

## CHAPTER 2

# TĪMŪR IN IRAN

Tīmūr's advances from Transoxiana into the Near East radically transformed conditions in Iran. The resulting changes were not confined to political affairs or to the structure of the state but also affected to a considerable degree the ethnic composition of Persia, the economic and social situation in the country and its cultural development.

In the decades following the demise of the Īl-Khān Abū Sa'īd the state of Iran was fragmented and there was widespread evidence of the collapse of national power. In itself, this might well have aroused the expansionist appetites of neighbouring states much earlier, but with the exception of the Golden Horde they simply lacked the military strength to take advantage of the situation. The Ottoman empire, as yet in its early stages, was just one of countless Anatolian principalities and constituted even less of a threat to Iran than any of the Türkmen tribal groups, such as the Qarā Quyūnlū, that were still struggling to obtain a political status. Nor is there any record of military advances by Egypt into Iran. The vast distances and the almost insurmountable geographical barriers involved make it unlikely that even the Mamlūk sultans contemplated such invasion plans,<sup>1</sup> and certainly any hopes the Muzaffarid Shāh-i Shujā' may have entertained when he granted recognition to the token caliph al-Mutawakkil 'alā'llāh Abū 'Abd-Allāh Muḥammad of Cairo were to remain unfulfilled. The situation was quite different, however, as far as the Golden Horde was concerned. At the court of Sarāī a keen interest was shown in events in Persia, and the ruling khans of the period were greatly attracted by the idea of gaining influence there. Indeed, as we have seen, attacks had already been made on Khurāsān and Āzarbāijān in 758/1357, as a result of which Tabrīz remained occupied for several years. The successes of the khans Jānī Beg and Berdī Beg proved ephemeral in view of the fifteen-year period of civil strife in the Golden Horde that followed their deaths, but Iran was to play a significant part in the duel between Tīmūr and Tokhtamish

<sup>1</sup> For details of Egypto-Persian relations during this period, see Sulaimān 'Aṭīya Sulaimān, *al-'alāqāt al-siyāsīyya baina Miṣr wa gharb Āsiyā (min waḡāt Ilkhān Abī Sa'īd ilā dawlat Aqquyūnlū)*, unpubl. Master's thesis, Univ. of Cairo (Kulliyat al-ādāb), 1952.

## TĪMŪR'S EARLY CAREER

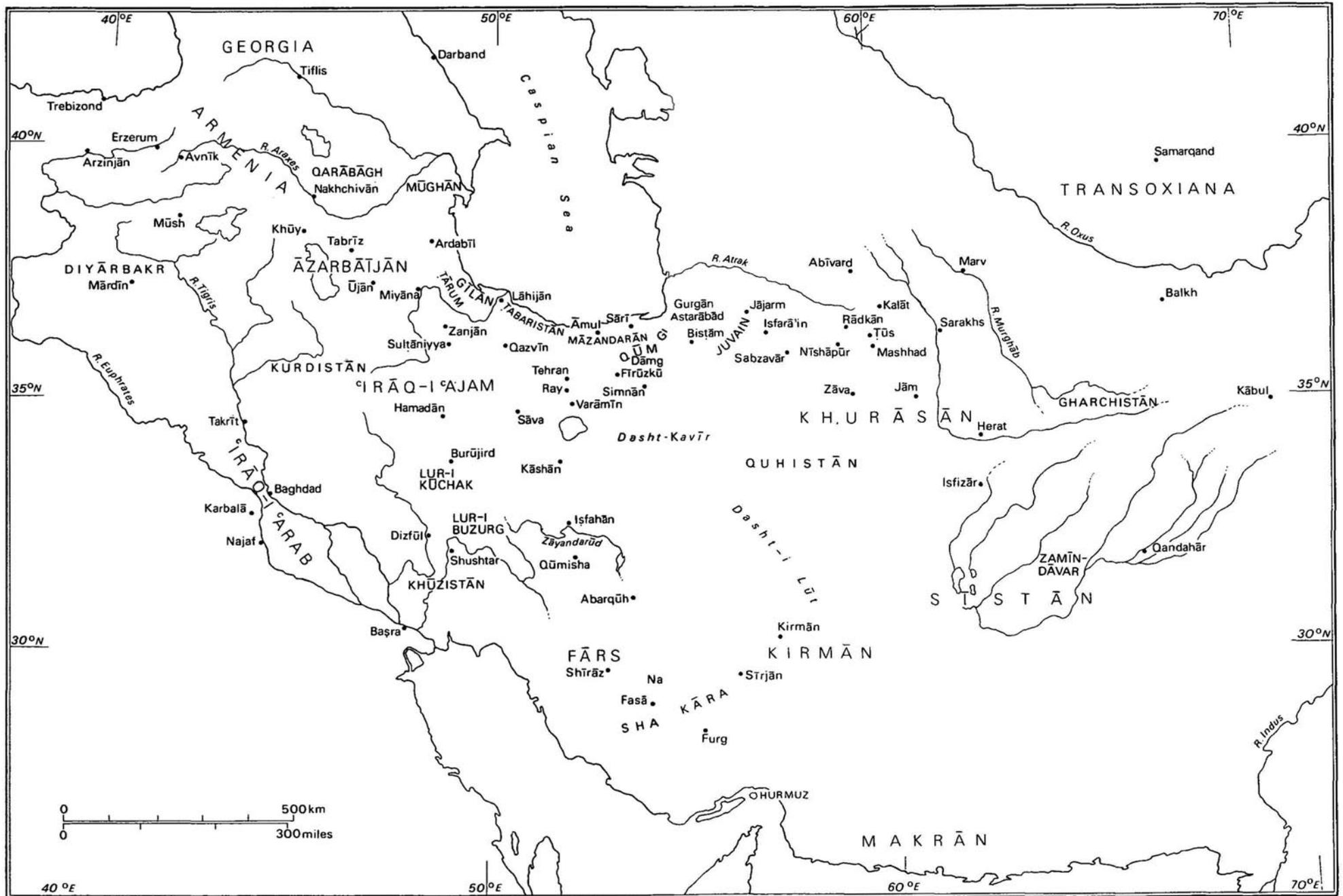
Khān and influence the actions and decisions of the two rivals over a long period, a subject that will be discussed in detail later.

## TĪMŪR'S EARLY CAREER

First, some reference must be made, if only briefly, to Tīmūr's origins and the early stages of his life. At roughly the same time as central power was breaking down in Il-Khanid Persia, its eastern neighbour, the *ulus* of Chaghatai, named after its founder, Chingiz Khān's second son, was also undergoing severe political and religious disruption. In the process the Chaghatayid empire was split up into two khanates. One of these was Mughalistān, on the river Ili in eastern Turkestan, a land ruled by Mongols in which Mongol tradition was so staunchly upheld that even Islam failed to gain a footing there. The other was Transoxiana, an area peopled by strongly Turkicised Mongols who were being converted to Islam in ever increasing numbers. They were in time given the name Qarā'ūnās, a term originally applied only to the Mongols of mixed race living in the Indo-Iranian border area.<sup>1</sup> By the year 747/1346 Qarā'ūnās amīrs had replaced the Chaghatayid khans who had previously ruled the area. From now on the amīrs were the *de facto* rulers, although each of them raised to the throne a shadow khan and exercised power in his name. These khans no longer came exclusively from the line of Chaghatai, some of them being descendants of his brother Ögedei.

It was natural that the name Qarā'ūnās should be transferred to the Chaghatai Mongols, for this people in Transoxiana had become assimilated to its original population so as to form a distinct culture. By the middle of the 8th/14th century, the process of assimilation was complete throughout Transoxiana and beyond, even as far as Sīstān. Among those affected were the Barlās in the valley of the Qashqa-Daryā, the tribe of Tīmūr (Tu. *temür*, "iron"), whose name has been corrupted, via the Persian Tīmūr-i Lang ("the lame"), into the European form Tamerlane. This, in rough outline at least, was the milieu

<sup>1</sup> See Aubin, "L'ethnogénèse", and "Le khanat de Čagatai", p. 18. Three possible meanings of the term Qarā'ūnās have to be taken into account: (1) the mixed Mongol population originating in the Indo-Iranian border area; (2) the Turco-Mongol population of Transoxiana; and (3) the Turco-Mongol dynasty of amīrs ruling in Transoxiana after the death of Qazan Khān in 1346. For the Timurid chroniclers the designation Qarā'ūnās ("half-castes") was taboo because the Mughals came to use it as their nickname for the Chaghatais. See Barthold, *Ulugh Beg*, p. 11, quoting Marco Polo and Mīrzā Ḥaidar Dughlāt. For their part the Chaghatais called the Mughals *jete* ("robbers").



Map. Iran at the advent of Tīmūr

into which he was born on 25 Sha'bān 736/8 April 1336, in Kish (Shahr-i Sabz), where he spent his childhood and probably also his youth. Although not a wealthy man, Tīmūr's father Amīr Taraghai was highly regarded within the Barlās tribe. A burial inscription ascribes to the family a common ancestry with Chingiz Khān, but during his lifetime Tīmūr never laid claim to such a relationship. Indeed, when he had come to power, he even installed puppet Chingizid khans in Samarqand: first Soyurghatmish Khān (proclaimed in 771/1370; d. 786/1384), a descendant of Ögedei, and then his son Sulṭān Maḥmūd Khān (d. 805/1402). This suggests that he felt his rule stood in need of legitimisation. He called himself Amīr, claiming the title *Amīr-i buẓurg*, *Amīr al-kabīr* or the like, in addition to the attribute Kūrgān, which derives from the Mongol *küregen* ("son-in-law"): this last was a reference to his marriage connection with the Chingizids, of which we shall speak later. In accordance with the customs of tribal life Tīmūr learned in his youth every skill a warrior needed, especially horsemanship and archery. In addition to the Turkish language of his tribe he also acquired Persian, although he did not learn to read or write. The spread of Islam, which was making great strides in Transoxiana at that time, had also affected the Barlās tribe. Tīmūr, who can scarcely be described as a particularly religious man, was to value the conversation of dervishes and pious shaikhs throughout his life, a habit which may perhaps be ascribed to the influence of his father's spiritual adviser, whose name is given as Shams al-Dīn Kulāl.

Even in his early days Tīmūr found such recognition amongst his contemporaries in the Barlās tribe that some of them aligned themselves with him more closely as liegeman (*nökūt*, sing. *nökūr*). His qualities as a leader and the success with which his various enterprises were crowned swelled the number of his followers. When considering the nature of these enterprises it must be borne in mind that in those times Transoxiana, just like Persia, was largely in a state of anarchy. They were in fact adventures typical of the circumstances of the time, warlike and predatory raids, mostly on a local scale – in other words nothing unusual in the nomadic milieu with which we are concerned. Reports of skirmishes in Sīstān, where civil wars were then a common occurrence, show that Tīmūr gradually extended his sphere of action. His involvement in this area may have had something to do with the Qarā'ūnās or Negüderis living there. Of course, whether one chooses to regard the leader of such exploits as an ambitious tribal warrior or as

a bandit and robber chieftain depends on one's point of view. What the court chroniclers thought of them is fairly obvious, since they pass over this phase of Tīmūr's career in stubborn silence.

Several attempts were made from Mughalīstān to re-establish the unity of the former *ulus* of Chaghatai under Mongol rule. The murder in 759/1358 of Amīr Qazaghan, who in 747/1346 had founded a line of Qarā'ūnās princes in Transoxiana, prompted Tughluq Temūr Khān to launch a campaign against the region, as a result of which the governor of Qashqa-Daryā, Hājji Barlās, took flight. Tīmūr, also convinced that it was pointless to put up any resistance, did not flee but acknowledged the authority of the khan, who then transferred to him the governorship of Qashqa-Daryā. This compact was short-lived, however, because Tīmūr then allied himself with Amīr Ḥusain, a grandson of Amīr Qazaghan who initially ruled the territory from Balkh to Kābul, but with Tīmūr's support managed after a long struggle to reconquer the lands of his grandfather. In one of these exchanges Tīmūr received the injuries to the right shoulder, the right hand and the right thigh which account for his nickname and traces of which were detected on his skeleton by the archaeological commission which opened up his sarcophagus in the Gūr-i Mīr in 1941. For the present Tīmūr cemented the alliance with Ḥusain by marrying one of his sisters, named Öljei Terken. Then, taking advantage of the increased social prestige this afforded him, he entered into further marriage alliances with the aristocracy of Central Asia.

Yet in the long run neither the alliance, nor the fact that they were related, nor even their shared experience of danger, imprisonment, defeats and eventual victories could prevent the two princes from becoming rivals. Tīmūr finally laid siege to Balkh and conquered it. Although he had granted Ḥusain safe conduct he allowed one of the local princes to murder him in revenge for the killing of his brother ten years earlier. Thus sovereignty over Transoxiana passed to Tīmūr. He now married Sarāi Mulk Khātūn, a member of Ḥusain's harem. She was a daughter of the Chaghatayid khan Qazan, who had ruled until 747/1346, and it was on this connection that Tīmūr based his claim to the epithet Kūrgān (son-in-law, that is, of a member of the dynasty of Chingiz Khān).<sup>1</sup>

The events just discussed took place against a background of great social upheaval and change for the population of Transoxiana. In part

<sup>1</sup> For the document of 804/1401 recording this, see Fekete, *Einführung*, pp. 71-5 and plates 3-6.

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this was due to the fact that political power passed from the hands of the Mongol khans and their adherents to Qarā'ūnās amīrs who of course had their own followers. It is known that Amīr Ḥusain ousted from their positions and estates numerous amīrs and landlords, many of whom took refuge with Tīmūr. The social consequences are particularly clear in the case of Sarbadārs of Samarqand, to whom brief reference has already been made. They managed to save the city from attack by the Mongols but were subsequently destroyed by Amīr Ḥusain, apart from those who escaped to Tīmūr or were rescued by him. Another notable factor is the change from a nomadic to a more settled way of life. An example of this is Ḥusain's fortification of Balkh, a task he undertook despite Tīmūr's warnings. In the eyes of the nomads this was tantamount to a criminal offence, since they regarded it as a matter of principle never to settle permanently in any one place but constantly to renew their migrations. Yet the impulse to establish a permanent capital city, if not to adopt a wholly settled way of life, was so strong that even Tīmūr succumbed to it. Once he had eliminated his rivals, he too set about fortifying and architecturally developing his capital, Samarqand.

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Tīmūr's advances to the south and west are in no way linked to a population explosion or to a mass migration of peoples. They lacked the spontaneity associated with the rise of Chingiz Khān. Tīmūr planned his campaigns against Afghanistan and the Iranian uplands with as much care as the early part of his career up to 1370 with which we have so far been concerned. Indeed, so thorough were his plans that more than a decade went by before he proceeded to put them into operation. Although he now had at his disposal the troops of his defeated rival, who had switched their allegiance to him, his forces were still not strong enough to outmanoeuvre the Qarā'ūnās amīrs, who had been watching his advancement with envy and suspicion. In order to ensure himself against surprise attacks in Transoxiana as he marched into the Near East he had either to eliminate them or to win them over to his side. To secure his position at the rear it was also necessary to subjugate Khwārazm.

At this time a variety of links existed between Transoxiana and Khurāsān. Following the murder of the Mongol ruler of Astarābād,

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Togha Temür (754/1353), there remained in eastern Persia three significant political powers. These were the realm of the Kartids of Herat, the state of the Sarbadārs of Sabzavār, and the dominion of the Jā'ūn-i Qurbān around Tūs. Tīmūr had to deal with all three, and in each case the issue was settled differently.

With the Kartids, who lived closest to his home territories, Tīmūr established links at an early date. Malik Mu'izz al-Dīn Ḥusain (732 to 771/1331-2 to 1370), who after his victory over the Sarbadārs at Zāva (743/1342) had carried out various successful campaigns against the *ulus* of Chaghatai, took Tīmūr into his service. He had himself proclaimed Sultan (750/1349), which was tantamount to abrogating Mongol supremacy and was a measure typical of the increasingly strong tendencies in Herat at that time towards a revival of Islam. Although married to a Chingizid princess, the daughter of Togha Temür, the malik was not himself of Mongol descent and thus according to the law of Chingiz Khān, the Yasa, he did not qualify for sovereign rule. From his Mongol father-in-law he had nothing to fear ; it was Amīr Qazaghan, exercising power in the name of a Mongol puppet khan, who moved against him and forced him to give up his independence. The alliance with Tīmūr came to an end as a result of a predatory raid by the Kartid that impinged upon his immediate sphere of influence. After the death of his father, sovereignty over the Kartid empire passed to Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Pīr 'Alī, except for Sarakhs and part of Quhistān, which were the inheritance of his stepbrother Malik Muḥammad. In the struggle to gain absolute power that inevitably ensued, each of the two brothers attempted to secure his position by enlisting Tīmūr's support. The prince of Herat sent an embassy to him, and his brother even arrived in person, seeking asylum after being driven out of Sarakhs. This did not prevent Tīmūr from proposing to Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Pīr 'Alī that they should renew "the old ties of friendship" and indeed strengthen them by means of a marriage between one of his nieces and Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn's eldest son, who for this purpose came to Samarqand. Not until two years later was he allowed to return to Herat, and then only as a result of pressure from his father. Scarcely were the marriage celebrations in Herat at an end when Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn was summoned by Tīmūr to a great council (*quriltai*). This summons may well suggest that Tīmūr was beginning to doubt the loyalty of the prince of Herat, probably because of conspicuous defence works that the latter had undertaken. When Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn now made all sorts of excuses to try

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to postpone the date of his departure, Tīmūr armed himself for battle and arrived with his troops outside the city in Muḥarram 783/April 1381. This was the prelude to one of the greatest catastrophes in the history of Iran.

There is no lack of evidence to suggest that Tīmūr was well informed about the desperate political plight of Persia, the breakdown of power and the widespread internecine strife within the country. Moreover, some important figures in Iran actually wanted Tīmūr to intervene. Evidence of this can be seen from a letter sent by Muʿīn al-Dīn Jāmī, the aged vizier of Muʿizz al-Dīn Ḥusain, in which Tīmūr was openly invited to make his way to Khurāsān. When Tīmūr was nearing their city, the shaikhs of Jām, who were related to the vizier and had great political influence in the country, called upon all the dignitaries to go out and welcome the conqueror: almost without exception they did so. It is likely that Tīmūr was similarly encouraged by those Khurasanian emigrés and refugees who were in his camp, such as the Kartid prince of Sarakhs and Togha Temūr's son Luqmān. No doubt they held hopes of being restored to power by Tīmūr, hopes which, incidentally, were often fulfilled.

Despite the city's strong fortifications Tīmūr had no difficulty in taking Herat. Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Pīr 'Alī, who was by no means as skilful or capable as his father, had failed to arouse in the population the strength of will to defend the city. Tīmūr showed effective command of the tactics of psychological warfare by promising to spare the lives and possessions of those who took no part in the battle. He went even further when he made the magnanimous gesture of releasing some two thousand prisoners of war. After the city had been occupied the fortifications were dismantled, although not the citadel of Ikhtiyār al-Dīn. A fairly large group of respected citizens, including theologians and other scholars, was deported to Shahr-i Sabz in Tīmūr's more immediate homeland, and a high tribute was exacted from the population. Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn had no choice but to submit to the authority of his father's former liegeman and could count himself lucky to be reinstated as Tīmūr's vassal. In 785/1383, however, his career was terminated when he was suspected of complicity in a plot hatched by members of the house of Herat. Tīmūr's son Mīrān Shāh, the Chaghatayid governor, managed to nip the rebellion in the bud and annexed Herat. In 798/1396 he was to murder the other surviving Kartids at a banquet to which he had invited them. Thus ended, after 130 years, the sway of a

local dynasty of no little significance in the history of Iranian civilisation.

In the very year he conquered Herat, Tīmūr turned his attention to the west, where 'Alī Beg Jā'ūn-i Qurbānī, who had succeeded his brother as ruler of Kalāt and Tūs, had ignored the summons to assist in the campaign against Herat. After a long siege Tīmūr took him prisoner, sent him to Transoxiana and shortly afterwards had him killed. A sizeable contingent of the Jā'ūn-i Qurbān was deported to Samarqand and the surrounding area, where they were later to attract the notice of chroniclers.<sup>1</sup> Tīmūr installed one of their number, Hājjī Beg, as governor (*hākīm*) of Tūs, thus entrusting to him a Chaghatayid protectorate which he was to administer until his rebellion in the year 791/1389.

It is sometimes maintained that the sovereign of the Sarbadār state of Sabzavār, Khwāja 'Alī-yi Mu'ayyad, suffered a fate similar to that of the ruler of the Jā'ūn-i Qurbān. The proponents of this view would have us believe that Tīmūr subjected him to his overlordship, only to dispose of him a few years later when he had outlived his usefulness. However, as Jean Aubin has recently shown, this version of events is not only inaccurate but also runs counter to the general policy pursued by Tīmūr in Persia. Already, towards the Sarbadārs of Samarqand, it will be recalled, Tīmūr had adopted a more or less friendly attitude. It is reasonable to suppose that he also established friendly contacts with the Sarbadār leader in Khurāsān before embarking on his westward advance from Herat. When he arrived in the region of Nīshāpūr, Khwāja 'Alī was there to pay him homage. What he had to offer the conqueror may have been no more than a modest remnant of the once glorious Sarbadār state, but the offer suited Tīmūr's plans well. His policy was not to dismantle established political structures but to make use of them whenever it was possible to do so without risk to himself.

Tīmūr was right to anticipate possible risks in western Khurāsān, as the conflicts with 'Alī Beg Jā'ūn-i Qurbānī had already shown. In addition there were the activities of Amīr Valī, self-appointed guardian of the interests of the Il-Khanid prince Luqmān. As we have already mentioned, Khwāja 'Alī-yi Mu'ayyad sought assistance from Tīmūr against him when he was already close to conquering Sabzavār. Tīmūr promptly relieved the pressure on the leader of the Sarbadārs by

<sup>1</sup> See Roemer, in *Šams al-Husn*, pp. 99 ff., quoting Shāmī II (commentary), 46, 48, 49, 76.

actions against Gurgān and the possessions of Amīr Valī in Māzandarān, but above all by the brutal treatment he meted out to the latter's forces and the population of Isfarā'in. In Rādkān, as he was returning from the campaign in Māzandarān, Tīmūr confirmed the appointment of Khwāja 'Alī-yi Mu'ayyad as governor of Sabzavār.

Khwāja 'Alī remained loyal to Tīmūr until the end, fulfilling his military obligations towards him until 788/1386, when he died as a result of a wound sustained in battle in Lesser Luristān. His loyalty was respected by Tīmūr, who did not occupy Sabzavār with a Chaghatai garrison. Khwāja 'Alī may have forfeited his independence, but he did retain control of the local administration and – although this did not always protect him from the encroachments of Chaghatai finance officers – even enjoyed in principle exemption from taxation. How can one reconcile this picture of events with the reported rebellion of 785/1383 in Sabzavār and the terrible retribution that followed it? The answer is quite simple. The scene of the uprising was not the capital of the Sarbadārs but a place in eastern Khurāsān that lay some 70 miles south of Herat and was furthermore called Isfizār.<sup>1</sup> Nor had the ring-leader of the rebellion, Shaikh Dā'ūd-i Khiṭāṭāī, any connection with the Sarbadārs. He was a military man who, having left the service of the Kartids to join Tīmūr, had been made governor of the place. The rebellion was thus the work of the petty aristocracy of the Kartid empire.

The death of Khwāja 'Alī did not mean that his family ceased to play an active rôle in Tīmūr's empire. The territory of the Sarbadārs was divided up amongst several of his relatives, possibly in imitation of the Turkish or Mongol principle of inheritance. The army of Sabzavār and a number of Khwāja 'Alī's relations featured in several campaigns, usually playing a loyal part. Only Mulūk Sabzavārī allowed himself to become involved in the rebellion of Hājji Beg of Tūs, to which we have already referred. After its failure he sought refuge with the Muzaffarid Shāh Manšūr in Işfahān, but was eventually pardoned by Tīmūr and made governor of Başra at the beginning of 796/end of 1393.

When they had quelled the rebellion of Sabzavār/Isfizār, Tīmūr's forces marched on Sīstān. After heavy fighting they captured the capital Shahr-i Sīstān, and plundered and destroyed it. They then devas-

<sup>1</sup> Aubin, "La fin de l'état Sarbadār", pp. 109ff., traces the origin of the confusion to Shāmi 1, 91: Barthold had already correctly equated Sabzavār with Isfizār in 1903 in *Istoricheskiĭ-geograficheskiĭ obzor Irana* (see now his *Sochineniya* vii, 84)

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tated the country, destroying especially irrigation works vital to its agriculture, a factor often cited as contributing to the continuing backwardness of the region even to this day. Qandahār was to suffer a similar fate in the course of the army's return march.

One other advance can be seen as part of this first phase of Tīmūr's operations against Iran. Begun in 786/1384, it took him back initially to Māzandarān. The Il-Khanid prince Luqmān, a son of Togha Temūr who himself had found refuge in Samarqand in his day, was appointed governor of Astarābād. This was not, however, the sole aim of the offensive. Tīmūr advanced further, against the Jalayirid Sulṭān Aḥmad in Āzarbāijān, but failed to capture him either in this campaign or later. As a result of the latter's flight, however, Tīmūr had little difficulty in conquering the ancient Il-Khanid capital Sulṭāniyya, where he halted his advance. After going into winter quarters in Ray, he returned to Samarqand. Persia was to be further subjugated in the course of Tīmūr's three famous campaigns, the three-year campaign of 788-90/1386-8, the five-year campaign of 794-8/1392-6 and the so-called seven-year campaign<sup>1</sup> which he began on 4 Sha'bān 801/11 April 1399. These will be dealt with later.

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An account has now been given of the most important stages of the military operations by means of which Tīmūr in the space of less than five years imposed his sovereignty on the east and south-east of Iran, i.e. Māzandarān, eastern and western Khurāsān, and Sīstān. Already a few typical features have emerged, a number of which were to recur in later operations against Iran. Particularly striking is the thorough preparation of each individual operation. It is obvious that all the military possibilities were carefully considered, as well as the means needed to put them into operation. Without prior reconnaissance this would certainly have been impossible. Members of Islamic orders, dervishes and itinerant monks (*qalandarān*) all played a part in the gathering of secret military information. For a Sunnī Tīmūr was relatively indifferent in his personal attitude to religion but he treated the champions of

<sup>1</sup> When Tīmūr died on 18 Feb. 1405, six years had elapsed since the start of the campaign and the seventh had begun only thirteen days previously, i.e. on 4 Sha'bān 807/5 February. The traditional designation "Seven Year Campaign" is therefore somewhat problematical, unless perhaps it derives from some plan of Tīmūr's.

the Islamic faith with obvious benevolence. Descendants of the family of the prophet Muḥammad (*sayyid*, pl. *sādāt*), shaikhs, Ṣūfīs, dervishes and judges of the religious law (*quḍāt*, sing. *qāḍī*) all enjoyed his special protection. Their lives or property were never in jeopardy when he was taking terrible reprisals against a captured city. Even when tributes were being raised, when the rest of the population had to surrender money and other belongings under threat of death or were forced by torture to reveal the whereabouts of hidden valuables, they were able to move about freely in the streets and squares. On occasion, indeed, they were able with some hope of success to intercede for one or another of the victims of Tīmūr's myrmidons. Naturally, they proved grateful for such great privileges, and Tīmūr could count on many of them whenever he was in need of their help. The mobility of this class of people and the widespread organisation of their orders made them ideal agents of reconnaissance.

The objects of Tīmūr's military ventures and campaigns were various: they might be designed to eliminate a permanent military threat, as in the case of the Golden Horde; to secure political influence, as in India or Anatolia; or to impose his own power in the face of dangerous rivals in the Chaghatayid heartlands, as was the case with the struggle against the Qarā'ūnās amīrs in Transoxiana and the subjection of Khwārazm. The invasion of Iran, however, had none of these aims. When he began his advance into Khurāsān, Tīmūr never contemplated annexing the territory or incorporating it into his homelands, as is quite clear from his endeavours to maintain existing political structures in being rather than destroy them. His objective was to neutralise other rulers, that is, to extend his own sphere of influence by setting up protectorates. The rulers were, of course, obliged to give up their independence and required to pay considerable sums in tribute. Although only one of the three protectorates, that of the Sarbadārs of Sabzavār, lasted for any length of time, whereas the other two – the empire of the Kartids and the realm of the Jā'un-i Qurbān – were liquidated soon after they had been established, this was due solely to the rebellions that occurred there after Tīmūr had withdrawn.

Increased political power was, however, by no means the only motive for Tīmūr's invasion of Iran. Economic considerations must have played an equally important part. In this connection it is worth bearing in mind the economic situation in Chaghatayid Transoxiana. It was far inferior to that of Iran even after almost three decades of

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confusion and civil war had, it would appear, reduced to ruins the Il-Khanid empire, which had attained a particularly high level of development thanks to the reforms of Ghazan Khān. Culturally, too, the Chaghatais were backward in comparison with the people of Iran. It would therefore be reasonable to assume that Tīmūr with his pragmatic cast of mind was concerned to redress the situation in favour of his Central Asian homeland. His idea was, as far as it was possible, to transfer material goods to Transoxiana in order to lay the foundations of economic prosperity and to give his authority as ruler a fitting air of splendour. His advances into Iran may have been predatory raids, but they were carefully considered and executed in accordance with previously established plans, unlike those of nomadic peoples attracted by the material wealth of sedentary populations. From Iran and other countries, therefore, the means were to be acquired to develop Transoxiana's economy and to transform Tīmūr's capital Samarqand into a splendid metropolis appropriate to so great a monarch. In fact, Tīmūr was not content to strip the cities he conquered or occupied of their treasures and objects of value, but also seized movable property of all kinds, including riding-horses and pack animals, domestic animals, herds of cattle, weapons, provisions and supplies of consumable commodities. No less important was the acquisition of human labour-forces, prisoners who could be used as slaves, especially qualified men such as craftsmen and artisans who could be put to work to improve and develop the homelands; although theologians and scholars were also included.

The description just given of the economic aspects of Tīmūr's conquests conforms to the type normally found in books. It is not wrong, but it is somewhat summary and lacking in concrete information. More recent investigations have served to clarify the picture, and though they may differ as regards points of detail, what emerges most strikingly from them is Tīmūr's essentially systematic and consistent approach. They provide an insight into the methods used when exacting tribute, ransom money and capital levies or confiscating property; and the extent to which such measures succeeded in individual cases can also be seen. In addition, they tell us what sort of means the army leaders used either to hold in check their soldiers' rapacity when it threatened to have an adverse effect on the superior claims of official revenue or, conversely, how they gave them free rein when the situation demanded it, i.e. when reprisals no longer worked or concessions had to be made to sustain the fighting spirit of the troops.

It was the normal military custom for troops on the march to live off the land, but the occasional mention of a requisition order suggests that they did not always go about it in an irregular manner. As far as they could be obtained, lists of businesses and tax registers were used as a basis for levying tribute. Responsibility for implementing the levies was entrusted to the tax-collectors (*muḥaṣṣilān*) of the Supreme Dīvān, to whom military assistance was also made available. The first step was to seal off all but one of a city's gates, sometimes even to wall them up. At any rate they were closely guarded, with two different aims in mind: to prevent the inhabitants from escaping or removing possessions that they were required to surrender, and to stop the troops who were eager for plunder from entering the city before the appointed time. Accompanied by torturers, the tax-collectors then moved through those areas of the city that had been assigned to them, confiscating money and possessions, carrying out house searches and extracting forced confessions from inhabitants whom they suspected of concealing valuables or possessing information about the circumstances of others who were liable to pay tribute. All takings were to be delivered to specified collection centres where they were registered, loaded and dispatched under the supervision of responsible amīrs. As the means of transport available for removing the confiscated possessions was often inadequate, particularly intensive searches were made for pack-animals. The ransom money (*māl-i amānī*) with which a city could buy immunity from plunder was usually distributed amongst the amīrs. Tīmūr's efforts to persuade every city he arrived at with his forces to capitulate by negotiating a ransom sum show that economic considerations weighed heavily with him. Naturally the desire to spare his own troops was also a significant factor, but above all he was concerned to secure the expected booty or tribute which would be considerably reduced, if not totally lost, as a result of the plundering that inevitably followed any seizure by force. As a rule the soldiers were only given permission to plunder, and then on a specific signal, when the officials of the dīvān had completed their requisitions; although such a regulation was no longer applicable when a city had been taken by storm. Tīmūr only resorted to military force when negotiations of surrender had failed, but when this happened he took extremely aggressive action, showing the city's inhabitants little or no mercy.

The economic and administrative aspect of Tīmūr's conquests – a feature common to all of them, not only those in Iran – has not

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received such clear recognition until now. This is probably because one's attention is all too easily distracted from such details by the descriptions of acts of cruelty and brutality found in reports. On the other hand, an economic approach to events must not be allowed to disguise the fact that bestial atrocities were commonplace. Indeed, to quote one historian, "The Great Amīr regarded terror as *the* means of government"<sup>1</sup> and all the more of waging war. The most horrifying atrocities were committed in the course of reprisals ordered by Tīmūr when his negotiators or officials sent into a city after its capitulation were attacked or killed, when a city prevented negotiations by attacking the forces besieging it, or when a conquered city subsequently rose up once more against the victors. In such cases punishment took the form of a bloodbath (*qatl-i 'āmm*), the slaughter of the entire population. While the menfolk were murdered, women, boys and girls were violated, but this did not necessarily mean that they escaped death. Only old people and very young children under the age of five had any chance of survival, providing they did not die of starvation later. Otherwise the inhabitants of conquered cities were considered as part of the booty, sold as slaves and deported to Transoxiana. Many of them – often one in two – died of exhaustion, starvation or disease on the way.

The pyramids (*minārahā*) of skulls that Tīmūr had erected outside the gates of cities punished in this manner may be regarded as direct symbols of his unbridled cruelty. The worst instance of this was in Iṣfahān, where in 790/1388 the population had attacked the tax-collectors. The historian Ḥāfiz-i Abrū, renowned for the reliability of his historical accounts, records how, in the aftermath of the reprisals, he walked with a friend half way round the periphery of the city and counted twenty-eight such towers, each consisting of roughly 1,500 heads. He also mentions similar towers on the other side of Iṣfahān, though not so many. Figures mentioned in the sources of 70,000 heads taken by Tīmūr's troops from the bodies of slain inhabitants of Iṣfahān may not, therefore, exceed the bounds of possibility. Tīmūr may have taken as his model the massacres carried out by the Mongols during their conquest of the Middle and Near East, but nothing they did equalled this degree of inhumanity. Nor could they rival in ingenuity the act of bestiality perpetrated in Sabzavār/Isfizār after the suppression of the above-mentioned uprising.

<sup>1</sup> Aubin, "Comment Tamerlan prenait les villes", p. 122.

Two thousand prisoners were heaped up in a living mound, which was then walled in with clay and fragments of brick.<sup>1</sup>

The conquest of a particular area could also be followed by resettlement operations on a fairly large scale.<sup>2</sup> Their significance is not always easy to determine, but as a rule they were probably carried out for reasons of security. This was the case with the group of the Jā'ūn-i Qurbān whose deportation has already been mentioned, and perhaps also with the Qarā Tatar who were moved from Amāsyā and Qaişariyya to Central Asia in 806/1403.<sup>3</sup>

The principles by which Tīmūr proceeded in his conquest of Iran were scarcely ever so rigid as not to admit of exceptions. From time to time even a city in revolt, like Yazd in 798/1396, was able to benefit from his flexibility. Tīmūr gave orders that it was neither to be plundered nor held to ransom, and it was even spared the biennial tax normally imposed in such cases. On the other hand, thousands of the city's inhabitants had already starved to death during the siege that led to its eventual capitulation. Yazd was a centre of textile manufacture, and it may be that Tīmūr dealt with the city relatively leniently because he was concerned about a possible demise of the local industry. A bloodbath of the kind suffered by quite a number of cities could reduce them to a state of almost total depopulation and economic collapse. Nevertheless, the majority were able to recover after some time. That this was so is probably due to the fact that even when the collective murder of a population was involved Tīmūr imposed certain limits on the use of arbitrary violence and ensured that these limits were observed. As we have already noted, sayyids, shaikhs, qādīs and other members of the religious classes could be granted protection against murder and pillage. We have also encountered one example of a city where the dignitaries were given exceptional treatment, namely Herat in 783/1381. In fact, the leading members of a city's aristocracy or "the rich", as they were sometimes called, were generally spared, together with their relatives and servants: it was not unknown for Tīmūr to

<sup>1</sup> Shāmī I, 91.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the case of the Şūfiyān-i Rūmlū, who were the descendants of liberated prisoners of war from Anatolia. Returning from his campaign against Bāyezīd in the spring of 806/1404, Tīmūr is said to have handed them over to the Safavid leader Khwāja 'Alī in Ardabil at the latter's request (Hinz, *Irans Aufstieg*, pp. 15 ff.): on the authenticity of this meeting, see Horst, "Tīmūr und Hōgā 'Alī," pp. 25, 38; also below, pp. 80, 205-6.

<sup>3</sup> For details, see Barthold, "Tatar", *EP*. The later history of this tribal group is considered in Roemer, *Şams al-Ĥusn*, p. 97.

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protect this section of society from the fate suffered by the remainder of the population by ordering a military cordon to be thrown around the closed districts in which they lived.

No direct comparison can be made between the planning of Tīmūr's advances into Iran and that of his other military enterprises, such as his campaigns against the Golden Horde, India and Anatolia. This is apparent even from the earliest of his operations which we have so far discussed. The subjugation of the Kartids of Herat, the removal of the Jā'ūn-i Qurbān and the partnership with the Sarbadārs of Sabzavār were not simply conceived as predatory raids, whatever gains they brought in terms of booty. Nor was there any intention, at least from the outset, to annex these territories. Tīmūr aimed rather at eliminating or, more precisely, at neutralising these hitherto more or less independent political entities by turning them into Chaghatai protectorates. His first raids on Sīstān, Gurgān and Māzandarān may be regarded as flanking manoeuvres to secure the principal territories of Khurāsān. The conquest of eastern Persia owed its success, as we have shown, to several carefully planned operations. There were good reasons for proceeding in so calculated a manner. Tīmūr had to tread cautiously because the internal situation in Transoxiana was only gradually returning to stability and because he saw danger threatening from his neighbours, the White Horde and the Golden Horde to the north, and the Mughals from the region of the river Ili in the north-east.

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The offensive of 786/1384 against Sulṭāniyya in itself makes it clear that Tīmūr's conquests in eastern Persia were not designed merely to establish a glacis for his Chaghataid empire, but were the beginning of a campaign to subjugate Persia as a whole. In this connection a brief consideration of the political situation in Central Asia is necessary, and in particular of Tīmūr's relations with Tokhtamīsh. The latter, after clashing with Qīpchaq princes, had sought refuge with Tīmūr, who gladly welcomed him, not so much out of respect for his Chingizid descent, if he had such respect at all, but because he recognised the opportunity this offered to weaken the position of his northern neighbours, the White Horde and possibly also the Golden Horde. The campaigns Tokhtamīsh fought in Tīmūr's service all ended in defeat, but eventually he gained dominion over the White Horde and even

over the Golden Horde. From then on his actions were quite the opposite of what Tīmūr had expected from him. He strove to make his territory a major power, first by invading Russia and plundering and destroying Moscow, then by pursuing ambitions in Transoxiana and Iran which led to attacks across the Jaxartes in the east and over the Caucasus in the west. Although there are coins of Tokhtamīsh that were minted in Khwārazm in 785/1383, it is not clear whether it was his incursion into this area that prompted Tīmūr to return to Samarqand from his first campaign to Āzarbāijān, instead of pursuing the Jalayirid Sulṭān Aḥmad, who had retreated from Sulṭāniyya to Tabrīz. On the other hand, all the evidence indicates that Tokhtamīsh kept a careful eye on Tīmūr's movements in Persia and began making preparations for an attack on Tabrīz on receiving news of his return to Central Asia. After advancing via Darband, his troops captured and plundered the city in the winter of 787/1385-6.

At the outset of the three-year campaign the Chaghatai forces aimed initially for the Jaxartes, a line of attack which might lead one to conclude that Tīmūr had in mind a show of force against Tokhtamīsh. There is, however, greater reason to believe that it was a diversion designed to cover up Tīmūr's real objectives, which were central and western Persia together with the invasion routes leading there from Qīpchaq. In fact his forces first went into action against the Lurs, on the pretext that they had been ambushing caravans of pilgrims bound for Mecca. But it is more likely that the slaughter Tīmūr inflicted upon them was designed to make secure the route to Mesopotamia because of its possible strategic importance in the struggle against Sulṭān Aḥmad Jalāyir. To suppress him was, after all, clearly one of the principal objectives of Tīmūr's campaign. Soon after the withdrawal of the Qīpchaq forces, Sulṭān Aḥmad had recovered control of the city of Tabrīz, and Tīmūr lost no time in marching there once the operation in Luristān had been completed. He had no difficulty in capturing the city in the summer of 788/1386, but the Jalayirid, whose army and resources had been seriously weakened by Tokhtamīsh's attack, had again managed to evade him by taking flight. The inhabitants of Tabrīz, still quite prosperous through their trading connections, were forced to pay a heavy tribute, and scholars, artists and craftsmen were deported to Samarqand. The Chaghatai court remained in residence in Tabrīz throughout the summer, and the rulers of the surrounding territories came to pay homage. Amīr Valī, who as Sulṭān Aḥmad's city comman-

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dant in Tabrīz had been swept away by Tokhtamīsh's forces, led a rebellion in Māzandarān, but it was put down, and the ringleaders were captured and executed. A nephew of Tīmūr, Muḥammad Sulṭān, was eventually made governor, and the Chaghatai troops moved on.

They now began a campaign against Georgia, the first of six invasions whose object was not only to subjugate and exploit the local population but also to cut off the approach routes normally used by the armies of the Golden Horde for their attacks on the Iranian uplands. As a result of these operations, the territory of Georgia was devastated and depopulated. The Georgians, a Christian people, were usually more than capable warriors, but they proved no match for the ferocious Chaghatais. The city of Tiflis, which was difficult to capture and tenaciously defended, was taken by storm in the very first campaign. King Bagrat V was imprisoned together with his wife Anna Comnena, a princess of Trebizond. Only by accepting Islam was he able to save his life, but subsequently he apostatised and as a result his country suffered further calamities.

In the winter the Qipchaq forces again advanced through Darband to attack Persia. They were defeated by Mīrān Shāh, who then went with his prisoners to Qarābāgh, an Armenian territory where Tīmūr had set up his winter quarters. Against all expectations and contrary to his usual practice, Tīmūr treated the prisoners leniently. He set them free with no more than a warning, thus clearly making one last effort to convince Tokhtamīsh that he still enjoyed the goodwill of his former protector and at the same time discouraging him from further hostilities.

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Reference was made in the previous chapter to the official dispatch that Shāh-i Shujā' issued shortly before his death, in which he sought to commend to Tīmūr's favour the members of his dynasty<sup>1</sup>. Tīmūr's mistrust of foreign rulers and the intrigues by individual relatives of the recently deceased Muzaffarid prince made him unwilling to take this document at face value. After the struggles in Armenia and Georgia he might have been expected to continue the pursuit of Sulṭān Aḥmad Jalāyir into Mesopotamia, but he chose first to establish order and stability in those territories of central Persia as yet not touched upon in his campaigns. A letter was dispatched to Zain al-'Ābidīn 'Alī,

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 16.

the son and successor of Shāh-i Shujā', reminding him of the latter's declaration of loyalty. As this had no effect, Tīmūr marched on Iṣfahān, whose governor, Muẓaffar-i Kāshī, surrendered the keys to him. The citizens would probably have suffered no more than the tribute imposed upon them, harsh though it was, had not a rebellion against the Chaghatai tax gatherers aroused Tīmūr's wrath and resulted in the slaughter of the population as was described above. On Tīmūr's approach, Zain al-'Ābidīn fled from his capital Shīrāz, intending to go to Baghdad. Near Shushtar he encountered his cousin Shāh Maṣṣūr, who treated him kindly at first but subsequently had him taken prisoner and thrown into gaol. In the circumstances Shīrāz easily fell prey to the Chaghatai troops. Along with 'Imād al-Dīn Aḥmad and other Muzaffarid princes and local rulers, Shāh Maṣṣūr then came to Tīmūr's court in the city to pay homage to the conqueror. As before, Tīmūr resorted in this instance to his old practice of reinstating the members of previously ruling families as governors in his service or allowing them to continue in office. Such a course of action was particularly advisable in this case, as reports of incursions by Tokhtamīsh called for his immediate return to Transoxiana. He entrusted the administration of Shīrāz to Nuṣrat al-Dīn Shāh Yaḥyā, a nephew of Shāh-i Shujā'.

It was obvious that Tīmūr's successes in Transoxiana and Persia, the bloodbath of Iṣfahān and the plundering of Shīrāz had all failed to teach the Muzaffarids a lesson, for they resumed their old feuds as soon as he had departed. Shāh Maṣṣūr, a particularly enterprising prince, set about re-establishing the old sphere of influence of the Muzaffarids. He first gained control of Shīrāz, forcing Shāh Yaḥyā to flee to Yazd. Then he captured Abarqūh, but his attempts to conquer Iṣfahān met with less success and he returned to Shīrāz. Meanwhile Zain al-'Ābidīn had escaped from prison and proceeded to Iṣfahān, where the inhabitants gave him a warm welcome. His cousin Shāh Yaḥyā tried to form an alliance with him and Sulṭān Aḥmad, the ruler of Kirmān, against Shāh Maṣṣūr. Negotiations took place in Ṣafar 793 (began on 8 January 1391) in Sīrjān,<sup>1</sup> at the home of the local ruler, a Muzaffarid by the name of Abū Ishāq. The common front agreed upon against Shāh Maṣṣūr, however, was soon to crumble. When they were met by the latter's troops near Furg on the border of Kirmān, Shāh Yaḥyā's

<sup>1</sup> On the location of Sīrjān, which A.A.K. Vazīrī Kirmānī, *Tārīkh-i Kirmān (Sālāriyya)* (Tehran, 1340/1961), equates with Qal'a-yi Sang, see Aubin, "Deux sayyids", p. 13, n. 1, and "La question de Sīrḡān au XIIIe siècle", *Silr* VI (1977), 285-90.

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forces were not on the spot, and Sultān Ahmad retreated in the direction of Nairīz, accompanied by his son Ghiyāš. He eventually joined battle at Fasā, but lost the day and fled to Kirmān. Zain al-‘Ābidīn for his part repaired to Iṣfahān, pursued by Shāh Manṣūr. When he attempted to slip away into Khurāsān he was captured in Ray by the local ruler Mūsā Jaukān and handed over to Shāh Manṣūr, who had him blinded and imprisoned in Qal‘a-yi Safīd. The following year Shāh Manṣūr devastated the city of Yazd and its hinterland. He then appeared before the gates of Kirmān and tried to persuade Sultān Aḥmad and Shāh Yaḥyā, who had sought refuge there, to join him in an alliance against Tīmūr. When his efforts failed, he clearly recognised that he was in no position to capture the city, for he returned to Shīrāz, probably with the intention of strengthening his forces. At all events, he renewed his attacks on Yazd and Kirmān soon afterwards, though again without success except in terms of pillage and destruction. He failed to take Kirmān, so it is said, because a number of his officers defected to Sultān Aḥmad.

Such was the state of affairs in Fārs, in ‘Irāq-i ‘Ajam and in Kirmān when Tīmūr left Transoxiana on 14 Dhu‘l-Qa‘da 794/3 October 1392 to begin his new five-year campaign against Iran. In the interim he had been involved in conflicts with the powers that had invaded Iran during his absence, and with those who had aided and abetted them, i.e. the khans of the Golden Horde, the khans of Mughalistān and the ruler of Khwārazm. Since these campaigns are only indirectly connected with the history of Iran, a few brief references to them will suffice for our purposes. By now respect for Tīmūr’s military genius had grown to such an extent that the mere news of his approach was sufficient to scatter the troops of his enemies, who were wreaking havoc in Transoxiana. But he was not content to let matters rest there. He launched a campaign against Khwārazm, plundering and destroying Ürgench, the country’s flourishing capital, and emptying it of its inhabitants, who were abducted as slaves. This raid meant the end of the local Ṣūfī dynasty, whose last representative, Sulaimān Ṣūfī, sought refuge with the Golden Horde. After two campaigns against Mughalistān, where sovereignty had passed to Khizr Khān, Tīmūr then prepared to strike against Tokhtamīsh. At the head of powerful forces he marched to Qipchaq and inflicted a heavy defeat on his former protégé by the river Qundurcha, to the north of the city of Samara (15 Rajab 793/18 June 1391). Even though Tokhtamīsh had

suffered heavy losses and was forced to flee, the foundations of his power had by no means been destroyed, as events were soon to show. A new khan was installed by the grace of Tīmūr, but this measure was of no lasting consequence because the Chaghatai troops soon withdrew once more.

Nevertheless Tīmūr was able to march to the west again in the following year without having to worry about the situation in Samarqand and Transoxiana, his departure having been delayed only by a serious illness. If the account in Yazdī's *Zafar-nāma* can be relied upon, Tīmūr's route took him through Gurgān and Māzandarān. The "heretical Sayyids", of whom he killed many in this area, may have been adherents of the Ḥurūfī sect. Its founder Faẓl-Allāh Abu'l-Faẓl, whom Tīmūr's son Mīrān Shāh executed with his own hands in Dhu'l-Qa'da 796 (began 6 November 1393) at the fortress of Alinjaq near Nakhchivān, was a native of Astarābād and had many followers in the region.<sup>1</sup> However, this was probably no more than a minor action. Tīmūr's advance was aimed principally against the Muzaffarids or, to be more precise, against the one particularly active representative of the family, Shāh Maṣṣūr. Even though it meant conflict with his own relatives, the latter was doing everything in his power to re-establish the political dominance of his dynasty, and this in open opposition to Tīmūr. When he received the news of Tīmūr's departure from Samarqand, of his activities in Māzandarān and of his further advance, begun in Šafar 795/at the end of December 1392, via Dāmghān, Ray, Kurdistān and Burūjird, Shāh Maṣṣūr resolved initially to make Iṣfahān his defensive base. However, he was persuaded to drop this plan by the Sarbadār Mulūk, who had switched his allegiance to him, and instead remained in Shīrāz. He dispatched Mulūk to Kāshān as commandant (*dārūgha*) of the city, with the task of protecting the northern frontier of the Muzaffarid territory and of keeping him informed of the movements of the Chaghatai forces. By Rabī' II 795/the beginning of March 1393 Tīmūr had advanced to Dizfūl and Shushtar, where he installed the Sarbadār Khwāja Mas'ūd as governor. On the way he freed prince Zain al-Ābidīn from imprisonment in Qal'a-yi Safīd, treated him kindly and promised to exact vengeance from Shāh Maṣṣūr on his behalf. At the approach of the Chaghatais Shāh Maṣṣūr had first left Shīrāz, but thinking better of it he turned back to face Tīmūr and

<sup>1</sup> Ritter, "Die Anfänge der Ḥurūfīsekte"; cf. Aubin, "La fin de l'état Sarbadār", p. 100.

fought with great personal courage at the head of a feeble contingent whose numbers were further decreased by desertions. Wounded several times, he finally attempted to fight his way through to Shīrāz but was captured by prince Shāh Rukh's forces and decapitated.

This conflict was also of vital concern to the other princes of the house of Muzaffar, and its outcome served to convince them of the futility of all further resistance. Arriving to announce their submission to Tīmūr, they were given an honourable reception, but on 10 Rajab 795/22 May 1393 in Qūmisha, to the south of Iṣfahān, a supreme order was issued for their execution. So ended the rule of the Muzaffarids. Only Zain al-‘Ābidīn and Sulṭān Shiblī, the eldest and the youngest sons of Shāh-i Shujā‘, were spared and sent to Samarqand.

For an insight into conditions in general in Iran during the eighty years (713-95/1313-93) in which the Muzaffarids were politically active we have already had recourse to the testimony of Ḥāfiz (d.791/1389 or 792/1390), whom many literary experts consider the greatest poet in the Persian language. His dīvān provides outstanding evidence of the cultural and intellectual situation at the time. It is significant both as a poetic masterpiece and as a rich source for the history of ideas, not least because of the style in which it is written, a subtle interplay of normal sense usage and mystical hidden meaning. Although the dīvān contains verses that are cheerful in mood, it does not of course follow that the circumstances of its author and his contemporaries were happy ones. On the contrary, the vein of melancholy which again and again predominates in the work carries rather more conviction. It is a reflection of the sceptical and often pessimistic attitude to life that was widespread amongst the people of Iran as a result of numerous national catastrophes, foreign domination, despotism and tyranny, typified especially by the beginning and end of the Mongol empire.

Strangely enough, these conditions of existence, however wretched and miserable they may have been, did not inhibit the development of strong cultural energies in the country, as has been indicated in the previous chapter. We have mentioned Shāh-i Shujā‘'s patronage of Ḥāfiz, but this was not an isolated example. Even a prince like Shāh Maṣṣūr took an interest in literature and promoted the Khwāja. Mubārīz al-Dīn Muḥammad, too, though his interest was more narrowly religious, encouraged certain intellectual disciplines, as can be seen from his generous patronage of ‘Azud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d.756/

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1355), the distinguished Shāfi‘ī jurist and Ash‘arī theologian.<sup>1</sup> When the latter was in Iṣfahān, Shāh-i Shujā‘ took the opportunity of studying under his guidance the commentary of Ibn Hājib (d.626/1229) on *al-Mufaṣṣal fi’l-Nahw*, a study of Arabic grammar by al-Zamakhsharī (d.538/1144).<sup>2</sup> Finally, one could point to the example of Shaikh Majd al-Dīn Ismā‘īl, whose reputation for scholarship prompted the famous traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d.780/1378) to visit Shīrāz.<sup>3</sup> The Muzaffarids may have failed to rescue Persia from the chaos of civil wars and disruption that followed the collapse of the Il-Khanid empire: indeed their fratricidal warring brought untold disaster to countless inhabitants of the country and facilitated its almost effortless conquest by Tīmūr. Yet they managed reasonably well to maintain a minimum of public order and security, thus making possible cultural achievements such as we have just mentioned, achievements that are of greater significance in the history of Iran than the Muzaffarid rulers themselves.

## THE CONQUEST OF THE JALAYIRIDS

Tīmūr’s only adversary in Persia after the defeat of the Muzaffarids was Sulṭān Aḥmad Jalāyir, whose sphere of influence stretched from Āzarbāijān into Mesopotamia as far as Baghdad. Normally his summer residence, Baghdad had served him as a refuge from the Chaghatais ever since he had taken flight during Tīmūr’s first advance on Sulṭāniyya. Hoping to surprise him by attacking in the hottest part of summer, Tīmūr took only eight days to march at the head of his advance guard from Fārs to Mesopotamia and arrived at the gates of Baghdad on 30 Shawwāl 795/29 August 1393. He caught his opponent unawares but failed to defeat him, for although Sulṭān Aḥmad had no time to prepare for the defence of Baghdad he did manage to withdraw to the west bank of the Tigris, taking with him what ships he could and scuppering the rest, as well as destroying all the bridges. To no avail, for Tīmūr wasted no time on the fortifications of the city, which at this period stood only on the east bank; nor did he halt at the Tigris. Showing great foresight, he had equipped his troops with planks and

<sup>1</sup> Van Ess, “al-Idjī”, *EP*, and *Die Erkenntnistheorie des ‘Aḥadaddīn al-Idjī*, (Wiesbaden, 1966).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Brockelmann, *GAL* 1, 303 (*GAL*<sup>2</sup> 1, 367) and *Supplement* 1, 531–9, where no such commentary, however, is listed.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, trans. Gibb, II, 300–5. We are here dealing with the *qāḍī* Ismā‘īl b. Yaḥyā b. Ismā‘īl, whose father and grandfather before him had also held the office of *qāḍī* of Shīrāz.

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beams by means of which they were able to cross the river both above and below the city. Nevertheless, they arrived too late. Sulṭān Aḥmad narrowly escaped them, just as he did later when his pursuers came within a hair's breadth of capturing him near Karbalā. He fled to Syria, where his request for asylum was granted by the ruler of the Mamlūk empire, Sultan Barqūq (784–801/1382–1399).

Timūr occupied Baghdad without a fight. Several writers, including two eye-witnesses,<sup>1</sup> have left detailed accounts of the Chaghatai troops' behaviour in Mesopotamia, and we also have data on specific outrages and atrocities they committed. Yet it would appear that the population of Baghdad itself, in so far as they remained within the city walls, were treated relatively leniently, albeit at the price of a high ransom that was extorted from them. Plunder and confiscation were succeeded by dearth and famine when Timūr marched away again some two months later. On this occasion too, scholars and artists were deported, including the masters of the renowned Baghdad school of book illumination, who had enjoyed the protection of Sulṭān Aḥmad. Timūr also had captives, both male and female, taken away to be sold as slaves.

The governorship of Baghdad was conferred upon Khwāja Mas'ūd Sabzavārī, a nephew of Khwāja 'Alī-yi Mu'ayyad, the last Sarbadār prince of Sabzavār. His force of Sarbadārs, however, though 3,000 strong, was not sufficient to defend the city when Sulṭān Aḥmad marched back again a year later. Instead of giving battle, Khwāja Mas'ūd withdrew his troops from Baghdad to Shushtar. Sulṭān Aḥmad was thus able to re-establish his control over Baghdad. As if nothing had happened, he proceeded to live in the same unrestrained fashion as before, thus giving many a leading figure in his entourage cause to criticise him. In 800/1397–8 this discontent found expression in a conspiracy, and although he triumphed over the conspirators Sulṭān Aḥmad no longer felt secure. Secretly leaving the city, he sought assistance from the Qarā Quyūnlū chief Qarā Yūsuf, but when the latter's Türkmen cavalry arrived in the outskirts he had a hard task preventing them from occupying and – almost inevitably – plundering the city. Eventually, however, he persuaded them to turn back. Despite the air of nonchalance he usually displayed, Sulṭān Aḥmad was well aware of the danger of his position. Even though an attempt by Mīrān

<sup>1</sup> Shāmī I, 139. 'Azīz b. Ardashīr Astarābādī, *Baḡm u raḡm*, ed. Kılıslı (Istanbul, 1928), p. 19.

Shāh to advance against him from Tabrīz in the summer of 800/1398 had to be abandoned, it provided, along with other signs, clear evidence of a recurring Chaghatai interest in Mesopotamia. Two years later, when news reached him of Tīmūr's presence in Anatolia, he left Baghdad. Subsequently, when Tīmūr was occupied in Syria, he returned for a short while and handed over command of the city to Amīr Faraj, one of his army leaders, before taking refuge himself with the Ottomans.

Sultān Aḥmad's fear that a new Chaghatai advance against Baghdad was in the offing proved well grounded. After his numerous military successes, to which we shall return later, Tīmūr must have been especially irritated by the thought that the Jalayirid prince remained undefeated. In addition, of course, Baghdad was still an important centre of trade and communications. It was also strategically significant as a possible base for campaigns directed against the rear or the flank of those of his units active in Anatolia or Syria, and thus constituted a threat to the very operations that occupied his mind at this time. The disaster Sultān Aḥmad had anticipated soon occurred. It befell Baghdad in May 1401, when a Chaghatai division Tīmūr had sent out from Mosul to exact tribute met with vigorous resistance outside the city from Türkmen units and bands of bedouins called to the scene by Amīr Faraj. Even when Tīmūr's troops received reinforcements the resistance did not slacken, for the commandant of the city clearly had no idea that he was dealing with Tīmūr himself. As it was, the latter had arrived in person at the head of comparatively small forces, leaving behind the main body of his troops in the Kurdish mountains in view of the summer heat. There they had the benefit not only of a better climate but also of rich grazing grounds.

Although all Baghdad's supplies were exhausted in a siege that lasted forty days, Tīmūr's hopes of a bloodless surrender were disappointed. As a result, when the city was taken by storm on 27 Dhu'l-Qa'da 803/9 July 1401, he ordered a ruthless massacre of the population from which not even women and children were exempted. The only people whose lives were spared were theologians, shaikhs and dervishes. The city's fortifications were then demolished and its public buildings, including some from the 'Abbasid period, destroyed; the only exceptions were mosques, universities and hostels. By all accounts the depopulation and destruction of the city were carried to such lengths that Tīmūr had no need to instal a governor. Despite all

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this Sultān Aḥmad returned to Baghdad soon afterwards and set about rebuilding the city. In the middle of winter he had another narrow escape when a Chaghatai raiding party advancing from Kurdistān caught him unawares. Nevertheless he arrived back in his city again a few months later, this time accompanied by Qarā Yūsuf. The friendship between the two princes was not to last long. When they quarrelled, Sultān Aḥmad was expelled by the Türkmen leader.

Any hopes he entertained of being kindly received and granted asylum by the Mamlūks a second time proved illusory. Sultan Faraj (801-815/1399-1412), who in the meantime had succeeded his father Barqūq on the Egyptian throne, imprisoned the Jalayirid in a stronghold because he feared Tīmūr's vengeance. Here Sultān Aḥmad was to meet up again a short time later with Qarā Yūsuf, who in the autumn of 806/1403 was driven out of Baghdad by Abā Bakr, a grandson of Tīmūr, and similarly sought refuge with the Mamlūks. In prison the two of them formed a new alliance, but despite all guarantees it proved shortlived when they regained their liberty some time later. Qarā Yūsuf moved to Tabrīz, whilst Sultān Aḥmad returned to Baghdad and again assumed power. He retained it for five difficult years before Qarā Yūsuf defeated him in battle, took him prisoner and executed him. The victor handed over Baghdad to his son Shāh Muḥammad Qarā Quyūnlū, who conquered the city on 5 Muḥarram 814/29 April 1411. Thus began the Türkmen phase of the city's history. Elsewhere, notably in Khūzistān, Jalayirid rulers managed to retain power until as late as 835/1432.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from the Sarbadārs, who won Tīmūr's favour by promptly establishing good relations with him and continuing to serve him loyally, the Jalayirids were the only political force of any importance on Persian soil that survived the conqueror, though not by many years. The price Sultān Aḥmad had to pay for his survival was not only unsettled and precarious, but also depended on an uncertain alliance with his rivals, the Qarā Quyūnlū. This alliance was bound to end in a trial of strength, and when it finally came he proved no match for them

<sup>1</sup> Duda, "Buchmalerei", p. 32, lists (following Shīrīn Bayānī) the remaining Jalayirids: Sultān Valad (813-14/1410-11); Sultān Uvais II (814-24/1411-21); Sultān Mahmūd (824-8/1421-4); and Sultān Ḥusain II (828-36/1424-32). Of these the first three were sons of Sultān Aḥmad, and Husain his grandson. In Yinanç, "Celāyir", the successor of Uvais is named as Muḥammad, and it is alleged that Valad's widow Tandū Khātūn bint Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusain (previously married to the Egyptian Sultan Barqūq) paid homage to the Timurid Shāh Rukh and ruled over Wāsiṭ, Baṣra and Shushtar until her death in 819/1416.

either in Tabrīz or in Baghdad. Sultān Aḥmad's survival also entailed the sacrifice of a considerable cultural inheritance. His family had made Tabrīz and more particularly Baghdad into important cultural centres, and in both cities a miniaturist school of the highest rank was crippled, if not entirely destroyed, when Tīmūr carried off the best painters to Central Asia. Scholars and other representatives of intellectual, religious and artistic life were also deported. In the nine years that remained to him after 803/1401, Sultān Aḥmad was quite incapable of repairing the damage caused by this drain on his cultural resources, even though he did everything in his power to try to restore Baghdad.

In terms of his character and rôle, about which we have considerable detailed evidence, the Jalayirid prince was probably a typical figure not only of his dynasty but of his times in general, for he was a man of startling contrasts. He was both a patron of the arts and a practising artist in his own right : none other than the famous 'Abd al-Ḥaiy taught him drawing. He was a miniaturist, a skilled calligrapher, well versed in music, and a poet whose Arabic and Persian verses were collected in a dīvān. On the other hand he is described as cruelly despotic, fratricidal, disloyal and avaricious. Others depict him as a courageous warrior, in spite of his tactical retreats in conflicts with Tīmūr and his generals, and also as a protector of scholars and poets. We have already mentioned the court poet Jamāl al-Dīn Salmān Sāvajī (b. c.700/1300, d. 778/1376), who was highly esteemed by Sultān Aḥmad's father, Shaikh Uvais. Primarily a panegyrist, he was also a master of the romantic epic and of lyric poetry. A measure of the respect he enjoyed is the quatrain, ascribed to Ḥāfīz, in which he is praised as "chief among the cultured men of the age" (*sar-āmad-i fuṣṣalā-yi zamāna*). One unusual feature of his poetry is that he takes real events as his subject matter – a rare phenomenon in the classical literature of Iran. This is true of his *Firāq-nāma* ("Book of Separation"), in which he describes Shaikh Uvais's pain at the loss of one of his favourites, first when he disappears from the court, then when he is away on a military campaign, and finally when he dies unexpectedly.<sup>1</sup> Salmān is mentioned here as just one example of the many poets,

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed consideration of Salmān, see *LHP* III, *passim*, and *HIL*, pp. 261–2; Bozorg Alavi in *Kindlers Literatur-Lexicon* (Munich, 1974) IX, 3433f. (*Firāq-nāma*), 3767 (*Jamshīd va Khūrshīd*), and XIX, 8432ff. (*Sāqī-nāma*); Abdul Muqtadir, *Catalogue of the Arabic and Persian MSS in the Oriental Public Library at Bankipore*<sup>2</sup> 1 (Bihar 1962): "Gazaliyyāt-i Salmān". Rypka considers the Ḥāfīz quatrain to be wrongly attributed.

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famous and less well known, who lived under the Jalayirids and were patronised by them.

With their liking for ostentation at court, it was also natural that several of the Jalayirids should distinguish themselves as builders, but many of the architectural achievements for which they were renowned have been destroyed. One of the buildings of Khwāja Mirjān, who was the Jalayirid governor of Baghdad on more than one occasion, has survived, however. It is the Islamic university (*madrasa*) in Baghdad, which was later named Jāmi‘-i Mirjān.<sup>1</sup> The Spanish ambassador Clavijo, usually a reliable observer, records having seen a palace of gigantic proportions in 804/1401 in Tabrīz which was called Daulat-khāna and had been erected by Uvais. His observations could well be based on fact. Lastly, Sulṭān Aḥmad’s repeated efforts to improve or restore the architecture of Baghdad are emphasised in many sources.

The most impressive legacy of the Jalayirids is their painting. Examples of miniatures from Tabrīz and Baghdad that have been preserved derive for the most part from the Sultans Uvais, Ḥusain and Aḥmad. The Jalayirid schools suffered greatly as a result of the deportations ordered by Tīmūr, but the Baghdad school at least survived the first conquest of 795/1393 and did not finally come to an end until the second in 803/1401. This is demonstrated by works of art produced during the intervening period.

The cultural and intellectual achievements of the Jalayirids, particularly the complex and controversial subject of iconography, its genesis and styles, will be considered in more detail in later chapters. Here we have been content to give a general sketch of the world that Tīmūr destroyed in his efforts to eliminate the political and military power of the dynasty. Although Sulṭān Aḥmad personally succeeded in eluding Tīmūr’s grasp, the blows he suffered sapped the vitality of his empire. Each military defeat drained away more of its cultural and intellectual energies until by the time of the conflicts with the Türkmens it had exhausted all its strength, and neither Sulṭān Aḥmad nor his successors could bring about its regeneration.

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For the history of Iran the most important outcome of the five-year campaign was that the country became an integral part of Tīmūr’s

<sup>1</sup> For Khwāja Mirjān and his architectural activities, see al-‘Azzāwī, *Ta’rīkh al-‘Irāq* II, 84–129.

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sphere of influence. Opponents such as Sultān Aḥmad Jalāyir, the Türkmen Qarā Yūsuf Qarā Quyūnlū, or individual Georgian princes who managed to elude the grasp of the Chaghatais, constituted at most a latent threat. In practice they were reduced to living as best they could either as exiles abroad or in border areas of Iran to which access was difficult. Yet Tīmūr by no means underestimated the possibility of trouble from them. Contemplating as he did further conquests, he had to guard against all eventualities in his rear.

His plans did not stop at the destruction of the military power of the Qipchaqs. For Mongol supremacy to be restored, as he envisaged, he would need to subjugate India and China too, not to mention areas of the Near East outside Persia. His grandson, Pīr Muḥammad b. Jahāngīr, who since 794/1392 had occupied the "throne of Maḥmūd of Ghazna" and had the closest knowledge of Indian affairs, was ordered to march against the Punjab in the autumn of 800/1397. This was the prelude to Tīmūr's Indian campaign of the next two years, culminating in the sack of Delhi in 801/1398. No political reasons for the expedition are mentioned in the sources. Since it was directed not solely against non-Muslim princes but also, indeed primarily, against Muslim rulers, the view that the campaign was motivated by a desire to spread Islam cannot be accepted without qualification. The weakness of the Indian princes and the fact that they were in conflict with one another may well have prompted Tīmūr's decision to attack, for booty and the payment of tribute seem to have been his principal aim. As a consequence the Indian territories affected suffered devastation and slaughter on an unimaginable scale, together with disease and famine, as one can see from Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn 'Alī's record of the expedition.

## THE FINAL CONFLICT WITH TOKHTAMĪSH

Our summary of the fortunes of the later Jalayirids has taken us well beyond the period of Tīmūr's five-year campaign (794-798/1392-1396). The time has now come to pick up the thread of events following Tīmūr's departure from Baghdad in the late autumn of 795/1393, events which took place not in Iran itself but in border areas and neighbouring countries. In what follows they will be considered in more or less detail depending on the extent to which they affected Persian history.

When Tīmūr moved on up the Tigris after conquering Baghdad, it

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was not clear what his next military objective would be. Syria, Egypt, western or eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus were all possible targets, and the news of Tīmūr's military successes as well as his brutal methods of waging war not only perturbed the rulers of these territories but also struck fear into the hearts of their populations. Nor was the situation eased when the conqueror sent envoys to numerous princes and rulers, inviting them to establish friendly relations or demanding that they should submit to his sovereignty, as was the case with Sultan Barqūq of Cairo, who had granted asylum to Sulṭān Aḥmad Jalāyir, and with Aḥmad's Türkmen ally, Qarā Yūsuf of the Qarā Quyūnlū confederation. One other act of Tīmūr was probably designed to strike terror in the hearts of his rivals. This was the spectacular feat of capturing the fortress of Takrīt on the Tigris, which had been considered impregnable. Its commandant and garrison were slaughtered, and pyramids of skulls were erected for all to see. After the capture Tīmūr held a military parade on the west bank of the Tigris to demonstrate to the world the strength of the Chaghatai forces.

Such demonstrations had their effect, though not in the way Tīmūr had desired. They resulted in intensive diplomatic exchanges on the part of his adversaries. The ruler of Sīvās informed Barqūq of his fears and asked him for support. The Ottoman Sultan Bāyezīd made contact with the Egyptian ruler and sent him subsidies. Tokhtamīsh and Barqūq also entered into an alliance, which was of particular significance since it showed that Tīmūr's campaign against Qipchaq in 793/1391 had failed to neutralise or at any rate intimidate the khan of the Golden Horde.

Nevertheless, Tīmūr now delayed, in fact for a whole year, before deciding on his next major blow. In the meantime he turned his attention to operations on a geographically limited scale. As well as the Artuqids in Mārdīn, he again attacked the Georgians. This was the prelude to later offensives against their territory, that of 1395 under the command of Mīrān Shāh and those of 1399 and 1403 which Tīmūr was again to lead himself. Qarā Yūsuf and his Qarā Quyūnlū, at this time Tīmūr's most dangerous enemy south of the Caucasus, were also engaged in battle. They lost the fortress of Avnik on the Araxes, and its commandant, a brother of Qarā Yūsuf called Mişr Khwāja, was taken captive and sent to Samarqand together with his family. Events of importance on the personal level at this time were the birth of Ulugh Beg, a son of Shāh Rukh who was to become Tīmūr's favourite grand-

son, and the death of the conqueror's oldest surviving son, 'Umar Shaikh, which must have come as a severe blow. Summoned to the court from Fārs, where he was governor, he was fatally wounded by an enemy arrow while besieging a Kurdish stronghold en route.

A letter of 8 Jumādā I 797/1 March 1395<sup>1</sup> shows that Tīmūr made one last effort to effect a reconciliation with Tokhtamīsh. Even though it failed, it provides further evidence of his concern to remain loyal to the descendants of Chingiz Khān. Another communication, addressed to the Ottoman sovereign,<sup>2</sup> indicates that at this time – and perhaps even earlier – Tīmūr was contemplating something quite different. This was an expansionist policy on a grand scale, stretching as far as eastern Europe. As his starting point, Tīmūr took the old division of the *ulus* of Jochi into two parts, i.e. the area east of the river Dnieper as the left flank (*sol qol*), the empire of the Golden Horde, and the territories west of the Dnieper as the right flank (*oŋ qol*), together with the Ukraine, the lands of the Lithuanians and Poles, who were the allies of Tokhtamīsh. In his letter Tīmūr praised Bāyezīd's achievements in the holy war (*jihād*) against the Christian princes in the Balkans and suggested that they should establish mutual spheres of interest. The right flank, that is the area extending west of the Dnieper to the Balkans, was to be allotted to Bāyezīd, the left flank or all territory to the east of the Dnieper to Tīmūr. The letter also reveals that two of the basic principles behind Tīmūr's global political strategy were the spread of Islam throughout the world and the restoration of the worldwide supremacy of the Mongols. If, as Togan assumes,<sup>3</sup> Tīmūr's new campaign against Tokhtamīsh was designed not merely to punish a disloyal ally, but "to put into effect a comprehensive plan for eastern Europe", it failed because the sultan was not prepared to cooperate with him. At that time Bāyezīd regarded a siege of Constantinople and operations in northern Greece as more important than any far-reaching projects Tīmūr was contemplating.

Be that as it may, the spring campaign of 797/1395 turned out to be more urgent than any other actions Tīmūr may have been considering, such as operations against the Mamlūks in Syria and Egypt or indeed against Bāyezīd himself. For this there were two reasons. First, the attempts to negotiate an alliance between the Golden Horde and Cairo,

<sup>1</sup> Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī 1, 523ff.

<sup>2</sup> For the text, with detailed commentary, see Togan, "Tīmurs Osteuropapolitik".

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 290.

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which cannot have escaped the attention of the Chaghatai high command, meant that the ruler of Iran faced the risk of being hemmed in between these two powers, as was the situation of the Il-Khanid Empire and other Iranian empires before it. Secondly – and here the danger was no less acute – incursions into Tīmūr's domain in the Caucasus provided clear evidence of hostile intentions on Tokhtamīsh's part. When, in addition, Tokhtamīsh replied in unsatisfactory terms to Tīmūr's conciliatory message, the Chaghatai troops received the order to march against him that same spring. The decisive battle, in which both rivals personally took part, was fought in the valley of the river Terek in the northern Caucasus. It ended in a crushing defeat for the Qipchaq army. The way was now clear for Tīmūr to advance into the Volga area and to strike against the capital of the Golden Horde, Sarāī. It was looted and plundered together with other cities of the lower Volga, the Crimea and the northern Caucasus. An immeasurable amount of booty was carried off, and many of the native people, not just soldiers but women and children too, were abducted into slavery. Stories of Tīmūr advancing as far as Moscow have no basis in fact, although he did make raids on cities in southern Russia that were close to the frontiers of the Golden Horde.

The country was so devastated and depopulated, its economic potential so effectively destroyed, that the Qipchaq empire never again recovered. Moreover, with the severance of the trade routes and the destruction of key transfer-points, long-distance trade between the Far East and Europe, in so far as it passed via the Golden Horde, was virtually paralysed. Tīmūr had probably intended to ruin the country's economy in this way, for it is unlikely that he thought of usurping power there even though he helped Temūr Qutlugh, a pretender of his choice, to assume control. Tokhtamīsh, who lost his throne as a result of the defeat, still had a rôle to play in later eastern European conflicts, but any ambition he or the Golden Horde had in Transoxiana or Iran were thwarted once and for all. Although its effects were to be felt for some time, Tīmūr's brutal punishment of the Qipchaqs came to an end in the spring of 798/1396 when he marched to Persia via Darband. Isolated operations in Georgia, Āzarbāijān, Fārs and other areas of Iran, including the suppression of a rebellion in Yazd, brought the five-year campaign to a close. In the summer the Chaghatai troops set out on the return journey to Samarqand, where Tīmūr was to make his most protracted sojourn prior to embarking on the Indian campaign we have already noticed.

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### THE CAMPAIGNS IN SYRIA AND ANATOLIA

Tīmūr had scarcely recovered from a severe illness suffered on the return march from India to Transoxiana when not long after his arrival back in Samarqand, in May 1399, he began preparations for a new campaign. This was the so-called seven-year campaign against the West. A mass of information reaching him from that quarter led Tīmūr to decide on this course of action. All was not well in the realm of his son Mīrān Shāh, who reigned "on the throne of Hūlegū" in Sulṭāniyya and Tabrīz. The situation was eased somewhat by the death in 801/1399 of Barqūq, the Mamlūk Sultan of Cairo, and the succession of his son Faraj, a boy of ten. On the other hand, it was aggravated by the constant and apparently irresistible rise to power of the Ottoman Sultan Bāyezīd I. On 25 September 1396 he had won a spectacular victory over an army of crusaders at Nicopolis on the lower Danube. Later, during Tīmūr's Indian campaign, he had enjoyed success in Anatolia in operations against the princes of Qaramān. Other news to reach Samarqand at this time was that of the death in 1398 of the emperor T'ai-tsu, who thirty years earlier had brought the Yüan dynasty to an end and expelled the Mongols from China. No doubt this greatly interested Tīmūr, but not enough to make him waver in his resolve to take action first against the threats looming in the west.

When the Chaghatai troops set off for Persia, a detachment under the command of Sulaimān Shāh, one of Tīmūr's nephews, was sent on ahead to investigate the charges that had been made against Prince Mīrān Shāh. Doubts had arisen about his loyalty because he had alluded in letters to his father's advanced age and incapability. The charges also concerned his failure to deal with instances of unrest and refusal to pay taxes in the area he ruled, as well as the loss of the stronghold of Alīnjaq, a pocket of resistance of great importance to the Jalayirids<sup>1</sup> where Georgian troops had come to the relief of Prince Ṭāhīr, a son of Sulṭān Aḥmad Jalāyīr. Far from making difficulties, Mīrān Shāh actually came forth with Sulaimān Shāh to meet his father. Tīmūr deposed him, and without further punishment assigned him to his retinue, where he was to remain for the next four years. His friends

<sup>1</sup> See more fully Minorsky, "Transcaucasica", pp. 91-112. Alīnjaq had already been attacked by Tīmūr in 789/1387. It was to offer the most stubborn resistance of all the fortresses he conquered, for it did not fall until 803/1401, after the Georgian campaign with which we shall shortly deal.

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and advisers, some of them well known figures in cultural life, were not treated so lightly. They were severely punished, and some of them even executed, for allegedly corrupting the prince and leading him astray; this despite the fact that he was by now thirty-three years of age.

Timūr personally directed operations to restore order in north-western Persia. Then he moved into winter quarters in Qarābāgh, a stretch of country in the bend of the river Araxes that offered good winter shelter, especially for cavalry. From here he launched a punitive raid against the Georgians that was interrupted only by adverse weather conditions. The very next spring saw the start of a new campaign against the Georgians, the fifth in all, in the course of which Tiflis was again stormed. Timūr had demanded that the Jalayirid Ṭāhir, who had sought refuge with the Georgians, be handed over, but King Giorgi VII allowed him to escape just in time, and he made his way to the Ottoman Sultan Bāyezīd. In view of the destruction caused by the Chaghatais and the heavy losses sustained by his troops and people, the Georgian king was forced to open negotiations with Timūr, in the course of which he agreed to pay a considerable tribute and to furnish a contingent of troops for the conqueror's army.

Even though Sultan Barqūq had now died, Timūr still had a score to settle with the Mamlūks because of the support they had given to Sulṭān Aḥmad Jalāyir, their attempts to form an alliance with the Golden Horde, and above all the murder of his ambassador to Cairo. Although some years had elapsed since the murder took place, Timūr could scarcely allow it to go unexpiated, if only for reasons of prestige. Another factor he had to consider was the position of Mesopotamia. The presence of a strong opponent in Egypt would pose a real threat to its security and might leave one flank dangerously exposed, should he ever contemplate an expedition to Anatolia. Nor can one entirely rule out the possibility that Timūr, with his respect for Mongol tradition, felt an obligation to avenge the historic defeat that the Mamlūks had inflicted upon the Mongols in 658/1260 at 'Ain Jālūt in Palestine. Lastly, it can scarcely have escaped his attention that since the death of Barqūq and young Faraj's elevation to the throne rivalries among the military commanders had made the internal situation in the Mamlūk kingdom highly unstable, a state of affairs that positively invited intervention on his part.

Such were the considerations that led to the advance of the Chaghatais against Syria in the autumn of 803/1400. Setting off from Malatya,

the armies marched via 'Ainṭāb and captured the city of Aleppo. There they laid siege to the citadel, forcing it to surrender within four weeks. Not long afterwards Ḥamā, Ḥimṣ and Ba'labakk also fell. Early in Jumādā I/at the end of December Tīmūr arrived outside Damascus. Sultan Faraj, who had arrived with his forces from Cairo a few days earlier, was encamped in the Ghūṭa, not far from the city. He did not join battle, however, but marched off again, ostensibly because of rumours of an impending coup in Cairo. The sultan's withdrawal was a shattering blow to the morale and resistance of the Damascenes. The surrender of the city was followed by that of the fortress. The tribute Damascus had to pay was so high that all its resources were exhausted. Even so, the city was thrown open to the Chaghatai troops for three days of general pillage in the middle of March 1401. They committed untold crimes and atrocities despite Tīmūr's orders to spare the population.

For Tīmūr the Syrian campaign reaped a rich reward in terms of goods and valuables confiscated and slaves captured. For the country itself it meant economic ruin, the devastation of its cities, the decimation of its population and the destruction of countless businesses and trades. This state of collapse, which was to last for many years, suited Tīmūr's plans perfectly. Together with the unstable political situation inside Egypt, it offered, for the time being at least, the best possible guarantee against dangerous activities on the part of the Mamlūks, let alone any revival of the idea of an alliance between them and the Ottomans. Conscious of the success he had thus achieved and perhaps influenced by the warnings of a Western observer, Bertrando di Mignanelli, of a possible attack from the rear by the Ottoman Sultan, Tīmūr resolved to refrain from advancing further southwards against Egypt and to turn his attention once more to activities in Anatolia. Before doing so, however, he still had to avert the danger threatening from Baghdad. Thus, in the summer he proceeded to carry out the terrible revenge on that city to which we have already referred.

Just as Sultān Aḥmad Jalāyir and the Qarā Quyūnlū prince Qarā Yūsuf had sought refuge with the Ottoman sovereign, so Anatolian chiefs came to ask Tīmūr for asylum, having lost their dominions to the Sultan of Edirne. They were able to ensure that the Chaghatais were kept well informed about developments in the Ottoman sphere of influence. Although no military confrontation had yet taken place,

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Tīmūr and Bāyezīd Yıldırım (“the Thunderbolt”) had already been in opposition to one another for some time. When Tīmūr had invaded eastern Anatolia in the preceding year, the Sultan had been besieging Constantinople and was unable to react, first because of the great distance involved and secondly because of the impossibility of confronting the enemy with his troops before the onset of winter. He was thus unable to relieve the city of Sīvās, which he had captured only a few years previously from the renowned Qāzī Burhān al-Dīn Aḥmad. In revenge for the devastation of the city, he conquered Arzinjān in 1401, deposing for the time being its commandant, a protégé of Tīmūr named Taharten.<sup>1</sup>

Bāyezīd was only too well aware, however, that much more was at stake than this or that stronghold in eastern Anatolia, than one more city or less pillaged by the Chaghatais. Tīmūr’s plans for global conquest, long since a topic of daily conversation in every kingdom, were now jeopardising the very existence of the Ottomans. Up to now Bāyezīd had succeeded not only in centralising power in his own empire but had also subjugated the Balkan states within a few years and won a brilliant victory over the Hungarian King Sigismund at Nicopolis. If he wished for further success in this direction he simply had to eliminate the Chaghatai threat. He was now confronted by a new situation, for in his desire to expand he had so far looked principally to the west and north-west. Raising the siege of Constantinople, he marched eastwards with his army. In doing so he planned to force Tīmūr, who had again spent the winter in Qarābāgh, into fighting a battle at a spot on the upper reaches of the Euphrates where conditions would be much less favourable to Tīmūr than to his opponent. By strategically skilful manoeuvres Tīmūr managed to avoid the confrontation. Indeed, he even lured Bāyezīd into what, for him, proved a fatal race to reach Chubuq-ovası, a plain north-west of Engüriye, on the site of present-day Ankara, where he, Tīmūr, contemplated fighting the decisive engagement. Arriving a few days earlier on the field of battle, the Chaghatais from the outset enjoyed an advantage over the Ottomans, who were late on the scene and, what is more, exhausted after days of forced marches in the summer heat. Tīmūr made good use of

<sup>1</sup> The forms Tahirten and Mutaharten, which are probably corruptions of Muṭahhar al-Dīn, also occur: cf. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu beylikleri*, p. 165.

his start by fortifying his camp and cutting off the enemy's access to water.

Sources differ as to the precise date of the battle. The most likely date is 27 Dhu'l-Ḥijja 804/28 July 1402.<sup>1</sup> There are also considerable discrepancies in the figures quoted for the strength of the two armies, the highest estimates being those of the Bavarian, Johann Schiltberger, who himself participated in the battle and was captured by the Chaghatais – namely, 1,600,000 Chaghatai and 1,400,000 Ottoman troops. A modern historian, after taking into account every known or accessible circumstance, particularly the distances marched and the movement of supplies, puts the figure for each side at a maximum of 20,000 men.<sup>2</sup> Apart from a few dozen Indian elephants on Tīmūr's side, the most important difference between the two armies was the strong representation in the Ottoman ranks of Janissaries, who were crack troops. In contrast to the bulk of the Chaghatais, however, these were not mounted forces.

In the first phase of the battle it was by no means clear which army would be victorious, which was hardly surprising since some of the most successful and efficient fighting troops of that time had come face to face. A turning point was reached only when whole contingents of the Sultan's army left the field en bloc or went over to Tīmūr's side. This was the result of earlier propaganda by the Chaghatais, helped by the Anatolian princes who had taken refuge with Tīmūr after being deposed by Bāyezīd. Although the Sultan lost all his cavalry in this way, he fought stubbornly on together with his Janissaries. They struggled with a courage born of despair, but had no chance against the might of the Chaghatai cavalry: in the end they were massacred, and Bāyezīd, who fell from his horse in a last minute attempt to escape, was taken captive.

If the battle of Ankara did not seal the fate of the Ottoman empire, it was because Tīmūr failed to exploit his victory to the full. Some of his generals did pursue fleeing enemy contingents, but quite a number of them escaped across the Sea of Marmora to Europe. Tīmūr also advanced further to the west, but at an unusually slow pace attributed by Roloff in part to the depleted strength of the Chaghatai forces after the battle and to the delay in reinforcements from the east. In spite of

<sup>1</sup> The date decided upon by Alexandrescu-Dersca, pp. 116–19.

<sup>2</sup> Roloff, "Die Schlacht bei Angora", pp. 253–6.

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the many places he conquered (and they included the former Ottoman capital Bursa); in spite of his advance to the Aegean, where at the end of 1402 he stormed the stronghold of the Knights of St John at Smyrna (İzmir) and afterwards received the homage of the lords of several Aegean islands, there can be no question of Tīmūr's having truly eliminated the Ottomans. Nor did he set up a Chaghatayid administration in Anatolia. Instead he was content for the most part to re-establish under his suzerainty the regional principalities that the Sultan had abolished. As far as Constantinople was concerned, he was happy to accept the offer of submission brought to him by the hastily dispatched envoys of Emperor Manuel II, and he did not concern himself with the Balkans. The Sultan himself was taken along as a prisoner in Tīmūr's retinue until his death in Aqshehir on 13 Sha'bān 805/8 March 1403. Even though suicide was relatively rare in the Islamic world, the possibility cannot be ruled out that he took poison because it had been divulged to him that he would have to accompany Tīmūr to Samraqand. Tīmūr's problems in Anatolia were more or less at an end when Prince Süleymān, one of Bāyezīd's sons, subsequently declared his submission. Since the conqueror used the same methods to subjugate Anatolia as he had in other countries – raising excessive tributes, plundering and destroying cities, depopulating and devastating the countryside – the result was that the country's economic strength was destroyed when the campaign ended and his troops marched off eastwards. Politically, too, the area had been effectively neutralised, because for the time being Tīmūr could rest assured that the Ottoman princes and the regional dynasts, both in Anatolia and in Europe, would be occupied with their own rivalries.

The Chaghatay victory at Ankara gave rise to numerous diplomatic exchanges, not only between Tīmūr's headquarters and oriental courts, but also with Western powers. These will be discussed in detail later, but it is worth mentioning at this point that even Sultan Faraj of Cairo made efforts to win Tīmūr's favour. Hitherto he had detained the latter's envoys, but he now gave them permission to leave and sent an embassy of his own to declare his submission, which Tīmūr accepted. The reaction of the Georgian King Giorgi VII was different. He had failed to congratulate Tīmūr on his victory over Bāyezīd. In late summer, when Tīmūr was approaching, he tried to make good the omission, but the conqueror rejected the gifts he sent, demanding that he should appear before him in person. He then resorted to various

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excuses, but could not prevent the Chaghatais from invading his country and again subjecting it to the most terrible devastation. Giorgi at first retreated without any show of resistance, but eventually he managed to appease Tīmūr by offering him valuable gifts, including droves of horses and gold coins struck in the conqueror's name. Tīmūr again spent the winter of 806/1403-4 in Qarābāgh, setting off on the return march to Transoxiana the following spring. If we were to accept the evidence of Safavid historians, it would have been in the course of this journey that he visited Ardabīl and agreed to a request from Khwāja 'Alī, the master of the Ṣafaviyya, for the release of his Ottoman prisoners of war.<sup>1</sup> He arrived back in Samarqand at the beginning of 807/the end of July or early in August 1404, after an absence of five years.

### THE PLAN TO INVADE CHINA AND TĪMŪR'S DEATH

In the middle of the 8th/14th century the famous Arab traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa had written that Transoxiana, the kingdom of Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Tarmashirin, was surrounded by four of the world's great kings: the king of China, the king of India, the king of Persia and the king of the Golden Horde (Özbeḡ), all of whom sent gifts to the sultan, and honoured and respected him.<sup>2</sup> This statement gives some insight into the view of the world with which Tīmūr grew up. It is not difficult to imagine what it now meant to the ageing prince to have conquered all the renowned rulers who had played a rôle in his boyhood and youth – all, that is, except for the emperor of China. To appreciate the full significance of this, it has to be realised that Tīmūr considered it his mission to restore the former Mongol world empire, of which China had of course been a part. In fact, Mongol domination in China had actually outlasted the world empire, continuing as it did until the collapse of the Yüan dynasty in 1368. Chaghataid court circles were of course familiar with the political situation in contemporary China. It was known, for instance, that just recently, in 1402, the Emperor Hui-ti, grandson and successor of the Ming Emperor T'ai-tsu who had died four years previously, had been deposed by his uncle Yung-lo. Information about Yung-lo's policy towards the Mongols was also available. The new sovereign was known to be a

<sup>1</sup> See n. 2 p. 56; also pp. 205-6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, trans. Gibb, III, 556.

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particularly efficient warrior and thus probably represented a special challenge to Tīmūr.

As had been his custom prior to making a major decision, Tīmūr again summoned a quriltai. Concerning this assembly, which took place in September 1404 on the plain of Kān-i Gil close to Samarqand, we possess a report by the Castilian ambassador Clavijo, who had then just arrived to take up his post and attended the gathering together with his advisers. It amounted to a demonstration of power, designed not only to impress external enemies against whom military operations were planned, but also to bolster the confidence of Tīmūr's own forces. In addition to military consultations, Tīmūr held a gigantic review of his troops in which the various Chaghatai hordes appeared. In conjunction with the assembly magnificent banquets were given, including the marriage celebrations for several royal princes, notably Prince Ulugh Beg, Tīmūr's favourite grandson.<sup>1</sup> During the festivities and consultations in Kān-i Gil preparations for the expedition to China, which Tīmūr had already commenced from Anatolia, were in full swing. Thus his forces, which included numerous auxiliaries in addition to the hard core of Chaghatais, were able to begin their march soon afterwards. Tīmūr himself left Samarqand on 23 Jumādā I/27 November. The orders he issued regarding the government and administration of the capital and the country as a whole, as well as the measures he took to protect his advance and his supply lines, all pointed to a particularly long absence. Despite severe weather conditions Tīmūr pressed on with all speed. He left Āqsūlād, where it had been planned to spend the winter, even before December was over. The bitter cold and the snow made life very difficult for the troops with their numerous baggage trains, but on the other hand a thick covering of ice on the Jaxartes made the river easier to cross. Nevertheless, there were instances of both men and animals succumbing to the frost. In the middle of Rajab 807/January 1405 Tīmūr reached Utrār, some 250 miles from Samarqand. This city, the point of departure for caravans going to China by the route through Mughalistān north of the Tien Shan range, was to serve as the rendezvous for the planned operation.

Tīmūr lodged in the governor's palace. Although he had made use of a litter as on previous occasions when he had been unwell, e.g. on

<sup>1</sup> Roemer, *Sams al-Husn*, pp. 21-3.

the return journey from India, the long trip had left its mark on the conqueror, who was now nearing the end of his sixty-ninth year. In Utrār he continued to suffer from the extreme cold, and when members of his entourage suggested holding a feast to relieve the general atmosphere of depression, he readily agreed. The celebration lasted three days, during which Tīmūr, in his efforts to keep warm, constantly drank wine and other alcoholic beverages, but touched no food. Although he became feverish and suffered from stomach and bowel trouble, rather as in cases of gastritis, he continued drinking until he eventually lost the power of speech. For all their efforts his court physicians were unable to bring him relief. When he finally recovered consciousness and was able to speak again, he himself announced that his end was near. His doctors, asked to tell him the unvarnished truth about his condition, could not in all seriousness contradict him. To the princes and dignitaries assembled around his sick-bed he declared his last will and testament, in which he appointed as his successor on "the throne of Samarqand" his grandson Pīr Muḥammad b. Jahāngīr. All the nobles present, whose spokesmen were Amīr Shāh Malik and Amīr Shaikh Nūr al-Dīn, had to swear a solemn oath that they would respect this stipulation. Tīmūr died in the night of 17 Sha'bān 807/18 February 1405.

The princes and generals resolved to abandon the projected expedition to China and to proceed only with the smaller scale action against Mughalīstān, which had formed the first stage of the original plan and which Tīmūr had ordered to begin on 10 Sha'bān/11 February, even before he fell ill. They would in any case only have been carrying out an order given long ago, since prince Ulugh Beg had been appointed governor of Mughalīstān on the occasion of his marriage in Kān-i Gil, and his retinue had already been assembled. In order to accomplish this much at least, it was decided to keep secret the monarch's death for the time being. Khwāja Yūsuf, who was charged with transporting Tīmūr's mortal remains to Samarqand, was to leave under cover of darkness so as to escape notice. In addition he was to spread the rumour that he was conveying the remains of a dead princess. Despite all attempts to cover things up, however, it quickly became common knowledge that the conqueror had passed away. As a result the planned campaign against Mughalīstān was also abandoned.

Khwāja Yūsuf, who is said to have arrived in Samarqand by 23

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February,<sup>1</sup> buried Tīmūr in total secrecy alongside his grandson Muḥammad Sulṭān b. Jahāngīr (who had originally been designated as Tīmūr's successor but had died on the return march from the Aegean in March 1403), in the vault that bore the latter's name, the Khāngāh-i Muḥammad Sulṭān. Later, probably in 1409 after Shāh Rukh's occupation of Samarqand, the body was removed – once more with that of Muḥammad Sulṭān – to its present resting place in the Gūr-i Mīr.

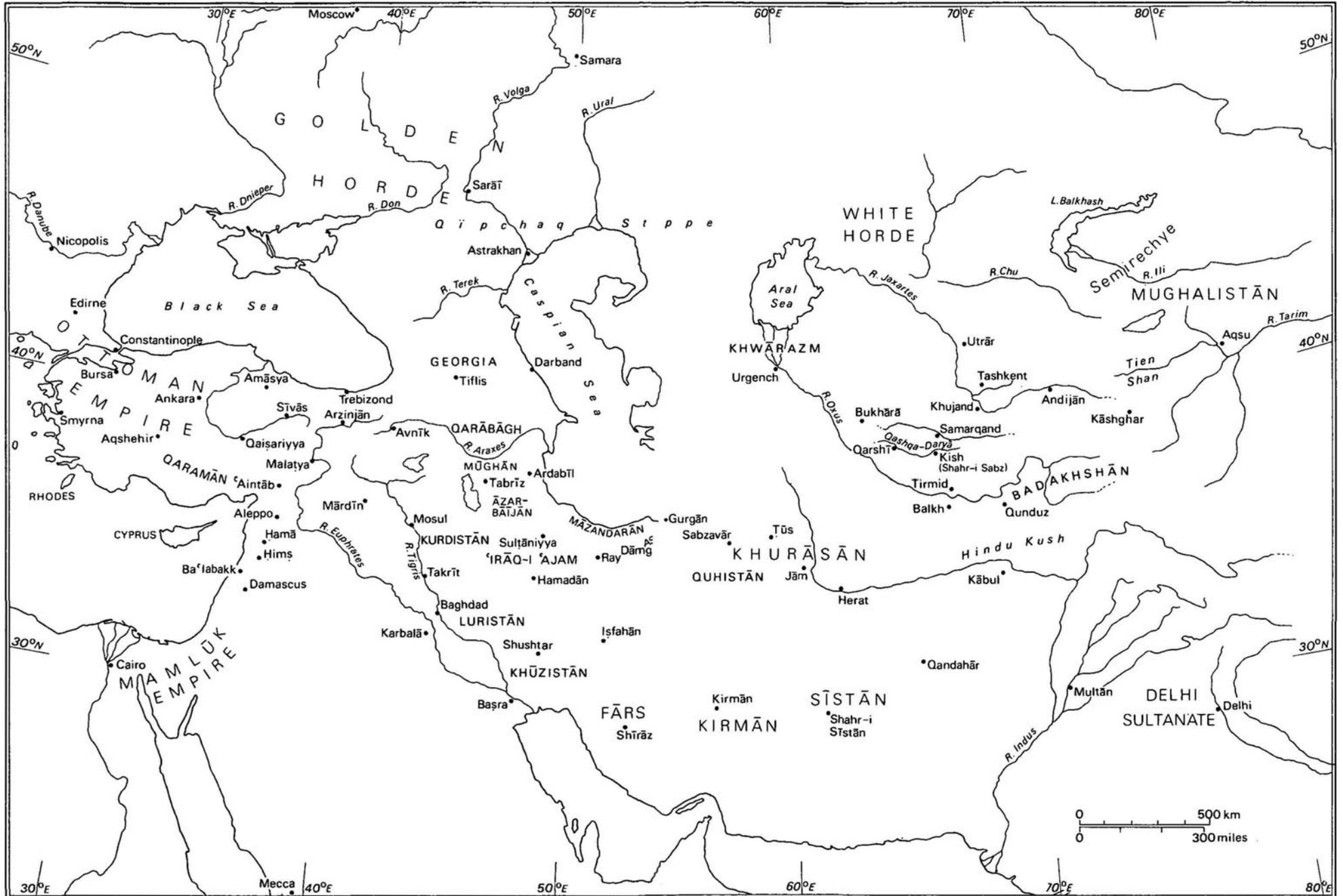
## AN ASSESSMENT OF TĪMŪR

Before assessing Tīmūr's significance in the framework of Iranian history, a brief sketch of his personality will be given, especially those features not yet touched upon. For this we are indebted to several excellent studies of Tīmūr that have appeared in the course of the last sixty years. Concerning Tīmūr and his times there is an abundance of source materials. They provide details not only of his campaigns, actions, and policies but also of his person, character and outlook on life. We can even say with certainty what he looked like. He was tall in stature and broad-shouldered. His right thigh bone had coalesced with the kneecap, which made him drag his right leg, and similar deformities in the right shoulder and lower arm deprived him of the normal use of his right hand. This coincides with what Ibn 'Arabshāh, who was a fourteen-year old boy when he saw Tīmūr, later wrote about his appearance from memory. It is also borne out by the account of the Castilian ambassador Clavijo, who met the conqueror a few weeks before his death and thus also speaks of his great age, his weakening eyesight and his already clouded judgment. There exists, in addition, a modern reconstruction by the Soviet anthropologist and sculptor M. M. Gerasimov, of Tīmūr's head which gives a reasonably accurate likeness of his facial features inasmuch as it has been modelled on his preserved skull.<sup>2</sup> It is not, however, adequate to help determine whether any of the illustrations that have been preserved in miniature paintings has the character of a portrait.

The information available about Tīmūr's character and personality is of course far less reliable than the data just mentioned, which are based

<sup>1</sup> Barthold questioned the accuracy of this date in view of the great distance from Utrār to Samarqand (400 km) which would have had to be covered at an average rate of 80 km a day: see "O pogrebenii Timura", trans. Rogers, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Reproduced in Hookham, *Tamburlaine*, facing p. 32.



Map. Tīmūr's campaigns

on examinations of his skeleton. Here we are dependent to a large extent on the accounts of writers who were anything but impartial, for example the polemical utterances of Ibn 'Arabshāh, who had every reason to be resentful of the conqueror, or the panegyrics of Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, who was in the pay of Tīmūr's descendants. More or less neutral observers, such as Clavijo or the North African philosopher of history Ibn Khaldūn, are rare exceptions, but there are many questions on which they remain silent.

One of Tīmūr's characteristics was truly extraordinary: his military genius. His victories and conquests, his strategic and tactical feats are almost without parallel in world history. The callousness and bestial cruelty with which he achieved them are similarly almost unrivalled. As a rule only those who surrendered without a struggle had any chance of escaping his dreadful vengeance. His imposing appearance, his exceptional physical strength, his powerful voice, his courage and resilience may well have contributed to his military rise to power, but such qualities are not in themselves enough to explain his unprecedented successes. The example set by heroes of the nomadic tradition in which he had grown up must certainly have played a great part. This is clear from the reverence he had for the Chingizids and his predilection for Mongol customs that culminate in warlike deeds and demand from their adherents above all else feats of military prowess. When such imponderables have been taken into account, together with the fact that from his earliest youth he enjoyed a first-rate military training, a great deal still remains which must be ascribed to natural talent.

Tīmūr's immense political and military power may be regarded as the ultimate achievement of a nomadic warrior tradition that was modelled on the exploits of the Mongols, but this is by no means the only reason why he is a figure of historical interest and significance. Whilst it is true that he criticised his fellow warrior and rival Amīr Ḥusain for fortifying the city of Balkh and thus violating nomadic tradition, to which any idea of fixed settlements was utterly foreign, he himself proceeded to establish a fixed capital of his own after Ḥusain had been defeated. At first it was intended to be Shahr-i Sabz, but in fact it turned out to be Samarqand. Tīmūr, the descendant of nomads, spent decades of his life making this city more and more splendid. He surrounded it with a ring of newly built villages named after the ancient centres of the Islamic world – Baghdād, Sulṭāniyya, Shīrāz, Miṣr (Cairo) and Dimashq (Damascus) – thus emphasising the unique

distinction and superiority of the new metropolis. His military campaigns provided the resources, materials and manpower needed to carry out the architectural projects he had in mind. The vast wealth of booty brought to Samarqand from the countries he had conquered, and the architects, craftsmen and artists selected from the populations of captured cities and deported to Transoxiana, all made it possible to develop the capital and other places as well. Many of the buildings Tīmūr had erected have been preserved to this day. Some have survived intact or have been restored, some are merely representative remains; but all testify to the artistic taste of the period and also, it is reasonable to assume, to the taste of their architect, Tīmūr himself.

The question now arises as to whether all this architectural activity stemmed from genuine cultural impulses or whether it was merely the product of Tīmūr's desire to provide as splendid a framework as possible for the power he had gained. We may perhaps be in a better position to answer this question if we first examine Tīmūr's attitudes to other areas of cultural life to see whether he had any feeling for such activities at all, and if so to what extent. Even though he could neither read nor write, Tīmūr had a command of Persian in addition to his Eastern Turkish mother tongue. Persian was the language not only of his court chroniclers, who had to read out their works for his critical comments, but also that of his chancellery.<sup>1</sup> His interest in history was not confined to contemporary chronicles but included also the past of the Turks, the Persians and the Arabs. Two other disciplines in which he is said to have shown an interest were medicine and astrology, although it is claimed that he did not avail himself of the latter for his personal use, preferring instead to seek guidance from oracles (*tafā'ul*) in the Qur'ān. Regarding his attitude to philosophy and logic the sources contain conflicting statements.

Tīmūr always had a number of scholars in close attendance, and he had a particular liking for the conversation of members of religious orders, theologians and representatives of spiritual life in general. Of these the most famous – if one ignores the meeting with Ḥāfiẓ which cannot be entirely ruled out but is not reliably documented – was Ibn Khaldūn (b. 732/1332, d. 808/1406). The Moroccan scholar has left us

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of this is provided by three documents: (1) Tīmūr's decree of 804/1401, referred to in n. 1 p. 45; (2) his letter to Charles VI of France, in Qazvīnī, "Nāma'ī"; and (3) his letter of 1395 to Bāyezīd, referred to in n. 2 p. 72. It goes without saying that the use of Persian was not confined exclusively to Tīmūr's chancellery.

detailed accounts of the conversations he had with Tīmūr in January and February 1401, when they met on numerous occasions in the military camp outside Damascus. The very fact that the conqueror knew of Ibn Khaldūn's reputation as a historian and philosopher, immediately enquired after him in Damascus, and received him time and again for lengthy conversations is in this context highly significant. The various discussions are said to have been conducted in a friendly – indeed positively cordial – atmosphere. This was probably because the historian with his engaging appearance, elegant bearing, shrewdness and eloquence was soon able to gain Tīmūr's sympathy. The fact that he mentioned several prophecies from his younger days that might be interpreted as relating to Tīmūr may also have played its part. In view of the large number of audiences he was granted and the favours readily bestowed upon him for his personal security and that of his friends and colleagues, as well as unconditional leave to return to Cairo, one can scarcely describe Ibn Khaldūn's account of his friendly reception by Tīmūr as exaggerated. The historian's Moroccan homeland figured largely in the discussions. The conqueror, who knew little about it, not only made him talk at some length about the country but also caused him to write a fairly detailed exposé of the subject during those weeks in Damascus. It is likely that they devoted even more time to historical questions, discussing the heroes of classical antiquity, the ancient East and Iranian mythology, as well as more recent matters such as the continuation of the 'Abbasid caliphate after the fall of Baghdad in the persons of the puppet caliphs at Cairo and the problem of their legitimacy. Tīmūr did not hesitate to recognise them, influenced as he probably was by the legitimist attitude which he himself observed towards his own Chingizid shadow khan, Maḥmūd, whose name had been duly inserted in the khuṭba of the Umayyad mosque following the capture of Damascus. The account of the conversations in Damascus conveys the impression that Tīmūr, even at an advanced age (he was then just completing his sixty-fifth year), was blessed with an active mind, intellectual curiosity, unclouded judgment and a remarkable degree of culture. Ibn Khaldūn expressly credits him with high intelligence, discernment and delight in the discussion of topics both familiar and unfamiliar.

As far as his religious attitudes were concerned, Tīmūr remained strongly attached to Mongol traditions; indeed, after his death his followers felt constrained to design his burial-place according to Mon-

gol custom and in defiance of Muslim beliefs.<sup>1</sup> Yet he frequently stressed his faith in Islam, claiming that he would make it the dominant religion in the world. As an example of this attitude one need only point to his conflict with the Mughals, whom he quite justifiably regarded as unbelievers. In general the evidence for his religious beliefs is conflicting: some factors suggest a commitment to Islam, others cast doubt upon it. His relations with representatives of the Muslim faith – theologians, members of religious orders and dervishes – have already been mentioned, as has his predilection for religious debate. One could also point to the sums he spent on religious causes, on sacred buildings and visits to Muslim holy places. On the other hand, it is impossible to ignore the fact that his troops desecrated mosques, transgressed the laws of sanctuary, murdered prayer-leaders in the Umayyad mosque of Damascus and killed Muslim men, women and children or took them captive by the thousand in order to sell them as slaves. Ibn al-Shiḥna records hearing Tīmūr vent his anger upon troops who were found to have decapitated people alive instead of collecting human heads severed from corpses, as they had been ordered, but such evidence scarcely mitigates the overall picture of disregard for Muslim lives.

Another contradictory aspect of Tīmūr's behaviour was his simultaneous observance of both the customary law of the Mongols (*törü, tura*) and the Muslim religious law (*Shari'a*). No less peculiar was his ambivalent attitude to the split within Islam between Sunna and Shī'a. In Māzandarān he punished Shī'i dervishes for disparaging the Companions of the Prophet, whereas in Syria he appeared as the protector of the Shī'a and the descendants of 'Alī. Here one must assume that either his contemporaries and associates in general or he himself lacked all awareness of the acute polarisation between the two views of Islam, or that he acted in a purely opportunist fashion, adopting religious causes for reasons of political expediency. Despite conflicting evidence in the sources Tīmūr cannot be regarded as an adherent of the Shī'a. Yet even though he was not a religious man, his personal development was influenced to a great extent by three theologians. They were Shams al-Dīn Kulāl, his father's spiritual adviser, who was greatly attached to him in his childhood; Zain al-Dīn Abū Bakr Tāyabādī Khwāfī, who is said to have protected him from the start of his military career; and Sayyid Baraka, his own spiritual adviser.

<sup>1</sup> Barthold, "O pogrebenii Timura", trans. Rogers, pp. 81–3: on the grave (*qabr*) itself lay his clothes (*aqmisha*), on the walls hung his weapons (*asliha*) and his personal effects (*amti'a*).

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Tīmūr's attitude to religion becomes somewhat clearer if it is seen against the background of his homeland Transoxiana. At that time the country was the meeting point of the Muslim sphere of influence (*Dār al-Islām*) and the as yet non-Islamic world (*Dār al-ḥarb*). The sedentary population, predominantly Persian, had adopted the Muslim faith. So too had the nomadic population, Chaghatai Turks and Mongols, although their Islamic beliefs were less orthodox and still left room for elements of Shamanism and other heathen notions. Alongside these were tribes which were totally unaffected by Islam and attracted the attention of itinerant Muslim mystics, who attempted to convert them. The majority of these were Ṣūfī dervishes whose views as a rule did not accord with strict Sunnī doctrine. One such itinerant monk was Ni'mat-Allāh Valī Kirmānī, the famous founder of a religious order, who when they met personally made so strong an impression on Tīmūr that the conqueror feared he might exert a suspect political influence and banished him from Transoxiana.<sup>1</sup>

The assertion that Tīmūr was a proponent of uncompromising orthodoxy does not bear investigation, any more than do attempts to compare him with Charlemagne, Charles V or Napoleon and other great historical figures. Not even the apparently convincing comparison with Chingiz Khān is well founded. The Mongol conqueror was a nomad, and remained a nomad all his life. The Chaghatai was himself no longer a nomad, even though he won his victories with predominantly nomadic troops and actually came from a nomadic environment. He had, after all, given up the vital principle of not becoming attached to any one place, at the latest when he made Samarqand his capital and set about developing it into a splendid metropolis with the help of the treasures, artists and craftsmen of the countries he had conquered. Of course he was familiar with the nomadic way of life and even liked to take part in it frequently, but from his earliest childhood he had connections with the settled rural population and also with city life, as can be seen from his knowledge of Persian alone.

Tīmūr, if one wants to characterise him aptly, was a Turkish aristocrat of Central Asian origin, in essence a military man but not lacking either in cultural interests or intellectual refinement. If anything, his respect for Mongol traditions strengthens rather than detracts from

<sup>1</sup> See Aubin's introduction to *Matériaux*, which contains three biographies of the saint; for a further biography recently discovered in Princeton by Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh, see *RK* XVI (1352), 285-7.

this view, as does his ideal of restoring Mongol world domination. His cruel methods of warfare were not unique to him, but corresponded to the almost inconceivably harsh practices of the period, as we have seen from those symbols of terror, the pyramids of skulls. What set him apart from all other contemporary princes was his mastery as a general and the unprecedented good fortune in battle that accompanied his career right up to the end. It is this that has guaranteed him a place not only in the annals of history but also in the popular legends and literatures of the East and the West even down to the present day.

Tīmūr's effective destruction of the military and economic might of the Golden Horde did a great deal to liberate Old Russia from the Tartar yoke under which it had suffered for so long. The catastrophic fall of the Ottoman empire after the defeat at Ankara and the capture of Sultan Bāyezīd, granted Constantinople, which was then close to falling, another fifty years' respite. In this way Tīmūr, who considered himself the standard-bearer of Islam, rendered the Christian powers valuable service. Needless to say, this was not his intention; indeed, it is doubtful whether he ever became aware of such causal connections. There can be even less question of agreements with the prince of Moscow and the Byzantine Emperor. It does, however, show that Tīmūr, who after all had undertaken to re-establish the Mongol world empire, was not always guided by global political considerations.

Just as it is difficult to discern any clear global policy behind his campaigns, so it is hard to see what were the objectives in his various campaigns in the case of victory. Nor is there much evidence of economic planning and consideration, apart from the primary need to supply Samarqand and a certain amount of assistance given to other cities of Transoxiana, notably Shahr-i Sabz. Tīmūr seems to have lacked any really clear sense of the need to make long term arrangements or to plan for the future. The conquered territories were held together as if in a vice by their fear of Tīmūr's policy of inexorable terror, as experienced by all those who disobeyed him or rebelled against him. In this sense the gruesome examples of Herat, Tabrīz, Iṣfahān and Baghdad had the desired effect, but in the long run they could not make up for Tīmūr's lack of statesmanly vision and his failure as a consequence to make appropriate structural changes.

Originally Tīmūr seems to have pursued a policy of setting up protectorates in the conquered territories under the control of mem-

bers of the previously ruling dynasties who were loyal to him. However, this solution only proved practical in exceptional cases because the danger of such governors defecting was too great. As his sons and grandsons, along with other princes of his dynasty, gradually grew older, Tīmūr therefore reverted to the old Turkish principle of appointing princely governors from among his own family. In such cases an experienced amīr would be assigned to the younger princes as *atabeg* or tutor, whose job it was to ensure that they exercised power correctly. This, at any rate, was the policy Tīmūr applied in Iran soon after his very first advance against Khurāsān, though he did not necessarily adhere to it in other countries as well. Thus Amīr Shāh Malik was appointed governor of Damascus, and Prince Abā Bakr received Baghdad. But Tokhtamish, on the other hand, was replaced by one of his Mongol relatives, while in India power was similarly entrusted to a native regent, and it was an Ottoman prince who after the battle of Ankara was set up as ruler in the Ottoman dominions.

Basic to this principle was of course the idea that power belonged not only to the ruler but to his whole family, or more precisely to all its male members. As far as the continuity of the dynasty was concerned the concept was not without its attendant risks, for an almost inevitable consequence of the death of the ruler was the creation of minor principalities, a problem that duly arose in Tīmūr's realm. In such cases it was necessary, if the empire was not to become fragmented, to neutralise all those princes who were surplus to succession requirements. The Ottomans solved the problem by murdering them. Later, the Safavids were to confine them strictly to the harem and to exclude them from all the affairs of state. In the case of the Timurids the problem never became quite so acute, because their dominions collapsed before such a stage was reached.

In a recent study of administration and authority in Tīmūr's empire, Beatrice Forbes Manz points out that the information on the subject available in the sources is inadequate. The very fact that such data are scarce has led Gafurov to conclude that Tīmūr had no interest in setting up a new system of administration in his dominions.<sup>1</sup> The large number of different – indeed in themselves conflicting – settlements he is reported to have made do in fact suggest that he was more concerned to limit the powers of the governors, and leave himself as much oppor-

<sup>1</sup> *Istoriya tadzhikskogo naroda* 11/1, 337.

tunity as possible for intervention, than to introduce unified and clearly defined forms of organisation. Certain features of Tīmūr's military organisation bear this out. Whereas the main body of the fighting forces remained under the control of the central authority, the governors had only relatively small contingents at their disposal. In this way units could be called away from a particular territory without any need to consult the local governor responsible. Even though we are only concerned with Iran, it is necessary at this point to consider some features at least of the Chaghatai military system, to which Tīmūr owed his victories and conquests. The nucleus of his armed forces was the Chaghatai units. Shortly after the invasion of Persia they were joined by Iranian troops such as, for example, the Khurasanian contingents under Sarbadār command, which were renowned for their efficiency and for which Tīmūr had a particularly high regard. In the tightness of their organisation and the strictness of their discipline Tīmūr's forces were more akin to the armies of Chingiz Khān than to any Islamic contingents of the period. No doubt this was Tīmūr's intention, but it would be wrong to assume that he modelled his forces on those of the Mongols in every respect. In fact, he also pursued quite new tactics of warfare to outwit his opponents, such as abruptly changing the direction of his marches, using novel methods of deployment and reorganising his troops into hitherto unknown combat units.

The military and administrative organisation of Iran under Tīmūr differed in essential points from that of Transoxiana. The seven *tūmens* of Transoxiana had no equivalent in Persia. Instead the country was divided into provinces or areas controlled by governors of the kind that, with the exception of Farghāna, did not exist in Transoxiana. Here especially there was a lack of uniformity. The Persian gubernatorial districts differed in size, and their legal arrangements were neither uniform from case to case nor over the course of time. Two of them are particularly notable – both because of their size and because of their titles, which were derived from older traditions. They are Tabrīz (or Sulṭāniyya) and Qandahār. Prince Mīrān Shāh was expressly appointed to “the throne of Hūlegü” when he received the governorship of Āzarbāijān, a post he occupied from 1396 until his dismissal in 1399. So too was his successor Muḥammad Sulṭān b. ‘Umar Shaikh on his appointment in 1401. Three years later he was in turn followed by prince ‘Umar, Mīrān Shāh's second son, who was to have jurisdiction over all the princes in western Persia, including Fārs and ‘Irāq-i ‘Ajam

as well as Mesopotamia. This immense power was in turn curtailed when the highly influential amīr Jahān Shāh was appointed as his guardian. As governor of Qandahār, Pīr Muḥammad b. Jahāngīr received, along with the territories stretching west of the Hindu Kush to the Indus, "the throne of Maḥmūd of Ghazna". Since such high ranking princes were appointed to these two governorships – no less than three of them were designated successors to the throne – Tīmūr must have considered them very important territories, perhaps even the most important of all after Transoxiana. In the case of Āzarbāijān and the areas belonging to it this clearly makes sense, but it is not immediately obvious why Qandahār, which was economically no match for Tabrīz, should have carried such weight. Evidently, however, it had a certain military and political significance, above all by virtue of its glorious past under the Ghaznavids, but also on account of its sheer size. Even in 1383, long before the Indian campaign, when it was first conferred upon a Timurid prince (Mīrān Shāh), it comprised Herat, Balkh, Qunduz, Baghlān, Badakhshān, Khuṭṭalān and Hīṣār.

There were of course other large provinces in Iran, especially Fārs with its capital Shīrāz, which was conferred upon 'Umar Shaikh and later upon his son Pīr Muḥammad (not to be confused with his namesake, Jahāngīr's son, who was prince of Qandahār). In addition there were any number of medium-sized and small governorships, such as Iṣfahān under Rustam, Hamadān under Iskandar, Kirmān under the amīr Idikū, Ray under Sulaimān Shāh and Fīrūzkūh under Iskandar Shaikhī. Although the majority of the governors were descendants or relatives of Tīmūr, such posts were also open to other deserving military commanders.

Appointments of this kind, as the example of Fārs suggests, could take the form of fiefs, called *suyūrghāl*, which were either hereditary (*suyūrghāl-i abadī*) or granted for a fixed duration.<sup>1</sup> The *suyūrghāl* was an extension of the older *iqṭā'* that covered administration and jurisdiction in addition to taxes and duties.<sup>2</sup> It probably dates from the turn of

<sup>1</sup> According to Shāmi I, 135: 'Umar Shaikh Bahādūr-rā ān mamlakat [sc. Fārs] ba-suyūrghāl farmūda ḥākīm-i muṭlaq gardānīd. This evidence is important because it is the sole instance mentioned by Shāmi of a large Persian territory being granted as *suyūrghāl*. The other examples he lists where a *suyūrghāl* was granted are: I, 77 (*il va vilāyat*); I, 95 (Kāvkarsh in the Nisā area as *suyūrghāl-i abadī*); I, 122 (*vilāyati mu'tabar*); I, 145 (*ān qal'at-rā*); and I, 153 (*vilāyat-i Akhlāṣ*). He employs the word *suyūrghāl(āt)* on numerous other occasions, but not with reference to enfeoffments. Cf. the etymology in *TMEN* I, 351–3.

<sup>2</sup> A view expressed time and again by Petrushevsky, e.g. in *Zemledelie*, p. 273.

the 7th–8th/13th–14th centuries, and thus cannot have been introduced by Tīmūr, as has been suggested,<sup>1</sup> but must have been in existence before his time. It was given specific form first by the Jalayirids,<sup>2</sup> then by the Türkmen confederations, and finally by the Safavids. Although further research into the matter is needed, the *suyūrghāl* appears to have had various functions in Tīmūr's time, such as the granting of territories, cities or strongholds, first to relatives of Tīmūr, secondly to deserving military commanders, and lastly to former holders of such possessions who had surrendered to the conqueror. Whether exemption from taxation was also granted in every case remains to be seen, although it was probably a regular feature of the last mentioned type of arrangement. What is certain is that the *suyūrghāl* was not yet of great importance during Tīmūr's reign, so that no comparison with the Safavid period is possible. Tīmūr's governors in Persia, even if they were his own close relatives and enjoyed wide ranging powers, were not given unlimited jurisdiction *vis-à-vis* the armed forces or the organs of civilian administration.<sup>3</sup> There is ample evidence to show that they were subject to direct supervision from above and that they could be deposed where necessary, as the fate of prince Mīrān Shāh demonstrates. When they were appointed, they were given the task of getting trade and business going again, putting the administration on a regular footing and bringing to heel or eliminating rebellious elements. In each case they were granted an initial period of a few years to accomplish such tasks, after which they were again required to report for military service.

Under this administration, however much it may have varied from one area to another, Iran as a whole gradually recovered from the heavy damage it had sustained during the period of turmoil resulting both from the collapse of the Il-Khanid empire and the conquest and subjugation of the country by the Chaghatais. No lesser an authority

<sup>1</sup> Belenitsky, "K istorii feodal'nogo zemlevladieniya", p. 46, and Yakubovsky, "Timur", pp. 66ff.

<sup>2</sup> The word *suyūrghāl* occurs fifteen times in Nakhchivānī's *Dastūr al-kātib*, dedicated to the Jalayirid Shaikh Uvais; but it is used not in the sense of "fief" or "transfer of territory" but rather of "favour", otherwise forming part of a compound verb meaning "to grant" or "to donate".

<sup>3</sup> In this respect it would be wrong to make too much of the fact that the formula *sözümiz* is used in documents of Mīrān Shāh dating from 796/1394 and 798/1396 and in a document of Muḥammad Sulṭān of 804/1401. It is particularly interesting to note that in addition to the preamble *Sulṭān Mahmūd yarlıghbindin*, which is common to all three documents, the last also contains the formula *Amir Tīmūr küregen sözümindin*. Cf. Fekete, *Einführung*, no. 1 (reviewed by Herrmann in *Der Islam* LV [1978], 147–9), and Herrmann, "Zur Intitulatio".

than Barthold claimed that Tīmūr's constructive achievements were just as astonishing as the destruction he wrought, and he has been praised in particular for the security that prevailed in his dominions. For instance, the example of a merchant's widow travelling on business, accompanied only by two young Indian slaves, has been cited to show that the route from Qandahār to Diyārbakr was absolutely safe. In dangerous areas robbery and theft were effectively curbed by the introduction of severe sanctions and also by military or police operations against notoriously disruptive elements amongst the nomadic populations of Türkmens, Kurds and Lurs. Not only Iran but Tīmūr's entire empire also enjoyed the benefit of an efficient postal system.

Apart from these by no means negligible achievements of Tīmūr and his governors, what other benefits did the conqueror bring to Iran? We know of irrigation works in the steppes of Mūghān and in Khurāsān that he either had installed or had restored to working order.<sup>1</sup> He is said to have shown great enthusiasm for the reconstruction or restoration of cities and villages destroyed during his conquests; indeed it is claimed that he could not bear to see a patch of arable land lying fallow.

As far as cultural life is concerned, one can point to the fact that Persian poetry continued to flourish, although there is relatively little evidence of its being directly encouraged by Tīmūr. Persian historical scholarship owes a greater debt to him, for he commissioned several works of distinction.<sup>2</sup> One can also name Persian scholars who enjoyed his patronage, and who wrote their works exclusively or predominantly in Arabic, e.g. the theologian and grammarian Sa'd al-Dīn Mas'ūd al-Taftazānī (d. 791/1389 or six years later), the famous mystic and logician 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413) and the renowned lexicographer Abū Ṭāhir b. Ya'qūb al-Shīrāzī al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 817/1414).

The lack of any well organised, uniform system of administration, in conjunction with the basically destructive attitude to ruling authority which ceased to be latent among the Tīmūrids when their eponymous leader died, did not detract from the gradual process of recovery in Persia, at least during the last phase of the conqueror's life. Once the news of his death had spread, however, these factors proved fatal both

<sup>1</sup> Barthold, *K istorii orosheniya Turkestana*, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> See *PL*, trans. Bregel' 11, 787-828; Hinz, "Quellenstudien"; Yakubovsky, "Timur", pp. 42-6; and Roemer, *Šams al-Ḥusn*, pp. 1-14.

to the continued existence of the empire and to the unity of Persia. But as far as the cultural foundations of the empire were concerned, the situation was quite different. Within the broad framework of his sphere of authority Tīmūr once more, and for the last time, re-established the total cultural entity of Iran – from Transoxiana to eastern Anatolia, from the Aral Sea to Mesopotamia and from the Caucasus to the Indus. It is idle to speculate whether or not he was himself conscious of this fact. Certainly he personified the transition from a nomadic to a sedentary way of life, and in this his contact with Iranian culture played a decisive rôle. For him, indeed, Iran may well have been the very epitome of culture. This can be seen from his tireless efforts over a period of decades to develop his homeland, and in particular the metropolis of Samarqand, by means of buildings, works of art and other cultural achievements, the vast majority of which bore the imprint of Persian taste, Persian artistic sensibility and Persian craftsmanship. The fact that scholars, poets, artists and craftsmen were selected from the population of conquered cities and deported to Samarqand is also clear proof of this, for Iranian elements predominated in these cultural circles both outside Persia and within. Of course, as a result of this influx and in other ways, that section of the capital's population which was responsible for its cultural development also contained a sprinkling of Turkish and, to a lesser extent, Mongol elements: in certain particulars they too left their mark on the resulting culture, but they had no effect on its essential features.

With the development of Samarqand the centre of gravity of Persian culture was switched to the periphery, a process not without precedent in the history of Iran. After Tīmūr's death, however, this was offset by the enforced exodus of numerous people and by the development of new centres of Iranian culture under the Timurids. Not only did the culture of Iran survive the trials inflicted upon its representatives by Tīmūr and his Chaghatais, but it also conserved sufficient energy to experience a further development in the constituent states that were formed after 807/1405. This was true even of Samarqand under Ulugh Beg, who had a marked preference for Mongol traditions. Tīmūr thus laid the foundations for the culture of the Timurids, which was one of the most important epochs in Persian cultural history.

## CHAPTER 3

# THE SUCCESSORS OF TĪMŪR

The empire Tīmūr left behind at his death was of vast extent. But as there existed neither an effective disposition for the succession nor a firm political organisation for the realm, its unity immediately crumbled. In spite of this, large portions of the territory remained for a long period in the hands of Tīmūr's successors, some of them ruling over independent states, some in the manner of joint rulers and local princes as governors of the individual provinces in the daughter empires which now emerged. The distinction of this period was no longer military in character, nor political; it is to be sought rather in an astonishing upsurge of cultural and intellectual life, the shaping of which involved both Persian and Turkish elements under Timurid control and largely also Timurid patronage. After some years of violent conflict for the possession of the throne, the countries of Central Asia and the Near East again enjoyed periods of relative quiet in comparison with the reign of Tīmūr. During such periods many of the old wounds inflicted by Tīmūr in his campaigns and acts of devastation were healed. Conditions in individual regions, however, varied considerably, and hardly anywhere was there any sure guarantee of tranquil life, since local risings, disputes concerning the succession and incursions on the part of warlike neighbours were a constant possibility.

The period of Timurid government in Iran extends from 807/1405 to 913/1507. Successors of Tīmūr did in fact rule long after this period, in the Mughal empire in India founded by Ṣahīr al-Dīn Bābur. However, that state had no immediate influence upon the development of Persia – at least, none of any major consequence. The importance of the Timurid age for Iran lies in the intellectual, religious, and cultural developments which were beginning to take shape at that time. These led at the end of the 9th/15th and the beginning of the 10th/16th century to radical changes in many parts of the Islamic world and particularly in the Iranian area.

### EARLY SUCCESSION DISPUTES

Of the conqueror's sons, Jahāngīr had died in 777/1375 and 'Umar Shaikh in 796/1394. The third, Mīrān Shāh, suffered from mental trouble as the result of an accident, while the fourth, Shāh Rukh, who

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had been born in 779/1377 and had a reputation for excessive modesty, peaceableness and personal piety, appeared to lack the necessary qualities to rule. Hence Tīmūr had appointed as his successor his grandson, Pīr Muḥammad b. Jahāngīr, who was thirty-one years of age and occupied at the time the governorship of Qandahār, the “throne of Maḥmūd of Ghazna”. In the absence of support from his relatives he was unable to succeed to the throne and was murdered by his own vizier in 809/1407.

It was clearly the case that the great empire which had been built upon the conquests of three decades was all too dependent on the personal authority of its founder. His sons and grandsons, whom he had appointed as governors of individual countries and provinces, where they reigned in effect as joint rulers, had been obliged to defer to his authority. With his death, however, that authority was at an end, and now they ignored his dispositions for the succession. Any one of them who was in a position to do so had his name incorporated in the official prayers and inscribed on the coinage in his own domain, so claiming for himself the status of an independent ruler. The governmental pattern Tīmūr had given to his empire thus revealed its weakness. It based itself on the conception commonly accepted among Turkish peoples that the state belonged not to the ruler alone, but to the whole ruling family, and hence that the territory entrusted to the administration of any one member of the family was his property.<sup>1</sup> Under a monarch as strong as Tīmūr such notions might not endanger the unity of the empire; but it was a very different matter in the situation obtaining after his death, when no personality comparable in terms of personal authority was at hand to take over the succession. The empire disintegrated into a number of separate principalities; and although a large number of them were later for some decades reintegrated into one state, the territorial extent of Tīmūr’s empire was never again attained. In the disputes over the succession and the confusions which now followed, various of his successors made war on one another, and certain amīrs who had deserved well of the state and had been entrusted by him with offices at court or in the provinces were inevitably drawn into the conflicts. Others involved were local princes

<sup>1</sup> For this and similar interpretations, see F. Köprülü, *Türk edebiyatında ilk mutasavvıflar* (Ankara, 1966), p. 161n., with reference to the Köktürks and the Saljūqs; O. Turan, *Selçuklular tarihi ve Türk-İslâm medeniyeti* (Ankara, 1965), p. 218, with reference to the Great Saljūqs; and Yınanç, “Akkoyunlular”.

who derived their claims from the period before the reign of Tīmūr and who now came forward to urge their own particular demands by force of arms. These struggles lasted for some years.

At the death of Tīmūr the troops of the main army formed part of his immediate train. Their amīrs really wanted to prosecute the war against China, if only with the limited aim of striking a blow against the Mughals in eastern Turkestan. They abandoned the project, however, when on the news of Tīmūr's death the succession did not work out according to plan. Samarqand, Tīmūr's capital, fell into the hands of Prince Khalīl Sulṭān b. Mīrān Shāh (b. 786/1384), who had distinguished himself in the campaign in India, had in 1402 received the governorship of Farghāna, and had enjoyed his grandfather's particular favour. While still in Tashkent he had forthwith had his amīrs pay homage to him; and regarding himself as Tīmūr's successor, he took possession of his treasure, which he squandered, and transferred the title and authority of khan, which had hitherto always been vested in a direct descendant of Chingiz Khān, to a Timurid prince. Sulṭān Ḥusain, the son of one of Tīmūr's daughters, who at first had also been a pretender to the throne, relinquished his claim and joined forces with Khalīl Sulṭān; though after various adventures he was to finish up in captivity and was put out of the way by Shāh Rukh while under detention in Herat.

Shāh Rukh marched his army from his city of Herat to the Oxus, but made no further offensive move against Khalīl, no doubt because the latter's father Mīrān Shāh represented a serious threat, advancing at the head of his troops from Āzarbāijān – which had been given into his charge by Tīmūr – with Abā Bakr, another of his sons, to the support of Khalīl. He later withdrew, however, without having carried out his intentions. Although there were a series of more or less unproductive negotiations between Shāh Rukh and Khalīl Sulṭān, the latter was finally reduced after many clashes even though he had frequently been victorious. His attitude had provoked general disapproval in Samarqand. His amīrs could not condone the powerful influence permitted to his wife Shād Mulk, as a result of which individuals of low rank were elevated to high positions to the disadvantage of Tīmūr's old companions-in-arms, while the widows and concubines of Tīmūr, not without some pressure, it seemed, were married off to men of humble origin. A famine which affected the land contributed its share to the general mood of discontent. And finally Khalīl Sulṭān fell into the hands of Khudāidād Ḥusain, a

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powerful tribal amīr, leader of the Dughlāt, a man who had once been his mentor. The latter accompanied him to Farghāna, had him proclaimed as ruler in Andijān, and himself went to join the Mughals in order to win their military support for further operations.

Meanwhile, on 27 Dhu'l-Hijja 811/13 May 1409, Shāh Rukh occupied his own home city of Samarqand without striking a blow. He declared his eldest son Ulugh Beg (b. 796/1394) governor of Transoxiana, with his seat of government in Samarqand, initially under the guardianship of Amīr Shāh Malik, one of Tīmūr's long-serving military commanders. Khalīl Sulṭān, whose wife had fallen into the hands of Shāh Rukh, now betook himself to his uncle in Samarqand, received his wife back from him and became governor of Ray. Shortly afterwards, however, on 16 Rajab 814/4 November 1411, he died there; whereupon Shād Mulk took her own life. Khalīl Sulṭān, whose generosity, liberality and credulity, and unquestioning love of Shād Mulk, contributed largely to his own failure, has gone down in history – not least for his literary and artistic leanings – as a romantic figure, difficult to place in the general picture of the age.

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Now that, at a point in time marked at the latest by the death of Khalīl Sulṭān and following the execution of Sulṭān Ḥusain and the murder of Pīr Muḥammad, all immediate rivals had left the scene, Shāh Rukh became Tīmūr's successor. In spite of the fact that his father had not considered him for the succession, he had made him governor of Khurāsān, the most centrally situated province of his empire, which he administered from Herat. He plainly felt so attached to that city that he declined to move to Samarqand and conducted the government of the Timurid empire from Herat until his death in 850/1447. Some years before the acquisition of Transoxiana Shāh Rukh had extended his domains to include Gurgān and Māzandarān. Insubordination on the part of his nephew Bāīqarā b. 'Umar Shaikh led to his mounting an expedition to Fārs in 817/1414. Two years later he succeeded in subduing Kirmān, where Sulṭān Uvais b. Amīr Idikū Barlās had reigned since 811/1408 as an independent ruler. The area under his control was further extended as the pull of his steadily consolidated dominion made itself felt, either by voluntary subordination on the part of minor princes or by means of alliances. Thus it was not long after the fall of Khalīl

Sultān that in a single year emissaries presented themselves from the land of the Uzbeks, from the Qīpchaq steppes, from Shīrvān, Hazār-jarīb, Sārī, Fīrūzkūh, Garmsīr and Qandahār.

Up until 823/1420 Shāh Rukh was able to assert his power in the eastern areas of Tīmūr's empire, central and southern Persia, but not in Mesopotamia and Āzarbāijān. After the death of Tīmūr, the Jalayirid Sultān Aḥmad b. Uvais, who had been expelled by Tīmūr fifteen years previously, once again seized power, only to be driven out of Tabrīz by Abā Bakr b. Mīrān Shāh. Shortly afterwards, however, an opponent made his appearance on the scene for whom Abā Bakr was no match. This was Qarā Yūsuf Qarā Quyūnlū, who defeated him, first in 809/1406 at Nakhchivān and then again in 810/1408 at the battle of Sardrūd near Tabrīz, in which Mīrān Shāh met his death. In 813/1410 this Türkmen prince defeated and destroyed also Aḥmad Jalāyir when the latter attempted to reconquer Tabrīz. As a result of his conquest of Diyārbakr and Baghdad and successful operations against Georgia and Shīrvān, and above all by the conquest of Sultāniyya, Tārum, Qazvīn and Sāva in 822/1419, he established himself as a dangerous neighbour to the Timurids.

The threat which arose in this advance of the Türkmens remained for decades the great unresolved problem of the Timurid empire. Shāh Rukh attempted to solve it by political and – in three campaigns against Āzarbāijān – military means, but never achieved more than partial success. Qarā Yūsuf, the real founder of the princely power of the Qarā Quyūnlū, an energetic and battle-hardened man, ended his days in Dhu'l-Qa'da 823/November 1420 as Shāh Rukh entered Āzarbāijān in the course of the first of these campaigns, so that the Timurid troops were at first able to occupy not only Tabrīz but also Āzarbāijān and Armenia without difficulty; but even so Shāh Rukh was obliged to assert his sovereignty in the summer of the following year in a battle of several days' duration against the Türkmen prince's sons. However, as Iskandar b. Qarā Yūsuf contrived to re-establish the power of the Qarā Quyūnlū in the years that followed, another Āzarbāijān campaign proved to be necessary in 832/1429. Once again, Shāh Rukh won the day against the Türkmens. But his attempt to solve the problem by installing a Qarā Quyūnlū prince named Abū Sa'īd under Timurid suzerainty met with only short-lived success; for in 835/1431 Qarā Iskandar reoccupied Tabrīz and had Abū Sa'īd executed. Faced with the extension of Qarā Iskandar's control over an ever wider area, Shāh

## REIGN OF SHĀH RUKH

Rukh early in 838/near the end of 1434 resolved upon his third and last campaign against north-west Persia. This campaign, although it did not achieve a final settlement of the Türkmen question, at least brought about one which was adequate for the remainder of his reign, namely the installation of Qarā Iskandar's brother Jahān Shāh as the Timurid governor of Tabrīz.

It is noticeable that Shāh Rukh, at least in the early part of his reign, frequently made transfers among the princes who held court as governors in the provinces of his empire. Among those transferred were not only Khalīl Sultān (from Samarqand to Ray) but also 'Umar Mīrzā (from Āzarbāijān to Astarābād), Iskandar Mīrzā (from Farghāna and Kāshghar to Hamadān and later to Shīrāz), and Bāīqarā Mīrza (from Shīrāz to Qandahār and Garmsīr), to mention only a few examples. It is reasonable to assume that the motive behind such measures, which were quite often directly connected with acts of insubordination on the part of those affected, was the desire to ward off possible hankerings after independence. Certainly Shāh Rukh, for all his precautions, was not spared dangerous rebellions on the part of the Timurid princes. And though he was not hard put to it to suppress them in the eastern parts of his empire, it was a different matter in his western dominions. Over and over again he had to intervene with armed might against recalcitrant relatives, as for instance in 816/1413 against his nephew Iskandar b. 'Umar Shaikh, who once before, in 812/1409, had encouraged his brother Pīr Muḥammad to attack Kirmān and, moreover, after the latter's murder had himself assaulted Iṣfahān and Kirmān, systematically devastating the country in the process. Mention has already been made of Shāh Rukh's campaign against Bāīqarā b. 'Umar Shaikh, who not long afterwards rose in rebellion in Shīrāz. Even shortly before his death, Shāh Rukh, already weakened by age and ill-health, again had to march to the west, where one of his grandsons, Sultān Muḥammad b. Bāīsunqur, had risen in revolt. In Ramaḍān 850/December 1446 he managed to bring the latter's supporters to justice in Sāva, but the prince himself had eluded his grasp and escaped to Luristān. Three months later, on 25 Dhu'l-Ḥijja 850/13 March 1447, Shāh Rukh died in winter quarters at Ray.

At first sight his long reign seems to yield a fairly favourable overall picture.<sup>1</sup> Although Timūr's enormous empire was not preserved in its

<sup>1</sup> For a particularly favourable view, see Togan, "Büyük türk hükümdarı Şahruh".

entirety under his rule, it remained a coherent dominion of considerable extent in Central Asia and the Near East. In spite of protracted and sanguinary conflicts at home, which inevitably brought misery and suffering to the populations affected, the state was preserved for four decades from the anarchy which threatened to engulf it upon Tīmūr's death; and in some parts of the empire there was an improvement not only in economic standards but also in cultural achievements. It must be admitted that the credit for the turn of the tide and these more hopeful developments was not all – perhaps not even primarily – Shāh Rukh's. Although certain aspects of his character are in marked and refreshing contrast to the hardness and ruthlessness of his father, there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that he should be credited with outstanding skill as a statesman, and even his character is not a matter of agreement amongst modern historians. It is rather the case that at the court of Herat other personalities exercised a more powerful influence on government than the ruler himself, especially his first wife, Gauhar Shād, who together with her sons and a few state officials made it her business to provide for orderly continuity in the state's affairs, which contributed to the welfare of wide sections of the population. The highest offices of state had indeed been entrusted to men of unusual ability, some of whom, moreover, remained in office for a very long period, with the result that they had full scope to develop their talents. Examples are Jalāl al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh, who was for thirty-five years supreme commander of the armed forces; Ghiyāsh al-Dīn Pīr 'Alī Khwāfī, who was supreme secretary for thirty-one years; and Amīr 'Alīka Kōkūltāsh, vizier in charge of the finances of the state for forty-three years.

Shāh Rukh's piety, indeed bigotry in religious matters, is well known. He regarded himself as an Islamic ruler for whose actions the prescriptions of the Sharī'a were authoritative, not the Mongol traditions which had of course meant so much to Tīmūr that he called himself Küregen (i.e. bound by marriage ties to the dynasty of Chingiz Khān) and was constantly accompanied by a Chingizid shadow khan even when he had reached the peak of his power. Shāh Rukh's son Ulugh Beg adhered to this tradition in Samarqand by taking the title Küregen and immediately after the deposition of Khalīl Sulṭān, whose Timurid shadow khan disappeared from Transoxiana simultaneously with him, appointed a Chingizid to be khan in Samarqand. In contrast, Shāh Rukh called himself neither Khān nor Küregen (though he did bear the title Bahādūr accorded him by Tīmūr) and appointed no shadow khan in Herat.

## ULUGH BEG

Shāh Rukh's relations with China,<sup>1</sup> in which Ulugh Beg was also involved, are renowned. They were not restricted to the exchange of ambassadors but included also trading contacts. Other commercial links, too, especially with Egypt and India, were fostered. Source material contains in addition details of the encouragement of agriculture. River control and irrigation schemes in the Herat and Marv regions are also mentioned.

The reign of Shāh Rukh saw significant advances in cultural life, especially in the sphere of the arts and intellectual inquiry. These included painting, especially miniatures and calligraphy, architecture, music, historiography,<sup>2</sup> and the law and theology of Islam. The encouragement of artistic and intellectual achievement, however, was due not only to the ruler but also to his sons and other members of the family, and to certain highly placed members of his court. The interest of Prince Bāisunqur (d. 837/1433) in promoting calligraphy is well known; so, too, is the patronage at Shīrāz of Prince Iskandar b. 'Umar Shaikh, one of whose protégés was the mathematician and astronomer Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Jamshīd b. Mas'ūd Kāshī, who later lived in Samarqand. Poetry, too, in this period is marked by such distinguished names as those of the Ṣūfī poets Qāsim al-Anvār and Shāh Ni'mat-Allāh Valī. In addition to Persian literature the beginnings of an eastern Turkish literature are also to be discerned. Even though the cultural achievements of the Timurid age were only just moving towards their climax, however, the death of Shāh Rukh saw the onset of the decline of the Timurid empire as the leading political power in Central Asia and the Near East.

## ULUGH BEG AND HIS RIVALS

Shāh Rukh had made no disposition for the succession, but it was understood that he would prefer to see Muḥammad Jūkī, a man of some forty years of age then ruling as governor in Balkh, as the next occupant of the throne. The latter, however, died three years before his father, so that of Shāh Rukh's five sons only Muḥammad Taraghai,

<sup>1</sup> Quatremère, "Mémoire" and "Notice"; also *A Persian Embassy to China ... from Zubdat'ī Tawārikh of Hafiz Abru*, trans. K.M. Maitra, new ed. (New York, 1970); D.M. Dunlop, "Hāfiz-i Abru's version of the Timurid Embassy to China in A.D. 1420", *Glasgow Univ. Oriental Soc. Transactions* XI (1942-4), 15-19; and H. Serruys, *The Tribute System and Diplomatic Missions, 1400-1600* (Brussels, 1967), p. 624.

<sup>2</sup> As instanced in the dedication of the *Muntakhab al-tawārikh* to Shāh Rukh, on which see Hinz, "Quellenstudien", p. 362.

known as Ulugh Beg, survived him. Yet at the time of his father's death he was neither in the royal entourage nor in Herat. In fact he had only ever made an occasional appearance at court as a guest and had never been invited to share in the imperial government; since 812/1409 he had been merely a more or less independent local prince in Samarkand. He had up to this time had coins struck bearing the name of his father, though his edicts were issued in the name of the Chingizid shadow khan he himself appointed; and he had provided military contingents for his father's campaigns, but had never personally served in command. He appears not to have been required to make contributions to the central treasury in Herat, or at any rate he never in fact did make any. The question of the succession under the existing circumstances could have been a comparatively straightforward matter. Nevertheless, as early as 848/1444, when Shāh Rukh had fallen ill and his impending death had to be reckoned with, there had been a kind of prelude to the confusions which now ensued in real earnest. At that time, Muḥammad Jūkī had gone to Herat, hoping to succeed to his father's throne, while the troops, at the direction of Gauhar Shād, were quickly sworn in allegiance to 'Alā' al-Daula b. Bāisunqur (b. 820/1417), in confident but, as things turned out, misplaced expectation of a change of ruler. The latter, together with Ulugh Beg's third son 'Abd al-Laṭīf, had previously been a supporter of the princess in her conduct of government affairs.

It looked almost as if the demise of Shāh Rukh was going to produce a repetition of what had happened at the death of Tīmūr. Again there was no one outstanding figure strong enough to assert himself against the aspirations to power of the numerous princes. But there the parallel ends, for on this occasion there was nobody on the scene, like Shāh Rukh in his day, to profit from the general turn of events or to enlist competent aides in order to build up a centralised administration and thereby to preserve the unity of the empire. It soon became evident, moreover, that what had been experienced at the time of Shāh Rukh's illness in 848/1444, far from easing the question of the succession, had if anything exacerbated it. Gauhar Shād, who had accompanied Shāh Rukh on his last campaign, induced 'Abd al-Laṭīf, who was also present in the royal camp, to take over supreme command of the army. Abu'l-Qāsim Bābur b. Bāisunqur (b. 825/1422), together with Khalīl Sulṭān b. Muḥammad Jahāngīr, Shāh Rukh's daughter's son, plundered the main baggage-train of the army and marched to

Khurāsān. 'Alā' al-Daula, who had remained in Herat, at first played a waiting game, but then had himself proclaimed ruler when he realised how the situation was shaping. He distributed his grandfather's treasure among his troops and had Mashhad occupied. Ulugh Beg, who regarded himself as his father's only rightful successor, called his troops together and advanced as far as the Oxus. However, he found himself prevented from further immediate action because Mīrzā Abū Bakr, governor of Khuttalān, Arhang and Sālī Sarāī, had crossed the river ahead of him and occupied the region of Balkh, Shabūrghān and Qunduz as far as Badakhshān and expelled his brother Muḥammad Qāsim, to whom Balkh had been entrusted after the death of their father Muḥammad Jūkī.

Such was the situation at the beginning of the struggles for power which developed after the death of Shāh Rukh among his descendants, lasting the whole two years of Ulugh Beg's reign, and which has been described in detail by Barthold in his classic study of Ulugh Beg. In the struggle of each party against every other which now began, the fortunes of war ebbed to and fro, but no decisive victory was won, nor were clear alignments established. The various parties agreed to certain alliances, frontier settlements and other arrangements, which led in some instances to a temporary lull in hostilities. But these agreements were hardly ever kept for any length of time and their infringement in each case became the cause of renewed conflict. Various princes were captured, regained their freedom, or were killed.

Ulugh Beg did achieve a certain measure of success. He contrived, for example, to foil the plans of Prince Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad Jūkī, and in the spring of 852/1448 he won a victory over his nephew 'Alā' al-Daula at the battle of Tarnāb and occupied Mashhad, while his son 'Abd al-Laṭīf conquered the fortress of Herat. Yet his political and military skill was nowhere near sufficient to master the complexities of the situation. The occupation of Herat, important though it was in strategic terms and still more — as the former capital — in a psychological sense, was only a step in the right direction, since he did not wish to remain there but intended to make Samarqand the capital of the Timurid empire. The military enterprises he carried out from Herat did not bring about the consolidation of his power, but rather led to the most detrimental of results for the population of Khurāsān and their economic life through the devastation of the countryside which was involved. In Transoxiana at this period it was the same

## THE SUCCESSORS OF TĪMŪR

disastrous story. The continuing confusions had remained no secret to the Timurids' neighbours, especially the Türkmens in the west and the Uzbeks in the east. The first move was made by the Uzbek khan Abu'l-Khair, who invaded Transoxiana and marched through the region around Samarqand, looting and burning as he went.

When Ulugh Beg left Herat for Samarqand late in 852/at the end of 1448, taking his father's body with him, the problems of Khurāsān were no nearer solution than they had ever been, not to mention those of other parts of the empire: indeed he was not even able to march unimpeded to Transoxiana. First a detachment dispatched by Abu'l-Qāsim Bābur inflicted heavy losses on him; and then, to make matters worse, his troops were ambushed by the Uzbeks while crossing the Oxus before reaching their intended winter quarters at Bukhārā.

To summarise the first phase of the conflicts arising from the succession to Shāh Rukh, it remains only to be said that two years after his death no centralised form of government had been achieved, and what was emerging was rather a tripartite division of his empire. Ulugh Beg, who may be regarded as his father's rightful successor, evidently imagining that he could make Samarqand the capital once again as in the days of his grandfather Tīmūr, had – by yielding up Khurāsān as the real base from which to extend his rule over the whole of Shāh Rukh's territory – *de facto* limited the area of his control to Transoxiana. To begin with, Abu'l-Qāsim Bābur asserted himself in Khurāsān, conquering both Mashhad and Herat, while 'Alā' al-Daula, after the defeat at Tarnāb, was soon forced to abandon his plan of marching on Samarqand and had to be content with a small territory in south-western Afghanistan. From here he was able in the next few years to intervene in the struggle for Khurāsān, but without any enduring success. Central Persia ('Irāq-i 'Ajam) and Fārs passed into the control of Sulṭān Muḥammad b. Bāisunqur, who after the death of his grandfather at once emerged from his hiding-place in Luristān and played a significant part in the ensuing struggles for the succession. Finally, the supremacy of the Timurids over the Türkmens principality of the Qarā Quyūnlū under Jahān Shāh in north-west Persia and eastern Anatolia, which Shāh Rukh had secured in three campaigns, had become virtually meaningless in the present circumstances. It was not to be long before Jahān Shāh's expansionist potential would be made evident, to the detriment of the Timurids.

Ulugh Beg had no further opportunity to put into effect his

intention of again subjugating Khurāsān in the spring of 853/1449, since his strained relations with ‘Abd al-Laṭīf, who ruled in Balkh, led to the latter breaking into open rebellion around this juncture. During his time in Herat Ulugh Beg had on various occasions humiliated his son, in connection, it would seem, with the planned transference of the capital city. When his pent-up anger was still further increased after his father’s departure, the result was a military confrontation in the autumn of 853/1449, the consequences of which were decisive. Ulugh Beg was defeated near Samarqand at the township of Dimashq. Previously a series of uprisings had broken out in the capital against Ulugh Beg’s appointed governor, his youngest and favourite son ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, in which it would appear that representatives of the religious classes had played some part, just as they had in the downfall of Ulugh Beg’s predecessor Khalīl Sulṭān in 811/1409. The ruler had been able to restore order, but dissatisfaction and resentment had continued. After his defeat, and plainly in association with these events, his stock had sunk so low that wherever he sought shelter he could find no refuge, not even in his own capital. He was only able to escape the imminent threat of being captured and handed over to his victorious son by voluntarily giving himself up. He received permission to undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca, as often happened in such cases, but was killed on the journey in accordance with the verdict which ‘Abd al-Laṭīf had caused to be passed on him in his absence and without his knowledge at a false trial. This was in Ramaḍān 853/October–November 1449. Some days later the same fate overtook ‘Abd al-‘Azīz; but in his case no legal means had been invoked.

This sorry end after a rule of only two years, consisting of a series of political and military failures and errors, is by no means what has gone down in history as the dominant image of the man Ulugh Beg. What are remembered as significant are rather the cultural achievements brought about in the course of his reign of almost four decades as prince of Transoxiana, achievements either associated with his name or attributed to him personally. We may mention his initiation of building projects in Samarqand and Bukhārā or his interest in problems of Persian poetry, which he discussed in a correspondence with his artistically inclined brother Bāisunqur. Mention may also be made of the fact that certain Chaghatai poets eulogised him in Turkish verse, though it is not known what attitude he adopted towards the eastern Turkish literature which was just emerging during his lifetime. A

historical work, the *Tārīkh-i arba' ulūs*, a history of the four states which came into being at the disintegration of the Mongol empire, is reputed to have been written at his behest.

Though such interests and activities may have encouraged the view of him as "the scholar on the throne", they did not succeed in really validating it. What did, however, was his involvement in the *'ulūm-i riyāzī va ḥukmī* – the exact sciences as one would say nowadays. In this he was in line with an attitude of mind that had prevailed in the Near East, and especially in Persia, since the rule of the Mongols and amounted to a view of scientific findings as being of lasting benefit to mankind in contrast to theology and literature, whose significance in terms of time and also – on account of language differences – in terms of space could only ever be limited. Among the scholars available to provide Ulugh Beg with instruction or collaborate with him in scientific research a number of astronomers and mathematicians are noteworthy, especially Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Mūsā b. Qāzizāda Rūmī, Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Jamshīd b. Mas'ūd Kāshī, 'Alā' al-Dīn b. Muḥammad Qūshchī and Mu'īn al-Dīn Kāshānī.<sup>1</sup> Ulugh Beg's observatory in Samarqand, dating from 823/1420, is famous (its remains were excavated in 1908); yet the period during which it was in use did not outlast the death of its founder. His writings on astronomy won him an enduring reputation. His astronomical tables, usually known as *Zīj-i Ulugh Beg* or *Zīj-i jadīd-i sulṭānī*, represent a climax of achievement in that science, which declined in the Islamic world after his death.

Ulugh Beg's splendid style in Samarqand did not lag behind that of the court of Herat, even in his father's lifetime. However, he found his model not in Shāh Rukh but in his grandfather Tīmūr. The very choice of royal title, already mentioned, reveals that his pattern was not the figure of the Muslim prince but that of the Mongol ruler, for whom the prescriptions of the Yasa rather than those of the Sharī'a were authoritative. Thus he was given to such secular delights as cannot be reconciled with the religious law of Islam. In Samarqand there were carousals with music and singing. Wealthy inhabitants of other cities even had musicians and singers of both sexes come from Samarqand. As a result of his predilection for such pleasures Ulugh Beg came into conflict with certain religious circles, not the representatives of the official theology, on whose support he could broadly count, but the

<sup>1</sup> See below, chapters 10 and 11.

adherents of Folk Islam, as embodied in the manner of life of *ṣūfīs* and dervishes, usually adherents of the Naqshbandiyya order. The situation was therefore the precise opposite of that in Islamic lands situated further west, in which the theologians figured as the guardians of the religious law, whereas *ṣūfīs* and dervishes gave their allegiance to more liberal notions in which the requirements of the religious law could easily be relegated to an unimportant place.

Ulugh Beg was a cultured prince of keen intellectual interests; but he was not a man of action and he lacked political and military talent. Thus after a defeat which he had sustained in the spring of 830/1427 in a battle against a small force of Uzbeks he took no further part in any campaign for twenty years, and even in the dispute over the succession following the death of Shāh Rukh he did not distinguish himself through bold action or strategic acumen. In contrast to his pious, not to say bigoted, father he was a man of *savoir vivre* and cheerful demeanour. Towards his subjects he was, it seems, an easy-going if not a popular prince. At all events, he contented himself with a modest land rate, though he insisted implacably on the tax imposed on commerce and trades, the *tamghā* – a tax, moreover, which conflicted with the Sharī‘a.

ABŪ SA‘ĪD AND THE LOSS OF WESTERN PERSIA

‘Abd al-Laṭīf, who succeeded his father, was, like him, interested in secular scholarship. He introduced a stricter discipline among the population and the military than had been the case hitherto. However, by a pious personal life and respectful treatment of the dervishes he managed to secure the goodwill of those religious circles which had been offended by Ulugh Beg’s habits. Since many amīrs could not forget the murder of his father and brother, a conspiracy was eventually mounted against him, to which he fell victim after a reign of only six months, in Rabī‘ I 854/May 1450.

‘Abd-Allāh b. Ibrāhīm (b. 836/1433), another grandson of Shāh Rukh, who replaced him on the throne, also enjoyed only a short reign. Earlier, Fārs had been entrusted to him by his grandfather, but he had been obliged to withdraw from there in 851/1447 under attack from Sultān Muḥammad’s troops. As an adherent of Ulugh Beg he had been imprisoned at the latter’s fall. His release and installation as sultan, for which he had to show his recognition by handsome gifts of money to the troops, did not meet with universal approval. ‘Alā’ al-Daula b.

Bāisunqur, whose ambitions have already been mentioned in connection with the death of Shāh Rukh, rose against him, though with only passing success. Far more dangerous, however, was the reaction in Bukhārā, the traditional centre of dervishism in Transoxiana. There, Abū Saʿīd b. Muḥammad (b. 1424), a great-grandson of Tīmūr of the lineage of Mīrān Shāh, who had also been incarcerated at the death of Ulugh Beg, was released from captivity and proclaimed ruler. After some initial setbacks he eventually marched from Tashkent to Samarqand with the military support of the Uzbek Abu'l-Khair Khān, defeated his rival in Jumādā I 855/June 1451, took him prisoner and had him executed, causing himself to be enthroned instead. Abū Saʿīd was able to maintain his authority for some considerable time, in fact until the winter of 873/1468-9, and he even succeeded in bringing about a stabilisation of the internal situation in his dominions. However, these only embraced western Turkestan, Khurāsān, Māzandarān and parts of present-day Afghanistan (Kābulistān and Zābulistān), so that it is not possible to speak of a restoration of the Timurid empire, even to the extent of Shāh Rukh's territorial possessions. But even such limited successes were not achieved without warfare.

Since the fall of Ulugh Beg, changes had also come about beyond Transoxiana. Sulṭān Muḥammad b. Bāisunqur, not content with Fārs and ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam, had advanced on Khurāsān and compelled Abu'l-Qāsim Bābur in an initially victorious campaign culminating, in March 1450, in a battle at Mashhad, to cede to him certain parts of his domain. Somewhat later, however, the fortunes of war turned against him. Abu'l-Qāsim took him prisoner and had him executed, re-established his authority over the whole of Khurāsān, and then marched to Shīrāz to incorporate his vanquished opponent's lands into his own empire.

He had proceeded to appoint governors for Qum and Sāva when Jahān Shāh of the Qarā Quyūnlū, who had hitherto remained loyal to the vassal relationship instituted by Shāh Rukh, advanced westwards from Tabrīz and threatened the two cities. His action had in a sense even been provoked by Bābur, and not merely by the unstable political conditions prevailing in eastern Persia and Transoxiana; for Bābur, in spite of having placed his name on the coinage and in the public prayers, the privileges of the Muslim sovereign, had merely communicated the news of his victory over Sulṭān Muḥammad to him in a letter bearing the royal seal rather than in the form of an edict

(*nishān*), with the demand which might be expected from a successor of Shāh Rukh, to the effect that henceforth Jahān Shāh must pay him tribute money (*bāj*), as formerly laid down by Shāh Rukh, and the taxes (*kharāj*) for the province of Āzarbāijān.

Bābur, who had already set off to relieve Qum and Sāva, was obliged to return to Herat, ostensibly because of the news of intrigues on the part of ‘Alā’ al-Daula, in league with the Türkmens, but more likely as a result of the massive onslaught of the troops led by Pīr Būdāq, Jahān Shāh’s son. The way was now wide open for the further expansion of the Qarā Quyūnlū. An additional factor was that they could count on a friendly attitude on the part of certain groups among the population in many places. Hardly one of the Timurid princes and other governors was able to hold at bay the Türkmens assault for any length of time. Thus in Rajab 856/August 1452 the control over almost the whole of Persia and Mesopotamia established by Tīmūr seventy years before came to an end, with the exception of Abarqūh, which was not taken until a year later, and Kirmān, which was temporarily reconquered and was intended to have served as a base position for more ambitious operations by the Timurid forces. These losses were final, and a few thrusts against Ray at a later date could do nothing to alter the situation.

An invasion of Transoxiana carried out by Bābur as a reply to the conquest of Balkh by Abū Sa‘īd in the spring of 858/1454 from Herat led to the siege of Samarqand. Apparently it was only under pressure from the Naqshbandī shaikh ‘Ubaid-Allāh Ahrār that Abū Sa‘īd resolved to defend the city. But hostilities were finally brought to an end by the mutual recognition of the Oxus as frontier. This was agreed in a treaty of peace which remained effective until the death of Bābur in 861/1457. Bābur’s successor, his eleven-year-old son Maḥmūd, was forced out of Herat by Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alā’ al-Daula after only a few weeks. The latter himself, however, had to flee in Sha‘bān 861/July 1457 from Abū Sa‘īd, who had never abandoned the idea of annexing Khurāsān. Nevertheless, Abū Sa‘īd did not succeed in capturing the citadel of Herat, but took up winter quarters in Balkh.

The conflicts going on among the Timurids induced Jahān Shāh, after his amazing successes in central Persia, Fārs and Mesopotamia, to attempt further advances eastwards. Having occupied Gurgān, he defeated Ibrāhīm in a battle near Astarābād. The vanquished Timurid withdrew to Herat, where he was joined shortly afterwards by his father ‘Alā’ al-Daula and his forces. Yet there was no question of the

pair offering resistance to Jahān Shāh, so that there was nothing left to them but flight, whilst the Türkmen prince made his entry into Herat on 15 Sha‘bān 862/28 June 1458. Four months later Pīr Būdāq also arrived in the city with his troops, clearly in order to strengthen the Türkmen forces. Jahān Shāh, now installed in the capital city of his former overlord Shāh Rukh, promptly had his name incorporated into the official prayers and inscribed on the coinage.

It was soon evident, however, that he had outreached himself by his advance into such remote regions. He had to contend with the same handicap as the Timurids, namely the unceasing struggle for power on the part of the princes of his own house; ambitions which were all the more dangerous for him as his capital Tabrīz was so far distant. Faced with a revolt led by his son Ḥasan ‘Alī, who had managed to escape from the fortress of Mākū where he had been held prisoner, he saw no other course open to him but to return to Āzarbāijān. Abū Sa‘īd, who had not remained in ignorance of his opponent’s tight situation, demanded in the ensuing negotiations that all Timurid possessions which Jahān Shāh had conquered should be handed back. In the event, all he secured was the return of Khurāsān.

Qarā Quyūnlū rule over Herat remained no more than an episode in the history of the Timurids without other direct results of any consequence. No more Türkmen operations were undertaken, nor were the Türkmen governors able to hold Khurāsān for any length of time after this. Quite soon, more or less friendly relations were established between Abū Sa‘īd and Jahān Shāh, since each of them had enough to do to keep his own house in order. Thus we know of Türkmen missions in 1461, 1463, 1465 and 1466 which were amicably received in Herat. On balance, the whole train of events had tended to consolidate the power of Abū Sa‘īd. In the very next spring he defeated ‘Alā’ al-Daula, Ibrāhīm and Sulṭān Sanjar b. Aḥmad b. ‘Umar Shaikh in the vicinity of Sarakhs. He had Sanjar, who had fallen into his hands, executed, but the two other princes managed to escape. However, they both died soon afterwards, Ibrāhīm within only a few months and his father the following year. And as, in addition, Bābur’s son Maḥmūd met his death about this time, Abū Sa‘īd was able to consolidate his power still further, being rid of so many rivals, and even to extend it to Māzandarān and Sīstān.

Meanwhile, Prince Ḥusain Bāīqarā (b. 842/1438), a grandson of ‘Umar Shaikh who had formerly lived in Khwārazm, had appeared

upon the scene in Khurāsān. After Jahān Shāh's withdrawal from Herat he succeeded in defeating the latter's governor of Gurgān, Ḥusain Beg Sa'dlī, the chief of one of the most important Qarā Quyūnlū tribes, and taking over his territory. Although, to begin with, he recognised Abū Sa'īd's sovereignty, as soon as the latter was involved in putting down a rising in Transoxiana in 1460, he lost no time in occupying Māzandarān, and in Dhu'l-Qa'da 865/September 1461 he laid siege to Herat. Though his successes were not permanent and he was later compelled to seek refuge again in Khwārazm, he was nevertheless able in 868/1464 to undertake a pillaging expedition to Khurāsān with impunity.

Abū Sa'īd had gained power with Uzbek aid. In spite of this, Uzbek incursions across the Jaxartes into Transoxiana did not cease during his reign. The same Abu'l-Khair Khān who a few years previously had supported Abū Sa'īd in his struggle against 'Abd-Allāh and had then received a daughter of Ulugh Beg in marriage, was by 859/1454-5 granting Uvais b. Muḥammad b. Bāīqarā his assistance in a rising in the course of which Abū Sa'īd suffered a serious defeat. Another Timurid, Muḥammad Jūkī b. 'Abd al-Laṭīf, rose in revolt in 865/1461, marched through Transoxiana pillaging as he went, and finally took up a position in Shāhrukhiyya, where Abū Sa'īd besieged him from November 1462 to September 1463. The danger from the Mughals also became acute once again but receded after Abū Sa'īd had repulsed two attacks by the Chaghatayid khan Esen Buqa and from 860/1456 onwards lent his support to the latter's elder brother Yūnus, whom he had recognised as joint ruler in Mughalīstān.

It would be wrong to conclude from the friendly relations which Abū Sa'īd maintained with Jahān Shāh after 863/1458 that he had given up the idea of re-establishing Timurid rule over the territory conquered by the Türkmens. This was plain when early in 872/at the end of 1467 Jahān Shāh, coming up against the rivalry of the Āq Quyūnlū Türkmens, met his death in a clash with their ruler Uzun Ḥasan. Abū Sa'īd was quite aware that the reconquest of the Iranian territories previously lost to the Qarā Quyūnlū and now passing into the hands of the Āq Quyūnlū might become a forlorn hope – indeed an absolute impossibility – if he did not succeed in checking the menacing rise of Uzun Ḥasan. In face of this danger the traditional alliance linking the Timurids with the Āq Quyūnlū no longer carried much weight.

Abū Sa'īd therefore embarked on a campaign to the west under the

pretext of relieving Jahān Shāh's son Ḥasan 'Alī, who had asked for his assistance after an unsuccessful battle against the Āq Quyūnlū. Even the start of this operation, at the beginning of Sha'bān 872/end of February 1468, was clearly undertaken so impetuously and with so little planning that he did not wait for all the troops at his disposal to arrive, let alone ensure that he had adequate reserves. He did in fact manage to dislodge the Türkmen governors of 'Irāq-i 'Ajam and Fārs; and elsewhere, as in Gīlān, his sovereignty was once again recognised. But he continued his advance without paying due regard to establishing order in the hinterland, and failed to capture all the strongholds – Ray, for example, was one which was simply bypassed. Nor did he pay any attention to asseverations of friendship and peaceful intentions on the part of Uzun Ḥasan, which reached him en route.

The situation for Abū Sa'īd was in fact far from unfavourable. After the disastrous end of Jahān Shāh there were a fair number of amīrs and members of the Qarā Quyūnlū federation who were only awaiting the opportunity to throw in their fortunes with a new leader, especially in a campaign against Uzun Ḥasan. Thus when the Timurid army arrived in Miyāna, Jahān Shāh's son Yūsuf, a large number of amīrs of the Qarā Quyūnlū, and troops totalling allegedly some fifty thousand men joined him; so did Prince Ḥasan 'Alī b. Jahān Shāh with his son Amīrzāda 'Alī; and when he was about to take up winter quarters on the banks of the Araxes he was joined also by the Shīrvān-Shāh Farrukh-Yasār, who was in alliance with him.

In spite of this accession of strength, the Timurid army found itself in a critical situation at this time, caused not only by the inclemencies of the Āzarbāijān winter but also by serious supply problems. Not only were its supply routes to Khurāsān – extending some 1,250 miles – vulnerable in themselves, but to make matters worse Uzun Ḥasan succeeded within a short space of time in severing all routes by which reinforcements could be brought up. He cut off the access of supply ships from Shīrvān, intercepted a supply column (*jībakkhāna*) from Khurāsān and mounted attacks from Ray against his enemies' communications. The lack of food and winter clothing, the loss of riding and transport animals, and the constant surprise attacks by fast raiding groups of Türkmens undermined the morale of the Timurid troops. When Uzun Ḥasan succeeded, in addition, in persuading the Shīrvān-Shāh to defect from Abū Sa'īd and withdraw, the demoralisation of the army reached a nadir which manifested itself in numerous

desertions. The depleted army marched via Ardabīl, low in spirit and with little heart for fighting, into the Mūghān steppes and was there met by the waiting Türkmen troops. After suffering heavy losses, Abū Sa'īd was taken prisoner. On 22 Rajab 873/5 February 1469 he was handed over to Yādgār Muḥammad, a great-grandson of Shāh Rukh who had sought refuge with Uzun Ḥasan. Yādgār Muḥammad took a belated bloody revenge on him for Gauhar Shād, the energetic wife of Shāh Rukh, who had been murdered in Herat twelve years previously on Abū Sa'īd's orders. With his overthrow the loss to the Timurid empire of all Persian territories west of Khurāsān was finally sealed.

The verdict on Abū Sa'īd as a man and a ruler is sometimes more favourable than his achievements warrant, not least because he succeeded in holding his own in the succession struggles of his day throughout eighteen years. This does not of course offset his failure to re-establish the previous extent of the empire and bring about peaceful conditions. He is best seen as a typical representative of the Türkmen military aristocracy. The main prop of his power was clearly the Turkish tribe of the Arghūn, who had elected him as their chieftain and on whom he could rely in his political and military ventures. The means he used to consolidate his power was the granting of fiefs (*suyūrghāl*), in which he indulged most liberally, and not only to leading members of the tribe, but also to his sons and to secular and religious dignitaries, to Turks and non-Turks alike. We should not fail to observe the religious element in the sultan's character. Šūfī shaiḫs had a considerable influence on him, especially Khwāja 'Ubaid-Allāh Aḥrār. He described himself as a *murīd* of this particular dervish, who exercised absolute power in Samarqand under his government, persuaded him to reinstitute the religious law (the Sharī'a) in Samarqand and Bukhārā, and even to give up the tax on commerce and trades (*tamghā*), which could not be reconciled with Islam. It was he, too, who fortified him in his fatal decision to undertake the campaign to the west from which he was never to return.

In the domestic sphere he can be seen to have shared the kind of interest in agriculture and the welfare of the peasants which we have observed earlier in the empire of the Timurids. His measures included tax provisions favouring agriculture and improvements in the irrigation system. In this connection his vizier Quṭb al-Dīn Simnānī was particularly active in organising the laying of the Jūi-yi Sulṭānī to

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the north of Herat. Source materials also speak of peasants' revolts, however, and it therefore needs to be clarified how far these measures in the area of agricultural policy may have been inspired only as a response to uprisings and the threat of violent action on the part of desperate peasants. As there is no lack of evidence of Abū Sa'īd's cruelty we should not simply attribute his tax reductions to motives of generosity and sympathy.

### THE LINE OF ABŪ SA'ĪD IN TRANSOXIANA

With the passing of Abū Sa'īd the Timurid empire entered a new phase of disintegration. In the territory which Shāh Rukh had at least nominally ruled as one whole, three independent empires now emerged: in Persia, Transcaucasia and eastern Anatolia a Türkmen empire with its capital at Tabrīz, in which, however, it was no longer princes of the Qarā Quyūnlū who ruled, but the Āq Quyūnlū Uzun Ḥasan, until 882/1478, and later his son Ya'qūb (883-96/1478-90) and his successors; in western Turkestan, Timurid Transoxiana with its capital at Samarqand, in which Khwāja Aḥrār (d. 895/1490) was the dominant figure until his death, but where sovereignty passed to the sons of Abū Sa'īd, beginning with Sulṭān Aḥmad (b. 855/1451, ruled 873-899/1469-94); and finally Cisoxiana, i.e. the territory to the west and south-west of the Oxus together with Khurāsān and the greater part of present-day Afghanistan, where the great-grandson of 'Umar Shaikh, Sulṭān Ḥusain Bāīqarā (873-911/1469-1506), came to power. The latter ruled in Herat, with whose attractions Samarqand had not been able to compete since the days of Shāh Rukh, so that even Abū Sa'īd had transferred his seat of government there after finally managing to conquer the city in 863/1459.

While Uzun Ḥasan was engaged in raising his empire to a position where it commended itself even to Western powers as an ally against the Ottomans, things were going steadily from bad to worse with the two Timurid principalities. They were plagued with the age-old Turkish rivalry between princes, who operated in the cities and provinces entrusted to them as governors with an independence that grew in proportion to the weakness of the central power – fundamentally the inevitable result of that Turkish concept of the state referred to earlier, whereby the country did not belong to the ruler, let alone the people, but jointly to all the members of the ruling family.

The disintegration of power in Transoxiana was particularly drastic. Here, as previously, danger threatened from two eastern neighbours, the Uzbeks, who in 1447, under Abu'l-Khair Khān, a descendant of Shaiban (or Shīban), a son of Jochi and grandson of Chingiz Khān, had advanced their area of control at the expense of the Timurids as far as the Jaxartes; and the Mughals, who lived in the Semirechye, that is to say on the Issyk Kul and the rivers Talas, Ili, Yulduz and Manas. In spite of originally friendly relations between them, Abū Sa'īd had of course been obliged to defend himself repeatedly against Uzbek intrigues. Moreover, he had succeeded in weakening the offensive power of the Mughals by promoting the division of Mughalīstān between two rival Chaghatayid princes. However, it proved to be his own protégé Yūnus Khān (866–892/1462–87) who later reunified the country under his rule, thus becoming so powerful that he was able to intervene in the disputes of the Timurids of western Turkestan. In this connection it should be remembered that these princes, regardless of their respective genealogies, even if they boasted descent from Chingiz Khān himself, were, like their peoples, Turks or Turkicised. It is doubtful, even in the case of the inhabitants of Mughalīstān, who called themselves Mongols and were thus designated by other ethnic groups, whether by this time they spoke the Mongol language. Yūnus Khān, whom we have mentioned, had spent long years in Persia in his youth and had there acquired a degree of cultivation thanks to which he is described as the “most educated Mongol of all time”. Sulṭān Aḥmad's brother 'Umar Shaikh, who ruled as prince of Farghāna from Andijān (not to be confused with Tīmūr's son of the same name, who had similarly governed Farghāna in his day), maintained friendly relations with him. 'Umar's wife, Qutluq Nigār Khānum, the khan's sister, was the mother of his son Ṣahīr al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur (b. 888/1483), who was thus descended on his father's side from Tīmūr and on his mother's from Chingiz Khān: he later became the founder of the dynasty and empire of the Great Mughals in India.

The fall of Abū Sa'īd had been preceded in 872–3/1468 by the death of the Shaibanid Abu'l-Khair Khān. After years of heavy fighting with the Oirats pressing forward from western Mongolia he had finally been defeated and done away with by members of his own family who had earlier defected from him and taken up their abode in Mughalīstān. In the same year his son Shaikh Ḥaidar had met his death in a conflict with Yūnus Khān. Thus the Uzbek menace to the Timurids had been

brought under control, but only temporarily. A grandson of Abu'l-Khair named Muḥammad Shaibānī (b. 855/1451) had managed to survive after the death of his grandfather and uncle, until he found the opportunity of re-establishing himself in a position of power in the service of Maḥmūd b. Yūnus Khān. When he finally marched across the Jaxartes into western Turkestan, there arose once more an Uzbek dominion: it was to spread rapidly at the expense of the Timurids, who were prevented from taking effective counter-measures by incessant family strife, and was to provide the basis for a powerful empire that endured for a century and played a significant rôle in the history not only of Central Asia but also of Iran.

Muḥammad Shaibānī's objective was of course Samarqand. At the same time, he had a Timurid competitor in Prince Bābur, of whom mention has just been made and who had succeeded his father in Andijān in 899/1494, when the latter was killed in an accident. His uncle Sulṭān Aḥmad promptly marched against him to take possession of Farghāna, since 'Umar Shaikh had withdrawn from his obedience under the protection of his Mughal allies and had even made attacks on territories belonging to Samarqand; but Bābur was saved by Sulṭān Aḥmad's sudden death in the course of his advance. Since his brother Maḥmūd, who succeeded him, died in the following year and none of the sons of Sulṭān Aḥmad was able to hold his own, Bābur occupied Samarqand in 903/1497, but then had to yield it up on account of a conspiracy in Andijān. The partition of Farghāna which he arranged with his brother Jahāngīr (who enjoyed the support of the Mughals) provided him with a free hand for a new move against Samarqand in competition with Muḥammad Shaibānī, in which he was, however, defeated. In 905/1500 the Uzbeks conquered Samarqand, and in the course of the fighting the ruling Timurid Sulṭān 'Alī lost his life. But shortly afterwards Bābur succeeded in taking the city by means of a *coup de main*. In Ramaḍān 906/April–May 1501, however, he was defeated at the battle of Sar-i Pul by the Uzbeks, following which he had to abandon Samarqand to them again. They were now able to establish a firm hold on Transoxiana, while he himself, losing even his homeland of Farghāna, which Jahāngīr now claimed for himself alone, set off on his celebrated wanderings and was not able to gain a foothold until 910/1504, in Kābul. Here, two years later, a plea for help reached him from Ḥusain Bāīqarā of Herat, who was now also being hard pressed by the Uzbeks.

## ḤUSAIN BĀĪQARĀ

### ḤUSAIN BĀĪQARĀ

We must now trace out the beginnings of the Timurid empire of Herat, which had arisen shortly after the death of Abū Sa'īd. That state also had to struggle against heavy odds but, in contrast to the Timurid empire in Transoxiana, it was distinguished by great achievements in the sphere of intellectual and material progress, a continuation for more than three decades of the great age which had begun under Shāh Rukh and which had given the state of Herat that characteristic stamp that now reached its ultimate development under the rule of the Timurid Ḥusain Bāīqarā.

Sultān Ḥusain b. Mansūr b. Bāīqarā, to give him his full name, had lost his father when he was only seven or eight years of age, and in 856/1452 had entered the service of Abu'l-Qāsim Bābur, interrupted for a brief time only after the latter's unsuccessful campaign against Samarqand. After the death of his master he led the irregular life of a wandering mercenary captain, the kind of man frequently found over the years among the auxiliary troops of various Timurids engaged in their struggles for power, until he eventually began to wage war on his own account, for a long time indeed without lasting success. To begin with, his interests lay in Māzandarān, then particularly in Khwārazm, whence he repeatedly set out on invasions or pillaging expeditions into Khurāsān. These won him the enmity of Abū Sa'īd, against whom he sought assistance from the Uzbek khan Abu'l-Khair. However, his overtures were brought to nothing by the latter's death, to which we have referred.

With the news of Abū Sa'īd's fall, a situation had therefore arisen in which Ḥusain Bāīqarā was no longer dependent on Uzbek aid. Seeing his opportunity, he forthwith exploited it. On 25 Sha'bān 873/10 March 1469 the news reached Herat of the events in the Mūghān steppes; on 2 Ramaḍān/16 March Sultān Maḥmūd, a son of the executed prince, arrived in the city with the remnants of his father's army, but had to quit it again shortly afterwards; and only a week later the official prayers were proclaimed in the name of Ḥusain Bāīqarā, who had meanwhile made his entry into the city. Although Sultān Aḥmad was already approaching Herat with a powerful force from Samarqand, he broke off his campaign to Khurāsān after meeting up with his brother Maḥmūd en route.

Nevertheless, Ḥusain Bāīqarā's succession did not remain undisputed. Uzun Ḥasan did not fail to exploit his victory over Abū

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Sa'īd. He transferred his capital from Diyārbakr to Tabrīz, and not only occupied 'Irāq-i 'Ajam, Fārs and Kirmān but also declared Yādgār Muḥammad, the prince who had put Abū Sa'īd to death, as the only legitimate heir to the throne, sending him off with the Timurid soldiery who were in his company at the time to Khurāsān. A victory which Ḥusain Bāīqarā scored over him at Chinārān on 8 Rabī' I 874/15 September 1469 proved indecisive, because Uzun Ḥasan promptly sent reinforcements to the aid of his protégé. It was plainly his intention to extend his influence, if not his sovereignty, over Khurāsān. Thus he demanded from Ḥusain Bāīqarā, in vain as it turned out, the handing over of various Qarā Quyūnlū amīrs who had fled to Herat while he was occupying Kirmān. When Uzun Ḥasan's sons Zainal and Khalīl were brought in to support Yādgār Muḥammad, Ḥusain Bāīqarā found himself in a critical situation. So many of his troops deserted to the enemy that he even had to abandon Herat, where his rival made his entry on 9 Muḥarram 875/8 July 1470. The latter, in fact, could not rely on his troops either, especially the contingents of the Āq Quyūnlū, so that Ḥusain Bāīqarā, having assembled fresh forces and having met the three sons of Abū Sa'īd in a victorious engagement, reoccupied his capital six weeks later. Yādgār Muḥammad, who fell into his hands, was executed, and with him the last descendant of Shāh Rukh left the political stage. Since the line of Jahāngīr had ceased to play a political rôle only a few years after the death of Tīmūr, the activity of Tīmūr's heirs was now restricted to descendants of his two sons Mīrān Shāh and 'Umar Shaikh – that is to say, respectively the scions of Abū Sa'īd in Transoxiana, of whom only Bābur had a significant future, and Ḥusain Bāīqarā and his family in Khurāsān.

With the death of Yādgār Muḥammad the designs of Uzun Ḥasan on Khurāsān likewise came to an end. There were no further attempts to extend his territorial power over eastern Persia. And Ḥusain Bāīqarā, too, refrained from any move against his western neighbour. His frontier with the empire of the Āq Quyūnlū followed from the coast of the Caspian Sea a line west of Astarābād running in a southerly direction, then ran along the edge of the Dasht-i Lūt, finally reaching Lake Hāmūn. Both parties were intent on good-neighbourly relations, which were not affected by occasional frontier incidents.

Though he had achieved signal distinction through his courage and enterprise before his accession to the throne, Ḥusain Bāīqarā seems henceforth to have yielded to no further desire for military enterprises of any scope. Thus he substantially respected the Oxus frontier,

though the incessant conflicts of his cousins beyond the river and their military weakness in fact represented a constant invitation to intervene. This is all the more remarkable since from his own experience and acquaintance with the personalities of the situation he knew only too well what dangers were lurking in the background; that is to say, how strongly the peoples who lived on the Jaxartes, particularly the Uzbeks, were pressing towards the west and developing into an immediate threat to him personally with every success they scored in western Turkestan. Before he found himself in direct confrontation with the Uzbeks at the end of his life, only incidents of a more or less limited significance took place on the Oxus frontier, with one exception: the campaigns carried out by Khurāsān forces against the Timurid Sulṭān Maḥmūd ruling in Ḥiṣār.

These in fact fruitless operations were connected with the conflicts which Ḥusain Bāīqarā had to fight out against his sons, especially in the second half of his reign. Fundamentally, the cause yet again was always the question of the authority enjoyed by the Timurid princes who ruled in the most important cities; a perpetual temptation to challenge the central power as soon as differences of opinion with the ruler arose. As early as 1490 Darvīsh ‘Alī, a brother of ‘Alī Shīr (see below), had – as guardian of Prince Ibrāhīm Ḥusain, a son of Ḥusain Bāīqarā who had his residence in Balkh – intrigued with Ḥiṣār, which apparently led to a campaign against the city. Years later, in the course of a further campaign, Ḥusain Bāīqarā’s eldest son Badī’ al-Zamān was transferred from his governorship in Astarābād to Balkh and rose in rebellion when his son Muḥammad Mu’min, whom he had left behind in Astarābād, was passed over for appointment as governor there. Badī’ al-Zamān was defeated in battle, and chance decreed that his son, who had also risen in rebellion and had consequently been imprisoned in Herat, was executed at about the same time, though this had no connection with his father’s defeat. A reconciliation was brought about, but this revolt was not the last, and in 1499 the prince even besieged Herat. Other sons, too, rose against the ageing ruler. As a result, there were frequent occasions for military operations but no upheavals, apparently, serious enough to endanger the state.

We have detailed knowledge of the Turkish and Persian figures of eminence in the empire on whom Ḥusain Bāīqarā depended in the business of government, even down to the details of court intrigues. Among these figures, one personality stands out, a man of distinction in both political and intellectual history. This is ‘Alī Shīr Navā’ī

(b. 844/1441), who had been closely connected with Ḥusain Bāīqarā even in his youth. He was a Turk born in Herat who had been present at Sulṭān Aḥmad's headquarters in 873/1469 and arrived in the capital only a few weeks after Ḥusain's accession to the throne. He was appointed keeper of the great seal, and in 876/1472 member (*dīvān begī*) of the great state council (*dīvān-i buẓurg-i amārat*). The influence he exerted was so powerful that he is referred to as second only to the prince. In the course of time relations between ruler and adviser did indeed become strained, and this state of affairs took some years to pass, with 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī in 892/1487 going to Astarābād as governor for fifteen months. The high esteem in which he was held, which incidentally is not to be dissociated from his achievements in the cultural sphere, was strikingly evident in the ceremonies of mourning ordered by the prince on the occasion of his death in 906/1501.

The year 1501 ushered in a new era for both Central Asia and the Middle East involving the fall of the Timurids and the rise of new powers. It saw the consolidation of Uzbek power, as has been mentioned above, resulting from Muḥammad Shaibānī's final conquest of Samarqand, and the accession of Shah Ismā'īl I, with which the Safavid empire began. Ḥusain Bāīqarā, who had moved further and further away from the military prowess of his youth in the three decades of his rule in Herat, was prevented by advanced age and protracted illness from taking energetic decisions. As may be seen from his correspondence, he was at pains to avoid conflict with Shah Ismā'īl. For a long time – far too long, in fact – he closed his eyes to the immediate threat of a massive attack on the part of the Uzbeks, whose successes in Transoxiana could of course have been no secret to him, and trusted in his fortresses which barred the way to Khurāsān. Even Bābur's attempt to spur him to action against the common enemy was unable to prevail against this view. So it came about that the Uzbeks were able to cross the Oxus, conquering Khwārazm and carrying out pillaging expeditions against Khurāsān.

Ḥusain Bāīqarā did not live to see the collapse of his empire. He died on 11 Dhu'l-Ḥijja 911/4 May 1506, having finally marched against the Uzbeks. It was just at this very time that Bābur was making preparations to answer the appeal for help that he had received from Herat by advancing from Kābul with his troops. Though he received the news of Ḥusain Bāīqarā's death en route, he continued his march until, after four months, he reached his objective. In his memoirs he records of Badī' al-Zamān and Muẓaffar Ḥusain, two sons of the

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dead prince who were at odds over the succession, that they were no doubt experienced in matters of court ceremonial but not in the rules of warfare. Judging the military situation to be hopeless, he retreated without waiting to clash with Muḥammad Shaibānī. In the very next year he received news of the Uzbeks' entry into Herat and the flight of Ḥusain Bāīqarā's sons. Muḥaffar Ḥusain did not long survive the disaster; his brother found refuge first at the court of Shah Ismā'īl and afterwards in Istanbul, where he died in 923/1517.

It stands to the credit of Ḥusain Bāīqarā that in the thirty-seven years of his rule in Herat he gave the Timurid empire, in spite of everything, fairly peaceful conditions, albeit within a severely reduced area. Bābur speaks of his reign as a wonderful period, in which many significant men lived in Khurāsān. The able warrior he is described as being in the first half of his life was not only a famous sabre-fighter who plunged fearlessly into hand-to-hand fighting in battle, but also a cultivated man, actively interested in the intellectual and artistic life of his time, and a renowned patron of the arts. He himself wrote Turkish and Persian poetry under the pseudonym of Ḥusainī. It should, however, be said that his Turkish dīvān, which has come down to us, contains only poems of average merit. He also left behind a brief treatise in which his opinions and ideals are set out. He does not appear to have been strongly committed in a religious sense. He was entitled to plead the rheumatism he suffered from for years as an excuse for neglecting the prescribed prayers; but this and similar excuses cannot account for offences against the laws of fasting or for other derelictions from the religious law which appealed to him, such as daily indulgence in wine, pigeon-flying, ram-fighting and cock-fighting. His lack of political acumen and his all but apathetic absence of resolution in dealing with the Uzbeks – among the main contributory factors in the fall of the Timurid empire – may have been signs of senility, for he was generally credited with an alert mind which found expression not only in rapid utterance but also, at the beginning of his career, in swift decision.

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The Uzbek conquest of Khurāsān need not in itself have signified the end of the Timurids in Central and Western Asia, for Zāhir al-Dīn Bābur was still ruling in Kābul. Indeed, the idea of a Timurid restoration in these territories remained alive in him, and he was to be pre-

sented with the necessary opportunity a few years later, on the fall of Muḥammad Shaibānī. Although an incursion into India in 910/1505 shows a new direction of his ambitions, the march on Herat which he carried out at Husain Bāīqarā's request reveals his sense of involvement in the Timurid heartlands and his hatred for the Uzbeks who had expelled him from them. In the fresh circumstances he was once again threatened in Kābul by the same enemy, and from two directions: in the north from Qunduz and the province of Badakhshān, and in the south-west from Qandahār. To begin with, he had to witness his younger brother Nāṣir Mīrẓā falling back before the Uzbeks in Badakhshān. And when Muḥammad Shaibānī also laid siege to Qandahār, Bābur does seem temporarily to have given his cause up for lost. At all events he took care to evacuate his men from Kābul in order to march on India. Only because he was prevented from making a rapid advance by ambushes mounted by Afghan tribes did he learn en route that due to difficulties in the hinterland the Uzbeks had raised the siege of Qandahār after offering easy conditions to the besieged troops. At once he returned to Kābul.

Here he received news, some time later, of Shah Ismā'īl's victorious campaign against Khurāsān, the battle of Marv, in which Muḥammad Shaibānī had been killed on 1 Ramaḍān 916/2 December 1510, and the entry of Ismā'īl into Herat. In spite of the winter conditions he at once set off for Transoxiana. In Qunduz, where he was held up by Uzbek resistance, he was joined by his sister Khānzāda Begum, whom he had agreed to marry off to Muḥammad Shaibānī when he had been forced to give up Samarqand. She had fallen into the hands of the Persians at Marv and had now been sent to him by the shah. To this gesture of amity he responded by sending Prince Mīrẓā Khān on a mission with presents and felicitations. The shah confirmed the ambassador in the governorship of Badakhshān and gave an assurance that Bābur should retain all the territories in Transoxiana he could take from the Uzbeks – on condition, however, that he converted to the Shī'a. Bābur accepted, although of course this implied recognising the sovereignty of the Safavids. On his advance through Transoxiana he took Ḥiṣār and Bukhārā. In Rajab 917/October 1511 he occupied Samarqand – for the third time – but was compelled to evacuate the city again in the following Ṣafar/May after a reverse in battle with the Uzbeks. Meanwhile, the initial jubilation at his return had subsided, and indeed had turned to disaffection and hatred, because the Sunnī population could not come to terms with the Shī'a. Though nothing more than

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mere verbal assent was involved for Bābur, the official prayers did include the name of Shah Ismā'īl, whose brutal treatment of eminent Sunnīs in Herat was common talk; and also the Shī'ī confession of faith. The same objections no doubt applied to the inscriptions on the coinage. Shortly afterwards, with the arrival of Persian auxiliaries under Ismā'īl's viceroy (*vakil*) Yār Aḥmad Khūzānī, known as Najm-i ṣānī,<sup>1</sup> Bābur realised that his position had become untenable. It was not merely that he was to be subjected to the military authority of the Persian general; the latter inspired terror and revulsion in the people as a whole for having, against Bābur's advice, slaughtered the entire population of the city of Qarshī which he had conquered. Thus at the battle of Ghujduvān on 3 Ramaḍān 918/12 November 1512, Bābur held back. The Uzbeks were victorious and the Safavid general was killed; while Bābur withdrew in all haste.

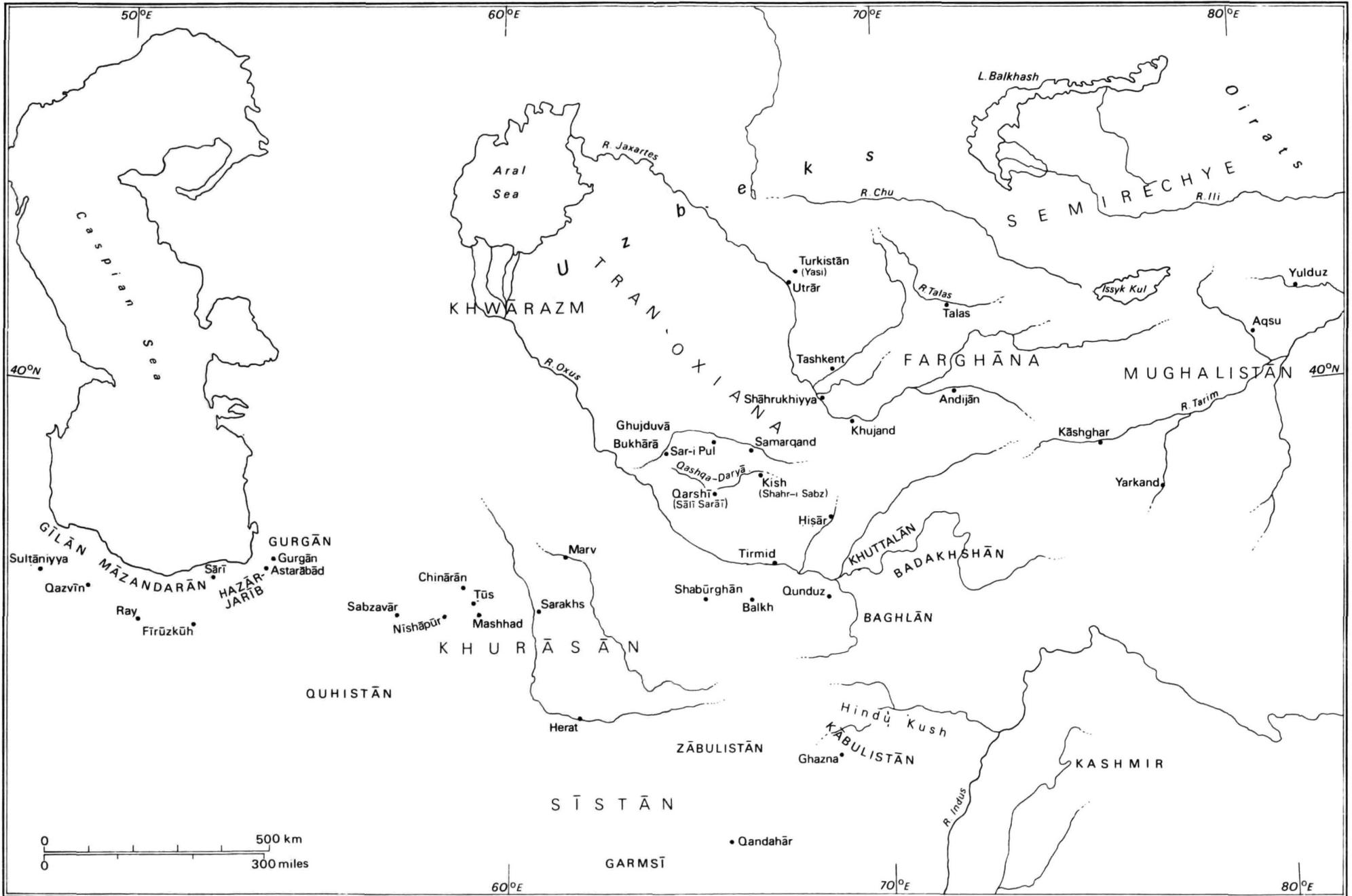
He remained in fact in Badakhshān for some considerable time after this before admitting to himself that there was no future for him in Transoxiana and Khurāsān. After 920/1514, the year of his return to Kābul, he turned his whole attention to India and undertook several campaigns in that direction, until on 8 Rajab 932/20 April 1526 he won a decisive victory against Ibrāhīm Lōdī, the sultan of Delhi, at the battle of Pānīpat. This was the moment at which the Mughal empire was born, a Timurid state founded on Indian soil, which endured until the 13th/19th century. And though parts of Afghanistan, and Kābul, which was not lost until it was conquered by Nādir Shāh in 1738, belonged to this empire, the fact is that its centre of gravity lay in India. This state of affairs was not altered by occasional later thrusts towards Khurāsān and Transoxiana, which led at best to ephemeral successes. In Central and Western Asia the Timurids had ceased to play a vital part on the political scene in 913/1507, with the Uzbek victory over the sons of Ḥusain Bāīqarā, and at the latest with the return of Bābur to Kābul in 920/1514.

### THE POLITICAL TRADITIONS OF THE TIMURID EMPIRE

What, then, are the characteristic features of this Timurid period? The state which Tīmūr had left to his successors was made up, according to Barthold,<sup>2</sup> from components derived from the Turco-Mongolian military system, and ample trimmings of Islamic culture,

<sup>1</sup> On whom see Braun, *Aḥvāl-e Šāh Ismā'īl*, pp. 81ff., and Aubin, "Études Safavides I", pp. 68ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ulugh Beg*, pp. 8ff.



Map. Eastern Iran and Central Asia in the later Timurid era

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generally of a Persian cast. The relationship of these elements to one another varied in the different states deriving from the Timurid empire according to the attitudes and inclinations of the particular ruler at any one time. An extreme example of this is found in the reign of Ulugh Beg in Samarqand. During the lifetime of his father Shāh Rukh, who ruled strictly according to the prescriptions of the Sharī'a, he was able to promote his own enthusiasm for the Yasa and the tradition of Chingiz Khān in the management of the state. If this was possible in an area loyal to the central government, it is all the more likely that in the Timurid states of later times, each leading an independent existence from the others, certain differences will have been found.

The main reason for the obvious lack of success with which the Timurids had to contend in Āzarbāijān and Iran was the rise of the Türkmens, firstly the Qarā Quyūnlū and then the Āq Quyūnlū. It may be the case that the stimulus which came to these two nomadic federations to strive for independence was partly due in the first instance to the destructions wrought by Tīmūr,<sup>1</sup> for example in eastern Anatolia and Āzarbāijān; though hardly in Iran, where the details given by the Spanish ambassador Clavijo concerning the cities he visited shortly before Tīmūr's death preclude the possibility that these had been devastated or not rebuilt.

Of smaller significance were the nomadic tribes in western Turkestan and – less still – in Khurāsān. Nevertheless, there still existed, as in Tīmūr's day, nomadic tribes originally Mongol in descent which had become Turkish in culture, certainly in respect of speech, though we should be cautious in the assessment of their ethnic composition. This nomadic element was referred to in Transoxiana as Chaghatai, after Chaghatai (d. 639/1242), the second son of Chingiz Khān, even long after there were any surviving khans of this dynasty in western Turkestan. The most important of these tribes were – according to the account given by Ibn 'Arabshāh – the Arlāt in the northern part of present-day Afghanistan, the Jalāyir in the region of Khujand, and the Barlās on the Qashqa-Daryā. Their chiefs had extensive sovereign rights in the areas in which they lived.

Still stronger was the position of those Timurid princes who, as joint or autonomous rulers, were appointed as governors in individual provinces. We have referred a number of times to the conception

<sup>1</sup> This is at any rate the reasoning of Cahen, *Der Islam* 1, 331.

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underlying their legal position, namely that the empire was not the sole possession of the ruler but belonged to all male members of the ruling family, and have drawn attention to the fateful results which followed from this assumption. Taken together with the absence of an effective disposition for the succession, this conception led to unending disputes over the rightful inheritance and to the fragmentation and diminution of the territory as a whole. At the same time, military strength crumbled, and when powerful opponents took the offensive, disaster followed.

One of the basic features of the Timurid state was feudalism, the material foundation of the military. The prime beneficiaries were the princes and those holding high military command, including tribal chieftains. From the beginning of Shāh Rukh's reign we come across the institution known as the *suyūrghāl*, a further development of the earlier *iqṭā'*. Etymologically, as we have seen,<sup>1</sup> this suggests a *beneficium*, an "act of largesse" or "reward" on the ruler's part towards persons employed in his service. *De facto* it was the granting of a territory as a fief, especially a military fief, which carried the obligation to serve in the army of one's lord and at the same time to make available a fixed number of armed warriors. In return, the fiefholder was guaranteed freedom from rates and taxes in his own territory but allowed the right to raise such contributions for his own benefit from the population, who of course did not share the privilege of this freedom. Unlike the *iqṭā'*, this immunity not only applied to the fiscal sovereignty of the central authorities but extended also to their administrative and judicial sovereignty. A typical feature of the Timurid administration was the existence of extremely large fiefs of this kind embracing whole provinces. In time, the *suyūrghāl* acquired a hereditary character and was not restricted to military beneficiaries, being accorded also to civilians such as the holders of religious offices and dignities.

The organisation of the Timurid governmental machinery has been only inadequately researched as yet. Although it cannot be assumed that it remained even in broad outline uniform throughout the whole period from 807/1405 to 913/1507 or even among the various states existing alongside each other, we may nevertheless reasonably infer that certain basic characteristics were common, for instance the influences exerted by the different elements in the population on the organisation of the communities, or at any rate the Turkish/Persian dichot-

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 94 and n. 1, 95 n. 2.

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omy. A brief consideration of the most important authorities among the supreme imperial institutions under Ḥusain Bāīqarā gives the easiest general picture.<sup>1</sup> The supreme body in the Herat administration was the Great State Council (*dīvān-i buẓurg-i amārat*) already mentioned. As the designation *dīvān-i amārat-i tuwājiyān* is also found, it is to be assumed that it was identical with the *tuwājī dīvānī* frequently referred to.<sup>2</sup> Among yet other titles for the same institution, *türk dīvānī* is especially interesting as a reflection of the responsibility for army matters: the army was of course composed mainly of Turks and Turkicised Mongols. It was a sort of general staff with additional functions corresponding to the increased importance of the forces in maintaining a state constantly threatened by external and internal enemies. Its members were amīrs (= begs) with the title *amīr-i tuwājī* or *dīvān begī*. They took precedence in rank over all other amīrs. As inspectors of troops they had a wide area of responsibility. At court or in the military headquarters this included preparing and carrying out the receptions and parades given by the ruler. The secretaries of this *dīvān* were called *bakhsbiyān* or *navīsandagān-i turk*, never *vazīr*. Of course, there were also viziers; but they were responsible for the financial affairs that fell within the competence of another *dīvān*, the *dīvān-i māl*, which appears to have been identical with the *dīvān-i 'ālī* and was also called *sart dīvānī* in order to distinguish it from the *türk dīvānī*. In contrast to the "Turkish secretaries" just referred to, in the case of this *dīvān* only the term "Persian secretaries" was used (*navīsandagān-i tājīk*). At its head stood the *amīr-i dīvān-i māl*. The superior status of the *tuwājī dīvānī* is suggested by the fact that it was also called the supreme *dīvān* (*dīvān-i a'lā*). This interpretation of the source material, incidentally, is not upset if we adopt the explanation of the function of the Great Amīr (*ulugh beg*), who is sometimes referred to, as that of supreme head of both the *dīvāns* we have considered. It must be admitted, though, that the schema suggested here need not offer the only possible explanation for what is a highly complex set of facts.

## ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL LIFE

The economic life of the Timurid age was not so darkened by the destructions carried out by Tīmūr as might be imagined. In this connection the particularism of the Timurid princes and governors even

<sup>1</sup> Roemer, *Staatsschreiben*, pp. 169–72; Togan, "Ali Şir".

<sup>2</sup> See J. Deny, "Osmanlı ancien toviĵa (doviĵa)", *JA* ccxxi (1932), 160–1; *TMEN* I, 260–4.

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had favourable results; for they had a strong vested interest in rebuilding the cities which were their seats of government and – in the economic sphere – of putting the political, and more especially the cultural, aspirations which most of them cherished on a sound footing.

In most comparisons made of the cruelty and destructive fury of Tīmūr with that of the Mongols, Tīmūr comes off badly. Yet it is a fact that the desolation he wrought did not have such a lasting effect as those for which they had been responsible. Whereas whole cultivated areas were destroyed and reduced to pastureland as a result of Mongol campaigns, under Tīmūr public order was at any rate to some extent soon restored after the cessation of hostilities. Where the irrigation systems vital to agriculture had deteriorated as a result of devastation or lack of attention, they were put in order without delay. It is known of a number of rulers, for instance Shāh Rukh, Ulugh Beg and Abū Saʿīd, that they paid particular attention to the irrigation system and were renowned for their construction of famous installations. The holders of fiefs and benefices also had an interest in the development of the territories whose taxes and rates were under their control. There is evidence of specific measures to encourage agriculture in many places, not only in Transoxiana and Khurāsān, but for example also in the vicinity of Iṣfahān. In some places the pre-Mongol standard was reached or even surpassed. However, there were areas in which the destructions of the Mongols could not be made good. Care for agriculture is seen as one of the characteristic features of Timurid rule. Nevertheless, arbitrary increases in the rates imposed and abuses in the taxation system on occasion caused distress and poverty among the peasantry, sometimes proving so oppressive that revolts broke out.<sup>1</sup>

Under the Timurids there was a commercial life which was as active as it was important, and which did not stop at the frontiers. Tabrīz, due to its peripheral situation, was indeed not able to continue to play the same part in east-west trade as it had under the Mongols. Even the trade relations with Byzantium, the Ottomans and the Mamlūks in Egypt were now necessarily based on other routes. The trade routes to the east and the north, to China and the Golden Horde, ran via Samarqand and in part also via Herat, which was in addition an important stage on the trade route via Kābul to and from India. The *ortaq* system provided a remarkable trading institution. By means of this, merchant entrepre-

<sup>1</sup> Arunova, "K istorii narodnykh vystuplenii".

neers invested loan capital for orders and for the benefit of their financial backers, of whom quite often the ruler himself was one.

In the taxation system Mongol traditions were quite unmistakably preserved: payments in kind made by the agricultural section of the population, and trade and craft taxes (*tamghā*) in the towns, levied to some extent as local and transit tolls. We do in fact often hear of such levies being waived or reduced, either because of the results of natural catastrophes, epidemics or crop failures, or for religious reasons on the occasions when a pious mystic or a theologian succeeded in steering his ruler back onto the path of the religious law (*Shari‘a*), whose prescriptions condemned such sources of revenue. But this sort of concession was rarely permanent; with the best will in the world, the rulers could usually not manage to forgo the *tamghā*, the most productive of all the taxes. Even the pious *Shāh Rukh* went no further than giving a semblance of legality when he attempted to declare trading taxes to be alms levies (*zakāt*) – by a simple change of terminology – just in order to rescue them from the odium of illegality that attached to the *tamghā*.

What has been said here of the restoration of public order, the recouping of losses due to destruction at the hands of *Tīmūr*, and the rebuilding of cities does not by any means imply that in Central and Western Asia under the *Timurids* peaceful and prosperous conditions everywhere prevailed. The long reigns of *Shāh Rukh*, *Abū Sa‘īd*, and *Ḥusain Bāīqarā* did in each case bring about a certain stabilisation of affairs in comparison with earlier times and the intervening periods. Nevertheless, in view of the incessant risings, the incursions by the *Türkmen*s in the west and the *Uzbeks* and *Mughals* in the east, the endless succession disputes and the concomitant military measures, troop movements, requisitionings and reprisals, it is not reasonable to speak of general peace and prosperity, even though the conjunction of all these things was generally confined to a few limited areas. The sufferings of the people in the districts and cities affected were protracted and had long-lasting effects. In the first half of the 9th/15th century reports from the province of *Kirmān* speak of the constant insecurity to which daily life was subject.<sup>1</sup> Here even a town such as *Bam*, described by Arabian geographers as a flourishing city with an important textile industry, fell back into village conditions with a mere four or five thousand inhabitants. In *Khurāsān*, too, a decline in

<sup>1</sup> Aubin, “Deux sayyids”, and “Fragments historiques concernant Bam”; for conditions in Herat, cf. Boldyrev, “Ocherki iz zhizni”, which was unfortunately inaccessible to me.

## RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITY

population density in contrast with the Mongol period can be observed which is recognisable in the changes that took place in the territorial pattern.<sup>1</sup> The constituent units of Timurid territory were larger than those of the Mongols; and the reason for older administrative units having been abandoned is clearly to be sought in a considerable reduction in the size of populations. Quhistān, for instance, formerly the largest district (*vilāyat*) belonging to Herat, was now no longer a unit administratively speaking, but only geographically.

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This somewhat grim background of general conditions is eminently important for an understanding of the religious situation of the Timurid period. It is undoubtedly true to say that the larger part of the population should be thought of as belonging to a Sunnī form of Islam, yet this is an inadequate description of the pattern. Even the limitation that individual areas such as Gīlān, Māzandarān, Khūzistān and eastern Quhistān, and a few cities such as Ray, Varāmīn, Qum, Kāshān, and Sabzavār in Khurāsān, were traditional centres of the Shī'a – and especially of the Twelver Shī'a – amounts to no more than a rough amplification of what is only a crude sketch. In reality, it was a far more complicated matter. The facts show that much of the Islamic world was vigorously involved in religious change. This begins at the latest with the disappearance from the scene of the 'Abbasid caliphate, the rule of the Mongols and the resulting curtailment of the influence of the theologians in the Islamic east. The most important aspects of these changes were numerous manifestations of popular piety, an increase in Islamic monasticism (*tāriqa, taṣawwuf*), veneration of the saints, pilgrimages, belief in miracles, veneration of 'Alī and the *ahl al-bait* generally. Such phenomena often bore a Shī'i stamp, but this is far from justifying the conclusion that they are evidence for religious assent and adherence to the Shī'a. For some time past the term Folk Islam has been applied to this kind of phenomenon,<sup>2</sup> usually in reference to conditions in Asia Minor; but there is no lack of convincing evidence for an analogous development further to the east, in the dominions of the Timurids.

<sup>1</sup> Aubin, "Un Santon quhistānī".

<sup>2</sup> The concept of Folk Islam, at least in the broad sense, is probably older and is to be found as early as Babinger's Berlin inaugural lecture of 1921, published as "Der Islam in Kleinasien"; see further Mazzaoui, *Origins of the Safawids*, pp. 22ff, and *passim*.

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The oscillation between Sunna and Shī'a typical of Folk Islam also exercised a powerful influence on the political potentates of the age. The traditional formula which speaks of the Shī'ī Qarā Quyūnlū and the Sunnī Āq Quyūnlū can now no longer be sustained in its former exclusive sense.<sup>1</sup> It is undoubtedly truer to say that the princes of the two federations were hardly concerned about a religious issue but far more about political ones when they sought to achieve assent and more effective support among the population by favouring one side or the other. Similar motives of expediency – in addition to personal preferences, no doubt – may explain something of Abū Sa'īd's adherence to the Naqshbandiyya, the order of Khwāja Ahrār, who was omnipotent in Samarqand and indubitably persecuted Sunnī attempts at a restoration of the Sharī'a; or again, it would seem, when Ḥusain Bāīqarā, who after his succession to the throne in Herat had taken the first steps to introduce the Shī'a, then abandoned the project at the instigation of 'Alī Shīr; not to mention Ṣahīr al-Dīn Bābur's conversion to the Shī'a on his third conquest of Samarqand, when his only concern was to secure the support of Shah Ismā'īl for his plans.

All in all there developed in the atmosphere of Folk Islam favourable preconditions for heterodox tendencies and hence also for the Shī'a, either because it formed a bridge to the popular variant of Shī'a and thus advanced the Imāmiyya, or because it prepared the ground for extremist sects, which in the course of the 9th/15th century attracted many new adherents and had far-reaching effects.<sup>2</sup> The underground political-cum-religious activities of the time are vividly projected for a moment on 22 Rabī' II 830/21 February 1427 by an attempt on the life of Shāh Rukh, when an adherent of the Ḥurūfiyya attempted to stab him as he was leaving the Friday prayers.<sup>3</sup> This was by no means the first outbreak of heretical violence. It had been preceded by religiously inspired risings, immediately after the death of Tīmūr, in Sabzavār, where Shāh Rukh had only been able to exert his authority with difficulty, and a year later in Māzandarān, where an attempt was made to re-establish the amirate of the Shī'ī Mar'ashī Sayyid. One rising

<sup>1</sup> "Le problème n'était pas pour les Qara Qoyunlu ou les Aq Qoyunlu de se montrer hostiles ou favorables au chiisme, mais d'adopter une politique qui leur garantît un large support parmi leurs sujets": Aubin, "Notes sur quelques documents Aq Qoyunlu", p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Molé, "Les Kubrawiyya"; Miklukho-Maklaï, "Shiizm".

<sup>3</sup> Most recently treated by Savory, "A 15th Century Şafavid Propagandist"; on the Ḥurūfiyya, see Bausani, "Ḥurūfiyya"; Ritter, "Die Anfänge der Ḥurūfisekte"; Gölpınarlı, "Fadlallāh-i Hurūfī'nin oğluna".

which was successful, at least against the Timurid governor of Fārs and Khūzistān, was that of Sayyid Muḥammad b. Falāḥ (845/1441–2), who claimed to be the Mahdī and who made the city of Ḥavīza the official seat of an extremist provincial dynasty, the Musha‘sha‘, which even outlasted the Timurids.<sup>1</sup> It must also be assumed that the revolt of Muḥammad b. Bāisunqur in 849/1446 had a religious background. This would also explain the severity of Shāh Rukh, unusual for him in his dealings with Islamic aristocrats and scholars (*sādāt* and ‘*ulamā*’), when in Ramaḍān 850/December 1446 in Sāva his verdicts on the adherents of the rebellious prince – to the horror of many contemporaries – did not spare this category of persons the penalty of execution. In fact he thus dealt a severe blow to the Shī‘a, which was spreading rapidly in Fārs, as elsewhere, from which it could not easily recover. This action of his is intimately connected with his religious attitudes and the rôle as restorer of orthodoxy and protector of the Sunnī theologians which he had assumed.

Even though it is difficult, and in many cases impossible, to classify individuals or indeed even particular orders as to their religious attitude – Sunna or Shī‘a – this does not mean that all the distinctions were simply blurred. Orthodox theology existed under the Timurids as it had before. It had indeed passed its ultimate climax with ‘Azud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 756/1355), who had gathered its doctrines together in a new form in his *Mawāqif* – and in a challenging fashion.<sup>2</sup> His ideas were, moreover, still widespread among the theologians of the 9th/15th century. But they had long since ceased to be productive and had petrified into merely scholastic forms. With a few exceptions – one of them the *Sulūk al-mulūk* of Faḥr-Allāh b. Rūzbihān al-Khunjī, written in the *Fürstenspiegel* tradition – the theological writings of the period have nothing to offer but commentaries and super-commentaries in devastating quantity, and glosses and manuals which in their use of abbreviations are barely comprehensible to the modern reader.

To be brief, the representatives of the Sunna were in no position to have their own way in the conflict with the rising tide of Shī‘ī or heretical movements. The decisive blow was struck, as far as large areas of the Timurid territory were concerned, when one of these movements, that of the Safavids, succeeded in Persia in forcing through its religious ideas against the Sunna by the use of the military

<sup>1</sup> Minorsky, “Musha‘sha‘”; Caskel, “Ein Mahdī des 15. Jahrhunderts”, and “Die Wālī’s von Ḥuvēzeh”.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 63–4 and n. 1.

might which it had acquired through the support of fanatical adherents. However, it was unsuccessful against the mortal enemies of the Timurids, the Uzbeks, who now became the protective power of orthodoxy in the eastern Islamic world. The results of these events were, however, only clearly perceptible after the fall of the Timurid states of Central and Western Asia.

The intellectual life of the Timurid age may be traced through the ample evidence which has come down to us, the most noteworthy source being Daulatshāh of Samarqand. If their best historians do not quite approach the leading figures of Mongol historiography, they did leave behind works of a highly respectable quality. Their most important writers include such names as Ḥāfiz-i Abrū (d. 833/1430), 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī (d. 887/1482) and Mīr Khwānd (d. 903/1498). The lastnamed chronicler not only soon aroused the interest of historically minded groups in the Ottoman empire, but later intensively occupied Western historians, as can be seen by the numerous translations of his work, especially in the last century. Ḥāfiz-i Abrū offers in his works interesting evidence of the historical method and the historical interests of the age. His *Majmū'a* embraces twelve works, of which a majority are based on earlier authors and the rest are his own work. His *Majma' al-tavārīkh* with its four parts is a universal history, the fourth section of which, separately entitled *Zubdat al-tavārīkh-i Bāisunqurī*, contains the history of Shāh Rukh up to 830/1427. 'Abd al-Razzāq's work, entitled *Maṭla' al-sa'dain*, is also in the nature of a universal history. Its treatment of the Timurid period is based primarily on Ḥāfiz-i Abrū and is a valuable source in itself for the events which its author experienced in person. Since the Timurid historical writings were mainly, if not exclusively, commissioned by princes intent on transmitting their own renown or that of their dynasties to posterity, we have of course to be prepared for much rose-coloured presentation of the facts. Furthermore, the lives and sufferings of the common people usually disappear in the aura of court history. In the area of religious and social history certain works of popular literature, especially hagiographical writings – which for some time now have been evaluated with remarkable results – are therefore of very considerable importance. Aspects of constitutional history and the history of finance are being illuminated by documents which to date indeed are only seldom available in their original form but frequently are to be found in the copies which figured in a literary genre highly appreciated at that time, the works called *Inshā'*. Analysis of these, too, has now been taken in hand.

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While historical writing in the Timurid period, and also, it seems, the astronomical and mathematical work mentioned in connection with Ulugh Beg, was written in Persian, in the sphere of literature there figures also Chaghatai, an eastern Turkish language of which no literary monuments are preserved from the time before Tīmūr's reign. Its first known representative is Sakkākī, a poet from Transoxiana who died in the first half of the 9th/15th century. He may have been writing as early as the lifetime of Tīmūr, but at all events he is mentioned as court poet to Khalīl Sulṭān and Ulugh Beg. Outstanding among his successors is Luṭfī, the author of a dīvān and a verse narrative (*masnavī*) entitled *Gulu Naubabār*. His home was Herat, where he died in 1462 or 1463 at the age of ninety-nine. Turkish poetry was written by Timurid princes such as Khalīl Sulṭān, Abā Bakr Mīrzā and Abu'l-Qāsim Bābur. Chaghatai literature reached its peak under Ḥusain Bāīqarā, who personally contributed a dīvān and a *risāla*.<sup>1</sup> While his works lack the touch of real distinction, this is found in the numerous compositions of his famous minister and friend Mīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī, who not only finally raised Chaghatai to the level of a literary language but, in one of his works entitled *Muḥākamat al-lughatain* ("Arbitration on the Two Languages", i.e. Persian and Turkish), accorded Chaghatai the primacy for its greater expressiveness. The first history of Chaghatai literature, the *Majālis al-nafā'is*, came from his pen.<sup>2</sup> Among the other prose writings Zāhīr al-Dīn Bābur's memoirs of the period 899-936/1494-1529, entitled *Vaqā'ī-i Bāburī* or more usually *Bābur-nāma*, occupy an eminent place from a biographical, a historical and a geographical point of view. There is no reason to conclude from Navā'ī's "Arbitration" that there existed any antagonism between the use of Turkish or Persian, if only because the authors of Turkish works usually had in addition Persian writings to their credit. Chaghatai poetry also has many if not most forms in common with Persian – and the same ones, moreover, as had been favoured by Persian poets as early as the 8th/14th century. Even the subject matter corresponds, except that Turkish poets show a somewhat stronger preference for subjects derived from popular literature. Evidence for the good relationship between Chaghatai and Persian literature is provided by Navā'ī himself with his Turkish translations of Jāmi's *Nafahāt al-uns* and 'Aṭṭār's *Mantiq al-ṭair*.

<sup>1</sup> Gandjei, "Ḥusayn Mīrzā", and "Uno scritto apologetico".

<sup>2</sup> But although he held Persian to be of lesser value, this did not prevent him from using that language also: cf. Gandjei, "Il canzoniere persiano".

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The brilliant period of Persian literature before Tīmūr's invasion is not repeated after his death. One does come across Timurids who wrote in Persian, esteemed Persian poetry, and as patrons also reinvigorated court poetry. Favourable external circumstances of this kind increased the number of poets but not the intellectual and aesthetic worth of their production. The originality and richness of thought of the previous century declined, and adherence to poetic convention and heavy stress on formal elements took their place. As Indian style extended its influence, classicising rigidity was further encouraged. Such negative elements are a burdensome legacy even for considerable talents.

The increased tendency to turn for guidance to the religious orders, due to the troubles of the time, is matched by an increase in mystical poetry. Typical exponents are such saints as Shāh Ni'mat-Allāh Valī (d. 834/1431), the author of numerous works, some in Arabic and some in Persian, which display pantheistic emphases, and the poetically far more gifted Qāsim al-Anvār (d. 837/1433-4). The latter was born in Āzarbāijān, lived for a time in Herat, and was suspected of being involved in a heretical conspiracy in connection with the attempt on Shāh Rukh's life, but finally found asylum with Ulugh Beg in Samarqand. But in addition to this religiously orientated poetry, there are represented also love lyrics and romantic and heroic epics. The lyric poetry quite often shows the same weave of mystical and pseudo-mystical elements as is frequently found in the work of Hāfiz. This is particularly true of the writings of Kamāl al-Dīn Binā'ī (executed in 918/1512). In the romantic epic Kātibī of Nīshāpūr (d. between 1434 and 1436) earned a high reputation, while 'Abd-Allāh Hātifī (d. 927/1520), a nephew of Jāmī, is worthy of mention for his *Tīmūr-nāma*, a heroic epic in praise of Tīmūr.

These few examples would adequately characterise Persian poetry were it not for the fact that the century produced one other remarkable figure, Maulānā Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (b. 817/1414, d. 898/1492), who was outstanding not only as a poet and mystic but also as a scholar in various disciplines and as a powerful personality. True to his training under Sa'd al-Dīn Muḥammad Kāshgharī, the pupil and follower of the founder of the order, Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband, he remained loyal throughout his life to the Sufism observed by the Sunna, in spite of the pantheistic ideas found in his works. He was a friend of 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī and Khwāja Aḥrār and had good connec-

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tions with the court of Herat. He dedicated various of his works to Ḥusain Bāīqarā and Sulṭān Ya‘qūb Āq Quyūnlū, the prince of Tabrīz. Yet he was never tempted into the conventional flattering panegyrics of his day. Nor did he take up an invitation to move to the Ottoman court, though he did not disdain travel, as is shown by his pilgrimages to Mashhad and Mecca and quite lengthy stays en route in Baghdad, Damascus and Tabrīz. As a scholar, Jāmī dealt with questions of theology, prosody, and Arabic grammar. In his poetry, an œuvre of unusual scope, almost all the traditional genres are represented. He left three dīvāns, and in seven long poems (maḡnavīs) under the general title *Haft aurang* he took up again the main themes of Persian poetry. As the mature expression of Persian thought, his works have commanded high regard and found numerous translators in Europe.

There is an apparent contradiction to be seen between the fair consolidation of outward conditions in the Timurid dominions, on the one hand, especially under the long reigns of Shāh Rukh, Abū Sa‘īd and Ḥusain Bāīqarā, and the insecurity, distress and oppression, on the other, which obtained at particular stages and in many areas for the population of the plains and the provincial towns. This contradiction, however, is exceeded by the remarkable imbalance between the general social and economic conditions and the brilliance of some of the larger cities, especially the royal cities such as Samarqand, Shīrāz and Herat. The great pattern and standard the Timurids imitated was Tīmūr, who had applied his best efforts to making Samarqand the radiant metropolis of the Islamic world. We know that he deported master builders and artisans, artists and scholars for this purpose to Samarqand from the cities he conquered, in order to use their skills to enhance the beauty and renown of his capital. We find the same habit in his successors, if not to the same extent. We know, at any rate, the names of certain artists, poets and scholars who at the whim of the particular conqueror had to shift their sphere of operations away from various cities when these were occupied, to where the prince resided. Of course it should not be assumed that coercion was always used, since clearly the patronage of many princes had a powerful attraction for those involved in cultural life.

The most obvious expression of all this was to be found in the buildings of the Timurid empire, of which many are preserved and others are at least known from the descriptions of contemporary writers, of whom some were travellers from Europe. They bear testi-

mony to a great flourishing of Islamic architecture at this time, which largely accounts for the phrase "Timurid renaissance" coming into vogue in Europe. One of the characteristic features was an adherence to existing architectural traditions, especially – but not exclusively – Iranian traditions; another is a striking eclecticism. Both are seen by scholars as symptomatic of that coming together of professional artists, especially from central and southern Persia, which we mentioned above. And it was precisely this that preserved architecture from slipping away into provincialism. We cannot reject the suggestion that the personal taste of the clients also gave a new impulse to artistic creativity. This is a question which would merit detailed investigation. Finally, there is some *prima facie* evidence suggesting foreign influences, for instance from the Far East.

The beginnings of essentially Timurid architecture go back to the time of Tīmūr, and had already achieved their peak of perfection in the palace of the conqueror at Kish (Shahr-i Sabz), known from the description of the Spanish ambassador Clavijo, who saw it in 1404 before its completion, and in the Aḥmad Yasavī mosque at Turkistān, built 797/1394–5, and the Bībī Khānum mosque at Samarqand, completed five years later. A new era, the first Khurāsān period, occurs during Shāh Rukh's reign, in which his wife Gauhar Shād and their son Bāisunqur (d. 837/1433) are remembered for the work they commissioned, and Qivām al-Din Shīrāzī as their builder. In contrast to the preceding era in Transoxiana it shows considerable progress in both design and decoration, as can clearly be seen by a simple comparison of the Gauhar Shād mosque at Mashhad (begun 808/1405–6 and completed 821–2/1418–9) with the Bībī Khānum mosque at Samarqand. This structure initiated the predominantly classical Timurid style of the next few decades. The basic architectural plan – as in the 8th/14th century – was the inner court with its four cloisters with pointed arches (*aiṣvān*), connected by two-storey arcades, but now also extended by a portal. In the next architectural period, which lasted from the end of Shāh Rukh's reign to the fall of the Timurid empire of Herat, this type of structure only occurs once, namely in the Herat madrasa. Otherwise we find the covered mosque, which demanded less expenditure, or a kind of combined form, a mixture of covered and courtyard mosque, represented by Abu'l-Qāsim Bābur's mosque in Anau dating from 848/1444–5. As an example of the more common covered mosque we may cite the Masjid-i Shāh (1451) at Mashhad. As

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the period went on the statesman and writer Mīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī won renown as the builder of a large number of edifices.

Among the striking innovations of Timurid architecture are not only the increase in expenditure involved and – especially in the first Khurāsān period – the tendency to magnificence seen in the greater height of the buildings, precious surface decorations, numerous cupolas and minarets and a greater number of rooms in contrast with former designs, but also new structural features such as the portal with stalactites in droplet form and – very typically – the tall pear-shaped cupola which now appears, in addition to the flat cupola which is still used. The first instance of this is found in the Gūr-i Mīr at Samarqand. It rests on a supporting cupola not visible from the outside, which, in addition to its function as a support, also serves to restore the normal height dimension to the space beneath. Still more important, though, indeed perhaps the most important feature, is the hitherto unprecedented wealth of colour. It is often found in the faience mosaics of the surface decoration, which is frequently embedded in stucco and covers the representational sides of whole buildings in a lavish display of plant and script motifs. Whereas the Timurid faiences of the early period have only a modest, somewhat austere range of colours, what develops in the course of time is a rich palette as great in its variety as in its aesthetic elegance which gives the whole architectural concept its characteristic fascination.

With the choice achievements of its architecture, in terms both of technical and decorative developments, Timurid civilisation undoubtedly reached its peak. It is part of the great artistic heritage which passed to the Safavids in the 10th/16th century and became the starting-point of a new development which so impressed itself on the outward appearance of Persia that it remains to this day one of the characteristic features of the country.

The initiative of the Timurid princes, no matter what may have been the motives and personal interest of the art-loving patrons among them, was responsible for the emergence of painting of high quality. No examples of mural or textile painting have been preserved, but specimens of miniature art are numerous. Illuminated manuscripts of the Timurid period constitute some of the most priceless treasures in the libraries and collections of east and west.<sup>1</sup> Even before Tīmūr's

<sup>1</sup> To give two examples: I. Stchoukine, "Un Gulistan de Sa'dī illustré par des artistes timūrides", *R.A.A.* x (1936), 92–6; R. Ettinghausen, "An illustrated manuscript of Hāfiz-i Abrū in Istanbul", *KO* II (1955), 30–44.

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time several generations of artists, influenced by the work of the Far East, and under Mongol and probably also Turkish influences, had awakened the art of old Iran to new life out of the petrification of obsolete forms. In the 9th/15th century, under Timurid – that is to say, essentially Turkish – patronage, the art of painting looks back to its Iranian past, and the influence of this past forces back the hitherto dominating influences.

Research to date places the origins of Timurid painting in the workshops of the Jalayirids in Baghdad and Tabrīz, perhaps also in those of the Muzaffarids in Shīrāz, attributing them to artists deported by Tīmūr to Samarqand after his conquest of these cities.<sup>1</sup> Since none of their work survives, it cannot be proved, though it may reasonably be assumed, that it was here that the roots of a syncretism of various different styles are to be found, and moreover those of totally different schools of painters, a syncretism which is characteristic of Timurid painting throughout the whole period of its existence. The political upheavals which followed the death of Tīmūr induced many artists to leave Samarqand and to seek their livelihood at the newly developing Timurid princely courts. This would account for the fact that the style of the period, in spite of the great distances that separated the individual centres, shows a remarkable unity in which the only differences are matters of nuance.

This style can only in fact be traced as an unbroken sequence at two places, Shīrāz and Herat. Under Iskandar b. ‘Umar Shaikh, who ruled from 812/1409 to 817/1414, painting in Shīrāz enjoyed a period of distinction strikingly marked by the refinement of its draughtsmanship and the delicacy of its colours. And in the following twenty years under Ibrāhīm (d. 838/1435), whom his father Shāh Rukh appointed governor of Fārs after the victory over Iskandar, the distinction of this school continued, even though its production was no longer quite of the same high standard. At the same time there grew up a powerful rival to it under the patronage of Shāh Rukh and his son Bāisunqur in the form of the Herat school, which eventually reached and later even surpassed its achievements by its success in evolving new means of expression and a unique wealth of colour. Signs of age were already appearing in Timurid art when it once again had the good fortune to

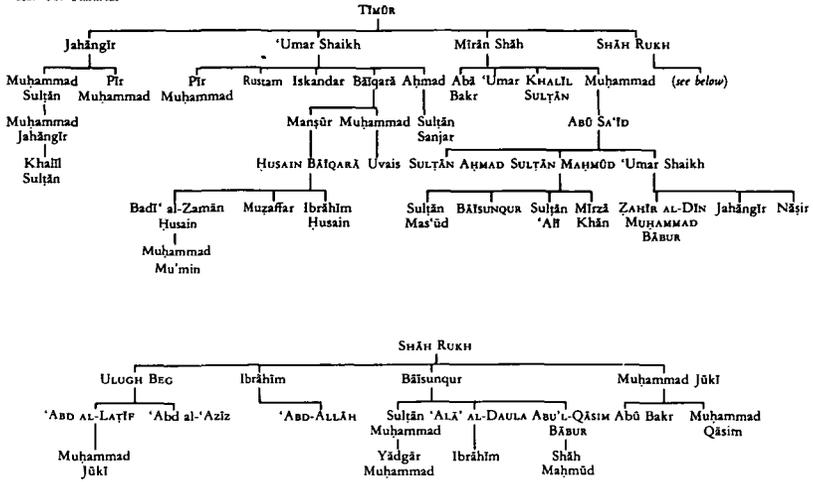
<sup>1</sup> Stchoukine, *Manuscripts Timūrides*, p. 156, regards both Jalayirids and Muzaffarids as the precursors of the Timurid schools of painting, whereas Aubin, “Le mécénat timouride”, p. 73, mentions only the Jalayirids.

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acquire generous patrons in Ḥusain Bāīqarā and Mīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī. Under their protection emerged the greatest painter of Muslim Iran, Kamāl al-Dīn Bihzād (d. c. 1535). Combining direct observation of nature with traditional elements, he was responsible for the renaissance of book illumination. He outlived the fall of the Timurids, went to Tabrīz, and achieved high renown at the court of the Safavids. As a result of his work and the wide circle of his pupils he introduced into Safavid miniature art what was to be a continuation of Timurid painting, distinguished by the brilliance of its achievements.

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## III. The Timurids



## BIBLIOGRAPHIES

The abbreviations used in the bibliographies and the footnotes are given below.

<i>AA</i>	<i>Arts Asiaticques</i> (Paris)
<i>AAWL</i>	<i>Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur</i> (Mainz)
Acta Iranica	Acta Iranica (Encyclopédie permanente des études iraniennes) (Tehran-Liège-Leiden)
<i>Acta Orientalia</i>	<i>Acta Orientalia</i> (ediderunt Societates Orientales Batava Danica Norvegica Svedica) (Copenhagen)
<i>Acta Orientalia Hung.</i>	<i>Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i> (Budapest)
<i>AI</i>	<i>Ars Islamica = Ars Orientalis</i> (Ann Arbor, Mich.)
<i>AI(U)ON</i>	<i>Annali. Istituto (Universitare) Orientale di Napoli</i>
AKM	Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes (Leipzig)
<i>AMI</i>	<i>Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran</i> (old series 9 vols 1929–38; new series 1968–) (Berlin)
<i>AN</i>	<i>Akademiya Nauk</i>
<i>Anatolia</i>	<i>Anatolia</i> (Revue annuelle d'archéologie) (Ankara)
<i>Anatolica</i>	<i>Anatolica</i> (Annuaire international pour les civilisations de l'Asie antérieure) (Leiden)
<i>AO</i>	<i>Ars Orientalis</i> (continuation of <i>Ars Islamica</i> )
<i>AOAW</i>	<i>Anzeiger der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften</i> (Phil. Hist. Klasse) (Vienna)
<i>Arabica</i>	<i>Arabica</i> (Revue d'études arabes) (Leiden)
<i>Armāghān</i>	<i>Armāghān</i> (a monthly literary and historical magazine), 47 vols (Tehran 1298/1919–1357/1978)
<i>ArOr</i>	<i>Archiv Orientální</i> (quarterly journal of African, Asian and Latin American Studies) (Prague)
<i>Āthār-é Irān</i>	A. Godard (ed.), <i>Āthār-é Irān</i> (Annales du service archéologique de l'Iran), 4 vols (Haarlem, 1936–49)
<i>Āyanda</i>	<i>Āyanda</i> (A Persian journal of Iranian studies), vols 1–4 (Tehran, 1304/1925–1322/1943), vol. 5 (1358/1979–)
BAIPAA	<i>Bulletin of the American Institute for Persian (Iranian) Art and Archaeology</i> , 5 vols (New York, 1930–42)
<i>Belleten</i>	<i>Belleten (Türk Tarih Kurumu)</i> (Ankara)
BEO	<i>Bulletin d'Études Orientales de l'Institut Français de Damas</i> (Damascus)
BIFAO	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale</i> (Cairo)
BMQ	<i>British Museum Quarterly</i> (London)
BSO(A)S	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies</i> (University of London)

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- EV *Epigrafika Vostoka* (Moscow)
- FIS *Freiburger Islamstudien* (Wiesbaden)
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- GETOV *Gosudarstvennyiĭ Ermitazh. Trudy Otdela Vostoka*
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- IAN *Izvestiya Akademii Nauk*
- IC *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad)
- ICO *International Congress of Orientalists*
- IDT *Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān*
- IJMES *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (Los Angeles – Cambridge)
- IM *Istoriĭ-Marksist* (Moscow)

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- IQ* *The Islamic Quarterly* (London)
- Iran* *Iran* (Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies) (London)
- Iranica* = (Journal of Iranian studies) (Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Tehran University)
- Irān-Shināsi*
- IrSt* *Iranian Studies*
- IS* *Islamic Studies* (Denver, Colorado)
- Isis* (International review devoted to the history of science) (Cambridge, Mass., etc.)
- Islamica* *Islamica* (dirāsāt islāmiyya) (Cairo)
- Isl. Ans.* *Islam Ansiklopedisi*
- IU* *Islamkundliche Untersuchungen* (Freiburg)
- JA* *Journal Asiatique* (Paris)
- JAH* *Journal of Asian History* (Wiesbaden)
- JAOS* *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (New York)
- JASB* *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Calcutta)
- JASP* *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan* (Dacca)
- JBORS* *Journal of the Bihar (and Orissa) Research Society* (Patna)
- JESHO* *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* (Leiden)
- JNES* *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* (Chicago)
- JPHS* *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* (Karachi)
- JRAS* *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (London)
- JRCAS* *Asian Affairs* = *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society* (London)
- JRCI* *Journal of the Regional Cultural Institute*
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- REA *Revue des Études Arméniennes* (Paris)
- REI *Revue des Études Islamiques* (Paris)
- RHR *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* (Paris)
- RK *Rāhnumā-yi Kitāb* (Tehran)
- RMM *Revue du Monde Musulman* (Paris)
- RO *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* (Cracow)
- RSO *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* (Rome)
- Saeculum* *Saeculum* (Jahrbuch für Universalgeschichte) (Freiburg-Munich)
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- SV *Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie* (Moscow)
- Syria* *Syria* (Revue d'art oriental et d'archéologie) (Paris)
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- TD *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*
- TDMKV *Trudy XXV. mezhdunarodnogo Kongressa Vostokovedov* (= Proc. 25th ICO), 5 vols. Moscow, 1963.
- TMEN G. Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen*, 4 vols. Wiesbaden, 1963-75 (VOK XVI, XIX-XXI)
- TTYK *Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınlarından*
- TüMe* *Türkiyat Mecmuası* (Istanbul)

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- UZIV *Uchennye Zapiski Instituta Vostokovedeniya AN SSSR*
- UZLGU *Uchennye Zapiski Leningradskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*
- Vahid*
- Veltro*
- Vierteljahrschrift für* (Leipzig)  
*Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*
- VizVr* *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* (Moscow)
- VOK Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur. Veröffentlichungen der orientalischen Kommission (Wiesbaden)
- Voprosy Istorii* (Moscow)
- WZKM *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* (Vienna)
- Yādgar* *Yādgar* (majalla-yi māhiyāna-yi adabī va tārikhī va 'ilmī), 5 vols (Tehran, 1944-9)
- ZDMG *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (Wiesbaden)
- ZVO *Zapiski Vostochnogo Otdeleniya Imperatorskogo Russkogo Arkeologicheskogo Obschestva* (St Petersburg)

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