Iranian Studies, 2021
Vol. 54, Nos. 3–4, 633–646

Review Essay

Completing the Persianate Turn

The Persianate World: Rethinking a Shared Sphere, Abbas Amanat and Assef Ashraf (eds.), (Iran Studies, 18), Leiden: Brill, 2018, ISBN 9004385627, hbk, 258 pp.

Turkestan and the Rise of Eurasian Empires: A Study of Politics and Invented Traditions, Ali Anooshahr, New York: Oxford University Press, 2018, ISBN 0190693565, hbk, 224 pp.

The Persianate World: The Frontiers of a Eurasian Lingua Franca, Green Nile. Oakland: University of California Press, 2019, ISBN 0520300927, pbk, 368 pp.

Persianate Selves: Memories of Place and Origin before Nationalism, Mana Kia, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2020, ISBN 1503610682 hbk, ISBN 1503611955 pbk, 336 pp.

We are all now familiar with the term *Persianate*: a rubric for the cultural and political practices associated with the Persian language that expanded into, and helped connect, most of the triangular region bounded by the Gansu Corridor, the Deccan, and the Balkans. Use of the terms "Persianate" and "Turco-Persian" was recently challenged by the late Shahab Ahmed, who offered "Balkans-to-Bengal complex" as a substitute, because "Persianate" and "Turco-Persian" were "ethnic and linguistic identifications."[1] The reviewed works make a strong case that the Persian and Turkic languages and genealogies were not as connected to ethnic identities as one might expect; they might be better described as alternative modes of civic life.

It seems we most often encounter the term "Persianate" used in a piecemeal fashion, to situate particular regional phenomena, such as manuscript painting produced by the

[1]Ahmed, *What Is Islam?*

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mughal court, in relation to a larger cultural complex grounded in Persian literature. What is far less often attempted is to map and describe the cultural complex as a whole, if not exhaustively then at least systematically. The four volumes under review—two edited volumes and two monographs—all do this in different ways. The two edited volumes consist mainly of studies of different regions of the Persianate world, and together offer a very effective broad survey of the whole space. *The Persianate World: The Frontiers of a Eurasian Lingua Franca* maintains a tight focus on the language itself, as both a spoken and written language—Persophonia and Persographia. These essays focus on the use of Persian outside of Iran, aiming to "denationalize the study of Persian in order to recognize more fully the shifting profiles of its users and the changing spatial contours of its locales." The collected essays describe "the spatial edges, social limits, and linguistic breaking points of Persian's usage and usefulness," thus delineating the social and geographical space that Persian connected as a lingua franca (p. 2).

Assef Ashraf's introduction to *The Persianate World: Rethinking a Shared Sphere* explains that the collected essays take up the question of whether the term "Persianate" can "work as a conceptual framework beyond language and literature, to such areas as habitat, economy and trade routes, and political and material cultures." (p. 1) He describes the subsequent chapters as being focused on "three main topics around which scholarship of the Persianate world has tended to cluster … the production of culture, literature, and knowledge, and their diffusion in space and time; modes of religious thought and practice, as well as networks of religious authority; and finally … the limits and ends of the Persianate world" (pp. 1–2). *The Frontiers of a Eurasian Lingua Franca*'s approach is cumulatively cartographic, delineating a single phenomenon in time, space, and category. The chapters together have a tight, coherent focus that is truly impressive for an edited volume. The chapters of *Rethinking a Shared Sphere*, while more heterogeneous, nonetheless achieve impressively broad coverage for such a volume.

Mana Kia's *Persianate Selves*, which stands out from the other reviewed works in taking a determinedly emic approach, is perhaps unique in arguing that the Persianate world, for which (as Ashraf notes) there was no contemporaneous Persian term, did in fact exist for some of its denizens. Kia offers a view of the Persianate world from inside, which is to say not from some version of "Iran" or in fact any particular geographic center, but from subjects who identified and situated themselves as writers and civic actors within networks spanning multiple regions from South Asia to Iran and Turan. Kia's most important finding is thus encapsulated in the book's title.

What becomes quickly apparent from the studies under review—both the edited volumes and the monographs—is that the use of Persian did not correspond to any particular ethnic identity or a single political structure. I would suggest that, if there is a single term that comes closest to encompassing the diverse phenomena that make up *the Persianate*, it is that the Persianate was *political*: it comprised a complex of related political institutions and practices based on a common understanding of the relationship between language and power. Imaginative literature was a critical part of this language–power complex, but again and again we see in the reviewed

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press

studies a preoccupation with kingship, justice, authority, and proper conduct. Whatever Persian was actually used to write about (and scholars of an earlier generation, such as Julie Meisami, have made a strong case for political content and function in poetry about love),[2] the present generation of scholarship writes the history of the Persianate as a kind of trans-Eurasian political phenomenon.

The fourth volume reviewed here, Ali Anooshahr's *Turkestan and the Rise of Eurasian Empires*, reconsiders the meaning of Turkic and Mongol lineage for the ostensibly Turkic dynasties that ruled in the early modern period. Anooshahr is scarcely focused on the concept of the Persianate, and yet his study covers almost exactly the territory of the Persianate world. It is surprising, given this overlap, that existing attempts to theorize the Persianate world have not given a more central place to Turkic political culture and the Turk–Tajik binary. The relevance of the Turk–Tajik binary becomes especially clear given the degree to which the other three volumes reviewed here connect the Persian language to political power and public life—Turks, like Persian-speakers (native or otherwise) were, especially in the South Asian and European frontiers of the Persianate world, heavily involved with the state. The argument that Anooshahr makes across all the major states of the Persianate world in the sixteenth century is that, at this moment, dynasties sought to deemphasize or qualify their Turco-Mongol lineage. The significance of this finding will be discussed below. Suffice it to say, for now, that these four volumes go far enough in delineating the Persianate world in time and space, from the tenth through the nineteenth centuries, describing its constituent processes and institutions, and its subjective dimension, that we can now understand the Persianate world, or the Persian cosmopolis, as not simply a convenient rubric for a congeries of cultural phenomena, but a substantial and coherent historical phenomenon worthy of further investigation. The Persian cosmopolis is indeed a significant component of medieval and early modern global history.

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The chapters of the two edited volumes will be discussed in tandem, before proceeding to a discussion of the two monographs. As stated above, the composite image that emerges from the two edited volumes is theorized by Richard M. Eaton, in his chapter in *Rethinking a Shared Sphere*, as a *cosmopolis*.[3] Borrowing from Sheldon Pollock's formulation of a "Sanskrit cosmopolis" in *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men* (2006), referring to the language and related cultural forms that connected the diverse regions of South Asia, Eaton argues that the basis of the Persian cosmopolis was "an aesthetic and literary sensibility, together with an integrated understanding of moral and social order" that could be decoupled from religion, which made possible its spread across South Asia. Central to Pollock's account is

[2]Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*.

[3]Eaton uses the concept of the Persian cosmopolis to frame the history of South Asia during the period of Muslim rule in his recent book, *India in the Persianate Age: 1000–1765*.

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the shift in the use of Sanskrit, under Scythian rulers in the first three centuries CE, from scripture and liturgy to new modes of writing whose status as artificial fabrications of their authors was openly acknowledged—texts such as the *Mahabharata*, the *Panchatantra*, and political panegyric. Pollock's concept of a cosmopolis is in some ways a loose fit for Persian: New Persian was, from its inception, decidedly *not* a language of the divine—in which respect it distinguished itself from Arabic. It was also, in its capacity as a cosmopolitan language, enmeshed in daily life, especially where daily life involved the state—Pollock in contrast argues that Sanskrit was not used for bureaucratic record-keeping, but that vernaculars were reserved for this function.

This paradigm still has much to offer. Eaton describes how, as many South Asian states shifted to vernacular languages, Persian spread widely as a lingua franca in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the Delhi sultanate's successor states, and how during the next two centuries, Persian words entered the vocabulary of many South Asian languages as Persian took the place of Sanskrit as the cosmopolitan language of South Asia; a similar process played out in other cultural forms, including dress and architecture. Persian as a cosmopolitan language was especially associated with political discourse and civic institutions, so what should be understood from the term cosmopolis is not simply a zone in which Persian was used because it facilitated communication, or where Persianate aesthetics developed appeal, but a zone in which Persian was a language of power that infused multiple aspects of civic life. Even where Persian was used in literature that can unproblematically be described as religious—i.e. Sufi literature—its use coincided with a period in which the discourses and devotional modes of Sufism invested individual saints with increasing authority, if not sovereignty. Saints and their shrines became some of the most important components of Persianate political life. On the other hand, Alexandre Papas' chapter in *Frontiers* shows how this process could be reversed: while the elite of early modern Eastern Turkestan mastered Persian, by the nineteenth century it became a *lingua magica*—still a language of power, but now *arcane power*.

A point that is made somewhat more explicitly in Pollock's work, but with which Eaton's and other authors' accounts of the Persianate are largely in agreement, is the prevalence of specifically political functions of the cosmopolitan language. Persian was strongly connected to statecraft and diplomacy, and to Sufism—to a range of functions which Brian Spooner, in the final chapter of *The Frontiers of a Eurasian Lingua Franca*, characterizes as "public life" (a characterization all the more apt given the prevalence of bureaucratic and other semi-mundane uses of Persian). The principal agents of the rise of Persian as the language of statecraft and bureaucracy, and as the most prevalent vernacular that historical memory associated with the Sasanians and other premodern dynasties, were the scribes (e.g. *dabir*, but later more commonly *munshi*) who were responsible both for internal, bureaucratic affairs as well as diplomatic communication.

Persian's place as a language of power conditioned its promotion throughout the Ottoman polity, which Murat Umut Inan's chapter in *Frontiers of a Eurasian Lingua Franca* shows to have been correlated with the bureaucratization of the

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press

state and the growth of a professional class. But Persian was not confined to the bureaucracy and related textual practices—it was also closely connected to Sufism. Purnima Dhavan's chapter in *Frontiers*, focusing on a circle of scholars in seventeenth-century Lahore, shows literati crafted personas for themselves in their Persian writing, which at the height of their careers included more prose than poetry. Here, Persographia was the basis of an imagined community of scholars who were not courtiers, but operated in "eclectic settings across the provinces and cities of the empire" (p. 171). So, in Ottoman and Mughal empires (without either of these two making significant use of Persian or Persian literary models, the term Persianate would surely never have been coined) we see Persian associated with classes of people who served the state—just as Persian-speaking scribes had staffed the bureaucracy of the Abbasid caliphate.

For early modern Central Asia, there is a tendency to imagine the new states such as the Uzbek Empire as Turkic, anticipating the turn to Turkic vernaculars and the formation of Turkic national states under Soviet nationalities policy. However, the Persian language's connection to political and social power also secured its longevity from the Caucasus and western Siberia to Eastern Turkestan (at the edge of the Gansu corridor). Devin DeWeese shows that, in western Central Asia, Persographia coexisted with Chaghatay Turkic long after the latter came into vogue as a literary language during the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Alfrid Bustanov and Marc Toutant's chapters add to this picture of Persographia—specifically, composition of original works in Persian—persisting in Transoxiana under Russian imperial rule and in the Khanate of Khiva, respectively, even though Muslims in these regions most commonly wrote in Arabic and Tatar. Bustanov argues that this use of Persian was not tied to any single urban center: while from the seventeenth century on, Persian literacy among Muslims of the Volga–Urals region was strongly associated with scholarly credentials from Bukhara and East Turkestan, in the nineteenth century "active production of Persian texts with no obvious links to Bukhara commenced in Tatar territory" (p. 197). Persographia also persisted into the nineteenth century in western Siberia. Likewise, in the nineteenth century, Toutant argues that the Khanate of Khiva's active promotion of Turkic literary activity in place of Persian was a "top-down" policy undertaken by the courts, and a "political act *par excellence*" (p. 254), in that it constituted an attempt to promote the local language of the dynasty against more prestigious languages. Persian persisted in all the regions of Turkestan and the turn away from it occurred largely as a political move.

In East Asia, Persian was probably not, as has been argued, the main diplomatic or commercial lingua franca between Central Asia and China under the Yuan dynasty (a distinction most likely held by Turkic languages), but Graeme Ford's chapter in *Frontiers* shows that it was one of several important languages of diplomatic communication used by the Yuan and Ming states. Persian remained an important language used for diplomatic pronouncements under the Ming (1368–1642), which maintained an institution called the Siyiguan dedicated to diplomacy and trade that included a corps of translators, with Persian translators employed until the late sixteenth century and probably to the end of the dynasty. The Qing dynasty, with its foreign, Manchu origins, its more aggressive posture in Central Asia, and its increasing

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commercial relations with European maritime empires, has come to be seen as relatively cosmopolitan. Nevertheless, as David Brophy argues in his chapter in *Frontiers*, the Qing state allowed the Siyiguan to dwindle and shift its diplomatic and local communication with Muslims to Turkic and Arabic. "The prevailing view of Persian was thus strictly as a language of diplomacy, and limited to a sector of its frontier stretching from the khanate of Kokand to the kingdom of Ladakh" (p. 179), lands to the north and west of the Pamirs. Evidence of textual production in these regions shows a resurgence of Persian in the eighteenth century likely due to the prominence of Naqshbandi Sufis, with a retreat of Persian in the nineteenth century. In China, Persian also ceded some of its use as a language of religious learning with the development of a Chinese canon of Islamic texts, and with an increase in translations from Persian to Turkic in Xinjiang from the late seventeenth century on—which was also a watershed moment in the spread of Sufi tariqas such as the Naqshbandis into China. As noted in passing at the beginning of this review, the region around the Gansu corridor, which was a strategic frontier between Chinese territory and Islamic Central Asia, including (just to the northeast of Gansu) present-day Ningxia province—together, historically the main population centers of Hui (Muslims of Han Chinese ethnicity)—can be considered a frontier zone of the Persian cosmopolis.

In South Asia, the use of Persian was not always a state-related phenomenon. While the sultanates of Delhi, Jawnpur, and the Deccan all maintained Persian chanceries and scribal corps, Thibaut d'Hubert's chapter in *Frontiers* shows how, in Bengal, the eastern frontier of Islam in South Asia, Persian was more connected to Sufism and to rural, vernacular literature than to the court. On one hand, Chinese sources report that Persian was the second language of the Bengal sultanate after Bengali; Hafiz's famous ghazal about the parrot of Bengal eating Persian sugar indicates his awareness of Bengal as part of the geography of patronage for Persian poetry; and "the court protocol, titles, and architecture of the sultanate also indicate the role of Persian models in the political idiom of the period" (p. 95). On the other hand, stone inscriptions and other textual evidence reveals Arabic to have been the main language of "official statements composed for both inside and outside the kingdom." The eastern regions of the Indian Ocean in general, including Bengal, were more an Arabic cosmopolis than a Persian one. If official use of Persian was more limited in Bengal than in states to its west, d'Hubert's chapter about Bengal in *Rethinking a Shared Sphere* shows how the depiction of India and the Indian Ocean—"Below the Winds"—in the Islamicate geographical imaginary as lands of wonders, where Adam first set foot when he descended from paradise, also shaped its self-understanding in local literature. This literature thus spoke back to the larger Persian cosmopolis through its adaptation of a shared imaginative geography. The Persian cosmopolis as a transregional political phenomenon thus consisted in a combination of state bureaucracies, as in the Deccan sultanates and the Ottoman Empire, and networks of saintly authority and ascetic practice, which also spread through regions such as China and Bengal.

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What the two edited volumes together achieve through their fairly comprehensive vista of Persian and the Persianate, which vindicates and occasionally complicates Brian Spooner's characterization of Persian (in *Frontiers*) as a language of public life, can be seen by looking to the origins of the term "Persianate." While the term may not seem tied to any specific periodization, it is in fact entangled in the question of early modernity in Asia and the Islamic world. The master-narrative of nationalist histories that made Indo-Persian texts "homeless" viewed the centuries between the Reformation and the industrial revolution as the period of European divergence, a view which excludes any extra-European early modernity—to paraphrase a sentiment expressed in late twentieth-century Iran, Iranian civilization had jumped from Notre Dame to the industrial revolution. The theorization of an early modern Persian cosmopolis is thus imbricated with the reevaluation of Persian poetry and Islamicate philosophy of the same period by scholars such as Paul Losensky and Seyyed Hossein Nasr.[4] What, then, of the history of political life, which is so central to the cosmopolis paradigm? What our (distant) scholarly forebears classified as decadent tends to comprise especially those aspects of late medieval and early modern Islamicate culture that involved *the exercise of authority*: the evolution of Sufism from a seemingly individualistic tradition of speculative asceticism into cults of sainthood; both the absolutism of the gunpowder empires and the weakness of their increasingly palace-bound rulers before their viziers and other bureaucratic servants; and, as is becoming increasingly apparent, the occult sciences. The decadence paradigm has proved more resistant to revision in these areas than in the arts and philosophy, because the *political* uniqueness of Europe is much more essential to modern and orientalist world views. The foundational texts of modern political thought, especially liberal thought, are largely of early modern provenance, and to reevaluate, with all due openness, the contemporaneous political systems against which Montesquieu and Locke asserted their own ideas deals a body-blow to the modern liberal political self. It requires, at least, the bold moral imagination of a Marshall Hodgson.

But to what extent was the Persian cosmopolis a specifically early modern phenomenon? Amanat's chapter in *Rethinking a Shared Sphere* offers an impressively comprehensive description of the various phenomena that make up Persianate culture, but what stands out is the extent to which it avoids an early modern framing. The results of this approach are uneven. On the one hand, scholars familiar with medieval Persian historiography may be rather unsatisfied with his offering the famously opaque and highly atypical style of Vassaf as a metonym for the stylistic evolution of Persian history writing after the Mongol conquests—which is to say, most of the "Persianate millennium" and thus the great majority of Persian historiography including stylists such as Sharaf al-Din 'Ali Yazdi whose prose was widely circulated and highly influential, and nothing like that of Vassaf. Amanat's narrative also gives little attention to developments in the field of early modern Persian literature. On the other hand, his emphasis on the first 500 years of the Persianate millennium shows how developments that might be seen as part of the cosmopolitanism of the gunpowder empires in

[4]Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*; Nasr, *Sadr Al-Din Shirazi*.

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press

fact had deeper roots. Amanat shows how Persian functioned as a cosmopolitan lingua franca within the region stretching from Transoxiana and Khorasan through present-day Iran and Azerbaijan, in which New Persian became a vernacular language, in many of the same ways as it would function later on in a larger zone encompassing South Asia, Eastern Turkestan, and the Ottoman Empire. If recent applications of the Persianate paradigm to early modern cultural history, especially of South Asia, have forged a dauntingly capacious framework (which Amanat aptly describes as a scholarly "comfort zone") that can accommodate the many distant frontiers of the Persianate, his narrative presented here draws on his more regionally focused and deeply rooted expertise within the framework of Iranian and more specifically Qajar or Iranian national history. What is especially valuable is that Amanat interpolates the new paradigm into older periods and into a more centralized, smaller geography, which has been the beneficiary of an older and larger body of scholarship.

Azfar Moin's chapter in *Rethinking a Shared Sphere* compares practices of saint shrines across the medieval and early modern periods, and in the latter period across the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires whose territory comprised most of the Persian cosmopolis. Following Moin, Waleed Ziad's chapter extends this discussion in space and time with an intensive study of the Naqshbandi Sufi networks that linked Kabul, on the Mughal frontier, with Yarkand in present-day Xinjiang in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Ziad argues that this Sufi order, whose members the Durrani Empire in present-day Afghanistan recruited to official posts, represents not a "Neo-Sufi" movement but rather continues ideas and practices seen as characteristic of medieval and early modern Sufism. These include writings with antinomian content and a form of Sunni–Shi'i ambiguity, achieved by reconciling Sunni and Imami traditions into a cohesive lineage and honoring both the caliphs and Shi'i imams.

The next two chapters of *Rethinking a Shared Sphere*, by Hirotake Maeda and Joanna de Groot, are among the most distinctive contributions to the volume, as they apply this framework of the Persianate zone, which we find most often used for its more distant, especially European and South and Central Asian, imperial frontiers, to the nearer regions of Georgia and Baluchistan. Maeda's chapter discusses an Armenian family from Georgia, the Enikolopians, whose surname, meaning "language box" in Georgian, originated with a Safavid-era ancestor. Constructing the genealogy and history of this family from sources including scholarly work written by a member of the family educated in Soviet Armenia, Maeda shows how the family served the Georgian kings, and Iranian and Russian courts as translators and in high diplomatic or political offices. While the collapse of the Safavid state was disruptive to the regional political order, one member of the family, Mirza Gurgen, served under Karim Khan-i Zand, and had sons who worked for the Russian Empire, settling in Tbilisi and Saint Petersburg, as well as Iran. One of these, Manuchehr, was captured and made a eunuch slave of the Qajars, and served as governor of Gilan, then Shiraz, and later Isfahan, where he died in 1847. Maeda emphasizes that while the family capitalized on their traditional role as multilingual scribes, shaped by their position as outsiders to Georgia and Muslim polities, this position was also a dangerous one, and the

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press

family's attitude towards the conversion of members such as Manuchehr and Gurgen Khan could be quite hostile.

De Groot's chapter describes the modes of interaction between the Qajar state and its agents and non-Persian-speaking Baluch people of its southeast frontier region. Drawing on travelogues from Europeans and Qajar men of state, she finds that their interactions with Baluch were understood very little in terms of ethnicity or culture, but mainly in terms of the main themes of Persianate statecraft, especially the importance of revenue collection, fostering agricultural productivity, and concerns about "predatory" nomads: Baluch groups were treated in the narratives of Qajar men of state as a matter of "good governance and law and order." Baluch, for their part, used *kajar* as one term for Iranians, which "suggests that dynastic and governmental distinctions shaped ethnic perceptions rather than the reverse." Where more specifically ethnographic concerns do appear in these narratives, they seem to be connected more with concerns about civilization and progress than with exoticism as a mode of representation.

This turn to the frontiers of the Persian-speaking lands (one wonders how this panorama would be augmented by additional contributions on Kurdish languages or Pashto!) brings us back to Eaton's theorization of the Persianate world as a cosmopolis. Abbas Amanat's chapter in *The Frontiers of a Eurasian Lingua Franca* and Nile Green's chapter in *Rethinking a Shared Sphere* both show how, in the nineteenth century, Persianate literary forms—and in South Asia, the Persian language more generally—could become conservative in both form and function, an obsolete status marker that ceased to be effective as a medium of public communication. Amanat offers, as evidence of this phenomenon, the *Mikadu-nama*, an epic poem celebrating emperor Mikado following the Japanese victory over the Russians in 1905. At the same time, as Rebecca Gould shows, the cities of the Persian cosmopolis outside the Qajar state, including Istanbul, Tabriz, Tbilisi, and Calcutta, became the most important centers of jadidist, constitutionalist, and other reformist literature, home of famous publications such as *Mulla Nasr al-Din* and *Habl al-Matin*. This new political discourse and Persian print culture more generally were generated by a merchant class that was increasingly distinct from the ulama—Iranians were the largest diasporic group in the Russian Empire, mostly residing in the Caucasus.

Taking the life and works of ʿAbd al-Rahim Talibuf as a paradigmatic case, Gould shows how his outlook and ideas were shaped by his position outside Qajar domains and the freedom gained from exile, and engagement with "the European Enlightenment as mediated by Russian sources." There is an important difference between thinking of the merchant diasporas and Persian periodicals of Istanbul, Tbilisi, and Calcutta as displaced from their proper homes, and thinking of them as the nodes in a network with the best access to new ideas and technologies that could be carried on to the Qajar domains—at the same time providing a position of safety to critics of the Qajars, just as Najaf would one day provide for Khomeini. When we pass from historiography of the early modern world to that of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the nation state of Iran seems to simply appear in place of the gunpowder empires or Persian cosmopolis. We may instead ask how the Persianate

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world functioned as a context or matrix within which the Iranian nation state was generated—as we would say of the global enlightenment and the modern nation-state system.

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The studies discussed above have effectively charted the Persian language and Persianate culture across its whole transcontinental reach. But even such a relatively comprehensive map of how, where, and when Persian was used—even bearing in mind Eaton's convincing application of Pollock's cosmopolis paradigm—falls short of explaining *what* the Persianate was. To answer this, we need to understand how it conceived of itself; in what sense could it be said to constitute an imagined community. Were there, in fact, Persianate selves, and what were they like? Mana Kia's *Persianate Selves* addresses this question in a nuanced, systematic fashion, using *tazkiras*—compendia of poets, containing samples of their verse—to explain how writers identified themselves with, and positioned themselves within, regions of the Persianate world. *Tazkiras*, which became prevalent as a genre in the fifteenth century, follow a format similar to *kitab al-rijal*, meaning biographical dictionaries of ulama (an origin corresponding to one of the key characteristics of Pollock's Sanskrit cosmopolis: the use of textual forms associated with the divine to write the human world). Kia argues that Persianate concepts of self and place were aporetic, meaning that they encompassed opposing qualities. For example, writers surveyed believed that men were superior poets and that Kashmir was part of Hindustan, but commemorated female poets in their *tazkiras* and represented Kashmir as mirroring the qualities of Gilan—people and places thus need not be wholly and exclusively committed to a single category, but could be seen from different angles. Kia uses this concept of aporias to write a detailed anatomy of Persianate selfhood generated through memorializing the various connections between people and places.

The book is divided into two parts: Part 1, "Place," and Part 2, "Origin." Chapter 1 argues that the categories and narratives through which places were described were multiple and contextual: Hindustan, for example, could be described as a *kishvar* (region) in one context, and a domain (*mamlakat*) in another, but the term *mamlakat* could also be used for much smaller regions. Chapters 2 and 3 argue that the places that held meaning for individuals were often, though not always, relatively small ones—for instance, the domain defined by a particular city. Here Kia argues that Lutf ʿAli Azar Baygdili's *Atashkada* (written between 1760 and 1779), which has been interpreted in a protonationalist framework, should instead be understood in terms of a narrower regional partisanship for western Iran and the "*Bazgasht*" ("Return") movement that favored older, often simpler styles of poetry as its models, against the "Fresh Style" (*taza-gu'i*) that since the sixteenth century had become popular across much of the Persian cosmopolis. While Azar favored western Iran, he did not see it as an essentially distinct space, but as sharing overlapping features with Turan (Transoxiana) and Hindustan.

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Part 2 extends this discussion of place to individuals' homelands. Chapter 5 shows how individuals had multiple origins: the lands of one's ancestors, the land of one's birth, or an earlier phase of one's career could all function as an origin. Just as homeland was neither uniquely determined nor determinative of identity, Chapter 6 shows how, whereas for modern concepts of ethnicity and ancestry blood is the symbolic medium of heredity (and a deeply, specifically Christian one at that), Persianate lineages could be mediated in many ways including by milk and servitude. This made Persianate lineages far more extensive and heterogeneous. Interestingly, Kia argues that Turco-Mongol genealogies were generally articulated with far more detail than others were. Finally, Chapter 7 turns back to the *tazkira*s as a genre that represents and produces community through commemoration. Kia argues that the *tazkira*s, as commemorative texts, engendered imagined communities of Persian poets that spanned Iran, Turan, and Hindustan. With particular attention to Shaykh Muhammad ʿAli Lahiji, commonly known by his pen name, Hazin, Kia argues that his memoir and *tazkira* which disparage Hindustan and lament his relocation there should not be read as expressing protonationalist identification with Iran, but instead as an elegiac memorial to the Safavid polity, whose collapse was the reason for Hazin's relocation to South Asia. Hazin lost family, friends, and possessions in the Afghan siege of Isfahan that precipitated the end of the Safavids, and his condemnation of Hindustan should be understood as conditioned by this loss and his resulting state of exile, and not by any identification with a territorially delineated Persian-speaking demos.

The case of Hazin exemplifies a theme that ties together all of the works reviewed here: while Kia's approach is considerably richer and more multidimensional than political history in the usual sense of the term, what emerges when we break down ethnonational totalities like Iran or Hindustan is a congeries of political and ideological (as well as familial and individual) commitments, often involving individuals' relationship to the state. Just as Persian was a language of power and statecraft, Persianate selves were, to a significant degree, civic selves. And these Persianate civic selves were constituted through, and within, a geographical space that was, if not as expansive as the whole Persianate zone (Hafiz's boast about Bengali parrots eating his sugar notwithstanding), much larger than any nation state or even gunpowder empire. These authors were not, in Diogenes' sense, citizens of the world (i.e. of nowhere). Nonetheless, their personal and political commitments marched to the horizons with Alexander's armies.

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What, then, of the fact that Persianate civic identities were constructed in the context of what were largely "Turkic" dynasties? While Iranian nationalism tends to frame Persian or Iranian identity in opposition to Arab identity, for most of the Persianate millennium, a common term for speakers and writers of Persian was "Tajik," typically a heteronym for subject peoples and servants of the ruler, and used in opposition to

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press

"Turk." And it has long been observed that the ruling dynasties could virtually without exception "go back to 'Turco-Mongol' or 'Turcophone' war-bands" (p. 1). Turkic poetry, too, circulated across the Persian cosmopolis, including Timurid South Asia as well as of course the Ottoman, Safavid, and Inner Asian states. Especially bearing in mind Bustanov, DeWeese, and Toutant's discussion of the use of Persian in Central Asian khanates in *Frontiers*, it might be said that if there was a Turkic cosmopolis, it was virtually coextensive and contemporaneous with the Persian, and thus any convincing explanation of the Persian cosmopolis must include a systematic explanation—beyond Inner Asian or Turkestani regional contexts—of the Turk–Tajik binary. Anooshahr's study does not explore this binary comprehensively, but offers insight into the invention, suppression, and manipulation of Turkic lineages at a pivotal moment in the development of the Persian cosmopolis—the long sixteenth century. Through analysis of histories and other texts patronized by these dynasties, Anooshahr effectively converts what has been taken as a question of ethnicity or cultural origin to one of ideology and the practice of politics.

Following the introduction, Chapter 2 lays out the early modern and modern intellectual history of "the question of origins." Chapter 3 then discusses Idris Bidlisi's account of Ottoman origins in the *Hasht Bihisht*. Writing for Selim I, whose conquests transformed the Ottoman polity from an Anatolian-Balkan regional power to a Mediterranean superpower, Anooshahr argues that "Idris tried to distance the ruling family from its Turkestani origins" (p. 28); in Ottoman discourse, "Turk" was opposed to "Rumi," the former meaning warlike, predatory nomads, the latter productive cultivators. By the end of the sixteenth century, "Rumi" became a composite, essentially non-ethnic identity.

Chapter 4 revisits the rise of the Safavids and how Safavid shaykhs Junayd and Haydar built up what would become the Safavid war band. Anooshahr articulates a well-developed alternative to the notion—largely out of favor—that the Safavid war band was formed by using heterodox Sufism to appeal to Turkic pastoralists. Anooshahr turns to material-political explanations, arguing that the famous red headgear of the Safavids could be understood as a reference to the former position of many of Haydar's recruits—*sipahi*s, who wore red headgear, unlike the Janissary slave soldiers, who wore white. He argues that the Safavids did not embrace or wholly reject a Turkic identity, but "chose a nonethnic self-identification as a holy warrior state." (p. 80) He thus explains the formation and identity and composition of the Safavid war band in terms of material interests, political machinations (by the Qara Qoyunlu, Ottomans, and Safavid Shaykhs) and the ideology of *ghaza* (holy war) rather than fixed ideological or cultural characteristics of ethnic groups.

Chapters 5 and 6, discussing histories of Transoxiana—Fazl Allah Khunji's Mihmannama-i Bukhara and Mirza Haydar Dughlat's Tarikh-i Rashidi—show how Turco-Mongol identity was understood in terms of a tension between pride in aristocratic lineages and the Turco-Mongol heritage as violent, pagan, and primitive. On the one hand, Chinggisid lineage was a source of pride, while on the other hand, Fazl Allah Khunji characterizes the Kazakhs as primitive to justify his patron's warfare against

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press

them. Mirza Haydar Dughlat saw Mongol royal lineage as a source of pride, but viewed the Mongols' pagan past with horror. The latter author was preoccupied with a distinction between men of noble lineage and men "trained" by their rulers, referring especially to men in positions of high status in South Asia. Chapter 7 continues the discussion of Timurid (a.k.a. Mughal) India and the significance of Turkic and Mongol heritage there. Here again we find that authors of chronicles downplayed their patrons' association with Timur, the Mongols, and even the celebrated figure of Mahmud of Ghazna.

The image that obtains in all of the cases discussed by Anooshahr is that across the early modern Persian cosmopolis, Turkic heritage was treated as a problematic legacy with specific, instrumental value, rather than an automatic source of political legitimacy. For Babur, a Timurid scion who founded the Mughal Empire in South Asia, the bitter memory of Timur's sack of Delhi was at least as relevant as the Timurids' nominal suzerainty over South Asia. Bearing in mind the diverse ancestry of Shah Isma'il and the Ottoman sultans, and the Persianate courtly education received by generations of Babur's ancestors, Anooshahr's findings challenge us to reconsider rulers' ideological relationship with previous dynastic dispensations during late medieval and early modern periods. Turco-Mongol lineage was not an indelible characteristic of dynastic identities; rather, it was one that needed to be advertised, and could, accordingly, be abandoned to a degree—a political rather than an ethno-national characteristic.

Anooshahr's discussion of the Safavid and Mughal cases builds on his earlier work on the role of *ghaza*—a concept and practice which comes across as something like a form of mass politics—in processes of state-building.[5] This brings us back to a thread running through all of the reviewed works: the relationship between language and authority—the specifically political dimension of the Persian cosmopolis. The early modern climax of the Persianate millennium (the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries) began with what appears to have been widespread reaction (at least by political elites) against their Turkic political heritage, following which Turkic literary production exploded, especially in the Ottoman Empire—perhaps not coincidentally, the furthest of the gunpowder empires from Central Asia. The image thus rendered by all four of the reviewed works is basically consistent with the view presented two generations earlier by Marshall Hodgson and his contemporaries, albeit in much higher resolution. And rather than seeing Persianate culture as deriving from the cultural characteristics of "Persians," we can consider the Persianate itself to be a kind of political configuration—much as David Sneath, in a different context, argued about Inner Asian "tribes" in *The Headless State*.[6] The turn to global history that motivated recent interest in the Persianate has identified a tremendously important subject *and subjectivity* of global history.

[5]Anooshahr, *The Ghazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam*.
[6]Sneath, *The Headless State*.

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press

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Kaveh Hemmat
Benedictine University
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https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385

https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2020.1810385 Published online by Cambridge University Press