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KHWANDAMIR'S "MAOSIR AL-MULUK" AS A SOURCE FOR THE HISTORICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF URBAN PLANNING CULTURE AND THE WAQF SYSTEM IN THE TIMURID PERIOD

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ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: Khwandamir, "Maosir al-muluk", Timurid urbanism, waqf, soyurghal, tarkhan, Samarkand, Herat, comparative source criticism.

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Abstract: This article examines Giyasiddin Khwandamir's "Maosir al-muluk" (composed c. 905/1499-1500) as a source for reconstructing the urban planning culture and waqf institutions of the Timurid state (771-911/1370-1506). The work is analyzed through the source-studies (manbashunoslik) method of comparative-historical criticism, placing Khwandamir's testimony in dialogue with a corpus of roughly twenty Timurid-era and pre-Timurid chronicles, diplomatic accounts, and surviving legal deeds (waqfnamahs), as well as with the modern Turkish, Central Asian, and Western historiographical traditions that have engaged this material. The analysis addresses three interlocking themes: the spatial-architectural typology of Timurid Samarkand and Herat, the legal-economic anatomy of the waqf system, including its administrative personnel and its dialectical relationship with soyurghal and tarkhan land grants, and the agrarian-hydraulic infrastructure that sustained both cities. The results indicate that "Maosir al-muluk" functions not as an ordinary court chronicle but as an institutional and juridical synthesis that bridges the more rhetorical narrative accounts (Yazdi, Ibn Arabshah,

Clavijo) and the archival record. The discussion situates these findings within the broader historiography and concludes that Khwandamir's treatise remains an indispensable, if not independently sufficient, source that requires triangulation against archival waqfnamahs and comparative chronicles for empirical verification.

TEMURIYLAR DAVRI SHAHARSOZLIK MADANIYATI VA VAQF TIZIMINI TARIXIY REKONSTRUKSIYA QILISHDA XONDAMIRNING "MAOSIR AL-MULUK" ASARINING MANBA SIFATIDAGI AHAMIYATI

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MAQOLA HAQIDA

Kalit so'zlar: Xondamir, "Maosir al-muluk", temuriylar davri shaharsozligi, vaqf, suyurg'ol, tarxon, Samarqand, Hirot, qiyosiy manbashunoslik tahlili.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada G'iyosiddin Xondamirning "Maosir al-muluk" (taxminan 905/1499–1500-yillarda yozilgan) asari temuriylar davri (771–911/1370–1506) shaharsozlik madaniyati va vaqf institutlarini rekonstruksiya qilishda manba sifatida o'rganiladi. Asar manbashunoslikning qiyosiy-tarixiy tanqid metodi asosida tahlil qilinib, Xondamir ma'lumotlari temuriylar davri va undan oldingi davrga oid yigirmaga yaqin solnoma, diplomatik hisobot va saqlanib qolgan huquqiy hujjatlar (vaqfnomalar), shuningdek, ushbu materialni o'rgangan zamonaviy turk, O'rta Osiyo va g'arb tarixshunosligi an'analari bilan qiyoslanadi. Tahlil uch o'zaro bog'liq mavzuni qamrab oladi: temuriylar davri Samarqand va Hirotining fazoviy-me'moriy tipologiyasi; vaqf tizimining huquqiy-iqtisodiy asoslari, jumladan, uning ma'muriy xodimlari hamda suyurg'ol va tarxon yer mulklari bilan dialektik aloqasi; ikkala shaharni ta'minlagan agrar-gidravlik infratuzilma. Natijalar "Maosir al-muluk" oddiy saroy solnomasi emas, balki ritorik xarakterdagi rivoyaviy manbalar (Yazdiy, Ibn Arabshoh, Klavixo) bilan arxiv hujjatlarini o'zaro bog'lovchi institutsional-huquqiy sintez ekanini ko'rsatadi. Xulosada Xondamir asari o'rnini bosib bo'lmaydigan, biroq yakka o'zi yetarli bo'lmagan manba

ekani, uning ma’lumotlari vaqfnomalar va qiyosiy solnomalar bilan taqqoslab tekshirilishi zarurligi asoslanadi.

«МААСИР АЛ-МУЛУК» ХАНДЕМИРА КАК ИСТОЧНИК ДЛЯ ИСТОРИЧЕСКОЙ РЕКОНСТРУКЦИИ КУЛЬТУРЫ ГРАДОСТРОИТЕЛЬСТВА И СИСТЕМЫ ВАКФ В ТИМУРИДСКИЙ ПЕРИОД

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О СТАТЬЕ

Ключевые слова: Хандемир, «Маасир ал-мулук», тимуридский урбанизм, вакф, суюргал, тархан, Самарканд, Герат, сравнительная источниковедческая критика.

Аннотация: В данной статье рассматривается сочинение Гиясаддина Хандемира «Маасир ал-мулук» (составленное ок. 905/1499-1500 гг.) в качестве источника для реконструкции градостроительной культуры и институтов вакфа Тимуридского государства (771-911/1370-1506 гг.). Работа анализируется с помощью источниковедческого метода сравнительно-исторической критики, сопоставляя свидетельства Хандемира с корпусом примерно из двадцати хроник тимуридского и дотимуридского периодов, дипломатических отчетов и сохранившихся юридических актов (вакфнаме), а также с современной турецкой, среднеазиатской и западной историографическими традициями, исследовавшими этот материал. Анализ затрагивает три взаимосвязанные темы: пространственно-архитектурную типологию тимуридских Самарканда и Герата, правово-экономическую анатомию системы вакфа, включая ее административный персонал и диалектическую взаимосвязь с земельными пожалованиями суюргал и тархан, а также аграрно-гидравлическую инфраструктуру, поддерживавшую обе столицы. Результаты показывают, что «Маасир ал-мулук» функционирует не как рядовая придворная хроника, а как институционально-юридический синтез, соединяющий более риторические нарративные описания (Йазди, Ибн Арабшах, Клавихо) и архивные документы. Обсуждение помещает эти выводы в более широкий

историографический контекст и приходит к выводу, что трактат Хандемира остается незаменимым, хотя и недостаточно самостоятельным источником, требующим триангуляции с архивными вакф-наме и сравнительными хрониками для эмпирической верификации.

Introduction. The historical reconstruction of medieval Islamic urbanism and its underlying agrarian and socio-economic mechanisms requires a multi-tiered methodology that triangulates official court chronicles, normative juristic treatises, administrative manuals, and surviving diplomatic and legal records. Within the continuum of Timurid and early Safavid historiography, the intellectual legacy of Giyasiddin Muhammad ibn Khwajah Humamuddin Muhammad Shirazi, known as Khwandamir (c. 880/1475-942/1535), occupies a distinctive position. The maternal grandson of Mirkhwand (author of the "Rawzat al-Safa"), Khwandamir worked at the center of Timurid intellectual patronage under Sultan Husayn Bayqara (r. 873-911/1469-1506) and Mir Ali Shir Nava'i (844-906/1441-1501). His treatise "Maosir al-muluk" [1] ("مآثر الملوک", "Memorable Feats of Rulers"), composed around 905/1499-1500 and dedicated to Nava'i, has more often been read as a specimen of the "Mirror for Princes" (andarznamah) genre than as a historical-source repository in its own right. Khwandamir is more commonly approached through his universal chronicles the "Khulasat al-akhbar fi bayan ahwal al-akhyar" [3] (completed 904/1498) and the multi-volume "Habib al-siyar fi akhbar afrad al-bashar" [2] (927-930/1521-1524). "Maosir al-muluk", however, treats the institutional mechanics of the Timurid state in a more condensed and targeted register than either work: it fuses the ethical ideal of kingly justice (adolat) with the physical practice of state-building: city construction, royal garden belts (chahor bagh), water management networks (qanats and anhar), colleges (madaris), congregational complexes (jami'), and the endowments (awqof, sing. waqf) that sustained them. A historiographical fallacy in earlier Orientalist scholarship held that late Timurid works such as Khwandamir's largely reproduced earlier narratives without independent administrative value. Against this view, the present article asks to what extent "Maosir al-muluk" preserves institutional detail concerning waqf deed conditions, fiscal immunities such as soyurghal and tarkhan grants, and municipal engineering that clarifies or extends the record found in earlier and contemporaneous chronicles, and how this testimony stands up against the surviving archival corpus and modern critical scholarship on Timurid urbanism and waqf institutions.

Literature review. The study draws on three groups of material. The first comprises surviving archival and documentary sources, above all waqfnamahs (Amir Timur's deed for the Yasawi shrine, 799/1397; Goharshad's endowment for her Herat madrasah and Musalla complex; Mir Ali Shir Nava'i's deed for the Ikhlasiyya madrasah and Khalasiyya khanaqah, 886/1481) and the Central Asian legal-deed corpus published by O. D. Chekhovich [21]. The second comprises the narrative sources of the Timurid and pre-Timurid periods [6–20]. The third is the secondary literature of three historiographical traditions: the Turkish school (Ismail Aka, Tuncer Baykara, Mustafa Koçak, Yaşar Yücel) [22–27], the Central Asian and Soviet school (V. V. Barthold, O. D. Chekhovich, B. A. Akhmedov) [21; 28], and Western scholarship (Maria Eva Subtelny, Beatrice Forbes Manz, Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, Bernard O'Kane, R. D. McChesney) [29–34]. Their main contributions are outlined below.

Ismail Aka shifted Timurid historiography away from military narrative toward administrative, fiscal, and urban mechanisms, arguing on the basis of Khwandamir, Fasih Khwafi, and Samarqandi that Shahrukh's reign represented a deliberate bureaucratic normalization achieved through the institutionalization of waqf trusts and the formalization of chancery decrees (manshurs).[22–24] Tuncer Baykara [25] examined the demographic and spatial realities of Turkestan and Khurasan, while Mustafa Koçak's [26] source-critical study of Timurid administrative terminology clarified the legal boundaries separating soyurghal, tuyul, and waqf tenures. Yaşar Yücel [27] documented the architectural impact of Anatolian and Syrian artisan deportations on Samarkand's urban fabric. This school consistently reads the Timurid urban waqf complex as the physical synthesis of nomadic steppe custom ("töre/yasa") and sedentary Islamic administrative norms ("shari'a").

V. V. Barthold first applied systematic historical-critical methodology to Persian and Arabic Timurid manuscripts, foregrounding the socio-economic tension between the nomadized military elite and the sedentary municipal and scholarly classes. O. D. Chekhovich's [21] transcription and translation of fifteenth-century legal deeds provided the archival counterpart to the narrative waqf record in Khwandamir and Samarqandi, B. A. Akhmedov's[28] critical translations of Ulugh Beg, Yazdi, and Khwandamir established a methodology still used by Central Asian historians reconstructing the institutional history of the period.

Maria Eva Subtelny [29] produced the standard English-language socio-economic study of late Timurid Herat, using agricultural manuals, fiscal registers, and Khwandamir's treatises to argue that agricultural intensification and waqf institutionalization were mutually reinforcing strategies of political consolidation. Beatrice Forbes Manz [30–31] reconstructed the tribal mechanics of Timur's coalition and the use of urban patronage by competing Chaghatay

factions. Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber [32] and Bernard O'Kane [33] established empirical architectural catalogs confirming the spatial layout and structural details recorded by Khwandamir, while R. D. McChesney [34] modeled waqf institutions as dynamic, adaptable structures rather than static mortmain trusts – a framework directly applicable to the Ikhlasiyya and Goharshad foundations discussed above.

Materials and Methods. The study applies the comparative-historical method of source criticism (manbashunoslik). The testimony of "Maosir al-muluk" [1] is set against six clusters of comparanda: (1) pre-Timurid models of urban restoration in Juvayni [18] and Rashiduddin [17]; (2) the official Timurid chronicles of Shami, Yazdi and Hafizi Abru [6–9]; (3) the outside testimonies of Clavijo [20], Ibn Arabshah and Ibn Shihna [19]; (4) provincial and later Timurid histories by Natanzi, Fasih Khwafi, Ulugh Beg and Abdurazzaq Samarqandi [10–13]; (5) biographical and hagiographical works by Dawlatshah and Fakhriddin Ali Safi [14–15]; and (6) surviving waqfnamahs and legal deeds [21]. Where the accounts converge, Khwandamir's data are treated as corroborated; where they diverge, the divergence is analysed in terms of genre, authorial position and patronage.

Discussion and Results. Khwandamir drew on the models preserved in Juvayni's (d.681/1283) "Tarikhi jahongushoy" [18] and Rashiduddin's (d.718/1318) "Jame' ut-tawarikh".[17] Juvayni details the destruction of Central Asian urban centers such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Merv, and Gurganj during the Mongol invasions, while Rashiduddin documents the administrative rehabilitation of urban life under Ghazan Khan (r. 694-703/1295-1304), including the endowment complexes of the Shanb-i Ghazan in Tabriz and the Rab'i Rashidi. In "Maosir al-muluk", Khwandamir adopts Rashiduddin's institutional terminology, presenting Timur's building projects as the culmination, rather than an unprecedented anomaly, of a trans-Eurasian pattern of urban synthesis: where Juvayni laments rupture, Khwandamir narrates restoration. The passage shows that the Ilkhanid concept of "abwab al-birr" (charitable endowment complexes) served as the direct institutional archetype for Timurid urban planning, Khwandamir applies the same juridical category to Timur's foundations in Samarkand and Kesh, indicating institutional continuity between the Ilkhanid and Timurid chanceries.

The foundational accounts of Timur's reign survive in two "Zafarname" [6] texts: Nizamuddin Shami's (806/1404), composed at Timur's own command, and Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi's [7] more ornate redaction (828/1425), produced under the patronage of Ibrahim Sultan ibn Shahrukh. Shami records the construction of the Friday Mosque of Samarkand (Bibi Khanum, begun Rajab 801/May 1399) and the garden estates of Baghi Chinar, Baghi Shimal, and Baghi Dilgusha in comparatively unadorned terms, Yazdi embeds the same material in

theological and panegyric rhetoric. The waqfnamah of Amir Timur for the shrine of Khwajah Ahmad Yasawi in Yasi (Turkestan), dated 799/1397, provides extraordinary legal detail regarding the endowment of extensive agricultural estates, water rights from the Syr Darya river basin, flour mills, and livestock to sustain the pilgrims, dervishes, and staff of the colossal Yasawi mausoleum complex. Khwandamir's later synthesis extracts the administrative apparatus underlying both accounts forced craftsman transfers (kash), the appointment of building overseers (darughagani imarat), and the conversion of state finances (moli divan) into perpetual waqf funds. Comparison indicates that Shami emphasizes the logistics of stone transport and craftsmen, while Yazdi frames the construction within Qur'anic typology (the pillars of Iram), Khwandamir's "Maosir al-muluk" harmonizes the two registers around the legal decree (hukmi muta') mandating long-term endowment for the structure's upkeep. The embassy journal of Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, Castilian envoy resident in Samarkand between August and November 1404, provides an outside eyewitness account of Timurid urban topography spatial measurements, subterranean water networks feeding urban pools (hovuz), the arterial commercial streets Timur drove through Samarkand, and the suburban garden belts. Ibn Arabshah (791-854/1392-1450), taken captive from Damascus as a child, composed his "Aja'ib al-maqdur fi nawa'ib Timur" in an adversarial register but supplies granular testimony on the layout of Samarkand's craftsmen suburbs, deliberately named after Islamic metropolises: Misr, Damascus, Baghdad, Sultaniyya, Shiraz. Ibn Shihna, chief Hanafi qadi of Aleppo, documents in his "Rawdat al-manazir" [19] the legal status of waqf lands during Timurid military operations in Syria. Ibn Arabshah records that Samarkand's suburban ring was named after the great capitals of the Islamic world to assert imperial supremacy, Clavijo corroborates that these garden estates were linked by subterranean irrigation into a continuous rural-urban system. "Maosir al-muluk" suggests that what Ibn Arabshah frames as tyrannical deportation, and Clavijo as coerced day-and-night construction, Khwandamir recasts within the Persianate political idiom of sovereign will transforming regional disorder into civilizational permanence. The transition from Timur's military urbanism to the stabilized building programs of Shahrukh and his sons is documented in Hafizi Abru's "Zubdat al-tawarikh" [8] and his continuation of Shami ("Zayli Zafarnamayi Shami") [9], which track the shift of the empire's center of gravity from Samarkand to Herat under Shahrukh and Goharshad Agha. The waqfnamah of Goharshad Begum for her Herat madrasah and Musalla complex (dated in the literature to 845/1441), recorded in legal registers and analysed by modern scholars, specifies the allocation of agricultural yields from dozens of villages in the Herat, Badghis, and Jam valleys to support professors, students, library curators (kitabdar), custodians, and cleaning staff, complete with exact salary grades measured in both

currency (dinars) and agricultural commodities (xarvor of wheat and barley). Natanzi's "Muntakhab al-tawarikhi Mu'ini"[11] (816/1413–14), composed for Iskandar ibn Umar Shaykh in Fars, documents provincial patronage in Isfahan and Shiraz. Fasih Khwafi's "Mujmali Fasihi" [12] (845/1442) supplies precise foundation dates, supervising architects (mi'maran), and financial administrators (mustawfiyan). Fasih Khwafi records the foundation of the Goharshad Complex in Herat (821/1418), Khwandamir draws on this data in "Maosir al-muluk" to present the role of imperial female patrons in institutionalizing waqf networks across Khurasan and Transoxiana. Mirza Ulugh Beg's "Tarikhi arba' ulus"[13] legitimizes the Timurid house through both Chinggisid genealogy and Islamic monarchical duty, his reign materialized this synthesis in the Registan Ensemble his madrasah (completed 823/1420), the Khanaqah, the Caravanserai of Mirzoyi, and the Observatory on the Kuhak hills. Abdurazzaq Samarqandi's "Matla'i sa'dayn wa majmai bahrayn" [10], compiled by a senior diplomat under Shahrukh, Abdullatif, Abul Qasim Babur, and Abu Sa'id, records diplomatic missions, ceremonial entries, and the fiscal allocation of agrarian revenue to municipal endowments, Khwandamir used it as a textual foundation for the later sections of both "Maosir al-muluk" and "Habib al-siyar". Samarqandi describes the unified spatial planning of the Registan complex, noting that agricultural plots (aradiyi qati'ah) and urban bazaars were formally designated as permanent endowments (waqfi mu'abbad) the archetypal model Khwandamir invokes for state-directed academic urban patronage. Dawlatshah Samarqandi's (d. 900/1495) "Tazkirat al-shu'ara" [14] maps Timurid urban centers culturally, situating poetic and intellectual circles within specific gardens, madrasahs, and bathhouses. Fakhriddin Ali Safi's "Rashahati 'ayn al-hayat" [15] (909/1503-04) documents the Naqshbandi order and the socio-economic weight of Khwajah Ubayd Allah Ahrar (806-895/1404-1490), whose family holdings - encompassing extensive irrigated land, canals, and villages across Transoxiana and Khurasan were consolidated into perpetual family waqfs. Safi documents that Ahrar's property acquisitions were organized into protective waqfs, securing economic autonomy from state confiscation, Khwandamir underscores in "Maosir al-muluk" the necessity for rulers to honor these spiritual mortmain properties to preserve civic stability.

Timur's transformation of Samarkand after his accession in 771/1370 broke with the fragmented post-Mongol urban landscape of Transoxiana. Declared the sole capital (dorussaltana), Samarkand was reconfigured on a radial, concentric model: a fortified citadel (Ark) housing the four-story Kok Saray palace, treasury, mint, and armory, an inner city (shahristan) intersected by new axial arteries, and, per Shami, Yazdi, and Clavijo [20], a wide commercial thoroughfare (rastai bazar) driven through the city and completed, under military oversight, in under thirty days (806/1404). A green belt of suburban garden estates (chaharbagh)

- Baghi Shamal, Baghi Dilgusha, Baghi Bulandi, Baghi Bihisht, Baghi Jahannoma - served as residences, staging grounds, and reception venues, enclosed by walled perimeters and centered on pavilions with marble and tilework. Beyond this ring lay satellite villages named Misr, Dimashq, Baghdad, Sultaniyya, and Shiraz, populated by artisans transplanted from the conquered cities of the same names - an economic strategy, per Khwandamir, rather than mere symbolism. Khwandamir notes the systematic transfer of master craftsmen from Syria, Fars, and Iraq, corroborating Ibn Arabshah's account that specific guilds concentrated by origin Damascene weapon and glassmakers, Shirazi stone architects, Baghdadi painters and gilders. If Samarkand embodied centralized monumentality, Herat under Sultan Husayn Bayqara and Nava'i represented polycentric civic urbanism. The waqfnamah ("Vaqfiya") of Mir Ali Shir Nava'i for the Ikhlasiyya madrasah and Khalasiyya khanaqah, dated 886/1481, preserved in historical copies and analysed in Khwandamir's treatises, is the most comprehensive surviving administrative blueprint of late Timurid civil society. Nava'i enumerates hundreds of irrigated shops, baths, agricultural parcels and vineyards across Khurasan whose revenues were locked into the perpetual service of civic philanthropy. As Khwandamir records in "Maosir al-muluk", "Khulasat al-akhbar", and his biographical treatise on Nava'i, the "Makarim al-akhlaq" [4], Herat's growth extended north along the Juyi Injil canal to the Musalla complex and Khiyaban avenue, where Goharshad's madrasah and mausoleum (architect Qavamiddin Shirazi) established a northern civic axis, complemented by Husayn Bayqara's Baghi Jahan Ara estate. Nava'i financed the Ikhlasiyya Complex along the Juyi Injil (880-886/1475-1481), comprising: 1) the Ikhlasiyya Madrasah, teaching tafsir, hadith, Hanafi fiqh, and mathematics to seventy stipendiary students under two senior professors, 2) the Khalasiyya khanaqah, a Sufi hostel distributing daily rations, 3) the Shifa'iyya Hospital, with wards, a pharmacopeia (darukhanah), and free medicine, 4) the Dar al-Huffaz, employing thirty reciters in rotation, and 5) a bathhouse (Hammami Safa), a public fountain (saqaya), dormitories, and drainage. Khwandamir details the institutional breakdown of the Ikhlasiyya complex, noting that medical care, medicines, food, student stipends, and maintenance were financed permanently through the Ikhlasiyya waqfnama. The Central Asian Waqf Deeds of Khwajah Ahrar surviving legal purchase contracts and waqf testaments demonstrate how the Naqshbandi leadership accumulated vast agrarian and urban properties across Samarkand, Bukhara, Tashkent, and the Fergana Valley, creating an autonomous economic empire governed strictly by Hanafi waqf jurisprudence.

Under classical Hanafi jurisprudence governing the Timurid state, a waqf is the detention of a non-consumable asset (asl) in perpetual divine ownership, its usufruct (samara/manfa'at) dedicated to charitable, religious, academic, or familial purposes. Khwandamir's account and

contemporaneous archival documents distinguish two legal forms: “waqf khayri” public/charitable endowments (mosques, colleges, hospitals, caravanserais, water channels), exemplified by the foundations of Timur, Goharshad, Ulugh Beg, and Husayn Bayqara, and waqf ahli (waqf dhurri/waqf khass) family endowments benefiting the founder’s descendants, reverting to public charity upon the lineage’s extinction, which Subtelny and McChesney identify as a legal shield protecting family fortunes from confiscation (musadara), taxation, and inheritance fragmentation.

The narrative record is corroborated by surviving waqfnamahs: Amir Timur’s endowment for the shrine of Khwajah Ahmad Yasawi in Yasi (799/1397), covering agricultural estates, Syr Darya water rights, mills, and livestock, Queen Goharshad’s endowment for her Herat madrasah and Musalla complex (845/1441), allocating village yields across Herat, Badghis, and Jam to fund professors, students, librarians, and custodians with salaries graded in both currency and grain, Mir Ali Shir Nava’i’s endowment for the Ikhlasiyya madrasah and Khalasiyya khanaqah (886/1481), the most comprehensive surviving blueprint of late Timurid civil philanthropy, and the Central Asian waqf corpus of Khwajah Ahrar, published by Chekhovich, documenting Naqshbandi property accumulation across Samarkand, Bukhara, Tashkent, and the Fergana Valley. Timur’s Yasawi deed establishes binding conditions (shurut al-waqif): revenue from designated lands and canals must feed pilgrims, the destitute, and wayfarers daily, and the mutawalli is barred from diverting any revenue to unapproved purposes – evidence of the deed’s juridical force independent of the narrative sources.

Soyurghal (“سیورغال”, “favor” or “hereditary fief”) denoted an imperial assignment of state tax revenue and often full administrative jurisdiction over a district to a military commander, prince, or religious notable. [16] Unlike the classical Seljuk or Abbasid iqta’, non-hereditary and subject to periodic review, the Timurid soyurghal evolved by the 15th century into an inalienable, hereditary tenure exempt from central taxation (mali divan, ikhrajat, awaridat) and from interference by tax collectors (muhassilan). Extensive grants to secure the loyalty of amirs during civil wars permanently reduced the state’s fiscal base, creating recurring pressure to encroach on waqf properties.

Khwandamir records that during periods of dynastic instability, military commanders extended predatory claims over waqf lands to the detriment of scholars and the needy, and credits Sultan Husayn Bayqara with ordering a comprehensive audit of waqf ledgers, revoking illegal encroachments, and restoring properties to shari’a compliance.

The Tarkhan (“ترخان”) title, an ancient Turco-Mongol grant for exceptional service, conferred exemption from customs duties (tamgha), transit tolls (baj wa zakat), and labor service

(hashar), along with immunity from punishment for up to nine offenses. Prominent tarkhan lineages accumulated substantial urban real estate: caravanserais, covered bazaars (qaysariyya), baths, workshops in Samarkand and Khurasan. Khwandamir documents how tarkhans used these exemptions to undercut non-exempt merchants and frequently converted private assets into family waqfs (waqf ahli), combining hereditary tax exemption with the perpetual legal sanctity of waqf a fusion of Islamic law and Mongol customary law (Yasa) that Khwandamir records with particular clarity.

Medieval cities in arid Central Asia and Khurasan depended on continuous management of rivers, diversion canals (anhar), and subterranean filtration channels (qanats/karez). In "Maosir al-muluk", Khwandamir treats water management as a central obligation of sovereign statecraft.

Samarkand's survival depended on the Zarafshan River (Nahr al-Sughd). Under Timur and Ulugh Beg, the primary artery - the Dargom Canal (Nahri Dargom), widened and deepened from an ancient course diverted water from the upper Zarafshan, from it, the Siab Canal and other branches fed subterranean cisterns (sardobas), mosque-courtyard pools (hawz), and the ring of royal gardens. Khwandamir notes that canal maintenance was enforced through collective mobilization (hashar) and financed by dedicated waqf water shares (haqqi ab), Chekhovich's [21] published deeds confirm that Samarkand property sales specified water allocation down to fractions of an hour (sa'at) per irrigation cycle (gardishi ab). Herat's growth depended on the Hari Rud basin, principally the Juyi Injil and Juyi Naw canals. Under Husayn Bayqara, Nava'i personally financed the dredging and re-engineering of the Juyi Injil, along whose banks Goharshad, Husayn Bayqara, and Nava'i clustered their major complexes. Khwandamir records that Nava'i legally tied the water rights of the Juyi Injil to the Ikhlasiyya waqf, securing running water for the hospital, baths, and student hostels, with surplus runoff irrigating downstream wheat fields and orchards whose proceeds funded medicine and stipends. [36] Both sources detail how Nava'i used his personal fortune (mali halal) to dredge the silted channel (tamiy), making it the hydrological spine of northern Herat's civic and academic infrastructure.

"Maosir al-muluk" is not reducible to court panegyric or ordinary chronicle. By fusing the normative tradition of Islamic political philosophy (hikmati 'amali) with the administrative reality of the late Timurid chancery, Khwandamir produces a functional account of dynastic governance in which urban planning and waqf institutionalization appear as structural prerequisites of political legitimacy rather than discretionary acts of piety. [35]

The work performs a structural triangulation. In isolation, Shami and Yazdi tend toward military-heroic register, Ibn Arabshah toward polemic, and Clavijo toward description without

administrative context. Khwandamir's account supplies the institutional and legal vocabulary fiscal, juridical, hydraulic that connects the monuments Clavijo describes and the construction campaigns Yazdi narrates to the everyday operation of the Timurid state.

Where the narrative can be checked against the surviving archival record the waqfnamahs analyzed by Chekhovich and Subtelny, and the architectural surveys of Golombek [32], Wilber, and O'Kane [33] the institutional description in "Maosir al-muluk" is broadly consistent with the juristic terminology, disbursement patterns, and property descriptions of the documentary sources. This consistency should be read as a claim requiring case-by-case archival verification rather than as blanket corroboration; specific dates, sums and personnel reported by Khwandamir should therefore be checked against the manuscripts and critical editions in each instance.

Khwandamir's own trajectory extends the Timurid urban model beyond its immediate context: following the Timurid state's collapse under Muhammad Shaybani Khan, Khwandamir migrated to Safavid territory and then to the Mughal court of Babur and Humayun, carrying the administrative and spatial theories of "Maosir al-muluk" into his final work, the "Qanuni Humayuni" [5], and, through it, into the institutional and architectural fabric of the early Mughal Empire.

Conclusion. Khwandamir's "Maosir al-muluk" occupies a distinctive place among Timurid sources: neither a narrative chronicle in the mode of the "Zafarname"s nor a purely juristic manual, it synthesizes the ethical vocabulary of Timurid kingship with the institutional mechanics of urban construction and waqf administration. Set against the pre-Timurid, Timurid, and archival corpus surveyed here, and against the Turkish, Central Asian, and Western historiographical traditions, the work functions as an interpretive bridge between panegyric narrative and documentary record. Its principal limitation as a source is the same as its principal value: because it compresses institutional detail into a normative political framework, its specific factual claims – dates, sums and personnel – require confirmation against the surviving archival deeds and modern critical editions before they can be treated as established fact. This article's reconstruction of that comparative field, and its identification of the specific points at which independent verification is still needed, is offered as a basis for that further archival work.

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