937, Ma Hushan took advantage of an uprising in Kashgar, marched west, and seized the city. Boǧrā, then in exile in Afghanistan, also attempted to regain power in Kashgar. That summer, however, Soviet forces advanced southward and routed the Muslim forces. Ma and his officers fled to India, while their armies went eastward to Gansu and Qinghai and southward across Tibet, bringing Dungānestān to an end. Khotan was thenceforth brought under the rule of the provincial government. The subsequent era is poorly documented. However, a branch of the *Xinjiang Gazette* (*Shingjāng Geziti*) was established at Khotan in 1939, and it reported local news (Freeman, pp. 238, 244).

Moḥammad Amin Boǧrā returned to China in 1943, and then to Xinjiang in 1945, where he worked in the Nationalist-backed provincial government from 1947 to 1949 (Benson, pp. 97–98, 101–2, 108–9). There he forcefully argued in the press for the Turkic ethno-national identity of his homeland's people, the colonial nature of Qing and Chinese rule, and the need for the independence of Chinese Turkestan. However, the entrance of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) into Chinese Turkestan in October 1949 prompted Boǧrā to flee over the mountains to India and eventual exile in Turkey.

PLA forces captured Khotan in December 1949 (Dillon, 2014, pp. 211–31). They took the most dangerous road, across the Taklimakan desert from Aksu, presenting a different tactic than the usual approach from Yarkand. This mission was treated with urgency because Khotan was seen as a final and



critical frontier in the new country's border defense. Pro-Nationalist forces stationed there not only garrisoned an important road into Tibet, but also borders with India and Pakistan. Subsequently, through the early 1950s, the PLA established not only a military presence, but also a set of political organs intended to displace local structures of authority.

These efforts continued through a major incident in December 1954 in which remaining followers of Boğrā organized resistance to Chinese rule through an apparent combination of nationalist and Sufi organizations (Dillon, 2003, pp. 52–55). Reasons for their opposition included land reform and the oppression of Islam. Their Salām movement successfully attacked a “reform through labor” (Chinese *laogai*) prison farm before being repelled. Further uprisings took place in March 1956, May 1956, and April 1957. Despite conflict between Khotanese people and Chinese army and paramilitary forces, documents collected in Khotan indicate the persistence and even expansion of central Islamic institutions, such as pious endowments (*waqf*) and courts, through at least 1958 (Xinhua; Zhang, pp. 882–83). Such institutions were damaged irreparably by land reform and the deprivations of the Great Leap Forward (1958–62).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

W. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*. London, 1928.

Linda Benson, “Uyghur Politicians of the 1940s: Mehmet Emin Bugra, Isa Yusuf Alptekin and Mesut Sabri,” *Central Asian Survey* 10/4, 1991, pp. 87–104.

Michal Biran, *Qaidu and the Rise of the Independent Mongol State in Central Asia*, Surrey, U.K., 1997.

Idem, *The Empire of the Qara Khitai in Eurasian History: Between China and the Islamic World*, Cambridge, 2005.

Moḥammad Amin Boğrā, *Šarqi Turkestān tāriki*, Kabul, 1940.

Rahilä Dawut, *Uyghur mazarliri*, Ürümchi, 2001.

Michael Dillon, *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Far Northwest*, London, 2003.



Idem, *Xinjiang and the Expansion of Chinese Communist Power: Kashgar in the Early Twentieth Century*, London, 2014.

Joshua L. Freeman, "Uyghur Newspapers in Republican China: The Emergence of Mass Media in Xinjiang," in Onuma Takahiro, David Brophy, and Yasushi Shinmen, eds., *Xinjiang in the Context of Central Eurasian Transformations*, Tokyo, 2018, pp. 221–50.

Peter Golden, "Inner Asia c. 1200," in Nicola Di Cosmo, J. Allen Frank, and Peter B. Golden, eds., *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia: The Chinggisid Age*, Cambridge, 2009, pp. 9–25.

M. Fernand Grenard, *J.-L. Dutreuil de Rhins, Mission scientifique dans la haute Asie, 1890–1895*, Vol. I, Paris, 1897–98.

Idem, "Spécimens de la littérature moderne du Turkestan chinois," *JA*, 9e sér., 13, 1899, pp. 339–44.

Masami Hamada, "L'Histoire de Hotan de Muḥammad A'lam (I), texte turque oriental édité, avec une introduction," *Zinbun* 15, 1979, pp. 1–45.

L. Hambis, "Khotan," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*² V, pp. 37–39.

Ḥodud al-ʿālam, tr. Vladimir Minorsky, as *Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam: The Regions of the World, A Persian Geography, 372 A.H.-982 A.D.*, enlarged and corrected ed., London, 1970.

H. G. Hofman, *Turkish Literature: A Bio-Bibliographical Survey*, Utrecht, 1969.

W. H. Johnson, "A Report on His Journey to Ilchī, the Capital of Khotan, in Chinese Tartary," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 37, 1867, pp. 1–47.

ʿAlā-al-Dīn ʿAṭā-Malek Jovaynī, *Tārīḳ-e jahān-gošāy*, tr. John Andrew Boyle, as *The History of the World-Conqueror*, 2 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1958.

Hodong Kim, *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1865-1877*, Stanford, Calif., 2004.

James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang*, New York, 2007.

Mirzā Moḥammad Ḥaydar, *Tārīḳ-e rašīdī*, tr. Wheeler M. Thackston, as *Mirza*



Haydar Dughlat's *Tarikh-i Rashidi: A History of the Khans of Moghulistan*, Cambridge, Mass., 1996.

Moḥammad Niāz b. Ġafur Beg, *Qeşaş al-ġarāyeb*, Lund University Library, Jarring Collection, MS Prov. 21.

Muhämmäd Sadiq Qāshqāri, *Tāzkirāi āzizan*, Qāshqār, 1988.

Yusupbeg Mukhlisov, *Uyghur klassik ädäbiyati qolyazmilirining katalogi*, Ürümchi, 1957.

Laura Newby, *The Empire and the Khanate: A Political History of Qing Relations with Khoqand c. 1760–1860*, Leiden, 2005.

‘Oşur Ākhund b. Esmā’il b. Moḥammad Ġārebi, *Amir-e ‘ālī*, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences, C 759.

Marco Polo, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian: Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East*, tr. Henry Yule, London, 1871.

Omeljan Pritsak, “Von den Karluk zu den Karachaniden,” *ZDMG* 101/26, 1 1951, pp. 270–300.

Idem, “Die Karakhaniden,” *Der Islam* 31/1 1953, pp. 17–68.

Mollā Musā b. Mollā ‘Isā Sayrāmi, *Tāriḳ-e ḥamidi*, reproduced in Miao Pusheng, ed., *Xibei shaoshu minzu wenzi wenxian*, Beijing, 2006.

Reginald C. F. Schomberg, *Peaks and Plains of Central Asia*, London, 1933.

Yasushi Shinmen, “The Eastern Turkestan Republic (1933–1934) in Historical Perspective,” in Stéphane A. Dudoignon and Komatsu Hisao, eds., *Islam in Politics in Russia and Central Asia (Early Eighteenth to Late Twentieth Centuries)*, London, 2001, pp. 133–64.

Aurel Stein, *Sand-Buried Ruins of Khotan: Personal Narrative of a Journey of Archaeological & Geographical Exploration in Chinese Turkestan*, London, 1904.

Abdulla Sulayman, “Qoshumchä: Khotän rayonida saqliniwatqan bir qisim qädimki kitablar,” in *Dunyada birla Khotän bar (kitablar uchuri)*, Ürümchi, 2006.



T. I. Sultanov, “Medieval Historiography in Manuscripts from East Turkestan,” *Manuscripta Orientalia: International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research* 2/1, March 1996, pp. 25-30.

Rian Thum, *The Sacred Routes of Uyghur History*, Cambridge, Mass., 2014.

Mämtimin Tokhti, “Häzriti Sultan Maziri,” in Muhämmättokhti Tursun et al., eds., *Khotan shähiri tarikh materiyyalliri*, Ürümchi, 2010, pp. 92–94.

Xie Weixing, *Hetian zhilizhou xiangtu zhi*, reproduced in Ma Dazheng et al., eds., *Xinjiang xiangtu zhi gao*, Beijing, 2011, pp. 384-89.

Xin Wen, “Kingly Exchange: The Silk Road and the East Eurasian World in the Age of Fragmentation (850–1000),” Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2017.

Xinhua tongxun she, “Xinjiang Hetian xian Yisilan jiao zuzhi ‘Hui li hui,’” in *Neibu cankao*, 17 July 1953.

Abdureshit Yakup, “The Khotan Varieties of Uyghur as Seen in Jarring’s Transcription,” in I. Bellér-Hann, B. N. Schlyter, and J. Sugawara, eds., *Kashgar Revisited: Uyghur Studies in Memory of Ambassador Gunnar Jarring*, Leiden, 2017, pp. 80–88.

Rongding Yi, *Hetian zhilizhou xiangtu zhi*, reproduced in Ma Dazheng et al., eds., *Xinjiang xiangtu zhi gao*, Beijing, 2011, pp. 390–400.

Shicai Zhang et al., eds., *Weiwuerzu qiyue wenshu yi zhu*, Wulumuqi, 2015.

Tingyu Zhang et al., comps., *Ming shi*, Shanghai, 1888.