

A NOTE ON ISKANDAR BEG'S CHRONOLOGY

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THE value of Iskandar Beg Munshī's *Tārīkh-i ʿĀlam ʾĀrā-yi ʿAbbāsī* (hereafter *TAAA*) for the history of Iran, Khurāsān, and Māwarānnahr has long been appreciated. Marshall G. S. Hodgson spoke of the work's "judicious accuracy, its psychological perceptiveness, and the broad interest it manifests in the ramifications of the events it traces."¹ N. D. Miklukho-Maklai described the chronicle as "a basic source for the history of Iran during the last quarter of the sixteenth century and the first third of the seventeenth and also an invaluable source for the same period for some of the countries and provinces adjacent to Iran."²

Such esteem is shown not only by present-day historians, with their own distinctive preferences in historical sources, but also by Iskandar Beg's own contemporaries and successive generations of scholars in Iran, Māwarānnahr, and India. Judging first by the relatively large number of manuscript copies of the work which have been preserved and secondly by the dates those copies were made, the popularity of the *TAAA* seems to have been assured virtually from the moment it was written.³ The lithographed publication of most of the work (minus eleven of the twelve *maqālahs* on ʿAbbās)⁴ in Tehran in 1896–97 and its re-publication (with the *maqālahs* restored) in Isfahan in 1956 have assured its wide availability. In addition, an awaited English translation will unquestionably enhance its already enormous influence as an authoritative source for the sixteenth and seventeenth century history of greater Iran.

I have made extensive use of the *TAAA* in preparing a monograph on the last years of the Abū'l-Khayrid/Shībānid rule in Māwarānnahr, Balkh, and Khurāsān. For the period 995–1007/1587–99, the *TAAA* is one of the most important, if not the most important, source. It is highly detailed, coherent, comprehensive, and at least on the surface chronologically precise. Iskandar Beg was an eyewitness to many of the events in Khurasan that he narrates and relied on the accounts of other ocular participants and "reliable sources" in his reconstruction of events.⁵

¹ Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam* (Chicago 1974), vol. 3, p. 42.

² N. D. Miklukho-Maklai, *Opisanie persidskikh i tadzhikskikh rukopisei instituta vostokovedeniia*, (Moscow, 1975), vol. 3, p. 171.

³ C. A. Storey and Ūri E. Bregel', *Persidskaia literatura* (Moscow, 1972), pp. 875–80. Bregel' lists more than 180 complete and partial copies preserved in public libraries alone. Many of the manuscripts are dated to the 1630s and 1640s. The relative magnitude of the number of copies is more readily apparent if compared to contemporary Iranian and Māwarānnahrid chronicles. For example, Qāḍi

Aḥmad-i Qumī's *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh* is preserved in only four manuscript copies (see H. Müller *Die Chronik Hulāṣat al-tawārīkh* . . . [Wiesbaden, 1964], pp. 13–14). Maḥmūd b. Amīr Walī's *Baḥr al-asrār fī manāqib al-akhyār* does not exist in its entirety and of the fourth *rukn* of the sixth volume (the section pertinent to Māwarānnahr and Balkh in the seventeenth century), only the Indian Office Library copy is known (see n. 12 below); Suhaylā's *Imām Qulī-nāmah* has survived only in a single defective copy (Storey and Bregel', *Persidskaia literatura*, p. 1135).

⁴ See Irāʾ Afshār's comments in the Isfahan edition of *TAAA*, p. 1097; all further citations are to Afshār's edition.

⁵ For a full citation of these sources, see F. von Erdmann, "Iskender Munschi und sein Werk," *ZDMG* 15 (1861): 457–501.

But in the course of correlating Iskandar Beg's information with that of other Iranian works composed more nearly contemporarily with the period 995–1007⁶ such as Bidlīsī's conclusion (*khātimah*) to the *Sharaf-nāmah* (completed on the last day of Dhū'l-Hijjah 1005);⁷ Qāḍī Aḥmad Qumī's *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh* (the epilogue of which was completed in 1001);⁸ or Māwarānnahrid sources such as Ḥāfiẓ-i Tanīsh's *Sharaf-nāmah-yi shāhī* (a.k.a., 'Abdallāhnāmah), completed in its first version in 997 and its second sometime after 998;⁹ or Badr al-Dīn Kashmīrī's *Rawḍat al-riḍwān* completed in 998¹⁰ and his *Zafar-nāmah*, written in 1001;¹¹ as well as with Maḥmūd b. Amīr Walī's *Baḥr al-asrār*, the appropriate volume of which was completed in 1045¹² and the Sīstānī work of Malik Shāh Ḥusayn, *Ihyā al-mulūk*,¹³ completed in 1028/1618–19, both of which were approximately contemporarily with Iskandar Beg's work, a number of questions arose regarding Iskandar Beg's system of chronology and thus his dating of events.

We may take as an example the dating of the siege of Harāt by 'Abdallāh Khān Shībānī. The opening of the siege, an important moment in Shībānīd-Ṣafavid as well as Qizilbāsh-Ṣafavid relations, is dated to 995/1587 (by all of the above-named sources who provide a date) and its conclusion to 996/1588. Taken in chronological order of composition, the *Sharaf-nāmah-yi shāhī* dates the opening of the siege 2 Rajab 995,¹⁴ when 'Abdallāh Khān established his headquarters at the Sulṭān Ḥusayn Bayqarā *madrasah* outside the city walls and its close to 5 Rabī' II 996.¹⁵ The *Rawḍat al-riḍwān*, which gives no opening date, ends the siege on Monday, 1 Rabī' II 996.¹⁶ In the *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh*, Qāḍī Aḥmad Qumī records that 'Abbās left Mashhad for Qazwīn during the first ten days of Ramaḍān 995¹⁷ by which time 'Abdallāh Khān had already encircled Harāt and brought the outlying areas under control.¹⁸ News of the death of the Qizilbāsh commander of the Harāt garrison, killed when Harāt fell, was brought to Qazwīn by "swift messengers" on the 18th of Rabī' II of the "aforementioned year" (i.e., 996).¹⁹ The Kurdish historian, Sharaf Khān Bidlīsī, dates the Harat siege from 1 Rajab 995 to 18 Rabī' II 996.²⁰ The Sīstānī chronicler, Malik Shāh Ḥusayn, gives the opening date of the assault on the city as 28 Jumādā II 995 and its conclusion "ten months later"²¹ (i.e., Rabī' II 996).

Iskandar Beg alone dates the opening of the campaign to 996, or at least, to all

⁶ The first part of *TAAA* (*ṣaḥīfah-i awwal*, the twelve *maqālahs*, and *ṣaḥīfah-i dawwum/maqṣad-i awwal*) was completed in 1025/1616 and the second part (*ṣaḥīfah-i dawwum/maqṣad-i dawwum*) in 1038/1629.

⁷ Sharaf Khān b. Shamsaddin Bidlīsī, *Sharaf-nāme*, vol. 2, trans. E. I. Vasil'eva (Moscow, 1976), p. 35.

⁸ Qāḍī Aḥmad-i Qumī, *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh*, ed. and partial trans. H. Müller, *Die Chronik Hülāṣat al-tawārīkh des Qāḍī Aḥmad Qumī* (Wiesbaden, 1964); the main part of Qumī's text was finished at the end of Bārs Yīl 999 (according to his Turki-Hijrī year correspondences), p. 86 (text). In one manuscript, there is an incomplete epilogue carrying events down to 1001, p. 99 (text).

⁹ Mikhlukho-Maklai, *Opisanie*, pp. 295–96.

¹⁰ Badr al-Dīn-i Kashmīrī, *Rawḍat al-riḍwān wa ḥadiqat al-ghilmān*, Tashkent, Institut Vostokovedeniā, inventory no. 2094, 552 fols. The exact date of the completion is not given, but on fol. 146b, after referring to the conquest of Harāt (by the Shībānīds) in 996, the author discusses a fiscal practice initiated then which had continued for two years (down to the time the work was written).

¹¹ Badr al-Dīn Kashmīrī, *Zafar-nāmah* (the fourth part of the poetic cycle, *Rusul-nāmah*), Dushanbe, Institut Vostokovedeniā, inventory no. 779, fol. 14a.

¹² Maḥmūd b. Amīr Walī, *Baḥr al-asrār fī manāqīb al-akhyār*, vol. 6, *rukn* 4, India Office Library, London, MS no. 575, fols. 374b, 408b, and elsewhere. A *dhayl* was later added bringing events down to Dhū'l-Qa'dah 1050.

¹³ Malik Shāh Ḥusayn, *Ihyā al-mulūk*, ed. Manuchihr Sutūdah (Tehran 1344/1966).

¹⁴ Ḥāfiẓ-i Tanīsh, *Sharaf-nāmah-i shāhī* (a.k.a. 'Abd Allāh-nāmah), Dushanbe, inventory no. 778/II, fols. 520a–b.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, fol. 543b.

¹⁶ Kashmīrī, *Rawḍat al-riḍwān*, fol. 266b.

¹⁷ Qāḍī Aḥmad, *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh* (Müller edition), p. 4 (text).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 24 (text).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 27 (text); in the translation, Müller also understands the phrase "aforementioned year" to refer to 996 (p. 45, trans.).

²⁰ Bidlīsī, *Sharaf-nāme*, pp. 255–259.

²¹ Malik Shāh Ḥusayn, *Ihyā al-mulūk*, p. 266.

appearances, seems to. "At the beginning of the Year of the Pig (Tangūz Yil) 996, he (ʿAbdallāh) came to Khurāsān with an innumerable Ūzbek army."²² Leaving the door slightly ajar at first as to whether he really meant to correspond Tangūz Yil to 996 (elsewhere he corresponds it to 994 and 995),²³ Iskandar Beg then firmly closes it by including his principal account of the siege in the events of the succeeding year, Sīchqān Yil, which he corresponds to 997,²⁴ that is, the New Year's Day (Nawrūz) of Sīchqān Yil occurred in 997. Unlike the other sources for the siege, he gives no precise dates for either the inception or conclusion of the campaign, remarking only that it came to an end in its eleventh month.²⁵ However, later, in one of the many ambiguities that mark his treatment of the period, he states that the siege was concluded in Tangūz Yil (which he here calls 994 rather than 996).²⁶

The capture of Mashhad by the Shībānīd sultān, ʿAbd al-Muʿmin b. ʿAbdallāh Khān serves as another instance of the apparent discrepancies between the chronology of Iskandar Beg and that of the other Iranian and Māwarānnahrid historians.

Iskandar Beg places the siege and fall of Mashhad in Ūd Yil, corresponding to 998.²⁷ (As will be discussed below, he actually dates Nawrūz of Ūd Yil 14 Jumādā I 997²⁸ but makes it clear that he intended 998—as he states in the chapter heading—when he dates the following Nawrūz 14 Jumādā I 999.)²⁹ Once again, as in the Harāt case, he mentions no specific dates for the siege and fall of Mashhad to Ūzbek troops under ʿAbd al-Muʿmin. There is a mention of the campaign's duration—four months³⁰—and Iskandar Beg calls the battle at the Riḍāwī shrine "a second ʿĀshūra."³¹ Whether he meant this both literally and metaphorically is problematic.

In Qumī's account, ʿAbbās received word of the siege and marched out of Qazwīn on the 21st of Shawwāl 997.³² Before the Ṣafavid-Qizilbāsh force could reach even as far as Dāmghān, word arrived that ʿAbd al-Muʿmin had occupied Mashhad. Qāḍī Aḥmad Qumī dates the transfer of the city to Shībānīd hands to Sunday, the 20th of Dhū'l-Qaʿdah 997.³³ His year-date is supported by Sharaf Khān Bidlīsī, who includes the fall of Mashhad in his account of the Hijrī year 997. The latter, however, offers different dates for the inception and conclusion of the siege. ʿAbd al-Muʿmin, according to the Kurdish historian, reached the walls of Mashhad on the 1st of Jumādā II, besieged the city for "four months," and then conquered it.³⁴

The *Rawḍat al-riḍwān* records a *fath-nāmah* which ʿAbd al-Muʿmin sent to the Jūybārī shaykh, Khwājah Saʿd. The Shībānīd sultān sent the document at the very end of Dhū'l-Ḥijjah 997, unaware that the distinguished shaykh had died two weeks before.³⁵

Maḥmūd b. Amīr Walī writing two decades after Iskandar Beg, likewise dates the campaign 997 and cites a chronogram celebrating the fall of Mashhad which yields the year 997 as well.³⁶

There are many more similar chronological discrepancies. In many cases, there is a one

²² TAAA, p. 363.

²³ Ibid., p. 356 (corresponding New Year's Day Tangūz Yil to 995) and p. 549 (corresponding Tangūz Yil to 994).

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 386–90 for the principal account of the siege.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 387, 549.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 549.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 411.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 409.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 428.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 412.

³¹ Ibid., p. 413.

³² Qāḍī Aḥmad, *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh* (Müller edition), p. 49 (text).

³³ Ibid., p. 51 (text).

³⁴ Bidlīsī, *Sharaf-nāme*, p. 260.

³⁵ Kashmīrī, *Rawḍat al-riḍwān*, fols. 289a, 433b.

³⁶ Maḥmūd b. Amīr Walī, *Baḥr al-asrār* . . . , vol. 6, *rukṇ* 3, Tashkent, Institut Vostokovedeniia, inventory no. 1375, fols. 258a, 260b.

year difference between Iskandar Beg's chronology and that of others who had narrated the same events. Certain questions then inevitably arise: was Iskandar Beg as careful and accurate in his work, specifically in his dates, as history has judged him to be? Or are the discrepancies simply attributable to scribal and editorial negligence? Certainly, in the case of the Tehran lithograph, the editing was neither thorough nor of a standard acceptable today. Whether Iskandar Beg himself or succeeding generations of copyists were at fault, it appears that the errors crept into the text very early. No final conclusion may be drawn, however, without a systematic analysis of the extant manuscripts of the work. What is certain is that major discrepancies do exist in the chronological structure of the work as it has come down to us, and I shall now attempt to identify and explain those discrepancies.

Since many of the problems are directly linked to the arrangement of the *TAAA*, it is worthwhile to begin by briefly describing it. The *TAAA* comprises three volumes, the first and second called "*ṣaḥīfah-yi auwal*" and "*ṣaḥīfah-yi dawwum*." The third volume is called "*maqṣad-i dawwum*." Originally Iskandar Beg had intended the second *ṣaḥīfah* to contain two *maqṣads*, but since the second *maqṣad* was written fourteen years after the first, with its own introduction, it has come to be treated as a separate volume.³⁷

What concerns us here is Iskandar Beg's arrangement of the second *ṣaḥīfah*. The first *ṣaḥīfah*, includes 'Abbās's genealogy, the history of his ancestors before the establishment of the Ṣafavid house in Iran, and then the history of the dynasty in Iran down to the beginning of his reign. In addition, twelve short essays (*maqālahs*) on 'Abbās are part of the first *ṣaḥīfah*. The second *ṣaḥīfah* incorporates an entirely different arrangement. Instead of a topical arrangement, Iskandar Beg adopts an annalistic framework within which the various events of 'Abbās reign are narrated. It is the use of this annalistic framework which leads to difficulties. In order to adduce the dating of specific events one usually has to rely on the "year frame" within which those events are included and to which they are related by such phrases as "in this year," "in the same year," or "in this time."

Iskandar Beg begins the second *ṣaḥīfah* with a preface in which he states his intention to record the events of 'Abbās's reign annalistically (*sāl bi-sāl*).³⁸ He then goes on to say:

If, in the manner of the ahl al-tārikh, the Hijrī year, whose beginning according to Arab usage (*bi-ʿurf-i ʿarab*) is the first of Muḥarram, should be adopted, then most of the people of Iran would not understand. For among the Turks and Iranians, the beginning of the year is *nawrūz-i sultānī*, which is the first day of the world-adorning spring (*auwal-i bahār-i ʿālam ārā-st*). When four seasons pass and another Nawruz comes, that is one year. The month of Muḥarram may fall anywhere in the Turkī year (*māh-i Muḥarram dar ʿarḍ-i sāl-i turkī wāqī ʿmishawad*). Dates of great events (of the Hijrī year) for which talented people provide a literary arrangement will vary with the Turkī year (*tawārikh kih arbāb-i istiʿdād bi-jihat-i waqāyī ʿi ʿaẓimah-yi rūzgār dar rishtah-i balāghat intizām mīdahand bā sāl-i turkī mukhtalif ast*). Some will correspond to the previous year and some to the subsequent year, i.e., one fewer or one more. Since this ignoble atom is under the obligation to eliminate and expunge ambiguities and problems from this work of the World Adorning One and (make it) acceptable to the comprehension of both the ordinary person and specialist alike, he has closed his eyes

³⁷ Miklukho-Maklai, *Opisanie*, pp. 171–73. Iskandar Beg speaks of the two *maqṣads* on p. 919. The first covers the first "qarn," or thirty lunar years, of 'Abbās's reign; the second begins with the thirty-first

julūs year and ends with 'Abbās's death in the forty-second year of his reign on the 24th of Jumada I 1037 (p. 1077).

³⁸ *TAAA*, p. 379.

to that discrepancy (*naẓr az ān ikhtilāf pūshīdah*) and has settled on the Turkī year which the general public better understands so that knowledge may increase among those who inquire after events³⁹

To this statement it is necessary to add that as the Turkī year was part of a (twelve year) cycle and had no point of reference except the recurring Nawruz that would tell the user where, in relation to the distant past, any event stood, Iskandar Beg added to the Turkī year the number of the Hijrī year within which Nawrūz fell. As the entire scheme was keyed to ʿAbbās's succession, the ordinal number of the succession year was also included. The system Iskandar Beg used, therefore, was not based on the Turkī year alone, as the prefatory remarks suggest, but was a "mixed" julūs-Turkī-Hijrī system.

In his discussion of the chronological system he would use to "eliminate and expunge ambiguities" from his work, Iskandar Beg criticized those historians who adhered to the strictly Hijrī system, since it was not the context within which the general public understood the passage of time. The beginning of the year was not Muḥarram 1 but Nawrūz, the vernal equinox as determined under the solar calendar revised during the time of the Saljūq, Malik Shāh Sulṭān (whence the term *nawrūz-i sulṭānī*?). When events were recorded by the Hijrī calendar, according to Iskandar Beg, it simply confused the general readership. For example, if a writer spoke of the events of Šafar 998, in the Turkī system this would occur in the year beginning in 997, since Nawrūz fell two-thirds of the way through 997 and included the first four months of 998. This, we assume is what Iskandar Beg meant when he said: "Some (of the events recorded according to the Hijrī system) will correspond to the previous year" What he meant by ". . . and some to the subsequent year . . ." is less clear. As the solar Turkī year was longer than the lunar Hijrī, it would have been impossible for an event recorded as occurring in a given Hijrī year to have corresponded to a subsequent Turkī year. One senses from this remark that Iskandar Beg himself had some difficulty keeping the two systems in proper relation, a feeling reinforced by his then stating that he would ignore the discrepancies between the two systems and simply rely on the Turkī year, which the public (and he) understood better (*naẓr az ān ikhtilāf pūshīdah bi-sāl-i turkī kih ʿamm fahmtar ast qarār dād*).⁴⁰

Iskandar Beg used the Turkī year to divide or frame the chapters of the second *ṣahīfah*. Each year had its own name and corresponding Hijrī year number. The month names used were the Hijrī months. The Turkī year could begin at any point in the Hijrī year (and vice versa), and, since it was eleven days longer, always included parts of at least two and sometimes three Hijrī years. For example, It Yil 1018 began on 25 Dhū'l-Ḥijjah 1018, included all of 1019, and ended on 5 Muḥarram 1020.⁴¹

The first chapter, organized according to the Turkī year-frame, was Tangūz Yil (corresponding to 996 according to Iskandar Beg). As the accession of ʿAbbās to the throne took place during the year, the chapter is entitled "The Remaining Happenings and Events of Tangūz Yil, the First Year of the Accession of the *Humāyūn*"⁴² The first full year of ʿAbbās's reign is the framework for the first full chapter incorporating the system. The chapter is entitled "The Events of Siḥqān Yil corresponding to 997,

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 379–80.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 380; Martin B. Dickson, "Shah Tahmasb and the Ūzbeks" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1958) has treated the problem of the "mixed" system for the years 1524–40; see pp. 373–78.

⁴¹ TAAA, pp. 806, 829.

⁴² Ibid., p. 381.

which is the Second Year of the Accession of the *Humāyūn* . . . ”⁴³ This format remains in effect for all succeeding chapters until ‘Abbās’s death. For the most part, the Hijrī year correspondences, crucial for understanding the discrepancies between Iskandar Beg and other historians, are found in the chapter headings and only occasionally in the text itself. The correspondence of Nawrūz, when it is given, usually occurs without the Hijrī year, the proper year being inferred from the chapter heading.

As most of the chronological questions arising from the *TAAA* relate directly to Iskandar Beg’s use of the Turkī-Hijrī-julūs “year-frame,” we will list here each of the years in the first “*qarn*” of ‘Abbās’s reign with the Nawrūz dates when and as Iskandar Beg provides them in the text. The corresponding Gregorian date is also given using the Wustenfled-Mahler tables.⁴⁴

Thus Iskandar Beg presents the Turkī-Hijrī-julūs year-frame with the Nawrūz correspondences. Before we begin to deal with the obvious discrepancies in this table, we should note that in two of the categories Iskandar Beg has preserved perfect consistency and accuracy. The correct order of julūs years is never confused nor is the proper sequence of Turkī years in the twelve year cycle.

A cursory look at the correspondences of the Turkī (solar) and Hijrī (lunar) years as presented by Iskandar Beg will uncover numerous inconsistencies. One of the first and most apparent is the erratic correspondence of the Nawrūz date to the vernal equinox. In the Gregorian calendar (and all these dates fall in the Gregorian era), the vernal equinox falls on or about 20 March. Of the twenty-five years for which Iskandar Beg gives a Nawrūz date, only twelve correspond to the vernal equinox. Given the sophistication of the Šafavid court astronomers, it is safe to assume that they are not responsible for this inconsistency.

Another glaring inconsistency regards the fixing of the beginnings of several Turkī years. In the fourteenth julūs year (Sichqān), Iskandar Beg says the commencement (*āghāz*) of the year corresponds to 1009 and then later states that the fifteenth julūs year “corresponds partly to 1009 and partly to 1010.” According to him then, the Sichqān year would have begun on the 5th of Ramaḍān and ended eleven days later! Obviously, in giving the correspondence for one of the two years an error has been made. The same problem occurs with the sixteenth and seventeenth julūs years (Bārs and Tūshqān) and the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth (Ūd and Bārs).

The correspondence of the day of the week on which Nawrūz fell is another broad area of inconsistency. There are six years (1004, 1005, 1015/16, 1016/17, 1017/18, 1018/19) in which the Nawrūz day of the week as given by Iskandar Beg and the Wustenfled-Mahler correspondence are exactly equivalent. If we give Iskandar Beg the benefit of the doubt and assume he considered the weekday to begin and end at sundown, then we may add to the six, two more years (1000, 1021) in which Iskandar Beg’s and Wustenfled-Mahler’s weekdays may be said to coincide. Yet this still means that in less than one-third of the cases do the weekdays coincide.

Another area of inconsistency is when the Hijrī year number is given in both the chapter heading and in the text. In eight of the years in which the Nawrūz correspondence is given (998, 999, 1011, 1014, 1018, 1020, 1022, 1023), Iskandar Beg includes the Hijrī year number with the week and month days in the text. In all but one of these instances

⁴³ Ibid., p. 386.

⁴⁴ B. Spuler, *Wustenfled-Mahler’sche Vergleichungstabellen* (Wiesbaden, 1961).

TABLE 1
ISKANDAR BEG'S CHRONOLOGY

Accession (julūs) year	Solar Turkī year (yil)	Lunar Hijrī year	Nawrūz (weekday, no., month)	Gregorian equivalent (weekday, no., month, year)
1st	Tangūz	996 ⁴⁵	—	—
2d	Siḥqān	997 ⁴⁶	—	—
3d	Ūd	998 ⁴⁷	3 Jumādā I 997 [<i>sic</i>] ⁴⁸	20 March 1589
4th	Bārs	999 ⁴⁹	Monday, 14 Jumādā I 999 ⁵⁰	Saturday, 10 March 1591
5th	Tūshqān	1000	Wednesday, 25 Jumādā I ⁵¹	Tuesday, 10 March 1592
6th	Lūy	1001	Saturday, 3 Jumādā II ⁵²	Sunday, 7 March 1593
7th	Yilān	1002 ⁵³	—	—
8th	Yūnt	1003 ⁵⁴	—	—
9th	Qūy	1004	Sunday, 10 Rajab ⁵⁵	Sunday, 10 March 1596
10th	Pichīn	1005	Monday, 21 Rajab ⁵⁶	Monday, 10 March 1597
11th	Takhāqūy	1006	Friday, 2 Sha'bān ⁵⁷	Sunday, 10 March 1598
12th	Īt	1007	Monday, 11 Sha'bān ⁵⁸	Tuesday, 9 March 1599
13th	Tangūz	1008	Sunday, 23 Sha'bān ⁵⁹	Thursday, 9 March 1600
14th	Siḥqān	1009	Wednesday, 5 Ramaḍān ⁶⁰	Saturday, 10 March 1601
15th	Ūd	1009/10 ⁶¹	Saturday, 16 Ramaḍān ⁶²	Wednesday, 21 March 1601
16th	Bārs	1011	Thursday, 26 Ramaḍān ⁶³	Sunday, 9 March 1603
17th	Tūshqān	1011/12 ⁶⁴	Friday, 7 Shawwāl 1011 ⁶⁵	Wednesday, 20 March 1603
18th	Lūy	1012/13 ⁶⁶	Sunday, 19 Shawwāl ⁶⁷	Friday, 21 March 1604
19th	Yilān	1014	Monday, 1 Dhū'l-Q. 1014 ⁶⁸	Friday, 10 March 1606
20th	Yūnt	1015	Saturday, 15 Dhū'l-Q. ⁶⁹	Wednesday, 14 March 1607
21st	Qūy	1015/16 ⁷⁰	Wednesday, 22 Dhū'l-Q. ⁷¹	Wednesday, 21 March 1607
22d	Pichī	1016/17 ⁷²	Thursday, 3 Dhū'l-H. ⁷³	Thursday, 20 March 1608
23d	Takhāqūy	1017/18 ⁷⁴	Saturday, 14 Dhū'l-H. ⁷⁵	Saturday, 21 March 1609
24th	Īt	1018/19 ⁷⁶	Sunday, 25 Dhū'l-H. 1018 ⁷⁷	Sunday, 21 March 1610
25th	Tangūz	1020/21 ⁷⁸	Friday, 6 Muḥarram 1020 ⁷⁹	Monday, 21 March 1611
26th	Siḥqān	1021	Tuesday, 16 Muḥarram ⁸⁰	Monday, 19 March 1612
27th	Ūd	1022/23 ⁸¹	Wednesday, 27 Muḥarram 1023 ⁸²	Sunday, 9 March 1614
28th	Bārs	1023/24	Friday, 10 Šafar 1023 ⁸³	Saturday, 22 March 1614
29th	Tūshqān	1024/25 ⁸⁴	Saturday eve, 21 Šafar ⁸⁵	Sunday, 22 March 1615
30th	Lūy	1025 ⁸⁶	—	—

⁴⁵ TAAA, p. 381.⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 386.⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 409.⁴⁸ Ibid.⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 429.⁵⁰ Ibid., Nawrūz (New Year's Day) began "on Monday eve."⁵¹ Ibid., p. 439.⁵² Ibid., p. 447; Nawrūz began on Saturday after "four hours of the night."⁵³ Ibid., p. 459. Although no Nawrūz correspondence is given, the lacuna in the text indicates it was intended. Other manuscripts may show the date.⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 491; no Nawrūz date is given.⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 506.⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 518.⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 532.⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 547.⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 589.⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 598.⁶¹ Ibid., p. 609; "part of Ūd Yil corresponds to 1009 and part to 1010."⁶² Ibid.⁶³ Ibid., p. 619.⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 634; "part of Tūshqān Yil corresponds to 1011 and part to 1012."⁶⁵ Ibid.⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 652; "part of Lūy Yil corresponds to 1012 and part to 1013."⁶⁷ Ibid.⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 676.⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 713.⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 737; "part of Qūy Yil corresponds to 1015 and part to 1016."⁷¹ Ibid.⁷² Ibid., p. 763; "part of Pichī Yil corresponds to 1016 and part to 1017."⁷³ Ibid.⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 780; "part of Takhāqūy Yil corresponds to 1017 and part to 1018."⁷⁵ Ibid.⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 806; "part of Īt Yil corresponds to 1018 and part to 1019."⁷⁷ Ibid.⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 829; "part of Tangūz Yil corresponds to 1020 and part of it to 1021."⁷⁹ Ibid.⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 853.⁸¹ Ibid., p. 861; "Ūd Yil corresponds to 1022 and part of it to 1023."⁸² Ibid.⁸³ Ibid., p. 873.⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 886; "Tūshqān Yil corresponds to 1024 and part (of it) to 1025."⁸⁵ Ibid.⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 897.

(999), the year number is written out in full. Of these eight, two (998, 1022) differ from the year number given in the heading. In the former (where 998 is given in the heading and 997 in the text), the year number given in the text (997) is the correct one, while in the latter case (where 1022 is given in the heading and 1023 in the text) the reverse is true.

A closer examination of the table reveals a discernible pattern in the inconsistencies. The correspondences for the Turkī-Hijrī years Tangūz 996 to Sīḥqān 1009 as given by Iskandar Beg appear to be consistently incorrect. Of the ten Nawrūz correspondences given in this fourteen year period, only one is correct, and even that one (Ūd) is ambiguous, for the heading and textual year numbers are different. The correspondences for the years Ūd 1009/1010 to Yūnt 1015 are inconsistently incorrect. Three of the six correspondences are incorrect as given by Iskandar Beg. Finally, for the Turkī-Hijrī years Qūy 1015/1016 to Tūshqān 1024/1025 the correspondences are inconsistently correct. Only one of the nine is inaccurate and that one (Ūd) is ambiguous, for the heading and textual year numbers are different.

There are two methods by which we may demonstrate these characterizations. The first is by correlating the two categories of the table known to be correct (the julūs and Turkī year sequences) with the Nawrūz correspondence in the Hijrī year. As the first day of the Turkī year (Nawrūz) is the vernal equinox, it becomes, therefore, a fixed referent against which to measure the accuracy of Iskandar Beg's correspondences.

The second method of demonstrating the soundness of the characterizations is by comparing the Turkī-Hijrī-julūs correspondences of Iskandar Beg with those of other historians who used the same system.

On correlating the Nawrūz occurrence we begin with an assumption. Since the vernal equinox (the transition from Ḥūt/Pisces to Ḥamal/Aries) occurs on or about the 20th of March (Gregorian), we may assume that the Nawrūz dates given by Iskandar Beg which correspond to the vernal equinox are more likely to be correct than those which do not. It is clear from the table that most of the Nawrūz dates corresponding to ca. 20 March occur toward the end of the thirty-year period under discussion, i.e., between the years 1015/1016 and 1024/1025, during which we have called the correspondences inconsistently correct. As this is so, I shall begin with this period and work backwards, using these Nawrūz dates as points of reference.

The first problem we encounter is Ūd Yil, called in the chapter heading "partly corresponding to 1022 and partly to 1023." However, in the text the Nawrūz correspondence is given as 27 Muḥarram 1023, an obvious impossibility if the heading is correct. Since two Turkī years earlier (i.e., in Tangūz Yil) the Nawrūz date is given as 1020 in the text and since the following Nawrūz is dated 10 Šafar 1023, then clearly 27 Muḥarram 1022, not 1023 is meant. This would yield an equivalent Gregorian date of 19 March 1613 rather than 9 March 1614. The weekdays may then be said to coincide as well, Iskandar Beg giving Wednesday and the Wustefeld-Mahler tables yielding Tuesday. Aside from the days of the week which do not correspond in the 1015/1016–1024/1025 period, there are no other discrepancies; and the *TAAA* chronology may be considered correct.

We come now to the section of the table considered inconsistently incorrect (Ūd 1009/1010–Yūnt 1015). In this section, the years Ūd (1009/1010), Tūshqān (1011/1012), and Lūy (1012/1013) all begin on or about 20 March and thus may be taken as the referent points for correcting the Nawrūz dates of Bārs (1011), Yilān (1014), and Yūnt

(1015). In the latter three cases, by taking the given year as the second part of the Turkī year and *not* as the year in which Nawrūz fell, we can arrive at the correct Nawrūz correspondence. Thus Bārs 1011 is actually 1010/1011, Yilān 1014 is 1013/1014, and Yūnt 1015 is 1014/1015. The full dates are corrected in the revised Turkī-Hijrī-julūs table given below (table 3). The entire sequence of the years Ūd through Yūnt now accords with the subsequent sequence Qūy through Tūshqān.

The fourteen year period Tangūz (called 996 by Iskandar Beg) through Sīchqān (called 1009), the period we have designated consistently incorrect in the correspondences given for it, must now be dealt with in the same fashion. With Ūd correctly given as 1009/1010, Sīchqān must therefore correspond to 1008/1009, Tangūz to 1007/1008, It to 1006/1007 and so on back to the first julūs year Tangūz which by these modified correspondences should be Tangūz 995/996 rather than 996/997 as Iskandar Beg would have it. Every Nawrūz date for this period as it is given in the *TAAA* is late by one year. (Only Ūd Yil is correctly corresponded to 997/998 in the text, a fact that is undermined by the wording of the heading which would seem to correspond the beginning of the year to 998.)

By revising the Nawrūz dates of this period back by one Hijrī year, not only are the inconsistencies in correspondence between these years and subsequent years eliminated, but more importantly, Iskandar Beg's chronology of the period is brought into harmony with other sources, both Central Asian and Iranian. It is therefore essential for the modern historian making use of the *TAAA* to adjust Iskandar Beg's chronology as described.

Fortunately, we have more than inductive reasoning on which to rely in arriving at these findings. Although Iskandar Beg's use of the Turkī-Hijrī-julūs system is probably the best known, it is not unique. Qāḍī Aḥmad Qumī, for example, is another historian of the Šafavid period who used the same system. In the published, abridged version of his work, Nawrūz correspondences for five of the first six years of ʿAbbās's reign are given.

On comparing the two tables, a number of points are immediately apparent. On the correlation of Turkī years and the julūs sequence there is complete harmony between

TABLE 2
QĀḌĪ AḤMAD QUMĪ'S CHRONOLOGY

Accession (julūs) year	Solar Turkī year	Lunar Hijrī year	Nawrūz (weekday, no., month, year)	Gregorian equivalent (weekday, no., month, year)
2d	Sīchqān	996/97	"end of" Sunday 21 Rabīʿ II 996 ⁸⁷	Sunday, 20 March 1588
3d ⁸⁸	Ūd	997/98	Tuesday, 4 Jumādā I 997 ⁸⁹	Tuesday, 21 March 1589
4th ⁹⁰	Bārs	998/99	Wednesday, 24 (i.e., 14) Jumādā I 998 ⁹¹	Wednesday, 21 March 1590
5th ⁹²	Tūshqān	999/1000	Thursday, 25 Jumādā I 999 ⁹³	Thursday, 21 March 1591
6th ⁹⁴	Lūy	1000/1001	"end of" Friday 6 Jumādā II 1000	Friday, 20 March 1592

⁸⁷ Qāḍī Aḥmad, *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh* (Müller edition), p. 31 (text).

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 42 (text).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 62 (text).

⁹¹ Ibid. The Nawrūz date as given by Qāḍī Aḥmad is incorrect, whether as the result of a scribal or compositional error is not clear. Since Müller gives no variant readings from the manuscripts he used, it would appear that the mistake was the author's. The 24th of Jumada I 998 corresponds to 31 March 1590,

obviously far too late for the vernal equinox. Moreover, since all the other Nawrūz days and dates are consistent and since the weekday given in the text corresponds to the weekday of 21 March but not to 24 Jumada I, the presumption is that the "fourteenth" (*chahārdahum*) rather than the "twenty-fourth" (*bīst u chahārum*) was intended.

⁹² Ibid., p. 88 (text).

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 99 (text).

Iskandar Beg and Qāḍī Aḥmad. Moreover, there is a general consistency in their Nawrūz correspondences for Ūd, Bārs, Tūshqān, and Lūy. The corresponding Hijrī year numbers and the names of the weekdays, however, are wholly disparate. But on the basis of what has been said above about revising Iskandar Beg, it is obvious that it is Qāḍī Aḥmad's Nawrūz dates that are correct.⁹⁵ Not only are his Hijrī dates in harmony with the occurrence of the vernal equinox, but for all five years the weekdays are in perfect correspondence with the Gregorian calendar as well.

There are sound methodological reasons for devoting so much space to revising what might appear to some to be a very minor point of chronology. For one thing, the authority and wide use of the *TAAA* tends to lead to the perpetuation of the chronological errors. For example, the chapter on Šafavid Iran in the recently published *Cambridge History of Islam*, apparently relying in the main on Iskandar Beg's narrative, dates 'Abdallāh Khān's assault on Harāt to 996 instead of 995⁹⁶ and the fall of the city to 997 rather than 996.⁹⁷

TABLE 3
REVISED TURKĪ-HIJRĪ-JULŪS YEARS

Accession (julūs) year	Solar Turkī year	Lunar Hijrī year	Nawrūz (no., month, year)	Gregorian equivalent (no., month, year)
1st	Tangūz	995/96	(10 Rabī' II 995)	20 March 1587
2d	Siḥqān	996/97	21 Rabī' II 996	20 March 1588
3d	Ūd	997/98	3 Jumādā I 997 (IB)	20 March 1589
			4 Jumādā I 997 (QA)	21 March 1589
4th	Bārs	998/99	14 Jumādā I 998	21 March 1590
5th	Tūshqān	999/1000	25 Jumādā I 999	21 March 1591
6th	Lūy	1000/1001	3 Jumādā II 1000 (IB)	17 March 1592
			6 Jumādā II 1000 (QA)	20 March 1592
7th	Yilān	1001/2	(16 Jumādā II 1001)	20 March 1593
8th	Yūnt	1002/3	(27 Jumādā II 1002)	20 March 1594
9th	Qūy	1003/4	10 Rajab 1003	21 March 1595
10th	Pichīn	1004/5	21 Rajab 1004	21 March 1596
11th	Takhāqūy	1005/6	2 Sha'bān 1005	21 March 1597
12th	Īt	1006/7	11 Sha'bān 1006	19 March 1598
13th	Tangūz	1007/8	23 Sha'bān 1007	21 March 1599
14th	Siḥqān	1008/9	5 Ramaḍān 1008	20 March 1600
15th	Ūd	1009/10	16 Ramaḍān 1009	21 March 1601
16th	Bārs	1010/11	26 Ramaḍān 1010	20 March 1602
17th	Tūshqān	1011/12	7 Shawwāl 1011	20 March 1603
18th	Lūy	1012/13	19 Shawwāl 1012	21 March 1604
19th	Yilān	1013/14	1 Dhū'l-Q. 1013	21 March 1605
20th	Yūnt	1014/15	15(?) Dhū'l-Q. 1014	24 March 1606
21st	Qūy	1015/16	22 Dhū'l-Q. 1015	21 March 1607
22d	Pichīn	1016/17	3 Dhū'l-H. 1016	20 March 1608
23d	Takhāqūy	1017/18	14 Dhū'l-H. 1017	21 March 1609
24th	Īt	1018/19/20	25 Dhū'l-H. 1018	21 March 1610
25th	Tangūz	1020/21	6 Muḥarram 1020	21 March 1611
26th	Siḥqān	1021/22	16 Muḥarram 1021	19 March 1612
27th	Ūd	1022/23	27 Muḥarram 1022	19 March 1613
28th	Bārs	1023/24	10 Šafar 1023	22 March 1614
29th	Tūshqān	1024/25	21 Šafar 1024	22 March 1615
30th	Lūy	1025/26	(2 Rabī' I 1025)	20 March 1616

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ R. M. Savory, "Modern Persia," in P. M. Holt, Ann K. S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis, eds. *The Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge, 1970), vol. 1; pp. 595–626. Professor Savory actually dates the assault to Muḥarram 996, a highly unlikely date

(overlooking all the contrary textual evidence) simply because it would have had the Shībānīd khān starting a major campaign at the beginning of winter (early December), a most uncharacteristic (for him) time to begin a campaign.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 415.

There is a related danger that given the *TAAA*'s deserved reputation the dating discrepancies might tend to discredit the authority of the other sources. A researcher might well be inclined to discount the less detailed and complete accounts found in other sources citing as a pretext for such discounting what may appear to be chronological inaccuracies when compared with Iskandar Beg's work.

Therefore, to assist the student of Iranian and Central Asian history, particularly in the period where Iskandar Beg's chronology is consistently incorrect, a table of revised Turkī-Hijrī-julūs correspondences is provided (Table 3). Where neither Qādī Aḥmad nor Iskandar Beg give Nawrūz dates, the Hijrī correspondent to 20 March is presented in parentheses.

ADDENDUM

After completing this article, I received from the British Museum a microfilm of Jalāl-i Munajjim's *Tārīkh-i Shāh ʿAbbās* composed ca. 1020/1611. Although Jalāl-i Munajjim did not use a mixed Turkī-Hijrī-julūs dating system, the chronological information he does provide buttresses the above findings. He dates the arrival of the Shibānīd army under ʿAbd Allah Khān at Harāt to the summer of 995/1587 (fol. 42a) as do all our other sources except Iskandar Beg. Jalāl-i Munajjim dates Shāh ʿAbbās's departure from Mashhad for Qazwīn in Shaʿbān 995/7 July–4 August 1587 and his arrival at Qazwīn and accession in late Dhū'l-Ḥijjah 995/late November 1587 (fol. 45b). Thus, the first Hijrī julūs year, according to Jalāl-i Munajjim, would have been 995.