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The Uzbek State as Reflected in Eighteenth Century Bukharan Sources*

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The combined research project on “Nomadic rule in a sedentary context – state formation in Central Asia, sixteenth and eighteenth century” focuses on nomads rather close to the political power centres. The states we are dealing with here, originated in a nomadic confederation conquering and migrating to a mixed agro-pastoral zone (Mawarannahr and Khurasan) around 1500. The conquest led by Muḥammad Shaybānī Khān was the last great inroad of pastoralists from the Great Steppe (the Dasht-i Qipchaq) into Mawarannahr, where Uzbek dynasties ruled until 1920.

Some of the wide range of questions the project addresses are the following: How and to which extent have the Central Asian states been shaped by nomads since 1500? How and to what extent have nomadic conquerors been subjected to changes after they came from the Great Steppe to Mawarannahr? How and to what extent did the constraints of their new social and ecological environment affect their economic subsistence and mode of life?

The combined project focuses, in particular, on the military and the state.¹ An attempt is made to trace developments both in sphere of political interaction (between nomads and sedentary groups) and in the military sphere, for instance the participation of sedentary groups in military activities or the building-up of mixed (nomadic and non-nomadic) forces and groups upon which later dynasties, such as the Manghits in Bukhara could rely on.

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¹ Paul, “Documents”; *id.*, “Nomaden”; *id.*, “State and Military”; Holzwarth, “Nomaden und Sesshafte”; Berndt, “Organisation”.

These questions can be approached from several different angles; however, our sources set objective limits to potential directions of research. For us, the most serious of these drawbacks is the taciturnity of Central Asian sources about non-spectacular social facts, such as the mode of life and subsistence of their protagonists. It is only by chance that they occasionally inform us about the nomadic background of certain individuals or groups, in tantalizing short statements in the context of some extraordinary event.

Before taking a closer look at 18th century Bukhara, my special area of research,² it is perhaps worthwhile recalling the wider historical and geographical setting and adopting a more general view on the persistence and constraints of nomadic rule in a sedentary context. Reviewing a vast sample of nomadic states which subjugated sedentary groups, Anatoly Khazanov distinguishes between two main historical scenarios or tendencies in the emergence and evolution of nomadic statehood.

“States of the first type (...) are those in which the subjugation and conquest of the sedentary population basically result in vassal-tribute or other primitive, and not always completely regulated forms of collective dependence and exploitation. These states were usually most stable and long-term where nomads and the sedentary population continued to inhabit separate ecological zones.”³

„States of the second type are particularly characteristic of those situations in which nomads, after conquering a sedentary state, or during the process of conquest, moved onto the territory of this state and began to divide the same ecological zones between themselves and agriculturalists.”⁴

² An earlier draft of the paper was presented at the Conference “Civilizations of Central Asia: Sedentary and Nomadic Peoples” in Samarkand, September 25-28, 2002. I am indebted to the participants in the discussion, especially Roziya Mukminova (Tashkent) and Isenbike Togan (Ankara). I also want to thank all those who helped me to prepare the revised version of this paper by sharing some of their knowledge, skills and time with me: Jürgen Paul, Ulrike Berndt, Kurt Franz, Thomas Herzog (Halle), Anatoly Khazanov (Madison), Anke von Kügelgen (Bern), Hale Decdeli-Holzwarth, Deborah LeGuillou, Anna Renz. All mistakes and inaccuracies are mine.

³ Khazanov, *Nomads*, 231.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 232.

The state created by Muḥammad Shaybānī Khān around 1500 clearly fits to the second trajectory, in which the nomadic population has gradually been incorporated into the sedentary state. In this scenario the nomadic population tends to sedentarize and/or comes to be subjected to the ruler in much the same way as sedentary groups. This happens relatively quickly, usually within two or three successive generations. If this did not happen in the case of the Uzbek state, in Khazanov's opinion, it was due to the shortage of arable land that posed an obstacle to sedentarization, and to the predominance of the appanage system, an ancient tradition in nomadic states.⁵

This study draws primarily on 18th century Bukharan sources, concentrating on those from the late Ashtarkhanid period, as the early Manghit sources have already been discussed in detail by Yuri Bregel and Anke von Kügelgen in their works on related topics.⁶ In addition to narrative sources, such as chronicles, some special attention will be given to court documents, in particular to letters of appointment issued to office-holders by Bukharan rulers. Since only a few of these documents have been preserved in the original, the study will refer to a hitherto somewhat neglected category of sources: copies or rather extracts of original documents in so-called *inshā'*-collections, which have been compiled to serve as stylistic models and guidelines to future court secretaries.

As a preliminary research report, this study cannot attempt to present a single sustained and coherent account of the long and complicated process of transition and transformation that the integration of a large group of nomadic conquerors to an agro-pastoral zone entailed. Instead, a series of vignettes are presented, each pointing briefly to some different aspects of continuity and change, which, in my opinion, need to be considered in an attempt to outline and understand the overall process. The scope and focus of observation varies in each of the following sections in which various

⁵ *Ibid.*, 262; cf. Batrakov ("Osobennosti razvitiia", 154-155), who argues that the lack of irrigation water in Central Bukhara (Zarafshan and Qashqa-Darya oases), which was noted as early as around 1500, impeded the expansion of agricultural production and hampered the sedentarization of nomads in Bukhara, whereas more favourable ecological condition facilitated the transition in Khorezm and Farghana.

⁶ Bregel, *Administration*; Kügelgen, *Legitimierung*.

aspects of the basic question on nomadic rule in a sedentary context and state formation in Uzbek Central Asia are approached from different perspectives.

The first two sections focus on long-term continuities in Uzbek Central Asia, both the continuity of nomadic ways of life and the dominant role of Uzbeks in the military and the state. The third and the fourth sections discuss in more detail the continuity in the privileged social position of the former conquerors' descendants in 18th century Bukhara. The fifth section focuses on the changing significance of the *atālīq*, the highest state post which Uzbek tribal chiefs could hold in the 18th century. The sixth section presents a closer look at an Uzbek tribal chief who rose to the rank of an *atālīq* in the early 18th century, demonstrating the close interrelationship between Bukharan state affairs and Uzbek tribal politics in those days. The seventh section addresses the evolution and connotations of two particular terms used to denote the "totality of the Uzbeks" in 18th century documents and chronicles.

1. A bird's eye view of the presence of nomads in Mawarannahr

I shall proceed by giving a very brief account of the presence of nomads in Transoxania from 1500 to 1800 and then I shall turn to some special features and developments of the Uzbek state. The Uzbek conquests around 1500-1512 seem to have brought some 300,000 to 500,000 nomadic Uzbeks from the Great Steppe into an agro-pastoral zone,⁷ where the native population (nomadic and sedentary groups) could barely have exceeded four million people.⁸ The process of sedentarization or rather the transition to transhumant modes of husbandry seems to have started in the 16th cen-

⁷ According to Bregel ("Turko-Mongol", 74, note 13) the number of only those Uzbeks who remained in Mawarannahr and Farghana could not have been less than 200,000 to 400,000, whereas the total figure was probably much higher. Sultanov (*Kochevye plemena*, 21) estimates the number of nomadic immigrants coming to the land between the Sir-Darya and Amu-Darya, to be 240,000 to 360,000.

⁸ The conquered areas were much larger than the territory controlled by Bukhara in the 18th century. According to a rough but informed estimate around 1600, at a time of maximal expansion of the Uzbek state, the number of the total population in Uzbek Turan (i.e. Mawarannahr and Khorezm) and Balkh (Khurasan) could not have been higher than five million people (Dale, *Indian Merchants*, 20-21).

tury, as indicated by the term „winter-camp-dweller“ (*qishlāq-nishīn*) emerging in the late 16th century, as opposed to „village-dweller“ (*dih-nishīn*) and „steppe-dweller“ (*ṣabrā-nishīn*).⁹ The speed of this process, however, should not be overestimated. The first estimates of relative and absolute figures, supplied by a Bukharan writer and a European traveller around 1820 still note a significantly high proportion of nomadic groups. According to Meyendorff the total population in the Bukharan state was two and a half million, among them one million nomads.¹⁰ ‘Abd al-Karīm Bukhārī speaks of large numbers of nomads (*ḥasham-nishīnān*) in the surroundings of Bukhara, among them Arabs, Turkmens, Uzbeks, Qaraqalpaqs, and Qunghrat. Many of them lived on the River Amu-Darya. Another area characterized by a particularly strong nomadic presence was the Middle Zarafshan Valley: “One can say that in the region of Miyānkālāt and towards Samarqand, the number of tent-dwellers (*ḥasham-nishīnān*) equals that of the city-dwellers (*shahr-nishīnān*). All the way from Bukhārā up to Samarqand, Jizdaq and Ūra-Tīpa there are villages (*dihāt*), towns (*kūy*) and nomads (*ḥasham-nishīn*) side by side.”¹¹

It is clear that Uzbeks were not the only nomadic group in Mawarannahr, nor have all the Uzbek groups and subgroups preserved a nomadic way of life up to the 19th century. In the following, I shall not address the question of sedentarization which remains open. Instead, I propose to follow a richer stream of 18th century Bukharan sources, for the critical social distinction in the Bukharan state was evidently not conceptualised between “nomad” and “sedentary” but between „warrior“/“Uzbek” and „subject“.

⁹ On this often repeated argument which has, as yet, never been substantiated, see Ivanov, *Ocherki*, 72; Abduraimov, *Ocherki*, II, 91; Shaniiazov, “Nekotorye voprosy”, 89. None of these authors mentions even a single source; Abduraimov (*ibid.*, 91) refers to a short note of Bartol’d (*Istoriia*, 210), which does not lead us any further. On the single textual evidence that has so far been identified, see Paul, “Nomaden”, 50. It appears in a document issued in 1006/1598 by Abdallāh Khān II and refers to the town of Sighnāq on the Middle Sir-Darya. The original Persian text has been published by Bartol’d, *Otchet*, 201.

¹⁰ Meyendorff, *Voyage*, 197.

¹¹ Bukhārī, *Histoire*. Ed./tr. Schefer, text, 77; tr. 171-172.

2. *A note on the periodization of the Uzbek state*

When referring to the political system created by Muḥammad Shaybānī Khān's conquests in the Central Asian agro-pastoral zone as the "Uzbek state", I partly follow Robert McChesney's usage of the term "Uzbek", both for the tribal groups that provided most of the state's military and administrative manpower, and for the political system as a whole.¹² A major feature that McChesney attributes to the Uzbek state is the prevalence of certain modes of steppe political practice within the conquered territory, notably the "Chingizid system" and the "appanage system"; i.e. the Chingizid descent of the sovereign that was indispensable to the legitimacy of political rule, and the decentralization of authority based on ideals of equality among the members of the royal clan. Sons, brothers, and to a certain extent also cousins of the grand khan could all claim an appropriate share of the patrimony. These princes bore the titles *sulṭān* or even *khān* and reigned in the various regions that had been allotted to them as appanages. Hence, adopting McChesney's criteria, we could infer that the abolition of the appanage system in the late 17th century¹³ hints at the decline of the Uzbek state in a narrower sense of the word,¹⁴ though the prerogative of Chingizid sovereignty has been perpetuated well into the 18th century.

Even after the downfall of Chingizid dynastical rule, some prominent features of the Uzbek state had persisted. Therefore I propose untying the somewhat too close a link between the "Uzbek state" and the "Chingizid state" that McChesney seems to favour, confining the "Uzbek state", as such, in the strict sense of the word, to the political formations in 16th and 17th century Central Asia. A closer look at 18th century Bukhara shows how viable the basic concept of the "Uzbek state" remained, notwithstanding important political and dynastical changes.

18th century Bukhara witnessed a transition of supreme power from the last Chingizid dynasty (variously referred to as "Ashtarkhānids", "Jānids", or "Tuqāy-Tīmūrids") to the Manghits, a Uzbek tribal dynasty. The first

¹² McChesney, *Waqf*, 49-51.

¹³ McChesney, *Waqf*, 149-163; *id.*, *Central Asia*, 138-139.

¹⁴ This is a simplified rendering of McChesney's view. He does not explicitly make the point, focusing instead on successive alterations introduced into the political system between the early 16th and the mid-18th century.

Manghit to claim full sovereignty was Muḥammad Raḥīm, who in 1756 declared himself *khān*.¹⁵

A major trend under Manghit rule was, as Bregel points out, the gradual decline of power of Uzbek tribal chiefs, and the strengthening of the central government of Bukhara. Relying on the support of the urban population and creating a standing army, the Manghits achieved the centralization of power. The military role of Uzbek tribal chiefs was finally crushed during the reign of the Manghit ruler Amīr Naṣrallāh (1827-1860), whose standing army was able to quell all Uzbek military uprisings.¹⁶ As a result, the Bukharan state “became a despotic monarchy, where the *amīr*, enjoying practically unlimited power, ruled through a huge bureaucratic apparatus. Persons of mean or at least non Uzbek origin (former Persian slaves, Turkmens, etc.), tied to the sovereign by personal loyalty, held key positions in this bureaucracy.”¹⁷

Seen against this historical background, the development of political systems from the nomadic conquest to the emergence of the “despotic” or “bureaucratic” Bukharan state reveal a long-term continuity which, in my view, can be regarded as a period of Uzbek statehood.

Throughout the 18th century, Uzbeks were by far the politically most dominant group in the Bukharan state and they were the backbone of the army. The highest state ranks and posts, in particular those vested with military authority, were reserved for their tribal leaders. When 18th century chronicles and documents speak of “the Uzbeks” in general terms, they often refer to military competence and prowess, and to a superior social position of the military (*sipāh*, *‘asākir*), as opposed to the mean estate of the “poor subjects” (*fuqarā*).

Not until the mid-19th century could the Bukharan state, with its expanding non-tribal standing army establish a firm control over the former Uzbek military estate. The decisive shift in the balance of power towards the central authority finally shattered the privileged social position of the descendants of the former conquerors. Furthermore, the Uzbek warriors

¹⁵ At his inauguration that was deliberately staged in a Chingizid style, see Sela, *Ritual*.

¹⁶ Bregel, “Mangits”, 419.

¹⁷ Bregel, “Mangits”, 418.

were reluctant to serve in the newly emerging regular army, whose instructors were Iranians, British-Indian deserters and Russian slaves. For, the chief arms of services of the nascent Bukharan standing army were infantry and artillery, whereas the Uzbek warriors favoured fighting in cavalry detachments.¹⁸ Thus, I would argue that around 1850, the Uzbeks lost control over the military domain in the Bukharan state which they had gained around 1500. Seen from this point of view, the process of adaptation of nomadic rule to a sedentary society has lasted much longer than has hitherto been supposed. It was not a matter of two to three generations, as in other cases of nomadic conquests of sedentary areas, but a long and complicated process lasting for three and a half centuries.

The following section points to recurring textual evidence in late Ash-tarkhanid and early Manghit sources that gives us some insight into autochthonous (emic) conceptualisations of what we might call “Uzbek statehood in the eighteenth century”.

3. *The Uzbeks as warriors and their concept of the ideal state*

As I have already mentioned earlier, we can see from 18th century Bukharan sources that an important social distinction is made between “warriors”/“Uzbeks” on the one hand, and the “subjects” on the other hand. Sources from the very beginning up to the very end of the 18th century reveal a striking persistence of the general concept that Uzbeks, as military commanders and soldiers, are entitled to receive a certain share of the state revenues from agricultural lands. Seen from their point of view, the ideal state is one in which their vested interests are safeguarded and the system of allocation and redistribution operates smoothly.

An early 18th century court chronicle outlines the ideal state of affairs in retrospect, referring to the rule of a Bukharan khan who died in 1702:

“In the days of this sublime king (Subhān-Qulī Khān, r. 1682-1702) the commanders and the troops (*umarā wa lashkarī*) lived absolutely free

¹⁸ Khanykov, *Opisanie*, 306-314; Galkin, *Materialy*, 210-212; Troitskaia, „Voennoe delo“.

from anxiety and worries. Year by year they carried off their provisions and pay from the treasury and the peasants.”¹⁹

In the first decade of the 18th century a conflict unfolds between the military estate and the administrative bureaucracy. The same author who has outlined the ideal system in the quotation above, describes its temporary breakdown as being a major reason for the downfall of the successive ruler, ‘Ubaydallāh Khān (r. 1702-1711). Please note in the following quotation that the terms “army” and “Uzbeks” are used synonymously:

“Discord arose between the king (*pādshāh*) and the army (*sipāh*). Trust and sincerity – such as is due [between them] – ceased to exist. (...). The courtiers (*sarāyān*), especially Bāltū Sarāyi and some government clerks and agents (*‘amala wa fa‘ala-i sarkār*) noticed that the king was not well disposed towards the military leaders (*umarā-yi sipāh*). (...) This stupid and shortsighted bunch of people was afraid of the Uzbeks. They disregarded the law (*ḥukm*) and started to lodge rash complaints about the state of the subjects (*fuqarā*) and the uniform authority of the army (*ḥukm-i yaksān-i sipāh*). They carried it to a point where they brought along orders (*ḥukm*) and confiscated the agricultural estates and pensions (*arāḍiya wa tanḥwāh*) of the Uzbeks. (...) Whereas the assignment of provisions for the soldiers was fully indicated in current fiscal inventories of agricultural land, they imagined [this agricultural land] to be their own private and tax-free land and disarranged the papers of the inventory register. The soldiers [in consequence] received nothing but a piece of paper”.²⁰

This narrative clearly shows that the appropriation of agricultural surplus by the army could not have functioned without the paperwork and

¹⁹ *‘alūfa wa marsūmāt-i kbwudhā-rā dar har sana az khazīna wa ra‘āyā mīburdand.* (Muḥammad Amīn, *‘Ubaydallāh-nāma*, MS Tashkent, f. 6b; tr. Semenov, 17). This is obviously a retrospectively idealized view. The poet Turdī Farāghī, a member of the Uzbek tribe of Yūz and a contemporary of Subhān-Qulī Khān, strongly criticizes the rule of the latter, in particular the decline of virtue and virility, and the growing influence of ladies (*xotun*) and eunuchs (*xojasaroy*) at the Bukharan court (Turdī, *She‘rlar*, 24).

²⁰ *wa barāt-i ‘alūfa-i sipāhī ki az arāḍiya-i rāyij-i daftarī fī l-jumla marwjud mīshud, milk-i khālīš-i kbwudhā pindāshhta, awrāq-i daftar-rā parīshān kardand; sipāhī ba-juz kāghadh chīzī namīgirift.* (Muḥammad Amīn, *‘Ubaydallāh-nāma*, f. 202b-203a; tr. Semenov, 235).

the files of the central financial administration. The administration was attached to the palace and, at times, pursued also its own particular interests. As the bureaucrats deliberately obstructed the established pattern of redistribution, the soldiers were left with “uncovered cheques” in their hands. In order to defend and safeguard their vested rights and interests, they directed their military power against the supreme ruler. They killed and replaced him shortly afterwards, in 1711.

We now turn to a source from the late 18th century: *Majma‘ al-arqām*, a manual of instructions for the Bukharan fiscal administration written in 1212/1798, during the reign of the Manghit ruler Shāh Murād (r. 1785-1800).²¹ It demonstrates that the concept of the Uzbeks as warriors and their claim to the allocation of agricultural surplus was sustained even at the end of the 18th century. The manual describes the methods of documentation employed by the Bukharan revenue department and served as a kind of handbook for officials of the Bukharan treasury. Most of the rules and principles of fiscal administration described here, refer to the “income” side of model account books, especially to the design of tax registers of agricultural land irrigated by extensive channel systems, such as in the Bukhara oasis. On the “expenditure” or allocation (*tawjīha*) side, the model account books, or tax administration registers, reveal a striking persistence of features of Uzbek tribal organisation, and of the Uzbek warriors’ concept of the ideal state of affairs mentioned above. Thus, after having registered the taxed agricultural land on every level of administration, from the province (*wilāyat*) down to the administrative village (*qariya*),

²¹ Badī‘, *Majma‘*. Facs. ed. / tr. Vil’danova. For further information about the author, Mīrzā Badī‘, a chancery official (*dīwān*) who had been promoted to the highest post in the Bukharan fiscal administration – *wazīr-i dīwān-i a‘lá* – in charge “of the books of assessment of receipts and disbursement of the treasury”, see Bregel, “Administration”, 1-6, 36. Bregel devotes special attention to a small treatise on Bukharan ranks and offices which as he convincingly shows, was appended to Mīrzā Badī‘ *Dīwān*’s manual by a copyist and spuriously ascribed to the same author. This appendix (*Tadhyīl*) has attracted considerable interest since Semenov (“Bukharskii traktat”) published a Russian translation. Bregel’s critical investigations lead to the conclusion that “the *Tadhyīl* cannot be considered an entirely reliable description of the Bukharan administration before and after Shāh Murād” (Bregel, “Administration”, 18). The following quotation is taken from Mīrzā Badī‘ *dīwān*’s original work.

the revenue officials are instructed to proceed in the following way in order to complete their administrative records:

“Thereupon underneath the total revenue (*jam*) of each province and each village (*qariya*), one has to write the name of the warrior (*ghāzi*) to whom the grain and the cash is to be delivered. The warrior has to be listed along with his tribe (*urūgh*), and if he is a dependant, along with [the name of] his chief (*matbū*); if he is an office-holder (*amal-dār*), along with the name of his office. Furthermore, the ‘method of assignments’ (*tariqa-i tawjīha*) is the following: First the names of ‘those allowed a fixed pension’ (*muwazzafīn*) have to be written in such a way that first the name of a commander of several soldiers (*amīr-i ba’dī asākir*) is written along with the name of his office and tribe.

With regard to the rank (*rutba*) of that commander according to office and tribe (*dar amal wa urūgh*), the ‘two sides’ have been fixed and designated in such a manner that to ‘the right side’ (*jānib-i ūng*) [tribes] like [the following] take [their] place (*ūrūn*)²²: Manghit, Kīnakas, Karait, Dūrmān, Qungrāt, Khiṭāy, Qipchāq, Ūtārchī, Turkmān, Arlāt, Kiyat, Qirghiz, Qalān, Ūyshūn, Jūblājī, Qārī, Mughūl, Hāfiz, Ūglān, Tīlād. And to the left (*taraf-i sūl*): Qaṭaghān, Sarāy, Yābū, Bahrīn, Jalāyir, Qānglī, Yūz, Mīng, Naimān, Qārliq, Burqūt, Ārghūn, Qūshchī, Ūghlān, Qalmāq, Fūlādchī, Qirq, Alchin, Majār, Chīnbāy, Badāy, As, Chibūrgān, Kīlchī, Tama, Misīt, Tātār, Ūyghūr, Baghlān, Īlach, Tanghut, *shāgird-pīsha*^{23, 24}.

²² In 18th century Bukhara, the Turkish term *ūrūn* (“place, seat”) can be distinguished from two other terms used for the concept of official “posts”, namely *manṣab* and *amal*. The *ūrūn* fixes court protocol positions of high officials, i.e. their seats to the right or left side of the ruler on ceremonial occasions (Bregel, “Administration”, 20-21, 24; cf. Bleichsteiner, “Raumordnung”; McChesney, “Amirs”, 39-41).

²³ Around 1800 the *shāgird-pīsha* (“servants; apprentices”) was a non-tribal group, that constituted a low-ranking and, numerically speaking, strictly confined body in the Bukharan military. They were mostly employed as guards, see Viatkin, “Karshinskii okrug”, 15-16; Abduraimov, “Voprosy”, 54. In 1123/1711, when Uzbek rebels attacked and looted the citadel of Bukhara, the *shāgird-pīshagān* were closely associated with the ruler’s confidants (*mahramān*) and the palace eunuchs (*khwāja-sarāyān*) (Muḥammad Amīn, *Ubaydallāh-nāma*, f. 246b; tr. Semenov, 275). In the 1830s and 1840s, two diverse connotations of the term *shāgird-pīsha* have been recorded by European travellers: a) a sizeable non-tribal section of the Bukharan cavalry made up of “mixed tribes of Bokhara” which were under the ruler’s direct command (Burnes, *Travels*, II, 374), and b) the Bukharan population of low, i.e. non-Uzbek origin, com-

The long list of tribal names mentions twenty groups on the right (*ūng*) wing, and thirty-two on the left (*sūl*) wing. Thus we see the Uzbeks depicted once again as a military estate. It is worth noting that the two accounts presented above basically describe the same procedure by which the descendants of the former conquerors extracted agricultural surplus. No originals of the combined tax registers and army payrolls alluded to in these statements have been discovered as yet.

Considering the high rank the author of the “fiscal instructions” held in the Bukharan administration, there can be no doubt about the implementation of his scheme in Bukhara around 1800. We gain some insight into how the military-administrative system functioned from letters written by the successive Bukharan ruler, Amīr Ḥaydar (r. 1800-1826), to his governor in Qarshi. Here I am referring to a manuscript kept at Tashkent: copies of 279 letters, all written between 1800 and 1803,²⁵ which is an average of nearly two letters per week. Most of these letters deal with military issues. Roughly, half of the letters order the mobilisation and movements of troops; the other half allots revenue titles as salaries for soldiers of merit. A typical order of the first category, for instance, tells the governor of Qarshi to send some 700 soldiers (among them a specified number of Manghits from different subsections, as well as from other tribes) to the neighbouring district of Khuzar. A typical order of the second category, in turn, tells the governor of Qarshi to assign to some ten or fifteen soldiers, who are named, the revenue of one, or two, or five “ploughs of land” (*juft-i gaw*), sometimes also specifying the preferred village and area. We can infer from these letters that the Bukharan ruler exercised much tighter control over all kinds of military affairs than a hundred years earlier.²⁶

prising Tajiks, persons of Persian descent as well as freed slaves (Khanykov, *Opisanie*, 185).

²⁴ Badī, *Majmaʿ*. Facs. ed. / tr. Vilʿdanova, f. 14b-15a; tr. Vilʿdanova, 37.

²⁵ *Maktūbāt-i Amīr Ḥaydar*, MS Tashkent, Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences, no. 5412. This collection has been studied in detail by Viatkin, “Karshinskii okrug”.

²⁶ We should, however, bear in mind, that in the meantime the territorial realm of Bukhara had decreased considerably, and that the province of Qarshi, being a

The following two sections explore if and how continuities and changes in the political and military spheres during the century of transition from Ashtarkhanid to Manghit dynastic rule are reflected in documents, especially in letters of appointment issued to office-holders by Bukharan rulers.

4. “The Uzbeks” in eighteenth century Bukharan documents

18th century Bukharan documents usually refer to “the Uzbeks” or to “the totality of the Uzbeks” in cases where the ruler appoints certain individuals to high-ranking positions in the Bukharan state, in particular when the official position is closely linked to the military sphere.

One such example is the appointment of Farhād *biy bahādur atālīq* to the post of a general and “chief-commander” (*ilghār-bāshī*)²⁷. After announcing that Farhād *biy* has been bestowed the rank of a chief-commander of the victorious army, the Bukhara ruler calls the brave amirs (*umarā*), proud warriors (*mubārizān-i ghairat-anjām*), the toiling army-people (*lashkariyān*), those who volunteer to risk their lives, all the ninety-two tribal divisions of the Uzbeks of Mawarannahr (*jambūr-i nawad-u-dū firqa-i ūzbakīya-i Māwarānnahr*) and the other soldiers of the steppe and the city (*sā’ir lashkar-rawān-i šahrā wa shahr*) to recognise the general’s authority and to obey his commands.²⁸

In documents referring to the office and rank of a *qādī-yi ‘askar*, a “military judge”, we again come across the connection made between the army and “the Uzbeks”. For instance, in an original letter of appointment issued in 1130/1718 by Abū l-Fayḍ Khān relates the following: “We have

stronghold of the Manghit tribe, was particularly closely tied to the capital of Bukhara.

²⁷ The exact meaning of the term *ilghār* around 1718-1720, when the royal mandate was most probably issued (see below, section 6), is difficult to establish. In the 16th century, *ilghār* meant “a rapid military campaign; light cavalry” (Pavet de Courteille, *Dictionnaire*, 131-132). Around 1800, the Bukharan ruler occasionally used the term in the sense of “troops; garrison” posted in a fort (*qūrghān*) (*Maktūbāt-i Amīr Ḥaydar*, MS Tashkent, f. 115b).

²⁸ *Maktūbāt, manshūrāt, munsha’āt*, MS Tashkent, Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences, no. 289, f. 131a. The first to take note of this collection and to advocate its study was Semenov, “Ocherk ustroistva”, 69.

bestowed upon Ibrāhīm Khwāja *raʿīs* the famous office and excellent rank of a military judge (*qadā-yi ʿaskar*) of the noble province (*wilāyat*) of Bukhara – may it be protected from disaster and evil! – and its dependencies in the same manner as the previous *qādīs*. The great sayyids, the respected *amīrs*, all the victorious army (*sipāh*) and soldiers (*ʿasākīr*) in whose footsteps follows victory, and [...] ²⁹ all the Uzbeks of the districts and places subjected [to Bukhara] should acknowledge the above mentioned [person] as holding this office”. They should not oppose his judicial authority, and they should have all their legal affairs settled by him.” ³⁰

Another letter of appointment, available only in an abbreviated version, mentions a certain Qādī Khwāja Shāh appointed to the position of military judge of Bukhara. Here again, “all the Uzbeks of the province” (*tamām-i ūzbakīya-i wilāyat*) are called to recognise him as military judge. In addition to the standard formula, the ruler here also calls on the “judges of the Tajiks of the places mentioned” (*quḍāt-i tājikīya-i maḥāll-i madhkūr*) to obey the supreme judicial authority of the military judge (*qādī-yi ʿaskar*) and not to oppose him or any deputy (*nāʿib*) he might appoint in the districts. ³¹ Thus this document obviously associates the military and non-military spheres with ethnic categories: Uzbeks and Tajiks respectively.

Furthermore, we find the term “Uzbeks” in documents nominating certain individuals to the rank of *atālīq*, which until the middle of the 18th century was the highest position an Uzbek amir could be appointed to. In a letter of appointment, issued [in *ca.* 1131/1719] by Abū l-Fayḍ Khān to Farhād *biy*, the authority of the *atālīq* was defined as follows:

“We have bestowed upon [Farhād *biy bahādur*] the famous office and excellent rank of *atālīqī* over the realm of the noble province (*wilāyat*) of Bukhara – may God protect it from evil! – according to the model of the previous *atālīqs* with full and sole authority (*bi l-istiqlāl wa l-infirād*). The religious dignitaries (*arkān-i dīn wa millat*), the chancery officials (*dī-*

²⁹ Due to a defect in the original document, two or three words here are missing between “*ʿasākīr-i firūzī-maʿāthīr wa*” and “*mutawaṭṭīna wa tamām-i tamām-i ūzbakīya-i tūmānāt wa maḥāllhā-yi maḥkūmāt*”.

³⁰ Central State Archives, Republic of Uzbekistan, Fond I-126, op. 1, d. 2.

³¹ *Maktūbāt*, MS Tashkent, no. 289, f. 104ab. Neither have I been able to identify the office-holder, nor have I been able to date this document.

wāniyān), the chiefs and local headmen (*arbāb wa kadkhudāyān*), the Uzbek tribes of Mawarannahr (*īl wa aqwām-i ūzbakīya-i Māwarānnahr*), the commanders of fifty and the commanders of ten (*īlik-āqāsiyān wa daba-bāshiyān*), those with bad and those with good fortune (*yābkhwurān wa ābkhwurān*), and the entire population of the city, the district and the province mentioned above [Bukhara] have to recognise the above-mentioned [Farhād biy] as *atālīq* and “Pillar of the Amirs” (*‘umdat al-umarā*) of the above-mentioned province [Bukhara].”³²

In 1756, on the occasion of Muḥammad Raḥīm Khān’s ascendance to the throne of the Bukharan khan, the rising Manghit dynasty confirmed in principle the essentially military role of the Uzbek tribes and their legitimate claim to a share in government authority; as one of their court chroniclers expressed it:

“It was the honoured custom of the Sultans descending from [the Chingizid] Juchī and the mighty Uzbek khaqans (*khawāqīn-i ūzbakīya*) that among the thirty-two tribes of the Uzbek warriors (*sī wa dū ūrūgh-i ‘asākīr-i ūzbakīya*), the rule of favours and the equality of kindness was observed. [Thus] the head of each tribe (*sardār-i har khailī*) and the chief of each troop (*pīshwā-yi har faujī*) were to be assigned the appropriate offices of authority and the suitable posts of governing according their ranks and their distinction within the [the hierarchy of the two] sides (*ba-qadr-i marātīb wa tafāwut dar jānīb*)”.³³

5. *The changing role of the atālīq in eighteenth century Bukhara*

The post and authority of the *atālīq* were subject to considerable change in 18th century Bukhara. In the Chingizid appanage system, i.e. up to the late 17th century, the *atālīqs* acted as chief military and political advisors to Chingizid princes and appanage holders.³⁴ Under these conditions, several Uzbek amirs held the post, at one and the same time, but they were based in different parts of the khanate and bound to different Chingizid authori-

³² *Ibid.*, f. 129b-130a. See also below, section 6.

³³ Karmīnāgī, *Tuhfa*, MS Kazan, f. 190b. The translation partly follows Bregel, “Administration”, 20.

³⁴ McChesney, “Amirs”.

ties. In 1114/1702 the Bukharan khan granted the rank of *atālīq* and the honorary title “Pillar of the Amirs” (*‘umdat al-umarā*) to Muḥammad Raḥīm Yūz.³⁵ Still, a few years later there were several Uzbek tribal chiefs holding simultaneously the post and rank of *atālīq*.³⁶

The 1710s witnessed a readjustment of the office to the new political (i.e. *post* “appanage system”) conditions. The idea that there could be only one chief military and political executive of a Chingizid ruler – a plenipotentiary *atālīq* – was implemented in political practice. As the importance of the (sole) *atālīq* in the Bukharan central government grew, the post became the object of intense rivalry between aspiring Uzbek amirs.³⁷ As is well known, the Manghit family that grappled the post of *atālīq* immediately after the above mentioned Farhād did not cede it again. They came to be the most powerful men in 18th century Bukhara, acquiring supreme political authority and ousting the Chingizid-Ashtarkhanid dynasty.

On the accession of the Manghits to the throne of Bukhara, the political and military powers of the non-Manghit Uzbek amirs, officiating as *atālīqs*, declined. Immediately after the first Manghit ruler, Muḥammad Raḥīm (*atālīq* in 1160-1170/1747-1756, *khān* in 1170-1172/1756-1758), had himself proclaimed khan, he appointed his chief officials. The post of the *atālīq*, along with the honorary title “Pillar of the Amirs”, was given to Khwājam-Yār *biy* Ūtarchī – the son of Farhād *biy* and the tribal leader of the Khitay-Qipchaq at that time. The text of his diploma is not available. However, we can tell the decreasing significance of the post from the court chronicler’s narrative, who summarizes the content of his letter of appointment in the following words: “And a decree which the entire world has to obey was issued that the amirs and the Uzbek troops (*‘umarā wa sipāh-i ūzbakīya*) should address official petitions to him and should expect an answer [from him].”³⁸

³⁵ Muḥammad Amīn, *‘Ubaydallāh-nāma*, f. 20b, 28b; tr. Semenov, 34-35, 43-44.

³⁶ During the Balkh campaign of 1119/1707, three Uzbek chiefs bearing the title *atālīq* were present in the royal camp, among them also Muḥammad Raḥīm Yūz (*Ibid.*, f. 118a).

³⁷ See below, section 5.

³⁸ Karmīnagī, *Tuhfa*, MS Kazan, f. 192b. The English translation follows Bregel, “Administration”, 13-14.

When the second Manghit ruler of Bukhara, Muḥammad Dāniyāl *biy atālīq* (r. 1758-1785), reclaimed the title *atālīq* for Manghit sovereign, the post could obviously not any longer be conferred to a subaltern tribal chief. By the end of the 18th century, the post of the *atālīq* was dissociated from the realm of the military. According to an anonymous treatise on Bukharan state offices, around 1785-1800 the *atālīq*'s responsibility was to supervise the irrigation system and the distribution of water of the River Zarafshan from Samarqand down to Qarakul.³⁹ There are doubts about the authenticity of the source just referred to. Evidence from narrative sources, however, affirm that from the period of Amīr Ḥaydar (1800-1826) until the end of Manghit rule, the rank of *atālīq* was merely an honorary title. Parallel to the declining significance of the *atālīq*, the importance of the post of *qushbīgī* (*qushbegi*), which was not strictly reserved to persons of Uzbek tribal affiliation, steadily increased during the Manghit period. Thus, the *qushbegi* came to be the head of the entire administration of the state and the second person after the sovereign.⁴⁰

The declining importance of the *atālīq* highlights just one aspect of the overall decline in power of Uzbek tribal chiefs and the strengthening of the central government of Bukhara under the Manghit rulers.

6. *The career of an Uzbek amir: Farhād biy*

Farhād *biy* is an Uzbek tribal leader (*amīr*) whose military and political career during the first two decades of the 18th century is rather well documented. Copies of four letters of appointment issued to him are preserved in a Tashkent *inshā'* manuscript which, however, omits the names of the issuing authority as well as the dates. The copies appear under the following rubrics and in the following order:

1. Diploma of the post of an *atālīq* for Farhād *biy atālīq*;⁴¹
2. Diploma of the post of an *ilghār-bāshī* and head of the army for Farhād *biy atālīq*;⁴²

³⁹ *Tadhyil*, in: Badī', *Majma*. Facs. ed. / tr. Vil'danova, text f. 89b-90a; tr. 95.

⁴⁰ Bregel, „Administration“, 7-12, 14-15; Kügelgen, 85-94.

⁴¹ *manshūr-i atālīqī ki ba-imārat-panāh Farhād biy atālīq niwīshā-and (Maktūbāt*, MS Tashkent, no 289. f., 128a-130a).

3. Diploma of the post of a governor of Samarqand province for Farhād *biy bahādur parwānachī*;⁴³
4. Diploma of the post of a governor of Anhār province in the manner of a reward for Farhād *biy*.⁴⁴

Contemporary chroniclers provide additional information. Farhād *biy* rose to prominence during the rule of ‘Ubaydallāh Khān (1702-1711). We know that in 1116/1705 his base was a fortress located a night’s ride from the village of Charkhīn (on the outskirts of Samarqand) on a route linking Samarqand with the capital, Bukhara.⁴⁵ He was a member of the Ūtārchī clan of the Uzbek tribe of Khitay-Qipchaq.⁴⁶ The Khitay-Qipchaq were one of the most powerful and largest Uzbek tribes in Bukhara. According to an 18th century chronicler they counted 100,000 families in 1129/1716-17, two early 19th century estimates are 120,000 persons, and 80,000 families respectively.⁴⁷ The Khitay-Qipchaq tribe was also among those Uzbek tribes that had most strongly retained a pastoral economy and a nomadic or transhumant way of life.⁴⁸

⁴² *manshūr-i ulghār-bāshbīgī-yi ‘asākīr-i fīrūzī-ma’āthir wa sardārī-yi sipāh ki ba-imārat panāh Farhād biy atālīq niwīshā-and (Ibid., f. 130a-131a).*

⁴³ *manshūr-i hukūmat-i wilāyat-i Samarqand firdaus-mānand ki ba-Farhād biy bahādur parwānachī niwīshā-and (Ibid., f. 140a-141a).*

⁴⁴ *manshūr-i hukūmat-i wilāyat-i Anhār ba-tarīqa-i juldu ki ba-Farhād biy niwīshā-and (Ibid., f. 151b-152a).*

⁴⁵ Muḥammad Amīn, *‘Ubaydallāh-nāma*, f. 42a, tr. Semenov, 57.

⁴⁶ His father, in all likelihood, was Khwāja-Qulī *biy* Ūtārchī (Ūtāji), who held in 1096/1684-85 the governorship (*hukūmat*) of Samarqand and rebelled against the Bukharan ruler, “relying on the multitude of the Kḥiṭāy tribe (*qabīla-i Kḥiṭāy*)“. (Tirmidhī, *Dastūr*. Facs. ed. / tr. Salakhedinova, text, 123-125; tr., 88-89. On these events see Burton, *Bukharans*, 332-333. In 1866, the Utarchi were considered to be the aristocratic section (*bekskoe otdelenie*) of the *Ktai*, i.e. Khitay (Grebekina, „Uzbeki“, 100). 18th century sources mostly mention the „Kḥiṭāy and Qipchāq“, or „Kḥiṭāy-Qipchāq“ together, as if forming a stable union or even a single tribe. For further information on the Khitay-Qipchaq see Ivanov, *Vosstanie*, 27-32.

⁴⁷ Balkhī, *Tārīkh*, MS Oxford, f. 292b; Ivanov, *Vosstanie*, 30.

⁴⁸ On the early 18th century, see the evidence quoted below. In the 19th century Khanykov still lists them as nomadic tribes: “2) Kḥitai, nomadise between Bukhara and Kermin. (...) 4) Kipchak, nomadise between Katta Kurgan and Samarkand” (Khanykov, *Opisanie*, 64). For a discussion of 19th century evidence see Ivanov, *Vosstanie*, 30-31; Tashev, “Zhivovodstvo“, 52-54.

Farhād *biy* Ūtārchī (Ūtārjī) in 1119/1707 took part in the conquest of Balkh, leading a body of Khitay and Qipchaq troops (along with some of ‘Ubaydallāh Khān’s personal Qalmaq body-guards in one action).⁴⁹ He was among the distinguished commanders honoured in the celebrations upon the return of the victorious army to Bukhara.⁵⁰ Shortly after, still in the year 1119/1707-08, Farhād *biy* was rewarded on the khan’s order (*yār-līgh*) for his devoted services in the Balkh campaign with the governorship (*ḥukūmat*) of Shahr-i Sabz.⁵¹ The letter of appointment has not been preserved. The event has, however, been related by a court chronicler. His narrative deserves our attention, as it points to the decidedly pastoral economic interests of Farhād *biy*’s tribal following. Furthermore, the case shows how closely intertwined Bukharan state affairs and Uzbek tribal politics were in those days. Shahr-i Sabz, a fertile hill region, was dominated by an Uzbek tribal coalition referred to (in the first two decades of the 18th century) as the “Ūng-Sūl”, or “Ūng wa Sūl”, the right and the left (wing).⁵² By issuing the above-mentioned order, the khan intended to punish the Ūng-Sūl, as they had joined the Balkh campaign only reluctantly and deserted his forces once the battle ground was reached.

“Furthermore”, the chronicler states, “the king thought that the Kḥiṭāy-Qipchāq tribe (*jamā‘at*) would solve the task of conquering the said province when he issued the royal order (*yār-līgh*) of that region’s governorship to Farhād. The painstaking *amīr* instantly set out towards the Kḥiṭāy-Qipchāq tribespeople (*īl wa ulūs*) who were living in the region of Qarshī, in the surroundings of Samarqand, and in Miyānkālāt. On his arrival, he spread the good news of such an authority among the people, and the

⁴⁹ Muḥammad Amīn, *‘Ubaydallāh-nāma*, f. 100a, tr. Semenov, 114. Farhād *biy*’s fortress could well have been Katta-Qurghan, which came to be a central place of the Khitay-Qipchaq territory in the Middle Zarafshan Valley in the early 19th century (Ivanov, *Vosstanie*, 27, 31-32).

⁵⁰ Muḥammad Amīn, *‘Ubaydallāh-nāma*, f. 118b; tr. Semenov, 134. On the background to the Balkh campaign, see McChesney, *Waqf*, 163-166.

⁵¹ Muḥammad Amīn, *‘Ubaydallāh-nāma*, f. 132a; tr. Semenov, 150.

⁵² On some possible implications of the term, see McChesney, *Waqf*, 163. There is little information about the subgroups of the “Ūng wa Sūl”. Their leader is usually identified as a Keneges (Kanikas). In 1121/1709, however, a Manghit amir, Khudā-Yār *par-wānachi* Manghit, was the head of the Ūng-Sūl tribe (*sardār-i firqa-i Ūng-Sūl*) (Muḥammad Amīn, *‘Ubaydallāh-nāma*, f. 153a; tr. Semenov, 172).

prospects of pastures and grassland (*charāgāb wa ‘alafzār*) of that fresh land. The Khiṭāy-Qipchāq community (*qawm*) was living in poor conditions since their tribespeople (*īl wa ulūs-i khwud-hā*) were dispersed throughout all of the districts. They therefore wished to have such a fortified home [like Shahr-i Sabz]. The elders of that community cheered; as soon as the herald’s cry (*jār*) was heard, the troops gathered. They assembled in the area of Pul-i Mīrzā which had been fixed as a meeting point (*būljār*). The remaining council (*kīmkāj*) was held in that area in the open air.”⁵³

Farhād *biy* failed to conquer Shahr-i Sabz with his Khitay-Qipchaq followers. Still, he was obviously promoted to a higher rank. Two years later, when he is mentioned as having set out for another campaign to Balkh in Sha‘bān 1121/October 1709, he is already referred to as Farhād *parwānachī* Ūtārchī (Ūtājī).⁵⁴

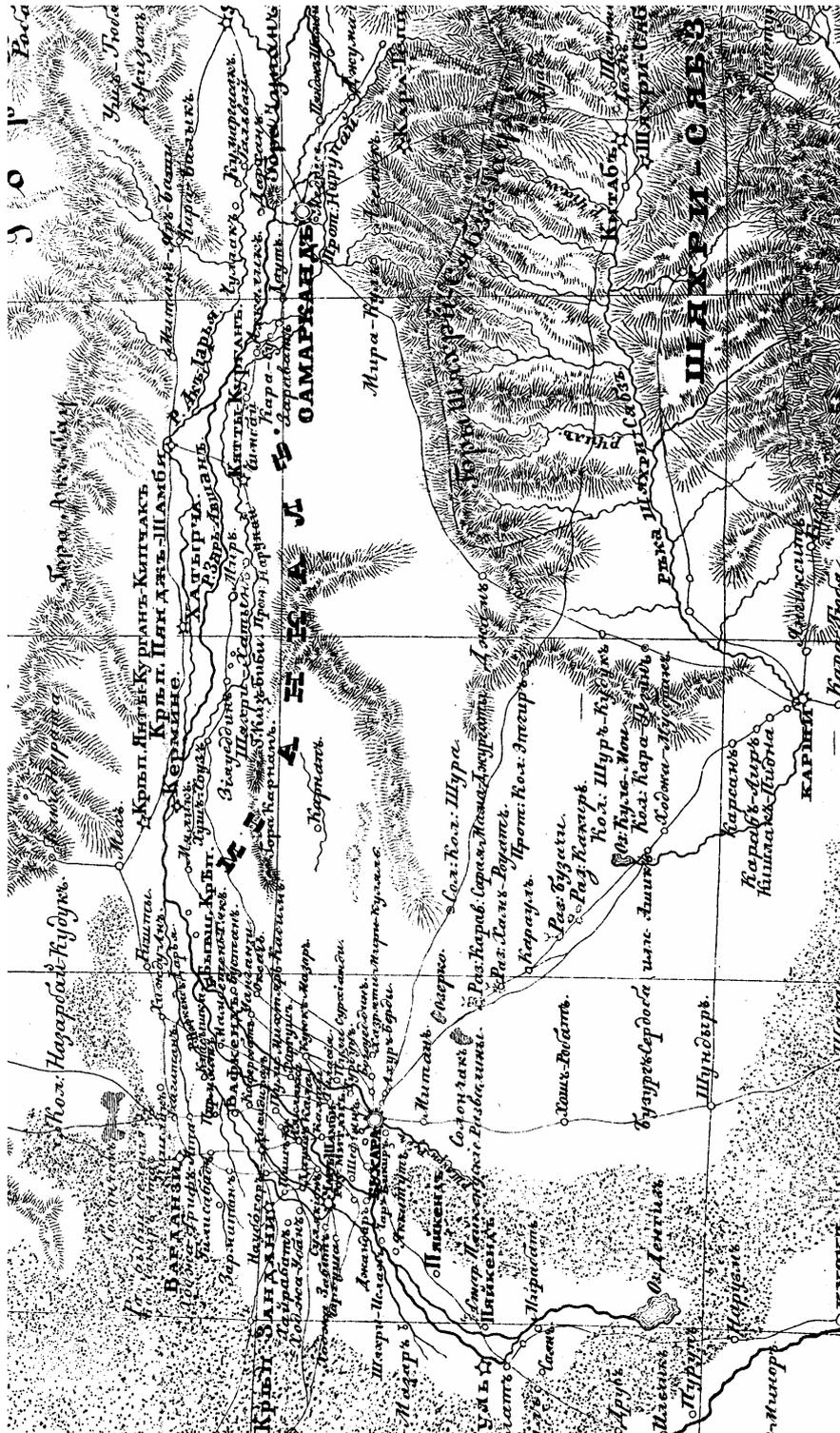
Two copies of diplomas issued to Farhād may reflect the difference in status between a *biy* and a *parwānachī*. Whereas Farhād, who only held the title *biy*, had received the tiny “province of Anhār” (*wilāyat-i Anhār*),⁵⁵ Farhād *parwānachī* was appointed to the governorship of the greater province of Samarqand (*ḥukūmat-i wilāyat-i Samarqand*).⁵⁶

⁵³ *Ibid.*, f. 132ab; tr. Semenov, 150-151.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 173a; tr. Semenov, 193; Ṭāli‘ (*Tārīkh*, f. 8a) clearly spells Ūtārchī. The title *parwānachī* referred to one of the most prestigious court ranks in Bukhara. His duty, at least in the literal sense, was to hand over royal letters of appointment: He folded these letters and attached them to the turbans of the recipients who wore them for three days (Ṭāli‘, *Tārīkh*. Tr. Semenov, 149, note 83). On the ranking of Bukharan state titles see Semenov, “Ocherk ustroistva“, 60-61. Here Semenov underlines the fact that state titles did not correspond to specific duties, at least not in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

⁵⁵ *Maktūbāt*, MS Tashkent, no. 289, f. 151b. The region of Anhār (lit. “the channels”) is located to the west of the city of Samarqand; the steep bank of the great Anhār-channel being the dividing line between the Samarqand oasis and the steppe (Maev, *Ocherki*, 3). Anhār was usually considered merely as an administrative subdivision (*tūmān*) of the greater Samarqand province, see Viatkin, “Materialy“, 43-57. In an order (*ḥukm*) issued by ‘Ubaydallāh Khān, Anhār is also referred to as the *tūmān* of Anhār of the Samarqand province (*wilāyat*), see Egani / Chekhovich, “Pamiatniki [II]”, 61. This order mentions ‘Arab, Aimāq and Uzbek groups among the population of Anhār.

⁵⁶ *Maktūbāt*, MS Tashkent, no. 289, f. 140a.



Bukhara, Miyankal, Samargand, Qarshi. Source: Kanykov, *Opisanie*.

A chronicler close to court circles has recorded the appointment or re-appointment of Farhād *biy parwānachi* Ūtārchī to the governorship (*ḥukūmat*) of Samarqand for the year of accession of Abū l-Fayḍ Khān (1711-1747), i.e. 1123/1711.⁵⁷ The chronicler's narrative continues with Samarqand affairs. Here, Farhād *parwānachi* is depicted as a very brutal governor who oppressed the houses of the subjects (*fuqarā*). News of his transgressions reached the court, but to no avail. Finally, in 1125/1713, "all the soldiers" (*hama sipāhī*) gathered in the city of Bukhara and decided to act in favour of another Uzbek chief. "They removed him [Farhād] from office and gave the governorship of Samarqand to Muḥammad Raḥīm *biy Dūrmān*. Since it was the home (*khāna*) of the Khiṭāy-Qipchāq, he could not establish a firm hold on that country (*mamlakat*)"⁵⁸ and called in the help of Sulṭān *tūqsāba*, his Keneges (Kīnakās) in-law and ally, from Shahr-i Sabz.

Tensions and hostilities further escalated. Farhād retired to his fortress and started to increasingly challenge state authorities. In 1126/1714 the Bukharan ruler Abū l-Fayḍ Khān laid siege to Farhād's fortress (*qūrgḥān*). Farhād's people had already fled to the mountains when one of the khan's chief commanders sided with the besieged Farhād.⁵⁹ Following these events, we find Farhād moving around in Samarqand, Shahr-i Sabz, Qarshi, and again Miyankal, hiding and networking amongst competing Uzbek amirs. In 1129/1716-17 he put into action a well-planned scheme and struck with all his military power. He conquered Samarqand and appointed one of his tribesmen, Bāqī *biy* Qipchāq as governor (*ḥākim*) of Qarshi.⁶⁰ Central Asia news that had been recorded by an Uzbek émigré in Lahore gives another account of these events. According to this report, Farhād *biy*'s military actions were motivated by pastoral interests of his tribesmen and accompanied by the movement of flocks in search of new pastures:

"In 1129/1716-17 for lack of pasture (*az tangī [-yi] charāgāb*) the Khiṭāy and Qipchāq tribes (*aqwām*), roughly a hundred thousand families,

⁵⁷ Tāli', *Tārīkh*, f. 33b; tr. Semenov, 37.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 33b-34a; tr. Semenov, 38.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 34a-35a; tr. Semenov, 38.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 40b; tr. Semenov, 43.

moved from the direction of Miyānkāl to the surroundings of Samarqand and Qarshī and stripped the sown fields and the orchards bare like locusts. They treated the mean and nobles, the little and the big people in whatever manner they chose to do so.”⁶¹

For two years Farhād *biy* was able to defy almost all efforts on the part of Bukharan troops and allies to encroach on his newly acquired territory. The only military success the weak Bukharan centre could claim was the conquest of the fortress of Kasbī⁶² by a certain Mīrzā Bēg Turkmān who was based at *Labāb*, the [Amu-Darya] riverside and “for two years launched battles against the Kḥiṭāys (*kḥiṭāyān*).”⁶³ On the route linking Bukhara with Samarqand, the Bukharan frontier-post was the town of Karmina which Farhād *biy* unsuccessfully attacked with his own allies, the *Yētī Urūgh* (“Seven Tribes”), in 1130/1717-18.⁶⁴

The pace of events accelerated when in Rajab 1131/May-June 1719, or 1130/June 1718,⁶⁵ Farhād *biy*’s relations to the Bukharan court completely changed. During the celebrations marking the first Friday of the month of Rajab, the two chief amirs, Ibrāhīm *atālīq* Kīnakas⁶⁶ and Khwāja-Qulī *dīwān-bēgī* Qaṭāghān, received orders and blessings for action “against the Qipchāq tribespeople (*īl-ulūs-i Qipchāq*) and Farhād *biy* Ūtarjī, who had kindled the flame of injustice in the garden-like Samarqand and burned the harvest of wealth of the Muslims.”⁶⁷ The two commanders in charge did

⁶¹ Balkhī, *Tārīkh*, f. 292a.

⁶² A small village called “Kazbi” by Maev (*Ocherki*, 43) is located on the caravan route linking Bukhara with Qarshī.

⁶³ Ṭālī‘, *Tārīkh*, f. 41a; tr. Semenov, 43. Semenov’s translation has “one year”. Semenov’s translation on several occasions proves to be imprecise and, at times, even misleading. I do not point to all the divergent renderings where they occur.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 41a; tr. Semenov, 43.

⁶⁵ The year 1131/1718-19 is quoted by the chronicler at the beginning of his very detailed narration of these events. There is, however, reason to doubt it. The chronicler states that in the year “one thousand one hundred and thirty-one, on Friday the 4th of Rajab” a public solemnity was held in Bukhara according to dynastical custom to celebrate the first Friday in the month of Rajab (Ṭālī‘, *Tārīkh*, f. 94b; tr. Semenov, 45). The 4th of Rajab was a Tuesday in 1131/1719, and a Friday in 1130/1718 (Wüstenfeld / Mahler, *Vergleichungs-Tabellen*, 24).

⁶⁶ He was appointed *atālīq* in the aftermath of the Kḥitay-Qipchāq expansion in 1129/1716-17 (Balkhī, *Tārīkh*, f. 292b).

⁶⁷ Ṭālī‘, *Tārīkh*, f. 97a; tr. Semenov, 48.

not move since they considered their own forces as no match for the military strength of the Qipchaq (*aqwām-i Qipchāq*). Instead of setting out against the enemy, some 2,000 auxiliary troops (Kīnakas, Manghit and Juyūt) who had arrived from Shahr-i Sabz, the stronghold of Ibrāhīm *atālīq*, started to molest and loot peasant (*fuqarā*) families in the area around Bukhara. Next, Ibrāhīm *atālīq* attacked the citadel (*ark*) of Bukhara. The palace entourage of Abū l-Fayḍ Khān – including his personal Qalmaq bodyguard (*qalmāqān-i khāṣṣa-i sharīfa*) and other non-Uzbek elements styled *mabramīya* (“intimates, confidants”)⁶⁸ and *khwājas* (“eunuchs”)⁶⁹ – as well as armed city-dwellers defended the Bukharan sovereign against his own Commander-in-Chief. Thereupon, Ibrāhīm gathered together his tribal followers outside the city gates and retired to Shahr-i Sabz, his summer camp (*yailāq-i khwud*).⁷⁰

An unfortunate successor to the chief Uzbek command post in Bukhara was killed by suspicious palace confidants after holding the *atālīq* post for just eight days.⁷¹ Thereafter, the troublesome position was offered to a previous enemy of the state, Farhād *biy*. Letters assuring royal favours (*ināyat-nāma-hā-yi khusrawī*) were sent to Farhād *biy* Qipchāq and his ally Bēg-Ūghlī Baḥrīn. Upon their arrival in Bukhara, Farhād received the post of *atālīq* (*manṣab-i atālīqī*).⁷² In a ceremony, which seems to have also symbolized the submission of the whole Khitay-Qipchaq tribe to the Bukharan sovereign, the newly appointed *atālīq* offered a tribute (*pīsh-*

⁶⁸ Young (*khwurdṣāl*), but military able and trained men (*Ibid.*, f. 113a, 119a, 60b; tr. Semenov 60, 65, 82). Qalmaq body-guards and *mabramīya* were not mutually exclusive categories (*Ibid.*, f. 61a; tr. Semenov, 83).

⁶⁹ The report of Florio Benevini, the Russian envoy to Bukhara, bears witness to that particular meaning of the term *khwāja*, “master”. Benevini (in his report of 8-4-1726) refers to the chief court executive of Abū l-Fayḍ Khān, a certain *khwāja* Ulfat who bore the title *khwāja-i kalān*, “the great master” (Ṭālī‘, *Tārīkh*, f. 45a; tr. Semenov, 70), as “Khoja Ulfet, the chief eunuch” (Benevini, *Poslanik*, 127). On the “chief khoja of the palace khojas” in the early Manghit period, see Bregel, “Administration”, 26.

⁷⁰ Ṭālī‘, *Tārīkh*, f. 99a-116b; tr. Semenov, 48-42.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, f. 117b-119a; tr. Semenov, 64-65.

⁷² *Ibid.*, f. 120a; tr. Semenov 66.

kash) to Abū l-Fayḍ Khān, consisting of 10.000 sheep, 99 horses with gold-embroidered horse-blankets, and 1000 bales of cloth.⁷³

On accepting the post of an *atālīq*, Farhād *biy* moved with his sons and an unspecified number of Qipchaq followers to the city of Bukhara, where he resided near the Namāzghāh gate. In the following two years he led Bukharan military campaigns against Ibrāhīm *biy* in Shahr-i Sabz and against Turkmans on the banks of the Amu-Darya near Narazm, both with a moderate degree of success.⁷⁴ Posted in Bukhara, he is said to have feared for his life whenever he was summoned to the palace.⁷⁵ Indeed, the “people of the city” (*mardum-i shahr*), as the chronicler chooses to call the non-Uzbek entourage of Abū l-Fayḍ Khān in this context, watched Farhād *atālīq* with utmost suspicion and decided to take action against him when his close allies showed signs of insubordination in Miyānkāl. In an exchange of letters they were able to incite a number of Uzbek amirs to take action against Farhād *atālīq* who in 1134/1721-22 was killed in Bukhara.⁷⁶

In retrospect, the chronicler depicts Farhād *biy* as a greedy tyrant: “When he was governor of Samarqand, he imposed cash [payments] on the people on a daily basis using some pretext. The people obeyed and they fulfilled their obligations. The subjects (*fuqarā*) moaned: ‘The carefree Farhād [is] the ruin of Samarqand’ and wept, but he was not afraid that someone would destroy Samarqand. The Uzbeks carried everything that they found.⁷⁷ Furthermore, to everybody who went to him, he said: ‘Don’t you have a coin (*tanga*) in your pocket that you might give to my sons who have been pressing me since this morning?’ (...) To sum up: He

⁷³ Balkhī, *Tārīkh*, f. 293a. Balkhī dates Farhād *biy*’s promotion as well as this event to 1131/1719. The tribute represents a fair sample of goods produced in the Middle Zarafshan valley, where Miyankal is located. Cotton was grown on irrigated land; homespun coarse cotton cloth was one of the chief Bukharan exports in trade with the Kazaks.

⁷⁴ Ṭālīʿ, *Tārīkh*, f. 120b-121a; tr. Semenov 66.

⁷⁵ Balkhī, *Tārīkh*, f. 293a.

⁷⁶ Ṭālīʿ, *Tārīkh*, f. 121b-122a; tr. Semenov, 67; Balkhī (*Tārīkh*, f. 293a) dates the murder to 1132/1720-21.

⁷⁷ *wa har chih paidā mīshud, ūzbakān mīburdand.*

had behaved in Samarqand like the tyrant Ḥajjāj, but he could not do that in Bukhārā because His Highness was on the ruler's throne."⁷⁸

7. *The thirty-two and the ninety-two Uzbek tribes (of Mawarannahr)*

Some 18th century sources use fixed numbers to express the notion of “all Uzbeks”: either “thirty-two” or “ninety-two” representing the total number. Thus, the document endowing Farhād *biy* with rank of a general (issued around 1719-1720) mentions the “ninety-two Uzbek sections of Mawarannahr” (*nawad-u-dū firqa-i ūzbekīya-i Māwarānnahr*).⁷⁹ An early Manghit chronicler who describes the appointments to offices and posts made by Muḥammad Raḥīm Khān in 1756 uses the alternative number when he speaks of the “thirty-two tribes of Uzbek warriors” (*sī wa dū ūrūgh-i ‘asākīr-i ūzbekīya*).⁸⁰

In 1781 when Russia proposed a trade agreement with Bukhara, the Bukharan ruler, Dāniyāl *biy atālīq*, replied that he had to consult the leaders of the ninety-two Uzbek tribes on the matter and that he could not sign such a contract without their consent.⁸¹

In Amīr Ḥaydar's letters to his governor in Qarshi, written between 1800 and 1803, we find an expression that stresses the central role of the Bukharan court for the ninety-two tribes: “The Almighty has given the power (*daulat*) to [us], the king, and for the ninety-two sections (*nawad-u-dū firqa*) this “golden threshold” (*altūn būsāgha*) is the place to come to.”⁸²

A great deal has been written on the subject, often with the underlying assumption that the specified numbers of tribes (and their names listed in an additional category of sources) provide factual data on the composition of the Uzbek confederation at some stage in its development. V. V. Bartol'd, for instance, noting (in the 1920s) the difference in the numbers of Uzbek tribes mentioned in 1756 and 1781, concluded that this discrepancy

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 122ab; tr. Semenov 67.

⁷⁹ *Maktūbāt*, MS Tashkent, no. 289, f. 131a. On the context see above.

⁸⁰ Karmīnagī, *Tuhfa*, MS Kazan, f. 190b. For a full quotation see above.

⁸¹ Askarov / Mukminova, *Istoriia*, III, 152. The source, not given here, is in all likelihood the report of the Russian envoy Bekchurin which I was not able to get access to.

⁸² *Maktūbāt-i Amīr Ḥaidar*, MS Tashkent, no. 5412, f. 15b.

points to a change in Uzbek tribal organization, the number of tribal segments rising from thirty-two to ninety-two between 1756 and 1781.⁸³

Meanwhile, additional sources have come to light which indicate that both numerical expressions, i.e. the concepts of the “thirty-two” and of the “ninety-two” tribes have coexisted since the early 16th century, when they are first traceable in a written source.⁸⁴

The earliest reference to both these concepts is provided by the *Majmū‘ al-tawārīkh* of Mullā Sayf al-Dīn Akhsīkantī, who in 909-920/1503-1514⁸⁵ wrote down tales about places and shaikhs in the Farghana Valley. He wrote in Persian, and obviously drew on Turko-Mongol oral traditions.⁸⁶

The “thirty-two tribes”, here, appear in passing in a historical account of Toqtamish (the khan of the “Golden Horde” or *ulūs* of Jūchī, r. ca. 1378-95) which states that “the thirty-two tribes that had previously gathered around Fulād, submitted to Toqtamish.”⁸⁷

The “ninety-two tribes”, however, are given prominence in the context of a myth of origin of (Central Asian) nomadic tribes which is inextricably linked with Islam and the Islamization of Central Asian peoples. The narrative is followed by a list of 92 tribal names. While the list has attracted considerable scholarly attention, the narrative, carrying the main message has been completely neglected.⁸⁸

The *Majmū‘ al-tawārīkh* tells of ninety-two young men (from Turkistan, Khorezm and from among the Ghuzz tribe) who had accepted Islam and are said to have gone to Madina to support the Prophet Muḥammad in fighting the infidels. At first, the volunteers could not understand the Prophet’s command, but when they were told in the “Turkic” language “Attack!” (*ūrūsh kun*), the brave young men attacked the enemy and secured a victory for the Prophet who thereupon told his son-in-law, ‘Alī b.

⁸³ Bartol’d, “Sovremennoe sostoianie”, 465.

⁸⁴ Sultanov, *Kochevye plemena*, 27.

⁸⁵ Akhsīkantī, *Majmū‘*. Facs. ed. Tagirdzhanov. On the date of the chapters relevant here, see Tagirdzhanov, “Vvedenie” [Introduction] to the facsimile edition, 10.

⁸⁶ The text seems to contain the earliest tangible fragments of the Kirgiz epos of “Manas” (*Ibid.*, 4).

⁸⁷ *ān-chi sī-u-dū jamā‘at ba-Fulād Khān jam‘ shuda būd, ba-Tūqtamish Khān tābi‘ shuda* (Akhsīkantī, *Majmū‘*. Facs. ed. Tagirdzhanov, f. 46b [p.92]).

⁸⁸ As already noted by DeWeese, *Islamization*, 458-459.

Abī Ṭālib, to give them tuition. With the permission and the blessing of the Prophet the ninety-two youths returned – to Rum, Khorezm, Mawarannahr, the Dasht-i Qipchāq, and Farghana. The following words link the list of tribal names to the narration:

“Ninety-two names remained of these ninety-two youths; the ninety-two Uzbek divisions (*nawad-u-dū qism-i ūzbek*) are from this very assembly. The master (*pīr*) of the ninety-two Uzbek divisions is the king of the heroes (*shāh-i mardān*). [The Prophet] – peace be upon him – said: ‘Alī these young men had been presented to me by their fathers, I gave them to you. Till the Day of Judgement they shall not dismiss your name from [their] tongues, and they shall serve your offspring, their offspring shall become numerous!’ Having said this he invoked a blessing. The ninety-two divisions of the nomadic tribes (*nawad-u-dū qism-i ilātīya*) stem from their very offspring. According to the book and according to the *Tawārīkh-i zubdat al-bashar*⁸⁹ these are the ninety-two divisions of the Uzbeks (*nawad-u-dū qism-i ūzbek*): Mīng, Yūz, Qirq....”⁹⁰

Similar texts and lists of ninety-two tribes have been produced well into the 20th century, and have been identified both in large manuscript repositories and in private collections in rural areas of Uzbekistan; some of these texts are entitled “genealogy” (*nasab-nāma*) of the Uzbeks.⁹¹ Hardly two of these lists agree, and none of them actually presents an ancestral tree.

⁸⁹ The literary source called “chronicles of the cream of mankind” (*Tawārīkh-i zubdat al-bashar*) from which the author gathered the names of the 92 tribes, has not come down to us.

⁹⁰ Akhsīkantī, *Majmūʿ*. Facs. ed. Tagirdzhanov, f. 11ab [p. 21-22]. What follows is the full list of tribal names: “Mīng, Yūz, Qirq, Jalāyir, Sarāy, Qūnghūrāt, Ālchīn, Arghūn, Naimān, Qībchāq, Qalmāq, Chaqmāq, Qirghīz, Qīrlīq, Turk, Turkmān, Bayāwut, Būrlān, Shimirjiq, Qabasha, Nujin, Kīlajī, Kīlakash, Būrāt, Ūbrāt, Qiyāt, Khitāy, Qanklī, Ūryūz, Jūnālāhī, Qūjī, Ūtārjī, Qūlādjī, Jiyūt, Jūyūt, Jaljūt, Tūrmāwut, Ūymāwut, Arlāt, Karait, Ōnkgūt, Tānkgūt, Mānkgūt, Jalāwut, Mamāsīt, Markīt, [*Būrqūt, *Kait] Qūralāsh, Ōkīlān, Qārī, ‘Arab, Īlājī, Jubūrghān, Qīshlīq, Kīrāy, Dūrmān, Nābīn (Tābīn), Tāma, Ramadān, Ūyshūn, Bādān, Ḥāfīz, Āwirjī, Jūrāt, Tātār, Būrghā (*Yūrghā), Bātāsh, Qaujīn, Tūbālī, Tilau, Kardārī, Sakhtiyān, Qirghīn // Shīrīn, Ōghlān, Jīmbāy, Ḥarkas (*Jarkas), Ūyghūr, Aghār, Yābū, Targhīl, Tūrghān, Tain, Quḥat, Fākhīr, Qūjalīq, Shūrān, Darajāt, Kimāt, Shuja‘at, Awghān.” (11b-12a; p. 22-23). The names preceded by asterisk (*) have been amended on the basis of a parallel manuscript version, see Sultanov, *Kochevye plemena*, 31.

⁹¹ Akhmedov, “O roli”, 48-49; Doniyorov, *O‘zbek*, 74-77.

Analyzing one of these lists of ninety-two tribes, Togan identified thirty-three Mongol tribal names among them. In his view, the list outlines the tribal composition of the Golden Horde.⁹² Romodin, however, argues that it is the list of the “32 tribes”⁹³ which comprises the main components of a historical tribal confederation, namely that of the Uzbek *ulūs* founded by Abū l-Khayr Khān in the mid-15th century in the Dasht-i Qipchaq, whereas the lists of “92 tribes” include a much wider range of nomadic groups.⁹⁴ The earliest textual evidence clearly supports the latter view, for the author of the *Majmū‘ al-tawārīkh* makes no distinction at all between “the Uzbeks” (*ūzbakīya*) and “the nomadic tribes” (*īlātīya*), and even includes Arabs and Afghans (*Awghān*) in his list.⁹⁵

To sum up this long digression for our purpose, two points can be gathered from the *Majmū‘ al-tawārīkh*’s account of the ninety-two sections. Firstly, its language fixes a definitely nomadic connotation of the term “Uzbek” in the early 16th century;⁹⁶ secondly, its narrative aims at expressing and firmly establishing a decidedly Muslim connotation of the term “Uzbek”.⁹⁷

So why “ninety-two” and “thirty-two”? I am not aware of any symbolic significance of these numbers in Turko-Mongol tradition. We know about a general tendency of steppe peoples to express political union by

⁹² Togan, *Türkili*, 42-43.

⁹³ The topic of the “32 Uzbek tribes” did not develop into a popular literary genre and received little scholarly attention. For a full list of the “32 Uzbek tribes” of Khiwa, see Vambery, *Reisen*, 276-277, for an incomplete list from Bukhara, see Burnes, *Travels*, II, 266-267.

⁹⁴ Sultanov (*Kochevye plemena*, 28) quoting a paper of V.A. Romodin, which is not available to me.

⁹⁵ See the quotation above. On the term *īlāt*, “nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes”, see Lambton, “*īlāt*”, 1095.

⁹⁶ “Uzbek” in the sense of “nomad” appears rather unexpectedly and late in a message sent by the Junghar (Oirat) ruler Galdan Tseren to Abū l-Khayr Khān of the Kazak Junior Horde: “We – [that is to say] the Kalmucks and Kaisaks – are *uzbeks*.” (Moiseev, *Dzhungarskoe khanstva*, 128, quoting a Russian archival source of 1742).

⁹⁷ There is a logical contradiction, as the two equations, „Uzbek = nomad“ and „Uzbek = Muslim“ did not allow the conclusion “nomad = Muslim“ as long as non-Muslim nomadic groups, such as the Western Mongol Oirat (*Qalmāq*) were living nearby. Indeed, in the continuation of the narration quoted above, the *Majmū‘ al-tawārīkh* immediately turns to the Qalmaq problem and the Qalmaq’s refusal of Islam.

the number of confederate tribes.⁹⁸ Given the Islamic context and the Muslim educational background of early authors and narrators like Mullā Sayf al-Dīn, the peculiar numbers may point to a possible influence of a Hadith which states that the religion of Islam will be divided into “seventy-two sects”. Indeed, the Arabic term *firqa* (“part; sect”) is used most frequently when the formulation “ninety-two Uzbek tribes” is expressed in Persian, whereas in Central Asian Turki the term *baw/būy* (*boy*), “part”, is preferred instead.

In diplomatic correspondence of 16th century Shaybanid khans of Uzbek Central Asia, the “thirty-two” and the “ninety-two Uzbek tribes” still had distinct connotations. The smaller number denoted the tribal confederation led by the Shaybanids,⁹⁹ whereas the larger number included other, independent (Muslim) Turko-Mongol groups as well. In a letter sent to the Mughal emperor Akbar, ‘Abdallāh Khān II (r. 1583-1598) mentions the “ninety-two” Uzbek tribes:

“Thanks God, the gates of ease and repose are open to the population of the sublime territory. By divine grace, several thousand tribespeople (*īl wa ulūs*) of the ninety-two Uzbek tribes of Turan (*nawad wa dū firqa-i ūzbekīya-i mulk-i Tūrān*) that are more numerous than the spring rain [drops] and the stars on the firmament have fixed the earring of submission and obedience; [now] they are submissive, ready to carry out orders, and happy as they have benefited from noble favours. Even (*balki*) the Kazaks, Qaraqalpaqs and Kirgiz tribes (*firqa-i qazāq wa qarāqalpāq wa qirghizī*) who dwelled on the border of the sublime country and who had fought and killed [our people] since olden times, are now, by divine command, constantly waging war (*ghaza*) against the pagan Qalmāqs, and daily sending many captives and countless wealth to [our] firm and illustrious abode.”¹⁰⁰

By the late 17th century, the earlier distinction between the two formulas seems to blur, as can be gathered from a poem by the Bukharan Uzbek

⁹⁸ See Doerfer, *Elemente*, II, 197-198.

⁹⁹ When ‘Ubaydallāh Khān threatened the king of Persia on the brink of war, “he recounted his military strength in the terms of thirty-two tribal groups.” (Haidar, *Central Asia*, 46)

¹⁰⁰ *Maktūbāt*, MS Tashkent, no. 289, f. 9b.

Turdī Farāghī. Turdī uses the image of a body with ninety-two limbs to appeal to unity and criticise tribal factionalism. “You narrow-minded *beks*, don’t say ‘Me first’, think of others / It’s the home of the Uzbeks composed of ninety-two parts (*tūqsān ikī bawlī uzbek yūrtī-dūr*), treat [them] as equals. Don’t call one Qipchāq and Khiṭāy, the other Yūz [or] Naiman / Counting [even] forty and a hundred thousand (*qirq-u yūz mīng*), form one body (*jān*)¹⁰¹! The head raising from one collar / the whole clad in one robe.” The head of this body is, no doubt, the khan.

Conclusion

In this paper I proposed that the Bukharan state as depicted in 18th century sources bears the legacy of the nomadic conquest around 1500. I perceive Uzbek statehood as the institutionalisation and consolidation of the rule of the nomadic conquerors and their descendants in a sedentary context. As discussed earlier in detail, despite the successive breaks with Chingizid steppe traditions, the Uzbek state, that is the rule of the Uzbeks warrior tribes (*ūrūgh-i ‘asākir-i ūzbekīya*), persisted throughout the 18th century. Recent scholarly works on Central Asian history have concentrated on the important changes in the political and administrative structure, and the legitimisation of political leadership in the early Manghit period (1747/1756-1826). Setting the early Manghit period in a larger historical context and tracing thereby also the usage of the term “Uzbek” in particular, I came to the conclusion that the predominant features of the earlier social order, that is the Uzbek military estate and its claim to agricultural surplus, survived these changes and were secured also in the early Manghit period. We also see symbols of power and collective identity being transmitted from the late Ashtarkhanid to the early Manghit period. Appealing to the loyalty of the Uzbek tribes, Amīr Ḥaydar, who did not claim Chingizid descent to legitimate his rule, evokes a distinctively Chingizid imagery when

¹⁰¹ In Hayitmetov’s edition: “khān” (*xon*) (Turdī, *She’rlar*, 13) whereas a manuscript version reads *jān*, “soul, spirit; self” (Turdī, *Dīwān*. MS Tashkent, Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences, no. 1962/I, 10b).

he designates his palace as the “golden threshold” (*altūn būsāgha*) where the “ninety-two tribes” convene.

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