

## **A coverage of the activities of the Mangitic Emirs in the works of Ahmad Donish**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Ahmad Donish was a versatile scholar who lived and worked in the second half of the 19th century. He carried out research in all disciplines of his time, transmitted ideas of enlightenment to the next generation and left a rich scientific legacy. Along with his philosophical, natural and ethical views, Ahmad Donish paid particular attention to historiography during the last years of his career. The article analyses his work "Histories of the mangitic dynasty" which demonstrates his historiographical abilities, the level of his study, his personal and at the same time critical views of the historian on the reign of the Mangit rulers.*

*Keywords: Amir Temur, Ahmad Donish, ruler, reformer, Mangit rulers, millennial reformer, tax collector, historian, judge.*

### **Introduction**

To date, research has shown that Ahmad Donish's *A Brief History of the Risola*, or a "*Brief History of the Mangitic Emirs of Bukhara*") became known to history much later than its creation. However, it should be noted that the work is quite familiar to a narrow circle of the author's contemporaries. Although this treatise is not mentioned in the scholarly heritage of S. Aini, Sadish Ziyov's large work "*Ro'znoma*", in which his close colleagues "*Navodirul wakoe*" and "*Me'yor ul tadoyun*" are written, represents a brief analysis of Donish's work history "[20]. According to the tradition established by Donish in the house of Sadr Zia, three days a week - on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays - the urban intellectuals and enlighteners would meet for various discussions. Not only the leading educators of their time, but also members of the younger generation took an active part in the circles [11; 14]. This means that the enlighteners in this house were well aware of the contents of the Risala.

Abdurauf Fitrat, who took part in such educational circles, paved the way for future research. In particular, in the last part of his pamphlet "*The rule of Amir Alimkhan*", written in 1930 at the request of Tajik State Publishing House, he described the "*Risola*" of Ahmad Mahdum about Mangit emirs of Bukhara and gave brief information about the work [23; 53-55]. Later, orientalist E. Bertels requested a copy of the brochure from Fitrat and published the manuscript in 1936 [10; 12].

In 1946, S. Ulugzoda summarized the contents of the pamphlet [22]. When the scientific community became acquainted with Donish's brochure, careful research led to the discovery of several manuscripts of this work. One of them was copied in 1933 by calligrapher Ibodullo Adilov (died 1944).

In 1959, the first edition of the work in Tajik was published by R. Khodzod [7], and in 1960, A. Mirzayev published a complete critical text in Arabic script, based on one of the manuscripts with a number of abbreviations, based on five existing manuscripts [8]. The

second edition contained more text and new and interesting material than the first. For example, in the preface the translator tries to describe the author as a historian and literally achieves this.

In 1960, M. N. Osmanov published the first Russian translation of the "Brief History of Bukhara Mangit Emirs" in the co-authored translation "Journey from Bukhara to St. Petersburg" [1; 33-122]. Source I.A. In 1967, Najafova published a translation titled "The History of the Mangit Kingdom" with a complete introduction and commentary. It should be noted that this translation served as the basis for works published in recent years [3, 6].

In 2014, as a result of many years of work, the translator, Dr. K. Yuldashev, gave researchers the opportunity to read this unique work in Uzbek. Although the translator encountered difficulties due to the considerable complexity of the work's language and the large number of complex elements characteristic of Arabic and Persian, I.A. was able to express some sentences more smoothly. By all accounts, Najafova's translation was very useful.

The title "*Risola, or a Brief History of the Mangitic Emirs of Bukhara*" is provisional. E.E. Bertels calls it "*Biography of the Holy Emirs of Bukhara*" and explains that the work is named after the author's death, but he simply called it "*Risola*". Later, R. Hodizoda suggests calling the work a "*historical-critical treatise*".

In his preface to the 1960 edition, A. Mirzayev notes that in none of the five manuscripts at his disposal the author named the work, but the conventional titles were given by the calligraphers. It is noted that some calligraphers copied it under the title "*Kichik tarikh*" or "*Safarnoma*" and others under the title "*Biography of the Emirs of Bukhara*". A. Mirzoev, critically comparing five available manuscripts, stops at the title "*Risola, or brief history of Bukhara emirs*" [8; 5].

The date of the work is as uncertain as its title. None of the manuscripts mentions the date of its completion. However, based on the content and description of historical events, it is clear that the work was written in the last years of the author's life - 1895-1897 [2; 6]. From the fact that the work does not have a specific title and no date of its writing is recorded, we can conclude that, in our opinion, the author wanted to continue this rare work and enrich it even more.

### **Main part**

"*Risola*", a valuable and interesting historical work of the late 19th century, cannot be compared with any other work of the time in terms of richness of content. The work can therefore be divided into two parts, which are conventionally different in size and importance:

*In the first part*, the author recounts events that can only be read or heard from written sources. It describes the last years of Amir Daniel's reign and the reign of the three emirs, Shah Murad, Haydar and Nasrullah.

*In the second part*, the author describes the events he witnessed, particularly the details of some historical events that were directly witnessed during the rule of Amir Muzaffar (1860–1885) and Amir Abdullah (1885–1910) of the Mangit dynasty [4].

Unfortunately, Donish does not quote the historical events he cites. Only two historical works are mentioned in the entire treatise, "*Tuzuki Temurii*" and "*Ravzat-us Safo*", enriched with new nineteenth-century information. It should be noted that the former was of interest to him as a work of searching for a model ruler.

I.A.Najafova told about historical sources on the history of Mangits, where Donish were analyzed, which may be used by different authors in early and mid 19th century with "*Risola*", and confidently cites several sources. In his opinion, Donish cited a number of credible historical sources when writing the first part of this work [2; 6-9].

Ahmad Donish, of course, wrote in simple yet sharply critical language [15] in his first part of "*A Brief History of the Risale-i Mangit Dynasty*" without referring to the rich scholarly heritage of his time. He had ample opportunity to do so. In particular, in addition to the sources cited when he wrote the treatise, he also referred to oral history. The histories of traditional historiography organized at in "*Poyi Kalon*" and "*Devonbegi Labi hovuz*", the centre of Bukhara, served as a living source for him. Donish was also greatly aided by the rare sources preserved in the library of Jafarhodja.

The "*Risola*" consists of an introduction and 7 chapters describing almost 150 years of history of the Mangit dynasty, which ruled Bukhara. The author describes the events of the early years of the Mangi Emirs in a strict chronological sequence. The first representative of the Mangit dynasty, Muhammad Rahimkhan, did not give any information about his reign. Of course, it is far from true that Donish knows nothing about the period of his reign. However, there are certain reasons for this. In our opinion, the arrival at the top of Bukhara Khanate of Muhammad Rahimkhan, the first representative of the Mangit dynasty, may not have pleased the excellent author and he did not consider it necessary to start his treatise during his reign.

In his introduction, A. Donish tries to find an answer based on Islamic religion and astronomical interpretations of the factors that lead to a country's development or decline. Focusing on the importance of the reformer's role in the sustainable development of the world, the man said: "Progress and destruction will continue for a thousand years, affecting the world and its people. Throughout the millennia and centuries of world history, pious and devout people have revived it as gifted kings and encyclopaedic scholars, known as "*Mujaddidi Alf*" (millennial innovator) and "*Mujaddidi Mia*" (century, i.e. hundred-year innovator). Undoubtedly, development comes at the expense of mature scholars of all nations"[4; 12], he writes.

Stressing that it is not important to assign millenniums and centenarian Mujaddids, if one is familiar with Tuzuki Temuri, one should be sure that Amir Temur Kuraghani was a Mujaddid of the eighth century Hijra and then Mujaddids came from all over the Islamic world such as Sultan Hussain (Mirza) in Herat, around the ninth mia (century) of Boykaro; Amir Abdullah Khan in Bukhara in the early millennium; Subhankulikhan in the millennium; in the year one thousand two hundred Hazrat Amir Masum, i.e. Amir Shah Murad; In the countries of the Movarounnahr region, modern *mutabahir* (encyclopaedic scholars) studied with these Mujaddids simultaneously; so similar kings and scholarly Mujaddids appeared in the rest of the Islamic world; including Abrangzeb, Shah Jahan and, of course, the great scholars of their time in India [4; 17].

While creating "*Risola*", Donish has set specific goals for himself. He explains that he is to create a programme for the princes of Mangit, to guide them in the pursuit of good deeds, to warn them to refrain from things that might harm their kingdom, and to establish the Emirate's rule in accordance with time and space. The scholar bequeaths to the next generation that the work will be accepted as a criterion of justice and quality, and that they will prosper their religion and the world, and thus achieve a prosperous future [3; 8].

The main part of the work begins with a chapter entitled "*The destruction of the Emirate*

*under Amir Daniel and the reign of Amir Shah Murad*". Amir Daniel (1758–1785) gave a brief description of Amir Daniel's reign: "During the reign of Amir Daniel, the capital city of the Bukhara Emirate underwent a terrible change in the life of the nation: classes were prohibited in most madrassas, and prayers were prohibited in most madrassas. The Mangits told the story of everything. Drunkenness, gambling and financial corruption were rampant among emirs and governors. Citizens and citizens could not breathe freely because of increasing harassment, taxes and the cost of marriage training. The Emir knew no justice and no violence "[2; 27].

Indeed, during the reign of Amir Daniel, the capital became an open arena of conflict between religion and state affairs. Great tribal uprisings against the central government were in full swing and the social, political and economic situation of the country deteriorated.

The information about Amir Shah Murad (1785–1800), the third representative of the Mangit dynasty, is noteworthy. His views on the nobility, personal qualities, ability to govern, internal and foreign policy, the pros and cons of his activities and his efforts to strengthen the state, prosperity and development of the country are significant among the nobility and the common people. According to Donish, Amir Shah Murad's administrative reforms began with his removal of Davlatmand Koshbegi and Nizamiddin Kazikalon from office.

Donish praises the work of Amir Shah Murad and tries to set an example for rulers. "In the Islamic era, Amir Masoom (Arabic: pure, clean, sinless, patient) was not a Mujadid like Shah Murad. He should be called the Second Umar. Hence, we see that the virtues and qualities that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Aziz did not have were present in Amir Masum Shah Murad. He was Farooq (the second of the four caliphs who succeeded the Prophet (pbuh) after the Prophet (pbuh) and had the perfection of Solomon.

Amir Shah Murad, intolerant of oppression and injustice by nature, focused on science, reduced non-Shariat taxes, showed justice, listened to people in the courtyard near the Bukhara Tower and overcame a shortage of troops during his march on Iran. ... a few odd praise stories are also valuable.

According to the play, Shah Murad was as unprincipled as Sayyid Mir Nizamiddin of Bukhara (*Qaziy al-Quzzat*) and Davlatbi of Bukhara (who had been in that position since the time of Muhammad Rahim Khan, founder of the Mangit dynasty, but was in fact an Iranian slave) executed officials in 1785 for violating Sharia law and being under Iranian (*Shia*) influence and oppressing common people [18; 119].

Other sources on the history of the Emirs of Mangit also praise the virtues of Masum Shah Murad. In particular, S. Aini said: "Amir Shah Murad was one of the fairest and best kings of Bukhara. He disciplined and stabilized the country in which he was a parishioner"[9; 17], he writes. Historian Mirza Sami said: "During his reign all heresies were abolished and the Sunnah of Rasool was revived. He strengthened the Shariah, restored neglected foundations and rebuilt mosques, shrines and madrassas,"[16; 52] he reports.

Although Amir Haydar (1800–1825), titled "*Amir al-Mu'minin*" in the second chapter of "*Some Events during the Reign of Amir Haydar*", was prone to good deeds, most rulers during his reign were opposed and hostile to him because of the description. Bukhara's efforts to eradicate the growing corruption among subordinate peoples, and the opportunity to hold scholarly discussions with scholars should not be missed. "No one in history remembers such a form of government," he said. News of this spread throughout the Islamic world and people from different places started coming to Bukhara to study. In Bukhara the religious sciences

and the norms of Shariah are so well developed that in the time of Islam scholars had never been so successful in any other kingdom "[4; 29-30], writes Donish. Indeed, if we look at a more comprehensive source on the period of Amir Haydar's rule, it becomes clear that he focused mainly on resolving internal conflicts in the country [17].

The third chapter, *'The Death of Amir Haydar and the Reign of Amir Husayn and Amir Umar'*, briefly describes Amir Husayn (6 October 1826 - 10 December 1826) who was well versed in poetry, chemistry and medicine and sat on the throne for only two months and four days. Amir Umar (December 23, 1826 - March 1827), who ascended the throne less than four months later, was a man of natural viciousness who did not live long and was unaware that his brother Nasrullah had arrived from Samarqand and besieged Bukhara. as a result, women were sentenced to leave Ark fortress in their veils [4; 32].

According to the fourth chapter titled *"The era of Amir Nasrullah and his statehood"*, Nasrullah (1827-1860) was a tyrant, resolute, ruthless and enterprising king. During his reign he severely punished those who colluded between the people and the nation. He paid many compliments to his supporters. Focusing on the advancement of religion and science, he followed the principles of Shariah. Appointment of officials was based on their genealogy. The consumption of alcoholic beverages, forbidden by Shariah, was restricted. Under him Bukhara state was centralized and the entire country from Kokand to Kesh (*Shakhrisabz*) was subordinated to him [1; 41-42].

Donish's comments about Amir Nasrullah, who firmly adhered to the ideas of justice and the principle of impartiality in his historical work, make today's reader ponder deeply. As many consider his views to be "cruel and ruthless" and are still evaluating, the various attributes inherent in him and the chicken still play a key role in the study and understanding of Amir Nasrullah's personality [19].

However, Donish does not support Amir Nasrullah's policies. On the contrary, while condemning the decline of religious and state affairs after his time (1835), he gives the following reasons: the property of soldiers was confiscated; tax collectors were reluctant to use force on the public to replenish the treasury; and scholars were required to issue *fatwas* on unpublished works [4; 34].

Ahmad Donish devotes two-thirds of the treatise to details of the Amir Muzaffar Khan period (1860–1885), which he witnessed first-hand. According to the fifth chapter of the work *"Some events during the rule of Amir Muzaffar, his way of life, ways of ruling the country"*, Amir Nasrullah had no intention of giving the throne to his only son Muzaffar. Because he had noticed the cruelty and selfishness in his son's character. So he appointed one of his grandsons to the throne. However, after his death he was brought to the capital from Karman, because he was in the majority in favour of his son's accession to the throne [4; 35]. During the first years of his reign, relying on the state inherited from his father, Hissar and Khokand occupied some territories, but after two or three victories Emir discovered zeal of Pharaoh and did not recognize anybody but himself in the world. Depending on the adaptation is criticised [4; 36].

Focusing on the rule of Amir Muzaffar (1860–1885), he mainly tries to find answers to the details of his personality and his fight against the Russian Empire, as well as the reasons for his defeat. He wrote that the appointed commanders, who had never fought in their lives, were ruthless, zealous and ignorant. It was natural that any soldier who knew that his family was not guaranteed provision when he died in combat did not show courage. The cause of this

chaos was the Emir's army, made up of school slaves who were ashamed to serve them. Another reason for the soldiers' confusion was that they did not know the state of the enemy [4; 45-46]. Even Amir Muzaffar thought that "the capital of the empire, St. Petersburg, could be captured" because he did not have enough information about the enemy, but he did not understand that he could not go beyond two farces [4; 43].

As a result of the unrest during the time of Donish Amir Muzaffar "Amir Temur became famous in the quarter of the world for his courage and bravery, while the emirs of Bukhara discredited their names by rudeness, reluctance and cowardice" [4; 72], - concludes.

The "Risola" also mentions the mistakes made in the country's foreign policy during the rule of Amir Muzaffar. He noted that the Emir's officials failed to adequately protect the country's interests and did not even implement the task assigned to them. Using various examples from life, the author also exposes the lawlessness of the population of his time, various tricks in the market, the fact that property rights are not guaranteed under Shariah law [4; 74].

Donish also stresses the problem of water, which is essential to the prosperity of the country and the well-being of its citizens. Employing workers to clean canals, demanding bribes from mirabs before the water has even arrived and, ultimately, the lack of water is criticised as unjustified. When it comes to socio-economic problems, it is difficult to understand the fact that all fertile lands were seized by the sultan and even if someone wanted to start a family, he would inform the palace about it [4; 77].

The sixth chapter of the treatise "*The Time of the Emir*" describes the daily routine of the Amir and its qualities. After the evening prayer, the Emir spends time with a dance group, sleeps until ten in the morning, then stares in the mirror for half an hour, ignores the complaints of the townspeople, indulges in drunkenness and sexuality, and travels unnecessarily. This is categorically condemned. going out and making the fields unusable, spending the day and night aimlessly [4; 87-94]. In general it is unfortunate that during the time of Amir Muzaffar Islam was completely weakened, the Shariah was trampled, heresy was growing, there was no control over the markets, and posts were occupied by inferiors, slaves and incompetent people. In this chapter the historian also describes the visits of Bukhara Emir's ambassadors to Russia, the failures of this mission and their reasons, and the current issues of water supply in Bukhara.

The last chapter of the treatise is titled "*Order in the Emirate and Some Events during the Reign of Amir Abdullah*". Donish praises the construction of the railway at Kagan at the foot of Mamajugroth (Karavulbozor) hills, as well as the construction of several factories and businesses imported from Russia, the expansion of churches and the gathering of new Russians. However, Bukhara regretted its complete dependence on Russia [4; 124]. Nevertheless, Amir Abdullah Khan (1885–1910) is seen as a ruler capable of bringing significant changes to the country. On the eve of his first visit to Russia, he will present a reform that will serve to increase the country's capacity and he hopes that this reform will be implemented. However, the Emir is well aware that no reform will be welcomed because no consultative procedure (Council) has been introduced.

The booklet also contains important information for the country's development that is not found in other related works and is at the same time put forward by the author. In particular,

- A proposed comprehensive economic programme for improving the welfare of the people and reforming the country's economy;
- Impressions of the historian's visits to Russia;
- Details of some events related to Russian-Bukhari relations in the second half of the 19th century;
- Project on improvement of water supply in Bukhara and nearby oases;
- The issues of development of the country's minerals and improvement of people's life with their help;
- The image of popular spectacles, which in turn present the problems of society in markets that are ironic;
- Information on the Chinese Kipchak rebellion;
- The author's conclusions on the situation in the Emirate of Bukhara.

Some of the thoughts and comments expressed by Ahmad Donish in his treatise also reveal a partial ignorance of the original historical reality. In particular, he writes that he had no information about the status of the Emirate prior to the Russian Empire's invasion of the provinces of the Emirate of Bukhara. For this reason, they are aware of the power of Timur's empire and the Uzbek army that shook the world four centuries ago, and they agree to make peace for fear of great damage because they retain their fame and position [4; 43]. Of course, that assumption is far from the truth. After all, for several years the Russian Empire had sufficient information about Central Asia, including the Emirate of Bukhara, by sending expeditionary missions consisting of special spies and embassy staff.

### **Conclusion**

In short, Ahmad Donish, as a historian, rejected traditional historiography compared to many of his predecessors and contemporaries in his work "The History of Risola or Mangit Amirs". Historical works of that period tended to be written in accordance with the requirements of official historiography, and the economic and political situation of the country was described without analysis or even the slightest criticism. Donish, on the other hand, emerged as a historian who felt involved in the life of his country and was not indifferent to it. In his work he found the courage to speak sharply, ruthlessly and at the same time freely about the history of the reign of the Mangitic Emirs. What gives the historian a special place among other historians and contemporaries is that he firmly believed in the inevitability of the collapse of the dynasty. As a result, history itself witnessed and the prophecy came true. In this work, Ahmad Donish not only portrayed himself as a critic of the regime of his time, but he also sought ways to reform the country, which was in increasing decline, and put forward his socio-economic and political proposals. The above considerations can be seen as a primary source and an objective source to illuminate the history of the Mangitic Emirs, raising the scientific level of the work. It should also be noted that a number of important information presented in the play helps to clarify many historical events.

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