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LEGAL, POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL SCIENCES

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Contents

Part One

LEGAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCES IN THE EASTERN IRANIAN WORLD AND CENTRAL ASIA IN THE PRE-MONGOL PERIOD

(*C. E. Bosworth*)

The legal sciences

The development of studies in Islamic tradition, *hadīth*, has been delineated in Chapter Three, Part One, and the oft-quoted observation made that, of the six *hadīth* collections considered as canonical by the Sunnis, four of their authors came from Khurasan (or Transoxania) and the other two from adjacent regions of the Iranian world (Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī from Sistan and Ibn Māja from Qazvin in northern Iran) (see above, pp. 108–110). The study of *hadīth* began comparatively late in the Iranian East, a key figure here being ᶜAbdallāh b. Mubārak (d. 797), who by himself and through his pupils like Abū Yaᶜqūb Is'hāq, called Ibn Rāhawayh (d. 852), did much to spread this discipline as far as Merv and Nishapur.

A few preliminary words on *hadīth* are necessary for our purposes from the fact that many of the sections in *hadīth* collections, from the time of Mālik b. Anas' (d. 795) *Muwatta'* [The Clearly Trodden Way], were essentially organized round legal topics, with their headings subsequently taken over directly into early law books, showing that such *hadīth* collections were proto-law books.[1] Given the florescence of *hadīth* studies in the East after this initial delay, legal studies proper now began to develop there, eventually to be based in particular in the new *madrasas* (colleges for higher religious and other studies), often founded for a particular, eminent legal scholar and the specific study of his *madh'hab* (law school). Hence the geographer al-Maqdisī was to observe, at the end of the tenth century,

[1] Mottahedeh, 1997, pp. 66–7.

that Khurasan was 'the region most abundant in learning (*ʿilm*, probably referring essentially to *hadīth* studies) and law (*fiqh*)'.[2]

The two orthodox Sunni law schools which flourished in Khurasan and the East during the first six centuries or so of Islam were the Hanafite and the Shafiʿite, so completely dominant that they are often called in the sources *al-farīqān* ('the two sects') *par excellence*.[3] Hanafism appeared early in Khurasan and had connections with the moderate members of the Murji'ite trend of thought which found expression in the revolt in Khurasan and Transoxania in the early eighth century led by al-Hārith b. Surayj (see Volume IV, Part One, Chapters 1 and 2). Hence it was not surprising that Balkh, one of the epicentres of al-Hārith's movement, became an early bastion of eastern Hanafism, with its first Hanafite *qādī* (judge) appointed in 759 while Abū Hanīfa was himself still alive. The Murji'ite doctrines taken over by Abū Hanīfa had relevance for the legal situation of the numerous recent converts to Islam of Transoxania and the upper Oxus (Amu Darya) lands of Tukharistan, the ancient Bactria. (It is reported that Abū Hanīfa held that a Muslim in the land of polytheism, the *dār al-shirk*, could be ignorant of the Qur'an and the religious duties laid down in the *sharīʿa* yet still be accounted a *mu'min*, or believer, although this definition of such convert' legal status did not imply moral laxity; Abū Hanīfa held that every effort had to be made to teach such persons the obligations and prescriptions of the Islamic faith.) Hence the appeal of Hanafism there is not surprising, and by the ninth century Transoxania and Tukharistan had become overwhelmingly Hanafite in *madh'hab*, especially as Arab settlers there were few and the indigenous converts to Islam found attractive the liberal definition of faith by that law school, so that Hanafism took on a populist character as the egalitarian form of Islam of *al-sawād al-aʿzam* ('the great mass of people').[4] In this respect, Hanafism was the antithesis of the Hanbalite law school, whose founder Ibn Hanbal emphasized the permanent superiority of the Arab race as the one which had nurtured the Prophet Muhammad and the pure, pristine Islam of the first community.[5]

Shafiʿism, the law school named after its eponym, the Palestinian Muhammad al-Shāfiʿī (d. 820), stressed the paramountcy of *hadīth*, and in particular, traditions traceable back to Muhammad, as the foundation of law; hence its followers were often termed the *as'hāb al-hadīth* ('partisans of tradition'), as against the *as'hāb al-ra'y* ('partisans of speculative opinion'), a title applied (not wholly accurately) to the Hanafites (see further, Chapter 3, Part Two, above). In Khurasan, Shafiʿism obtained a strong footing and in the early eleventh century, the Shafiʿites of Nishapur, under the influence of Abū Bakr Ibn Fūrak

[2] *Ahsan al-taqāsīm*, cited in Mottahedeh, 1997, p. 66.
[3] Madelung, 1988, p. 26.
[4] Ibid., pp. 18–22.
[5] Ibid., pp. 22–4.

(d. 1015) and Abū Is'hāq al-Isfarā'inī (d. 1027), adopted the Ashᶜarite system of theology, so that henceforth, the Shafiᶜite *madh'hab* became predominantly Ashᶜarite in theology. During the tenth century, the Hanafites and Shafiᶜites were probably roughly balanced in Khurasan. In Transoxania, however, it was only in the middle Syr Darya (Jaxartes) region, in the neighbourhood of Chach and Ilaq, that Shafiᶜism established for itself an enclave, largely because of the teaching and influence of the prominent local Shafiᶜite scholar Abū Bakr Muhammad al-Qaffāl (d. 976).[6] Elsewhere in Transoxania, Tukharistan and the eastern fringes of Afghanistan, Hanafism was dominant, and it was this dominance which later provided the springboard for the wholesale adoption of Hanafism by the Turks of Central Asia, the Afghans and the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent.

In Transoxania and Semirechye, the Karakhanids favoured Hanafism, although this did not prevent them at times clashing on social or political issues, if not on theologico-legal ones, with such powerful local lines of Hanafite scholars in the Transoxanian cities as the *sudūr* (eminences, prominent leaders; sing. *sadr*) of the Burhān family in Bukhara. These *sudūr* preserved their temporal and spiritual authority into the period of domination of Transoxania by the Buddhist Kara Khitay, and a similar influence was carried on through the Mongol period by another Bukharan family, the Mahbūbīs, still notable in local affairs when the Moroccan traveller Ibn Battūta visited Bukhara in 1333.[7]

Under the early Ghaznavids, and then under the Seljuqs, both Hanafism and Shafiᶜism flourished in the provincial capital Nishapur, together with the pietistic sect of the Karramites (see on this, above, Chapter 3, Part Two, pp. 124, 142–3). The Ghaznavid sultans and their officials tended to favour the Hanafites. Mahmūd of Ghazna's brother Nasr, governor of Khurasan, in 1000 founded the Sāᶜidiyya *madrasa* in Nishapur, while the sultan himself often employed members from leading families of Hanafite *faqīhs* (Islamic legal experts) in Nishapur for diplomatic missions.[8] The patronage of the Ghaznavids in their more eastern provinces had its effects on the legal complexion of Islam in eastern Afghanistan and the Indian plain, where Ghaznavid officials and legal scholars brought Hanafism to north and central India to the exclusion of all other *madh'habs*. This process was continued by the Ghurids, even though Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muhammad (1163–1203) had personally favoured the Shafiᶜite scholar Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzi (see above, Chapter 3, Part Two, pp. 129–30);[9] the weight of Hanafite penetration proved overwhelming in Muslim India.

[6] Madelung, 1988, pp. 28–9.
[7] *EIr*, Vol. 1, 1985, pp. 753–4, 'Āl-e Borhān' (C. E. Bosworth).
[8] Bulliet, 1972, pp. 35 et seq.; Bosworth, 1973, pp. 173–8.
[9] Bosworth, 1961, pp. 129–30.

For Nishapur, we are particularly informed about the Hanafite and Shafi^{c}ite lawyers and theologians, and the *madrasas* founded there and in other Khurasanian towns like Merv and Sarakhs for the notable scholars among them, making eleventh-century Khurasan a powerhouse of legal scholarship. Under the Seljuqs, such scholars of Nishapur as the Shafi^{c}ite Abū Muhammad al-Juwaynī (d. 1047) and his son, the Imām al-Haramayn Abu'l-Ma^{c}ali (d. 1085), passed on their learning to their student, the great al-Ghazālī (1058–1111). The vizier Nizām al-Mulk (d. 1092) made a strenuous effort to restore the influence of Shafi^{c}ism in Nishapur through his appointment of Shafi^{c}ite judges, preachers and so on, and above all, his foundation of a fresh wave of *madrasas*, his Nizāmiyyas, several of which were in the eastern Iranian lands; one result of this was to prolong the tensions within Nishapur and other cities between the adherents of the two *madh'habs*, often resulting in rioting and violence.[10]

It has been noted in more than one place in the present volume that, from 1200 onwards, the springs of original thought and learning tended to dry up in the eastern Islamic lands, as elsewhere, with a resultant rigidification of knowledge, and legal scholarship was not exempt from this process. Here began, as in other branches of learning, an age of encyclopedias, summations of knowledge, commentaries and supercommentaries. Al-Ghazālī's first training had been as a lawyer, and in his numerous works on *fiqh* he was able to make original contributions, as in his *Kitāb al-Basīt fi'l-furū^{c}* [Simple Work on the Derivative Developments in Law], his *Kitāb al-Wajīz* [Concise Book] and his *Kitāb al-Mustasfā min ^{c}ilm al-usūl* [Select Book on the Science of Basic Principles in Law].[11]

Subsequent legal scholars were more noted as writers of compendia of legal information than as original authors. As an example, one may cite the Marghīnānīs, an eminent family of Hanafite lawyers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries from Marghinan in Ferghana. From among them, Burhān al-Dīn Abu'l-Hasan ^{c}Alī (d. 1197) wrote a compendium of law, the *Bidāyat al-mubtadī* [Preliminary Work for the One Embarking (on the Study of Law)] based on two earlier, classic legal works, *al-Jāmi^{c} al-saghīr* [The Smaller Collection] of Muhammad al-Shaybānī (d. 803 or 805) and the *Mukhtasar* [Epitome] of Abu'l-Hasan Ahmad al-Qudūrī (d. 1037). On his own work he wrote a commentary in eight volumes, the *Kifāyat al-muntahā* [The Satisfactory Achievement of the Goal], but on completing it, he found it too diffuse and unwieldy, and hence produced a shorter commentary, the *Hidāya* [Guidance], which was to have a wide success all over the Islamic East; it attracted, from the author's own time onwards, numerous supercommentaries, and in 1791 an English

[10] Bulliet, 1972, pp. 31–46; Bosworth, 1973, pp. 171 et seq.
[11] *EI*^{2}, 'al-Ghazālī' (W. M. Watt); Brockelmann, 1937–49, Vol. 1, pp. 542–4; Suppl., Vol. 1, pp. 752–4.

translation was made for the use of British officials in India.[12] Also popular was the *Kitāb al-Muntakhab fī usūl al-madh'hab* [Select Book on the Basic Roots of the (Hanafite) Legal School] by another Ferghanan legal scholar, Husām al-Dīn Muhammad al-Akhsīkatī (d. 1247), familiarly known as the *Husāmī*, which again attracted several commentaries.[13]

Political science

THE BACKGROUND

Aristotle in his *Nicomachaean Ethics* defined politics, Plato's 'royal art', as the most authoritative of the sciences, aiming at the highest good which man desires for its own sake in his quest for happiness. Medieval thinkers, Jewish, Christian and Muslim alike, pictured this happiness, the Islamic *saᶜāda*, in relationship to God, viewing the knowledge and love of God as its supreme goal, to be attained within a society united by a common faith in God and governed by a divinely revealed law; on such questions as these, Maimonides, Thomas Aquinas and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) were united.[14]

Within Islam, this quest involved questions of practical politics, the business of ruling over the various classes making up the body politic (the *ᶜilm al-siyāsa*, science of government), and questions of the ethical bases of that rule, the duties incumbent on all grades of human society, in the first place towards God and, following on from that, towards each other (the *ᶜilm al-akhlāq*, moral and ethical sciences). It was these latter theoretical, ethical topics, rather than practical politics, which concerned the first great Platonist philosopher in Islam, Abū Nasr Muhammad al-Fārābī (Alfarabius) (d. 950), who was born at Farab in Turkistan on the lower Syr Darya but who worked mainly in Syria and Iraq. Hence his great works concerning questions of human behaviour and society, the *Kitāb fī Mabādi'ārā'ahl al-madīna al-fādila*. [Principles of the Opinions of the Citizens of the Ideal State], the *Kitāb al-Siyāsa al-madaniyya* [On Political Government] and the *Kitāb Tahsīl al-saᶜāda* [On the Attainment of Happiness], deal primarily with philosophical and ethical questions rather than the setting forth of any political programme.[15]

Much of what became political science in medieval Islam was nevertheless very much of a practical bent. At its core lay the rule of the caliph-imam and his deputies as God's instruments for carrying out the legacy of the Prophet Muhammad in securing a God-directed society, but it also drew quite extensively on Greek ethics, as is particularly clear

[12] Brockelmann, 1937–49, Vol. 1, pp. 466–9; Suppl., Vol. 1, pp. 644–9; *EI*^{2}, 'al-Marghīnānī' (W. Heffening).
[13] Brockelmann, 1937–49, Vol. 1, p. 474; Suppl., Vol. 1, p. 654.
[14] See E. I. J. Rosenthal, 1968, pp. 13–15.
[15] Ibid., pp. 122–42; al-Fārābī, 1985; *EI*^{2}, 'al-Fārābī' (R. Walzer).

in the case of al-Fārābī, and on the Persian tradition of kingly power and statecraft, with its advice to rulers (*andarz*, *pand*) to be expounded at length in the 'Mirrors for Princes' literature (see below). Islamic political science thus had some points of contact with historiography. In both Arabic and Persian literatures, material of a 'Mirrors for Princes' nature appears in historical works (for example, as an extensive prolegomenon, 'On Matters Concerning the Sultan and the Methods for Ruling of Kings', which Ibn al-Tiqtaqā prefixed to his history of the caliphate, the *Kitāb al-Fakhrī*, written in 1302 for a local ruler, Fakhr al-Dīn ᶜĪsā of Mosul), with this literary genre drawing upon the lives of ancient Persian kings and Islamic rulers alike for telling examples of moral and political conduct. The approach here was strictly practical; not until we come to the North African thinker and historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 1406) do we have any theorizing on political conduct, and Ibn Khaldūn remained for quite a while a unique figure.[16]

THE QUESTION OF THE CALIPHATE AND THE SULTANATE

As the unity of the ᶜAbbasid caliphate began to crumble in the later ninth century (see Volume IV, Part One, Chapter 2) and lines of autonomous governors or, in effect, independent rulers appeared in regions of the East like Khurasan, Sistan and Transoxania, the question arose of the relationship between the caliph-imam (still morally and religiously the head of Sunni Islam even if his actual political authority was now circumscribed) and the provincial powers. Such lines as the Tahirid governors in Khurasan still acknowledged the ultimate authority of the caliph and sent tribute to Baghdad, although a more remote dynasty like the Samanids, with their capital in Transoxania, no longer felt the obligation to send such tribute. For these rulers, the 'caliphal fiction', i.e. that all executive power derived from an act of delegation by the caliph, nevertheless still held good. The Shiᶜite Buyid amirs of northern and western Persia had an uneasy relationship with the ᶜAbbasids, but the advent of Toghrïl Beg and his Seljuqs in the mid-eleventh century meant that a *rapprochement* between the two Sunni potentates, caliph and sultan, was now possible. This needed a basis in constitutional theory, so that the question of the relationship and balance between the ᶜAbbasids and the Seljuq sultans, the latter now effective holders of temporal power in the Islamic East, arose.[17]

In Khurasan, the task was undertaken in the later eleventh century by Abu'l-Maᶜālī al-Juwaynī and Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī (see on these two figures, above, pp. 130–1). The first of these was concerned to assert, against the Shiᶜite doctrine that ᶜAlī and his progeny had been divinely designated as both spiritual and secular heads of the community, the

[16] E. I. J. Rosenthal, 1968, pp. 115–16.
[17] See for the background here, Arnold, 1924, pp. 42–81.

supreme importance of *ijmāᶜ*, the consensus of the (Sunni) community, in choosing and validating the caliph-imam, the defender and protector of the community. He was also practical enough to recognize that the political unity of the *dār al-Islām* was now gone and that two simultaneous imams were possible, provided that they were in widely separated areas.[18]

Al-Ghazālī's writings range over a wide field of constitutional and ethical questions, including a special concern to refute the claims to authority of the Shiᶜites and such of their representatives as the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt and Syria who, he asserted, had usurped the real caliph-imam's spiritual and temporal authority. Al-Ghazālī wished, therefore, to reaffirm the calip's position as head of the Islamic *jamāᶜa* (community) and to incorporate the sultanate of his Seljuq patrons into the ideal structure of Islamic government. Hence he stressed authority in religion, right belief, and the personal loyalty of the sultan to the caliph as ideals to be pursued. *Fitna* (civil disorder) and anarchy were to be avoided at all costs, even if this meant living under an unjust caliph or sultan.

In a series of Arabic works, from his *Kitāb al-Mustazhirī* (written for the caliph al-Mustazhir) to his *Kitāb al-Mustasfā min ᶜilm al-usūl*, his last great work, completed in 1109, al-Ghazālī examined the relationship between *dīn* (religion) and the *sharīᶜa* (religious law) on the one hand, and *hukm* (temporal jurisdiction) and *saltana* (power) on the other. He asserted that the office of caliph-imam was necessary both by revelation and by reason, and that the *sharīᶜa* required an executive power to enforce its provisions; this last was provided by the sultanate, whose authority, however, was conditional on the sulta' obedience to the caliph-imam, who appointed him.[19] Al-Ghazālī was to elaborate the practical duties of the sultan, as opposed to the theoretical bases of the constitutional relationship between him and the caliph-imam, in a 'Mirror for Princes' composed in Persian, which will be considered below.

THE 'MIRRORS FOR PRINCES' LITERATURE

At the side of treatises by *'ulamā'* (scholars of the religious sciences; sing. *ᶜālim*) like al-Juwaynī and al-Ghazālī dealing with basic constitutional principles in Islam, there had existed almost since the outset of Islam a minor genre of literature containing aphorisms in the testaments of rulers for their successors, practical advice for rulers and their ministers, how these last two groups should comport themselves and what policies they should pursue, all these constituting the *ᶜilm al-siyāsa* ('science of government'), *tadbīr al-mulūk*

[18] Lambton, 1981, pp. 103–7. For the importance here of *ijmāᶜ*, see Watt, 1968, pp. 90–8.

[19] E. I. J. Rosenthal, 1968, pp. 38–43; Laoust, 1970, pp. 75–133, 152–82, 191–364; Lambton, 1981, pp. 107–17; Hillenbrand, 1988, pp. 81–91.

('how kings should manage their affairs') or *nasīhat al-mulūk* ('advice and counsels for kings'). The genre was indeed an ancient Near Eastern one, with elements of it appearing from ancient Egyptian times onwards. The early Islamic 'Mirrors' incorporated strands from earlier cultures such as the classical Greek and even the Indian one, but above all, they continued and drew upon the Sasanian Persian traditions of kingship, seen in the frequent references in this literature to wise monarchs like Ardashīr I, Bahrām V Chūbīn, Khusraw I Anūshirwān and Khusraw II Abarwiz and to their sage ministers like Buzurjmihr, and the many anecdotes recounted about them.[20]

There was thus a long tradition of such writing in the Iranian world. The surviving examples of it from the period 750–1500 are especially connected with Khurasan, the Caspian region and Central Asia. This may well not be fortuitous: it may reflect the fact that, with the constituting of the Seljuq empire, whose running was largely staffed by viziers, secretaries and officials from Khurasan, the centre of religious and cultural gravity in the orthodox Sunni world had shifted eastwards and the new generation of rulers, comprising sultans, amirs and Khans, exercising an essentially secular rule, required manuals and models of conduct which took into account the new conditions.

The famed littérateur of Nishapur, Abū Mansūr ᶜAbd al-Malik al-Thaᶜālibī (d. 1038), wrote at the court of the Ma'munid Khwarazm Shah in Gurganj an Arabic *Kitāb Adāb al-mulūk al-Khwārazmshāhī* [Book for the Khwarazm Shah on the Manners of Kings].[21] The Ziyarid prince of Gurgan and Tabaristan, Kay Kāwūs b. Iskandar, composed in 1082–3 his *Qābūs-nāma* [Book for Qābūs] (named after his grandfather, the Amir Qābūs b. Wushmagir, whom the author regarded as the epitome of ruthlessness and the exercise of *realpolitik*). Hence in his sections on ruling, the employment of ministers and the arts of war, Kay Kāwūs recommends that one should have an eye to the claims of God but pursue worldly ends with a single-minded concentration on one's own interests.[22]

As noted above, al-Ghazālī complemented his consideration of the religious and constitutional issues involved in the dual exercise of authority by caliph and sultan by writing a 'Mirror for Princes', the *Nasīhat al-mulūk* [Advice for Kings], apparently utilizing material on government and the exercise of power which he had already set forth in his Persian *Kīmiyā-yi saᶜādat* [The Alchemy of Happiness], largely but not wholly an epitome of his Arabic *summa*, the *Ihyā'ᶜulūm al-dīn* [Revivification of the Religious Sciences] (see on the author, above, Chapter 1, Part One). In his *Nasīha*, al-Ghazālī dealt with the more practical aspects of kingship, or rather, it seems that he wrote the first part of the book on the ideal

[20] See on the genre in general, Inostrantsev, 1918, pp. 37 et seq.; Richter, 1932; Bosworth, 1990, pp. 165–7; 1993.
[21] Bosworth, 1993.
[22] Kay Kāwūs b. Iskandar, 1951.

of the godly ruler and how he should in practice exercise his authority for a Seljuq prince, Muhammad b. Malik Shāh or his brother Sanjar, but that the second part is by an unknown Persian author of a generation or so later writing very much within the old Persian ethical and political tradition. At all events, the work, endowed with the prestige of al-Ghazālī's name, proved popular (especially through a somewhat later Arabic translation) for several centuries and well into Ottoman Turkish times.[23]

The supreme example of the 'Mirrors for Princes' genre in Persian is, nevertheless, without doubt the *Siyāsat-nāma* [Book of Government], or *Siyar al-mnlūk* [Conduct of Kings], by the great Seljuq vizier Nizām al-Mulk, a native of Tus in Khurasan. He combined the acuity and learning of a Shafi^{c}ite lawyer and an Ash^{c}arite theologian (whose name in this regard would be immortalized in the Nizāmiyya colleges which he founded; see above, Chapter 1, Part One) with an immense breadth of practical experience as administrator of Khurasan and then vizier to two Seljuq sultans, a career extending over 30 years. Written towards the end of its author's life, the *Siyāsat-nāma* thus contains the distilled wisdom accumulated during a long career as a statesman. In some respects it is an hortatory work, setting forth a political programme for his Turkish masters, who were fresh to the Perso-Islamic tradition of ruling and were still rooted to some extent in the Turkish tribal past; the Seljuqs were to heed the examples both of the ancient Persian kings and of Islamic despots like Mahmūd of Ghazna. The central theme, however, is the divinely ordained authority of the ruler, who holds his power in trust from God, with a consequent duty to ensure that true, orthodox religion prevails; conversely, subjects, the *ra^{c}iyya* ('sheep driven to pasture'), owe complete obedience to the ruler, paying taxes in return for protection. Nizām al-Mulk was in this respect restating the old Persian concept of the ruler's authoritarian, in practice unfettered, power, even when theoretically tempered with the Islamic requirement that the ruler should conform to the *sharī^{c}a* and the *sunna*.[24]

CENTRAL ASIA

These governmental notions continued to permeate the subsequent political development of the eastern Islamic lands, and in the eleventh century, the one which produced the classic Persian 'Mirrors', had already begun to spread into Central Asia. Yūsuf Khāss Hājib of Balasaghun in fact presented his long didactic poem in Karakhanid Turkic, the *Kutadghu bilig* [Knowledge which Brings Happiness], to a Karakhanid prince in Kashghar some years before Kay Kāwūs, Nizām al-Mulk and al-Ghazālī wrote. The poem includes

[23] Al-Ghazali, 1964; Laoust, 1970, pp. 144–52; Lambton, 1981, pp. 117–26; Hillenbrand, 1988, pp. 91–2; Lambton, 1988, pp. 97–8.
[24] Nizām al-Mulk, 1978; Lambton, 1984, pp. 55–6.

elements of Turkish tribal lore and practice, but its central emphasis is firmly in the Islamic pattern of the enlightened ruler, whose firm exercise of power conduces to the happiness of his subjects, and it even includes perceptibly Sufi motifs (see further on the *Kutadghu bilig*, below).[25] Yet perhaps because of the decline and disappearance of the Karakhanids in face of the Mongol cataclysm, the lasting influence of the *Kutadghu bilig* within Central Asia and the steppes was small, compared to the enduring success which the Persian 'Mirrors' enjoyed, although copies of it apparently circulated up to Timurid times. It would in fact be long before incoming steppe peoples like the Mongols and fresh waves of Turks from Inner Asia threw off their ancestral, tribal and patrimonial conceptions of rule over mobile, nomadic peoples in favour of the Perso-Islamic idea of the sole despotic ruler over a territorial state, only fully developed in the later Khanates of Bukhara, Khiva and Kokand.

Part Two

ARABIC, PERSIAN AND TURKISH HISTORIOGRAPHY IN THE EASTERN IRANIAN WORLD

(*C. E. Bosworth*)

The pre-Mongol period

Islamic historical writing in the first two centuries of our period (at this time, entirely in the Arabic language) is dominated by the figure of Abū Jaᶜfar Muhammad al-Tabarī (d. 923), whose *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk* [History of Prophets and Kings] deals with universal history, as it was known to the Muslims, and carries the history of the Islamic caliphate up to 915. Although al-Tabarī's *nisba* (gentilic name) indicates a family origin from the Caspian province of Tabaristan (the later Mazandaran), he had settled in Baghdad and had composed his history there. Hence although his sources included the ancient Persian and Sasanian royal annals, the *Khwadāy-nāmag* [Book of Lords] (used in an Arabic version

[25] Yūsuf Khāss Hājib, 1983, Introduction.

made from the Pahlavi original in late Umayyad times), he expressed essentially the viewpoint of someone writing in the heartland of the caliphate, Iraq.

The early Islamic conquests in Khurasan and Central Asia are described, often in considerable detail, and draw upon, among other things, the tribal traditions of the Arab warriors involved. An episode like the revolt of the Qarinid ruler Māzyār in the Caspian lands of the mid-ninth century is treated in great detail, yet the amount of information on the Iranian lines of governors and rulers who arose out of the weakening of caliphal authority, such as the Tahirids, Samanids and Saffarids (see Volume IV, Part One, Chapters 1, 2 and 4), is only modest; it was events in the capitals Baghdad and Samarra in Iraq, and those in south-western Persia, like the Zanj revolt of the later ninth century, which really concerned him. Nor did al-Tabarī's numerous continuators, running through the Sābi' family of Harran and Baghdad up to the twelfth-century historian Muhammad al-Hamadhānī or Hamdānī, depart from this concentration on events at the centre of the ᶜAbbasid caliphate.[26] The Persian-language epitome of al-Tabarī's original Arabic history, made in 976 by the Samanid vizier Abū ᶜAlī Muhammad Balᶜamī, added a few amplifications from earlier Persian history but did not take the opportunity to add new subject-matter on the history of Khurasan and Central Asia during the previous 60 years.[27]

There does not seem to have been any tradition of historiography with a wider sweep in those eastern Islamic lands until the later tenth century and after; until that time, and for a good while to come, the western Iranian lands, ruled by the Buyids, were far more significant.[28] We only know of one historian of stature from the Samanid period, Abū ᶜAlī Husayn al-Sallāmī, who was possibly in the service of the local amirs of Chaghaniyan on the upper Oxus and who wrote for a wider stage than the local historians of the region (see below, for these). In *c*. 950 he wrote in Arabic his *Tārīkh Wulāt Khurāsān* [History of the Governors of Khurasan], lost soon after the Mongol invasions but extensively cited (and independently of each other) by the early Ghaznavid general historian Abū Saᶜīd ᶜAbd al-Hayy Gardīzī (wrote *c*. 1050, see below) and by the thirteenth-century Mesopotamian annalist ᶜIzz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr in his *Kitāb al-Kāmil fi'l-tawārīkh* [Perfect Book Concerning History]. We accordingly derive much of our knowledge of the Tahirids, the Samanids and the Saffarids from this last, who also drew on continuations of al-Sallāmī's work so that his chronicle, though compiled in distant Mosul, is a major source for the history of

[26] Margoliouth, 1930, pp. 110–12; Barthold, 1968, pp. 25–6; F. Rosenthal, 1968, pp. 71–2, 81–3, 134–5; 1989, General Introduction, pp. 10 et seq., 130–64; *EI*^{2}, 'al-Tabarī, Abū Djaᶜfar Muhammad b. Djarir' (C. E. Bosworth).

[27] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 61–5; Barthold, 1968, p. 10.

[28] Barthold, 1968, pp. 25–6.

such subsequent eastern dynasties as the Ghaznavids, the Seljuqs, the Khwarazm Shahs and the Ghurids (see on these Volume IV, Part One, Chapters 5, 7 and 8).[29]

The Samanid court of Bukhara emerged in the second part of the tenth century as a centre for the nascent New Persian literature: at first used for lyric and epic poetry, the language gradually evolved into a flexible medium for historical and scientific prose (see below, Chapters 13 and 14).[30] But, as E. G. Browne noted, Arabic still retained immense prestige as the language of scholarship *par excellence*.[31] It was in a florid, later to be much admired and imitated, Arabic prose style that Abū Nasr Muhammad al-ᶜUtbī wrote his special history of the Ghaznavid dynasty's founder Sebüktegin and Mahmūd, his *al-Ta'rīkh al-Yamīnī* (from Mahmūd's favoured honorific title, Yamīn al-Dawla, 'Right Hand of the State') shortly after 1020. And it was in Arabic that Abū Rayhān Muhammad al-Birūnī (973–1048) wrote his great work on chronology, calendars and history, *al-Āthār al-bāqiya* [The Remaining Traces (of Past Ages)], plus a history of his native province, Khwarazm, the *Kitāb al-Musāmarāt fī akhbār Khwārazm* [Book of Night Conversations Concerning the History of Khwarazm], though this is only known to us from the use made of it in the Persian work of Abu'l-Fadl Bayhaqī (see below).[32]

In fact, by the middle of the eleventh century, Arabic began to yield to Persian as the language for historical writing. For the early Ghaznavids, this process is seen in the work of Gardīzī alluded to above, the *Kitāb Zayn al-akhbār* [Ornament of Histories], and the highly detailed, almost day-to-day account of events at the court of Sultan Masᶜūd I and in the Ghaznavid empire at large, the *Tārīkh-i Masᶜūdī*, this being all that has survived of what must have been an immense work, the *Mujalladāt* [Volumes], covering Ghaznavid history up to 1059. It is especially valuable as marking a departure from the bald, impersonal annalistic recording of events by many historians, for it gives a revealing picture of the workings of the central and provincial administrations and the personalities involved that is almost unique in medieval Islam and led one nineteenth-century British scholar to compare Abu'l-Fadl Bayhaqī with the seventeenth-century English secretary to the navy and intimate diarist Samuel Pepys.[33]

Most of these works might be described as macro-history, ranging over the entire course of human history or covering whole dynasties or empires and extensive regions. But it is a so far unexplained fact of history that the eastern Iranian world, Khurasan, Sistan and Transoxania, also saw in these times the development of a rich genre of local history

[29] Barthold, 1968, pp. 2–3, 10–11, 21; Bosworth, 1994, pp. 19–21; *EI*^{2}, 'al-Sallāmī' (C. E. Bosworth).
[30] Barthold, 1968, pp. 9–16.
[31] Browne, 1908, pp. 365–6.
[32] Bosworth, 1963, pp. 5–7, 14–15.
[33] Ibid., pp. 8–14; Barthold, 1968, pp. 12–13, 20–4.

writing, originally mainly in Arabic but increasingly in Persian. The cities, towns and districts involved in this process actually extended westwards and southwards through Persia proper to Qum, Isfahan, Shiraz, Yazd and Kirman, with a particularly rich concentration on the petty dynasties and principalities of the Caspian coastlands and the Elburz mountains interior, but Khurasan and Transoxania are especially well represented here. The genre seems to have had its origin in the recording of events of theological rather than of secular significance: the settlement in a town or district of *sayyids* (descendants of the Prophet Muhammad's family), believed to retain a unique charisma from their illustrious ancestry; and the recording of the biographies, scholarly achievements and miracles of lines of notable *ᶜulamā'* and *faqīhs*, and, at a later stage, of Sufi *shaykhs*.[34]

The surviving histories of Nishapur are very much of this biographical nature, beginning with the voluminous work of Abū ᶜAbdallāh Muhammad al-Hākim Ibn al-Bayyiᶜ (d. 1014), which attracted several continuators and epitomizers. The hard historical information which can be extracted from these works on the scholars of Nishapur is disappointingly meagre.[35] However, this is far from the case with the *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā* [History of Bukhara], written originally in Arabic for the Samanid amir Nūh I b. Nasr II in 944 by a local author, Abū Bakr Muhammad Narshakhī. It not only describes the coming of Islam to the city and its subsequent political and dynastic history but also dwells on Bukhara's geographic and topographic features plus its special products, reflecting what becomes a constant feature of these local histories: an exposition of the *manāqib* and *fadā'il* (merits and excellences) of the author's town or region and its *khasā'is* and *manāfiᶜ* (special products and beneficial features).

Narshakhī's work clearly reflected a growing sense of local pride and patriotism, for it was continued by various hands up to the Mongol invasions, being known to us at the present time in a Persian version;[36] from a fact like this, observable also in regard to the extant Persian versions of local histories originally written in Arabic for the western Persian towns of Qum and Isfahan, it would appear that, as time went on, literacy in Arabic decreased and there arose a popular demand for Persian versions (in the case of Isfahan, both Arabic and Persian versions survive). At nearby Samarkand, one Abū Saᶜīd ᶜAbd al-Rahmān al-Idrīsī (d. 1015) wrote in Arabic a local history of this great Transoxanian city,

[34] For the genre of local histories in general, and the Iranian world in particular, see F. Rosenthal, 1968, pp. 150 et seq., 160–2; Bosworth, 1992, pp. 394–5. The local histories of the Iranian world and of Central Asia will be the subject of a multi-authored volume edited by Jürgen Paul, to appear in a special issue of *Iranian Studies* in the year 2000.

[35] Frye, 1950–55, pp. 405–20; Lambton, 1962, pp. 143–5; Barthold, 1968, pp. 16–17;BuIliet, 1972, pp. xi–xii.

[36] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 369–71, 1300; Frye, 1954; Barthold, 1968, pp. 13–15.

continued up to the twelfth century by the well-known theologian Abū Hafs ᶜUmar Nasafī and known as the *Kitāb al-Qand fī tā'rīkh Samarqand* [Book of the Sugar-loaf Concerning the History of Samarkand] or simply as the *Qandiyya*, now only known to us in a Persian abridgement. As in the case of Bukhara, there is information on the pre-Islamic period, the Arab conquest and the buildings and irrigation system of the city, although the greater part of the extant book concentrates on the *ᶜulamā'* and holy men of Samarkand.[37]

Further south, the region of Sistan, straddling the border of modern Iran and Afghanistan, is known to us in remarkable detail from the survival of two extensive and often highly detailed local histories in Persian. The first, simply called the *Tārīkh-i Sīstān*, is by an unknown author who wrote *c*. 1062 and dealt with the epic, legendary history of the province and then its Islamic one; one, or possibly two, equally unknown continuator(s) brought the story, much more perfunctorily, up to 1326, when Sistan was being ruled by local Maliks in the shadow of more powerful neighbours like the Kart princes of Herat and the Mongol Il Khanid sultans. For the later history of these Maliks, up to the Safavid annexation of Sistan in the mid-sixteenth century, we have a second local history, the *Ihyā'al-mulūk* [Revivification of the Kings] by Malik Shāh Husayn, himself a member of the ruling stratum.[38]

For Khurasan proper, the small town of Bayhaq (modern Sabzavar) to the west of Nishapur was the subject of a Persian history written in the mid-twelfth century, apparently on the basis of a more elaborate history, now lost, by Zayd b. ᶜAlī Bayhaqī, called Ibn Funduq (d. 1170), the *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq*. Although aimed primarily at recording the early history of the *sayyid* families of the town and their achievements, there are a fair number of references to contemporary events affecting the town in that period of a power struggle for control of Khurasan between the Ghurids and the Khwarazm Shahs (see Volume IV, Part One, Chapters 7 and 8).[39] Nothing seems to have survived concerning Merv, despite the fact that this great city was the seat of the early Arab governors of Khurasan and of the Seljuq Sultan Sanjar. But the two great cities of eastern Khurasan, Balkh and Herat, had their historians. The *Fadā'il Balkh* [Excellences of Balkh] of Safī al-Dīn Abū Bakr Balkhī, known only in a Persian version, is confined to biographies of the city's *ᶜulamā'*, but the *Tārīkh-i Harāt* of Sayfī Harawī (wrote in the early fourteenth century) deals with the local dynasty of the Kart Maliks, to whom the author dedicated his work, while the *Rawdāt al-jannāt* [Gardens of Paradise (Concerning the Characteristics of the City of Herat)] of Muᶜīn al-Dīn Zamchī Isfizārī (completed in 1494) is a valuable compendium of information both on Timurid

[37] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 371, 1300; Barthold, 1968, pp. 15–16.
[38] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 364–5; Bosworth, 1994, pp. 23–9; *idem*, in Paul (ed.), forthcoming (see above, note 34).
[39] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 353–5, 1295–6; Barthold, 1968, p. 31 and no. 8; Bosworth, 1973, p. 15.

history (Herat being at that time the capital of Sultān Husayn Bayqara, see Volume IV, Part One, Chapter 17) and on the buildings, gardens, amenities and other features of the city's topography.[40]

By the time of Sanjar (1097–57), the empire of the Seljuqs included Khurasan, together with suzerainty exercised far beyond the Amu Darya (Oxus) over the Khwarazm Shahs of Anūshtegin's line and the Karakhanids. Yet little of the limited amount of historical writing produced in these regions from the mid-eleventh century to the Mongol invasions has survived, apart from the anonymous (by an official in the caliphal administration in Baghdad, in the surmise of Angelika Hartmann) Arabic *Akhbār al-dawla al-Saljūqiyya* [Historical Reports of the Seljuq dynasty] (written at the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century), which contains material by Sadr al-Dīn al-Husaynī, an official in the service of the Khwarazm Shahs; this work is especially valuable for the last Seljuqs and their struggles with various Turkish Atabeg lines and the Khwarazm Shahs, who were ultimately victorious in northern Persia.

The Persian history of the Seljuqs, the *Saljūq-nāma*, written by Zahīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī (d. *c*. 1184), who was a tutor to some of the last Seljuq sultans, was used by Rāwandī and several other later authors for their accounts of eastern Seljuq history. What seems to have been an important work by Ibn Funduq (see above) – his continuation of the Buyid historian Miskawayh's history, which the Bayhaqī author called the *Mashārib al-tajārib* [Watering-places of the Experiences (of the Nations)], *The Experiences of the Nations* being the title of Miskawayh's history – has not survived as an independent work but is known from citations. An extensive treatise on the history of Khwarazm by Abū Muhammad Mahmūd Khwārazmī (d. 1173) has shared the same fate. Otherwise, for the history of the Seljuqs, we largely depend on Arabic works like Fat'h b. ᶜAlī al-Bundārī's *Zubdat al-nusra* [Cream of the Book called 'Help'] written in Ayyubid Syria in 1226, or on Persian ones like Abū Bakr Muhammad Rāwandī's *Rāhat al-sudūr* [Consolation of the Hearts] written at the opening of the thirteenth century in Seljuq Anatolia.[41]

Concerning the history of the other eastern Islamic dynasties of this period, it is that of the Ghurids which is best known to us, thanks to the *Tabaqāt-i Nāsirī* [Nasirean Classes (of Rulers)] (thus called from the honorific of the author's patron, the Turkish Malik of Uchch in north-western India, Nāsir al-Dīn Qabācha), written *c*. 1259–60 by Minhāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī, theologian and diplomat in the service of the Slave Kings of Delhi and their provincial rulers. In form, this is a universal history but in fact, a special history of the

[40] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 354–6, 1296–7; Barthold, 1968, p. 57; Safa, 1986, p. 925.
[41] Cahen, 1962, pp. 59–78; Barthold, 1968, pp. 27–30.

Ghurid dynasty and their successors in India and their confrontations with the Mongol invaders.[42]

The Mongol period

The career of Jūzjānī does indeed straddle the decades when the Mongols erupted from Inner Asia into the eastern Islamic world (see Volume IV, Part One, Chapter 12). Jūzjānī recorded this cataclysm from the standpoint of a horrified observer of the humbling of the Islamic powers in Central Asia and Khurasan by savage infidel hordes, the scourges of God, and he always accompanied mention of the name of Chinggis Khan with the epithet *mal*^{c}*ūn* ('the accursed one'). This was likewise the inevitable standpoint of another contemporary observer of the Mongol incursions, Muhammad al-Nasawī (d. 1249), who was in the service of the last, fugitive Khwarazm Shah Jalāl al-Dīn Mingburnu when he wrote – somewhat unusually for this late date, in Arabic, although a Persian version of the book was speedily produced – his *Sīrat* [Conduct of] *Sultān Jalāl al-Dīn Mingburnu*.[43] However, the attitude of a third contemporary, Khurasanian chronicler of the Mongol invasions, ^{c}Atā'Malik Juwaynī (d. 1283), had to be much more nuanced in his writings, whatever his private feelings may have been, since he wrote his *Tārīkh-i Jahān-gushāy* [History of the World Conqueror] as a secretary and high *dīwān* (government department) official of the Mongol rulers themselves.

Together with *The Secret History of the Mongols* (see Volume IV, Part One, Chapter 12 and Chapter 15), a source on which Juwaynī himself drew,[44] Juwaynī's work is our chief authority for the tribal origins of the Mongol people and the rise in Mongolia of Chinggis Khan. He was the only Islamic writer personally to travel to and stay at the *ordu* (encampment) of the Mongol Great Khan at Karakorum (where he began to compose his history) during 1252–3. Hence it is to his work and to the travel narratives of the Franciscan friars William of Rubruck and John of Piano Carpini that we owe virtually all that is known about the Mongol capital.[45] The conflicting allegiances to his Mongol masters and to his Islamic faith and the preservation of the threatened Islamic civilization, Juwayni could only resolve by interpreting, at least ostensibly, the savagery of the Mongols as a divine retribution for the degenerate state of Islam in his time. He also attempted to find somewhat lame justifications for the Mongols as extirpators of the heretical Isma^{c}ilis and as facilitating,

[42] Bosworth, 1963, pp. 16–17; Barthold, 1968, pp. 38–9.
[43] Barthold, 1968, pp. 38–9; Morgan, 1982, pp. 110–13; 1986, pp. 16–17; *EI*^{2}, 'al-Nasawī, Shihāb al-Dīn Muhammad' (P. Jackson).
[44] See Boyle, 1962, p. 136.
[45] See for these Western travellers to the Mongol court, Morgan, 1986, pp. 24–6.

through the immense extent of their empire, the spread of Islam to such distant regions as China.[46]

The upheavals felt right across Eurasia during the thirteenth century were also the background of what may be justly regarded as a product of Muslim historiography worthy of being linked with al-Tabarī's *History* and that of Ibn al-Athīr. The vizier to the Mongol Il Khanids Ghazan and Öljeytü, a convert from Judaism, Rashīd al-Dīn Fadlallāh, called Tabīb (The Physician), wrote at Ghazan's instigation his *Jāmi*^{c} *al-tawārīkh* [Compendium of Histories], two generations or so after Juwaynī at a time when the Mongol domination of Inner Asia and much of the Middle East was an accomplished fact. Apparently the Khan feared that the early lore and achievements of the Mongol people might go unrecorded and thus be forgotten; hence the first part of Rashīd al-Dīn's work is what might be termed an official history of the Mongols and their conquests, in part based on Juwaynī but important as also drawing indirectly (since Rashīd al-Dīn was not allowed to see this sacred work) on the so-called *Altan debter* [Golden Book], the official chronicle of the Mongols (which itself survives only in a Chinese version).[47] Also of interest for the cultural and intellectual history of Islam are the sections on the nations with whom the Mongols came into contact, such as the Chinese, the Indians and the Franks. Of course, these sections are not primary sources for the histories of medieval China, India or western Europe, but they do indicate that there was some contemporary Islamic knowledge of what were to the Muslims the lands of the infidels, and the title which has been accorded to Rashīd al-Dīn of being the first world historian is therefore not unjustified.[48]

The third great historian of the Il Khanid period, ^{c}Abdallāh Shīrāzī, called Wassāf (*fl.* in the first half of the fourteenth century), like Rashid al-Dīn served Ghazan and Öljeytü and then the latter's son Abū Sa^{c}īd. He aimed in his *Tārīkh* at continuing Juwaynī's chronicle of the Mongols and their empire, and employed an even more tedious and bombastic Persian style than Juwaynī, one which entranced his contemporaries and was imitated by later Persian historians but which has tended to obscure the great value of his historical information. This last represents a quite independent tradition from that of Rashīd al-Dīn, and although Wassāf wrote in western Persia, probably in Fars where he was employed in the provincial administration, he has independent data on the rule of the Mongols in China,

[46] Storey, 1927–53,pp. 260–4, 1272; Juwaynī, 1958, Vol. 1, Introduction; Barthold, 1968, pp. 39–41; Morgan, 1982, pp. 113–18; 1986, p. 18.
[47] See Boyle, 1962, pp. 134, 137; Morgan, 1986, pp. 11–12.
[48] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 71–8, 1230–2; Barthold, 1968, pp. 44–7; Boyle, 1971, Introduction; Morgan, 1982, pp. 119–21; 1986, pp. 21–2.

on the Chaghatayids in Turkistan and on the Central Asian state of Qaydu, the Great Khan Qubilay's rival for power there.[49]

Further work by two protégés of Rashīd al-Dīn who worked as officials for the Il Khanids may be noted here: the *Tārīkh-i Uljāytū Sultān* of Abu'l-Qāsim Kāshānī, valuable for the specific reign of that Khan; and the general history, the *Tārīkh-i Guzīda* [Select History], of Hamdallāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, which ends with a short section on the Mongols, useful to some extent because Mustawfi wrote in 1330, the later Il Khanid period, for which we have few sources.[50]

The Timurid period

The succeeding Timurid period brought forth a crop of important histories connected with the ruling dynasty and its dominion over Khurasan and Transoxania, and, above all, describing and lauding the exploits of Timur. Although Timur's wars brought much destruction to the Middle East, he was, unlike the earlier Mongols, a Muslim and, like many conquerors who attempted to salve their consciences for their violence, cultivated the *ᶜulamā'* and Sufi *shaykhs*. Some of Timur's official historians contented themselves with giving a straightforward account of his conquests without implying any moral judgement. This was the case with Nizām al-Dīn Shāmī (from Shanb, a quarter of Tabriz, and not from Shām, 'Syria') (d. by 1411). When he was in Timur's entourage, the amir in 1401 commissioned a history of his conquests, to be written from official records and in a straightforward Persian style which all would be able to understand; this is Shāmī's *Zafarnāma* [Book of Conquests]. The identical title was used some 20 years later for a history of Timur and his successors by the courtier of Shāh Rukh, Sharaf al-Dīn ᶜAlī Yazdī, who completed his work in 1425 but in a much more florid style than Shāmī's. Yazdī's work was much admired by contemporary literati but is less easy for modern historians to use.[51]

The historical works of Hāfiz-i Abrū fall within the genre of universal history, since this courtier of Timur and Shāh Rukh was instructed by the latter to put together a large-scale chronicle which would subsume earlier works from Balᶜamī's Tabarī translation onwards up to Rashīd al-Dīn's history of the Mongols and then up to the year 1416 in Shāh Rukh's reign. As well as this *Majmūᶜa* [Compilation], he wrote a further universal chronicle, the *Majmaᶜ al-tawārīkh* [Bringing-together of Histories], whose fourth and last book was a

[49] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 267–70, 1272–3; Barthold, 1968, pp. 41, 48–9; Morgan, 1986, pp. 21–2.
[50] Barthold, 1968, pp. 47, 49–50; Morgan, 1986, pp. 22–3.
[51] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 278–9, 283–7, 1273–4; Barthold, 1935, p. 209, French tr., 1945, p. 165; 1968, pp. 53–1; Safa, 1986, pp. 921–2; *EI*^{2}, 'Shāmī, Nizām al-Dīn' (P. Jackson); 'Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī' (C. E. Bosworth).

special history of Timur and the reign of Shāh Rukh up to 1427, called separately the *Zubdat al-tawāriīkh* [Cream of Histories]. The works of Hāfiz-i Abrū, as analysed by F. Tauer, display particularly well the methodology of these later Persian historians in producing a pastiche of earlier chronicles, although his *Zubda* is an original source, and the best one extant, for the first 22 years of Shāh Rukh's reign (i.e. 1405–27).[52] Likewise a general history, in this case going up to 1441, is the *Mujmal-i Fasīhī* [Fasīh's Compendium] of Fasīh Khwāfī, i.e. from Khwaf in Kuhistan; it is significant only when it deals with contemporary events which the author, as a treasury official for Shāh Rukh and his son Baysunqur, was well placed to observe, and when the author is concerned with the *ᶜulamā'* and *shaykhs* of Khurasan and Transoxania.[53]

For the history of the later Timurids, especially important is a third 'official history', the *Matlaᶜ al-saᶜdayn* [Rising-place of the Two Auspicious Stars], written by ᶜAbd al-Razzāq Samarqandī (d. 1482), who was in the service of Shāh Rukh and then of his great-nephew Abū Saᶜīd b. Muhammad b. Mirān Shāh as a courtier, diplomatic envoy and so on. The *Matlaᶜ al-saᶜdayn* depends heavily on Hāfiz-i Abrū's *Zubda* for events from the reign of the last Il Khanid Abū Saᶜīd b. Öljeytü up to 1427, but thereafter becomes a prime source for the period up to 1470, the year of its completion, its simple style facilitating its wide usage.[54]

The sole corrective which we possess today for the approach and attitude to events of these Timurid court historians lies in the *ᶜAjā'ib al-maqdūr fī nawā'ib Tīmūr* [The Wonders of What has been Divinely Ordained in Regard to the Disasters Brought About by Timur] of the Syrian historian Ibn ᶜArabshāh (d. 1450), whose family had been carried off from Damascus by Timur to his capital Samarkand in 1400. He ranged through the Inner Asian lands of the Chaghatayids and the Golden Horde, and was in the service of the Ottomans for a while. His history, written in the Arab lands hence in Arabic, depicts Timur as a bloodthirsty tyrant, although it allows the impressiveness of his conquests.[55]

From the closing decades of our period, the end of the fifteenth century, came a general history in six books, the *Rawdat al-safā'* [Garden of Purity] of Muhammad Mīrkhwānd (d. 1498), of Bukharan *sayyid* origin and protégé of the great late Timurid vizier Mīr ᶜAlīshīr Nawā'ī. This was to enjoy exceptional fame in the Irano-Turkish worlds and achieved many Turkic translations, including into Ottoman and Chaghatay. It became known in the nineteenth century to Western orientalist scholarship on account of the straightforwardness of

[52] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 86–9, 1234–5; Barthold, 1935, p. 210, French tr., 1945, p. 166; 1968, pp. 55–6; Safa, 1986, p. 922.
[53] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 90–1, 1236; Barthold, 1968, p. 55; Safa, 1986, p. 922.
[54] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 293–8, 1276–7; Barthold, 1968, p. 56; Safa, 1986, p. 924.
[55] *EI*^{2}, 'Ibn 'Arabshāh' (J. Pedersen).

its Persian style and the accessibility of many manuscript copies, so that sections of it were early edited and/or translated into Latin or the modern European languages. Mirkhwānd's history is not entirely derivative, but, as with many such compilations, scraps of earlier, now lost sources can be found within it; thus it gives excerpts from the anonymous *Malik-nāma* [Book of Kings] on the origins of the Seljuq family in the Oghuz steppe before they came into the Islamic lands and on their subsequent overrunning of Khurasan, and quotes from a fourteenth-century history of the Sarbadars of Sabzavar (see Volume IV, Part One, Chapter 16).[56] Finally, although this takes us slightly beyond our period, one should note the continuation of Mīrkhwānd's work by his grandson Ghiyāth al-Dīn Khwāndamīr (d. *c.* 1535), who also enjoyed the patronage of Nawā'ī, of the Timurid prince Badīᶜ al-Zamān, and of Bābur and Humāyūn in India. He added a seventh book to the *Rawdat al-safā'* on the reign of Sultān Husayn Bayqara and his sons, and wrote two general histories of his own. One of these, the *Habīb al-siyar*, roughly translatable as 'The Cherished Form of Conduct', carried events up to Shah Ismāᶜīl I Safawī and is valuable for its contemporary information on the final disintegration of Timurid power and the early career in Transoxania of Babur, who introduced Mughal power into India.[57]

Part Three

ARABIC, PERSIAN AND TURKISH HISTORIOGRAPHY IN CENTRAL ASIA

(*R. N. Frye*)

Islam brought a strong sense of the need to record history to the peoples of Central Asia. Before the coming of Islam, Central Asia, like India, was little concerned with the chronological recording of events and we possess no histories or fragments thereof, or even reports of their existence, on the vast region of Central Asia. On the other hand, according to the Islamic view of history, what occurred before Muhammad's message was

[56] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 92–101, 1236–7; Safa, 1986, p. 925; *EI*^{2}, 'Mīrkhʷānd' (A. Beveridge and B. F. Manz).

[57] Storey, 1927–53, pp. 101–9, 1237–8; Safa, 1986, pp. 925–6; *EI*^{2}, 'Khʷāndamīr' (A. Beveridge and J. T. P. de Bruijn).

an age of ignorance and not worth recording. The general point of view in the histories written in Arabic was that Arabia's pre-Islamic past was of interest only to a few tribesmen who wanted to know something about the exploits of their tribe in the past, and there was no kind of nationalism to provoke inquiry into the past glories of ancient dynasties. In Iran and Central Asia, on the other hand, there was great interest in the civilization of the Sasanians and even regarding minor dynasties in Central Asia. Some of this interest was no doubt inspired by a desire to outshine Arabs whose mam claim to privilege in the caliphate was to claim descent from, or relation to, the family of the Prophet. Pride in descent from the Sasanian royal family, or from one of the great noble families of the past, probably inspired interest in recording the glories of pre-Islamic times. A Middle Persian *Khwadāy-nāmag* [Book of Lords] of ancient Iran was translated into Arabic in the eighth century by a Persian Zoroastrian convert to Islam, Ibn al-Muqaffa^{c}. Thus, at the beginning of the Umayyad caliphate we have two sources for pre-Islamic history, one tales of the Arab tribes and the other the legacy of Sasanian Iran in the form of stories as well as the dynastic history of the Sasanians. But historical writing in Arabic, on the whole, seems to have ignored both in favour of the history of the rise of Islam.[58]

In Central Asia, however, there were a few inquiring minds, such as the Khwarazmian al-Birūnī, who were fascinated by the pre-Islamic past of their land, as well as by the genealogies of Arab tribes, or of learned men in the Islamic religion. For at first most Muslim historians were concerned with the transmitters of traditions concerning the Prophet, and later this was extended to his followers in succeeding generations. This may be described as a continuation of the Old Testament genealogical histories with incidental information added to the lists of generations. From the outset, then, the early historians of Islam had biographical information as their main content. This applied to all historians, including those of Iranian or Central Asian background, but by the fourth century changes came about.

historiography took several main directions, after early concern with the origins of Islam, which had a purpose of glorifying Islam and showing how it was superior to other religions. In Central Asia, as in Iran, writers of history either became interested in composing general histories or local city histories. Frequently the former were really only histories of the Islamic oecumene, but they seem to have had more of a goal of enlightenment than simply recording the virtues of one's home town and short biographies of the illustrious men who had lived there. Many city histories became large indexes – the equivalent of the modern telephone directory – with long lists of names and very little information about the persons in the books. Such works as the *Kitāb-i Mullāzāda* on the history of Bukhara

[58] Nöldeke, 1920, pp. 14–18; Richter, 1932, pp. 4–32.

and the *Kitāb al-Qand* for Samarkand were among the pre-Mongol histories of cities in the east.

For the first three centuries of Islamic rule in Central Asia everything is written in Arabic, and only in the fourth/tenth century, at the time of the Samanid dynasty with its capital at Bukhara, do writings in Persian appear.[59] The universal histories, such as the massive work of al-Tabarī in Arabic, generally followed a chronological scheme of reporting what happened year by year, and in the case of al-Tabarī, several versions of one event. This style was copied and modified by other authors such as Ibn al Athīr, and only later, after the Mongol conquest of the Near East, do universal histories follow the pattern of reporting events by dynasties. The much-abridged Persian translation of the history of al-Tabarī, commissioned by Bal^{c}amī, vizier of the Samanid ruler Mansūr b. Nūh, however, presages the future style of writing by abandoning the tedious repetitions of the Arabic original. In the east such histories, for the most part, were written in Persian, since even those who knew Arabic preferred to read histories in the common literary language of Iran and Central Asia, understood by the local population.

Since poetry was the largest part of Persian literature, even historical works in poetry were produced after the Mongol invasions. Also, since historical works were commissioned by rulers or wealthy patrons, many historical works tend to glorify that patron or his dynasty. Gardīzī's *Zayn al-akhbār* [The Adornment of History] is a universal history in the pattern of dynasties, but the Ghaznavids, to one of whom the work is dedicated, naturally receive some praise in the book.

The city histories, such as the history of Qum in Persia or Bukhara in Transoxania, were originally written in Arabic, but in most cases, only later Persian translations have survived. The *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā* by Narshakhī, written in the tenth century but translated and abridged in the twelfth century, is remarkable in having considerable material devoted to pre-Islamic times, usually ignored in other works. Narshakhī's history shows another feature of many of the Persian-language histories, i.e. extensive copying or paraphrasing of earlier works. Usually the author mentions which older books he has used in his composition, but sometimes plagiarism is rampant. Other city histories, however, are concerned only with shrines in the city and biographies of learned men, poets and/or saints; this is especially the case with the histories of Nishapur. As such, they are really biographical works rather than histories (see further on the genre, above).

After the Mongol conquest of Iran, universal histories in a new style are found, possibly influenced by Chinese dynastic histories, but containing more information about peoples and tribes than the older universal histories. The most famous of these new histories was

[59] Frye, 1962, pp. 252–5.

the *Jāmiᶜ al-tawārīkh* [Compendium of Histories] of Rashīd al-Dīn, in which much information about Turkish and Mongol tribes and about China and India is found for the first time (see above). This pattern continued in a proliferation of universal histories under the Timurid dynasty in Central Asia. The campaigns of Timur are described in a number of works. Timur had scribes record daily events, and these notebooks provided material for the many historians at the Timurid court in Samarkand. As a result, the history of the Timurid period is the best known in the period under discussion.

The influence of Firdawsī's *Shāh-nāma* [Book of Kings], an epic rather than a history of pre-Islamic Iran, provided another model for poet-historians of the Timurid period and later. We have a *Timūr-nāma* and a *Shāhrukh-nāma*, both in poetry, wherein the new rulers are compared to the epic heroes of the past. The historical works in poetry are characterized by their extensive use of poetic licence and they set a style for many future writers of history.

It is clear that history became ever more important as a vehicle for justifying the rise to power of a new dynasty or simply to flatter a patron. The proliferation of such histories after the Timurid period is a feature of the history of Central Asia, India and Iran. All histories are now in Persian. In the east, histories were not written in Arabic after the tenth century, although Rashīd al-Dīn's work was translated into Arabic. Arabic was reserved for religious or philosophical tracts and scientific works of medicine, mathematics and astronomy.

Authors of historical works were frequently literary men who also wrote poetry or other works, sometimes in Arabic if in a scholarly vein. There is another genre of literature, however, which is allied to history and does frequently contain stories about the past with historical materials in them. In Persian these works generally have been called *andarz* (advice) literature since they are books of counsel for rulers (see on the genre in general, above). Other books contain stories in a similar vein with historical anecdotes and information about rulers and also common folk. Such a work is the *Chahār maqāla* [The Four Discourses] of Nizāmī ᶜArūdī Samarqandī (written in the middle of the twelfth century), which does not mention rulers, but secretaries, astrologers, poets and others instead. Another such book, written in the following century, was the *Jawāmiᶜ al-hikāyāt* [Collection of Tales] by Muhammad ᶜAwfī. Thus the historical literature of this period was copious and manifold.

We may say that histories were written in Arabic until the tenth century, but from the eleventh century onwards, Persian usurps the place of Arabic in Iran and Central Asia. What of Turkish? It is interesting that in the tenth to the twelfth century not only were attempts made to write Persian in Arabic letters, but the same was done in the Khwarazmian

and Mazandarani languages, examples of which have survived. The initiative for this came from a desire of Islamic missionaries to spread the faith among the common folk of the east, especially to villagers, and to pastoralists who had been little touched by Islam until this period. The surviving specimens of the two aforementioned languages are interlinear translations from Arabic of religious texts, law books or works of theology. One would expect the ever growing number of Turks converted to Islam in Central Asia and the Near East to have at least attempted to write their language in the Arabic alphabet. In East Turkistan, the Uighur Turks had adopted the Sogdian alphabet to write their language and we have an extensive literature in the Uighur language. In the world of Islam, however, only the Karakhanids or Ilek Khans, who probably stemmed from the Karluk tribe (see Volume IV, Part One, Chapter 6) and who assumed rule after the fall of the Samanids, produced a Turkish literature which was an Islamic one. But the Karakhanids also patronized Arabic and Persian literature, and few of the earliest Islamic Turkish language writings have survived. The most important is the *Qutadgu bilig* [Wisdom of Royal Glory] of Yūsuf Khāss Hājib from Balasaghun in modern Kazakhstan. Yet this book is in poetry, is completely within the Perso-Islamic tradition and has no historical events but is rather a theoretical *andarz* work, a 'Mirror for Princes'. It is only after the period under discussion that Turkish historiography flourishes, but then it is completely in the Perso-Islamic tradition.

Part Four

HISTORIOGRAPHY AMONG THE MONGOLS

(*Sh. Bira*)

The earliest known, surviving monument of Mongolian historiography is the so-called *Mongol-un Niguca Tob-ciyan* [The Secret History of the Mongols].[60] It is widely believed to have been written in 1228 or in 1240, although the exact date of its composition and its authorship are still a matter of debate. The problem of its authorship is most likely insoluble, because the book may not have been written by any single author but by several. Probably the oral tradition pertaining to the genealogy and heroic exploits of Chinggis

[60] *The Secret History of the Mongols* has been translated into many languages. The English translation we have used is that by Cleaves, 1982.

Khan and his ancestors was first written down at the Khan's court after his death, through the collective efforts of transmitters of history and traditions under the supervision of one of the literati (in Mongolian, *bitiqci*). It was finally approved at the great *kurultay* (assembly) of the Mongol nobles as a family history of the 'Golden Clan' of Chinggisids.

Ancient history in Mongolia developed through the double inspiration of poetry and folklore. The first written Mongol masterpiece was a heroic epic as well as a history. *The Secret History of the Mongols* represents the richest treasure-house of Mongolian folklore. The book is divided into three parts: a genealogy of the ancestors of Chinggis Khan; stories about his life; and a short section on his son and successor, Ögedey Khan. The first part records mainly the legendary history of Mongolia as reconstructed from ancient oral traditions – myths and legends, and stories about historical events in the life of Mongol nomads. The legend begins with the story of the birth of the forefather of the Mongols, 'a bluish wolf which was born having [his] destiny from Heaven Above', and 'His spouse was a fallow doe'.[61] It is obvious that here we have the traces of totemism.

The legend of Alan-goa, also to be found in *The Secret History*, reflects the next step in the development of the mythological notion by the Mongols pertaining to their ancestry. According to this legend, Chinggis Khan's clan derived its origin from a man whose name was Bodoncar but who was born to his mother Alan-goa as the result of an immaculate conception by light.[62] Closer examination of the text reveals that this legend reflected the perceptible influence of the Zoroastrian-Manichaean cult of light. The Mongols, at the time of historical writing, preferred to glorify the origin of their Khans from the viewpoint of a more advanced ideology, i.e. this cult.[63]

The main theme is developed in the second part of the book, in which legend and myth give way to more reliable historical data taken, most probably, from written sources. It assumes the characteristics of a chronicle. From paragraph 141, *The Secret History* presents a historical chronology according to the 12-year animal cycle. Its chronology covers the events from 1201 (The Year of the Hen) until 1240 (The Year of the Rat), although it does not keep strictly to a year-by-year succession and becomes confusing as regards the accuracy of some events. (See further on *The Secret History* as a literary document, below, Chapter 15)

One of the distinctive features of early Mongolian history was its idea of sacral rulership. The heaven-sanctioned Khanship conception of the Mongols was developed, and according to this conception, Chinggis Khan was eternally protected by 'Everlasting

[61] Cleaves, 1982, p. 1, para. 1.
[62] Ibid., p. 4, para. 20.
[63] Bira, 1989, pp. 30–3.

Heaven' (Möngke Tengri).[64] The other idea running through the book is that of the unification of numerous tribes in Mongolia into a single state under the power of a strong Khan.

Most historical events in the main part of the book – the life of Chinggis Khan, his construction of the Mongol state, the administrative and military structure and many others – may be taken as trustworthy historical data. Moreover, *The Secret History* is a unique source for gaining an insight into the way of life, patterns of thought and beliefs of the ancient Mongols. In general, the book can be described as a historical chronicle, retold in epic style and 'impregnated with the aroma of the steppe'.[65]

During the period of the Mongol World Empire, with the subsequent adaptation of Mongol rulers to the realities of Chinese and Iranian culture, the historiographical activities of the Mongols shifted from Mongolia to outside that region, and it was there that Mongolian historiography entered into direct contact with the already developed traditions of historical writing – Buddhist, Chinese and Muslim. Because of Mongol domination, their historiography gained the leading position throughout the empire, and the family history of Chinggis Khan and his clan was regarded by historians as an official history. The legend of Alan-goa, the foremother of the 'Golden Clan' of Chinggisids, enjoyed extraordinary popularity throughout the empire, from Iran to Tibet.

The Mongol Khans appreciated the significance of history, patronized it and did their best to use it in their universal policy. Nevertheless, hardly any historical works have survived from those days in their original form. We know from Chinese and Tibetan sources, which used them extensively, of the existence of some important books, such as the *Altan debter* [Golden Book] and the *Tobčiyan* [Histories]. However, the only book in Mongolian that has reached our times, in the sixteenth-century edition of Qutugtu Sechen Qung Tayiji (1540–86), is what is briefly called the *Chaghan Teuke* [White History],[66] supposedly written during the reign of Qubilay Khan between 1260 and 1280.[67] This *White History* is notable because for the first time it expounds the Buddhist philosophy of history, which formed, in the long run, the ideological basis of Mongolian historiography as a whole. It is here that the traditional scheme of the three Buddhist monarchies (India, Tibet and Mongolia), with the introduction of a genesis of the universe, including the inanimate and animate worlds, is set forth under the impact of Buddhist teaching. In addition, the

[64] Cleaves, 1982, p. 115, para. 187.
[65] Vladimirtsov, 1934, p. 8.
[66] The full name is *Arban buyantu nom-un čagan teüke* [The White History of the Ten Virtues]. The manuscript is in the State Library of Mongolia in Ulan Bator.
[67] Bira, 1978, p. 92.

anonymous author elaborates another important concept of Mongol Buddhist historiography, that of the 'two orders', i.e. the Khan's power and Buddhist doctrine.[68]

Extensive historiographical work was carried on in Dai-du (Khanbalïk, Peking), the capital city of the Yüan empire. In 1264 Qubilay Khan instituted the Bureau of Dynastic History, which was responsible for the compilation of *shih-lu* [Veritable Records] of all deceased Khans under the supervision of the reigning Khan. It was these 'Veritable Records' that subsequently formed the basis of the famous *Yüan-shih* [History of the Yüan Dynasty]. It took nearly six months (from March to September 1369) for a board of 18 compilers to finish 159 *chuan* of this. It was possible to accomplish so much in so short a time because the compilers could rely principally on the histories from annals and biographies of 13 reigns from Chinggis Khan onwards.[69] The *Yüan-shih* represents a valuable source for the reconstruction of historical knowledge of the Mongols of that time, and is also a unique synthesis of the Chinese and Mongolian historiographical traditions that then ran so closely in China. From this source we discover that there was a series of historical compilations in Mongolian and that these are mentioned several times in the *Yüan-shih* under the general term *Tobčiyan*. Some Mongolian sources were preserved in the Chinese translation; one example is the *Sheng-wu ch'in-cheng lu* [An Account of the Victories of Our Imperial Expedition], which may be considered a typical example of the Chinese translation of a Mongol chronicle that has not survived in its original.

historiography enjoyed no less attention and patronage at the court of the Mongol Il Khans in Iran, where Mongol rulers had the privilege of availing themselves of the rich tradition of Muslim historiography. They encouraged historians of different nations to write history and made their archives and official chronicles available to them. There resulted the two most famous works of the period of Mongol rule in Iran: the *Tārīkh-i Jahān-gushāy* [History of the World Conqueror] by ᶜAtā Malik Juwaynī[70] and the *Jāmiᶜ al-tawārīkh* [Compendium of Histories] by Rashīd al-Dīn (see above). The authors of these works used original Mongolian sources extensively, so that they are of great significance for the reconstruction of historical knowledge of the Mongols in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Rashīd al-Dīn's work was written in 1300–11, by order of the Il Khans Ghazan and Öljeytü, and was the world's first real universal history. It was possible to produce it due to the efforts of a multinational team of historians working under the supervision of Rashīd al-Dīn, the organizer and compiler of the work, who had the unique opportunity of obtaining

[68] Ibid., p. 93.
[69] Hung, 1951, p. 472.
[70] Juwayni, 1958.

the assistance of scholars from different nations resident at the Il Khanid court. Accordingly, his book represents a collection of the histories of the respective countries rather than an original composition.[71] One should, however, stress that the history of the Mongols was the main theme of the book, thus relegating the history of the Islamic people to the background.

In writing the history of the Mongols, Rashīd al-Dīn enjoyed particularly propitious circumstances – he availed himself of the assistance and favour of influential Mongols like Pulad-chinksank (Mongolian, Bolod-chingsang), the greatest expert on Mongol history and the personal representative of the Great Khan Qubilay at the Il Khanid court, and the II Khan Ghazan, whose knowledge of history was only surpassed by that of Pulad. All materials pertaining to the Mongols, which Rashīd al-Dīn includes in detail in his book, must have been retold or specially prepared in written form for him by his Mongol colleagues, using Mongol sources, like the *Altan debter*, the official chronicle of the Golden Clan of the Chinggisids. This was 'always preserved in the treasury of the Khan in the hands of the oldest amirs',[72] but has been lost to us.

It is assumed that the first draft of the *Jāmi*^{c} *al-tawārīkh* was originally not written in Persian, but goes back to a Mongolian version, probably compiled by Pulad-chinksank and other Mongol genealogists; consequently, the monumental history became a multilingual compilation which was edited in Persian and Arabic and perhaps also in Mongolian and Eastern Turkic.[73] Thus, the thirteenth century saw the birth of written history in Mongolia, which was to develop further under the specific historical conditions of the Mongol World Empire.

[71] Bira, 1978, pp. 133–4.
[72] *Sbornik Letopisey*, 1952, p. 180.
[73] Togan, 1962, p. 64.