

THE PORTRAITS AND CAREER OF MOHAMMED ALI, SON OF KAZEM-BEG: SCOTTISH MISSIONARIES AND RUSSIAN ORIENTALISM¹

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*'The Lord be praised for this
trophy of his grace'*
(Richard Knill's Journal)

(PLATES I-IV)

The occasion for the present article was the appearance for sale in a London auction of the portrait, apparently by the Scottish painter Sir William Allan (1782-1850), reproduced here on pl. I. It represented a young Persian gentleman in mid-nineteenth-century dress. On the back was a label in a later hand, which read:

*'Muzjd [read Mirza?] Mohammed Ali Bey / Professor of Oriental
Languages / University of Hazan / Painted by Sir William All...'*

On 26 March 1987 the present writer received an inquiry from the cataloguer, Karen Taylor, seeking help with the identification of the sitter and his place of residence. Some rapid inquiries were made at the time, from which it appeared that the university was probably that of Kazan in eastern Russia, and that the sitter may have had some connexion with a teacher of Persian known to the celebrated Russian Orientalist V. V. Bartol'd. However, records relating to Kazan then available in London were insufficient to support a definite identification. The portrait was sold as Lot no. 352 in the auction held on 4th November 1987, and was reproduced in the catalogue of the sale.² Subsequent research, and inquiries in Russia, have brought forth fuller information about the sitter, a person whose career was unusual and distinguished, and who may be considered one of the founders of Oriental Studies at St. Petersburg. In spite of the time which has passed since the sale, it seems worth while to put the resulting information on record. Notwithstanding the Scottish interest of the story, the facts are not easily accessible in English, and there are details which further research in various archives, Scottish, Russian and possibly Turkish, might greatly clarify.

That the seat of Mohammed Ali's professorship was indeed Kazan was quickly confirmed. Russian colleagues, who kindly made inquiries on the writer's behalf, soon traced a considerable bibliography for his career, though

¹ For the help with the bibliography of this article and much other advice, the author is indebted to Professors Y. V. Gankovsky and B. A. Litvinsky of Moscow, I. C. Cunningham (National Library of Scotland), Lindsay M. Errington (National Gallery of Scotland), Helen E. Smailes (Scottish National Portrait Gallery), Charles Hind (Sothebys); to my colleagues H. T. Norris, Turkhan Gandjei, and A. H. Morton of SOAS; and to Mrs. Olga Lawrence, whose summaries from the Russian text of Rzaev (1989) have greatly extended my use of his information. Without their help little progress would have been made with an inquiry extending far beyond the writer's field.

² Sale Catalogue, Sotheby's *Topographical paintings watercolours and drawings, particularly of American, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, South African, Asian, South American, Greek and Middle Eastern interest*, London, Wednesday 4th November 1987, 158, no. 352.

few of these sources could be found in England.³ According to their information, the following facts emerged.

Mohammed Ali (1802/3–70) was born at Resht in Persia on 22 June 1802,⁴ or, according to another version, on 3 August 1803.⁵ We shall see that he had later been residing, with his father Kazem-Beg, at Darband (Derbent), and came to Astrakhan in 1821. According to the most detailed of the Russian biographies, that of A. K. Rzaev (1989), the father's full designation was actually Hājji Qāsim Kazem-Beg, the similarity of the middle two elements being a possible source of confusion in European transliterations. Mohammed Ali became acquainted with Scottish missionaries established at Astrakhan, one or two of whom he had in fact previously encountered at Darband. It seems that an important contact in this regard was William Glen, one of those who visited Darband.⁶ He could apparently converse in Persian, and could have communicated with Mohammed Ali in that language. According to the *Brief Memoir*⁷ the latter received some European education from the missionaries, to whom, as we shall see later, he also gave lessons in Arabic and Turkish. In respect of this mutual instruction, it is indeed far from clear in which direction the balance of obligation lay. In 1823, according to these sources, Mohammed Ali adopted Christianity, evidently of the Presbyterian denomination, assuming the name Alexander. He thus came to be known in Russian circles by his baptismal name as Aleksandr Kasimovitch Kazem-Beg. We shall see that in 1825 he entered the Russian official service, and was instructed to proceed to Omsk. On the way, however, he stayed at Kazan, where he became acquainted with the authorities of the Imperial University there. The impression he made upon them was so great that he was in due course appointed to a post in the university. In 1849 he transferred to St. Petersburg, where he remained until shortly before his death on 27 November 1870.

This sketch of Mohammed Ali's career gave the first hint of his connexion with the Scottish missionaries, a contact likely to have occasioned his choice as a portrait subject by the Scottish artist. However, these indications raised some intriguing questions. What were Scottish missionaries doing at so remote a place as Astrakhan in 1821, and why did they encounter Mohammed Ali? How far did Mohammed Ali learn to speak English from the missionaries, or did they communicate only in Persian or Russian? How and when, if in fact at all, did our subject meet Sir William Allan? Was Sir William, in turn, acquainted with the Scottish missionaries? These questions lead to a three-way inquiry: into the Scottish archives relating to the activities of the missionaries at Astrakhan and elsewhere; the rather sketchy records concerning the travels of Sir William Allan; and those relating to the life of Mohammed Ali, and to the Universities of Kazan and St. Petersburg.

The activities of Scottish Presbyterian missionaries in Russia during the early nineteenth century form a remarkable episode, little known to the general

³ See entries in bibliography under Baratynskaya, Zagoskin, and Zakiev.

⁴ A. K. Rzaev, *Mukhammad Ali M. Kazem-Bek* (Moskva, 1989), 22.

⁵ The first date is given by Rzaev, 22. But since he places Hājji Qāsim's return from Mecca already in 1802, and his marriage subsequent to this, there must be some discrepancy, possibly arising from the problems of converting Hijri dates, and the Old and New Style datings in Russia. The later date is that of 'A.K.', which seems on the face of it the more plausible.

⁶ *Brief Memoir*, 15 'Messrs Glen and Dickson, as soon as he was introduced to them, recognized in him an old acquaintance. They had been on a missionary excursion to Darbent, where they had frequently met with young Mohamed Ali, had frequent conversations, and had given him a New Testament.'

⁷ p. 80, 'He feels a strong desire to become acquainted with our language, which he expects to open up for him a mine of information from which he is at present excluded, and being of uncommonly quick parts, as formerly mentioned, Dr Ross has commenced giving him lessons.'

readership today. Scottish craftsmen and specialists had no doubt been settling in Russia in numbers since the time of Peter the Great. Some perhaps had gone as refugees after the Jacobite risings, and others on account of economic pressures. Their sturdy merits evidently earned the respect of the aristocracy. Owing, it seems, to some exercise of influence at the Russian Imperial court, concessions were given to the missionaries to establish settlements near the frontiers of the expanding Russian Empire, and even to seek and baptize converts not only from pagan communities whom they might encounter, but also, apparently, even from among Muslims. It might be thought such concessions would infringe the prerogatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, and in the records there are occasional suggestions of friction having thus arisen. Yet in the event, as might perhaps have been anticipated, the number of converts, apparently no more than ten in all, was hardly so great as to create a serious problem.

A missionary station was founded at Karass, in the Caucasus,⁸ in 1802. Karass was near Piyatigorsk, between Stavropol and Vladikavkaz (subsequently Ordzhonikidze). Later, again, in 1815, other missions were established: at Orenburg, north-west of the Caspian Sea, and, apparently in 1821, at Astrakhan, where the mission continued to operate until 1838. The number of prospective converts to Christianity at all these stations, was, however, as we have seen limited, understandably a disappointment to the missionaries. At Karass, in any event, a source of converts was nevertheless found. It appears that local law here, based presumably on considerations of the Muslim *shari'a*, and deriving from the Crimean Tatar Khanate, recognized the enslavement of prisoners of war, at any rate those classified as pagans. Such persons were moreover being purchased and sold locally in the slave market. Indeed this situation is illustrated in the famous painting of about 1815 by Sir William Allan.⁹ A large proportion of such prisoners were Kabardians, who had rebelled against the Russian government, and were the object of punitive campaigns. It was therefore open to the missionaries also to purchase prospective converts in the slave market—thereby of course rescuing them from a distressing fate—or, to use the terminology adopted, to ‘ransom’ them. Those so ransomed might be converted to Christianity, and were expected to work on the missionary settlement until twenty-three years old. By 1813, at Karass, 16 boys, seven girls, three women, and two men (a total of 28) had been recruited in this way. Of these, nine had been baptized, six had died, and six had been kidnapped or had returned to their tribes. Three of the females married members of the mission. J. T. Davidson’s first wife, Margaret, of the Dugor tribe, died in 1811. He later married Malek Khan, a Kabardian. Another Kabardian, a male, Teoona, was christened as John Abercrombie, and was later trained as a printer. On 27 December 1826, this John Abercrombie visited Richard Knill, the pastor in St. Petersburg, who records in his *Journal*:¹⁰ ‘Had a visit from John Abercrombie—a lad who was born on the Cabardian mountains but was brought acquainted with the gospel by the grace of God thro’ the Scottish miss(ionaries) near the Caucasus. This young man told me that

⁸ Jones (1975), 57.

⁹ ‘Circassians selling captives of a neighbouring nation to a Turkish Pasha, the scene taking place at the residence of the Turk’. This was one of the paintings subject of the famous lottery, organized by Sir Walter Scott, when 100 subscribers staked ten pounds each, and which was won by the Earl of Wemyss. (Cf. J. G. Lockhart, *The life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.*, London, 1893, 394; H. J. C. Grierson (ed.), *The letters of Sir Walter Scott*, v, 322, n. 2. From this picture, still in private hands, there exists an engraving by J. Stewart. For these references I am grateful to Miss Helen Smailes.)

¹⁰ Richard Knill, *Journal*, 192. (SOAS Archives. Journals (1) Russia 1818–1831: P. Knill, Russia, etc. 1819–1831.)

he is often filled with the deepest amazement at the love of God to him, that he should be granted to love Xt. when many who have been nursed in the cradle of Xty. are haters of the Redeemer.' What had aroused the convert's bitterness is not explained, but John Abercrombie was still in the area of Karass, long after the closing of the mission, in the 1870s. At that time he met the Scottish traveller Mackenzie Wallace, with whom he could still converse in English with a pronounced Scots accent.¹¹ Whether from this we should infer that Mohammed Ali also learned to speak some English is, however, not immediately clear. We shall see in due course that his acquaintance with the language may have begun around 1822.

The encounter of the missionaries at Astrakhan with Mohammed Ali is described at some length in the missionary records:¹²

p. 425: In 1815, two new stations were begun, the one at Astrachan, on the river Wolga, the other at Orenburg, a town to the north of the Caspian Sea. In the neighbourhood of Astrachan, there were a number of Tartar villages which were visited by some of the missionaries; but the reception they met with was far from encouraging. In that city, there were also resident a number of Persians; and at first they appeared to give a much more favourable reception than the Tartars; but when the novelty was over, they were no longer disposed to enter into conversation on the subject of religion, and wished to avoid all intercourse with them. But there was one man named Mahomed Ali, who appeared to be a promising convert to Christianity. This young Persian was the only surviving son of Haji Kazem Beg, a venerable old man, who was descended from one of the principal families of Derbend, and who, until within these few years, held the office of chief kazi or judge in that city.

It may be noted here that at the time of Mohammed Ali's birth at Resht in 1802 or 1803, the city of Darband was Persian territory, and was acquired (for the fourth time) by the Russian Empire in 1806. His father, Ḥājī Qāsim Kazem-Beg (according to Rzaev) was the youngest son of Ḥājī Muḥammad-khān Beg, who had settled in the region during the campaigns in the area of Nadir Shah. During the fighting with Russia, Ḥājī Qāsim Kazem-Beg had undertaken the pilgrimage to Mecca, where he took up studies in Muslim jurisprudence. On his return after the establishment of peace, he was appointed Chief Qāḍī of Darband, evidently with the approval of the Russian authorities. His situation seemed sufficiently secure for him to bring his wife and child from Rasht in 1811. Even after his exile to Astrakhan which is described below, in conditions which do not seem to have been onerous, he appears to have regarded himself as a Persian subject. As we shall see he resorted to the Persian consul, 'Mirza Abdool', in connexion with his family dispute. The narrative continues as follows:

Having, on grounds which are not well understood, been accused and convicted of treason, the old man had all his property confiscated by order of the governor-general of Georgia, and was sent along with some others a prisoner to Astrachan. Feeling himself lonely in his present situation, he wrote to his son Mahomed Ali at Derbend, to come and be the companion of his exile, a request with which the young man immediately complied. As the Haji had been previously acquainted with the missionaries, the son,

¹¹ Jones, 53-4.

¹² Brown (1854), II, 425-9.

after his arrival, frequently visited them, and was employed in giving some of them lessons in Turkish and Arabic.

It appears from the account in the *Brief Memoir* that Mohammed Ali had previously met the missionaries during a visit by William Glen, and a companion, to Darband, and was therefore already acquainted with them. Glen, a competent Orientalist, could evidently converse in Persian, and it was apparently through conversation in this language that their acquaintance developed, although the missionaries may also have been fluent in Russian, which Mohammed Ali learnt thoroughly only later. He was also, of course, proficient in Azari Turkish.

Frequent discussions took place between him and his pupils on the subject of religion; but he at first firmly opposed everything that was said concerning the gospel. He even became at times quite angry, and gave vent to his feelings in blasphemous expressions regarding the Redeemer; yet still there appeared a marked difference between him and most /426/ other Mahomedans; and within a few days after such ebullitions of passion, he would again renew his inquiries, and endeavour to provoke discussion. He at length appeared to become a serious inquirer after truth, and seemed to be deeply impressed with the sense of his sinfulness and misery; he could not even sleep at night, so keenly did he feel the convictions of a wounded spirit; but after some time he obtained peace to his conscience, through the application, it was hoped, of the peace-speaking blood of Jesus.

This rather enigmatic phrase suggests that already at this time, Mohammed Ali may have privately professed Christianity, and been admitted to the communion service. However, his public profession, as we shall see, took place somewhat later.

His father, as may naturally be supposed, was deeply grieved at his apostasy: sometimes his bowels appeared to yearn over him with all the tenderness of a parent's heart; at other times, he treated him with the utmost harshness. One day, having assembled a number of Persians, he required him, in the presence of them all, to renounce the new opinions he had imbibed; and when Mahomed Ali refused to do so, the old man, in a great passion, sent for the Persian consul, and told his son that unless he recanted, he would get him bound hand and foot, and given up to the police. 'Father', replied Mahomed, 'I cannot recant; my flesh would willingly become a Mahomedan, but my conscience will not allow me.' Here his father reminded him that all their controversies about matters of faith were determined by the sword. 'A sure proof', replied Mahomed, 'that your religion is not of God; for he does not need such carnal weapons to decide matters of faith.' His father, full of rage, ordered the servant not to give him any food; and Mahomed Ali had accordingly to go to bed fasting; but after about 11 o'clock, his father, who had been out on business, returned, and coming to his bedside, gently awoke him. 'My son', said he, 'you see I am an old man; have compassion on my white beard: do not grieve me by becoming an infidel.' 'Father', replied the young man, 'you are my parent, and it is my duty to obey you in everything; but why should you demand of me that obedience which I owe to God only? In this one thing, I cannot obey you.'

Mahomed continued to visit the missionaries daily; but as for two successive days he did not make his appearance as usual, they became anxious for his personal safety. It afterwards appeared that he was confined

as a prisoner by his father: that he had been severely beaten, and was left in great mea-/427/sure without food.

Conceiving it to be their duty to adopt some means for his protection, they called on the Haji, and after some conversation stated to him that they would have applied immediately to the governor to protect his son, but that in order to save him trouble they had come first to him. The father in a rage declared that neither the governor nor the emperor could interfere in a case like the present, that he had the power not only to imprison his son, to beat and to starve him, but even, according to the Mahomedan law, to put him to death. They, therefore, applied immediately to the governor to protect Mahomed Ali from the rage of his enemies, and in consequence of this he was brought the same evening by the police-master to the mission-house. On being asked as to his state of mind during the time he was confined by his father, he said that notwithstanding all the wrangling and abuse to which he was exposed, he felt quite peaceful and happy. The meekness with which he bore the ill-usage of the Persians who came to argue with him, was also pleasing proof of the influence of divine faith on his heart, and was calculated to make a strong impression on the minds of his countrymen.

Mahomed Ali having been thus safely lodged in the mission-house by the civil authorities, the anxiety of the missionaries regarding him was for the present relieved, but there now arose a new cause of apprehension and alarm. By the laws of Russia, heathens and Mahomedans subject to the imperial government can be instructed and baptized only by the priests of the Greek church; and proceeding on this law the Archbishop of Astrachan required that he should be placed under a Greek priest with a view to his being baptized in the Greek church. The missionaries represented to the archbishop the privileges which had been conferred by his imperial majesty on the Scottish colony at Karass, of which they were members, and it was finally settled that their right to baptize him should be referred to the emperor, and that in the meanwhile he should be allowed to remain under their care. Mahomed Ali accordingly addressed a petition to the Emperor Alexander, begging that he might be allowed to receive baptism from the missionaries who had been the instruments of his conversion to the Christian faith, and the Archbishop of Astrachan also made a communi-/428/cation to the government on the subject.

This conversion and the related correspondence is duly noted in Richard Knill's *Journal* for 15/25 May 1823:¹³ 'Another letter came this day from Astrachan reporting the desired conversion of Mahommed Ali and of his firm endurance of stripes and imprisonment—of parting with father and family and friends for Xt's sake. The Lord be praised for this trophy of his grace. May he [i.e. Mahommed Ali] long live to show forth thy praise. Amen.' And on Friday 18/30 May 'Prince Galitzin sent word to Mr Blyth and myself. I came to him in the morning at 10 and Mr Venning was requested to accompany us. We all had an interview with the excellent Prince for nearly an hour. The subject of the Miss(ionaries') letter about Mohammed Ali, the Persian letter, the Archbishop's letter, the Karass privileges, etc., etc., were all discussed.' It is an interesting point that Mohammed Ali's own petition was in Persian.

It may be noted that a much fuller account of Mohammed Ali's conversion, with detailed descriptions of his anxieties and states of mind, the names of the missionaries with whom he held discussions, and the text of two significant

¹³ Knill, *Journal*, 47.

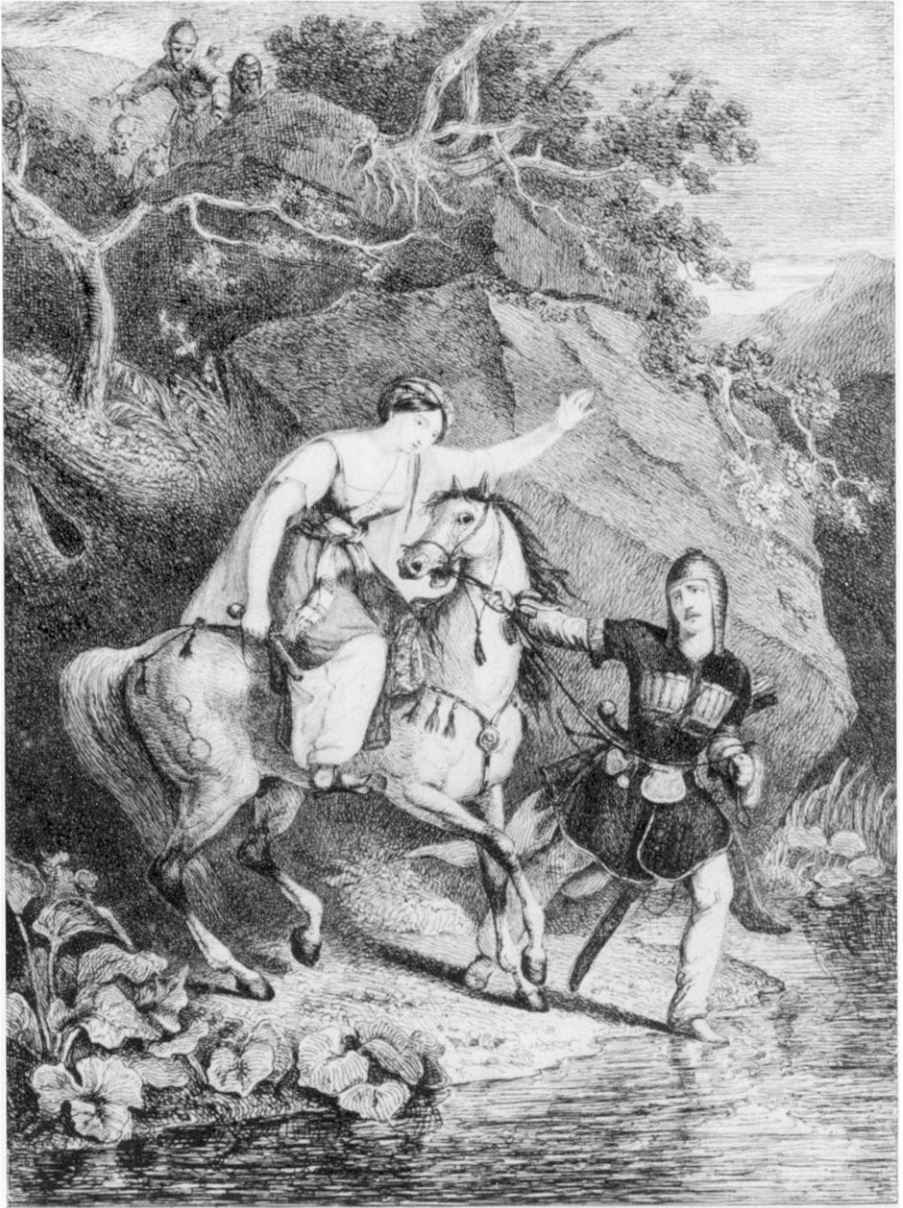


Painting of Mohammed Ali, Professor of Oriental Languages at Kazan, attributed to Sir William Allan. (Reproduced by courtesy of Sotheby's.)

PLATE II



Engraving of Mohammed Ali, said to be 'from the original painting'. The Christian Keepsake, 1836, facing p. 155. (Reproduced by courtesy of the British Library.)



Drawn & Engraved by W. Allan.

HASLAN GHERAY CONDUCTING ALKAZIA

ACROSS THE KUBAN.

Engraving by Sir William Allan from his painting 'Haslan Gheray conducting Alkazia across the Kuban', published as frontispiece to his Haslan Gheray: a narrative. (Reproduced by courtesy of the British Library.)

PLATE IV



Photographic portrait of Munshi Mohan Lal by David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson, taken on about 24 October 1844. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.)

documents, is provided by the *Brief Memoir*, an anonymous tract published in Philadelphia.¹⁴ One of these documents is the full text of Prince Gol'tizin's reply to the petitions concerning Mohammed Ali, and the other an epistle of the latter to the Qāḍī of Khiva, maintaining the advantage of certain points of Christian teaching, and inviting a rejoinder (Appendix A, below).

Prince Galitzin, the minister of religion, through whom these representations were made to the emperor, and who was a special friend of the missions, informed the missionaries in reply, that the Karass privileges 'contained a sufficient decision, authorizing them to receive by holy baptism all who were converted to the Lord through their instrumentality.'^a

^a In reply to a similar petition from a professed convert from Mohamedanism, in the Crimea, Prince Galitzin was even more explicit. 'I do not find it necessary to enter into this affair, because the imperial ordinance of 25th December 1806, most graciously presented to the colony of Scotsmen in the Caucasian government, authorises you to introduce him into the faith preached by you *without requiring any decision on the subject.*' '*On a subject, then, settled by law, it is unnecessary, on every occasion to require a particular determination.*'—Rep. Scot. Miss. Soc. 1824, 22. It may here be mentioned, that, in 1821, two new stations were commenced, one in the Crimea, the other at Nazran, among the Inguish, one of the Caucasian mountain tribes; but Mr Blyth, the missionary, after being only about seven months in the latter place, received orders from the governor of the province to leave it, and he accordingly retired to Astrachan. *Ibid.*, 1822, 14, 16.

Mahomed Ali was accordingly baptized by the missionaries, and on this occasion the mission chapel was crowded by the natives of at least seven different countries, Persians, Tartars, Russians, Armenians, English, French and Germans.^b We have seen how distinctly the right of missionaries to baptize their converts was acknowledged by the government, notwithstanding the general law of the empire in regard to proselytes from heathen and Mahomedan tribes; but in such a country as Russia special privileges are of small avail, if it be the interest or the wish of the priesthood, or of the nobility, to evade and nullify them. Mahomed Ali, though he had been allowed to be baptized by the missionaries, was after some time informed by the governor of Astrachan, agreeably to instructions received from General Yarmeloff, commander-in-chief of the province, that in consequence of his having become a Christian he was expected to enter the Russian service, and that he might have his choice either of the civil, the military, or the commercial service; he was required to sign an obligation that he would not at any time go out of the city without the knowledge of the police, and it was further stated that he must /429/ refrain from interfering or co-operating in any kind of missionary work. In consequence of these proceedings, Mahomed Ali drew up a petition to the emperor, soliciting permission to remain at Astrachan and to engage in making known the glad tidings of salvation to his countrymen. This petition the missionaries transmitted to Prince Galitzin, with the request that they would present it to his imperial majesty, but this the prince judged it prudent to decline.

^b Rep. Edin. Miss. Soc. 1816, 7, 11; Rep. Scot. Miss. Soc. 1822, 8; *ibid.*, 1823, 14; *ibid.*, 1824, 10; Scottish Missionary Register, II, 164, 204, 207; IV, 293.

It appears that the Emperor, Tsar Alexander I (1805–25), was at this time beginning to show signs of the illness that was shortly to prove fatal. His successor, it seems, was far less favourable to the cause of the missionaries

and their advocates at the St. Petersburg court. It is very understandable that the Prince was unwilling to raise a contentious issue with an ailing ruler, and preferred to deal with it on the basis of the existing documentation. Brown's narrative continues:

The Princess Mertchersky, a pious and excellent lady, was then applied to, and she kept the petition by her, waiting for a fit opportunity of submitting it to the emperor, but observed that at present this would not be advisable. As there was little hope of his obtaining permission to remain at Astrachan in the service of the mission, Mahomed Ali begged that he might be admitted into the College of Foreign Affairs at St Petersburg, rather than be obliged to enter into the military or commercial service. Had this petition been granted, he would have enjoyed in that metropolis the privileges of Christian society and of Christian ordinances. Instead, however, of being admitted into the college at St Petersburg, he was appointed to a college at Omsk in Siberia, a place about 3735 versts from the capital, where there was no Christian worship, unless we were to call by that name the superstitious and idolatrous worship of the Greek Church; but on his arrival at Kazan on his way thither, some of the members of that university were so taken with his accomplishments as a scholar, a gentleman and a Christian, that they made application to the Russian government to appoint him to a professorship in that city, and he was accordingly allowed to remain there.^c

^c Rep. Scot. Miss. Soc. 1825, 13; *ibid.*, 1826, 19.

Thus it is evident that Mohammed Ali's sojourn at Astrakhan took place between 1821 and 1825.

It appears that the above narrative by Brown, citing of course no sources, was partly a summary made from a rather fuller account of Mohammed Ali's conversion, by the Reverend Dr. (Robert) Ross, entitled 'The Persian convert', which had appeared in the *Christian Keepsake and Missionary Annual* for 1836.¹⁵ It appears indeed from the *Brief Memoir* that Ross was in fact present during the transactions in question, and that his account is that of an eyewitness. However he was probably not the author of the latter tract, whose orientalist knowledge suggests that he may have been William Glen.

Even more interesting, in the present connexion, is the fact that the *Keepsake* article contains an engraving from a portrait of Mohammed Ali (pl. II), below the caption of which is an enigmatic note 'Made from the original painting'. Neither the authorship nor the location of the source painting is specified. Although in most respects the engraving coincides with the work attributed to William Allan, there are differences in background and detail. Whereas the painting sold at Sotheby's represents an interior scene, with curtains and a window through which two vaguely defined domes can be seen, the engraving has a landscape background, with clearly rendered domed buildings on either side. It seems best to assume that the engraving was indeed made from the painting which we have been discussing, but that the engraver has changed the rather dark background, the better to adapt it to the requirements of his medium. On the one hand, the engraving confirms by its caption that the subject of the painting is indeed Mohammed Ali, son of Kazem-Beg. On the other, that the painting was already in existence by 1836, when the engraving was published. This last proposition gives rise as we shall see to a chronological problem.

We have therefore still to account for the putative encounter, if the painting was actually made from life as we might assume, of Mohammed Ali with William Allan. This Scottish artist, later President of the Royal Scottish Academy from 1838 to his death in 1850, had come from Edinburgh to London in 1805 in the hope of finding professional employment, but:¹⁶

after many hard struggles in the great brick wilderness, he determined on going abroad to try whether encouragement might not be had elsewhere. Russia suggested itself as a country where an opening for his talents might be expected, and as one abounding in stirring and novel subjects for his pencil.

With letters of introduction to fellow Scotsmen at St. Petersburg, amongst whom no doubt were the surgeon to the Imperial family Sir Alexander Crichton, and the British Ambassador, the future Duke of Hamilton, Allan set sail for Riga. However, he was shipwrecked at Memel (later Königsberg/Kaliningrad), and, having apparently lost all his possessions, was able to recoup his fortunes by painting portraits of leading personages there, in particular of the Danish consul, whose name was apparently Klaipeda. (We may wonder, incidentally, whether that painting is still to be traced in Denmark.) He continued his journey to St. Petersburg by land, passing on the way the Russian army on its march to Austerlitz. On his arrival¹⁷

he was, through the kindness of Sir Alexander Crichton, then physician to the Imperial family, introduced to many valuable friends... Having obtained a knowledge of the Russian language, he travelled in the interior, and remained for several years in the Ukraine, making excursions at various times to Turkey, Tartary, to the shores of the Black Sea, Sea of Asoph (sic), and the banks of the Kuban, amongst Cossacks, Circassians, Turks and Tartars; visiting their huts and tents, studying their history, character and costume, and collecting a rich museum of their arms and armour, as *matières premières* for his future labours in Art.

In 1812, William Allan began to entertain plans for his return to Scotland, but the outbreak of the Napoleonic War made this impracticable for some time. It was not until 1814 that he eventually returned to Edinburgh. That he witnessed certain events of Napoleon's march on Moscow in 1812 is suggested by the existence of his painting entitled 'Don Cossacks conducting French prisoners to a Russian camp, with a Russian village on fire in the distance', exhibited at the Edinburgh Exhibition Society in 1814.¹⁸ However, it is not known what role Allan exercised during the course of that campaign.

It is clear then that during his nine years in Russia from 1805, Allan led an eventful and exciting life, but no journal seems to exist recording his itinerary, and only the surviving letters, lists of his paintings, and his one brief publication, *Haslan Gheray*, give some indication of the area of his travels.¹⁹ He evidently visited the Ukraine, the Crimea and the Caucasus, besides 'Tartary', which may refer to Astrakhan. He is even said in several accounts

¹⁶ 'Sir William Allan', *Art-Journal*, 1849, 108-9. This anonymous sketch, published during the artist's lifetime, appears to be based on an interview with the subject.

¹⁷ loc. cit.

¹⁸ Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Academy, *The Royal Scottish Academy, 1826-1916*, 13 (1814.47).

¹⁹ cf. Robert Chambers, *A biographical dictionary of eminent Scotsmen*, new edition 1870, reprinted 1971, 1, 33, 'It is much to be regretted that he kept no journal of the many stirring scenes he witnessed, and the strange adventures he underwent in this novel pilgrimage in quest of the sublime and the beautiful.'

to have visited Turkey at this time.²⁰ However, confirmation of so early a visit to Turkey is lacking, and his famous Turkish paintings, 'The slave-market, Constantinople' and 'Lord Byron reposing in the house of a Turkish fisherman, after having swum across the Hellespont' (an event which took place on 3 May 1810) were, even though sketches of the young Byron made for the latter are thought to have been from life, most probably later compositions inspired by his visit there in 1829.

Other documents record further incidents in William Allan's travels. His own account²¹ describes his visit in September 1808 to Achmetchet in the Crimea in the entourage of the Duc de Richelieu, by whom he was introduced to the heroic Tatar princeling Haslan Gheray (i.e. Arslan Giray). The artist's presence is confirmed by the letter from there dated 24 September 1808²² to him from the Baron de Courlande, who expressed a wish to purchase some of his paintings. In November the artist passed on to Taman, again met Haslan Gheray, and painted his portrait (a work of which nothing seems to be known today). At the same time he recorded the narrative of the Tatar's romantic elopement with his chosen bride Alkazia, which was to be the basis of a famous picture, 'Haslan Gheray conducting Alkazia across the Kuban'. This painting, originally commissioned by the Earl of Wemyss, was purchased instead by the Grand Duke Nicholai Pavlovich during a visit to Edinburgh in December 1816, and eventually reached the Hermitage from the Anchikov Palace. It was later, in 1920, sent to Makhachkala, capital of Daghistan, where it should now be sought.²³ Its content was recorded in an etching by the artist himself (pl. III) appearing as the frontispiece of *Haslan Gheray*. Apparently a later version of the same subject was painted as a replacement by Allan for his Scottish patron, in the possession of whose heirs it is still to be found today. If Allan's etching is to be trusted as an exact rendering of the earlier version, it appears the two similar paintings can be readily distinguished by the treatment of the horse and its trappings. In particular, the earlier version should have a brand or *tamgha* on the horse's rump in the form of two circles linked by a vertical bar; while on the later version, judging by the photograph in the Witt gallery, this has the form of a ring with three short radiating bars, and the horse wears no crupper. This type of brand is of course an ancient and authentic usage in pastoral societies, and its representation a tribute to Allan's accurate observation.

Allan's later presence in Odessa is attested by a charming letter of thanks, in all but faultless English, for a view of the city, received from the Duc de Richelieu, Governor-General and the city's refounder:²⁴

I return you many thanks for the charming picture you have been pleased to make for me. I never saw anything more pretty in my life. I should desire Odessa would be so fine in reality as you have represented it in this delightful drawing. Knowing your partiality for everything that is Circassian I send you a *Panzer* taken from one of the bravest princes killed last year

²⁰ Anon, 'Sir William Allan', *Art-Journal*, 1849, 108–9; see the passage quoted on the preceding page where the artist is said to have made several journeys to 'Turkey, Tartary and the shores of the Black Sea, the Sea of Asoph . . .'

²¹ *Haslan Gheray*, 5. It may be significant that verses of Byron are quoted on the title-page of this booklet.

²² Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS 6294, fol. 62.

²³ According to a letter dated 11 February 1991 from Elizabeth Renne, Curator of British Paintings at the Hermitage to Helen Smailes, the transfer took place in the 1930s. In her Leningrad catalogue, however, the event is placed in 1920.

²⁴ National Library of Scotland, MS 6294, f.150. Once more, I am obliged to Helen Smailes for calling my attention to this volume among the several containing letters concerning William Allan.

in an action against the troops of your friend Monseieur Boursin (?). I pray you to accept it as a remembrance of your peregrinations through our barbarian country. And if the Countess come here in the spring pray endeavour to accompany her. I shall be very happy to see you, and remain for ever

Dear Sir,
Your humble servant,
Richelieu

Unfortunately, this letter is undated. It is, however, tempting to connect the episode with a painting recorded in an Edinburgh Exhibition catalogue, 'Portrait of himself in the costume of a Circassian: painted at Toulizen, 1813'.²⁵ Following the explanation of the St. Petersburg specialist Kroll,²⁶ we may understand that 'Toulizen' represents not a site in the Caucasus, as one might at first sight suppose, but the town of Tul'chin in the Ukraine. It lies between the rivers Dniester and Bug in the Vinnitsa Oblast (280 km. NNW of Odessa, and 40 km. SE of Vinnitsa), and was once the estate of the Pototsky family. The 'Countess' mentioned in the letter was no doubt the flamboyant Countess Pototsky, mentioned in Robert Lyall's *Travels*,²⁷ which thus helps to confirm the identity of 'Toulizen'. One might suspect that the artist had at the time just received the armour mentioned in the Duke's letter, and lost no time to illustrate it, functioning himself as the model in the absence, so far to the west, of other Circassian subjects.

Besides the many works recorded in Britain and possibly still surviving, we must remember that Allan had supported himself by painting both at Memel, and later at St. Petersburg and elsewhere in Russia. To compile a systematic catalogue of his paintings would thus provide a fascinating research project. Two of these, at any rate, were recorded at the State Hermitage, Leningrad in 1961:²⁸ 'Les Bashkirs' or 'Un piquet de Bashkirs conduisant les condamnés', signed and dated 1814; and 'Piquet de garde'. Surprisingly, however, his famous work 'Peter the Great teaching his subjects the art of ship-building', gives rise to a mystery. Exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy in 1844, and at the Royal Academy in 1845, it was said to have been later sold to Tsar Nicholas, and is claimed in British textbooks to be hanging on the walls of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. Kroll, however, cites documentary evidence to suggest that it never reached St. Petersburg, and that its present whereabouts remains untraced.

One point, at least, emerges clearly from this hasty sketch of Allan's travels. On his first journey he reached Russia in 1805 and returned to Scotland in 1814. Mohammed Ali, however, arrived at Astrakhan in 1821, and was converted to Christianity in 1823, leaving for Kazan in 1825. Thus Allan during his first journey in Russia could never have encountered or painted the Persian. If, as we could suppose, the painting of Mohammed Ali is from life, it might have been executed during Allan's brief second visit to Russia in 1844. Yet here again a difficulty arises. The engraving published in the *Christian Keepsake* in 1836, supposing it is derived directly from Allan's portrait, should prove that Allan's portrait of Mohammed Ali (or indeed an earlier prototype of that painting), was already in existence by that date. It is thus difficult to understand on what material Allan's portrait could have been based. Whether it could

²⁵ Exhibited at the Edinburgh Exhibition Society, 1814, according to the Royal Scottish Academy catalogue, 13.

²⁶ In 'Russian themes in the paintings of a British romantic', p. 5 of the English translation.

²⁷ I, 128-9.

²⁸ A. E. Kroll, *Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha*, 1961, 6, 383-94.

have been based on a photograph, or on a sketch sent from Russia is at present uncertain.

It is worth noticing that Allan was definitely interested at that time in portraying historical eastern personalities. The point is substantiated by his portrait exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy in 1845 of 'Munshi Mohun Lal, Persian secretary to the British Mission at Cabool, and who had previously accompanied Sir Alexander Burnes on his journey to Bokhara'. Though I have not been able to determine the location of this painting at the present day, Mohan Lal actually visited Scotland in October 1844. He came in order to return to the family the papers of Sir Alexander Burnes (which he had rescued during the fighting at Kabul in 1841), and it is established that he visited Allan's studio at that time.²⁹ Negatives also survive of photographic portraits of Mohan Lal (pl. IV) taken on about 24 October 1844,³⁰ which would certainly assist the identification of the painting, and which may have contributed to its composition. At the time of Sir William's death in 1850, the portrait of Mohan Lal remained in his studio, where it was sold in the auction of his effects on 18 April 1850.³¹ The portrait seems therefore not to have been undertaken as a commission, but painted by the artist as a matter of personal interest. In the case of Mohammed Ali, in spite of his connexions with the Scottish missionaries, and his links with the Royal Asiatic Society (below, p. 295), there is no evidence of his having visited Britain before 1869. Both Mohammed Ali and Mohan Lal were Asians distinguished in the service of the rising European powers, and also, no doubt, persons of impressive intellect, whose historical roles attracted widespread public interest.

To complete the circle, it is necessary to trace in more detail the life and travels of Mohammed Ali himself, especially after his installation at Kazan. One important point arising from the biographical sketch by 'H.K.' is that Mohammed Ali was the grandson of Nāzir Muḥammad-khān Beg, first minister of the Darband ruler Fath 'Alī Khān. That this family were of political importance makes intelligible otherwise puzzling points in the story. The exile by the Russian authorities of the convert's father Qasim Kazem-Beg from Darband to Astrakhan becomes understandable, since so prominent a Persian subject in that city, newly conquered for Russia, would inevitably become a focus for Persian sympathizers. Again, Kazem-Beg's resort to the Persian consul to avert the prospect of his son's defection from Islam would be more natural if he were himself a person of consequence with a claim on the interest of the Persian government. Moreover, the young Persian's reaction—when offered a choice of joining the Tsarist civil, military, or commercial service—of requesting admission to the College of Foreign Affairs at St. Petersburg, appears less presumptuous when we understand that besides his own considerable intellectual powers, he was a person of illustrious ancestry.

Kazem-Beg's host in Kazan, when he first arrived, had been a Professor

²⁹ cf. Mohan Lal, *Travels in the Punjab* (London, 1846), 505 (dated 28 October to 11 November 1844): 'Sir William Allen, the famous artist, begged my host, Sir John Macneill, to ask me to give him a few sittings, and he has drawn and painted a very good portrait of me, which appeared in the exhibition of pictures for last year.' I am grateful to Helen Smailes, of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, for calling my attention to this encounter, documented also by letters from Sir John MacNeill.

³⁰ Sarah Stevenson, *David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson: catalogue of their calotypes taken between 1843 and 1847 in the collection of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery* (Edinburgh, 1981), 78; cf. *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 24 October 1844. I owe these references to the kind help of Helen Smailes.

³¹ Edinburg, C. B. Tate and T. Nisbet, *Catalogue*, 21, no. 95: 'SIR WILLIAM ALLAN. Original portrait of Mirza Mohun Lal, Persian Secretary to the British Mission at Cabool, and who had previously accompanied Sir Alexander Burnes on his journey to Bokhara.'

of the University, Karl Fuchs, to whom he no doubt owed introductions to academic circles. At Kazan also, Kazem-Beg became friendly with Lobachevsky, then Rector of the University, whom he used to visit, and with whom he used to play at chess. The two collaborated on Kazem-Beg's article on the capture of Astrakhan by the Crimean Tartars in 1660, Published at Kazan in 1835. In 1829 Kazem-Beg had met A. Humbolt, who drew on the Persian's writings for his study of Central Asia, notably on the article 'Ob ozere Ala-Kël' (On the Ala-Köl lake). This contribution is noted by Rzaev, (p. 103). However, he does not appear to list the details in his bibliography.

Details of the academic career of Mohammed Ali at Kazan are given in the notice by 'H.K.'³² It seems he was not immediately appointed Professor, as the missionary accounts, written some years later, tend to suggest. He was appointed Lector in 1826, Adjunct in 1829, extraordinary Professor in 1837, and regular Professor in 1838. Finally, as we have seen, his appointment to St. Petersburg as Professor of Persian came in 1849. In the study of Kazan by Turnerelli,³³ Kazem-Beg is twice mentioned among distinguished members of the university. Turnerelli witnessed and describes the catastrophic fire in Kazan on 24 August 1842, one of a series over the decades, in which the greater part of the city was destroyed, though fortunately the university buildings escaped. In this fire, which the Persian reckons to have begun on 17 August, much of Kazem-Beg's library was burned, together with the manuscript of the first volume of his 'Anthology of Turko-Tatar languages' (Rzaev, 1989, 35), a work which was consequently delayed in seeing the light of day.

In the same year, 1842, but whether before or after the fire is not immediately clear, Mohammed Ali married in Kazan the daughter of a retired Russian naval officer. He writes, in translation here from Rzaev's quotation (1989, 38): 'My bride is 25 years old, she is the daughter of the most honest man in Kazan, whose surname is Kostlivtsev. We will not be very rich, but will be completely happy.' Curiously, there was once more a British connexion. Alexander Petrovitch Kostlivtsev (1776-1844) was the son of the Vice-Admiral commanding the port of Taganrog. In 1798 he had been sent to England for nautical training, and having volunteered for active service with the British fleet, had taken part in the battle against the French squadron at Toulon. The couple had a daughter, whose saving of her father's frequent letters has preserved many biographical details relating to the life of Kazem-Beg, but whose name seems not to be transmitted in the available literature.

It was also in 1842 that Kazem-Beg met Leo Tolstoy, then a student of Turkish and Arabic at Kazan. Tolstoy was awarded full marks in his entrance examination for the university, and Kazem-Beg considered him outstandingly able, but details of Tolstoy's studies on Oriental languages seem not to be recorded in that writer's biographies.

Already while at Kazan Kazem-Beg had established contacts with Orientalist societies in the west. His name appears, as M. A. Kazem-Beg, in the list of 'Foreign Fellows' of the Royal Asiatic Society in London between 1835 and 1871, the year after his death. In the 1850s he is also listed among the Editorial Committee on the cover of the *Journal Asiatique*.

In fact, variations in nomenclature make it puzzling for the unprepared student to follow our subject's career and publications. In the missionary records he is regularly designated Mohammed Ali, son of Hājji Kazem-Beg. Many of his writings are signed A. K. Kazem-Beg, for A(leksandr)

³² ZDMG, 1854, 375-8.

³³ I, 279, 289.

K(asimovitch) Kazem-Beg. Again, his edition of the *Derbend-nāma* is credited to M. A. Kazem-Beg, for M(irza) A(leksandr) Kazem-beg, or of course equally M(ohammed) A(li) Kazem-Beg. Despite the statement of the missionary history that he was an only son, Bartol'd makes reference to a step-brother, 'Abd al-Sattar Kazem-Beg, who later was to seek employment at St. Petersburg university as a language informant, though without success.

Mohammad Ali's very extensive output of scholarly writings, both published and surviving in manuscript, is detailed both by 'H.K.', and more fully in the Russian biography by A. K. Rzaev,³⁴ where 74 items are listed, in Arabic, Turkish, Russian, English, and French. However, this list includes also some reviews and discussions of his work. We may note, for example, that one of Mohammed Ali's earlier writings, his *Risāla*, or 'Epistle', is said to contain a vindication, in Arabic, of the Christian faith. His frequenting of the missionaries in Astrakhan, and discussion with them on questions of religion, may thus have been motivated initially by a desire to collect information for the purpose of a critical study. It remains to determine whether the letter of Mohammed Ali to the Qāḍī of Khiva, printed in close English translation in the *Brief Memoir* (see Appendix A, below), had any relation to this *Risāla*. The former letter, known only in English, but drafted in characteristic Arabic epistolary style, had at the same time a strong note of Christian apologetic, and probably owed a good deal to the prompting of his missionary mentors, at least one of whom, Glen, was an excellent Arabic and Persian scholar. During his time at Astrakhan between 1822 and 1825, Mohammed Ali seems to have engaged in vigorous epistolary exchanges. His *Risāla* evoked a strong rebuttal from a certain Mulla Rizā of Tabriz, his rejoinder to whom is preserved (according to Rzaev, 193, n. 3), in the library of the Oriental Faculty at St. Petersburg under no. 77-84.

The detailed examination, and evaluation, of Mohammed Ali's writings as a whole is no doubt a task awaiting Russian scholars, with ready access to the archive of his unpublished works in St. Petersburg, besides the published writings. His earlier writings, mainly published at Kazan, are no doubt rare and mostly inaccessible in the U.K., and one cannot hope to elaborate the bibliography of Rzaev to any degree, still less to give any summary of the contents. However, there is no doubt that many of Kazem-Beg's writings are of interest, and stimulating even today, and it is to be hoped that they may some day be included in the ongoing series of complete works of Russian orientalists which already includes many of the writings of Bartol'd. Nevertheless certain of Kazem-Beg's major undertakings deserve individual mention in the present connexion.

Amongst his major early works, an important item was certainly his edition of *Al-Sab' al-sayyār fī ta'riḫ mulūk Tātār* ('The seven planets on the history of the Tartar Kings'), a Turkish history by Sayyid Muḥammad Rizā of the Khans of the Crimea from Mangli-Giray I (871/1466) to Mangli-Giray II (1137/1724), published at Kazan in 1832. His article on the suppositious 'Unknown chapter' of the Qur'ān, known as the *Sūrat al-Nūrain*, a chapter which had been reported by Garcin de Tassy in the *Journal Asiatique*, displays expertise in the Islamic tradition of Qur'ān scholarship, and at the same time has merits in terms of Western Orientalism. He comes to the plausible conclusion that the alleged chapter is a pastiche of Qur'ānic phrases from other contexts, put together by Shī'a controversialists during the sixteenth century or earlier, a conclusion generally supported by later scholarship.³⁵

³⁴ *Mukhammad Ali M. Kazem-Bek* (Moskva, 1989), 191.

³⁵ cf. R. Blachère, *Introduction au Coran* (Paris, 1947), 185, n. 58, and p. 86.

Among Kazem-beg's interests was a preoccupation with the literature of pre-Islamic Iran, and the origins of the Persian epic, which to some extent anticipates the studies of later Orientalists. According to Rzaev, his writings on this subject, such as his paper 'Mifologiya persov po Firdosi' (1848), and the unpublished 'Oazyky i literature persov do islamizma' deserve serious study. On the other hand, his attempts to find parallels between ancient Greek and Iranian legends, though by no means wholly lacking in interest, might seem controversial or even dilettante today.

Kazem-Beg's most substantial work was probably his *Obshchaya grammatika Turetsko-tatarskogo yazyka* 'Comprehensive grammar of the Turk-Tartar language' (Kazan, 1846), which was promptly translated into German by T. Zenker, as *Allgemeine Grammatik der türkisch-tatarische Sprache* (Leipzig, 1848). This work remains a standard reference, in its German version, for Western turcologists concerned with the area.

From the viewpoint, however, of the British Orientalist, it is no doubt his edition of the *Derbend-nâma* (St. Petersburg, 1851), the history of Darband, with Turkish text and commentary and translation in English, which forms his most important and accessible contribution. The fact that he used the English language for this edition was no doubt a graceful compliment to the English-speaking mentors of his youth, and at the same time a tribute to the proficiency he had attained in the language, while living in an all but exclusively Russian-speaking environment. It is indeed ironical, and symptomatic of the speed with which Kazem-Beg's role came to be forgotten, that in November 1929, the Library Committee of the Royal Asiatic Society decided that their copy of his *Derbend-nâma*—no doubt, though it contains no dedication, his personal presentation—should be offered for sale with 'unnecessary and duplicate books'. An item of rarity in the West, it was certainly no duplicate. It was fortunately purchased, at the trifling price of £1/10s, by the School of Oriental and African Studies, where it is happily preserved. It may be said in defence of predecessors at the Society that their seemingly eccentric decision could have been prompted by fears for the future accommodation of their library in one of their recurrent periods of financial stress; and by a belief that the work would find a safer home at SOAS. Yet they seemed unaware of Kazem-Beg's sentimental connexion with Britain, and indeed with the Royal Asiatic Society itself.

Kazem-Beg was an effective administrator, serving for three years, from 1855–58, as Dean of the Faculty of Oriental Studies at St. Petersburg, though he eventually resigned, to be succeeded by Mukhlinsky. He was also an excellent teacher. In 1842 he devised a three-year travel plan in Iran and the Middle East for two of the Kazan lecturers, partly with the aim of collecting books and manuscripts. In his Orientalist work Kazem-Beg laid constant stress on reference to original sources. When preparing his article on Muridism and Shamil, he met the insurgent in exile in St. Petersburg, and offers an assessment of his character, regarding his rebellion as chiefly a movement against Russian sovereignty (Rzaev, 1989, 55; 61–3). He did not travel extensively, but after his transfer to St. Petersburg visited Darband and Kazan in search of manuscripts. When preparing his work on the Bab and Babism, he visited Tabriz and Mazandaran, making personal contact with participants in the movement. Later, in the closing months of his life, he made a journey to the West. In February 1869 he visited Germany for health reasons, later travelling to France, and finally to London and Oxford. During November he stayed in London, where he apparently found the weather depressing, as one might have expected at that date and season. Also, it seems, he was bored and, no doubt, unwell.

The Scottish friends of his youth had of course passed away long before, and he would have found himself relatively isolated. He visited the 'Asiatic Museum' (possibly that of the East India Company), and was welcomed at the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Yet Soviet writers knew of his experiences in England only from surviving letters to his daughter, and any archival evidence in the institutions where he was received still awaits investigation. A bare year after his return from western Europe, on 27 November of the following year, while still planning further travels in the West, Kazem-Beg died. He was buried at Pavlovsk, presumably having gone there on a journey in the days immediately before his final illness.

Kazem-Beg's role as a pioneer in the European world of Persian, Iranian, and of course Turkish studies was considerable, and one that during the present century in Britain has been too readily forgotten. He had the advantage of early training in the traditional scholarship of Islam, besides his rapidly growing command of European orientalist skills. His writings give an impression of clear and logical presentation, and reach admirably objective conclusions. Though Bartol'd seems to have been too young to have known him in his prime, that scholar had clearly been interested in the Persian's role as an influence in the development of the St. Petersburg Oriental School. Subsequently Minorsky, a product in some sense of the same tradition, who was to reach the peak of his career in London at SOAS, clearly appreciated the stature of Kazem-Beg when he included items from the Persian's bibliography in contributions made by him to Arnold's *Bibliography of Persia*. Kazem-Beg is rightly, if briefly, mentioned by Dresden in the *Handbuch der Orientalistik* as a significant figure in the development of Iranian studies.³⁶

With Kazem-Beg's lifelong attachment equally to English-speaking, and to Russian culture, and his combined proficiency in Persian and Turkish studies, a quality which he shared with both Bartol'd and Minorsky, the Persian deserves recognition as an intellectual forerunner not only of the distinguished Leningrad/St. Petersburg Iranian School, but also of that in London. Recent writers on the Scottish missionary establishments in the Caucasus, with their few local converts, are apt to discuss those enterprises as failures. Yet we may contend that by providing Kazem-Beg with his first training in Western languages and Orientalism, they were instrumental in the formation of an outstanding personality and scholar, which by itself surely justified the expenditure of money, lives and toil which had been devoted to the founding of their missions.

APPENDIX A

The letter of Mohammed Ali to the Qāḍī of Khiva
(From the *Brief memoir*, 107)

May He direct!

This letter is from the lowest of the servants of God Most High, thy unknown friend Mohamed Ali.

To the illustrious, learned, intelligent and excellent, famed, confirming and correct (*his name*) and to all who have a peaceful heart and a meek

³⁶ M. J. Dresden in *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, Abt. 1, Der Nähe und Mittlere Osten. Band 4, Iranistik. Abschnitt 2, Literatur. Lieferung 1, 185: 'Mention should be made of at least the names of a number of scholars who inaugurated Iranian and Persian Studies in Russia, such as M. A. Kazem-Beg (1803-70).'

spirit before God; peace be to you, and prosperity, and the mercy and blessing of God.

Indeed, two important questions have become clear to me in my whole heart, and no person here can solve them well. Therefore I ask you, O learned man, that you would solve them for me, and that you would open the curtain from before them, so that what is hidden may be made clear, and that which is covered may be laid open.

The first is, to find me health-giving arguments as to Mahomed's being a prophet, and that the Koran is the word of God; for, after much inquiry, I have found no argument for Mahomed but the Koran, and for the Koran but Mahomed, and for both nothing but the traditions, and for the traditions nothing but either the Koran or Mahomed; and thus there is no reasoning in their support except in a circle; but this is vain; and where a circle is necessary that thing is vain. But if you speak of miracles, there is no mention of them except by Mahomedans; and among them there is nothing but report: But a report is not confirmation, and the one cannot be put in the place of the other.

Second, the Old and New Testament, which the Jews and Christians have, did they come from God or not, through his prophets? If it is said in answer, No; then I ask of you to write good arguments concerning this point, besides what may be taken from the Koran and the traditions, unless you first prove these two are true. So think and meditate; and this is my prayer and hope, that God will be with you and us, and have mercy on you and us. Amen. [p. 109]

May peace be upon the person who reads this, and thinks and looks upon this thing; and may the mercy and blessing of God be upon him. Amen.

This document, quoted in English in the *Brief Memoir*, is clearly couched in the style of a formal Arabic epistle or *suwāl*, a question directed to a religious authority or *muftī*, seeking an opinion on a religious or legal difficulty. At the same time, the content is no doubt fairly typical of missionary apologetics, and it is difficult to be sure how far it is Mohammed Ali's personal composition, and how much it owes to the prompting of his missionary mentors, especially Glen, a skilled translator from Arabic and Persian, who was probably quite aware of the Arabic epistolary style. No doubt, however, Mohammed Ali had an interest in the procedures of formal logic, which may account for the attempt to deploy them here in religious argument.

According to the *Brief Memoir*, the writing of this letter arose from a visit to the convert of a local Muslim, who attempted to dissuade him from persisting in his resolve to adopt the Christian faith, and who insisted that strong arguments against this intention would be provided by the Qādī of Khiva, a noted theologian. At the same time, though this aspect is not represented in the missionary accounts, one can hardly doubt that the motivation of the numerous Muslim visitors, who called on Mohammed Ali when his conversion was impending, was partly influenced by a wish to determine whether he might be acting under some sort of duress; whether his mental balance was disturbed, or even whether, as some had come to suspect, he had been won over by bribery! His written declaration containing a statement of his views, whether or not really intended by the visitor for dispatch to the Qādī of Khiva, was written evidence that could be shown to the Muslim authorities, clearly indicating that the convert's change of attitude was a considered one. Whether this document has any relation to the Arabic *Risāla* 'Epistle' issued by Mohammed

Ali at Astrakhan in 1822, of which the text seems unavailable in London, is so far uncertain.

Select writings of M.A. Kazem-Beg

Note: Items marked with an asterisk have not been seen by the present writer, but are quoted from other bibliographies, especially that of Rzaev (1989), 191–3, not all of whose references in Western journals I have been able to locate.

- **Risāla*. Astrakhan, 1822. (A tractate on the truth of the Christian religion.) ‘En 1822, j’écrivis en arabe un petit traité ayant pour titre: *Preuves convaincantes de la religion chrétienne etc.*, qui fut publié à Astrakhan. L’année suivant cet opuscule fut réfutée, en langue perse, par Mulla Reza de Tabriz.’ Rzaev (193, no. 3) records that Kazem-Beg’s reply to the epistle of Mulla Rizā is preserved in manuscript in the library of the Oriental Faculty at St. Petersburg, no. 77–84.
- *The *Gulistān* of Shaykh Sa’dī of Shiraz. A translation into Russian by M. A. Kazem-bek (extract). *Kazanskii Vestnik*, 1829. According to ‘H.K.’, p. 77, the complete work was said to survive in unpublished manuscript. It is listed on p. 193, no. 2 by Rzaev, and therefore presumably still extant.
- Al-Sab’ al-sayyār fī ta’rīkh mulūk Tātār* (‘The seven planets on the history of the Tartar Kings’). A history of the Khans of the Crimea, from Mangli-Giray I (871/1466) to Mangli-Giray II (1137/1724), composed in Turkish by Sayyid Muhammad Riza, and edited with an introduction in Russian. Kazan 1832. [= BL 14456. h. 21]
- ‘O vzyatii Astrakhana v 1660 godu’ (The capture of Astrakhan in the year 1660), in *Uchenye zapiski, izdavaemye Imp. Kazanskim Universitetom*, 1, Kazan, 1835.
- ‘Note critique sur un passage de l’histoire de l’Empire ottoman par M. de Hammer’, *Journal Asiatique*, xvi, 1835, 154–71. Calls attention to erroneous identifications of place-names in Bessarabia and the Ukraine, resulting from misreadings in Ottoman Turkish script.
- **Mukhtaṣar al-wiqāya*. (An edition of a well-known manual of Ḥanafī Muslim jurisprudence). Kazan, 1841.
- ‘Observations de Mirzā Alexandre Kazem-Beg, professeur de langues orientales à l’Université de Casan, sur le *Chapitre inconnu du Coran*, publié et traduit par M. Garcin de Tassy’, *Journal Asiatique*, 4^{me} série, II, 1843, 373–429.
- **Muḥammadiya*. (An edition of the poetical work of Yazidjizade Muhammad Effendi, a highly regarded item of Turkish Şūfī literature of the fifteenth-century). Kazan, 1845.
- **Thabāt al-‘ājizīn*, ‘The support of the helpless’, a poem in the Jagatai dialect. Kazan, 1847.
- Obshchaya grammatika Turetsko-Tatarskago yazyka*. Kazan, 1846. Translated into German by T. Zenker *Allgemeine Grammatik der türkisch-tatarische Sprache: aus dem Rüssischen übersetzt und mit einem Anhang und Schriftproben herausgegeben*. Leipzig, 1848.
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- **Polnyi konkordans Korana, ili klyuch ko vsem slovam i vyrazheniyam ego tekstov, dlya rukovodstva k issledovaniyu religioznykh, yuridicheskikh, istoricheskikh, i literaturnykh nachal sei knigi*, St. Petersburg, 1859. (A comprehensive concordance to the Qur’ân, with full contexts.)
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Works in manuscript

A large number of Kazem-Beg’s works in manuscript, published and unpublished, are reported to exist in Russian, Tatar, and Azarbaijan archive collections. Some of those unpublished, no doubt, would still merit publication. A selection in Russian of his writings are printed by Rzaev (1985). Here I note, from Rzaev (1989), only certain items relating to themes developed in the present paper.

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- *‘Jawāb-i risāla-i Hājji Maulā Rizā’ (A reply to the letter of Hājji Mulla Rizā). Biblioteka vostochnogo fakul’teta St. Petersburgskogo Universiteta, no. 77–84.
- **Iranskii epos (Shakh-nama)*. MS Tsentral’nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv TatASSR, f. 1186.
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