

Eurasian Journal
of Humanities and
Social Sciences



Formation And Development Stages Of Medieval Central Asian Historics

**Axmadjonova Gulnoza
Rustamjon qizi**

Teacher of the IRCICA Department of Islamic History and Source Studies
of the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan

Tel: +998 97 490 08 91

E-mail: g.r.axmadjonova@gmail.com

Orcid: 0001-0009-1588-2191

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the formation and developmental stages of medieval Central Asian historiography. The work highlights historical processes from the period of the Turkic Khaganate to the Arab conquest, the Eastern Renaissance, and the Timurid era, revealing the factors behind the development of historiography. The contribution of scholars such as al-Tabari, Narshakhi, Beruni, and Gardizi to the development of historical science has been scientifically evaluated. Additionally, the methodological features of historical works, their significance in source studies, and their influence on subsequent historiography are analyzed. The article is of great importance as an important scientific source in studying the process of formation of Central Asian historical thinking and traditions of historiography.

Keywords:

Central Asia, historiography, the Middle Ages, the Turkic Khaganate, the Sogdians, Mawarannahr, the Arab Caliphate, Islam, the Eastern Renaissance, the Eastern Renaissance, Al-Tabari, "Tarikh-i ar-Rusul wal-Muluk," Ba'lami, Narshakhi, "History of Bukhara," Abu Rayhan Biruni, "Asar al-Bakiya," "India," Gardizi, "Zayn al-Akhbar," the Timurid period, Amir Temur, "Zafarnama," Nizamiddin Shami, Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi, Mirkhand, Khondamir, Abdurazzak Samarkandi, Hafizi Abru, source studies, historiography, chronicles, manuscripts, inscriptions, Islamic culture, Samanids, Karakhanids, Ghaznavids, cultural development, scientific and critical method.

INTRODUCTION. The formation and development of medieval Central Asian historiography is a multifaceted process that occurred in close connection with the socio-political life, religious-philosophical views, and cultural development processes of the region. According to its conceptual foundations, the historiography of this period manifests not merely as a chronology of events, but as a fundamental science aimed at understanding the patterns of societal development.

In the early Middle Ages, specifically in the 6th–7th centuries, major ethnic and cultural processes occurred in the history of Central Asia, transforming Turkic peoples into a leading force in the political arena.

It is known that by the middle of the 6th century, the Turkic Khaganate was established in Central Asia. Data for this period are sufficient, but they are contradictory and do not provide accurate information. Written sources serve as an important source in studying the history of Turkic peoples. Many information about this

period has been preserved in ancient inscriptions, manuscripts, and chronicles.

Additionally, Armenian authors will be able to obtain detailed information about this period in documents in languages such as Pahlavi (Middle Persian), Hindi, Saka-Khutan, Georgian, Arabic, and Persian, which will help illuminate some aspects of the history of Tibet and the Khaganate, reflecting the relations between the Syrian, Turkic, and Tibetan khanates that illuminate the Western activities of the Turkic Khaganate, particularly the system of titles.¹

MATERIALS AND METHODS. The existence of ties with the Sogdians was of great importance in the emergence, development, and formation of the culture of the Turkic Khaganate. If one turns to early medieval sources, one can read the following information in Abu Bakr Narshakhi's work "History of Bukhara": "The services of the Sogdians in promoting Islam in the region were also great." Thus, the first mosque was opened in Bukhara, and later hundreds of mosques and madrasas were built in the region. This situation led to the transformation of the cities of Mawarannahr into centers of Islamic culture.

It should be noted that the Turkic Khaganate put an end to the period of depression in the Hephthalite state in Central Asia and established strong ties with the local rulers of this region. According to Atakhodjaev's correct conclusion, unlike the Hephthalite economy, which was based on the spoils of the Sassanids, the primary focus during the period of the Turkic Khaganate was on production and trade. Political and economic interests ensured the dominance of the Turkic Khaganate in Central Asia.²

Furthermore, during the period of the Turkic Khaganate, trade, urban planning, and crafts were well-developed in the country. To further revitalize international trade and the domestic market, the Turkic khagans minted their own coins. Wherever the state mint was located, the city and its surrounding areas developed rapidly. For example, the Chach oasis was one of

the centers where coins were minted by the Turkic khagans, as evidenced by Turkic titles and Turkic iconographic images on early medieval coins found in the Tashkent oasis. It is also observed that new cities were erected in the oases where the princes (tegin) and governors (tudun, tutuq) appointed to the administration of the Turkic khagans and vassal domains were chosen as administrative and political centers, or that the towns that were previously small settlements expanded and developed further.

DISCUSSION. The emergence of examples of material culture played a significant role in human life, while the emergence of manuscripts and printed books exerted a significant influence on the development of human culture. Detailed information about the situation of the peoples of Central Asia on the eve of the Arab invasion and its aftermath is provided in the aforementioned Arabic sources.

Among them, Tabari's famous work "Tarikh-i ar-Rasul wal-Muluk" ("History of Prophets and Countries") or "Tarikh-i Tabari" holds a special place. In 963, Balami revised this work and translated it into Persian.

At-Tabari made extensive use of the work of his predecessor, Abdul-Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad al-Madaini (who, according to V. V. Barthold, died between 215–225 AH and 830–840 AD). The work is compilative (based on the works of previous historians), but unlike other Arab historians, Al-Madaini tried to write his stories more like epic folk epics than historical works. This was typical of medieval Arabic prose. Al-Tabari was the first of the Arab historians to write historical events based on accurate historical facts. In turn, it should be noted that al-Tabari's work "Tarikh al-Rasul wal-Muluk" completes the initial stage of Arabic historiography. This work is the most important source on the history of the Islamic world, which includes historical monuments, stories, folklore and legends.

The work "Tarikh-i ar-Rasul wal-Muluk" (first author Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari), written

¹ Doniyorov A. X. Markaziy Osiyo xalqlari tarixshunosligi / Darslik. Toshkent: NIF MSH, 2020. 89-b.

² Отахужаев А. Илк ўрта асрларда Марказий Осиё цивилизациясида турк-сугд муносабатлари. 48-6.

by Abu Ali Muhammad ibn Muhammad Ba'lami and translated and supplemented from Arabic, also provides many interesting information regarding the Arab conquest of Central Asia. Balami's work mainly reveals the terms, obligations and features of the occupation of Samarkand and the agreement between Qutayba ibn Muslim and Gurak, the ruler of Samarkand. The Latin text you provided is as follows:

The work is completely different from other works due to its perfection and richness of evidence. The work tells about the socio-political events that took place in the countries of Arabia, Rum (Little Asia), Iran and the Arab Caliphate, as well as in the territory of Uzbekistan from the creation of the world until 912. The events are narrated year by year, chronologically. The author has created many conveniences for using the work.

In creating this work, Tabari made extensive use of Jewish and Christian narratives, the Sassanid chronicle (224-651), al-Waqidi's (747-823) "Kitab al-Maqazi" ("Book of Wars"), al-Madaini's "Tarikh-i Khulafa" ("History of the Caliphs"), and Ibn Tayfur's (819-893) "Tarikh-i Baghdad" ("History of Baghdad"). However, in many cases, according to the method of "Hadith science," especially in the parts of the work dedicated to the scientific history, he precisely cited evidence and information from other sources. Parts of the book discussing ancient history are also of certain scientific significance, as they contain valuable information and fragments contained in sources that have not reached us (narratives "Khvaday Namak," "Tarikh-i Khulafa," etc.).

Imam Zahabi, reflecting on Tabari's book "Tahzib al-asar tafsil al-ma'ani as-sabit an Rasulullah (peace be upon him) min al-akhbar," wrote: "If this book had been completed by the author, it would have consisted of approximately one hundred volumes." Ibn Kasir said, "It is one of the best books, and if it were finished, this book would be enough." Ahmad ibn Kamil Abu Bakr, Abdulaziz ibn Muhammad Tabari, and Abdullah ibn Ahmad al-Fergani were among Tabari's mature students.

"Tarikh al-Rusul wa-l-Muluk" is one of the main and most authoritative sources on the history of Muslim countries, as well as Mawarannahr in the 8th-9th centuries, and had a great influence on the further development of historical science. There were two editions of this work in Arabic (detailed and abridged), but only its abridged edition has reached us, and the text of the work was published in 15 volumes in 1879-1901 by the Dutch orientalist M.Ya. de Gue (1836-1909). There is also a Persian edition of Tabari's work, which was written in 963 by the famous patron of science, al-Bal'ami (d. 974) who was the vizier of the Samanid Salih Mansur ibn Nuh (961-976). Bal'ami's edition is not just a simple translation, but a revision of the work and, in some cases, enriched with new facts. The work contains information that is not found in the abridged edition, which is taken from the full copy of the author's work Tabari. The edition by Bal'ami was supplemented with new information based on other sources.

Some excerpts from Tabari's work have been translated into several European languages. Its complete French translation was published by G. Sotenberg in Paris in 1867-1874. The Uzbek translation of the work was made in 1882 by Muhammad Yusuf Bayani. There are also Persian and Turkic translations of the work, the authoritative manuscript copies of which are available in the libraries of Saint Petersburg and Tashkent. The full text of Bal'ami's edition was published in Lakhnav, Kanpur (1874, 1896, 1916) and Tehran (1962, 1967)³.

Muhammad Narshakhi's work "History of Bukhara" contains historical events of the 8th-12th centuries. This work contains various issues, including "The beginning of the conquest of Bukhara," "The reign of Qutayba ibn Muslim and the conquest of Bukhara, the division of Mawarannahr between the Arabs and the Persians," "The conquest of Bukhara and the spread of Islam there," "The construction of the mosque," "Eid prayer place," "The division of the city of Bukhara between the Arabs and the Persians," "The attack of Muqanna and his subjects in white robes"⁴ chapters directly

³ Насруллаев, Н. Манбашунослик асослари [Матн] : дарслик / Н. Насруллаев. - Тошкент: Navro'z, 2020. -202-207-б.

⁴

<https://n.ziyouz.com/books/tarixiy/Abu%20Bakr%20Narshaxiy.%20Buxoro%20tarixi.pdf>

describe the events related to the Arab invasion and its consequences, as well as the spread of Islam.

In the work "History of Bukhara," the situation of the people and the movement against Arab invaders (for example, the popular movement led by Muqanna) are condemned. The action of the local nobility against him is approved, but nevertheless, an objective account of historical events of the 7th–10th centuries elevates him to the level of a valuable source. Without this, it is difficult to assess the socio-economic and political situation of the peoples of Central Asia during the period of Arab rule, as well as the struggle of the broad masses against the invaders. The Persian text of this work was published in Paris, Bukhara, and Tehran in 1892, 1894, 1904, and 1939. The book was translated into Russian, English, and Uzbek (1897, 1954, 1966). There is no doubt that the "History of Bukhara" is a valuable source for modern historiography.

RESULTS. Researchers of the Soviet period on the history of Central Asia in the 10th–11th centuries, such as V. V. Barthold, V. I. Belyayev, E. V. A. Belyaev, A. A. Romaskevich, I. Yu. The works of Krachkovsky and B. Gafurov, as well as foreign historians such as H. Gib, K. Brockelmann, E. V. Zeymal, D. Sinor, K. Hoog, and other scholars⁵.

The early stage of development of regional historiography (7th–9th centuries) is characterized by the penetration of Islam and the formation of a common cultural space within the Arab Caliphate. During this period, historical works were primarily written in Arabic from a general Islamic perspective, interpreting the history of the peoples of Central Asia as an integral part of world history. Although the works of great authors such as Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari occupy a central place in the conquest of the region and the establishment of Islamic values, these works serve as a methodological model for local historiography of the later period.

In the 9th–12th centuries, during the period known as the "Eastern Renaissance," Central

Asian historiography acquired its own independent and analytical direction. The establishment of national statehood systems such as the Samanids, Karakhanids, and Ghaznavids posed new ideological tasks for historical science.

The socio-political changes that occurred in the Arab Caliphate and the formation of a unified Islamic state also influenced cultural life. Since this cultural upsurge encompassed the entire Arab Caliphate and the Near and Middle East, it was called the Eastern Renaissance. This Renaissance process began in the 9th century and continued until the 15th and 16th centuries. The Renaissance, which emerged in the Arab Caliphate in the 9th century, began in the cities of Baghdad, Damascus, and Aleppo and spread to the cultural life of all other peoples, which also prepared the ground for the cultural development of these states. The cultural development of the independent states formed during the decline of the Caliphate was a continuation of the cultural development of the Caliphate period. During the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid and his son al-Ma'mun, the "Bayt al-Hikma" (House of Wisdom) was established in Baghdad. This Academy will become a scientific center for scientists. He organized a library under him. The Academy developed further between 819 and 833. The academy had two observatories, and later a new library was built. This center of knowledge in Baghdad, in turn, influenced the development of science and the development of spiritual life in the East and West. In this regard, it is worth noting the patronage of Caliph al-Ma'mun in the development of science⁶.

CONCLUSION. Abu Bakr Narshakhi's "History of Bukhara" was a revolutionary step in this regard, as it was the first comprehensive study of the social, economic, and cultural landscape of a specific region. In his work, Narshakhi did not limit himself to the activities of political figures but also analyzed land ownership, the tax system, and the people's way of life. At the same time, the scientific-critical method introduced by Abu Rayhan Biruni into

⁵ Doniyorov A. X. Markaziy Osiyo xalqlari tarixshunosligi / Darslik. Toshkent: NIF MSH, 2020. 101-b.

⁶ Pedagogika tarixi: Darslik. Q.K.Hashimov, S.Nishonova. - T.:Alisher Navoiy nomidagi O'zbekiston Milliy kutubxonasi nashriyoti. 2005. 74-b.

historiography raised science to a new level. In his works "Monuments of Ancient Peoples" and "India," Biruni used mathematical calculations, astronomical data, and comparative-analytical approaches to determine historical truth. He rejected historical myths and raised the necessity of passing every piece of information through the filter of logic and experience to a conceptual level.

Abu Rayhan Biruni's work "Osor ul-boqiya" ("Remnants of Past Peoples") is particularly noteworthy in its information about the ancient culture of the local people. In his scientific articles, A. Khidirov demonstrates and provides a scientific analysis of the significant aspects of Biruni's historical activity. The author emphasizes that the role of Abu Rayhan Biruni in the history of the medieval East, the comparative study of his historical works "Al-asor ul-baqiya" and "India" with the historical works of Tabari, Narshakhi, Utbi and Bayhaqi plays an important role in finding a perfect solution to some issues⁷.

Mahmud Gardizi's work "Zayn al-Akhbar" also occupies an important place in the history of the 11th century. His full name was Abu Abulhay ibn Zahhak ibn Mahmud Gardizi, and he was born in the village of Gardiz, which was subordinate to Ghazni (Afghanistan) and was located on its eastern side. He is a scholar who has already gained fame in his time. This was due to his work "Zayn al-Akhbar." The book was completed between 1049 and 1050 and presented to the Ghaznavid Sultan Abdurashid (1049–1053).

The author of the book "Zayn al-Akhbar" ("The Decoration of Histories") is the prominent 11th-century historian Gardizi. "Zayn al-Akhbar" mainly tells about the events that took place in Khorasan from ancient times (from the time of the ancient Iranian kings who passed before Islam) until 1041, that is, between Sultan Mavdud (1041–1050) of the Ghaznavids and Sultan Muhammad (1030–1031, the second time 1041), that is, until the war in Dinovar in 1041. The work covers the history of Khorasan from

the Arab conquest to 1041 more extensively than other works.

In writing this work, Gardizi effectively used the following sources:

- 1) As-Sallomi's "Kitab fi axbor wolot-i Khorasan";
- 2) "Ajoyib al-Buldon" by Al-Jayhani;
- 3) The works of Ibn Muqaffa and Ibn Khalliqan.

The work "Zayn al-Akhbar" consists of chapters on the culture of the Rum (dar ma'rifat al-rumiyyan), religious rites and chronology of various peoples, the Turkic population of Mawarannahr, and India. The parts about the religious rituals of the peoples and India are based on the works of Abu Rayhan Beruni, and the part about the Turkic population is partially based on the works of Ibn Khurdadbeh, Jayhani and Ibn Muqaffa.

The work "Zayn al-Akhbar" plays an important role in studying the political history of Khorasan and Transoxiana from the Arab conquest to the mid-11th century.

The Persian text was published by Mirza Muhammad Qazvini (1937), Muhammad Nozim (1928), and Said Nafisi (1954). In 1969, a complete edition of the work was published in Tehran.

The chapter on Turkic peoples was published by V.V. Barthold in 1900.

The part of the book related to Uzbekistan was translated into Russian by A.K. Arends and published in 1991 by L.M. Epifanova in Tashkent⁸.

Although stagnation was observed in historiography during the period after the Mongol conquest (first half of the 13th–14th centuries), history reached its true zenith during the Timurid era (late 14th–15th centuries).

References used:

1. Doniyorov A. X. Markaziy Osiyo xalqlari tarixshunosligi / Darslik. Toshkent: NIF MSH, 2020. 101-b.
2. Насруллаев, Н. Манбашунослик асослари [Матн] : дарслик / Н.

⁷ Насруллаев, Н. Манбашунослик асослари [Матн] : дарслик / Н. Насруллаев. - Тошкент: Navro'z, 2020. -130-131-б.

⁸ Насруллаев, Н. Манбашунослик асослари [Матн] : дарслик / Н. Насруллаев. - Тошкент: Navro'z, 2020. -213-215-б.

-
- Насруллаев. - Тошкент: Navro'z, 2020. - 213-215-б.
3. Pedagogika tarixi: Darslik. Q.K.Hashimov, S.Nishonova. - T.:Alisher Navoiy nomidagi O'zbekiston Milliy kutubxonasi nashriyoti. 2005. 74-b.
 4. Otaxo'jayev A. Ilk o'rta asrlarda Markaziy Osiyo tarixi. - Toshkent: Universitet, 2005.
 5. Sharafiddin Ali Yazdiy. Zafarnoma. - Toshkent: G'afur G'ulom nomidagi nashriyot, 1997.
 6. Abdurazzoq Samarqandiy. Matla' us-sa'dayn va majma' ul-bahrayn. - Toshkent: O'zbekiston, 2008.
 7. <https://n.ziyouz.com/books/tarixiy/Abu%20Bakr%20Narshaxiy.%20Buxoro%20tarixi.pdf>