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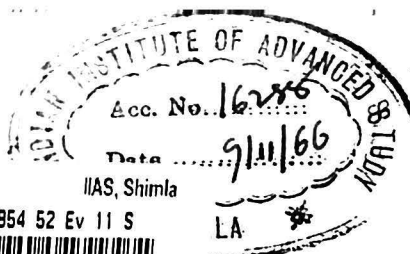


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WRITING ON CENTRAL ASIA

(Below are reviews of publications on Central Asia and the bordering countries received during the period September-December 1962. For reasons of space only a portion of the total number can be noticed, but care has been taken to make the selection representative of what has come to hand. The article is contributed by the Central Asian Research Centre in association with the Soviet Affairs Study Group of St. Antony's College, Oxford.)

I. THE BORDERLANDS

Russia is acutely conscious of the countries upon which her Central Asian territories give. She commonly refers to these under the collective name of *Perednyaya Aziya*, or "Hither Asia" (corresponding roughly with our South-West Asia), and she no less commonly asserts, or implies, an intimate concern with them which no other Great Power is in a position to share. Her output of books about them is nowadays very large, but because this literature lies outside the department of the Sovietologist it has grown up almost unnoticed by the West. These reviews aim at conveying something of its range and flavour.

Afghanistan

TO hold that the proper study of mankind is Marx is a serious handicap. Soviet writers who are linguistically and otherwise proficient seldom seem to arrive at an authentic portrayal of eastern countries. *The Development of Capitalist Relations in the Agriculture of Afghanistan* (Razvitiye kapitalisticheskikh otnosheniy v zemledelii Afganistana. U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1962. Pp. 156, 1,400 copies) by A. D. Davydov is an instance of what often happens. Here is an author who knows his European authorities backwards, hunts up the old volumes of this Journal, quotes the Kabul press on more pages than not, handles figures effectively—and has no art to capture the Afghan scene.

Less pretentious but immeasurably more telling is the quick *coup d'œil* of 60 pages permitted in *Afghanistan: Persia: Turkey* (Afghanistan: Iran: Turtsiya. Ministry of Education R.S.F.S.R. Moscow, 1961. Pp. 200, 16,000 copies). In this text-book for schools M. P. Pobedina writes engagingly of the land and of what the people in it do. If this edition has been distributed and the teachers have succeeded in putting over to their classes what it contains, a couple of million young Russians will by this time know quite a lot about Afghanistan. The photographs are well chosen but ought to have come out better.

Persia

A word has just been said about the text-book for teachers, *Afghanistan: Persia: Turkey* (Afghanistan: Iran: Turtsiya. Ministry of Education R.S.F.S.R., Moscow, 1961. Pp. 200, 16,000 copies). In the pages which M. P. Pobedina devotes to Persia, the presentation is again attractive and the style fluent. One cannot, however, help noticing a pointed

contrast in the choice of illustrations: they are this time chosen to depict nothing but poverty and toil. There is no reason to suppose that the author had a say in it. She writes of either country with impartial sympathy. But when the book was planned there was a strong bias against Persia, and these photographs are undoubtedly selected to correct the absence of it in the letterpress.

In 1913 there came out a small anthology of Persian proverbs compiled and translated by M. A. Gaffarov and V. A. Gordlevskiy. A "proverb" was defined in that collection as a genuinely popular saying; most quotations from the poets and all literary apophthegms, it was argued, are to be discarded because they stand apart from the living speech. Not, it seems, until the publication of a book now on our table, *Persian Proverbs and Sayings* (Persidskiye Poslovitsy i Pogovorki, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1961. Pp. 363, 10,000 copies) selected and translated by Kh. G. Korogly, had any further work on Persian proverbs appeared in Russian.

In a preface which is a happy blend of liveliness and learning Korogly subscribes wholeheartedly to the principle enunciated by his two predecessors, but shows that they scarcely adhered to it themselves; nor in any case, he finds, with their modest accumulation of 500 entries did they dig out a great deal from the new ground they were claiming to break.

He next gives a résumé of the recent labours performed in this field by the Persians themselves, noticing in particular: A. A. Dehkhodā's *Amsāl ō Hekam* (Proverbs and Aphorisms) Tehran, 1931; A. K. Amini's *Dāstān-hāye Amsāli* (Proverbial Tales) Isfahan, 1945; and S. Haim's *Persian-English Proverbs*, Tehran, 1956. Each of these, he says, was the fruit of a life-time of love. Dehkhodā's achievement of 50,000 insertions was monumental; Amini's special merit was to conduct the enquiry out-of-doors among the actual people whose property, as he put it himself, the proverbs are; and it is to Haim's credit that he introduced the English-speaking world to the unsophisticated talk of his native land. On the other hand (he goes on), Dehkhodā's work is really a Book of Quotations, the purely literary content accounting for 97 per cent. of the whole; Amini is too often obsessed by an entirely irrelevant sense of mission to lay bare "a sort of national soul"; and Haim interprets his theme so loosely as to allot much unjustifiable space to idiomatic expressions and even to regular grammatical usage.

The lesson of all this, according to our author, is that when everything bookish has been rejected the amount of material to hand up to the present time is small, and that what there is has not been very thoroughly digested. His own design is to carry the study of that material "a little further forward." He will be handling, as is now apparent, the folk-proverb and "only when in search of a parallel or an analogy will he appeal to a saying which is of literary provenance." He is not, his name shows, a Russian—at a guess he learned Persian in the nursery—and as a resident of Ashkhabad was able to spend thirty years on his field-work. The resultant book is arranged in four sections: (1) Proverbs and Sayings; (2) Proverbs and Sayings by Anecdote (in which the story lights up the phrase); (3) Consecrated Similes; (4) Russian Index.

Leafing over these pages one is, if anything, astonished at the number of old favourites who have satisfied the examiner. Here is the cow which ate up those papers, and here are the little drops of water that make the mighty ocean; here too the mouth that is no sweeter for crying Halva, Halva. But what about *Jāye gol gol bāsh, jāye Khār Khār*. Isn't that Sa'di? And how did *Bālā ye siāhi rangi nist*—which is Nizāmi very slightly reworded—slip by? Or are we to infer that these were proverbs on the lips of the people *before* they received their endorsement from the poets? Anyhow there is no doubt about the beautifully ungrammatical *Mārā az madraseh birun miravim*, neatly rendered by the equally ungrammatical *Nas iz shkoly ukhodyat*; nor about *Cherā tupchi nashodi?*—the sarcastic remark made to somebody who starts at the slightest noise. Every item creates an appetite for the next, every page is an unanswerable argument in favour of turning to just one more. This is a happy hunting-ground for Persian scholars, and also a remarkably good bedside book for very many who are not.

India

Of *India on the path of independent progress* (Indiya na puti nezavisimogo razvitiya. Institute of International Relations, Moscow, 1962. Pp. 195, 2,700 copies) by V. A. Maslennikov, the publishers in their blurb say: "Factual material on the economy of India derived from the works of Soviet and outside authors is here summarized. . . . The book will meet the needs both of the teacher . . . and of the lecturer and propagandist." To our thinking there is a strange juxtaposition here. How can trade statistics from Delhi serve the purpose of Soviet propaganda? They serve it well, as we see if we read on. On page 4 there is an entire paragraph taken from Karl Marx's "East India Company." Having thus presented his credentials, Maslennikov feels qualified to allot some 60 pages, or one-third of his total space, to the story of the corruption, brutality and maladministration of the British. When the end of their raj was at hand "the English colonizers provoked pogroms in result of which more than 500,000 Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs perished and 12 million lost their homes and property." This was the grim heritage of free India, and since August, 1947, not enough time has gone by for her to outlive "the effects of many centuries of colonialism." After his indictment of empire, or at any rate the form of it practised by the British, the author turns to what has been happening in the country during the past fourteen years. He looks at: agrarian reform, industry, foreign trade, and state finances. His principal authorities are H. D. Malaviya's Land Reform, 1954; India. A Reference Annual, 1960; "Second Five-Year Plan," Planning Commission, 1956; and the Reserve Bank of India Bulletin. He draws deeply from these; in fact, in this part of his book he is no more than selecting from his sources and editing.

He finishes with a postscript which amounts to a *précis* of an article by the late Ajoy Ghosh of the Communist Party defining "aid" as extended by the countries of the Socialist camp and differentiating it from the "so-called aid" foisted upon India by the warmongering bloc.

Indian languages became a subject of academic study in Russia as long

ago as the middle of the nineteenth century, but their intensely specialized pursuit is a feature of the Soviet scene—indeed of the last decade. In Leningrad and Moscow Universities, to name no others, Indian studies have been so developed latterly as to compete with any of the Oriental disciplines, and the process of expansion is not over. Eminent Indianists like A. P. Barannikov have contributed talent and enthusiasm; but resources are another thing, and only the State itself could have offered these. The courses as recently approved by the Ministry of Higher Education of the U.S.S.R. are, for want of a better word, vocational. A student today taking up say, Bengali at Leningrad can expect to spend four years in the Department of Indian Philology under the supervision of Madame Novikova; then reside for one year in Calcutta; then return and settle down to his graduation thesis.

Not otherwise than in this setting can the present flow and variety of Soviet works on Indian languages be explained. Five examples have been received in the current period. One of these is a massive volume made up of eight searching essays on some particular aspect of five languages; a second is also a collection of articles, but this time upon one and the same language throughout; and the remaining three are self-contained language-manuals belonging to a uniform series. The first is bound in cheap cardboard and printed on inferior paper; the rest seem to be too flimsy for much thumbing and may be meant for the user's own folder. But the type is in every case clear—and prices are in kopecks rather than in roubles: which is to say that a book of this kind can be bought at the cost of half a pound of potatoes.

Languages of India (Yazyki Indii. U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1961. Pp. 410, 1,500 copies) contains the following studies: (1) On certain compound words in Sanskrit. By V. A. Kochergina. (2) Meaning of present-roots in the Rigveda. By T. Ya. Yelizarenkova. (3) The phraseological combinations "noun *plus* verb (karnā, hōnā, dēnā)" and compound-denominative verbs in contemporary literary Hindi. By V. A. Chernyshev. (4) Use of the forms of the subjunctive mood in the independent sentence in literary Hindi and Urdu. By V. P. Liperovskiy. (5) Use of the forms of the subjunctive mood in subordinate clauses of varied type in literary Hindi and Urdu. By V. P. Liperovskiy. (6) Verbal features of the infinitive in Hindi and Urdu. By O. D. Zhmotova. (7) Basic functions of the auxiliary in verb-combinations in Panjabi. By N. I. Tolstaya. (8) Personal forms of the verb in modern Tamil. By M. S. Andronov.

The first two of these, covering between them 165 pages, are for the trained Sanskritist and for nobody else. But the remaining essays, in spite of their headings, can be enjoyed at a lower level of learning. Those unlovely terms (they are more displeasing in Russian) turn out to be transparent containers through which the familiar shows itself. A lucid exposition accompanied by copious and apt examples makes good reading not only for the professed student but for anyone even moderately interested in the subtleties of his, or another's, mother tongue. *Kahā lagāū chāy? Chaprāsī nē dātṭar kahā dēr na lagē nahī to tum jānōge. Kuchh inām bhī*

mil-jāe, Kal īd hai, bābū-ñ—the sentences bubble up by the hundred till the uninitiated feels that he has been using the subjunctive in main clauses all his life without knowing it. It dawns on him like prose on Monsieur Jourdain.

The Bengali Language. Grammatical Questions (Bengal'skiy Yazyk. Voprosy grammatiki. U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1962. Pp. 146, 1,300 copies) presupposes a complete grounding. The collection embodies the research of five scholars into five questions: (1) Meanings and syntactical functions of case inflexions of substantives. Ye. M. Bykova. (2) Suffixation and prefixation as methods of noun and adjective formation. L. M. Chevkina. (3) The category of the adverb in modern Bengali. E. A. Alekseyeva. (4) Constructions with passive meanings. I. A. Svetovidova. (5) Base of the verb in Bengali. B. M. Karnushkin.

The authors display particular familiarity with the range of English writing on the subject from the eighteenth century until now, but have generally not rested content with the conclusions of others. They make frequent reference, it can be added, to Dzh. Bimz who under the spelling of John Beames has lately come into the ken of the reading public of this country.

The three manuals are: *Urdu* (Yazyk Urdu, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1962. Pp. 143, 2,500 copies. By Z. M. Dymshits); *Telugu* (Yazyk Telugu. U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1960. Pp. 110, 1,200 copies. By Z. N. Petrunicheva); and *Malayalam* (Yazyk Malayalam. U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1961. Pp. 93, 1,300 copies. By Ch. Sekkhar and Yu. Ya. Glazov). Seeing that this series is the result of co-ordinated planning, already comprises more than thirty Asian and African languages, and is still growing, a word or two about it will be forgiven.

These surveys begin at the same point—viz., the beginning; but some—like the *Urdu* among the three we are looking at—would appear to get further than others. Each is a synopsis brought within a prescribed scheme: Introduction, Phonetics, Graphica, Morphology, Syntax, Appendix. The Introduction, it needs to be said, is concerned with the cradle and development of the particular language. The Appendix contains: (1) one very short but representative text; a transliteration of this into Latin characters; a translation of it; a vocabulary of each word; (2) a bibliography. There are no Exercises in these handbooks. There is perhaps room to attend a bit more closely to the *Urdu* of this series.

The Urdu Language. Z. M. Dymshits.

In 1948 the Soviet Union decided to do without Urdu, and produced a map of the sub-continent demarcating the influence of twenty-four languages among which its name did not occur. They have rolled up that map. Urdu, they have now come round to saying, is the language of West Pakistan. Dymshits in the present series makes that the opening sentence of his Introduction and, as it were, gets it off his chest. Thereafter the excellently chosen and abundant examples do the talking, and on the in-

ternal evidence they speak from Delhi and Lucknow. If Dymshits is in a quandary, so are we all.

The Introduction is adequate but not in the class of say, Dr. Grahame Bailey's treatment of the same subject and within the same compass in Chapter I of his *Urdu Literature*. It is the price of specialization that Soviet orientalists are usually more at home with the chisel than with the pen. Not, therefore, until page 11 does Dymshits really turn up his sleeves and begin. In what follows there is much good workmanship.

Altogether this is a useful handbook and an interesting specimen of the modern method of language-teaching as the Russians apply it. There is one curious mis-statement in the section on Phonetics where we are told that the final short "a" in borrowings from Persian and Arabic is pronounced long. The Latin transcriptions in such cases are consequently vitiated throughout the book: *rāsta* (road), *wāda* (promise) and so forth, being shown as *rāstā*, *wādā*, etc. It is true that a very few borrowed nouns in this category are so acclimatized as to have acquired a long final "a" and even a feminine, where appropriate, in -i (e.g., *bachchā* is sometimes heard for *bachcha*; and *bachchī* is correct for the feminine). But in standard Urdu the rule is that the final vowel in the borrowings in question is short.

The Russians have no use for Basic and would find the matchsticks of I. A. Richards idiotic: consequently the vocabulary employed in the examples is rich, and not a few of the longer sentences are taken from the works of accepted writers.

Pakistan

In 1959 F. A. Trinich's "East Pakistan" appeared as the first part of a two-volume geographical account of the whole country. V. A. Pulyarkin's *West Pakistan* (Zapadnyy Pakistan. U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1962. Pp. 260, 5,000 copies) completes the undertaking. The term "geography" in Soviet writing is imprecise, but it invariably includes what English-speaking writers sometimes call "human geography" and "commercial geography." In a Russian Geography, that is to say, one would look to find not merely an account of the formation and natural features of the given area but also an analysis of the latest census report, a description of the communications network, and trade statistics. In keeping with this, the present work is arranged under the chapter headings: Territory, Natural Conditions, Population, Agriculture, Industry, Transport, Foreign Trade. Apart from a tilt or two at the governing class whose current attitude is said to "confer a sufficiently episodic character" on things, the author sticks to the rules: politics are taboo; and there is no allusion to the Kashmir problem.

The Imperial Gazetteer has furnished much, or most, of the material; the State and municipal publications of recent years have supplemented this. If, therefore, the occasional lapses from the proper path of geographical research can be ignored, Pulyarkin's book deserves to be labelled as a sound and convenient summary.

II. THE SOVIET MUSLIM REPUBLICS

Kirgizia

Inseparable from the Muscovite mind and voiced from time to time is the belief that it is the role of Russia Civilisatrice to extend a way of life to the men and women of other lands. In so far as Tsarism fulfilled that mission in Central Asia, it was doing something essentially Russian and therefore, even to Soviet thinking, good. This conviction that the Russians are carriers of a message hewn out of the rock of doom is to be read between every line of a slender but absorbing dissertation, Sh. Kadyrov's *Memoirs and Journals of Russian Travellers as source material for the history of Kirgizia in the second half of the nineteenth century* (Zapiski i otchety russkikh puteshestvennikov kak istochnik po istorii Kirgizii vtoroy poloviny XIX veka. Kirgiz State Publishing House, Frunze, 1961. Pp. 105, 3,000 copies). The author, who had roughly a score of names to choose from, selects for his purposes Semenov, Valikhanov, and Severtsov. He could scarcely have done better, for all three were pioneers, were outstanding in attainment, and had the gift of putting down on paper whatever they observed.

Petr Petrovich Semenov-Tyan Shanskiy (1827-1914) was the *doyen* of the travellers to Kirgizia, having been there in the years 1856-57, and in 1906 was honoured with a surname which commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of his first visit to Tyan' Shan'. Geographer, geologist, botanist, entomologist and an acknowledged authority on the history of painting, this distinguished academician who had been born to property and intended for the Guards was more than half a socialist, and was closely associated with the reforms of 1861 abolishing serfdom.

There were two Russias in those days, remarks Kadyrov in a significant passage—and we catch the echo of Lenin—the Russia of landownership and capital and the Russia of the Russians, the real Russia. Meanwhile Kirgizia was “at a dead end” with no hope of salvation except through the culture which was Mother Russia's to provide. This man Semenov who “personified the sense of justice of the mighty Russian people” made up his mind to go to Kirgizia. He had to move diplomatically. “It would have been a huge mistake on my part,” he wrote in later years, “to declare to anyone my firm determination to push through to Tyan' Shan'; any such intention would have been thwarted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.” Anyhow Semenov got to Kirgizia; and did so at a turning-point in its history, since this was the eve of its annexation by the Russian Empire. The expression Kadyrov himself employs here is the more neutral one of “union with Russia.”

Semenov's *Memoirs*, to go by Kadyrov, are enthralling as literature. They are also documentary evidence of the internal dissensions among the Kirgiz tribes, and of the relations at that juncture between those tribes and the Kazakhs of the Greater Horde. Semenov was a humane man who was sickened by “the meaningless blood letting” going on all around him, and knew that “for the whole Kirgiz people there was only one way out.” The Tsar's ministers, the author comments at this point, were unconcerned about the Kirgiz people and feared that any forward movement of the frontiers would lead to complications with China and, still more, Great

Britain. When, eventually, the die was cast in favour of incorporating Kirgizia in the Empire it was thanks to the brilliant reconnaissance carried out by Semenov, the author maintains, that the step was not taken in the dark.

The second traveller, Chokan Chingisovich Valikhānov (1837-66), was not a Russian but a Kazakh, who after passing out from the Omsk Cadet Corps became aide-de-camp to the Governor-General of West Siberia, Gosford. Two persons were to shape his career: Dostoyevsky the novelist and Semenov-Tyan Shanskiy. "Remember," wrote Dostoyevsky to the young man, "that you are the first Kirgiz [sc. Kazakh: the Russians of that day called the Kazakhs *Kirgiz* and the Kirgiz *Kara-Kirgiz*] to be brought up entirely in European fashion, a striking circumstance in itself; and on top of that, Destiny has made you a man above your fellows and has given you a soul and a heart." Semenov noticing that the Kazakh youth had the makings of a scientist in a field where his blood and speech qualified him uniquely, introduced him to the company of the learned when he was hardly out of his teens. It was arranged for him to join an expedition going out in 1856 under Colonel Khomentovskiy to Issyk-Kul', the home of the Bugu tribe whose leader Borombay had at that precise moment accepted Russian allegiance. For the next four years Valikhānov steeped himself in the lore, oral literature, and social organization of the Kirgiz people. Happily—for his life was burning itself out brightly—he made haste to put on record what he had discovered. But higher than this distinguished contribution to Oriental studies the author would seem to rate Valikhānov's achievement in the reverse direction: which was to "pierce a window" and "allow light" to peoples without it; peoples who counted themselves brothers of the Russians and ready of their own volition to come into the Russian fold.

The third of our travellers was Nikolay Alekseyevich Severtsov (1827-1885), a nobleman of unusual talent and wide learning who welcomed the chance of accompanying General Chernyayev on his march from Verny to Aulie-Ata in 1864. Within the next three or four years Severtsov succeeded in exploring the area between the Chu and the Syr-Dar'ya, Tyan' Shan', and the region around Lake Issyk-Kul'. His observations both supplemented those of the two earlier explorers and took into account a new factor of vital importance. This was the impact of Russian settlers who had by that time begun to migrate to these parts. Kadyrov quotes Severtsov on this matter: "The question (of extending the settlements) arose because our movement deep into Central Asia . . . had invariably been attended, quite apart from the military side of things, by the founding of new centres of the Russian civil way of life, agricultural, commercial and industrial."

The inclusion of Kirgizia in the Russian Empire was good, Kadyrov argues in a sentence, because it was progress. He ends with some lines from the poet Abay Kunanbayev: "Learn thou the culture of the Russians, learn their art. These are the key to life."

The National Economy of Kirgizia at the time of the October Revolution, the Civil War, and Foreign Intervention, 1917-1920 (Narodnoye

Khozyaystvo Kirgizii v period Oktyabr'skoy revolyutsii, grazhdanskoy voyny i inostrannoy interventsii, 1917-1920. Kirgiz S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Frunze, 1962. Pp. 118, 500 copies) by A. Oruzbayev, K. Dzhunushev, and S. Mansurkhodzhayev, is a dutiful response to Khrushchev's call to the economists, philosophers and historians, at the XXI Party Congress of 1961, "to go deeply into the natural law of the transition from socialism to communism, master the lesson of economic and cultural construction, and advance the education of the toilers in the communistic spirit." Within the terms of reference this team of three has discharged its task competently. There is nothing new in these chapters, but there does not pretend to be. The "manaps" and beys are elbowed out unceremoniously, and the foreigners meet with the disaster they are said to have courted. The narration of these events is terse, by the standards of Soviet political writing, and very much less than the normal dose of venom has been poured into it. Perhaps this is because all three authors are economists, and not philosophers or historians, and the facts that interest them are those of production and wealth. These are cast into so many tables that the book is as hard to read as Bradshaw; but they constitute its value for those needing a book to consult and replace on the shelf for another occasion.

Turkmenistan

The Turkmen epic *Dede Korkut* was reduced to writing in Azerbaydzhan in the fifteenth century under the title of "The book of my grandfather Korkut in the tongue of the Oguz tribes." In this written version the fabric of the songs is shot with Islam and the theme is the chivalry and the valour of the Turkic-speaking peoples as a whole. For these reasons the epic was officially condemned some ten years ago. This verdict has since been reversed, and a translation which the late Professor Barthold had finished in 1922 now sees the light. *The Book of My Grandfather Korkut* (Kniga moyego deda Korkuta, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow-Leningrad, 1962. Pp. 300, 3,000 copies) translated by V. V. Barthold and prepared for publication by V. M. Zhirmunskiy and A. N. Kononov comes out in an edition of exceptional elegance.

Of his translation Barthold himself wrote. "It cannot be regarded as definitive . . . I must hope that it will be recognized as out of date and superseded by another in less than a hundred years." Forty of these have gone by already, and whatever they have yielded has been incorporated in the notes appended to the text. It is not, as the editors are generous enough to concede, very much.

"Kitabi dedem Qurqut" is written in great scarlet Arabic characters across the fly-leaf, and a portrait of Barthold which is worthy of Elliott and Fry at their best occurs inside. It is obvious that Dede Korkut is not alone in his come-back. This is the formal re-instatement of a renowned scholar as well.

Uzbekistan

The political advance of Russia into Central Asia around the middle of the nineteenth century, assisted by geographical exploration of the terri-

tory, in its turn facilitated the task of science. On the other hand, from the point of view of the Orientalist comparatively little could be accomplished because the writings of the native historians, even of the contemporary ones, were not accessible. "The library of the Emir of Bukhara" groaned Barthold "is not merely out of reach: its very existence has been denied." Soviet Russia has torn asunder this veil, and *The History of the Mangit Dynasty* by Mirzā 'Azīm Sāmi (Tārikh-i Salātin-i Mangitiya, Uzbek S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1962. Pp. 321, 2,100 copies) is an example of what lay behind. The Mangit were an Uzbek tribe, numerous in the Zaravshan Valley, which won political ascendancy in Bukhara, and in the eighteenth century founded a dynasty which endured until overthrown in the revolution of 1920. What we have in front of us is a record of the doings and fortunes of that house, mainly in the period of its acceptance of Russian paramountcy, as penned by a court historian. It adds to the interest of the manuscript to know that the library yielded another by the same author and having precisely the same subject-matter called *Tohfe-ye Shāhi* (Kingly Gift) in which the court historian was truer to the first than to the second half of his official designation. Not inappropriately the Soviet scholars have nicknamed the text now published the "illegal version."

This is a model edition. The book consists of a translation and notes by L. M. Yepifanova, followed by a reproduction of the manuscript itself. The penmanship of the copyist was good, and skilful photography has done the rest. There is a very full index and the print is a joy to the eye.

Sāmi recounts with candour the internal conditions, the cruelties and intrigues of the age. We hear the people of Samarkand complaining to their ruler Shir 'Alī Enāq that they had "twice paid up"; and those of Kokand moaning under the rule of Khodāyār Khān, "praying God night and day to destroy him." There are details of the skirmishes and heavier encounters between Bukharan and Russian troops. "And what soldiers we have, we in Bukhara: thieves, gamblers, drunkards, half-wits—it only needs the sound of a shot."

The editors label Sāmi's language as "the literary Tadjik of the second half of the last century." The *līterati* of Tehran would undoubtedly pronounce it to be Persian, though they might be inclined to comment that it ignored most of the canons governing good writing. Flowery phrases and lifeless metaphors abound. There are samples on every page: "Like smoke they leaped out from the nest of the fire of their miseries"; or "the register of his hideous deeds he washed clean with the water of pardon"; or "he went forth and pacified the ebullition of the kettle of unrest." Our historian punctuates his narrative with verses. These are usually prefaced by the words *Shā'er goft* (a poet has said), but sometimes we are told who the poet was. Sometimes, there is no attribution of authorship at all and the inference is permitted that the lines are Sāmi's own. The translator says that "all these couplets add nothing of substance to the contents." If this be meant as a rebuke it is less than fair: couplets are in character in this class of composition and in the present narrative serve by way of relief and also, here and there, to point the moral.

HUBERT EVANS.

