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NADIR SHAH'S PECULIAR CENTRAL ASIAN LEGACY: EMPIRE, CONVERSION NARRATIVES, AND THE RISE OF NEW SCHOLARLY DYNASTIES

Abstract
Over the course of the 18th–early 20th centuries, a curious narrative emerged in Central Asia wherein the Turko-Persian monarch Nadir Shah Afshar was converted from Shiʿism to Sunnism by a group of Islamic scholars outside of Bukhara. While this legend was rooted in Nadir Shah's theological ambitions to bring Shiʿism back into the Sunni fold as a fifth school of canonical law, the *memory* of that event in the subsequent two centuries was intimately tied to the establishment of several scholarly dynasties, which managed to perpetuate themselves all the way to the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. This article engages the memory of this mythological conversion to explore sharpening conceptions of sectarian divisions and the role of genealogy in projecting spiritual authority. Most broadly, it argues that—far from a passing depredation—the Afsharid Empire profoundly shaped the geopolitical and social landscape of Persianate Asia.

Keywords: Conversion; Islamic History; Persian; Shiʿa; Sunnism

In the early 20th century, Sharif Jan Makhdum Sadr Ziyaʾ, a famous Bukharan scholar, explained his matrilineal heritage thusly:

> Qazi Mirza Umid was one of ten ʿulamaʾ selected by Abu al-Fayz Khan [Tuqay-Timurid ruler of Bukhara, 1711–47] to be part of Hadi Khwaja's retinue sent in audience to Nadir Shah Afshar at the Charbakr mausoleum.[1] These ten [Bukharan Hanafi] scholars engaged in debate with ten skilled Shiʿi ʿulamaʾ on the issue of which sect embodied the truth.[2] Mirza Umid emerged from this engagement triumphant and proved the truth of Sunnism.[3] Nadir Shah saw fit to be merciful toward Abu al-Fayz Khan [who had just surrendered Bukhara][4] and embraced the true Sunni sect.[5]

Why would the scion of one of the most powerful scholarly families in Bukhara make a special point of tying his lineage to a foreign invasion already fading into distant memory? And since when did Nadir Shah Afshar, the understudied 18th-century Turko-Persian conqueror, "convert" to Sunnism at the hands of a people he had soundly defeated?[6] By the time Sadr Ziyaʾ wrote his memoirs, over a century and a half had passed since the murder of Nadir Shah scattered his armies, and the conqueror does not loom especially large in other writings of the late colonial period. Yet this particular conversion narrative

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bore curious resonance during Central Asia's long 19th century and the story served to justify the lofty status of numerous great families of Bukhara.[7] More importantly, this episode puts in stark relief changing conceptions of sect and religious community on the eve of colonialism.

The aforementioned conversion narrative is entirely absent in the secondary literature, and even the basic political history of Nadir Shah's empire—however short-lived—is misrepresented as a passing depredation in Central Asian history, a footnote in the rise of the Manghit dynasty of Bukhara (1747–1920).[8] Central Asia is hardly unique in this regard: Nadir Shah generally appears as a bit player during an age of "decline" and transition into colonialism; an inconvenient placeholder between Safavid and Qajar history; a catalyst to British dominance in India; and a momentary challenger to Ottoman control over its eastern provinces.

Yet vacillating memory of Nadir Shah's theological intervention into Central Asia's religious landscape has much broader implications, edging up against fluid historiographical debates on communalism, conversion, and genealogy.[9] Voluminous work has exposed the decisive role of colonial forms of knowledge in hardening communal boundaries,[10] but somewhat less research interrogates the nature of those boundaries during the precolonial period,[11] and still less engages these issues during the transition period of the the long 19th century.[12] Scholarship from a related vector has demonstrated the role conversion, or memory of conversion, can play in sanctifying a community and in assimilating it to a new environment.[13] And genealogy provides the connective tissue to the conversion event.[14]

This article has several related goals. First, it emphasizes the importance of Nadir Shah's empire in Central Asian history, and ultimately in catalyzing a long 19th century of city-states throughout Eurasia and the Indian Subcontinent. In this formulation, the Manghit dynasty of Bukhara (1747–1920) was but one of many Afsharid successor states. Second, it contends that the rubble of Nadir Shah's empire proved fertile soil not only for new political dynasties, but for scholarly ones as well. The analysis focuses in particular on the line of Hadi Khwaja, whose origins are connected personally to Nadir Shah, and whose family dynasty prevailed for over a century up to the Bolshevik Revolution. This period was characterized by rising levels of Sunni–Shiʿa animosity, which necessitated the myth of Nadir Shah's conversion to Sunnism. This narrative in turn originated in Nadir Shah's much better-known efforts to establish Shiʿism as a fifth "Jaʿfari" legal school within the Sunni fold. The conversion narrative not only established the venerability of some of Bukhara's most influential families, but also grounded them and their successors as paragons of Hanafi Sunnism. Thus, the Afsharid Empire directly led to the rise of new scholarly dynasties and indirectly set the stage for the changing political-religious landscape that framed the memory of Nadir Shah.

THE MANGHIT DYNASTY OF BUKHARA AS AN AFSHARID SUCCESSOR STATE, ONE OF MANY

Before considering the memory of Nadir Shah amongst the Bukharan ʿulamaʾ, it is necessary to first expose a few key points of political history that have been ignored (or at least minimized) in the secondary literature. The central contention here is that the specter of Nadir Shah loomed large in the imaginations of Islamic scholars throughout

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the long 19th century precisely because the Turko-Persian conqueror's impact on the region was decisive and enduring. Moreover, his empire *indirectly* set in motion a number of changes in the political-religious landscape that profoundly shaped sectarian divisions over the ensuing long 19th century. This section, therefore, emphasizes the role of Nadir Shah in the inception of the Manghit dynasty and the lasting importance of his imperial project on the region.

Details about the precise circumstances surrounding Muhammad Rahim Bey's rise as the founder of the Manghit dynasty are decidedly vague in the secondary literature[15] —which is not surprising given that the Iranian and Bukharan sources on this sensitive episode are murky and contradict one another. The account in several of these sources goes something like this: after Nadir Shah subdued Abu al-Fayz Khan (the last Tuqay-Timurid dynast of Bukhara, r. 1711–47), the two rulers reached an accord by which Abu al-Fayz was confirmed as shah of Turkestan, Nadir Shah married Abu al-Fayz's daughter, Muhammad Hakim Khan (who had until then been ruling Qarshi as a quasi-independent governor) was appointed *atalīq* (sometimes synonymous with *amīr al-umarāʾ*, "head of the amirs"),[16] and Muhammad Hakim Khan's son, Rahim Bey, was placed at the head of 10,000 horsemen and sent away with Nadir Shah on his campaign to Khwarazm.[17] Most sources agree on these basic points. What is less clear is the nature of Nadir Shah's continued relationship with the region and how, exactly, one of his deputized generals—Rahim Bey Manghit—managed to take the throne for himself.

Early Manghit political history has been detailed elsewhere—most notably in Andreas Wilde's study of Bukharan dynastic chronicles.[18] My intervention in this section is to suggest that Nadir Shah maintained meaningful control over Transoxania even after most of his armies vacated the region in 1740, and that the rise of the first Manghit monarch—Rahim Bey—was the result of a successful struggle for the material resources of the Afsharid military machine, similar to many such contests that played out across Eurasia in the wake of imperial collapse. This geopolitical background is context for the hardening communal boundaries that followed, which are evident in the conversion narrative to be discussed subsequently.

From 1740 to 1747 Transoxania was integrated into the Afsharid Empire through tribute and political intervention; it was not simply conquered, pillaged, and then abandoned, as much of the literature would have it.[19] Afsharid rule of Central Eurasia was, of course, highly personalized and indirect, and it vacillated during that seven-year period in response to crises. However, these characteristics are present to various degrees in all premodern empires.[20] Nadir Shah's *de jure* sovereignty was recognized by reading the Friday prayer (*khuṭba*) and minting coins (*sikka*) in his name in 1740.[21] Although it is unclear whether these practices continued after Nadir Shah left the region,[22] they were implemented in 1747 as well to emphasize that Bukhara remained part of the empire.[23] More importantly, Nadir Shah maintained *de facto* control over Transoxania through the periodic collection of tribute and intervention into vassal politics.[24] Abu al-Fayz (the puppet Tuqay-Timurid ruler of Bukhara) continued to dutifully send requisitions (*sūrsāt*) even *after* the Afsharid armies had left the region.[25]

Within the Afsharid Empire more broadly, Bukhara was no exception in this regard. When provinces ceased sending tribute, Nadir Shah dispatched armies to compel them to do so. For instance, in 1746 Mirza Nabat—the *wālī* and *pādishāh* of Badakhshan—was "persuaded" to pay two years in back taxes in the form of rubies at the value

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of one hundred thousand *tūmān*. As a reward for the tribute, Nadir Shah granted him the privilege of retaining the title *pādishāh*.[26] Similarly, Nadir Shah was constantly intervening in Khwarazmian politics, collecting tribute and picking favorites for the throne.[27] Put starkly, the Afsharid Empire was collecting material resources from Central Asian territories never successfully incorporated by the Manghits during the precolonial period and from a far more distant capital.

Moreover, Nadir Shah did not finish off the Tuqay-Timurid dynasty; rather, he temporarily resuscitated it. By the time Nadir Shah defeated Abu al-Fayz Khan in 1740, the khanate of Bukhara existed more in name than in fact. The early 18th century had witnessed a series of disastrous upheavals that allowed the Turkic military elite of the region to compete for indirect control of the throne and carve out independent territories.[28] After defeating Abu al-Fayz, Nadir Shah's first act was to send armed emissaries to secure the submission of outlying provinces such as Samarqand, Hisar, and Shahrisabz, which had enjoyed *de facto* independence for decades.[29] Although Nadir Shah most certainly stripped Bukhara of material and human resources by drafting troops for his campaigns, it was in fact Abu al-Fayz who suggested that the conqueror conscript certain troublesome tribal leaders in order to remove political competition.[30] Thus, rather than marking the end of the Tuqay-Timurid dynasty, the Afsharid invasion gave it a new lease on life, however fleeting. When Nadir Shah's Central Asian vassal was threatened by a series of rebellions in the 1740s—business as usual during the preceding decades—troops were sent to enforce Bukharan (and thus Afsharid) suzerainty over its hinterland.

Ultimately, this suzerainty over Central Asia came to an end with the death of Nadir Shah in 1747. Yet there were multiple Afsharid generals contending for regional dominance, and Rahim Bey Manghit did not simply formalize a mantle already in his possession. In 1746–47 a particularly threatening uprising by ʿIbad Allah Khatayi prompted Nadir Shah to appoint Bihbud Khan Chapushi[31] sardar of the entire province (*mamlakat*) of Turkestan and dispatch him to restore order—which he ultimately succeeded in doing.[32] It appears that Bihbud Khan was effectively Nadir Shah's heir apparent in Central Asia, or at least one of them.[33] In Manghit versions of this event, however, it is Rahim Bey, not Bihbud Khan, who takes the central role in the succession struggle, and his motive was not to preserve the integrity of the Afsharid Empire, but rather to avenge an act of sacrilege: around the year 1743, Muhammad Hakim Khan Manghit (Rahim Bey's father) died, leading to widespread rebellions in Transoxania.[34] Particularly odious were the deeds of the aforementioned ʿIbad Allah Khatayi, who in 1746 desecrated a Naqshbandi shrine in Miyankal.[35] Nadir Shah sent Rahim Bey at the head of an army of four thousand Qizilbash to assist Abu al-Fayz Khan and defeat ʿIbad Allah Khatayi, orders he carried out handily. Manghit chronicles do not attempt to write Nadir Shah out of Bukharan history, but they do elevate Rahim Bey over more important Afsharid generals such as Bihbud Khan. Some even go so far as to assert that Nadir Shah explicitly bequeathed the authority to rule Turkestan to Rahim Bey,[36] a rhetorical strategy shared by Afghan chronicles, for instance.[37]

The events surrounding the Manghit ascension during the months preceding and following Nadir Shah's murder clarify even further the critical importance of the Afsharid imperial framework. In May of 1747—a little under two months before Nadir Shah was killed on 20 June 1747—a dispatch arrived at Bihbud Khan's fortification (*sangur*)

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outside of Bukhara from Nadir Shah's court indicating that Rahim Bey would be arriving imminently to ensure that Turkestan remained pacified, after which time the Manghit prince should return to the royal encampment. But the favor Nadir Shah had shown Rahim Bey went far beyond allowing him to temporarily return home: based on the testimony of Rahim Bey along with several other unnamed Turkic nobles to the effect that Abu al-Fayz was weak and therefore responsible for the unrest in Turkestan, Nadir Shah ordered that he be deposed and put under house arrest in favor of his twelve-year-old son, ʿAbd al-Muʾmin.[38] In effect, Rahim Bey had maneuvered the head of the Tuqay-Timurid dynasty—the ruling lineage for a century and a half—out of power through the threat of force from the Afsharid army. On 10 July 1747, when rumors of general chaos in Iran began to permeate Transoxania, Rahim Bey executed Abu al-Fayz.[39] All that remained between him and undisputed control of Bukhara was Bihbud Khan and his Qizilbash garrison.

Once Abu al-Fayz was executed, the struggle for control of Bukhara began—a contest ultimately decided by Afsharid troops. After an engagement in which one of Bihbud Khan's trusted commanders perished, a contingent of Afghans in his army slipped off in the night to join Rahim Bey's side. Shortly thereafter, on 21 July 1747, seven hundred Ottoman soldiers (who had been captured and recommissioned during Nadir Shah's western campaigns) followed suit.[40] With his forces dwindling, Bihbud Khan was forced to retreat.[41] Thus Nadir Shah's military organization allowed the Manghits to emerge as the victorious Afsharid successor state, one of many throughout the broader region.[42] The Afsharid imperial grid was the pivotal factor in the rise of the Manghit dynasty, just as it was in the Durrani dynasty in Afghanistan and the Zand dynasty in Iran.

CHANGING RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE OVER THE LONG 19TH CENTURY OF PERSIANATE CITY-STATES

The impact of Nadir Shah's conquest of Central Asia intensified during the ensuing decades, precipitating transformations in the region's religious and social landscape. Far from a fleeting depredation, the imprint of Nadir Shah's conquest deepened as the long 19th century wore on due to the *indirect* consequences of his empire. Even if Nadir Shah the man was eclipsed in local chronicles by the Manghit dynasts of Bukhara, structural changes resulting from his empire endured.

Most decisive of these developments was the definitive end of the Chinggisid dispensation in Central Asia, which had justified the rule of regional monarchs since the Shibanid conquest in 1500. This shift did not happen immediately.[43] Muhammad Rahim maintained a puppet Chinggisid khan on the throne until 1756,[44] a practice Timur had employed centuries earlier,[45] one his neighbors in Khiva would echo decades later,[46] and one his Uzbek brethren in Balkh had exploited even before Nadir Shah's conquests.[47] The Chinggisid legacy competed with that of the Timurids, that of the Safavids, and—briefly—even that of Nadir Shah himself, following his death.[48] Nevertheless, it was the Chinggisid lineage of the deposed Tuqay-Timurids that most vexed Manghit rulers, and the connection between the Afsharid-authorized deposition of Abu al-Fayz—the last Chinggisid who ruled Bukhara both in name and in fact—and the nullification of this claim to power is clear.[49]

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The new political tapestry of non-Chinggisid, Afsharid successor city-states in turn had profound implications in the religious realm. As Anke von Kügelgen in particular has demonstrated, this shift away from Chinggisid justifications for rulership prompted the Manghit dynasty to increasingly depict themselves as pious Islamic rulers.[50] This is not to imply that Islam was not an integral component in the ruling ideology of pre-Afsharid rulers,[51] nor is it to suggest that the legacy of Chinggis Khan evaporated along with his ruling bloodline.[52] It does mean, however, that the Manghits had fewer rhetorical options than their immediate predecessors, and that they were *relatively* more dependent upon the religious elite. Early Manghit rulers went about compensating for the Chinggis-sized chip on their collective shoulder in part by portraying *themselves* as ʿulamaʾ. Shah Murad (r. 1785–1800) and Amir Haydar (1800–27) in particular were remembered as exemplary scholars.[53] Ultimately, however, this increased orientation toward Islam as a ruling ideology rested on an alliance with the ʿulamaʾ.

This turn toward the ʿulamaʾ came during a period in which that very social group was undergoing profound change, a change that was also arguably an indirect result of the Afsharid interregnum. Just as Nadir Shah's invasion constituted the death knell of Chinggisid rule in Central Asia, in India it was a fatal blow to Mughal rule.[54] This humiliation in turn fueled the rise of the aggressive, expansionist, shariʿa-minded Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi order. As Juan Cole puts it: "Sunni notables of Delhi watched the decline of the Mughal Empire, as first the Hindu Marathas and then the British East India Company reduced the Mughal emperor to a figurehead. Crisis-stricken Sunni ulama asked with anguish if the Deity had visited these calamities upon them as punishment for lapses in the way Sunnis practiced Islam."[55] In earlier centuries, Sufi traffic had flowed primarily from Central Asia to the Indian subcontinent, but in the 18th century the direction reversed, and Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi proselytizers began arriving in Bukhara exactly when the Turkic elite's reliance on them had become more pronounced.[56] These Naqshband-Mujaddidis were initially resisted by rival Sufi orders and Turkic nobility alike,[57] but by the third Manghit ruler, Shah Murad, they were firmly entrenched in the halls of power.[58] Concurrent with this alliance (and perhaps consequent of it) were reforms to the taxation system to better align it with the letter of the shariʿa,[59] for instance, and a boom in madrasa construction.[60]

This imagined return to Islam coincided with heightening Shiʿa–Sunni tensions and likely played a role in causing them, although Bukhara's sizable Shiʿi community has not received sustained scholarly inquiry. Extensive literature has revealed the role of colonialism and European categories of knowledge in sharpening communal boundaries,[61] and while Russian rule may well have affected conceptions of the Shiʿa–Sunni divide in Central Asia (the issue has never been investigated),[62] the discussion that follows provides evidence of growing sectarian differentiation dating to the 19th century.[63] Although it would be a mistake to overemphasize the rigidness of the Shiʿa–Sunni divide,[64] even as late as the early 20th century, Central Asian chroniclers of the 18th century took Nadir Shah's affiliation quite seriously, describing his Qizilbash warriors as "enemies of religion" (*dushmanān-i dīn*) and justifying the conflict as a jihad against blasphemers.[65] One chronicler of the 1830s wrote: "from the time of Timur until [Nadir Shah's conquest of] 1740, the world-conquering shahs have been Muslims (*ahl-i Islām*), and an infidel like Nadir Shah had never sat upon the world-sheltering throne."[66] By the 19th century Central Asia witnessed forced relocation of Iranian Shiʿa to Bukhara and

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sporadic communal violence.[67] Blurry boundaries between communities equally reverent of the House of the Prophet hardened into rival communities through the discourse of blasphemy.[68]

This background explains why Nadir Shah's formative role in Central Asian geopolitics became more problematic as the long 19th century wore on. It also explains why later chroniclers marginalized the role of Nadir Shah in the rise of the Manghits as well as the strained relationship of the ʿulamaʾ with the memory of that same Turko-Persian monarch. This brings us to the curious conversion narrative of Nadir Shah and the ʿulamaʾ who benefited from it.

THE LEGENDARY CONVERSION OF NADIR SHAH TO SUNNISM AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

This new sectarian terrain posed a retrospective problem for scholarly dynasties that owed their genesis to Nadir Shah, a figure increasingly seen as an Iranian, Shiʿi ruler as the 19th century progressed. This tension is put into stark relief in varying accounts of Nadir Shah's relationship with Sunnism, usually revolving in some way around the figure of Hadi Khwaja "Eshan Ustaz" (d. late 18th century).

Although later accounts veer toward the mythological—no less revealing for our purposes here—the conversion narratives grew out of an *actual* encounter between Hadi Khwaja and Nadir Shah. According to an untitled, anonymous travel account written by someone apparently present for the events in question,[69] in August 1743 Hadi Khwaja—along with a party of fellow Sunni, Central Asian ʿulamaʾ—set out from Bukhara to visit the Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala, both especially sacred in Shiʿism.[70] The travel account does not specifically say so, but he was answering an empire-wide call to assemble scholars to resolve the Sunni–Shiʿa divide.[71] On the way, Hadi Khwaja also visited a shrine in Mashhad that had been endowed with Shiʿi significance by the Safavid dynasty only in the previous century or so, though none of this was unusual behavior for a Sunni Muslim—especially at that early date.[72] More remarkable is what transpired once Hadi Khwaja arrived in Iraq, parts of which were then controlled by Nadir Shah. After visiting the shrines of Adam, Moses, and ʿAli, located in Najaf, Hadi Khwaja entered into a religious disputation (*munāẓara*) with a group of Qizilbash mullas outside of the shrine complex following the afternoon (*pēshīn*) prayer.[73] The scholars debated the exigencies of religion (*żarūrīyāt-i dīn*) until the Qizilbash were persuaded to Hadi Khwaja's side (*qāʾil shudand*), though allowances were made for those facets of their Shiʿi beliefs not intrinsically at odds with Sunnism.[74] According to an Ottoman observer, it was in fact Hadi Khwaja who was coaxed out of his stubbornly anti-Shiʿa position by an Afghan colleague in attendance, but either way, Nadir Shah's position prevailed.[75] Having arrived at this accord, the next day, "the Sunni and Qizilbash mullas gathered together at the front of the tomb complex, where they wrote and sealed a document asserting that Shiʿism was within Islam."[76]

Hadi Khwaja's accord with the Qizilbash scholars makes a great deal of sense within Nadir Shah's broader efforts to secure acceptance of Shiʿism within Sunni Islam. Scholars of Iranian history have portrayed Nadir's theological efforts exclusively in relation to the Ottoman Empire. Nadir Shah exhorted the Ottoman sultan to recognize Shiʿism as the fifth juridical school (*maẓhab*) of Islam, to be known as the Jaʿfari school after the sixth

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Shiʿi imam. In exchange, Shiʿa would renounce certain practices particularly offensive to Sunnis, such as the ritual cursing of the first three caliphs.[77] Although Nadir Shah's primary preoccupation was indeed the Ottoman Empire, the Sunni ʿulamaʾ who actually signed off on his agenda (such as Hadi Khwaja and colleagues, but also a delegation of Afghans) overwhelmingly hailed from territories he had conquered.[78] The text of the Najaf accord signed by Hadi Khwaja's delegation explicitly cedes Nadir Shah final authority in punishing anyone throughout his empire who fails to abide by the agreement and continues to persecute Shiʿa.[79] Thus the Council of Najaf bore importance as a tool not only of diplomacy, but also of imperial integration.

These efforts ultimately came to naught, but Hadi Khwaja's role in justifying them proved extremely lucrative. After Friday prayer in Kufa with his new Qizilbash colleagues, Hadi Khwaja proceeded to Karbala where he visited the shrine of Husayn and was honored with a personal audience with the shah. According to Hadi Khwaja's account, Nadir Shah showered him with unprecedented hospitality while they drank tea together.[80] More concretely, whoever transcribed the travelogue scribbled in the margin that Hadi Khwaja was given six thousand rupees and all of his fellow Bukharan companions were given two thousand.[81] At the end of the account, the author further added in the margins that in December 1744 Hadi Khwaja was appointed military judge (*qāżī-yi ʿaskarī*) of Bukhara—the first step in his family's dominance of the city-state's highest religious posts.[82]

This terse travelogue stands as our earliest account of Hadi Khwaja's relationship with Nadir Shah. That it is an eyewitness account and fits with our understanding of Nadir Shah's theological ambitions is indicative of authenticity. However, later, substantially altered versions of the encounter between Nadir Shah and Hadi Khwaja are no less revealing of the event's symbolic importance for the fortunes of scholarly dynasties in subsequent decades.

Certain changes in the depiction of this debate are already present in Muhammad Sharif's *Taj al-Tawarikh* (Crown of History),[83] a chronicle commissioned by Amir Haydar Manghit in ca. 1800. The most important change is the lack of compromise or conciliation with Shiʿism: Sunni victory is total. In this version, the Qizilbash Mulla Bashi[84] made a fool of himself through spurious deployment of the Hadith, and Nadir Shah was fully convinced of his treachery.[85] Nadir Shah went on to issue a decree (*wathīqa farmūda*) that all should recognize the rightness of the Sunni path, which prevailed from the foundation of Islam until the perversions of Shah Ismaʿil (the founding Safavid ruler, r. 1501–24).[86] Nonetheless, many of the details resemble those of the briefer *Safarnama* (Travelogue): the disputation also takes place in Najaf,[87] though in this version Nadir Shah himself is present, having summoned scholars from all corners of his empire to determine the true *mażhab*.[88] The *Taj al-Tawarikh* also makes special note of the rewards (including Indian rupees) handed out to the victorious Sunni ʿulamaʾ. The text does not mention Hadi Khwaja specifically, but it does single out one *ḥażrat-i ēshān ustād* as particularly deserving of recompense.[89] Although this was a fairly common title of ʿulamaʾ in Central Asia, it was one used in other texts to refer specifically to Hadi Khwaja.[90]

Most later accounts preserve the climactic Sunni–Shiʿa debate with Nadir Shah as arbiter, but shift the encounter to an earlier date and the location to the Charbakr shrine outside of Bukhara. According to Muhammad Hakim Khan's Khoqand-centric *Muntakhab al-Tawarikh* (Selections from History), composed in the 1840s, after Nadir

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Shah crossed the Oxus he camped his massive army at Charbakr, which left the militarily weak Abu al-Fayz Khan (r. 1711–47) at a loss. Conferring with his advisers, Abu al-Fayz determined to greet Nadir graciously and—after fruitlessly dispatching several ambassadors (*īlchī*)—sent a wise Sufi named Eshan Imla to meet the Iranian shah.[91] Impressed, Nadir treated the Eshan with great honor, and as a result of their discussions of religion, Nadir Shah repented and forsook the Shiʿi *maẕhab* in favor of Sunnism. Thanks to Eshan Imla's intervention, Bukhara was compensated for its military subjugation with a theological victory.[92] Instead of appearing as an arbiter above the religious disputes, as in previous versions, here Nadir Shah's personal conversion to Sunnism is emphasized. Also as with previous versions, in this one Nadir Shah rewarded the scholar handsomely with an assortment of jewels (*khalīṭa-ʾi jawāhir*). In contrast with the characterization of Hadi Khwaja in the *Safarnama*, however, the author is careful to clarify that Eshan Imla had no use for the trappings of temporal power and immediately gave the jewels away to his servant (*kafsh bardār,* lit. "shoe carrier").[93] Following the Eshan's intervention, Abu al-Fayz was able to secure peace with Nadir.

As this narrative evolved over the course of the 19th century, the emphasis on *conversion* became more pronounced, as did the agency of Hadi Khwaja. As Devin DeWeese has illustrated in a different context, the act of conversion simultaneously assimilated elements increasingly understood to be outside the fold (Shiʿism) and sacralized a new community of scholars (Hadi Khwaja and his descendants).[94] Sadr Ziyaʾ's account of the event (quoted at the start of this article), composed in the early 20th century, combined elements of the *Safarnama,* the *Taj al-Tawarikh*, and the *Muntakhab al-Tawarikh*. In this version, Nadir Shah crossed into Transoxania not to conquer, but for the express purpose of visiting the Naqshbandi shrine at Charbakr. He sent a letter to Abu al-Fayz boasting that: "seizing this city would be incredibly easy for me. My only pretension in coming here is to visit (*zīyāra*) Hazrat Eshan Imla."[95] Ziyaʾ asserted that Nadir Shah was secretly a Sunni all along (*ẓāhiran shīʿī wa-bāṭinan ahl-i sunnat*)—which is why he wanted to meet Eshan Imla in the first place.[96] Later in his history, however, Ziyaʾ inserts into the narrative ten ʿulamaʾ alongside Eshan Imla in the audience with Nadir Shah at Charbakr—Hadi Khwaja foremost among them. As in the *Safarnama* and *Taj al-Tawarikh,* we find a theological debate between Sunni and Shiʿi scholars, though this time taking place in Charbakr, just as in *Muntakhab al-Tawarikh*. Moreover, rather than serving to legitimate Nadir Shah's theological agenda uniting the Sunni and Shiʿi sects, in this version (as in the *Taj al-Tawarikh*) the Sunni victory is absolute, with the Bukharan scholars convincing the Shiʿa of the ultimate truth of Sunnism (*ḥaqqat-i maẕhab*).[97] Ultimately, Ziyaʾ contradicted his own assertion of Nadir's secret Sunnism by claiming that Nadir Shah too embraced the Sunni *maẕhab* as a result of this religious debate.[98]

The evolution of this conversion narrative over the course of the long 19th century reveals both the lasting impact of the Afsharid imperial project detailed in the first section and mounting sectarian tensions. Nadir Shah's empire facilitated exchange, including between scholars, and his theological ambitions left a lasting imprint on the memory of families of ʿulamaʾ in the region. What originated in his attempt to integrate Shiʿism into the Sunni fold, however, morphed over time into his own conversion to Sunnism as facilitated by the Bukharan ʿulamaʾ, which transformed the memory of his initial patronage into an asset rather than a liability. As the next section will demonstrate, that

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memory was not just an idle story: it empowered Hadi Khwaja's family in particular for over a century.

OPPORTUNITY FROM UPHEAVAL: NADIR SHAH AND THE GENESIS OF HADI KHWAJA'S FAMILY DYNASTY

Thus Hadi Khwaja likely did perform a theological service for Nadir Shah, but the memory of that service changed radically over the long 19th century as the Sunni–Hanafi gaze toward Shiʿism became increasingly strained. Hadi Khwaja, along with a cadre of peers,[99] morphed from Afsharid servants into champions of Hanafi Islam, thereby fulfilling the role of mythological ancestor sacralizing a discreet community of descendants. As this section will demonstrate, that memory proved a powerful force indeed, as Hadi Khwaja's new scholarly dynasty perpetuated itself all the way to the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. Piecemeal genealogies and hagiographies connected Hadi Khwaja's ancestors to that foundational conversion event, as well as to the Prophet and numerous saintly figures.[100]

Hadi Khwaja "Eshan Ustaz" was most likely a scholar of some prestige before the events described above, but no reference is made to influential ranks held by prominent forebears, so it is impossible to know for sure.[101] However, the social, material, and political benefits that emerged from putting his religious expertise at the service of Nadir Shah allowed him to perpetuate a family dynasty on his own merit. Following the execution of Nizam al-Din Husayni in 1785,[102] Hadi Khwaja was elevated to his deceased colleague's recently vacated chief judgeship (*qāżī-yi kalān*) and was appointed shaykh al-Islam,[103] *mudarris*/*akhūnd*[104] of the prestigious Kokaltash madrasa, and personal tutor of Shah Murad Manghit (r. 1785–1800).[105]

Hadi Khwaja's son, Muhammad ʿAtaʾ Allah (d. 1795–96) became a force in his own right, certainly in no small part due to the fact that his father managed to pass on all three of his major positions: shaykh al-Islam, *qāẓī-yi kalān*, and *mudarris* of Kokaltash.[106] Not only was he connected to the new crop of elite scholars embroiled in the rise of the Manghit dynasty through his father, he was also a disciple of Muhammad Siddiq, a member of the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya who emigrated from India and rose to the top of the Dihbidi branch of order.[107] Moreover, ʿAtaʾ Allah was inducted into that order by the aforementioned Eshan Imla, whose role in the Nadir Shah conversion legend eclipsed that of Hadi Khwaja in some accounts.[108] Suggestively, Eshan Imla's legacy does not seem to extend much past his own lifetime, and the sources do not speak of any heirs to his legacy from his own family. In contrast, hagiographical sources make much of ʿAtaʾ Allah taking up Eshan Imla's *spiritual* legacy. One such source states that when ʿAtaʾ Allah was fifteen years old, his father, Hadi Khwaja, entrusted him over to Eshan Imla, stating: "Muhammad ʿAtaʾ Allah is your servant [*ghulām*]." To this, Imla responded: "ʿAtaʾ Allah is my child." Thus ʿAtaʾ Allah was symbolically adopted into the genealogy of Eshan Imla, who was also held to have participated in the legendary conversion of Nadir Shah.

Just as Hadi Khwaja had passed on his authority to his offspring, ʿAtaʾ Allah ensured that the family's prestige lived on in future generations.[109] ʿAtaʾ Allah's son Rahmat Allah was appointed *raʾīs*, then *mudarris*,[110] and ultimately succeeded his father as shaykh al-Islam. Fittingly, one of the madrasas in which Rahmat Allah taught was none

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other than Damulla Muhammad Sharif—the very institution that had been endowed by Eshan Imla's follower using the treasure given by Nadir Shah.[111] He also tapped into the memory of the conversion narrative from another direction by marrying the daughter of one of the attested participants in the Council of Najaf.[112] Rahmat Allah's promising career was cut terminally short by some variety of plague (*al-wabāʾ al-ʿām*) in 1807–8,[113] but not before the Turkic–scholarly alliance was cemented with a marriage between Rahmat Allah and one of Shah Murad's daughters.[114]

Rahmat Allah's untimely demise did not, however, spell the end of Hadi Khwaja's legacy, as ʿAtaʾ Allah's other son, Eshan Sharif Khwaja, inherited all of the positions held by his forebears: *qāżī-yi kalān,* shaykh al-Islam, *mudarris/akhūnd* of Kokaltash madrasa,[115] and personal tutor of the khan, in this case Nasr Allah (r. 1827–60), who appointed him at the astonishingly young age of thirty-five.[116] Sadr Ziyaʾ noted the poetic symmetry between the Manghit dynasty and Hadi Khwaja's line thusly: "These three renowned members of the ʿulamaʾ of a single hue (*bi'yak'rang*) and of a single repose (*bi-yak'qarār*) were in the respective ages of three powerful shahs appointed to great ranks and mighty titles."[117]

Hadi Khwaja's prestige continued to elevate his descendants even after Eshan Sharif Khwaja's death. Eshan Sharif Khwaja's son, Buzurg Khwaja, served Amir Muzaffar (r. 1860–85) in the most serious way possible by taking up arms and joining the Bukharan military resistance against the Russian Empire, which was ultimately quashed in 1868. He was rewarded for his service with the rank of *ṣadr* (an honorary title) and the position of *muḥtasib* (sometimes translated as "censor").[118] Another son, Fayz Allah Khwaja, served as military mufti (*muftī-yi ʿaskarī*) and was granted the rank of *ṣudūr* (another honorific).[119]

As with Nadir Shah's conquest, the Russian subjugation of Bukhara altered the political landscape, once again creating new opportunities for new families of scholars. As Stéphane Dudoignon has demonstrated, the Russian-enabled Bukharan conquest of the mountainous eastern provinces resulted in the influx of scholars from territories such as Kulab. The presence of these new competitors, particularly the descendants of Ibn Bayza Khatlani, allowed the amir greater leverage over more established lineages such as that of Hadi Khwaja.[120] Until the Bolshevik conquest of Bukhara in 1920, the Bukharan amirs tended to rotate the position *qāżī-yi kalān* between the descendants of Ibn Bayza Khatlani (the Kulabi faction) and Sadr Ziyaʾ's Bukharan faction of ʿulamaʾ—the latter of which was separate from that of Hadi Khwaja, but similarly rooted in Bukhara. In this context the relinquishment of Hadi Khwaja's family hold on Bukhara's top positions open to the ʿulamaʾ is understandable. However, it is worth noting that Sadr Ziyaʾ's maternal grandfather, Sabir′jan, was one of Hadi Khwaja's students, so the two lines were intertwined in terms of intellectual pedigree.[121]

Even if the top judicial positions were dominated by other families of ʿulamaʾ during the colonial period, Hadi Khwaja's successors were hardly left out in the cold. The seal of a third, perhaps younger son of Eshan Sharif Khwaja, Muhammad ʿAlim Khwaja, turned up on court documents he stamped as a *qāżī* in Charjuy and Qarshi during the 1880s, having attained the honorary rank of *ṣudūr*.[122] Likewise, ʿAbd Allah Khwaja "Tahsin" carried on the tradition of his uncle (several steps removed) Fayz Allah Khwaja by holding the post of military mufti (*muftī-yi ʿaskarī*) during the reign of ʿAbd al-Ahad Khan Manghit (r. 1885–1911), though he was descended from Hadi Khwaja via Rahmat

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Allah's line rather than Eshan Sharif Khwaja.[123] He was also employed on the *qāżī* circuit, serving as judge in the provinces of Wabkand and Waghanza, and was honored with the rank of *urāq*—as well as *ṣudūr* and *ṣadr*—during the course of his career.[124]

If one considers Hadi Khwaja's intellectual and patronage ties comprehensively, his legacy remained vibrant well into the colonial period. Although his last direct descendent to hold the top judicial post appears to have been his grandson, the aforementioned Eshan Sharif Khwaja, one of Hadi Khwaja's students—Damulla ʿInayat Allah Khwaja "Qazi-yi Kalan Taht-i Minari" (Chief Judge Beneath the Minaret)—rose to the position of *qāżī-yi kalān* under Nasr Allah[125] and had assumed the full suite of top posts (shaykh al-Islam, *mudarris/akhūnd* of Kokaltash madrasa) by the reign of Amir Muzaffar (r. 1860–85).[126] Like his predecessors, he cemented his political alliance with the khan by personally tutoring Amir Muzaffar.[127]

Hadi Khwaja's line—both intellectual and familial—truly did constitute a dynasty in its own right, passing on spiritual authority like a baton for well over a century. As with other family dynasties, genealogies and hagiographies emphasized his family's descent from the Prophet and individual achievements. The legendary conversion of Nadir Shah served as one further pillar buttressing the family's authority, anchoring the lineage to a particular place (the Charbakr shrine outside of Bukhara, by the conversion narrative's final incarnation), and burnishing its Sunni-Hanafi credentials in an age when sectarian boundaries between Sunni and Shiʿa were sharpening. All of Hadi Khwaja's successors accessed this foundational event through the production and reproduction of texts, which genealogically connected later members of the scholarly dynasty to their forebears, collapsing chronology just as the narrative itself collapsed geography.

CONCLUSIONS

The Afsharid Empire proved ephemeral, but Persianate Eurasia's "even longer" 19th century was in many ways defined by it. North of the Oxus, the conquest marked the end of the appanage system characterized by Chinggisid rule. South of the Oxus, the territories of Afghanistan emerged as independent units, rather than frontiers of the Iranian and Indian political orbits (also due in no small part to the vacuum created by Anglo–Russian imperial rivalry). New dynasties such as the Durranis, Qajars, Manghits, and Qongrats engaged in expansion and state building, and the ensuing century was characterized by an overlapping tapestry of independent and semiautonomous city-states. The transformative impact of the Afsharid Empire extended beyond geopolitics, in Central Asia leading to increasing emphasis on shariʿa-minded religiosity by the ruling dynasty and greater reliance on the ʿulamaʾ. Meanwhile, an influx of Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi proselytizers from India—reeling from the implosion of the Mughal Empire—pushed the ʿulamaʾ towards scripturalist Islam. This in turn prompted scholarly dynasties to tie their origins to Nadir Shah's conversion to Sunnism, a legend that originated from *actual* encounters between religious elite and the conqueror, but morphed into a defense of sectarian purity.

Upheaval brought new opportunities for patronage and consequently the establishment of new scholarly dynasties as well. Robert McChesney has remarked upon the propensity of the ʿulamaʾ to establish family dynasties thusly: "The amirs come and go, houses and dynasties rise and fall but the ulama with their intellectual traditions, schools, ideologies

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and disciplines continue to evolve and keep alive the contributions and legacies of the founding intellects as well as their worthiest successors down through the ages."[128] Certainly, many families of scholars weathered even the most turbulent of crises, and Hadi Khwaja's descendants were very keen to emphasize the family's venerability, but even the most ancient of houses had to start somewhere. The auspicious alignment of stars heralded not only the rise of a world conqueror (*ṣāhib qirān*), but a realignment of the political and social landscape throughout the fragments of his empire.

NOTES

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[1]The Charbakr shrine complex is located only a few kilometers outside of Bukhara. See Florian Schwarz, "From Scholars to Saints: The Bukharan Shaykhs of Guybar and the Ziyarats to the Four Bakr," in *Iz Istorii Kul'turnogo Naslediia Bukhary: Sbornik Statei*, vol. 6 (Bukhara: Izd. "Uzbekistan," 1998).

[2]Sharif Jan Makhdum Sadr Ziyaʾ, *Tarjumih-i Hal-i Abaʾ wa-Ajdad-i Hazrat-i Kaʿbagahi Am wa-Awlad wa-Atbaʿishan*, ms. Institut Vostokovedeniia Akademiia Nauk Uzbekistana (IVANUz) no. 1304/IV, 116b-117a.

[3]Ziyaʾ, *Tarjumih-i Hal-i Abaʾ wa-Ajdad*, 116–117b. Iran's transition from a predominantly Hanafi and Shafiʿi legal sphere to a Shiʿi one was at the time of this disputation only a little over a century old—even though Sunnis and Shiʿa alike venerated the House of the Prophet. Said Amir Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order, and Societal Change in Shi'ite Iran from the Beginning to 1890* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 28, 105–6.

[4]Manghit accounts portrayed Abu al-Fayz as submitting without a fight, with an emphasis on the role of Muhammad Hakim Khan Manghit and Rahim Bey Manghit as intermediaries, while Kazim described an actual battle in which Nadir Shah defeated the Manghit father–son duo. Muhammad Kazim, *ʿAlam Arayi Nadiri* (Tehran: Kitabfurushi-i Zawwar, 1985), 790–91. Andreas Wilde suggests that this encounter was unlikely to have taken place since it was only mentioned in Kazim's account. Wilde, *What Is Beyond the River? Power, Authority and Social Order in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Transoxania* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2016), 364.

[5]Ziyaʾ, *Tarjumih-i Hal-i Abaʾ wa-Ajdad*, 116–117b.

[6]Nadir Shah was from a Turkmen tribe and probably raised as a Shiʿa, though his views on religion were complex and often pragmatic. L. Lockhart, *Nadir Shah: A Critical Study Based Mainly upon Contemporary Sources* (London: Luzac & Co., 1938), 21. Given this Turkic ethnic background, coupled with Persianate high culture (a combination similar to that of the Manghits), Nadir Shah is characterized here as "Turko-Persian," following Robert L. Canfield, "Introduction: The Turko-Persian Tradition," in *Turko-Persia in Historical Perspective*, ed. Robert L Canfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 1–34.

[7]As understood here, Central Eurasia's "even longer" 19th century runs from 1747 to 1917, from the collapse of Nadir Shah's empire to the Bolshevik Revolution.

[8]See, for instance, Yuri Bregel, "The New Uzbek States: Bukhara, Khiva and Khoqand c. 1750–1886," in *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia: The Chinggisid Age,* ed. Nicola Di Cosmo, Allen J. Frank, and Peter Golden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 392–410; A. Mukhtarov, "The Manghīts," in *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, vol. 5, ed. Chahryar Adle and Irfan Habib (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2003), 53–62; and Svat Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), chap. 14. Similarly, Central Asia appears as a relatively unimportant conquest in studies of Nadir Shah's life and rule, and the conversion narrative is absent entirely. Axworthy, *The Sword of Persia*; Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*; Ernest Tucker, *Nadir Shah's Quest for Legitimacy in Post-Safavid Iran* (Gainesville, Fl.: University Press of Florida, 2006). This is also true of much of the Iranian secondary literature: ʿAbbas Qadiyani, *Tarikh, Farhang wa-Tamaddun-i Iran dar Dawra-i Afshariyyih wa-Zandiyyih* (Tehran: Farhang-i Maktub, 2005), 41.

[9]Remarkably, the vast Afsharid Empire has yet to receive comprehensive treatment. Lockhart's classic study does not critically engage the chronicle sources (despite promising just that in the title). Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*. Michael Axworthy offers an imaginative biographical treatment of the conqueror, but relies

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heavily on the previous study. Axworthy, *The Sword of Persia*; Thomas Welsford, "Review of Axworthy's *The Sword of Persia*," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 20 (2009): 109–13. Historians have offered useful insights into how Nadir Shah legitimated his rule, but studies of the business of running an empire are for the most part limited to Soviet and Iranian scholarship. Tucker, *Nadir Shah's Quest for Legitimacy*; M. R. Arunova, *Gosudarstvo Nadir-Shakha Afshara: Ocherki Obshchestvennykh Otnoshenii v Irane 30-40-x Godov XVIII Veka* (Moskva: Izd. Vostochnoi Literatury, 1958); I. P. Petrushevskii, *Ocherki po Istorii Feodal'nykh Otnoshenii v Azerbaidzhane i Armenii v XVI-Nachale XIX vv* (Leningrad: Izd. Leningradskogo Gos. Ordena Lenina, 1949); Abu Turab Sardadwar, *Tarikh-i Niẓami wa-Siyasi-yi Dawran-i Nadir Shah Afshar* (Tehran: Sitad-i Buzurg-i Artishan, 1975).

[10]See, for example, Bernard S. Cohn, "The Census, Social Structure, and Objectification in South Asia," in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, ed. Bernard S. Cohn (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 224–54; Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990); and Paul W. Werth, "From 'Pagan' Muslims to 'Baptized' Communists: Religious Conversion and Ethnic Particularity in Russia's Eastern Provinces," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42 (2000): 497–523.

[11]Scholarship on the premodern period tends to characterize sectarian boundaries as fluid and overlapping. Robert D. McChesney, "'Barrier of Heterodoxy'?: Rethinking the Ties between Iran and Central Asia in the 17th Century," *Pembroke Papers* 4 (1996): 231–67; Susan Bayly, "The Limits of Islamic Expansion in South India," in *Islam and Indian Regions*, ed. Anna Libera Dallapriccola and Stephanie Zingel-Avé Lallemant (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1993), 453–90.

[12]An early exception (corroborated by this study) is Juan Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shīʿism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Awadh, 1722–1859* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1989).

[13]Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994); Teena Purohit, *The Aga Khan Case: Religion and Identity in Colonial India* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012).

[14]Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2006); Schwarz, "From Scholars to Saints: The Bukharan Shaykhs of Guybar and the Ziyarats to the Four Bakr."

[15]Works on Nadir Shah often mention Rahim Bey's conscription into the Afsharid army in 1740, but do not follow his career after the empire's collapse. Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, 187–90; Willem M. Floor, *The Rise and Fall of Nader Shah: Dutch East India Company Reports, 1730–1747* (Washington, D.C.: Mage Publishers, 2009); Peter Avery, "Nādir Shāh and the Afsharid Legacy," in *The Cambridge History of Iran: From Nadir Shah to the Islamic Republic,* ed. P. Avery, G. R. G. Hambly, and C. Melville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 3–62; Axworthy, *The Sword of Persia*. Conversely, literature from the Central Asian side emphasizes the agency of Rahim Bey and mentions Nadir Shah in passing. Mukhtarov, "The Manghits"; Bregel, "The New Uzbek States"; Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia*.

[16]On this title, see Yuri Bregel, *The Administration of Bukhara under the Manghïts and Some Tashkent Manuscripts*, Papers on Inner Asia, no. 3 (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2000).

[17]Bregel, "The New Uzbek States: Bukhara, Khiva and Khoqand c. 1750–1886," 394. On Nadir Shah's invasion of Khwarazm, see Ulfatbek Abdurasulov, "Ot Arabshakhidov k Kungradam: Dinamika i Politicheskii Landshaft Khorezma v Period Pravleniia Dvukh Dinastii," *O'zbekiston Tarixi* 2 (2013): 20–22.

[18]Wilde, *What Is Beyond the River?*

[19]Bregel, "The New Uzbek States," 394–95.

[20]After all, even the Russian Empire has been characterized as a "hodgepodge of conflicting jurisdictions distinguished by no guiding principle of government." Alfred Rieber, "The Sedimentary Society," in *Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia*, ed. Edith W. Clowes, Samuel D. Kassow, and James L. West (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991), 344. See also Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, "What Is Inside and What Is Outside? Tributary States in Ottoman Politics," in *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Gábor Kármán and Lovro Kuncevic, The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, v. 53 (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

[21]Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 796. This is also confirmed by numismatic evidence: Michael Fedorov et al., *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tübingen: Buhārā/Samarqand XVa Mittelasien/Central Asia I* (Tübingen, Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 2008), 54.

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[22]Kazim acknowledges that the *khuṭba* and *sikka* were implemented in the name of the Tuqay-Timurid ruler after Nadir Shah left the region—for instance, during the brief enthronement in 1747 of ʿAbd al-Muʾmin, Abu al-Fayz's twelve-year-old son. Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1120.

[23]Ibid., 1111. The fact that Kazim's chronicle makes a point of mentioning that Bihbud Khan ordered that the *sikka* and *khuṭba* be implemented in Nadir Shah's name in 1747 implies that such was not the case during the intervening period—but the evidence is inconclusive.

[24]Dominant historiography places the rise of the Manghit dynasty in 1740 immediately after Nadir Shah moved on to Khwarazm. Mukhtarov, "The Manghits," 55.

[25]Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 830, 936.

[26]The ruler of Badakhshan enjoyed a degree of independence not so different from that of the ruler of Bukhara, who was also granted the title of padishah. Nadir Shah's chronicler makes it clear that Mirza Nabat never bent his knee to the World Conqueror (*sar az iṭāʿat-i ṣāhib-i qirān na pīchīd*). Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1099. These events receive no mention in a chronicle about the Yarid dynasty of Badakhshan, despite Afsharid forces swarming through central Eurasia in the middle of Mirza Nabat's reign. Fazl ʿAli-Bek Surkhafsar and Sang-Muhammad, *Taʿrikh-i Badakhshan, Istoriia Badakhshana*, ed. A.N. Boldyrev (Leningrad: Izd. Leningradskogo Universiteta, 1959).

[27]Shir Muhammad Mirab Munis, *Firdaws al-Iqbal: History of Khorezm*, trans. Yuri Bregel (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 66.

[28]The most detailed treatment of this political landscape can be found in Wilde, *What Is Beyond the River?*

[29]Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 796.

[30]Ibid., 802.

[31]Bihbud Khan had already proved his mettle by putting down a rebellion in Astarabad on the southeastern shore of the Caspian Sea and campaigning in the Kipchak steppe. Ibid., 1103. See also Wilde, *What Is Beyond the River?*, 344. Bihbud's further exploits in Turkestan are absent in most narrative accounts of Nadir Shah's empire, though they are briefly mentioned in Riza Shaʿbani, *Tarikh-i Ijtimaʿi-yi Iran dar ʿAsr-i Afshariyya* (Tehran: Muʾassasih-i Intisharat-i Nawin, 1986), 539–40.

[32]Abu al-Fayz requested the intervention of Nadir Shah's forces when the very outskirts of Bukhara began to be plundered. Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1101–2. ʿIbad Allah Khatayi was formerly a member of Abu al-Fayz Khan's retinue (*az chākirān*), which he may have entered during the Kipchak invasion that devastated much of Transoxania in the 1720s. Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1101. On the scope of the devastation in Central Asia during the first half of the 18th century, see Ron Sela, *The Legendary Biographies of Tamerlane: Islam and Heroic Apocrypha in Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), chap. 6.

[33]As will be shown subsequently, Nadir Shah clearly invested his confidence in Rahim Bey *as well* by appointing him to the same position (*atalïq*) as his father, preferring a system of overlapping jurisdiction to balance potential rivals against one another. Kazim describes his *atalïq*-ship as equivalent to authority in Bukhara (*ṣāḥib-i ikhtiyār dar ān mamlakat*), but also one ostensibly subordinate to the Tuqay-Timurid monarch (*dar khadamāt-i pādishāh)*—whereas Bihbud Khan's appointment to the post of sardar was over all of Turkestan (rather than just Bukhara) and included no such caveats vis-à-vis the padishah. Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1102–3.

[34]Manghit chronicles assert Muhammad Hakim Khan's death as the direct cause of the rebellions, implying that a Manghit was already effectively the glue holding Bukhara together. While Manghit chronicles indicate that rebellions broke out already in 1744, they did not grow severe enough to provoke a response from Nadir Shah until the end of 1746, which fits poorly with this explanation. Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1094; Wilde, *What Is Beyond the River?*, 487.

[35]When news of this perfidy reached Nadir Shah in Mashhad, he rebuked Rahim Bey for not telling him sooner, and gave him an army to avenge the transgression. Muhammad Yaʿqub Bukhari, *Risala-i Muhammad Yaʿqub Bukhari*, ms. Sankt-Peterburgskii Filial Instituta Vostokovedenii, Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk: Institut Vostochnykh Rukopisei no. 1934, 3b; Sharif Jan Makhdum Sadr Ziyaʾ, *Nawadir Ziyaʾiyyih*, ms. IVANUz, no. 1304-II, 38; Wilde, *What Is Beyond the River?*, 606.

[36]For a discussion of the many ways in which Manghit chronicles depicted legitimacy in relation to Nadir Shah, see Anke von Kügelgen, *Legitimatsiia sredneaziatskoi dinastii mangitov v proizvedeniiakh ikh istorikov, XVIII–XIX vv.* (Almaty: Daik-Press, 2004), 233; and Michael Axworthy, *The Sword of Persia: Nader Shah, from Tribal Warrior to Conquering Tyrant* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009), 233–45.

[37]Imam Husayni Chishti, *Husayn Shahi*, ms. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library (Patna, India) no. 530, 7b–8.

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[38]Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1120. The conventional narrative generally attributes the decision to depose Abu al-Fayz and put his son on the throne as coming directly from Rahim Bey. Mukhtarov, "The Manghits," 55. Sadr Ziyaʾ, however, wrote that it was Nadir Shah's preference to keep a Chinggisid on the Bukharan throne. Ziyaʾ, *Nawadir Ziyaʾiyyih*, 38. For several other versions of how this decision came to pass, see Wilde, *What Is Beyond the River?*, 616–17.

[39]The Bukharan (and Khoqand) chronicles do not shy away from the fact that Rahim Bey executed Abu al-Fayz. Abu al-Fayz warned Bihbud Khan of the plot in advance, but Bihbud Khan doubted the veracity of the news of Nadir Shah's death, not believing Rahim Bey capable of such an act. Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1122.

[40]Muhammad Kazim explicitly attributed their treachery to their shared Sunni *maẓhab* and similar customs. Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1124–25.

[41]In one Bukharan chronicle, it is at this point that Rahim Bey put ʿAbd al-Muʾmin bin Abu al-Fayz on the throne as a compromise, having fought Bihbud Khan to a standstill. Bukhari, *Risala-i Muhammad Yaʿqub*, 3b-4. After various intrigues in Balkh, Bihbud Khan ended up returning to Astarabad, where he joined another sardar's campaign into the Kipchak steppe, never again to contest Rahim Bey's supremacy in Bukhara. Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 1136.

[42]This succession was remarkably similar to power struggles throughout the region. For instance, when Ahmad Abdali, founder of the Durrani Afghan dynasty, learned of Nadir Shah's assassination, he immediately took a force of 3,000 to protect the slain emperor's harem. Then "at dawn he clashed with a group of Qizilbash renegades and evil Afshar who were plundering the royal coffers, routed them, and took charge of all the money and valuables." Soon after proclaiming the Durrani dynasty, Ahmad Abdali managed to seize several years' worth of revenue bound for Nadir Shah's court on its way from Kabul and Peshawar provinces. Fayz Muhammad Katib Hazarah, *The History of Afghanistan: Fayz Muhammad Katib Hazarah's Siraj al-Tawarikh*, vol. 1, trans. Robert D. McChesney (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 11–12.

[43]Von Kügelgen emphasizes the continued salience of claims to Chinggisid lineage even *after* the Manghit rise. Von Kügelgen, *Legitimatsiia sredneaziatskoi dinastii mangitov v proizvedeniiakh ikh istorikov, XVIII–XIX vv.*, 50. This was also true of the Timurids, who did not enjoy patrilineal descent from Chinggis Khan, but nevertheless justified their rule through Chinggisid ideology. Maria Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition: Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 3.

[44]Ron Sela, *Ritual and Authority in Central Asia: The Khan's Inauguration Ceremony*, Papers on Inner Asia, no. 37 (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2003), 4.

[45]Beatrice Forbes Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 21; Sela, *Ritual and Authority in Central Asia: The Khan's Inauguration Ceremony*, 34–35; Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 179–81.

[46]The first ruler of the Qongrat Dynasty (r. 1804−6) in Khiva ordered the writing of a royal chronicle immediately after deposing the Chinggisid puppet and proclaiming himself khan. Yuri Bregel, "Tribal Tradition and Dynastic History: The Early Rulers of the Qongrats according to Munis," *Asian and African Studies* 16 (1982): 381–82.

[47]When Nadir Shah's son, Rizaʿ Quli, conquered Balkh in July 1737, the city was ruled by the Chinggisid Abu al-Hasan Khan. However, the real power was held by the *ataliq*. Kazim, *ʿAlam Ara-yi Nadiri*, 576.

[48]The importance of Timur to the Mughals for justifying their rule is well known (e.g., Lisa Balabanlilar, "Lords of the Auspicious Conjunction: Turco-Mongol Imperial Identity on the Subcontinent," *Journal of World History* 18 [2007]: 1–39), and even the nearby Ming dynasty invented a Timurid connection to valorize their house. Aftandil Erkinov, "Fabrication of Legitimation in the Khoqand Khanate under the Reign of ʿUmar-Khan (1225–1237/1810–1822): Palace Manuscript of 'Bakhtiyar-Nama' Daqayiqi Samarqandi as a Source for the Legend of Altun Bishik," *Manuscripta Orientalia* 19 (2013): 3–18. Similarly, just as Nadir Shah kept Safavid figureheads on the throne until 1740 (hence Nadir Shah's title Tahmasp Quli Khan, "slave of Tahmasp"), Karim Khan Zand kept Shahrukh (Nadir Shah's grandson) installed in Khurasan. See John R. Perry, *Karim Khan Zand* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006).

[49]The direct connection between Nadir Shah and the end of Chinggisid rule was made explicit by some Central Asian chroniclers. See, for example, Jumʿa-Quli Khumuli, *Tarikh-i Khumuli*, ms. IVANUz no. 37, 185a.

[50]Von Kügelgen, *Legitimatsiia sredneaziatskoi dinastii mangitov v proizvedeniiakh ikh istorikov, XVIII–XIX vv.*, 84.

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[51]Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition*, 38, 109.

[52]Von Kügelgen, *Legitimatsiia Sredneaziatskoi Dinastii Mangitov v Proizvedeniiakh Ikh Istorikov, XVIII–XIX vv.*, 50.

[53]The Central Asian ʿulamaʾ welcomed the expression of piety, of course, but preferred to view themselves in the role of the teacher rather than fully cede Islamic authority to the monarch. For instance: Mir Salman Samarqandi, *Tafsil u Bayan-i Dawlat-i Jamaʿat-i Manghit az Zaman-i Rahim Khan*, ms. Sankt-Peterburgskii Filial Instituta Vostokovedenii, Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk: Institut Vostochnykh Rukopisei no. 667, 178a.

[54]Mughal rule was already being rolled back by emergent polities such as the Marathas, but the British were acutely aware of the Mughal emperor's humiliation before Nadir Shah (quite similar to that of Abu al-Fayz Khan, in that both were restored to the throne as vassals), and that awareness fueled colonial expansion. Sanjay Subrahmanyam even hypothesizes an alternate history in which an enduring Afsharid empire fended off the Europeans well into the 19th century: "Un Grand Dérangement: Dreaming an Indo-Persian Empire in South Asia, 1740–1800," *Journal of Early Modern History* 4 (2000): 337–78.

[55]Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shīʿism in Iran and Iraq*, 230–31.

[56]Numerous examples of south–north traffic are evident in Muhammad Mazhar Mujaddidi, *Manaqib al-Ahmadiyya wa-Maqamat al-Saʿidiyya*, ms. IVANUz no. 2933/II (e.g., 218–222b). See also Jo-Ann Gross, "The Naqshbandīya Connection: From Central Asia to India and Back (16th–19th Centuries)," in *India and Central Asia: Commerce and Culture, 1500–1800*, ed. Scott Levi (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 232–59.

[57]Of course, the founder of the Mujaddidi branch—Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi—died over a century before Nadir Shah's conquests; and the earliest Mujaddidi preachers showed up in Bukhara already at the end of the 17th century (i.e., Hajji Habib Allah). Nevertheless, the appeal of those doctrines can be traced to the "the decay of the Ashtarkhanid [i.e., Tuqay-Timurid] rule in the first half of the 18th century," which was a consequence of the Afsharid conquest. Devin DeWeese, "'Dis-Ordering' Sufism in Early Modern Central Asia: Suggestions for Rethinking the Sources and Social Structures of Sufi History in the 18th and 19th Centuries," in *History and Culture of Central Asia*, ed. Bakhtiyar Babadjanov and Kawahara Yayoi (Tokyo: University of Tokyo, 2012), 262.

[58]Bakhtiar Babadzhanov, "On the History of the Naqshbandiya Mujaddidiya in Central Mawara'nnahr in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries," in *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Centuries*, ed. Anke von Kügelgen, Michael Kemper, and Allen Frank (Berlin: Klaus, Schwartz, Verlag, 1998); Anke von Kügelgen, "Rastsvet Nakshbandiia-Mudzhaddidiia v Srednei Transoksanii s XVIII–Do Nachala XIX vv.: Opyt Detektivnogo Rassledovaniia," in *Sufism v Tsentral'noi Azii*, ed. A. A. Khismatulin (St. Petersburg: Filologicheskii Fakul'tet Sankt-Peterburskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta, 2001), 275–30; DeWeese, "'Dis-Ordering' Sufism in Early Modern Central Asia."

[59]Von Kügelgen, "Rastsvet Nakshbandiia-Mudzhaddidiia v Srednei Transoksanii s XVIII–do Nachala XIX vv.: Opyt Detektivnogo Rassledovaniia," 278–79.

[60]James Pickett, "The Persianate Sphere during the Age of Empires: Islamic Scholars and Networks of Exchange in Central Asia 1747–1917" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2015), chap. 3.

[61]Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*; Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996); Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2000).

[62]Although the colonial impact on intrareligious boundaries has not received sustained investigation in the Russian case, parallel literature has demonstrated the Russian impact on *ethnic* boundaries: S. N. Abashin, "Empire and Demography in Turkestan: Numbers and the Politics of Counting," in *Asiatic Russia: Imperial Power in Regional and International Contexts*, ed. Tomohiko Uyama (New York: Routledge, 2012), 129–50; and Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1998).

[63]Again, the chronology here parallels that in Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shīʿism in Iran and Iraq*, chap. 9.

[64]McChesney, "'Barrier of Heterodoxy'?"

[65]Muhammad Wafa-yi Karminagi, *Tuhfat al-Khani*, ms. IVANUz, no. 2721, 23a–b, 27a. It should be noted as well, however, that the very same chronicler later praised Nadir Shah (e.g., f. 110a) and the order he imposed, which Wolfgang Holzworth has described as the "gentleman's way of conquest." Holzworth, "Relations between Uzbek Central Asia, the Great Steppe and Iran, 1700–1750," in *Shifts and Drifts in*

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Nomad–Sedentary Relations, ed. Stefan Leder and Bernhard Streck (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2005), 204.

[66]This translation assumes that *kufr* (infidelity), as it appears in the manuscript, was intended as *kāfir* (infidel), though the meaning remains the same either way. Khumuli, *Tarikh-i Khumuli*, 189b. Despite asserting Nadir Shah's Shiʿism (f. 185a), Khumuli's account portrays him as a fair arbiter between the sects in his theological project, and even suggests that his murder at the hands of the Qizilbash was a consequence of his sympathy toward Sunnism. Ibid., 187a–b.

[67]Satoru Kimura, "Sunni–Shiʿi Relations in the Russian Protectorate of Bukhara, as Perceived by the Local ʿUlamaʾ," in *Asiatic Russia: Imperial Power in Regional and International Contexts*, ed. Tomohiko Uyama (London: Routledge, 2011), 189–215.

[68]Anti-Shiʿa sentiment comes through in legal notebooks of the period. For instance, one such ruling declares Shiʿi cities as part of the Abode of War (*dār al-ḥarb*) and enjoins Sunni rulers to wage war against them. Untitled legal manual, designated *Sbornik vypisok iz sochinenii po fikkhu i iuridicheskikh kazusov*, ms. RNBOR no. F 924 D 558, 392b. ʿAbd al-Ghafur Turkistani describes in his memoir the execution of a Tashkent shop owner for cursing the first three Rightly Guided caliphs while venerating ʿAli (c. 1830s). ʿAbd al-Ghafur Turkistani, *Bayan-i Dastan-i Sarguzasht-i ʿAbd al-Ghafar Turkistani*, ms. Rossiskaia Natsional'naia Biblioteka, Otdel Rukopisei, no. Khanykov 53, 19a.

[69]Von Kügelgen suggests that Hadizada (i.e., "son of Hadi") was none other than ʿAtaʾ Allah, a figure discussed subsequently. Von Kügelgen, *Legitimatsiia sredneaziatskoi dinastii mangitov v proizvedeniiakh ikh istorikov, XVIII–XIX vv.*, 242.

[70]Hadizada, *Safarnama-i Qazi Hadi Khwaja az Bukhara ba Iran*, ms. IVANUz no. 5255/XVIII, 150b–155a. See also von Kügelgen, *Legitimatsiia sredneaziatskoi dinastii mangitov v proizvedeniiakh ikh istorikov, XVIII–XIX vv.*, 242.

[71]Hamid Algar, "Shiʿism and Iran in the Eighteenth Century," in *Shiʿism*, ed. Paul Luft and Colin Turner, vol. 1 (New York: Routledge, 2008), 330. ʿAbd Allah ibn Husayn al-Suwaydi confirms Hadi Khwaja's role in the discussions. One Mulla Umid Sudur, quite likely the same individual as Mirza Umid of the opening passage of this article, also appears on the list of Central Asian scholars. ʿAbd Allah ibn Husayn Suwaydi, *Muʾtamar al-Najaf* (Egypt: al-Matbaʿa al-Salafiyya, 1973), 40.

[72]Robert McChesney argues that in many contexts even the very term "Shiʿism" is misleading because it conjures modern binaries not applicable to the early modern period. Instead, the alternative *ahl al-baytism* (people of the house [of the Prophet Muhammad]) serves to describe the reverence for the Prophet's family that cut across sectarian lines and was particularly prominent in Sufi orders of all stripes. *Waqf in Central Asia: Four Hundred Years in the History of a Muslim Shrine, 1480–1889* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991), 34.

[73]Central Asian sources often considered all Iranian religious personages to be Qizilbash, whatever their actual status. For instance, some notes jotted down on scrap paper during one of Alexander Kun's Central Asian expeditions refer to Nadir Shah himself as one of the Qizilbash (*Nadīr* [sic] *az Qizilbāsh āmada*). "Fragmenty iz istorii Srednei Azii ot o epokhe Nadir-shakha i Abdully-khana," Sankt-Peterburgskii Filial Instituta Vostokovedenii Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk: Arkhiv Vostokovedov, F 33 O 1 D 140.

[74]Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, 233; Algar, "Shiʿism and Iran in the Eighteenth Century," 330–32. This encounter in Najaf was also mentioned in three of the Manghit chronicles. Von Kügelgen, *Legitimatsiia Sredneaziatskoi Dinastii Mangitov v Proizvedeniiakh Ikh Istorikov, XVIII–XIX vv.*, 242.

[75]Algar, "Shiʿism and Iran in the Eighteenth Century," 330–31; Suwaydi, *Muʾtamar al-Najaf*, 40–44.

[76]*Safarnama-i Qazi Hadi Khwaja az Bukhara ba Iran*, 152b. The signed document itself is included in Nawaʾi's collection of Afsharid documents; Hadi Khwaja's name is apparently not among the discernable seals, but several of his colleagues attested by Suwaydi indeed appear. ʿAbd al-Husayn Nawaʾi, *Nadir Shah wa-Bazmandaganash Hamrah ba Namaha-yi Sulṭanati wa-Asnad-i Siyasi wa-Idari* (Tehran: Intisharat-i Zarin, 1990), 339.

[77]Nadir hoped that securing such an accord with the Ottomans would at once deprive them of a convenient casus belli for waging war against Iran and cast him as a defender of Shiʿism. Toward the end of his reign, after many battles with the Ottomans, Nadir abandoned his calls for a Jaʿfari *maẕhab*. Ernest Tucker, "Nadir Shah and the Jaʿfari Madhhab Reconsidered," *Iranian Studies* 27 (1994): 163–79.

[78]Indeed, the composition of the scholars in attendance partly explains why the Ottomans had so little interest in it. Algar, "Shiʿism and Iran in the Eighteenth Century," 332.

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[79]Nawaʾi, *Nadir Shah wa-Bazmandaganash Hamrah ba Namaha-yi Sulṭanati wa-Asnad-i Siyasi wa-Idari*, 338–39.

[80]*Safarnama-i Qazi Hadi Khwaja az Bukhara ba Iran*, 153a.

[81]Ibid., 153 marginalia and 154a. The rupees Nadir Shah was handing out in Iraq presumably originated from his famous sack and pillage of Delhi in 1739.

[82]Ibid., 155a, marginalia. It does not specify *who* did the appointing.

[83]My gratitude to Andreas Wilde for sharing this text with me.

[84]The Mulla Bashi was the highest religious authority under the Safavids. Mansur Sefatgol, "From Dar al-Saltana-yi Isfahan to Dar Al-Khilafih-i Tihran," in *Religion and Society in Qajar Iran*, ed. Robert Gleave (New York: Routledge, 2009), 76–77.

[85]Muhammad Sharif ibn Muhammad Naqi, *Taj al-Tawarikh*, ms. IVANUz no. 2092, 308b–310.

[86]*Taj al-Tawarikh*, 310a.

[87]Ibid., 312a.

[88]Nadir Shah convened the debate in order to "expose the correct path and legal school" (*barāyi iẓhār-i maslak wa-maẕhab-i ṣawāb*) and to "eliminate doubt and dissention" (*mawād-i shubha wa-khalal az mā bayn mundafiʿ wa-silsila-i nizāʿ wa-jadal rā az ṭarafayn munqaṭiʿ sāzand*). *Taj al-Tawarikh*, 307b–308b.

[89]*Taj al-Tawarikh*, 311b.

[90]Mir Musayyab Bukhari, *Kitab-i Maqamat-i Mashayikh*, m.s. Biblioteka Vostochnogo Fakul'teta, Sankt-Peterburgskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet no. 854, 676b.

[91]Hakim Khan, *Muntakhab al-Tawarikh*, 344. Muhammad Yaʿqub Bukhari, who was the twelfth son of the second Manghit ruler, Daniyal Ataliq (r. 1759–85), referenced a delegation of ʿulamaʾ and *umarāʾ* sent to Charbakr, but emphasized the role of Manghit dynasty founder Rahim Khan (r. 1747–59) and did not mention any theological debates. Bukhari, *Risalih-i Muhammad Yaʿqub Bukhari*, 2b–3b. Another account puts Eshan Imla at the Charbakr parlay, but mentions no conversion. Anonymous, *Zikr-i Tarikh-i Abu al-Fayz Khan*, 266a.

[92]By contrast, in the *Safarnama-i Qazi Hadi Khwaja* it is the Bukharan scholar who performs a religious service for Nadir.

[93]That servant, Muhammad Sharif, used the wealth to become a scholar in his own right and eventually built an eponymously named madrasa where Muhammad Hakim Khan, the chronicle's author, studied. Hakim Khan, *Muntakhab al-Tawarikh*, 345.

[94]DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*, 6, 11. Gauri Viswanathan further emphasizes the power of such an event: *Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity, and Belief* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), xi.

[95]Sharif Jan Makhdum Sadr Ziyaʾ, *Nawadir Ziyaʾiyyih*, ms. IVANUz, no. 1304-II, 37. Ziyaʾ also mentions Nadir Shah's royal gift to Eshan Imla and the subsequent founding of the Muhammad Sharif madrasa—where Ziyaʾ's own father, ʿAbd al-Shakur, taught for a time—on that largesse. Ziyaʾ, *Tarjuma-i Ahwal-i Qazi ʿAbd al-Shakur*, ms. IVANUz no. 1304/IV, 103b.

[96]Ziyaʾ, *Nawadir Ziyaʾiyyih*, 37b.

[97]Ibid., 38–39b.

[98]Ziyaʾ, *Tarjuma-i Ahwal-i Qazi ʿAbd al-Shakur*, 116b–117.

[99]Other scholars (usually ten) tapped into the memory of Nadir Shah's conversion as well, and some of those scholars initiated family dynasties of their own. For instance, Mirza Umid (mentioned in the introductory quote in this article) and his descendants were rewarded handsomely: Mirza Umid was appointed qazi, his son Sabir'jan personally tutored one of Amir Haydar's sons, another son—Mirza Sharif—became a famous mufti, and his grandson Karamat Allah continued the tradition of princely tutoring. Ziyaʾ, *Tarjuma-i Ahwal-i Qazi ʿAbd al-Shakur*, 117a–b, 119a–b.

[100]Enseng Ho writes: "genealogy presents a linear aspect which may be pressed into service as a vehicle for narrative." Ho, *The Graves of Tarim*, xxiii.

[101]However, a major section of Mir Musayyab Bukhari's work traces Hadi Khwaja's ancestry all the way back to the Prophet. Mir Musayyab Bukhari, *Kitab-i Maqamat-i Mashayikh*, ms. Biblioteka Vostochnogo Fakul'teta, Sankt-Peterburgskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet no. 854, 6–8b. Also, Suwaydi lists him first among the Central Asian delegates to Najaf, and with the title *al-ʿalāma* (learned scholar) and *baḥr al-ʿilm* (ocean of knowledge). *Muʾtamar al-Najaf*, 40.

[102]Nizam al-Din Khwaja Husayni (d. 1199/1785f) was the first *qāżī-yi kalān* (chief judge) appointed by the founding Manghit ruler, Rahim Khan (r. 1747–59). He was also allegedly one of the "ten scholars" who

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converted Nadir Shah to Sunnism (as against the "seven" reported by Suwaydi in Najaf), but that service did not save him when Shah Murad Manghit found him guilty of corruption and impious behavior. Ziyaʾ, *Nawadir Ziyaʾiyyih*, 39b.

[103]The *Majmaʿ al-Arqam* describes the supreme judge (*qāżī al-qużāt* synonymous with *qāżī-yi kalān*) as subordinate to the shaykh al-Islam. Scott Levi and Ron Sela, eds., *Islamic Central Asia: An Anthology of Historical Sources* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2010), 270.

[104]*Ākhūnd* was an honorific title given to the *mudarris* of the Kokultash madrasa; it also had the more general meaning of teacher.

[105]Ziyaʾ, *Nawadir Ziyaʾiyyih*, 43a, 45b.

[106]Documents bear ʿAtaʾ Allah's shaykh al-Islam seal from at least 1788–89. Thomas Welsford and Nouryaghdi Tashev, eds., *A Catalogue of Arabic-Script Documents from the Samarqand Museum* (Samarqand–Istanbul: International Institute for Central Asian Studies, 2012), 56.

[107]Mir Musayyab Bukhari, *Kitab-i Maqamat-i Mashayikh*, 640–41b, 676b. On Muhammad Siddiq, see Babadzhanov, "On the History of the Naqshbandiya Mujaddidiya in Central Mawara'nnahr in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries," 395–96.

[108]Mir Musayyab Bukhari, *Kitab-i Maqamat-i Mashayikh*, 676b; Abu al-Barakat al-Mulaqqab bi-Padishah ʿAziz Khwaja Mirgani Razawi, *Manaqib wa-Maqamat-i Sayyid Muhammad ʿAtaʾ Allah Shaykh al-Islam*, ms. Rossiskaia Natsional'naia Biblioteka, Otdel Rukopisei, Sankt-Peterburg no. P.n.s. 200, 3.

[109]Memory of ʿAtaʾ Allah was also perpetuated through the sanctification of his tomb, which (along with that of his father) was reported as a pilgrimage destination in an early 20th-century Tatar pamphlet. Muhammad ʿArif al-Muʿazi, *Tarikh-i Bukhara wa-Tarjumat al-ʿUlamaʾ (Tarikh-i Muʿaziyyih)* (Orenburg, Russia: Din u Maʿishat, 1908), 17.

[110]Mir Musayyab Bukhari, *Kitab-i Maqamat-i Mashayikh*, 729b–730.

[111]Abu al-Barakat Razawi, *Manaqib wa-Maqamat-i Sayyid Muhammad ʿAtaʾ Allah Shaykh al-Islam*, 64a.

[112]Rahmat Allah married the daughter of Sadr al-Din Khwaja. Mir Musayyab Bukhari, *Kitab-i Maqamat-i Mashayikh*, 725a. Sadr al-Din was the son of Padishah Khwaja, whose presence at Najaf is attested by Suwaydi. *Muʾtamar al-Najaf*, 40.

[113]Marjani, *Wafayat al-Aslaf wa-Tahiyyat al-Akhlaf*, 139b. Based on document evidence, Rahmat Allah was legally active since at least 1799–1800. Welsford and Tashev, *A Catalogue of Arabic-Script Documents from the Samarqand Museum*, 68–69.

[114]Abu al-Barakat Razawi, *Manaqib wa-Maqamat-i Sayyid Muhammad ʿAtaʾ Allah Shaykh al-Islam*, 49a.

[115]Eshan Sharif Khwaja was legally active from at least 1818 to 1819, as military judge (*qāżī-yi ʿaskar*) from 1820 to 1821, and *qāẓī-yi kalān* from 1826 to 1827, with a last document reference from 1841. Welsford and Tashev, *A Catalogue of Arabic-Script Documents from the Samarqand Museum*, 78.

[116]Ziyaʾ, *Nawadir Ziyaʾiyyih*, 45b.

[117]Ibid., 45b–46.

[118]Ibid., 48b–49.

[119]Ibid., 49a.

[120]Stéphane A. Dudoignon, "Faction Struggles among the Bukharan Ulama during the Colonial, the Revolutionary and the Early Soviet Periods (1826–1929): A Paradigm for History Writing?," in *Muslim Societies: Historical and Comparative Aspects*, ed. Sato Tsugitaka (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 62–96.

[121]Ziyaʾ, *Tarjuma-i Ahwal-i Qazi ʿAbd al-Shakur*, 116b.

[122]Welsford and Tashev, *A Catalogue of Arabic-Script Documents from the Samarqand Museum*, 128, 140–42.

[123]Ziyaʾ, *Tazkar-i Ashʿar*, 289–90; Afzal Pirmasti, *Afzal al-Tazkar fi Zikr al-Shuʿaraʾ wa-l-Ashʿar*, ms. IVANUz, no. 2303, 51a–b.

[124]Muhtaram, *Tazkirat al-Shuʿara*, 96b; Pirmasti, *Afzal al-Tazkar fi Zikr al-Shuʿaraʾ wa-l-Ashʿar*, 51–51b.

[125]Welsford and Tashev, *A Catalogue of Arabic-Script Documents from the Samarqand Museum*, 48.

[126]Ziyaʾ, *Nawadir Ziyaʾiyyih*, 43.

[127]Ibid., 48b.

[128]Robert D. McChesney, "Central Asia's Place in the Middle East: Some Historical Considerations," in *Central Asia Meets the Middle East*, ed. David Menashri (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 42.

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