

4. Herat in the Nineteenth Century

In the early nineteenth century the Sadūzai Empire disintegrated into a number of small regional states. After Faṭḥ Khān Muḥammadzai's execution in 1818, his remaining twenty brothers began to advance separate claims to authority, simultaneously competing against each other from their local bases in Pishāvar, Kābul and Qandahār. The region east of the Khyber Pass fell to the Sikh Empire in 1834. Between 1826 and 1837, Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān, the founder of the Muḥammadzai dynasty, carved out a power base for himself in Kābul, Bāmiyān, Jalālābād and Ghaznī. His half brothers, the Sardārs of Qandahār, controlled a principality of equal size in southern Afghanistan. These so-called "Dil" brothers Shīrdil Khān (d. 1826), Purdil Khān (d. 1830), and Kuhandil Khān (d. 1855) were able to maintain their independence from 1818 until the middle of the nineteenth century. As regional actors, they exerted pressure on the eastern borders of Herat and, like Herat, pursued a shifting policy vis-à-vis Iran, alternately seeking support from the Qājār government and challenging its claims to authority. After the First Anglo-Afghan War of 1839–1842, Dūst Muḥammad Khān widened his sphere of influence to such an extent that by 1863 he could lay claim to all the regions forming the outline of present-day Afghanistan with the exception of Maimana and Badakhshān. After gaining control of Qandahār in 1855, he advanced against Herat in the summer of 1862, which he conquered on 8 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1279/27 May 1863 after a ten-month siege.¹ The incorporation of Herat into the Muḥammadzai domain represented the culmination of Dūst Muḥammad Khān's achievements. He died two weeks later, on 9 June 1863, without having set foot into the city.²

West of Herat, the nascent Qājār dynasty began to make its influence felt with the conquest of Mashhad in 1803. Henceforth the Qājārs were to insist on the possession of Herat, moulding their territorial claims according to the precedents set by the Safavid Empire. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, these demands were largely theoretical. Until the early 1830s, Qājār presence in Khurāsān was too weak to allow more than occasional exactions of tribute and other expressions of fealty from the rulers of Herat. Later on, Muḥammad Shāh Qājār (r. 1834–1848) and Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Qājār (r. 1848–1896) took military action to incorporate Herat in their realm. The Persian sieges of 1837–1838 and 1856 were cut short by British intervention, which allowed the local rulers of Herat to maintain a precarious independence until the Muḥammadzai takeover in 1863. Qājār policies in Khurāsān will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. The present chapter focuses on the circumstances that prevailed in Herat and its hinterland during the period at stake. One important aspect to be discussed is the interplay between territorial claims and projection of religious realms. Thus Qājār efforts to reclaim Herat as part of the Iranian patrimony were justified by the necessity to protect the Shī'ī population in the region. By the same token, Herat's incorporation into the Afghan kingdom was followed by deliberate attempts to heighten national unity on the basis of Sunnī Islam. The fate of the nomad Sunnī *ūymāq* groups around Herat highlights the process of delineation and appropriation which accelerated from the second half of the nineteenth century on. The final section of this chapter treats the division between the Iranian and Afghan spheres of influence from different points of view. Apart from recounting the physical process of delimitation, I will also trace the reflection of emerging separate Iranian and Afghan polities in the historiography of the time.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

In the interval between the demise of the Sadūzai kingdom and the incorporation of Herat into the Muḥammadzai state, Herat became a minor principality. Seemingly a Sadūzai enclave, its politics were increasingly dominated by the Alakūzai Durrānīs. This process was abetted by the rivalry between Shāh Maḥmūd and his son Kāmran. In the summer of 1241–42/1826, Kāmran Sadūzai evicted his father from

¹ Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān's siege of Herat began on 27 July 1862 (Champagne 1981: 443).

² KR 143 (Patterson 1988: 258); Champagne 1981: 449.

Herat and took control of the city with Iranian help.³ In the judgement of foreign visitors, his court only bore “a caricature semblance” with the former splendor of Sadūzai rule.⁴

The first important Alakūzai figure in the politics of Herat was ‘Aṭā Muḥammad Khān, a member of the Nāṣū section of the Alakūzais and a descendant of Sardār ‘Abd al-Ghanī Khān. ‘Aṭā Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai accompanied Shāh Maḥmūd to Herat when he lost control of Kābul and Qandahār in late 1818 and served as *vazīr* of Herat until his death in 1244/1828–29. He was succeeded by his nephew Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai b. ‘Abdullāh Khān, who became known as an able and ruthless administrator. Yār Muḥammad Khān began his career by removing Shāh Maḥmūd from power, who died shortly afterwards.⁵ Once Kāmran Sadūzai was installed as ruler of Herat, Yār Muḥammad Khān gained control over all sectors of government.⁶ In early 1842,⁷ he had Kāmran killed and assumed full authority until his own death on 11 Sha‘bān 1267/11 June 1851.⁸ Yār Muḥammad Khān was succeeded by his son Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān,⁹ who was ousted by Hājji Fīrūz al-Dīn Sadūzai’s grandson Muḥammad Yūsuf b. Malik Qāsim in September 1855.¹⁰ This bid at a Sadūzai comeback was cut short by Qājār intervention in 1856. At the onset of the siege in April 1856, the Herati *vazīr* ‘Īsā Khān Bardurrānī handed over Muḥammad Yūsuf Khān to the Iranians¹¹ but continued to hold the city until he was forced to surrender on 25 Ṣafar 1273/25 October 1856.¹² After the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris in 1857, the Qājār Prime Minister Āqā Khān Nūrī I‘timād al-Daula (1851–1858) awarded the government of Herat to Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān’s nephew, Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān b. Sardār Muḥammad ‘Aẓīm Muḥammadzai, thereby contravening the stipulation that Herat should be independent.¹³ Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān died on 6 March 1863, while Herat was besieged by Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān. Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān’s son, Shāh Navāz Khān, held power until the city fell to the Muḥammadzai troops on 31 May 1863.

The territorial consolidation achieved by Dūst Muḥammad Khān was called into question soon after his death. His successor Amīr Shīr ‘Alī Khān, who was crowned in Herat on 24 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1279/12 June 1863, found his power contested by different sets of full and half brothers.¹⁴ His main antagonists were his eldest

³ ST 110–11; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 181–2; T Su 282.

⁴ Lal 1977: 143.

⁵ ST 113; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 187.

⁶ Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai’s tenure in Herat was interrupted from Rabī‘ I 1248/August 1832 until Jumādā II 1249/October 1833. During this period he was detained by ‘Abbās Mīrzā Nā‘ib al-Saltāna, the Qājār governor of Khurāsān (1831–1833) (NT 481, 487–9, 496, 500, 504).

⁷ See Chapter 3, footnote 225.

⁸ Letter by Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān to Mīrzā Taqī Khān Amīr Kabīr quoted in Ādamīyat 1982: 621. According to the *Tārīkh-i sulṭānī* and *Sirāj al-tavārikh*, Yār Muḥammad Khān died on 30 Sha‘bān 1267/29 June 1851 (T Su 287; ST 211; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 28). On the basis of British documents Champagne reaches the conclusion that Yār Muḥammad Khān died on 7 June 1851 (Champagne 1981: 273).

⁹ The latter is often referred to by Iranian authors as “Ṣaid Muḥammad” or “Sayyid Muḥammad”.

¹⁰ TRSN X: 667; Taylor 1858c: 933–6.

¹¹ Muḥammad Yūsuf was sent to Tehran. In Sha‘bān 1273/March 1857, he was killed by the relatives of Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai (NT 1332–4, 1473–4; TRSN X: 763–4; Khūrmījī 1984: 229–30). See also Champagne, 1981, 375–6, 390; Taylor 1858c: 946).

¹² NT 1336. Shortly afterwards, on Friday 6 Rabī‘ II 1273/4 December 1856 Sartīp ‘Īsā Khān was assassinated while on his way to the Iranian camp (TRSN X: 705–6; NT 1347). According to British accounts, ‘Īsā Khān was put to death by order of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (Champagne, 1981, 377; Taylor 1858 c: 943–6). See also T Su 288–9.

¹³ Champagne 1981: 390–1; 408; Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān arrived in Herat on 30 Ramaẓān 1273/24 May 1857 (KR 130 (Patterson 1988: 220).

¹⁴ ST 252; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 100. According to Nūrī, a formal pledge of allegiance was given to Shīr ‘Alī Khān a week later on 1 Muḥarram/18 June 1863 (*Gulshan-i imārat* 46–7). By the time of his coronation, Shīr ‘Alī Khān was 40 or 41 years old. Nūrī gives 10 Muḥarram 1237/6 October 1821 (*Gulshan-i imārat* 3–5) as his date of birth. Faiẓ Muḥammad is of the opinion that Shīr ‘Alī Khān was born in 1238 (18 September 1822–6 September 1823) (ST 251; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 98). Although he was not the eldest of Dūst Muḥammad Khān’s surviving sons, he belonged to the most favored set among them. His mother Khadīja, who stemmed from an important Pūpalzai lineage, had been Dūst Muḥammad Khān’s favorite wife. Before Shīr ‘Alī Khān gained this appointment, two of Khadīja’s older sons, Muḥammad Akbar (d. 1847) and Ghulām Ḥaidar (d. 1858) had been designated as heir apparents.

brother Muḥammad Afzal Khān and his nephew ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān (1844–1901), who had been associated with the government of Turkistān under Dūst Muḥammad Khān. The ongoing rivalry with his brothers caused Shīr ‘Alī Khān to lose the throne between March 1866 and September 1868. Muḥammad Afzal Khān assumed kingship from 21 May 1866¹⁵ until his death on 7 October 1867.¹⁶ He was succeeded by his younger brother Muḥammad A‘zam Khān (1818–1869), who held power until 21 August 1868.¹⁷ In the course of these events, Shīr ‘Alī Khān temporarily found his sphere of influence reduced to Herat.¹⁸ After regaining control of Kābul on 8 September 1868,¹⁹ he triumphed over his rivals with British backing in late Ramaẓān 1285/mid-January 1869.²⁰ During the following decade, Amīr Shīr ‘Alī Khān enjoyed a stable rule until he was forced to resign due to the declaration of the Second Anglo-Afghan War on 21 November 1878 and died in Mazār-i Sharīf on 29 Ṣafar 1296/22 February 1879.²¹

The only sustained opposition Shīr ‘Alī Khān encountered during his second reign emanated from his sons Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān (1849–1923) and Muḥammad Ayūb Khān (1857–1914). The two full brothers were closely associated with the affairs of Herat. Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān was appointed governor of Herat in June 1863, when he was aged 14 and, in Vámbéry’s words, a “good-humoured inexperienced child.”²² He was in charge of Herat throughout the 1860s and, with the conquest of Qandahār in May 1868, decided the civil war in favor of Shīr ‘Alī Khān. Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān’s two rebellions of 1870–1871 and 1874 were triggered by his frustrated hopes for the heir apparentship and the Amīr’s enduring preference for his youngest son ‘Abdullāh Jān (1861–1878).²³ On 2 September 1870, Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān left Kābul in protest after being deprived of his post as civil and military administrator of the capital, which he had held since 1869.²⁴ On 20 October he gave up his month-long siege of Qandahār, moved westward, and temporarily took refuge in Iran in February 1871. A month later he reappeared in the region of Herat, conquered Ghūriyān during the final days of March and assumed control of Herat in early May after a violent battle in the course of which Faṭḥ Muḥammad Khān, Shīr ‘Alī Khān’s appointed governor, was killed. Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān’s forceful takeover of Herat was successful. In September 1871 he was formally reinstated as governor of Herat.²⁵

Despite financial difficulties in the administration of Herat, Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān enjoyed a relatively secure position for the two following years. Yet his relationship with Shīr ‘Alī Khān deteriorated once again when the Amīr formally designated the thirteen-year old ‘Abdullāh Jān as heir apparent on *‘id al-*

¹⁵ Wyllie 1875: 42–3; KM 12 May, 26 May 1866 (NAI, For. Pol. A. June 1866 Nos. 9, 142).

¹⁶ Sykes 1981 II: 75. According to Tate, Muḥammad Afzal Khān died on 1 October 1867 (Tate 1973: 165–6).

¹⁷ Lee 1996: 306, 313, 325–30; Memorandum on Sardar Muhammad Ismail Khan (NAI, For. S.I. 1869 No. 85); KD 6–10 August 1868 (NAI, For. Pol. A September 1868 Nos. 3–4).

¹⁸ After suffering a decisive defeat near Qalāt-i Ghilzai on 9 Ramaẓān 1283/15 January 1867, Shīr ‘Alī Khān was forced to flee to Herat (*Gulshan-i imārat* 110; ST 293; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 179; Wyllie 1875: 97).

¹⁹ *Gulshan-i imārat* 152.

²⁰ ST 305–9; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 200–9.

²¹ ST 345; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 274.

²² Vámbéry 1864: 281.

²³ ‘Abdullāh Jān’s mother ‘Ā’isha belonged to the royal family both by paternal and maternal descent. Her father Mīr Afzal Khān Muḥammadzai (b. 1810) was the son of the Qandahār Sardār Purdil Khān. Her mother was the daughter of Muḥammad A‘zam Khān b. Dūst Muḥammad Khān. For this reason, she enjoyed a powerful position in the politics of Kābul. Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān’s mother Maryam was the daughter of Sa‘ādat Khān Murcha Khēl Muhmand of the Jalālābād region (Adamec 1975: Tables 69–70).

²⁴ ST 326; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 239–40; KA 4 September 1870, NAI, For. Pol. A September 1870 No. 327; KD 9–10 October 1870, NAI, For. Pol. A December 1870 No. 351).

²⁵ Adamec 1975: 268; ST 326–30; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 239–48; KR 167–8; PM II: 112–19, 122–4, 131–3; KD 5–15 September (NAI, For. Pol. A. October 1870 Nos. 261–3); KD 20–25 September 1870 (NAI, For. Pol. A November 1870 No. 62); KD 4–8 October 1870, KD 8–10 November 1870 (NAI, For. Pol. A December 1870 Nos. 348, 409); Sardar Muhammad Aslam Khan to Muhammad Husain Khan (governor of Kābul) 19 October 1870 (NAI, For. Pol. A. December 1870 No. 357); Sardar Muhammad Aslam to Amir Shir Ali Khan 29 November 1870, KD 20–22 December 1870 (NAI, For. Pol. A February 1871 No. 165); KD 7–10 April 1871 (NAI, For. Pol. A May 1871 No. 466); letter from Kabul agent 15 April 1861 (NAI, For. Pol. A May 1871 No. 470); MA 9, 24 June 1871 (NAI, For. Sec. October 1871 Nos. 296, 298).

fiṭr 1290/22 November 1873.²⁶ While this proclamation was followed by three days of festivities and fireworks in Kābul, Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān showed his opposition by ignoring the Amīr’s order to illuminate Herat. Only a year later did Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān consent to join Shīr ‘Alī Khān’s court in Kābul to seek his father’s forgiveness. Yet a week after his arrival in Kābul on 2 November 1874, he was placed in confinement. He was detained at the Bālā Ḥiṣār until December 1878.²⁷

Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān’s detainment triggered a rebellion by seventeen-year-old Muḥammad Ayūb Khān in Herat in early December 1874.²⁸ Subsequently, Muḥammad Ayūb fled away from the Amīr’s approaching army and took refuge in Iran, where he remained until the Second Anglo-Afghan War.²⁹ After Shīr ‘Alī Khān’s death in late February 1879, he became the governor of Herat. A year later, on 27 July 1880, he was to attain fame by totally defeating the British forces stationed at Qandahār during the battle of Maivand.³⁰ On 22 September 1881, Muḥammad Ayūb suffered a decisive defeat at the hands of the British appointee Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān and fled to Iran.³¹ Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān used British backing to assert authority over all the regions making up present-day Afghanistan. This policy of internal conquest and ruthless oppression earned him the epithet of “Iron Amīr”. In the course of numerous military campaigns Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān reoccupied Maimana in 1884 and conquered the Shī‘ī Hazārajāt (1891–1893) as well as Kāfiristān (1896). Apart from the Amīr’s reprisals against the local leadership, the Herat region was primarily affected by his effort to repopulate the Murghāb district in order to secure the northwestern frontier. This policy suffered a major setback with the Russian occupation of Panjdih (present-day Takht-i Bāzār) on 30 March 1885. Afterwards the Amīr continued his policy of resettlement but switched to Pashtūn herders from the south instead of the local *ūymāq*.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY SOURCES ON KHURĀSĀN

For the nineteenth century, an increasing delineation of the Afghan and Iranian spheres of influence may be observed. This process is reflected in the emergence of divergent narratives concerning the position of Herat, which mirrored the respective viewpoints of the Qājār and Muḥammadzai governments. It may be no coincidence that the production of Iranian historical works peaked around 1856–57, when Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh embarked on his final attempt to reimpose Qājār authority on Herat. Owing to the flourishing of Iranian historiography in that time, the developments of the first half of the nineteenth century are particularly well documented. The historical output diminished somewhat over later decades, and the information on local circumstances becomes more patchy. Compared with the Iranian historiographical output, Afghan historical writing began relatively late. Apart from the *Tārīkh-i sulṭānī*, which was published in 1880, the major chronicles that shaped and reflected the Afghan viewpoint appeared in the early twentieth century. Although the Afghan authors reach different conclusions over the affairs of Herat, the preponderance of Iranian

²⁶ KA 9, 24 November 1873 (NAI, For. Sec. March 1874 Nos. 1, 22) According to Faiẓ Muḥammad, the ceremony took place on 2 Shavvāl 1288/15 December 1871 (ST 331–2; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 250).

²⁷ ST 333; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 252. According to Faiẓ Muḥammad, Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān was imprisoned on *‘īd al-fiṭr* 1289/2 December 1872. Yet the Kabul Diaries bear clear testimony that this event took place on 8 November 1874 (KD 6–10 November 1874, IOL, L/PS/5/277 No. 73 of 7 December 1874, p. 542; KD March 1875 (IOL, L/PS/7/4 Pt. II No. 131 of 1875, p. 467).

²⁸ Muḥammad Ayūb Khān deposed and killed the Amīr’s new appointee to the government of Ghūriyān. Around 7 December 1874 he imprisoned the Amīr’s Ishīk Āqāsī Shīrdil Khān and deported him to Kuhsān (KR 171; PM II: 143–44, 130b; ST 333–4; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 253–5).

²⁹ Shīr ‘Alī Khān’s troops took possession of Herat on 19 January 1875 (IOL, L/PS/7/2 Pt. III No. 11 of 5 March 1875, p. 1433). Until 1293/1876 *Ishīk Āqāsī* Shīrdil Khān and Mustaufī Mīrzā Ḥabībullāh Khān served as governors of Herat (ST 334; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 255). After that, Sardār Muḥammad ‘Umar b. Muḥammad ‘Azīm Khān held this post until 1879 (KD 22–25 September 1876, NAI, For. Sec. A. November 1876 No. 12; MA 4 August 1877, NAI, For. Sec. April 1878 No. 33A).

³⁰ According to Faiẓ Muḥammad, the battle of Maivand took place on 17 Sha‘bān 1297/25 July 1880 (ST 375; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 336). Riyāzī places these events in early Sha‘bān 1297/middle of July 1880 (KR 195–7).

³¹ Adamec 1975: 127.

sources is clearly discernable from their works. As will be seen below, the authors of *Tārīkh-i sulṭānī*, *Kulliyāt-i riyāzī* and *Sirāj al-tavārīkh* derived at least part of their information from the Iranian historical works available to them.

For the purpose of the following chapters, several sources from the early Qājār period are of great importance. The earliest available chronicle, Muḥammad Faṭḥullāh b. Muḥammad Taqī Sāravī's *Tārīkh-i muḥammadī* (*Aḥsan al-tavārīkh*), was written at the behest of Bābā Khān (the future Faṭḥ 'Alī Shāh). It describes the exploits of Āqā Muḥammad Shāh and ends with his death on 21 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1211/17 June 1797 and his burial in Najaf in Rajab 1212/January 1798.³² Muḥammad Taqī b. Muḥammad Miḥdī Nūrī served as the *munshī* and *vazīr* of Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā, the first Qājār governor of Mashhad (1218–1231/1803–1816). The first edited volume of his book entitled *Ashraf al-tavārīkh* covers the first five years of Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā's governorship.³³ In 1237/1821–22, Zain al-'Ābidīn Shīrvānī (1193–1253/1779–1837/38) wrote an account of his spiritually motivated travels in Khurāsān, Kābul, Turkistān, Sind and India. His work combines details on the towns and districts of the Iranian kingdom with information on local dynasties and the biographies of poets and Sufis.³⁴ A member of an influential family from Khūy, 'Abd al-Razzāq Dunbulī (1167–1242/1753–1827) spent his early years in Shīrāz and Iṣfahān and later joined the service of 'Abbās Mīrzā Nā'ib al-Salṭana in Tabrīz. His *Ma'āthir-i sulṭānīya* begins with the origins of the Qājārs and covers the events until 1229/1814. Completed in 1236/1821, this work was published in Tabrīz in 1241/1825–26.³⁵ Roughly a decade later, Faḏlullāh Shīrāzī "Khāvarī" (1190–1266/1776–1850) composed a history entitled *Dhū al-qarnain*. Shīrāzī's description of the events from 1212–1250/1797–1834/35 was taken up by later historians like Lisān al-Mulk and Riżā Qulī Khān Hidāyat.³⁶

In the middle of the nineteenth century, a number of historical works were produced by high-ranking Qājār officials. In 1258/1842, Faṭḥ 'Alī Shāh's 47th son 'Alī Qulī Mīrzā (1238–1298/1822–1880), who received the title of "I'tizād al-Salṭana" in 1856, compiled *Iksir al-tavārīkh*, a survey of Persian history from its mythical origins to the time of writing. His brief history entitled *Tārīkh-i vaqāyi' va savānih-i Afghānistān* appeared during the Herat crisis in 1856.³⁷ Another noteworthy work produced during this period was *Jām-i Jam* by 'Abbās Mīrzā's 15th son, Farhād Mīrzā Mu'tamad al-Daula (1233–1305/1818–1888). A free translation of William Pinnock's *A Catechism of Geography* (London, 1826), the book was published in Tehran (1272/1855) and Bombay (1273/1856).³⁸ Both I'tizād al-Salṭana's works and Farhād Mīrzā's geography were to become standard sources for Afghan historians.

Between 1274 and 1276/1857–1859, the court poet Muḥammad Taqī Khān Lisān al-Mulk "Sipihr" (1207–1297/1792/93–1880) published the *Tārīkh-i qājārīya*, which formed part of a ten-volume universal history entitled *Nāsikh al-tavārīkh*.³⁹ Shortly before that, in 1271–1274/1854–1857, the literary scholar Riżā Qulī Khān Hidāyat (1215–1288/1800–1871) composed a history in three volumes devoted to the history of Iran from Safavid times on. Entitled *Rauzat al-ṣafā-yi nāshirī*, this work was intended as a supplement to Mīr Khvānd's and Khvānd Amīr's seven-volume *Rauzat al-ṣafā*. Hidāyat is also the author of an important travelogue. In 1267/1851, Nāshir al-Dīn Shāh deputed him on a diplomatic mission to the court of Khīva. The account of this journey, which will become relevant for the treatment of the northeastern border regions in Chapter 6, was entitled *Sifaratnāma-yi Khvārazm* and published sometime after the *Rauzat al-ṣafā-yi*

³² Sāravī 298, 312. See also Amanat, "Historiography viii. Qājār Period," *E.Ir.* XII: 369–70.

³³ *Ashraf al-tavārīkh* xxxi–xxxii.

³⁴ Zain al-'Ābidīn Shīrvānī, *Riyāz al-siyāhat*, 1237/1822, "Introduction".

³⁵ Ghulām Ḥusain Ṣadrī Afshār, [Introduction], *Ma'āthir-i sulṭānīya*, Tehran 1972, pp. 5–6; Amanat, "Historiography viii. Qājār Period," *E.Ir.* XII: 370.

³⁶ Faḏlullāh Shīrāzī, *Tārīkh-i dhū al-qarnain*, ed. Nāshir Afshārfar, "Introduction," xxxii–xxxv. See also Amanat, "Historiography viii. Qājār Period," *E.Ir.* XII: 370–1.

³⁷ Amanat, "E'tezād al-Salṭana," *E.Ir.* VIII: 669–72.

³⁸ Eslami, "Farhād Mīrzā Mo'tamad al-Daula," *E.Ir.* IX: 263.

³⁹ Amanat, "Historiography viii. Qājār Period," *E.Ir.* XII: 371–2; Bāmdād 1992 III: 319; KR 124 (Patterson 1988: 202).

nāširī.⁴⁰ Another important Central Asian travelogue was produced by ‘Abbās Qulī Khān about his mission to Bukhārā in 1260/1844. The events surrounding the 1860 Qājār campaign to Marv were documented by several eyewitnesses.⁴¹

During the later part of Nāšir al-Dīn Shāh’s reign, three authors provided useful information about the circumstances in Khurāsān. Muḥammad Ja‘far Khūrmūjī (d. 1301/1883–84), who initially gained an appointment as *ḥaqāyiq nigār* in 1277/1860–61, was ultimately unsuccessful. Completed in 1284/1867–68, his *Ḥaqāyiq al-akhbār-i nāširī* did not meet with royal approval and was confiscated.⁴² The Qājār statesman Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān I‘timād al-Salṭana (1259–1313/1843–1896), by contrast, enjoyed a high standing at the Qājār court, serving as minister of publications, newsreader to Nāšir al-Dīn Shāh, and official historian. One of the first graduates of the *Dār al-Funūn*, I‘timād al-Salṭana published official gazettes and compiled numerous almanacs, general histories, geographies and novels. His *Mir‘āt al-buldān* (four volumes, 1294–97/1877–80) was intended as a geographical encyclopaedia but remained incomplete.⁴³ Published in 1300/1883, I‘timād al-Salṭana’s *Tārīkh-i muntaẓam-i nāširī* also drew on contemporaneous European sources.⁴⁴ According to Abbas Amanat, it consisted of “a comparative chronology based on headlines of the Persian gazette and similar material from European almanacs”.⁴⁵ I‘timād al-Salṭana’s *Maṭla‘ al-shams* (three volumes, 1301–1303/1883–1886) commemorates Nāšir al-Dīn Shāh’s journey to Khurāsān in 1300/1883 and contains a historical and geographical account of Mashhad.⁴⁶ In 1296/1879, Nāšir al-Dīn Shāh authorized Ḥasan Ḥusainī Fasā‘ī (1237–1316/1821–1898) to produce a geographical and historical account. The resulting work was completed in 1304/1887 and entitled *Fārsnāma-yi nāširī*. Its first chapters recount the history of Persia up to the death of Fath‘Alī Shāh in 1250/1834 in a comprehensive manner. The remainder of the book focuses on the events in the province of Fārs.⁴⁷

Most of the Afghan historians of the late nineteenth century made use of the works of their Iranian counterparts. Writing in 1280–81/1865, Sulṭān Muḥammad cites a number of Indian, British, and Iranian authorities. Among these are Muḥammad Qāsim Hindūshāh Firishta’s *Tārīkh-i Firishta*,⁴⁸ and Ni‘matullāh Haravī’s *Makhzan-i afghānī* from the early seventeenth century, the works of John Malcolm, and Shāh Shujā’s diary (*Vaqi‘at-i Shāh Shujā*). The Iranian sources that he lists include Astarābādī’s *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā-yi nādirī*, Farhād Mīrzā Mu‘tamad al-Daula’s *Jām-i Jam*, as well as I‘tizād al-Salṭana’s *Tārīkh-i vaqāyī‘ va savānih-i Afghānistān*.⁴⁹

Other works of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are indebted to Iranian sources, to varying degrees. In 1906, Muḥammad Yūsuf Riyāzī (1290–1330/1873–1911), a native of Herat, produced a voluminous work entitled *Kulliyāt-i riyāzī* as an exile in Mashhad.⁵⁰ Entitled ‘*Ain al-vaqāyī*’, the third and

⁴⁰ *Sifāratnāma* (Schefer 1975): “Introduction,” xvi–xxi; French text: 66–7; Persian text: 42. See also Amanat, “Historiography viii. Qājār Period,” *E.Ir.* XII: 371; Granmayeh 1996: 234; Losensky, “Hedāyat, Reżāqoli Khān,” *E.Ir.* XII: 119–21; Noelle-Karimi 2012.

⁴¹ These were the army scribes Sayyid Muḥammad Nūrī (Za‘farānlū 1968: 75–144; Shahīdī 1971: 35–63) and Mīrzā Maḥmūd Taqī Āshtiyānī (*Ibratnāma*, ed. Ḥusain I‘mādī Āshtiyānī. Tehran 1382/2003). The author of the third extant report, *Safarnāma-yi Ḥamza Mīrzā* (ed. Muḥsin Raḥmatī, Tehran 1387/2008), is not known.

⁴² Afshār, “Muqaddama,” in Khūrmūjī 1984: xxii–xxv; Afshār 1992: 226.

⁴³ Amanat, “Historiography viii. Qājār Period,” *E.Ir.* XII: 373; Kashani-Sabet 1997: 223.

⁴⁴ TMN 2055.

⁴⁵ Amanat, “E‘temād al-Salṭana,” *E.Ir.* VIII: 665.

⁴⁶ Mann 1898: 116; Yate 1900: 313–14.

⁴⁷ Busse 1972: xvi–xvii; Busse, “Fārs-Nāma-yi Nāširī,” *E.Ir.* IX: 374–6.

⁴⁸ Hambly, “Ferešta, Tariḳ-e,” *E.Ir.* IX: 533–4.

⁴⁹ T Su 4, 8, 12–13, 15, 130.

⁵⁰ On the paternal side, Muḥammad Yūsuf Riyāzī claimed descent from the Abdālī leader Ḥayāt Sulṭān. His mother belonged to the Afshār tribe and had a Shiite background. She was the daughter of Riżā Qulī Khān and the granddaughter of Āqā Muḥammad Khān Buland Afshār, who had settled in Herat during Nādir Shāh Afshār’s time (KR 8, 171). See also Fikrat, “Introduction,” *Ain al-vaqāyī*, 1990, p. 1; Kakar 1979: 59; Nāyil 1961; Noelle-Karimi, “Historiography xi. Afghanistan,” *E.Ir.* XII: 392. Reflecting a Shī‘ī orientation, the *Kulliyāt-i Riyāzī* is divided into twelve parts in devotion to the twelve *imāms*. Each of these segments is subdivided into twelve plus two sections in honor of the twelve *imāms*, the Prophet Muḥammad and his daughter Fāṭima (KR 6). I am grateful to Robert D. McChesney for sharing his copy of this work with me.

longest part of the volume begins with a brief history of the Sadūzais and continues with an account of the events between 1217–1326/1802–1906. This work not only covers the developments in Khurāsān; it also reports on the political affairs of Iran and other parts of the world and displays a clear orientation towards the existing Iranian historiography.⁵¹ Faiz Muḥammad's *Sirāj al-tavārīkh* was written in Kābul under the supervision of the Muḥammadzai court. Printed in 1912, the first two volumes of this work are devoted to the history of Afghanistan from 1747 until the second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–80. The third, and by far the largest volume was published in the early 1920s and dealt exclusively with the reign of Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān Muḥammadzai (r. 1880–1901). For the first two volumes of his work, Faiz Muḥammad relied on Astarābādī's *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā-yi nādirī*, as well as on a number of the aforementioned Iranian chronicles produced from the middle of the nineteenth century on, such as I'tizād al-Saltāna's *Tārīkh-i vaqāyi' va savānih-i Afghānistān*, Hidāyat's *Tārīkh-i rauzat al-ṣafā-yi nāṣirī*, Lisān al-Mulk's *Nāsikh al-tavārīkh*, and Farhād Mīrzā's *Jām-i Jam*. Among the Afghan sources, Faiz Muḥammad lists *Vāqi'āt-i Shāh Shujā'*, Ḥamīd Kashmīrī's *Akbarnāma*, Sulṭān Muḥammad's *Tārīkh-i sulṭānī*, and Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Afghānī's Arabic treatises. The second volume reproduces portions of Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān's autobiography entitled *Pandnāma-yi dunyā va dīn*.⁵² The third volume of the *Sirāj al-tavārīkh*, by contrast, is based on government documents, decrees, and letters.

An additional source of information on the circumstances in Khurāsān in the nineteenth century is provided by the numerous travelogues produced by visitors from Great Britain and mainland Europe. These accounts helped to shape conceptions on the politics of Afghanistan and Iran, and also entered Persian works of the time. As early as 1782–1784, George Forster travelled from Bengal to Russia via Afghanistan and Iran.⁵³ In the early nineteenth century, both the East India Company (EIC) and the British Government stepped up their diplomatic activities in Iran. John Malcolm (1769–1833), the architect of the political and commercial treaties of 1801, visited Iran a total of three times, returning for brief periods in 1808 and 1810. This early phase in the diplomatic relations with the Qājār court was complexified by the ongoing competition between Calcutta and London. After his initial success in 1801, Malcolm, who acted on behalf of the EIC, found himself eclipsed by the British appointee Harford Jones Brydges (1764–1847). The latter served as the first envoy from 1809–1811 and concluded the Preliminary Treaty of Friendship and Alliance with Faṭḥ 'Alī Shāh in 1809. He was succeeded by Sir Gore Ouseley, who served as “ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary” from 1811–1814. Both Malcolm and Harford Jones actively contributed to the knowledge of Iran. After his return to London, Malcolm summed up the experience gained during his travels in a two-volume work entitled *History of Persia*. In 1833, Harford Jones translated an early version of 'Abd al-Razzāq b. Najaf Qulī Dunbulī's *Ma'āthir-i sulṭānīya*.⁵⁴

These early diplomatic missions stimulated further exploration of Iran. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, Malcolm initiated a number of scientific missions that were to play an important role in shaping British conceptions of Iran. From Bombay, he sent Charles Christie and Henry Pottinger to explore the inland regions north of Makrān. Alternately posing as horse buyers and pilgrims, these two men travelled through Balūchistān in spring 1810 and then separated. Christie made his way through Sīstān to Herat and subsequently moved on to Iṣfahān via Yazd. Pottinger continued to explore Balūchistān before traveling to Kirmān, Shīrāz and Iṣfahān, which he reached a few days before Christie. The information gathered during their expedition was published in 1816.⁵⁵ In the meantime, Malcolm had embarked on his third mission to Iran. He was accompanied by a team of officers from the Company's Indian establishment who were in charge of collecting information. John Macdonald Kinneir, who was to serve as envoy to Iran from 1826 until his death in 1830, published the material accumulated during these missions in a book entitled *A*

⁵¹ Patterson's partial English translation of the *'Ain al-vaqāyi'* covers the events from 1212–1282/1797–1866. Unfortunately, it contains numerous reading and translation errors.

⁵² ST III: 656; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 III, 2: 541–2.

⁵³ Forster 1798.

⁵⁴ Brydges 1973: i; Wright 2001: 4–9.

⁵⁵ Pottinger 1986; Holdich 1910: 329–43.

Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire. Another important explorer of this period was the orientalist William Ouseley (1767–1842), who arrived in Iran together with his younger brother, the ambassador Gore Ouseley, in 1811 and travelled widely in the country.⁵⁶

Later diplomatic missions also yielded a literary harvest. Lady Sheil, the wife of Justin Sheil, who served as envoy from 1844–1853, wrote “an engaging account of her life and travels in Persia.”⁵⁷ Another important authority on Afghanistan and Iran was Henry C. Rawlinson (1810–1895), who was appointed political agent in Qandahār in 1840 and served as envoy to Iran in 1859–60.⁵⁸ Edward B. Eastwick (1814–1883) left a detailed account of his work as secretary and later chargé d’affaires at the British legation in Tehran in 1859–62 and 1862–3. In September–November 1862, he visited Mashhad to gather information concerning Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān Muḥammadzai’s ongoing siege of Herat.⁵⁹ Hyacinth L. Rabino (1877–1950), who served as vice-consul in Rasht from 1906–1912, furnished an important account on the circumstances in Astarābād and Māzandarān.⁶⁰

British efforts to establish diplomatic contacts with Afghanistan likewise began in the early nineteenth century. After gaining control of the upper Ganges valley, the East India Company developed a steady eastern thrust and showed great interest in exploring the commercial pathways to Central Asia. As early as 1808–09, Mountstuart Elphinstone was sent to Pishāvar to negotiate a defensive treaty with Shāh Shujā ‘Sadūzai against Napoleon.⁶¹ Contrary to Iran, however, British efforts to gain a foothold in Afghanistan encountered great obstacles. The difficult nature of this relationship is highlighted by the two Anglo-Afghan Wars of 1839–1842 and 1878–1880. These phases of direct military involvement alternated with a more cautious policy aiming at stabilizing the internal situation in Afghanistan. The First Anglo-Afghan War occurred against the backdrop of the early unsettled phase of the Muḥammadzai dynasty and was triggered by the ill-fated British attempt to re-impose the authority of Shāh Shujā ‘Sadūzai. After the conclusion of the war, Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān, hitherto considered an undesirable usurper in the British perception, became viewed as a friendly partner. This friendship found its expression in the 1855 and 1857 treaties, whereby Dūst Muḥammad Khān undertook to become “friend of the friends and enemy of the enemies of the Honourable East India Company”. The second treaty stipulated the exchange of *vakīls*, “representatives”, between Kābul and Pishāvar but also prescribed that no European officers should be stationed in Kābul. In other words, Indian Muslims only could serve at such a post. Under the Conservative Prime Minister Disraeli (1874–1880), British policy prerogatives once again shifted to a “Forward Policy” aiming at the occupation of Afghanistan. The newly appointed British Indian viceroy Lytton (1876–1880) exerted pressure on Dūst Muḥammad Khān’s successor Amīr Shīr ‘Alī Khān (r. 1863–1866, 1869–1878) for the establishment of a permanent British mission in Kābul. In the summer of 1878, the dispatch of a Russian envoy to Kābul provided a pretext for the viceroy to force a British mission on Afghanistan. On Shīr ‘Alī Khān’s refusal to allow the British envoy to enter Afghanistan, Lytton declared war on Afghanistan on 20 November 1878. This war was concluded with the ascension of Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān to power in July 1880. Under ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān’s auspices, Afghanistan became a British protectorate. Even so, the only British Indian representatives allowed to reside in the country were Sunnī Muslims.⁶²

The ebb and flow of British engagement in Afghanistan is reflected by a succession of political and commercial missions to the region. Naturally, the opportunities to gather information peaked during the First and Second Anglo-Afghan Wars, which produced a fair density of data concerning local conditions. Alexander “Bukhara Burnes” (1805–1841) earned his sobriquet on account of his travels to Kābul, Bukhārā, Marv, Sarakhs, Mashhad and Tehran in 1832.⁶³ Five years later he embarked on a commercial mission to

⁵⁶ Wright 2001: 150–1.

⁵⁷ Wright 2001: 22.

⁵⁸ Champagne 1981: 428–33.

⁵⁹ Champagne 1981: 444–8; Wright 2001: 25–6.

⁶⁰ Wright 2001: 105.

⁶¹ Balland, “Afghanistan, x. Political History,” *E.Ir.* I: 549.

⁶² Balland, “Afghanistan, x. Political History,” *E.Ir.* I: 552–3; Kakar 2006: 161–6, 231–3.

⁶³ Marvin 1881: 9.

Afghanistan. Lasting from September 1837 to April 1838, Burnes's sojourn in Kābul coincided with the onset of the Persian siege of Herat. Against the backdrop of intense Persian and Russian activity, the British representative soon assumed a political role and sought to reshape local constellations of power according to his ideas. He attempted to strengthen Dūst Muḥammad Khān's position vis-à-vis the neighboring Sikhs and to weaken Iranian influence in Qandahār. As it turned out, these goals were at variance with those of Governor-General Auckland (1836–1842), and Burnes had to yield the diplomatic field in Kābul to the Russian agent Vitkevich. A year later, Burnes returned with the invading British Indian force and served as deputy to the British envoy until he was killed in the uprising of Kābul on 2 November 1841.⁶⁴ Mohan Lal (1812–1877) accompanied Alexander Burnes on his exploratory mission of 1832, in the course of which he met the Qājār heir apparent 'Abbās Mīrzā Nā'ib al-Saltāna and visited Herat. Acting as political assistant, Lal also witnessed the Kābul massacre of 1841 but was able to take refuge in the house of a merchant, from where he continued to report on the events in Afghanistan.⁶⁵

During the First Anglo-Afghan War, British military presence in Afghanistan was restricted to the areas south of the Hindū Kush and east of the Hilmand River. Even so, two Englishmen were present in Herat during this period. The first of these was Henry Pottinger's nephew Eldred (1811–1843), who happened to be in Herat at the time of the Persian siege and stayed there until July 1839. His successor D'Arcy Todd (1808–1845) was in charge of an official mission to Herat until February 1841. Pottinger is mainly known for the active role he assumed in the defence of Herat against the Persians. After the conclusion of the siege both he and Todd attempted to extend British influence in Herat but found themselves outmaneuvered by Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai. The latter exploited the flow of British subsidies purely for his own ends and played off British against Iranian interests.⁶⁶ Subsequent to the second Persian siege of Herat in 1856, Major R. L. Taylor arrived in Herat in October 1857 to monitor Iran's compliance with the Treaty of Paris.⁶⁷

The northeastern frontier or Iran was explored, among others, by G. C. Napier, who was deputed to Mashhad in 1874 to report on the circumstances along the Perso-Afghan frontier. After negotiating with the Persian authorities in Mashhad, Napier travelled onwards to Kalāt-i Nādirī and Astarābād.⁶⁸ Three British Indian officers served as consuls of Astarābād from 1879–1883: O. St. John, C. B. Lovett, and Charles E. Stewart. Stewart used his time in Astarābād to explore the adjacent regions, posing as an Armenian horse dealer.⁶⁹ During these travels he met the war correspondent Edmund O'Donovan (1844–1883), who advanced to the Qara Qum desert to report on the military encounters between the Russian army and the Teke Turkmens for the *London Daily News*. After witnessing the Russian conquest of Gök Tepe in January 1881, O'Donovan moved on to Marv where he was detained by the local Turkmens until July of that year. George N. Curzon, who was later to become Viceroy of India (1899–1905) and Foreign Secretary (1919–1924), travelled to Central Asia and Iran in 1888–1890. After crossing the Caspian by ship from Baku to Uzun Ada on the eastern shore, he travelled 300 miles on the newly opened Transcaspian Railway to Ashkhabad (Ashgabat, 'Ishqābād) in present-day Turkmenistan. From there he proceeded across the Iranian border, visited Mashhad, and traveled far and wide in Iran by means of the *chāpār* service.⁷⁰

From the 1870s on, the division between the evolving polities of Iran and Afghanistan was cemented by the creation and demarcation of national borders. The British commissions participating in this process surveyed the regions at stake and produced detailed accounts of the negotiations. Fredric John Goldsmid (1818–1909), who negotiated the Anglo-Persian Telegraph Convention of 1865, also served as chief British Commissioner on the Baluchistan (Makran) Boundary Commission of 1870–71 and Arbitrator on the Perso-

⁶⁴ Holdich 1910: 398–402; Lee 1996: 145–6; Yapp 1980: 228–40; Yapp, "Burnes, Alexander," *E.Ir.* IV: 566.

⁶⁵ For Mohan Lal's role in Kābul during the First Anglo-Afghan War, see Yapp 1980: 526.

⁶⁶ Champagne 1981: 217–18, 220–8; Ferrier 1857: 171; Kaye 1857 I: 222–300; Lee 1996: 146, 189; T Su 284–5; Yapp 1980: 364–80. Todd's mission to Herat consisted of the following officers: Lieutenant R. Shakespear, Colonel Sanders, Lieutenant Conolly, Lieutenant Pottinger, Lieutenant North, Surgeon Login (Markham 1977: 480–1).

⁶⁷ Champagne 1981: 409–20; Kelly 1991: 498.

⁶⁸ Marvin 1884: 139–41, 152.

⁶⁹ O'Donovan 1970 II: 62; Wright 2001: 81.

⁷⁰ Wright 2001: 165.

Afghan (Sistan) Arbitration Commission of 1872–73.⁷¹ Between 1884 and 1888, the northwestern Afghan frontier between the Āmū Daryā and the Harī Rūd was fixed by a joint Russian-English commission which became known as the Afghan Boundary Commission. The British component of the commission was headed by Peter S. Lumsden and J. W. Ridgeway.⁷² Further members were A. C. Stephen, Charles E. Stewart, Thomas H. Holdich (1843–1929), the head of the survey party, and Charles E. Yate (1849–1940).⁷³

A number of Russian explorers also deserve mention. In 1837–40, the Russian officer Blaramberg travelled to Iran. In 1837 and 1848, Baron de Bode visited the east Caspian coast.⁷⁴ The eminent orientalist M. Nicholas de Khanikoff (1819–1878) became famous for his descriptions of Central Asia and Khurāsān. In 1841, he accompanied Butenieff's mission to Bukhārā. After assuming diplomatic posts in Tabrīz and Tiflis, he led an exploratory mission to Khurāsān in 1858–1859. During his sojourn in Herat from September 1858 to February 1859, he entered negotiations with Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān concerning a preliminary trade agreement.⁷⁵ General Grodekoff (b. 1843) is mainly known for his role in the battle for Gök Tepe and his service as military governor of the Syr Darya District from 1883 on. In October 1878, he set out from Samarqand on a journey to the Caspian via Mazār-i Sharīf, Maimana, Herat, and Mashhad to Astarābād.⁷⁶

A crucial part of the literature on Khurāsān is provided by private travellers, who visited the region on their own accord and at their own expense. One of the earliest among them was James Baillie Fraser, who left India for Tehran in 1821. In December of the same year he travelled to Mashhad but could not proceed further to Bukhārā because of the insecurity that prevailed along the trade route. He therefore turned west again and explored the southern shore of the Caspian Sea.⁷⁷ After deserting from the British Indian army in 1827, Charles Masson (alias James Lewis, 1800–1853) spent several years travelling in Afghanistan, Balūchistān, Sind and Panjāb. Based in Kābul from 1832 on, he explored the passes of the western Hindū Kush but apparently never made it to Herat. From 1835 to 1838, he served as official newswriter for the EIC at Kābul.⁷⁸ In 1828–1829, Edward Stirling travelled in Persia and Afghanistan. Arthur Conolly (1807–1842), who was to attain sad fame for his death at the hands of the Amīr of Bukhārā, journeyed overland through Iran and Afghanistan to India in 1830.⁷⁹ Henry Walter Bellew (1834–1892), surgeon and amateur orientalist, was sent on a political mission to Qandahār in 1857 and visited Mashhad in 1872. Charles MacGregor, who is mainly known as “compiler of two huge works on Central Asia and Afghanistan”, travelled from Bushire (Būshihr) to Herat, Mashhad, Sarakhs and Kalāt-i Nādirī in the spring and summer of 1875.⁸⁰

In 1845, the French officer Joseph Ferrier travelled from Baghdad to Afghanistan. His travelogue is somewhat of an exception insofar as portions of it seem to be based on hearsay rather than on personal observation.⁸¹ In 1863, Armin Vámbéry (1832–1913) embarked on a journey to Central Asia on behalf of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Disguised as a *darvīsh*, he travelled to Khīva, Bukhārā and Samarqand and passed through Herat on his return to Iran.

⁷¹ Wright, “Goldsmid, Major-General Sir Frederick John,” *E.Ir.* XI: 76.

⁷² KR 217; Balland, “Boundaries iii. Boundaries of Afghanistan,” *E.Ir.* IV: 407–408; Rastogi 1965.

⁷³ Rastogi 1965: 52; Wright, “Holdich, Colonel Sir Thomas Hungerford,” *E.Ir.* XII: 430.

⁷⁴ Marvin 1881: 11.

⁷⁵ Champagne 1981: 425–7.

⁷⁶ Lee 1996: 378; Marvin 1884: 264–94.

⁷⁷ Fraser 1825: 326, 341, 523; Marvin 1881: 3–4; Wright 2001: 153.

⁷⁸ Hambly, “Introduction,” in: Masson 1842 I: vii–xxvii; Holdich 1910: 348–410; Whitteridge 1986: 1–5; Yapp 1980: 191.

⁷⁹ Lee 1996: 145; Wright 2001: 117; Yapp 1980: 208.

⁸⁰ Marvin 1884: 152–174.

⁸¹ In assessing Ferrier's work, Holdich comes to the conclusion that his account of the circumstances in Herat and its hinterland is accurate. Yet he claims that his descriptions of other regions, such as Balkh, Farāh and Ghūr border on the imaginary. One indication of the doubtful character of this account is that “Ferrier describes the valley of the Upper Murghab in terms of rapture which appear to be a trifle extravagant to those who know that country” (Holdich 1910: 477–98). In his introduction to the reprint of Ferrier's *Caravan Journeys and Wanderings* of 1976, Gavin Hambly notes that “the whole of Ferrier's route between Sar-i Pul and Zarni remains something of a mystery” but he declares himself inclined “to give Ferrier the benefit of the doubt” (Hambly 1976: xvi).

SUNNĪ-SHĪ'Ī DEMARCATATIONS

One recurrent theme in the description of political events in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is that of competing religious realms. As we have seen in Chapter 2, political demarcations readily translated into religious affiliations in the early Safavid period. Thus the allies of the Safavids assumed a Shī'ī identity, while the proponents of Uzbek rule emphasized Sunnī leanings. By the eighteenth century, these religious denominations had solidified and were associated with distinct groups. At the same time, they retained their importance for the delineation of political factions. Typically, the distinction between Sunnīs and Shī'īs was activated at times of conflict and implied political partisanship. A classic pattern in the politics of Herat is the identification of the Shī'īs with the Qizilbāsh, hence with Iranian interests. In other spheres of life, religious contours were less pronounced. Thus the distinction between Shī'īs and Sunnīs was blurred when it came to popular worship and royal patronage of shrines. In the following, I will give a short survey of the ways in which religious denominations were used to project various social and political fields of gravity.

THE POPULATION OF HERAT IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

Nineteenth-century observers categorized the population of Herat on the basis of religious affiliations. In connection with the events of 1222/1807, Muḥammad Taqī Nūrī observed that the overwhelmingly Shī'ī population of Herat and its hinterland had faced the oppression of the “fanatic” Afghāns since the decline of the Safavid empire.⁸² In 1237/1821–22, Zain al-‘Ābidīn Shīrvānī described the city in the following manner:

After the downfall of Nādir Shāh's government, it [Herat] suffered severely from the onslaught of friendly and hostile armies until it was conquered by the Abdālīs. Until now... it is under the authority of that group [Abdālīs, i.e. Sadūzai Durrānīs]. On the whole it has been adorned with prosperity and cultivation. The city proper contains 6,000 houses, and outside of each gate living quarters have been erected. The majority of the city dwellers are Shī'īs (*shī'a madhhab*), while the villagers are mixed, Sunnī and Shī'a.⁸³

In 1830, the overseer (*kalāntar*) of the town stated that the city of Herat consisted of 4,000 houses. On the basis of this information, Conolly concluded that the urban population amounted to 40,000 or 45,000 persons. He was of the opinion that Herat was as large, or slightly larger than Mashhad at that time.⁸⁴ A few years later, Mohan Lal corroborated the figure of 4,000 houses and estimated the city population at 60,000. He reported that it consisted of three major components, namely Bardurrānī, Qizilbāsh, and Fārsīvān (Pārsīvān, Pārsībān), Persian speakers of Shī'a faith. Unfortunately, Lal's information on the relative proportions of the three groups is contradictory. While he describes the Sunnī Bardurrānīs as a “major part” of the population and assumes that the local Qizilbāsh are “small in number”,⁸⁵ he also claims that the Fārsīvān make up a “great part” of the inhabitants.⁸⁶ Around the same time, Masson, who apparently never visited Herat in person, perceived the Durrānī Afghāns as a minority superimposed on the urban social fabric:

The Chief of the State is a Mahomedan of the Sunnee persuasion, but most of his subjects are Sheeahs. Moguls are very numerous at Herat, and the bulk of the peasantry are called Parsevans, a name indicating Persian origin... The genuine Dooranee (although the Chief is one, being a Suddozye) always appeared to me to consider himself a stranger in this country...⁸⁷

⁸² *Ahālī-yi ān balda va aṭrāf aktharī imāmī madhhab va shī'a-yi pāk mībāshand ki pas az inqirāz-i daulat-i ṣalāṭīn-i riẓvān-makīn-i ṣafavī ilā yauminā hādihā* [1222/1807]...*ba-balīya-yi zulm u 'udvān-i nāpākān-i muta'aṣṣib-i afghān... mubtalā va giriftār-i anvā'-i miḥan u i'nā būdand* (*Ashraf al-tavārīkh* 426–7). Nūrī characterizes the Shī'ī population of Herat as comprising “Javānshīr, Fārsīzabān, and Qizilbāsh” (*Ashraf al-tavārīkh* 425).

⁸³ *Riyāz al-siyāhat* 430.

⁸⁴ Conolly 1834 I: 264; II: 2.

⁸⁵ Lal 1977: 160.

⁸⁶ Lal 1834: 9.

⁸⁷ Forrest 1906: 124.

ENCOUNTERS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The following three events in 1731, 1750 and 1754 reflect the rapid succession of conquests that took place in Khurāsān until the middle of the eighteenth century. Furthermore, the case of Aḥmad Shāh's campaign to Mashhad sheds light on two contrasting modes that accompanied successful military action: destruction during invasion and patronage upon conquest. The uniting theme of these encounters is that of a Sunnī-Shī'ī dichotomy, which creates the frame of reference for the articulation of political identities. The first two examples are interesting in that they cast Herat in terms of mutually exclusive spheres. Depending on the perspective of the narrator, the central elements of the city population are either described as Shī'ī or "Afghān", i.e. Sunnī.

Nādir Shāh's chronicler Muḥammad Kāzīm portrays the final siege of Herat in 1731 as a struggle between the *ithnā 'asharī* Qizilbāsh and the local Sunnī population. In the summer of that year, Dhū al-Faḡār Khān Sadūzai Abdālī appealed to Ḥusain b. Mīr Vais Hūtak at Qandahār for assistance. According to Kāzīm, Dhū al-Faḡār Khān couched his request for aid in religious terms: "How about sending a group of Ghilzai warriors (*ghāzī*) to give assistance for the sake of tribal bonds and religious unity... By the grace of God and the four rightly guided Caliphs [we] will repel the Qizilbāsh evil and gain fame in this world and the next."⁸⁸

When Dhū al-Faḡār's cousin Allāhyār Khān entered Herat with Nādir Shāh's assistance on 22 August 1731, he was reviled by the urban Afghāns for his treachery:

'It is a far cry from manliness and piety to relinquish one's tribe for the sake of one spoonful of putrid blood and to seek shelter with the irreligious *ithnā 'asharīs*.' The women of that tribe added, 'You have helped in killing our husbands, you have caused our children to starve and now you want to hand us over to the Qizilbāsh warriors!'⁸⁹

The author of *Majma' al-tavārīkh*, on the other hand, highlights the sentiments of the local Shī'ī population. According to his portrayal, Bihbūd Khān's siege of Herat on behalf of Sulaimān II of Mashhad in 1750 met with an enthusiastic response on the part of the Shī'īs:

For a long time the poor population of the city of Herat had been afflicted by the reprisals of the Afghāns and had suffered utter anguish and confusion. In particular, those who were known for their allegiance to the true religion of *ithnā 'asharism* rejoiced at the news of the arrival of the Qizilbāsh army and the defeat of the Afghān troops. They secretly sent messengers to the [Qizilbāsh] military leaders and offered to seize and hand over Tīmūr Khān [Aḥmad Shāh's son Tīmūr Mīrzā] [They also suggested] that the entrenchment be removed from the Girishk [Qandahār] Gate and that the entire group (*qaum*) of Afghāns, who did not amount to over five thousand persons, be allowed to flee.⁹⁰

Maḥmūd al-Ḥusainī's account of Aḥmad Shāh Sadūzai's conquest of Mashhad in 1754 reflects several levels of incorporation. On the one hand, he equates Aḥmad Shāh's military success with an outright assertion of Sunnī supremacy:

On Friday, 19 Ṣafār [1168/5 December 1754] ... the various components of the population (*tavāyif-i ahālī va sakana*) assembled as usual in the Friday mosque. The royally appointed preachers mounted the pulpit and uttered the Friday sermon with loud voices and eloquent tongues; they adorned the shell of the ears of the worshippers with pearls, by mentioning the auspicious names of the rightly guided Caliphs... and of the royal defender of Islam and the Muslims. Praising the virtues and attainments of... the first four Caliphs (*chahār yār*)...they elevated the fundament of the formerly forlorn and lustreless pulpit to the zenith of the revolving firmament.⁹¹

On the other hand, Maḥmūd al-Ḥusainī describes the generous gifts Aḥmad Shāh made to the shrine of Imām Riḏā. By extending the umbrella of royal protection over local institutions, the Durrānī ruler expressed at once his devotion and his scope of control. Seen in this light, the above demonstration of Sunnī superiority by no means contradicted Aḥmad Shāh's ostentatious veneration for the shrine of Imām Riḏā. After attending to the affairs of Mashhad, he performed a pilgrimage to the holy threshold (*āstāna-yi muqaddasa*) and repaired some of the damages the shrine had recently suffered. He restored the golden minaret (*guldasta*)

⁸⁸ Kāzīm 188.

⁸⁹ Kāzīm 191.

⁹⁰ *Majma' al-tavārīkh* 126.

⁹¹ TA (Humāyūn) 192–3.

adjoining the cupola, which had been stripped during Mīr ‘Alam I Khuzaima’s reign in 1752–1753. He likewise replaced a chandelier which the military commander of Mashhad had turned into money during the Afghan siege and thus undid some of the harm caused by his own invasion.⁹²

ŞŪFĪ ISLĀM

Throughout the nineteenth century, the conflict of interest between the Afghān overlords of Herat and Iranian claims to supremacy was cast in religious terms. One important protagonist of the Sunnī cause was Şūfī Islām (d. 1807), a Naqshbandī *pīr* who established a convent (*khānaqāh*) in Kurukh.⁹³ Together with his rival, Ḥājjī Mullā Mūsā, the foremost ‘*ālim*’ of Herat, he played a leading role in mobilizing troops for a military confrontation between Ḥājjī Fīrūz al-Dīn Sadūzai and the Qājār army. During this battle, which took place at the village of Shāda near Shakībān on 22 Rabī‘ II 1222/29 June 1807,⁹⁴ both Şūfī Islām and Ḥājjī Mullā Mūsā were killed. These events are covered by all the available chronicles concerning this period. Shī‘ī sources emphasize the nexus between spiritual and political authority and highlight Şūfī Islām’s role in the activation of troops in the rural hinterland of Herat. The interpretation of the nature of Şūfī Islām’s involvement varies depending on the perspective of the narrator. Thus, he is either portrayed as a victim of Ḥājjī Fīrūz al-Dīn’s military ambitions or as the driving force in the confrontation with the Qājār troops.

With slight variations, all accounts agree on Şūfī Islām’s death during the battle of Shāda and the abuse his body suffered at the hands of the Qizilbāsh troops. Most of them also concur on his Uzbek background and locate his early career in Bukhārā. Boukhary reports that,

Shaikh al-Islām, also known as Şūfī al-Islām had 50,000 [French text: 150,000] disciples and was originally an Uzbek from Bukhārā. During the reign of Shāh Murād Bēg [Manghīt, r. 1785–1800], he moved to Herat and was settled in Kurukh by Tīmūr Shāh. He claimed to receive divine revelations and to perform miracles (*kashf va karāmat*).⁹⁵

Şūfī Islām’s Bukharan background is confirmed by Zain al-‘Ābidīn Shīrvānī, who apparently met the *pīr* at his convent in Kurukh shortly before his death:

Şūfī Islām—an Uzbek by tribe, lived in Kurukh, a dependency of Herat. He followed the Naqshbandī path. He was a Ḥanafī by religion. He spent his early life in Bukhārā. As the local ruler disapproved of [the performance of] vocal *dhikr*,⁹⁶ he expelled [Şūfī Islām] from Bukhārā. He travelled around in Transoxiana for a while and assembled many disciples. Finally he came to Herat and settled in the aforementioned village. He has assumed the throne of preaching (*va ẓ*) and has carried the banner of guidance (*irshād*) for almost sixty years.

I met him in 1222/[1807]. At that time he was over ninety years of age. In his assembly, the *mathnavī* was continuously read and he interpreted it. He had more than two hundred representatives (*khalīfas*),⁹⁷ who offered spiritual guidance to the people in the regions (*vilāyāt*) of Khurāsān and Tūrān. His followership comprised about 100,000 families. He and his adherents wore distinct khaki-colored clothes. He enjoyed great wealth. He never neglected [the duties of] hospitality and attendance to the poor for even a minute. When a Qizilbāsh army set out for Herat in that year, the governor of the region [Ḥājjī Fīrūz al-Dīn] and a number of other Afghāns impelled him to combat the Qizilbāsh army and induced him to join the battle against them. When the two armies met between Herat and Ghūriyān, a tremendous battle unfolded. The Afghān troops were defeated. Şūfī Islām was taken prisoner

⁹² TA (Humāyūn) 194–5; Mann 1898: 326–7.

⁹³ Samizay reports that this convent was believed to have been erected by Kāmrān Mīrzā in 1213/1798–99 or 1219/1804–05 (Samizay 1981: 51–2). Yet Kāmrān was not present in Herat at that time.

⁹⁴ The Persian sources alternately list the name of the battleground as Shāda (*Dhū al-qarnain* 226; Boukhary 83–4, Persian text 40) or Shāhdih (TRSN IX: 433; T Su 185; KR 62). The present-day village of Shāda (34° 24’ N 61° 39’ E) is located west of Shakībān on the northern bank of the Harī Rūd (*Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 359).

⁹⁵ Boukhary 83–4, Persian text 40.

⁹⁶ Zain al-‘Ābidīn uses the term *dhikr-i jalī* instead of the more common designation *dhikr-i jahrīya* (See *Dhū al-qarnain* 266; NT 162). According to Riyāzī, Şūfī Islām was affiliated with the Surūdī and Naqshbandī orders (KR 62). On Shāh Murād’s religious policies and further details on Şūfī Islām’s early career, see Kügelgen 1998: 123–4. For brief mention of Şūfī Islām’s teachings, see Algar 1976 and Algar 1990.

⁹⁷ Ākhundzāda Mullā Muḥammad Şadīq-i Haravī states that Şūfī Islām had 1,001 *khalīfas* (*Mazārāt-i Harāt* 157).

and killed by the Qizilbāsh tribe on the spot. Some parts of his body were burned.⁹⁸ A great number of his disciples who had stood fast by his side were killed. Others retrieved his half-burned corpse, carried it back and buried it. A great cupola was erected over his grave and he left many descendants after him.⁹⁹

Writing in 1350/1931–32, the Herati author to Ākhundzāda Mullā Muḥammad Ṣadīq reports that Ṣūfī Islām was of Khivan ancestry. Born near Maimana in 1138/1725–26, he joined the service of the Manghūt ruler Muḥammad Raḥīm Bī (r. 1747–1758) in Bukhārā and was promoted to high rank. Ṣūfī Islām's initiation occurred during a campaign to Marv and Ūrganj, when Khizr appeared to him and exhorted him to turn away from the transitory world and its futile pursuits: *Ay farzand, az lahv u la'b-i dunyā dast ba-dār*. Heeding Khizr's advice, Ṣūfī Islām gave up his military career and retired to a cave for seven years. Subsequently, his teachings attracted such a large following in Farghāna and Bukhārā that he fell out of favor with the Amīr and moved to Herat.¹⁰⁰

The only source that casts doubt on Ṣūfī Islām's Uzbek origin is the Shī'ī author Riyāzī. Although he mentions Ṣūfī Islām as a Bukharan Sufi in the main body of the text, he offers some additional biographical details on the margin that indicate an Iranian background and locate Ṣūfī Islām's spiritual career exclusively in Kurukh. According to this account, Ṣūfī Islām's real name was Mullā Islām. Originally from Iṣfahān, he came to Herat in 1197/1782 and set up business as dyer (*ṣabbāgh*) in the 'Irāq market. After going bankrupt, he became the agent (*gumāshta*) of a Herati dyer called Mullā Islām (sic) and traded in indigo at Kurukh for two to three years. Subsequently, he spent three to four years in Bukhārā and Turkistān. Upon his return to Kurukh, a great number of disciples assembled around him, named him Ṣūfī Islām, and bestowed great authority upon him.¹⁰¹

Acknowledging Ṣūfī Islām's influential position, the Iranian sources of the early nineteenth century identify him as the instigator of Fīrūz al-Dīn's military actions. The most scathing portrayal of Ṣūfī Islām's activities is offered by his contemporary Muḥammad Taqī Nūrī, who summons his entire rhetorical repertoire to demonstrate the ignorance and arrogance of the mystical leader, in effect highlighting his spiritual and military weight:

[He is] the preceptor and chief of all the Afghāns, Ūymāq and Turkmens, [their] great leader and the second Abū Ḥanīfa..., who heads several thousand ignoble disciples from the Afghān regions and Turkistān. This impostor, who leads the ignorant astray, lives in Kurukh. Outwardly, in order to win the hearts of the common people, that is, all the Afghāns, Turks and Ūymāq, he observes the futile school of Abū Ḥanīfa, but inwardly, he follows no religion at all.¹⁰²

Nūrī depicts Fīrūz al-Dīn as a gullible follower and helpless victim of Ṣūfī Islām's conceit:

On the basis of his faulty imagination, [Ṣūfī Islām] seized upon Fīrūz Mīrzā's laughable delusions; because of his stupidity he considered himself capable of wise religious judgment. Equating the confrontation with the soldiers of Islam with jihad, he deemed it to be an easy matter. He twirled his unbecoming moustache like the whiskers of a cat, girded his loins for hostilities with the dutiful Qizilbāsh, mounted the steed of error and ignorance, set out for the distinguished city of Herat and moved

⁹⁸ Muḥammad Taqī Nūrī states that Ṣūfī Islām's head was mounted on a spear and his body was burned in situ (*Ashraf al-tavārikh* 420). According to Boukhary's version of events, the Qizilbāsh skinned (*pūst kardā*) Ṣūfī Islām's head and sent it to Tehran. His body was burned (Boukhary 83–4, Persian text 40–41). Riyāzī reports that Ṣūfī Islām's head was hit by a cannon ball (*gulūla-yi tūp*). After the battle, the Azerbaijani artillerymen placed his body on a stack of dried rape seed (*mandāb*) and burned it (KR 62).

⁹⁹ *Riyāz al-siyāhat* 481–2.

¹⁰⁰ *Mazārāt-i Harāt* 154–7. See also Dupree 1977: 334; Kügelgen 1998: 124). Fūfalzā'ī is also of the opinion that Ṣūfī Islām was born in 1138/1725–26 but places him in Herat at the time of Aḥmad Shāh's death in 1772, that is, thirteen years before Shāh Murād Bī came to power in Bukhārā (Fūfalzā'ī 1967: 131). See also Wood 1998: 100–1.

¹⁰¹ KR 62.

¹⁰² *Murshid va pīshvā-yi jamī'i afghāna va ūymāq va turkmān, imām-i a'zam va Bū Ḥanīfa-yi thānī...ṣāhib-i chandīn hazār marada-yi mardūd az mamālīk-i afghān va turkistān va ān muzavvir-i ablah farīb dar Kurukh maskan namuda; zāhir-i ḥāl-rā ba-jihat-i jadhb-i qulūb-i 'avāmm, balki 'umūm-i afghāniya va atrāk va ūymāq, madhhab-i pūch-i Bū Ḥanīfa-rā ri'āyat mīkunad va līkan dar bāṭin muqallid ba-hīch madhhab nīst*. Nūrī further avers that Ṣūfī Islām used his spiritual standing to enforce his "right to the first night" with the brides of his followers (*Ashraf al-tavārikh* 389).

towards fate and jihad, accompanied by one thousand misguided Sufis..., ten of his impure and doomed representatives, and two of his degenerate and vicious sons...¹⁰³

According to Nūrī's version of events, Fīrūz al-Dīn's enthusiasm for warfare faded when he received news of the approach of the Khurāsānī troops under the command of Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā, the governor of Mashhad. Fīrūz al-Dīn's experienced military leader Badal Khān Afghān likewise preferred submitting Ghūriyān to the option of defying the Iranian government: "This is the first manifestation of the ascendancy of this world-disturbing power, whereas the star of Afghān fortune is on its decline."¹⁰⁴ At length, however, Fīrūz al-Dīn gave in to a coalition of Afghān and Ūymāq chiefs under the leadership of Šūfī Islām, who insisted on the necessity of battling the Qājars.¹⁰⁵ To strengthen his cause, Šūfī Islām addressed a letter to the Hazāra and Tīmūrī leaders in Qājār employ and reminded them of their duty to join the "army of Islam" (*lashkar-i islām*). His prediction of the upcoming fierce battle may also be read as a premonition of his impending death:

Your consent with the ignominious Qizilbāsh unbelievers and your obedience to the errant *shī'ī* polytheists is against the divine command and contrary to my approval. It should be known that in this altercation many heads will lose their bodies and many bodies their heads; many sons will lose their fathers and fathers their sons. Through the souls of the eminent saints (*abdāl va autād*), through the felicitous ambition of the devoted servants and ascetics, and through the heavenly signs and constellations it has become evident to me that victory will belong to His Majesty Fīrūz Mīrzā. In this battle, owing to the presence of ascetics and the prayer of hermits, he will be victorious (*fīrūz*) like his name and happy like his fate. Fortunate will be those who lend the ear of understanding to the advice of their compassionate guide and hurry to [join] their preceptor. Be aware that the irreligious heretics will be defeated... All the Afghāns and Ūymāq have sincerely united with His Majesty and me...¹⁰⁶

In his description of the battle itself, Nūrī anticipates Šūfī Islām's violent end by comparing his palanquin to a coffin. While attempting to ridicule Šūfī Islām, the following passage from the *Ashraf al-tavārīkh* inadvertently illustrates his spiritual authority and the way in which it translated into physical arrangements. As Šūfī Islām entered the battlefield, seated on a palanquin and shielded by his close associates and armed followers, his spiritual standing produced a battle order in its own right. The protective field surrounding the leader and his associates was enhanced by the performance of vocal *dhikr*:

Šūfī Islām seated himself on a litter. A number of men bearing his squalid litter on their shoulders, one thousand of his ignoble disciples baring their swords, together with his representatives and his offspring of adultery, they [marched to] sacrifice themselves under his flag and before his coffin [-like litter], and began to recite the *dhikr* of *hū hū*.¹⁰⁷

Writing in the 1830s, Fażlullāh Shīrāzī offers a similar interpretation of the relationship between Šūfī Islām and the ruler of Herat. In his portrayal, it is again Šūfī Islām who seduces Ḥājī Fīrūz al-Dīn to stray from "proper" religion and, hence, to give up his allegiance to the Qājār overlords. He accuses Šūfī Islām of polytheism and his disciple Ḥājī Fīrūz of apostasy: "Because of the assembly of irreligious disciples and the

¹⁰³ *Ba-za 'm-i nāqīš-i bātil-i khud tasvīlāt-i rīshkhand-āmīz-i Fīrūz Mīrzā-rā ba-rīsh bardāshta; az kūn-i kharī khud-rā rīsh-i qāzī pindāshta va muqābila-yi 'asākīr-i islām-rā ghazva-yi jihād dānista, ān-rā sahl u āsān ingāsht va burūthā-yi nāmarbūt-i khud-rā chūn asbāl [sibāl]-i gurba tāb dāda, kamar ba-'adāvat-i Qizilbāsh-i haqq-shinās basta, bar bāragī-yi zālālat va jahālat nishasta, ba mavāzī-yi yak hazār nafar az šūfiya-yi tīra-rāy... va dah nafar az khulafā-yi nāpāk-i shaqāvat-intimā va du pisar-i nā-khalaf-i badgauhar-i ū... rah-sipar-i balda-yi fākhira-yi Harāt va pay-sipār-i tarīq-i qazā va jihād gardīdand (Ashraf al-tavārīkh 390).*

¹⁰⁴ *Avval-i ṭulū 'i ṭalī 'a-yi īn daulat-i jahān-āshūb ast va kaukab-i iqbal-i afghān-rā zamān-i ghurūb (Ashraf al-tavārīkh 402).*

¹⁰⁵ *Ashraf al-tavārīkh 401–3.*

¹⁰⁶ *Muvāfiqat-i shumā bā kāfirān-i qizilbāsh-i qallāsh va mutābi 'at-i shumā bā mushrikān-i shī 'a-yi nāhaqq-talāsh khilāf-i hukm-i khudā va munāfi 'at-i riżā-yi māst. Īn ma 'nā ma 'lūm va īn mafhūm hamginān bāshad ki dar īn mujādila basā sar bī tan va tan bī sar khvāhad shud va bisyār pidar bī pisar va pisar bī pidar. Va az ta 'thīr-i nufūs-i abdāl va autād va yumn-i himmat-i 'ibād u zuhhād va az āthār-i falakī va auzā 'i kavākib chinīn ma 'lūm-am shud ki fath u nuṣrat qarīn-i ḥāl-i ḥazrat-i a 'lā Fīrūz Mīrzāst va ū dar īn ma 'raka ba-sabab-i vujūd-i murtāzān va aṭhar-i du 'ā-yi gūsha-gūran chūn nām-i khud fīrūz va mānand-i bakht-i khud bihrūzī khvāhad yaft. Nīk-bakht va sa 'ādatmand kasī ki naṣīhat-i pūr-i mushfiq-rā ba-gūsh-i hūsh jā dāda ba-jānib-i murshid-i khud shitāft. Āgāh bāshīd ki rafīziyān-i bī-īmān maghlūb... khvāhand būd. Tamāmī-yi afghān va ūymāq... bā ḥazrat-i a 'lā va īn jānib bī-nifāq ittifaq namūda-and... (Ashraf al-tavārīkh 408).*

¹⁰⁷ *Šūfī Islām bar miḥaffa qarār girifta, gurūhī miḥaffa-yi palīd-i ū-rā bar-dūsh va hazār nafar az marada-yi mardūda-ash shamshūrā-yi birihna dar āghūsh nihāda, bā khulafā va aulād-i zinā-yash dar pā-yi bairaq va pīshrū-yi tābūt-ash fidāi va az zabān ba-dhikr-i hū hū gushādand (Ashraf al-tavārīkh 415).*

polytheistic injunctions of that cursed one [Šūfī Islām], the matter of Sufism gained splendor. The unfortunate Ḥājī Fīrūz became his disciple and turned away from the circle of Islām.” Shīrāzī casts the confrontation with the Herati troops as the defense of the true religion: Seeking recourse in God’s strength and placing their confidence in the good fortune of their king, the Iranian fighters mounted attack after attack against the “irreligious” Herati troops and carried the day. In keeping with this imagery, Shīrāzī likens the bodies of the slain Afghan soldiers to the carrion of dogs and hogs.¹⁰⁸

Twenty years later, Lisān al-Mulk largely follows Fażlullāh Shīrāzī’s earlier account of the battle but views the dynamic between royal patronage and religious legitimacy differently. While assuming the submissive role of a disciple, Ḥājī Fīrūz al-Dīn sought to instrumentalize Šūfī Islām’s spiritual resources for his own ends. By pointing to Šūfī Islām’s far-spread followership, Lisān al-Mulk makes it clear that the Naqshbandī *pīr* had considerable resources at his disposal which Ḥājī Fīrūz al-Dīn wanted to harness to his military cause. Furthermore, Lisān al-Mulk enumerates all the regions Šūfī Islām drew adherents from, thus mapping his large sphere of influence:

[Šūfī Islām] assembled a great group of disciples and adherents. Ḥājī Fīrūz became likewise enamoured with his spiritual attainments and, believing in him, became his disciple. He thought that [Šūfī Islām’s] influential position would enable him to win over the entire population, urban and rural, and to enjoy complete power over his kingdom.¹⁰⁹ For this reason, he prepared for a military campaign and assembled 50,000 men from among the tribes of Herat, Qandahār, Farāh, Andkhūd, Mārūchāq, Qunduz, Khatlān, Chīnānjakh [Chīchaktū],¹¹⁰ Maimana, Fāryāb, Bādghīsāt, and the Jamshīdī, Tāymanī, Fīrūzkūhī and Nikūdārī *ūymāq*. He placed Šūfī Islām in a golden litter in the middle of the army and surrounded it with 366 heroic guards, one for each day of the year...¹¹¹

The available Afghan sources assume a more neutral tone in their account of the battle of Shāda. Sulṭān Muḥammad merely mentions Šūfī Islām as one “of the great *shaikhs* of Afghānistān” and lists him among a number of dignitaries whose support Ḥājī Fīrūz al-Dīn summoned. During the ensuing confrontation, Šūfī Islām and 5,000 others imbibed the drink of martyrdom.¹¹² Writing in the early twentieth century, Faiz Muḥammad adds a religious note to the campaign: “Ḥājī Fīrūz al-Dīn, who was among [Šūfī Islām’s] fortunate disciples, assembled 50,000 troops from among the tribes (*īlāt va ulūsāt*) of Herat and its environs in the name of jihad.”¹¹³

After Šūfī Islām’s death, his authority passed to his descendants, who enjoyed “complete power” (*kamāl-i iqtidār*) until the reign of Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān.¹¹⁴ Mīrzā Abū al-Qāsim b. Šūfī Islām was among the Herati ulama and notables who endorsed Muḥammad Yūsuf Khān Sadūzai’s assumption of power in Muḥarram 1272/September 1855.¹¹⁵ Mīrzā Abū al-Qāsim was succeeded by his brother Mīrzā Allāhvīrdī b. Šūfī Islām, who gained great fame for his hospitality: In his convent, two hundred travellers were fed crushed wheat and barley (*bulghūr*) and bread every night.¹¹⁶ After Mīrzā Allāhvīrdī’s death, the control of the shrine and its considerable resources was contested between two cousins claiming Šūfī Islām’s heritage. In 1895, the sons of Mīrzā Abū al-Qāsim and Mīrzā Allāhvīrdī, both named Muḥammad ‘Umar, appealed to Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān, who eventually allotted a stipend to both parties but ordered Mīrzā Allāhvīrdī’s sons and two of his grandsons to reside in Kābul.¹¹⁷ Riyāzī reports that the influence of Šūfī Islām’s family

¹⁰⁸ *Dhū al-qarnain* 266.

¹⁰⁹ *Bar chār bālīsh-i mulk takiya khvāhad zad*. This expression is commonly employed in the chronicles to project the ease accompanying full authority. For further examples spanning the period from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century, see Saif al-Haravī 1943: 165; Rota 2009: 385; Vārid, *Mir’āt* 128, 180, 185; *Dhū al-qarnain* 172.

¹¹⁰ See *Dhū al-qarnain* 266.

¹¹¹ NT 162.

¹¹² According to Sulṭān Muḥammad’s account, the second religious dignitary who backed Ḥājī Fīrūz al-Dīn was Mullā Ḥalīm Kākārī (T Su 184).

¹¹³ ST 74–5; see also the translation by McChesney in McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 121.

¹¹⁴ KR 62.

¹¹⁵ TRSN X: 667; NT 1278.

¹¹⁶ KR 62. See also *Mazārāt-i Harāt* 157.

¹¹⁷ ST 1158–59, 1206–7; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 III, 3: 1511–12; 1603–4.

declined from that time on. Even so, its followership consisted of ten to twelve thousand families in and around Kurukh in the early twentieth century.¹¹⁸

Khanikoff, who visited Kurukh in 1858, noted that two popular graves stood in close vicinity to one another. Šūfī Islām's grave was located in a beautiful mausoleum constructed by Mīrzā Abū al-Qāsim.¹¹⁹ It was surrounded by a spacious garden intersected by two pine-lined avenues. The other shrine at Kurukh housed the grave of Imām Riżā's doorkeeper Ma'rūf al-Karkhī (d. 200/815–16) and was venerated by the Shī'ī population. Yet the building containing the grave, which probably stemmed from the Safavid era, was in a state of dilapidation.¹²⁰

THE QĀJĀR SIEGES

In the course of the nineteenth century, the demarcation of political spheres intensified and enhanced local antagonism. During the Persian sieges of 1837–1838 and 1856, both Iran and the rulers of Herat justified their territorial claims on the basis of religious affiliations. For the local Shī'ī population, the Iranian endeavor to regain possession of Herat held the promise of added political leverage. In 1832, Lal noted that religious sentiments as such played a secondary role in the outlook of the Fārsīvān: "They are all fond of the Persian government—not with regard to religion, but through the ill treatment, which they daily receive from Kamran and his ministers."¹²¹

The Iranian reasoning for the intervention in Herat rested on the notion of the Qājār state as a Shī'ī domain. From this point of view, it was Muḥammad Shāh Qājār's duty to protect the entire Shī'ī population in the region. For one thing, this idea applied to the Shī'īs of Herat, who had to be protected from Kāmran Sadūzai's tyranny. An additional and equally important consideration was the need to safeguard the remaining Shī'ī population of Khurāsān from slave raids committed not only by the Turkmens but also by the Sunnī *ūymāq* of the Herat region. Kāmran was held responsible for plundering raids that emanated from his realm and were carried out as far as Sabzavār. In April 1836, Muḥammad Shāh stated that Kāmran and the Afghāns under his authority had carried away 12,000 persons as slaves.¹²² What is more, Kāmran was accused of interfering with territories considered Iranian possessions: He had exerted direct pressure on Khvāf and Qāyin for tribute and had mounted a campaign against Lāsh-Juvain.¹²³ The position of the Qājār government concerning the necessity of a campaign to Herat was supported and encouraged by the religious establishment. As early as April 1836, Ḥājji Ibrāhīm, the *mujtahid* of Iṣfahān, declared jihad against the Afghāns. In May 1837, the clergy of Mashhad demanded that Muḥammad Shāh free the Shī'īs from Kāmran's oppression.¹²⁴

Kāmran Sadūzai, on his part, attached his own religious interpretation to the conflict. Seeking support from other Afghān leaders, he described Muḥammad Shāh Qājār's pending attack as an effort to extirpate the

¹¹⁸ KR 62.

¹¹⁹ According to Ākhundzāda Mullā Muḥammad Ṣadiq-i Haravī, the text on Šūfī Islām's gravestone read as follows: *Tā az naẓar nihān shuda sulṭān-i dīn panāh, kardand rūz ahl-i irādat shab-i siyāh. Sāl-i shihādātash ṭalabīdam zi pīr-i 'aql, giri-yān shud u ba nāla biguftā gharīv u āh* (1222) (*Mazārāt-i Harāt* 157; see also Fūfalzā'ī 1967: 131) In the 1850s, Abū al-Qāsim played a prominent role in the politics of Herat. In 1272/1855, he was one of the members of the council formed by Muḥammad Yūsuf Khān (Fūfalzā'ī 1967: 525).

¹²⁰ Khanikoff 1864: 376–7. According to a popular legend, Karkhī converted to Islam at the hands of Imām Riżā (R. A. Nicholson/R. W. J. Austin, "Ma'rūf al- Karkhī," *E.I.*, 2 VI: 613–14).

¹²¹ Lal 1834: 9.

¹²² Ellis to Palmerston, 17 April 1836 (IOL, L/PS/20/A7/1, No. 32, p. 23). In 1837, Ḥājji Mīrzā Āqāsī accused Kāmran of having killed 40,000 *sayyids* of Khurāsān. Ḥājji Mīrzā Āqāsī to McNeill, n.d. (dispatch No. 45 of 1837, IOL, L/PS/20/A7/1, No. 4, Appendix p. 3).

¹²³ Ellis to Palmerston, 8 January 1836; McNeill to Macnaghten, Tehran, 22 January 1837; Stoddart to McNeill, 23 July 1837; Memorandum by M Shāh to England, France, Russia, Turkey on 15 Rabī' II 1254/ 8 July 1838 (IOL, L/PS/20/A7/1, Nos. 32, 50, 59, 105, pp. 23, 43, 66, 188–90); T Su 284.

¹²⁴ Ellis to Palmerston, Tehran, 29 April 1836; Count Simonich to Count Nesselrode 28 May 1837 (IOL, L/PS/20/A7/1, No. 33, pp. 9, 23).

Sunnī Muslims.¹²⁵ Yet the Iranian accounts also create the impression that Kāmran acknowledged the issue of slavery to be at the root of the conflict with the Qājār government. Lisān al-Mulk reports that the ruler of Herat sent his son Nādir Mīrzā Sadūzai and a number of Herati dignitaries to Allāh Qulī Khān of Khīva (r. 1825–1842), Mīzrāb Khān of Maimana (r. 1831–1845) and the leaders of the Hazāra, Tāymanī and Jamshīdī *ūymāq* to solicit help. Nādir Mīrzā bore the following message:

‘Now Muḥammad Shāh has set out for Herat. Do not think that you can live in peace after the [Iranian] conquest of Herat. It is the endeavor of this king and his army to free the Shī‘ī prisoners, who are mostly scattered among the tribes around Khīva and Maimana. You should pay attention to the result of the matter and beware not to avoid fighting this army.’¹²⁶

In response to Kāmran Sadūzai’s request for aid, Allāh Qulī Khān appointed ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khalīfa to the command of 1,500 cavalry. With the support of the Uzbek leader Mīzrāb Khān, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān raised 6,000 additional troops in the region of Maimana, Andkhūd and Shibarghān. In the context of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s military activities, Lisān al-Mulk observes that he was considered so holy that the dust from his feet was believed to heal all ailments.¹²⁷ A highly influential Naqshbandī *shaikh* of Marv, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khalīfa (d. 1854) was a key figure in the politics in the region. In assuming a military role, he followed the example of his preceptor Šūfī Islām, who had died combating the Iranian troops in 1807.¹²⁸

In preparation for the pending confrontation with the Iranians, the Herat government also requested legal assistance from local theologians. When the Iranian army arrived before the gates of Herat on 22 Sha‘bān 1253/21 November 1837, Kāmran Sadūzai summoned Mullā ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Pushtakī, who is described as an eminent *sayyid*¹²⁹ and one of the foremost ulama of Herat.¹³⁰ Mullā ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Pushtakī mounted the pulpit of the Friday mosque and issued a *fatvā* declaring jihad against the Iranians:

‘If this army finds entrance into the city your lives and property will be wasted. The protection of lives and property is obligatory. What is more, fighting this group is jihad according to the will of God (*jihād fī sabīlallāh*). If you are killed, you will enter Paradise and if you kill one of them Paradise will also be yours.’ Incited by these words, the people went to the public bath in groups, cleaned their bodies, clipped their nails, and put on shrouds. Led by the people from Pushtakī, the Heratis took up weapons and issued from the Khushk [Khush] Gate to fight [the Iranians].¹³¹

Whatever expectations the Shī‘ī population may have attached to the Iranian intervention, the siege exposed them to a number of hardships and reprisals from both sides. Prior to the arrival of the Iranian army, the influential Shī‘ī citizens were either forced to flee from Herat or deprived of their property.¹³² The ten-month siege by 30,000 Iranian soldiers and 90,000 camp followers spelled disaster for the environs of the city. Some sources state that all villages in a twelve-mile radius were plundered and depopulated.¹³³ Lisān al-Mulk reports that the Iranian troops, ‘becoming annoyed with the lengthy siege of Herat, busied themselves with the destruction of forts, buildings and the outskirts of the city. Nor did they refrain from cutting down

¹²⁵ Ellis to Palmerston, Tehran, 4 February 1836, 17 April 1836 (IOL, L/PS/20/A7/1, No. 32, pp. 15–16, 23). This argument was not new. In 1800, Shāh Zamān already accused Fath ‘Alī Shāh of oppressing the Sunnī population of Khurāsān in the name of *ithnā ‘asharism* (Fūfalzā’ī 1958: 141–2).

¹²⁶ NT 682–3. See also ST 132; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 221–2.

¹²⁷ NT 683. See also TMN 1641.

¹²⁸ For ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khalīfa’s role in the politics of Marv, see Wood 1998: 100–1, 105–17. His military activities in the regions north of Herat continued throughout the Iranian siege of Herat (Wood 1998: 158–6).

¹²⁹ NT 690.

¹³⁰ KR 74 (Patterson 1988: 60).

¹³¹ ‘Agar in sipāh badīn shahr rāh kunand jān u māl-i shumā ba-hadar shavad va ḥifẓ-i jān u māl vājib ast va az in bar ziyādat muqātilat bā in jamā‘at jihād fī sabīlullāh ast ki agar kusha shavīd jāy dar bihisht kunīd va agar az īshān bukushīd ham bihisht shumārā bāshad.’ *Mardum-rā badīn kalamāt junbish dāda hamī gurūh gurūh be garmāba dar-raftand va ghosl kardand va nākhun bachīdand va kafan ba-pūshīdand va mardum-i Pushtakī az pīshrūy va shahriyān as qafā ālāt-i harb u zarb-rā girifta az darvāza-yi Khushk ba-āhang-i muqātila bīrūn shudand* (NT 690). See also ST 135; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 226–7.

¹³² McNeill to Macnaghten, Tehran, 22 January 1837 (IOL, L/PS/20/A7/1, No. 50, p. 46).

¹³³ KR 75 (Patterson 1988: 63). According to the British envoy McNeill, these villages were destroyed by the government of Herat prior to the siege in order to deprive the Iranian army of all basis of sustenance (McNeill to Palmerston, Tehran, 30 October 1837 (IOL, L/PS/20/A7/1, No. 63, pp. 78–9).

trees, groves and orchards. [In this manner] an area of twenty to thirty *farsang* (80–120 miles) around Herat was turned into plain desert and was cleared of dwellings and fields alike.”¹³⁴ In October 1839, Todd observed that the impact of the siege continued to be strongly felt in Herat a year after its conclusion. Muḥammad Shāh Qājār and his army had turned the country into an “uninhabited waste”: The greater part of the cultivators was gone, bullocks and implements of husbandry had been destroyed or carried away, and seed corn was unavailable.¹³⁵

As early as December 1837, the Iranian foraging parties scoured the region to a distance of sixty miles. In their search for provisions, the Iranian troops made no distinction on the basis of faith and relentlessly pillaged the Sunnī and Shī‘ī population alike. In particular, the atrocities committed by the Iranian commander Muḥammad ‘Alī Khān Mākū‘ī in a village of *sayyids* caused a great outcry. After being plundered twice in a row, the villagers sought shelter in Herat and avowed that they felt nothing but enmity for the Qājārs from this point. The urban Shī‘īs, who likewise suffered from the scarcity of provisions brought about by the Iranian siege, joined their opinion.¹³⁶ Muḥammad Shāh Qājār’s decision to execute Kāmrān Sadūzai’s Qizilbāsh attendant ‘Abbās Khān Raiḥān, who had deserted to the Qājār camp during the early part of the siege, likewise caused public opinion to sway against the invaders. Henceforth, neither Shī‘ī nor Sunnī Heratis were tempted to join the Iranian ranks, as Riyāzī puts it.¹³⁷

At the conclusion of the Iranian siege, Kāmrān Sadūzai undertook to give up the slave trade and to respect the Qājār sphere of influence in Khurāsān.¹³⁸ In Herat itself, however, the lot of the Shī‘ī population took a turn for the worse. Ironically, the famine brought about by this war once again encouraged the trade in slaves. According to Ferrier, the situation of the inhabitants was so dramatic at the time that many sold themselves to the Turkmens in order to safeguard the survival of their families. In the meanwhile, the local Shī‘īs faced reprisals on the part of the government. In order to salvage his desperate financial situation, Vazīr Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai resorted to the exchange of Fārsīvāns for supplies:

Herat contained a population of at least 70,000 souls before this siege, and when it was raised there were at the outside not more than six or seven thousand persons. This extraordinary decrease is to be accounted for by the great emigration that took place, the casualties during the siege, and the deaths by famine. The mortality continued long after it was over, and was of a most fearful and heartrending character; many of the unfortunate Heratians, to escape its terrors, sold themselves to the Turcomans as slaves, to provide food for their wives and children. Yar Mohamed was then in as great a difficulty as any one else during this frightful visitation, and he met the difficulty in the most pitiless manner; for the least fault, probably without any, he sold the Parsivans to procure provisions, and bartered four or five against a horse or a few quarters of wheat. His officers and agents traversed the city, and endeavoured to excite the people that he might have an excuse for selling them in greater number to the Turcomans; the inhabitants, however, perceived the snare, and remained quietly in their houses: but Yar Mohamed was not, however, to be foiled; he closed all the outlets of the bazaars at an hour of the day when they were the most crowded, drew up his troops at these points, seized indiscriminately all he could lay his hands on, and sold them to obtain funds.

Since these sad episodes took place, the Vezir has usurped the sovereign authority and enriched himself with English gold, and under his altered circumstances has given up a horrible traffic, which he justified by the necessities of the times. Since the year 1842 he has endeavoured to repeople Herat with several thousand nomads, Hazarahs [Hazāras], Jumshidies [Jamshīdīs], and Taymoonees [Tāymanīs], whom he made prisoners in the expeditions he has at various times successfully undertaken against these tribes. At the period of my visit every one enjoyed the most complete security, and commerce and agriculture had greatly developed themselves during the last few years. An amnesty had been granted to the Heratians who fled to Persia or the English territories, and they have returned to their native city in considerable numbers. The population in 1845 amounted to from 20,000 to 22,000 souls...¹³⁹

After the withdrawal of the British mission from Herat in February 1841, Kāmrān Sadūzai and Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai formally tendered their submission to Iran. Throughout the 1840s, Yār

¹³⁴ NT 710. See also Busse 1972: 258.

¹³⁵ *Correspondence Relating to Herat*, IOL, L/PS/20/G 10/3 No. 4, p. 10.

¹³⁶ Mirza Agha’s Journal 3 December, 17 December, 25–26 December 1837; Stoddart to McNeill 7 January 1838, McNeill to Palmerston, 23 Feb. 1838 (IOL, L/PS/20/A7/1, Nos. 18, 73, pp. 95–6; App. pp. 27, 29, 31, 34).

¹³⁷ KR 74–5 (Patterson 1988: 61–2). Fasā’ī merely mentions ‘Abbās Khān’s desertion to the Qājār side (Busse 1972: 255).

¹³⁸ For the text of the treaty between Kāmrān and the Iranian Government, see Muqaddam 1995: 33–5.

¹³⁹ Ferrier 1857: 171–2.

Muḥammad Khān maintained a friendly relationship with the Qājār court but failed to perform the standard expressions of submission, such as the striking of coins and reciting the Friday prayer in the name of Muḥammad Shāh. At the same time, he intermittently interfered with the affairs in the Qājār realm. In 1845, he supported the rebellious governor of Qāyin.¹⁴⁰ During the early phase of Ḥasan Khān Sālār's uprising in the autumn of 1848, by contrast, he rendered active support to the Qājār governor Ḥamza Mīrzā. In exchange for his services during this period, he was awarded the title of Ṣāḥib al-Dawla.¹⁴¹ Around that time, Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai instituted five regular infantry regiments with Iranian support.¹⁴²

The Iranian views concerning the position of Herat and the role of the local Shī'īs are highlighted by the account of a diplomatic mission in 1851. In Rajab 1267/May 1851, Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh dispatched an envoy to award a robe of honor to Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai and to request his assistance in a military campaign to Sarakhs which Sulṭān Murād Mīrzā Ḥusām al-Saltāna, the governor of Mashhad, was about to undertake. When this unnamed envoy¹⁴³ arrived in Herat on 10 Ramaẓān 1267/11 July 1851, he found out that Yār Muḥammad Khān had died a month earlier. During his month-long stay, he interacted with Yār Muḥammad Khān's successor Sa'īd Muḥammad Khān, his *vazīr* Mīrzā Najaf Khān and the Shī'ī merchant community. By bestowing the robe of honor on Sa'īd Muḥammad Khān and reiterating his request for troops, the envoy made it clear that he considered Herat a part of the Iranian realm.¹⁴⁴ This notion is also underlined by his attempt to refer the adjudication of a dispute between a Shī'ī and a Sunnī merchant to a religious judge (*ḥākim-i shar'*) in Mashhad.¹⁴⁵

On their part, the members of the Herati government readily professed their allegiance to Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh.¹⁴⁶ These protestations of loyalty, however, were not backed up by any practical expression of fealty. The central figure in the politics of Herat was Mīrzā Najaf Khān, a Fārsīvān, who had taken the reins of government and was busy suppressing rebellions among the Hazāra and Fīrūzkūhī *ūymāq*.¹⁴⁷ Citing the difficulty of maintaining order in the principality after Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai's death, Najaf Khān politely but firmly rejected the envoy's request for troops.¹⁴⁸ Although providing little firsthand information on the economic circumstances in Herat, the envoy's report allows one to conclude that the trading community was doing well. He reported that Yār Muḥammad Khān had routinely protected the trade caravans to Bukhārā.¹⁴⁹ The envoy's meeting with 30–40 influential Shī'ī merchants and ulama at the house of Mīrzā Najaf Khān indicates that the trading community of Herat was fairly strong.¹⁵⁰ This impression is supported by British sources, which report that many of the merchants who had left for Mashhad during the siege of 1837–38 returned to Herat at the time of Ḥasan Khān Sālār's rebellion in Mashhad in 1847–1850.¹⁵¹ These positive developments notwithstanding, the envoy's notes capture the atmosphere of resentment that continued to cloud the relations between Shī'īs and Sunnīs. As in former times, the Shī'ī representatives expressed great impatience for the return of Iranian rule and the hope to be freed from Sunnī oppression.¹⁵² The news of Ḥusām al-Saltāna's military setback in Sarakhs triggered opposite emotions in the two camps: "All the Shī'īs were aggrieved and all the Sunnīs rejoiced."¹⁵³

¹⁴⁰ Champagne 1981: 229–30, 234–5, 245–53, 271–4.

¹⁴¹ TRSN X: 665; Abbas Amanat, "Herat, vi. the Herat Question," *E.Ir.* XII: 222; Champagne 1981: 265–71. For Yār Muḥammad Khān's correspondence with Prime Minister Mīrzā Taqī Khān Amīr Kabīr (1848–1851), see Ādamiyat 1982: 618–20.

¹⁴² KR 99, 119 (Patterson 1988: 135–6, 189).

¹⁴³ Ādamiyat is of the opinion that this envoy was 'Abbās Qulī Khān Pisyān (Ādamiyat 1982: 620–1 fn 15).

¹⁴⁴ Za'farānlū 1968: 30–32.

¹⁴⁵ Za'farānlū 1968: 43–49.

¹⁴⁶ Za'farānlū 1968: 34–5.

¹⁴⁷ Za'farānlū 1968: 27–8, 35–6, 38–41. On the person of Najaf Khān, see also Ferrier 1857: 158.

¹⁴⁸ Za'farānlū 1968: 30–1.

¹⁴⁹ Za'farānlū 1968: 36.

¹⁵⁰ Za'farānlū 1968: 35.

¹⁵¹ Champagne 1981: 270.

¹⁵² Za'farānlū 1968: 34–5, 39.

¹⁵³ Za'farānlū 1968: 49.

The notion of separate Sunnī and Shī'ī factions was offset by numerous instances of interlacing interests in the political sphere. A case in point was Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai's powerful Fārsīvān minister Mīrzā Najaf Khān. Yār Muḥammad Khān himself was married to "Navvāba", an "Iranian" woman, who was Sa'īd Muḥammad Khān's mother. This maternal connection with the Shī'īs did not automatically translate into allegiance. Sa'īd Muḥammad Khān, who is generally described as "mentally impaired" (*nuqṣān-i 'aql*) or "mad" (*khabṭ-i dimāgh*), was unable to garner the support of the local leadership, regardless of religious affiliation.¹⁵⁴ His hold on the hinterland of Herat was even more tenuous, and constant Hazāra and Turkmen raids on the highroads brought overland trade to a halt. The decrease in custom receipts in turn reduced his ability to offer pecuniary incentives for collaboration.¹⁵⁵ Sa'īd Muḥammad Khān attempted to make up for his lack of authority in and around Herat by summoning Iranian support. He solicited aid from Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh to ward off Sardār Kuhandil Khān of Qandahār, who made a brief but ultimately unsuccessful attempt to occupy Herat in the spring of 1852. Subsequently, Sa'īd Muḥammad Khān had gold and silver coins minted in the name of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh and submitted them to the Qājār court in Ṣafar 1269/November–December 1852.¹⁵⁶ The Iranian intervention in Herat once again highlighted sectarian demarcations. Seven Afghān leaders were arrested and sent to Mashhad. In the wake of the retreating Iranian troops, Sa'īd Muḥammad Khān stepped up his activities against the Durrānī nobility and eliminated the prominent members of the Alakūzai, Bārakzai, Pūpalzai and Achakzai tribes. To compensate for the dwindling of Afghān support, he increasingly entrusted Shī'ī notables with the affairs of government.¹⁵⁷

During the second Iranian siege from early April to late October 1856, Muḥammad Yūsuf Khān's *vazīr* 'Īsā Khān Bardurrānī, who took control of the city at the onset of the military encounter, exemplified the indomitable spirit of Herati Afghāns.¹⁵⁸ The urban Shī'īs, on their part, again identified with Iranian interests. Both British observers and Iranian historians recount a failed attempt of the Fārsīvāns (Fārsīzabānān) to give entry to the Qājār troops during the siege. According to Lisān al-Mulk's account, Amīr 'Abbās Khān, an influential Fārsīvān, deserted to the Iranian camp but simultaneously maintained contact with the Shī'ī population inside the city. The right moment for an invasion seemed to be one hour after sunset on Thursday night, 26 Dhū al-Ḥijja/28 August, when the Afghān population had assembled for prayer in the Friday mosque. At this time, Ḥaidar Qulī Khān Sartīp, the leader (*sarkhēl*) of the Persian population, and Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥusain Mustaufī entered the southeastern Burj-i Khvāja 'Abd al-Miṣr from inside the city, killed the Afghān soldiers guarding the counterscarp (*faṣīl-i bāra*) and encouraged the Iranian troops to enter. As the Iranian troops hurried towards the tower, the Herati Shī'īs, both men and women, extended their turbans and ropes to help them scale it. Although the Iranian troops briefly gained control of a great part of the fortifications and the central bazaar area (*Chahār Sū*), they subsequently scattered amid plundering and were eventually beaten back by the Afghāns, who issued from the Friday mosque like "mad wolves". Reprisals against the Shī'ī population followed shortly thereafter. The property of the pro-Iranian conspirators was plundered and their wives and children were handed over to the Sunnī leadership. Another hundred Fārsīvān were executed and their houses burnt.¹⁵⁹

From the Iranian point of view, the communal conflict in Herat was resolved as soon as the Qājār troops assumed control of the city during the final week of October. Ḥusām al-Saṭṭana sent two messengers to Tehran to submit coins minted in Herat and to communicate the following message:

¹⁵⁴ KR 123 (Patterson 1988: 198); Champagne 1981: 282.

¹⁵⁵ Champagne 1981: 291–2.

¹⁵⁶ NT 1196. See also KR 111 (Patterson 165–6).

¹⁵⁷ Champagne 1981: 298, 302, 305–6.

¹⁵⁸ In a letter to the Muḥammadzai Amīr, 'Īsā Khān allegedly made the following statement: "The Afghans, as good Sunnīs, would never submit to the supremacy of the Persian Shī'ah" (Champagne 1981: 374). See also Stack 1975: 454.

¹⁵⁹ NT 1324–27. See also Taylor 1858c: 942–3.

After the conquest of Herat... the urban population has been relieved from [its former] anxieties and has taken up the path of joyfulness, as the Iranian army represents the law of justice and equity, benevolence and civility. Now the people of Herat regret their resistance and aloofness, Shī'īs and Sunnīs live together in a brotherly fashion in all walks of life (*gulkhan va gulshan*).¹⁶⁰

As was to be expected, the Iranian chronicles paint a rosy picture of Ḥusām al-Saltāna's presence in Herat. Hidāyat avows that, in order to win the sympathy of the peasants, Ḥusām al-Saltāna saw to it that not a single ear of grain was damaged during the approach of the Qājār army in Rajab 1272/April 1856.¹⁶¹ With its incorporation into the Qājār domain, the city became so secure that even pearls lost in the street were restored to their rightful owner. The establishment of Qājār authority found its expression in the insertion Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's name into the Friday prayer and in the institution of the Shī'ī call to prayer.¹⁶² Furthermore, Ḥusām al-Saltāna attempted to strengthen the position of the Shī'īs of Herat. Among the three army contingents he ordered to be raised, one was to consist of Herati Afghāns and two of Fārsivāns. To this purpose, he ordered the "old hands" (*naukar-i qadīm*) among the Fārsivāns, Afshārs, Shāmlūs, Shāhseven and the people from Jām and Qāyin to be registered. In effect, eight hundred Fārsivāns as opposed to one hundred Afghāns were assembled and drilled.¹⁶³ Besides, Ḥusām al-Saltāna showed a general concern for the well-being of the population. To alleviate the scarcity prevailing in the city, he sent grain to the bakers in town, lowered food prices and relinquished his tax demands on the Heratis.¹⁶⁴ He restored the water supply of the city and ordered the citadel to be repaired. Finally, he imposed the stamp of Qājār supremacy by purchasing houses and shops within a distance of 100 *dhar'* of the citadel and demolishing them to enhance its security. He also opened one of the northern city gates and named it *Bāb al-Nuṣrat*.¹⁶⁵

The Shī'ī author Riyāzī likewise emphasizes the benign nature of Qājār rule:

The late Ḥusām al-Saltāna opened the door of benevolence to Sunnīs and Shī'a alike, so that the people of their own accord changed the names of their children from 'Umar, 'Uthmān and Abū Bakr to 'Alī, Ḥasan and Ḥusain... The late Sulṭān Murād Mīrzā Ḥusām al-Saltāna donated 50 *tūmān* in cash and a shawl as [poetry] prize. He instituted justice, assigning stipends, salaries and fiefs (*istimrār va mavājib va tuyūl*) to all judges, students and notables (*a'yān*), both Shī'ī and Sunnī. He also awarded landed estates (*jāyḍād va tuyūl*) to the author's paternal uncles.¹⁶⁶

But Riyāzī also alerts the reader to the fact that the ideal circumstances brought about by Qājār rule faced serious challenges. In his opinion, the continuing resistance to Ḥusām al-Saltāna had to be attributed to the activities of interested circles fomenting Sunnī fanaticism. According to his version of events, a small group of stakeholders sought to activate the Sunnī population of the neighboring Muḥammadzai province of Qandahār into a jihad against the Shī'īs of Herat and their Qājār overlords. Riyāzī seeks to substantiate his claims by quoting a letter that allegedly fell into his hands in 1306/1888–89. On the basis of this letter, he portrays Sunnī attitudes during the siege of 1856 and casts this group as cannibals and warmongers:

But instigators turned up in corners and byways and impelled some judges to write to the Afghān tribes around [Herat] up to Bakvā and Zamīndāvar and to request help. One of their writings which the author saw someplace in 1306 may be summarized as follows: 'Oh Sunnī believers and Muslims! The Qājār army surrounded Herat. In the first instance the [Shī'ī] heretics inside Herat... brought many of the [Qājār] soldiers into the city when the Muslims were [busy] performing the Friday prayer in the Friday mosque. On that day the brave [defenders] of Islām attacked jointly and fought fiercely. One of the Qājār officers, who is a Ḥanafī Muslim, sounded the trumpet of return and the Qājār soldiers retreated without [heeding] the order of the Prince. The warriors of Islām attained victory and many of the heretics fell victim to their shiny and bloodthirsty swords. We killed a wily

¹⁶⁰ NT 1343.

¹⁶¹ TRSN X: 674.

¹⁶² NT 1346–7; Amanat, "Herat vi. the Herat Question," *E.Ir.* XII: 223–4.

¹⁶³ NT 1353.

¹⁶⁴ NT 1346. Lisān al-Mulk also reports that Ḥusām al-Saltāna requisitioned provisions for Herat from Turbat-i Ḥaidariya. His order to the rulers of Maimana and Marv for the submission of 2,000 donkey loads and 500 camel loads of grain respectively seems less credible, as Maimana and Marv did not fall into the orbit of Qājār control at that time (NT 1354).

¹⁶⁵ The last part of the passage in question is not entirely clear. Lisān al-Mulk's statement that the northern and eastern gate were opened and manned with guards at this time might imply that they had been walled up during the siege: *Va darvāza ba-ṭaraf-i shumāl gushūda, ān-rā bāb al-nuṣra nāmīd va az sarbāzān-i fauj-i duvvum-i nuṣrat qarāvulān bagumāshtand va ba-jānib-i mashriq nīz darvāza bāzdāshtand va jamā'atī ra ḥāfiṣ u ḥāris kardand* (NT 1353). See also NT 1347.

¹⁶⁶ KR 129 (Patterson 1988: 217).

Shī'a *shaikh* by the name of Sayyid Muḥammad, roasted his meat and ate it. After a while the Qājār unbelievers employed trickery, entered an agreement with the baffled 'Īsā Khān Bardurrānī, swore an oath, invited him into camp and martyred him. Now they have occupied our realm and fully devote themselves to heresy: They sing 'āshūrā and perform *ta'zīya* in public... Their entire group, including the local heretics does not exceed 30,000. All of you should come to the aid of religion and prepare to wage *jihād* so that all of us in unison will drive them away and kill them. We will not even allow a single local heretic to remain alive.¹⁶⁷

While projecting a purported Sunnī perspective, Riyāzī's account of the ongoing discord in the province of Herat reflects the impact the Qājār presence had on the division and appropriation of the public realm. Apart from the specific call to prayer, the performance of the customs surrounding 'āshūrā signalled a new apportioning of urban space. Yet this new order of things did not last for even a year. The only 'ashura ceremony that can have been performed in Herat under Qājār auspices was that of 1274/31 August 1857, which immediately preceded the withdrawal of the Iranian troops in September of that year.¹⁶⁸ The departure of the Qājār forces implied uncertainty and the risk of insecurity for their Shī'ī protegés. According to Riyāzī, Ḥusām al-Saltāna reluctantly left Herat and only at the insistence of Prime Minister Āqā Khān Nūrī I'timād al-Daula. His farewell was accompanied by heart-rending scenes:

Aware of the harm done [by the evacuation of Herat] Ḥusām al-Saltāna, with extreme bitterness, announced to the Qizilbāsh of Herat, 'We intend to depart. You people, whatever and whoever you are, must emigrate and accompany us to Iran, for after our departure, you will suffer injustice from the Afghāns.' Some of the Shī'īs (*ahl-i tashayyu'*) who had fewer entanglements (*āلوداغی*) or had no alternative to leaving, chose to accompany the royal army. The others, who were bound to stay, wept on the day of Ḥusām al-Saltāna's departure as bitterly as mothers bereft of their children. They escorted them as far as one *farsang* to see them off. The late Ḥusām al-Saltāna, on his part, sought to console them and shed tears himself.¹⁶⁹

Khanikoff, who visited Herat a year later reported that many of the wealthy Shī'ī citizens of Herat had chosen to accompany their Qājār overlords. The prevailing divisions within the urban population are highlighted by the fact that the Shī'ī emigrants destroyed their houses to prevent them from being taken over by the Afghāns.¹⁷⁰ The Herati emigrés who accompanied Ḥusām al-Saltāna to Mashhad received salaries and stipends according to their rank from the Qājār government.¹⁷¹

British sources paint a less sanguine picture of the Persian presence. Apart from the "Qizilbāsh" of Herat who voluntarily accompanied Ḥusām al-Saltāna, a number of other groups faced forceful deportation to Mashhad. Among these were a great number of Herati Jews who were removed to Qājār Khurāsān because of their importance in the regional economy. This resettlement seems to have been largely counterproductive. A great number of Jews died en route and many of those who made it to Mashhad lived in abject poverty.¹⁷² Furthermore, Ḥusām al-Saltāna endeavored to resettle a great number of Hazāra and Jamshīdī *ūymāq* in Iranian Khurāsān.

¹⁶⁷ *Likan az gūsha va kinār muḥarrik paidā shud chand nafar quzāt va muftī-rā vādāshta barā-yi īnki ānhā ba-īlāt-i afāghina-yi aṭraf tā Bakvā va Zamīndāvar nivishta va kumak khvāsta būdand ki yak nivishta-yi ānhā-rā mu'allif sana-yi hazār u shīshad u shash ba-jā'ī dīda. Khulāsa 'unvānash īn būd: 'Ay mu'minīn va muslimīn, ahl-i sunnat va jamā'at. Lashkar-i qājār āmadand ba-daur-i Harāt. Avval rāfiziyan-i dākhila-yi shahr dū rāji [?] shuda bisyārī lashkariyan-i ānhā-rā dar vaqti ki musalmānān ba-namāz-i jum'a dar masjid-i jāmi' būdand ba shahr vārid kardand. Va ān rūz shujā'ān-i islām muttafiqan ḥamla burda ghazā-yi sakhti kardand. Yakī az afṣarān-i qājār ki madhhab-i islām-i ḥanafī dārad barā-yi khair-i musalmānān shāifūr [shāipūr]-i bāzgasht kashīd va sarbāzhā-yi qajar [sic] ba-ḥukm-i shāhzāda-yi qajar [sic] nakarda bargashtand va fath barā-yi ghāziyan-i islām rūy dād va bisyārī az rāfiziyan-rā tu'ma-yi shamshūr-i ābdār va talvār-i khūnkhvār qarār dādand va Sayyid Muḥammad nām shaikh-i 'ayyār-i kalān-i shī'a-rā kushta gūshatash-rā biryān namūdīm va khurdīm. Ammā ba'd az chandī Qajarhā-yi kāfir ḥīla ba-kār burda bā Sardār 'Īsā Khān Bardurrānī-yi shamīd band u bast kardand va qasam khurdand ū-rā ba-urdū khvāstand va ba-shahādat rasānīdand. Hāl ham ki mulk-i mā-rā girifta-and ghair az rafz kār-i dīgar nadārand. 'Ashūrā mīkhvānand va shabīh bīrūn miyāvarand. Tamām-ishān bā rāfiziyan-i vilāyatī mutajāviz az sī hazār nīstand. Shumāhā hama yārī-yi dīn-i islām-rā namūda kamar basta ba-'azm-i jihād ḥāzīr shavīd ki hama muttafiq shuda īnhā-rā az pīsh bar-dārīm va ba-qatl rasānīm va yak tan az rāfiziyan-i vilāyatī-rā ham zinda gudhārīm.'* (KR 129–30 (Patterson 1988: 218–19)).

¹⁶⁸ Kelly 1991: 498.

¹⁶⁹ KR 130 (Patterson 1988: 219).

¹⁷⁰ Khanikoff 1864: 360.

¹⁷¹ KR 131 (Patterson 1988: 221).

¹⁷² Champagne 1981: 410, 415, 419.

British observers noted that the departing Iranian troops left behind a trail of destruction. In December 1857, Major Taylor filed the following gloomy report:

The Persian soldiers in sheer wantonness, have removed all the timber props from the houses... The defences (all the serviceable guns and ammunition) have been destroyed, the unripe crops were cut down as well as 6,000 muskets removed, and in fact the city has been left in such a complete state of defencelessness that any rabble army might make it an easy capture.¹⁷³

Subsequent to the Treaty of Paris, Herat formally became a Muḥammadzai dominion. Āqā Khān Nūrī I'timād al-Daula assigned the government to Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān, who was a son of Dūst Muḥammad's brother Muḥammad 'Aẓīm Khān (1785–1823). A close associate of Dūst Muḥammad Khān's son Muḥammad Akbar (1816–1847), Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān had played an important role in the resistance against the British occupation of Kābul during the First Anglo-Afghan War. Disillusioned with his position at court after Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān's return to power in 1843, Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān departed for Qandahār and backed the local Sardārs against Kābul until the Amīr's takeover of Qandahār in 1855. Subsequently, he made his way to Tehran and gained the government of Herat, thus rendering this principality a final bastion against Dūst Muḥammad Khān's territorial expansion.

From the beginning, Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān occupied a relatively weak position vis-à-vis Iranian and Muḥammadzai interests. In the light of the pressure these entities brought to bear on Herat, the British envoy Murray (1855–1859) compared the principality to a clay pot squeezed between two iron ones.¹⁷⁴ Given the British backing of Dūst Muḥammad Khān, Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān depended entirely on the Iranian government for financial and material support.¹⁷⁵ His subordination to Tehran in effect negated the Treaty of Paris and its injunction that Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh was to “relinquish all claims over the territory and city of Herat”.¹⁷⁶ At the time of his appointment in March 1857, Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān, apparently unaware of the terms of the treaty, undertook to coin money and have the Friday sermon read in Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's name.¹⁷⁷ In spring 1860, he traveled to Tehran in person and presented the Shāh with 1,000 *tūmān* struck in his name and received three light field guns, 800 muskets and 12,000 *tūmān* in exchange. From May 1860, he obtained a monthly stipend of one thousand *tūmān* from the Qājār court.¹⁷⁸ For the year 1277/1860–61, Riyāzī reports that Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān performed *sikka* and *khuṭba* in the name of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh “as usual”.¹⁷⁹ In 1862 the Qājār court subsidized his preparation for the war with Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān.¹⁸⁰

There is little information on the interplay of communal identities in Herat during Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān's six-year reign. An anecdote recounted by Riyāzī indicates that the conflict with Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān was cast along communal lines, with the rulers of Herat playing on a Shī'ī identity. When Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān's son Shāh Navāz Khān heard in 1272/1860–61 that Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān had named a cannon in Kābul “Chahār Yārī” to invoke the assistance of the first four caliphs, he had a 36 lb gun cast in Herat which he called “Panj Tanī” to summon the support of the five central figures of the Shī'ī belief, Muḥammad, 'Alī, Fāṭima, Ḥasan and Ḥusain.¹⁸¹ With Muḥammadzai pressure mounting on Herat from 1862 on, communal differences once again assumed sharper outlines. Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān, himself a Muḥammadzai, began to suspect the Afghāns of Herat of treason and expelled them from the city. In his war effort against the ruler of Kābul, he exclusively relied on Fārsīvān and other Shī'ī soldiers.¹⁸² The opposite

¹⁷³ Champagne 1981: 418.

¹⁷⁴ Champagne 1981: 421.

¹⁷⁵ Champagne 1981: 420–1, 429.

¹⁷⁶ For the full text of the Treaty of Paris, see Champagne 1981: 490–7.

¹⁷⁷ Champagne 1981: 390–1.

¹⁷⁸ Champagne 1981: 432–5.

¹⁷⁹ One side of the coin read: “Struck at the abode of victory 1277” (*ẓarb-i dār al-nuṣrat* 1277). The other side of the coin was inscribed: “Al-Sulṭān Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Qājār” (KR 138 (Patterson 1988: 244)).

¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān received permission to purchase supplies on credit, the bills of which were covered by the provincial government in Mashhad (Champagne 1981: 441).

¹⁸¹ Riyāzī states that the “Panj Tanī” cannon was still in Herat in the early twentieth century, but its name had changed to “Tūp-i Zilzila” in the meantime (KR 139 (Patterson 1988: 246–7)).

¹⁸² Champagne 1981: 445.

camp likewise couched their strategy in religious arguments. As early as 1857, Dūst Muḥammad Khān's son Sardār Ghulām Ḥaidar Khān (1819–1858) had appealed to Sunnī solidarity in order to bring the Jamshīdī chief 'Abdullāh over to his side.¹⁸³ Thus the bifurcation of the political landscape on the basis of religious alignments once again served as an important rallying point and marker of opposition. Even so, the notion of two opposed religious camps hardly transcended the complex patterns of conflict "on the ground". The aforementioned 'Abdullāh Khān Jamshīdī is a case in point. Despite Sardār Ghulām Ḥaidar Khān's insistence on common religious bonds, he chose to side with Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān in the defence of Herat.¹⁸⁴ His brother Mihdī Qulī Khān, by contrast, became a faithful ally of Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān.¹⁸⁵

The orientation of the Heratis underwent a significant shift with the Muḥammadzai conquest, as Herat was given up to plunder by the victorious troops:

Four thousand Afghan soldiers, chosen expressly for the purpose from different tribes and regiments, rushed at a given signal, and from different sides of the city, upon the defenceless habitations, and are said not only to have carried off clothing, arms, furniture, whatever in fact met their eye, but forced every one to strip himself almost to a state of nudity, and to have left the half-naked tenants behind them in their thoroughly denuded and emptied houses.¹⁸⁶

The abuses committed in the wake of the annexation of Herat served to unite the old inhabitants, Sunnī and Shī'ī alike, against the new overlords. Vámbéry, who visited Herat five months after the conclusion of the Muḥammadzai siege, noted a prevailing resentment against the Pashtūn newcomers:

The fortress itself is inhabited, for the most part, by Persians, who settled here in the last century, to maintain and spread the influence of their own country. They are now principally handicraftsmen or merchants. As for Afghans, one cannot find in the city more than one in five. They have become quite Persians, and are, particularly since the last siege, very hostile to their own countrymen. A Kabuli, or a Kakar from Kandahar, is as much regarded by him in the light of an oppressor, and therefore is as much detested, as by the aboriginal natives of Herat.¹⁸⁷

After the incorporation of Herat into the Muḥammadzai kingdom, the Shī'ī population maintained its orientation towards Qājār Iran. In January 1864, Vámbéry reported to Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh that the Heratis continued to pray "for the welfare of His Majesty of Persia".¹⁸⁸ Thus the linkage of confessional identities with overarching political entities remained a vital aspect in the political outlook of the local population. Yet the position of Herat changed dramatically: In 1863, the city and the province as a whole ceased to be a contested domain between Afghan and Qājār interests, and the potential for direct Iranian interference was removed. This implied a significant change in comparison with the early nineteenth century, when the Iranian government postured as the guardian of the old Safavid, and hence, largely Shī'ī realm.

THE IMPACT OF AMĪR 'ABD AL-RAḤMĀN KHĀN'S ANTI-SHĪ'Ī POLICIES

Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān's war against the Shī'ī Hazāras of central Afghanistan in 1309–1311/1891–1893 was accompanied by a propaganda campaign that affected the entire Shī'ī community. For the year 1309/1891–1892, Riyāzī reports that the Amīr's military campaign to "Barbaristān" was not proceeding well. While wintering in Urāzgān [Urūzgān], the Afghan troops were afflicted by hunger and cold and shrank from the idea of fighting their fellow countrymen (*ra'āyā-yi dākhil-i Afghānistān*). To remedy this situation, Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān ordered the Sunnī 'ālim Mullā Ṣaid Muḥammad to produce a booklet proving the unbelief of the "Barbarīs" and inciting the general populace to engage in war against them.¹⁸⁹ Published in 1310/1892–1893, Mullā Ṣaid Muḥammad's anti-Shī'ī tractate was distributed and read to the Shī'a ulama in the Friday mosques all over the country. This proclamation was accompanied by the injunction that the

¹⁸³ Champagne 1981: 392.

¹⁸⁴ Markham 1977: 510. For 'Abdullāh Khān Jamshīdī's role during the siege of 1856, see NT 1312, 1327, 1329, 1336–7.

¹⁸⁵ Vámbéry 1864: 259–60.

¹⁸⁶ Vámbéry 1864: 280.

¹⁸⁷ Vámbéry 1864: 273.

¹⁸⁸ Vámbéry 1864: 295.

¹⁸⁹ KR 253.

Shī'īs were to attend the daily prayers at the Sunnī mosques and should give up their passion plays (*ta'zīya dārī*).¹⁹⁰ Moreover, their *takyas* (places reserved for the commemoration of the Prophet's grandson Ḥusain during Muḥarram) were confiscated and passed to the possession of Sunnī ulama.¹⁹¹

Riyāzī views Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān's propaganda as an expedient to address the exigencies of his time and to further the progress of government matters, that is, to extend his authority in central Afghanistan. In his opinion, the Amīr was aware that his measures exposed the entire Shī'ī population to grave danger, as the dissemination of the anti-Shī'ī proclamation was accompanied by a royal order to the civil and military officials for the protection of the Qizilbāsh.¹⁹² Riyāzī reports that Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān indeed succeeded in galvanizing support for his campaign against the Hazāras. Particularly the "desert dwelling Afghān tribes" (*ṭavāyif-i saḥrā nishīn-i afghān*) heeded his call to arms and swelled the ranks of the government troops. At the same time, the Amīr's proclamations had an unsettling effect on communal relations, particularly in the cities. According to Riyāzī, common people misunderstood the orders as a legal ruling (*fatvā-yi shar'ī az 'ulamā-yi millat*) and a binding royal injunction (*ḥukm-i qaṭ'ī az pādshāh-i mamlakat*) to plunder and kill Shī'īs.¹⁹³

According to Riyāzī, the Amīr's anti-Shī'ī proclamation might well have triggered a major riot in Herat, had it not been for the judicious intervention of the civil and military governors and the leading Sunnī ulama. On the day of the reading of the royal proclamation, the Shī'ī ulama were taken to the Friday Mosque by force and rumors spread that they were about to be executed. They were accompanied by a crowd of 8,000 coreligionists and 400 armed Shī'ī soldiers. When the Sunnī preacher entered the pulpit the governor and commander-in-chief took position in front of it. The Sunnīs amounted to more than 70,000 persons, including civilians (*ra'īyat*) and soldiers (*sipāh*). In order to incite the crowd, the preacher not only read the royal decrees but went on to expound the circumstances of the assassination of the third Caliph 'Uthmān b. 'Affān in a highly emotional manner. At this point, he was silenced by the two governors, who ordered the soldiers present to escort the Shī'ī ulama safely to their homes. During the following days the two leading Sunnī ulama of Herat, Qāzī Mullā Ḥusain and Ākhūndzāda Mullā Muḥammad 'Umar, saw to it that the important Shī'īs of Herat remained unmolested.¹⁹⁴

While the immediate tension was thus defused, the situation of the Herati Shī'īs was far from secure. Many of the local residents used the anti-Shī'ī propaganda as a pretext to settle personal scores. Riyāzī recounts the case of a Shī'ī tailor by the name of Ḥājī Haidar who was accused of heresy and stoned. To evade this pressure, a great number of Shī'īs fled to Iranian Khurāsān and onward to Russia and England. Many of them lived around Mashhad in extreme poverty. Riyāzī, who also emigrated with his father at that time, praises the local ulama for the solicitude they showed for the Herati refugees. He draws two lessons from the events in Herat. On the one hand, he utters a prayer to God to free the Sunnī and Shī'ī Muslims from the discord prevailing among them so that hypocrisy (*nifāq*) may be transformed into unity (*ittifāq*). On the other hand, he clearly feels that the Afghan government is to blame for the difficult position of the Shī'īs in Herat. Comparing Iranian and Afghan policies towards local minorities, he reaches the conclusion that the Qājār government is to be commended for its tolerance. To prove his point, he quotes a letter written by Ḥājī Mīrzā Āqāsī to Āṣaf al-Daula in 1260/1844–45, in which the Prime Minister exhorted the governor of Khurāsān to look after the safety of his Jewish subjects. "See the difference," Riyāzī exclaims, "The officials of the exalted Iranian government show such a [great a degree of] kindness and justice to unbelievers (*kuffār*). The nation (*millat*) of Afghānistān, by contrast, allows the oppression, murder, and plundering of coreligionists, who share [the same belief] in God, the Prophet and the Koran!"¹⁹⁵ The account of Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān's policies from the point of view of a Herati Shiite highlights the government push to

¹⁹⁰ KR 256–7.

¹⁹¹ KR 258.

¹⁹² KR 257.

¹⁹³ KR 258.

¹⁹⁴ KR 257. See also Kakar 1979: 160–1.

¹⁹⁵ KR 257–8.

endow the Afghan state with a Sunnī identity and bears witness to the degree of alienation these policies bred among the Shīʿī minority.

THE ŪYMĀQ

Nineteenth-century travellers to the Herat region reported a highly heterogeneous population in the districts south and east of the city. In the winter of 1858–59, Khanikoff encountered Ghilzai nomads in the village of Siyāvushān southeast of Herat. These groups migrated between the mountainous regions around Dāy Zangī in the summer and the plains extending to Qāyin in Iranian Khurāsān in the winter.¹⁹⁶ The region near the Davandar mountain south of Kurukh was mostly inhabited by Pashtūns: Apart from Ghilzais, Alakūzai, Pūpalzai, and Bārakzai Durrānīs dwelled there. The Zūrī ūymāq constituted a further component of the population.¹⁹⁷ Mārva, a collection of villages on the right bank of the Harī Rūd, had a mixed population of Tājiks, Zūrīs, as well as Alakūzai, Nūrzai and Ishāqzai Durrānīs.¹⁹⁸ South of Herat, the town of Isfīzār was inhabited by Bārakzai and Alakūzai Durrānīs, Tājiks, Zūrīs, Tīmūrīs, Jews and Hindus.¹⁹⁹ The Durrānīs of Isfīzār migrated to the mountainous region of Ghūr in the summer months.²⁰⁰

The tribal elite that figured in the politics of the principality of Herat was mainly furnished by the ūymāq, who were semi-nomadic, Sunnī in faith, and Persian speaking. Among these, the Sunnī Hazāras of Qalʿa-yi Nau played a preponderant role in the early nineteenth century. From the 1860s on, the Jamshīdīs assumed a central position. In the 1830s, the distribution of the major ūymāq was as follows:

- The Sunnī Hazāras under the leadership of Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra controlled the lands between Auba and the upper course of the Murghāb river.²⁰¹
- The Jamshīdīs under Darvīsh ʿAlī Khān Jamshīdī held the region south of the confluence the Kushk Rūd and the Murghāb river, that is, Panjdih, Mārūchāq, and Bālā Murghāb.²⁰²
- The western part of the Fīrūzkūhī lands lay around Qādis and Kūcha east of Herat. The eastern Fīrūzkūhīs were based in the basin of the upper Murghāb river (Gharjistān) and on the plateau north of the upper Harī Rūd valley (Chaghcharān).²⁰³
- The Tāymanīs under the leadership of Ibrāhīm Khān Tāymanī were centered around Taivāra in the mountainous area of Ghūr southeast of Herat.²⁰⁴
- The Tīmūrīs occupied the lands south of Herat from Isfīzār to Khvāf.²⁰⁵ Most of this tribe acknowledged the authority of the Qājār governors of Mashhad from the early nineteenth century on.

For the greater part of the nineteenth century, the ūymāq were tied into the regional economy of slave trade. In the early 1820s, Fraser ascribed to them the same role as that of the Turkmens, as both groups preyed on the population of Khurāsān and disrupted the local economy:

¹⁹⁶ Khanikoff 1864: 366.

¹⁹⁷ Khanikoff 1864: 369.

¹⁹⁸ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 296; Khanikoff 1864: 374.

¹⁹⁹ Khanikoff 1864: 381–3. According to *Ḥayāt-i afghānī*, the Nūrzai, ʿAlīzai and Ishāqzai Durrānīs constituted the dominant component of the population of Isfīzār in 1867 (*Ḥayāt-i afghānī* 457–8).

²⁰⁰ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 401, 408, 413–14.

²⁰¹ Forrest 1906: 35–6, 38.

²⁰² Lumsden 1885 IOL, L/PS/18/A 53 pt. 3, pp. 12–13; Stirling 1991: 250–5, 258–9.

²⁰³ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 106–7; Holdich 1910: 217; Todd, Oct. 1839, IOL, L/PS/20/G 10/3 No. 4 p. 9; Pottinger, Dec. 1839, IOL, L/PS/20/G 10/3 No. 63, 54–5; Yate, NAI, For. Sec. F Feb 1887 No. 478 pp. 24–5.

²⁰⁴ Todd, Oct. 1839, IOL, L/PS/20/G 10/3 No. 4 p. 9. Taivāra is located 187 miles southeast of Herat on an open plain at the junction of the Khvājagar and Ghūr streams (*Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 419).

²⁰⁵ Todd, Oct. 1839, IOL, L/PS/20/G 10/3 No. 4 p. 9.

We find to the north, the Gocklan [Göklen], the Yamoot [Yomut], and Tuckeh [Teke] Toorkomans, who occupying the country behind the Elburz [Alburz], and in the steppe of Khaurezm [Khvārazm], pour from their deserts upon the cultivated countries around; plundering villages and caravans, committing every sort of atrocious outrage, murdering on the spot the old, the feeble, and the helpless; carrying into slavery all who are fit for labour, and thus depopulating many extensive districts, that, but for them, would have continued fertile and well inhabited. On the east, the Timoores [Tīmūrīs], Hazarehs [Hazāras], Feerozecooses [Fīrūzkūhīs], and Jumsheedees [Jamshīdīs], commit the same ravages; disposing of their captives to those who frequent the slave markets of Khyva [Khīva] and Bukhara.²⁰⁶

During the same period, the Iranian traveller Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Shīrvānī noted with abhorrence that the Hazāras of Bākhārz routinely captured travellers and traded them to the Uzbeks and Turkmens.²⁰⁷ In 1838, Alexander Burnes reported that Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra of Qalʿa-yi Nau had far-reaching connections and played a pivotal role in the slave trade:

This Chief has great power in these countries, and besides his attachment to Kamran has connections with the Khivans, Toorkmans [Turkmens] and Chiefs in and about Maimuna [Maimana], all of whom would only assist Herat through him. He plunders the country of its property and inhabitants as far west as Meshid [Mashhad] and Nishapur [Nīshāpūr], and the petty Chiefs of Khaf [Khvāf], Toorshish [Turshīz] and Tabbus [Ṭabas Gīlakī] are glad to send him annual presents to spare in some degree their people.²⁰⁸

In 1845, Ferrier observed that Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra's brother Karīmdād Khān Hazāra had followed the "noble profession of pillager" until recent times, when Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai had forced him to concentrate on stock breeding as economic mainstay:

[H]e plundered caravans, and extended his forays to the south of Persia in the district of Ghaīn [Qāyīn], where he sacked the villages and carried off the people to sell them to the Usbeks. His depredations were so frequent, and gave rise to so many complaints, that Assaf Doulet [Allāhyār Khān Āṣaf al-Daula, governor of Khurāsān, 1834–1847] sent to Yar Mahomed Khan and informed him that, as he seemed unable to keep his own vassal in order, he should chastise him himself at the head of an army. The Vezir Sahib, who had everything to fear from the violation of his territory by the Persians, marched in person against Kerimdad Khan, vanquished him, and obliged him to acknowledge the sovereignty of Herat, which he had thrown off. Since then the Sirdar has contented himself with the large profits arising from his stud, his numerous flocks, and the manufacture of a cloth called kourk or barek [*barak*], woven of an exceedingly fine and silky wool which grows on the belly of the camel... The Afghan and Persian nobles, even the sovereign, always wear it in the winter.²⁰⁹

The *ūymāq* chiefs operated in a field of overlapping interests emanating from Herat, Khīva, and Maimana. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Iranian push for the control of Herat also affected local relationships of power. Although virtually independent, the rulers of Maimana formally tendered allegiance to Herat. Until his death in 1845, Mīzrāb Khān of Maimana submitted an annual present of five horses and received a dress of honor in return.²¹⁰ From 1845 on, Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai endeavored to enforce control over the *ūymāq* and to extend his authority over Maimana. He repeatedly inserted himself into the power struggle between Mīzrāb Khān's sons, Ḥukūmat Khān and Shīr Muḥammad Khān Mīng. In 1847, he used Ḥukūmat Khān's plea for assistance as a pretext for a military campaign in the region, in the course of which he plundered Chīchaktū, Andkhūd and Āqcha. Before withdrawing in the midst of winter, he installed Ḥukūmat Khān (r. 1847–1862) as ruler and obtained a pledge for the payment of 30,000 *ṭilā*.²¹¹ As this revenue was not forthcoming, the Herati troops besieged Maimana for eleven months in 1849, denuding the entire region of its produce. At the conclusion of the siege, Ḥukūmat Khān submitted a tribute of 12,000 *ṭilā* and made the usual offering of horses, camels and carpets. After Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai's death, the

²⁰⁶ Fraser 1825: 256.

²⁰⁷ *Riyāz al-siyāhat* 150.

²⁰⁸ Forrest 1906: 38.

²⁰⁹ Ferrier 1857: 191–2.

²¹⁰ Taylor 1858b: 866.

²¹¹ Taylor 1858b: 867–869.

expression of fealty once again became largely symbolic and was reduced to an annual gift of a few horses.²¹²

The developments the *ūymāq* experienced in the course of the nineteenth century mirror the changing circumstances in the wider political setting. One general phenomenon was the genesis of fairly stable territorial units. British intervention in the affairs of Herat brought about a formal division of the Afghan and Iranian spheres of activity. This process of delineation and appropriation closed up the open field of political options that had previously presented itself to local actors. What is more, it provided the rulers with an unprecedented “sense of territorial ownership”.²¹³ Freed from the pushes and pulls previously generated in a setting of fluid alliances, the Qājār and Muḥammadzai dynasties were able to achieve a degree of consolidation unheard of as of yet. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, this enhanced scope of authority entailed a corresponding “freezing” of local circumstances.

In the eighteenth century, by contrast, the tribal leadership of Herat still presented a highly dynamic and powerful elite that derived its identity not so much from notions of territoriality as from opportunities of advancement under the auspices of the Durrānī state. While there was a distinct concept of tribal “homelands”, the leadership primarily obtained its standing from government offices and the concomitant land grants, which, over time, also came to be considered hereditary tribal possessions. Among the *ūymāq* chiefs who figured within the framework of the Durrānī administration, Darvīsh ‘Alī Khān Hazāra enjoyed a high profile, serving as the governor of Herat under Aḥmad Shāh. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Qilich Khān Tīmūrī, Yalangtūsh I Jamshīdī, Gidā Khān Tāymanī, and Ḥusain ‘Alī Khān Darzai Fīrūzkūhī played a formidable role in the politics of Herat.²¹⁴ With the crumbling of the Sadūzai Empire in the early nineteenth century, the tribal leadership was able to expand its hold over local affairs and interacted with the lords of Herat on an equal footing. One striking example for the political segmentation prevailing at the time is the dominion Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra carved out for himself around his stronghold of Qal‘a-yi Nau. Situated north of Herat, he negotiated Kāmran Sadūzai’s contacts with the local *ūymāq* and Maimana. His great control over the military resources of the northern regions enabled him to prop up Kāmran and to give him crucial military support during the Iranian siege of 1837–1838.

In the 1840s, the balance of power shifted in favor of the ruler of Herat. Maintaining a friendly relationship with the Qājār court, Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai employed the resources at his command to strengthen his position vis-à-vis the *ūymāq*. This period was characterized by sustained military intervention in the environs of Herat and occasional campaigns against Maimana. As part of his effort to bring the *ūymāq* to heel, Yār Muḥammad Khān instituted a policy of deportation to the Herat valley. In the face of the unremitting pressure exerted by the ruler of Herat, the options of the tribal leadership were reduced to the choice between migration beyond the Vazīr’s domains and total subjection. While the Jamshīdīs adopted the first course of action, the Hazāras of Qal‘a-yi Nau and the Tāymanīs found their power broken and were reduced to subjects of the Herat government. The only group that apparently benefited from Yār Muḥammad Khān’s policies were the Fīrūzkūhīs, who were able to widen their sphere of influence.

Another round of resettlements was inaugurated by the conclusion of the Iranian occupation of Herat in 1856. Upon his departure from Herat, Ḥusām al-Saltāna, the Qājār governor of Mashhad, induced a substantial group of Hazāras and Jamshīdīs to enter Iranian service. While Yār Muḥammad had employed the resettlement of the *ūymāq* to consolidate his position in the Herat valley, the Qājār government brought the *ūymāq* to the region east and northeast of Mashhad to secure Khurāsān against Turkmen depredations. With hindsight, this heightened speed and scale of resettlement in the 1840s and 1850s represented a final phase of feverish activity before the incorporation of Herat into the Muḥammadzai realm and the emerging delineation of the state spheres of Iran and Afghanistan. After 1856, the Qājār interference in the affairs of

²¹² Like his father, Ḥukūmat Khān lent military support to Herat when the need arose. Thus it is reported that he dispatched 2,000 cavalry to help Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān suppress a Hazāra rebellion (Taylor 1858b: 869–70).

²¹³ Kashani-Sabet 1999: 36.

²¹⁴ *Ashraf al-tavārīkh* 278, 408; ST 50–2; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 80–3.

Herat ceased but was replaced by mounting pressure from Kābul. The main counterweight in the region was Maimana, which retained its independence until 1876.

In the light of the pressure exerted by the government of Herat from the 1840s on, the *ūymāq* leaders sought alliances with Maimana and the more distant powers based in Kābul and Tehran. In the early 1860s, Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān paid allowances to the Jamshīdīs in order to weaken the influence of Maimana in the region. Henceforth, the Jamshīdī leadership advanced the cause of the Muḥammadzai government and prospered accordingly subsequent to the conquest of Herat in 1863. Linked to the royal family by marriage alliances and political offices, the Jamshīdī leader Khān Āqā Jamshīdī dominated the affairs in the province until his death in 1880.

The freezing of local circumstances reached its climax under Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān, under whose government all *ūymāq* groups were exposed to the tightening grip of the central government. Initially, the Jamshīdīs and Fīrūzkūhīs profited from the Amīr’s plans to protect Afghanistan northwestern border by settling *ūymāq* there. Within a short period, however, Amīr Abd al-Raḥmān Khān switched from a policy of patronage to one of relentless persecution. In 1885, he blamed these groups for the Russian occupation of Panjdih and wiped out their entire leadership within the next two years.²¹⁵ On the following pages, I will take a closer look at the developments among the Sunnī Hazāras of Qal‘a-yi Nau, the Jamshīdīs, Fīrūzkūhīs and Tāymanīs.

THE SUNNĪ HAZĀRAS OF QAL‘A-YI NAU

The Sunnī Hazāras trace their origin to Mongol groups who settled in the region at the time of Chingiz Khān.²¹⁶ European travelers came up with other theories concerning the historical roots of this group. Thus Khanikoff reached the conclusion that they had originally formed part of the Barlās tribe centered around Shahr-i Sabz, the birthplace of Tīmūr Lang (r. 1370–1405). Their migration to the region of Herat occurred when Tīmūr appointed his son Shāh Rukh as governor of Khurāsān, Sīstān and Māzandarān in 799/1397 and ordered one thousand families (*hazāra*) to accompany him to Herat.²¹⁷ British observers were of the opinion that the Sunnī Hazāras had been relocated from the Hazārajāt by Nādir Shāh.²¹⁸

The region occupied by the Hazāras was more hilly than the Jamshīdī lands to the west:

[T]he rolling downs and long smooth ridges and hollows of the latter are here exchanged for a mass of small tumbled hills, which cover the whole surface, except a few high plateaux along the bases of the range to the south. From these plateaux descend great ravines, whose beds are far below the general level of the country. Their upper parts are rocky and narrow, but as they ascend they widen out, and become broad, shallow hollows or valleys, all uniting at last in the Tora Shaikh [Tūr-i Shaikh] hollow, which runs north to the Murghab, joining the valley of that river between Maruchak [Mārūchāq] and Panjdeh [Panjdih].²¹⁹

The involvement of the Sunnī Hazāras in the politics of Herat can be traced to Bēglerbēgī Darvīsh ‘Alī Khān Hazāra (d. 1772), whose career I have discussed in the previous chapter. At the time of Darvīsh ‘Alī Khān Hazāra, Qal‘a-yi Nau already formed the stronghold of the Hazāras. The only other fortress worth mentioning was that of Naratū, which had already figured in Isfīzārī’s fifteenth-century description of the Herat region. Similar to the other areas of Bādghīs, the agricultural production consisted of wheat, barley, lucerne, tobacco, and opium. Another important source of income were pistachios, which grew wild all over eastern Bādghīs, the Fīrūzkūhī country of the upper Murghāb river, and on the slopes of the Band-i Turkistān. These pistachio groves were most extensive on the low hills around Qal‘a-yi Nau. Moreover, there were “enormous” quantities of sheep and goats in the entire region.²²⁰

²¹⁵ Lee 1996: 478–9.

²¹⁶ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 228.

²¹⁷ Khanikoff 1864: 348–9.

²¹⁸ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 228–9; Lee 1996: 125 fn 107.

²¹⁹ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 226.

²²⁰ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 227.

In the 1830s, Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra b. Iskandar b. Āqā'ī b. Muḥammad Shāh was the most influential leader of the Sunnī Hazāras and held a superior position among the *ūymāq* north of Herat.²²¹ The degree of power he enjoyed can be gauged from the fact that he was in charge of raising troops among the Fīrūzkūhīs and Jamshīdīs, and from the rulers of Maimana.²²² Furthermore, he was considered an ally rather than a subject of Kāmran Sadūzai. In 1838, Alexander Burnes reported that the Hazāra dominion constituted the northern border of the realm of Herat.²²³ As a “devoted supporter of Kāmran’s interests,” Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra attempted to curtail Vazīr Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai’s influence at the court of Herat, and it was thought that Kāmran owed his political survival entirely to his backing.²²⁴ In exchange for his services Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra received the title of Nizām al-Daula from Kāmran.²²⁵ During the Iranian campaign against Herat in 1837–38, Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra united with Zamān Khān Jamshīdī, Shāh Pasand Khān Darzai Fīrūzkūhī and Mīzrāb Khān of Maimana to ward off the Iranian troops that had entered Bādghīs under the command of Āṣaf al-Daula. After offering spirited resistance, this alliance was eventually beaten on 20 December 1837 and had to bow to Iranian supremacy.²²⁶ Even so, Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra continued to harass and plunder the Iranian troops before Herat until the summer of 1838.²²⁷

Karīmdād Khān Hazāra, who succeeded his brother Shīr Muḥammad Khān in the early 1840s, enjoyed a fairly comfortable position during the first years of chieftainship. In 1258/1842–43, he accepted Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai’s claims to authority and signalled his willingness to submit revenues to Herat.²²⁸ At the time of Ferrier’s visit in 1845, this tribute was largely nominal: Karīmdād Khān Hazāra sent in an offering of a few choice horses, which Yār Muḥammad Khān reciprocated with gifts of valuable cashmere shawls and European goods. The relation of fealty with the ruler of Herat was also expressed by the obligation to furnish soldiers in case of war. Moreover, Karīmdād’s brother Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Hazāra was kept at Yār Muḥammad Khān’s court as a hostage.²²⁹ Major Taylor, who monitored Iranian activities in autumn 1857, reported that the Hazāras enjoyed considerable privileges and few obligations during the early 1840s. In exchange for a grant of 2,000 *khavār* of grain and 9,000 *tūmān*, they furnished one horseman in every four families.²³⁰ During this period Karīmdād Khān’s scope of authority in Bādghīs expanded considerably, as the Hazāras spread into the regions given up by the Jamshīdīs as a result of their conflict with Yār Muḥammad Khān. Karīmdād Khān’s brothers Aḥmad Qulī Khān and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Khān Hazāra governed Panjdih and Murghāb respectively. The extent of Karīmdād Khān’s authority is reflected by the fact that he was in charge of 28,000 tents and could summon 5,000 horsemen and 3,000 foot soldiers.²³¹

Yet by 1847, Karīmdād Khān Hazāra also began to feel the brunt of Yār Muḥammad’s endeavor to break the power of the tribal groups around Herat. After a “bloody engagement” that same year, 10,000 Hazāra

²²¹ Mohan Lal met Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra near Herat in March 1833 (Lal 1977: 141). Maitland’s assumption that Shīr Muḥammad Khān died during the Iranian siege of 1837–1838 is not borne out by the other available sources. As will be seen below, Shīr Muḥammad Khān spearheaded the resistance to the Iranian invasion and apparently died sometime between 1838 and 1842 (*Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 231; Lee 1996: 201).

²²² “[Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra] can take the field with 6,500 horse; 2,000 of these are constantly present and 2,000 more from his ‘Ooloos’ [*ulūs*] can be assembled in a few days, 1,500 are furnished from the Feerozkohees [Fīrūzkūhīs], who are his subjects, and the Jamsheedee Kimaks [sic] [Jamshīdī *ūymāq*], who are his friends and co-adjutors, will send 1,000 more. He can also command two or three thousand horse from Maimuna [Maimana], and on the former invasion of the Persians Toorkmāns [Turkmens] co-operated with him” (Forrest 1906: 38).

²²³ Forrest 1906: 36.

²²⁴ Forrest 1906: 35, 38.

²²⁵ *Gaz Afghanistan* III: 230. See also Lee 1996: 125 fn 107; 149.

²²⁶ NT 682–692; ST 130–1, 132–135; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 218, 221–6; TRSN X: 58, 60, 215; Lee 1996: 149–58; McNeill to Palmerston, Tehran, 23 February 1838 (IOL, L/PS/20/A7/1 No. 73, p. 95).

²²⁷ NT 713; ST 146–7; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 247.

²²⁸ ST 190; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 326.

²²⁹ Ferrier 1857: 191–4.

²³⁰ Taylor 1858c: 949.

²³¹ Ferrier 1857: 191–4.

families were forcibly resettled in the Herat valley, and Qal‘a-yi Nau lost more than half of its population. Karīmdād Khān fled to Mashhad and joined Ḥasan Khān Sālār’s rebellion, which lasted until the spring of 1850.²³² Later on, he returned to his erstwhile stronghold and, after Yār Muḥammad’s death in June 1851, offered sustained resistance to the new ruler, Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān.²³³ Owing to Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān’s political and military weakness, Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai’s arrangements quickly unravelled in the summer of 1851. A great number of the Hazāras who had been deported to Herat left for Kushk, where they besieged Yār Muḥammad Khān’s appointee Mīr Hāshim Khān Bēglerbēgī. In order to prevent a further exodus from the Herat valley, Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān imprisoned the remaining Hazāra population. The Fīrūzkūhīs, who had been settled at Qal‘a-yi Nau by Yār Muḥammad Khān, withdrew from the erstwhile Hazāra stronghold during this time.²³⁴

In 1269/1852, Karīmdād Khān Hazāra tendered allegiance to Sulṭān Murād Mīrzā Ḥusām al-Salṭana, the Qājār governor of Mashhad (1849–1853).²³⁵ Two years later, in 1271/1854–55, Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān executed Karīmdād Khān, thus bringing about his own downfall. Disgusted with Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān’s erratic policies, the leadership of Herat summoned the Hazāra cavalry from Bādghīs and invited Muḥammad Yūsuf b. Malik Qāsim Sadūzai, who resided in Iranian Khurāsān, to assume the reins of government. After receiving a reassuring answer from Muḥammad Yūsuf, they pronounced Sa‘īd Muḥammad Khān insane and began to disobey his orders.²³⁶ The Hazāra leadership prepared the way for Muḥammad Yūsuf’s entry in Herat.²³⁷

In the 1880s, Karīmdād Khān Hazāra’s nephew Muḥammad Khān Niẓām al-Daula b. Aḥmad Qulī Khān was the most influential Hazāra chief.²³⁸ In 1881, he opposed the advance of Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān’s general Sardār ‘Abd al-Quddūs b. Sulṭān Muḥammad Muḥammadzai on Herat but was beaten during a battle near Shāfilān. Afterwards he maintained a close relationship with Sardār ‘Abd al-Quddūs Khān, who governed Herat from 1881–1882, and gave one of his daughters in marriage to him.²³⁹ Muḥammad Khān strongly opposed Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān’s plans to secure the northern frontier of Herat by settling Jamshīdīs and Fīrūzkūhīs in the region around Bālā Murghāb. In 1883, the Hazāra leader successfully intrigued against the settlement program and provoked tensions between the Jamshīdīs and the Afghan general in charge, Ghauth al-Dīn Khān. The ensuing clashes between Jamshīdīs, Fīrūzkūhīs and Sunnī Hazāras convinced Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān to colonize the area with Durrānī groups from Farāh and Qandahār instead.²⁴⁰ Subsequent to the Panjdih crisis in March 1885, the Amīr’s attitude to the *ūymāq* hardened. Muḥammad Khān Niẓām al-Daula was placed under open arrest in Herat for over a year.²⁴¹ In April 1886, he and the Jamshīdī and Tāymanī nobility were charged with sedition and sent to Kābul. Muḥammad Khān Niẓām al-Daula and his brother Maḥmūd were luckier than the Jamshīdī leadership and escaped execution. However, they were not allowed to return to their homeland and had to remain in Kābul.²⁴²

A second branch of the leading Hazāra family was associated with the district of Bākharz, which belonged to the Durrānī Empire in the late eighteenth century but was incorporated into the Qājār administration in the early nineteenth century. Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra’s paternal great uncle

²³² TRSN X: 325, 415; NT 881, 1099.

²³³ Ferrier 1857: 194 fn by editor. See also Champagne 1981: 262–3.

²³⁴ Za‘farānlū 1968: 27–8, 35–6, 39–40.

²³⁵ Karīmdād Khān sent 2,000 Hazāras and “Bākharzīs” to Mashhad (TMN III: 225; Za‘farānlū 1968, “Introduction,” p. 13). See also Champagne 1981: 283; Daud Khan 1873; Durand NAI, For. Sec. F Feb. 1887 No. 479.

²³⁶ KR 123 (Patterson 1988: 198–9). See also TRSN X: 607–8.

²³⁷ According to Taylor, Muḥammad Yūsuf’s brother Muḥammad Rizā b. Malik Qāsim conquered Herat with the help of Karīmdād Khān Hazāra’s three brothers Aḥmad Qulī Khān, Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Khān Hazāra, who lived in Shahr-i Nau at that time (Taylor 1858c: 932–3). See also *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 239.

²³⁸ Lee 1996: 400–402.

²³⁹ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 234. See also Kakar 1979: 42, 110; Lee 1996: 427.

²⁴⁰ Kakar 1979: 131; Lee 1996: 429–32; Tapper 1973: 53–61.

²⁴¹ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 238.

²⁴² Lee 1996: 478–9.

Muḥammad Khān Bēglerbēgī b. Muḥammad Shāh Khān Hazāra was appointed as governor of this region by Tīmūr Shāh Durrānī in 1785. Until the early 1830s, Muḥammad Shāh Khān Hazāra's descendants were associated with the administration of Bākharz and Jām.²⁴³ In the early 1820s, Shīrvānī described Bākharz as a district containing fifty cultivated villages. The principal town of the district was Shahr-i Nau, which had been founded by Muḥammad Khān Bēglerbēgī. It contained "good buildings and delightful castles", as well as one thousand houses. Both grain and different kinds of fruit grew in abundance. There were 10,000 Hazāra families in the district and a Persian minority known as "Bākharzī".²⁴⁴ In 1845, Ferrier reported that 2,000 Hazāra families inhabited Shahr-i Nau. Like their relatives in Qal'a-yi Nau, the Hazāras of Bākharz engaged in horse breeding, and the revenue due to Mashhad consisted of fifty horses per year. In addition, they were required to furnish one thousand armed cavalry to the Qājār governors.²⁴⁵

Subsequent to the Iranian siege of Herat in 1856, there was a renewed influx of Hazāras into Iranian Khurāsān. In 1857, Ḥusām al-Saltāna settled 5,000 Qal'a-yi Nau Hazāras in Turbat-i Shaikh Jām and Bākharz under the leadership of Karīmdād Khān Hazāra's relative Yūsuf Khān Hazāra.²⁴⁶ In 1858, Khanikoff reported that all the plains between Turbat-i Shaikh Jām and Mashhad had been surrendered to the Hazāras who had been forced to join the Persian army during its retreat from Herat. The newcomers did not prosper in Iranian Khurāsān. They were greeted with hostility by the local population and were said to pine for the beautiful pastures of Bādghīs.²⁴⁷ The involuntary nature of their migration is underlined by the fact that the Iranian government confiscated all their baggage cattle to prevent them from returning to their homelands.²⁴⁸ Nonetheless, two thousand among them departed for Herat within a short period.²⁴⁹ The remaining groups were moved to Isfārāyin, where they were decimated by cholera. The survivors of this epidemic were shifted to the village of Kana Gūsha ten miles northeast of Mashhad. In 1275/1858–59, they were ordered to return to Bākharz and Maḥmūdābād near Turbat-i Shaikh Jām. Their chief Yūsuf Khān Hazāra served as governor of Bākharz from 1877–1881 and was granted land in Muḥsinābād, Kārīz, Farmānābād and Tāybād. After his death in 1885, his sons Gul Muḥammad Khān and Muḥammad Ismā'īl Khān successively became the paramount chiefs of the Hazāras of Bākharz. Muḥammad Ismā'īl Khān gained the Qājār title of Shujā' al-Mulk in 1894 and was appointed governor of Bākharz in 1896. In the 1890s, the Hazāras in Iran numbered 1,200 families and furnished 450 cavalry.²⁵⁰

When Charles E. Yate passed through the region in spring 1894, he observed that Shahr-i Nau, by now a village of 200 houses, still formed the headquarters of the Bākharz district. In the meantime, however, the composition of the local population had changed significantly and the Sunnī Hazāras had dwindled to a minority:

The place was well watered, and the numerous gardens and orchards were said to produce every kind of fruit known in these parts, with the exception of pomegranates, for which the climate was too cold... Our route now led up the valley in the centre of the Bakhharz district. We passed through continuous villages and cultivation, and the stream flowing down the valley, with the springs and grassy sward along its banks, gave a look of fertility to the place that one rarely sees in Persia... The population was comprised of Persians known as Bakhharzis, with a small proportion of Hazarah, Timuri, and Afghan settlers...²⁵¹

²⁴³ For the developments in Jām and Bākharz in the early nineteenth century, see Chapter 5, footnotes 132, 145.

²⁴⁴ Shīrvānī's opinion of the inhabitants of this region was not very favorable. Apart from noting a general inclination for bloodshed and wickedness, he takes issue with the lack of politeness prevailing among the Bākharzīs. Thus, his courteous question concerning the origin of a passer-by met with a rough response: "The author asked one of them: 'Which region do you hail from, which rose garden were you picked from?' (*Mardum-i kudām diyār-ī va gul-i kudām gulzār-ī?*) He answered with complete rudeness and ill humor: 'I am a Bākharzī'" (*Riyāz al-siyāḥat* 150).

²⁴⁵ Ferrier 1857: 137.

²⁴⁶ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 241.

²⁴⁷ Khanikoff 1864: 348–9. At the time, only a hundred Hazāra families seem to have remained in the Herat region (Taylor 1858c: 949).

²⁴⁸ Taylor 1858 a: 854–855. See also *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 120–1.

²⁴⁹ The Hazāras who returned from Iran took possession of Qal'a-yi Nau under the leadership of Karīmdād Khān Hazāra's brother Aḥmad Qulī Khān in 1871. Qal'a-yi Nau, which had been destroyed by the Jamshīdīs, was rebuilt in 1874.

²⁵⁰ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 241; Mīr Niyā 1994: 124–6; Yate 1900: 131–2. See also Vámbéry 1864: 289.

²⁵¹ C. E. Yate 1900: 136–7.

THE JAMSHĪDĪS²⁵²

The two etymologies adduced for the genesis of the Jamshīdīs suggest a merging of different groups into a military coalition. The first links their genesis to the Persian past participle *jam* ‘*shuda*, “gathered” or “collected together”.²⁵³ The second traces their name to the mythical king Jamshīd. This view is taken by a member of the leading lineage (*khān khēl*), Āqā Khān Jamshīdī b. Yalangtūsh II, who wrote a treatise entitled *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Jamshīdīhā* in the early twentieth century.²⁵⁴ Āqā Khān reports that his family was of Kayanid descent and was resettled by Tīmūr from Sīstān to Bādghīs in 795/1392–93. In exchange for protecting the frontier of Khurāsān, they received Bādghīs as a permanent grant and were placed in command over the *ūymāq* living around Herat. As part of this process, the name Jamshīdī became associated with all their followers.²⁵⁵

According to another emic view, the Kayanid migration to Bādghīs was brought about by the policies of Tīmūr’s grandson Ulugh Bēg (d. 1449), who induced the founders of the *khān khēl*, the brothers Mīr Ḥaidar Khān and Yalangtūsh Sultān, to settle at Kurukh and Kushk in Bādghīs respectively.²⁵⁶ As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Jamshīdīs figured in the politics of Herat in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The groups based in Harāt-Rūd and Kurukh east of Herat controlled the lands along the highroad to Maimana and held service grants in Gharjīstān.²⁵⁷

The members of the leading lineage of the Jamshīdīs emphasize their unbroken dominance over Bādghīs from the Timurid period to the eighteenth century.²⁵⁸ This “telescoping” bypasses the arrival of the Abdālī Afghāns in the Herat region around 1000/1592 and their assumption of power in 1717.²⁵⁹ According to the *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Jamshīdīhā*, Nādir Shāh’s conquest of Herat in 1732 even enhanced the position of the Jamshīdīs in Bādghīs. After suffering a temporary resettlement in Turbat-i Shaikh Jām and Langar, they were allowed to return to Bādghīs under their principal chief Maḥmūd Khān Jamshīdī in 1732 and exerted great influence on the affairs of Herat.²⁶⁰

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Kurukh and Kushk are mentioned as the most important Jamshīdī settlements. Kushk was held by Maḥmūd Khān’s sons Yalangtūsh I and Maḥmūd II Jamshīdī (d. ca. 1817). In the 1830s, Yalangtūsh Khān widened the Jamshīdī sphere of influence to include Bālā Murghāb, Mārūchāq and Panjdih.²⁶¹ Like the other *ūymāq* of the Herat region, the Jamshīdīs suffered from Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai’s resettlement policies. In the early 1840s, 5,000 families were forced to move to the Herat valley.²⁶² Roughly at the same time, the *khān khēl* and the greater part of the tribe moved from Kushk and Qara Tepe to Khīva and entered the military service of Allāh Qulī Khān (r. 1825–1842), Raḥīm Qulī Khān (r. 1842–1846), and Muḥammad Amīn Khān Qunghrāt (r. 1846–1855).²⁶³ Estimates of the Jamshīdīs who settled in Khīva vary between 5,000, 7,000, 10,000, 12,000 and 15,000 families.²⁶⁴ The available sources differ on the role of the Khivan government in bringing on the Jamshīdī migration. While the European sources maintain that the Jamshīdīs were forcefully removed to Khīva, the Khivan historian

²⁵² For an earlier article on the Jamshīdīs, see, Noelle-Karimi, “Jamšīdī,” *E.Ir.* XIV: 528–31.

²⁵³ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 185; Pottinger Dec. 1839, IOL, L/PS/20 G10 3 No. 63 p. 54–5.

²⁵⁴ Semenov 1923. I am most grateful to Lutz Rzehak, who generously shared his Persian and Russian materials on the Jamshīdīs with me.

²⁵⁵ Semenov 1923: 165.

²⁵⁶ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 185.

²⁵⁷ IM 1154, 1475; DS 158–9, 280–1.

²⁵⁸ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 185; Semenov 1923: 165–6.

²⁵⁹ *Majma‘ al-tavārīkh* 19, 21.

²⁶⁰ Semenov 1923: 166; T Su 105.

²⁶¹ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 186–7; NT 284–5; Stirling 1991: 260; Lumsden 1885 IOL, L/PS/18 A 53 pt. 3 pp. 12–13.

²⁶² Ferrier 1857: 158, 172, 193–4; *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 187–8.

²⁶³ Raḥīm Qulī Khān died on 2 Šafar 1262/30 January 1846 and was succeeded by his brother, Muḥammad Amīn Khān Qunghrāt (Wood 1998: 205–6).

²⁶⁴ Ferrier 1857: 193–4; Basiner 1848: 202–3; *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 188; Semenov 1927: 166; Vámbéry: 1864: 258–9, 355; Wood 1998: 169.

Muḥammad Rizā Āgāhī reports that the Khivan campaign to Bādghīs in the winter of 1841–42 was occasioned by a Jamshīdī plea for help against the oppression of the Herat government.²⁶⁵ The Iranian sources indicate that the Jamshīdī leader Mīr Aḥmad Khān b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār Bēg b. Yalangtūsh Khān closely cooperated with the Khivan court. He played a key role in his military activities in Marv and Sarakhs between 1844 and 1855, received the title of “Khān Āqā” from Muḥammad Amīn Khān, and was killed together with him while fighting the Iranian army in Sarakhs in March 1855.²⁶⁶ The author of the *Tārīkh-i Jamshīdīhā* relates that his tribe spent a total of sixteen years in Khīva but decided to return to Bālā Murghāb and Mārūchāq when unrest spread in Khīva after the death of Muḥammad Amīn Khān. This migration took place in 1856–57, under the leadership of Mīr Aḥmad Khān’s brother Mihdī Qulī Khān.²⁶⁷

In the late 1850s, the Jamshīdīs were exposed to pressure exerted by the Herati ruler Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān (r. 1857–1863), who deprived the Jamshīdīs of Kurukh of their customary service grants and enforced revenue payments from them. Furthermore, he displaced the northern section of the Jamshīdīs from their stronghold in Bālā Murghāb and razed it to the ground.²⁶⁸ Even so, Mihdī Qulī Khān seems to have maintained a certain degree of independence. In the 1860s, he reportedly lived in Mārūchāq, while his brother Allāh Qulī Khān governed Bālā Murghāb.²⁶⁹ Mihdī Qulī Khān exacted his own custom tolls from caravans crossing the Murghāb river.²⁷⁰ He also interacted independently with the Qājār government and actively supported its final military campaign to Marv in 1860.²⁷¹

In 1863, the Jamshīdī leader assisted Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān in the conquest of Herat and subsequently cooperated with the newly crowned Amīr Shīr ‘Alī Khān. During the civil war of 1866–1868, Mihdī Qulī Khān consistently sided with Shīr ‘Alī Khān and the Jamshīdī troops played a crucial role in Shīr ‘Alī Khān’s final victory over his adversaries.²⁷² Furthermore, he gave two daughters in marriage to the Amīr’s sons Muḥammad Ya‘qūb and Muḥammad Ayūb. His high position at the court of Herat is reflected by the illustrious title of “Amīn al-Daula va al-Niyābat” which was conferred on him in addition to the Khivan title of “Khān Āqā”. Acting as Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān’s guardian, Mihdī Qulī Khān was the most powerful official in the province until Muḥammad Ya‘qūb Khān’s recall and imprisonment in 1874.²⁷³

Mihdī Qulī Khān’s career ended with the last phase of the Second Anglo-Afghan War when he turned against Muḥammad Ayūb Khān, who was busy fighting the British near Qandahār in July–August 1880. At this time, the Jamshīdī leader entered a plot with Sardār Anbiyā Khān Tāymanī and Sardār ‘Abdullāh Khān Tīmūrī to depose Sardār Muḥammad Ayūb Khān and to install Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai’s grandson Bihbūd Khān Alakūzai as ruler of Herat.²⁷⁴ After his initial success at Maivand on 27 July 1880, Muḥammad Ayūb Khān was defeated by the British at Mazra‘ in the Arghandāb valley on 31 August and returned to Herat. Despite his recent military setback against the British, Muḥammad Ayūb Khān still commanded sufficient military support to mount campaigns against the ringleaders of the plot against him. The Jamshīdīs of Kushk were defeated in late November 1880. Mihdī Qulī Khān Jamshīdī initially managed to flee to Ghūr but was soon apprehended by a rival of Anbiyā Khān Tāymanī and handed over to Muḥammad Ayūb Khān, who assassinated him in a brutal fashion. During the ensuing general persecution of the Jamshīdī tribe Mihdī Qulī Khān’s son Yalangtūsh II fled to Maimana.²⁷⁵

²⁶⁵ Wood 1998: 168.

²⁶⁶ NT 1202–3, 1248–52; *Sifāratnāma* 57 (French text 89–90); Wood 1998: 202–7. See also Chapter 6.

²⁶⁷ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 189; Khanikoff, 1846: 376; Stewart 1883: 51; Lumsden 1885 IOL, L/PS/18 A 53 pt. 3 pp. 12–13.

²⁶⁸ Molloy 1883: 10.

²⁶⁹ *Hayāt-i afghānī* 458.

²⁷⁰ Vámbéry 1864: 259–61. In 1867, the Jamshīdīs reportedly submitted a yearly revenue of 15,000 rupees (*Hayāt-i afghānī* 459).

²⁷¹ Shahīdī 1971: 56.

²⁷² *Gulshan-i imārat* 75; PM II: 144.

²⁷³ Napier 1875: 244; PM II: 143.

²⁷⁴ ST 375; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 335. According to the British correspondence of the time, Mihdī Qulī Khān championed the cause of Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai’s son Muḥammad Ḥaidar Alakūzai (Kakar 1971: 70–1).

²⁷⁵ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 190–1, 410; Kakar 1971: 66, 70–1; Lee 1996: 400–2; Semenov 1923: 169.

Yalangtūsh II's subsequent career exemplifies the unpredictable nature of Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān's policies. Until 1883, the newly crowned king extended his patronage to the *ūymāq* of Herat and awarded an annual subsidy of 60,000 rupees to their chiefs.²⁷⁶ In exchange for his assistance in the conquest of Herat in 1881, Yalangtūsh II was confirmed as the leader of the Jamshīdīs and received the title of "Amīn al-Daula".²⁷⁷ Yalangtūsh Khān's appointment to the government of Panjdih in 1884 represented the high point of his career but also precipitated his downfall. After the Russian occupation of Panjdih in March 1885, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān charged him with treason and ordered him and his brother Amīnullāh Khān, who had served as governor of Bālā Murghāb, to be executed in late 1886. Their fellow tribesmen initially migrated to Kushk but were deported to Herat in 1889. Those who were allowed to return to Kushk a few years later found themselves reduced to tenants of Afghan officials, who had taken over their lands in the meantime.²⁷⁸ Yalangtūsh II's sons and nephews remained in prison until 1903. Their flight to Russian territory in 1908 once again exposed the Jamshīdīs to persecutions by the Afghan government, and 3,000 families escaped to the Russian districts of Chaman-i Bīd and Qal'a-yi Mūr located on the lower course of the Kushk Rūd.²⁷⁹

Like the Sunnī Hazāras, a number of Jamshīdīs relocated to Qājār Khurāsān. These migrations occurred from the middle of the nineteenth century on and were occasioned by Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai's oppressive policies in 1842, the Iranian siege of 1856, and Muḥammad Ayūb Khān's defeat and flight to Iran in 1881.²⁸⁰ In 1857, Ḥusām al-Saḥāna settled 2,000 Jamshīdī families on the Sar-i Jām plain southeast of Mashhad in an apparent attempt to secure the eastern border of Khurāsān. Battered by Turkmen raids, some of these Jamshīdīs returned to Herat, while others moved to Kana Gūsha and Qara Buqa near Mashhad. In the following decades, this group of "Iranian" Jamshīdīs dwindled further. The famine of 1870–1872 reduced their number to 150 families. After a temporary relocation to Pas Kamar near Pul-i Khātūn on the Russian border between 1885 and 1889, they were estimated to number eighty families. This group of Jamshīdīs furnished a border guard of fifty cavalry to the provincial government in Mashhad until the end of the nineteenth century.²⁸¹

THE FĪRŪZKŪHĪS

Like the Jamshīdīs, the Fīrūzkūhīs essentially viewed themselves as Persians and linked their migration to the Herat region to Tīmūr's conquest. An important aspect of their ethnogenesis is the heterogeneous background of the constituent groups. While there are indications that the Fīrūzkūhīs may have been associated with the ancient Ghurid capital of Fīrūzkūh, popular accounts trace their origin to the more distant town of Fīrūzkūh in Māzandarān, where a number of tribes are said to have assembled before being deported to Herat:

[T]heir forefathers fought Timurlang [Tīmūr Lang] bravely when that conqueror subjugated their country. After they were driven by him into the mountains south of Mazandaran, they defended themselves most desperately, but were eventually defeated and carried by him into Herat, where their descendants exist at the present time. Although this body of men belonged to several distant tribes, from their being involved in one common misfortune, they were all included in the name of Firozkohi, from the village in the neighbourhood of which they were surrounded and captured.²⁸²

This process of tribal agglomeration seems to have continued in later times as well, and there is evidence that the Fīrūzkūhī functioned as a military formation. One of the leading families traces its descent to a certain

²⁷⁶ Molloy 1883: 9.

²⁷⁷ According to the *Tārīkh-i Jamshīdīhā*, Yalangtūsh II was appointed chief of the Herati *ūymāq* at that time (Semenov 1923: 170).

²⁷⁸ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 283; Yate 2003: 216–17.

²⁷⁹ Semenov 1923: 170–3.

²⁸⁰ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 207–8; Napier 1875: 246.

²⁸¹ Curzon 1966 I: 198–9; Yate 1900: 32–3.

²⁸² MacGregor 1871a: 252. See also Ferrier 1857: 195–6. Other accounts trace the name of the Fīrūzkūhīs to the person of Fīrūz, who assumed leadership during the march to Khurāsān (*Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 109).

Durrānī leader by the name of Khvāja Maḥmūd, who was a descendant of an Achakzai leader by the name of Ḥakīm Khān. Khvāja Maḥmūd was appointed to the command over the western Fīrūzkūhīs by the military governor of Herat in the early eighteenth century.²⁸³ From the middle of the eighteenth century on, two main branches can be identified among the Fīrūzkūhīs. Khvāja Maḥmūd's descendants and their followers were known as Maḥmūdī and were based in Qādis and Kūcha. The second branch was designated as Darzai (Darazi) and was centered in Gharjistān and Chaghcharān.²⁸⁴ The political allegiances of the Fīrūzkūhīs were split on the basis of clan ties and geographical factors. In the early 1840s, the Maḥmūdīs under Faṭḥullāh Bēg tendered allegiance to Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai. The Darzai section of Gharjistān, by contrast, sought an alliance with Maimana. The Darzais of Chaghcharān were far enough removed from both centers of power to restrict themselves to mere tokens of loyalty to the powers in presence.²⁸⁵

One important member of the Maḥmūdī branch was Bahrām Khān Fīrūzkūhī, who entered an alliance with Bunyād b. Muḥammad Shāh Khān Hazāra in 1817.²⁸⁶ For most of the nineteenth century, however, the Maḥmūdī Fīrūzkūhīs were locked into struggles with Hazāras of Qal'a-yi Nau, whose grazing grounds adjoined their territories on the west. In the 1830s, the Hazāras seem to have had the upper hand, as they forced the Maḥmūdī Fīrūzkūhī chief Maudūd Qulī Khān out of Qādis.²⁸⁷ Maudūd Qulī Khān, on his part, supported the Iranian siege of Herat in 1837–38 and received Qal'a-yi Nau as *tuyūl* from Muḥammad Shāh Qājār.²⁸⁸ While this assignment apparently was as short-lived as the Iranian presence before Herat, the Fīrūzkūhīs made substantial territorial gains when Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai turned against the Hazāras in the late 1840s. There is evidence that the Fīrūzkūhīs were again placed in possession of Qal'a-yi Nau during this period.²⁸⁹

From the 1840s on, Faṭḥullāh Bēg b. Muḥammad 'Aẓīm Khān Atālīq is mentioned as the most influential leader of the Maḥmūdī section. He consistently sided with Amīr Shīr 'Alī Khān during the power struggle for the possession of Kābul in the 1860s.²⁹⁰ From 1870 to 1880, Faṭḥullāh Bēg was locked into a conflict with a rival faction under the leadership of Bahrām b. Maudūd Qulī Khān, who gained possession of Qādis with the support of the Hazāra chief Muḥammad Khān Nizām al-Daula in 1878. Faṭḥullāh Bēg was evicted and fled to Maimana.²⁹¹ Later on, Niyāz b. Faṭḥullāh Bēg Fīrūzkūhī obtained Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān's permission to occupy Tagāu 'Alam on the upper course of the Murghāb river. In the 1880s, both sections suffered from Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān's reprisals. In 1884–85, the Fīrūzkūhī chiefs of Qādis and Kūcha were taken to Kābul and killed. By the early years of the twentieth century, their Fīrūzkūhī followers, as well as the Hazāras of Qal'a-yi Nau, were reported to have given up all hostilities among one another: "They are now absolutely broken and under the thumb of the central Government."²⁹² Located at a greater distance from Herat, the Darzai section of Chaghcharān, on the other hand, continued to evade Muḥammadzai authority. Throughout the 1880s, the local leadership resisted the efforts of the Herat government to control the selection of leaders and to ensure a smooth flow of revenues.²⁹³

²⁸³ C. E. Yate 1887a:10–12, 14, 24–6; *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 117.

²⁸⁴ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 118.

²⁸⁵ Yate 1887a: 8–9.

²⁸⁶ NT 282–5. Bahrām Khān Fīrūzkūhī is mentioned as one of the *sardārs* of Khurāsān in the context of Maḥmūd Mīrzā Sadūzai's rebellion in 1795 (T Hu 310, 423). One of his daughters was married to Tīmūr Shāh (Fūfālzā'i 1967: 32).

²⁸⁷ Pottinger, Dec. 1839; IOL, L/PS/20/G 10 3 No. 63, 54–5. See also Ferrier 1857: 195–6.

²⁸⁸ NT 708.

²⁸⁹ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 120–1; Za'farānlū 1968: 35.

²⁹⁰ Napier 1875: 244; *Gulshan-i imārat* 75.

²⁹¹ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 122; Stewart 1883: 51; Yate 1887a: 24–6.

²⁹² *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 122–3, 126.

²⁹³ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 123–6.

THE TĀYMANĪS

The leading lineage of the Tāymanīs traced its origin to the eponymous ancestor Tāyman, a Kākar Pashtūn who reportedly settled in Darra Khargūsh²⁹⁴ in 973/1565–66 and displaced the local Qipchāq population. At the time, the Tāymanīs enjoyed the support of the Khvājas of Chisht, and Tāyman himself is said to have acted as their agent in Chaghcharān, Gharjistān and Chahār Šada. In the late seventeenth century, the Tāymanī leader Mīr Muḥammad Sulṭān conquered Ghūr, which henceforth was considered as Tāymanī homeland.²⁹⁵

During the nineteenth century, the Tāymanīs were said to number 12,000 families, 2,000 of which belonged to the *khān khēl* originated by Tāyman.²⁹⁶ British observers noted that the Tāymanī country seemed somewhat less inviting than other *ūymāq* settings: “The Taimani hills are totally different from the grassy uplands and tremendous ravines of the Firozkohi country, or from the magnificent rolling downy pastures of Badghis. They are bare and stony, though not often actually rocky.” Within this “maze of brown, treeless and barren hills,”²⁹⁷ the narrow valleys along the streams draining the region in a southwesterly direction formed fertile islands yielding wheat and barley, vegetables, melons, rice, cotton and tobacco.²⁹⁸

The “national hero” of the Tāymanīs, in the words of a British observer, was Dilāvar Khān, who used the breakdown of Safavid authority around 1717 to expand the Tāymanī sphere of influence towards the southwest. When the Abdālī Afghāns asserted their authority over Herat, Dilāvar Khān conquered Farāh and expelled the Shāmlū governor from Isfizār.²⁹⁹ This expansion of power enabled Dilāvar Khān to offer spirited resistance to Nādir Shāh from 1731 on, as has been discussed in Chapter 2. After Dilāvar Khān’s death the Tāymanī country was divided among two of his sons and his paternal uncle Shāh Karam Sulṭān. Shāh Karam Sulṭān was placed in possession of Taivāra in the Tāymanī heartland of Ghūr. Dilāvar Khān’s son Āqā Mīrzā received the southwestern regions of Isfizār and Fārsī. The other son, ‘Unāb Khān, was placed in control of the northern regions of Tagāu Ishlān, Tūlak, Shahrak and Chaghcharān. ‘Unāb Khān joined Aḥmad Shāh’s service in 1754 and played an important role in his Indian campaigns. In 1761–62, he sided with the military governor of Herat, Anzala Khān Fūfalzai Durrānī, in his conflict with the Hazāra *bēglerbēgī* Darvīsh ‘Alī Khān Hazāra.³⁰⁰

In the eighteenth century, the Tāymanī chiefs were expected to furnish 2,000–3,000 soldiers to the Sadūzai rulers and to present a yearly “present” (*pīshkash*) to the court. While no longer in charge of Farāh and Isfizār, they played an important role in the administration of the eastern Herat valley. Thus, Khusrau Khān b. Āqā Mīrzā was appointed governor of Shāfilān and Auba by Aḥmad Shāh.³⁰¹ In the course of the nineteenth century, the Tāymanī possessions shrank further. Chaghcharān was lost to the Fīrūzkūhīs, and from the early 1840s on, the region of Ghūr faced increasing pressure from Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai. However, the local chief, Shāh Karam Sulṭān’s great-grandson Ibrāhīm Khān Tāymanī b. Muḥammad Khān (d. 1855–56), enjoyed a measure of support from the Qandahār Sardārs. Ibrāhīm Khān Tāymanī’s conflict with Yār Muḥammad Khān was apparently triggered by his steadfast loyalty to Kāmran Sadūzai: After Kāmran’s assassination in 1257/1842, he had given shelter to two of his sons and other Sadūzai exiles from Herat. In 1844, Ibrāhīm Khān Tāymanī was displaced from Taivāra by Yār Muḥammad Khān, and 3,000 Tāymanī families were deported to the Herat valley. Subsequently, Ibrāhīm Khān Tāymanī returned with the active help of the Pusht-i Kūh Hazāras and the encouragement of the Qandahār Sardārs.³⁰²

²⁹⁴ A valley draining northwards from the Band-i-Bāba range into the basin of the Murghāb river, through which runs the route from Chaghcharān to Chahār Šada (*Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 65, 86, 246).

²⁹⁵ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 396–7; Janata 1983: 326. For the relationship of the Tāymanīs with the Khvājas of Chisht in the late eighteenth century, see T Hu 423.

²⁹⁶ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 408.

²⁹⁷ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 391.

²⁹⁸ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 391–395.

²⁹⁹ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 397.

³⁰⁰ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 399, 414–15; TA 172, 430.

³⁰¹ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 398, 408–9.

³⁰² Ferrier 1857a: 242–3.

Ibrāhīm Khān Tāymanī's sons 'Abd al-Ghafūr Khān (d. 1879) and Anbiyā Khān (d. 1886) enjoyed a powerful position in Ghūr. 'Abd al-Ghafūr Khān is mainly known for the fact that he provoked a confrontation between the Muḥammadzai overlords of Qandahār and Farāh and Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān of Herat, which eventually led to the Muḥammadzai conquest of Herat. Subsequent to these events, 'Abd al-Ghafūr relinquished his claim to the government of Ghūr but resurfaced during the power struggle of the late 1860s as a proponent of Amīr Shīr 'Alī Khān's cause. Later on, he was closely associated with Sardār Muḥammad Ya'qūb Khān.³⁰³

In the early 1860s, 'Abd al-Ghafūr's brother Anbiyā Khān assumed the leadership of the Tāymanīs of Ghūr. In exchange for his pledge to submit revenues to the Muḥammadzai administration he was formally installed as the governor of Ghūr. The Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–1880 brought about a rift among the various Tāymanī sections. Anbiyā Khān of Taivāra and Sardār Sulṭān Muḥammad Khān of Fārsi (a descendant of Āqā Mīrzā Khān) showed pro-British sentiments. The chiefs of Tūlak and Tagāu Ishlān and the Ghurid sub-chiefs of Sākhar and Sangān, by contrast, decided to side with Muḥammad Ayūb Khān. The chief of Sangān and the son of the chief of Sākhar actively participated in the battle of Maivand. The leaders of Tūlak and Tagāu Ishlān proved their loyalty to Muḥammad Ayūb Khān by apprehending Khān Āqā Jamshīdī and delivering him to Herat in December 1880. As Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān consolidated his hold over Herat in 1881, the pro-Ayūb forces suffered correspondingly. The northern Tāymanī chiefships of Tūlak and Tagāu Ishlān were incorporated into the provincial administration, and only Shahrak evaded sustained government intervention. Anbiyā Khān, on his part, successfully held on to his old prerogatives. He continued to be in charge of the assessment and collection of the government revenue of Ghūr and received an annual subsidy of 15,000 *qirān*. Furthermore, he evicted the chief of Sangān with government backing and thus enhanced his sphere of influence. The privileges of the Tāymanī chiefs of Ghūr lasted until 1894. The chief of Fārsi was not quite as fortunate. While enjoying liberal grants and a marriage alliance with the governor of Herat, Muḥammad Sarvar Khān (1882–1887), he was deprived of the right to assess and collect the local revenues.³⁰⁴

HERAT AND ITS HINTERLAND IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Persian accounts of the Herat oasis are unanimous in their praise of its delightful climate, its abundant and fine agricultural produce, and its well fortified and prosperous city. Passing through the region in the early nineteenth century, Zain al-'Ābidīn Shīrvānī recorded his impressions as follows: "[Herat's] climate is pleasant, its water tasty... It contains charming districts, pleasing villages, and flourishing paradise-like gardens... The entire valley is inhabited and cultivated. Seven irrigation channels are in use. Its fruit and grain are for the most part excellent, its grapes and melons outstanding."³⁰⁵

The Central Asian traveller Boukhary, who described Herat around 1233/1818,³⁰⁶ roughly at the same time as Shīrvānī, noted that the local monuments had suffered due to the vicissitudes of time. Even so, he was of the opinion that the Muṣallā in the *bulūk* Khiyābān and the Pul-i Mālān south of Herat had retained much of their erstwhile splendor. To Boukhary, the Muṣallā complex represented the finest architecture in Herat and surpassed all the buildings he had seen in Transoxiana, Iran and Anatolia:

The descendants of Chingīz Khān, Tīmūr-i Gūrgān and the Uzbek kings erected buildings in Herat. When [the city] fell to the [Safavid] Iranians ('*ajam*), they destroyed these splendid edifices on purpose. As soon as the Iranians had erected new buildings, this country was once again conquered by the Uzbeks, and they destroyed whatever the Iranians had built. But a few monuments remain. The Muṣallā, the *madrasa* and nine minarets built by Sulṭān Ḥusain Mīrzā Bāyqarā in the name of Imām Rizā were spared by the Iranians. The Muṣallā remains unharmed. Its cupola equals the 'Uthmāniya mosque [in Istanbul] in size and height. But its vault is gilded, covered with arabesques of gold and lapis lazuli, and ornamented with inscriptions and glazed tiles. They

³⁰³ Napier 1875: 244; KD 31 Jan–6 Feb 1868, NAI, For. Pol. A Feb 1868 No. 328.

³⁰⁴ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 410–413.

³⁰⁵ *Riyāz al-siyāḥat* 419.

³⁰⁶ Boukhary 83–4, Persian text 41.

have truly constructed a fine edifice. In each of its four corners is a tiled minaret. There is no building like this in Transoxiana, Khurāsān, or Iran. Such delicate ornaments in gold and lapis lazuli are not to be found in Istanbul either.³⁰⁷

Boukhary was also deeply impressed with the most famous bridge spanning the Harī Rūd, the Pul-i Mālān:

There is also the Pul-i Mālān across the river of Herat located one *farsakh* (four miles) towards the south along the road to Qandahār. It was built by a lady called Bībī Nūr. It has twenty-seven arches, each of them high enough that an elephant, its driver and its litter can pass underneath. It is beautifully ornamented and is twenty paces wide. In springtime, when the water of the river swells and swirls around, it is a most wonderful spectacle to behold.³⁰⁸

Subsequent European visitors mostly noted signs of decline in and around Herat. This state of dilapidation was brought about by three major military campaigns, viz. the Iranian sieges of 1837–1838 and 1856 and the Muḥammadzai conquest of 1863, which took their toll of the population and altered the urban fabric. In the following, I will first reproduce a few eyewitness accounts which capture the prevailing mood in the city. In the second part of this section I will revisit some of the landmarks known since Timurid times. The final part will capture some impressions from the “counties” (*vilāyāt*) of Herat.

In 1839, D’Arcy Todd, the British envoy to Herat, painted a gloomy picture of the circumstances in Herat subsequent to the first Iranian siege:

Herat was formerly celebrated for its manufacture of carpets, swords and matchlock rifles; but there is now scarcely a single artificer or workman in the place: the whole of these people, with the exception of one or two whom Lieutenant Pottinger has induced to remain by lending them small sums of money, and occasionally employing them, having either died or emigrated with their families to Mushed [Mashhad], and other places beyond the Herat frontier. Of the forty-five thousand inhabitants of Herat, which, at the lowest calculation, the town contained eight or nine years ago, there do not remain at present more than eight thousand persons. Not more than one tenth of the houses of the city are inhabited, the remainder are deserted and ruined; the bazaar consists of about one hundred shops, chiefly of the necessities of life, beyond which there is scarcely anything procurable in the place... Most of the mosques and public edifices are in ruin. The city water-courses are choked up or destroyed. In fact, everything about the place denotes desertion, desolation and ruin.³⁰⁹

When Ferrier visited the city six years later, he estimated the population at 6,000–7,000 persons and noted that the impact of the war was still clearly visible:

Though the population of Herat has continually increased during the last three years, it will be a long time before the ruins are all cleared away, for only one house in five at the utmost is inhabited, or in a condition to be so. Buildings of all kinds, caravansarais, bazaars, baths, & c. were nearly all destroyed by the Persian shells or fell to the earth from being abandoned by their owners. The besieged also pulled down many of those nearest to the walls to repair the breaches made by the enemies’ guns. Nothing can be imagined more desolate than the appearance of the city in 1845; the traces of the wanton destruction of gardens and houses in the environs, originally so picturesque and fertile, was still apparent; villages and handsome esplanades, shaded by beautiful trees, have completely disappeared. The Persian troops during the ten months’ siege... made greater havoc and devastation than if the country had been a prey to civil wars for a hundred years. Not one of the splendid trees which were the pride of the inhabitants and ornament of the suburbs was spared, everything was levelled to the ground by these Vandals, and on their departure the town and country round was one scene of desolation and ruin. [new paragraph] The greater number of the bazaars at the period of my visit were in a dilapidated state; a portion of those in the Char Sook [Chahār Sū], the four streets, were the only ones in good repair. The houses in these four streets are built of burnt bricks, and vaulted, there are shops on either side, and the four extremities of the streets unite at one end in a circular building, from the top of the cupola of which there is a panoramic view of the whole city.³¹⁰

After the Muḥammadzai conquest of Herat in May 1863, the city was given up to plundering by 4,000 Afghan soldiers.³¹¹ When Vámbéry arrived there almost half a year later, he was dismayed at the general level of destruction:

We entered by the gate Dervaze Arak [Darvāza-yi Arg]. The houses which we passed, the advanced works, the very gate, looked like a heap of rubbish. Near the latter, in the inside of the city, is the Ark (citadel) having, from its elevation, served as a mark for

³⁰⁷ Boukhary 250–1, Persian text 110.

³⁰⁸ Boukhary 251, Persian text 110.

³⁰⁹ D’Arcy Todd to Macnaghten, 2 October 1839 (IOL, L/PS/20/G 10/3 No. 4, p. 4).

³¹⁰ Ferrier 1857: 173.

³¹¹ Vámbéry 1864: 280.

the Afghan artillery; it lies there blasted and half demolished. The doors and windows have been stripped of their woodwork, for during the siege the inhabitants suffered most from the scarcity of fuel. In the bare openings of the walls are perched here and there a few wretched-looking Afghans or Hindoos—worthy guards of such a ruin... [new paragraph] The bazaar itself, dating from Herat's epoch of splendour, the reign of the Sultan Husein Mirza [Sultān Ḥusain Bāyqarā], and consequently about four hundred years old, deserved still, even in its ruins, the epithet beautiful. It is said, in earlier times, to have formed an entire street, from the Dervaze Arak to the Dervaze Kandahar [Darvāza-yi Qandahār].³¹²

In the 1870s, the population of Herat rebounded. However, Grodekoffs statement that the city contained 50,000 persons in 1878 is not borne out by other sources.³¹³ In 1884, Stewart ventured the opinion that the city population hovered between 12,000 and 15,000 people.³¹⁴

In spite of the decay that the city suffered during the nineteenth century, most of the characteristic features of Timurid Herat survived into the nineteenth century. A look at the Persian chronicles of that time shows that certain places had assumed new names in the meantime. While the western and eastern city gates continued to be designated as 'Irāq and Khush/Khushk,³¹⁵ the name of the southern Fīrūzābād Gate had changed to Qandahār Gate.³¹⁶ Leading to the citadel, the northwestern Malik Gate was also designated as "Darvāza-yi Arg".³¹⁷ In the nineteenth century, the Qipchāq Gate was referred to as Quṭb(-i) Chāq.³¹⁸ Among the four bastions of the city walls, only the southwestern tower retained its historical name of Burj-i Khākistar.³¹⁹ The former Burj-i Sham'āniyān in the northwest was called Burj-i Fīlkhāna (Pīlakhāna), the former Burj-i 'Alī Asad in the northeast was known as Burj-i Shāh-i Karam, and the former Burj-i Kh-R-Q in the southeast was now referred to as Burj-i (Khvāja) 'Abd al-Miṣr.³²⁰

European and British Indian visitors described the Chahār Sū and the Qal'a-yi Ikhtiyār al-Dīn as the most prominent features of Herat city. Even after a prolonged period of peace, Yate noted that the trade going on in the Chahār Sū was but a mere shadow of its former potential:

All the trade of the city is comprised in these four streets and with the exception of a few fruit-stalls, &c., there are no shops worth speaking of anywhere else. All these four streets are roofed with wooden beams, either boarded over or covered with matting and bushes during almost their entire length from the gateways to the Chaharsu; the central portion immediately adjoining the Chaharsu alone being roofed with regular brick domes. At present hardly half of the shops are occupied, and it is only in the immediate neighbourhood of the Chaharsu that there is any display of wares...³²¹

In 1833, the British Indian traveller Mohan Lal described the Qal'a-yi Ikhtiyār al-Dīn as "one of the most solid and ancient buildings in Herat." Yet he reached the conclusion that it "has so little of the character of a regal residence, that the gaols in British India are much superior to the palace of Kamran, not only in architectural beauty, but even in cleanliness."³²² At the time of Charles E. Yate's visit, the citadel was known as *arg-i kuhna* to distinguish it from the *arg-i nau*, an open enclosure on the northern wall which had been

³¹² Vámbéry 1864: 270–2.

³¹³ Marvin 1884: 287.

³¹⁴ *Correspondence respecting the Demarcation of the N.W. Frontier of Afghanistan from the Hari Rud to the Oxus, 1884–86*, IOL, L/P&S/18/A53, pt IV, p. 11.

³¹⁵ *Dhū al-qarnain* 448; NT 679, 682, 690, 713, 716, 1317, 1325; KR 167; ST 146; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 247.

³¹⁶ *Dhū al-qarnain* 448; NT 677, 682, 713, 716; KR 172; ST 146; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 247; Lal 1977: 158; Szuppe 1992: 27; Vámbéry 1864: 272.

³¹⁷ *Dhū al-qarnain* 448; KR 167; Vámbéry 1864: 270, 272.

³¹⁸ KR 167; Takki Khān 1885: 1175; Lal 1977: 158; C. E. Yate 1885: 1164. Tumanovich translates *quṭb-i chāq* as "large dome" (Tumanovich 1989: 49). Iranian sources of the time distort the name of the gate into *Qūṭchāq*, *Qūbichāq*, or *Qūfī Chāy* (*Dhū al-qarnain* 448; NT 682; *Vaqāyi 'va savāniḥ* 25). For a description of the adjoining Quṭb-i Chāq quarter, see Samizay 1981: 118–147.

³¹⁹ NT 678, 682; ST 14; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 21.

³²⁰ NT 682, 713, 716, 1324; Hamilton 1906: 152; ST 146; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 247; Stewart, *Correspondence respecting the Demarcation of the N.W. Frontier of Afghanistan from the Hari Rūd to the Oxus, 1884–86*, IOL, L/PS/18/A53, part IV, p. 10; Szuppe 1992: 27, 29; T Su 98; C. E. Yate 1885: 1164. The southeastern quarter of town was known as 'Abdullāh Miṣrī (Samizay 1981: 148–74), the southwestern as Muhmand (Samizay 1981: 174–211), the northwestern as Bardurrānī (Samizay 1981: 212–53), and the northeastern as Quṭb-i Chāq (Samizay 1981: 118–47).

³²¹ C. E. Yate 1885: 1163. The domes of the Chahār Sū Bazaar eventually collapsed in 1914 (Najimi 1982: 38).

³²² Lal 1977: 159.

erected to fortify the northern line of defence and served as a parade ground for the troops in garrison. Yate's portrayal of the citadel is somewhat more sober than that of Isfizārī in the late fifteenth century but still reflects its imposing dimensions:

This building, which is altogether some 250 yards in length, now stands not in the centre of the town, but slightly back from the main northern wall. The ditches... are now mostly choked up and full of reeds, though efforts are being made to clear them out. The entrance is over a bridge across the ditch and through a gateway at the south-east angle, facing the main street down to the Chahar Su... This Citadel is at present occupied by the Sipah Salar and his brother and their wives and families with a guard of some 50 men... The entire inhabited portion or Citadel proper is a lofty building of burnt brick, with four bastions on its southern face, some 110 yards in length and 60 in breadth.³²³

Another building which continued to impress visitors to the region was the cistern (Hauz-i Chārsū) erected by the Safavid governor Ḥasan Khān Shāmlū in the seventeenth century. Mohan Lal even characterized it as the “most beautiful and beneficial edifice” in Herat. He described it as nearly sixty feet square and thirty feet deep, containing “clear and shining” water. Lamps placed in its arches served to bring out its fine architectural features.³²⁴ In 1845, Ferrier praised this “vast reservoir” and its dome of “bold and excellent proportions” as a chef d’oeuvre of its kind.³²⁵

In the districts around Herat, the available nineteenth-century accounts focus on the Pul-i Mālān in the *bulūk* of Guzāra, the Gāzargāh in the *bulūk* of Parvāna-Havādashtak and the Muṣallā in the *bulūk* Injīl. Contrary to Boukhary, European and British Indian observers were less than enthusiastic about the state of the Pul-i Mālān and mostly noted signs of deterioration. Because of the crumbling of its arches and the changing course of the Harī Rūd, the bridge only afforded a partial passage across the river. The other branches of the river could only be forded during the dry season. At the time of the spring and autumn floods, trade with Qandahār entirely ground to a halt.³²⁶ In 1833, Mohan Lal reported that the spring floods had swept away three of its arches and cut off the intercourse between Herat and the outside world for two months.³²⁷ The decay of the Pul-i Mālān in the nineteenth century is confirmed by a British agent in 1840:

An old irregular bridge having numerous arches of unequal size formerly spanned the river at this point; three of its arches have entirely failed, and the whole structure is in a state of great dilapidation; the river has also partially deserted the bed in which it formerly ran, a branch now flowing round either end of the bridge.³²⁸

In the summer of 1845, Ferrier noted the Pul-i Mālān among other vestiges bearing witness to a more glorious past:

At one hour's distance from the town we crossed the Heri-rood [Harī Rūd] by a bridge of twenty-six arches, called Pūl Malan; it is built of burnt brick, and has been recently restored by Yar Mohamed [Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai]. In Europe it would have been an ordinary work; but at Herat it was an object of general admiration. At this place the bed of the river is hollowed out of the sand, and the waters flow through fifteen canals, twelve feet wide and very deep, enclosed between two embankments, formed of the earth taken out of the excavations. They have been made as a precautionary measure against the overflowing of the river, from which the country had often suffered... The rise of the Heri-rood in the spring is considerable; but such is the number of outlets cut from it to carry on the irrigation of the country between Obeh [Auba] and Herat, that it was nearly dry when we crossed it at Pūl Malan. The cultivation extends for two miles south of Herat, and scattered in various directions are the remains of houses, aqueducts, and other monuments of antiquity, which even now give an idea of what the environs were in former times.³²⁹

Forty years later, Yate reported that the Pul-i Mālān was reduced to 25 arches:

³²³ C. E. Yate 1885: 1163. See also C. E. Yate 1887b: 85.

³²⁴ Lal 1977: 159–60.

³²⁵ Ferrier 1857: 174.

³²⁶ Khanikoff 1864: 362.

³²⁷ Lal 1834: 17; 1977: 156–7. While most accounts assume the Pul-i Mālān to have originally consisted of 26 arches, Lal fixes their number at 33.

³²⁸ This passage is quoted in Allen 1981: 42.

³²⁹ Ferrier 1857: 261.

Of the old bridge only half of it now remains, and though the main channel of the river is turned under the present remnant of the bridge every year at the conclusion of the spring floods, still while the floods last, say during April, May and June, there is always a wide stretch of water to be forded, though the flood, I am told, is seldom so high as to render the river impassable for very many days together at a time. Some 25 arches, all told, of the old bridge are now standing, but some of these are broken through and are decidedly precarious, though still passable, except towards the northern end, where the deepest channel of the river has cut away a couple of arches. Only three or four small blocks of masonry sticking up in the middle of the bed of the river to the south of the bridge, show where it formerly extended to.³³⁰

Other focal points of British interest were the Muṣallā and the Gāzargāh containing Khvāja ‘Abdullāh Anṣārī’s grave. Both locations reportedly suffered acts of Shī‘ī vandalism during the frequent Qājār campaigns in the region in the early nineteenth century and the sieges of 1837–38 and 1856.³³¹ In 1830, Conolly reported that the Iranian troops had vented their anti-Sunnī sentiments on Anṣārī’s grave by cracking the pillar of white marble adorning it. Even so, he came away with the impression that the shrine and its attendants still prospered:

The shrine is well endowed, a Motwullee [*mutavallī*] and thirty attendants being retained to perform the duties of reading the Korān and keeping the garden in order; and they, and numberless cats, lounge about and sleep, and profit by the visitors (sic). Khojeh Abdoollah Ansarree extended his philanthropy to the brute species, and was very fond of cats, of which I should think not fewer than a hundred are kept in honour of his memory; not that the shrine is put to much expense, for the townspeople continually make picnic parties, to enjoy the *sail* (prospect) from these hills, and what they do not eat they leave for the cats and beggars.³³²

In 1885, Yate noted that although the buildings of the shrine complex had lost much of their former splendor, the Gāzargāh was still “well worth a visit”:

Passing first through a large walled garden of pine and mulberry trees, the visitor comes to an octagonal domed building full of little rooms and three-cornered recesses, two stories in height and all opening inwards, built apparently as a cool, breezy place in which to pass the heat of the summer days. Beyond this again is the main enclosure of the Ziarat, now a deserted and dilapidated-looking place; everything bears a look of decay; the unkept court-yard, the broken tile work on the archway and entrance to the shrine, and general want of repair visible everywhere, betoken a great falling off from former prosperity... The entrance of the shrine lies at the eastern end of the main court yard through a doorway under a high arched vestibule and across a covered corridor, paved with slabs of white marble, worn and polished into a most dangerous state of slipperiness by, presumably, the feet of countless pilgrims. Round about this door sit Mullas, beggars and pilgrims of all sorts, in addition to the numerous blind Hafiz or reciters of the Koran who here seem to act as the general showmen of the place... Passing through the entrance one emerges into a square court-yard, surrounded by high walls and little rooms with a lofty half domed portico at the eastern end, the tile work on which is very much out of repair... The great feature of the Shrine is the headstone of white marble to the grave of the Saint which stands some 14 or 15 feet in height and is most exquisitely carved throughout. This stone is a beautiful piece of work, as not only is the carving of the texts and inscription well executed, but the whole proportions of the stone are beautiful.³³³

Yate goes on to describe a number of the 20–30 tombs inside the portico, most of which belonged to nobles related to Shāh Rukh or Chingiz Khān. The covered water reservoir in the enclosure had originally been built by Shāh Rukh and was subsequently restored “by some lady of royal descent” in 1100/1688–89. A more recent addition was the grave of the Muḥammadzai ruler Dūst Muḥammad Khān, who died barely two weeks after conquering Herat in May 1863:

The Amir Dost Muḥammad’s tombstone is a plain simple but handsome block of pure white marble, some 8 feet in length by about 1 ½ or 2 feet in height and breadth, finely carved and surrounded by a marble balustrade. It lies just to the north of the Saint’s tomb in the open enclosure. At the head and foot of the grave stand small blocks of white marble carved in imitation, but a very bad imitation, of the head and foot stones of the Khwajah’s tomb. They are dwarfed and quite lost in comparison with the original monuments.³³⁴

Ironically, British presence in Herat caused further damage to the local monuments. After the fall of Panjdih in March 1885, the British feared further Russian encroachment on Afghanistan and proceeded to strengthen

³³⁰ C. E. Yate 1885: 1164.

³³¹ Vambéry 1864: 283–4

³³² Conolly 1834 II: 23.

³³³ C. E. Yate 1885: 1166–7; 1887b: 85–8.

³³⁴ C. E. Yate 1885: 1168; 1887 b: 90. For a twentieth-century account of the Gāzargāh, see Samizay 1981: 64–74.

the fortifications of Herat. Part of their efforts to ward off a possible Russian bombardment focused on the citadel and the city gates, which were equipped with heavy artillery. Of graver consequences was the British decision to clear the outskirts of Herat of all elevations that might provide cover for an approaching Russian army. This undertaking entailed the destruction of the Muşallā, as the Herati historian Riyāzī bitterly remarks:

After the Russian conquest [of Panjdih] the British officials endeavored to strengthen the army and fortifications of Herat. A number of entrenchments were erected outside of Herat. Among others, they built mighty entrenchments at Tall-i Bangiyān north of Herat. In addition, they cleared the environs of the city to a distance of 600 paces of walls and trees. They dismantled the mosque and the *īvān* of the famous Muşallā of Herat by means of mining, gunpowder and manpower. They transported the bricks [of these buildings] to Herat and used them to build a large storage facility to provide the army with grain. They installed a firm entrenchment outside of the 'Irāq Gate next to the moat, in which they placed six cannons. They also used the bricks of the Muşallā to erect an entrenchment underneath the Burj-i Khākbasar by the moat, in which they installed a battery of artillery. In like manner they erected entrenchments outside all of the gates and placed several cannons on them. The Muşallā of Herat, which was destroyed with the approval of the British functionaries, was the most excellent building in the eastern territories and [its beauty] was beyond imagination. Its chambers (*ghurfāt*) and the vault (*īvān-i maqṣūra*) were ornamented with blue and green tile work in a [style] that is far removed from the technical skills and artistic concepts of present-day craftsmen.³³⁵

Yate, who witnessed the demolition of the Muşallā complex and furnished a last report concerning its constituent parts in November 1885, agreed with Riyāzī that it was the “grandest building anywhere in this part of the world”:

The so-called Musalla in reality consists of the remains of three separate buildings, running north-east and south-west and covering a total space of nearly 600 yards from end to end. The Madrassah on the north-east lies some 1,350 yards, the domed building in the centre, known as the tomb of Shah Rukh, about 1,200 and the Musalla some 1,000 yards to the north of the walls of the new citadel. Of the Madrassah or college nothing but two high arches and four minarets remain. The arches must be at least some 60 feet in height and are covered with the remains of fine tile work of beautiful and artistic designs. The tile work on the minarets seems to have been mostly worn off by stress of weather, while inside the arches the tiles in some places are still perfect. The minarets of the Madrassah appear taller than those of the Musalla and must be between 120 and 150 feet in height... The domed building called the tomb of Shah Rukh stands between the Madrassah and the Musallah. It is faced on the east by an archway and by one solitary minaret, still covered with tilework. The dome, too, was once covered with blue tiles, but is now sadly out of repair... The Musallah was a huge, massive building of burnt brick and mortar throughout, almost entirely faced with beautiful tile or rather mosaic work as the various patterns were all formed of small pieces of enamelled tile compactly fitted together in fine gypsum plaster... The main building of the Musallah consisted of a fine, lofty dome some 75 feet in diameter with a smaller domed building behind it and many rooms around. The entrance to this was from the east through a lofty archway some 80 feet in height, the outer face of which was one great sheet of mosaic work, mingled with large inscriptions in gilt. Above the archway was a square-topped mass of masonry containing rooms and passages of sorts, adding greatly to the height of the building. Beyond again or to the east of this archway was an enclosed courtyard some 60 to 80 yards square surrounded with corridors and rooms several stories in height, all faced with enamelled tile and mosaic work... The main entrance to the building lay through another massive archway, also some 80 feet in height... Four minarets some 120 feet in height form the four corners of the building and are still for the most part covered with tiles, though a good deal has been worn off by the weather, especially on the north by east, the side of the prevailing wind.³³⁶

In sum, the above descriptions of the great sites of Herat convey a sense of forlornness. They capture individual monuments without offering the corresponding sense of coherence these buildings were endowed with in Timurid times. Rather than vibrant institutions, the reader comes upon scattered architectural shells bereft of their former embeddedness in a corresponding social and political context. While these accounts bear witness to the longevity of the Timurid buildings and eagerly trace signs of former grandeur, they also document an ongoing process of deterioration.

As far as the *vilāyāt* of Herat are concerned, the European observers note regional differences. While the western lands adjoining Iranian territory bore the mark of repeated military altercations, the eastern and southeastern regions reportedly flourished. Towards the north, Bādghīs still lived up to its reputation as pasture ground and thus figured largely in British strategic considerations.

³³⁵ KR 225–6. See also ST 465–6; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 III, 1: 174; Kakar 1979: 107.

³³⁶ C. E. Yate 1885: 1171–3; 1887b: 96–9. See also Samizay 1981: 96.

KURUKH

Despite its proximity to the city, Kurukh was not directly affected by the Iranian siege of Herat in 1837–1838. Nevertheless, the local governor sought to ingratiate himself with Muḥammad Shāh Qājār by sending loads of snow to the Qājār camp at the height of summer in 1838.³³⁷ A year later, British observers reported Kurukh to be in a “comparatively flourishing condition” and to yield sufficient revenue for the upkeep of four hundred cavalry and four hundred infantry by the local governor.³³⁸ In 1858, the products of horticulture and wool sold in Herat are mentioned as major sources of income.³³⁹

GHŪRIYĀN

In the early nineteenth century, Ghūriyān assumed a central position in the altercations between the Qājār government and the princes of Herat concerning their respective spheres of influence in eastern Khurāsān. In 1839, D’Arcy Todd summed up the shifting configurations of power as follows:

Ghorian has been considered as one of the four velayuts [*vilāyat*], or counties of Herat, since the time of Ahmad Shah [Aḥmad Shāh], but it has often changed masters, and was for many years, about the beginning of this century, held as an independent possession of Eesa Khan, Karaee [Ishāq Khān Qarā’ī, d. 1816], the celebrated chief of Toorbut [Turbat-i Ḥaidarīya]. On Eesa Khan’s death, Ghorian was taken by Bunyad [Bunyād] Beg, Hazara, who kept it for about a year; after which it fell to Hajee Feerooz [Fīrūz al-Dīn Sadūzai], the Governor of Herat [1801–1818], who retained it for about a year.³⁴⁰ On Hajee Feerooz being driven out of Herat by his brother Shah Mahmood [Shāh Maḥmūd], Ghorian was taken by the Persians, assisted by the Tymoorees [Tīmūrīs] under Ghillich Khān [Qilich Khān, d. 1822], by which chief Ghorian was held for about two years. It then fell into the hands of Mahomed Khan, Karaee [Muḥammad Khān Qarā’ī], son of Eesa Khan above mentioned, who retained possession of it for four or five years, independent of either Persians or Afghans. On Mahomed Khan being seized by the Persian Governor of Khorasan [in 1833], Ghorian was attacked and taken by the rulers of Herat, in whose possession it remained until taken, in November 1837 by the Persians... The fortifications of Ghorian are of no great strength, but its position renders it of extreme importance to Herat. It is situated about forty miles to the west of the city, and commands the only road practicable for artillery, by which Herat can be approached from the west... The possession of Ghorian by the Persians is at present productive of great evil to the inhabitants of Herat, as it entirely prevents the importation of grain from the west and south-west, whence supplies might be obtained in considerable quantities.³⁴¹

During the same period, the Russian lieutenant Blaramberg reported that the fort of Ghūriyān was square-shaped; each of its walls measured 400 feet and was equipped with towers and a double moat.³⁴² In 1844, Vazīr Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai destroyed the fort in order to secure the favor of Muḥammad Shāh Qājār.³⁴³ When Khanikoff visited the region in September 1858, a new fort was under construction to the northeast of Ghūriyān.³⁴⁴

KŪSŪYA (KUHSĀN)

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Kūsūya was “one vast ruin” containing only four hundred inhabited houses. Passing through in June 1845, Ferrier observed that the local citadel apparently dated back to a much earlier period:

The wall of the enceinte is open at several points, and its desolate appearance agrees with the tradition that the town has been rebuilt and destroyed many times; certain it is that the materials of which the citadel was constructed are very ancient—the burnt bricks, of a fine grain, being as hard as stone. The ditch that surrounds it is wide, deep and in good repair, and always full of

³³⁷ Stoddart to McNeill, Herat, 16 August 1838 (IOL, L/PS/20/A7/Vol. 1–Part 1 Appendix, p. 56).

³³⁸ Todd to Macnaghten, Herat, 2 October 1839 (IOL, L/PS/20/G10/3, p. 6).

³³⁹ Khanikoff 1864: 377.

³⁴⁰ Ḥājī Fīrūz al-Dīn held Ghūriyān twice, from 1813–1814, and from 1816–1817. For a detailed account of the changing political configurations in the region, see the next chapter.

³⁴¹ Todd to Macnaghten, 2 October 1839 (IOL, L/PS/20/G10/3 No. 4, p. 8).

³⁴² Blaramberg 1841: 268, quoted in Tumanovich 1989: 225.

³⁴³ Ferrier 1857: 142.

³⁴⁴ Khanikoff 1864: 359.

water; the foundations and a large proportion of the gates are of hewn stone, and were apparently constructed two or three thousand years ago.³⁴⁵

In Ferrier's opinion, the picturesque environs made up for the "melancholy and desolate appearance" of the town:

[T]he banks of the Heri-rood [Harī Rūd] are admirably wooded for a distance of twelve parasangs [48 miles], both with copse and trees of large growth... The tamarisk rises above every other tree, and is the kind generally met with in Central Asia, more especially by the side of a river. That part of the forest which extends in a radius of two parasangs [eight miles] round Kussan [Kuhsān] has been preserved as the hunting-ground of the chiefs of Herat, and the game is collected here in prodigious quantities. Pheasants, black-cock, hares, grey partridges, and the very small kind called in Persian *tuyou*, are in abundance; also boars, deer, and the wild ass; carnivorous animals are also in great numbers, who here find ample rations.³⁴⁶

In September 1858, Khanikoff also mentioned the rich vegetation of large tamarisk, yew and plane trees around Kūsūya on the right bank of the Harī Rūd. He observed that the Harī Rūd carried very little water in this region and often disappeared altogether under sandbanks.³⁴⁷

BĀDGHĪS

Nineteenth-century accounts of Bādghīs identify Kurukh and Qal'a-yi Nau as the constituent parts of Bādghīs. They further include Panjdih at the confluence of the Kushk Rūd and Murghāb river as part of Bādghīs, despite the fact that this region had formed part of the province of Murghāb in Timurid times. In 1885, Lumsden assigned a vast territory to Bādghīs and described it as comprising:

the lands watered by the Murghab river, including the Kushk and all other tributaries, together with grazing lands extending from the Heri-rud [Harī Rūd] river on the west, to a day's journey for flocks to the east of the Murghab. In earlier times it included Yulatan [Yolotan], but since the time of Khivan supremacy... the tract of cultivation between Penjdeh [Panjdih] and Yulatan has remained fallow, and beyond the traces of early canals presents no vestige of former occupation, and has become desert. Penjdeh is the principal valley of Badghis, and may be described as that portion of it watered by an extensive system of canals, which formerly issued from the dam known as Band-i-Nadir [Band-i Nādir], some eight miles north of Maruchak [Mārūchāq] on the Murghab river.³⁴⁸

Another British report from this period found that the pasture grounds of Bādghīs were on a par with those of England and might serve the needs of the British cavalry as well. Yet at the time, there was hardly a trace left of the copious wood supply mentioned by Isfīzārī:

Badghis is a country of beautiful grassy downs, sloping gently to the northward. The soil of the valleys, and also of the high ground when near the hills, is exceedingly fertile and produces excellent crops of wheat and barley without irrigation. The grass in spring and early summer is magnificent, standing several feet high in the bottoms, sweet and good as English meadow grass and, like it, filled with wild flowers. The horses of the Afghan cavalry, and most of the horses in the Herat valley, are picketed out for several weeks in spring, during which they live on the grass, and nothing else. During April, May, and June all the cavalry would find grass in abundance in Badghis. After that the hot sun dries it up, but if cut in time and made into hay; a very large number of horses might be fed on it throughout the year. There are also places in the hills where there is good grass throughout the summer and well on into autumn. The rolling downs are perfectly bare of trees and even bushes. Only in eastern Badghis, where the country gets more hilly and broken, is wood found, and there, both in the Kushk and Kala Nao [Qal'a-yi Nau] districts there are tracts covered with the pistachio tree (*pistacia vera*)... Juniper grows on the Band-i-Baba [Band-i Bāba], and is excellent firewood, but is too far off to be readily available as such. It is used for building, but pista (pistachio) is made use of as well in conjunction with the tamarisk and willow which occasionally grow along the larger streams.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁵ Ferrier 1857: 140–1.

³⁴⁶ Ferrier 1857: 141.

³⁴⁷ Khanikoff 1864: 357.

³⁴⁸ Lumsden 1885: 565.

³⁴⁹ *Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 37. See also Stewart 1883.

ISFIZĀR (SABZAVĀR-I HARĀT)

Nineteenth-century accounts generally portray Isfizār as a flourishing region but also note signs of decline. In the summer of 1833, Lal repeated a local saying, according to which Isfizār consisted of 300 walled villages, each of which was watered by 300 *kārīz*. Nonetheless, he concluded that the place was “not worth seeing”:

Sabzawar, the residence of Shahzadah Jalaluddin [Jalāl al-Dīn b. Kāmrān Sadūzai], is a very small place, fortified; there is a high structure, repaired by the prince for his family, and houses of the chiefs and common people numbered nearly sixty. The buildings are destroyed by the rain and snow, and have a very dismal appearance. The market is on Friday, when all bargains are managed by twenty Hindu merchants. 10,000 kharvars of corn is produce of the whole country of Sabzawar.³⁵⁰

Twelve years later, Ferrier attributed the “present wretched condition” of Isfizār to the fact that it had been the bone of contention between the principalities of Herat and Qandahār in the recent past.³⁵¹ In early 1859, Khanikoff reported that the town was situated in an elliptic plain extending from east to west which was bounded by the river Adraskan on the east, north and west, while mountain ridges rising beyond the river in the north, east and south provided additional barriers. The entire plain was irrigated by canals drawn from the Adraskan river and presented an “uninterrupted succession of rich pastures and cultivated fields” allowing a plentiful production of grain. The surrounding wall of the town was of a nearly square shape, with the northern and eastern wall measuring 260 and 211 paces respectively. One gate on the southern wall gave access to the town and the citadel located in its center. Consisting of a poor northern and a more densely populated southern quarter, Isfizār contained about four hundred houses. Khanikoff noted that the town was more or less deserted in the summer when its overwhelmingly nomadic population of Durrānī Afghāns, Zūrī and Tīmūrī *ūymāq* left for the mountains by force of habit rather than necessity. According to Khanikoff, the climate was generally considered salubrious and the summer heat never became intense.³⁵²

In the early twentieth century, Hamilton described Sabzavār-i Harāt as a bustling trade mart, containing nearly 800 shops. He attempts the following estimate of the population:

The town is only a gathering place for the district which supports a number of villages and, together with the enveloping pasturage and a wide belt of cultivation, is inhabited by Nurzai Duranis [Nūrzai Durrānīs]. Each village is a small fort in itself and is surrounded by a high mud wall erected for purposes of security... in all there may be some 5000 households in the district, which may be apportioned into 4500 in the villages, 400 in the town, 100 in the fort, with a combined population of 12,000 souls.³⁵³

FARĀH

In Lal’s opinion, Farāh was a forelorn and decrepit place in 1833. Located at the outer periphery of Kāmrān Sadūzai’s sphere of power, this region was only loosely incorporated into the principality. At the same time, he notes a flourishing trade with Herat:

Farah is said to be the oldest place in Afghanistan, and to have been built by Faredun, an ancient king, mentioned in the Shah-namah. It is surrounded by a high wall, and small ditch. There are three gates; one of them is blocked up with mud. The houses are very poor and dirty. The people looked harassed, and were vagabonds. Great part of the town was in ruins, and abounded with large tanks of dirty water. In a word, it is not worthy of notice... The inhabitants are all Afghans, and are never obedient to their governors... They pay annually some thing to their masters, according to their own will; for if they are required to obey order, they resist with swords in their hands. Farah is very hot in the summer, when the people are often attacked by fever, and die very soon. The winter is not cold. Snow seldom falls here, and when it does, it melts directly. The soil is very rich: wheat and other necessities of life are exported to Herat, and sold at a great profit. Nadir Shah wrote to the king of Constantinople, that he

³⁵⁰ Lal 1977: 171.

³⁵¹ Ferrier 1857: 265.

³⁵² Khanikoff 1864: 381–3.

³⁵³ Hamilton 1910: 179.

had recently possessed himself of a country, the earth of which killed his enemies, and was sold at a high price; that is, saltpetre, which is produced in considerable quantity in Farah, and makes a strong gunpowder; it is exported to Herat and other places.³⁵⁴

As with Isfizār, Ferrier held the rivalry between Herat and Qandahār responsible for the decline of Farāh. In particular, he quotes the deportation of the entire population of 6,000 persons to Qandahār during the Qājār siege of Herat in 1837–38, by means of which Muḥammad Shāh Qājār's ally Sardār Kuhandil Khān sought to create a diversion in aid of the Iranian army.³⁵⁵

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS AND BORDERS

In the early nineteenth century, the administrative divisions of Herat continued to reflect Timurid arrangements. The principality was still conceived of as the core oasis consisting of “districts” (*bulūk*) irrigated by the Harī Rūd and adjoining “counties” (*vilāyāt*). From the accounts of the time, Herat emerges as a miniature version of the former Timurid province. In the early 1820s, Zain al-‘Ābidīn Shīrvānī reported that seven irrigation channels were in use in the oasis proper.³⁵⁶ A decade later, British-Indian travellers to the region mention eight *bulūk* and four *vilāyāt* but differ on the exact composition of the latter category. Conolly, who visited the region in 1830, mentions the *vilāyāt* of Auba (formerly Harāt-Rūd), Kurukh, Shāfilān, and Ghūriyān.³⁵⁷ Lal, who passed through Herat in 1832, lists Auba, Kurukh, Isfizār, and Ghūriyān as the four constituent parts of the principality.³⁵⁸ Conolly assigns a different status to Isfizār, Farāh, and Ghūr than the *vilāyāt*. Held as *tuyūl* by members of Kāmran Sadūzai's immediate family, they yielded no taxes to the administration.

The *bulūk* listed by Conolly from west to east were Alanjān, Injīl, Khiyābān, Sabqar, and Ghūrvān-Pāshātān north of the Harī Rūd, and Udvān-Tīzān, Guzāra and Kamburāq south of the Harī Rūd. Despite the shrinkage of cultivable areas, the oasis of Herat was still famed for its fertility. Conolly provides the following statistics concerning the production of grain in the eight *bulūk*:

[I]n these districts are four hundred and forty-six villages, eight large canals, which feed innumerable smaller ones, one hundred and twenty-three canals [*qanāt*], and two thousand two hundred and eighty-eight ploughs. The gross produce of wheat and barley in the eight belooks, by the above calculation, amounts to more than sixty eight thousand six hundred [Tabrīz] khurwars... [O]f these, twenty-eight thousand are assigned to the crown, and the rest to the cultivators, except a tithe, which is set apart for seed.³⁵⁹

Conolly estimated that the *vilāyāt* yielded another 30,000 Tabrīz *khavār*. Yet from Ghūriyān, only 500 out of a total estimated harvest of 10,000 Tabrīz *khavār* were at the disposal of the administration of Herat. Conolly attributed the reduced flow of revenues to the independent status of the local governor, Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai's half brother Shīr Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai. Moreover, he indicated that the state of unrest prevailing in the region had a negative impact on the proceeds from trade:

Formerly the country of Ghourian sent in much money and grain, but of late years it has suffered from the inroads of the Toorkmuns [Turkmens], and there has been a great falling off in the duties which were once levied upon the passing trade. When we were at Heraut, the government of Ghourian was held by a brother of sirdar Yar Mohummud Khan, protected by whom, it was said, he generally gave a very Flemish account of his receipts.³⁶⁰

During the 1830s, the eastern subdivisions of the province were assigned to close relations of Kāmran Sadūzai. At the time of Conolly's visit to the region, Kāmran's brother-in-law Shams al-Dīn Khān held Farāh as a service grant in exchange for furnishing 3,000 cavalry to Herat.³⁶¹ In 1833, he governed Anār

³⁵⁴ Lal 1977: 175–6.

³⁵⁵ Ferrier 1857: 394.

³⁵⁶ *Riyāz al-siyāhat* 419.

³⁵⁷ Conolly 1834 II: 7.

³⁵⁸ Lal 1834: 10; Lal 1977: 158, 165.

³⁵⁹ Conolly 1834 II: 6–7.

³⁶⁰ Conolly 1834 II: 8.

³⁶¹ Conolly 1834 II: 11, 67.

Darra. At that time, the Sadūzai princes Jahāngīr, Saif al-Mulūk and Jalāl al-Dīn b. Kāmran were in charge of Farāh, Ghūr and Isfizār.³⁶² Within a decade, however, the real authority in the eastern regions shifted to relations or dependents of Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai. Furthermore, the Vazīr's relatives controlled the western subdivisions directly. His younger brother Shīr Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai governed Ghūriyān. His paternal cousin Dīn Muḥammad Alakūzai b. 'Aṭā Muḥammad Khān was in charge of Kurukh and used the local revenues to keep up a body of 400 cavalry.³⁶³

From the enumeration of the regions subservient to Herat, the borders of the principality can be deduced. On the road to Mashhad, the village of Rūzanak north of Ghūriyān was considered the western outpost of the principality. Towards the east, Kāmran Sadūzai's authority extended 224 miles on the road to Qandahār.³⁶⁴ Farāh constituted the easternmost possession of Herat, and nineteenth-century sources describe the Khāsh Rūd as the border between the provinces of Qandahār and Herat. On the north, Herat was bounded by the possessions of Shīr Muḥammad Khān Hazāra.³⁶⁵ In the south, Lāsh-Juvain was beyond the purview of the Herat government. Sīstān formally acknowledged the supremacy of Herat in 1818 but broke away under the leadership of the Sarbandī and Shahrakī tribes in 1834.

After the Iranian siege of 1837–38, it took a while until Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai regained the territories lost to the Qājārs. On 31 March 1841, the Iranian government gave in to British pressure and evacuated Ghūriyān.³⁶⁶ In 1845, Ferrier listed six provinces that could furnish a total of 45,000 troops: Ghūriyān, Kurukh, Auba, Isfizār, Farāh, and Bakvā.³⁶⁷ In the following years, Yār Muḥammad Khān was able to extend his sphere of influence considerably. In the course of his campaigns against the Hazāras of Qal'a-yi Nau and the Tāymanīs, he successfully expanded the Herat territory northwards to include the lands on the left bank of the middle course of the Murghāb river.³⁶⁸ Activities in a westerly direction soon followed. Ḥasan Khān Sālār's occupation of Mashhad from fall 1848 to March 1850 provided an opportunity for Yār Muḥammad Khān to insert himself into the affairs of Qājār Khurāsān. Apart from rendering active assistance to the ousted Qājār governor Ḥamza Mīrzā, he occupied Khvāf and Turbat-i Shaikh Jām in an alleged attempt to displace the rebels from these areas. In January 1850, he requested that the Qājār government recompense him for his efforts by either paying 60,000 *tūmān* or awarding Khvāf and Turbat-i Shaikh Jām to him. Apparently, neither proposition was taken up by the Qājārs.³⁶⁹ During the last year of his life, Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai attempted to bring the southern territory of Lāsh-Juvain into the fold of his government. Governed by Ishāqzai Durrānī *khāns*, this region was also claimed by the Qandahār Sardārs, who made their presence felt there with Iranian backing in 1267/1850–51.³⁷⁰ Yār Muḥammad Khān accomplished his goal of conquering Lāsh but subsequently died on his way back to Herat in June 1851.³⁷¹ Immediately after Yār Muḥammad Khān's death, an Iranian envoy listed a number of governors in the western border region of Herat, all of whom were relatives of the deceased ruler: Yār Muḥammad Khān's cousin by his paternal aunt (*'ammazāda*) Dādū Khān was in charge of Kūhistān-i Herat near Rūzanak; his

³⁶² Lal 1977: 162–4, 172; NT 710. When Lal passed through Sabzavār-i Harāt in August 1833, he was received by Jalāl al-Dīn's deputy governor Mullā Karīm (Lal 1977: 171). In Farāh he met the local deputy governor Salīm Khān, "a negro slave of the king" (Lal 1977: 174).

³⁶³ The only check on Yār Muḥammad Khān's influence were the so-called *dāvṭalab* ("volunteers"), a Durrānī force which had been created by Tīmūr Shāh (D'Arcy Todd to Macnaghten, 2 October 1839 (IOL, L/PS/20/G 10/3 No. 4, pp. 5–9); Lal 1977: 163).

³⁶⁴ Conolly 1834 II: 44–5.

³⁶⁵ Forrest 1906: 36; D'Arcy Todd to Macnaghten, 2 October 1839 (IOL, L/PS/20/G 10/3 No. 4, p. 10).

³⁶⁶ Champagne 1981: 211, 231.

³⁶⁷ Ferrier 1857:183

³⁶⁸ Lee 1996: 205; Vámbéry 1864: 259–60.

³⁶⁹ Champagne 1981: 268–9; T Su 286–7.

³⁷⁰ In Šafar 1267/December 1850–January 1851, the Iranian Prime Minister Mīrzā Taqī Khān Amīr Kabīr ordered Sardār Kuhandil Khān of Qandahār to create security in Lāsh-Juvain on behalf of the Qājār government. As a reward for his services, the Qājār government appointed Mīhrdīl Khān as governor of Lāsh-Juvain (Ādamiyat 1982: 631). According to Sulṭān Muḥammad, Shīr 'Alī b. Mīhrdīl Khān received lands in Lāsh from the local leadership at that time (T Su 287).

³⁷¹ Yār Muḥammad Khān allegedly succumbed to an illness caused by a meal of cucumbers and sour milk. After his death, Lāsh-Juvain once again slipped from the control of Herat (T Su 287).

grandnephew by his sister, Ghulām Qādir Khān b. Amīr Khān governed Shakībān (Shakīvān); Ghulām Qādir Khān's brother Ghulām Jabbār Khān Qullarāqāsī held Ghūriyān.³⁷²

The Qājār campaign against Herat from April to October 1856 brought about territorial losses and prepared the ground for the Muḥammadzai takeover of Herat in 1863. Concurrent with the occupation of Herat, the Qājār army conquered Lāsh-Juvain but was compelled by the British to evacuate it on 29 March 1858.³⁷³ Already in 1856, the Muḥammadzais of Kābul began to make inroads in the territory of Herat. On 30 October 1856, five days after the fall of Herat to the Persians, Dūst Muḥammad Khān's son Ghulām Ḥaidar Khān gained control of Farāh. From 1860 on, Muḥammadzai pressure on Herat increased. Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān demanded a share of the taxes of Anār Darra and Qal'a-yi Kāh located northwest of Isfizār.³⁷⁴ In 1861, 'Abd al-Ghafūr Khān Tāymanī's intervention with the affairs of Farāh caused the newly appointed Muḥammadzai governor of Farāh, Pusht-i Rūd and Girishk, Muḥammad Sharīf b. Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān, to engage in military activities against Ghūr. In an effort to retain control over the region, the Herati ruler Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān sent his wife (a sister of Sardār Muḥammad Sharīf Khān) and his son to negotiate for the possession of Taivāra and Sākhar. Nevertheless, Sardār Muḥammad Sharīf continued with his military campaign to Ghūr and displaced 'Abd al-Ghafūr from Taivāra.³⁷⁵ At that point, one of the recently unseated Qandahār Sardārs, Mīr Afzal Khān Muḥammadzai, convinced Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān to conquer Farāh while Sardār Muḥammad Sharīf Khān was busy in Ghūr. The occupation of Farāh by Herati troops in March 1862 triggered Dūst Muḥammad Khān's campaign against Herat and its conquest on 27 May 1863.³⁷⁶

With its incorporation into the Muḥammadzai state, Herat became one of the four provinces (*vilāyāt*) in Amīr Shīr 'Alī Khān's realm. The other three provinces were Kābul, Qandahār, and Afghan Turkistān.³⁷⁷ During Amīr Shīr 'Alī Khān's reign, Herat was governed by a number of members of the ruling Muḥammadzai family. As mentioned above, his son Muḥammad Ya'qūb Khān served as governor in 1863–1868 and 1871–1874. From 1869 to 1871, Shīr 'Alī Khān's nephew Sardār Faṭḥ Muḥammad Khān b. Muḥammad Akbar Khān was in charge of the administration of Herat. After Muḥammad Ayūb Khān's rebellion in December 1874, the Amīr's troops took possession of Herat on 19. January 1875.³⁷⁸ Until 1293/1876, Ishīk Āqāsī Shīrdil Khān Bārakzai (d. 1878) and Mustaufī Mīrzā Ḥabībullāh Khān Vardak

³⁷² Za'farānlū 1968: 28–9.

³⁷³ Champagne 1981: 418–19, 423; Taylor 1858c: 949.

³⁷⁴ Champagne 1981: 433.

³⁷⁵ ST 238; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 75–6.

³⁷⁶ ST 240–1; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 79–82. According to another account, it was 'Abd al-Ghafūr who persuaded Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān to annex Farāh (*Gaz. Afghanistan* III: 409). See also Champagne 1981: 436–7; *Ḥayāt-i afghānī* 457–8; *Gulshan-i imārat* 25–26.

³⁷⁷ Kakar 1979: 49; Vámbéry 1864: 244–5. In the 1870s, the outlines of these provinces underwent a number of changes. The province of Kābul included the southern towns of Qalāt-i Ghilzai and Ghaznī, the eastern city of Jalālābād and the central regions of Bāmiyān, Yak Aulang and Dāy Zangī (*Gaz. Afghanistan* VI: 1, 4, 60). Shīr 'Alī Khān's sphere of influence in Turkistān expanded with the conquests of Badakhshān in 1873 and Maimana in 1876 (Ghubār 1981: 596; *Gulshan-i imārat* 170–1; ST 304–5, 335–6; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 200, 256–7; PM II: 84–5, 87, 100, 105; KD 8–14 January 1869 (NAI, For. Pol. A. February 1869 Nos. 178–9); KD 1–4 July 1870 (NAI, For. Pol. A. August 1870 No. 158); KD 28–31 July 1876 (NAI, For. Sec. September 1876 No. 56)). The administrative border of Qandahār province changed significantly. After the conquest of Herat in 1863, Farāh was formally incorporated into Qandahār province. Nevertheless, the local governor continued to render accounts separately from Qandahār and possibly enjoyed greater powers than the governors of Qandahār, who had to delegate revenue matters to officials appointed by Amīr Shīr 'Alī Khān from 1871 on (St. John 1879). The districts of Girishk and Zamīndāvar were separated from the province of Qandahār and were likewise treated as distinct administrative units (KD 8–10 November 1870 (NAI, For. Pol. A. December 1870 No. 409); KD 1–4 December 1871 (NAI, For. Sec. January 1872 No. 33)). Under Amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān, the province of Kābul expanded at the cost of other districts. Afghan Turkistān was subdivided into the provinces of Maimana, Turkistān, and Badakhshān and was placed within the administrative jurisdiction of Kābul (ST 687; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 III, 2: 597–8; Kakar 1979: 49). Farāh, Girishk, Zamīndāvar and Chakhānsūr were likewise subsumed within the administration of Kābul (Kakar 1979: 49).

³⁷⁸ IOL, L/PS/7/2 Pt. III No. 11 of 5 March 1875, p. 1433.

served as governors of Herat.³⁷⁹ In 1876, Muḥammad ‘Umar b. Muḥammad ‘Aẓīm Khān, the brother of the former Herati ruler Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān, was appointed to the government of Herat and held the post until 1879.³⁸⁰ Under Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān, Herat was governed by the Muḥammadzai Sardār ‘Abd al-Quddūs b. Sulṭān Muḥammad Khān (1881–1882),³⁸¹ Muḥammad Sarvar Khān (1882–1887),³⁸² and Qāẓī Sa‘d al-Dīn Khān Vakīl al-Daula (1887–1904).³⁸³

From the 1860s on, Kuhsān (Kūsūya) northwest of Ghūriyān was considered the last Afghan duty station on the way to Iran. All the available reports indicate that the Afghan border was separated from the Iranian territory by a stretch of no man’s land. In 1863, Vámbéry gave the following description of Afghanistan’s western frontier:

From this point [Kuhsān] to the Persian frontier, which commences at Kahriz [Kārīz] and Taybad [Tāybād], lies a district without claimant or owner, over which from north to south as far as Khaf [Khvāf], Kaīn [Qāyin], and even Bihrdjan [Bīrjand], the Tekke [Teke], Salor, and Sarik [Sarīq] send forth their Alamans: these, consisting of hundreds of riders, fall unawares upon villages and hurry off with them into captivity, inhabitants and herds of cattle.³⁸⁴

While the exact demarcation of the border between Afghanistan and Iran was still pending, no major changes occurred in its broad outlines after 1863. The description given by Napier in 1874 shows that there was a general understanding of the division of the territories. North of Kuhsān, the border was thought to coincide with the lower course of the Harī Rūd along a stretch of roughly one hundred miles that was devoid of bridges. Towards the south, the border ran,

undefined and unguarded, into the great expanse of desert, stretching from Subzwar to the borders of Ghain [Qāyin]... till the border of Lash Jouven [Lāsh-Juvain] is reached... This part of the frontier line being so well protected by nature, it is perhaps unnecessary that it should be watched.³⁸⁵

The demarcation of the border between Afghanistan and Iran was forced by the temporary Iranian occupation of the Dasht-i Hashtādān in 1885.³⁸⁶ In December 1889, the region was divided through the arbitration of C. S. MacLean, who then served as British consul general for Khurāsān and Sīstān.³⁸⁷ MacLean’s settlement concerning Hashtādān highlighted the difficulty of creating sharply defined boundaries in a setting characterized by marginal government presence and loose allegiances. Thus, neither the Iranian nor the Afghan government were able to provide MacLean with documentary proof that they were entitled to the lands at stake.³⁸⁸ In the following two years, the 66-km stretch in question was demarcated by 39 boundary posts. The 400 km-long southern stretch of the border extending between Hashtādān and Sīstān remained undefined until the twentieth century. It was delimited by a Turkish commission in 1934–1935 by the erection of a total of 48 boundary posts. The role of the lower course of the Harī Rūd as boundary between Afghanistan and Iran was apparently never called into question.³⁸⁹

Towards the north, the extent of the Muḥammadzai possessions was more vaguely defined. As mentioned above, the lands up to the confluence of the Murghāb river and the Kushk Rūd had been incorporated into the principality of Herat in the late 1840s. The regions further north along the lower course of the Murghāb,

³⁷⁹ ST 333–4; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 II: 253–5.

³⁸⁰ KD 22–25 September 1876, NAI, For. Sec. A. November 1876 No. 12; MA 4 August 1877, NAI, For. Sec. April 1878 No. 33A.

³⁸¹ KR 12.

³⁸² KR 215; ST 404–5, 465, 483; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 III, 1: 52, 172, 208; *Correspondence respecting the Demarcation of the N.W. Frontier of Afghanistan from the Hari Rūd to the Oxus, 1884–86*, IOL, L/PS/18/A53 Pt. 4, p. 9.

³⁸³ KR 5, 11, 226, 253; ST 536, 1085; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 III, 1: 311; III, 3: 1371; Balland, “Boundaries III. Boundaries of Afghanistan,” *E.Ir.* IV: 408.

³⁸⁴ Vámbéry 1864: 288. In the 1870s, a number of British travellers confirmed that Kuhsān was the Afghan border post and that the Iranian territory commenced at Kārīz (Marvin 1884: 67, 159; Napier 1875: 217–18). See also KR 171.

³⁸⁵ Napier 1875: 218.

³⁸⁶ Kakar 2006: 212.

³⁸⁷ Balland, “Boundaries III. Boundaries of Afghanistan,” *E.Ir.* IV: 412, 414.

³⁸⁸ ST 596–7, 603–4; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 III, 1: 429–30, 441–3.

³⁸⁹ Balland, “Boundaries III. Boundaries of Afghanistan,” *E.Ir.* IV: 412, 414. See Kreutzmann (1997) for the delineation of the borders.

by contrast, formed a “terrain vague” of shifting Turkmen configurations. The northern stretch of the border was defined and demarcated between 1884 and 1888 by a joint Russian-British delegation to become known as the Afghan Boundary Commission (ABC). Early on into the proceedings, Peter S. Lumsden, the head of the British mission, noted that defining a border in the region north of Herat posed conceptual problems. Although there were sufficient historical precedents to prove that the lands occupied by the *ūymāq* belonged to Afghanistan, he observed that it was difficult to delineate a border in a setting where proprietary rights did not necessarily translate into corresponding notions of space. Lumsden’s account of the circumstances in Bādghīs highlights the tenuous nature of sovereignty and local allegiance. The *ūymāq* had traditionally acknowledged the sovereignty of Herat, he noted, except in times of crisis. Furthermore, he adverted that Herat’s hold over the region

has principally been a feudal one, consequently, it is not to be expected that an exact boundary of state jurisdiction should be found, especially when it is considered that the population is a nomad one, and that, save in the case of the Kushk and Murghab valleys, the whole of the ground has been used for pasturing only.³⁹⁰

The Tsarist government, on its part, assumed a more activist stance in the creation of boundaries. Before the Afghan Boundary Commission settled down to business, Russian troops occupied a number of strategic regions, thus strengthening Russian positions in the subsequent negotiations. As a result, Pul-i Khātūn and Panjdih passed to Russian control. After prolonged negotiations, the demarcation began near the Dahana-yi Dhū al-Faqār and then proceeded to Khamyāb on the Āmū Daryā. The process of delineation, in the course of which a total of 79 boundary posts were set up, lasted from November 1885 to January 1888.³⁹¹

STAKING CLAIMS: THE PORTRAYAL OF AFGHĀN-QĀJĀR ENCOUNTERS IN PERSIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

So far, this chapter has been concerned with the practical implications of the delineations of the Iranian and Afghan spheres of influence around Herat. In the following, I will attempt to gauge the extent to which the political developments were taken up in the Persian sources of the time. The production of Iranian historiography reached its high point in the mid-1850s, coinciding with Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh’s final attempt to incorporate Herat into the Qājār state. Seen in this light, it is perhaps not surprising that many authors focus on ancient Iranian rights to far-flung lands and seem somewhat reluctant to take ongoing territorial losses into account. However, the persistent notion of extensive Iranian possessions in the east is no less remarkable given the notable inability of Qājār rulers to extend their military and administrative presence beyond the core regions of the province in a significant manner. What is more, one identifies a gap between formal notions of entitlement and concrete knowledge about the regions claimed. The lack of information about the areas targeted was acutely felt by the Qājār rulers during the campaigns to Herat in 1837–38 and 1856. On the eve of the first expedition to Herat, Muḥammad Shāh Qājār, for example, attempted to make up for this shortfall by charging his envoy to Qandahār, Qanbar ‘Alī Khān, with the task of gathering detailed intelligence concerning the regions beyond Kirmān.³⁹²

One good example for the reiteration of an inclusive sense of Iranian territorial entitlement is Mīrzā Faḡlullāh Shīrāzī, who undertook to describe the territory of Iran around 1250/1834–35. In the introduction to his *Dhū al-qarnain*, he portrays this “extensive country” (*mamlakat-i vasī‘ al-misāḥat*) to have traditionally stretched from the Caucasus, including the furthest limits of Dāghistān and Georgia in the north, to Kirmān and the Indian Ocean in the south. The eastern and western reaches of this territory are defined by the Oxus and the Tigris. Among the sixteen provinces of Iran, Shīrāzī identifies Ghaznīn and Khurāsān as the easternmost possessions and delineates the extent of each province by enumerating the principal constituent cities, each of which was replete with historical associations. The ensuing lists of provinces and towns

³⁹⁰ Lumsden to Granville, 27 January 1885 (IOL, L/PS/18/A 53 part 3, p. 11).

³⁹¹ KR 218–20; Balland, “Boundaries III. Boundaries of Afghanistan,” *E.Ir.* IV: 408.

³⁹² McNeill to Palmerston, Tehran, 30 December 1836; Instructions from the Persian Government to Qanbar ‘Alī Khān (IOL, L/PS/20/A/7/1 No. 49, p. 43; enclosure 9 in No. 51, p. 56).

creates a sense of timeless territorial integrity. He states that Ghaznīn comprises the towns of Farāh, Sabzāra [Isfīzār], Qandahār, Balkh, and Ghaznīn. The list of towns making up Khurāsān is even more impressive: “Herat, Marv-i Shāhijān, Tūs, that is, holy Mashhad, Turbat-i Ḥaidarīya, Turshīz, Qūchān (known as Khabūshān), Buzūnjird [Bujnūrd], Kalāt, Darra Jazain [Darra Gaz], Tūn, Ṭabas, Bīrjand, Nīshāpūr, Sabzavār, Bisṭām, Jājarm, Juvain, Dāmghān, Simnān, and Mazīnān.”³⁹³

Yet there also were differing voices. Mīrzā Zain al-‘Ābidīn Shīrvānī makes a clear distinction between the ancient province of Khurāsān, extending a month’s journey from east to west, and the actual scope of Qājār control. He agrees that the first Safavid ruler Shāh Ismā‘īl I (r. 1501–1524) freed Khurāsān from the control of strangers, i.e., the Uzbeks. Yet he also points out that this formerly vast expanse had disintegrated into a number of independent realms in the second half of the eighteenth century:

From the time of the decline of the Nadirid kingdom until now (1237/1827), the princes of that territory have built up tribal kingdoms (*mulūk al-ṭavāyif*) and no one bows his head in obedience to the other. Early on, the Qājārs established control over [the region between] Bisṭām and Mashhad; beyond, the Afghāns rule over Herat and its dependencies. [This also holds true for] the Uzbeks in Balkh and its districts, the Afshārs in Andkhūd and Shibarghān, the Jalāyir tribe in Kalāt, the ruler of Bukhārā in Marv and its dependencies, the Turkmens in Sarakhs and Bādghīs, the Arabs in Qāyin, the Kayanids in Sīstān, the Hazāras in Bākharz, the Kurdish tribes in Khabūshān, the Qarā‘ī in Turbat [Turbat-i Ḥaidarīya], the Khuzaima tribes in Ṭabas, the Ghurid Maliks in Gharjīstān, the group of Mask [?] in Khulm, another tribe (*qaum*) of Hazāras in the mountains of Herat, and another group of Turkmens in Nasā and Abīvard. There are many others in various nooks and corners who do not submit to anybody.³⁹⁴

The Qājār preoccupation with the need to reclaim Iranian territories raises the question of how the changing political realities in Herat entered the historical discourse. Early chronicles like *Dhū al-qarnain* loosely refer to the eastern territories of Khurāsān as the “Afghān region” (*diyār-i afghān*)³⁹⁵, the “Afghān region/province” (*vilāyat-i afghān*),³⁹⁶ or the “Afghān kingdom” (*salṭanat-i afghān*).³⁹⁷ From the 1850s on, however, the concept of “Afghānistān” emerges in the official historiography. Writing in 1273/1856–57, the Iranian official I‘tizād al-Salṭana was the first author to include the name of Afghanistan in the title of his work. The definition he furnishes in the introduction to his *Tārīkh-i vaqāyi‘ va savāniḥ-i Afghānistān* essentially confirms the sentiments most commonly expressed with regard to this territorial and political entity. From the Iranian point of view, Afghanistan occupied the distant eastern margins of the historically grown empire but was by no means entitled to a separate political identity. By including Kashmīr and Pīshāvar in the Afghan dominions, the author apparently refers not so much to the contemporary Afghan state but to the scope formerly under Sadūzai control:

Afghānistān is an extensive country. According to the delimitation of the European [authors], it measures 1,000 miles from east to west and 700 miles from north to south. This country extends from Kashmīr to the plain of Herat, and the Europeans call it ‘Eastern Iran’, as it has continuously formed a part of Iran and has been subordinate to its rulers. Its major cities are Herat, Kābul, Pīshāvar, Qandahār, Kashmīr, Balkh and Ghaznī.³⁹⁸

Hidāyat’s *Tārīkh-i rauzat al-ṣafā-yi nāsirī* epitomizes the incipient incorporation of Afghanistan into the historical narrative. In the context of the Qājār conquest of Herat in 1856, the author offers an overview of the history of the region drawing on the works of I‘tizād al-Salṭana and Lisān al-Mulk. Hidāyat introduces the lengthy chapter by pointing out that “the account of the events in eastern Khurāsān calls for the

³⁹³ *Dhū al-qarnain* 13–14.

³⁹⁴ *Riyāz al-siyāḥat* 146. Shīrvānī’s survey of the land, population and history of Khurāsān was integrated into Hidāyat’s account of Āqā Muḥammad’s campaign to Khurāsān in 1210/1796. Interestingly, Hidāyat leaves out all information that could cast doubt on Āqā Muḥammad’s absolute authority. Thus, he omits the above list of more or less independent groups in the region and contents himself with the observation that Khurāsān passed to the descendants of Nādir Shāh in the second half of the eighteenth century (TRSN IX: 277).

³⁹⁵ *Dhū al-qarnain* 137, 172.

³⁹⁶ *Dhū al-qarnain* 94, 138.

³⁹⁷ *Dhū al-qarnain* 173.

³⁹⁸ *Vaqāyi‘ va savāniḥ* 24–5.

description of the origin and branches of the Afghāns and of the country of Afghānistān.”³⁹⁹ Yet in the subsequent historical outline he shows a clear preference for the historical geographical expression of “Zābulistān” as the designation of the Afghān homeland.⁴⁰⁰

The changing profile of territorial concepts can best be traced on the basis of a number of historical junctures exemplifying competing notions of political authority. These crucial moments in history were Āqā Muḥammad Khān Qājār’s conquest of Mashhad in 1210/1796, Faṭḥ ‘Alī Shāh’s campaign in Khurāsān in 1214–15/1800 and Nā’ib al-Salṭana’s preparation for a campaign against Herat in 1248/1832–33. All the available historical accounts employ a specific dramaturgy to highlight the critical nature of these encounters, which are portrayed as written and verbal interchanges between Iranian and Afghan rulers concerning their respective spheres of influence. These dialogues mark the corner stones of the historical narrative and endow it with a specific rhythm. Recounted and embellished by the Iranian historians, they form the set pieces of the evolving Persian historiography of the mid-nineteenth century. They reflect the Qājār endeavor to root territorial claims in the past and illustrate that the sense of ownership over the entire historical province of Khurāsān remained alive well into the nineteenth century. As will be seen below, the notion of Afghanistan gradually enters the accounts of these historical snapshots.

PRELUDE: ĀQĀ MUḤAMMAD ENTERS KHURĀSĀN

One example of the evolving historical script is furnished by Āqā Muḥammad Khān’s assertion of his territorial claims against his Manghīt and Sadūzai antagonists, and the renderings it receives in the chronicles of the mid-nineteenth century. While earlier historians remain silent on the repercussions of Āqā Muḥammad Khān’s conquest of Mashhad in 1210/1796, both Hidāyat and Lisān al-Mulk frame this event as a revival of Safavid grandeur. According to these accounts, Āqā Muḥammad was not content with conquering Mashhad; he also reclaimed the ancient Iranian possessions of Balkh, Herat and Marv. Lisān al-Mulk does not comment on the immediate outcome of Āqā Muḥammad’s initiative; he merely states that:

He sent Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qarāguzlū as a messenger to Shāh Zamān, the successor of Tīmūr Shāh Afghān, who held the government of Kābul and Afghānistān at the time, and entrusted a kind letter to him. [In this letter] he conveyed the happy news of his conquest of Khurāsān and requested that he [Shāh Zamān] withdraw his officials from Balkh, which constitutes part of the Iranian territories [*ki juzv-i mamālik-i Īrān ast*], and submit it to the representatives of His Majesty.⁴⁰¹

Hidāyat compares Āqā Muḥammad Khān’s success in ordering the affairs of these provinces with the most brilliant phases of Safavid administration, thus establishing a linkage between the Qājār efforts at state building and well-known historical precedents. Interestingly, Hidāyat endows Āqā Muḥammad Khān with the right to a wide range of territories which not even his most illustrious forebears ever controlled in their entirety. In a letter to the Bukharan Amīr Shāh Murād (r. 1785–1800), Āqā Muḥammad Khān protested recent Uzbek interference with the affairs of Marv and Balkh and took the opportunity to stake out his territorial claims:

It is not necessary to recount the history of the previous Safavid rulers from Shāh Ismā‘īl I and the contemporaries of Muḥammad Khān Shībānī Uzbek down to Nādir Shāh and the Uzbek Abū al-Khair Khān [Abū al-Faiḏ Khān?]. I know and you know what has happened. It is evident that Balkh-i Bāmī, Marv-i Shāhijān, Zamīndāvar, Sīstān, Qandahār, and Kābul have [always] belonged to the realm of the Iranian kings [*mulk-i pādshāhān-i Īrān*].

According to Hidāyat’s version of events, Āqā Muḥammad Khān exhorted Shāh Murād to content himself with his historical possessions. On his part, the Qājār leader graciously undertook to honor the long-standing borders (*hudūd, sunūr, thughūr*) of Iran and not to venture beyond the Oxus (*Āb-i Jaiḥūn*).⁴⁰²

³⁹⁹ *Chūn dar bayān-i vaqāyī ‘i Khurāsān-i mashriqī az dhikr-i aṣl u far ‘i afāghina va tashrīḥ-i bilād afghānistān guzīrī nīst īnak mujmalī marqūm mīgardad* (TRSN X: 652).

⁴⁰⁰ TRSN X: 654–5.

⁴⁰¹ NT 81.

⁴⁰² TRSN IX: 283.

Hidāyat also recounts the mission of Muḥammad Khān Qarāguzlū to the court of Shāh Zamān. He reports that Shāh Zamān immediately complied with Āqā Muḥammad Khān's territorial demands and confirmed the cessation of Balkh to the Qājārs. What is more, his brother Maḥmūd Mīrzā, the governor of Herat, readily acknowledged the fact that his province had been a dependency (*ẓamīma*) of Iran for many years during the Safavid period and asserted his readiness to be counted among the governors and appointees of the [present] Iranian king. Yet Āqā Muḥammad Shāh's plan to emulate the Safavid mode of administration by appointing his own governors to Balkh-i Bāmī, Marv-i Shāhijān and Herat was cut short by the need to protect Azerbaijan from Russian intervention.⁴⁰³

THE DRAMA UNFOLDS: FATH 'ALĪ SHĀH'S CAMPAIGN TO KHURĀSĀN IN 1214–15/1800

The ensuing exchanges between Shāh Zamān Sadūzai and Fath 'Alī Shāh Qājār over the possession of Khurāsān likewise present a crucial moment in Persian historiography and bring the evolving notions of territoriality into focus. The available accounts of two Afghan missions to the Qājār court prior and during Fath 'Alī Shāh's second campaign to Khurāsān provide insights into different historiographic styles. They also bear witness to the fact that the term "Afghānistān" as a political entity entered the discourse relatively late. Writing in 1236/1821, Dunbulī gives a terse report of the message Shāh Zamān's envoy Ṭurra Bāz Khān Pūpalzai submitted to the court on the occasion of his first visit:

The substance of his message and the gist of his undeveloped thought was as follows: Neither should Shāh Zamān leave the path of obedience, nor should the world-conquering emperor mount his steed and set his boundless army into motion toward Khurāsān. This request covered the king's sun-like soul with the dust of indignation. The royal countenance turned away from accepting this petition and the resolve to move against Khurāsān was carried out.⁴⁰⁴

When Ṭurra Bāz Khān rejoined the royal camp near Sabzavār, he bore a more submissive message on behalf of the Sadūzai ruler. Shāh Zamān readily acknowledged Qājār supremacy and offered to induce the rebellious leadership of Sabzavār and Nīshāpūr to give up their resistance:

A handful of base people and a few low persons, who, fearing [royal] retribution for their treason, are hiding behind the walls of Khurāsān, are neither fit to combat the king, powerful as heaven, nor able to resist his boundless army. If the compassionate sovereign should accept the mediation of this well-wisher..., [he] will, when the victorious reins have been turned towards the capital, send them to the heaven-like court, soothed by royal favors and without resistance.⁴⁰⁵

In the 1830s, Faḡlullāh Shīrāzī highlights the differing views on Khurāsān by introducing the conceptual contradistinction between the "regions [properly] belonging to Iran" (*vilāyāt-i muta'alliqa ba-daulat-i Īrān*) and those "occupied by the Afghāns" (*vilāyāt-i mutaṣarrifi-yi afghān*). According to his account, Shāh Zamān aspired to a separate but clearly subordinate position as the "younger brother" of the Qājār king:

At the behest of Shāh Zamān and dispatched by his Prime Minister Vafādār Khān, Ṭurra Bāz Khān Afghān arrived in the capital for a meeting with Ḥājī Ibrāhīm Khān I'timād al-Daula... In short, his message was as follows: 'The domain (*mamlakat*) of Khurāsān, because of its neighborhood with the regions occupied by the Afghāns, should suitably remain in the possession of Shāh Zamān, while the other provinces (*mamālik*) of Iran shall belong to the King of kings, powerful as heaven. Because Shāh Zamān does not [wish to] interfere with the other provinces of Iran, His Majesty shall also refrain from moving against Khurāsān. [The King] shall consider Shāh Zamān his younger brother and leave the entire domain of Khurāsān to him.'... He received the following answer: 'The goal of the departure of the victorious standards for Khurāsān is not only to [restore] order in Khurāsān;

⁴⁰³ TRSN IX: 284–5.

⁴⁰⁴ Dunbulī 60. See also Brydges 1973: 106.

⁴⁰⁵ [M]ushtī furūmāyagān va lakhtī bipāyagān-rā ki az bīm-i jān va mujāzāt-i khiyānat harāsān va dar pusht-i divārḥā-yi Khurāsān pinhān-and na liyāqat-i sitiz-i shahryār-i gardūn-tavān ast va na iḡqat u tavān dar pīsh dar pā-yi lashkar-i bī-karān. Agar khadīv-i marḥamat-kīsh shafā'at-i īn khairandīsh-rā qabūl farmāyad... īn nīkkhvāh ba'd az īn iḡf-i 'inān-i ḡafar ba-jānib-i takhtgāh īshān-rā ba-ālḡf-i shāhāna dil-āsā va bī-ikrāh ravāna-yi dargāh-i gardūn-ishtibāh khvāhad sākht (Dunbulī 63). See also Brydges 1973: 120.

its general aim is to free all the regions belonging to Iran from foreign occupation. Now the campaign to Jarūd [?], Qandahār and Kābul has been determined and the decision of this conversation can only be settled by brandishing the fire-like sword.⁴⁰⁶

Shīrāzī further agrees with Dunbulī that Shāh Zamān assumed a more compliant tone in his second message to Fath ‘Alī Shāh. On this occasion, the Sadūzai king readily conceded the Qājār entitlement to Khurāsān by heritage and by merit. Furthermore, he accepted the subordinate position of his own, acquired regions, referring to them as a worthless backyard of the Qājār domain.⁴⁰⁷

In Hidāyat’s version of events, Shāh Zamān’s purported endeavor to hold on to the divisions of power prevalent during the Zand/Sadūzai period likewise met with an indignant reaction. The author adds a slightly different emphasis to the verbal exchange by focusing on the importance of the Safavid legacy. Furthermore, he introduces an emotional note by portraying the region as Fath ‘Alī Shāh’s ancestral resting place:

We will now reconquer Herat, Marv, Balkh, Kābul, Qandahār, Bust, Qaşdār,⁴⁰⁸ Sīstān and Zamīndāvar, which were dependencies (*izāfāt va mulḥaqāt*) of the exalted government of Iran under Safavid rule, from their [present] usurpers. Khurāsān itself is the ancient home of our fathers and forefathers.⁴⁰⁹ If Khurāsān were not part of Iran, how could it be that the grave of our great ancestor is located near Tūs, a fact that is well known in Turkey and Russia alike?⁴¹⁰

Writing in the 1880s, Ḥasan Ḥusainī Fasā’ī closely follows Shīrāzī’s portrayal of the exchanges between the Qājār court and Shāh Zamān but unhesitatingly identifies the domain of the Sadūzai king as “Afghānistān”.⁴¹¹ The Iranian historiography thus largely agrees on the reasoning behind Fath ‘Alī Shāh’s second campaign to Khurāsān and the sequence of events. All of the aforementioned sources display a striking contrast between the inclusive territorial claims put forward and actual military scope. With the exception of Hidāyat, the authors attribute Fath ‘Alī Shāh’s decision to break his camp before Sabzavār and to call off the siege of Nīshāpūr to the formal Sadūzai submission conveyed by Ṭurra Bāz Khān during his second visit. Yet the ready acceptance of Shāh Zamān’s proffered role as a mediator suggests that Qājār claims to authority in Khurāsān were not as absolute as the verbal statements imputed to Fath ‘Alī Shāh seem to purport.

From the perspective of the Afghan author Sulṭān Muḥammad Bārakzai, the message submitted by Ṭurra Bāz Khān takes on a different meaning. In this account, “Afghānistān” emerges as the overarching territorial unit which includes the region of Khurāsān. Moreover, Shāh Zamān assumes a position of equality with the Qājār ruler. Accordingly, his message to Fath ‘Alī Shāh reads more like a challenge than the baseless and ill-

⁴⁰⁶ *Ṭurra Bāz Khān-i afghān ba-ishāra-yi Shāh Zamān az jānib-i Vafādār Khān vazīr-i a‘zam ba-‘azm-i mulāqāt-i jināb-i Ḥājī Ibrāhīm Khān I’timād al-Daula vārid-i takhtgāh shud...khulāsa-yi paighām īnki: Mamlakat-i Khurāsān ba-sabab-i hamjavāriyat ba vilāyāt-i mutaṣarrifī-yi afghān ansab chinān ast ki dar taṣarruf-i Shāh Zamān, va sāyir-i mamālik-i Īrān dar taht-i ikhtiyār-i shāhanshāh-i gardūn-tavān bāshad. Chinānki Shāh Zamān-rā dar bāb-i sāyir-i mamālik-i Īrān ḥarfī nīst, az ān ṭaraf-i qarīn al-sharaf nīz dar ḥarakat ba-jānib-i Khurāsān ‘azīmatī vāqī’ nagardad, ū-rā barādārī kihtar az khud shumārānd va mulk-i Khurāsān-rā dar-basta ba-Shāh Zamān gudhārānd... Ū-rā chinīn javāb guftānd:... Manẓūr az ḥarakat-i rāyāt-i ṣafar-āyāt na tanhā naẓm-i mamlakat-i Khurāsān ast balki maqṣūd-i kullī intizā’-i jamī’-i vilāyāt-i muta‘allīqa ba-daulat-i Īrān az taṣarruf-i biḡānagān [mībāshad]. Īnak ‘azīmat-i Jarūd [?] va Qandahār va Kābul muṣammam va qaṭ‘ u faṣl-i rishta-yi īn guftugū mauqūf ba-burish-i ḥusām-i ādhar-shiyam ast (Dhū al-qarnain 132–3).*

⁴⁰⁷ *Mamlakat-i Khurāsān bi-al-irṭh va bi al-istiḥqāq muta‘allīq ba-kārguzārān-i ān daulat-i ‘alīya ast balki vilāyāt-i mutaṣarrifī-yi īn niyāzmand nīz maṭbakhī az ān dūdmān-i sanīya (Dhū al-qarnain 136).*

⁴⁰⁸ A region in Sind (Dīkhudā XI: 15527).

⁴⁰⁹ *Khāna-yi qadīm-i ābā va ajdād-i mā.*

⁴¹⁰ TRSN IX: 361.

⁴¹¹ “The spring of that year saw the arrival of Ṭurra Bāz Khān Afghān in the name of Vafādār Khān, the Prime Minister of Shāh Zamān, for a meeting with Ḥājī Ibrāhīm Khān I’timād al-Daula. He submitted the following message of the vizier of Afghānistān: ‘The domain (*mulk*) of Khurāsān, because of its close neighborhood, should suitably remain in the possession of Shāh Zamān, while the other provinces (*mamālik*) of Īrān shall belong to the victorious King of kings. Because Shāh Zamān does not [wish to] interfere with the other provinces of Īrān, His Majesty shall also refrain from moving against Khurāsān from the opposite side. [The King] shall consider Shāh Zamān his younger brother and leave the entire domain of Khurāsān to him.’ After deliberating the Ḥājī answered as follows: ‘The intention of His noble Majesty’s proceeding to Khurāsān is the occupation of all the countries which belong to Īrān: Nīshāpur, Sabzavār, Kābul, and Qandahār. At this very moment, he is preparing the conquest of Afghānistān’”(FN 677). The above translation is a modified version of the one given by Busse (1972: 92–3).

timed request it is portrayed as in the Iranian sources. The Sadūzai ruler confidently informs his Qājār counterpart that he will refrain from extending his authority beyond Khurāsān, provided that Fath ‘Alī Shāh gives up his plan to attack the possessions of Afghanistan (*amlāk-i Afghānistān*). As 50,000 Qājār cavalry set out for Sabzavār and Nīshāpūr, Shāh Zamān issues a further warning to Fath ‘Alī Shāh not to meddle with Khurāsān, which forms part of Afghanistan.⁴¹²

The modern Afghan historian Fūfalzā’ī likewise endows Shāh Zamān with a position of strength vis-à-vis the Qājār ruler. Interestingly, he lets the protagonists speak for themselves, adducing their purported correspondence of 1214–1215/1799–1800. While the authenticity of these letters remains to be verified, the style adopted fits the circumstances and the period.⁴¹³ In keeping with the late eighteenth-century setting, the concept of “Afghānistān” is not framed as a political concept yet. Rather, the written dispute focuses on the validity of the respective claims advanced by the Durrānī and Qājār rulers to Khurāsān. On his part, Fath ‘Alī Shāh takes exception to the incursions by Abdālī Afghāns into the ancient dependencies of his hereditary kingdom, which he stakes out as comprising Marv, Balkh, Andkhūd, Shibarghān, Badakhshān, Maimana, Herat, Sabzavār, Bust, Nīshāpūr, Ṭabas, Qandahār, Bāmiyān, and Balūchistān.⁴¹⁴ While acknowledging the territorial precedents set by the Safavids, Shāh Zamān asserts his right to Khurāsān, which, deriving from the degree of power currently exercised by the Durrānī dynasty, is more tangible and more justified than the vague historical claim advanced by the Qājārs:

It is evident that this is your inherited and protected country as much as it is mine (*mulk-i mahrūs va maurūth-i man u tu-st*). If the quality of your swords and spears justifies your [claims to] dignity, it will be yours. If it befits my Alexander-like standing, it will be mine, bound to the essence of my perseverance and resolve. You try to enter and establish your ownership by means of fraud and meanness. I have occupied [this region] by merit of military strength and intrepidity. It was my blessed forefathers who obtained this realm by means of the sword.⁴¹⁵

In keeping with his insistence on the force of more recently established precedents, Shāh Zamān advises Fath ‘Alī Shāh to stick to the agreements concluded between the Durrānīs and Karīm Khān Zand and to respect “the limits of the guarded domains of the Durrānīs” (*hudūd-i mamālik-i mahrūsa-yi durrānīya*), or else he will face military confrontation.⁴¹⁶ Finally, he roundly rejects Fath ‘Alī Shāh’s claim to ownership over Khurāsān on the basis that his ancestor Navvāb Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār is buried there.⁴¹⁷ Referring to Āqā Muḥammad Shāh’s desecration of Nādir Shāh’s tomb in 1796, he states:

[Merely] referring to your ancestor’s grave is not enough to place the guarded domain of Khurāsān (*mulk-i mahrūsa-yi Khurāsān*) in your jurisdiction. If the graves of the great ancestors and kings were an indication for actual possession and were honored as such by the great Qājār commander, the deceased king Āqā Muḥammad Shāh would never have upturned the grave of the Iran-ornamenting king Nādir Shāh, resting in Paradise, by the strikes of the spear and would not have acted in utter disrespect to his bones.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹² T Su 170, 175–6.

⁴¹³ The correspondence quoted by Fūfalzā’ī consists of a letter by Fath ‘Alī Shāh and a response by Shāh Zamān written on 18 Jumādā II 1215/6 November 1800. According to Fūfalzā’ī, these letters were copied by his ancestor Sardār ‘Alam Khān Vakīl al-Daula, who served as Shāh Zamān’s *vazīr-i dīwān-i a’lā* (Fūfalzā’ī 1958: 144, 243).

⁴¹⁴ Fūfalzā’ī 1958: 138–9.

⁴¹⁵ Fūfalzā’ī 1958: 143.

⁴¹⁶ Fūfalzā’ī 1958: 142.

⁴¹⁷ Fūfalzā’ī 1958: 139. It is not clear who is intended here. Fath ‘Alī Shāh’s grandfather Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Quyūnlū was killed near Ashraf in Jumādā II 1172/January–February 1759. His head was sent to Karīm Khān Zand in Tehran, who buried it in the nearby shrine of ‘Abd al-‘Aẓīm (Bāmdād 1992 III: 365–72). To the best of my knowledge, Fath ‘Alī Shāh’s only ancestor to die in Khurāsān was his great grandfather Fath ‘Alī Khān Quyūnlū, who was assassinated in Khvāja Rabī’ near Mashhad in Ṣafar 1139/October 1726 (Lockhart 1938: 24–6). In connection with Shāh Rukh Afshār’s deposal in January 1750, there is mention of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār Ishk Āqāsībāshī (TA Humāyūn 75–6).

⁴¹⁸ Fūfalzā’ī 1958: 143.

CONCLUDING ACT: 'ABBĀS MĪRZĀ NĀ'IB AL-SALTĀNA BEFORE THE GATES OF HERAT

Qājār territorial claims are also brought into relief by the available accounts of Nā'ib al-Saltāna's endeavor to regain control of Herat in 1248/1832–33. Again, a stylized verbal exchange serves to illustrate notions of Qājār ownership. Addressing Vazīr Yār Muḥammad Khān Alakūzai of Herat, Nā'ib al-Saltāna employs a summary historical overview to underline his right to Herat as part of the Iranian legacy. According to the version given by *Dhū al-qarnain*, Nā'ib al-Saltāna informs Yār Muḥammad Khān that the “provinces occupied by the Afghāns” (*vilāyāt-i mutaṣarrafi-yi afāghina*) of Herat, Qandahār and Kābul have since time immemorial accepted their subservience to the Iranian kings. From Nā'ib al-Saltāna's perspective, competing Sadūzai claims to this region merely form an aberration in an otherwise unbroken chain of Iranian sovereignty. Aḥmad Khān Sadūzai, the founder of the Durrānī dynasty, is portrayed as a rebel, who has upset the time-honored order of things. His speech culminates in the peremptory order that Kāmran Sadūzai, the ruler of Herat, should either assume the same duties as the other governors within the Qājār realm or give up his dominion:

In bygone times, the provinces occupied by the Afghāns were continuously in the possession of the powerful Iranian kings and were controlled by their governors. The Afghān tribes (*tavāyif-i afāghina*) belonging to the tribes of Hindūstān, and those of them who have resided in the provinces of Herat, Qandahār, Kābul, etc. have submitted taxes (*kharāj-gudhār va bāj-dih*) to the kings of Iran [throughout time]. After the assassination of Nādir Shāh Afshār, Aḥmad Khān Abdālī has established control over those provinces contrary to law and order and by means of imposture, and, assuming the title of *shāh*, has galloped down the valley of obstinacy. Lacking the wherewithal to conquer Herat and the other regions mentioned..., the Zand *amīrs* postponed this issue. The martyred king [Āqā Muḥammad] would have had the power to accomplish all these matters had fate not plucked him from this transitory world. The present king of auspicious conjunction [Fath 'Alī Shāh] has devoted his ever-lasting reign to the jihad against the Russian unbelievers so that he could not take any royal steps in this direction. Now, by the abundance of divine grace and high royal fortune, all worldly and religious matters have been resolved and the enmity between the realms of Islam and unbelief has dissolved. I, the lowest servant of the exalted court, have girded the loins of high ambition to reclaim the hereditary possessions (*mulk-i maurūth*)... In short, Kāmran Mīrzā and his entire entourage should embark on the royal highway to the heaven-embracing court and vacate the province of Herat and the other regions; or else he should accept the same duties as the other local rulers and governors of the guarded domains (*mamālik-i mahrūsa-yi sulṭānī*), submit the taxes and proceeds of the occupied regions, and perform *sikka* and *khuṭba* in the name of his Muslim-sheltering royal majesty.⁴¹⁹

Nā'ib al-Saltāna's statement as recounted in *Dhū al-qarnain* is closely mirrored, at once in content and wording, in Hidāyat's version, with the difference that Nā'ib al-Saltāna avows his readiness to extend his military campaign as far as Balkh.⁴²⁰ Both Faḡlullāh Shīrāzī and Hidāyat refer to the Afghan dominions as “provinces occupied by the Afghāns”. Writing roughly at the same time as Hidāyat, Lisān al-Mulk, by contrast, gives a more summary account of Nā'ib al-Saltāna's speech, and employs the term *Afghānistān* as territorial designation for the debated region in eastern Khurāsān.⁴²¹

As viewed through the lens of Persian historiography, the early debates between the Qājār and Sadūzai rulers revolved around an abstract and extensive notion of Khurāsān, which was conjured up and reinforced by the formulaic repetition of the component districts constituting the historical province. The above quotes illustrate the fact that regional identifications were endowed with different meanings according to context. In sketching the contested terrain, both the Afghan and Iranian chroniclers conceptualized the terrain as nested entities reflecting increasing degrees of inclusiveness. Yet, while the Afghan commentators perceived Afghanistan to contain Khurāsān, the opposite was true from the Iranian perspective. If using the term *Afghānistān* at all, the Iranian authors make it clear that it is to them no more than a subordinate region located on the eastern fringes of the Iranian legacy. Yet, for all its geographical and political marginality, this eastern region remained central to prevalent Iranian conceptions of space.

⁴¹⁹ *Dhū al-qarnain* 838–9.

⁴²⁰ TRSN X: 30–31.

⁴²¹ NT 487–8. While omitting the Iranian bias concerning the illegitimacy of Aḥmad Shāh's gaining possession of *Afghānistān*, the early twentieth-century Afghan chronicle *Siraj al-tavārikh* closely follows Lisān al-Mulk's version (ST 117; McChesney/Khorrami 2013 I: 193–4).

As the nineteenth century wore on, the concept of Afghanistan gradually gained currency. This process coincided with a reduction of the regions within the political and military reach of the Iranian government. As a result, the conflict with the Afghans increasingly narrowed down on Herat as the crucial possession in eastern Khurāsān.⁴²² Henceforth, Herat and Marv formed vital coordinates on the mental map of the Qājārs. While located on the margin, and increasingly beyond, the scope of Qājār military control, both cities continued to hold the Iranian imagination as places of great strategic importance and inherent strength. Thus Lisān al-Mulk described Herat as the regional center of “eastern Khurāsān” and *Afghānistān* in the 1850s.⁴²³ Hidāyat extolled Marv as the key to Khvārazm and praised Herat as the key to all of Khurāsān and Turkistān.⁴²⁴ The continued prestige of Herat is also reflected by the reasoning the Iranian Prime Minister Mīrzā Āqā Khān Nūrī I‘timād al-Daula adopted to explain the difficulties besetting the Qājār siege of Herat in the summer of 1856:

The conquest of Herat, which constitutes the center of Khurāsān, is no easy matter. The firmness and impenetrability of its fortifications is legendary, from ancient times until today. No king of old that we have read or heard about was ever able to gain control of Herat unless the inhabitants of that city found it advisable to submit on their own accord... [Even] Nādir Shāh Afshār, who conquered half of the world, was unable to take Herat by force.⁴²⁵

CONCLUSION

The aftermath of the short-lived Iranian occupation of Herat in 1856 bears witness to Khurāsān’s transition from a far-flung territory embracing the ancient centers of Iranian civilization to a closed space defined by linear borders. Owing to British pressure, Herat was removed from the orbit of Qājār control, and the sense of Khurāsān as a vast eastern expanse gave way to more concrete notions of boundedness. As the Afghan ruler Amīr Dūst Muḥammad Khān Muḥammadzai prepared to conquer Herat in 1862, a small Persian force occupied the village of Kūsūya to afford protection to the province of Khurāsān.⁴²⁶ Rather than the Oxus, a village on the right bank of the Harī Rūd located seventy miles west of Herat had come to symbolize the eastern border of the Iranian state.

A similar process took place in Afghanistan, albeit with the difference that, in this case, a dramatic territorial shrinkage had already taken place with the downfall of the Sadūzai dynasty in the early nineteenth century. Operating from a narrow base of power, the first Muḥammadzai kings employed the limited resources at their disposal to expand from Kābul into the space delimited by British and Russian interests. While the exact course of the border between Afghanistan and Iran was not settled until the 1930s, the fact remains that the Afghan kingdom assumed the identity of a territorially bounded entity. This process found its visual expression in a map Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān (r. 1880–1901) published in 1898. Contrary to the western cartographic conventions the Amīr had undoubtedly become acquainted with in the course of his boundary negotiations with the British, this map does not attempt to reproduce a bird’s eye view of the Afghan territory and its geographical features. Rather, it depicts the Afghan state as a multi-tiered, hierarchical edifice surrounded by similar structures representing the governments of Iran, Russian Turkistan, China and British India. Placed in the center of the map, the realm occupied by Afghanistan is set apart from the neighboring states by a dotted line suggesting a clearly identified and self-contained territorial unit.⁴²⁷

The borders sketched in this map may be seen as a delimitation against outsiders. Afghanistan’s position as a buffer state between British and Russian interests, and the fixed borders it implied, freed the hands of the Muḥammadzai *amīrs* to impose order internally. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān reportedly compared his country to a

⁴²² This phenomenon is also discussed by Kashani-Sabet 1997: 218.

⁴²³ NT 1192.

⁴²⁴ *Sifāratnāma* Persian text 112.

⁴²⁵ NT 1320.

⁴²⁶ Wynne 1870a: 53.

⁴²⁷ The text accompanying this map was originally published in Curzon 1888: 55–8. For a detailed discussion of its context and content, see Edwards 1996: 78–88.

building requiring constant and vigilant maintenance in order to keep both external and internal enemies at bay:

It is easy to understand that before furnishing a house one must think of making or finding a house to furnish; and in case of building a house it must be surrounded by walls to keep the goods safe which are put in it; and if the house is full of holes, ditches, snakes, scorpions, etc., it is necessary to get rid of these before any one can live in it. In the same way, it was of the first and greatest importance to mark out a boundary line all around Afghanistan, so that we should first know what provinces really belonged to Afghanistan before thinking of introducing any reforms and improvements therein. Fortunately, I have succeeded in defining the boundaries of Afghanistan with the neighbouring powers, and putting an end to their gradual moving forward... Taking into consideration that the boundary lines made a strong wall around the country, shaping it, as it were, into a house, it was necessary to clear that house of all the injurious scorpions existing in it, scorpions that formed a great obstacle in the way of peace and progress. To explain myself: I mean that I had to put in order all those hundreds of petty chiefs, plunderers, robbers, and cut-throats, who were the cause of everlasting trouble in Afghanistan. This necessitated breaking down the feudal and tribal system, and substituting one grand community under one law and under one rule.⁴²⁸

The above utterance was imputed to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān by his Punjabi biographer Sulṭān Muḥammad Khān, who, in fact, produced the sections concerning the Amīr’s effort at state building and the nature of his administration without any direct input or control on the part of the king. The statement is also interesting in that it endows ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān with an active role in the delineation of Afghanistan’s borders, obscuring the fact that they were largely defined at the instance of Great Britain and Russia. The notion that Afghanistan’s boundaries were created on the Amīr’s initiative is also shared by Afghan historians of the time.⁴²⁹

While the above statement may not have been coined by the Amīr himself, it reflects a profound conceptual change which signifies the adoption of modern notions of territoriality. The emergence of fixed borders in the late nineteenth century caused traditional conceptions of political authority to be charged with entirely new perceptions of space. As part of this process, the early modern dynastic idea of a ruling “house” and its net of allegiances with other influential families was substituted by a notion of the state as a clearly bounded edifice. In keeping with this image, the walls of the house symbolized the linearity and seeming immutability of national borders, which in turn called for a more efficient and profound administrative penetration of the state sphere thus defined. The construction of the modern state as a confined but inviolable space continued to carry the seeds of territorial conflict with next-door neighbors and endowed lingering territorial claims with a new degree of urgency. This inherent tension was highlighted during the first British attempt at dividing Sīstān between Iranian and Afghan interests in 1872. The boundary line created in this process left both parties involved discontent. Even so, it formalized the distinction of Iran and Afghanistan as separate and clearly delimited political entities.

The creation of modern boundaries engendered the necessity of redesigning the relationship between the central government and its subject territories. Both in Afghanistan and Iran, the state faced the challenge of penetrating a more narrowly defined space from within. The transformation of the tribal leadership from important allies into “scorpions” in the perception of the state reflects the effort to substitute the traditional methods of maintaining a web of personal allegiances with centralized control. It was this aspect of modernity that both the Qājār and the Muḥammadzai governments found it difficult to implement conceptually and practically. While the outward borders were in place, the internal balance was slow to shift. On the Afghan side, the relative weakness of early Muḥammadzai rulers was offset by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān’s sustained effort at sweeping out the feudal and tribal elements from his vision of a centralized state by means of countless rounds of execution, imprisonment and exile. In Qājār Khurāsān, intermittent attempts at curbing the influence of the tribal leadership were followed by periods of entrenchment. While individual leaders were subject to execution and deportation, the local nobility retained, and at times even enhanced its influential position in the provincial administration. In the following chapter, I will attempt to shed light on the regional relationships of power by exploring the demographic makeup of Iranian Khurāsān and the

⁴²⁸ Sultan Mahomed Khan 1980 II: 175–7.

⁴²⁹ Riyāzī states that Amīr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān decided to fix the borders of Afghanistan (*ba khiyāl-i ta’yīn-i sarḥaddāt uftād*) in 1301/1883–84. As a result, the Afghan Boundary Commission was formed (KR 217).

interaction between Qājār administrators and the local forces. The prominent tribal leaders of Khurāsān enjoyed a great degree of stability both in terms of their territorial possessions and their relationship with the government. The circumstances in the eastern and northeastern reaches of Khurāsān, by contrast, were characterized by a high volatility until the late nineteenth century. As will be seen below, this environment of fluctuating allegiances and changing patterns of settlement only gained a measure of solidity with its incorporation into modern political entities and the resulting freezing of local conditions.

