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Introduction

In December 2012, Carnegie Corporation of New York provided a grant to the Library of Congress to digitize its collections relating to Afghanistan and to make this content freely accessible via the World Digital Library (WDL, www.wdl.org). These collections include manuscripts, books, maps and atlases, prints and photographs, and newspapers, journals and magazines. They span the period from the early 1300s to the 1990s, and include materials produced in or about Afghanistan, as well as from neighboring countries with which Afghanistan has longstanding cultural, historical, ethnic, and linguistic ties.

The Library of Congress Afghanistan project was announced at a ceremony at the U.S. Department of State in January 2013 with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Dr. Vartan Gregorian, president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, and Dr. James H. Billington, the then-Librarian of Congress. President Karzai and Secretary Clinton both welcomed the initiative.

In addition to making these collections accessible online, the Library of Congress pledged to give high-resolution copies of the digitized material (along with associated bibliographic records and explanatory documentation) to cultural and educational institutions in Afghanistan for use in building their own digital libraries and online repositories.

This document is a report on the manuscripts, books, maps, journals and magazines, and prints and photographs that were digitized under this project for publishing on the WDL and for transfer via hard drive to institutions in Afghanistan. The institutions receiving complete sets of the content are the National Library of Afghanistan, the National Archives of Afghanistan, American University of Afghanistan, Badakhshan University, Balkh University, Bamiyan University, Herat University, Kabul University, Kandahar University, and Nangarhar University.

The content consists of several thousand Library of Congress items, comprising more than 160,000 digital images or pages, and occupying approximately seven terabytes of digital storage. Content in the following languages is represented in the collection: Dari, Pashto, Persian, Chagatai, Brahui, Tajik, English, Arabic, French, German, Turkish, Italian, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish.

Presented here are the titles of the items digitized, their URLs (i.e., where they can be accessed on the WDL), and the description for each item as it appears on the WDL (in some cases edited for reasons of space). An “item” is defined as a manuscript, book (including multivolume books), map, journal, magazine, print, or photograph having a distinct bibliographic
record that is individually indexable and searchable both within the WDL and on external search engines such as Google. All items are available for download in PDF format.

Selected images are presented to illustrate the kinds of material included. Unless otherwise indicated, all items are digitized and presented in their entirety, with full metadata and descriptions in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Items have been digitized to the high standards of the WDL, i.e., in color, at high resolution, and with all fold-outs included. In addition to the Library of Congress, a number of other WDL partner institutions have contributed Afghanistan-related items to the WDL, including the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries, Brown University Library, Qatar National Library, Walters Art Museum, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Government College University Lahore (Pakistan), National Library and Archives of Egypt, Sultan Qaboos University Library (Oman), University Library in Bratislava (Slovakia), Russian State Library, and the Wellcome Library (United Kingdom).

The WDL is a project of the U.S. Library of Congress, carried out with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in cooperation with libraries, archives, museums, educational institutions, and international organizations from around the world. It makes available on the Internet, free of charge and in multilingual format, significant primary materials from all countries and cultures. The principal objectives of the WDL are to:

- Promote international and intercultural understanding;
- Expand the volume and variety of cultural content on the Internet;
- Provide resources for educators, scholars, and general audiences;
- Build capacity in partner institutions to narrow the digital divide within and between countries.

The WDL currently includes nearly 15,000 books, manuscripts, journals and newspapers, maps and atlases, prints and photographs, and films and sound recordings, comprising approximately 800,000 digital files. These items are in 132 different languages, and have been contributed by 135 libraries, museums, and archives in 59 countries. The WDL interface is in seven languages—Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Since its launch at UNESCO headquarters in April 2009, the WDL has attracted more than 42 million visitors, from every country and territory in the world.
MANUSCRIPTS


This manuscript in Persian is an untitled Sufi text on meditation containing both poetry and prose. It was completed in early 1520, probably in Herat (present-day Afghanistan) or Mashhad (present-day Iran). The colophon, which is in Arabic, gives the name of the scribe, Mīr 'Alī Ḥusaynī Haravī (circa 1476−1543). The manuscript is on a firm cream-colored paper inlaid into light cream (folios 1−8) or pale greenish-blue margin paper, with the writing enclosed within alternating gold and cream (or green) bands with black ruling. The margin paper is profusely decorated with floral and animal motifs. The text is in nastaliq script, eight lines to the page. The binding is contemporary leather with medallions. A former owner’s stamp appears on folio 1a. Sufism, a mystical and introspective interpretation of Islam that emerged after the initial spread of the religion, combines Islamic teachings with gnosticism. The practice embraced the idea of enlightenment through spiritual knowledge, informed by pre-Islamic Greek, Zoroastrian, and Indian spiritual practices. By the 13th century, Sufi thought in the Persian-speaking world was expressed primarily through poetry or in poetic works of prose, such as this treatise.

Jāmī. Two of the Master Jāmī’s Works on Prosody; Anonymous Treatise on Astronomy (Persian), Afghanistan, 1616, www.wdl.org/11792 [159 pages]

This Persian manuscript dated 1025 AH (1616) contains two works on prosody by Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī (1414–92), as well as an incomplete, anonymous work on astronomy. Jāmī was a great poet, scholar, and mystic who lived most of his life in Herat, present-day Afghanistan. The 69 leaves of the manuscript are on a variety of papers: thin, pink-colored laid paper (folios 1a−31b); cream-colored laid paper (folios 32a−35b); pink-colored laid paper (folios 36a−37b); cream-color laid paper (folios 38a−40b); light-green-colored laid paper (folios 41a−45b); tan unpolished paper (folios 46a−53b); orange-to-rose-colored unpolished paper (folios 54a−61b); and dark-yellow-colored paper (folios 62a−69b). The text is in a nastaliq script, but different numbers of lines are used in different parts of the manuscript: 14 lines (folios 1b−40b), 10 lines (folios 41a−45b), and 12 lines (folios 46a−69b). Certain pages have circular figures showing classical poetic metrical schemes. The binding is newer, in a flexible leather without ornamentation.
**Firdawsī. Selections from the Shāhnāmeh of the Learned Abū al-Qāsim Firdawsi, May he be Blessed and May his Sins be Pardoned** (Persian), Afghanistan, 1618, [www.wdl.org/11801](http://www.wdl.org/11801) [192 pages]

This manuscript from the early 17th century contains selections from the *Shāhnāmeh* (Book of kings), the epic-historical work of Persian literature composed at the end of the tenth century by the poet Abū al-Qāsim Firdawsī (940–1020). This beloved epic of pre-Islamic Persia (present-day Iran) was widely read in Persia, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. The manuscript contains three half-page paintings showing different battles. The text is preceded by an introduction and table of contents (folios 1b–6b) and is written in black ink in a nasta’liq script. The pages are in four columns of 25 lines each within a blue-cream-gold-cream-gold border. Rubrication is used, and there are catchwords on the recto pages. A few notes and corrections have been made in the margins. The colophon states that the manuscript was completed on Jamādī al-Avval, 14, 1027 (May 9, 1618); the place of writing is not given. The binding, newer and of Central Asian origin, is olive-green leather with embossed medallions, two in dark red, with a light-red leather spine.

**Mahdī Khān Astarābādī. Waqiat-i Nadiri** (Persian), Afghanistan, 1759-60, [www.wdl.org/11852](http://www.wdl.org/11852) [492 pages]

*Waqiat-i Nadiri* (literally “Events of Nadir”) is a historical manuscript that chronicles the political and military career of Nādir Shāh, who was born in 1688 and rose to power in Iran during the 1720s; he became shah in 1736. He is known as a military warrior famous for his campaigns in Iran, Afghanistan, northern India, and Central Asia. He was assassinated by his officers in June 1747. The name of the author of this work, Muḥammad Mahdī Munshi’ ibn Muḥammad Naṣīr (also seen as Mahdī Khān Astarābādī), appears on page four. Mahdi Khan was a court secretary, historian, and close confidante of Nādir Shāh, whom he accompanied on many of his campaigns, so the work is an important historical source. The manuscript is organized chronologically and recounts about 100 military and political events. The preliminary pages contain a preface outlining the political events in Iran and Qandahar (or Kandahar) that led to the Afghan invasion of Isfahan in 1722 and the emergence of Nādir Shāh as a ruler who would confront and eventually defeat the Afghans and other enemies. The preface is followed by a biography of Mahmud Hotaki, an Afghan commander who defeated the Safavids and briefly ruled in Isfahan. The last part of the manuscript covers the reigns of Ali Shah and Ebrahim Shah, nephews of Nādir Shāh, each of whom claimed the throne in Isfahan for brief times in the aftermath of Nādir Shāh’s assassination. In the manner typical of Persian court historiography, the author emphasizes throughout the restoration of order, the introduction of justice, and the defeat of the enemies of the state. The margins contain notes, probably by anonymous readers. Various poems and verses from the Qur’an appear throughout the text. The manuscript is written in different styles of broken nasta’liq, the calligraphic Persian script. All of the events recounted have a rubricated title and are organized and described in terms of their outcomes or final causes, usually in a page or a half page. The manuscript is numbered in pencil in the Indo-Arabic numeral style, probably by an anonymous reader.

This manuscript is volume one of *Matla us-Sadain wa Majma ul-Baahrain* (The rising of the propitious twin stars and the amalgamation of the oceans) by ʻAbd al-Razzāq Kamāl al-Dīn ibn Išāq al-Samarqandī (1413–82). The book offers a semi-official account of the political history of the late Mongol khanates and Timurid polities in the Caucasus, Iran, Khorasan, and Mawarannahr. Volume one documents the period from 1316, when Abu Said Bahadur Khan, the last great Mongol khan, came to power in Persia, to the death in 1405 of Timur, founder of the Timurid line. This period is central to the history of the region as a time of important social and political transitions. The work recounts how the Mongol khanates disintegrated, various local Mongol and non-Mongol lineages competed for supremacy, and the Timurid lineage established itself as the dominant political and social group. This volume describes Timur, his rise to power, and his immediate descendants. Timur was succeeded by his son Shahrukh, under whom Razzaq prospered as a legal courtier, trustee, and ambassador. Razzaq’s ambassadorial missions took him to various places in Eurasia, for example to Calicut in the southwest of India in 1442. The major figures and events described in volume one of Razzaq’s work are also described in other contemporary texts.

Volume two recounts the reigns of Shahrurk and his descendants, and covers the accession to the throne of Sultan Ḥusain Bāyqarā Chorasan and other events to which the author was eyewitness. The descriptive preface praises God, Muhammad, and the four guided caliphs in Islam. It explains that Razzaq long had wanted to write a history but was prevented from doing so by political instability and other problems. However, one year at Nowruz (New Year) his old friend Shikh Maza al-Din Husain encouraged him to finish writing his text. The events are described chronologically, using the Islamic calendar. The title of each event, verses from Qur’an, and poems all are rubricated. Events usually start with one of the following phrases: “mention of,” “the event of,” and “sending of.” Pages are numbered but numbers do not show on some early pages because of water damage; folio 11 is missing.


*Divan-i Ťarzī* (Poetic collection of Tarzi) contains verses by Ghulām Muḥammad Ťarzī (1830–1900), mostly concerning piety, ethics, politics, and society in 19th century Afghanistan. Tarzi came from a distinguished background; he belonged to the Mohammadzai sub-lineage of the Durransis, one of two main Afghan Pushtun lineages, the other being Ghilzai. Because of their connections to Muḥammad Ya’qūb Khān, Tarzi and his family were exiled from Afghanistan in 1882–83 by Abd al-Rahmān Khān, a kinsman of Ya’qūb Khān and a rival to the Afghan throne. The feeling of desolation occasioned by Tarzi’s exile pervades many of the poems. Each poem is specific in theme, meaning, and place. One poem, for example, extols the verse of Mirza ʻAbd al-Qādir Bīdil, the famous Persian poet and Sufi who was instrumental in the development of “Indian-style” Persian poetry in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. In another poem, Tarzi praises the wedding of Muḥammad Ya’qūb Khān, who in 1879 was briefly amir of Afghanistan, after he signed the Treaty of Gandamak recognizing British control of Afghanistan’s foreign affairs. Each poem has a rubricated title that indicates where it was written and its purpose. On page 336, for example, it is stated that “this ghazal is written in Kandahar in response to Neamat Khan.” A few poems are not titled, but each is distinguished by its conclusion with the author’s pen name tarzi (stylist). The volume itself is not titled. The names and personal library stamps of several owners and readers, including that of Abdul Rauf Khan Tarzi, a descendant of the author, appear on the
The book is in two sections: the main one is of *ghazal* (lyric) verses, while the last 50 pages are in *rubai* (quatrain) form. The script includes several versions of Persian nastaliq, such as clear nastaliq, broken nastaliq, and uneasy nastaliq. The paper is of different qualities and colors; most text appears on plain cream paper laid down on a marbled backing. Pages have penciled Persian-Arabic numerals inserted by a reader. The marginal notes may be the author’s own or by anonymous readers. The final text is a prose piece, in which Tarzi emphasizes his virtue, sorrow, and loyalty.


*Shahnameh* (Book of kings) was composed by the revered Iranian poet Abū al-Qāsim Firdawsi (940–1020). The book recounts in verse the mythological history of ancient Persia and tales of the famous heroes and personalities of Iranian history, from legendary times to the 7th-century reign of Yazdegerd III, the last king of the Sassanid dynasty. Considered the national epic of Iran, the book was widely read throughout the Persian-speaking world. This manuscript copy was made in India in the 17th or 18th century. The text is written in nastaʻliq script in four columns of 25 lines. The text begins on folio 1b with rubrication and gold interlinear decoration up to folio 3a; folios 1b and 2a have an elaborate border of grape decoration in various shades of green and gold. Catchwords are on the recto pages. The paper is a cream-colored Eastern laid paper. Black ink is used, with highly decorated major *ʻunwāns* (title pages); minor *ʻunwāns* are in gold ink, now very faded. Full-page paintings illustrating scenes from the text appear on folios 1a, 144a, 193b, 412b; half-page paintings are on folios 10a, 10b, 127a, 157b, 193a, 230a, and 409a; two small paintings are in the lower corners on folios 133a and 402a.
Mahdī Khān Astarābādī. *Tārīkh-i Nādirī* (Persian), probably India, 1760, [www.wdl.org/13026](http://www.wdl.org/13026) [548 pages]

*Tārīkh-i Nādirī* (The history of Nadir) is a historical work that chronicles the political and military career of Nadir Shah, who was born in 1688 and rose to power in Iran during the 1720s; he became shah in 1736. (This work is also known as *Jahāngushāy-i Nādirī* in reference to the celebrated history of Genghis Khan, whom Nadir Shah admired.) Nadir Shah is known as a military warrior famous for his campaigns in Iran, Afghanistan, northern India, and Central Asia. He was assassinated by his officers in June 1747. The name of the author of this work, Muhammad Mahdi Munshi’ ibn Muhammad Nasir (also seen as Mahdi Khan Astarabadi), appears on page four. Mahdi Khan was a court secretary, historian, and close confidante of Nadir Shah, whom he accompanied on many of his campaigns, so the work is an important historical source. The manuscript is organized chronologically and recounts about 100 military and political events. The preliminary pages contain a preface outlining the political developments in Iran and Qandahar (or Kandahar) that led to the Afghan invasion of Persia in 1722 and the emergence of Nadir Shah as a ruler who would confront and eventually defeat the Afghans and other enemies. The manuscript is incomplete, with the scribe having stopped mid-sentence after completing several lines from the penultimate section of the work, “On the end of the [Nadir Shah] and the manner of his murder...”. Virtually all of this penultimate section (chronicling the cruel and bloody final years of Nadir’s reign) and the final section (on the rule of ‘Ali Quli Khan and Ibrahim Khan, nephews of Nadir, who each claimed the throne for a brief period after the assassination of their uncle) are therefore missing from the manuscript. The missing parts correspond roughly to six pages of text. In the manner typical of Persian court historiography, the author emphasizes throughout the restoration of order, the introduction of justice, and the defeat of the enemies of the state. Various poems and verses from the Qur’an appear throughout the text. The manuscript is written by a single hand in a uniform nastaliq, the calligraphic Persian script. All of the events recounted have a rubricated title. The first word of every other page is repeated as a “catchword” in the bottom margin of the previous page to ensure the proper order of the pages prior to binding, as was common practice in Persia and elsewhere.

Tuğhrā-yi Mashhādī. *Risālah-‘i Firdawsīya* (Persian), India, circa 18th century, [www.wdl.org/14350](http://www.wdl.org/14350) [430 pages]

This manuscript is an anthology of works in prose by the Persian poet Tuğhra-yi Mashhādī (died before 1667–68). *Risālah-‘i Firdawsīya* (The paradisal epistle) is the name of the first item in the anthology. It is both an evocation of the beauties of Kashmir and a panegyric to the Mughal ruler Shah Jahan (1592–1666). Nothing is known of Tuğhra’s childhood and youth, other than that he probably was born in Mashad (although Tabriz also has been proposed as his native town). Tuğhra moved to India and the court of Jahangir (reigned 1605–27) towards the end of the latter’s reign. During the reign of Jahangir’s successor, Shah Jahan, Tuğhra joined the court of one of Shah Jahan’s sons, Murad Bakhsh, and accompanied him on the Mughal campaign in Balkh (1646). Although unsuccessful, this campaign is nonetheless commemorated by the poet as a victory in his panegyric to Murad Bakhsh, *Mirʾāt al-futūḥ* (Mirror of victories), which appears near the end of the present collection. Tuğhra subsequently settled in Kashmir, where he died. He is buried in Srinagar in a plot adjacent to that of Kalim Hamadani, one of the foremost Persian poets of the 17th century. Tuğhra composed verse in all the popular forms of Persian poetry, but he is most famous for his prose works known as *risālahs* (epistles) which include *Risālah-‘i Firdawsīya* and *Mirʾāt al-futūḥ*. More than 30 of these *risālahs* have survived in numerous anthologies,
serving as a testament to the high esteem in which Tughra was held by succeeding generations as a prose stylist.


Masnavi-e Manawi (Spiritual rhyming couplets) is the famous poetic collection of the medieval ecstatic mystic scholar and Sufi, Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (1207−73), known in Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran as Mowla or Mawlānā Jalaluddin Balkhi and in the West as Rumi. This Persian manuscript in nasta‘liq script is a complete 15th century copy of Masnavi, with all six volumes. Narratives, homilies, and commentaries appear throughout. Many stories have stock characters, such as beggars, prophets, kings, and animals. Ethical concerns, traditional wisdom, and stories filled with jokes, including ones about sexuality and ethnic and gender stereotypes, appear throughout Masnavi. Prose pieces are arranged extemporaneously, sometimes breaking off mid-narrative and resuming later. Masnavi begins with Rumi’s famous “Song of the Reed,” which is the 18-verse prologue. This song, scholars have argued, contains the essence of the work. A mystic who has become separated from God is searching for his origin, and longs to find it again; Rumi suggests in this song that love of God is the only way to return to that state. The first story of Masnavi expands on “Song of the Reed,” and is about a king whose love for a sick slave cures her illness. All six books have their own introductions. The introduction to book one, written in Arabic, defines Masnavi as “the roots of religion” and “uncovering the secrets of knowledge and union.” Masnavi’s contents are specified as a creed, holy law, proof of God, cure for man’s ills, and mysticism. Rumi also praises the supremacy of God: “He is the most protective and most merciful of all.” The other introductions are mostly in Persian (the one to book three is partly in Arabic) and some are part prose and part verse. In each one, Rumi praises his leading disciple and successor, Ḣosām-al-Din Chalabi (died 1284), and his contribution to Masnavi. The work has a mixed verse-and-prose conclusion in Persian and Arabic entitled “The seventh book of the books of Masnavi,” which is not part of the known original of Masnavi; however, there are claims for a seventh book. If true, then this manuscript is a rare copy. Rumi’s full name and the year of publication, 1435, appear on the last page of book six. The place of publication is not given; it was probably somewhere in Khorasan. Each narrative has a rubricated heading. Pages are not numbered.


Dīvān-i Silsilah va al-Ẓahab (literally, The collection book of the chain of gold) is a work of Persian literature in verse. It forms volume one of a seven-volume literary collection of Mowlana Nur al-Din Abd al-Rahman Jami (1414−92), the famous Persian scholar, poet, and Sufi. The entire collection is known as Haft awrang (The seven thrones) and was one of Jami’s first major works. Volume one is the longest volume, composed sometime between 1468 and 1486. This manuscript copy seems incomplete, as the final narrative of verses on scholars and perfectionists finishes suddenly and awkwardly. This copy has more than 100 pages paginated in Indo-Arabic numerals. Each verse narrative has subheadings rubricated in blue, gray, and red. This copy lacks preface and epilogue notes, making it difficult to establish the place, date, and contributor of the publication.
A black ink hand-written line on the first blank page reads “Silsilah-i zahab, 28 Rabi Al-Awwal, 1246,” being the title and the Islamic date (September 16, 1830), possibly the publication date. However, one of three seals on the same page gives the Islamic year as 1210 (1795–96); thus the correct date for this manuscript is uncertain. The author’s name, Mowlana Abd al-Rahman Jami, appears on the second page. The complete Dīvān-i Silsilah has three sections; the first deals with ethical and didactic themes and includes short anecdotes and criticisms of contemporary society. Section two is of similar structure and deals with carnal and spiritual love. The third section is the conclusion. This copy is structured around religious and ethical themes and various heroic, historical, and sententious stories. Several narratives, such as the first verses, are in praise of God, his divinity, and supremacy. Page six praises the Prophet Muhammad. The verses on page 11 are on righteousness and justice. Ethical stories include one on pages 28–31 of a king and his son or perhaps a question-and-answer session of a king and a slave; on page 39 a story of a teacher and his student; and on pages 90–91 the tale of a village boy who reverses his decision to sell his old donkey after he hears that the broker wants to sell it as a young donkey in the market. Jami had direct connections with the Timurid court and its rulers in Herat and in Khorasan, particularly at the court of Sultan Husayn Baiqara. Jami’s many works in poetry and prose include interpretive and religious commentaries, Persian poetry of different genres, mystical treatises, works on Arabic grammar, and elegies. He was influenced by Sufi mystical discourses, particularly of the Naqshbandi order, and by earlier Persian classic literary authors, including Sadi, Sanai, and Nizami. Scholars consider Jami’s work as representative of a shift from the classical to the neoclassical Persian literary era, and regard Jami as one of the last great traditional Persian poets.


Little is known about the author of this treatise on medical remedies, Nağīb al-Dīn Al-Samarqandī, apart from the fact that he was killed during the pillage of Herat (present-day Afghanistan) by the Mongols in 1222. His premature death notwithstanding, al-Samarqandī composed an impressive number of medical treatises dealing with pharmacology, dietetics, toxicology, and ophthalmology, and books on medicine in general. Al-Samarqandī showed a degree of modernity and independent thinking in his treatment of pathology. He appeared to set aside the theory of the four humors of the body dating back to ancient Greek medicine and adopted a more pragmatic approach to therapeutics, one that considered medicine and pharmacology in a broader and more empirical sense. This treatise opens with an investigation of the 15 causes that can make a remedy more or less effective and continues with a systematic description of simple and composite remedies for different kinds of illnesses. Each of the 19 chapters is devoted to a particular remedy, starting with syrups and drinkable medicines and moving on to describe the medical use of remedies found in nature or that can be prepared by the physician.


Dīvān-i Shāhī (Collection of poems by Shāhī) is a divan (collection) of verse by Amīr Shāhī Sabzavārī (died 1453; 857 AH), a prominent Persian poet of the Timurid era who composed in many of the classical forms of Persian poetry. Amīr Shāhī’s poetry belongs to the tradition of Persian mystical love poetry. The collection includes poems composed in the ghazal (a metrical form expressing the pain of loss and the beauty of love), qaṣīda (lyric poem), and rubā‘ī (quatrain) forms. Amīr Shāhī was born in Sabzavar
Biographers refer to Amīr Shāhī as a superb poet, but also as a painter, musician, and calligrapher. His poetry was greatly admired by his celebrated contemporary ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (1414–92), as well as by later authors, such as Alīshīr Nawāʾī (1441–1501). In Tadhkirat al-Shuʿarā (Memorial of poets), Dawlatshāh Samarqandī (died circa 1494) describes the premature death of Baysunqur Mīrzā after a bout of drunken revelry, and singles out the elegy for him composed by Amīr Shāhī as having surpassed those of all his peers in its pathos. It is said that Amīr Shāhī wrote more than 12,000 verses, but his surviving anthology contains less than a tenth of that number. He himself is believed to have destroyed that portion of his verse he considered inferior. Amīr Shāhī died in Gorgan and is buried in Sabzevar in a khānaqāh (Sufi dervish lodge) founded by his ancestors. The present manuscript of Dīvān-i Shāhī is an illuminated, undated copy written in a flowing nastaʿlīq hand. An unusual feature of the work is the manner in which each poem is set off by the Arabic wa lahu ayḍan or ayḍan lahu (furthermore, he wrote).

Kalīm, Abū Ṭālib. Dīvān-i Kalīm (Arabic and Persian), Iran or India, 1691-92, www.wdl.org/11242 [467 pages]

Abū Ṭālib Kalīm Hamadānī (or Kāshānī, died 1651; 1061 AH) was one of the foremost Persian poets of the 17th century. He was born in Hamadan (present-day Iran) but appears to have lived in Kashan (also in Iran) for a sizeable portion of his life—hence the appellation Kāshānī. He received his education in Kashan and in Shiraz before moving to India to serve the Mughal ruler Jahangir (reigned 1605–27). Abū Ṭālib was thus among a large number of Persian poets and literati who left Persia in search of patronage in the Indian subcontinent beginning in the 16th century. Under Jahangir’s successor, Shah Jahan (reigned 1628–58), Abū Ṭālib achieved the rank of poet laureate. Later in life he is said to have accompanied Shah Jahan to Kashmir, which became his home until his death. Abū Ṭālib’s fame rests principally on his ghazaliyāt (a metrical form expressing the pain of loss and the beauty of love). Of the 10,000 verses that appear in his divan (or collected poems), about half were written in the ghazal form. He is especially renowned for the novelty of his themes, for which he came to be known as khallāq al-maʿāni (creator of meaning). Other characteristics of his poems are the originality of his khayāl bandī (rhetorical conceits) and the aptness of his mithāliya (illustrations). Abū Ṭālib was also the author of Shāh Jahān Nāma (The book of Shah Jahan), a work which, following the style of the epic Shāhnāma (The book of kings), praises Timur and the Timurid rulers up to Shah Jahan. In the present illuminated copy of Abū Ṭālib’s divan, the maqta’ (final verse) of many of the poems, which generally includes the takhallus (pen name of the poet), is set off in its own frame. The year 1103 AH (1691–92) is written in the colophon.

Iskandar Munshī. Tārīkh-i ʿĀlam ārā-yi ʿAbbāsī (Persian), Iran, 1812, www.wdl.org/11239 [557 pages]

This early 19th-century manuscript contains a history of Shāh ʿAbbas (1571–1629, reigned 1588–1629) and his predecessors, composed in the late 16th or early 17th century by a contemporary. The manuscript most likely was written in Iran. The paper is a light cream, glazed laid stock. The text is written in nasta'liq script, 23 lines to the page, in black ink, with red ink used for headings, keywords, and some punctuation. Catchwords appear on verso pages. ʿAbbās I, also known as ʿAbbās the Great, was one of the most successful rulers of the Safavid dynasty (1502–1736). He expelled Ottoman and Uzbek invaders from Persian soil and transferred the capital of the empire from Kazvin to Isfahan, which he then
developed into one of the world’s most beautiful cities. He introduced reforms that improved the lives of his subjects and cultivated new commercial and diplomatic relations with the European powers. Persian artistic achievement also reached its high point during his reign, as carpet weaving, ceramics, painting, and the production of illuminated manuscripts all flourished under his patronage.

*Treatise on Prosody* (Arabic and Persian), Iran, Afghanistan or India, ca. 1527-28, [www.wdl.org/11788](http://www.wdl.org/11788) [208 pages]

This treatise discusses different aspects of the art of versification, including meters, verses, letters, syllables, patterns of rhythm, and other topics relating to the poetic arts in early modern Persian poetry. The author, who is identified on folio 2, Mahmud ibn ‘Umar al-Najati al-Nisaburi (died 1328), is also known as Hamid al-Din Mahmud bin ‘Umar Nijati Nishapuri. No information exists about his place and date of birth or about his death. He is known to have produced a translation of and commentary on *Tārīkh-i Utubi*, also known as *Tārīkh-i Yamīnī* (History of Yamini), an early 11th-century courtly chronicle recounting the political and military events of the early Ghaznavid sultans, especially of Sultan Mahmud (died 1030). Where and when this manuscript was made are unclear, but its calligraphic style and clear prose nasta’liq script suggest that it could have been written in the 15th–16th centuries somewhere in the Persianate world, e.g., India, Afghanistan, Iran, or somewhere in Islamic Central Asia. The manuscript is organized around a five-line eulogistic note (folio 1) praising and thanking God, an eight-page preface (folios 1–8), and the main contents. In the preface, the author discusses Persian poetry and the usefulness of a treatise on Persian prosody, briefly touching upon the names and works of earlier prosodists, such as the 12th century al-Ustad al-Mutarzi al-Ganji (folios 4–5). He also mentions the relationship between holidays and festivities, such as Nawruz (Persian New Year) and the Islamic festival of Eid, and the composition of poetry. The main contents start on folio 9. The first two poetic verses discussed (folios 9–15 and 16–17) are from a famous longer *qasidah* (poem) of al-Ustad al-Murtarzi al-Ganji (also known as Qavami Ganjavai), said to exemplify the composition of a studious, elegant, and meaningful *qasidah* and the technical and conceptual contents of the first two lines of a long poem (referred to in Arabic and Persian poetic sciences as *Husn-i Mutala-e* and *Nik Aghazi*, literally, “elegant beginning”). In addition to *Husn-i Mutala-e*, other technical aspects of prosody, such as meter and repetition, are discussed throughout the treatise. Although the work is written in Persian, the language is filled with dense Arabic grammar and vocabulary. All the poems discussed in the text have subheadings that appear in bold red font, indicating the author or the theme being discussed; the headings are always written in Arabic, while the discussion is in Persian. The paper is thin and light-cream colored. Chain lines run vertically and horizontally in a random manner throughout the text. The manuscript is written in black ink with rubrication; folio 1 is elaborately decorated in blue and gold. The writing is enclosed in thin gold borders edged in black. Two lines of an
Ottoman Turkish poem appear at the end of the manuscript, although there is no evidence to suggest that these two lines are original; they might be a later addition, as might the title of the manuscript that appears on the flyleaf. There is no pagination.

**Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismāʻīl. al-Bukhari's Collection of Authentic Hadith, Followed by a Qur’anic Exegesis in the Fourth Volume** (Arabic), Uzbekistan, ca. 17th century, [www.wdl.org/11227](http://www.wdl.org/11227) [406 pages]

Muhammad ibn Isma‘il al-Bukhari (810–70) was born in Bukhara, in present-day Uzbekistan, and died in Khartank, near Samarkand. He is considered by Sunni Muslims to be the most authoritative collector of hadiths—reports of statements or deeds attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. This work, completed in 846, is al-Bukhari’s best-known collection. It was the first work of its kind exclusively dedicated to hadiths, and is the most authoritative of the so-called Six Books—canonical collections that were written down some 200 years after the death of Prophet Muhammad. These books ultimately cemented the role of hadith as the second most important source of Islamic jurisprudence after the Qur'an. In its entirety, *Sāhih al-Bukhārī* (sahih means authentic or correct) has 97 *kitāb* (books). This beautiful North African manuscript in Maghribi script contains books 59–64: *Bad’ al-khalq* (Beginning of the creation), *Aḥādīth al-anbiyā* (Sayings of the prophets), *al-Manāqib* (The virtues), *Faḍl aṣḥāb al-nabī* (Merits of the companions of the Prophet), *Manāqib al-ansār* (Virtues of the Prophet’s Medina supporters), and *al-Maghaẓī* (The battles). Although the division of *Sāhih al-Bukhārī* into 97 books is well known and remains unchanged, copyists and modern-day publishers have produced the mammoth work in a varying number of volumes, depending on how much they add to it from the large body of work that had grown with it over the centuries. The six books in this manuscript copy make a complete third volume of an unknown number of volumes that might or might not have existed. The manuscript sections have elaborate titles in blue and yellow in various combinations, scattered notes and corrections in the margins, and catchwords on rectos. The text, by an unknown scribe, is in black ink with rubrication on cream laid paper and is enclosed by a border of two red lines. The work has an elaborate ‘ʻunwan (decorative panel at the start of a treatise) and colophon. Attempts to collect hadiths began during the Prophet Muhammad’s life and continued for the next two centuries, but it was al-Bukhari who established the underpinnings for a clear methodology of authentication and used it to collect hadiths. As the theological and political schism between Sunni and Shia Muslims grew, the issue of authentication became more important. In terms of authenticity, Sunni Muslim scholars typically classify hadiths into six categories, depending on the authority of their *ismad* (chain of transmitters). A hadith can be *sahih* (authentic), *hasan* (good), *da’if* (weak), *mawdhu’a* (fabricated), or *munkar* (denounced). Typically, hadiths that are classified as *sahih* or *hasan* can be used in jurisprudence. As the title of this work suggests, *Sāhih al-Bukhārī* includes only authentic hadiths. Differences between Sunni and Shia hadith traditions largely center on the reliability of the transmitters.
This 15th century manuscript comprises five surahs (chapters) of the Qur’an: Yāsīn (Yā Sīn, chapter 36), al-Fatḥ (The conquest, chapter 48), al-Wāqi‘ah (The inevitable, chapter 56), al-Mulk (The sovereignty, chapter 67), and al-Nabā (The tidings, chapter 78). It is not fully understood why these surahs in particular are put together. They do not follow this order in the Qur’an, and the manuscript appears to be complete and in excellent shape. It is, therefore, plausible to assume that this is not an arbitrary collection of Qur’anic fragments that were bound together but rather was intended as a compilation in one manuscript from the start. The compilation suggests that this manuscript is of the so-called Al-Suwar al-munjiyāt (The surahs that save), considered in some traditions to be of particular devotional virtues. There is no agreement on the number of these munjiyāt, nor a fixed list of them. But they typically range from five to seven surahs, and include some or all of these five chapters. It is also possible that they were meant to correspond with the five daily Muslim prayers, with each chapter to be recited in this order after each prayer. The fact that the manuscript has a green binding seems to suggest it was made for or used by an adherent of a Sufi order. The reputation of these surahs as saviors rests largely on hadiths (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) that are not well authenticated. The manuscript, probably copied in Iran, is on thick, cream laid paper, with the first and fifth lines in large muhaqqaq script and the remaining text in small naskh with diacritics in black and red. The ‘unwan (decorative opening panel) is illuminated in gold, blue, and green. Gold discs separate the verses.


This manuscript consists of the first part of Anwār al-bayān wa asrār al-burhān fī fahm awzān ʻilm al-mīzān (The luminance of explication and mysteries of proof in the understanding of the paradigms of the science of weights and measures). It was composed by the Persian alchemist Aidamur ibn ‘Ali ibn Aidamur al-Jaldaki (also seen as al-Gildaki, died circa 1342). The author’s name indicates that he was born in Jaldak, in present-day Afghanistan. Over the course of 17 years, al-Jaldaki traveled to Iraq, Asia Minor, West Africa, Egypt, Yemen, Hejaz, and Syria. These journeys are recounted in another of his works, Niḥāyat al-talab fī sharḥ kitāb al-muktasab (The limits of pursuit in regard to the explanation of the book of acquired [knowledge]). Al-Jaldaki is considered one of the last outstanding Islamic alchemists. The first part of his book concerns the relationship between the Creator and the created world, as well as the relationships between the higher and lower planes of existence in their various manifestations. This
part also contains information on the relationship of metals to their corresponding planets and other chemical information. The second part is on ‘Ali (the Prophet’s son-in-law and a central figure to the esoteric traditions of Islam) and the Greek philosopher Apollonius of Tyana. The third part is a commentary on Nihāyat al-talab wa aqsā ghāyāt al-arab (The utmost pursuit and the remotest scheme) by the Persian-born Jabir ibn Hayyan (circa 737–circa 815). The fourth part of the work is described by the author as “On that which we have promised in our books and on what we have indicated … to those endowed with gnosis.” This manuscript contains part one of the work, at the conclusion of which the author warns against sharing the contents of his work with those who are unworthy. The colophon of this manuscript refers to the work by the shorter form of its title Kitāb al-burhān fī asrār ‘ilm al-mīzān (Proof of the secrets of the science of weights and measures), referring to the author as Nur al-Din ‘Ali ibn Aidamur. The provenance and date for the manuscript have been effaced, apparently on purpose.

Shāh Arzānī, Muḥammad Akbar ibn Muḥammad. Ḥudūd al-Amrāḍ (Arabic and Persian), South Asia, ca. 1700-1850, www.wdl.org/15270 [51 pages]

Muhammad Akbar, commonly called ‘Urf Muhammad Arzani, who died at Delhi in Rabi‘ al-Thani 1134 AH (January–February 1722), is the author of numerous medical texts in Persian and Arabic. He was active in Mughal India, although he appears to have received part of his medical training in Shiraz in Persia. Ḥudūd al-Amrāḍ (Definitions of illnesses) consists of an alphabetized list of medical ailments along with their definitions. The medical terms are mainly Arabic but include a fair number of Latin and Greek terms as well (e.g., mania, melancholia, and synochus—a type of fever). The name of the scribe, ‘Abd al-Hamid ibn Miyansahib, as well as that of the patron, Hazrat-i Makhdum Sahib, appear in the colophon, which is in Persian. The manuscript is undated.

Hindi, Sadr al-Din Ali al-Gilani. al-Shifā’ al-‘ājil (Arabic and Persian), India or Iran, 1760, www.wdl.org/15276 [28 pages]

Sadr al-Din Ali al-Gilani al-Hindi (died April 10, 1609) was a renowned physician of the 16th century. His uncle was a physician and may have served as Sadr al-Din’s first teacher. Sadr al-Din completed his studies in Persia (likely in his region of birth, Gilan), and subsequently emigrated to India and the court of Akbar I (reigned 1556–1605). Presented here is an 18th century manuscript of Sadr al-Din’s al-Shifā’ al-‘ājil (Rapid healing). In the introduction, the author states that he composed this work in response to Razi’s Bur‘ al-sa‘a (The book of instant recovery). Sadr al-Din is also the author of a well-regarded commentary on Avicenna’s al-Qānūn fi al-tibb (Canon of medicine). The colophon of this work is in Persian, and the scribe, Ghulam Muhammad Pursururi, lists the completion date for the manuscript as Dhū Qa‘da 17, 1173 AH (July 1, 1760). Based on Qānūncha (The little canon) by Mahmud ibn Muhammad al-Jaghmini, which was completed by the same scribe the following month, the provenance of this manuscript is likely the city of Sialkot in present-day Pakistan.


The title of Mahmud ibn ‘Umar al-Jaghmini’s medical text, the Qānūncha, (or Qānūnja in Arabic), is a reference to Avicenna's seminal work on medicine, al-Qānūn (The canon). The suffix -cha is a diminutive in Persian, so the title of al-Jaghmini’s work can be translated as “The little canon.” The Qānūncha is
written in ten chapters: 1, *al-Umūr al-tabī‘iya* (On natural philosophy); 2, *al-Tashrīḥ* (On anatomy); 3, *Aḥwāl badan al-insān* (On the states of the human body); 4, *al-Nabḍ* (On the pulse); 5, *Tadbir al-aṣḥḥā’ wa ‘alāj al-maraḍ* (On the management of those of sound health and treatment of illness); 6, *Amrāḍ al-ra’ā’s* (On diseases of the head); 7, *Amrāḍ al-a‘dā’ min al-ṣadr ilā asfal al-surra* (On diseases of organs housed between the chest and the navel); 8, *Amrāḍ baqiyat al-a‘dā’* (On diseases of the remaining organs); 9, *al-‘Ilal al-zāhira fi zāhir al-jasad wa al-hummayāt* (On visible afflictions of the body and fevers); and 10, *Quwwā al-āṭa‘ama wa al-ashriba al-ma‘lūfa* (On the strengths of familiar food and drink). Each of these chapters is further divided into sections. The name al-Jaghmini refers to the place of origin of the author in modern-day Uzbekistan (known during al-Jaghmini’s time as Khwarazm). The author of the Qānūncha has been occasionally identified with the 13th-century astronomer Mahmud ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Umar al-Jighmini (died circa 1221), who wrote a hugely popular work, the *Mulakhkhaṣ fi al-hay‘a* (Epitome of astronomy), though such an identity is controversial. A popular medical work, Mahmud al-Jaghmini’s Qānūncha inspired a large number of commentaries. A marginal note in one such commentary by Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Tabib al-Misri lists al-Jaghmini’s year of death as 745 AH (1344–45), which, if correct, would preclude a unitary identity for the two authors in question. The present manuscript contains numerous marginal notes in Arabic. Part of the colophon, including the date for the manuscript and the name of the scribe, has been effaced. The name of Sialkot (in present-day Pakistan) is still visible, indicating the likely provenance for the manuscript. The date of completion of the manuscript has been inscribed in a different hand, indicating Muharram 4, 1174 AH (August 15, 1760). The scribe ends the work with a poem in Persian asking the reader for prayers.

**Babur. Bāburnāmah** (Persian), India, ca. 1575-1600, www.wdl.org/8906 [78 pages]

Recognized as one of the world’s great autobiographical memoirs, the Bāburnāmah is the story of Zahir al-Dīn Muhammad Bābur, who was born in 1483 and ruled from the age of 11 until his death in 1530. Babur conquered northern India and established the Mughal Empire (or Timurid-Mughal Empire). Originally from Fergana in Central Asia, Babur descended on his father’s side from Timur (Tamerlaine) and on his mother’s from Chingiz (Ghengis) Khan. Babur wrote his memoir in Chagatai, or Old Turkish, which he called Turkic, and it was later translated into Persian and repeatedly copied and illustrated under his Mughal successors. The present copy, in Persian written in nastā‘īq script, is a fragment of a dispersed manuscript that was executed in the late 16th century. The ordering of the leaves as found here does not follow the narrative of the text. The Walters’ fragment contains 30 paintings, mostly full-page, which are representative of the Mughal court style under Emperor Akbar, who ruled 1556–1605. Another major fragment of this work, containing 57 folios, is in the State Museum of Eastern Cultures, Moscow. The dark-green leather binding, which is not original to the text, is in the region of 75–150 years old.
This work dating from the 16th century is an illuminated and illustrated copy of the first collection of poetry (called *Divān-i avval* or *Fātihat al-shabāb*) by Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī (1414–92), a great Persian poet, scholar, and mystic, who lived most of his life in Herat, in present-day Afghanistan. According to the colophon (folio 306a), the manuscript was copied by the illustrious Safavid calligrapher Shāh Mahmūd Nīshāpūrī, who died in the mid-1560s. The codex opens with a double-page illustrated frontispiece followed by a double-page illuminated incipit. There are ten additional paintings that appear to be later than the text itself and are in the style of Isfahan in the 17th century. The text block, which has been trimmed, is bound in lacquer boards decorated with hunting scenes and landscape motifs. The binding was also executed in Iran and dates from the late 16th–17th centuries. There are several erased seals and one ownership statement on folio 1a, and a seal impression naming Muhammad Amīn is found on folio 3a.

This is an illuminated and illustrated manuscript of a small collection of short love poems of the type called *tarjī`band* by Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī (d. 898 AH / 1492 CE). It was copied in black *nasta’liq* script by the calligrapher Muḥammad Zamān al-Tabrīzī in 998 AH / 1589-90 CE in Safavid Iran. The text is written on orange-tinted paper, and the bluish-green borders are illuminated throughout. The manuscript opens with an incipit page with illuminated headpiece (fol. 1b), and there are two illustrations (fols. 3a and 6a). The Qajar lacquer binding is decorated with floral motifs and is inscribed with verses attributed to Imām ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. An ownership statement is present, and dated 1311 AH / 1893-4 CE, stating that this precious book was bought for his son, Maḥmūd Askānī, from a woman for 10 *ashrafis* (gold dinars) (fol. 6b).
This manuscript was composed by Hasan al-Burini (1555 or 1556−1615 or 1616). It is a commentary on a qasidah (poem) of moral aphorisms by al-Busti entitled “To Rise in One’s World Is to Decline.” Al-Burini is best known for his commentary on the mystical poetry of Ibn al-Farid and for his biographical dictionary of Damascus. He is also recognized as a poet, mathematician, and logician, although few of his works in these fields have survived. In this commentary on al-Busti’s poem, he generally follows a pattern of quoting a stanza and then furnishing a brief explanation followed by a longer grammatical and morphological discussion. Ali ibn Muhammad al-Busti was born in the once-prosperous town of Bust, in southern Afghanistan, and served at the Ghaznavid court. After falling out with his patron, he took refuge in Central Asia, where he died in 1010. He is known for his love of wordplay, as demonstrated here. This poem has several titles: “Ziyadat al-Mar’ fi-Dunyahi Nuqsan” (To rise in one’s world is to decline), “Nuniyat al-Busti,” a poem featuring the Arabic letter nun at the end of each couplet, and “‘Unwan al-Hukm” (Banner of adages). The manuscript is in an inelegant hand with marginalia and is carelessly trimmed. It is from the collections of the National Library and Archives of Egypt and is bound with two other manuscripts. Details concerning its copying are obscure, but it appears to have been written by the same scribe who copied one of the titles with which it is bound, Notes of Those Rooted in Understanding and Verification in the Matter of Hadiths and Their Abrogation by Abū al-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī.

Al-Ḥusayn ibn Masʿūd al-Baghawī (ca. 1044−ca. 1117), nicknamed muḥyī al-sunnah (Reviver of the Prophet’s traditions), was a Shāfiʿi scholar and Qurʾan exegete. He was born, and possibly died, in Bagh or Baghshor, an old town that was located in Khorasan between the ancient cities of Herat (in present-day Afghanistan) and Merv (near present-day Mary, Turkmenistan). Preserved in this manuscript copy is the second and last part of al-Baghawī’s maʿālim al-tanzīl (Milestones of the divine revelation), an exegesis of the Holy Qurʾan. The manuscript starts with al-kahf (The cave), the 18th surah (chapter), and goes on to include the remainder of the Muslim Holy Book, with its 114 chapters. The main text is inscribed in frames of gold, green, and red lines. All the verses are written and voweled in red ink, in the same lines with the exegesis, which follows in black. There is minimal text on the margins, with the exception of catchwords and rubricated text indicating the beginnings of the sections. The manuscript, copied by [illegible] Ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl in 1110 AH (1699), was owned by a Muhammad ibn Sālim ibn 'Āmir al-Ṭawqī as recently as 1946.


This manuscript, written by Ibrāhim bin Mustafā in 1744, is a copy of a work in Arabic by the Afghan scholar Al-Baghawi (1043-1122), written sometime between 1116 and 1122 (510-516 AH). It is a summary, in seven chapters, of seven collections of traditions about Muhammad, arranged according to their veracity. The manuscript is from the Bašagić Collection of Islamic Manuscripts in the University Library of Bratislava, Slovakia, which was inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World register in 1997. Safvet beg Bašagić (1870-1934) was a Bosnian scholar, poet, journalist, and museum director who
assembled a collection of 284 manuscript volumes and 365 print volumes that reflect the development of Islamic civilization from its inception to the early 20th century. The manuscript is item 41 in Jozef Blaškovič, Arabské, turecké a perzské rukopisy Univerzitnej knižnice v Bratislave (Arab, Turkish, and Persian manuscripts in the University Library, Bratislava).

Qandahārī, ʻAbd al-Ra’ūf, *Risālah-‘i Khiradnāmah-‘i Amīrī* (Persian), Afghanistan, 1888 or 1889, [www.wdl.org/17675](http://www.wdl.org/17675) [68 pages]

*Risālah-‘i Khiradnāmah-‘i Amīrī* (Epistle of princely wisdom) is a short work written in the form of a commentary on what apparently are the musings of the Afghan ruler ʻAbd al-Rahman Khan (reigned 1880–1901) on the topic of ‘aql (intellect). ʻAbd al-Rahman’s observations concern both the variability in the allocation of reason and intellect in humanity, as well as the divine reasons for this unequal distribution. ʻAbd al-Rahman ends his short treatise with the declaration that regardless of any particular individual’s intellectual gifts, there exist in each period true sages whose authority should be recognized by all. The author of the commentary, ʻAbd al-Ra’ūf (died 1915), includes the hadiths and other Arabic sources, as well as poems in Persian in his somewhat ingratiating and lengthy commentary. ʻAbd al-Rahman’s original text, which amounts to no more than two pages, is highlighted in red ink, while ʻAbd al-Ra’ūf’s commentary is presented in black. The book was completed in Muharram 1304 AH (October–November 1886) and is in manuscript form. The text is written on a light-cream paper in a nasta’liq script with black ink. Some of the poems are in red ink.

Balkhī, Mīr ‘Aẓīm ibn Mullā Muḥammad Rajab. *Gulshan-i Tauḥīd* (Persian), Afghanistan, 1817 or 1818, [www.wdl.org/17677](http://www.wdl.org/17677) [204 pages]

*Tauhid* (the belief in the unity of God) is a central tenet of Islam that also serves as one of the main inspirations of the *Masnavi* (The spiritual couplets) of Maulana Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi (1207–73). This principle also appears in the title of Ibrahim Shahidi Dadah’s book *Gulshan-i Tauḥīd* (Garden of Unitarianism), a work that was inspired by Rumi’s well-loved *Masnavi*. Shahidi Dadah (died 1550 or 1551) was born in Mughlah (Muğla, present-day Turkey) and was a Sufi of the Maulawī, or Mevlevi, order. In *Gulshan-i Tauḥīd*, Dadah chose from the 25,000 verses of the *Masnavi* 600 verses and appended to each of them five of his own verses, inspired by and amplifying the original. He completed this work in 937 AH (1530–31). The work has had at least one modern printing (Istanbul, 1881). The manuscript copy presented here was completed in 1233 AH (1817–18), probably in Afghanistan. Each Rumi original verse appears in red ink, followed by the Shahidi Dadah verses in black. The copyist has signed his name as Mīr ‘Azīm ibn Mulla Muḥammad Rajab Balkhī. The manuscript is written in a nasta’liq script on a light-cream paper.
Kayānī, Nādir Shāh. *Gulshan-i rāz* (Persian), Afghanistan, 1900-1940, [41 pages]

*Gulshan-i rāz* (The garden of mystery) is a 20th century text on the Nizari Isma‘īlī belief system, written by Nadir Shah Kayani (circa 1897‒circa 1971), a leader of the Isma‘īlī community in Afghanistan. The title of this work deliberately echoes a celebrated Isma‘īlī book of verse of the same name composed by Mahmud Shabistari in 1317. Nadir Shah’s work is organized in 14 sections, each of which discusses a philosophical or religious topic such as nafs (the soul) or namaz (prayer). The first section, on tafakkur (the faculty of thought), is written as a commentary on a verse from the original *Gulshan-i rāz*. Kayani’s leadership of the Isma‘īlī community coincided with the reign of Muhammad Shah (Aga Khan III, 1877–1957).

Much remains to be discovered about the Isma‘īlī community of Afghanistan during this period. What is known is that Nadir Shah belonged to a family of Isma‘īlī leaders based in the Kayan valley in northern Afghanistan. He was a prolific author who wrote both poetry and philosophical texts. The present work is a manuscript, most likely produced in Afghanistan. The script is nasta‘liq, written in black ink, 11 lines to the page, on a light-cream paper. The “third” in the title probably refers to Shabistari’s original work as the first *Gulshan-i rāz*. The identity of the second *Gulshan-i rāz* is not clear; it could be a reference to the well-known commentary by Shams al-Din Lahiji, written in 1472–73.

Rājī Bukhārī, Muḥammad Idrīs Khvājah. *Tāzkirat al-khaṭṭāṭīn* (Persian), Afghanistan, 1908, [61 pages]

*Tāzkirat al-khaṭṭāṭīn* (Memorial of calligraphers) is a book of verse in the mathnawi form. This type of poetry is based on a scheme of individually rhyming couplets and is used in many important works of Persian literature. The author, Muhammad Idris Khvajah Raji Bukhari (died 1919 or 1920), was a literary figure in the fabled city of Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan), capital of the Emirate of Bukhara. As the title of the book suggests, the work belongs to the tazkira (memorial) genre, and Raji Bukhari includes in it the names of the Bukharan calligraphers of his day and short accounts of their life and work. These miniature biographical sketches are preceded by an extended and whimsical description of the art of calligraphy itself, and of the various proportions and shapes of the Persian alphabet. Raji Bukhari concludes his work with a list of short references to various branches of knowledge, including logic and grammar. The manuscript, in a nasta‘liq script, was copied in 1908–9, possibly in Afghanistan. The scribe, Katib Kuchak Bukhari, notes that he based his text on the divan (or collected works) of Raji Bukhari. Bukhara came under the control of the Russian Empire in the second half of the 19th century. In 1920, following the Russian Revolution of 1917, it was declared the Bukharan People’s Soviet Republic. It subsequently became part of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic.
CALLIGRAPHY SHEETS

Verses by Jami (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/2422](http://www.wdl.org/2422) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes verses composed by the famous Persian poet Jami (died 1492 [897 AH]), whose name appears in the lower horizontal panel inscribed with the verse: “Jami does not try to seek fame.” In the two diagonal registers in the central text panel, the verses describe mystical union with God: “If your wish is to meet, say so / If you need something from God, say so / When the mystic [i.e., the "intoxicated with ecstasy"] heard the name of the Lord / He sighed and expired from the remembrance of God.” The verses are executed in black nastaliq script on brown paper and are framed by cloud bands on a gold background. The spaces left open by the intersection of the diagonal registers and the inner frame are filled with blue, gold, and black illumination. The text panel is framed with several borders, including one painted in white and gold containing verses inscribed in independent registers. The outer frame is dark blue and decorated with white and red flowers; it is pasted to a larger pink sheet of paper ornamented with gold-painted flowers and backed by cardboard. The fragment is neither dated nor signed. However, it appears to have been produced in 16th- or 17th-century Iran and placed later into a muraqqa (album) of calligraphies.

Verses by Jami (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/2424](http://www.wdl.org/2424) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes verses composed by the Persian poet Jami (died 1492 [897 AH]), whose full name, Mawlana 'Abd al-Rahman Jami, is noted in the topmost panel. In larger script appears a ghazal (lyric poem) in which a lover sighs about the lack of news from his beloved. The central text frames are bordered on the right and left by illuminated panels and contain a rubai (iambic pentameter quatrain) written in smaller script. The quatrain encourages true and eternal love of God rather than passing infatuations: "Every beautiful face that manifested itself to you / Quickly the heavens will remove it from your eyes / Go and give your heart to the person in the bounds of existence / Who has always been with you, and always will." The text is executed in black nastaliq script on blue paper sprinkled with gold flecks. Every verse is framed by a gold line and separated by a gutter or border illuminated with panels in gold, pink, and orange. The text panel is pasted onto a larger sheet of orange paper backed by cardboard. In the lowest panel appears the calligrapher's signature, “Written by the servant Mahmud b. Mawlana Khwaja.” Little is known about this calligrapher, but the hues and decorative motifs suggest that he worked in Central Asia (perhaps in Shaybanid Bukhara or Samarqand) in the 16th century.
Ghazals of Asifi (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/2426](http://www.wdl.org/2426) [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment includes a variety of ghazals (lyric poems) from the *Compendium of Poems* (Divan) of the Persian poet Asifi. A student of the famous poet Jami (died 1492 [897 AH]) in Herat (present-day Afghanistan), Asifi remained in the Timurid capital city until his death (1517 [923 AH]), even during and after the Uzbek invasions. These particular verses on the fragment's recto and verso portray a lover's madness and his complaints about the pains of separation from the object of his affection. At the end of the first verse on the sixth line appears the poet's signature or pen name, facilitating the identification of the fragment. The two ghazals are executed in black nastaliq script in two columns, separated at the center by a plain gutter marked off by black vertical lines. They are divided by an illuminated, horizontal register with a gold-painted panel bordered by a blue background decorated with flowers. Though not inscribed, this panel demarcates each independent ghazal. The text panel is framed by several borders and pasted to a sheet of beige paper decorated with mythical birds painted in gold. The fragment's style and composition are common to Persian manuscripts produced during the Safavid period, i.e., the 16th and 17th centuries.

Prayers for Safety and Success (Persian), Afghanistan or Uzbekistan, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/2431](http://www.wdl.org/2431) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes verses in Persian praying for the patron's personal well-being and the prosperity of his kingdom. The verses read: "May the world be (your) fortune and the firmament (your) friend / May the World-Creator (God) protect (you) / May all your works be successful / May God of the World look after you / May your heart and your kingdom be collected and well-frequented / May division stay far away from your realm." The verses are executed in black nastaliq script on beige paper. They are framed by cloud bands and placed on a gold background decorated with vine motifs and blue flowers. Salmon and blue borders decorated with gold-painted flowers and leaves frame the text panel, which is pasted to a larger blue sheet decorated with gold bouquets. The entire fragment is backed by cardboard for strengthening purposes. The upper right triangle of the text panel includes an ornamental blue finial, the lower left triangular panel the signature of the calligrapher, Mir 'Ali, who designates himself as "the poor" (al-faqir). Mir 'Ali Heravi (died 1543 [951 AH]), a calligrapher in nastaliq script, was active in the city of Herat (Afghanistan) during the 16th century until he was taken to Bukhara (Uzbekistan) in 1528-9 (935 AH) by the Shaybanid ruler 'Ubaydallah Khan Uzbek.
**Verses by Hilali** (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 1500-1550, [www.wdl.org/2487](http://www.wdl.org/2487) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes three distinct text panels all executed in nasta'liq script: one written in black ink on blue paper, another in white ink on beige paper with two illuminated triangles (or thumb pieces) in the upper and lower corners, and a third (lowest on the page) written in black ink on beige paper. All three panels were cut out and placed together, provided with a gold frame, and pasted to a larger sheet of paper decorated with flecks of gold. The blue text panel includes verses composed by the mystical poet Badr al-Dīn Hilālī (died 1528–29; 935–36 AH), whose name appears in the upper-left triangular corner. The other two text panels contain prayers for a king, wishing him glory and health, composed in the poetic format known as tarji-band (in between each stanza with a different rhyme appears a single hemistich with its own rhyme). The panel executed in white ink on the top left is signed in the lower left corner by the calligrapher Mir 'Ali. This famous Persian calligrapher, whose full name was Mīr 'Alī Ḥusaynī Haravī (circa 1476–1543), was active in the city of Herāt (present-day Afghanistan) during the 16th century until he was taken to Bukhara (present-day Uzbekistan) in 1528–29 by the Shaybanid ruler 'Ubaydallah Khan Uzbek. He was not only a master calligrapher, but a poet in his own right who composed a number of sample verses (qit'as) in honor of his patrons. The text executed in black on blue paper is signed by another calligrapher, Sultan Bayazid (died 1578). He was a respected pupil of Mīr ‘Alī, who considered him his spiritual son and even calligraphed certain pieces for him, signing his name and making a note that the piece was for his "illustrious son, Sultan Bayazid." It appears that this calligraphic piece attempts to highlight the close master–pupil relationship by pasting together their works onto a single album page.

**Three Bayts to a Loved One** (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 1500-1550, [www.wdl.org/2488](http://www.wdl.org/2488) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes three湾s (verses) of poetry in the main text panel and ten verses around this panel, creating a textual frame decorated with gold vine and leaf motifs. The entire calligraphic piece is pasted to a paper decorated with blue geometric and vegetal motifs highlighted in gold. The central text panel is topped by an illuminated rectangular panel and includes a decorative triangle in the upper left corner. The verses in the central panel are written in nasta'liq script on a white ground decorated with gold flowers. The verses read: "Why set out to the Ka'ba when the Ka'ba is your home? / The Sacred Enclosure of my Ka'ba is the threshold to your soil. / The bewitchment of your eye captures the territory of hearts, / Now all the people of the world tell your story. / How can I bring out from (my) heart the imagination of your garnet (lips)? / Because in the treasury of the heart there are many marks of you." By drawing on the imagery of Mecca, the Ka'ba, and its Sacred Enclosure (harim), the poet describes his affection for his beloved's eyes and lips in terms of a pilgrimage into his heart. The verses are signed by the writer (al-katib) Mir 'Ali (died 1543 [951 AH]), a master calligrapher who was active in Herat (Afghanistan) and Bukhara (Uzbekistan) during the 16th century.
**Illuminated Frontispiece** (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 1500-1550, www.wdl.org/6800 [1 page]

This illuminated frontispiece is one of two pages that would have formed the opening double-page composition of a manuscript. It is possible that it belonged to a Qur’an. The title would have appeared in the top and bottom rectangular panels. The central medallion may have contained the beginning of the first chapter of the Qur’an, *al-Fatihah* (The opening). It also may have served as a space for the work’s dedication to a patron or blessings upon its owner. The illumination is typical of Qur’an frontispieces made in Herat (present-day Afghanistan) about 1500–1550. The central gold medallion and rectangular panels are set in polychrome scrolls with white and orange flowers on a blue background. These panels are framed by an outer border composed of black cartouches alternating with gold quatrefoils on a red background. The remaining outer space is decorated with overlapping blue and gold lappets. Illuminators during the first half of the 16th century experimented with the double-page illuminated frontispiece. The artist Shaykhzadah began using black backgrounds and invented new arabesque or scrollwork motifs. These motifs not only appeared in frontispieces but were used as architectural ornamentation in manuscript paintings. Such decorative connections highlight the close relationship between illuminators and painters, who collaborated in the production of illuminated and illustrated manuscripts.

**Divan of Sultan Husayn Mirza** (Chagatai Turkish), Afghanistan, 1492, www.wdl.org/6802 [1 page]

This folio includes ten lines of poetry from a divan (compendium of poems) written in Chagatai Turkish by the last Timurid ruler, Sultan Husayn Mirza (1438–1506). Executed in nasta’liq script through a process of découpage, the fragment belongs to a now dispersed manuscript possibly calligraphed by Sultan 'Ali al-Mashhadi around 1490. Sultan Husayn Mirza b. Mansur b. Bayqara was ruler of Khurasan, based in its capital city of Herat (present-day Afghanistan), from 1469 to his death in 1506. The city was an important cultural center, attracting both Turkish and Persian poets as well as historians, artists, and calligraphers. The ruler himself composed poetry using the pen name Husayni, and his Chagatai Turkish poems (*ghazals* in *ramal* meter) were compiled in a collection called the *Divan-i Husayni*. This folio’s letters are not written in ink, but have been cut out very skillfully from a blue paper pasted onto a cream-colored background provided with a marginal frame decorated with gold sprinkles on a blue ground. This découpage technique is known as *qit’a*, or literally a cutting out, and artists specializing in this technique were called *qati’an* (cutters). Découpage calligraphy became popular around the last quarter of the 15th century, as Qadi Ahmad’s treatise of AH 1015 (A.D. 1606) on the subject makes clear.
This fragment contains the beginning pages of the historical encyclopedia *Ta'rikh al-Rusul wa-al-Muluk* (History of prophets and kings) composed in Arabic by the celebrated historian al-Tabari (circa 223–310 AH/circa 838–923), later abridged and translated into Persian in 963 by the writer Bal'amī. The verso of the fragment continues the first two pages and includes a later note identifying the work as *tawarikh-i Tabari-yi farsi* (Histories of Tabari in Persian). The work includes a history of kings and dynasties from pre-Islamic times to the prophecy of Muhammad, as well as early Islamic history. The first two pages of text on the recto of the fragment include a lengthy encomium to God, His power, and His creations. This is followed by an encomium in Arabic to the author's patron, the Samanid ruler of Khorāsān and Transoxiana, al-Mansur b. Nuh b. Ahmad b. Isma'il, for whom Bal'amī translated the work into Persian. The author states at the conclusion of his preface that "we have transcribed in this work the history of the world, everything that is said about astronomers and that which is said about the Zoroastrians, Christians, and Jews." The third section, which begins at the lower part of the left side of the recto and continues on the right side of the fragment's verso, glorifies God's power to create, citing numerous verses from the Qur'an picked out in red ink. The page on the right contains the continuation of an encomium to God's creative powers, interspersed with Arabic prayers picked out in red ink, followed by the third section of the work which addresses various scientists' opinions on the duration of the world. In this section, the length of the world's existence from the time of Adam until the Day of Resurrection is calculated according to a variety of opinions, including those of Aristotle and Hippocrates. Bal'amī notes that some scholars believe that the duration of the world is 7,000 years. The left page includes a number of a posteriori reader's notes. At the top appears an ex-libris mark, which states that the book belonged to a certain Muhammad [...] 'Abd Khawajaga, who dated his mark 1214 AH/1799–1800. Unfortunately, both the former book's owner and the date were smeared at a later date. Because this fragment bears Bal'amī's introduction and thus marks the beginning of the manuscript, the text is framed on both sides by an illuminated border. The frames are decorated with gold flowers with blue spots on a pure-gold background. On the top and bottom horizontal frames appear praises to God, Muhammad, and Muhammad's family and his companions, executed in white ink and framed by blue panels decorated with gold flowers. The main text is executed in black ink in an old Persian Naskh (cursive) script typical of works produced during Ilkhanid rule (1256–1353) in Iran.
**Military Document** (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 18th-19th century, [www.wdl.org/6842](http://www.wdl.org/6842) [1 page]

This *sanad* (document) is in the form of a *namah* (letter) written in black nastā'liq script and outlined in cloud bands on a gold background. The letter is from a ruler to a certain Mirza Yadigar, from whom he requests military assistance. In response, the ruler sends a reputable fighter named Mirza Qilich (*qilich* means "sword" in Turkish) to the ruler. Known as Rustam-i Zaman (the Rustam of his day, Rustam being a great Persian hero) because of his fighting prowess, Mirza Qilich provides military assistance to vanquish the ruler's adversaries. The last line of text states “*tahrir namud*” (the document was written) by Muhibb 'Ali on 12 Jumada I, 1220 AH (August 8, 1805). The Turkic name of the hero, Mirza Qilich, hints that the document may have been related to clashes on the Ottoman Turkish–Persian border during the first decade of the 19th century or perhaps to conflicts in Afghanistan or Central Asia in the same period.

![Image of Military Document]

**Quatrain on Divine Mercy** (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/6867](http://www.wdl.org/6867) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a *ruba'i* (iambic pentameter quatrain), a few words of which are lost due to water damage. The poem begins with an invocation to God as "Ya Malak al-Muluk" (the King of Kings) and then praises God's mercy as a torrential rain, which allows humans to find *fana'* (annihilation) in the Divine. This spiritual blossoming resembles the growth of plants on the surface of a hard stone. On the back of this fragment appears the inscribed attribution "Mawlana Sultan Mīr ‘Alī," intended to identify the calligrapher whose name was either lost or erased on the fragment's recto. If this attribution is accepted, then one may conjecture that this work was executed by the great Persian calligrapher Mīr ‘Alī Ḥusaynī Haravī (circa 1476–1543), who was active in the city of Herāt (in present-day Afghanistan) during the 16th century until he was taken to Bukhara (present-day Uzbekistan) in 1528–29 by the Shaybanid ruler 'Ubaydallah Khan Uzbek. Mīr ‘Alī was not only a master calligrapher and the creator of Nasta'liq script, but a poet in his own right. These lines may well have been written by him for one of his benefactors, with the purpose of drawing a poetic parallel between God's omnipotence and the earthly ruler's authority.
Two Verses on Lovesickness (Persian), India, ca. 1890, [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes two bayts (verses) on the woes of lovesickness. Initiated by praise to God, “al-'aziz” (the Glorified) and “al-rashid” (the Rightly Guided), the verses continue: “In that high place where the inhabitants of the skies / Wish to be the doorkeepers of your abode / What purpose to speak to you about my state / Since you yourself know the state of (my) heartsickness.” Around the verses of poetry, a calligrapher has added a dedicatory inscription. He states that khatt (calligraphy) is bi nadir (incomparable) to all other forms of art and dedicates the calligraphy to Mir Safdar 'Ali. Although the diminutives of the calligrapher—that is, al-'abd (the servant) and al-mudhnib (the humble)—and his request for God's forgiveness for his sins remain, his name has been erased. Other parts of the fragment have been damaged and then repaired, suggesting that the name of the calligrapher may have been lost as a result. Mir Safdar 'Ali Khan (died 1930) was a ruler of the princely state of Hunza, in present-day northeastern Pakistan in 1886–92. When British forces invaded in December 1891, Mir Safdar 'Ali fled to Kashghar in China. Hunza became the northernmost frontier post of the British presence in India. It thus appears that this calligraphy was made for Mir Safdar 'Ali at the time of his tenure, in about 1890. If such a dating is accepted, then this piece bears witness to the continued existence and practice of nasta'liq script in this part of India on the eve of British colonization.

Letter Exercises (Persian), Persia, ca. late 16th-early 17th century [1 page]

This calligraphic practice sheet includes a number of diagonal words and letters written in the common Persian cursive script nasta'liq. Letters are used in combinations, sometimes yielding fanciful agglutinates and at other times real words, facing upwards and downwards on the folio. The script is executed in brown ink on a cream-colored background, framed by a blue border, and pasted onto a sheet decorated with interlacing vines and flowers. These kinds of sheets, known as siyah mashq (literally, black practice) in Persian, were entirely covered with writing as a means to practice calligraphy and conserve paper. As an established genre, practice sheets abided to certain rules of formal composition, largely guided by rhythm and repetition. In time, they became collectible items and thus were signed and dated. Many fragments, such as this one, were provided with a variety of decorative borders and pasted to sheets ornamented with plants or flowers painted in gold. This particular siyah mashq is signed in the corner by a famous Iranian master of nasta'liq script, Mir 'Imad al-Hasani (died 1615). He has signed his name "'Imad" four times, in a playful gesture emulating the repetitive nature of the practice sheet itself. Like this fragment, a number of siyah mashq sheets executed at the turn of the 17th century by 'Imad al-Hasani were preserved and provided with illumination by Muhammad Hadi in about 1747–59. This particular siyah mashq thus shows how a master of calligraphy practiced his craft during the Safavid period in Persia (Iran). A number of other siyah mashq sheets are held in the Library of Congress.
Quatrain Praising Vision (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. early 17th century, www.wdl.org/6918 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a ruba'i (iambic pentameter quatrain), praising vision as the most keen of the human senses. The text is written in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper decorated with gold paint. The text panel is framed by two borders in beige and gold and pasted to a blue paper decorated with gold flower and vine motifs. Beginning with an invocation to huwa al-mu'izz (God as the Glorified), the verses read: “The heart is a place of sadness and the eye is the site of essence / That means the essence of your arrival is in the wet eye / In the heart (is) sadness and in the eye is the imagining of you / Because my eye is more refined than my heart.” The poet describes his crying (“wet eye”) upon seeing his beloved, attempting to show that visual imagination is more sensible and responsive than the heart. In the lower left corner, al-katib (the writer) Mas'ud al-Tabib has signed his name, along with his diminutive epithets al-da'if aqall al-'ibad (“the weak, the smallest of servants”). The calligrapher's full name was Rukn al-Din Mas'ud al-Tabib, and he was known as a master of the nasta'liq style. Rukn al-Din was nicknamed al-Tabib (“the doctor”), as he came from a long line of royal physicians and he himself held high position at the court, or divan, of Shah 'Abbas I (reigned 1587–1629) in Isfahan. However, when the ruler did not get well after an illness, he requested that Rukn al-Din pay back his salary and forced him to leave the city. Rukn al-Din made his way to Mashhad (northeastern Iran) and from there journeyed to Balkh (present-day Afghanistan) and eventually to India.

Prayers for Nawruz (Persian), Iran or India, 1796-97, www.wdl.org/6919 [1 page]

This calligraphic panel is executed in black (Indian) naskh on a pink paper decorated with gold cloud motifs and pasted to a light-blue backing. It is signed by Muhammad Bakhsh and dated 1211 AH (1796–97) in the lower-left corner. In the upper-right corner, an invocation to 'Ali, Ya 'Ali al-a'ala (Oh 'Ali, the Greatest), shows that the work emerged from a Shi'i milieu. The ruba'i (iambic pentameter quatrain) that follows reads: “Oh Star of the Constellation of Destiny (endowed) with good luck / Rise up and be merry because the New Year has arrived. / Every promise that Fortune has made to you / Is now close, if it (ever) had been far.” This poem wishes a ruler (nicknamed the "Star of the Constellation of Destiny") everlasting good fortune and the fulfillment of promises on the occasion of Nawruz (New Year). This Nawruz is most likely the spring equinox (March 21), marking the beginning of the solar calendar as celebrated in Iran and parts of India. It appears that this calligraphic panel was executed on such an occasion to celebrate the New Year and to wish a patron prosperity for the years to come. This practice of offering good wishes in written form during New Year celebrations is attested to in a number of other calligraphic specimens in the Library of Congress.

A Friend’s Letter (Persian), Persia, ca. 17th-18th centuries, www.wdl.org/6920 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment consists of a letter written by a man to his friend. At the top, the letter is initiated by four bayts (verses) from a ghazal (lyrical poem) that advises men to be good and not engage in siyah kar (evil deeds). These lines are written in smaller script on the diagonal and separated into four columns. The letter then proceeds horizontally. The correspondent apologizes for not having written in a long time. In the middle of his letter, he also includes verses from Firdawsi’s Shahnameh that bear an eschatological character. They promote the fear of God and the Day of Judgment. The text is written in small black shikastah-nasta'liq script on a piece of paper painted in light brown in such a manner that it looks like papyrus, bark, or bamboo. The text panel is pasted directly onto a purple sheet of paper backed
by cardboard. Although the letter is neither signed nor dated, it appears to have executed in Persia (Iran) during the 17th–18th centuries.

**Insha’** (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6921](http://www.wdl.org/6921) [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment belongs to a series of 22 *insha’* (literary compositions or letters) written by calligraphers named Mir Kalan, Khan Zaman (son of Khan Khanan), Qa'im Khan, Lutfallah Khan, and Mahabat Khan. Judging from the script (Indian nasta’liq), a seal impression bearing the date 1113 AH (1701–2), and a letter mentioning the city of Janpur in India, it appears that these writings were executed in India during the 18th century. Furthermore, if one were to identify the calligrapher Mir Kalan as the renowned painter active during the mid-18th century in Lucknow, then this identification would add further support to identifying this calligraphic series in the Library of Congress' collection as a corpus of materials produced by several writers active in 18th-century India. The calligraphy is typically written in a hasty nasta'liq on white paper, framed in blue, and pasted to a pink or salmon cardboard. They stand out for being in rather poor condition, in many cases badly damaged by worm holes and/or water stains. Some bear squiggle-like marks in the margins, while others include seal impressions that were cut out and pasted onto the cardboard. In most cases, an attribution to a calligrapher is written at the top, preceded by the expression *raqamahu* (written by) or *khatt-i* (the handwriting of). The recto of this particular fragment bears the attribution “*khatt-i Khan Zaman*” to Khan Zaman at the top. In the lower horizontal frame appears a fragment of a seal impression in which the following names can be deciphered: Muhammad bin... Shah Ghazi...Khan Fadavi. The composition on the white paper consists of a letter addressed to the writer's *baradar-i mihraban-i man* (dear friend or brother), in which he acknowledges receipt of the latter's letter. The writer then states that he and his family are well, but he is disappointed that his friend cannot join them. For this reason, he requests that his friend/brother send a *vakil* (agent) in his stead. The verso of this piece has suffered heavy water damage. At the top, however, one can still read the attribution to Khan Zaman. In the lower horizontal, there is a squiggle design and a pasted white piece of paper. The composition in the center resembles the letter on the fragment's recto. The author addresses his dear friend/brother to tell him that he misses him and wishes to see him again. Since he cannot come, the writer requests that he get a *vakalat* proxy or deputy to carry out an action that is not specified here.

**Insha’** (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6922](http://www.wdl.org/6922) [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment belongs to a series of 22 literary compositions or letters (insha') written by calligraphers named Mir Kalan, Khan Zaman (son of Khan Khanan), Qa’im Khan, Lutfallah Khan, and Mahabat Khan. The recto of this particular composition is attributed to Qa’im Khan, as noted by the inscription on the top "*fa'la Qa'im Khan pa[sar]...*" (made by Qa’im Khan, son of...). A small squiggle design appears in the lower-left corner. The composition itself appears on a white-and-blue marble paper decorated with salmon flowers. It begins with praise of God, *huwa al-'aziz* (He is the Glorified,), followed by two *bayts* (verses) of poetry on *firaq* (the pain of separation) composed by the great Persian poet Ḥāfiz (died circa 1390). The writer then states that he received his friend's letter, which was like a flower for him. Although this *insha*’ (letter) is filled with ornate and elaborate expressions, the writer admits at the end that it was “*hararahu bi al-'ajalah*” (written in haste). The verso, like this fragment's recto, is attributed to Qa’im Khan, and has the same inscription on the top Qa’im Qa’im. The composition itself appears on a white paper decorated with blue sprinkles, and consists of an *insha*’ addressed to a certain
Navab Sahib (a title further supporting the Indian origin of these letters). The writer states that he is pleased to have received Navab Sahib's letter, which was like a *gul-i khush bu* (sweet-smelling flower), and is eager to see him. He thanks Navab Sahib for having done very thoughtful things for him and ends his letter by promising that he will not forget his kindness.

Qur'anic Chapters 1 and 114 (Persian), Iran, ca. 18th-19th century, [www.wdl.org/6923](http://www.wdl.org/6923) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment is executed in fine shikastah (literally, "broken") script and includes an initial *bismillah* (in the name of God) and surahs (chapters) one and 114 of the Qur'an. At the top appears the first chapter of the Qur'an, entitled al-Fatihah (The opening). It reads: “In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. / Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds; / The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful; / Master of the Day of Judgment. / You do we worship, and Your aid do we seek. / Show us the straight way, / The way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.” Below the Fatihah appears one of the shortest chapters of the Qur'an entitled Surat al-Nas (Mankind). It praises God as the Malak al-Nas (Lord of mankind) and as the Protector from Satan al-waswas (literally, the "Whisperer"): “Say, I seek refuge with the Lord and Cherisher of Mankind, / the King of Mankind, / The God of Mankind, / From the mischief of the Whisperer who withdraws / And who whispers in the hearts of mankind among the spirits and men.” These two short surahs from the Qur'an appear together here probably because they are short, and easily memorized and recited aloud. It is quite unusual, however, to find Qur'anic verses executed in shikastah, a very fluid script invented in Persia (Iran) by the 18th-century calligrapher Darvish 'Abd al-Majid al-Taliqani. During the 18th and 19th centuries, Qur'ans were generally written in naskh or nasta'liq, as these scripts were more legible than shikastah. For this reason, this particular fragment stands out as scarce proof that some Qur'anic ayahs were executed in shikastah in Iran during the 18th–19th centuries.

'Id Quatrain (Persian), Persia, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6924](http://www.wdl.org/6924) [1 page]

This *ruba'i* (iambic pentameter quatrain) is written in black nasta'liq and surrounded by cloud bands on a gold background. It is not signed or dated, although the script suggests that it was executed in Persia (Iran) sometime in the 16th or 17th centuries. Provided with several monochromatic frames, the text page is pasted to a pink paper strengthened with cardboard. In the top-left corner of the text panel, an invocation to God initiates the poem with the expression "*huwa al-mu'izz*" (He is the Glorified). Then follows the quatrain, which reads: “May your heart be like the sea and your hand like the mineral, / Like the heart and the hand of God, / King of the world who orders, / May you always run across the world.” This quatrain provides a *du'a* (prayer) for a ruler, comparing his generosity to God and hoping that his authority, much like God's, may spread far and wide.
Eulogy to a Ruler (Persian), Iran or India, ca. 19th-20th century, www.wdl.org/6925 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a Persian na't (eulogy) to a king, describing him as the sayah (shadow) of God on earth. The verses read: “Oh God, You have looked (down) with mercy / Because You extended this shadow to the people / Like a slave, I seek your goodness / Oh God, You Everlasting Shadow.” The verses are written in black nasta'liq script framed by cloud bands on a beige sheet of paper with a background painted in gold. In the upper-right corner appears an invocation to huwa al-hadi (God as the guide) written in a script known as khatt al-taj (literally, crown writing), in which letters interlace to form decorative coronets. Khatt al-taj is a rather late calligraphic invention, generally appearing in specimens produced during the 19th and 20th centuries. In the lower-left corner of the text panel, the calligrapher has signed his work with the inscription: fidavi dargah Muhammad Husayn tab' namud (the devoted slave at [your] presence [or court], Muhammad Husayn marked [made] it). Although otherwise unrecorded, Muhammad Husayn may have been a calligrapher active in Iran or India at the turn of the 20th century.

Illuminated “Sarloh”, ca. 18th century, www.wdl.org/6926 [1 page]

This illuminated double-page frontispiece formed the opening to a text that was never transcribed. It probably was intended to accompany a Persian poetical epic, such as Nizami's Khamsah (Quintet) or Firdawsi's Shahnamah (Book of kings). It is also possible that it could have framed the introductory pages of a historical text or exegetical treatise. The layout does not suit the composition of the beginning of a Qur'an, which typically includes a central medallion used for the first chapter entitled al-Fatihah (The opening), as seen in another fragment of an illuminated frontispiece in the Library of Congress. The illumination found here is called a sarlawh or sarloh, which literally signifies a tablet or panel at the top of a page. In fact, the decorative panel at the upper part of the right side of the folio is heavily ornamented with interlacing finials and geometric scrollwork, with base hues that alternate between blue, gold, and red. Immediately below the sarloh appears a gold rectangular cartouche left blank but originally included to contain the work's title. All around the margins of the folios appear vines of leaves and flowers; their light-pink and blue tones give the composition a shimmering quality. Such illumination—with its combination of reds and blues, as well as the lighter blue and pink tones—appears in Persian manuscripts of the 18th century. Unlike earlier illuminated patterns, which are dominated by dark blues and blacks, the palette of this piece is lighter and reveals some of the color innovations in illuminated frontispieces after the waning of the Timurid mode.

This calligraphic fragment is unique in the collections of the Library of Congress, as it uses no ink at all. Instead, the text is executed in a style known as khatt-i nakhani (fingernail calligraphy), in which either a nail or a metal stylus is used to create topographical impressions on a monochromatic (usually white) sheet of paper. Although not very much is known about this inkless calligraphic practice, a number of signed and dated specimens held in international collections (e.g., the New York Public Library, the Bern Historical Museum in Switzerland, and the Golestan Palace in Tehran) prove that khatt-i nakhani thrived during the 19th century in Persia (Iran). At least three albums were made by the calligrapher 'Ali Akbar Darvish 1849–51 for the Qajar ruler Nasir al-Din Shah (reigned 1848–96), while even the daughter of the ruler Fath 'Ali Shah Qajar (reigned 1797–1834), Fakhr-i Jahan, was a master of the technique, herself having created an album of ten "fingernail" paintings and calligraphies. Possibly linked to the rise of lithography and the printing press, this Qajar practice discards the traditional tools of the reed pen and ink in favor of a more abstract and experimental approach towards calligraphy. This particular example of khatt-i nakhani in nasta'liq script includes one bayt (verse), on lines two and four, of poetry that is related to two tak bayts (single verses) on lines one and three. Although difficult to decipher, the verses describe human vagabondage. Lines two and four read: "(For) a friend has placed a rope around my neck, / He drags me where he wishes." Lines one and three read: "I have no choice in my travels: / He fashions my home sometimes to be the Ka'ba, and sometimes as a monastery.

Love's Snare (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th century, www.wdl.org/6928 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a number of poetical verses written diagonally, horizontally, and vertically in separate panels of beige and gold paper. Two gold horizontal panels at the top and bottom include the following bayts (verses): “Your body that is under (your) shirt, / 'It is alone, it has no equal,’ what a body it is!” Drawing on the symbolic potential of the Arabic expression for proclaiming the unity of God, "He is alone and has no partner," the poem describes the divine beauty of the beloved. In the main text panel, a ruba'i (quatrain) written diagonally in large black nasta'liq script describes the humiliation of love's untamed passion: “You came riding and you hunted my heart and body for yourself / You cut the rope of reason and leashed in the horse's passion / I was hiding my crying in my robe, (and) suddenly you passed by intoxicated (with love) / I became disgraced, I with a wet robe and one hundred others with clean robe(s).” In the lower-left gold thumb piece of the main text panel appears the signature of a certain Muhyi, who states that he wrote the text and asks forgiveness for his sins. Muhyi may be identified either as Muhyi al-Din al-Khurasani or Mawlana Muhyi, active circa 1550–1600. This fragment, therefore, probably belonged to a muraqqa’ (album) of calligraphies produced during the Safavid period in Iran.

Verses by Baba Tahir (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th-17th centuries, www.wdl.org/6929 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes various excerpts in both prose and verse. In the central blue panel, verses by the 11th-century Persian poet Baba Tahir describe his helplessness and inferiority: “I am that ant which is crushed underfoot / Not the bee from whose sting they suffer.” Other Persian verses appear both above and below the central panel, and, in the left vertical, a register contains an elaborate du'a (prose prayer) wishing a king prosperity and happiness. The texts are executed in black nasta'liq script on
variously colored papers decorated with designs in gold paint, cut out individually and pasted together into one composition. Triangular areas left empty by the intersection of diagonal lines of text and rectangular frames are filled with blue and gold illumination. The whole text panel is pasted to a larger sheet of cream-colored paper decorated with gold flecks and backed with cardboard. The fragment is neither dated nor signed. However, it appears to have been produced in 16th- or 17th-century Iran and placed later into a *muraqqa’* (album) of calligraphies.

**Ghazals of Amir Khusraw Dihlavi** (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 1500, [www.wdl.org/6984](http://www.wdl.org/6984) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a number of *ghazals* (lyric poems) composed by the Persian poet Amīr Khusraw Dihlavī (circa 1253–1325), whose pen name or signature “Khusraw” appears at the top of the central column of diagonal verses. The ghazals are executed in black nasta'liq script in three columns, with the verses appearing on a beige paper and framed by cloud bands on a background painted in gold. Several triangular panels fill in the spaces remaining at the intersection of the diagonal verses and the rectangular frame. These panels include inscriptions that specify that the remaining part of the poem continues beyond the formal (spatial) separation. In other cases, such as at the top of the central column of text, a different ghazal is introduced by an inscription in red ink. The inscription reads: "also from him" and asks for God's forgiveness of Amīr Khusraw's sins. In the bottom left corner of the rightmost column appears the artist's signature, which reads: *mashaqahu al-‘abd* (written by the servant) Sultan ‘Ali Mashhadi. Sultan ‘Ali Mashhadi (flourished circa 1453–1519) was active at the court of the last Timurid ruler Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā (reigned 1470–1506) in Herāt (present-day Afghanistan), where he was a contemporary of the famous painter Bihzād (died circa 1535) and the prolific poet Jāmī (1414–92). He was responsible for copying a number of royal manuscripts and composing inscriptions to be placed on royal buildings. A master of nasta'liq script, he also composed a treatise on the rules of writing, the moral qualities of calligraphers, how to make ink and paper, and how to use the reed pen and other writing implements. The text is framed by a wide border painted in gold and is pasted to a sheet of paper decorated by white, blue, and red marbling. Although the original text was executed circa 1500 in Herat, it was pasted to the marbled paper at later date.

**Qur'anic Verses** (Arabic), Afghanistan, ca. 15th century, [www.wdl.org/6985](http://www.wdl.org/6985) [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment includes verses 13–18 of the 81st chapter of the Qur’an entitled *Al-Takwir* (The folding up). The text continues with verses 18–21 on the fragment's verso. This *surah* (chapter) provides a series of graphic images of the Day of Judgment, when the world shatters and souls are weighed in the balance: “And when the Garden is brought near, / Then each soul will know what it has done.” (81:13–14). The style of the script is close to the Kufi D.I. category of the ninth century. Executed in six lines, the text is written in black ink, outlined with gold cloud bands, and provided with a multicolored frame. There are no diacritical marks, but vocalization is indicated by red dots. The verse marker on the last line of the recto consists of a gold rosette with the term *khamsah* (five) inscribed in its center. In the lower right corner, a hole has eaten through a letter.
Quatrain Eulogizing a King (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. early 17th century, www.wdl.org/6990 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a ruba'i (iambic pentameter quatrains), in honor of a king. Written diagonally in black nastaliq script and framed by cloud bands on a rather crudely painted purple background, the verses read: “Oh King, may the mornings of your fortune / Last until the morning of the Day of Gathering / May good luck take you to the utmost limit of hope / And may the evil eye not reach you.” With these words, the poet wishes the king good fortune until the end of time, literally until mahshar (the Day of Gathering at the Last Judgment) and eternal protection against envy or chasm-i bad (the evil eye). In the lower left corner, the calligrapher Rukn al-Din Mas'ud al-Tabib states that he has copied the namaqahu (text) and asks God to forgive his shortcomings. Rukn al-Din was nicknamed al-Tabib (the doctor), as he came from a long line of royal physicians and he himself held high position at the divan, or court, of Shah 'Abbās I (reigned 1587–1629) in Isfahan. However, when the Persian ruler did not get well after an illness, he requested that Rukn al-Din pay back his salary and forced him to leave the city. Rukn al-Din made his way to Mashhad (northeastern Iran) and from there journeyed to Balkh (present-day Afghanistan) and eventually to India. He is known as a master of the nastaliq style, and he may have executed this eulogistic quatrains for Shah 'Abbās I prior to his banishment.

Quatrain for a King (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 1500-1550, www.wdl.org/7028 [1 page]

This calligraphic piece includes a ruba'i (iambic pentameter quatrains), written diagonally in black nastaliq script outlined in cloud bands on a gold background. The text panel is provided with several monochromatic frames and is pasted onto a larger pink sheet strengthened by cardboard. In the top right corner, an invocation to Huwa al-fard al-ahad (God, “the Unique and the Only”) begins the poem. The subsequent verses read: “Oh King, the retinue of good fortune escorts you. / Rise if you intend to capture the world. / With such a summit of perfection form the presence of your rulership. / You are aware and you serve the conscious hearts.” This poetic tribute to a king encourages him to defeat his enemy with the support of his faithful retinue and good fortune. It also advises him to be aware and serve his people—"those with conscious hearts". In the lower left corner, the calligrapher, 'Ali, states that he wrote the work. 'Ali can be identified as Mīr ʻAlī Ḥusaynī Haravī (circa 1476–1543), a calligrapher active in the city of Herat (present-day Afghanistan) during the 16th century, until he was taken to Bukhara (present-day Uzbekistan) in 1528–29 by Shaybanid ruler 'Ubayd Allah Khan Uzbek. Mir ʻAlī was not only a master calligrapher, but a poet in his own right who composed a number of qit'a (sample verses) in honor of his patrons. This may be one of the poems he wrote for a royal benefactor.

Good Wishes for 'Id (Persian), Afghanistan, ca. 1900, www.wdl.org/6998 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes four lines in Persian wishing its owner good fortune and happiness on the occasion of Eid (also seen as 'Id). Initiated by praise to “huwa al-'aziz” (God, the Glorified), the verses read: “Oh, the joy of Eid is from your name / The comfort of the world is from your peacefulness / The bubbling of the sky reaches the celestial spheres / The wine of chance is in your glass.” The verses are written in black Thuluth script on a beige paper framed by cloud bands and placed on a background decorated by pasted pieces of white-and-blue
The Feast of Iskandar and Nushabah from Nižāmī's "Iskandarnamah" (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th century, www.wdl.org/2427  [2 pages]

The painting on the recto and the text on the verso of this fragment describe an episode in Nižāmī's Iskandarnamah (The book of Alexander the Great), the last text of the author's Khamsah (Quintet). In his work, the great Persian author Nižāmī Ganjavī (1140 or 1141–1202 or 1203) describes the adventures and battles of Alexander the Great as he travels to the end of the world. On his way to the Land of Darkness, he visits the queen of the Caucasian city of Barda, Nushabah, in order to seek her financial and logistical support. Disguised as a messenger, Alexander nonetheless is recognized by Nushabah, who is familiar with his facial traits from a painting located in her treasure house of portraits. While keeping his identity a secret, she organizes an 'ishrat (large feast) for him and invites him to sit next to her on a golden throne. Servants and musicians surround the couple, as described in Nižāmī’s text on the fragment's verso. The text located above and below the painting is executed in fine Persian cursive script known as nastaliq. Because the verses precede and follow a composition, they are outlined in cloud bands and located on an illuminated gold ground decorated with flower and vine motifs. The painting's composition is typical of illuminated manuscripts made in Shiraz (southwestern Iran) during the second half of the 16th century. These manuscripts usually were produced for the market rather than for a royal patron.

Beginning of Nižāmī's "Iqbalnamah" (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th century, www.wdl.org/6814  [2 pages]

This illuminated folio continues the beginning of Nižāmī Ganjavī's Iqbalnamah (The book of progress), the second of two sections in the last book, Iskandarnamah (The book of Alexander the Great), of the author’s Khamsah (Quintet). It follows the first two illuminated folios of the book and provides multiple subhan (praises) of the Creator, as well as a eulogy on Muhammad, the Lord of the Messengers. Nižāmī introduces each of his five books with introductory praises of God and His Prophet before launching into a narrative. The verso of this folio completes the first four folios of Iqbalnamah. The
section that introduces the book's subject matter appears in an illuminated cartouche with the title written in white ink. In the lower corner of the folio appears the catchword that begins the subsequent folio, which unfortunately does not survive. Composed during the last few decades of the 12th century, *Khamsah* is written in *mathnavi* (rhyming distichs). *Iskandarnamah* recounts Alexander the Great's heroic exploits, battles, and journey to China and Gog and Magog at the end of the world. It is loosely based on the epic narrative of Alexander's deeds as recounted by Firdawsī (940–1020) in his *Shahnamah* (Book of kings), which may have drawn from the history of Alexander as written by his official biographer, Callisthenes of Olynthus (circa 370–327 B.C.). The illumination, white ink chapter headings, text layout, and nasta'liq script are typical of manuscripts made in Shiraz during the second half of the 16th century. Many Safavid Persian manuscripts at this time were produced for the domestic market and international export, rather than by royal commission. Nine other folios from the same manuscript—mostly initial and terminal folios of the various books from the *Khamsah* as well as one painting from the story of Laylah and Majnun—are in the Library of Congress.

*Colophon of Nizāmī's "Sharafnamah" and Title Page of Nizāmī's "Iqbalnamah"* (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th century, www.wdl.org/6815 [2 pages]

This folio contains the last lines and colophon of the *Sharafnamah* (The book of honor), the first section of the fifth book of Nizāmī Ganjavī's *Khamsah* (Quintet) entitled *Iskandarnamah* (The book of Alexander the Great). On the folio's verso appears the beginning of the second section of the *Iskandarnamah* called *Iqbalnamah* (The book of progress), arranged in an illuminated title page, which contains a heading written in white ink: *Kitab Iqbalnamah-yi Shaykh Nizami, 'alayhi al-rahmah wa-al-maghfarah* (The book of progress of Nizāmī, mercy and forgiveness upon him). The title appears on a blue background decorated with concentric vines of red and yellow flowers. All around the title panel and the written surface appear bands of illuminated decoration on either a gold or blue background. Written during the last few decades of the 12th century, the *Khamsah* consists of five books written in rhyming distichs. Nizāmī's *Iskandarnamah* recounts Alexander the Great's heroic exploits, battles, and journey to China and to Gog and Magog at the end of the world. It is loosely based on the epic narrative of Alexander's deeds as recounted by Firdawsī in his *Shahnamah* (The book of kings), which may have drawn from the history of Alexander as written by his official biographer, Callisthenes of Olynthus (circa 370–327 BC). The final lines of the *Sharafnamah* on the recto of this folio are executed in a carpet-page format, i.e., in alternating horizontal and diagonal lines with illuminated decoration in the remnant triangular or rectangular spaces. At the very bottom of the folio appears the work's colophon in the shape of a triangle, which states that the book *Sharafnamah-yi Iskandari* of Nizāmī has been completed thanks to the grace of God. Unfortunately, the colophon gives neither the date of the book's completion nor the name of the calligrapher. The layout of the text and the nasta'liq script are typical of manuscripts made in the city of Shiraz during the second half of the 16th century. Many Safavid Persian manuscripts at this time were produced for the domestic market and international export, rather than by royal commission. Nine other folios from the same manuscript—mostly initial and terminal folios of the various books from the *Khamsah*, as well as one painting from the story of Laylah wa Majnun—are also held in the Library of Congress.
This folio contains the illuminated title page of the second book of Nizami’s Khamsah (Quintet), entitled Khusrav va Shirin, and the colophon of the preceding work, Makhzan al-Asrar (The treasury of secrets). Written during the last few decades of the 12th century, the Khamsah consists of five books written in rhyming distichs. Along with Firdawsi’s Shahnamah (Book of kings), the Khamsah stands out as one of the great monuments of medieval Persian poetry. It is about the love relationship of the last great Sasanian ruler, Khusraw Parvīz (590–628), and his beautiful mistress, Shirin, and many of the episodes in the story revolve around the complications caused by the king’s ruses and the strength and faithfulness of his mistress. The illuminated title page shown here includes the book’s heading, written in white ink. The title appears on a gold background decorated with red and blue flowers. All around the title panel and the written surface appear bands of illuminated decoration on either a gold or blue background. On the back of this folio appear the last lines of the Makhzan al-Asrar, a didactic-philosophical work. The final lines of the Makhzan al-Asrar are executed in a carpet-page format, i.e., in alternating horizontal and diagonal lines with illuminated decoration in the remnant triangular or rectangular spaces. At the very bottom of the folio appears the colophon of the work, which states that the book was finished thanks to the grace of God, but which gives neither the date of the book's completion nor the name of the calligrapher. The illumination, text layout, and nasta’liq script are typical of manuscripts made in the city of Shiraz during the second half of the 16th century.

This illuminated folio contains the introductory praise dar tawhid-i Bari (to God and His Unity, or on the Unity of the Creator) of the second book of Nizami Ganjavī’s Khamsah (Quintet), entitled Khusrav va Shirin. It continues the text of the first two folios of the book, also held in the Library of Congress, and thus completes the praise of God typically found at the beginning of each book of the Khamsah. This first section is then followed, as seen on this folio, by an examination of the istidlal (proof) of God's presence and praise for the dar munajat-i Bari ta’ala (Exalted Creator). Written during the last few decades of the 12th century, the Khamsah consists of five books written in rhyming distichs. Along with Firdawsi’s Shahnamah (Book of kings), the Khamsah stands out as one of the great monuments of
medieval Persian poetry. It is about the love relationship of the last great Sasanian ruler, Khusraw Parvīz (590–628), and his beautiful mistress, Shirin, and many of the episodes in the story revolve around the complications caused by the king's ruses and the strength and faithfulness of his mistress. The illumination, text layout, and nasta'liq script are typical of manuscripts made in the city of Shiraz during the second half of the 16th century. The script is written in four columns per page, each with 20 lines.

The Fainting of Laylah and Majnun from Nizāmī's "Khamsah" (Persian), Persia, ca. 16th century, www.wdl.org/6818 [2 pages]

This folio depicts a well-known passage from the tragic story of Laylah and Majnun described in the third book of Nizāmī Ganjavī's Khamsah (Quintet). Forcibly separated by the animosity of their respective tribes toward each other, forced marriages, and years of exile in the wilderness, the two ill-fated lovers meet again for the last time before each is to die, thanks to the intervention of Majnun's elderly messenger. Upon seeing each other in a palm-grove outside of Laylah's camp, they faint from pain and extreme passion. The messenger tries to revive the lovers, while the wild animals, protective of Majnun ("king of the wilderness"), attack unwanted intruders. The location and time of the narrative is hinted at by the two tents in the middle ground and the night sky in the background. The composition's style and hues are typical of paintings made in the city of Shiraz during the second half of the 16th century. Many manuscripts at this time were produced for the domestic market and international export, rather than by royal commission. The painting appears to have been executed at the same time as the text, which survives on the painting's verso. Nine other folios from the same manuscript, mostly initial and terminal folios of the various books from the Khamsah, are held in the Library of Congress. The text is in nasta'liq script, four columns per page, each with 20 lines.
This calligraphic practice sheet includes a number of diagonal words and letters used in combinations facing upwards and downwards on the folio. The common Persian cursive script nasta'liq is favored over the more "broken" Shikastah script. These sheets, known as siyah mashq (literally black practice in Persian), were entirely covered with writing as a means to practice calligraphy while conserving paper. In time, they became collectible items and thus were signed and dated (this fragment, however, has no signature or date). Many fragments such as this one were provided with a variety of decorative borders and pasted to sheets ornamented with plants or flowers painted in gold. A number of siyah mashq sheets executed at the turn of the 17th century by the great Iranian master of nasta'liq script, 'Imād al-Ḥasanī (died 1024 AH/1615), were preserved and provided with illumination by Muhammad Hadi (active circa 1160–72 AH/1747–59). As an established genre, practice sheets followed certain rules of formal composition, largely guided by rhythm and repetition. Although siyah mashq sheets survive from about 1600, they seem to have been a particularly popular genre during the second half of the 19th century, during the artistic revival spearheaded by the Qajar ruler Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, shah of Iran in 1848–96.
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**Siyah Mashq** (Persian), Iran, ca. 19th century, [www.wdl.org/6825](http://www.wdl.org/6825) [1 page]

This calligraphic practice sheet includes a number of diagonal words and letters used in combinations facing upwards and downwards on the folio. The common Persian cursive script nasta'liq is favored over the more "broken" Shikastah script. This fragment includes two individual leaves of siyah mashq (literally black practice in Persian) pasted together onto a single sheet of paper and provided with dark-blue and pink frames decorated with gold vine and leaf motifs. The fragment on the right also includes light-blue horizontal frames at the top and bottom on the sheet: these appear cut out from a previous manuscript and are pasted here for preservation and aesthetic purposes. In the lower left-hand corner of both calligraphic sheets appear the remnant traces of now illegible square seal impressions. Both sheets and their decorative frames are pasted onto a beautifully illuminated page with interlacing gold flowers and vines topped by three large gold flowers adorned with blue illumination. These sheets, known as siyah mashq, were entirely covered with writing as a means to practice calligraphy while conserving paper. In time, they became collectible items and thus were signed and dated (this fragment, however, has no signature or date). Many fragments such as this one were provided with a variety of decorative borders and pasted to sheets ornamented with plants or flowers painted in gold. A number of siyah mashq sheets executed at the turn of the 17th century by the great Iranian master of nasta'liq script, ‘Imād al-Ḥasanī (died 1024 AH/1615), were preserved in muraqqa'at (albums) and provided with illumination by Muhammad Hadi (active circa 1160–72 AH/1747–59). As an established genre, practice sheets followed certain rules of formal composition, largely guided by rhythm and repetition. Although siyah mashq sheets survive from about 1600, they seem to have been a particularly popular genre during the second half of the 19th century, during the artistic revival spearheaded by the Qajar ruler Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, shah of Iran in 1848–96.

**Siyah Mashq** (Persian), Iran, ca. 19th century, [www.wdl.org/6826](http://www.wdl.org/6826) [1 page]

This calligraphic practice sheet includes a number of diagonal words and letters used in combinations facing upwards and downwards on the folio. The common Persian cursive script nasta'liq is favored over the more "broken" Shikastah script. This fragment, decorated with a blue frame and pasted onto a light-pink sheet painted with gold vine and flower decorations, bears a striking resemblance to another sheet in the Library of Congress. It appears that both sheets came from the same muraqqa'at (album) of calligraphies, which belonged to a patron who placed his seal impression on a number of calligraphic works. Unfortunately, the seal impression is illegible. These sheets, known as siyah mashq (literally black practice in Persian), were entirely covered with writing as a means to practice calligraphy while conserving paper. In time, they became collectible items and thus were signed and dated (this fragment,
however, has no signature or date). Many fragments such as this one were provided with a variety of decorative borders and pasted to sheets ornamented with plants or flowers painted in gold. A number of siyah mashq sheets executed at the turn of the 17th century by the great Iranian master of nasta’liq script, ‘Imād al-Ḥasanī (died 1024 AH/1615), were preserved in albums (muraqqā’at) and provided with illumination by Muhammad Hadi (active circa 1160–72 AH/1747–59). As an established genre, practice sheets followed certain rules of formal composition, largely guided by rhythm and repetition. Although siyah mashq sheets survive from about 1600, they seem to have been a particularly popular genre during the second half of the 19th century, during the artistic revival spearheaded by the Qajar ruler Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, shah of Iran in 1848–96.

Sa'di's "Gulistan" (Persian and Ottoman Turkish), Iran, ca. 19th century, www.wdl.org/6829 [2 pages]

This fragment includes the beginning of Sa'di's Gulistan (The rose garden) on its recto, as well as the work's final page on its verso. The first page includes the title of the work written in white ink on a blue background decorated with orange leaf spirals. The rest of the illuminated top panel contains interlacing flowers and gold panels on a blue ground. A didactic work in both prose and verse, Gulistan was composed in 1258 by the Persian poet and prose writer Shaykh Sa'di Shirazi (circa 1213–92), a contemporary of the famous poet Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (1207–73). It contains a number of moralizing stories that bear similarities to the fables of the French writer Jean de La Fontaine (1621–95). In Persian lands, Sa'di's maxims were highly valued and manuscripts of his work were widely copied and illustrated. Sa'di notes that he composed Gulistan to teach the rules of conduct in life both to kings and dervishes. The work was used as a tool of instruction and commentary, as witnessed by the extensive marginal glosses and notes that are executed in red or black ink and cross-checked with a corresponding note within the original text. A few notes in red ink in the main text frame also develop some of the terms or expressions: for example, the first line praising God bears a small note in red above specifying that God is Sahib (lord) and Malik (king). The main text is executed in the Persian cursive script called nasta’liq. It is placed in three columns, two of which are written horizontally and the third diagonally. At the top and bottom of the third column bearing diagonal writing appear two corner pieces (thumb-pieces) decorated with a gold vine with an orange bud. This motif is intended to fill the triangular space left blank by the intersection of the diagonal and horizontal registers. At the very bottom of the text frame appears a barely legible square seal impression. The verso of this fragment bears the last page of Gulistan. In concluding his work, Sa'di states: “Reader! For him who wrote this book, ask grace; / And let the scribe, too, in your prayers find place: / Next for yourself whatever you wish pray; / Lastly, a blessing for the owner say. / By aid of the All-Gracious King, / This work here to an end we bring.”
**Mufradat Page** (Persian), Turkey, ca. 19th century, [www.wdl.org/6830](http://www.wdl.org/6830) [1 page]

This fragment contains what would have been the first page of an album of calligraphic *mufradat* (alphabetical) exercises. Such albums include *al-huruf al-mufradah* or, in the Ottoman tradition, *huruf-i muqatta'a* (the single letters) of the Arabic alphabet in sequence, followed by letters in their composite form (in the Turkish tradition, *murekkebe*, literally "pairs"). Exercise books appeared by at least the 17th century in Ottoman Turkey and continued well into the 20th century. They were used as books of calligraphy exemplars to introduce students to the Arabic alphabet and the practice of beautiful handwriting. They also bear witness to the chain of transmission of calligraphic knowledge throughout the centuries. This folio's first three lines include the single letters arranged in alphabetical order. In the middle of the third line appears a light blue and gold stippled rosette intended to separate the free-standing letters at the top from the sequence of composite letters at the bottom. The composite letters combine the second letter of the alphabet *ba* (b) with subsequent letters of the alphabet. Between each line of text appear curved wavy lines executed in black ink intended to fill the otherwise unadorned, empty spaces in the composition. The letters are written in a black nastā'liq script on a beige paper and surrounded by cloud bands executed in light blue and white ink. Between the bands and the rectangular frame appear a number of illuminated flower motifs placed on a gold background stippled with three-dot incisions. The work's frames combine single colors with an internal white-and-gray marbled paper. The paper and frames are placed onto a thicker light-green piece of paper decorated with gold flecks.

**Poetic Verses Offering Advice** (Persian), Iran or India, ca. 17th-18th century, [www.wdl.org/6833](http://www.wdl.org/6833) [1 page]

This thin fragment is quite damaged by worm holes and has been pasted to a larger sheet for the purpose of preservation. Written in black nastā'liq script tending towards Shikastah, the text begins with a *ruba'i* (iambic quatrain), continues with two *tak bayt* (single verses), and ends with a *ghazal* (lyrical poem) with the rhyming terminal sound *sati*. The verses are separated by diagonal lines in red ink, and the term *aydan* (also) at the top of the left column initiates the ghazal. These various poetical verses provide the reader with advice to trust in God; they also warn of the futility of worldly goods. Although the fragment is neither dated nor signed, the script and the fragility of the paper suggest that it was executed in Iran or India during the 17th–18th centuries. Papers used at an earlier period were thicker and less prone to worm damage. A note on the fragment's recto attributes the calligraphic sample to the Persian calligrapher 'Abd al-Baqi (died 926 AH/1518). He was a native of the desert town of Yazd, a descendant of the famous mystical saint Shah Ni'matullah Vali (died 832 AH/1429), a minister of the Persian king Shah Isma'il I (died 930 AH/1524), and a reputed calligrapher in Ta'liq script. However, it appears unlikely that the fragment is by 'Abd al-Baqi or even was executed at the time he was active.

**Fragmentary Verses** (Persian), Iran or India, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/6836](http://www.wdl.org/6836) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment is in very poor condition. The four verses of Persian poetry are interrupted by a number of large holes in the paper. A few words are still legible, however: "[I want] to see your face again / Seeing your beauty... made my fortune / Hand... without end / [Their] presence made (my) heart and eye happy." In the upper-right corner appears a pasted gold panel, while the lower-right corner contains the truncated name of the calligrapher, Safi al-Husayni. This calligrapher is otherwise unknown; he may have been active in Persia or India sometime during or after the 16th century.


**Fragmentary Persian Poem** (Persian), Iran, ca. 15th-16th century, [www.wdl.org/6838](http://www.wdl.org/6838) [1 page]

This small calligraphic fragment includes one line of poetry describing a lover's secret passion: “Yesterday I passed by you quickly for fear of the others.” The text is executed in black nasta'liq script on a brown piece of paper, and it is framed by cloud bands and placed on a gold background filled with subtle decorative motifs. Several illuminated panels frame the top and bottom horizontals, while two black and gold borders decorate the right and left verticals of the text panel. The composition is pasted to a larger sheet of salmon-colored paper backed by cardboard, which is damaged by worm holes. Although the line of text may have been executed in Persia as early as the 15th or 16th century, the illuminated frames appear to have been added at a later date either for conservation purposes or to embellish a fragment intended for inclusion in an album of calligraphies.

**Verses from Niẓāmī's "Divan"** (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6840](http://www.wdl.org/6840) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes several verses from the *Divan* (Compendium of poems) by Niẓāmī (1140 or 1141–1202 or 1203). After a beginning invocation to God, the verses describe how certain things and people fulfill particular roles in the world: “(For) every idol that they fashioned / They sewed a robe the size of its body / Not everyone can be the confidant of power / Not every donkey can carry Jesus.” The verses are executed in dark-brown ink on a beige paper framed by a blue border. The text is pasted to a larger sheet of beige paper decorated with green flecks of paint and backed by cardboard. It is signed by a certain Abu al-Ma'ali, whose name appears in an opposite diagonal at the center of the composition. Although sharing his name with the reputed calligrapher Abu al-Ma'ali 'Izz al-Din 'Abd al-Wahhab Zanjani (died 606 AH/1209), a disciple of Yaqut al-Musta'simi, the Abu al-Ma'ali who composed this fragment in nasta'liq script must have been active at a much later date. The composition, which recalls a number of Safavid calligraphic exercises in its formal makeup and calligraphic style, must have been executed during the 16th or 17th century.

**Praise to 'Ali** (Persian), India, ca. 18th-19th century, [www.wdl.org/6841](http://www.wdl.org/6841) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes four lines of Shi'i poetry encouraging the *talib* (seeker) to derive spiritual knowledge of God by means of understanding the Prophet's son-in-law, 'Ali. The verses read: “Oh seeker, search for the secret of Truth (God) from (His) Names / From the Name, search the epitome of What is Named / From the essence of 'Ali recite the name of the Exalted One / And from the name of
'Ali search the favor of the Lofty One.” These verses draw on the symbolic dichotomy between al-ism (the name) and al-musammah (the named) and between dhat (essence) and zuhur (manifestation) found in discussions about al-asma al-husna (God and His Beautiful Names). The verses transform the theological theme into Persian poetry, while promoting a Shi’ia understanding of God (the Goal) through 'Ali (the means). The verses are executed in black nastaliq script framed by delicate cloud bands on a beige paper. The text (most likely an invocation to God) in the upper-right corner has been lost, while the lower-left corner contains the signature of the calligrapher 'Abd al-Bari al-Husayni, who asks for forgiveness of his sins from God. 'Abd al-Bari al-Husayni may have been a calligrapher in nastaliq script in 19th-century India. The purple frame decorated with gold leafs and the brown sheet of paper backed by cardboard onto which the text panel has been pasted suggest an Indian provenance.

**Petition to a Ruler** (Persian), India, ca. 17th-18th century, [www.wdl.org/6843](http://www.wdl.org/6843) [1 page]

This fragment probably formed part of a collection of munsha'at (literary compositions) showing how to write appropriate praises and petitions to a ruler. Some of these calligraphies, including this piece, appear to have been executed in Ta'liq script in India during the 17th and 18th centuries. This fragment tells how to compose a na't or munajat (formal praise) to a ruler using his many alqab (honorific epithets). A number of praises of the ruler's mulku (power) and his sultanhu (dominion) precede the ardh otarz (formal request or petition). In the penultimate diagonal line appears the date of 14 Jumadah I, although no year is specified nor is the piece signed by its calligrapher. The composition is executed in black Indian Ta'liq script framed by cloud bands on a beige paper. The ink from another calligraphic fragment, formerly contained in the same album of calligraphies, seems to have bled onto this piece. Several lines in reverse writing have stained the central calligraphic panel. The text appears on a background painted in gold ink, is framed by a plain blue border, and is pasted to a pink sheet backed by cardboard.

**Quatrain on the Virtue of Patience** (Persian), Iran or Pakistan, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6844](http://www.wdl.org/6844) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a ruba'i (iambic pentameter quatrain), on the need for endurance. The verses read: “I went to the doctor, asked about my severe pain / (And) what could he do for my lovesickness / He ordered as a drink the blood of liver and water of the eye / I said: ‘What kind of food (is that)?’ and he answered: ‘You must eat liver.’” The doctor recommends his lovesick patient to jigar khwurdan (endure, literally, “eat liver”) the pains of love, as there is no medicinal potion that will cure him. The verses are written diagonally in nastaliq script in white ink on a light-brown paper. The calligrapher, Muhammad Muhsin, raqamahu (signed his work, literally "has written it") in the lower-left corner. On the verso of this fragment appears a later note in English attributing the work to a Muhammad Muhsin Lahuri. He can be identified as the Lahuri who may have formed part of a group of calligraphers active in Lahore during the 18th century that included 'Abdallah Lahuri and Muhammad Zahir Lahuri. After the death of Aurangzeb (1618–1707), Mughal power was decentralized and royal patronage of calligraphy declined. New styles emerged in cities such as Lucknow, Hyderabad, and Lahore, where calligraphers active in the nastaliq script, including Muhammad Muhsin Lahuri, sought out patronage from local rulers.
**Verses on Perceived Value** (Persian), Iran or India, 1836, [www.wdl.org/6848](http://www.wdl.org/6848) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a Persian poem that describes how luxury goods such as semi-precious stones and furs are devoid of any inherent worth. Beginning with an invocation tohuwa al-muizz (God, the Glorified), the verses read: “I suppose your throne is made of crystal and jasper / Everyone who has an eye knows that they are just stone / That seat made from weasel and ermine (and with) a banner / To those who sit in wicker is but skin.” The calligrapher Muhammad Mahdi Husayni states that he has written these lines on unpolished paper in the year 1252/1836–37, and also asks forgiveness for his sins. As he notes, the paper is not of high quality, neither is the gold background used to highlight the verses executed in black nasta'liq script framed by cloud bands. Muhammad Mahdi Husayni remains unknown, but he seems to have been a calligrapher of nasta'liq script active in 19th-century Iran or India.

**Insha'** (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6849](http://www.wdl.org/6849) [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment belongs to a series of 22 literary compositions or letters written by the calligraphers Mir Kalan, Khan Zaman (son of Khan Khanan), Qa'im Khan, Lutfallah Khan, and Mahabat Khan. Judging from the script (Indian nasta'liq), a seal impression bearing the date 1113 AH/1701–2, and a letter mentioning the city of Jānpur in India, it appears that these writings were executed in India during the 18th century. The calligraphies are typically written a hasty nasta'liq on white paper, framed in blue, and pasted to pink or salmon cardboard. They stand out for being in rather poor condition, in many cases badly damaged by worm holes and/or water stains. Some bear squiggle-like marks in the margins, while others include seal impressions that were cut out and pasted onto the cardboard. In most cases, an attribution to a calligrapher is written at the top, preceded by the expression "written by" or "the handwriting of." This fragment's recto includes an attribution note at the top stating that it was executed by Mir Kalan. An otherwise unrelated document, perhaps from a ledger or accounting book, was torn out and pasted above the calligraphic sample. It includes the words "inhabitant of Lucknow," lending further support to the supposed Indian provenance of these materials. In the lower-left corner appears a squiggle motif. The main text is executed in black ink on white paper framed in blue. The writer begins his letter with three bayts (verses) of poetry about the enthusiasm of seeing one's close friends. He then apologizes for having been busy with work and thus unable to visit his friend. He concludes his letter with another bayt of poetry. The verso of the fragment also includes an attribution note at the top stating that it was executed by Mir Kalan. The main text is executed in black ink on a beige piece of paper. The letter begins with a bayt of poetry that states the lover should not push him away, as he has not committed any sins. The letter proper follows, and is overwrought by metaphors that show the writer's friendship, love, and pain at separation. Truly, he warns, if he were to write just a fraction of his sadness in this letter, this piece of paper would burn to ashes. He concludes by stating that he cannot wait to see his friend in two or three days.

**Sa'adi's "Bustan"** (Persian), Iran, ca. 17th century, [www.wdl.org/6850](http://www.wdl.org/6850) [7 pages]

This calligraphic fragment consists of the first seven pages of *Bustan* (The fruit garden), a famous and beloved work composed by Shaykh Sa'adi (died 691 AH/1292) in 1256–57. The work contains histories, personal anecdotes, fables, and moral instruction. This copy of Bustan may have been produced in India during the 17th century. The back of the second page includes a note supporting this provenance, as it states that the work was written by 'Abd al-Rashid Daylami, one of the famous calligraphers active at the
court of the Mughal ruler Shah Jahan (reigned 1627–56) in Agra and Delhi. The first six pages include various praises to God as an appropriate incipit to the text. Page 7 is an encomium to the Prophet Muhammad. As in this case, the first page of a Persian poetical text is easily recognizable, as it is provided with an ornamental panel at the top and the main text usually is decorated by cloud band motifs and decorative illumination between the text and in the gutter separating each verse of poetry. The top frieze contains three yellow flowers as well as a blue horizontal band decorated with a gold leaf and flower motifs.

*Two Bayts on Modesty* (Persian), Iran or India, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6851](http://www.wdl.org/6851) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes two *bayts* (verses) of poetry that describe the desire of unidentified antagonists to break or humble the beloved: “They want to break the wild-eyed / They want to break the black-eyelashed / They want to break the heart from the spirit / They want to break the objects of beauty.” In these verses with repetitive phrasing, the beloved ones or objects of beauty—the *kajkulahan* (literally, the “ones wearing crooked helmets,”)—are the target of violence and animosity. Written in black nasta'liq script on orange paper decorated with light-gold sprinkles, the text is provided with a gold frame and is pasted onto a blue-and-white *abri* or *ebru* (marbled) paper strengthened with cardboard. The fragment is neither signed nor dated, but the script and the marble paper suggest that it may have been produced in Iran or India during the 16th–17th centuries.

*Ghazals by Sa'di* (Persian), Iran, ca. 17th century, [www.wdl.org/6853](http://www.wdl.org/6853) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a number of *ghazals* (lyrical verses), composed by Shaykh Sa'di (died 691 AH/1292). Many of these verses express the pain at separation from a friend and exhort faithfulness to one's companions. Sa'di's name appears in one of the verses at the very bottom of the right column. The text is executed in black Shikastah script and is surrounded by cloud band motifs on a background covered with gold leaf. The central gutter separating the main text panel into two columns is decorated with interlacing blue flower and vine motifs. The text panel is provided with several decorative frames and is pasted onto a blue paper ornamented with gold painted interlacing floral vines. In the lower center of the text panel (that is, at the bottom of the central gutter) appears the calligrapher's signature. It reads: *mashaqahu al-'abd 'Abd al-Majid* (written by the servant 'Abd al-Majid). A note on the fragment's verso, not visible in this image, also states: "'Abd al-Majid, the inventor of Shikastah, 18th century." This is certainly Darvish 'Abd al-Majid al-Taliqani (died 1185 AH/1771–72), who resided in Isfahan, the capital city of Persia during the 18th century. He was a master calligrapher in nasta'liq and is credited with the invention of Shikastah, a very fluid and literally "broken" script derivative of nasta'liq. He was a poet in his own right and signed his poems with the pen name Khamush (the Extinguished One).
**Laylah and Majnun Meet in School from Niẓāmī's "Khamsah" (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/6854](www.wdl.org/6854) [1 page]**

This calligraphic fragment describes the first encounter between the star-crossed lovers Laylah and Majnun when they are children in school, as described by Niẓāmī Ganjavī (1140 or 1141–1202 or 1203) in the third book of his *Khamsah* (Quintet). In the story, Qays (also known as Majnun) is sent to school by his father to learn to read and write. One day, however, young Qays notices a lovely girl with hair that is *laylah* (literally as black as night) and falls deeply in love with her. The layout of this fragment, with text written in horizontal and diagonal lines, is called a "carpet" page. The triangular spaces left empty by the diagonal verses have been filled with illuminated decoration. The carpet-page structure usually is found at the end of a particular chapter or scene and often precedes a painting. One can surmise that a depiction of Laylah and Majnun's encounter in school would have appeared immediately after this text folio. The arrangement of the page and the nasta'liq script used in the fragment are typical of *Khamsah* manuscripts produced in 16th-century Persia. Paintings would have accompanied such a manuscript.

**Ruba‘i of Hafiz (Persian), Iran or Pakistan, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6857](www.wdl.org/6857) [1 page]**

This calligraphic fragment includes a *ruba‘i* (iambic pentameter quatrain), by the famous Persian poet Hafiz (died 791/1388–89). Beginning with an invocation to God as the Glorified (huwa al-'aziz), the verses read: “Those who turn dust to gold by the gaze, / Could they also glance at me from the corner of (their) eyes? / Hiding my pain from pretentious doctors is better. / May they cure (me) from the treasury of the invisible.” Hafiz uses the metaphor of al-kimiya (alchemy) to describe a man's painful and ardent desire to witness the realm of God, where earthly dust turns to heavenly, gold-like radiance. The text is executed in black nasta'liq script on a white-and-brown *abri* or *ebru* (marble) paper, cut out in cloud bands and outlined in red ink. The text is pasted to another sheet of paper decorated with gold sprinkles, provided with several (rather shoddy) frames, and pasted to a beige sheet backed by cardboard. In the lower-left corner, the calligrapher Muhammad Tahir has signed his work, while a later note in English on the fragment's verso attributes the work to a certain Tahir Lahuri. This is most likely Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Lahuri, a calligrapher of Qur'ans and other texts in Lahore during the 18th century. After the death of Aurangzeb (1618–1707), Mughal power was decentralized and royal patronage of calligraphy declined. New styles emerged in cities that included Lucknow, Hyderabad, and Lahore, where calligraphers such as Muhammad Tahir sought out patronage from local rulers. The same verses appear on another fragment in the collections of the Library of Congress written by 'Abdallah, a calligrapher also active in Lahore during the 18th century, thereby suggesting a relationship between the two pieces.

**Quatrain on Separation (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/6858](www.wdl.org/6858) [1 page]**

This calligraphic fragment includes a *ruba‘i* (iambic pentameter quatrain), that uses hyperbolic expressions to describe the all-consuming affection and pain of separation from a loved one. It says: “If I were to write an explanation of (my) wishes / A fire would burn up the reed of (my) pen, / And if I were to speak again of the burden of separation / The (upright) shape of the nine skies would hunch over.” The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script on a beige sheet of paper. The text panel is framed by three borders decorated with a variety of gold decorative motifs and is pasted to a light-brown paper backed by cardboard. In the lower-left corner, the text is signed by *al-faqir* (the poor) 'Abdallah, who asks forgiveness from God. Although the calligrapher is not identified any further here, a later note in English
on the fragment's verso attributes the piece to a certain 'Abdallah Isfahani Mishkin Qalam. This calligrapher is not well known, but his nisbah (place name) Isfahani indicates that he was originally from the city of Isfahan in Iran. His nickname Mishkin Qalam ("Musk-Black Pen") is typical of a number of calligraphers. 'Abdallah Isfahani seems to have belonged to the school of calligraphers in the nastal'iq style active in 16th-century Isfahan, the capital of Safavid Persia. Chief among these appears Mir 'Imad, perhaps one of 'Abdallah's contemporaries.

Three Bayts on Worldly Desires (Persian), Iran or India, ca. 18th-19th century, www.wdl.org/6859 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes three bayts (verses) of poetry in Persian that describe the true meaning of life in verses that read: “In this ancient monastery built in olden days / Strange that man's substance is so neglected / If he were to spend his whole life with riches / He would not know their value until they are lost / In this house of sandalwood and ebony / Sometimes (there is) mourning, at others a wedding.” The poem describes the world as an ancient monastery and a house of sandalwood and ebony. The world is treacherous, as it takes back what it gives, but also consists jointly of joys and sadness. The true value of man's life must be sought elsewhere than in the acquisition of worldly goods. The verses are executed in black nastal'iq script on beige paper and are outlined in cloud bands on a background painted in gold. The text panel is framed by blue- and cream-colored borders decorated with gold flecks, and somewhat sloppily pasted to a larger sheet of brown paper backed by cardboard. This calligraphic fragment is neither signed nor dated. However, it may have been executed in Iran or India in the 18th–19th centuries.

Ruba'i of Hafiz (Persian), Pakistan, ca. 18th century, www.wdl.org/6860 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes an iambic pentameter quatrain, or ruba'i, by the famous Persian poet Hafiz (died 791 AH/1388–89). The verses read: “Those who turn dust to gold by the gaze, / Could they also glance at me from the corner of (their) eyes? / Hiding my pain from pretentious doctors is better. / May they cure (me) from the treasury of the invisible.” Hafiz uses the metaphor of al-kimiya (alchemy) to describe a man's painful and ardent desire to witness the realm of God, where earthly dust turns to heavenly, gold-like radiance. The text is executed in black nastal'iq script framed by cloud bands on a beige paper covered in gold leaf. The gold leaf has crimped with age. The text panel is framed by several (rather messy) borders and is pasted to a larger sheet of paper backed by cardboard. Although the fragment is neither signed nor dated, a note in English on the fragment's verso attributes the calligraphy to a certain Abdallah Lahuri. This is most likely 'Abdallah Lahuri, a calligrapher active in Lahore during the 18th century. After the death of Aurangzeb (1618–1707), Mughal power was decentralized and royal patronage of calligraphy declined. The rise of new styles emerged in Lucknow, Hyderabad, and Lahore among other cities, where calligraphers such as 'Abdallah sought out patronage from local rulers. The same verses appear on another fragment in the collections of the Library of Congress written by Muhammad Zahir, a calligrapher also active in Lahore during the 18th century, thereby suggesting a relationship between the two pieces.
The Seductiveness of the World (Persian), Uzbekistan, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/2490](http://www.wdl.org/2490) [1 page]

This calligraphic panel includes three *rubā'iyāt* (iambic pentameter quatrains) in nasta'liq script on beige or blue papers cut out and pasted onto a sheet from a *muraqqa'* (album) of calligraphies. The quatrain in the upper-left panel, executed in black on a cream-colored sheet decorated with vine motifs painted in gold, reads: “Everyone whose heart is seduced by the world / Avoid (him) because of the pride of his ignorance / Grab the hem of that (person) who, because of his greatness, / Has left behind the world and its dwellers.” The three quatrains are separated by illuminated panels and thumb pieces, and divided horizontally by further verses in Persian. The whole of the text panel is provided by frames of various colors and pasted to a larger sheet of paper decorated by pounced motifs in blue and green. A number of standing figures, as well as a seated angel with red and yellow wings, further decorate the paper. Between each figure, a register includes a number of Persian verses written in red ink. The register in the left border, however, includes an inscription in yellow ink which bears a fragmentary date reading: “In the month of the second....” Although the year of execution unfortunately is omitted, albums of calligraphies and paintings using pounced decorative papers bearing inscribed medallions and registers are typical of Shaybanid works produced in Central Asia (in present-day Uzbekistan) over the course of the 16th century.

'Id Poem (Arabic and Persian), Middle East, 1810, [www.wdl.org/6865](http://www.wdl.org/6865) [1 page]

This calligraphic panel includes a *ruba'i* (iambic pentameter quatrain), signed and dated in the lower-left corner by the calligrapher Mir Muhammad Salih: “written by Mir Muhammad Salih, 1225” (AD 1810). Although little is known about the calligrapher, the date proves that this work dates from the early 19th century. The text is executed in black (Indian) naskh script on a beige sheet of paper, framed in a blue border decorated with gold leaf and vine motifs. Before the quatrain begins, a short invocation of God that reads “he is the Forgiving” appears in the upper-right corner. This is followed by the quatrain, which reads: “It is ’id, may the wine of joy be in your glass / May the circus of the moon of ’id be on your roof / Every robe of fortune that the firmament sewed / Oh, Generous Mineral, may it fit you properly!” This poem wishes a ruler (nicknamed a "Generous Mineral," ) fortune and happiness on the occasion of the ’id (feast day). This may well be the festival of Noruz (New Year), that is, the spring equinox (March 21) marking the beginning of the solar calendar as celebrated in Iran and parts of India. It appears that this calligraphic panel was executed on such an occasion to celebrate the New Year and to wish a patron prosperity for the years to come. This practice of offering good wishes in written form during New Year's celebrations is attested to in a number of other calligraphic specimens in the Library of Congress.
This calligraphic fragment includes a *hikmah* (wise saying or proverb) on the virtues of helping *al-fuqara'* (the poor) and endurance in hardship. These qualities increase faith in the heart of *fi qalb al-mu'min* (the believer). The proverb begins on the penultimate line, continues on the last line of the text panel, and runs sequentially from the first line down. Several words are lost, replaced, and misspelled, suggesting that the piece was cut out (or salvaged) and pasted to this folio. The text is executed in black naskh script on a beige paper and is framed by cloud bands on a gold background. The text panel is provided with two ornamental frames: The first is green with gold interlacing vines, while the second is white and decorated with pink and purple flower and leaf motifs. The text panel is then pasted to a larger sheet of salmon-orange-colored paper decorated with flower motifs painted in gold and backed by cardboard for strengthening. The fragment is neither dated nor signed. However, text panels such as this one, providing various Arabic-language prayers or proverbs in naskh script, were made by the famous naskh-revival Persian calligraphers Mirza Ahmad Nayrizi (died 1739) and Vassal-i Shirazi (died 1846) and their followers. For these reasons, it is possible that this calligraphic fragment was made in Iran in the 18th or 19th century.

This calligraphic fragment includes a poetical prayer wishing its owner happiness and prosperity on the occasion of the 'id (also seen as 'Id and Eid) festival of Noruz (New Year). Beginning with a (now barely legible) invocation to *huwa ar-Raheem* (God as the Glorious), the verses then read: “Oh, your face is 'id and your eyebrow is the moon of 'id / May your month and year be auspicious and happy / May my eye not be bright without seeing you / The arch of your eyebrow is the prayer direction of (all) people.” The text is written in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper and is framed by cloud bands on a gold background. The text panel is provided with blue and green frames and is pasted to a larger sheet of pink paper backed by cardboard. It seems likely that a calligrapher's signature may have been placed in the lower-left corner of the text panel. However, it now is illegible due to water damage. Judging from the fragment's theme, it is possible to suggest that the piece was executed in India sometime during the 18th or 19th century as a New Year's gift to an eminent patron.

This calligraphic fragment includes two unrelated *bayts* (verses) of poetry in Persian. The first two lines read: “Why does anybody fight with someone like me? / What comes from killing me and shedding my blood?” The last two lines read: “During the night and day of Spring, / The cloud was crying because of its sorrow.” The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script in diagonal on a beige sheet of paper. Gold and blue borders are rather sloppily pasted on. In the lower-right corner of the text panel appears the *sanah* (year) 1006 (1597–98). Although the calligraphic piece is not signed, a note on the verso attributes the work to a certain Sultan Hafiz Muhammad 'Ali, the brother of Hafiz Nur Allah. This calligrapher may be Mawlana.
Sultan Muhammad, the son (not brother) of Mawlana Nur Allah and a pupil of the famous Persian calligrapher Sultan 'Ali Mashhadi (died 1514). However, the work's date is more than 80 years after Sultan 'Ali Mashhadi's death, which seems too late to support such an identification. Although Sultan Hafiz Muhammad is not clearly identifiable, the calligrapher who executed this fragment was certainly a Safavid master of nasta'liq script.

*Quatrain on Freedom* (Persian), Lahore, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6870](http://www.wdl.org/6870) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a *ruba'i* (iambic pentameter quatrain) promoting personal independence and *khatir* (the renunciation of attachment to people and places). Beginning with an invocation to *huwa al-mu'izz* (God as the Glorified), the verses read: “Do not get tied to any person or to any place / Because the land and sea are vast and people are many / If a thousand beautiful ones come towards you / Look, move on, and do not get attached to anybody.” Executed in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper, the verses are highlighted from the cloud motifs formed by the gold-painted background. The text panel is decorated by salmon and blue borders with gold motifs and pasted to a larger sheet of brown paper backed by cardboard. In the lower-left corner, the calligraphic specimen has been signed by a certain Muhammad Riza “Kitabdar” (the librarian). On the verso of this fragment, a later note attributes the work to a certain "Muhammad Riza Lahuri" as well. Judging from these two notes, it appears that Muhammad Riza was a librarian-calligrapher in Lahore. He may have formed part a group of calligraphers active in Lahore during the 18th century, which included 'Abdallah Lahuri, Muhammad Zahir Lahuri, and Muhammad Muhsin Lahuri.

*Prayer for God's Mercy* (Persian), Iran or India, ca. 18th-19th century, [www.wdl.org/6871](http://www.wdl.org/6871) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a Persian poem seeking the mercy and assistance of God. The verses read: “Oh Sun of the proud skies, / Oh Gem of the sea freed from need, / I have hope (to receive) your favor, / Kindness, generosity, and support of me.” The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper. A small and rather sloppy frame has been pasted to the text panel and onto a larger sheet of paper backed by cardboard. The fragment is neither dated nor signed, but it may have been executed in Iran or India sometime during the 18th or 19th centuries.

*Noruz Poem* (Persian), Iran or India, ca. 17th-18th century, [www.wdl.org/6872](http://www.wdl.org/6872) [1 page]

This calligraphic panel includes a *ruba'i* (iambic pentameter quatrain) signed by the calligrapher Agha'i. He has signed his work: "written by the poor Agha'i." Unfortunately, nothing is known about this calligrapher, and the approximate date of the piece (17th–18th centuries) must remain conjectural. The quatrain is written in black nasta'liq script on a piece of paper framed in blue and pasted to a brown paper strengthened with cardboard. The poem reads as follows: “For you, Pride of Government and Religion / May happiness be your aide and may fortune be beside you. / Congratulations to you on the festival of New Year's / May you always sit side by side [with happiness and fortune].” This poem wishes a ruler everlasting happiness and good fortune on the occasion of New Year's. This Noruz (New Year) is most
likely the spring equinox (March 21) marking the beginning of the solar calendar as celebrated in Iran and parts of India. It appears that this calligraphic panel was executed on such an occasion to celebrate the New Year and to wish a patron prosperity for the years to come. This practice of offering good wishes in written form during New Year celebrations is attested to in a number of other calligraphic specimens in the Library of Congress.

\textit{'Id Blessing} (Arabic and Persian), Iran or India, ca. 18th century, www.wdl.org/6873 [1 page]

This calligraphic panel executed in nasta'liq script on a beige paper sprinkled with gold flecks is provided with a (water-damaged) frame and is pasted to a brown piece of paper strengthened with cardboard. Between the two lines of calligraphy, which offer a prayer to a ruler on the occasion of 'id (also seen as 'Id and Eid), appears another small fragment cut out and pasted in the center right. It reads: "In the name of Muhammad and Muhammad's family [prayers upon them]." The two main lines of calligraphy read: "On this 'id, may God the Exalted bring to the high essence of his Majesty, / Navab Sahib, everlasting blessing and good fortune." This poem wishes a ruler, described as a dhat 'ali (high essence), everlasting happiness and good fortune on the occasion of 'id. This festival may be Noruz (New Year), that is, the Spring equinox (March 21) marking the beginning of the solar calendar as celebrated in Iran and parts of India. An Indian provenance is supported by the fact that the title "Navab Sahib" was used, for example, by rulers of Junagadh Province in northern India from the 18th to the 20th centuries. It appears that this calligraphic panel was executed to celebrate the New Year and to wish a princely patron unending prosperity. This practice of offering good wishes in written form during New Year's celebrations is attested to in a number of other calligraphic specimens in the Library of Congress.

\textit{Three Ghazals by Tabib Isfahani} (Persian), India or Iran, ca. 18th century, www.wdl.org/6874 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment contains three ghazals (lyrical poems) by 'Abd al-Baqi, known as Tabib Isfahani. He was a tabib (court physician) to the Persian ruler Nadir Shah (ruled 1736–47) and a prolific writer whose many verses form part of his divan (compendium of poems). His takhallus (signature) "Tabib" appears in the verses. The first ghazal rhymes with payda (found), the second ghazal rhymes with ra (the accusative marker), and the third ghazal rhymes with aflatda ast (happened, occurred). All three ghazals describe the faithfulness of a lover and the sadness felt upon separation from the beloved. The lover describes his pain while simultaneously advising himself not to complain and to be patient in the face of adversity. The text is executed in minute shikastah-nasta'liq script diagonally in two columns, separated with two plain vertical lines painted in gold. The text page is made of cream-colored paper and is framed with borders painted in purple, light green, and gold. The text and its frame are pasted to a larger sheet of pink paper backed with cardboard for strengthening. As Tabib Isfahani was a poet in the 18th century, this fragment in all likelihood was executed during Nādir Shāh's reign, that is, around the middle of the 18th century. Nādir Shāh is best known for his invasions of Mughal India (he sacked Delhi and Lahore and brought back the famous Peacock Throne to Iran), so this piece may have been executed while the ruler was based in India (1738–39). It was later remounted and perhaps included in an album of calligraphies.
Invocations to 'Ali (Arabic and Persian), India or Iran, ca. 18th century, www.wdl.org/6875 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes two bayts (verses) invoking the Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law 'Ali through his various epithets. Beginning with an invocation ya 'Ali al-a'ala (to 'Ali as the Greatest), the verses then read: “Oh, Lion of God, Leader of Haydar, victory! / Oh, Stormer of the door of the Castle of Khaybar, victory! / The doors of hope have shut on my face. / Oh, Possessor of (the sword) Dhu al-Fiqar and (the servant) Qanbar, victory!” 'Ali is petitioned through his many names, attributes, and historical exploits to bring about hope and victory. The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script on a white-and-blue abri or ebru (marbled) paper. The text panel is provided with a rather sloppy golf-flecked frame and is pasted to a larger sheet of brown paper backed by cardboard. In the lower-left corner of the text panel, the calligrapher Hafiz Muhammad Sa'd al-Din states that he has written this mashaqahu (text) and asks for God's forgiveness for his sins. The number 205 appears as well, which may indicate that the piece was executed in AH 1205 (1790–91). Although Hafiz Muhammad Sa'd al-Din cannot be identified in historical sources, he appears to have been a calligrapher in nasta'liq script active in 18th-century Iran or India.

A Praise of Calligraphy (Arabic and Persian), Iran, 1828-1829, www.wdl.org/6876 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes several verses praising the practice of calligraphy. Beginning with an invocation of Allahu Akbar (God, the Great), the verses then read: “I have brought a small vow for you to be powerful like Asaf and Jam / I have used garnet, ruby, and emerald / They have said that beautiful handwriting is better than garnet and gems / I have brought (you) a house-full of gems as an offering.” The poet describes a fragment of a vow to be similar to a qit'a (fragment) of khatt-i khush (calligraphy), and as a result this panel functions as a nisar (offering) as precious as all the gems in the world. The blue border decorated with flecks of gold serves as a visual echo to the poem's contents. Around the border of the text panel, the calligrapher Muhammad Riza al-Din specifies that he katabahu (wrote) the verses in AH 1243 (1828–29). He also states that the piece is written for his 'izz and sharaf (glory and dignity), if it is gar qabul aftad (accepted). Although Muhammad Riza al-Din is not known, he appears to have been a calligrapher in the nasta'liq style active in 19th-century Iran.

'Id Quatrain (Arabic and Persian), Middle East, ca. 16th-17th century, www.wdl.org/6877 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment shows a ruba'i (iambic pentameter quatrain), written in nasta'liq script by the calligrapher Muhammad Qamar al-Din. He has signed the quatrain in the lower-left corner with the expression "katabahu [written by] Muhammad Qamar al-Din." Nothing is known about this calligrapher, although the steady nasta'liq script suggests that it was executed in Persia (Iran) during the 16th or 17th centuries. The text is framed by cloud bands executed in black ink and highlighted with gold paint, around which a blue frame with interlacing gold vine motifs has been pasted somewhat sloppily. The poem reads: “In as much as 'id is the month of blessings / And makes pilgrims (go) to 'Arafat / Like sacrificial sheep, / May all your enemies be in the ‘Direction of Pilgrims’.” The poem's imagery revolves around the activities linked to the celebrations of 'id al-Qurban (also called 'id al-Adha, the feast of sacrifice), which marks the end of the pilgrimage rites on the tenth day of the Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijja. Drawing on the symbolism of qibla (the direction of prayer), the poet describes a ruler as the "Direction of Pilgrims" and wishes him the defeat of his enemies. These lines were probably written on 'id al-Qurban in order to eulogize a patron, as they draw on the metaphorical potential of religious activities.
taking place at that time. Other poems written for rulers during the celebrations of pilgrimage or to usher in the New Year are held in the collections of the Library of Congress.

*The Sound of Insanity* (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6878](http://www.wdl.org/6878) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes four verses of poetry in Persian describing the simple mark and sound of insanity (i.e., the chain). The verses read: “I and the chain that / Were walking and lamenting together / (that is what) causes the separation between craziness / and enjoyment and wisdom.” The text is written in nasta'liq script in white ink on a red ground. The lines of text are separated by green or blue bands decorated with flower-and-vine motifs painted in gold. In the lower-right corner appears the calligrapher’s signature: *katabahu al-'abd ahqar al-anam* (written by the servant, the most humble of mortals), Munshi Ram. This calligrapher may be identified as Munshi Ram (1737–90), a writer specializing in Arabic and Persian, who was active in Rādhānagar, West Bengal, India. Another specimen signed by Munshi Ram is held in the collections of the Library of Congress. Judging from both examples, he seems to have been a calligrapher who preferred writing verses in nasta'liq script using white ink on red backgrounds.

*Verses on the Beloved* (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6879](http://www.wdl.org/6879) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes four lines of Persian poetry describing the heavenly scent and life-endowing capabilities of the beloved: “Although musk smells fragrant / It does not breathe life like your scent / Paradise is a good and beloved place / But it is not as splendid as your abode.” The text is executed in nasta'liq script in white ink on a red background. Blue panels decorated with gold flower-and-leaf motifs separate and frame the lines of text. Other monochromatic frames also appear on the larger sheet of beige paper backed by cardboard, onto which the text panel has been pasted. Although the calligraphic specimen is neither signed nor dated, a later note on the fragment's verso attributes the piece to a certain Munshi Ram. This calligrapher may be identified as Munshi Ram (1737–90), a writer specializing in Arabic and Persian who was active in Rādhānagar, West Bengal, India. Another specimen signed by Munshi Ram is held in the collections of the Library of Congress. Judging from both examples, he seems to have been an Indian calligrapher who preferred writing verses in nasta'liq script using white ink on red backgrounds.

*Page from an Unidentified Text* (Persian), India or Iran, ca. 17th-18th century, [www.wdl.org/6880](http://www.wdl.org/6880) [2 pages]

The recto and verso of his calligraphic fragment contain portions of an unidentified Persian text about the futility of the world. The text continues on the fragment's verso, which includes a chapter, provided with a heading in red ink in the center of the text panel, supplying a *sifat* (description) of craftsmen in a particular land. The text is executed in a rather hasty nasta'liq script written horizontally in two columns and diagonally in one column. Some lines are lost due to water damage. The text and folio frames consist
of a number of borders in gold, red, and blue, while the text's margins are decorated with a series of floral sprays and leaves painted in gold. The script and page layout suggest that this fragment was executed in Iran or India during the 17th–18th centuries.

**Persian Prose and Poetry** (Persian), Iran, 1743, [www.wdl.org/6881](http://www.wdl.org/6881) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment is executed in gold ink on brown leather. The text is written in shikastah-nasta'liq and comprises a selection of Persian excerpts in both nazm (poetry) and naskh (prose). These passages are written diagonally and are framed by cloud-band motifs. The text is framed by a blue border decorated with flowers and pasted to a pink sheet ornamented with gold leaf and flower motifs. There is a small hole in the brown leather, below which a note states that this calligraphic piece was finished in the *subh* (morning) of Shambah, Jumadah II 5, 1156 (Saturday, July 27, 1743). Close to the date appears a note specifying that the work was commissioned by a certain Mawlana [...]. The name of the calligrapher, apparently inscribed in red ink in the center of the composition, unfortunately is illegible. The script is typical of calligraphic work executed in 18th-century Iran, which witnessed the gradual development of shikastah script from its nasta'liq roots.

**Sample Calligraphies** (Persian), India, ca. 18th-19th century, [www.wdl.org/6884](http://www.wdl.org/6884) [1 page]

This panel's main inscription is contained in an elongated oval and reads: Khan Bahadur Sayyid 'Ayn al-Din Sahib Madar al-Mahamm Riyasat Ditya Dama Iqbaluhu. The ruler's name, probably Ditya, and his many titles including *madar al-mahamm* (center of important affairs) establish his high rank. The term *bahadur* in particular points to a Mughal Indian provenance, as this honorific designation was the sixth-highest title conferred on Mughal officers and, later, also given to the second class of the Order of British India. The inscription is executed in a number of different scripts, which are labeled by small notes in black ink immediately above or below the word to which they correspond. The titles Khan Bahadur are written in rayhani script, 'Ayn al-Din in ghubar (dust) script, Sahib in afshan (gold sprinkling) script, Madar al-Mahamm in gulzar (flower garden) script, and Riyasat Ditya Dama Iqbaluhu in mahi (fish) script. The sheer variety of scripts, some of which include flower and fish motifs, reveals the calligrapher's mastery of the art. The calligrapher, Hakim Sayyid Hamid 'Abbas al-Taqawi al-Bukhari, has included his name in the center of the bottom margin, where he states that he has written the work.
Although he is unknown, his name suggests that he was originally from the city of Bukhara, in present-day Uzbekistan. He probably migrated to India seeking patronage from a Mughal patron such as Ditya, for whom he executed this panel of his honorifics. Panels executed in a variety of scripts, especially those using the flower and fish scripts, seem to date from the 18th and 19th centuries and were made in Iran and India. For example, a calligraphic panel executed by Persian calligrapher Husayn Zarrin Qalam in 1212 AH (1797−98) held in the collections of the Library of Congress also includes a number of whimsical scripts and motifs. Panels such as these appear to have been used as wall hangings, as indicated here by the attached string remaining at the top of this panel. Perhaps also intended for their protective powers, they could include specific Qur’anic verses such as *ayat al-kursi* (The throne verse, 2:255), part of which appears in the center of the fragment’s top horizontal margin.

*Insha’* (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6889](http://www.wdl.org/6889) [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment belongs to a series of 22 *insha’* (literary compositions or letters) written by the calligraphers Mir Kalan, Khan Zaman (son of Khan Khanan), Qa’im Khan, Lutfallah Khan, and Mahabat Khan. Judging from the script (Indian nasta’liq), a seal impression bearing the date 1113 AH (1701−2), and a letter mentioning the city of Janpur, it appears that these writings were executed in India during the 18th century. The calligrapher of this fragment is identified by the inscription “*raqamahu Mir Kalan*” (written by Mir Kalan), which appears at the top of both recto and verso. If this were to be the same Mir Kalan as the renowned painter active during the mid-18th century in Lucknow, then this identification would further support the theory that this calligraphic series in the Library of Congress collections is a corpus of materials produced by several writers active in 18th-century India. The calligraphies are typically written in hasty nasta’liq on white paper, framed in blue, and pasted to pink or salmon cardboard. They stand out for being in rather poor condition, in many cases badly damaged by worm holes and/or water stains. Some bear squiggle marks in the margins, while others include seal impressions that were cut out and pasted onto the cardboards. In most cases, an attribution to a calligrapher is written at the top, preceded by the expression *raqamahu* or *khatt-i* (the handwriting of). The text of the fragment is composed of both *nazm* (poetry) and *naskh* (prose), a combination typical of the art of composition. The author begins with two *bayts* (verses) of poetry, then complains about the hardships of separation, invokes the *shawq* and *ishtiyaq* (passion) of friendship, and ends his *maktub* (letter) by stating that he offers it as a flower to his loved one. This calligraphic letter's verso also contains a seal impression in the lower center bearing the name Sayyid ‘Ali Taqi Khan. In the lower-left corner appears a squiggle design as well. The text itself begins with a praise of God *huwa al-’aziz* (he is the Glorified) and a poetical excerpt on the pain of being separated from a friend. Then come the contents of this *’irfani* (deeply spiritual) letter; the author insists he has not forgotten his friend, that his love is—like an inscription on a stone—incoeffaceable. He assures him that he sees him everywhere he looks (even in the walls) and that he is engaged in continuous *dhikr* (remembrance) of him. Finally, he apologizes for not being able to visit him due to weakness and fatigue, but promises that, as soon as he gets well, he will run to him with passion.

*On the Lovers’ Passion* (Persian), Iran, ca. 17th-18th century, [www.wdl.org/6893](http://www.wdl.org/6893) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes an anecdote about the *ishtiyaq-i muhibb va mahbub* (passion of the lover and the beloved), as written in red ink in the upper-right corner. As the author then notes, the story seems to have been recorded by the prolific Arab prose writer al-Jahiz (died 869, 255 AH). The
subsequent text describes the tragic story of two lovers who drowned at sea. The text is executed in minute shikastah-nasta'liq script in diagonal lines in two columns. Written on a beige paper, the text is framed by cloud bands on a gold background. The text panel is framed by a blue border with red and pink flowers and pasted to a larger sheet of paper backed by cardboard. The fragment appears to be signed in the upper-left corner; however, the signature is too small to be legible. The layout of the composition and the use of shikastah-nasta'liq script suggest that the piece was made in Iran during the 17th–18th centuries.

**Calligraphy** (Persian), Iran or India, ca. 18th-19th century, www.wdl.org/6894 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a poem in Persian that describes a ruler's duty to share his wealth. The verses read: “Majesty and Affection of Poets / If a variety of ripe peaches are brought to / Your servants by you or they (bring them themselves) / It is not permitted to eat alone. / […]they are right and know (?)”. The verses are written in black nasta'liq script and outlined by cloud bands on a background painted in gold and decorated by floral motifs. In the upper-right corner, the intersection between the diagonal lines of text and the rectangular frame is filled by an illuminated triangle (or thumb piece). The text panel is framed by gold, blue, and green borders and is pasted to a larger pink sheet of paper backed by cardboard. The fragment is neither signed nor dated, but may have been executed in Iran or India sometime during the 18th–19th centuries.

**Verses on the Permanence of Good Deeds** (Arabic and Persian), India, ca. 1575-1600, www.wdl.org/6896 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes verses composed by the celebrated Persian poet Ḥāfiẓ (died 1388–89, 791 AH) on the futility of worldly goods. Beginning with a praise of God, huwa al-fard (the Unique), in the upper-left corner, the verses continue: “Oh wealthy one, soothe the heart of the indigent / Because the treasury of gold, riches, and coins will not remain / On this topaz canopy (the sky) they have inscribed in gold / That nothing will remain except the good deeds of the generous ones.” The verses are executed in black nastaliq script on blue paper and outlined in cloud bands on a lavishly illuminated background. Between the two bayts (verses) of poetry appear illuminated triangles (or thumb pieces), which fill in the interim space created by the intersection of the diagonal lines of text and the rectangular frame. In the lower-right corner appears the name of the calligrapher, Muhammad Husayn al-Kashmiri. Originally from Kashmir, he became a pupil of Mir 'Ali Heravi and then joined the imperial book atelier of the Mughal emperor Akbar.
(reigned 1556–1605) in Agra. There, Muhammad Husayn al-Kashmiri was responsible for transcribing a royal copy of Amir Khusraw Dihlavī's *Khamsah* (Quintet) in 1595–98 (now in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore). Other calligraphic specimens, including one dated 1580 in the Shrine of Imam Riza in Mashhad, Iran, suggest that this fragment in the collections of the Library of Congress was executed in India around 1575–1600.

*Verses by Ḥāfiẓ* (Persian), India, ca. 19th century, [www.wdl.org/6903](http://www.wdl.org/6903) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a *ruba‘i* (iambic pentameter quatrain), composed by the famous Persian poet Ḥāfiẓ (died 1388–89, 791 AH). The verses use *‘irfani* (mystical) terms to urge the exculpation of the beloved's faults: “If from the hand of your musky tress, a fault is passed, passed / And if against us from their dark mole, an act of tyranny is passed, passed / If there is no (mystical) sect for memory's indignation, bring wine / Every foulness that you see (as) purity is passed, passed.” The text is written in black nasta'liq script typical of calligraphic works produced in India during the 19th century. Drawing on the creative potential of the script, the calligrapher has chosen to superimpose certain letters in each line, thereby creating three columns of overlaid letters repeated over the four lines of text. The visual effect is balanced and artistic. Although the calligraphic piece is not signed, a later note on the fragment's verso attributes the piece to a certain Hafiz Ibrahim. If this attribution is accepted, Hafiz Ibrahim appears to have been a calligrapher in the nasta'liq script active in India during the 19th century.

*Khusraw Kills a Lion* (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6905](http://www.wdl.org/6905) [2 pages]

This painting depicts an episode from the second book of Niẓāmī Ganjavī's *Khamsah* (Quintet) entitled *Khusraw va Shirin*. In this book, the adventures and battles of the Persian king Khusraw are described, and his love for the Armenian princess Shirin. At a feast one day Khusraw and Shirin were sitting and drinking together (per the folio's verso) when suddenly a lion approached the royal pavilion. Thereupon, the king, albeit drunk, made a fist, hit the lion in the ear, and killed it on the spot. The painting follows the text very closely by depicting Shirin and her attendants still in the pavilion and King Khusraw killing the lion with his bare hands. The painting's style and the text layout resemble manuscripts produced for the market in Iran during the 16th and 17th centuries. The verso of this page describes Khusraw's killing of the lion. Above and below the composition appear the attending verses written in black nasta'liq script in four columns. The text is framed by cloud bands and appears on a gold background decorated with blue and red flowers. The entire text and painting panel is framed by variously colored borders and is pasted to a larger sheet of cream-colored paper. On the verso the text is written in black nasta'liq script in four columns and separated by gold gutters decorated with black dots.
An illuminated chapter heading in the center of the text panel includes the title of the section, in which Khusraw and Shirin sit together. The text panel is framed by variously colored borders and is pasted to a larger sheet of cream-colored paper. Another painting from a different manuscript of Niẓāmī's *Khusraw va Shirin* is also held in the collections of the Library of Congress. It depicts King Khusraw in battle.

**Letter Exercise** (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6914](http://www.wdl.org/6914) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes an exercise in nasta'liq script that consists of mufradat (combining letters) in various formations. Albums of mufradat exercises include *al-huruf al-mufradah*, in the Ottoman tradition, *huruf-i muqatta'a* (the single letters) of the Arabic alphabet in sequence, followed by letters in their composite form. Exercise books begin at least by the 16th century. They were used as books of exemplars of calligraphy to introduce students into the practice of handwriting and provide chains of transmission of calligraphic knowledge through the centuries. This particular fragment bears witness to the practice of mufradat exercises in nasta'liq script that seems to have existed among calligraphers active in 18th-century India. The script and decorative patterns—most especially the *abri* or *ebru* (marbled) papers used both for the text panel and the outside frame, backed by cardboard—support such a provenance. Although the calligraphic panel is not signed, a note appears on the fragment's verso. It reads: "*bi-khatt-i* [by the hand of] Muhammad Sa'd al-Din." This note may be a later attribution of the calligraphic panel to Muhammad Sa'd (or Sa'id) al-Din, about whom information is wanting.

**A Friend's Letter** (Persian), Persia, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6942](http://www.wdl.org/6942) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment contains an incomplete letter from a man to his friend written in a fine shikastah-nasta'liq script typical of 18th-century compositions from Persia (Iran). Framed by cloud bands and placed on a gold background with blue vine motifs, the text is comprised of four lines. Beginning with an invocation to God, *Huwa*, (He) in the top-right corner, the letter continues: “Because it's been a very long time / That I haven't (been able) to write a worthy letter, / Because a friend among friends wants to write to / Kind people to find out how they are doing . . . .”

**Beginning of Sa'di's "Gulistan"** (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6943](http://www.wdl.org/6943) [1 page]

A didactic work in both prose and verse, the famous *Gulistan* (The rose garden) was composed in 1258 by the Persian poet and prose writer Shaykh Sa'di Shirazi (circa 1213–92), a contemporary of the famous poet Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207–73). It contains a number of moralizing stories that bear similarities to the fables of the French writer Jean de La Fontaine (1621–95). In Persian lands, Sa'di's maxims were highly valued and manuscripts of his work were widely copied and illustrated. Sa'di notes that he composed *Gulistan* to teach the rules of conduct in life both to kings and dervishes. The work, which includes eight chapters, an introduction, and a conclusion, was used as a tool of instruction and commentary. Each chapter narrates a number of stories, maxims and admonitions. This fragment is the first page of the *Gulistan* 's introduction, initiated at the top by a *bismillah* (in the name of God) and followed by Sa'di's praise of God. He states: “Praise to God of Majesty and Glory. Obedience to him is a cause of approach and gratitude in increase of benefits. Every inhalation of the breath prolongs life and every expiration of it gladdens our nature. Every breath confers two benefits and for every benefit gratitude is due: Whose hand and tongue is capable to fulfill obligations of thanks to Him?” Executed on a white-and-brown *ebru* or
abri (marbled) paper, the text is written in black ta'liq. This fluid cursive script is typical of 18th-century Indian compositions. Red strokes serve to separate visually the lines of text, both in the diagonal and the vertical. The text is framed by a salmon border and pasted to a cardboard backing decorated with a light-purple paper.

**Verses by Shaykh Baha'i** (Persian), Persia, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/6934](http://www.wdl.org/6934) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes verses composed by Shaykh Baha'i, a Persian mystical poet of the 11th century. The poem describes the many ways in which to express one's love of God: “Oh, the arrow of Your grief (is) the target of Your lovers' heart(s) / People are mesmerized by You, but You are absent from both time and place / Sometimes I retire to my monastery, others I inhabit a mosque / That means that I search for You from house to house / Everyone speaks about his love for You in (his own) language / The lover by the song of sorrow and the minstrel by (his) melody.” The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script written diagonally on a cream-colored paper decorated with delicate flower and leaf motifs painted in gold. The spaces created by the intersection of the diagonal lines of text and the rectangular frame are filled by illuminated triangles (or thumb pieces). The central text panel is framed by several borders, including an outermost border which contains further verses in Persian individually cut out and pasted into the rectangular panels. The entirety of the composition is contained on a beige sheet of paper painted with gold flowers and backed by cardboard. The composition is neither signed nor dated; however, the script and decorative style are typical of calligraphies made during the Safavid period (16th century) in Persia.

**Quatrain for the Loved One** (Persian), Persia, ca. 17th century, [www.wdl.org/6930](http://www.wdl.org/6930) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a *ruba'i* (iambic pentameter quatrain) describing competition for the loved one. At the top, the verses are initiated by an invocation to God, “Huwa” (He), and the *abjad* (numerical equivalent) 111. The poem then reads: “That person who holds a glass (of wine) in his hand / Has everlasting pleasure and joy. / We, wine, devout and pious ones, / Which one will the beloved prefer?” The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper and are outlined in cloud bands on a background painted in gold. The text panel is surrounded by several monochromatic frames and pasted to a larger pink sheet of paper backed by cardboard. The calligrapher, Hasan Shamlu, signed his work in the lower-right corner of the text panel with the expression *mashaqahu* (written by). Hasan Shamlu (died circa 1666–67) was a calligrapher in nasta'liq script who followed closely the style of his predecessor Mir 'Imad (died 1615). Works by Hasan Shamlu are rather uncommon; calligraphies by Mir 'Imad are less rare, and are well represented in the collections of the Library of Congress. Both calligraphers provide a continuum of calligraphic works produced in nasta'liq script in (Greater) Persia during the course of the 17th century.

**Sample of a Hopeful Letter** (Persian), Persia, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6931](http://www.wdl.org/6931) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment is intended as an example of how a letter to a friend is to be written. The text, written in a fluid shikastah-nasta'liq in black ink, is outlined in cloud bands and placed on a background painted in gold. Several borders in orange, blue, and gold frame the text panel, which is pasted to a larger sheet of pink paper backed with cardboard for support. The letter begins with two verses of poetry about
hope after disappointment. They read: “Look at the bird of the heart, his wing and feathers burned / He has the hope (to return to) the nest, still still still . . .” The sample letter then proceeds with expressions that the writer must use when missing a friend and wishing to see him again. The calligrapher's signature appears vertically at the top of the text panel and reads: "mashaqahu al-'abd al-aqall . . . 'Abdallah al-musammah bi-khatim al-anbiya" (written by the modest servant 'Abdallah known as the "Seal of the Prophets"). The calligrapher, whose name is shared with that of the Prophet Muhammad, has added a note indicating that he wrote his composition in the month of Muharram. Although he does not specify the year, the script is typical of 18th-century Persian calligraphic works.

**Quatrain on Reaching Divine Unit** (Persian), ca. early 17th century, [www.wdl.org/6933](http://www.wdl.org/6933) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a *rubā‘i* (iambic pentameter quatrain) on the subject of spiritual transformation. At the top right, an invocation to God, *Huwa al-‘aziz* (He is the Glorified), precedes the quatrain's verses, which read: “When the close of my pain became the reason of my cure / My lowness changed into loftiness, and disbelief became faith / Spirit and heart and body were the obstacle to the path (toward God) / But now body became heart, heart became spirit, and spirit became the ‘Spirit of Spirits’.” The mystic describes his path towards God as *hijab* (veiled) because of his physical self. Only once he transforms himself into pure spirit can he be united with God, the *Jan Janan* (Spirit of Spirits). This motif of revelation and divine unity through spiritual metamorphosis is typical of *‘irfani* (mystical) poets, such as Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi (popularly known in Persian as Mawlana, and in English as Rumi, 1207–73). Below the quatrain, the calligrapher, (Mir) 'Imad al-Hasani, has signed his work with his name and a request for God's forgiveness. Mir 'Imad was born in 1552, spent time in Herat and Qazvin, and finally settled in Isfahan (then capital of Safavid Persia), where, as a result of his implication in court intrigues, he was murdered in 1615. He was a master of nastā'liq script, whose works were admired and copied by his contemporaries and later collected by the Mughals. Many works in international collections are signed by him, although whether all these pieces are really by his hand remains uncertain.

**Quatrain on True Knowledge** (Persian), ca. early 17th century, [www.wdl.org/7011](http://www.wdl.org/7011) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment provides a *rubā‘i* (iambic pentameter quatrain) written in black nastā'liq script. The text is outlined in cloud bands filled with blue and placed on a gold background. In the upper-right corner, a gold decorative motif fills in the triangular space otherwise left empty by the intersection of the rectangular frame and the diagonal lines of text. The verses read “I arrived at a worshipper's in the area of Baylaqan. / I said: ‘With tutoring purify me from ignorance.’ / He said: ‘Oh, Thoughtful One, go, because, like the earth, you can withstand all, / Or bury everything that you have read under the soil.’” These verses show how the poet sought out *tarbiyat* (spiritual teaching or tutoring) from a wise man, who responded that learned knowledge may be cast aside. Baylaqan (present-day Beylakan, Azerbaijan) was a city known for its purifying waters.

**Illuminated Frontispiece** (Persian), ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6936](http://www.wdl.org/6936) [1 page]

This illuminated frontispiece was intended for a divan (compendium) of poems, which included *kulliyat* (collections) of *muqat‘at* (fragmentary verses) and *qasa‘id* (lyric poems), among many poetic forms. The name of each *kitab* (book) of verse is inscribed in white ink in every individual rectangular panel on the
vertical left border of the frontispiece. These title panels are painted directly on the cardboard, which serves as a backing for the rest of the salvaged frontispiece. For this reason, they possibly are not part of the original piece. The frontispiece consists of a central roundel decorated with seven blue petals stemming from a central orange circle bordered on its perimeter by a gold strip. The outer perimeter is decorated in red, and delicate finials emanate like rays from the central roundel. The corners of the central panel are also filled with illuminated patterns, forming a diamond-shaped plain panel. All around the rectangular panel further decorative medallions ornament the margins of the page, which is pasted to the aforementioned cardboard. This frontispiece may have belonged to a Persian manuscript made in the 16th or 17th centuries.

**Mufradat Exercises** (Persian), ca. 17th century, [www.wdl.org/6938](http://www.wdl.org/6938) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment creates an illuminated carpet page, which combines *mufradat* (letter exercises) on three horizontal lines and Persian poetical excerpts written in diagonally between colored triangular corners (called "thumb pieces"). It is the first of two fragments from the same fragmentary album held in the collections of the Library of Congress. Albums of mufradat exercises include *al-huruf al-mufradah*, or, in the Ottoman tradition, *huruf-i muqatta'a* (the single letters) of the Arabic alphabet in sequence, followed by letters in their composite form, called in the Turkish tradition *murekkebe* (literally "pairs"). Exercise books begin at least by the 17th century in Ottoman and Persian lands. They were used as books of exemplars of calligraphy to introduce students into the practice of *husn al-khatt* (beautiful handwriting) and bear witness to the chain of transmission of calligraphic knowledge throughout the centuries. This fragment includes double-letter combinations, with the letters $b$, gutteral $t$, and gutteral $s$, and subsequent letters of the alphabet arranged in three horizontal registers. Immediately below each horizontal band of composite letters appears a series of Persian verses by several authors. The poetry of Abu Sa'id Abu al-Khayr (967–1049) and Shaykh Awhad al-Din is quoted. Awhad al-Din can be identified as Hakim Awhad al-Din Anvari (died 1189 or 1190), an early Persian poet who composed a *kulliyat* (compendium of poems) often quoted in illuminated or illustrated poetical works produced during the period of Timurid and Safavid rule in Iran. The lowest horizontal band containing motifs on a black ground and two gold scalloped roundels is composed of two rectangular panels cut out from another work and pasted onto the sheet. This procedure shows that materials were culled from other sources and “recycled” in other works, such as this poetical letter album.

**Mufradat Exercises** (Persian), ca. 17th century, [www.wdl.org/6939](http://www.wdl.org/6939) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment creates an illuminated carpet page, which combines *mufradat* (letter) exercises on three horizontal lines and Persian poetical excerpts written in diagonal between colored triangular corners (called "thumb pieces"). It is the second of two fragments from the same fragmentary album held in the collections of the Library of Congress. Albums of mufradat exercises include *al-huruf al-mufradah*, or, in the Ottoman tradition, *huruf-i muqatta'a* (the single letters) of the Arabic alphabet in sequence, followed by letters in their composite form, called in the Turkish tradition *murekkebe* (literally "pairs").
Exercise books begin at least by the 17th century in Ottoman and Persian lands. They were used as books of exemplars of calligraphy to introduce students into the practice of *husn al-khatt* (beautiful handwriting) and bear witness to the chain of transmission of calligraphic knowledge throughout the centuries. This fragment includes double-letter combinations with the letters *h*, guttural *s*, and *sh*, and subsequent letters of the alphabet arranged in three horizontal registers. Immediately below each horizontal band of composite letters appears a series of Persian verses by several authors. One is identified with the epithet Sa'd al-Haq wa-al-Din: he may be synonymous with the great Persian poet Sa'di (died 1292). The lowest horizontal band containing motifs on a dark-blue ground and two gold scalloped roundels is composed of two rectangular panels cut out from another work and pasted onto the sheet. This procedure shows that materials were culled from other sources and “recycled” in other works, such as this poetical letter exercise. In the right margin appears the number 13, which indicates that the folio was probably one of many pages in a now-dispersed album.

**Note About the Construction of a Takiyah-Khanah** (Persian), Iran or India, ca. 20th century, [www.wdl.org/6940](http://www.wdl.org/6940) [1 page]

This large piece of paper, constructed of a number of separate sheets pasted together, includes four lines of writing in nasta'liq script. At the top appears the number 786, which in the *abjab* (letter number) system is equivalent to sum total of the letters appearing in the *bismillah* (in the name of God). In other words, the number 786 at the top of the page functions as an initial “In praise of God, the Merciful, the Beneficent,” immediately before the text's main contents. The four lines immediately below state that a certain Muhammad ‘Ali ordered the construction of a building intended for the *dhikr* (commemorations) services and *matam* (mourning) ceremonies of the martyrdom of Imam Husayn. Such a building is called a *takiyah* or *takiyah-khanah*, and is used for the staging of *ta'ziyah* (Shi'i passion plays) reenacting the events at Karbala in 680. Takiyahs were built by Shi'i communities in Iran and India during the 19th and 20th centuries. One of the most famous takiyahs was ordered built by Mu'avin al-Mulk in Kermanshah (southwestern Iran) in 1895−96. A lavishly decorated and multipart complex, it was constructed for a variety of religious events and performances linked to Imam Husayn's martyrdom.

**Verses by Amir Khusraw Dihlavi** (Persian), 1590, [www.wdl.org/6941](http://www.wdl.org/6941) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a number of verses written by the poet Amir Khusraw Dihlavi (circa 1253–1325), whose name is noted in the upper-right corner of the central text panel as “li-Amir Khusraw.” The verses describe the permanence of love as a flower bud in perpetual blossom, and read: “This so beautiful, pleasing one in the rose garden / (May God place) a thorn in my eyes if one of them (the flowers) is similar to you / I enter and leave the garden a hundred times / (and) because of my distress I do not know which flower is in bloom / The dust of Kisra became a flower and the bejeweled crown turned to dust / The name of the lover still (remains) on every door and wall.” The text panel is framed by a number of other verses held in registers on a pink or blue ground painted with gold designs and is pasted to a larger sheet of blue paper with deer and flowers painted in gold. The composition is backed with cardboard for strengthening. In the lower-left corner and on the two horizontal lines of text below the central panel the calligrapher, Muhammad Husayn al-Katib ("the writer"), has signed his work with his
diminutives and his request for God's forgiveness of his sins. He also states that he completed the calligraphic panel in the year 998 AH (1590). Muhammad Husayn appears to have been active during the reign of the Safavid Shah 'Abbas I (reigned 1587–1629).

**Page from the "Farhang-i Jahangiri"** (Persian), India, 1618-19, [www.wdl.org/6956](http://www.wdl.org/6956) [2 pages]

This fragment is the third folio of the *Farhang-i Jahangiri*, a Persian lexicon purportedly executed in Agra in 1028 AH (1618–19). A total of four folios of this work are held in the collections of the Library of Congress. The author of this Persian-language *farhang* (dictionary) was Jamal al-Din Husayn b. Fakhr al-Din Hasan Inju Shirazi (died 1626), a learned man from an old Persian *sayyid* (noble) family who came from Persia to Akbar's court in India, where he held high offices. He began writing his dictionary in 1596–97 at Akbar’s request, basing it on Persian poems and previous lexicographical works. Because of the scope of the work and his continuous revisions, he did complete the work by the time of Akbar's death in 1605. Instead, he presented the work in 1608 to Akbar’s successor Jahangir. For this reason, Jamal al-Din's Persian dictionary came to be known as the *Farhang-i Jahangiri* (Jahangir's dictionary). Along with the *Burhan-i Qati’* and the *Farhang-i Rashidi*, it is one of the three most important Persian-language dictionaries produced in Mughal India. The recto of this folio provides a list of words starting with the letters *f–r* executed in red ink and followed by their definitions and sample usages in poetical excerpts. This list of *f–r* words continues in alphabetical order on the folio's verso. A marginal gloss cross-referenced to the main text with the number 4 appears in the center and outside the right vertical purple frame. This gloss offers additional comments and poetical excerpts on one of the words listed in the main text. The folio's margins are decorated with birds, storks, phoenixes, and mythical animals in a garden landscape painted in gold ink. During the early 20th century, a portion of the *Farhang-i Jahangiri* was acquired by the French art dealer Demotte, who cut out its pages and used the decorative margins as mounts for Safavid and Mughal paintings. In some cases, paintings remounted on margins originally intended for the dictionary retain the marginal glosses accompanying the main text.

**Illuminated First Page / Identification Note of the "Farhang-i Jahangiri"** (Persian), India, 1619, [www.wdl.org/6957](http://www.wdl.org/6957) [2 pages]

This fragment is the third folio of the *Farhang-i Jahangiri*, a Persian lexicon purportedly executed in Agra in 1028 AH (1618–19). A total of four folios of this work are held in the collections of the Library of Congress. The author of this Persian-language *farhang* (dictionary) was Jamal al-Din Husayn b. Fakhr al-Din Hasan Inju Shirazi (died 1626), a learned man from an old Persian *sayyid* (noble) family who came from Persia to Akbar's court in India, where he held high offices. He began writing his dictionary in 1596–97 at Akbar’s request, basing it on Persian poems and previous lexicographical works. Because of the scope of the work and his continuous revisions, he did complete the work by the time of Akbar's death in 1605. Instead, he presented the work in 1608 to Akbar’s successor Jahangir. For this reason, Jamal al-Din's Persian dictionary came to be known as the *Farhang-i Jahangiri* (Jahangir's dictionary). Along with the *Burhan-i Qati’* and the *Farhang-i Rashidi*, it is one of the three most important Persian-language
dictionaries produced in Mughal India. The first page of the farhang includes a *sarloh* (lavish illumination) followed by an Arabic *bismillah* (In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful) written in gold on a blue ground and followed by a translation in Persian. Then follows Jamal al-Din's introduction, which identifies the work as a lexicon or *lughatnamah* (book of words) containing a number of *lughat* (Persian- and Arabic-language words) and *istalahat* (expressions) compiled from a variety of works in *nazm* (prose) and *shi‘r* (verse). After his introduction, he includes an excerpt of poetry in Persian, the verses of which are separated by three small dots executed in red ink. The note on the verso identifies Jamal al-Din's work as having been completed in the *Dar al-sultanah* (Mughal capital) Agra in the month of Jumadah I 1028 (April 1619). Below the note appears a smeared area, which may have contained a former owner's ex-libris mark or reading statement. A sheet of gold also has been added to the lower part of the folio, camouflaging two seal impressions. Below the smudge and on top of the gold leaf appears a later note written in diagonal giving the truncated title of the work, i.e., *Kitab-i Farhang* (Dictionary). The text is framed by lavish gold-illuminated borders and margins decorated with putti, phoenixes, and grapes painted in gold ink. During the early 20th century, a section of the *Farhang-i Jahangiri* was acquired by the French art dealer Demotte, who cut out its pages and used the decorative margins as mounts for Safavid and Mughal paintings. In some cases, paintings remounted on margins originally intended for the dictionary retain the marginal glosses accompanying the main text.

*Protocol of Address* (Persian), India, ca. 17th-18th century, [www.wdl.org/6945](http://www.wdl.org/6945) [1 page]

This fragment probably formed part of a *munsha‘at* (collection of literary compositions) showing how to write appropriate praises to a ruler. Like this piece, a number of these calligraphies appear to have been executed in *ta‘liq* script in India during the 17th and 18th centuries. The collections of the Library of Congress hold other works of *insha‘* (composition), also made in India at this time, that provide examples of how to compose letters to a friend. This particular fragment demonstrates the composition of a *na‘t* or *munajat* (formal praise) to a ruler using his many *alqab* (honorific epithets). It provides a blueprint for the literary protocols used in addressing a high-ranking patron. Executed in black Indian *ta‘liq*, the text is outlined in gold cloud bands on a beige paper. The background is decorated with delicate flower-and-vine motifs painted in gold. In the lower panel, three lines of text are written diagonally, while the empty spaces in the upper-left and lower-right corners of this panel are filled by illuminated triangles (called “thumb pieces”). The text panel is framed by two blue borders and pasted to a pink sheet of paper backed by cardboard.

*Shi‘i Invocation to a Ruler* (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6947](http://www.wdl.org/6947) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment contains a Shi‘i praise to a ruler by comparing him to the figure of ‘Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, and his famous double-edged sword, Dhu al-Fiqar ("Cleaver of the Spine"): “Oh Dignity of Haydar, it shows on your forehead, / Your name is like Dhu al-Fiqar in battle.” The two verses thus compare the ruler to ‘Ali, the Haydar Allah (Lion of God), and liken his name to ‘Ali’s victorious sword. The text is written
in black nasta'liq on a beige paper framed by a light-brown border cut out and pasted to a larger sheet of paper backed by cardboard. In the outside margin, the calligrapher's name, Hafiz Nur Allah, seems to have been added at a later date. Nothing is known about this calligrapher, although the style and content of the fragment suggests that it was executed in a Shi'i milieu in India during the 18th century.

*Mufradat Exercise* (Persian), ca. 18th-19th century, [www.wdl.org/6948](http://www.wdl.org/6948) [1 page]

This calligraphic panel includes a letter exercise combining the letter *h* with all other letters of the alphabet starting with the letter *alif* (a) and ending with the letter *ya* (y). This particular exercise shows how an initial *h* letter must be connected to any number of subsequent letters or letter combinations. These composite letters, executed in nasta'liq script in black ink on white paper, are framed in blue and pasted to a purple piece of paper strengthened by a cardboard backing. Albums of *mufradat* (letter exercises) include *al-huruf al-mufradah* or, in the Ottoman tradition, *huruf-i muqatta'a* (the single letters), of the Arabic alphabet in sequence, followed by letters in their composite form (in the Turkish tradition, *murekkebe*, literally "pairs"). Exercise books begin at least during the 17th century and are typical of Ottoman calligraphic practices. They were used as books of exemplars of calligraphy to introduce students into the practice of *husn al-khatt* (beautiful handwriting) and bear witness to the chain of transmission of calligraphic knowledge throughout the centuries. The collections of the Library of Congress include a number of other letter exercise sheets.

*Sa'di,* "The Chinese Girl and the Slave" (Persian), Persia, 15th-16th century, [www.wdl.org/6949](http://www.wdl.org/6949) [2 page]

This fragment and its verso include the text of the 40th story from *Gulistan* (The rose garden) by Shaykh Sa'di Shirazi (circa 1213–92). This story describes a king's giving away of a Chinese servant girl to his slave after she refused the king's drunken advances. The text on the recto describes the slave in an unflattering manner. On the verso, the text continues by describing the king's passing the servant girl to the slave, since she was already "consumed." The terminal verses conclude: “The thirsty heart does not wish for limpid water / Half of which was consumed by a fetid mouth. / How can a king's hand again touch / An orange after it has fallen into dung?” The text is written in black nasta'liq script on a blue paper framed by several borders and pasted to a beige paper decorated by flower-and-leaf motifs painted in gold. The prose part of the text is executed in continuous horizontal lines, while the poetical verses interspersed throughout the narrative are outlined by rectangular frames provided with central gutters. This layout is found in manuscripts of Sa'di's *Gulistan* produced during the Timurid and Safavid periods in Persia (Iran), i.e., during the 15th and 16th centuries.

*'Id Prayer for Good Fortune* (Persian), India, ca. 18th-19th century, [www.wdl.org/6950](http://www.wdl.org/6950) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes two *bayts* (verses) wishing its owner prosperity and happiness on the occasion of an 'id. “It is 'id, congratulations on the new celebration / May the crown of fortune be your summit / May the Chapters of Victory and Blessing / Be your protectors and supporters in both worlds.”
In this prayer, which probably was written for the celebration of the 'Id-i Noruz (New Year), a patron is wished protection through two Qur'anic chapters, namely Surat al-Fath (Victory, Qur'an 48) and Surat Tabarak (Blessing), otherwise known as Surat al-Mulk (The kingdom, Qur'an 67). These two verses are known for their apotropaic and protective powers, and thus are appropriate in a prayer wishing success and well-being. The verses are executed in Indian naskh script in dark-brown ink and are framed by cloud bands on a background painted with a light-brown wash. Each bayt is executed in diagonal and contained in a separate rectangular frame. The whole of the text frame has been pasted to a larger sheet of beige paper backed by cardboard. In the lower-left corner appears the calligrapher's signature, which reads: “mashagahu al-faqir (written by the poor) Agha Muhammad 'Ali (or Muhammad 'Ali Agha).” Part of the signature—along with the last word (bad) of the poem's final verse—has been filled in later, since a part of the original calligraphy was lost or damaged. Muhammad 'Ali is otherwise unrecorded. However, judging from the fragment's script and theme, it can be surmised that this piece was executed in India sometime during the 18th or 19th century as a New Year's gift to an eminent patron.

**Advice to a King** (Persian), Persia, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/6951](http://www.wdl.org/6951) [2 pages]

This fragment includes an excerpt from *Bustan* (The fruit orchard), by Shaykh Sa'di Shirazi (circa 1213–92), in which he offers *nasihat* (advice) to a ruler. The author counsels a king not to worry about what he does not have, because all things come to an end. He also notes that good deeds matter, as only a man's reputation and the memory of him remain after his death. Sa'di's text continues on the fragment's verso, as evidenced by the similar subject matter and the continuation of the *makun takiyah* (catchwords) in the lower-left corner of the recto. The calligraphic fragment is executed in black nasta'liq script in horizontal and diagonal lines on a beige folio decorated with polygonal motifs highlighted in gold. Various text panels are framed by simple borders, creating a complex web of verses in a quilt-like pattern. The text panel is framed by several borders and pasted to blue paper decorated with flower-and-medallion motifs painted in gold. The folio's layout and style are typical of works produced in Safavid Persia (Iran) during the 16th century.

**Two Verses of Poetry** (Persian), India, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6952](http://www.wdl.org/6952) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a small rectangular panel of text pasted onto a much larger page decorated with a blue paper and painted with gold flower motifs. This fragment resembles a number of pages used to mount calligraphies and paintings in Mughal Indian albums, such as the famous Saint Petersburg *Muraqqa*. The text panel includes eight verses inscribed in rectangular frames and decorated in gold cloud bands, constituting a "text" border for the central panel. At the top and bottom of the main panel appear cut out pieces of *ebru* or *abri* (marble paper) and illuminated finials typically reserved for the top of a *sarloh* (text page). The two lines of poetry in the central panel, written in black nasta'liq, framed by cloud bands outlined in blue ink, and placed on a beige background decorated with painted gold flowers, read: “When the spirit of the world came out of the garden with a floating skirt / The birds of the garden's spirit flew up, you say, like out of a body.” The poet describes the arrival of his loved one, nicknamed the *Jan-i jahan* (Spirit of the world), and the euphoria he feels upon seeing her. As birds fly up, his spirit rises so high as if to pierce through his bodily cage. The calligrapher has followed to the letter the maxim, "form fits function." Taking his clue from the repeated *n* sound in the Persian poem, he
has emphasized the circular interlacing shape of the nun (n) letters on the sheet of paper. Like lacework, the calligraphy is “stitched” together by the artistic layout of the recurring rounded nuns.

**Verses on Hidden Love** (Persian), ca. 1550-1600, [www.wdl.org/6953](http://www.wdl.org/6953) [1 page]

This calligraphic panel is executed in black nasta'liq script on a ground decorated with flowers painted in gold and topped by a painting depicting two foxes in a landscape. The poetic text describes the subterfuges of the beloved. The poem reads in part: “Yesterday that moon (the beloved) brushed the curls of her hair / Over her face, she placed her amber-smelling hair / By this stratagem, she covered her beautiful visage / So that he who is not allowed cannot see her.” A number of letters and words are repeated in this calligraphic panel, so as to create a playful composition that fills up the entirety of the text panel. This calligraphic game—itself a device of dissimulation—echoes the contents of the poem. Below the text panel and outside the text frames a minute inscription in black ink appears written horizontally on the beige paper decorated with gold flecks. The inscription attributes the calligraphy to the *qiblat al-khattatin* (destination of the calligraphers), Mir 'Imad Qazvini. The calligrapher can be identified as Mir 'Imad al-Hasani (died 1615). He was born in 1552, spent time in Herat (present-day Afghanistan) and Qazvin, and finally settled in Isfahan (then the capital of Safavid Persia) where, as a result of his implication in court intrigues, he was murdered in 1615. He was a master of nasta'liq script, whose works were admired and copied by his contemporaries and later collected by the Mughals. It is possible that this particular calligraphy was decorated, when it was made, by the painting of two foxes and pasted to a gold-flecked paper under the Mughals. A square seal impression in the lower-right corner bearing the epithet Bahadur and the date 1186 AH (1772‒73) supports the hypothesis that this piece belonged to a Mughal patron by the second half of the 18th century at the latest. The Library of Congress collections include other calligraphies by, or attributed to, Mir ‘Imad.

**Bahram Gur Hunting** (Persian), ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/6954](http://www.wdl.org/6954) [2 pages]

This painting represents an episode drawn from Nizāmī Ganjavī's *Haft Paykar* (Seven thrones), the fourth book of his *Khamsah* (Quintet). The great Sasanian king Bahram Gur (reigned 430‒38), famous for his hunting prowess and thus known by his nickname (Bahram Gur means “wild ass”), astonishes his companions with his quasi-divine skill and power in hunting onagers. After his expedition and as a gesture of generosity, he orders 1,200 onagers (half to be branded and half to be earmarked with gold rings) to be distributed among his people. The scene shows the ruler and his entourage on horseback against a pink and green landscape as they shoot wild
animals with arrows. Behind a hillock appear four other men either looking at the scene below or observing the birds flying in the gold-painted sky. Above and below the painting are illuminated panels of the story's text, which continues on the fragment's verso. The illuminated panels with diagonal text and triangular corners, or "thumb pieces," in the upper-right corner create a visual marker for the painting. The painting is typical of 16th-century Persian compositions, but it was repaired and repainted at a later date. A large rectangular panel was added, and missing areas of the painting were filled. Some of the characters' faces also bear overpainting. The collections of the Library of Congress contain several other paintings illustrating this and other episodes from Nizāmī's Khamsah.

*Painting of Khusraw in Battle; Shirin Looks for Khusraw* (Persian), ca. 20th century, www.wdl.org/6955 [2 pages]

This painting depicting a battle scene between two armies was inserted into a manuscript of the second book of Nizāmī Ganjavī's Khamsah (Quintet), *Khusraw va Shirin* (Shirin and Khusraw). In this book, the adventures and battles of the Persian king Khusraw are described, as is his love for the Armenian princess Shirin. The painting does not appear to match the text, which is about Shirin's search for Khusraw. Probably inserted during the 20th century, the painting depicts soldiers on horseback attacking their fleeing enemies with drawn swords. One soldier holds an orange war banner as well. The text on the verso describes *raftan Shirin bi-talab-i Khusraw* (Shirin's search for Khusraw), which is also written in red ink in the chapter heading on the right of the third line of text. The verses are written in black nasta'liq script in four columns, divided by three gutters marked off by gold-painted vertical lines. The text panel is framed by lines of several colors. The original text, executed in black nasta'liq script in four columns, may date from as early as the 16th century, although it also may be a modern reproduction.

*Levha* (Arabic), Iran or India, 1721-22, www.wdl.org/6944 [1 page]

This *levha* (calligraphic panel) reads: “Ya 'Ali, ruhi fadakah” (Oh 'Ali, my spirit is sacrificed for you). The letters are arranged artistically to fill the calligraphic panel, making the reading of the phrase quite difficult. Diacritics (vocalization signs) also fill in the composition's empty spaces. Although meaning is secondary to form, this vocative phrase calling for loyalty to 'Ali underscores the Shi'i message of the panel. In the left vertical border, the artist,
Muhammad Ibrahim, has included his seal and has dated his composition 1134 AH (1721–22). The right and left vertical borders both are decorated with blue-and-white ebru or abri (marbled) paper, while the whole composition is backed by a thick cardboard covered by pink paper. In the left margin appears the number 205, which suggests that this particular calligraphic fragment was but one of many such specimens formerly included in an album of calligraphies. The square seal impression of Muhammad Ibrahim appears in another calligraphic fragment held in the collections of the Library of Congress, which includes a mirror image of the expression: “‘Ali wali Allah” (‘Ali is the Vice Regent of God). Shi'i calligraphic panels such as this one by Muhammad Ibrahim are found in Iran and India, and were either bound into albums or displayed on walls.

**The Lover's Lament** (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6976](http://www.wdl.org/6976) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a lover's lament about his beloved's indifference. The verses read: “My body is exhausted from sorrow, what will I do? / The fire is in my burning heart, what will I do? / Because of (her), who brands my deplorable heart / (She) is a garden and spring for others, what will I do?” The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper decorated with bird and leaf designs painted in gold. The main text panel is bordered by a number of other verses in both diagonal and vertical registers forming a frame. The entire composition is pasted to a larger sheet of paper decorated with a pounced vegetal motif in green and backed by cardboard. The fragment is neither dated nor signed. However, it may have been produced in Iran during the 16th or 17th century.

**Nizami's "Iskandarnamah"** (Persian), ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6977](http://www.wdl.org/6977) [1 page]

This folio includes a fragmentary text from Nizami's *Iskandarnamah* (The book of Alexander the Great), the fifth book of his *Khamsah* (Quintet). Written during the last few decades of the 12th century, the *Khamsah* consists of five *kitab* (books) written in *mathnavi* (rhyming distichs). The *Iskandarnamah* of Nizami Ganjavi (1140 or 1141–1202 or 1203) recounts Alexander the Great's heroic exploits, battles, and journey to China, and his travel to Gog and Magog at the end of the world. It is loosely based on the epic narrative of Alexander's deeds as recounted by Firdawsi in his *Shahnamah* (Book of kings) completed in the early 11th century, which may have drawn from the history of Alexander as written by his official biographer, Callisthenes of Olynthus (circa 370–327 BC). This particular text is executed in black nasta'liq script in four columns separated by plain gutters. The text panel is framed by lines of various colors and pasted to a larger sheet bearing a number of a posteriori notes at the top. It appears to date from the 16th or 17th century. Another textual fragment of Nizami's *Iskandarnamah* is also held in the collections of the Library of Congress and can be seen in the World Digital Library.

**The Ephemerality of the World** (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6968](http://www.wdl.org/6968) [1 page]

This calligraphic panel includes a number of verses describing the transience of worldly goods. Two lines of Arabic poetry appear in the upper horizontal panels, and two lines of Persian poetry frame the central text panel on the right and left vertical. The line in the left vertical contains the first half of a verse from Firdawsi's *Shahnamah* (Book of kings). The right vertical reads: “We have no other friend beside you in the whole world.” The left vertical reads: “Who knows except for God” (the missing subsequent line is “How the wind will play tomorrow”). The four horizontal verses inscribed in black nasta'liq script on the
The illuminated ground of the central panel also describe the impermanence of the world: “The world passes and how engaged you are in it / Now that a cold breeze of old age blows / What trust in the leaf and the branch of the tree / Especially when the autumn wind (begins to) blow.” Each calligraphic panel is cut out and pasted on the black background, which is provided with a pink frame decorated with gold leaves. The composition is pasted to a larger white sheet of paper decorated with gold, blue, and red flowers and backed by cardboard. The fragment is neither dated nor signed. However, it appears to have been produced in 16th or 17th century Iran and placed later in a muraqqa (album) of calligraphies.

Moral Lesson on Friendship (Persian), Iran, ca. 17th-18th century, [www.wdl.org/6960](http://www.wdl.org/6960) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment appears to comprise an excerpt from the *Gulistan* (The rose garden) by Shaykh Sa'di Shirazi (circa 1213–92), in which he provides readers with a variety of hikayat (anecdotes or stories with moral lessons). This text describes the anger of a king toward his servant and his desire to punish him, whereupon the servant writes a letter to stress his faithfulness and to seek forgiveness. This particular story stresses the virtue of royal clemency. The text is executed in black shikastah-nasta'liq on a cream-colored paper. The lines of text, which alternate diagonally, are framed by cloud bands on a gold background. The text panel is framed with red, pink, and green borders and is pasted to a larger sheet of paper backed by cardboard. In the lower-right corner of the frames appears a minute scribble, which may be the calligrapher's signature. Unfortunately, it is now illegible. Calligraphic sheets written in shikastah-nasta'liq script similar to this fragment were produced in Iran during the 17th and 18th centuries. Another calligraphic fragment from *Gulistan*, similar to this one, is in the collections of the Library of Congress and is also presented in World Digital Library.

Standing Woman and a Ghazal of Hafiz (Persian), Persia, ca. 17th century, [www.wdl.org/6963](http://www.wdl.org/6963) [1 page]

This painting includes an outer frame comprised of a ghazal (lyric poem) composed by the Persian poet Hafiz (died 1388‒89). The ghazal describes a lover's affection for his beloved until the day of his death. The lover compares the woman's eyebrows to a mihrab (the prayer niche in a mosque) and thus the direction of his own repeated desirous entreaties. He also states that he is willing to seek out magicians to find a love potion to spellbind her. It appears that the poem is linked to the painting it contains, which depicts a beautiful young woman walking among plants and using her right index finger to point to her strikingly arched eyebrows. Between her two fingers she also holds a tuft of hair, either taken from her own head or perhaps given to her by her lover as a token of his affection. The motif of the large abru (arched eyebrow) as a mark of feminine beauty is common in Persian art and literature. The composition's style is typical of single-sheet paintings produced in Safavid Isfahan, the capital of Persia (Iran), during the 17th century. At that time, painters such as Riza 'Abbasi (died 1635) and Mu'in Musavvir (died circa 1707) frequently depicted single figures or lovers in embrace. Backgrounds tend toward single tones (such as grisaille) or include various motifs lightly painted in gold as used in this particular composition. This painting originally was signed, as a small black smudge is visible on the right of the woman's hip. The artist's signature has been erased and is now illegible.
This fragment is the last folio of the Farhang-i Jahangiri, a Persian lexicon purportedly executed in Agra in 1028 AH (1618–19). A total of four folios of this work are held in the collections of the Library of Congress. The author of this Persian-language farhang (dictionary) was Jamal al-Din Husayn b. Fakhr al-Din Hasan Inju Shirazi (died 1626), a learned man from an old Persian sayyid (noble) family who came from Persia to Akbar's court in India, where he held high offices. He began writing his dictionary in 1596–97 at Akbar's request, basing it on Persian poems and previous lexicographical works. Because of the scope of the work and his continuous revisions, he did not complete the dictionary until after Akbar's death in 1605. Instead, he presented the work in 1608 to Akbar's successor Jahangir. For this reason, Jamal al-Din's Persian dictionary came to be known as the Farhang-i Jahangiri (Jahangir's dictionary). Along with the Burhan-i Qati' and the Farhang-i Rashidi, it is one of the three most important Persian-language dictionaries produced in Mughal India. The recto of this folio includes a number of words and expressions beginning with the last two letters of the Arabic alphabet, namely ha' and ya' (h and y). This list of words ends on the folio's verso, where a new series of az (expressions) immediately follows. Marginal glosses cross-referenced to the main text with numbers appear on the left and outside the dark-purple vertical text frame containing gold flowers and vines. These notes offer additional comments and poetical excerpts on the words listed in the main text. The folio's recto margins are decorated with images of Mughal youths sitting in a landscape painted in gold ink. The folio's verso margins are decorated with various birds (including a phoenix) in a landscape painted in gold ink. During the early 20th century, a section of the Farhang-i Jahangiri was acquired by the French art dealer Demotte, who cut out its pages and used the decorative margins as mounts for Safavid and Mughal paintings. In some cases, paintings remounted on margins originally intended for the dictionary retain the marginal glosses accompanying the main text.
lughat (books of words) he consulted for his work. These are listed in a grid format on this page, and continue on the fragment's verso. The dictionaries include, among many, the Farhang-i Shahnaham (Dictionary of Firdawsi's Shahnamah [Book of Kings]) and the Farhang-i Ibrahimi (Abraham's dictionary), and a Persian dictionary compiled by Ibrahim Qivam al-Din Faruqi in 1448 for the ruler of Bengal, Barbak Shah. The text frame is illuminated with panels of interlacing flowers, and the folio's borders include a number of putti, birds, and grapes painted in gold ink. Unfortunately, the marginal decoration suffers from a number of worm holes. During the early 20th century, a section of the Farhang-i Jahangiri was acquired by the French art dealer Demotte, who cut out its pages and used the decorative margins as mounts for Safavid and Mughal paintings. In some cases, paintings remounted on margins originally intended for the dictionary retain the marginal glosses accompanying the main text.

The Ephemerality of the World (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th-17th century, www.wdl.org/6968 [1 page]

This calligraphic panel includes a number of verses describing the transience of worldly goods. Two lines of Arabic poetry appear in the upper horizontal panels, and two lines of Persian poetry frame the central text panel on the right and left vertical. The line in the left vertical contains the first half of a verse from Firdawsi's Shahnamah (Book of kings). The right vertical reads: “We have no other friend beside you in the whole world.” The left vertical reads: “Who knows except for God” (the missing subsequent line is “How the wind will play tomorrow”). The four horizontal verses inscribed in black nasta'liq script on the illuminated ground of the central panel also describe the impermanence of the world: “The world passes and how engaged you are in it / Now that a cold breeze of old age blows / What trust in the leaf and the branch of the tree / Especially when the autumn wind (begins to) blow.” Each calligraphic panel is cut out and pasted on the black background, which is provided with a pink frame decorated with gold leaves. The composition is pasted to a larger white sheet of paper decorated with gold, blue, and red flowers and backed by cardboard. The fragment is neither dated nor signed. However, it appears to have been produced in 16th or 17th century Iran and placed later in a muraqqa (album) of calligraphies.

Petition for Funds; Insha' (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, www.wdl.org/6970 [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment belongs to a series of 22 insha' (literary compositions or letters) in the collections of the Library of Congress written by calligraphers named Mir Kalan, Khan Zaman (son of Khan Khanan), Qa'im Khan, Lutfallah Khan, and Mahabat Khan. Judging from the script (Indian nasta'liq), a seal impression bearing the date 1113 AH (1701–2), and a letter mentioning the city of Janpur in India, it appears that these writings were executed in India during the 18th century. Furthermore, if one were to identify the calligrapher Mir Kalan as the renowned painter active during the mid-18th century in Lucknow, then this would add further support to identifying this calligraphic series as a corpus of
materials produced by several writers active in 18th century India. The calligraphies are typically written in a hasty nast'aliq on white paper, framed in blue, and pasted to a pink or salmon cardboard. They stand out for being in rather poor condition, in many cases badly damaged by worm holes and/or water stains. Some bear squiggle-like marks in the margins, while others include seal impressions that were cut out and pasted onto the cardboards. In most cases, an attribution to a calligrapher is written at the top, preceded by the expression raqamahu (written by) or khatt-i . . . (the handwriting of). This particular fragment is attributed to Lutfallah Khan, as noted by the expression "khatt-i Lutfallah Khan" written above the blue frame and below a cut-out seal impression pasted in the upper horizontal margin. The seal impression includes the year 1113 AH (1701−2) and the name Bahadur Shams al-Dawlah Khan. The text itself is a petition addressed to a certain Navab Sahib, asking him to endow a piece of land and provide funds for the employees working at the khanagah (monastery) of the deceased dervish Hajji Muhammad in Janpur. Bahadur Shams al-Dawlah Khan also asks for further supplies (i.e., food and clothing) for the fuqara' (poor) who frequent this holy place of worship. He ends his letter by stating that he and the dervishes are busy praying for him and his welfare. At the top of the verso of the fragment appears a now illegible attribution note stating that the text was khatt-i . . . . The calligrapher may well be Lutfallah Khan, who also executed the text on the fragment's recto. The text itself, written in a crisp nast'aliq, is highly florid. It begins with a poetical excerpt dedicated to the addressee, calling him the "flower of the garden and the towers of Fortune." The writer states that he was very happy to see him, that he was satisfied, and that he treasures their friendship.

Insha' (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, www.wdl.org/6971 [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment includes a note at the top horizontal stating that the text is by Khan Zaman, the walad (son) of Khan Khanan. In the lower horizontal margin are a squiggle design and a cut-out seal impression pasted onto the salmon paper. The seal impression also bears the name of Khan Zaman. The main text is executed in black ink on white paper decorated with blue sprinkles. The author writes to his baradar-i mahraban-i man (dear friend or brother) to tell him how much he misses him and that he is in his du'a (prayers). Interestingly, the fragment's verso provides an exact duplicate copy of this text, suggesting that the original was executed as a stencil and used as an exemplum of how to write insha' (compositions) to one's friend or brother during times of separation.

Insha' (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, www.wdl.org/6972 [2 pages]

The recto of this calligraphic fragment includes a note at the top horizontal stating that the text is raqamahu by Mahabat Khan. In the lower-left corner appears a squiggle design. The main text, executed in a very fluid Indian nast'aliq, consists of a letter addressed to the writer's dear friend or brother. The writer states that he received his friend’s letter and that he is well. The verso of this page includes a note at the top horizontal stating that the text is “khatt-i . . . Khan Zaman.” The main text is addressed to the writer's baradar-i mahraban-i man (dear friend or brother) to confirm receipt of the latter's letter. At the end of his text, the writer states (in lines executed vertically to the right on the main horizontal text) that he composed his letter on the 24th day of Jumadah II (a month in the Islamic lunar calendar) although he does not specify the year.
This particular fragment includes a now-damaged attribution note at the top, stating that the calligraphy was executed by a “son of Mir Afkan Khan.” Immediately below the attribution note appears a cut-out illegible seal impression. The main text, written in an Indian nasta'liq tending towards shikastah, begins with an invocation to God, or *Huwa al-'aziz* (He is the Glorified). The writer then begins his letter to his brother or friend, stating that he was happy to receive his wonderful letter. He hopes to see his friend or brother soon and asks him to send him news as soon as possible. The verso of this particular fragment includes a now-damaged attribution note at the top, stating that the calligraphy was executed by a son of Mir Afkan Khan. Immediately below the attribution note appears a cut-out seal impression with the name "al-Dawlah Bahadur" still legible. In the lower-left corner appears a squiggle design. The main text executed on the white paper is addressed to the writer's dear friend or brother, in which he states that he received the latter's letter. He hopes to see him and his friends on Yakshambah (Sunday).

A small note at the top of this fragment's recto states that the work was executed “khatt-i . . . Mir Kalan.” In the lower-left corner appears a squiggle motif. The main text, written in black ink on a white piece of paper, consists of a letter. It is initiated by a *bayt* (verse) of poetry on love and separation, and continues with the writer expressing his wish to see his addressee again. He describes his friend/brother as a son and as the source of all generosity (of which he hopes to receive some of the benefit). This particular fragment's verso bears a note attributing the text to a particular calligrapher, although the note is now damaged. If it were by the same writer as the text on the fragment's recto, then one might assume that it was executed by Mir Kalan. The text itself, executed in black ink on a white piece of paper, begins with two bayts of poetry about joy and the need to see one's friends. Then the writer concludes with his own letter, stating that he is in good health and hopes to be of use (literally, become a *bandagar*, or servant) to the addressee.

This calligraphic page includes a number of verses of poetry in the central text area and in the many rectangular panels forming borders. In the main, central text area appears a *ruba'i* (iambic pentameter quatrain) written in diagonal. The verses solicit borrowed grandeur and read: “Oh Friend, I am not successful compared to you / I appear small and indigent / Nonetheless, I beg (of you) a clean robe / So that I can wear (it) and show off in front of people.” In the lower-left corner of the panel containing the *ruba'i*, *al-'abd* (the servant) Shah Mahmud has stated that he wrote this *katabahu* (specimen). The calligrapher Shah Mahmud al-Nishapuri (died 1564 or 1565 in Mashhad) was one of the most celebrated masters of nasta'liq script active during the reign of the Safavid king Shah Tahmasp (reigned 1524–76) in Tabriz. Shah Mahmud’s beautiful handwriting earned him the nickname Zarrin Qalam (Golden Pen). He was also a poet in his own right. A number of *qit’as* (calligraphic fragments) signed by him are held in international collections. Verses immediately surrounding the main panel of text are individually cut out and pasted so as to create a textual frame, while verses in the rectangular panels contained on the
outermost salmon-colored border are executed directly on the sheet of paper. For this reason, it is possible
that these verses were not executed by Shah Mahmud al-Nishapuri. Rather, they may have been added by
a different calligrapher or album compiler at a later date. All text panels have been pasted to a larger blue
sheet, backed by cardboard, decorated with flowers and plants painted in gold.

**Jahan Malak Khatun's Prayer for Power** (Persian), Iran, ca. 19th-20th century, [www.wdl.org/6861](http://www.wdl.org/6861) [1 page]

This calligraphic panel includes three *bayts* (verses) of Persian poetry possibly composed by Jahan Malak
Khatun, a female poet of the Qajar period (not to be confused with the 14th century poet of the same
name). Beginning with an invocation of God as *al-ghafur* (forgiving) and *al-rahim* (merciful), the verses
then provide a repeated versified *du'a* (prayer) for the patron's continued *mulk* (power): “Oh, the
continuity of power depends on the survival of your substance / Good fortune has sewn a cloak of power
for your rank / Your policy on the land was such that not even one bird / Could fly away into the air of the
country / Malak-i Jahan [the power of the world] wants you to invoke God / And this will bring victory as
blessings from the prayer of power.” The diagonal verses are executed in black nasta'liq script on a beige
paper and framed by cloud bands on a gold background. Blue and beige frames decorated with gold
sprinkles have been pasted onto the sheet in a rather sloppy manner. The text panel originally contained a
signature in the lower-left corner, which has been erased and is no longer legible. As Jahan Malak Khatun
was active in Persia (Iran) over the course of the 19th century, this particular fragment must have been
produced sometime in the 19th or 20th century.

**Quatrain by Rumi** (Persian), Afghanistan or Uzbekistan, ca. 1500-50, [www.wdl.org/2432](http://www.wdl.org/2432) [1 page]

This calligraphic piece includes a *ruba'i* (iambic pentameter quatrain) composed by the Persian poet Rumi (1207−73). Written diagonally
in black nasta'liq script on a white-and-blue marbled paper, the text is
also decorated by four illuminated triangles (or thumb pieces) in the
spaces left empty by the intersection of the diagonal lines and the
rectangular frame. The text panel is framed by two borders in pink
and beige painted with interlacing gold vines and is pasted onto a
larger piece of paper decorated with blue flower motifs. The verses
read: “(Oh) wine-bringer, because of (my) grief for you, (my) mind
and spirit left / Give (me) wine so that (my) pride may disappear. / My patience and ability are spent in this way, / I too would vanish, if
only I could.” The poet describes the *saqi* (wine-bringer) as the
object of his "intoxicated" love. His abilities disappear "in this way"
(i.e., in loving her), and he wishes that he—much like his abilities
conquered by the effects of inebriation—also would fade away. The
text is signed by the "poor" fakir Mir 'Ali, much as it is in a similar
fragment in the Sackler Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Mir 'Ali Heravi (died 1544−55) was a
calligrapher in nasta'liq script active in the city of Herat (present-day Afghanistan) during the 16th
century until he was taken to Bukhara (present-day Uzbekistan) in 1528−29 by the Shaybanid ruler
'Ubaydallah Khan Uzbec. Other calligraphic fragments written by, or attributed to, Mir 'Ali also are held
in the collections of the Library of Congress.
This superb document consists of a legally-binding *'aqd-namah* (marriage contract) written in Persia (Iran) in 1219 AH (1804–5). Like other Persian marriage contracts of the 19th century, the document is quite imposing (at almost a meter in height) and its gold work indicative of the couple's wealth. At the top appears a *sarloh* or *sar lawh* (illuminated gold heading) containing a number of prayers to God written in red ink on a gold background. On the right of the illuminated sarloh and in the right margin decorated by flower-and-leaf motifs painted in gold appears another invocation to God as the *Ayat al-nur* (Light of the Heavens and the Earth, an invocation from Qur'an 24:35). Between the illuminated prayers and the main text panel appear a number of seal impressions of the various marriage witnesses and the identification of the document as a *nikah* (marriage certificate). In the main text panel, various prayers to God are offered before introducing the bride and the groom, their various genealogies, their places of residence (Isfahan), and the marriage settlement provided by the *mahiryah* (groom). In this particular marriage contract, the groom offers his bride 100 dinars, a bakery, and other shops he owns. These "collateral" gifts seem related to the *mubaya‘at-namah* (sales contract) dated Muharram 28, 1228 AH (January 31, 1813) on the backside of this marriage contract. In this sales contract, several individuals enter into an agreement about the renting of several shops in the grand bazaar of Isfahan. The location of the shops, their goods (e.g., a bakery), and rental fees are specified. In the upper-right corner is the witness's signature, his seal impression, and the date of Shawwal 2, 1236 (July 3, 1821). This appears somewhat strange, as the witness's signature postdates the contract by seven years. One might speculate that the difference in dates may be due to a lengthy process of negotiation or an a posteriori addendum to the contract. The sales contract is written in *ta'liq* script tending towards shikastah. The text is unadorned, which is quite unlike the marriage contract. It appears that both documents are related to one another and provide detailed evidence of the various business and personal activities of a well-to-do merchant active in Isfahan during the first decade of the 19th century. Marriage contracts produced during the 18th and 19th centuries in Persia (Iran) belong to a class of Islamic legally-binding documents, such as *vaqf-namahs* (deeds of endowments) and *vakalat-namahs* (powers of attorney), a number of which survive in Iranian collections.
This painting represents an episode described in the *Shahnamah* (The book of kings), the epic story of ancient kings and heroes of Persia composed by the renowned poet Firdawsi during the first decades of the 11th century. The text on the fragment’s recto and verso describes the painting. King Khusraw summons Rustam to help him stop a *div* (demon) disguised as a wild ass that is ravaging the royal herds. After three days of unsuccessful battle, the hero falls asleep in the grass. Thereupon, the Div Akvan casts aside his disguise, resumes his demonic form, rushes towards Rustam, and digs up the ground around the hero. He gives Rustam the choice of being thrown against the mountains, to be eaten by lions and onagers, or cast into the sea, where he would drown. Knowing that the demon’s action would be the exact opposite to his request and realizing that, if cast into the sea, he would have a chance to swim to safety, he asks to be thrown against the mountains. Rustam is then cast into the sea, swims back to the shore, and returns to defeat the demon in combat. The painting shows the precise moment when the Div Akvan pauses before deciding to hurl Rustam into the waters. The demon stands tall, his outstretched arms supporting a still-sleeping Rustam, as his gold bell bangles clang loudly. A posteriori labels added to the right of Rustam's head and at the demon's waist identify Rustam and Div Akvan. On the right side of the composition, rocky mountains and two threatening tigers are depicted, while, at the bottom of the painting, a variety of fish swim in the sea. Immediately above the painting, the chapter heading executed in gold ink identifies the scene and its corresponding text. The painting's style and composition are typical of illustrated manuscripts of the *Shahnamah* produced during the Safavid period in Iran. The shapes of the rocky outcrop, loosely painted in light-blue, pink, and yellow washes, seem to hint at facial features. The layout of the text and the script (nasta'liq) as visible on the painting's verso also are characteristic of 16th-century Persian manuscripts. The lower-right corner of the painting has suffered damage and thus a small portion of the painting is lost to us today.

*Quatrain of Kamal al-Din Isma'il* (Persian), ca. early 17th century, [www.wdl.org/6981](http://www.wdl.org/6981)  [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a *ruba'i* (iambic pentameter quatrain) written by the famous *'irfānī* (mystical) poet Shaykh Kamal al-Din Isma'il al-Isfahani (circa 1172–1237). The author's name appears in the upper-right illuminated corner (or thumb piece) of the text panel. The four lines of verses are written diagonally in black nasta'liq, framed by cloud bands, and placed on a gold background. The verses read: “Look at that strand of hair and the face of that famous idol / It [the hair] is knotted up without a battle or adversary / Look at those eyebrows, which like wrestlers / Go head to head and arch their backs.” These
verses describe the loved one's hair and eyes. The woman's hair is perfectly disheveled and her curved eyebrows meet in the center of her forehead, in the shape of wrestlers hunched over and ready for combat. The calligrapher has signed his work diagonally below the last verse, with the expression katabahu al-'abd al-mudhnib 'Imad al-Hasani (written by the humble servant, 'Imad al-Hasani). In the triangular panel below his signature and above the third line of poetry, 'Imad al-Hasani asks for God's mercy and forgiveness for his sins. Mir 'Imad (1552–1615) spent time in Herat and Qazvin and finally settled in Isfahan (then capital of Safavid Persia), where, as a result of his implication in court intrigues, he was murdered in 1615. He was a master of nasta'liq script, whose works were admired and copied by his contemporaries, and later collected by the Mughals. Many works in international collections are signed by him, including other calligraphies bearing his name in the collections of the Library of Congress, although whether all these pieces are by his hand remains uncertain.

Bayts on Tragic Love (Persian), Iran or India, 1560-61, www.wdl.org/6982 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes three bayts (verses) of poetry that use the tragic love story of Laylah and Majnun, from the third book of Nizami’s epic Khamsah (Quintet), to describe the magic and pain of love. With an initial invocation to God in the upper-right corner, Huwa al-mu’izz (He is the Glorified), the verses then read: “The holy angels that fastened these veils of the green firmament / That placed the cradle of the lovers' joy outside of this curtain / Those magicians that blow life into bodies by sorcery / They shut the mouths of magic in the presence of the garnet [lip] of the enchanter / New bride of Laylah's beauty in the empty place of coquetry / They placed [on her] the necklace from the tears of Majnun.” The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script, written in diagonal and horizontal lines on a beige paper decorated with bird-and-flower motifs painted in gold. The right and left vertical sides of the text panel are framed by a green border bearing gold flecks. The calligraphic specimen is pasted onto a larger sheet of light-yellow paper decorated by interlacing pink arabesques and animals. Between the diagonal and lower horizontal lines on the text panel appears a triangle (or thumb piece) inscribed by the calligrapher Shah Muhammad al-Mashhadi, who notes that mashaqahu (he wrote) the verses and requests forgiveness from God for his sins. Between the first and the second bayt of poetry written diagonally, Shah Muhammad al-Mashhadi also specifies that he wrote the work during the months of the year 968 AH (1560–61). Shah Muhammad al-Mashhadi was a calligrapher originally from the holy city of Mashhad in northeastern Iran who migrated to India. His work as a calligrapher in the nasta'liq script recalls the style of his more famous contemporary, Mir 'Imad al-Hasani.

Two Textual Excerpts (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, www.wdl.org/6983 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes two separate and unrelated texts written diagonally in black Indian nasta'liq script on beige paper. The lines of the texts are separated visually by strokes in red ink. The first text at the top provides a section from the Indian historical work entitled the Ta'rikh-i Bikramajit (History of Bikramajit). It appears that this text belongs to a series of works dealing with local histories, in this case of the Indian state of Sangri and its ruler Bikramajit (ruled 1800–1803 and 1815–16). The calligrapher, a certain Jamal-i Nuri, has signed and dated his work in the last two diagonal lines. He states that he executed the text on the 20th day of Rajab during the third regnal year in the dar al-sultanah (capital city) of Lahore. Whose regnal year is not specified, but one may hypothesize that the calligrapher may have written the work during the third year of Bikramajit's rule, that is, in 1803. The second text in
the lower part of the fragment includes a section of *Bustan* (The fruit garden) by Shaykh Sa'di, which discusses events during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. This section relates the story of a certain Hakim Ta'i, a generous man who belonged to a tribe that did not accept Islam, and his daughter's pleading for the Prophet's mercy upon the killing of her tribesmen. This fragment is written in a fluid nasta'liq typical of texts written in India during the late 18th century. The nature of the historical text in the upper portion of the fragment and its date also support placing this fragment within a corpus of works produced in 18th century India.

**Jami's "Nafahat al-Uns"** (Persian), Central Asia, ca. 16th century, [www.wdl.org/6988](http://www.wdl.org/6988) [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment includes a section from a hagiographical work by Jami (died 1492) entitled *Nafahat al-Uns* (Lives of the saints), in which the lives of a number of Sufi saints are described. In this particular folio and its verso, Jami describes an event in the life of the Sufi shaykh Sirri ibn al-Maghlas al-Saqati (died 867). He was the teacher and maternal uncle of the famous mystic Junayd of Baghdad (Abu al-Qasim Junayd ibn Muhammad, died circa 910) and composed many sayings on *tawhid* (mystical unity), love of God, and other spiritual matters. The biography is continued on the verso of this folio. The Persian verses are written in black nasta'liq script in two columns on a beige paper. Verses are divided by a plain central gutter marked off by two gold vertical lines. An illuminated chapter heading towards the bottom of the text panel includes the section title about al-Saqati written in white ink on a gold background. The text panel is framed and pasted onto a larger sheet of paper decorated with flower-and-leaf motifs on a blue ground achieved through the use of a pounce. This kind of marginal decoration is found in a number of 16th-century manuscripts produced under Shaybanid patronage in Bukhara (present-day Uzbekistan) from about 1500‒1550. Other manuscripts, such as a 1568 copy of *Athar-i Muzaffar* (A history of the Prophet) in the Topkapi Palace Library, also make use of pounced motifs as marginal decoration. For these reasons, it is possible to suggest that this manuscript was produced in Central Asia during the 16th century.

**Verses by Jami** (Persian), Central Asia, ca. 17th century, [www.wdl.org/6989](http://www.wdl.org/6989) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes verses composed by the famous Persian poet Jami (died 1492). In the top-right corner, the text begins with the attribution of the verses to the *makhdumi* (master) poet and a request for (God's) *al-maghfarah* (forgiveness) and *al-rahmah* (mercy) upon Jami. The verses then describe how often true beauty is overlooked: “How often there is a beautiful face with graceful ways / Who is not sought after by people / But how often a harlot with sweet winks / Causes the blood of hearts to pour out in gushes.” In the lower-right corner, *al-mudhnib* (the lowly) calligrapher Hajji Yadigar al-Katib has signed his work. As his name suggests, he must have completed the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) and been a *katib* (professional scribe). He may be a certain Yadigar Khwajah Samarqandi, who arrived in India and offered the Mughal ruler Jahangir (ruled 1605‒27) a *muraqqa’* (album) of calligraphies, for which he received a robe of honor. The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper. Framed by cloud bands, the text appears on a background lavishly decorated with gold painted vegetal
designs highlighted in light-blue and red dots. These motifs appear to support a 17th century Central Asian or Mughal provenance.

 Invocation of 'Ali (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th-19th century, www.wdl.org/6991 [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a *du'a* (invocation) to 'Ali, the Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law, in the central text panel. Written in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper decorated with arabesque motifs painted in gold, the Shi'i *du'a* reads: “Call upon 'Ali who causes marvels to appear / You will find him to help (you) in adversity / All anguish and sorrow will vanish / Through your guardianship, oh 'Ali, oh 'Ali, oh 'Ali.” In the lower-right corner of this main text panel appears the calligrapher's signature: "*katabahu* (written by) *al-mudhnib* (the poor) Ahmad al-Husayni." The triangular area that contains the signature is rather suspicious: the paper does not match the main text panel and this section appears to have been cut out and pasted onto the fragment. It is possible that the otherwise-unknown calligrapher Ahmad al-Husayni may have removed the original calligrapher's signature and replaced it with his own. The main text panel is framed by a pink border decorated with gold vine motifs and a large blue frame decorated with gold leaves and panels of Persian verses. Each rectangular panel of text has been individually cut out and pasted into the appropriate panels in the blue border. The whole composition is contained on a larger sheet of pink paper painted with gold flowers and backed with cardboard. Although the original, main text panel executed in large nasta'liq script may have been executed during the Safavid period (16th century), the surrounding border and the calligrapher's signature may have been added later, in the 18th–19th centuries. Such procedures of alteration show how some calligraphies experienced a "second life" when combined into albums or passed down through the hands of another calligrapher.

Section of Mirkhwand's "Rawzat al-Safa" (Persian), ca. 18th-19th century, www.wdl.org/6993 [1 page]

This fragment includes a section of the *Rawzat al-Safa* (The garden of purity), a Persian historical encyclopedia composed by the prolific Timurid author Mirkhwand (Muhammad ibn Khavandshah Mir Khvand, 1433–98). This particular excerpt begins with an invocation to *Huwa al-'aziz* (God, the Glorious) and then relates a particular episode in the life of the seventh Shi'i imam Musai al-Kazim ibn Ja'far (circa 745–99). The imam is described as going one day to a mountainous place where he sees a group of Christians looking for a *rahib* (monk) in a *dayr* (monastery) from which he had not exited for an entire year. Although the remaining portion of the story is lost, the last word *wa* (and) and the number 12 in the lower-left corner hint that the text may have continued on a subsequent page. The text is executed in black *ta'liq* typical of the 18th and 19th centuries, while the theme of its text suggests an Indian Shi'i milieu. Written diagonally on a cream-colored paper, the text panel is framed by a dark-green border outlined in red and backed by cardboard for strength.
This calligraphic fragment belongs to a series of 22 insha’ (literary compositions or letters) in the collections of the Library of Congress written by calligraphers named Mir Kalan, Khan Zaman (son of Khan Khanan), Qa'im Khan, Lutfallah Khan, and Mahabat Khan. Judging from the script (Indian nasta’liq), a seal impression bearing the date 1113 AH (1701–2), and a letter mentioning the city of Janpur in India, it appears that these writings were executed in India during the 18th century. Furthermore, if one were to identify the calligrapher Mir Kalan as the renowned painter active during the mid-18th century in Lucknow, then this would add further support to identifying this calligraphic series as a corpus of materials produced by several writers active in 18th century India. The calligraphies are typically written in a hasty nasta'liq on white paper, framed in blue, and pasted to a pink or salmon cardboard. They stand out for being in rather poor condition, in many cases badly damaged by worm holes and/or water stains. Some bear squiggle-like marks in the margins, while others include seal impressions that were cut out and pasted onto the cardboards. In most cases, an attribution to a calligrapher is written at the top, preceded by the expression raqamahu (written by) or khatt-i . . . (the handwriting of). The recto of this particular calligraphic fragment is attributed to Khan Zaman on the top horizontal, although the attribution note is quite damaged. In the lower-right margin appears a squiggle motif and some hasty inscriptions. The main text, written in black ink on white paper, is addressed to the writer's baradar-i mahraban-i man (dear brother or friend). The writer states that he is well, that he received the latter's letter, and that he hopes to see him soon. The note at the top of the verso of this calligraphic fragment attributes the khatt (writing) to Khan Zaman. The main text, written in black ink on a white paper, consists of the writer’s letter to his dear friend or brother. He states that he is happy to have received his letter and that he now writes back with ishtiyaq (great joy). He also hopes for further continued contact.

This calligraphic sample from a muraqqa' (album) of calligraphies includes poetical verses composed by the poets Zahir Faryabi (died 1201 or 1202), Shaykh Abu al-Fayz ibn Mubarak Fayzi (known as Fayzi, died circa 1595), Khwaja Afzal-i Taraka (died 1185), and Asiriddini Akhsikati (circa 1126–circa 1181). Their names are picked out in gold ink and are followed by their respective verses, which are chosen for their thematic unity. The verses all describe the power of ishq (love) and its rewards. In the right column, a ruba’i (iambic pentameter quatrain), by Shaykh Fayzi Hindi written in diagonal describes the effects of love. Another of his love quatrains appears on the main text panel on the fragment's recto. The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script written diagonally on a cream-colored paper and horizontally on panels made of beige paper. Corners created by the intersection of the diagonal verses and the horizontal and vertical frames are filled with illuminated triangular panels. The text panel is framed by borders of various colors and pasted to a
larger sheet of beige paper decorated with various vegetal and geometric motifs painted in gold. The verso of this folio from an album (muraqqa') of calligraphies includes excerpts by the poets Fayzi, Mawlana Baqiri (Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Baqari, 1609–1700), and (Muhammad Husayn) Chalabi Tabrizi (17th century). The names of the three poets are picked out in red ink on the folio and are followed by their respective poetical verses. In the center of the text panel appears one ruba'i, and two takbayt (single verses) by the Deccani poet Fayzi. The quatrains describe a lover's enchantment at his beloved's face, which entices him to look at it again and again. It reads: “Oh God, how do you appear when my eye looks upon your face / By every glance it (my eye) is beguiled to take another look / Oh, from the lie of procrastination at the foot of deceit / On tomorrow's Day of Gathering, she searches for another tomorrow.” The verses are written in black nasta'liq script on a blue paper decorated with leaf motifs painted in gold. Verses also form registers around the central text panel, separated by squares filled with decorative motifs in blue or gold. The entire text panel is pasted to a larger cream-colored sheet decorated with painted gold flowers and backed by cardboard. In the lower-left corner of the panel containing the diagonal verses by Fayzi, the calligrapher Mirza Quli Mayli has signed his work with his name inscribed vertically. He was most likely a calligrapher active in Persia (Iran) during the 17th or 18th century.

*Ruba'is by Hafiz* (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/6996](http://www.wdl.org/6996) [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment includes three *ruba'iyat* (iambic pentameter quatrains) arranged in corresponding vertical and horizontal panels. The verses written diagonally in the upper-right corner describe the duplicity of humankind: “(Bad deeds) have a very strange adjective / This bizarre Satan that eats people / Most people are cannibals / You are not safe when they greet you.” Another quatrains by the Persian poet Hafiz (died 1388‒89, 791 AH) is inscribed in vertical panels, the last two verses of which appear on a background painted with gold leaves. This quatrains describes respect owed to one's superiors: “My heart is in your house of love / (My) eye is the mirror that reflects your brilliance / I, who do not prostrate myself to the two worlds, / My neck is under the weight of your favor.” The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script in independent registers on a background decorated with illuminated triangular and rectangular panels. The entirety of the text panel is pasted to a larger sheet of beige paper decorated with light-blue vegetal motifs. The fragment is neither dated nor signed. However, it appears to have been produced in Iran in the 16th or 17th centuries and placed later into a *muraqqa'* (album) of calligraphies.

*Insha'* (Persian), India, ca. 18th century, [www.wdl.org/6997](http://www.wdl.org/6997) [2 pages]

This calligraphic fragment belongs to a series of 22 *insha'* (literary compositions or letters) in the collections of the Library of Congress written by calligraphers named Mir Kalan, Khan Zaman (son of Khan Khanan), Qa'im Khan, Lutfallah Khan, and Mahabat Khan. An attribution note at the top of the recto of this fragment states that this calligraphic fragment was *raqamahu* (written by) Qa'im Khan. The main text, written in black ink, appears on both a white paper speckled in blue and a marble paper decorated with orange flowers and green leaves. In the center of the lower horizontal margin appears a seal impression bearing the date 1116 AH (1704‒5). At the beginning of the composition appears the phrase in praise of God *Huwa al-qadir* (God, the All-Powerful), followed by the writer's letter. Here, he states that he received his friend's letter and has wanted to write back. He is distressed that he has not heard from his friend. To make his message clear, the writer includes a *bayt* (verse) by Hafiz (died
1388–89, 791 AH) on separation and pain, as well as a Qur'anic ayah (verse) stating that if someone helps others, God will help him in return. An attribution note at the top of the verso of this fragment states that this calligraphy also was written by (raqamahu) by Qa'im Khan. The main text, written in black ink, appears on both a white paper speckled in blue and a marble paper decorated with orange flowers and green leaves. At the beginning of the composition appears the word huwa (literally, "He," functioning as the laudatory incipit "In the Name of God"), followed by the writer's letter to a certain Navab Sahib. stating that he is very thankful to the latter for his help, and that he is his servant and wishes to be at his side again.

**Arabic and Persian Excerpts**, India, 18th-19th century, [www.wdl.org/6999](http://www.wdl.org/6999) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a number of textual excerpts in Arabic and Persian. The top three lines include an invocation to God and a saying in Arabic about the necessity to trust in him. The next few horizontal lines include a saying in Persian about God's will. The diagonal lines of text in the lower half of the fragment quote the famous Persian poet Shaykh Sa'di Shirazi (died 1292, 691 AH) beginning with the note min kalam-i Sa'di Shirazi (from the words of Sa'di Shirazi). The text taken from Sa'di is translated from Persian to Arabic in this fragment and gives advice to be aware of what one says. The text is written in black tahriri script. Some orthographic marks and vowels are picked out in red ink, and all lines of text are separated visually by red strokes. The ends of certain sections or phrases also are marked by pyramids consisting of three red dots. The paper is thin and brown, and is damaged at the bottom. In the lower-right corner, the calligrapher Fayaz 'Ali Vasi'i states that raqamahu (he wrote) this fragment, and in the lower-left corner he has baraya khatir-i (dedicated) his piece to a certain Mamki Nahali. He has written vertically in the top-right margin that he wrote his piece on a ruz-i panjshamba (Thursday), although he does not specify the month or year. As Nahali is a language spoken in Madhya Pradesh, the name of the patron suggests a north-central Indian provenance for this calligraphy. The script—a fluid tahriri found in 18th and 19th-century calligraphies from India—also suggests an Indian provenance.

**Excerpt from Sa'di's "Gulistan"** (Persian), India, 17th-18th century, [www.wdl.org/7002](http://www.wdl.org/7002) [1 page]

This beautiful calligraphic fragment includes an excerpt from Gulistan (The rose garden), in which the author offers nasihat (advice) about each man's necessities. For example, a vazir (vizier or minister) needs a lashgar (army) and tarbiyat (education); a ra'iyat (farmer) must observe [nature]; kings need wise ministers; and brave men need silah (weapons) and asp (horses). The text is executed in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper. The words are framed by cloud bands and placed on a gold
background decorated with the painting of a tree and various flowers. The main text panel is framed by a border containing further verses in Persian on an illuminated background. The entire composition is then provided with a number of monochromatic frames and is pasted to a larger sheet of dark-blue paper decorated with gold flowers and backed by cardboard. The calligraphic specimen is neither dated nor signed. However, the decorative pattern and the style of the folio resemble folios inserted into albums produced during the 17th and 18th centuries in Mughal India.

**Quatrain on Unity of Lovers** (Persian), [www.wdl.org/7005](http://www.wdl.org/7005) [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes a *rubai* (iambic pentameter quatrain) on the primordial nature of a lover's affection. Beginning with an invocation to *Huwa al-'aziz* (God, the Glorious), the verses read: “How good is that person in the bazaar of love / He died for your sadness and bought your sorrow with his heart / It is not today that the story of love in Salman's heart (began) / God created me and my love of you in tandem.” The verses are executed in black nasta'liq script on a beige paper framed by a pasted border decorated with interlacing leaf and vine motifs. In the bottom horizontal panel, the calligrapher Pir Muhammad b. Dust Muhammad states that *katabahu* (he wrote) the piece. In the lower-left corner of the text panel, he also specifies that he has *naql min khatt* (copied the handwriting) of the *ustadh al-kamil* (master teacher) Muhammad 'Ali Bukhari. Pir Muhammad b. Dust Muhammad's statement suggests that he may have used a calligraphic specimen by his teacher as a model for his own, either adapting it or copying it directly. Unfortunately, as neither calligrapher appears to be recorded in historical sources, it is difficult to suggest a date of execution and a provenance for this piece.

**The Battle of Mazandaran** (Persian), India, ca. 1564-1579, [www.wdl.org/7012](http://www.wdl.org/7012) [2 pages]

This large-scale painting depicts the Battle of Mazandaran, an event in the Persian romance of the mythical adventures and battles of Amir Hamzah, the uncle of the Prophet Muhammad, recorded in the famous *Hamzahnamah* (Book of Hamzah). The *Hamzahnamah* was begun around 1564 under the sponsorship of the Mughal emperor Akbar (ruled 1556–1605) and was completed in approximately 15 years. This painting is number 38 in the seventh volume of the *Hamzahnamah*, as inscribed between the legs of the man in the bottom center. It depicts a battle scene in which the protagonists Khwajah 'Umar and Hamzah, nicknamed Sahib Qiran (Owner of the Epochs), and their armies engage in a fierce battle. Originally, the faces were depicted, subsequently erased by iconoclasts, and repainted in more recent times. Only the face of the groom wearing an orange turban in the center of the left edge has been left untouched. Immediately above this figure, a soldier in a studded gold tunic has a disjointed face, revealing how an old border was removed and faces retouched.
Approximately 50 painters worked on the project under the supervision of the famous artists Mir Sayyid 'Ali and 'Abd al-Samad, who both had worked circa 1522–35 on the royal *Shahnamah* of the Safavid ruler Shah Tahmasp. Although a number of the paintings are linked to specific artists, this particular one does not bear an attribution mark. The large-scale text panel on the verso describes the Battle of Mazandaran. The text is executed in black nastā'liq script on a large beige sheet of paper that bears substantial water damage. The last three lines also exhibit the crowded writing that is seen frequently in the manuscript as the scribe or scribes struggled to fit the complete the narrative account on each text page.

*Moral Lessons Through Bird Stories* (Persian), Iran, 1844, [www.wdl.org/7018](http://www.wdl.org/7018)  [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes verses providing two separate stories, in which the protagonists are birds. The first narrative describes two falcons in the desert talking about whether to join the king. The smart one refuses because he notes that freedom is better than service, even to a royal patron. The second story describes a hunter about to shoot a small bird. The latter prays to God to save it, at which time the hunter begins to tremble and his arrow misses the bird. Through God's intercession, the prey is saved from an untimely death. These moralizing verses are written both vertically and horizontally in black shikastah-nasta'liq script on a white piece of paper. The verses are divided by red lines. The text panel is pasted to a green piece of paper backed by cardboard and framed by a border heavily damaged by worm holes. In the lower-right corner of the text panel, the calligrapher Muhammad Valikhan Khattat, known as Chalaq (the Speedy One), has signed his work. He also notes that it was completed in 1260 AH (1844). From this information, one may hypothesize that this Muhammad Valikhan Khattat was a swift writer active in Iran during the mid-19th century.

*Sa'di,"Two Lovers Lost at Sea"* (Persian), Iran, ca. 16th-17th century, [www.wdl.org/7020](http://www.wdl.org/7020)  [1 page]

This calligraphic fragment includes, in the main text panel, four verses from Sa'di's *Bustan* (The fruit garden), in which he succinctly describes the tragic story of two lovers who fall into a whirlpool in the sea. When a sailor attempts to save them, each lover asks him to save the other—as he turns to each one, it becomes too late and both die: “I read that, in a very large sea, / They fell together into a whirlpool. / When the sailor arrived to give a hand / So that they not die in that difficult situation...” The text is executed in black
nasta'liq script framed by cloud bands on a background covered in gold leaf and decorated by vine motifs in black ink. In the upper and lower corners, the spaces between the diagonal lines of text and the rectangular frame are filled by illuminated triangles (or thumb pieces). The main text panel is framed by several borders, including one that contains ten verses of poetry separated by red panels decorated by gold flower designs. The decoration is of mediocre quality and may have been added after the text panel, itself possibly executed in Iran during the 16th–17th centuries.

**Persian Royal Order Granted to James L. Merrick** (English and Persian), Iran, 1839, [www.wdl.org/7025](http://www.wdl.org/7025) [1 page]

This Persian firman (royal decree) grants the Reverend James Lyman Merrick the right to establish a school in the city of Tabriz in northwestern Persia (Iran). The decree was issued by Shahzadah (Prince) Malik Qasim Mirza (died 1859), one of the members of the Qajar royal family and the governor-general of Urumiya and Azerbaijan in 1829–49. The firman includes a note in English in the upper-right corner, which reads: "A Firman or Order, of Muhammad Shah, the present King of Persia, authorizing Rev. J.L. Merrick to open a school in Tabriz in 18(3)9." At the top center appears the royal seal of Muhammad Shah (reigned 1834–48), below an invocation to God in gold ink. Below the seal impression, a bismillah (in the name of God) in gold ink initiates the main text of the decree, which gives the Reverend Mr. Merrick permission to open a school to teach *ta'lim-i aftal wa javanan* (children and youngsters) various *'ulum* (sciences), such as geography and *'ilm-i hisab* (accounting). The last line of the decree states that it was *tahrir* (written) on 21 Rabi’ I, 1255 AH (June 5, 1839). James Lyman Merrick (1803–66) was an American Presbyterian missionary in Iran from 1834 to 1845. He had studied at the Princeton and Columbia theological seminaries. In 1834 he was ordained at Charleston, South Carolina, and was immediately sent on a mission to Persia. He stayed in the cities of Tabriz, Shiraz and Urumiya until 1845. After his return to the United States, he was in charge of a Congregationalist church in South Amherst, Massachusetts from 1849 to 1864 and taught "oriental" literature at Amherst College from 1852 to 1857. He wrote a number of books on Islam and the Prophet Muhammad, which were translated into Persian at the end of the 19th century. In a letter to the *Missionary Herald* published in 1838, Merrick noted the opening of his school and stated that Prince Malik Qasim Mirza wanted him to spend the winter with him as his tutor. However, he was uncertain whether he would stay in Iran as the school was not in a "flourishing condition." He did not elaborate further on the subject. This note and the firman provide valuable evidence of some of the earliest American missionary efforts in Iran around the middle of the 19th century.
LITHOGRAPHIC BOOKS


This book is a lithograph edition of the Persian translation of Bāburnāmah (Memoirs of Babur), the autobiography of Ẓahīr al-Dīn Muḥammad Bāburshāh (1483–1530), the first Mughal emperor of India. Bāburnāmah originally was written in Chagatai Turkish and was translated into Persian during the reign of the Mughal emperor Akbar. The translation was undertaken by Bairam Khan (died 1561), an Afghan bureaucrat and military commander who served under Emperor Humayun and who was briefly appointed regent over his successor, Emperor Akbar, when Akbar was a child. This book was printed in 1308 AH (1890–91) in Bombay (present-day Mumbai), India, from a 19th-century manuscript. The print bears the stamp of the Cheetra Prabha Press and has on its last page the seal of Mirzā Mohamed Shīraẓī Malik al-Kuttāb, the scribe of the manuscript. A few explanatory lines in Persian are in the colophon, presumably written by Mirzā Mohamed Shīraẓī. He notes that he used a unicum (a unique example) and tried to “correct” the renderings of the Turkish nouns before producing the book. The manuscript reproduced here is written by one hand in the nasta’liq script popular in Central and South Asia from the Mughal period onward, with 27 lines per page. Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late 18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early 19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet. The new technology was so successful during the Raj that many more Persian lithographic books were printed in India than in Iran.


Muḥārabah-ʻi Kābul va Qandahar (The war of Kabul and Kandahar) is an account of the First Afghan War (1839–42) by Munshi ʻAbd al-Karīm, an associate of Shāh Shujā’, the emir of Afghanistan. Mawlawī Muḥammad ʻAbd al-Karīm was an Indo-Persian historian from Lucknow, India, who was active in the mid-19th century. He was a prolific munshi (writer, secretary, and language teacher) and translator. He rendered into Persian from Arabic such works as Tārīkh al-Khulafā (History of the Caliphs), by al-Sūyūtī (1445–1505) and a history of Egypt by Ibn Iyās (1448–circa 1524). He also completed an abridged translation of the biographical dictionary, Wafayāt al-a’yān wa anbāʾ abnāʾ az-zamān (Deaths of eminent men and history of the sons of the epoch) by Ibn Khallikān (1211–82). Muḥārabah was written some time between 1848 and 1850. It discusses the war of the states of Kabul and Kandahar against the British East India Company and specifically against the British expedition of 1842 headed by General Pollock. Munshi ʻAbd al-Karīm later revised the original composition and added information from Akhbārūmānah (Book of Akbar, a history of the third Mughal emperor) to produce the final version shown here, which was published in India in 1850. This book and
the munshi’s other contemporary historiographical text, *Tārīkh-i Ahmadshāhī* (History of the sultans of Delhi, in which he narrates the history of the Abdālīs, ancestors of the Durranis) were two of the major sources of the better known text of the Afghan history, *Sirāj al-Tavārīkh* (Lamp of history) by Fayţ Muḥammad (died 1931). Of Mawlawī ‘Abd al-Karīm's extensive oeuvre, three books exist in lithographic prints, including *Muhārabah*. Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late 18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early 19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet. The new technology was so successful during the Raj that many more Persian lithographic books were printed in India than in Iran.


This work is a lithographic print of a manuscript containing a treatise on pharmacology. It was produced in Kabul, in the Royal Printing House, by Ṣāliḥ ibn Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad and Sardār Gul Muḥammad Khān. Ṣāliḥ ibn Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad was an officer and commander from the Muhammadzai clan in the Pushtun tribal confederacy that ruled Afghanistan in the Barakzai period (1826–1973) after the fall of the Durrani Dynasty in 1842. Sardār Gul Muḥammad Khān served as the chief editor of the printing press in Kabul, where his activities included publishing works on behalf of Emir ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān. This book is the earliest printed work in the field of medicine in Afghanistan. It contains a list of various substances, herbs, flowers, minerals, and potions used in traditional medicine. The introductory section gives an account of how the author learned to mix drugs and experimented with how different drugs affect states of mind. This is followed by a list of the technical terminology related to pharmacology, such as the terms pertaining to weights and measures used by the pharmacists’ guild. The bulk of the work is a listing of different drugs (simple and compound) arranged alphabetically, with a brief description provided for each entry. Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late 18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early 19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet. By the 1860s, lithographic printing had spread to Afghanistan, including Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat.


This work is an autobiography of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān, emir of Afghanistan from 1880 to 1901. It is styled, however, as a manual of advice and a mirror for princes. It is divided into 16 chapters, which are arranged according to the topics on which the author provides advice and worthy examples, in this case drawn from his own conduct. Subdivision by topic of this kind mimics the pattern of books in the advice genre. The colophon dates the work to the month of Muharram of 1303 AH (October–November 1885) and indicates that the manuscript was in the hand of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān himself. Emir ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān was a grandson of Dōst Moḥammad Khān, the founder the Barakzai dynasty of Afghanistan in the period of British expansion after the fall of Durrani in 1842. The reign of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān was a
crucial period in the Great Game, as the late-19th-century rivalry between Russia and the British Empire for influence in Central Asia came to be known. The emir reestablished the Afghan government following the Second Afghan War of 1878–80, after his return from exile in Russian Turkistan. The work is a lithographic print of the original manuscript. Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late 18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early 19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet. By the 1860s, lithographic printing had spread to Afghanistan, including Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat.

**Durrānī, 'Āyishah Afghān. Dīvān-i ʻĀyishah**, Kabul, 1891-92, [www.wdl.org/11309](http://www.wdl.org/11309) [349 pages]

This work is a lithographic print, published in Kabul, of the collected poems of 'Āyisha Durrānī, an Afghan poetess from the Durrani family, who was active in the second half of the 19th century. The poems include *qasidas* (a lyric form) and *ghazals* (a metrical form expressing the pain of loss and the beauty of love), and are arranged alphabetically according to *qāfiya* (the effect of rhyme). The collection was compiled during the reign of 'Abd al-Rahmān Khān, emīr of Afghanistan from 1880 to 1901. The Durrani family led a Pushtun tribal empire in Afghanistan from 1747 to 1842. 'Āyisha Durrānī was the daughter of Yaʻqūb Ali Khān Barakzai and the wife of Tīmūr Shāh Durrānī (1742 or 1743–93), the second ruler of the dynasty. She was well educated in Arabic and Persian literature and in the Islamic canon. She is also credited with opening the first school for girls in Afghanistan. The manuscript that was the source of the lithograph print is in one hand, by an unidentified scribe writing in nasta‘līq script. The date of completion given in the manuscript is 1299 AH (1881–82). Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late-18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early 19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet. By the 1860s, lithographic printing had spread to Afghanistan, including Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat.

**Jāmī. Inshā-yi Jāmī**, Kanpur, 1884, [www.wdl.org/11615](http://www.wdl.org/11615) [84 pages]

This lithographic print is a literary essay by Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī (1414–92), a great Persian poet, scholar, and mystic, who lived most of his life in Herat (present-day Afghanistan). The work is exceptional for being written in prose at a time when most fine Persian writing was in poetic form. Extensive commentary and critical notes are printed in the margins. There are also some handwritten notes in the margins, but most of these were lost when the work was rebound. Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late-18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early
19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet.

**Mahdī Khān Astarābādī. *Tārīkh-i jahānkushā-yi Nādirī*, India, 1875, [332 pages]**

*Tārīkh-i jahānkushā-yi Nādirī* (The history of the world-conquering Nāder) is a historical study of Iran and Afghanistan during the reign of Nāder Shah (1736–47), written by a contemporary. Nāder was born in 1688 into a humble pastoral family. He established his reputation as a skilled military commander in fighting with Afghan forces that had invaded Iran in 1719 and that for a time occupied Isfahan. He assumed the throne as ruler of Iran in March 1736. His reign was marked by wars with the Afghans, Mughals, Dagestanis, and Ottomans, and he eventually ruled over an empire that included Iran, northern India, and parts of Central Asia. Nāder was assassinated by a cabal of his officers in June 1747. This book was published as a lithographic print in 1875. The former owner's stamps appear on the verso of the title page and on page 3; catchwords are on the page versos. Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late 18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early 19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet.

**Bilgrāmī, Murtaz̤ ā Ḥusayn. *Hadīkatu-l Akálím*, Lucknow, 1879, [712 pages]**

*Hadīkatu-l Akálím* (An enclosed garden of the climes) is a compilation of geographic and historical information by Murtaz̤ ā Ḥusayn Bilgrāmī (circa 1729–95), also known as Sheikh Allahyar Usmani. Bilgrāmī was employed as *munshi* (secretary) to Captain Jonathan Scott, Persian secretary to Warren Hastings (1732–1818), the first British governor-general of India. Scott commissioned Bilgrāmī to write the book, which is mainly a work of geography but which also includes information on history, biography, and literature. It emphasizes Afghanistan, India, and Iran, but Europe and other parts of the world are covered to some extent. Much of the book consists of extracts from older works. The work is especially valuable as a source on events, including battles between the British and local rulers, that occurred during Bilgrāmī’s lifetime. This lithographic print edition was produced in 1879. Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late-18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early 19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet.


*Tārīkh-i Sulṭānī* (The Sulṭānī history) is a historical study of the Afghan people and the rulers of Afghanistan from the beginnings of Islam to the mid-19th century. The work was published as a lithographic print in Bombay (present-day Mumbai) in 1881. This copy has been rebound, with “Ṣaḥāfī Sulṭān Muhammad, Kabul” gold-stamped on the back cover. The title page and pages 3–4 are damaged.
and repaired with no loss of text. The last page (page 291) has been repaired and missing text added in ink in a later hand. Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late-18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early 19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet.

**Aurangzeb. Ruqʿāt-i ʿĀlamgīrī-i muḥashshá, Lahore, 1878, [www.wdl.org/11857](www.wdl.org/11857) [156 pages]**

This lithographic book, published in 1875 in Lahore, present-day Pakistan, is a volume of letters written by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (1618–1707, reigned 1658–1707) to his sons, daughter, friends, and ministers. It also includes jottings, as in an occasional journal, on events and other things that caught his attention. The marginal printed notes were added by an unknown person and probably postdate the work itself. After imprisoning his father, Emperor Shah Jahan, and killing his brothers, Aurangzeb crowned himself emperor of India and assumed the title ʿĀlamgīr (meaning world-conquering, but also connoting sweeping and universal). The Mughal Empire reached its greatest extent under Aurangzeb, but his harsh rule and attempt to impose strict Muslim orthodoxy on India provoked revolts by non-Muslim peoples and led to the decline of the empire. Aurangzeb’s treatment of the Hindus was especially harsh, and included the imposition of a poll tax and the destruction of many Hindu temples. Aurangzeb was interested in poetry and literature, and his letters are regarded as models of elegant Persian prose.

**Khān, ‘Abd al-Qādir. Tuḥfat al-ʻulamā’, Afghanistan, 1875, [www.wdl.org/11789](www.wdl.org/11789) [90 pages]**

*Tuḥfat al-ʻulamā’* (An offering for religious scholars) is ostensibly a tract addressed to the ‘ʻulamā’ (religious scholars) of Afghanistan, asking them to actively discourage the suspicion held by their followers toward things foreign. It was written by order of the Afghan ruler Sher Ali Khan (reigned 1863–66 and 1868–79). Little is known of the author, ‘Abd al-Qadir Khan, although he is identified as a *qāḍī* (judge) indicating his religious authority. ‘Abd al-Qadir uses numerous quotations from the hadith literature to argue that practices originating with “non-believers” may be in accordance with the sharia provided these practices benefit the Islamic *ummah* (community). The foreign practices in question mostly have to do with the military—that military spending and a strong military are consistent with Islamic teachings remain major themes throughout the work. Although the heavy reliance on the Qur’an, the hadith, and quotations by learned men in the Islamic tradition (such as Fakhr al-Din al-Razi and Muhammad al-Ghazali) demonstrate the expertise and the erudition of the author (or, possibly, authors), the polemical and often repetitious arguments serve to emphasize the purely propagandistic aspects of *Tuḥfat al-ʻulamā’*. The timing of the publication is noteworthy. For much of his career Sher Ali Khan was in the enviable position of managing the conflicting interests of tsarist Russia and Great Britain, two colonial powers locked in the “Great Game” for mastery over Afghanistan. The publication of *Tuḥfat al-ʻulamā’* in 1875 predates the Second Anglo-Afghan War (and Sher Ali’s retreat from Kabul) by several years. The book was published in the Mustafawi printing press, which was founded by Sher Ali Khan, and is one of the earliest works printed in Afghanistan.

‘Umdat al-farāʾīẓ (The stanchion of divine precepts) is a 1914 book on the laws of inheritance as described in the sharia (Islamic law). In the opening pages, the author, Nik Muhammad, formally praises the Afghan ruler Habibullah Khan (reigned 1901-19). He states that the book was written by decree of Prince Muʿin al-Saltana (i.e., Habibullah’s son, ‘Inayatullah Khan, who in 1929 would serve briefly as ruler of Afghanistan), and that it was printed by lithography at the Dar al-Saltana printing press in Kabul. The book includes a discussion of the different categories of inheritors and of the inheritance share for each, as well as several sections on mathematical operations dealing with fractions. Interspersed within the text are poetic verses generally containing a précis of the topic under discussion. Included at the end of the work are a tabsira (clarification) and a taqrīţ (eulogy). The tabsira is a moral commentary on the transience of life, wryly expressed from the viewpoint of a dead person. The taqrīţ, which praises Habibullah while making no reference to ‘Inayatullah, includes the first mention of the author’s name, and lists as well the name of his father (a certain Hajji Muhammad of the mountainous Parwan Province to the north of Kabul). It also recommends the text for use by second- and third-year students at the Habibiya School founded by Habibullah Khan.


Divan-i Mullah Rahmat Badakhshani (The collected works of Mullah Rahmat Badakhshani) is a divan of Khwaja Rahmat Ullah Badakhshani, a late-19th-century poet from Badakhshan, Afghanistan. The book’s main section includes several forms of ghazal (lyric) poetry. They include ghazal-e char dar char (ghazals in four by four), ghazal-e ka tama-e huruf ash hech nuqta nadara (ghazal poems where the words have no diacritical marks), and ghazal-e laf-o nashr-e muratab (a form in which the subject of the poem appears in the first lines and is then described in detail in the rest of the poem). Some other forms appear in the supplementary section, pages 103−11, such as musalas ghazals (with three-line rhythms), mutazad ghazal (where the verses can take opposite meanings), and rubai (quatrain) poems. The author’s pen name, Rahmat, often appears at the end of each stanza. The section also includes some prose, in which the author talks about an imaginary garden, gardening, and different flowers that “look like paradise.” Rahmat explains that this special garden does not exist in known places. The last few pages contain information about the poet and his family. His father Mirza Ismail appears to have been a state official and the family was khwaja’zada (descended from Muhammad). Rahmat seems to have been a literary servant or courtier of the local rulers in Qaţaghan, the political center of northeast Afghanistan, but the biographical section is incomplete; the last two pages are missing from this copy. These pages would have clarified for readers that Emir Abdur Rahman Khan, the ruler of Afghanistan, had ordered Crown Prince Sardar Habibullah Khan to collect and publish the works of Rahmat. Matba-e dar al-Sultanah-e Kabul, the Royal Printing Press of Kabul, published the book by lithography in 1894. The pages are numbered, and on page 112 a red-colored hand-written verse by an anonymous author reads: “I provide/write this book for three reasons; do not politicize, misuse, or hide it.”
Sayyid Ahmad Vasliî (or Seyyed Ahmad Wasliî) Samarkandî (1870–circa 1920) was a writer, teacher, and scholar who was active in Samarkand (in present-day Uzbekistan) in the early 20th century. He was associated with the Jadidist Muslim reform movement, which was active within the Russian Empire in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Sayyid Ahmad Vasliî was supportive of some new methods of teaching, but cautious about wider societal reform. He wrote in Uzbek, Arabic, and Persian on a diverse range of topics, including literature, linguistics, and social issues. He also translated Bahiristan (Spring garden, written in 1487), one of the major prose works of the great Persian poet Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī (1414–92), from Persian into Uzbek. Presented here is a lithographic book containing a collection of Samarkandi’s poems in Persian. The illegible stamp of a former owner appears on the title page.


Asās al-Quẓāt (The basis for judges) is a lithographic book on Islamic jurisprudence, published in the late 19th century by the royal publishing house in Kabul. It was intended as a source for judges charged with applying the law on the basis of Islamic jurisprudence. The fine quality of the book and the binding reflect the importance given to law books in Afghanistan and other Islamic countries. Lithographic printing was invented in Europe in the late 18th century and spread widely on the Indian subcontinent from the early 19th century onward, its popularity stemming from the relative ease with which it could be used to reproduce different scripts not based on the Latin alphabet. By the 1860s, lithographic printing had spread to Afghanistan, including Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat.


Shown here is volume one of the two-volume Tāj al-Tavārīkh (The crown of histories), which is the autobiography of 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān, ruler of Afghanistan between 1880 and 1901. After long years in exile in Central Asia, Rahman came to power in Afghanistan with the support of the British, by whom he was later patronized financially, politically, and militarily. He began to suppress various social groups who opposed and threatened his rule, such as the Hazarah and Ghilzai tribes of central and eastern Afghanistan. He also exiled rival individuals and families, including that of Barakzai Khan, Ghulam Muhammad Tarzi. Amir 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān is famous for creating and centralizing modern state administration in Afghanistan. A note in the volume states that it was translated from English into Persian by Ghulam Murtza Khan Qandahari, the British deputy consul general in Mashhad, Iran, and published in Bombay by Matb-e Gulzar Husaini on July 2, 1904. In fact, this is a reverse translation, as the book was originally published in Persian in Kabul in 1883. Qandahari says in the preface that he translated it “because its absence in Persian was felt and unfortunate.” According to scholar Amin Tarzi, the actual translator from English into Persian was Mirza Husain Ali Shirazi, who published his work in Mashhad in 1903; thus, Qandahari’s contribution to the 1904 edition was less than he implied. The volume is arranged as a preface and 12 chapters. The preface seems to have been written by Qandahari, who praises the supremacy of God and the integrity of Rahman as a restorer of order in Afghanistan and builder of the modern country. Chapter one discusses Rahman’s youth from 1853 to 1863, growing up as a child of royal lineage. Chapter two is about Rahman’s flight from Balkh to Bukhara in 1863, after he was challenged by his uncle, Emir Sher Ali Khan (1825–79). Chapters three and four are about Rahman’s
wars with Sher Ali Khan. Chapter five covers his life in exile in Samarqand in 1870–78. Chapter six deals with his year in Badakhshan, in 1879. Later chapters cover his enthronement, his organization of Afghan state affairs, the annexation of Herat, an overview of Afghanistan during the 1880s, battles with various opposition groups, and the Afghan individuals and families.


Kitāb-i mustaṭāb-i Kullīyāt-i (Collection of works from Hakim Sanai) contains poetic works of Abu al-Majd Majdud ibn Adam Sanai Ghaznwai (died circa 1150). Abu al-Majd, better known as Sanai, was a famous medieval classical Persian scholar, poet, and mystic, thought to have been born and died in Ghazna (a present-day province in southeast Afghanistan) and also to have lived in Khorasan. Sanai is considered to be the first to compose qasida (ode), ghazal (lyric), and masnavi (rhymed couplet) poems in Persian, and he is famous for his homiletic poetry and role in the development of early mystical literature. He was connected to the Ghaznavid dynastic courts as a literary person whose patrons were state officials, military men, scholars, and the like. Modern collected works of Sanai are an outcome of a complex textual transmission stretching back centuries, during which their contents have changed in various ways, particularly in the order of poems, variant texts, and the numbers of verses. The oldest copy of his diwan (collection) that was copied in Herat in 1284–85 is housed now in the Bayezit Library in Istanbul. The last page of this lithographed edition, copied from one or multiple old manuscripts, states that it was printed and published at Math-e Brejis in Bombay by Aqa Muhammad Jafar Saheb in October 1910. This particular collection is arranged by its genres and forms, such as ghazals, masnavis, qasidas, and others and by religious, mystical, ethical, philosophical, and courtly themes concerning God, mysticism, love, humankind, divine knowledge, ideas, and courtly culture. Verses appear very compressed throughout, covering entire pages including the margins. Almost all the poems have titles and are clearly separated at the end by “Sanai.” The work concludes with a brief biography of Sanai which has more than 130 pages, paginated with Indo-Arabic numerals.
Āyinah-i Jahān Numā (The mirror of orrery) is a prose work of fables in Persian, which are relevant to both religious and worldly affairs. An orrery is a model representing the movements of heavenly bodies around the sun. The book was published in 1899 in Kabul by lithography. It is thought that it may derive in part from a work by Ḥusayn Vā‘īz Kāshīfī, but the name of the author is unknown. This copy is arranged in several sections. It has a typically late-19th century Afghan-style leather cover embossed with flowers. The inside cover page also has a description affirming the approval for publication of ‘Abd al-Rahmān Khān, then emir of Afghanistan, and the name of the scribe or the man responsible for the publication, Gul Mohammad Mohammadzai Durrani Afghan, who seems to have been an official in the Afghan administration. This information appears in more detail in the foreword and the epilogue, which mentions that the emir himself had read the book several times at night and approved its publication so that “people should read and benefit from its fables.” The contents are arranged as 14 short and 12 long fables. These fables cover themes of ethics, religious piety, honesty, loyalty, friendship, obedience, respect, and the like. The fable on pages 17–18 is on the moral and professional responsibility of society’s learned individuals in serving, advising, and correcting a (new) ruler or king. Page 28 has a fable on why it is wrong and potentially harmful if a person is not frank and truthful in addressing the king, a doctor, or friends. The 14 short fables that appear on pages 5–15 mostly start with the relative pronoun “That” or “Who.” The 12 long fables usually start “Scholars have said that” or “The story of.” Each title is in bold face and numbered. Well-known poems appear occasionally, as on page seven, often after a fable for the purposes of acclaiming its importance and value. The pages are numbered with Indo-Arabic numerals; pages 141, 173, 236, 270, 278, and 311 are missing. Pages 1–144 were by Gul Mohammad; after his death, his brother, Mohammad Zaman Khan Barakzai, completed the remaining pages.


Tarikh-e Futuhat-e Islamiyah (History of Islamic conquests) is a two volume work chronicling Islamic historical events, particularly wars, battles, and conquests. It is also known as Tawarikh-e Islam (History of Islam) and Futuhat-e nabawai (Conquests of the Prophet). This lithographic copy is a Persian translation from the original Arabic work by Sayyid Ahmad ibn Sayyid Zayni Dahlan (1816 or 1817–86), an eminent scholar of Mecca and Medina. The translation was a collective effort by “scholars of Herat . . . for an Afghan audience to know about the history of Islam.” It was carried out by 11 translators who were approved by Governor of Herat Abdul Rahim Khan and supervised by his son, ‘Abd al-‘Alīm Khān. Mullah Fakhruddin Khan Saljuqi was one of the main contributors. The preface by the 20th-century iconic Afghan poet, Khalilullah Khalili, praises the supremacy of God and the divinity of Islam, its Prophet Muhammad, and his followers. Khalili emphasizes the need for a history of Islam’s conquests in Persian, the lingua franca of high culture in Afghanistan. The contents of volume one range from the military campaigns and conquests of Usama bin Zayd, an adopted grandson of Muhammad, to the reign of Abdul Hamid II, one of the last sultans of the Ottoman Empire. The conquests include Syria, Persia, Anatolia, Egypt, Spain, Afghanistan, and other geographical regions in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Famous battles and peace treaties are also described. A short epilogue to volume one, by the translators and contributors, praises the completion and publication of the volume, and announces the intention to begin on the second volume. All events have subheadings both in the body of the text and on the page headers. Volume two covers 195 events, from the Mongol invasions of Islamic lands in the mid-13th century and
the overthrow of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad to the military campaigns and battles of 19th century Ottoman sultans. Also at the end of volume two are short descriptions of the moral and personal qualities and lives of Muhammad and of Islam’s first four caliphs, and a discussion of the reign of Sultan Abdul Aziz, one of the last Ottoman sultans. An epilogue and a table of word corrections appear on pages 538 and 539–44. The two volumes amount to about 1,110 pages, paginated with Indo-Arabic numerals. The paper and color are of poor quality, and some marks of water spillage are visible. There are stamps and signatures of several owners of the book on the cover and the last blank pages of the volumes. Extra notes appear on the margins of the texts, often providing additional information on a particular event or a Persian translation of an Arabic verse from the Qur’an, such as on page two of volume two.

Ganḍāpūr, Sher Muḥammad Khān. Tavārīkh-i Khūrshīd-i Jahān, Lahore, 1894, [319 pages]

Tavarikh-i Khurshid-i Jahan (literally, Histories of the sun of the world) is primarily a history of Afghan Pushtun (or Pashtun) ancestry. It describes Afghan Pushtun genealogies, the various lineages, and the many political events, wars, and polities, such as the Safavid and Mughal dynasties in Khorasan and India, with which the Pushtuns have historically been identified. The book is arranged in four sections. Section one is a detailed list of contents. Section two begins with a preface containing the names of the author, patron, and contributor and proclaims that the work is “to be a book of history of Afghan Pushtun ancestry since the creation of Adam.” This section covers the various popular genealogical legends of the Afghan Pushtuns, chief among them that they are descendants of one of the tribes of Israelites, specifically children of Saul, the first king of Israel. Section three is the main text and has eight chapters devoted to the history of the Pushtuns. An epilogue, written both in prose and verse, gives the author’s name, publication details, and a brief conclusion of the contents of the book. Tables charting the various genealogies of Afghan Pushtuns with detailed introductions to each lineage appear in several chapters. For example, tables outlining the descent of the Barakzais, Alokzais, Mohmands, Kakars, and other families appear on pages 188–319. These genealogical tables are followed by detailed discussions. The book was published in 1894 in Lahore (present-day Pakistan). The full name of the author, Sher Muhammad Khan Saheb Gandapur Ibrahim Zai (circa 1837–1902), appears on the cover of the book. He most likely was a Gandapur Pushtun and an official appointed by the British in the municipality of Kulachi in Dera Ismail Khan, one of the administrative centers in the Northwest Frontier Province of British India. The preface says that he had written another historical work called Gulshan-i Afghanistan (Flower garden of Afghanistan), published under the title Hayat-i Afghani (Ancestry of the Afghans). Sher Muhammad Khan claims that Hayat-i Afghani fell into the hands of Mohammad Hayat Khan Saheb, a judicial official in Bannu District of the province, who published it under his own name; the veracity of this claim has not been proven. It is clear, however, that Tavarikh-i Khurshid-i Jahan was published under the patronage of Sardar Mohammad Hayat Khan Saheb, who could possibly have been the same official. The 319 pages of the work are numbered with Indo-Arabic numerals.

Siraj al-Tavarikh (literally, Histories of light) is a work on the modern history of Afghanistan by Faiz Muhammad Katib Hazarah (1862 or 1863–1931), one of the earliest historians in Afghanistan. The book was commissioned by Emir Habibullah Khan, ruler of Afghanistan in the early 20th century. Siraj al-Tavarikh is generally agreed to be a four-volume text covering the period between 1747, when Afghanistan under Ahmad Shah Durrani, the founder of the modern state, emerged as an independent polity in Khorasan, and 1919, when Amanullah Khan, Habibullah Khan’s son, came to power. It is also claimed, however, that there is also a fifth volume, covering 1919–29. This copy contains only volumes one and two, published as a single tome by the royal printing press of Matba-e Hurufi Dar al-Saltana-e Kabul in 1912–13. In this copy, volume one has a detailed preface on pages 1–2; the maps on pages 3–4 show the topography and “ancient geography of Afghanistan,” known as Bakhtar, Kabulistan, and Zabulistan. (When this region converted to Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries, it was divided into the eastern part, from Qandahar and Kabul to Sindh, and the western part, which included Khorasan.) Pages 4–9 cover famous cities of Afghanistan and eastern Persia, including Kabul, Qandahar, Herat, Ghaznin, and Balkh. The main content of volume one, on pages 10–194, covers the reigns of the 18th-century dynasties of Ahmad Shah Durrani and his Sadozai Pashton (Pushtun) lineage, who ruled modern Afghanistan and parts of northwestern India until the early 19th century, when Emir Dost Muhammad Khan and the Afghan Barakzai lineage replaced the Sadozais as the dominant political line. Volume two of the original work, pages 195–377 in this edition, discusses the reigns of Dost Muhammad Khan and other Barakzai rulers until 1880, when Emir ʻAbd al-Rahman Khan, also a Barakzai, came to power. Page 196 has a half-page preface in which the author writes of finishing volume one and its approval by Emir Habibullah Khan. On page 197 is a family tree of the Barkazais. A short epilogue appears on page 377. Subheadings appear throughout, in both the main text and at the tops of pages. The pages are numbered with Indo-Arabic numerals.


Kulliyat-e Farsi Taymurnamah (literally, The biographical account of Timur) is a biography of Timur or Tamerlane (1336–1405), the Turkic-Mongolian founder of the Timurid dynasty and lineage. It chronicles in detail his personal, political, and military life, including campaigns and conquests, and events in the regions of present-day Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran. Many biographies of Timur were produced during his lifetime and after. This lithographed version was published in Tashkent by Matba-e Ghulam Hasan in 1912. The last page of the introduction (pages 2–7) states that this book was written in 1792 during the reign of Shah Murad, founder of the emirate of Bukhara. The full name of the author, Mirza Muhamamd Qasim Ibn Abdul Khaliq Bukhari, appears on the cover, but no other information about him is provided. The introduction to this copy is a typical Persian historiographical trope praising God’s supremacy and linking the rise of a ruler, Timur, to divine sanction. The author emphasizes that this connection also held true with the prophets, from Abraham to Muhammad, and for the first four caliphs of Islam, Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman, and Ali. On page four the author states that “humanity” is of two types, firstly the prophets, then the kings, as protectors of religion, makers and keepers of peace, and defenders of justice with courage and bravery. (He says nothing about people who do not fit either of these categories.) Timur (Amir Timur Gorgan) is seen as the latter type, “unquestionably brave, and conqueror
of the world from Bulgaria to China, and the ruler of Iran and Turan.” The author refers to other biographers of Timur, including Qazi Abdul Wakil and Abdul Razzaq Samarqandi. He covers Timur’s family background, coronation as a ruler in Balkh in 1369–70, and his military campaigns. The work also expands beyond the life of Timur to cover events relating to the lives of his descendants, including the coronation of Mirza Shahrulk as a dynast in Herat, the rise of Babur as emperor in Khorasan and India, and the emergence of the Uzbeks and Safavids as new political lineages in Mawaranahr, Khorasan, and Iran. Particular historical events, individual figures, and narratives are marked with bold subheadings within the text and above. The first dastan (narrative) on pages eight to 15 concerns the birth of Timur. The last dastan is on his death and briefly discusses his descendants, notably his 34 sons and his many grandchildren. Notes and the signatures of anonymous readers, or perhaps of the author, appear in the margins of the text, as well as seals and stamps of many other readers on the last page of the book. The work is about 440 pages, paginated with Indo-Arabic numerals.


This work is a compendium of the compositions (primarily in verse) of Ghulām Muḥammad Khān (1830–1900), a prominent Pushto Afghan intellectual of the 19th century. Known by his pen name Ṭarzī (the Stylist), Ghulām Muḥammad Khān was a member of the important Bārakzay tribe of Kandahār. The dībācha (introduction) of this work includes an account of Ghulām Muḥammad Khān and his family’s exile from Afghanistan in 1882, which was ordered by Amir ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (reigned 1880–1901). The important and detailed account of the family’s life outside Afghanistan, dated June 15, 1892, was written by Ghulām Muḥammad Khān’s son, Maḥmūd Ṭarzī (1868–1935), a famous intellectual and author in his own right who is generally referred to as the father of journalism in Afghanistan. It describes his family’s stay in Karachi and subsequent immigration to Syria, where Ghulām Muḥammad Khān received the protection and sponsorship of the Ottoman ruler Abdūlhamid II (reigned 1876–1909). The bulk of Ṭarzī’s dīwān (divan or collection) consists of his ghazals (lyric poems), which are grouped alphabetically according to the last letter of the ṭadrīf (rhyme). In Persian literature the ghazal generally denotes a metered and rhymed poem expressing the beauty and pain of love. The ghazal was derived from the qasīda (ode); and it matches the rhyme scheme of the qasida, although it is shorter, generally consisting of 12 verses or less. Many of Ṭarzī’s ghazals are response poems, referring to earlier poets in the Persian and Indo-Persian tradition. In this regard, the poems of ʿAbd al-Qādir Bīdil (1644 or 1645–1720 or 1721) and of Ṣā’īb Tabrīzī (1601 or 1602–77) figure prominently. In addition to poems in the ghazal form, Ṭarzī’s divan includes his rubāʾīyāt (quatrains) and other poetic forms, such as the tārjī band and the tarkīb band (strophic forms, with a series of isolated verses marking the end of each strophe). This edition is dated August 10, 1893. The work was published by Sardār Muḥammad Anwar Khān and printed at the press of Fayḍ Muḥammadādī in Karachi. The calligrapher is Muḥammad Zamān. The cover of this copy contains a handwritten note indicating Asmā’ Ṭarzī, wife of Maḥmūd Ṭarzī, as the owner, and containing the date 11 Sha’ban, 1336 AH (May 22, 1918). Upon his accession to the throne, the Afghan ruler Amir Ḥabībullāh (reigned 1901–18) gave amnesty to Ghulām Muḥammad Khān’s family, allowing its members to return to Afghanistan. A measure of the family’s improving fortune is that Asmā’ and Maḥmūd Ṭarzī’s daughter, Soraya, married Amir Ḥabīballāh’s son and was queen of Afghanistan from 1913 to 1929.
This work is a collection of poems in the *qaṣīda* (ode) form by Ghulām Muḥammad Khān (1830–1900), a prominent Pushto Afghan intellectual of the 19th century. Known by his pen name Ṭarzī (the Stylist), he was a member of the important Bārakzay tribe of Kandahār. In 1882 Ghulām Muḥammad Khān fell into disgrace with the Afghan ruler Amir ‘Abd-al-Raḥmān (reigned 1880–1901) and was expelled from Afghanistan along with his family. He spent three years in Karachi, before immigrating to Damascus, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire. Ghulām Muḥammad Khān died and is buried in Damascus. (ʿAbd al-Raḥmān’s son Amir Ḥabībullāh, reigned 1901–18, was to reverse the policy of his father and confer amnesty on those exiled under his father’s reign, allowing Ghulām Muḥammad Khān’s family to return to Afghanistan.) In Persian poetry the *qaṣīda* denotes a poem consisting of an initial verse with two rhyming hemistiches, followed by a collection of paired hemistiches in which the second member only is rhymed. The *qaṣīda* form started out as a vehicle for panegyrics, but was soon adopted for didactic, philosophical, religious and even satirical purposes. Many of Ghulām Muḥammad Khān’s *qaṣīdas* are poems in praise of the Prophet Muhammad and of other notable religious figures, such as the four rightly-guided caliphs and Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī (died 680), grandson of the prophet. Other figures who are subjects of poems in the collection include Maulānā Jalāl al-Dīn Balkhī (Rumī, 1207–73), and ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (1077–1166), whose tomb in Baghdad Ghulām Muḥammad Khān visited on the way to Syria. Ghulām Muḥammad Khān also composed panegyrics for statesmen of his own era, including the Afghan ruler Dōst Muhammad Khān (1793–1863), the Persian ruler Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (1831–96), the Ottoman sultan Abdülaziz (1830–76), whom Ghulām Muḥammad Khān calls “martyred,” and Ottoman sultan Abdülhamid II (1842–1918). The final section of the work contains chronograms depicting the birthdate of relatives and the dates when some of the notable men of his era died. The book was published by Sardār Muhammad Anwar Khān on April, 18, 1892, at the Fayḍ Muḥammadī press in Karachi. The calligrapher is listed as Muḥammad Zamān.


*Tazkirah-i gulzār-i Aʿẓam* (The memorial known as the greatest flower meadow) is a biographical compendium of poets and their poetic output. It belongs to the *tazkirah* (memorial) genre of Persian and Indo-Persian literature. The author, Muḥammad Ghauth Khān, was born on the 29th of Dhū al-Ḥijjah 1239 AH (August 25, 1824) in Chennai, India, and was the last nawab of the Carnatic. In the introduction to *Tazkirah*, Muḥammad Ghauth Khāndescribes how, after writing an earlier biographical work, *Ṣubḥ-i
Vaţan (Dawn of the homeland, completed in 1257 AH [1841–42]), he was eager to write a more comprehensive book, with more judiciously chosen poems for each poet. The resulting work was Taţkirah-i gulzār-i Aʿẓam, in which the title refers both to the genre and its author (Aʿẓam, meaning “greatest,” was the takhalluṣ or pen name of the author). The gulzār (meadow) in the title refers to the collection of poets included in the work. The title is also a chronogram that references the date it was published. Taţkirah-i gulzār-i Aʿẓam consists of the biographical entries for 141 poets arranged alphabetically by the takhalluṣ of each poet. (The author’s earlier work, Šubh-i Vaţan, has 90 entries.) The entries here include biographical information as well as samples of each poet’s work. The poets are generally from the Indian subcontinent, though on occasion they are listed as having moved to India from Persia, as, for example, in the entry for Vālih, or Muḥammad Musavī, which lists Khurāsān as his home. The work is in Persian, the literary language of India during the Mughal and ensuing eras. This edition was printed in 1272 AH (1855–56) at the Sarkārī printing press (likely in Rampur, India). Muḥammad’s father, Nawab Aʿẓam Jāh, died shortly after his son’s birth, but Muḥammad did not assume power until he was installed as nawab by British colonial administrators in 1842. Prior to this, his uncle, Prince ‘Azīm Jāh Bahādur, acted as regent. (‘Azīm Jāh Bahādur is listed in the Taţkirah-i gulzār-i Aʿẓam under the takhalluṣ Naẓīr and his entry describes a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina as well as him founding a school for Muslim students.) Muḥammad Ghauth Khān died childless in October 1855. Rather than have power revert to ‘Azīm Jāh Bahādur, the British East India Company chose to annex the Carnatic kingdom, thus ending the rule of the nawabs of the Carnatic.


Qānūn-i kārguzārī dar muʿāmalāt-i ḥukūmatī wa taʿayyun-i jarāyim wa siyāsāt (Law pertaining to government procedures and the imposition of penalties and redresses) is the earliest law manual produced in Afghanistan. The document dates from 1303 AH (1885–86), and was issued by the ruler ʻAbd al-Raḥmān Khān (reigned 1880–1901). The printed edition of this work was published somewhat later, and is dated Rabīʿ al-Ākhar, 1309 AH (November–December 1891). It was through documents such as Qānūn-i kārguzārī that ʻAbd al-Raḥmān Khān sought to transform traditional Islamic law into a codified body of rules. This effort was part of a broader project for the modernization and centralization of power in Afghanistan, which included the creation of an advisory council, a restructuring of the tax administration, and the division of the country into provinces that cut across the traditional territories of the tribal entities. In 1888, shortly after issuing Qānūn-i kārguzārī, ʻAbd al-Raḥmān Khān commissioned Asās al-Qudāt (Principles for judges), a blueprint for reshaping
the Afghan court system through centralization and standardization. Unlike this later work addressed to judges, *Qānūn-i kārguz̲ ārī* is primarily intended for the *ḥukkām* (local governors). It is a rather thin volume, consisting of 61 *qāʿida* (plural *qawāʿid*; rules) outlining procedures for dealing not only with criminals such as thieves, highwaymen, blackmailers, and murderers, but also those guilty of using foul language prohibited by *sharīʿa* law. The book was published at the Dār al-Salṭana printing press in Kabul. At the conclusion of each of the 61 sections a handwritten note states *ṣaḥīḥ ast faqat* (this much is correct), presumably to discourage spurious additions to the text.

**Riyāżī Haravī, Muḥammad Yūsuf. *Kitāb-i baḥr al-favāʿid*, Iran, 1906, [www.wdl.org/13022] [580 pages]**

*Kitāb-i baḥr al-favāʿid* (The ocean of rewards) is a literary-historical work written in a mixture of prose and verse styles and published in a lithographic version in Mashhad, Iran, in 1906. It chronicles social, cultural, and political events taking place in the second-half of the 19th century in Afghanistan and Persia, especially during the reigns of Afghan ruler ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan (1880–1901) and his Persian counterpart, Mozaffār al-Din Shah Qajar (1896–1907). The author, Muhammad Yusuf Riyazi Haravi, was from a family of bureaucrats; his father had served different local Afghan officials in Herat. Historians generally have used colonial sources in their study of late-19th century Iran and Afghanistan; this book is a local historical source for the study of relations between these two countries and their formation. Muhammad Yusuf received support from Mozaffār al-Din Shah Qajar, who is praised as a just and learned ruler. The author also provides rich descriptions of his own family background, childhood education, travels, and his move to Qajar Iran and the confiscation of his and his family’s property in Herat. The book includes a preface, table of contents, 12 chapters, and an extra section. The preface contains a 48-line verse and a prose section praising God, Muhammad, the family of ‘Ali, the Qajar dynasts, and the author’s own family. Chapter 1 describes the family background of the author. Chapter 2 contains several *hikayat* (stories) describing cities, political regions, and individuals; this chapter also includes a section on Afghanistan. Chapter 3, the longest, documents events in late-19th century Afghanistan and elsewhere, such as the signing of a friendship treaty between China and Japan, the death of a prime minister in the Ottoman Empire, and the Greek-Ottoman Wars. Chapter 4, called “Book of Knowledge,” discusses “12 types of knowledge.” Chapter 5, entitled “Questions and Answers,” describes ten encounters with different individuals in which various topics are discussed, for example, with a German traveler about religious laws in Islamic countries, and with an English officer about why Muslims do not send their children to Europe for schooling. Chapter 6 contains spiritual *ghazal* (lyric poems). Chapter 7, “The Source of Crying,” also has spiritual poems. Chapter 8 contains quintet
poems, here called takhmisat. Chapter 9 is only one page and appears to be incomplete; it contains a few quintet and quatrain poems. Chapter 10, “Book of Regrets,” discusses 12 different topics, for example, the finite character of the world and the nature of worship. Chapter 11, “Situations of Cities and Countries,” is a brief ethnographic account of Beijing, Kabul, Mashhad, and other places. Chapter 12 offers a conclusion; it also describes the recently concluded Russo-Japanese War (1904–5). The book ends with a section, Mulh’qat (Relevancies), which covers a seemingly random set of topics, including a hunting campaign in 1904 of Amir Habibullah Khan, nationalist activities in Greece, and the salaries of poets in Herat. This work clearly was written at different times and published by the author as single collection. Each chapter forms a unit, and there are no direct connections between them. The book contains lithographic images, including of the Qajar and Afghan rulers and of the author.


Risālah dar ‘ilm-i mūsīqī (Epistle on the science of music) is a short treatise on the music of India and Persia published in 1906. In his introduction, the author, Muhammad ‘Usman Qays, cites earlier sources, such as Tuḥfat al-Hind (The gift of India) by Mirza Khan (flourished in the 17th century), on this topic. After discussing such basic concepts as lahn (pitch) and iqa’ (rhythm), the author proceeds to trace the historical proliferation of the maqamat (modes) of Persian music. The discussion here is notable, among other things, for the way it highlights the affinities and differences within the currently canonized modal system known as dastgah. The second half of the work presents a short but dense examination of the ragas of Indian music. The six primary ragas of classical Indian music are presented, as are their associated ragini (wives) and putras (sons). The correspondences between the Indian and Persian modal systems are also listed. A poem by Badr-i Chach (died 1346) lists the appropriate times for the performance of each of the Persian modes, recalling the Indian system and the particular time or season associated with each raga. This lithographic book is the second edition of Qays’s work. It was published at the famed Newal Kishore Press in Lucknow, India, under the direction of Prag Narayan, the son and successor of the founder of the press, Munshi Newal Kishore (1836–95).

*Jaz̲ b al-qulūb ilá diyār al-maḥbūb* (The attraction of hearts to the house of the beloved) by ʻAbd al-Haq ibn Sayf al-Din Dihlavi (1551–1642) is a work in 17 chapters on the history and lore of the city of Medina. Surpassed only by Mecca in its importance to Muslims, Medina houses the tombs of the Prophet Muhammad and some of his close companions. The Hegira (or Hejira, the migration of Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina, then known as Yathrib) in 622 was a pivotal moment in Islamic history and serves as the origin of the Islamic calendar. In the introduction of the work, Sayf al-Din lists *Wafāʾ al-wafāʾ bi akhbār dār al-muṣṭafā* (The exhaustive history of the house of the Chosen One) by Nur al-Din Abu al-Hasan al-Samhudi (1440–1506) as his main reference. He also states that he commenced writing his work during a visit to Medina in 998 AH (1589–90) and completed it in Delhi in 1001 AH (1592–93). Although Sayf al-Din discusses the customs involved in the pilgrimage to Medina, the focus for much of his work is on the physical fabric of the city and the architecture of its religious and secular spaces (much of which has fallen into decay or been subject to deliberate dismantling in the intervening centuries). The present volume is the third edition of this work, printed and published by the famed Newal Kishore Press in Lucknow, India, in 1914.


*Kitāb al-Sittinī* (The book of sixty sciences) is a scientific encyclopedia written by one of the foremost intellectuals of the 12th century, the Persian philosopher Fakhr al-Din Razi (1149 or 1150–1210). Razi dedicated his work, which is also known as *Jāmiʿ al-ʻulūm* (The encyclopedia of sciences) to ʻAla’ ad-Din Tekish, the Khwarazmshahi ruler (reigned 1172–1200), near the beginning of the latter’s reign. As the title suggests, Razi treats 60 distinct branches of knowledge in his work, ranging from *al-kalam* (theology) to *adab al-muluk* (the conduct of kings). It is unfortunate that only portions of this important work have been subject to modern critical studies. The edition presented here is a lithographic print that was published by the Muzaffari Press in Bombay (present-day Mumbai, India), in the month of Ramadan, 1323 AH (March–April 1905).

Ṭarab al-majālis (The delight of assemblies) is a book of moral advice written in the 13th century by Husayn ibn ‘Alim, also known as Mīr Husaynī Haravi (1272 or 1273–circa 1317), a well-known Sufi. Born in Ghor (in present-day Afghanistan), the author appears to have spent much of his adult life in nearby Herat, hence the appellation Haravi. The work is divided into five sections: creation; various classes of human beings; the superiority of humans to animals; ethical behavior; and vice. The edition presented here is a lithographic printing produced in Tashkent, Russian Turkestan (present-day Uzbekistan) in 1914–15, during the waning years of the tsarist empire. It was published at the Yakovlev printing press, which was known for printing works in Persian and other non-European languages during the first decades of the 20th century. The book has sustained considerable damage to a number of its initial and final leaves and has been partially repaired.
BOOKS


Augustus Abbott (1804–67) was the eldest of five brothers, all of whom distinguished themselves as British soldiers. He joined the army at age 15 and served until his retirement in 1859 with the rank of major-general. During the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838–42), Abbott saw much action as commander of an artillery battery. This book is an account of the war, based on Abbott’s journals and correspondence, published during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80), when reader interest in Afghanistan was high. The book was edited, with an introduction, by Charles Rathbone Low, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and the author of several books on India. The First Anglo-Afghan War began when the army of the British East India Company was ordered to move into Afghanistan with the object of occupying the capital of Kabul, deposing Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, and replacing him with the more malleable—from the British perspective—Shah Shujā’. The cities of Kandahar and Ghazni fell, and, as is stated in the introduction, “No further opposition was offered to the advance of the Army, which encamped before Cabul, and, on the 7th of August, our puppet king, Shah Shooja, resplendent in jewels, was conducted in pomp through the city, to the Bala Hissar, or citadel.” Abbott’s descriptions of the fighting provide tactical accounts by a soldier who saw action in most of the war’s important engagements. At the front of the volume is a sketch map of the alignment of forces at Jalalabad, a major city on the road from Kabul to the borders of India.


James Abbott (1807‒96) was a British army officer who went to India in 1823. He participated in the Anglo-Indian invasion that precipitated the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). He reached Kandahar in April 1839 and was a member of a political mission to Herat. In December 1839 he was sent on a mission to the Khanate of Khiva (in present-day Uzbekistan), which was under attack by a Russian military expedition and which had requested British help. The Russian expedition was ostensibly aimed at freeing Russian slaves held by the Khivans and ending attacks on caravans, but it was in fact intended to bring the khanate under Russian control. Abbott was unable to convince the khan of Khiva to free the Russian slaves in order to eliminate any pretext for Russian intervention, but he succeeded in convincing the khan to agree to a treaty that provided for the establishment of a British agent in Khiva and empowered the British to mediate between Khiva and Russia. Abbott then traveled to Saint Petersburg to pursue the mediation. He left Khiva in March 1840 and, after many adventures, which included being attacked and kidnapped by a band of Kazakhs, reached the Russian capital, where his efforts at mediation were rejected. He returned to England and eventually to his post in India. In 1843 he published his two-volume *Narrative of a Journey from Heraut to Khiva, Moscow, and St. Petersburgh*, presented here. The book contains a detailed account of Abbott’s mission, beginning with his departure from Herat and covering his journey through Turkestan, across Russia to Saint Petersburg, on to London, and finally back to Calcutta. Volume one contains a large fold-out map with the route of Abbott’s journey from Herat to Khiva and on to Orenburg, Russia. An interesting aspect of the book is the perspectives offered by Summud Khaun, an Afghan steward who accompanied Abbott on the entire journey, visiting places not only in Central Asia and Russia, but London, Paris, Genoa, Rome, Naples, Athens, and other European cities on the way back...
to India. Abbott offers many of his companion’s observations on European customs and conditions (he feels great pity at the poverty and squalor he sees in Naples, for example) under the heading “Summud Khauniana.” In 1845–53 Abbott was commissioner of Hazara, India, where the city of Abbottabad is named for him.


ʻAbd al-Rahman Khan (1844–1901) ruled Afghanistan from 1880 to 1901. He was a grandson of Dost Mohammad Khan (ruled 1826–39 and 1845–63), the founder the Barakzai dynasty of Afghanistan after the fall of the Durranis and the end of the First Anglo-Afghan War in 1842. After long years in exile in Central Asia, Rahman came to power in Afghanistan with the support of the British, by whom he was later patronized financially, politically, and militarily. The Life of Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan is a two-volume work, edited and translated from the original Persian by Mir Munshi Sultan Mohamed Khan, the amir’s former state secretary. Volume one consists of 12 chapters, the first 11 of which are an autobiographical narrative of the amir’s life up to his accession to the throne at the end of the Second Anglo-Afghan War and his early years as ruler, in which he consolidated his grip on the country by defeating the Hazaras and conquering Kafiristan. The final chapter of volume one and the eight chapters of volume two consist of ʻAbd al-Rahman Khan’s observations and reflections on various matters as conveyed by Sultan Mohamed Khan. The titles of some of these chapters indicate the range of topics covered: “My Successor to the Throne of Kabul”; “The Means I Took for the Encouragement of Progress in Commerce, Industries, and Arts”; “A Few Details in My Daily Life”; “The Boundaries of Afghanistan and the Durand Mission”; “The Future of Afghanistan”; and “England, Russia, and Afghanistan.” The book includes a preface by Sultan Mohamed Khan in which he explains how the book was composed, and in which he claims that “since the time of the great Mogul Emperors—Timur, Babar, and Akbar, etc. no Muslim sovereign has written his autobiography in such an explicit, interesting, and lucid manner as the Amir has done…. The book is illustrated and contains a genealogical table of the Barakzais and several maps.

ʻAbdulgānī. A Review of the Political Situation in Central Asia, Lahore, 1921, www.wdl.org/17733 [380 pages]

Muhammad ʻAbdulghani Jalalpuri (1864–1943), better known as Dr. Abdul Ghani, was an Indian Muslim reformist and educator who was active at the Afghan court in the early 20th century. He was the English secretary to Amir ʻAbd al-Rahman Khan (reigned 1880–1901) and Amir Habibullah Khan (reigned 1901–19). Abdul Ghani’s A Review of the Political Situation in Central Asia was written after his return to British India from Afghanistan. Published in Lahore in 1921, the book examines the geopolitical developments in Central Asia in the wake of World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, and Afghanistan’s achievement of complete independence in 1919. He argues that Indian leaders need to
understand correctly the geopolitical changes in Central Asia in order for them to guide their country safely and successfully to independence. The book is comprised of a preface, an introduction entitled “Why should India have an interest in Central Asia?”, and 12 chapters. The first four chapters deal with Afghanistan and its rulers. Chapter five is entitled “Russian Advance into Central Asia.” It is followed by four chapters that analyze, review, and critique Russian Bolshevism. Chapters 10–12 deal with “India and the present revolutionary struggle of the world” and the interconnections among developments in Russia, Afghanistan, and India. The book has two appendices and contains six illustrations depicting notable Afghans of the time, including Amir Amanullah Khan (reigned 1919–29), several ministers, and Sardar Mohammad Nadir Khan, the leading Afghan general in the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919, and later King Muhammad Nadir Shah of Afghanistan in 1929–33. Abdul Ghani criticizes what he considers the mischief brought about by “popular applause” and the readiness of the Indian political class to consider foreign assistance as a means to gain independence. The book ends with suggestions of what Indian nationalists should do to secure independence. “India” as used by Abdul Ghani refers to British India, meaning Pakistan (and Bangladesh) as well as present-day India.

Abū Maʾshar. De magnis coniunctionibus et annorum revolutionibus ac eorum profectionibus octo continens tractatus, Venice, 1515, [99 pages]

Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad al-Balkhī (787–886), known as Abū Maʾshar (and as Albumasar in the Latin West), was one of the most-renowned astronomers of the Middle Ages. His fame in Europe rested upon numerous Latin translations of his astronomical works from the original Arabic. He was born in the Persian city of Balkh (present-day Afghanistan), on 20th of Safar, 171 AH (August 10, 787). He most likely received his early education in Balkh prior to moving to Baghdad, as his works are often colored by a distinct Persian nationalism. According to Ibn al-Nadīm, the tenth-century scholar and bibliographer, Abū Maʾshar abandoned the study of hadith to focus instead on astronomy and astrology when he was 47 years old. Ibn al-Nadīm lists more than 30 astronomical titles by Abū Maʾshar. Shown here is Kitāb aḥkām taḥāwil sinī al-mawālīd (Book of the annual revolutions of nativities), translated by Johannes Hispalensis (John of Seville, flourished mid-12th century) under the title De magnis coniunctionibus et annorum revolutionibus ac eorum profectionibus octo continens tractatus, and first printed at Augsburg in 1489. The first five books were also translated into Latin in the 13th century from an earlier Greek translation and published in Basel in 1559. Presented here is a Venice edition of 1515, printed in the shop of Melchiorre Sessa the elder (active 1506–49), identifiable by his printer’s mark: the initials “MS” beside a crown above the image of a cat that has just caught a mouse.

Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad al-Balkhī (787–886), known as Abū Maʿshar, lived in Baghdad in the 9th century. Originally an Islamic scholar of the hadith (the prophetic traditions of Muhammad) and a contemporary of the famous philosopher al-Kindī, Abū Maʿshar developed an interest in astrology at the relatively late age of 47. He became the most important and prolific writer on astrology in the Middle Ages. His discourses incorporated and expanded upon the studies of earlier scholars of Islamic, Persian, Greek, and Mesopotamian origin. His works were translated into Latin in the 12th century and, through their wide circulation in manuscript form, had a great influence on Western scholars. *Kitab al-Mudkhal al-Kabīr* (Great introduction) is his most important work and the one most frequently cited by scholars in the West. It contains an astrological theory on the nature of the moon’s influence on the tides and was the key work on the subject during the Middle Ages. This edition is the 1140 translation into Latin by Hermann of Carinthia, first printed by Erhard Ratdolt in Augsburg, Germany, in 1489. The woodcut title vignette of a black-faced astronomer reading the stars with an astrolabe and dividers is one of the best-known Renaissance representations of an astronomer.


*Causes of the Afghan War* is a compilation of documents assembled by the Afghan Committee of the British Parliament to examine the events leading up to the Second Anglo-Afghan War, which began in November 1878 and lasted until September 1880. The committee was comprised of members of Parliament from all parties who were critical of the secrecy with which the British government had initiated the war and its reasons for doing so. As stated in the preface: “We believe that this war is unjust; and injustice is certain, sooner or later, to bring disaster in its train. We believe that, even if just, it is inexpedient; that the policy which brought it about is unwise, and will imperil our rule in India.” The stated purpose of the book is to help the British public at large understand the war by making available to it the same documents (“papers”) presented by the government to the Parliament or assembled by the Afghan Committee in the course of its own investigations. The book is in three parts. The first deals with the causes of the Anglo-Afghan War, beginning with events in 1855 and leading up to the outbreak of the conflict in 1878. The second part deals with the Anglo-Indian occupation of Quetta (in present-day Pakistan) in 1876 and its incorporation into British India. The third part, entitled “England and Russia in Central Asia,” concerns the understanding reached between the British and Russian governments in 1876 regarding their respective spheres of influence in Asia and the subsequent breakdown of that understanding as a consequence of competition for influence in Afghanistan. The texts reproduced here include diplomatic dispatches, correspondence between British and British Indian officials and their Afghan and Russian counterparts, articles or reports from newspapers and periodicals, and other documents, excerpted from a series of parliamentary “Blue Books” (so called because they were printed with blue paper covers) on Afghanistan and Central Asia. The texts are elucidated and commented upon in an anonymously written connecting narrative.
Afghān, Fażl Aḥmad. Yāddāsht-i yak musāfir, Afghanistan, 1935-36, [77 pages]

Yāddāsht-i yak musāfir (Memoirs of a traveler) is an account of the political and social history of Tajikistan in the early 20th century, written from a pro-Soviet and pro-Russian perspective. The author, Fażl Ahmad Afghan, writes of leaving Afghanistan for neighboring Tajikistan near the turn of the century and records his observations about the remarkable progress made by the Tajik people in subsequent decades. He begins his history with the Emirate of Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan) on the eve of its annexation by imperial Russia in the 1860s and 1870s. The author emphasizes the backward character of this polity (placing special emphasis on the licentiousness of the clergy) and the hopeless plight of those living within its borders. Annexation by Russia brings some improvement in the form of the telegraph and postal service and other symbols of progress, but these changes only benefit the ruling class, leaving the working class to languish as before. The main portion of the book offers a glowing (and one-sided) account of the progress achieved in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution and the formation of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic. Areas of progress in the author’s view include improved health care and education, equality for women, and an equitable system of control over the agricultural and industrial production by the working class. A notable feature of the early history of the Tajik Republic is that it was initially formed as an entity within the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. Writing in the mid-1930s, the author treats the secession of the Tajik Republic from the Uzbek Republic, which occurred in 1929, as not yet fully actualized. Several of the illustrations in the book depict public buildings said to serve the working class in the post-revolutionary period. The section on the period of imperial Russian rule includes an illustration of revolutionary Tajiks condemned to die for their seditious activities, while the section on the rule of the Emirate of Bukhara includes an illustration of an anonymous and fictitious victim of torture. The final chapter concerns the history of contemporary Afghanistan, but virtually all of the text for this section is missing. The final surviving portion of the book is a condemnation of British capitalism and its exploitation of Egypt, Iran, and Afghanistan, and a presentation of the argument that were these nations to be freed of foreign influence, they could share in the progress made by the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic.

Afghānī, Jamāl al-Dīn. Kitāb tatimmat al-bayān fī tārīkh al-Afghān, Cairo, 1901, [192 pages]

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–97) was a pan-Islamic thinker, political activist, and journalist, who sought to revive Islamic thought and liberate the Muslim world from Western influence. Many aspects of his life and his background remain unknown or controversial, including his birthplace, his religious affiliation, and the cause of his death. He was likely born in Asadabad, near present-day Hamadan, Iran. His better known history begins when he was 18, with a one-year stay in India that coincided with the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857–59. In what would become a life of constant travel, he soon went to Mecca to perform Hajj, before returning to Afghanistan to join the service of the country’s ruler, Dost Mohammad Khan (1793–1863). He later sided with Dost’s son Mohammad A‘zam, who ultimately lost in a power struggle with his British-supported brother Sher Ali. Al-Afghani’s political activism eventually took him to Paris, London, Tehran, Saint Petersburg, and Constantinople. It was during his second stay in Egypt (1871–79) that he cemented his role as a reformer. He found in Cairo a class of young intellectuals who
gathered around him, established newspapers, and used these papers to disseminate his ideas. Chief among al-Afghani’s Egyptian disciples were scholar Muhammad ‘Abduh, journalist ‘Abd Allah al-Nadim, and nationalist politicians Mustafa Kamil and Sa’d Zaghlul. Al-Afghani’s influence on both modernist and traditionalist Islamic thought continues to the present. An activist who sought to effect change through political journalism and public speaking, he did not write many books. This small book, entitled Tatimmat al-bayān fī tārīkh al-Afghān (Completing the narrative on the history of the Afghans), was written during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80) and was published in 1901. It begins with a dedication by the publisher, ‘Ali Yusuf al-Karidli, to ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan, the ruler of Afghanistan. Two short chapters at the beginning discuss the etymology of the name Afghanistan and the ancestry of its people. The third chapter covers Afghan political and military history starting with Mahmud of Ghazni (971–1030); the fourth deals with the “different people inhabiting the lands called Afghanistan.” A conclusion discusses the “general conditions of the land” and is followed by a 12-point list of advice from an unnamed “emir of the Afghans” to his son.


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Afghanische Strafgesetzbuch vom Jahre 1924 (Afghan Penal Code of 1924) is a translation from Persian of the Afghan Penal Code of that year, with its 1925 amendments. The translation is by Sebastian Beck (1878–1951), a German scholar of the Near East who was active during the Nazi era and was the author of textbooks for Germans learning Persian. The booklet is comprised of three parts: a general introduction
by Beck on the society and the legislative process in Afghanistan; an appendix covering 19 issues contested by the nation’s *loya jirga* (grand assembly); and the German translation of the text of the law. Beck notes in the introduction that the Afghan use of the expression *nezam-nama* (decree) instead of *qanun* (law) was not arbitrary, but was carefully chosen to denote the Afghans’ preference for the canonical word *sharia* to the secular word *law*. The contested issues include amendments to the law and measures to protect Afghan culture and traditional values from secular and Western influences. The law itself is comprised of 295 articles. The Persian original was published by the official court and government printing office in 1,000 copies. This book was published in Berlin in 1928. It is an imprint of the academic journal *Die Welt des Islams* (The world of Islam), known in English as the *International Journal for the Study of Modern Islam*. The journal was established in 1913 and is published by Brill. This copy is from the Law Library of the Library of Congress.


*Niẓāmnāmah-‘i miqyāsāt* (Rule book for measurement standards) deals with the standardization of measurement systems pertaining to length and weight, as well as currency. It was published in Afghanistan during the reign of Amanullah Khan (1919‒29), the ruler under whom Afghanistan won its full independence from Great Britain. The book provides the names for the subdivisions and multiples of the units of length and weight in the metric system (i.e., the meter and the gram), but it does not provide information relating these new units to traditional units of measure, such as the *dharʿ* for length and the *mithqal* for weight. The introduction of the new standards was instead based on official prototypes that were shipped to various locations in Afghanistan and used as points of reference. The discussion of currency does provide conversion rates for the new monetary unit, the afghani, a silver coin weighing 10 grams that replaced the Kabuli rupee (at a rate of 11 Kabuli rupees to 10 afghans). Also listed in the work are two gold coins, the amani and the half amani, named in honor of the Afghan ruler, and valued at 20 afghanis and 10 afghanis, respectively. The work includes an implementation timetable, which requests that the conversion project be completed by the spring of 1929, and warns that unspecified penalties will be imposed on those failing to make the conversion to the new system. The work was published in March 1926, in 50 copies, at the Rafiq printing press in Kabul. The author is unknown, but the book is stamped with the official seal of Amanullah Khan.

*Niẓāmnāmah-‘i albisah-‘i ʾaskariyah* (Military uniform regulation book), a slightly earlier work dealing with military uniform regulations under Amanullah Khan, appears to reflect a similar preoccupation with standardization as a key to progress.

*Uṣūlnāmah-ʿi mūtur rānī va gādī rānī dar Afghānistān* (Guidebook for the driving of motor vehicles and carts) is a handbook for drivers in Afghanistan. The book was published in 1,000 copies on December 26, 1939, corresponding to the early reign of Mohammed Zahir Shah (reigned 1933–73). The text is presented in the two principal languages of Afghanistan, Pushto and Dari, in side-by-side columns. The stipulations treat the operation of vehicles by foreign nationals (both those within the foreign diplomatic corps and non-diplomats) as well as Afghan citizens. Other stipulations relate to license plates, age limits and other qualifications for drivers, and the draught animals used for drawing carts. The work is similar to *Uṣūlnāmah-ʿi taʿziyahʿdāri dar Afghānistān* (Guidebook for visits of condolence in Afghanistan), also published in 1939, in that both books reflect the modernization and expansion of the Afghan state in this period.


*Uṣūlnāmah-ʿi taʿziyahʿdāri dar Afghānistān* (Guidebook for visits of condolence in Afghanistan) is a short tract consisting of 13 injunctions concerning public mourning in Afghanistan, particularly with regard to visits of condolence. The tone of the text is largely proscriptive. It prohibits repeated visits to the survivors of the deceased, and requires that such visits occur in a three-day period following the death of the person being mourned. Also included are injunctions against excessive displays of grief and condolence visits by young women in cases when the deceased is not a woman or a close male relative. The text is presented in the two principal languages of Afghanistan, Pushto and Dari, in side-by-side columns. The book was published in 300 copies on April 9, 1939, corresponding to the early reign of Mohammed Zahir Shah (reigned 1933–73). *Uṣūlnāmah-ʿi taʿziyahʿdāri dar Afghānistān* is important in offering a rare look at the intrusion of the rapidly modernizing Afghan state into areas that previously would have been the exclusive domain of religion and traditional belief systems.

*Niẓāmnāmah-‘i mu‘āmilāt-i nahr-i razzāq-i samt-i shumālī* (Bylaws regulating the transactions regarding the Razzaq Stream, Northern Quarter) is a collection of ordinances pertaining to the construction of a canal to the northeast of Kabul, in what is today the Kapisa Province of Afghanistan. It was published by the Majlis-i ‘ali-yi vuzara (Office for the Publications of the Cabinet) on February 14, 1924, in 500 copies. The religious associations with the term *razzaq* (provider) are highlighted by the invocation of God as the provider in the opening of this document. In the introduction we read that the purpose of the construction of the canal was to divert the water of the Panjshir, Shutul, Salang, and Ghorband rivers for agricultural purposes, and that the estimated expense for the entire project was 1.1 million Kabuli rupees. The irrigated area fed by the canal was estimated as 1,000 *jarīb* (202 hectares) and land was to be provided at zero or low cost to the needy residents of the region as well as other poor citizens of Afghanistan.


*Niẓāmnāmah-i albisah-‘i ʿaskarīyah* (Military uniform regulation book) contains the uniform and dress regulations for the Afghan military under the rule of Amanullah Khan (reigned from 1919 to 1929). The book was published in January 1921, soon after the conclusion of the Third Anglo-Afghan War (May–August 1919), in which Amanullah Khan was the leader of the Afghan forces and through which Afghanistan gained its complete independence from Great Britain. The book outlines the form and color of the *kurtī* (coat) and *birjis* (breeches) of military personnel, and it also illustrates the collar and shoulder insignia for each military rank. The work is printed in black and white, but a page near the beginning contains a hand-colored palette using opaque watercolors to depict the regulation uniform colors. The book was printed in 1,000 copies at the Maktabah-i Funun-i Harbiyah (Military Arts Library) printing press in Kabul.


*Jughrāfiyāh-‘i kūchak* (A small geography) is a geography text for students. It begins with a definition of geography (“the science that reveals to us cities, mountains and the rivers on the earth”) and a discussion of the cardinal directions. The basic features of the earth’s surface are then defined and in some cases (as with continents and oceans) clarified by the listing of examples. There follows a discussion of Afghanistan’s borders, mountain ranges, and rivers, and short entries on its population, its capital, its political divisions and government, and prominent Afghan cities and well-known high schools. The section on Afghanistan is followed by a presentation of the continents, with a list of the main rivers, mountains, countries, and famous cities of each. Notable features of the work include a short guide for teachers as an aid in teaching the cardinal directions. The work is bound with another textbook entitled *Khulāṣah-‘i tarīkh-i anbiyā* (An abridged history of the prophets). This work begins with a definition of history as “a science that teaches us the lives of famous persons such as the prophets … and the circumstances of past nations and peoples and the reasons for their advancement and decay.” What follows is a series of short biographies of more than 20 prophets and religious figures revered in Islam, including the prophets Adam, Hud, Abraham, and Moses. The final section discusses the Virgin Mary and what is said to be the foretelling by her son Jesus of the Prophet Muhammad. Both works were published in 1922 under the auspices of the minister of education, Hayatullah Khan (1888–1929), brother of the Afghan king, Amanullah Khan (1892–1960, reigned 1919–29). Subsequent to serving as minister of education, Hayatullah Khan was minister of justice (1925). He later was killed in the insurrection that toppled his brother from power in 1929. Both books were printed in editions of 10,000 copies.


*Afghanistan: Ancient Land with Modern Ways* was published by the Ministry of Planning of the Royal Government of Afghanistan in 1961 to provide, as stated in the foreword, a “panorama of the ‘Afghan Scene’—past and present.” The book portrays a dynamic, modernizing Afghanistan whose people and government are “determined to make up for lost time” after a long period, said to have begun early in the 19th century, when the country’s “fortunes fell on bad days” and in which “the hopes and aspirations of its people repeatedly found expression only in successive, costly and bloody wars for Independence.” The book is in both English and Pushto, and includes short, richly illustrated chapters on the geography, culture, history, people, social development, economy, government, and international affairs of the country. The emphasis is on development, including the construction of roads, airports, universities, bridges, and other forms of infrastructure, as well as education and the training of the workforce. Women are portrayed as active in society and in the economy, both as workers and consumers. The section on international affairs underlines Afghanistan’s status as a member of non-aligned group of nations, with photographs showing King Mohammed Zahir Shah, Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud, and Minister of External Affairs Sardar Mohammed Naim meeting with the leaders of China, Egypt, Turkey, the Soviet Union, the United States,
and other countries. The book concludes: “The stress and strain of historical events have forged the people of Afghanistan into a united mass with a single purpose to eliminate the deficiencies of the present which we have inherited from the past. With cautious optimism Afghanistan looks forward toward its future with confidence.”

Ahmad, Shīr. *Kashf al-asrār*, Afghanistan, 1910 or 1911, [www.wdl.org/17670](http://www.wdl.org/17670) [60 pages]

*Kashf al-asrār* (The unveiling of mysteries) is a book of Qur’anic commentary dating from the early 20th century. The author, Shir Ahmad, was from Kabul, Afghanistan. In the *Kashf al-asrār*, Shir Ahmad makes repeated reference to an earlier and more comprehensive commentary but states that, because of the great bulk of the earlier work, he was forced to write a short text dealing with various essential topics. The *Kashf al-asrār* is organized as an introduction and 13 sections, with each section treating a collection of related verses from the Qur’an. Shir Ahmad writes the introduction in Persian, in which he makes a customary plea about the potential shortcomings of his work. In the subsequent section the commentary is in Arabic. The Qur’anic verses under consideration are written in the same color and in the same naskh calligraphy as the commentary, but they are set off by use of a larger script size. Somewhat unexpectedly, Shir Ahmad switches back to a Persian commentary (written in the nasta’liq calligraphic style) mid-way through the subsequent section. The work concludes with a table of contents. Shir Ahmad’s *Kashf al-asrār* shares its name with a number of works, including a celebrated 12th century Qur’anic commentary by Rashid al-Din Maybudi. The book was printed and published in 1910 or 1911 in Kabul by Matba‘ah-i ‘Umumi.

Ainī, Sadriddin. *Numūnah-‘i Adabīyāt-i Tājīk*, Moscow, 1926, [www.wdl.org/17680](http://www.wdl.org/17680) [640 pages]

*Numūnah-‘i Adabīyāt-i Tājīk* (Collection of Tajik literature) is a compendium of poetic works by medieval, early modern, and modern Tajik poets. It was compiled and edited by Sadriddin Aini (1878–1954), who is considered a national poet in Tajikistan and was by far the most literary of the Tajik nationalists. The work was published in Samarkand by the Central Press of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1926, just two years after the creation of the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. Each work in the compendium is well known and available in other collections and volumes published in the Persian-speaking world; collectively these works represent the Persian literary tradition in the Persian-speaking regions of Central Asia. The compendium includes a biographical entry on Aini by the Iranian nationalist political activist Abolqosim Lohuti, a preface, and three main sections. The first section includes representative works by 80 medieval and early modern Persian poets, including Rudaki, Daqiqi, Farabi, Alisher Navoi (or Nawa‘i), and others. The second section discusses the poetic works of 132 Persian-speaking poets from the late-18th and 19th centuries. Section three deals with what Aini calls the “new Tajik literature” produced between 1905 and 1925. These later poems deal with the discourse on modernization, known in Central Asian studies as Jadidism, and the social and political developments that took place in the region as a consequence of the Bolshevik Revolution. Three pictures of Aini appear in the book. Each section begins with a short preface and ends with a list of contents. Aini
provides a biographical entry about each poet’s life and career. Publication of the compendium was a state-sponsored project carried out during a crucial period of history when many of the countries that today are independent nation-states in Central Asia were established as parts of the Soviet Union under a policy of “national delimitation.”


This work is a history of Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan), written by Said Mir Mohammed Alim Khan (1880–1944), the last amir of Bukhara. Between 1785 and 1920 Bukhara was ruled by eight amirs of the Manghit dynasty. After the Russian conquest of Samarkand in 1868, the emirate of Bukhara became a Russian protectorate. Alim Khan assumed power in 1910, following the death of his father, Abdulahad Khan. Alim Khan was overthrown by the Red Army in September 1920, went into exile, and eventually settled in Kabul, Afghanistan. The title of the book, *Tārīkh-i ḥuzn al-milal-i Bukhārā* (The anguish of nations), alludes to the suffering of his people under communist rule. The text, in Persian, is dated 1921, but the book contains a map of Bukhara and its border with Afghanistan, in French and with information about events after 1925. The illustrations include several photographs of the amir.


*My Wanderings in Persia* is an account of a three-year journey to and posting in Teheran in 1875–78 by a British official contracted to the India Office for unspecified services. The author traveled by sea from London to Bombay and to Karachi and then overland to Teheran. His return journey was via Russia and across Europe. The book contains descriptions of the major cities of Persia (present-day Iran) visited, with observations on culture, religion, and everyday life. The author is critical of many aspects of Persia, including the cruelty and despotism of the ruling shah and the treatment of women throughout society. The book is illustrated with drawings and contains a large fold-out map that uses different colors to show the author’s route, the old western frontier of British India and the new “scientific frontier” further to the west, and the old Russian frontier and the new Russian frontier of 1878 after the Russian advance southward. An inset map in the lower left shows an enlarged view of the scientific frontier between Afghanistan and British India (in present-day Pakistan). The scientific frontier was a term used in 1878 by British prime minister Benjamin Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield) in reference to a rectified border between Afghanistan and British India, by which he meant a frontier that could be occupied and defended according to the requirements of the
science of military strategy, as opposed to a “haphazard frontier” that was the product of historical circumstance. Although Anderson includes this term in the subtitle of his book and marks it prominently on the map, there is in fact very little discussion of the Afghan-Indian frontier in the book, which deals largely with Persia and very little with Afghanistan. An appendix gives the distances on the stage roads from Bushehr to Teheran, Teheran to Baghdad, and Teheran to Resht (present-day Rasht), with the distance in miles between stages and remarks on the status of the road on each stage.


Pierre Jean Daniel André was a French military officer who studied Oriental languages in Paris before serving with the French Colonial Infantry in a number of parts of the French Empire, including Algeria and Morocco, and at posts along the African and Arabian coasts of the Indian Ocean. In 1919–20 André was governor of the sanjak (administrative district) of Djebel-i-Bereket in Cilicia, a region of southeastern Turkey that had been placed under French administration following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I. Based on his experiences in Turkey, in 1921 André published, under the pseudonym Pierre André Redan, *La Cilicie et le problème ottoman* (Cilicia and the Ottoman problem). The book presented here, *L’Islam et les races* (Islam and race), was published the following year under André’s own name. It is an ambitious, two-volume work, in which André propounds his particular theory about the world of Islam. In volume one, he describes the main doctrines and institutions of Islam and traces its origins in Arabia, its expansion beyond the Arabian Peninsula to North Africa and the Middle East, and its conquest of and spread to the region that André characterizes as Turco-Mongolian. André’s thesis is that Islam can be best understood in terms of a tree metaphor: as an Arab trunk onto which has been grafted a vast Turco-Mongolian growth. Volume two describes the principal schisms and sects found within Islam and the local forms that the faith takes in Egypt and Tripolitania (present-day Libya); elsewhere in North Africa; in sub-Saharan Africa; in the sultanates along the coast of the Indian Ocean; in the Far East; in Russia and the Caucasus; in India; in Southeast Asia (Indonesia); and in Persia, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan. At the beginning of volume one is a table giving the total estimated Muslim population of the world in 1917—close to 247 million—and its geographical distribution.


The “scientific frontier” is a term used by Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield) of Great Britain in 1878 to denote a border between British India (in present-day Pakistan) and Afghanistan, which could be occupied and defended according to the requirements of the science of military strategy, as opposed to the existing frontier, which had been formed by a haphazard pattern of British expansion through agreements and annexations. The term subsequently figured prominently in British discussions about the defense of British India from a possible Russian invasion through Afghanistan. *Our Scientific Frontier*, published toward the end of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80), is an analysis of this subject, written to influence the British debate on the terms of peace. The author, William Patrick Andrew, was chairman of the Scinde, Punjab, and Delhi Railway Company, and thus an expert on logistics and transport in India and along its frontiers. The book contains chapters on the Northwest Frontier, the history, geography, and economy of Afghanistan, the independent border tribes, mountain passes, probable routes of invasion from Afghanistan into India, and the “Powindahs, or
Soldier-Merchants of Afghanistan.” Three appendices cover the Sherpur entrenchments that were part of the defense of Kabul, the Bolan and Khyber railways (neither of which was constructed until after the period discussed), and transport by rail of troops, horses, guns, and war matériel in India.


*The Afghan Question from 1841 to 1878* consists of five chapters extracted and reprinted from a larger work, *The Eastern Question*, also published in 1879. The author, George Douglas Campbell, eighth duke of Argyll (1823–1900), was secretary of state for India in the first government of Liberal Prime Minister William Gladstone (1868–74). Argyll believed that the security of India did not require territorial expansion into Persia or the northwest, and he was critical of British politicians and officials who in his view worried excessively about Russian advances in Central Asia. He became a fierce critic of British policy toward India and Afghanistan under the Conservative government of Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, and of British policies leading up to and in the conduct of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). In the preface to the book Argyll writes: “We have yet to see the final results of the Afghan war. We have indeed hunted our victim, Shere Ali, to the death. We have overrun, with the most perfect ease, a great portion of his country. But our ‘scientific frontier’ is not yet defined. The wild tribes of Afghanistan have not yet been reconciled to our dominion. The cost and waste of our operations are enormous.” Argyll was one of the two largest landowners in Scotland, possessing estates comprising more than 175,000 acres (70,000 hectares), and the head of clan Campbell. His interests included politics, science (especially ornithology and geology), and the improvement of education and agriculture in Scotland.


As is stated in the introductory chapter, the subject of *Ma’rifat al-arz̤* (Knowledge of the Earth, or Introduction to geology) is “the structure and the continual evolution that [the Earth] has been subject to in prior eons and at the present time.” The work thus can be regarded as an introductory text on geology. Following the introduction are 20 chapters on topics ranging from “rocks” (Chapter 2) to the “Quaternary Period” (Chapter 21). Sections in each chapter are numbered consecutively, and end at Section 167, “The Ice Age.” Other topics covered include the water cycle, erosion, and volcanism. Several historical events are listed, including the 1755 Lisbon earthquake and the 1902 volcanic eruption in Martinique. Written prior to the widespread acceptance of the theory of continental drift, the book describes earthquakes as having an “as of yet undetermined cause” (although the author rules out volcanism as the underlying cause). The division of the geological time periods into the primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary was already antiquated by the time the book was written. The surviving work does not include figures and notes, which creates a conundrum as numerous references to figures exist within the text. (It is possible that the figures were published separately or that the present work is incomplete in some way.) The work was printed at the Dar al-Saltanah printing press in Kabul. The author, a Mr. Arjumand, was a history teacher from Persia hired at the Amaniyah School in Kabul. This school was founded by the Afghan ruler Amanullah Khan (reigned 1919–29) and was staffed by Persian and French teachers. The book was published in 1926–27 (AH 1305).

The Afghan Committee of the British Parliament was comprised of members of Parliament from all parties who were critical of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80) and the policies that had led to it. The committee issued documents and reports intended to help the public to understand the war and to counter the secrecy with which, in the committee’s view, the British government had conducted its policy toward Afghanistan. *Afghanistan: In Relation to Past Conquests of India* is a pamphlet published by the committee in 1879, written by the Reverend William Arthur (1819–1901), a Methodist missionary who had lived and worked in India in 1839–41. The Disraeli government had invoked the argument that British India was vulnerable to attack by Russia through Afghanistan to justify the Anglo-Indian invasion of Afghanistan, and Arthur begins with the observation that “India is often spoken of as having been, in all ages, the easy prey of every foreign conqueror.” He goes on to argue that the conquest of India was in fact an extremely difficult undertaking, accomplished very rarely. Summing up the historical evidence presented in the pamphlet, he concludes that during “the 2,400 years from Darius to the present time, we have found that five great conquerors have attempted to sweep down upon India through the Hindu Koosh. Two of them, Darius and Genghis Khan, were stopped by the frontier stream. The third, Alexander, was stopped in the Punjab by the second river…. Two, Tamerlane and Nadir Shah, reached Delhi. None of the five got further.” Adding that “not one of the five had to face a centralized Government able to command the united forces of the country,” he discounts the contention that India was in any way threatened by a possible Russian invasion.


The Kandahar Campaign was the last phase of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). It began in late June 1880, when Ayub Khan, the governor of Herat, led an Afghan force toward Kandahar, then occupied by an Anglo-Indian army. A column of troops under Brigadier General George Burrows was sent from Kandahar to try to intercept Ayub Khan’s force but was defeated in a fierce battle at Maiwand on July 27. The remnants of the British force struggled back to Kandahar, followed by Ayub Khan, who laid siege to the city. A column of approximately 10,000 soldiers under the command of Lieutenant General Frederick Roberts then was sent from Kabul to relieve the city. After marching some 480 kilometers to reach Kandahar, Roberts decisively defeated Ayub Khan at Baba Wali on September 1, thereby bringing the war to an end. The new Liberal government of Prime Minister William Gladstone, formed in May 1880, already had decided to terminate the war and had ordered the withdrawal to India of all British troops in Afghanistan, which the Kandahar Campaign delayed by some months. *Personal Records of the Kandahar Campaign, by Officers Engaged Therein* is a compilation of letters by officers serving with the armies of General Burrows and General Roberts, assembled by Waller Ashe, an author and retired British army major. The documents provide extensive and detailed accounts from the British perspective of this final phase of the war. Waller does not give the names of the men who wrote the letters, some of which may have been fictionalized or embellished by the compiler. The book contains an introduction by Ashe that summarizes the history of Afghanistan and of the two Anglo-Afghan wars of the 19th century. Ashe was an enthusiast for the British Empire and British military glory. He was also co-editor of *The Story of the Zulu Campaign*, published in 1880 and likewise compiled from the letters of officers who served in the campaign.
James Atkinson (1780–1852) was a man of many talents, best known for his early translations into English of Persian poetry and prose. He was born in England and studied medicine in London and Edinburgh. He was appointed an assistant surgeon in the Bengal service of the East India Company in 1805, and spent most of the rest of his life in India. In his spare time he mastered Persian, and by 1814 he had published a translation of part of the *Shahnamah* (Book of kings), the first time the Persian epic was made accessible to an English audience. In 1838 Atkinson was appointed chief surgeon of the Army of the Indus, and in that capacity he accompanied the army on its march to Kabul in the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). *The Expedition into Afghanistan: Notes and Sketches Descriptive of the Country*, published in London in 1842, is Atkinson’s account of the war. It begins with a chapter on the causes of the expedition (the perceived Russian threat to Afghanistan and by extension to India), which is followed by a history of Shah Shuja‘ and of the Durrani dynasty. Subsequent chapters describe the advance of the army to the Indus, to Kandahar, the march from Kandahar to Ghazni, the capture of Kabul, and the march to Jalalabad. Atkinson returned to Bengal in 1841 and thus escaped the disaster that befell the Anglo-Indian army of occupation the following year, when Afghan tribesmen annihilated the Kabul garrison, a British and Indian force of 4,500 men. Atkinson was a talented artist who, in the same year in which this book appeared, published a book of lithographs entitled *Sketches in Afghanistan*, based on drawings he made in Afghanistan. Atkinson also published translations of Italian verse and wrote a medical treatise on the bladder. He is regarded as a pioneer of oriental research who helped to make Persian and Afghan culture better known in Britain and beyond.

La Perse d’aujourd’hui is an account of trips made by the author in parts of Persia (present-day Iran) and Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq) in the second half of 1906 and the first half of 1907. The places visited included territories that as a consequence of later territorial changes are now in Azerbaijan and eastern Turkey. Mesopotamia was at this time part of the Ottoman Empire. The author, Léon Eugène Aubin Couillard Descos (1863–1931), was a French diplomat and writer who served as the French minister in Tehran in 1905‒7. Most of the chapters are devoted to particular journeys and places, for example the road to Tauris (present-day Tabriz), the city of Tabriz, a journey around Lake Urmia (present-day Orumiyeh), the Kurdish regions west of Lake Orumiyeh, a journey from Tabriz to the Caspian, and a journey from Tehran to Isfahan and a sojourn in the city of Isfahan. Other chapters cover particular themes or topics, including Shiism, the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, the Persian revolution of 1905–6, Persian customs, and Shia holy cities. The book contains a large color fold-out map showing Persia and parts of Iraq, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, and Turkey, indicating Aubin’s routes in 1906–7. An inset map in the upper right shows Lake Orumiyeh, with Tabriz to the east and Kurdistan to the west. A small inset map in the lower left shows the division of Persia into Russian, British, and neutral zones of influence under the Anglo-Russian Agreement of August 31, 1907. Aubin, who published several books under the pen name Eugène Aubin, was also the author of *Les Anglais aux Indes et en Égypte* (1899), *Le Maroc d'aujourd'hui* (1904), *Le Chiisme et la Nationalité persane* (1908), and *En Haïti: Planteurs d'autrefois, nègres d'aujourd'hui* (1910).
Ayāzī, Muḥammad Aʻzam. *Qavāʻid-i Pushtū*, Kabul, 1939-40, [224 pages]

*Qavāʻid-i Pushtū* (Pushto grammar) is a linguistic work, produced by Pushto Tolanah (Pushto Academy), an Afghan governmental literary organization that was founded in 1938 in Kabul to promote Pushto language, literature, and history. This particular manual was written in Persian by Muhammad Aʻzam Ayazi, a member of Pushto Tolanah, and published in 1939 for both Pushtun and non-Pushtun readers interested in learning the Pushto language. The manual is 224 pages long and is organized into a detailed table of contents, acknowledgements, and 14 sections, each of which is divided into numerous chapters. Section 1 (pages 1–10) is a detailed description of the Pushto alphabet. Section 2 (pages 10–35) is devoted to discussion of the morphology of the language. Section 3 (pages 36–51) discusses Pushto adjectives, their various types and usage. Section 4 (pages 51–67) deals with pronouns, their use, and agreement in the language. Section 5 (the longest section, pages 67–146) is about verbs, their various forms, usage, and conditions. Section 6 (pages 146–55) deals with adverbs in Pushto. Section 7 (the shortest section, pages 155–58) discusses prepositions. Section 8 (pages 158–61) deals with verb phrases. Section 9 (pages 161–64) discusses vowels. Section 10 (pages 164–73) deals with compound words. Section 11 (pages 173–79) discusses syllabification. Section 12 (pages 179–81) deals with punctuation marks. Section 13 (wrongly headed “section 14,” pages 182–212) deals with sentence formation. Section 14 (pages 213–22) has a list of Pushto infinitives alongside their Persian meanings. The concluding pages list corrections to the text.


This book is a brief biography and introduction to the work of Mirza ʻAbd al-Rahim Rahimi, an Afghan poet who was active in the first half of the 20th century. The author, ʻAbd Allah Bakhtani, was a prolific Afghan scholar and translator who wrote primarily in Pushto. He states in the beginning of his work that his goal in writing the book was to highlight the literary achievements of Rahimi, an under-appreciated poet whose verse had never been gathered together in a proper divan or collection. The book offers little-known biographical information about Rahimi, noting that he was born in Surkh Rod in eastern Afghanistan and early in his career worked as a secretary in nearby Jalalabad. The book also includes examples of Rahimi’s poetry and correspondence. Rahimi composed poems in both Pushto and Dari, but the present work contains examples only of his Dari poetry. The first edition of this book was published by the Historical Society of Afghanistan in Kabul in the year 1933 of the solar calendar (1960–61). A second edition was published in Peshawar, Pakistan in 2001.

Balfour, Betty, Lady. *The History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration, 1876 to 1880*, London, 1899, [614 pages]

British poet and diplomat Edward Robert Bulwer-Lytton (1831–91) was viceroy of India between 1876 and 1880. He was appointed by Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, a Conservative, at a time of intense competition between Britain and Russia over control of Central Asia. During his viceroyalty Lytton worked to improve the Indian administration and supervised his government’s much-criticized response
to the Great Famine of 1876–78. Lytton was also widely criticized for his assertive, “forward” policy toward Afghanistan, which in the view of his detractors was responsible for provoking the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). Presented here is The History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration, 1876 to 1880, a narrative of Lytton’s viceroyalty, compiled by his daughter, Lady Betty Balfour, from private and official documents. Lytton had requested in his will that his wife “endeavour to obtain the assistance of some statesman or writer” to produce a complete record of his administration. The family first chose Lytton’s close friend and colleague Sir John Strachey to write it, but when Strachey’s health made it impossible for him to continue the work the task fell to Lytton’s daughter. Published in 1899, the book is a straightforward account of the events of Lytton’s administration, presented in chronological order. It is comprised of 12 chapters, and covers such issues as the Delhi Assemblage of 1877 that proclaimed Queen Victoria as Empress of India, the frontier negotiations of 1877, the famine of 1876–78, the 1878 Russian mission to Kabul, and the negotiations conducted and treaties concluded with the rulers of Afghanistan. One chapter is devoted to Lytton’s controversial Vernacular Press Act, which restricted the freedom of India’s non-English newspapers. The book concludes with a fold-out map of India and surrounding territories, which shows the land gained from Afghanistan by British India after 1786. Lady Betty Balfour later became known for her support of the suffrage movement and female education.


_Tuḥfah-i Amīrī_ (The princely offering) is a book on the topic of gunpowder published in Afghanistan at the end of the 19th century. The author, Gul Muhammad Khan Barakzayi, dedicates the work to the Afghan ruler, Amir ʿAbd al-Rahman Khan (reigned 1880–1901). The introduction gives the proportions of the constituent parts of gunpowder (saltpeter, charcoal, and sulfur) used in European countries such as Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, and Sweden. The main body of the book is in two chapters, each of which is further divided into sections. The first chapter is on topics related to the physical and chemical characteristics of gunpowder, such as its composition, water content, and hardness. The second chapter deals with the industrial manufacture of gunpowder, but Barakzayi concludes this chapter with sections on the manufacture and storage of dynamite, an invention that predates the book by about three decades. The book lists as possible stabilizing agents for dynamite the diatomaceous earth known as Kieselgur (mined in Hanover, Germany, the author notes), sawdust, and paper. In his introduction, Barakzayi associates gunpowder with European progress, but he also offers a short account in which he claims that the compound originated in the East. In Barakzayi’s rather muddled rendering, however, gunpowder is said to have been in use by the Arabs before the birth of Christ and was subsequently transmitted to Europe during the Sassanian era (224–651). The book was published by the Dar al-Saltana press in Kabul in 1315 AH (1897–98).


_Our Afghan Policy and the Occupation of Candahar_ is a pamphlet published in London in 1880 at the height of the debate in Great Britain over the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–80. The author, identified only by the initials “D.B.,” was Sir David Miller Barbour (1841–1928), a senior British administrator in India and expert on Indian monetary issues. He argues that there was no moral justification for the Anglo-Indian invasion of Afghanistan and that any argument for the invasion of, or
for continued British occupation of, any part of the country had to rest on “expediency” and the need to retain control over all or parts of Afghanistan for the defense of India. He then analyzes two potential types of danger to India, “dangers arising from the action of the Afghans,” and “dangers arising from the action of Russia, on, through, or in conjunction with, the Afghans.” The author proceeds to make the case that neither of these kinds of dangers is very real, and that the “arguments appear conclusive against the occupation of Candahar, or of any portion of Afghan territory whatever.” The focus of the discussion is on the possible interaction of a military threat emanating from Afghanistan, either by the Russians or by the Russians in concert with the Afghans, with a mutiny in the Indian army, particularly by its Muslim soldiers. One of the key arguments he advances for not permanently occupying Kandahar is that this would deprive the Indian government of trustworthy soldiers whose services might be needed in India to quell a rebellion. The Liberal William Gladstone replaced the Conservative Benjamin Disraeli as prime minister in April 1880 and took office committed to a policy of full withdrawal. The last Anglo-Indian troops left Afghanistan in the spring of 1881.

**Barr, William. Journal of a March from Delhi to Peshâwur and from Thence to Câbul, with the Mission of Lieut.-Colonel Sir C.M. Wade, Kt. C.B., Including Travels in the Punjâb, a Visit to the City of Lahore and a Narrative of Operations in the Khyber Pass, Undertaken in 1839, London, 1844, [446 pages]**

*Journal of a March from Delhi to Peshâwur and from Thence to Câbul* is a firsthand account by a British officer, Lieutenant William Barr, of an operation led by Lieutenant Colonel Claude Martine Wade during the first year of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839‒42). The war began when the main Anglo-Indian force, the Army of the Indus, advanced toward Kabul through the Bolan Pass and southern Afghanistan, with the aim of overthrowing the Afghan ruler, Amir Dost Mohammed Khan. Wade was given the assignment of making a converging attack through the Punjab and the Khyber Pass, with the objective of compelling Dost Mohammed Khan to divide his army. Barr was part of a force of nearly 10,000 soldiers that included 5,000 Punjabi Muslims, 4,000 Afghan troops raised by Shah Shujaʻ, Dost Mohammed’s British-backed rival, and 380 regular British troops. Barr’s account, which was published in London in 1844, consists of journal entries written between January 21 and July 25, 1839, and connecting narratives composed at a later date. The most dramatic part of the book is the account of the attack on July 22 on Ali Masjid, the fort commanding the entrance to the Khyber Pass. After four days of heavy fighting the invaders prevailed against the local Afridi defenders, and from there proceeded to march to Kabul. In
addition to his accounts of the military engagements, Barr offers descriptions of the territories through which Wade’s army marched, including an especially detailed description of Lahore (in present-day Pakistan). The book concludes with the march from Kabul back to Firozpur, in British India, which was completed on December 31, 1839. The book contains six hand-colored illustrations of scenes in Afghanistan.


This document is a one-page manifesto issued by the Positivist Society in London to protest the Second Anglo-Afghan War, which began in November 1878 when Great Britain, fearful of what it saw as growing Russian influence in Central Asia, invaded Afghanistan from British India. The text declares: “As Positivists we condemn our Indian Empire in principle. We therefore deprecate all extensions of it…. The present invasion of Afghanistan seems to be even more destitute of excuse than many of the other unjust aggressions by which our Indian Empire has been from time to time extended. There is not, as in some other cases, even a pretence that we have suffered any injury from the Afghans, or that we are interfering for the purpose of ameliorating their condition.” The protest is signed on behalf of the society by its president, E.S. (Edward Spencer) Beesly. The Positivist Society was an organization that campaigned for social reform and the rights of workers and against the British Empire and British sea power, ostensibly on the basis of principles articulated by the French philosopher Auguste Comte (1798–1857), the founder of positivism.


Henry Walter Bellew was a surgeon and medical officer in the Indian Army who in 1871–72 accompanied Major General F.R. Pollock on a political mission to Sistan in southwestern Afghanistan. Undertaken on behalf of the government of British India, the mission set out from Multan (in present-day Pakistan) on December 26, 1871, and arrived in Sistan in early March. From there, Pollock and Bellew traveled to Mashhad and Tehran. Bellew went on to Baghdad and returned to India by steamer to Bombay (now Mumbai). *From the Indus to the Tigris* is Bellew’s account of the voyage. It includes detailed observations on the landscape, people, economic life, and culture of the parts of Afghanistan and Iran that he visited, and descriptions of encounters with Afghan leaders. Like many British and Anglo-Indian officials at the time, Bellew was preoccupied with the perceived Russian threat to India and the importance of Afghanistan in the rivalry between the two empires. Referring to the First Anglo-Afghan War of 1839–42, he regretted “the wrong we inflicted in the Afghan war—a wrong the fruits of which are yet abundant, as anybody who has served on our north-west frontier can testify.” The book contains two appendices: a grammar and vocabulary of the Brahui language (called Brahoe by Bellew) and a record of the meteorological conditions encountered on the journey.

Bellew, Henry Walter. *A Grammar of the Pukkhto or Pukshto Language, on a New and Improved System, Combining Brevity with Practical Utility, and Including Exercises and Dialogues, Intended to Facilitate the Acquisition of the Colloquial*, London, 1867, [www.wdl.org/17727](http://www.wdl.org/17727) [176 pages]

Henry Walter Bellew (1834–92) was a surgeon and medical officer in the Indian Army who over the course of a long career undertook a number of political missions in Afghanistan and wrote several books on Indian and Afghan subjects. His *A Grammar of the Pukkhto or Pukshto Language* is a Pushto textbook
written during his service in Peshawar. It was intended for use by British-Indian administrators in the North-West Frontier of British India (present-day Pakistan). As such, the work assumes that the student is already acquainted with Hindustani (Urdu). Bellew partly based his book on earlier works, including *A Grammar and Vocabulary of the Pooshtoo Language* (1854) by Sir John L. Vaughan and *A Grammar of the Pukhto, Pushto or Language of the Afghans* (1855) by Henry G. Raverty. Bellew arranged his work according to the scheme used by Duncan Forbes in his *A Grammar of the Hindustani Language* (1846). Consisting of five sections and numerous exercises, the book begins with a general background on the characteristics of the Pushto language and its alphabet, before delving into phonetics, grammatical constructions, vocabulary, and short dialogues. It ends with “familiar conversations” — dialogues that emulate everyday situations and that are meant to be of practical utility. In his discussion of the general characteristics of Pushto, Bellew suggests that the language was more influenced by Hindustani and Persian than by Hindi and that it assumed its present form before the arrival of Arabic with the Muslim conquest. The book was first published in 1867.


*Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan* is an account of a mission undertaken by Henry Burnett Lumsden, a British officer in the Indian army, to Kandahar, Afghanistan, in 1857. Lumsden’s assignment was to ensure that the subsidies paid by the government of India to Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, ruler of Afghanistan, were being used for the upkeep of troops employed to defend Afghanistan against the Persians, a vital British interest. Lumsden was accompanied by his brother and fellow army officer, Lieutenant Peter Lumsden, and by Dr. Henry Walter Bellew, the author of the book presented here. Bellew was a surgeon and medical officer in the Indian Army who undertook a number of political missions in Afghanistan and went on to write several other works on Indian and Afghan subjects. The book has two parts. Part one, consisting of three chapters, is an introduction to Afghanistan and its people. It covers geography, topography, marriage and customs, the ethnic groups that make up the Afghan population, history, and religion. The origins of the Afghan people and the tradition that they are descended from Saul, the first king of Israel, are covered in detail. The second and much longer part of the book is Bellew’s journal of the mission in 11 chapters. There are eight beautiful color prints of Afghan subjects, and an appendix with a list of all the plants gathered by Bellew on the march to and from Kandahar with brief descriptions of their characteristics and, where relevant, their medical uses.

*The Races of Afghanistan* was written towards the end of, and shortly after, the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80) and published in London in 1880. The author, Henry Walter Bellew, was a surgeon and medical officer in the Indian Army who over the years had undertaken a number of political missions in Afghanistan and written several books on Indian and Afghan subjects. In explaining the purpose of his book, Bellew writes that the peoples of Afghanistan in his view soon would become subjects of the British Empire and that, “to know the history, interests, and aspirations of a people, is half the battle gained in converting them to loyal, contented, and peaceable subjects....” The book begins with an introduction, an overview chapter on the Afghans, and separate chapters on the history of the Afghans, British relations with Afghanistan, and Sher Ali (the amir of Afghanistan who reigned 1863–66 and 1868–79). These introductory chapters are followed by individual chapters on the following ethnic groups or tribes: Pathan (today usually seen as Pashtun or Paktun, Puktun, or Pushtun), Yusufzai, Afridi, Khattak, Didea, Ghilji (also seen today as Ghilzi and Khilji), Tajik, and Hazarah (Hazara in modern times). Bellew speculates on the pre-Islamic origins of the different Afghan peoples, discussing the tradition that the Afghans were descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, and referring to the writings of Herodotus, in which the Dadicae are mentioned as one of four Indian nations forming a satrapy on the extreme eastern frontier of the Persian Empire under the emperor, Darius I. Bellew’s book was used as a source by later writers, for example Percy Molesworth Sykes (1867–1945) in his *A History of Persia* (1921). Bellew was the author of other books on Afghanistan and neighboring countries, of grammars and dictionaries of several Afghan languages, and of studies of individual ethnic groups.


Israel Joseph Benjamin (1818–64) was a Jewish lumber trader from Falticeni, Moldavia (present-day Romania), who at the age of 25 set out to find the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. Fashioning himself “The Second Benjamin” after the 12th-century Jewish traveler from Spain, Benjamin of Tudela, he spent five years visiting Jewish communities in what are today Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Armenia, Afghanistan, India, Singapore, China, and Egypt. After a brief return to Europe, he spent another three years in Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. He recorded the first five years of travels in a book that appeared in French in 1856 as *Cinq années de voyage en orient 1846-1851* (Five years of travel in the Orient, 1846-1851). He combined his accounts of both sets of travels in an expanded book in German, published in 1858, under the title *Acht Jahre in Asien und Afrika von 1846 bis 1855* (Eight years in Asia and Africa from 1846 to 1855). Translations into English and Hebrew followed in 1859. Benjamin describes the economic and social conditions in the Jewish communities he visited; he also recounts many traditions and local legends. Several chapters draw general conclusions about the state of the Jewish communities in different regions. The German version presented here is bound together with the other language editions in the copy held by the Library of Congress. The book has four synoptic tables, derived from the Bible, of the Jewish patriarchs from Adam to Abraham, the judges from Moses and Joshua to the prophet Samuel, the kings of Judah, and the kings of Israel. It ends with a fold-out map of Benjamin’s travels.
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*Travels in the Mogul Empire* is the first authoritative translation into English of François Bernier’s *Histoire de la dernière révolution des états du Grand Mogol*, published in Paris in 1670‒71. Bernier was born at Joué in the Loire, France, and educated in medicine at the University of Montpellier. Desiring to see the world, he traveled to Syria and Palestine in 1654. He returned to the Middle East in 1656, where he lived for a year in Cairo before sailing south through the Red Sea with the intent of making his way to Gondar (in present-day Ethiopia). Upon learning that conditions there were unsafe for travel, he embarked on a ship bound for the port of Surat on the west coast of India. He remained in India for some 12 years, from 1658 to 1669. He initially served as personal physician to Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of the Mughal emperor Shahjahan and the emperor’s designated successor, and later worked for Daneshmand Khan, a nobleman in the court of Emperor Aurangzeb. Bernier witnessed firsthand the bloody civil war and succession struggle of 1656‒59 in which Aurangzeb, a younger brother of Dara Shikoh, seized the Mughal throne. In 1664 Bernier traveled with Aurangzeb to Kashmir, “commonly called the paradise of India,” becoming most likely the first European to visit the province. Bernier wrote several long letters to correspondents in France, in which he gave detailed descriptions of economic conditions and religious and social customs in northern India, including one to Jean-Baptiste Colbert, finance minister to King Louis XIV. These letters form part of *Travels in the Mogul Empire*. Along with his compatriots Jean Chardin (1643‒1713) and Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605‒89), both of whom he met on his travels, Bernier was the source of most of what Europeans knew about India in the
late 17th century–early 18th centuries. Bernier was a thinker as well as an adventurer, and the book is replete with excursions on a range of topics, for example, on the nature of atoms, the Lost Tribes of Israel, winds and currents, rains, and the Nile River. There is also an appendix on the history of travel to India. The book contains a preface by the translator, Irving Brock, an English merchant banker who had literary interests. It has illustrations of notable people and scenes and three fold-out maps.

**Biddulph, Cuthbert Edward. *Four Months in Persia and a Visit to Trans-Caspia*, London, 1892, [www.wdl.org/16714](http://www.wdl.org/16714) [140 pages]**

*Four Months in Persia and a Visit to Trans-Caspia* is a compilation of articles that originally appeared in various newspapers and journals in India and the United Kingdom. The author, Cuthbert Edward Biddulph, was an official in the Indian Civil Service who specialized in Central Asian and Afghan affairs. The articles are based on travels that Biddulph undertook in 1890 and 1891. The first and longer part of the book concerns a four-month journey via the Orient Express to Constantinople (present-day Istanbul) and from there to Baku (in present-day Azerbaijan) and on to Tehran, Isfahan, and other parts of Persia (present-day Iran). The second part documents a trip on the Russian-built Trans-Caspian Railroad through the region of the Russian Empire east of the Caspian Sea (known as Trans-Caspia). The places visited and described include, in present-day Turkmenistan, the city of Merv and the Merv Oasis and the fortress at Gok-Teppe; the Oxus River (today known as the Amu Darya, and forming the border between Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan); and, in present-day Uzbekistan, Bukhara and Samarkand. Biddulph offers observations about the people, government administration, military forces, economics and economic development projects, and customs in the regions visited. On both journeys, he interacts with a variety of ethnic and linguistic groups, including Persians, Armenians, Turkmens, Afghans, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz, and Russians. Biddulph was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and entered the Indian Civil Service in 1878. He served in the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–80 and held various posts in British India. He died in 1899. His other works include *Our Western Frontier of India, Afghan Politics, Afghan Poetry of the Seventeenth Century,* and *Army Reforms in Native States.*


Abu al-Rayhan al-Biruni (also known by the Latinized version of his name, Alberonius, 973–1048 AD; 362–440 AH) was an 11th-century Muslim polymath whose works and scholarly interests spanned the physical and natural sciences, mathematics, astronomy, geography, history, chronology, and linguistics. Al-Biruni was born in Kath, Khuwarazm, in present-day Uzbekistan, and died in Ghazni, in what is today east-central Afghanistan. He wrote more than 120 works and is considered the founder of Indology for his detailed description of 11th-century India. The crater Al-Biruni on the moon is named after him. *Risālah fī Istikhrāj al-awtār fī al-dā’irah* (A treatise on drawing chords in a circle) is, as its title suggests, a treatise on geometry that deals with circles.
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Tamhīd al-mustaqqarr li-taḥqīq maʻná al-mamarr (Smoothing the basis for the investigation of the meaning of transits) is a treatise dealing with the subject of light rays and shadow lengths. It was Al-Biruni who discovered that light traveled more quickly than sound.


Ornament gornykh tadzhikov Darvaza (Ornaments of the mountain Tajiks in Darvaz) is a work by a Russian traveler and scholar on the material culture of the region of Darvaz, also known as mountainous Bukhara (in present-day Tajikistan). The work focuses on two sets of objects, embroidery and stockings. The book begins with an overview of the area and its population. Northern Darvaz is located on the western side of the Pamir Plateau and on the right bank of the Panj River (parts of which form a border between present-day Afghanistan and Tajikistan). The author describes the land as beautiful, peaceful, and lush. The population of Darvaz is mixed, owing to invasions over the centuries and its proximity to the route connecting India and Central Asia. The author defines five types of people based on their physical features and notes that the people of the region are mostly Sunni Muslims, but not particularly religious. The book contains five color and 15 black-and-white plates. The section on embroidery discusses how silk embroidery is applied to decorate curtains and women’s clothing, often showing birds and a tree. Curtains are not commonly used in everyday life but kept as family heritage, mostly by well-to-do families. The author explains that the mountain people all wear stockings; they put on two or three pairs at the same time all year around before slipping into muki (very soft leather boots), which they tie with a string at the top.
Gabriel Bonvalot (1853–1933) was a French explorer and author who led three major expeditions to Central Asia in the 1880s and 1890s. *En Asie centrale: De Moscou en Bactriane* (In Central Asia: From Moscow to Bactria) is Bonvalot’s account of the first of these expeditions, undertaken with the scientist Dr. Guillaume Capus (1857–1931) in 1880–82. After traveling by rail from Moscow to Semipalatinsk (in present-day Kazakhstan) where they entered Russian Turkestan, the two men journeyed southeast to Tashkent (in present-day Uzbekistan) and from there to Qarshi, in what is today southern Uzbekistan. They explored the headwaters of the Syr Darya and finally reached the Amu Darya River where it formed part of the border between the Russian Empire and Afghanistan. Their return journey was via Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva. The “Bactria” of the title refers to the plain lying between the Amu Darya and the Hindu Kush, ruled at various times by the Persians, Seleucids, and various other peoples, and today making up parts of Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. In the 1880s France was attempting to expand its empire and global influence, and Bonvalot’s expedition was financed by the French government. Capus was affiliated with the National Museum of Natural History in Paris, for which he brought back many scientific samples. The book contains descriptions of the places visited and the peoples encountered, which included Afghans, Gypsies (Roma), Kyrgyz, Hindus, Jews, Tatars, Uzbeks, and others. The book is illustrated with engravings and concludes with a fold-out map of Russian Turkestan with an inset map showing the route taken by Bonvalot and Capus.

Major Émile Antoine Henry de Bouillane de Lacoste (1867-1937) was a military officer who, after serving with the French army in Indochina, undertook a number of extended voyages to different parts of Asia on behalf of the French authorities. He wrote several books based on his travels. *Around Afghanistan* is an English translation of a work originally published in Paris in 1908 under the title *Autour de l’Afghanistan aux frontières interdites* (Around Afghanistan by forbidden borders). As the French title makes clearer than the English, Bouillane de Lacoste was denied permission by the Afghan authorities to travel in Afghanistan. He thereupon he devised a scheme to travel around the borders of the country. Starting from Tehran in late April 1906, Bouillane de Lacoste traveled first to Meshed in northeastern Persia (Iran) and from there into Russian Central Asia, through Ashkabad (present-day Ashgabat) and Merv (both in present-day Turkmenistan), Bukhara, and Samarkand. After reaching the end of the Russian railway line at Andijan (present-day Andijon, Uzbekistan), he proceeded into the Altai Mountains in present-day Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which he then crossed into China and British India. The next stage of journey was from Srinagar (Kashmir) to Lahore, and from there across Baluchistan (in
present-day Pakistan) and back into Persia, where he eventually reached Tehran in late January of 1907. The journey was made by rail and horse caravan. Bouillane de Lacoste was accompanied by Lieutenant Hippolyte Marie Joseph Antoine Enselme (born 1872), who had served with Bouillane de Lacoste in Indochina and accompanied him on an earlier voyage to Manchuria. Bouillane de Lacoste’s account is written as a diary, and contains descriptions of the landscape and the people he encountered. The book contains several maps, including one of the author’s route, and nearly 80 photographs. The preface, by Georges Leygues, a French politician who was later, for some years, the minister of Marine and briefly prime minister, contains general reflections on the Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia and the British in India, written from a French perspective.


Demetrius Charles Boulger (1853–1928) was a British orientalist who wrote prolifically on topics mainly related to the British Empire. With Sir Lepel Henry Griffin (1838–1908), a British administrator in India, he co-founded the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, which he edited for a time. An unapologetic imperialist with strongly anti-Russian views, Boulger criticized the British government for its lack of assertiveness, as he saw it, in defending British interests in Afghanistan and Central Asia. *Central Asian Questions: Essays on Afghanistan, China, and Central Asia* is a collection of 24 previously published pieces dealing with Russian policy in Central Asia, Anglo-Russian rivalry, British policy toward Afghanistan and, in by far the largest part of the book, China. In the introduction, Boulger writes prophetically about the future of China: “The power of China is not yet equal to the vastness of her pretensions, but it will some day enable her to make them good in face of every rival. When England and Russia have reached the limit of their resources and authority in Asia, China will still be developing the power to hold her own and to exercise on the future history of the world that influence which cannot yet be measured with any degree of accuracy. China is now the least powerful factor in the Central Asian problem; but unless her rulers are extremely apathetic, she is the Power that will acquire material strength in the greatest degree.” The book has two maps, one showing “the acquisitions of the Russian Empire towards India” and another the Chinese Empire.

*Ought We to Hold Candahar?* is a pamphlet that was published in London in May 1879 with the intent of influencing the negotiations then underway between Great Britain and the government of Moḥammad Yakub Khān, amir of Afghanistan, aimed at ending the Second Anglo-Afghan War. The war began in November 1878 when an Anglo-Indian force invaded Afghanistan from British India, ostensibly for the purpose of forestalling Russian moves into the country. The British force met with initial successes and was at this time occupying Kandahar. The author argues that in the peace treaty, Britain should demand the right to continue its occupation of the city as a guarantee against possible Russian advances. The British government chose not to follow this course of action. The Treaty of Gandamak, concluded on May 26, 1879, required the amir “to conduct his relations with Foreign States in accordance with the advice and wishes of the British Government,” but it restored most of the Afghan territory under British occupation, including Kandahar, to the amir and Afghan rule. The author of the pamphlet, Demetrius Charles Boulger (1853–1928), was a British orientalist who wrote many books, articles, and pamphlets on the British Empire and related topics. He described Kandahar as “the chief town of the southern portion of the country, the former capital of the whole State, the one spot which more than any other is associated with the glory of the Afghans…."


Edward William Bray was a young lieutenant serving with the 31st Regiment of Foot of the British Army during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839‒42). In early 1842 the regiment was ordered to leave its quarters at Agra, in British India, and march toward Afghanistan, with the aim of joining the army of Major General (later Field Marshal) George Pollock, which had been sent to the relief of Jalalabad, where a British force was surrounded and under siege by Afghan troops. *Journal of the Afghan War in 1842* is Bray’s firsthand account, published more than two decades later, of the events from early 1842 to January of the following year. The 31st Regiment proceeded by stages to Jalalabad, which it reached on May 13, nearly a month after Pollock had relieved the garrison. From there it marched to Gandamak and finally to Kabul, where it participated in the punitive actions by the British against the city. The journal concludes with the march back to Agra via Peshawar. Bray’s journal is full of interesting details. He describes, for example, how at the tope of Manikyala, said by the locals to be the tomb of Alexander the Great’s horse Bucephalus, villagers came forward with ancient Greek coins to sell. He gives a vivid account of the advance through the passes from Gandamak to Kabul, where all along the way were strewn the dead bodies of British and Indian soldiers from the force that had been annihilated by Afghan tribesmen in January 1842. Bray writes: “It was a shocking sight for English soldiers to behold, and many a deep vow of vengeance was made by those who witnessed it, which was fulfilled to the best of our ability, as no quarter was given in actual action after this.” His journal records the death, by combat and disease, of soldiers and civilians on both sides in a way that captures the gruesomeness and the brutality of the war. Bray later served with distinction in the Abyssinian Campaign (in present-day Ethiopia) in 1868 and in the Zulu War of 1879. He retired in 1882 with the rank of major general.

*Outline of the Operations of the British Troops in Scinde and Affghanistan* is a detailed account of British military operations in the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42) and of the invasion in 1839 by the British East India Company of the province of Sind (in present-day Pakistan). The author, George Buist (1804–60), was editor of the *Bombay Times* and the book is heavily drawn from dispatches that appeared in that newspaper and in another Indian publication, the *Monthly Times*. Buist was born in Scotland and educated at Saint Andrews University and the University of Edinburgh. In addition to his newspaper work, he was an accomplished amateur scientist who collected scientific data in various fields and served as secretary to the Geographical Society of Bombay and the Agri-Horticultural Society of Western India. Buist was highly critical of British policy, both in this book and in the editorial line taken by the *Bombay Times*. He writes that the Anglo-Afghan War began as a “war of aggression,” turned into “struggle for our own defence,” and was transformed “finally into a war of vengeance.” He opposed the policy of retaliation against the Afghans after the Kabul massacres of 1842 and argued that the war was both ruinously expensive and inimical to British interests. The British objective in starting the war was to drive the ruler of Afghanistan, Dost Mohammad Khan, from power and to replace him with Shah Shuja, who was thought to be more favorable to British interests and less susceptible to Russian pressure or blandishment. About this view Buist writes: “The more the matter is examined, the more difficult it is to discover by what process of self-delusion it was that the projectors or advocates of the Doorannee [Durrani] alliance could for a moment persuade themselves that the restoration and maintenance of the Shah Shoojah [Shuja’] on the throne, could conduce to any one of the ends we professed ourselves anxious to attain.”


*British Agents in Afghanistan* is a pamphlet by Sir Owen Tudor Burne that was privately printed in London in 1879 and formed part of the British debate over the origins of and justification for the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). Burne was an army officer who, after military service in India during the Sepoy Rebellion (1857–59), held a number of posts in the government of India, including as private secretary to Earl Mayo, viceroy of India from 1869 to 1872, and to Lord Lytton, the viceroy from 1876 to 1880. The proximate cause of the British invasion of Afghanistan was the reported refusal of the amir, Sher Ali Khan, to receive a delegation of British officers after he had received a Russian mission in the summer of 1878. Critics of the war argued that the Conservative government of Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli and the viceroy, Lord Lytton, had provoked the war by changing the previous British policy under which Sher Ali, they contended, was not to be pressured to accept resident British officers or agents in Afghanistan. *British Agents in Afghanistan* presents a detailed argument that such criticisms were incorrect. Burne bases his argument on the existing documentation and his recollections of meetings with Afghan officials at which he was present. He takes as his starting point a letter in the London *Times* by
the Duke of Argyll (1823–1900; secretary of state for India, 1868–74) in which Argyll states that Lord Mayo had promised to the amir “that no European officers would be placed as Residents in his cities.” This pledge reportedly was made at a meeting with Sher Ali at Umballa (present-day Ambela, Pakistan) in 1869. Burne argues that it was only intended as an “intermediate” policy, not to be adhered to permanently, and that it was premised on Russian non-involvement in the affairs of Afghanistan. He also argues that the amir was mainly concerned about the stationing of British officers in the capital of Kabul, and that he would have gladly accepted British residents in Balkh, Herat, or Kandahar. Burne’s autobiography, Memories, published in London in 1907, contains additional information about his involvement in British policy toward Afghanistan in this period.

Burnes, Alexander. *Cabool: A Personal Narrative of a Journey to, and Residence in that City, in the Years 1836, 7, and 8*, Philadelphia, 1843, [www.wdl.org/14409](http://www.wdl.org/14409) [112 pages]

*Cabool: A Personal Narrative of a Journey to, and Residence in that City, in the Years 1836, 7, and 8* is an account of an 18-month voyage undertaken by Sir Alexander Burnes and three companions by order of the governor-general of India. The purpose of the journey was to survey the Indus River and the territories adjoining it, with the aim of opening up the river to commerce. Following a route that took them up the Indus from its mouth in present-day Pakistan, Burnes and his party visited Shikarpur, Peshawar, Kabul, Herat, and Jalalabad, before completing their journey in Lahore. The book contains detailed information about the ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups living in Afghanistan and parts of present-day Pakistan, and observations about the war underway at that time between the Sikh Empire and the Emirate of Afghanistan. Also included is a brief account of the formal audience with the amir of Afghanistan, Dost Mohammad Khan, who cordially received the visitors as representatives of the governor-general of India. Of particular interest is the economic and demographic data compiled by Burnes and his party, which is presented in striking detail. The book notes, for example, that the bazaar at Dera Ghazee Khan (present-day Dera Ghazi Khan City, Pakistan) had 1,597 shops, of which 115 were sellers of cloth, 25 sellers of silk, 60 jewelers, 18 paper sellers, and so forth. Equally detailed information is given about the prices of grains and other commodities, the production of dates and pomegranates, and the number of Hazaras living in the region between Kabul and Herat, which is put at 66,900. Burnes was killed in Afghanistan in 1841, and this book was published posthumously.


Rollo Gillespie Burslem (1813–96) was a British soldier in the 13th Prince Albert’s Light Infantry Regiment, which was part of the Anglo-Indian Army of the Indus that invaded Afghanistan during the initial phase of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). Burslem’s regiment later became part of the occupying force tasked with enforcing order in the country. In the summer of 1840, Burslem accompanied Lieutenant Stuart of the Bengal Engineers on a mission to survey the passes of the Hindu Kush and the Turkestan mountain ranges. *A Peep into Toorkisthân* is
Burslem’s account of the mission. The party left Kabul with a military escort on June 13, traveled to Balkh through Bamyan, and returned to Kabul on November 7, three days after the surrender of Dost Mohammad Khan to Sir William Macnaghten, the British envoy to Afghanistan. First published in London in 1846, the book is comprised of 20 short chapters that describe the routes that the mission took and the people, physical features, ancient ruins, markets, and vegetation of the places visited. Burslem also recounts military engagements fought with the Afghan rebels and concludes his narrative with the encounter at Purwan Durrah with Dost Mohammad and his men. On this occasion, a panic seized a British reconnaissance force, resulting in the loss of several officers. The book includes a route map and is illustrated with plates showing two different views of the cave of Yeermallik, a view of the town and fortress of Kollum, and facsimile drawings of ancient coins that Burslem collected during the mission.


The English explorer and author Sir Richard Francis Burton (1821–90) began his long and adventurous career in India, where he arrived in 1842 to join the 18th regiment of Bombay infantry as a young commissioned officer. In 1844 Burton’s regiment was posted to Sind, the province located in present-day southeastern Pakistan, at that time only recently annexed by the British. Burton lived in Sind for a number of years and published three early books based on his experiences and observations: *Scinde, or, The Unhappy Valley* (two volumes, 1851), *Sindh, and the Races that Inhabit the Valley of the Indus* (1851), and *Falconry in the Valley of the Indus* (1852). The “unhappy valley” of the title of his first book refers to the valley of the Indus, which, along with the Indus River delta, largely defines the geography of Sind. More than two decades later, in 1875‒76, Burton and his wife Isabel made a return visit to the province. *Sind Revisited*, published in London in 1877, is a result of this later journey. The book contains Burton’s observations on the cities of Karachi and Hyderabad; the state of the Anglo-Indian army; relations among Muslims and Hindus and, in particular, the relentless pressure on the Hindus to convert to Islam; Sindi men and women; the Indus Valley Railway; and many other topics. Throughout, Burton uses the literary device of a fictitious traveling companion, “Mr. John Bull,” to whom he addresses comments and asides. He also includes translations of poems and summaries of colorful local tales and legends, for example, that of “the seven headless prophets.” In concluding remarks, Burton judges British rule to have had a positive influence, by bringing improvements in health and access to education for the Sindi people. The book is indexed but has no maps or illustrations.


George Wyman Bury (1874‒1920) was a British naturalist and explorer who spent 25 years in different parts of the Arab world, including Morocco, Aden, Somalia, and Egypt. He wrote several books, including *The Land of Uz*, about the Arabian Peninsula, which he published in 1911 under the pseudonym Abdullah Mansur, and *Arabia infelix, or, The Turks in Yamen*, published in 1915. During World War I he served with British intelligence in Egypt, where he was charged with countering Turkish and German pan-Islamist propaganda (and infiltrators) aimed at stirring up popular sentiment against the British and inducing Muslim troops under British command to desert. *Pan-Islam*, written while Bury was dying of a lung disease, is based in part on his experiences during the war. He writes that Pan-Islam “is a movement to weld together Moslems throughout the world regardless of nationality” and that it is “the practical protest of Moslems against the exploitation of their spiritual and material resources by outsiders.” While acknowledging these indigenous causes, Bury argues that the growth of Pan-Islam as a
political movement in the period before and during World War I was very much the product of German political, financial, and logistical support, supported by Ottoman Turkey after it entered the war on the side of Germany. Bury argues that the German attempt to use Pan-Islam as a political weapon was largely unsuccessful, owing to the animosity between the Turks and Arabs and the lack of “psychic insight” on the part of the Germans. Bury concludes with a “Plea for Tolerance,” in which he calls for better understanding in Europe and the United States of the Islamic world. The book includes a fold-out map showing the lands of Islam.


George Campbell (1824–92) had a long career as an administrator in India, where he first went in 1843 in the service of the East India Company. He eventually rose to become lieutenant-governor of Bengal (1871–74). Campbell wrote several books about India, where he established a reputation as an administrator who, while paternalistic and authoritarian, was genuinely interested in the welfare of the Indian people. Campbell left India in 1874 to return permanently to England. He joined the Liberal Party and in 1875 was elected to Parliament as the member for Kirkcaldy. *The Afghan Frontier*, published in 1879, early in the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–80, is a short book containing Campbell’s sweeping critique of the errors and inconsistencies that in his view marked British policy with regard to Afghanistan. After a brief overview of the situation before the war, the military and political situation in the spring of 1879, and the history, geography, and ethnography of the country, Campbell presents his argument that the British should accept a compromise accord with the new Afghan leader, ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan, and withdraw from the country. Campbell’s philosophy is summed up in the concluding sentences of the book: “I am myself all for economy, peace, and quiet at home, and would only seek to hold India so long as we can do so without being forced into ambitious projects beyond the Indian border. That was my view in 1849, and that is my view in 1879.”
Christensen, Jens. *Injīl sharīf pah maʻrifat da muqaddas Yūḥannā*, Mardān, 1939, [www.wdl.org/17767](http://www.wdl.org/17767) [224 pages]

This book is a versified translation into Pushto with commentary of the Gospel of John, published in Lahore, British India (present-day Pakistan), in 1939. The earliest translations of parts of the Bible into Pushto were completed in the first decade of the 19th century by John Leyden, a Scottish linguist and poet who went to Calcutta in 1803 as a surgeon’s assistant for the East India Company and subsequently became a professor at the College of Fort William. By the time of his death in 1811, Leyden had completed translations of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Leyden’s Pushto speaking co-workers completed the entire New Testament by 1818. Large parts of the Hebrew scriptures were translated between 1822 and 1832 by a group led by William Carey. Several other translations were begun and partially completed later in the century. The version of the Gospel of John presented here is a revision of earlier translations undertaken in the 1930s by the American-Danish Protestant missionary Jens Christensen (1889–1966), with the assistance of M.K. Taib. Christensen was born in Chicago to Danish parents. After service as a soldier at the front in World War I, Christensen decided to become a missionary. Following study at the New York Missionary Training School in Nyack, New York, in 1925 Christensen joined the Danish Mission in Mardan, North-West Frontier Province, British India. In addition to his pastoral work, Christensen wrote several books on the Pathans and Islam and completed new translations of the Gospels of Matthew and John. His collaborator, Taib, was a Muslim convert from a village in Swat who was also a writer, poet, and the librarian of the Mardan mission. Taib versified the translation to make it more palatable to Pathan tastes. The volume presented here, from the Africa and Middle East Division of the Library of Congress, is quite rare.


Captain Arthur Conolly (1807–42?) was an intelligence officer of the British East India Company. After briefly attending Rugby School and the Addiscombe Military Seminary in England, he went to India in 1823 and enlisted as a cadet in the 6th Bengal Native Light Regiment. In 1829 Conolly was granted permission to return to India from sick leave in England via an overland route through Russia and Central Asia. *Journey to the North of India, Overland from England, Through Russia, Persia, and Affghaunistaun*, presented here, is Conolly’s two-volume account of this voyage. After arriving in Saint Petersburg by ship from England, Conolly travelled by land across Russia and through the Caucasus. He arrived in Herat, Afghanistan, in September 1830, and reached India in January 1831. Conolly describes such incidents as his failed attempt to travel in disguise through the Khanate of Khiva and offers his impressions of the Sunni and Shia Muslim populations of the region. Conolly’s journey was a reconnaissance mission, conducted as part of the growing geopolitical rivalry between the British and Russian empires for control of Central Asia. It was in fact Conolly who is credited with coining the phrase the “Great Game” to describe this rivalry. Conolly later attempted to bring together the warring khanates of Bukhara, Khiva, and Kokand to counter the Russian encroachment on British India. In 1841, he set out to rescue Colonel Charles Stoddart, a British officer who was imprisoned by the amir of Bukhara. Both men ended up in jail and, about a year later, were beheaded in a public square in front of Bukhara’s Ark Fortress.

George Nathaniel Curzon (1859–1925) was a British politician, traveler, and writer who served as viceroy of India from 1899 to 1905 and foreign secretary from 1919 to 1924. The somewhat confusingly titled *British Government in India: The Story of Viceroys and Government Houses* was one of Curzon’s last books, completed after he left the Foreign Office in January 1924 and posthumously published. The two-volume work is a study of Calcutta (present-day Kolkata), capital of British India in the period 1772–1911, and home of the governors and viceroys who represented the British East India Company and later the British government from the early 18th to the early 20th century. As Curzon states in the preface, his plan to write the book went back to his time in India, when he “resolved to write the history of Government House—that stately building, by far the finest Government House in the Empire, designed upon the model of my own home of Kedleston in Derbyshire—which had sheltered the rulers of India for exactly one hundred years….” In addition to being a study of the house, the book contains notes and observations on viceroys and governors such as Robert Clive, Warren Hastings, and Lord William Bentinck. The last chapter in volume one, entitled “Forms, Ceremonies, and Entertainments,” is an especially interesting overview of ceremonial life at the viceroyal residence, which reflected a blend of British and Indian traditions. Other chapters cover the famous Black Hole of Calcutta or touch upon important historical events, such as the Indian Mutiny and the Anglo-Afghan Wars.


George Nathaniel Curzon (1859–1925) was a British politician, traveler, and writer who served as viceroy of India from 1899 to 1905 and foreign secretary from 1919 to 1924. As a young man he traveled extensively and wrote several books that drew on his travels, including *Russia in Central Asia* (1889), *Persia and the Persian Question* (1892), and *Problems of the Far East* (1894). *Persia and the Persian Question*, presented here, is two-volume work, based on a six-month stay in Iran that Curzon began in late 1899 as a correspondent for the London newspaper, the *Times*. The author’s intent, as he states in the preface, is to produce “the standard work in the English language” on the subject. After two introductory chapters, chapters 3–12 document Curzon’s visits to and observations concerning different parts of the
country, including the journey from Ashkabad (present-day Ashgabat, Turkmenistan) into Iran and stays in Kuchan, Meshed, Khorasan, Seistan, Tehran, and elsewhere. Volume one concludes with individual chapters devoted to the shah and the royal family; the government; institutions and reforms; the northwest and northwestern provinces; the army; and railroads. Volume two begins with another seven chapters (19‒25) recounting journeys to different parts of the country, including Isfahan, Shiraz, Bushir (present-day Bushehr), and the eastern, southeastern, and southwestern provinces. The remaining chapters (26‒30) deal with the navy; the Persian Gulf; revenue, resources and manufactures; commerce and trade; and British and Russian policy in Persia. For Curzon, the essence of “the Persian question” is the rivalry between the Russian and British empires for influence in Persia, which he discusses in detail in the final chapter. This chapter also deals with Persia’s “two Asiatic neighbours,” Afghanistan and the Ottoman Empire, both of which “held large tracts of territory that were once included within the Persian dominions.” Curzon ends on a hopeful note regarding the future development of the country, but he cautions patience and warns that “colossal schemes for the swift regeneration of Persia … will only end in fiasco.” He also warns against a dominant role for foreign concessions: “Persian capital must be interested in the exploitation of Persian resources, for a monopoly of the finance by foreigners excites jealousy, and suggests the idea of usurpation.” The book includes illustrations and maps.

Curzon of Kedleston, George Nathaniel Curzon. Speeches by Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Calcutta, 1900-06, [1702 pages]

George Nathaniel Curzon (1859‒1925) served as viceroy and governor-general of India from 1899 to 1905. As the head of the British administration in India, he instituted sweeping reforms in the colonial bureaucracy, organized relief in the famine of 1899‒1900, and enacted agricultural reforms aimed at increasing food production. He also modernized the police, railways, educational system and universities, established the North-West Frontier Province (in present-day Pakistan) near the border with Afghanistan, created a directorate-general for archaeology, and launched an expanded program to restore important cultural and historical monuments in India, including, for example, the Taj Mahal. While widely praised for reforms that greatly benefited the people of India, Curzon has been criticized by historians for his fundamentally paternalistic attitude toward the country and his failure to recognize the emergence of the new nationalist elite associated with the Indian National Congress. Presented here is a four-volume compilation of the speeches given by Curzon during his tenure in India, published by the Indian government in Calcutta. Included are both statements to formal sessions of the Viceroy’s Legislative Council and addresses at conferences, meetings, and on ceremonial occasions. The speeches cover a vast array of topics, including the economy, budget and finance, civil and military administration, culture, art, and ancient monuments. A high point of Curzon’s time in India was the great durbar held in Delhi in January 1903 to celebrate the accession of King Edward VII. Curzon’s speeches at the events that were part of the durbar are contained in volume three. Also noteworthy is the last speech in volume four, Curzon’s farewell speech given at the Byculla Club in Bombay on November 16, 1905, in which he proclaimed that he had always striven for the good of India, and concluded: “I have worked for no other aim. Let India be my judge.” Curzon went on to serve in the House of Lords and as British foreign secretary from 1919 to 1924.
Curzon of Kedleston, George Nathaniel Curzon. Tales of Travel, London, 1923, [408 pages]

George Nathaniel Curzon (1859‒1925) was a British politician, traveler, and writer who served as viceroy of India from 1899 to 1905 and foreign secretary from 1919 to 1924. As a young man he traveled extensively and wrote several travel books, or books that drew extensively on his travels, including Russia in Central Asia (1889), Persia and the Persian Question (1892), and Problems of the Far East (1894). Tales of Travel (1923), presented here, is one of his last books. It consists of previously unpublished memoirs and essays based on journeys taken earlier in Curzon’s life. The book reflects the range of Curzon’s travels, his curiosity and powers of observation, and his literary talent. One essay, “The Great Waterfalls of the World,” describes and compares waterfalls in North America, South America, Africa, India, and New Zealand. Another, “The Singing Sands,” deals with the strange singing or rumbling sounds said to be heard in deserts, and discusses this phenomenon as it manifests itself in the deserts of Central Asia, Afghanistan, Persia, the Sinai, Arabia, North Africa, and the Americas. Another piece is about sumo wrestling in Japan. One of the most noteworthy essays in the book, “The Amir of Afghanistan,” is an account of Curzon’s meetings in 1894‒95 with ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan (circa 1844–1901), ruler of Afghanistan. Curzon characterizes the amir as brilliant and effective, but also cruel and merciless. “He welded the Afghan tribes into a unity which they had never previously enjoyed, and he paved the way for the complete independence which his successors achieved. He and he alone was the Government of Afghanistan.” The book is illustrated, and contains a large fold-out facsimile of a map of Afghanistan prepared and circulated by ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan.

Darmesteter, James. Chants populaires des Afghans, Paris, 1888-90, [742 pages]

James Darmesteter (1849‒94) was a great French Iranist who from 1885 occupied the chair of Persian language and literature at the Collège de France in Paris. His major fields of study were Iranian philology and the Zoroastrian religion. His greatest scholarly achievement was his translation of the Avesta, the surviving ancient sacred texts of the Zoroastrians. Darmesteter was also very interested in the language and history of Afghanistan. In 1886–87 he undertook an 11-month philological mission to India, supported by the French Ministry of Education. He spent much of this time on the Northwest Frontier area of the Punjab, where he studied Pushto, not as a literary language from written texts but as a living language. Assisted by two local amanuenses, he transcribed the texts of songs as dictated by popular singers. He supplemented his collection with songs written down by various British authors. Upon his return to Paris, Darmesteter published the work presented here, Chants populaires des Afghans (Popular songs of the Afghans), a collection of more than 100 songs in Pushto script, with annotated French translations. He grouped the songs in five categories: “Chansons historiques” (historical songs); “Chansons religieuses” (religious songs); “Légendes romanesques”
(romances); “Chansons d’amour” (love songs), and “Moeurs et folklore” (customs and folklore).

Darmesteter’s preface, which runs to more than 200 pages, includes a thorough analysis of Pushto phonology and morphology, a sketch of Afghan literature and history, and an overview of the popular literature of the Afghans. The book also includes several appendices and four indexes (lexicographic, personal names, geographic, and ethnic). The order of the work is: preface, French translations, appendices and indexes (all reading from left to right), and original Pushto texts (reading from right to left). Darmesteter published an accompanying volume based on his travels on the Northwest Frontier, *Lettres sur l’Inde: À la frontière afghane* (Letters about India: At the Afghan frontier).


James Darmesteter (1849‒94) was a great French Iranist who from 1885 occupied the chair of Persian language and literature at the Collège de France in Paris. His major fields of study were Iranian philology and the Zoroastrian religion. His greatest scholarly achievement was his translation of the Avesta, the surviving ancient sacred texts of the Zoroastrians. Darmesteter was also very interested in the language and history of Afghanistan. In 1886‒87 he undertook an 11-month philological mission to India, supported by the French Ministry of Education. He spent much of this time on the Northwest Frontier area of the Punjab, where he studied Pushto, not as a literary language from written texts but as a living language. Assisted by two local amanuenses, he transcribed the texts of songs as dictated by popular singers. Upon his return to Paris, Darmesteter published *Chants populaires des Afghans* (Popular songs of the Afghans), a collection of more than 100 songs in Pushto script, with annotated French translations. In 1888 Darmesteter also published an accompanying volume based on his travels on the Northwest Frontier, the work presented here: *Lettres sur l’Inde: À la frontière afghane* (Letters about India: At the Afghan frontier). The book contains short, literary chapters on Darmesteter’s journey; places such as Peshawar, Yagistan, Abbottabad, and Lahore; the Afghan dynasties and amirs; Afghan philosophy; the celebrated Afghan warrior-poet Khushal Khan Khatak (also seen as Khwushhal); and chapters that discuss the histories, culture, and contemporary situations of the Afridi, Baluchi, Ghilzai (or Ghilji), Pushtun, Hazara, and other peoples of Afghanistan and of present-day Pakistan.

**Dennie, William Henry. ***Personal Narrative of the Campaigns in Affghanistan, Sinde, Beloochistan, etc., Detailed in a Series of Letters of the Late Colonel William H. Dennie*, Dublin, 1843, [www.wdl.org/17711](http://www.wdl.org/17711) [246 pages]

William Henry Dennie (1789–1842) was a British army officer who took part in the First Anglo-Afghan War of 1839–42. During the Anglo-Indian occupation of Kabul in 1840 he was sent with a small force against the army of Dost Mohammad Khan (1793–1863), the former Afghan amir whom the British had overthrown, which he defeated in an engagement at Bamyan on September 18. Dennie later succeeded to the command of Sir Robert Sale (1782–1845) when Sale was wounded in action against Afghan insurgents in October 1841. Dennie himself was wounded in an engagement on April 7, 1842, and died shortly thereafter. *Personal Narrative of the Campaigns in Afghanistan, Sinde, Beloochistan, etc.,*
Detailed in a Series of Letters of the Late Colonel William H. Dennie consists of letters written by Dennie between November 11, 1838, and December 5, 1841, and published after his death. Dennie was a fighting soldier, known for his courage and military skills, and the letters are mainly interesting for the first-hand accounts they offer of battles in which he led British and Indian troops. The appendices contain the texts of official dispatches by Dennie and correspondence with the government of India, including those related to the victory over Dost Mohammad. The book was edited by William Steele, a relative of Dennie’s, and includes a preface and an introduction that traces the history of the Afghans from biblical times to the early 19th century. The book contains a fold-out map, on which the lines of march of the units commanded by Dennie are hand colored.


The Retention of Candahar, published in London in 1881, is typical of the many pamphlets produced in Great Britain as the British Parliament and public debated policy toward Afghanistan in the wake of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). The war began in November 1878 when the British sent an Anglo-Indian force into Afghanistan with the aim of replacing the Afghan amir, Sher Ali Khan, who was reputed to harbor pro-Russian sentiments, with a ruler more favorable to Britain. After a series of battles won by both British and Afghan forces, the war finally ended in September 1880 with a decisive British victory at the Battle of Kandahar. William Ewart Gladstone, who became prime minister for a second time in April 1880, took office firmly committed to a policy of complete withdrawal from Afghanistan. The policy was opposed by many active and retired officials in Britain and British India, who argued that British Indian troops should permanently occupy Kandahar as a check on possible Russian expansion toward India. One such former official was the Earl of Lytton who, as viceroy of India, had been a keen enthusiast for the war. This pamphlet contains the text of a speech delivered in the House of Lords by the Earl of Derby (Edward Henry Stanley, 1826–93), a British statesman and an influential, liberal-minded intellectual in the Victorian era and afterwards, in rebuttal of Lytton’s argument for retention. The pamphlet argues for abandonment, presenting the military, political, and financial case against retention. Lord Derby sums up his view at the end of his speech stating “I shall vote against the retention of Candahar because I believe it will be a burden and not a benefit—a source of weakness, not of strength.” This argument won out, and in the end the British and Indian governments made good on Gladstone’s commitment to complete withdrawal. The last British Indian troops left Afghanistan in the spring of 1881. The new Afghan ruler, ‘Abd-al-Rahman, conceded British supervision of his foreign relations, in return for which Britain promised him a subsidy and help in resisting unprovoked aggression by an outside power. By this agreement Afghanistan was able to preserve its independence and avoid foreign occupation.
Sir Pierre Louis Napoleon Cavagnari (1841–79) was a French-born army and political officer who joined the army of the East India Company in 1858 and held a variety of military and political posts in India up until the time of his death. During the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80), he negotiated the Treaty of Gandamak (signed May 26, 1879), which ended the first phase of the war. Under the terms of the agreement, the government of the new ruler of Afghanistan, Ya’qub Khan, was obliged to receive a permanent British envoy at Kabul and Britain was given the right to exercise control over Afghan foreign policy. Lord Lytton, viceroy of India, appointed Cavagnari as the British envoy resident at Kabul. Cavagnari entered the city on July 24, 1879. His reception was at first friendly, but on September 3 several Afghan regiments mutinied and attacked the citadel where Cavagnari and other British officials were living. Cavagnari and his guards were killed. These events triggered a general uprising and a second phase of the war. *The Life and Career of Major Sir Louis Cavagnari* is a compilation of original documents relating to Cavagnari’s life and the diplomatic and military circumstances of the Second Anglo-Afghan War, published in Calcutta (present-day Kolkata) in 1881. The documents include dispatches about Afghanistan from the government of India to the government in London, correspondence between the British and Sher Ali Khan, ruler of Afghanistan in 1863–66 and 1868–79, excerpts from newspapers and official reports, and the complete text of the Treaty of Gandamak. The compiler was Kally Prosono Dey (also seen as Kaliprasanna De), who appears to have been a civil servant or clerk in the government of India.


*The Hero of Herat: A Frontier Romance* is a popular biography of Eldred Pottinger (1811–43) by Maud Diver (1867–1945), a British Indian author who was a friend and contemporary of Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) and who, like Kipling, primarily wrote about Englishmen in India and their encounters with the people and cultures of the East. Pottinger was an army officer in the East India Company and the nephew of Henry Pottinger, also in the service of the company. In 1837 Eldred Pottinger traveled from Peshawar to Kabul and Herat, disguised as a horse dealer. Soon after his arrival in Herat, the city was besieged by the Persian army with the assistance of Russian officers. Pottinger identified himself to and offered his services in the defense of the city to Yar Mohammad Khan, the wazir and commander of the forces under Shah Kamran, ruler of Herat. His services were accepted and the defense was successful, as the Persians ended their siege and withdrew in September 1838. Pottinger left Herat in 1839 but returned to Afghanistan in 1841 as the British political agent in Kohistan. He was heavily involved in the fighting and diplomacy of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). *The Hero of Herat* covers Pottinger’s activities up to his departure from Afghanistan in 1839. A later volume by the same author covers his involvement in the events of the First Anglo-Afghan War. The book opens with a portrait of Pottinger in Afghan dress and concludes with a fold-out map that illustrates the route of his journey to Afghanistan in 1837–38.

George Dobson (1850‒1938) was the Russian correspondent for the *Times* of London for more than 25 years. In the spring of 1888 he became the first Englishman to travel the newly-opened Central Asian Railway to Samarkand. He reported on his journey in a series of long letters that appeared in the *Times* in the fall of that year. *Russia's Railway Advance into Central Asia: Notes of a Journey from St. Petersburg to Samarkand* contains the texts of those letters, expanded and rewritten, as well as new content. Dobson interweaves the account of his journey with detailed descriptions of the towns and cities along the route and discussions of terrain and climate, the history and peoples of the region, and Russian policy and objectives. The concluding chapter provides much interesting detail on the railroad as a feat of engineering, one that involved the transport of masses of construction materials across the Caspian Sea by steamer, the inland transport of these materials by camel, and the overcoming of such challenges as language barriers and difficulties in communicating with locally recruited workmen, the hot climate, diseases among the workforce, the death of workers from sunstroke and thirst, high winds and drifting sands, and the threat of attacks on the construction crews by marauders. This chapter also includes much information about the costs of the construction and how they were financed. The book contains three maps in the first quarter of the book, some photographs, and an appendix that gives the different rail routes to Samarkand from Saint Petersburg and other Russian cities as well as from European cities such as Paris, Cologne, and Berlin. The fastest route from Paris to Samarkand was by rail to Odessa via Vienna, by steamer across the Black Sea from Odessa to Batumi, and by rail from Batumi to Baku and then to Samarkand. This route took 10 days, 10 hours, and 9 minutes; other routes took as long as 13 days to complete.


*Akbar and the Jesuits, An Account of the Jesuit Missions to the Court of Akbar* is a partial translation of a work written and compiled by the Jesuit priest Pierre Du Jarric and published in France between 1608 and 1614. The complete title of Du Jarric’s magnum opus is *Histoire des choses plus memorables advenues tant ez Index Orientales, que autres païx de la descouverte des Portugais, en l’establissement et progrez de la foy Christienne at Catholique: et principalement de ce que les Religieux de la Compagnie de lèsus y ont faict, & endure pour la mesme fin;depuis qu’ils y sont entrez iusqu’à l’an 1600*. Du Jarric himself was not a traveler or missionary; the work is compiled from other sources, including books, letters, and reports in Portuguese, Spanish, Latin, and French. Du Jarric’s *Histoire* is in three parts (volumes), each of which has two books, and covers Jesuit missions to India and Southeast Asia, Africa, Brazil, and the Mughal Empire. The translation presented here is from the original Book IV of Part II and Book V of Part III, dealing with the Mughal Empire, and specifically events during the life of the Emperor Akbar, including the three Jesuit missions to his court made before 1600. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Akbar (1542‒1605), also known as Akbar the Great, was the Mughal emperor who ruled India from 1556 to 1605. Born and raised as an orthodox Sunni Muslim, Akbar nonetheless practiced religious tolerance, curbed the power of the Islamic
clergy in political and legal matters, and opened discussions of religion to a variety of Muslims, including Shiite scholars and Sufi dervishes, as well as eventually to Hindus, Jains, Parsees, and Christians. Du Jarric recounts numerous conversations between Akbar and the Jesuit fathers, and their hopes, which in the end were disappointed, that he would become a Christian. The book contains detailed notes to the chapters and is illustrated with black-and-white paintings from the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The book was part of The Broadway Travellers, a series of classic travel accounts published by George Routledge & Sons, London, between 1926 and 1937. This American edition was published in New York by Harper & Brothers.


*Recollections of the Kabul Campaign, 1879 & 1880* is a firsthand account of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). The author, Joshua Duke, was a British officer in the Bengal Medical Service, attached to “our native army in India.” The war began in November 1878 when Great Britain, fearful of what it saw as growing Russian influence in Afghanistan, invaded the country from British India. The first phase of the conflict ended in May 1879 with the Treaty of Gandamak, which permitted the Afghans to maintain internal sovereignty but forced them to cede control over their foreign policy to the British. Fighting resumed in September 1879 after an anti-British uprising in Kabul that resulted in the death of Sir Louis Cavagnari, the British resident in Kabul and a negotiator of the Treaty of Gandamak, and of nearly all the British soldiers at the residency. The Kabul Field Force, commanded by General Sir Frederick Roberts and composed of British and Indian army regiments, was sent to Kabul to restore order and take revenge. *Recollections of the Kabul Campaign* offers a vivid eye-witness account of the main incidents of the war, including the bloody siege of the Sherpur Cantonment of December 1879, in which Afghan forces mounted a nearly successful attack on the Anglo-Indian forces, the relief march from Kabul to Kandahar in August 1880, and the climactic Battle of Kandahar in September 1880 that ended the war. In addition to his account of the military operations, Duke provides insights from his perspective as a medical officer, for example, on the treatment of wounds by traditional methods by the Afghan forces. The book is illustrated with a frontispiece photograph of Roberts and maps and drawings of important battles and fortresses. The appendix contains a summary explanation of the causes of both Anglo-Afghan wars, the full text of the Treaty of Gandamak, and copies of correspondence between Russian and Afghan authorities that were found by the British when they occupied Kabul.

Sir Henry Marion Durand (1812–71) was a British army officer and colonial administrator who took part in the early stages of, and later wrote a history of, the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Bengal Engineers at age 15 and sailed for India in October 1829. In 1839, he was part of the column of British and Indian soldiers that invaded Afghanistan under Sir John Keane. On July 23, 1839, with a British sergeant and a small number of Indian sappers, Durand blew open the Kabul Gate to the city and fortress of Ghazni and thus played a major role in the capture of the city. Durand subsequently had a falling out with his superiors and left Afghanistan; he thus was not part of the disastrous march to Jalalabad, in which a British column of 4,500 soldiers and 12,000 camp followers was annihilated by Ghilzai warriors in January 1842. Durand went on to serve at other posts in Burma and India and in 1847, while on home leave in England, began writing *The First Afghan War and Its Causes*. He never finished the work, which his son published in 1879. Durand was critical of many aspects of British policy in Afghanistan.

**Eastwick, Edward Backhouse. *Journal of a Diplomat’s Three Years’ Residence in Persia*, London, 1864, [www.wdl.org/17536](http://www.wdl.org/17536) [689 pages]**

Edward Backhouse Eastwick (1814–83) was a British orientalist scholar and diplomat, best known for his translations of Persian literary classics. After being educated at Balliol and Merton colleges, Oxford, Eastwick went to India where he joined the Bombay infantry as a cadet. He soon moved over to the East India Company, and later to the British civil service, largely because of his proficiency in languages. In addition to holding various administrative posts in India, Eastwick served as a British diplomat in Persia (Iran) and Venezuela. *Journal of a Diplomat’s Three Years’ Residence in Persia* is Eastwick’s account of his activities in Persia between 1860 and 1863, a critical period a few years after the Anglo-Persian War of 1856‒57. Eastwick left London on July 1, 1860, and, traveling via Paris, Marseilles, Athens, Istanbul, Sinope, Tbilisi, and Tabriz, arrived in Tehran on October 20, where he took up the post of secretary of the British legation to the court of Persia. He later was put in charge of the British mission in Khorasan, and arrived in Mashhad in August 1862, where he played a role in mediating between the Persian and Afghan governments. He returned to Tehran in December 1862, where he was chargé d’affaires of the British mission, but he was recalled to London in February of the following year. *Journal of a Diplomat’s Three Years’ Residence in Persia* is in two volumes. Volume one contains a detailed account of Eastwick’s journey to Tehran, descriptions of the working of the British mission and its relations with the French and Russian missions, and accounts of his visits to a number of the provinces. Volume two draws on Eastwick’s time in Mashhad, and is primarily an account of the activities of the Afghan amir Dost Mohammad Khan (reigned 1826‒39 and 1842–63) and his attack in 1855 on Herat, which at that time was under Persian control and ruled by the governor of Khorasan. The book contains a number of appendices, including a table listing the stages on the route from Trebizond (present-day Trabzon, Turkey) to Tabriz with the distance between stages in hours and miles (total time and distance: 173 hours; 490 miles), and a fold-out pedigree of the reigning shah of Persia.

*Lord Lytton and the Afghan War* is a scathing critique of the Afghan policies of Edward Robert Bulwer-Lytton, the viceroy of India who is credited with provoking the Second Anglo-Afghan War. A poet, novelist, and diplomat, Lytton was appointed viceroy in 1876 by Conservative Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. Lytton purportedly feared the spread of Russian influence in Central Asia. In November 1878 he launched the invasion of Afghanistan from British India by an Anglo-Indian force with the aim of replacing the Afghan amir, Sher Ali, who was reputed to harbor pro-Russian sentiments, with a ruler more favorable to Britain. Published in 1879 by William Joseph Eastwick, a former high-ranking official of the East India Company, the book criticizes the errors of fact and judgment made by Lytton in pursuit of his “forward” policy toward Afghanistan. Eastwick accuses Lytton of misleading Parliament and the British public about the situation in the country, exaggerating the threat posed by Sher Ali, underestimating the duration and ferocity of the resistance the invasion was likely to provoke, disregarding previous diplomatic understandings with Russia, and undermining progress in India, where Eastwick regarded British rule as a force for good. Many of Eastwick’s pessimistic predictions about the war were eventually borne out, as the conflict dragged on until the fall of 1880 with rising human, financial, and political costs.


Abu al-Ghazi Bahadur (or Ebulgazi Bahadir Han, 1603–63) was the ruler of the Khanate of Khiva (in present-day Uzbekistan) and a prominent historian of the Turkic peoples who wrote in the Old Turkic (Chagatai) language. The son of ‘Arab Muhammad Khan, Abu al-Ghazi was caught up in a dynastic struggle with his brothers following the death of their father and forced to flee to the Safavid court in Isfahan (in present-day Iran), where he lived from 1629 to 1639. He eventually ascended to the throne of the Khanate of Khiva in 1644 or 1645, which he ruled until his death. He was the author of two works that are important sources for Central Asian history, *Shajare-i Tarâkime* or *Şecere-i Terakime* (The genealogical tree of the Turkmen), completed in 1659, and *Shajare-i Turk* (The genealogical tree of the Turks), which he left incomplete and which his son, Abu al-Muzaffar Anusha Muhammad Bahadur, completed in 1665. *Shajare-i Turk* was translated into French and published in Leiden in 1726 under the title *Histoire généalogique des Tartars*. The work contains a genealogical history of the Turks from the time of the biblical Adam to 1663. The bulk of the book is a history of the Shaybanid dynasty, which ruled the Khanate of Bukhara from 1500 to 1598. Presented here is a Russian edition of *Shajare-i Turk*, published in Saint Petersburg in 1768 by the Russian Academy of Sciences, based on the French translation of 1726. The book is in two volumes and contains different maps of “Northern Asia” at the beginning of each volume. It is from the Rare Books Department of the Russian State Library in Moscow.
Edwards, Henry Sutherland. *Russian Projects against India from the Czar Peter to General Skobelev*, London, 1885, [www.wdl.org/17731](http://www.wdl.org/17731) [310 pages]

Henry Sutherland Edwards (1828–1906) was a British author and journalist who over a long career worked in a wide range of genres, producing dramatic pieces, fiction, and serious journalism. In 1856 he went to Russia as correspondent of the *Illustrated Times* to cover the coronation of Tsar Alexander II. He remained in Moscow to study the language and married the daughter of a Scottish engineer who had settled in Russia. Sutherland developed a lifelong interest in Russian subjects, and wrote numerous essays and articles and several books on Russian themes. *Russian Projects against India from the Czar Peter to General Skobelev* is a history of Russian interest in and expansion into Central Asia from the time of Peter the Great (1672–1725) to the late 19th century. Echoing what was a widely held view in Great Britain at the time, Sutherland writes in the preface: “Russian expeditions in Central Asia (supported at critical moments by intriguers in Persia and Afghanistan) have always been undertaken, not with a view to an improved frontier, the Russian frontier on the Central Asian side never having been threatened; nor for commercial purposes, the exports and imports between Russia and the Khanates being of the most trifling value, and quite out of proportion to the cost of occupying and administering the Russian possessions in Central Asia: but simply in order to place Russia in a position to threaten and, on a fitting opportunity, attack India.” Among the Russian expeditions covered in detail by Sutherland are General Vasily Alexseevich Perovsky’s expedition of 1839 to Khiva; Colonel Nikolai Pavlovich Ignatiev’s mission of 1858 to Khiva and Bukhara; and General Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman’s expedition to Khiva of 1872–73. The concluding chapter, “Projects for the Invasion of India,” discusses several different schemes put forward by Russian military writers in the second half of the 19th century for Russian advances on India through Afghanistan. The book contains a fold-out color map of the Russo-Afghan frontier.
Elphinstone, Mountstuart. *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul*, London, 1815, [772 pages]

Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779–1859) was an administrator with the East India Company who in 1808 was sent by the British Indian authorities on a mission to Afghanistan for the purpose of concluding an agreement with the Afghan ruler, Shah Shuja Durani. Suspicious of British intentions and engaged in a domestic power struggle, Shah Shuja refused to allow Elphinstone and his party to proceed beyond Peshawar (present-day Pakistan), which was then part of the Durani empire. Elphinstone remained in Peshawar for several months, where he met with Shah Shuja and gathered information about Afghanistan from a variety of sources, including merchants, travelers, and Islamic teachers. The result was a detailed report to the East India Company, which Elphinstone later expanded into *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul*, published in 1815. The book is arranged logically and systematically. Following an introduction describing the mission of 1808–9, it contains books on geography; the inhabitants of Afghanistan and their customs and way of life; the Afghan tribes; the provinces; and the royal government of Kabul. Appendices cover the history of the kingdom from the founding of the Durani monarchy; the narrative of a Mr. Durie, a half-English, half-Indian compounding of medicines, of his journey across Afghanistan; an account of neighboring countries, including Kafiristan; an extract from the memoir of Lieutenant Macartney, the surveyor in Elphinstone’s party who drew up a detailed map of Afghanistan; and a vocabulary of Pushto words. The book includes colored plates that portray Afghans of different ethnic groups and a very large fold-out map. *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul* became a standard work, relied upon for decades by the British and other Europeans as a source of information about Afghanistan. Elphinstone went on to serve in a variety of posts in British India and to write other books, including *History of India: The Hindu and Mohametan Periods* (1841).

William Erskine (1773–1852) was a Scottish-born scholar and administrator who held a variety of posts in India between 1804 and 1823. He mastered Persian and in 1826 published an English translation of the memoirs of Babur, the first Mughal emperor and the founder of the Mughal dynasty. In 1831 Erskine began formulating plans for a history of the first six Mughal emperors. He died before he could finish the work. In 1854 Erskine’s son, Claudius James Erskine, a member of the Indian Civil Service, published this two-volume study of the first two emperors, Babur (born 1483, reigned 1526–30) and Humayun (reigned 1530–40 and 1555–56), which his father had completed before his death. The book is a pioneering study of Mughal India, based on Erskine’s painstaking research and close reading of original Persian sources. Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire and dynasty, was descended on his father’s side from the Turkic conqueror Timur (Tamerlane) and on his mother’s side from the Mongol ruler Genghis Khan. He was driven from his ancestral domain in Central Asia, but established himself at Kabul from where he secured control of the Punjab and eventually expanded his domains to become ruler of all northern India. Babur was succeeded by his son, Humayun, who ruled for a decade before losing much of the empire to the ethnic Pushtun Sher Shah Suri (1486–1545). With Persian help, Humayun reestablished control of the lost territories 15 years later, after he had passed much of his interregnum in Afghanistan, and ruled until his death in 1556. Following preliminary sections on the Tartar tribes and Genghis Khan and Timur and their dynasties, Erskine recounts the history of Babur and Humayun in meticulous detail. Volume two concludes with supplementary remarks entitled “On the State of Government and Manners in Kabul and the Surrounding Countries during the Reigns of Babur and Humayun.” The topics covered in this section include government and regal etiquette, the court, the state of the provinces, the army, fortresses, inhabitants, administration of justice, men of learning and piety, literature, sciences, architecture, and several others.


*The Kabul Insurrection of 1841–42* by Sir Vincent Eyre (1811–81) is an updated and expanded edition of his *The Military Operations at Cabul*, originally published in 1843. Eyre was an officer in the Indian army who served as commissary of ordnance in the Kabul Field Force that marched into Afghanistan in the fall of 1839. He arrived in Kabul in April 1840, bringing with him a large quantity of ordnance stores. In November 1841 he was caught up in the uprising in Kabul by the Afghans against the Anglo-Indian force in which Sir Alexander Burnes was killed. The occupiers were besieged in their cantonments and Eyre was severely wounded. Under a treaty with the Afghan government, in early 1842 the Anglo-Indian force was given safe passage to evacuate the country. Accompanied by his wife and child, Eyre joined the column heading eastward but, along with the other British soldiers and civilians, he was taken hostage by the amir, Akbar Khan (1816–45, ruled 1842–45). The British hostages spent nearly nine months in captivity and suffered many privations, including severe cold and the effects of an earthquake and its aftershocks. In August 1842 the captives were marched north towards Bamyan in the Hindu Kush under the threat of being sold as slaves to the Uzbeks. They finally were released on September 20, after one of the prisoners, Major Pottinger, succeeded in buying off the Afghan commander of their escort. Prior to his release, Eyre had managed to smuggle the manuscript of his journal in parts to a friend in India, who sent it to England where, with the help of Eyre’s relatives, it was published the following year as *The Military Operations at Cabul*, as were his *Prison Sketches, Comprising Portraits of the Cabul Prisoners, and*
Other Subjects. Eyre went on to have a distinguished army career, and retired with the rank of major general in October 1863. With the onset of the Second Anglo-Afghan War in late 1878, Eyre decided to reissue his journal from the earlier war. Published in 1879, The Kabul Insurrection of 1841‒42 contains a new author’s preface and two new preliminary chapters, the first a brief account of Afghanistan and its inhabitants, the second a retrospective, from the vantage point of the late 1870s, on the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839‒42). The contents of the older book are then reproduced, with the journal beginning at chapter four. The Kabul Insurrection of 1841‒42 includes a fold-out map by Eyre of the Kabul cantonment and surrounding country that appeared in the older book, a sketch map of Afghanistan, and three appendices with the texts of documents relating to the 1841 uprising in Kabul.


The Military Operations at Cabul is comprised primarily of the journal kept by Lieutenant Vincent Eyre (1811–81) before and during the time he was held prisoner in the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). Appointed commissary of ordnance to the Kabul Field Force that marched into Afghanistan in the fall of 1839, Eyre arrived in Kabul in April 1840, bringing with him a large quantity of ordnance stores. Eyre begins his journal on November 2, 1841, the first day of the uprising by the Afghans against the Anglo-Indian force, in which Sir Alexander Burnes was killed. The occupiers were besieged in their cantonments and on November 13 Eyre was severely wounded. Under a treaty with the Afghan government, in early 1842 the Anglo-Indian force was given safe passage to evacuate the country. Accompanied by his wife and child, Eyre joined the column heading eastward but, along with the other British soldiers and civilians, he was taken hostage by the amir, Akbar Khan (1816–45, ruled 1842–45). The British hostages spent nearly nine months in captivity and suffered many privations, including severe cold and the effects of an earthquake and its aftershocks. In August 1842, the captives were marched north towards Bamyan in the Hindu Kush under the threat of being sold as slaves to the Uzbeks. They finally were released on September 20, after one of the prisoners, Major Pottinger, succeeded in buying off the Afghan commander of their escort. Prior to his release, Eyre had managed to smuggle the manuscript of his journal in parts to a friend in India, who sent it to England where, with the help of
Eyre’s relatives, it was published the following year. The book includes an introductory chapter, a foldout map of the Kabul cantonment and surrounding country made by Eyre, a glossary of Afghan terms, a list of those held prisoner and released in September 1842, and a list of the civilian and military officers killed in the uprising of November 1841. Eyre was a gifted artist who also produced most of the drawings in Prison Sketches, a collection of portraits of some of the men and women with whom he had been imprisoned that also was published in London in 1843.

**Eyre, Vincent. Prison Sketches, Comprising Portraits of the Cabul Prisoners, and Other Subjects,** London, 1843, [www.wdl.org/17792](http://www.wdl.org/17792) [65 pages]

*Prison Sketches, Comprising Portraits of the Cabul Prisoners, and Other Subjects* is a set of lithographs based on drawings made primarily by Lieutenant Vincent Eyre (1811–81) at the time he was held prisoner during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). Appointed commissary of ordnance to the Kabul Field Force that marched into Afghanistan in the fall of 1839, Eyre arrived in Kabul in April 1840, bringing with him a large quantity of ordnance stores. An uprising by the Afghans against the Anglo-Indian force began on November 2, 1841. The occupiers were besieged in their cantonments, and on November 13 Eyre was severely wounded. Under a treaty with the Afghan government, in early 1842 the Anglo-Indian force was given safe passage to evacuate the country. Accompanied by his wife and child, Eyre joined the column heading eastward but, along with the other British soldiers and civilians, he was taken hostage by the amir, Akbar Khan (1816–45, ruled 1842–45). The British hostages spent nearly nine months in captivity and suffered many privations, including severe cold and the effects of an earthquake and its aftershocks. In August 1842, the captives were marched north towards Bamyan in the Hindu Kush, under the threat of being sold as slaves to the Uzbeks. They finally were released on September 20, after one of the prisoners, Major Pottinger, succeeded in buying off the Afghan commander of their escort. Prior to his release, Eyre had managed to smuggle the manuscript of his journal in parts to a friend in India, who sent it to England where, with the help of Eyre’s relatives, it was published the following year under the title *The Military Operations at Cabul, which Ended in the Retreat and Destruction of the British Army, January 1842*. Eyre’s sketches of his fellow prisoners and of several scenes from his captivity also were smuggled out of Afghanistan and made their way to England. Following the success of *The Military Operations at Cabul*, the Bond Street stationer and lithographic publisher Lowes Dickinson had lithographs made from the sketches, which were published separately. Dickinson supplemented the drawings by Eyre with those by several other artists, with the aim of completing a set of sketches, “which cannot fail to interest those who have read of the disasters of Cabul.” The lithographs were intended to be inserted into and bound with Eyre’s *The Military Operations at Cabul*, or with another work by a fellow prisoner, Lady Florentia Wynch Sale’s *A Journal of the Disasters in Afghanistan, 1841-2* (1843). This bound collection from the Library of Congress contains 30 of the 32 lithographs that Dickinson had produced.

Joseph Pierre Ferrier (1811–86) was a French soldier who served as a military instructor in the army of Persia (present-day Iran) in 1839–42 and again in 1846–50. He was sent on a diplomatic mission to Europe by the Qajar ruler Muhammad Shah (1808–48, reigned 1834–48), but later fell out of favor with the shah and was forced to leave Persia. He returned to the Persian service in 1846, after undertaking a dangerous overland journey through Afghanistan and Persia in 1844–46. While working for the Persian army, Ferrier reported to the French government and sought to promote French interests in the rivalry with Great Britain and Russia for influence in the country. Ferrier produced two major books based on historical research and his personal observations. *Caravan Journeys and Wanderings in Persia, Afghanistan, Turkistan and Beloochistan* was published in London in 1857; the French edition, *Voyages et aventures en Perse, dans l’Afghanistan, le Beloutchistan et le Turkestan* appeared only in 1870. The book presented here, *History of the Afghans*, was published in London in 1858 and is an English translation of the manuscripts of Ferrier made by a British officer, Captain William Jesse. A French edition of the book was never published. The work is a history of the Afghans from ancient times to 1850. Ferrier chronicles the rise of British power in South Asia, which from a French perspective he regrets. In the final passage of the book, he notes that possession of Peshawar in the north and Shikarpur in the south had given the British control of the Indus River, and concludes: “These are the têtes-de-pont [bridgeheads] which command the passage of that river, and give the Anglo-Indian government the power of exercising the greatest influence over the policy of the chiefs of Kandahar and Kabul—may Europe never have cause to repent that she has permitted those conquests which will render Great Britain and Russia all-powerful over this planet.” The book contains a detailed fold-out map.

Forrest, George, ed. *Selections from the Travels and Journals Preserved in the Bombay Secretariat*, Bombay, 1906, [370 pages]

*Selections from the Travels and Journals Preserved in the Bombay Secretariat* is a compilation of 14 documents, previously unpublished, relating to journeys taken or documented by officials of the East India Company. Most of the trips described were to and from cities in Afghanistan, Persia (present-day Iran), and Central Asia, but a few were by the Indian Navy to places on the coasts of the Arabian Peninsula. The documents, from the archives of the East India Company in Bombay (present-day Mumbai), were compiled by George William Forrest, the former director of records of the Imperial Record Office at Calcutta (present-day Kolkata). Forrest provides a lengthy introduction to the volume, in which he writes that these “tales of the exploits of the soldiers and sailors of the East India Company and these plain narratives of facts show that in searching the most opposite corners of the Eastern World they faced the dangers and distresses which beset them with calm courage and made good use of the opportunities of their calling for the furtherance of knowledge.” Among the documents presented is the record of a journey from Yezd (Persia) to Herat (Afghanistan) and from Herat to Kabul via Kandahar, undertaken in 1826 by a French officer and translated into English in 1839 by a British officer in Kabul for transmission to the East India Company; the account of the journey by Major Elliott D’Arcy Todd
from Herat to Simla (present-day India) in 1838; the February 7, 1838, report by Sir Alexander Burnes on
the state of Herat and the surrounding region; and the English translation of a report in Persian of a
mission undertaken by a Persian adventurer, Mohamed Hoosain, on behalf of the amir of Kabul to the
king of Persia in 1837–38. The purpose of this journey, as explained by Mohamed Hoosain, was to sound
out the Persian ruler on an arrangement to protect Afghanistan against the Sikh kingdom that was then
threatening from the east. The report was translated in early 1839 by order of Burnes (then British
resident in Kabul, who was later to be killed in the uprising of 1841) and transmitted to Bombay as part of
the historical record.

[140 pages]

*A Guide to the India Office Records, 1600–1858* is a short book intended for use by historians and other
researchers, written by the registrar and superintendent of records of the India Office in London. The
book is in five sections. The first covers the records of the home administrations, meaning the East India
Company from the time of its chartering by Queen Elizabeth in 1600 to the end of its rule over India in
1858, and the Board of Control, or Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, which functioned in
London from 1784 to 1858. Section two covers the records of the administrations in India, including
Bengal, the government of India, Agra, the North-Western Provinces, the Punjab, Madras, and Bombay.
Section three provides an overview of the records of the India Office relating to third countries and
regions, for example, the Cape Colony, Persia and the Persian Gulf, and Egypt and the Red Sea. Section
four deals with records relating to shipping. Section five concerns personal records, including records of
baptisms, marriages, and burials of Europeans in the service of the East India Company, wills, army lists,
and lists of civil servants. Each section or sub-section contains a brief introduction to the entities that
created the records described and listed, making the book a succinct and authoritative guide to the
organization and structure of British rule in India. The author notes that the “volumes dealt with in this
little handbook are estimated to number about forty-eight thousand.”

Fraser, James Baillie. *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan, in the Years 1821 and 1822*, London,
1825, www.wdl.org/11797 [800 pages]

James Baillie Fraser left his native Scotland for India in 1813. After a short and unsuccessful stint
working in a trading business in Kolkata (Calcutta), in 1815 he joined his brother William Fraser on an
expedition to find the sources of the Jumna and Ganges rivers. He documented the trip in *Journal of a
Tour through Part of the Snowy Range of the Himalā Mountains*, published in 1820. A skilled artist who
produced sketches and aquatints of different parts of India, in 1821 Fraser accompanied Dr. Andrew
Jukes of the East India Company on a diplomatic mission to Persia. Jukes died in Isfahan in late 1821, but
Fraser continued the journey, visiting Tehran, Mashhad, Tabriz, and other cities before returning to
London. This book is Fraser’s account of his voyage through Khorasan, a historical region that includes
parts of present-day Iran, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan. It contains detailed information about the
peoples of the region and their customs, religious practices, and forms of government. Appended to the
main work is a lengthy “Geographical Sketch of the Principal Districts of Khorasan,” with descriptions of
the countryside and of towns such as Herat, Afghanistan. At the end are listed the route and travel
distances from Mashad to Herat, Herat to Kabul, Kabul to Balkh, and between various other points. Also
included are several tables with geographic and meteorological data.
John Fryer (circa 1650-1733) was a British traveler and writer. After studying medicine at Cambridge University, he went to India, where he first worked as a surgeon in the employ of the East India Company, with which his family most likely had some kind of connection. He left England in December 1672 and did not return until August 1682. *A New Account of East India and Persia in Eight Letters: Being Nine Years Travels, Begun 1672. And Finished 1681* is Fryer’s account of the time he spent in the East. The book is organized in eight letters, most of which are further divided into chapters.

Letter one covers the passage to India. Letters two, three, and four recount Fryer’s time in India. Letter five, by far the longest in the book, is an account of his time in Persia, with detailed descriptions of the Safavid capital of Isfahan, Shiraz, and the ruins of the ancient city of Persepolis. Letter six covers Fryer’s return to India and his stay in the cities of Bharuch, Baharampur, and Surat in present-day western India. Letter seven consists of “General Occurrences and Remarks”; letter eight covers the trip back to England via the Cape of Good Hope and Ascension Island, Saint Helena, and the Azores. The book is rich in details of natural history and is particularly valuable as an account of how medicine was practiced in Persia and India, reflecting Fryer’s training as a physician. Fryer’s writings are known for his lively curiosity and his observations in geology, meteorology, and other scientific fields. He also describes the lives and customs of the minority peoples of Persia, including the Gabrs (Zoroastrians), Armenians, Georgians, and Jews, and offers insights into the activities of rival European powers—the Portuguese, Dutch, and French—in the countries he visited.
García Ayuso, Francisco. *El Afghanistan; descripción histórico-geográfica del país; religion, usos y costumbres de sus habitantes*, Madrid, 1878, [www.wdl.org/17724](http://www.wdl.org/17724) [263 pages]

*El Afghanistan; descripción histórico-geográfica del país; religion, usos y costumbres de sus habitantes* (Afghanistan; a historic and geographic description of the country; religion, manners and customs of its inhabitants) is a short book in Spanish, published in Madrid in 1878, for the use of contemporary travelers and others interested in Afghanistan. At the time it was published, it was one of the few sources available in Spanish about the country. The book is in three parts. The first covers geography, and has chapters on different regions, with some attention paid to the problem of defining the borders between Afghanistan and British India (i.e., present-day Pakistan). The second part is devoted to ethnography, and has separate chapters on Afghans, Baluchis, and other diverse peoples. The third part is a summary of the history of Afghanistan. There is a large fold-out map. The author, Francisco García Ayuso, was a leading orientalist in late-19th century Spain. After studying at the University of Munich, he returned to Madrid, where he became a member of the Real Academia Española. The author of books on a wide range of topics, including the religion of ancient Iran and Sanskrit philology, Ayuso also taught many languages, including Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Sanskrit, and Syriac.


Elias John Wilkinson Gibb (1857–1901) was a Scottish Orientalist who was born and educated in Glasgow. After studying Arabic and Persian, he developed an interest in Turkish language and literature, especially poetry, and in 1882 he published *Ottoman Poems Translated into English Verse in the Original Forms*. This was a forerunner to the six-volume classic presented here, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, published in London between 1900 and 1909. Gibb died in London of scarlet fever at the age of 44, and only the first volume of his masterpiece appeared before his death. His family entrusted to his friend Edward Granville Browne (1862–1926), a distinguished Orientalist in his own right who had made a special study of Babism, the task of posthumously publishing the five remaining volumes. Browne characterized the work as “one of the most important, if not the most important, critical studies of any Muhammadan literature produced in Europe during the last half-century.” The first volume contains a long and compelling introduction by Gibb on the entire subject, in which he argues that Ottoman poetry often rose and fell in tandem with Ottoman power. Gibb divides Ottoman poetry into two great schools, the Old or Asiatic (circa 1300–1859), which generally was characterized by its deference to Persian influences; and the New or European (from 1859 onward), which was influenced by French and other Western poetry. According to Gibb, the Old or Asiatic School went through four periods: a formative period (1300–1450); a period (1450–1600) in which works were modeled after the Persian poet Jami; a period (1600–1700) dominated by the influences of Persian poets Urfi Shirazi and Sa’ib Tabrizi; and a period of uncertainty that lasted until 1859. The European school that followed was inaugurated by Ibrahim Sinasi (1826–71), who in 1859 produced a small but momentous collection of French poetry translated into Turkish verse. The influence of the collection was far-reaching and eventually changed the course of Ottoman poetry. Gibb is known for his masterful translations that brilliantly render into English both the meaning and the form of Ottoman, Persian, and Arabic poetry. For almost a century after his death, a family trust financed the Gibb Memorial Series of editions and translations into English of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish texts.

William Ewart Gladstone (1809–98) was four times Liberal prime minister of Great Britain (1868–74, 1880–85, 1886, 1892–94). One of the major political figures of the Victorian era, he served in the Colonial Office and was three times chancellor of the Exchequer, including during the first two years of his second government. *Soudan and Afghanistan. The Vote of Credit* is a pamphlet containing the text of a speech that Gladstone delivered before the Committee of Supply in the House of Commons on April 27, 1885, less than a month after the Panjdeh incident between Russia and Afghanistan and three months after the fall of Khartoum to the Mahdi forces and the subsequent killing of General Charles Gordon. In the Panjdeh incident, Russian forces seized Afghan territory south of the Oxus River (today known as the Amu Darya), leading to a clash with Afghan troops and a diplomatic crisis with Great Britain, which was sensitive to Russian pressures on Afghanistan and the potential threat they posed to British India. In the speech, Gladstone requested a Vote of Credit amounting to £11,000,000, of which £6,500,000 was designated for unspecified “special preparations” to strengthen the hand of the British Empire. It was obvious from the speech that these preparations were meant to counter possible Russian threats to Afghanistan and India. The other £4,500,000 was to be spent in connection with the crisis in Sudan. Gladstone expected the Sudan money to come with a censure, for he was seen as having allowed General Gordon to go to Khartoum but having failed in the attempt to rescue him from the forces of the Mahdi. In the end, the credit was approved. The speech was published for the Liberal Central Association of Great Britain in 1885.


This book is a laudatory account of the actions of the First Bengal Brigade, commanded by Colonel Robert Henry Sale (1782–1845), in the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838–42). The war began in late 1838 when the British launched an invasion of Afghanistan from India with the aim of overthrowing its ruler, the amir, Dost Moḥammad Khān, and replacing him with the supposedly pro-British former ruler Shah Shujā‘. Sale’s brigade fought its way into the country and helped to install Shah Shujā‘ as ruler in Jalalabad. Dost Moḥammad fled the country for Bukhara (present-day Uzbekistan), but returned to lead an 1841–42 uprising against the British and Shah Shujā‘. Dost Moḥammad took Kabul and Afghan tribesmen annihilated a British force of 4,500 men and thousands of followers. Sale managed to hold Jalalabad against a superior attacking force. He was relieved by a large British force commanded by Sir George Pollock, and eventually retreated to India. Sale was killed in the First Anglo-Sikh War of 1845–46. The book is by George Robert Gleig (1796–1888), a British soldier, author, and chaplain to the armed forces who wrote numerous books on military, imperial, and India-related subjects.


*At the Court of the Amīr: A Narrative* is an account by John Alfred Gray, a British doctor who served as surgeon to ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan (circa 1844–1901), ruler of Afghanistan, for a number of years in the late 1880s–early 1890s. Along with several British engineers, Gray had been recruited in England to provide advice and services to the amir. The book includes several chapters that relate specifically to health and the practice of medicine in Afghanistan at this time, including on Afghan hospitals, Afghan
surgeons and physicians, an outbreak of cholera, and the illnesses and health of the amir and various members of the royal household. Other chapters cover primarily non-medical topics, such as Gray’s journey from Peshawar to Kabul, the inhabitants of Afghanistan, Afghan dwellings, life in Kabul, the seasons, and bazaars in Kabul. Anderson recounts his meetings with the amir, who he describes as “a swarthy heavily built man,” who “seemed the personification of watchful strength,” and “who added to the courtesy of the Oriental something of the bluff heartiness of an Englishman.” He also describes his meetings with the sultana, wife of the amir, and conversations with her. A major role in the book is played by Gray’s interpreter, an Armenian Christian who had been educated at a missionary boarding school in India and had lived for many years in Kabul. A photograph of Gray and the interpreter, both in Oriental dress, is in the National Portrait Gallery in London.


*Correspondence Relating to Persia and Afghanistan* is a compilation of documents concerning British policy toward these two countries, published in London at the time of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). The volume includes, for example, dispatches sent to the British foreign secretary, Viscount Palmerston (1784–1865), by British diplomats in Saint Petersburg and Teheran; Palmerston’s replies; the texts of treaties concluded by the East India Company with the shah of Persia, the amirs of Sind, and other parties; correspondence between Dost Mohammad Khan (1793–1863), ruler of Afghanistan, and the governor-general of India; and reports concerning Afghanistan by Sir Alexander Burnes, political officer in India and Afghanistan, to Governor-General of India Lord Auckland. One section of the book documents the expedition of Shah Shuja (1785–1842), ruler of the Durrani Empire from 1803 to 1809, into Afghanistan in 1833–34 and his attempt to reclaim the throne in collaboration with Maharaja Ranjit Singh, ruler of the Punjab. Shah Shuja was defeated by Afghan forces at Kandahar under Dost Mohammad Khan. The First Anglo-Afghan War began four years later, when the British sent an Anglo-Indian army into Afghanistan in order to install Shah Shuja, who they perceived as more sympathetic to their interests than Dost Mohammad Khan, as ruler of the country. The documents provide a detailed look at the secret diplomacy that preceded the First Anglo-Afghan War.

**Green, Henry Rodes. The Retention of Candahar**, London, 1881, [www.wdl.org/17752](http://www.wdl.org/17752) [36 pages]

*The Retention of Candahar*, published in London in 1881, is typical of the many pamphlets produced in Great Britain as the British Parliament and public debated policy toward Afghanistan in the wake of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). The war began in November 1878 when the British sent an Anglo-Indian force into Afghanistan with the aim of replacing the Afghan amir, Sher Ali Khan, who was reputed to harbor pro-Russian sentiments, with a ruler more favorable to Britain. After a series of battles won by both British and Afghan forces, the war finally ended in September 1880 with a decisive British victory at the Battle of Kandahar. William Ewart Gladstone, who became prime minister for a third time in April 1880, took office firmly committed to a policy of complete withdrawal from Afghanistan. The policy was opposed by many active and retired officials in Britain and British India, who argued that British Indian troops should permanently occupy Kandahar as a check on possible Russian expansion.
toward India. This pamphlet, written by a retired major general who had served as political superintendent and commandant on the Sind frontier and in Baluchistan, argues for retention. The pamphlet presents the military, political, and financial case for a continued British military presence in Afghanistan and disputes “government arguments for abandonment.” The pamphlet greatly exaggerates the threat to Afghanistan posed by Russia, and concludes with a warning that “Afghanistan must eventually fall under the influence of Russia or England. We have now to decide which it will be.” This argument did not win out, and in the end the British and Indian governments made good on Gladstone’s commitment to complete withdrawal. The last British Indian troops left Afghanistan in the spring of 1881. The new Afghan ruler, ʿAbd-al-Rahman, conceded British supervision of his foreign relations in return for which Britain promised him a subsidy and help in resisting unprovoked aggression by an outside power, but Afghanistan was able to preserve its independence and avoid foreign occupation.

Griesinger, W. German Intrigues in Persia, New York, 1918, [44 pages]

In November 1914, after the Ottoman Empire entered World War I on the side of Germany and the Central Powers, Sultan-Caliph Mehmed V issued a call for a worldwide jihad against Britain and France. The Germans and their Turkish allies hoped to stir up Muslims against British rule in India and to draw Persia and Afghanistan, both of which had declared their neutrality, into the war on the side of the Central Powers. In furtherance of these objectives, Germany, with the active support of the Turks, sent a mission led by Captain Oskar von Niedermayer and diplomat Werner-Otto von Hentig from Berlin to Afghanistan (via Constantinople, Baghdad, and Isfahan) with the aim of convincing its ruler, Amir Habibullah Khan, to join the war on the German-Turkish side and to attack the British in India. The mission ultimately failed, as the cautious amir feared that if he entered the war he would be exposed to attack by Russia and the British Empire and would lose the benefits of trade with these two neighboring empires. *German Intrigues in Persia* is an English translation of a diary by a certain W. Greisinger, a German agent who is described in the anonymously written introduction as having split off from the main Niedermayer mission in Baghdad in order to carry out subversive activities against the British in southern Persia. The diary, which is said to have fallen into the hands of the British authorities, was translated and published in New York in 1918, no doubt as part of the widespread British propaganda effort to fan anti-German sentiment in the American public. It reveals Greisinger as an unscrupulous individual, in the words of the introduction, “a very interesting figure of a German intriguer, at once brutal and hysterical, stopping at no outrage… ready to intrigue with anyone….”
Hamilton, Angus. *Afghanistan*, Boston and Tokyo, 1910, [www.wdl.org/14407](http://www.wdl.org/14407) [374 pages]

Angus Hamilton was a British journalist who reported for a number of newspapers and journals between 1894 and 1912. Among the events he covered were the Boer War in South Africa, the Boxer uprising in China, and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5. Like most books of this period, *Afghanistan* approaches its subject through the prism of the rivalry between Great Britain and Russia for influence in Central Asia, the so-called “Great Game.” The first chapter is devoted to the Orenburg–Tashkent Railway (in present-day Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan) recently completed by the Russians. It is followed by chapters devoted to the khanates, provinces, and districts to the north of Afghanistan, notably Bukhara, Tashkent, Samarkand, and Merv, territories located in present-day Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Subsequent chapters cover Herat, Kandahar, Seistan (Sistan), and Kabul. Hamilton also devotes separate chapters to the provinces and ethnic groups in the country; administration, law, and revenue; trade and industry; and the army. The author highly praises Abd al-Rahman Khan, ruler of Afghanistan from 1880 to 1901, for his work in creating a modern army, but concludes: “It is to be regretted that the late Amir, while evolving out of a heterogeneous collection of warring tribes a settled and independent country, failed to bequeath to his son any portion of his own singular abilities.” His son and successor was Habibullah Khan (1872–1919, reigned 1901–19). Presented here is a second edition of the book, published in Boston and Tokyo as part of the “Oriental Series.” The first edition was published in London in 1906.

Harlan, Josiah. *A Memoir of India and Avghanistaun*, Philadelphia, 1842, [www.wdl.org/14408](http://www.wdl.org/14408) [244 pages]

Josiah Harlan (1799–1871) was an adventurer and soldier of fortune who possibly was the first American to travel to Afghanistan. Born in Pennsylvania into a large Quaker family, he went to Asia in 1823, where he found employment as a surgeon with the British East India Company. In 1827 he entered the service of Shah Shuja’, the former leader of Afghanistan who had been deposed in 1810. Harlan remained in Afghanistan for 14 years, where he engaged in various intrigues with rival Afghan leaders, several times changing allegiances. During the First Afghan War (1839–42) his activities infuriated the British authorities, who expelled him from the country. *A Memoir of India and Avghanistaun* is Harlan’s account of his adventures in South Asia, published in 1842, shortly after his return to the United States. The book and a series of interviews that Harlan gave to newspapers at the time stoked American interest in Afghanistan and the war then underway. The book begins with a discussion of the disastrous defeat of the Anglo-Indian force at the hands of Afghan tribesmen in January 1842. Six of the book’s seven chapters deal with British India, its foreign policy, and its relationship to Afghanistan. The seventh, and by far the longest,
chapter is a detailed description of Amir Dōst Moḥammad Khān (1793–1863), based in part on Harlan’s service to and interactions with the amir. The book has three appendices. The first and third are concerned with the British defeat of 1842; the second is an 18-page essay that attempts to explain contemporary historical events with reference to a prophecy in the Bible (Daniel xi, 45). The book has several maps and a portrait, in profile, of Dōst Moḥammad.


*Narrative of the War in Afghanistan, in 1838–39*, by Sir Henry Havelock (1795–1857), is a two-volume account of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42), based on Havelock’s personal experiences, when he was a captain in the 13th Regiment and aide-de-camp to Major-General Sir Willoughby Cotton, commander of the Bengal Division of the Army of the Indus. In December 1838 the British launched an invasion of Afghanistan from India with the aim of overthrowing the Afghan ruler, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, and replacing him with the supposedly pro-British former ruler, Shah Shuja’. The British were at first successful. They installed Shah Shuja’ as ruler in Jalalabad and forced Dost Mohammad to flee the country. In 1841 Dost Mohammad returned to Afghanistan to lead an uprising against the invaders and Shah Shuja’. After the occupying forces suffered major defeats, the British sent a larger force from India to exact retribution and to recover hostages, before finally withdrawing in October 1842. Published in 1840, Havelock’s book covers only the first two years of the war and not the insurgency that began in 1841. In the first volume, Havelock recounts the preparations for war, the British alliance with Sikh leader Ranjit Singh, and the march by the Army of the Indus to Kandahar and the occupation of the city. The second volume recounts the arrival of the Bombay Division in Kandahar, the joint march to Kabul and the fall of the city, and the skirmishes with the Afghan tribesmen around the Khyber Pass as the army moved out of Kabul toward the Indus. A sketch map shows the route taken by the Army of the Indus. The appendix at the end of volume two contains the texts of many military orders and other historical documents. Havelock went on to serve with distinction in the Sepoy Rebellion (1857–59), where he died of wounds sustained in the first year of that conflict.


*The Afghan War of 1879–80* is a detailed account of the final phase of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80), consisting of a reprinting in book form of letters originally written from the field and published in an Indian newspaper. The author, Howard Hensman, was a special correspondent of the Allallabad Pioneer. He was the only journalist to accompany the Anglo-Indian Kurram Valley Field Force that marched from Ali Kheył, Afghanistan, to Kabul in the fall of 1879 following the uprising of Afghan forces in Kabul in September of that year and the massacre of the British envoy, Sir Louis Cavagnari, and other British officials in the city. The first letter is dated September 28, 1879, the last September 20, 1880. Brief explanatory texts are used to introduce some of the letters and provide context. Each letter runs to several pages, and collectively they offer a vivid first-hand account of the war as seen from a British perspective. Hensman
describes, for example, the courageous charge by Afghan Ghazis at the Battle of Ahmed Khel (April 19, 1880) and the desperate, hand-to-hand fighting with British, Sikh, and Gurkha troops that ensued; the Battle of Maiwand (July 27, 1880), in which a force of 2,500 British and Indian troops was routed by a much larger Afghan force; and many other engagements. The book contains ten detailed foldout maps of the major military operations and battles of the war. A short appendix provides information about the heights above sea level of places in Afghanistan, distances by road between key points, and transportation in the Indian army.

**Holdsworth, T.W.E. Campaign of the Indus: In a Series of Letters from an Officer of the Bombay Division**, London, 1840, [www.wdl.org/14410](http://www.wdl.org/14410) [236 pages]

*Campaign of the Indus: In a Series of Letters from an Officer of the Bombay Division* is a privately published collection of letters, written by Lieutenant T.W. Holdsworth between November 27, 1838, and April 21, 1840. Holdsworth’s division was part of the Anglo-Indian force that invaded Afghanistan during the First Anglo-Afghan War of 1839–42. Most of the letters are addressed to Holdsworth’s father, A.H. Holdsworth, who wrote the introduction and edited and published the book. The introduction sketches some of the history of Afghanistan, from the campaigns of Alexander the Great to the recent involvement of the British in the country, and their attempt, temporarily successful, to install the pro-British Shāh Shujā‘ as ruler. The letters recount the journey by sea of Lieutenant Holdsworth and his unit to the mouth of the Indus River, the march to Afghanistan, and encampments at Kandahar and other locations. Holdsworth was severely wounded in the capture of the fort and citadel of Kelat on November 13, 1839, which he recounts in his letter to his father of December 8. The letters contain descriptions of the Afghan countryside; reports and speculations on Dōst Moḥammad, the leader of the resistance to the invaders; and details about the workings of the Anglo-Indian army that included British officers, Indian troops, and Indian sirdars (noblemen) engaged on the British side. The appendix reproduces official dispatches relating to the campaign, the numbers of men killed and wounded from the different units, and the names of British officers and Baluchi sirdars killed and wounded.

**Hughes, Thomas Patrick. *Kalīd-i Afghānī*, Lahore, 1893, [www.wdl.org/16948](http://www.wdl.org/16948) [440 pages]**

*Kalīd-i Afghānī* (Afghan key) is a Pushto textbook that was originally published in 1872 in Lahore. It was produced for the use of British Indian military personnel and missionaries stationed in the Northwest Frontier Province of British India and living among the Pushtuns. Its purpose was to acquaint English speakers with colloquial and standard forms of Pushto as well as with Pushtun history. The compiler was Thomas Patrick Hughes, priest at the Peshawar Mission in 1865–84. The textbook is dedicated to the lieutenant governor of Punjab, Sir Robert Henry Davies (1824–1902). Presented here is the second edition of the work dating from 1893. The contents are a compilation of eight works of prose and verse from Pushto literature, language, and history. *Ganj-i Puṣhto* (Treasury of Pushto) written by Mawlawi Ahmad of Tangi, an Afghan poet, discusses 49 literary tales in pure colloquial Pushto that is lacking Persian and Arabic words (pages 5–130). *Tārīkh da Šūṭān Ṭaḥṣīb Ghaznavī* by Mawlawi Ahmad (a translation of the Persian *Tārīkh-i Firishtah*) deals with the life and career of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni (971–1030; pages 131–204). *Ṭārīkh-i Murāscha‘* (Gem-studded history) by Afzal Khan (died 1748), a local writer, is a miscellaneous local history that starts with...
a discussion of the creation of the world through biblical and Qur’anic lenses and proceeds to the migration and ancestral origin of some of the Pashtun tribes, such as the Khattaks, Ghurids, and others living between Afghanistan and the Peshawar Valley (pages 205–40). *Shahzādah Bahrām wa Gulandām* (Story of Prince Bahram and Gul Andam) by Fayyaz is a mystical love story that was originally Persian (pages 241–96). *Da Dīwān dʿAbd al-Rahman* (Collection of poetry by ʿAbd al-Rahman) is a selection of poems by the famous Pashto mystic-poet, Rahman Baba (1651–1709; pages 297–328). *Da Dīwān da Khīshkhāl Khān Khatak* is also a selection of poems of the Pashtun poet-warrior, Khushal Khan Khatak (also called Khwushhal, 1613–89; pages 329–60). *Chaman-i Bīnāzīr* (Unique garden) is a selection of poetic sonnets from 35 Pashtun poets, most of whose works are no longer extant (pages 361–402). *Inshaʿ da Puṣhto* (Writing in Pashto) is a compilation of 19 Pashto letters that supplements the textbook.


*Ruhainah, the Maid of Herat: A Story of Afghan Life* is an historical novel, closely based on events in Afghanistan during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). The heroine of the book, Ruhainah, is a former slave girl from Kashmir in the harem of a powerful Afghan chieftain who after the chieftain’s death marries Bertrand Bernard, a fictional British officer modeled on a real person. The author, Thomas Patrick Hughes (1838–1911), was an Anglican deacon, originally from Shropshire, England, who spent nearly 20 years at the Church Missionary Society (CMS) mission at Peshawar (in present-day Pakistan), Northwest Frontier Province, British India. Hughes mastered Persian, Pashto, Arabic, and Urdu and became deeply interested in the language and culture of the villagers in the region of Peshawar. His accomplishments included building an Anglican church in Peshawar, establishing a library, and gathering a collection of Pashto manuscripts that he bequeathed to the British Museum. Hughes departed India for England in March 1884 and, unable to find a suitable position in the Church of England, immigrated with his wife and family to the United States in May of the following year. He published *Ruhainah, the Maid of Herat* during his first year in the United States, originally under the pen name Evan Stanton. Although it was hardly an accomplished work of literature, the book was popular and went through several editions. Presented here is an edition of 1896, published under Hughes’s own name. Hughes also produced a major scholarly work, *The Dictionary of Islam: Being a Cyclopedia of the Doctrines, Rites, Ceremonies and Customs, Together with the Technical and Theological Terms of the Muslim Religion*, which was first published in 1885 and appeared in numerous later editions in many countries around the world.


Written in India by an unknown author in the final decades of the 19th century, *Ghāyat al-shuʿūr bi-ḥujaj al-ḥajj al-mabrūr* (The utmost knowledge of the arguments for the blessed Hajj) describes the various observances associated with the Hajj pilgrimage. The introduction and the text are written in Arabic, but the main text is in Persian, as are two appended texts (by a different author), a *taqriz* (encomium) praising *Ghāyat al-shuʿūr*, and a shorter versified text directed against critics of the work. The main text is dedicated by the author to a nobleman by the name of Rahim al-Din. The afterword states that the work is a second edition, printed in 1290 AH (1873) by the famed Newal Kishore Press in
Lucknow, the first edition having been printed in Calcutta in 1283 AH (1866–67). Inserted prior to the discussion of the publication date is a chronogram that stands for 1290 AH, i.e., the date of the second edition of the work. The chronogram is credited to a Sayyid Munawwar Husayn, an employee of the court of Awadh (also called Oudh). The nawabs of Awadh were a Persian Shi’a dynasty that had migrated to India from Nishapur (in present-day Iran) and that actively promulgated Persian letters and Shi’a beliefs. The Nawabate of Awadh was stripped of power, however, by the British in the aftermath of the Uprising of 1857 (also known as the Sepoy Rebellion), roughly a decade before Gḥāyat al-shu‘ūr was first published. The mention of the court of Awadh is therefore somewhat anachronistic—a reference to what was by then at best a ceremonial office.


Ivan Lavrovich Iavorskii (1853–circa 1920) was a Russian physician who in 1878–79 accompanied an imperial Russian embassy to Afghanistan, the goal of which was to establish a Russian ambassador in the court of Afghan ruler Sher Ali Khan (1825–79, reigned 1863–66 and 1868–79) with the aim of extending Russian control over the foreign policy of Afghanistan. The success of the mission was the spark that kindled the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–80. Led by General Nikolai Stoletov (1834–1912), the mission left Tashkent on June 13, 1878. Iavorskii joined it later, in Samarkand. Sher Ali wanted to remain neutral in the rivalry between the Russia and Great Britain for influence in Central Asia and at first tried to prevent the mission from proceeding to Kabul. The Russians used ‘Abd al-Rahman, Sher Ali’s nephew and rival who was at that time living in exile in Russian-controlled Samarkand, to exert pressure on Sher Ali. After being forced to wait in Mazar-i-Sharif for several weeks, Stoletov eventually was allowed to proceed and arrived in the Afghan capital on July 9. Sher Ali’s admission of the Russian embassy to Kabul, however reluctant, was seen by Lord Lytton, the British viceroy in India, as a slight that could not be allowed to stand. When Sher Ali refused to admit a similar British mission, Lytton ordered the invasion that began the Second Anglo-Afghan War. The British marched a force to Kabul, deposed Sher Ali, and installed ‘Abd al-Rahman on the throne. This book is Iavorskii’s account of the mission, written in Russian and translated into German by Eduard Iulʹevich Petri, a professor at the University of Bern.

India. Quarter Master General’s Department. Intelligence Branch.  A Dictionary of the Pathan Tribes on the North-West Frontier of India, Calcutta, 1899, www.wdl.org/17690  [252 pages]

Pathan is a British term for Pashtun (also seen as Pushtun and Pukhtun), the people who inhabited the region along the border between British India and Afghanistan. Today they constitute the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan and the second largest in Pakistan. During much of the 19th and early 20th centuries, British India sought to control the Pathan areas in order to secure India’s northwestern border with Afghanistan.  A Dictionary of the Pathan Tribes on the North-West Frontier of India was compiled by James Wolfe Murray (1853–1919), a British officer who was at the time an assistant quartermaster general in the intelligence branch in India. The book was published in Calcutta in 1899. The dictionary provides a detailed index of
the Pathan tribes and their subdivisions. It does not include details on Pathan history or genealogy. The dictionary uses a hierarchical classification that starts with the tribe on top, followed by the clan, the division of the clan, the subdivision of the division, the section of the subdivision, and other minor fractions of the section. The entries are alphabetically ordered, from the lesser entity to the greater. The locality of the tribe, clan, or division is given in brackets. Some entries are also followed by figures in parentheses, indicating the number of fighting men in that division or fraction. The dictionary concludes with a note explaining the various spiritual titles and denominations used by the Pathans, and a color map showing the tribal boundaries.


Sir Keith Alexander Jackson was a captain in the Fourth Light Dragoons in the British army, part of the Anglo-Indian force that set out for Afghanistan from British India in December 1838, thereby precipitating the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). The British objective was to drive the Afghan amir, Dost Mohammed Khan, from the throne and replace him with Shah Shuja’, who was seen as more friendly to Britain and less subject to Russian influence than the amir. The Army of the Indus, as the force was called, reached Quetta in late March 1839 and proceeded through the Bolan Pass (in present-day Pakistan) and on into Afghanistan. The British captured Kandahar on April 25, 1839, and the great fortress of Ghazni on July 23 of that year. *Views in Affghaunistaun* is a collection of 25 hand-colored lithographic plates, based on sketches made by Jackson in the course of the campaign. Each of the illustrations is accompanied by a text, written by Jackson, identifying the subject and providing historical and topographical information. The book includes views of numerous cities and towns in Afghanistan and in present-day Pakistan, including Quetta, Kabul, and Kandahar. Also shown are the Bolan Pass; forts and fortresses; landscapes; ruins; and local people as well as British officers. The frontispiece is a hand-colored portrait of an Afghan man, identified as a facsimile of a colored drawing found in one of the rooms in the fortress of Ghazni after the storming of the citadel. A map shows the route of the Army of the Indus from its starting point at Thatta (present-day Pakistan), up the Indus River, and ultimately to Kandahar and Kabul. The book is dedicated “To The Chairman and Directors of the Honble, the East India Company” by Joseph Fowell Walton, who may have been one of the lithographers. Jackson died in Kabul in 1843.

The First Anglo-Afghan War began in early 1839 when the British undertook an invasion of Afghanistan from India with the aim of overthrowing the Afghan ruler, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, and replacing him with the supposedly pro-British former ruler, Shah Shuja'. The British were at first successful. They installed Shah Shuja' as ruler in Jalalabad and forced Dost Mohammad to flee the country. But in 1841 Dost Mohammad returned to Afghanistan to lead an uprising against the invaders and Shah Shuja'. In one of the most disastrous defeats in British military history, in January 1842 an Anglo-Indian force of 4,500 men and thousands of followers was routed by Afghan tribesmen. The British then sent a larger force from India to exact retribution and to recover hostages, before finally withdrawing in October 1842.

*History of the War in Afghanistan* is a two-volume study of the war, based on unpublished letters and journals by British political and military officers who served in the conflict. The author, Sir John William Kaye (1814–76), was a one-time officer in the army of the East India Company who resigned in 1841 to devote himself full time to the writing of military history. The book begins with a detailed analysis of the events of 1800–1837 that led up to the war and of the “Great Game of Central Asia”—the rivalry between Russia and Britain for influence in the region that spurred British intervention in Afghanistan. This is followed by detailed accounts of the major battles and military campaigns. Kaye joins other authors in concluding that the war was a disaster for Britain: “No failure so total and overwhelming as this is recorded in the page of history. No lesson so grand and impressive is to be found in all the annals of the world.” Kaye also wrote a novel based on the war, *Long Engagements: a Tale of the Afghan Rebellion* (1846), and several other major historical works, including *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir John Malcolm* (1856), and the three-volume *The History of the Sepoy War in India, 1857–8*, published in 1864–76.


In 1851, Sir John William Kaye (1814–76) published a two-volume *History of the War in Afghanistan*. Presented here is the “revised and corrected” edition of the same work, published in three volumes in 1857–58. As explained by the author in the preface, the second edition largely follows the first, but it contains corrections and better organization based on additional research and on information provided by readers of the first edition. Kaye also notes that the presentation of the same material in three rather than two volumes is in his view a major improvement: “I doubt whether there is a series of events in all history, which falls more naturally [than the First Anglo-Afghan War] into three distinct groups, giving the epic completeness of a beginning, a middle, and an end to the entire Work.” Kaye was a one-time officer in the army of the East India Company who resigned in 1841 to devote himself full time to the writing of military history. His other works include a novel based on the war, *Long Engagements: a Tale of the Afghan Rebellion* (1846), and several other major historical works, including *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir John Malcolm* (1856), and his magnum opus, the three-volume *The History of the Sepoy War in India, 1857–8* (1864–76).

Sir John Malcolm (1769–1833) was a British soldier, colonial administrator, diplomat, linguist, and historian. He was born in Scotland, left school at age 12, and, through an uncle, secured a position in the East India Company. While stationed in various parts of India as an officer in the company’s military forces, he became interested in foreign languages, which he studied diligently. He became fluent in Persian and, over the years, served as an interpreter and British envoy to Persia in various capacities. Malcolm wrote a number of books while living in Persia and during several extended stays in England, including *Sketch of the Political History of India* (1811), *Observations on the Disturbances in the Madras Army in 1809* (1812), *Sketch of the Sikhs* (1812), and his most famous work, *The History of Persia: From the Most Early Period to the Present Time*, published in 1815. His last official post was as governor of Bombay in 1827–30. He returned to England in 1831, and completed two other works, *Government of India* (1833), and *Life of Clive* (posthumously published in 1836). *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir John Malcolm* is a two-volume biography, written by Sir John William Kaye (1814–76), a onetime officer in the army of the East India Company who resigned in 1841 to devote himself full time to the writing of military history. Kaye’s other works include the two-volume *History of the War in Afghanistan* (1851) and the three-volume *The History of the Sepoy War in India, 1857–8* (1864–76).


This book is based on a four-month journey undertaken in the first part of 1910 by Emily Georgiana Kemp (1860–1939) and a friend via the Trans-Siberian Railroad to Harbin, China, across Manchuria, and through Korea, and from there to Russian Turkestan via the Trans-Siberian Railroad, ending with a trip through the Caucasus. It includes lively descriptions of Mukden, Pyongyang, Seoul, Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara and other places, with colored illustrations by the author. Written a few years after the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5 and in the same year as the Japanese annexation of Korea, the book warns of future Japanese aggression in Manchuria. Kemp was a member of a wealthy English Baptist family. She was one of the first students at Somerville College (one of the first women’s colleges at the University of Oxford) and later studied at the Slade School of Fine Art in London. She traveled widely and wrote seven books, mostly about China. A perceptive observer of the places she visited, she was especially interested in the activities of Christian missionaries, the status and well-being of women, and religion. In this book, she discusses in considerable detail the
role of Islam in Central Asia. She writes that Bukhara “has always been the centre of religious influence since Islam first conquered it about A.D. 709 (Arabian invasion), and to-day it boasts a rigid adherence to the letter of the Koran, surpassing that of any other place,” but she deplores the condition of women in the khanate. The book is illustrated with Kemp’s own watercolors and pen-and-ink sketches, and it concludes with a colored fold-out map tracing the route of the journey.


*A Journey in Khorassan and Central Asia* is a short, privately printed account by the author, Robert J. Kennedy, of a journey that he and his wife, Bertha Kennedy, took through northeastern Persia (present-day Iran) and parts of Russian Central Asia in March–April 1890. At the time Kennedy was the chargé d’affaires at the British legation in Tehran. The journey is described in three parts: from Tehran to Meshed (also known as Mashhad, the largest city in Khorasan Province); from Meshed to Dushak (in present-day Turkmenistan) and from there, on the Trans-Caspian Railway, through Merv, Samarkand, Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan), and Ashgabat (Turkmenistan) to the Caspian Sea port of Uzun-Ada; and from Uzun-Ada across the Caspian Sea by steamer to the Persian port of Meshed-i-Sar (present-day Babol Sar) and back to Tehran via Mazanderan Province. The background to the book is the opening of a Russian consulate in the previously closed city of Meshed in 1889, after which the British successfully demanded from the government in Tehran the right to similar representation. The book is permeated by concerns about Russian expansionism, and the duty of the British consul-general in Meshed, Major-General C.S. MacLean, is described as “to watch and report upon the Russian advance from the Caspian on one side, and Turkestan on the other, which, begun a quarter of a century ago, and increasing in velocity year by year, threatens to crush, or, rather, to absorb the kingdoms of Persia and Afghanistan, as it already has absorbed the khanates of Central Asia.” The book contains interesting portraits of the places visited, including the Shiite holy city of Meshed.
Kitāb Khairullughāt yaʿnī Pushto Urdū Lughāt (Pushto–Urdu Dictionary of Khairullah) was published in a lithographic version in Lahore in 1906. The author, Qazi Khairullah, took six years to produce the work. Khairullah, who is pictured in a simple drawing at the beginning of the book, was a church missionary and teacher of Pushto. The book has a preface in Urdu (pages 1–3), in which the author discusses the importance of having a Pushto–Urdu dictionary and its use as a supplementary book for schools that were being established in the borderland regions of the Northwest Frontier Province of British India. This is followed by a brief essay (pages 3–6) in Urdu, “Tārīkh-i Zabān-i Pushto” (History of the Pushto language), in which the author identifies Pushto as an Indo-European language (like Persian, Latin, and Sanskrit). He states that there is no textual evidence predating the arrival of Islam to support that Pushto had an ancient alphabet. The bulk of the work (pages 7–192) is the Pushto–Urdu vocabulary. The dictionary does not include the many words in Pushto that start with the letter ya, the last letter of Pushto alphabet. The volume presented here is the first Pushto–Urdu dictionary ever compiled. It was produced at a period in the history in the Northwest Frontier Province when Pushto- and Urdu-speaking peoples were interacting with each other in increasing numbers through contacts with the British Indian Army and at schools in the region.

Risālah-i Puṣhto It̤āʻat-i ūlā al-amr (On the obedience of the ruler in Pushto) is a tract meant to encourage obedience to the ruler of Afghanistan. The expression ūlā al-amr refers to one who is foremost in authority, and the title of the book references a Qur’anic verse (5:59), “Oh Believers! Obey the Lord and the Prophet and those who are foremost in authority amongst you,” which is quoted at the beginning of the work. Numerous quotes from the hadith literature (primarily from the collection of al-Bukhari) follow. The Arabic text of each hadith is followed by an explanation in Pushto, several of which equate disobedience with jahāla (ignorance, i.e., of religious precepts) and contrast it with shahāda (bearing testimony or witness to Islam). The aim of the work is thus plainly the garnering of legitimacy and authority for the then-ruling Afghan amir, Habibullah Khan (reigned 1901–19). The Persian original of this work was composed by Maulawi ‘Abd al-Rabb Khan (1878 or 1879–1919), who, ironically, appears to have been jailed for his involvement in the constitutional movement in the early 1900s against the authoritarianism of Habibullah Khan. By the time he composed the It̤āʻat-i ūlā al-amr, ‘Abd al-Rabb Khan was serving Habibullah Khan in the role of mullā-i darbār (court theologian). Both ‘Abd al-Rabb Khan and the translator, Salih Muhammad, were teachers at the Habibiya School founded by Habibullah Khan. The Pushto translation of It̤āʻat-i ūlā al-amr was printed by the Dar al-Saltanah press in Kabul. The cover states that it is the first Pushto work printed in Afghanistan, and that it was meant to be distributed free of charge.
Khān, Khwushḥāl. *Afghan Poetry of the Seventeenth Century*, London, 1890, [228 pages]

Khushal Khan Khatak (1613–89) was a celebrated warrior-poet, often called the national poet of Afghanistan. He was born near Peshawar, the son of Shahbaz Khatak, chief of the Khatak tribe. By appointment of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, in 1641 he succeeded his father as chief of the Khatak tribe, but later was imprisoned by Shah Jahan’s powerful and harsh successor, Emperor Aurangzeb (reigned 1658–1707). Khatak eventually was permitted to return to Peshawar, where he incited the Pushtuns to unite and to revolt against Mughal rule. *Afghan Poetry of the Seventeenth Century* is a selection of Khatak’s poems, edited and compiled by C.E. Biddulph of Trinity College, Cambridge. The book contains an introduction to the history of Afghanistan and the poet Khatak, a grammatical introduction that explains the fundamentals of the Pushto language, English translations of a selection of Khatak’s poems, and the original Pushto texts written in the Persian script. The translations are either by Biddulph or reproduced from H.G. Raverty’s *Selections from the Poetry of the Afghans from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (1862). In the introduction, Biddulph writes that Khatak’s poems “are characteristic of the national character and the circumstances of his life; they contain the most extraordinary mixture of warlike, not to say bloodthirsty sentiments, and those of a philosophical, religious, or sentimental nature. In the same poems almost one may find the simple and most charming expressions of his appreciation of the beauties of nature and the benefits of the Creator, the most sanguinary rejoicings over the discomfiture of his foes, even when these are of his own countrymen, and reflections of a moralizing description which show the amount of thought he had bestowed on such subjects.”

Khān, Qamar al-Dīn. *Qiṣṣah-i Shams Ābād*, India, 1852, [34 pages]

This work is the first installment of *Qiṣṣah-i Shams Ābād* (Story of Shams Abad) by Qamar al-Din Akbar Abadi. The author was the editor of *As‘ad al-akhbār* (The most propitious news), an early Urdu periodical published at a printing house of the same name in Agra, India, in circa 1840. (The appellation Akbar Abadi refers to Akbar Abad, the name of Agra during the Mughal Empire.) Qamar al-Din was a scholar of hadith and Islamic history and had mastery of Persian as well as Arabic. He wrote several books, including *Tārīkh-i ḥukamā*’ (The history of learned men), *Lama‘āt-i Qamar* (Glimmers from the Moon, the title of which references the name of the author), *Inshā’-i khirād afrūz* (The wisdom illumining composition), and *Muntakhabāt-i Būstān* (Selections from the Būstān), which is a partial translation into Urdu of this well-known work of Persian literature. *Qiṣṣah-i Shams Ābād* does not appear to address overtly political themes and focuses instead on a group of landowners in the town of Shamsabad, located to the southeast of Agra. However, the timing of its publication in the years leading to the first Indian Rebellion of 1857 and references on the cover to the lieutenant governor of the Northwest Provinces as well as to the “visitor general” (i.e., the colonial inspector) lend the work a certain historical interest. The first installment of *Qiṣṣah-i Shams Ābād* was printed at the As‘ad al-akhbar printing press in an edition of 3,000 copies.

Alexis Sidney Krausse (1859–1904) was a British journalist and author who wrote for many British periodicals and produced books about a wide range of subjects, including poverty in the city of London, China and the Far East, and the Russian Empire. *Russia in Asia: A Record and a Study, 1558–1899* is a history of Russia’s expansion in Asia, beginning in 1558, the year Grigorii Stroganov received a charter from Ivan the Terrible to colonize lands on the Kama River on the western edge of the Ural Mountains. The book covers the absorption of Siberia, Russia’s conquest of the khanates of Khiva and Bukhara, its late-19th century expansion into Turkestan, its annexation of lands previously belonging to Persia and China, railroad construction, and Russian policy toward Afghanistan. In the preface, Krausse writes that his book “does not profess to be more than a history, complete yet concise, of Asiatic Russia. In criticising the rival policies of Russia and England, my endeavour has been to present the clear and impartial deduction that a careful study of these policies yields.” In fact the book is heavily biased against Russia, which is portrayed as inexorably expansionist and the “natural enemy” of Great Britain. *Russia in Asia* appeared in several editions, in Britain and the United States. Presented here is the first edition, published in London in 1899. It contains 12 maps and three appendices: a chronology of “Landmarks in the History of Asiatic Russia”; a compendium of the most important treaties and conventions between Russia and China, Persia, Afghanistan, and other polities on the southern rim of the Russian Empire; and a bibliography of authorities on Asiatic Russia and neighboring countries.


Father Tadeusz Judas Krusiński (also seen as Tadeusz Jan Krusiński, 1675–1756) was a Polish Jesuit priest who spent nearly 20 years in Persia (Iran) at the court in the Safavid capital of Isfahan. In 1722 he was an eyewitness to the siege and conquest of Isfahan by an invading Afghan force. Krusiński wrote an account in Latin of the war and its immediate aftermath, which included the extirpation of the Persian royal family by the Afghan commander, Mahmud Ghilji. Krusiński left Persia in 1725. Passing through Constantinople (present-day Istanbul) on his way back to Europe, he gave a Turkish translation of his narrative that he himself reportedly had made to Ibrahim Padshah, vizier of Sultan Ahmed III. In 1729 the vizier had the work published at the newly established Ottoman press. John Christian Clodius, professor of Arabic at the University of Leipzig, re-translated this work from Turkish into Latin and had it published in Germany in 1731. The book presented here is a translation into English of Clodius’s Latin
translation. The English translator was George Newnham Mitford, about whom little is known. Another version of the narrative, a translation into French of Krusiński’s original Latin text, was made by another Jesuit, Father Du Cerceau, and published in The Hague in 1725. Mitford’s objective in translating Clodius’s translation was to point up major differences between passages in this text and those describing the same events in Du Cerceau’s version. In his introduction Mitford contends that Du Cerceau introduced major inaccuracies, and that these later were repeated by early British writers on Persia such as the merchant Jonas Hanway. Mitford’s translation appeared in London in 1840, a time of heightened public interest in Afghanistan as a consequence of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42).


Henry Lansdell (1841–1919) was a Church of England clergyman who in 1879 and 1882 undertook two long and arduous journeys through what was then called Asiatic Russia, one to Siberia, and another to Russian Central Asia. His purpose was to distribute religious tracts and Bibles in the places he visited, especially in prisons, and to gather information of interest both to specialists and the general public. *Russian Central Asia* recounts Lansdell’s second journey, which took place over a 179-day period between June and December of 1882. By his own account, he covered a total of 12,145 miles (19,545 kilometers), traveling by rail, water, mounted on horse or camel, or on wheeled conveyances, and visiting Semipalatinsk (in present-day Kazakhstan); Kuldja (China); Tashkent, Khokand, Samarqand, Qarshi, Bukhara, and Khiva (in present-day Uzbekistan), Merv (in present-day Turkmenistan), and other locations. Landsell supplemented his own observations with detailed research and consultation with experts. Another of Landsell’s interests was the Bible, and the book contains numerous references to the ways in which, in his view, customs and traditions seen in Central Asia reflected those described in the Bible, the Old Testament in particular. His two-volume account was praised by critics for its detailed descriptions and analyses of places not well known at that time in the English-speaking world, but he was widely criticized for offering a rose-colored view of the prisons of Russian Central Asia and for excusing Russia’s expansionist foreign policy and, in particular, its recent annexation of Merv. The book contains a foldout map and illustrations. The end of volume two consists of three long appendices: listings of the fauna and flora of Russian Central Asia and a bibliography of 702 authoritative works, in English, French, German, and Russian, on the region.


George Saint Patrick Lawrence (1804–84) was a British Indian army officer who served in the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42), the Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848–49), and the Indian Mutiny (also known as the Sepoy Rebellion) of 1857–58. During the initial phase of the First Anglo-Afghan War, Lawrence was political assistant and later military secretary to Sir William Macnaghten, the British envoy to Afghanistan. When the Afghan amir Dost Mohammed Khan surrendered to Macnaghten in November 1840, Lawrence was put in charge of the Afghan ruler until the latter was exiled to India. Lawrence was also one of three officers who accompanied Macnaghten to his ill-fated meeting with Afghan general
Akbar Khan. Following the killing of Macnaghten in December 1841, Lawrence was taken as a hostage, and remained in captivity for eight and a half months. Ill health obliged him to return to England in 1843, but he was back in India three years later. He was appointed assistant political agent in the Punjab, in charge of the important Peshawar district. During the Second Anglo-Sikh War, Lawrence’s troops, consisting mainly of Sikh soldiers, changed sides and Lawrence ended up a prisoner of the Sikh general Chattar Singh. Lawrence remained in captivity for five and a half months. *Reminiscences of Forty-three Years in India* is Lawrence’s account of these events, compiled from his letters and diaries by William Edwards, who was a judge in the Bengal Civil Service. The book consists of 21 chapters, of which the first 16 are focused on the events of the First Anglo-Afghan War. Chapters 17–19 recount the events of the Second Anglo-Sikh War. The remaining two chapters are dedicated to the Sepoy Rebellion and end with the retaking, in March 1858, of the city of Kotah (present-day Kota, India) from the insurgents. The book was published in London in 1874.

**Le Messurier, Augustus. *Kandahar in 1879; Being the Diary of Major Le Messurier*, London, 1880, [www.wdl.org/15413](http://www.wdl.org/15413) [336 pages]**

*Kandahar in 1879* is the diary of Brigade Major Augustus Le Messurier (1837–1916), a British Indian railroad engineer who first joined the Bombay Engineers in 1856 and rose to become chief engineer and secretary to the government of Punjab in 1889. In November 1878, very shortly before the beginning of the Second Anglo-Afghan War, Le Messurier was assigned to the Quetta Field Force, which at the time was assembled at Mooltan (present-day Multan, Pakistan). Under the command of Lieutenant General Donald Stewart, the force was one of three columns that simultaneously invaded Afghanistan during the first phase of the war. Tasked with clearing the Bolan Pass and the valleys up to Kandahar, the Quetta Field Force did not see as much action as the other two columns, but it faced severe supply shortages and encountered difficult terrain and weather conditions before it could reach and occupy the city. The diary, presented here in book format but with no introduction or conclusion, recounts the events surrounding the march to Kandahar and the time Le Messurier spent serving in Afghanistan before his return to India in October 1879. The entries are divided into 14 chapters. The first three chapters describe the advance to Kandahar and the difficulties the force encountered. Chapters 4–12 cover military life in the British cantonment in Kandahar as well as offer descriptions of the city’s fortifications, natural features, neighborhoods, trades, antiquities, and amusements. The two remaining chapters describe the initial preparations made by the British troops to withdraw to India after the end of the first phase of the war, as well as the recall of the troops following the Afghan uprising in Kabul and the killing of the British envoy to Kabul, Sir Louis Cavagnari, events that triggered the second phase of the war. Le Messurier did not remain in Afghanistan but was sent back to India, where he served as engineer in chief and manager of the Mysore State Railway. The diary was published in London in 1880.


*Grammar and Vocabulary of Waziri Pashto* is a textbook intended for British officers with knowledge of the Pushto (as the language is spelled in the present day) of Peshawar and seeking to learn the Pushto spoken in the Bannu District and in Waziristan (in present-day Pakistan). The author, a political officer in
the British Indian army, notes the significant difference in the way the language is spoken in the two locales, which, he ventures, “is hardly less than that which separates broad Scots from cockney English, and like it extends to grammar and idiom as well as vocabulary.” Following a summary overview of Waziri grammar, the bulk of the book is taken up by a vocabulary, in which transliterated Waziri words are listed in alphabetical order with their English equivalents given. The book is intended strictly for learning to speak and to comprehend speech, as the Pushto alphabet is not used and no attention is paid to the written language. Two appendices give examples of an English text translated into Waziri Pushdo and a Waziri Pushdo text rendered into English. A third appendix, entitled “Some Leading Waziri Characteristics,” discusses what the author regards as the qualities of the people of Waziristan, which he sees as having been formed by the rugged and impassable nature of the territory in which they live. Among the topics discussed in this essay are Islamic religious practice and the role of women in Waziri society. Waziri Pushdo is today spoken in Waziristan and Bannu, Pakistan, and adjacent parts of Afghanistan. The book was published in Bombay (present-day Mumbai), India, by the government of India.


*Lumsden of the Guides* is a biography of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Burnett Lumsden (1821–96), co-authored by his younger brother, General Sir Peter Stark Lumsden (1829–1918) and George R. Elsmie (1838–1909), a judge and writer in British India. Harry Lumsden was a soldier in the army of the British East India Company who was part of the Anglo-Indian force that occupied Kabul during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). He subsequently held posts on the North-West Frontier of India and in 1857–58 undertook a mission to Kandahar to ascertain whether the Afghan ruler Dost Mohammad Khan was adhering to the terms of a treaty that required the Afghans, in exchange for British subsidies, to maintain their defenses against Persia in the region of Herat. The “guides” of the title refers to the corps of guides, locally recruited soldiers that the British used to defend the frontiers of India from attacks and uprisings by warlike tribes hostile to British rule. Lumsden recruited and commanded this force at different times in his career, beginning in 1846. The book covers Lumsden’s background and education and his military career and diplomatic missions. Three appendices consist of unpublished writings by Harry Lumsden, including sections from a notebook entitled “Frontier Thoughts and Frontier Requirements” concerning all aspects of the recruitment and command of the guides; an essay entitled “A Few Notes on Afghan Field-Sports” dealing with hawking, hunting, and related subjects; and a few pages of recollections of the march from Peshawar to Jalalabad in 1842. The book is illustrated with drawings and photographs and contains a fold-out map of the Afghan frontier with an inset of the route from Kandahar to Herat. Peter Stark Lumsden was also a distinguished soldier in the Indian army. He accompanied his brother on the Kandahar mission of 1857–58 and in the 1880s headed the Anglo-Indian side of the Joint Boundary Commission formed with Russia to define the northern border of Afghanistan.

*Afghanistan: The Buffer State. Great Britain and Russia in Central Asia* is an overview of Anglo-Russian rivalry and the perceived Russian threat to British India, written by a former officer and Russian-language interpreter in the Indian Army. It is intended as a succinct introduction to a complex subject and provides insight into a certain type of British imperial thinking that prevailed right up until World War I. Chapter one discusses the importance of India to the British Empire. British objectives, the book argues, must be to safeguard “all lines of communication connecting India with the Mother Country” and to safeguard India itself. To achieve these objectives, Great Britain “must so direct her policy that Persia, Afghanistan, and Western China, shall remain independent and undivided, and, if possible, more prone to British influence than that of any other power.” Also essential were keeping the Bosporus and Dardanelles “always closed to Russia” and preventing Russia from ever obtaining a port in the Persian Gulf. Chapter two is an overview of past invasions of India, from the time of the ancient Assyrians and Persians to that of Nadir Shah in the 18th century. Chapters three and four deal with the Russian presence and policies in Central Asia. Chapter five covers the “theater of operations” in which an Anglo-Russian conflict might be fought. Chapter six deals with the role of states or principalities that would influence the course of any such conflict, most importantly, Afghanistan but also Baluchistan, Tibet, Kashmir, and China. The concluding chapter discusses the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907, which reaffirmed the predominant influence of Great Britain in Afghanistan. Published both in London and Madras (present-day Chennai, India), the book contains two detailed fold-out maps illustrating the Russian “advance” into Central Asia. The book has little to say about Germany, with which, ironically, Britain would be at war (in alliance with Russia) within a few years.


*The Dynasty of the Kajars* is an English translation of an original manuscript, *Maʿāsir-i sulṭānīyah*, published in London in 1833 in an edition of 250 copies. The translator, Sir Harford Jones Brydges (1764–1847), was a British diplomat in the service of the East India Company who served as the company’s envoy-extraordinary and minister-plenipotentiary to the court of Persia from 1807 to 1811, and who received the manuscript from the shah of Persia, Fath ‘Ali Shah (reigned 1797–1834). The author of the original work, ‘Abd-al-Razzaq Beg Donbolī (1762 or 1763‒1827 or 1828), was a poet, historian, and biographer who lived and worked in Isfahan, Shiraz, and Tabriz. The history is mainly an account of the early part of Fath ‘Ali’s reign. In addition to the translation, Brydges provided preliminary matter running to more than 200 pages that includes an explanation of how he came to possess the manuscript, an overview of the dynasties and rulers of Persia, and an account of his own time in Persia. The Qajar dynasty ruled Persia
(present-day Iran) from 1794 to 1925. ‘Abd-al-Razzaq’s history begins with a chapter on the “illustrious lineage” of the Qajars, a Turkmen tribe that held ancestral lands in present-day Azerbaijan. The dynasty was founded by Shah Aqa Muhammad, who defeated numerous rivals to bring all of Persia under his rule by 1794. Aqa Muhammad was assassinated in 1797 and was succeeded by his nephew, Fat‘ Ali. Much of the history is taken up by Russo-Persian War of 1804–13, in which Persia was defeated and forced to cede to the Russians extensive territories in the Caucasus. The history also covers Fat‘ Ali’s interactions with Afghanistan and with his Arab neighbors. The book is illustrated with plates and a map.


Sir John Malcolm (1769–1833) was a British soldier, colonial administrator, diplomat, linguist, and historian. He was born in Scotland, left school at age 12, and, through an uncle, secured a position in the East India Company. While stationed in various parts of India as an officer in the company’s military forces, he became interested in foreign languages, which he studied diligently. He became fluent in Persian and, over the years, served as an interpreter and British envoy to Persia in various capacities. In 1815, he published his The History of Persia, From the Most Early Period to the Present Time, which earned him literary fame and an honorary doctorate from Oxford University. In two volumes, the book covers the period from the legendary Pishdadian Dynasty to the early 19th century. Malcolm drew on both written sources and his own extensive experiences in India and Persia. Volume 2 is particularly valuable as an account of Persia in the early 1700s, with descriptions of the country’s rulers, religions, government, and society. Although Malcolm deeply admired Persian culture and civilization, he believed that the country badly needed political reform, a subject that he addressed in the concluding section of the book. Translated into French in 1821 and German in 1830, The History of Persia was the standard Western work on Persia until the appearance, in 1915, of Percy Molesworth Sykes’s A History of Persia.


History of Afghanistan, from the Earliest Period to the Outbreak of the War of 1878 is a political and military history of Afghanistan that was published in London in 1879, shortly after the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). The author, George Bruce Malleson, was a British army officer and military historian who had served in India and who wrote prolifically on the history of India and Afghanistan. The central theme of the book is the strategic importance to the British Empire of Afghanistan as a buffer against Russian expansion toward India. Malleson explains why Afghanistan, a mountainous “country of rocks and stones,” has an importance “far beyond its territorial value.” Following an opening chapter on the physical features of the country and the ethnic composition of its population, Malleson recounts the succession of dynasties and leaders through the centuries, from the
Ghaznavid Empire (977–1186) to the reign of Dōst Moḥammad Khān (1826–39 and 1842–63). As the narrative approaches Malleson’s own day, it becomes unabashedly nationalistic and partisan. The book argues for a forceful policy in which the protection of India against possible Russian threats should take precedence over the views of independence-minded Afghan rulers. Malleson criticizes the policy of Prime Minister William Gladstone and Thomas Baring, Earl of Northbrook, viceroy of India from 1872 to 1876, for attempting to pursue by diplomatic means agreements that would have prevented the Second Anglo-Afghan War. The work was translated into Pushto and published in Peshawar in 1930.


*Tārīkh-i-Afghānistān* (History of Afghanistan) is a translation into Pushto of G.B. Malleson’s *History of Afghanistan, from the Earliest Period to the Outbreak of the War of 1878* (1879). Published in Peshawar in 1930, the book was used as a textbook for British military officers serving in the Pushto-speaking areas of northwestern India (present-day Pakistan) and Afghanistan. Its purpose was to provide a language learning text that would at the same time introduce its readers to the history of the Pushto lands. The translation was done by Ahmad Jan (1818–99), a munshi (scribe or clerk) from Peshawar. The Pushto language is one of the principal languages spoken in Afghanistan and is recognized as such in the country’s constitution of 2004. Many Pushto dialects are spoken in different regions of Afghanistan and in jurisdictions of northwestern Pakistan. Like Dari, Pushto belongs to the Iranian family of languages, but these Afghan languages are mutually unintelligible to the general population. Linguists continue to rely on 19th and early 20th century fieldwork in describing the phonetic and syntactic features of the language. Munshi Ahmad Jan is credited with developing a modern style of Pushto prose writing.

**Malleson, G. B. The Russo-Afghan Question and the Invasion of India**, London, 1885, [205 pages]

George Bruce Malleson was a British army officer and military historian who had served in India and who wrote prolifically on the history of India and Afghanistan. One of his major works was *History of Afghanistan, from the Earliest Period to the Outbreak of the War of 1878*, a political and military history of Afghanistan that was published in London in 1879, shortly after the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). *The Russo-Afghan Question and the Invasion of India*, published six years later, has the same theme as the earlier book, namely the strategic importance to the British Empire of Afghanistan as a buffer against Russian expansionism and the growing seriousness of the Russian threat to Afghanistan and by extension to India. The immediate impetus to Malleson’s writing the second book was the Russian annexation of Merv (in present-day Turkmenistan) and the formation of a joint Anglo-Russian boundary commission to determine the northern frontier of Afghanistan. The author argues that the territories recently seized by Russia historically belonged to the amir of Afghanistan and should be returned to him. The key strategic
point, Malleson argues, is Herat, “the outlying redoubt of India” and in his view the next objective in the Russian campaign of expansion. Malleson calls for a forceful response to the threat from Russia, and specifically the concentration of “all our available troops in the Pishin valley, ready for a prompt advance” to Herat. Chapter nine, “The Armies on Both Sides,” contains a detailed accounting of the size, composition, and strength of Russian military units deployed in Central Asia and of the British and Indian troops available for the protection of India. The book presented here is the second edition of The Russo-Afghan Question and the Invasion of India, published in 1885.


*Tashkīlāt va davāyir-i māliyātī-i Afghānīstān* (Tax institutions and offices of Afghanistan) is a textbook and reference manual written in 1935 for the employees of the Afghan Ministry of Finance. The author, Gino Mancioli, was an Italian national who served as the adviser to the ministry under Mohammad Zahir Shah, the last king of Afghanistan (reigned 1933–73). In the years leading up to World War II, Afghanistan relied on foreign assistance, especially from Germany and its allies Italy and Japan, in developing and implementing its plans for modernization. The work consists of three sections: the first covers the principles of taxation, the second treats the different governmental agencies involved in taxation, and the third includes templates for different official tax forms. A handwritten note by a previous owner defends the soundness of the presentations in the book but criticizes their implementation and ends with a solemn prayer for the advancement of Afghanistan.


*Étude militaire géographique, historique et politique sur l’Afghanistan* (Military study of Afghanistan considering its geography, history and politics) is an analysis of the military and strategic situation in Afghanistan, written by a French officer early in the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–80 and intended to help explain the conflict to a French audience. The book is in eight parts, covering 1) Preliminary facts; 2) General data on the country and its population; 3) Borders; 4) Orography and hydrography; 5) Routes and thoroughfares, including passes and canyons, towns, and strategic points; 6) Domestic infrastructure (political and social as well as military); 7) History; and 8) “Political relations between England and Afghanistan, from the beginning of the 19th century until the events that led to the current conflict.” The part on routes and transportation is particularly well developed, and includes analyses of the routes into and through Afghanistan that the author classes as “eastern” (the road from Peshawar to Kabul via the Khyber Pass; the road from the Indus to Kabul via the Kurram Valley; and the road from the Indus to Ghazni via the Gomal Valley); “southern” (from Jacobabad to Kandahar, via Dadar, the Bolan Pass, Quetta, and the Khojak and Khwaja canyons); “center” (from Kandahar to Kabul via Ghazni); “western and northwestern” (the road from Kandahar to Herat; and the roads from Herat to Persia and within Turkestan); and “northern and northeastern” (the road from Murghab to Kabul via Balkh, and northeastern routes and routes to eastern Turkestan and China). Three maps of important military routes illustrate the discussion, and there is a short list of terms in French and their Afghan or Persian equivalents to help the reader understand the etymology and elements of geographical names. The book consists of extracts from the February, March, and April 1879 issues of *Journal des Sciences militaires* (Journal of military science).

*The Russians at Merv and Herat, and Their Power of Invading India* is an account of Russian policy in Central Asia and of possible Russian intentions toward Afghanistan and India in the late 19th century, written from a British perspective. Topics covered include writings by Russian military officers on Central Asia and India; the analysis by the Russian general staff of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80); the journeys by Russian diplomat Pavel M. Lessar from Ashgabad (present-day Ashqabat, Turkmenistan) to Sarakhs (in present-day Iran) and from Sarakhs to Herat, Afghanistan; Russian railroad construction in Central Asia; Russia’s buildup of naval power in the Caspian Sea; and the development of the oil industry in Baku (present-day Azerbaijan). The book predicts that in a future crisis with Great Britain, Russia, unlike in previous crises or during the Crimean War, almost certainly would strike at British India. The author, Charles Thomas Marvin (1854–90), was a writer and one-time Foreign Office staff member who had lived many years in Russia, initially with his father, who was employed in Saint Petersburg, and later as a correspondent for a British newspaper. The book draws on interviews that Marvin conducted in 1882 with leading Russian military and political leaders, and contains translations of long excerpts from relevant Russian books and reports. It includes drawings by Russian artists, which, the author asserts, “are the first illustrations of Merv and the Turcoman region that have yet appeared in this country.” The book contains three appendices, including a long essay on the Russian navy that is only partly related to the main subject of the work.

*The Russian Advance Towards India* is based on a series of interviews conducted by English author Charles Thomas Marvin in Saint Petersburg in March 1882, a year after the Russian conquest of the fortress of Geok-Tepe and the incorporation of Akhal (present-day Ahal, Turkmenistan) into the Russian Empire. The most prominently featured individual in the book is General Mikhail Dmitrievich Skobelev (1843–82), a hero of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 and the Russian commander at Geok-Tepe. Other interviewees include the diplomat and official Count Nikolai Pavlovich Ignatiev (1832–1908), Baron Osten-Sacken of the Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Office, the diplomat and scholar of international law Friedrich Fromhold Martens (also known as Fedor Fedorovich Martens, 1845–1909), and other military and civilian officials. Marvin expresses complex and ambivalent attitudes toward Russia, whose policies in Central Asia he generally defends as posing no threat to British interests. He admires Skobelev but, in perhaps the most remarkable passage of the book, recounts the general’s admission to him that his troops slaughtered 8,000 Turkmen men and women, and his observation that “in Asia the duration of peace is in direct proportion to the slaughter you inflict upon the enemy.” Skobelev was later removed from his command because of the massacre. Marvin was a writer and briefly a Foreign Office staff member who had lived many years in Russia, initially with his father, who was employed in Saint Petersburg, and later as correspondent for a British newspaper. His trip to Russia in 1882 was sponsored by the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*.

Martin, Frank A. *Under the Absolute Amir*, London, 1907, [www.wdl.org/17697](http://www.wdl.org/17697) [352 pages]

*Under the Absolute Amir* is an account of life and work in Kabul by Frank A. Martin, who for eight years was engineer-in-chief to Amir ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan (reigned 1880–1901), ruler of Afghanistan, and later to his son and successor, Habibullah (reigned 1901–19). The book provides a first-hand overview of Afghanistan, written from a European perspective, and is particularly interesting on subjects such as roads, trade, and economic development, with which the author was directly involved. It includes chapters on travel, the city of Kabul, manners and customs, the life of Europeans in Afghanistan, soldiers and arms, geological conditions in the country, religion, and the political situation. As indicated by the title, Martin is especially struck by absolute monarchy as the Afghan system of government. He opines that “fortunately there are few parts of the earth where such a form of government exists, for it is not one which is likely to produce the greatest good for the greatest number.” Chapters devoted to the character and policies of Amir ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan, prisons and prisoners, and tortures and methods of execution underscore the despotic character of the state. Martin also stresses, however, the interest of both ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan and his son in the modernization and development of the country and the keen interest that both took in trade, commerce, and mechanical tools of all kinds. The chapter “Trades and Commerce” draws on Martin’s involvement in managing the government workshops, which at this time constituted the main industrial base of the country. The chapter on the political situation contains accounts of Martin’s conversations with ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan, including one in which the Afghan ruler expresses his interest in obtaining a strip of territory in Baluchistan that would provide direct access to the sea. The book is illustrated with photographs and drawings by the author.

Charles Masson (alias of James Lewis) was a traveler and explorer who was the first European to appreciate the archeological heritage of Afghanistan. Not much is known about his early life. He was born in London in 1800 and by all accounts received a good education that included Latin, Greek, and French. After a quarrel with his father, in 1821 he enlisted as an infantryman in the army of the East India Company. He sailed for Bengal in early 1822. In July 1827, he deserted his regiment, changed his name, and traveled westward to escape British jurisdiction. After wandering through Rajasthan and the independent Sikh territory, he crossed into Afghanistan via the Khyber Pass. Over the course of the next decade he traveled extensively throughout Afghanistan. He also spent time in Persia (present-day Iran) and Sind (present-day Pakistan). He began his archeological explorations in 1832 with a survey of the Buddhist caves at Bamyan. In 1833 he discovered the ruins of the ancient city of Alexandria ad Caucasum, founded by Alexander the Great. He collected more than 80,000 silver, gold, and bronze coins and made a particular contribution to science by recognizing the importance of bilingual bronze coins, whose Greek inscriptions could be used to decode unknown scripts that appeared on the reverse side. Masson’s real identity was discovered by the British authorities, but he received a pardon in recognition of his archeological work and the valuable intelligence about Afghanistan he provided. He left Afghanistan in October 1838. Living in Karachi, he wrote an account of his archeological investigations and completed his three-volume Narrative of Various Journeys in Balochistan, Afghanistan, and the Panjab, which was published in London in 1841. With the first Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42) underway, in early 1840 he attempted to return to Kabul, but was caught up in the siege and insurrection in the Khanate of Kalat (in present-day Pakistan) and for a time was imprisoned as a spy. Following his release in January 1841, Masson wrote Narrative of a Journey to Kalat, which was published in London in 1843. In 1844 his publisher reissued Narrative of Various Journeys, with Narrative of a Journey to Kalat added as a fourth volume to the original edition. Volume four opens with a large fold-out map showing Masson’s journeys. Presented here is the complete 1844 edition.

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James Mill (1773–1836) was a Scottish-born writer and political philosopher, also known as the father of the philosopher and economist John Stuart Mill (1806–73). He studied at the University of Edinburgh, was licensed as a Presbyterian minister, and worked for a time as an itinerant preacher. In 1802 Mill moved to London, where he began a career as a writer of pamphlets, articles, and eventually books. In 1806 he began his monumental *The History of British India*, which he published in 1817. Mill had never traveled to India and knew none of the Indian languages. His objective was to gather, read, and evaluate the vast amount of written documentation about India that existed in European languages to produce a comprehensive “critical history”—one that would render judgements about both the events covered and the evidence on which knowledge of these events was based. The three-volume work is organized in six books. Book one deals with the earliest British interactions with India, from the voyage to India by the merchant Robert Thorne in 1527 to the state of the East India Company in the early 1700s. Book two deals with the history, religion, literature, and culture of ancient India and Hindu civilization in particular. Book three covers Islamic conquest and rule, beginning with incursions in the ninth century and concluding with the Mughal Empire. This book ends with a chapter entitled “A Comparison of the State of Civilization among the Mohamedan Conquerors of India with the State of Civilization among the Hindus.” Books four, five, and six cover the expansion and consolidation of British power in India and the rule of the East India Company. The work contains a glossary of terms, a large fold-out map entitled “Map of the Eastern Part of Persia with Afghanistan, Bactriana, Trans-Oxiana, &c” at the beginning of
volume one, and a foldout “Map of Hindoostan” at the beginning of volume two. The latter map was compiled and engraved by the London mapmaker John Arrowsmith. Mill’s “critical history” is known for its harsh judgments on Hindu culture and civilization, which Mill characterized as “rude” and “backward.” Despite its many limitations, Mill’s *The History of British India* served as the standard reference work on Indian history for much of the 19th century.

**Mīr Khvānd, Muḥammad ibn Khāvandshāh. Histoire des Samanides, Paris, 1845, [www.wdl.org/17701](www.wdl.org/17701) [324 pages]**

Mir Khvand (1433–98) was a leading 15th-century historian and historiographer in the service of the Timurid court at Herat, Afghanistan, under the patronage of Mir ‘Ali-Sir Nava’i. Mir Khvand wrote a world history in seven volumes extending up to 1506, the last volume of which was completed by his grandson, Khvand Mir, also a leading Persian historian. *Histoire des Samanides* (History of the Samanids) is a translation by the French orientalist Charles François Defrémery (1822–83) of a part of the larger work. The book includes a brief introduction, the Persian text, the French translation, and a detailed set of notes that reflect Defrémery’s careful historical and linguistic scholarship. The Samanid Empire (819–999) was founded by Saman Khuda, a landowner originally from Balkh in northern Afghanistan, in what are now eastern Iran and Uzbekistan. At its peak, the empire extended over parts of present-day Iran, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan. The Samanids were known for their patronage of commerce, science, and the arts. They extended Persian and Islamic culture deep into Central Asia and even conducted trade with parts of Europe. The works of the poet Firdawsi, Samanid silver coins, and new forms of pottery are among the high points of Samanid culture. Defrémery also published an edited edition of another part of Mir Khvand’s history, *L’histoire des sultans du Kharezm* (1842). Defrémery was educated at the Collège de France and the École des Langues Orientales in Paris and taught for many years at the Collège de France. He published important scholarship on both Arabic and Persian literature and history and completed a translation from Chagatai Turkish into French of the memoirs of the Mughal emperor Babur.

**Mir’āt al-arz, Kabul, 1905-6, [www.wdl.org/16754](www.wdl.org/16754) [117 pages]**

*Mir’āt al-arz* (Mirror of the world) is a text on geography, written for Afghan students. The work begins with a discussion of general topics, such as the shape of the Earth and its rotational motion and revolution about the sun, the great circles, and geographical longitude. It then presents information on each of the continents, listing the area of each and “well-known” countries and cities located therein. Each of the listed countries is further discussed by a presentation of boundaries in the cardinal directions, its capital, the name of the ruler, comments on the method of governance, its economic wealth, and the size of its army. The book concludes with a glossary of common geographical terms, such as gulf, peninsula, and so forth. It contains no maps or illustrations. The work was published in 1905–6, during the reign of Habibullah Khan (ruled 1901–19). The author is not listed.
Mitford, R. C. W. *To Cabul with the Cavalry Brigade*, London, 1881, [www.wdl.org/16716](http://www.wdl.org/16716) [230 pages]

*To Cabul with the Cavalry Brigade* is an account by a British officer, Major Reginald Mitford, of the actions of his unit, the 14th Bengal Lancers, during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80) in the period between September 1879 and January 1880. The war began in November 1878 when Great Britain, fearful of what it saw as growing Russian influence in Afghanistan, invaded the country from British India. The first phase of the conflict ended in May 1879 with the Treaty of Gandamak, which permitted the Afghans to maintain internal sovereignty but forced them to cede control over their foreign policy to the British. Fighting resumed in September 1879 after an anti-British uprising in Kabul that resulted in the death of Sir Louis Cavagnari, the British resident in Kabul and a negotiator of the Treaty of Gandamak, and of nearly all the British soldiers at the residency. The Kabul Field Force, commanded by General Sir Frederick Roberts and composed of British and Indian army regiments, including the 14th Bengal Lancers, was sent to Kabul to restore order and take revenge. Mitford’s book offers a first-hand account of the march to and operations in Kabul, including the harsh suppression of the uprising and the execution of many Afghans judged guilty of participating in it. Mitford and his unit also took part in the bloody siege of the Sherpur Cantonment of December 1879, in which Afghan forces mounted a nearly successful attack on the Anglo-Indian forces. The 14th Bengal Lancers were ordered back to India in January 1880, and marched to Peshawar by way of Jalalabad. The Second Anglo-Afghan War finally ended in September 1880, after the decisive Battle of Kandahar. The book contains illustrations based on sketches and a fold-out map of the Kabul district.


*Life of the Amir Dost Mohammed Khan of Kabul* is a two-volume biography of Dost Mohammad Khan (1793–1863), ruler of Afghanistan in 1826–39 and 1842–63 and founder of Barakzai dynasty. The book is by Mohan Lal (1812–77), a notable figure in the intellectual history of 19th-century India. The son of a Kashmiri Brahmin who had been a munshi (secretary) on the mission in 1808 of Mountstuart Elphinstone to Peshawar, Mohan Lal was one of the first graduates of Delhi English College. Fluent in English, Urdu, Persian, and Kashmiri, he was one of three men to accompany Sir Alexander Burnes on his journey from India to Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan) in 1832–34. In 1834 he published an account of this mission entitled *Journal of a Tour through the Punjab, Afghanistan, Turkistan, Khorasan and Part of Persia in Company with Lt Burnes, and Dr Gerard*. He became a trusted adviser to Burnes and served as his intelligence chief until Burnes’s death during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). While serving in Afghanistan, Mohan Lal wrote a draft, in Persian and in English, of his biography of Dost Mohammad Khan, drawing on documents and information
provided by members of the amir’s family and court. The supporting documents were lost in the insurrection of 1841 and the manuscript of the book itself seized by Mohammed Akbar Khan, forcing Mohan Lal to rewrite the entire work. Scarred by the disastrous outcome of the war and the death of Burnes, Mohan Lal traveled to Great Britain, where he had an audience with Queen Victoria, unsuccessfully sought compensation from the East India Company for loans he had taken out in his own name to secure the release of British hostages, and to deliver Burnes’s journals to his family in Scotland. Mohan Lal dedicated the book to the queen, signing his name “Mohan Lal, Kashmiritan. (In the Service of the Honourable East India Company).” In addition to being a vivid portrait of Dost Mohammad Khan, this biography is a valuable primary source for the study of the First Anglo-Afghan War. As indicated by the subtitle, the book highlights the amir’s diplomatic and political skills in maneuvering between the competing powers of Persia, Russia, and Great Britain, all of which were seeking to exert influence over his policies and control, directly or indirectly, his country.


Da Puṣhto da Zhabe Liyārah Liyā Puṣhto Ṣarf aw Naḥo (The way of Pushto language or Pushto grammar) is a language textbook. The author, Muhammad Gul Momand, was a famous (and controversial) Pushto literary-political nationalist. He appears to have written the book in Balkh, Afghanistan, where he was posted as governor in the 1920s. It was published in Lahore in 1938 by the Feroz Printing Press, at a time when Afghan Pushtun nationalist literati were advocating the institutionalization of the Pushto language throughout Afghanistan and Pakistan. The contents of the book include an 11-page preface, two main sections, and a supplementary section at the end. In his long preface Momand emphasizes the importance of language for the development of every nation. He suggests that formalization and nationalization of the Pushto language is directly related to the well-being of Pushtun individuals, society, culture, and identity. Section one is on morphology. It has three sub-sections: on the parts of speech; on lexicology, negation, pluralization, gender, and gerunds; and on prepositions. Section two is devoted to syntax and discusses sentence structure and formation. The supplementary section at the end was prepared by another author, Abdul Azim Safi, and includes a list of infinitives. The pages are numbered. Momand mentions in the preface two other individuals who assisted in the production of the book, Mohammad Qasim Khan Ibrahim Khele and Mullah Obaidullah Khan Safi. The book seems to have been produced for a Pushtun audience as well as for non-Pushto speakers interested in learning the language.

Monserrate, Antonio. The Commentary of Father Monserrate, Society of Jesus, on His Journey to the Court of Akbar, Mumbai, 1922, www.wdl.org/17772 [302 pages]

Antonio Monserrate (1536–1600) was a Portuguese priest who accompanied two other priests, Father Rodolfo Acquaviva and Father Francisco Enriquez, on the first Jesuit mission to the court of the Emperor Akbar (1542–1605; reigned 1556–1605), also known as Akbar the Great. Monserrate left Goa on November 17, 1579, and arrived at the Mughal capital of Fatehpur Sikri on March 4, 1580. The missionaries had been invited by Akbar and were warmly received at the court. Father Monserrate soon
was appointed tutor to Murad, the second son of the emperor. He also accompanied Akbar on his military expedition to Kabul in 1581, proceeding as far as Peshawar with the emperor and to Jalalabad with the rear guard of the Mughal army. Monserrate remained at Akbar’s court until April 1582, when he returned to Goa. Presented here is an English translation of Monserrate’s Commentarius, an account of his time at the Mughal court that he began writing shortly after his return to Goa and finally completed in December 1590, as he was being held prisoner by the Turks in Arabia. The text of the work was never sent to Europe but somehow made its way to Calcutta, where it was discovered in the early 20th century. The Latin text was first published in 1914 by the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Monserrate’s account is an important primary source for the study of Akbar and his court and empire. His detailed account of the Mughal army and its composition and organization is especially valuable. Monserrate describes Akbar as physically imposing—“of a type of countenance well-fitted to his royal dignity, so that one could easily recognize, even at first glance, that he is the King”—accessible to his subjects, and a great patron of learning. Monserrate claims that Akbar absorbed knowledge through having manuscripts read to him, and that he himself could neither read nor write. Monserrate concluded his manuscript with 23 pages of information on Akbar’s ancestors going back to Genghis Khan and Timur (Tamerlane). The editors regarded these passages as unreliable and not germane to Monserrate’s time at the court and relegated them to an appendix.


William Moorcroft (1767–1825) was a veterinary surgeon who, after maintaining a veterinary practice for a time in London, was engaged in 1807 by the East India Company to manage its breeding of horses. He arrived in India in 1808 and took charge of the company’s stud operations at Pusa, Bengal. In 1811 and 1812 he undertook journeys to the northwest in search of larger and better stud horses than he was able to find in India. In July 1812 he crossed the Himalayas to become one of the first Europeans to enter Tibet by this route. By this time, his interests had expanded from the procurement of horses to include the opening of trade relations between Central Asia and Great Britain and the projection of British influence beyond the northwest of British India to counter what he saw as a growing Russian presence in the region. In May 1819 Moorcroft received permission from the East India Company to travel to Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan). He reached the city in February 1825 after a more than five-year journey that took him to Ladakh, Kashmir, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, into Afghanistan
via the Khyber Pass, and through Kabul and Kunduz to his ultimate destination. He began his return journey to India in July 1825, but died of fever in Balkh, Afghanistan, on August 27. *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Panjab* is Moorcroft’s account of his journey of 1819–25. It was posthumously edited and published by Horace Wilson, professor of Sanskrit at the University of Oxford and a member of the Royal Asiatic Society, based on Moorcroft’s voluminous notebooks and correspondence. Volume one is devoted entirely to Moorcroft’s journey to and residence in Ladakh. Volume two completes the account of Moorcroft’s time in Ladakh and recounts his journey to Kashmir, Kabul, and Bukhara. The book contains a detailed map of Central Asia compiled and drawn by the London mapmaker John Arrowsmith, based mainly on the field notes of George Trebeck, a young Englishman who accompanied Moorcroft on the journey and who recorded geographical details measured in paces combined with compass bearings.

**Morris, Mowbray. The First Afghan War**, London, 1878. [116 pages]

This book is a brief account, written for a popular audience, of the First Anglo-Afghan War, published in 1878, the year that marked the start of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). The First Anglo-Afghan War began in late 1838 when the British launched an invasion of Afghanistan from India with the aim of overthrowing the Afghan ruler, Amir Dōst Moḥammad Kháń, and replacing him with the supposedly pro-British former ruler, Shāh Shujāʿ. The British were at first successful. They installed Shāh Shujāʿ as ruler in Jalalabad and forced Dōst Moḥammad to flee the country. But in 1841 Dōst Moḥammad returned to Afghanistan to lead an uprising against the invaders and Shāh Shujāʿ. In one of the most disastrous defeats in British military history, in January 1842 an Anglo-Indian force of 4,500 men and thousands of followers was annihilated by Afghan tribesmen. The British then sent a larger force from India to exact retribution and to recover hostages, before finally withdrawing in October 1842. The concluding sentence of this book sums up the essential futility of the conflict: “And so the English army left secure on the throne of Afghanistan the dynasty they had spent so many millions of treasure and so many lives to overthrow.” The book is by Mowbray Walter Morris (1847–1911), editor of *Macmillan’s Magazine* and the author of works of biography and literary criticism.


Nikolai Nikolaevich Muravʹev (1794–1866) was a Russian military officer and statesman who in 1819 and 1820 led an imperial mission to the eastern coast of the Caspian Sea and the Khanate of Khiva. At that time a captain on the general staff of the Imperial Russian army, he was accompanied by Major Ponomarev, the commandant of Ganja (present-day Gänçe, Azerbaijan). The objective of the mission was to secure the region’s
trade routes with Russia. General Aleksiei Petrovich Ermolov, the powerful commander of the Caucasus who ordered the mission, envisioned the establishment of a Russian commercial port on the east coast of the Caspian Sea. The mission left Tiflis (Tbilisi, Georgia) on June 17, 1819, and traveled by land to Baku on the western coast of the Caspian, where a corvette, a merchant ship, and more troops were awaiting. The vessels arrived in the Bay of Balkan (present-day Karabogaz Bay, Turkmenistan) in September. From there, Murav’ev traveled by land to Khiva (present-day Uzbekistan) to meet the khan, Muhammad Rahim. He was not permitted to enter the city, however, and was detained for 48 days. He later was released and returned to his vessel. Accompanied by two Khivan envoys, Murav’ev sailed back with his men, and arrived in Baku in December. They were received by General Ermolov on January 17, 1820. *Voyage en Turcomanie et à Khiva* (Journey to Turkmenistan and Khiva) is Murav’ev’s account of his mission. The book is divided into two parts. In the first part, Murav’ev recounts the journey to the Bay of Balkan, the subsequent land journey to Khiva, and the return journey to Tbilisi. This part includes copies of letters from General Ermolov and Major Ponomarev to the khan of Khiva. The second part of the book is a general description of the territory of Khiva, its economy, and its military forces, and an account of the civil war in the khanate. The book also contains a catalog in Latin of the animals of Central Asia, notes describing the inhabitants of the region, and a map of the route from Tiflis to Khiva drawn by Murav’ev. The book was translated from Russian by G. Lecointe de Laveau and published in Paris in 1823.

**Muḥammad Yūsuf ibn Khvājah Baqā. Supplément à l’histoire générale des Huns, des Turks et des Mogols**, St. Petersburg, 1824, [www.wdl.org/16945](http://www.wdl.org/16945) [158 pages]

Muḥammad Yusuf ibn Khawajah Baqa was a historian and *munshi* (court secretary) active in the mid-17th–early 18th centuries in the court of Muqim Khan, the khan of Balkh (reigned circa 1702–7), in the north of present-day Afghanistan. Munshi Muhammad Yusuf is known for his *Taz̲ kirah-ʻi muqīm‘khānī* (History of Muqim Khan), an account chronicling the political, cultural, and social history of Transoxania during the reigns of the Shaybanids (circa 1500–99) and their successors, the Astrakhanids (circa 1599–1747), both Turco-Mongol dynasties. Known to the Greeks and Romans as Transoxania (Land Beyond the Oxus) and to the Arabs as *Ma wara‘ al-nahr* (Land Beyond the River), this area roughly corresponds to present-day Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, southwest Kazakhstan, and southern Kyrgyzstan. *Supplément à l’histoire générale des Huns, des Turks et des Mogols* (Supplement to the general history of the Huns, the Turks and the Mughals) is comprised of two commentaries based on Munshi Muhammad Yusuf’s *Taz̲ kirah*. The first, in French, is a commentary on the *Taz̲ kirah* consisting of an introduction and three parts. The second commentary, *Tuḥfat ʻazhār al-tadhkirat al-muq̲iq̲imiyyah li ṭullāb ʻilm al-lughati al-fārisiyah* (Bouquet offering from the history of Muqim Khan for the students of the discipline of the Persian language), is in Persian (albeit with an Arabic title) and summarizes the historical sources used in the first commentary. The author of both commentaries is the Polish-Russian orientalist Joseph Senkowski (1800–1858). Better known as Osip Ivanovich Senkovskii, Senkowski was a professor at the Imperial University of Saint Petersburg known for his parodies of fellow orientalists and the fantastic tales he wrote and published under the pen name Baron Brambeus. The introduction to the first commentary discusses the *Taz̲ kirah* and Senkowski’s method, while the three parts are dedicated respectively to the Shaybanids, the Astrakhanids, and the Bukharan ruler ʻUbaydullah Khan (reigned 1702–11). The second commentary is a summary of biographies of various rulers, compiled by Senkowski. It is unclear if the “students” he refers to in his title were his own, which, if true, might make the commentary a textbook. The *Supplément* was published by the Imperial Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg in 1824.

*Dawlat-i mustaqilah-'i Afghānistān va vaẓāyif-i millat-i Afghān* (The independent government of Afghanistan and the duties of its citizens) is an early 20th century work on the rights and duties of citizenship for the peoples of Afghanistan. The author, Ghulam Muhyi al-Din, begins with a discussion on the role of society in the conduct of citizens and proceeds to an enumeration of the duties of citizens to the state. The book provides descriptions of the different parts of the state apparatus, including governmental ministries and courthouses. It also has sections on the equality of citizens before the law and on the importance of loyalty to the state. A section on the proper usage of parks and public spaces includes an imaginary dialogue between students, which suggests that Ghulam intended his work to be accessible for a young audience. The book likely would have been a useful instructional tool for the teaching of civics to citizens of different ages and backgrounds in a rapidly modernizing Afghanistan. The book was posthumously published in year 1307 of the Jalali (solar) calendar (i.e., 1928–29). This coincides with the abdication from the throne of the Afghan ruler Amanullah Khan (reigned 1919–29). In a section of the book on the importance of patriotism, Amanullah Khan’s name has been blotted out, suggesting that the work remained in use even after his abdication.

Nash, Charles. *History of the War in Afghanistan, from its Commencement to its Close*, London, 1843, [www.wdl.org/17708](http://www.wdl.org/17708) [430 pages]

*History of the War in Afghanistan, from its Commencement to its Close* is a narrative of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). The book is based on the journal and letters of an anonymous, high-ranking British officer, who purportedly served many years in the British army in India. Published in London in 1843, the book was edited by Charles Barnes Nash (1815–92), a British lawyer who was extensively engaged in the affairs of public companies in Great Britain. The book is comprised of 14 chapters, beginning with a general description of the country and its people and a history of the Durrani Empire (1747–early 19th century), the predecessor state to modern Afghanistan. The war began when the British launched an invasion with the aim of overthrowing the Afghan ruler, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, and replacing him with the supposedly pro-British former ruler, Shah Shuja‘. The invaders were at first successful. They installed Shah Shuja‘ in Jalalabad and forced Dost Mohammad to flee the country. But in 1841 Dost Mohammad returned to Afghanistan to lead an uprising against the invaders and Shah Shuja‘. The rebellion forced the British force to retreat to India; the force was then annihilated by Afghan tribesmen. In the end, the war proved futile, as Dost Mohammad eventually returned to rule Afghanistan. *History of the War in Afghanistan, from its Commencement to its Close* recounts the stages of the war in chronological order, beginning with the declaration of war at Simla, British India, and concluding with the complete British withdrawal from Afghanistan in October 1842.


*The Afghan Question* is a pamphlet containing the text of a speech given by Thomas George Baring, first earl of Northbrook (1826–1904), in Winchester, United Kingdom, on November 11, 1878. Northbrook
was a prominent Liberal politician who served as viceroy of India from 1872 to 1876. As viceroy, he opposed the suggestions increasingly voiced in London that Russian expansion in Central Asia be countered by British efforts to secure the northwestern approaches to India, possibly even by expansion into Afghanistan. In the speech, Northbrook reviews the history of British policy toward Afghanistan since 1840 and the end of the First Anglo-Afghan War in 1842, and in particular his own policy as viceroy of not pressing for the establishment of a British resident mission in Kabul or insisting that the ruler of Afghanistan receive British officers at his court. He then reviews the controversy that had arisen since the summer of 1878, when it was learned in London that a Russian mission had arrived in Kabul on July 22. The British authorities immediately decided to send a mission of their own to the Afghan capital, which on September 21 was denied entrance to the country by Afghan officials at the Khyber Pass. The British then issued an ultimatum to the ruler of Afghanistan, Amir Sher Ali Khan, containing certain demands which, if not met, would result in the commencement of war on November 20. Northbrook chides the government for doing little to ascertain the intentions of either the Russians or the Afghans, failing to communicate adequately with the amir, and in effect using the controversy over the missions as a pretext to launch a war. He ends the speech by asking “whether the war is just, and whether it is necessary,” and concludes that “upon these two essential questions, I am sorry to say, it is quite impossible for me, in the present state of the information before the public, to pronounce a decided or positive opinion.” Northbrook remained a critic of the war and, when the Liberals returned to power under William Gladstone in April 1880, advocated for complete and rapid withdrawal of British troops from Afghanistan.


Sir William Nott (1782–1845) was an army officer in the East India Company who commanded British and Anglo-Indian forces in the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). He was born into a farm family of modest means in Glamorganshire, Wales, and received a limited elementary education. He embarked for India in 1800, and received a commission in the army of the East India Company. For many years he commanded a succession of native infantry regiments. Throughout his military career he appreciated the military qualities of the sepoy (Indian soldiers serving in the army of the East India Company), which he compared favorably with those of the British soldier. A colonel before the Anglo-Afghan War began, Nott soon was promoted to general. He commanded British and native troops in several successful engagements and on January 13, 1842, was appointed commander of all British and Anglo-Indian troops in Lower Afghanistan and Sind. He won a major victory over Afghan forces near Ghazni on August 30, 1842, which led to the capture of Kabul and ultimately termination of the war. After service as resident at the court of Lucknow, Nott returned to England, where within two years he died. This book was compiled posthumously by J.H. Stocqueler, the author of several books of biography and British military history, using documents in the possession of Nott’s daughters. Volume two of the work has a long appendix containing documents relevant to Nott’s activities in Afghanistan, some by Nott himself but most by other officers. Nott is regarded by historians as by far the best British general in the Anglo-Afghan War.

Edmund O’Donovan (1844–83) was a British war correspondent who covered conflicts and uprisings in France, Spain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Central Asia. Born in Dublin, he wrote for the *Irish Times* and other Dublin papers and later for the British paper, the *Daily News*. In 1879 he traveled to Merv (in present-day Turkmenistan), where he was arrested by the Turcomans, or Turkmen, on suspicion of being a Russian spy. He was released after several months’ captivity, and remained for a total of nearly three years in the region. *The Merv Oasis* is O’Donovan’s account of his adventures and observations. Volume one covers his voyage from Trebizond (Trabzon), in Turkey, across Georgia and the Caucasus to Baku (in present-day Azerbaijan), his crossing of the Caspian Sea, and his travels in the regions east of the Caspian, in Turkmenistan and Iran. Volume two is almost exclusively devoted to a detailed account of Merv, where he spent five months. The book covers the geography, history, rulers and system of government, religious practices, economy, and food and customs of the oasis. O’Donovan describes the Russian military campaign in the region and the fall of the fortress at Geok-Tepe in early 1881, but his focus is on the peoples and cultures of the region. The appendix includes a collection of documents relevant to the narrative, with translations from Persian and Russian, and facsimiles of several of the Persian and Russian documents. The cover reproduces his Russian passport (laissez-passier), issued in the name of Tsar Alexander II, granting O’Donovan permission to travel from Tiflis (Tbilisi, in Georgia) to Baku.

Ohsson, Constantin d’. *Histoire des Mongols, depuis Tchinguiz-Khan jusqu’à Timour Bey, ou Tamerlan*, The Hague and Amsterdam, 1834-35, [www.wdl.org/16718](http://www.wdl.org/16718) [2567 pages]

Baron Abraham Constantin d’Ohsson’s *Histoire des Mongols, depuis Tchinguiz-Khan jusqu’à Timour Bey, ou Tamerlan* (History of the Mongols, from Genghis Khan to Timur, or Tamerlane) is considered the first serious Western study of the Mongols. It was published in Paris in 1824 and reissued in this four-volume edition in Amsterdam and The Hague in 1834–35. D’Ohsson was born in Turkey in 1779. His father, Ignatius Mouradgea (1740–1807), was the son of a French mother and an Armenian Catholic father who was employed as a translator at the Swedish consulate in Izmir, Ottoman Turkey, and who adopted the name d’Ohsson in 1787. Ignatius followed his father’s career path and became a translator for the Swedish embassy in Constantinople (present-day Istanbul). This allowed Abraham Constantin to move to Sweden in 1798, where he graduated from the University of Uppsala and entered the Swedish diplomatic corps. He had a distinguished career as a diplomatic and government official, serving in various European capitals and in Stockholm, and eventually being elevated to baron. He also devoted himself to scientific and historical research and, in addition to his own work, helped to complete and publish his father’s monumental *Tableau général de l'Empire othoman* (General overview of the Ottoman Empire). *Histoire des Mongols* begins with an analysis of the nomadic origins of the Mongols, the rise of Genghis Khan (1162–1227), and the reasons why the Mongols were successful in war. Subsequent volumes deal with the Mongol conquests and the history of the empire to the time of Timur (1336–1405) and the founding of the Timurid dynasty. D’Ohsson served for a time at the Swedish embassy in Paris, and his research drew heavily on Arabic, Persian, and Syriac manuscripts in the Bibliothèque de la Nation
(later the Bibliothèque nationale de France) as well as on Western sources. For many years *Histoire des Mongols* remained the standard work on the subject.

**Oliver, Emmerson. *Across the Border, or Pathan and Biloch*, London, 1890, [368 pages]**

*Across the Border, or Pathan and Biloch* is a work of ethnographic description by little-known English writer Edward Emmerson Oliver. It deals with the Afghan and Baluch tribes of the northwest frontier of British India bordering Afghanistan (in what is today Pakistan) and of Afghanistan itself. The book is in a long line of British writing about these territories going back to the foundational study of Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779–1859), *An Account of the Kingdom of Cabul and its Dependencies in Persia, Tartary, and India*, published in 1815. Like Elphinstone, Oliver never actually entered Afghanistan. He seems to have relied primarily on library research. He combed the files of the East India Company and used unclassified official reports, newspapers, and other documents and publications, including Elphinstone’s researches of 1808–9. To the information gleaned from these sources, he added his own views of the virtues and vices of the native peoples. He also called for the maintenance of a formidable defense of India against Russian expansionism and stressed the need for up-to-date intelligence from tribal lands. The book includes many illustrations by John Lockwood Kipling, a teacher, journalist, illustrator, and conservationist, who spent much of his working life in India and was the father of the British writer Rudyard Kipling.


*Papers Relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan* is a compilation of official documents relating to the conduct of British forces during a part of the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). It contains the texts of 547 letters, dispatches, reports, memoranda, general orders, and other documents from the period between October 1841 and December 1842. The authors of the documents include Lord Auckland, governor general of India, Major General George Pollock, commander of the relief column sent to try to rescue the Anglo-British force that was decimated by Afghan tribesmen in the retreat from Kabul in January 1842, Major General William Nott, who defeated an Afghan force at Ghazni in August 1842, and many lower ranking military officers and civilian officials. Among the more arresting documents in the compilation is Number 132, a dispatch dated February 19, 1842, in which the governor general reports to the Secret Committee of the East India Company in London on the disaster of the previous month. The report begins by stating that “we have to deplore the occurrence of heavy calamity to the British arms, and at the same time lament the great obscurity which still hangs over many of the most important circumstances connected with the causes and course of the disasters which have been suffered.” Other documents provide further details about the scale of the defeat, the measures undertaken by Auckland and his subordinates to recoup the situation by sending reinforcements, and their decision ultimately to withdraw all British forces from Afghanistan.
Pennell, T.L. *Among the Wild Tribes of the Afghan Frontier*, London, 1927, [www.wdl.org/17785](http://www.wdl.org/17785) [344 pages]

*Among the Wild Tribes of the Afghan Frontier* is a first-hand account by Dr. Theodore Leighton Pennell of the 16 years that he spent as a medical missionary at the medical mission station at Bannu (in present-day Pakistan) on the Northwest Frontier of India. The book was first published in 1908; presented here is the fourth edition of 1927. Pennell begins with a chapter entitled “The Afghan Character,” which is followed by several chapters discussing Afghan traditions, the geography of the border region, and the prevalence of tribal feuds and conflicts. Other chapters include “Afghan Mullahs” and “Afghan Women.” Much of the work concerns Islamic customs and traditions, as practiced in Afghanistan and the Northwest Frontier Province. Pennell discusses his medical work, which included treating eye diseases (which “form more than a quarter of the whole”), consumption (tuberculosis), and flesh and bone wounds suffered during the numerous blood feuds in which the local tribes engaged. He also discusses traditional medical practices, which included the nearly universal use of charms and amulets, and two widely used treatments, *dzan* and *dam*. The former, employed mainly to treat fevers, involved killing a goat or sheep and wrapping the patient in the skin of the animal, “with the raw surface next to him and the wool outside,” a process said to cause profuse perspiration and a breaking of the fever. *Dam* involved burning into the flesh with a cloth steeped in oil and then set on fire. Purgatives and bloodletting were also widely used. The book is illustrated with photographs; it also contains a small map of the Northwest Frontier Province and a “Glossary of Words Not Generally Used Outside India.”


This early Western history of Genghis Khan, the 13th-century Mongol emperor who established the world’s largest contiguous empire, is by François Pétis (1622–95), an interpreter of Arabic and Turkish at the French court. In a long and distinguished career, Pétis translated a history of France into Turkish, compiled a French-Turkish dictionary, and created a catalog of the Turkish and Persian manuscripts owned by the king of France. François Pétis de la Croix (1653–1713), the son of François Pétis, took over the position of interpreter from his father in 1695. In 1710, he published his father’s history of Genghis Khan. This edition is an English translation, which appeared in London some 12 years later. The translation is by Penelope Aubin (1679–1731), an English novelist, playwright, poet, and translator.


*A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All Parts of the World* is a 17-volume compilation of travel narratives assembled by the Scottish historian and poet John Pinkerton (1758–1826), first published in Great Britain in 1808–14. A contemporary and acquaintance of the historian Edward Gibbon and the novelist Sir Walter Scott, Pinkerton wrote books on Scottish history and poetry, numismatics, and other topics, as well as his own plays and poems. Many of the narratives were
newly translated into English from French, German, Dutch, Latin, Italian, Spanish, and other European languages. Each volume is illustrated with plates. A six-volume American edition of Pinkerton’s collection of voyages was published in Philadelphia in 1810–12. Shown here is the seventh volume of the original London edition, which mainly includes narratives of travel by Europeans to many countries of Asia, including China, Japan, Korea, Persia (Iran), and Turkestan. The narratives include “travels of two Mohammedans through China and India in the ninth century,” and accounts of travels by Marco Polo, ambassadors, and missionaries from present-day Italy, Germany, France, Spain, and Russia.


*Tuḥfat al-Ḥabībiyah*, published in 1938 in Peshawar, is a Pushto book about the various Islamic durood (complimentary ritual phrases), which are invoked during prayer times, and other ritual practices in praise of the Prophet Muhammad. It reviews a number of Islamic theological traditions and hadiths that discuss the benefits of invoking the verse *sallū ʻalyhi wasallimū taslīmā* (Ask blessings on him and salute him with a worthy salutation; Qur’an 33:56), which is interpreted as a reference to Muhammad. These salutations are called “Salawat.” The contents include an Arabic preface (pages 3–6), a Pushto acknowledgement section (pages 6–7), and six chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the meaning, context, and six descriptions of verse 56 in chapter 33 of the Qur’an. Chapter 2 is about the benefits and obligations of Muslims chanting Salawat when they read or mention the name of Muhammad. Chapter 3 talks about the meaning and context of the chant *Jalla Jalaluh* to praise Allah. Chapter 4 discusses the value of offering Salawat on Fridays, and during the five daily Islamic prayers. Chapter 5 addresses the time and benefits of offering Salawat right before and after the five daily prayers. Chapter 6 (the longest chapter) discusses the invocation of Salawat and its other benefits, as narrated specifically in 40 hadiths (sayings of Muhammad). The author, Muhammad Amin Mahajir Pishawari, seems to have produced the book for Haji Fazl Ahad, a local bookseller and a patron. The book has an illustrated cover, and a list of contents. Many mystical and ritualistic Persian poems, such as several by Jami (on pages 7, 14, and 74) appear throughout the book in support of a particular point being made by the author. This Pushto *Tuḥfat al-Ḥabībiyah* should not be confused with the Persian *Tuḥfat al-Ḥabīb* (Gift to Habib), a history dating from the beginning of the 20th century written by the Afghan court historian, Fayz Muhammad Katib Hazarah.


*The Rival Powers in Central Asia* is an English translation of a work originally published in Vienna in 1890 under the title *Antagonismus der Englischen und Russischen Interessen in Asien: Eine Militär-Politische Studie* (The antagonism between English and Russian interests in Asia: A military-political study). The study analyzes what the author sees as the threat to British India posed by an aggressive Russia. The author characterizes the Russian Empire as a “reckless, expansive force,” which, having reached its natural limits on the seas to the east and the north, was now concentrating “all its energies on the South, and chiefly in the direction of Constantinople and Central Asia.” While the Russian thrust into Central Asia is portrayed as a threat mainly to British interests, Russian ambitions toward Constantinople are seen as most threatening to the continental European powers, “Austria in particular,” which “cannot at
any cost permit Russia to take possession of Constantinople.” On this basis, the author argues that it is in Great Britain’s interest to join a “Central European Coalition” with Austria-Hungary and imperial Germany. Chapter four, the longest in the book, entitled “Strategical Relations of the Two States,” assesses the relative strengths of Russia and Great Britain in a contest for control of Central Asia and ultimately India, with sections on land forces, naval forces, and the transport and logistical routes likely to be used by each power. The concluding chapter discusses the benefits that Great Britain would gain by allying with the Central European powers against Russia, stresses the value to those powers of a British alliance, and argues that only through such an alliance would Britain be able to retain its hold on India. Ultimately, of course, the envisioned alliance did not come about, as some two decades later Great Britain allied with Russia (and France) and against Germany and Austria-Hungary in the great European conflict that came to be known as World War I.


*Travels in Beloochistan and Sinde* is a first-hand account of a journey taken in 1810–11 through parts of present-day India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq. The author, Henry Pottinger (1789–1856), was a lieutenant in the East India Company who, along with a friend and fellow officer, Captain Charles Christie, volunteered to undertake a mission to the region between India and Persia (present-day Iran), about which the East India Company at that time had little knowledge. The two men journeyed from Bombay (present-day Mumbai) to Sind (present-day southeast Pakistan) from where, disguised as Indians, they traveled overland to Kalat. They were quickly recognized as Europeans, but they were able to continue their journey to Nushki, near the present-day border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. There the men separated. Pottinger continued westward to Persia, through Kerman to Shiraz and Isfahan. Christie traveled north from Nushri into Afghanistan, through Helmand to Herat and from there into Persia to Yazd and Isfahan, where he rejoined Pottinger. Christie was directed to remain in Persia, where in 1812 he was killed in a Russian attack. Pottinger returned to Bombay via Baghdad and Basra. The book is in two parts. The first is a detailed account of Pottinger’s journey, with observations on climate, terrain, soil, plants and animals, peoples and tribes, customs, religion, and popular beliefs. The second is an introduction to the history and geography of the provinces of Baluchistan and Sind. An appendix reproduces part of the journal kept by Christie on his travels through Afghanistan. The book contains one colored illustration at the front and a large fold-out map after the end of the text. Pottinger went on to have a distinguished career with the East India Company and the British government. In April 1843 he was appointed the first British governor of Hong Kong.

Henry George Raverty (1825–1906) was an army officer in British India who, as a self-educated amateur scholar, made important contributions to the study of the languages, history, and cultures of India (present-day India and Pakistan) and Afghanistan. He sailed for India at the age of 15 or 16. After mastering Hindustani, Persian, Gujarati, and Marathi during his service in India, in 1849 he was transferred to Peshawar and the Northwest Frontier, where he turned his attention to Pushto and the language, history, and ethnology of Afghanistan. In 1855 he published volume one of his *A Grammar of the Pukhto, Pushto, or Language of the Afgháns*, which also includes a 50-page introduction on “the language, literature, and descent of the Afghan tribes.” To complete the grammar, Raverty is credited with collecting and systematizing a body of grammatical and lexical material never previously assembled. Volume two of the grammar was published in 1856. The book was produced by subscription, and the first pages of volume one list the names of the subscribers, the chief of which was the government of India, which reserved 150 copies. The beginning of volume two contains a slip reminding subscribers to pay for their copies of the book, along with the necessary postage. Presented here are both tomes, which were printed at the Baptist Mission Press in Calcutta (present-day Kolkata). The second volume is still in its original binding; the first was rebound by the Library of Congress.

Raverty issued a revised second edition of the grammar in 1860, and a third edition in 1867. His other major works include a monumental *Dictionary of the Pushto or Afghan Language* (1860; second edition 1867), an anthology of Pushto prose and poetry in English translation entitled *Gulshan i Roh* (1860); another book of translations, *Poetry of the Afghans from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (1862); and *Notes on Afghanistan and Baluchistan*, issued in four installments between 1881 and 1888.


Henry Creswicke Rawlinson (1810–95) was a British scholar and diplomat, best known for his contributions to the field of Assyriology. In 1827 he entered the service of the East India Company, where he held a variety of posts. He was involved in the reorganization of the Persian army in 1833–39 and in 1843 was appointed political agent of the East India Company in Turkish Arabia. He later served as consul general in Baghdad, where, in addition to his official duties, he took part in archeological expeditions and worked at deciphering Akkadian cuneiform tablets. He returned to England in 1856 and in 1858 was elected to Parliament as a member of the Conservative Party. He served briefly as British minister to Persia, where he was known for his uncompromising attitude towards Russia, which he regarded as a growing threat to the security of British India and to British interests in the region. *England and Russia in the East*, published in 1875, is a collection of five
essays by Rawlinson about Persian, Afghan, and Central Asian affairs, three of which are reprints of articles that appeared in the Calcutta Review and the Quarterly Review, and two of which were written for this volume. Rawlinson focuses on the perceived Russian threat and argues that “in the event of Russia’s approach to Herát, it will be indispensable to the safety of India that we should resume our military occupation of Western Afghanistán…. “ Chapter four of the work, “Central Asia,” is the most scholarly and least polemical part of the book. It offers a comprehensive overview of the geography of the entire region, which Rawlinson defines as located “between the Russian empire to the North and the British-Indian empire to the south, including, perhaps, a portion of the Persian province of Khorassán to the west, and Chinese Turkestan to the east.” Rawlinson provides a wealth of detail about the region, drawn from all of the leading British, Russian, German, and French authorities as well as knowledge derived from his own travels and observations. Regional treaties dating from 1853 to 1874 are included in the appendix in whole or in extract.


Kafiristan, or “The Land of the Infidels,” was a region of eastern Afghanistan where the inhabitants had retained their traditional pagan culture and religion and rejected conversion to Islam. The Káfirs of the Hindu-Kush is a detailed ethnographic account of the Kafirs, written by George Scott Robertson (1852–1916), a British administrator in India. With the approval of the government of India, Robertson made a preliminary visit to Kafiristan in October 1889, and then lived among the Kafirs for almost a year, from October 1890 to September 1891. Robertson describes his journey from Chitral (in present-day Pakistan) to Kafiristan and the difficulties he encountered in traveling about the country and in gaining information about the Kafir culture and religion. The latter, he writes, “is a somewhat low form of idolatry, with an admixture of ancestor-worship and some traces of fire-worship also. The gods and goddesses are numerous, and of varying degrees of importance or popularity.” Robertson describes religious practices and ceremonies, the tribal and clan structure of Kafir society, the role of slavery, the different villages in the region, and everyday life and social customs, including dress, diet, festivals, sport, the role of women in society, and much else that he observed first-hand. The book is illustrated with drawings, and it concludes with a large fold-out topographical map, which shows the author’s route in Kafiristan. In 1896 the ruler of Afghanistan, Amir ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan (reigned 1880–1901), conquered the area and brought it under Afghan control. The Kafirs became Muslims and in 1906 the region was renamed Nuristan, meaning the “Land of Light,” a reference to the enlightenment brought by Islam.

Theophilus Francis Rodenbough (1838–1912) was a Union Army officer during the American Civil War, who received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions at the Battle of Trevilian Station (Virginia) in June 1864. After his retirement from the Army in 1870, Rodenbough wrote several books on military themes. He composed *Afghanistan and the Anglo-Russian Dispute* very rapidly in the spring of 1885, as it appeared that Russia and the British Empire were headed for war in a dispute over the presence of Russian military forces in the region south of Merv (near present-day Mary, Turkmenistan). The Russians were reportedly established on the road to Herat, Afghanistan, which was seen by the British as a threat to Afghanistan and through Afghanistan to India. Following introductory chapters on the geography and recent history of Central Asia and Afghanistan, the heart of the book is two chapters, “The British Forces and Routes” and “The Russian Forces and Approaches.” Each of these chapters discusses the organization, size, geographic distribution, systems of transport and supply, and leadership of the two armies. The British chapter covers the routes by which a British army would proceed from British India (through present-day Pakistan, then part of India) into Afghanistan to confront the Russians; the Russian chapter describes the routes by which Russian forces might move against Herat. In a final chapter, “Review of the Military Situation,” Rodenbough endorses the view of British Lieutenant General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley that British interests would best be served by fighting the Russians on the Kandahar–Ghazni–Kabul line. In the end, the crisis of 1885 was defused by diplomatic means, and there was no war between Russia and Great Britain. The book is illustrated with sketches of scenes from Afghanistan and portraits of leading Afghan political figures. It includes three maps, one a large fold-out map of Afghanistan and surrounding territories, drawn and corrected from the latest military surveys.

Roskoschny, Hermann. *Afghanistan und seine nachbarländer*, Leipzig, 1885, [www.wdl.org/17688](http://www.wdl.org/17688) [353 pages]

*Afghanistan und seine Nachbarländer* (Afghanistan and its neighbors) by Hermann Roskoschny (1845–98) was considered the standard reference in German on Afghanistan in the late 19th century. Roskoschny was an author and publisher who studied in Prague and Munich and taught briefly in Saint Petersburg. He wrote books on Russia and on the European colonies in sub-Saharan Africa. *Afghanistan und seine Nachbarländer* was published in two volumes in 1885, five years after the end of the Second Anglo-Afghan War, a conflict that figures prominently in the work. Roskoschny discusses the competition for influence in Central Asia between Russia and the British Empire that provided the context for the war, the fear on the part of the British that the Russians would use Afghanistan as a base from which to threaten British India, and the war itself, which pitted British India against the Barakzai dynasty of Afghanistan.
under Sher Ali Khan (reigned 1863–66 and 1868–79). Other topics that Roskoschny discusses include the origins of the Afghan people, the ancient history of the country, and the frontier disputes with British India. A separate chapter in the first volume is devoted to the “most interesting” Kafiristan, or “The Land of the Infidels,” a region in eastern Afghanistan where the inhabitants had retained their traditional culture and religion and rejected conversion to Islam. The volumes include four explanatory maps and a total of 103 drawings that depict places, people, and daily life in Afghanistan of the time.


*La rivalité anglo-russe au XIXe siècle en Asie: golfe Persique, frontières de l'Inde* (The Anglo-Russian rivalry in 19th century Asia: Persian Gulf, frontiers of India) is a history of the competition between the British and Russian Empires over territories lying between their respective dominions in Asia. Russian expansion into Central Asia and British penetration east of Suez to the Indian subcontinent led the two powers into this diplomatic and military competition, which became known as the Great Game. The author, Alphonse Rouire (1855‒1917), was a French physician and writer on geographical and historical topics concerning Asia and Africa. The book is based on articles that he published over a five-year period in the French intellectual monthly *Revue des Deux Mondes* (Journal of two worlds). It contains chapters on England in Arabia, England and Russia in Persia, the English and the Russians in Afghanistan, the English in Tibet, and the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. Rouire analyses Anglo-Russian tensions in these regions, and concludes that the rivalry between the two empires ended happily with the signing of the “wise” and “durable” Anglo-Russian Convention, which he optimistically predicts would become “one of the best measures of world peace.” The book was published in 1908 by Armand Colin, the French academic press founded in 1870. It contains a fold-out map of the region.


*Afganskoe razgranichenie* (Delimitation of Afghanistan) was published by the Russian Foreign Ministry in 1886 to inform national and international audiences about the negotiations between the Russian and British governments in 1872–75 and in 1883–85 about demarcation of the northern border of Afghanistan. The book is in Russian and French, with the identical text on facing pages. Part one is an introduction that provides a historical overview of the negotiations; part two provides the texts of 159 documents produced by or relevant to the negotiations. Documents are presented in Russian and French; British official documents are also presented in their original English. At the end are three maps. The topics
covered include the negotiations of 1869–73 and the occupation by the Afghans in 1883 of the territories of Shugnan and Roshan (on the border of present-day Tajikistan and Afghanistan); the Russian conquest of the territory of the Ahal Teke (in present-day southern Turkmenistan) and the negotiations between Britain and Russia of 1882; and the Russian occupation of Merv (Mary) and the negotiations of 1884–85 concerning the city and oasis. Among the documents reproduced in the volume are correspondence by Prince Gorchakov, foreign minister of Russia from 1856 to 1882, and by his successor Nicholai Karlovich Girs; dispatches from Saint Petersburg to London by Sir Edward Thornton, the British ambassador to Russia; and important bilateral documents such as the protocol defining the frontier between Russia and Afghanistan signed on August 29, 1885, by Lord Salisbury, the British prime minister, and Baron de Staal, the Russian ambassador in London.


*A Visit to Afghanistan* is an account of a two-month trip to Afghanistan in 1909 by Dr. Walter Saise, a British mining expert. Saise had been invited to Afghanistan by Amir Habibullah Khan (1872–1919, reigned 1901–19, whom Saise often refers to as king), who was interested in developing national sources of coal to power the royal factories and workshops. The latter, many of which were established by Habibullah’s father ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan, produced boots, uniforms, guns, ammunition, and other military supplies. Saise visited the coalfields at Ghorband (present-day Chahadah-ye Ghorband) as well as the lead mines at Ferengal (present-day Koh-e Firingal) and the ruby mines of Jagdallak (present-day Jigdalai or Jegdalek). His account describes the mineral seams at these locations and the mining techniques used by the Afghans. Saise also recounts his visit to the Madrassa Herbeia Serbajia (Royal Military College), his observations on how the Afghans built and maintained their roads, and his discussions with the amir. Like other Afghans, Habibullah believed that the people of Afghanistan were descendants of the Beni-Israel, the ten lost tribes of Israel, who after the Arab conquest of Kabul in the middle of the seventh century had converted from Judaism to Islam, later converted back to Judaism, and finally reconverted to Islam in circa 690–700. Habibullah also described for Saise the conquest of the Kafirs of Kafiristan by his father and his own role integrating this formerly non-Muslim minority into Afghan society. Saise’s paper was read at the Central Asian Society in London on April 12, 1911, and originally published in the *Proceedings* of the society.
Lady Florentia Wynch Sale (1790–1853) was the wife of Sir Robert Henry Sale (1782–1845), a British army officer who served in India and Burma and participated in the ill-fated Anglo-Indian invasion of Afghanistan that triggered the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). The objective of the invasion was to overthrow the amir of Afghanistan, Dost Mohammad Khan, and replace him with Shah Shuja’, a former ruler thought to be more pro-British. The Anglo-Indian force that entered the country quickly overcame resistance and occupied Kabul and other major cities. Lulled into believing that the Afghans had been pacified, Sale, like other British officers and civilian officials, sent for his wife to join him, first in Jalalabad and then in Kabul. Following a violent uprising that began on November 2, 1841, the British and Afghan governments concluded a treaty under which the occupying Anglo-Indian force agreed to evacuate the country and was assured safe passage on its return to British India. The new amir, Akbar Khan (1816–45, ruled 1842–45), the son of Dost Mohammad, disregarded the terms of the treaty, and in January 1842 Lady Sale and her daughter, Alexandrina, were taken hostage, along with British officers and soldiers and other women and children. A total of 63 hostages were held, several of whom died in captivity. The prisoners finally were released after nine months of captivity, when they offered to pay a large bribe to their Afghan jailer. Lady Sale, who was wounded in the initial fighting and had a bullet in her wrist, managed to keep the diary that she had begun in Kabul in September 1841, making frequent entries right up to her release in September of the following year. Along with Lieutenant Vincent Eyre’s The Military Operations at Cabul, which Ended in the Retreat and Destruction of the British Army, January 1842, Lady Sale’s A Journal of the Disasters in Afghanistan, 1841–2 is one of two first-hand accounts of the ordeal of the British hostages. Both books were published in London in 1843. The author recounts the hardships endured by the prisoners, encounters with Afghans both friendly and hostile, battles that she witnessed, and the negotiations for release of the prisoners. The book contains a glossary of “Persian, Hindostani [Hindi] and other Oriental Words” used in the text and a fold-out plan of the cantonments around Kabul. The appendix contains the text of the treaty between the British and Afghan authorities concluded on December 11, 1841, regarding evacuation and safe passage. Following publication of her journal, Lady Sale was widely hailed as a heroine in Britain.

Presented here is a pocket English-Dari dictionary, published in Kabul in 1967. It is meant to provide the vocabulary needed by English speakers to engage in everyday conversation. The dictionary includes a guide to pronunciation, brief notes on grammar, and a list of greetings and useful expressions. All Dari words are transliterated, using Roman script rather than the Perso-Arabic script with which Dari is written. Dari is the variety of Persian spoken in Afghanistan. It is, along with Pushto, one of the country’s two official languages, spoken by approximately five million people. Another 2.5 million Dari speakers are found in Iran and Pakistan.


Eugène Schuyler (1840–90) was an American diplomat, explorer, author, and scholar who was one of the first foreigners invited by the Russian government to see Russia’s newly conquered territories in Central Asia. In 1873, while serving as the secretary of the American legation in Saint Petersburg, Schuyler made an eight-month trip through lands then little known to outsiders. He gathered extensive geographical information and wrote accounts of his travels for the National Geographic Society and a lengthy confidential report for the U.S. Department of State. He was critical of Russian treatment of the Tartars but otherwise saw the Russian presence in Central Asia as benign. *Turkistan: Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bukhara, and Kuldja* is Schuyler’s two-volume account of his travels. Volume one begins on the Russian steppe and the Volga River before proceeding to Central Asia proper, with chapters on the Syr Darya, Tashkent, Muslim life in Tashkent, bazaars and trade, Samarkand, the Zarafshan Valley, and Hodjent (present-day Khujand, Tajikistan) and Kurama (a mountain range in present-day Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). Volume two completes the geographic survey of the region with
chapters on Khokand, Bukhara, Issyk Kul (in present-day Kyrgyzstan) and Semirech (present-day Semirech’e, Kazakhstan), and Kul’dja (in present-day China), and concludes with chapters on Russian administration, Russian foreign policy in Asia, and the Khivan campaign of 1873, in which Russia conquered the Khivan khanate. Both volumes contain appendices with supplemental materials and translations of primary documents, for example, at the end of volume one, a summary of early Chinese and medieval European travelers to Central Asia and the accounts of their voyages. Published in 1876 in the United States and Britain, the book includes illustrations, three maps, and a detailed index.


[710 pages]

The Afghan Campaigns of 1878–1880 is a two-volume account of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80) by Sydney H. Shadbolt, a London barrister and the author of works on imperial subjects. The first volume, entitled “Historical Division,” includes a sketch of the war and the movements of the forces, illustrated by maps. The second volume, entitled “Biographical Division,” contains albumen photographs and short biographies of the 140 British officers, along with a small number of civilians from the diplomatic service, who died in the campaign. The men are listed alphabetically. Most were killed in combat, but those who died of typhoid, cholera, and other causes also are included. The longest biography in the book is that of Major Sir Pierre Louis Napoleon Cavagnari, the French-born British military adviser who negotiated the Treaty of Gandamak in May 1879 and who was killed by mutinous Afghan troops in Kabul in September 1879, while serving as envoy and minister plenipotentiary of the British government to the court of Amir Ya’qub Khan. The concluding section of the biographical volume lists the 13 men who were awarded the Victoria Cross (the highest military honor awarded for bravery in the British Army) and provides accounts of the acts of valor for which they were recommended for this honor. This list includes mainly officers, but also a gunner, a sergeant, and a lance corporal.

**Shāh Arzānī, Muḥammad Akbar ibn Muḥammad. Mīzān al-ṭibb, Lucknow, 1884, [www.wdl.org/17676](http://www.wdl.org/17676)**

[230 pages]

Mīzān al-ṭibb (The measure of medicine) is a popular medical work written by Muhammad Akbar Arzani (died 1772). Scholars differ as to whether Arzani was born in Persia or in India, but he is generally considered the first physician of the Mughal Empire to systematically translate Arabic medical works into Persian. His medical texts enjoyed great popularity in India and Persia and served as instructional texts for medical students throughout these lands. It is also known that Arzani was a Sufi and that he belonged to the Qadiriyya order. In the introduction to Mīzān al-ṭibb Arzani states that his purpose in composing this text was to serve destitute students who desired to study medicine as did others of greater means. The clarity of Arzani’s text and its abridged but comprehensive nature are likely what contributed to its...
becoming the principal work to be mastered by beginning medical students from the 18th century onwards. The work is written in three sections: the first on kāfiyāt-i chahar ganah (the four qualities, i.e., heat, cold, moistness, and dryness); the second on dār bāyān adwīyah mufrada wa murakabbah aghzīya (the simple and compound drugs and food); and the third on dār bāyān amraza wa 'alaj-i an (diseases and their cures). The major part of the book is taken up by the third section, which is divided into chapters that primarily deal with the treatment of diseases of individual organs. Also included in this section are diseases specific to women and to men and sections on fevers and swellings. The present volume concludes with shorter treatises by other authors on the pulse and on urine. The book was published in 1884 by the famed Newal Kishore Press in Lucknow, India.


William Morgan Shuster (1877–1960) was an American lawyer and financial expert who served as treasurer general to the government of the Persian Empire in 1911. In 1910, the Persian government asked U.S. president William Howard Taft for technical assistance in reorganizing its financial system. Taft chose Shuster to head a mission of American experts to Tehran. *The Strangling of Persia* is Shuster’s account of his experiences, published soon after his return to the United States. In the Anglo-Russian convention of August 31, 1907, Britain and Russia had divided Persia (present-day Iran) into a Russian sphere of influence in the north of the empire and a British sphere in the south (with additional arrangements for Afghanistan and Tibet). Each power was to have exclusive commercial rights in its sphere. Under this agreement and other arrangements, Persian customs revenues were collected to guarantee the payment of interest and principal on foreign loans. Seeking to defend the interests of the Persians, Shuster clashed repeatedly with Russian and British officials, until his mission was forced to withdraw in early 1912. The book provides a detailed account of the background to the mission, of political and financial conditions in Persia in the early 20th century, and of the rivalry among Russia, Britain, and eventually Germany for influence in the country. The narrative covers the Russian military intervention of 1911, the atrocities committed by Russian troops, and the coup and dissolution of the Majlis (parliament) carried out under Russian pressure in December 1911. The book includes numerous photographs and a map, an index, and an appendix with copies of key documents and correspondence.


*L’Afghanistan: les Russes aux portes de l’Inde* (Afghanistan: The Russians at the gates of India) is a comprehensive analysis of Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia in the 19th century. The book is intended to help explain this rivalry to a French audience. The author is Charles Simond, an alias for Paul Adolphe van Cleemputte (1837–1916), a French-Belgian publicist, journalist, and novelist. The book was published in Paris in May 1885, two months after the Panjdeh incident, to which reference is made in the introduction. The incident involved the seizure by Russian forces of Afghan territory south of the Oxus River (the present-day Amu Darya), leading to a clash with Afghan troops and a diplomatic crisis with Great Britain. The work is divided into three books,
each of which is further divided into chapters. In Book I, Les clefs de l'Indie (The keys to India), Van Cleemputte portrays Afghanistan as the probable route through which Russia would invade India. He discusses various aspects of Afghanistan’s strategic position, including its geography, strategic routes and passes, population, military strength, and history. Book II, L'intrigue russe (The Russian intrigue), covers Russian expansion into Central Asia, including the recent annexation of Merv (present-day Mary, Turkmenistan) in 1884 as well as the Russian plans for the region as developed by General Mikhail Skobelev, the architect of the expansion. In Book III, L'intrigue anglaise (The English intrigue), Van Cleemputte discusses Britain’s Indian Empire and the British involvement in Afghanistan, including the Afghan policy of William Gladstone, the prime minister at the time. The book includes a color map of Afghanistan showing the country’s location between the Russian and the British-Indian empires. In the introduction Van Cleemputte suggests that war between Britain and Russia is inevitable and recommends that France remain strictly and sincerely neutral in any conflict between the two rivals.


Akbar the Great Mogul, 1542–1605 is a biography of Akbar I (reigned, 1556–1605), the third and greatest of the Mughal emperors of India. The author, Vincent Arthur Smith, was an Irish-born historian and antiquary who served in the Indian Civil Service before turning to full-time research and scholarship. After assuming the throne while still a youth, Akbar succeeded in consolidating and enlarging the Mughal Empire. He instituted reforms of the tax structure, the organization and control of the military, and the religious establishment and its relationship to the state. He was also a patron of culture and the arts, and he had a keen interest in religion and the possible sources of religious knowledge. The book traces Akbar’s ancestry and early years; his accession to the throne and his regency under Bayram Khan; his many conquests, including Bihar, the Afghan kingdom of Bengal, Malwa, Gujarat, Kashmir, Sind, parts of Orissa, and parts of the Deccan Plateau; and his annexation of other territories through diplomacy, including Baluchistan and Kandahar. The book devotes considerable attention to Akbar’s religious beliefs and interests. On several occasions Akbar requested that the Portuguese authorities in Goa send priests to his court to teach him about Christianity, and the book recounts the stories of the three Jesuit missions organized in response to these requests. By origin a Sunni Muslim, Akbar also sought to learn from Shi’ite scholars, Sufi mystics, and Hindus, Jains, and Parsis. The last four chapters of the book are not chronological but deal with the Akbar’s personal characteristics, civil and military institutions in the empire, the social and economic conditions of the people, and literature and art. The book contains a detailed chronology of the life and reign of Akbar and an annotated bibliography. Also included are maps and illustrations. Maps of India in 1561 and India in 1605 show the extent of Akbar’s conquests, and sketch maps illustrate his main military campaigns.

*Frontier Folk of the Afghan Border—and Beyond* is a book of photographs, with explanatory text, of people from more than 20 tribes and ethnic groups mainly living in the Northwest Frontier region of British India (present-day Pakistan) or across the border in Afghanistan. A few of the pictures show people or scenes from Kashmir, Tibet, and Russian Turkestan. The photographs depict local costumes, festivals and celebrations, and economic life. Most were taken by Captain L.B. Cane of the Royal Army Medical Corps. The text is by Lilian Agnes Starr, the widow of Vernon Harold Starr, a physician at the British medical mission in Peshawar who was murdered by a local tribesman in 1918. Lilian Starr, a nurse at the mission where her husband worked, continued to live in Peshawar after his death and produced several books on the region. The hospital at Peshawar was part of a chain of medical missions run by British missionaries stretching along the Northwest Frontier and into Kashmir and Tibet. Many of the photographs depict patients arriving at one or another of these hospitals for treatment or vaccination against smallpox. The book contains a brief foreword by Lionel C. Dunsterville, a British army officer who served on the Northwest Frontier and was a friend of Vernon Starr and of British writer Rudyard Kipling.


Captain John Stevens (died 1726) was a prolific translator and embellisher of Spanish and Portuguese works of history and literature who published this book in 1715. In his preface, Stevens explained: “Persia is at this time, and has been for several Ages, one of the Great Eastern Monarchies, and yet the Accounts we have hitherto had of it in *English* have been no better than Fragments.” The book is a translation of a work in Spanish published in 1610 by Pedro Teixeira (erroneously identified by Stevens as Antony), a Portuguese traveler and writer about whom little is known. Some time after 1586 Teixeira traveled to Portuguese Goa in present-day India. From there he went to Persia, where he became proficient in Persian and acquired books and manuscripts on the history of the country. Teixeira’s book consisted of a summary and translation of the *Tārīkh-i rawzat al-ṣafā* (History of the kings of Persia) by Mir Khvānd, Muhammad ibn Khāvandshāh (1433–98), a summarized translation of a Persian chronicle of the kings of Hormuz, and an account of his own voyage from India to Italy in 1600-01. Stevens’s work contained numerous errors and inaccuracies, but it played an important part in making Persia better known to 18th-century European and especially British readers.

*Through Persia in Disguise, with Reminiscences of the Indian Mutiny* consists of diary entries written by Charles Edward Stewart, an officer in the Indian Army and later British consul general at Tabriz and at Odessa, edited and published posthumously by members of his family. Part one of the book recounts Stewart’s role in the suppression of the Indian Mutiny of 1857 (also known as the Sepoy Rebellion), an uprising of sepoys (native soldiers) against the army of the British East India Company. Much of the action described takes place in Peshawar (in present-day Pakistan). Stewart also participated in and describes the Umbeylah (also seen as Ambela and Umbeyla) Campaign of 1863, in which an Anglo-Indian force marched against Pashtun (also seen as Pushtun) tribes opposed to British colonial rule. Part two deals with several missions that Stewart undertook in the early 1880s, in which he traveled across Persia to the Persian-Afghan frontier and into Afghanistan. The purpose of his trips was to gather intelligence for the British government, and for much of the time he traveled disguised as an Armenian horse dealer from Calcutta. In 1884 Stewart was appointed the second assistant commissioner on the Afghan Boundary Commission under Sir Peter Lumsden, and the book has a chapter on the work of the commission in the city of Herat and its environs. The book includes illustrations and a map of the Afghan-Persian border region and four appendices: the text of a paper read at the Royal Geographical Society in June 1887, “The Country of the Tekke Turkomans, and the Tejend and Murghab Rivers,” based on Stewart’s mission of 1880; an article on the use of petroleum as a fuel for locomotives and steamships (based on Stewart’s observation of this new technology as used by the Russians in the region of the Caspian Sea); an article on a possible railway extension to link the Russian Central Asian Railway and the Indian Railway System; and a short article entitled “Bible Work in Persia” in which Stewart makes a number of observations about different religious groups in Persia, including Shia Muslims, Nestorian and Armenian Christians, and Babis.

*Some Considerations on the Political State of the Intermediate Countries Between Persia and India* is a short tract by Edward Hamilton Stirling (1797–1873), a British explorer and East India Company civil servant. It is based on an 1828 overland journey that Stirling took from Persia via present-day northern Afghanistan and back to India. Stirling joined the East India Company in 1816 and rose to become a collector in the Agra Division of the Bengal Presidency. When he was granted leave in 1828, he decided to use the time to explore Persia and Central Asia, with the ultimate goal of returning to India via the overland route through Herat, Balkh, and Kabul. He left India in February 1828 and arrived in Bushire (present-day Bushehr, Iran) a month later. From there he travelled overland via Shiraz to Tehran, where he met with the British envoy to Persia, Sir John MacDonald, who asked him to investigate “the conditions, capabilities, and military features of those countries by which a European army from the North or West could penetrate to India...” Stirling eventually completed his journey, thereby becoming the first European to return alive from northern Afghanistan. In this tract, he reported on the social and political conditions in the regions he visited and identified three possible invasion routes, in addition to the “high road through the middle of Persia.” Upon his return to India, he found that he had been replaced and demoted, and that his findings were ignored by the company’s political officers. Incensed by such treatment, Stirling returned to England in 1834. He published *Some Considerations* in London the following year.


*The Constitution and Laws of Afghanistan* originally was written as a dissertation at Christ’s College, Cambridge, by an Afghan student, Sultan Muhammad Khan, and published in London in 1900. In his introduction, the author writes that in “searching in the libraries of the University of Cambridge and the British Museum, all the books of reference on Afghanistan which I have been able to find were either on history, travels, or war, and none specially on law.” One of his objectives is to compare “the modern laws of the most advanced European countries with the immature laws of a country which is now only just emerging from a state of lawlessness.” Sultan notes that the laws of Afghanistan are based on several sources, including ancient customs and Islamic law, borrowings in modern times from India and other neighboring countries, and on the work of the current ruler of Afghanistan, Amir ʿAbd al-Rahman Khan (circa 1844–1901, reigned 1880–1901). Another of Sultan’s objectives is to identify and analyze these different sources of law. The book begins with a brief outline of Afghan history. This is followed by several chapters on the crown and different aspects of the monarchy and the royal prerogative and chapters on the king in durbar and council; the king and his cabinet; the crown, justice, and courts of justice; the departments of government; and the crown and foreign powers. It concludes with a long chapter entitled “Comments on Private Law.” The book is dedicated to Amir ʿAbd al-Rahman Khan and his son, the heir apparent, Prince Habibullah Khan (1872–1919, reigned 1901–19). Sultan Muhammad Khan was *mir munshi* (state secretary) under ʿAbd al-Rahman Khan and edited and translated the amir’s autobiography for publication, which also appeared in 1900.
Percy Molesworth Sykes (1867–1945) was a British soldier, diplomat, and author who wrote several important books about Persia (present-day Iran) and neighboring countries, including *Ten Thousand Miles in Persia* (1902), *The Glory of the Shia World* (1910), and this two-volume *A History of Persia* (1915). Sykes was educated at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst and, upon his commission as an officer in the British Army, joined a cavalry regiment in India in 1888. In November 1892, he undertook a secret mission to Samarkand (present-day Uzbekistan) to survey, on behalf of the British authorities, the Trans-Caspian Railway, recently completed by the Russians. He made trips to Persia in 1893 and 1894 for surveying and mapping, and to cultivate local leaders. In late 1894, he was appointed the first British consul for Kermān and Baluchistan, a position he held for the next decade. After an introduction to the climate and physical features of the country, *A History of Persia* provides a comprehensive history, from the early civilization of Elam (circa 2700 BC) to the adoption of the first modern constitution in 1906. The book was updated and reprinted in 1921 and 1930 as well as translated into Persian. Presented here is the 1921 edition. It contains maps, illustrations, and a bibliography of sources used by Sykes.

*Tall Tactics: England Afghanistan* is a 50-page essay by an unidentified author on British foreign policy, particularly policy toward Afghanistan, published during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). The war was initiated under the Conservative government of Benjamin Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield), who was prime minister from February 1874 to April 1880. Disraeli was preceded by the Liberal William Gladstone (in office December 1868–February 1874). Written from the Liberal point of view, the essay is an attack on Disraeli’s policies and a defense of those of Gladstone. It begins with a discussion of Anglo-Russian relations and the Eastern Question, i.e., the fate of the Ottoman Empire, noting that Conservative “policy towards Afghanistan has been guided by Tory wishes and watchings in Turkey in Europe.” The remainder of the pamphlet is devoted to a defense of British policy toward Afghanistan under Gladstone and to criticisms of that policy under Disraeli, which it claims needlessly alienated the amir of Afghanistan, Sher Ali (ruled 1863–66 and 1868–79), and ultimately culminated in a pointless and costly war. The arguments made are reflective of those that raged in the British press and parliament in the 1870s as the parties debated how to respond to Russian expansionism in Central Asia and whether Russian moves constituted a threat to British India through Afghanistan. The author accuses the Disraeli government of acting contrary to the unwritten English constitution by committing “the country to a new line of political action without consulting Parliament.” The essay concludes with calls for the reform of the British political system, which it argues are needed to ensure that foreign and domestic policy are conducted for the “general good of all the people” rather than for the benefit of private interests.


George Passman Tate was an assistant superintendent employed by the Survey of India who headed the surveys undertaken by two missions that determined large parts of the borders of Afghanistan, the Baluch-Afghan Boundary Commission of 1895–96 and the Seistan Arbitration Mission of 1903–5. The first of these surveys was carried out to delimit the so-called Durand Line, the border between Afghanistan and British India (present-day Pakistan) that was negotiated during the 1893 mission to Kabul by Sir Mortimer Durand of the Indian government and codified in an agreement signed by Durand and the ruler of Afghanistan, Amir ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan. The second survey was to Seistan, or Sistan, a region that straddles eastern Iran and southern Afghanistan (and parts of Pakistan). It was undertaken after the governments in Kabul and Tehran asked Great Britain to arbitrate the border
between the two countries in this region. The book contains an introduction by Colonel Sir Henry McMahon, the British commissioner on both missions. Most of the book is taken up by Tate’s account of the Seistan Mission. He describes the journey overland from Quetta (in present-day Pakistan) to eastern Iran and the region of the marshy Hamun-e Helmand (present-day Daryacheh-ye Hamun) fed by the Helmand River. Tate offers vivid descriptions of the harsh and forbidding climate, the famous “Wind of 120 Days,” and the people, economy, and social conditions of the region. The final chapter is devoted to the Helmand River. The book includes illustrations and two fold-out maps, one showing the route of Tate’s travels, and another the region of the Daryacheh-ye Hamun. Tate describes the work of the surveying parties, but he offers little insight into the politics surrounding the determination of the borders, a topic which, as Sir Henry McMahon phrased it in his introduction, he “felt himself debared from touching.” Tate filed a number of official reports in which these topics were discussed.

**Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste. *Les six voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier*, Paris, 1676-77, [www.wdl.org/17788](http://www.wdl.org/17788) [1240 pages]**

Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605–89) was one of the most renowned travelers of 17th century Europe. The son of a French Protestant who had fled Antwerp to escape religious persecution, Tavernier was a jewel merchant who between 1632 and 1668 made six voyages to the East. The countries he visited (most more than once) included present-day Cyprus, Malta, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. In 1676–77 he published his two-volume *Les six voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier* (The six voyages of Jean Baptiste Tavernier). Presented here is the first edition of the book, which was published in Paris by the firm of G. Clouzier. The complete title and subtitle of the book read: *Les six voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier, Ecuyer Baron d’Aubonne, qu’il a fait en Turquie, en Perse, et aux Indes, pendant l’espace de quarante ans, & par toutes les routes que l’on peut tenir, accompagnez d’observations particulières sur la qualité, la religion, le gouvernement, les coutumes & le commerce de chaque païs, avec les figures, le poids, & la valeur des monnoyés qui y ont cours* (The six voyages of Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, baron of Aubonne, through Turkey into Persia and the East-Indies, over the course of forty years, and by all possible routes, illustrated with particular observations on the quality, religion, government, customs and commerce of each country, with images, weight, and value of the currencies of each of them). An abridged and very imperfect English translation of the book appeared in 1678. The first modern scholarly edition in English was published in 1889.

**Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste. *Travels in India, from the Original French Edition of 1676, with a Biographical Sketch of the Author, Notes, Appendices, etc.*, London, 1889, [www.wdl.org/17760](http://www.wdl.org/17760) [1000 pages]**

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Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605–89) was one of the most renowned travelers of 17th century Europe. The son of a French Protestant who had fled Antwerp to escape religious persecution, Tavernier was a jewel merchant who between 1632 and 1668 made six voyages to the East. The countries he visited (most more than once) included present-day Cyprus, Malta, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. In 1676 he published his two-volume *Les six voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier* (The six voyages of Jean Baptiste Tavernier). An abridged and very imperfect English translation of the book appeared in 1677. The first modern scholarly edition in English was published in 1889, with translation, notes, and a biographical sketch of Tavernier by Dr. Valentine Ball (1843–95), a British civil servant with the Indian Geological Service. Presented here is the second edition, which was published in 1925 and edited by William Crooke, based on Ball’s original translations with corrections drawing on knowledge developed in the field of Indian studies after 1889. Among the most memorable chapters in the book are those that recount Tavernier’s visits to the diamond mines of India and his inspection of the jewels of the Great Mogul. Tavernier was not a scholar or an educated linguist, and after his initial popularity in the 17th century his authority waned, as historians and others questioned the accuracy of his observations. In the 20th century, however, Tavernier’s reputation rose, as such important historians as Lucien Febvre and Fernand Braudel used the detailed information he recorded about the prices and qualities of goods and about business and commercial practices in their pioneering studies of economic and social history. The book contains several appendices by Ball about famous diamonds (including the historic Koh-i-Noor Diamond now belonging to the British royal family), diamond mines in India and Borneo, ruby mines in Burma, and sapphire washings in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). A fold-out map shows Tavernier’s voyages in India and the mines he visited.
Scenes and Adventures in Afghanistan is a personal account, by a soldier in the army of the British East India Company, of his experiences during the First Anglo-Afghan War (1838–42). The author, Sergeant-Major William Taylor, tells of the march of his regiment from the vicinity of Bombay (present-day Mumbai) in India to the borders of Afghanistan. In the preface he states: “Mine is a simple, straightforward narrative of a soldier, more accustomed to wielding the sword than the pen…” The action takes place in 1838 and 1839. In Taylor’s telling, British forces were sent to Afghanistan to protect the possessions of the East India Company “from the intrigues and aggressions of Persia,” an explanation that misses the main point of the invasion. Although Persian expansion played a role in British strategic thinking, it was in fact the perceived ambitions of the Russian Empire that inspired the British occupation of Kabul and the removal of the Afghan leader Dost Moḥammad Khān and his replacement by the more tractable amir, Shah Shujāʿ (circa 1780–1842). Taylor’s regiment spent little if any time in Afghanistan. His tale recounts the march north from Bombay and through Sind Province to the borders of what is now Pakistani Baluchistan. Taylor describes army camp life and frequent more-or-less peaceful encounters with the local population. He intersperses accounts of hunting and fishing with observations about weddings, shopping in the markets, and other scenes and activities. First published in 1842, the book enjoyed popularity as a travel account and was frequently reprinted. Presented here is the 1847 edition by the London publishers T.C. Newby and Parry, Blenkarn, & Company.

The Bāz-nāma-yi Nāširī, a Persian Treatise on Falconry is a 19th century manual on the art and sport of hunting with raptors. The book is by Taymur Mirza (died 1874 or 1875; mirza means “prince” in Persian when it follows a personal name), a member of the Qajar dynasty (1785–1925) and grandson of Fath ʿAlī Shah, Shah of Iran. The translator’s introduction describes how Taymur Mirza was exiled from Persia but eventually was restored into the good graces of Nasir al-Din Shah (1831–96). Falconry is a traditional sport of Asia and Europe, enjoyed by royalty from ancient times. Birds of prey specially trained for the hunt have been termed “the king’s darlings.” Taymur Mirza divides his descriptions of such birds into the two traditional taxonomies: “dark-eyed birds” and “yellow-eyed birds.” Examples in the first category are eagles and buzzards, and in the second, various hawks, owls, and the osprey (“which refused all food except fish”). In meticulously detailed text enhanced by the translator’s notes and photographs, Taymur Mirza covers the husbandry of raptors, their capture, training, diet, and treatment of diseases, illustrated with examples from his own experience. The book was translated by Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Craven Phillott (1860–1930), a British army officer who was a linguist, teacher, and prolific writer of manuals for students of Hindi, Urdu, and Persian. Phillot translated numerous literary works, including other treatises on the traditional royal pursuits of hunting and horsemanship. This edition of Phillot’s translation of Bāz-nāma-yi Nāširī was published in London in 1908 in a limited edition of 500 copies.
**Thorburn, Septimus Smet. *Bannu; or Our Afghan Frontier*, London, 1876, [www.wdl.org/17706](http://www.wdl.org/17706) [488 pages]**

*Bannu, or Our Afghan Frontier* is an account of Bannu District in British India (located in present-day northwestern Pakistan). The Bannu Valley was seized by the East India Company in 1848 and the district formed in 1861. The author, Septimus Smet Thorburn, was an official in the Indian Civil Service and the settlement officer in the district. The book is in two parts. Part one, consisting of six chapters, covers the geography, history, and administrative system of Bannu, with emphasis on British rule and its interaction with local traditions, customs, and patterns of authority and land tenure and ownership. Part two, which comprises the bulk of the book, deals with customs and folklore. It includes an introductory chapter entitled “Social Life, Customs, Beliefs and Superstitions of the Peasantry,” and separate chapters devoted to “Popular Stories, Ballads and Riddles” and “Pashto Proverbs Translated into English.” The final chapter gives the texts of the same proverbs—406 in all—in Pushto. The stories, ballads, and riddles are brief—generally a few paragraphs—and are classed in five categories: humorous and moral, comic and jocular, fables, Marwat ballads (relating to the Pushto Marwat tribe living in Bannu), and riddles. The proverbs are grouped according to the topics to which they relate, for example, begging, boasting, bravery, and so forth, and for many of the proverbs a brief explanation is given of its meaning and application. A short appendix deals with the complicated system of land allotments in the different *tappas* (traditional subdivisions) of the Bannu region. The book includes a map of the Bannu District with an inset map showing its relationship to the neighboring parts of Afghanistan and the regions of Waziristan, Kashmir, and the Punjab.


Ernest Thornton was an English official and industrial manager who in 1892 was engaged by the ruler of Afghanistan, Amir ‘Abd al-Rahman Khān (reigned 1880–1901), to establish a tannery and leather factory in Kabul. After encountering all manner of difficulties with the enterprise, Thornton resigned his post and left Afghanistan the following year. In late 1902, he received an offer from the Afghan government to return to Kabul to make another attempt at establishing a factory. Accompanied by his wife Annie, Thornton lived in Afghanistan in 1903–9, where he successfully built and operated a plant that produced boots for the Afghan army. Thornton, who at one point was one of only two Englishmen living in the country, worked closely with ‘Abd al-Rahman’s successor, Amir Habibullah Khān (reigned 1901–19), who sought to modernize his country but whose real passion was golf. *Leaves from an Afghan Scrapbook* is an account by the Thorntons of their life in Afghanistan. It offers a detailed portrayal of Amir Habibullah Khān and life at the court as well as observations on Afghan religious life, customs, dress, music, and economic activity. Of particular interest are Ernest Thornton’s observations on the speed with which a largely illiterate Afghan workforce with little or no formal education or training for industrial labor was able to master modern technologies and operate up-to-date machinery imported from Europe.

*Through the Heart of Afghanistan* is an English translation of Emil Trinkler’s *Quer durch Afghanistan nach Indien*, published in Berlin in 1927. Trinkler (1896–1931) was a German geographer and explorer who went to Afghanistan in 1923–24 as a geologist for the German-Afghan Trading Company. The book is an account of Trinkler’s voyage, which began in Riga, Latvia, and included a trip by train across Russia followed by a seven-week delay at the Russian-Afghan border. Trinkler eventually succeeded in entering Afghanistan and traveled on to India. The book contains vivid accounts of the places he visited, including Herat, central Afghanistan, Kabul, Peshawar, and the “Valley of the Great Buddha,” where Trinkler viewed the large, rock Buddhist statues of Bamyan (destroyed by the Afghan Taliban in 2001). The chapter on Kabul describes the opening up of the country brought about by the amir, Amanullah Khan (ruled 1919–29), and the work of German architects and engineers in building roads, of the German medical mission in superintending the hospitals, and of “the celebrated German-Afghan Company [in] trying to reorganize the administration and business of Afghanistan.” The book includes 44 photographs by the author and a fold-out map of Afghanistan. Trinkler published the scientific results of his trip in a separate volume, *Afghanistan: Eine landeskundliche Studie auf Grund des vorhandenen Materials und eigener Beobachtung* (Gotha, 1928). In 1927–28 Trinkler led a German scientific expedition to Tibet, which he documented in two books published in 1930. His career as an explorer and Asia expert was cut short the following year when he was killed in an automobile accident near his native Bremen.

Tumanovich, O. *Turkmenistan i turkmeny*, Moscow, 1926, [www.wdl.org/16942](http://www.wdl.org/16942) [126 pages]

*Turkmenistan i turkmeny* (Turkmenistan and the Turkmens) is a book on Turkmenistan published in 1926, early in the Soviet period. Part one, in four chapters, is devoted to Central Turkestan and also explains the broader geographic context of Turkmenistan. The chapters cover the history of Turkestan and its importance as the link between Persia and China; the 17 main ethnic groups in Turkmenistan (including the Turko-Mongol Altai people, Mongols, Arabs, Jews, Taranchi, Kalmyks, and others); clan tradition and its influence on modern life in the central Asian republics; and an overview of the nationalities in the Soviet republics bordering Turkmenistan (Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz or Kirgiz, Kara-Kirgiz, and Karakalpaks). Part two, in 15 chapters, is devoted to the Soviet Socialist Republic of Turkmenistan. The chapters cover such topics as the history, geography and topography, administrative divisions and population centers, agriculture, irrigation, transport, industry, vegetation and wildlife, and the size, ethnic composition, and distribution of the population of the republic. Part three covers the Turkmens, in three chapters, devoted to the genealogy of the Turkmens and their migrations, modern clan division and clan locations in Turkmenistan, and national characteristics of the Turkmens and their clan life, which included high status for women.

*The History of the Afghans*, published in English in 1829, is the first history of the Afghan people translated from a non-Western language to appear in a European language. The original work was composed in Persian, in 1609–11, by Neamet Ullah (active 1613–30) in the court of the Mughal emperor Jahangir (1569–1627). Ullah based his work on material compiled by Hybet Khan, an attendant of the Afghan General Khan Jahan Lodi. The translation is by the German philologist and Orientalist Bernhard Dorn (1805–81), who worked from a copy of the history made by Fut’h Khan in 1718. The book covers the history of Yacoob Israel, to whom the work attributes the origin of the Afghans; the life of Yacoob’s grandson, King Talut (Saul), and the migration of his descendants to Ghor (in present-day Afghanistan); and the spread of Islam and the influence of Khaled ben Valeed, a celebrated army officer who converted to Islam and used his military skill to spread Islam in central and south Asia. The work then chronicles the reigns of rulers of two dynasties that gave way to the rise of the Mughal Empire, namely the sultans Behlol, Sekander, and Ibrahim of the Lodi family, and Sher Shah of the Suri family. The last section recounts the lives of Afghan dervishes-turned-saints, and the book concludes with accounts of the genealogy of the Afghan tribes that descend from Sarbanni, Batni, and Ghurghust, the three sons of the forefather Abd Ulrashid (also known as Pathan, a variation of the term “Pushtun”), a descendent of King Talut.


*Al-Kitāb al-Yamīnī* is a history of the early Ghaznavid dynasty, composed in Arabic sometime after 1020 by Muhammad ibn ʻAbd al-Jabbar ʻUtbi (died 1035 or 1036), a secretary and courtier who served the first two Ghaznavid rulers and personally witnessed many of the events recounted in the book. The Ghaznavids were a dynasty of Turkic origin founded by Sabuktakin (or Sebuktigin, ruled 977–97), a former slave who in 977 was recognized by the Samanids as governor of Ghazna (present-day Ghazni, Afghanistan). Sabuktakin and his son Mahmud (ruled 998–1030) expanded the territory under their control to create an empire that stretched from the Oxus River to the Indus valley and the Indian Ocean. Mahmud’s son Masʻud I (reigned 1030–41) lost territories in Persia and Central Asia to the Seljuk Turks, but the Ghaznavids continued to rule eastern Afghanistan and northern India until 1186, when the dynasty fell. ʻUtbi’s history is generally called al-Yamīnī (after Mahmud’s moniker Yamin-al-dawla, “the right hand of the state”). It was translated into Persian in 1206–7 by Abushsharaf Noseh Ibni Zafari Jurfodiqoni, a minor official in western Persia. Jurfodiqoni’s translation gradually came to replace the Arabic original in South Asia, Persia, Anatolia, and Central Asia. Presented here is an English translation of Jurfodiqoni’s Persian version, published in London in 1858. The translation is by James Reynolds (1805–66), a British Orientalist and Anglican priest who translated several historical books from Persian and Arabic and who served as secretary to the Oriental Translation Fund of the Royal Asiatic Society. The book contains a long introduction by Reynolds, as well as Jurfodiqoni’s preface to his Persian translation.
Godfrey Thomas Vigne (1801–63) was an English traveler and travel writer. After studying law and working in London for a number of years, in 1831 he undertook an extensive trip to the United States, which he recounted in Six Months in America, published in 1832. After a brief return to England, he left for India later that same year, beginning a seven-year journey to the regions to the west and northwest of British India, including Persia, Afghanistan, and parts of Central Asia. Vigne described these travels in two books, A Personal Narrative of a Visit to Ghuzni, Kabul, and Afghanistan (1840) and Travels in Kashmir (1842). In the former book, presented here, he describes his journey in 1836 through the Sulimani (present-day Sulaiman) Mountains from the Punjab to Ghazni, and from there to Kabul, which he is said to have been the first Englishman to have visited (although the Scot, Alexander Burnes, had reached Kabul in 1832). Vigne recounts his meetings with Dost Mohammed Khan, who he describes as especially interested in America, which the amir knew Vigne had visited. Upon leaving Kabul in October 1836, Vigne traveled to Jalalabad and from there into a part of Kafiristan (present-day Nuristan), a region inhabited by Kafirs (infidels) who had never converted to Islam. Vigne describes the mutual detestation and the violent feuds between the local Muslims and the Kafirs, who he speculates were “descended from the Greeks of the Bactrian dynasty.” Vigne writes about Russian incursions into Central Asia, and shows himself to be an early exponent of the view that as the Russians advanced toward Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan), the British needed to assert control over Kabul and Kandahar and ensure the neutrality of Herat. The book contains illustrations based on sketches by the author, including a colored portrait of Dost Mohammad Khan as the frontispiece. A fold-out map shows Vigne’s route through Afghanistan. Presented here is the second edition of A Personal Narrative, published in London in 1843.

Vyse, Griffin W. Southern Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier of India, London, 1881,  
www.wdl.org/17696 [54 pages]

Southern Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier of India is a pamphlet containing two separate works, “Southern Afghanistan. The Tal-Chotiali Route,” and a paper entitled “The North-West Frontier of India.” The first work is a reprint of two articles that appeared originally in Army and Navy Magazine arguing the importance of the Tal–Chotiali route as a link between southern Afghanistan and British India. The author, Griffin W. Vyse, advocates the permanent stationing of British troops at Tal (in present-day Pakistan) in order to control the eastern terminus of this route running from India to Kandahar via Pishin. Vyse had served as field engineer in part of the Tal–Chotiali Field Force in southern Afghanistan during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80), and he bases his
argument on information obtained from his service in the field. He begins with a general discussion of the
passes from India into Afghanistan and notes that until very recently European writers knew of only three
such passes, the Khyber, the Gulairi (or Gomal), and the Bolan. He points out the existence of many more
passes, including 92 alone in the part of Afghanistan bordering Baluchistan, of which he argues the Tal–
Chotiali route is the most important. The work contains a detailed discussion of the geography of the
region, with many historical references to the routes taken by military leaders, going back to the Emperor
Babur in 1505, to cross the mountains separating Afghanistan and India. The second essay is a bitter
attack on the importance assigned by British policy to the districts of the Northwest Frontier, which Vyse
argues are much poorer and harder to control than southern Afghanistan and Baluchistan. The pamphlet is
subtitled “A Refutation of Mistakes Made in Parliament” and is dedicated to the Marquis of Hartington,
Secretary of State for India. It contains a large fold-out sketch map by Vyse of southern Afghanistan and
northern Baluchistan showing the Tal–Chotiali route.

Walker, Philip Francis. *Afghanistan: A Short Account of Afghanistan, Its History, and Our Dealings

This book is a brief history of Afghanistan and its relations with the British Empire. It was published in London in 1881 as Parliament and the British public were debating policy toward Afghanistan in the aftermath of the Second Anglo-Afghan War, which was fought between 1878 and 1880. The author, Philip Francis Walker, was a London barrister who had recently served with the British army in Afghanistan, and the book contains vivid accounts of fierce fighting with the Afghans. In a typical passage, Walker describes the Afghan tribesmen as “being in great strength, fighting very courageously, and being well led.” The most interesting aspect of the book is the summary, in the concluding pages, of the debate underway in Britain about future policy toward Afghanistan. According to Walker, three main plans were under discussion: “1st. That we should annex the whole country, including Herat. 2nd. That we should settle some chief, or chiefs, in the country, as securely as possible, and ourselves retire behind the scientific frontier, with, or without Candahar. 3rd. That we should evacuate most of the country, and continue to hold almost the same frontier [between British India and Afghanistan] as hitherto.” Walker generally favored the second option, but the third was in fact followed by the Liberal government of Prime Minister William Gladstone.

[402 pages]

Sir Robert Warburton (1842–99) was a British army officer who served for 18 years as the political
officer, or warden, of the Khyber Pass, the most important of the mountain passes connecting Afghanistan
and present-day Pakistan. He was born in Afghanistan, the son of a British officer and his wife, a noble
Afghan woman who was the niece of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan. Warburton was educated in England,
commissioned an officer, and served at posts in British India and in Abyssinia (present-day Ethiopia)
before being appointed, in 1879, to his post in the Khyber. Home to the fiercely independent Pashtun
Afridi people who resisted external control, the pass frequently had been blocked by the Afridis or by
fighting among the hill tribes. Warburton is credited with keeping the frontier peaceful and the pass open,
mainly through diplomacy rather than force. He drew upon his Afghan background and his fluent Persian
and Pushto to gradually win the trust of tribesmen whose traditions made them deeply suspicious of outsiders. In August 1897, one month after Warburton’s retirement, unrest broke out among the Afridis, who seized the pass and held it for several months. Warburton was called back into service and participated in the Tirah expedition of 1897–98, in which Anglo-Indian forces reopened the pass. Warburton was especially proud of the role played in the expedition by the Khyber Rifles, a paramilitary force recruited from Afridi tribesmen that he had raised and commanded. *Eighteen Years in the Khyber, 1879–1898* is Warburton’s account of his education and career. It touches upon virtually every individual and event that played a role in relations between Afghanistan and British India during the last quarter of the 19th century. Long in poor health, Warburton returned to England and died before the book was completed. Posthumously published, it is illustrated with a number of striking photographs and includes a detailed fold-out map of the Khyber.


This book is a biography, published in London in 1895, of ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan (circa 1844–1901), amir of Afghanistan from 1880 to 1901. ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan was a grandson of Dost Mohammad Khan, the founder the Barakzai dynasty of Afghanistan after the fall of the Durrans in 1842. ‘Abd al-Rahman was driven into exile in 1869, when his father and uncle lost a long struggle with Sher ‘Ali to succeed Dost Mohammad. ‘Abd al-Rahman lived in Samarkand (in present-day Uzbekistan) in what was then Russian Turkestan until 1880, when, amid the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–80, he returned to Kabul, where he was installed as amir. He negotiated a settlement with the British, whereby the British recognized him as amir while he acknowledged the British right to control the foreign relations of Afghanistan. The book recounts these events, as well as ‘Abd al-Rahman’s subsequent rule and his consolidation and partial modernization of the country up to 1895. The concluding chapter, entitled “A Ruler in Islam,” describes the amir’s accomplishments as an administrator in reforming and strengthening the Afghan state and its institutions, including the army. An appendix contains excerpts from the amir’s autobiography, translated from a Russian text produced during his exile in Russian Turkestan. The book includes a genealogical table of the Barakzais, a chronology, illustrations, and two maps. The author, Stephen Wheeler, was the editor of *Civil and Military Gazette* (CMG), a daily newspaper that was published in Lahore (in present-day Pakistan), which circulated in the Punjab, at that time part of British India. Wheeler wrote or edited several other books, but he is best known as the editor who employed the young Rudyard Kipling in his first job in journalism.


*Ariana Antiqua* is an important early scholarly treatment of ancient coins and other antiquities discovered in Afghanistan and adjacent regions of present-day Pakistan. Much of the work focuses on the discoveries of Charles Masson (1800–53), a British traveler and explorer who in the 1830s, working in the vicinity of Kabul and Peshawar, amassed a collection of more than 80,000 silver, gold, and bronze coins while in the service of the East India Company. The book was compiled and for the most part written by H.H. Wilson, professor of Sanskrit at Oxford. Chapter one is an account of numismatic and antiquarian research in Afghanistan up to the late 1830s. Chapter two is a narrative by Masson about his study of topes (dome-
shaped monuments used as Buddhist or Jainist reliquaries or commemorative shrines, more generally known as stupas) and sepulchral monuments in Afghanistan. Chapter three is a study of references to “Ariana,” the name that ancient Greek authors, such as Eratosthenes and Strabo, gave to Afghanistan. Chapter four is a treatment of all of the dynasties that ruled Afghanistan from the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC to the first Islamic invasion of India in the 12th century. The book contains plates with illustrations of topes, antiquities, and coins and a reconstruction of the Arianian alphabet, as well as a large foldout “Map of Ariana Antiqua: The Countries between Persia and India as Known to the Ancients with the Marches of Alexander,” with Greek place-names supplied by Wilson.

Wolff, Joseph. *Narrative of a Mission to Bokhara, in the Years 1843–1845, to Ascertain the Fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly*, New York, 1845, [www.wdl.org/16713](http://www.wdl.org/16713) [494 pages]

In December 1838 Colonel Charles Stoddart arrived in Bukhara (present-day Uzbekistan), where he had been sent on a mission by the British East India Company to try to arrange an alliance with the khanate against the Russian Empire, whose expansion into Central Asia was of concern to the British. The ruler of Bukhara, Nasrullah Khan (reigned 1827–60), had Stoddart imprisoned in a vermin-infested dungeon under the Ark Fortress for failing to bow before him, bring gifts, and to show signs of respect that the amir regarded as his due. In November 1841, Captain Arthur Conolly, a fellow officer who is best remembered as the coiner of the phrase “the Great Game” (the competition between Great Britain and Russia for influence in Central Asia) arrived in Bukhara to try to secure Stoddart’s release. He was also imprisoned by the amir and on June 17, 1842, both men were executed. Word of the executions did not reach Britain, and in 1843 Dr. Joseph Wolff (1795–1862) undertook a mission to Bukhara to try to ascertain the fates of the two men. Wolff, who had extensive experience in the Middle East and Central Asia, volunteered his services to a committee that had been formed in London to try to help the captives. Wolff was brilliant, courageous, and eccentric. He was born in Germany into the family of a rabbi but had
converted from Judaism to Roman Catholicism at a young age. He studied theology and Near Eastern languages in Austria and Germany and then went to Rome intending to become a missionary. After falling out with the church over theological issues, he became an Anglican. In 1821 he began his career as a missionary to the Jews of the Middle East and Central Asia, and in that capacity spent many years working in the region as far east as Afghanistan. Wolff was himself nearly executed in Bukhara, but he managed with the help of the Persian government to return to England and to bring word of the fate of Stoddart and Conolly. *Narrative of a Mission to Bokhara* is Wolff’s account of his mission. It contains much information about the countries through which he traveled (present-day Turkey, Iran, and Uzbekistan), particularly concerning the religious beliefs and practices of the Muslims, Jews, and Christians he encountered. Wolff denounces Nasrullah Khan as a “cruel miscreant” guilty of the “foul atrocity” of the officers’ murder. The book, which ran to seven editions in its first seven years after publication, contains line drawings of notable and common people.


*The Cradle of the War: The Near East and Pan-Germanism* is a study of the origins of World War I. The author, Henry Charles Woods (1881–1939), argues that the main cause of the conflict was “the Pan-German desire for domination from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf.” The book offers an overview of political and military developments in the Near East (defined as the Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor), with chapters on Serbia and Montenegro, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, and Albania. Later chapters cover military highways in the Balkans, the Dardanelles campaign, the port of Salonica (present-day Thessaloniki, Greece) and its hinterland, and the attempt by the German Empire to build a Berlin-to-Baghdad railroad in the period before World War I. The final chapter, entitled “Mittel-Europa” (Central Europe), deals with German policy toward the region, based in part on writings by Prince Karl Max von Lichnowsky (1860–1928), the former German ambassador to Great Britain. In a privately circulated pamphlet of 1916, Lichnowsky claimed that his efforts from London to prevent war had not been supported by the German government. Lichnowsky’s pamphlet was published in January 1918 under the title *Revelations of Prince Lichnowsky* and widely circulated by the allies as proof of Germany’s responsibility for the war. Woods’s book, which is based on a series of lectures at the Lowell Institute in Boston in 1916–17, reflects British and American thinking of the time. Historians have since concluded that many countries besides Germany played a role in Europe’s slide toward war.
[390 pages]

John Wood (1811–71) was an officer in the navy of the East India Company who in 1836 was appointed to take part in a mission to Afghanistan led by Alexander Burnes. His instructions were to “ascend the Indus from its mouth to Attock, that a more perfect knowledge of the river may be procured, as well for purposes of commerce as of war…. He proceeded upstream to the region of Kunduz, Afghanistan, and in February 1838 discovered what he thought was the source of the Oxus (Amu Darya) River, located in the Pamir Mountains at what he estimated was latitude 37° 27’ North and 73° 40’ East (most likely in present-day Tajikistan). Wood subsequently resigned from the Indian navy in a dispute over British policy toward Afghanistan and what he believed was the breaking of good-faith assurances he had given the Afghans about British intentions. *Journey to the Source of the Oxus* is Wood’s account of his expedition and discoveries, first published in 1841. Presented here is the second edition, which appeared in London in 1872. Wood was one of the first Europeans to visit many remote regions of present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan. The book includes observations on topography and hydrology, climate, economic activity, religion, politics and history, and different ethnic groups encountered, including Uzbeks, Tajiks, Hazaras, Kyrgyz, Kaffirs, Kazakhs, and others. The book includes many interesting anecdotes, for example, encounters with local chiefs claiming to be descended from Alexander the Great. Wood estimated that his party at one point reached a height of 14,400 feet (4,389 meters) above sea level, and he offers speculations about the as-yet poorly understood effects of altitude on the human body. The book contains a fold-out map of the upper Oxus and another of Wood’s route up the Indus.


Francis Younghusband was an explorer and soldier best known for leading the controversial British military mission to Lhasa, Tibet in 1903–4. In 1886 Younghusband was granted leave from his military post in British India to accompany the explorer H.E.M. James on a seven-month journey around Manchuria. After completing this expedition, Younghusband received permission in March 1887 to undertake an overland journey from Peking (Beijing) to India. Traveling alone with just hired guides, Younghusband crossed the Gobi Desert to reach Hami (China), and proceeded from there over the Himalayan Mountains via Kashgar (present-day Kashi, China) and the Muztagh Pass to Kashmir. He reached Srinagar on November 2 and his post at Rawalpindi on November 4, exactly seven months after his departure from Beijing. Younghusband recorded this journey in the first eight chapters of his *The Heart of a Continent*. In 1890–91 Younghusband undertook further travels to the Pamir Mountains (chiefly in present-day Tajikistan, with parts in Afghanistan, China, and Kyrgyzstan) and the Karakoram Range, the unclaimed corridor between Afghanistan and China. He and his superiors in the Indian government suspected that the Russians might be looking for an invasion route to India through these mountains, and one object of his travels was to search for signs of Russian activity. Younghusband recounted these expeditions in the remaining chapters of the book. The book provides descriptions of
spectacular scenery and of the peoples—Chinese, Kalmak (Kalmyk), Kirghiz (Kyrgyz), Tajik, Hunza, and others—that he meets. It also recounts several meetings with Russian reconnoitering parties, including one in the Pamir Mountains in August 1891 with a Russian detachment of more than 30 Cossack soldiers that resulted in a diplomatic clash between Britain and Russia. After an initial friendly meeting, the Russian staff officer in command of the party, Colonel Yonoff, declared that Younghusband was on territory claimed by Russia and that he was under orders to escort the British intruder across the border to China. This encounter led to the lodging of a diplomatic protest by the British embassy in Saint Petersburg and a subsequent apology by the Russian government and an acknowledgement that Yonoff had been operating outside the Russian sphere of influence. The book contains illustrations and several maps, including a large foldout “Map of the Northern Frontier of India.” Widely praised for his explorations, Younghusband was elected the youngest fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in 1890 and named Companion of the Indian Empire (CIE) in 1891.
Shams al-nahār (The sun of the day) is the earliest printed periodical published in Afghanistan. It is written in the Persian language. The Afghan ruler Sher ʻAlī Khān (reigned 1863–66 and 1868–79) introduced the printing press to Afghanistan following a trip to India, where he appears to have been impressed by technological advances under the British Raj. At least three lithographic presses are known to have been operating in Kabul during the second period of Sher ʻAlī Khān’s rule: the Shams al-nahār, the Murtaḍāwī, and the Muṣṭafawī. The first issues of Shams al-nahār were printed at the Murtaḍāwī press. The publication moved to the Shams al-nahār press by the seventh issue at the latest. The first page of Shams al-nahār contains an emblem with a circular medallion enclosing the name Shams al-nahār-i Kābul and flanked by two sword-wielding lions. The lions allude to Sher ʻAlī Khān. Sher denotes lion in Persian, and ʻAlī, the revered son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, is often denoted by the epithet Shīr-i Haqq (Lion of God). The entire composition is framed by devotional verses asking God for success. The present copy is the seventh issue dating to the 15th of Shawwāl, 1290, or December 6, 1873. The issue opens with a discussion of the various ways to subscribe to the periodical and gives a list of rates. The publisher also states that, in return for the delivery of free copies of Shams al-nahār to other printing shops, the managers of these shops should “kindly send the news [publications] of their print shops weekly” and include a summary of the news in Shams al-nahār in their publications “for two entire months.” A notable feature of this issue is an almost complete absence of news. The bulk of the issue is composed of an advertisement for a four-volume English–Persian–Urdu–Arabic dictionary. The issue also contains an editorial that praises Sher ʻAlī Khān and offers advice regarding his just and prosperous reign.
Haqq (Lion of God). The entire composition is framed by devotional verses asking God for success. The present copy is the ninth issue dating to the 7th of Dhū al-Hijja, 1290, or January 26, 1874. The beginning of the periodical contains directions for becoming a subscriber as well as a list of subscription rates, and an advertisement for a reference work in Arabic, Persian, English, and Urdu. The remainder of this issue contains more than a dozen short news entries, ranging in length from several lines to a few pages. The articles relate news from Afghanistan, but also from European colonial powers that were greatly involved with Afghan affairs, notably Great Britain and Russia. Included are several reports on the marriage of Russian princess Maria Alexandrovna to Prince Alfred of Great Britain, as well as an article on the landing of British forces on the Cape Coast of Africa during the Third Anglo-Ashanti War. Some of the articles are attributed to Indian news publications (Ṭilism-i hayrat, Sind News, and Mufarrah al-qulūb). A few items, appearing under the title “The Situation of Europe via the Electric Line,” are stories that were transmitted via telegraph. News stories from Afghanistan include a report on a project to provide shelter to homeless persons in Kabul and on the death by exposure of an indigent Hazara woman.

Zhvandūn, Kabul, 1972-82, www.wdl.org/13552
[179 issues; 11,144 pages]

Zhvandūn, generally known as “Zhwundun,” was one of the most popular magazines published in Afghanistan in the second half of the 20th century. It began as a progressive magazine published both in Persian and Pushto, beginning in May 1949. The magazine presented articles on Afghan and global history, archaeological discoveries and artifacts, poetry and language, biographies of Afghan and foreign figures, arts and culture, philosophy and religion, and other topics relating to culture and everyday life, including music, dance, plays, health, and households. While Zhvandūn presented articles on literary, historical, educational, and entertainment topics throughout the time it was published, the changing social and political dynamics of Afghanistan influenced the character of the editorial content. In the 1960s, the magazine reflected the royalism of the Kingdom of Afghanistan. In contrast, the leftist regimes of the 1980s promoted revolutionary content, such as discussions of Marxist ideology, anticapitalist chants, and articles on agricultural reforms. While Zhvandūn marketed itself as a magazine for khanawadah (families), its main audience was the post-World War II generation of urban Afghans of various backgrounds: students, academics, writers, poets, researchers, and general readers. Zhvandūn was published every 15 days until 1952, when it became a weekly publication. On May 6, 1954, the management of Zhvandūn was given to the Riyasat-i Mustaqil-i Matbu’at (Autonomous Directorate of Publications). The Vizarat-i Ittila’at va Kultur (Ministry of Information and Culture) took over the magazine in 1970, and managed it until 1982, when control was transferred to Itihadyah-yi Navisandanagi Jumhur-i Dimukratik-i Afghanistan (Union of the Writers of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan). The renamed Union of Afghan Writers issued separate editions of Zhvandūn (one in Pushto and another in Persian) under the mujahideen government in the 1990s, until the magazine ceased publishing in 1996.
Kābul, Kabul, 1933-64, www.wdl.org/13076 [375 issues; 24,918 pages]

Kābul was a monthly periodical of the Anjuman-i Adabi Kabul (Kabul Literary Society), first issued on December 15, 1931. It published original and translated works, often short or longer essays dealing with the history, archaeology, literature, culture, languages, and society of Afghanistan. It also published news reports relating to both national and international events. In its first year, the magazine was printed in 40 to 60 pages per issue. This later grew to around 80–120 pages per issue. The contributors to the magazine included such Afghan literary-nationalist writers as Qari ʻAbd Allah (1871–1944), Mir Ghulam Mohammad Ghubar (1895–1978), Ahmad ʻAli Kuhzad (born 1907), ʻAbd al-Hayy Habibi (1910–84), and others who played critical roles in the historicization and characterization of Afghan identity in the 20th century. Between 1931 and 1938 Kābul published only Persian material within the framework of Anjuman-i Adabi Kabul. It later branched into two separate publications and became a Pushto magazine, while continuing to publish a Persian edition. Pushto Tolanah (The Pushto Society), established in 1939 to promote Pushto-Afghan history, literature, and language, took charge of the Pushto edition within the organization of the newly-formed governmental media department, Riyasat-i Mustaqil-i Matbu'at (Autonomous Directorate of Publications). The magazine was one of the oldest and most popular publications to appear under the royal regime in Afghanistan. After the communists came to power in 1979 and the country descended into conflict and political instability, the magazine was no longer published in a stable and continuous manner. Presented here are 375 issues of the magazine from between 1933 and 1964, from the collections of the Library of Congress.


Kamkayāno anīs (Anīs for children) is a magazine for young readers in Afghanistan. Its parent publication, the newspaper Anīs (first published on May 6, 1927), was named after its first director, Muhyi al-Dīn Anīs (died 1938 or 1939), one of the founders of journalism in Afghanistan. Anīs is also the word for “companion” in Arabic and Persian, so the title Kamkayāno anīs can be seen to contain a play on words denoting “the children’s companion.” Kamkayāno anīs began in the late 1960s. It was first published under a different title (though with the same meaning), Kūchnayāno anīs, under the direction of Tahir Paknahad. The magazine changed its name to Kamkayāno anīs in the early 1970s. At this time, it was a weekly publication that included articles, cartoons, stories, jokes, puzzles, and readers’ correspondence. A fair amount of the content was in the form of contributions by its young
readers. The major part of the journal is in Persian (Dari), while each issue contained several items in Pushto as well. The early editorship of Kamkayano anis included such well-known journalistic figures as Shukriya Ra’ed (who also served as editor of the journal Zhvandiin). Articles published in the 1970s included occasional references to American culture and society, as can be seen, for example, in essays on farming practices in the United States and on children’s television programs. The magazine ceased publishing shortly after the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979. It was resurrected in 1990 under the editorship of Muhammad Mahdi Bashir.

*Kandahār, Kandahar, 1961-75, [www.wdl.org/18067](http://www.wdl.org/18067) [67 issues; 2,446 pages]*

*Kandahār* was founded in 1960 as the monthly magazine of the Pushto vernacular in Kandahar Province. It was established within the structure of the Kandahar-based Tolo-e Afghan newspaper, with Mohammad Wali Zulmay as the first editor in chief. In an editorial note dated April 21, 1961, and entitled “With the Writers of Kandahār,” the second editor in chief, Agha Mohammad Karzai, states that the objective of the magazine is “to represent the culture of Kandahar for the purposes of writing and enlightening people on the subjects of history, literature, economy, and language.” Issues published between 1961 and 1974 contain articles on such topics as “Contemporary Pushto Language and Pushto Identity,” “The Literature of China,” “Pushtonistan,” “Kandahar’s Forty Towers Castle,” “Abraham Lincoln,” “The Unending War in Vietnam,” and many others. What makes *Kandahār* interesting and important is its vernacular character. The magazine has been one of the major publications in Pushto produced and read in southern Afghanistan. It is a rich source of information about literary, historical, and political thinking in Afghanistan from the 1960s onwards, particularly in rural and provincial localities, and is especially valuable to scholars interested in Afghan history and culture. *Kandahār* averaged 30–50 pages every month. It almost always had colorful front and back covers with illustrations to accompany the text of the articles. Contributors to the magazine were often local and nationalist literary intellectuals from Kandahar as well as from throughout Afghanistan. *Kandahār* has continued publication up to the present day, but its contents have changed over time in ways that reflect the social and political dynamics in the country.
Adab, Kabul, 1954-78, [86 issues; 10,430 pages]

Adab was the literary magazine of the Pohanżay-i Adabīyāt va ‘Ulūm-i Basharī (Faculty of Letters and Humanities) at Kabul University. It began publishing in May of 1953 as a quarterly publication. The word “adab” denotes both culture and literature in Arabic, Persian (Dari), and Pushto; and the magazine consists primarily of articles on literature and history, with a focus on the literature and cultural history of Afghanistan. The majority of the articles were written in Persian, though many were written in Pushto as well, and some were in English. A typical issue included articles on aesthetics and literary criticism, biographies, essays on major literary works, and submissions of original poetry and prose in traditional style. The inception of Adab followed the founding of the Faculty of Letters and Humanities, inaugurated in the autumn of 1944, by roughly a decade. Kabul University itself was founded in 1932. The Faculty of Letters and Humanities was the fourth faculty established in the university, following the Faculty of Medicine (1932), Faculty of Law and Political Sciences (1938), and Faculty of Science (1942).

Farhang-i Khalq, Kabul, 1978-80, [5 issues; 622 pages]

Farhang-i Khalq (Culture of the people) was a bimonthly publication devoted to the vernacular languages and cultures of Afghanistan. The word Khalq (People) is traditionally associated with leftist politics in Afghanistan and the title can also be read as “Culture of the Masses.” Its first issue was published in the late fall of 1978, after the Saur Revolution that brought to power the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan on April 28 of that year. The magazine contained essays on regional dialects, traditional proverbs, and cultural minorities such as the Baloch and the Nuristani people. Included as well were more theoretical essays on the history and significance of vernacular languages and cultures in general. The articles were written in Pushto and Persian (Dari), with a roughly equal number of each. The revolutionary outlook of the publication can be seen in various ways, such as by the line drawing of Nur Muhammad Taraki (1917–79), the leader of the Saur Revolution, on its first cover. The magazine was presented to its readers as one of a series of efforts to promote the vernacular cultures of Afghanistan. It credited the earlier efforts of publications in the Uzbek, Turkmen, and Balochi languages. The first issue contains as well a dedication by Muhammad Bariq Shafi’, an author and journalist who was a founding member of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan and served as minister of information and culture. He praises the wise leadership of Nur Muhammad Taraki, and calls on the intellectuals of Afghanistan to aid in promoting Farhang-i Khalq so that it can reach the hearts and minds of the working class in Afghanistan.
PHOTOGRAPHS and PRINTS

Afghanistan, 1879–80


Afghanistan, 1879–80 is an album of rare historical photographs depicting people and places associated with the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). The war began in November 1878 when Great Britain, fearful of what it saw as growing Russian influence in Afghanistan, invaded the country from British India. The first phase of the war ended in May 1879 with the Treaty of Gandamak, which permitted the Afghans to maintain internal sovereignty but forced them to cede control over their foreign policy to the British. Fighting resumed in September 1879 after an anti-British uprising in Kabul, and finally concluded in September 1880 with the decisive Battle of Kandahar. The album includes portraits of British and Afghan leaders and military personnel; portraits of ordinary Afghan people; depictions of British military camps and activities; and Afghan structures, landscapes, and cities and towns. The sites shown are all located within the borders of present-day Afghanistan or Pakistan (a part of British India at the time). About a third of the photographs were taken by John Burke (circa 1843–1900), another third by Sir Benjamin Simpson (1831–1923), and the remainder by several other photographers. Some of the photographs are unattributed. The album possibly was compiled by a member of the British Indian government, but this has not been confirmed. How it came to the Library of Congress is not known.

Sir Robert Egerton, Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, www.wdl.org/11437

This small photograph is of Sir Robert Egerton (1827–1912), lieutenant governor of Punjab. Egerton was an aide to the previous lieutenant governor, Sir Robert Henry Davies (1824–1902), before being appointed to the same position in 1877. During the British Raj of 1858–1947, prominent British administrators and military men were often considered as “Indian” celebrities.

General Dunham Massy, www.wdl.org/11438

This portrait of General Dunham Massy (1838–1906) shows him standing next to his spiked pith helmet. As a lieutenant colonel, Massy successfully led a cavalry brigade at the Battle of Charasia in October 1879, but he subsequently was removed from cavalry command because of poor leadership in another engagement, the Battle of Killa Kazi, in December of the same year. He overcame this dismissal and by 1886 had risen to the rank of major general because of his reliable service as a regimental commander and support from his powerful patrons in London.

Sir Donald Stewart, www.wdl.org/11439

In this three-quarter-view portrait is Sir Donald Stewart (1824–1900). Stewart commanded the Kandahar Field Force (also known as the Quetta Army) in October 1878 and, after arduous marching across harsh terrain and several cavalry battles against Afghan forces, successfully occupied Kandahar in January 1879. He was promoted to commander in chief in India in April 1881 and to field marshal in 1894. He is shown here in the uniform of a lieutenant general. During the British Raj of 1858–1947, prominent British administrators and military men were often considered as “Indian” celebrities.
Babu Khan, http://www.wdl.org/11440

This photograph features Babu Khan, probably a tribal Pushtun leader judging from his typical Afghan longi (turban). During the British Raj of 1858–1947, prominent British administrators and military men, as well as Indian princely rulers and tribal chiefs, were often considered as “Indian” celebrities. The Second Anglo-Afghan War began in November 1878 when Great Britain, fearful of what it saw as growing Russian influence in Afghanistan, invaded the country from British India. The first phase of the war ended in May 1879 with the Treaty of Gandamak, which permitted the Afghans to maintain internal sovereignty but forced them to cede control over their foreign policy to the British. Fighting resumed in September 1879, after an anti-British uprising in Kabul, and finally concluded in September 1880 with the decisive Battle of Kandahar.

Amir Abd al-Raḥmān, www.wdl.org/11441

The Afghan amir, Abd al-Raḥmān Khān (ca. 1844–1901), was known as the “Iron Amir” because of his skill and forcefulness in suppressing rebellions against his authority. He is credited with creating a centralized state in the aftermath of the war, based on a cabinet called the Supreme Council, a general assembly called the Loya Jirgah, and the army. His achievements included the introduction of some modern manufacturing, agriculture, and health care. This portrait shows him as a young man in uniform, clutching the hilt of his sword. The Second Anglo-Afghan War began in November 1878 when Great Britain, fearful of what it saw as growing Russian influence in Afghanistan, invaded the country from British India. The first phase of the war ended in May 1879 with the Treaty of Gandamak, which permitted the Afghans to maintain internal sovereignty but forced them to cede control over their foreign policy to the British. Fighting resumed in September 1879, after an anti-British uprising in Kabul, and finally concluded in September 1880 with the decisive Battle of Kandahar.

Mustanfi Habibullah Khan, www.wdl.org/11442

In this photograph of Mustanfi Habibullah Khan he is seated on a tasseled chair and wearing a small longi (turban) and chapan (tunic) covered by a shawl. Mustanfi (also seen as mostufi and mustaofi, the latter being the Arabic origin of the title) was a title approximating to state treasurer, the most powerful position in the government of Afghanistan after that of Amir Yakub
Khan. Mustanfs were not elected, but subject to the ruler’s approval. They had full authority over all financial affairs, including hiring and dismissal of government personnel.

**Sir Alfred Lyall, [www.wdl.org/11443]**

Sir Alfred Lyall (1835–1911) was an administrator in the Indian Civil Service, a poet and Tennyson scholar, and the author of several works on the expansion of British power in India. He served as the foreign secretary to the government of India during the war and helped broker the 1880 peace treaty with the Afghan ruler, Amir Abd al-Raḥmān Khān (circa 1844–1901).

**Sir Ashley Eden, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, [www.wdl.org/11444]**

Sir Ashley Eden (1831–87), lieutenant governor of Bengal, became the first civilian governor of Burma after his success as a special envoy to the Himalayan hill state of Sikkim in 1861. He was appointed lieutenant governor of Bengal in 1877 and promoted major public works in the state, such as hospitals, schools, canals, and railroads. Eden’s efforts were praised by both Europeans and Bengalis.

**Sir William Muir, [www.wdl.org/11445]**

Sir William Muir (1819–1905) entered the Bengal Civil Service in 1837 but served in the North-Western Provinces for most of his career. After the 1857 Indian Rebellion, the North-Western Provinces were ruled by a lieutenant governor who reported directly to the British government; Muir served in that position from 1868–74. He became famous because of his extensive and controversial scholarship on Islam and the early Muslim empires. Muir’s four-volume *Life of Mahomet and History of Islam to the Era of the Hegira* was based on his original translations from the Arabic of the Qur’an and hadith. His scholarship was much admired, but his opinions on Islam were polarizing.

**Sir Richard Meade, [www.wdl.org/11446]**

In this photograph of Sir Richard Meade (1821–94), who served as the British resident at the Indian princely (nominally sovereign) state of Hyderabad in 1875–81, he is smartly dressed with his military honors across his chest. Meade tutored and protected Maḥbūb ʿĀlī Khān (1866–1911), the underage nizam (ruler). Meade’s biographer, Thomas Henry Thornton (1832–1913), author of *General Sir Richard Meade and the Feudatory States of Central and Southern India* (1898), regarded this position as one of the most politically challenging in India. Meade’s successes there included rebuffing efforts by the prime minister, Mir Turab Ali Khan, known as Sir Salar Jang (1829–83; *salar jang* means war leader), to reestablish Hyderabad’s authority over the neighboring province of Berar.
Sir George Colley, www.wdl.org/11447

This photograph of Sir George Colley (1835–81) was likely taken within three years of his death. Colley served nearly all of his military and administrative career in British South Africa, but he played a significant part in the Afghan War as military secretary and then private secretary to the governor-general of India, Lord Lytton (1831–91). After the war Colley returned to South Africa, became high commissioner for South Eastern Africa in 1880, and died a year later at the Battle of Majuba Hill during the First Boer War.

Sir Peter Lumsden, www.wdl.org/11448

This is a military portrait of Sir Peter Lumsden (1829–1918). His first posting in the region was in the North-West Frontier of British India in the 1850s, where as an ensign in the 60th Bengal Native Infantry he participated in the suppression of rebellions by several Pushtun tribes. He also served in the Second Opium War and the Bhutan War. He was adjutant general of the Indian army 1874–79 and then was promoted in 1879 to chief of staff under the commander in chief of India, Sir Frederick Haines (1819–1909).

Sir James Fergusson, Governor of Bombay, www.wdl.org/11449

Sir James Fergusson (1832–1907) briefly served as undersecretary of state for India in 1866–67, but otherwise his career in British India began late in life. His direct involvement in the war was brief. He was appointed as the governor of the Bombay Presidency in 1880. In this position, Fergusson was able to exercise as much power within Bombay as the viceroy wielded in the rest of the British Raj. He was respected by upper-class Bombay residents for his deliberate policy of appointing Indians to positions of increasing responsibility in the presidency, especially in administrative and educational affairs.

Sir Frederick Haines, www.wdl.org/11450

Sir Frederick Haines (1819–1909) served as commander in chief in India (the highest-ranking military officer in the British Raj) throughout the war. His authority was subject only to the viceroy, Lord Lytton (1831–91). Haines and Lytton repeatedly clashed over British war strategy. At the start of the war, for example, Haines favored a significantly larger troop commitment than Lytton, but he was partially overruled by the viceroy. Haines ultimately succeeded in securing needed reinforcements for British forces during both phases of the war.

Lord William Beresford, www.wdl.org/11451

Lord William Beresford (1846–1900) served as an aide-de-camp to several British viceroys, including under Lord Lytton during the war. He was also a captain in the 9th Queen's Royal Lancers and, while on leave from Delhi, volunteered to fight under General Sir Samuel Browne (1824–1901) at the November 1878 Battle of Ali Masjid. Beresford was commended for his valor in dispatches after the battle. He was also awarded the Victoria Cross, Britain’s highest honor for gallantry, during the 1879 Zulu War in South Africa.
Sir Chas Aitchison, [www.wdl.org/11452](http://www.wdl.org/11452)

Sir Charles “Chas” Aitchison (1832–96) held many positions in the government of India during his long career. He was the British foreign secretary in India from 1868 until 1878. During this time Aitchison published several scholarly works on Indian politics and the relationship between Britain and the nominally sovereign Indian princely states. He was a critic of the confrontational foreign policy towards Afghanistan pursued by the viceroy, Lord Lytton (1831–91), and avoided direct involvement in the war by accepting an appointment to become chief commissioner of Burma in March 1878.

Colonel Mowbray Thomson, [www.wdl.org/11453](http://www.wdl.org/11453)

Colonel Mowbray Thomson (1832–1917) was one of only four survivors of the massacre of a British garrison in Cawnpore (now Kanpur) during the 1857 Indian Rebellion. After recovering from his injuries, he wrote a 260-page account of the massacre entitled *The Story of Cawnpore*. Thomson, then a captain, dedicated it to “the brave men, the patient women, and the helpless innocents of England,” who perished in the siege. The extent of Thomson’s participation in the Afghan War is unclear based on available information.

Sir Andrew Clarke, [www.wdl.org/11454](http://www.wdl.org/11454)

This photograph of Sir Andrew Clarke (1824–1902) is from an album of rare historical photographs depicting people and places associated with the Second Anglo-Afghan War. Sir Andrew Clarke was a military engineer and colonial governor for several British settlements in Australia, New Zealand, and Southeast Asia. He served as minister of public works in India in 1875–80 and was a member of the viceroy's council. Clarke's ambitious plans to upgrade the infrastructure of the subcontinent were undermined by the Indian famine of 1876–78 and by the British invasion of Afghanistan, both of which diverted resources from development.

Group of Mountain Tribes, [www.wdl.org/11455](http://www.wdl.org/11455)

This photograph is of a group of mountain tribesmen, most likely Afghan Pushtuns. The term “Afghan” is very ancient and originally was used to denote only Pushto speakers or the Pushtun people, the dominant ethnic group in the country. But by the time of 17th-century Pushto poet Khwushhāl Khān, Afghan already referred to any citizen of Afghanistan, regardless of tribal heritage. These men, apparently warrior tribesmen, are wearing traditional loose-fitting clothing and *longis* (turbans) and holding jezails (elongated heavy Afghan muskets) or possibly long wooden sticks.

Sikh Gurus Attached to Punjab Regiments, [www.wdl.org/11456](http://www.wdl.org/11456)

Seen here are two Sikh gurus who were attached to Punjab regiments of the British Indian Army. Sikh soldiers were often deployed on the Afghan frontier and fought in most major engagements of the Afghan War. The men shown are religious figures who accompanied soldiers into battle. The gurus can be seen wielding their *kirpans* (ceremonial swords). They also wear elaborate *dastars* (turbans), which cover their uncut hair.
This photograph is of a white-clad Pushtun Afghan tribesman wearing a carefully wrapped turban and a medal pinned to his tunic, with his sword by his side. The religious and ethnic identity of this individual is unknown. The caption states that he was "a loyal Afghan," so he may have fought with the British during the war and earned the medal for his service. The Second Anglo-Afghan War began in November 1878 when Great Britain, fearful of what it saw as growing Russian influence in Afghanistan, invaded the country from British India. The first phase of the war ended in May 1879 with the Treaty of Gandamak, which permitted the Afghans to maintain internal sovereignty but forced them to cede control over their foreign policy to the British. Fighting resumed in September 1879, after an anti-British uprising in Kabul, and finally concluded in September 1880 with the decisive Battle of Kandahar. The album includes portraits of British and Afghan leaders and military personnel, portraits of ordinary Afghan people, and depictions of British military camps and activities, structures, landscapes, and cities and towns.


This young Afghan girl’s head is covered with a patterned scarf tied behind her head and full-body chador (a large cloth worn as a combination head covering and shawl), and her long braided hair hangs down below her waist. The caption supplied by the photographer sheds little light on the girl’s identity or circumstances but may derive from her melancholy expression and the British saying “to be down in the dumps,” meaning to be depressed.

Certificate Given by Kabul Prisoners in 1842 to Babu Khan, www.wdl.org/11459

The certificate, relating to an important episode in the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42), apparently had remained in the possession of an unknown Afghan for some 40 years before being reproduced by a British photographer during the Second Anglo-Afghan War. In the document, the prisoners attest to the kindness shown them by Babu Khan, who was probably a tribal Pushtun leader, during their captivity in Kabul. The top signature on the left side appears to be that of Major-General William George Keith Elphinstone (1782–1842), the commander of the invading British force. Along with other British officers and their wives and children, Elphinstone was taken prisoner following the Kabul insurrection of November 1842. Following negotiations with Akbar Khan, son of Dost Mohammed, Elphinstone’s army was granted safe passage to return to India. The guarantee of safe passage notwithstanding, the British force was attacked and annihilated by tribesmen on the retreat from Kabul. Only one British survivor reached Jalalabad.
A hondee, or hundi, is a Hindi word for a negotiable financial instrument, such as a bill of exchange or promissory note, by which the signer authorized the recipient to pay a specified sum of money to a third party. This document, in English and Persian, was a ransom payment for 11,000 rupees, signed by the English explorer William Moorcroft (1767–1825) on December 20, 1824. Moorcroft was a surgeon who was the first Englishman to complete a formal veterinary education. After working with horses in England, in 1808 he went into service of the East India Company. The search for quality stud horses for use by the company led him to remote parts of Central Asia. He was one of the earliest British travelers to the regions of the southwest Himalayas, the Hindu Kush, Samarkand, and Afghanistan. Where the photograph was taken and by whom is not known, but it clearly represents an attempt by a later photographer to record an important historical document relating to one of the early British explorers of Central Asia.

The Persian term durbar (darbar in Hindi) used in the caption describes a gathering of princes and other notables, usually for the purposes of state administration and business. In this durbar two British officers are present, one on the floor to the left of center and the other behind him, suggesting that they might have been cooperating with the Afghan attendees in some way.
Four Sons of Nawrūz Khan of Lalpoora, www.wdl.org/11462

This photograph features four sons of Nowruz Khan, ruler of Lalpura, Afghanistan. The young men are wearing handsome traditional Afghan garments and pointed shoes called paizaaar, usually adorned with gold-thread embroidery. The photographer, John Burke (circa 1843–1900), accompanied the Peshawar Valley Field Force during part of the war, and became one of the first photographers to take pictures of Afghanistan’s people, rather than simply of military personnel. The khan was the most important chief of the Pushtun Mohmand tribe living in the hill country northwest of Peshawar and a rival of Amir ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khan. The Second Anglo-Afghan War began in November 1878 when Great Britain, fearful of what it saw as growing Russian influence in Afghanistan, invaded the country from British India. The first phase of the war ended in May 1879 with the Treaty of Gandamak, which permitted the Afghans to maintain internal sovereignty but forced them to cede control over their foreign policy to the British. Fighting resumed in September 1879, after an anti-British uprising in Kabul, and finally concluded in September 1880 with the decisive Battle of Kandahar.

Sir Frederick Roberts and the Sirdars of Kabul, 1879, www.wdl.org/11463

In this photograph of Sir Frederick Roberts (1832–1914) and Afghan sirdars (noblemen), he is seated among Afghan men and boys, who are all wearing turbans and warmly dressed in chapan (overcoats) or tunics. Roberts was a British Army officer who in a long career fought in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and South Africa. In October 1879 he led the Kabul Field Force, consisting of a combination of British and Indian troops, over the Shotur Gardan Pass, defeated an Afghan army at the Battle of Charasia, and occupied Kabul.

Dōst Moḥammad Family, www.wdl.org/11464

Dōst Moḥammad Khān (1793–1863) was the predominant Afghan political figure of the mid-19th century. He brought the Barakzai Dynasty to power and ruled Afghanistan, at various times, for more than 30 years, gradually extending his rule from Kabul to the entire country. He is seated slightly to the right of center in this photograph. To Dōst Mohammad’s right, the first figure in a white chapan (overcoat) is his son and successor, Sher ‘Alī Khān (1825–79), who ruled Afghanistan from 1863 to 1879. Abd al-Raḥmān Khān (circa 1844–1901), the grandson of Dōst Mohammad and future “Iron Amir” of Afghanistan, is on Dōst Moḥammad’s far left.
Group of Hazara Chiefs, www.wdl.org/11465

This photograph is of a group of Besuti Hazara chiefs with two boys and a mule. The origins of the Hazara people of Afghanistan are uncertain. One theory holds that they are descended from the Mongol tribes who invaded Afghanistan in the 13th century. They are predominantly Ithnā‘ashariyyah (Twelver Shia Muslims) who speak a Persian dialect containing words of Mongolian origin. They form Afghanistan’s third largest ethnic group and have historically suffered discrimination, standing out as Shiites in a Sunni nation and distinguished from other Afghans by their Asiatic features. Some of the Hazaras wear pointed caps called hazaragi while others wear small longis (turbans). The identity of the chiefs in the photograph is unknown.

Peshawar Fort, www.wdl.org/11466

Peshawar Fort, also known as Bala Hissar (High Fort, in Persian), served as the winter capital of the Durrani Empire (1747–1818). It was reconstructed in 1835 under the Sikh Empire (1799–1849), after its conquest by Sikh forces, but was captured by the British in 1849. The fort dominates the background of the photograph. The dirt road in the foreground is the Grand Trunk Road running from India to Afghanistan. On it travelers and merchants are seen observing the photographer.

Jamrūd Fort near the Khyber , www.wdl.org/11467

Jamrūd Fort is located at the eastern entrance to the Khyber Pass (in present-day Pakistan), the strategically important route through the Hindu Kush mountain range along the historic Silk Road that in the 19th century linked British India and Afghanistan. It was the site of a major battle between the Sikh and Durrani Empires in 1836–37. Even though the fort appears to be in disrepair, it was an important staging point for any advance through the pass and became the headquarters of the Khyber Rifles Regiment, an auxiliary force of the British Indian Army. The three tribesmen in the foreground of the picture wear loose tunics, longi (turbans), and dōpāta (shawls) and carry jezails (long heavy muskets).
The Afridi are Pushtun Afghans, part of the Karlani tribal confederacy, who both fought against and with the British in Afghanistan during all three Anglo-Afghan wars. The British frequently classified the peoples that they conquered with fixed personality or “racial” traits. They regarded both the Punjabi Sikhs and the Afghan Afridi tribesmen as “warlike” peoples. Different Afridi clans cooperated with the British forces in exchange for subsidies, and some even served with the Khyber Rifles, an auxiliary force of the British Indian Army. Here Jamrūd refers to Jamrūd Fort, which was strategically located at the eastern entrance to the Khyber Pass in present-day Pakistan.

Ali Masjid and Surroundings, www.wdl.org/11470

Ali Masjid is a small shrine located at the narrowest point in the Khyber Pass, to the east of the city of Landi Kotal. The shrine is dedicated to ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (ca. 600–661), nephew and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, one of the first converts to Islam. Above the shrine sits a fort, at the highest point of the pass (visible atop the hill on the far side of the river in the center of the image), which was the site of several battles between British and Afghan forces during the First and Second Anglo-Afghan Wars. The shrine can be seen at the bottom-left corner of the photograph, alongside the faint signature of the photographer, John Burke.


Ali Masjid was the first location captured by General Sir Samuel Browne (1824–1901) on his march with the Peshawar Valley Field Force towards Kabul at the start of war. The battle took place on November 21, 1878. Browne’s victorious British and Indian troops faced the Afghan army and tribesmen led by Gholam Hyder Khan. The shrine at Ali Masjid can be seen in the background at the far right of the photograph, above the tent encampment, with the fort topping the hill rising to its left.


This photograph is of the gorge below Ali Masjid. The fortress above the shrine was built in 1837 by the Afghan amir, Dūst Mohammad Khān (1793–1863), and was the site of fierce battles between British and Afghan forces in 1842 and in 1878. The figures in the foreground are not identified.
Ali Masjid from Below, [www.wdl.org/11473](www.wdl.org/11473)

This photograph is another from below Ali Masjid. The shrine and fort are located in extremely rugged terrain overlooking a deep gorge. The figures in the foreground, one standing in a shallow riverbed, are not identified.

Captured Guns at Ali Masjid, [www.wdl.org/11474](www.wdl.org/11474)

This is a photograph of artillery pieces captured by British forces during the Battle of Ali Masjid. In the battle, which took place in November 1878, a British and Indian force led by General Sir Samuel Browne (1824–1901) won a victory over the Afghan Army and tribesmen led by Gholam Hyder Khan. Browne captured the fort at Ali Masjid and then marched to Kabul, prompting the Afghan amir, Sher ‘Alī Khān (1825–79), to flee into exile in an unsuccessful attempt to gain Russian assistance. Behind the 36 captured guns of different calibers are the tents of the British encampment and horses belonging to a British unit.

Landi Kotal, [www.wdl.org/11475](www.wdl.org/11475)

Landi Kotal is a small town at the western edge of the Khyber Pass that traditionally marks the entrance to Afghanistan. It is the highest point along the pass. Pictured here is the encampment of the 12,000-strong Peshawar Valley Field Force, under General Sir Samuel Browne (1824–1901), as it crossed the Khyber Pass on the march towards Kabul at the start of the war. The small fort in the foreground guarded the western end of the Khyber Pass.

Landi Kotal Pass, [www.wdl.org/11476](www.wdl.org/11476)

Pictured are members of the Queens’s Own Madras Sappers and Miners of the Peshawar Valley Field Force inspecting the new road through the Khyber Pass that was constructed by the British during their march to Kabul at the start of the conflict. British forces had to travel through the Landi Kotal Pass to reach Jalālābād, the first major town on the Afghan side of the Khyber Pass.

Pipers Hill, Jalālābād, [www.wdl.org/11477](www.wdl.org/11477)

Jalālābād was occupied by the British and Indian Peshawar Valley Field Force during its march towards Kabul in 1878 at the start of the war. The occupation was lengthy but unremarkable and passed without major armed clashes. One of several tribesmen in the foreground is digging with a pick, manned sentry posts
are visible in the middle distance, and Jalālābād appears in the background at the far left. Pipers Hill may have been so named because of its suitability for buglers or bagpipers signaling a British encampment.

**The Amir’s Garden, Jalālābād, [www.wdl.org/11478](www.wdl.org/11478)**

The site of modern Jalālābād was chosen by Zahīr al-Dīn Muhammad Bābur (1483-1530), the first Mughal emperor. Building began in 1560 under his grandson, Emperor Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Akbar (1542–1605), who oversaw the construction of numerous gardens in the city. Many Mughal gardens were inspired by the Persian decorative style, *chahar bagh* (“four gardens,” a design that divided the garden into four sections separated by water or straight paths). The photograph shows two sentries standing next to an avenue of trees that recedes to a circular summerhouse in the middle distance.

**Buddhist Tope at Sphola, [www.wdl.org/11479](www.wdl.org/11479)**

This photograph of the Buddhist *tope* (stupa) above the Afghan village of Sphola is about 25 kilometers from Jamrūd. This ruined stupa features a dome resting upon a three-tiered base. Sphola sits in a ravine located midway between Ali Masjid and Landi Kotal in the Khyber Pass. The stupa may have been constructed towards the end of the Kushan Empire or soon after (third to fifth centuries). It is the most complete Buddhist monument in the Khyber Pass.

**Suffain Koh Panorama, [www.wdl.org/11480](www.wdl.org/11480)**

Presented here is a panoramic photograph of the Suffain Koh or Safed Koh (meaning White Mountain). The Safed Koh range reaches up to 4,671 meters, creating a natural border between eastern Afghanistan and northwestern Pakistan. A range of smaller hills runs across the middle distance of the photograph, while the Safed Koh looms behind them. The British military camp can be seen stretching across the plain in the foreground.

**From the Khyber to Shuttugardun, [www.wdl.org/11481](www.wdl.org/11481)**

This photograph shows the rocky landscape beneath the Safed Koh range. The caption mentions “Shuttugardun,” which is probably a reference to Shotur Gardan (meaning camel’s neck), a small town in Kandahar Province. The Safed Koh range dominates the background, while in the foreground signs of agricultural activity are visible. The right side of the photograph shows a receding layer of short stone walls.

**Panorama of an Afghan City, [www.wdl.org/11482](www.wdl.org/11482)**

The unidentified Afghan city is in the middle frame, flanked on both sides by rocky hills, and with mountains rising in the distance. The right frame shows a sentry tower atop a hill and a man with his mule stopping for rest beneath it.

**Shamsher Bridge and Masjid, Kabul, [www.wdl.org/11483](www.wdl.org/11483)**

This photograph shows the Shah-do-Shamsher Bridge and the Shah-do-Shamsher Masjid (mosque) in Kabul. Shah-do-Shamsher means “king of two swords” in Dari. Shamsher Bridge crosses the Kabul River, which is the main waterway through the city. Except during the summer, the flow of the river is minimal. An Afghan soldier overlooks the river with the bridge in the background, while several people
take shelter from the sun in the shadows of a nearby building. The Shamsher Masjid is not clearly visible in this photograph.

**Kabul River, Old Bridge, Bala Hissar in the Distance**, [www.wdl.org/11484](http://www.wdl.org/11484)

The Kabul River, a tributary of the Indus, is seen running through the center of the photograph and soldiers stand atop the bridge, one of five bridges that crossed the river, while people walk along the road in the distance. In the right foreground people sit or squat on the bridge; behind them soldiers ride by on horseback. Bala Hissar (High Fort) is in the background, just visible through the heat haze and trees. The locus of power in Kabul for many centuries, the fort was the site of fierce fighting and was partly destroyed in October–December 1879 when Sir Frederick Roberts occupied the city at the head of the Kabul Field Force.

**Captured Guns, Kabul**, [www.wdl.org/11485](http://www.wdl.org/11485)

This photograph is of the Afghan artillery captured during the British occupation of Kabul in October–December. Sir Frederick Roberts (1832–1914), the commander of the Kabul Field Force, brought at least 20 field guns (usually horse-drawn mobile cannons) with his army during the conquest and occupation of Kabul during the second phase of the war. His move against Kabul was sparked by the assassination in September 1879 of Sir Pierre Louis Napoleon Cavagnari (1841–79), the British envoy in Kabul and the official who had signed the Treaty of Gandamak with Amir Mohammad Yaqub Khan (1849–1923) in May of that year. Roberts and his staff are shown here on horseback inspecting the captured Afghan artillery in the Sherpur Cantonment, located 1.5 kilometers north of Kabul. British artillery was usually superior to Afghan armament, but occasionally it was ineffective, as at the Battle of Maiwand in July 1880.

**Panorama of the Bala Hissar**, [www.wdl.org/11486](http://www.wdl.org/11486)

This panoramic photograph is of the Bala Hissar (High Fort) in Kabul. The British envoy to Kabul, Sir Pierre Louis Napoleon Cavagnari (1841–79), was murdered inside the fort in September 1879, triggering a general uprising and the second phase of the war. The Kōh-e Shēr Darwāzah (lion door) Mountain rises behind the fort, while the ancient walls with battlements and sentry towers trail off into the distance on both sides. The fortress, which dates from the fifth century, overlooked the city from a hill to the south and was the traditional seat of Afghan rulers. It reputedly was home to Timur (Tamerlane, from Timūr Lang meaning Timur the Lame) and the Mughal emperor, Babur. British troops can be seen by the entrance gate in the right side of the photograph.

**Camp on Shagai Heights**, [www.wdl.org/11487](http://www.wdl.org/11487)

Seen here is the British camp on the Shagai Plateau. The ascent to the Shagai Plateau begins shortly after the entrance to the Khyber Pass from the southeast (at Peshawar, in present-day Pakistan). The encampment of the conical tents of the Peshawar Valley Field Force stretches off into the horizon. The
Camels seen among the tents were used by the British and Indian troops to transport supplies and equipment. Smaller hills in the Safed Koh mountain range flank both sides of the encampment. The photograph presumably was taken shortly before the Battle of Ali Masjid, which occurred in late November 1878 and was the opening battle of the war.

**Guns Captured at the Peiwar Kotal. Parked at Kohat, [www.wdl.org/11488](http://www.wdl.org/11488)**

Mobile field guns of various sizes are arrayed in front of a line of British tents. In the foreground is a row of trees, probably watered from the irrigation ditch alongside. Peiwar Kotal was the site of a battle in late November 1878 between British forces under Sir Frederick Roberts (1832–1914), who outmaneuvered Afghan forces under an unknown commander. The result was a British victory and seizure of the Peiwar Kotal Pass.

**Means of Carrying the Wounded, [www.wdl.org/11489](http://www.wdl.org/11489)**

Two soldiers wearing sun-shielding pith helmets stand at the front of the photograph. They flank two Afghan camel drivers who likely are escorting a wounded British (Indian) soldier. The soldier’s head is swathed in bandages and he lies on a platform atop another dromedary camel. Because of their greater endurance in the harsh Afghan climate, camels were generally preferable to horses for transporting the wounded. British and Indian forces also used camels extensively to transport supplies and equipment.

**An Afghan Water Mill in Afghanistan, [www.wdl.org/11490](http://www.wdl.org/11490)**

The mill, rectangular shaped with a thatched roof, was probably operated on a part-time basis by the family pictured in the photograph. The water mill is a traditional design with a small horizontal mill-house built of stone, or perhaps mud bricks. The men look directly at the camera, but a woman wearing a chador partially screens her face for modesty.

**Bridge Across the Indus at Attock, [www.wdl.org/11491](http://www.wdl.org/11491)**

Pontoon bridges such as this one, formed from boats lashed together by various materials, were easily assembled and disassembled. This pontoon bridge was built near the town of Attock in Punjab Province, in present-day Pakistan, and likely was used by the British Army to ferry supplies and troops across the Indus River. Laborers, fishermen, travelers, soldiers, and pack animals are seen in the foreground. Attock itself is visible on the plateau in the background at the far right.

**Kohat Pass, [www.wdl.org/11492](http://www.wdl.org/11492)**

In this photograph are Afridi tribesmen at the Kohat Pass. The Kohat Pass links the town of Kohat with Peshawar further to north. The pass is the home territory of the Pushtun Afridi tribe, who were regarded by the British authorities as a strongly independent and “warlike” tribe. The Afridi men shown here are
observing the photographer, who might have been John Burke. He was rejected as an official photographer but accompanied the 12,000-strong Peshawar Valley Field Force anyway as it crossed the pass.

**Army Signaling**, [www.wdl.org/11493](http://www.wdl.org/11493)

Signaling in the British Army at that time was performed by the Corps of the Royal Engineers. They used electric telegraphy in regions that had telegraph lines. Hand-held flags, fires for nighttime communications, and different types of non-electrical semaphores were used for campaigns in less-developed regions, such as Afghanistan. The seated soldier who is facing right uses a telescope to view the horizon; other soldiers operate rod (Chappe) semaphores with maneuverable arms, as well as heliograph semaphores (mirrors that transmit reflected light signals in Morse code).

**Engagement in the Khost Country from a Drawing**, [www.wdl.org/11494](http://www.wdl.org/11494)

This drawing of a military engagement near Khost (now Khowst), Afghanistan was created by an unknown artist. The image appears to show a skirmish in late 1878–January 1879 that involved the Kurram Valley Field Force fighting against unidentified Afghan adversaries. In the foreground are massed British cavalry and dragoons (mounted infantry), while ahead of them infantrymen fire upon the enemy in the distance. A section of the Hindu Kush mountain range rises up in the far background of the drawing.

**Mule Battery**, [www.wdl.org/11495](http://www.wdl.org/11495)

Mules historically were used by armies to transport supplies in difficult terrain and, occasionally, as mobile firing platforms for smaller cannons. Mules were also used to tow heavier wheeled field guns through treacherous mountain trails in Afghanistan. One of these slightly larger field guns sits in the left foreground of the photograph, surrounded by sepoys (Indian soldiers in the British Army).

**Elephant and Mule Battery ("Dignity & Impudence")**, [www.wdl.org/11496](http://www.wdl.org/11496)

The mule team on the left side of the photograph would have hauled supplies or towed the small field gun, while the elephants towed the larger gun. The men in the photograph are a mix of British soldiers and Indian sepoys. The group kneeling around the smaller, muzzle-loaded field gun is preparing to fire after the soldier at front left has used the ramrod he is holding to jam the charge down into the gun. The humorous caption invokes common stereotypes about elephants (“dignity”) and mules (“impudence”).

**Elephant Battery on the March**, [www.wdl.org/11497](http://www.wdl.org/11497)

Elephants were commonly used as shock cavalry in the front lines of military campaigns throughout South and Southeast Asia until the end of the 19th century, when the introduction of advanced artillery and Gatling guns made them vulnerable to enemy fire. The British Indian Army, like their Mughal
imperial predecessors, used war elephants to transport large quantities of cargo, but the main advantage of the elephant in late-19th-century military tactics was in towing heavy field guns that horses and mules could not manage. In this photograph, the lead elephants in each team are mounted by Indian mahouts and escorted by British cavalry and foot soldiers. An accompanying baggage train of mules and oxen is seen on the right.

**Mule Battery on the March**, [www.wdl.org/11498](http://www.wdl.org/11498)

The British soldiers facing the camera are wearing pith helmets, which were made of spongy plant tissues, or occasionally of cork, and provided light-weight protection from the sun. The mules are carrying disassembled field guns, including wheels, barrels, and other parts. Mules had considerable advantages as pack animals in the rough terrain, being hardy, sure footed, and habituated to the altitude.

**Afghan Trophies, Peiwar Kotal**, [www.wdl.org/11500](http://www.wdl.org/11500)

This photograph shows a pile of military "trophies" after the Battle of Peiwar Kotal in November 1878. Peiwar Kotal was the site of a battle in late 1878, between British forces under Sir Frederick Roberts (1832–1914), who outmaneuvered Afghan forces under an unknown commander. The result was a British victory and seizure of the Peiwar Kotal Pass. A young boy is perched atop the pile; he leans against a huge bass drum and sits on a fur-lined sheepskin coat, called a *poostin* in Dari. He is surrounded by an assortment of military items that were abandoned during the battle or removed from the bodies of slain soldiers. They include swords and scimitars of both British and Afghan design, scabbards, rifles, and a helmet in the center.

**Group of Afghans**, [www.wdl.org/11501](http://www.wdl.org/11501)

Most of the men are armed with rifles or jezails (heavy Afghan muskets) and wear distinctive turbans. Pushtuns generally leave a length of turban cloth hanging down, so these men are probably from a smaller ethnic group. One lone exception has no head covering at all, and there is a Sikh soldier sitting on a chair in the center of the photograph. He wears a British Army uniform, soldiers' boots, and a Sikh *dastar* (a different style of turban), which distinguish him from the rest of the group. Some Pushtun tribes fought for the British during the war, while Sikhs were used as highly effective mountain scouts and regular infantry against Afghan forces.
Group of Afghans, www.wdl.org/11502

In this photograph is another group of Afghan men. Most of the men are armed with jezails (elongated heavy muskets) and long daggers and wear distinctive turbans. The lone exception is the Sikh soldier standing in front of a tent at the back center of the photograph. He wears a British Army uniform, soldiers' boots, and a Sikh dastar (a different style of turban), which distinguish him from the rest of the group.

General Hume and Staff at Kandahar, 1881, www.wdl.org/11503

Major-General Robert Hume led the Southern Afghanistan Field Force and supervised the British withdrawal from Kandahar in April 1881. He is in the center, with a full beard and a sash across his chest. Surrounding him are the staff members who assisted him in coordinating the evacuation, along with two Baluch orderlies. The withdrawal from Kandahar marked the end of the war.

Medical Officers at Kandahar, 1881, www.wdl.org/11504

This photograph is of 24 medical officers of the Southern Afghanistan Field Force in Kandahar. It is estimated that at least 30 surgeon officers accompanied the field force in 1880 in the fighting that culminated at the Battle of Kandahar. The men pictured here were withdrawn from Kandahar by April 1881.

Theatrical Group, Kandahar, www.wdl.org/11505

The members of the theatrical group are dressed up in different comic costumes. A man on the far left side of the portrait is pantomiming a mother holding a rather unhealthy looking “child.” Other soldiers are dressed as Afghan tribesmen, Sikhs, beggars, jesters, and a vendor of “Camel hot pies.”

Ayub’s Ambassadors from Herat, 1881, www.wdl.org/11506

This photograph is of the ambassadors appointed by Ghazi Mohammad Ayūb Khān (1857–1914). Ayūb Khān was the son of the deposed Afghan amir, Sher ‘Afī Khān (1825–79), and cousin of the future amir, Abd al-Rahmān Khān (1844–1901). He won a significant Afghan victory at the Battle of Maiwand in July 1880, only to be decisively defeated by Sir Frederick Roberts (1832–1914) at the Battle of Kandahar two months later. He retreated to Herat in western Afghanistan and from there fought his cousin, militarily
and diplomatically, for control of the country. Ayūb controlled Herat during and after the war. All the men in this picture wear long knee-length coats called *chapans* and some hold swords. The figures seated in the front are Umrjan Sahib Zadeh in the center, and Ayub’s vizier Abdullah Khan, seated on the left with his son on the right.

**A Baluch Beggar, "Dato Obolum Belisario",** [www.wdl.org/11507](http://www.wdl.org/11507)

Despite the title, it is unclear whether the elderly Baluch (Baluchistan is a region in present-day southwest Pakistan and southeast Iran) is truly a beggar or, perhaps more likely, a Sufi fakir or dervish who would have been regarded as a holy man and relied solely on alms for his livelihood. He wears a pair of worn-out boots, a long quilted coat, and a woolen shawl and has prayer beads around his neck. In his lap is a *kashkul*, a bowl or pot for receiving food donations, symbolizing the emptying of the Sufi’s ego through the renunciation of worldly goods and aspirations. The Latin quotation in the caption, “Dato Obolum Belisario,” refers to the legend of Belisarius, a Roman soldier reduced to begging for alms after Emperor Justinian ordered his eyes to be put out. The story became popular in the Middle Ages and later became the subject of a novel, sculpture, and paintings, including a 1781 work by Jacques-Louis David.

**Group of Fakirs, Kandahar**, [www.wdl.org/11508](http://www.wdl.org/11508)

The term *fakir* sometimes refers to Hindu holy men, but in this context it is understood to describe a Sufi Muslim holy man, who practices an ascetic form of Islam with a stress on poverty and personal devotion to God. The Sufi men in this photo resemble beggars, and in fact many fakirs begged for alms as a means of basic subsistence. The fakir seated in the left-center, staring at the camera, is the subject of another photograph in the album. In his lap is a *kashkul*, a bowl or pot for receiving food donations, symbolizing the emptying of the Sufi’s ego through the renunciation of worldly goods and aspirations.

**Afghan Horse Dealers**, [www.wdl.org/11509](http://www.wdl.org/11509)

The men in the image, by Sir Benjamin Simpson (1831–1923), both wear fine turbans. The one on the right has pointed shoes called *paizar*, and his younger companion has two small leather pouches on his belt, probably holding money or ammunition. Simpson was an avid amateur photographer who spent many years in the Indian Medical Service and served as deputy surgeon general in the South Afghanistan Field Force, mostly in Kandahar, in 1880–81. He took many photographs of the city and its people in the months following the September 1880 victory in the Battle of Kandahar by Major General Frederick Roberts over Ghazi Mohammad Ayub Khan. The Second Anglo-Afghan War began in November 1878 when Great Britain, fearful of what it saw as growing Russian influence in Afghanistan, invaded the country from British India.
Group of Hazaras, www.wdl.org/11510

The origins of the Hazara people of Afghanistan are uncertain. One theory holds that they are descended from the Mongol tribes who invaded Afghanistan in the 13th century. They are predominantly Ithnā'ashariyyah (Twelver Shia Muslims) who speak a Persian dialect containing words of Mongolian origin. The Hazaras are traditionally nomads from the highland regions, who move their flocks of sheep, goats, and camels around the pastures of the Pamir Mountains and the Hindu Kush. In front of the mother and child in the image is a bundle of kindling, possibly the only source of fire for cooking and heat.

Natives of Ziarat-e-Hazratji, www.wdl.org/11511

Ziarat generally means “visit” in Arabic, but here it refers specifically to religious pilgrimage sites found across the Middle East and North Africa and visited by Muslims of all persuasions. The remains of great religious teachers or members of bāyt ʻAlī (the family of ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the fourth Muslim caliph) are buried in such shrines. This monument to Hazratji, a famous Kandahari saint, is located north of the center of the city and is surrounded by the tombs of 19th-century Afghan rulers.

Group of Timuris, www.wdl.org/11512

The Timuris are considered a subset of the nomadic-pastoral Aimaq peoples and live primarily in eastern Iran and western Afghanistan. They speak a distinct language that draws on Indo-European and Indo-Iranian roots, but most Timuris would also understand Farsi. Small groups live near the Khyber Pass, and are relatively integrated into Pushtun culture. The four Timuri men shown here are well-dressed in traditional chapans (overcoats), woolen loose-fitting pants, and turbans. This image is by Sir Benjamin Simpson (1831–1923), an avid amateur photographer who spent many years in the Indian Medical Service and served as deputy surgeon general in the Southern Afghanistan Field Force in 1880–81.

Group of Pārsiwans, www.wdl.org/11513

Parsiwan, or “Persian speaker,” refers specifically to Afghans speaking Dari, or Afghan Persian, as opposed to Farsi, or Iranian Persian, although the two languages are mutually comprehensible. Most Parsiwans live in western Afghanistan in and around Herat. The men here are dressed in traditional style, with fine embroidery on their overcoats and pointed shoes. This photograph was taken in the same location and from the same angle as another portrait in the album, but with different men as subjects.

Sir Bolan, an Achakzai Chief, www.wdl.org/11514

This portrait is of a seated Achakzai chief and five of his associates. The Achakzai are a Pushtun tribal subgroup, residing primarily in eastern Afghanistan, between Quetta and Kandahar. Most of the tribe took up arms against the British Raj when its rule reached the Afghan border. Little is known about this chief’s background, his allegiance during the war, or what role he might have played in it.

Pomegranate Sellers, Kokaran Road, Kandahar, www.wdl.org/11515

In this photograph the merchants are clustered about the side of a main road. Kandahar, located in southern Afghanistan, is renowned for its pomegranate production, and the country’s pomegranates, which have been a staple crop in the region for centuries, are considered among the best in the world.
Pomegranate trees are indigenous to the region from Iran to the Himalayas and have been cultivated in the Mediterranean and elsewhere since ancient times.

**Kandahar from Hazratji Tomb, [www.wdl.org/11516](http://www.wdl.org/11516)**

Located north of the center of the city and surrounded by the tombs of 19th-century Afghan rulers, the tomb is a shrine to Hazratji, a famous Kandahari saint. That his tomb is seven meters long attests to his reputation for holiness. The other tombs have tall marble stones at each end and are decorated with black and white pebbles. The photograph shows the walls and sentry towers of the city, sprawling across the background and fading into the distance to the right. Small shrines and graves occupy the foreground. The British occupied Kandahar from September 1880 until their withdrawal in April 1881, which marked the end of the war.

**Barrack Square, Kandahar, 78th Highlanders, [www.wdl.org/11517](http://www.wdl.org/11517)**

The 78th Highlanders, a Scottish infantry regiment then commanded by Colonel A.E. Warren, did not arrive in Afghanistan until November 1880. Most of the fighting was over by then, as the British victory at the Battle of Kandahar several months earlier was the last major battle of the war. In this photograph, the 78th Highlanders pose for a group portrait. The unit encamped in large wedge tents in order to escape some of the effects of fierce weather conditions of Afghanistan, but many soldiers nevertheless were invalidated out, suffering from the extreme climate.

**Natives of Kandahar,** [www.wdl.org/11518](http://www.wdl.org/11518)

Kandahar, the second-largest city in Afghanistan, was occupied by the British Southern Afghanistan Field Force from September 1880 until April 1881, when all British forces withdrew from the country. This photograph is taken at a palace *zenana* (harem) quarters, which clearly were not being used by women at the time, given the presence of a large group of men and boys of different ages.
Plain, North and East of Kandahar, www.wdl.org/11519

This photograph of a plain located northeast of Kandahar is from an album of rare historical photographs depicting people and places associated with the Second Anglo-Afghan War. foothills are visible in the distance. The buildings and other objects in the photograph are not identified, but the irregular pillars could well be tombstones.

Tomb of Ahmed Shāh, Kandahar, www.wdl.org/11520

This photograph is of the tomb of Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī (circa 1723–72). Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī established the Durrani Empire (1747–1818) and is regarded as the father of the modern Afghan state. His repeated invasions of India greatly extended his domains. His ornate octagonal mausoleum topped by a dome sits in the center of Kandahar and is situated in the back of the Kirka Sharif (Mosque of the Sacred Cloak). The mosque was said to be the resting place of the cloak of the Prophet Muhammad, acquired by Aḥmad Shāh in the late-18th century.

Signal Tower, Kandahar, www.wdl.org/11521

Shown here is a ruined building in use as a British Army signal tower in Kandahar. Soldiers are seen at various levels of the building, with officers at the top holding a tripod, a telescope, and other devices. The British Army of the 1870s used various signaling technologies, including where possible the telegraph, and heliographic semaphores, which transmitted Morse code by means of sunlight flashed from mirrors.

Heyland Cart and Pack Mules, www.wdl.org/11522

Mules were important pack animals in the often-difficult terrain, valued for their strength and patient, mild temperament. The photograph shows some of the different kinds of pack harnesses. The massive brick walls at the Durrani Gate in Kandahar are visible in the background. The photograph is by Sir Benjamin Simpson (1831–1923), who captured many scenes of everyday life in Kandahar during his stay in the city with the Southern Afghanistan Field Force in September 1880–April 1881.

Artillery Square, Kandahar, www.wdl.org/11523

The large citadel, possibly Kandahar Bala Hissar (High Fort), dominates the skyline of the photograph, while the Kirka Sharif (Mosque of the Sacred Cloak) is visible in the left background. The soldiers of a British Army artillery unit are encamped across the square, near their light and heavy field guns.
Kandahar from Signal Tower, www.wdl.org/11524

A section of the city wall starts at the right side of the photograph and stretches out of sight into the left background. The unusually shaped mountain shrouded by haze in the back right holds the Chilzina, a chamber hewn out of the rock that was part of the old Kandahar citadel, accessed by the "Forty Steps" carved in the rock.

Street View, Kandahar, www.wdl.org/11525

A crowd seems to have gathered to watch the photographer, who is also regarded by a young boy perched on a roof. Shops, houses, and a section of the city wall are visible from this point, which is called Charsu or Char Su. It is where the main routes into Kandahar from the gates in the city walls converged. The photograph was taken during the British occupation of Kandahar, which lasted from September 1880 to April 1881.

Street View, Kandahar, www.wdl.org/11526

The crowd of men and young boys seems to have gathered to watch the photographer at work. A street vendor is selling food. His shop is adorned with beautiful traditional embroidered chadors, large scarfs worn by women as a combination of veil, shawl, and head covering. The photograph was also taken during the British occupation of Kandahar.

Street View, by Sir Benjamin Simpson, www.wdl.org/11527

This photograph of a scene is assumed to be in Kandahar. Men and young boys have gathered on both levels of a ruined building and in its courtyard and are observing the photographer. In the foreground is a charpoy (also seen as chaar payee), a bed frame made of woven rope used throughout Afghanistan as an outdoor bed during the hot summer. The photograph most likely was taken during the British occupation of Kandahar.


Most likely taken during the British occupation of Kandahar, this photograph shows the exterior of the zenana, the women’s quarters of the palace of Sher Ali Khan, who was amir of Afghanistan for most of the period 1863–79. Sher Ali Khan was the son of Dost Mohammad Khān, founder of the Barakzai Dynasty in Afghanistan.
The Durrani Gate, www.wdl.org/11529

Ahmad Shah Durrani made Kandahar his capital when he became the ruler of an Afghan empire in 1747. The heavy wooden doors of the gate, one of the entrances to the Kandahar citadel, can be seen in the back center of the photograph. Soldiers in pith helmets stand guard, regarding a scene that includes camels and herdsmen who have just emerged from the gate, civilians visible in the foreground, and a boy minding his sheep. The photograph most likely was taken during the British occupation of Kandahar.

Chilzina, or the Forty Steps, www.wdl.org/11530

The Chilzina is a chamber carved from the mountain rock that was part of the old citadel of Kandahar, built by the first Mughal emperor, Žahîr al-Dîn Muḥammad Bābur (1483–1530), in the early 16th century. Inside the chamber near the summit, reached by forty steps, are Persian inscriptions detailing Bābur's conquests in India and elsewhere in Asia. A battle between Amir Abd al-Raḥmān Khān and his cousin Ayūb Khān took place near the base of the steps in 1881. The ruins of the old citadel, which was destroyed in 1738, are visible in the center of the photograph, above the dried-fruit seller sitting with two other people.

Kirka Sharif, the Shrine Where the Mantle of the Prophet is Preserved, www.wdl.org/11531

The Kirka Sharif (Mosque of the Sacred Cloak) houses the mantle (cloak) said to have belonged to the Prophet Muhammad. It is one of the most-revered relics in the Islamic world, given to Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī (1722–72), ruler of the Durrani Empire (1747–1818) by the amir of Bukhara in about 1768. The interior of the mosque is ornately carved green marble from Helmand, with mirrored tiles and gilded detailing. Shown here is a courtyard and gravestone within the shrine. The walls are decorated with carvings of trees and other foliage, each design different from the next. A lone Afghan man sits on the steps leading to the inside of the mosque.

Baba Wali Kotal, www.wdl.org/11532

The village and pass of Baba Wali were named for a Kandahari holy man whose tomb was nearby. The place was the site of a major battle outside Kandahar in September 1880, between Afghan forces led by Ghazi Mohammad Ayub Khan (1857–1914) and British and Indian forces under Sir Frederick Roberts (1832–1914). The British defeated Ayub Khan, raising his siege of the city and effectively ending the war. Shown here is the site of the battle and the British defensive lines. In the background on the left is the mountain with the Chilzina (a chamber carved out of the rock); another mountain can be seen on the right. Ayub Khan placed his artillery between these two peaks.
**Panorama of Kandahar, [www.wdl.org/11533](http://www.wdl.org/11533)**

Panoramic photographs employ a variety of techniques to create a wide angle of view. This panoramic view is comprised of five photographs set together to give the viewer a broader image than would have been possible with a single photograph. The city of Kandahar is seen in the two photo panels on the right, with British troops, horses, and tents in the foreground. The Chilzina (a chamber cut out of the mountain rock) and the ruined old citadel of Kandahar are in the distant background of the same two panels. Agricultural lands stretch across the entire panorama. A lone figure stands atop a rocky hillside in the inner panel on the left side.
**Drawings from “Illustrated London News”**
from the Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection at the Brown University Library.

### The Amir. A Dogcart Drive, [www.wdl.org/9214](http://www.wdl.org/9214)

This pencil drawing by Melton Prior (1845–1910) was published in the *Illustrated London News* on January 21, 1905 under the title “The Amir’s favour for English ways: A dog-cart drive, one of his Highness’s favourite pastimes.” According to the caption, the artist created the picture from material supplied by an official in the service of the amir, Habibullah Khan (born 1872), the ruler of Afghanistan from 1901 until his death in 1919. In this drawing, the amir is shown driving down a street with an escort of mounted lancers alongside. Prior was one of the leading “special artists” employed by the *Illustrated London News* in the late 19th–early 20th century. He supplied numerous illustrations of military conflicts in Africa, Asia, Spain, the Balkans, and Crete, as well as of events such as royal tours and marriages.

### Adal, Hazara, Gundamuck, [www.wdl.org/9644](http://www.wdl.org/9644)

In the fall of 1878, *The Illustrated London News* dispatched the Scottish artist William Simpson (1823–99) to Afghanistan in anticipation of a conflict between Britain and Afghan tribal leaders. The British were concerned about growing Russian influence in the region and a possible Russian threat to British India. Fighting broke out in November 1878, precipitating what became known as the Second Afghan War (1878–80). Simpson documented the conflict, but he was also interested in people he encountered and places he visited, especially ancient Buddhist ruins, several of which he excavated. This sketch, dated April 18, 1879, shows Adal, a member of the Hazara ethnic group living in Afghanistan’s central highlands.

### Ali Masjid from the Shagai Heights, [www.wdl.org/9645](http://www.wdl.org/9645)

One of the British military objectives was to take the fort at Ali Masjid and thereby establish British control of the Khyber Pass. Shown here is Scottish artist William Simpson’s watercolor of Ali Masjid as seen from the Shagai Heights.
In the fall of 1878, *The Illustrated London News* dispatched the Scottish artist William Simpson (1823–99) to Afghanistan in anticipation of a conflict between Britain and Afghan tribal leaders. The British were concerned about growing Russian influence in the region and a possible Russian threat to British India. Fighting broke out in November 1878, precipitating what became known as the Second Afghan War (1878–80).

Simpson documented the conflict, but he was also interested in people he encountered and places he visited, especially ancient Buddhist ruins, several of which he excavated. This watercolor landscape, dated November 20, 1878, shows the entrance to the Khyber Pass, the strategic link between British India and Afghanistan.

Gorge on the Kabool River, near Basawul, [www.wdl.org/9647](http://www.wdl.org/9647)

Simpson labeled this watercolor “Gorge on the Kabool River, near Basawul” and dated it December, 13, 1878. The painting is from the Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection at the Brown University Library.

Hassan, a Tajik, Attendant of the Khan of Lal Poora, [www.wdl.org/9648](http://www.wdl.org/9648)

This watercolor, dated November 24, 1878, shows Hassan, a Tajik attendant of the khan of Lalpura, one of the leading tribal chiefs on the Afghan–Indian frontier. In the fall of 1878, *The Illustrated London News* dispatched the Scottish artist William Simpson (1823–99) to Afghanistan in anticipation of a conflict between Britain and Afghan tribal leaders. The British were concerned about growing Russian influence in the region and a possible Russian threat to British India. Fighting broke out in November 1878, precipitating what became known as the Second Afghan War (1878–80). Simpson documented the conflict, but he was also interested in people he encountered and places he visited, especially ancient Buddhist ruins, several of which he excavated. This watercolor, dated November 24, 1878, shows Hassan, a Tajik attendant of the khan of Lalpura, one of the leading tribal chiefs on the Afghan–Indian frontier.
Picquet of the 4th Goorkhas, Basawul, www.wdl.org/9650

Shown in this sketch, dated December 12, 1878, is a watchful picket of the Fourth Gurkha Regiment at Basawul. Gurkha soldiers, recruited in Nepal for service in the British Indian Army, were known for their courage and fighting power. The British were concerned about growing Russian influence in the region and a possible Russian threat to British India. Fighting broke out in November 1878, precipitating what became known as the Second Afghan War (1878–80).

Tent and Servant, "Mahomed Buksh", www.wdl.org/9651

Shown here is Simpson’s watercolor of the camp of the Fourth Gurkha Regiment at Jalalabad in March 1879. In the foreground next to the tent stands Gurkha servant Mahomed Buksh. In the fall of 1878, The Illustrated London News dispatched the Scottish artist William Simpson (1823–99) to Afghanistan in anticipation of a conflict between Britain and Afghan tribal leaders.

Village of Lala Cheena in the Khyber River, www.wdl.org/9653

Shown here is Simpson’s watercolor sketch of the village of Lala Cheena. Simpson’s notes indicate that this was where General Sir Neville Chamberlain met with Faiz Mahomed Khan, governor of the fort of Ali Majid. The sketch is dated November 21, 1878, the day of the Battle of Ali Masjid in which 12,000 British and Indian troops defeated 3,700 Afghan troops and an unknown number of Afghan tribesmen.
Simpson documented the conflict, but he was also interested in people he encountered and places he visited. This sketch by Simpson, dated May 26, 1879, shows the British envoy, Major Cavagnari, and Bakhtiar Khan writing out the Treaty of Gandamak, the treaty of peace concluded between the British government and Muhammad Yakub Khan, Amir of Afghanistan. Bakhtiar Khan was Cavagnari’s agent in negotiating the treaty, which was signed on the same day that the drawing was made.
Sketches in Afghanistan


James Atkinson (1780–1852) was a man of many talents, best known for his early translations into English of Persian poetry and prose. He was born in England and studied medicine in London and Edinburgh. He was appointed an assistant surgeon in the Bengal service in 1805 and spent most of the rest of his life in India. In his spare time he mastered Persian, and by 1814 he had published a translation of part of Firdawsi’s Šahnamah (Book of kings), the first time the Persian epic was made accessible to an English audience. In 1838 Atkinson was appointed chief surgeon of the Army of the Indus, and in that capacity he accompanied the army on its march to Kabul in the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–42). He left Afghanistan in 1841 to return to India. In 1842 he published a first-hand account of the war entitled The Expedition into Afghanistan: Notes and Sketches Descriptive of the Country. Atkinson was also a talented artist, several of whose works are now in the National Portrait Gallery in London. Sketches in Afghanistan is a book of lithographs based on drawings that Atkinson made in Afghanistan. Published in London in the same year as The Expedition into Afghanistan, it includes 25 sketches depicting scenes in Kabul, mountain scenery, and significant events during the war.

The Durbar-Khanéh of Sháh Shu’újá’-Ool-Moolk, at Caubul, www.wdl.org/18516

Illustration shows Shāh Shujāʿ seated on a balcony as civilians and soldiers assemble in front of him at his quarters in Kabul, Afghanistan.
The Avenue at Baber’s Tomb, www.wdl.org/18517

Afghan men at the Garden of Babur, the site of his tomb in Kabul, Afghanistan.

The Tomb of the Emperor Baber, www.wdl.org/18518

Afghans at the tomb of Babur (1483–1530), the first Mughal emperor, at Kabul, Afghanistan.

Caubul Costumes, www.wdl.org/18519

Afghan women in traditional dress in Kabul, Afghanistan; portrait of Shāh Shujā‘; and Governor Ghulam Haider Khan hiding in Ghaznī, Afghanistan.
Scene on the River Sutledge, near Pauk-Puttun in the Punjaub, [www.wdl.org/18495](http://www.wdl.org/18495)

Punjabi people working on the banks of the Sutlej River near Pakpattan, in present-day Pakistan: cooking; carrying water; running a *sakia*, or Persian wheel, to irrigate fields; and operating a boat.

![Scene on the River Sutledge, near Pauk-Puttun in the Punjaub](image)

The Town of Roree and the Fortress of Bukker, on the Indus, [www.wdl.org/18496](http://www.wdl.org/18496)

Indian civilians and their animals, accompanying the Army of the Indus en route to Afghanistan, on the banks of the Indus River at the army encampment near Bukkur Fort and the town of Rohri, in present-day Pakistan.

The Encampment at Dadur with the Entrance to the Bolan Pass, [www.wdl.org/18497](http://www.wdl.org/18497)

Indian civilians and their animals, accompanying the Army of the Indus en route to Afghanistan, at the army encampment near the entrance to the Bolan Pass, in present-day Pakistan.
View of the Mountain Baba-Naunee, Called Kutl-Gahor, [www.wdl.org/18498](http://www.wdl.org/18498)

Illustration shows three Baluchis preparing to murder an Indian civilian accompanying the Army of the Indus en route to Afghanistan, as he slept at Qatal Gah, in present-day Pakistan; caravan of soldiers, camp followers, camels, and equipment in the distance.

Entrance to the Bolan Pass from Dadur, [www.wdl.org/18499](http://www.wdl.org/18499)

Indian civilians and their animals travelling through the entrance to the Bolan Pass, in present-day Pakistan, with the Army of the Indus en route to Afghanistan.

Baluchi snipers on cliff observing the Army of the Indus and Indian civilians with the army going through the Bolan Pass in the Toba Kakar Mountains, in present-day Pakistan, en route to Afghanistan; sepoys above the Baluchis prepare to fire at them.

The Opening into the Narrow Pass above the Siri Bolan, www.wdl.org/18501

Illustration shows skirmish between Baluchis and soldiers of the Army of the Indus as they march through the Bolan Pass in the Toba Kakar Mountains, in present-day Pakistan, en route to Afghanistan; Indian civilians, who traveled with the army, stand nearby.
The Approach to the Fortress of Kwettah, www.wdl.org/18502

Army of the Indus soldiers and Indian civilians, who traveled with the army, approaching Quetta Fort, later also known as Sandeman Fort, in present-day Pakistan, en route to Afghanistan.

Entrance into the Kojack Pass from Parush, www.wdl.org/18503

Army of the Indus soldiers and Indian civilians, who traveled with the army, en route to Afghanistan from British India. The Khojak Pass is about eight kilometers long and some 2,300 meters above sea level at its highest point.

The Troops Emerging from the Narrow Part of the Defile, www.wdl.org/18504

Soldiers exiting a narrow gorge in the Khojak Pass, in present-day Pakistan, en route to Afghanistan; Indian civilians, who traveled with the Army of the Indus, are nearby; the pass is about eight kilometers long and some 2,300 meters above sea level at its highest point.
The First Descent Through the Koojah Pass, [www.wdl.org/18505](http://www.wdl.org/18505)

Soldiers and Indian civilians, who traveled with the Army of the Indus en route to Afghanistan, marching in the Khojak Pass, Pakistan, en route to Afghanistan; prisoners stand in the foreground.

The Second Descent Through the Koojah Pass, [www.wdl.org/18506](http://www.wdl.org/18506)

British and Indian soldiers, and some civilians, with the Army of the Indus en route to Afghanistan. The army made the descent to the steep Khojak Pass, north of Quetta, in present-day Pakistan, in three stages.
Indian civilians, who traveled with the Army of the Indus en route to Afghanistan, preparing an encampment as the army marches down the Khojak Pass, Pakistan, [www.wdl.org/18507](http://www.wdl.org/18507)

British and Indian soldiers, and some civilians, with the Army of the Indus en route to Afghanistan. The army made the descent to the steep Khojak Pass, north of Quetta, in present-day Pakistan, in three stages.

![Image](image_url)

The Third Descent of the Koojah Pass, [www.wdl.org/18508](http://www.wdl.org/18508)

Indian civilians, who traveled with the Army of the Indus to Afghanistan in 1839, with merchants near an encampment for the army on the outskirts of Kandahar.
The Fortress and Citadel of Ghuznee and the Two Minars, [www.wdl.org/18509](http://www.wdl.org/18509)

Indian civilians, who traveled with the Army of the Indus to Afghanistan, and soldiers outside the walls of the fortress and citadel at Ghazni, in eastern Afghanistan.

The Valley of Maidan, [www.wdl.org/18510](http://www.wdl.org/18510)

Army of the Indus soldier on camelback meeting Afghan men near a watch tower as a file of soldiers rides on horseback from Maidan to Arghandeh.
The Village of Urghundee, [www.wdl.org/18511](http://www.wdl.org/18511)

Afghan or Indian civilians conversing in the foreground, as Army of the Indus soldiers examine cannons left behind after the flight of Dost Mohammad Khan and his troops near Arghandeh, Afghanistan.

Surrender of Dost Mahommed Khan, to Sir William Hay MacNaghten Bart, at the Entrance into Caubul from Killa-Kazee, [www.wdl.org/18512](http://www.wdl.org/18512)

Dost Mohammad Khan surrendering to Sir William Hay MacNaghten during a horseback ride near Kabul in the valley of Qila-Qazi.

The Main Street in the Bazaar at Caubul in the Fruit Season, [www.wdl.org/18513](http://www.wdl.org/18513)

Illustration shows Afghans in a marketplace buying and selling fruit, bread, and other goods.
The Balla Hissar and City of Caubul from the Upper Part of the Citadel, [www.wdl.org/18514](http://www.wdl.org/18514)

Afghan men standing on a hill overlooking the city of Kabul, Afghanistan, including the Bala Hisar fortress.

Caubul, from a Burying Ground on the Mountain Ridge, North-east of the City, [www.wdl.org/18515](http://www.wdl.org/18515)

Illustration shows Afghan men at Kaga-Suffa cemetery overlooking the city of Kabul, Afghanistan.
In the mid-to-late 19th century, the Russian Empire expanded into Central Asia, annexing territories located in present-day Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Tsar Alexander II approved the establishment of the governor-generalship of Russian Turkestan in 1867. General Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman (1818–82), the first governor-general, commissioned the *Turkestan Album*, a comprehensive visual survey of the region that includes some 1,200 photographs, along with architectural plans, watercolor drawings, and maps. The work is in four parts, spanning six large, leather-bound volumes: “Archaeological Part” (two volumes); “Ethnographic Part” (two volumes); “Trades Part” (one volume); and “Historical Part” (one volume). The compiler of the first three parts was Russian Orientalist Aleksandr L. Kun, who was assisted by Nikolai V. Bogaevskii. Production of the album was completed in 1871–72. The fourth part was compiled by Mikhail Afrikanovich Terent’ev (born, 1837), a Russian military officer, orientalist, linguist, and author who participated in the Russian expedition to Samarkand of 1867–68.

Presented here is the “Archaeological Part,” containing 359 individual photographs and sketches on 154 plates. It is a detailed visual record of the Islamic architecture of Samarkand as it appeared shortly after
the Russian conquest in the 1860s. The Library of Congress acquired a complete set of the volumes in 1934; other surviving copies are in the National Library of Uzbekistan and the National Library of Russia.


This striking sketch is of the crypt at the Gur-Emir mausoleum in Samarkand (Uzbekistan) is from the archeological part of *Turkestan Album*. The album devotes special attention to Samarkand’s Islamic architectural heritage, including Gur-Emir (Persian for “tomb of the ruler”). Although known primarily as the burial place of Timur (Tamerlane), Gur-Emir was begun by Timur in 1403 to commemorate the death of his beloved grandson, Muhammad Sultan. His sudden death at the age of 27 deprived Timur of his chosen successor. The shrine was not yet completed at the time of Timur's own death from pneumonia in 1405. With his burial there, Gur-Emir became the Timurid mausoleum. The interior was completed by Timur’s grandson Ulugh Beg, also buried at Gur-Emir. The mausoleum has two levels, the upper of which has imposing sarcophagi, while the lower contains the crypt, or sepulcher, whose more austere tombs hold the actual remains. The sketch frames the view with rough brick to give the sense of a grotto. The perspective skillfully includes the four arches and the low circular vaulted ceiling. The central slabs have carved inscriptions.

**Syr-Darya Oblast. City of Turkestan. Mausoleum of Saint Sultan Akhmed Iassavi**, [www.wdl.org/3587](http://www.wdl.org/3587)

This photograph is of the mausoleum of Khodzha Ahmed Iassavi in Yasi (present-day Turkestan, Kazakhstan). Yasi is associated with the Sufi mystic, Khodzha Ahmed Iassavi (1103-66), whose great reputation led Timur (Tamerlane) to construct a memorial shrine (*khanaka*) at his grave site. Built in 1396-98, the mausoleum displays features of Timurid architecture, then at its height in Samarkand. The facade is flanked by two large fortress-like towers. At the center of the iwan niche is a portal arch, or *peshtak*. Above the portal is another niche with an intricate vault. Only fragments remain of the tile surface of the walls. The mausoleum is built of adobe brick and shows damage probably caused in part by earthquakes. The structure in the left foreground has an open portico with wooden columns supporting a flat roof—a design typical of summer mosques.

Rabii Sultan Begim was the daughter of the Timurid ruler Ulugh Beg, and thus the great-granddaughter of Timur (Tamerlane). In 1451 she married Khan Abulkhair. After her death in 1485, this mausoleum was built adjacent to the late 14th-century khanaka dedicated to Khodzha Akhmed Iassavi. This view from the back shows significant damage to the adobe brick structure. The dome is without its original azure tile cladding, and the bottom part of the mausoleum is submerged beneath layers of accumulated soil. Nonetheless, the drum that supports the dome has retained most of its polychrome ceramic tile surface, which is composed of intricate geometric patterns interlaced with elongated Perso-Arabic script. The mausoleum has since been restored. In the background is a wall encompassing the sacred area.

Syr-Darya Oblast. Ruins of the City of Sauran. Taken in 1866. www.wdl.org/3601

This photograph is of ruins from the city of Sauran, located in the southern part of present-day Kazakhstan. The caption notes that the photograph was taken in 1866, which predates the photography undertaken specifically for the album. Sauran (also known as Savran) was some 40 kilometers from the city of Yasi (present-day Turkestan, Kazakhstan), and was reputed to be an important point on the Silk Road. In the 14th century it became the capital of the regional Ak Orda (White Horde), and at the time was known for its ceramic tile production. (Ak means “white” and, in the traditional Turkic naming of cardinal compass points, corresponds to “south”; the other cardinal directions are Kok, meaning “blue” or “east”; Qizil, “red” or “west”; and Qara, “black” or “north.”) The brick minarets on hilly terrain in the photograph show signs of major damage, but they remain standing. The tower on the right in particular seems without a sufficient base. The exterior wall of the tower is in fact a shell that encloses a spiraling stairway, and the core of the tower is still relatively intact. The left tower still has its superstructure, visible above the flared stalactite culmination of the main shaft. The figure on the left gives a sense of the scale of the towers.
This photograph is of the Usto Ali mausoleum at the Shah-i Zindah necropolis in Samarkand. The patron of this mausoleum (built around 1380) is unknown. The mausoleum is often referred to by the name of its master builder, Usto Ali Nesefi. Much of the facade has suffered severe losses, but the surviving parts of the ornamentation reveal one of the most elaborate decorative programs in the entire necropolis. The ceramic work includes polychrome majolica tiles in geometric and botanical patterns, faience panels and mosaics, Arabic inscriptions, and ornamental columns flanking the entrance arch. The basic colors of the facade are dark blue and turquoise.

This photograph is of the Shadi Mulk mausoleum at the Shah-i Zindah necropolis in Samarkand. Built on the site of an ancient settlement known as Afrosiab, Shah-i Zindah (Persian for “living king”) is revered as a memorial to Kusam-ibn-Abbas, a cousin of the prophet Muhammad. This view is taken facing south within the upper passageway of the necropolis. On the right is the mausoleum of Shadi Mulk Aka, built in 1372 for the burial of Uldjai Shadi-Mulk, the daughter of Tamerlane's elder sister, Kutlug-Turkan-Aka. Its main facade is covered with ceramic tiles, and the structure is surmounted by a ribbed dome. Adjoining to the left is the Emir-Zade mausoleum (1386), also with a large pointed dome. In the left foreground is the so-called octagonal mausoleum (15th century).
This photograph of the Khodzha Akhmad mausoleum at the Shah-i Zindah necropolis in Samarkand is from the archeological part of Turkestan Album. The six-volume photographic survey was produced in 1871-72 under the patronage of General Konstantin P. von Kaufman, the first governor-general, in 1867-82, of Turkestan, as the Russian Empire’s Central Asian territories were called. The Khodzha Akhmad mausoleum was built in the 1360s, presumably for a local spiritual leader. Situated at the end of the necropolis passageway in the northern cluster of shrines, the monument displays vibrant ceramic ornamentation with floral, geometric, and inscriptional patterns. The name of its designer—Fakhri-Ali—was revealed within a pattern on one of the ceramic tiles. The facade arch, or peshtak, is flanked by glazed carved terracotta columns, and on either side of the arch is a terracotta band of script in the cursive Thuluth style. Located to the upper right of the arch, the fragment shown demonstrates a mastery of intricate floral detail, both in terra-cotta and polychrome majolica tiles.

In 1386 a mausoleum was built for Toglu Tekin, daughter of Emir Khodzha and mother of Emir Hussein—one of Timur’s grandees. The rich display of polychrome ornament includes: a glazed carved terracotta capital supporting a corner of the facade arch (peshtak); vertical strips of majolica tiles in geometric and floral patterns; an inscription in cursive Thuluth script set within a carved background; and a strip of tiles with a rosette motif. The outer corner of the structure is marked by a large glazed column with an ascending rhomboid pattern. The basic colors are dark blue and turquoise, with white detailing.
Antiquities of Samarkand. Tomb of the Saint Kusam-ibn-Abbas (Shah-i Zindah) and Adjacent Mausoleums. Mausoleum of Emir Assad (Abdul Khayum), Facade, www.wdl.org/3648

Most of this unnamed mausoleum collapsed, but the surviving ornamental fragments on the main facade reveal a decorative technique similar to that of the nearby Usto Ali mausoleum. In both cases there are vertical bands with interconnected strapwork and geometric motifs. No information exists on the identity of the patron or the builder, but the resemblance suggests a similar date of construction (circa 1380).

Antiquities of Samarkand. Tomb of the Saint Kusam-ibn-Abbas (Shah-i Zindah) and Adjacent Mausoleums. Mausoleum of Emir Burunduk, www.wdl.org/3652

The Burunduk mausoleum, built apparently in the 1380s, commemorates one of Tamerlane’s leading military commanders. Here it is viewed from the parapet on the opposite side of the necropolis passageway, and partially obscured by a rubble line. The massive structure suffered major damage: its outer cupola is missing, although the polygonal drum and inner dome have survived, and on the main facade (at right), the top of the entrance arch (peshtak) has collapsed. Still visible are fragments of ceramic work around the portal and within the arch niche. This mausoleum is the first of a cluster of shrines at the north end of the necropolis.


This impressive view was taken from high ground to the east of the ensemble. It shows the brick back walls of the Shirin Bika Aka Mausoleum, capped by a high drum and dome with ceramic decoration, as well as a small octagonal mausoleum (center). Also included are the ribbed domes of the Emir-Zade Mausoleum (center background) and of the Shadi Mulk Mausoleum. The upper corner of the Shadi Mulk main facade is visible, together with its east wall (on right). Dating from the late 14th and early 15th centuries, these shrines are among the jewels of Timurid architecture. In the foreground are brick burial mounds.

This mausoleum was built in 1385-86 for Timur’s younger sister and is considered one of the greatest achievements at the Shah-i Zindah complex. Its design, which reflects Persian influence, centers on a remarkable entrance arch, or peshtak, which culminates in “stalactite” corners supporting a semicircular open vault. Despite significant damage, the facade shows profuse ceramic ornamentation, including early examples of composite terracotta mosaics in colors ranging from orange and red to deep blue. The facade is also decorated with inscriptional bands in the cursive Thuluth style. This view is taken from the north corner of the Shadi Mulk Mausoleum.

Antiquities of Samarkand. Tomb of Saint Kusam-ibn-Abbas (Shah-i Zindah) and Adjacent Mausoleums. Mausoleums of Uldzh Inak and Bibi Zinet. View of the Mausoleums of Tamerlane’s Benefactress and Her Daughter (Uldzk Inak and Bibi Zinet), www.wdl.org/3682

This photograph shows a double-domed structure thought to have been built in 1437 by Ulugh Beg, the renowned astronomer king and grandson of Tamerlane. Although it is identified in the album as the mausoleum of Tamerlane's benefactress Uldzk Inak and of her daughter Bibi Zinet, the structure is also considered the tomb of Ulugh Beg’s fellow astronomer, Każy-Zade Rumi. The effects of neglect are clearly visible on the superb ceramic tile decoration (including patterned Arabic script), much of which has since been restored. This view of a mausoleum at the Shah-i Zindah necropolis in Samarkand is from the archeological part of Turkestan Album. The lavish edition in six volumes was produced in 1871-72 under the patronage of General Konstantin P. von Kaufman, the first governor-general (1867-82) of Turkestan, as the Russian Empire’s Central Asian territories were called.
Antiquities of Samarkand. Tomb of Saint Kusam-ibn-Abbas (Shah-i Zindah) and Adjacent Mausoleums. Mausoleums of Uldzh Inak and Bibi Zinet. View from South of the Exterior of the Mausoleums of Chugun Bek and Kutuluk Turdi Bek Aka, [www.wdl.org/3683](http://www.wdl.org/3683)

The two mausoleums shown here are at the top of a stairway to the second passageway chamber (chartak), from which the photograph is taken. On the left is the Mausoleum of Emir-Zade (1386), beyond which is the Mausoleum of Shadi Mulk Aka, also known as Turkan-Aka (1372). Because of their protected location, their intricate ceramic tile decoration (including patterned Arabic script) has been relatively well preserved. Of particular note are the glazed polychrome columns that flank the Shadi Mulk mausoleum.

Antiquities of Samarkand. Tomb of the Saint Kusam-ibn-Abbas (Shah-i Zindah) and Adjacent Mausoleums. Mosque (khanaka) of Shah-i Zindah. Reading-Stand with a Qur’an Donated by Emir Nasrullah of Bukhara, [www.wdl.org/3684](http://www.wdl.org/3684)

This photograph is of the interior of the mosque at the Kusam-ibn-Abbas memorial ensemble in the northern cluster of shrines at the Shah-i Zindah necropolis in Samarkand. It features a worshipper in front of a wooden rihal (Qur’an holder) in the largest structure of the ensemble, the memorial mosque, or khanaka, which dates from the first half of the 15th century. The rihal supports a large Qur’an donated, according to the album caption, by Emir Nasrullah of Bukhara. The walls behind the rihal are partially covered by polychrome ceramic work with a geometric motif formed by intersecting lines that create six-pointed stars. The upper part of the middle wall displays remnants of an inscription. The door to the right leads to other chambers in this mausoleum complex.

Antiquities of Samarkand. Tomb of the Saint Kusam-ibn-Abbas (Shah-i Zindah) and Adjacent Mausoleums. Mosque of Shah-i Zindah. General View from the South, [www.wdl.org/3686](http://www.wdl.org/3686)

This south view of the group of structures dedicated to the “living king” includes a mosque and minaret (on left) dating from the mid-15th century. On the right is the mausoleum complex, including a ziaratkhana (1334) for ritual prayers and the gurkhana, or mausoleum proper (right foreground), which contains the grave of the saint and may have been built as early as the 12th century. The undecorated
brick walls in the back of the complex give a clear view of the domed structures themselves. In the foreground are rectangular marble sarcophagi as well as brick mounds for subsequent burials near the sacred site. The entire ensemble is bolstered by a retaining wall.


This view from the south shows the entrance portal to the Shah-i Zindah necropolis and first group of mausoleums. Samarkand is among the oldest and most distinguished cities of Central Asia. Already thriving by the time of Alexander the Great, the city was taken by the Arabs in 712. During the millennium to follow, Samarkand would become a repository of monuments of Islamic architecture. The 14th and 15th centuries were particularly brilliant during the reign of Tamerlane and his successors (the Timurids). Among the main accomplishments of this period is a collection of mausoleums known as Shah-i Zindah (Persian for “living king”). Built on an ancient burial ground, the necropolis is revered as a memorial to Kusam-ibn-Abbas, a cousin of the Prophet Muhammad.

**Antiquities of Samarkand. Ishrat-Khan, Ruins of the Summer Palace of Tamerlane. Lateral Facade (Southern), [www.wdl.org/3703](http://www.wdl.org/3703)**

The caption for this photograph states that Ishrat-khan (“house of joy”) was the summer palace of Timur (Tamerlane), and there have been recent claims that such was indeed the structure’s purpose. Generally accepted research, however, proposes that it was built in 1464 (perhaps at the command of Habib Sultan Begum, a wife of Abu Said) as a mausoleum for the women and children of the Timurid dynasty. Its design adheres to a cruciform plan prevalent in mausoleums during this period. Although the interior was capped with a low dome, the exterior dome was elevated on an unusually high drum decorated with geometric patterns formed by a relief of shaped brick. The brick forms were filled with polychrome faience mosaics. The main facade and its *iwan* (vaulted hall, walled on three sides, with one end open) arch also displayed elaborate ceramic work, and the dome was surfaced with azure tiles. Despite severe damage from earthquakes and neglect, Ishrat-khan retained its extraordinary monumentality.
Although relatively modest in appearance, the Ak Sarai mausoleum is one of the more important burial shrines in Samarkand by virtue of its association with the Timurid dynasty. The initiative for its construction came from the Timurid ruler Abu Said, who wished to supplement the nearby great Guri Emir mausoleum as a burial place for the dynasty’s male line. Abu Said himself died in 1469 during fighting with Turkmen forces in Azerbaijan, and construction of the mazar (mausoleum) occurred in the 1470s. Although Ak Sarai lacks the imposing dome of the earlier Rukhabad mausoleum, it had a highly developed centralized design that was richly decorated on the interior. Seen here is a pointed iwan (vaulted hall, walled on three sides, with one end open) arch, with standing figures that give a sense of scale. Considerable damage is evident in the surface of the massive brick walls and vaults. In the foreground are houses of sun-dried (adobe) brick whose flat roofs are supported by wooden beams.

This view of the Gur-Emir mausoleum’s north facade shows the effects of major damage over the centuries, including the collapse of the upper part of the great iwan (vaulted hall, walled on three sides, with one end open) arch. Nonetheless, much remains of the rich polychrome ceramic ornamentation, including portions of tile cladding on the ribs of the main dome. Particularly impressive are the sides of the arch and its niche facade, surfaced with an array of faience panels containing intricate botanical and geometric figures. Above the pointed portal arch are inscriptions in elongated Perso-Arabic script. This photograph of the Gur-Emir mausoleum in Samarkand (Uzbekistan) is from the archeological part of Turkestan Album. The six-volume photographic survey was produced in 1871-72 under the patronage of General Konstantin P. von Kaufman, the first governor-general (1867-82) of Turkestan, as the Russian Empire’s Central Asian territories were called.
Antiquities of Samarkand. Mausoleum of Guri Bibi Khanym. General View of the Mausoleum,
www.wdl.org/3732

The Bibi Khanym mausoleum was built at the same time as the nearby main mosque (1399-1405) and like the mosque was named in homage to Timur’s senior wife, Sarai Mulk Khanym, (bibi being “lady” or “mother”). Indeed, the structure appears to have been connected to the mosque by a long passageway. The mausoleum is thought to have served not only as the burial shrine for Sarai Mulk Khanym, but also for other women of the ruling family. As with all monuments in the Bibi Khanym ensemble, the mausoleum suffered severe damage in this active seismic zone. This view shows fragments remaining of the pointed dome that arose over a cruciform plan within an octagonal structure. The surviving masonry walls of the mausoleum have also lost their original decorative patterns of ceramic tiles. In the foreground is a brick house with a flat roof supported by embedded log beams.


The Khodzha Abdu-Derun memorial complex was dedicated to a revered 9th-century Arab judge of the Abdi clan, with the word derun (inner) added to signify its location within Samarkand and to distinguish it from another complex commemorating the sage located just beyond the city. The original domed mausoleum, erected perhaps as early as the 12th century, was expanded as a pilgrimage shrine in the 15th century. The complex included a courtyard pool, a mosque, and a separate entrance portal. This view shows the main components from the back. In the center is the domed mausoleum, a centralized structure with a cruciform plan. Although structurally intact, its wall and dome surfaces reveal substantial damage. On the right is the attached mosque with its own dome. On the left is a small minaret in front of the summer mosque. Low ancillary buildings extend from the back, where three figures give an idea of the scale.
Turkestan Album: Ethnographic Part

[490 items; 577 images]

Presented here is the “Ethnographic Part,” containing 490 individual photographs on 163 plates. The photographs show individuals representing the Kyrgyz, Kazak, Uzbek, Sart, Tajik, Iranian, Gypsy, Indian, Afghan, Arab, and Jewish populations (Plates 1–33). Daily life and rituals, including weddings, horse racing, religious activities, clothing and dress, along with occupational portraits of musicians, street vendors, and others are covered in Plates 34–91. Plates 92–93 show views of villages and cities, including Samarkand and Tashkent, street vendors, and other commercial activities.
Pastimes of Central Asians. A Group of Female Performers, Possibly Uzbek, Kneeling on a Ru, www.wdl.org/10831


Kokand Khan and His Sons. Maadamin Beg, Second Son of the Kokand Khan, www.wdl.org/10717

Folk Festival during Ramadan. Milk Vendor, www.wdl.org/10790

Native Festival for the New Year's Holiday, Sail Sali Nau. Yogurt Vendors, www.wdl.org/10781
Muslim School. School Routine, [www.wdl.org/10758](http://www.wdl.org/10758)

Afghans. Aym Khan, [www.wdl.org/11020/](http://www.wdl.org/11020/)

Afghans. Dzhan Makhmed Khan, [www.wdl.org/11021](http://www.wdl.org/11021)

Afghans. Ayaz Khan, [www.wdl.org/11019](http://www.wdl.org/11019)


Four Jewish Men Seated on the Ground next to Two Large Covered Bundles, Inspecting the Dowry, www.wdl.org/11178


**Turkestan Album: Industrial Crafts and Trades Part**

[214 items; 265 images]

Presented here is the “Trades Part,” containing 212 mounted photographs and 1 mounted drawing on 44 plates. The crafts and occupations shown are textiles (plates 1-10); metalwork and mining (plates 11-19); timber and woodwork (plates 20-24); leatherwork (plates 25-30); agriculture, baking, and other products (plates 31-41); and pottery making and other small industries (plates 42-44).

Reed Production. Preparation of Large Woven Reed Mats, www.wdl.org/13984
Cotton Production. Spinning Thread, www.wdl.org/13889


Silk Production. Unwinding Silk from a Reel, www.wdl.org/14006


Commerce of Iron Goods. Tinsmith in His Workshop, www.wdl.org/13865

Fabric Printing Production. Samples of Stamps for White Cotton Fabric, www.wdl.org/13898
Wax and Soap Production. Making Wax, www.wdl.org/13917

Cotton Production. Preparation of the Tow Flax, www.wdl.org/13883

Iron Smelting Production. Casting, www.wdl.org/13930


Trades of the Kyrgyz. Braiding Rope, www.wdl.org/14031

Leather Production. Cleaning the Inner Side, www.wdl.org/13943

Pottery Production. Manufacture of Earthenware Pots for Baking Bread (Tandoor), www.wdl.org/13971


Cotton Production. Separating Cotton from the Seeds, www.wdl.org/13872
**Turkestan Album: Historical Part**


Presented here is the “Historical Part,” containing 211 individual photographs and maps on 79 plates. The photographs include individual and group portraits of officials and military personnel, as well as views of citadels, fortifications, cities and villages, churches, ruins, and monuments commemorating soldiers killed in battle.
Assault and Siege of the Fortified City of Ura Tyube from September 27 to October 2, 1866.  

www.wdl.org/14864

This topographic map was prepared for use by the Russian forces commanded by General Kryzhanovskii when they overcame Ura Tyube (also called Istaravshan, in the northwest of present-day Tajikistan) in the fall of 1866. The map is from the historical part of Turkestan Album, a comprehensive visual survey of Central Asia undertaken after imperial Russia assumed control of the region in the 1860s. Commissioned by General Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman (1818–82), the first governor-general of Russian Turkestan, the album is in four parts spanning six volumes: “Archaeological Part” (two volumes); “Ethnographic Part” (two volumes); “Trades Part” (one volume); and “Historical Part” (one volume). The compiler of the first three parts was Russian Orientalist Aleksandr L. Kun, who was assisted by Nikolai V. Bogaevskii. Production of the album was completed in 1871–72. The fourth part was compiled by Mikhail Afrikanovich Terent’ev (born 1837), a Russian military officer, orientalist, linguist, and author who participated in the Russian expedition to Samarkand of 1867–68. The album contains some 1,200 photographs, along with architectural plans, watercolor drawings, and maps. The “Historical Part” documents Russian military activities between 1853 and 1871 with photographs and watercolor maps of major battles and sieges. The photographs include individual and group portraits of officials and military personnel. Most of the men portrayed were recipients of the Cross of Saint George, an honor conferred upon soldiers and sailors for bravery in battle. A few photographs at the beginning of the album depict officers awarded the Order of Saint George, an honor granted to senior Russian officers for superior merit in conducting military operations. Also shown are views of citadels, fortifications, cities and villages, churches, ruins, and monuments commemorating soldiers killed in battle. The album contains 211 images on 79 plates.

Seige of Samarkand Summit on May 1, 1868.  

www.wdl.org/14897

This topographical map shows the Russian siege of Samarkand (in present-day Uzbekistan), which fell to Russia on May 1, 1868. The Turkestan Album “Historical Part” documents Russian military activities between 1853 and 1871 with photographs and watercolor maps of major battles and sieges. This map is from the historical part of Turkestan Album. The “Historical Part” documents Russian military activities between 1853 and 1871 with photographs and watercolor maps of major battles and sieges.
Syr Darya Oblast. Orthodox Church at the Fortification of Dzhulek, www.wdl.org/14807

This photograph is from the historical part of the Turkestan Album, a comprehensive visual survey of Central Asia undertaken after imperial Russia assumed control of the region in the 1860s. Commissioned by General Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman (1818–82), the first governor-general of Russian Turkestan, the album is in four parts spanning six volumes. The “Historical Part” documents Russian military activities between 1853 and 1871 with photographs and watercolor maps of major battles and sieges. The photographs include individual and group portraits of officials and military personnel. Most of the men portrayed were recipients of the Cross of Saint George, an honor conferred upon soldiers and sailors for bravery in battle. A few photographs at the beginning of the album depict officers awarded the Order of Saint George, an honor granted to senior Russian officers for superior merit in conducting military operations. Also shown are views of citadels, fortifications, cities and villages, churches, ruins, and monuments commemorating soldiers killed in battle. The album contains 211 images on 79 plates.

Defense of the Samarkand Citadel, June 1–8, 1868, www.wdl.org/14933

Samarkand (in present-day Uzbekistan) fell to Russian forces on May 1, 1868. A month later, the city rose against the Russian garrison and, with great numbers of Samarkandians, other Bukharans, and Kazakhs, overwhelmed the citadel. General K.P. von Kaufman quickly marched his army to relieve the garrison at Samarkand and overcame the siege on June 8. The topographical map presented here shows the citadel at Samarkand and the area around it at the time of the local uprising against the Russian forces.
Assault and Siege of the Fortress of Dzhizak from October 12–18, 1866, [www.wdl.org/14895](http://www.wdl.org/14895)

This topographical map shows the battle plan for the Russian assault on the fortress of Dzhizak (also seen as Jizzakh and Jizzax, in present-day eastern Uzbekistan) in October 1866. The old center of the city was largely destroyed in the ensuing battle. The map is from the historical part of *Turkestan Album*, a comprehensive visual survey of Central Asia undertaken after imperial Russia assumed control of the region in the 1860s. Commissioned by General Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman (1818–82), the first governor-general of Russian Turkestan, the album is in four parts spanning six volumes: “Archaeological Part” (two volumes); “Ethnographic Part” (two volumes); “Trades Part” (one volume); and “Historical Part” (one volume).

Syr Darya Oblast. Fortress of Tashkent, [www.wdl.org/14834](http://www.wdl.org/14834)

This photograph is from the historical part of the *Turkestan Album*, a visual survey of Central Asia undertaken after imperial Russia assumed control of the region. Photographs at the beginning of the album depict officers awarded the Order of Saint George. Also shown are views of citadels, fortifications, cities and villages, churches, ruins, and monuments. The album contains 211 images on 79 plates.

Battle over Chin-cha-go-zi and Siege of the City, June 18, 1871 [www.wdl.org/14993](http://www.wdl.org/14993)

This topographical map shows battle plans for the Russian assault on Chin-cha-go-zi, located in the northwestern part of Xinjiang province, China. The battle was part of the Russian invasion of the Ili River region. During the Dungan Revolt of 1864, this region had come under the control of the Muslim Dungans and Tarachis, who had overthrown the Qing
authority and established the Taranchi Sultanate. The Russians captured the town of Chin-cha-go-zi with a quick artillery offensive on June 18, 1871, and a few days later entered Ghulja, capital of the Taranchi Sultanate, against no resistance. The Russians temporarily assumed control over the Ili Basin region. Chinese authority in Xinjiang was reestablished by 1877, but it was only in 1881, with the signing the Treaty of Saint Petersburg (also known as Treaty of Ili), that the eastern part of the region was returned to China.

**Battle over Suidun, June 19, 1871, [www.wdl.org/14994](http://www.wdl.org/14994)**

This topographical map shows battle plans for the Russian assault on the citadel at Suidun (present-day Shuiding), located in the northwestern part of Xinjiang province, China. The capture of Suidun took place on June 19, 1871, and was part of the Russian invasion of the Ili River region. During the Dungan Revolt of 1864, this region had come under the control of the Muslim Dungans and Tarachis, who had overthrown the Qing authority and established the Taranchi Sultanate. Following their victories at Chin-cha-go-zi and Suidun, the Russians temporarily assumed control over the Ili Basin region. Chinese authority in Xinjiang was reestablished by 1877, but it was only in 1881, with the signing the Treaty of Saint Petersburg (also known as Treaty of Ili), that the eastern part of the region was returned to China.

**Syr Darya Oblast. Orthodox Churches. Khodzhend, [www.wdl.org/14831](http://www.wdl.org/14831)**

This photograph is from the historical part of the Turkestan Album, a comprehensive visual survey of Central Asia undertaken after imperial Russia assumed control of the region in the 1860s. The “Historical Part” documents Russian military activities between 1853 and 1871 with photographs and watercolor maps of major battles and sieges. Also shown are views of citadels, fortifications, cities and villages, churches, ruins, and monuments commemorating soldiers killed in battle.
Battle plan of Zerabulak of June 2, 1868, www.wdl.org/14947

In May 1868, the emir of Bukhara ignored a peace offer from Russia and with his army attacked Russian forces at Zerabulak, northwest of Samarkand (in present-day Uzbekistan). Despite outnumbering the Russians almost two to one, the emir’s forces suffered a crushing defeat. Shown here is the topographical map of the Russian battle plan for Zerabulak. The map is from the historical part of Turkestan Album. The “Historical Part” documents Russian military activities between 1853 and 1871 with photographs and watercolor maps of major battles and sieges. The photographs include individual and group portraits of officials and military personnel.

Assault of the Kitab Fortress August 13–14, 1870, www.wdl.org/14988

Kitab was a mountainous province of Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan) that in 1868 aided in a rebellion against Russian rule in the region. General A.K. Abramov led an expedition against Kitab in August 1870. This topographical map shows battle plans of the Russian assault on the fortress at Kitab. After the Russians retook Kitab, the emir of Bukhara resumed his government of the area and acknowledged Russian supremacy. The map is from the historical part of Turkestan Album, a comprehensive visual survey of Central Asia undertaken after imperial Russia assumed control of the region in the 1860s. Commissioned by General Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman (1818–82), the first governor-general of Russian Turkestan, the album is in four parts spanning six volumes: “Archaeological Part” (two volumes); “Ethnographic Part” (two volumes); “Trades Part” (one volume); and “Historical Part” (one volume). The compiler of the first three parts was Russian Orientalist Aleksandr L. Kun, who was assisted by Nikolai V. Bogaevskii. Production of the album was completed in 1871–72. The fourth part was compiled by Mikhail Afrikanovich Terent’ev (born 1837), a Russian military officer, orientalist, linguist, and author who participated in the Russian expedition to Samarkand of 1867–68.
Views in Central Asia – Russian Empire


At the beginning of the 20th century, the Russian photographer Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii (1863–1944) used a special color photography process to create a visual record of the Russian Empire. Some of Prokudin-Gorskii’s photographs date from about 1905, but the bulk of his work is from between 1909 and 1915, when, with the support of Tsar Nicholas II and the Ministry of Transportation, he undertook extended trips through many different parts of the empire. “View in Central Asia – Russian Empire” is a collection of 235 color composite photographs taken by Prokudin-Gorskii in cities and rural areas of what are today Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Below are twelve examples from these photographs, with item-level descriptions by Professor William G. Brumfield of Tulane University. All 235 photographs with descriptions by Professor Brumfield are included in the Carnegie Corporation of New York World Digital Library Afghanistan project.


Between 1785 and 1920 Bukhara was ruled by eight emirs in the Manghit dynasty. After the Russian conquest of Samarkand (1868), the Emirate of Bukhara became a Russian protectorate. Seen here is the last emir of Bukhara, Said Mir Mohammed Alim Khan (1880–1944). Following the death of his father, Abdulahad Khan, in late 1910, Alim Khan assumed power in Bukhara. He initially flirted with ideas of reform, but self-interest and the opposition of conservative clergy led him back to despotic rule. Overthrown by the Red Army in September 1920, he went into exile and eventually settled in Kabul, Afghanistan. The image is by Russian photographer Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii (1863–1944), who used a special color photography process to create a visual record of the Russian Empire in the early 20th century. Some of Prokudin-Gorskii’s photographs date from about 1905, but the bulk of his work is from between 1909 and 1915, when, with the support of Tsar Nicholas II and the Ministry of Transportation, he undertook extended trips through many different parts of the empire. Prokudin-Gorskii was particularly interested in recently acquired territories of the Russian Empire such as Turkestan (present-day Uzbekistan and neighboring states), which he visited on a number of occasions, including trips in January 1907 and 1911 to the ancient cities of Bukhara and Samarkand. Prokudin-Gorskii made this and a number of other portraits of Said Mir Mohammed Alim Khan in 1911.
Group of Eleven Adults and Children, Seated on a Rug, in Front of a Yurt, [www.wdl.org/6344](http://www.wdl.org/6344)

This remarkable portrait shows a family of the Teke ethnic group near the Murgab Oasis in the region of Bayramaly (present-day Turkmenistan). The oasis takes its name from the Murgab River, which flows from Afghanistan into Turkmenistan and forms part of the border between the two countries. Seated on the far right is the family patriarch, whose tunic displays three Russian medals. His wife is seated in the center. On the far left are his married son and daughter-in-law. The adults and children are dressed in colorful festive attire. Behind them is the entrance to a *kibitka* (wattle yurt) made from reeds, with a felt cover. Although nomadic in origin, part of the Teke adopted a settled existence and served as cavalry in the Russian armed forces.

View of a Courtyard, Adobe Buildings, and a Bird's Nest Atop a Dome, [www.wdl.org/6450](http://www.wdl.org/6450)

Cotton was an essential raw material for the large textile mills of the Russian Empire, which underwent rapid industrialization in the late 19th-early 20th century. Russian authorities made concerted efforts to find sufficiently warm areas in the empire for the cultivation of this crop. This photograph shows machines and vats for the production of cottonseed oil at the estate of Murgab near Bayramaly (present-day Turkmenistan). The Murgab Oasis and the city of Merv (now Mary) were incorporated into the Russian Empire through negotiations in 1884. The oasis takes its name from the Murgab River, which flows from Afghanistan into Turkmenistan and forms part of the border between the two countries.

Fabric Merchant, Samarkand, [www.wdl.org/2494](http://www.wdl.org/2494)

This photograph shows a merchant at the market in Samarkand (present-day Uzbekistan) displaying silk, cotton, and wool fabrics, as well as a few traditional carpets. A framed page of the Qur’an hangs at the top of the stall. Founded around 700 BC, Samarkand is one of the oldest cities in the world. It is best known for its central position on the Silk Road between China and the West and for being an Islamic center of learning. The image is by Russian photographer Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii (1863–1944).

This remarkable photograph shows a nomadic Kyrgyz family resting in the steppe grasslands. The Kyrgyz are a Turkic ethnic group widely spread over the area of eastern Turkestan. The man, with weathered face, is dressed in a skullcap and a frayed traditional striped coat. He is burdened with padded blankets and probably a small tent. The woman, with brilliant white turban, wears a tattered cloak and carries smaller bundles of blankets and clothes. Their small boy wears a colorful skullcap and a sparkling green silk jacket in the Chinese style. To the left is a desert thorn bush. The image is by Russian photographer Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii (1863–1944). In 1911 he made two trips to an area of Central Asia then known as Turkestan (present-day Uzbekistan and neighboring states), where he photographed Islamic architectural monuments as well as Russian development projects, such as an irrigation scheme to make Golodnaia Steppe (“Hungry Steppe”) a productive area for raising cotton and wheat.

Tillia Kari from Ulugh Beg. Samarkand, www.wdl.org/5741

In the center of Samarkand is the Registan complex, consisting of three major examples of the madrasah (religious school). The third of these, the Tillia Kari Madrasah, was built in 1646–60 on the site of a former caravansarai. Its basic plan is formed by a rectangular courtyard, shown here with two stories composed of arcades of pointed arches that frame rooms for scholars. Although much damaged, the facades are profusely decorated with intricate ceramic work in geometric and floral patterns. On the far left is a corner of the Ulugh Beg Madrasah.


In the center of Samarkand is the Registan complex, consisting of three madrasah (religious schools). The second of these, the Shir-Dar Madrasah, was built in 1619–36 during the Bukhara Astrakhaniid dynasty. This view from the interior courtyard parapet shows the ribbed dome over an instruction hall at the southwest corner. Despite losses in this active seismic zone, the surface displays lavish ceramic decoration that includes geometric and botanical motifs, as well as a horizontal Perso-Arabic inscription band. Uzbek craftsmen restored the ceramic tiles on the dome during the Soviet period. The minaret is covered in geometric tiles with patterns of block Kufic script forming words from the Kalima, the basis of the Shahada, or Islamic declaration of faith.
Bayga, Samarkand, [www.wdl.org/5859](www.wdl.org/5859)

*Bayga* is a traditional form of horse racing popular among the Turkic peoples of Asia. The length of the race could vary, but it was essentially a test of endurance for the horses. This photograph shows hundreds of horsemen gathered on a hillside outside Samarkand for a race. Higher up on the hill spectators are seen sitting and standing. Samarkand is one of the oldest settlements in Central Asia. It came under the control of Bukhara in the 16th century. Russian forces occupied the city in 1868, which was linked to the Trans-Caspian Railway some 20 years later. By the time this photograph was taken, Samarkand reflected a mix of its centuries-old Islamic culture and the four-decade Russian presence.

In the Country Palace of the Bukhara Emir, Bukhara, [www.wdl.org/5858](www.wdl.org/5858)

Between 1785 and 1920, eight emirs of the Manghit dynasty ruled Bukhara (in present-day Uzbekistan). After the Russian occupation of Samarkand (1868), the Emirate of Bukhara became a Russian protectorate. The last emir of Bukhara was Said Mir Mohammed Alim Khan. Shown here is the throne room of the emir’s suburban residence at Shir-Budun near Bukhara. The design shows the often fanciful use of traditional decorative motifs within a European interior, including the bentwood chairs along the wall. The ceiling cornice displays a decorative application of suspended vaulting elements known as *mocárabe*.

Isfandiyar, Khan of the Russian Protectorate of Khorezm (Khiva), [www.wdl.org/6553](www.wdl.org/6553)

This is a 1910 photograph of Asfandiyar-khan (Seid Isfandiyar Tyurya; 1871–1918), penultimate ruler of the Khanate of Khiva. Located largely in what is now Uzbekistan, the Khanate of Khiva existed within the ancient territory of Khwarezm from 1511 to 1920 under various dynasties descended from Genghis Khan. A campaign by General Konstantin von Kaufman in 1872–73 culminated in the conquest of Khiva on May 28, 1873, following which the khanate was granted status as a Russian protectorate. The khan wears a robe adapted to conform to his appointment as General in the Russian army. Adorned with decorations including the Order of Saint Ann, the robe conceals a traditional colorful robe of a Central Asian potentate. In the aftermath of the dissolution of the Russian Empire, the khan was killed by a rival in
September 1918. The image is by Russian photographer Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii (1863–1944), who used a special color photography process to create a visual record of the Russian Empire in the early 20th century. Some of Prokudin-Gorskii’s photographs date from about 1905, but the bulk of his work is from between 1909 and 1915, when, with the support of Tsar Nicholas II and the Ministry of Transportation, he undertook extended trips through many different parts of the empire. Prokudin-Gorskii was particularly interested in recently acquired territories of the Russian Empire such as Turkestan.
Different Views of the Major Cities in Persia, Nuremberg, 1762, [www.wdl.org/11740](http://www.wdl.org/11740)

This map by the Nuremberg engraver and publisher Johann Baptist Homann (1663-1724) features 15 aerial views of cities in Persia (present-day Iran), Afghanistan, southern Russia, eastern Turkey, and the Caucasus region. Beneath each city portrait is a number or letter key indicating the most important points in each city, including city gates and walls, bodies of water, royal palaces, and markets. The cities depicted are (1) Astrakhan, Russia; (2) Derbent, Dagestan, Russia; (3) Tiflis, Georgia; (4) Kars, Turkey; (5) Erzurum, Turkey; (6) Baku, Azerbaijan; (7) Sultanlieh (Zanjan Province), Iran; (8) Şamaxi (Shirvan Region), Azerbaijan; (9) Yerevan, Armenia; (10) Shiraz, Iran; (11) Kandahar, Afghanistan; (12) Ardabil, Iran; (13) Kashan (Isfahan Province), Iran; (14) Isfahan, Iran; and (15) Bandar Abass, Iran. Isfahan is identified as the capital of the kingdom of Persia and shown larger than the other cities. Shiraz is identified as the ancient city of Persepolis and the former capital of the Persian Empire. Kandahar is described as a “fortress and city on the Indian border of Persia.” Erzurum, located in present-day Turkey, is identified as “die Grantz-Stadt in Armenien” (the Armenian border town).

This 1952 map by the Army Map Service of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides a broad overview of the Near East, the geographic region traditionally thought of as encompassing the countries of southwest Asia, including Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Israel, and Jordan, and the countries of the Arabian Peninsula. In addition to political borders, the map shows lakes, rivers, and other bodies of water, marshlands, cities by population, pipelines, railroads, and pumping stations. Above the key is a glossary of topographic terms with transliterations and translations into English. An inset map on the bottom left displays the cities of the Nile River delta, along with its natural and man-made topography. The map shows the region as it appeared before the many important political changes that were to occur in the 1950s and the 1960s. These included independence for Sudan (at this time still Anglo-Egyptian Sudan), withdrawal of the British from the Colony of Aden and the creation of the Republic of South Yemen (later merged with North Yemen to form the Republic of Yemen), and the achievement of full independence from the United Kingdom of the Gulf states of Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates.

Map of Persia, Turkey in Asia: Afghanistan, Beloochistan, Philadelphia, 1868, [www.wdl.org/11689](http://www.wdl.org/11689)

Samuel Augustus Mitchell (1792–1868) was a renowned American geographer and cartographer. The majority of his work focused on the United States, but he also made maps of other parts of the world, including this 1868 map of the Ottoman Empire, Persia (present-day Iran), Afghanistan, and Baluchistan. The main territorial units that Mitchell shows are Turkey, meaning the core of the Ottoman Empire comprised of present-day Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon; Persia; Afghanistan; and Baluchistan (mainly present-day Pakistan). Egypt and much of the Arabian Peninsula were at that time technically under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire, but they were highly autonomous and Mitchell shows them as separate states. An inset map at the lower left depicts Palestine, or the Holy Land, a subject of great interest to 19th-century American readers. This map also was published in Mitchell’s New General Atlas (1869).
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In the late-19th century, European politics were troubled by what had come to be called the “Eastern Question,” the fate of the 600-year Ottoman Empire. Once encompassing the Ottoman heartland of Anatolia (present-day Turkey), most of the Arab Middle East, and the Balkan Peninsula, by 1886 the empire had shrunk dramatically as a result of wars with European powers, Russia in particular, and revolts by subject peoples. This 1886 map, published in London, shows the Turkish Empire as comprised mainly of Albania, Thrace, Crete, Anatolia, and parts of the Arab world, notably present-day Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Railroads, roads, telegraphs, mountain passes and their height in feet (one foot = 30.5 centimeters), and the summits of mountain ranges—all geographic features with military implications—are shown. Tables at the bottom of the map list the major religions of the world and the number of their adherents, and the principal states with a stake in the Eastern Question and their land area, population, and the size of their peacetime and wartime armies. The states covered are the United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, Greece, Russia, Turkey, China, India (at that time part of the British Empire), and Persia (present-day Iran).

This 1833 map in Latin shows the conquests of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC), whose empire stretched from present-day Greece through Turkey and the Middle East to Afghanistan. In 326 BC Alexander set out to conquer India, but he was stymied when his exhausted armies mutinied on the banks of the Hyphasis River (now known as the Beas River) in northern India. The map shows the cities that Alexander founded and named after himself, including Alexandria Arachosia (Kandahar, Afghanistan), Alexandria Ariana (Herat, Afghanistan), Alexandria, Egypt, and many others. Place-names are shown in their traditional Latin versions, such as Arabia Deserta and Arabia Felix. A noteworthy feature of the map
is the inclusion, in the lower left, of three scales with different measures of distance used in the ancient world, the *Stadium Quorum*, the *Miliara Romana*, and the *Leucae Gallicae*. The map is by Félix Delamarche, an engineer, geographer, and globe maker, who was the son of the important French mapmaker Charles-François Delamarche (1740–1817). Félix continued his father's work, and in 1820 he produced the *Atlas de la géographie ancienne et moderne* (Atlas of ancient and modern geography), which was used at the French military academy of Saint-Cyr and reprinted several times in the 19th century.

*Kingdoms of the Successors of Alexander: After the Battle of Ipsus, B.C. 301*, London, ca. 1880, [www.wdl.org/11739](http://www.wdl.org/11739)

Alexander the Great (356–323 BC) died suddenly at the age of 32, leaving no apparent heir or appointed successor. Some 40 years of internecine conflict followed his death, as leading generals and members of Alexander’s family vied to control different parts of the vast empire he had built. The Battle of Ipsus, fought in Phrygia, Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) in 301 BC between rival successors, resulted in the empire’s irrevocable dissolution. This late-19th century map in Latin shows the four main kingdoms that emerged after the battle. The kingdom of Cassander (circa 358–297 BC), consisted of Macedonia, most of Greece, and parts of Thrace. The kingdom of Lysimachus (circa 361–281 BC), included Lydia, Ionia, Phrygia, and other parts of present-day Turkey. The kingdom of Seleucus (died 281 BC; later the Seleucid Empire), comprised present-day Iran, Iraq, Syria, and parts of Central Asia. The kingdom of Ptolemy I (died 283 BC) included Egypt and neighboring regions. The map is by Edward Weller (died 1884), a London-based cartographer and engraver who made maps that were published monthly and distributed to subscribers of the newspaper *Weekly Dispatch* and later published as *Cassell's Weekly Dispatch Atlas*. The scale of the map is given in Greek stadia. One stade equaled 185 meters.

*Southwest Asia*, Weimar, 1866, [www.wdl.org/11741](http://www.wdl.org/11741)

This map of Southwest Asia dating from about 1866 shows the possessions of the European powers in this region. The map extends from Libya, Egypt, and Sudan in the west to Mongolia, China (Tibet), and Burma in the east. Colored lines are used to indicate territories controlled by Britain, France, Portugal, and the Ottoman Empire and to delineate what the map calls the kingdom of the imam of Oman. The names of provincial capitals are underlined. British territories in India are divided into six parts: Bengal, the Northwest Provinces, Panjab, the Central Provinces, Madras, and Bombay. The map was issued by the Geographical Institute of Weimar, an important German publisher of maps, globes, and statistical yearbooks that was founded in 1804 and that became known for the high quality of its products. Among the German geographers and cartographers associated with the institute were Adam Christian Gaspari, Carl Ferdinand Weiland, and Heinrich Kiepert.

*Middle East Countries: Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, Jordan, Saudi-Arabia*, St. Louis, 1955, [www.wdl.org/11742](http://www.wdl.org/11742)

This map of the Middle East, originally published in August 1950 and revised in February 1955, was issued by the Aeronautical Chart and Information Center, Air Photographic and Charting Service, Military Air Transportation Service (MATS), of the United States Air Force. In addition to Syria, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, it shows the eastern parts of Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium of Sudan as well as parts of Eritrea and Ethiopia. Many borders on the map, particularly on
the Arabian Peninsula, are shown as still undetermined. Territories shown on the map as still under colonial administration include the Aden Protectorate, French Somaliland (present-day Djibouti), British Somaliland (present-day Somalia), and Italian Somaliland (present-day Somalia). The armistice lines between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria reflect those established after the Arab-Israeli War of 1948. During the Cold War, the U.S. Air Force viewed the Middle East primarily through the prism of global military rivalry with the Soviet Union. It operated several installations in or near the region, notably Wheelus Air Base in Libya from 1948 to 1970, and Dhahran Airfield in Saudi Arabia from 1945 to 1962.

*Carte de la Turquie d'Asie, de la Perse, de l'Afghanistan et de l'Arabie*, Paris, 1842, [www.wdl.org/11746](http://www.wdl.org/11746)

This map, published in Paris in 1842, shows the Asian provinces of the Ottoman Empire, Persia (present-day Iran), Afghanistan, and the Arabian Peninsula. The map appeared in *Atlas universel de géographie ancienne et moderne* (Universal atlas of ancient and modern geography) by the cartographer and engraver Pierre M. Lapie (1779–1850). Lapie was a member of the corps of topographical engineers in the French army, where he rose to the rank of colonel. He eventually became head of the topographical section in the Ministry of War. He was assisted by his son Alexandre Emile Lapie (flourished 1809–50), also a French military cartographer, who worked with his father over a period of many years. The map provides scales of distance in five different units: myriameters (10,000 meters), leagues, nautical leagues, miles, and, curiously, hours of walking or marching required to cover a given distance. Paris is given as the prime meridian.

*Johnson’s Turkey in Asia, Persia, Arabia, etc.*, New York, 1864, [www.wdl.org/11747](http://www.wdl.org/11747)

This map of the Middle East and Central and South Asia extending from the Nile Valley to the boundary of Afghanistan with British India is from *Johnson’s New Illustrated Family Atlas*, published in New York in 1864. The map shows national capitals, provincial capitals, principal towns, and railroads. The Suez Canal, under construction at this time, is shown as proposed. The map provides a detailed overview of the towns and cities along the Nile in Egypt, Nubia (present-day southern Egypt and northern Sudan), and Sennar (present-day Sudan), and of the river’s major cataracts. Illustrations depict the port cities of Muscat in Oman and Trebizond and Smyrna in Turkey. Like many of the maps in *Johnson’s New Illustrated Family Atlas*, this map originally was produced by J.H. Colton & Company of New York and displays the distinctive decorative border characteristic of most Colton maps.

*Persia, Arabia, etc.*, Philadelphia, 1852, [www.wdl.org/11748](http://www.wdl.org/11748)

This 1852 map from the *New Universal Atlas* by the Philadelphia publisher Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co. shows the Arabian Peninsula, the kingdom of Persia, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan. The provinces of Persia, including Irakadjemi, Fars, Khorasan, and Kerman, are shown by different colors. The Arabian Peninsula is divided into the traditional divisions used by European geographers, Arabia Petrea, Arabia Felix, and Arabia Deserta. Yemen and Oman are shown, along with the locations of important towns, mountains, ruins, and wells and sources of fresh water in the Arabian Desert. Afghanistan includes the northern province of Balkh, which was conquered in 1850 by Dost Mohammad Khan, the emir of Afghanistan. The *New Universal Atlas* was based on an atlas published in 1846 under the same title by Mitchell & Sons, the firm founded by the pioneering American geographer and map publisher S.
Augustus Mitchell (1792–1868). The “universal” designation notwithstanding, it included mainly maps of the United States.

*Carte de la Turquie d'Asie, de la Perse, de l'Afghanistan, du Belouchistan et de la grande Boukharie; avec une partie des États voisins*, Paris, 1848, [www.wdl.org/11749](http://www.wdl.org/11749)

This 1848 map of the Middle East and parts of Central and South Asia is by the French cartographer and engraver Pierre M. Lapie (1779-1850), a colonel in the French army and head of the topographical section in the Ministry of War. Accurate and beautifully detailed, the map reflects the high quality of French cartography, and military cartography in particular. The territory covered includes the Nile Valley and the Nile delta, Cyprus and present-day Turkey, the countries of the eastern Mediterranean, Persia, Afghanistan, and Bukhara and other khanates in Central Asia that within a few decades were to come under Russian rule. The map provides scales of distance in no fewer than nine different units: myriameters (10,000 meters), leagues, English miles, German miles, nautical miles, Turkish *agachs*, Persian *fersangs*, hours of walking or marching required to cover a given distance, and Russian *versts*. Paris is given as the prime meridian. The map at one time belonged to the Geographic Section, U.S. Department of State, but was transferred to the Library of Congress.

*Colton's Persia, Arabia, Et cetera*, New York, 1863, [www.wdl.org/11750](http://www.wdl.org/11750)

This map of Persia (present-day Iran), the Arabian Peninsula, and neighboring countries originally appeared in the 1865 edition of *Colton's General Atlas*. It extends from a part of Egypt (the Nile Delta) in the west to Afghanistan in the east and reflects the general level of geographic knowledge of the Middle East in mid-19th century America. Coloring is used to indicate borders and certain provinces or settled areas. The map shows cities, mountains, and roads, and includes some notes on topographical features. J.H. Colton & Company was founded in New York City, most likely in 1831, by Joseph Hutchins Colton (1800–93), a Massachusetts native who had only a basic education and little or no formal training in geography or cartography. Colton built the firm into a major publisher of maps and atlases by purchasing the copyrights to and republishing other maps before it began creating its own maps and atlases. In the 1850s, the firm became the G.W. & C.B. Colton Company, after Colton brought his sons, George Woolworth Colton (1827–1901) and Charles B. Colton (1832–1916), into the business. As in this
example, virtually all Colton maps were framed in decorative borders of intertwining vines, flowers, or geometric shapes.

Central Asia: Afghanistan and Her Relation to British and Russian Territories, New York, 1885, www.wdl.org/11751

This 1885 map shows Asia from the eastern littoral of the Mediterranean to western China and the Indian subcontinent. An inset in the upper right depicts the region in the broader context of Asia, Europe, and Africa. A focal point of the map is Afghanistan, where, in what was called “the Great Game,” the Russian and British empires competed for influence throughout most of the 19th century. The British feared that the Russians, who annexed large parts of Central Asia in the 1860s and 1870s, would use Afghanistan as a base from which to threaten British India. The central region of Arabia is described as “uninterrupted desert from Mecca to Oman.” The map has two distance scales, one in English statute miles and another in Russian vershki. Intended for American audiences, it also shows, at the bottom center, the U.S. states of Indiana and Ohio, which are drawn to scale as a way of comparing distances in the region with those in the United States. The map was issued by the G.W. & C.B. Colton Company, which was owned by George Woolworth Colton (1827–1901) and Charles B. Colton (1832–1916), the sons of Joseph Hutchins Colton (1800–93), founder of the pioneering map publishing firm J.H. Colton & Company.


This 1885 map of Western Asia shows the region from the Mediterranean Sea to British India, including the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula. This region was at the time under the rule of the Ottoman Empire in the west, independent Persia (present-day Iran) in the center, and independent Afghanistan in the east, with the Russian Empire to the north. Relief is shown by hachures, and the elevations of lakes and inland seas are given in feet (one foot = 30.48 centimeters) above sea level. The map indicates pilgrimage routes to Mecca from Baghdad, Damascus, and other cities. Also shown are the ruins of ancient cities, including Babylon and Petra, and towns and other sites mentioned in the Bible. In the lower portion of the map can be seen the submarine telegraph cable running from Kurrachee (present-day Karachi, Pakistan) to terminuses in Iran and Iraq. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the British authorities in London relied upon a worldwide network of such cables, mainly built and owned by the British government and private interests, to tie together the far-flung empire. The map is by Edward Stanford Ltd., a London map seller and publishing house established in 1853 by Edward Stanford (1827–1904), known for its London shop that catered to famous explorers and political figures.
**A Map of the Countries between Constantinople and Calcutta: Including Turkey in Asia, Persia, Afghanistan and Turkestan**, London, 1885, [www.wdl.org/11753](http://www.wdl.org/11753)

This 1885 map shows the region between Constantinople, capital of the Ottoman Empire, and British India, an area of intense imperial rivalry between the British and Russian Empires in the late-19th century. British possessions are colored in red and include British India, Cyprus, the Aden Protectorate (present-day Yemen), Socotra Island (Yemen), and the northern littoral of the Horn of Africa, which became the protectorate of British Somaliland (present-day Somalia) in 1888. The map shows railroad lines and submarine telegraph cables. The railroad network is at this time more developed in India and the Caucasus region of the Russian Empire than in the other areas shown on the map. Distances between major port cities are indicated in miles (one mile = 1.61 kilometers) on the telegraph lines and in the table showing distances between the Egyptian ports of Alexandria and Suez and the European ports of London, Marseilles, and Brindisi, Italy. The map is by Edward Stanford Ltd., a London map seller and publishing house established in 1853 by Edward Stanford (1827–1904), known for its London shop catering to famous explorers and political figures.


*General-Karte von Central-Asien* (General Map of Central Asia) is a large, detailed map produced in 1874 by the Military Geographic Institute of Vienna. The map is on 12 separate plates, numbered I–XII; a 13th plate gives an overview and a numbered guide to how the parts fit together. The map covers a huge expanse, bounded to the northwest by the region of Russia north of the Caspian Sea; to the southwest by present-day Saudi Arabia and Oman; to the northeast by western Mongolia; and to the southeast by Gujarat, India. The title, key to symbols, and explanation of abbreviations are on Plate X, in the lower left-hand (southwestern) corner. Seven scales in different distance units (English, Italian, Russian, Turkish, Persian, Chinese, and metric) are provided, at the bottom of Plate XII. The features shown include cities and towns; national and provincial borders; towers, fortresses, and ruins; existing and projected railroads; telegraph lines; and roads. According to the title, the map is “revised with the best and newest Russian and English sources.” Russia and the British Empire were rivals for influence in Central Asia in what came to be called “the Great Game,” and they had special expertise about the region gained from scientific and military expeditions and commercial contacts.
Colton’s Persia, Arabia, Et cetera, New York, 1855, www.wdl.org/12887

This map showing the Arabian Peninsula, Persia (present-day Iran), Afghanistan, and Baluchistan (present-day Iran and Pakistan) was published in 1855 by the G.W. and C.B. Colton and Company of New York. Coloring is used to indicate borders and certain provinces or settled areas. The map shows cities, mountains, and roads, and includes some notes on topographical features. The old Qatari city of Al Zabara is shown. The map is accompanied by a one-page summary of the geography, people, principal places, and recent history of Afghanistan and Baluchistan. The map later appeared in the 1865 edition of Colton’s General Atlas and reflects the general level of geographic knowledge of the Middle East in mid-19th-century America. J.H. Colton & Company was founded in New York City, most likely in 1831, by Joseph Hutchins Colton (1800–93), a Massachusetts native who had only a basic education and little or no formal training in geography or cartography. Colton built the firm into a major publisher of maps and atlases by purchasing the copyrights to and republishing other maps before it began creating its own maps and atlases. In the 1850s, the firm became the G.W. & C.B. Colton Company, after Colton brought his sons, George Woolworth Colton (1827–1901) and Charles B. Colton (1832–1916), into the business. As in this example, virtually all Colton maps were framed in decorative borders of intertwining vines, flowers, or geometric shapes.


This map, published in New York in 1879, appears to have been made to inform American audiences about the war then underway in Afghanistan. The conflict, which became known as the Second Anglo-Afghan War, began in November 1878, when Great Britain invaded Afghanistan from British India in order to check what it perceived as the growth of Russian influence in the country. The map was compiled, drawn, and published by Captains Jackson and Wyndham, who are identified only as “Late, H.B.M. Service,” meaning recently in the service of Her Britannic Majesty, i.e., Queen Victoria. The map shows the mountainous terrain of Afghanistan, cities and towns, rivers, roads, and parts of the British-Indian railroad network extending into present-day Pakistan. In the upper right are listed the commanding officers of the British forces formed to prosecute the war, which the map designates as the Mitankote Force, Khyber Column, Quetta Force, Kurram Valley Force, and the Reserve Force, all under the overall command of General Sir Frederick Haines. The Second Anglo-Afghan War lasted until September 1880 and resulted in heavy casualties on both the British and Afghan sides.

Persia, Afghanistan and Baluchistan, Chicago, 1881, www.wdl.org/12985

This colored map of Persia (present-day Iran), Afghanistan, and Baluchistan (in present-day Iran and Pakistan) was published by Chicago-based Rand McNally and Company, which became a major publisher of atlases, maps, globes, and travel guides in the United States in the second half of the 19th century. The map shows major cities and towns, mountains, rivers, deserts and other geographic features, and submarine telegraph cables in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea. Two distance scales are given, one in Persian fursakhs (also seen as parasangs or farsangs, an ancient Persian unit of distance, usually estimated at about 5.56 kilometers), and another in English statute miles. Longitude is provided both in degrees east of Greenwich, United Kingdom (top) and Washington, DC. (The map was published in 1881, before Greenwich was chosen as the universal prime meridian at the International Meridian Conference of
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1884 in Washington). The map formerly belonged to the library of the U.S. Geological Society and is now in the collections of the Library of Congress.


This map was published in November 1878 by the Office of the Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army, for “the information of the Officers of the U.S. Army.” The title, “Seat of the War in Asia, Map of Afghanistan,” refers to the Second Anglo-Afghan War of 1878–80, which began that month when Great Britain invaded Afghanistan from British India, for the purpose of checking what it perceived as the growth of Russian influence in the country. The map is based on surveys by British and Russian officers, “up to 1875.” Geographic features with military implications, such as key towns, mountains, mountain passes and their heights, and roads are emphasized. The inset map at the lower right places Afghanistan in the context of the wider region stretching from the east coast of Africa to India and western China, and gives distances in miles from London to Madras (present-day Chennai, India), Calcutta (present-day Kolkata), Singapore, and other ports in Asia.


This map, published in New York in 1879, appears to have been made to inform American audiences about the war then underway in Afghanistan. The conflict, which became known as the Second Anglo-Afghan War, began in November 1878, when Great Britain invaded Afghanistan from British India in order to check what it perceived as the growth of Russian influence in the country. The map was compiled, drawn, and published by Captains Jackson and Wyndham, who are identified only as “Late, H.B.M. Service,” meaning recently in the service of Her Britannic Majesty, i.e., Queen Victoria. The map shows the mountainous terrain of Afghanistan, cities and towns, rivers, roads, and parts of the British-Indian railroad network extending into present-day Pakistan. In the upper right are listed the commanding officers of the British forces formed to prosecute the war, which the map designates as the Mitankote Force, Khyber Column, Quetta Force, Kurram Valley Force, and the Reserve Force, all under the overall command of General Sir Frederick Haines. The Second Anglo-Afghan War lasted until September 1880 and resulted in heavy casualties on both the British and Afghan sides.

*Bukhara, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Etcetera*, London, second half of 19th century, [www.wdl.org/12988](http://www.wdl.org/12988)

This mid-19th century British map shows Bukhara (an independent khanate located in what is today Uzbekistan), Afghanistan, Baluchistan (in present-day Iran and Pakistan), and the eastern part of Persia (present-day Iran). Five different geographic scales are provided on the left and right margins of the map: Indian *cos* (i.e., *kos*, a measure of distance dating from ancient India and still used in the 19th century), Persian *farsangs* (or *parasangs*; one farsang was equal to approximately 5.56 kilometers), French leagues,
English miles, and “Hours of a Karavan of Camels.” (The map notes that a day’s journey for a caravan “is about 7 ½ hours or 16 miles”). Also shown are the names and routes of early British travelers across Afghanistan, including Forster, Christie, Fraser, Conolly, and Burnes. George Forster (died 1792) was an official of the Madras Civil Service of the East India Company who in 1783 traveled overland from Bengal to England via Afghanistan. Charles Christie (died 1812) was an Anglo-Indian officer who in 1810 undertook an exploratory journey from Bombay to Baluchistan, Sīstān, and other territories in Central Asia. James Baillie Fraser (1783−1856) accompanied Dr. Andrew Jukes of the East India Company on a diplomatic mission to Persia in 1821–22 that took him across Afghanistan. Arthur Conolly (1807−42) was an Anglo-Indian officer who traveled through Central Asia and Afghanistan in 1831−32. Alexander Burnes (1805−41) was an Anglo-Indian officer who traveled to Bokhara in 1832. The map was published by Edward Stanford (1827–1904), a London map dealer and publisher with well-known premises at Charing Cross that catered to famous explorers and political figures.

*Palestine, or, the Holy Land; Persia, Afghanistan and Beluchistan*, Chicago, 1885, [www.wdl.org/12989](http://www.wdl.org/12989)

“Rand McNally & Co.’s Map of Asia and Europe” displays two maps on a single large sheet. The top half is a map of Asia, with an inset of the Holy Land in the lower-right corner. The bottom half contains a more detailed map of Persia (present-day Iran), Afghanistan, and Baluchistan (in present-day Pakistan and Iran). At the bottom is an index showing lakes, mountains, and cities and towns in Afghanistan and Baluchistan. Populations are given for some cities and towns, with the largest in Afghanistan being Kabul (60,000), Kandahar (50,000), and Herat (30,000). An inset map of Afghanistan shows the location of the passes through the mountains to India (i.e., British India, including present-day Pakistan). The two main maps show longitude east from Greenwich, United Kingdom, and from Washington, DC. The lower map shows the scale in miles and in Persian fursakhs (also called parasangs or fursangs). The text at the lower right gives an overview of the geography, population, government, economic resources, and history of Afghanistan. The map was published in 1885 by Chicago-based Rand McNally, a major publisher of atlases, maps, globes, and travel guides in the United States in the second half of the 19th century.

*Iran und Turan: Persien, Afghanistan, Biludschistan, Turkestan*, Gotha, 1834, [www.wdl.org/12990](http://www.wdl.org/12990)

This map of Central Asia appeared in the 1839 edition of *Stieler's Hand-Atlas über alle Theile der Erde* (Stieler’s portable atlas of all parts of the Earth), edited by Adolf Stieler and published by the firm of Justus Perthes in Gotha, Germany. The map was compiled and drawn in 1829 by Heinrich Karl Wilhelm Berghaus (1797−1884) and updated by him in 1834. The numbered key in the lower right-hand corner of the map indicates the states of the region as they existed in 1834. They included the Persian Empire, Afghanistan (composed of six separate entities), a federation of states in Baluchistan under the rule of the sirdar (tribal head) of Kelat, and a number of khanates and emirates in Central Asia, including Khiva and Bukhara (both in present-day Uzbekistan). Berghaus divides the vast region shown on the map into two subregions, defined as “Iran” and “Turan,’’ the latter being a geographic designation derived from the Persian for the region of Central Asia north of Afghanistan. Scale is given in German, French, and geographical miles. Berghaus was a German geographer, cartographer, and scholar. Trained as a surveyor, he worked for a time as a geographical engineer for the general staff of the Prussian army. In 1836 he founded a geographical school in Potsdam. A friend and collaborator of the great naturalist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), Berghaus was a pioneer in incorporating into maps and
atlases data from meteorology and climatology, hydrography, geology, ethnography, and other scientific fields.

**Afghanistan**, London, 1912, [www.wdl.org/12991](http://www.wdl.org/12991)

This map of Afghanistan was produced by the Geographical Section of the General Staff of the British Army and issued by the War Office in London in January 1912. It gives the names and locations of districts, mountains, passes, and sources of water. Relief is shown by contours and heights are given in feet. Colors, as explained in the key on the right side of the map, are used to indicate altitude, with the heights shown ranging from sea level to 25,000 feet (7,620 meters) and higher. The map devotes particular attention to transportation and communications networks in the parts of British India and the Russian Empire adjacent to Afghanistan. Railroads (both operational and under construction or planned) are marked, with the different Russian and Indian gauges indicated with different lines and symbols. Also shown are roads and telegraph lines.

**Iran and Afghanistan**, Tokyo, 1912, [www.wdl.org/12992](http://www.wdl.org/12992)

Published in 1941 during the early part of World War II, this Japanese map of Iran and Afghanistan is based on a map issued the previous year by the Main Administration of Geodesy and Cartography of the Soviet Union. Unlike the British and the Russians, the Japanese did not have extensive knowledge of, or experience in, this part of Asia, which nonetheless became an important strategic interest for them during the war. The Axis powers—Germany, Japan, and Italy—believed that ultimate victory would require that they gain control of the Indian Ocean and the entire continent of Asia. On December 15, 1941, a week after their attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese presented the Germans with a draft military convention that divided the world into spheres of military operations along the 70 degrees longitude line. Japan would be responsible for territory east of this line, and Germany and Italy for territory to its west. The 70 degrees line bisected the Soviet Union east of the Urals and ran through Afghanistan somewhat east of Kabul. The Germans reportedly disliked the scheme, because it cut through territories that, like Afghanistan, constituted organic units. Germany would have preferred a line running along the eastern frontier of Iran and following the northern border of Afghanistan before turning north through Russia to the Arctic. The military convention signed by Germany, Italy, and Japan on January 18, 1942, for the most part adopted the line proposed by Japan. In the end, these discussions proved purely theoretical, as Germany and Italy were defeated in the west, and Japan in the east, long before they could implement their plans for Siberia, Central and South Asia, and the Indian Ocean.
Letts’s Bird’s Eye View of the Approaches to India, London, ca. 1920, [www.wdl.org/12993](www.wdl.org/12993)

This panoramic map dramatizes the approaches to British India through Afghanistan by offering a bird’s-eye view of the mountainous territory between the then-Soviet Union and the Indus River valley (present-day Pakistan). The map was produced, probably in the 1920s, by Letts, a famous London stationer and publisher of diaries that was established in 1796 by John Letts. The map was clearly intended for hobbyists and armchair strategists who, as advertised, could buy for six pence a packet of flags for sticking into the map to plan or follow military movements. In the foreground are two British soldiers in uniform, overlooking the Indus River. Geographic features seen in the distance below include the Khyber Pass, the city of Jalālābād, the Amudar’ya River that formed part of the border between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, the Murgab River in present-day Turkmenistan, and the disputed border between Russia (i.e., the Soviet Union) and Afghanistan. Fear of a Russian attack on India through Afghanistan was a major influence on British strategic planning in the 19th century, and one that persisted into the first half of the 20th century.

Map Illustrative of the March of the Indian Section of the Boundary Commission from Quetta to Olerat and Badkis; of the Frontier as Proposed and Actually Demarcated, and of the Author's Return Journey from Herat to the Caspian, India, 1885, [www.wdl.org/12994](www.wdl.org/12994)

In the early 1880s, Great Britain (which at that time effectively controlled the foreign policy of Afghanistan) and the Russian Empire opened negotiations to define the northern border of Afghanistan. The two sides formed a Joint Boundary Commission, which began work in the fall of 1885. By January 1888, the commission had set up 79 boundary markers along the 630-kilometer frontier from the Du’l-Feqar Pass to the Amudar’ya River. This annotated map of the western half of Afghanistan shows the route taken by the British (i.e., Indian) half of the commission from Quetta in British India to Herat, where it set up its headquarters, and further north where the survey work was undertaken. Colored lines are used to indicate “Boundary as actually demarcated,” "Boundary as required by the Russians," and "Boundary as required by the Afghans.” The author referred to in the title of the map is most likely Sir Joseph West Ridgeway (1844–1930), who succeeded Sir Peter Stark Lumsden as the head of the Indian side of the commission and played a large role in both the survey work and in negotiations concerning the border with the Russian government in Saint Petersburg.

The Helmund River, London, 1879, [www.wdl.org/12995](www.wdl.org/12995)

The Helmand River (also seen as Helmund) rises in the mountains of east-central Afghanistan west of Kabul. It flows 1,150 kilometers through southwestern Afghanistan and a small part of Iran before emptying into the Helmand (Sīstān) swamps on the Afghan-Iranian border. This map of the river was prepared for a paper presented by Sir Clements Robert Markham (1830–1916) to the Royal Geographical Society in London in February 1879. The paper and the map were published in the March 1879 Proceedings of the society. Markham was a British geographer who for a time worked in the India Office, where he helped to collect and organize the many Indian maps, reports, and surveys. He also served as secretary (1863–88) and president (1893–1905) of the Royal Geographical Society. In his paper, Markham summarized what was known about the Helmand and its tributaries, which include the Argandab, Tarnak, Arghastān. The map shows the course of the Helmand and its tributaries and other important geographic features, including deserts, salt wastes, and swamps. Roads also are indicated. Helmand Province, the largest province in Afghanistan, takes its name from the Helmand River.
Map of Kafiristan, London, 1881, [www.wdl.org/12996](http://www.wdl.org/12996)

Kafiristan, or “The Land of the Infidels,” was a region in eastern Afghanistan where the inhabitants had retained their traditional culture and religion and rejected conversion to Islam. In 1896 the ruler of Afghanistan, Amir 'Abd al-Raḥmān Khān (reigned 1880–1901), conquered the area and brought it under Afghan control. The Kafirs became Muslims and in 1906 the region was renamed Nuristan, meaning the “Land of Light,” a reference to the enlightenment brought by Islam. Kafiristan was visited by British expeditions and survey missions in the 1870s and 1880s and was the subject of several papers read at sessions of the Royal Geographical Society in London. This map of Kafiristan was published in 1881 by the London firm of Edward Stanford for the Royal Geographical Society. The map is by Henry Sharbau (1822–1904), for many years the chief cartographer of the society.

Der Nahe Osten, Berlin, 1944, [www.wdl.org/13038](http://www.wdl.org/13038)

Shown here is a large folding map produced by the General Staff of the German Army during World War II. Notes on the map indicate that it was solely for use within the army and that reproduction was prohibited. One side is a large map of the region stretching from the Balkan Peninsula to the eastern part of Iran. Shown are towns and cities by population size, international borders, the borders of republics and provinces within the Soviet Union, major and secondary roads, roads under construction, oil pipelines, mountain passes, heights in meters, and bodies of water. The key on the right gives the German equivalents of common geographic expressions in Arabic, Persian, Russian, and Turkish; in the lower right is a pronunciation key for Turkish letters. The reverse side contains a large map entitled Der vordere Orient (The Near East), showing the region from Egypt to eastern Afghanistan. The table at the bottom lists all the territories of the region and their geographic size and population, grouped by category: independent states and British, French, Italian, and Portuguese possessions. Also on this side are a map of the entire Mediterranean Sea from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Levant; and two inset maps, one of Cyprus and another of the islands of Rhodes and the Dodecanese (in present-day Greece but at that time under Italian control).
This map shows the expeditions of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC) from the Hellespont, the strait (later called the Dardanelles) that separates Europe from Asia in present-day Turkey, through Turkey, the Levant, Egypt, Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq), Persia (Iran), and Afghanistan. Alexander reached as far as the banks of the Hyphasis River (now known as the Beas River) in northern India, where the conqueror’s exhausted armies finally mutinied. Shown are cities that Alexander founded and named “Alexandria” in honor of himself. Two distance scales are given, the ancient measure of stadia, and contemporary leagues. The map is by the French cartographer and geographer Jean-Baptiste Bourguignon d’Anville (1697–1782) and, as indicated in the title, was made to illustrate *Histoire Ancienne* (Ancient history) by Charles Rollin (1661–1741). D’Anville was one of the most important mapmakers of the 18th century, known for the accuracy and scientific quality of his maps. Rollin was a professor of rhetoric and university official who wrote his major works in retirement, including *Histoire Ancienne*, a 12-volume history that appeared between 1730 and 1738.

*Recommended Facilities for Search and Rescue, Middle East Region*, Montreal, 1946,
[www.wdl.org/13040](http://www.wdl.org/13040)

This map was prepared for the Middle East Region Air Navigation Meeting of the Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization (PICAO), which took place in Cairo, Egypt, in October 1946. It shows political borders and recommended facilities for search and rescue, including rescue-coordinating and rescue-alerting centers, bases for different types of search-and-rescue aircraft, and facilities for surface vessels. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) was established under a
convention signed by 52 countries at the November 1944 International Civil Aviation Conference in Chicago. From August 1945 to August 1947, as the Chicago convention was being ratified, PICAO began work on the rules, regulations, and technical standards for the postwar civil aviation system. The work of PICAO, and later of ICAO, was organized on a regional basis. The Middle East Region, as demarcated on this map, ran from Benghazi, Libya, in the west to the western coast of India in the east, and included Sudan and the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, and a part of Greece.


This map of airline routes in the Eastern Mediterranean and adjacent areas was compiled and drawn by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency for the Department of State, based on information supplied by the Foreign Air Transport Division of the U.S. Civil Aeronautics Board. It presumably was for use by diplomats at the newly established International Civil Aviation Organization. Some of the airlines whose routes are shown exist to the present day; others have merged, gone bankrupt, or changed their names. Athens, Cairo, Lydda (Lod in present-day Israel; until 1948 British Royal Air Force Station Lydda), Beirut, and Baghdad are shown as important air-transport hubs. Noteworthy for this early period is the internal network established by Ethiopian Air Lines, with links from Addis Ababa to Gondar, Debra Marcos, Gimma (present-day Gonder, Debre Mark’os, and Jīma), and other towns and cities, as well as the airline’s international flights to Nairobi, Cairo, Aden, and Asmara. Aircraft of this era had limited ranges, and flights from, for example, the United Kingdom to Australia or the Netherlands to the Dutch East Indies (present-day Indonesia) are shown as stopping to refuel at locations in the Middle East, including Dhahran (Saudi Arabia), Bahrein, and Sharja (United Arab Emirates).

_Middle East Air Traffic Control Scheme_, Cairo, 1946, [www.wdl.org/13042](http://www.wdl.org/13042)

This map, produced in 1946 by the Survey of Egypt, shows a scheme for air traffic control in the Middle East. The International Convention on Civil Aviation, adopted by 52 countries in 1944, provided for the establishment of an international air-traffic control system aimed at preventing aircraft collisions. The world’s airspace was to be divided into contiguous regions, within each of which all traffic would be controlled by a designated air-traffic control authority. On longer flights, aircraft are passed by radio from the control of one region to another. These regions, which later came to be known as Flight Information Regions (FIRs), are regulated by the Montreal-based International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). This map shows the Middle East divided into six regions, centered on Cairo (Egypt), Khartoum (Sudan), Basra (Iraq), Aden (Yemen), Karachi (Pakistan), and Bangalore (India).

_Völker- und Sprachenkarte des Vorderen Orient_, Germany, 1943, [www.wdl.org/13043](http://www.wdl.org/13043)

This map, produced in 1943 by the Geographic Service of the Auswärtiges Amt (Foreign Office) of Germany, shows the ethnic, linguistic, and religious makeup of the Middle East. Included are the Caucasus and other parts of the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, and parts of present-day Pakistan and India. The map and the explanatory text reflect the Nazi-era obsession with race and ethnicity. The long note at the top of the key states that the map "endeavors to show the Lebensraum [living space] of those oriental peoples located in Europe’s area of interest." It notes that the region is for the most part dry and lightly populated; most of its peoples are settled, but that nomadism persists in the interior of the Arabian Peninsula and in parts of Central Asia. Colors are used to indicate the different ethnic and linguistic
groups, which are divided into broad Indo-Germanic (Indo-European) and Turkic categories, the former indicated by the blue-toned, the latter by the red-toned colors. Religious affiliations are shown using the symbols identified at the bottom of the key. The inset map in the lower right shows population densities, which range from 0.1 percent per square kilometer to 50 per square kilometer.

_Vorder-Asien_, Berlin, 1855, [www.wdl.org/13044](http://www.wdl.org/13044)

German geographer and cartographer Heinrich Kiepert (1818–99) is generally regarded as one of the most important scholarly cartographers of the second half of the 19th century. He was head of the Geographical Institute in Weimar between 1845 and 1852 and professor at the University of Berlin from 1852 until his death. Shown here is Kiepert’s 1855 map of the Near East, which appeared in the _Kiepert’s Neuer Hand-Atlas über alle Teile der Erde_ (Kiepert’s new portable atlas of all parts of the world), published by Dietrich Reimer, with whom Kiepert had a long association. The map covers the region between the eastern Mediterranean and the border of Afghanistan with British India. Different colors are used to mark the borders of the Ottoman and Russian empires, British possessions and protectorates in India, and the territory of the imam of Maskat (present-day Muscat). In the lower left-hand corner is a list of topographic terms in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian with their German equivalents.

_Karte des Mittleren Ostens_, Berlin, 1943, [www.wdl.org/13045](http://www.wdl.org/13045)

This map of the Middle East was made by the Führungsstab der Luftwaffe (the operations staff of the German air force) in 1943. The map is labeled “Secret.” Covering the region from the eastern Mediterranean to the border of Afghanistan with British India (present-day Pakistan), it shows the locations of first- and second-class air bases, operational bases, landing strips, and airfields under construction, as of March 15, 1943. Six inset maps—of Aden, Mosul, Cyprus, Baghdad, Gaza-Haifa, and Damascus-Aleppo—provide additional detail about locations with more well-developed aviation infrastructure. Railroad lines and oil pipelines are also shown.

_Marittima Italiana: Bombay Line_, Italy, ca. 1939, [www.wdl.org/13046](http://www.wdl.org/13046)

Marittima Italiana was an Italian shipping company, established in 1936 as an offshoot of the long-established firm of Lloyd-Triestino, which in the late 1930s operated shipping lines between Italy and east Africa, southern Africa, Asia, and Australia. Shown here is a map of Marittima Italiana’s line from Genoa to Bombay (Mumbai), India. Distances are given for the different sections of the route: from Genoa to Naples, Naples to Port Said, Port Said to Aden, and Aden to Bombay. Inset maps show these five ports and the Suez Canal, with water depths given in meters. Symbols are used to indicate radiotelegraph stations and the availability of coal, fuel oil, and dry-dock facilities at various ports. The clock in the center of the map shows the division of the world into 24 time zones.

Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d’Anville (1697–1782) was an important French cartographer known for his scrupulous attention to detail and his commitment to accuracy. His method was to collect and compare as many sources of geographic information as possible and to correct and reissue maps as new information became available. His own personal collection of maps eventually totaled nearly 9,000 items. This map of 1751 by d’Anville shows the part of Asia from its border with Africa and Europe in the west to most of the Indian subcontinent and Tibet in the east. Brief notes describe parts of the Arabian Peninsula as “very dry” and “covered with sand.” Qatar is listed as Catura. Kandahar, Kabul, and Herat are shown, and a garbled version of the name Afghanistan—“Agvanistan”—appears. Borders on this copy are indicated by hand-drawn lines in colored ink. No fewer than 12 different scales of distance are provided, a testament to d’Anville’s commitment to detail and the lack of standardization at the time.


This 1740s map shows the possessions of the Ottoman Empire in Asia (including present-day Turkey, Iraq, and the Levant), the Persian Empire (shown to include present-day Iran, Afghanistan, much of Pakistan, and the Caucasus), the country of the Uzbeks, Arabia, and Egypt. The boundaries of these territories are hand colored on this copy. The desert to the south and west of present-day Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates is described as “without water and without habitation.” The pearl-diving region of the southern Persian Gulf is indicated by shading and dots. In the southwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula are two noteworthy Biblical references: one to Moab, another to the Queen of Sheba. Also shown is the Red Sea town of Moka, a major exporter of coffee and the origin of the word “mocha.” The map is by Gilles Robert de Vaugondy (1688–1766), an important French cartographer who inherited the cartographic materials of the mapmaker Nicolas Sanson and his sons and who published atlases in 1748 and 1752.

Map of Western Asia, Circa 1918–20, New York, ca. 1920, www.wdl.org/13049

This map of western Asia produced by the American Geographical Society (AGS) of New York dates from the period immediately after World War I. A similar map in the collection of the American Geographical Society Library at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is thought to have been made by the AGS for the use of the American delegation to the peace negotiations in Versailles in 1918–19. The map shows Turkey, the Arabian Peninsula, Persia (present-day Iran), and Afghanistan. Iraq is still shown as part of Turkey (the Ottoman Empire). The League of Nations mandates for Syria, Iraq, and Palestine, adopted at the peace conference, are not yet shown. Qatar is indicated as El Katr; Doha and Wakrah are shown as Dohah and Wakra. India (i.e., British India) includes present-day Pakistan. The Soviet Union, with its constituent republics in Central Asia (Russian Turkistan), has not yet been formed. The map has three scales: miles, kilometers, and Russian versts.
Alexandri magni imperium et expeditio per Europam, per Africam et potissimum per Asiam, Paris, 1712, www.wdl.org/13050

This map, published in Paris in 1712, shows the expeditions and empire of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC), in Europe, Africa, and Asia. The circular inset at the top shows the three continents. The numbered notes in the lower right refer to Alexander’s campaign on the banks of the Hyphasis River (now known as the Beas River) in northern India, which is shown on the far-right side of the map. The long note in Latin in the upper right-hand corner summarizes Alexander’s career and conquests, which are explained with reference to Biblical sources, in particular the prophecies in the Book of Daniel, and the Antiquitates Judaicae (The Jewish antiquities) by the first-century historian Flavius Josephus. Borders are annotated in colored ink, and three distance scales are given: 1,000 paces (also known as Roman miles), Greek stadia (one stadia is circa 185–225 meters), and Persian parasangs (a measure of length variously given as between 3.9 and 5.3 kilometers). The map is by Pierre Moulart-Sanson (died 1730), a member of the prominent family of cartographers founded by Nicolas Sanson (1600–67).


Carl Zimmermann was a first lieutenant in the Prussian Army who, in the early 1840s, developed a strong personal and professional interest in the conflict then being waged by the British Army in Afghanistan. In what became known as the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-40), Britain tried to extend its control from India northwest into Afghanistan, but suffered a series of disastrous defeats at the hands of the Afghan tribes and eventually was forced to withdraw. In 1842 Zimmermann published Der Kriegs-Schauplatz in Inner-Asien (The theater of war in inner Asia), a book in which he attempted to bring the geographic knowledge that the British had accumulated about Afghanistan and its environs to a German audience. Zimmermann based this map on English sources, in particular Geographer to the Queen James Wyld's “Notes to a Map of Afghanistan” and East-India Company geographer John Walker's “Skeleton Map of Afghanistan and the Countries on the North-West-Frontier of India.”

Persia (Iran), Afghanistan and Baluchistan, New York, 1897, www.wdl.org/2675

This map of Persia (present-day Iran), Afghanistan, and Baluchistan (the western part of present-day Pakistan) was produced for The Century Atlas of the World, published by the Century Company of New York in 1897. The atlas was the last volume in a ten-volume set that included The Century Dictionary (volumes 1-8) and The Century Cyclopedia of Names (volume 9). In keeping with the encyclopedic style of the series, the map includes notes about the size and political organization of the countries depicted. Persia is described as an independent country ruled by the shah, Afghanistan as ruled by an emir, and Baluchistan as partly under British administration and ruled by a khan.

Afghanistan, Beloochistan, etc., New York, 1893, www.wdl.org/2676

This 1893 map of Afghanistan and Baluchistan (the western part of present-day Pakistan) was published by Hunt & Eaton and engraved by Fisk & Co. of New York. Located at Fifth Avenue and 20th St. in Manhattan, Hunt & Eaton were the agents of the Methodist Book Concern, the publishing and bookselling arm of the American Methodist Church. The book concern was established in Philadelphia in 1799, and over the years used a series of firms as its agent. Hunt & Eaton was formed in 1889 when
Homer Eaton joined the Reverend Sanford Hunt to take over the assets and business of an earlier firm, Philips & Hunt. In addition to printing official church publications, Hunt & Eaton turned out books on art, science, literature, and other subjects, as well as maps, all of which were known for their consistently high quality. This map is from an atlas produced for the New York Recorder Company, which published the New York Recorder, a daily newspaper associated with the Baptist Church. The map is attractive, but simple and uncluttered, intended to appeal to a mass audience.

**Persia, Afghanistan and Baluchistan**, New York, 1904, [www.wdl.org/2677](http://www.wdl.org/2677)

This 1904 map of Persia (as Iran was then known), Afghanistan, and parts of present-day Pakistan is by the Americana Company of New York, publisher of the *Encyclopedia Americana*. Also included in the map are large parts of Central Asia (known as Turkestan) that were then part of the Russian Empire, the extreme western part of China, and the Persian Gulf. The late 19th and early 20th centuries were a period of intense rivalry for influence in this part of the world between the Russian and British empires. Railroad construction was an important part of this rivalry, which was often called the “Great Game.” The map shows the strategically important Trans-Caspian Railway, built by Russia between 1879 and 1898, running from the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea to Samarkand and the Fergana Valley. Few railroads as yet existed in Iran, Afghanistan, and western Pakistan.

**Persia, Afghanistan and Baluchistan**, Chicago, 1898, [www.wdl.org/2678](http://www.wdl.org/2678)

Chicago-based Rand McNally became a major publisher of atlases, maps, globes, and travel guides in the United States in the second half of the 19th century. This map of Persia (as Iran was known until 1935), Afghanistan, and Baluchistan is from the 1898 edition of *Rand, McNally & Cos. Indexed Atlas of the World, Containing Large Scale Maps of Every Country and Civil Division upon the Face of the Globe, Together with Historical, Statistical and Descriptive Matter Relative to Each*. The atlas contains two volumes, one with maps of the United States, the other with maps of foreign countries. This map features a list of the provinces, islands, mountains, rivers, and towns on the map, as well as short descriptive essays about the countries depicted. Baluchistan is a region bounded by Iran on the west, Afghanistan on the north, and the Arabian Sea to the south. A historic invasion route to India, it was crossed by Alexander the Great in 325 BC. In the late 19th century it came under British control. In 1947 it became part of Pakistan.

**Map of Persia and Adjacent Countries, for Sir John Malcolm's History of Persia**, London, 1815, [www.wdl.org/2679](http://www.wdl.org/2679)

Sir John Malcolm (1769-1833) was a British soldier, colonial administrator, diplomat, linguist, and historian. He was born in Scotland, left school at age 12, and, through an uncle, secured a position in the East India Company. While stationed in various parts of India as an officer in the company’s military forces, he became interested in foreign languages, which he studied diligently. He
became fluent in Persian and, over the years, served as an interpreter and British envoy to Persia in various capacities. In 1815, he published his History of Persia, which earned him an honorary doctorate from Oxford University. This map by Aaron Arrowsmith (1750-1823) was produced for Malcolm’s history. Arrowsmith was one of the premier map publishers of the day. His firm was known for rendering the latest geographical findings into impressively detailed maps. His nephew, John Arrowsmith (1790-1873), took over the firm after his death.


This map of the region around the Pishin Lora River in southern Afghanistan and western Pakistan was presented at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society in London on February 9, 1880, in connection with a paper by Major-General Sir Michael A. Biddulph, “Pishin and the Routes Between India and Candahar [Kandahar].” The previous year, Biddulph had led a military expedition of British, Gurkha, and Punjabi troops on an expedition from British India into Afghanistan. The map is based on an earlier British military map, with corrections and additions based on surveys conducted by Biddulph’s expedition. In addition to expanding their geographic knowledge of the region, the British were interested in determining the feasibility of building a railroad to connect Afghanistan with India and the sea.

*Bokhara, Kabool, Beloochistan, &c.,* London, 1841, [www.wdl.org/474](http://www.wdl.org/474)

This map of Afghanistan and parts of present-day Iran and Pakistan was published by Charles Knight (1791–1873), an English author and publisher who is best known for his role as superintendent for publications for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. The society was founded in London in 1826 for the purpose of improving the educational level of the British working and middle classes. In the 1830s and 1840s, it produced numerous publications, including a Library of Useful Knowledge, the volumes of which sold for sixpence, and a two-volume series of maps that were known for their high quality. This map was published separately in 1841, but it also appeared as Plate 94 in *Maps of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, published in London in 1844. The map was engraved by J. & C. Walker, a London firm of engravers, draftsmen, and publishers that flourished in the mid-19th century. The map is from the Library of Congress. The significance of the hand-colored lines on the map is not known.

*The Hindu Kush and Passes Between the Kabul and Oxus*, London, 1879, [www.wdl.org/475](http://www.wdl.org/475)

This map originally appeared in the February 1879 issue of the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography* in connection with an article by C.R. Markham entitled “The Upper Basin of the Kabul River.” The Hindu Kush is a range of high mountains that extends some 800 kilometers in a northeast-to-southwest direction from the Pamir Mountains near the Pakistan-China border, through Pakistan, and into western Afghanistan. The range forms the drainage divide between two great river systems, the Amu Darya to the northwest, and the Indus to the southeast. The ancient Greeks called the Amu Darya the Oxus, the name used on this map. The passes through the Hindu Kush historically have been of great military significance. Alexander the Great (356-323 BC) crossed these mountains with his army in 329 BC, most likely over the Khawak Pass, during a campaign to suppress a revolt against his authority in Bactria, an eastern province of the Persian Empire.
In the early 1880s, Great Britain (which at that time effectively controlled the foreign policy of Afghanistan) and the Russian Empire opened negotiations to define the northern border of Afghanistan. The two sides formed a joint Afghan Boundary Commission, which began work in the fall of 1885. This map shows the routes taken by the members of the commission in the Badghis area (present-day Badghis Province) in the northwestern part of the country, on the border with present-day Turkmenistan, which at that time was part of the Russian Empire. The map shows rivers and populated places. Relief is shown by hachures; the height of mountains is given in feet. The scale is one inch to 24 miles (2.54 centimeters to 38.62 kilometers). The map was drawn by Major T.H. Holdich, an officer with the Royal Engineers of the British Army in India, and was prepared for a paper on the Afghan Boundary Commission that was read to the Royal Geographical Society in London in March 1885. The map was produced by lithographer Edward Weller (1819–84), a London-based cartographer and engraver who was the unofficial geographer of the Royal Geographical Society.

This map of Afghanistan and its neighbors was printed in multiple editions by the publishing house of Carl Flemming in Glogau, Germany (present-day Głogów, Poland). The areas covered by the map were the site of an intense rivalry between Great Britain and Imperial Russia during the course of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The borders of Afghanistan changed repeatedly during the latter part of the 19th century: the border between Baluchistan and Afghanistan was redrawn with the establishment of the Durand Line in 1893, and the borders between Afghanistan and Russian Turkestan to the north and with Persia to the west changed as well. The issuing of new editions of this map would have been complicated by these shifting boundaries. An 1890 printing of the map credits the German cartographer Friedrich Handtke (1815–79) with the original design. The map was published as number 44 of the Generalkarte (general maps) published by the Carl Flemming firm. Its designation “general” distinguishes this map from those used for educational purposes, as well as from those that were used for specialized scientific purposes.

The Survey of India was founded in 1767 in order to map the vast holdings of the British East India Company. It remained in operation following Indian independence and is currently the national mapping organization of the government of India, under the Department of Science and Technology. The map shows portions of Afghanistan and present-day Pakistan (then part of British India). It is dated July 1891, although it is a reissue of an earlier map of November 1886, with updated information on political boundaries and railways. The border between Afghanistan and Baluchistan was to be redrawn in 1893, just two years after the publication of this map, by the establishment of the Durand Line. An arbitrary political demarcation, the Durand Line cut through the boundaries of the various tribal entities residing in a region recognized for the fierce independence of its inhabitants. The area remains a source of political volatility today. The map was published during the directorship of the Survey of India of Colonel Sir Henry Ravenshaw Thuillier (1838–1922). Sir Henry was educated at the Addiscombe Military Seminary (also known as the East India Company Military Seminary), and led the Survey of India from 1886 to his
retirement in 1895. Sir Henry’s father, Sir Henry Edward Landor Thuillier, also led the Survey of India, in 1861–78. The map was reproduced by photozincography, a process of photolithography using a zinc plate. The scale is one inch to 32 miles (2.54 centimeters to 51.49 kilometers).


The term Kafiristan (“The land of the infidel” in Persian) refers to the fact that the inhabitants of this region in the northeast of Afghanistan were non-Muslims, following Buddhism and other pre-Islamic religious practices long after neighboring regions had converted to Islam. Indeed, the region as a whole did not adopt Islam until late in the 19th century, when it was forcibly converted by the Afghan emir ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan (also called Abdur Rahman, reigned 1880–1901). The term Kafiristan has become obsolete, and the area is now referred to as Nuristan (“The land of light”). Nestled within the Hindu Kush mountain range, the area remains remote and underdeveloped, and local traditions live on in the form of the Nuristani languages, a group of Indo-Iranian languages spoken by more than 100,000 inhabitants of the area. The map was produced by Edward Stanford (1827–1904), a prominent 19th century cartographer best known for his Library Map of London, first published in 1862. This map dates from 1881 and was produced for the Royal Geographical Society. Elevations on the map are shown in feet and the scale of distances is one inch to 15 miles (2.54 centimeters to 24.14 kilometers).

The city of Herat and the adjoining region of Badghis were part of the territory to which the Qajar dynasty of Persia was forced to relinquish its claims following the Anglo–Persian War of 1856–57. Under the terms of 1857 Treaty of Paris, the Persians were compelled to withdraw from Herat, leaving the city under Afghan control. Britain’s interest in Herat was linked to the intense rivalry between it and Russia in what has come to be known as the Great Game. The object of this rivalry was the control of Central Asia. The annexation of Merv by imperial Russia in 1884 sent waves of concern reverberating throughout the British Empire. The British feared that from Merv the Russians had gained new access to British India via the Hari Rud valley and the city of Herat. The map depicts the Badghis region and surrounding areas stretching from the Merv oasis in the north to Herat in the south, an area of great strategic concern for the British in 1885. The map was compiled from a survey conducted by the Afghan Boundary Commission, a joint British and Russian body, and was published in 1885 by the Royal Geographical Society in London. The scale is given in miles and versts, a Russian unit of measurement equal to 1.07 kilometers.


This 1878 map depicts Afghanistan and portions of Central Asia, Persia, and British India based on surveys carried out by British and Russian officers up to 1875. An inset map shows the wider Asian context and notes distances from London of the most important places. The year 1878 is significant in the history of Afghanistan in that it marked the beginning of the Second Anglo-Afghan War, launched by a British invasion on November 21, 1878. The pretext for military action was the refusal of the Afghan government to admit the British envoy, Sir Neville Chamberlain, who had been dispatched to Kabul by the orders of Lord Lytton, the governor-general of India. The Afghan ruler Sher Ali Khan (reigned
1863–66 and 1868–79) had already and with some reluctance admitted into Kabul a Russian delegation led by General Nikolai Grigorevich Stoletov. In the context of the political rivalry that existed between Russia and Great Britain over the control of Central Asia, this preference toward Russia was a slight which, from the British perspective, could not be allowed to stand unchallenged. Major fighting in the Second Anglo-Afghan War did not cease until the Battle of Kandahar in September 1880, after which Afghanistan ceded control of its foreign affairs to the British government. Compiled and printed by the Office of the Chief of Engineers of the United States Army “for the information of the officers of the U.S. Army,” the map includes along its western edge markings indicating the latitude of a number of cities in the United States to be used as reference for its North American readers.

**Military Map of Afghanistan Compiled from the Latest Russian and British Official Surveys with Reference to the Anglo-Russian Dispute**, London, 1885, [www.wdl.org/15026](http://www.wdl.org/15026)

This map shows the borders of Afghanistan in 1885. It reflects the fact that the city of Herat and its environs were ceded by the Qajar dynasty of Persia to Afghanistan under the Treaty of Paris in 1857. The precise delimitation of the Afghanistan-Persian frontier was an ongoing process, however, one that was not completed until 1935. As a result of these changes, the present-day border between Afghanistan and Iran (the successor state to the Persian Empire) lies considerably to the west of the frontier as it appears on the map. The map shows the encroachments by Imperial Russia into the northeastern territory of Afghanistan during the period between 1881 and 1885. Not reflected on this map are further changes brought about eight years later, in 1893, with the establishment of the Durand Line demarcating the boundaries between Afghanistan and British India. The Durand Line shifted the boundary between Baluchistan (in present-day Pakistan) and Afghanistan. The map was drawn by W.J. Wilson and published as part of the book *Afghanistan and the Anglo-Russian Dispute*, by Colonel Theophilus Rodenbough (1838–1912), a Union officer and military hero of the United States Civil War. In addition to his study of Afghanistan, Rodenbough wrote several books on U.S. military history.

**Herat, Afghanistan**, London, 1880, [www.wdl.org/15027](http://www.wdl.org/15027)

This beautifully rendered map of Herat dates from 1880, the final year of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). The map depicts Herat’s impressive defenses and its roughly square plan. The southern and most imposing part of the citadel, “the Ark” (from the Persian *arg*, citadel) remains standing and is one of the major landmarks of Herat, as is the Friday Mosque (the Jumma Musj idi in northeastern Herat). The defensive walls have long been replaced by spacious boulevards, however. Also noteworthy are the extensive vineyards that surround the city along with gardens and other cultivated land. The governor of Herat, Ayub Khan (1857–1914), was the son of the Afghan ruler Sher Ali Khan, who died in 1879 while seeking the assistance of the Russians against the British forces that had invaded Afghanistan. Sher Ali Khan was succeeded by another son, Mohammad Yaqub Khan (reigned February–October 1879),
who adopted a conciliatory policy toward the British. Ayub Khan refused to recognize the conciliatory policies of his brother, and in August 1880 struck the British forces at Maiwand, near Kandahar (483 kilometers to the southeast of Herat, as the crow flies). After inflicting a serious defeat on the British forces, Ayub Khan proceeded to lay siege to Kandahar in an engagement known as the Battle of Kandahar, but was defeated in early September of the same year. At his defeat, Ayub Khan was forced to seek asylum in Persia. The Battle of Kandahar marked the end of the Second Anglo-Afghan war, and allowed the British to help consolidate the power of ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan (also called Abdur Rahman, reigned 1880–1901) as ruler of Afghanistan. The map was produced by the famous British mapmaker James Wyld the younger (1812–87). After studying at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, he joined his father’s mapmaking and publishing firm, which he eventually inherited. Wyld published numerous maps, many of which were intended to satisfy public interest in current events, such as the Anglo-Afghan wars, the California Gold Rush, and the Crimean War. Wyld’s maps were of high quality, and he was appointed geographer to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.  


The city of Kandahar, or Candahar, was the site of the final battle of the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80). Soldiers stationed at the British garrison at Kandahar met Afghan forces at nearby Maiwand, where on July 27, 1880, the two British and Indian brigades suffered a calamitous defeat. Retreating to Kandahar, the surviving British soldiers drove away the local population and took shelter behind the protective walls in preparation for the defense of the city. Ayub Khan, the ruler of Herat and the victor at Maiwand, proceeded to lay siege to Kandahar in early August 1880. The Battle of Kandahar, which lasted until September 1, resulted in the defeat of the Afghan forces, thanks in part to fresh British reinforcements from Kabul. This map, by the famous British mapmaker James Wyld the younger (1812–87), dates from 1880 and includes text describing the city’s defenses. It is extremely detailed, showing individual groups of houses, the areas of the different trades, and markets. The fortified walls of the city, behind which the British forces took shelter during the battle, remained standing in parts until the early 20th century. The roughly rectangular layout of these fortifications can be traced in the modern city, where the walls have been replaced by streets and boulevards. Also noted on the map are the citadel (at the approximate site of the present-day governor’s and police compound of Kandahar) and the nearby tomb of Ahmad Shah Durrani (circa 1722–72), the founder of modern Afghanistan. Kandahar is an ancient and storied city that was frequently fought over by warring empires. Its recorded history goes back at least to the sixth century BC, when the city served as the administrative capital of the province of Arachosia in the Persian Empire.
The Survey of India was founded in 1767 in order to map the vast holdings of the British East India Company. It remained in operation following Indian independence and is currently the national mapping organization of the government of India, under the Department of Science and Technology. The present map shows portions of Baluchistan, Sind, Punjab, and neighboring regions. It was originally produced in July 1886. The version shown here is a reprint from 1891, with updated information on political boundaries and railroads. The map was reproduced by photozincography, a photolithographic process that used zinc plates. It was published at the direction of Colonel Sir Henry Ravenshaw Thuillier (1838–1922), then surveyor-general of India. Sir Henry was educated at the Addiscombe Military Seminary (also known as the East India Company Military Seminary) south of London, and led the Survey of India from 1886 to his retirement in 1895. Sir Henry’s father, Sir Henry Edward Landor Thuillier, also led the Survey of India (from 1861 to 1878).

The name Turkestan means “Land of the Turks” in Persian. Turkestan has never corresponded to a national entity but has been used in the Persianate world and elsewhere to signify the domain of Turkic peoples in Central Asia. During the second half of the 19th century these lands were the setting for the intense political rivalry between Great Britain and Imperial Russia known as the Great Game. During this period, the Russian Empire conquered vast regions in Central Asia. It assigned much of its newly acquired territory to the newly established Governor-Generalship of Turkestan. Of note on this map are the Emirate of Bokhara and the Khanate of Khiva, which were not included in the governor-generalship. Both were made Russian protectorates, following their defeats at the hand of Russia. The Khanate of Kokand (corresponding roughly to the area marked as Ferghana) was conquered in 1876 and, rather than being afforded protectorate status, was annexed into the vast domains of the Governor-Generalship of Turkestan. Today the portion of this map that corresponds to Central Asia falls within the borders of the states of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, all former Soviet republics that gained independence following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. A handwritten note describes the consequences of the rising of the Aral and Caspian Seas, a process that would be dramatically reversed in the latter part of the 20th century, when the Aral Sea all but disappeared as a consequence of ill-conceived Soviet irrigation projects. The map is marked "Loaned by the American Geographical Society to the Peace Conference at Versailles, 1918-1919."
The year 1883 falls between two critical events in the Russian conquest of Central Asia: The sack of Geok Tepe (present-day Gökdepe) in 1881, and the conquest of Merv (present-day Mary) in 1884. This 1883 map depicts roads, rivers, and topographic information relating to the region adjacent to the Tejend (or Tejen) oasis as well as the Merv oasis, some 130 kilometers to the east. Geok Tepe and the nearby city of Ashgabat do not fall within the confines of the map (lying approximately 325 kilometers to the east of Merv). Subsequent to the campaign against Geok Tepe and prior to its annexation of Merv, Russia claimed control over the sparsely populated Tejend oasis area. Some of the survivors of the massacre that followed the conquest of Geok Tepe had found their way to the Tejend area and were living in the previously uninhabited oasis. In contrast to the conquest of Geok Tepe, the conquest of Merv was based on a ruse, rather than heavy fighting. It was aided by a native of Dagestan (Daghestan in Persian), a certain Lieutenant Alikhanov. Alikhanov, whose survey data from Tejend are included in the present map, posed as a merchant, and initiated a trading agreement with Merv. In early 1884, he managed to secure the capitulation of the oasis through oratory and warnings about heavy Russian reprisals in the event of resistance on the part of the local population. Other cartographic details included in the map were gathered by Lieutenant Colonel Baron Aminof, Lieutenant Visheslaftsef, and Mr. Edmond O’Donovan. The distance scales are given in miles and versts. The map was lithographed by Edward Weller and published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* in 1883.

This 1907 map of Russian Central Asia covers a region falling within the boundaries of present-day Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan. At the time the map was made, most of this vast territory was part of the Russian Empire. Willi Rickmer Rickmers (1873–1965) was a German mountaineer and explorer who undertook several expeditions in Central Asia and the Caucasus before journeying to the foothills of the Pamir range in eastern Tajikistan in 1906. This expedition, on which Rickmers was accompanied by his wife and fellow mountaineer C. Mabel Duff Rickmers, reached as far east as the Darvaz region in Tajikistan and explored along the way the Zarafshan River valley and the Zarafshan glacier as well as the Fann Mountains of western Tajikistan. The map includes two insets highlighting the Fann Mountains in greater detail. The map was made to illustrate a lecture delivered by Rickmers at the Royal Geographical Society in London, and Rickmers’s paper was published in the June 1907 edition of the *Geographical Journal*. An avid explorer in her own right, Mabel Rickmers was the author of *The Chronology of India from Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* (1899) and was a member of the Royal Asiatic Society and a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

This impressively detailed map of Central Asia, dated 1879, was published during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80) by the British mapmaker James Wyld the younger (1812–87). The map shows the vast domains acquired by the Russian Empire in Central Asia (present-day Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan) in the late 19th century, as well as Afghanistan, eastern Persia, and parts of Baluchistan (present-day Pakistan), India, and China. The political boundaries shown on the map delineate the khanates of Bukhara, Khiva, and Afghanistan, as well as the borders the Russian Empire, Persia, and Baluchistan. After studying at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, James Wyld the younger joined his father’s mapmaking and publishing firm, which he eventually inherited. Wyld published numerous maps, many of which were intended to satisfy public interest in current events, such as the Anglo-Afghan Wars, the California Gold Rush, and the Crimean War. Wyld’s maps were of high quality, and he was appointed geographer to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

Karta Khivinskago Khanstva i nizov'ev' Amu-Dar'yi, Moscow, 1873, [www.wdl.org/15034](http://www.wdl.org/15034)

The permanent military presence of imperial Russia in the Aral Sea region dates to 1847, when the Russians founded Fort Aralsk near the mouth of the Syr Darya (Jaxartes) River on the northern shore of the sea. At the time Russia was locked with Great Britain in the intense rivalry for influence in Central Asia and Afghanistan that became known as the Great Game. This detailed and beautifully rendered Russian map shows the southern shores of the Aral Sea and the other great river of Central Asia, the Amu Darya or Oxus. The map was published in 1873, a watershed year that saw Russian annexation of the Khanate of Khiva (lying along the course of the Amu Darya in the region depicted in the map) as well as of the Emirate of Bokhara (lying to the southeast of the Khanate of Khiva). The map includes such features as rivers, lakes, marshes, and cultivated areas, in addition to arid regions (labeled as Takir, i.e., salt flats characterized by fissured and cracked surfaces, and solonetz). Also included are cities and
villages, roads, and mosques. The city of Khiva lies near the bottom of the map at the edge of an area of vast cultivation that includes other historical cities such as Kunya-Urgench and Kath or Kat. The entire region was later to undergo an environmental cataclysm with the drying up of the Aral Sea, caused by irrigation policies pursued during the Soviet era. The map was created by the cartographic unit of the Military Topography Directorate of the Russian General Staff. The scale is in versts, a Russian unit of measurement; one verst is equal to 1.07 kilometers.

Part of Central Asia, Showing the Territory Between Zarafshan and Amu Darya Rivers, Chiefly Compiled from the Latest Russian Documents to Illustrate Mr. Delmar Morgan’s Paper, London, 1884, www.wdl.org/15035

The map depicts parts of northern Afghanistan and the protectorate of Bukhara (corresponding to portions of modern-day Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan). It was meant to accompany an article written by Edward Delmar Morgan (1840–1909) as a supplementary paper published by the Royal Geographical Society. Entitled “Notes on the Recent Geography of Central Asia from Russian Sources,” the paper was published in 1884. Morgan was an English explorer and author. As a young man, he lived in Saint Petersburg, where his father was a merchant, and he was fluent in Russian. He translated several notable texts dealing with travel and exploration from Russian to English. Morgan was also a longtime fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, who served on its council and contributed to its journal. The map was drawn by Henry Sharbau (1822−1904), for many years the chief cartographer of the Royal Geographical Society, and lithographed by Edward Weller (1819−84), a London-based cartographer and engraver who was the unofficial geographer of the society.


This map covers Central Asia and adjoining regions, including eastern Persia and the lands stretching from east of the Caspian Sea to Mongolia and Tibet. It was published in 1880 in Vienna, Leipzig, and Pest (Hungary), based on the research of Josef (also seen as Joseph) Chavanne (1846−1902), an Austrian geographer, cartographer, and explorer. The map shows cities and towns, which are classified according to three different population sizes (fewer than 20,000, 20,000−50,000, and more than 50,000 inhabitants), as well as forts and fortified cities, wells, and topographic details, including mountains, deserts, swamps and salt lakes, and “known” and “presumed” courses of rivers. International borders and borders between governorates in the Russian Empire are shown. Elevations are given in meters. The map has four scales: kilometers, English miles, geographic miles, and Russian versts. Chavanne traveled extensively in America and Africa, but he does not appear to have personally visited the regions depicted on this map. He recorded his experiences in Africa in his Die Sahara, oder: Von Oase zu Oase (The Sahara, or: From oasis to oasis) published in Vienna in 1879. Chavanne was admired in Europe not only for his geographic knowledge and cartographic skill but also for the ethnographic insights he drew from his own travels.


This 1909 map covers Turkestan, or the domains of Russia in Central Asia, along with adjoining regions in Persia, Afghanistan, British India, and China. Russia had acquired its vast holdings in Central Asia, including the protectorates of Khiva and Bukhara, in the second half of the previous century. The map
shows Bokhara as the state capital of Turkestan and Tashkent, present-day capital of Uzbekistan, as the seat of government. This is the second map in a series of ten published by Hachette in the early 1900s as part of the *Atlas Universel* (World atlas) by Louis Vivien de Saint-Martin and Franz Schrader. The other maps in the series are: 1, Asia Minor and the Caucasus; 3, Mongolia; 4, Japan, Korea, and Manchuria; 5, Arabia; 6, Persia, Afghanistan, and Northwest India; 7, Northeast India and Tibet; 8, China; 9, South India; and 10, Indochina. One of the contributors to the map is David Alexandrovich Aïtoff (1854–1933), the inventor of the Aïtoff projection in cartography, who first published his formulation in an article entitled “Projections des cartes géographiques” that appeared in *Atlas de géographie moderne* in 1889. The map includes a glossary of Russian and Turkish terms. It was loaned by the American Geographical Society to the Paris Peace Conference of 1918–19, convened to draw up peace treaties after World War I.

*Carte de Tartarie: dressée sur les Relations de plusieurs Voyageurs de différentes Nations et sur quelques Observations qui ont été faites dans ce pais*, Amsterdam, 1757, [www.wdl.org/15038](http://www.wdl.org/15038)

The French cartographer Guillaume de l’Isle (1675–1726) was admitted into the French Académie Royale des Sciences when he was 27 years old and subsequently became the first person to receive the title *Premier Géographe du Roi* (principal geographer to the king). At the time de l’Isle was engaged in cartographic research, the prestige of a cartographer and the authority of his maps were gauged by the veracity of the cartographer’s sources, i.e., the explorers and travelers who reported details of their travels to geographers and cartographers in Europe. De l’Isle’s map covers much of Asia as well as portions of Scandinavia and of Russia east of the Ural Mountains. Vast areas depicted in the map, such as Siberia and the regions north of the Arctic Circle in Asia, were only visited by European explorers starting in the 17th century. Many of de l’Isle’s maps were reissued by the publishing house of Cornelis Mortier and Johannes Coven in Amsterdam in their *Atlas Nouveau*, which was published in multiple editions, the earliest of which dates to 1733. The map shown here is a later version of a map that was published in 1706, during de l’Isle’s lifetime. The map shows forested areas, drainage, and other natural features, as well as the Great Wall of China, roads, and political boundaries. Distance scales are given in French, Russian, Chinese, and Persian units of measurement. The decorative title cartouche features native male figures and horses.

*Iran. Östliche hälft enthaltend Afghanistan, Balutschistan, und die Özbekischen Khanate am Oxus*, Berlin, 1878, [www.wdl.org/15039](http://www.wdl.org/15039)

This 1878 map depicts Afghanistan as well as a narrow band of eastern Persia and adjoining regions. The cartographer, Heinrich Kiepert (1818–99), was a German geographer, who published several atlases of the ancient world during his career. The title, *Iran. Östliche hälft enthaltend Afghanistan, Balutschistan, und die Özbekischen Khanate am Oxus* (Iran. Eastern Half Including Afghanistan, Baluchistan, and the Uzbek Khanate on the Oxus), can perhaps be understood in terms of historic Persian claims over parts of Afghanistan and Baluchistan, dating from the Safavid and Afsharid dynasties of Persia. Given the author’s interest in ancient history, it is also possible that, in choosing his title, he was referring to the history of the ancient world and the Achaemenid Empire of Persia (550–330 BC). Whatever the case, prior to the publication of this map the ruling Qajar dynasty of Persia had ceded its claims to Afghanistan in the Treaty of Paris (1857), concluded with Great Britain after the Anglo-Persian War of 1856–57. Persia also later ceded large parts of the Makran coast (in 1863) and Baluchistan (in 1872) directly to British India. Shading in different colors is used to indicate the Russian and British spheres of influence.
The map shows international borders, important cities, mountains, and railroads. The note above the title indicates that “the final section of the great Indian railroad from Peshawar to Rawalpindi is still under construction.” Three distance scales are provided: kilometers, English statute miles, and German geographic miles. Kiepert was a professor of geography at Humboldt University in Berlin from 1854 until his death.