

HAIDAR DUGHLAT'S ACHIEVEMENTS ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF TARIKH-I-RASHIDI

Mirza¹ Muhammad Haidar Dughlat² (or Oghlat) Kurkan (or Gurkan) Chaghatai Mughul was born in the year 905A.H=1499A.C at Tashqand the capital of the province then known as Shash (or Chach). His father, Muhammad Hussain Gurgan Dughlat, had been made governor of Shash some six years before by Mahmud, the titular Khan of Mughulistan and Kashghar. On his mother Khub Nigar Khanam's side, Mirza Haidar was related to the Emperor Babur. Khub Nigar was a daughter of Yunus Khan Mughul and a younger sister of Qutlugh Nigar Khanam, the mother of Babur³.

Mirza Haidar served his kinsman the Mongol ruler Sultan Said Khan of Manghulistan as a soldier and led several campaigns in distant lands. He was dispatched along with Prince Skandar Mirza (Sultan Said's second son) to conquer Ladakh. Mirza Haidar undertook an invasion first of Ladakh, then of Kashmir and then of Baltistan and afterwards of Tibet proper. After subduing Ladakh, a rapid march was made into Kashmir in about 1531A.C., but the Mirza was obliged to leave Kashmir⁴.

After the Sultan Said Khan's death in 1533, Mirza Haidar thereafter abandoned Kashghar and transferred his services to the Mughuls in India and proceeded to Lahore.

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Here Mirza Haider was received by Babur's son, Mirza Kamran, who received him to a position of honour and dignity, namely, the governorship of the Punjab. Mirza Haidar resided at Lahore for a year. According to Mirza Haidar's own statement, he was approached by Kaji Chak, Abdual Magan and Rigi (Ross's translation has Zangi) Chak of Kashmir, who were at variance with the reigning Sultan and had found refuge in Punjab. They endeavored to procure, through Mirza Haidar's influence, the assistance of a body of Mughul troops to invade their own country, and expel the obnoxious ruler. The scheme seems to have commended itself to the Mirza Haidar's judgment. After some delay, he was able to descend into the valley in about

November 1540 A.C = 947 A.H⁵. He obtained possession of Kashmir with out striking a single blow, thus at once becoming, to all intents and purposes king of the valley⁶.

Mirza Haidar's Rule in Kashmir lasted for about eleven years (1540-51 A.C). During his period, he established peace, order and good government in the country. Few medieval rulers of Kashmir did so much for the promotion of art and culture in Kashmir as Mirza Haidar. He was in this respect, a great admirer of Zainul-Abidin and tried to follow in his footsteps⁷. He send for artists and craftsmen from different countries and revived arts which had been languishing due to continuous civil wars. He patronized men of learning, and appointed teachers in every village for the education of children. He built a number of mosques in Srinigar with baths (Hamam). He also constructed magnificent edifices, and laid out beautiful gardens in Andarkot⁸. Mirza Haidar was very versatile and a man of many accomplishments. He excelled in penmanship, painting and various kinds of hand work. He was a great lover of music, and introduced in to Kashmir

various types of musical instruments⁹. According to Jahangir, Mirza Haidar's court was celebrated for skilled musicians¹⁰.

But Haidar Dughlat's reputation and permanent fame rests on the books he wrote and the contribution he made to the development of the fine arts. Mirza Haidar was a prolific writer and an excellent poet. He wrote prose and poetry in both Persian and Turkish with equal ease and compitance¹¹. One of his quatrains best depicts his attitude towards life:

عاشق شده را اسیر غم باید بود محنت کش وادنی ستم باید بود
یا از سر کوی یار باید برخواست یا از سر کوی یار کم باید بود

"One who falls in love ought to remain in the chains of sorrow;
an amorous person should endure the sufferings with perseverance;
(If, however that was not possible) either he should pack up and leave the
lanes of the beloved
Or he should keep away and be seldom seen in those by lanes"

Besides the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* which he composed in Persian, he is also regarded as the author of the anonymous *Jahan Nama*, a metrical treatise on Geography in Turkey, which he is said to have written during his stay in Badakhshan in 1508-9¹³.

It was during those years of his stay in Kashmir that Mirza Haidar Dughlat wrote his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* which may be regarded as the history of the Moghul Khans of central Asia, the eastern branch of the Chaghatais who separated themselves about the year 1321A.C. from the

main stem of the Chaghatai, which was then the ruling dynasty in Transoxiana; and it is the only history known to exist of this branch of the Moghuls¹⁴.

The first part of the *Tarikh-i-Rashid* is called by its accomplished author *Tarikh-i-Asl*, or the *Read History*. It was written in Kashmir in 1544 and 1545 A.C. and was completed about February 1546A.C., or five years after his installation as regent of Kashmir. Further additions were made between March 1546A.C. and February 1547A.C.=953 A.H. in this work, the prolegomena of Sharaf-ud-Din Yazdi's *Zafar Nama* have been extensively used. The first part (called *Daftar*) is entirely historical and contains a record of two distinct and parallel dynasties (1) that of the Khan's of Moghulistan beginning with Tughluk Timur, who reigned from 1347A.C. to 1362A.C. and whose father, Isan Bugha was the first to separate from the main Chaghatai stem and (2) of their vassals, the Dughlat Amirs of Eastern Turkistan¹⁵.

The second part which the Mirza styles *Mukhtasar* or the 'Epitome' was written in 1541-42A.C.=948A.H. and is twice the extent of the first and contains Mirza Haidar's record of his life and times. The first was written after the second part had been completed the history was named after 'Abdul Rashid Khan' the ruler of Kashghar and the eldest son and successor of Sultan Said Khan.

The *Traikh-i-Rashidi* was not written "for effect or for the indulgence of a taste for literature." The work is an earnest one. The author no doubt intended that it should be, before everything else, a clear and complete exposition of the times he had set himself to chronicle. On the

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work he has been successful, and has produced a record that, in point of usefulness, will bear comparison with most of those of Asiatic authors who have occupied themselves in the same field from the thirteen century to the seventeenth.

In the opinion of Amin Razi, a critic writing in the sixteen century, Hiadar Dughlat's *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* "enjoys universal esteem". The reader is immediately enchanted by the lucidity, frankness and pleasant style of writing. The author shares all his woes with his readers with same intensity as he does his joys and his frivolous activities, his happy moments and moments of sober reflection. Haider Dughlat was greatly influenced by the Arabic style of writing history in which truthfulness and *usul-i-isnad* are as important as the descriptions of a geopolitical and socio-economic nature.

The *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* is in fact a fine blend of autobiography, memoir and with his readers of history. The author makes no effort to be diplomatic in presenting facts. The work, therefore, belongs neither to the category of 'intentional records' nor to official biographies.

Hiadar's *Tarikh* consists of varied kinds of information gathered from different sources. Before writing his history, he seems to have had consulted people extensively about the subject. His History covers a very large area which extended from Western Turkistan, Bukhara, Fargana, provinces of Semirech Kashghar, Eastern Turkistan, Ladakh, Tibet, Baltistan, Gilgit, Badakhshan, Afghanistan, Kashmir and northern India, containing references to even more distant regions.

Khan. Babur himself refers to this event in the most cryptic manner saying that in those days of adversity, Khanzada Khanam fell into the hands of Shaibani Khan. Haider Dughlat, however, gives the details (which are confirmed by Gulbadan Begam); Shaibani had demanded Khanzada Khanam and Babur gave her up in ransom or in exchange for his own life and escaped.

The book also has very information on different aspects of the central Asian social structure, its tribal organization, customs, tradition, food habits and so on.

Although epithets such as Karawanas, Jetah, Kazaqs, Qauchin, Imak are frequently mentioned in our sources, the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* is one of the few works which provides explanations for these unfamiliar terms and titles. Some times Dughlat Haidar gives very specific information relating social structure and social groups. For instance, he refers to four classes in Kashghar and Khotan; namely the Tumam, Kuchin, Imak and the custodians of religion.

While Ladakh is almost always mentioned as Tibet, certain other terms have been properly explained by him e.g.; "in the Turki language they called a Karawul (picqueter guard) 'Yazaq'. In his account of Tibet and the custom of its people, he describes at length the Lamas, Shakia Muni, the tenets of their religion, the mode of salvation, philosophy and places of worship. The account of Kashmir is marked by some inaccuracies, although the geographical details are by and large correct and the architectural details, particularly his description of 151 temples reflect Mirza Haider's knowledge of architecture.

His history is not merely a collection of facts presented as history. He intervenes and gives his own assessment of events, and his own verdict on episodes. Describing the evil deeds of Abdur Rashid Khan- the Mongol ruler- he criticizes him for his intimacy and friendship with the Uzbek Shaiban.

Haider Dughlat has in fact been rated as a better historian. His history 'carries with it a conviction of honesty'. And he is by and large honest in assessing his own character.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. When "Mirza" is placed before a name, it means merely "Mr" or "Esq" and has about the same significance as the word "Khan" when used by Persians of the better class, and by Hindustani Muslims of all classes, at the present day. When placed after a name, it is equivalent to "Prince", and is so used only by persons belonging to a reigning family.
2. "Dughlat" is described as one of the first aqwam (people) of Qiyat tribe though the etymology of this name is not yet clear. Daghlat were renowned for the nobility of their pedigree and lineage (Sharafati nasb-o-hasb) and propinquity and affinity (qarabat-o-waslat) of this qaum (people) with the great rulers.
3. For more details of Mirza Haidar's life, see the Introduction by Mr. Ney Elias to Sir Denison Ross's English Translation of the Tarikh-i-Rashidi, P1-27.
4. TR: Introduction.
5. The chronogram of this date Mirza Haidar Says he, "discovered in Julus-i-Dar-ul-Mulk-i-Kashmir".
6. Kashir Vol-I, P-202 and History of India under Humayun, book 4th P-364.
7. Kashmir under the Sultans P-224.
8. Akbar-nama, Vol-I, P-404.

9. Akbar-nama ,Vol-I, P-404
10. Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol-II, P-148.
11. Amin Ahmad Razi says, "*he was endeavored with a rear talent elegant composition in verse as well as prose*".
12. Hafat Iqlim Vol-III, P-493.
13. Kashmir under the Sultans, P-225.
14. TR: P-7 and Kashir, P-203.
15. TR: P-7 and Kashir, P-203-4.

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