

## A NUMISMATIC "KING-LIST" OF THE TIMURIDS Robert C. Grossman

According to the Sumerian King-list, the eight kings "Before the Flood" ruled 241,200 years. The reign of the Timurids was of more modest duration; 156 years. It began with the enthronement of Timur in Samarqand in A.D. 1370 and ended after the Battle of Panipat in 1526, when Babur transferred the Timurid capital to Dehli, and created a new empire in India.

The Timurids offer no single line of succession. The descendants of Timur contended for royal power whenever and wherever an opportunity presented itself. As a result, there is an untidy and confusing overlapping of reigns both geographically and chronologically. Until now, no one has devised for the numismatist a simple but comprehensive system of arrangement that takes into consideration the realities of Timurid politics.

The first attempt to devise such a system was by Stanley Lane-Poole.<sup>1</sup> He designated as "The House of Timur" the nine principal rulers in Samarqand between A.H. 771 and 900. Four additional princes (increased to seven in a supplement) were relegated to the status of "Governors of Provinces". When he published *Mohammadan Dynasties*,<sup>2</sup> he again identified as "The Timurids" only those who reigned in Samarqand. Banished to an accompanying genealogical chart were several powerful monarchs, and other lesser, but not unimportant, independent Timurid princes.

Bosworth's more recent work, *The Islamic Dynasties*,<sup>3</sup> essentially followed Lane-Poole: nine rulers in Samarqand were listed first and referred to as "supreme". Categories were added for "Rulers in Khurasan after Ulugh Beg's death", which placed six Timurids in their correct geographical location, while omitting at least eight others; and "Rulers in western Persia and Iraq after Timur's death", which listed four Timurids, three of whom were, in fact, only provincial governors, while omitting at least three others who were independent.

Dr. Mitchiner in *The World of Islam*<sup>4</sup> provided the names of several additional princes, some of whom were independent rulers, some of whom were not. As his predecessors, he endowed the Samarqand succession with primacy, and assigned all other Timurids to provincial "sub-dynasties".

A principal defect in these approaches is that possession of Samarqand, in and of itself, did not confer legitimate pre-eminence over Timurid princes in other regions. Under Shah Rukh, for example, Herat was the capital of the Timurid Empire, and Ulugh Beg ruled in Samarqand as his vassal. After Shah Rukh's death, Ulugh Beg found control of Samarqand to be insufficient to deter the ambitions of his sons and nephews, each of whom felt equally entitled to rule. In the later Timurid period, when the sons of Abu Sa'id ruled in Samarqand, even their cousin Babur, who himself avidly sought the throne of Samarqand, acknowledged:

... there was in Timur Beg's territory ... no ruler so great as Sultan Husain Mirza, whether by his years, armed strength, or dominions ...<sup>5</sup>

Sultan Husain never ruled in Samarqand. While possession of Timur's capital and the burial site of many of his descendants conferred an abundant measure of prestige, it cannot be maintained that the rulers there were, by definition, supreme, or that those who reigned elsewhere were mere "provincial governors" or "sub-dynasts".

A more logical approach is suggested by Professor John E. Woods in his study of the Aqqoyunlu.<sup>6</sup> He states that in steppe-origin Turkish dynasties (such as the Aqqoyunlu and the Timurids) sovereignty is conceived of as a non-personal or group possession. Each male member theoretically has an equal claim to the common patrimony by virtue of his descent from "X", the founding ancestor. He calls this "The Dispensation of X".

In practice, this means that civil war is often the only means of establishing the right to rule among several equally entitled claimants. A member of the dynasty ("Y"), who, through superior virtue, fortune, or fire-power, finds himself in control of all or a portion of the common patrimony, is naturally likely to attempt to restrict the future allocation of territories and offices to his own descendants. Thus, in the next generation the opportunity to rule, and the prestige necessary to do so, will derive no longer by descent from "X" alone, but by descent from "X" through "Y", creating "The Dispensation of Y".

This king-list reflects the four principal Timurid dispensations; the "X" of Timur and the "Ys" of Shah Rukh, Sultan Abu Sa'id, and Sultan Husain.

Timur (no. 1) was the founding ancestor of the dynasty. His immediate dispensation extended to descendants of his only legitimate son Jehangir (d. 777), (nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5); to his son Miranshah and Miranshah's sons (nos. 6, 7, and 8); to descendants of his son Umar Shaikh (d. 796), (nos. 9, 10, and 11); and to his son Shah Rukh (no. 12). Except for the last named, none were able to establish or long maintain power for themselves.

Shah Rukh was the first great "Y". He extended his rule over most of Timur's domains. In the quarter century after his death, his descendants (nos. 13 through 22) were able to exploit the power of their offices and the prestige of their descent to establish several important kingdoms.

The second great "Y" was Sultan Abu Sa'id (no. 23). Although the sons of Miranshah had failed in the period 807-14 to consolidate their power, their nephew was eventually able to establish sole rule over the remaining Timurid realm. Only descendants of Sultan Abu Sa'id (nos. 24 through 33) ruled in Transoxiana after his death.

The third great "Y" was Sultan Husain (no. 34). After several false starts, this great-great-grandson of Timur, of the line of Umar Shaikh, took possession of Khorasan, and created a powerful and cultured state. Of his descendants (nos. 35 through 40) several revolted against him, and few survived him by more than a few years.

The names of over 330 Timurid princes are known. Nearly all who claimed sovereignty, and had the opportunity to practice it, exercised the right of *sikka*, or coinage. I have numbered all forty of those presently known either from my collection or from coins examined by Stephen Album, and have listed with an asterisk three others who, according to Stephen Album, are likely to have struck coins. Others may have done so, but to suggest names would be speculative. Some of the rulers on this list appear on the basis of only one or two specimens known (nos. 4, 27, 32, 37, 38, and 40), and of these, several are recent discoveries. Chronological and geographical information is provided as a guide for the numismatist, and is not comprehensive.

The princes' names as written on the list are more complete than will be found on the coins themselves. In most cases the coins will show only the first of the names (e.g. "Sultan Abu Sa'id"). Where there is an exception (e.g. Muhammad Muhsin) I have added the numismatic name in parenthesis ("Kibek Khan"). Please note that "sultan" is written only when it is part of the ruler's actual name, as distinct from a title of rank or royal power. Verification of the proper form of these names has been provided by Dr. Woods, who gave me the opportunity to examine a photocopy of the massive Timurid genealogy, now located in Istanbul, prepared for Shah Rukh and up-dated by Badi' al-Zaman.

This work could not have been prepared without the generous help of Stephen Album, John Woods, and Michael Bates of the A.N.S.

#### Notes:

1. Lane-Poole, Stanley, *The Coinage of Bukhara (Transoxiana) in the British Museum*. British Museum, London, 1882., pp. 3, 44-52 and *Additions to the Oriental Collections 1876-1885*. London, 1890, pp. 156-63.
2. Lane-Poole, Stanley, *The Mohammadan Dynasties*, IAD Oriental Series No. 47. Dehli, 1977 (1893), p. 268.
3. Bosworth, C. E., *The Islamic Dynasties*. The University Press, Edinburgh, 1967, p.165.
4. Mitchiner, Michael, *Oriental Coins and Their Values: The World of Islam*. Hawkins Publications, London, 1975, p.276.
5. Beveridge, Annette S., trans., *Babur-nana (Memoirs of Babur)*, vol. I, Sange-Meel Publications, Lahore, 1975, p.191.
6. Woods, John E., *The Aqqoyunlu, Clan, Confederation, Empire*. Bibliotheca Islamica. Minneapolis & Chicago, 1976, pp. 13-16.

## TĪMŪR 771 - 807

1. TĪMŪR (736-807): From 771 in Transoxiana; 772-82 conquest of Khwarizm; 782-83 conquest of Khorasan; 784-86 conquest of Gurgan, Mazandaran, Sistan; 785 conquest of Qandahar; 788-89 conquest and 795-97 reconquest of Luristan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Jibal, Fars, Kirman; 795-97, 803-04, and 806-07 campaigns in Iraq 'Arabi; 801 campaign in northern India; 803-07 campaigns in Anatolia. Citing as his nominal Mongol overlords Suyūrghātmish from 771-90 and Maḥmūd from 790-807 (although he died in 805); alone on local AE coins; and cited alone or as overlord on certain Isfendiariid, Ottoman, Karamanid, and Germiyan issues 803-08.

### The Dispensation of Timur: rivals of Shah Rukh 803 - 817

2. MUḤAMMAD SULṬĀN B. JIHĀNGĪR B. TĪMŪR (777-805): Cited as Wali 'Ahd 803-07 (although he died in 805) with Timur and Mahmud.
3. PĪR MUḤAMMAD B. JIHĀNGĪR B. TĪMŪR (778-809): 805-07 as Wali 'Ahd; 807-09 in Kabul, Qandahar, Balkh.
4. QAIDU B. PĪR MUḤAMMAD B. JIHĀNGĪR B. TĪMŪR: (c.799-821): 809-12 in Balkh.
5. MUḤAMMAD JIHĀNGĪR B. MUḤAMMAD SULṬĀN B. JIHĀNGĪR. B. TĪMŪR (799-836): Cited as "Khan" or nominal overlord on coins of Khalil Sultan b. Miranshah.
6. KHALĪL SULṬĀN B. MĪRĀNSHĀH B. TĪMŪR (784-814): 807-11 in Transoxiana.
- \* MUḤAMMAD 'UMAR B. MĪRĀNSHĀH B. TĪMŪR (c.785-809): c.808 in Mazandaran, Iraq.
7. ABŪ BAKR B. MĪRĀNSHĀH B. TĪMŪR (c.784-810): 808 and 809 in Azerbaijan; 808 campaign against Isfahan.
8. MĪRĀNSHĀH B. TĪMŪR (c.768-810): Cited as nominal overlord on coins of Abu Bakr b. Miranshah.
9. PĪR MUḤAMMAD B. 'UMAR SHAIKH B. TĪMŪR (c.781-812): 807-12 in Fars, as nominal vassal of Shah Rukh.
10. RUSTAM B. 'UMAR SHAIKH B. TĪMŪR (783-828): 807-12 in southern Jibal, as nominal vassal of Shah Rukh.
11. ISKANDAR B. 'UMAR SHAIKH B. TĪMŪR (786-818): 815-17 in Fars; 816-17 in Jibal, Mazandaran, as nominal vassal of Shah Rukh 815-16, independent thereafter.

## SHĀH RUKH 807 - 850

12. SHĀH RUKH B. TĪMŪR (779-850): From 807 in Khorasan; from 809 in Gurgan, Mazandaran; from 810 in Sistan; from 811 in Transoxiana; from 817 in Fars, Jibal; from 819 in Kirman; 823-24, 832-35, and 839-50 in Azerbaijan.

### The Dispensation of Shah Rukh 849 - 875

13. SULṬĀN MUḤAMMAD B. BAISONGHUR B. SHĀH RUKH (821-855): 849-50 rebel in eastern Jibal; from 851 in Fars, eastern Jibal; 853-55 in Khorasan, Mazandaran.
14. ABU'L-QĀSIM BĀBUR B. BAISONGHUR B. SHĀH RUKH (827-861): From 851 in Khorasan, Gurgan, Mazandaran; 855-56 in Fars, eastern Jibal; 858 campaign in Transoxiana.
15. 'ALĀ AL-DAULA B. BAISONGHUR B. SHĀH RUKH (820-865): 851-53, 862-63 in Khorasan.
16. ABŪ BAKR B. MUḤAMMAD JUKI B. SHĀH RUKH (831-852): 851-52 in Balkh.
17. ULUGH BEG B. SHĀH RUKH (796-853): 851-53 in Transoxiana, Khorasan.
18. 'ABD AL-LAṬĪF B. ULUGH BEG B. SHĀH RUKH (830-854): 853-54 in Transoxiana.
19. SULṬĀN 'ABDALLAH B. IBRĀHĪM SULṬĀN B. SHĀH RUKH (836-855): 854-55 in Transoxiana.
20. SHĀH MAḤMŪD B. ABU'L-QĀSIM BĀBUR B. BAISONGHUR B. SHĀH RUKH (852-863): 861-62 in Khorasan.
21. SULṬĀN IBRĀHĪM B. 'ALĀ AL-DAULA B. BAISONGHUR B. SHĀH RUKH (843-863): 861-63 in Khorasan.
22. YĀDKĀR MUḤAMMAD B. SULṬĀN MUḤAMMAD B. BAISONGHUR B. SHĀH RUKH (855/6-875): 872-75 in Azerbaijan; 874-75 in Khorasan.

### SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD 854 - 873

23. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD B. SULTĀN MUḤAMMAD B. MĪRĀNSHĀH B. TĪMŪR (c.828-873): From 854 in Turkestan; from 855 in Transoxiana; 861, 863-73 in Khorasan; from 864 in Mazandaran; 872-73 in Fars, Jibal, Gilan.

#### The Dispensation of Sultan Abu Sa'id 873 - 932

24. SULTĀN AḤMED B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD (855-899): From 873 in Transoxiana.
25. SULTĀN MAḤMŪD B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD (857-900): From 873 in Badakhshan; 899-900 in Transoxiana.
26. ULUGH BEG "KĀBULĪ" B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD ( -907): From 873 in Kabul, Qandahar.
- \* 'UMAR SHAIKH B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD (860-899): From 873 in Uzkand, Ferghana.
27. ABŪ BAKR B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD ( -884): Rebel against Ulugh Beg Kabuli in Kabul region and against Sultan Husain in Badakhshan.
28. SHĀH RUKH B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD ( -897/8): 896-97 in Gilan (vassal of Mirza Kiya Ali, Husainid rebel against the Aq Qoyunlu Rustam).
29. BAISONGHUR B. SULTĀN MAḤMŪD B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD (882-905): 900-02 in Transoxiana; 903-05 in Hisar.
30. SULTĀN MAS'ŪD B. SULTĀN MAḤMŪD B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD ( -906): From 901 in Transoxiana.
31. SULTĀN 'ALĪ B. SULTĀN MAḤMŪD B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD ( -906): From 901 in Transoxiana.
32. SULTĀN UWAIŠ ("KHĀN MIRZA") B. SULTĀN MAḤMŪD B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD ( -927): From 913 in Badakhshan (vassal of Babur).
33. BĀBUR B. 'UMAR SHAIKH B. SULTĀN ABŪ SA'ĪD (888-937): 899-903, 904-06 in Ferghana; 903, 906, 917-18 in Transoxiana; 910-12 and from 913 in Badakhshan; from 910 in Kabul, Ghazni; 913 and from 928 in Qandahar.

### SULTĀN ḤUSAIN 863 - 911

34. SULTĀN ḤUSAIN B. MANŠŪR B. BAIQARA B. 'UMAR SHAIKH B. TĪMŪR (842-911): 863-64, 866-68 in Gurgan, Mazandaran; 873-74, 875-911 in Khorasan, Khwarizm, Badakhshan, Mazandaran, Sistan, northern Jibal.

#### The Dispensation of Sultan Husain 902 - 922

35. MUḤAMMAD ḤUSAIN B. SULTĀN ḤUSAIN ( -907): 903-07 rebel in Astarabad.
36. MUḤAMMAD MUḤSIN ("KIBEK KHĀN") B. SULTĀN ḤUSAIN ( -913): c.904 rebel; 911-13 in Meshed region.
37. FARĪDŪN ḤUSAIN B. SULTĀN ḤUSAIN ( -915): 911-12 in Astarabad.
- \* IBN ḤUSAIN B. SULTĀN ḤUSAIN ( -919): Rebel in Merv.
38. MUZAFAR ḤUSAIN B. SULTĀN ḤUSAIN ( -913/14): 911-13 in Khorasan as co-ruler with Badi al Zaman.
39. BADĪ' AL-ZAMĀN B. SULTĀN ḤUSAIN ( -923): 902-03 rebel in Balkh; 911-13 in Khorasan as co-ruler with Muzafar Husain, and possibly alone in 913.
40. MUḤAMMAD ZAMĀN B. BADĪ' AL-ZAMĀN B. SULTĀN ḤUSAIN (902-946): 913-14(?) and c.919-22 in Astarabad.