

ZOBDAT AL-TAWĀRIḲ-E BĀYSONĠORI IS A MAJOR SOURCE FOR THE PERIOD OF TIMURIDS

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Abstract: *This article gives information about known Timurid historian Hāfez-e Abru and his historical essay «Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori», also translations and editions of this source. This historical work is one of the main sources of the reign of Amir Timur and his son Shahrukh.*

Keywords: *Hāfez-e Abru, Sahibkiran, «Diary», source, Timurids, Center of oriental manuscripts, oriental, vakf documents.*

INTRODUCTION. The role of written sources in the study of the history and culture of the Timurids period is incomparable. The main sources in the study of the history of Timurid's are Ghiyas ad-Din 'Alī Yazdī's «Ruznāma-e ghazawat-e Hindustan» (The memoirs of Timur's campaign to India), Neẓām-al-Din Šāmi's «Zafar-nāma», [Mo'in-al-Din](#) Naṭanzi's «Montaqab al-tavāriḳ», Sharaf ad-Din 'Alī Yazdī's «Zafar-nāma», Фасих Аҳмад Хавофийнинг «Мужмали Фасихий», Ahmad ibn Arabshah's «Aja'ib al-Maqdur fi Nawa'ib al-Taymur (The Wonders of Destiny of the Ravages of Timur)», 'Abdal-Razzāq Samarqandī's «Maṭla'-e sa'dayn va majma'-e baḥrayn» (The Rise of the Two auspicious constellations and the Confluence of the Two Oceans), Mīr-Khvānd's «[Rawzat as-safā](#)», Zāhīr-al-Dīn Mohammad Bābur's «Bābur-nāma», Mirza Muhammad Haidar's «Tarikh-i-Rashidi», and also, three safarnamas (memoires-A.F.) – «Diary of Journey to Samarqand to the Court of Timur» of Ruy González de Clavijo, Ghiyas ad-Din Nakkash's diary of journey

to China and travel memoirs of ‘**Abdal-Razzāq Samarqandī**’ to India, vakf documents and private correspondence period of Timurids and etc. And to this number of sources could be added Timurid’s historian Hāfez-e Abru’s historical essays «Geography» and «Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori».

METHODS. Hāfez-e Abru, Timurid historian known by this *laqab*, whose full name was ‘Abd-Allāh (or Nur-Allāh) b. Lotf-Allāh b. ‘Abd-al-Rašid Behdādini (also Ḳvāfi or Haravi; d. Šawwāl 833/June 1430). He was the author of many historical and historico-geographical works in Persian, which were commissioned by Shahrukh, the Timurid ruler of Herat during the first decades of the 15th century (1409-1449 years – A.F.), and he remains the earliest Timurid historian from eastern Persia whose works have survived. Born in Khorasan but educated in Hamadān, Hāfez-e Abru became a member of Timur’s retinue in the 1380s and regularly attended court gatherings of learned men and literati, where he became renowned as a chess player. He accompanied Timur on several of his campaigns, and after the latter’s death entered the service of his son Shahrukh, to whose court he was attached for the remainder of his life. His role at court, at least under Timur, seems to have been as a boon companion (*nadim*) rather than a functionary, though he did serve for a short time as a government official in Hawiza. He was buried in Zanjān[1].

RESULTS. By the reason Hāfez-e Abru was a close man at the court of Timur and his son Shahrukh, the historical-geographical information that was written to him was more important. Hāfez-e Abru wrote several important historical works.

The first work of Hāfez-e Abru which was dedicated to Sahibkiran Amir Timur’s history was *Dayl-e Zafar-nāma-ye Šāmi*.

Dayl-e Zafar-nāma-ye Šāmi, a continuation of Nezām-al-Din Šāmi’s biography of Timur from 806/1404 up until Timur died in 807/1405, which was completed in 814/1412 on the order of Shahrukh[1]. This brief history is an appendix (*Dayl or Zayl*) to the Nezām-al-Din Šāmi’s work «Zafarnama» [2, 12].

Another masterpiece of Hāfez-e Abru is *Majmu'a-ye Hāfez-e Abru*, a compiled universal history commissioned by Shahrukh in 820/1417-18, incorporating the following earlier works: (a) Bal'ami's translation of Ṭabari's *Ta'rik*, with a continuation by Hāfez-e Abru as far as the year 656/1258; unedited. (b) Rašid-al-Din's *Jāme' al-tawāriḳ* and its continuation by Hāfez-e Abru, extended as far as the year 795/1393[1]. And also «*Dayl-e Zafar-nāma-ye Šāmi*». Some parts of «*Majmu'a-ye Hāfez-e Abru*» had been published by K. Bayoni (1938), F. Tauer and K.M.Maitra (1934)[3, 122].

In his historical-geographical work, Hāfez-e Abru reports about visits of diplomats to Herat in 1409, 1412, and 1417. The present writing work comes to its end with the explanation of events in 1417, but information concerning visits of diplomats from China to Herat in 1419 has been given in his historical essay «*Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori*». Because this source comes to its end with a description of events until 1417, but from the reports of Hāfez-e Abru in his historical essay «*Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori*», we know about the arrivals of Chinese missionaries in 1419 and their visits in many provinces of the state of Timurids. This Chinese diplomatic mission was first put up in Samarkand and then arrived in Herat. From there he had visited in other places of the state Timurids. It is well-known about the visit of one group to Shiraz, where Ibrahim Sultan had governed and another one to Khorezm, where Emir Shah-Malik was ruler. The general number of the relevant diplomatic mission of the state of Timurids in China was more than 500 people, which had been represented by various provinces [3, 122].

In part of a big diplomatic mission in 1419-1422 years, was Ghiyas-ad-Din Nakkash, who had been charged to take notes about everything seen in reality during the visit on the order of Bāysonḡor. His «*Diary*» contains valuable factual materials about China. The «*Diary*» of Giyas-Ad-Din Nakkash exists in science, in the form as was noted in Hafez-e Abru's «*Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori*», and translated into Uzbek language [4].

Hafez-e Abru wrote his third work – «*Majma' al-tawāriḳ [al-soltāni(ya)]*», a universal history to the year 830/1426 on the order of Bāysonḡor Mirza. This major historical source named «*Majma' al-tawāriḳ [al-soltāni(ya)]*» is a collection, which consists of four volumes. The fourth volume of *Majma'* called «*Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori*» was completed from 826/1423 up until 830/1427.

Hāfez-e Abru's famous work by the name of «*Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori*» («Selected chronicle of Bāysonḡor Mirza») was written in the form of universal history. In this book were noted events from the creation of the universe before 1427.

The first three sections concern, respectively, the pre-Islamic prophets, Mohammad and the caliphate, and the dynasties contemporaneous with the Abbasids and the Mongols up to the death of Abu Sa'id. This suggests that there is much duplication of the material. The fourth part, entitled «*Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori*», is the most valuable historical source. It contains a continuation of the history of Timur in the form of what is primarily a revised, expanded and chronologically arranged version of the *Za-far-nāma-ye Šāmi*, followed by Hāfez-e Abru's *Dayl-e Zafar-nāma-ye Šāmi* (supplemented with information from Naṭanzi's *Montaḳab al-tawāriḳ-e Mo'ini*, as well as, probably, the lost *Fotuḡāt-e Mirānšāhi* by Sa'd-Allāh Kermāni) and a continuation of the *Tāriḳ-e Shahrukh(i)* as far as the year 830/1427 [1].

Also this work is given information about the historical geography of the Central Asian region. They are mostly dispersed in the description of historical events, first of all, it is necessary to read and collect information, and then it will be possible to make a systematic analysis of them [2, 12]. Especially, the last part of this book is more important, in which the full history of Amir Timur is illuminated [3, 141].

The manuscripts of «*Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori*» are not enough, and these manuscripts are kept in libraries in England, France, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, and Russia [3, 196]. The one of manuscripts of «*Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori*» is kept in the fund of the Center of Oriental Manuscripts named after Abū Rayḡān Bīrūnī under Tashkent State Institute of Oriental studies, № 4078.

DISCUSSION. The information given by Hāfez-e Abru about Amir Timur attracted the special attention of the researchers. For example, he tells a story about the last days of the ruler's life which is missing in the work by Kamal ad-Din 'Abd-al-Razzāk as-Samarkandi. In particular, he writes: "When the amirs gathered at the chamber of the sick Amir Temur, he once, and then twice, winked to the people surrounding him and asked them "What do I mean?" One dared to say, "Your majesty means that there is still a remedy or two". Amir Temur with no signs of irritation, with full submission to the will of God, said that the meaning of his winking was different: "I won't stay with you for more than one or two days. Doctors confirmed that the ruler was right, and some of those who were there, started to scold the doctors for being frank but Amir Temur himself praised them". Hāfez-e Abru added texts from "Zafar-nama" by Shami to the content of his work, thus saving it for descendants. Amir Temur paid much attention to the strengthening of shariat's laws and the direct following of the religion's demands. The main goal of Amir Timur was justice. Information about the irrigation and drainage systems, which were built in Angor district near Samarkand and on top of the Murghab River basin in the period of Amir Timur also, was described in this historical source [3, 196].

The classical translation of Nezām-al-Din Šāmi's «*Zafar-nāma*» translated by Felix Tauer with comments, and in conjunction with Hāfez-e Abru's «*Zobdat al-tawāriḳ-e Bāysonḡori*» printed in 1937 and 1956 years in Prague [5].

Despite the pioneering work of Felix Tauer, much remains to be studied regarding Hāfez-e Abru's use of sources, the full extent of his contribution to the compilations he produced, and the evolution of the texts through their various recensions. His wide-ranging and voluminous corpus of works influenced considerably the compilations of later historians of the Timurid period [1].

In 1934 was printed a book «A Persian Embassy to China, Being an Extract from Zubdatu't Tawarikh of Hafiz Abru» in Lahore by the Indian scientist K.M. Maitra [6]. This book was reprinted in New York in 1970. And, also printed in the

Persian language by Hājī Sayyed Jawādi [7]. This source is not translated into Uzbek language.

CONCLUSION. The *Majma'* is a source of major importance for the reign of Timur and the first half of the reign of Shahrukh. The *Zobdat al-tawārik* served as a primary source for many later works, starting with 'Abd-al-Razzāq Samarkandi's *Maṭla'-e sa'dayn* [1].

The value of the works of Hafiz-Abru is that he widely used materials and quotes from the writings of his predecessors, which now found themselves lost.

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