

beyond the scope of this work. Hussein's achievement is substantial: *Rhetorical Fabric* is both a reliable philological resource and an original, thought-provoking, honest argument about poetry.

ALEXANDER M. KEY
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Samarqand et le Sughd à l'époque 'abbāsside: Histoire politique et sociale. By YURY KAREV. *Studia Iranica, Cahiers*, vol. 55. Paris: ASSOCIATION POUR L'AVANCEMENT DES ÉTUDES IRANIENNES, 2015. Pp. 372. €40 (paper).

In this French volume under review, Yury Karev offers a multidisciplinary study that aims to “restituer de manière détaillée l'histoire politique et sociale du Mā'warā'annahr” (p. 27). The book focuses on Samarqand, the capital of ancient and medieval Sughd, in today's Uzbekistan, and covers the period from the beginning of the Abbasid revolution (“747” in the book) to the beginning of the Samanid era (“820s”). Karev provides a sound scholarly apparatus with transliteration tables of Arabic, Persian, Chinese, and Cyrillic (pp. 11–12), historical maps produced by himself (pp. 38–40), two indexes of personal names and toponyms, without further subdivisions (pp. 355–72), and a detailed bibliography subdivided into Chinese, Byzantine, and “Arabo-Persian” primary sources, and secondary literature (pp. 13–26). The secondary sources contain a good number of Russian-language studies, including numismatic and archaeological reports from the archaeological excavations at Samarqand. Karev also adds plans of architectural sites, e.g., maps showing the oasis walls of Samarqand (p. 113) and 3-D reconstructions of the eighth-century Abbasid palace of Samarqand (pp. 119–21).

Karev's critical apparatus is relatively consistently applied. The footnoting is detailed, although not always adequate—for instance, for a citation from *Kitāb al-Qand*, the bibliographical reference is missing entirely and it is not clear whether the Arabic original or the Persian adaptation was used (p. 51). Transliteration errors and spelling mistakes are present, but not to such a degree that the reader is distracted by them.

Karev situates his study within the scholarship of V. V. Barthold, O. G. Bol'shakov, E. Daniel, F. Amabe, S. Said Agha, M. Shaban, and M. Sharon, which, he says, provided an important base for scholars studying the eastern Islamic lands of the Abbasids, but suffered from “un cadre centré sur Baghdād et Marw, une approche qui faisait du Māwarā'annahr une partie périphérique et presque indistincte du Grand Khurāsān” (p. 35). He views É. de La Vaissière's study *Sogdian Traders* (2004, Eng. trans. 2005) as exemplary in giving Transoxanian places like Samarqand their due, and for studying them as centers rather than caliphal peripheries. There have been a number of other important studies in recent years on this region and its social and political currents (which Karev does not mention, such as those by Andrew Peacock, Richard Bulliet, Frantz Grenet, Minoru Inaba, Louise Marlow, Pavel Lur'e, Florian Schwarz, Michael Shenkar, Deborah Tor, and myself), but he is correct that they are still few and far between. Karev promises to interpret historical events “sous un autre angle, en s'appuyant sur une étude plus détaillée des sources” (p. 36).

While Karev does not specify the methods he applied in his research, he explains that his study is developed along two methodological axes: first, he pays attention “à la « stratigraphie » des événements—les rapports entre eux et surtout la chronologie [. . .]. Dans beaucoup de cas la restitution reste hypothétique . . .” (p. 28). In this way, Karev hopes to offer “un contexte chronologique plus serré [. . . et] de « tisser des liens » entre des faits établis et d'autres qui le sont moins.” He suggests, further, that this would enable treatment of social aspects, such as “l'évolution des élites dirigeantes et des colons musulmans” (p. 28). A second “point focal” is the analysis of “le contexte « international »”—involving the three key forces: the central and local Abbasids, and their external rivals, the Tang and the Turks—which, according to Karev, the Chinese sources provide (p. 29).

From a historiographical point of view, it is clear that Karev takes his literary sources by and large at face value and without much source-critical elaboration. However, he goes beyond the published primary source base and consults numerous unpublished manuscripts as well. For example, for Bal'ami's

history, he refers to unpublished sections on al-Muqannaʿ in a Vienna manuscript, which has been partly translated in P. Crone and M. Jafari Jazi (“The Muqannaʿ Narrative in the *Tārikhnāma*,” *BSOAS* 73.2 [2010]: 155–77; 73.3 [2010]: 381–413). Another example of a manuscript used and cited at length is al-Thaʿālibī’s *Ghurur al-siyar*, for which Karev references L. Caetani’s study from 1910 (p. 53). Karev offers new readings of contradictory accounts by “auteurs musulmans,” such as on the level of the independence of Shāsh (modern-day Tashkent) in 750 CE (p. 68).

Samarqand et le Sughd à l’époque ‘abbāsside is divided into six chronologically ascending chapters. Chapter one sets the scene with the Abbasid revolution and Abū Muslim, “l’un des principaux instigateurs de l’arrivée au pouvoir de la dynastie ‘abbāsside’” in Transoxania in 128/745. Chapter two outlines the chronology of events after the assassination of Abū Muslim in February 755 (137*h*), with a focus on Abbasid relations with Tang China, e.g., during the An Lu-shan rebellion (755–763), including ambassadorial exchanges, campaigns in Ferghana, settlements of Isfijābīs in al-Manṣūr’s (r. 136–58/754–75) Baghdad, and the strengthening of Abbasid power in Transoxania. Chapter three, by far the longest, discusses the insurrection of al-Muqannaʿ and his *mubayyiḍa* (“wearers of white garments”) movement during the caliphate of al-Mahdī (158–169/775–785). According to Karev, al-Muqannaʿ occupies a special place in the history of eighth-century Transoxania because his movement exposed the issues that continued to plague the Muslim authorities (p. 207). Chapter four is largely a listing of Abbasid governors and their politico-military activities in Transoxania after al-Muqannaʿ and before the revolt of Rāfiʿ b. al-Layth, including the participation of Sogdians in the military campaigns of Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 170–193/786–809) and Islamization attempts in Shāsh and Ferghana. Chapter five discusses the events that led to the period of rule by Rāfiʿ b. al-Layth (d. 193/809), the governor of Samarqand and grandson of the Umayyad governor of Khurasan, who had rebelled against the punitive rule and financial exploitation by ʿAlī b. ʿĪsā b. Māhān, the caliphal governor of the province. Chapter six carries the chronology forward to when the caliph al-Maʿmūn (r. 198–213/813–33) resided in Marw (809–817) and Transoxania acquired “autonomie administrative” (p. 317), and the Abbasids created new connections with local élites (pp. 333–36) and old royal families, such as the Ikshīds and Bukhārākhudāts (pp. 336–44). The account ends with the eve of Samanid rule in the 820s.

Karev’s main conclusions are not surprising, but they are supported by a wide set of evidence and with considerable detail. Thus, he concludes that the political system was “double” from the Umayyad era already (i.e., a caliphal one that leaned on local power structures) and that the history of the conquest of Transoxania was, more than anything, “une histoire d’une colonisation” (pp. 345–47). Karev concludes further that the Abbasids changed the criteria by which provincial leaders had been chosen under the Umayyads, and it was only after Rāfiʿ’s revolt that the first tangible attempts were made to create a new administrative unit that was distinct from “le Grand Khurāsān” (p. 346). This was when the caliph al-Maʿmūn placed the administration of the Transoxanian cities and regions (Samarqand, Ushrūsāna, Ferghana, Shāsh, as well as Herat) under the rule of the Samanids from Balkh.

Karev succeeds in his stated aim of providing more detail on the political (and military) events in Transoxania after the Abbasid revolution and before the rise of the Samanid dynasty. While this forensic approach to the sources may at times be challenging to read, his diligent summaries of political personages, places, dates, and events over a sixty-year period fill a gap in our knowledge of a large and important part of the early Islamic world—when the Abbasid caliphate was at the height of its strength, before al-Maʿmūn instituted the *miḥna* that led to the diminished authority of the caliph on religious matters, and before the de facto eclipsing of caliphal political authority in the East by the Samanids. Karev offers a better understanding of how events on the ground (especially battles and diplomatic exchanges) in Transoxania might have had an impact on the Abbasid caliphate, and as such has written an indispensable source for all interested in Abbasid history and politico-military history of the early Islamic East.

Regarding the social history of this period in Transoxania, Karev offers insight into at least three themes—the identities of “ethnic” groups, Islamization processes, and urban-rural relations. These are complex phenomena that are still in need of adequate defining, or rather deconstructing (of orientalist binary paradigms). Karev provides little by way of conceptual disambiguation, but he delivers fascinating accounts that merit further study by social historians. Some of his terminology will sit uncom-

fortably with the latter, such as his suggestions that people were Arab or Sogdian, with an “identité ethnique et sociale” and leaders of a “communauté ethnique” when there is little evidence that people identified themselves thus (see, e.g., p. 48; also p. 249). Conversions are handled somewhat sketchily as well, although, admittedly, this is a difficult subject to tackle. Karev makes references to “conversion très superficielle” of members of the local royal house of Bukhara, the Bukhārākhudāt (in a “culture encore très païenne”), in the year 750, which he supposes was a local response to “motivations idéologiques” of Abū Muslim’s troops (p. 89). Statements that “L’exécution du *bukhārākhudāt* fut un acte d’intimidation, un message clair adressé à ceux qui prenaient la conversion à la légère” (p. 90) and that, at this time, “le processus d’islamisation du Māwarā’annahr n’atteignait pas encore la même ampleur qu’au Khurāsān central” (p. 50, also p. 92) lack diachronic data to support them. Karev makes similar attempts at tackling Islamization in Shāsh and Ferghana in the early ninth century (pp. 267–69). Urban-rural relations feature in Karev’s study of al-Muqanna’s insurrection, for example, but again these distinctions are treated without further definition and as factors that contributed to military and politico-military actions rather than as topics in their own right (e.g., pp. 207–213).

In sum, Karev has produced a meticulous and informative study of early Abbasid Transoxania, the result of painstaking work about the people, places, and political and military events described in the medieval literary and archaeological records. Despite a few cavils, the relevance of his study extends beyond this book, as he has produced a reference work for studying a little-understood region and time in its full historical context.

AREZOU AZAD
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Entombed Epigraphy and Commemorative Culture in Early Medieval China: A History of Early Muzhiming. By TIMOTHY M. DAVIS. Studies in the History of Chinese Texts, vol. 6. Leiden: BRILL, 2015. Pp. xiv + 414. €125, \$162.

Entombed epigraphs (*muzhiming*) are square slabs of stone buried in Chinese tombs inscribed with “a biographical prose preface followed by a rhymed elegy commemorating the life of a deceased member of the elite class” (p. 4). From the fifth century CE on, they became commonly and widely used, valued for their literary qualities and refined aesthetic sensibilities as well as commemorative and religious functions. Over the past two decades, they have become one of the most important new sources for the study of medieval China, valued for their portrayal of individuals and topics that might otherwise be unknown or for offering additional, and at times contradictory, perspectives on famous personages and events.

This monograph is the first English-language work to study the entombed epitaph across the early medieval period (200–600 CE). Drawing upon a substantial corpus of research written in multiple languages, Davis’ study explores early medieval Chinese *muzhiming* along various lines of inquiry: their social (chapter 1) and religious (chapter 2) functions, their early history and development (chapter 3) and later maturation (chapter 4), their commemorative value vis-à-vis other genres (e.g., biography) used to construct memory (chapter 5), and how they developed into a mature aesthetic and literary form by the Tang dynasty (chapter 6). The volume also contains a lengthy introduction, in which Davis defines the three main categories and characteristics of early medieval entombed epitaph (simple “records of internment,” tomb interred epitaphs, and “standard” *muzhiming*), a conclusion, and two appendices listing entombed epitaphs from the Western and Eastern Jin Dynasties (Appendix 1) and the Northern Wei prior to 494 CE (Appendix 2).

In the first chapter, “The Social Functions of Early Medieval *Muzhiming*,” Davis argues that entombed epitaphs developed as early medieval Chinese elites responded to changing social and cultural realities in which power and influence became increasingly dependent upon marriage alliances and office-holding. Through close readings of two entombed epitaphs—those of Liu Huaimin (410–