

# Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran

BEATRICE MANZ



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## **Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran**

Beatrice Forbes Manz uses the history of Iran under the Timurid ruler Shahrukh (1409–47) to analyze the relationship between government and society in the medieval Middle East. She provides a rich portrait of Iranian society over an exceptionally broad spectrum – the dynasty and its servitors, city elites and provincial rulers, and the religious classes, both ulama and Sufi. The work addresses two issues central to pre-modern Middle Eastern history: how a government without the monopoly of force controlled a heterogeneous society, and how a society with diffuse power structures remained stable over long periods. Written for an audience of students as well as scholars, this book provides the first broad analysis of political dynamics in late medieval Iran and challenges much received wisdom about civil and military power, the relationship of government to society, and the interaction of religious figures with the ruling class.

BEATRICE FORBES MANZ is Associate Professor of History at Tufts University, Massachusetts. Her previous publications include *The Rise and Fall of Tamerlane* (1989) and, as editor, *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Central Asia* (1995).



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# Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran

BEATRICE FORBES MANZ

*Tufts University*



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For Eve and Ellen Manz,  
with love and admiration.



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## Preface

I have profited from the support of several institutions while writing this book. A fellowship from the American Research Institute in Turkey in 1990 allowed me to begin research in the libraries of Istanbul. In the summer of 1996 I spent two months in Tashkent, Bukhara and Samarqand on a Tufts Faculty Research award. Grants from the American Council of Learned Societies and the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1991–92 and a National Council for Eurasian and East European Research Fellowship for the calendar year 1999 allowed me to take leave from teaching. Finally, in 2003–04 a membership at the School of Historical Studies, Institute for Advanced Studies, together with an American Council of Learned Societies fellowship and a Tufts Faculty Research award allowed me to finish the manuscript while beginning my next project. To all of these institutions I want to express my heartfelt thanks.

A number of individuals have also provided valuable help. Professor Bert Fragner generously facilitated a semester spent at the University in Bamberg, in spring, 1993, which provided a peaceful place to work and an introduction to several colleagues who continue to help and inspire. Leonard Lewisohn lent me his unpublished dissertation and answered a number of important questions for me. Several colleagues have read parts of the manuscript and offered valuable advice; I want to thank in particular Devin Deweese, Jo-Ann Gross, Ahmet Karamustafa, Robert McChesney, David Morgan, Johannes Pahlitsch and Jürgen Paul. Finally, I want to express my gratitude to Hesna Ergün and Hande Deniz, for their invaluable help with the index and galleys.

The work of two scholars in particular underlies much of what I have written here. The numerous articles of the late Jean Aubin provided an indispensable base and constant inspiration for me, as he has for anyone writing on this and related periods. Over the course of his long career, Professor Iraj Afshar has collected and edited an extraordinary number of medieval sources, particularly the local histories crucial to the understanding

of southern and central Iran. Without his work, the sections of the book on central and southern Iran could not have been written.

### **Note on usage**

I have tried to make this book both useful for scholars and accessible to non-specialists. My solution to the perennial problem of transcription is to use classical Arabic transcription for Arabic and Persian names and terms, but not for Turkic ones. Names of well-known cities are written with their common spelling, while less well-known ones are transcribed in classical fashion. Within the text I have omitted most diacriticals except for technical terms. In bibliographical references and the index to the book, full diacriticals are used. Dates are given first according to the Islamic calendar and then the Christian one.

## Chronology

- 794/1391–92** Temür appoints Pir Muhammad b. Jahangir governor of Kabul and Multan.
- 796/1394** ‘Umar Shaykh b. Temür dies and is succeeded as governor of Fars by his son, Pir Muhammad.
- 799/1396–97** Shahrukh is appointed governor of Khorasan.
- 800/1397–98** Muhammad Sultan b. Jahangir is appointed governor of northern Transoxiana.
- 18 Sha‘ban, 805/March 13, 1403** Muhammad Sultan b. Jahangir dies.
- Winter, 806/1404–05** Temür in Qarabagh, sends out inspectors to provincial *dīwāns*.
- 17 or 18 Shawwal, 807/February 17 or 18, 1405** Temür dies in Otrar.
- Rajab, 808/December, 1405 to January, 1406** Khorezm is taken over by the Jochids.
- 809/1406–07** Sayyid Fakhr al-Din Ahmad comes from Samarqand to Herat, where he is appointed to *dīwān*, and then dislodged.
- Ramadan, 809/February, 1407** Pir Muhammad b. Jahangir is murdered.
- Dhu‘l-Qa‘da, 810/April, 1408** Defeat of Aba Bakr and Amiranshah by the Qaraqoyunlu, death of Amiranshah.
- 811/1408** Vizier Ghiyath al-Din Salar Simnani is killed and Fakhr al-Din Ahmad is returned to *dīwān*.
- Late winter of 811/1409** Khudaydad and Shaykh Nur al-Din invite Shahrukh to undertake a joint campaign against Khalil Sultan. Shahrukh arrives in Transoxiana in late spring.
- 27 Dhu‘l-Hijja, 811/May 13, 1409** Shahrukh enters Samarqand; he spends about six months there and in early 812/1409 appoints Ulugh Beg governor.
- 3 Muharram, 812/May 18, 1409** Murder of Pir Muhammad b. ‘Umar Shaykh; beginning of Iskandar b. ‘Umar Shaykh’s rise to power in Fars.
- 12 Dhu‘l-Hijja, 812/April 17, 1410** Shaykh Nur al-Din defeats Ulugh Beg’s army, necessitating Shahrukh’s second campaign in Transoxiana.
- 813/1410–11** Shahrukh completes a madrasa and *khānaqāh* in Herat and appoints teachers.

- Dhu'l-Qa'da, 813/February–March, 1411** Shahrukh declares that he has abrogated the Mongolian dynastic code, the *yasa*, and reinstated the *sharī'a*. He has wine from the taverns publicly poured out.
- 813–14/1410–12** Ḥāfiz-i Abrū writes a continuation of Shami's *Zafarnama*; Taj al-Salmani writes *Shams al-husn*.
- Last day of Rabi' I, 814/July 22, 1411** Shahrukh sets out against Transoxiana on threat of another attack by Shaykh Nur al-Din, backed by the eastern Chaghadayid khan. On receiving news of Shahrukh's movement, the khan deserts Shaykh Nur al-Din.
- Dhu'l-Hijja, 814/March–April, 1412** Rustam murders Qadi Ahmad Sa'idi; the population of Isfahan turns against him and soon after Iskandar b. 'Umar Shaykh takes the city.
- End of 815/spring, 1413** Successful expedition against Khorezm under Amir Shahmalik.
- 816/1413–14** Composition of Iskandar's history of Temür and his house, and first recension of Natanzi's *Muntakhab al-tawarikh*. Iskandar begins to use title "Sultan."
- Beginning of 817/March–April, 1414** Shahrukh heads against Iskandar.
- 3 Jumada I, 817/July 21, 1414** Isfahan submits to Shahrukh; Iskandar flees but is captured and handed to his brother Rustam.
- 817/1414–15** Ibrahim Sultan b. Shahrukh is appointed governor of Fars.
- Early 818/1415** Baysunghur is made governor of Mazandaran and western Khorasan.
- Early 818/spring, 1415** Sa'd-i Waqqas b. Muhammad Sultan, governor of Qum, defects to the Qaraqoyunlu. Disturbances in western regions including Fars, where Bayqara b. 'Umar Shaykh pushes Ibrahim Sultan out of Shiraz.
- 17 Jumadi II, 818/August 24, 1415** Shahrukh sets off against Fars.
- 27 Ramadan, 818/December 1, 1415** Bayqara submits to Shahrukh at the request of the population.
- Spring, 819/1416** Shahrukh campaigns against Kerman, arriving at the beginning of Rabi' II/May–June, 1416.
- 819/1416–17** Amir Buhlul begins uprising against Qaydu b. Pir Muhammad b. Jahangir, governor of Kabul.
- 819–20/1416–18** Gawharshad builds cathedral mosques, *dār al-siyāda* and *dār al-ḥuffāz*, in Mashhad.
- 820/1417–18** Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Ḥusayni Ja'fari presents *Tarikh-i wasit* to Shahrukh.
- 820** Work begins on Gawharshad's complex in Herat.
- 820/1417** Amir Ghunashirin is appointed governor of Kerman.
- Middle Rabi' I, 820/beginning of May, 1417** Shahrukh sets off on campaign towards Kabul to put down disturbances of Hazara and others; he winters in Qandahar.
- Jumadi I, 820/June–July, 1417** Death of vizier Fakhr al-Din Ahmad.

- End of 820/early 1418** Ghiyath al-Din Pir Ahmad is appointed *sāhib dīwān*.  
**821/1418–19** Soyurghatmish replaces Qaydu as governor of Kabul.  
**By 823/1420** Chaqmaq has been appointed governor of Yazd.  
**11 Sha‘ban, 823/August 21, 1420** Shahrukh leaves Herat for Azarbaijan campaign.  
**7 Dhu‘l Qa‘da, 823/November 13, 1420** Death of Qara Yusuf Qaraqoyunlu.  
**8 Dhu‘l Hijja, 823/December 14, 1420** Shahrukh reaches Qarabagh.  
**End of Rajab 824/late July, 1421** Qara Yusuf’s sons Isfand and Iskandar meet Shahrukh’s armies in Alashgird. After a hard battle Shahrukh’s forces prevail.  
**19 Shawwal, 824/October 17, 1421** Shahrukh arrives back in Herat.  
**827/1423–24** Disturbance by Shaykh Ishaq Khuttalani and his disciple Nurbakhsh.  
**827 or 828/1423–45** Death of Rustam b. ‘Umar Shaykh. Governorship of Isfahan goes to the family of Amir Firuzshah.  
**829/1425–26** Baraq Khan of the Blue Horde claims Sighnaq.  
**Muharram, 829 to end of 830/November, 1425 to October–November, 1427** Shahrukh rebuilds the Ansari shrine at Gazurgah.  
**830/1426–27** Hāfiz-i Abrū completes the *Majma‘ al-tawārikh* and *Mu‘izz al-ansāb*.  
**6 Muharram, 830/November 17, 1426** Death of Shahrukh’s son Soyurghatmish, governor of Kabul.  
**23 Rabi‘ I, 830/January 22, 1427** A member of the Hurufi sect makes an attempt on Shahrukh’s life. Qasim al-Anwar is banished from Herat to Samarqand.  
**Middle of 830/March–May, 1427** Ulugh Beg and Muhammad Juki attack Baraq and are defeated.  
**1 Sha‘ban, 830/May 28, 1427** Shahrukh leaves Herat for Transoxiana and briefly deposes Ulugh Beg from his governorship. He returns to Herat on 14 Dhu‘l Hijja/October 6.  
**831/1427–28** Completion of Sharaf al-Din Yazdi’s *Zafarnama*.  
**832/1428–29** Iskandar Qaraqoyunlu takes a number of cities, including Sultaniyya.  
**5 Rajab, 832/April 10, 1429** Shahrukh sets off on his second Azarbaijan campaign.  
**18 Dhu‘l Hijja, 832/September 18, 1429** Decisive battle at Salmas. Shahrukh defeats Iskandar and installs Qara Yusuf’s youngest son, Abu Sa‘id, in Azarbaijan.  
**833/1429–30** Shahrukh appoints Muhammad Juki to the governorship of Khuttalan.  
**8 Muharram, 834/September 26, 1430** Shahrukh arrives back in Herat from Azarbaijan campaign.  
**834/1430–31** Uzbeks, under Abu‘l Khayr Khan, begin to attack the borders of Khorezm.

835/1431–32 Hurufi uprising in Isfahan.

7 Jumadi I, 837/December 20, 1433 Death of Baysunghur b. Shahrukh.

c. 838/1434–35 Eastern Chaghadayids retake Kashghar.

2 Rabi' II, 838/November 5, 1434 Shahrukh sets out on third Azarbaijan campaign.

Jumadi II to Rajab, 838/January to February, 1435 Outbreak of plague in Herat.

2 Shawwal, 838/May 1, 1435 Death of Zayn al-Din Khwafi.

4 Shawwal, 838/May 3, 1435 Death of Ibrahim Sultan b. Shahrukh.

Spring to summer 838/1435 Shahrukh in Azarbaijan. Iskandar Qaraqoyunlu retreats. Shahrukh receives submission of most local rulers, including Jahanshah Qaraqoyunlu. Jahanshah Qaraqoyunlu is left as vassal.

839/1435–36 Uzbeks take the northern part of Khorezm.

2 Rabi' II, 840/October 14, 1436 Shahrukh arrives back in Herat.

840/1436 Death of Amir Ghunashirin. Governorship of Kerman goes to his sons, notably Hajji Muhammad.

840/1436–37 Muhammad b. Falah Musha'sha' declares himself *mahdī*.

841/1437–38 Completion of mosque and madrasa of Gawharshad.

842/1438 Accession of Mamluk Sultan Chaqmaq. Relations with the Mamluks improve.

17 Jumadi I, 844/October 14, 1440 Amir 'Alika dies.

13 Shawwal, 844/March 7, 1441 First military encounter between the Timurids and the Musha'sha', near Wasit.

845/1441–42 Rains and floods through much of Iraq and Fars. Beginning of quarrel between Yusuf Khwaja and Malik Gayumarth of Rustamdar. Defeat of Shahrukh and Yusuf Khwaja's joint forces.

22 Rabi' I, 845/August 10, 1441 *Dīwān* upheaval; Pir Ahmad Khwafi is forced to accept a new partner.

Early 846/1442 Death of Yusuf Khwaja, governor of Rayy. Appointment of Sultan Muhammad b. Baysunghur as governor of northern Iran.

846/1442–43 Shahrukh sends Shah Mahmud Yasawul to assess tax arrears of 'Iraq-i 'Ajam.

847/1443–44 Return of Shah Mahmud Yasawul. News of Sultan Muhammad's ambitions. Power of Amir Firuzshah exceeds bounds. Shahrukh orders investigation into the taxes of Balkh, under Firuzshah's charge.

Late 847 through early 848/March to June, 1444 Serious illness of Shahrukh. Gawharshad makes Firuzshah swear *bay'at* to 'Ala' al-Dawla.

848/1444–45 Misappropriation of taxes of Balkh is proven, leading to the disgrace and death of Firuzshah.

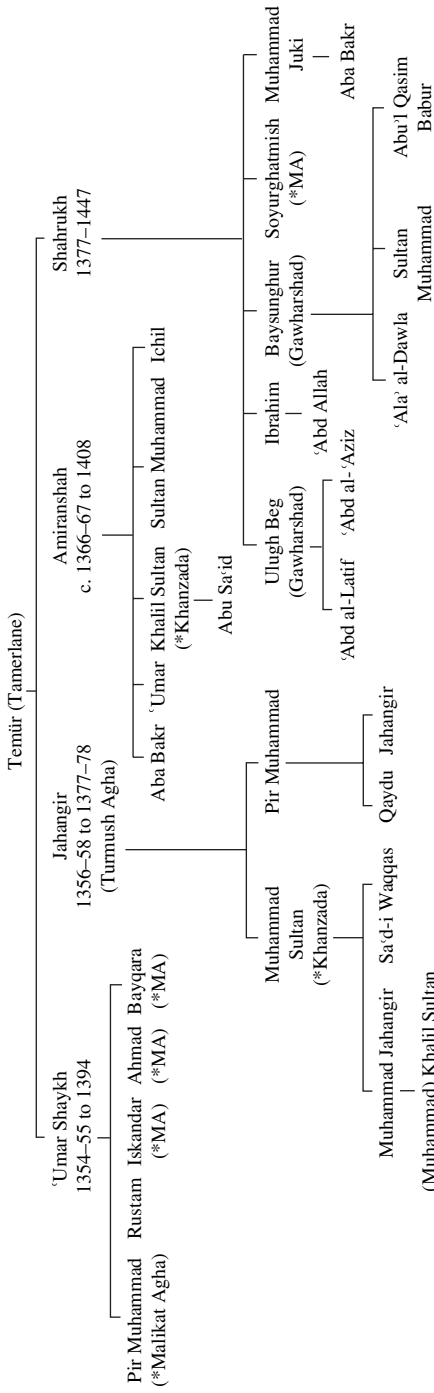
848/1444–45 Death of Muhammad Juki; Khuttalan is given to his son Aba Bakr.

5 Safar, 850/May 2, 1446 Sultan Muhammad enters Isfahan at the request of its notables, an overt move against Shahrukh.

Middle of Ramadan 850/early December, 1446 Shahrukh, campaigning against Sultan Muhammad, executes several Isfahani notables at Sawa.

- 25 Dhu'l Hijja, 850/March 13, 1447** Shahrukh dies near Rayy.
- 851/1447–8** Sultan Muhammad is consolidating power in Iran.
- c. Late Safar, 851/early May, 1447** Ulugh Beg takes Aba Bakr b. Muhammad Juki captive, crosses Oxus to camp at Balkh, makes peace with 'Ala' al-Dawla.
- 25 Rajab, 851/October 5, 1447** Sultan Muhammad defeats the army of Fars outside Shiraz.
- Early 852/spring, 1448** Ulugh Beg and 'Abd al-Latif invade Khorasan, defeat 'Ala' al-Dawla in Tarnab.
- Middle Ramadan, 852/mid-November, 1448** Ulugh Beg learns that Yar 'Ali has escaped and is besieging Herat.
- Dhu'l Hijja, 852/February, 1449** Abu'l Qasim Babur takes Herat from Yar 'Ali, executes him.
- Rabi' I, 853/April–May, 1449** Abu'l Qasim Babur offers submission to Sultan Muhammad.
- Probably early summer, 853/1449** 'Abd al-Latif's opposition becomes so open that Ulugh Beg has to go against him.
- 8 or 10 Ramadan, 853/October 25 or 27, 1449** 'Abd al-Latif murders Ulugh Beg after defeating him near Samarqand.
- 13 Ramadan, 853/October 30, 1449** Sultan Muhammad defeats the army of Abu'l Qasim Babur near Jam.
- Ramadan, 853/October–November, 1449** Sultan Muhammad pushes Abu'l Qasim Babur out of Herat.
- 25 Rabi' I, 854/May 8, 1450** 'Abd al-Latif is killed by emirs in Samarqand.
- 3 Rabi' II, 854/May 16, 1450** Sultan Muhammad sends Hajji Muhammad b. Ghunashirin against Abu'l Qasim Babur; Hajji Muhammad is killed in battle.
- 22 Jumada I, 855/June 21 or 22, 1451** In Transoxiana Abu Sa'id seizes power from 'Abd Allah b. Ibrahim Sultan.
- 15 Dhu'l-Hijja, 855/January 9, 1452** Abu'l Qasim Babur defeats Sultan Muhammad near Astarabad and has him killed.
- Rajab, 856/August, 1452** The Qaraqoyunlu take most of central and western Iran.

## Family tree of major Timurid princes



Note: The names of mothers with political or genealogical importance are given in parenthesis below the name of their sons. For reasons of space I have abbreviated the name of Malikat Agha after the first use.

\* denotes a woman of Chinggisid descent.

# Introduction

A scholar contemplating pre-modern government must experience a sense of wonder. How was it possible to keep control over an extensive region with so few of the tools that modern governments possess? The central administration rarely held a monopoly of force, and a message sent to the other end of the kingdom could require weeks or months to arrive. The population spoke a variety of languages and most were more firmly attached to local elites than they were to the central government. Tax collection was difficult, since both landowners and peasants attempted to thwart the process. In the medieval Middle East, the challenge was particularly great, since there were few legal entities which provided society with a formal structure or regulated relationships among its separate parts. Furthermore its inhabitants included not only urban and agricultural populations but also large numbers of mountain peoples and nomads, some of whom inhabited regions almost inaccessible to government forces. Despite all this, governments did gain and hold power in the Middle East and society remained remarkably cohesive and resilient through numerous dynastic changes.

This book is an examination of how the system worked: both how government retained control over society, and how society maintained its cohesion through periods of central rule and of internal disorder. It is also a portrait of a particular place, time and dynasty: the place is Iran, the time the first half of the fifteenth century, and the dynasty is the Timurids, founded by the Turco-Mongolian conqueror Temür, or Tamerlane (r. 1370–1405). I am examining in particular the reign of Tamerlane's son Shahrukh who ruled from 1409 to 1447. The Timurid dynasty and its military followers came from outside the Middle East, spoke a language foreign to most of the population, and depended on an army that was consciously different from their Iranian subjects. At the same time they were Muslim, literate, and for the most part fluent in Persian. Many were landowners and cultural patrons who had much in common with their subjects, and particularly with the Persian elite who made up the class of city notables. Timurid rule depended on the superiority of nomad armies, but, like all other rulers, the Timurids required some form of consent from the population.

The relationship of government to society in the medieval Middle East is a slippery question. Here, as elsewhere, the ruler was the lynchpin of government, despite his inability to monopolize coercive force. He held an ambivalent position – above his followers and subjects, but also at their mercy. Because there was no fixed system of succession, the death of a ruler often unleashed a struggle. A serious illness commonly brought disorders within the realm and death could precipitate a free-for-all, bringing with it the destruction of crops and cities and the implementation of ruinous taxes. The Sufi shaykh Khwaja Ahrar told his disciples that his family had been preparing a feast to celebrate the shaving of his head on his first birthday, when they learned the news of Temür's death in 1405. They were too frightened to eat, and so emptied the cauldrons onto the ground and fled to hide in the mountains.<sup>1</sup> The population's panic was fully justified. The importance of the ruler to the system did not ensure respect to central government, the ruler's possessions, or even to his corpse after death.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the fragility of central rule, the medieval Middle East was the locus of a stable and self-replicating society, which was based on personal ties rather than formal structures. The urban populations who depended most directly on central rule included separate and self-conscious groups: the religious classes, artisans, and merchants – none of them organized into legal corporate bodies with a fixed relationship to the ruler or the city. Major cities contained centrally appointed governors and garrison troops, but not in numbers large enough to dominate the area. The towns from which the Timurids ruled their dominions were rather like an archipelago within a sea of semi-independent regions, over which control was a matter of luck, alliance and an occasional punitive expedition. Some major cities remained under their own leaders, as vassals of the higher power. All of the local rulers, of cities, mountain regions and tribes, had their own political programs. Nonetheless the economic system remained strong enough to make the Middle East one of the most powerful and prosperous regions of the world.

I am not the first to attempt an analysis of the relationship between government and society in this area, and my study owes a great deal to those which have preceded it. Roy Mottahedeh's classic study, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society*, demonstrated the importance of social and ideological loyalties in forging the bonds which fostered order in early medieval Iran. As he showed, people created loyalties in predictable ways through oaths which bound them in relationships of clientage or military service.

<sup>1</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī b. Ḥusayn Wā'iz Kāshifī, *Rashaḥāt-i 'ayn al-ḥayāt*, edited by 'Alī Aṣghar Mu'īniyān (Tehran: Bunyād-i Nikūkārī-yi Nūriyānī, 2536/1977), 391.

<sup>2</sup> When Temür's grandson Pir Muhammad b. 'Umar Shaykh was murdered by a follower in 812/1409–10, one of his followers stole the clothes from his body, leaving him naked (Tāj al-Dīn Ḥasan b. Shihāb Yazdī, *Jāmī' al-tawārīkh-Ḥasanī*, edited by Ḥusayn Mudarrisī Ṭabāṭabā'ī and 'Iraj Afshār [Karachi: Mu'assasa-i Ṭaḥqīqāt-i 'Ulūm-yi Āsiyā-i Miyāna wa Gharbī-yi Dānishgāh-i Karāchī, 1987], 18–19).

Although such acquired loyalties did not survive the men who made them, they were often dictated or reinforced through loyalties of category based on a perception of shared self-interest among people of common family, lifestyle or profession. Almost from the beginning of Islamic history, there was a theoretical separation between the ruler and his subjects, considered necessary because only a ruler outside the groups making up society would be able to remain impartial and maintain a balance among them. The dreams which connected the ruler to the supernatural, and made his rule a compact with God rather than with man, were one mark of the ruler's separate status.<sup>3</sup>

More recently Jürgen Paul has presented an analysis of eastern Iran and Transoxiana up to the Mongol period emphasizing the economic and institutional aspects of government and society. He describes a division of tasks between local elites and the central government with a relationship mediated largely by the local notables and Sufi shaykhs, whose importance increased as the period progressed. What set the notables apart was their local base of power, which was independent of the central government. Both Mottahedeh and Paul stress the importance of individual loyalties to personal groupings and the ruler himself. Paul discusses a long period and suggests an increasing distance between government and society from the eleventh century, with the advent of nomad rulers who were less connected with agricultural and urban society.<sup>4</sup>

For the later period two scholars, Marshall G. S. Hodgson and Albert Hourani, put forward complementary theories of the relationship between government and society which have been widely accepted. Hodgson outlined a dynamic which he called the "a'yān-amīr system." The landowning classes were drawn to the cities, where they exerted influence through clientship, in a social atmosphere imbued with the values of Islamic law. Order and security were assured by a garrison of military commanders – emirs – who were often foreign.<sup>5</sup> Hourani described the politics among the city notables, drawn from these landowning classes and dominated, usually, by the ulama. Hourani showed that the city elite could control a significant part of city life and in times of government weakness or crisis they could take over governance of the city.<sup>6</sup> Thus we see a separation between government and society with the

<sup>3</sup> Roy Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Islamic Society* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 69–71, 178–80.

<sup>4</sup> Jürgen Paul, *Herrscher, Gemeinwesen, Vermittler: Ostiran und Transoxanien in vormongolischer Zeit* (Beirut: F. Steiner, 1996). The two studies mentioned are of course not the only ones from which I have profited. Claude Cahen, *Mouvements populaires et autonomisme urbain dans l'Asie musulmane du moyen âge* (Leiden: Brill, 1959), Ann K. S. Lambton, *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia* (Albany, NY: Bibliotheca Persica, 1988), and more recently Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) are among the central contributions to the discussion.

<sup>5</sup> Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 4 vols. (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1974), vol. II, 64–69.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of Hourani's theories see Boaz Shoshan, "The 'Politics of Notables' in Medieval Islam," *Asian and African Studies* 20 (1986), 179–215.

city and its elite as the point of contact. Government and society were connected by a tacit contractual relation based on common interests in stability, the promotion of religion, and the protection of trade and agriculture. For the later period in particular, military matters are seen to be the domain of the government, largely removed from the general population. Since the central administration took limited responsibility for the daily life of the population, social cohesion is usually ascribed to the strength of social and kinship groups controlling the life of the individual.<sup>7</sup>

The basic schema drawn by Hourani and Hodgson has been elaborated by numerous specialized works over the last thirty years, particularly concerning the religious classes who made up the core of the city notables. In such studies, scholars draw conclusions about the general from the particular, and the choice of population studied is determined by the sources available. The middle period of Islamic history, from the Seljukid through the Mamluk and Timurid period, has provided most of the material for detailed analysis. For social history, biographical works are usually the most valuable source and studies of urban life and the activities of the ulama are most often based on material from the Mamluk Sultanate which produced rich historical literature, including voluminous biographical collections on the ulama. Studies on the composition and organization of the military have also depended heavily on the superior sources available from the Mamluk regions.<sup>8</sup> For Iran and Central Asia, there is much less information on ulama but we have a fund of biographical literature on Sufi shaykhs. These have strong influence over our views on Sufi society. A social history of the Middle East based on existing secondary studies is likely to depend on Mamluk material about cities and the ulama, but may favor Iranian material for Sufi circles. We should recognize however, that social norms in the two regions may not have been identical.

While studies on individual communities can provide invaluable insight into social history, they do not fit together well to produce a composite picture of the dynamics of society as a whole. The literature of the medieval period divides society into classes and types of people, and separates out the history of each. Each genre of historical compilation preserves a different type of information, and thus provides a selected and homogenized picture of the people with which it deals; together the sources serve to emphasize the peculiarities of each group and the differences between them. The picture thus presented of separate and distinct groups is misleading. Neither occupational nor kinship groups were mutually exclusive. Few people and certainly few families belonged to only one class or type; this is something we know and

<sup>7</sup> See Albert Hourani, *The History of the Arab Peoples* (New York: MJF Books, 1991), 98–146, and Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 128.

<sup>8</sup> See the numerous studies by David Ayalon, and more recently those of Reuven Amitai.

often acknowledge, but it is nonetheless difficult to write history in a way that fully incorporates our understanding. Furthermore, we must recognize that politics, even within a given milieu, rarely involved only internal personnel; people fighting over a common prize often reached outside their own group for allies. Just as no type of person was clearly defined and separated from others, there was no sphere of power controlled exclusively by one group of people. Rulers and military were important in the religious sphere and religious figures in the economic one. In Iran at least, the city classes, including both artisans and ulama, played an important role in regional military contests. The nomad and semi-nomad populations of mountain and steppe were connected not only to central and regional military powers, but also directly to city populations.

Most studies have focused on institutions and on the practices they engendered. In this book I attempt to analyze the relationship between government and society primarily by examining the practice of politics, seeking the dynamics that kept people together within the groups they belonged to, and connected people of different associations. I am looking for the blurred edges of groups; for the overlaps among different types of organizations and classes of people. I have chosen to concentrate on a single defined period, the reign of Tamerlane's son Shahrukh and the first years of the power struggle after his death. The place is likewise limited to Iran and Central Asia, which were the central parts of Shahrukh's domains. While the use of a limited time and region prevent me from drawing conclusions which can be confidently applied over a longer period, it does offer a number of advantages. First of all, it allows the use of a variety of interrelated sources, which make it possible to trace the activities of important people in different spheres. In this way, the action of an individual in one situation can be judged against accounts from different sources; we can discern secondary identities not mentioned in a single type of source. Secondly, it is possible in a detailed study to recognize the different affiliations contributing to the prestige of an individual or a family.

I have tried to treat individuals not as representatives of particular groups but as independent actors, using whatever affiliations were available to them. I have done the same in the case of cities and provinces. Here again, there are advantages to a study which goes beyond the individual city but remains within a contained period. It is possible both to determine something of the common political structure in Iranian cities and to discern variations in political culture. Likewise, in the case of provinces and regions, one can perceive a range of difference within the larger system. Examining a number of different Sufi affiliations, together with contemporary habits of shrine visitation, allows us to analyze the interaction among communities and to gauge their place and their role in society more fully than the study of one *tarīqa* over time would allow. Moreover, the detailed analysis of a particular time and place permits the historian to check the actual against the ideal. The

literature of the period is liberal in its explanations of approved attitudes and the narrative is shaped to reflect them. If motives for behavior are mentioned they will fit into the categories considered appropriate, and it is thus important to keep in mind that collective memory can distort both events and conventions to fit what are perceived as the rules of society. William Lancaster has analyzed the practice of manipulation in his discussion of genealogy among the *Rwala Bedouin*:

As political and economic motives change with time, so the genealogy must change to accommodate changing assets and new options and so there is no true genealogy – truth is relative to the pragmatic needs of the group involved. Thus a society that appears to be constrained by the past (for this is how we see genealogies) is in fact generating the very genealogy through which it ‘explains’ the present, and . . . using that genealogy to generate the future.<sup>9</sup>

Many of our sources manipulate their material in similar ways, and while we cannot untangle relationships and motivation reliably, the use of a variety of different sources and the study of different groups does allow some correction to the picture provided.

There are two major questions posed in this study: first, how a government retained power and fulfilled its function without a monopoly of force, and second, how society maintained its cohesion. The most common answer for the functioning of government has been that the preservation of order was worth the payment of taxes. The city populations who made up urban government thus had some common interests with the ruling group.<sup>10</sup> Society was so frightened of disorder that any government was better than none at all, and should thus be obeyed; this maxim became a truism of pre-modern political thought.<sup>11</sup> Had obedience been only passive, this explanation would be sufficient, but in Iran at least urban elites and semi-independent rulers were actively engaged in politics and military activity. In examining the life of the cities, religious classes, and independent rulers, one sees a mass of people pursuing their interests with the tools they had at hand. Some further explanation is therefore needed. I have examined here not only the common interests which might persuade powerful, independent groups to collaborate with the government, but also the way in which their internal politics intersected with those of the central and provincial administrations.

The other major issue I address is the cohesion of society, and here a central part of the discussion is the question of how to deal with the relationship of the individual to the group. When we learn that a person was a member of a given commonality, what does that tell us? If people saw themselves less as

<sup>9</sup> William Lancaster, *The Rwala Bedouin Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 35.

<sup>10</sup> Hourani, *Arab Peoples*, 133–37.

<sup>11</sup> Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 182–83.

free individuals than as members of a group or community, then we must attempt to understand how a specific community affected the individual, what its internal politics were, and how it fit into society at large. We should not assume that because a group was an important factor in the life of its members it would command their full loyalty or achieve internal unity. The history of any royal lineage demonstrates that blood ties can cause as much conflict as cooperation. The extended families central to pre-modern society also fostered internal rivalry; one can argue that the more benefits the extended family offers, the more likely it is that there will be strife within it.

The central question, then, is how people coped with the constraints and possibilities of their society. Each group to which a person belonged offered both support and danger; one could hope to call on one's fellows for help, but one was very likely to be competing with them for a common set of prizes. Alliances thus often went across recognized groups, both of birth and of training. The politics of the Timurid period was highly factional, with a dynamic made up of individuals with multiple loyalties, identities and rivalries. The multiplicity of obligation gave choice back to the individual person – anyone in a position of wealth or authority had to navigate among a variety of conflicting obligations and attachments. Thus, in the end, we must assume that the individual was a key player in this society, and not always a predictable one.

## **The place and the period**

The period I have chosen for this study is the early fifteenth century, and the dynasty that of the Timurids, who ruled Iran and Central Asia for much of the century. The founder of the dynasty was Temür, a Muslim Turk of Mongol descent who came to power in Samarqand in 1370 and spent most of his life in spectacularly successful conquest. He was succeeded by his son Shahrukh, whose reign, from 1409–47, is the focus of this study. Shahrukh was a cautious ruler who balanced the ideological and political forces of his time to consolidate control over a friable realm, and he was a man who fit the time he lived in. The fifteenth century offers us less sound and fury, and fewer outstanding personalities than the centuries which preceded and followed it. The major dynasties who controlled the Middle East after the Mongol conquests were already in power: the Ottomans in Anatolia and eastern Europe, the Mamluks in Syria and Egypt, the Timurids in Iran and Central Asia and the Delhi sultans in northern India. This was a period in which the changes of the past could be assimilated and newly won positions consolidated.

One of the great watersheds in the history of the central Islamic lands was the Mongol invasion of the early thirteenth century. The whole of the Middle East was affected by their rule, either directly or by example: their conquests and their rivalries became part of the political dynamic of the Middle East. After the death of Chinggis Khan in 1227, his empire was ruled by a supreme

khan or *khaghan* and was divided into sections ruled by subordinate khans from the families of Chinggis Khan's four sons by his chief wife. The western region stretching from the steppes north of the Black Sea to the Aral Sea and into Siberia was the inheritance of the eldest son, Jochi. The family of the second son, Chaghadai,<sup>12</sup> held much of central Asia from Transoxiana through Turkistan and the Ili region. Chinggis's third son Ögedei became supreme khan, but the personal area of his house lay outside Mongolia, in the Altai. The youngest son Tolui inherited Mongolia itself; his descendants succeeded in taking over the position of great khan, and then in founding a separate dynasty in Iran: the Ilkhanate. After the death of the great khan Möngke in 1259, no one member of Chinggis Khan's family was able to achieve universal recognition as *khaghan*. Supreme power remained limited to the family of Chinggis Khan but each section of the empire was ruled as an independent state. By the mid-fourteenth century, the Mongol elites west of Mongolia had converted to Islam, and the Islamic and Mongol worlds had come to overlap. Despite its division, as an idea the Mongol Empire remained strong and the memory of Chinggis Khan retained a supreme place in political and cultural traditions.

In the Middle East the Mongol conquest reinforced some old political traditions and introduced new ones. The elimination of the caliphate with the fall of Baghdad in 1258 created new possibilities for rulers within the Islamic world. It became possible to claim full sovereign power within one area and to base one's legitimacy on dynastic claims unrelated to the house of the Prophet. The first to take advantage of the new situation were the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria, who based their legitimacy in part on their resistance to the Mongols and their possession of a descendant of the 'Abbasid dynasty whom they kept in Cairo as a titular caliph. Iran and Iraq were ruled by the Mongol Ilkhans. Mongol rule brought about an ethnographic change, with the division of the region into separate culture areas. The arrival of new nomads to occupy the pastures of the eastern regions displaced Turks who had entered with the Seljukid invasions of the eleventh century. This population had already begun to move into Anatolia, and Mongol pressure completed the Turkification of the region. Mongol rule centered in Iran and did not extend beyond Iraq, thus creating a separation between these areas and the Arab cultural region of Egypt and the Levant controlled by the Mamluks. From this time on, the Middle East has retained the division into three major cultural zones, one primarily Arab, one primarily Iranian, and one primarily Turkic.

In Iran and Central Asia the impact of Mongol rule was far-reaching. Throughout their realms, the Mongols introduced a period of experimentation.

<sup>12</sup> Where I discuss Chinggis Khan's son, I use the Mongol version of the name, but for the people and the khanate to which he gave his name, I have chosen to use the later Turkic rendering of this name: Chaghatai.

In the realm of culture, science and daily life, they brought in changes of all sorts – new foods, new plants, new styles of art.<sup>13</sup> In the political sphere, they brought in traditions from earlier steppe empires and from China. In the fifteenth century many Mongol administrative traditions were still in force. There were regional armies conscripted from the population and organized in decimal units, military governors – *darughas* – in many cities, and a Turco-Mongolian military and court administration bearing Mongol titles. These two regions were part of the former Mongol Empire, just as they were part of the former caliphate.

The high culture of Iran under the Mongols was influenced by its new ruling class, and by the end of the Mongol period Iran differed markedly from the Arab regions of Egypt and Syria in literary and visual culture. The Mongols employed many Iranian bureaucrats, and, at their court, Persian became the primary language of high culture. In the visual arts they introduced significant Chinese influence and their rule oversaw the introduction of a new art form, the Persian miniature. By the Timurid period the Persian miniature was well established and buildings, decorated liberally in colored tiles, were very different from the Mamluk architecture which relied on stone for decoration.

In the fourteenth century, as the descendants of Chinggis Khan began to lose power in some of the areas they controlled, a heady period of apparently unlimited opportunity arose. In China, an indigenous dynasty took control and pushed the Mongol ruling class back into the steppe. Towards the end of the century, the Chinggisid ruler Tokhtamish reunited much of the Jochid section of the Mongol realm and revived its claims to the Transcaucasus and Khorezm. In the west, the Ottomans under Bayazid I (r. 1389–1402), decisively entered the central Islamic lands and laid claim to the whole of Anatolia. The most spectacular career was that of Temür, who undertook a symbolic recreation of the Mongol Empire. He died in his eighties on his way to reconquer China, where Mongol government had been overthrown in 1368. While he was not descended from Chinggis Khan and thus could not claim supreme power for himself, he created a structure of Mongol legitimation by marrying into the Chinggisid house and ruling formally through a puppet khan descended from Chinggis. At the same time, Temür claimed supremacy in the Islamic world and crushed the Mamluk and Ottoman rulers who dared to assert equality. In explaining the justice of his conquests, he called on both the *sharī'a* and Mongol traditions.

The great military engagements of Temür and his contemporaries gave way after his death, in 1405, to a period of more cautious rule within most of the Islamic lands. In both the Mamluk Sultanate and the Ottoman state the first task was to repair the ravages of Temür's campaigns and to regain formal

<sup>13</sup> For more information on the Mongol impact on cultural exchange see Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

independence from the Timurid dynasty. The level of ambition shown by Bayazid I was not appropriate for his immediate successors. For the Delhi Sultanate and the other Muslim dynasties of northern India, even independence was beyond reasonable expectations, and they continued as formal vassals of the Timurids to the end of Shahrukh's reign.<sup>14</sup> The Golden Horde of the Russian steppe could support local rulers in the Crimea or the Volga, but had lost control over the trade routes and much of their influence over the western steppe. Neither the Islamic nor the Turco-Mongolian world of the fifteenth century encouraged the adventurism shown by Temür and his contemporaries.

The choices that Temür himself had made also discouraged his successors from considering further conquest. In the last ten years of his career, he had clearly differentiated between two types of military campaign: those designed to bring land into his domains and those undertaken to display his superiority over rivals. He chose only to incorporate lands which had a strong agricultural base and had been part of the Mongol Empire; these were the regions which would accept his Mongol legitimation and could produce taxes sufficient to support a mixed army of nomad and settled forces. At the time of his death his realm was complete and further conquests would have been both costly and unprofitable.

Both Temür and his successors used Mongol legitimation and recognized their kinship with other Mongol peoples, most notably the Jochid Uzbeks and the eastern Chaghadayid Khanate, from whom they sought brides descended from Chinggis Khan. While Shahrukh discontinued the practice of ruling through a puppet khan, he himself informally adopted the Mongol supreme title of *khaghan* and in the histories written for him and his sons, the dynasty's connection to the house of Chinggis Khan became the subject of an elaborate myth. Loyalty to the Mongol heritage did not prevent the Timurids from subscribing fully to the Perso-Islamic culture of their subjects. Temür himself, though illiterate, was bilingual in Persian and Turkic and had a strong interest in intellectual questions, particularly history and religious studies. He collected at his court not only the finest craftsmen of the cities he conquered, but whatever scholars he could bring home. In religious sciences he was particularly successful; his court contained three scholars of outstanding prestige, Sa'd al-Din Taftazani, Sayyid 'Ali Jurjani, and Muhammad al-Jazari. He commissioned histories of his reign in both Persian and Turkish. What was equally important for the future course of the dynasty was Temür's active interest in the education of his descendants. According to the historians of Shahrukh's period, Temür took charge of the education of his grandchildren, personally appointing their nurses and tutors. During his lifetime, almost all his grandsons were raised in the central court

<sup>14</sup> Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate. A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 322.

by Temür's wives or sometimes those of his followers. They were to be trained in good behavior, and taught the arts and manners of rulers (*ādāb-i pādshāhī*).<sup>15</sup> It is clear that cultural patronage was an expected part of rule both for Temür and for his descendants. Shahrukh showed a strong interest in historical writing and many of Temür's grandsons were famous for their enthusiastic and informed patronage. They continued Temür's interest in history and religion, and added active patronage of mathematics and astronomy, and most particularly, the arts of the book.

The Timurids after Temür excelled not in military might but in cultural patronage, and this was probably not by chance. While Temür left his heirs a realm which was logically complete, his cultural legacy provided ample scope for ambition and initiative. His descendants had the advantage of inheriting the Iranian lands ruled by the Mongols, thus the area in which new ideas, techniques and art forms were still in the process of development. They were in a position to gather the calligraphers and miniature painters of Tabriz and Shiraz and the astronomers working on the rich legacy of Nasir al-Din Tusi, whose observatory at Maragha was financed by the first Ilkhan Hülegü. The active exchange of embassies with Ming China, quickly renewed after Temür's death, continued the importation of outside influences. Thus we need not be surprised to find that among Temür's successors, building and cultural production were among the first steps in the assertion of power and position.

Despite significant differences, the Timurids shared many institutions with the neighboring Muslim dynasties of their period. The Ottomans, Delhi sultans, and Mamluks were all Turks, originating from the Eurasian steppe, who ruled over the population as outsiders. Because they owed their prestige to the nomad military prowess of their armies, they preserved the foreign element, whether by upholding traditions and importing new foreign soldiers. The "middle period" of Islamic history, when rulers of nomad origin predominated, strengthened a number of institutions which were common to the central Islamic lands. While terminology differed among regions, as did the importance of individual institutions, all states in some way used the *iqṭā'* (grants of land use for salary) and charitable *waqf* endowments, and all struggled with the resultant loss of tax revenue. They endowed similar religious establishments, the madrasa and the *khānaqāh*, sometimes organized into mausoleum complexes, and thereby created religious positions dependent on their favor. The prestige of Sufi shaykhs and the growing importance of shrines and Sufi brotherhoods was likewise a development common to all regions. Thus we can examine the Timurids as a dynasty trying to control a

<sup>15</sup> Hāfiz-i Abrū, *Majma' al-tawārīkh*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, MS Fatih 4371/1, fols. 8b–9a; see also Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, *Zafarnāma*, edited by Muḥammad 'Abbāsī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, sh. 1336/1957), vol. I, 278, 504, 515 (for Ibrahim Sultan), vol. II, 36 (for Ulugh Beg), 285 (for several princes).

society similar to that of its neighbors, with many of the same tools. On the other hand, their direct connection to the Mongols and their rule over the central Iranian lands set them apart from Mamluks and Ottomans. We can assume that their society and politics were similar to those of their western neighbors, but significant differences also existed.

### **The organization of the book**

One basic premise of this book is that much of the political activity within the realm originated in society, and that the task of the government was less to initiate than to balance and to react. It would be logical therefore to begin my analysis from below, with the city, the countryside and the province. There is one major practical disadvantage to such a course – the narrative history of the period, to which we must refer for our framework, depends largely on the activities of the dynasty and its immediate servitors. Without introduction to the chronology and the personnel of the central government, the history of individual communities cannot be explained or related to each other. I will therefore begin where I would have liked to end, with a discussion of the history of Shahrukh's reign and the organization of the dynasty, its central army and its formal administration.

In the **first chapter**, I combine a brief narrative history with analysis of the rulers and their Chaghatay followers. My goal is to place events in sequence and show their impact on the dynasty and its core military command. The **second chapter** is a discussion of the sources and the problems they raise. The **third** deals with the central chancellery (*dīwān*) and its first section is largely narrative. Many of the events introduced in the **first** and **third chapters** will be analyzed in greater detail in subsequent chapters concerned with other segments of society. My **fourth chapter** is an analysis of the political and military dynamics of Iran, and I have followed it with a discussion of government and society in the province of Fars, since the two chapters deal with similar issues. Chapters **6** and **7** are devoted to the politics of the religious classes; in the **sixth chapter** I give a general analysis of the dynamics of politics in the religious sphere, and in the **seventh** discuss specific people, shrines and communities. The **last chapter** is a description of the rebellion of Shahrukh's grandson in the last years of his reign and the succession struggle after his death, which illustrate many of the political dynamics discussed throughout the book.

## The formation of the Timurid state under Shahrukh

In the years after Temür's death his youngest son, Shahrukh, succeeded in taking over Temür's central lands. Shahrukh had none of the theatrical inclination of his father and limited his military campaigns to those he considered truly necessary. He was also much more willing to share power than his father had been, and under him we find both more provincial independence and more individual power among the Persian and Turco-Mongolian elite. These traits, along with his conspicuous religious observance, have won him a reputation as a ruler who devoted himself to religion while leaving the business of governing to his officials and his powerful wife, Gawharshad.<sup>1</sup> This assessment appears to be based on the assumption that Temür had left an intact polity which was relatively easy to govern. Such was not the case. Shahrukh had to win the realm he ruled through battle and diplomacy; he had to balance innumerable separate centers of power – dynastic, provincial and local. While some contemporary historians of the latter part of Shahrukh's reign portray him as a distant and preoccupied ruler, those writing about his early and middle years show a man active in the affairs of army and administration. Even Shahrukh's early rival and critic, the prince Iskandar b. 'Umar Shaykh, gives Shahrukh credit for skill in ruling. He states that he knew how to maintain the externals of religious and customary law, and although he allowed his subordinates considerable power, he himself controlled major decisions.<sup>2</sup>

The military and dynastic history of the Timurid period was dominated by two closely interrelated groups: the Timurid dynasty and the Chaghatay commanders – emirs – descended from Temür's highest commanders. The dynasty and emirs shared a common origin within the Ulus Chaghatay of

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, H. R. Roemer, "The Successors to Timür," *The Cambridge History of Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), vol. VI, 104; V. V. Bartol'd, *Ulugbek i ego vremia*, in *Sochineniia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1964), vol. II, pt. 2, 97.

<sup>2</sup> "Synopsis of the House of Timur," in *A Century of Princes: Sources on Timurid History and Art*, edited and translated by Wheeler Thackston (Cambridge, MA: The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1989), 240, 245–46.

Transoxiana and eastern Afghanistan which bound them to the history of the Mongol Empire and the charismatic figure of Chinggis Khan. They owed their position as a ruling group more immediately to Temür, who had won the realm they ruled and raised them or their fathers to power. Their descendants remained central to military power right up to the end of the Timurid dynasty. In order to attain and hold power over the Timurid realm a ruler had to dominate this group of people – both princes and emirs – who were at once his first rivals for power and his most important agents in keeping control over the populations of subject territories. The settled and nomad peoples of Timurid lands were neither powerless nor politically unimportant, but to win and keep their allegiance, a ruler had to control his own family and army.

The challenges facing Shahrūkh changed over the course of his reign. During the first fifteen years after his father's death, he competed with the other members of the dynasty for power. While he struggled to achieve supremacy over his relatives, he also had to bring his Chaghatay emirs into order. The two processes were closely related since many emirs had connections to several different princes and felt free to switch allegiance. In 823/1420 Shahrūkh was able to turn his attention to retaking Azarbaijan; from this time until about 835/1431–32 we find him at the head of a stable and well-functioning government, able to meet any outside challenges offered. After 835 new problems arose and from 840/1436–37 the combination of Shahrūkh's increasing age and illness, the death of his most senior emirs and the early death of most of his sons led to a serious decline in the efficiency of his government.

### **The composition of the ruling elite**

Temür had divided his realm into four sections, each governed by the family of one of his sons. Amiranshah's sons held the governorship of Azarbaijan, 'Umar Shaykh's sons that of central and southern Iran, Pir Muhammad, the son of his senior son, Jahangir, was governor of Kabul and its region, and Shahrūkh and his young sons were appointed to Khorasan and the regions surrounding Transoxiana. This arrangement appears to have been an imitation of Chinggis Khan's disposition of his realm, but it should not be seen as the acceptance of a divided state. Temür, to the end, was jealous of power and insistent on centralization. When he died, only two of his sons were still alive. The elder, Amiranshah, was thirty-seven, but had been discredited and removed from his governorship for what was probably an attempted rebellion.<sup>3</sup> Shahrūkh was twenty-seven. In addition, there were numerous grandchildren, ranging in age from twenty-nine to newborn.

<sup>3</sup> John E. Woods, "Turco-Iranica II: Notes on a Timurid Decree of 1396/798," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 43/4 (1984), 333–35; Yazdī, *Zafarnāma*, vol. II, 148–50, 406.