

THE CHAGHADAIDS AND ISLAM: THE CONVERSION OF TARMASHIRIN KHAN (1331–34)

MICHAL BIRAN

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY

Muslim sources agree that the conversion of Tarmashirin Khan paved the way to the overall Islamization of the Khanate of Chaghadaid, the Mongol state in Central Asia. Yet apart from that, there is very little agreement among the sources: even the dates of Tarmashirin's reign and the extent of his realm are not unequivocally established. Moreover, unlike other Chinggisids who won their fame as the Islamizers of their realms, Tarmashirin's conversion engendered no conversion stories in the sources. On the basis of Muslim, Chinese, and numismatic sources, this article seeks to shed some light on the reign of Tarmashirin. It suggests a chronological framework for his career and, in the light of this framework, utilizing Tarmashirin's biography in the works of his contemporary, the Mamluk historian al-Şafadī (d. 1363), the paper reexamines Tarmashirin's Islam. What do we know about his conversion; how did his islamization affect his foreign and domestic policies; and what part did it play in his deposition? Lastly, the paper locates Tarmashirin's conversion in the general environment of Chaghadaid and Mongol islamization. His inglorious rule and the heavy shadow Tamerlane was soon to cast over the Chaghadaids explain why Tarmashirin never achieved a posthumous fame equivalent to that of Ghazan or Özbek in their respective realms.

TARMASHIRIN, the CHAGHADAID KHAN whose conversion paved the way to the overall Islamization of the Chaghadaids, is an enigmatic figure. While Arabic, Persian, and Turkic sources stress the importance of his islamization to the establishment of Islam among the Mongols of the Chaghadaid Khanate,¹ some of these

same sources simultaneously suggest that the rebellion against Tarmashirin that resulted in his deposition was caused by his Islamic policies.² Was Tarmashirin, then, both the one who brought Islam to the Chaghadaids and the victim of his own success?

Moreover, despite the stress on Tarmashirin's reign as the one in which Islam became firmly rooted in the Chaghadaid domain, and in sharp contrast to the situation of other Chingissids whose fame is similarly grounded, e.g., the Ilkhan Ghazan (r. 1295–1304), Özbek, Khan of the Golden Horde (r. 1313–41), or even the eastern Chaghadaid Khan Tughluq Temür (r. ca. 1347–62), Tarmashirin's conversion engendered no conversion stories in the narrative sources. Nor, to the best of my knowledge, was any later epic tradition developed around his name.³ Was his conversion so meaningless to the Cha-

This study was undertaken in 2001–2 while I was a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. I would like to thank the Institute's director and staff and the members of the School of Historical Studies for the nurturing intellectual environment. I am also grateful to my colleagues Reuven Amitai, Peter Jackson, Beatrice F. Manz, David O. Morgan, and Yuri Pines for their comments on earlier drafts. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the 2nd conference of the Central Asian Studies Society in Madison, Wisconsin, in October 2001 and at the IAS Islamic seminar in November 2001.

¹ al-ʿUmārī, *Das Mongolische Weltreich: al-ʿUmārī's Darstellung der Mongolischen Reiche in seinem Werk Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār*, ed. and tr., K. Lech (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1968), 38 (hereafter, ʿUmārī/Lech); Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī, *Taʾriḫ-i guzīda* (Paris, 1913), 577; Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī. *Muqaddima-i Zafar nāmāh*, ed. A. Urunbayev (Tashkent: Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek SSR, 1972), fol. 80b, p. 180; Anonymous. *Shajarat al-atrāk* MS Harvard University Pers. 6F, fol. 113a; Abū al-Ghāzī Bahādur Khan,

Histoire des Mongols et des Tatares, tr. P. I. Desmaisons (rpt. Amsterdam: Ad Orientem Ltd. and Philo Press, 1970), 159; Khwāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-siyar*, ed. and tr. W. M. Thackston (Cambridge, Mass: Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard Univ., 1994), 3: 90 (text); 3/1: 51 (trans.).

² Yazdī, fol. 81a; *Shajarat al-atrāk*, fol. 113b.

³ Nor am I aware of any literature regarding Tarmashirin's conversion, despite the numerous recent publications discussing other royal Mongol conversions. For Özbek and the Golden

ghadaids that they chose to ignore it? And if so, why do the sources stress Tarmashirin's leading position in bringing Islam to Transoxania?

Those questions, however, are by no means the only questions that Tarmashirin's reign raises. Apart from his being a Muslim, the sources hardly agree on anything regarding Tarmashirin and even the dates of his reign and the extent of his realm are far from being unequivocally established.

This study aims first to suggest a chronological framework for Tarmashirin's career, based on Muslim, Chinese, and numismatic sources. In the light of this framework, and utilizing Tarmashirin's biography in the works of his contemporary, the Mamluk historian al-Ṣafadī (d. 1363),⁴ we shall reexamine Tarmashirin's Islam: how his islamization affected his foreign and domestic policies and what part it played in his deposition. Lastly, I attempt to locate Tarmashirin's conversion in the general framework of Chaghadaid islamization, and to explain why Tarmashirin never achieved a posthumous fame equivalent to that of Ghazan or Özbek in their respective realms.

THE CHRONOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Tarmashirin was the son of the famous Chaghadaid Khan, Du²a (r. 1282–1307) and was the last of Du²a's sons to rule successively over the Chaghadaid Khanate during the nearly three decades after Du²a's death.⁵ From

Horde, see D. DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1993); for the Ilkhanate, see Ch. Melville, "Pādshāh-i Islām: The Conversion of Ghazan Khan to Islam," *Pembroke Papers* 1 (1990): 159–77; R. Amitai, "The Conversion of Ahmad Tegüdar," *JSAI*, 25 (2001): 15–43; R. Amitai-Preiss, "Ghazan, Islam and Mongol Tradition: A View from the Mamluk Sultanate," *BSOAS* 59 (1996): 1–10; idem, "Sufis and Shamans: Some Remarks on the Islamization of the Mongols in the Ilkhanate," *JESHO* 42 (1999): 27–46; J. Pfeiffer, "Conversion Versions: Sultan Oljeitu's Conversion to Shi'ism (709/1309) in Muslim Narrative Sources," *Mongolian Studies* 22 (1999): 35–67; for Tughluq Temür, see Hodong Kim, "The Early History of the Moghul Nomads: the Legacy of the Chaghatai Khanate," in *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, ed. R. Amitai-Preiss and D. O. Morgan (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 290–318.

⁴ For al-Ṣafadī's work, see D. P. Little, "Al-Ṣafadī as a Biographer of his Contemporaries," in idem, *History and Historiography of the Mamluks* (London: Variorum, 1986), art. I.

⁵ For Du²a's career, see M. Biran, *Qaidu and the Rise of the Independent Mongol State in Central Asia* (Richmond, Surrey:

726/1326 Tarmashirin had been stationed at Ghazna, in Afghanistan, apparently on behalf of the ruling Chaghadaid khan, his brother Kebek (r. 1318–26/27). Due to his alleged intention to invade Khurāsān, Tarmashirin was attacked in 726/1326 by the forces of Ḥasan b. Chūbān sent from the neighboring Ilkhanate, and was badly defeated. Although the Ilkhanid forces had evacuated Ghazna by the end of that year, leaving it in Chaghadaid hands,⁶ this defeat did not improve Tarmashirin's chances of winning the Chaghadaid throne.⁷ After Kebek's death, two of their brothers, Eljigidei and Döre Temür, came to the throne before Tarmashirin. Eljigidei, Döre Temür, or both, however, are often skipped by the Muslim sources that describe the Chaghadaid dynasty, or are said to have ruled for a very short time.⁸ This

Curzon, 1997), *passim*, esp. ch. 3; for the later Chaghadaids the standard work is V. V. Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia* (rpt. Leiden: Brill, 1962), 1: 50–52, 132–35; see also O. Karaev, *Chagatajskij ulus, Gosudarstvo Khajdu, Mogulistan* (Bishkek: Muras, 1995), 20–43.

⁶ *Guzīda*, 607: Hāfīz Abrū, *Dhayl-i Jāmi' al-tawārikh Rashīdi* (Tehran: Chāpkhānah-i 'ilmī, 1317/1938), 121–22; Mirkhwānd, *Ta'rikh-i rawḍat al-yafā* (Tehran: Payrūz, 1960), 5: 511; 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Samarqandī, *Maṭla' al-sa'dayn wa-majma' bahrayn*, ed. A. Nawā'ī. (Tehran: Mu'asasa-i muṭāla'āt wa-tahqīqāt-i farhangī, 1372/1993), 96. For Ghazna as part of the Chaghadaid domain, see *EIR*, s.v. "Chaghatayid dynasty" (P. Jackson), 345 and the references there.

⁷ See *Maṭla' al-sa'dayn*, 96, where 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Samarqandī ascribes Tarmashirin's deposition to his defeat by Ḥasan b. Chūbān. This is based on the wrong Timurid assumption that Tarmashirin died in 727/1327, yet it certainly stresses the impact such a defeat could have on the latter's status.

⁸ See, e.g., Nizām al-Dīn Shāmī, *Zafar nāmāh*, ed. F. Tauer (Beirut, 1937), 22; Khwāndamīr, 3: 90 (tr. 3/1: 51); *Guzīda*, 577; Mu'īn al-Dīn Naṭanzī, *Muntakhab al-tawārikh-i Mu'īnī*, ed. J. Aubin (Tehran: Ḥaydarī, 1957), 111; Mirkhwānd, 5: 509; *Shajarat al-atrāk*, fol. 113a; 'Umarī/Lech, 22; Ibn Baṭṭūta, *Voyages d'Ibn Baṭṭūta*, ed. and tr. C. Defremery and B. R. Sanguinetti (Paris: L'Imprimerie Nationale, 1969), 3: 31; H.A.R. Gibb, *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūta* (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1958–1994), 2: 556; Aḥmad Tattawī et al., *Ta'rikh-i Alfī*, MS I.O. 3291, vol. 4, fol. 60a/6; Anonymous, *Mu'izz al-ansāb*, MS BN Persian 67, fols. 32a/b. Based on numismatic evidence, Fedorov reached a rather similar verdict: according to him, both khans reign for several months each in 727/1327 and were replaced by the end of this year by Tarmashirin. His conclusion is based on different types of coins from 727/1327, though there are no known coins inscribed with the names of either Eljigidei or Döre Temür. M. Fedorov, "On the Attribution of

brought Barthold (and everybody after him) to conclude that each of them ruled for a few months in 1326, after Kebek's death, and that by the end of this year Tarmashirin succeeded Döre Temür. The beginning of Tarmashirin's reign is therefore often misleadingly dated to 1326, when he was defeated in Ghazna.⁹

The contemporary official Chinese history, the *Yuan shi*, however, attests that Kebek was alive in early 1327,¹⁰ and that Eljigidei, who succeeded him, reigned from 1327 to 1330.¹¹ This is supported by the Pope's letter to Eljigidei, which was given to the Dominican Thomas Mancasola, after the latter came back from Central Asia to Europe in 1329,¹² as well as by Eljigidei's mention as the ruling Chaghadaid khan in *The Wonders of the East*, the memoirs of Jordanus, the bishop of Columbium (India), a book that was apparently written in 1328–30.¹³

During Eljigidei's reign Tarmashirin remained in the western half of the khanate, and his base was probably at Tirmidh.¹⁴ In 729/1328–29 he gathered enough troops

to launch his famous expedition to Delhi, an event, which, however, did not have lasting results for the Chaghadaids.¹⁵ It is also possible that by that time Tarmashirin enjoyed a certain amount of authority in the western part of the khanate, especially when Eljigidei was actively involved in the succession struggles at the Yuan court in 1328–29.¹⁶ Nevertheless, Eljigidei was succeeded not by Tarmashirin but by yet another of their brothers, Döre Temür (r. 1330–31). In the Yuan map, drawn in 1330, all the traditional Chaghadaid realm, from Uighuria to the Oxus, is described as "the lands of Döre Temür."¹⁷ In the eighth month of 1331 Tarmashirin's messengers arrived at the Yuan court to report that he had succeeded Döre Temür as the Chaghadaid Khan.¹⁸

Political and Military History (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), 232.

⁹ Yahyā al-Sirhindī, *Ta'rikh-i Mubārak Shāhī*, ed. M. H. Hosain [sic] (Calcuta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1931), 101, and Jackson, *Delhi*, 232, for the date. See there as well as Jackson, "Muhammad Tughluq," 119–28; Siddiki, 14 for a discussion of this invasion. See also Al-Jazārī, *Ta'rikh ḥawādith al-zamān wa-anbā' ihā wa-wafayāt al-akābir wa'l-a'yān min abnā' ihā*, ed. 'U. 'A. Tadmūrī (Beirut: al-maṭba'at al-baṣariyya, 1998), 2: 377; *Ta'rikh-i Alfī*, fol. 60a. The invasion won most of its fame due to Tamerlane's later, and more successful, invasion of Delhi (about which, see Jackson, *Delhi*, 311–14). It may also be worth mentioning that in the late thirteenth century Qutluḡ Khwāja, an elder brother of Tarmashirin who was stationed in Ghazna under Du'ā Khan, also conducted raids of India (Jackson, *Delhi*, 217–24; Biran, *Qaidu*, 69–74).

¹⁰ YS, 31.694, 695, 696, though the mention is not of Eljigidei specifically but of "the Chaghadaid prince, who came from afar"; J. W. Dardess, *Confucians and Conquerors: Aspects of Political Change in Late Yuan China* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1973), 28–30; Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, "Mid-Yuan Politics," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6: *Alien Regimes and Border States 907–1368*, ed. H. Franke and D. Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994), 545–46. Fedorov claims that a certain type of anonymous coin dated 727–31 and coined in the western part of the Chaghadaid Khanate can be identified as belonging to Tarmashirin (Fedorov, 9–11).

¹¹ YS, 63.1567ff.; for the map, see E. V. Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources* (1910; rpt. Osnabruck: Biblio Verlag, 1987), vol. 2; Liu Yingsheng, "Chahatai Hanguo jiangyu yu lishi zhihan yanjiu," *Zhongguo bianjiang shidi yanjiu* 1993.3: 30–44, and see there for the correct date (1330).

¹² YS, 35.789. Several former references to Döre Temür in the *Yuan shi*, part of them cited by Bretschneider (*Mediaeval Researches*, 2: 14) and hence in Barthold and elsewhere, con-

the Anonymous Chaghatayid Coins Minted in 726–7 AH," *ONS Newsletter* 162 (2000): 9–11. I thank Dr. Tjong Yih for sending me this article.

⁹ Barthold, *Four Studies*, 1: 52, 134; see, e.g., J. A. Boyle, *The Successors of Genghis Khan* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1971), 343; P. B. Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic People* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), 303; J. P. Roux, *L'Asie centrale: Histoire et civilisations* (Paris: Fayard, 1997), 334; Karaev, *Chagatajskij ulus*, 41; Biran, *Qaidu*, 122. Indeed the Timurid chronicles, which preserved the most detailed description of the raid to Ghazna, claim that Tarmashirin was by then a Pādshāh, i.e., the reigning Chaghadaid Khan (see, e.g., Mīrkhwānd, 5: 511; *Maṭla' al-sa'dayn*, 96), but this seems to originate in their confused chronology regarding Tarmashirin's reign (see below, n. 25). No such title is given to Tarmashirin by his contemporary, Mustawfī Qazwīnī. (*Guzīda*, 577, 607).

¹⁰ *Yuan shi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976; hereafter YS), 30.669, 673. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's statement that Tarmashirin killed Kebek (3: 47) is not supported by other sources that stress Kebek's natural death (e.g., Mīrkhwānd, 5: 509).

¹¹ YS, 30.680, 31.699, 33.740, 34.754, 139.3352.

¹² Barthold, *Four Studies*, 1: 134 (though he concluded that Eljigidei was by then dead).

¹³ H. Yule, tr., *The Wonders of the East by Friar Jordanus* (1863; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, n.d.), 54.

¹⁴ Baranī, cited in I. H. Siddiqi, "Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq's Foreign Policy: A Reappraisal," *Islamic Culture*, 62 (1988): 5 and in P. Jackson, "The Mongols and the Delhi Sultanate in the Reign of Muhammad Tughluq (1325–1351)," *CAJ* 19 (1975): 123; see also P. Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A*

Some opposition from Döre Temür or his heirs might have continued even after this date,¹⁹ yet Tarmashirin's new status as the "official" Chaghadaid Khan at this time is evident from numismatic materials as well: from 731/1330–31 onward he inscribed his name on his coins.²⁰ Tarmashirin sent two tribute missions to the Yuan court in the first and seventh months of 1332,²¹ and in 1333 Ibn Battūta met him near Bukhara.²² In 734/1333–34 Tarmashirin still struck coins,²³ but not for long. A *manshūr* of the Delhi Sultan dated to this same year in which Muḥammad b. Tughlūq invited Transoxianan religious scholars, artisans, soldiers, and "victims of the oppressive behavior of the enemies of the Sharī'a" to immigrate to India, suggests that by the end of this year (summer 1334) the rebellion against Tarmashirin had begun.²⁴ The rebellion was led by Tarmashirin's nephew, Buzan son of Döre Temür, and supported by commanders of the eastern part of the Chaghadaid khanate. Tarmashirin tried to escape to Ghazna but was caught and killed probably in early 735 (summer-fall 1334)²⁵ near

fused the Chaghadaid prince with Döre Temür son of Yaqudu, a Toluid prince who was subject to the Yuan.

¹⁹ See YS, 35.794, where four months after Tarmashirin's accession an embassy of Döre Temür is recorded.

²⁰ Fedorov, 9–11; according to him, however, the inscribing of the name has nothing to do with Tarmashirin's accession, which he dated to 727/1327, but was the initiative of Tarmashirin's son Sanjar who served as his governor in Samarqand. For examples of Tarmashirin inscribed coins (of 732 and 733), see T. Mayer, comp. *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tübingen: Nord und Ostzentralasien*, vol. 15/2 (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth Verlag, 1998), 16.

²¹ YS, 36.801, 805. Neither Tarmashirin nor other Chaghadaids are mentioned in the Yuan chronicles afterwards, but this probably results from the absence of the veritable record (*shilu*) for the reign of the last Yuan emperor, Toghon Temür (1333–68) and not necessarily from the cutting of the relations. See the bibliographical essay in *Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6, 716ff.

²² Ibn Battūta, 3: 39 (tr. Gibb, 560 n. 73).

²³ Fedorov, 11.

²⁴ *Farā'id Ghiyāthi*, ms Fatih, fol. 454a–455b, cited in J. Aubin, "Le Khanat de Chaghatai et le Khorassan (1334–1380), *Turcica* 7 (1976): 22; Jackson, *Delhi*, 233–34.

²⁵ For the date, see al-Şafadī, *al-Wāfi bi'l-wafayāt*, ed. M. al-Bahit and M. al-Ĥiyārī (Beirut, 1981–97), 10: 382; al-Şafadī, *A'yan al-ʿaṣr wa-a'wān al-naṣr*, ed. ʿAlī b. Abū Zayd (Beirut: Dār al-fikr, 1998), 2: 105; abridged in Ibn Ḥajar *al-Durar al-kāmina* (Cairo: Dār al-kutub al-ḥadītha, 1966), 2: 51; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-kutub, 1934–73), 2: 389. Other Mamluk writ-

ters describe Tarmashirin as reigning over the Chaghadaids in later years; see, e.g., al-Jazarī for 735 (3: 751), 736 (3: 851–52), and 737 (3: 922–23) whereas his book ends; al-Shujāʿī, *Taʾriḫ al-malik al-nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn al-ṣāliḥi wa-awlādihī*, ed. B. Schäfer (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1985), 1: 17 for 738; Mufaḍḍal b. Abī al-Faḍāyil. *Agypten und Syrien Zwischen 1317 and 1341 in der Chronik des Mufaḍḍal b. Abī al-Faḍāyil*, ed. and tr. S. Kortantamer (Freiburg: Schwarz, 1973), 63–64 (for 738) and 90 (for 741). Earlier references of Mufaḍḍal to Chaghadaid rulers also suffer from this "delay." Timurid dates for Tarmashirin's death (usually 727 [see n. 8 for references], but see Fāsiṇī, *Mujmal-i Fāsiḥi* [Tus-Mashed: Bastan, 1339/1960], 3: 41, that gives 729) are obviously wrong. The Timurid confusion began with Kebek who according to them died in 721, and might have originated in their confusion of Kebek's two reigns (1309, 1318–26/27). See also Ibn Battūta's report on the posthumous adventures of Tarmashirin in India and Shiraz, even though he himself stated that Tarmashirin was killed by the rebels (Ibn Battūta, 3: 43–47; tr. Gibb, 3: 562–64).

²⁶ Yazdī, fol. 81a: *Shajarat al-atrāk*, fol. 114a (Samarqand); Khwāndamīr, 3: 51 (tr. Thackston 3/1: 90); Ibn Battūta, 3: 42–43 (tr. Gibb, 562); ʿAbd al-Razzāq, 125 (Nehsheb). The Qandīyya, a fifteenth-century manual of Samarqandi tombs, does not mention Tarmashirin's grave (ʿUmar b. Muḥammad, al-Nasafī, *Qandīyya (dar bayān-i mazārāt-i Samarqand)*, ed. I. Afshār [Tehran: Tahuri, 1955]).

²⁷ Al-Şafadī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382; al-Şafadī *A'yan*, 2: 51, stated he reigned for six years; Mīrkhwānd noted that Tarmashirin ruled for a long time, yet the (wrong) dates he gave make clear that Tarmashirin could not have ruled more than six years (721–27, which also includes the reign of Döre Temür) Mīrkhwānd, 5: 504.

²⁸ Barthold, *Four Studies*, 1: 134. Tarmashirin is derived from the Sanskrit *Dharmaśrī*, "venerable in the Dharma (the Buddhist law)".

²⁹ Mufaḍḍal, 63–64, 90; al-Jazarī, 3: 851, 922; al-ʿUmarī, *al-Taʿrif bi'l-muṣṭalah al-sharif* (Beirut: Dār al-kutub, 1988), 70.

TARMASHIRIN'S ISLAM

Judging by his name, Tarmashirin was born as a Buddhist.²⁸ After his conversion he adopted the name ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad and the title *Sulṭān al-aʿzam* (the most exalted sultan).²⁹ Tarmashirin converted to Islam in the last decade of his life when he was thirty or

more.³⁰ Yet it is hard to determine whether he converted in 725/1325, i.e., before he appears on the political scene, or in 729/1328–29, after his expedition to India. According to al-ʿUmārī, writing in the early 1340s, the Chaghadaid rulers had converted to Islam recently, after (*fī mā baʿd*) 725/1325, and Tarmashirin was the first Chaghadaid ruler to adopt Islam.³¹ Summarizing al-ʿUmārī's information, Ibn Khaldūn simply stated that Tarmashirin converted in 725/1325, and this view is sometimes cited in modern scholarship.³² This date is, however, brought into question by a letter, dated to 729/1328–29, from the Sultan of Delhi to the Ilkhan Abū Saʿīd. In this letter Muḥammad b. Tughlūq tried to persuade the Ilkhan to join forces in the name of Islam against the infidel Chaghadaid rulers in Khurāsān.³³ The letter does not mention Tarmashirin by name, yet, as Siddiqi suggested, it is probably a reaction to Tarmashirin's incursion into India earlier in 729. On this basis Siddiqi concluded that Tarmashirin converted to Islam around 729/1328–29). If this is the case, then Tarmashirin had a good political reason to embrace Islam: his conversion enabled him to establish friendly relations, attested by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, with the Delhi Sultan and to avoid the retaliation campaign the latter was planning against him.³⁴ It might be worth noticing that an anony-

mous Utrāri coin from 729, which Fedorov ascribes to Tarmashirin, bore the Muslim formula "*al-Sultān al-aʿẓam, khallada Allāh mulkahu*"³⁵ (The most exalted Sultan, may God render his kingship everlasting), and this suggests that by that date Tarmashirin was already a Muslim. If indeed Tarmashirin converted in late 729, aside from improving his relations with Delhi, he might have also aimed to bolster his chances in the struggle for the Chaghadaid throne, but we have no proof of that. Certainly if there was a connection between his conversion and his accession to the throne, it is much less direct than we find in Ghazan's case.³⁶

Thus we do not know when Tarmashirin was converted, nor do we know who converted Tarmashirin. But there is, in fact, a "perfect" candidate: Sheikh Yaḥyā Abū al-Mafākhir Bākharzī (d. 1336), a notable Sufi of the Kubrawiyya order who spent his last fifteen years in Bukhara. As the head of his family's endowment in Bukhara, Bākharzī was extremely rich, and was greatly respected by the Chaghadaid "sultans and kings."³⁷ He was also the grandson of Sayf al-Dīn Bākharzī, the sheikh who in the mid-thirteenth century converted Berke, then the Khan of the Golden Horde (1257–67) and the first Mongol prince to adopt Islam. Yet neither Bākharzī himself in his writings nor any of the many sources that mention him ever give him the credit for converting Tarmashirin.³⁸

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who also enjoyed Bākharzī's hospitality,³⁹ mentioned two (unidentified) religious figures who were closer to Tarmashirin: Sheikh Ḥasan, who was related to the khan in marriage, and the lawyer (*faqih*) and Sheikh Ḥusām al-Dīn Yāghī from Utrār.⁴⁰ The latter clearly had a certain influence on the khan—Ibn Baṭṭūṭa describes him rebuking Tarmashirin until the latter burst into tears⁴¹—yet neither he nor any other

³⁰ Al-Ṣafādī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382 said that he was around forty years old when he died, and see below.

³¹ ʿUmārī/Lech, 38–39.

³² Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-ʿibar* (Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1957), 5: 1129; J. Paul, "Scheiche und Herrscher im Khanat Čagatay," *Der Islam* (1990): 283 (probably owing more to Lech's inaccurate translation, ʿUmārī/Lech, 116).

³³ Anonymous, *Bayāḍ-i Tāj al-Dīn Aḥmad Wazīr*, ed. I. Afshār and M. Taymūrī (Isfahan, 1353/1974), 404–8. I thank Dr. Peter Jackson for sending me this text; see Siddiqi, 10–12; Jackson, *Delhi*, 233.

³⁴ Siddiqi, 14; as Jackson pointed out in his 1975 article, the Sultan of Delhi might have had internal reasons for his change of policy toward Tarmashirin. The date of the letter is also a bit problematic, as it can be read 727 or 729; and the embassy that most probably brought it is dated by other sources to 728 (Shabānkāraʿī, *Majmaʿ al-ansāb* [Tehran: Muʿasasat-i intishārāt-i amīr kabīr, 1363/1984], 277–78; *Mujmal-i Fāsihi*, 3: 39; see Jackson, *Delhi*, 233), which means it arrived before Tarmashirin's invasion, if indeed that took place in 729. The Sultan of Delhi might have been unaware of the Chaghadaid conversion or preferred to ignore it, to strengthen his relationship with the Ilkhans. For the cordial relations between the Muslim Tarmashirin and the Sultan of Delhi, see Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 43 (tr. Gibb, 3: 562); for the retaliation campaign against Khurāsān and its abandonment, see Jackson, *Delhi*, 263–65.

³⁵ V. P. Shekin, "Klad serebrianykh dinarov i dirkhmov Chagataidov XIV v.," *Epigrafika Vostoka* 23 (1985): 62.

³⁶ Melville, "Pādshāh-i Islām," 159–77.

³⁷ O. D. Chekhovich, *Bukhariskie dokumenty XIV veka* (Tashkent: Nauka, 1965), 36.

³⁸ For Yaḥyā Bākharzī, see Afshār's introduction to Bākharzī's book (Abū al-Mafāhir Yaḥyā Bākharzī. *Awrad al-aḥbāb wa fuṣūṣ al-ādāb*, ed. I. Afshār [Tehran: Intishārāt-i danishgāh-i Tihārān, 1966], esp. 26–31 and the many references there. For Bākharzī's important status in Bukhara before Tarmashirin's time and during his reign, see Chekhovitz, 196–201 (tr. 202–6); 36 (tr. 117). For Sayf al-Dīn Bākharzī and Berke's conversion see DeWeese, *Islamization*, 83–86 and the references there.

³⁹ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 27–28 (tr. Gibb, 3: 554).

⁴⁰ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 30, 33, 38 (tr. Gibb, 3: 556, 557, 559).

⁴¹ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 38 (tr. Gibb, 3: 559).

figure is credited as the one who actually converted the khan.⁴²

We can use Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's information, however, in trying to assess the religious circles that influenced Tarmashirin. The title "sheikh" usually refers to a Sufi master, and Ḥusām al-Dīn is described as "one of God's saintly servants . . . who made a vow to God never to accept anything from anyone,"⁴³ i.e., as an ascetic. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's description of Tarmashirin reciting the *dhikr* also suggests a Sufi influence on the khan.⁴⁴ Yet al-ʿUmarī's general statements that the conversion of Transoxiana was achieved with the help of *imāms*, religious scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*), sheikhs and devoted people (*atqiyāʾ*) or with lawyers (*fuqahāʾ*) and darwishes (*fuqarāʾ*) may imply that the Sufis cooperated with more orthodox religious scholars, or that the line between the two groups was not that clear cut.⁴⁵

Whoever converted Tarmashirin and whenever it happened, one thing is clear: Tarmashirin came to the Chaghadaid throne in 1331 as a Muslim ruler.

TARMASHIRIN AS A MUSLIM RULER

Tarmashirin's ascendancy had a significant impact on the foreign and domestic policies of the khanate. As we have seen, Tarmashirin's conversion might have improved his relations with the Delhi sultanate. It certainly improved his economic relations with Mamluk Egypt. After Tarmashirin's conversion, Transoxiana was opened to Egyptian and Syrian merchants, and the khan treated them with great respect.⁴⁶ No doubt, Tarmashirin's abo-

lition of the commercial duties not sanctioned by the Shariʿa (*mukūs*) in his domains was an additional incentive for those traders (and others). This policy might have given rise to a similar policy on the part of his neighbors, Muḥammad b. Tughlūq and the Ilkhan Abū Saʿīd.⁴⁷ Tarmashirin maintained diplomatic relations with the Mamluk sultanate, but these do not seem to have been very close.⁴⁸ If Tarmashirin's conversion affected his relationship with the other Muslim Mongol states, the Ilkhanate and the Golden Horde, we have no information to document the fact.⁴⁹

In his internal policies, Tarmashirin took great pains to strengthen the Islamic character of his realm: he actively spread the new religion throughout his domains,⁵⁰ called his commanders and soldiers to convert, and favored the Muslim warriors over their non-Muslim

⁴⁷ Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382; al-Ṣafadī, *Aʿyān*, 2: 105; Ibn Hajar, 2: 51 for Tarmashirin; al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 2: 69; Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira* (Cairo: Dār al-kutub al-Miṣriya, 1942), 9: s.a. 736 for Abū Saʿīd; Jackson, *Delhi*, 266, 272, for Muḥammad b. Tughlūq and for Tarmashirin.

⁴⁸ Tarmashirin certainly exchanged letters with the Mamluk court, (ʿUmarī, *Taʿrif*, 70 retrieved in Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā fi ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ* [Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-amiriyya, 1913–19], 4: 448; al-Jazarī, 3: 851–52, 922–23; Mufaḍḍal, 63–64, 90). Yet while Mamluk chronicles frequently mention the arrival of ambassadors from the Ilkhanate or the rarer embassies from the Golden Horde or from Delhi (see, e.g., K. V. Zettersteen, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mamlukensultane in den Jahren 690–741 der hira nach arabischen handschriften* [Leiden: Brill, 1919], 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 190, 192, 200, 215, 221), I have not come across any mention of a Chaghadaid embassy. Perhaps the Chaghadaid letters were brought by the Ilkhanid emissaries.

⁴⁹ The absence of information on Chaghadaid-Ilkhanate relations for this period is rather surprising. The last mentions of the Chaghadaids I have located refer to 728 when, during the struggle between Chūpān and Abū Saʿīd, the former and his allies sought refuge in the Chaghadaid realm (or intended to do that). See, e.g., Mufaḍḍal, 40; Ch. Melville, *The Fall of Amir Chupan and the Decline of the Ilkhanate, 1327–37: A Decade of Discord in Mongol Iran* (Bloomington: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Indiana Univ., 1999), 25 n. 66, 30. Tarmashirin is never mentioned in those chronicles, which refer to "the sons of Kebek." Al-Ṣafadī's mention of Marw as an important part of Tarmashirin's realm and his designation as the Sultan of Balkh may indicate that Tarmashirin took advantage of the turmoil in Khurāsān to broaden his territory there (al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382; *Aʿyān*, 2: 104–5; 5: 102).

⁵⁰ ʿUmarī/Lech, 41; *Shajarat al-atrāk*, fol. 113a; Yazdī, fol. 81a.

⁴² This is in sharp contrast to the important position of the Sufi sheikhs involved in the conversion of the other Mongol khans, who became legendary figures, or at least heroes of folk stories. The best example is that of Baba Tükles, the Sufi who converted Özbek, about whom see DeWeese, *Islamization*.

⁴³ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 38 (tr. Gibb, 3: 560); Paul, "Scheiche," 283; this Ḥusām al-Dīn Yāghī may be identical with Ḥusām al-Yāghī who was active in Bukhara in the 730s–740s, according to Sakhāwī, *al-Dawʾ al-lāmiʿ* (Beirut: Dār maktabat al-hayāt, 1966), 2: 195.

⁴⁴ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 36 (tr. Gibb, 3: 558); Paul, "Scheiche," 283.

⁴⁵ ʿUmarī/Lech, 38; ʿUmarī, *Taʿrif*, 70; cf. Paul, "Scheiche," 283; after all, Ḥusām al-Dīn is described as both a *faqih* and an ascetic. For earlier Transoxianan examples of religious scholars (*faqih*, *qādī*, *muftī*) who are also described as sheikhs or *zāhids*, see L. N. Dodkhudoeva, *Epigrafičeskie pamiatniki Samarkanda XI–XIV vv.*, vol. I (Doshanbe: Donish, 1992), 127, 128, 129, 142, 172, 189–90, 201, 219; for a similar situation under the Ilkhanate, see Amitai, "Sufis and Shamans," 36–37.

⁴⁶ ʿUmarī/Lech, 41.

colleagues.⁵¹ He also ordered the performance of the five daily prayers in public.⁵² Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's statement that Tarmashirin's successor allowed the Christians and Jews to rebuild their temples⁵³ suggests that Tarmashirin prohibited them from doing so. Yet in Tarmashirin's case we have none of the dramatic descriptions of wrecking the churches and temples or of slaughtering Buddhist priests, which form such an important part of other royal Mongol conversions.⁵⁴ This despite the fact that significant Buddhist and Christian communities, and even some Jews, were present in his realm.⁵⁵

His conversion, however, definitely brought Tarmashirin closer to his Muslim subjects. He ordered his army to avoid harming the population, and his just treatment of his subjects is very much emphasized.⁵⁶ Al-Ṣafadī claims that when the people of a certain city, governed by Tarmashirin's brother, came to complain about the latter's behavior, Tarmashirin suggested financial compensation. When they demanded a harsher punishment, however, he complied with their demand and killed his oppressive brother.⁵⁷ If this is not a *topos* but an historical fact, then aside from a manifestation of impartiality, Tarmashirin could have used the subjects' request as a pretext for the annihilation of a potential rival.

The sources especially praised Tarmashirin for the establishment of the Shari'ca in his realm.⁵⁸ This policy, however, had the obvious potential of colliding with the Mongol Yasa, especially since the Chaghadaids were known to be among its most fervent keepers.⁵⁹ The Yasa

was the legal code laid down by Chinggis Khan. There is an ongoing debate about its content, its scope, and whether it was a written or oral code.⁶⁰ Without getting into this debate, we still can state that whatever the Yasa originally was, the Mongols of the thirteenth and fourteenth century believed that it did exist and were keen on preserving it. The Yasa and the Shari'ca could easily contradict each other, yet the two systems also coexisted in later Central Asia for centuries, albeit not without tension, each having its own sphere of influence.⁶¹ Finding the balance between the two systems was a challenge for any Muslim Mongol khan. Ghazan managed to remain a great upholder of the Yasa even after his conversion,⁶² while Özbek simply executed the *amirs* who protested against the abandonment of the Yasa of Chinggis Khan in favor of the "old religion of the Arabs."⁶³ Tarmashirin, according to Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, abrogated specific aspects of the Yasa, as will be discussed below. Al-Ṣafadī, however, goes much further. According to him, Tarmashirin abolished the Yasa altogether and even defined it as "the most ignoble political system" (*ardhal al-siyāsāt*).⁶⁴ This lack of balance between the Shari'ca and the Yasa is usually given as the main reason for Tarmashirin's deposition.

WHY WAS TARMASHIRIN REMOVED FROM POWER?

According to al-Ṣafadī, Tarmashirin was not deposed, but abdicated of his own free will. Becoming extremely religious towards the end of his reign, he preferred to give up his rule and to live in seclusion on a lofty mountain. Before reaching that destination, however, he was caught by a certain commander and eventually executed by order of the new khan.⁶⁵ Yet such a description of

⁵¹ Ṣumari/Lech, 38–39; *Shajarat al-atrāk*, loc. cit.; Yazdī, loc. cit.; al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382; *A'yān*, 2: 104–5.

⁵² Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382; *A'yān*, 2: 104–5; see also Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's descriptions of Tarmashirin attending the prayers in public: Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 36–38 (tr. Gibb, 3: 558–59).

⁵³ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 46 (tr. Gibb, 3: 555).

⁵⁴ See, e.g., J. A. Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Ilkhans," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5: *The Saljuq and Mongol Periods*, ed. J. A. Boyle (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1968), 379–80; DeWeese, *Islamization*, 95–100.

⁵⁵ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 46 (tr. Gibb, 3: 555); Naṭanzī, 111; Abū al-Mafākhīr Bākhārzi, *Awrad al-ahbāb*, 297, 298, 309; W. Klein, *Das nestorianische Christentum an den Handelswegen durch Kirgizstan bis zum 14. Jh.* (Turnhout: Brespols, 2000), 110–11, 162, 167, 169.

⁵⁶ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 3: 31, 34 (tr. Gibb 3: 556, 557); al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382; al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān*, 2: 104–5; *Ta'rikh-i Alfī*, fol. 60b.

⁵⁷ al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān*, 2: 104–5.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*; *Shajarat al-atrāk*, loc. cit.; Yazdī, loc. cit.; Ṣumari/Lech, 41.

⁵⁹ E.g., Ṣumari/Lech, 41, 47; D. O. Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 99.

⁶⁰ For a recent assessment, see *EI*², "Yāsā. (D. O. Morgan); D. O. Morgan, "The Great Yasa of Chinggis Khan Revisited," forthcoming in *Mongols, Turks and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Outside World*, ed. R. Amitai and M. Biran.

⁶¹ For the relationship between the Yasa and the Shari'ca in Uzbek Central Asia, see R. D. McChesney, *Central Asia: Foundations of Change* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1996), 117–41; R. D. McChesney, "Zamzam Water on a White Felt Carpet: Adapting Mongol Ways in Muslim Central Asia, 1550–1650," in *Religion, Customary Law and Nomadic Technology*, ed. M. Gervers and W. Schlepp (Toronto: Joint Center for Asia Pacific Studies, 2000), 63–80.

⁶² R. Amitai-Preiss, "Ghazan, Islam and Mongol Tradition," 1–10.

⁶³ DeWeese, *Islamization*, 108–9.

⁶⁴ Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382; al-Ṣafadī, *A'yān*, 2: 104–5.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Tarmashirin is hard to reconcile with what we know about him from other sources: even though Ibn Baṭṭūta stresses Tarmashirin's devotion, he also describes him as a ruler who dutifully performs his administrative and juridical duties toward his subjects and troops and as a man more interested in hunting than in meditation.⁶⁶ Al-Ṣafadī's words seem to reflect a current rumor about a Chaghadaid Khan who became a saint of some sort,⁶⁷ but should not be taken at face value. We can suppose that Tarmashirin was indeed deposed. But was it because he was a Muslim?

Yazdī, Khwāndmīr, the *Shajarat al-atrāk*, and the *Ta'rikh-i Alfī* all stress that Buzan, who deposed Tarmashirin, was a non-Muslim, therefore implying a religious motive for the coup.⁶⁸ Ibn Baṭṭūta, who defines Buzan as "an ill-tainted and evil Muslim," gives more specific—and often quoted—reasons for Buzan's opposition to Tarmashirin: Tarmashirin abrogated the Yasa of Chinggis Khan by not conducting the annual *toy*, an assembly of the princes and nobility who had the power to depose a khan, nor did he visit his eastern territories, and especially Almaliq, the former Chaghadaid capital on the Ili river, for four years (i.e., throughout his reign).⁶⁹ Mamluk descriptions of Tarmashirin's territories (Bukhara, Samarqand, Balkh, and Marw; Ghazna and Transoxiana or Khurāsān and Transoxiana)⁷⁰ certainly support the latter accusation, and if al-Ṣafadī's description of Tarmashirin's relation to the Yasa is even remotely correct, then a rebellion would have been almost inevitable.

There are, however, other factors that can explain Tarmashirin's fate. First, from the outset of his reign Tar-

mashirin was in a very unfortunate position. He was the last in a long line of lateral successors to Du'a, which means that the lineal descendants of the former khans all had a potentially good claim to the throne. Indeed it was Buzan, son of Döre Temür, who deposed him, and among the latter's collaborators there were other nephews of Tarmashirin, e.g., Yangī, the son of Kebek, and Jankeshi and Yesü Temür, sons of Ebügen.⁷¹

Another possible reason for Tarmashirin's removal from power was an aspect of his policy that is mentioned only by al-Ṣafadī. According to the latter, Tarmashirin forced the Mongols to practice agriculture, over their protests.⁷² Indeed, the devastation that Ibn Baṭṭūta described in Samarqand, Balkh, Ghazna, and Marw, as well as the frequent references to ruins in the Bukharian *waqf* of 1326,⁷³ can explain the need for encouraging agriculture in the Chaghadaid realm.⁷⁴ By 1326 several Chaghadaid *amirs* owned lands or gardens near Bukhara,⁷⁵ though this does not necessarily mean that they practiced agriculture.⁷⁶ In general, a hundred years after Chinggis Khan the Mongol attitude toward agriculture had become much more complex than it had

⁷¹ Yazdī, fol. 81a; *Shajarat al-atrāk*, fol. 114a; Ibn Baṭṭūta, 3: 42–43 (tr. Gibb, 562). If indeed Tarmashirin had killed his brother, as al-Ṣafadī says (and Ibn Baṭṭūta's claim that Tarmashirin had killed his brother Kebek (3: 47) probably reflects a similar rumor), the reasons were more firm. Kebek died of natural causes before Tarmashirin's accession, but the brother that Tarmashirin might have killed could be either Döre Temür (if he outlived Tarmashirin, as the *Yuan shi* suggests) or Ebügen. The descendants of those two brothers were leading players in Tarmashirin's deposition.

⁷² Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382; al-Ṣafadī, *A'yan*, 2: 104–5.

⁷³ Ibn Baṭṭūta, 3: 52, 58–59, 63, 88 (tr. Gibb 3: 567, 571–72, 574, 590); Chekhovitz, e.g., 40, 41, 42, 94.

⁷⁴ An immediate parallel is Ghazan's endeavors to restore Iranian agriculture, though those did not necessarily involve Mongol work. See I. P. Petrushevski, "The Socio-Economic Condition of Iran under the Ilkhans," in *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5, 494ff.

⁷⁵ Chekhovitz, 58, 65, 67, 68, 75, 83, 84, 107.

⁷⁶ The only Mongols practicing agriculture in Central Asia that I have been able to identify are those mentioned in the 726 Bukharan *waqf*, who were among the slaves that worked on the *waqf* lands (Chekhovitz, 109; tr., 184); or, in Kebek times, those who sowed the fields on their way to attack the Yuan and enjoyed the harvests on their way back: Naṭanzī, 107–8; for earlier Mongol use of this method, see A. K. S. Lambton, "The *Athār wa-ahyā'* of Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Ḥamadānī and his Contributions as an Agronomist, Arboriculturist and Horticulturist," in *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, 146.

⁶⁶ Ibn Baṭṭūta, 3: 29, 30, 31, 34, 38–39 (tr. Gibb, 3: 555, 557, 558, 559); and see also ^cUmarī's enthusiastic description of the Transoxianan army (^cUmarī/Lech, 41).

⁶⁷ See, for example, Naṭanzī's description of Dorji Khan, allegedly Tarmashirin's heir, who even while eating was afraid to bite into his food lest he would have to pay for it on the day of resurrection (Naṭanzī, 111). The mysterious figure of Ḥalīl b. Yasawur, who became the teacher of Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband, is probably connected to this theme as well. On Ḥalīl, see Paul, "Sheikhe," 284–91.

⁶⁸ Yazdī, fol. 81a; *Shajarat al-atrāk*, fol. 113b; Khwāndmīr, 3: 51 (tr. 3/1: 90); *Ta'rikh-i Alfī*, fol. 60a.

⁶⁹ Ibn Baṭṭūta, 3: 40 (tr. Gibb, 3: 561).

⁷⁰ Al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, 10: 382; al-Ṣafadī, *A'yan*, 2: 104–5; Ibn Ḥajar, 2: 51; ^cUmarī, *Ta'rif*, 70 (though while describing the Chaghadaid realm in his *Masālik* he certainly includes the eastern parts of the Chaghadaid Khanate ^cUmarī/Lech, 36–37; cf. Mufaḍḍal, 63–64; see also Ibn Baṭṭūta, 3: 17–18 (tr. Gibb 3: 548) where Almaliq is described as the last town in the province of Transoxiana and the first town of China.

been earlier.⁷⁷ Still, if al-Şafadī is right, and Tarmashirin indeed forced the Chaghadaid Mongols to till the soil, it seems like a recipe for political suicide.

There were, therefore, several reasons for Tarmashirin's deposition, not all of them connected to his religion or even to his religious policies. The combination of his attitude towards the Yasa, his family situation, and his agricultural policy would have been powerful enough, and the fact that most of his opponents had a separate geographical base in the eastern part of the khanate certainly did not help him.

It is not surprising, then, that Tarmashirin was deposed. What is surprising is that, despite his short rule and its inglorious end, the coup against him did not change the Muslim character of his realm.⁷⁸ This statement, however, must be qualified: Jankeshi (r. December 1335–38),⁷⁹ the khan who after Buzan's short rule succeeded Tarmashirin, was sympathetic towards the Christians in Almaliq,⁸⁰ and Naţanzī describes him as a devout Buddhist. Following the counsel of his Buddhist priests (*bakhshiyān*), Jankeshi erected many Buddhist temples and set up idols in every mosque.⁸¹ Exaggerated as this description probably is,⁸² it certainly reflects a non-Muslim rule, albeit a short-lived one. Another reservation is that by Tarmashirin's death the eastern part of the Chaghadaid Khanate, where Jankeshi spent most of his time, was not fully Islamized.⁸³ Tarmashirin's achieve-

ment was therefore limited to the western part of the Chaghadaids, later known as Ulus Chaghatay.⁸⁴ And yet, even the full Islamization of the Ulus Chaghatay would have been a profound change. Since it is hard to believe that such a profound change was achieved only during Tarmashirin's short rule, let us examine what we know about Chaghadaid Islamization up to his reign.

CHAGHADAID ISLAMIZATION BEFORE TARMASHIRIN

The first Muslim ruler in the Chaghadaid Khanate was the short-lived sixth khan, Mubārak Shāh (r. 1266). His heir, Baraq (r. 1266–71) embraced Islam on the eve of his death, after a major military defeat suffered in 1270.⁸⁵ In both cases there is no evidence suggesting any Muslim policy of those khans, and Abū Ghāzī especially noted that Baraq's conversion had no lasting effect on the Chaghadaids.⁸⁶ In the early fourteenth century another Muslim khan, Naliqoʿa (r. 1308–9), took the Chaghadaid throne. He attempted to convert his army commanders, a policy that (combined with his non-Duʿaid origins) led to his swift deposition.⁸⁷ Yasawur, a Chaghadaid prince who contested the throne in the early fourteenth century was also a Muslim.⁸⁸ Chaghadaid genealogy, most fully recorded in the anonymous Timurid compilation, the *Muʿiz al-ansāb*, enables us to identify certain princes as Muslim by their names. The limitations of this method do not allow for quantitative estimation, but it is clear that among Tarmashirin's generation and the one that preceded him several Chaghadaid princes were already Muslims.⁸⁹

This is also true for the Mongol commanders: al-ʿUmārī explicitly says that some of Tarmashirin's com-

⁷⁷ For a discussion of late-Ilkhanid *amirs'* attitude toward agriculture, see R. Amitai, "Turco-Mongolian Nomads and the Iqtāʿ System in the Islamic Middle East (c. 1000–1400)," in *Nomads and the Sedentary World*, ed. A. M. Khazanov and A. Wink (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2001), 156–65.

⁷⁸ See n. 1.

⁷⁹ For the dates, see M. Ch. Dzhumagulov, "Die syrisch-türkischen Denkmäler in Kirgisien," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientalforschung* 14 (1968), 478; Aubin, "Khorassan," 24 n. 34.

⁸⁰ Barthold, *Four Studies*, 1: 134; see H. Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither*; rpt. Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint Limited, 1967), 3: 31–32, quoting the evidence of Bartholomew of Pisa.

⁸¹ Naţanzī, 114.

⁸² See, e.g., al-Sakhawī's description of Samarqandi scholarship in those years; he does not mention any threat to the continuity of Muslim learning (Sakhawī, 2: 194–95).

⁸³ The Islamization of Moghulistan is ascribed to Tughluq Temür, the eastern Chaghadaid Khan who converted around 1350. See Mirza Khaydar-i Doghlat, *Taʿrikh-i Rashīdī*, ed. and trs. W. M. Thackston (Cambridge, Mass: Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard Univ., 1996), 1: 10 ff.

⁸⁴ This is indeed the term the later sources use (Yazdī, Abū Ghāzī, *Shajarat al-atrāk*; see n. 1 for references). It was also the part of the Chaghadaid realm of which ʿUmārī and Mustawfī were mostly aware.

⁸⁵ For Mubārak Shāh and Baraq, see Biran, *Qaidu*, 23–32.

⁸⁶ Abū Ghāzī, 159.

⁸⁷ Waşşāf, *Taʿrikh-i Waşşāf* (rpt. Tehran, 1338/1959–60), 518–19; Qāshānī, *Taʿrikh-i ʿUljaytū* (Tehran: Banj-i tarjumah wa-nashr-i kitāb, 1969), 148; Barthold, *Four Studies*, 1: 131–32; Biran, *Qaidu*, 77, 93 (where the khan is wrongly named Taliq).

⁸⁸ Qāshānī, 213; see also K. Kato, "Kebek and Yasawur—The Establishment of the Chaghatay Khanate," *Memories of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 49 (1991): 100, 110.

⁸⁹ *Muʿiz al-ansāb*, fols. 30b–38a. Muslim princes prevail especially among the descendants of Basar b. Yesun Tʿua, Baraq Khan's brother (fol. 30b).

manders converted before him;⁹⁰ and at least from the early fourteenth century, Chaghadaid *amirs* who bore Muslim names are attested in narrative sources.⁹¹ A fuller list of Chaghadaid commanders from the tribe of Temür, the Barlas, whose appanage was in the region of Kesh in Transoxiana, is given in the *Mu^ciz al-ansāb* for the period from the rise of Chinggis Khan to the rise of Temür. J. E. Woods, who studied this genealogy, concluded that by Tarmashirin's time fifty to seventy percent of the commanders from this branch bore Arab Muslim names.⁹² There is also indirect evidence for the islamization of rank and file Mongols by that time: Bukharan *waqf* documents from 726/1326 describe numerous villages and fields that supported the mausoleum and *khānqāh* of the Kubrawi sheikh Sayf al-Dīn Bā-kharzī. Apart from demonstrating the extensive material foundations of the Kubrawiyya in Bukhara, which impressed Ibn Baṭṭūṭa as well, the documents devote a special place to provisions for purchase and manumission of slaves acquired to work the lands supporting the endowment. The list of slaves included several people noted as Mongols (as well as Chinese [or Khitans] and Indians), who must have been converted by the *waqf* holders.⁹³ Therefore the islamization of the Chaghadaids in Tarmashirin's time did not begin from the ruler downwards.⁹⁴ It looks more as if Tarmashirin's pro-Muslim policies were an accelerating factor, which transformed a mixed society into a more Muslim one.⁹⁵ In Transoxiana the additional conversions created by his policies sufficed to establish a Muslim character in the whole region. This was the basis for Tarmashirin's fame.

But why was this fame so limited? In conclusion, let us return to the question posed at the beginning of this study. Why did Tarmashirin's conversion not give him a place like that of Ghazan, Özbek, Tughluq Temür (or even Berke) in their own realms? Why do we know so little about Tarmashirin's conversion, both about how it happened and about how it was understood to have hap-

pened, to use DeWeese's terminology.⁹⁶ Why is there no conversion story? Besides the general paucity of sources about the Chaghadaid Khanate, other reasons come to mind.

First, if the interpretation suggested in the previous pages is accurate, Tarmashirin's islamization was a continuation, perhaps partly an outcome, of the conversion process in Transoxiana, rather than a real breakthrough, as presented by the sources. The same situation, however, did not prevent Ghazan Khan from becoming the focus of the Ilkhanate's conversion stories.

More important, and in sharp contrast to both Ghazan and Özbek,⁹⁷ as a ruler Tarmashirin was a failure. His uncontested rule was very short. It lacked any remarkable achievement, and ended in a shameful deposition. This is not material that easily creates myths.

Yet Tarmashirin's marginalization in the Central Asian collective memory derives not only from his poor performance as ruler but also from the later development of the Chaghadaid Khanate.⁹⁸ After Tarmashirin's death the Chaghadaid Khanate entered upon turmoil that resulted in the division of the Khanate into two political entities, the western part, Transoxiana, and the eastern part, Moghulistan. The western half of the khanate, which had been Tarmashirin's power base, was soon subservient to Tamerlane (r. 1370–1405). As shown by Beatrice Manz,⁹⁹ Temür, a non-Chinggisid, tried to build a double legitimacy based on his role as both guardian and restorer of the Mongol empire, and his position as a Muslim warrior of faith and defender of Islam. While he married a Chaghadaid princess and nominated a puppet khan, of the Ögödeid or Chaghadaid branches, Temür was keen on keeping the puppet in his place. A glorification of Tarmashirin, both a Chaghadaid khan and a Muslim, could have been inconvenient for Temür, especially since Tarmashirin's descendants might have been still resident in his court.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁰ cUmarī/Lech, 38.

⁹¹ See, e.g., Waṣṣāf, 518–19.

⁹² *The Timurid Dynasty* (Bloomington: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, Indiana Univ., 1990), 12.

⁹³ Chekhovich, esp. 109 (tr. 184); DeWeese, "The Eclipse of the Kubrawiya in Central Asia," *Iranian Studies* 21.1–2 (1988): 48–49.

⁹⁴ See the same conclusion in relation to the Ilkhanate in Melville, "Pādshāh-i Islām," 171–72.

⁹⁵ Cf. Woods' conclusion, according to which Tarmashirin converted because of the *amirs'* former conversion. (*Timurid Dynasty*, 12).

⁹⁶ DeWeese, *Islamization*, 22.

⁹⁷ For Özbek, see *ibid.*, 91–92; for Ghazan, see Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History," 379–97, esp. 396.

⁹⁸ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's description of Tarmashirin's "after life" in Delhi and Shiraz (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa 3: 43–47 [tr. Gibb, 3: 562–64]) suggests that several years after his death he was still remembered at least among the substantial Transoxianan community in India, though not necessarily in very heroic terms.

⁹⁹ "Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty," *Iranian Studies* 21.1–2 (1988): 105–22.

¹⁰⁰ In 771 Temür gave Tarmashirin's daughter, formerly the wife of *amir* Ḥusayn, to Bahram Jalāyir, another of his emirs. Mīrkhwānd, 6: 78–79; Khwāndamīr, 3: 418 (tr. Thackston, 3/1,

Moreover, Temür's brilliant career provided the Ulus Chaghatay with a better focus of communal identity than Tarmashirin could have done. The Muslim Turco-Mongolian identity in Transoxiana therefore built itself on the political success of Temür and his heirs, not around its Islamizers. While the Mongol component was an important part of Temür's ideology and Timurid legitimacy, Temür never limited himself to the Chaghadaid branch. Taking Chinggis Khan as his model, he gathered around him a host of Mongol princes from the different Chinggisid houses. Portraying himself as the protector of all of them, he therefore managed to legitimize his conquests in every territory that had once belonged to the Mongol empire.¹⁰¹ Temür's successors, from Shāh Rūkh onward, did not neglect their connection to the Chaghadaids. Yet, based in Iran and ruling over a smaller realm, they preferred to take the Ilkhans,

240); see also Mirkhwānd 6: 307 for Temür's acknowledgment of Tarmashirin's superiority on the eve of his invasion to India.

¹⁰¹ B. F. Manz, "Mongol History Rewritten and Relived," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la méditerranée* 89–90 (2000): 137–41.

and especially Ghazan, as their heroes.¹⁰² Later, when the Chinggisid Uzbeks had defeated the Timurids and took over Transoxiana (1501), they turned to their ancestors—Jochids and not Chaghadaids—when creating their own identity myths.¹⁰³ Later Chaghadaid traditions originated mainly in the eastern part of the khanate, in Moghulistan,¹⁰⁴ not in Transoxiana, thus making Tughluq Temür and not Tarmashirin the subject of the Chaghadaid conversion stories.

¹⁰² Manz, "Mongol History," 143–47, where she also explains several of Shāh Rūkh's acts, such as the commission of historical writing in continuation of Rashīd al-Dīn's work or the efforts to hold the region of Tabriz, formerly the Ilkhanid capital, as originating in Shāh Rūkh's attempts to model himself after the Ilkhans. Another reason for choosing the Ilkhanate might have been that, unlike the Chaghadaids, it was totally extinguished by Timurid time.

¹⁰³ See De Weese, *Islamization*.

¹⁰⁴ For several examples, see Hodong Kim, "Muslim Saints in the 14th to the 16th Centuries of Eastern Turkestan," *International Journal of Central Asian Studies* 1 (1996): 285–322.