

The Bukhara Emirate during the Reign of Amir Nasrullah: Issues of Source Studies and Historiography

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Abstract

This article is dedicated to the analysis of the complex and contradictory history of the Bukhara Emirate during the reign of Amir Nasrullah (1827-1860) from source studies and historiographical perspectives. The period of Amir Nasrullah's reign was an important stage in the history of the Bukhara Emirate, characterized by the strengthening of centralized power, the implementation of military and administrative reforms, as well as sharp changes in foreign policy.

Keywords: Amir Nasrullah, Manghid dynasty, "Tuhfat al-Khaniy", "Tajut-tavorikh", "Makhazin ut taqwa", manaqib, historiography, chronogram, religious-mystical, mutrib, mughani, saqi, Persian-Tajik.

Introduction. Historical works created in Bukhara during the late 18th and early 19th centuries primarily belonged to local historiographers. The subject matter and style of these works were mainly dedicated to dynastic history, the activities of its representatives, and often political issues. Most of them were written in Persian-Tajik. Furthermore, a great deal of historical information can also be found in works written in the genre of *manaqib* (hagiography) and *tazkiras* (biographical dictionaries/memoirs). Most of the authors who lived and worked during the Manghit period tailored their works to serve the interests of the ruling dynasty.

While the question of historiography and source studies in the Bukhara Emirate is a highly pertinent issue, it has not yet been comprehensively examined. Among the literature and research dedicated to this topic, Anke von Kügelgen's scholarly work titled "Legitimization of the Central Asian Manghit Dynasty in the Works of Their Historians"[1] stands out. In this work, the author analyzed the process of legitimization (legitimacy) of the Manghit dynasty's rule based on the historical works of the period, and also provided information about the works of Bukhara historians.

Methodology. This research employs historical-comparative, systemic-structural, critical-analytical, and source studies methods. When studying sources, their objectives, the authors' worldviews, and the socio-political conditions of the period are taken into account. In the historiographical analysis, the evolution of assessments given to Amir Nasrullah's era in works written during different periods, along with their common and distinct features, is identified. Within the scope of the article, existing scientific literature, monographs, and articles are also studied and summarized.

Tadqiqot Natijalari (Results). The oldest work written during the period under study is considered to be "Tuhfai Khoni" (Tuhfat al-Khoni) by Qazi Vafo Karminagi. Scholars such as A.A. Semenov, N.D. Miklukho-Maklay [1], A.M. Mirzoyev, and A.N. Boldyrev, who studied certain aspects of this work and its author's activities, attributed the work to two authors.

Its first part covers historical events up to the death of Muhammad Rahim Biy (1759). The subsequent part of the work includes the period up to 1768/69. Qazi Vafo Karminagi died in 1769/70 (1183 AH) at the age of 87. Information regarding his biography has not been preserved. After the

author's death, Domullo Olimbek valadi Niyozqulibek Eshon continued the work, covering events up to 1782.

In the preface to "Tuhfai Khoniyy," published in Tajikistan in 2018, it is described as follows: "An analysis of the work's copies has shown that it consists of 72 chapters, each beginning with the words 'zikri' and 'dar bayoni.' The ruler and his army are mentioned as the subject of each chapter. Qozi Vafo's work begins with a brief praise and eulogy, then recounts events starting from Hijri 1159 (1745 CE) (var.4a)" [2].

Qozi Vafo, the author of "Tuhfai Khoniyy," primarily focuses on political events and information related to rebellious tribes in the work. When describing the relations of the tribes with the central government, he often disrupts the chronological order (see: 71a-73a, 92a-95a, 108b-110b, 268b-269a.).

The language of "Tuhfai Khoniyy" is very complex, containing exaggerated passages and intricate Arabisms. For this reason, in 1906, by order of Jahongirbek Biy Dodkhokh, the ruler of the Yakkabogh Emirate, Mirzo Abdulqodir Keshiy simplified the language of the work and prepared its abridged version (var.265b) [3].

Another historical work from the Manghit period is "Tojut-Tavorikh" (Crown of Histories) by Muhammadsharif ibn Muhammadnaqi. His name and scholarly-literary legacy are reflected in the biographical dictionaries (tazkiras) of the era [4]. Arif Muhammadsharif lived during the reign of Amir Haydar, taught at one of the Bukhara madrasahs, and was engaged in poetry, history, and literary history [5].

Muhammadsharif states that he wrote his work at the behest of Amir Haydar and was pleased with the ruler's favor towards him. From the work, we learn that he worked as a scribe (inshonavis) in Amir Haydar's court until the end of his life and was involved in poetry (17b-18a). Muhammadsharif is considered one of the authors who wrote most extensively about historiography (ilmi

ta'rix wa fanni akhbor) in Bukhara historiography. He considers the origin of the science of history to be the Quran and the inspiration of the Prophet. In his opinion, the purpose of the Quran and history is to provide admonition and lessons.

Six copies of the work "Tojut-tavorikh" are currently known. The copy of the work numbered 9265, preserved in UzFASHI (Uzbek Academy of Sciences), was written after Amir Haydar ascended the throne in 1215 AH (1800 CE). Scholars like Y. Bregel and B. Bobonazarov, through their research, have determined that the subsequent five copies were precisely transcribed from this particular copy. Many events were omitted in these copies, specifically the period of Muhammad Doniyolbiy Ataliq and the reign of Shohmurod, which were left unilluminated.

It can be said that the author's purpose in writing this work was to demonstrate the greatness of Amir Haydar and the splendor of his reign. After discussing this in the work, the author urges everyone to be obedient and subservient to the "world conqueror" (jahongir). Responding to those who criticized the complexity of his work's language, the author emphasizes that he "did not write it to display beautiful words" (var.28a).

In this work, unlike "Tuhfai Khoniyy," several sources used by the author are mentioned. However, some of his sources have been identified through comparative analysis. The author states that in "Tojut-tavorikh," he utilized "Jami'ut-tavorikh," "Zubdat ul-wuzaro," "Rawzatus-safo," "Ta'rikhi Rashidi," "Ta'rikhi Nadiri," as well as "Tuhfai Khoniyy" (var.162a, 332a). It is appropriate to say that the author used these for writing the history and genealogy of the Mongol period, and for illuminating the eras of Nadir Shah, Muhammad Rahimbey, and Doniyolbiy. However, conversely, he did not mention sources related to the Shaybanids,

Ashtarkhanids, and the era of Amir Shohmurod.

Mirzo Sodiq Munshiy also gained fame among Bukhara historians not only for his historical works but also for his epics, lyrical works, chronograms (tarikh), and for serving as a scribe (katib) in the courts of Shohmurod and Amir Haydar.

Usmon Karimov, who wrote a treatise on Mirzo Sodiq Munshiy, studied his works such as "Daxmai Shohon," "Qazo va Qadar," "Raf'i Tumani Ohugir," "Oshiq Shudani Darvesh ba Duxtar," and "Tavorikhi Manzum" [6].

Mirzo Muhammad Sodiq Jondoriy was born between 1753 and 1758 in the village of Jondor, located 1.5 farsakhs from Bukhara. His pen name was "Sodiq." According to assumptions, he served Muhammad Doniyolbiy [6]. It is clear that Mirzo Muhammad Sodiq served as a munshi (scribe/secretary) in the courts of Amir Shohmurod and Amir Haydar during their reigns. This is confirmed by the author's own works and by information provided by his contemporaries. Reliable information about Mirzo Sodiq is also provided by Muhammadsharif in his work "Tojut-tavorikh."

Mirzo Sodiq passed away in Bukhara in 1235 AH (1819/20 CE).

In addition to lyrical works, Mirzo Sodiq Munshiy is the author of historical works titled "Tavorikhi Manzum," "Daxmai Shohon," and "Futuhoti Amiri Ma'sum va Amir Haydar." Of these works, only "Daxmai Shohon" (The Royal Mausoleum) has been studied by Usmon Karimov.

Anke von Kügelgen acknowledges Mirzo Sodiq Munshiy's skill in writing historical processes and refers to him as a "chronogrammist." The scholar states that he differs from other historians due to this skill [5].

The next historical work from this period is "Makhazin at-Taqvo" (Treasury of Piety) by Miriy – Mir Husayn ibn Shohmurod. He was

born in 1200 AH (1785/86 CE) into the family of Shohmurod, the Amir of Bukhara [7]. Some information about him is provided in Fazliy Namangoni's "Majmu'atush-shu'aro" [5]. However, the main information is compiled in his own work, "Makhazin at-Taqvo." His mother was the eldest daughter of G'ani Makhdum, who was known by the name "Shaykhi Ko'lobiy." G'ani Makhdum (d. 1174 AH / 1760-61 CE) was one of the murshids (spiritual guides) of the Naqshbandiya-Mujaddidiya tariqa (Sufi order) of his time. Mir Husayn (pen name Miriy) praises his mother, calling her his "Ka'ba," and commending her innocence and humility. He emphasizes that Shohmurod loved his mother very much and did not separate from her for a long time, but she fell victim to court intrigue [7]. Miriy interpreted the year of his birth, when his father Shohmurod ascended the throne, and the consistent success of the Amir's campaigns in which he participated, as a "good omen" (foli nek) [7].

After Shohmurod's death, Mir Husayn's relations with Amir Haydar, who became the successor to the throne, became strained.

Analysis and Discussion. The work "Zikri te'dodi podshohoni o'zbek" (Mention of the Sequence of Uzbek Kings) is attributed to an author named Muin. This pen name appears in two chronograms (ta'rix) within the work. One of them is in Uzbek, and the second is a munajat (supplication) in Persian-Tajik, found in the conclusion of a work dedicated to Amir Nasrullah [9].

Academics D. Yusupova and R. Jalilova, in their description of Muin's work, suggested that an unknown author wrote it, and that the two chronograms (ta'rix) quoted within it, belonging to the poet Muin who lived in the late 18th – early 19th centuries, were not connected to the actual author [10]. In our opinion, the Bukharan poet and historian might be one and the same person. In any case, the Turkic (Uzbek) chronogram mentioned in the work proves

the author's Uzbek ethnicity. His Persian-Tajik language is very simple, sometimes even containing dialectal words. Compared to the works of court historians Qazi Vafo and Muhammadsharif, his work uses fewer Arabisms, metaphors, and ironies. He consistently avoids the excessive use of various synonyms. He did not frequently cite information from Quranic verses, hadiths, or the works of classical Persian-Tajik literary figures. The work lacks chapter and section titles. One event is distinguished from the narration of another by an address to a musician (*mutrib*), singer (*mug'anniy*), or cup-bearer (*saqi*). The lines "Biyo *mutrib*, *bizan changu bixon afsonaam*" (Come, musician, strike the *chang* and sing my tale) [9] indicate a transition from one story to the next. The simplicity of Muin's work's language and the clarity of its narration suggest that he lacked extensive knowledge in secretarial duties and composition.

Muin's "Zikri te'dodi podshohoni o'zbek" is considered a purely political history. Although rebellions and their suppression are often highlighted in the work, it ultimately concludes with the ruler's triumph. Muin does not shy away from analyzing the actions of certain rulers, yet he refrains from passing judgment on their activities. He narrates events chronologically from the Ashtarkhanid period up to Amir Nasrullah. He refrains from criticizing Nadir Shah's army. Nor did he praise Shohmurod for his religious policies. Sufis do not feature in his accounts of historical events, and he rarely touches upon religious themes. Dates are presented in a systematic order within the work. The logical conclusion of events is marked by the ruler's death, a description of their character, and an account of their ruling methods. Thus, the work concludes with Amir Nasrullah's ascension to the throne (April 1827). It is also possible that the author passed away before completing his

work, perhaps with the intention that someone else would continue it.

Muhammad Yaqub, the twelfth child of Amir Doniyolbiy Ataliq, is the author of the work "Gulshanul-mulk." Both the author and his work were studied in a monographic context by V. Voronovskiy during the Soviet era (1952). However, apart from the scholar's abstract, the dissertation and the translation of the work have been lost [10]. According to available information, Muhammad Yaqub lived as an ordinary citizen and, unlike many of his father's other children, did not achieve great fame, wealth, or high positions. It is known that he was mentioned as a military serviceman in the ranks of Amir Nasrullah's vanguard cavalry [11]. Currently, no other biographical information about him is available.

It is worth noting that the history of the Manghit period was also studied by Khorezm historians, particularly by representatives of the Kokand school of historiography. Works from this category primarily shed light on the mutual relations between Bukhara and neighboring states, as well as external, political, and military issues and themes. Specifically, it can be said that the period of Manghit rule is thoroughly covered in the works of Kokand historians Muhammad Hakimkhon and Avaz Muhammad Attor Khuqandiy.

Information regarding the work "Muntaxabut-tavorix" and its author, Muhammadhakimkhon, is primarily derived from the work itself and has been comprehensively studied by scholars such as A.A. Semyonov, A. Qayumov, A. Muxtorov, B. Ahmedov, and E. Khurshut. Among the aforementioned scholars, Academician Aziz Qayumov is known to have repeatedly equated Muhammad Hakimkhon's "Muntaxabut-tavorix" with the "Baburnama" [12].

Within the Kokand school of historiography, the poet, scribe, and historian Avazmuhammad Attor ibn Mullo So'fi

Muhammad Attor Khuqandiy left a significant mark with his versatile body of work.

Challenges in Source Study:

- **Subjectivity:** Local sources are subjective due to the authors' personal positions, their proximity to the court, or their opposition.
- **Lack of Information:** Some important areas, such as the daily lives of ordinary people and economic statistical data, are poorly documented.
- **Errors in Foreign Sources:** Information from foreign travelers and diplomats sometimes contains errors stemming from cultural misunderstandings, language barriers, or political motives.

Conclusion. The topic is based on historiographical and source-critical analyses. Accordingly, the existing literature can be categorized into several groups based on the periods in which they were written. The first group includes works written during the Russian Empire's rule; the second group, studies created during the Soviet era; the third group, works written during the period of independence; and the fourth group, literature authored by foreign scholars.

Literature belonging to the first group is distinguished by having been created by direct witnesses of historical events that occurred from the 18th century to the early 20th century. They can be divided into two parts based on their affiliation: namely, information provided by historians of the historiographical school of the Uzbek Khanates and by historians of the Russian Empire's colonial period. Since works created in local languages by representatives of the Bukhara Emirate's historiography are used as written sources in this study, they will be discussed in detail in the section on the work's source base.

A number of academic works on this topic were also created during the Soviet era, forming the second group. However, the main part of these works presented the

history of the Emirate and its political, economic, and cultural processes from the perspective of the prevailing Marxist-Leninist ideology and its objectives of that period.

The third group consists of a series of works on the history of the Uzbek Khanates created during Uzbekistan's independence, which began to investigate certain aspects of the Emirate, including the period of Amir Nasrullah, from the perspective of scientific objectivity and historicity.

The fourth group comprises a series of foreign-language literature, including works by M. Oldworth, B. Mans, Y. Bregel, S. Levi, L. Neybi, and others. This category of works, along with newly engaged sources and studies, will aid in a comprehensive study of the topic.

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