

Abdurazzoq Samarkand's Work "Matla' Us-Sa'dayn Va Majma Ul-Bahrayn" As A Historical Source

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Abstract: This article discusses the historical significance of Abdurazzoq Samarkand's work "Matla' us-sa'dayn va majma ul-bahrayn" as a historical source, as well as the content of the events of the work.

Keywords: historical source, work, administrative process, internal control, factors, reality in the work

INTRODUCTION

Abdurazzoq Samarkandi's work "Matla' us-sa'dayn va majma' ul-bahrayn" (translated as The Rising of the Two Stars and the Meeting of the Two Seas) is an important historical and literary source, offering rich insights into the cultural, political, and social history of the time in Central Asia. Here's a breakdown of its significance as a historical source:

1. Historical Context

Abdurazzoq Samarkandi, a 15th-century historian, diplomat, and poet, was a notable figure in the Timurid Empire. He wrote his work during the reign of Shah Rukh, the son of Timur (Tamerlane), in the early 15th century. This was a period of great political stability and cultural flourishing in Central Asia, particularly in Samarkand, which was a major center of the Timurid Renaissance.

2. Overview of the Work

"Matla' us-sa'dayn va majma' ul-bahrayn" is a biographical and historical account of the life of the Timurid ruler Shah Rukh and his court. The work is a mixture of historical narrative and literary exposition, focusing on the political, cultural, and intellectual achievements of the Timurid dynasty. The title can be roughly translated as "The Rising of the Two Stars" (referring to Shah Rukh and his wife, Gawhar Shad) and "The Meeting of the Two Seas" (a metaphor for the harmonious blending of Persian and Turkic cultures under Timur's successors).

3. Literary and Historical Significance

- **Chronicles of the Timurid Dynasty:** The work is an important historical source for understanding the political and cultural history of the Timurid Empire. It provides a detailed account of the reign of Shah Rukh and his court, and the relations between the Timurid rulers and their neighbors, including Persia, the Ottoman Empire, and India.

- **Diplomatic Insights:** As a diplomat, Abdurazzoq Samarkandi had direct access to the Timurid court and its political dealings. This work sheds light on the diplomacy and alliances of the period, offering valuable perspectives on Timurid foreign relations.

- **Cultural Synthesis:** The Timurid period is known for its efforts to bring together Persian, Turkic, and Mongol traditions. Samarkandi's work highlights the intellectual and cultural achievements of this era, particularly the patronage of arts and sciences by Shah Rukh and his wife, Gawhar Shad, who played a significant role in the development of Samarkand as a center of learning.

4. Key Features as a Historical Source

- **Personal Account:** As someone who was present at the Timurid court and likely had direct access to Shah Rukh and other court figures, Samarkandi's work offers a firsthand account of life in the Timurid Empire. This adds a layer of authenticity and direct insight into the events and figures of the time.

- **Court Culture and Administration:** The work provides a window into the court culture, social norms, and administrative structures of the Timurid Empire. It gives detailed descriptions of the royal court, the patronage of scholars, artists, and scientists, and the intellectual climate in Samarkand.

- **Diplomatic Relations:** Samarkandi's status as a diplomat allowed him to record interactions between different states and the diplomatic strategies of the Timurid rulers. His observations offer historical insights into the power dynamics of the era.

- **Timurid Ideology and Legitimacy:** Samarkandi's work also presents a view of how the Timurids sought to legitimize their rule, particularly through connections with both the Persian intellectual and artistic heritage and the Turkic military traditions.

5. Literary Style and Influence

"Matla' us-sa'dayn va majma' ul-bahrayn" is written in a poetic and eloquent style, characteristic of the Persian literary tradition. The book reflects the literary tastes of the time, often blending historical facts with poetic descriptions and cultural reflections. This makes it not only a historical source but also a literary one, providing insight into the aesthetics and intellectual currents of the period.

6. Challenges and Limitations as a Historical Source

- **Subjectivity:** As with many historical works written at court, there is a degree of subjectivity in Samarkandi's account. His close association with the Timurid court and his role as a court historian may have influenced his portrayal of events and figures in a more favorable light.

- **Idealization of the Ruler:** Like many royal biographers, Samarkandi often idealizes the figure of Shah Rukh, emphasizing his wisdom, generosity, and accomplishments. While this is an important aspect of understanding the political culture of the

time, it can also limit the objectivity of the historical account.

- **Absence of Broader Perspectives:** The work focuses primarily on the court and the elite, with less emphasis on the experiences of common people or the broader social dynamics within the empire. This makes it a more focused, elite-centric account of the period.

7. Impact on Later Historiography

Samarkandi's work has been influential in the study of Timurid history. It has been used by later historians to understand the cultural and political climate of the Timurid Empire. His blending of history and literature has also influenced later historical writing in the region.

Conclusion

As a historical source, "Matla' us-sa'dayn va majma' ul-bahrayn" offers a fascinating glimpse into the Timurid Empire, particularly the reign of Shah Rukh, and the cultural and intellectual achievements of the period. It provides valuable insights into the administration, diplomacy, and court life of the time. However, like many works written by court historians, it should be read with an understanding of its biases and idealizations, making it an important, though not entirely objective, source for the study of Timurid history.

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