

Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge  
in 13th–15th Century Tabriz

# Iran Studies

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# Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th–15th Century Tabriz

*Edited by*  
Judith Pfeiffer



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the framework of an anthropological perspective aiming at analyzing the interaction between death elegies and the performativity of courtly panegyrics.

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INTRODUCTION  
FROM BAGHDAD TO MARĀGHA, TABRIZ, AND BEYOND:  
TABRIZ AND THE MULTI-CEPHALOUS CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS,  
AND INTELLECTUAL LANDSCAPE OF THE 13TH TO  
15TH CENTURY NILE-TO-OXUS REGION

Judith Pfeiffer

For a long time the study of the Later Middle Period of Islamic History (1258–ca. 1500) was marred by a decline paradigm that posited a ‘golden age’ of Islam during its first three to four centuries, and about a millennium of decline afterwards, which reached its bottom with the Mongol invasions and their conquest and destruction of Baghdad in the mid-13th century (1258). As a result, the cultural and intellectual achievements of the Later Middle Period have been less well studied than those of other periods of Islamic history and culture.

While the decline paradigm has long been challenged as a widely accepted framework of inquiry, especially by the historians of science<sup>1</sup> and material culture<sup>2</sup> and scholars of the literary<sup>3</sup> and intellectual history

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<sup>1</sup> For the field of astronomy, see the literature cited by Ragep and Morrison in this volume. The RASI project at McGill (Rational Sciences in Islam: An Initiative for the Study of Philosophy and the Mathematical Sciences in Islam), which is based on the sustained and meticulous research by Sally and Jamil Ragep and has significantly expanded over the past years, is at the forefront of research in this area. RASI subsumes three major research projects: the Islamic Scientific Manuscripts Initiative (ISMI), the Post-classical Islamic Philosophy Database Initiative (PIPDI under the leadership of Robert Wisnovsky) and Scientific Traditions in Islamic Societies (STIS) (for all three, see <http://islamsci.mcgill.ca/RASI/>).

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Upham Pope stated more than seventy years ago that “the close of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth were characterized by an outburst of creative energy in architecture such as Persia had rarely seen.” Arthur Upham Pope, “Islamic Architecture. H. Fourteenth Century,” in *idem*, ed., *A Survey of Persian Art From Prehistoric Times to the Present* (Tehran: Soroush Press, 1977/2535; originally published in 1938–39), 1052–1102, at 1052. Similar statements could be easily multiplied. See, most recently, Linda Komaroff’s essay, in which she declared that what we are witnessing is nothing less than the creation of “a New Visual Language” in Western Asia under Mongol rule. Linda Komaroff, “The transmission and dissemination of a New Visual Language,” in *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courty Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353*, eds. Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 2002), 169.

<sup>3</sup> E.G. Browne, Jean Aubin and others have observed the high quality of the literary production under Ilkhanid, Muzaffarid, and Timurid rule, noting with surprise that Persian

of Islam,<sup>4</sup> and while especially Mamluk Studies have flourished over the past decades,<sup>5</sup> their insights and efforts have only highlighted the amount of work that has yet to be done: Due to the long neglect of this period, some of the most basic groundwork has yet to be undertaken, including the stock-taking of the literary production during this time. The last

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historiography reached its all-time peak during a period that is otherwise known for its destructive aspects and 'decline.' While the periodization and canonization of Persian and Arabic literature has generated its own debates, recent scholarship has acknowledged the vibrancy of the literary production during this period. See, e.g., the work of Paul Losensky, and Thomas Bauer, "Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9.2 (2005): 105–132; *idem*, "In Search of 'Post-Classical Literature.' A Review Article," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 11.2 (2007): 137–167.

<sup>4</sup> See Dimitri Gutas, "The Study of Arabic Philosophy in the Twentieth Century: An Essay on the Historiography of Arabic Philosophy," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 29.1 (2002): 5–25; Robert Wisnovsky, "The nature and scope of Arabic philosophical commentary in post-classical (ca. 1100–1900 AD) Islamic intellectual history: Some preliminary observations," in *Philosophy, Science and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic and Latin Commentaries*, Vol. 2. eds. P. Adamson, H. Baltussen and M.W.F. Stone (London: Institute of Classical Studies 2004), 149–191. (*Supplement to the Bulletin of the Institute Of Classical Studies* 83/1–2); Peter Adamson and R.C. Taylor, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, eds. Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1–9. Several major research projects and research activities are currently under way in order to inventarize, retrieve, publish, and analyze the sources of the intellectual history of this period. These include, but are not restricted to, PIPDI at McGill (see above), "Intellectual History of the Islamicate World" and "Rediscovering Theological Rationalism in the Medieval World of Islam" at Berlin (<http://www.ihw.de/w/>), IMPAcT at Oxford (<http://impact.orient.ox.ac.uk/>), Perso-Indica in Paris (<http://perso-indica.net/index.faces>), and "Graeco-Arabic Rationalism in Islamic Traditional Sciences: The Post-Classical Period (ca. 1200–1900 CE)" at Berkeley (<http://nes.berkeley.edu/MellonSawyer/Home.html>). An earlier, exceedingly stimulating project was organized by Cornell Fleischer at the University of Chicago in 2001–2002 ("From Medieval to Modern in the Islamic World," <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/orgs/institute/sawyer/archive/islam/events.html>). While each of these has distinct aims, together they demonstrate that the need to investigate the legacy of the Middle Periods of Islamic history has been recognized, and are witness to the vibrancy of the intellectual history of this period. For a systematic overview and analysis of the scholarly works in the areas of philosophy and *kalām* during this period, see Heidrun Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition and Islamic Orthodoxy. Philosophical and Theological summae in Context* (Habilitationsschrift, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 2009), especially the introduction, and throughout. See also, *eadem*, "Dissolving the Unity of Metaphysics: from Faḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī to Mullā Ṣadrā al-Šīrāzī," *Medioevo. Rivista di storia della filosofia medievale* 32 (2007): 139–197.

<sup>5</sup> The study of the Mamluk Sultanate, and Mamluk Studies in general, have flourished over the past two to three decades, notably through the activities of the Middle East Documentation Centre at the University of Chicago (<http://mamluk.uchicago.edu/>), which were more recently reinforced by programmes and publications at the universities of Liège (<http://www.islamo.ulg.ac.be/f3.htm>), Bonn (<http://www.mamluk.uni-bonn.de/the-kolleg>), and Ghent (<http://www.mamluk.ugent.be/>). See in particular Stephan Conermann's article on the state of the art, "Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg History and Society during the Mamluk Era (1250–1517). Program, Concept, Tasks," *ASK Working Paper* 1, Bonn: 2012, and the contributions in *idem*, ed., *Ubi sumus? quo vademus? Mamluk studies, state of the art* (Goettingen: V & R Unipress/Bonn University Press, 2013).

overarching attempt of capturing all Arabic literature as represented in its manuscript tradition was begun more than a century ago and was completed before the explosion of the production of manuscript catalogues, and without access to IT and digital tools.<sup>6</sup> Many of the most crucial texts remain unpublished, and apart from the second volume of Marshall G.S. Hodgson's groundbreaking three-volume synthesis *The Venture of Islam* (which is by now also almost half a century old and lacks in-depth analysis of the primary sources), we have no analytical grand overview of the major historical developments of this period. Most research has been done on individual authors, texts, and topics, and is often discipline-specific. Therefore, many overviews, handbooks, and history programs still treat the Later Middle Period of Islamic History lightly, if they don't pass it over altogether.

Perhaps one of the positive upshots of the neglect of the study of the Later Middle Period for such a long time is that it is a relative *terra incognita*, and almost unlimited avenues are open for its exploration. Methodologically, a new type of history is being practiced by scholars working on this period. They have refashioned the way in which Islamicate intellectual history is written by working very closely with the primary sources, all the while paying increased attention to human agency and historical context.<sup>7</sup> Whereas in the past, a good book about this period was published once a decade, by now several excellent monographs appear every year. In short, the study of the Later Middle Period is thriving, and has generated some of the most innovative research over the past years.

It is now almost universally accepted that Mongol rule marked the end of the Middle Ages in the Middle East and initiated the long intellectual, cultural, and religio-political processes that paved the way for the establishment of the territorial regional empires of the Safavids, Ottomans, and Mughals. One of the desiderata of Islamic history today is a coherent presentation of these processes without the limitations of nationalist historiographies which so long dominated the study of this field in the past. The aim of this volume is to contribute to the efforts of constructing a more mature analytical framework for approaching this period by

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<sup>6</sup> Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, Weimar: E. Felber; Leiden/New York: Brill, 1898–1943.

<sup>7</sup> Foremost practitioners of this approach are Cornell Fleischer, Devin DeWeese, Shahzad Bashir, and Evrim Binbaş. For an early reflection on the differences between a method that approaches a culture via its archetypical representations and one that “attaches meaning to finding just which human individual did each thing, when, and why,” see Hodgson, *Venture 2*: 447.

focusing on one specific city and its cultural and intellectual life during the 13th–15th centuries.<sup>8</sup> The workshop of which these are the proceedings took place from 1–2 October 2010 at Koç University's *Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations* in Istanbul and included contributions on the social, political, economic, religious, literary, and intellectual history and the history of science and material culture of the period with a focus on Tabriz. Several articles were invited afterwards in order to achieve a better balance between the represented disciplines, and to gain a more holistic idea—at least for one important local case—of the wider context of the continuities and discontinuities during this crucial era of transition from the late medieval to the early modern period of Islamic history.<sup>9</sup> The aim was to shed light on the specific case of Tabriz as a cultural and economic centre and its transformation from a city on the political periphery of the late Abbasid caliphate into a major political, economic and cultural centre of the Mongol and Timurid periods, which contributed significantly to the cultural and intellectual achievements of this time. Thus, Tabriz became a center of learning where many of the scholars of Marāgha and elsewhere from Azerbaijan congregated especially at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th century, whence especially philosophical knowledge was transmitted to other centers of learning, in particular Shiraz.

The focus on Tabriz does thus not mean to suggest that Tabriz became *the* new 'capital' after Baghdad, even though the Ilkhanid historian and geographer Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī (fl. 1340) may have insinuated as much,<sup>10</sup> and despite the lofty epithets that the city assumed on coinage and in official titulature under Mongol rule.<sup>11</sup> One of the overarching institutions

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<sup>8</sup> For the periodization and terminology, see Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam. Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 2: 369–385.

<sup>9</sup> These are the contributions by Joachim Gierlichs, Domenico Ingenito, Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, and Patrick Wing.

<sup>10</sup> Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī Qazvinī, *Nuzhat al-qulūb, The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al-Qulūb*, trans. Le Strange (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1915; London: Luzac, 1919). The author pointed out that while Marāgha had formerly been 'the capital' of Azerbaijan, it was now Tabriz (1919, 78–83). In the same work, however, he also described the newly founded Sulṭāniyya as "the capital of the Kingdom of Iran." (p. 9). From the Mongol perspective, none was probably their only 'capital'; what mattered was their ambulant *ordu* and court, the allegiance of their followers, and, as Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper put it, "governing practices based on recognized difference, with no fixed center or core population." Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History. Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010), 115.

<sup>11</sup> See Bert Fagner's pertinent discussion of the succession of 'capital epithets' from Baghdad (*dār al-salām*—'the abode of peace'; *dār al-khilāfa*—'the seat of the caliphate')

of the Turco-Mongol polities of the middle periods of Islamic history was a decentralized political system, also known as appanage system. In this system, the ruling dynastic family collectively owned the political realm. The most important political implication of this was the existence of multiple political centres in a single polity, which was exacerbated especially under Mongol and Timurid rule. When Tabriz was at the height of its cultural, political, and economic importance, it never was the *only* city that mattered. With the Mongol conquest of Baghdad, the Sunni ideal of a single capital for a single *umma* was replaced by the reality of a multi-cephalous Islamicate commonwealth that had multiple, often co-existing, centres of political authority and cultural excellence. Under Mongol and Timurid rule multiple urban centres emerged or re-emerged as important centers of scholarly activities and the transmission of knowledge, including Marāgha, Tabriz, Sulṭāniyya, Konya, Herat, Samarqand and indeed Baghdad, and of course, Cairo, Damascus and other cities that were not subject to Mongol rule were equally vibrant centres of cultural and intellectual activity. At the same time, and almost as a parallel set of institutions, the Turco-Mongol rulers' ambulant *ordus* and courts also hosted both the mechanisms of political power and administration, and offered a forum for theoretical debates. In addition to accommodating libraries, church tents, the *dīvān*, the treasury, an ad-hoc court, and ambulant *madrasas* and *dār al-siyādas*, these ambulant courts were also places where theological debates were carried out.<sup>12</sup> Cities, villages, and shrine centers, especially those located on trade and pilgrimage routes with easy access for pastoralists, became places where the steppe and the sown met, and often developed outlayer satellite suburbs such as the Shanb-i Ghazan and the Rab'-i Rashīdī in the environs of Tabriz, which were easily accessible to the Turco-Mongol ruling elite.<sup>13</sup>

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to Tabriz (*dār al-salṭana*—'the seat of unconditional rulership'), to which can be added as an extension Sulṭāniyya, which, as a new foundation, assumed the epithet itself as a toponym; Bert G. Fagner, "Ilkhanid Rule and Its Contributions to Iranian Political Culture," in *Beyond The Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (London/Boston: Brill, 2006), 74–76.

<sup>12</sup> The de-centralized, 'federal' system of the corporate dynasty or appanage system had been introduced to the Islamicate world most prominently via the Seljuqs, Karakhanids, and other polities basing their rule on steppe traditions. Under Mongol rule it was reinforced through their mobile lifestyle, with an ambulant court and mobile divan, library, and chapel, seasonal transhumance, lateral succession, exogamous marriage, and Mongol wives with independent *ordus*.

<sup>13</sup> On pastoral cities, mausoleum cities, and trade during the Mongol and Timurid periods, see Jean Aubin, "Éléments pour l'étude des agglomérations urbaines dans l'Iran

Tabriz played not only a preeminent role as a central node in trade networks and as a meeting point of scientists, diplomats, merchants, artists, and litterateurs from east and west. As this volume demonstrates, Tabriz also hosted a vibrant community of scholars who appear to have thrived independently of political patronage, and sometimes despite of it, though often supported by affluent patrons, including, among many others, such luminaries as ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar al-Bayḍāwī, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, Rashīd al-Dīn al-Hamadhānī, al-‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, and ‘Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī. What emerges from the articles included in this volume is that there was not a single model or reason (such as *madrasas*, wealth, or patronage) that explains the great vibrancy of scholarship carried out at Tabriz. Just like in the political realm, where the strength of Turco-Mongol rule lay in recognized difference, it was apparently diversity and friction in opinions and institutions that facilitated excellence in the scholarly milieu. The contributions of this volume provide ample evidence for this.

Reuven Amitai’s study of the first Ilkhan and his relationship with the scholars of the time (“Hülegü and His Wise Men: Topos or Reality?”) lays out the background to the interactions between the Mongol and local elites who surrounded the first Ilkhan Hülegü right after the fall of Baghdad. The article provides insights into Hülegü’s closest entourage, which included many scholars and religious figures, and provides an analysis of the religious debates within the Ilkhanate at that time.

Devin DeWeese’s article “‘Alā’ al-Dawla Simnānī’s Religious Encounters at the Mongol Court near Tabriz” is an in-depth case study of one such figure, ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Simnānī, in the multi-religious environment at the fourth Ilkhan Arghun’s ambulant court, and his interactions with a number of individuals with different religious backgrounds, including most importantly Buddhism, and the impact of these interactions on the thought and career of Simnānī as a key figure in the development of Sufism. Like Amitai’s contribution, it confirms that Simnānī did not seek the close proximity to the Mongol overlords by free choice, and thus

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médiéval,” in *The Islamic City. A Colloquium*, eds. A.H. Hourani and S.M. Stern (Oxford: Casirer, 1970), 65–75; *idem*, “Réseau pastoral et réseau caravanier. Les grand routes du Khurasan à l’époque Mongole,” *Le Monde Iranien et l’Islam* 1 (1971): 105–130; Masashi Haneda, “Gāzāniyya in Tabrīz,” in *Urbanism in Islam. Proceedings of [the] International Conference on Urbanism in Islam (ICUIT)*, ed. Takeshi Yukawa (Tokyo: Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo, 1989), 2: 283–299; *idem*, “The Pastoral City and the Mausoleum City: Nomadic Rule and City Construction in the Eastern Islamic world,” in *Islamic Urbanism in Human History: Political Power and Social Networks*, ed. Sato Tsugitaka (London and New York, Kegan Paul International, 1997), 142–170.

highlights the details of the theological debates that were carried out between Simnānī and his Buddhist counterparts.

Domenico Ingenito's contribution ("‘Tabrizis in Shiraz are Worth Less than a Dog,’ Sa‘dī and Humām, a Lyrical Encounter") delves into the culture of poetic circles during this period and discusses the literary competition between the Tabriz-based poet Humām al-Dīn b. ‘Alā’ Tabrīzī (d. 714/1314–5) and the Shiraz-based literary luminary Sa‘dī. Their competition also symbolizes the relationship between two major urban centers under Mongol rule, Shiraz vs. Tabriz, where Shiraz clearly claims the upper hand. It appears as though the independence, if not supremacy, claimed in literary craftsmanship by Shirazi over Tabrizi poets is also an allegory for the feeling of the Shirazi elites vis-à-vis Tabriz and its inhabitants. For the Shirazis' taste, the Tabrizis were a bit too close to the political power.

Quite a different picture emerges from the study of Shi‘i reactions to Mongol rule in Judith Pfeiffer's article entitled "Confessional Ambiguity vs. Confessional Polarization: Politics and the Negotiation of Religious Boundaries in the Ilkhanate." The paper argues that Twelver Shi‘i groups turned Mongol rule to their advantage by asking for the establishment of *dār al-siyādas* in all major cities of the Ilkhanate. The distribution of the latter across a wide web of cities—Tabriz, Isfahan, Shiraz, Baghdad, Kirman, Kashan, Kufa, Yazd, and Sivas—places Tabriz into a wider network of equally important cities of the Ilkhanate. Twelver Shi‘i groups used existing confessional differences and the radical change in political circumstances—the abolition of the Sunni Abbasid caliphate—and politicized religion in order to create new long-term economic, social, and political opportunities for their confessionally defined community. Their legitimization of Shi‘ism via sayyidism had a long-term impact on political thought in the region.

The contributions of Birgitt Hoffmann and Nourane Ben Azzouna provide case studies of one of the largest endowments ever established in the medieval Islamic world for which the endowment deed also survives in the original. This is the Rab‘-i Rashīdī, the Ilkhanid vizier, historian, and intellectual Rashīd al-Dīn's center of learning, which he established at the outskirts of Tabriz in a place that was both close to Tabriz, the largest town of the Ilkhanate, and could be easily accessed by the ambulant court of the nomadic rulers. Birgitt Hoffmann's contribution "In Pursuit of *memoria* and Salvation: Rashīd al-Dīn and his Rab‘-i Rashīdī" prepares the ground by providing an overview of Rashīd al-Dīn's endowment and endowment deed. The author is the foremost specialist on this endowment

and has studied its deed in extenso.<sup>14</sup> The article is based on the original endowment deed as well as archaeological evidence from research carried out recently in Iran. Nourane Ben Azzouna's article "Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl-Allāh al-Hamadhānī's Manuscript Production Project in Tabriz Reconsidered" provides detailed insights into the manuscript production within the Rab'ī Rashīdī. Based on a close reading of the endowment deed, Ben Azzouna's paper describes the evolution of Rashīd al-Dīn's project and interprets this evolution in relation to that of the vizier's occupation. Since little is known about the details of Rashīd al-Dīn's career, the study of his manuscript production project suggests a fast and impressive rise in power and wealth.

Also related to Rashīd al-Dīn and his circle, and to Tabriz as a center of learning and the transmission of knowledge, is Robert Morrison's contribution "What *Was* the Purpose of Astronomy in Ījī's *Kitāb al-Mawāqif fī 'ilm al-kalām?*" which is dedicated to 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355)'s *Mawāqif*. Heidrun Eichner has recently located the emergence of a new type of *kalām* in the Ilkhanate, and identified the intellectual circles of Marāgha and Tabriz with its vibrant intellectual milieu during the late 13th and early 14th centuries as an important and so far missing link in the connection between the originally Transoxanian-based Maturidism of pre-Mongol times that was mostly taught outside of *madrasas*, and the "amalgamation of the Ash'arite-Shāfi'ite and Māturīdite-Ḥanafite traditions, a process that has decisively shaped the construction of Sunnī orthodoxy in the Ottoman empire,"<sup>15</sup> which had so far been thought to have come about in the Mamluk area. By drilling down to the level of colophons in Maturidi (as well as Ash'ari and Imami) manuscripts copied or studied in Tabriz in the 1310s and 1320s, Eichner has put our knowledge about the transmission of this knowledge, the evolution of the relationship between Ash'arism and Maturidism, and that of theology and the sciences, on much firmer ground by identifying Tabriz (among others) as a place where vivid contemporary debates on the nature of theology took place.<sup>16</sup> The Ash'ari scholar al-Ījī, who defined himself in many ways in clear contra-distinction to the Maturidi scholarship that was actively read in Tabrizi circles during the early 710s and 720s, was an important player in these debates. Robert Morrison's article provides unique insights into

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<sup>14</sup> Birgitt Hoffmann, *Waqf im mongolischen Iran: Rašīduddīns Sorge um Nachruhm und Seelenheil*. Freiburger Islamstudien 20 (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 2000).

<sup>15</sup> Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition*, 380.

<sup>16</sup> Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition*, 317.

Ījī's position in the on-going debate about the relationship between *kalām* and astronomy, adding one further dimension to our knowledge about Ījī and his circle, and the intellectual debates during this time.

Jamil Ragep's "New Light on Shams: The Islamic Side of Σάμψ Πουχάρης" discusses the state of astronomy in the Ilkhanate at the close of the 13th century, and the way it was understood and transmitted by the Byzantine scholar Gregory Chioniades. Ragep concludes that by the end of the 13th century, the center of learning in the area of astronomy had moved from Marāgha to Tabriz. The article puts Tabriz into relief as a node for the transmission of astronomical knowledge between the Ilkhanate and Byzantium. It demonstrates that the fame of the empirical observations gained at the Marāgha observatory had reached Byzantium, whence scholars arrived to request copies of the works produced there. However, the scholar involved, whom Ragep identifies convincingly as Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Khwāja al-Wābkanawī al-Munajjim, did not actually transmit the most up-to-date knowledge, as he passed on to Chioniades Ṭūsī's early, pre-Marāgha Persian *Risāla-yi Mu'iniyya*, rather than the later Arabic *Tadhkira*, which contained corrections based on the insights gained at the observatory in Marāgha.

The final five articles put Tabriz into the broader geographical and chronological context of the 13th to 15th century circulation routes and information nodes.

Johannes Preiser-Kapeller's article "*Civitas Thauris*: The Significance of Tabriz in the Spatial Frameworks of Christian Merchants and Ecclesiastics in the 13th and 14th Century" introduces Christian scholars to our 'mental map' of Tabriz. Using the method of mental mapping, it describes and analyzes Tabriz in mercantile space within the ecclesiastical framework of Eastern Christian denominations and the spatial organisation of the Mendicant orders and the Catholic church. It argues that Franciscans and Dominicans followed the mercantile networks already established and tried to come to terms with the local Christian communities.

Patrick Wing's article " 'Rich in Goods and Abounding in Wealth': The Ilkhanid and Post-Ilkhanid Ruling Elite and the Politics of Commercial Life at Tabriz, 1250–1400" summarizes the role of Tabriz as a center of politics and trade under the Ilkhans and successor dynasties, and explains the role of European merchants in the region, providing a bird's eye's view on a broader geographical and chronological context of Tabriz during the Later Middle Period.

Sheila Blair's article "Tabriz: International Entrepôt under the Mongols" focuses on the transmission of artistic styles, providing an overview of

the importance of styles emanating from Tabriz, and covers a wide chronological scope, moving from the late Ilkhanate into the Timurid period. Joachim Gierlich's contribution on "Tabrizi Woodcarvings in Timurid Iran" provides evidence for one such case of the 'export' of Tabrizi artistic taste and workmanship to the early Ottoman lands in the form of wood carvings in the mosques of Bursa.

Moving on to Tabriz under Aqqyunlu rule, Ertuğrul Ökten's paper on "Imperial Aqqyunlu Construction of Religious Establishments in the Late Fifteenth Century Tabriz" argues that there is little evidence of royal patronage of religious architecture there. While much of the evidence was destroyed by earthquakes and a larger corpus of evidence might permit us to reach different conclusions, the question of patronage as such is an important one. It is shared not only by these last three papers, but by the volume as a whole: From observing the one case study of Tabriz alone, it appears that patronage, royal or otherwise, was significant, but it was only one factor among many that contributed to the exceedingly vibrant cultural and intellectual milieu at Tabriz during this period. If anything, the importance of patronage appears to have diminished as the political hierarchies flattened with the waning of Chinggisid rule, though further studies are needed to put such a hypothesis on firmer ground.

In conclusion, this volume does not provide a single answer to the question of the relationship between the political prominence of Tabriz, patronage, including royal patronage, and the cultural and intellectual efflorescence of Tabriz during the Later Middle Period, as it provides examples for both: at the height of Chinggisid power, some of the local elites—and it appears as though it was in particular those who actively sought patronage by individuals at the highest echelons of political power, the Ilkhans themselves—benefited tremendously from political patronage. They were, in turn, able to shape institutions and even political thought in the long run. Such efforts were especially successful when undertaken communally and spread over wide areas or several cities, as in the case of the *dār al-siyādas*. But equally, this volume provides several examples of individuals and groups who flourished or even claimed superiority precisely because they did *not* depend on patronage, especially royal patronage. This suggests that factors beyond patronage are to be considered.

These include the great diversity among the scholars, denominations, and modes of thought that came together in Tabriz and before it in Marāgha and indeed the Ilkhanate at large; the notion of "recognized difference" which permitted individuals of very different backgrounds to interact in close vicinity and, so it appears, with mutual respect, regardless of these

differences; the relative affluence and high mobility of the local elites during the Mongol and Timurid periods; the accepted pluralism and parallelism of truth claims and sacred pasts that was possible under Mongol rule; and the relatively 'hands-off' mode of the political leadership that enjoined rather than directed or prohibited the pluralism of ideas in an environment that was embedded in large mercantile networks that reached from China to Europe and afforded relative economic ease. All of these appear to have contributed in various degrees to the vibrant intellectual milieu in Tabriz during the 13th and 14th centuries, which are captured in this volume and had repercussions into the 15th century and beyond.

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PART ONE

INTELLECTUALS, BUREAUCRATS AND POLITICS



## HÜLEGÜ AND HIS WISE MEN: TOPOS OR REALITY?

Reuven Amitai

The great historian and statesman to the Mongols, Rashīd al-Dīn (d. 1318)<sup>1</sup> wrote the following in his summation of the life of Hülegü, grandson of Chinggis Khan, brother of two great Khans, and the founder of the Ilkhanid dynasty in Iran and the surrounding countries:

A great lover of wisdom, [Hülegü] encouraged the learned to debate the basic sciences and rewarded them with stipends and salaries. His court was adorned by the presence of scholars and wise men (*'ulamā' wa ḥukamā'*). He was exceptionally fond of the science of alchemy, and its practitioners received extraordinary patronage from him. According to their own delusions and fancies they lit fires, burned innumerable potions, and spouted a lot of useless hot air to young and old alike about making "pots of clay of wisdom," but the benefit of it reached nothing but their nostrils and palates. In transmutation they had no luck, but they were miracles of cheating and fraud, squandering and wasting the stores of the workshops of worldly power. In supplying them, meeting their demands, and paying their salaries, more was spent on them than Qarun made by alchemy in his whole life.<sup>2</sup>

The reader is surely struck in this text by the deprecating and dismissive view towards the practitioners of alchemy, expressed with particular rhetorical flourish. However, the entertainment value of the last two-thirds of the passage—to which I will return below—should not distract us from its opening two sentences. The first Ilkhan is described as having a penchant for scientists and philosophers, whom he patronized at court.

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<sup>1</sup> On this figure, see D.O. Morgan, "Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb," *EI* 8 (1995): 443–344 and the forthcoming volume: *Rashīd al-Dīn, Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran*, eds. A. Akasoy, C. Burnett, and R. Yoeli-Tlalim, to be published in the series "Warburg Institute Colloquia."

<sup>2</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, ed. 'A. 'Alizādah (Baku, 1957), 3: 90–91 [= the edition by B. Karīmī (Tehran, A. Sh. 1338/A. H. 1959), 2: 734]. The translation from W.M. Thackston, *Rashīduddīn Fazlullāh's Jami'u't-tawārīkh: Compendium of Chronicles. A History of the Mongols* (Cambridge, MA, 1998–99), 2: 513, except for the expression *'ulamā' wa ḥukamā'*, which he translates as "philosophers and scientists." Qārūn is the Biblical Qorah/Korah (Num. XVI) and is mentioned three times in the Qur'ān (XXVIII: 76–82; XXIX: 39/38, and XL: 25/24). His great wealth is attributed to his knowledge of alchemy; according to post-Qur'ānic Arabic literature, he is one of the founders of this science; D.B. MacDonald, "Qārūn," *EI* 4 (1978): 673.

Might one wonder if this is a rhetorical device, perhaps even a topos: the ruler of Steppe provenance meets with wise men and scholars, deriving from them advice and insights (at times, even leading to religious conversion). Indeed, it can be suggested that such a theme exists in the cultural history of the pre-Mongol Steppe peoples, and perhaps it continued among the Mongols who were the heirs of the rich cultural and political tradition of the Steppe.<sup>3</sup> In other words, do we have before us a firm historical account, or rather a description of what would have been expected of a ruler from the Steppe?

I will argue in this paper that the above passage from Rashīd al-Dīn and others are definitely rooted in the reality of the Mongol Empire, even if they occasionally contain exaggerated or fantastic features: undeniably Hūlegū—like other Mongol rulers—was the patron of a body of scholars and wise men of various types who were regular members of his entourage, and they had a certain impact on his policy, including in the strategic sphere. At the same time we cannot reject the role of the topos: it may well be that the Mongol rulers (including Hūlegū), acted at times with an eye to the imperial tradition of Inner Asia: one reason that they might have assembled such an entourage of wise men was that this was what they were expected to do. It may also be that the authors who wrote down these accounts may also have been affected by such cultural precedents. Thus, we can note here already in passing the dialectical relationship between topos and reality in Eurasian Steppe culture: the theme of the ruler surrounded by wise men is fed by a real situation, but in turn it also encourages real historical protagonists to continue in this vein, and writers to describe them as such.<sup>4</sup>

To set the stage, I will briefly relate two well known instances in the historical literature describing pre-Mongol Steppe rulers and wise men from the realm of religion. The first example will be the council of scholars who were assembled by the Qaghan of the Khazars, as reported in the *Book of*

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<sup>3</sup> For the continuity of certain cultural aspects among these nomads over the centuries, see: M. Biran, *Chinggis Khan* (Oxford, 2007), chapter 1, esp. 12–14; P.B. Golden, “Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity Amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia,” *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 2 (1982), 37–76 [reprinted in P.B. Golden, *Nomads and their Neighbors in the Russian Steppe: Turks, Khazars and Qipchaqs* (Aldershot, 2003)].

<sup>4</sup> Although it goes beyond the present study, it would be interesting and instructive to consider the theme of rulers and their wise men in others cultures. For example, I will note the portrayal of a two examples in the Old Testament: Pharaoh’s “wise men and magicians” (Exodus, 7:11), and Ahasuerus’s “wise men, who knew the times” (Esther, 1:13), reflecting again probably the dialectical relationship between topos and reality.

*Refutation and Proof on Behalf of the Despised Religion* (*Kitāb al-radd wa al-dalīl fī al-dīn al-dhalīl*), also known by the Hebrew title *Ha-Kuzarī*—the book of the Khazars—written in Judeo-Arabic by the Andalusian Yehudah Halevy (d. 1141). The Qaghan's interlocutors, who include a philosopher and representatives of the monotheistic great religions, each present their case, which are then weighed; in the end Judaism is picked, which in this context may not come as a surprise.<sup>5</sup> The story, which finds its echoes in the so-called letter of King Joseph of the Khazars to the Andalusian Jewish leader, Ḥasḏai ibn Shaprut (915–975)<sup>6</sup> and the Schechter (or Cambridge) Document (another reputed letter to Ḥasḏai),<sup>7</sup> more-or-less parallels the account of the adoption of Judaism by the Khazar leadership in the eighth century, although whether this was the way in which some of the Khazar elite adopted at some point Judaism of some type and to some degree remains an open question.<sup>8</sup> However, the theme of the wise men surrounding the ruler—albeit perhaps for only a short period, and at his initiative—is clearly seen.

The second example, this time from the other side of Asia, also has the motif of a steppe ruler, or at least one of steppe provenance, holding a debate between religious leaders as a prelude to conversion. 'Aṭā Malik Juvaynī (d. 1283), another administrator and historian of the Mongols, relates the story of the quasi-historical mid-eighth century king of the Uyghurs, Būqū (<Bögü) Khan, who held a debate between shamans (*qāmān*) and Buddhist holy men (*toyins*) from the *Khīṭā* (the reference appears to be to northern China itself and not to later Khitan rulers of the Liao dynasty [916–1125], or even the Qara Khitay [1124–1118]). The *toyins* were victorious after they read from the book called *nom* (i.e., law, *dharma*) and explained their doctrine of reincarnation and other matters,

<sup>5</sup> For this episode (or rather, a series of discussions), see D.M. Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars* (Princeton, 1954), 116–118. The original story is found in Yehūda Ha-Levī, *Kitāb al-radd wa al-dalīl fī al-dīn al-dhalīl* (*Kitāb al-khazarī*), ed. D.H. Baneth, prepared for publication by H. Ben-Shammai (Jerusalem, 1977), 3–41; Yehūda Ha-Levī, *Sefer Ha-Kuzarī*, based on the translation of Ibn Tibbōn (Vilna, 1904), 15–154; Judah Hallevi, *Book of Kuzari*, tr. H. Hirschfeld (New York, 1946), 31–71.

<sup>6</sup> On this letter, a reply to a supposed missive by Ḥasḏai, see Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars*, 125–155, esp. 154–155.

<sup>7</sup> For conversion story in this missive, see *ibid.*, 157–158; N. Golb and O. Pritsak, *Khazarian Hebrew Documents of the Tenth Century* (Ithaca and London, 1982), 109–111, 130–131.

<sup>8</sup> On the question of the conversion of the Khazars (or their elite) to Judaism, see Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars*, 89–170; P.B. Golden, "Khazaria and Judaism," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 3 (1983), 127–156 [reprinted in Golden, *Nomads and Their Neighbours*]; K.A. Brook, *The Jews of Khazaria*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, Maryland, 2006), 87–123.

and Būqū Khan duly converted to their faith.<sup>9</sup> Again, one has trouble deciding if this reflects a real historical event, or it is a mere trope. I tend to think that the latter is the case; certainly—as Golden points out—the story here of Būqū's conversion is wrong: Būqū and the Uyghur elite in general had become Manichaeans in 762.<sup>10</sup> Yet, Juvaynī's story, with all of its confusion and inserted stereotypical elements, may well be an echo of such a conversion.

Two episodes probably do yet not constitute a topos, but one cannot help but notice a certain similarity with two stories from the Mongol period, where we are most surely on firmer historical ground: The first takes place at the end of May 1254, when the Great Khan (Qaghan) Möngke (r. 1251–59), brother of Hülegü, ordered a debate between representatives of the different faiths. We have a report of this affair by the Franciscan emissary William of Rubruck (d. ca. 1293), who wrote a fairly detailed account of his mission to the Great Khan's court. His testimony of the debate may suffer from problems of bias; William was himself a participant in this panel, and he was neither there as a social scientist attempting objectivity nor as a post-modern relativist. However, there is no reason to doubt that this event took place or its broad outlines. Here, however, the aim in this case was not to ask for religious advice, i.e. to help the ruler make a decision about adopting a new religion, but rather to satisfy his curiosity regarding the different faiths, whose representatives and holy men were present at his capital.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Juvaynī ('Alā' al-Dīn 'Atā Malik), *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā*, ed. M.M. Qazvīnī (London and Leiden, 1912–37), 1: 45–55 = J.A. Boyle (tr.), *The History of the World Conqueror* (Manchester, 1958), 1: 59–60. I am grateful to Michal Biran for reminding me of this episode. For the religious vicissitudes in Uyghur history, see A.M. Khazanov, "The Spread of World Religions in Medieval Nomadic Societies of the Eurasian Steppes," in M. Gervers and W. Schlepp (eds.), *Nomadic Diplomacy, Destruction and Religion from the Pacific to the Adriatic: Papers Prepared for the Central and Inner Asian Seminar, University of Toronto, 1992–93* = "Toronto Studies in Central and Inner Asia," No. 1 (Toronto, 1994), 18–21. For the historicity of Būqū Khan, see the comments of Boyle in *History of the World Conqueror*, 54, note 4; 56, note 16.

<sup>10</sup> P.B. Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples* (Wiesbaden, 1992), 174–176, who points out the parallel with the conversion story of the Khazars. For the possible connection between the two stories, see Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars*, 155, n. 118.

<sup>11</sup> P. Jackson with David Morgan (trans. and eds.), *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke 1253–1255* (London, 1990), 230–235. For this council, see B.Z. Kedar, "The Multilateral Disputation at the Court of the Grand Qan Möngke, 1254," in H. Lazarus-Yafeh, M.R. Cohen, S. Somekh, S.H. Griffith (eds.), *The Majlis. Interreligious Encounters in Medieval Islam*, "Studies in Arabic Language and Literature," 4 (Wiesbaden, 1999), 162–183.

A second debate of religious wise men before a Mongol leader is around 1258, before Möngke's brother and future successor Qubilai (r. 1260–1294). At the order of the Qaghan, the latter—then governing China—ordered a debate between Tibetan Buddhists, Chinese Taoists and Confucians. Qubilai's sympathies were clearly with the Buddhists, and together with what appear to be their superior debating skills and the support of the Confucians, the Taoists were trounced. Although their punishment was not as heavy as could have been expected (17 Taoists had to convert to Buddhism, some Taoist holy books were burnt, and ca. 250 temples were expropriated from the Taoists and handed back to the winning side), this appears to have been a real setback for the Taoists. We are not, however, concerned here with the fate of Taoism, Buddhism or Confucianism under the Mongols, but rather how again a Mongol prince convened a gathering of religious wise men, this time even serving as a partial participant in the proceedings.<sup>12</sup>

All of the above gatherings of wise men were initiated by a Steppe ruler (or one of Steppe origin) in order to learn about different faiths, perhaps with the intention of joining a particular group, or expressing support for it. However, this was only one type of consultation with the wise men of different ilk that the Mongol rulers certainly had in their entourage on a normal basis. For example, Bar Hebraeus in his Arabic chronicle noted that Qubilai “loved wise men (*al-ḥukamā'*), the '*ulamā'*' and the godly of all sects and nations.”<sup>13</sup> Thus, the Khan would have met these wise men, scholars and holy figures out of intellectual curiosity or sustained interest in philosophical, scientific and religious matters. This tallies with the long passage about Hülegü at the beginning of this paper.

In addition, the Mongol ruler could assemble wise men of various types for consultations about real affairs of state, seeking their advice or confirmation for decisions already made. Hence, we find the following story about Hülegü, in the mid-1250s, making his way west through the Islamic world: In the run up to the campaign to Baghdad (early 1258), the not quite

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<sup>12</sup> A. Waley (tr. and intro.), *Travels of an Alchemist* (London, 1931), 31–33; M. Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1988), 37–43. I am grateful to Prof. Christopher Atwood of Indiana University in Bloomington for illuminating me about this particular debate.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn al-'Ibrī, (Abū al-Faraj Ghrīghūriyūs), *Kitāb mukhtaṣar al-duwal*, ed. A. Ṣāliḥānī, 2nd ed. (Beirut, 1985), 281; cited in Jackson, “Hülegü Khan and the Christians,” 205, from which this translation is taken.

yet Ilkhan<sup>14</sup> consulted with scholars of various types and religions about the expedition. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, there was a lot of disagreement among the experts. Hülegü first turned to the astronomer Ḥusām al-Dīn, who had been sent by Möngke. Ḥusām al-Dīn was unequivocally opposed to the campaign, predicting six catastrophes if Hülegü went ahead with it: horses and men would die; the sun will not rise; rain will not fall; a cold wind will rise and the world will be destroyed; plants will not grow; and, finally, a great ruler will die within a year. Given this pessimistic outlook, Hülegü ordered a second opinion. He turned to his commanders and the *bakhshīs*, here referring to Buddhist holy men,<sup>15</sup> who were greatly in favor of the campaign. Needing to resolve the matter, the Mongol leader turned to the man who was rapidly becoming his main civilian advisor, the Shī'i savant Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 1274),<sup>16</sup> who was also adamant in his support for attacking the city, giving examples of past caliphs having been killed with no apocalyptic results. The author concludes the matter with a short poem that shows Hülegü's delight at receiving the answer that he wanted and the estimation of wise men:

*From the wise man's speech, the prince's  
Heart lit up like a tulip in spring.<sup>17</sup>*

There is nothing that rings false in the essence of this story. The khan consulted with a number of wise men, finally getting the confirmation of his original plan. Whether the exact words of Ḥusām al-Dīn are reflected here or his motives were more complicated (i.e., the reluctance to support an attack on the Abbasid capital) remains an open question. Be that as it may, the next story, however, is perhaps more suspect.

Ibn Ṭīqtaqā, writing in 1302, tells how Hülegü convened a council of *ulamā'* (Muslim scholars) after the conquest of Baghdad (in early 1258) to ask for a *fatwā* (legal opinion) on the following question: "Who is preferable, an infidel ruler who is righteous, or a Muslim ruler who is unjust?" A *fatwā* was indeed prepared that stated that a just infidel was preferable

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<sup>14</sup> It seems that Hülegü only adopted his title in the aftermath of the taking of Baghdad. See R. Amitai-Preiss, "Evidence for the Early Use of the Title Ilkhan among the Mongols," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd Ser., 1 (1991), 353–362 [reprinted in R. Amitai, *The Mongols in the Islamic Lands: Studies in the History of the Ilkhanate* (Aldershot, UK and Burlington, VT, 2007)].

<sup>15</sup> P. Jackson, "Bakši," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 3 (1989): 535–536.

<sup>16</sup> On Ṭūsī and his relations with the Ilkhans, see G. Lane, *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Iran: A Persian Renaissance* (London and New York, 2003), 213–225.

<sup>17</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Karīmī, 3: 50–51 = tr. Thackston, 2: 492.

to an unjust Muslim. However, only the well known Shi'i scholar Raḍiyy al-Dīn ibn Ṭāwūs<sup>18</sup> was willing to put his signature to it, while the others demurred at first; eventually, however, they all signed it.<sup>19</sup> This story indeed smacks of *post facto* apologetics, and one can wonder if it or at least parts of it is a fabrication. Its credibility is not strengthened by the fact that it is not found to the best of my knowledge in any other source.<sup>20</sup> If, indeed, the story reflects a real historical event, I am sure that this too is just what Hülegü wanted to hear. In any case, it provides a nice rationalization to Muslim officials serving the Mongol regime, and legitimization towards the Muslim population as a whole. If it is an invention, it only works because the idea of a group of scholars meeting to dispense advice to the ruler was an accepted idea.

Even with likely imaginary aggregations, from the above passages we can see that Hülegü would assemble groups of wise men, scholars and religious figures to hold practical consultations or to enjoy some intellectual entertainment (as was also the case with Möngke). It seems that the feeling of estimation and appreciation between Hülegü and the learned ones was a mutual one, or at least that was the appearance that was given. Thus, Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286)—known also as Ibn al-'Ibrī—in the Arabic version of his chronicle wrote that “Hülegü was possessed of an intellect and understanding which endeared him to wise men and *'ulamā'*.”<sup>21</sup> The Persian historian Qāshānī, writing early in the fourteenth century confirms

<sup>18</sup> On Ibn Ṭāwūs, see the introduction to E. Kohlberg, *A Medieval Muslim Scholar at Work: Ibn Ṭāwūs and His Library* (Leiden, 1992), 3–18.

<sup>19</sup> Ibn Ṭiḡtaqā (Ṣafī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ṭabāṭabā), *al-Fakhrī fī al-ādāb al-sulṭāniyya wa'l-dawla al-islāmiyya*, ed. 'A.-Q. M. Māyū (Aleppo, 1418/1997), 23; cited and discussed by J. Sadan, “‘Community’ and ‘Extra-Community’ as a Legal and Literary Problem,” *Israel Oriental Studies* 10 (1980), 114–115; Kohlberg, *A Medieval Muslim Scholar*, 10–11.

<sup>20</sup> There may, however, be an echo of this account in an episode related by Vaṣṣāf taking place just before the conquest of Baghdad: A Shi'i delegation from Hilla, including members of the Banū Ṭāwūs, came to Baghdad to submit to Hülegü. They complained of the tyranny of Sunni Baghdad, and welcomed the Mongols in ambiguous terms as the long announced and awaited sons of the Biblical Keturah. See J. Pfeiffer, “Faces Likes Shields Covered by Leather: Keturah's Sons in the Post-Mongol Islamicate Eschatological Traditions,” in İ. Evrim Binbaş and N. Kılıç-Schubel (eds.), *Horizons of the World: Festschrift for İsenbike Togan* (Istanbul, 2011), 559–566, citing Vaṣṣāf [‘Abd Allāh b. Faḍl Allāh], *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf [= Tajziyat al-amṣār wa-tajziyat al-a'sār]* (rpt., Teheran, A.Sh.1338/1959–60, of Bombay, A.H.1269/1852–3), 36. I am grateful to Judith Pfeiffer for bringing this passage to my attention, along with her important and interesting new article.

<sup>21</sup> Ibn al-'Ibrī, *Kitāb mukhtaṣar al-duwal*, 2nd ed., 284–285; translation from P. Jackson, “Hülegü and the Christians: The Making of a Myth,” in P. Edbury and J. Phillips (eds.), *The Experience of Crusading*, vol. 2: *Defining the Crusader Kingdom* (Cambridge, 2003), 199–200, note 20 [reprinted in P. Jackson, *Studies on the Mongol Empire and Early Muslim India* (Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT, 2009)].

this information: Hülegü “loved science, was infatuated with astronomy and geometry. Consequently . . . , scientists from East and West congregated at his court, and his contemporaries were fascinated by different branches of learning, geometry and mathematics.”<sup>22</sup> All in all, we can see then that indeed Rashīd al-Dīn was on the mark when he wrote (as cited at the beginning of this paper) that Hülegü was “a great lover of wisdom, [who] encouraged the learned to debate the basic sciences and rewarded them with stipends and salaries. His court was adorned by the presence of scholars and wise men.”

The special place in Hülegü’s circle of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī—erstwhile Isma‘īli, and after his “release” from Alamut in 1256, just a plain Twelver Shi‘i—is well known. He was a political advisor (as we have seen), an expert in economic affairs,<sup>23</sup> an administrator of religious endowments,<sup>24</sup> and a composer of letters on behalf of his patron;<sup>25</sup> all this besides his achievements as a philosopher, religious scholar and scientist.<sup>26</sup> In the Mongol context, he was especially famous as an astronomer, and as is well known, Hülegü had built for him the observatory near Marāgha. Ṭūsī’s associates there included Fu Meng-chi, who explained to him the principles of Chinese astronomy.<sup>27</sup> There is really no need to expand on this renowned figure, but it is perhaps necessary to mention him as the unofficial leader of the Ilkhan’s intellectuals and scholars.

Hülegü also was concerned about scholarly infrastructure. In 1256, before the destruction of Alamut, the future historian and governor of Baghdad (and brother of the first minister of the Mongols in Iran) ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī<sup>28</sup> who was with Hülegü, noted the matter of the value of books in the library at the castle. The Mongol ruler ordered that all the

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<sup>22</sup> Qāshānī (Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad), *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, ed. M. Hambly (Tehran, 1348 Sh.), 106–107; cited by T.T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge, 2001), 162, from which this translation is taken.

<sup>23</sup> V. Minorsky, “Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī on Finance,” in V. Minorsky, *Iranica* (Tehran, 1964), 64–85.

<sup>24</sup> Lane, *Early Mongol Rule*, 217; Minorsky, “Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī on Finance,” 65.

<sup>25</sup> For his role in composing letters in Arabic to Ayyubid princes and Mamluk sultans, see D. Aigle, “Les correspondances adressées par Hülegü au prince ayyoubide al-Malik al-Nāsir Yūsuf: la construction d’un modèle,” in M.-A. Amir Moezzi, J.-D. Dubois, C. Jullien et F. Jullien (eds.), *Pensée grecque et sagesse d’orient: hommage à Michel Tardieu* (Turnhout, 2010), 25–45.

<sup>26</sup> H. Daiber and F.J. Ragep, “al-Ṭūsī, Naṣīr al-Dīn,” *EI*<sup>2</sup> 10 (2000): 746–752; Lane, *Mongol Rule in Iran*, 217.

<sup>27</sup> Boyle, *CHIr*, 5: 547; D. Morgan, *The Mongols*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 2007), 134, 140.

<sup>28</sup> For this, see Juvaynī (already cited above), and W. Barthold and J.A. Boyle, “Djuwaynī, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Aṭā Malik b. Muḥammad,” *EI*<sup>2</sup> 2 (1965): 606–607.

books be delivered to our author. Those works and astronomical instruments that were deemed valuable were saved, while those tainted with the Ismaʿili heresy were burned.<sup>29</sup>

Of course, Hülegü was not alone among the Mongol princes in surrounding himself with wise men and supporting them. We have already seen that his brothers Möngke and Qubilai had each organized assemblies of religious figures, and the latter certainly enjoyed the presence of sundry wise men and religious figures. Later Ilkhans also maintained these traditions; for example, Arghun (r. 1284–91) witnessed a debate between the Buddhist monks and the Kubravī sufi shaykh, ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Simnānī (his friend since youth),<sup>30</sup> while Rashīd al-Dīn reports that at the court of Ghazan, there were “the wise and learned of Cathay, India, the Uyghur, the Qipchaq [Steppe] and other nations.”<sup>31</sup>

All of this fits well into the work of both Thomas Allsen and Peter Jackson. The former has written about how the Mongol rulers gathered intellectual, scientific and spiritual experts (especially with a propensity for predicting the future) from across their empire, just as they assembled artisans and specialists in other fields,<sup>32</sup> while the latter has concentrated more on the Mongols’ relationship with religious, magical and predicting experts. Basically, the Mongols were equal opportunity employers in this realm; they were happy to exploit expert personnel of all kinds if they would pray for, work on or especially forecast at their behalf, and there was an expectation of success.<sup>33</sup> In short, Hülegü’s policy here was very much part and parcel of a wider Mongol approach, which in turn may be seen as a continuation and development of Eurasian Steppe culture.

In the remainder of this paper I will present two other passages dealing with Hülegü’s relations and patronage with scientists, wise men, religious

<sup>29</sup> Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, 3: 269–270 = tr. Boyle, 2: 719; cited in W. Barthold, *An Historical Geography of Iran*, tr. S. Soucek, ed. C.E. Bosworth (Princeton, 1984), 210.

<sup>30</sup> R. Amitai, “Sufis and Shamans: Some Remarks on the Islamization of the Mongols in the Ilkhanate,” *Journal of the Social and Economic History of the Orient*, 42/1 (Leiden, 1999), 32 [reprinted in Amitai, *The Mongols in the Islamic Lands*].

<sup>31</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Karīmī, 1: 18 = tr. Thackston, 1: 18–19. A concrete example of such a scholarly-religious entourage—composed of Muslims and Jews—is found when Ghazan campaigned in Syria in 1299–1300; see K.V. Zetterstéen, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mamlükensultane in den Jahren 690–741 der Hīgra nach arabischen Handschriften* (Leiden, 1919), 76.

<sup>32</sup> T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge, 2001), 203–211.

<sup>33</sup> P. Jackson, “The Mongols and the Faith of the Conquered,” in R. Amitai and M. Biran (eds.), *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World* (Leiden and Boston, 2005), 245–290, esp. 275–278 [reprinted in Jackson, *Studies on the Mongol Empire and Early Muslim India*].

scholars and philosophers. As far as I am aware, neither of these passages has yet caught the attention of the scholarly community, although one was summarized and briefly analyzed in a fairly obscure publication (at least from the perspective of Mongol and Eurasian studies) over 70 years ago. We will see that while both accounts are somewhat fantastic in their contents they are based to a certain degree on a historical reality, one that we have just attempted to demonstrate. There may be a connection of some type between the two passages.<sup>34</sup>

The first of these is taken from the Arabic chronicle by Ibn al-Furāt (d. 1405), *Taʿrīkh al-duwal wa al-mulūk*; two of its extant volumes remained unpublished, and it is from one of them that the following is taken. While it is a relatively late work, Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle is chock full of interesting, detailed material for the late Ayyubid and early Mamluk period, much of which would have been otherwise lost.<sup>35</sup> A comparison of those sections which are found in existing works shows that Ibn al-Furāt was a very faithful and accurate compiler and summarizer, which is much more than can be said about the still more famous al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442). I have shown in earlier work that the sections of al-Maqrīzī's *Kitāb al-sulūk* on the late Ayyubids and early Mamluks are almost totally based on Ibn al-Furāt's chronicle, and that at times he does his job in a sloppy, often inaccurate manner.<sup>36</sup> The passage in question is taken from the Vatican manuscript (Ar. 726) of the *Taʿrīkh al-duwal wa al-mulūk* (which covers 639 to 659 AH), and is found *sub anno* 658 *hijri* after the description of the Mongol conquest of Syria, but before telling how Hülegü returned to the east in the late winter of 1260. The chapter is entitled "The setting out of

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<sup>34</sup> These two passages are also briefly discussed in a recent article: R. Amitai, "Jews at the Mongol Court in Iran: Cultural Brokers or Minor Actors in a Cultural Boom," in Marc von der Höh, Nikolas Jaspert, and Jenny Rahel Oesterle (eds.), *Cultural Brokers at Mediterranean Courts in the Middle Ages* (Paderborn, Wilhelm Fink and Ferdinand Schöningh, 2013), 33–45.

<sup>35</sup> Some initial assessment is given by Claude Cahen, "Ibn al-Furāt," *EI*<sup>2</sup> 3 (1971): 768–769, who plays down the importance of the volumes that deal with the early Mamluk period. For a more positive appraisal, see D.P. Little, "Historiography of the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk epochs," in Carl F. Petry (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 2: *Islamic Egypt (640–1517)* (Cambridge, 1998), 433; *idem*, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography: An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik an-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāʾūn* (Wiesbaden, 1970), 73–75. For my own evaluation, see the next note.

<sup>36</sup> See my paper "Al-Maqrīzī as a Historian of the Early Mamluk Sultanate (or: Is al-Maqrīzī an Unrecognized Historiographical Villian?)," *Mamluk Studies Review*, 7/2 (2003), 99–118. Frédéric Bauden has written a number of papers that touch upon this subject, especially his forthcoming "Maqriziana VII: Al-Maqrīzī and the Yāsa: New Evidence of His Intellectual Dishonesty."

King Hülegü from Aleppo, and his return to the land of the east, and his order to Kitbugha and Baydara to fight the people of Egypt and to take control of it.” The information immediately preceding the passage that we will discuss describes the Mongol religion—or according to the author the lack thereof—and (to his mind) the despicable Mongol customs. As far as I know neither this passage nor the next—the focus of my discussion now—has received any notice by scholars. Let me turn to the relevant section, which I will summarize in some detail.

According to Ibn al-Furāt,<sup>37</sup> Hülegü had thirty wise men (*ḥukamāʾ*), as had Alexander. This group was comprised of five Arabs, five Persians, five Greeks (*rūm*), five Jews, five Christians and five Zoroastrians. After Hülegü conquered Aleppo, he called for these wise men and sought their advice about going to Egypt. During his reign, he had never besieged a town or castle or went to war without consulting his wise men, who would check the horoscope. When Hülegü asked about going to Egypt, not one of these wise men said anything. Hülegü then called for Sunqur al-Ashqar (we know from earlier in the work and other sources that Sunqur was a member of the Mamluk Baḥriyya, and had been taken prisoner in Aleppo by the Mongols; Sunqur was also one of Baybars’ closest friends, who later was to successfully get him out of Mongol captivity).<sup>38</sup> Asked about the campaign to Egypt and intelligence on the country and its army, Sunqur replied about Egypt’s size and wealth. At this point, the Mongol khan again turned to the wise men, and repeated his question about the wisdom of invading Egypt. It seems that Hülegü was having some second thoughts, having understood the difficulty of taking the country. His doubts were compounded by his encounter with some of the Baḥrī Mamluks, who had been imprisoned by the Ayyubid sultan. Hülegü—so it is reported—had a chance to perceive the noble-mindedness of the Baḥrīs, their handsome appearance and dress, and thus took them into his service and brought them to the East. But meanwhile, Hülegü had been nonplussed by the negative response of the wise men, so he asked them again. They told him that he would not rule Egypt and the Mongols would not enter it, but in a *non sequitur* then informed him that he had no choice but to go to the country. The two commanders who will gain control of the country are those whose names had the letters *bāʾ* and *ghayn* in one, and *dāl* and *rāʾ*

<sup>37</sup> MS. Vatican, fols. 240b–241b.

<sup>38</sup> On Sunqur, his captivity and his later return to the Mamluk Sultanate, see R. Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Ilkhanid War 1260–1281* (Cambridge, 1995), 118–120.

in another. These letters are found in the names Kitbugha and Baydara, and thus Hülegü called for two senior officers with these names,<sup>39</sup> and he made Kitbugha governor (*nā'ib*) in Aleppo and Baydara in Damascus, and ordered them to invade Egypt and conquer it, saying “This country is in your name, and it won’t be conquered except by you.” Hülegü thought that his “mamlüks” (*mamālikuhu*) would rule the country. (N.B.: “Mamluks” here is being used in either a metaphorical sense, or perhaps our author, living in the Mamluk Sultanate, was misinformed about the nature of the Mongol army and its command structure.) Actually, as our source notes: it was another Kitbugha and Baydara—mamluks of Sultan Qalawun—who eventually took control of Egypt: Kitbugha as Sultan al-Malik al-‘Ādil in 1294, and Baydara for one day, in the aftermath of the assassination of al-Malik al-Ashraf Khalil in 1293.<sup>40</sup> The fate of the Mongol commanders with these names is, of course, well known.

The sympathetic, even panegyric description of the Baḥriyya—soon to take control of Egypt under the leadership of Baybars—should already call into question the historicity of at least part of the passage. The neat correspondence of the names Kitbugha and Baydara from 1260 and the 1290s is a wonderful touch, but such a marvelous prescience might also raise our positivistic eyebrows. However, these matters, as entertaining as they are, should not distract us from another significant point here: the recourse to the theme of the wise men of various religions and cultures. On the one hand, this confirms what we have already seen regarding Hülegü and his entourage of advisors composed of wise men. On the other hand, this is unique and interesting evidence regarding the ethnic and religious composition of this entourage (which we should perhaps also take with a grain of salt). The addition of Alexander as a model is a noteworthy point, but we will leave it to others to deal with its significance.

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<sup>39</sup> For Kitbugha (Arabic: Kitbughā), probably Hülegü’s most important general, see R. Amitai, “An Arabic Biographical Notice of Kitbughā, the Mongol General Defeated at ‘Ayn Jālūt,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 33 (2007), 219–234. For Baydara (Arabic: Baydarā, also found as Baydar), a much less significant figure, see Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks*, 33, 34n, 38, 43. The story of Kitbugha receiving the governorship of Aleppo, and Baydara that of Damascus is of course nonsense: the former was clearly the senior officer, and he was appointed governor over all of Syria. See the discussion in R. Amitai-Preiss, “‘Ayn Jālūt Revisited,” *Tārīḥ* (Philadelphia) 2 (1992), 124–125 [reprinted in Amitai, *The Mongols in the Islamic Lands*].

<sup>40</sup> For the fate of the Mongol commanders Baydara and Kitbugha, see Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks*, 26–43; Amitai, “An Arabic Biographical Notice of Kitbughā,” 227–230. For the Mamluk officers and sultans of this name, see R. Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250–1382* (London, 1986), 70–91.

It can also be noted that the passage brought by Ibn al-Furāt appears out of the blue. I have no idea of his source in this case. This in itself is interesting, since usually Ibn al-Furāt mentions from whence he has taken his material, which is one of his notable positive points as a historian. However, this time he does not provide even a clue. But, I did have a suspect: One of the important sources for Ibn al-Furāt for the tumultuous events of A.H. 658 (which began on 18 December 1259, starting with the Mongol invasion of Syria, continuing with the Mamluk response that culminated in the battle of ‘Ayn Jālūt, and concluding with Baybars’ rise to power) is the chronicle of Shihāb al-Dīn Qirtāy (or Qaraṭāy as suggested by the editors of the recent edition) al-‘Izzī al-Khaznadārī, *Ta’rīkh majmū’ al-nawādir mim mā jāra li al-awā’il wa al-awākhir*.<sup>41</sup> There is some question to the author’s exact identity, but it appears that he served as a middle ranking Mamluk officer in Syria in the first half of the fourteenth century.<sup>42</sup> Qirtāy belonged to a very small group of Mamluk officers (and their descendents) who themselves composed chronicles and other works.<sup>43</sup>

In Qirtāy’s chronicle we find a chapter called “What happened to Hülegü with his wise men.” Already in 1939, this section was noted and summarized by Eli Strauss, later known as Eliyahu Ashtor, in an article entitled “The Mongol Conquests and the Jews” that appeared in Hebrew in *Zion*, then a fledgling journal published (as today) in Jerusalem.<sup>44</sup> Until recently, the article by Strauss/Ashtor does not seem to have had much impact on

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<sup>41</sup> Edited by H. Hein and M. al-Ḥujayrī, and published in the series “Bibliotheca Islamica,” volume 46 (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2005). One important section for the events of this year is found on 92–103; here Qirtāy directly quotes at length Šarīm al-Dīn Uzbak al-Ashrafī, an important eyewitness. This entire passage is in turn cited by Ibn al-Furāt, MS. Vatican, fols. 241a–242a, 246a–247b. This section was published first by G. Levi della Vida, “L’Invasione dei Tartari in Siria nel 1260 ricordi di un testimone oculare,” *Orientalia* 4 (1935), 253–276.

<sup>42</sup> For a discussion of the author’s identity, see the Introduction of the edition, 14–19.

<sup>43</sup> Four notable examples are Baybars al-Manšūrī, Ibn al-Dawādārī, al-Šafadī and Ibn Duqmāq. For the first three, see Little, “Historiography,” 423–425, 431–432. For the last mentioned, see J. Pedersen, “Ibn Duqmāq,” *EI*<sup>2</sup> 3 (1971): 756.

<sup>44</sup> “The Mongol Conquests and the Jews: Towards the History of the Jews in the East according to the Arabic Sources,” *Zion* 4 (1939), 51–70 [Hebrew]. This article contains many pieces of evidence that the author culled from a variety of sources, mostly still in manuscript. One can imagine that the late 1930s was not a terribly good time for an Orientalist from Mandate Palestine to be consulting manuscripts in Europe, but somehow Strauss/Ashtor succeeded in his task. While characterized by a certain methodological naiveté and not demonstrating a particularly sophisticated understanding of Mongol history, his study is important for its assembling of some interesting passages, most importantly the one by Qirtāy to be discussed here.

the study of the Mongol or Jewish history.<sup>45</sup> However, it has done a great service in drawing attention to the particular passage by Qirtāy, which I summarize in some detail, based on a re-reading of the new edition of the Chronicle:

A group of Mongol princes (*mulūk al-tatar*) detached to Hülegü's army were talking among themselves about Hülegü and his wise men (*ḥukamā'uhu*), who were connected to non-religious sciences. The princes were angry with Hülegü and told him "You spend a lot of money on these wise men, and what do you get out of it?" Hülegü thought to investigate the matter and called for the wise men to appear. He asked them "What do you do for me?" One of the Jews stood up; he was the cleverest among them and the most honorable in Hülegü's eyes. He said: "We are wise men." Hülegü asked "What is the job of the wise men?" The Jew said: "[To be] clever." Hülegü said: "Do you deserve what you receive [from me]?" The Jew then said that they had been in his service for twenty or more years, and Hülegü had not attacked a city or region, or gone for an enemy without being victorious. This was according to the opinions that they had given or the horoscopes that they had cast. "You have only seen good out of our service. You have listened to our enemies, and looked at our salary. Don't believe that nature will be sufficient for you, and god (Allah) will take care of you." Hülegü, however, was not convinced, and the Jew asked for an opportunity to demonstrate their worth. He called for ten candles, and divided them into two equal groups. One he put into a well, and the second he left exposed to the wind but surrounded by a group of wise men. All the candles were lit at the same time: the candles in the well burnt out during the night, but those surrounded by the wise men lasted for four days. The value of the wise men was proven, and Hülegü continued to employ their services.<sup>46</sup>

Before looking specifically at Qirtāy's story, let me first discuss briefly a certain similarity between the two passages: Both Ibn al-Furāt and Qirtāy refer to the wise men as *ḥukamā'* and indeed, they both describe how around the time of the Mongol campaign into Syria these met with Hülegü. However, there are some important differences between these two stories: the former author refers to the Mongol prince is referred to as Hülākū, while in Qirtāy's work he is called Hulāwūn, a less frequently

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<sup>45</sup> One notable exception is the M.A. thesis of Naama O. Arnon, "The People of the Book and the People of the Horse: Contacts between the Mongols and the Jews in the 13th and 14th Centuries" (Bar Ilan University, 2008) [Hebrew].

<sup>46</sup> Qirtāy, 108–109.

used variant.<sup>47</sup> No less significant, Ibn al-Furāt describes a strategy session before the campaign, whereas Qirtāy writes about how the wise men were called upon to justify their continual enjoyment of royal patronage; this latter passage is placed after the description of ‘Ayn Jālūt. The similarity of the two passages would appear to be derived from the two authors reporting in their own way, each with a degree of exaggeration and embellishment, a real phenomenon: the entourage of wise men with whom Hülegü consulted and from whom he derived important advice and assistance.

Much of the story brought by Qirtāy can be rejected out of hand. After all, Qirtāy is known to be one who freely mixes fantasy with fact in his chronicle.<sup>48</sup> This also makes for good reading, and perhaps can be seen as an early example of what the late Ulrich Haarmann called the *Literarisierung* of Mamluk historical writing, i.e. the introduction of popular, folkloristic and entertaining elements in order to strike a stronger cord with the audience.<sup>49</sup> One way of looking at this story and the previous one conveyed by Ibn al-Furāt is that it is a fictional account, but reflects a reality of a substantial number of wise men active in Hülegü’s entourage. As suggested above, basing a fabricated story on real phenomena will obviously add credibility and verisimilitude to the whole account. This is good as far as it goes, but perhaps we can offer a different interpretation.

Firstly, we can see in the passages by Qirtāy, Ibn al-Furāt and Rashīd al-Dīn, the wise men—usually called *ḥukamā*’, plural of *ḥakīm*—are a mixed bunch in terms of skills, sources of authority and methodologies. They are not just religious scholars and philosophers à la Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, but also alchemists and astrologers, along with other specialists. Rashīd al-Dīn has already mentioned the alchemists, while the Armenian historian Vardan (d. 1271), when discussing the death of Hülegü in 1265

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<sup>47</sup> For another example of this form (as Hülā’ūn), see: al-Makīn Jirjis Ibn al-‘Amīd, *Kitāb al-majmū’ al-mubārak*, ed. C. Cahen, in “‘La Chronique Ayyoubides’ d’al-Makīn b. al-‘Amīd,” *Bulletin des Études Orientales* 15 (1955–57), 143; translation in A.-M. Eddé and F. Micheau, *Chronique des Ayyoubides (602–658 / 1205–6–1259–60)* (Paris, 1994), 54. On the variations of this name, see P. Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo* (Paris, 1959–63), 2: 866–867.

<sup>48</sup> This has been pointed out by Robert Irwin, “The Byzantine and the Frank in Arab Popular Literature,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 4 (1989), 237–240 [reprinted in R. Irwin, *Mamlūks and Crusaders: Men of the Sword and Men of the Pen* (Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT, 2010)]; see also R. Amitai-Preiss, “Mamluk Perceptions of the Mongol-Frankish Rapprochement,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 7 (1992), 63–64 [reprinted in Amitai, *The Mongols in the Islamic Lands*].

<sup>49</sup> U. Haarmann, “Auflösung und Bewahrung der klassischen Formen arabischer Geschichtsschreibung in der Zeit der Mamluken,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 121 (1971), 46–60; the main argument is summarized in Little, “Historiography of the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk epochs,” 1: 425.

and summarizing his reign, wrote unhappily that the Mongol ruler had been seduced by astrologers (as well as Buddhist priests, *toyins*).<sup>50</sup>

The long passages cited or summarized in this paper confirm what we know from reading about Hülegü's time and the reigns of his successors, as well as those of the great khans: We not only see that in general there was a large entourage of wise men with whom Mongol experts consulted, but we also find fairly clear echoes of—let alone explicit evidence for—the competition in the court between different purveyors of knowledge and spiritual power. We should note that there is not a clear border between wise men and holy men, and at times they could be one and the same. At the Ilkhanid court, we have the shamans of the traditional Mongolian religion; holy men of other faiths, including an increasing number of Muslims (who were—of course—not cut from one cloth) supported by the Muslim bureaucrats; astronomers, alchemists, philosophers, physicians, and perhaps others (and some of these were overlapping categories). I have mentioned Muslim bureaucrats, who themselves could also moonlight as “wise men,” as well as having mundane skills to offer. Rashīd al-Dīn's comments given at the beginning are a reflection of the opposition of the Muslims—including scholars, bureaucrats and religious figures of different types—to the alchemists, and Qirṭāy's passage may reflect the tension between the practitioners of the traditional Mongol religion and newer spiritual-intellectual technicians. This was not just a clash over world-views or epistemologies. As is clearly seen in the passage from Qirṭāy, the fight was also over patronage and the receiving of resources. Even at the Mongol court, such resources were not unlimited, and wise men of various types struggled to get their share of the pie. Wise men and spiritual workers may not have been engaged in their activities only for the money (*pace* Frank Zappa), but without it, their intellectual and spiritual activities would have definitely been curtailed.

We might emphasize a point made above: The borders between a wise man, a religious leader, an astrologer, a magician and a miracle worker were often blurry in the traditional Mongol religion and evidently also

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<sup>50</sup> Robert W. Thomson, “The Historical Compilation of Vardan Arewel'ci,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43 (1989), 221; summarized and discussed by Jackson, “Hülegü Khan and the Christians,” 198. The role of Buddhism in the Ilkhanate is beyond the scope of this article, but see: B. Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran: Politik, Verwaltung und Kultur der Ilchanzeit 1220–1350*, 4th ed., (Leiden, 1985), 149–56; S.N. Grupper, “The Buddhist sanctuary-vihāra of Labnasagut and the Il-qan Hülegü: An Overview of Il-qanid Buddhism and Related Matters,” *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 13 (2004), 5–77, and Devin DeWeese's article in this volume.

in other faiths. The late Walther Heissig has written of shamanism as a system of practical magic,<sup>51</sup> and this may be a key in understanding some of what the Mongols were interested in when they extended patronage to holy men and wise men of various types: as from their shamans, they wanted both counsel and useful products (good health, defense, success, gold, etc.). Hülegü, like other Mongol rulers and princes before and after him, gathered around him a large group of wise men and holy men of various provenances and specializations, to provide the maximum protective umbrella and the best advice. This point has been well made already by Peter Jackson.<sup>52</sup>

The symposium that was the basis of this volume and the volume itself put Tabriz at the center of the discussion. I have not mentioned Tabriz by name, but I have concentrated on the royal camp, or *ordu*, that moved in its environs. I hope that this will be understood to be Tabriz by extension (or conversely, that Tabriz was an extension of the *ordu*). It is clear that at the *ordu* Hülegü extended his patronage to a large group of wise (and holy) men of different origins and types. I would suggest that this large group assembled by this Mongol ruler was the basis of discernable intellectual interaction, and leading to the transmission of knowledge and its development. The role of the Mongol ruler is clearly seen, helping to create the intellectual vibrancy that we associate with the Mongol regime in Iran and the surrounding countries. In this respect, Hülegü's reign provides a precedent for the courts of his successors, based in the *ordu*, with Tabriz and some other cities in Azerbaijan as linchpins for wider intellectual and cultural activities. The Ilkhan may have been influenced by an earlier *topos* and cultural traditions, but he embraced them with gusto, and thus contributed to their transmission in a stronger form.

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<sup>51</sup> W. Heissig, *The Religion of Mongolia*, tr. G. Samuel (London, 1980), 12.

<sup>52</sup> Jackson, "The Mongols and the Faith of the Conquered," 278.

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‘ALĀ’ AL-DAWLA SIMNĀNĪ’S RELIGIOUS ENCOUNTERS  
AT THE MONGOL COURT NEAR TABRIZ

Devin DeWeese

The life and autobiographical writings of the celebrated Sufi ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Simnānī (659/1261–736/1336) remain strangely unexplored by students of the political, cultural, and religious history of Ilkhanid Iran. His own long service, and that of his father and two uncles, at the Mongol court gave him a distinctive perspective on court affairs, and his legacy as a Sufi shaykh and prolific author facilitated the preservation of several intimate and self-referential accounts, among Simnānī’s own numerous works and those of his direct disciples, that offer fascinating vignettes of the cultural encounter entailed by the interaction of Mongol and Muslim elites in northwestern Iran. The present study is intended to outline just one aspect of that encounter in the context of Simnānī’s life and the development of his Sufi career: the diverse religious influences to which he was exposed during the critical period following his initial turn to Sufism, while in Ilkhanid service. That period saw an increasing tension between Simnānī’s wish to withdraw from court service, and his growing desire to travel to Baghdad to meet a particular Sufi teacher, on the one hand, and the efforts of the Mongol elite—including the *ilkhān* Arghun himself—and his own family to keep him at the Mongol court near Tabriz, or, if that proved impossible, then at least to prevent him from going to Baghdad; those efforts included a series of religious encounters arranged for Simnānī while he was detained at the royal *ordu* near Tabriz for several months in 687/1288. These encounters no doubt had a lasting impact on Simnānī himself, but Simnānī eventually did make his way to Baghdad, and the course his religious life took afterwards obviously colored his recollection of the time he spent at the Mongol ruler’s court discussing spiritual disciplines and doctrines with practitioners of other paths, and with Arghun himself. Nevertheless, his accounts of that time in his life offer a glimpse of religious interaction in this era, as staged and “sponsored” by the Mongol elite, and of one remarkable individual’s efforts to make sense out of his own temporary engagement with religious diversity.

The outlines of ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Simnānī’s life are relatively well known, thanks, most recently, to the study of Jamal Elias.<sup>1</sup> Born into a politically prominent family of Simnān, he entered the service of Arghun at the age of 15, some nine years before Arghun assumed power in 683/1284; his paternal uncle, Jalāl al-Dīn, was Arghun’s *vazīr* from the beginning of his reign until 687/1288, when he was dismissed (his execution came a year later), while Simnānī’s maternal uncle, Rukn al-Dīn, and his father Sharaf al-Dīn were both among the loyal servants of Arghun who eventually ran afoul of rival officials under Ghazan and were executed (his father already in 695/1295, his uncle in 700/1301). ‘Alā’ al-Dawla was spared his relatives’ fate by his departure from the court to adopt the life of a Sufi; he says relatively little about Ghazan, or his famous conversion to Islam, in his writings, and it seems that he was closer to Öljejtü, in whose encampment he spent considerable time even after he made known his wish to leave Arghun’s service (Öljejtü would later disappoint Simnānī, however,

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<sup>1</sup> Jamal J. Elias, *The Throne Carrier of God: The Life and Thought of ‘Alā’ ad-Dawla as-Simnānī* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), with the biographical survey on pp. 15–31; see pp. 165–212 for the most thorough account to date of Simnānī’s writings. Among earlier studies may be mentioned Sayyid Muẓaffar Ṣadr, *Sharḥ-i aḥvāl va afkār va āthār-i ‘arif-i rabbānī Abū’l-Makārim Rukn al-Dīn Shaykh ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Simnānī* (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-yi Dānishgāh, n.d. [ca. 1955–56]); Henry Corbin, “L’intériorisation du sens en herméneutique soufie iranienne (Ṣā’inoddīn ‘Alī Torka Ispāhānī, ob. 830/1427 et ‘Alāoddawla Semnānī, ob. 736/1336),” *Eranos-Jahrbuch*, 26 (1957): 57–187 [137–172]; *idem*, *En Islam iranien: Aspects spirituels et philosophiques*, t. 3 (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), section 2 (Shī’isme et Soufisme), ch. 4 (“Les sept organes subtils de l’homme selon ‘Alāoddawleh Semnānī (736/1336),” 275–355); Marijan Molé, “Les Kubrawiyya entre sunnisme et shiisme aux huitième et neuvième siècles de l’hégire,” *Revue des études islamiques* 29 (1961): 61–142 [76–109]; Fritz Meier, “‘Alā’ al-Dawla al-Simnānī,” *EP<sup>2</sup>* 1 (1960): 346–347; Hermann Landolt, ed., *Correspondance spirituelle échangée entre Nuroddīn Esfarāyeni (ob. 717/1317) et son disciple ‘Alāoddawleh Semnani (ob. 736/1336)* (Tehran: Département d’Iranologie de l’Institut Franco-Iranien de Recherche/Paris: Librairie d’Amérique et d’Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1972; Bibliothèque Iranienne, vol. 21), esp. 10–21; Hermann Landolt, “Simnānī on *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*,” in *Collected Papers on Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism*, ed. Mehdi Mohaghegh and Hermann Landolt (Tehran, 1349/1971; Wisdom of Persia series, vol. IV), 91–112; *idem*, “Der Briefwechsel zwischen Kāšānī und Simnānī über *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*,” *Der Islam*, 50 (1973): 29–81; *idem*, “Deux opuscules de Semnānī sur le moi théophanique,” *Mélanges offerts à Henry Corbin*, ed. S.H. Nasr (Tehran, 1977; Wisdom of Persia series, vol. IX), 279–319; Andreas D’Souza, “Simnānī’s Cosmology and its Mystical Implications,” *The Bulletin of the Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies* (Hyderabad, A.P.), 8/4 (Oct.–Dec., 1985): 94–126; Jamal J. Elias, “A Kubrawī Treatise on Mystical Visions: The *Risāla-yi nūrīyya* of ‘Alā’ ad-dawla as-Simnānī,” *Muslim World*, 83 (1993): 68–80; ‘Abd al-Raḥī’ Ḥaḳīqat, *Khumkhāna-yi vaḥdat: Shaykh ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Simnānī, ‘arif-i buẓurg-i qarn-i haftum va hashtum-i hijrī* (Tehran: Shirkat-i Mu’allifān va Mutarjīmān-i Īrān/Chāpkhāna-yi Kāvīyān, 1362/1983); George Lane, *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Iran: A Persian Renaissance* (London/New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 253; and the introductions to other publications of Simnānī’s works, including those of Thackston and Māyil Haravī noted below.

with his adoption of Shī‘ism, and Simnānī’s stock at the Ilkhanid court improved substantially only during the reign of Abū Sa‘īd, who evidently held him in high regard, as did the powerful Amīr Chūbān).

According to Simnānī’s own accounts, and later presentations of his life and Sufi lineage, his chief master in Sufism, whom he eventually succeeded in meeting in Baghdad, was Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Isfarāyīnī (d. 717/1317), who belonged to an initiatic lineage going back to the famous victim of the Mongol conquest of Khwārazm, Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 618/1221); for this reason Simnānī is typically classed as a Kubravī Sufi, though it seems clear that such a corporate identity did not develop until as much as a century after his death. In any case, Simnānī trained numerous disciples, maintained a *khānqāh* in Simnān and another in his native village nearby, Biyābānak, and wrote a large number of works on Sufi doctrine and practice, as well as on the lives of various figures in his initiatic lineage; his mystical works, a good number of which have been published, are distinguished by their often highly personal tone and their detailed descriptions of visions and other experiences that accompanied his austerities and spiritual disciplines.

For present purposes the most important of his works in terms of his autobiographical accounts are, first, *al-‘Urwa li-ahl al-khalwa wa’l-jalwa*, completed in 722/1322 and extant both in an Arabic version (the original) and a Persian translation (perhaps by Simnānī himself or a disciple);<sup>2</sup> the *Faṭḥ al-mubīn*, a Persian treatise completed in 713/714, with an autobiographical account close in sequence and detail to that of the ‘*Urwa*;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> On the work, see Elias, *Throne Carrier*, 167–169; both versions are edited in Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Biyābānakī, ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Simnānī, *al-‘Urwa li-ahl al-khalwa wa’l-jalwa*, ed. Najīb Māyil Haravī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mawlā, 1362/1983). The work includes by far the most extensive account of Simnānī’s early life, in two major sections: first, a narrative summarizing his childhood and royal service and describing his abandonment of the same and his return to Simnān, concluding with a substantial digression on the *khānqāhs* he built and the *waqfs* he established (Arabic text, 496–498; Persian text, 297–301); and second, a longer account of his initial mystical experiences and practices, his difficulties with Arghun, his first meeting with Isfarāyīnī, and his return to Simnān as a shaykh in his own right (Arabic text, 508–514; Persian text, 314–325). Another Arabic version of the ‘*Urwa*, known as the *Ṣafwat al-‘urwa*, was evidently prepared by Simnānī himself in 728/1328, and although it mostly abbreviates the original work, it occasionally includes additional details; see Molé, “Les Kubrawiya,” 76–77, n. 58, and the work of Cordt cited below.

<sup>3</sup> See Elias, *Throne Carrier*, 181–182; the text is edited in Muṣannaḥāt-i fārsī-yi ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Simnānī, ed. Najīb Māyil Haravī (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i ‘Ilmī va Farhangī, 1369/1990), 251–275 (with the autobiographical material on pp. 251–256), and in ‘Alā’uddawla Simnānī, *Opera Minora*, ed. W.M. Thackston, Jr. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, Office of the University Publisher, 1988; Sources of Oriental Languages

two brief Arabic treatises dealing with Simnānī's masters, but including other autobiographical references as well;<sup>4</sup> and finally, the collection of Simnānī's discourses, compiled by his disciple Iqbāl Sīstānī, known as the *Chihil majlis*, reflecting material recorded by Sīstānī during the mid- to late-720s/1320s.<sup>5</sup> All these accounts, it may be noted, were written with the advantage of at least a quarter-century of hindsight on Simnānī's detention at the royal *ordu*, and reflect shifting perspectives shaped no doubt by age and by religious and political developments during the reigns of Ghazan, Öljeitü, and Abū Sa'īd.

In the latter regard, we may note here that Simnānī's awareness of and engagement with the Mongol world was not limited to the Ilkhanid realm. The *Chihil majlis*, for instance, records his comments about the Chaghatayid *khān* Kebek, in which he affirms that he had seen a *yarliḡh* of this ruler; he describes Kebek as a worse infidel than the early successors of Chinggis Khan (because Kebek's *yarliḡh* referred, says Simnānī, to a god on earth separate from the god in heaven), and as an enemy of the family of Amīr Chūbān, but as an undeniably just ruler.<sup>6</sup> Simnānī's information on the *ulus* of Chaghatay from this era was most likely filtered through Ilkhanid informants, but earlier he no doubt had heard much about the situation in "Turkistān" from his disciple, Abū'l-Mavāhib Muḡsin al-Dīn Turkistānī (to whom Simnānī dedicated several of his works); this disciple, as Simnānī relates, had been in the service of a Mongol prince of Central Asia, Shāh Oghul b. Qaydu, before renouncing royal service as Simnānī had done, and coming to Simnānī's *khānqāh* in 712/1312.<sup>7</sup> Simnānī

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and Literatures, ed. Şinasi Tekin and Gönül Alpay Tekin, 10, Islamic Sources, II), 117–134 (with the autobiographical material on pp. 117–120).

<sup>4</sup> One, published by Thackston under the title *Fī dhikr asāmī mashā'ikhī* (*Opera Minora*, 1–5), is evidently an excerpt from Simnānī's larger *Kitāb al-falāḡh li-ahl al-ṣalāḡh*, and dates to 712/1312; see Elias, *Throne Carrier*, 181. The other was published by Thackston under the title *Fī mashā'ikhīhī min al-mutaqaddimīn* (*Opera Minora*, 75–77).

<sup>5</sup> The best account of the complicated textual history of the *Chihil majlis*, of which extant versions (some bearing the appellation *Favā'id*) go back to two collections of Simnānī's sayings compiled by Sīstānī still during his master's lifetime, is that of Hartwig Cordt, *Die Sitzungen des 'Alā' ad-dawla as-Simnānī* (Dissertation, Universität Basel; Zürich: Juris Druck + Verlag, 1977), 39–45; see also Elias, *Throne Carrier*, 176–178. The most complete published version is Amīr Iqbāl Sīstānī, *Chihil majlis yā Risāla-yi Iqbālīya*, ed. Najīb Māyil Haravī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Adīb, 1366/1987); the text was also edited (based on two manuscripts) by Thackston, *Opera Minora*, 175–244.

<sup>6</sup> *Chihil majlis*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 157–158; ed. Thackston, *Opera Minora*, 189; Cordt, *Die Sitzungen*, 122.

<sup>7</sup> Simnānī recounts this Muḡsin al-Dīn's story in the introduction to his *Bayān al-iḡsān li-ahl al-'urfān* (ed. Thackston, *Opera Minora*, 7–8; ed. Māyil Haravī, *Muṣannaḡāt*, 181–182). On Shāh Oghūl, who was an ally of his older brother Chapar in the struggles among

also mentions his correspondence with a figure from the *ulus* of Jochi, a certain Shaykh Aḥmad Mawlānā of Khwārazm,<sup>8</sup> and he may have been in contact with a Muslim Mongol *amīr* from the Jochid realm as well.<sup>9</sup>

Simnānī's consciousness of all these figures lay in the future, however, at the time he was most directly engaged with the world of the Mongol elite, i.e., during his service to Arghun; his recollections of that period of service also lay in the future, of course, and we cannot be sure of the extent to which he adjusted his accounts to conform with his later understanding of where he was headed in his religious life—beyond the assumption that his adjustments may have been substantial. In any case, his writings

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Ögedeyid and Chaghatayid princes after Qaydu's death in 1301 (he is mentioned in the sources until approximately 1309), see Michal Biran, *Qaidu and the Rise of the Independent Mongol State in Central Asia* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1997), 75; cf. O. Karaev, *Chagataiskii ulus. Gosudarstvo Khaidu. Mogulistan. Obrazovanie kyrgyzskogo naroda* (Bishkek: "Kyrgyzstan," 1995), 35.

<sup>8</sup> See my discussion in "Bābā Kamāl Jandī and the Kubravī Tradition among the Turks of Central Asia," *Der Islam*, 71 (1994): 58–94 (85–87).

<sup>9</sup> A Persian work on Sufi technical terminology, entitled *Hall al-ʿiqāl*, preserved in a single known manuscript at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (MS Supp. Pers. 1837, 113 ff., dated 886/1481–82, described in E. Blochet, *Catalogue des manuscrits persans*, 4 [Paris: Réunion des Bibliothèques nationales, 1934], 196, No. 2248), is ascribed to Simnānī (see Elias, *Throne Carrier*, 189–190), and purports to be a translation from Simnānī's earlier Arabic treatise bearing the same title; that Arabic version was supposedly dedicated to the "*amīr-i kabīr*, 'Alā' al-Dīn Tūlūk Temūr Bek." If the work is indeed Simnānī's (which remains unclear), the most likely candidate for identification with this figure is the Amīr Tūlūk Temūr mentioned by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa as his host in the Crimea in the early 1330s (*Voyages d'Ibn Battūta*, ed. C. Defrémery and B.R. Sanguinetti [Paris, 1854; repr. Éditions Anthropos Paris, 1969], 2, 359–362, 366–370); this *amīr* is shown there as a patron of Sufis, and may be identified further with the figure referred to as a martyr in the Persian *Qalandar-nāma*, a large compendium of Sufi lore written in the Crimea by a certain Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī during the reigns of Özbek Khān and his son Jānībek (the work was begun in 720/1320, and the unique manuscript, preserved in Tashkent, was copied in 761/1360: MS Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan No. 11,668, in 400 folios, described in *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii nauk Uzbekskoi SSR*, IX, ed. A. Urunbaev and L.M. Epifanova [Tashkent: Fan, 1971], 471–4, No. 6705; the fifth volume of the work, written under Jānībek, includes a brief account under the heading, *dar bayān-i zuhūr-i shahādat-i Amīr Tūlūktimūr* [f. 362a]). Other possible candidates are the Amīr Tūlūk Temūr b. Küch Temūr mentioned, as the governor of Jurjāniya in Khwārazm who died in 707/1307–08, in the 15th-century *Mujmal-i Faṣīḥī* (ed. Maḥmūd Farrukh [Mashhad, 1339–1341/1960–62], 3: 16; see the Russian translation by D. Iu. Iusupova, *Mudzhmal-i Fasikhi (Fasikhov svod)* [Tashkent: Fan, 1980], 40), or Malik Temūr (*m.l.k d.m.r.*), named in the Arabic history of al-Birzālī (d. 739/1338–39) as the ruler of Khwārazm to whom the Shaykh 'Alā' al-Dīn Nu'mān al-Khwārazmī (later in Özbek Khān's service) attached himself upon his return to Khwārazm in 701/1301–02 (V. Tizengauzen, *Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy*, I (Arabic sources) (St. Petersburg, 1884), 173–4 [text], 175 [tr.]; on Shaykh Nu'mān, see my discussion in *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 125–129).

remain for us a remarkable window on Simnānī's own individual religious journey, and on the fluid religious environment of the Ilkhanid court prior to the conversion of Ghazan.

*Stuck Inside the Ordu with the Baghdad Blues Again:  
Simnānī's Spiritual Crisis and Its Resolution*

Among his writings, as noted, are several accounts of his early "experiments" in the Sufi life, from which it is clear that Simnānī's mystical journey was considerably more complex than a straightforward presentation of his Sufi lineage, involving his training under Isfarāyīnī, would suggest; Simnānī underwent mystical experiences that induced efforts to 'free-lance' his spiritual discipline, without a master's guidance (at one point attempting a self-directed regimen based on his study of a Sufi book), sought out multiple teachers before finding one with a connection to Isfarāyīnī, and found common ground—as is clear even in writings that evince some embarrassment about this—with the diverse religious influences to which he was exposed through his service at the Mongol court.

Simnānī's experiments began after the pivotal conversion experience he underwent on the battlefield before the decisive fight between the forces of Arghun and Aḥmad Tegüder, in 683/1284, near Qazvīn. Looking back on his royal service down to the time of this climactic battle, Simnānī describes, in the *Urwa*, how his service had taken its toll on his religious life; he applied himself to Arghun's service with such earnestness, he writes, that he ceased to perform his prayers, and even had trouble remembering them. This continued until the time when the armies of Arghun and his uncle, Sulṭān Aḥmad, confronted each other before Qazvīn in the year 683/1284; Simnānī, then 24 years old, "with youthful zeal prepared to do battle that day to win the ruler's praise." As he began to shout "*Allāhu akbar*" before charging to attack the enemy, however, something held him back: "it was as if a veil was raised from before my eyes, and I saw the next world and all that is in it." While the armies fought, he says (in the Persian account), "I was left bewildered and dazed atop my horse."<sup>10</sup> Simnānī would eventually find the irony in his readiness to perform the

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<sup>10</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 497 (Persian, 297–298); only the Arabic version identifies Sulṭān Aḥmad as Arghun's uncle. In the *Fath al-mubīn* (ed. Thackston, 118; ed. Māyil Haravī, 252) he more accurately records that the commander of the enemy army was Sulṭān Aḥmad's *amīr-i lashkar* 'Alināq.

*takbīr* in the course of fighting on the side of an infidel Mongol prince, the Buddhist Arghun, against the forces of the latter’s uncle, the Muslim convert Aḥmad Tegüder, but even this small element in his account may remind us, in the broader context of local Muslim elites serving the Mongol rulers, of the complexity of the religious and political environment in the days before Ghazan’s accession as the *pādshāh-i Islām* helped sharpen the lines between supporters and opponents of Islamization.

In any case, the immediate effects of this battlefield experience soon passed, but it left its mark in the loss of his desire to serve his patron Arghun, and indeed in an inclination to withdraw from other people altogether. It was during this period, he adds in the *Faḥ al-mubīn*, that he saw the “Sulṭān al-‘Ārifīn” Abū Yazīd Bisṭāmī in a dream and received training (*tarbīyat*) from him; in the same work he mentions at this point in his narrative that he saw the Prophet several times as well.<sup>11</sup> His assertion in this work is underscored in his *Risāla fī mashā’ikhihi min al-mutaqaddimīn*,<sup>12</sup> where he divides the shaykhs from whom he received guidance into “past” and “contemporary” masters, specifically listing Bisṭāmī as his first shaykh among five in all from the former category.<sup>13</sup> He notes here that Bisṭāmī guided him “in the unseen world” for nearly two years, and it seems likely, taking these two accounts together, that his “encounters” with Abū Yazīd were themselves an important part of his religious experiences while still at the Mongol court, and occupied much of the time that passed between his experience prior to the battle at Qazvīn and his departure from Arghun’s service.

If we accept Simnānī’s later statement about one of his very earliest “religious” encounters, with a certain Shaykh Siyāvush Shīrvānī, who came to Simnān from “Turkistān” when Simnānī was 11 years old (before his service at court began), we might understand his dream-vision of Bisṭāmī as a natural outcome of his limited exposure to the lore and “personnel” of Sufism before that time; Simnānī credits this Shaykh Siyāvush with predicting his eventual engagement with the spiritual world, and with instructing him to perform a *ziyārat* to the *turbat* of the Sulṭān al-‘Ārifīn

<sup>11</sup> *Faḥ al-mubīn*, ed. Thackston, 118; ed. Māyil Haravī, 252.

<sup>12</sup> Thackston, ed., 75.

<sup>13</sup> The others, in order, are Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (evidently not solely through his book, the *Qūt al-qulūb*, which Simnānī used to guide himself early in his mystical pursuits); Ibrāhīm b. al-Adham, “my shaykh in detachment (*tajrīd*) and world-renunciation (*tark al-dunya*) and asceticism;” Abū Ḥafṣ al-Ḥaddād al-Nishābūrī, “my shaykh in the path of nobility (*murawwa*) and chivalry (*futuwwa*);” and finally Junayd al-Baghdādī, “my shaykh in isolation (*‘uzla*) and seclusion (*khalwa*) and in traveling the mystical path.”

(the stock epithet applied to Bisṭāmī) when he reached manhood.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, Simnānī's "interior" guidance by the spirit of Abū Yazīd is not without significance in the context of the developing experience of Islam among the Ilkhans themselves, given Simnānī's apparently close relationship, initially, with Ūljeytū, and the latter's seemingly obsessive, albeit temporary, interest in Bisṭāmī (naming three of his own sons after different components of the saint's name, i.e., Bisṭām, Bāyazīd, and Ṭayfūr, and patronizing Bisṭāmī's shrine complex and its custodians, representing a Sufi community that claimed both genealogical and spiritual ties with Bisṭāmī).<sup>15</sup> In any case, here again what Simnānī does *not* say is also significant: his encounters with Bisṭāmī, and with the spirits of other deceased shaykhs of the past, reflect the kind of spiritual guidance that would eventually become known as the "Uvaysī" mode of spiritual training (it had already been defined as such by 'Aṭṭār in the early 13th century). Simnānī never mentions the term, however, and he does not appear to discuss at any length the notion of receiving guidance from deceased shaykhs; at the same time, on this occasion at least, he mentions it quite matter-of-factly, as if it required no explanation.

Simnānī does appear to have sought out living guides during this time in Tabriz, following his initial conversion experience. He names three individuals with whom he associated: two were evidently ascetic renouncers who dwelled in nearby towns (one in Āmul and one in Abhar), while another appears to have been a learned man who joined Simnānī in performing his prayers and learning the Qur'ān (as he sought to make up, in

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<sup>14</sup> *Opera Minora*, ed. Thackston, 4 (from *Fī asāmī mashā'ikhī*), 75 (from *Risāla fī mashā'ikhīhi min al-mutaqaddimīn*); cf. Elias, *Throne-Carrier*, 17–18. The latter, longer account adds that Shaykh Siyāvush moved on to Isfahan, where he died, but not before sending to the young Simnānī his Sufi cap (*tāqīya*); the latter gesture implies a confirmation of spiritual succession, but nothing further is made of this, by Simnānī himself or by later biographers.

<sup>15</sup> On the latter issue, see the work, completed in 730/1330, of Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. Shaykh al-Kharaqānī, *Dastūr al-jumhūr fī manāqib Sulṭān al-'Arifīn Abū Yazīd Ṭayfūr*, MS Tashkent, Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, Inv. No. 78 (copied in 791/1389; see the description in in *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii nauk Uzbekskoi SSR*, ed. A.A. Semenov et al., vol. III [Tashkent: Fan, 1955], 223–224, No. 2293), f. 159b, affirming that in the year 700, Ūljeytū became a *murīd* of one Raḍī al-Dīn Faḍlullāh, a 12th-generation descendant of Bisṭāmī, donned the *khirqā* from him, and built a *khānqāh* at the grave of Bisṭāmī. The work outlines the familial Sufi community of Bisṭām (reflecting combined descent lines traced to both Bisṭāmī and his posthumous 'successor,' Abū al-Ḥasan Kharaqānī) and other instances of patronage by the Mongol elite.

both regards, for his past negligence).<sup>16</sup> One of the ascetics, the “Khwāja Ḥājī” he met in Abhar, is of particular interest for having deterred Simnānī (temporarily) from his inclination to abandon his service to Arghun; Simnānī, noting that he was then still dressed in the robe of a court official and engaged in service to the Sulṭān, recalls,

The idea had occurred to me that I should take off the robe (*qabā*) and abandon the Sulṭān’s service and go out from among the people; but he stopped me, saying “We pray that God will multiply the likes of you among them,” that is, among the Sulṭān and the *amīrs*.<sup>17</sup>

The account is of course retrospective, and it is possible that Simnānī was ascribing to this renouncer views he came to accept himself, giving voice to the view that the presence of pious Muslims among the Mongol elite would be good for Muslim society, and possibly for the Mongol elite as well.

In any event, during the period following his battlefield experience, while still in Arghun’s service, Simnānī began extensive prayers and fasting, repenting from forbidden and idle pursuits and adopting the life of religious exertions, sleeplessness, hunger, and silence; his “summary” account in the Arabic *Urwa* is expanded in the Persian account with details of his fasting: once, he says, he went a week without eating at all. He was apparently intent upon concealing such undertakings from his associates at court; he notes that his own servants assumed that he was eating with Arghun, while in the latter’s household they imagined that he was eating in his own home. He further recounts how once in extreme hunger he left his house and found a crust of burnt bread beside a bread-maker’s oven; someone happened by and spoke with him, and he was careful to wait until the man went on his way to eat the bread in the darkness.<sup>18</sup>

His austerities must have continued for quite some time. In the *Faṭḥ al-mubīn* he says that he remained in this condition, but still in the *sulṭān*’s service, for a year and two months, while in the *Risāla fī mashā’ikhihi min al-mutaqaddimīn* he says he remained in his service for “six or eight months” after his initial vision; neither period seems to account for all

<sup>16</sup> See the discussion in Elias, *Throne-Carrier*, 20, noting that Simnānī had probably encountered the two ascetics in his youth; the third figure, mentioned in just one of Simnānī’s works, is called Imām Sharaf al-Dīn Ḥasan b. ‘Abdullāh al-Qarvānī (or al-Farvānī, as Cordt, *Sitzungen*, 6 and n. 7, reads the *nisba*), but his identity remains uncertain.

<sup>17</sup> *Risāla fī mashā’ikhihi min al-mutaqaddimīn*, ed. Thackston, *Opera Minora*, 75–76.

<sup>18</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 497 (Persian, 298). The latter incident is recounted also in the *Chihil majlis* (ed. Māyil Haravī, 178; ed. Thackston, *Opera Minora*, 201; Cordt, *Die Sitzungen*, 141), where Simnānī also recalls his concern that he would have been force-fed had he been discovered fasting while in Arghun’s service.

the time between the battle at Qazvīn and his departure from Arghun's court. In any case the next date Simnānī mentions in the *Urwa* is in the middle of Sha'bān 685/ October 1286: it was then that, having been overcome by an illness the court physicians were unable to cure, he sought and received permission to return to Simnān, setting off from Tabriz on the 16th of the month /7 October 1286 and traveling by way of Arrān. He realized that it was in fact his life at court in royal service that had made him ill, for, he notes, already when he reached Ūjān he was recovering his health.<sup>19</sup>

He reached Simnān at the beginning of the next month, Ramaḍān / 21 October 1286. In the *Urwa* he says only that he arrived in Simnān during that month; but in both the *Faṭḥ al-mubīn* and one of the treatises on his masters, he recounts his dramatic gesture at the tomb of Shaykh Ḥasan-i Sakkāk in Simnān, when, at the beginning of Ramaḍān, he took off his *qabāh* (robe) and *kulāh* (hat) and *kamar* (belt), marks of royal service, and put on the garb of the pious.<sup>20</sup> This episode is not mentioned in the *Urwa*, which turns immediately to his further devotions and austerities in Simnān, with only a book—the famous *Qūt al-qulūb* of the 4th/10th-century mystic Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī—as his initial guide in traveling the mystical path.<sup>21</sup> It was then, he says in the *Urwa*, that he sought to divest himself of all his riches, and at this point in his narrative he recounts how he disposed of his wealth: he settled his debts, turned his properties into *waqf* endowments and outright donations (*ṣadaqa*), freed his male and female slaves, gave his wife and son what was due them from his wealth—leaving his son more than his own father had left him—and had the Khānqāh-i Sakkākīya built.<sup>22</sup> Simnānī then describes his handling of the *waqfs* he established, an issue that occupies the remainder of the initial autobiographical passage in the *Urwa*; this account, and his other extensive discussions of his economic and 'managerial' activities, are of interest

<sup>19</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 497 (Persian, 299); *Faṭḥ al-mubīn*, ed. Thackston, 118; ed. Māyil Haravī, 253.

<sup>20</sup> *Faṭḥ al-mubīn*, ed. Thackston, 118; ed. Māyil Haravī, 253; *Fī dhikr asāmī mashā'ikhī*, ed. Thackston, 1.

<sup>21</sup> On the *Qūt al-qulūb* of al-Makkī (d. 386/996), see the translation and study of Richard Gramlich, *Die Nahrung der Herzen: Abu Talib al-Makkis Qut al-qulub*, 4 vols. (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1992–1995). Simnānī also refers to his dependence upon this book in the works cited in the preceding note, and in his introduction to the collection of Isfarāyīnī's letters which he edited, published by Landolt in *Correspondance spirituelle*, text, 3.

<sup>22</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 497–498 (Persian, 299–301). The *khānqāh* he mentions was associated with the shrine of Shaykh Ḥasan Sakkākī Simnānī, whom Simnānī identifies as a contemporary of several figures from the first half of the 5th/11th century.

in their own right, but cannot be explored here, beyond noting two alternatives they suggest: Simnānī was either much more attentive to such seemingly ‘worldly’ engagements during this period than would be supposed based on his later recollections, in which he highlighted his single-minded pursuit of extremes of asceticism during this time, or his accounts reflect considerable maturation in his understanding of the Sufi’s responsibilities, encompassing the proper management of wealth rather than its simple abjuration (the *Chihil majlis*, for instance, includes criticism of the expectation that Sufis be poor and shun property ownership<sup>23</sup>). It is difficult to judge in which of these directions—toward overstating his ascetic inclinations, or toward justifying his attention to property management—his recollections shifted over the years, but in either case the general trend seems to have been in the direction of appreciating property and its uses (just as he came to value the royal service he says he wished to abandon in the immediate aftermath of his ‘conversion’ experience). Here again we may be reminded of the close connection between Simnānī’s later Sufi career and what he gained, and learned, in service to the Mongols.

The second major autobiographical passage from the *Urwa* begins with Simnānī’s account of his self-directed mystical practices in Simnān. There he spent his time, he writes, engaged in the *dhikr* using the phrase “*lā ilāha illā’llāh*” and in prayer and fasting, studying the Qur’ān and then Sufi books on the sayings and austerities of the great *shaykhs*; this was also a time of considerable distress over his recent (and still not decisively repudiated) service to the Mongol court, however, and the intensity of his disgust is evident in a passage from the *Urwa* in which he first catalogues the sins of the infidel conquerors, but reserves his most intense scorn for Muslims who cooperated with them for their own benefit.<sup>24</sup> “My heart was full of pain,” he writes, “because of the darkness of the oppressors and idol-worshippers who had seized the world and enslaved the Muslims.” He complains that they built idol temples in the lands of Islam, but a greater offense was exercising control over *waqfs* intended for “the *madrasas* and mosques and *khānqāhs* of the countries of Islam.” This resulted, he laments, in “the *qāḍīs* and *shaykhs* of the age, and the people of learning

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<sup>23</sup> *Chihil majlis*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 250–252; ed. Thackston, *Opera Minora*, 229–230; Cordt, *Die Sitzungen*, 214–215. The terms of the *waqf* endowments described here are paralleled in the *Urwa* (ed. Māyil Haravī, 498, Persian, 301), but in the latter context Simnānī rails against the involvement of various officials in the management of *waqf* properties, and against the greed and corruption they inevitably introduce into the institutions, including *khānqāhs*, they support.

<sup>24</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 508 (Persian, 313–314).

and the people of the *khānqāhs*” entering into the service of the infidels, and even boasting of their closeness to them, “for the sake of that carcass that is the world.” Simnānī further insists, in effect, that the Mongols were ultimately responsible for the corruption of Sufism, since the “disgraceful love of the world” inculcated by service to the infidels allowed “libertinism and heresy” (*ibāḥat va zandaqa*) to find a place among “the people of the *khirqā*,” and this in turn led to the appearance of “a group that externally pretends to resemble the people of *taṣavvuf*.”

Despite his scorn for false Sufis, however, he reserves his greatest wrath for those who have introduced *falsafa* into the *madrasas* and who despise the *ahl-i dīn* and consider them ignorant; consequently, he says, he sought to associate with pure and simple Sufis, to the point of asking that every *darvīsh* who passed through Simnān be brought to him. Finally, he writes, the person charged with that duty brought news that a certain Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn had arrived in town, on his way from Khurāsān to Baghdad;<sup>25</sup> this Sharaf al-Dīn<sup>26</sup> would become Simnānī’s first and key link with Isfarāyīnī, and would for some time facilitate communications between them, but Simnānī affirms in the *Urwa* that he was initially eager to meet him

<sup>25</sup> In the *Faṭḥ al-mubīn*, Simnānī says that Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn arrived at the beginning of Muḥarram 686/16 February 1287, while the *Risāla fi mashā’ikhīhi min al-mutaqqadīmīn* dates it a month earlier, at the beginning of Dhū’l-ḥijja 685/18 January 1287.

<sup>26</sup> The name and identity of this Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn remain uncertain. Thackston refers to him as Simnānī’s “good friend,” evidently interpreting the appellation “Akhī” as alluding to long association, but there is no indication that the two had ever met before (on the contrary, he is distinguished from Simnānī’s longtime companions); the title “Akhī” no doubt reflects Sharaf al-Dīn’s involvement in the *futuwwa* organizations (as would not be unusual for a Sufi in this era), but its specific implications are impossible to judge. Simnānī gives a fuller version of his name in the *Urwa* (ed. Māyil Haravī, 508; Persian, 314), calling him “Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn Sa’dullāh b. Ḥannūya (?) al-Simnānī;” the element written “*ḥ.n.w.ya*” (with an explicit *tā marbūṭa* in the printed text of both the Arabic and Persian versions) is interpreted by Elias (*Throne Carrier*, 22, n. 35) as a *nisba*, “Ḥanawayh,” possibly derived from the name “Ḥanā” or “Ḥānī,” a town near Diyārbakr, but Māyil Haravī, in his edition of the *Chihil majlis* (11, n. 2, and 326–327), writes this element “*ḥ.s.n.w.ya*” (again with explicit *tā marbūṭa*, and citing his edition of the *Urwa*, but without commenting on the different forms), as if perhaps to imply some connection between this figure and the local saint, Shaykh Ḥasan Simnānī (at whose shrine Simnānī had divested himself of his court garb). Such a link is of interest in connection with a subsequent reference to Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn, in the Persian rendering of the *Urwa* (318), as “Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn Ḥasan” (which we might then read as “Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn-i Ḥasan”); this might be taken as an error on the part of the copyist or translator, but the same form, “Shaykh Sharaf al-Dīn Ḥasan,” is found in the introduction to the text of a letter from Isfarāyīnī to Simnānī found in a manuscript preserved in Rampur (see below, note 45), and clearly refers to the same figure identified elsewhere as Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn Sa’dullāh, suggesting that he might have belonged to a familial lineage claiming ties with Shaykh Ḥasan Simnānī. All this must remain speculative, however, given the lack of other references to this figure.

because he learned that this Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn had performed the *ḥajj* three times and had served as *mujāvir* at the Ka’ba. Simnānī went to him, and through the spiritual bond established at once between them, the two men became the closest of friends; in another allusion to his growing alienation from his companions at court, he affirms that the friendship he felt with Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn was “stronger even than what I felt with those people with whom I had associated from childhood through adulthood.”<sup>27</sup>

Simnānī began performing the *dhikr* under his guidance, noting Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn’s habit of jerking his head left and right during the *dhikr*, which he explained as necessary to ensure that the *dhikr*’s power reached his heart. After engaging in this *dhikr* for a time, Simnānī had a vision of sparks radiating from his chest, which frightened him to the point that he sought, unsuccessfully, to refrain from performing that *dhikr*; this was followed by yet another vision, of a “fountain” made of light spouting from the direction of the *qibla*, emitting countless sparkling stars as he watched. He asked Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn about this, and his friend was surprised to learn that Simnānī had had such experiences so soon in his training (Simnānī later cites Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn’s affirmation that it had taken him two years of *dhikr* to experience this vision) and assured him that this was a sign of a very special aptitude.<sup>28</sup>

Simnānī then asked Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn about his teacher, and heard his account of his own youth and how he sought and found his *shaykh*, Nūr al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Isfarāyīnī, a native of the village of Kasīrḳ, in Khurāsān, who now dwelled in Baghdad;<sup>29</sup> it is of some interest, with regard to the supposition of ‘Kubrāvī’ consciousness, that in reporting Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn’s account of the figures in Isfarāyīnī’s lineage of *dhikr*-transmission, Simnānī mentions only Isfarāyīnī’s master, Shaykh Aḥmad Jūrbānī (i.e., Gūrḫānī, d. 669/1270), and the latter’s teacher, Shaykh Raḍī al-Dīn ‘Alī Lālā (d. 642/1244), omitting the earlier lineage, including Najm al-Dīn Kubrā. In any case, as Simnānī learned, Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn had received instruction from Isfarāyīnī while on the way to Mecca during the pilgrimage, receiving the transmission of the *dhikr* from him at

<sup>27</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 508 (Persian, 314–315).

<sup>28</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 509–510 (Persian, 315–317). This account of Simnānī’s experiences under Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn is closely paralleled in the *Faṭḥ al-mubīn* (*Opera Minora*, ed. Thackston, 118–120), but Thackston’s punctuation sometimes obscures the sequence of the account.

<sup>29</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 510–511 (Persian, 318–319).

‘Arafāt and continuing in its practice during the year he spent as *mujāvir* in Mecca. He told Simnānī, moreover, that Isfarāyīnī had instructed him to go to Khurāsān, and had written, on the cover of a volume of the “sayings” of Shaykh Abū Yūsuf Hamadānī and Rūzbihān Baqlī Shīrāzī,<sup>30</sup> that Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn would find a person among “the sons of rulers” (*abnā’ al-mulūk*) who had been drawn to God and was a seeker on the mystical path; he should attend to him and help him. These instructions, Simnānī observes, “were written two months before I left the Sulṭān and came to Simnān.”

Simnānī, now intent upon meeting Isfarāyīnī in person, shaved his head, put on “an old *khirqā*,” and set out for Hamadān on the way to Baghdad; the Arabic version of the work specifies that his departure came in Rabīʿ II 687/May 1288, thus a year and a half after his return to Simnān. Shortly after setting out, however, in Hamadān, he was detained on orders of Arghun, and was soon taken to the *ilkhān*’s summer camp, southeast of Tabriz, at the site, Simnānī notes, where the new city, later completed and named Sulṭāniyya by Öljejtü, was being built;<sup>31</sup> there, he writes, a number of *bakhshīs*—a term he explains as referring to “the lords of the

<sup>30</sup> Both are named in the Arabic version (510); the Persian text (318) mentions only Hamadānī. Both versions explicitly refer to the latter as “Shaykh Abū Yūsuf Hamadānī,” leaving it doubtful that the famous Sufi Abū Ya’qūb Yūsuf Hamadānī (d. 535/1140) is intended.

<sup>31</sup> The Arabic version of the *Urwa* evidently refers to the site of Arghun’s summer camp as “Sh.w.n.yān” (ed. Māyil Haravī, 511). In the Persian rendering (320), the editor has garbled the place name in such a way as to require an insertion in the text: the editor’s version reads that they took Simnānī “*ba-shahr, va bāz burd [ba-jāyī] ki khayma-gāh būd dar faṣl-i tābistān*” (“to the city, and carried him back [to the place] which was the camp during summer”); shorn of unnecessary punctuation and insertions, the passage should clearly read, “*ba-shahrūyāz burd ki . . .*” (“to Shahrūyāz, which was the summer camp”), referring to Shahrūyāz, near the site of Sulṭāniyya (the Persian redaction also adds the erroneous identification of Öljejtü as Arghun’s father, most likely reflecting the translator’s mistake, since it would seem unlikely for the editor to have read *padar* for the text’s *pasar*). Another of Simnānī’s autobiographical accounts—in the *Risāla fī mashā’ikhī min al-mutaqaddimīn*—presents a much-abbreviated account of this phase of his life, omitting all mention of his debates with the *bakhshīs* and implying that he went directly from Arghun to Isfarāyīnī; but the same account adds the detail that when Arghun had him detained at Hamadān and brought to his court, the *ilkhān* “was summering at Qunqūr Öläng (*ülānk*), between Abhar and Zanjān” (*Opera Minora*, ed. Thackston, 76), referring to the pastures favored by the Mongols, not far from Shahrūyāz, at the site of Sulṭāniyya. In the *Chihil majlis*, when referring incidentally to the occasion and site of his detention, Simnānī gave no specific place-name, but simply referred to “the time when Arghun had me stopped on the road to Baghdad and brought me to the *ordū*” (ed. Māyil Haravī, 206).

idol worshippers,” i.e., Buddhist monks—had been assembled from India, Kashmir, Tibet, and the Uyghur country,<sup>32</sup> in order to debate with him.

Thus began Simnānī’s detention at the *ordu*, during which he indeed debated with Buddhist monks; but he also had more prolonged contacts with an individual monk, as well as with a rabbi (and with a Sufi he says he detested as a heretic), and his accounts of these relationships suggest the extent of religious interaction underway in the highly structured and tense atmosphere of the Mongol royal court. We will return shortly to his accounts of these individual interactions. Here we may first follow the sequence of his life over the next few years, beginning with his detention and his encounter with the Buddhist monks, and ending with the realization of his long-thwarted goal of journeying to Baghdad and meeting with Isfarāyīnī; for this, the basic account of the *‘Urwa* must be supplemented with the rich narrative material of other sources, chiefly the *Chihil majlis*.

In the *‘Urwa*, indeed, Simnānī says little about his encounter with the *bakhshīs*, affirming only that God gave him the power to refute the Buddhist monks, and that he thereby overcame Arghun’s respect for them.<sup>33</sup> His account in the *Fath al-mubīn* is equally brief, noting only that the *bakhshīs* were all defeated, but it does add the explicit statements that he had been taken to Arghun by force and was held there for a total of 80 days.<sup>34</sup> In the *Chihil majlis*, however, we find a much fuller narrative of the beginning of his detention, including a dramatic account of Simnānī’s encounter with his sovereign—and longtime friend—Arghun;<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Their places of origin are specified only in the *‘Urwa*. On the term *bakhshī*, see Gerard Clauson, *Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth Century Turkish* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972) [hereafter “Clauson, *ED*”], 321, Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen* [hereafter “Doerfer, *TMEN*”], 2 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1963), 271–277, and the discussion in Raschid-eldin, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse*, ed. & tr. Étienne Quatremère (Paris, 1836; repr. Amsterdam: Oriental Press, 1968), 184–198, n. 51; Rashīd al-Dīn specifies India, Kashmir, Khīṭāy, and the Uyghur country as the homelands of the *bakhshīs* brought to the Ilkhanid realm (cited in Quatremère, 194).

<sup>33</sup> *‘Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 511 (Persian, 320).

<sup>34</sup> *Fath al-mubīn*, ed. Thackston, 120; ed. Māyil Haravī, 255–256. The figure of 80 days given for the duration of his detention corresponds reasonably well with the dates given in the Arabic version of the *‘Urwa*, according to which he left Simnān in Rabī‘ II 687/May 1288 and set off to return there in Sha‘bān of the same year, i.e., September 1288.

<sup>35</sup> Thackston, 186–188, § 9; Cordt, 116–119, § 21; ed. Māyil Haravī, 150–154. This passage in the *Chihil majlis* is part of a longer discourse prompted by a visit to Simnānī, evidently around 725/1325, by envoys sent by the powerful Amīr Chūbān, who was in the vicinity with his army and hoped that the shaykh might be induced to come to him; in reply to the invitation, Simnānī recalled his respect for Chūbān because of the latter’s earlier refusal to follow “Kharbanda” (i.e., Öljeytü) into the ways of the “schismatics” (*ravāfīd*, i.e. Shi‘is)

it is possible that Simnānī embellished the story as he recounted it to his disciples in the 1320s, highlighting his boldness in the face of a by-then long-dead ruler, but the account is nevertheless remarkable for starkly conveying the tension of the meeting. Recalling, nearly 40 years later, how he was stopped at Hamadān by Arghun's agents (*ilchīyān*), Simnānī told the story thus:

When they took me before Arghun, I went and sat cross-legged near him. Inasmuch as before that time, during my service to him, I would be impudent with him and he would often joke with me, he at first began the same sort of jest, and he assumed that I would engage in the game with him. I faced him, and whenever he would say something I would not answer; he would take hold of my knees and shake them to make me say something. But I paid no attention to him at all. My uncle, who was his *vazīr*, was watching from outside the tent. He was trembling and came in and said, "Answer!" I raised my head and said, "You should go to your own place, for I am at ease with this and I fear no creature, only God." So it was until Arghun became sorely tried and, reclining upon the cushion at his place, said, "Go and bring the *bakhshīs*," and fell silent. When the great *amīrs* who were inside the tent observed the change in him, they began to speak harshly to me, saying, "You are a fugitive from us and a Tajik; how can you be so bold?" Again I raised my head and turned to them and said, "When I was with you I was your servant. Now that I have recognized my own [true] master I have no care for you and I have no fear of you." Right then the *bakhshī* came in and sat down; I faced him as Arghun said to the *bakhshī*, "Question him." The *bakhshī* laughed and said, "He was with us as a child; what does he know that I could ask him about?" [Arghun] said, "You *will* indeed question him."

The *bakhshī* then approached him and began to ask questions, and Simnānī realized that he intended to debate with him; Simnānī saw in this an opportunity to break Arghun's liking for the monk, and agreed to debate. Evidently intent on ridiculing Simnānī, the *bakhshī* first asked

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and to harass the Sunnis, but still refused to go to see Chūbān on principle: "It has been 40 years since I left Arghun Khān, and I resolved that I would never go to see the people of the world; I do not take a step at the behest of *amīrs* and *sultāns* and the like, and it is not possible for me to go to see Amīr Chūbān." Simnānī nevertheless declared that he would accompany Amīr Chūbān if the latter would indeed commit to pursuing his campaign as a *jihād* directed against the infidels, tempering his seeming agreement to follow the commander by noting that inasmuch as he would have taken up arms with the intention of holy war, "I would not turn back" if Amīr Chūbān were to turn back; he implicitly links his zeal in this regard to his service in his youth, "for I have fought and risked my life for an idol-worshipping ruler." After noting the envoys' departure to convey this message to Chūbān, the author writes, "gradually the talk turned to the time of Arghun, when the shaykh set off for Baghdad and reached Hamadān, and Arghun sent envoys who detained him by force and took him before [the ruler]."

him to what part of him the term “‘Alā’ al-Dawla” (his *laqab*, meaning “the exaltation of the realm”) referred; Simnānī said it referred to all of him, and the monk began to dispute with him. The specifics of the monk’s arguments are never given, however, for at that point, Simnānī says, he realized that he needed first to assuage the ruler’s anger, and then to diminish his attachment to the monk. He thus addressed Arghun first, evidently hoping that flattery would serve his cause; he declared that “the heart of the monarch is a world-revealing mirror,” and affirmed that if Arghun would listen fairly, he would first prove to him that “this Indian” whom he held dear was worthless, and that he did not even know “the religion of Shākmūnī.”<sup>36</sup> The monk, he would demonstrate, was far from God and “does not heed the words of Shākmūnī,” and the ruler would see that there was no profit from following him and cultivating him in hopes of obtaining his blessing.

The monk, hearing this, challenged Simnānī’s claim that he violated the words of Shākmūnī, whereupon Simnānī referred to Buddhist scripture:

Did not Shākmūnī say, in the *Nūm*,<sup>37</sup> that if a person steps on a blade of grass in such a way that it is damaged, and its means of taking up water is blocked, the way between that person and God is also blocked; and if a person steps on dry grass so that the blade of grass breaks and the two parts become separated, a veil arises between that person and God?

The monk answered, “Yes, it is written.” Simnānī then explained that many blades of grass had been trampled and broken by the monk’s servants when setting up his tent; “and in traveling from there to here, you have broken many blades of grass beneath your footsteps.” The monk’s response, if any, is not mentioned.

Then Simnānī posed another question: “Did Shākmūnī not say that if wine is spilled on the ground, and grass grows from that place, and a horse eats that grass, one who sits on that horse is excluded from this path?” The monk answered, “It is so written.” Thereupon Simnānī declared that the

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<sup>36</sup> This is the rendering of “Śakyamuni,” the only term used by Simnānī as a personal reference to the Buddha, adopted by Māyil Haravī in the *Chihil majlis* (he uses the form “Shakmānī” in his edition of the *Urwa*); see his note on p. 327, where he mentions several other variants.

<sup>37</sup> The text here in Māyil Haravī’s edition reads “*nūn*” (151), but it is clear that the form intended is “*nūm*,” a term explained earlier in the text as the name of the book that explains the Buddhist path (84); the term reflects the Uyghur term “*nom*,” borrowed from Soghdian (as Māyil Haravī notes, 329), used to refer to the Buddhist *dharma* in general, and to particular sacred books. On the term, see Clauson, *ED*, 777, and Doerfer, *TMEN* 4: 37–40 (no. 1756), “*نوم* (*nōm*).”

monk was sitting with his belly full of wine, and challenged him, asking “What kind of *bakhshī* are you?” (*tu chīgūna bakhshī bāshī*). The monk, Simnānī recounted, became embarrassed, and “I saw that my words had found a place in Arghun’s heart.”

In these two brief exchanges, then, during which he claimed to be arguing on the basis of Buddhist scripture (though he might be suspected of merely alluding to caricatures of Buddhist doctrine), Simnānī succeeded, in his telling, in portraying the Buddhist monk as a hypocrite who violated the words of “Shākmūnī,” and as a wine-drinking fraud. This, however, is the extent of the “religious debates” Simnānī recounts for us, and it is worth noting that these two exchanges are hardly high-level doctrinal disputations; the point made in this passage is not that Simnānī refuted a knowledgeable *bakhshī*, or exposed intellectual shortcomings in Buddhist doctrine, but that he exposed this particular monk as a fraud, turning his neglect of formulaic Buddhist precepts against him. In other contexts, Simnānī does evince some knowledge of Buddhist teachings, but that is not what we find here.

In any case, the account then leaves the monk behind and turns to interaction between Simnānī and Arghun; whether out of respect for his status or out of memory of their friendship, Simnānī gives a much fairer and fuller account of Arghun’s side of the discussion than he does for the hapless monk. The ruler, we are told, liked Simnānī’s words, and asked him to talk with him apart from the others; Simnānī first protested that he simply could not be with Arghun any more, but then accompanied him to his private garden (*bāgh-i khāṣṣa*), where the two sat down to talk. Arghun first taunted Simnānī a bit, suggesting that it was a pity for “someone like you” to be involved with a false religion (*dīn-i bāṭil*); Simnānī asked which false religion he had in mind, and when the ruler said, “The religion of your Muḥammad,” “I said, ‘God forbid!’ (*ma’ādha’llāh*). The true religion is the religion of Muḥammad.” Arghun pressed his challenge: “Were you not just saying that in the religion of Shākmūnī, whoever damages a blade of grass is blocked from this path?” Simnānī agreed, and Arghun proceeded with his comparison: “Your Muḥammad has established a rule (*yasaq*)<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Māyil Haravī’s edition gives the form “*nasaqī*” here (152), with no comment or explanation; it is not impossible that the term “*nasaq*” (an “ordering” or “arranging”) is indeed intended, but it seems more likely that Thackston is correct in reading “*yasaq*” here, and that Arghun (or Simnānī’s disciple) was already making a point about the equivalence of the Chinggisid *yasa(q)* and the Muslim *sharī’a*. On the term *yasaq*, see Doerfer, *TMEN* 4: 71–82 (no. 1789), “ياساق (*yāsāq*).”

that makes people eager to shed blood; and killing people becomes necessary because of that rule.” If crushing blades of grass blocks the path, he concluded, was not killing people much worse? Arghun further argued that the Prophet’s command to his army to fight the infidels entailed the promise to his followers that “If you kill them, you will go to heaven, and if they kill you, you will go to heaven;” this *yasaq*, he said, increases the desire for fighting, with the result that more on both sides would be slain.

The account so far is naturally of interest for Simnānī’s depiction of the Mongol *ilkhān* taking issue with what he termed a *yasaq* of Muḥammad, indicating the currency, even then, of the equation of *sharī’a* and *yasaq*]; it is also of interest for the image of a Mongol ruler posing as the defender of peace and tranquility and situating a thirst for warfare among the Muslims, however much the account may be a set-piece. In any event, Simnānī defended Islam, as he recounted, by taking an example from a gardener who came to prune a tree as they were talking:

I said, “Do you not give this gardener a salary each year?” He said, “Yes.” I said, “Why is he cutting off these green branches and throwing them away?” He said, “He is a gardener and he knows what he is doing: he cuts what needs to be cut so that other branches will gain strength, and the water which the bad branches draw away without growing, those good branches may then absorb and grow.” I said, “The world is God’s garden, and Muḥammad is the gardener, and the people are like trees. Muḥammad knows that the infidels are bad branches, and the Muslims good branches; the good branches cut the bad branches—that is, they kill the infidels so that the Muslims may perform their service to God with peace of mind. And those blessings which the infidels consume to behave rebelliously, the Muslims may thus consume and show obedience.”<sup>39</sup>

Arghun was amazed by these words, Simnānī related, but then asked if there were anyone “closer” to the religion of Muḥammad than Simnānī (*az tū muqarrab-tar kasī*, perhaps alluding to an expectation of a distinction paralleling that between the monastic community and lay Buddhists, or simply, again, to Simnānī’s youth and long neglect of his religious obligations); perhaps such a person could better speak on behalf of Muḥammad and Islam. Simnānī’s reply was quite brazen, as he recounts it, but it may have been sharpened over the years:<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *Chihl majlis*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 152–153; ed. Thackston, 187; Cordt, 118–119.

<sup>40</sup> Or it may simply reflect the context in which the entire account was related, i.e., in the presence of two commanders sent by Amīr Chūbān to Simnānī’s *khānqāh*, to whom he was explaining why he would not bother going to see their leader.

I said, "What do you know about those close to Muḥammad? Do you not see, after all, that I was not able to be without you for an hour, but now that the scent of those close to [Muḥammad] has come to me, I do not want to see you any more, and I have developed an aversion to you? What care would those close to him have for you, and why would they give any thought to you?"

Despite this quite personal attack, the account concludes, Arghun still professed his affection for Simnānī and declared that he liked what he said; he explicitly asked Simnānī to remain in his service, promising to give him whatever he wished for. Simnānī refused, adding further insult, in effect, by reminding the *ilkhān* that he was just one among many rulers in various parts of the world, and affirming that he had nothing to give of value; Arghun finally "realized that something else was at work" (*dānist ki kār naw'ī dīgar ast*), and gave up hope of persuading Simnānī, "until the time when I left there without permission and came to Simnān."

The aftermath of this first discussion with the Buddhist monks, and the conversation with Arghun, is recounted somewhat differently in the *Urwa*, where the narrative thread is resumed following the summary affirmation of Simnānī's defeat of the Buddhist monks.<sup>41</sup> Arghun again summoned Simnānī, the account says, this time allowing him to come wearing his Sufi *khirqā* (the latter element appearing only in the Persian rendering); despite his unbelief, Simnānī writes, Arghun spoke kindly to him and brought him close to him, remarking that he had liked what Simnānī said in the debates. But Arghun then told him that such words as he spoke in the debates could not have come from Simnānī himself, "for you were my servant for ten years, since you were 15 years old, and I never heard such words from you." Simnānī then put his case before his sovereign: he told him that his heart was unable to bear associating with people and that he found his solace in seclusion and withdrawal; he maintained that his only goal was to follow the path of God, and his only undertaking was the practice of *dhikr* in *khalvat*; and he explained that he needed to go to his shaykh, imploring Arghun not to prevent him from doing so.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, the ruler was unmoved, and expressly forbade him to travel to Baghdad. According to another version of the

<sup>41</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 511–512 (Persian, 320–321).

<sup>42</sup> The account is somewhat different, and more dramatic, in the *Faḥ al-mubīn*, where Simnānī writes that Arghun was so closely tied to him that he even ceased his prostrations to idols, and told him to continue in his service "in the clothes that you have on;" Simnānī told him, in this account, that he could not serve him, but had to go to his shaykh, a request which Arghun flatly refused (*Faḥ al-mubīn*, ed. Thackston, 120; ed. Māyil Haravī,

*Urwa* (the *Ṣafwa*), despite preventing Simnānī from traveling to meet Isfarāyīnī, Arghun awarded to Isfarāyīnī a yearly “pension” of 500 *dīnārs* plus a substantial allocation of wheat;<sup>43</sup> it is possible that the ruler was simply moved by Simnānī’s high opinion of his would-be shaykh, but the donation has all the signs of, in effect, a ‘pay-off’ given in the hope that Isfarāyīnī would discourage Simnānī from his wish to travel to Baghdad (as in fact Isfarāyīnī did, at least for awhile).

According to the *Urwa* again, Simnānī eventually found the company of the infidels unbearable, and finally departed for Simnān without Arghun’s permission (the date of this second departure, Sha‘bān 687/September 1288, is again given only in the Arabic version); informed of his departure by his *vazīr*, Simnānī’s uncle Jalāl al-Dīn, Arghun apparently showed some forbearance, saying, in Simnānī’s account, “I have argued with him to continue in my service, but he would not agree, for inside him he has been pulled toward another world (*ilā ‘ālamīn ākhirīn*, but in the Persian text, ‘toward another place’ [*ba-maḥallī-yi dīgar*]), and he is tired of us.” Arghun ordered someone sent after him to stop him from going to Baghdad, if that was his actual intention, and to accompany him on to Simnān and send word of his arrival.<sup>44</sup>

Determined to make the best of his separation from the shaykh he wished to serve, Simnānī continues in the *Urwa*, he sent a letter to Isfarāyīnī while still on the way back to Simnān, forwarding it to Baghdad with Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn. In response the shaykh wrote back assuring Simnānī that there was no need for him to come to Baghdad, “for my spirit will be present before you, as you have seen in your vision;” Isfarāyīnī’s letter, which included explanations of Simnānī’s dreams and ‘unveilings,’ as well as Isfarāyīnī’s licensure for the practice of contemplative seclusions, arrived at the end of Sha‘bān [687]/late September, 1288 with Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn, who also brought the variegated Sufi *khirqā* (*al-khirqā al-mulamma‘a*) that Isfarāyīnī intended for Simnānī.<sup>45</sup> Thus invested,

256). Cf. Simnānī’s affirmation elsewhere (*Chihil majlis*, Cordt, 69) that the “new” *bakhshī* who won Arghun’s favor forbade prostrations to idols.

<sup>43</sup> See Cordt, *Die Sitzungen*, 9.

<sup>44</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 512 (Persian, 321); the *Fath al-mubīn* (ed. Thackston, 120; ed. Māyil Haravī, 256) recounts none of these details, noting only his departure for Simnān without the ruler’s permission.

<sup>45</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 512 (Persian, 321–322). As Landolt suggests (*Correspondance spirituelle*, 15), the letter here referred to is surely to be identified with the letter which he publishes (A. V, text, 15–28) from the collection of Isfarāyīnī’s letters edited by Simnānī. Landolt’s suggestion is supported by the anonymous introduction, of uncertain provenance, added before the text of this letter in another manuscript, from Rampur, which

and with the shaykh's permission—though still without having ever met him—Simnānī undertook a 40-day contemplative seclusion (*arbaʿīn*) at the beginning of Dhū'l-qa'da 687/late November 1288, in the course of which he experienced guidance from the spiritual essence (*rūḥāniyya*) of Isfarāyīnī (affirming, in the *Faṭḥ al-mubīn*, that he indeed saw the form of Isfarāyīnī in his heart, instructing and guiding him); and in both the *Faṭḥ al-mubīn* and the *Urwa* he concludes that he would not have found such blessings from his shaykh's spiritual essence had he been in his presence directly, noting that the ruler's prohibition of his visiting Isfarāyīnī was thus actually an instance of divine grace on his behalf (*iḥdā latā'if al-ḥaqq*, in the Persian account *yakī az alṭāf-i ilāhī*), one that served to strengthen him in obedience to the shaykh and in observance of his spirit rather than his form.<sup>46</sup> Although this comment may be tempered in specific terms by Simnānī's later affirmation, following his direct meeting with Isfarāyīnī, that the benefit he derived from his master's direct guidance was more than he could have obtained through a thousand years of traveling the

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was unavailable to Landolt (I have discussed this manuscript in my "Two Narratives on Najm al-Dīn Kubrā and Raḍī al-Dīn 'Alī Lālā from a Thirteenth-Century Source: Notes on a Manuscript in the Raza Library, Rampur," in *Reason and Inspiration in Islam: Theology, Philosophy and Mysticism in Muslim Thought: Essays in Honour of Hermann Landolt*, ed. Todd Lawson [London: I. B. Tauris/Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2005, 298–339, now republished in corrected form in Devin DeWeese, *Studies on Sufism in Central Asia* [Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012], No. XI); it would appear, from Landolt's silence on the matter, that no such introduction appears in the manuscripts he used. The account identifies the letter in question as Isfarāyīnī's response to an appeal from Simnānī "after Arghun had made him turn away from the road to Baghdad, when the Shaykh [Isfarāyīnī] had written him a letter instructing [Simnānī] to "Engage in the *awrād* which I have written and consider that I am in your presence." The account also summarizes the contact between Simnānī and Isfarāyīnī prior to this episode and down to the time when Arghun had Simnānī detained, alluding to Isfarāyīnī's dispatch of the book by Abū Yūsuf Hamadānī (noted above), but seemingly conflating that episode and the teaching of the *dhikr* with the formal investment with the *khirqā* and the (limited) licensure brought by Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn on this occasion: "Shaykh Rukn al-Dīn 'Alā' al-Dawla had not yet entered the service of Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, who was his shaykh, from the formal standpoint, but had received both instruction in the *dhikr* and the *jāma* from Shaykh Sharaf al-Dīn Ḥasan Simnānī, whom the aforementioned Shaykh [Isfarāyīnī] had sent to Simnān through an inspiration [*ilhām*], writing on the cover of a book, 'When you find someone among the *aṣḥāb-i vuzarā* to whom a divine attraction (*jadhba*) has come and who is avoiding the company of people, serve him, instruct him in the *dhikr*, and invest him with the *jāma*.' And when [Simnānī] had received instruction in the *dhikr* from him by the order of Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, he engaged in *khalvat* and '*uzlat* with a group of sincere *darvishes*' (MS Rampur, Raza Library, *Sulūk* 764, f. 95a).

<sup>46</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 513 (Persian, 323); *Faṭḥ al-mubīn*, ed. Thackston, 120, ed. Māyil Haravī, 256 (marking the end of the autobiographical material in this work). The comment was noted by Landolt, *Correspondance spirituelle*, 19.

mystical path on his own,<sup>47</sup> it is nonetheless a remarkable affirmation by the mature Simnānī—that his detention at the *ordu* actually furthered his spiritual development, and that in this instance God’s grace was manifested through the command of the infidel Arghun—and is noteworthy in itself.

Although the account of the *Urwa* summarized here implies that Simnānī’s “training-by-correspondence” with Isfarāyīnī began after his second departure from Arghun’s court, a narrative in the *Chihil majlis* makes it clear that Simnānī was in touch with Isfarāyīnī during his detention at the *ordu*. In the account,<sup>48</sup> Simnānī recalls his attempts, during the time before he had met Isfarāyīnī, to eat practically nothing, to the point, he says, that he would have preferred having a stone placed in his mouth over having someone give him a bite to eat; if the idea of tasting some food came over him, he would close his eyes and imagine tasting something in the unseen world. This aversion to food continued until one day he saw “the Shaykh” (i.e., Isfarāyīnī) in a vision telling him to eat something, lest his fasting allow Satan to gain power over him. When he came to himself, he says, observing this command seemed more difficult to him than continuing his austerities; “at that time I was in the *ordu* of Arghun,” Simnānī relates, and a letter arrived from “the Shaykh,” saying that he had heard, through Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn, that Simnānī was not eating anything, and imploring him to eat a proper amount of food in order to keep Satan at bay. The letter conveyed the same message as the vision, and Simnānī complied; but of special interest here is the incidental reference to a letter from Isfarāyīnī reaching Simnānī during his detention at the *ordu* (the account must refer to the time of his detention, rather than to the earlier period in which he describes abstaining from food and wasting away, i.e., between his battlefield conversion and his first departure from Arghun’s court, insofar as at that point, he knew nothing of Isfarāyīnī, and had not yet met Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn). The same conclusion is suggested by the arrangement of the material in the collection of Isfarāyīnī’s letters edited by Simnānī,<sup>49</sup> and it must thus be acknowledged

<sup>47</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 513–514 (Persian, 524).

<sup>48</sup> *Chihil majlis*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 78–79; Cordt, *Die Sitzungen*, 62 (this passage is not found in the version edited by Thackston); cf. Landolt, *Correspondance spirituelle*, 38, n. 39.

<sup>49</sup> Simnānī notes in his introduction to the collection of his master’s letters and writings, which he edited under the title *Rasā’il al-nūr*, that he arranged the letters addressed to himself in chronological order, and four letters precede the one identified with the “initiatory” letter of Sha’bān 687/September 1288, leading Landolt to conclude that their

that despite the efforts of Arghun and Simnānī's family to prevent him from traveling to see Isfarāyīnī in person, they evidently did not obstruct all contact between the two men; as we consider below the various religious influences to which Simnānī was exposed during his detention at the *ordu*, we must keep in mind that among them, in all likelihood, was ongoing, albeit indirect, influence from Isfarāyīnī himself.

That influence, of course, continued after Simnānī's second departure from Arghun's court, as Simnānī continued his training in Sufism, through, in effect, a correspondence course, with Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn serving as the go-between for Simnānī, in Simnān, and Isfarāyīnī, in Baghdad; evidently nearly a year was passed in this way, as Isfarāyīnī continued guiding him in the performance of retreats and meditation, until at last Simnānī took the risk of traveling, without Arghun's permission, to Baghdad to meet his master. This momentous decision, fraught with potentially serious consequences for Simnānī, is in fact mentioned quite matter-of-factly in the autobiographical accounts. In the *Urwa*,<sup>50</sup> Simnānī notes that it was Ramaḍān 688/September–October 1289 when he arrived in Baghdad and finally met Isfarāyīnī, who now personally instructed him in the *dhikr* and assigned him a *khalvat* lasting until nearly the end of that month (the 26th, says the Persian text, or 13 October 1289); then on his shaykh's orders he made the pilgrimage to Mecca, returning, by way of Iraq, to his shaykh in Baghdad early in the new year (i.e. at the end of Muḥarram 689/mid-February 1290).

It was only after his brief return to Isfarāyīnī in Baghdad, after performing the *hajj*, that Simnānī learned of the execution, in 688/1289, of his paternal uncle Jalāl al-Dīn, at the court where he himself had been detained not long before; he writes of this, in the *Urwa*, in a way that reminds us of the tense political atmosphere of the time, especially in connection with the old 'capital,' Baghdad. Isfarāyīnī had told him to return from the pilgrimage via Iraq (as he had duly done), and had not told him the news about his uncle earlier, because, Simnānī learned, the chief men of Baghdad (*hukkām*, in the Arabic version, but *mashā'ikh* in the Persian) had complained to Isfarāyīnī that if Simnānī learned of his uncle's fate, he might try to return through Syria (then not in Mongol hands) and stir up unrest (i.e., incite a *fitna*), thereby causing trouble for

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correspondence began already during Simnānī's detention at Arghun's camp (see his discussion in *Correspondance spirituelle*, 23).

<sup>50</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 513 (Persian, 523–524).

them.<sup>51</sup> Once Simnānī returned through Iraq, he says, the same men came and apologized to Isfarāyīnī; but the account underscores both the sensitive nature of Simnānī's position and family ties, and the suspicions that still lingered regarding Baghdad's loyalty to the Ilkhans, despite the devastation of three decades earlier.

With Simnānī back safely in Baghdad, Isfarāyīnī assigned him another *khalvat*, lasting two weeks (ending, according to the Arabic version alone, on 16 Šafar 689/28 February, 1290), and then told him to return to Simnān to care for his mother;<sup>52</sup> he ordered Simnānī to engage there in the guidance of travelers on the mystical path (the Persian text alone speaks of formal "licensure," *ijāzat*), and Simnānī thus set off for his native region with Isfarāyīnī's authorization to train his own disciples (in the *Risāla fī mashā'ikhī min al-mutaqaddimīn*,<sup>53</sup> he specifies that he was thirty years old when he returned to Simnān and began training disciples in his own right).

It is worth noting that Simnānī's subsequent relationship with Isfarāyīnī continued to develop in large measure through their correspondence (some of which has survived), and although Simnānī appears to have traveled again to Baghdad to see Isfarāyīnī before the latter's death in 717/1317 (we know that he was there, for instance, in 712/1313), it is clear that their relationship was not what is normally thought of as the typical master-disciple relationship cultivated in Sufi communities of later times. Indeed, when Simnānī mentions the importance of the guidance he obtained while in Isfarāyīnī's presence, as noted above, it is difficult to avoid the impression that he added this in order to stress the significance of a relationship that is otherwise remarkable for nothing so much as its extraordinary brevity: Simnānī's initial time in Baghdad with Isfarāyīnī appears not to have exceeded three or four weeks altogether (i.e. from some time in Ramaḍān 688 until his departure for the *ḥajj* apparently soon after the end of the same month, and from his return to Baghdad

<sup>51</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 513 (Persian, 524).

<sup>52</sup> An apparent allusion to this episode, and perhaps to his shaykh's eventual charge to return to care for his mother, is found, though with a different assessment, in the *Chihil majlis* (ed. Māyil Haravī, 239; ed. Thackston, *Opera Minora*, 223–224; Cordt, *Die Sitzungen*, 205); here Simnānī describes a vision, during the *khalvat* Isfarāyīnī had assigned him at this time, in which "I saw Khurāsān, and an army came and plundered Simnān and took my mother captive; and I saw my mother amidst the army, dressed in a tattered cloak, in a wretched and miserable state." He then wanted to abandon his *khalvat* and go to Khurāsān to rescue his mother, he says, but he soon recognized that in fact this vision was the result of Satanic influence upon his carnal soul, designed to spoil his retreat.

<sup>53</sup> Ed. Thackston, *Opera Minora*, 76.

at the end of Muḥarram 689 until his departure for Simnān just over two weeks later), and during much of that time Simnānī was in seclusion. Simnānī thus actually spent minimal time under the direct guidance of the figure he was to count as his central and pivotal spiritual influence; his chiefly long-distance association with Isfarāyīnī, alongside his early efforts at self-directed ascetical practices and his exposure to diverse religious influences at court, may remind us of the decidedly unconventional character of Simnānī's early mystical training, at least when judged against the 'normative' expectations of the functioning Sufi 'orders' of later times.

*A Sufi, a Rabbi, and a Monk walk into the Ordu:  
Simnānī and the Temptations of Religious Diversity*

Let us return now to Simnānī's accounts of the specific religious encounters he had during his detention at Arghun's *ordu* during the late spring and summer of 687/1288. To judge from his later accounts, his detention at the Mongol court must have been a time of considerable religious ferment, and it is not unlikely that Simnānī was at that time much more open—or 'vulnerable'—to the kind of religious experimentation no doubt fostered by the eclectic atmosphere of the Mongol court than he was later wholly willing to acknowledge. Three figures appear more or less briefly in his accounts of this period, each representing, in Simnānī's retrospective accounts, particular religious directions and, in effect, as he later recognized them, errors (he was attracted to some of them, he says, by the power of his carnal soul [*nafs*]); the three also share the status of having been 'put up' to engage Simnānī religiously, with the aim of inducing him to return to royal service, an aim shared by Arghun himself and by Simnānī's relatives in high places.

Simnānī says that he disliked one of these figures from the outset and remained unimpressed by his spirituality (as well as unmoved by the religious 'alternative' he represented); this was the Sufi, wearing a blue *khirqa*, whom he calls "Ḥājjī Āmulī," and who in fact accompanied Simnānī during his second departure from Arghun's *ordu*. Simnānī had been introduced to this figure by his uncle Jalāl al-Dīn, Arghun's *vazīr*, during his detention, and although in the only account of him we have, in the *Chihil majlis*, Simnānī insists that his heart recognized Ḥājjī Āmulī as a "heretic" (*mulḥid*) when he first saw him, Simnānī clearly associated with him extensively. He describes this figure's mystical training and his devotion to his shaykh, and notes that he saw the certificate of licensure given him by his master, even as he recounts the vision he had of

a black snake entering his uncle’s tent and hissing at each person there; when it came to him, Simnānī tried to kill it, but it slipped away. It is less clear when, exactly, he understood this vision as signalling the dangerous nature of this Ḥājjī Āmulī, who, the account says, accompanied Simnānī when he left the *ordu* without Arghun’s permission. The account is in fact ambiguous, since Simnānī first reports that he left the court in Ḥājjī Āmulī’s company, but then notes that Arghun, informed by his *vazīr* that Simnānī had “fled,” ordered that someone be sent after him to prevent him from going to Baghdad, and to accompany him if he indeed went to Simnān; the account then mentions that “a Muslim Turk” who had served at the *ordu* was sent after Simnānī and overtook him on the road. It is clear from the rest of the account that Simnānī was accompanied on his journey toward Simnān by both Ḥājjī Āmulī and this Muslim Turk, but the wording of the account leaves the impression that it was in fact Ḥājjī Āmulī who was dispatched as Simnānī’s ‘minder;’ and it seems clear, whoever was sent by Arghun and/or Simnānī’s kinsmen, that Ḥājjī Āmulī was tasked by Simnānī’s uncle with dissuading him from seeking out Isfarāyīnī, and perhaps more broadly with turning him away from his wish to leave royal service. In any event, as Simnānī relates in the *Chihil majlis*, the journey brought further conversation and observation that left no doubt about Ḥājjī Āmulī’s heresy; Simnānī sought to induce the Turk to kill Ḥājjī Āmulī, who saved himself by renouncing his convictions and then slipping away to Āmul (where, Simnānī heard, he again became an apostate).<sup>54</sup>

If the encouragement to associate with Ḥājjī Āmulī—who belonged to Muslim society, whatever his doctrinal or ritual offenses—appears to have come from Simnānī’s family, his links with the other two figures developed firmly in the context of the broader cultural and religious horizons of the Mongol court. Those other two figures—a Jewish rabbi and a Buddhist monk—are introduced together as sequential players in Simnānī’s spiritual drama during this period, though he had known the rabbi earlier

<sup>54</sup> *Chihil majlis*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 206–211; Cordt, *Die Sitzungen*, 170–178; *Opera Minora*, ed. Thackston, 204–209. See also the brief discussion of Elias, *Throne-Carrier*, 26–27, and that of Landolt, *Correspondance spirituelle*, 13–14, and 41–42, nn. 43–46 (calling attention also to Isfarāyīnī’s clear dislike of Ḥājjī Āmulī, as evidenced in one of the letters published by Landolt [A.IV]); Landolt no doubt correctly sees in this episode from the *Chihil majlis* a sign of the intense concern on the part of Simnānī’s family to prevent his association with Isfarāyīnī, noting that the efforts to encourage Simnānī’s ties with Ḥājjī Āmulī amounted to an attempt to “satisfy his spiritual tastes” and thereby, “in connivance with the Buddhist Ilkhān, to accomplish that which they had not succeeded in doing by the less subtle means of his arrest in Hamadān: preventing him from joining Isfarāyīnī in Baghdad” (13).

during his service, and it seems that his relationship with the monk outlasted his detention at Arghun's *ordu* during the summer of 687/1288.

In the *Chihil majlis*,<sup>55</sup> Simnānī recalls that when Arghun had had him stopped on the way to Baghdad and brought to his court, he had discussions, in the *ordu*, with a rabbi whom he had known during his earlier service at court. Simnānī here notes that early in his development he used to experience many mystical "ascents" (*mā'ārij*), and implicitly, in the account, it appears that the rabbi was perhaps the first "counselor"—though it is not clear whether this was before or after the "debate" with the Buddhist monks—sent by those concerned about Simnānī to help him through his evidently continuing spiritual crisis. This is at least the impression conveyed by Simnānī's account, although he does not say so explicitly, for at least in the case of the rabbi it is clear that Simnānī did not seek him out; rather, in Simnānī's telling the rabbi's "intervention" was unwanted and short-lived: but again, Simnānī's attitude toward this figure may have hardened considerably later on, as he repented of, ignored, or forgot any value he might have derived from the rabbi's counsel.

This rabbi, says Simnānī, engaged in ascetic practices and was highly respected by Arghun; the former is in fact made the basis for the latter, suggesting that the practice of austerities offered a basis for religious respect among Buddhists that transcended the boundaries of their particular confessional community: Simnānī explains that because Arghun was an idol worshipper (*but-parast*) and gathered in his presence "*bakhshīs* and idol-worshippers from all quarters," he "held this Jew in the utmost esteem by reason of his extensive austerities." The rabbi came to Simnānī and greeted him, but because he was a Jew Simnānī refused to return the greeting or show him any regard; the rabbi said that he had come, and would come each day in spite of Simnānī's slights, to tell him of his own visions and show what fruit his spiritual exertions bore. When the rabbi took a volume out of his cloak and showed it to Simnānī, however, the latter saw that it was full of descriptions of "ascents" just like those he had experienced. Thus presented with evidence of the commonplace nature of these experiences, accessible even to this Jew, Simnānī notes, his heart turned cold toward such ascents and he gave them up altogether. Nevertheless, he continues, his carnal soul led him to take solace in the fact

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<sup>55</sup> *Chihil majlis*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 69–70; Cordt, 54–55, § 1; the same account is also translated by Molé, "Les Kubrawīya," 87–88. In the account, Simnānī identifies the rabbi only by saying, *shakhsī būd az aḥbār, ya'nī dānishmand-i yahūdī*.

that the rabbi had *not* experienced the visions of light that Simnānī had experienced; here it may be recalled that Simnānī’s vision of the flashes and sparks came already under the direction of Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn before his attempt to visit Isfarāyīnī, according to the *Urwa*, though in this passage Simnānī speaks of seeing “the sun and moon and many lights.”

In any event, his misguided faith in the importance of these luminary visions required exposure to another religious figure to be shattered. This figure appeared, says Simnānī, when Arghun ordered all *bakhshīs* in his realm to come to his court; one who did so was an old man of long experience, who had spent 40 years in seclusion and belonged to the class of monks called, in Simnānī’s telling adoption of a Sufi term, “*khalvatīyān*,” i.e., those who engaged in contemplative seclusion. Simnānī was impressed by the honor shown to this newly-arrived *bakhshī* by Arghun, who sent people to escort the monk into the *ordu*, and went himself on foot to greet him. The *bakhshī* immediately challenged the ruler, however, asking why he had been brought, and disparaging the *bakhshīs* already at Arghun’s court; they were not true *bakhshīs*, he said, but sought only power and riches, and he urged Arghun to pose questions to them to expose them. The first question was whether these monks, when entering seclusion and engaging in austerities, witnessed visions of “the moon and the sun and lights” in the unseen world; the second was in regard to “a person who is seated here but whose real being is traveling through Hindūstān or Turkistān.” The *bakhshīs* knew nothing of these experiences, and Arghun’s respect for them diminished; and the point of the story, Simnānī notes, is that when he heard the new *bakhshī* talk about visions of lights (nothing more is said of the second, more enigmatic question), his heart grew cold to those as well, as he understood that they were simply incidental experiences not central to spiritual advancement.

Meanwhile, Simnānī notes, Arghun turned his favors to the newly-arrived *bakhshī*, who was called “Paranda Bakhshī,” a designation that should no doubt be understood not as a proper name, but as an epithet, i.e., “the Flying Bakhshī.” This figure is certainly the same “Paranda Bakhshī” mentioned by the historian Rashīd al-Dīn, who credits this *bakhshī* with saving the life of Simnānī’s uncle, Jalāl al-Dīn, in Dhū’l-ḥijja 687/January 1289,<sup>56</sup> when he was suspected of involvement in intrigues against Arghun;

<sup>56</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Hamadānī, *Jāmi’ al-tavārīkh*, eds. Muḥammad Rawshan and Muṣṭafā Mūsavī (Tehran: Nashr-i Alburz, 1373/1994), 2: 1173, referring to the intercession (*shafā’at*) of “*b.r.n.da bakhshī*.” Rashīd al-Dīn here uses the name known from the *Chihil majlis* and clearly links him with Simnānī’s family; but shortly thereafter (2: 1179–1182;

although Jalāl al-Dīn was executed some eight months later for an imprudent complaint about Arghun, and despite the somewhat strained relations we may presume between ‘Alā’ al-Dawla and his uncle, the monk’s intercession speaks equally strongly of this “new” *bakhshī*’s favor with Arghun and of his ties with Simnānī’s family.

The passage from the *Chihil majlis* noted above makes Paranda Bakhshī a foil, in effect, whose mention of visions of light convinced Simnānī that these experiences, too, were essentially worthless; we may detect some satisfaction, however, in his portrayal of Paranda Bakhshī’s exposure of the fraudulent *bakhshīs*—presumably the same monks whom Simnānī himself had bested. In any case, in another section of the *Chihil majlis*,<sup>57</sup> the same “Bakhshī Paranda” is spoken of in much more respectful terms, and we learn not only that this Buddhist monk visited Simnānī in his *khānqāh*, away from the confines of the *ordu* where they met, but that Simnānī even sent one of his own followers to the monk in order to help him overcome his attachment to a particular state (in which he experienced similar luminary visions and considered that he was seeing God himself therein), which was obstructing his further spiritual progress.

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cf. Quatremère, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse*, 194) he discusses an unnamed *bakhshī* who arrived at Arghun’s court from India, evidently in 688 or 689, and convinced Arghun that he could produce an elixir to prolong a man’s life (the concoction this newly arrived *bakhshī* produced was eventually blamed for Arghun’s illness and death in 690/1291). The circumstances of this Indian *bakhshī*’s arrival and his quick winning of Arghun’s trust clearly resemble what Simnānī says about Paranda Bakhshī arriving and undermining Arghun’s faith in the *bakhshīs* who were already with him, and it is possible that Rashīd al-Dīn had the same figure in mind, despite using his ‘name’ only the first time he mentioned him. Cordt (*Die Sitzungen*, 69–70, n. 6) further suggests the possible, but as he acknowledges, unverifiable, identity of Paranda Bakhshī with Rashīd al-Dīn’s informant on Buddhism and Indian history, the monk Kamālashrī of Kashmir (Cordt notes that Kashmir was regarded as part of India by Muslim geographers, but Simnānī, as noted, distinguishes Kashmir from Hindūstān, and clearly links Paranda Bakhshī with the latter). Better grounded is Cordt’s comparison (10 and note 6) of the appellation “Paranda Bakhshī” with the “flying” epithet attached to the names of Muslim saints, e.g., “Luqmān-i Paranda.”

<sup>57</sup> *Chihil majlis*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 79–84; Cordt, *Die Sitzungen*, 62–70 (this section is not found in the version edited by Thackston). The passage was translated in part by Molé, “Les Kubrawiyya,” 79–81 (Molé, who implies his reading of the form “Paranda” in the section discussed above, calls the *bakhshī* who figures in this episode “Sarand,” taking the term as a proper name; but there can be no doubt that the same “Paranda Bakhshī” is intended in both passages). Simnānī’s encounter with Paranda Bakhshī has been noted briefly in Toby Mayer, “Yogic-Śūfi Homologies: The Case of the ‘Six Principles’ Yoga of Nāropa and the Kubrawiyya,” *Muslim World*, 100 (2010): 268–286 [269–270] (a study commendable for avoiding facile narratives of ‘influence’ and syncretism, but overly certain of continuities of doctrine, practice, and outlook in a ‘Kubravī’ community).

The account appears in the *Chihil majlis* following an allusion to the excessively long fast observed by one of Simnānī’s pupils—another account reminding us that Simnānī adopted Isfarāyīnī’s caution regarding extreme austerities. Simnānī first relates how he dealt with this potential obstacle to his disciple’s development, and then proceeds to tell of another pupil, identified as a *muftī* and a learned man,<sup>58</sup> who had been in *khalvat* for four years when Simnānī assigned another *arba’in* to him; on this occasion he experienced a vision filled with the lights as induced by the *dhikr*, but believed that he was seeing God himself. Simnānī was aware, within himself, of his pupil’s experience, and went to warn him against attachment to it; he saw that Satan was leading the pupil to believe that this was an exalted state, fostering pride and thereby veiling him from genuine guidance. When the pupil disobeyed his command to devote himself exclusively to the *dhikr*, Simnānī went so far as to order the *khādim* (‘steward’) of the *khānqāh* to lock him in his cell, since it was only the 38th day of his 40-day retreat, and to assign someone to watch him when he went to perform ablutions. The pupil remained obstinate, however, and left the *khānqāh* to return to his father in Biyābānak.

Six months later while in retreat, Simnānī saw, in the “unseen world,” that this pupil was in danger of losing his faith altogether if he did not come back; he called out to him in the vision to return, and he did so. He left his cell and found Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn working to build a place for ablutions, and told him of the vision. Just then the pupil appeared claiming that he had heard Simnānī calling him back; Simnānī told him he had done well to come, and ordered him to take a shovel and get to work helping Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn. As they worked, word came that Bakhshī Paranda was coming from Arghun’s court,<sup>59</sup> and Simnānī thought to himself that

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<sup>58</sup> Simnānī refers to this disciple as a “Hājji” and then uses a term read by Māyil Haravī and Cordt as “*m.tājī*,” with no comment or explanation; Molé read “Hājji Munāji,” again without explanation. These forms may be attractive for the rhyme, given the somewhat pejorative terms in which this figure is discussed, but the shape of the word would seem to argue for interpreting it as “*muta’akhi*” and understanding it not as a proper name but as a designation for someone “joined in brotherhood” to Simnānī or to his disciples; a close relationship to Simnānī is perhaps further suggested by the evidence in the narrative that this figure’s father dwelled in Biyābānak, Simnānī’s own native town.

<sup>59</sup> The apparent discrepancy here—i.e., the four years spent in *khalvat* by this disciple, and the explicit reference to Paranda Bakhshī coming from the court of Arghun, who died in 690/1291, vs. Simnānī’s receipt of permission to train disciples only in 689/1290—was noted by Cordt (*Die Sitzungen*, 66, n. 4). However, there is no specific indication that the disciple’s four years in seclusion had been directed by Simnānī (who, after all, had himself engaged in seclusionary retreats before finding his master); here again, expectations based

this Buddhist monk might be of use in removing the obstacle from his pupil's path; "although he is an infidel," he thought, "in the practice of austerities higher states than this have been made known to him." Simnānī affirms that he knew of this because "I had seen him in the *ordu*." He thus instructed his pupil to tell the *bakhshī* of his experiences, but not to mention who his master was. When the monk arrived, the pupil did so; the monk's first response was that such experiences were impossible without a master, but the pupil insisted and pressed his question: was there a higher state than the one in which he remained? The monk said there were many higher states, and as his questioner described the truly advanced states he had experienced, the monk broke off the discussion, accusing the pupil of mocking him and insisting on his initial suspicion, because "I can sense from your words that you have a master." At that point the pupil relented and told the monk the truth, but the plan had already worked: the pupil realized that there was a higher state than his own, and the obstacle to his progress disappeared.

At this point in his narrative, we come to a remarkable passage in which Simnānī reviews the life story of this Paranda Bakhshī, showing in the process that he must have had much more extensive contacts with him than he specifically acknowledges; in this regard we may recall the broader implications of this episode, left without comment by Simnānī himself, that this Buddhist monk was coming to visit Simnānī's Sufi *khānqāh*, again suggesting an extensive and longstanding relationship. Whatever the actual extent of their contacts, Simnānī affirms that Paranda Bakhshī was "a remarkable man" (*ū 'ajab shakhṣī būd*) of considerable experience, and had recounted his life "from the beginning" in conversations with Simnānī.

Paranda Bakhshī had told him that he had originally been a prince in a city of India, but had undergone a spiritual crisis and had abandoned his power and the world altogether; he had gone to an island where a 250-year old *bakhshī* lived in constant seclusion, and remained with him in seclusion, experiencing all sorts of mystical states, for 40 years. Among his achievements was the trust that birds developed for him; he would put grain on his chest, and birds would come unafraid to eat it. He became seriously ill, however, and when word of this reached his home, his sister came and with the 'host' *bakhshī*'s permission took him to the

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on assumptions about the master-disciple relationship in the age of regularized, *silsila*-conscious Sufi orders may not yet be warranted during Simnānī's lifetime.

city for treatment; the physicians could do nothing, however, explaining that his condition would only improve if he took some broth (*āb-i gūsh*) for nourishment. However, “because eating meat is not permitted in our method (*sulūk-i mā*), I was not going to eat it; I preferred death over committing something forbidden in our path (*ṭarīq-i mā*).” Finally his sister induced him to swallow some broth without telling him what it was; he was led to discover this inadvertent sin only when, having recovered his health and returned to his “master” (*pīr*), he realized that birds would no longer come to him. He confronted his sister and learned the truth, and thereupon set off to atone for his sin with a pilgrimage to Somnath (*sūmnāt*), which, Simnānī explains, is “their *hajj*.”

There he remained for some time with the *bakhshīs* and ascetics, who questioned him about his practices and doctrines; here Simnānī reports Paranda Bakhshī’s conclusion that these other monks had once followed the same path as he described to them, but had long sense contaminated it and mixed their doctrine with other teachings. Thus it was that the *bakhshīs* of Somnath disapproved of Paranda Bakhshī’s way, telling him that it was not the path of “Shākmūnī,” but instead resembled the way of the Muslims—a name, said Paranda Bakhshī, that he had never heard before. Hearing that his path was that of the Muslims, he reported, he concluded that “if the Muslims have this path, they must be a good people” (*agar musulmānān īn rāh dārand, qawm-i nīk bāshand*). He soon left the monks of Somnath to return to his master, but the wind carried his ship to the Arabian coast; there he learned that the people were Muslims, and he sought to find among them “wise men” (*dānāyān*) in order to learn whether his own path indeed resembled the Muslim way. He could find no one among the Muslims who knew that inner path (*sulūk-i bāṭin*), however; the same was true when he was brought by force to Arghun’s court, as he reached Shiraz on the way, where he was sure he would find someone acquainted with this path in such a great city, but did not. He thus marveled that his way was compared to the Muslim way, but the Muslims themselves did not know this inner path.

Paranda Bakhshī’s life-story, as related by Simnānī, may have been built out of broader elements of Buddhist lore (e.g., his status as a renouncer-prince, an element that may have been particularly significant for Simnānī himself), and some elements seem suspiciously similar to themes of Simnānī’s religious critiques of contemporary Muslim society, but we have no firm way of judging how much of it truly preserves the monk’s biography. In any case, the rest of Paranda Bakhshī’s travelogue, if more was related to Simnānī, is omitted, for at this point the compiler of the *Chihil*

*majlis* asked Simnānī why this *bakhshī*'s path would be compared with that of the Muslims. The shaykh responded with a comparison: Shākmūnī is for the Buddhists like the Prophet; "when a person's work reaches the end, they call him a *burkhān* (i.e., "*buddha*"), that is, one who attains the goal (*wāṣil*)."<sup>60</sup> "And they have a book called 'Nōm,' which describes their path (*ṭarīqa*); their claim is that it is the word of God" (*sukhan-i khudā*). He continues, noting that they make idols in the form of Shākmūnī "for the common people," but that when a person passes beyond the level of the common people, he gains knowledge of "the souls of Shākmūnī" in the spiritual world; after this, the adoration of idols is considered sinful. He confirms this point by noting that when Paranda Bakhshī had come to Arghun, he not only refrained from venerating idols himself, but also stopped Arghun from doing so.

In short, Simnānī notes, the Buddhist path represented by Paranda Bakhshī shares with Muslims a belief in paradise and hell, in the resurrection and judgment, and in divine unity. Their unbelief lies (1) in their affirmation of union with God as the goal of the path; (2) in their doctrine of transmigration, with souls exchanging bodies on the way toward perfection (a teaching which he criticizes primarily for turning the spiritual shedding of base qualities as enjoined in Sufism into a successive shedding of material bodies<sup>61</sup>); and (3) in their belief that anyone may become a *burkhān* or Shākmūnī through ascetic practices and spiritual

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<sup>60</sup> Thackston's edition gives what is clearly the correct reading here; Māyil Haravī prefers the reading "*tarkhān*" (84), adding an explanation (328–329) that mostly repeats his earlier note in his edition of the *Urwa*, 567–568 (though in this edition, Māyil Haravī adopts the form "*burkhān*" in the Arabic text [482], noting manuscript variants "*y.r.khān*," "*t.r.hān*," and "*t.r.khān*," but adopts the form "*tarkhān*" in the Persian text; on the passage from the *Urwa* discussing these terms, see below). Māyil Haravī argues that the term intended in both the *Chihil majlis* and the *Urwa* is the "Mongol" term "*tarkhān*," which he says means "free," thus applying the quasi-political sense of the term to the spiritual realm and suggesting that it was applied to those "attainers" who were free from the bonds of the body. The suggestion is not without interest, but the freedom alluded to by the term "*tarkhān*" in fact has to do chiefly with taxes (i.e., to be granted the status of *tarkhān* is to be granted exemption from particular taxes), and it is unlikely that this particular semantic development is at work here (on the term, see Clauson, *ED*, 539–540, and Doerfer, *TMEN* 2: 460–474). The term intended, rather, is clearly "*burkhān*," the Turkic and Mongol term for *buddha*, derived ultimately from Chinese, most likely via Soghdian (see Clauson, *ED*, 360–361, and Doerfer, *TMEN* 2: 282–284; ironically, in the *Chihil majlis* [329], Māyil Haravī offers a note on the term *nom*, written also *nūm*, correctly noting its passage from Soghdian to Uyghur and Mongol).

<sup>61</sup> He explains here that through the completion of ascetic practices, one's spirit is brought into another body, "higher than the previous one," and so on until one becomes a *burkhān*; cf. on this issue the *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 482 (Persian, 267–268), and the discussion below.

discipline, unlike the Muslim belief that the prophets were sent by God. Nevertheless, Simnānī concludes, because of those doctrinal points held in common with Muslims—the resurrection (*ḥashr va nashr*), heaven and hell (*bihisht va dūzakh*), and the unity of God (*yagānagī-yi ḥaqq*)—they had told Paranda Bakhshī that his was the path of the Muslims (*ṭarīqa-yi musulmānān*).

Though framed here in connection with Paranda Bakhshī’s life story, Simnānī’s doctrinal comparison of Buddhism with Islam, in this discourse from the *Chihil majlis*, is actually more extensive than his doctrinal discussion in the *‘Urwa*,<sup>62</sup> where he reinforces certain comparisons but focuses almost exclusively on the doctrine of *tanāsukh* (i.e., transmigration or ‘metempsychosis’). Alluding to his debates with “the sages of India” (*ḥukamā al-hind*) who travel “the path (*ṭarīq*) of Shakmānī,” Simnānī affirms their belief that advancing on the spiritual path occurs through transmigration, and that spiritual attainment entails “unification” (*ittiḥād*);<sup>63</sup> *tanāsukh* reaches its end, they say, with “attainment of the sought-after perfection in unification” (*al-wuṣūl ilā’l-kamāl al-maṭlūb bi’l-ittiḥād*), “and they call the one who reaches the goal (*al-wāṣil*) a *burkhān*.”<sup>64</sup> He further acknowledges that they affirm the next world and blessings there for the righteous, and painful torments for the wicked, but notes that their belief is that these rewards and punishments come “in the manner of transmigration” (*bi-ṭarīq al-tanāsukh*)—not, as is added in the Persian redaction alone, “in the way that the people of truth believe.” He then briefly alludes to the contrast made also in the *Chihil majlis*, affirming that according to the Buddhists, perfection depends upon passing beyond bad qualities, and this can happen only by leaving one body behind and attaching to another (i.e. as opposed to the Sufi principle of shedding bad qualities in a single lifetime). This, however, is as much as we hear of Simnānī’s presentation of Buddhist doctrine, for the rest of the account is devoted to what he says was his own response to the Buddhist monks’ arguments; we may presume that his response may have developed considerably over the years between his debates, or simply his discussions with Paranda Bakhshī, and the composition of the *‘Urwa*, but in fact it is

<sup>62</sup> *‘Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 482–484 (Persian, 267–269).

<sup>63</sup> In the Arabic version (482), *mu’taqaduhum fi’l-sulūk al-tanāsukh wa fi’l-wuṣūl al-ittiḥād*; in Persian (267), *mu’taqad-i īshān dar sulūk tanāsukh-ast va dar wuṣūl ittiḥād*.

<sup>64</sup> The Persian version makes no mention of the term *burkhān*; it says, instead, that “when *tanāsukh* reaches its end, attainment (*vuṣūl*) is achieved, “and they call that attainment ‘unification’” (*chūn tanāsukh ba-nihāyat rasad wuṣūl ḥāṣil shavad va ān wuṣūl-rā ittiḥād mīgūyand*).

even less clear whether what Simnānī understood of Buddhist doctrine should indeed be ascribed just to his staged encounter with the *bakhshīs* during his detention at the royal *ordu*. If Paranda Bakhshī visited Simnānī in his *khānqāh*, and recounted his entire life story, it may be that he was a more important source of information than the monks with whom Arghun compelled him to debate; as to whether the allusions to Buddhist doctrine in the *Urwa*, or in the *Chihil majlis*, offer any insights into the actual content of those debates, we are likewise left uncertain, especially insofar as the elements of the “debate” recounted by Simnānī, as we have seen, were rather crude, focused on exposing his interlocutor as a fraudulent monk rather than on undercutting his position intellectually.

In any event, it is worth stressing that in the *Urwa*, Simnānī makes no reference to Paranda Bakhshī; and in that work, he is more rigidly negative in his descriptions of Buddhist teachings, making no concessions to the similarity of ascetic practices or visionary experiences, and finding no common ground between Buddhist and Muslim doctrines. It is hard to escape the conclusion that he in some way felt sufficiently drawn to Paranda Bakhshī to elevate him above the other representatives of Buddhism, both in terms of theory and doctrine, and in terms of practical relations with the other Buddhist monks at the Ilkhanid court. He clearly admired Paranda Bakhshī’s spiritual experiences and ascetic practices, which he contrasts with the fraudulent monks surrounding Arghun; we may even conjecture that it was from Paranda Bakhshī that Simnānī heard of the other monks’ ignorance or neglect of the two prescriptions he cited, from the ‘scripture’ of Shākmūnī, in his debate in Arghun’s presence during his detention.

In discussing Paranda Bakhshī in the *Chihil majlis*, then, Simnānī makes an effort, not reflected in the *Urwa*, to find common ground with Buddhist doctrine as represented by someone he quite openly regards as of more authentic and higher attainment than other monks; and in a quite interesting way he is happy to put his own criticisms of other defective or inadequate Muslims in this *bakhshī*’s words: Paranda Bakhshī’s discovery that the path he follows was comparable to the Muslim path, and was once followed by the *bakhshīs* of Somnath before they mixed in other doctrines, serves at once as a not-so-subtle encapsulation of Simnānī’s views on the unity of “original religion” and as a critique of the syncretic tendencies of his age, while the Buddhist monk’s surprise that the inner life of Islam is unknown to most Muslims is a transparent evocation of Simnānī’s frequent criticism of both scholastic attacks on Sufism and of charlatan dervishes (and here the fact that he singles out Shiraz as a city devoid of

authentic followers of the inner life may reflect some then-current quarrel with a Sufi community there, among, for instance, the circle of followers of Rūzbihān Baqlī or some other shaykh of Shiraz).

Over and above these hints at Simnānī’s relative affection for Paranda Bakhshī stands his willingness to send one of his own disciples to him, as recounted in the *Chihil majlis*. However much this episode had come to be cast as a rather cynical manipulation of an infidel, the fact of the monk’s journey to Simnānī’s *khānqāh* relatively soon after Simnānī’s return from his no longer clandestine visit to Isfarāyinī in Baghdad (and thus relatively soon after the execution of Simnānī’s uncle, which Paranda Bakhshī had previously been able to forestall) suggests that there may have been more to the relationship between Simnānī and this *bakhshī* than religious propriety would later allow the former to acknowledge; the same conclusion is reinforced by the fact that Simnānī, then newly established as a shaykh in Simnān, recommended this monk—even with caveats that no doubt increased with the telling—to one of his own *murīds*.

It is somewhat difficult, more broadly, to judge the extent of Simnānī’s familiarity with Buddhist doctrine, or his source of information; one account suggests some acquaintance with Buddhist scripture, but this was no doubt secondary, obtained through discussions with one or more of the *bakhshīs* at Arghun’s court, and not through actual study of any Buddhist texts in translation. We might assume that his knowledge of Buddhism came primarily or exclusively in the course of the debates he mentions, or that it came chiefly through his personal interactions with Paranda Bakhshī. In either case, the brief accounts he gives of Buddhist teachings are intended to highlight key points of agreement or disagreement with Muslim principles, rather than to outline Buddhist doctrine in any systematic way.

In this regard, however, it is also of interest to note the cultural context of Simnānī’s acquaintance with Buddhism. In his brief doctrinal discussions and in the narrative accounts as well, he consistently refers to Buddhist monks from India, recounting the career of one of them, Paranda Bakhshī, and noting more generally his having debated with “the wise men of India and the followers of the path of Shakmānī;”<sup>65</sup> only in the *Urwa*, as noted, does he mention Buddhist monks at the Ilkhanid court as having included Kashmīrīs, Tibetans, and Uyghurs as well. The two Buddhist terms he mentions, however, both reflect the Turkic (i.e., Uyghur)

<sup>65</sup> *Urwa*, ed. Māyil Haravī, 482 (Persian, 267).

or Mongolian linguistic environment in which his acquaintance with Buddhist doctrine must have taken shape; he of course speaks of “Shakya-muni” as a personal name, but otherwise interprets Buddhist concepts with Islamic terminology (*wuṣūl*, *ittiḥād*, *tanāsukh*, *khalwatīyān*), giving only the terms *nom* for Buddhist scripture and *burkhān* for a *buddha* (or in Simnānī’s terminology, a *wāṣil*), both terms borrowed into Turkic and thence into Mongolian from old Soghdian Buddhist terminology. That Simnānī’s knowledge of Buddhist terminology might reflect a prevalence of Uyghur monks should not be surprising given the important role played by Uyghurs in the Mongol empire; likewise, given both the prominence of Tibetan monks at the court of the Great Khan, especially under Arghun’s contemporary Qubilai, and the close ties between that court in China and the Ilkhanids (both stemming from the Toluid house), the presence of Tibetan monks in Tabriz should not be surprising (as for Kashmīrī, we know of the prominence of the Kashmīrī Kamalashrī from Rashīd al-Dīn’s history). It is less clear, however, whether the preference Simnānī shows for Indian monks, or a particular Indian monk, reflects an Islamic stereotype of Buddhism as an essentially Indian religion (and of all Indian doctrines of *tanāsukh* as essentially Buddhist), or a genuine shift in the Buddhist ‘personnel’ at the Ilkhanid court.<sup>66</sup>

In the end, Simnānī’s seemingly limited knowledge of Buddhist teachings, and the caveats and disclaimers he adds to his accounts of his dealings with the heretical Sufi, the rabbi, and Paranda Bakhshī, reinforce the conclusion that should be evident already from Simnānī’s wider literary legacy: they remind us that however much he may have explored other religions at one point early in his life, Simnānī did not become a freethinking believer in the truth of all spiritual paths. He was, rather, a Muslim whose experience at the Mongol court if anything increased his conviction regarding the superiority, and exclusive access to the highest spiritual attainments, of his own religious community.

The same conclusion is also suggested, ironically, by the trajectory evident in Simnānī’s life, from the unconventional character of his early spiritual explorations, which his later accounts cannot entirely conceal, to

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<sup>66</sup> On the continued activity of Buddhist centers in India in the 13th and 14th centuries, well into the period of Muslim rule, see now the study of Johan Elverskog, *Buddhism and Islam on the Silk Road* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

the more normative roles he adopted as an established shaykh later in life. Between his battlefield conversion and his detention at Arghun’s court near Tabriz, after all, Simnānī had experienced visions of the Prophet and of Abū Yazīd Bisṭāmī, had consulted various books by earlier Sufis, and had devised his own ‘free-lance’ regimen of spiritual practices; though he eventually adopted more ‘normative’ practices under the influence of Akhī Sharaf al-Dīn, an associate of Isfarāyīnī who came to Simnān, he continued his spiritual exercises for a long time without direct contact with his master. At Arghun’s court, moreover, Simnānī clearly continued his somewhat experimental approach to mystical training, through his contacts with the rabbi and Paranda Bakhshī, not to mention the dervish he says he instantly disliked and recognized to be a heretic, but with whom he nevertheless had extensive discussions and spent considerable time. Simnānī’s personal and individual tension during this time, indeed, reflects a broader pattern of tension between the region of Tabriz—in effect the Mongols’ base of operations in military and political terms—and the religious diversity to which Simnānī was exposed there, and Baghdad—still a symbol, thirty years after the Mongol destruction of the Abbasid Caliphate, of Islam’s religious dominance—and the object of Simnānī’s spiritual yearning. The very fact that Simnānī’s own accounts of this period in his life appear to reflect a growing inclination to downplay or deny the appeal and impact of the religious diversity he encountered at the Mongol court itself reflects, inevitably, the growing impact of the Islamization of the Mongol elite during Simnānī’s lifetime; his accounts thus remind us that despite the power of the Mongols in the latter 13th century, the religious history of the region of Tabriz from the 14th to the 15th century is marked by a trajectory in which the impact of Ilkhanid-sponsored religious pluralism ultimately mattered very little, but in which the impact of Simnānī’s own Sufi circle mattered very much.

In effect Simnānī’s own works, and what he told his disciples in the 1320s, reveal a ‘normativizing’ development in Simnānī’s discourse that we may understand to have continued, after his death, as he, his mystical training, and his Sufi circle were fitted ever more firmly into the structures and paradigms of a Sufi order, a process that reached a decisive stage in the late 16th century, with the hagiographical work of Ḥusayn Karbalā’ī, who in addition to memorializing the saints of Tabriz more broadly, crafted the quite loose and diverse associations among the Sufi contemporaries of Isfarāyīnī and Simnānī into firm initiatic lineages within a distinct

'Kubravī' *silsila*.<sup>67</sup> That process, in the context of Karbalā'ī's broader project of integrating the Mongol presence near Tabriz into the Muslim history and hagiography of that city, is a topic for another study; the accounts reviewed here suggest that the revisions in personal and communal narratives that would in time transform the multiple religious influences and 'experimental' religious attitude evident in Simnānī's early Sufi career into an orderly account of the normative activity and transmission of a Sufi order began already with Simnānī himself.

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<sup>67</sup> Ḥusayn Karbalā'ī Tabrizī, *Rawḍāt al-jinān va jannāt al-janān*, ed. Ja'far Sulṭān al-Qurrā'ī (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjima va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1344–49/1965–70), 1: 66–76, 83–88, 397–400, 409–414, 500–511, and 2: 95–107 (for lines traced to Simnānī through Ismā'īl Sīsī); 1: 339–345 (Simnānī's 'disciple' Tāj al-Dīn Karkahrī); 2: 248 (another disciple of Simnānī); 1: 96–98, 107–114, 366–368 (for lines traced to Isfarāyīnī through Niẓām al-Dīn Yahyā Ghūrī). On Ḥusayn Karbalā'ī and his work, see my discussion in "The Eclipse of the Kubravīyah in Central Asia," *Iranian Studies*, 21/1–2 (1988): 45–83, and the account of Leonard Lewisohn, "Ḥosayn Karbalā'ī," *Elr*, XII (2004): 512–513.

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"TABRIZIS IN SHIRAZ ARE WORTH LESS THAN A DOG:"  
SA'DĪ AND HUMĀM, A LYRICAL ENCOUNTER<sup>1</sup>

Domenico Ingenito

Humām al-Dīn b. 'Alā' Tabrīzī (d. 714/1314–5) was one of the most famous poets of his time and enjoyed the political and cultural protection of the powerful Juvaynī family until the last days of its abrupt and painful decline.<sup>2</sup> He spent most of his life in Tabriz, where he founded a monastery and, after the death of the Juvaynīs, he praised many of the Ilkhanid rulers who had recently converted to Islam.<sup>3</sup> In many hagiographic accounts Humām has been associated with Sa'dī's literary persona and, later on, was even named "the Sa'dī of Azerbaijan"<sup>4</sup> just as Ḥasan Dihlavī was named "the Sa'dī of India" by Żiyā al-Dīn Baranī, one of the historians of the Delhi Sultanate.<sup>5</sup>

The literary reciprocity between the two poets started much earlier. This fact is attested by a miscellaneous collection of poems and prose works by several authors (a *jung* composed between 740/1340 and 743/1343),<sup>6</sup> one

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<sup>2</sup> 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā Malik, the author of the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* and governor of Baghdad for 24 years, died in 681/1283, followed by his brother Shams al-Dīn, Abaqa Khān's influential *ṣāhib-dīvān*, "whose role under the Īl-Khāns may be compared [...] with that of Nizām al-Mulk under the Saljuqs." The latter was murdered on 4 Sha'bān 683/16 October 1284. John Andrew Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khāns," *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 5 (1968): 369. Shams al-Dīn's son, Rashīd al-Dīn Hārūn, patron of the arts, poet, musician and calligrapher himself, was executed in Jumādā II 658/ July–August 1286; see Hashem Rajabzade, "Jovayni Family," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 15 (2009): 61–3.

<sup>3</sup> On Humām's life and works, see R. 'Ivaḍī's introduction to the critical edition of his *dīvān*: Humām Tabrīzī, *Dīvān*, ed. Rashīd 'Ivaḍī (Tabriz: Mu'assasa-yi tārikh va farhang-i Irān, 1351/1972), i–lxxxiv; Dhabīḥ Allāh Ṣafā, *Tārīkh-i adabīyāt dar Irān*, 5 vols. (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Firdawsī, 1363/1984), 3/2: 712–31.

<sup>4</sup> Ādhar Baygdili, *Ātashkada*, ed. Ḥasan Sādāt-Nāşirī, 4 vols. (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1336–1340/1957–1961), 1: 146.

<sup>5</sup> Baranī is the author of the *Tārīkh-i Firūzshāhī*, completed in 758/1357. See Ṣafā, *Tārīkh-i adabīyāt*, 2/3: 824.

<sup>6</sup> Istanbul, Süleymaniye, MS Lala Ismail 487; a microfilm is available at the Central Library of the University of Tehran, n. 573. See Muḥammad-Taqī Dānish-pazhūh, *Mikrūfilmhā-yi Kütābhāna-yi Markazī-yi Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān*, 2 vols. (Tehran, 1348–1363/1969–1984), 1: 499–504.

section of which, under the title of “the poetic interactions [*mu‘arīḍāt*] between the Shaykh Sa‘dī and Mawlānā Humām al-Dīn” (ff. 90a–114b) contains 49 *ghazals* by Humām patterned on the same formal scheme (metre, rhyme and *radīf*) of an equal number of *ghazals* by Sa‘dī. This document proves that the two poets were engaged in a dense process of poetic exchange that allowed the younger of the two, Humām, to broadcast Sa‘dī’s style throughout the 14th century. Furthermore, while Humām imitates poets like ‘Aṭṭār and Anvarī on no more than five or six occasions, two-thirds of his *ghazals* are hypertextual replies (*javāb*) to Sa‘dī.<sup>7</sup>

In two of the manuscripts containing Humām’s *dīvān* a *ghazal* by Sa‘dī was inserted by mistake by copyists [I].<sup>8</sup> According to R. ‘Īvaḍī, this confusion attests to the many similarities shared by the two authors in terms of style and imagery, which makes it difficult in some cases to discern whether a text belongs to one or to the other.<sup>9</sup> The most remarkable verse of this wandering *ghazal* says that

## II

In the assembly where the beautiful boys [*shāhidān*]<sup>10</sup> of the two worlds convene

I will keep my gaze on you; I will be the servant of your face.<sup>11</sup>

Another verse attributed to both poets (but in this case it is a *bayt* by Humām accidentally embedded into one of Sa‘dī’s *ghazals*) presents a thematic similarity with the previous line:

<sup>7</sup> For the two most important studies on the subject of poetic imitation in pre-Modern Persian literature see Paul E. Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī*. Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1998, and Riccardo Zipoli, *The technique of the Ġawāb: replies by Nawā‘ī to Ḥāfīz and Ġāmī*. Venezia: Cafoscarina, 1993. See also Domenico Ingenito, *Percorsi intertestuali nella storia del ghazal persiano tra imitazione e riscrittura: per una ermeneutica della risposta poetica*, Ph.D. dissertation, Università di Napoli “L’Orientale,” Dottorato di Ricerca in Turchia, Iran e Asia Centrale, VII ciclo, 2 vols., Naples, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> Sa‘dī, *Ghazalhā-yi Sa‘dī*, ed. Ghulām-Ḥusayn Yūsufī (Tehran: Sukhan, 1385/2006), 87. See also Yūsufī’s confutation (ibid., 428) of ‘Īvaḍī’s philological arguments to attribute the *ghazal* to Humām; *Dīvān*, 293. Bold Roman numerals in the article refer to the original Persian texts in the Appendix.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., lxii.

<sup>10</sup> On the concept of “*shāhid*” see Lloyd Ridgeon, “The Controversy of Shaykh Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī and Handsome, Moon-Faced Youths: A Case Study of Shāhid-Bāzī in Medieval Sufism,” *Journal of Sufi Studies* 1 (2012): 3–30, especially 7–13; Sirūs Shamīsā, *Shāhidbāzī dar adabīyāt-i fārsī* (Tehran: Firdaws, 1381/2002); Hellmut Ritter, *Das Meer der Seele: Mensch, Welt und Gott in den Geschichten des Farīduddīn ‘Aṭṭār* (Leiden: E. J. Brill: 1955), John O’Kane, trans., *The Ocean of the Soul* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003), 448–519.

<sup>11</sup> Sa‘dī, *Ghazalhā*, ibid.

III

For many years the land showing your footprints  
will be the direction of the Lord of Gazes' prayer [*sāhib-naẓarān*].<sup>12</sup>

My main thesis concerning Sa'dī's *ghazals* is that centrality of vision is what characterises the novelty of his lyrical output in the effort to create a bridge between the mundane and the metaphysical aspects of the amorous experience:

IV

Alas for those eyes that haven't seen your face  
or, having seen it, are looking at someone else's face.  
If the deniers had ever seen the image of a fairy  
they would understand why the madman tears his clothes.  
The secret of the impenetrable power of God  
appears on your face like a face appears in a mirror.<sup>13</sup>

Elsewhere, Sa'dī even states that looking at the beautiful-faced ones is the “religion” he has embraced:

V

I understood very well that looking at the beautiful ones is impiety [*kuf̄r*]  
but I will never give it up: this is my religion!<sup>14</sup>

The act of seeing, *naẓar*, “look,” “gaze,” “vision,” in its ophthalmological sense (not to be confused with the concept of *baṣīrat*, “inner vision,” “subtle perception”) is presented as an undeniable anthropological *datum*:

VI

If you despise the contemplation of the created world [*āfarīnīsh*]  
I will tell [you] that it is for this that the eyes have been created.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 494; Humām, *Dīvān*, 98. I translate the expression *sāhib-naẓar* as ‘Lord of Gazes’ in order to maintain its semantic multivocality. Dihkhudā (www.loghatnaameh.org) distinguishes the primary meanings (*bārik-bīn*, *āgāh*, *baṣīr*) from its technical sense (*jamāl-parast*, *‘arīf*).

<sup>13</sup> Sa'dī, *Ghazalhā*, 41. See Ma'rūf 'Abd al-Rī'dā, “Naẓar az didgāh-i Sa'dī,” *Hāfiẓ* 29 (1385/2006): 68–70; Amīr Sādiqī-Gīvī, “Sa'dī va naẓar-bāzī,” *Faṣl-nāma-yi Adabīyāt-i Fārsī-yi Dānishgāh-i Āzād-i Islāmī-yi Khuy* 4 (1384/2005): 53–71. The two articles have pointed out, although with different statistical data, that Sa'dī is the poet who has made the most extensive use of words related to the semantic field of “seeing.”

<sup>14</sup> Sa'dī, *Ghazalhā*, 165.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 297.

Humām is probably the poet who, earlier and more skillfully than anybody else, has cast his poetic endeavors into the same aesthetical and theoretical framework. This can be seen in two verses taken from the first two *ghazals* of his *divān*:

## VII

Before your face we must put our head on the ground:  
prostration is what the mirror of God deserves.

Look at your painting-like face reflected in the mirror  
so that you can understand the power of your Painter.<sup>16</sup>

The following *bayt* can be elected as the main cypher of Humām's poetic meditation on the metaphysical justification for the act of looking at the beautiful ones:

## VIII

When the light of God's face was cast on human beings  
the bewildered passion for the complexion of the beautiful ones became  
a custom.<sup>17</sup>

This article will explore the political and literary milieu to which the two poets belong and the historical context in which they developed their poetical conception of vision.

When Jāmī stated that “nobody has composed *ghazals* before Sa‘dī”<sup>18</sup> he was probably referring to some peculiarities of Sa‘dī's style that soon became part of the canonical pattern for the composition of lyrical poetry in Persian and allowed Pre-modern critics to trace a close association between the poet and his epigones who flourished between the late 13th century and the first decades of the 14th century. Nevertheless, modern critics have reductively considered on one hand the style and contents of Sa‘dī's *ghazals* as an “inaccessibly simple” (*sahl-i mumtani*) poetic discourse on “mundane love” (*ishq-i majāzī*), and, on the other, the poems of his imitators (namely Humām-i Tabrīzī and Sayf-i Farghānī) as inaccessible texts which lack simplicity.<sup>19</sup> But the role played by the minor poets in the development of the Persian *ghazal* should be analysed as a network of

<sup>16</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 58.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>18</sup> Jāmī, *Bahāristān*, ed. Ismā‘īl Hākīmī (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1385/2006), 105.

<sup>19</sup> Sa‘īd Hāmīdīyān, *Sa‘dī dar ghazal* (Tehran: Nashr-i Qaṭra, 1382/2003), 293.

intertextual relationships in which authorship is a concept which belongs to a family of texts rather than to single poems.

The reification of the aesthetic values offered by a canonic model (i.e. Sa’dī’s style) and the subsequent disregard shown towards the authors who (like Humām), by imitating that model, have assured the continuity and further development of its literary innovation, is one of the most misleading biases affecting the process of the critical interpretation of a poetic system based on a network of tight intertextual relationships.

The relationship between the “minor poets” (or the “*shā’irān-i dast-i duvvum-u sivvum*” as the Iranian critics would say) who flourished between the 13th and the 14th century and the “rising suns”-like masters of that time whose poetic excellence “extinguished the light of the other stars” is enormously important for a better understanding of Iranian society during one of the most turbulent periods of its history and at the crossroads of politics, literary patronage and spirituality.

The case of Humām is particularly interesting because there is much evidence of his influential role in the cultural and political environment of Tabriz during the process of the Islamisation of the Īl-Khānid power at the time when the empire was struggling to exert a close control on the economically and militarily strategic region of Fārs with its access to the Gulf and the inner regions of the heartland of the Iranian plateau.<sup>20</sup>

The religious syncretism dominating this period—especially during Abaqa’s reign (r. 669–680/1270–1282)—is often reflected in Humām’s *ghazals* with verses like the following, which perfectly summarises the mid-Īl-Khānid multi-confessional ethos:

IX

It is in the pealing of the bells and the call to prayer  
that you may hear the beloved’s name with the ears of affection.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> See Denise Aigle, “Les premiers contacts avec les Mongols;” “L’incapacité des successeurs d’Abū Bakr,” *Le Fārs sous la domination mongole: politique et fiscalité, XIII<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> s.* (Paris: Association pour l’avancement des études iraniennes, 2005), 101–11; 113–8.

<sup>21</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 152; this verse [X], as a fragment reflecting a peculiar extra-textual situation, should be compared with both Amīr Mu’izzī’s (fl. 12th century) overtly anti-Christian propaganda extolling the Saljukid penetration of Anatolia and the topos of the antinomic utterances exalting religions other than Islam. See also Mu’izzī, *Kulliyāt-i Dīvān-i Amīr Mu’izzī-yi Nīshābūrī*, ed. Muḥammad-Riḍā Qambarī (Tehran: Zavvār, 2006), 62 [XI]; Farīd al-Dīn ‘Attār, *Dīvān-i ‘Attār*, ed. Taqī Tafāḍḍulī (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1386/2007 [1341/1962]), 486–7. About the multi-religiosity characterizing Abaqa’s reign, see Leonard Lewisohn, *Beyond Faith and Infidelity* (Richmond: Curzon, 1995), 59–64.

It was the *khānqāh* he had founded, (and which was still active in the late 15th century, according to Dawlatshāh)<sup>22</sup> which was the veritable space where his spiritual and literary engagement had the chance to enter in a dialectical relationship with the Persian-speaking political elite.<sup>23</sup> The special favour Humām enjoyed from his relationship with the Juvaynī family was in fact personal,<sup>24</sup> continuant and mostly related to the space of his *khānqāh*, for which Shams al-Dīn had allocated an annual sum of 1,000 dinars deriving from the revenues of lands in Anatolia.<sup>25</sup> It was the latter, furthermore, who included Humām's name in the farewell dedicated to his close friends when his execution was approaching.<sup>26</sup> But Humām's influence on the Juvaynī family may have been much deeper if we consider his relationship with Shams al-Dīn's son, Sharaf al-Dīn Hārūn, who was appointed governor first of Anatolia and subsequently of Baghdad, and to whom the poet dedicated a *mathnavī* entitled *Suḥbat-nāma*, ('The book of companionship') which opens with fervent praise for the ontological superiority of human beings:

XII

In the name of the One who gave the light of the soul to the body  
and provided wisdom with an interpreter like the language.

With the heart he kindled a light in the middle of clay  
and taught science and intelligence to the opaque mud.

As soon as the soul was given a shape  
he bestowed honour to a handful of muddy beings.

When His secrets were entrusted to water and clay  
the angels prostrated themselves before water and clay.

When His light hit the ground with a ray  
human clay reached the level of the stars.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Dawlatshāh Samarqandī, *Tadhkirat al-shu'arā'*, ed. Fāṭima 'Alāqa (Tehran: Pazhūhishgāh-i 'Ulūm-i Insānī va Muṭāla'āt-i Farhangī, 1285/2007), 378.

<sup>23</sup> For a comprehensive history of the *khānqāh* institution, see Muḥsin Kayānī, *Tārīkh-i khānqāh dar Īrān* (Tehran: Ṭahūrī, 1991). See also, Lewison, *Beyond Faith and Infidelity*, 106–12.

<sup>24</sup> From a passage contained in the introduction to 'Irāqī's *Dīvān* it seems that Humām accompanied Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī on one of his visits of Anatolia. *Dīvān-i 'Irāqī*, ed. Sa'īd Nafīsī (Tehran, 1338/1959), 59.

<sup>25</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, xviii–xviii.

<sup>26</sup> Vaṣṣāf, *Tajziyat al-amṣār va tajziyat al-a'ṣār*, ed. Muḥammad Mahdī Iṣfahānī (Bombay: 1853), 141.

<sup>27</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 261.

This short *mathnavī*, which in terms of freshness and elegance can be compared to the style of ‘Ubayd Zākānī’s *‘Ushshāq-nāma*,<sup>28</sup> has as a main topic the concept of “*suḥbat*” explored in its entire gamut of senses and implications, from sincere companionship and amorous commitment up to courtly gentillesse and the spiritual path. Its didactic tone, joined to the fact that one of its sections is dedicated to the enjoyment of youth, suggests that the poem may have been composed for the entertainment and guidance of Hārūn during his youth as a pedagogical pattern for his courtly life.

Hārūn was probably one of the most refined members of the Juvaynī family, excelling in the arts of music, calligraphy and poetry. Over the past century many scholars (including Āghā Buzurg Ṭīhrānī, Rieu, Browne and Biran)<sup>29</sup> have referred to the manuscript (BM) Or 3647 kept at the British Library as the unique document containing Sharaf al-Dīn Hārūn’s *dīvān*. With much regret I have recently discovered that the author of the poems collected in this 17th century manuscript is an anonymous Hārūn who imitated Ḥāfiẓ of Shiraz and, for this reason, presumably lived much after Sharaf al-Dīn Hārūn’s death, which occurred in 658/1286 whereas Ḥāfiẓ was born during the first half of the 14th century.

However, the relationship between Humām and Hārūn is also attested by the only specimen of Humām’s poetry quoted by Dawlatshāh in his biographical note on the poet from Tabriz. The text is a *ghazal* apparently composed by the poet on the occasion of Rashīd al-Dīn Hārūn’s visit to Humām’s *khānqāh*:

XIII

Today the house is a paradise, for Riḍvān is here  
it is time to nourish the soul, for the beloved is here.

<sup>28</sup> ‘Ubayd’s *‘Ushshāq-nāma* belongs to the same tradition of ‘Aṭā’ī’s homonymous *mathnavī* misattributed to ‘Irāqī (*Dīvān*, 361). See ‘Ubayd-i Zākānī, “‘Ushshāq-nāma,” *Kullīyāt-i ‘Ubayd-i Zākānī*, ed. Muḥammad-Ja‘far Maḥjūb (New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 1999), 147–82. In this *mathnavī*, ‘Ubayd has inserted two *ghazals* by Humām (*Dīvān*, “bidādam chashm-i mastat raftam az dast,” 62–3; “khiyālī bud-u khvābī vaṣl-i yārān,” 133–34) the first of which (*Kullīyāt*, 156) is introduced by mentioning the name of Humām and referring to him as one of the “masters” (*ustādān*).

<sup>29</sup> Āghā Buzurg Ṭīhrānī, *al-Dharī‘a ilā taṣānīf al-Shī‘a*, ed. Aḥmad Munzavī, 24 vols. (Najaf and Tehran: 1315–56/1936–78), 9: 1287; Michal Biran, “Jovayni Ṣāḥeb Divān,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 15/1 (2009): 73; Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920–24), 3: 21; Charles Rieu, *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1895), 166–7.

Why should I fear the moral police, the tax collector and the squabbles  
when Khvāja Hārūn is here, the son of the *ṣāhib-dīwān* [Shams al-Dīn]?<sup>30</sup>

The mention of Hārūn accompanied by the name of his father and the use of the word “*pisar*” may imply that he visited the *khānqāh* at a young age, the place where he might have been initiated to the path.

The fact that the line mentioning Hārūn does not appear in any of the manuscripts containing the *divan* of Humām (mostly *jungs*, dating from the 14th to the 16th century)<sup>31</sup> raises the critical problem of how biased, in the sense of ideologically restrictive choices, the first communities of readers might have been at the moment of receiving the texts composed by authors who were perceived as exempla of pious spirituality rather than obsequious (even if only occasionally) *clientes* of political figures.

It was in fact by the end of the 13th century that, after four decades dominated by Ilkhanid rulers who could barely understand the language of the Persian *qasīda*, not to mention the symbolic values embedded in its structure and traditional social use, that the temporary decline of purely political praise poetry was followed by the widely spread perception of a sharp difference between *shā'irī* as a slavish and insincere form of flattery and *shī'r guftan* as the expression of a lyrical disposition appropriate for the representation of spiritual truths.<sup>32</sup> In the time between the reign of Abaqa and the accession of Ghazan, the Mongol penchant for faiths other than Islam made many learned men turn their attention towards notables (such as the Juvaynī family) whose cultural and religious firmness was seen as a security against the threat of Mongol “otherness”. Notwithstanding the general anti-panegyric attitude of the time, the praise of such personalities was therefore tolerated as the expression of an occasional attachment to notables who were supposed to rescue Islam after the downfall of the Abbasid Empire. And, as we shall see below, such an ideological attachment was often explicitly expressed by all the major

<sup>30</sup> Dawlatshāh, *Tadhkirat*, 379.

<sup>31</sup> This discrepancy has been also noticed by Īvaḍī (Humām, *Dīwān*, lxxvi–lxxvii), but without providing any critical comment on it.

<sup>32</sup> See J. Christoph Bürgel, *The Feather of Simurgh: the 'Licit Magic' of the Arts in Medieval Islam* (New York; London: New York University Press, 1988), for a general survey of the relationship between Islam and the arts. See also Franklin Lewis, “Sincerely Flattering Panegyrics: The Shrinking Ghaznavid Qasida,” in *The Necklace of the Pleiades: Studies in Persian literature presented to Heshmat Mo'ayyad on his 80th birthday*, eds. Franklin Lewis and Sunil Sharma (Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers; West Lafayette Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2007), 215–6.

poets flourishing in the second half of the 13th century, regardless of their local political affiliations.

It is for this reason that the spiritual renown of these poets praising the personalities of the time was untouched by the presence of short encomiastic sections in their *dīvāns*, just as in Dawlatshāh’s account, the notables were the guests visiting the private space of the monasteries at a time when the temporal power had to acknowledge the socially pivotal role of the network of *khānqāhs*.<sup>33</sup> But, from the point of view of those communities of readers, it was much harder to accept that the *ghazal*—widespread in the *khānqāhs*—as the main form for the circulation of textual patterns able to generate spiritual contemplation could be used as a text conveying political commitment.

Although it is this kind of ambiguity between the realms of eroticism, spirituality and politics that elevates the lyrical output taking place between the 13th and the 14th centuries (a conflation of realms which, contrary to the traditional view, started with Sa’dī and not with Ḥāfiẓ), the lack of clear separation between the legitimate and the potentially illegitimate (also considering the ontologically negative status of poetry within the framework of the Islamic tradition) might have persuaded the first copyists—and especially the authors of miscellaneous works and anthologies—to exclude those poems from the textual *receptus* circulating along different channels.

I am convinced that many of Sa’dī’s *ghazals* were composed to praise the notables of his time. To develop a rhetorical analysis of this cryptopolitical modality is part of the desiderata of future studies on this author,<sup>34</sup> but what is clear is that early copyists of his *dīvān* have methodically eliminated any trace of praise from many of his *ghazals*. If we take into account the manuscripts used by Gh.-Ḥ. Yūsufī for his edition of the *Ghazalhā-yi Sa’dī* we find that the handful of *ghazals* explicitly mentioning a patron either do not appear at all in the first *vulgatae* collecting Sa’dī’s poems or,

<sup>33</sup> But note, for example, how the compiler of Humām’s poems (*Dīvān*, 4) laments the “loss of the most part of his panegyric *qaṣīdas*.”

<sup>34</sup> About whose *ghazals* only a few works have been published so far; see Humā Katūziyān, *Sa’dī: shā’ir-i ‘ishq-u zindagī* (Tehran: Nashr-i Markaz, 1385/2006); Sa’dī Ḥāmīdiyān, *Sa’dī dar ghazal*; Setrag Manoukian, *L’argento di un povero cuore* (Rome: Istituto Culturale della Repubblica Islamica dell’Iran in Italia, 1991). As for the relationship between Sa’dī and kings, as well as his literary representation of kingship, see Katūziyān, “Sa’dī va pādshāhān,” 203–20.

in a few cases, their encomiastic verses have been dropped.<sup>35</sup> Much work has yet to be done in order to disentangle the different paths of transmission of Sa'dī's political *ghazals*; although we may well be dealing here with an invention of tradition or even with later and spurious attributions, it is non unlikely that these texts were retrieved by the second half of the 14th century exactly like in the case of many of Ḥāfiẓ's *ghazals*, often truncated by the copyists in the section which follows the *takhalluṣ* in order to expunge their eulogistic lines.<sup>36</sup>

It is undeniable that the encomiastic activity of the 13th century cannot even be compared with the literary output produced by the poets serving the Saljuq kings, princes and notables between the late 11th and the 12th century. However there are a number of poets flourishing in this period who, by imitating the masters of the previous century, attempted to attach themselves to elements of cultural resistance that were surviving in a region like Fārs, whose relative political and economic independence assured a revival of the arts, literature and philosophy the effects of which contributed to shaping the Persianate culture of the next two centuries, from the Islamized Ilkhanid empire of Ghazan to the Timurid 'renaissance' of the 15th century.

Thanks to the strategic policies (highly applauded by historical sources)<sup>37</sup> undertaken by the Salghūrid ruler Abū Bakr b. Sa'd (r. 623–658/1226–1260) to protect the region of Fārs from Mongol belligerence, Shiraz attracted many poets from other cities keen to exert their rhetorical art in safety and at a court willing to increase its political legitimacy through literary propaganda.<sup>38</sup> This was the case, among Sa'dī's contemporaries, with Majd-i Hamgar (607–686/1210–1287),<sup>39</sup> who moved from Yazd to Shiraz to become *Malik al-Shu'arā* under Abū Bakr b. Sa'd to whom he probably

<sup>35</sup> Sa'dī, *Ghazalhā*, numbers 440, 581, 478, respectively dedicated to 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā Malik Juvaynī, Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī and Abū Bakr b. Sa'd or his son Sa'd II.

<sup>36</sup> See Maḥmūd Futūhī, "Mukhātib-shināsī-yi Ḥāfiẓ dar sada-yi hashtum-u nuhum-i hijri bar asās-i rūykard-i tārikh-i adabī-yi hirminūtik," *Naqd-i Adabī* 6 (1388/2009): 71–129.

<sup>37</sup> See Vaṣṣāf, *Tajziyat*, 156–7 and, for example, Ibn Zarkūb who, in his *Shirāz-nāma*, which was completed in 1343–4, describes Abū Bakr as the best king of any time. *Shirāz-nāma*, ed. Ismā'īl Vā'iẓ Javādi (Tehran, 1350/1971), 79–80.

<sup>38</sup> On the the Salghurids as patrons of arts and literature, see Farīd Aḥval, *Dīvān-i Farīd-i Isfahānī*, ed. Muḥsin Kayānī (Tehran: Anjuman-i āthār va mafākhir-i farhangī, 1381/2002), especially the paragraph "Tavajjuh-i atābakān bi dānishvārī va dānishvārān," xxxiv–xxxvi. Farīd (d. after 663/1264) was one of the many Isfahani poets who moved to Shiraz to serve the Salghurid court and, subsequently to their downfall, started composing poetry in praise of the *ṣāhib-dīvān* Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī; *ibid.*, 329–34.

<sup>39</sup> See Sa'īd Nafīsī, "Majd al-dīn hamgar," (first published in *Mīhr*, x, xi, xii, 1934) in Majd Hamgar, *Dīvān-i Majd-i Hamgar*, ed. Aḥmad Karamī (Tehran, 1375/1996), 26–80; Ṣafā,

offered the service of both the pen and the sword, as stated in a long *qaṣīda* dedicated to Abū Bakr’s son Sa’d II:

Or because I departed so many times from the city of the king  
to face the mouth of the dragon and the eyes of the furious lion?

Or perhaps in reward for how often my tongue has scattered  
seas of pearl-like praises rewarded by your gold-bestowing hands?<sup>40</sup>

In the same lengthy *qaṣīda*, the poet begins to boast about his own poetry by describing the purity of the Central Asian canon he has brought to Shiraz (interestingly, drawing on his knowledge of the literary past rather than through his travels) and to complain about the presumptuous and parochial poetic taste of the Shirazi literary circles:

XIV

Was anybody saying yesterday in the presence of his excellence  
that in my poetry I only describe pomegranate-like breasts and red lips?

Or that in my *ghazals* I praise the beauty of the slender cypress-statured  
ones?

Or that I just describe curls, musk, breezes and red lips?

Or the happy news of the imminent union with a beautiful beloved  
or the hope for tenderness, and kisses from a heart-robbing moon?

The fact that this excellent style has been cleansed and refined  
to avoid Shirazi expressions and idioms from Isfahan

makes me fear that one day a narrow-minded boor could jump from a  
corner

and say: you’re not from Shiraz, where are you from o boor?

Oh if only the rhymes never came to an end!

I would have then praised Shīrvān and mocked Azerbaijan!

[...]

Donkeys are better than these people, why does the king need this bunch  
of fools?<sup>41</sup>

Shiraz is then represented as a new cultural capital with its own poetic style about which local poets feel confident enough to defend it as a linguistic canon. Does the threat of mockery directed against Azerbaijan hint

*Tārīkh-i adabīyāt*, 3.1: 523–45; Ḥamd-Allāh Mustawfī, *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, ed. ‘Abd al Ḥusayn Navā’ī (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1336–39/1957–60), 749–52.

<sup>40</sup> Majd, *Dīvān*, 344.

<sup>41</sup> Majd, *Dīvān*, 346–7.

at the accusation that the Iranian elites of that area were collaborating with the Mongol presence? In the following verses, dedicated to Abū Bakr, Majd's anti-Mongol resentment is explicitly voiced:

## XV

In these times when the sky scatters arrows  
your justice to protect the world has covered it with an armour.

In all this turmoil, with Taurus having drunk the Nile's waters,<sup>42</sup>  
during your reign no Tūrān [i.e. the Mongols] exists.

If your resolution and right judgment hadn't built a barrier around Iran  
nobody in the future would have thought that once there was an Iran.<sup>43</sup>

After 1264, when the decline of the Salghurid dynasty begun, Majd moved to Kirmān, from where he mourned the decline of his previous patrons to the Qarākhītā'ī rulers:

## XVI

Alas the day of joy, and the joy of the young age!  
Alas the days of youth and the epoch of young hopes!

Where is the Salghurid reign, which could cause the envy  
of the Sasanian kingdom and the Samanid state!

So deep from the roots was uprooted the [Salghurid] state  
that now it doesn't even exist in dreamy fantasies.

No trace remained of those good deeds  
No name, no sign remained of those good works.

No fortress remained, no treasure, no principle, no offspring,  
no throne remained, no crown, no court, no banquet.<sup>44</sup>

Many years later, the poet sent a *qaṣīda* to Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī to seek a new patron by boasting of a 'post-mortem affection' of the Salghurids towards his poetry:

## XVII

My poetry is a gentle and elegant traveller  
but it has fallen into the pit of affliction, like Joseph and Bīzhan.

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<sup>42</sup> In the old times the Vernal Equinox was deemed to be the period when the waters of the Nile received their fertilising power from the combined action of the equinoctial Sun and the new Moon, meeting in Taurus.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 392.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 361.

Delicate and subtle speech is the one which when hardship comes  
transfers its abode to the threshold of the Şāhib [Shams al-Dīn] of  
Speech.

My poetry and prose have conquered the four corners of the world  
from Egypt to Khatay, from Byzantium to Khotan.

The Lord infuses the meanings with the eternal precious essence  
my eternal precious essence now is a present reaching the Court from  
Pārs.

The Salghurid kings, under the earth, in their passion for my style  
are tearing their shrouds with the hands of their spirit.<sup>45</sup>

After the turmoil following the disastrous policies of the last Salghurids,<sup>46</sup>  
in 667/1268–9 Abaqa nominated a certain Inkiyānū as governor of Fārs,  
highly esteemed by Vaṣṣāf, who described him as an “intelligent and char-  
ismatic Turk, harsh but fair.”<sup>47</sup> Apparently, Inkiyānū asked Majd-i Hamgar  
to write a poem about his ascendancy, but the poet suggested that Sa’dī  
would accomplish such a task much better than himself:

XVIII

Now that your mandate has begun in the reign of Solomon [i.e. Fārs]  
do not let any demon’s hand touch the seal [of Salomon].

In the kingdom of the world be a renown-seeker  
for it is better than the reign of Alexander and the kingdom of Jamshīd.

Be merciful on Fārs because here you will find  
the felicity of the two worlds.

[...]

You have asked me to compose a poem about your birth  
oh, your birth is the acme of Adam’s offspring!

[...]

Ask the famous Sa’dī [instead of me] to compose an eloquent poem  
for he is the Ka’ba of virtue and his heart is the source of Zamzam.<sup>48</sup>

In fact, Sa’dī eulogised the Īl-Khānid governor sent by Abaqa Khān with  
at least three *qaṣīdas*, which are interestingly replete with allusions to  
pre-Islamic Iranian kingship.<sup>49</sup> This manipulation of the pre-Islamic past

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 331.

<sup>46</sup> Vaṣṣāf, *Tajziyat*, 192; Aigle, *Le Fārs*, 118.

<sup>47</sup> Vaṣṣāf, *Tajziyat*, 193; Aigle, *Le Fārs*, 120–1.

<sup>48</sup> Majd, *Dīvān*, 305–6.

<sup>49</sup> Sa’dī, *Kulliyāt*, 667 [XIX]; Ibid., 675 [XX].

in order to fulfil the requirements of an obscure *nūyan* sent to Shiraz from Tabriz is probably part of that process of acculturation undertaken precisely during Abaqa's reign, and described by C. Melville in his analysis of the ideology sustaining Bayḍāvī's *Nizām al-tavārīkh*, composed in 674/1275.<sup>50</sup>

It was during these years that Humām Tabrīzī was reaching his poetic maturity. The political instability perturbing Shiraz after the sixties persuaded Sa'dī to strengthen his ties with Tabriz, the new Ilkhanid multi-confessional and culturally vibrant capital, where Sa'dī too gained literary renown thanks to the Juvaynī brothers.<sup>51</sup> The Juvaynīs are depicted in two short passages belonging to Sa'dī's minor prose works (whose authenticity must be open to question in terms of narrative details, as argued by H. Katūziyān)<sup>52</sup> as wholeheartedly devoted to the charismatic persona of the Shirazi poet, defined before Abaqa as their "spiritual father."

Apart from these two potentially spurious passages explicitly suggesting Sa'dī's permanence in Tabriz, his *divan* (whose panegyric section has been as much neglected as its obscene verses) contains several references to a period of restlessness with regard to his residence in Shiraz and his willingness to join the two members of the influential family:

XXI

My heart has become sick and tired of being in Shiraz  
from now on you will have to find me in Baghdad.

There is no doubt that my weeping will be felt over there  
and how strange if the *ṣāhib-i dīvān* won't rescue me.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Bayḍāvī, *Nizām al-tavārīkh*, ed. Shams-Allāh Qādīrī, Hyderabad: Tarikh Press, 1930. See Charles Melville, "From Adam to Abaqa: Qāḍī Baiḍāvī's Rearrangement of History," *Studia Iranica* 30, 1 (2001): 67–86.

<sup>51</sup> In the context of nomadic groups accessing power in Iran, the presence of a settled capital is often the bureaucratic (generally Persian-speaking) counterpart of a 'wandering court.' For the Saljuq case, see Carole Hillenbrand, "Aspects of the Court of the Great Seljuks," *The Seljuqs: politics, society and culture*, eds. Christian Lange and Songül Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 22–38. When Hülegü died in 663/1265, his son and successor Abaqa (r. 663–680/1265–1282) settled in Tabriz the official *dār al-mulk* of Ilkhanid Persia. Mustawfī Qazvīnī, *Nuzhat al-qulūb*, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al Qulūb* (Leyden: E. J. Brill; London: Luzac, 1919), 76. See also Charles Melville, "Historical monuments and earthquakes in Tabriz," *Iran* 19 (1981): 159–77 and Muḥammad-Javād Mashkūr, *Tārīkh-i Tabrīz tā pāyān-i qarn-i nuḥum-i hijrī*, (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āthār-i Millī, 1352/1973), 440–8. For a detailed survey of Abaqa's reign, see Henry H. Howorth, *History of the Mongols from the 9th to the 19th Centuries*, 4 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1876–88), 3: 218–84.

<sup>52</sup> H. Katūziyān, *Sa'dī, shā'ir-i 'ishq-u zindagī* (Tehran, 1385/2006), 231–2.

<sup>53</sup> Sa'dī, *Kulliyāt-i Sa'dī*, ed. Muḥammad-'Alī Furūghī, Bahā al-Dīn Khurramshāhi (Tehran: Nāhīd 1386/2007), 204.

In this case the poet is, in all likelihood, referring to ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Aṭā Malik (d. 681/1283), Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī’s brother. It is hard to date Sa’dī’s wishful request, but it probably coincides with the period of political instability affecting Shiraz after the death of Sa’d b. Abū Bakr in 658/1260 on his way back from Baghdad. In a two-fold exordium *qaṣīda* (i.e. characterised by a *tajdīd-i maṭla’*) Sa’dī underlines the stability enjoyed by the vast regions of Fārs and Iraq thanks to the solid political presence of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn:

XXII

Fortunate is ‘Irāq, protected by your shadow  
I do not mention only your protection, this is God’s grace!

Thanks to your fortitude the countries of Persia and Arabia  
will no longer fear the aggression of the wolf-like enemies.<sup>54</sup>

The specification of divine grace (*‘ināyat*, echoed at the end of the text by the *ḥimāyat-i qur’ān*) bestowed upon ‘Alā’ al-Dīn’s protection of the region might also signal the widespread preoccupation with the anti-Islamic sympathies held by the Īl-Khānid rulers of that time. In the second part of the poem Sa’dī makes clear that

XXIII

It is your favour that spreads my renown in the world  
it was thanks to the *ṣāhib-i dīvān* that my divan became splendid.<sup>55</sup>

The following lines show that the “shumā” of the previous verse has to be intended as a plural, thus referring to the two brothers:

XXIV

Stronghold for the lords of the heart is your family nowadays  
may it endure until doomsday!<sup>56</sup>

In a *qaṣīda* dedicated to Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī, Sa’dī vigorously acknowledges the Ilkhanid sovereignty as a grace granted by God:

XXV

This grace embracing the earth comes from the sky:  
this is the mercy that the Lord of the world bestows upon the world.

As soon as the notables of the world became dejected  
they offered their neck to the Īl-Khānid orders and decrees.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 682.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 683.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 683.

<sup>57</sup> Sa’dī, *Kulliyāt*, 678.

He repeated the same concept in another eulogy dedicated to the same minister:

XXVI

God has given east and west to the Īl-Khān  
and you are the protector and the guardian of the treasures of the  
world.<sup>58</sup>

In the final section of the same poem he even defined Shams al-Dīn as “the shadow of God:”

XXVII

Oh sun of the reign, shine for many days  
oh shadow of God, remain for many years!<sup>59</sup>

From another *qaṣīda* it is possible to guess that the *ṣāhib-dīvān* had contacted Sa’dī and probably invited him to join the court at Tabriz:

XXVIII

I know that where you are people are used to musk;  
who brought to you the fragrance of my basil

How could ever the flies deserve the morning of the springtime  
and broadcast their noise in front of the nightingales?

Who has published my writings in that gathering?  
Who has mentioned the name of dust before the skies?

I am now standing and thanking my high fortune  
for the first time it bestows all this grace upon my life.

For how long will I be a pawn on the chessboard of Shiraz  
whilst the pawns are all queens in this game?<sup>60</sup>

Was it on this occasion that Sa’dī visited Tabriz? The parallels in terms of length and metre between the *tarjī-band* that Humām had penned to mourn Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī’s death and the stanzaic elegy composed by Sa’dī on the occasion of the unexpected death of the young Atabeg of Fars Sa’d b. Abū Bakr may reveal the patterns of continuity between the two poets within the framework of the Ilkhanid influence on Shiraz in the aftermath of the fading of the Salghurids’ destiny.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 685.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 685

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 169–70; Sa’dī, *Kulliyāt*, 698–9.

Apart from Dawlatshāh’s account that we shall discuss below, there is no reliable textual evidence attesting the encounter between these two poets. However, among Humām’s scattered verses an isolated couplet can be found:

XXIX

When you come to Tabriz from Shiraz  
I shall devote my eloquence to thank your favour.<sup>62</sup>

Even though its context of composition can hardly be discerned, considering the reference to the welcoming performed by the means of an act of speech, this single *bayt* could well be part of a message sent to Sa’dī as a declaration of personal and literary devotion. The evocation of Sa’dī as an object of poetic affection involving also the enjoyment of his physical presence is a pattern that can be found also among other authors flourishing in the same period as Humām. This is similar to the case of Sayf al-Dīn Farghānī, a Central Asian author (d. between 1305 and 1348) who before settling in the Anatolian city of Āqsarā (modern Aksaray, 250 km north-east of Konya) spent some time in Tabriz, the city where, according to Dh. Şafā, Sayf al-Dīn might have met Sa’dī at some time after 1257.<sup>63</sup>

The fervour of Sayf’s manifestations of appreciation of Sa’dī’s poetry can be representative of the kind of affection that the poets of the time exerted upon the poet of Shiraz:

XXX

The nightingale of his poetic talent sang  
and rose gardens conquered the horizons.

[...]

When his poems reached my ears  
so strong was the passion I felt for him  
that my heart was marked by his seal  
just like being impressed by a ring.<sup>64</sup>

The relationship which ties Sayf to the poetry he listens to and imitates is described with the same image employed by Aristotelian philosophy to describe the process of memorisation of sensorial data as the mark of

<sup>62</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 202.

<sup>63</sup> Şafā, *Adabiyāt*, 3: 623–45.

<sup>64</sup> Sayf-i Farghānī, *Dīvān-i Sayf al-Dīn Muḥammad Farghānī*, 3 vols., ed. Dhabiḥ Allāh Şafā (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tihirān, 1341–44/1962–65), 1: 114.

rings impressed onto wax.<sup>65</sup> The literary connection is thus represented as a form of physical participation in the poetic corpus he is about to imitate:

XXXI

Good fortune strives to send me to Shiraz  
but it is not proper to scatter dust towards the stars.

If our physical proximity will not take place  
corresponding by messages is not less worthy.

Before your majestic presence—compared to which the solid gold of kings  
is nothing but dust  
allow this beggar to send fresh poems to you.<sup>66</sup>

These verses are taken from a *qaṣīda* with which Sayf is apparently asking Sa'dī to show him his poems and make of such epistolary exchange the *analogon* of physical contact. Such textual evidences suggest that Sa'dī's writings were perceived as a metonymical extension of his physical presence. For at that time poetic imitation, rather than being a mere stylistic exercise, was practiced as if it could allow the symbolic construction of a layer of reality by which authors of other spaces and times were able to participate in the same intertwined system of texts.

Therefore, Sa'dī, repeatedly imitated when he was still alive (as part of the canon of the “moderns” which 10,000 young poets should commit to memory, as Niẓāmī Arūḍī would have stated one century earlier), became the most prominent hallmark of the connection between life and poetic activity within the restored network of cultural and economic exchanges assured by the *pax mongolica*.

The symbolic strength of Sa'dī as a sign can be witnessed in the works of 'Ubayd-i Zākānī, the foremost satirist of the 14th century, who constantly imitated Sa'dī in his serious works and, at the same time, made him the main object of his most pungent lampoons.

As stated by Ch. H. de Fouchécour, “Sa'dī est son oeuvre”<sup>67</sup> and it is interesting to see, in the case of its relationship with Humām Tabrizi, how the hypertrophically intertextual sensibility of Timurid authors imagined the interaction between life and poetic intertextuality:

<sup>65</sup> See Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 24–37.

<sup>66</sup> Sayf-i Farghānī, *Divān*, 1: 111–3.

<sup>67</sup> Charles-Henry de Fouchécour, *Moralia : les notions morales dans la littérature persane du 3<sup>e</sup>/9<sup>e</sup> au 7<sup>e</sup>/13<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les civilisations, 1986), 327.

It is said that Khvāja Humām from Tabriz, one of the Shaykh Sa’dī’s contemporaries, was an initiate to the path of love [*ahl-i dil*], a virtuous, refined and wealthy nobleman. One day the shaykh [Sa’dī] entered the public baths of Tabriz where the shaykh Humām, with great pomp, was also present. Sa’dī poured a bowl of water on Humām’s head and the latter asked: “Where are you from, o *darvīsh*?” Sa’dī replied: “From the land of Shiraz.” Humām said: “How surprising that nowadays in Tabriz there are more Shirazis than dogs!” Sa’dī smiled and responded: “This state is exactly the opposite of what happens in our city, where Tabrizis are worth less than a dog.” Humām frowned and left the baths. Sa’dī then approached the entrance of the baths and sat in a corner. As was the custom among notables, a handsome young man was fanning Humām.

Humām was sitting between the two and thus preventing Sa’dī from seeing the handsome boy. Then he asked Sa’dī whether Humām’s poems were recited in Shiraz. Sa’dī replied: “Indeed, they are well renowned.” “Do you remember any of his verses?” asked Humām—“Of course” said Sa’dī—“I do remember one line” and recited:

XXXII

Humām is a veil between me and the beloved  
it is time for me now to draw apart this curtain.

Humām had no more doubts that this man was Sa’dī: “Are you Sa’dī?” “Yes I am” he confirmed. Humām prostrated himself before the Shaykh, apologised and took him to his home in order to pay homage to his honour and where they entertained themselves with engaging conversations. Humām has imitated most of Sa’dī’s *ghazals*, and his songs and panegyrics, just like Sa’dī’s poems, are exceptionally elegant.<sup>68</sup>

The playful homoerotic ethos expressed by this anecdote associated with the display of the spiritual rank of both poets shows very well the way in which the community of readers of the 15th century could interpret this kind of erotic poetry as a bridge between mundane and metaphysical experiences. Irony is a key concept in understanding how the literary perception of the world lying behind erotic *ghazal* as a craft is something beyond the sharp difference between debauchery and serious spiritual meditation.

In the tale presented by Dawlatshāh, the verse Sa’dī recites to make clear that he is much more interested in the presence of the young boy rather than in the rather egocentric character of the Tabrizi poet is the last line of a *ghazal* by Humām in which the themes of wine and love are explored to show the transcendent nature of the self:

<sup>68</sup> Dawlatshāh, *Tadhkirat*, 354–5.

## XXXIII

What should I do with this perishable body?  
I'm not a crow or a kite, I'm an eloquent parrot!

I am a bird from the celestial garden, not from the material world  
for a couple of days they made a cage of my body.<sup>69</sup>

Within this context, the final verse (“Humām is a veil between me and the beloved / it is time for me now to draw apart this curtain”) can be read as a meditation on the nature of the self, especially if we consider the peculiar status of the *takhalluṣ* as a pen-name separating the space of the poetic fiction from the historical presence of the author as a poet, the signature of his authorship.<sup>70</sup> Humām’s metaphysical elaboration was perhaps conducted on the subtext of a *ghazal* by Sa’dī whose rhyme is the same (“-anam”) and in the last line of which we read:

## XXXIV

All these stub wounds receives Sa’dī and he keeps going  
how much blood will flow if you are you and I am me?<sup>71</sup>

Sa’dī’s love discourse on the difference between the self and the “you,” with the apparent coincidence between the poetic persona and the fictitious author represented by the *takhalluṣ*, is developed by Humām in order to produce a deeper meditation on the annihilation of the self when the encounter takes place.

What is fascinating about the relationships between living poets in a poetic system like the pre-modern Persian one, profoundly marked as it is by both a dense and cohesive degree of intertextuality and a rigid set of formal characteristics, is the clash of poetic personae and historical personalities all defending the same ideal of self and, at the same time, trying to impose their spiritual, political and artistic individuality. When in Dawlatshāh’s account Humām ironically denounces the number of Shirazis living in Tabriz (*Shīrāzī dar Tabrīz az sag bīshtar ast*) and Sa’dī replies that in Shiraz Tabrizis are worth less than a dog (*Tabrīzī dar shahr-i mā az sagī kamtar ast*)<sup>72</sup> the rivalry among cities is part of a broader geopoeti-

<sup>69</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 125.

<sup>70</sup> On the concept of *takhalluṣ* as a pen-name, see Paul Losensky, “Linguistic and Rhetorical Aspects of the Signature Verse (Takhalluṣ) in the Persian Ghazal,” *Edebiyāt* 8 (1998): 239–71; Wojciech Skalmowski, “The Meaning of the Persian Ghazal,” *Orientalia Lovanensia Periodica* 19 (1987): 141–62.

<sup>71</sup> Sa’dī, *Ghazalhā*, 198.

<sup>72</sup> The pun is incredibly similar to a line by Sa’dī [XXXV]. See *Ghazalhā*, 19.

cal representation in which the spaces also acquire the characteristics of literary signs. This part of Dawlatshāh’s anecdote is probably drawn from this line of Humām:

XXXVI

Sweet and charming is Humām’s poetry  
but what good is that, since the unfortunate is not from Shiraz?<sup>73</sup>

Here the poet is bemoaning his non-Shirazi origins probably following a metonymical logic according to which “Shirazi” stands for the Shirazi *par excellence*, i.e. Sa’dī Shirazi who, in a poem composed with the same metre and rhyme states that

XXXVII

For the grace of Sa’dī’s sweet words  
I became the servant of all the Shirazi poets.<sup>74</sup>

The metonymical connection between the persona of Sa’dī and the city of Shiraz appears to be an association on whose construction Sa’dī himself started working actively, as stated in this verse, whose second *miṣrā’* was also quoted by Sayf-i Farghānī in one of his *javābs* to Sa’dī:

XXXVIII

Every luxury derives from a mine:  
the sugar from Egypt and Sa’dī from Shiraz.<sup>75</sup>

In this passage Sa’dī, as in many other verses, not only extols the beauty of his hometown but also presents it as the source of his poetic talent. Remarkably, the source for the poem by Humām in which he complains about his non-Shirazi origins as a discredit for the social appreciation of his art could also be another poem by Sa’dī (in the same metre and rhyme) where Shiraz is thus mentioned:

XXXIX

Nobody will ever receive as much violence from Khatay Turks  
as the violence I suffer from the Shirazi Turk.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 152. See Mustawfī, *Tārīkh-i Guzīda*, 756; according to the historian this verse was inspired by Humām’s envy of Sa’dī’s renown. See also Ghiyāth al-Dīn Khvādamīr, *Tārīkh-i ḥabīb al-siyar*, ed. Muḥammad Dabīr-Siyāqī, 4 vols. (Tehran 1353/1974), 2: 564.

<sup>74</sup> Sa’dī, *Ghazalḥā*, 344.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 581.

I have elsewhere suggested that this *ghazal* should be seriously taken into consideration to produce a more historically balanced interpretation for the “Shirazi Turk” line by Ḥāfiz, which is as renowned as it is ambiguous.<sup>77</sup> In the same article I have also proposed that when in a *ghazal* the author mentions the specific place where he resides, it is a speech act normally implying an encomiastic or celebratory function by exposing the markers of the performative context. In this case the “*Turk-i Khatāʾī*” is a poetic topos opposed to an extra-textual reference contained in the non-topic expression “*Turk-i Shīrāzī*.” In fact, as announced by the “*ṣāḥib-i nāz*” of the second line, in the last line Saʿdī warns:

Don't act like the *ṣāḥib-i dīvān* when  
you push Saʿdī away from your sight.<sup>78</sup>

Hence the entire *ghazal* is dedicated to the Īl-Khānid *ṣāḥib-dīvān* (probably Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī). Saʿdī's Shirazi Turk could well be one of the last Atabegs of Fars (who were Turkmen in origin) when, after the death of Saʿd II, the political influence of Tabriz on Shiraz started growing exponentially. But it is also not unlikely that the poet might be referring to the Turco-Mongol *noyan* sent by Abaqa, who fell from his position when a group of Shirazi officials conspired against him.<sup>79</sup>

Quṭb al-Dīn Yaḥyā b. Zangī, one of the many obscure Shirazi poets who imitated Saʿdī when the latter was still alive, replied to the above text with a *ghazal* which ends with a direct criticism of Humām's supposed complaint:

XLI

Isn't Humām Tabrizi aware at all  
that the king of the reign of poetry is Saʿdī Shirazi?<sup>80</sup>

In other words, Humām's grievance fully satisfied Saʿdī's attempt to create a symbolic association between the city of Shiraz and himself. By the first decades of the 14th century, poems extolling the beauty of Shīrāz (the so called *shīrāzīyas*) started becoming part of a specific genre which turned

<sup>77</sup> Domenico Ingenito, “Amir Khosrow and Hāfez: a geo-poetical approach,” paper presented at the 7th European Conference of Iranian Studies, Cracow, September 7–10, 2011.

<sup>78</sup> Saʿdī, *Ghazalḥā* [XL], 262.

<sup>79</sup> Vaṣṣāf, 194.

<sup>80</sup> Muḥammad Jājarmī, *Mūnis al-aḥrār fī daqāʾiq al-ashʿār*, ed. Mīr Ṣāliḥ Ṭabībī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Chāp-i Ittīḥād, 1338–50/1959–71), 2: 1082.

the city into a geopoetical landmark, creatively exploited by Ḥāfiẓ and all the poets who were active in Shiraz until the following century.

It is as a follow-up to this kind of association accurately designed by Sa‘dī that Humām, in another poem, says that

XLII

To the seekers of the “aesthetic inspiration” [*dhawq*] say this:  
 during the mystical gathering [*samā‘*] listen to Shirazi poetry!<sup>81</sup>

Despite the old debate on the lawfulness of erotic poetry it is well known that since the 11th century lyrical texts were widely circulating in Iran as part of the performative experience of mystical gatherings.<sup>82</sup> One of the liveliest accounts of the direct participation of poets in the *samā‘* sessions has been reported by Amīn al-Dīn Ḥājj Bulah (d. 719/1320) and inserted by Abū al-Majd Muḥammad b. Mas‘ūd Tabrīzī in the kaleidoscopic *Safīna-yi Tabrīz*. This passage (Muḥammad Tabrīzī 2001, ff. 529–30) describes how, during a *samā‘* session a selection of the *ghazals* of the poets participating in the gathering (among whom were Athīr al-Dīn Akhsikātī, Ṣāḥīb Fāryābī and Khāqānī) were passed to the *qavvāl* in order for any of them to perform to see which one would have most enlivened the session and thus “confirming that its author is the absolute master of *ghazalsurā‘ī*.”<sup>83</sup> What the text denotes with the mention of how one of the participants, after listening to a line by Athīr al-Dīn, “experienced a remarkable aesthetic inspiration” (“*dhawq-i ‘aẓīmī dāsh*”) is that the *dhawq*, when associated with the experience of poetry, emerges as a point of contact between the stimulations offered by external senses and the inner sense of a metaphysical perception. From this perspective the *dhawq*, as the result of literary superiority, is intrinsically similar to the Western concept of aesthetic experience and it is in this understanding that it can show how deep the relationship between recitation, imitation and spirituality in this context is.<sup>84</sup>

From the line quoted where Humām invites the *dhawq-ṭālībān* (the “seekers of aesthetic inspiration”) to listen (*istimā‘ kardan*) to Shirazi

<sup>81</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 106.

<sup>82</sup> See below the arguments presented by Hujvīrī in the *Kashf al-maḥjūb* to prevent Sufis from listening to erotic poetry.

<sup>83</sup> Muḥammad Tabrīzī, *Safīna-yi Tabrīz*, ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Hā‘irī; Naṣrullāh Pūrjavādī (Tehran: Markaz-i Nashr-i Dānishgāhī, 1380/2001), ff. 529–30.

<sup>84</sup> See Lewisohn, *Beyond Faith and Infidelity*, 176–8. See Bo Utas compares this word with the Sanskrit concept of “*rasa*.” “The Aesthetic Use of New Persian,” *Edebyāt* 9 (1998): 1–16.

poetry during the *samā'* session, it is possible to infer that in his *Khānqāh* Sa'dī's *ghazals* were probably circulating as texts actively performed and also representing, on a social basis, a sort of "finesse chirazienne" which constituted a pivotal focus of interest for the cultured elite of Tabriz.

Interestingly, the verse by Humām cited by Dawlatshāh in the late 15th century—"Humām is a veil between me and the beloved / it is time for me now to draw apart this curtain"—is also part of a lampoon—describing a session of *samā'*—which belongs to the second section ("laṭāyif-i fārsī") of the 14th century satirist 'Ubayd-i Zākānī's *Risāla-yi dilgushā'*:

A beautiful boy was participating in a *samā'* session with Mawlānā Humām al-Dīn. Humām embraced the boy and entered the [circle of the] *samā'*. A libertine [*rindī*] who was there was in love with the boy; hence he approached the singers [*muṭribān*] and asked them to sing this verse:

Humām is a veil between me and the beloved  
it is time for me now to draw apart this curtain.<sup>85</sup>

It is likely that lampoons satirically manipulating this verse by Humām were—recounted in different fashions—widely circulating already by the first decades of the 14th century, when the poet was still alive. The pederasty-focused allusions exuding from this joke and from almost all the references to Sa'dī (both in prose and in verse)<sup>86</sup> should not be considered as a form of moral criticism on 'Ubayd's part towards two authors whom he had respected and imitated in many of his serious works. On the contrary, satires of this kind were often approaching social reality from a viewpoint diametrically opposed to the often idealised literary representation of that time. As demonstrated by Riccardo Zipoli, Sa'dī's obscenities were nothing but counter-representations of the positive ideals characterising the Persian society of the 13th century.<sup>87</sup> This means that the issue of *shāhid-bāzī* was so sensitive a topic as to be easily and repeatedly the object of mockery, as if expressing a social concern or an ethically controversial issue.

*Shāhid-bāzī* or, as defined by L. Ridgeon "the ritualised activity that was grounded on a belief that God may be seen by contemplating faces that bear witness to divine beauty,"<sup>88</sup> is a practice to which Sa'dī refers several

<sup>85</sup> 'Ubayd-i Zākānī, *Kulliyāt*, 307.

<sup>86</sup> See, for example *ibid.*, 291.

<sup>87</sup> "Le Khabithāt oscene di Sa'dī," *Annali di Ca' Foscari* 36, 3 (1997): 179–214.

<sup>88</sup> Lloyd Ridgeon, "The Controversy of Shaykh Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī and Handsome, Moon-Faced Youths: A Case Study of Shāhid-Bāzī in Medieval Sufism," *Journal of Sufi Studies* 1 (2012): 3–30.

times in his *ghazals*, and on at least one occasion he even defines himself as a *shāhid-bāz*:

XLIII

Sa’dī’s fame as a *shāhid-bāz* spread everywhere  
and this is not a defect among our people, but a praiseworthy quality.<sup>89</sup>

It is difficult to tell whether the concept of *shāhid-bāzī* had been extensively used in poetry earlier than Sa’dī. One piece of evidence could be offered by the large corpus of quatrains composed by Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī (d. 634–5/1237–8), who, according to many historical sources, was considered one of the first renowned *shāhid-bāzān* of the 13th century as represented in many accounts reported by the author of the hagiography fully dedicated to him.<sup>90</sup> There are 1742 *rubā’ī* attributed to him in a manuscript from the Ayasofya collection whose copyist has placed the quatrains within twelve subject headings, two of which (Chapters Six and Ten) are dedicated respectively to the topics of “love and witnessing” and “spring, wine and *samā’*” the latter of which contains a group of texts dedicated to *shāhid-bāzī*.<sup>91</sup> Unfortunately, both the *Manāqib* (early 14th century)<sup>92</sup> and the *rubā’ī* (late 14th century) were collected a long time after Awḥad al-Dīn’s death. Whilst the *Maqālāt-i Shams* (recorded sometime before 644/1247) when dealing with the Sufi from Kirman curiously do not mention anything related to his practice of *shāhid-bāzī*,<sup>93</sup> the only accounts explicitly echoing what was reported by the *Manāqib* concerning his passion for the young witnesses of God’s beauty are Aflākī’s *Manāqib al-‘Arifīn* (completed in 754/1353–1354) and Jāmī’s *Nafahāt al-uns* (circa 881/1476).<sup>94</sup> Thus it is likely that, as in the case of ‘Umar Khayyām(i), Kirmānī’s name also “became a collective pseudonym for authors of *rubā’iyāt*” focusing on *shāhid-bāzī* (and not on hedonistic contents, as in the case of Khayyām).<sup>95</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Sa’dī, *Ghazalhā*, 156.

<sup>90</sup> *Manāqib-i Awḥad al-Dīn Ḥamid b. Fakhr-i Kirmānī*, ed. Badī al-Zamān Furūzānfar (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1348/1969).

<sup>91</sup> Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī, *Dīvān-i rubā’iyāt-i Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī*, ed. Aḥmad Abū Maḥbūb (Tehran: Surūsh, Intishārāt-i Ṣadā va Simā-yi Jumhūrī-yi Islāmī-yi Irān, 1366/1987), 224–8.

<sup>92</sup> *Manāqib*, 55–56.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>94</sup> Jāmī, *Nafahāt al-uns*, ed. Maḥmūd ‘Ābidī (Tehran: Ittilā’āt, 1379/1991), 586.

<sup>95</sup> François De Blois (begun by Charles Ambrose Storey), *Persian Literature—A Bibliographical Survey: Poetry CA. A.D. 1100–1225* (Volume V) (London: Luzac, 1997), 363.

Sa'dī then, should be considered one of the first poets who methodically dealt with the issue of *shāhid-bāzī* by incorporating the theories circulating in his time into the imagery offered by the legacy of the classical erotic canon. Although he is widely considered as the author who brought the legacy of the erotic *ghazal* to its highest degree of literary refinement, there is considerable agreement among scholars about whether in many of his poems the beloved is God or can be either God or a mundane object of desire.<sup>96</sup>

What I would like to point out here is that when we are concerned with poetic fiction, the actual dedicatee of a text as an extra-textual presence is, in many cases, a matter of socio-literary analysis and does not necessarily have to be implicated in the interpretation process as a main key to the texts. Some of the most purely mystical poems by Ḥāfiẓ are in fact dedicated to political patrons and this fact does not interfere directly with the symbolic discourse to which the text belongs. When Jāmī, in the *Nafahāt al-uns*, declares that it is not clear whether Ḥāfiẓ was a Sufi or not, what matters (at least to him) is that his poems look *as if* they had been composed by a Sufi. Jāmī's "as if" certainly does not allow us to decipher Ḥāfiẓ's imagery according to a set of predetermined and scholastic allegorical meanings (which is what nowadays is unfortunately intended when talking about *sharḥ-i 'irfānī*),<sup>97</sup> but surely does urge us to separate his texts from their external contingencies and deal principally with the complex of images and ideas offered by the poem and the tradition to which it belongs.

Many Iranian scholars have defined Sa'dī as the highest point reached by the historical development of the amorous *ghazal* ("awj-i ghazal-i 'āshiqāna") set by poets such as Anvarī, Ṣāḥibī,<sup>98</sup> Jamāl Iṣfahānī and Kamāl

<sup>96</sup> See Manoukian, *L'argento di un povero cuore*, 25–6; Badī' al-Zamān Furūzānfar, "Sa'dī va Suhṛavardī," *Sa'dī-nāma*, ed. Ḥabīb Yağhmā'ī (Tehran, 1316/1937), 71–90; R. Yāsīmī, "Sa'dī va 'ishq," *Ibid.*, 208–15; A. Tchāvoshi, "Mysticisme de Sa'dī," *Luqmān* 6, 1 (1368–9/1989–90): 70–86. S. Ḥāmīdiyān arbitrarily classifies Sa'dī's *ghazal* in "non-mystical," *Sa'dī dar ghazal*, 100–5, "overtly mystical," *ibid.*, 106–12, and "with mystical overtone," *ibid.*, 113–8.

<sup>97</sup> See Domenico Ingenito, "Tradurre Ḥāfez: quattro *divān* attuali," *Oriente Moderno*, 89, 1 (2009): 151–71. See also Khatmī Lāhūrī, *Sharḥ-i 'irfānī-yi ghazalā-yi Ḥāfiẓ*, ed. Bahā' al-Dīn Khurramshāhī, Kūrūsh Maṣṣūrī, Ḥusayn Maṭī'i-Amīn, 4 vols., (Tehran: Nashr-i Qaṭra, 1347/1995–6), for the most comprehensive mystical commentary on the *divān* of Ḥāfiẓ. See also 'Arīf Nawshāhī, "Nakhusṭīn sharḥ-i fārsī-yi dīvān-i Ḥāfiẓ dar shibh-i qārra-yi Hind," *Sukhan-i ahl-i dil*, ed. Sa'īd Niyāz-Kirmānī, 2 vols. (Tehran, 1371/1992), 2: 761–7.

<sup>98</sup> It is worth mentioning that, according to the latest critical edition of Ṣāḥibī's *divān*, this author has written no *ghazals* at all. *Divān-i Ṣāḥibī-i Fāryābī*, eds. Amīr-Ḥasan Yazdgirdī and A. Dādbih (Tehran, 1380/2001). See Sa'īd Ḥāmīdiyān, "Kār kardhā'ī az mutūn-i nāshusta va taṣṣiḥ-i khaṭā'ī-yi sabkshīnākhtī," *Bukhārā* 4 (1377/1998): 446–8.

Ismā‘īl. Parallel to this group should can be posited the line of the *ghazal-i ‘arīfāna* (mystical or Gnostic *ghazal*), represented by Khāqānī, ‘Aṭṭār and ‘Irāqī, with Rūmī as its uttermost exponent.<sup>99</sup> Ḥāfiẓ’s “singular personality” is supposed to have given birth to “the fusion of the two currents, amorous and mystical, which until the 13th century were progressing at each other’s side.”<sup>100</sup>

The theoretical fallacy of this classification deserves to be discussed at length and with a great deal of philological accuracy. What I would like to point out now is that if we are to maintain the difference between the two poles (the amorous and the mystical), the fusion mentioned by Pūrnamdāriyān and Shamīsā has already fully taken place with Sa‘dī and becomes undeniable when we consider the original contribution that he offered with the multi-layered device of *nazar-bāzī*.

The received idea which sees in Ḥāfiẓ the first instance of fusion of the two sides (mystical and mundane) of the love discourse, should be profoundly reconsidered. What probably misleads the critical reader is the almost absolute absence in Sa‘dī’s *ghazals* of technical language explicitly referring to the transcendental realm of love experience, whereas Ḥāfiẓ’s ‘contrapointalism’ (enhanced by the relative thematic independence of his verses within the structure of the *ghazals*) generates a kind of centrifugal syncretism in which the political (in its wider sense), the transcendental and the mundane all appear at the same time and within the same poetic kaleidoscope. On the other hand, Sa‘dī’s style is synthetical and centripetal, and the thematic unity of his poems (in which each line is a further elaboration on the previous one) displays an apparently homogeneous and balanced<sup>101</sup> representation which, in reality, intertwines all the disparate elements of the poetic, religious, political and philosophical complexities of his time.

As a result of this balance, the motif of vision (as an act primarily concerned with the act of seeing external reality and looking at the beauty of the shapes of the world) is what Sa‘dī puts on the stage of his verses as the gaze of the poetic persona over the world and its hidden essence.

<sup>99</sup> Sīrūs Shamīsā, *Sayr-i ghazal dar shi‘r-i fārsī* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Firdawsī, 1362/1983), 130.

<sup>100</sup> Taqī Pūrnamdāriyān, *Dar sāya-yi āftāb: shi‘r-i fārsī va sākht-shikanī darshi‘r-i Mawlavī* (Tehran: Sukhan, 1380/2001), 73.

<sup>101</sup> “*Tanāsub*” is, according to Ḥāmidīyān, the keyword to understand Sa‘dī’s personality and style; see *Sa‘dī dar ghazal*, 295–6.

This look—*naẓar*—becomes mediator and harmoniser of the contrasts and the antinomies characterising the human experience.

It is precisely this characteristic that constitutes, in opposition to the poets preceding him and to his contemporaries, the novelty of Sa'dī's *ghazal* and which soon influenced his contemporaries (namely Humām and Sayf-i Farghānī), creating a wake whose effects contributed to the further development of the metaphysics of love between the 14th and the 15th centuries.

In fact, as already pointed out above, the prominence of the visual experience is one of the most recurrent topoi of Humām's *dīvān*, and almost all his *ghazals* contain a reference to this sensorial domain:

Love showed in His face the mirror of the soul  
and in that mirror He showed the reflection of the beloved's face.

His beauty is the reflection of a splendour that transcends the sight  
how wonderful that it appeared in the mirror of contingencies.<sup>102</sup>

If Sa'dī is probably one of the first poets to have introduced the concept of *naẓar-bāzī* in Persian poetry, this concept was fully exploited during the 14th century by also becoming one of the key words of Ḥāfiẓ's poetical thought, among others through the influence of Awḥadī Marāgha'ī.

When Sa'dī says that

XLIV

Looking at the beautiful ones is an established custom:  
it is not me who brought this heresy to the world

If you claim to be practicing abstinence  
I will believe you, but God knows better!

And if you say that you don't feel desires either  
well, I won't be sure about this claim!

If you say that love is a sin  
then the first sinners were Adam and Eve!<sup>103</sup>

he is exploring an anthropological concept which permeates some of the dominant ideas characterising Iranian aesthetical thought. My suggestion is that what is truly innovative in Sa'dī's *ghazals* is the attempt to re-establish within the Persian lyrical canon a concept formulated much earlier by the author of the *Nawrūz-nāma* (12th century) in the chapter

<sup>102</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 99.

<sup>103</sup> Sa'dī, *Ghazalhā*, 150.

dedicated to the advantages of looking at a beautiful face and correlated to the contemplation of the mundane world as a sign of transcendental beauty.<sup>104</sup> This idea was not new, and in the short chapter of the *Nawrūz-nāma* it is very clearly expressed:

It is said that a great fortune is bestowed upon beautiful faces and a good omen is enjoyed by those who look at them. They also say that the good luck given by contemplating a beautiful face to the condition of people is similar to the effect of the stars when they reach a fortunate conjunction in the sky. This effect is similar to what happens to the clothes kept in a trunk with some perfume in it: when the clothes are pulled out from it they are still scented. Another example could be the reflection of the sun [*‘aks-i āftāb*] on the waters, which still reaches other places when the sun is no longer visible.

[...]

It is said that a beautiful face causes prosperity in this world and when a beautiful face is paired with beautiful manners, this prosperity reaches its peak because there is both inner and outer beauty [*ba-ẓāhīr-u bāṭin*], which is cherished by God and by people.

Four are the benefits deriving from looking at a beautiful face: it makes auspicious the day of he who contemplates it and adds pleasure to life, it bestows chivalry and courtesy and, fourth, it augments one’s wealth and position.

They have also said that a beautiful face turns the old man into a young boy and the young boy into a child, and the child into a paradise, and the Prophet said:

Draw advantage from the beautiful-faced ones!

Many people have striven to define the beautiful face with attributes: somebody called it “the field of love,” someone else “the plane of happiness,” or “the garden of affection,” “the ornament of creation” or “the sign of paradise.”

But the masters of philosophy have said that [it] is the reason for the creation of God and for the quest which brings us to Him, and it is a trace coming from its creator [of the beautiful face] and shows the path towards the beauty of His essence [*khūbī-yi dhāt-i ū*].

According to the Pantheists [*tabī‘iyān*] all the things [of the world] are susceptible to excess, lack, and balance, and elegance is always accompanied by balance, therefore beautiful shapes are balanced because they show proportion among their parts.

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<sup>104</sup> Attributed to ‘Umar Khayyām[ī] but probably composed between the 10th and the 11th century. See De Blois, *Persian Literature*, 359.

[...]

According to the believers in metempsychosis [*tanāsukhiyān*] the beautiful face is the robe of honour given to His servants in reward for their purity and integrity.

The masters of Gnosis [*khudāvandān-i maʿrifat*] have said that the beautiful face is the passion which belongs to the torch and kindles it. Others have said that it is the announcer of the supreme edict [*manshūr-sarā*] and the rain of mercy which turns green the garden of Gnosis and causes to blossom the tree of passion.

Another group have said that a beautiful face is the sign of God [*āyat-i Ḥaqq*] disclosing the truth to the truth-seekers [*ki haqīqat ba-muḥaqqiqān ʿarḍa hamī kunad*] so that through its truth [of the face] they can return to God.<sup>105</sup>

[Pseudo?]Khayyām[ī]'s approach to the benefits deriving from the contemplation of beautiful faces is multi-layered and apparently independent of any specific doctrine. For this reason these passages have been compared with Saʿdī's general appraisal of the beauty of young people in works other than his *ghazals*.<sup>106</sup> The general impression of ethical unevenness about Saʿdī's point of view on homoeroticism (switching very often from clear indulgence to over-condemnation) has also baffled Shamīsā, who wonders what Saʿdī's true standpoint about the subject is.<sup>107</sup> But the classical Persian canon is organised on a complete separation between confessions and conventions which implies the formation of ethical standards and ideological discourses very often connected to the literary genres rather than a unitary (or apparently uneven) system of beliefs of one single author. In this passage, what seems to be relevant to the interpretation of Saʿdī's *ghazals* is the presence of the last group, which is presented as a sub-category of the Sufis [*khudāvandān-i maʿrifat*] in such a position that it seems to imply that their belief about contemplation is also shared by the author of the text.

Some time before the *Nawrūz-nāma* was probably composed, Abū al-Ḥasan Hujvīrī (fl. 1077), in the chapter dedicated to the *samāʿ* of the *Kashf al-mahjūb*,<sup>108</sup>—which is the oldest surviving independent manual of

<sup>105</sup> Umar Khayyām, *Kullīyāt-i āthār-i pārsī-yi ḥakīm ʿUmar-i Khayyām*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbbāsī (Tehran, 1338/1959), 384–6.

<sup>106</sup> See Minoo S. Southgate, "Men, Women, and Boys: Love and Sex in the Works of Saʿdī," *Iranian Studies* 17.4 (1984): 413–52.

<sup>107</sup> Shamīsā, *Shāhid-bāzī*, 148–9, n. 1.

<sup>108</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan Hujvīrī, *Kashf al-mahjūb*, ed. Maḥmūd ʿĀbīdī (Tehran: Surūsh, 1383/2004), 571–610.

Sufism written in Persian (465–469/1073–77)—deplores a custom that, by that period, was likely to be enormously widespread, *al-naẓar fī al-aḥdāth* or “looking at the young boys:”

On the whole, staring [*naẓāra kardan*] at the young boys and associating with them is unlawful and those who legitimise it [*mujavviz-i ān*] are infidels [*kāfir*], since any argument [*athar*] they allege [for it] derives from falsity and ignorance. Among all the ignorant people, I know of a group who has denied the allegations against these infidels and has even formed a religious path out of it. But all the masters of Sufism have considered all this pernicious, for it belongs to the legacy of the incarnationists [*ḥulūliyān*], *may God curse them*.<sup>109</sup>

The first passage in which Hujvīrī mentions the issue of incarnationism is the paragraph dedicated to Muḥammad b. Vāsi‘, who said

*I never saw anything [in the world] without seeing God therein [mā ra’aytu shay’an illā wa ra’aytu Allāha fihī]*—and this corresponds to the rank of the manifestation [*mushāhadat*] where the believer is ravished by the passion for the Agent [*fā’il*] and thereby reaches a degree in which in the action [*fī’l*] of Him he sees the Agent and not the action; just like someone who sees the painter [*muṣavvir*] in the painting [*ṣūrat*].

[...]

They do not see the object [*maf’ūl*], they see the Agent [*fā’il*], they do not see the creature [*makhlūq*], they see the Creator [*khāliq*].

[...]

But there is a group of people whose error is to think that Muḥammad b. Vāsi‘’s utterance *I have seen God therein [ra’aytu Allāha fihī]*—involves the generation of space [*makān*], fragmentation [*tajzīyat*] and incarnation [*ḥulūl*]; which is mere blasphemy, because space and what resides in it [*mutimakkīn*] are associated with each other, and if we suppose that the space has been created then also what resides in it has been created, and if we postulate that what resides is eternal [“pre-existent”, *qadīm*] then the space too will be uncreated. Two are the blasphemies deriving from this argument: either creatures must be defined as uncreated, or that the Creator has to be created [*muḥdath*]. It is impiety in both cases. Therefore this vision [*ru’yat*] of Him in the things [of the world] must be seen as sign and proof and demonstration of His existence.<sup>110</sup>

In the section where Hujvīrī lists all the sects belonging to the path of Sufism, he devotes a paragraph to those who, according to him, are

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 606.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 142.

the historical forbearers of incarnationism and states that Abū Ḥulmān Dimashqī (fl. 3rd/9th century) is the utmost representative of this group, who was originally an Iranian from Fārs and started preaching his doctrine in Damascus.<sup>111</sup> His followers, organised as a sect, the *Ḥulmāniyān*, used to prostrate themselves before any beautiful boy they encountered on their path.<sup>112</sup>

From Hujvīrī's viewpoint, the act of worshipping God through beautiful-faced human beings is the negative and unacceptable side of what he calls the "manifestation" (*mushāhada*),<sup>113</sup> as a purely metaphysical practice and detached from any mundane "catalyser". The double negation of Mohammad b. Vāsi' ("I have seen nothing [in the world] in which I have not seen God") reminds the believer that the physical manifestation of God's presence is but a mere accident that should be taken as a further sign of His existence. Conversely, the material forms of this world *should not* be actively searched in order not to cross the line separating manifestation from incarnation.

In the passage questioning the lawfulness of erotic poetry during the *samā'* sessions, Hujvīrī traces a parallel between the unlawfulness of sensual desire towards young boys and the illegal status of the texts describing with words a physical presence which could trigger the believer's arousal: "just as it is forbidden to look at and touch a beautiful person who might be a cause of corruption, listening to the description of his attributes is similarly forbidden, and if someone considers this lawful, then also touching and staring at the young boy should be lawful, which is impiety."

To those who say "through [the mention] of the eyes and the face, the stature, the mole and the hair [of the beloved] I feel [the presence of] God and I seek Him through these elements because my eyes and my ears are the path and source to all science" he replies that "at this point a third person could say—I will touch and kiss that person because so-and-so said that it is permitted to listen to the description of his attributes—and might also conclude that—I look for God by doing so."<sup>114</sup>

Interestingly, Hujvīrī associates the recitation of erotic poetry to incarnationism as if the literary texts were to evocate a physical presence to be considered unlawful both for the sensual arousal that it may cause and for the risk of seeking God in the accidental presence of material *phaenomena*.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 382.

<sup>112</sup> See also Qāsim Ghanī, *Baḥth dar āthār-u afkār-u aḥvāl-i Ḥāfiẓ* (Tehran, 1356/1977), 458; Badi' al-Zamān Furūzānfar, *Sharḥ-i Mathnavī-yi sharīf* (Tehran, 1347/1968), 30.

<sup>113</sup> *Kashf*, 484 et passim.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 581–2.

The cultural tendency that Hujvīrī tries to overcome can be compared with the quality of the relationship described in the *Nawrūz-nāma* between the beautiful face and God’s splendour as an effusive correlation operated by reflection (like the sun on the waters) or contact (like the clothes in the perfumed trunk) and not as an accidental phenomenon to be deciphered as an additional proof.

The correlation by reflection or contact generates a sign which, according to Charles Sanders Peirce’s semiotic classification, would be called “index” on the basis of being able to point at the object (in this case, God) by physical contiguity, thereby risking incarnationism.

By contrast, the line of the “manifestation” defended by Hujvīrī against the custom of worshipping the beautiful ones assumes the unbridgeable gap between the sign and the object: it is impossible not to see the latter in the former, but the former does not share any contiguity with the latter. It is a symbol.

It is for this reason that Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, almost a century later, by adopting a milder position with respect to the lawfulness of erotic poetry performed during the *samā’* (although he strictly forbade *shāhid-bāzī*),<sup>115</sup> suggested that the believer should interpret symbolically the sensual elements described by the poets in order not to stray from the right path and lose the spiritual concentration on God.<sup>116</sup>

From Muḥammad al-Ghazālī onwards, there is an entire line of scholastic interpretation of lyrical poetry as a set of coded symbols waiting to be deciphered to disclose the true meaning of the text, as if the symbolic interpretation appeared to be the only compromise able to justify the presence of erotic poetry within the framework of spiritual practices.

Although I am convinced that these codified symbolical correspondences (whose number exponentially increased from the 14th century onwards) were not fully accepted by the Persian poets, mystical authors like ‘Aṭṭār and ‘Irāqī poured into their *ghazals* a high degree of technical symbolism at the expenses of the lyrical aspects of this poetic genre.

On the other hand, the *maktab-i naẓar-bāzī* (as we may call it), which was introduced by Sa’dī into the Persian poetic discourse through the emphasis on the visual aspect of the mundane experience, managed to restore the metaphysical ground of the contemplation of the beauty of the world by perfectly merging it with the legacy of Persian erotic poetry,

<sup>115</sup> Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Kīmīyā-yi sa’ādāt*, ed. Ḥusayn Khadīvjām, 2 vols. (Tehran: Shirkat-i ‘Ilmī va Farhangī, 1380/2001), 2 : 56.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 : 484.

with all its psychological refinement modelled on the experience of love as it is felt among human beings.

The first theoretical turning point towards Sa'dī's innovation, soon welcomed and developed by Humām, was offered by Muḥammad al-Ghazālī's brother, Aḥmad, whose *Savāniḥ* is the first treatise on love composed in Persian. In fact, in this work, the ideas lying behind the anthropology of beauty explored by the *Nawrūz-nāma* collaborate in the construction of a solid metaphysical ground for the erotic experience forming the basis of the poetic discourse elaborated by the poets of the following centuries. The *Savāniḥ* seems to have exerted a profound influence on Sa'dī's entire literary output,<sup>117</sup> but the following passages can be regarded as the theoretical basis for the poetic discourse on the anthropology of vision developed by the poet of Shiraz:

When [Love] finds the house vacant and the mirror is polished, the image appears and remains stable in the tension of the spirit towards purity. Its perfection is that if the spirit wants to see itself with the eye of the illumination [*dīda-yi ishrāq*], it will see the unveiled image of the beloved, or his name or his attribute. [...]

XLV

So much have my eyes imagined you  
that anyone I look at, I think it is you.<sup>118</sup>

This passage is one of the foundational moments of Aḥmad Ghazālī's metaphysical speculation on love. As we can see, the manifestation of love as ontologically co-natured to the creation of the universe takes place through a movement of the eyes, as an image appearing in a mirror. The *bayt* poetically illustrating the passage in prose compares the appearance of love as the identity between the invisible object of desire and anyone who is visually perceived.

This concept is further explored in the 21st chapter:

The commencement of love takes place when the seed of beauty is sown in the earth of the heart's solitude with the hand of contemplation [*mushāhada*]. Then it is nurtured by the radiance of the gaze belonging to the supreme sun and the spiritual moonlight.

[...]

<sup>117</sup> See Naṣullāh Pūrjavādī, "Sa'dī va Aḥmad Ghazzālī," *Nashr-i Dānish* 1 (1378/1999): 3–16.

<sup>118</sup> Aḥmad Ghazālī, *Majmū'a-yi āthār-i fārsī-yi Aḥmad Ghazālī*, ed. Aḥmad Mujāhid (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tihārān, 1370/1991), 108.

XLVI

The principle of all falling in love derives from seeing:  
when the eyes have seen, everything has already begun.<sup>119</sup>

And it is again repeated in chapter number 48: “the commencement of love is the eyes and looking [*bidāyatash dīda buvad va dīdan*].” And then, towards the end of the book:

In the first chapter we have said that love, in order to be love, does not require a determined direction [*qibla-yi mu‘ayyan*]. But now notice that *God is beautiful and He loves beauty* [*Allāh jamīl va yuḥibb al-jamāl*]. The lover must be in love with that beauty, not with his beloved, and this is an immense secret. The lovers must only see, know and recognise the locus of the gaze, the sign of beauty and the place where the love of him takes place. [...] And it is possible that the lover does not know about all this, but his heart will seek the locus of that gaze and beauty.<sup>120</sup>

A further step was taken by ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī (d. 526/1131), who in his *Tamhīdāt* analyses the concept of the physical manifestation of God as an analogy departing from the double reading (as a passive or active participle) of one of the names of God, *al-muṣavvir*, “the shape giver,” or *muṣavvar*, “the depicted.”

Alas, *The night of the Mi‘rāj I have seen my Lord in the most beautiful shape*, this ‘most beautiful shape’ [*aḥsan ṣūrat*] is an analogy [*tamaththul*], and if it is not an analogy, what is it? *Verily God created Adam and his descendants according the image of the Merciful*, and this too is a kind of analogy. Alas the names! He is the *muṣavvir* [مصور], which means “the shape-giver”; but I also say that he is the *muṣavvar* [مصور], i.e. “the depicted one.”<sup>121</sup>

Sa‘dī was one of the first poets who very often used the expression *muṣavvar* according to the sense suggested by the beautiful passage from the *Tamhīdāt*:

XLVII

Oh amorous young boy, my lovely moon  
I can dismiss everyone, but I have no choice but you.

As soon as you became depicted [*muṣavvar*] in my devoted heart  
in my mind there is no more space left for imagination [*taṣavvur*].<sup>122</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 131–2.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>121</sup> ‘Ayn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī, *Tamhīdāt*, ed. ‘Afif ‘Usayrān (Tehran, 1373/1994), 296.

<sup>122</sup> Sa‘dī, *Ghazalḥā*, 171.

Humām too used this term very often, and with even more emphasis on the process by which the soul accesses a physical shape:

XLVIII

All this is not from water and clay: he is a depicted [*muṣavvar*] soul!  
Illuminated with His beauty are the eyes of the people of the world.

The leitmotiv of anybody who looks at him is  
*Glorified be the shape-giver, Allāhu akbar!*<sup>123</sup>

‘Ayn al-Qudāt, in the following passage, introduces a key difference between two terms, *ḥaqīqī* and *majāzī*, taken from the domain of the theoretical reflection on rhetoric<sup>124</sup>

Alas, who has spoken of the degree of contemplation [*shuhūd*], and who could ever know about that? You still do not know that the witness [*shāhid*, i.e. the young boy] is needed for the Beloved! The hearts have received a foretaste of the Supreme *shāhid-bāzī* [*-yi ḥaqīqī*] through this metaphorical [*majāzī*] witness. That Supreme Truth can be allegorically represented by means of this beautiful face [*ān ḥaqīqat tamaththul badīn šūrat-i nūkū tavān kard*].<sup>125</sup> May my soul serve the one who worships the allegorical *shāhid* [*-i majāzī*], for worshipping the Absolute *shāhid* [*-i ḥaqīqī*] is so rare! But do not think that I am speaking of carnal love, which derives from lust; I am talking about the love of the heart.<sup>126</sup>

From a doctrinal point of view, these meditations became the pre-text for ‘Irāqī, sometime around the mid-13th century, to overcome the problem of incarnationism [*ḥulūl*] which was one of Hujvīrī’s main concerns and, after all, the last theoretical barrier preventing Persian poets from the full development of a non-technical and non-scholastic representation of metaphysical love in its wider gamut of physical possibilities:

Know that between the image and the mirror no unification [*ittihād*] is possible nor incarnation [*ḥulūl*]:

The only person who on this subject can say something like this is the one who does not distinguish incarnation from Epiphany [*tajallī*].

<sup>123</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 67.

<sup>124</sup> Wolfhart Heinrichs, “On the Genesis of the Haqiqa-Majāz Dichotomy,” *Studia Islamica* 59 (1984): 111–40.

<sup>125</sup> ‘Ayn al-Qudāt, *Tamhīdāt*, 297. My translation diverges from L. Ridgeon’s who, perhaps because of the misleading punctuation chosen by the editor of the Persian text, reads an *idāfa* between “*ḥaqīqat*” and “*tamaththul*” and thus: “This is the reality of *tamaththul*. It can be [manifested] in a fair form,” *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

Incarnation and unification can take place only between two [separate] essences [*dhāt*], and in the eyes of the manifestation [*shuhūd*] all beings are but part of a single essence.

[...]

The master of the unveiling [*sāhib-i kashf*, i.e. the initiate] sees the multitude [*kathrat*] in the *phaenomena* [*ahkām*] not into the essence, and knows that any variation [taking place] in the *phaenomena* does not affect the essence, because the essence possesses a perfection which cannot be subject to change and influence. When the light goes through coloured glass, its colour does not change, even though it appears so.

[...]

And if you do not understand what I am saying: [hemistich]:

get close to my eyes and look, so that you can see.

The sun shines through thousands of coloured glasses and shows the colour of each of them.

All of them are but one single light with several colours  
what difference is there between this and that?<sup>127</sup>

The legitimization of the representation of the Absolute principle in the form of mundane shape without compromising the unity of Being is what truly inaugurates the main aesthetic value of the second half of the 13th century.

According to N. Pūrjavādī, “the idea according to which mundane love [*‘ishq-i majāzī*] is a ladder leading towards the Superior love [*‘ishq-i ḥaqīqī*] became widespread mainly thanks to Sa’dī.”<sup>128</sup> It was during Sa’dī’s lifetime, in fact, that Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd Zangī Bukhārī, in his treatise *Nuzhat al-‘āshiqīn* says that from the perspective of mystics the experience of mundane love is a necessary condition to experience the Superior love and that “the shaykhs of the path and the followers of the Truth do not consider reliable an initiate who has not experienced mundane love.”<sup>129</sup>

Sa’dī’s poetics of vision deserves a separate study, but these two verses belonging to the same *ghazal* are emblematic of his innovative contribution to the history of Persian poetry:

<sup>127</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Irāqī, *Lama’āt*, ed. Muḥammad Khvājivī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mavā, 1371/1992), 81–2.

<sup>128</sup> N. Pūrjavādī, *Bāda-yi ‘ishq: pazhūhishī dar ma’nā-yi bāda dar shi’r-i ‘irfānī-yi fārsī* (Tehran: Kārnāma, 1387/2008), 203.

<sup>129</sup> Zangī Bukhārī, *Zangī-nāma*, ed. Īraj Afshār (Tehran: Tūs, 1372/1993), 140.

## XLIX

When the eyes of short-sighted ones fall upon the beautiful page of your face

they look at down [*khaṭ*], whilst the Gnostics see the pen of God's creation.

Everyone's eyes stare at your face, but  
self-worshippers do not distinguish the Truth from lust.<sup>130</sup>

If we recall the strict position held by Hujvīrī two centuries earlier, Sa'dī's constantly moralising instance is perfectly understandable especially considering the ambiguous and potentially heterodox terrain crisscrossed by his texts.

The face of the beautiful one is compared to a page on which the pun with the expression *khaṭ* ("script," "writing," "line" but also "down") creates the double layer of interpretation for those who only focus on the beautiful face and the Gnostic [*'ārīf*] who recognises the signs of God's creation. The second line specifies even further the difference between the merely erotic gaze and the look attempting to grasp a deeper understanding of the transcendental reality.

Such ethical defence occurs very often throughout Sa'dī's *ghazals*:

## L

It is not possible to call just anyone a Lord of Gazes  
there is much difference between love commitment and lust-worshipping.

Not all the eyes possessing a black and a white side  
or able to distinguish black and white possess vision [*baṣar*].

If those who possess human shapes can resist their base desires  
they also possess human manners, otherwise they're but animals.<sup>131</sup>

Humām has replied with two *ghazals* to Sa'dī's visual ethos:

## LI

Here comes that blessed face worthy of gazes

[...]

He is pure spirit molded in a shape for the sake of gazes  
otherwise this beauty would not belong to human beings.

<sup>130</sup> Sa'dī, *Ghazalhā*, 35.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 121–2.

He is something more than just a decorated image,  
because he causes upheavals among the lords of the heart and the masters of gazes.<sup>132</sup>

Humām converts Sa’dī’s moralising attitude into an elaboration of the topos of visual concentration. But sometimes the ethical approach to the theme of vision offers Sa’dī the opportunity to criticize the hypocritical attitude of those who forbid altogether the contemplation of beautiful faces:

LII

The one who says do not look at the face of the handsome ones  
sees only the external form and is unaware of the inner meaning.<sup>133</sup>

The concept of God’s creation [*ṣun‘i ilāhī*] reflected in the beautiful forms of the beloved is a concept that permeates Humām’s *ghazals* as well and with utterances going much further than Sa’dī’s meditation of vision:

LIII

My intellect is bewildered by the creation of that King  
who could create the sun from clay.

From your face a reflection of God’s light  
we will worship then the mirror of the Creator!

[...]

You are in my eyes and I cannot close my thorn-like eyelashes  
I fear that I would scratch your rose-like face.<sup>134</sup>

And, in the following *ghazal* of the *dīvān*:

LIV

The enemy reproaches my practice of love  
but the beauty of the *shāhid* should be witnessed with the eyes of the Gnostics.<sup>135</sup>

These three *ghazals* by Humām are imitations composed following the same rhyme (*-īdan*, but with different metres) of a poem by Sa’dī concerned with the binary opposition between asceticism (*zuhd*) and love with regard to the lawfulness and the unlawfulness of the gaze on beauties:

<sup>132</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 68.

<sup>133</sup> Sa’dī, *Ghazalḥā*, 306.

<sup>134</sup> Humām, *Dīvān*, 136.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

LV

In love I do appreciate drunkenness and ill-reputation because  
it is not nice to practice asceticism when you are in love.

the joy of the ascetic derives from dry religious practices  
the purity of the Gnostic comes from looking at the beauties' eyebrows.

When your grace embraces Sa'dī's soul what really matters?  
Why should he suffer on the Day of Judgment when sins will be weighed?<sup>136</sup>

We see now how these poems constitute the ultimate elaboration of Aḥmad Ghazālī's love theory, thanks to the elaboration of the anthropological discourse already contained in passages like this:

The head and the face of all things is the point of connection to Him and in the creation [*ṣun*] there is a concealed sign, and beauty [*ḥusn*] is a sign [*nishān*] of the creation.<sup>137</sup>

We conclude with a *ghazal* by Humām, in which the manifestation of the beloved bewilders all the pious categories of Īl-Khānid Tabriz:

LVI

That slender cypress walks with all elegance  
there is a resurrection [*qiyāmat*] in the entire world on account of his  
statue [*qāmat*].

If the Muezzin had seen your slender body  
he would forget about the call to prayer.

The Imam fervent for that frame and complexion  
would yield to the singers his priestly salary.

If you ever pass by a monastery [*khānqāh*]  
no Shaykh will remain on the straight path.

The initiates would abandon their seclusion  
they would look at you and burn in their contrition.

In the epoch of your enchanting and intoxicated eyes  
all the incorruptible ones will pay the penitence.

Listen, you who always gives us some advice  
is it you or we who now deserves to be rebuked?

When Humām can enjoy love  
he doesn't seek the dignity of piety and miracles.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>136</sup> Sa'dī, *Ghazalḥā*, 224.

<sup>137</sup> Aḥmad Ghazālī, *Majmū'a*, 124.

<sup>138</sup> Humām, *Divān*, 79.

### *Conclusion*

Thanks to the policies first undertaken by the Salghurids and then by the Juvaynī family, Shiraz and Tabriz were the main settings witnessing the cultural renaissance that took place in Iran soon after the devastations brought by the Mongol invasion and the collapse of the Abbasid caliphate. Sa’dī from Shiraz and Humām from Tabriz, both surviving the downfall of the two families to which they were respectively attached, can be considered as the representatives of the fruitful network of political, spiritual and literary exchanges dominating the influence that the two cities exerted on each other during the second half of the 13th century.

This article has offered a sketch of the literary interactions between the two poets within the framework of the cultural exchange taking place when, during the seventies and the eighties of the 13th century, the Īl-Khānid influence on Shiraz became stronger and Tabriz provided the poets flourishing in Fārs with a new pole of attraction. It was during this period that Sa’dī’s *ghazals* (paradoxically as much neglected by scholars as his politically engaged poems) became the vehicle to disseminate a new aesthetical framework—which we have called *maktab-i naẓar-bāzī*—for the integration of the mundane and the mystical poles of the amorous experience through the anthropological experience of vision.

I have argued that Humām was one of the first poets who, by closely imitating Sa’dī’s *ghazals*, contributed to the further development of the *maktab-i naẓar-bāzī* which arguably untied the ethical knot that probably prevented Sa’dī from elaborating in his poems the multivocal aesthetics of intoxicated debauchery which would later characterise the style of Ḥāfiz.

*Appendix: Persian Texts Translated in the Article*

I	VI
در آن نفس که بمیرم در آرزوی تو باشم بدان امید دهم جان که خاک کوی تو باشم	گرتوانکار نظر در آفرینش می کنی من همی گویم که چشم از بهر این کار آمد دست
II	VII
به مجعی که در آینه شاهدان دو عالم نظر به سوی تودار مغلا مروی تو باشم	پیش رخ تو باید بر خاک سر نهادن شرط است سجده بردن آینه خدا را عکس روی تو چون نگار خود بین در آینه تابدانی قدرت صورت نگار خویش را
III	VIII
سالها قبله صاحب نظران خواهد بود بر زمینی که نشان کف پای تو بود	پرتو روی الهی چون بر انسان افتاد رسم شد شیفته صورت خوبان بودن
IV	IX
افسوس بر آن دیده که روی تو ندیدست یادیده و بعد از تو به روی نگاریدست گرمد عیان نقش بیند پری را دانند که دیوانه چرا جامه دریدست	به گوش محبت شنود کرجانان ز آواز ناقوس و بانگ نمازی
[...]	
سر قلم قدرت بی چون الهی	X
در روی تو چون روی در آینه پدیدست	آنجا که بود نعره ناقوس رومیان اکنون خروش و ناله الله اکبر است
V	
خود گرفته که نظر بر رخ خوبان کفرست من از این باز نگردم که مرا این دین است	

XI

گه مرد کلیسای و ناقوسیم  
گه صومعه دار عزی و لایتم

XII

به نام آنکه تن را نور جان داد  
خرد را ترجمانی چون زبان داد  
میان گل زد ل شمع بر افروخت  
به خاک تیره علم و حکمت آموخت  
چو با قالب تعلق داد جان را  
شرف بخشید مشتی خاکیان را  
چو اسرارش به آب و گل سپردند  
ملایک آب و گل را سجده بردند  
چونورش بر توی افکند بر خاک  
بساط خاکیان شد سطح افلاک  
چو سوز عشق او در آد افتاد  
ز شوقش غلغلی در عالم افتاد

XIII

خانه امروز بهشت است که رضوان اینجاست  
وقت پروردن جانان اینجاست  
[...]

چه غماز محبتسب و شحنه و غوغا که امروز  
خواجه هارون پسر صاحب دیوان اینجاست

XIV

دی مگر گفتند در حضرت که شعر من همه  
وصف پستان چونا راست و لب چون نار دان  
یا غزل در نعت قدی همبر شمشاد و سرو  
یا سخن در وصف زلفی بانسیم مشک و پان  
یا نوید وعده وصلی زیاری دل گسل  
یا امید عشو و بوسی ز ماهی دلستان  
اینکه این طرز غریب آورده شد پاکبری  
از عبارتهای شیراز و عیار اصفهان  
ترسماز کجی کرانی قلتبان گوید م  
تونه از شیرازی آخر از کجایی قلتبان  
قافیه آوخ مکرر میشود و رنه به نظم  
مدح شروان کردی و طعن آذر بایجان  
جز خراسانی و غزنی کس نکوید شعر نغز  
بد نکوید ماوراالنهری و اهل دامغان  
[...]

خر به از اینها چه جوید شاه ازین مشتی عوام

XV

در این زمان که فلک تیر بار شد عدلت  
ز حفظ بر سر گیتی کشید خفتانی  
در این فتور که خورده است ثور آب از نیل  
ز مملکت تو که داند که هست تورانی  
سدید رای تو گر سد نگشتی ایرانرا  
به روزگار که گفتی که بود ایرانیا

XVI

دریغ روز نشاط و نشاط روز شباب  
 دریغ عهد جوانی و دور بخت جوان  
 بجاست مملکت سلغری که غیرت بود  
 برا و مالک ساسان و دولت سامان  
 چنان ز بیج برآمد درخت آن دولت  
 که در خیال نیاید به خواب سایه آن  
 نماند از آن همه کردار نیک بوی و اثر  
 نماند از آن همه آثار خوب نام و نشان  
 نه قلعه ماند و نه گنج و نه اصل ماند و نه نسل  
 نه تخت ماند و نه تاج و نه بار ماند و نه خوان

XVII

مسافر نیست لطیف و غریب گفته من  
 ولی به چاه عناد چو یوسف و بیژن  
 سخن سخیف و رقیق آن بود که در پستی  
 وطن به دامن صاحب سخن کد موطن  
 چهار ربع زمین نظم و نثر من دارد  
 ز مصر تا به ختاز و روم تا به ختن  
 حکیم جوهر باقی رسد معانی را  
 ز پارس جوهر من تحفه بر سوی مسکن  
 شهان سلغری از عشق طر ز من در خاک  
 به دست واقعه بر خود همی درند کفن

XVIII

بر ملک سلیمان چونفاذ تور وان شد  
 مگذا رکه هر دیو برد دست به خاتم

در ملک جهان نام نکو جوی که آن به  
 از دولت اسکندر و از مملکت جم  
 در پارس نظر کن به ترحم که یابی  
 از گوشه نشینان وی اقبال دو عالم  
 در زادن خود شعر ز من خواستی آن روز  
 ای زادن تو منصب ذریت آدم  
 [...]

از سعدی مشهور سخن شعر روان جوی  
 کو کعبه فضلاست و دلش چشمه زمزم

XIX

اینکه در شهنامه ها آورده اند  
 رستم و رویننه تن اسفندیار  
 تا بداند این خداوندان ملک  
 که بسی خلقت دنیا یادگار

XX

به نقل از اوستادان یاد دارم  
 که شاهان عجم کی خسرو و جم  
 جهان سلا را عادل انجانو  
 سپهدار عراق و ترک و دیلم  
 که روز بزم بر تخت یکانی  
 فرید و نست و روز زم رستم

XXI

دل ما ز صحبت شیراز بکلی بگرفت  
 وقت آن است که پرسی خباز بغداد م

- XXVII  
هیچ شک نیست که فریاد من آنجا برسد  
عجب ارساحب دیوان نرسد فریادم  
ای آفتاب ملک بسی روزها بتاب  
وی سایه خدای بسی سالها بمان
- XXII  
خنک عراق که در سایه حمایت توست  
حمایت تونگو پرعنایت یزدان  
ز باس تونه عجب در بلا دفس و عرب  
که گرگ بر گله یاران باشدش عدوان
- XXVIII  
تورا شمامه ریحان من که یاد آورد  
که خلق از آن طرف آرند نافه مشکین؟  
چه لایق مگسانست بامداد بهار  
که در مقابله بلبلان کند طنین؟  
که نشر کرده بود طی من در آن مجلس؟  
که برده باشد نام ثری به علین؟  
به شکر بخت بلند ایستاده ام که مرا  
به عمر خویشن کرد دست هرگز این تمکین  
میان عرصه شیراز تا به چند آخر  
پیاده باشم و دیگر پیادگان فرزین؟
- XXIII  
مراقبول شما نام در جهان گسترده  
مرا به صاحب دیوان عزیز شد دیوان
- XXIV  
ملا ذاهل دل امروز خندان شماست  
که باد تا به قیامت به دولت آباد
- XXIX  
چون تواز جانب شیراز به تریزایی  
شکر آن نعمت را و امکم گویایی
- XXV  
این منتی بر اهل زمین بود از آسمان  
وین رحمت خدای جهان بود بر جهان  
تا گرد نان روی زمین منزجر شدند  
گردن نهاده بر خط و فرمان ایلخان
- XXX  
بلبل طبع او صفیری زد  
همه آفاق گلستان گرفت
- XXVI  
خدای مشرق و مغرب به ایلخان دادست  
تو بر خزاین روی زمین حفیظ وامین  
سخن او به سمع من چور رسید  
مر مرا شوق او چنان گرفت  
که دل من ز خاتم مهرش  
همچون شمع از نگین نشان گرفت

XXXI

سعادت میکند سعی که با شیراز ماندازد  
 ولیکن خاک را نتوان به گردون بفرستادن  
 اگر بایکدگر ما را نیفتد قرب جسمانی  
 نباشد که ز پیغامی که به یکدیگر فرستادن  
 سراسر حامل اخلاص از اینسان نکته هادارم  
 ز سلطان سخن دستور و از چاکر فرستادن  
 در آن حضرت که چون خاک است زر خشک  
 سلطانی

گدایی را اجازت کن به شعر تر فرستادن

XXXII

در میان من و معشوق همام است حجاب  
 وقت آن است که این پرده به یکسو فکنم

XXXIII

پیش این قالب مردار چه کار است مرا  
 نیستم زاغ و زغن طوطی شکر سخند  
 مرغ باغ ملکوت نیم از عالم خاک  
 دوسه روزی قفسی ساخته اند از بدنم

XXXIV

این همه نیش میخورد سعدی و پیش میرود  
 خون برود در این میان گرتوتویی و من منم

XXXV

گفتی ز خاک بیشترند اهل عشق من  
 از خاک بیشتر نه که از خاک کمتر

XXXVI

همام را سخن دلفریب و شیرین است  
 ولی چه سود که بچاره نیست شیرازی

XXXVII

ز لطف لفظ شکر بار گفته سعدی  
 شد مغلای همه شاعران شیرازی

XXXVIII

هر مطاعی ز معدنی خیزد  
 شکر از مصر و سعدی از شیراز

XXXIX

زدست ترک ختایی کسی جفا چندان  
 نمی برد که من از دست ترک شیرازی

XL

تو هم چو صاحب دیوان مکن که سعدی را  
 به یکره از نظر خویشتن بیندازی

XLI

نه آگهست همانا همام تبری  
 که شاه ملک سخن سعیدیست شیرازی  
 زلال گفته او نزد ما چنان باشد  
 که قطره ای سوی دریای اخضر اندازی

XLII

طالبان ذوق را گو در سماع  
 استماع شعر شیرازی کنید

XLIII

نام سعدی همه جارفت به شاهد بازی  
 وین نه عیبست که در ملت ما تحسین نیست

XLIV

نظر بانیکوان رسمی است معهود  
 نه این بدعت من آورد مر به عالم  
 تو گرد دعوی کنی پرهیزگاری  
 مصدق دارم توالله اعلم  
 وگرگوی میل خاطر من نیست  
 من این دعوی نمی دارم مسلم  
 حدیث عشق اگر گویی گناه است  
 گناه اول ز خواب بود و آدم

XLV

از بس که دودیده در خیالت دارم  
 در هر که نگه کم تویی پندارم

XLVI

اصل همه عاشقی ز دیدار افتد  
 چون دیده بدید آنکھی کار افتد

XLVII

ای پسر دلرباوی قرد لپذیر  
 از همه باشد گریز و ز تو نباشد گزیر  
 تا تو مصور شدی در دل یگای من  
 جای تصور نماند دیگر ماند رضمیر

XLVIII

این ز آب و خاک نیست که جانی مصور است  
 چشم جهانیان به جمالش منور است  
 ذکر زبان هر که نظر میکند برو

سبحان من یصور والله اکبر است

جام جهان نمای الهی است صورتش  
 انصاف میدهند نظر ها که مظهر است

XLIX

چشم کوه نظران بر ورق صورت خوبت  
 خط همی بیند و عارف قلم صنع خدا را  
 همه را دیده به رویت نگران است ولیکن  
 خود پرستان ز حقیقت نشناسند هوارا

L

هر کسی را نتوان گفت که صاحب نظر است  
 عشق بازی دگر و نفس پرستی دگر است

نه هر آن چشم که بیند سیاه است و سپید  
 یا سیاهی ز سپیدی بشناسد بصر است  
 آدمی صورت اگر دفع کند شهوت نفس  
 آدمی خوی شود ورنه همان جانور است

LIV

ملا مت میکند دشمن مراد عشق و رزیدن  
 به چشم عارفان باید جمال شاهدان دیدن

LV

به عشق مستی و رسوایی امر خوش است از آنک  
 نمک نباشد با عشق زهد و رزیدن  
 نشاط زاهد از انواع طاعت است و ورع  
 صفای عارف از بر وی نیکوان دیدن  
 عنایت تو چون با جان سعدی است چه باک  
 چه غم خور دگه حشر از گاه سنجیدن

LI

اینک آن روی مبارک که سزای نظر است  
 روح پاک است مصور شده از بهر نظر  
 ورنه این حسن نه اندازه روی بشر است  
 روشن آید که نظر بردگر اندازی  
 یا از آینه که از عکس رخت پیچبر است  
 به جز صورت آراسته چیز یدگر است  
 که اهل دل و فتنه صاحب نظر راست

LVI

خرامان می رود آن سرو قامت  
 جهانی را از آن قامت قیامت  
 مؤذن گر بیند قامتت را  
 فراموشش شود تکبیر و قامت  
 اما ما از شوق آن شکل و شمایل  
 به قوالان دهد مرز دامامت

LVII

آنکه میگوید نظر در منظر خوبان مکن  
 او همین صورت همی بیند ز معنی غافل است

LVIII

حیران شده است عقلم در صنع پادشاهی  
 کز خاک میتواند خورشید آفریدن  
 ای نور الهی از روی شما عکسی  
 ما آینه صانع خواهیم پرستیدن  
 در چشم منی توان خار مرثه بر هم زد  
 ترسم که گلت یا بد ز حمت ز خراشیدن

گرت باشد گذر در خانقاهی  
 نماند شیخ بر راه سلامت  
 مریدان زار بعین آیند بیرون  
 تور اینند و سوزند از ندامت  
 به عهد چشم مست دلفریبت  
 بود بر جان مستوران غرامت

بگوای آن که مارا می دهی پند  
تویی یا ما سزاوار ملامت

همه ما از عشق چون دارد نصیبی  
نخوید منصب زهد و کرامت

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CONFESSIONAL AMBIGUITY VS. CONFESSIONAL POLARIZATION:  
POLITICS AND THE NEGOTIATION OF RELIGIOUS BOUNDARIES  
IN THE ILKHANATE\*

Judith Pfeiffer

Students of the Later Middle Period of Islamic history (1258–ca. 1500) usually learn that the taxonomies, hierarchies, notions of political authority, and definitions of religious boundaries that apply to other periods of Islamic history are not applicable here, at least not without significant adjustments. This holds true especially for the areas north of the Euphrates River: In the wake of the Mongol invasions, new cards were dealt to everyone, old hierarchies shaken up, and confessional boundaries mellowed to the extent that we can speak of a period of “confessional ambiguity” during which especially the distinctions between Sunnism and Shi‘ism were largely dissolved into a form of ‘Alid loyalism that makes it difficult to discern strict confessional boundaries during this period.<sup>1</sup>

Far from questioning the overall accuracy of this picture, this paper argues that, not surprisingly, the above cannot be generalized across the whole period of 250 years, and that specific political and geographic contexts have to be taken into account in each case. For instance, and quite contrary to what was outlined above, at the height of centralized Chinggisid power in the Ilkhanate, confessional boundaries sharpened significantly. It appears that the degree to which religio-political groups had

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<sup>1</sup> For the definition of the Later Middle Period of Islamic history, and an analysis of the “‘Alid loyalism typical of Şūfism by this time,” see Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam. Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 2: 369–385; 445–455; 463. For the use of the term “confessional ambiguity” in this context, see John E. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2009), 1–23.

access to political and economic power had a noticeable impact on their relationships with members of other confessional groups: The greater the access to political power, economic resources, and participation in the dominant religio-cultural and political discourse, the higher the tendency to demarcate boundaries—religious and otherwise.<sup>2</sup> Conversely, one might posit that the more ‘federal’ and ‘horizontal’ the political organization, the more ambiguous we would expect the confessional boundaries to be. This working hypothesis is subject to further scrutiny and refinement, and it would yet have to be tested against concrete examples from periods not investigated in this paper. This concerns in particular the Timurid context, when Chinggisid authority was waning, the model of the ‘corporate dynasty’ played out at its strongest, economic insecurity was high, and local authorities experimented with multiple alternative forms of religio-political authority that included non-Chinggisid and non-Mongol warlords, local notables, Sufi socio-religious networks, and adherents of other competing ideologies, including various forms of Shi‘ism, mysticism, millenarianism, and the occult.<sup>3</sup> The examples investigated in this paper are taken from the earlier part of this period, the Ilkhanate at the height of Chinggisid power. They are evidence for the fact that confessional boundaries were strongly accentuated during some of the long Later Middle Period of Islamic history, when the political hierarchies were at their steepest, and its protagonists showed strong tendencies of confessional polarization instead. They also explain the noticeable rise in genealogical consciousness, *sayyid* ascendancy, and descent-based claims to access to divine knowledge during the post-Mongol period, which are shared by Chinggisid, *sayyid*, and Sufi lineages. As Devin DeWeese’s research has demonstrated, lineage in particular appears to have contributed to what

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<sup>2</sup> This works apparently both at the level investigated in this paper, and with regard to the larger regional political boundaries between the Mamluks and Mongols at the beginning of the Later Middle Period, and the Ottomans, Safavids, Mughals, and Özbeks towards the end of it: The stronger the political (and at times military) differences between states, the sharper accentuated the religious differences, and the higher the traffic in polemical exchanges. On the latter, see Michel M. Mazzaoui, *The origins of the Şafawids; Şī‘ism, Şūfism, and the Ġulāt* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1972).

<sup>3</sup> On the diversification of the political paradigms during this period with a particular focus on millenarian religio-political movements, see Said Amir Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam. Religion, Political Order, and Societal Change in Shi‘ite Iran from the Beginning to 1890* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 66–84, and Shahzad Bashir, *Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions. The Nūrbakhshīya Between Medieval and Modern Islam* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 31–41.

Shahzad Bashir has called the “hardening of communal boundaries” in the Sufi context during this period.<sup>4</sup>

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Mongol rule in the Middle East extended westwards until the Euphrates River, eventually resulting in the Euphrates becoming a political and cultural border zone, with an Arabophone zone south of the river, and a Perso-Turkish zone to the north of it. The initial four decades of non-Muslim (mostly Buddhist) Mongol rule in the heartlands of Islam (ca. 1258–1295) constituted a novel and for many Muslims perturbing politico-theological situation. They interpreted Mongol rule either as divine punishment<sup>5</sup> or as a portent of cosmological realignments beyond the grasp of human understanding.<sup>6</sup> The new political realities on the ground eventually resulted in novel formulations of political ideas: While the Mongols of the Ilkhanate converted to Islam after three to four generations, a caliphate in Baghdad with universalistic aspirations was never seriously re-established, even after the dissolution of the Ilkhanate. The Mamluks, in turn, took advantage of the situation by transferring the caliphate to Cairo in an ingenious act of *translatio imperii* that involved the inversion of the

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<sup>4</sup> Devin DeWeese, “Khojagānī Origins and the Critique of Sufism: The Rhetoric of Communal Uniqueness in the *Manāqib* of Khoja ‘Alī ‘Azīzān Rāmītanī,” in *Islamic Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, eds. Frederick de Jong and Bernd Radtke (Leiden etc.: Brill, 1999), 492–519; Shahzad Bashir, *Sufi Bodies. Religion and Society in Medieval Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 78–104, at 96. When investigating various techniques of asserting communal distinction in the Khojagānī tradition, DeWeese also found explicit examples of the rejection of lineage (*shajara*) as a standard feature of institutional Sufism, confirming the important role that lineage usually played as a source of authority among Sufi groups during this period; *ibid.*, 514.

<sup>5</sup> As Devin DeWeese has recently established, some of the later narratives circulating about Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 618/1221) claimed that, in fact, it was the Sufi saint who ‘unleashed’ the Mongol forces in order to rid the earth from Muslims who had strayed from the straight path; Devin DeWeese, “‘Stuck in the Throat of Chingiz Khān.’ Envisioning the Mongol Conquests in Some Sufi Accounts from the 14th to 17th Centuries,” in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East. Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, eds. Judith Pfeiffer and Sholeh A. Quinn (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 23–60.

<sup>6</sup> As a result, apocalyptic literature proliferated. Echoes of this can be found in the historian Jūzjānī’s (fl. 658/1260) account, who cites a long series of Muslim chiliastic traditions ‘predicting’ the Mongol invasions. See also, Ann K.S. Lambton, “Ta’rikh. 2. In Persian,” *EI*<sup>2</sup> 10 (1998): 288b. Chiliastic ideas are a world-wide phenomenon which seems to occur especially in situations of suppression and impoverishment; for examples, see Vittorio Lanternari, *Movimenti religiosi di libertà e di salvezza dei popoli oppressi* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1960); Wilhelm E. Mühlmann, *Chiliasmus und Nativismus: Studien zur Psychologie, Soziologie und historischen Kasuistik der Umstürzbewegungen* (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1961); and the bibliography in David Hellholm, *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and in the Near East* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1983/21989).

oath of allegiance to the caliph (*bay'a*) together with the related hierarchies. As a result, the Mamluk Sultan's authority became superior to that of the descendants of the Abbasid caliph, who became known henceforth as 'shadow caliphs.'<sup>7</sup>

The Mamluk establishment, and the majority of the Mamluk historians, adopted the pre-Mongol Abbasid history as their own past. In addition to the transfer of the caliphate from Baghdad to Cairo, this was expressed in the Mamluk claim to the protection of Mecca and Medina and the Ḥajj and Ḥajj routes; in cross-border theological polemics, and above all in a voluminous literary output that emphasized the continuity from early Islam down to the authors' own times.<sup>8</sup> For various reasons which cannot be explored here in depth, these sources have had a strong impact on Western scholarship.<sup>9</sup> The latter adopted without much questioning the narrative of a *Golden Age* of early Islam and a subsequent decline under non-Arab rule, which started with the Buyid and Seljuq domination in the heartlands of Islam, and culminated in the Mongol invasions, Turkic slave rule in Egypt and the Levant, and subsequent supposed decline.

Muslim historiography from the Ilkhanate, by contrast, initially reacted to Mongol Buddhist rule with absolute silence, as though scholars did not know what to make of it, only to burst out into the all-time peak of Persianate historiography after the Ilkhan Ghazan's conversion to Islam in 1295.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> On the transfer of the Abbasid caliphate, see Stefan Heidemann, *Das Aleppiner Kalifat (A.D. 1261): vom Ende des Kalifates in Bagdad über Aleppo zu den Restaurationen in Kairo* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> Such claims are especially explicitly apparent in the flourishing genre of Mamluk biographical dictionaries, such as, e.g., in al-Subkī's *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyya al-kubrā*, which narrates generation after generation of scholars from the beginning of Islam down to Subkī's own time in a metanarrative that insinuates continuity, but by-and-large bypasses the developments of intellectual history north of the Euphrates subsequent to the Mongol conquests. On Mamluk-Mongol polemics, see Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Ṣafawids*; Dorothea Krawulsky, "Legitimation und Herrschaft: Das mongolische Dilemma," in *eadem, Mongolen und Ilkhāne—Ideologie und Geschichte* (Beirut: Verlag für Islamische Studien, 1989), 131–164; Yahya Michot, "Rashīd al-Dīn et Ibn Taymiyya: regards croisés sur la royauté," in *Mohaghegh Nāma*, eds. B. Khorramshāhī and J. Jahānbaksh, 2 vols., (Tehran: Sinānegār, 2001), 2: 111–137; Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and ideology in the Islamic and Mongol worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), and Tariq al-Jamil, "Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥilli: Shi'i polemics and the Struggle for Religious Authority in Medieval Islam," in *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, eds. Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 229–246.

<sup>9</sup> For a general discussion, see Hodgson, *Venture* 1, Introduction, especially "On the history of Islamic studies," 39–45, and 45–69.

<sup>10</sup> Judith Pfeiffer, "The canonization of cultural memory: Ghāzān Khān, Rashīd al-Dīn, and the construction of the Mongol past," in *Rashīd al-Dīn, Agent and Mediator of Cultural*

The best known reports on the early, pre-Islamization Mongol presence in the Nile-to-Oxus region are therefore written from a geographical or chronological distance. Moreover, the political enmity between the Mamluk and Ilkhanid polities is strongly reflected in the historiography of the time, which is dominated by a focus on the dichotomy between the Muslim Mamluks and non-Muslim Mongols.<sup>11</sup> This makes it difficult to hear either inner-Mongol or indeed inner-Muslim debates and voices of dissent and makes it easy to overlook alternative views. Thus, the Mongol capture of Baghdad, which epitomizes the Mongol conquests in the region, is widely known mainly in Sunni narratives,<sup>12</sup> which represent the mainstream, majority voice of Islam of that time—be that under Mamluk or Mongol rule. This paper focuses on a set of alternative, Shi'i voices instead.

### *Reactions to the Mongol Conquests in the Nile-to-Oxus Region*

Reactions to the Mongol conquests in the Nile-to-Oxus region included the following.

i. Resistance on the ground and defeat or subjugation through the Mongols and/or enmity with them, followed by what may be called a 'memory of grievance' on the part of the defeated. This view has often been investigated, and requires no further introduction here.<sup>13</sup>

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*Exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran*, eds. Anna Akasoy, Charles Burnett and Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim (London: The Warburg Institute/Turin: Nino Aragno; forthcoming).

<sup>11</sup> For a detailed study of this issue, see Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*.

<sup>12</sup> Juvayni described in detail how after the surrender of the Ismaili fortress of Alamut, he personally participated in the burning of those parts of Ismaili scholarship that he did not approve of: "being desirous of inspecting the library, the fame of which had spread throughout the world, I suggested to the King [Hülegü] that the valuable books in Alamut ought not to be destroyed. He approved my words and gave the necessary orders; and I went to examine the library, from which I extracted whatever I found in the way of copies of the Koran and [other] choice books [...]. As for the remaining books, which related to their heresy and error and were neither founded on tradition nor supported by reason, I burnt them all." 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā Malik Juvaynī, *Genghis Khan. The History of the World-Conqueror*, trans. John Andrew Boyle (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 2: 719.

<sup>13</sup> This view is most prominently represented by the Mamluk sources. Even though the Mamluks themselves did not suffer a major defeat at Mongol hands, they, as the protectors of the descendants of the Abbasid caliphs after the latter's defeat by the Mongols, appropriated their memory, grief, and past. On the conquest of Baghdad from different contemporary perspectives, see, e.g., John Andrew Boyle, who renders Naṣir al-Dīn Ṭūsī's account in an English translation ("The Death of the Last 'Abbasid Caliph: a Contemporary

ii. A proactive accommodation of Mongol contingents in the region, starting several decades before the Chinggisid conquest of Baghdad. An example for this is the policy adopted by the ruler of Mosul, Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu', who established Mongol trade posts in his home town from the early 1230's (631/1233–34) onwards.<sup>14</sup> Lu'lu' started minting coins in the name of the Mongol Great Khan Möngke (r. 1251–1259) at least three years before the Mongol conquest of Baghdad.<sup>15</sup> A similar form of early cooperation

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Muslim Account," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 6/2 (1961): 145–161; and G.M. Wickens, who presents a translation and annotations to Bar Hebraeus' account on the fall of Baghdad ("Nasir ad-Din Tusi on the Fall of Baghdad: A Further Study," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 7 (1962): 23–35). See also Taqī al-Dīn Ismā'il b. Abū al-Yusr's Arabic *marthiya* on the same subject, which was preserved in al-Dhahabī's history, and has been published and translated by Joseph de Somogyi in his article "A *Qasida* on the Destruction of Baghdād by the Mongols," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 7 (1933–35): 41–48. Other, mostly later, accounts from Mamluk sources include those of al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1347; see de Somogyi, "Ein arabischer Bericht über die Tataren im Ta'rīḥ al-Islām von ad-Dahabī," *Der Islam* 24 [1937]: 105–130); al-Subkī (d. 771/1370; see Otto Spies, "Ein unbenutzter Bericht über die Mongolen in Bagdad," *Der Islam* 40 [1965]: 97–112); and Ibn al-Furāt (d. 807/1404; see Guy le Strange, "The Story of the Death of the last Abbasid Caliph, from the Vatican MS. of Ibn al-Furāt," *JRAS* [1900]: 293–300). For a pertinent discussion of this historiography, see Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934–1961), 10: 67–69. For the Mongol conquest of Damascus, see G. Levi della Vida, "L'Invasione dei Tartari in Siria nel 1260 ricordi di un testimone oculare," *Orientalia* 4 (1935): 253–276; Joseph de Somogyi, "Adh-Dhahabī's Record of the Destruction of Damascus by the Mongols in 699–700/1299–1301," in *Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume*, vol. 1, eds. Samuel Löwinger and Joseph Somogyi (Budapest: 1948), 353–386; and Anne-Marie Eddé, "La prise d'Alep par les Mongols en 658/1260," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 5–6 (1987–88): 226–240. On the Mongol conquest of Isfahan, see John E. Woods, "A Note on the Mongol Capture of Isfahān," *JNES* 36 (1977): 49–51.

<sup>14</sup> According to Douglas Patton, Ibn Naẓīf al-Ḥamawī in his *Ta'rīkh al-Manṣūrī, talkhīṣ al-kashf wa'l-bayān fī ḥawādīth al-zamān* (facsimile ed. P. Gryaznevitch, Moscow: Institute of the peoples of Asia, 1960, f. 226b) states "that in 631/1233–34 the Caliph gave his permission for Mongol agents to establish a permanent residence in Mosul." Douglas Patton, *Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu': Atabeg of Mosul, 1211–1259* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1991), 52. For accounts on Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu's diplomatic acrobatics during these years, see Anne-Marie Eddé, *La Principauté Ayyoubide d'Alep (579/1183–658/1260)* (Freiburg: Steiner, 1999). According to Juvaynī, Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu' also sent an envoy to attend the Great Khan's election and pay his allegiance to Güyük Khan after his succession in 1246. Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i jahān-gushāy*, ed. Muḥammad Qazvīnī (Leiden: Brill, 1912–37), 205; Juvaynī, *Genghis Khan. The History of the World-Conqueror*, 250. This meeting was also attended by other Muslim leaders, including the chief *qaḏī* of Baghdad, Fakhr al-Dīn (see below).

<sup>15</sup> Mahāb Darwish al-Bakrī, "al-'Umla al-Islāmiyya fi al-'ahd al-Īlkhānī," *Sumer* 22.1–2 (1966): 95–106. Both silver and gold coins bearing the name of the Caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh on the obverse, and of Chinggis Khan on the reverse have been found, and while the mint name is illegible, the names of the rulers mentioned permit us to date the coins before 1225, the death date of al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (r. 575–622/1180–1225), followed by Chinggis Khan's death two years later in 1227. For an example of such a coin, see *Ak Akçe. Moğol ve İlhanlı Sikkeleri: Mongol and Ilkhanid Coins* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1992), 41.

was sought by the Qara-Qarākhītā'ī ruler of Kirman, Barāq Ḥājib, who secured recognition simultaneously both from the Abbasid caliph as 'Qutluḡ Sulṭān'<sup>16</sup> and by the Mongol Great Khan Ögedei (r. 1228–1241) as 'Barāq Khān Ḥājib' in the 1230s.<sup>17</sup> The Seljuqs of Anatolia and the rulers of Lesser Armenia are other examples of polities who pursued a deliberate, pro-active policy of accommodation before the Mongol conquest of Baghdad.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, one of the last Abbasid caliphs and the last powerful among them, al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (r. 575–622/1180–1225), may once have requested support from the Mongols as potential cooperation partners against the Khwārazmshahs.<sup>19</sup>

iii. A voluntary submission to the Mongols during the conquest phase. This approach was adopted by some local groups and individuals from among the Twelver Shī'i community who saw the Mongols as liberators from the Abbasid yoke. These views are at the center of the present article, and we shall return to these below.

iv. A post-conquest *modus vivendi* under Buddhist Mongol rule between 1258 and 1295, between the Chinggisid conquest of Baghdad and their conversion to Islam in 1295.<sup>20</sup> Apart from continuing day-to-day life under

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The inscription on this undated *dirham* reads on the obverse "al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh amīr al-mu'minīn" and on the reverse "al-'ādil al-a'ẓam Chīnkiz Khān."

<sup>16</sup> Juvaynī, *Genghis Khan. The History of the World-Conqueror*, 2: 479.

<sup>17</sup> Nāṣir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī (fl. 725/1324), *Simṭ al-'ulā li al-ḥaḍrat al-ulyā*, ed. 'Abbās Iqbāl Aṣhtiyānī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i aṣāfir, 1328 sh./1949), 25. As Jean Aubin has demonstrated for the Timurid context, early submission almost always resulted in the avoidance of bloodshed. See his article "Comment Tamerlan prenait les villes," *Studia Islamica* 19 (1963): 83–122.

<sup>18</sup> In the year of the accession of Güyük Khan (r. 1246–1248), grandees and princes from all over the world came to congratulate him; according to Juvaynī, this included "the notables of Khurasan, Iraq, Lur, Azerbaijan and Shirvan. From Rum came Sultan Rukn-ad-Din and the [Armenian] Sultan of Takavor; from Georgia, the two Davids; from Aleppo, the brother of the Lord of Aleppo; from Mosul, the envoy of Sultan Badr-ad-Din Lu'lu'; and from the City of Peace, Baghdad, the chief *cadi* Fakhr-ad-Din." Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i jahān-gushāy*, 205; Juvaynī, *Genghis Khan. The History of the World-Conqueror*, 250. Juvaynī also mentions *yarlighs* and posts that were given to the various emissaries, and points out that the *yarligh* that had been issued regarding the emissary from Baghdad was rescinded. Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-i jahān-gushāy*, 212–213; Juvaynī, *Genghis Khan. The History of the World-Conqueror*, 257–258. For Anatolia, of course, not the Fall of Baghdad, but the Battle of Köseadağ in 1243 was the decisive moment in the establishment of Mongol sovereignty in the region.

<sup>19</sup> Angelika Hartmann, "al-Nāṣir Li-Dīn Allāh," *EI*<sup>2</sup> 7 (1992): here 998. *Eadem*, *an-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (1180–1225): Politik, Religion, Kultur in der späten 'Abbāsidenzeit* (Berlin: New York: de Gruyter, 1975).

<sup>20</sup> For a concise, but key study of this period, see Jean Aubin, *Émirs mongols et vizirs persans dans les remous de l'acculturation* (Paris: Association pour l'avancement des études iraniennes, 1995; *Studia Iranica Cahier* 15).

Mongol rule, some groups and individuals appear to have derived direct benefits from the changed situation under the new overlords.<sup>21</sup> Especially some Sufi groups and individuals entertained good relations with the Mongol administrators and rulers before their conversion to Islam, as Buddhism did not prevent the latter from supporting charismatic religious leaders or Muslim religious institutions.<sup>22</sup> It is noteworthy that the few surviving original documents from the early Ilkhanate, i.e. the Ilkhanate under Buddhist rule, support Muslim religious institutions. The 1272 endowment deed of Nūr al-Dīn Ibn Jājā in Kırşehir in Central Anatolia, which was signed by several dozens of Mongol *amīrs*, supports numerous mosques and *madrāsas*,<sup>23</sup> and the 1292 edict (*söz*) of the Mongol *amīr* Baytmish Qushchi from the reign of the Ilkhan Gaykhatu (r. 690/1291–694/1295) was issued for the benefit of a Sufi lodge near the Caspian Sea.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> For a study of the local elites in Yazd, see Jean Aubin, “Le patronage culturel en Iran sous les Ilkhans. Une grande famille de Yazd,” *Le Monde Iranien et l’Islam* 3 (1975): 107–118. On the endowments of Rukn al-Dīn Sayyid in Yazd, see Īraj Afshār, *Yādgārhā-yi Yazd*, 2 vols. (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āthār-i Millī, 1970–1975). See also, Renata Holod-Tretiak, “The Monuments of Yazd, 1300–1450: Architecture, Patronage and Setting” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1972), 55, 150, fn. 47, on the *dār al-siyāda* in Yazd, which received large incomes both from the city of Yazd, and the surrounding crucial water systems (both from the *qanāt* and the water mills). On the ascendancy of *sayyid* families during the 14th and 15th century post-Ilkhanid and Timurid period, such as the Sarbadārs of Khurasān, who had *ithnā-‘asharī* aspirations, the Shi‘i *sayyid* Mar‘ashis in Māzandarān, and the *sayyid* family of the Kiyā in East Gilān, largely consisting of Zaydi ‘*ulamā*’, see Yukako Goto, “Timūr and Local Dynasties in Iran,” in *Irano-Turkic Cultural Contacts in the 14th–17th centuries*, ed. Éva M. Jeremiás (Acta et Studia I. Piliscsaba, The Anicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies [2002] 2003), 67–77. See also *eadem*, “Der Aufstieg zweier Sayyid-Familien am Kaspischen Meer: ‘Volksislamische’ Strömungen in Iran des 8/14. Und 9/15. Jahrhunderts,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 89 (1999): 45–84, and for a general appreciation of the socio-religious movements of the period, Bashir, *Messianic Hopes*, 31–41.

<sup>22</sup> Individual prominent Sufis include Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahmān, who was the ‘right and left hand’ of the first Muslim convert Ilkhan Aḥmad Tegüder in 1284; Shaykh Barāq Bābā, who was highly venerated by the Muslim Ilkhans Ghāzan Khān and Öljeitü; Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (see below); and others.

<sup>23</sup> The founder of this endowment, a certain Nūr al-Dīn (b.) Jājā (Caca Oğlu), may have been of Turkmen background. On the endowment, and the endower’s interaction with the Mongols stationed in the region, see Judith Pfeiffer, “Protecting Private Property vs. Negotiating Political Authority. Nūr al-Dīn Ibn Jaja and His Endowments in 13th Century Anatolia,” in *Ferdowsi, the Mongols and the History of Iran: Art, Literature and Culture from Early Islam to Qajar Persia*, edited by Robert Hillenbrand, A.C.S. Peacock and F.A. Abdulaeva (London: I.B. Tauris, forthcoming).

<sup>24</sup> Facsimile publ. and trans. Abolala Soudavar, *Persian Courts. Selections from the Art and History Trust Collection* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), 34–35. The original is held at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (LTS 1995.2.9). For a facsimile reproduction of the incipit, see also *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353*, eds. Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven [Conn.]: Yale University Press, 2002), 50. This is

An important group of original documents from the Ilkhanate bears witness to the close relationship between the Mongol and local elites, and in particular the protection of the nascent Şafaviyya Sufi network in Ardabil, a then Sunni precursor to the later Twelver Shi'i Safavid dynasty in Iran.<sup>25</sup> The close relation between Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1273) and his family and the Mongol sovereigns in Anatolia that can be gleaned from Aflākī's hagiography is another example for this kind of accommodation and symbiosis that pre-dates the Ilkhans' conversion to Islam.<sup>26</sup>

v. A post-conquest *literary* accommodation that set in particularly after the Mongols' conversion to Islam, and the proliferation of literature seeking to explain the Mongol phenomenon within a narrative framework of

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one of the few and among the earliest original documents from the Ilkhanid period that have come down to us. In Irinjin Turji's (Gaykhatu's Buddhist name) name, it confirms the Great Amir Baytmish Aqa's endowment and tax exemption of the village Mandashīn near the Caspian Sea for the benefit of a dervish lodge (*zāvīya*), so that its revenue "can be used to feed the dervishes and the hospice visitors." The founder of this endowment, the "Great Amir Baytmish Aqa'"s name is mentioned in the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh* as one of the *amīrs* both during Arghun's and Gaykhatu's reigns as "*Bāytmish Qūshchī*," i.e., Baytmish the Falconer, and he is listed in the *Shu'ab-i panjgāna* under Gaykhatu Khan's predecessor Arghun Khan as the leader of ten thousand ("*amīr tūmān*;" Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh, *Shu'ab-i panjgāna*, Ms. Ahmet III. 2937, unfoliated).

<sup>25</sup> On the early Şafaviyya during the Mongol period, their relationship with the Mongol military elite, and the documentary evidence from this period, see especially Jean Aubin, "Shaykh Ibrāhīm Zāhid Gilāni (1218?–1301)," *Turcica* 21–23 (1991): 39–53; and Monika Gronke, *Derwische im Vorhof der Macht. Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte Nordwestirans im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1993). Another local family with *sayyid* affiliations that started out in this period, but did not have quite the same political success, are the Kujujis of Tabriz. They owned extensive real estate in Azerbaijan and established major foundations, including in Tabriz. To the founding father, Khvāja Muḥammad Kujujāni (d. 677/1278) has been ascribed a *sayyid* genealogy via the *imāms* Zayn al-Ābidīn and 'Alī. However, this genealogy is found in the 16th century Ibn Karbalā'ī's *Rawḍat al-jinān*, and it is not known whether this 'Alid genealogy was already contemporary. See, Christoph Werner, Daniel Zakrzewski, and Hans-Thomas Tillschneider, *Die Kuşuĵi-Stiftungen in Tabriz. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Ğalāyiriden (Edition, Übersetzung, Kommentar)* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2013), 20. See also Jean Aubin, "Études Safavides. I. Şāh Ismā'īl et les notables de l'Iraq Persan," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 2.1 (1959): 55.

<sup>26</sup> For Rūmī's relationship with the Mongols, see the various entries in his hagiography by Aflākī, (d. 761/1360), *Manāqib al-'arīfīn*, 2 vols., ed. Tahsin Yazıcı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1959–1961 [21976–80]); *Les saints des derviches tourneurs*, 2 vols., trans. Clément Huart (Paris: E. Leroux, 1918–22, 2: 230–235); *The feats of the Knowers of God (Manāqeb al-'arefīn)*, trans. John O'Kane, (Leiden etc.: Brill, 2002). Aflākī relates, e.g., how, when the Mongol commander Bayju asked the grandees of Konya to raze the city walls, it was Rūmī who, against the outcry of the citizens, strongly advised that the city walls ought to be levelled, stating that the Mongols, "these servants of God are merciful and patient; even better, they have a divine character." Rūmī suggested that their commander Bayju was a "saint" without knowing it.

conquest and conversion, which resulted in the integration of the Mongols into the larger Muslim historiography and cosmology.<sup>27</sup>

For the literature seeking to explain the Mongol phenomenon, the Mongols' conversion to Islam around 1295 played a pivotal role, as it entirely reversed the Mongols' perception even among those Muslims who had reacted to the Buddhist period of Mongol rule with silence. With their conversion to Islam, the Mongols, once represented by Hülegü's hordes, heralds of the end of the world, became acceptable rulers.<sup>28</sup> To a certain extent, these *narratives of accommodation* from the Ilkhanid and Timurid milieu are counterparts to the *narratives of grievance* that are dominant in the Mamluk milieu, which have largely contributed to reinforcing, if not creating, such paradigms as 'the Golden Age of Islam,' and the 'Decline of Islam' under non-Arab rule. The latter is particularly popular in areas that were never directly subject to Mongol rule, whereas the former is widespread in areas ruled by Turco-Mongol dynasties. *Together*, the memory of grievance and the narratives of conversion and accommodation represent the two faces of a coin which Marshall G.S. Hodgson once dubbed the "Age of Mongol Prestige."

With this in mind, we can turn to the Twelver Shi'is of Ḥilla as an example of the third and to a certain extent also the fifth group, those who deliberately sought cooperation with the Hülegüids during the conquest phase. As outlined above, they were not alone in accommodating Mongol rule, but the sources are particularly rich, and as a minority with a strong sense of community, history, and legitimacy they appear to have been particularly successful in appealing to Mongol notions of sovereignty, history, and justice and were thereby able to turn Mongol rule to their benefit.

*Political Cooperation and Narrative Accommodation of Mongol Rule  
in the Middle East*

Several famous Twelver Shi'i individuals who lived during the Ilkhanid period owe their fame partially to their interaction with the political authorities of the time. They include the vizier of the last Abbasid caliph al-Mustaʿsim, Ibn al-ʿAlqamī (d. 656/1258), who has been accused

<sup>27</sup> See Pfeiffer, "The canonization of cultural memory."

<sup>28</sup> For a detailed discussion, and a larger range of examples from similar texts of accommodation, see Judith Pfeiffer, "Conversion to Islam among the Ilkhans in Muslim narrative traditions: The Case of Aḥmad Tegüder" (PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 2003).

of cooperating with the Mongols in bringing about the fall of the Abbasid caliphate;<sup>29</sup> the polymath Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274), head of the famous observatory in Marāgha during the reigns of the Ilkhans Hülegü and Abaqa, and overseer of the pious foundations of the Ilkhanate;<sup>30</sup> and the theologian ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1326), whom the Ilkhan Öljeitü (r. 704–716/1304–1316) called to his court to elaborate on Twelver Shi‘i theology and who was therefore posthumously (and erroneously) claimed for Öljeitü’s conversion to Twelver Shi‘ism.<sup>31</sup>

Here I shall discuss two less well-known cases, which point beyond the level of individual involvement. Rather, they are examples of *communal* efforts of smaller, possibly locally organized, Shi‘i groups to turn to their advantage the radical change in the political circumstances under Mongol rule. They represent categories iii. and v. in the scheme presented above.

The first example are the Shi‘is of the town al-Ḥilla in Southern Iraq, who sent a delegation to Chinggis Khan’s grandson Hülegü during his final attempt to take Baghdad. From him they secured edicts (*yarlighs*) that not only spared their home town from a Mongol attack, but apparently also initiated a special relationship between the Shi‘is of Ḥilla and future Ilkhanid rulers. The second example is the institution of the *dār al-siyāda* founded by Ghazan Khan to support the *sayyids* in the major cities of the Ilkhanate.

#### *A Letter from the Shi‘i Community of Ḥilla to Hülegü (ca. 1258)*

The message that the Shi‘is of Ḥilla sent to Hülegü provides important insights into the interactions between a local community and the Chinggisid rulers. The relevant passage is found in the Ilkhanid historian Vaṣṣāf’s

<sup>29</sup> On Ibn al-Alqamī, see J.A. Boyle, “Ibn al-Alqamī,” *EI*<sup>2</sup> 3 (1971): 702.

<sup>30</sup> On Ṭūsī, see Jamil Ragep’s excellent “General Introduction” to his edition of Ṭūsī’s *al-Tadhkira fī ‘ilm al-hay’a*, ed. and trans. F. Jamil Ragep (New York, Springer Verlag: 1993), vol. 1. See also Hans Daiber and F.J. Ragep, “al-Ṭūsī, Naṣīr al-Dīn,” *EI*<sup>2</sup> 10 (1998): 746–752, and Rudolf Strothmann, *Die Zwölfer-Schi‘a: zwei religionsgeschichtliche Charakterbilder aus der Mongolenzeit* (Hildesheim; New York: Georg Olms, 1975), 16–87.

<sup>31</sup> On ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, see Sabine Schmidtke, *The Theology of al-‘Allāma al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325)* (Berlin: Schwarz, 1991). For a short sketch of his vita, see al-Ḥillī, *al-Bābu ‘l-hādī ‘ashar. A Treatise on the Principles of Shi‘ite Theology*, by Ḥasan b. Yūsuf b. ‘Alī ibnu’l-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī with Commentary by Miqdād-i-Fāḍil al-Ḥillī, trans. William McElwee Miller (London: The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain [1928] 1958), xi–xiv. On Ḥillī’s claimed involvement in Öljeitü’s conversion to Twelver Shi‘ism, see Judith Pfeiffer, “Conversion Versions: Sultan Öljeitü’s Conversion to Shi‘ism (709/1309) in Muslim Narrative Sources,” *Mongolian Studies* XXII (1999): 35–67.

early 14th century history *Tajziyat al-amṣār*. Vaṣṣāf relates that after Hülegü's armies had besieged Baghdad for fifty days without achieving its surrender, they erected high scaffolding outside the city, from which they flung nafta and stones into the streets of Baghdad with catapults.<sup>32</sup>

[In Persian—JP:] At this point, Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Ṭā'ūs al-Ḥillī,<sup>33</sup> Sadīd al-Dīn Yūsuf Ibn al-Muṭahhar,<sup>34</sup> and Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-'Izz entrusted a messenger with a letter to Hülegü Khān, saying 'we are docile and submissive (*mā munqād va il-īm*),'<sup>35</sup> [In Arabic—JP:] "thus it was decreed on us and explained to us:" [In Persian—JP:] We have found among the traditions (*akhbār*) of our ancestors the Twelve Imams, and in particular the Commander of the Faithful [...] 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, that you will be ruling over these lands, and that its [current] ruler will become caught in the grip of power and crushed by the verdict of pride. With these words they meant the words of Murtaḍā.<sup>36</sup>

[In Arabic—JP:] When there arrives the group of horsemen (*iṣāba*) that has no share, by God, you will surely be laid in ruins, oh mother of tyrants and abode of oppressors, oh source of tribulations! Woe unto you, oh Baghdad, and unto your splendid palaces with their wings resembling the wings of peacocks, disintegrating like salt dissolves in water.<sup>37</sup> There will come the Banū Qanṭūra, preceded by a loud, neighing noise; they have faces like

<sup>32</sup> Vaṣṣāf, *Tajziyat al-amṣār va tazjiyat al-a-ṣār*, ed. Muḥammad Mahdī Iṣfahānī (Bombay, 1269/1853), 36.

<sup>33</sup> According to the *Ḥawādith al-jāmi'a*, Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Ṭā'ūs al-'Alawī died in 656/1258 "ba'd al-wāqī'a," i.e. after the fall of Baghdad. See [Pseudo-?] Ibn al-Fuwaṭī (d. 723/1323), *Kitāb al-ḥawādith*, eds. Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf and 'Imād 'Abd al-Salām Ra'ūf (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1997), 365. On other prominent members of the same family, see Strothmann, *Die Zwölfer-Schi'a*, 88–162 (primarily on Raḍī al-Dīn Ṭā'ūsī, d. 664/1266); Etan Kohlberg, *A medieval Muslim scholar at work: Ibn Ṭāwūs and his library* (Leiden: Brill, 1992).

<sup>34</sup> This is a reference to the famous 'Allāma al-Ḥillī's father, Sadīd al-Dīn Yūsuf b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī. Vaṣṣāf's account is confirmed by the testimony of Ḥasan b. Yūsuf b. al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī (al-'Allāma) in his *Kashf al-yaqīn fi faḍā'il Amīr al-mu'minīn* (Najaf: Dār al-kutub al-tijāriyya, 1371/1961), 28. For a brief sketch of what is known about his vita, see Schmidtke, *The Theology of al-'Allāma al-Ḥillī*, 10–11.

<sup>35</sup> On the Turco-Mongol term *il* ('friendly inclined,' 'submissive'), see Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und Mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1963–75), 2: 194–201, article "ēl."

<sup>36</sup> "Murtaḍā" here refers most probably to the first Shi'i *imām* 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, one of whose *laqabs* (surnames) is "al-Murtaḍā."

<sup>37</sup> A similar critique of Baghdad and the adverse effects of its luxury is given in a *marthiya* on Baghdad, in which the poet Taqī al-Dīn Ismā'il b. Abū al-Yusr exclaims: "God knows that the people [of Baghdād] were made negligent by what they enjoyed of divine favors, wherein was abundance, so they grew heedless of the wrath of the Almighty, since they became negligent, and there came upon them a mighty one of the hosts of infidelity [...] Truly the Day of Judgment has been held in Baghdād, and her term, when to prosperity succeeds adversity." See Joseph de Somogyi, "A *Qaṣīda* on the Destruction of Baghdād by the Mongols," 45–46.

shields covered with leather (*lahum wujūhun ka-al-mijānn al-muṭraqa*),<sup>38</sup> and trunks like the trunks of elephants, and there is no country they reach which they will not conquer, and no creature (*birāya*) which they will not unsettle!

[In Persian—JP:] Hülegü Khān was<sup>39</sup> utterly delighted and issued a *yarliḡh* as a reward (*suyūrghāmishī*)<sup>40</sup> for them, and sent Bugha and ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-‘Ajāmī to become governors there. By this means, the inhabitants of al-Ḥilla put on the garment of security and drank from the goblet of Ṭā’ūsiyan friendship (*jam-i khulla-yi ṭā’ūsi nūshidand*).<sup>41</sup>

The narrative continues with the Mongol conquest of Baghdad. According to the contemporary chronicler and catholicos of the Jacobite (Monophysite) Church Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286), al-Ḥilla was indeed spared from Mongol attacks.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup> In the reading and translation of *al-mijānn al-muṭraqa* as ‘leather-covered shields,’ I follow the explanation given by Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (773–852/1372–1449) in his commentary on Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*. See Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bukhārī bi-sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Imām Abī ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ismā’īl al-Bukhārī*, eds. Muḥammad Fu’ād ‘Abd al-Bāqī and Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Beirut: Dār al-ma’rifā, 1959), 6:104 (*Jihād*, 2928). For further explanations, see Judith Pfeiffer, “Faces Like Shields Covered with Leather: Keturah’s Sons in the Post-Mongol Islamicate Eschatological Traditions,” in *Horizons of the World: Festschrift for Isenbike Togan*, eds. İlker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kılıç-Schubel (Istanbul: İthaki, 2011), 556–594, where the above translation and some of the following interpretation of the passage are provided in greater detail.

<sup>39</sup> The Persian text here continues in the present tense, whereas the beginning of the story had been narrated in the past; to achieve a better English translation, both were rendered here in the past tense.

<sup>40</sup> On the terms *yarliḡh*, *soyūrghāl* and *soyūrghāmishī*, see Doerfer, *Türkische und Mongolische Elemente*, 4: 153–58, and 1: 351–354, with further references to secondary literature. It is important to note the legal implications of the term *soyūrghāl* as expressed in the difference between *tiyūl*, e.g., as a life-long ‘present’ (in the form of portable presents or land), and *soyūrghāl* as an inheritable grant. This should (at least theoretically) indicate that future generations of inhabitants of Ḥilla should have been able to ‘inherit’ the right to the same ‘grant’ (and possibly duties) given by Hülegü. Unfortunately, Vaṣṣāf does not say explicitly of what this *soyūrghāl* exactly consisted; it may have been a permanent tax exemption, though further research (especially on the later building activities by the Ilkhan Ghazan in the vicinity of Ḥilla) might shed light on this issue.

<sup>41</sup> Vaṣṣāf, *Tajziyat al-amṣūr*, 36. There is possibly a pun involved: The term “*ṭā’ūsī*” probably refers to the name of the leader of the Ḥillī delegation, Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Ṭā’ūs al-Ḥillī, though Vaṣṣāf’s audience might also have remembered that another prominent Ibn Ṭā’ūs, namely Raḍiyy al-Dīn ‘Alī b. b. Mūsā b. Ja’far b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn Ṭā’ūs, had been the driving force behind the ruling that a just infidel is to be preferred as a ruler to an unjust Muslim in the face of the arrival of the Mongols in Baghdad, as related by Ibn al-Tiḡtaqā (fl. 700/1300); see *al-Fakhrī fī al-ādāb al-sultāniyya wa al-duwal al-islāmiyya* ([Beirut]: Dār Ṣādir, 1386/1966), 17. Raḍī al-Dīn Ibn Ṭā’ūs later became the leader of the ‘Alids in Iraq, and saw himself as their savior; Kohlberg, *A medieval Muslim scholar*, 4: 10–13.

<sup>42</sup> After the conquest of Baghdad, Hülegü sent the Mongol *amīr* Buqa-Timur to Ḥilla “to test its inhabitants, to see whether they were submissive or not,” which they proved by

By ‘packaging’ the imminent Mongol conquest of Baghdad as a prophecy coming from the Shi‘i *imāms*, and by using highly evocative chiliastic vocabulary that called both for the collapse of the old order and expressed hope in a future of justice, the Ḥillī delegation reinforced Ṭūsī’s efforts to convince the Mongols to spare the Shi‘is of Iraq<sup>43</sup> and added metaphysical meaning to mere submission. When Baghdad did indeed fall, the ‘prophecy come true’ served to elevate the esteem of both the *imāms* and their Shi‘i followers in the Mongols’ eyes.

On the one hand, the Ḥillī message reflected the attitude of the Twelver Shi‘is of Ḥilla vis-à-vis the Sunni establishment of Baghdad which was, from their view, usurping the Shi‘is’ right to the caliphate/imamate. The Mongols, on the other hand, while strong enough to subdue the unjust rulers of Baghdad, were themselves a terrible, hitherto unknown force, and rather awe-inspiring, as expressed in the use of the wording “*lahum wujūhun ka-al-mijānn al-muṭraqa*,” which is directly borrowed from *fitan* and *malāḥim* literature, where the arrival of a people with these features is listed among the signs announcing the end of the world. Nonetheless, the identification of the Mongols with the Banū Qanṭūrā, the descendants of Abraham’s third wife Ketorah, was an important step in integrating them into an expanded Islamicate cosmology: Through this genealogy, the Mongols became part of the Abrahamic paradigm and thereby received a firm place in the then known world.<sup>44</sup> As for the impact of the negotiations with Hülegü during his siege of Baghdad, the involvement of Shaykh Sadīd al-Dīn Yūsuf b. ‘Alī b. Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī may well have laid the foundations for the personal relationship between Hülegü’s great grandson Öljeytü (r. 1304–1316) and al-Ḥillī’s son Jamāl al-Dīn Ḥasan b. Yūsuf b. ‘Alī b. Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, known as ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, who wrote several treatises on behalf of Öljeytü after the latter’s adoption of Shi‘ism,<sup>45</sup> and whom the

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building a bridge over the Euphrates river. Without approaching Ḥilla, the Mongol armies passed by the town in the direction of Wāṣiṭ. Wāṣiṭ, a town which had not previously surrendered, was then plundered by the Mongols. Wickens, “Nasir ad-Din Tusi on the Fall of Baghdad,” 35; similarly Boyle, “The death of the last ‘Abbasid Caliph”, 161.

<sup>43</sup> “Owing to al-Ṭūsī, and probably also to Ibn al-‘Alkāmī, the Shi‘ī vizier of the last ‘Abbāsid caliph, upon their occupation of Mesopotamia, the Mongols spared to a large extent the Shi‘ī sanctuaries.” Daiber and Ragep, “al-Ṭūsī.”

<sup>44</sup> According to the Hebrew Bible, Abraham had six sons with Ketorah—more than with Sarah and Hagar taken together. See, Genesis 25; Chronicles I: 32. She is prominently present in the Muslim literary traditions, especially *ḥadīth* literature. For a detailed discussion of Ketorah’s re-interpretation as the ancestress of the Mongols, see Pfeiffer, “Keturah’s Sons.”

<sup>45</sup> Among these were his *Nahj al-ḥaqq wa kashf al-ṣidq*, an apologetic work addressing Ash‘arite views; the *Istiqṣā’ al-naẓar fī baḥth ‘an al-qadā’ wa al-qadar*, a defense of

Ilkhan Öljeytü called from Ḥilla to his ambulant court in North-Western Iran five decades later.<sup>46</sup>

*The Institution of the Dār al-Siyāda under Ghazan Khan*

The above example of a local Shi'i reaction to the Mongol conquest of Baghdad stems from the early Ilkhanate, and is extracted from a narrative source, Vaṣṣāf's chronicle, which, while known to have preserved rather faithfully a number of original documents, is still a narrative source composed during the middle to late Ilkhanate (ca. 1328, seventy years after the events in question). The following example, by contrast, stems from the time immediately after Ghazan Khan's conversion to Islam, and involves an original document dating to his reign. The background to this is found in the early 14th century *Tārīkh-i ʿUljāytū*, named after the Shi'i convert to Islam among the Ilkhans, Sultan Öljeytü (r. 704–716/1304–1316). The story goes as follows:

On a Friday afternoon in the year 702/1302, in the Friday mosque of Baghdad, a group of Muslims killed and then burned the remains of an "Alavī" while he was performing his prayer (*ʿAlaviyyī rā dar namāz bikushtand va bisūkhtand*). The reason for this was that the man had apparently been making up for a missed and possibly deliberately postponed Friday prayer. When interrogated about this, he had declared that "performing my prayer behind this (Sunni) Imam is illicit for me." As a

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the Mu'tazilite view on the free choice of human action; and the *Minhāj al-karāma fī ma'rifat* [or: *ithbāt*] *al-imāma*, which was influential immediately beyond the confines of the Ilkhanate, as it provoked al-Ḥillī's contemporary Ibn Taymiyya to compose his *Minhāj al-sunna al-nabawīyya fī naqḍ kalām al-Shī'a al-Qadariyya* in reaction to it. See, Henri Laoust, "La critique du Sunnisme dans la doctrine d'Al-Ḥillī," *Revue des études islamiques* 34 (1966): 35–60; Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Ṣafawids*; Schmidtke, *The Theology*; Jean Calmard, "Le chiisme imamite sous les Ilkhans," in *L'Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1997), 283; Tariq al-Jamil, "Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī."

<sup>46</sup> Such obedience to a call of duty at the Ilkhanid court was, as the case of Simnani has shown, not always voluntary. See Devin DeWeese's contribution to this volume. On Simnānī, and his reluctance to serve the non-Muslim Mongols, see Jamal J. Elias, *The Throne Carrier of God. The Life and Thought of 'Alā' ad-Dawla as-Simnānī* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995). In al-Ḥillī's case, his service to Öljeytü may well have been part of his home town Ḥilla's truce with Hülegü and, by extension, certain duties that inhabitants of the town had vis-à-vis future Ilkhans. However that may be, al-Ḥillī's name is found among the *taqrīzāt* for the Ilkhanid vizier Rashīd al-Dīn's theoretical works, and he was certainly well connected in the higher political echelons of the Ilkhanate. Josef van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten. Zu Inhalt und Entstehungsgeschichte der theologischen Schriften des Rasīduddīn Faḏlullāh* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1981), 47–48.

result, the enraged mob executed the man and burned his remains.<sup>47</sup> A group of *sayyids* (*jam'ī sādāt*) brought his ashes (“burnt bones:” *ustukhvān-i sūkhṭa*) to the nearby “Mashhad” (of either ‘Alī, i.e., Najaf, or that of his son Ḥusayn, i.e., nearby Karbalā’), and presented them to the Mongol ruler Ghazan, who happened to visit the area at that time. Upon hearing the story and seeing the bones of this member of the house of the prophet (*az awlād-i dhurriyāt-i payghambar, dhurriyāt-i nabī, sādāt*), Ghazan asked to be instructed about the different confessions (*madhāhib*) in Islam that stood behind this strife—a question that moved the focus from a terminology of consanguinity and descent to a terminology of confessional differences as the root cause of the conflict, i.e., it moved from the social to the religio-political definition of *sayyidism*.<sup>48</sup> Ghazan was then presented with an elaborate summary of Islamic history in which the story of the descendants of the prophet was equated with the history of political Shi‘ism, whose proponents, beginning with ‘Alī himself, were suppressed first by Mu‘āwiya and the Marwanids, who had ‘Alī’s name cursed in the *khuṭba*, and then the Abbasids, who likewise propagated Sunni Islam.<sup>49</sup> Once again, however, partisanship with ‘Alī is variously expressed in a terminology that evokes a biological relationship/consanguinity, such as *ahl-i bayt, āl-i bayt, sādāt, āl-i ‘Alī, ṭāyifa-yi sādāt*, suggesting that these

<sup>47</sup> Abū al-Qāsim Qāshānī (d. 736/1335–6), *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, ed. Mahin Hambly (Tehran: *Intishārāt-i Būngāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb*, 1348 h.sh./1969), 90–91. A similar incident was reported for the year 1312, when the vizier Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī was executed by the mob: According to Ibn ‘Inaba (d. 828/1424), Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī Naqīb was killed, together with his sons, next to the Tigris (literally ‘confluence,’ *shaṭṭ*) of Baghdad, where “some of the misers among the populace of Bagdad” [*ba’z-i az ajlāf-i ‘avāmm-i Baghdād*] tore the Sayyid to pieces. Ibn ‘Inaba, *al-Fuṣūl al-Fakhrīyya*, ed. Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥaddith Urmavī (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i ‘Ilmī va Farhangī, 1364 h.sh./1984), 189 (who also reports that the remains of the *sayyid* were eaten). The earlier, contemporary writer Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī (d. 750/1349) mentions the incident, but does not include cannibalism and points to vizieral rivalry as the reason. *Tārīkh-i guzida*, ed. ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā‘ī (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1362/1983), 608. See also Muẓaffar Bakhtiyār, “Nām-i nivishta-yi Sulṭān Muḥammad Khudābanda,” *Majalla-yi Dānishkada-yi Adabiyāt va ‘Ulūm-i Insāni-yi Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān* 3–4 (1368), 215. For Ūljeytū’s reaction to this massacre, see Henry M. Howorth, *History of the Mongols from the 9th to the 19th Century, Part III: The Mongols of Persia* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., [1880–] 1888), 562–63.

<sup>48</sup> Obviously, not every *sayyid* was a Shi‘i and vice versa, as the some three dozen members of the 14th and 15th century Ījī network of scholars show, many of whom bore both the title *sayyid* and were Shafi‘is. In the above context, however, it is very clear that the arguments made by contemporary scholars aimed at mingling the two, if only in the minds of their Mongol patrons. On the Ījī network of scholars, see Denise Aigle, “Le rayonnement d’une grande famille du sud de l’Iran et sa contribution à la transmission du savoir Šāfi‘ite aux XIV<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècles,” *Cahiers d’onomastique Arabe 1988–1992* (1993): 105–161.

<sup>49</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, 91–93.

terms were either used synonymously at that time, or that the author—Qāshānī—very skillfully mingled the subtle differences in the conceptual frameworks in which the *sādāt* on the one hand and Ghazan on the other understood the conflict.<sup>50</sup>

All along, however, the story implicitly equates descent from the prophet (*sayyid*-ship) in the *Muslim context* with descent from Chinggis Khan in the *Mongol context* as the prerequisite for political leadership, an idea that is expressed explicitly in the same text only a few pages later, when Taramtāz, one of the Mongol *amīrs*, is asked by Öljeytü to explain to him the tenets of Shi'ism, and does so by drawing a parallel between Shi'i and Chinggisid notions of authority:

Oh Padishah, in Islam a Shi'i (*rāfiḍī*)<sup>51</sup> [is he who] recognizes the seed (*urugh*)<sup>52</sup> of Chinggis Khan as his successor after his death according to the Mongol *yasa*. The Sunna (*madhhab-i sunnat*) considers an *amīr* [i.e., someone without Chinggisid descent] worthy of his position.<sup>53</sup>

In other words, Taramtāz (Qāshānī) states that Shi'ism is good for the Chinggisids, whereas Sunnism is the appropriate confession for the (non-Chinggisid commoner) *amīrs*. This parallel, and by extension the parallel between Chinggis Khan and the Prophet Muḥammad, is omnipresent in the post-Mongol Islamicate sources both in the narrative texts, and perhaps even more succinctly so in visualizations of royal vs. prophetic lineages that were produced during this period for the first time in the Islamicate context.<sup>54</sup> This parallelism explains the easy equation of the *sayyids* with the Shi'is, replacing partisanship on the basis of religious-political ideas (the *shī'at* 'Alī) with descent (the *ahl-i* 'Alī).<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> For a discussion of the terminology used, see Kazuo Morimoto, "Introduction," in *Sayyids and Sharifs in Muslim Societies. The living links to the Prophet*, ed. Kazuo Morimoto (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 1–12. See also the same author's programmatic essay, "Toward the Formation of Sayyido-Sharifology: Questioning Accepted Fact," *The Journal of Sophia Asian Studies* 22 (2004): 87–103.

<sup>51</sup> The original Persian uses the singular here, which has been retained in the translation.

<sup>52</sup> On the term *urugh* see Doerfer, *Türkische und Mongolische Elemente*, 2: 47–52 (No. 468).

<sup>53</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāyātū*, 99.

<sup>54</sup> On the parallel between Chinggis Khan and the prophet Muḥammad, see below. On the visualization of prophetic vs. royal lines and claims to political leadership based on these, see İlker Evrim Binbaş, "Structure and Function of the Genealogical Tree in Islamic Historiography (1200–1500)," in *Horizons of the World: Festschrift for İsenbike Togan*, eds. İlker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kılıç-Schubel (Istanbul: İthaki, 2011), 465–544.

<sup>55</sup> As far as the terminology itself is concerned, it appears to have been almost interchangeable at the time. Where some historians, e.g., describe Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī as the head of the *sādāt*, others, such as Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī, call him straightforward a Shi'i and

As a result of listening to this story, Ghazan declared that henceforth he was going to be the defendant of the *ahl al-bayt*, and decreed that *dār al-siyādas* ('houses for *sayyids*') be built in all the major cities of the Ilkhanate.<sup>56</sup> The *dār al-siyādas* were established in explicit comparison and contrast to already existing institutions, such as *madrasas* for the scholars, *khānqāhs* for the Sufis, and *zāviyas* for the dervishes.<sup>57</sup> Ghazan issued an edict to this effect, with major endowments to be made available for this purpose in the main cities of the Ilkhanate, including Tabriz,<sup>58</sup> Isfahan, Shiraz, Baghdad, Kirman, Kashan, Sivas, Kufa,<sup>59</sup> and Yazd.<sup>60</sup>

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one of their most militant and extremist representatives at that. "Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn Āvaḡī ki pishvā-yi ahl-i shī'a būd va dar raḡḡ ghulūvī 'azīm dāsht." Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī, *Tārikh-i Guzīda*, 608.

<sup>56</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārikh-i Ūljāyūtū*, 93. On the social role of these *dār al-siyādas*, see Akio Iwatake, "Ghāzān Khān's *dār al-siyāda*," *Itoyoshi kenkyū* 50 (1993): 48–82 (in Japanese). Iwatake's article treats the *dār al-siyāda* not only under Ghazan, but also under his successors down to the Timurid period. It investigates this institution from the angle of social policy, arguing that Ghazan intended to "make *sayyids*, the descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad and representatives of authority in Islam during the post-Caliphate period, the core of society and protect them in order to curb urban conflict and stabilize the urban society of Iran." *Ibid.*, 71. At the latest under Ūljeytū, Iwatake argues, the position of the *mutawallī* was compounded with that of the head *naqīb*, thereby permitting the ruler to control, manage, and co-opt *sayyids* into the state all the while protecting them and constructing *dār al-siyādas* dedicated to them.—I am greatly indebted to Mrs. Yui Kanda, who made this important article accessible to me in an English translation. Unfortunately, this occurred too late for me to be able to engage with Iwatake's ideas in a more detailed manner in the present article, though I hope to be able to do so in the future. It is very much hoped that an English translation of Iwatake's article will be made accessible to the wider academic audience in due course.

<sup>57</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārikh-i Ūljāyūtū*, 91, mentioning as locations for such *dār al-siyādas* explicitly the *abvāb al-birr* (Ghazan's own endowment) of the Shanb-i Ghazan in Tabriz, Anatolia (Rūm), and the towns of Baghdad, Kirman, and Shiraz. *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>58</sup> Next to the *dār al-siyāda* of Kashan, the endowment deed of which is discussed in this paper, we are best informed about that of Tabriz. This is because a copy or possibly summary of the text of Ghazan's endowment deed (*vaqfiyya*) is preserved in the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, which also describes a *dār al-siyāda* as part of Ghazan's royal *vaqf* at the *abvāb al-birr* in Tabriz. See Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, eds. Muḥammad Rawshan and Muṣṭafā Mūsavī (Tehran: Nashr-i Alburz, 1373/1994), 2: 1377–1386, at 1378; Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shaybī, *Tashayyu' va taṣavvuf tā āghāz-i qarn-i davāzdahum-i hijrī*, Persian trans. 'A.Z. Karāguzlū (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1374/1995), 78.

<sup>59</sup> For the *dār al-siyāda* in Kufa, with the explicit note that it was established by Ghazan, see *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al-Qulūb Composed by Ḥamd-Allāh Mustawfī of Qazwīn in 740 (1340)*, trans. Guy Le Strange (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1919), 39.

<sup>60</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārikh-i Ūljāyūtū*, 93. See also Rashīd al-Dīn, *Savāniḡ al-afkār-i Rashīdī*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh (Tih-rān: Intishārāt-i Kitābkhānah-yi Markazī va Markaz-i Asnād, 1358 [1979]), 143 (letter no. 29); Nakhchivānī, *Dastūr al-kātib fi ta'yīn al-marātib*, ed. A.A. Ali-zade (Moscow: Izd-vo "Nauka," 1971), 2: 205; Ja'farī, *Tārikh-i Yazd*, ed. Īraj Afshār (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma wa Nashr-i Kitāb, 1343/1965), 45 ("Ghāzān [...] *chand dār al-siyāda dar mamālik binā kard*"); Muḥammad Taqī Khān Ḥakīm, *Ganj-i*

An alternative and complementary narrative is provided by Rashīd al-Dīn, who attempted to explain Ghazan's increased sympathies for the House of the Prophet by a dream. In this dream, the Prophet Muḥammad told Ghazan that he (Ghazan) and his own (the Prophet's) offspring (via 'Alī) ought to be brothers and asked him, the *pādshāh-i Islām*, to embrace (*mu'ānaqa*) 'Alī, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn as a symbol of this brotherhood.<sup>61</sup> As a result of this dream, Ghazan decided to endow *dār al-siyādas* in all the major cities of the Ilkhanate. Vowing not to reject (*inkār*) the *ṣaḥāba*, Ghazan said that he nonetheless had a special inclination for the *ahl al-bayt* and therefore also ordered a canal to be dug to the "*mashhad-i Ḥusayn*" in Iraq.<sup>62</sup>

It needs to be kept in mind that the Shafī'i convert from Judaism Rashīd al-Dīn, the author of the above narrative, followed with suspicion the ascendancy of the Shi'a both ideologically and politically, and openly opposed Ghazan's potential conversion to Shi'ism (as far as we know, Ghazan never adopted Shi'ism either as an individual, or as a state religion, as much as some of the sources may like to suggest as much). Thus, we know from the *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū* that Rashīd al-Dīn attempted to convince Ghazan that the Shi'a was merely a minority in Islam overall, and that the benefits of being Sunni would become apparent to Ghazan once he conquered Syria and Egypt.<sup>63</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, who was well aware of the importance of genealogy-based authority in the Mongol context, apparently also manipulated the genealogy (*nasab-nāma*) of a particularly overbearing and aggressive Shi'i opponent in order to get rid of him and his political influence.<sup>64</sup> Nonetheless, Rashīd al-Dīn as well had understood

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*dānish. Jughrāfiyā-yi tārikhī-yi shahr-hā-yi Īrān* (Tehran: Zarrīn, 1366/1987), 221; Dorothea Krawulsky, *Iran—Das Reich der Ilkhāne, Eine topographisch-historische Studie* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1978), 244; Manūchīhr Murtaḍavī, *Masā'il-i 'aṣr-i Īlkhānān* (Tabriz: Chāpkhāna-yi Shafaq, 1358 h.sh./1980), 215, 240; Shirīn Bayānī, *Dīn va dawlat dar Īrān-i 'ahd-i Mughūl* (Tehran: Markaz-i Nashr-i Dānishgāhī, 1371/1993), 2: 537. In the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh* Rashīd al-Dīn only lists explicitly Tabriz, Isfahan, Shiraz, and Baghdad among the cities where *dār al-siyādas* were founded; *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, eds. Rawshan/Mūsavī, 2: 1358–59. For the *dār al-siyāda* in Yazd, which was part of the Shamsiyya complex in Yazd, see Jean Aubin, "Le patronage culturel en Iran," 116.

<sup>61</sup> "*mūbāyad ki shumā birādarān bāshīd va farmūd tā pādshāh-i Islām bā ishān mu'ānaqa karda va az jānibayn birādarī qabūl karda-and.*" Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, 2: 1358–59, at 1358. See also Yūsuf Raḥīmī, "Risāla-yi 'Favā'id-i Ūljāytū," *Nashriyya-yi Dānishkada-yi Adabiyāt va Ūlūm-i Insānī-yi Tabriz/Revue de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de l'Université de Tabriz* 25 (1973): 135–156.

<sup>62</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, 2: 1358–59.

<sup>63</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, 95.

<sup>64</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, 132.

the close affinity between Chinggisid and Shi'ī notions of political authority and the seriousness with which Ghazan had begun to establish *dār al-siyādas* all over the Ilkhanate. He therefore legitimized this affinity ex-post-facto by ascribing responsibility for Ghazan's literal 'embracing' of the house of 'Alī to none less than the Prophet Muḥammad himself.

Whichever the motive, there appears to have been a kernel of truth to the story about the *dār al-siyāda* and Mongol support for the *sādāt*, as this information, gleaned from narrative sources such as the above, is confirmed by contemporary documentary evidence. The extant endowment deed (*vaqf-nāma*) of the *dār al-siyāda* in Kashan highlights the importance of this institution during the middle Ilkhanid period and provides important insights into the details of its day-to-day running. The endowment deed, which was published by the late Īraj Afshār, is dated Ramaḍān 703/1303, i.e., to the end of Ghazan's reign, and was signed by a large number of notables from the immediate royal entourage.<sup>65</sup>

Many of the forty-seven individuals who signed this document belonged to the royal court, or held high offices in the Ilkhanate. Among them were the *qāḍī al-quḍāt* Isma'īl b. Yahyā b. Isma'īl Majd al-Milla va al-Dīn Shīrāzī; the vizier Sa'd al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Sāvājī,<sup>66</sup> the governor of Kirman, Ṣadr al-Dīn Abharī,<sup>67</sup> the "kh'āja" and future vizier Rashīd al-Dīn; the astronomer (*munajjim*) Sa'd al-Dīn Ḥasan; a representative (*nā'ib*) of Ghazan Khan's favorite wife Bulughan Khatun (d. 709/1310), who was at that time probably the most influential woman of all the Ilkhanate as the heir to Hülegü Khan's wife Dokuz Khatun's appanage; several deputies

<sup>65</sup> Īraj Afshār, "Vaḳf-nāma-yi sih dih dar Kāshān," *Majalla-yi Farhang-i Īrān-zamīn* 4 (1335 h.sh./1956–57): 122–138; for the date see p. 126. The latest date of any signature found on the *vaqf-nāma* is 17 Ṣafar 704/19 September 1304 (pp. 127, 129), which is several months after Ghazan Khan's death. Ghazan apparently enacted his decision swiftly, as a *dār al-siyāda* is already included in his larger project *abvāb al-birr* in the *Shanbi Ghāzānī* in Tabriz. Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, 2: 1377–1386, at 1378. The *abvāb al-birr* in Tabriz also included a tomb, a Friday mosque, Shafi'ī and Hanafi *madrasas*, a *khānqāh*, an observatory, a hospital, a library, a 'house of law/law chamber' (*bayt al-qānūn*), the overseers's lodgings (*bayt al-mutawallī*), a bath (*ḥawḍkhāna*), and several other institutions.

<sup>66</sup> On Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvājī, who held the vizierate together with Rashīd al-Dīn until his execution in Shawwāl 711/February 1311, see the entries in Nāṣir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī, *Nasā'im al-ashār min laṭā'im al-akhbār dar tārikh-i vuzarā'*, ed. Mīr Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Urmavī "Muḥaddith" (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Iṭṭilā'āt, <sup>2</sup>1364/1985), 114–116; 'Uqaylī, *Āthār al-vuzarā'*, ed. Mīr Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Urmavī "Muḥaddith" (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Iṭṭilā'āt, 1364/1985–86), 283–85; and Kh'āndamīr, *Dastūr al-Vuzarā'*. *Shāmil-i aḥvāl-i vuzarā-yi Islām tā inqirāḍ-i Tūmūriyān 914*, ed. Sa'īd-i Nafīsī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Iqbāl, 2535 Shāhinshāhī), 313–315.

<sup>67</sup> On Abharī, see Bertold Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran. Politik, Verwaltung und Kultur der Ilkhanzeit 1220–1350* (Leiden: Brill, <sup>4</sup>1985), 129, 288.

(*nā'ibs*) and a brother of the vizier Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvajī; Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī's son Aṣīl al-Dīn Ḥasan; and Tāj al-Dīn 'Alī Shāh, who later became vizier under Öljejtü, as well as a number of less famous individuals holding typical court offices, namely *kātibs*, *bitikchīs* (scribes) (among them one "*bitikchī-yi Mughūl-nivīs*"), *muḥarrirs*, *qāḍīs*, *daftar-dārs*, and a financial officer (*mustawfī*).

Three villages near the city of Kashan (Bīdgul, Harāskān, and Mukhtaṣṣ-Ābād) were endowed in their entirety to secure the material basis for this *dār al-siyāda* in Kashan to be run. The named administrator (*mutavallī*), the *naqīb al-nuqabā'* Jalāl al-Milla va al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Sayyid al-Sa'īd Tāj al-Milla va al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī al-Rāvandī al-Kāshī, (and after him generation after generation of his sons and grandsons, "womb after womb")<sup>68</sup> was to be remunerated with 1.000 dinars annually. The *imām*, the teacher, and the physician each were to receive 100 dinars per year, and several other individuals working on the premises (a *farrāsh*, i.e., the chamberlain; a *bavvāb*, 'doorkeeper;' a *saqqā*, 'cupbearer;' a *maṭbakhī*, 'cook/clerk of the kitchen;' a *murattib*, some kind of 'director' or 'organizer;' and an assistant to the physician) were to be paid 60 dinars annually. In addition, the endowment supported 25 poor *sayyids*, who were to be given 2.700 dinars for praying in the mosque and for taking care of the travelers and the poor. It also provided 20 stipends of 30 dinars per year for *sayyid* students of the Koran and Islamic law. A fixed sum of 50 dinars per dowry was to be given to 20 poor *sayyid* women per year to enable them to get married. Also, 60 dinars were set aside to bury the dead (*mawtāhum*) and 740 dinars annually were to be spent on medicine and potions for the sick. All in all, this was a major endowment.<sup>69</sup> Among the endowed positions, it was stipulated explicitly that the *mutavallī*, the *imām*, and the teacher be *sayyids*; for the physician and his assistant, by contrast, such a condition is not mentioned.

While the incipit of this document is missing, there is little reason to doubt that this *vaqf-nāma* can be attributed to Ghazan Khan and his policy to support the *sayyid* community through the creation of *dār al-siyādas* throughout the Ilkhanate. The date, the contents, the names and high ranks of the signatories of this *vaqf-nāma*, together with the sums involved and the kind of objects (entire villages) to be endowed, should leave little

<sup>68</sup> "*thumma al-arshad min awlādihi thumma min awlād awlādihi mā tanāsālū wa ta'āqabū baṭnan ba'da baṭnin.*" Afshār, "Vaḳf-nāma-yi sih dih," 125.

<sup>69</sup> Afshār, "Vaḳf-nāma-yi sih dih," 124–125.

doubt that this was in fact a royal or at least royally supported *vaqf*. In other words, what we have in front of us is most likely one of Ghazan's *dār al-siyāda* endowments.<sup>70</sup>

As this document demonstrates, at least at the socio-economic level, there was little ambiguity about belonging: there was a very clear demarcation line between what was "ours" and "theirs," which was reinforced by genealogy and descent, and the *ahl al-bayt* pursued this ever more aggressively also at the religio-political level once an Ilkhan, Öljeytü, had adopted Twelver Shi'ism not only as his personal conviction, but as the 'state religion' of the Ilkhanate, with concomitant changes in the coinage, *khuṭba*, etc.

### *Waqfs and the Reshaping of the Religious Landscape in Ilkhanid Iran*

*Awqāf* matters were important in the reorganization of the state under Mongol rule—so important that at the Ilkhanid court, which remained semi-ambulant throughout at least Sultan Öljeytü's reign<sup>71</sup> and probably much longer, there existed the post of a "*bitikchī-yi awqāf*."<sup>72</sup> Endowers usually paid great attention to what was done with the funds assigned to endowments: Only the very best scholars were selected to work in one of the largest endowments of the Ilkhanate, Ghazan Khan's *abvāb al-birr* in Tabriz.<sup>73</sup> As has become clear from the above example, the *sayyid* leaders who promoted the idea of the *dār al-siyāda*—possibly in this case the Rāvandī family—made sure that 'dynastic' benefits were written into the

<sup>70</sup> It is possible that the *vaqf* was implemented by the [probably Shi'i, but at least Shi'i-friendly] vizier Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvajī, since he is the first to sign after the *qādī*, and there are one brother and four of his representatives who sign the *vaqf*. His family is thus rather strongly represented. However, for the above reasons it seems more likely that he was ordered to implement the royal command to establish *dār al-siyādas* in all major cities, rather than doing this on his own, which might, moreover, have been interpreted as an act of rivalry with the Ilkhan.

<sup>71</sup> See Charles Melville, "The Itineraries of Sultan Öljeytü, 1304–16," *Iran* 28 (1990): 55–70. Ottoman sources in particular seem to have been impressed by the two tents set up in the camp of the Ilkhan Öljeytü, being for the Ḥanafī and the Shafī'i *madrassa* respectively. Even if the Ottoman sources do not report much else about this ruler's reign, the ambulant *madrassa* is almost always mentioned, and even with its "famous" name, "*al-sayyāra*." For examples, see Pfeiffer, "Conversion Versions."

<sup>72</sup> İraj Afshār, "Vaqf-nāma-yi sih dih," 122–138, at 132, where among those who sign the *vaqfiyya* figures a certain "*Ḥusām al-Dīn Muḥammad Khurāsānī ki bitikchī-yi awqāf ast*."

<sup>73</sup> "*va farmūd tā dar īn avvāb al-birr-i madhkūra jamā'ati ki afzal va aknal-i 'aṣr bāshand sākin va mutavallī gardand va ham-vāra mulāzīm bāshand*." Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, 2: 1384.

legally binding *vaqfiyya*. The latter guaranteed that the future management of the endowment would remain firmly in *sayyid* hands (“womb after womb,” as the endowment deed states), both via the (with high probability Shi‘i) Rāvandī family as administrators, and through stipulations in the endowment that ensured that key positions which mattered both intellectually and economically were filled exclusively with *sayyid* postholders. Since endowments in Islam operate independently of political rule, it did not matter what the creed of the rulers was for the support of the *sayyids* through the *dār al-siyādas* to continue, and such endowments were therefore in theory able to thrive relatively well protected from the hand of the state for a long time.

*The Political Ascendancy of the Shi‘a during the Reign of Öljeytü*

The Ilkhan Öljeytü, who succeeded Ghazan in 703/1304, officially adopted Twelver Shi‘ism around 709/1309–10. He made Twelver Shi‘ism the state religion of the Ilkhanate by having the *khutba* read in the Twelver Shi‘i way, putting the Shi‘i *shahāda* on his coins, and recruiting Shi‘i theologians from Iraq to his ambulant court, including ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, the son of one of the Shi‘i notables from Ḥilla who had participated in the delegation to Hülegü during the Mongol conquest of Baghdad.<sup>74</sup> Öljeytü also had a *dār al-siyāda* built in his capital Sultaniyya, entertained an ambulant college for the *sayyids* in his camp, and supported the *sādāt* financially.<sup>75</sup>

When the Mongols came to power in the Middle East, anti-Abbasid ‘Alid claims to political authority were a viable option to enhance claims to political leadership at the highest echelons. The Khwārazmshah ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad II b. Tekish (r. 596–617/1200–1220), a contemporary of both Chinggis Khan (d. 1227) and the last strong Abbasid caliph, al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (r. 575–622/1180–1225), challenged the caliph on this basis. He appointed as an anti-caliph a Ḥusaynid *sayyid* and declared the caliph deposed.<sup>76</sup> After an unsuccessful campaign to take Baghdad in the winter

<sup>74</sup> Pfeiffer, “Conversion Versions.”

<sup>75</sup> The *Favā’id-i Öljeytü* provide evidence that Öljeytü supported the *sādāt* financially—whether to individuals directly or to the *dār al-siyādas* is not quite clear. See, Raḥimlū, “Risāla-yi ‘Favā’id-i Ūljāytü,” 150, where Sultan Öljeytü relates, in the first person singular: “*Muhtāj nīstam ki ‘Alaviyyān yā Shi‘a chīzī ba man dihand har sāl chandān hazār Tūmān ba-muḥabbat-i Amūr al-mu’minīn ‘Alī ‘alayhi al-ṣalāt va al-salām ba sādāt midaham.*”

<sup>76</sup> “With the help of a *fatwā*, he [the Khwārazmshāh] declared al-Nāṣir [li-Dīn Allāh] deposed, nominated as anti-caliph a *Shī‘ī* from Tirmidh who was a direct descendant of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and had his name, ‘Alā’ al-Mulk, placed on the coinage and

of 614/1217–18, Muḥammad II had the Abbasid caliph declared dead during a Friday sermon.<sup>77</sup>

Under Mongol rule, various prominent Shi‘i figures played the religious-political card relatively aggressively when the political situation under Öljeytü permitted them to do so. Thus, under the leadership of Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī,<sup>78</sup> essentially the chief of the Twelver Shi‘is with full oversight of all shrines of the Ilkhanate,<sup>79</sup> who had been employed by the vizier Sa‘d al-Dīn Sāvājī and is one of the individuals held responsible for Öljeytü’s conversion to Twelver Shi‘ism,<sup>80</sup> an uncompromising appropriation of shrines was pursued.<sup>81</sup> Under Tāj al-Dīn’s leadership, the Shi‘is appropriated the sanctuary of the Prophet Dhū al-Kifl (Ezekiel) south of Ḥilla, who had until then been venerated equally by both Jews and Muslims and which had been managed by the Jewish community right up to Mongol times.<sup>82</sup> During the sultanate of Öljeytü, the administration

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mentioned in the *khutba* (*Tārīkh-i Djahān-gushā*, ii, 120–2).” Angelika Hartmann, “al-Nāṣir Li-Dīn Allāh,” 998.

<sup>77</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi al-tārīkh* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1966), 12: 318. See Angelika Hartmann, “al-Nāṣir Li-Dīn Allāh,” 998.

<sup>78</sup> On Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī, and the political background to his execution, see ‘Abbās Zaryāb, “*Sih nukta dar-bāra-yi Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh. 2. Qatl-i Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī*,” in *Majmū‘a-yi khitābahā-yi taḥqīqī dar bāra-yi Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Hamadāni/Proceedings of the Colloquium on Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍlallāh, Tehran-Tabriz, 11–16 Ābān/2–7 November 1969*, eds. Sayyid Ḥusayn Naṣr *et al.* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tihārān, 1350 sh./1971), 123–135, at 130–134.

<sup>79</sup> “*Jumla-yi mazār va mashāhid ba ḥukm-i yarligh ba vay tafviḍ shuda*.” Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, 99–100; see also Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī, who describes him as an extremist Shi‘i: “*Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī ki pishvā-yi ahl-i shī‘a būd va dar rafḍ ghulūvī ‘azīm dāsht*.” Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī, *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, 608. See also Abbas Zaryab, “Struggle of religious sects in the Ilkhanid court,” *La Persia nel Medioevo* 160 (1971): 465–466, at 465. During the 13th and 14th centuries, Āvah was one of the most prominent centers of Shi‘ism in Iran; see the entry in Dorothea Krawulsky, *Iran—Das Reich der Ilkhāne, 233–234* (“Āve”): “Nach Ibn Baṭṭūta [...] ist Āve eine fanatisch šī‘itische Stadt, in der ein Andersgläubiger nicht seines Lebens sicher ist.” See also Jean Calmard, “Le chiisme imamite sous les Ilkhans,” 286.

<sup>80</sup> According to the *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī was successful in winning Öljeytü for the Shi‘a (here called *al-rafḍ*) due to the absence of the influential Shafi‘i Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Malik, who had left for Azerbaijan in order to take care of endowment matters (*awqāf*). Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, 100.

<sup>81</sup> “During the reign of Uldjaitu Khudābenda (700=1300) the fanatic *Naḳīb al-Ashraf* Tādī al-Dīn Abu ‘l-Faḍl made an attempt to forbid the Jews access to the sanctuary founded by them and proclaimed it from the chancery as a place accessible to Muslims alone. This proclamation gave the vizier Rashīd al-Dīn an excuse to overthrow this rival and bring about his execution (Quatremère, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse*, Paris 1836, xxvi *et seq.*).” Goldziher, “Dhū ‘l-Kifl,” *EP* 2 (1913–38), 963. See also Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, 132.

<sup>82</sup> Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1228–29) states only that the tomb was visited by Jews from distant countries (“*yaqṣuduhu al-Yahūd min al-bilād al-shāsi‘a*”). The tomb (complex) at Barmalāha south of Ḥilla where Hizkil/Dhū al-Kifl’s remains are said to be buried was also believed to contain the remains of Barukh, Joshua, and Ezra. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muḥjam*

(*tawliyat*) was taken away from the Jews (*Banī Isrāʿīl*), and Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī had a mihrab, minbar, and a minaret built there.<sup>83</sup>

As under Ghazan, dreams play an important role in the narrative sources to legitimize Öljeytü's support for the Shi'a and his implementation of Twelver Shi'ism as the official religion of the Ilkhanate. However, under Öljeytü, these dreams are not only supportive of the Shi'a, as they had been under Ghazan, they also become distinctly anti-Sunni. Thus, in one of Öljeytü's dreams 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, fourth of the caliphs and first of the Twelve Shi'i imams, invites Öljeytü to join him on the top of a tall tree, and subsequently asks him to look down. There Öljeytü beholds three men, holding a saw, an ax, and a cleaver—presumably representing the first three caliphs Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān. 'Alī tells Öljeytü that these men intend to fell the tree, and that he has to kill them if he wants to save the tree. Öljeytü wakes up, bathed in his own sweat, and knows that it has become his task to strengthen " 'Alī's *madhhab*." <sup>84</sup> The tree imagery, which was extensively used at that time in the Islamicate context for the visualization of genealogies, is significant, as *nasab* was a shared element between Mongol and *sayyid*/Shi'i claims to authority.

In a second, even more violent, dream, Öljeytü watches two men fighting: a "man from the East" first heaves a "man from the West" high in the sky and then smashes him on the ground. This dream is laid out to Öljeytü as 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib being the man from the East, while the man from the West represents the second Caliph 'Umar.<sup>85</sup>

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*al-buldān* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1374/1955), 1:403 ("Barmalāḥa"). Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī stated that the prophet Dhū al-Kifl was buried close to Kufa, where "the Jews (*Banī Isrāʿīl*) visit his tomb for pilgrimage" ("*Banī Isrāʿīl gūr-i ū-rā chūn ḥajj ziyārat kunand*"). Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī, *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, 54. See also Ahmet Subhi Furat, "Zū 'l-Kifl," *Islam Ansiklopedisi* 13 (1997): 652–654.

<sup>83</sup> Ḥamd-Allāh Mustawfī, *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, 54. Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāytū*, 132. The minaret is still standing. Since the inscription indicates that the construction of the minaret was ordered by Öljeytü but that it was finished under his son Abū Saʿīd, its completion must be around the death year of Öljeytü, which is 716/1316. See Donald Wilber, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran. The Il Khānid Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 154. Ernst Herzfeld published the remains of the inscription of the minaret and discussed the possible identification of this building with the mosque mentioned by Ḥamdullāh Mustawfī. Ernst Herzfeld, "Damascus: Studies in Architecture-I," *Ars Islamica* IX (1942): 39, 30, figs. 70–72.

<sup>84</sup> Raḥīmīlū, "Risāla-yi 'Favā'id-i Ūljāytū'," 149.

<sup>85</sup> Raḥīmīlū, "Risāla-yi 'Favā'id-i Ūljāytū'," 149. This second dream should have had particular relevance for the Mamluk-Ilkhanid rivalry for sovereignty in the region at that time.

However packaged, the message is unambiguous: Royal support for the offspring of ‘Alī is legitimate, and so is fighting the Sunnis, even with violent means. This is undertaken with the ultimate aim of making Shi‘ism the official religion of the Ilkhanate, with a concomitant politicization of religion within the Ilkhanate, and the reinforcement along confessional lines of the Mamluk-Mongol political rivalry: the earstwhile Muslim/non-Muslim rivalry across the Euphrates river continued as a good Muslim/bad Muslim polemic;<sup>86</sup> Öljeytü entered an alliance with the (Zaydi) Shi‘i *amūr* Ḥumayda b. Abī Numayy al-Ḥasanī to invade Mecca in order to exhume the remains of the first two Caliphs Abū Bakr and ‘Umar;<sup>87</sup> and armed fights broke out in the mosques of the Ilkhanate when Öljeytü attempted to have the *khutba* read in the Twelver Shi‘i way.<sup>88</sup>

Much more so than had already been the case under Ghazan and other Ilkhans, Öljeytü made theological debates a regular feature of his court life.<sup>89</sup> His oscillation between different confessions (Christianity, Buddhism, Sunnism and Shi‘ism), and the surviving records of some of the theological debates that were held at his court as written down by Rashīd al-Dīn, suggest that Öljeytü took theological matters seriously. More than that, his adoption of the name Muḥammad Khudābanda,<sup>90</sup> his extensive building programme,<sup>91</sup>

<sup>86</sup> See the references in fn. 8.

<sup>87</sup> al-Fāsi, *al-‘Iqd al-thāmin fī ta’rīkh al-balad al-amīn*, ed. Fu’ād Sayyid (Cairo: Maṭba‘at al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya, 1384/1965), 4: 240. Ibn Kathīr has only the background of the story, without mentioning the purpose of the raid on Mecca. Öljeytü died before he could carry out his plan. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa al-nihāya fī al-ta’rīkh* (Cairo: Maṭba‘at al-Sa‘āda, 1351–58/1932–39), 14: 77–78. Similarly, Ibn al-Wardī, *Ta’rīkh Ibn al-Wardī. Tatimmat al-mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar*, ed. Aḥmad Rif‘at al-Badrāwī (Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifa, 1389/1970), 378. On the Zaydi allegiances of the *sharīfs* of Mecca during this period, see Richard T. Mortel, “Zaydi Shi‘ism and the Ḥasanid Sharīfs of Mecca,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19 (1987): 455–472, at 462–464. I am grateful to Kazuo Morimoto for bringing Mortel’s article to my attention.

<sup>88</sup> Pfeiffer, “Conversion Versions.”

<sup>89</sup> On the central role of court debates on religious matters under the Mongols, including with non-Muslims, see Devin DeWeese’s contribution to this volume.

<sup>90</sup> Khudābanda is Persian for ‘Abd Allāh, ‘servant of God,’ the name of the prophet Muḥammad’s father which, in combination with Muḥammad’s own name, was anticipated to be an essential part of the name of the expected *mahdī* and restorer of justice at the end of time (Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh); Hodgson, *Venture*, 2: 446. While Öljeytü took on this name prior to his adoption of Shi‘ism, the change of his name from Öljey-Buqa via Temüder and Kharbanda to Khudābanda was most probably associated with a shift from personal conviction to claims to communal leadership.

<sup>91</sup> On Sultaniyya and its ideological building programme under Öljeytü, see Sheila S. Blair, “The Mongol Capital of Sultaniyya, ‘The Imperial,’” *Iran* XXIV (1986): 142–151; *eadem*, “The Epigraphic Program of the Tomb of Uljaytu at Sultaniyya: Meaning in Mongol Architecture,” *Islamic Art* II (1987): 43–96; *eadem*, “Sultāniyya. 2. Monuments,” *EI*<sup>2</sup> 9 (1997): 860–861. See also Bert Fragner’s pertinent discussion of the succession of ‘capital epithets’ from Baghdad (*dār al-salām*—‘the abode of peace;’ *dār al-khilāfa*—‘the seat of the caliphate’) to

his propagation of Shi'ism via coinage,<sup>92</sup> and his politics show that for him Shi'ism was more than a personal belief: It was a political statement which permitted Öljejtü to present himself as a divinely enlightened ruler who was a far step removed from the sheer military might with which his great grandfather Hülegü had taken Baghdad. Rashid al-Din, his court historian and theologian, did not become tired of repeating about Öljejtü the *ḥadīth* that “*The hearts of kings are the treasuries of God,*”<sup>93</sup> and presented Öljejtü as an enlightened ruler by asserting that “his enlightened mind is the treasury of Divine secrets and source of the never ending grace of light.”<sup>94</sup> Therefore his, the Sultan's, decisions were absolute and even his theological speculations quasi-unquestionable, since “*The words of the kings are the kings of the word* [or ‘theological reasoning’]” (*kalām al-mulūk mulūk al-kalām*—with a pun on *kalām*).<sup>95</sup> The Sultan's word was therefore to be followed—a conclusion which Rashid al-Din supported furthermore by the oft-cited and much debated Qur'anic phrase “*Oh you who believe! Obey God, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you.*”<sup>96</sup>

### *Shared Notions of Legitimacy in Shi'i and Chinggisid Political Thought*

The foundation of the *dār al-siyādas* by the later Ilkhanid rulers Ghazan and Öljejtü was a result of the growing rapprochement between the Mongol

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Tabriz (*dār al-saltāna*—‘the seat of unconditional rulership’), to which can be added as an extension Sulṭāniyya, which, as a new foundation, assumed the epithet itself as a toponym; “Ilkhanid Rule and Its Contributions to Iranian Political Culture,” 74–76.

<sup>92</sup> *Ak Akçe*, 83–88; Ömer Diler, *İlhanlar, İran Moğollarının Sikkeleri*. (Istanbul: Turkuaz Kitapçılık, 2006), 371–421; Ḥamīdriḏā ‘Alizāda Muqaddam, *Sikka-hā-yi Ūljāytü* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Pāzina, 1388/2009).

<sup>93</sup> “*Qulūb al-mulūk khazā'in Allāh;*” Rashid al-Din, “Risālat dar ithbāt-i ashrafiyyat-i ‘uqalā’ az ‘ulamā’,” in *idem, As'ila va ajviba*, 2 vols., ed. Riḏā Sha'bānī (Islamabad: Markaz-i Taḥqīqāt-i Fārsī-yi Irān va Pākistān, 1371 sh./1993), 2: 413–513, at 415.

<sup>94</sup> “*ḏamīr-i munīr-ash makhzan-i asrār-i ilāhī va maṣdar-i fayḏ-i anvār-i nā-mutanāhī ast.*” *Ibid.*, 415.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 416. The notion that *kalām* might be conceived as divine speech can be found in some of the new type of *kalām* literature that arose from the intellectual circles at Ilkhanid Marāgha and Tabriz. These 14th century *kalām* texts discussed at length the meaning of the term ‘ilm al-kalām. To this debate, the Transoxanian Maturidi scholar Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a al-Thānī’s (d. 1346/1347) *Sharḥ Ta’ḏīl al-‘ulūm*, which was studied in Tabriz, added a new perspective “by identifying the contents expounded in the ‘ilm al-kalām with divine speech. From this perspective results his approach to interpret both the ‘ilm al-kalām and the Qur’ān as divine speech.” Heidrun Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition and Islamic Orthodoxy. Philosophical and Theological summae in Context* (Habilitationsschrift, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 2009), 353; 346.

<sup>96</sup> Q 4: 59 (*al-Nisā’*). Rashid al-Din, *As'ila va ajviba*, 2: 416.

rulers and the *ahl-i bayt*, i.e., the descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad. Given Öljejtü's conversion to Shi'ism, his support for the Twelver Shi'i community is not surprising. Particularly striking and pertinent in this context, however, is the way in which members of the Shi'i community appear to have approached the new rulers, who were initially outsiders to the Sunni/Shi'i strife that had existed within the Muslim *umma* under previous dynasties, and won them for their cause. This they achieved by appealing to Mongol notions of sovereignty and justice through a language that successfully married religion, politics, and descent to the extent that they appeared inseparable.

The Mongols, in turn, appropriated and interpreted the existing language and notions of legitimacy within their own framework of political thought. As Bert Fragner put it,

Presentation and representation of the Ilkhans as a (if not *the*) regional power meant not only their identification with the Mongol Chinggisids [...], but also their manifestation as a power belonging to the cultural and political area, rather than as an alien authority, by using well-developed means of communication of political semantics immediately understandable to those whom they ruled and whom they wanted to recognize the Mongol yoke.<sup>97</sup>

As pointed out above, key for understanding the merger of biological and political association with 'Alī in the definition of *sayyid*-ship is the parallel between Chinggis Khan as the carrier of the Mandate of Heaven and founder of the Chinggisid universal empire, and Muḥammad as the prophet and representative of God on earth and the founder of the Muslim *umma*.

An essential prerequisite for this parallelism is the acceptance of parallel pasts and parallel histories that are expressed in different branches of history, of which Rashīd al-Dīn with his *Jāmi' al-tavārikh* was the main architect at the turn of the 14th century, permitting for the co-existence of both models of authority.<sup>98</sup> As Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper and before them Thomas T. Allsen have pointed out, in a political environment in which *difference* was seen as a source of strength, "Rashid al-Din's idea of humanity was composite. The world was made up of different peoples,

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<sup>97</sup> Bert G. Fragner, "Ilkhanid Rule and Its Contributions to Iranian Political Culture," in *Beyond The Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (London/Boston: Brill, 2006), 73.

<sup>98</sup> On the expansion of Islamic cosmology during the Mongol period, and Rashīd al-Dīn's role in it, see Pfeiffer, "The canonization of cultural memory."

each with its own knowledge and beliefs, its own scholars and sources—an assemblage, not a ladder or a staircase.”<sup>99</sup>

One of the first to draw explicitly a parallel between Chinggis Khan and the prophet Muḥammad was the early 14th century Ilkhanid historian Shabānkāra’ī (d. 738/1337), who compared the Mongols in their kingship to the prophet Muḥammad’s rank in prophethood:

This people [i.e., the Mongols] has implemented such rules/regulations on the earth that one might say that rule and kingship culminated [‘were sealed’] in them, just as prophethood was sealed with Muḥammad, the Messenger of God.<sup>100</sup>

This permitted Shabānkāra’ī to go one step further and state that if Chinggis Khan had only been a Muslim, he surely would have been a prophet:

God [...] fastened the attribute of Divine favor and eternal grace to the soul of this man [i.e., Chinggis Khan]. If he had found the felicity of Islam, one could have said that he had his share in prophethood.<sup>101</sup>

Moving even yet one step further, the early 15th century Timurid historian Mu‘īn al-Dīn Naṭanzī (fl. 817/1414) asserted that Chinggis Khan only came into the world so that Ghazan Khan would come into existence, in order

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<sup>99</sup> Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History. Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010), 111. Similarly, Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 83–102.

<sup>100</sup> “*in qawm dar rīy-i zamīn qā’ida-ī nihādand ki gūyā saltanat va mamlakat bar īshān khatm shud chunānchi nubuvvat ba Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh.*” Shabānkāra’ī, *Majma’ al-ansāb*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddith (Tehran: Mu’assasa-yi Intishārāt-i Amīr Kabīr, 1363/1984), 24. Note that ‘seal of the prophets’ is one of the epithets of the Prophet Muḥammad. Such reasoning blends in comfortably with earlier Islamicate statecraft treatises expressing a political ethic of absolutist kingship that Saīd Arjomand has called “Islamic royalism,” and for which there exists abundant evidence from sources pre-dating Mongol rule. A contemporary example that is strikingly similar to the above is found in the *Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, which dates to the turn of the 8th hijri century: “Kingship (*pādshāhī*) . . . is the deputyship (*khilāfat*) of God Most High on Earth. If the kings do not contradict divine command and the Prophetic prescription (*naṣṣ*), and if justice and equity are exercised in kingship . . . its degree will be equal to the rank of prophecy.” Quoted in Saīd Amīr Arjomand, “Medieval Persianate Political Ethic,” *Studies on Persianate Societies* 1 (2003), 17, referring to the *Tuḥfat al-mulūk*, p. 62.

<sup>101</sup> “*va chūn bā ‘aql-i khvud qiyās kunī in ma’nā muyassar nashavad illā ānki bārī ‘azza sha’nuhu khāshiyatī az ‘ināyat-i ilāhī va lutf-i nāmutanāhī dar dhāt-i in mard [ya’nī Chingīz Khān] markūz karda bāshad. va agar ū-rā sharaf-i Islām ḥāṣil būdī, tavānist guft ki az nubuvvat bā bahra būda ast.*” Shabānkāra’ī, *Majma’ al-ansāb*, 223. For further examples, see Pfeiffer, “Conversion to Islam among the Ilkhans in Muslim narrative traditions,” esp. Chapter I.iii.e. on the concept of historical horizons. See also, *eadem*, “The canonization of cultural memory.”

to strengthen Islam, thus establishing a rapprochement between political and religious leadership:

Ghazan Khan was the eye and light of the house of Chinggis Khan. One might say that he was the purpose behind the advent of Chinggis Khan. He exerted the utmost possible endeavors in the strengthening of Islam . . .<sup>102</sup>

Such speculations did not remain hidden from the Mamluk authors, who immediately picked up on this, and accused the Ilkhans (and those propagating their beliefs) of blasphemy for equating Chinggis Khan with the Prophet as soon as such ideas started to circulate. Thus, Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) exclaimed:

Their [the Mongols'] most senior leader among those who visited Syria [. . .] and who claimed that they were Muslims stated that these two, Muḥammad and Chinggis Khan, are both exalted signs emanating from God (*hādḥān āyatān 'aẓīmatān jā'ā min 'indi Allāh*).<sup>103</sup>

He went on expressing his indignation about this blasphemous equation of Muḥammad, “the messenger of God and the noblest of God’s creatures, the *sayyid* of the offspring of Adam and seal of the prophets” with “an unbelieving king from the race of Nebuchadnezzar (Bakhtnaṣr) and the likes, one of the greatest polytheists, full of unbelief, depravity, and wrongdoing,” and declared that since the Mongols believed that Chinggis Khan was “the son of God” (Ibn Allāh), conceived from a beam of the sun, similar to what the Christians believed about Christ, and since “all

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<sup>102</sup> Naṭanzī, *Muntakhab al-tavārikh-i Mu'īnī*, ed. Jean Aubin (Tehran: Kitābforūshī-yi Khayyām, 1336/1957), 137. The account goes on by emphasizing the implementation of the *sharī'at* (Islamic law) under Ghazan Khan etc. Such comparisons of Chinggisids with prophets were not confined to Muḥammad. Other prophets were evoked as well. The Ilkhanid vizier, historian, and theologian Rashīd al-Dīn (d. 718/1318) compared his patron Ghazan to the prophet Abraham when relating Ghazan's destruction of the Buddhist temples after his conversion to Islam: “Abraham the Friend of God [. . .] with his own hand smashed all the idols, and [he] totally blocked the way to infidelity and polytheism.” Rashīd al-Dīn Fadl Allāh, *Compendium of Chronicles. A History of the Mongols*, trans. Wheeler M. Thackston (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1999), 1: 16; compare *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, eds. Rawshan/Mūsavi, 1: 29–30. It appears as though the notion of parallel taxonomies was well established, and that the entire hierarchy was ‘translated’ from one system into the other. While in the above examples Chinggisids are compared to prophets, in other texts from the period non-Chinggisid Mongol commanders are compared to saints. Thus Rūmī's hagiographer Aflākī compared to a saint the Mongol commander in Anatolia, Bayju, who had razed the walls of Konya (see, fn. 26, above).

<sup>103</sup> Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Fatāwā al-kubrā* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, 1385–86/1965–66), 4: 339. See also Dorothea Krawulsky, “Legitimation und Herrschaft,” 137. According to Ibn Taymiyya, the Mongols “verstießen gegen das Dogma, weil sie ihren Ahn Chinggis Khan und den Propheten des Islam beide als von Gott gesandt betrachteten.”

men of religion know that this is a lie” (*wa ma‘lūm ‘inda kulli dhī dīnin anna hādhā kadhib*), Chinggis Khan must have been conceived in an act of adultery (*wa hādhā dalīl ‘alā annahu walad zinā*).<sup>104</sup>

What was unbelief in the eyes of Ibn Taymiyya worked well for the Shi‘a, who exploited the “symbolic capital” of sayyidism to their advantage.<sup>105</sup> Evidence from narrative and hagiographic sources suggests that strategies of equating royal and sacral authority were very much in tune with the genealogically oriented notions of Mongol dynastic authority. An anecdote from the “Favā‘id-i Ūljāytū” expresses the affinity between Mongol and Shi‘i notions of descent-based authority very clearly.

One day, Sulṭān Ūljeytū, whose conversion to Twelver Shi‘ism had not gone unquestioned by his predominantly Sunni *amīrs*, asked the following rhetorical question during a debate with an anonymous audience of “scholars” (and presumably the Mongol *amīrs*): How would they find it if the aged, well-reputed Mongol (but non-Chinggisid) *amīrs* who had been already sitting next to his father—like the caliph Abū Bakr had been sitting next to the Prophet Muḥammad—would have claimed or even attempted to take by force the throne after his father’s death? This question was answered with the unanimous protest of the audience, who found the thought outrageous—of course, only a Chinggisid could succeed a Chinggisid; there was no place on the throne for non-Chinggisid commoners. Once again, the parallel between Shi‘is vs. Sunnis and Chinggisids vs. non-Chinggisids was drawn to clarify the rules of leadership, political authority, and succession.<sup>106</sup>

Like for many other steppe polities, the principle of descent was a cornerstone of the Mongol political ideas, and it is no coincidence that in the Islamicate context genealogies were greatly elaborated and indeed visualized during the Mongol period.<sup>107</sup> The Mongols did not permit any playing around with this. The issue concerned both their own genealogies and those of others. Thus, the already mentioned chief of the Twelver Shi‘is of the Ilkhanate Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī was executed on Ūljeytū’s order in 711/1312 upon the accusation of having presented a counterfeited ‘Alid

<sup>104</sup> Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Fatāwā al-kubrā*, 4: 339.

<sup>105</sup> I have borrowed this expression from Morimoto, “Introduction,” 2, who demonstrated convincingly that this “symbolic capital” was equally accepted among Sunni and Shi‘i Muslims at the time, including Ibn Taymiyya.

<sup>106</sup> Raḥīmlū, “Risāla-yi ‘Favā‘id-i Ūljāytū,” 144–145.

<sup>107</sup> Martin B. Dickson, “Uzbek dynastic theory in the sixteenth century,” in *Proceedings of the 25th International Congress of Orientalists/Trudy XXV Mezhdunarodnogo kongressa vostokovedov* (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo vostochnoi literatury, 1963), 3: 208–217; Woods, *The Aqquyunlu*; Binbaş, “Structure and Function of the Genealogical Tree.”

genealogy (“*nasab-nāma*”) in order to prove his *sayyid* identity.<sup>108</sup> It is also during this time that was apparently felt the need for the composition of a list of different impostors of *sayyid* genealogies, an incipient ‘biographical dictionary of *sayyid* impostors,’ so to speak, the *Bayān al-ad‘iyā*, for which the author travelled as far as Saray, the Crimea, and Khwarazm to establish the truth.<sup>109</sup>

An important theme in the conversion narratives about Öljeytü is the affinity between the descent-based and divinely sanctioned legitimization of rule in both Chinggisid and Shi‘i notions of political authority, which was strengthened through such narratives, favoring Shi‘i over Sunni attempts at a universal claim for sovereignty in the region.<sup>110</sup> By playing the anti-Abbasid, anti-Sunni card, perhaps not coincidentally in both abovementioned incidents in the former Sunni capital Baghdad, the Twelver Shi‘is were able to draw Mongol attention to their special status *as a group* both as descendants of the prophet and as a constituency with a specific confessional identity and political role. By linking descent—sayyidism—to religion—Shi‘ism—the Shi‘is of the Ilkhanate politicized both religion and descent. The latter was directly translatable into Mongol notions of sovereignty. This, in turn, helped Shi‘i groups to gain significant intellectual, cultural, economic, and political influence both in the Ilkhanate and beyond.

Michel Mazzaoui, Said Amir Arjomand, and others have emphasized the growing importance of religio-political movements, and in particular Shi‘i groups, in the political arena of the Timurid period. Shahzad Bashir has observed that, despite the waning of the ideal of dynastic universal rule after the dissolution of the Chinggisid dispensation, “its basis, the

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<sup>108</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljāyātū*, 132. According to Qāshānī, who did not hide his enmity with Rashīd al-Dīn, Rashīd al-Dīn had a hand in altering his *nasab-nāma* in order to effect Āvajī’s execution—this, again according to Qāshānī, in revenge for the Shi‘i appropriation of the shrine of Dhū al-Kifl from the Jews, which Āvajī had promoted and supported, which had enraged Rashīd al-Dīn (who came from a Jewish family). Apparently, tampering with Āvajī’s genealogy was the only way for Rashīd al-Dīn to get rid of him, as the Ilkhan was otherwise reluctant to have a *sayyid* executed. The early 15th century Ibn ‘Inaba related the incident all the while asserting the accuracy of Āvajī’s claim to ‘Alid descent (“*va rāst ānki īn sayyid Tāj al-Dīn ṣaḥīḥ al-nasab ast*”). Ibn ‘Inaba, *al-Fuṣūl al-Fakhrīyya*, 189.

<sup>109</sup> See the forthcoming publication by Kazuo Morimoto, “‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad Ibn Katīla Ḥusaynī, *Bayān al-ad‘iyā*” (forthcoming in the festschrift for Sayyid Aḥmad Ḥusaynī Ashkivarī). I am grateful to the author for sharing with me a copy of his article before it went to press.

<sup>110</sup> On Sunni ideological claims to the same sovereignty, see Krawulsky, “Legitimation und Herrschaft;” Tilman Nagel, *Timur der Eroberer und die islamische Welt des späten Mittelalters* (München: Beck, 1993), 72.

charisma of a genealogical line, seems [...] to have gained wider social significance in the Timurid period.”<sup>111</sup> Bashir also noted an “increase in the social prestige of genealogical classes such as sayyids [...] and hereditary heirs of prominent Sufi shaykhs,” and pointed out that not only was there a rise of local *sayyid* dynasties, but notably, “three major messianic movements from the period were led by individuals claiming sayyid status.” Faḍlullāh Astarābādī (d. 796/1394), Muḥammad b. Falāḥ Musha‘sha‘ (d. 866/1462) and Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh (d. 869/1464) “all based at least a part of their messianic claim in their genealogical distinction.”<sup>112</sup> This paper investigated and explained the immediate antecedents to these developments.

### *Conclusions*

To conclude, with the removal of Baghdad as the political and ideological center of the Sunni caliphate, a politically, culturally and economically multicephalous landscape emerged in which the Sunni-Shi‘i rivalry was not removed, but revived and politicized in areas under Mongol rule, via the marriage of religion, genealogy, political authority, and notions of the enlightened ruler, justice, and sacral kingship. The establishment of *dār al-siyādas* provided institutional support to Shi‘is in a network of major cities across the Ilkhanate at the height of Chinggisid political authority and control over the Ilkhanid state.

Twelver Shi‘i groups used existing confessional differences and the radical change in political circumstances—the abolition of the Sunni Abbasid caliphate—and politicized religion in order to create new long-term economic, social, and political opportunities for their confessionally defined community. By linking confession to genealogy through the simple equation “sayyidism = Shi‘ism,” they appealed to the Chinggisid elites to translate Shi‘i claims to political authority into Mongol political thought, and to thereby recognize the superiority of Shi‘i over Sunni Islam. This was made explicit by anecdotes on the parallel between Shi‘i vs. Sunni Muslims and Chinggisid vs. non-Chinggisid Mongols as claimants to political authority.

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<sup>111</sup> Bashir, *Messianic Hopes*, 34–35; see also *idem*, *Sufi Bodies*, 96, for a discussion of lineage in the Sufi context.

<sup>112</sup> Bashir, *Messianic Hopes*, 35.

After the end of Öljejtü's reign in 716/1316, his son and successor Abū Sa'īd reverted to Sunni Islam. Some of Öljejtü's bigger plans did not come to fruition. These included the invasion of Mecca, and the transfer of the remains of the first two Caliphs Abū Bakr and 'Umar to his new 'capital' Sultāniyya, where his impressive tomb is still standing today, and which was possibly meant to succeed both Baghdad and distinguish itself from the predominantly Shafi'i 'capital' Tabriz of his precedecors. However, while Öljejtü's personal politics ended with his death, the emphasis on genealogy and access to divine knowledge as central elements in post-Mongol Islamicate political thought survived him as the bedrock of *sayyid* ascendancy and the increased charisma of genealogical lines during the Timurid period, which are the precursors of the political theology of the early modern absolutist state of the Twelver Shi'i Şafavid dynasty, whose intellectual origins and economic powerbase both date back to the Ilkhanid period.<sup>113</sup>

Genealogy, *silsila*-consciousness and the notion of a descent-based right to rule (which stand in stark contrast to notions of political authority developed south of the Euphrates) are significant parts of the legacy of Chinggisid rule to later Shi'i and Sufi dispensations, and furthered the rapprochement between Shi'ism and Sufism after the dissolution of Chinggisid rule in the region. At the same time, they also provided a convenient and easily comprehensible mechanism of distinction between an increasing number of Shi'i and Sufi lines as the actual ideological differences between these became both less distinct and more complex over time.

The abolition of the caliphate, and with it the hegemony of the class of *'ulamā'* who had for centuries claimed that they alone possessed the tools and expertise to interpret divine knowledge, permitted the Chinggisids to put forward claims to access to divine knowledge that were akin to those of the prophet Muḥammad and the Shi'i *imāms*. This provided a unique opportunity for the Shi'a—and in their wake various other descent- and *silsila*-based groups, including Sufis—to partake in this discourse and revive claims to esoteric knowledge through *sayyid* genealogies.

Both Chinggisid and *sayyid* genealogies served the aim of establishing direct access to divine knowledge—either via the prophet Muḥammad, or

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<sup>113</sup> For a detailed study of the works of several scholars living during the Ilkhanid through early Safavid periods, see Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Şafawids*. On the social and economic pre-history of the Şafaviyya, see Gronke, *Dervische im Vorhof der Macht*; *eadem*, "La religion populaire en iran mongol," in *L'Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1997), 205–239.

via Chinggis Khan, a role that various *pīrs*, *quṭbs* etc. could easily absorb and expand on in the Sufi context. Combined with either thaumaturgic experience or esoteric reasoning of access to divinely inspired knowledge, or both, this was a powerful tool in attaining and maintaining authority in the new religio-political arena of the post-Mongol era—a legacy that is still with us today.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> For examples of the relevance of *sayyidism* in today’s context, see Morimoto, “Introduction.”

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PART TWO

THE TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE



IN PURSUIT OF *MEMORIA* AND SALVATION:  
RASHĪD AL-DĪN AND HIS RAB'-I RASHĪDĪ

Birgitt Hoffmann

I. *Introduction*

The Rab'-i Rashīdī—a complex of pious and charitable institutions which surrounded the mausoleum of its founder, Rashīd al-Dīn Hamadānī (1248–1318), the famous vizier of the Ilkhans Ghazan and Öljeytü and author of the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*—is one of the most well-known pious endowments in Iranian history.<sup>1</sup> This is due to its endowment deed *al-Waqfiyya al-Rashīdiyya* or *Vaqfnāma-yi Rab'-i Rashīdī* (= *VRR*), dating from the beginning of the 8th/14th century. The document was published first as a facsimile edition and a few years later as a critical printed edition by Minovi and Afshar in 1971 and 1977 respectively.<sup>2</sup>

The *VRR* is not only one of the oldest and most copious endowment deeds of Iranian provenience, it also stands out because against usual practice large parts of it were not written down by a *qādi* or judicial notary, but by the prominent founder himself who also preferred to compose it in Persian, not in Arabic, the common language of Islamic legal documents at the time. The founder had conceived his *vaqfiyya* not as a document to get dusty in an archive, but to be consulted permanently by the administrators of the endowment. This is reflected by the outer and inner organization of the deed: it is not a scroll (*ṭumār*) but a codex of 191 grand size folios, neatly arranged in chapters subdivided by headlines and columns partly resembling a financial manual. All these features make the *VRR* a rather spectacular document. In 2007 it was incorporated into

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<sup>1</sup> For a biographical sketch of Rashīd al-Dīn, see David O. Morgan, "Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb," *EI*<sup>2</sup> 8 (1995): 443–444.

<sup>2</sup> Facsimile-edition: *Vaqfnāma-yi Rab'-i Rashīdī*, eds. Mujtabā Minuvī and Īraj Afshār (Tehran: Intishārāt-i anjuman-i āthār-i millī, 1350 h.sh./1971). Printed edition: *Vaqfnāma-yi Rab'-i Rashīdī*, eds. Mujtabā Minuvī and Īraj Afshār (Tehran: Intishārāt-i anjuman-i āthār-i millī, 2535 sh./1356 h.sh./1977). References are to the printed edition = *VRR* (as in: *Vaqfnāma-yi Rab'-i Rashīdī*).

the UNESCO World Memory program.<sup>3</sup> This honour prompted the Islamic Republic of Iran to issue a postage stamp showing its title page.<sup>4</sup>

Sadly, nearly nothing remains of the Rab‘-i Rashīdī itself. Wilber’s and Minovi’s first survey in 1938 resulted in a plan of the site so that at least its location in the North East of Tabriz has been verified and documented.<sup>5</sup> (fig. 1) Since then no further archaeological investigation was undertaken until quite recently. Sheila Blair has tried to locate the central elements of the complex and to reconstruct their architectural appearance by using

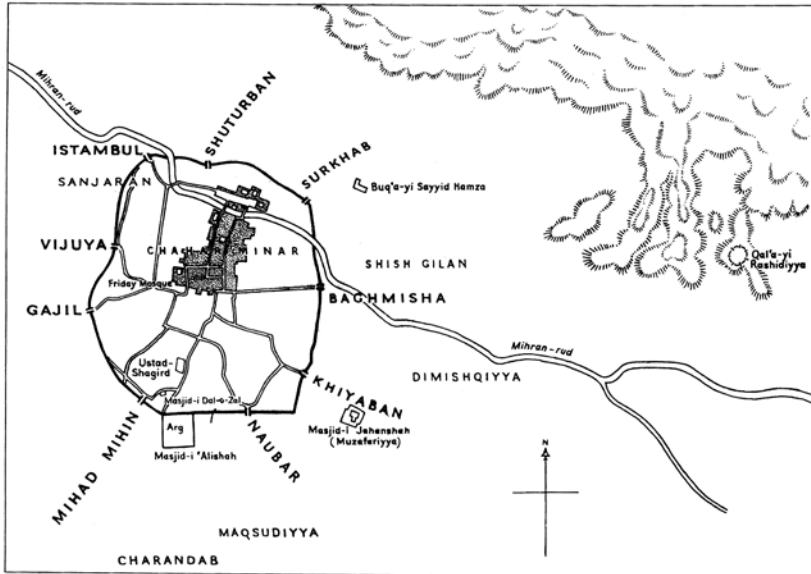


Fig. 1: Tabriz (with city gates) and the Rab‘-i Rashīdī, after Melville, “Historical Monuments,” 165, Fig. 1.

<sup>3</sup> See the UNESCO world-memory-register on the unesco.org website. You may find the item by region “Asia and the Pacific, Iran,” or by year of inscription, i.e. 2007. The entry is supplemented by a photo gallery (8 pictures) under the template “Multimedia.”

<sup>4</sup> For a picture, see wnsstamps.ch, Iran, 2009 (= 1388 sh.).

<sup>5</sup> Donald Wilber and Mojtaba Minovi, “Notes on the Rab‘-i Rašīdī,” *Bulletin of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology* 5 (1938): 247–259.

Wilber's outline and the textual evidence of the *vaqfiyya*.<sup>6</sup> In 2006 Lāleh Roohangiz on behalf of the Sāzmān-i Mirāth-i Farhangī undertook some limited excavations on which she gave a report on the occasion of the 9th Annual Congress of Iranian Archaeology, 9–12 December 2007.<sup>7</sup> These pilot excavations in one place brought up fragments of bricks, ceramic tiles, stucco decoration, vessels and pieces of epigraphy, all of refined quality, which can be attributed to a *ḥammām* of the Īlkhānid period and are supposed to have been part of Rashīd al-Dīn's endowments.<sup>8</sup>

Most of the other findings—remains of ramparts and the stub of a tower—date from the Safavid period when Shāh 'Abbās transformed the site to a military stronghold against Ottoman invaders. However within these Safavid structures some spolia (for instance gravestones) were identified which can be dated to previous periods and which come from other places around Tabriz, presumably also from Shanb in the South Western outskirts of Tabriz, where Ghazan Khān had his funeral complex, the famous Ghāzāniyya, built just a few years earlier.<sup>9</sup> When I visited the Rab'-i Rashīdī in June 2010, it was forbidden to take photographs of the site; visitors could only take a picture of an information board which shows a recent reconstruction outline. (fig. 2) Conditions for excavation probably are going to worsen, because the city of Tabriz is in rapid expansion and the surrounding areas are already built up or will be built up in the near future.<sup>10</sup>

Contemporaries and later authors have highlighted the impressiveness and splendour of the site. Some of them based their assessment on

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<sup>6</sup> Sheila S. Blair, "Ilkhanid Architecture and Society: an Analysis of the Endowment Deed of the Rab'-i Rashīdī," *Iran* 22 (1984): 67–90.

<sup>7</sup> See en.icar.ir. and Lāla Rūhangiz, "Rab'-i Rashīdī va Khvāja Rashīd al-Dīn Faẓlallāh Hamadānī," in *43 Maqāla dar buzurgdāsh-t-i ustād duktūr Muḥammad Yūsuf Kiyānī*, ed. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Zārī'ī, (Hamadān: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Bū 'Alī Sinā, 1390 sh./2011), 153–182.

<sup>8</sup> Oral communication of Khanum-i Roohangiz in May 2010.

<sup>9</sup> Masashi Haneda, "The Pastoral City and the Mausoleum City: Nomadic Rule and City Construction," in *Islamic Urbanism in Human History*, ed. Tsugitaka Sato (London, New York: Kegan Paul International, 1997), 142–170; Birgitt Hoffmann, *Waqf im mongolischen Iran* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 2000), 113–116.

<sup>10</sup> For a recent photograph of this situation see [Wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rabe\\_Rashidi.jpg](http://Wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rabe_Rashidi.jpg).



Fig. 2: The Rab'ī Rashīdī in Tabriz, Reconstruction outline, after Muḥammad 'Alī Kaynizhād and Azitā Bilālī Uskuyī, *Bāz-āfarīnī-yi Rab'ī Rashīdī bar asās-i mutūn-i tārikhī* (Tabriz: Dānishgāh-i Hunar-i Islāmī Tabriz, 1390/2011).

evidence from the alleged letters of Rashīd al-Dīn.<sup>11</sup> While Alexander H. Morton after analysis of the contents arrived at the conclusion that these letters must be forgeries,<sup>12</sup> Abolala Soudavar wrote a passionate article in defense of their authenticity.<sup>13</sup> A comparison of those letters which give details concerning the Rab'ī Rashīdī with the data provided in the *vaqfiyya* proves that the two sources are rather incongruous. Besides the fact that with regard to style and wording the letters differ greatly from the *VRR* and other writings of Rashīd al-Dīn, the figures occurring in the letters turn out to be exaggerated beyond all measure when compared to the stipulations of the *VRR*.<sup>14</sup> In the letters it is alleged for instance that the Rab'ī Rashīdī was hosting hundreds of scholars and thousands of students—in fact there were altogether some dozens. More precisely: of the 200 reciters of the Qur'ān, 400 'ulamā', 7000 students, 50 physicians

<sup>11</sup> *Mukātabāt-i Rashīdī*, ed. Muḥammad Shafī' (Lahore: University of the Punjab. Oriental publications, 1945); *Savānih al-afkār-i Rashīdī*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānish-Pazhūh (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Kitābkhāna-yi Markazī va Markaz-i Asnād, 1358 h.sh./1979.)

<sup>12</sup> "The Letters of Rashīd al-Dīn: Ilkhānid Fact or Timurid Fiction?" in *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy*, eds. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 155–199.

<sup>13</sup> "In Defense of Rashid-od-Din and his Letters," *Studia Iranica* 32 (2003): 77–122.

<sup>14</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *Mukātabāt*, nos. 34 and 51, *Savānih* nos. 35 and 52 (see n. 11) vs. Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, printed edition, 135; 150–156.

with 500 assistants mentioned in the letters only 24 reciters, fewer than 10 religious professionals, only 25 students and 2 physicians with 3 other health care staff are attested in the *VRR*.<sup>15</sup> After all, there was no such thing as a public hospital inside the endowment compound. Health care was provided only for residents and guests of the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī. Patients had to consult the two physicians—one practitioner and one surgeon who also functioned as an ophthalmologist—in their office (situated in the so called *rivāq al-murattabīn*), and those confined to bed were taken care of in their places of accommodation. Health care for those living in the adjacent quarters, most of them also staff members, servants, slaves and freedmen with their families, was limited to dispensary services twice a week.<sup>16</sup> The assertion that 100 women were among the residents of the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī<sup>17</sup> likewise is at odds with the stipulations of the *vaqfiyya* where it is explicitly specified that no women at all worked or lived within the endowment compound. All residents, beneficiaries as well as staff members and servants who were entitled to accommodation inside the endowment complex had to settle outside the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī enclosure if they were married and wanted to live with their families.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, even if there once had been a nucleus of original material that was at the disposal of the individual(s) responsible for the preserved textual version of the so called letters, these person(s) must have distorted this nucleus in a way that makes this text unemployable as a reliable source of factual evidence on the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī.

However, there was no need for this kind of exaggeration. The *vaqfiyya* definitely proves that the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī endowment was an outstanding achievement to be compared only to the imperial Ghāzāniyya complex on the other side of town.<sup>19</sup> In the year 715/1315 the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī hosted some 150 beneficiaries and staff, 200 endowment slaves cultivated the lands in the vicinity, and up to 30 guests and 100 poor people were fed each day.<sup>20</sup> And the sheer bulk of 835 donated items, in the majority landed estate, amongst them more than 100 villages (most of them in the province of Azerbaijan), and the high amount of yearly expenditure for its upkeep and

<sup>15</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 56–59.

<sup>16</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 234–239; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, printed edition, 145–148.

<sup>17</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *Mukātabāt*, 195 (letter no. 34); *Savānih*, 175 (letter no. 35).

<sup>18</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, printed edition, 170–198.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. note 9 above.

<sup>20</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 191–194.

working expenses are impressive enough.<sup>21</sup> The endowment deed testifies to Rashīd al-Dīn's constant engagement in this project: dated 709/1309 it was already the revised version of a previous *vaqfiyya* and includes several addenda up to 716/1316. This reveals that the founder was continuously improving and expanding his "Gates of Charity" (*abvāb al-birr*) and that the Rab'ī Rashīdī was only the nucleus of a far bigger urban ensemble partly built up, partly still under construction when the main part of the document was composed. Rashīd al-Dīn refers to other endowments which he had founded elsewhere, in Yazd, Hamadān, Marāgha, Baṣṭām and also in Sulṭāniyya, the new capital favoured by Öljeytū.<sup>22</sup>

That Rashīd al-Dīn chose the Rab'ī Rashīdī as his place of residence after retirement and meant it to be his and his family's eternal resting place suggests that this site is to be seen as his most important monumental legacy. His commitment is further evidenced by the fact that he wrote a major part of the *vaqfiyya* in his own hand, which makes it a rather personal document which promises to yield more than the usual biographical information on property, family, the explicit aims of the endowment and so on, but also information on the more hidden motivations, perceptions, ambitions and obsessions of its author.

Rashīd al-Dīn's endowment deed with its extremely meticulous stipulations is a very personal testimonial in many respects. In his lengthy introduction (*dībācha*) to the original document (dated 709/1309)<sup>23</sup> and his comments preceding some of his further endowments (dated 713/1313)<sup>24</sup> the donor discusses the motivations and aims of his charity. Safeguarding posthumous commemoration, *memoria*, and salvation in the hereafter are the entangled leitmotifs of these treatise-like remarks. They are adorned with frequent citations from the Qur'ān, traditions of the prophet Muḥammad and in the 713/1313 supplement also of *imām* 'Alī,<sup>25</sup> verses in

<sup>21</sup> See Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 154–168 for an analysis of the yearly expenditure and 168–180 on the *mawqūfāt*.

<sup>22</sup> Although the directory listing all these endowments (*Jāmi' al-mabarrāt va fihrist al-khayrāt-i Rashīdī*) mentioned in the *VRR* is either lost or was never completed, evidence within the *VRR* (p. 241) and other contemporary sources (e.g. Qāshānī, *Tārikh-i Ūljāytū*, ed. Hambly [Tehran: Intishārāt-i Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1348 h.sh./1969], 116) testify that these institutions actually existed. For the endowments in Yazd, see İraj Afshār, "Rashīd al-Dīn Faḏl Allāh va Yazd," *Īrānshīnāsī* 2 (1349 sh. = 1970): 1–11.

<sup>23</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, printed edition, 1–21.

<sup>24</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, printed edition, 242–252.

<sup>25</sup> This could be interpreted as a tribute to Öljeytū's turn to Shi'ism in 710/1310. See also Rashīd al-Dīn's quotation of "The people follow the religion of their kings" (*al-nās 'alā dīn mulūkihīm*; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, printed edition, line 10).

Arabic and Persian (some of his own) and references to his own learned tracts, i.e. the four works assembled in the so called *Majmū'a-yi Rashīdiyya* (*Tawzīhāt*, *Miftāḥ al-tafāsīr*, *Sulṭāniyya*, *Laṭā'if*) and the *Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq*.<sup>26</sup> In the *dībācha* he concentrates on the religious justification of *vaqf* in view of its spiritual benefit (*thavāb*) and draws up a very detailed vision of the day of justice and the balance of the soul's account. Whereas evil acts will be recompensed in a linear relation, the reward of good acts will increase exponentially. In consequence of this unequal rewarding the final balance of a person whose bad acts surmount his good ones still might be positive. The soul's balance of account is decisive for one's position in the hierarchy of paradise. Spiritual benefit implies a rise in this hierarchy. Referring to a saying of the prophet, Rashīd al-Dīn enumerates several chances to influence the balance of account and implicitly one's allocation and status in the other world—even *post mortem*. The first is establishing perpetual charities (*ṣadaqa jāriyya*) which is identified with making pious endowments (*vaqf*) and irrigating and cultivating wastelands; the second is the establishment and transmission of valuable knowledge by books; and the third is having others (especially one's offspring) praying for one's soul (*du'ā*).

For those who command at least one of these assets, death marks only an interim balance of their soul's account. For them the accumulation of spiritual benefits and the elevation in the heavenly hierarchy continues to the day of judgement.

There is nothing surprisingly new in these considerations on the economics of salvation, but it is remarkable in its elaborateness and its apologetic commitment. Surely there is no reason to deny that Rashīd al-Dīn was honestly concerned with his post-mortal fate; however, more worldly aspects turn up if we put his *abvāb al-birr* in his biographical context. What comes to mind, for instance, are the suspicions, accusations and hostilities that Rashīd al-Dīn was exposed to during his career. Among the things that made him vulnerable more than once were the enormous wealth that he had gained *inter alia* from his salary as a vizier, his position as chief administrator (*mutavallī*) of the Ghāzāniyya in Tabriz and all the other *awqāf* of Ghazan and Öljeytü and of other members of the royal family, and finally from the presentation of his collected works to

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<sup>26</sup> See Josef van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten: Zu Inhalt und Entstehungsgeschichte der theologischen Schriften des Rašīduddīn Faḡlullāh (gest. 718/1318)*, (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1981).

Öljejtü.<sup>27</sup> To transfer one's holdings into a charitable foundation was a well-established method to safeguard one's properties against confiscation. The Rab'ī Rashīdī endowment was a so-called mixed *waqf* which reserved half of its income for the donor and his family. Further considerable portions of its income were spent on the administration of the endowment which was also a prerogative of Rashīd al-Dīn and his family.<sup>28</sup> That the latest of the addenda dates from 716/1316 shortly after Rashīd al-Dīn had been slandered for embezzlements by his colleague and rival Tāj al-Dīn 'Alī Shāh in front of Öljejtü seems hardly accidental.<sup>29</sup> (fig. 3) This last donation of several hundred items, including 99 villages in the province of Azerbaijan, is preceded by another fervent commitment to the pursuit of a worldly career and a prominent position (*ḥawas-i jāh-u manṣab-u shuhrat*) for the sake of salvation. Rashīd al-Dīn praises Öljejtü in exalted phrases as the real benefactor in the background, whereas he compares his own part to that of a cook who prepares and distributes what his master has paid for. Salvation of the soul in the hereafter therefore appears to be entangled intensely with an agenda of self-defense in the political contexts of "this world."<sup>30</sup> (And, as a side note, we should not forget that there was a keen competition in building activities going on between high-ranking state officials).

The part of the *waqfiyya* which sheds further light on the ambitions and obsessions of the founder is of course the autograph portion which encompasses Rashīd al-Dīn's meticulous stipulations (*sharā'it*) for the organization of the Rab'ī Rashīdī, and the duties, salaries, alimentation and lodging of beneficiaries, academic, administrative and service staff. The donor shows himself to be a man of precise ideas and visions, of considerable know-how and strong opinions, who wants to be in control of every detail and strives to improve whatever in his eyes had been going wrong before. When revising the previous *waqfiyya*, Rashīd al-Dīn was not only concerned with the teaching and copying of his own writings, which was a major obligation of the professors and students, but also with the further subject matter of the curriculum. Interestingly enough, he strictly interdicted the study of philosophy. He even gave order not to accept students who already were acquainted with this discipline.<sup>31</sup> In contrast to

<sup>27</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārikh-i Ūljāytü*, 196–97.

<sup>28</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 147–154; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 125–127.

<sup>29</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 176–179, map 180; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 353–382.

<sup>30</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 241–252.

<sup>31</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 198; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 173.

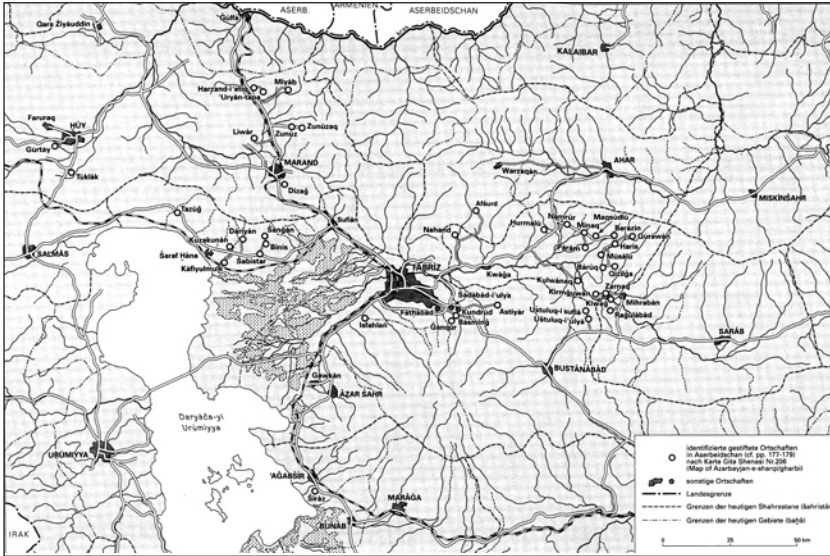


Fig. 3: Map showing endowments in Azerbaijan; originally published in: Hoffmann, *Waqf im mongolischen Iran*, 180.

the Shanb-i Ghazan which included an observatory and offered courses in astronomy, astronomical subjects were obviously not part of the curriculum of the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī. From among his own writings, which were an obligatory subject for every student, he mentions his treatises on theological, metaphysical and scientific matters, including the *Āthār va ahyāʾ*, which contained his empirical observations on agriculture and irrigation—but not the *Jāmiʿ al-tavārikh*.<sup>32</sup>

A close reading of the stipulations reveals that the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī was a quite exclusive club. In view of its rich financial sources it was housing a rather moderate company of scholars, students and Sufis.<sup>33</sup> Their attendance was precisely regulated and their families were strictly kept outside. As mentioned above women especially had no access to the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī.<sup>34</sup> A clear distinction was made between ‘normal’ guests who travelled alone and distinguished (*mutamayyiz*), high-ranking guests, who travelled with

<sup>32</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 199–200; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 237–252.

<sup>33</sup> In 1309 it was 67 resident beneficiaries and 36 servants adding to a total number of 103. In 1315 this total number was enhanced to 149. These numbers do not include external personnel for special occasions and the agricultural slaves working in adjacent areas. Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 191–197; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 216–234.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. fn. 18 above.

servants and followers (*khādim-u murīd*) and were not to be accommodated in the guesthouse but in special suites.<sup>35</sup> The Rabʿ-i Rashīdī was to stage fine ceremonial and social events on religious holidays or other occasions.<sup>36</sup> The kitchen of the poor that had originally been part of the complex was banned outside by the revised version of the *vaqfiyya*. One gets the impression that the residents and guests were not supposed to be exposed to the view of hordes of poor people every day.<sup>37</sup>

The chapter on the endowed irrigation facilities because of its many technical terms is arduous reading; however, together with an analysis of the endowed properties in the Tabriz area it elucidates how intensely Rashīd al-Dīn developed the territories in the immediate vicinity of the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī and the area to the West of it, in direction of the city of Tabriz.<sup>38</sup> While the territories south of the Mihrānrūd, which traverses the city and its hinterland from East to West, profited from the water resources provided by the Sahand mountain region, the areas north of this river had suffered from aridity until Rashīd al-Dīn took action. Qāshānī—who cannot be considered a friend of Rashīd al-Dīn—nevertheless in his History of Öljeytū praises the vizier for the construction of a major channel which brought fresh water to these areas.<sup>39</sup> By systematic purchase of landed estate he paved the way for the settlement of all those who were not residents of the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī but were in a way affiliated to it: that is to say the extended family of Rashīd al-Dīn himself, the families of the beneficiaries and the staff and 20 privileged slaves of Turkish origin with their families. All these people were obliged to take up residence in these quarters, where they had to build or rent houses.<sup>40</sup> If we put all these details together, Rashīd al-Dīn's ambitious urbanization project became discernible: like a citadel the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī was surrounded by the other structural components of a town proper: there was the Shahristān-i Rashīdī in the sense of the Arabic term *madīna* with several quarters (*maḥallāt*) for those of the residents and staff who had families.<sup>41</sup> Like the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī, this Sharistān-i Rashīdī was a walled-in area. It had four gates, a covered bazar, *karvānsarāys*, a Friday mosque and an open air praying area (*muṣallā*), three smaller mosques, public baths, several

<sup>35</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 227; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 142–43.

<sup>36</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 228–231.

<sup>37</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 231–234; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 143–145.

<sup>38</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 133–140; 334–348; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 204–215.

<sup>39</sup> Qāshānī, *Tārikh-i Öljāytū*, 116–17.

<sup>40</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 129–133; 175.

<sup>41</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 175–76; 188.

water mills, and at least one paper mill. The so called Rabaž-i Rashīdī was a kind of elegant residential area the upper part of which was reserved for the founder's sons. In the absence of archaeological surveys and given the rapid expansion of modern Tabriz, it is hard to delineate precisely the scope of these peripheral areas of the Rab'-i Rashīdī, but the persistence of quite a lot of toponyms suggests that the Sharistān-i Rashīdī covered a stretch of land approximately 2–2.5 km in length and 500 to 1500 meters in width which probably can be identified with the quarters Bāghmīsha and Bilānkūh. Rashīd al-Dīn was already clutching at the areas west of it: in Pul-i Sangī and Shashgaylan he had built a Friday mosque, a *ḥammām* and a *kārvānsarāy*.

In the hinterland of this urban area in development 150 slaves farmed two agricultural estates which were to supply the Rab'-i Rashīdī with fruit, vegetables, eggs, poultry and dairy products. They were assisted by a group of 30 irrigation specialists who were to retain and restore the water channels and conduits, together with 20 handymen. The larger of these gardens was named Bāgh-i Rashīdābād.<sup>42</sup>

All these activities not only reflect Rashīd al-Dīn's entrepreneurial spirit and expertise, but also manifest his ambition to leave a monumental landmark in this world. The fervent wish to be remembered by posterity is something Rashīd al-Dīn shared with Ghazan Khan. In a famous, often quoted passage he cites this ruler, who was deeply impressed by what he saw on his visits of the shrines of the Shi'ite imams and the mausolea of prominent Sufi saints, with the following words:

How can one consider a person who has died in this manner and has a shrine or visitation site like this to be among the dead? Dying like this is better than other people's living. Even though we do not possess the rank of pious people, nonetheless in imitation of them we can build a charitable institution to spend eternity in, and in that manner there will be charity and alms, the blessings of which will attract God's mercy, and there will be an eternal reward stored up. It will be very good. Let us begin now, while God has given us the strength, so that it may be completed successfully.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 181–189; 280–284; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 153–156.

<sup>43</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, 4 vols., eds. Muḥammad Rawshan and Muṣṭafā Mūsavī (Tehran: Nashr-i Alburz, 1373/1994), 2: 1376; *Jāmi'u'tavwarikh. Compendium of Chronicles. A History of the Mongols*. 3 parts. Translated and annotated by Wheeler M. Thackston (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1999), 3: 685.

And then continues:

Since he was in the capital Tabriz, he chose it as the site and laid the foundation himself outside the city to the west in the place called Shanb. They have been working on it for several years now, and it is planned [projected?] to be much more magnificent than the dome of Sultan Sanjar the Seljuq in Marv, [which he saw] and which is the most magnificent building in the world.<sup>44</sup>

Of course we cannot be sure that this is the truthful reproduction of an authentic saying of Ghazan. However, there is convincing other evidence that Ghazan was deeply concerned with his postmortal commemoration, as the commission of the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh* is rooted in the same desire.<sup>45</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn on the other hand does not articulate this wish for posthumous fame openly, possibly—as a person under pressure—in fear of being accused of arrogance and pretension. But when we scrutinize those passages of the *vaqfiyya* which deal with his own burial place, his desire for immortalization cannot be overlooked.

The mausoleum—*qubba*—was the real focus of the whole ensemble, its true *raison d'être*.<sup>46</sup> It was placed behind the *mihṛāb* of the mosque and thus benefitted from the prayers spoken there. It was one of the oldest parts of the Rab'ī Rashīdī ensemble, but the only one that could not serve its purpose during Rashīd al-Dīn's lifetime. But nevertheless the room above the crypt was functioning as a kind of treasure room or museum where precious codices and other rare and valuable objects were to be exposed to those glancing from outside through metal latticework.<sup>47</sup>

Most striking is the meticulous regulation of ceremonies to be exercised once the founder had died. For the perpetual reciting of the Qur'ān twenty-four reciters were to work in eight shifts of three hours, so that three of them were always engaged in reciting. On Fridays and religious holidays preceding the common prayer all twenty-four were reciting together. For the evenings of those holidays they were to perform a special program in commemoration of Rashīd al-Dīn. With exhaustive details he also regulated the installation of candles and the diffusion of scents, of course all of superior quality.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, 1: 34–35; *Jāmi'u'tawārikh. Compendium of Chronicles*, 1: 17–19.

<sup>46</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 204–211.

<sup>47</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 210; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 179.

<sup>48</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 208–209; 257–261; Rashīd al-Dīn, *VRR*, 135f.

Probably poor Rashīd al-Dīn never was to enjoy his illustrious resting place—because his corpse was dismembered and dispersed.<sup>49</sup> But although the Rab<sup>c</sup>-i Rashīdī was sacked several times and fell into ruins, its fame survived.<sup>50</sup> We are not in the position to judge Rashīd al-Dīn's pursuit of salvation, but with regard to his wish to be commemorated—he obtained what he wanted.

So far we have seen how many aspects have to be considered to appreciate Rashīd al-Dīn's endowment in Tabriz adequately. In this respect it shows many analogies to endowments in medieval Europe. In studying European foundations medievalists and scholars from other fields have developed new approaches. They have directed attention to the conjunction of the multiplicity of spheres involved: religious, juridical, economic, social, moral, political etc. and moved on from reducing this kind of charity to its juridical and religious aspects alone or attempting to determine whether the donor's intentions were 'sincere' and 'honourable' or whether he had ulterior motives. Drawing on concepts and terms of historical anthropology Michael Borgolte has classified endowments as "total social fact"<sup>51</sup> and also emphasized the pivotal role *memoria* plays as an incentive and goal for the donor.<sup>52</sup>

Such a perspective fits Rashīd al-Dīn's endowments, where we can discern that a number of mundane and pious aspects are inextricably entangled: Preservation and self-assured representation of wealth and power, self-defense against accusation of embezzlement, augmenting one's prestige and honour by patronizing learning and artisanship, maintaining one's ground against rivals, who also engage in endowments or big building projects, gratitude to the ruler(s) who had generously rewarded his service, ensuring one's *memoria*, desire for salvation, desire for high status in the other world as a precondition for closeness to god... The pursuit of *memoria* indeed found expression in many ways: The name and fame

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<sup>49</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 90f.

<sup>50</sup> Hoffmann, *Waqf*, 140–145.

<sup>51</sup> This term was coined by the French anthropologist Marcel Mauss in his seminal "Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques," *L'année sociologique* 1 (1923–1924): 30–186; *idem*, *The Gift. Forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies*, trans. Ian Cunnison (London: Cohen & West, 1966); *idem*, *The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans. W.D. Halls (London: Routledge, 1990).

<sup>52</sup> Michael Borgolte, "Totale Geschichte' des Mittelalters? Das Beispiel der Stiftungen. Antrittsvorlesung." *Revue du Mauss permanente*, 16, April 2007; <http://www.journaldumauss.net/spip.php?article19>. Borgolte draws on the studies of Otto Gerhard Oexle, who classified *memoria* as a total social fact: Dieter Geuenich and Otto Gerhard Oexle, *Memoria in der Gesellschaft des Mittelalters* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994).

of the donor were retained in written form not only by the *vaqfiyya* itself, presumably in the now lost inscriptions which once adorned the entrance and buildings of the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī, but also by his writings which were to be reproduced and taught throughout his endowments; materially in the architectural ensemble of the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī and the adjacent areas which all were named after him (Rabaʿ-ī Rashīdī, Shahristān-i Rashīdī), orally and ritually by the compulsory prayers for Rashīd al-Dīn’s soul on various occasions, the perpetual reciting of the Qurʾān at the donor’s tomb by a choir of 24 reciters, the celebratory banquets on the anniversary of the donor’s demise and on other occasions. Gift economies are characterized by cycles of reciprocity creating and safeguarding social relationships and we may discern Rashīd al-Dīn’s endowments to be involved in such cycles:<sup>53</sup> In one cycle he is the donor and the beneficiaries (amongst them his offspring) receive his charity and reward him with commemoration and prayers, thus confirming the persistence of bonds beyond death. In another one he is reciprocating the generous gifts of Öljejtü and corroborating the mutual commitment. In a third cycle his endowment is established to please god who generously rewards him with exalted rank in the hereafter.

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<sup>53</sup> See Hans Christoph Kahlert: “Die Stiftungsgabe—Beobachtung eines Reziprozitätskreislaufs.” *Opusculum* 23, Februar 2008, ed. Maecenata—Institut für Philanthropie und Zivildgesellschaft an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. ISSN (Web): 1868–1840; URN:urn:nbn:de:0243-02008op233.

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RASHĪD AL-DĪN FAḌL ALLĀH AL-HAMADHĀNĪ'S MANUSCRIPT  
PRODUCTION PROJECT IN TABRIZ RECONSIDERED

Nourane Ben Azzouna

Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh al-Hamadhānī is one of the most outstanding figures of the history of Tabriz. A detailed biography of him is, however, still awaited, but information scattered in his own and his contemporaries' works throw some light on the main stages of his life and career. Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh al-Hamadhānī's full name is Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh b. 'Imād al-Dawla Abī al-Khayr b. Muwaffaq al-Dawla 'Ālī b. Abī Shujā' al-Hamadhānī. He was born ca. 648/1250<sup>1</sup> into a Jewish family of physicians that entered the service of the Ilkhanid dynasty (656–736/1258–1335) since the reign of its founder, Hülegü (656–663/1258–65)<sup>2</sup> or at least that of his son and successor, Abaqa (663–680/1265–82).<sup>3</sup> It is thus most likely at a very young age and as an apprentice physician that he started serving the Ilkhans—which is also indicated by his surname “*Ṭabīb*” (Physician)—but nothing is known about the first years of his career.

During the reign of the fifth Ilkhan, Gaykhatu (690–694/1291–95), he was most likely entrusted with the sultan's food and drink supply,<sup>4</sup> which was a very important charge at the Mongol courts.<sup>5</sup> It is probably during the troubled period that followed Gaykhatu's death that he converted

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<sup>1</sup> In one of his works, Rashīd al-Dīn states that he is 62 in 710/1310–11 (cf. *Kitāb Bayān al-Ḥaqā'iq* (*The Book of the Exposition of the Truths*) (Istanbul, Süleymaniye, Ms. Kılıç Ali Paşa 834, f°269). It is thus most likely that he was born in 648/1250, i.e. two or three years later than the date he is generally assumed to have been born (cf. for instance David O. Morgan, “Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb,” *EP* 8 (1994): 443–44.

<sup>2</sup> Birgitt Hoffmann, “The Gates of Piety and Charity: Rašīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh as Founder of Pious Endowments,” in *L'Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Paris, Tehran, 1997), 198.

<sup>3</sup> Kamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl 'Abd al-Razzāq b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (Ibn al-Fuwaṭī), *Talkhīṣ Majma' al-ādāb fī mu'jam al-alqāb*, ed. Muḥammad Al-Kāẓim (Tehran, 1995), n° 1043.

<sup>4</sup> Abū al-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-'Ibrī, *Tārīkh al-Zamān*, trans. Ishāq Armalah (Beyrouth, 1986), 368–369; Morgan, *Rashīd al-Dīn*; Reuven Amitai-Preiss, “New Material from the Mamluk Sources for the Biography of Rashīd al-Dīn,” in *The Court of the Ilkhans, 1290–1340*, eds. Teresa Fitzherbert and Julian Raby (Oxford, 1997), 26.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Allsen, “Two Cultural Brokers of Medieval Eurasia: Bolaq Aqa and Marco Polo,” in *Nomadic Diplomacy, Destruction and Religion from the Pacific to the Adriatic*, eds. Michael Gervers and Wayne Schlepp (Toronto, 1994), 64–65.

to Islam, like many Mongols and the future Ilkhan Ghazan himself. A short time after the latter's accession to the throne (694–703/1295–1304), Rashīd al-Dīn appeared to be very close to him.<sup>6</sup> He was soon nominated deputy to the vizier Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Zanjānī and shortly after the latter's execution in 697/1298, he was promoted to co-vizier, first with Sa'd al-Dīn al-Sāvājī (d. 711/1312), then with Tāj al-Dīn 'Alī-Shāh (d. 724/1324). Rashīd al-Dīn held this position for over twenty years, under Ghazan and under his brother and successor Öljeytü (r. 703–716/1304–16), but soon after the latter's mysterious death, he was accused of having played a role in it and was consequently disgraced and executed in 718/1318.

Rashīd al-Dīn is thus well known firstly as a great vizier. He is particularly credited with a leading role in Ghazan's renowned administration, land and trade reforms. But Rashīd al-Dīn also gained much power and wealth through the administration of Ghazan and Öljeytü's pious foundations. He also placed his sons at key positions at the court, as well as at the head of different provinces. Furthermore, Rashīd al-Dīn was entrusted with the highly significant responsibility of writing the official history of the Mongols, and of the different peoples with whom they came into contact, i.e., the Chinese, the Indians, the Jews and the Franks, a vast history entitled *Jāmi' al-Tavārikh* (*The Compendium of Chronicles*) that has been identified as the first world history to deserve this title.<sup>7</sup>

In parallel with his historical work, Rashīd al-Dīn also wrote theological and philosophical treatises: the *Majmū'a al-Rashīdiyya* (*Compendium of Rashīd al-Dīn*) and *Kitāb Bayān al-Ḥaqā'iq* (*The Book of the Exposition of the Truths*), together with scientific texts (in agriculture, medicine, etc.). The value of these different works has been judged unequal.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, probably circa 710/1310,<sup>9</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn decided to gather them in a collection that he named *Jāmi' al-Taṣānīf al-Rashīdiyya* (*The Complete Works of Rashīd al-Dīn*) that he arranged into a precise order. The *Jāmi' al-Taṣānīf*

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *Talkhīs*, no. 4589; Amitai-Preiss, *New Material*, 25–28.

<sup>7</sup> Karl Jahn, "Rashīd al-Dīn as World Historian," *Yádnáme -ye Jan Rypka* (Prague, 1967), 79–87; John Andrew Boyle, "Rashīd al-Dīn: The First World Historian," *Iran*, 9 (1971): 19–26.

<sup>8</sup> Josef van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten. Zu Inhalt und Entstehungsgeschichte der theologischen Schriften des Rašīduddīn Faḫrullāh* (gest. 718 / 1318) (Wiesbaden, 1981), 55 ss.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. the introduction of the oldest known copy of the *Majmū'a Rashīdiyya*, dated to 710/1310–11: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Arabe 2324, ff. 1v–2v, published and translated into French by Etienne Quatremère, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse, écrite en persan par Raschid-eldin, publiée, traduite en français accompagnée de notes et d'un mémoire sur la vie et les ouvrages de l'auteur par M. Quatremère* (Paris, 1836), cxlvii–clxxv for the Arabic text and cxxxvii–cxlvi for the French translation.

*al-Rashīdiyya* begins with the theological and philosophical texts which are followed by the scientific ones and lastly by the historical ones, and it ends with Persian and Arabic translations of Chinese and Mongol medical, pharmacological and political treatises.

As well as his activity as vizier and author, Rashīd al-Dīn thus also became a patron of manuscripts. At his own foundation which he called the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī, near Tabriz, he devised an exceptional program to produce *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth* manuscripts, as well as copies of his own works. This programme is described with a wealth of detail in an exceptional document: the “*Waqfiyya*,” the endowment deed of the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī, the original, holograph copy of which is preserved at the Central Library in Tabriz (Ms. 3693).

This document has been published twice, in *facsimile*<sup>10</sup> and in typography,<sup>11</sup> and has been studied in several papers and books.<sup>12</sup> In most of these studies, Rashīd al-Dīn’s manuscript production project has usually been presented as a coherent project. A few years ago, Sheila S. Blair has, however, proposed a new reading of the edition of the endowment deed and distinguished between two successive phases that she dated to 709/1309 and 713/1314.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, a reexamination of the *manuscript* of the *Waqfiyya* and a comparison between the text of the endowment deed and a few other contemporary sources allow us to refine this chronology, identify at least three distinct phases, and advance a new interpretation of this evolution.

<sup>10</sup> *al-Waqfiyya al-Rashīdiyya bi-Khaṭṭ al-Wāqif fī Bayān Sharāʾit Umūr al-Waqf wa al-Maṣārif*, eds. Mujtabā Mīnuvī and ʾIraj Afshār (Tehran, 1350/1971–72).

<sup>11</sup> *al-Waqfiyya al-Rashīdiyya bi-Khaṭṭ al-Wāqif fī Bayān Sharāʾit Umūr al-Waqf wa al-Maṣārif*, eds. Mujtabā Mīnuvī, ʾIraj Afshār and ʾAbd al-ʾAlī Kārang (Tehran, 1356/1977).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. especially Sheila S. Blair, “Ilkhanid Architecture and Society: An Analysis of the Endowment Deed of the Rabʿ-i Rashīdī,” *Iran* 22 (1984): 67–90; Birgitt Hoffmann, *Waqf im mongolischen Iran: Rašīduddīns Sorge um Nachruhm und Seelenheil* (Stuttgart, 2000), 200 ss.; Sheila S. Blair, “Writing and Illustrating History: Rashīd al-Dīn’s *Jāmiʿ al-tavārikh*,” in *Theoretical Approaches to the Transmission and Edition of Oriental Manuscripts*, eds. Judith Pfeiffer and Manfred Kropp (Beirut, 2007), 57–65. I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Blair for calling my attention to her last paper and providing me with a copy of it.

<sup>13</sup> Blair, *Writing and Illustrating History*, 58–61.

1. *The Initial Project*

In the absence of other, prior sources, we assume that the initial project is the one that is described in the most ancient and autograph part of the manuscript of the endowment deed<sup>14</sup> which is dated in Rashīd al-Dīn's own handwriting to the first day of Rabī' I 709/9 August 1309.<sup>15</sup>

The initial project only plans to fund two manuscripts each year: the first is a thirty-volume *Qur'ān*; the second is a four plus-volume copy of *Kitāb Jāmi' al-uṣūl fi aḥādīth al-rasūl*—a famous *ḥadīth* collection by a 12th century Mosuli scholar, Majd al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr (544–606/1149–1210)—and a special place called “دارالمصاحف وكتب الحديث” (the house of *Qur'ān* and *ḥadīth* books) is dedicated to this project.<sup>16</sup>

First, Rashīd al-Dīn provides a lot of details about the *Qur'ān*. It must be copied on large-size fine paper and by means of very fine black ink; it must be beautifully and correctly written, dotted and vocalized according to one of the seven orthodox readings; it must be provided with illuminated indications of individual verses as well as groups of five and ten verses; it must be covered with a leather binding and lastly placed in a chest adorned with gilt iron ornamentations. The *ḥadīth* collection must also be copied on fine paper by means of very fine black ink and in a good and clean handwriting.

Then, Rashīd al-Dīn specifies that these two manuscripts must be exhibited on a stand (مرفع) almost in the middle of the *qibla* wall, between the *mihrāb* and the *minbar*, in the principal mosque (صفة بزرگ) of the foundation, and prayers must be recited for him. Afterwards, a patronage and an endowment deed must be written at the end of the manuscripts which must then be checked and recorded by the judges of Tabriz, before being sent to important Islamic cities where they must be placed in great mosques or in other places where they may be needed.

<sup>14</sup> *Waqfiyya, facsimile*, ff. 166–168 and 247 / edition, 133–134 and 193.

<sup>15</sup> *Facsimile*, f. 292 / edition, 236, and *facsimile*, ff. 44–46 / edition, 30–31.

<sup>16</sup> *Dār al-maṣāḥif wa kutub al-ḥadīth*, situated besides the winter mosque of the Rab'ī-i Rashīdī, has been identified as the library of the foundation (Blair, *Ilkhanid Architecture and Society*, 76, 81). Nevertheless, several clues indicate that it was merely a *Qur'ān* and *ḥadīth* scriptorium and that the library was located elsewhere (cf. Nourane Ben Azzouna, *La Production de manuscrits en Iraq et en Iran occidentale à l'époque des dynasties mongoles (Les Ilkhanides et les Djalayirides (656–814/1258–1411))* (Ph.D. thesis) (Paris, 2009), 169–172).

This initial project is completed by two appendices. These two appendices have been merged in Mīnuvī, Afshār and Kārang's edition,<sup>17</sup> but several elements show that they actually consist of different documents, added at different times. First, they appear in different places in the manuscript.<sup>18</sup> Then, they are copied in different handwritings, neither of which is Rashīd al-Dīn's. At the beginning of the first appendix, Rashīd al-Dīn states that this appendix was omitted (ازقلم فرورفت / سقطت من القلم) and then added at the end of the endowment deed (به آخر آن الحاق می‌کند / بر) (سبیل الحاق نوشته),<sup>19</sup> which suggests that it was added either in August 1309 or very shortly thereafter. This appendix is not precisely dated. Nonetheless, it is not in Rashīd al-Dīn's handwriting. Thus, it is more likely that it was added shortly after August 1309. Moreover, it mentions the *Kitāb Bayān al-Ḥaqā'iq* which has been dated to 709–710/1309–11.<sup>20</sup> Lastly, it is quoted and translated into Arabic in the introduction of the manuscript of the *Majmū'a Rashīdiyya* of the Bibliothèque nationale (فصل في الوقفية ننقله) (بتلك العبارة إلى هنا / الفصل الذي كتبناه في الوقفية مشتتملا على هذا المعنى) which is also dated to 710/June 1310–May 1311.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, we can assume that this first appendix was added sometime between the autumn of 1309 and 1311.

On the other hand, the second appendix—which is also presented as omitted and added (این شرایط از قلم فرورفتاده بود... در آخر بر فصول سابقه الحاق) (کرده نوشته شد) (اتفق ذلك في التواريخ المختلفة السابقة و) (اللاحقة)—is actually dated twice, to 20 Jumādā I 713/12 September 1313 and to the beginning of Dhū al-Ḥijja 713/mid-March 1314, i.e. two or three years after the first deed.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Edition, 237–252; and English translation by Wheeler M. Thackston, “Articles of Endowment of the Rab’-i Rashidi, by Rashiduddin Fazlullah,” in Sheila Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din's Illustrated History of the World* (London, 1995), 114–115; reprinted in Fairchild Ruggles, *Islamic Art and Visual Culture: an Anthology of Sources* (Malden, Oxford, 2011), 35–38.

<sup>18</sup> *Facsimile*, ff. 293–296 and 325–344.

<sup>19</sup> *Facsimile*, ff. 293 and 296 / edition, 237 and 241.

<sup>20</sup> van Ess, *Der Wesir*, 58–59.

<sup>21</sup> Ms. Arabe 2324, ff. 2v–3; Quatremère, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse*, pp. clxiii–clxiv / trans. pp. cxxxix–cxliv.

<sup>22</sup> *Facsimile*, ff. 341, 344 / edition, 250, 252.

## 2. *The Intermediate Phase of the Project*

The intermediate phase of the project is the one described in the first appendix of the endowment deed datable to circa 710/1310–11.<sup>23</sup> This document does not mention the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth* manuscripts, which confirms that they belong to a distinct project. On the contrary, it stipulates that every year, one Arabic and one Persian copy of four of Rashīd al-Dīn’s books—the two theological works *Majmūʿa Rashīdiyya* and *Bayān al-Ḥaqāʾiq*, the historical work *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh* and a compendium of scientific treatises, *Āthār va aḥyāʾ* (*Monuments and Beings*)—are to be produced, exhibited and validated before being sent to the important Arabic-speaking and Persian-speaking cities of the empire.

The production to distribution processes of the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth* manuscripts and of Rashīd al-Dīn’s aforementioned books are very similar, but not identical. First, unlike the *Qurʾān* and the *ḥadīth* manuscripts that were to be copied in *Dār al-maṣāḥif va kutub al-ḥadīth*, Rashīd al-Dīn’s books have to be produced in “one of the places in the foundation that were not allocated to any particular person or use” (از جمله مواضع ابواب البرکه) جهت کسی و کاری تعیین نرفته<sup>24</sup> / من جمله مواضع ابواب البراتی لم تعیین لطائفه معینه اولاً امر معین<sup>25</sup>). Such lack of precision in the location of the scriptorium may be considered as further evidence that producing copies of his own works was not part of Rashīd al-Dīn’s initial programme. Furthermore, while only the patronage and endowment deeds were to be written at the end of the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth* manuscripts, both the patronage and endowment deeds and the prayers to the patron are to be inscribed at the end of Rashīd al-Dīn’s books. Moreover, these texts are slightly different. Finally, while the *Qurʾān* and *ḥadīth* manuscripts were to be sent indiscriminately to important “Islamic” cities and preferably placed in great mosques, Rashīd al-Dīn’s Arabic and Persian books are to be sent either to Arabic- or to Persian-speaking cities and they are to be placed in *madrasas*, which implies different objectives.

Finally, it must be added that besides the original manuscripts (نسخه) placed in the mausoleum of Rashīd al-Dīn and the (اصل / التسخ الأصول)

<sup>23</sup> *Facsimile*, ff. 293–296 / edition, 237–241; Arabe 2324, ff.°2v–3; Quatremère, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse*, clxiii–clxxiv / trans. cxxxix–cxliv.

<sup>24</sup> *Facsimile*, f. 294 / edition, 238: here, the negative form (نرفته) has been omitted.

<sup>25</sup> Arabe 2324, f°2v; Quatremère, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse*, clxix / trans. clx.

copies to be addressed to the provinces, the first appendix mentions several other types of copies of Rashīd al-Dīn's books:

First, an Arabic and a Persian copy of the *Majmū'a Rashīdiyya*, *Bayān al-Ḥaqā'iq* and *Āthār va aḥyā'*, i.e. three of the four books, but *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*—or the first half of *Jāmi' al-Taṣānīf al-Rashīdiyya* that is conceptualized almost at the same time—must be held and taught by the teacher of the Rawḍa, the principal part of the Rab'ī Rashīdī.

Second, every *faqīh* of the ten *faqīhs* appointed at the foundation<sup>26</sup> must, on pain of expulsion (بیرون کند / إخراج / وجب علی المتولی أن یخرجه), complete during the period of five years for which he is appointed at the Rab'ī Rashīdī at least one Arabic or one Persian large-size copy of these books for his own use (جهت خود / ملك او باشد / ملك لذك الفقیه).

Then, everyone within the Rab'ī Rashīdī is allowed to borrow the original or the teacher's copy in order to copy it for himself.

And lastly, everyone is allowed to borrow the provincial *madrassa's* copy, after leaving a deposit (رهن), in order to read it or to copy it.

### 3. The Final Phase of the Project

The final phase of the project is the one described in the second appendix of the endowment deed dated to 713/1313–14.<sup>27</sup> This appendix starts like the previous one, but it adds two new titles to the list of books to be copied: *Tahqīq al-Mabāḥith*<sup>28</sup> (*The Verification of the Investigations*) and *As'ūla va Ajviba va Ta'liqāt* (*Questions, Answers and Commentaries*).

These two titles do not appear in the 710/1310–11 phase of the *Jāmi' al-Taṣānīf al-Rashīdiyya*, but are most likely mentioned by the contemporary historian Vaṣṣāf in the beginning of 712/June 1312:

Then, the Master of all men [...], Rashīd al-Ḥaqq va al-Dīn [...], became the adviser and confidant of His Majesty... , and it was decreed that he arranges his noble book [...] in ten volumes, each volume [weighting] 200 *man*<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Facsimile*, ff. 224–225 / edition, 173–174. In several places, Rashīd al-Dīn mentions twelve *faqīh-s* (*facsimile*, ff. 201, 305 / edition, 157, 221), but in *facsimile*, ff. 224–225 / edition, 173–174, he specifies that there are ten *faqīhs* and two *ḥadīth* students.

<sup>27</sup> *Facsimile*, ff. 325–344 / edition, 241–252. A few pages are lacking after ff. 327 and 342/241 and 251.

<sup>28</sup> Or *al-Abḥāth* (*Facsimile*, f. 341 / edition, 250).

<sup>29</sup> 600 kilograms!

[...], so as to total 3000 sheets much larger than the format of Baghdad. More than 60.000 current dinars were spent to pay for the copying, correction, illumination, painting, binding and [?] [of the volumes]. These include Qur'anic exegeses, proved explanations, regal investigations, blessed distinctions, diverse questions and answers, information and works on agriculture and architecture, the refutation and abrogation of the doctrines of reincarnation that are banned and contested on the basis of 22 kinds of verses of the noble *Qur'ān*, the exposition of the truths, the description of the seven climates, the science of history and that of genealogy built on tables of ramifications. Nothing similar has never been seen in any book, nor achieved at any time until the first months of the year 712<sup>30</sup> when [this book] was fully arranged and assembled both in Persian and in Arabic.

(پس مخدومجهانیان . . . رشیدالحق والدین . . . مستشار و مؤتمن حضرت جلت گشت و حکم یرلیغ شد که در ترتیب قواعد جهان داری . . . بده مجلد و هر مجلدی دوست من . . . که مجموع آن سه هزار ورقه باشد مستعمل بر اضعاف قطع بغداد (?) که زیادت از شصت هزار دینار رایج در اجرت نسخ و تحریر و نقش و تصویر و جلد و ترسیس (?) صرف شد مشتمل بر تأویلات قرآنی و توضیحات برهانی و مباحث سلطانی و لطایف صاحبقرانی و اسئلة و اجوبة متفرقة و اخبار و آثار در فلاح و عمارت و ابطال مذاهب تناسخ و ناسخ ایشان در منع و معارضة استدلال بآیات بیست و دو گانه از مصحف مجید و بیان الحقایق و صفت اقالیم سبع و علم تواریخ و انساب مبتنی بر جد اول انشعاب که برین نمط در هیچ کتب دیده نیامده است و بدین طرز و ضابطه در هیچ عهد پرداخته نشده تا اوایل شهور سنه ۷۱۲ جامعین الترجمة والتقریب<sup>31</sup> مرتب و مدون گشت. <sup>(32)</sup>)

*Tahqīq al-Mabāhith* probably corresponds to the third book mentioned by Vaṣṣāf and *As'ila va Ajviba va Ta'liqāt* clearly corresponds to the fifth one. Thus, Vaṣṣāf's report very probably evokes another intermediate phase between Rashīd al-Dīn's intermediate and final projects, but Rashīd al-Dīn's final project adds new and different arrangements.

<sup>30</sup> Vaṣṣāf presents his *Tārīkh* to Öljeitü on Thursday 24 Muḥarram 712 / 1 June 1312.

<sup>31</sup> More likely *التقریب* (translation into Arabic).

<sup>32</sup> Faḍl Allāh b. 'Abd 'Allāh Shīrāzī (Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra), *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḍra dar Aḥvāl-i Salāṭīn al-Mughūl*, ed. Muḥammad Mahdī Isfahānī (Tehran, 1269/1338/1960), 538–539; cf. also 'Abd al-Muḥammad Āyatī, *Tahrīr-i Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf* (Tehran, 1372/1993), 302–303.

Firstly, whereas in the intermediate project only three theological and scientific works were to be taught, in the final one, all the works (تمام مصنفات) of Rashīd al-Dīn must be transmitted to the students (متعلم / طالب علم). It is not clear whether the ten *faqīhs* mentioned in the first appendix are identical to the ten students mentioned in the second one, but the ten *faqīhs* were appointed for five years, whereas the ten students seem to have been appointed for one year.

In addition, the initial education project seems to join the *Complete Work* diffusion project. As a matter of fact, whereas the teacher was asked to teach the *Majmū'a Rashīdiyya*, *Bayān al-Ḥaqā'iq* and *Āthār va aḥyā'* without specifying a period of time, and the *faqīhs* were asked to complete at least one Arabic or one Persian copy of these books within five years, in the second appendix, Rashīd al-Dīn details that the teacher must dictate (املا) the Arabic version of his whole work to five of the ten fellows and his assistant (معيد) the Persian one to the five other students within one year. Just like the *faqīhs*, the students are meant to copy Rashīd al-Dīn's books for their own use, but the patron underlines the compulsory nature (لزوم وجوب) of this task for all of the salaried employees: the teacher, his assistant as well as the fellows of the foundation who must be consistent and persevering (مواظب, مداوم) in their work.

In addition, teaching/reproducing the vizier's work is no longer limited to his principal foundation, the Rab'-i Rashīdī, but is extended to his different other foundations, for example in Tabriz, Sulṭāniyya, Hamadān, and Yazd. Rashīd al-Dīn also mentions a place (بقعه) that he builds specifically to teach his work but that also includes a pharmacy (بيت الأدوية) in Bisṭām. He even includes the sultans' foundations of which he is the supervisor such as Ghazan's foundations in Tabriz and Baghdad. Rashīd al-Dīn does not list all of the foundations involved, but states that there are twenty one of them. Then he establishes a precise teaching/reproduction program of his whole work. He divides his work in seven sections (قسم) and places the twenty one foundations and the seven sections in a table (جدول) in such a way that every year, each section is dictated in three foundations, so that in seven years, the whole work is finished in all of the foundations. Rashīd al-Dīn plans to add a picture of this table (به موجبی که . . . من بعد در جدول مفصل می شود / به موجب جدول که می آید). This has not been preserved but it may have been as follows:

	Y[ear] 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6	Y 7
Rab'-i Rashīdī	Section A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Rashīd's foundation in Sulṭāniyya	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Hamadān	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Yazd	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
Bisṭām	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
Shanb-i Tabrīz	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
Ghazan's foundation in Baghdad	F	G	A	B	C	D	E
Foundation 8	F	G	A	B	C	D	E
Foundation 9	F	G	A	B	C	D	E
Foundation 10	E	F	G	A	B	C	D
Foundation 11	E	F	G	A	B	C	D
Foundation 12	E	F	G	A	B	C	D
Foundation 13	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Foundation 14	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Foundation 15	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Foundation 16	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
Foundation 17	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
Foundation 18	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
Foundation 19	B	C	D	E	F	G	A
Foundation 20	B	C	D	E	F	G	A
Foundation 21	B	C	D	E	F	G	A

#### Rashīd al-Dīn's Whole Work reproduction schedule

At the end of the appendix, Rashīd al-Dīn reiterates that every year, five Arabic and five Persian copies must be achieved in every foundation, which makes a total of thirty complete copies divided in 210 sections or manuscripts. Rashīd al-Dīn even sets the dictation pace at 500 words per day. If this pace was strictly respected, a manuscript such as the *Majmū'a Rashīdiyya* of the Bibliothèque Nationale would have been copied in 265 days.<sup>33</sup> If in the former project one professional copyist was asked to complete one Arabic or Persian copy of one of Rashīd al-Dīn's books within a year, the copying pace would have been almost 1.5 (exactly 1.37) times quicker in the final phase than in the intermediate one. Thus, we may assume that reproducing Rashīd al-Dīn's works would have been the main

<sup>33</sup> In a passage in the *Majmū'a* (Paris, BNF, Ms. Arabe 2324, f.<sup>o</sup>121), Rashīd al-Dīn estimates the number of words of the three first books of the *Compendium* to be 100.000. At a pace of 500 words per day, 200 days would have been needed to copy these books (100.000/500). Since they occupy 283 of the 376 folios of the manuscript, 265 days would have been necessary to copy the whole compendium (376 × 200/283).

or possibly the only activity of the teachers and fellows of the foundations involved.

The contemporary Baghdadi historian Ibn al-Fuwaṭī testifies to the execution of this project. In several biographical notes of his precious biographical dictionary,<sup>34</sup> he mentions a *madrasa* “Ghāzāniyya” or “Sulṭāniyya” that is established by Rashīd al-Dīn within Ghazan’s foundation in Baghdad in 713/1313–14. In this *madrasa*, Rashīd al-Dīn hires several individuals—such as a doctor and pharmacist called Majd al-Dīn Ismā‘īl b. Muḥammad b. Lu’lu’ al-Baghdādī, a tachygraph called Majd al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Baghdādī and a calligrapher called ‘Izz al-Dīn al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib al-‘Alawī al-Ḥusaynī al-Wāsiṭī—to copy his works. Ibn al-Fuwaṭī himself contributes to the comparison (مقابلة) of a copy of the *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh* in the same *madrasa* in 714/1314–15—and it is worth noting that it is a historian who is entrusted with the work on the author’s historical book, which suggests that individuals recruited to work on the project are seriously and carefully selected.

To sum up, it seems obvious that Rashīd al-Dīn’s manuscript production project undergoes an important and almost constant evolution in terms of the works, foundations and certainly individuals involved between 709/1309 and 713/1313–14, as follows:

Books/manuscripts	709/1309	Ca. 710/1310–11	713/1313–14
<i>Qur’ān</i> and <i>ḥadīth</i> manuscripts	1 and 1	–	–
Rashīd al-Dīn’s books to be copied and sent to different cities	0	4	6
Rashīd al-Dīn’s books to be taught/copied and diffused	0	3	<i>Complete Work</i>

<sup>34</sup> Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, *Talkhīṣ*, nos. 101, 3814, 4047, 4074.

Table (cont.)

Books/manuscripts	709/1309	Ca. 710/1310–11	713/1313–14
Number of copies to be produced	0	8 (1 Arabic and 1 Persian copy of four books every year) + 10 (1 per <i>faqīh</i> appointed for five years)	12 (1 Arabic and 1 Persian copy of six books every year) + 30 copies of the <i>Complete Work</i> every year (+ 10 (1 per <i>faqīh</i> appointed for five years) (?))
Number of foundations	Rabʿ-i Rashīdī	Rabʿ-i Rashīdī	21

The evolution of Rashīd al-Dīn's manuscript production project between 709/1309 and 713/1313–14

The final phase of the project is so extensive that it may be un- and even mis-understood. Rashīd al-Dīn is, however, well aware of that. As a matter of fact, at the end of the endowment deed, he acknowledges that “the wise men are sometimes disconcerted about the sense [of this project]: what are its motives? Where does it come from? What is sought from it? What does it aim at?” (عقلا در حقیقت آن گاه گاهی متحیر باشند تا سبب آن دواعی) (از چپست و از کجاست و مطلوب آن چه و مال آن به کجا انجامد (این ضعیف به طریق مبالغت تصور نکنند (این ضعیف به طریق مبالغت تصور نکنند (این ضعیف به طریق مبالغت تصور نکنند (این ضعیف به طریق مبالغت تصور نکنند),<sup>35</sup> and he replies by expounding his motivations at length.<sup>36</sup> To the best of my knowledge, these motivations have never been discussed yet. They certainly deserve a full study in a separate article, but a few elements particularly relevant to our topic can already be evoked briefly here.

After several paragraphs where he explains that his good reputation and fame are a way to serve the Sultan and God, Rashīd al-Dīn more concretely underlines that good reputation can be earned by various means but is best gained through profitable knowledge (علم ینتفع به) and good deeds,

<sup>35</sup> Abolala Soudavar interprets the diffusion of the work of Rashīd al-Dīn as propaganda (cf. “The Han-Lin Academy and the Persian Royal Library-Atelier,” in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East. Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, eds. Judith Pfeiffer and Sholeh A. Quinn (Wiesbaden, 2006), 472–473).

<sup>36</sup> *Facsimile* pp. 329–344 / edition, ff. 242–250.

especially charitable funds (خیرات جاریه), and since the wider knowledge is spread, the more profitable it is, he argues that “for the author of a book, it is obligatory and necessary that in addition to endeavouring to writing it, he bends his efforts to diffusing it among people, [as] a priority” (برصاحب تصنیف واجب و لازم بود که زیادت از آنچه در تصنیف کردن رنج برده... در تشریح آن میان (مردم سعی و کوشش نماید... اولی باشد apart, appears extremely modern.

To sum up, Rashīd al-Dīn’s book and manuscript production project considerably grows from 709/1309 and probably even more from 711/1312 on. Although the precise evolution of his career is still not well known, this may have been linked to the growth of his power, and since the manuscripts produced and spread are exclusively his, it may appear a form of propaganda. Nevertheless, Rashīd al-Dīn’s argumentation about the utility not only of writing books, but also diffusing them is convincing to the modern scholar. A short time after Iran’s first and failed contact with printing, for which Rashīd al-Dīn seems to have had a sincere admiration,<sup>37</sup> his manuscript production project and his defense of it thus evoke a modern form of diffusion of books which, in a context where the direct contact between scholars and students and the *ijāza* are still the main way of transmission of knowledge, reveals a new aspect of the visionary character of Rashīd al-Dīn.

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<sup>37</sup> Persis Berlekamp, “The Limits of Artistic Exchange in Fourteenth-Century Tabriz: The Paradox of Rashīd al-Dīn’s Book on Chinese Medicine, part I,” *Muqarnas* 27 (2010): 216.

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WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF ASTRONOMY IN ĪJĪ'S  
*KITĀB AL-MAWĀQIF FĪ 'ILM AL-KALĀM?*

Robert Morrison

Around 1330, 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355), a *mutakallim* in contact with Rashīd al-Dīn,<sup>1</sup> composed *Kitāb al-Mawāqif fī 'ilm al-kalām*, a work of *kalām* that has attracted attention from academics as well as from Muslims throughout the centuries.<sup>2</sup> Some of this scholarship on the *Mawāqif* has attempted to explain why the *Mawāqif* included so much material from science and *falsafa* (philosophy in the Peripatetic tradition) and why it presented that material in ways that resembled but did not duplicate what was found in texts dedicated to science and *falsafa*. The article that has set the paradigm for explaining the purpose of this scientific and philosophic material is A.I. Sabra's 1994 article "Science and Philosophy in Medieval Islamic Theology." The publication has led other scholars to consider the role of science and philosophy in historical studies of *fiqh*, *kalām*, and *tafsīr*.<sup>3</sup> Sabra argued that, by Ījī's time, *kalām* was confidently

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<sup>1</sup> Josef van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1981), 29, 48. Ījī is listed as 'Aḍudaddīn 'Abdarrahmān b. Aḥmad al-Muṭarrizī, whom van Ess took to be Ījī. Ījī's father and brother were also in contact with Rashīd al-Dīn. See Heidrun Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition and Islamic Orthodoxy. Philosophical and Theological summae in Context* (Habilitationsschrift, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 2009), 378 for the importance of the milieu of Tabriz in shaping his *kalām*.

<sup>2</sup> See Carl Brockelmann: *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (Leiden: Brill, 1937–49), 2: 267–70; Supplement, 2: 287 for evidence of the proliferation of MSS of *Kitāb al-Mawāqif*. For information about Ījī, see Josef van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre des 'Aḍudaddīn al-Īcī: Übersetzung und Kommentar des ersten Buches seiner Mawāqif* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1966), 1–7.

The present article presumes that *kalām* was more than apologetics; Sabra himself made the same point in "Science and Philosophy in Medieval Islamic Theology: The Evidence of the Fourteenth Century," *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften* 9 (1994): 6–11. Sabra is not alone; his view is shared by a number of scholars, inter alia, Richard M. Frank, "The Science of *Kalām*," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 2 (1992): 7–37.

<sup>3</sup> Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 1–42. Sabra has since written another article on *kalām* as an alternative to *falsafa*: "Kalām Atomism as an Alternative Philosophy to Hellenizing *Falsafa*," in *Arabic Theology, Arabic Philosophy: From the Many to the One: Essays in Honor of Richard M. Frank*, ed. James E. Montgomery (Leuven, Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2006), 199–272; 257–72 are a translation from Ījī's *Mawāqif*. See, now, Sabra: "The Simple Ontology of *Kalām* Atomism: An Outline," *Early Science and Medicine* 14 (2009): 68–78. Sabra's 1994 article has informed the conclusions of several scholars, including F. Jamil Ragep, "Freeing Astronomy From Philosophy: An Aspect of Islamic Influence on Science," *Osiris* 16 (2001):

on the offensive against *falsafa*, and that the *Mawāqif* was evidence of an attempt to develop a new Islamic philosophy and science.<sup>4</sup> Because the *mutakallimūn* saw themselves as victors in the debate with the *falāsifa*, the *mutakallimūn* were, then, free to incorporate science and philosophy into *kalām*.<sup>5</sup>

On the narrower question of Ījī's presentation of astronomy (*ʿilm al-hayʿa*), Sabra concluded that Ījī's view of astronomy was "not unlike" the instrumentalist perspective expressed in Osiander's preface to Copernicus' *De Revolutionibus*.<sup>6</sup> According to Sabra's interpretation, Ījī took the explanations of the astronomers to be neither true nor even probable; they simply accounted for the observed phenomena.<sup>7</sup> I interpret an instrumentalist view of astronomy to entail retrodictive and predictive accuracy. Sabra raised the possibility that an instrumentalist position might

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49–71; *ibid.* "Ṭūsī and Copernicus: The Earth's Motion in Context," *Science in Context* 14 (2001): 145–63; Robert Morrison, *Islam and Science: The Intellectual Career of Nizām al-Dīn al-Nīsābūrī* (London: Routledge, 2007); Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, "Institutionalisation of Science in the Medreses of pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Turkey," in *Turkish Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*, eds. G. Irzik and Güven Güzeldere (Dordrecht: Springer, 2005): 273–4; Gerhard Endress, "Mathematics and Philosophy in Medieval Islam," in *The Enterprise of Science in Islam: New Perspectives*, eds. Jan P. Hogendijk and A.I. Sabra (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2003), 159, note 182.

<sup>4</sup> Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 12–13. Sabra observed that with the work of Juwaynī (d. 1085), *mutakallimūn* "realized that false premises do not necessarily lead to false conclusions." Thus *mutakallimūn* examined works of *falsafa* and science to understand and rebut their arguments.

<sup>5</sup> Sabra pointed out, in his article, that Ījī was not the first to conceive of *kalām* ontologically, and not theologically, but argued (pp. 13–17, esp. p. 16) that the *Mawāqif* was the fullest expression of that development. See also p. 19: "But what these few examples already show is not a confused *kalām* but a confident *kalām* on the offensive against *falsafa*." Heidrun Eichner has since argued for the centrality of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's *al-Mulakhkhaṣṣ fi al-ḥikma* for the process of *kalām*'s incorporation of science and philosophy in her recent *Habilitationsschrift*. See Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition*.

<sup>6</sup> Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 38. For Osiander's preface, see Edward Rosen (translation and introduction), *Three Copernican Treatises* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 24–5. See also Gad Freudenthal: "Instrumentalism' and 'Realism' as Categories in the History of Astronomy: Duhem vs. Popper, Maimonides vs. Gersonides," *Centaurus* 45 (2003): 227–48. Freudenthal observed (p. 230) that instrumentalism (and realism) were positions in the philosophy of science; a figure such as Osiander might have had an instrumentalist position regarding Copernicus' theories, but one should not presume that he thought that science in general was instrumentalist. Sabra's implication, though, that Ījī was functioning more as a philosopher of science than as a scientist was apt.

<sup>7</sup> A classic statement of instrumentalism is Pierre Duhem's *To Save the Phenomena*. See Pierre Duhem, *To Save the Phenomena: An Essay on the Idea of Physical Theory from Plato to Galileo*, trans. Edmund Doland and Chaninah Maschler (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969).

correlate with Ghazālī's critique of causality<sup>8</sup> found in the *Incoherence of the Philosophers* in that while there was no decisive reason to believe that humans could identify through coincidences what the true intermediate cause was, such causes could exist and could be a useful language for describing natural phenomena.<sup>9</sup> The evidence of other scholars from Ījī's own century, as well as the commentaries on the *Mawāqif* that defended astronomy, would seem to support Sabra's general assessment that *kalām* incorporated science and philosophy and that *kalām* sought to do so on its own terms.

Ahmad Dallal's recent *Islam, Science, and the Challenge of History* has challenged Sabra's thesis that Ījī's *Mawāqif* was evidence for *kalām*'s absorption of science and *falsafa*.<sup>10</sup> As astronomy was the science to which Ījī devoted the most attention, Dallal argued that Ījī's goal was to destabilize astronomy's (*ilm al-hay'a*) foundations and conclusions in order to advance what Dallal saw as *kalām*'s more central strictly

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<sup>8</sup> Ghazālī's critique of causality in the seventeenth discussion of *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* has recently been re-assessed in Frank Griffel, *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 175–214.

<sup>9</sup> Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 38–9. See also Ghazālī, *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, trans. Michael Marmura (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1997), 166–77. See pp. 167–8 where Ghazālī described a blind man who acquired sight due to the removal of a film from over his eyes. That man would believe that the cause of sight was the removal of the film whereas "When, however, the sun sets and the atmosphere becomes dark, he would then know that it is sunlight that is the cause for the imprinting of the colors in his sight." Some, though not all, recent scholarship on Ghazālī has found that Ghazālī accepted at least a version of natural causality in his *kalām* texts. See, e.g., Richard Frank, *Creation and the Cosmic System: Al-Ghazālī and Avicenna* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1992) and *idem*, *Al-Ghazālī and the Ash'arite School* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 36–9. Frank Griffel has found that "[a] close reading of the seventeenth discussion shows, however, that on its two dozen or so pages, al-Ghazālī does not deny the existence of causal connections—and thus of causality—and he certainly does not argue that efficient causality as an explanation of physical change is false." See Griffel, *Al-Ghazālī*, 147. There, Griffel described Michael Marmura's position that Ghazālī denied causation as "false." See Marmura, "Al-Ghazālī's Attitude towards the Secular Sciences and Logic," in *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science*, ed. George F. Hourani (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), 109.

Sabra ("Science and Philosophy," 38–9) pointed out that Jurjānī's response to some of Ījī's criticisms of astronomy meant that an Ash'ari occasionalist outlook did not necessitate a certain view of astronomy. But even though Ījī and Jurjānī disagreed about the role of astronomy in *kalām*, the extent to which Ījī's criticisms of astronomy were correlated with his denial of causality is unclear.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmad Dallal, *Islam, Science, and the Challenge of Modernity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 133. "It is possible, however, to conceive of *kalām* as an apologetic undertaking that is not a complete philosophical system without diminishing its value as a genuine intellectual pursuit."

religious arguments and in order to deny the *falāsifa* recourse to the prestigious science of *kalām* in order to support their positions. Ījī discussed astronomy in order to remove astronomy from the intellectual arsenal of the *falāsifa* and to show that all celestial phenomena depended directly on God for their existence.<sup>11</sup> *Kalām* was, inevitably, a science more prestigious than astronomy.<sup>12</sup> Dallal commented on how, throughout the précis of astronomy found in the *Mawāqif*, Ījī pointed out conceivable alternatives to the astronomers' formulations. For example, Ījī pointed out that that the planets did not need to be carried on orbs; cross sections of orbs would suffice.<sup>13</sup> Or, the numerous circles that the astronomers traced on the surface of the orbs were wholly imaginary.<sup>14</sup> Why would *kalām* comprise a science that it simultaneously criticized so deeply? Without doubt, Dallal has raised a few questions that Sabra did not fully address. First, when Ījī raised possibilities of alternative explanations, he never actually fleshed out any alternative model. Second, and along the same lines, Dallal argued that Ījī's discussion of astronomy contained nothing that suggested a positive statement of a distinctively Islamic astronomy. Third, by saying that astronomy's mathematical hypotheses were subject neither to affir-

<sup>11</sup> Dallal, *Islam, Science*, 136. Note, though, that Ījī neither criticizes nor discusses every science at anything approaching the same length. Thus what is the organizational scheme that led to such a lengthy discussion of astronomy?

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Franz Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant: Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1970; reprinted 2007), 229.

<sup>13</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 400–1 (when I cite *Kitāb al-Mawāqif*, I am citing a version that also contains Jurjānī's commentary); see also Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 35. The idea that the orbs could be replaced with belts had appeared in Ptolemy's *Planetary Hypotheses*. See Johan L. Heiberg (ed.), *Claudii Ptolemaei opera quae exstant omnia*, vol. 2: *Opera astronomica minora* (2 parts) (Leipzig: Teubner, 1907), 130 for the possibility of replacing the orbs with rings. Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī's commentary on *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt* noted those who suggested that the planets be carried on cross-sections of orbs, belts, tambourines, and the like but categorized those who held such as ideas as *ghayr al-muḥaṣṣilīn*, 'those who do not discriminate.' See Ibn Sinā, *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt ma'a sharḥ Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī*, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1957–1968), 3: 187. The key for Ījī's position in the *Mawāqif*, it would seem, is whether Ījī meant spherical three-dimensional belts. At the risk of overreading, Ījī's avoidance of the question meant that he did not have to take a position [cf. Mu'ayyad al-Dīn 'Urḏī, *Kitāb al-hay'a*, ed. G. Saliba (Beirut: Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-'Arabiyya, 1990), 37] about the likelihood (*bi-l-ḥarī*) of the celestial bodies being spherical (*kurī*). Note that 'Urḏī did not attempt to argue there that the celestial bodies were complete orbs.

In *kalām*, the proposition that the planets might be carried by belts (*niṭāqāt*) was found in Baydāwī's *Tawālī' al-anwār*, ed. 'Abbās Sulaymān (Beirut: Dār al-Jil and Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth, 1991), 139.

<sup>14</sup> Sabra took these comments as a reflection of Ījī's position that the astronomers' physical explanations were, at best, contingent.

mation or negation, might ʿĪjī have been saying that *kalām* (which has to come to some conclusions about God) had little to do with astronomy? Like Dallal, I have been troubled, for over a decade, that nothing about ʿĪjī’s rhetoric suggests a desire to incorporate astronomy into *kalām*. So while these questions that Dallal posed provoked this article, Dallal’s suggestion that *kalām* and astronomy have little to do with each accepts a version of Sabra’s conclusion that ʿĪjī’s presentation of astronomy was instrumentalist.<sup>15</sup> By finding, in ʿĪjī’s *Mawāqif*, discussions of astronomy that are even more pointed than those discussed in earlier scholarship, and which show that ʿĪjī was not an instrumentalist, this paper will argue that *kalām* certainly had something to say about astronomy.<sup>16</sup>

Two important books appeared too late for Dallal to take them into consideration. The first, Frank Griffel’s *Al-Ghazālī’s Philosophical Theology*, paid a great deal of attention to Ghazālī’s position on causality. Griffel argued that Ghazālī accepted the existence of intermediate causes, and proposed alternatives to the Avicennan view about how intermediate causes could function.<sup>17</sup> Science was possible, though, because God’s custom could be studied as an expression of nature’s workings. Griffel’s significant finding that the existence of causality was not as decisive a point of debate as earlier scholars (including Sabra) might have thought does not mean that there was agreement about what the causes for celestial motions were. This paper probes some instances of disagreement. In addition, the distance of the celestial bodies presented particular challenges to the astronomers when it came to arguing why any single causal explanation might be more correct than any other explanation. Thus, the question of whether ʿĪjī’s presentation of astronomy was instrumentalist remains central. The second book, Heidrun Eichner’s *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition and Islamic Orthodoxy. Philosophical and Theological summae in Context* (Habilitationsschrift, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 2009) is a detailed argument for how later *kalām* texts took their form from Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī’s *al-Mulakhkhaṣṣa fī al-ḥikma*. The present article builds on Griffel’s book because ʿĪjī, whether

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<sup>15</sup> Dallal, *Islam, Science*, 134. “In other words, these matters [sc. astronomy] do not belong to theology and *kalām* has nothing to say in their regard.”

<sup>16</sup> Dallal’s earlier statement that ʿĪjī hoped to remove astronomy from the intellectual arsenal of the *falāsifa* was closer to what I am arguing, but that it is important to realize that the arguments of ʿĪjī’s opponents were theological (and found in *kalām* texts) not those of the *falāsifa*.

<sup>17</sup> Griffel, *Al-Ghazālī*, 175–6.

or not he took Ghazālī's position on the existence of intermediate causes, did not always think that astronomers proposed the correct intermediate causes. Eichner's habilitationsschrift raises the question of, given that the inclusion of astronomy in the *Mawāqif* would have been due to transformations in the organization of *kalām* texts, what was at stake for Ījī in the details of his presentation of astronomy. While Ījī's was a précis of astronomy in a *kalām* text after Rāzī's career, each précis was not the same.

This article, indeed, will show first that Ījī's presentation of astronomy in the *Mawāqif* was not instrumentalist. Second, this article will suggest that Ījī's scepticism about the reliability of observations is related to a position on how well the human intellect can sort out certain sense perceptions from things that are purely imaginary. After all, there were cases (rainbows, eclipses) where observational and geometric arguments communicated something certain about the physical structure of the universe. And sense perceptions had long been considered premises for demonstrations.<sup>18</sup> Third and finally, this paper will situate Ījī's presentation of astronomy within a debate about the role of astronomy within *kalām* and within other Islamic disciplines more generally. There I will advance a few tentative conclusions about what we gain once we understand that Ījī's presentation of astronomy was not instrumentalist. Other Islamic disciplines, e.g. *fiqh*, were more amenable to the probabilist knowledge that astronomy yielded; for Ījī, *kalām* seems to have demanded a level of demonstrative certainty often unattainable by astronomy. Would a *mutakallim*, by setting extremely high standards for demonstrations, have, in turn, ceded ground for certain plausible theological arguments to scholars of astronomers?

### *Why Ījī was not an Instrumentalist*

By attempting to poke holes in astronomy's instrumentalist value, Ījī actually took on astronomy at its strongest point, where it, by definition, was least contingent. The first passage I wish to discuss, one that has received, to my knowledge, no scholarly attention, deals with explanations for solar and lunar eclipses and of the phases of the moon. Astronomers all said (and would continue to say today) that the moon's phases are the result of

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<sup>18</sup> Ibn Sīnā, *al-Burhān min Kitāb al-Shifā'*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-Miṣriyya, 1954), 192. See also Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 1: 196. *Maḥsūsāt* were listed under *mushāhadāt*.

the sun shining light on one hand, and the moon, sun, and earth's positions on the other. Eclipses would occur when the sun, earth, and moon are in a straight line in the same plane. Ījī explored alternatives, alternatives which he never rejected, writing, "Know that Ibn al-Haytham said, regarding the moon's phases, that it could be that way because the moon is a luminous sphere, with one half shining and one half not, and that it rotates on its own with a speed equal to that of its orb. If the luminous side is facing us, then it is a full moon. And if the dark side is toward us, then it's a new moon. In the intervening positions, the portion of the moon visible to us varies. But what we have said about solar and lunar eclipses annuls what Ibn al-Haytham said.<sup>19</sup> The response, after considering the hypotheses, is that the negation of this possibility (*iḥtimāl*) does not negate all possibilities. Perhaps there is another reason, and again what you have mentioned makes it conceivable that, due to God's creation, there is light in the sun and the planets or that they are illuminated by other planets hidden from us."<sup>20</sup> Ījī suggested that God might create light in the sun, which is what happens, and/or in the other planets. Or the sun and the rest of the planets might be illuminated by planets not visible to us. It could be that the sun's light comes from an unknown source, but, it would be difficult to explain the moon's phases and eclipses equally as well while postulating an unknown, unobserved light source.<sup>21</sup> One should note that this comment elicited Jurjānī's ire; Jurjānī generally appeared less opposed to Ījī's jibes at the contingency of astronomy's physical explanations. Jurjānī's commentary picked up on these sharp points, saying that, yes, it was possible that there be another reason such as a dull, dark (*kamad*) planet beneath the orb of the moon that obscures it (*yankhasif bih*) in some conjunctions (*istiqbālāt*), but that astronomers do not know of it.<sup>22</sup> In addition, Ījī's arguments in favor of occasionalism depended on the perception of a natural order; astronomy was crucial for demonstrating the reality of that order.<sup>23</sup> Thus, since an argument for occasionalism was

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Bayḍāwī, *Ṭawālī' al-anwār*, 140. This much about eclipses denying this possibility is in Bayḍāwī's text, though there is no reference to Ibn al-Haytham. As we will see, Ījī did not grasp what Ibn al-Haytham actually said. See Ibn Al-Haytham, "The Light of the Stars: A Short Discourse by Ibn Al-Haytham," trans. W. 'Arafat and H.J.J. Winter, *The British Journal for the History of Science* 5 (1971): 282–8.

<sup>20</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2, 462.

<sup>21</sup> In this case, Ījī's scepticism exceeded that of Ghazālī's in *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*. Cf. Ghazālī, *The Incoherence*, 6.

<sup>22</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 463.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 35. Sabra explained that Ījī's intent was "to insist on the hypothetical and conjectural character of astronomical theories and thereby to

not inherently an attack on astronomy, Ījī's views of astronomy emerge only through a careful reading of his presentation of astronomy's findings.

In order to cast doubt on the validity of astronomers' explanation of the eclipses; Ījī has introduced the possibility of an unknown, unobserved celestial body. Previously in the *précis* of astronomy, when Ījī proposed alternatives to the astronomers' physical models of uniformly rotating orbs, he did not have to contest any *observation* of uniformly rotating orbs. That is, different configurations of orbs might well not produce different observations. If Ījī's only concern with astronomy was to argue that it was instrumentalist, that astronomy's purpose was to save the phenomena, he would not have had to invent heretofore unobserved phenomena. By doing so, Ījī has cast doubt on astronomy's ability to account for or predict planets' future positions. As a point of contrast, Ghazālī, in the *Incoherence of the Philosophers*, commented that only the stubborn would contest astronomers' explanation for eclipses.<sup>24</sup> Ījī was sceptical of the astronomers' claim that the lunar phases and eclipses were caused by the relative positions of the sun and the moon *and that it could not be otherwise*.<sup>25</sup> Ījī proposed some scenarios in which things might be otherwise.<sup>26</sup>

Or, Ījī might have been saying that the constant possibility of new observational data is a reminder not to have undue confidence in astronomy. But the move Ījī has made has been to introduce the possibility of unobserved celestial bodies in order to argue that the astronomers' explanation might not always be able to account for observations. For if these

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vindicate the Ash'arite conception of a contingent world." The better one understood the reality of order in nature, the more powerful the spiritual impact of perceptions of a contingent universe would be.

<sup>24</sup> Ghazālī, *The Incoherence*, 6. "[T]hese matters rest on demonstrations—geometric and arithmetical—that leave no room for doubt. Thus, when one who studies these demonstrations and ascertains their proofs, deriving thereby information about the time of the two eclipses [and] their extent and duration, is told that this is contrary to religion, [such an individual] will not suspect this [science, but] only religion."

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mantiq al-Mulakhkhaṣ*, ed. Aḥad Qarāmalikī (Tehran: Dānīshgāh-i Imām Ṣādiq, 2002), 345, on how it would be impossible to rule out all other possible explanations including that God made things run in such a way as to create such an effect with the occurrence of that specific thing without it having an effect on it.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Morrison, *Islam and Science*, 110–1 where Rāzī used the (unobserved) possibility of minute variations in motion from one fixed star to another to allege that, therefore, the astronomers' preference of placing all of the fixed stars in a single orb was false. See Carlo Nallino, *ʿIlm al-falak: tārikhuh ʿind al-ʿArab fi al-qurūn al-wuṣṭā* (Rome, 1911; reprinted Cairo: al-Dār al-ʿArabiyya li al-Kitāb and Beirut: Awraq Sharqiyya, 1911), 257–9.

unobserved (cf. Jurjānī's comment about a dull planet beneath the orb of the moon) celestial bodies never affected observations then, at least by Ghazālī's standards, the phases of the moon and eclipses would always correlate with the relative positions of the sun and the moon. Elsewhere in the *Mawāqif*, Ījī had written that we could have confidence in things that customarily occur (*al-'ādīyyāt*); Ījī acknowledged there that we get nowhere by lingering on the possibility that an aged person was, in fact, created that way just a few moments beforehand.<sup>27</sup> Or, Ījī could have been going beyond an instrumentalist position that would remind one of the shakiness of foundations borrowed from *falsafa* to attacking observations as a foundation for astronomy. Beginning with Bīrūnī, moving through the astronomers at the Marāgha Observatory, and culminating with Qūshjī's vision (reminiscent of Bīrūnī) for an astronomy with foundations solely in observations and mathematics, the astronomers of Islamic societies themselves aimed, as much as possible, to move the foundations of their science away from conclusions borrowed from *falsafa*.<sup>28</sup> Questioning explanations for eclipses might have been necessary for conclusions based on eclipse data, and the assumption that eclipses were due to the positions of the sun, earth, and moon, was the foundation for any physical model to explain the motions of the moon.

We must also place Ījī's reference to Ibn al-Haytham in the intellectual context of what Ibn al-Haytham actually said about eclipses. Since Sabra's article appeared, numerous other publications have independently and externally (i.e. not just on the basis of the *Mawāqif*) confirmed Sabra's conclusion that by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, scholars such

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<sup>27</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 1: 104–6. Interestingly, Ījī pointed out that the philosophers (*ḥukamā'*), who attributed terrestrial occurrences to celestial configurations, might have been unaware of some celestial occurrence before recorded history that would have the same effect of changing the way events would transpire on earth.

<sup>28</sup> I am not sure that such a move away from *falsafa*, on its own (*pace* Dallal, *Islam, Science*, 81–2), constitutes a move towards instrumentalism. See Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 314. In a discussion of mathematical bodies (*aqsām ta'līmīyya*), Ījī wrote that the evidence of mathematics was certain, giving the soul a type of knowledge of which it could not be convinced otherwise. Jurjānī clarified in his commentary (*Mawāqif*, 2: 317–8) that the *wahm* (estimation) was the place (*maḥall*) of mathematical bodies, though the *wahm* itself is not a body, but rather one of the corporeal faculties (*quwan jismānīyya*). There is an important discussion in *Mawāqif*, 2: 318 (Jurjānī's commentary) about how mathematical bodies are real.

On Qūshjī, see Ragep, "Freeing Astronomy," 49–71. Dallal used this article to place Qūshjī at the culmination of a trend in which astronomers attempted to separate astronomy from *falsafa*. See Dallal, *Islam, Science*, 82. I may differ from Dallal, though, in holding that these astronomers were still making realist or probabilist claims.

as Ījī must have studied astronomy.<sup>29</sup> Ījī's insinuation that eclipses were not necessarily due just to the interposition of the sun, moon, and earth relied on a misunderstanding of a statement by Ibn al-Haytham about the luminosity of the moon. Ījī alleged that Ibn al-Haytham wrote that the moon might very well be self-luminous and, then, that the phases of the moon could be due only to the moon's own rotation in its orb. A full moon would be when the moon's luminous face was facing the earth.<sup>30</sup> Ījī argued, seemingly correctly, that the evidence of eclipses showed that Ibn al-Haytham's theory was wrong. But the disproving of one alternative did not entail the rejection of all alternative explanations for eclipses, so perhaps the moon and other planets were illuminated by a source other than the sun, etc.

The problem was that Ījī misunderstood Ibn al-Haytham; Ibn al-Haytham, in fact, wrote that while other planets besides the sun could be luminous, the moon was not luminous.<sup>31</sup> Jurjānī, too, pointed out Ījī's erroneous citation of Ibn al-Haytham.<sup>32</sup> Thus Ījī's misunderstanding of Ibn al-Haytham led him to find a debate among astronomers where, in fact, there was none; as Ījī himself acknowledged at the beginning of the *Mawāqif*, the explanation of eclipses was a paradigmatic example of the use of *ḥads*, defined in this case as intuition.<sup>33</sup> The matter of eclipses

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<sup>29</sup> Qutb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 1311) and Nizām al-Dīn al-Nisābūrī (d. c. 1330), two scholars who were also talented astronomers, were contacts of Rashīd al-Dīn. On Nisābūrī and Rashīd al-Dīn, see van Ess, *Der Wesir*, 50. On Shīrāzī and Rashīd al-Dīn, see van Ess, *Der Wesir*, 21 and 56. Heidrun Eichner (The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition, 285) has argued for placing 'Urḏī's *Kitāb al-hay'a* within a tradition of religious scholarship. Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's voluminous oeuvre encompassed all manner of subjects including *kalām* and ethics. Al-Sayyid al-Sharīf Jurjānī (d. 1413), the author of the most famous commentary on the *Mawāqif*, was also an important commentator on Ṭūsī's *Tadhkira*.

<sup>30</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 462.

<sup>31</sup> Ibn al-Haytham, "The Light," 282–8.

<sup>32</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 463.

<sup>33</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 1: 197. Here Ījī presented *ḥads* as one of the ways to find the premises of a syllogism, a means of speculation (*naẓar*), the way of confirming (*ithbāt*) religious creeds. Because *kalām* (*Mawāqif*, 1: 43) was a science that did not (hence could not) depend on the findings of another science (as *hay'a* did), Ījī wanted to ascertain that any finding from astronomy was acceptable according to the epistemology of *kalām*. If a finding of astronomy could not meet the standards of Ījī's *kalām*, then that finding of astronomy would be like knowledge of Islam garnered solely from, say, the Bible.

Once again, Ījī's criticism of astronomy comes, as far as Ījī knows, from within astronomy.

An important definition of *ḥads* came in Ibn Sīnā's *Shifā'*. See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Burhān*, 192. *Ḥads* (intuition) was the movement of a faculty of the soul to grasping the middle term of a syllogism on its own, such as the intuition that the phases of the moon are due to the moon's position with respect to the sun.

had been the sole example of *ḥads* mentioned by Ibn Sīnā in his *Kitāb al-Burhān*.<sup>34</sup> It is possible that Ījī's incomplete understanding of what Ibn al-Haytham had actually said affected his ability to understand and appreciate astronomers' use of *ḥads* and might explain why he did not understand how the astronomers, of whom Ibn al-Haytham was one, had excluded other explanations for eclipses. Besides or beyond any misunderstanding of astronomy on Ījī's part, Ījī may have been interested in *ḥads* because, after Ibn Sīnā, *ḥads* assumed an even larger role in astronomers' epistemology; Mu'ayyad al-Dīn al-'Urḍī wrote that Ptolemy intuited the existence of the epicycle and eccentric.<sup>35</sup> Ījī wrote that *ḥads* was the process through which we determined, by observing that God's deeds were perfect, that God was perfect.<sup>36</sup> Langermann has suggested that *ḥads* may not be intuition; astronomers might have understood *ḥads* as a conjecture or as an inspired solution to a problem that has not met with any other solution (i.e. a guess).<sup>37</sup> The first example (Ījī's discussion of the lunar phases and eclipses), then, could be understood as a zealous

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<sup>34</sup> Y. Tzvi Langermann, "Ibn Kammūna and the 'New Wisdom' of the Thirteenth Century," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 15 (2005): 287. Ījī also remarked on the distinction between *innī* and *limmī* proofs, roughly paralleling Aristotle's distinction between the proof of the fact and the proof of the reasoned fact (*Posterior Analytics*, Bk 1, Ch 13). Ījī defined an *innī* demonstration as reasoning from the effect to the cause, giving the example of a fever leading one to infer a decay of the humors (*ta'āffun al-akhlāt; Mawāqif*, 1: 177). See also Ṭūsī's *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt* where a tertian fever (*humma al-ghibb*) arose in the discussion of *innī* and *limmī* proofs. See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt*, 1: 487. Ibn Sīnā also mentioned eclipses as an example of a *limmī* proof. In *Posterior Analytics* 78b20, Aristotle explained that if the absence of balanced heat led to sickness, then the presence of balanced heat brought health. Subsequently, Aristotle recognized that the boundaries of *innī* and *limmī* proofs differed from one science to another. For the role of *innī* proofs in astronomy see Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's Memoir on Astronomy (al-Tadhkira fi 'ilm al-hay'a)*, ed. and trans. F. Jamil Ragep (New York: Springer, 1993), 39. Indeed, it seems that Ījī has different standards for astronomy regarding the principle that if the absence of x entails the absence of y, then the presence of x entails the presence of y.

<sup>35</sup> Langermann, "Ibn Kammūna," 293.

<sup>36</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 1: 197.

<sup>37</sup> Langermann, "Ibn Kammūna," 295. Nizām al-Dīn Nisābūrī, in his *Kashf-i Haqā'iq-i Ziy-i Īlkhānī*, validated astrological prognostications with the principle of *ḥads*, drawing general conclusions from specific instances (see Morrison, *Islam and Science*, 67). He also defined *ḥads* in his *tafsīr* entitled *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa-rahgā'ib al-furqān* (see Morrison, *Islam and Science*, 143). Nisābūrī's teacher, Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, had discussed *ḥads* in his astronomy text entitled *Nihāyat al-idrāk fi dirāyat al-aflāk*. See Robert Morrison, "Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī's Hypotheses for Celestial Motions," *Journal for the History of Arabic Science* 13 (2005): 92 note 84. Shīrāzī taught from his *Nihāyat al-idrāk* in the Gökmedrese in Sivas. See Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, "Institutionalisation," 270. Finally, Shīrāzī's teacher, Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, also used *ḥads* to validate astrological prognostications. See Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, *Sharḥ-i Thamara-yi Baṭlamyūs*, ed. Jalil Akhavan Zanjānī (Tehran: Āyina-yi Mirāth, 1999), 6–7.

(or, perhaps, over-zealous) attempt to clarify and restrict the application of *hads*, a process that Ījī agreed could yield certain knowledge.

The second passage in the *Mawāqif* that I would like to discuss that would militate against concluding that Ījī's presentation of astronomy was instrumentalist is his comments on the sphericity of the earth. Ījī began the paragraph by stating that they (the astronomers or *falāsifa*) alleged (*za'amū*) that the earth was spherical (*kurawīyya*).<sup>38</sup> They acknowledged that the earth was not perfectly spherical, but that the undulations that did exist were comparatively insignificant. At the end of the paragraph he remarked: "granted that what you have mentioned is like that, so what do you say about what is covered with water?"<sup>39</sup> Then, Ījī commented that simplicity (*al-basāṭa*) necessitates the sphere, but that undulations, even unobservable ones or minute ones, prevent the recourse to sphericity. Thus, he has implied that if the effect (sphericity) is not certain, the cause (simplicity) cannot be presumed. Jurjānī, in his commentary, reminded the reader that while it is possible that there might be hidden undulations, mathematical astronomers (*arbāb al-ta'ālīm*) are content with (*yaktafūn*) what appears to the senses.<sup>40</sup> We see, first, that Ījī has strayed from the instrumentalist task of just saving the phenomena. In order to undercut the physical assumptions of astronomers, Ījī had to propose undulations in the Earth that had not been observed because they were under water. But undulations that had not been observed would not affect observations; thus they would be beyond the scope, probably, of *'ilm al-hay'a*, and certainly beyond that of mathematical astronomy. Were astronomy's purpose simply to explain the observations, Ījī could have presumed the sphericity of the earth. Second, if Ījī's goal were to undercut the presumption of the Earth's simplicity, then he would be better off relying on undulations that have actually been observed rather than underwater undulations that may or may not exist. By conceding that the noticeable undulations could not sufficiently upset the presumption of the earth's simplicity, he had to resort to the possibility that beneath the oceans were mountains that, were they visible, could upset the presumption, based on observations, of the earth's simplicity.<sup>41</sup> Ījī's scepticism of sense perception did double

<sup>38</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 476.

<sup>39</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 476.

<sup>40</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 478.

<sup>41</sup> Again, we see parallels with Rāzī's comment about observations of the motion of the fixed stars in *al-Taḥṣīn al-kabīr*. Cf. fn. 26.

duty. It undercut the observations that bolstered the astronomers' adoption of principles from *falsafa* and it worked to deprive the astronomers of claiming the certitude of arguments based solely on observation. The findings of *falsafa* would then be, after all, only persuasive (*iqnāʿ*).<sup>42</sup> Hence, if sense perceptions, in addition, were wrong, astronomy's accuracy, even as a set of mathematical models, would be called into question.

The third and final aspect of Ījī's presentation of astronomy that I would like to focus on, in order to argue that the presentation of astronomy in *Kitāb al-Mawāqif* was not instrumentalist, was Ījī's statement that the equant was a difficulty in the model for Mercury that astronomers could not solve.<sup>43</sup> The matter of the equant arose from Ptolemy's conclusion that certain motions of planets were uniform about axes that did not run through the center of the orb, but rather those motions were uniform about an axis that ran through an off-center point called the equant. The only way that an orb could, in fact, rotate uniformly in place would be about an axis that *did* run through the center of that orb. In other words, Ījī understood, correctly, that the equant threatened the astronomers' principle that celestial motions were uniform and circular and that that principle motivated the entire discipline.<sup>44</sup> Ījī wrote, à propos astronomers' concern about the equant point, that, perhaps, partial inclinations (*irādāt juz'īyya*) would suffice to produce motions that appeared uniform about the equant point. If astronomers accepted that proposition then there was no reason to be concerned about the equant point and there was no reason to be concerned with trying to resolve the problem.<sup>45</sup> Jurjānī, in his commentary on the *Mawāqif*, related the problem with Mercury to the difficulty (*ishkāl*) associated with the other planets, an *ishkāl* that had been solved.<sup>46</sup> Ījī concluded that the truth was to transfer (*iḥāla*)

<sup>42</sup> Ragep, "Tūsī and Copernicus," 155.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 37. Sabra noted that Ibn al-Haytham, like Ījī, described the equant as a problem that threatened to destroy astronomy's foundations.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. what 'Urḍī said on page 211.

<sup>45</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 451. "Wa fi al-kull fa-inna ḥarakāt al-aftāk irādīyya fa-mādhā yamna' an takhtalif bi-ḥasab mā yata'āqib 'alayhā min irādāt juz'īyya?" On the same page, Ījī attributed the astronomers' frustration with the equant to their insistence on uniform rotation.

<sup>46</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 457. Jurjānī's commentary made the connection between the problem of Mercury and those of the other planets, but did not note that those problems had been solved. Of course, Jurjānī wrote a famous commentary on a text with a solution for those problems.

everything to *al-qādir al-mukhtār*.<sup>47</sup> Jurjānī added that this was the salvation (*manjāh*) from all these difficulties.<sup>48</sup> Astronomers' solutions to these difficulties did not seem to play a role. 'Urḍī, in his *Kitāb al-Hay'a*, a text written before the construction of the Marāgha Observatory, put it differently. He pointed out à propos the Ptolemaic equant point, that if orbs could speed up and slow down, there would be no need for any of the orbs that Ptolemy proposed such as eccentrics and epicycles.<sup>49</sup> By implication, if orbs could speed up and slow down, what would prevent them from moving backward and forward? Thus 'Urḍī has argued that scepticism about the need for solutions of the difficulty of the equant point meant, by extension, scepticism about the enterprise of astronomy. In fact, the most noteworthy achievement of astronomers in Islamic civilization, including astronomers known to Rashīd al-Dīn, were models that solved the equant problem. That is, astronomers of Islamic civilization, beginning with Ṭūsī and 'Urḍī, proposed models that retained the predictive and retrodictive accuracy of Ptolemy's models but in which all the orbs rotated uniformly about axes passing through their centers.<sup>50</sup> More important, Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311) resolved the difficulties of the Mercury model.<sup>51</sup> Ījī did not open himself to that possibility because he wanted to restrict closely the available ways to gain true knowledge.<sup>52</sup>

As was the case with Ījī's views about the phases of the moon and eclipses, Ījī's position has forced us to be more specific about what we mean by 'instrumentalist'. The noted astronomer al-Khafarī (d. c. 1550) has been understood as an instrumentalist in that he presented four

<sup>47</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 452.

<sup>48</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 457.

<sup>49</sup> 'Urḍī, *Kitāb al-hay'a*, 212. See also p. 214, where he mentioned those who composed books of doubts about Ptolemy, i.e. Ibn al-Haytham and Jābir Ibn Aflāḥ, before he ('Urḍī) began to discuss solutions for the doubts, implying that doubts were for the sake of solutions, not doubts.

<sup>50</sup> For 'Urḍī's solutions, see 'Urḍī, *Kitāb al-hay'a*. For Ṭūsī's solutions, see Ṭūsī, *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's* Memoir. For a well-informed survey of these theories and more, see George Saliba: "Arabic Planetary Theories after the Eleventh Century AD," in *Encyclopedia of the History of Arabic Science*, eds. Régis Morelon and Roshdi Rashed (London: Routledge, 1996), 58–127.

<sup>51</sup> Edward S. Kennedy: "Late Medieval Planetary Theory," *Isis*, 57 (1966): 365–78. Reprinted in E.S. Kennedy, *Studies in the Islamic Exact Sciences* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1983), 84–97.

<sup>52</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 450–1. See also Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 38–9. Dallal (*Islam, Science*, 134–5) interpreted Ījī's statement (cf. Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 37) about the neutral status of astronomy as applicable to the orbs as well as the circles imagined on the surface of the orbs. I disagree.

mathematically equivalent Mercury models without taking a position on which one was the real model. But the inclusion of uniformly rotating orbs remained the criterion of viability, meaning that predictive accuracy alone was insufficient. Thus, Khafri's multiple solutions for Mercury implied (though he did not say so himself) that solutions composed of uniformly rotating orbs were better than solutions that involved orbs that did not rotate uniformly. By questioning the need for the orbs' motions to be uniform, Ījī undermined the grounds for the argument that models with uniform motions were probably better than those without. Finally, if Khafri was an instrumentalist, he was an instrumentalist operating within the project of astronomy which was to explain complex celestial motions in terms of uniform rotational motions.

Ījī's lack of awareness of recent developments extended to optics, in this case the explanation for the phenomenon of the rainbow. Ījī explained that the colors of the rainbow

differ according to the parts/atoms (*ajzā'*) of the clouds and what is behind them, and the light from heavy bodies that is reflected from them. An eminent scholar of our time (*ba'd al-fudalā' min zamāninā*) has opined that a prism (*ka'b 'āl<sup>m</sup>*) maintains (*yadda'ī*) the falsehood of that. But it is the opinion of most (*ra'y al-jumhūr*), so we have mentioned it here following them.<sup>53</sup>

In his commentary, Jurjānī identified this eminent scholar as Kamāl al-Dīn Fārisī (d. 1320).<sup>54</sup> Fārisī found, by conducting an experiment with a transparent sphere, that the colors of the rainbow were the product of rays of light being refracted a second time after being refracted within the droplets of water.<sup>55</sup>

This is, indeed, an important part of the *Mawāqif* because Fārisī's experiment regarding the rainbow indicates how it was possible to provide an explanation, based on experiment, for physical phenomena. A rainbow was not material with the color of the spectrum in the sky, but rather light broken down into the color of the spectrum. This experiment, within the science of optics, was, perhaps, a threat to Ījī's portrayal of science because the demonstrations that supported it were geometric and mathematical. They were beyond refutation. Thus, if Ījī did not fully understand Fārisī's

<sup>53</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 596. Cf. Rāzī, *al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya*, 1: 181.

<sup>54</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 603.

<sup>55</sup> Roshdi Rashed, "Kamāl Al-Dīn Abu'l Ḥasan Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥasan Al-Fārisī," in *Complete Dictionary of Scientific Biography* (Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2008), 7: 212–219. Accessed via Gale Virtual Reference Library. Web. 16 Apr. 2011.

theory of the rainbow, rejecting Fārisī's theory would be to his advantage because attributing the colors of the rainbow to the colors of clouds served his goal of attributing natural phenomena, as entirely as possible, to God.<sup>56</sup> For Ījī, it would have been unclear how that light would have been anything other than either something imaginary or something material.<sup>57</sup>

On the next page of the commentary, Jurjānī cited Rāzī's *al-Mabāhith al-Mashriqiyya* where it was alleged that the cause of these atmospheric phenomena, rainbows, were celestial conjunctions (*ittiṣālāt falakiyya*).<sup>58</sup> Or, non-material powers (*quwan rūḥāniyya*) brought about their existence. Then Jurjānī wrote that atmospheric phenomena such as rainbows were not imaginary (*min qabīl al-khayālāt*). Were such phenomena imaginary, it would be like seeing one's image in the mirror while knowing that oneself, in the truth of the matter (*fi nafs al-amr*), is not in the mirror.<sup>59</sup> Rainbows, then, were real. My colleague İhsan Fazlıoğlu of Istanbul Medeniyet University has drawn my attention to the importance of this phrase (*nafs al-amr*) as a technical term and is preparing a lengthy study of the subject.<sup>60</sup> Jurjānī was saying that it is the mode of existence known

<sup>56</sup> Jurjānī mentioned Fārisī by name on *Mawāqif*, 2: 603.

<sup>57</sup> Ījī certainly had grounds for insinuating that observers did not always know what they saw. For instance he commented, at the beginning of his précis of astronomy (*Mawāqif*, 2: 400) that geometers (*muhandisūn*) who found that the orb of Venus was above the sun would, then, discredit Avicenna's statement that he observed Venus as a blemish on the face of the sun. See Bernard Goldstein, "Some Medieval Reports of Venus and Mercury Transits," *Centaurus* 14 (1969): 52–3. But what the geometers' position, if true, would really have meant was that whatever Ibn Sinā observed in the face of the sun, it was not Venus. Thus, the question was not necessarily even whether Ibn Sinā observed a transit, but whether Ibn Sinā could discern which planet it was; Ibn Bājja had observed a Mercury transit. Goldstein, "Some Medieval Reports," 55. Also interesting is Goldstein's (p. 54) account of Gersonides' argument for why transit observations were not, actually, observations of Venus and Mercury transiting the sun.

<sup>58</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 604. One place where Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī discussed the influence of the orbs' motions on the sublunar elements was in *al-Mabāhith al-mashriqiyya*, ed. Muḥammad al-Mu'taṣim bi-'llāh al-Baghdādī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1990), 2: 114–5.

<sup>59</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 604. Further down on the page is a spot where Jurjānī rebutted Ījī.

<sup>60</sup> On *nafs al-amr*, see Hans Daiber, *Bibliography of Islamic Philosophy: Index of names, terms, and topics* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 2: 103, 413. For Jurjānī's treatise on *nafs al-amr*, see Recep Duran: "Nefsü'l-emr Risaleleri," *Ankara Üniversitesi Dergiler Veritabanı* 14 (1992): 97–106. For Dawānī and Ardabilī's treatises on *nafs al-amr*, which were commentaries on Ṭūsī's, see Recep Duran: "Nefsü'l-emr Risaleleri," *Bilim ve Felsefe Metinleri* 1 (1992): 77–102. For Ṭūsī's treatise see *Sargudhast va-'aqā'id-i falsafī-yi Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī*, ed. Muḥammad Mudarrisī Zanjanī (Tehran: Nefisgāh-i Dānishgāh-i Tihārān, 1957), 169–172 (*Risālat Ithbāt jawhar mufāraq*). The same treatise is also found in Muḥammad Taqī Mudarrisī Raḍavī, *Aḥvāl va-āthār-i Khvāja Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī* (Tehran: Bunyād-i Farhang-i Irān, 1354; second printing 1375), 464–7. It is followed by a list of MSS of Ṭūsī's treatise and a list of the known commentaries thereon.

as *nafs al-amr* through which one can tell the difference between what one imagines and reality. Considering the truth of the matter (*nafs al-amr*) differentiates a real natural phenomenon from something imaginary (*khayālāt*).

In a famous part of the *Mawāqif*, Ījī remarked, forcefully, that the circles, such as the celestial equator, that the astronomers posited on the surface of the orb were purely imaginary.<sup>61</sup> Jurjānī responded in his commentary that (following Sabra's translation) "they are 'correctly imagined (*mutakhayyala takhayyul<sup>an</sup> ṣaḥīḥ<sup>an</sup>*) in accordance with what things are in themselves."<sup>62</sup> The Arabic phrase *fī nafs al-amr* is what Sabra translated as 'in accordance with what things are in themselves.'<sup>63</sup> This comment has also been interpreted as a broader defense of astronomy since, again, the question, as it was with the rainbow, would be whether there was another correct way to imagine the same circles.

Jurjānī wrote a short treatise entitled *Risāla fī taḥqīq nafs al-amr wa-l-farq baynahu wa-bayn al-khārij*. Recep Duran has edited the treatise and has translated it into Turkish. Jurjānī explained that ascertaining something (*taḥaqquq al-ashyā'*) is a supposition (*farḍ*) that is either within the faculties of perception or external to them. But *nafs al-amr* is more general than external existence (*a'amm min al-khārij*). That is, a compound body might be compound in the truth of the matter (*fī nafs al-amr*), but not externally if such a body does not exist externally.<sup>64</sup> The example Jurjānī gave was of a blackness (*sawād*) that did not exist externally but did in itself (*fī nafsih*). Such a blackness might plausibly exist, unlike, say, a three-headed monster or the abstractions of numbers. Rather such a blackness was a color just like colors the external existence of which has been assented to because the scope of that which exists in *nafs al-amr* subsumes that which exists externally.<sup>65</sup> Jurjānī cautioned that most errors resulted from confusion of the determination (*ḥukm*) of the intellect (*dhihn*), external reality, and the truth of the matter (*nafs al-amr*).<sup>66</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 410. See also Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 37.

<sup>62</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 432. The quoted translation comes from Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 37.

<sup>63</sup> Although Jurjānī, when returning to a blackness (*sawād*) not existing (*ma'dūm*) externally might be a color in itself (*fī nafsih*). Thus, *nafs al-amr* might be better understood as a mode of existence.

<sup>64</sup> Duran, "Nefsü'l-emr Risaleleri," 103.

<sup>65</sup> So the application of *nafs al-amr* to prove non-existence is more narrow than applying externality (Duran, "Nefsü'l-emr Risaleleri," 103).

<sup>66</sup> Duran, "Nefsü'l-emr Risaleleri," 104.

An earlier commentator on the *Tadhkira*, Nizām al-Dīn al-Nīsābūrī, understood knowledge gained from the *nafs al-amr* to be equivalent to syllogistic knowledge.<sup>67</sup> As *Kashf al-Zunūn* put it, the existence of something in *nafs al-amr* depended directly on neither the mind (*dhihn*) or external reality.<sup>68</sup> Though explanations of ‘the truth of the matter’ varied and are sometimes difficult to understand, it is clear that existence in the truth of the matter was not the same as mental existence (*al-wujūd al-dhihnī*) or as external existence but was a real form of existence.

### *Correlations with Occasionalism?*

al-‘Allāma al-Ḥillī’s (d. 1325) *Kashf al-murād fī sharḥ Tajrīd al-i’tiqād* was also from the Tabriz circle of Rashīd al-Dīn.<sup>69</sup> When Ḥillī (a Shiite) came to Ṭūsī’s account of the orbs in the *Tajrīd al-i’tiqād*, Ḥillī commented, though not at the length at which Ījī did, in a tone that was as critical as Ījī’s. Ḥillī’s strongest critiques of astronomy came with his arguments against the astronomers’ arguments for the transparency (*shaffāfa*) of the orbs. The astronomers’ argument that the orbs were simple, and consequently for the orbs’ transparency, was contradicted (*manqūḍ*) by the example of the moon.<sup>70</sup> Though Ḥillī did not specify what it was about the moon (the moon’s color comes to mind), *manqūḍ* was a strong word. The moon’s observed color contested but did not necessarily contradict the astronomers. The second argument, that what was beyond the orbs, e.g. the stars fixed in the eighth orb, was not obscured from sight, was deemed by Ḥillī only presumptive (*ẓannī*) and not certain. He argued that it was possible that the orbs had a weak color insufficient to obscure the stars from sight. This is a distinction without a difference as Ḥillī could not contest either the observations themselves or the functional transparency of the orbs.

Ḥillī also pointed to the problem of planetary distances, namely the principle that the greatest distance of a planet must be the least distance of the planet above it, as an area of uncertainty as the *jawzahr* of the moon

<sup>67</sup> Nizām al-Dīn al-Nīsābūrī, *Tawḍīḥ al-Tadhkira*, MS Fatih 3397, fol. 13r apud the distinction between *innī* and *limmī* proofs.

<sup>68</sup> Duran, “Nefsū’l-emr Risaleleri,” 105.

<sup>69</sup> van Ess, *Der Wesir*, 42, 44, 47.

<sup>70</sup> Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ḥassan al-Ḥillī (with comments and marginalia by al-Sayyid Ibrāhīm al-Mūsawī al-Zanjānī), *Kashf al-murād fī sharḥ Tajrīd al-i’tiqād* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-‘ulamā li-l-maṭbū‘āt, 1979), 164.

intervened between the moon's greatest distance and the nearest distance of Mercury.<sup>71</sup> According to the astronomers, the planets' orbs had to nest within each other lest there be a void between orbs.<sup>72</sup> Thus, a *mutakalim*'s position was as correlated with his commitment to the discipline of astronomy as it was with his intellectual tradition in *kalām*; aside from the fact that Ījī's treatment of astronomy was more extensive, Ḥillī's was as critical.<sup>73</sup> Ḥillī's criticisms of astronomy are fascinating because they went beyond asserting the contingency of the astronomers' (and Ṭūsī's) conclusions. Even more important, they came in a text that explicitly recognized causality.<sup>74</sup> Thus, it would be difficult to correlate Ḥillī's position on astronomy with his position on causality.<sup>75</sup> Given Ījī's chronologically posterior position to Ḥillī in the circle of Rashīd al-Dīn, Ḥillī's concern for certainty and *kalām* must have been more compelling than the general question of causality. Eichner has noted in Ḥillī's *Kashf al-murād fī sharḥ Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* an emphasis on rationalist demonstration.<sup>76</sup> And Sabine Schmidtke has noted that Ḥillī never defended philosophy at the expense of his views on *kalām*.<sup>77</sup> Ḥillī, for instance, rejected emanation and held that God could know particulars. Though he did not deny the existence of a soul, he did not argue directly for its existence.<sup>78</sup> With respect to Ḥillī, an acceptance of causality did not correlate with a realist or even instrumentalist astronomy.

<sup>71</sup> al-Ḥillī (with comments and marginalia by al-Sayyid Ibrāhīm al-Mūsawī al-Zanjānī), *Kashf al-murād fī sharḥ Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-a'lamī li al-maṭbū'āt, 1979), 163.

<sup>72</sup> See Ṭūsī, *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's* Memoir, 517–23 for more on how astronomers dealt with what Rager termed the 'unpleasant realities' of planetary sizes and distances.

<sup>73</sup> See Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition*, 291: "An analysis of the section dealing with astronomy shows that al-Āmulī—although being an author whose Ash'ari affiliation is quite explicit—was influenced by the tradition represented by the commentary by the al-'Allāma al-Ḥillī on al-Ṭūsī's *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*." It depends what one means by tradition, for Ḥillī's views on astronomy were not Ṭūsī's.

<sup>74</sup> Ḥillī, *Kashf al-Murād*, 113.

<sup>75</sup> Such a link would not be impossible, for in the milieu of Tabriz, Ḥillī could have picked up the critique of astronomy from Ash'ari scholars. Still, such a hypothesis would imply that the text of *Kashf al-Murād* is a student's notes.

<sup>76</sup> Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition*, 308.

<sup>77</sup> Sabine Schmidtke, *The Theology of al-'Allāma al-Ḥillī* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1991), 255–60, esp. 255. See also p. 215 for Ḥillī's rejection of the philosophers' doctrine of the world's eternity.

<sup>78</sup> Schmidtke, *The Theology*, 257–8.

*The Implications of Ījī's Non-Instrumentalist Presentation of Astronomy*

Having argued that Ījī's presentation of astronomy in *Kitāb al-Mawāqif* was not instrumentalist, there are three tentative conclusions that I would like to advance. First, because *kalām* texts such as the *Mawāqif* paid special attention to matters of logic and to how all demonstrations had to be based on certain (*yaqīnī*) premises in order to free the reader from *taqlīd*, then Ījī was likely troubled by how little or nothing of what the astronomers said could be established deductively from self-evident principles.<sup>79</sup> If Rāzī's *al-Mulakkhkhaṣ fi al-ḥikma* is indeed as important for the development of *kalām* as Eichner has argued, then the final section of the *Manṭiq al-Mulakkhkhaṣ* is crucial for understanding sections in later *kalām* texts, such as Ījī's that are critical even of astronomy's instrumental value.<sup>80</sup> In this section on the principles of demonstration (*mabādi' al-burhān*), Rāzī enumerated five: *awwalīyyāt* (the *a priori*), things that have been observed (*mushāhadāt*), *mutawātīrāt*, experiences (*mujarrabāt*), and *ḥadsīyyāt*. Regarding *ḥadsīyyāt*, Rāzī remarked that our example is our conviction (*i'tiqādunā*) that the light of the moon comes from the sun owing to how we see the phases (*ikhṭilāf ashkālīh*). But Rāzī said that he had already shown the weakness of that premise (*muqaddima*) in *ḥikma*, for that premise was neither sensed (*maḥsūs*) nor *a priori* (*awwalī*). He explained that what is sensed is the phases of the moon; that the phases are due to the moon's proximity and distance from the moon is not sensed. Thus a demonstration would be necessary. And since it requires a proof, the explanation for the phases of the moon could not be certain on its own; therefore intuition (*ḥads*) cannot be numbered among the premises (*al-mabādi'*).<sup>81</sup> It appears that Rāzī's strategy, then, has been to exclude

<sup>79</sup> See Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 10: "As the fourteenth-century Ash'arite al-Ījī as to put it in unequivocal terms, the first advantage of *kalām* was to raise the adept 'from the perigee of *taqlīd* to the apogee of certainty.'" On the non-deductive nature of astronomy, George Saliba perceived that the *mutakallimūn*'s qualms with astronomy had to do with how the principles of astronomy were not self-evident. See Saliba "Astronomy and Astrology in Medieval Arabic Thought," in *Les doctrines de la science de l'antiquité à l'âge classique*, eds. Roshdi Rashed and Joël Biard (Leuven, Dudley, MA: Peeters, 1999), 148–9.

<sup>80</sup> On the significance of Rāzī's *al-Mulakkhkhaṣ fi al-ḥikma*, see Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition*, 32. For the portion of the text under discussion, see Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, *Manṭiq al-mulakkhkhaṣ*, ed. Qaramqli (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Imām Ṣādiq, 2002), 344–54.

<sup>81</sup> Rāzī, *Manṭiq al-mulakkhkhaṣ*, 344–5.

*ḥads* from the list of acceptable principles for a syllogism by noting that it is not a sense perception.<sup>82</sup>

Subsequently, Rāzī went on to attack experientia (*mujarrabāt*) as a way to obtain a premise of a syllogism.<sup>83</sup> He cited the observation that diarrhea has been observed to occur upon taking scammony (*saqmūniyā*) time after time (*marra ba'd ukhrā*). His critique was far-reaching: correlating diarrhea and scammony depended on observing the effect (diarrhea) when scammony was taken. The implication is that one could not be forever certain of the correlation. Seemingly implicit, too, is occasionalism as one might otherwise argue that there was an element in the scammony that caused diarrhea to occur. From that position comes Rāzī's conclusion: sense perceptions do not yield universal certainty (*al-ḥiss lā yu'tī al-qaḍiyya al-kullīyya al-yaqīniyya*).<sup>84</sup> Rāzī has attempted to weaken 'ilm al-ḥay'a's claim to any certain knowledge, meaning that little of what the astronomers say could be considered to meet the demonstrative standards of *kalām*. Rāzī's position on sense perceptions reminds one of Ījī's attempts to undermine confidence in observations.

Ījī also provided his own cautious assessment of *ḥadsīyyāt*, *mujarrabāt*, and *mutawātirāt* in the *Mawāqif*.<sup>85</sup> As Rāzī had written (and Ṭūsī would agree in his *Tajrīd al-mantiq*), the main support (*ʿumda*) for demonstrations was first principles (*awwalīyyāt*).<sup>86</sup> Ījī argued that while *ḥadsīyyāt*, *mujarrabāt*, and *mutawātirāt* could be a satisfactory argument for an individual, these premises would not necessarily serve to convince someone who, say, lacked the intuition or the transmitted material. It would not be possible to convince an opponent by rejecting all alternatives (*ʿalā sabīl al-munākara*), perhaps for the reason that Rāzī mentioned. Conversely, only the truly deficient would lack the first principles. The only way to use induction comprehensively would be by conceiving of the two extremes,

<sup>82</sup> Notably, Ījī did acknowledge *ḥads* when he listed the possible premises of a demonstration. Ṭūsī also excluded *ḥads* from the premises of a demonstration in his *Tajrīd al-Mantiq*, but he allowed that *ḥads* could lead one to the middle term of a syllogism. See Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, *Tajrīd al-Mantiq*, [no editor listed] (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'lamī li al-Maṭbū'at, 1988), 53–4.

<sup>83</sup> Rāzī, *Mantiq al-mulakhkhaṣ*, 345.

<sup>84</sup> Rāzī, *Mantiq al-mulakhkhaṣ*, 345.

<sup>85</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 1: 198–99. On this part of the *Mawāqif*, see van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, 398–9.

<sup>86</sup> Ṭūsī, *Tajrīd al-Mantiq*, 52. See also Rāzī, *Mantiq al-mulakhkhaṣ*, 448. This is part of the editor's commentary, but the contemporary commentator was citing Ṭūsī, and not just Hillī's view of Ṭūsī.

and that would not always be possible.<sup>87</sup> Without the ability to form an induction by arguing from the two extremes, the intellect would need something to help it in its judgment. Sometimes that would be the estimative faculty (*al-wahm*), a faculty Ījī explained was capable of error.<sup>88</sup> While Ījī's position may have differed from Rāzī's in that Ījī may have acknowledged that some sense perceptions did provide certain knowledge, Ījī has left room to doubt some demonstrations, e.g. those of the astronomers, based heavily on sense perceptions.

The second implication of concluding that Rāzī's discussion of astronomy was not instrumentalist is that one might speculate that Ījī discussed astronomy in the way that he did in order to reinforce a distinction between *ʿilm* and *fiqh*.<sup>89</sup> By Ījī's time, astronomy (*ʿilm al-hayʿa*) had become part of a tradition of religious scholarship and the astronomers, like the *fuqahāʾ* (for God's law in a particular instance cannot always be known with certainty) depended necessarily on probabilist reasoning. Because *kalām* sought *ʿilm*, not *taqlīd*, *kalām* had to distinguish itself from the demonstrative standards of *fiqh* and astronomy inasmuch as astronomy's reasoning resembled that of *fiqh*. Nizām al-Dīn Nisābūrī, in fact, pointed out similarities between the *uṣūl* of *fiqh* and the *uṣūl* of astronomy.<sup>90</sup> In another text, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, in his *Maḥṣūl*, a work about *fiqh*, used the word *ḥadsīyyāt* (along with *mujarrabāt*) in a way that was closer to 'conjectures on the basis of experience' than it was to 'intuition.'<sup>91</sup> Because the *Mawāqif* appropriated *falsafa*'s epistemological terminology and methods of demonstration, Ījī had to pay special attention to the way astronomers interpreted those terms and methods to arrive at probabilistic knowledge, a type of knowledge that, again, was quite helpful in *fiqh*. He was concerned that the same method of speculation (such as *ḥads*) that led to

<sup>87</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 1: 198. Ījī added that if one can conceive of the two extremes, then such an argument would be tantamount to an argument from the *a priori* (*awwalīyyāt*).

<sup>88</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 1: 198.

<sup>89</sup> van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre*, 12–33.

<sup>90</sup> Morrison, *Islam and Science*, 67–70.

<sup>91</sup> Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*, 238. On Rāzī, see Rāzī, *al-Maḥṣūl fi ʿilm uṣūl al-fiqh*, ed. Jābir Fayyād al-ʿAlwānī (Beirut: Muʿassasat al-risāla, 1997), 1: 84. *Ḥadsīyyāt*, along with *tajribīyyāt* were judgments of the mind (*aḥkām al-dhihn*) that combined the other senses (other than hearing—that would be for *samʿīyyāt*) with the intellect. *Ḥadsīyyāt* were clearly sufficient to necessitate (*mūjib*) something, for Rāzī contrasted *ḥadsīyyāt* with *ʿtiqād al-muqallid*.

See Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 1: 196–9. Here Ījī listed the ways to arrive at premises (*muqaddamāt*): *awwalīyyāt*, *qaḍāyā qiyāsātuhā maʿahā*, *mujarrabāt*, *ḥadsīyyāt*, *mutawātīrāt*, and *wahmīyyāt*. These premises constituted definitive evidence (*dalāʾil qatʿīyya*); presumptive evidence (*muqaddamāt ḥannīyya*) followed.

probable knowledge in astronomy, and of God's law in *fiqh*, might be used to garner certain knowledge of God in *kalām*. Another example would be how, at the beginning of his précis of astronomy, he reviewed how the astronomers established the order of the orbs.<sup>92</sup> Determining whether Venus and Mercury were above or below the sun depended on transit observations, a tricky undertaking.<sup>93</sup> This second example represents a critique that would have been and was valid for the astronomers themselves; transit observations as well as the determination of planetary sizes and distances were notably difficult. Jurjānī's response, though, involved a legal term—*istihsān* (preference).<sup>94</sup> That was also the process through which astronomers determined the order of the planets, as placing Venus and Mercury below the sun met criteria of symmetry.<sup>95</sup> In sum, the reasoning of the astronomers evinced parallels with the reasoning of the *fuqahā'*, reasoning that led to *fiqh*, not the *'ilm* that *kalām* sought.<sup>96</sup>

Third, Ījī's critical depiction of astronomy indicates that natural theology, using an appreciation of nature to come to conclusions about God and God's actions, must have been a heated topic of debate in *kalām* without being a formally-defined topic of *kalām*. Ījī's points that scientists' explanations were not certain were an argument for how God's existence and power over nature were certain. In his own arguments, he combined a sense of wonder with a reminder that God was the only knowable cause of the wonders of nature. A crucial part of Ījī's argument was that the human intellect's inability to explain certain features of nature would heighten one's sense of wonder.<sup>97</sup> Near the end of his précis of *'ilm al-hay'a*, Ījī mentioned his reasons for his presentation of the topic. He wrote:

<sup>92</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 400–1.

<sup>93</sup> See note 55. See also Ṭūsī, *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's Memoir*, 391 for references on Ṭūsī and Shīrāzī's positions.

<sup>94</sup> On *istihsān*, see Aron Zysow: *The Economy of Certainty: An Introduction to the Typology of Islamic Legal Theory* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1984), 399–402. *Istihsān* emerged by the ninth century if not earlier; see Wael Hallaq, *The Origins and Evolution of Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 116–8, 144–5.

<sup>95</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 402.

<sup>96</sup> Shīrāzī also mentioned the principle of the optimum (*al-aṣḥāh*), an idea found both in *fiqh*, via *maṣḥāh* as well as Mu'tazilī *kalām*. On Shīrāzī and *al-aṣḥāh*, see Morrison, "Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī's Hypotheses," 26–8. On Nisābūrī and *al-aṣḥāh*, see Morrison, *Islam and Science*, 75–6.

<sup>97</sup> There is a thematic resemblance here with Maimonides' comments in Book Two, Chapter 24 of *The Guide of the Perplexed*, trans. Shlomo Pines (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), 2: 322–7. But at the end of the chapter, Maimonides did raise the possibility that humans' science could advance sufficiently to solve certain outstanding problems. On that possibility, see Y. Tzvi Langermann: "The 'True Perplexity': The Guide of the Perplexed, Part II, Chapter 24," in *Perspectives on Maimonides: Philosophical*

In the Earth are hills and depressions due to external reasons, and successive cols without any beginning to them. Water flows, naturally, to the depressions, and the hills are found to be a source of life (*ma'āsh*) for animals and vegetables. No reason for it has been mentioned except for God's providence/solicitude (*ināya*) in animals and plants, for without that their creation and endurance would not be possible. And this recourse to *al-qādir al-mukhtār* it is specifying a part of the simple [substance—*al-basīf*] to be prepared to receive as opposed to another with the relationship of the prepared material to it being something that the intellect has no path to.<sup>98</sup>

Jurjānī did not criticize this statement.

Ījī's sometime scepticism of even astronomy's instrumental value created a way for scientists to argue for a different, though related, sense of wonder. Nīsābūrī's writings on *'ilm al-hay'a* contained remarks, as had other texts on astronomy of that era, about God's role in certain phenomena (e.g. eclipses). The most extensive of such comments, and one of the most meaningful for asserting the religious value of *'ilm al-hay'a* as practiced by the astronomers, came in the course of the discussion of retrograde motion in *Tawdīḥ al-Tadhkira*. Retrograde motion is when the planets halt their west to east motion, move from east to west for a short time, then resume their previous west to east motion. This was an exceedingly complex phenomenon that attracted a dedicated treatise from Kamāl al-Dīn al-Fārisī.<sup>99</sup> Nīsābūrī wrote:

I say: some of the proofs of these laws (*qawānīn*)<sup>100</sup> are actually mentioned in the *Almagest*, and some are not mentioned, only potentially. And I have produced all of them here (*akhrajtuhā al-jamī' hāhunā ilā al-fi'l*) set forth in detail and made easy, especially the demonstration of the planet's retrogradation in the uppermost portions of the epicycle or the eccentric, how the two hypotheses agree there, and the conditions for that. And these things from the *Almagest* are in a state of neglect and the author (Ṭūsī)

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and *Historical Studies*, ed. Joel L. Kraemer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 159–174. See, now, Langermann: “My Truest Perplexities,” *Aleph* 8 (2008): 313 in which he argues, forcefully, that Maimonides did not see the perplexities of *Guide* II: 24 as insoluble. Langermann cited Ibn Naḥmias (in addition to Gersonides) as one who ventured to resolve the perplexities.

<sup>98</sup> Ījī, *Mawāqif*, 2: 493–4.

<sup>99</sup> Kamāl al-Dīn Fārisī, *Ḥāshiya 'alā dhikr aṣl al-rujū' wa al-istiqāma fi al-Tadhkira*, Istanbul MS Damad Ibrahim Paşa 848, fols. 163v–166v. 'Alī Qūshjī's work on retrograde motion may have paved the way for the transition from a geocentric to heliocentric cosmos. See F. Jamil Ragep, “'Alī Qūshjī and Regiomontanus: Eccentric transformations and Copernican revolutions,” *Journal for the History of Astronomy* 36 (2005): 359–71.

<sup>100</sup> Here he is commenting on the penultimate portion of the chapter on *uṣūl* II.[10]: “These then are models and rules that should be known. We have only stated them here; their geometric proofs are given in the *Almagest*.” (*Tadhkira*, 140–1) For the *Tuhfa*, cf. Morrison, “Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī's Hypotheses,” 62.

abbreviated the demonstration by speaking extremely generally. And by my life (*la-ʿumrī*), achieving truth in eliciting the reasons that necessitate the observed variations of the planets, with their motions being themselves (*fi anfusihā*) uniform, is something of majestic import (*amr ʿaẓīm al-qadr*) and truly complete (a true complement?) for the mathematical perspective of philosophy (*fa-tamām li-l-naẓar al-taʿlīmī min al-falsafa*). And as for its great import, it is because what it rests on regarding that [the mathematical perspective] are things found in the observable divine bodies which are among the observed bodies (*al-ajsām al-ilāhiyya allatī min bayn al-ajsām al-marʿiyya*), whose affairs proceed directly and orderly although it is my opinion that it is presumed that they are sought at a distance (*baʿīd al-marām*), and it was not like that.<sup>101</sup>

First, Nīsābūrī's reference to proofs (*barāhīn*) is notable, as it reminded the reader of the astronomers' view that astronomy's conclusions were demonstrable if one accepted astronomy's predictive ability. Second, Nīsābūrī noted the equivalence of the eccentric and epicyclic hypotheses, meaning that he was not claiming that the usual causal explanation, an epicycle with an eccentric deferent, surely existed externally. Nīsābūrī, nevertheless, did seem to be saying that it would be difficult to conceive of a meaningfully different alternative to the astronomers' explanation as eccentrics and eccentrics served to explain not only the planets' observed variations in longitude, including the loops of retrogradation, but also the observed variations in distance from the earth due to the size of the epicycle; such variations would be particularly notable in the case of Mars. Two possible conclusions from Nīsābūrī's remarks are possible, and both of them would be compelling to a reader interested in arguments about God based on nature. First, and most likely, the effectiveness of the astronomers' explanations for retrograde motion indicated these models were a step in the right direction towards understanding the structure of the heavens, a structure that would be a source of wonder. Failing that, a second conclusion, foreshadowing an argument that Qūshjī would make later, was that the ability of the astronomer's models to explain the hypotheses would be, itself, a source of wonder.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Nīsābūrī, *Tawdīh al-Tadhkira*, Istanbul MS Fatih 3397, fols. 37r–v. Here Nīsābūrī was commenting on the penultimate portion of the chapter on *uṣūl* II.[10]: "These then are models and rules that should be known. We have only stated them here; their geometric proofs are given in the *Almagest*." (*Tadhkira*, 140–1) For the *Tuhfa*, cf. Morrison, "Qūṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī's Hypotheses," 62. See also Morrison, *Islam and Science*, 87–9.

<sup>102</sup> Ragep, "Freeing Astronomy," 63. Ragep wrote, "Qūshjī, though, in rejecting the view that somehow we can know true reality, is attempting to present a rather more sophisticated position: that the correspondence between our human constructions and external reality is itself a source of wonder." Jurjānī, in his famous statement (*Mawāqif*, 2: 432; see

### *Conclusion*

Heidrun Eichner has observed that *kalām* texts associated with the Marāgha astronomers begin with the format of a philosophical text, which she argues at length was based on Rāzī's *al-Mulakhkhaṣ fī al-ḥikma* and that, throughout the Ilkhanid period, these texts were characterized by discussions among *mutakallimūn*.<sup>103</sup> Thus Ījī's position on science<sup>104</sup> was not, as Dallal implied, the position of *kalām* on science; rather, Ījī represented a point in a debate. In addition, Eichner has proposed that at Marāgha astronomy texts were, in fact, produced in the context of debates about *kalām*.<sup>105</sup> More advanced science texts might have been produced in a dialogue with *kalām* and would have more sophisticated arguments for the religious value of scientific theories contained within. Researching the connection that Eichner has proposed between astronomy and *kalām* at Marāgha would help explain why more sceptical accounts of astronomy sometimes contained erroneous and/or incomplete portrayals of the state of the discipline. But what is already clear is that Ījī and others' (mentioned in this article have been Rāzī and Ḥillī) denial of astronomy's instrumentalist and predictive value meant that more scientifically-informed religious scholars (e.g. Nisābūrī and Jurjānī) could and did legitimately contest Ījī's position as a foundation for arguments about natural theology.

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also Sabra, "Science and Philosophy," 39–41) defending the mathematical hypotheses of astronomy, had pointed out that while those hypotheses lacked external reality, they were true according to what was attested by *al-ḥikma al-salīma*.

<sup>103</sup> Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition*, 352. Thus, a text such as the *Mawāqif* considered the ideas of *Ash'ari*, *Imami Shi'i*, and *Maturidi mutakallimūn*.

<sup>104</sup> Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition*, 133.

<sup>105</sup> Eichner, *The Post-Avicennian Philosophical Tradition*, 138. See also p. 285 on the introduction to 'Urḍī's *Kitāb al-hay'a*.

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NEW LIGHT ON SHAMS:  
THE ISLAMIC SIDE OF ΣΑΜΨ ΠΟΥΧΑΡΗΣ

F. Jamil Ragep

I. *Introduction*

In 1295, a certain Gregory Chioniades<sup>1</sup> of Constantinople traveled to the kingdom of Trebizond, ruled at that time by its emperor John II Komnenos (reigned 1280–1297), from where he would embark upon a momentous journey to the land of the Persians. Chioniades seems to have had a way with rulers, for having found favor with Komnenos, he then traveled to Persia, most likely just after the accession to the Ilkhan throne by Ghazan Khan, who had recently converted to Islam. A generation later, George Chrysococces (fl. 1350), who had also traveled to Trebizond in hopes of learning the astronomy of the Persians, was told the following story by his teacher Manuel:

... in a short while he [i.e. Chioniades] was taught by the Persians, having both consorted with the King, and met with consideration from him. Then he desired to study astronomical matters, but found that they were not taught. For it was the rule with the Persians that all subjects were available to those who wished to study, except astronomy, which was for Persians only. He searched for the cause, which was that a certain ancient opinion prevailed among them, concerning the mathematical sciences, namely, that their king will be overthrown by the Romans, after consulting the practice of astronomy, whose foundation would first be taken from the Persians. He was at a loss as to how he might come to share this wonderful thing. In spite of being wearied, and having much served the Persian king, he had scarcely achieved his objective; when, by Royal command, the teachers were gathered. Soon Chioniades shone in Persia, and was thought worthy of the

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<sup>1</sup> An excellent summary of what is known of the life of Chioniades can be found in Joseph Gerard Leichter, “The Zij as-Sanjari of Gregory Chioniades: Text, Translation and Greek to Arabic Glossary” (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Brown University, 2004), 2–6. Cf. L.G. Westerink, “La profession de foi de Gregoire Chioniades,” *Revue des études byzantines* 38 (1980): 233–245; and David E. Pingree, “Chioniades, Gregory,” in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 422–423. See also Maria Mavroudi, “Exchanges with Arabic Writers during the Late Byzantine Period,” in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557): Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture*, ed. Sarah Brooks (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2007), 62–75.

King's honor. Having gathered many treasures, and organized many subordinates, he again reached Trebizond, with his many books on the subject of astronomy. He translated these by his own lights, making a noteworthy effort. There are in fact other books of the Persian *Syntaxis* which he translated, those having certain examples with the years systematically at the beginning. However, he handed on the *Syntaxis* alone, the best and most accurate of all, as our teacher said, who appeared to be telling the truth. He translated separately the commentary, which was taken from the Persians by word of mouth alone. In this way, the *Syntaxis*, called the Handy, was produced.<sup>2</sup>

From this account, we can gather that the *Persian Syntaxis* of Chrysococces is somehow based on the work of Chioniades and that the latter went to some city in Persia to obtain the necessary learning and materials. From letters of Chioniades, we know that the city in question was the Mongol capital, Tabriz.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, in the introduction to his translation of a work that Pingree tells us is related to the *Zīj al-'Alā'ī* of 'Abd al-Karīm al-Fahhād (fl. 1176), we learn that Chioniades studied with a certain Shams Bukharos,<sup>4</sup> about whom the author of a recent article states: "There is nothing known of him in Persian or Arabic sources, nor is there any known reference to him outside the Greek work just mentioned."<sup>5</sup> The purpose of this paper is to try to uncover some information about this elusive Shams, who undertook to teach the Greek Chioniades astronomy and provide him with valuable texts, despite whatever reservations Shams and others in Tabriz may have had. But first we will need to explore the intellectual context of Tabriz in which this transmission took place and the sources of some of the material Chioniades took back with him to Byzantium.

## II. *The Tabriz Context*

What was the state of astronomy in and around Tabriz at the end of the thirteenth century? Tabriz was the inheritor of the Marāgha scientific tradition and observatory, which had been established in Azerbaijan after

<sup>2</sup> Raymond Mercier, "The Greek 'Persian Syntaxis' and the *Zīj-i Īlkhānī*," *Archives internationales d'histoire des sciences* 34 (1984): 35–36; reproduced in Leichter, "Zīj as-Sanjārī," 3.

<sup>3</sup> Leichter, "Zīj as-Sanjārī," 3.

<sup>4</sup> David Pingree, *The Astronomical Works of Gregory Chioniades*, vol. 1: *The Zīj al-'Alā'ī* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1985), 36–37.

<sup>5</sup> Raymond Mercier, "Shams al-Dīn al-Bukhārī," in *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers*, eds. Thomas Hockey et al. (New York: Springer, 2007), 1047.

the Mongol conquests of the 1250s. The Marāgha Observatory had been built with the active support of the Mongol ruler Hülegü Khan, who made the redoubtable Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī its founding director. Thanks to the work of Aydın Sayılı and excavations carried out at the site, we know quite a bit about this observatory, which, as far as we can determine, was the first large-scale observatory ever built and was to be the model for similar, big-science initiatives in the centuries to come, whether in China, in Central Asia, in India, or in Europe.<sup>6</sup>

It is not clear, however, when the Marāgha observatory ceased functioning as an active scientific institution (as opposed, say, to a tourist attraction that led Tīmūr Lang to take a detour during one of his expeditions in order to show his grandson Ulugh Beg the remains of the observatory).<sup>7</sup> This has considerable significance as we try to reconstruct the chronology of events that led Tabriz to become the major center of global science by the time Chioniades arrived there in 1295.

Now this is what we can reconstruct: From what we gather from the *zīj* (astronomical handbook) of a certain Shams al-Dīn al-Wābkanawī (about whom more later), which was mostly compiled under Öljeitü (r. 703–716/1304–1316), but not completed until sometime during the reign of Abū Saʿīd Bahadur Khan (r. 716–736/1316–1335), the Marāgha observatory seems to have ceased operations a few years (exactly how many being unclear) after the death in 1274 of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī. According to Wābkanawī, the *zījes* of Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn Abī al-Shukr al-Maghribī used the Marāgha observations, which Ṭūsī, for whatever reasons, had not been able to incorporate into the *Īlkhānī Zīj* (completed sometime in the late 1260s). Now since Maghribī died in Marāgha in June 1283, and we have no firm indications of observations or activity at the Marāgha observatory after that date, it seems likely that we can take 1283 as the *terminus ad quem*. And Wābkanawī makes it clear that the Marāgha observatory did

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<sup>6</sup> Aydın Sayılı, *The Observatory in Islam and Its Place in the General History of the Observatory* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1960); and Parvīz Varjāvand, *Kāvish-i raṣadkhāna-i Marāgha* (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1366 H.Sh [1987 CE]).

<sup>7</sup> This is mentioned in a letter by the eminent mathematician Jamshīd al-Kāshī, who was a member of Ulugh Beg's scientific entourage; see Edward S. Kennedy, "A Letter of Jamshīd al-Kāshī to His Father: Scientific Research and Personalities at a Fifteenth Century Court," *Orientalia* 29 (1960): 196, 208–209 (reprinted in E.S. Kennedy et al., *Studies in the Islamic Exact Sciences*, eds. David A. King and Mary Helen Kennedy (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1983), 722–744).

not reach its goal of a 30-year observational period, which would have ended around 1289.<sup>8</sup>

This dating has implications for what scientific activity Chioniades may have found when he came to Azerbaijan in 1295. Given the testimony of Wābkanawī, it seems that the Marāgha observatory was no longer an ongoing concern. But we know from Rashīd al-Dīn that Ghazan Khan visited the Marāgha observatory on numerous occasions, and in particular in the spring of 1300 when returning from an expedition to Syria. He is said to have shown great interest in the observatory, asked many questions and then ordered his own observatory to be built in the extensive complex of Abwāb al-Birr in Sham, a suburb of Tabriz.<sup>9</sup> But let us consider the dates. If there was no functioning Marāgha observatory in 1295, and the Tabriz observatory lay in the future, what was it that brought Chioniades to Tabriz? Here, I think, we can safely guess that Tabriz, under Ghazan or before, had gained a justified reputation as a major center of scientific, and in particular astronomical, learning and research even without an observatory.

Although this period of the history of science in Islam has been somewhat downplayed (being in the shadow of the so-called Marāgha school), there is accumulating evidence that the time in which Chioniades visited Tabriz was one of intense activity. We know, for example, that Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī arrived in Tabriz sometime in 1290 (or shortly thereafter) after serving as a Mongol emissary in Egypt and as chief judge in Malatya and Sivas in Anatolia, where he wrote several major works on astronomy.<sup>10</sup> It is in Tabriz that he most likely wrote his *Fa'alta fa-lā talum* ("You have done it so don't impugn!"), one of the most remarkable works in the entire history of Islamic science. In it he lambasts a certain al-Ḥimādhī, who had dared criticize him and, adding salt to the wound, had allegedly plagiarized large chunks of Shīrāzī's *al-Tuḥfa al-shāhiyya*, an astronomical

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<sup>8</sup> Shams al-Dīn al-Wābkanawī, *al-Zij al-muḥaqqaq al-sultānī 'alā uṣūl al-raṣad al-Īlkhānī*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Ayasofya MS 2694, ff. 2a, 3a. On Maghribī, see Mercè Comes, "Ibn Abī al-Shukr," in *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers*, eds. Thomas Hockey et al. (New York: Springer, 2007), 548–549. On his astronomical observations, see George Saliba, *A History of Arabic Astronomy: Planetary Theories during the Golden Age of Islam* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 163–176, 177–186, 208–230. Cf. Sayılı, *The Observatory in Islam*, 204, 211–218.

<sup>9</sup> Sayılı, *The Observatory in Islam*, 227.

<sup>10</sup> On Shīrāzī, see F. Jamil Ragep, "Shīrāzī," in *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers*, eds. Thomas Hockey et al. (New York: Springer, 2007), 1054–1055.

work completed in Sivas in 1285. In the introduction, Shīrāzī mentions several individuals who formed, it seems, part of an extensive network of scientists centered in Tabriz. This included Shams al-Dīn (or perhaps Jalāl al-Dīn) al-ʿUbaydī, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Turkistānī, and Kamāl al-Dīn al-Fārisī, not to mention the hapless al-Ḥimādhī.<sup>11</sup> And Ghazan Khan, we are told by Rashīd al-Dīn, was something of an astronomer himself.<sup>12</sup> We also know that others would later be attracted to Tabriz, among whom was Niẓām al-Dīn al-Nisābūrī, who arrived sometime between 1304 and 1306.<sup>13</sup>

So in putting the pieces together, we come up with the following. Chioniades arrives in Tabriz in 1295, attracted both by the resurgence in Azerbaijan of the study of astronomy, which he longed to master, and the sympathetic attitude of the early Ilkhanids toward Christians. But even with Ghazan's ascension and conversion to Islam, Chioniades seems to have been well received in the court, which prided itself on its cosmopolitanism. Indeed Rashīd al-Dīn remarks: "There were gathered under the eyes of the pādishāh of Islam philosophers, astronomers, scholars, historians, of all religions, of all sects, people of Cathay, of Machin (South China), of India, of Kashmir, of Tibet, of the Uyghur, and other Turkish nations, Arabs and Franks."<sup>14</sup> And there is some evidence that Rashīd al-Dīn himself wrote answers to questions posed by Chioniades on difficult physical and theological matters, which were then translated into Greek.<sup>15</sup> And he seems to have been assigned, after some initial hesitation, to a tutor who undertook to allow Chioniades to gain the astronomy of his ancient Greek forebears, though admittedly, as we shall see, with a heavy dose of Islamic coloring.

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<sup>11</sup> Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī, *Fa'alta fa-lā talum*, Tehran, Majlis-i Shūrā MS 3944, ff. 5b, 7b, 9a.

<sup>12</sup> Sayılı, *The Observatory in Islam*, 227–229.

<sup>13</sup> On Nisābūrī, see Robert G. Morrison, *Islam and Science: The Intellectual Career of Niẓām Al-Dīn Al-Nisābūrī* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Sayılı, *The Observatory in Islam*, 230.

<sup>15</sup> Zeki Velidi Togan, "İlhanlı Bizans kültür münasebetlerine dair vesikalar" ("A Document concerning Cultural Relation between the İlkanide and Byzantiens" [sic]), *İslâm Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi* 3 (1959–60): 315–378 (= 1–39). I owe this reference to Dimitri Gutas, "Arabic into Byzantine Greek: Introducing a Survey of the Translations," in *Knotenpunkt Byzanz: Wissensformen und kulturelle Wechselbeziehungen*, eds. Andreas Speer and Philipp Steinkrüger (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 258.

### III. *Chioniades as Transmitter of Islamic Astronomy*

Chioniades returned to Trebizond in the late 1290s and was in Constantinople by April 1302. There he translated, presumably from Persian into Greek, a set of recipes for antidotes as well as a number of astronomical treatises, and wrote a confession of faith, evidently to counter accusations of heresy accruing from his work in astrology and his years among the Persians. Apparently sufficiently rehabilitated, he was appointed Bishop of Tabriz in 1305 and took the name Gregory, but he may not have returned to Tabriz until about 1310. By 1315, he was again in Trebizond, where he lived as a monk until his death around 1320.<sup>16</sup>

What did Chioniades gain from his time in Tabriz? Thanks to the work of Otto Neugebauer, David Pingree and others, we know that Chioniades obtained access to several astronomical works and translated (or reworked them) into Greek.<sup>17</sup> These included:<sup>18</sup>

- 1) *al-Zīj al-‘Alā’ī* of ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Shīrwānī al-Fahhād (ca. 1150), via a Persian version made by Shams al-Dīn (according to Pingree).<sup>19</sup>
- 2) An abridged version of *al-Zīj al-Sanjārī* of ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Khāzinī (ca. 1120), a Greek freedman of a judge in Marv; made after 1) and directly from the Arabic (according to Leichter).<sup>20</sup>
- 3) The *Īlkhānī Zīj* of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī.
- 4) A short *Syntaxis*, perhaps by Shams al-Dīn al-Bukhārī.
- 5) A longer *Revised Canons*, again perhaps by Shams al-Dīn al-Bukhārī. (Pingree takes this to be by Chioniades, who, he claims, was attempting to show his competence in using the tables of *al-Zīj al-‘Alā’ī*.)<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Leichter, “Zīj as-Sanjārī,” 3–6; Pingree, “Chioniades,” 422–423.

<sup>17</sup> A by now classic work on the subject is David Pingree, “Gregory Chioniades and Palaeologan Astronomy,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964): 133–160. Pingree amplifies his findings in his *Astronomical Works of Gregory Chioniades* and in his “In Defence of Gregory Chioniades,” *Archives internationales d’histoire des sciences* 35 (1985): 436–438.

<sup>18</sup> All or some of these works are preserved in Vaticanus Graecus MS 211 (Rome), Vaticanus Graecus MS 1058 (Rome), and Laurentianus MS 28, 17 (Florence). Convenient listings (complete) are in Pingree, *Astronomical Works of Gregory Chioniades*, 23–28, and Leichter, “Zīj as-Sanjārī,” 12–13 (partial, highlighting the works attributable to Chioniades).

<sup>19</sup> Edition and translation in Pingree, *Astronomical Works of Gregory Chioniades*, 36–243.

<sup>20</sup> Edition and translation in Leichter, “Zīj as-Sanjārī,” 19–162, 367–567.

<sup>21</sup> Pingree, *Astronomical Works of Gregory Chioniades*, 21–22; edition and translation, 260–333. The work is a report by Chioniades, but it seems to be based on observations and calculations made by Shams al-Dīn.

- 6) A work called *Schemata of the Stars* (Περὶ τῶν σχημάτων τῶν ἀστέρων).<sup>22</sup>
- 7) A work on the astrolabe by Shams al-Dīn.
- 8) *On the Genethliological Computation*, probably by Shams al-Dīn, which concerns the horoscope of a certain Fakhr al-Dīn born in Tabriz on 25 August 1268.<sup>23</sup>

As for the first 3 *zīj*es (astronomical handbooks with tables), one is struck by the fact that all were considerably out of date by the 1290s. The *zīj*es of Fahhād and Khāzinī had certainly been superseded by the *Īlkhānī Zīj*, which itself had been made obsolete by the *zīj*es of al-Maghribī, which, unlike Ṭūsī's *Īlkhānī Zīj*, incorporated the latest observations made at Marāgha.<sup>24</sup> Was this because Shams al-Dīn was withholding the latest findings from a potential Rūmī adversary (as implied by Chrysococces) or was this simply a matter of Chioniades needing to learn the more elementary material before embarking on cutting-edge research? Pingree notes that when translating *al-Zīj al-'Alā'ī*, Chioniades shows a remarkable degree of ignorance, often transcribing Persian words into Greek when he didn't understand the content.<sup>25</sup> But Joseph Leichter (the editor and translator of the Greek version of the *Sanjarī Zīj*) has noted an improvement in Chioniades's knowledge, this time presumably in Arabic, when translating the *Sanjarī zīj*.<sup>26</sup> Of considerable importance in determining how far along Chioniades got in his apprenticeship into Islamic astronomy is whether the purported works of Shams al-Dīn (the short *Syntaxis* and the longer *Revised Canon*), which are found in Greek translation in some of the manuscripts, contain any of the newer material from the Marāgha and Tabriz observations and whether the Persian *Syntaxis* of Chrysococces, which he says comes from the work of Chioniades, contains this new material. Raymond Mercier has claimed, somewhat unconvincingly, that the Persian *Syntaxis* of Chrysococces was mostly derived from the *Īlkhānī Zīj*, but this was disputed by Pingree, who held that there is substantial evidence that Chrysococces used the *'Alā'ī* and *Sanjarī zīj*es,

<sup>22</sup> Edition and translation in E.A. Paschos and P. Sotiroudis, *The Schemata of the Stars: Byzantine Astronomy from A.D. 1300* (Singapore; River Edge, NJ: World Scientific, 1998), 26–53.

<sup>23</sup> Edition and translation in Pingree, *Astronomical Works of Gregory Chioniades*, 242–259.

<sup>24</sup> See Saliba, *A History of Arabic Astronomy*.

<sup>25</sup> Pingree, *Astronomical Works of Gregory Chioniades*, 18–21.

<sup>26</sup> Leichter, "Zīj as-Sanjarī," 11–12.

in addition to the *Īlkhānī Zīj*, all of which were translated by Chioniades.<sup>27</sup> But neither seems to have considered that Chrysococces, and Chioniades himself, may have used sources and observations post-dating the *Īlkhānī Zīj*, whether from someone like Maghribī or from Shams al-Dīn himself. A fresh examination of the works attributed to Shams al-Dīn, along with a comparison of contemporaneous works in Arabic and Persian, is necessary in order to resolve some of these issues.

We can gain some additional insight into the question of what Chioniades learned in Tabriz from the examination of another of the treatises listed above, namely no. 6. This work has been dubbed “The Schemata of the Stars” and also an *‘ilm al-hay’a* text, i.e. a work of theoretical astronomy that seeks to provide a cosmography (or *hay’a*) of the Universe.<sup>28</sup> These works are well known to us in Islamic sources, and include the twelfth-century texts of al-Kharaqī, several writings by Sharaf al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Jaghminī, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī and Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī from the thirteenth century, and numerous commentaries and supercommentaries on these works, as well as original compilations, in the following centuries.<sup>29</sup> But compared to a true *hay’a* work, this *Schemata* is rather curious. For starters, it is quite short in comparison with Islamic works of this genre: in its extant three witnesses, it occupies about ten folios (only six in one Vatican witness). In comparison, Ṭūsī’s *al-Tadhkira fī ‘ilm al-hay’a* averages about 70–80 folios, while Shīrāzī’s ponderous tomes can be over two hundred!

The authors of a recent edition and translation of this work, E.A. Paschos and P. Sotiroudis, have insisted that it represents a completely independent work by a Byzantine author (they presume Chioniades) who has adapted and improved material from Islamic sources.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, most other recent scholars who have discussed this work have assumed that it derives from Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī’s *Tadhkira*.<sup>31</sup> Much of the material in the *Schemata* follows, more or less, material that can be found in the *Tadhkira*, and the *Schemata*’s model for the moon implicitly employs a Ṭūsī-couple,

<sup>27</sup> See Raymond Mercier, “The Greek ‘Persian Syntaxis,’” 35–60. Pingree responded to Mercier in his “In Defence of Gregory Chioniades.”

<sup>28</sup> Paschos and Sotiroudis refer to it as *The Schemata of the Stars*; Pingree and Leichter call it a *hay’a* text in their listing of works due to Chioniades.

<sup>29</sup> On the *hay’a* tradition in Islam, see F.J. Ragep, *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī’s Memoir on Astronomy* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1993), 1: 24–53.

<sup>30</sup> Paschos and Sotiroudis, *The Schemata*, 17.

<sup>31</sup> N.M. Swerdlow and O. Neugebauer, *Mathematical Astronomy in Copernicus’s De Revolutionibus* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1984), 1: 47–48.

a device invented by Naṣīr al-Dīn that produces straight-line oscillation from two interconnected rotating circles or spheres.<sup>32</sup> And in one manuscript (Vaticanus Graecus MS 211), there are diagrams of the Ṭūsī-couple and Ṭūsī's lunar model (ff. 116–117). But as I said, the resemblance is more or less. There are many odd differences between the *Schemata* and the *Tadhkira*: for example, the former has a complete list of constellations with the numbers of stars in each constellation, which is not given in the *Tadhkira*. Now one might think that this was an addition by Chioniades based on Ptolemy's *Almagest*, to which he presumably had access in the original. But there are a number of clues that point to a different source. For example, the constellation names are in several cases taken from Arabic, which themselves, of course, were translations and adaptations of the original Greek. A rather striking example of how a corrupt Arabic form could displace the original Greek is given by the northern constellation Cepheus (Κηφεύς). Now in most Arabic and Persian texts, one finds this mistakenly transcribed as *qayqāwus* (قياقوس) rather than (قيفاوس), presumably reflecting some scribal error that occurred in the transmission of the translations of Ptolemy's *Almagest* from the 9th century. What is striking is that Chioniades, a native Greek, dutifully lists this as *κακκαοὺς*, seemingly unaware that this is actually a mistranscription of the Greek Κηφεύς. (A number of other examples could be given, e.g. Βωώτης is called *βουάς*, reflecting the Arabic [العواء]).<sup>33</sup> It is clear then that Chioniades must be using an Islamic source for his listing of constellations, since an original Greek source is obviously excluded.<sup>34</sup> There are other indications that the *Schemata* is based on sources other than the *Tadhkira*. In his section on the sun, Chioniades very idiosyncratically opts for a deferent and epicycle model,<sup>35</sup> which is contrary to the choice of eccentric model used by Ptolemy, Ṭūsī and almost everyone else. Why he did so is not clear though a discussion of such a model is given by Ṭūsī as well as by Qutb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> On the Ṭūsī couple, see Ragep, *Naṣīr al-Dīn*, 2: 427–457.

<sup>33</sup> Paschos and Sotiroudis, *The Schemata*, 32. For a listing of these constellations in an Arabic *hay'a* text, see Ragep, *Naṣīr al-Dīn*, 1: 129 and 2: 411 for a brief discussion.

<sup>34</sup> The *Schemata* also gives a different number for stars associated with some constellations from what one finds in the *Almagest*; see example 2) below dealing with Ursa Major.

<sup>35</sup> Paschos and Sotiroudis, *The Schemata*, 38–43.

<sup>36</sup> Ragep, *Naṣīr al-Dīn*, 1: 144–145; Shīrāzī, *Nihāyat al-idrāk fī dirāyat al-aflāk*, Istanbul, Ahmet III MS 3333, f. 68a–b. Shīrāzī indicates that some astronomers had chosen an epicycle model for the sun, but it is not clear to whom he is referring.

Finally there is the case of Ṭūsī's famous lunar model, which incorporated his Ṭūsī couple. There are significant differences in the *Schemata* with the model presented in the *Tadhkira*, most strikingly that the deferent (*hāmīl*) of the *Tadhkira*, in which the Ṭūsī-couple device is placed, has been replaced by an inclined orb that incorporates the motions of the deferent and inclined orbs of the *Tadhkira* models. Furthermore, from the diagrams found in at least one manuscript of the *Schemata*, one can see that the couple is rotating in the opposite sense from that in diagrams found in manuscripts of the *Tadhkira*.

I was initially inclined to think that this was an adaptation by Shams al-Bukhārī, who may have been influenced by some of the new models presented by Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī in his work. In any event, I had assumed that the *Schemata* was somehow based upon a newer, more up-to-date *hay'a* work that had been produced after Ṭūsī's death. But following up on a suggestion by S. Ragep, I discovered, much to my surprise, that the *Schemata* is mostly a translation of fragments from another work by Ṭūsī, namely the *Risāla-yi Mu'īniyya*, which he wrote in 1235, when at the Isma'īli court in Qūhistān, long before the coming of the Ilkhanids and the writing of the *Tadhkira*.<sup>37</sup> A few examples should suffice to establish this, at least in a preliminary way:

1. From *Risāla-yi Mu'īniyya*, Part I, Chapter 2:<sup>38</sup>

A body is either simple or composite. A simple is that which is not made up of bodies of different natures or forms. A composite is the opposite. Necessarily composites are composed of simples. Simples are of two types: celestial and elemental. The celestials are all the orbs and stars. The elementals are those fourfold substances that are the basis of the world of generation and corruption, i.e., fire, air, water and earth. The composites are of four types: (a) that whose composition is not complete, such as clouds, wind, shooting stars and the like. These are called upper phenomena;

<sup>37</sup> On the *Risāla-yi Mu'īniyya* and its appendix, the *Ḥall-i mushkilāt-i Mu'īniyya*, see Ragep, *Naṣīr al-Dīn*, 1: 65–70; *idem*, "The Persian Context of the Ṭūsī Couple," in *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī: Philosophe et Savant du XIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, eds. N. Pourjavady and Ž. Vesel (Tehran: Institut français de recherche en Iran/Presses universitaires d'Iran, 2000), 113–130; and *idem*, "The Origins of the Ṭūsī Couple Revisited," forthcoming in a volume of conference essays devoted to Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, to be published by Mīrāth-i Maktūb (Tehran). Wheeler Thackston and I are in the process of completing an edition and translation of the *Risāla-yi Mu'īniyya* and *Ḥall-i mushkilāt-i Mu'īniyya*, which should appear in 2014.

<sup>38</sup> Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Risāla-yi Mu'īniyya*, facsimile of Tehran, Malik MS 3503 with an introduction by Muḥammad Taqī Dānish-Pazhūh (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tihirān (no. 300 in the series), 1335 H.Sh./1956–7 A.D.), 8; translation due to Wheeler Thackston, Sergei Tourkin, and Jamil Ragep.

(b) that whose composition is complete, i.e., it can remain for a period of time and have the capacity to retain its shape or form, but it is not subject to growth. This is called mineral; (c) that whose composition is complete but nonetheless has the capacity to grow. This is called vegetal; (d) that which has the capacity for growth and the capacity for perception and voluntary movement. This is called animal. The latter three types are called the three engendered [kingdoms]: the fourfold elements are the mothers of these engendered, and the celestial bodies are the fathers. The elements and composites are called lower bodies, and the orbs and stars are called the upper bodies.

From *The Schemata of the Stars* (introduction):<sup>39</sup>

The [celestial] body is divided into two [entities], simple and composite, as is the case with the four elements, simple and composite; each of them is thus called simple element. It became evident from what we know and comprehend that the sky is circular. On the other hand, the elements are four: fire, air, water and earth; if something is composite then it is none of these.

The entities beyond the elements are classified into two groups: one group where the mixing is not perfect, so that when mixing takes place the composition does not survive [for a long time]; examples are air and clouds and thunderbolts. The other group is the one in which mixing is perfect; when mixing takes place, the composition lasts for a long time. There are three such things; first the one which is produced and cannot develop any further, as is the case with metals; second the composed [substance] has the capacity for growth, as is the case with plants; and third, the one which has the capacity for both growth and movement, as is the case with animals. These three are called children of three structures, and this because the four elements are called their mother. On the other hand, the sphere and the stars are known as their father.

Although the Greek is not a perfect match for the Persian,<sup>40</sup> it is clear that it follows it to a great extent. And in particular, one should note the striking metaphor of the four elements being the mothers of the engendered, while the celestial bodies are the fathers. This is something I have not encountered in other *hay'a* works, including those of Ṭūsī.

2. The listing and names of the constellations, as well as the number of stars in *The Schemata of the Stars*, follows almost exactly what we find

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<sup>39</sup> Paschos and Sotiroudis, *The Schemata*, 27.

<sup>40</sup> It should be noted that the translation from the Greek is problematic and needs to be revised based on a better understanding of the concepts being presented. Hopefully this will be done in a future publication.

in the *Muṭniyya*.<sup>41</sup> For example, in both the *Schemata* and the *Muṭniyya*, Ursa Major is listed as having 27 stars with 7 lying outside the constellation. On the other hand, the *Tadhkira* simply lists Ursa Major, as well as the other constellations, without providing the number of stars, while in both Shīrāzī's *Nihāya* and his *al-Tuḥfa al-shāhiyya*, Ursa Major has 27 stars with 8 lying outside.<sup>42</sup> This is what one also finds in the *Almagest*.<sup>43</sup>

3. The most decisive, and interesting, piece of evidence establishing the relation of the *Schemata* and the *Muṭniyya* comes from the lunar model presented in the former. Chioniades lists 6 orbs, which differ both in number and content from the *Tadhkira*, where Ṭūsī lists 7 orbs for his non-Ptolemaic lunar model. Furthermore, the *Schemata* gives  $13^{\circ}11'$ /day for the motion of the second orb, while in the *Tadhkira* the equivalent motion, resulting from the combination of the inclined and deferent orbs, comes to  $13^{\circ}14'$ . On the other hand, in the Appendix (*Dhayl* or *Ḥall*) of the *Muṭniyya*, the lunar model given has the same 6 orbs as in the *Schemata* and the second orb also moves at  $13^{\circ}11'$ /day.<sup>44</sup>

From these 3 examples, which could be supplemented by quite a few others, one may conclude that Chioniades learned theoretical astronomy (*ilm al-hay'a*) from the *Risāla-yi Muṭniyya* and its Appendix. What is remarkable about this is that when Chioniades was in Tabriz in the 1290s, the Persian *Muṭniyya* and its Appendix, completed in 1235 and 1245, respectively, would have long since been superseded by the Arabic *Tadhkira*, written in 1261 and containing Ṭūsī's revisions and corrections to his earlier works. And any competent astronomer in Azerbaijan in 1295 would have known this. Why then did Chioniades's teacher, presumably Shams al-Dīn al-Bukhārī, use the *Muṭniyya* and its Appendix to teach him theoretical astronomy? One obvious reason that presents itself is that Chioniades was more comfortable dealing with a Persian text rather than an Arabic one. And Pingree has claimed that *al-Zīj al-'Alā'ī*, originally

<sup>41</sup> Paschos and Sotiroudis, *The Schemata*, 30–37; al-Ṭūsī, *Risāla-yi Muṭniyya*, 19–21.

<sup>42</sup> Ragep, *Naṣīr al-Dīn*, 1: 128–129; Shīrāzī, *Nihāyat al-idrāk*, f. 58b; Shīrāzī, *al-Tuḥfa al-shāhiyya*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Turhan Valide Sultan MS 220, f. 23b.

<sup>43</sup> Gerald J. Toomer, *Ptolemy's Almagest*, translated and annotated by G.J. Toomer (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1984), 342–343.

<sup>44</sup> Paschos and Sotiroudis, *The Schemata*, 42–45. For a listing of the parameters for the lunar model in the *Tadhkira*, see Ragep, *Naṣīr al-Dīn*, 2: 457. The sum of the lunar inclined and deferent orbs comes to  $13^{\circ}14'$  ( $24^{\circ}23'$ /day– $11^{\circ}9'$ /day) in the *Tadhkira*; cf. the *Hall*, where the equivalent motion of the inclined orb is given as the mean motion of the moon (*wasat-i qamar*), i.e.  $13^{\circ}11'$  (Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Hall-i mushkilāt-i Muṭniyya*, facsimile of Tehran, Malik MS 3503 with an introduction by Muḥammad Taqī Dānish-Pazhūh [Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tihārān (no. 304 in the series), 1335 H.Sh./1956–7 AD], 11).

written in Arabic, was translated by Shams al-Dīn into Persian, presumably for the benefit of his student, and that teaching was done in Persian.<sup>45</sup> The inescapable conclusion is that Chionides felt much more comfortable in Persian than in Arabic;<sup>46</sup> and this may well have reflected the Byzantine predilection when dealing, in whatever field of endeavor, with their Muslim neighbors to the east. That Shams Bukharos seems to have been happy to accommodate him reveals one aspect of their relationship; but that he felt little need to provide him with the most up-to-date astronomical information is another.

#### IV. *The Elusive Shams*

It would certainly help in understanding this relationship if we knew more about this elusive Shams Bukharos. As recently as 6 years ago, as we have seen, a biography of Shams al-Dīn al-Bukhārī stated “There is nothing known of him in Persian or Arabic sources . . .”<sup>47</sup> But since then, a researcher in Iran<sup>48</sup> and our group at McGill, working independently, have concluded that this Shams al-Dīn al-Bukhārī is the same individual known as Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī Khwāja al-Wābkanawī al-Munajjim, who is best known for a *zīj* entitled *al-Zīj al-muḥaqqaq al-sultānī ‘alā uṣūl al-raṣad al-īlkhānī* (The verified *zīj* for the sultan based on the principles of the Īlkhānī observations), a work that, as mentioned above, was mostly completed during the reign of Sulṭān Öljejtü (r. 703–716/1304–1316) but was dedicated to his son and successor Abū Sa‘īd (r. 716–736/1316–1335).<sup>49</sup> Now the village of Wābkana (or Wābakna), the basis for his *nisba*, is only 20 km from Bukhara, so two Shams al-Dīn’s from the Bukhara region working at the Mongol court as astronomers seems unlikely. And it was not uncommon to have two *nisbas*, one from one’s own village and another from the region. This Wābkanawī is also the author of a treatise on the astrolabe, *Kitāb-i Ma‘rifat-i uṣṭurlāb-i shamālī* (On the northern astrolabe) [in Persian] that seems to be the source of the Greek work on the astrolabe

<sup>45</sup> Pingree, *Astronomical Works of Gregory Chionides*, 18.

<sup>46</sup> But as we mentioned above, Leichter thinks Chionides’s Arabic had improved by the time he came to translate the Sanjarī *Zīj*.

<sup>47</sup> Note 5 above.

<sup>48</sup> The researcher is S.M. Muẓaffarī, whose work I have heard of informally; I am not sure whether he has published or will publish his findings.

<sup>49</sup> Benno van Dalen, “Wābkanawī,” in *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers*, eds. Thomas Hockey et al. (New York: Springer, 2007), 1187–1188.

(mentioned above) attributed to Shams al-Dīn.<sup>50</sup> Now if we can conclusively make this identification, we would also know that this Wābkanawī was born on 11 June 1254, based on one of the Greek sources.<sup>51</sup> Wābkanawī also provides evidence of continuity between the Marāgha Observatory and astronomical research in Tabriz. One of his earliest observations dates from the year 684/1285; he also uses the calendar introduced during the reign of Ghazan Khan and which was called the Khānī calendar.<sup>52</sup> Since as we have seen Wābkanawī himself speaks of the Marāgha Observatory as a thing of the past, this would provide evidence that the observational program in Azerbaijan resumed shortly after the death of Maghribī in 1283, but now presumably in Tabriz.

There is another possible identification we can make, this one a bit more speculative. As it turns out, al-Ḥimādhī, the author of the work that Shīrāzī lambasts, is also a Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Munajjim.<sup>53</sup> Shīrāzī refrains from mentioning his honorific, which, let us venture to say, might have been Shams al-Dīn; but given all the insults he hurls at him, it is not surprising that no honorific is given.

If this is indeed the same Muḥammad b. ‘Alī as Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Wābkanawī (a.k.a. Shams Bukharos), then it adds a bit more texture to our understanding of the academic infighting that occurred in the Mongol court at this time, infighting that makes some of our contemporary scholarly battles seem quite tame in comparison. For example, Shīrāzī in *Fa’alta* became extremely upset about a claim that Ḥimādhī (allegedly our Shams) made regarding the Ṭūsī-couple. Ḥimādhī said that someone had told him that Shīrāzī’s use of the couple to show that there was no resting point for an object thrown straight up was anticipated by Plato. Shīrāzī proudly tells us that he tracked this person down, a certain Shams al-Dīn al-‘Ubaydī, who may also have been Shīrāzī’s student, and asked him point blank if that is what he had told Ḥimādhī. *Kidhb!* (a lie) was the inevitable reply from the no doubt cowering ‘Ubaydī.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps this might explain why Wābkanawī tells us in *al-Zij al-sulṭānī* that he had mostly completed it at the time of Öljejtü (r. 1304–1316) but that it was not published until the reign of Abū Sa’īd (r. 1316–1335), at which time Shīrāzī

<sup>50</sup> Our group is currently seeking to verify this; we have recently gained access to the witness preserved in the Topkapı Museum Library.

<sup>51</sup> Pingree, *Astronomical Works of Gregory Chionides*, 16.

<sup>52</sup> Shams al-Dīn al-Wābkanawī, *al-Zij al-muḥaqqaq*, Ayasofya MS 2694, ff. 2a, 2b, 3b.

<sup>53</sup> Shīrāzī, *Fa’alta fa-lā talum*, f. 14b.

<sup>54</sup> Shīrāzī, *Fa’alta fa-lā talum*, f. 5a–b.

had been safely dead for several years (since 1311). And Shams/Wābkanawī feels safe enough in his *zīj* to take a swipe at the competing *zīj* of Shīrāzī's student Nizām al-Dīn al-Nisābūrī, who had written what Wābkanawī considered an unusable commentary on Ṭūsī's *Īlkhānī Zīj* entitled *Kashf-i ḥaqā'iq-i Zīj-i Īlkhānī*.<sup>55</sup>

It is tempting to ask at this point whether one source of the tension between Shīrāzī and his circle on the one hand and Shams/Wābkanawī on the other could have been the special treatment accorded Chioniades by Ghazan Khan and Shams's pedagogical role. This is certainly a possibility and highlighting civilizational rivalry makes a good story, especially in these times. But this question raises issues of east-west/Muslim-Christian competition, particularly in scientific matters, to a level that had not been reached, and we are in danger thereby of reading later concerns backwards in time. We can say with certainty that this period of Islamic scientific and intellectual history, during this Mongol interregnum, was a time of enormous creativity, advance and scholarly engagement and debate. No wonder Chioniades would be attracted to Tabriz. But the quest of a single scholar, and his flawed transmission of outdated texts, would not change the stark reality of the sizeable imbalance between Islamic and "western" science at the time. Chioniades had little, if anything, to offer the Persians, and they in turn took little notice of his coming—at least there is little in evidence from the historical record. Nevertheless, he had begun a process, one that would eventually result in the ancient legend coming true: for the "Romans" would indeed overthrow the "Persians," once they had consulted the practice of astronomy, whose foundation would first be taken from the Persians.

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<sup>55</sup> On Nisābūrī, see Robert Morrison, "Nisābūrī," in *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers*, eds. Thomas Hockey et al. (New York: Springer, 2007), 837. The reference to the *Kashf* occurs in Shams al-Dīn al-Wābkanawī, *al-Zīj al-muḥaqqaq*, f. 4a.

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PART THREE

TABRIZ AND INTERREGIONAL NETWORKS



CIVITAS THAURIS  
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TABRIZ IN THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORKS  
OF CHRISTIAN MERCHANTS AND ECCLESIASTICS  
IN THE 13TH AND 14TH CENTURIES

Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

In his *Relatio de mirabilibus orientalium Tatarorum* (written before 1330), the Franciscan missionary Odoric of Pordenone (c. 1286–1331) wrote: “(...) *transtuli me in Thauris, civitatem magnam et regalem, que Susis antiquitus dicebatur. Et est una de melioribus civitatibus pro mercimoniis que potest inveniri, quia omnium rerum scilicet tam victualium quam mercimonialium ibi habetur copia perabundans et ultra quod communiter possit credi. Et est etiam optime situata. De hac civitate etiam communiter dicitur et famose quod imperator eorum plura recipit de ipsa quam rex Francie de toto suo regno.*”<sup>1</sup> Judging from the number of manuscripts, Odoric’s *Relatio* was one of the most widely circulated texts on the Mongol sphere in Western Europe besides the works of Marco Polo (d. 1324) and Het’um of Korikos (d. c. 1310); Marco Polo and Het’um also highlight the significance of Tabriz as a central place and as nodal point of trade, where commodities from India, Baghdad, Mosul and Hormuz could be found.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Odoric of Pordenone (Odoricus de Portu Naonis), *Relatio de mirabilibus orientalium Tatarorum* (recensio c6), edited by Annalia Marchisio. 2011, 3: 1; 2–3; see also ed. van den Wyngaert, 417 (*I betook myself to Thauris, a great and royal city, which in ancient times was called Susa. And it is one of the best cities for trade which can be found, since there exists an abundant supply of all things, namely of food as well as of commodities and more than what can commonly be believed. And it is also very well situated. Of this city is also commonly said and well-known that their emperor receives more [income] from it than the King of France from his own entire kingdom.*)

<sup>2</sup> Marco Polo, *Die Wunder der Welt: Il Milione: Die Reise nach China an den Hof des Kublai Khan*, trans. Elise Guignard (Frankfurt: Insel, 2003), 42; Het’um, *Flor historiarum* 1: 9, 267–268; trans. Bedrossian; Bertold Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran. Politik, Verwaltung und Kultur der Ilchanzeit 1220–1350*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1955), 432; Hakob A. Manandian, *The Trade and Cities of Armenia in Relation to Ancient World Trade* (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1965), 196–197; Janet Abu-Lughod (*Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 165; Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221–1410* (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), 334 (on the circulation of manuscripts); Morris Rossabi, “Tabriz and Yuan China,” in *Aspects of the Maritime Silk Road: From the Persian Gulf to the East China Sea*, ed. Ralph Kauz (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 97–98. For the rise of Tabriz as (temporary) centre of the Ilkhans in the mirror of coinage see Judith Kolbas, *The Mongols in Iran: Chingiz*

As has been pointed out frequently, the Mongol expansion increased the geographical range of Western merchants and missionaries and enhanced their knowledge written down in handbooks, missionary reports and treatises.<sup>3</sup> Yet from a modern point of view, ancient and medieval texts often give the impression of a relatively “murky geographical imagination.”<sup>4</sup> While another prominent missionary, the Dominican Ricoldo da Monte di Croce (d. 1320) visited “*Thaurisium, que est metropolis Persarum, (Tabriz, which is the metropolis of the Persians)*” for instance, Marco Polo identified Tabriz as the “most noble” among the cities in the “province of Yrac;” and the Armenian Het‘um stated: “*In regno Armenie sunt plures magne et ditissime civitates; inter alia vero civitas Taurisii famosio judicatur.*” (*In the kingdom of Armenia are several large and very wealthy cities, among others actually the city of Tabriz is considered the most famous*). So we find Tabriz

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*Khan to Uljaytu 1220–1309* (London: Routledge, 2006), esp. 151–152. On the geographic situation of Tabriz see also Sirus Schafaghi, *Die Stadt Täbriz und ihr Hinterland* (PhD diss., University of Cologne, 1965); Dorothea Krawulsky, *Iran: Das Reich der Ilhane: Eine topographisch-historische Studie* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1978), 558–559 and map 3; Eckart Ehlers, *Iran: Grundzüge einer geographischen Landeskunde* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 335–342; Kolbas, *The Mongols in Iran*, 110, 151–152; Rossabi, “Tabriz and Yuan China,” 98; Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog, “The Mongol Conquerors in Armenia,” in *Caucasus during the Mongol Period = Der Kaukasus in der Mongolenzeit*, eds. Jürgen Tubach, Sophia G. Vashalomidze, and Manfred Zimmer (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2012), 60. On Het‘um of Korikos see for instance Denis Sinor, “The Mongols and Western Europe,” in *A History of the Crusades*, Vol. 3, *The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. Harry W. Hazard (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 538; Claude Mutaftian, “Héthoum de Korykos historien arménien. Un prince cosmopolite à l’aube du XIVe siècle,” *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes* 1 (1996): 157–176; Frédéric Luisetto, *Arméniens et autres chrétiens d’Orient sous la domination mongole. L’Ilkhanat de Ghâzân, 1295–1304* (Paris: Geuthner, 2007), 25.

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Hamilton, “The Impact of the Crusades on Western geographical Knowledge,” in *Eastward Bound: Travel and Travellers 1050–1550*, ed. Rosemund Allen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), esp. 25–30; Andrew Jotischky, “The Mendicants as Missionaries and Travellers in the Near East in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries,” in *Eastward Bound: Travel and Travellers 1050–1550*, ed. Rosemund Allen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 88–106; Evelyn Edson, “Reviving the Crusade: Sanudo’s Schemes and Vesconte’s Maps,” in *Eastward Bound: Travel and Travellers 1050–1550*, ed. Rosemund Allen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 131–155; Suzanne Conklin Akbari, “The Diversity of Mankind in The Book of John Mandeville,” in *Eastward Bound: Travel and Travellers 1050–1550*, ed. Rosemund Allen, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 156–176; Anna-Dorothee Von den Brincken, “Spuren der orientalischen Christenheit auf Karten des 12. bis 14. Jahrhunderts,” in *Studien zur Universalkartographie des Mittelalters*, ed. Thomas Szabó (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2008), 668–682.

<sup>4</sup> Kai Brodersen, *Terra Cognita. Studien zur römischen Raumerfassung* (Hildesheim: Olms, 2003), 26.

located in three different regions (Persia, Iraq, Armenia) in three different texts of the same period.<sup>5</sup>

The ‘maps in the minds’ of medieval authors, their approach to put objects in spatial relation to each other, have little connection to modern-day scaled maps.<sup>6</sup> As research on “mental maps,” “maps in minds” or “cognitive mapping” has illustrated, humans used non-cartographic modes of the imagination and depiction of space for the “collection, organisation, storing, recalling, and manipulation of information about the spatial environment.” In ancient texts and “maps” we encounter “topological” representations of the relative position of localities, connected through routes, not their absolute position in space as indicated by coordinates in modern day cartography. Points (landmarks) and routes (paths) are essential elements of these spatial concepts, which also can be combined into relatively complex spatial relational systems in order to transmit knowledge of what is there and how to travel between places. Here, modern research on human cognition of space and on past forms of imagination and depiction of space converge—the “emphasis is on topology rather than topography.”<sup>7</sup>

Central for the survey, description or also depiction of spaces was the definition and (re-)naming of landmarks, which stood out due to their visibility and significance; this could be larger cities, but also sites of religious relevance, such as Mt. Ararat as the landing place of Noah’s Ark, which we find mentioned in Western Christian descriptions or on medieval maps in the region around Tabriz. With the indication of such Biblical landmarks, for instance, “map drawing and naming of physical features”

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<sup>5</sup> Ricoldus de Monte Croce, “Itinerarium fratris Ricoldi, ordinis fratrum predicatorum,” in *Peregrinatores Medii Aevi Quattuor*, ed. Johann Christian Moritz Laurent (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1873), 122–123; Marco Polo, *Il Milione*, 42; Het’um, *Flor historiarum* 1: 9, 268; trans. Bedrossian. Anna-Dorothee Von den Brincken, *Die “Nationes Christianorum Orientalium” im Verständnis der lateinischen Historiographie von der Mitte des 12. bis in die zweite Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Habilitationsschrift, University of Cologne, 1973), 198, 298 (for the localization of Tabriz in Armenia).

<sup>6</sup> Brodersen, *Terra Cognita*, 33–35.

<sup>7</sup> Roger Downs and David Stea, *Maps in Minds: Reflections on Cognitive Mapping* (New York: New York: Harper & Row, 1977), esp. 6–28; Peter Gould and Rodney White, *Mental Maps*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1986), esp. 1–30; Andreas Ramin, *Symbolische Raumorientierung und kulturelle Identität. Leitlinien der Entwicklung in erzählenden Texten vom Mittelalter bis zur Neuzeit* (Munich: Iudicium, 1994), 9–11; Brodersen, *Terra Cognita*, 44–48, 191; Philippe Blanchard and Dimitri Volchenkov, *Mathematical Analysis of Urban Spatial Networks* (Berlin: Springer, 2009), 19–24.

became “an act of appropriation,” of integrating space within one’s cultural framework.<sup>8</sup>

The second important element for “mental mapping” is the indication of routes, depicted as chains of landmarks; if one followed them in the indicated order, one was on the “right track” (see below the example of Pegolotti’s [d. c. 1347] route from Ayas to Tabriz, for instance). Thereby the topological structure, the relative position of points to each other was documented. As “people are supposed to be sensitive to the costs of overcoming distance,” also sometimes the duration of a journey from one point to the next was indicated. Such information was transmitted in texts (*itinerarium, periplus*) or in diagrams (such as the *Tabula Peutingeriana* or late medieval portolans). This was the pre-dominant form of description of spaces until the early modern period: a sequence of landmarks, which were also described, along a route, while spaces between them were seldom characterized in greater detail. Domesticated spaces of cultivated regions and cities served as “oases” of order within the un-ordered wilderness. Space thus was appropriated as a sum of landmarks, of significant points, whose sequence for a specific purpose was defined in texts and images.<sup>9</sup>

In what we call today topological diagrams (such as a modern day plan of the underground system of London, for instance), various routes connected by landmarks could be combined into networks (as on the *Tabula Peutingeriana*). The centrality of a landmark depended on its position on many routes or even as single point on all possible routes from one area to another.<sup>10</sup> Such ancient and medieval “maps” indicate that a creation

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<sup>8</sup> Downs and Stea, *Maps in Minds*, 41–47, 108–119; Gould and White, *Mental Maps*, 12–13; David Woodward, “Medieval Mappaemundi,” in *The History of Cartography*. Vol. 1, *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, eds. John Brian Harley and David Woodward (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 330–335; Brodersen, *Terra Cognita*, 50–53, 111–126; Folker Reichert, “Nabel der Welt, Zentrum Europas und doch nur Peripherie? Jerusalem in Weltbild und Wahrnehmung des späten Mittelalters,” *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 38, no. 4 (2004): 559–584.

<sup>9</sup> Downs and Stea, *Maps in Minds*, 47–55, 77, 119–144; Tony Campbell, “Portolan Charts from the Late Thirteenth Century to 1500,” in *The History of Cartography*. Vol. 1, *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, eds. John Brian Harley and David Woodward (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), esp. 376–378, 439–446 (on portolan maps); Ramin, *Raumorientierung*, 37, 50–52 (esp. on the imagination of “wilderness” in the Middle Ages); Brodersen, *Terra Cognita*, 54–58, 94, 165–180; Edson, “Reviving the Crusade,” 149–150; Achim Landwehr, *Historische Diskursanalyse* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2008), 111, 116–117, 121.

<sup>10</sup> Downs and Stea, *Maps in Minds*, 130–135; Gould and White, *Mental Maps*, 12–13; Larry J. Gorenflo and Thomas L. Bell. “Network Analysis and the Study of Past Regional

of similar topological diagrams on the basis of information from sources in order to re-assemble spatial information can be an appropriate method for the depiction of past imaginations and conceptions of space, as Kai Brodersen has demonstrated, for instance.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, the depiction of landmarks indicated in medieval texts on modern-day maps also helps to understand the connection between “imagined” and “real” space, as Caspar Ehlers has shown.<sup>12</sup> In this paper we rather combine both methods to visualize the localization of Mongol period Tabriz within the spatial frameworks of the 13th and 14th century.

Mental mapping serves not only the solution of specific spatial problems, but is also useful for the generation “of frames of references for understanding and interpreting the spatial environment.” The organization and interpretation of space contributes to the cognitive construction of the world; the creation of meaning in space results in patterns of spatial behaviour.<sup>13</sup> In order to reduce the actual complexity of the environment, cognitive mapping is always selective with regard to what spatial information and what types of information are chosen and how they are symbolized and arranged. Landmarks are chosen due to their functional importance (as trading post, for instance), but also due to their significance within existing cultural matrices (such as the framework of biblical history).<sup>14</sup> Landmarks are also categorized; categories can refer to various aspects of the same locality (Tabriz as capital, trading post, station for mission, place of interaction with other Christians, etc.) or subsume different localities under the same label (*civitates*, bishoprics, etc.). Such categories allow further associations with spatial and non-spatial information (a bishop’s see should contain a cathedral) and thereby contribute to the establishment of predictive frameworks (what a traveller can expect to encounter in a specific locality, for instance).<sup>15</sup> With the application of

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Organization,” in *Ancient Road Networks and Settlement Hierarchies in the New World*, ed. Charles D. Trombold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), esp. 85–94; Ramin, *Raumorientierung*, 126–127; Brodersen, *Terra Cognita*, 59–65, 181–190 (with an example for such a modern diagram on the basis of ancient information on p. 186).

<sup>11</sup> Brodersen, *Terra Cognita*.

<sup>12</sup> Brodersen, *Terra Cognita*, 66–69, 186; Eckart Ehlers, *Die Integration Sachsens in das fränkische Reich (751–1024)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), esp. 52–101 for ecclesiastical organization of space. See also Blanchard and Volchenkov, *Mathematical Analysis*, 26–29.

<sup>13</sup> Downs and Stea, *Maps in Minds*, 68–78.

<sup>14</sup> Downs and Stea, *Maps in Minds*, 77–83, 100–101; Ramin, *Raumorientierung*, 12–16.

<sup>15</sup> Downs and Stea, *Maps in Minds*, 83–98, 103–104, 118–119, 123–124, 139–142; Ramin, *Raumorientierung*, 12–16.

such established patterns of spatial organization and categories to regions previously beyond the geographical horizon of a society, these spaces are pervaded and made accessible; by organising 'wild' or 'foreign spaces' in lists and diagrams of landmarks and routes, they are partly integrated into one's own space.<sup>16</sup>

In the following, we analyse these aspects of mental mapping for the case of Tabriz with regard to the two most prominent 'Christian' groups active in the city in the later 13th and 14th century: merchants and (especially) ecclesiastics. Both have transmitted their spatial knowledge in texts and lists, albeit for different purposes; yet, the activities of both groups partly depended on each other, and also their 'mental localization' of Tabriz as nodal point of commerce respectively of ecclesiastical activity converged in some important points.

### I *Tabriz in Mercantile Space*

As Nicola di Cosmo has stated, for the new Mongol rulers, "merchants were also, relatively, uncomplicated partners, since a common language could be found regardless of linguistic, religious or political barriers."<sup>17</sup> Thomas Allsen has highlighted the significance of Mongol agency for the establishment of commercial and other routes of exchange in the new imperial sphere; "cross-cultural relations were, therefore, subject to a process of filtering and adaptation within which the Mongol rulers occupied the most central and critical position. They controlled it inasmuch as they created the conditions for certain things and people to travel across Eurasia more quickly and in greater numbers than others."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ramin, *Raumorientierung*, 14–22, 59–61, 68, 85, 116–118, 120–124, 277; Hamilton, "The Impact," esp. 15–16; Conklin Akbari, "The Diversity;" Ehlers, *Die Integration*, 19; Barry Taylor, "Late medieval Spanish Travellers in the East: Clavijo, Tafur, Encina and Tarifa," in *Eastward Bound: Travel and Travellers 1050–1550*, ed. Rosemund Allen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 225–226; Anna-Dorothee Von den Brincken, "Christen im Orient auf abendländischen Karten des 11. bis 14. Jahrhunderts," in *Studien zur Universalkartographie des Mittelalters*, ed. Thomas Szabó (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2008), 367–374; eadem, "Spuren der orientalischen Christenheit;" see also Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 339–345, for the Mongol sphere.

<sup>17</sup> Nicola Di Cosmo, "Mongols and Merchants on the Black Sea Frontier in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," in *Mongols, Turks and others. Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*. eds. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 391.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 203–211; Di Cosmo, "Mongols and Merchants," 392 (for the citation); Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 291.

Besides Muslim traders, also merchants from the various denominations of the *Oriens Christianus* were active along the trade routes to and from Tabriz before and after the Mongol conquests. Nestorian merchants especially from Mosul traded in the East as well as in the West of the Middle East as far as Damascus, Acre, Cilicia and Cyprus.<sup>19</sup> As Gregory Bar Hebraeus reports, the *Jacobite* bishop of Tabriz Basil in 1272 was able to renovate his church with the support of pious (presumably *Jacobite*) merchants of the city.<sup>20</sup> Also Armenian traders established far reaching networks from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea including Tabriz.<sup>21</sup> *Byzantine* or *Greek* merchants from Trebizond, but also Constantinople did business in the town and augmented the community of 'Melkite' (Chalcedonensian) Christians in the city.<sup>22</sup>

Newcomers, by contrast, were however the merchants from the Italian cities active in Tabriz in increasing numbers since the second half of the 13th century. Venetian merchants are documented in the city since 1263, Genoese since 1280. In 1304, a Genoese consul was established in Tabriz; in 1306 the Ilkhan Öljejtü (1304–1316) issued a privilege for the merchants of Venice, who concluded also a treaty with his successor Abū Saʿīd in 1320. "As a consequence, the Genoese and Venetian communities in Tabriz flourished" until the 1330s. Rashīd al-Dīn even believed that all Western merchants active in the east came from Genoa.<sup>23</sup> Besides exotic goods such as spices which found their way to Tabriz from further east, of special significance were silk and other textiles, which were produced also in factories in and around Tabriz and were demanded in the West

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<sup>19</sup> Richard, "Die orientalischen Kirchen Asiens und Afrikas," in *Die Geschichte des Christentums*. Vol. 6, *Die Zeit der Zerreißproben (1274–1449)*, eds. Michel Mollat Jourdin, André Vauchez, and Bernhard Schimmelpfennig (Freiburg: Herder, 1991), 213; *idem*, "La confrérie des Mosserins d'Acre et les marchands de Mossoul au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *L'Orient syrien* 11 (1972): 451–460; Von den Brincken, *Nationes Christianorum*, 333–335.

<sup>20</sup> *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon ecclesiasticum* Sect. II, trans. AbbeLoos/Lamy Vol. III, 444; Peter Kawerau, *Die Jakobitische Kirche im Zeitalter der Syrischen Renaissance: Idee und Wirklichkeit* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1960), 50, 65; Luisetto, *Arméniens*, 73.

<sup>21</sup> Manandian, *The Trade*, 184; Richard, "Die orientalischen Kirchen," 225.

<sup>22</sup> Sergei Karpov, *Istorija Trapezundskoj imperii* (Saint Petersburg: Aletejja, 2007), 128–144.

<sup>23</sup> George Martin Thomas, ed., *Diplomatarium Veneto-Levanticum sive acta et diplomata res Venetas Graecas atque Levantis illustrantia a. 1300–1350*. Vol. 1. 1880 (Reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1966), 47–48 (no. 26, treaty of 1306) and 173–176 (no. 85, treaty of 1320); Rashīd al-Dīn, *Die Frankengeschichte des Rašīd-ad-Dīn*, ed. and trans. Karl Jahn (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1977), 51; Rosamund E. Mack, *Bazaar to Piazza. Islamic Trade and Italian Art, 1300–1600* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 16–20; Di Cosmo, "Mongols and Merchants," 409–411; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 294–298.

as *panni tartarici*.<sup>24</sup> A more problematic aspect of Tabriz' significance as trading point (at least from the point of view of Christian missionaries) is highlighted in the treatise *De modo sarracenos extirpandi* (from ca. 1317), which claimed that *Tauricium Persidis* served as entrepot for Greek slaves captured by Turkish pirates and that more than 200.000 of these slaves were living in in Persia.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, Tabriz became an important node in the 'mental maps' of Italian merchants. Francesco Pegolotti in the 1330s devoted a chapter in his famous handbook of trade to *Torisi di Persia* (or: *in Cataria*) and the commodities one could buy there. Of special interest is his description of how to get to Tabriz, namely the route from *Laiazzo* (the harbour of Ayas at the Cilician Coast, normally also always indicated on contemporary portolan maps)<sup>26</sup> through central and Eastern Anatolia via *Salvastro* (Sivas), *Arzinga* (Erzincan) and *Arzerone* (Erzurum) to *Torisi* (Tabriz). In total, Pegolotti listed 29 stations in his itinerary between Ayas and Tabriz and thus followed the already described conventional manner of organization of space with landmarks and routes. For the merchant the effort to get there was not measured in time, but in money; Pegolotti registered the transit fees charged at entering (and/or leaving) the various localities, which he added up to "*per tutti aspri 209 la soma*" (*in total, 209 aspri [small silver coins] per pack animal*), a considerable sum.<sup>27</sup> Tabriz (similar

<sup>24</sup> Anne E. Wardwell, "Panni Tartarici: Eastern Islamic Silks Woven with Gold and Silver (13th and 14th Centuries)," *Islamic Art* 3 (1988/89): 95–173; Mack, *Bazaar to Piazza*, 27–48; David Jacoby, "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Artistic Interaction: Byzantium, the Muslim World, and the Christian West," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 58 (2004): 231–234; Beatrice F. Manz, "The Rule of the Infidels: the Mongols and the Islamic World," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*. Vol. 3, *The Eastern Islamic World Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries*, eds. David O. Morgan and Anthony Reid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 154–155.

<sup>25</sup> Guillaume Adam, *De modo sarracenos extirpandi*, in *Recueil des historiens des croisades*, vol. 2, *Documents Arméniens* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1906), 4: 542–543.

<sup>26</sup> Campbell, "Portolan Charts," 379. For the integration of Ayas into the Venetian convoy system and its changing relevance within the mediterranean trading network also in dependence on the intensity of trade with Tabriz see Doris Stöckly, *Le système de l'Incanto des gales du marché à Venise (fin XIII<sup>e</sup>–milieu XV<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 119–124 (after 1338, "Armenia" disappears from the title of the convoy line to the Levant).

<sup>27</sup> Francesco Pegolotti, *La pratica della mercatura: Book of Descriptions of Countries and Measures of Merchandise*, ed. Allan Evans (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1936), 26–31 (and 389–391 for a localization of the toponyms); see also Rashid al-Din, *Die Frankengeschichte*, 44–45, for this route; Spuler, *Mongolen*, 422–430 (general on routes in Mongol Persia); Manandian, *The Trade*, 190–195 (with map); Krawulsky, *Iran*, esp. map 2 and map 3; Anthony Bryer and David Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos*. 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1985), 25–26; Robert H. Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical*

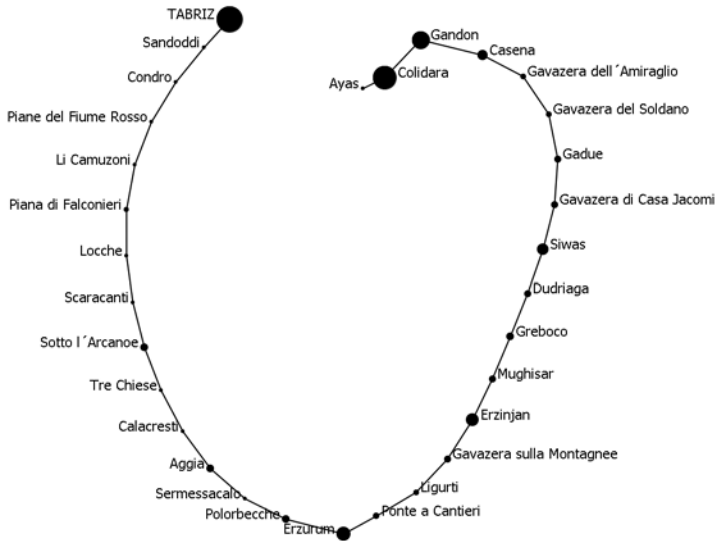


Fig. 1: The route from Ayas to Tabriz as described by Francesco Pegolotti in his “Pratica della mercatura” (the nodes are scaled according to the amount of transit fees charged at the respective locality) (graph created with the network analytical software ORA<sup>\*</sup>).

to *Gattaio* in Pegolotti’s description of the much longer and much more expansive route from Tana/Azow on the Black Sea to China)<sup>28</sup> was the desired final destination in this *Anabasis* from the Mediterranean to Persia (see fig. 1).

*Atlas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), map 116 (with a reconstruction of the route); Kurt Weissen 2002, “Dove il Papa va, sempre è caro di danari. The Commercial Site Analysis in Italian Merchant Handbooks and Notebooks from the 14th and 15th Centuries,” in *Kaufmannsbücher und Handelspraktiken vom Spätmittelalter bis zum beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert*, eds. Markus A. Denzel, Jean Claude Hocquet, and Harald Witthöft (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2002), 65–66; Mack, *Bazaar to Piazza*, 16–17; Di Cosmo, “Mongols and Merchants,” 395–396, 399–400 (for the transit fees); Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 297; Giorgio Rota, *Under Two Lions. On the Knowledge of Persia in the Republic of Venice (ca. 1450–1797)* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 22 and esp. 25 (for the indication of an Venetian “Itinerary from Aleppo to Tabriz” from 1496). For a comparative route-description across the Swiss Alps from 1390, see Robert S. Lopez and Irving W. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World. Illustrative Documents* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 251–252. On the route from Ayas to Tabriz, Tom Sinclair has written a monograph (*Between the Mediterranean and Iran in the Middle Ages. Pegolotti’s Ayas-Tabriz Itinerary and its Commercial Context*. London), which shall be published soon.

<sup>28</sup> Pegolotti, *La practica*, 21–23; trans. in: Lopez and Irving, *Medieval Trade*, 355–358.

But if we combine the information on the commercial connections of Tabriz respectively the localities on the route from Ayas to the city spread throughout Pegolotti's work, we also find it embedded within the larger mercantile network whose nodes Pegolotti is describing. At the end of the chapter on Tabriz for instance, he lists five cities, whose commodities could be traded in Tabriz respectively where products from Tabriz could be sold; these are Pera (near Constantinople), Ayas, Famagusta on Cyprus, Venice and Genoa.<sup>29</sup>

Pegolotti mentioned (but did not describe in detail) also the second important connection of Tabriz to the maritime network via the harbour of Trebizond at the Black Sea, which in turn profited from its position as broker between Tabriz and the Sea (Pegolotti states: "The weights and measures of Tabriz are as one with those of Trebizond"). The route from Trebizond to Tabriz joined the one from Ayas in Eastern Anatolia; it was used by emissaries, merchants and ecclesiastics from the Byzantine as well as the Latin world up to Clavijo in 1403 and still frequented by caravans in the 19th century, when it took them 32 days to master the 954 km between Trebizond and Tabriz.<sup>30</sup>

The connections from Tabriz especially to India were described by Marco Polo<sup>31</sup> and in 1306 (respectively 1321) by Marino Sanudo Torsello (d. 1338) in the first book of his *Book of the Secrets* (in which he was arguing for an embargo against the Mamluks in preparation of a new crusade).

In that part [India] there are two main ports on the Ocean Sea, which are called Mahabar [Malabar Coast, the ports of Calicut and Quilon] and Cambeth [Kambayat at the coast of Gujarat]. Most of the goods in India are collected in these ports and from there loaded and transported westwards across the ocean sea to four principal ports. Three of these are in the lands and on the river banks of the Tartars who rule Persia. Of these three ports,

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<sup>29</sup> Pegolotti, *Practica*, 30–31; Jacques Paviot, "Les marchands italiens dans l'Iran mongol," in *L'Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institut français de recherche en Iran, 1997), 71–86; Weissen, "Dove il Papa va," 65–66.

<sup>30</sup> Anthony Bryer, "Shipping in the Empire of Trebizond." *Mariner's Mirror* 52 (1966): 3–12; Bryer and Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments*, 14, 16 (fig. 3), 17, 100 (fn. 55), 251; Manandian, *The Trade*, 184, 189; Taylor, "Late medieval Spanish Travellers," 221–222; Anthony Eastmond, *Art and Identity in Thirteenth-Century Byzantium. Hagia Sophia and the Empire of Trebizond* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 22–23, 74, 93; Karpov, *Istorija Trapezundskoj imperii*, 128–144 (in detail on the trade of Trebizond), 232, 287. On the later significance of this route see Charles Issawi, "The Tabriz-Trabzon Trade, 1830–1900: Rise and Decline of a Route," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 1, no. 1 (1970): 18–27. For the integration of Trebizond into the Venetian convoy system see Stöckly, *Le système*, 101–106.

<sup>31</sup> Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 297; Rossabi, "Tabriz and Yuan China."

one is on terra firma and is called Hormus, another is an island called Kis [Kish, in the Persian Gulf] and the third is on a waterway that flows out [to the sea] from Baghdad [the port of Basra]. (...) The fourth port is called Ahaden [Aden]. (...) At present only a small proportion of the spices and goods brought to the west passes through the three first-named ports and come to Tartar territory at Baghdad and Thorisium [Tabriz]; from whence the goods can come down to the Mediterranean by many routes and every day are being transported without once touching harbours, shores and lands subject to the Sultan of the Saracens [the Mamluk Sultan of Egypt]. (...) From that region of the lordship of the Tartars as far as India even Christian merchants can direct their feet since there are many of them who already go and return. Indeed the Sultan, throughout the lands that he holds, does not allow any Christian to pass through, who would like to sail over to India.<sup>32</sup>

Sanudo's treatise was also accompanied by maps drawn by Pietro Vesconte, the "first surviving example of maps being designed for strategic purposes in Western Europe since classical times." On Vesconte's worldmap also *Tauris in Persia* can be found.<sup>33</sup>

If we integrate the information from Pegolotti and Sanudo as well as Vesconte into one topological network, the central position of Tabriz as "broker" between (a far less clearly mapped) East and (a densely "land-marked") West in the "mental commercial map" of the Italian traders of the time becomes clearly visible (see fig. 2/fig. 3). This image also converges with the actual concentration of Venetian and Genoese mercantile

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<sup>32</sup> Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Liber Secretorum Fidelium Crucis*, ed. Jacques Bongars, 1611, Reprint (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 22–23; *idem*, *The Book of the Secrets of the Faithful of the Cross*, trans. Peter Lock. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 49–51 (see also 23 for the introduction of Sanudo Torsello); Spuler, *Mongolen*, 147–152 (on the ports in the Gulf) and 433–435; Manandian, *The Trade*, 196–198; Angeliki Laiou, "Marino Sanudo Torsello, Byzantium and the Turks: The Background to the Anti-Turkish League of 1332–1334," *Speculum* 45 (1970): 374–392 (also on the dating of the books of Sanudo's *Liber*); Kirti Nayanar Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean. An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 38 (map), 47, 132, 168 (map), 186 (map); Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 185–197, 205 (on the localization and development of these routes); Rene Jan Barendse, "Trade and State in the Arabian Seas: A Survey from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of World History* 11, no. 2 (2000): 173–225; Edson, "Reviving the Crusade;" Hamilton, "The Impact," 27, 29–30; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 312; Philippe Beaujard, "The Indian Ocean in Eurasian and African World-Systems before the Sixteenth Century," *Journal of World History* 16, no. 4 (2005): 411–465; Kolbas, *The Mongols in Iran*, 258–260; Rota, *Under Two Lions*, 8. For the connection to India see also Croce, "Itinerarium," 123, and Adam, *De modo sarracenos extirpandi*, 4: 551–553 (also on the activities of Genoese sailors in Mesopotamia). For the idea of an embargo against Mamluk Egypt see also Adam, *De modo sarracenos extirpandi* 1: 523–526. On the connections between Tabriz and China see Rossabi, "Tabriz and Yuan China," 100–106.

<sup>33</sup> Edson, "Reviving the Crusade," 137–149.



activity in these regions. Although some Italian merchants became active east of Tabriz in China and India, these regions remained beyond the range of active state intervention by Venice or Genoa, which established *consules* in the city and concluded treaties with its rulers. “Tabrīz marked the limit of state interests,” as Nicola di Cosmo has pointed out.<sup>34</sup>

Yet, in Tabriz as well as in other regions, “the activities of Italian merchants depended upon the Mongol government’s [willingness and ability to promote favourable trading conditions.” With the collapse of the Il *Khānid* (henceforth: Ilkhanid) state after 1336, these conditions were not be guaranteed by the succeeding and rivalling dynasties, who also assaulted traders for short-term profit, leading to a Venetian *devetum* on trade with Tabriz in 1338, followed by the Genoese in 1340/1341. Yet, contacts between Tabriz and Venice or Venetian representatives continued in the second half of the 14th century; as Barendse indicated, “Venetian merchant houses had from the early fifteenth century, at least, established a network of correspondents and associated merchant firms stretching from Venice to Aleppo, Baghdad, and Basra, overseas to Hormuz and Diu and overland to Tabriz, and probably Mashed [Mashhad] and Samarkand [Samarqand] as well”- and continued to do so in the 16th century.<sup>35</sup> Once localized, Tabriz did not disappear from the mental mercantile maps, even if its relative significance as landmark declined after the fall of the Ilkhans.

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<sup>34</sup> Spuler, *Mongolen*, 435–436; Claude Cahen, “The Mongols and the Near East,” in *A History of the Crusades*, Vol. 2, *The Later Crusades, 1189–1311*, eds. Robert Lee Wolff and Harry Hazard (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 723–724; Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation*, 41; Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 33–35, 124, 145–147, 165; Paviot, “Les marchands;” Barendse, “Trade and State,” 177–187; Nicolas Standaert, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China*. Vol. 1, *635–1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 68–70 (on Italian traders in China); Lopez and Irving, *Medieval Trade*, 281–289 (for Venetian travellers to Delhi in the 1340s) and 346–348 (for a Latin-Persian-Cumanic glossary, most probably from Genoa from the year 1303); Di Cosmo, “Mongols and Merchants,” 401–406, 418; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 294, 297–301; Beaujard, “The Indian Ocean;” Rota, *Under Two Lions*, 8–14; Rossabi, “Tabriz and Yuan China,” 99–100; Roxann Prazniak, “Siena on the Silk Roads: Ambrogio Lorenzetti and the Mongol Global Century, 1250–1350,” *Journal of World History* 21, no. 2 (2010): 177–217; Manz, “The Rule of the Infidels,” 157–158.

<sup>35</sup> Manandian, *The Trade*, 201–202; Stöckly, *Le système*, 119–124 (as mentioned above, after 1338, “Armenia,” meaning the port of Ayas, disappears from the title of the Venetian convoy line to the Levant); Barendse, “Trade and State,” 186–188 (also for the citation); Lopez and Irving, *Medieval Trade*, 325–326; Di Cosmo, “Mongols and Merchants,” 394, 403–405; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 301–304, 310–311; Rota, *Under Two Lions*, 9–11.

II *Tabriz in Ecclesiastical Space*

Odoric of Pordenone in his *Relatio* stated about Tabriz: "In this city, there are many Christians from various nations who still remain, although the Saracens dominate in all things," thus illustrating the diversity of Christian life in Tabriz, but also indicating the already less favourable conditions for them which had come along with the conversion of the Ilkhans to Islam.<sup>36</sup> The position of Christian communities (as well as "heterodox" Muslim communities)<sup>37</sup> had, despite all destructions, improved after the Mongol conquest. But already the conversion of Ghazan (r. 1295–1304) to Islam in 1295 was accompanied by assaults against Christians, including the destruction of churches in Tabriz and other cities; and although Christian life could continue under the traditional status of *dhimmī*, the time of a privileged position of Christians within the Ilkhanid realm had passed.<sup>38</sup> During these decades, Tabriz as (one) Ilkhanid centre of power became a focus of ecclesiastical activity of various Christian denominations, of which some also integrated the city into their organizational and spatial framework by installing a bishopric there; thus, Tabriz became a landmark on ecclesiastical mental maps. For the relations between the various Eastern Christian communities in the city, the famous Maphrian of the West-Syrian Church Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286) reports an episode regarding an earthquake in Tabriz in 1273, which destroyed several churches: "*Our [the West-Syrian's] church, however, did the Lord protect, and it never shook, and the performance of the service never stopped, and*

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<sup>36</sup> Odoric of Pordenone, *Relatio* 3: 4, ed. van den Wyngaert, 418, ed. Marchisio 3 ("*In hac civitate sunt multi christiani diversarum nationum commorantes quibus tamen sarraceni in omnibus dominantur*"); see also Marco Polo, *Il Milione*, 42. Marchisio 3 ("*In hac civitate sunt multi christiani diversarum nationum commorantes quibus tamen sarraceni in omnibus dominantur*"); see also Marco Polo, *Il Milione*, 42. See also Judith Pfeiffer, *Twelver Shi'ism as State Religion in Mongol Iran: An Abortive Attempt, Recorded and Remembered* (Istanbul: Orient-Institut Istanbul, 1999), on the conversion to Islam.

<sup>37</sup> See Pfeiffer, *Twelver Shi'ism*.

<sup>38</sup> On these assaults see also Rashīd al-Dīn, *Die Frankengeschichte*, 48 and 92; Sinor, "The Mongols and Western Europe," 535–537; Walter Selb, *Orientalisches Kirchenrecht*, Vol. 1, *Die Geschichte des Kirchenrechts der Nestorianer (von den Anfängen bis zur Mongolenzeit)* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981), 223; Baldwin, "Mission to the East," 486–487; Kolbas, *The Mongols in Iran*, 295–296; Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 64–65; Manz, "The Rule of the Infidels," 151; for a general overview, see Luisetto, *Arméniens*; Wilhelm Baum, "Die Mongolen und das Christentum," in *Caucasus during the Mongol Period = Der Kaukasus in der Mongolenzeit*, eds. Jürgen Tubach, Sophia G. Vashalomidze, and Manfred Zimmer (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2012), 13–51.

*Greeks, and Armenians, and Nestorians, and all our own peoples gathered together therein.*"<sup>39</sup>

## II.1 *Tabriz in Eastern Christian Ecclesiastical Space*

The spatial organization of the Eastern Churches (as the one of the Western) since the 4th century was based on the Late Roman imperial administrative divisions—with a hierarchy of patriarchs, metropolitans (for every province) and bishops (for every *civitas*), who had the oversight over all ecclesiastical institutions and monasteries within the borders of their bishoprics. This ecclesiastical hierarchy was understood as effigy of the celestial one; the close connection between a bishop and his see was also symbolized through the image of bridegroom and bride. Established was also an element of collaborative management of the church by a synod of bishops at the level of the metropolitan province and of metropolitans and archbishops for an entire Patriarchate. These hierarchies were then written down in lists (in Greek for instance called "*taxis*"—"order, arrangement") for each patriarchate, registering the metropolitan sees according to their rank, and below each metropolitan see its suffragan bishoprics, in return according to their rank within the metropolitan province. Thus, ecclesiastical space was also organized in lists of landmarks (episcopal sees), which were connected through 'routes' of hierarchy one had to follow for questions of jurisdiction or appellation. In the simultaneous definition of the same city as landmark within various hierarchical frameworks, as in the case of Antioch or Baghdad, for instance, we can also observe the competition between the various Christian denominations. In addition, we encounter lists of participating bishops at synods, in which they were also arranged according to their hierarchical ranking, but depicted as acting together—as an interconnected ecclesiastical body, united in brotherly love according to the Christian ideal. As in our example from the book of Pegolotti, this adds a network component to the 'itineraries' from one episcopal landmark to the next within the hierarchy. Synods also decided on the spatial organization and borders of bishoprics; in doing so, bishops should also take into consideration the status of a locality in other spatial contexts such as political one, for instance (see Canon

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<sup>39</sup> Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abû 'l Faraj (1225–1286), the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician, commonly known as Bar Hebraeus, being the First Part of his Political History of the World*, trans. Ernest Alfred Wallis Budge, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), II, 450.

17 of the Council of Chalcedon in 451). The rise of Tabriz to the political centre thus could legitimate also a modification of ecclesiastical space as had done the establishment of Baghdad as centre of the Caliphate in the 8th century.<sup>40</sup>

The East Syrian (“Nestorian”) Church, which was already spread across entire Asia, experienced its largest extension during the first favourable decades of Mongol rule, with 230 dioceses and 27 metropolitan sees from the Euphrates river to China; traditionally, of course, it was not possible to assemble all hierarchs from this huge territory regularly for synodal meetings, so a ‘core synod’ consisting of the Catholicos (Patriarch) with the nominal see “of Seleukia and Ctesiphon” (de facto, he was residing in Baghdad) and of the six metropolitans of Elam-Gondēšāpur, Nisibis, Prāt de Maišān/Basra, Mosul, Bēt Garmai-Bēt Šlōk and Holwān, was established.<sup>41</sup> Following the shift of political power from Mesopotamia towards Ādharbāyjdjān (Azerbaijan) under Mongol rule, Catholicos Mār Yahballāhā III (1281–1317), who himself was of Mongol origin, moved his place of domicile from Baghdad towards Ilkhanid residences such as Tabriz (where a church and patriarchal residence were built) and Marāgha respectively in the monastery of St. John the Baptist built by him near these cities. In the history of Mār Yahballāhā we also encounter a Metropolitan Yohanan of Azerbaijan, but there is no indication for the existence of an East Syrian bishopric of Tabriz proper.<sup>42</sup> Yet, Tabriz became one of the focuses of

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<sup>40</sup> Selb, *Orientalisches Kirchenrecht Nestorianer*, 58–59, 118–134, 192–203; Walter Selb, *Orientalisches Kirchenrecht*. Vol. 2, *Die Geschichte des Kirchenrechts der Westsyrer (von den Anfängen bis zur Mongolenzeit)* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1989), 189–190, 198–200, 211–219, 227–235; Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, *Der Episkopat im späten Byzanz. Ein Verzeichnis der Metropolitane und Bischöfe des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel in der Zeit von 1204 bis 1453* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008), IX–X, XII–XVIII (with sources). For the relevance of studies on Eastern Christianity for research on the medieval Middle East see also Johannes Pahlitzsch, “Mediators between East and West: Christians under Mamluk Rule,” *Mamluk Studies Review* 9, no. 2 (2005): 31–47.

<sup>41</sup> Anonymous, *Un ambassadeur du Khan Argun en Occident. Histoire de Mar Yahballaha III et de Rabban Sauma (1281–1317)*, trans. Pier Giorgio Borbone and Alexandre Egly (Paris: Harmattan, 2008), 83 and 131 (for the church and residence in Tabriz); *idem*, *Die Mönche des Kublai Khan. Die Reise der Pilger Mar Yahballaha und Rabban Sauma nach Europa*, trans. Alexander Toepel (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2008), 66 (also for the location of Soba) and 116; Selb, *Orientalisches Kirchenrecht Nestorianer*, 193, 197, 223, and map 2. On the Nestorian communities in the China during the Yuan period see Standaert, *Handbook*, 63–68, 80–82, 84–87.

<sup>42</sup> Anonymous, *Histoire de Mar Yahballaha III et de Rabban Sauma*, 83; *idem*, *Die Mönche des Kublai Khan*, 66 (also for the location of Soba); Selb, *Orientalisches Kirchenrecht Nestorianer*, 193, 197, 223, and map 2; Baum, “Die Mongolen und das Christentum,” 27.

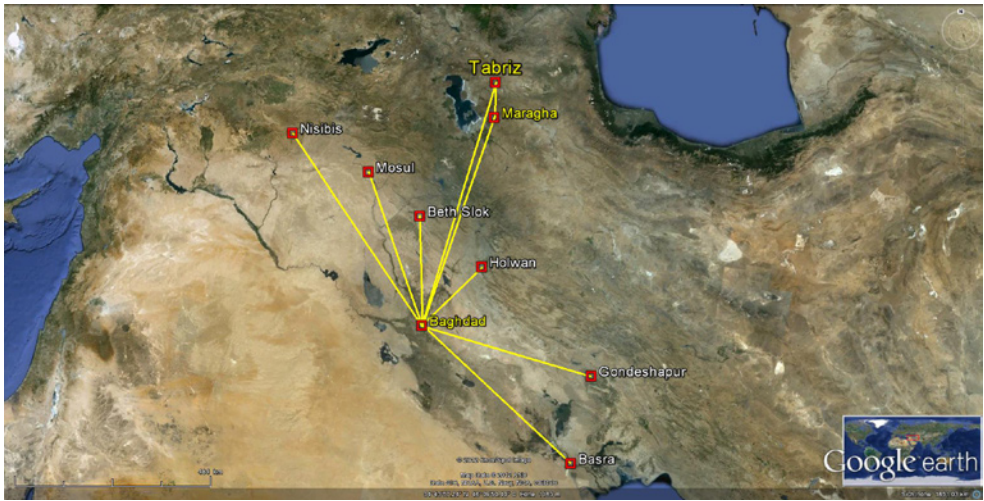


Fig. 4: Tabriz within the spatial framework of the “core synod” of the Eastern Syrian Church in the time of Catholicos Mār Yahballāhā III (1281–1317) in “real” space (yellow: temporary residences of the Catholicos) (digital base map: © Google Earth 2012).

activity of the East Syrian Church (see fig. 4); here it also came into contact with Latin missionaries, resulting in talks about a union of churches with Rome within the framework of Papal-Ilkhanid negotiations on an anti-Mamluk alliance. As already mentioned above, in 1295 the churches in Tabriz and Marāgha were destroyed; conditions for the Nestorian communities then stabilized again, albeit on a less favourable level.<sup>43</sup>

In contrast to the East Syrian Church, the West Syrian Church (*Jacobites*) reacted to the rise of Tabriz as centre of power with the installation of a bishop in the city; since before 1264 until his death in 1272,

<sup>43</sup> Anonymous, *Histoire de Mar Yahballaha III et de Rabban Sauma*, 89–111, 117–122, 131; *idem*, *Die Mönche des Kublai Khan*, 73–94, 100–112, 116; Jean Maurice Fiey, *Pour un Orient Christianus Novus: Répertoire des diocèses syriaques orientaux et occidentaux* (Beirut: Steiner, 1993), 107, 136, 172; Raymond Loenertz, *La société des frères pèlerins: Étude sur l'Orient dominicain* (Rome: Ad S. Sabinae, 1937), 160–162, 188; Kawerau, *Die Jakobitische Kirche*, 100, 102; Sinor, “The Mongols and Western Europe,” 521, 532–533; Von den Brincken, *Nationes Christianorum*, 298–316; Jean Richard, *La papauté et les missions d'Orient au Moyen Age (XIII<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècles)* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1977), 110–111; Selb, *Orientalisches Kirchenrecht Nestorianer*, 223–228; Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 483–484; Richard, “Die orientalischen Kirchen,” 211–214; Jacques Paviot, “England and the Mongols (c. 1260–1330),” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 10, no. 3 (2000): 305–318; Luisetto, *Arméniens*, 74–75, 106–108; Baum, “Die Mongolen und das Christentum,” 27, 33–35.

Bishop Basil resided in Tabriz, and in 1272 was able to renovate his cathedral church with the support of the Jacobite Christian merchants of the city. His successor Severus had been already bishop of Azerbaijan (this diocese existed since the 7th century; its see in the 11th century was in Urumiyya, in the Mongol period presumably in Marāgha), which was now united with Tabriz as one episcopal province. After Severus' death in 1277, his nephew Joseph-Denys, a monk, was elected by the West-Syrian community in Tabriz; he is attested also due to his correspondence with the Franciscans and the Pope on a union of churches.<sup>44</sup> Within the hierarchical framework of the West-Syrian Church, Tabriz was not subordinated directly to the Patriarchate with the nominal see in Antioch in Syria, but to the so-called Maphrian, who administered the entire East of the West-Syrian sphere from Mesopotamia to Central Asia; between 1264–1286, the Maphrian's throne was occupied by the famous Bar Hebraeus. His traditional see was in Tagrīt, later the Maphrian resided in the Mār Mattai-monastery (until its destruction in 1369) near Mosul; but as his Nestorian colleague Mār Yahballāh III also Bar Hebraeus often dwelt in the political centres in Tabriz and in Marāgha. His ecclesiastical province at this time nominally included 18 bishoprics, but from these we find bishops only still documented for the sees of Azerbaijan—Tabriz, Baghdad, Bēt Nūhādrā—Ma'altā, Bēt Rāmān, Bēt Saida, Gozārtā de Qardū, Habōrā (Circesium) and Karmēh (see fig. 5).<sup>45</sup> These sees marked the nodes in the spatial organization and network of the West-Syrian Church in the region, into which Tabriz was integrated for some time (see fig. 5). After

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<sup>44</sup> *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon ecclesiasticum* Sect. II, trans. Abbeloos—Lamy Vol. III, 444, 446; Conrad Eubel, "Die während des 14. Jahrhunderts im Missionsgebiet der Dominikaner und Franziskaner errichteten Bisthümer," in *Festschrift zum elfhundertjährigen Jubiläum des Deutschen Campo Santo in Rom*, ed. Stephan Ehse (Freiburg: Herder, 1897), 172, 184; Girolamo Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente francescano*. Vol. 1–2. (Quaracchi: Presso Firenze, 1906–1913), 323, 421; Kawerau, *Die Jakobitische Kirche*, 33, 50, 55, 65, 72, 101, 114; Fiey, *Pour un Oriens Christianus Novus*, 270; Richard, *La papauté*, 112; Baldwin, "Mission to the East," 484–485; Richard, "Die orientalischen Kirchen," 215–217.

<sup>45</sup> Kawerau, *Die Jakobitische Kirche*, 25 (with note 145), 109–114 (with dating and localization of these sees); Von den Brincken, *Nationes Christianorum*, 222; Selb, *Orientalisches Kirchenrecht Westsyrer*, 222–226; Richard, "Die orientalischen Kirchen," 216; Fiey, *Pour un Oriens Christianus Novus*, with localization and dating under the respective lemmata; Richard, "Die orientalischen Kirchen," 215; Baum, "Die Mongolen und das Christentum," 29–30. For the territories under the authority of the Mapheran see also *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon ecclesiasticum* Sect. II, trans. Abbeloos—Lamy Vol. III, 454–455 (Azerbaijan, Assyria, Mesopotamia).



Fig. 5: The bishopric of Azerbaijan (Marāgha)—Tabriz within the spatial framework of the ecclesiastical province of the Maphrian of the Western Syrian Church in the time of the Maphrian Bar Hebraeus (1264–1286) in “real” space (green: temporary residences of the Maphrian; ANTIOCH = nominal see of the Patriarch of the Western Syrian Church) (digital base map: © Google Earth 2012).

1295 the conditions for the West-Syrian sees in Tabriz and other cities also deteriorated; Bishop Joseph-Denys is still attested for the year 1302, but after him we encounter no more hierarchs for Tabriz.<sup>46</sup>

While the Eastern and Western Syrian Church could not rely on support from political power, the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia was one of the most important vassals and allies of the Ilkhans, especially against the Mamluks. Its rulers and representatives were frequently present in the Mongol centres of power, also in Tabriz, where they sometimes intervened on behalf of the Christian communities, as is mentioned in the history of Mār Yahballāhā, for instance.<sup>47</sup> Yet, the rise of Armenian statehood in Cilicia since the 11th century also entailed that the highest authority

<sup>46</sup> Richard, “Die orientalischen Kirchen,” 215–216; Fiey, *Pour un Oriens Christianus Novus*, 270.

<sup>47</sup> Anonymous, *Histoire de Mar Yahballaha III et de Rabban Sauma*, 119–120; *idem*, *Die Mönche des Kublai Khan*, 103–104. See in general Claude Mutaftian, “The Brilliant Diplomacy of Cilician Armenia,” in *Armenian Cilicia*, eds. Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers, 2008), 104–108; Dashdondog *The Mongols and the Armenians (1220–1335)* (Leiden: Brill, 2011); Dashdondog, “The Mongol Conquerors,” 74–75.

of the Armenian church, the Catholicos, moved his centre of activity and his residence to the West, first to Hromkla at the Euphrates, and since 1292 to Sis in Cilicia, while the Archbishop of Artza served as his exarch for Greater Armenia. An important hierarch was also the Archbishop of Siwnik', a province adjoining Azerbaijan; Archbishop Stephan Orbelian at the beginning of the 14th century opposed the efforts of the Catholicos in Sis to implement Union with the Roman Church. Thus, relations between Cilicia and the Armenian hierarchy nearest to Tabriz were not always at their best.<sup>48</sup> Despite the prominent position of Armenians at the Ilkhanid court, we also find no indication of an Armenian bishop of Tabriz in the 13th/14th century; this is only the case in the later Safavid Period, when Tabriz had become home of a larger Armenian community. Of high significance were in contrast those Armenian monks who agreed on a Union of Churches with Dominican missionaries in the 1330s and were even organized in a monastic order of their own; they provided the recruitment pool for the Roman ecclesiastical hierarchy in the region in the second half of the 14th century (see below).<sup>49</sup>

As for the Armenians, also for the Byzantine-Orthodox (Melkite) Church in the East there existed a supportive political power, which attempted to establish beneficial relations with the Ilkhans: the Byzantine Empire. Already in 1261 Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1259–1282) sent an embassy to Hülegü (the “*archon* of the Tocharians,” as the historian Pachymeres wrote).<sup>50</sup> Another embassy is documented for early 1265, including Theodosios Villehardouin, the archimandrite of the Pantokrator-Monastery in Constantinople (and later Patriarch of Antioch from 1278–1283), and, as Bar Hebraeus informs us, the Patriarch Euthymios I of Antioch (1258–1277, living in exile in Constantinople). They accompanied Maria (a natural daughter of the Emperor), who was intended to marry Hülegü. But as Hülegü had died by the time when the embassy arrived, Maria was betrothed to Hülegü's son Abaqa instead; she brought

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<sup>48</sup> S. Peter Cowe, “Catholicos Grigor VII Anavazetsi and Stepanos Orbelian, Metropolitan of Siunik, in Dialogue,” in *Armenian Cilicia*, eds. Hovannisian and Payaslian, 245–259; Hewsen, *Armenia*, map 116.

<sup>49</sup> Richard, “Die orientalischen Kirchen,” 224–229; Peter Halfter, “Papacy, Catholicosate, and the Kingdom of Cilician Armenia,” in *Armenian Cilicia*, eds. Hovannisian and Payaslian, 111–129; Hewsen, *Armenia*, map 140.

<sup>50</sup> George Pachymeres, *Relations Historiques*, ed. Albert Failler (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1984–2000), 3: 3, 1: 235, lines 1–21; Franz Dölger and Peter Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des Oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453*. Vol. 3, *Regesten von 1204–1282*. 2nd ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1977), no. 1900.

with her rich presents, among these (as fitting for the nomad tradition of the Mongols) a tent chapel, made “of sturdy silken cloth, embroidered in gold with the figures of saints.”<sup>51</sup> A third embassy was sent to *Media* in 1272/1275.<sup>52</sup> Maria stayed at the Ilkhan’s court until the death of her husband in 1282; during that time, there also was built a “church of the Greeks” in Tabriz, for whose decoration she employed two Byzantine painters, whom later (in 1285) the Maphrian Bar Hebraeus hired for the painting of a monastery.<sup>53</sup>

The further existence of a Greek Christian community in Tabriz is also documented in the letters of the famous astronomer Georgios/Gregorios Ch(i)oniades (d. c. 1320); around 1295/1296 he studied with Shams al-Dīn al-Bukhārī at the observatory of Marāgha and transmitted some of its knowledge to the Byzantine world by translating texts from Arabic and Persian into Greek.<sup>54</sup> He then returned to Constantinople, where with “imperial and synodal mandate” he was ordained bishop of *Taurez* for the “conservation and supervision of the local Christians,” as he explains in a

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<sup>51</sup> Pachymeres, *Relations Historiques*, 5: 24; 2: 515, lines 5–7; Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography* 11, 445; Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1932; Richard, *La papauté*, 102; Luisetto, *Arméniens*, 143–145; Marianna Shreve Simpson, “Manuscripts and Mongols: Some Documented and Speculative Moments in East-West/Muslim-Christian Relations,” *French Historical Studies* 30, no. 3 (2007): 374; Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*, 32; Baum, “Die Mongolen und das Christentum,” 29–31; for a similar present from King Louis IX of France to the Ilkhaān (transmitted by Andrew of Longjumeau in 1248), see Simpson, “Manuscripts and Mongols,” 355, 357–361. For the Patriarch of Antioch see Klaus-Peter Todt, “Griechisch-orthodoxe (Melkitische) Christen im zentralen und südlichen Syrien. Die Periode von der arabischen Eroberung bis zur Verlegung der Patriarchenresidenz nach Damaskus (635–1365),” *Le Muséon* 119 (2006): 85. On Theodosius Villehardouin see *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* (henceforth *PLP*) no. 7181 and Klaus-Peter Todt, “Zwischen Kaiser und ökumenischem Patriarchen: Die Rolle der griechisch-orthodoxen Patriarchen von Antiocheia in den politischen und kirchlichen Auseinandersetzungen des 11.–13. Jh. in Byzanz,” in *Zwei Sonnen am Goldenen Horn? Kaiserliche und patriarchale Macht in byzantinischen Mittelalter: Akten der internationalen Tagung vom 3. bis 5. November 2010*, eds. Michael Grünbart, Lutz Rickelt, and Martin Marko Vučetić (Berlin: Lit, 2011), 169, on Euthymios I see *PLP* no. 6267, on Maria see *PLP* 21395.

<sup>52</sup> Dölger and Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1984b (with further literature).

<sup>53</sup> Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon ecclesiasticum*, ed. and trans. Jean-Baptiste Abbeloos and Thomas Joseph Lamy. 3 vols. (Leuven: Peeters, 1872–1877), 3: 462–464; Hugo Buchthal, “The Painting of the Syrian Jacobites in its Relation to Byzantine and Islamic Art,” *Syria* 20, no. 2 (1939): 150; Kawerau, *Die Jakobitische Kirche*, 66, 100; Dimitri Korobeinikov, “Orthodox Communities in Eastern Anatolia in the Thirteenth to Fourteenth Centuries. Part 2: The Time of Troubles,” *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 17, no. 1 (2005): 3; for the influence of Christian and Islamic art on the Byzantine church of Hagia Sophia in Trebizond see Eastmond, *Art and Identity*. For the (possible) influence of Western Christian painting at the court of the Ilkhans, see Simpson, “Manuscripts and Mongols.”

<sup>54</sup> See the contribution of F. Jamil Ragep to this volume.

letter to his other patron, Emperor Alexios II of Trebizond (r. 1297–1330). Chioniades' ordination could have been combined with two diplomatic missions of Emperor Andronikos II (r. 1282–1328) to the Ilkhan Ghazan in the spring of 1304 and to the Ilkhan Öljeytü in the spring of 1305. The concerns of the Byzantine authorities with the "conservation" of the (Greek) Christian community in Tabriz may have been connected with the conversion of the Ilkhans to Islam after 1295 (whose impact Chioniades could observe during his stay at Marāgha). But also the co-existence with non-Christians and non-Orthodox Christians as such in Constantinople was normally regarded as a threat for the salvation of the flock; Chioniades himself after his return from his studies to Constantinople had to confess and affirm his Christian faith due to his long stay among "Persians, Chaldaeans and Arabs." The reference to the high number of "Greek" slaves sold in Tabriz in the treatise "De modo sarracenos extirpandi" may provide an additional hint for the background of the decision to establish a "Greek" bishop in the city.<sup>55</sup>

But by which Patriarch was Chioniades ordained bishop? By the Patriarch of Constantinople, as Karpov for instance assumes, or by the Patriarch "of Antioch and the entire East" (including the "far east" in Transoxania, for which the Catholicos of *Romagyris*, whose residence in the 14th century was possibly Samarqand, was responsible), in whose area of jurisdiction Tabriz would have been located?<sup>56</sup> Chioniades came as bishop

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<sup>55</sup> Gregory Chioniades, "Gregoriou Chioniadou tou astronomou epistolai," ed. Ioannes B. Papadopoulos, in *Epistemonike Epeteris tes Philosophikes Scholes* 1 (1927): 141–204, esp. Letter 5, 193–194; Pachymeres, *Relations Historiques*, 11: 16 and 12: 13; 4: 441, lines 23–27 and 647, lines 17–20; Ioannes B. Papadopoulos, "Une lettre de Grégoire Chioniadès, évêque de Tabriz (Rapports entre Byzance et les Mongols de Perse)," in *Mélanges Charles Diehl* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1930), 1: 257–262; David Pingree, "Gregory Chioniades and Palaeologan Astronomy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964): 135–160; Leendert Gerrit Westerink, "La profession de foi de Grégoire Chioniadès," *Revue des études byzantines* 38 (1980): 233–245 (for the confession of faith, Greek text 243–245); *PLP* no. 30814; Franz Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des Oströmischen Reiches von 565–1453*. Vol. 4, *Regesten von 1282–1341* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1960), no. 2265 and 2280; Allsen, *Culture and Conquest*, 163; Eastmond, *Art and Identity*, 93; Karpov, *Istorija Trapezundskoj imperii*, 460, 473–474; Luisetto, *Arméniens*, 144–145; Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*, 87; Baum, "Die Mongolen und das Christentum," 39. See also Thomas Hockey et al. (eds.), *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers* (New York: Springer, 2007), 229. On the concerns of the authorities in Constantinople see also Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, "Conversion, Collaboration and Confrontation: Islam in the Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople (14th Century)," *International Review of Turkish Studies*, 1.4 (2011): 62–79.

<sup>56</sup> Jean Dauvillier, "Byzantins d'Asia central et d'Extrême-Orient au Moyen Age," *Revue des études byzantines* 11 (1953): 62–87; Klaus-Peter Todt, *Region und griechisch-orthodoxes*

to Tabriz from Constantinople via Trebizond, but this does not exclude the possibility that he was ordained by a Patriarch of Antioch, since—as we have seen already for Euthymios I—the Patriarchs very often preferred exile in Constantinople, where they possessed a comfortable residence in the Hodegon-Monastery, to residence in Antioch. Also Patriarch Kyrill III of Antioch (1287–1308), former metropolitan of Tyre, took residence in Constantinople in 1288; but only in 1296 his transfer to the throne of Antioch was recognized by Patriarch Ioannes XII Kosmas (1294–1303) and the Synod of Constantinople. With Ioannes' successor (and antecessor), Athanasios I, Kyrill III then was in constant conflict, as we learn from a letter of Athanasios to Emperor Andronikos II, in which the Patriarch of Constantinople refers to Kyrill again only as "Metropolitan of Tyre." This may also provide a hint to date the ordination of Chioniades to the throne of Tabriz still in the incumbency of Ioannes XII, during which the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch cooperated. As Chioniades indicates, his election was also supported by the Emperor Andronikos II; a bishop at the Ilkhanid court could serve as intermediary between emperors respectively patriarchs and the rulers of Persia. At the same time, it may have been easier to nominate a bishop for Tabriz from the Byzantine Empire than from Antioch, which lay in the territory of the Ilkhans' arch-enemy, the Mamluks.<sup>57</sup>

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*Patriarchat von Antiocheia in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit und im Zeitalter der Kreuzzüge (969–1204).* 2 vols. (Habilitationsschrift, University of Mainz, 1998), 820–825; Karpov, *Istorija Trapezundskoj imperii*, 460, 473–474.

<sup>57</sup> Athanasios I. *The Correspondence of Athanasios I Patriarch of Constantinople: Letters to the Emperor Andronicus II, Members of the Imperial Family, and Officials*, trans. and ed. Alice-Mary Maffry Talbot (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1975), letter no. 69 (162–174) and 382–383; Vitalien Laurent, *Les registres des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*. Vol. 1, *Les actes des Patriarches*. Fasc. 4, *Les registres de 1208 à 1309* (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1971), no. 1568, 1614; Korobeinikov, "Orthodox Communities, Part 2," 4; Todt, "Zwischen Kaiser und ökumenischem Patriarchen," 169–170. See also Otto Kresten, *Die Beziehungen zwischen den Patriarchaten von Konstantinopel und Antiocheia unter Kallistos I. und Philotheos Kokkinos im Spiegel des Patriarchatsregisters von Konstantinopel* (Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 2000) and Todt, "Zwischen Kaiser und ökumenischem Patriarchen" in general on the relations between the two Patriarchates. For a similar case of bishops serving as intermediaries in Byzantine-Mongol relations see Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, "Zwischen Konstantinopel und Goldener Horde: die byzantinischen Kirchenprovinzen der Alanen und Zichen im mongolischen Machtbereich im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert," in *Caucasus during the Mongol Period = Der Kaukasus in der Mongolenzeit*, eds. Jürgen Tubach, Sophia G. Vashalomidze, and Manfred Zimmer (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2012), 199–216, for Byzantine-Mamluk relations see Pahlitzsch, "Mediators."

The subordination of the “Greek” bishopric of Tabriz is also indicated in a *Notitia* of the Patriarchate of Antioch in Armenian language, which is transmitted (and was edited) as appendix to the History attributed to Smbat Sparapet (d. 1276), the brother of King Het’um I of Cilician Armenia; there we find listed among the metropolitan sees of the Patriarchate of Antioch the city of *T<sup>c</sup>avrēž* at the place occupied by the see of Dara (in Upper Mesopotamia) respectively Theodosiupolis/Erzurum in earlier *Notitiae*. In addition, we find this identification of Tabriz with the ancient see of Dara (“*Daras—that is, the [place] now called Taures*”) in the work of Chioniades himself. There has been some discussion on the authenticity of these pieces of information, but convincing arguments in favour of the integration of Tabriz in the hierarchy of the Patriarchate of Antioch have been presented by Westerink and most recently by Korobeinikov, who wrote: “therefore, the *Notitia Antiochena* in pseudo-Smbat is an authentic document of the thirteenth century, when the chronicle was composed.”<sup>58</sup>

A further confirmation for this opinion we find in a later text: it is the confession of Paulos Palaiologos Tagaris before Patriarch Antonios IV of Constantinople from 1394; Tagaris had lived through an astonishing career as impostor under various episcopal titles (up to the one of Latin Patriarch of Constantinople) in Eastern and Western Christianity between 1363 and 1394. In his confession he stated that he was on his way from *Megale Iberia* (Eastern Georgia) intending to travel to Constantinople, but: “*while I carried myself with these thoughts, the Patriarch of Antioch* [residing since 1366

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<sup>58</sup> *Appendice à la chronique du connétable Sempad*, in: *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades*, Vol. 2, *Documents Arméniens* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1906), 1: 675; Heinrich Gelzer, “Ungedruckte und wenig bekannte Bistümerverzeichnisse der orientalischen Kirche,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 1 (1892): 258–260, 268–269, 278–279; Gregory Choniades, *The Astronomical Works of Gregory Choniades*. Vol. 1, *The Zij Al-‘Ala’ I*. Part 2, *Tables*, ed. David Pingree (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1985–1986), 1: 308, lines 20–21; Gustav Parthey, *Synecdemus et notitiae Graecae episcopatuuum. Accedunt nili doxapatrui notitia patriarchatuuum et locorum nomina immutata* (Berlin: In aedibus Friderici Nicolai, 1866), 312 (App. I, 22); Westerink, “La profession de foi,” 241; Todt, *Region und griechisch-orthodoxes Patriarchat*, 818–819, 872; Korobeinikov, “Orthodox Communities in Eastern Anatolia in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries. Part 1: The Two Patriarchates: Constantinople and Antioch,” *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 15, no. 2 (2003): 204–205; Todt, “Die Neustrukturierung des griechisch-orthodoxen Patriarchates von Antiocheia im Spiegel des Patriarchatsregisters von Konstantinopel,” in *Das Patriarchatsregister von Konstantinopel. Eine zentrale Quelle zur Geschichte und Kirche im späten Byzanz*, eds. Christian Gastgeber, Ekaterini Mitsiou, and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, forthcoming. The *notitia* was not edited in the most recent edition of Smbat’s work (*La chronique attribuée au Connétable Smbat*, trans. Dédéyan, Gérard [1980]. Paris), since it is not considered part of the original text.

in Damascus] *sends the Protothronos* [the highest ranking bishop within the hierarchy of the Patriarchate] *of his metropolitan sees, namely that of Tyre and Sidon, to me, with a mandate to stop me* [from fraudulent acts as bogus hierarch], *if possible, or to consecrate me as Bishop of Taurezion so that my actions may receive the blessing. So I was by him now, what I should not be, Bishop of Taurezion and had the intention to reach this area there.*" But while Tagaris was on his way to *Taurezion* and "came in the region of Trebizond," he encountered a monk with a letter of the Patriarch of Constantinople (at this time, Philotheos Kokkinos) with accusations against the Metropolitan of Tyros as well as Tagaris, which could have caused problems for him among the Orthodox communities in Trebizond as well as in Tabriz. This led to a change of Tagaris' plans; from Trebizond he travelled across the Black Sea to the "land of the Tatars" (the realm of the Golden Horde) and from there via Hungary finally to Rome. This episode can be dated to the years 1371 to 1375.<sup>59</sup> Nicol has spoken against an identification of *Taurezion* with Tabriz (also with the argument that the itinerary toward Trebizond described by Tagaris would not have led him anywhere near Tabriz—a presumption already disproved by Bryer and Winfield, who describe the various routes leading from the environs of Trebizond to Tabriz). Hunger, by contrast, as well as Karpov and Korobeinikov identify Tagaris as bishop of Tabriz. The combination with the evidence cited above supports this identification—and also again the assumption of the existence of a see of Tabriz within the Greek-Orthodox hierarchy of Antioch. At the same time we learn that the throne of Tabriz was vacant (maybe already for many years or decades) and that also Tagaris did not find his way to what may have been left of the Greek community of Tabriz, which was at this time under the rule of Uveys b. Ḥasan Buzurg (1356–1374) from the Jalāyirid dynasty, who had to fight several wars for the control of Azerbaijan.<sup>60</sup> Yet, Tabriz was for some time also

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<sup>59</sup> Herbert Hunger, "Die Generalbeichte eines byzantinischen Mönches im 14. Jahrhundert," in *Studien zum Patriarchatsregister von Konstantinopel*. Vol. 2, eds. Herbert Hunger and Otto Kresten (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1997), 196–197 (Greek text) and 202–203 (German translation). See also Todt, "Zwischen Kaiser und ökumenischem Patriarchen," 170–171, on the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch in this time.

<sup>60</sup> Donald M. Nicol, "The Confessions of a Bogus Patriarch: Paul Tagaris Palaiologos, Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem and Catholic Patriarch of Constantinople in the Fourteenth century," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 21 (1970): 292, with fn. 2; Pingree, "Gregory Chioniates," 141; Bryer and Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments*, 59, 98; Hunger, "Die Generalbeichte," 206; *PLP* no. 27401; Korobeinikov, "Orthodox Communities, Part 2," 11; Karpov, *Istorija Trapezundskoj imperii*, 221–222. For the history of the region in this

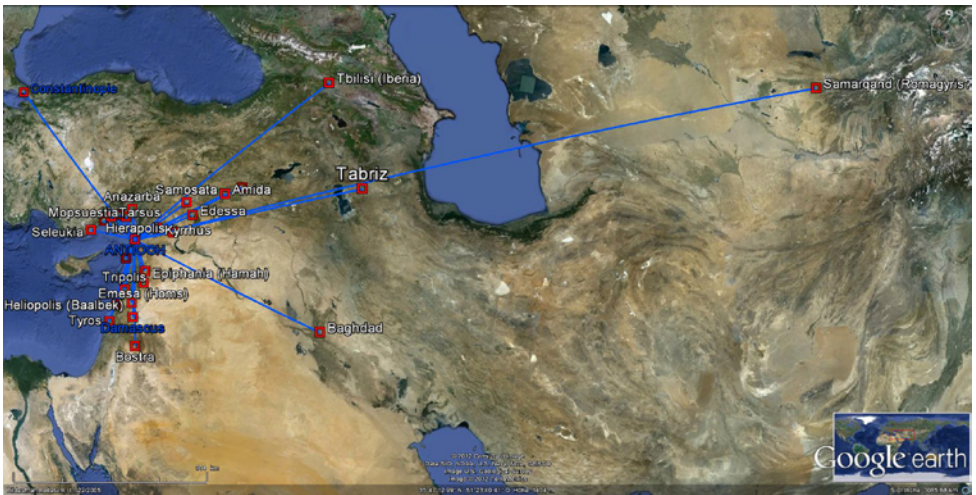


Fig. 6: The bishopric of Tabriz within the spatial framework of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch according to the Armenian *Notitia* in the time around 1300 in “real” space (blue: temporary residences of the Patriarch) (digital base map: © Google Earth 2012).

integrated in the framework of the Byzantine church, part of a network (see fig. 6; here depicted on the basis of the above mentioned Armenian *Notitia*) centred around Antioch respectively Constantinople—certainly a node at the periphery of the ecclesiastical space, but during its time as political centre of Persia interesting enough to attract the initiative of emperors and patriarchs.<sup>61</sup>

## II.2 *Tabriz in the Ecclesiastical Space of the Western Church*

As indicated above, the organization of space in the Papal Church of the Middle Ages followed the model of the Roman Empire with a hierarchy of authorities, which possessed competence and jurisdiction for a specific territory; the borders of dioceses and ecclesiastical provinces limited the spheres of activities of bishops and metropolitans. Only the Church

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time, see C.E. Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties. A Chronological and Genealogical Manual* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 267–268; Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*, 156–157, 161–163.

<sup>61</sup> The Armenian *Notitia* transmits an unrealistic pictures of the actual extent of the spatial framework of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, since many sees were no longer occupied in the later 13th and 14th century; see Todt, “Griechisch-orthodoxe” and forthcoming. But since we are interested in “mental maps,” this document provides an interesting example for the “ideal” or “imaginary” spatial organization of the Patriarchate.

of Rome claimed universal authority and jurisdiction, even beyond the limits of its Patriarchate (within the pentarchy of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem established at the Council of Chalcedon in 451) for the entire *orbis terrarum*, as is also documented in the papal correspondence with “non-Catholic” rulers in the 12th and 13th centuries. The Church of Rome was the *mater omnium ecclesiarum* (the mother of all churches), the Pope ruled over all *reges singulorum regnorum* (all kings of the respective kingdoms).<sup>62</sup>

The spatial organization of the Roman Church followed the provincial patterns of the Late Roman Empire also at a time when these had no practical significance anymore; ecclesiastical circumscriptions were thus not connected to contemporary spatial organizations such as political, ethnic or language borders; against the pressure to follow the constant changes of political life, the church maintained a “normed and hierarchically organised spatial fabric” in order to include all faithful in a consistent spatial arrangement. A dynamic element was in contrast the *plenitudo potestatis* of the Pope to establish new bishoprics and to fix and change the borders between dioceses and provinces. Also for the purpose of the papal financial administration new spatial entities and larger areas were defined, which partly followed contemporary political or linguistic borders. In any case, all bishoprics, monasteries (and other sources of income) were arranged in a list; again space was organized in “landmarks of hierarchy.”<sup>63</sup> In order to actually exercise authority in all these territories, the Popes nominated delegates; they served as extensions of the Papal corpus where his corporal presence was not possible. Also for them, task and territory of jurisdiction were defined by the Papal centre in advance, which delineated competences in space and created for them a consistent space of action.<sup>64</sup>

Since the 13th century, an alternative organization of space also beyond traditional ecclesiastical borders was established by the Mendicant orders;

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<sup>62</sup> Hans-Joachim Schmidt, “Raumkonzepte und geographische Ordnung kirchlicher Institutionen im 13. Jahrhundert,” in *Raumerfassung und Raumbewusstsein im späteren Mittelalter*, ed. Peter Moraw (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2002), 87–92; Bernard Guillemain, “Der Aufbau und die Institutionen der römischen Kirche.” In *Die Geschichte des Christentums*. Vol. 6, *Die Zeit der Zerreißen (1274–1449)*, eds. Michel Mollat Jourdin, André Vauchez, and Bernhard Schimmelpfennig (Freiburg: Herder, 1991), 17–74.

<sup>63</sup> Guillemain, “Der Aufbau,” 17–31 and 50–62; Schmidt, “Raumkonzepte,” 93–101, 104–105. See also Ehlers, *Die Integration*, 20–22.

<sup>64</sup> Schmidt, “Raumkonzepte,” 105–110; Ernst Kantorowicz, *Die zwei Körper des Königs. Eine Studie zur politischen Theologie des Mittelalters* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1990), 219–227.

their central administration defined their own organizational units in space according to the needs of mission or pastoral care—often against the resistance of the episcopacy, but legitimized by the Popes. As model for their organization served the angelic hierarchy in the same way as for the traditional hierarchy of the church. And also the founder of the new orders of the Franciscans and the Dominicans claimed universal competence for their sphere of activity beyond the borders of Western Christianity (as symbolized by the mission of St. Francis (1181–1226) to the Sultan of Egypt). Their missionary activity and mobility (the Mendicants were not obliged to maintain *stabilitas loci*) in space was equally sanctioned by the Popes, who allowed them the usage of portable altars, for instance.<sup>65</sup>

Spheres of mission were then organized into administrative provinces of the orders or even as ecclesiastical provinces within the episcopal hierarchy. For the spatial organization of these “new territories,” Mendicant and Papal authority used trial and error. For the definition of landmarks they relied on existing knowledge (missionaries, who had been there) and existing structures: following the model that they had established in Europe, the Mendicants selected localities which were already central places due to their position within existing political, mercantile and communication networks and their demographic and economic potential. Yet, such “external” circumstances could change, and accordingly ecclesiastical space was reorganized with a higher degree of flexibility than in the traditional areas of the Western Church.<sup>66</sup> As Baldwin has stated: “The dioceses of the Orient bore only a slight resemblance to those of Europe. Bishops had no regular revenues from their sees and no cathedrals. (...)”

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<sup>65</sup> Dieter Berg, “Kreuzzugsbewegung und Propagatio Fidei. Das Problem der Franziskanermission im 13. Jahrhundert und das Bild von der Islamischen Welt in der zeitgenössischen Ordenshistoriographie,” in *Miscellanea Mediaevalia. Veröffentlichungen des Thomas-Instituts der Universität zu Köln*. Vol. 17, *Orientalische Kultur und Europäisches Mittelalter*, ed. Albert Zimmermann (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1985), 60–62; Schmidt, “Raumkonzepte,” 114–120; Marshall W. Baldwin, “Mission to the East in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries,” in *A History of the Crusades*. Vol. 5, *The Impact of the Crusades on the Near East*, eds. Norman P. Zacour, Harry W. Hazard, and Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 456–458; André Vauchez, “Die Bettelorden und ihr Wirken in der städtischen Gesellschaft,” in *Machtfülle des Papsttums (1054–1274)*, eds. André Vauchez and Odilo Engels (Vienna: Herder, 1994), 833–860.

<sup>66</sup> Berg, “Kreuzzugsbewegung,” 65–67; Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 514–515, and esp. Vauchez, “Die Bettelorden,” 852–859 (on the selection of places for convents by the Mendicants) and Ehlers, 22–23, 385, and 53–101 for examples of the ecclesiastical organization of “new” territories.

Jurisdictional lines were not always observed, and as conditions changed new sees were instituted and old one transferred or suppressed.”<sup>67</sup>

For their activities, Dominicans and Franciscans often relied on the networks of trade and founded their convents and stations in mercantile nodes, where merchants from the West supported them and became part of their flock besides converts from among the endogenous population; “the presence of western Christians was often the initial reason for the establishment by the friars of a station which might also serve the missions.” Also Archbishop John of Sulṭāniyya wrote in retrospective at the beginning of the 15th century: “*Cum anno Domini MCCCX vel circa in partibus orientalibus nulla mentio esset de ecclesia Romana et de eius ceremoniis, ibidem quidam fratres Predicatores cum mercatoribus iverunt ad illas partes et primo in Persidem et Armeniam maiorem, (...), inceperunt ex tunc predicare fidem catholicam.*” In this way, mercantile and ecclesiastical mental maps converged, and Tabriz became a landmark on both.<sup>68</sup>

A further motivator for the presence of Mendicants in Ilkhanid territory were Mongol and Western initiatives for a common attack on the Mamluks; in the treatise “*De modo sarracenos extirpandi*” the “*imperator Tartarorum Persidis*” is identified as a natural ally for a crusade due to his position between the hostile Golden Horde and the Mamluk Sultanate. Western-Mongol diplomatic activity touched Tabriz from the middle of the 13th century until the mission sent by King Henry III of Castile to Tamerlane in 1403 and was described by Ruy González de Clavijo (d. 1412). Indeed, it continued beyond this time, as exemplified by the negotiations

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<sup>67</sup> Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 497.

<sup>68</sup> *Libellus de Notitia Orbis* 12, lines 5–9, ed. Kern 114 (*About the year of our Lord 1310, when there was no mention in the regions of the east of the Church of Rome and of its ceremonies, some of the Dominican Brothers went with merchants in these regions and first into Persia and Greater Armenia, (...), and from that time they began to preach the Catholic faith.*); Eubel, “Dominikaner und Franziskaner,” 173; Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica*, 304; Loenertz, *La société*, 151, 178 (also on merchants as companions of the missionaries travelling to India); Richard, *La papauté*, 141; Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 453, 482 (for the citation), 515; Richard, “Die römische Kirche und die Nichtchristen außerhalb der Christenheit: Kreuzzüge und Missionierung,” in *Die Geschichte des Christentums*. Vol. 6, *Die Zeit der Zerreißproben (1274–1449)*, eds. Michel Mollat Jourdin, André Vauchez, and Bernhard Schimmelpfennig (Freiburg: Herder, 1991), 884; Prazniak, “Siena,” 184–185. On Archbishop John de Galonifontibus and his work see also Aleksey Martyniuk, “Rus’ i Litva v sočinenii Ioanna de Galonifontibus,” *Studia Historica Europae Orientalis* 4 (2011): 79–88.

of Venice with the Aqqyunlu and later the Safavids related to an alliance against the Ottomans, for instance.<sup>69</sup>

Many of the ambassadors of kings and Popes were Dominicans and Franciscans, of course also because they hoped to convert the Ilkhans to Christianity. Yet besides the conversion of the “infidels,” especially the powerful Mongol rulers, the conversion of oriental Christians to the “Roman faith” was a central aim of the missionaries. In this regard, they may have been more successful than in other respects; in the region of Tabriz early contacts between Mendicants and indigenous Christians, especially “Nestorians,” “Jacobites” and Armenians, began already in the 1240s. But the attitude we find in the Western texts of the time towards the Christians of the East is ambiguous: while their (often exaggerated) large number was considered a chance for spiritual and also military successes in the Orient, we observe often a deep mistrust against these “*falsi Christiani*,” in crusading treaties such as the *Directorum ad passagium faciendum*, for instance, the presence of monks and ecclesiastics of these ‘heretic’ denominations (quasi, of a competing ecclesiastical infrastructures occupying the same landmarks) was even considered an obstacle for salvation.<sup>70</sup>

As indicated above, Dominicans and Franciscans organized territories of mission according to their orders’ frameworks. The Franciscans since the 1280s (until end of the 14th century) divided their missionary

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<sup>69</sup> Adam, *De modo sarracenos extirpandi* 4: 530, 534; Spuler, *Mongolen*, 224–235; Paviot, “Les marchands,” and Paviot, “England,” Richard, “Die römische Kirche,” 871–872, 878; Adam Knobler, “The Rise of Timür and Western Diplomatic Response, 1390–1405,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 5, no. 3 (1995): 341–349; *idem*, “Pseudo-Conversions and Patchwork Pedigrees: The Christianization of Muslim Princes and the Diplomacy of Holy War,” *Journal of World History* 7, no. 2 (1996): 189–197; Taylor, “Late medieval Spanish Travellers,” Denise Aigle, “The Letters of Eljigidei, Hülegü, and Abaqa: Mongol Overtures or Christian Ventriloquism?” *Inner Asia* 7, no. 2 (2005): 143–162; eadem, “De la ‘non-négociation’ à l’alliance inaboutie. Réflexions sur la diplomatie entre les Mongols et l’Occident Latin,” *Oriente Moderno* 88, no. 2 (2008): 395–436; Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*, 32, 85–87, 95; Rota, *Under Two Lions*, 26–29.

<sup>70</sup> Spuler, *Mongolen*, 224–235; Von den Brincken, *Nationes Christianorum*, esp. 63–75, 202–203; Richard, *La papauté*, 70–71, 78, 98, 107; Sinor, “The Mongols and Western Europe” (esp. on the connection to diplomatic missions); Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 460–465, 470, 472–480; Knobler, “Pseudo-Conversions,” 183–189; Standaert, *Handbook*, 71–76; Jotischky, “The Mendicants,” 89, 93–100; Aigle, “The Letters of Eljigidei,” eadem, “De la ‘non-négociation’;” Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 256–258; Luisetto, *Arméniens*, 63–65, 72–75; Simpson, “Manuscripts and Mongols,” 372; Baum, “Die Mongolen und das Christentum,” 17–40; Brocardus, *Directorum ad passagium faciendum*, in *Recueil des historiens des croisades, Documents Arméniens* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1906), 1: 386–387, 408, 424, 469–470, and 2: 487–488, 491–494.

sphere in the Mongol territories in a vicariate of *Tataria Aquilonaris* and in a vicariate of *Tataria Orientalis* with three *custodiae* in Constantinople, Trebizond and Tabriz. The *custodia* of Tabriz included Greater Armenia, Azerbaijan, southern Georgia and Mesopotamia; according to the list “De locis Fratrum Minorum et Fratrum Praedicatorum in Tartaria” (from before 1318) Franciscan stations at the beginning of the 14th century could be found within this *custodia* in Tabriz, Sulṭāniyya, Salmās near Lake Urumiyya, Erzurum, Tbilisi, *Porsico* (according to Richard, Borçka or Yeni yol at the river Çoruh on the route from Artvin to Batumi), *Carpi* (Garpi north-west from Erewan) and in Karakilise (today Ağrı in Eastern Turkey). Less clear is the spatial organization established by the Dominicans in these territories; in 1312, they founded the *Societas fratrum peregrinantium propter Christum inter gentes* (*Society of the Brothers who pilgrimage among the pagans for Christ*) for the purpose of the Mission in the East. Its central bases from 1312 to 1363 were in Pera/Galata and in Kaffa, where also its vicar-general had its see; but “it was, in fact, a society, a word whose meaning excluded territorial limitations,” and it had “no geographical unity, it was not organised into a province.” Its missionary jurisdiction included “parts of Greece, Egypt, Nubia, and all Asia except Palestine, Syria and Cilician Armenia”; these areas were partly divided into sections (*contratae*). The Dominicans presumably organized their missionary stations in the Ilkhanate, mostly in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, under a *vicarius* in a *contrata Persiae*, but the evidence is not as clear as for other *contratae*. According to “De locis Fratrum Minorum et Fratrum Praedicatorum in Tartaria,” the Dominicans had convents in Tabriz, Marāgha and Dekhvārankan, in Tbilisi (since the first half of the 13th century), in Sebastopolis on the Black Sea, in Sivas (there also Franciscans could be found since before 1277) and in Baghdad (in the second half of the 13th century). After 1315 they were also found in Trebizond, and after the creation of the archbishopric of Sulṭāniyya (1318) also in this city. Thus, the Mendicants founded their convents in the mercantile and political centres as well as along the important trade routes from Ayas and Trebizond to Tabriz (see fig. 7), following principles which were also observed in Europe (see above).<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Loenertz, *La société*, 135–137, 151; Sinor, “The Mongols and Western Europe,” 541–542; Richard, *La papauté*, 115–116, 128–131, 170–171 and 304 (map); Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 463, 481–483, 491–493 (also for citation), 507; Richard, “Die römische Kirche,” 881; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 257; see also Hubert Jedin et al., *Atlas zur Kirchengeschichte: Die*



Fig. 7: Tabriz as centre of the spatial framework of the *custodia* Tabriz of the Franciscan Order (black links) and within the framework of missionary stations of the Dominican order (orange labels) at ca. 1320 in “real” space (red: Papal residences) (digital base map: © Google Earth 2012).

As Loenertz has explained, Tabriz as “capital de l’empire des Il Khān, grand entrepôt commercial sur la route qui joignait la Mer Noire au golfe persique, résidence de marchands européens nombreux, siège de plusieurs évêques orientaux” [actually not so many, as we have seen] was “naturellement le centre des missions dominicaines de Perse” (an assessment shared by contemporaries such as Ricoldo da Monte di Croce, Marco Polo, Het’um of Korikos or Odorico of Pordenone [“optime situate”], as we have seen above). Dominicans and Franciscans were permanently present in the city since ca. 1289/1290, as various Latin ecclesiastics passing through the city report. There the two orders obviously had to share one church building, which became an object of contest.<sup>72</sup>

The next step was the integration of these territories in the Roman episcopal hierarchy. Since 1253, there existed plans for the installation of bishops in the territories under Mongol rule, but only the establishment

*Christlichen Kirchen in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Freiburg: Herder, 2004), maps on p. 63, and Hewsen, *Armenia*, map 116.

<sup>72</sup> Loenertz, *La société*, 152–154; Sinor, “The Mongols and Western Europe,” 533; Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 508–509. See also Schafaghi, *Die Stadt Täbriz*, 3–5, 11–12, 54–59, Ehlers, *Iran: Grundzüge*, 335–342, and Rossabi, “Tabriz and Yuan China,” for the significance of Tabriz as central place.

of a considerable number of “Latin Christians” (merchants, converts) and of the Mendicants in various cities provided something like a minimum of necessary infrastructure. Still, the peculiarity of circumstances in “partibus infidelium” as remote from the Roman centre as Persia or even China, necessitated the granting of special privileges to these new bishops beyond the norm in Western Europe. In 1307, John of Montecorvino (d. 1328) was ordained Archbishop of Chanbalyq (Beijing) by Pope Clemens V (1305–1314) with six suffragan bishops, for whom there were not assigned sees by the Pope; on the contrast, the metropolitan could exercise his own judgement in this matter, thus receiving total freedom to organize the space of his province.<sup>73</sup>

While the province of Chanbalyq was a Franciscan project, on April 1st 1318 Pope John XXII with the constitution *Redemptor noster* created a new ecclesiastical province in favour of the Dominicans; Pater Franco of Perugia was ordained archbishop of Sultāniyya, which was then residence of the Ilkhan Abū Saʿīd (thus, the archbishop should also serve as “ambassadeur permanent du pape auprès du khan de Perse”). Franco also received six suffragan bishops with the freedom to install them where it seemed proper for him. This and other privileges were justified “*propter loci distantiam, pericula maris et terre, expensas et alia que de necessitate ipsum oporteret subire.*” (on account of the distance of the place, the dangers of the sea and land, the expenses of himself and other things that it would be necessary to take upon himself) The new ecclesiastical province was created “*ad gubernationem fidelium et conversionem infidelium.*” (to the government of the faithful and the conversion of unbelievers) The “*locus Soltaniensis*” was selected as see for the archbishopric, since “*in partibus Persidis constitutes inter alia loca populosa illarum partium sit insignis, nobilis et famosus habensque populum copiosum;*” (in the regions of Persia, situated between other populated places of these regions, it is distinguished, noble and famous and has a large population) [hence the Pope “*de fratrum nostrorum consilio et apostolicae plenitudine potestatis*” (by advice of our brethren, and the fullness of the apostolic power) elevated Sultāniyya “*in civitatem metropolitanam.*” Thus, the Pope not only installed a bishop in the city, he rather transformed the “*locus Soltaniensis*”—taking into account its already existing advantages as centre of power and population—into a

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<sup>73</sup> Eubel, “Dominikaner und Franziskaner,” 175–176; Richard, *La papauté*, 137–144; Richard, “Die römische Kirche,” 882; Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 494–495; Standaert, *Handbook*, 74–76, 82–84, 87–90; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 258.

proper “*civitas Soltaniensis*,” as the city is referred to in the rest of the text and in further documents. Only by Papal privilege could a city achieve this status within the spatial order of Western Christianity; a settlement without a bishop could also not be considered a *civitas*. Francis of Perugia was installed as “*archiepiscopus et pastor*” and received “*curam et administrationem et sollicitudinem animarum omnium existentium in eisdem partibus, quae subduntur imperatori Tartarorum Persidis, principis Chaydo et Doha et Aethiopiae et Indiarum regum*,” (*the care and administration and advice of all souls existing in these regions, which are under the control of the Emperor of the Tatars in Perisa, the princes Chaydo and Doha and of Ethopia and the kings of the Indians*) which would include the territories of Anatolia, the Persian Khanate with Georgia, Transoxania, India and Ethiopia in delineation to the ecclesiastical province of Khanbaliq.<sup>74</sup> A very similar wording we find in further letters sent by the Pope, also to the presumptive suffragan bishops, among these William Adam, who later became archbishop of Sulṭāniyya himself. Their future sees were similarly established as “*civitates*,” and the churches in these localities became “*cathedrals*.” To the archbishop, the Pope also awarded the *pallium*, explaining in detail at which ecclesiastical feast it should be worn; thus also the (public) celebration of these feasts and the sanctification of the public space thereby was intended. It was also declared that the *ecclesia Soltansiensis* had become the “*sponsa*” (the bride) of the archbishop. Sulṭāniyya and the other bishoprics, among these Tabriz, thus became limbs of the ecclesiastical corpus, landmarks on the map of Western Christianity.<sup>75</sup> But their position remained peculiar; in his letters to Archbishop William Adam, Pope John XXII localized the new bishoprics “*inter barbaras nationes*” (among barbarian nations) and “*ad remotissimas partes infidelium nationum*” (*in the most extreme parts of the pagan nations*) We observe an “amalgam between physical and social distance;” the real as well as the cognitive distance between Avignon and the new ecclesiastical province necessitated special measures.<sup>76</sup>

Within the metropolitan province of Sulṭāniyya, six suffragan bishoprics were created in 1318: in Smyrna (Izmir at the Aegean coast of Asia Minor, whose harbour was under Genoese control from 1317 to 1329),

<sup>74</sup> Latin text edited by Eubel, “Dominikaner und Franziskaner,” 191–195.

<sup>75</sup> Charles Kohler, “Documents relatifs a Guillaume Adam archevêque de Sultanieh, puis d’Antivari, et a son entourage (1318–1346),” *Revue de l’Orient latin* 10 (1903–4): 18–29 (esp. letters I, IV, V); see also Kantorowicz, *Die zwei Körper des Königs*, 227, for this image.

<sup>76</sup> Kohler, “Documents relatifs,” 29, 36 (letters VIII and XII).



Fig. 8: The spatial framework of the ecclesiastical province of the Archbishop of Sulṭāniyya in 1318 in “real” space (red: Papal residences) (digital base map: © Google Earth 2012).

Sebastupolis (Sochumi, a significant harbour at the Black Sea in Abkhasia), Sivas, Tabriz, Marāgha and Dekhṽarakan. Thus, the central region of the Ilkhanid Empire and of Dominican activity in Azerbaijan and northern Jibāl became also the core of the ecclesiastical province with the metropolitan see and three suffragans. The other three suffragans had also been sites of missionary stations and/or nodes along the mercantile networks connecting the interior of the Ilkhanate to the Mediterranean and Black Sea (as indicated above) (see fig. 8). Also in other respects, the archbishopric was to exist in symbiosis with the Dominican infrastructure already established: not only were all new hierarchs members of the order, they also should remain in obedience to their vicars; the Dominican convents were to serve as chapters of the bishoprics. The bishops in turn should serve as electoral college in case of a vacancy of the archbishop’s see.<sup>77</sup>

Already in 1329, the spatial organization of the province of Sulṭāniyya was modified, possibly following the initiative of John de Cori, *vicarius*

<sup>77</sup> Kohler, “Documents relatifs;” Loenertz, *La société*, 137–140; Spuler, *Mongolen*, 234–235; Cahen, “The Mongols and the Near East,” 722, 730; Richard, *La papauté*, 169–180 and 299 (map); Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 495–497, 506–506; Richard, “Die römische Kirche,” 882–883; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 259. On the rise of Sulṭāniyya see Sheila S. Blair, “The Mongol Capital of Sulṭāniyya,” *Iran* 24 (1986): 139–151. See also Hewsen, *Armenia*, map u6.



Fig. 9: The spatial framework of the ecclesiastical province of the Archbishop of Sulṭāniyya in 1329/1333 in “real” space (red: Papal residences) (digital base map: © Google Earth 2012).

of the *Societas Peregrinantum*, who also was ordained Archbishop of Sulṭāniyya in that year: the see of Smyrna (whose harbour was conquered by the Emirate of Aydın in that year) was transferred to Tbilisi in Georgia (where Dominicans had been active since the 13th century) and disappeared from the list of bishoprics of the province, as did Sivas. Due to successes of mission, new bishoprics were established in *Semiscantensis* (Samarqand, which was located at this time in the Chagatai Khanate and on the extension of the route from Tabriz via Sulṭāniyya and Bukhara further to the east) and in *Columbensis* (the harbour of Quilon in India, which was connected to Sulṭāniyya and Tabriz over the sea via Hormuz, as we have seen). Between 1333 and 1356 also a first bishop for *Nachvanensis* (Nakhichevan) in Armenia was ordained as suffragan of the Archbishopric of Sulṭāniyya.<sup>78</sup> Thereby, the ecclesiastical province of Sulṭāniyya finally included the entire South-western Asia (see fig. 9). Archbishop John of Sulṭāniyya wrote at the beginning of the 15th century: “*Tunc enim instituit ecclesiam Soltaniensem in archiepiscopatum quasi totius Orientis ut patet*

<sup>78</sup> Eubel, “Dominikaner und Franziskaner,” 186–189; Kohler, “Documents relatifs,” 47–49 (letter XXI); Loenertz, *La société*, 140–141, 172–182; Dauvillier 1953, 67–69; Von den Brincken, *Nationes Christianorum*, 147–152 (on the Christian communities in Central Asia) and 318 (on the Christians in India); Richard, *La papauté*, 180–195 and 299 (map); Baldwin, “Mission to the East,” 505–507, 512–513 (esp. on the mission and bishoprics in India and in Samarqand); Richard, “Die römische Kirche,” 882–883.

*in bulla limitans de Thurkia usque ad Indiam et Ethiopiam, pluresque episcopos dans ei in adiutorium et gratias singularissimas ei concedens.*” (Then [the Pope] installed the Church of Sultāniyya as Archbishopric quasi of the entire Orient as declared in a bulla and set its borders from Turkey until India and Ethiopia and gave many bishops to it for support and granted very unique graces.) Yet, the core of his province consisted still of the “Persian Empire” whose borders (and at the same time those of his ecclesiastical province) he describes self-confidently as following: “*Incipit ab India minori et durat per occidentem usque ad Armeniam maiorem. Infra istos terminos omnes provincie et regna sunt sub imperatore ipsorum* [= of the Persians]. *Et quidquid est sub eo, omnes sunt in spiritualibus sub iurisdictione archiepiscopi Soltaniensis, nunc ego, licet indignus sum.*” (It begins in India minor and extends to the West until Greater Armenia. Within these very borders all provinces and kingdoms are under [the rule] of the their [= the Persians] Emperor. And whatever is under him, all of them are under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Sultāniyya in spiritual things, now me, although I am unworthy)<sup>79</sup> Although John of Sultāniyya still referred to the huge extension of his ecclesiastical province as established after 1329, the sustainability especially of the new sees in Samarqand (which is documented until 1342) and in India (for which no bishop is documented after the first in 1329) was very limited; also for Dekhvārakan (*Diargorganensis*), bishops are documented only until 1349. Bishops of Marāgha we find listed until 1374/1384, for Sebastupolis until 1450/1472, for Sultāniyya until 1425, for Tabriz even until 1476 and for Tbilisi until 1507, although later hierarchs were often only titular bishops and did not reside in their sees *in remotissimas partes infidelium nationum* (in the most remote parts of the pagan nations) anymore.<sup>80</sup> The collapse of the Ilkhanate after 1336 (with the partial withdrawal of Italian merchants), the Black Death after 1347 and especially “the absence of any association between the mission and political power,” as Peter Jackson has demonstrated, very much limited the chances for a sustainable or even growing ecclesiastical life.<sup>81</sup> The plan to establish the missionary bishoprics in the Mongol sphere as an “organisme autonome,” as Loenertz has called it,

<sup>79</sup> *Libellus de Notitia Orbis* 12, lines 38–41 and 13, lines 5–8, ed. Kern 116 and 117.

<sup>80</sup> Giorgio Fedalto, *La Chiesa Latina in Oriente*. Vol. 2, *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*. Verona: Casa Editrice Mazziana, 1976, 89, 115, 148, 203, 204–205, 211–212, 219–220, 220–221.

<sup>81</sup> Eubel, “Dominikaner und Franziskaner,” 184–185; Loenertz, *La société*, 154–160, 163, 172–173; Richard, *La papauté*, 177; *idem*, “Die römische Kirche,” 883; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 268.

which would regenerate itself on the basis of the Mendicant infrastructure in these regions, did not work out, neither in China nor in Iran, as for instance is documented by the frequent demands for new bishops in Avignon or Rome from these regions.<sup>82</sup> Yet the actual survival of Roman ecclesiastical infrastructure ultimately depended on local Christians: on the basis of contacts between the Armenian monastery of K'rna (near Nakhichevan) and the Dominicans (especially Bartholomew of Poggio, bishop of Marāgha, and John of Florence, Bishop of Tbilisi), between 1337 and 1344 there was found the order of the *Fratres de Majori Armenia Unitores nuncupati* ("The Brothers from Greater Armenia called Unitores") [(in Armenian: *Unitorq*), which in 1356 received papal approbation. At its apogee, more than 50 Armenian monasteries around Nakhichevan, but also around Sivas, in Cilicia and on the Crimea accepted the rules of the order (there also existed a convent in Tabriz), which in partial substitution of the weakened Dominicans provided the personnel for the continued existence of some of the bishoprics installed in 1318/1329 until the 15th century; "mission in Persia" became synonymous with "mission in Armenia," as Loenertz has explained.<sup>83</sup> Our last eyewitness for the ecclesiastical province of Sulṭāniyya is its Archbishop John (de Galonifontibus), who in 1403 served as ambassador of Tamerlane to Western Europe; he mentions "multa loca (...) Predicatorum et Minorum" in the regions of Georgia, the successes of the Dominicans in Armenia and the establishment of the order of the *Unitores* and also the significance of Tabriz and Sulṭāniyya, "civitas imperialis, (...) metropolis totius Orientis," but he has nothing to say on the strength of Roman Christianity or of the Mendicants in the bishoprics in the former core of the Ilkhanid Empire in Azerbaijan. Tabriz was still a landmark within the ecclesiastical space of Rome, but the human resources of its existence were dwindling by the second half of the 14th century.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Loenertz, *La société*, 140, 170; Richard, *La papauté*, 172–173; Richard, "Die römische Kirche," 884.

<sup>83</sup> Loenertz, *La société*, 141–150, 159–160, 166–172, 189–195; Richard, *La papauté*, 217–224; Baldwin, "Mission to the East," 509–511; Richard, "Die orientalischen Kirchen," 224–229. See also *Libellus de Notitia Orbis* 12, ed. Kern 114–116.

<sup>84</sup> Iohannes de Galonifontibus, *Der 'Libellus de Notitia Orbis' Iohannes' III. (de Galonifontibus?) O. P. Erzbischofs von Sulthanyeh*, ed. Anton Kern (Rome: Istituto storico domenicano di S. Sabina, 1938), 10, 12 and 13; 112–113, 114–116, 117; Richard, "Die römische Kirche," 884; Martyniuk, "Rus' i Litva."

### III *Tabriz as Landmark on the Biblical and Apocalyptic Christian Topography*

As indicated above, the localization of sites of Biblical history contributed to the imagination and appropriation of space by the Christian tradition. One site which served as important landmark for the positioning of Tabriz in Christian space in various reports and treatises of Western contemporaries was Mt. Ararat with Noah's Ark; it was also a common feature on the *Mappae mundi* of the time, which (with the exception of Vesconte's map, see above) otherwise demonstrated "no awareness of the range of new knowledge" documented in the various abovementioned texts.<sup>85</sup>

But we also encounter an identification of Tabriz proper with a Biblical site: as we have already read, in his *Relatio de mirabilibus orientalium Tatarorum* Odoric of Pordenone wrote: "(...) *transtuli me in Thauris, (...) que Susis antiquitus dicebatur.*"<sup>86</sup> Archbishop John of Sulṭāniyya elaborated this identification even more: "*Thauris—que olim Susis dicebatur, ubi Assuerus convivium magnum fecit ut in libro Hester habetur.*"<sup>87</sup> With this identification of Tabriz with the ancient Achaemenid residence of Susa, whose prosperity and magnificence is described in detail at the beginning of the Book of Esther (esp. I, 1–8), Ilkhanid Tabriz became not only a landmark in Christian topography, but was also equated with the older Persian imperial centre; thus also imaginations and expectations of grandeur and luxury were evoked in the reader (and again, the mental maps of merchants and missionaries could converge in this regard).

Yet, Tabriz occupied an even more significant place in some Christian imaginations of the 13th and 14th century. William of Rubruck reports a prophecy told by an Armenian bishop "about a race of archers who would

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<sup>85</sup> William of Rubruck, "*Itinerarium Wilhelmi de Rubruc,*" in Anastasius van den Wyngaert, ed., *Sinica Franciscana*. Vol. 1, *Itinera et relationes Fratrum Minorum saeculi XIII et XIV* (Firenze: Apud Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1929), 323; *idem*, *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke 1253–1255*, trans. Peter Jackson (London: Hackett, 2009), 267; Croce, "Itinerarium," 122; Heṭ'um, *Haytonus Flor Historiarum Terre Orientis*. In *Recueil des historiens des croisades*. Vol. 2, *Documents Arméniens* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1906), 1: 9, 268; *idem*, *Heṭ'um the Historian's History of the Tartars (The Flower of Histories of the East)*, trans. Robert Bedrossian (Long Beach, New Jersey, 2004); see also Woodward, "Medieval *Mappaemundi*," 330–335; Hamilton, "The Impact," 16 and 26, 29 for this tradition and for the citation; Von den Brincken, "Christen im Orient;" eadem, "Spuren der orientalischen Christenheit;" Reichert, "Nabel der Welt."

<sup>86</sup> Odoric of Pordenone, *Relatio*, 3: 1, ed. Marchisio 2–3; see also ed. van den Wyngaert, 417.

<sup>87</sup> Iohannes de Galonifontibus, *Libellus*, 117, lines 12–14 (*Thauris—which once was called Susa, where Ahasuerus made a great feast as related in the Book of Esther.*).

come from the north, saying that they would conquer the whole of the east but would spare the eastern kingdom so that it could make over to them the kingdom of the west; “though our brethren, the Catholic Franks,” he says,

will not trust them. They will occupy the countries from the north down to the south, will advance as far as Constantinople and will seize its harbour; and one of them, who will be known as the Wise Man, will enter the city and, on seeing the Frankish churches and their rite, will have himself baptized, and he will advise the Franks how to kill the ruler of the Tartars and thereby cause chaos among them. On hearing this, the Franks in the centre of the world—namely Jerusalem—will fall upon the Tartars on their borders and, aided by our own people (the Armenians, that is), will pursue them, with the result that the king of the Franks will establish his royal throne in Tauris in Persia. Then will follow the conversion to the Christian faith of all the peoples of the east and all the unbelievers, and such peace will reign in the world that the living will say to the dead: ‘Alas for you who have not lived to see these times’.<sup>88</sup>

Prophecies about the monarch of the end time and his battle against the Muslims (referring ultimately back to the 7th century Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius) were widely spread among Christians in West and East; in another version which became popular in Western Europe since ca. 1300, this king after his victory over the enemies of the cross will hang his shield on a sere tree (*arbor sicca*), which will then begin to green again. Then Jews and pagans will convert to the Christian faith. While this tree was often localized in or near Jerusalem, some authors located it more to the east; Odorico of Pordenone (and after him further authors) finally state that, “*ut dicitur*,” it can be found in Tabriz “*in una mosceta, id est in una ecclesia sarracenorum*.” (“*in a mosque, which is a church of*

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<sup>88</sup> William of Rubruck, “Itinerarium,” 322–323; *idem*, Mission, 266–267. Von den Brincken, *Nationes Christianorum*, 193; Hannes Möhring, *Der Weltkaiser der Endzeit. Entstehung, Wandel und Wirkung einer tausendjährigen Weissagung* (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2000), 199–200; Alexandr Osipian, “Baptised Mongol Rulers, Prester John and the Magi: Armenian Image of the Mongols produced for the Western Readers in the Mid-Thirteenth—Early Fourteenth Centuries,” in *Caucasus during the Mongol Period = Der Kaukasus in der Mongolenzeit*, eds. Jürgen Tubach, Sophia G. Vashalomidze, and Manfred Zimmer (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2012), 153–167; Zaroui Pogossian, “Armenians, Mongols and the End of Times: An Overview of 13th Century Sources,” in *Caucasus during the Mongol Period = Der Kaukasus in der Mongolenzeit*, eds. Jürgen Tubach, Sophia G. Vashalomidze, and Manfred Zimmer (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2012), 193. On the background to the Armenian expectations regarding the Western (Holy Roman) Empire at this time see also Peter Halfter, “Constantinus Novus. Zum geschichtlichen Hintergrund des apokryphen Freundschaftspaktes zwischen Konstantin und Trdat, Grigor dem Erleuchter und Papst Silvester,” *Le Muséon* 119, no. 3–4 (2006): 399–428.

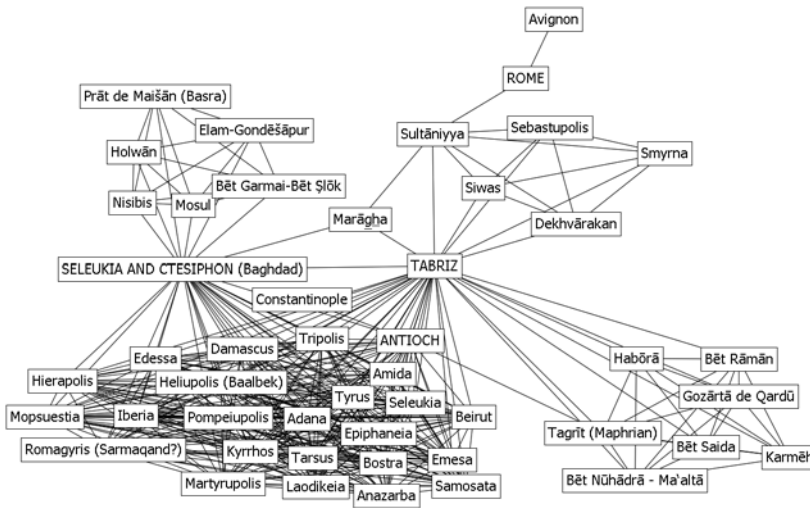


Fig. 10: Tabriz as nodal point within the combined hierarchical/synodal networks of the East Syrian Church (top left), the Roman Church (top right), the Greek-Orthodox Church (bottom left) and the West Syrian Church (bottom right) (Capital letters [besides Tabriz]: main Patriarchal residences) (graph created with the network analytical software ORA\*).

*the Saracens*”) The spatial dimension of apocalyptic Tabriz also crossed religious borders.<sup>89</sup>

Ilkhanid Tabriz became not only a nodal point in the spatial imagination of Christian merchants and missionaries, but was promoted even to a significant landmark in the Biblical and apocalyptic topography of 13th and 14th century Christianity. As these processes were very much connected to the rise of the city as centre of Mongol Iran, its prominence on the (mental) maps dwindled with its political and mercantile importance; yet, the case of Tabriz provides a most interesting example for the imagination and organization of space respectively the modification and adaptation of these phenomena within the Christian communities confronted

<sup>89</sup> Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius. An Alexandrian World Chronicle*, ed. and trans. Benjamin Garstad (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2012), 62–65 (Greek version) and 126–134 (Latin version), where the “King of the Romans” places his crown on the cross on Golgotha); Odoricus de Portu Naonis, “Relatio de mirabilibus orientalium Tatarorum,” in van den Wyngaert, *Sinica Franciscana*, 381–495, 417; Möhring, *Der Weltkaiser*, 255–260 (with further sources).

with the rise and fall of Mongol power in Iran. If we combine all information on the localization of Tabriz within one network, its position as nodal point of encounters between the various Christian denominations becomes obvious, too (see fig. 10). Further research by scholars acquainted with the sources in Persian and Arabic on the position of Tabriz in the spatial imagination of late medieval Muslim authors may also provide some interesting results for a comparative analysis of the significance of the city in the mental maps of the 13th to 15th century in order to establish a more complete picture (see also the papers by Patrick Wing and Judith Pfeiffer in this volume).

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“RICH IN GOODS AND ABOUNDING IN WEALTH:” THE ILKHANID  
AND POST-ILKHANID RULING ELITE AND THE POLITICS OF  
COMMERCIAL LIFE AT TABRIZ, 1250–1400

Patrick Wing

From the mid-13th century until the mid-16th century, Tabriz was Iran's most important city, in terms of its political and economic life. Established as the Ilkhanid capital, Tabriz became the focal point for political action between the Hülegüid-Chinggisid dynasty, the Turkish and Mongol military elite, and the Persian administrators and intellectuals who served the Ilkhanid state. Following the death of Abū Sa'īd Bahādur Khān in 1335, and the dissolution of the Ilkhanid lands, Tabriz remained important as the seat of the Ilkhanid political legacy, and was the paramount prize for families such as the Chubanids, Jalayirids, Muzaffarids and Timurids who sought to associate themselves with the charisma of the Chinggisids in Iran through the 14th, and into the 15th centuries. In fact, not until the Safavid capital was transferred to Qazvīn, and eventually to Isfahan in the 16th century, did Tabriz cease to have such a vital political importance. Closely related to its political importance was Tabriz's role as an economic center, primarily as the setting for commercial transactions among merchants dealing in local and foreign commodities, whose exchanges connected Tabriz to wider networks extending to Central Asia, India, China, the Black and Mediterranean Seas, and Europe. Tabriz's economic importance was closely connected to its central place in political life, of course, as the rulers and elite of the Ilkhanate and its successor states encouraged, and benefited from, revenue from trade conducted in Tabriz.

Much remains to be written about these complex connections. A generally accepted view of the period of Chingissid rule in much of Eurasia in the 13th and 14th centuries is that the Mongols created conditions favourable to overland trade between China and the Mediterranean. A *pax mongolica*, created by the Mongols' interest in wealth from trade, and their willingness to provide the security necessary to encourage it, helped to revive patterns of trade on the so-called “silk roads” that had flourished in earlier periods, and especially under the Tang dynasty in China and the early Abbasid Caliphate in the Middle East, in the 8th and

9th centuries.<sup>1</sup> The ways in which these larger processes aligned with more local histories raise further questions. While cities such as Tabriz, Saray and Samarqand are often recognized as significant points of transit and exchange along routes made possible by Mongol protection, less attention has been devoted to the interactions between commercial activities and the activities of the political elites—the dynasty, amirs, and men of the pen, whose livelihood depended on wealth from trade, and whose actions could promote, or harm, the commercial vitality of a city.

The purpose of this article is to offer a general overview of literature on the role of Tabriz in the political economy of the Ilkhanate and its successor states in the 13th and 14th centuries in the framework of relationships between three loci of political and economic interests: the Mongol-Persian ruling elite, merchants representing regional and long-distance trade networks, and the local conditions and interests of the city and people of Tabriz itself. The discussion that follows considers a series of relationships between these three sets of interests. While Tabriz came to prominence as a direct result of the Mongol conquerors of Iran choosing it as their capital, Tabriz and its distinct geographic setting served as a contact point between pastoral and agrarian economies, where a dual Mongol-Persian elite came together to serve the Ilkhanid dynasty and their successors. The Ilkhanid political elite created conditions for Tabriz, and thus themselves, to flourish economically, while also serving the interests of foreign merchants and encouraging wider trade contacts through partnerships and alliances. The ruling elite sought to sustain their benefits from these

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<sup>1</sup> Janet Abu Lughod has written that the contribution of the Mongols in the 13th century was to create an environment that facilitated land transit with less risk and lower protection costs. See Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 154. According to Xinru Liu, a scholar of the history of the silk roads, with the rise of the Mongols, “for a century or so, the Central Asian steppe was once again the link between Europe and China, as Mongol conquerors facilitated commercial and cultural exchanges on the Eurasian land routes.” See Xinru Liu, *The Silk Road in World History* (Oxford: University Press, 2010), 109. Thomas Allsen has demonstrated brilliantly the ways in which the Mongols not only allowed for cultural exchanges across Eurasia, but in fact acted as the principal agents of these exchanges to serve their own political and economic interests. See Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: University Press, 2001). Scholars have also begun to call for a more nuanced use of the term “pax mongolica.” David Morgan has suggested that the term may be too simplistic to describe a complex collection of processes. See David Morgan, *The Mongols*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 73. Nicola Di Cosmo has addressed specifically the meaning of “pax mongolica” as it relates to relations between the Mongols and Italian merchants in the Black Sea. See Nicola Di Cosmo, “Black Sea Emporia and the Mongol Empire: A Reassessment of the Pax Mongolica,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 53 (2010): 83–108.

commercial relationships by investing in buildings in Tabriz that simultaneously both encouraged merchants to come, and facilitated the channelling of revenue from trade into the hands of the khan, his household, and his administrators. The prosperity of the city, and particularly the vibrant commercial life in its markets, is attested by accounts of foreign travellers from the late Ilkhanid period until the beginning of the 15th century. While this dynamic system provided mutual benefits for all parties involved, it was also fragile, and could quickly fall apart if the political conditions became unstable, as was evident during the failed experiment with the paper *chao* currency under the Ilkhans, as well as the disappearance of Italian merchants in the 1340s under the rule of the Chubanids in Tabriz. In the final analysis, the issues of trade, the local urban setting, and dynastic politics should not be separated if we seek to understand the multi-layered dynamics of the Ilkhanid and post-Ilkhanid political economy in the 13th and 14th centuries. Tabriz was both a center for political action among princes and amirs, as well as a pivot connecting political and economic life between pastoral and agrarian communities, as well as to the wider world, from China to Europe.

*Tabriz at the Intersection of a Dual Elite*

Tabriz was not an imperial capital before the Mongols came to Iran. From the time of the first Persian empire of the Achaemenids, the Iranian plateau had been linked politically and economically with Mesopotamia. The Sasanids made their capital at Ctesiphon, and when the Abbasids took over the Islamic Caliphate in the 8th century, after a revolution that began in Khurāsān and depended strongly on Iranian support, they made their capital at Baghdad on the Tigris. Mesopotamia was the richest region of the Caliphate,<sup>2</sup> due to its agricultural production, sustained by heavy state investment in irrigation infrastructure. Yet, by the 10th century, overexploitation of the land, particularly in the Sawad of lower Mesopotamia, began to contribute to ever smaller agricultural yields.<sup>3</sup> The reasons for this were

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<sup>2</sup> Hugh Kennedy, *When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World: The Rise and Fall of Islam's Greatest Dynasty* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2004), 132.

<sup>3</sup> Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam, Vol. 1: The Classical Age of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 483–485; Hugh Kennedy, *When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World*, 131; Peter Christiansen, *The Decline of Iranshahr: Irrigation and Environments in the History of the Middle East, 500 B.C. to A.D. 1500* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, University of Copenhagen, 1993), 85.

both ecological and political. The soil of the Sawad became over-salinized from intense cultivation. Decline in revenues accruing to the central government led to the introduction of tax-farming in the form of land grants to amirs for up-front payments to the central treasury. The tendency of the tax-farmers to neglect the long-term well being of the land and its inhabitants at the expense of short-term gain exacerbated the problem of low-yields,<sup>4</sup> and over time resulted in a decline in the net area under cultivation in the central Abbasid lands, and an increase in pastoralism.<sup>5</sup> By the 13th century and the first wave of Mongol invasions, this process was well advanced. Thus, the Mongols, who were pastoralists themselves, and had little interest (at least initially) in agriculture, did not bring about a radical change in the balance between agriculture and pastoralism in Mesopotamia, but instead arrived at a time when the trend had begun to shift away from a centralized, agrarian imperial state that included both the Iranian plateau and Iraq. The conquest of Baghdad by Hülegü in 1258 did not bring about a sudden end to Iraq's significance, but was rather the final, symbolic blow. Azerbaijan, rather than Iraq, became the heart of the Ilkhanid ulus, which stretched from the Oxus to the Euphrates, with frontier zones in the Caucasus and Khwārazm contested with the Ilkhans' Jochid and Chaghatayid cousins. In fact, the Ilkhanate did not have a capital city in the way that Baghdad had been the Abbasid capital, serving as the site of the palace and court of the caliph. The Ilkhanid court was mobile, in keeping with the Mongols' nomadic traditions. The khan's household, family, entourage and wealth moved along migration routes to pasture that would support the royal herds of horses, sheep and other livestock.<sup>6</sup> Of the two main Iranian commanderies established in Iran prior to Hülegü's campaign to Baghdad, in Khurāsān and Azerbaijan, the latter, with access to the plains of Mughan and Arran, was better suited to the Mongol elite's pastoral economy.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 2004), 187.

<sup>5</sup> Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam, Vol. 2: The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 389–390.

<sup>6</sup> Sheila S. Blair, "The Ilkhanid Palace," in *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 23, ed. Gülru Necipoğlu (Ann Arbor, Department of History, University of Michigan, 1993), 239.

<sup>7</sup> Judith G. Kolbas, *The Mongols in Iran: Chingiz Khan to Uljaytu 1220–1309* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 151. The province of Arran, rather than the city of Tabriz, was the site of Ghāzān Khān's coronation, indicating that even by 1295 the most important dynastic ceremonies took place within a pastoral, rather than an urban context. See Charles Melville, "Pādishāh-i Islām: The Conversion of Sultan Maḥmūd Ghāzān Khān," *Pembroke Papers* 1 (1990), 171.

Azerbaijan had another advantage over other regions of the Ilkhanid domains: its location on a major east-west trade route. Again, we may contrast the situation here with that of Mesopotamia in the early Abbasid period. Baghdad had thrived as a trade entrepôt between the maritime trade of the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf, and overland routes through Syria to the Mediterranean. However, political instability in Iraq from the early 11th century contributed to a decline of the route linking Iraq to the Persian Gulf and India.<sup>8</sup> Trade across Eurasia over land was actively encouraged and stimulated by Mongol rule in the 13th century, but the Mongols were less interested in southern sea routes than those passing through their own territory. Thus, in place of the north-south route from the Red Sea, Mesopotamia, and Syria, the Mongols encouraged trade on east-west routes from Mongolia and northern China, central Asia, and Khurāsān and Azerbaijan on one hand in the south, and the Qipchaq steppe, Volga, and northern Black Sea shores on the other in the north. Thus, Azerbaijan was doubly advantageous. It was suitable to the Mongol and Turkish elites' pastoral economy, as well as situated on a trade route made possible by the Chinggisid Mongol imperial enterprise.

The establishment of Ilkhanid power in Azerbaijan was initially the result of the military victories of Hülegü's armies against the forces of the Caliphate and other local Muslim rulers in Iran, Iraq and Anatolia. Hülegü's campaigns were part of a broader process of the extension of Toluid political authority over the agrarian societies south of the steppe, in China and Iran. This process involved the organization of administrative structures to collect and manage both the agricultural and commercial wealth from these societies. In the Ilkhanate, Iranian men of the pen were integrated into the Mongol political elite, comprising the Chinggisid dynastic family and the Mongol and Turkish amirs. While the center of dynastic authority resided with the person of the khan, and moved as the khan did with his court camp, not all the business of government was carried out on the road. The Persian administrators were drawn to the city of Tabriz, the principal city of Azerbaijan. Thus, while Azerbaijan was crucial for the pastoral economy of the Mongols, Tabriz was the necessary contact point between all strata of the elite: princes, amirs, and administrators. Tabriz thus became the Ilkhanid capital, not because the khan lived

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<sup>8</sup> Stephen Humphreys, "Egypt in the World System of the Later Middle Ages," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Vol. 1, Islamic Egypt, 640-1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: University Press, 1998), 449.

there, but because it was the urban center at which the various strands of the Ilkhanid political economy were connected: royal and military power, administrative machinery, as well as trade and religious patronage. As a result, not only were the Mongols drawn to Tabriz, but the urban economy became tied to the wider Mongol world.

*Intersecting Interests of the Ilkhanid Elite and Foreign Merchants*

Tabriz was the setting for the interaction of the Ilkhanid political elite, the khan and his household, the princes, amirs, bureaucrats and religious officials who served the dynasty, and benefited from its continued survival. Another vital component to the political economy, that is, the means of acquiring, controlling, and redistributing the wealth and resources of the Ilkhanid domains, was the community of merchants who carried on trade in Tabriz and throughout the realm. Merchants were partners in the Mongol imperial enterprise from the time of Chinggis Khan, for the Mongols recognized the value of merchants and the ways that their interests often intersected with their own. Merchants often were able to speak several languages, spoken by the locals along trade routes. Their linguistic skills made them valuable to the Mongols as both cultural mediators and sources of military intelligence. They were also the main facilitators of the flow of resources of other societies to the court of the khan, and the households of his supporters. As Nicola Di Cosmo has pointed out, one of the main functions of large nomadic confederations was to develop means to ensure that resources and wealth flowed to the khan's court and the elite.<sup>9</sup> Such means included control over markets and commercial routes. In other words, trade, and the merchants who transported and transacted exchanges for commodities, constituted the primary engine of the Mongol elite's interests in transferring sedentary, agrarian resources to their own control. The Mongols sought alliances with the merchants, who served them in both economic and diplomatic capacities. The economic relationship of the merchants and the ruling elite involved the merchants' movement of resources along routes controlled and protected by Mongol military power, and thus the transfer of a portion of those resources to the control of the khan and the ruling elite. Mongol rulers and members of the dynastic family formed partnerships (sing. *ortogh*) with merchants,

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<sup>9</sup> Nicola Di Cosmo, "Black Sea Emporia and the Mongol Empire," 89.

which gave the merchants official sanction as the representatives of the dynasty, subject to its protection and authority.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to the economic services merchants could provide to the elite, they also often served diplomatic functions. An example of one merchant-diplomat in Ilkhanid service illustrates both the close relationship between the rulers and the merchants, and also the ways in which Mongol rule in Tabriz fostered trade links with the Latin West.<sup>11</sup> Buscarello di Ghizolfi was a Genoese merchant who received the title *qurchī* at the Ilkhanid court, and was sent as an envoy of Arghun Khān to the pope, as well as to the kings of England and France in 1289, seeking Latin help for a joint campaign against the Mamluks. Buscarello later served as an envoy for Ghazan Khān in the early 14th century.<sup>12</sup> Buscarello was not an anomaly.<sup>13</sup> Beginning in the 1280s, merchants from Genoa and other Italian cities began trading and residing in Ilkhanid Tabriz. Their arrival was part of a larger process by which Genoa, as well as Venice, began extending their economic interests to the Black Sea in the 13th century. Venice had the early advantage, following the conquest of Constantinople in 1204, which gave *La Serenissima* control of the Bosphorus and access to the Black Sea. Genoa, Venice's major Mediterranean rival, helped the Palaeologi to reclaim the imperial throne in 1261, and subsequently was able to establish its own base at Pera. It was not until the mid-13th century, however, that either Venice or Genoa was able to establish any real presence on the northern shores of the Black Sea. Here, contact with the

<sup>10</sup> On the *ortogh*, see Thomas T. Allsen, "Mongolian Princes and their Merchant Partners, 1200–1260," *Asia Major* 2 (1989): 83–126; Nicola Di Cosmo, "Black Sea Emporia and the Mongol Empire," 90.

<sup>11</sup> On the relationship between the Mongols and the merchants of the Latin West, see Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West* (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), 290–328.

<sup>12</sup> Jean Richard, "Buscarello de Ghizolfi," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1990), 4: 569; Laurence Lockhart, "The Relations between Edward I and Edward II of England and the Mongol Īl-Khāns of Persia," *Iran* 6 (1968): 26–29. A translation of the letter carried to the King of France can be found in Antoine Mostaert and Francis Woodman Cleaves, *Les Lettres de 1289 et 1305 des ilkhan Aryun et Öljeitü à Philippe le Bel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 18.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Jackson has pointed out that the Mongols generally used Eastern Christians or expatriate Europeans, such as Buscarello, or the Pisan Isolo da Anastasio, to act as emissaries with the Latin West. See Peter Jackson, "World Conquest and Local Accommodation: Threat and Blandishment in Mongol Diplomacy," in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, eds. Judith Pfeiffer and Sholeh A. Quinn, in Collaboration with Ernest Tucker (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 14–15. In 1305, Öljeitü sent one Tamaso Ugi of Siena as his ambassador to King Edward I of England. See Lockhart, "The Relations between Edward I and Edward II of England and the Mongol Īl-Khāns of Persia," 29.

Mongols was critical to their success. Recent scholarship has reinforced the idea that the consolidation of the Mongol conquests, particularly by the Jochids on the steppe north of the Black Sea, helped to make trade links possible between Italian and northern Black Sea markets.<sup>14</sup> By 1253 the Venetians had established a trading station at Soldaia in the Crimea.<sup>15</sup> In 1261 the Genoese acquired the right to trade in the Black Sea by the Treaty of Nymphaion, after being shut out by Venice since 1204. The Venetians themselves were allowed to return to the Black Sea in 1268, after a period of Greco-Genoese supremacy, and payback for the Venetian conquest. Thus, by ca. 1270, both Genoa and Venice were poised to establish their own foothold in Black Sea markets, in condominium with the Jochid Mongols. Genoa's principal Black Sea port was Kaffa in the Crimea, while Venice established a presence at Tana on the Sea of Azov. The most important commodity from the northern shores of the Black Sea was grain, a safeguard against famine in Italy.<sup>16</sup>

While the Crimea served as an entrepôt for grain from the Jochid lands, Tabriz was important for the Italian merchants for luxury commodities, particularly silk and spice.<sup>17</sup> Silk from Gilan, Lahijan, Ganja, and the

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<sup>14</sup> Michel Balard, "The Black Sea and International Trade of the XIVth and XVth Centuries," *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia, 22–27 August, 2011, Volume I: Plenary Papers* (Sofia, 2011), 444; Nicola Di Cosmo, "Black Sea Emporia and the Mongol Empire," 93. On the relationship between the Jochids, steppe trade routes, and the Italian republics, see also Mark G. Kramarovsky, "The Culture of the Golden Horde and the Problem of the 'Mongol Legacy'," in *Rulers from the Steppe: State Formation on the Eurasian Periphery*, eds. Gary Seaman and Daniel Marks (Los Angeles: University of Southern California, Ethnographic Press, 1991): 257–258.

<sup>15</sup> Michel Balard, "The Black Sea and International Trade of the XIVth and XVth Centuries," 444.

<sup>16</sup> Nicola Di Cosmo, "Mongols and Merchants on the Black Sea Frontier in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: Convergences and Conflicts," in *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*, eds. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005), 397. The Byzantine lands, as well as the lands under Jochid rule, around the Black Sea, were primarily important to merchants from the Latin West as sources of wheat. See Angeliki E. Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System: Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34/35 (1980/1981): 183–185.

<sup>17</sup> G.V. Scammell, *The World Encompassed: The First European Maritime Empires, c. 800–1650* (London: Methuen and Co., 1981), 162. The Pisan Pegolotti mentions in his merchant handbook of 1340 that fine spices and silk were sold at Tabriz, as well as indigo, coral, tin, camlets, pearls, and various furs. See Francesco Balducci Pegolotti, *La Pratica Della Mercatura*, ed. Allan Evans (Cambridge, MA: The Medieval Academy of America, 1936), 26–27. Also on Pegolotti and his work, see *Cathay and the Way Thither, Being a Collection of Medieval Notices of China*, trans. and ed. Sir Henry Yule, new ed. Henri Cordier, Vol. III: Missionary Friars—Rashiduddin—Pegolotti—Marignolli (London: Hakluyt Society, 1914), 137–173.

Caucasus was sold in Tabriz and carried to European silk centers such as Lucca in Italy.<sup>18</sup> A crucial link in the trade network between Tabriz and the Latin West was the Black Sea port of Trebizond. Descendants of the last Comnenid emperor at Constantinople established an independent Greek kingdom here in 1204, the same year that Constantinople fell to the armies of the Fourth Crusade.<sup>19</sup> The Comnenid rulers allowed the Italians to construct port facilities on the east side of Trebizond in the 13th century,<sup>20</sup> ensuring that the links between the Italian city states and the Mongol khanates would not be limited to the northern shores of the Black Sea alone, but would also include a southern route through Anatolia to Tabriz. Thus, both Ilkhanid Tabriz and Comnenid Trebizond benefited from the Genoese silk trade, and made the political situation in Anatolia and the Black Sea an important economic concern for the Mongol Ilkhans. Only in the second half of the 14th century did Bursa begin to eclipse Trebizond as the major western destination for caravans carrying silk from Tabriz. Yet the Genoese continued to prosper with this shift, as merchants from Pera were sent to Bursa to carry out business in the Ottoman capital. Halil İnalçık has characterized Bursa as a second Tabriz by the 15th century, a sign that while Anatolian caravan traffic continued through the 14th century, Trebizond and the maritime routes from the southeastern shores of the Black Sea declined.<sup>21</sup>

The Genoese merchant community at Tabriz reached the height of its prosperity in the first third of the 14th century, a period of relative stability under Öljeytü (r. 1304–1316) and Abū Saʿīd (r. 1317–1335). In this period, Genoese commercial activity spread across Eurasia, from the English Channel to China. Yet, Tabriz was especially significant for Genoa's eastern trade, as the easternmost outpost of Genoese state-sponsored commercial agents.<sup>22</sup> Nicola Di Cosmo has distinguished between the official, state-sponsored Black Sea enterprises of both Genoa and Venice, and the activities of Genoese and Venetian merchants acting independently of

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<sup>18</sup> Michele Bernardini, "Genoa," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 2001), 10: 423.

<sup>19</sup> Charles King, *The Black Sea: A History* (Oxford: University Press, 2004), 94. As King points out here, the newly-founded Comnenid kingdom at Trebizond had close ties to the Bagratid Kingdom of Georgia. Queen Tamar (r. 1184–1213) was likely the aunt of the Comnenid princes who founded the Trebizond kingdom.

<sup>20</sup> Charles King, *The Black Sea: A History*, 95.

<sup>21</sup> Halil İnalçık, "The Question of the Closing of the Black Sea under the Ottomans," in *Essays in Ottoman History* (Istanbul: Eren, 1998), 427–429.

<sup>22</sup> Nicola Di Cosmo, "Mongols and Merchants on the Black Sea Frontier in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," 418.

state policy. While the former were primarily engaged in providing Black Sea grain to the home cities, and remained active in the Black Sea until the Ottoman conquest of the Crimea in 1475, the latter began to disappear at points east by the middle of the 14th century, as a result of the collapse of the Chinggisid political order.<sup>23</sup>

To summarize, then, the commercial activity in Tabriz was a consequence of a number of factors: the suitability of Azerbaijan to the Mongol military elite, the prominence of the east-west caravan route through northern Iran as a result of the Mongol imperial power, and the contemporary rise of Italian merchant activity in the Black Sea. All of these processes were the result of intersecting interests of political elites and individual merchants from Mongolia to Europe. From a broader perspective, the Mongols created a large free-trade zone, in which protection and transportation costs were minimized.<sup>24</sup> We must also consider, however, the choices made by the Ilkhanid elite locally in Tabriz, where they sought to channel trade revenue most efficiently to their own control.

*Intersecting Interests of the Ilkhanid Elite and the Local Economy of Tabriz*

One means of both encouraging trade and channelling revenue in the urban environment was to commission the construction of public buildings. These building projects were designed to glorify the ruler and the dynasty, while simultaneously serving economic functions. As part of the Ghāzāniyya complex built to the west of the city at Shanb (or Shām), Ghazan Khān not only had a funerary building constructed, but also facilities for visiting foreign merchants.<sup>25</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn wrote that next to every gate within the walls of the Ghāzāniyya was a caravansaray, as well as a market, bath, workshops and stalls for animals. These facilities not only catered to foreign merchants, but also made it easier for the Ilkhanid financial administration to carry out its work of collecting commercial revenue. Merchants thus stopped at the caravansarays of Ghāzāniyya to unload their cargo, where they would be stamped by a customs official,

<sup>23</sup> Nicola Di Cosmo, "Black Sea Emporia and the Mongol Empire," 105.

<sup>24</sup> Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 154.

<sup>25</sup> On the Ghāzāniyya, see Donald N. Wilbur, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran: The Il Khānid Period* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1955), 124–126; Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfi Qazvinī, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat-al-Qulūb Composed by Ḥamd-Allāh Mustawfi of Qazwin in 740 (1340)*, ed. G. Le Strange (Leiden: Brill and London: Luzac & Co., 1915), 76.

before the merchants were permitted to enter the city of Tabriz itself. Upon departing the city, merchants were required to stop again at Ghāzāniyya for a customs inspection.<sup>26</sup> That Rashīd al-Dīn's report is not just normative or theoretical is illustrated by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's account. When he approached Tabriz, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa stayed first outside the city of "al-Shām," where he received food at a hospice for travellers. The following day, he left the hospice and entered the city of Tabriz, where he witnessed the spectacle of the main bazaar.<sup>27</sup>

The khans were not the only members of the political elite to build in Tabriz. Rashīd al-Dīn himself built a complex on the heights of Valiyān Kūh, on the east side of Tabriz, within the new wall that Ghazan had built to accommodate the growing population. This suburb, known as the Rab'ī Rashīdī, was the site of many buildings, including caravansarays, shops, and storehouses.<sup>28</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn's son, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad, later expanded the Rab'ī Rashīdī after becoming vizier himself under Abū Sa'īd.<sup>29</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn owned a great deal of property outside Tabriz as well, and seems to have been interested in aligning his personal property and endowments with trade routes. As Zeki Velidi Togan has pointed out, more than a third of Rashīd al-Dīn's property was in Anatolia, along the *shāh-rāh*, or imperial east-west trade route from Transoxania to the Mediterranean.<sup>30</sup> Buildings commissioned by Rashīd al-Dīn thus included not only those at Tabriz, but in cities all along the overland route through Anatolia, at Sivas, Kayseri, Tokat, and Arabgird.<sup>31</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn was not the only Ilkhanid official to commission monumental architecture. The vizier Tāj al-Dīn 'Alī Shāh Jīlānī built the monumental Friday mosque of

<sup>26</sup> Rashiduddin Fazlullah, *Jami'ut-Tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles*, trans. W.M. Thackston (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 684–685.

<sup>27</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325–1354*, trans. C. Defrémery and B.R. Sanguinetti, ed. H.A.R. Gibb (Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint, 1986), 344.

<sup>28</sup> Donald N. Wilbur, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran: The Il Khānīd Period*, 129. Wilbur's information on the buildings in the Rab'ī Rashīdī comes from the letters purportedly written by Rashīd al-Dīn himself. The authenticity of the letters is not without controversy, however. For an overview of the debate, see Gary Leiser's introduction to his translation of Zeki Velidi Togan, "References to Economic and Cultural Life in Anatolia in the Letters of Rashīd al-Dīn," trans. Gary Leiser, in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, eds. Judith Pfeiffer and Sholeh A. Quinn, in Collaboration with Ernest Tucker (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 84–87.

<sup>29</sup> Qazvīnī, *Nuzhat al-Qulūb*, trans. Le Strange, 76.

<sup>30</sup> Zeki Velidi Togan, "References to Economic and Cultural Life in Anatolia in the Letters of Rashīd al-Dīn," trans. Gary Leiser, 100–101.

<sup>31</sup> Zeki Velidi Togan, "References to Economic and Cultural Life in Anatolia in the Letters of Rashīd al-Dīn," trans. Gary Leiser, 90.

Tabriz, whose colossal façade remains today. The Ilkhanid political elite, which included both Mongol khans and Persian administrators, invested in the public face of the city of Tabriz, which served simultaneously a political and economic function: the glorification of the dynasty, through monumental public religious and funerary structures, and the enrichment of the elite, through the accumulation of wealth derived in part from long-distance trade.

Fourteenth century travelers attested to the prosperity of Tabriz. The Italian Friar Odoric of Pordenone passed through Tabriz in the early part of Abū Saʿīd's reign (ca. 1320), and marvelled at the merchandise to be found there. Odoric wrote that almost the entire world had commercial dealings with Tabriz, and that the Christians there told him that the khan took more revenue from that one city than the King of France took from his entire realm.<sup>32</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who also visited during the reign of Abū Saʿīd, called the city's "Qāzān" bazaar one of the finest in the world, and marvelled at the abundance of the jewels, ambergris, musk, and other luxury items available.<sup>33</sup> The renowned Maghribī traveller was certainly qualified to speak about the markets of the world of his time. Post-Ilkhanid travel accounts also suggest that Tabriz was still a wealthy city from trade even by the turn of the 15th century. The Bavarian knight Johannes Schiltberger, who served Bāyezīd I after being captured at Nicopolis in 1396, and then Timur after Bāyezīd's defeat at Ankara in 1402, also mentioned the large revenues that accrued to the ruler of Tabriz, as a result of a large number of merchants that visited the city.<sup>34</sup> In 1404, the Castilian envoy Clavijo reported on the large amount of merchandise and number of merchants, and particularly focused on the silk and cotton textiles offered in the markets. Tabriz was "rich in goods and abounding in wealth" when Clavijo passed through on his way to Samarqand.<sup>35</sup> If we consider these reports together, it seems that Tabriz enjoyed economic prosperity throughout the 14th century to the early 15th century, and that from the end of the Ilkhanid period until the beginning of Timurid rule,

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<sup>32</sup> *Cathay and the Way Thither, Being a Collection of Medieval Notices of China*, trans. and ed. Sir Henry Yule, new ed. Henri Cordier, Vol. II: Odoric of Pordenone (London: Hakluyt Society, 1913), 103–104.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta*, 344–345.

<sup>34</sup> Johannes Schiltberger, *The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger: A Native of Bavaria, in Europe, Asia, and Africa, 1396–1427*, trans. J. Buchan Telfer, ed. P. Bruun (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970. Reprinted from London: Hakluyt Society, 1879), 44.

<sup>35</sup> Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403–1406*, trans. Guy Le Strange (London: George Routledge & Sons. Ltd., 1928), 151–153.

there was little apparent decline in the commercial prosperity in Tabriz, at least based on the accounts of foreign travellers.

Such accounts are impressionistic, yet indicative of an economic vibrancy that accompanied Tabriz's importance as a political center in the years after the collapse of the Ilkhanate. Tabriz remained the locus of Ilkhanid political charisma, and thus was the primary goal for members of the 14th century post-Ilkhanid military elite who sought to appropriate it for themselves. However, the military conflict that accompanied the struggle for political supremacy, particularly in the early 15th century amid the conflicts among Timur's sons and grandsons, created difficult conditions, particularly in Azerbaijan. By the mid-1430s, Shāhrukh had begun to make efforts to revive the prosperity of Azerbaijan, a sign that the province had suffered as a result of military conflict.<sup>36</sup> Yet even under the Ilkhanids and their pre-Timurid successors the balance between the prosperity of the city, the merchants, and the political elites was tenuous, and could be undermined by failure of the rulers to provide stability for the local economy. Examples illustrating the ways in which local economic conditions could be swiftly undone by political conditions include the well-known experiment with paper money in 1294, and the disappearance of Italian merchants in Tabriz beginning in the 1340s.

### *The Limits of Prosperity: The chao and Italian Merchants*

In 1294 a new paper currency, known as the *chao*, or *chāw*, was introduced in Tabriz.<sup>37</sup> Paper currency had been used in China since the 12th century,<sup>38</sup> and was used by the Mongol Yüan regime. Gaykhatu Khan

<sup>36</sup> al-Maqrīzī reports that in 838/1434–1435, Shāhrukh ordered a general restoration of buildings and cultivated areas, in Qazvīn, Sultaniyya, Tabriz, and the rest of the lands of the two Iraqs, which had been destroyed as a result of prior conflict. In Muḥarram of 839/July–August 1435, rebuilding in Tabriz was begun. The work was completed in Rajab, 839/January–February, 1436, and the city was turned over to Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf of the Qarā Quyūnlū. See Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Ashūr (Cairo, 1972), 4: 955–956; 972.

<sup>37</sup> See Karl Jahn, Čao," Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed.; *idem*, "Das iranische Papiergeld," *Archiv Orientalni* 10 (1938): 308–340. For an account of the *chao* experiment, see the continuator of Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abū'l Faraj, the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician, Commonly Known as Bar Hebraeus, Being the First Part of His Political History of the World*, trans. Ernest A. Wallis Budge (Oxford: University Press, 1932), 496–497; Rashīd al-Dīn *Compendium of Chronicles*, 583–584.

<sup>38</sup> Paper money originated among merchants who wanted to avoid carrying heavy iron coins, which had replaced bronze. In 1120 the Song dynasty government took over the

(r. 1291–1295) was informed about paper money by Bolad Chingsang, the envoy of Qubilai Qa'an.<sup>39</sup> However, according to the continuator of Bar Hebraeus, whose account Rashīd al-Dīn follows, the main proponent of the *chao* was the Ilkhanid vizier and *ṣāhib-dīvān* Ṣadr al-Dīn Aḥmad Khālidi Zanjāni. By 1294, the central treasury had been depleted as a result of Gaykhatu's extravagance,<sup>40</sup> and Ṣadr al-Dīn faced the problem of replenishing the funds of the central administration. Although the sources present him as motivated by greed, we may also consider Ṣadr al-Dīn's policy as one designed to centralize the Ilkhanid monetary system and bring in hard currency under the control of the central administration, which had hitherto not introduced a standardized coinage, but relied on the irregular issue of money from provincial mints.<sup>41</sup> Such a policy anticipates the well-known centralizing reforms of Ghazan Khān begun soon after. Although opposed by some of the elite, including the most senior Ilkhanid amir,<sup>42</sup> Ṣadr al-Dīn was permitted to introduce the *chao*, and travelled from the royal camp to the city of Tabriz with a group of amirs and announced the use of paper currency. A month later paper notes were put into circulation.

The consequences were immediately disastrous. Although people were forced to accept the *chao* from the Ilkhanid officials under penalty of death, commerce ground to a halt as private individuals refused to deal with it. Economic and social problems escalated. Word of the *chao* spread beyond the city, and caravans stopped arriving. As a result, the once vibrant markets became deserted. People resorted to stealing food, and bandits preyed on anyone who carried food in the streets. After two

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issuance of paper currency. See Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), 142.

<sup>39</sup> On Bolad Chingsang, see Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, 72–80.

<sup>40</sup> J.A. Boyle, "Dynastic and Political History of the Īl-Khāns," in *The Cambridge History of Iran, Volume 5: The Saljuq and Mongol Periods*, ed. J.A. Boyle (Cambridge: University Press, 1968), 374.

<sup>41</sup> A single, standard coin for the entire Ilkhanate was not introduced until 1298. See Stephen Album, "Studies in Ilkhanid History and Numismatics I. A Late Ilkhanid Hoard (743/1342)," *Iranian Studies* 13 (1984), 53.

<sup>42</sup> This was Shiktūr Noyan of the Jalayir tribe, described by Rashīd al-Dīn as the leader of the amirs (*muqaddim-i umarā'*), and the khan's deputy (*nā'ib-i muṭlaq*) in Iran while Gaykhatu was in Anatolia. His opposition to the *chao* may have been influenced by a prior personal conflict with Ṣadr al-Dīn, who had tried to convince Shiktūr that Gaykhatu had died, in order to bring another candidate to the throne. See Rashīd al-Dīn Faḏl Allāh Hamadāni, *Jāmi' al-Tavārikh*, eds. Muḥammad Rawshan and Muṣṭafā Mūsavī (Tehran: Nashr-i Alburz, 1373 [1994]), 1193–1194; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Compendium of Chronicles*, 581–582.

months, Şadr al-Dīn and Gaykhatu Khān each issued decrees repealing the ban on metal currency, and commerce resumed in Tabriz.

The failure of the *chao* experiment demonstrated the limits of the power of the ruling elite to meddle with the economic life of the city. The Mongol rulers of Iran had successfully imported other techniques from both the steppe and from China, and thus likely expected paper money to be another such happy example.<sup>43</sup> The rejection of the *chao* by the populace, and the economic chaos that ensued, indicated that while the elite could encourage trade through protection along routes, close relationships with merchants, and investment in urban infrastructure, imposing an innovation as drastic as paper money was beyond their power.

A second example of the delicate balance that existed between the city, the political elite, and global trade networks is the disappearance of a large community of Italian merchants from Tabriz in the middle of the 14th century. While the interests of the governments of the Italian city states were focused mainly on the grain of the northern Black Sea markets, and continued after the collapse of the Mongol political order, the end of Chinggisid rule after the middle of the 14th century in much of Eurasia contributed to a decline in the activity of independent merchants travelling to central Asia and China.<sup>44</sup> Such a decline illustrates the significance of active Mongol interest in encouraging foreign trade and maintaining conditions for long-distance travellers, which fell away with the collapse of a stable political order.

The breakdown of the political order in the Ilkhanate after 1335 negatively affected Tabriz's contacts with the Black Sea. Historical literature tends to ascribe blame to the Chubanid rulers Shaykh Ḥasan b. Timūrtāsh (r. 1338–1343), and his brother and successor Malik Ashraf (r. 1343–1357). These rulers have been described as "prone to robbing and attacking foreign merchants,"<sup>45</sup> and carrying out "xenophobic persecutions."<sup>46</sup> Conditions became so bad that Genoa issued a commercial embargo against the domains of Shaykh Ḥasan in 1340, followed by another in 1341.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, especially chapters 13–18; *idem*, "Technician Transfers in the Mongolian Empire," *The Central Eurasian Studies Lectures 2* (Bloomington: Indiana University Department of Central Eurasian Studies, 2002).

<sup>44</sup> See Nicola Di Cosmo, "Black Sea Emporia and the Mongol Empire," 92.

<sup>45</sup> Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, 310.

<sup>46</sup> Michele Bernardini, "Genoa," 423.

<sup>47</sup> Robert Sabatino Lopez, "European Merchants in the Medieval Indies: The Evidence of Commercial Documents," *Journal of Economic History* 3 (1943): 183.

In response, Italian merchants were expelled from Tabriz,<sup>48</sup> and Genoese trade along the southern route through Iran came to a halt, reorienting toward the northern route through Jochid territory, via Kaffa, Saray and Urgench.<sup>49</sup> Although Malik Ashraf sent ambassadors to Genoa in 1344 promising an indemnity for their lost wealth, and improved relations, the merchants were again robbed and killed when they returned to Tabriz.<sup>50</sup>

The disruption of the Black Sea trade networks in the middle of the 14th century was not due to disorder in Iran alone. The 1340s and 1350s was also a period in which the Byzantine state attempted to break the Italians' control over trade in the Black Sea. Emperor John VI Cantacuzenus went to war with Genoa in 1348 after the Genoese burned Byzantine ships and warehouses. The Greeks were defeated the following year, but this short conflict was followed by war between Genoa and Venice in 1351, and did not end until 1355.<sup>51</sup> In addition, the Mamluks conquered Lajazzo (Ayas) in the Kingdom of Armenia in 1347, which, along with Trebizond, gave Latin Christians access to Anatolia and Iran.<sup>52</sup> War in the Black Sea, together with a loss of access to Ayas in the Mediterranean, contributed to a decline in Italian merchant traffic through Anatolia to Tabriz by the middle of the 14th century. A change of dynasty in Tabriz did not change the situation. In 1358 the Jalayirid Shaykh Uvays (r. 1356–1374) conquered Tabriz and ousted Malik Ashraf's (r. 1343–1357) supporters.<sup>53</sup> Sultan Shaykh Uvays attempted to attract the Venetians and the Genoese back to Tabriz.<sup>54</sup> However, in 1369 he received a reply from the Venetians at Trebizond, saying that they had been unable to pass through eastern

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<sup>48</sup> Michel Balard, "Gênes et la Mer Noire," in *La Mer Noire et la Romanie génoise* (XIII<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles) (London: Variorum Reprints, 1989) [originally published in *Revue Historique* CCLXX], 38; *idem*, "The Black Sea and International Trade of the XIV<sup>th</sup> and XV<sup>th</sup> Centuries," 449.

<sup>49</sup> Michel Balard, "Les Génois en Asie centrale et en extrême-orient au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle: un cas exceptionnel?" in *Économies et sociétés au moyen âge: mélanges offerts à Edoard Perroy*, Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne 5 (1973), 686.

<sup>50</sup> Robert Sabatino Lopez, "European Merchants in the Medieval Indies," 183; Luciano Petech, "Les Marchands Italiens dans l'Empire Mongol," *Journal Asiatique* 250 (1962), 569.

<sup>51</sup> Angeliki E. Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System," 194–195.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Sabatino Lopez, "European Merchants in the Medieval Indies," 183.

<sup>53</sup> Abū Bakr al-Qutbī al-Ahrī, *Tārīkh-i Shaikh Uwais* (*A History of Shaikh Uwais: An Important Source for the History of Ādharbajjān in the Fourteenth Century*, trans. J.B. Van Loon (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1954)), (Persian text), 183; (English translation), 82; Zayn al-Dīn b. Ḥamd Allāh Muṣṭawfi Qazvīnī, *Zayl-i Tārīkh-i Guzīda*, ed. Īraj Afshār (Tehran: Naqsh-i Jahān, 1372 [1993]), 65; Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Zayl-i Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, ed. Khānbābā Bayānī, (Tehran: 'Ilmī, 1317 [1939]–), 190.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Sabatino Lopez, "European Merchants in the Medieval Indies," 183.

Anatolia to Azerbaijan for two years, due to the insecurity of the roads.<sup>55</sup> Despite Shaykh Uvays's promises to punish anyone who would attack merchant caravans in his domains, the Venetians did not return.<sup>56</sup> The account of Clavijo seems to indicate that Shaykh Uvays had a falling out with the Genoese as well. According to the Castilian ambassador, the Genoese had purchased land on which to build a castle. However, Shaykh Uvays began to regret the sale and told the Genoese to halt construction of their castle. He eventually had all of them beheaded.<sup>57</sup>

The Ilkhanid political elite, wide-ranging merchant networks, and the local economy of Tabriz all prospered from a close interrelationship made possible and sustained by a number of factors. Tabriz itself developed as an imperial capital and global trade center as a result of choices made by the Mongol dynastic and military elite ruling the region between the Oxus and Euphrates rivers beginning in the middle of the 13th century. Traditionally, when this territory had been united, its center of political gravity had lain in Mesopotamia. Empires that ruled the Iranian plateau depended on the Tigris and Euphrates valleys for wealth from agriculture, while also benefiting from trade passing between the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf to the south, to Syria and the Mediterranean to the west. However, before the first arrival of the Mongols in the time of Chinggis Qa'an, Mesopotamia had begun to yield fewer returns on investment in the land, and a combination of ecological and political factors contributed to political fragmentation and a growth of pastoralism in the central lands of the Abbasid Caliphate on the eve of Mongol rule. The dynasty established by Hülegü looked to Azerbaijan, and not Iraq, as its political and economic heartland, doubly advantageous for its suitability to pastoralism, as well as being a crossroads for trade along an east-west oriented trade route which had been revived and encouraged by the Mongols themselves. The dual elite of the Ilkhanate, comprising the Turkish and Mongolian military families, and the Persian administrators, as well as urban and agricultural notables who served the dynasty, came together, both at the *ordu* of the khan, and at Azerbaijan's principal city of Tabriz. The city became the site of urban expressions of the power and glory of the dynasty, as well as the place where revenue from trade in foreign

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<sup>55</sup> Luciano Petech, "Les Marchands Italiens dans l'Empire Mongol," 569–570; Muḥammad Javād Mashkūr, *Tārikh-i Tabriz tā Pāyān-i Qarn-i Nuhum-i Hijrī* (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āṣār-i Millī, 1352 [1973]), 593.

<sup>56</sup> Luciano Petech, "Les Marchands Italiens dans l'Empire Mongol," 570.

<sup>57</sup> Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane*, 151–152.

and local commodities could be collected, invested, and redistributed among the elite. Political decisions in Tabriz could have both local and far-reaching negative economic consequences, as illustrated in the cases of the introduction of paper money by Gaykhatu Khan's vizier and *sāhib-dīvān*, Ṣadr al-Dīn Zanjānī, as well as the antagonism of Italian merchants by the Chubanid rulers Shaykh Ḥasan and Malik Ashraf. The interests of the dynasty, military and administrative elite, as well as merchants, rested upon mutual interdependence and prosperity. Tabriz served the interests of all of these groups as the nexus of the pastoral, urban, and commercial communities and economies, which together were vital to the survival of the Ilkhanid political enterprise.

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## TABRIZ: INTERNATIONAL ENTREPÔT UNDER THE MONGOLS

Sheila S. Blair

In the autumn of 1271, the seventeen-year-old Venetian globetrotter Marco Polo set off on a journey to China with his father Niccolò and his uncle Maffeo. Traveling overland from Acre through Anatolia, the group reached the city of Tabriz in the spring of the following year. In memoirs dictated to the romance-writer Rustichello of Pisa nearly three decades later while in prison, Marco Polo opened his description of the Ilkhanid capital thus:

Tabriz is a large city in a province called Iraq, which has many cities and towns. Since Tabriz is the most splendid city in [the] province I will tell you about it. The people of Tabriz live by trade and industry; for cloth of gold and silk is woven here in great quantity and of great value. The city is so favorably situated that it is a market for merchandise from India and Baghdad, from Mosul and Hormuz, and from many other places; and many Latin merchants come here to buy the merchandise imported from foreign lands. It is also a market for precious stones, which are found here in great abundance. It is a city where good profits are made by traveling merchants.<sup>1</sup>

Marco Polo's description of Tabriz and other cities in his *Travels* is the product of an observant merchant and a professional romancer, an account that highlights his commercial interests and his desire to eulogize. By looking at material culture, we can learn more about this cosmopolitan city, for buildings and objects are not just illustrations to history but are themselves sources for history. The historian David Morgan recently acknowledged history's debt to art history, for it was the study of visual culture that opened up new paths of inquiry into this period, showing it to be one not just of conquest but also of culture.<sup>2</sup>

There are two ways to approach this investigation into the artistic evidence for the cosmopolitan nature of Tabriz under the Mongols from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth century. First, we can examine what art can tell us about the varied sources available in this international entrepôt, and second we can look at what things—whether goods, techniques,

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<sup>1</sup> Marco Polo, *The Travels*, trans. Ronald Latham (London: Penguin books, 1958), 57. Marco Polo used the name Tauris in the original.

<sup>2</sup> David Morgan, "The Mongol Empire in World History," *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 425–37, esp. 426.

motifs, or ideas—were taken from Tabriz and adopted elsewhere. In other words, we can examine both the import and the export sides of the situation. I will do both here.

Let us begin with the question of what sources were available in Tabriz at the turn of the fourteenth century around the time that Marco Polo (and other travelers) passed through the city. The answer is a great many, as Tabriz's range of contacts traversed Eurasia, from England to China.<sup>3</sup> One of the easiest ways to grasp the extraordinary breath of available sources is to look at a new artistic project undertaken at this time: the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh* or *Compendium of Chronicles*, written by and produced for the Ilkhanid vizier Rashīd al-Dīn (d. 718/1318).<sup>4</sup>

The idea of ateliers to produce illustrated books was new to Iran, as was this kind of world history. Books with pictures had been produced earlier in the region, but they had not been a major artistic form.<sup>5</sup> The Rab'ī Rashīdī, the scriptorium that Rashīd al-Dīn financed in his pious foundation outside Tabriz, was one of the first centers in Iran for the production of illustrated manuscripts. Furthermore, following stipulations laid out in the addenda appended to the endowment a few years after it had been drawn up in Rabī I, 709/August 1309,<sup>6</sup> the author required his workers to produce two large copies of his works (one in Arabic, the other in Persian) every year. The artists were thus pressed to complete work quickly.<sup>7</sup> Extant copies of the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh* show that they carried out their instructions faithfully.

The new text was an extraordinary enterprise, quite unlike anything produced previously by Muslim historians. The first part, begun for the Ilkhanid sultan Ghazan (r. 1295–1305), treated the history of the Mongols. As one of the sources closest to its subject, it has received much scrutiny from historians. No copy survives intact from Ilkhanid times, but some detached illustrations mounted in albums in Istanbul and Berlin are

<sup>3</sup> See also the paper by Patrick Wing in this volume.

<sup>4</sup> See also Birgitt Hoffmann's paper at this conference.

<sup>5</sup> Sheila S. Blair, "The Development of the Illustrated Book in Iran," *Muqarnas* 10 [Essays in Honor of Oleg Grabar] (1992): 266–74.

<sup>6</sup> For the dating of these addenda, which are conflated in the published edition of Rashīd al-Dīn's endowment, see Nourane Ben Azzouna's paper in this volume.

<sup>7</sup> Sheila S. Blair, "Writing and Illustrating History: Rashid al-Din's *Jami' al-tavarikh*," *Theoretical Approaches to the Transmission and Edition of Oriental Manuscripts*, papers from an international conference held in Istanbul in 2001, eds. Judith Pfeiffer and Manfred Kropp, *Beiruter Texte und Studien* 111 (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen-Morganländischen Gesellschaft, 2007), 57–66.

thought to have illustrated this part of the text.<sup>8</sup> These paintings include large double-page compositions that typically show important events from the reigns of various Mongol rulers, such as one double page in the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin (Diez A, folg. 70, s. 7 and 4) usually identified as illustrating Hülegü's capture of Baghdad in 656/1258.<sup>9</sup>

The second part of the *Compendium of Chronicles*, composed for Ghazan's brother and successor Öljejtü (r. 1305–15), is a history of the non-Mongol peoples of Eurasia. Less well studied by historians, it is, paradoxically, more innovative historiographically, as it represents the first attempt to write universal history. It testifies to the global vision of the Mongols. It also illustrates their desire to link themselves with past rulers of Iran, thereby legitimizing themselves as present rulers of the world.

About one half of an Arabic copy of the history of the non-Mongol peoples dated 714/1314–15 survives, divided between Edinburgh University Library (ms. Arab 20) and the Khalili Collection in London (ms. 727).<sup>10</sup> Its illustrations show the diverse range of sources available to artists in Ilkhanid Iran to illustrate their global vision. Since the text was such a new enterprise, often based on oral information, the artists had to devise new strategies to illustrate it, gathering pictorial material from whatever models they could find.

To illustrate scenes from the lives of Muḥammad and other figures from the Old Testament, for example, the artists in Rashīd al-Dīn's scriptorium turned to Christian devotional texts that Western travelers had brought to the Ilkhanid court. One well-known example is the scene showing the "Birth of the Prophet Muḥammad" (Edinburgh University Library, ms. 20, fol. 44a).<sup>11</sup> We do not know about any earlier illustrations of this subject in the Islamic tradition. Rather, as Sir Thomas Arnold pointed out already

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<sup>8</sup> Karin Rührdanz, "Illustrationen zu Rašīd al-Dīns Ta'riḫ-i mubārak-i Ġāzānī," *L'Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. D. Aigle (Tehran, 1997), 295–306; Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni, eds., *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), nos. 17–32; *Dschingis Khan und seine Erben: Dar Weltreich der Mongolen* (Munich: Nimer, 2005), nos. 279–302.

<sup>9</sup> *Dschingis Khan und seine Erben*, no. 279.

<sup>10</sup> David Talbot Rice, *The Illustrations to the 'World History' of Rashīd al-Dīn*, ed. Basil Gray (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1976); Basil Gray, *The World History of Rashīd al-Dīn: A Study of the Royal Asiatic Society Manuscript* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978); Sheila S. Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashīd al-Dīn's Illustrated History of the World*, The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, vol. XXVII, ed. Julian Raby (London: The Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1995).

<sup>11</sup> Komaroff and Carboni, *Legacy of Genghis Khan*, fig. 130.

in 1928,<sup>12</sup> the artists in Rashīd al-Dīn's scriptorium readily adapted a scene of the Nativity, transforming the Three Magi of the Christian story into waiting women and Joseph into the Prophet's uncle, although these figures play no part in Rashīd al-Dīn's narrative.

This is but one case in which artists in Tabriz copied from Western sources to illustrate the history of the non-Mongol peoples in Rashīd al-Dīn's *Compendium of Chronicles*.<sup>13</sup> Another is "The Death of Moses" (fig. 1), whose setting is loosely modeled on "St John on Mt Patmos," the opening illustration in copies of the *Apocalypse*.<sup>14</sup> The last book of the New Testament, also known as Revelation, this admonitory text with the visions of the Apostle John became particularly popular in England in the mid-thirteenth century, as shown by at least twenty surviving manuscripts. The text's description of the struggle of good against evil, the persecution of the Church, and the final establishment of the Heavenly Jerusalem seems to have had historical resonance there, where some even connected it with the coming of the Mongols from the East and rumors about their taking of Jerusalem. The first English copies of the text were probably made for clerics, but others were increasingly produced for the private devotions of aristocratic lay readers.<sup>15</sup> In the opening illustration in these English manuscripts, St John is typically depicted reclining amidst the mountains of Patmos, as in the Dyson-Perrins *Apocalypse* in the Getty Foundation, attributed to 1255–60 (fig. 2), and in another manuscript in the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, attributed to 1265–70.<sup>16</sup> Illustrations in both manuscripts are done in colored washes, the same technique used

<sup>12</sup> Sir Thomas Arnold, *Painting in Islam: A Study of the Place of Pictorial Art in Muslim Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1928), reprint (New York: Dover, 1965), 99.

<sup>13</sup> See also Terry Allen, "Byzantine Sources for the *Jāmi' al-tāwarikh* of Rashīd al-Dīn," *Ars Orientalis* 15 (1985): 121–36.

<sup>14</sup> Komaroff and Carboni, *Legacy of Genghis Khan*, fig. 174; *Grove Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner: "Apocalypse" by Suzanne Lewis.

<sup>15</sup> The Lambeth *Apocalypse*, for example, was made for Eleanor de Quincy, Countess of Winchester. It is the only surviving manuscript whose patron is specified. Nigel John Morgan: *The Lambeth Apocalypse: manuscript 209 in Lambeth Palace Library: a critical study* (London: Harvey Miller, 1990).

<sup>16</sup> The Dyson-Perrins *Apocalypse*, named for its former owner, the bibliophile and businessman whose family fortune derives from Lea & Perrins Worcestershire sauce, is now in the Getty Foundation (ms. Ludwig III, 1); see the museum's description at <http://www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide/artObjectDetails?artobj=1574>. A facsimile of the Gulbenkian *Apocalypse* (ms. L.A. 139) was published as *Apocalipsis Gulbenkian* (Barcelona: M. Moleiro, 2001). The codex probably belonged to Pope Clement IX (1667–1669). In the latter half of the nineteenth century, it passed to Cesare Battaglini de Rimini whose wife was a descendant of Clement IX and then to Henry Yates Thompson who owned it from 1899 to 1920, when it was bought by Calouste Gulbenkian.



Fig. 1: “The Death of Moses” from a copy of the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh* dated 714/1314–15 and probably made at Tabriz. Folio 37.0 × 25.5 cm. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, London, ms. 727, fol. 54b.

in copies of the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*, but on parchment, as opposed to the paper used as the support for the *Compendium of Chronicles*.

English manuscripts of the *Apocalypse* may well have served as sources for Mongol artists in Iran, for there were direct contacts between the two empires. Both Plantagenet Kings Edward I and II, for example, sent missions from London to the Ilkhanid court in hopes of securing an alliance against the Mamluks.<sup>17</sup> The embassy led by Sir Geoffrey Langley reached the court of the Ilkhanid Gaykhatu in 1292.<sup>18</sup> Documents from the embassy's mission from Genoa to Tabriz preserved in the Public Record Office in London show that in addition to Langley, the group comprised several esquires, a chaplain, four men-at-arms, a trumpeter, a barber, three falconers, a cook, and several *garçons*. The mission brought several gyrfalcons as diplomatic gifts, but the chaplain and others may well have carried personal devotional literature as well.

<sup>17</sup> Laurence Lockhart, “Relations between Edward I and Edward II and the Ilkhans of Persia,” *Iran* 6 (1968): 23–31.

<sup>18</sup> See also Langley's biography by D.O. Morgan in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available on-line at <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.bc.edu/view/article/60822?docPos=2>.



Fig. 2: "Saint John on Mt Patmos," from the Dyson-Perrins copy of the *Apocalypse*, probably made 1255-60 at London. Folio 31.9 × 22.5 cm. J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig III 1, fol. 2.

In a parallel fashion, artists in Tabriz looked to Chinese models to illustrate the history of China in the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh*.<sup>19</sup> In the section recounting the reigns of individual emperors, the artists copied from Chinese wood-block-printed scrolls, but without understanding all the implications of the original iconography. For example, on the page depicting the emperors Shi Huangdi of the Qin dynasty and Gao Zu of the Han dynasty (fig. 3), the emperors are shown reclining, but seem to float awkwardly in mid-air as the artist did not depict the requisite pillows used in the originals. The Ilkhanid artists also did not understand all the implications of the sartorial details. Emperor Shi Huangdi, for example, wears inappropriate headgear, the soft cap with tails donned by servants rather than the imperial mortarboard. In other cases (e.g., Khalili Collection ms. 727, fol. 14a), the emperor is shown with his hands covered like a servant.

In a similar way, artists in Rashīd al-Dīn's scriptorium adapted illustrations in Chinese geographies. The scene depicting the "Mountains between India and Tibet" (Khalili Collection ms. 727, fol. 21a), for example, resembles the map of the Yinxian border (Ningbo) in a copy of the *Baoqing Simingzhi*, a gazetteer of the Siming region printed in 1272.<sup>20</sup> Not only is the general composition similar in both illustrations, but so is the way in which rivers are represented by segmented patterns.

This borrowing between cultures has often been explained as a consequence of the so-called *pax Mongolica*, when Mongols ruled much of Eurasia between 1250 and 1350, but as the historian Peter Jackson pointed out recently, there was not much peace in this *pax*.<sup>21</sup> Trade flourished despite—rather than because of—political rivalries, with the Mongols not merely a medieval UPS (United Parcel System), shuttling around the steppe delivering packages of "influences" but rather active enablers in facilitating cultural transmission in a wide range of fields from historiography, geography and cartography, astronomy, agriculture, cuisine, medicine, and printing to art.<sup>22</sup> This was a period of active trade in commodities and ideas, artistic and otherwise.

<sup>19</sup> Blair, *Compendium of Chronicles*.

<sup>20</sup> Komaroff and Carboni, *Legacy of Genghis Khan*, fig. 162; Yuka Kadoi, *Islamic Chinoiserie: The Art of Mongol Iran* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 169–70 and figs. 5.8 and 5.9.

<sup>21</sup> Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221–1410* (Harlow: Persona/Longman, 2005), 309–10.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Allsen, *Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) and idem, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*



Fig. 3: "Emperors Shi Huangdi of the Qin dynasty and Gao Zu of the Han dynasty," from a copy of the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh* dated 714/1314–15 and probably made at Tabriz. Folio 37.0 × 25.5 cm. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, London, ms. 727, fol. 11a.

The *Jāmi' al-tavārīkh* exemplifies such active exchange between cultures. The text contains a long section on the history of Tibet. Such a focus on that region is not surprising because of the Mongols' interest in the Red-hat Buddhism practiced there. The Great Khan Qubilai adopted this form of Buddhism in China under the monk Phagspa (1235–80). Qubilai's brother Hülegü, founder of the Ilkhanid line in Iran, may also have adopted Buddhism, which grew particularly strong there under his grandson Arghun (r. 1284–91) before Ghazan's official conversion of the Ilkhanid state to Islam in 695/1295.<sup>23</sup>

Such an interest in Tibetan Buddhism was furthered by trade missions, as shown by the survival of Mongol textiles in monasteries in this mountainous region. Virtually none of these textiles has survived in the lands where they were made, where they were literally worn to death, but scholars have begun to document their production through survivals elsewhere, first from European treasuries and tombs and more recently from Tibetan monasteries. Following the dissolution of these monasteries after the Chinese occupation of the region in the 1950s, many textiles have appeared on the art market, though their provenance is hard to document and often conjectural.

Textiles said to have come from Tibet include a group of five carpets, all showing stylized animals with raised forelegs.<sup>24</sup> The largest and best known of the group is an intact carpet in New York (fig. 4).<sup>25</sup> A similar carpet showing a stylized animal with raised foreleg is depicted in the greatest manuscript produced for the Ilkhanids: a magnificent, though sadly dismembered, copy of the Persian national epic dubbed the *Great Mongol Shahnama*. The carpet is shown there in the opening illustration, spread under the throne of the evil Zakhak in the scene of his enthronement (fig. 5).<sup>26</sup> On the basis of this comparison, Jon Thompson and other scholars have recently pinpointed Tabriz and the surrounding Ilkhanid

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). See also the comments by Morgan in "Mongol Empire in World History," 426–27.

<sup>23</sup> Sheila S. Blair, "Religious Art of the Ilkhanids," *Legacy of Genghis Khan*, 104–33.

<sup>24</sup> Jon Thompson, "Carpets in the Fifteenth Century," *Carpets and Textiles in the Iranian World 1400–1700* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2010), 30–57, especially note 54.

<sup>25</sup> Daniel Walker, "Animal Rug," *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (Fall 1990), 12–13.

<sup>26</sup> Oleg Grabar and Sheila Blair, *Epic Images and Contemporary History: The Illustrations of the Great Mongol Shahnama* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), no. 1. Richard Ettinghausen, "New Light on early animal carpets," *Aus der Welt der islamischen Kunst: Festschrift für Ernst Kühnel*, ed. R. Ettinghausen (Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 1959), 93–116.



Fig. 4: Wool animal carpet, Tabriz or environs, fourteenth century. 153 × 125.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, Louis V. Bell Fund and Fletcher, Pfeiffer and Rogers Funds, 1990 (1990.61).

domains as a major center of carpet production in the early fourteenth century.<sup>27</sup>

The Ilkhanid realm and its capital Tabriz were certainly the center for the production of other textiles, including the luxurious lampas weaves of silk and gold called *nasīj* in Persian, *nakh* in Arabic, and *panni tartarici*

<sup>27</sup> See the evidence in Thompson, "Carpets in the fifteenth century."



Fig. 5: "Enthronement of Zakhak" from the *Great Mongol Shahnama*, probably Tabriz, 1330s. Painting 24.3 × 19.7 cms. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, Purchase F1923.5.

(Tartar cloths) in the Italian sources.<sup>28</sup> The most spectacular set, also said to have come from Tibet, comprises large panels, each measuring more than  $2 \times 1$  meter, decorated with double niches that form an arcade when fitted around the interior of a tent to create textile architecture. Parts of five panels are now in the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha (TE.40), with a further half-panel in the David Collection in Copenhagen (40/1997).<sup>29</sup> These sumptuous silk panels have been localized to eastern Iran or Central Asia ca. 1300 because of their technique and iconography that mixes Chinese motifs such as peonies, lotus flowers, and dragons with standard Iranian ones such as roundels with paired birds.

One example of such “Tartar cloth” can be firmly localized to the Ilkhanid court, almost certainly at their capital Tabriz, specifically mentioned by Marco Polo as a center for production of this “cloth of gold:” a striped silk now in the Dom and Diocesan Museum in Vienna (fig. 6).<sup>30</sup> The design on it comprises a wide band of staggered polylobed medallions and ornamental diamonds with peacocks in the interstices. This band is flanked by narrow bands of running animals and inscriptions, including one with the name and titles that the Ilkhanid ruler Abū Saʿīd (r. 1318–35) assumed after 1319. This silk must therefore have been an official fabric (*tirāz*), not a commercial trade good produced for export. After Abū Saʿīd died without direct heir, the textile with his name was no longer useful, and it probably passed into the hands of an Italian merchant, who quickly exported it to Europe. There, the textile was clearly deemed a luxury good because it was soon transformed into the burial robe of the Hapsburg prince, Archduke Rudolf IV, who died in Milan a mere three decades later in 1365 and was buried in it in the ducal crypt in St. Stephen’s Cathedral in his capital, Vienna, the city where the silk remains today.

<sup>28</sup> Anne E. Wardwell, “*Panni Tartarici*: Eastern Islamic Silks woven with Gold and Silver (13th and 14th Centuries),” *Islamic Art* 3 (1988–89): 95–174.

<sup>29</sup> Jon Thompson, *Silk: 13th to 18th Centuries: Treasures from the Museum of Islamic Art, Qatar* (Doha: National Council for Culture, Arts and Heritage, 2004), no. 19; for the Copenhagen panel, see Komaroff and Carboni, *Legacy of Genghis Khan*, no. 73 and Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, *Cosmophilia: Islamic Art from the David Collection, Copenhagen* (Chestnut Hill, MA: McMullen Museum at Boston College, 2006), no. 12.

<sup>30</sup> Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250–1800*, Pelican History of Art (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 20; Marcus Ritter, “Kunst mit Botschaft: Der Gold-Seide-Stoff für den Ilchan Abū Saʿīd von Iran (Grabgewand Rudolfs IV. in Wien)—Rekonstruktion, Typus, Repräsentationsmedium,” and Márta Járó, “Der Metallfaden im Wiener Gold-Seide-Stoff für Abū Saʿīd,” *Beiträge zur Islamischen Kunst und Archäologie*, vol. 2, eds. Markus Ritter and Lorenz Korn (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2010), 105–35 and 136–42.



Fig. 6: Striped silk made for the Ilkhanid ruler Abū Saʿīd, probably at Tabriz, 1319–35, and then used for the burial robe of the Hapsburg prince, Archduke Rudolf IV (d. 1365). Dom and Diocesan Museum, Vienna.

Textiles, whether carpets or cloth of gold, were not the only export from Tabriz. The city was also the locus for the diffusion of ideas, including architectural ones.<sup>31</sup> We can trace this chain of transmission by looking at the few architectural remains that have been preserved in Tabriz. By far the largest is the Mosque of ‘Alī Shāh, sometimes called the Arg or citadel as it was used in this fashion by the Qajars in the nineteenth century (figs. 7a and b).<sup>32</sup> It comprises a single giant *t̄wān* (a barrel vaulted space

<sup>31</sup> The basic survey of architecture in this period is Donald Wilber, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran: The Il Khanid Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955). The major buildings are covered in Blair and Bloom, *Art and Architecture of Islam 1250–1800*, chapter 2, 5–20. See also “Ilkhanid architecture” by Sheila Blair in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* and “Religious architecture in Iran under the Ilkhanids and their successors” in the *Cambridge History of Religious Architecture* (forthcoming).

<sup>32</sup> Wilber, *Architecture of Islamic Iran*, no. 51; Blair and Bloom, *Art and Architecture of Islam*, 11–12 and fig. 13; Sheila S. Blair “Arg-e ‘Alī Shāh,” *Dā’irat al-Ma’ārif-i Buzurg-i*



Figs. 7a–b: Interior and exterior views of the *qibla iwān* in the Mosque of ‘Alī Shāh in Tabriz, ca. 1315. Author’s photos.

open at one end), measuring  $65 \times 30$  meters. Enormous walls ten meters thick were needed to support the vault, whose springing lines are set some twenty-five meters above ground level. Contemporary sources report that this tremendous construction was intended to surpass the celebrated Sasanian *īwān* at Ctesiphon, which measures 50 by 25 meters and likewise was roofed with a huge parabolic vault thirty-five meters high.<sup>33</sup> The arch at Ctesiphon was the focal point of the palace probably built by Khosrow I Anushirwan (r. 531–79), and by imitating—and slightly surpassing—the major pre-Islamic structure in the Ilkhanid winter capital, the mosque of ‘Alī Shāh was undoubtedly meant to show that the Ilkhanids had surpassed even the greatest of the pre-Islamic kings of Iran.

While the mosque of ‘Alī Shāh may have looked backward for its prototype, it in turn provided the model for future constructions, both in Iran and elsewhere. Like many other buildings in the Ilkhanid period, the mosque of ‘Alī Shāh was part of a multi-functional complex that provided instruction for both scholars and sufis. The Moroccan globetrotter Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who visited the site in 1327, reported that it included a theological school (*madrassa*) to the right as one faces the *qibla* and a hospice (*zāwiya*) to the left.<sup>34</sup> The architectural historian Donald Wilber reconstructed the plan of these buildings (fig. 8), noting that their footprint is conjectural, based on the plans of contemporary buildings and sized to fit his reconstruction of the original *īwān*, which may have fallen because it was weakened by the doorway in the western wall to the *madrassa*.<sup>35</sup>

Although only the bare brick remains of this enormous construction, further details about its original decoration are included in the description by a handsome *dawādār* who accompanied the Mamluk *amīr* Aytamish on a mission to the court of the Ilkhanid ruler Abū Sa‘īd in 1322.<sup>36</sup> According to the Egyptian envoy, the *īwān* faced a huge and splendid court paved with marble and surrounded by an arcade. In the center of the court was

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*Islāmī* (Great Islamic Encyclopedia) (Tehran: Markaz-i Dā‘irat al-Ma‘ārif-i Buzurg-i Islāmī, forthcoming). English synopsis trans. as “Arg-i ‘Alī Shāh.” *Encyclopaedia Islamica* 3 (2011): 610–614.

<sup>33</sup> *Grove Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1996), 18: 483–84 “Ktesiphon” by G. Herrmann.

<sup>34</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa A.D. 1325–1354*, trans. H.A.R. Gibb (reprint Delhi: Manoharlal Publishers, 1993), 2: 345.

<sup>35</sup> Wilber, *Architecture of Islamic Iran*, no. 51.

<sup>36</sup> Donald Little, “Notes on Aytamish, a Mongol Mamluk,” *Die islamische Welt zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit: Festschrift für Hans Roemer zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. U. Haarmann and P. Bachmann, Beirut Texte und Studien 22 (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen-Morganländischen Gesellschaft, 1979), 387–401.

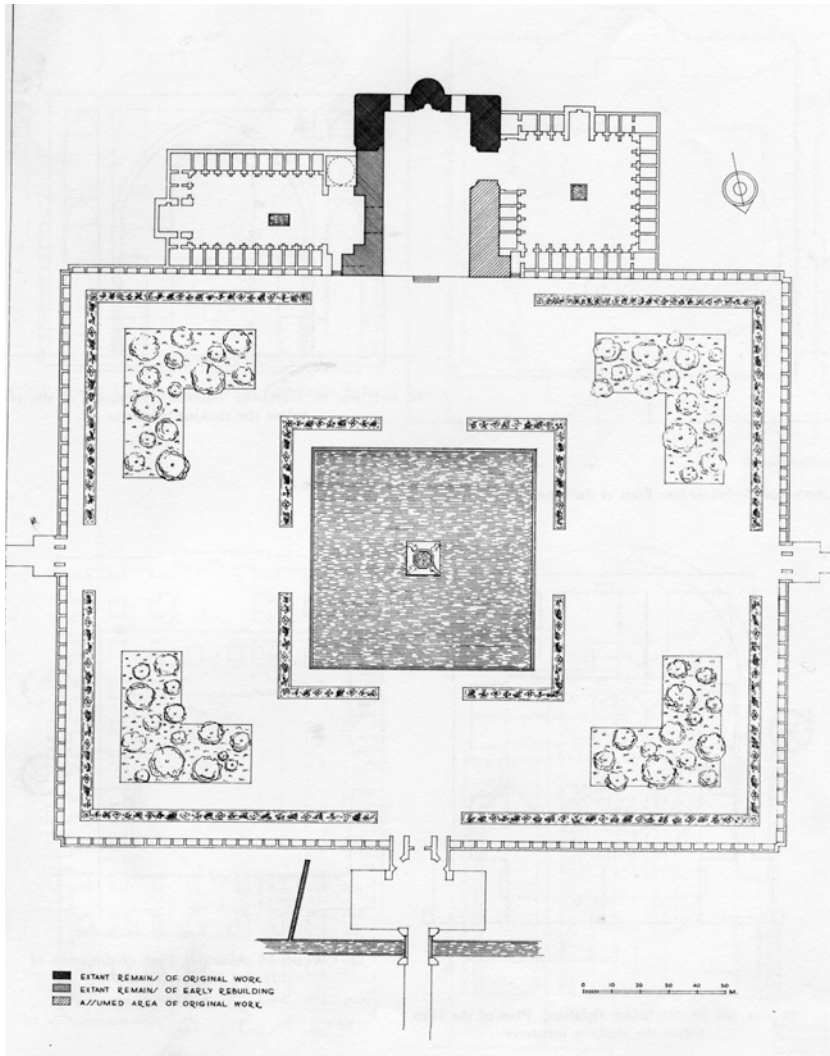


Fig. 8: Plan of the Mosque of 'Ali Shāh in Tabriz, ca. 1315. Adapted from Donald Wilber, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran: The Il Khanid Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pl. 30.

a square pool that measured one hundred fifty cubits on a side. In the center of the pool was a platform whose sides had statues of lions that spouted water. Above the platform was an octagonal fountain with two jets. None of this has survived, but the statues of lions that spouted water recall the bases of the four columns around the pool in the *tālār* of the seventeenth-century Safavid palace of Chihil Sutūn at Isfahan.<sup>37</sup>

The Mosque of ‘Alī Shāh in Tabriz also provided the model for buildings erected by the Ilkhanids’ rivals, the Mamluks in Cairo, notably the Mosque of Sultan Ḥasan (1357–64), the largest and most impressive of all Mamluk buildings in the city (fig. 9).<sup>38</sup> According to the Mamluk historian al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442), the *īwān* in the mosque was meant to be five cubits wider than the arch at Ctesiphon, but several features of its layout and function suggest that it also evoked Ilkhanid models. One telling architectural feature is the position of the tomb chamber behind the *īwān*, an arrangement used often in Ilkhanid architecture, both surviving (e.g., the tomb of Öljeitü’s son at Baṣṭām) and destroyed (e.g., Rashīd al-Dīn’s tomb in the Rab‘-i Rashīdī in Tabriz).<sup>39</sup> One functional feature is the similarity between the prayer rituals carried out in the tomb chambers in both Tabriz and Cairo, notably the continuous reciting of the Qur’an round the clock near the window grille.<sup>40</sup>

Not surprisingly, patrons in both Ilkhanid Iran and Mamluk Egypt commissioned similar large Qur’ān manuscripts with which to carry out such readings in their tombs. The classic type of Ilkhanid imperial Quran is a thirty-volume manuscript copied on very large “baghdādī”-size sheets of paper measuring some 70 x 100 cm. A single volume of one such manuscript commissioned by Rashīd al-Dīn for his “pious foundation,” probably the Rab‘-i Rashīdī in Tabriz (Istanbul, TKS EH 248), shows the typical format of five lines per page used in these imperial manuscripts.<sup>41</sup> These enormous copies were designed for public display, as the spacious layout

<sup>37</sup> Often illustrated; Sussan Babaie, *Isfahan and its Palaces* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 187 and n. 79, sees the lions as alluding to the well-established Solomonic iconography of kingship.

<sup>38</sup> Abdallah Kahil, *The Sultan Hasan Complex in Cairo 1357–1364: A Case Study in the Formation of Mamluk Style* (Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg, 2008).

<sup>39</sup> Robert Hillenbrand, “The Flanged Tomb Tower at Baṣṭām,” and Sheila S. Blair, “The inscription from the tomb tower at Bastam,” *Art et Société dans le Monde Iranien*, ed. C. Adle (Paris: Institut français d’Iranologie de Téhéran, 1982), 237–61 and 263–286; Sheila S. Blair, “Ilkhanid architecture and society: an analysis of the endowment deed of the Rab‘-i Rashīdī,” *Iran* 22 (1984): 67–90.

<sup>40</sup> Kahil, *Sultan Hasan*, 68.

<sup>41</sup> David James, *Qur’ans of the Mamluks* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988), no. 46.



Fig. 9: *Qibla iwān* in the Mosque of Sultan Ḥasan in Cairo, 1357–64. Author's photo.

was a prodigious waste of paper, meant to exemplify the power of the patrons. The paper used in them is as fine as the illumination, with large frontispieces showing block patterns based on tile decoration. Such exquisite illumination is also found in other manuscripts prepared for the same patron, notably copies of his theological works, the *Majmū'a al-Rashīdiyya*, one in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. arabe 2324) and the other in Doha (figs. 10a and b), both transcribed by Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad al-Amīn known as *zūd-nivīs al-baghdādī*, the "speedy writer from Baghdad."<sup>42</sup> The copy in Doha is particularly important, as it is the only one of these volumes prepared for Rashīd al-Dīn that specifies Tabriz as the site of production.

Tabriz set the model for Cairene architecture not just in the scale of buildings and their furnishings, but also in their decoration. The springing lines of the *qibla īwān* in the mosque of Sultan Ḥasan, for example, are decorated with a large (two-meter) band of exquisitely carved stucco decoration with a Qur'anic text set on a foliate ground. The upper part of the band displays a palmette frieze superbly carved on three levels. Such fine stucco carving with inscriptions on a foliate ground and palmette friezes on several levels was a typical feature of Ilkhanid architecture, seen, for example, in the magnificent *miḥrāb* that the Ilkhanid sultan Öljeytü ordered added to the congregational mosque in Isfahan in 710/1310 to mark his conversion to Shi'ism.<sup>43</sup>

The Iranian technique of carved stucco had been introduced to Cairo already in the early fourteenth century under the reign of Sultan Ḥasan's predecessor al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (r. 1294–1330 with interruptions). His *madrassa* erected between 1295 and 1303 on Bayn al-Qaṣrayn, the main street of Cairo, for example, preserves a stucco *miḥrāb* with pierced stucco bosses.<sup>44</sup> This type of pierced stucco had long been used in Iran, as in the *miḥrāb* in the mosque of Urumiyya (formerly Riżā'iyya) to the west of Tabriz, signed by 'Abd al-Mu'min ibn Sharaf Shāh, the designer of Tabriz

<sup>42</sup> For the Paris copy, see the preliminary comments by Francis Richard, *Splendeurs persanes: Manuscrits du XII<sup>e</sup> au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997), no. 12 and the fuller discussion by Nourane Ben Azzouna in this volume; the Doha copy is still unpublished.

<sup>43</sup> Sheila S. Blair, "Writing about Faith: Epigraphic Evidence for the development of Shi'ism in Iran," *People of the Prophet's House* ed. Fahmida Suleman (London: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

<sup>44</sup> K.A.C. Creswell, *Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 234–40; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks: A History of the Architecture and its Culture* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), 152–56.





Figs. 10a–b: Frontispiece and text page from a copy of Rashīd al-Dīn's theological treatise, *Majmū'a al-Rashīdiyya*, dated Sha'bān-Ramaḍān 711/December 1311–January 1312 and copied at Tabriz. Page 46.3 × 34.5 cm; written area 37.5 × 26 cm. Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, ms. 6, folios 22a and 259b.

(*al-naqqāsh al-Tabrizī*) in 676/1277.<sup>45</sup> Although provincial, the *miḥrāb* in Urumiyya suggests what must have been available in the capital itself, especially as the craftsman designates himself as a “Tabrizi.”

Other kinds of architectural decoration used in the Ilkhanid lands were also introduced to Cairo at this time. The most colorful is the technique known as complete tile mosaic (meaning that it covers the surface completely) in three colors: light and dark blue and white. According to the Mamluk historian al-Maqrīzī, a team from Tabriz came to Cairo to make minarets like those (now destroyed) in the mosque of ‘Alī Shāh. The German art historian Michael Meinecke documented the Tabrizi artisans’ presence in Cairo in the 1330s and 1340s, when they decorated such buildings as the minarets of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s mosque on the citadel, begun in 1318 and enlarged in 1335.<sup>46</sup>

Exactly this type of multicolor tile mosaic had been developed in Tabriz and surrounding areas of northwestern Iran at the beginning of the fourteenth century.<sup>47</sup> Fragments found in the 1930s at the Ghazaniyya, the tomb complex erected west of Tabriz by the Ilkhanid sultan Ghazan, show two colors of blue (light and dark blue). Others from the Rab‘-i Rashīdī erected east of Tabriz contrast these two colors against a plaster or terra cotta ground and use three colors (light and dark blue and black). The tomb of Ghazan’s brother and successor Öljejtü, erected at Sultaniyya between 1305 and 1313, shows tile decoration in the same two blues (light and dark blue) on the exterior cornice and spandrels. The interior, redecorated some time after 1313 but before 1320, adds a third color, white. It is these three colors that are used on the minarets of al-Nāṣir’s mosque on the citadel, and hence the tile mosaic there must have been part of the renovations in 1330, rather than the original construction in 1318.

These architectural forms and techniques were transferred from Tabriz and its environs not only to sites outside Iran but also to others within it, particularly in the central Iranian cities of Isfahan and Yazd, which flourished under the patronage of the Muzaffarid dynasty that ruled the region from 1314 to 1393. The founder, Sharaf al-Dīn Muẓaffar, had been appointed governor of Maybud near Isfahan. In 1314 his son Mubāriz

<sup>45</sup> Wilber, *Ilkhanid Architecture*, no. 16.

<sup>46</sup> Michael Meinecke, “Die mamlukischen Fayencemosaikdekorationen: Eine Werkstatt aus Tabriz in Kairo (1330–1350),” *Kunst des Orients* 9 (1976–77): 85–144.

<sup>47</sup> Donald Wilber, “The Development of Mosaic Faience in Islamic Architecture in Iran,” *Ars Islamica* 6/1 (1939): 16–47.

al-Dīn Muḥammad (r. 1314–58; d. 1364) succeeded him in this post, and in turn added Yazd (1319), Kirman (1340), Shiraz (1354), and finally Isfahan (1356) to his domains, wresting much of southern Iran from the control of the rival Inju governors and even briefly holding Tabriz.

Looking at buildings preserved in Yazd allows us to trace the transmission of architectural ideas from northwestern to central Iran. One example is the Shamsiyya, the tomb complex of Rashīd al-Dīn's son-in-law Shams al-Dīn that was completed in 733/1332–33.<sup>48</sup> Like his father-in-law's complex in Tabriz, the one in Yazd combined a mosque and adjoining *madrasa*, library, hospital, hospice for descendants of the Prophet, bazaar, and bath. Surviving parts include a narrow arcaded forecourt with a monumental *īwān* flanked by rectangular halls and leading to the rectangular tomb chamber (fig. 11). According to the local history, the *Tārikh-i Yazd*, after Shams al-Dīn died in Tabriz, his body was shipped to Yazd in a fancy ebony and sandalwood casket along with his marble tombstone. The text also tells us that plans for the tomb complex were drawn up in Tabriz and sent to Yazd.

The major innovation in the plan of the Shamsiyya is the use of multiple rectangular halls.<sup>49</sup> These rectangular halls must have had some sort of innovative transverse vaulting. As a dome can be used to cover only a square, different forms of vaulting are needed to cover other spaces such as a rectangle, a form often desirable because of its directionality and flexible dimensions. The simplest covering for a large rectangle is a barrel vault, but its walls cannot be pierced lest they collapse, exactly what happened in Tabriz in the mosque of 'Alī Shāh. To circumvent the problem of piercing the walls of a barrel vault and thereby admit light into a rectangular hall, architects in Iran developed a sophisticated system of throwing transverse arches across the long sides of a rectangle and then joining these transverse arches with ramping vaults that can be pierced with lanterns. The use of multiple rectangular halls in Shams al-Dīn's tomb chamber whose plans were developed in Tabriz suggests that builders there were already playing with such methods of transverse vaulting, although no examples have survived in the capital city and its environs.

<sup>48</sup> Īraj Afshār, *Yādgārḥā-yi Yazd* (Tehran: Ziba, 1965–1975), no. 137.

<sup>49</sup> There are at least four rectangular halls in the complex: one for the tomb chamber behind the *īwān*, two flanking the *īwān*, and a fourth in the back corner.



Fig. 11: *Qibla iwān* in the Shamsiyya complex at Yazd, completed in 733/1332–33. Author's photo.

Yazd underwent a building boom under Muzaffarid rule, when at least twelve mosques, one hundred *madrāsas*, and two hundred tombs were erected in addition to a new congregational mosque.<sup>50</sup> Such a spate of building encouraged more technological innovation in tile decoration and vaulting, as shown in the spectacular additions to the Friday Mosque, especially the winter prayer halls added between 765/1364 and 777/1375–76 (fig. 12).<sup>51</sup> These new methods of breaking up space then became the basis for the innovative forms of squinch net vaulting developed under the Timurids in Central Asia.<sup>52</sup>

Builders working under the Muzaffarids in central Iran also developed the palette of complete tile mosaic that had been initiated earlier in the fourteenth century under the Ilkhanids in Tabriz and northwestern Iran, adding yellowish brown and green to the black, light and dark blue, and white used previously. Together with the unglazed surface, these colors comprise the full palette or *haft rang* (seven colors). The geometric designs typical of northwestern Iran early in the century were also softened into more curvilinear floral patterns. The Madrasa-yi Imāmī erected in Isfahan in the middle of the fourteenth century is the first dated example of the full palette to survive, but many examples can be found in slightly later buildings in both Isfahan and Yazd.<sup>53</sup>

We know little of what happened in Tabriz later in the fourteenth century and early fifteenth when it became the capital of the Jalayirids, the Mongol dynasty that took over in western Iran after the dissolution of the Ilkhanids in the middle of the fourteenth century. Sultan Uways I (r. 1356–74) moved the capital from Baghdad to Tabriz, where he built the Dawlatkhāna, a huge palace described (probably hyperbolically) as having twenty thousand rooms decorated with paintings and used into the following century.<sup>54</sup> The Spanish traveler Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, who passed through the city in 1404 en route to Timur's capital in Central Asia, mentions the palace as one of the few standing buildings in a flourishing city with at least 200,000 householders.<sup>55</sup> The Timurids captured Tabriz

<sup>50</sup> Afshār, *Yazd*.

<sup>51</sup> Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, *The Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), no. 221.

<sup>52</sup> Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture*, 110–11.

<sup>53</sup> Douglas Pickett, *Early Persian Tilework: The Medieval Flowering of Kāshī* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1997), 127.

<sup>54</sup> Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture*, 30–31.

<sup>55</sup> Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane 1403–6*, trans. Guy Le Strange (London: Harper, 1928), 151–55.



Fig. 12: Transverse vaulting in the west prayer hall added to the congregational mosque at Yazd, 765–77/1364–76. Author's photo.

repeatedly, destroying many of its public monuments and carrying its artisans off to western Central Asia.

We can glimpse some idea of these splendid but now destroyed buildings in Tabriz from manuscripts made there, such as a copy of Nizāmī's *Khamsa* transcribed at the capital (*dār al-saltanat*) Tabriz circa 1405–10 by Mīr 'Alī ibn Ḥasan *al-sulṭānī*, the canonizer of *nasta'liq* script. The depiction of Khusraw in front of Shīrīn's palace (fig. 13) shows a stunning multi-story pavilion completely covered in blue and gold tile. It represents a generic version of the Persianate pavilion.

Unfortunately no traces of such palaces survive in Tabriz, but the major building that does—the Muẓaffariyya, the tomb complex erected in 870/1465 for the Qara Qyunlu sultan Abū al-Muẓaffar Jahānshāh—shows that such buildings lavishly covered with tile decoration must have existed.<sup>56</sup> The Muẓaffariya has long been known colloquially as the Maṣjid-i Kabūd or Blue Mosque because of its exterior and interior sheathing in tile mosaic, predominantly dark blue. The building preserves some of the finest glazed revetment in all of Iran, not only tile mosaic

<sup>56</sup> Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture*, no. 214.



Fig. 13: "Khusraw in front of Shīrīn's palace" from a copy of Nizāmī's *Khamṣa* transcribed ca. 1405–10 by Mīr 'Alī ibn Ḥasan *al-sultānī* at Tabriz. Painting 25.7 × 18.4 cm. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, Purchase F1931.36.

(fig. 14) but also luster tiles (quite exceptional in Iran at this time), tiles stenciled with gold, and underglaze-painted tiles.<sup>57</sup> Such quality and variety shows that there must have been a continuous tradition of tileworking in Tabriz over the course of the fifteenth century, and indeed we can document that tradition through the work of Tabrizi émigrés elsewhere.

One well-known example of work by Tabrizi émigrés is the Yeşil Cami at Bursa (1419–20), the tomb complex ordered by the Ottoman sultan Mehmed I Çelebi in 1412, with construction completed in 822/1419–20.<sup>58</sup> Like the Blue Mosque in Tabriz, the building once had a porch with five domes and is remarkable for its lavish tile decoration on both exterior and interior.<sup>59</sup> The spectacular decoration includes a dado of hexagonal monochrome tiles with stenciled gold patterns and an elaborate *mih̄rāb* (height 10 meters) with a molded frame and pyramidal *muqarnas* hood executed in a combination of tile mosaic and underglaze *cuerda seca*, exactly the techniques used in the Blue Mosque. The tilework is signed on the colonette to the right of the *mih̄rāb* “work of the masters of Tabriz.” An inscription over the loggia states that the decoration was finished by ‘Alī ibn Ilyās ibn ‘Alī in 827/1424. Better known as Naqqāsh ‘Alī (‘Alī the designer), he had been carted off to Samarqand,<sup>60</sup> and while it is possible that the workers in the atelier could have come directly from Samarqand to Bursa, the wording of the inscription, *ustādān-i Tabrīz*, rather than *ustādān-i Tabrīzī*, suggests a more direct connection to Tabriz.

Tabriz remained a center of art and patronage at the end of the fifteenth century. Walter Denny suggested that the layout and motifs in the Blue Mosque find close parallels in the carpets woven in western Anatolia in the Uşak district,<sup>61</sup> and both he and Jon Thompson now attribute the group known as Para-Mamluk carpets to fifteenth-century Tabriz.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Sandra Aube, “La Mosquée bleue de Tabriz (1465): Remarques sur la céramique architecturale Qarā Qoyunlu,” *Studia Iranica* 37 (2008): 241–77; Bernard O’Kane, “Tiles of Many Hues: The Development of Iranian *Cuerda Seca* tiles and the transfer of Tilework Technology,” *And Diverse are Their Hues: Color in Islamic art and Architecture*, eds. Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair (London: Yale University Press, 2011), 175–203, esp. 189.

<sup>58</sup> Blair and Bloom, *Art and Architecture of Islam*, 142–44.

<sup>59</sup> The porch was not built, but arch springs on the façade indicate that one was intended.

<sup>60</sup> Lisa Golombek, “Timurid Potters Abroad,” *Oriente Moderno* n.s. 15/2 (1996): 577–86.

<sup>61</sup> Walter Denny, *The Classical Tradition in Anatolian Carpets* (London: Scala, 2002) and “Anatolia, Tabriz and the carpet design revolution,” *Carpets and Textiles in the Iranian World 1400–1700* (Oxford: Ashmolean, 2010), 58–71.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* and Thompson, “Fifteenth century carpets.”



Fig. 14: Tile mosaic decoration on the interior of the Muzaffariyya complex in Tabriz, 870/1465. Author's photo.

Although little secular architecture of the period has survived in Tabriz, we can get an idea of what it looked like from manuscript illustrations and textual descriptions. The earliest depiction of the city (fig. 15) is found in the unique copy of the *Mecmû'-i Menazil* (Compilation of the Halting Places), compiled in 944/1537–38 by Matrakçı Nasuh, the Ottoman mathematician and historian who accompanied Sultan Süleyman on his campaigns in Iran and Iraq.<sup>63</sup> The city views in this manuscript are stylized and schematized. All use an architectural shorthand in which buildings are enumerated by type using similar conventions.

Matrakçı Nasuh's depiction of Tabriz shows a walled city bisected by a river, with several buildings depicted on the left or north side of the city, an area developed by the Aqquyunlu around the Bâgh-i Şâhibâbâd. The structure in the center is clearly a religious building, identifiable by its dome and flanking minarets. It represents the mosque of Ḥasan Pâdshâh, part of the complex of buildings by Abû'l-Naşr Uzun Ḥasan and also known as the Naşriyya.<sup>64</sup> Founded by his father Sultan Ya'qûb in 882/1478 and finished seven years later, the Naşriyya was destroyed in 1780, and the site rebuilt by the Qajars. The Safavid chronicler Iskandar Beg mentions the mosque's minaret as the place from which Shâh Ṭahmâsp had an unfortunate rebel, Muḥammad Şâlih, encased in a wine jar and hurled to his death.<sup>65</sup> Ottoman chroniclers such as Ḥâjji Khalifa add that the mosque was even larger than the Blue Mosque (the Muẓaffariyya) and had beautiful marble work.<sup>66</sup>

In Matrakçı Nasuh's depiction of Tabriz, the religious complex in the center of the northern quarter is set between by two garden precincts, both walled and rectangular. The smaller one at the top or east represents the Bâgh-i Şâhibâbâd. The larger one at the bottom or west is larger, with several buildings beyond the pool near the entrance gate on the south towards the rivers. The largest structure is a multi-story pavilion with tile

<sup>63</sup> Naşühü's-Silâhi (Matrakçı), *Beyân-ı Menâzil-i Sefer-i İrâqeyn*, ed. H.G. Yurdaydın (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1976), fols. 27b–28a; Albert Gabriel, "Les étapes d'une campagne dans les deux Irak d'après un manuscrit turc du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Syria* 9/4 (1928): 328–349; Walter Denny, "A Sixteenth-century Architectural Plan of Istanbul," *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970): 49–64.

<sup>64</sup> Charles Melville, "Historical Monuments and Earthquakes in Tabriz," *Iran* 19 (1981): 159–177.

<sup>65</sup> Iskandar Munshi, *History of Shah 'Abbas the Great*, trans. Roger Savory (Boulder, Co.: Westview, 1978), 1: 177, reading Nasriya instead of Basriya.

<sup>66</sup> 'Abd al-'Âli Kârang, *Āthâr-i bâstâni-yi Āzarbayjân*, vol. 1 (Tehran: Anjuman-i âthâr-i millî, 1351), 327–31; Melville, "Historical Monuments," 171.



Fig. 15: Double-page showing the city of Tabriz from a copy of Matrakçı Nasuh's *Mecmû-i Menazil*, compiled at Istanbul in 944/1537–38. Folio 23.0 × 21.5 cm. Istanbul University Library, ms. 5964, fols. 27b–28a.

decoration. It represents the palace precinct built in 891/1486 by Sultan Ya'qûb on the site of an earlier palace built by Jahānshāh.<sup>67</sup>

The precinct with multi-story pavilion matches the detailed description of Uzun Ḥasan's palace (*dawlat-khāna*) given by a Venetian merchant who visited the city in 1507.<sup>68</sup> The precinct was set in a large and beautiful garden that incorporated not only the palace in the center but also a mosque with attached hospital and the harem. The palace itself was set on a raised marble terrace a yard and half high and five yards wide, like a piazza. It incorporated a marble channel for a stream and bronze dragons at the corners that spouted water. Measuring some 30 paces high by 70 to 80 yards around, the palace had a central domed room surrounded by eight parts, each consisting of a room and anteroom. The interior walls were decorated with murals depicting battles, embassies, and hunts; the ceiling had beautiful gilding and ultramarine; and the floor was covered

<sup>67</sup> Melville, "Historical Monuments," 170 and n. 83.

<sup>68</sup> Gray, *The World History of Rashid al-Din*, 173–78; Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture*, 178–79.

by a round silk carpet woven to shape to fit the room and the place where the ruler gave audience. The anonymous Venetian merchant specifically called the building a *Hasht Bihisht* ("Eight Paradises").

Although Uzun Ḥasan's palace in Tabriz has been destroyed, this type of palace pavilion is known from many later examples from Istanbul to Agra, including the Safavid palace of that very name in Isfahan.<sup>69</sup> The earliest extant example of the *Hasht-Bihist* type of palace is the one in Istanbul known as the *Çinili Köşk*, the Persianate pavilion completed in 1472 for Mehmed the Conqueror's new palace complex.<sup>70</sup> But such types of palatine pavilion had already existed some two centuries earlier in northwest Iran. We know this from a late thirteenth-century drawing by an anonymous Venetian traveler now mounted in an album in Berlin (Staatsbibliothek, Hamilton 390, f. 85).<sup>71</sup> The Venetian artist shows the same type of multi-story pavilion as Matrakçı Nasuh did two and a half centuries later, but instead of the colorful blue tile revetment of the fifteenth-century building, the thirteenth-century one is decorated with a brick diaper pattern of the type used in Ilkhanid architecture.

The British art historian Deborah Howard has suggested furthermore that such diaper patterns in brick were the model for the decoration on the exterior of the Doge's Palace in Venice, constructed mainly between 1309 and 1324, shortly after Marco Polo had been imprisoned in the city and dictated his memoirs.<sup>72</sup> The Doge's palace became a hallmark of the city, standard in later depictions. A typical example shows the Polo family embarking from Venice in *Li livres du Graunt Caam* added ca. 1400 by Johannes and his school in England to a Flemish manuscript of the *Romance of Alexander* produced in France at the workshop of the Flemish illuminator Jehan de Grise between 1338 and 1344.<sup>73</sup> The type of the loggia

<sup>69</sup> Lisa Golombek, "From Tamerlane to the Taj Mahal," *Essays in Islamic Art and Architecture in honor of Katharina Otto-Dorn*, ed. A. Daneshvari (Malibu, CA, 1981), 43–50; Blair and Bloom, *Art and Architecture of Islam*, 195–96.

<sup>70</sup> Blair and Bloom, *Art and Architecture of Islam*, 214 and fig. 270.

<sup>71</sup> Bernhard Degenhart and Annegrit Schmitt, *Corpus der italienischen Zeichnungen, 1300–1400*, part II, *Venedig*, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1990), 1: 37 and pl. 53; cited in Deborah Howard, *Venice & the East: The Impact of the Islamic World on Venetian Architecture 1100–1500* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), 58 and n. 120.

<sup>72</sup> Howard, *Venice & the East*.

<sup>73</sup> Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS 264, part 3, fol. 218r, facsimile edition with introduction by M.R. James, *The Romance of Alexander: A collotype facsimile of MS. Bodley 264* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1933); online facsimile at: <http://image.ox.ac.uk/show?collection=bodleian&manuscript=msbodl264>.

seen in the Persianate pavilion in Istanbul might also be the source for the one in the Doge's palace in Venice.<sup>74</sup>

Tabriz in the Mongol period was thus an international emporium whose connections extended across Eurasia. Although only two major buildings survive, they and other works of art made there or by artists from the city show its wide range of connections as well as the extensive impact the city had on other cultural traditions, in both east and west. Such interaction was not limited to the realms controlled by Ilkhanids' governors, vassals, or successors in Iran such as the Injus, Muzaffarids, or Jalayirids. Rather, material culture shows that this interaction occurred also with their rivals, both Muslim (e.g., the Mamluks) and non-Muslim (e.g., Christian Europe and China). As the noted historians Patricia Crone and Michael Cook concluded in reference to the ready adoption in tenth-century Cordova of the most recent styles affected by their rivals, the Abbasids of Iraq, "Umayyad genealogy was no bar to 'Abbasid hairstyles."<sup>75</sup> Similarly, as the widespread wearing of blue jeans today shows, political enmity does not preclude cultural interaction. And this was certainly the case in Tabriz under the Mongols.

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<sup>74</sup> Howard remarks on the openness of the Venetian palace, but connects the loggia to Egyptian models, but the use of brick and the lozenge design are Persian.

<sup>75</sup> Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 116.

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## TABRIZI WOODCARVINGS IN TIMURID IRAN\*

Joachim Gierlich

The entrance doors to the Yeşil Türbe in Bursa of western Anatolia are artefacts of manifold interest for the study of the importance of the city of Tabriz in Iran of the Timurid era. Was Tabriz a center of invention, trade and crafts for the western Muslim world at this time?

The doors to this particular tomb-shrine can be dated to the early 15th century, having been carved and constructed for the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed I who died in the month of Jumādā I, 824 A.H. corresponding to May, 1421 A.D., giving us a very clear chronological indicator. The doors' inscription mentions a certain 'Alī b. Ḥājjī Aḥmad al-Tabrīzī,<sup>1</sup> hence raising the issue of a significant relationship between early Ottoman and Timurid woodworking. Unfortunately, this particular name has not yet been found on any other Ottoman or Persian artefact from the first half of the 15th Century (see below). (figs. 1–2).

Looking first at the central and dominating ornamentation on both wings of the door we see a 10-pointed star surrounded by hexagons. This was a widespread pattern that appeared not only on Timurid<sup>2</sup> and Mamluk woodwork but also one that had found expression on Anatolian woods of the late 14th century,<sup>3</sup> though not predominantly so.

Far more interesting is the design on the frames of each wing. Here we find calligraphic oval medaillons (cartouches) entwined together with curves and swells to fill the surface completely. This specific order of inscriptions is unusual because inscriptions are usually placed on the

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\* I am indebted to Linda Schilcher, Berlin, for the English translation of this article.

<sup>1</sup> Both the door and the inscription were published by Franz Taeschner. One could also render this as Hajji 'Ali b. Ahmad. See Franz Taeschner, "Beiträge zur frühosmanischen Epigraphik und Archäologie," *Der Islam* 20 (1932): 146–7, Pl. 2, fig. 5 (right door wing); Katharina Otto-Dorn, *Türkische Keramik* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1957), 62, fn. 121, also Leo Ary Mayer, *Islamic Woodcarvers and their Works* (Geneva: Kundig, 1958), 33 (with numerous bibliographical references.)

<sup>2</sup> For the numerous Persian woodworks which utilised this design in the 14th–16th centuries with provenance from a variety of provinces see the catalogue of the author's study "Woodwork of the Timurid Period in Iran and Central Asia" (in preparation).

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., the door of the minbar of the Ulu Cami in Bursa which dates from 802 A.H./1399–1400 A.D. (Ayla Ersoy, *XV. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Ajaç İşçiliği* (Istanbul: University of Marmara, 1993), 9–10, fig. 1 with a mistaken caption.)





Figs. 1–2: Bursa, Yeşil Türbe, entrance doors. © Das Bild des Orients, Berlin/  
Joachim Gierlich

smaller panels above and below the wings' main fields. The closest example of a similar design can be seen on an undated door now preserved in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA, M.73.5.790a–b) (fig. 3).<sup>4</sup> A further example would be the 14th century doors preserved in the Museum of Islamic Art in Teheran (Inv. 3293) on which the frame's design is also composed of entwined inscription cartouches (fig. 4).<sup>5</sup>

With the Yeşil Türbe doors of Bursa it appears we have a unique example of this type of decoration for early Ottoman times. Additionally there is no other example of a master signature of Persian origin (here: *al-Tabrīzī*) on any other Ottoman woodcarvings. That is not to say that Persian master craftsmen did not work on early Ottoman buildings. Especially in the creation of fayence works we have some examples. This particular "master" from Tabriz is hardly in that sense unique. For example we find signatures from ceramics masters in the nearby Yeşil Cami in Bursa, where the signature "made by the Masters from Tabriz" appears on the pillars of the splendid fayence mihrab.<sup>6</sup>

What about the contemporary woodcarvings from Tabriz itself? Unfortunately no comparable works are known from the surviving Timurid buildings:<sup>7</sup> whether doors, tympana, windows or other wooden screens, minbars, or even cenotaphs. However, there do exist three Persian woodcarvings from the 15th century found in Iran at locations outside Tabriz that carry a master's signature including the *nisba* "al-Tabrīzī."

Taking the first example, in Lahijan (Province of Gilan) at the Buq'a Chahār Pādshāh complex is an entry door of the *marqad* Sayyid Khūrkiyā that has an inscription naming a number of craftsmen or masters.

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<sup>4</sup> This extremely interesting high quality door was available on the art market several decades ago and was for a long time only known from a picture in the photo collection of the Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin.

<sup>5</sup> To my knowledge this woodwork remains unpublished and the inscription undeciphered. The work is variously dated to 1320 (Museum caption), 754 A.H./1353–54 A.D. (Photo by Würfel, Photo collection of the Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin).

<sup>6</sup> See Otto-Dorn, *Türkische Keramik*, 62. Another signature was found in the Sultan's loge of the same mosque, reading: "made by Mohammad al-Majnun." Eadem, 62. For a more recent and thorough discussion of Tabrizi ceramic masters in Ottoman Anatolia see Gülru Necipoğlu, "From International Timurid to Ottoman: A Change of Taste in Sixteenth-Century Ceramic Tiles," *Muqarnas* 20 (1990): 136–170, and especially Lisa Golombek, "Timurid Potters Abroad," in *La civiltà Timuride Come Fenomeno Internazionale*, ed. Michele Bernardini (Roma: Istituto per l'oriente C.A. Nallino, 1996), 577–586.

<sup>7</sup> The relevant monuments are found in Lisa Golombek and Donald Newton Wilber, *Timurid Architecture in Iran and Turan*. 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).



Fig. 3: Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA, M.73.5.790a–b), doors. Image: Courtesy of the National Museums, Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin, image collection



Fig. 4: Tehran, Museum of Islamic Art (Inv. 3293), door wing. © Das Bild des Orients, Berlin/ Joachim Gierlichs

There is a Master Bayazid (*'amal-i ustād Bāyazīd*)<sup>8</sup> and also the signature of a woodworker (*najjār*) named 'Alī from Tabriz (*'amal-i 'Alī najjār al-Tabrizī*).<sup>9</sup> Finally there is still a third name, the one who might have been responsible for the carved calligraphy, having authored the text or carved it or both. This name is 'Abd al-Kātib Khvājaki al-Kirmānī.<sup>10</sup> The *nisba* of al-Kirmānī tells us that this specialist came from Kerman in the southeast of Iran. The inscription has no date, however the door can be dated to the 15th century by virtue of its technical and stylistic attributes. (figs. 5–6)

This is a relatively small door, each wing measuring 165 × 42 cm. Each wing has the classical division into three fields with the largest bordered on the top and bottom by two smaller rectangular fields. Here the middle field is especially long and filled with a geometrically-ornamented design of some complexity. There is a six-pointed Rosetta at the centre encircled by six narrow and elongated pentagons. Dragons fill the resulting corner spaces so that the surface forms another large hexagon.<sup>11</sup>

The (now rather old) photograph made by L.A. Mayer<sup>12</sup> shows the upper part of the right wing and the middle beam in their original condition. The two wings were later rebuilt to fit to a larger (higher) door when the original doors in this opening were removed to the Iran Bastan Museum.<sup>13</sup> The original placement of these two wings, i.e. on which room of the complex the doors may have been, is not known and can no longer be reconstructed.

Now, although the artefact itself no longer exists, we know of a second woodcarving carrying the name of a craftsman from Tabriz.<sup>14</sup> The cenotaph from Buq'a Sayyid 'Alī Ghaznavī in Tijin Guka<sup>15</sup> near Astane

<sup>8</sup> The signature is probably on the upper surface of the middle beam (*"damagh-i dar"*); see Manūchīhr Sūtūda, *Az Astārā tā Astārabād* (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āthār-i Millī, 1351/1972), 2: 109, l. 12.

<sup>9</sup> On the lower panel of the same wing; see Sūtūda, *Az Astārā tā Astārabād*, 2: 110.

<sup>10</sup> On the lower panel of the same wing; see Sūtūda, *Az Astārā tā Astārabād*, 2: 110.

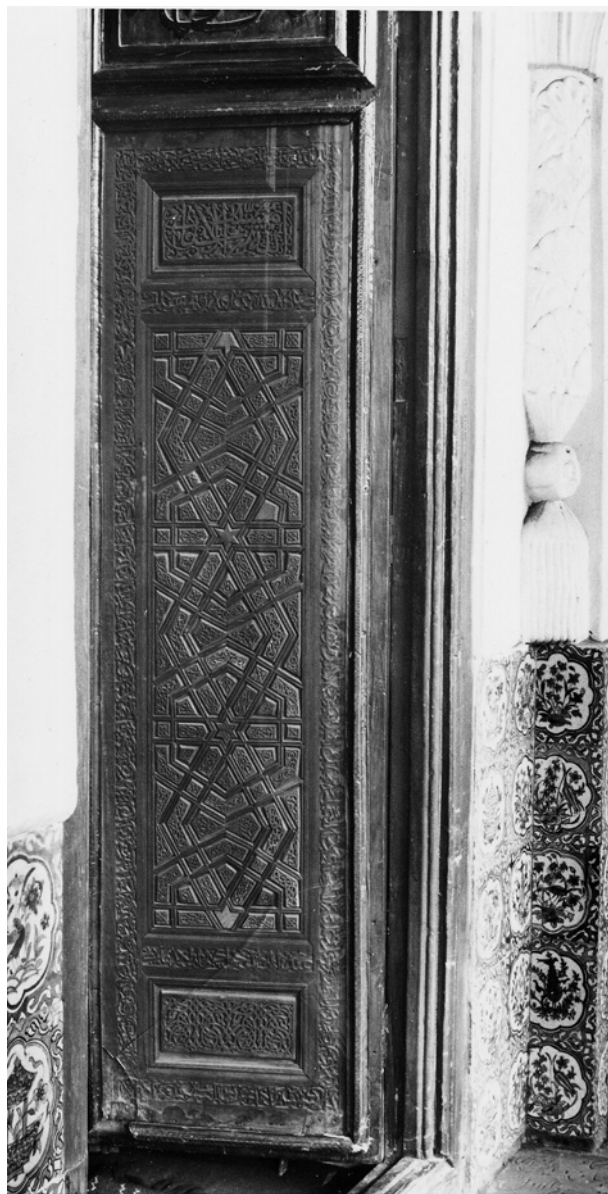
<sup>11</sup> Research project, photographic records: IR 95/XIII/11–12, XIV/1–3.

<sup>12</sup> See Mayer, *Islamic Woodcarvers*, Pl. XII, without provenance.

<sup>13</sup> For a number of years now the former Islamic division of the Iran Bastan Museum in Teheran forms the Museum of Islamic Art, Inv. Nr. 3312 (see Sūtūda, *Az Astārā tā Astārabād*, 2, figs. 79, 81).

<sup>14</sup> The older badly damaged cenotaph was apparently removed in 1341–42 Shamsi/1962–63 A.D. (Information provided by members of the local population in 1995). The Imamzadeh was rebuilt from the ground up.

<sup>15</sup> There are a variety of ways in which the names of this place are written: "Tijin Gukeh," "Tajan Guka." Bernerd O'Kane, *Timurid Architecture in Khurasan* (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda, 1987), 378–79, gives the name as "Astana Imamzadeh Sayyid 'Alī Ghaznavi b. Imam





Figs. 5–6: Lahijan (Gilan), Buq‘a-yi Chahār Pādshāh, Marqad-i Sayyid Khurkiya, entrance door © Das Bild des Orients, Berlin/ Joachim Gierlichs

(Āstāna) not far from Gilan Province (Lahijan) is inscribed with the date 871 A.H./1466–67 A.D. and with the name of the master *Ustād Muḥammad b. Yādgār b. Ḥājji Musāfir Tabrīzī*, as well as the name of the buried person ‘*Alī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī*.<sup>16</sup>

This large cenotaph (94 × 237 × 111 cm) was built in the so-called “frame-filled construction” (“Rahmenfüllungskonstruktion”). The front side of this wooden pseudo-sarcophagus was divided into three fields depicting a mihrab niche (with the inscription) in the centre framed by two fields of geometric designs: a central six-pointed star captured within four pentagons and two hexagons. This design is repeated on at least one of the two narrower sides. The design on the second narrow side as well as on

Ja‘far al-Sadiq,” and Mayer, *Islamic Woodcarvers*, 60 (referring to Dorn and Rabino) uses “Imamzadeh Ali b. Muhammad al-Husaini [descendant of Imam Ja‘far].”

<sup>16</sup> See Sutūda, *Az Astārā tā Astārabād*, 2: 171–72.

the rear side cannot be established due to the absence of information and documentation.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, we have a third wooden artefact made by craftsmen from Tabriz. This is a cenotaph dated to 807 A.H./ 1404–05 AD of Qazvīn which is, however, today no longer to be found. When Eugène Flandin travelled twice to Iran in 1839–41<sup>18</sup> he reported the following of interest to us: “Encountering no resistance I continued into the shrine to an enclosure, and looking through a window, saw a large catafalque, gilt and hung with silk.”<sup>19</sup> This would have been the cenotaph of Imāmzāda Ḥusayn (*Āstāna-yi Shahzāda Ḥusayn*)<sup>20</sup> for which, according to the inscription, two brothers from Tabriz are responsible. They were *ustād Bāyazīd b. Bābā Khvāja Tabrizī* and *ustād ‘Alī b. Bābā Khvāja Tabrizī*,<sup>21</sup> apparently two sons of Baba Khvaja of Tabriz, called masters. But these were not necessarily woodworkers (*najjār* or *darūdgar*). Hence it is not entirely clear what role they played in the construction of the cenotaph.

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What conclusions can we draw from this research? The material remains of woodwork from the Timurid era attributable to Tabriz are extremely rare. From this city of great political and cultural importance we have no

<sup>17</sup> See, e.g. Bernhard Dorn, *Atlas zu Bemerkungen [auf Anlass] einer wissenschaftlichen Reise in den Kaukasus und den südlichen Küstenländern des Kaspischen Meeres in den Jahren 1860–1861* (St. Petersburg: Buchdruckerei der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1895), 2nd Division, Pl. XI; Hyacinth Louis Rabino, *Mázandarán and Astarábad* (London: Luzac, 1928), 7 (text in Persian); Mayer, *Islamic Woodcarvers*, 60; Sutūda, *Az Astārā tā Astārabād*, 2: 171–72, figs. 133–137; O’Kane, *Timurid Architecture*, 379.

<sup>18</sup> The traveller’s report appeared in 1851; see Eugène Flandin and Pascal Coste, *Voyage en Perse de MM. Eugène Flandin, peintre, et Pascal Coste, architecte, attachés à l’ambassade de France en Perse pendant les années 1840 et 1841: entrepris par ordre de M. le ministre des affaires étrangères, d’après les instructions dressées par l’Institut* (Paris: Gide et Jules Baudry, 1851), 1: 217.

<sup>19</sup> Cited from the German translation by H.L. Teweleit; see Eugène Flandin, *Die persische Reise*, trans. Horst Lothar Teweleit (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1991), 90.

<sup>20</sup> Shahzada Husein is the son of the 8th century A.H. Imam Ali Reza; the former died in the 9th century A.H. His grave built in Safavid times (1588 A.D.) was so radically restored by Fath Ali Shah that it could be seen as a Kajari site. (J. Scarce in: *Cambridge History of Iran* 7, 924.) R. Boulanger, Mittlerer Osten (“Die Blauen Führer”), 856 mentions a “cenotaph made of wooden inlay work from the Safavid era.” During a visit to the mausoleum in 1995 the site was under (re)construction and the location of the cenotaph could not be ascertained.

<sup>21</sup> The cenotaph is mentioned by Ḥusayn Mudarris Ṭabaṭabā’ī, *Bargī az tārikh-i Qazvīn* (Qum: Kitābkhāna-yi ‘Umūmī-yi Ḥaẓrat-i Āyat Allāh al-‘Uzmā Najafī Mar‘ashī, 1361/1982), 42 and by O’Kane, *Timurid Architecture*, 372, though no published image of it appears to exist.

door, no tympanon, no window screen or any other wooden barrier made of wood, not to mention a minbar or a cenotaph. All we have are these three woodworks from outside Tabriz naming craftsmen coming from Tabriz. These pieces were found in Lahijan or its region, that is in the forest and wooded province of Gilan south of the Caspian Sea—Mazandaran and Gilan being the two regions of Iran from which come the greater portion of the woodcarvings from Timurid (1370–1506) and Safavid (1501–1722) times.<sup>22</sup> One of these mentions more than one craftsman which would not be unusual but also not the standard practice. The inscription on the wooden door in Buq‘a Pādshāh in Lahijan names not only an ‘Alī, with the addition of “carpenter from Tabriz”, but also another master by the name of Bāyazīd, with no further identification. It would be purely speculative to assume that this Bāyazīd was therefore a person of local origin, perhaps from Lahijan or its vicinity. Additionally an ‘*Abd al-Karīm from Kerman* is also named, Kerman being at that time an important city in the southwest of this large country. ‘Abd al-Karīm could very well have been the author of the inscription, i.e. not a woodworker at all.

The originally very high quality cenotaph from Tijin Guka, also from the province of Gilan, is unfortunately now completely lost. On this piece the name of the master (*ustād*) Muḥammad b. Yādgar b. Ḥājji Musāfir Tabrīzī was inscribed. Given this formulation it is not clear whether it is the artist himself or his grandfather who is the one from Tabriz. Also this inscription could give an indication that wood specialists (as well as other master workers) during the Timurid era travelled widely to pursue their commissions, especially because the word *musafir* literally means “the traveller.”

Unfortunately there is no photographic record of the third piece, the cenotaph from Qazvīn. But knowledge of it is helpful. We learn that in the year 807 A.H./1407 A.D. two brothers identified as master workers were active in this province not all that distant from Tabriz, working on a wooden sarcophagus, though whether as carpenters or as carvers is not clear.

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<sup>22</sup> A first overview can be found in Joachim Gierlich, “Timurid Woodfurnishings in Iran and Central Asia,” in *Islamic Art Resources in Central & Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Proceedings of the 5th International Seminar on Islamic Art and Architecture, Al al-Bayt-University, Maḥraq, 19–24 April 1996*, edited by Wijdan Ali and Khalid Deemer (al-Maḥraq: Āl al-Bayt-University, 1421/2000), 149–155. The percentage of known woodwork from North Iran (Mazandaran and Gilan) in relation to that from other provinces has shifted as a result of this research. See in more details, Joachim Gierlich, *Holzarbeiten der Timuridenzeit in Iran und Mittelasien* (forthcoming).

The woodwork found at the Yeşil Türbe in Bursa—which was the departure point for our investigation—is, therefore, very interesting. That such an important shrine would be inscribed with the name of a Persian master, here a Tabrizi, may well be the link for which we are searching. This otherwise unique example of woodcarving—nothing similar yet to be discovered for early Ottoman Anatolia—made by a master from Tabriz who carved the frames with inscribed cartouches (or perhaps even brought the design with him from Tabriz) is clearly an important piece of evidence, indicating that Tabriz may well have been a centre of artistic innovation for the eastern Muslim world at this time.

Was there a “Tabriz School” of woodwork in the 15th century? Given the poor evidential remains, as already discussed, we really cannot establish such a phenomenon. The same can be said for the possibility that there may have been artistic relations between Tabriz and western Anatolia and particularly Bursa, the cradle of Ottoman civilization. These are the larger issues which cannot be pursued here and remain for historians yet to answer.

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## IMPERIAL AQQUYUNLU CONSTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE LATE FIFTEENTH CENTURY TABRIZ

Ertuğrul Ökten

The starting point for this paper is the premise that under the Aqqyunlu Tabriz was promoted as an imperial capital, even if it is rarely remembered as such.<sup>1</sup> There are a variety of reasons for this, the most important ones being the brevity of Aqqyunlu rule centered in Tabriz, the destruction of most monumental works by natural disasters or human activity, and the relatively longer survival and preservation of other capitals on par with Tabriz such as Herat and Istanbul.

More specifically, I will deal with the question of to what extent did Tabriz receive religious ‘imperial,’ ‘monumental’ investment in the second half of the fifteenth century? Although an examination of capital cities requires discussing legitimacy claims, politics is beyond the scope of the present paper. I confine the discussion within the boundaries of religious architecture for two reasons: First, given the limited amount of information on the Aqqyunlu architectural works, it makes sense to compare the most outstanding Aqqyunlu structure, the *Masjid-i Ḥasan Pādshāh*, with its predecessor, *Masjid-i Kabūd* of the *Qaraqyunlu*. Second, an examination of the activity in religious architecture sheds light on the nature of the relationship between the Aqqyunlu rulers and the people of the city. To answer the above question, I begin with an assessment of the imperial architectural heritage in Tabriz until the Aqqyunlus, and then move to their architectural contribution, mainly, the *Masjid-i Ḥasan Pādshāh*. Next, I discuss the nature of Aqqyunlu religious construction and patronage, and argue that the Aqqyunlu rulers’ architectural/religious investment in

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<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Sheila Blair and Dr. Judith Pfeiffer for their constructive comments, support, and patience with me in the course of writing this paper. I also thank the IMPACT project and its sponsor ERC for making available the resources crucial for bringing this article to completion. Funding for research on this paper that enabled me to finalize it for publication was made available from the European Research Council under the *European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007–2013)* / ERC Starting Grant 263557 IMPACT. For Tabriz’s role as an imperial capital starting from the time of Ghazan and his vizier Rashīd al-Dīn see, Karl Jahn, “Tebriz Doğu ile Batı Arasında bir Ortaçağ Kültür Merkezi,” trans. İsmail Aka, *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Bölümü Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 13 no. 24 (1979–80): 59–77. 60, 61, 63.

Tabriz was not sufficient for them to penetrate certain levels of the city's religious life.

*Aqquyunlu Imperial Construction and Its Precursors*

One of the major traits that distinguishes an imperial capital from other culturally and politically prominent cities is that imperial ideology and expansion brings about a significantly higher level of cultural and construction activity. This activity aspires to achieve monumentality in order to overshadow other cities of the same dominion. The ideological prerequisite for this, that is, a sovereign with claims to universal sovereignty who controls the capital, is indispensable, but as mentioned above, it will not be dealt with as it is beyond the scope of the present essay. Instead I ask the following question: What constitutes an imperial architectural program? Acknowledging that the question already assumes the prevalence of the norms and values of a settled society, one can suggest that every ruler with an imperial construction program builds i) an imperial complex (*imārat*), and ii) a palace in his capital city. The Friday mosque is the central element of such complexes which typically consist of a *madrasa*, library, pantry, and bathhouse with the aim to meet religious, intellectual, and social challenges that arise with imperial rule. If economic concerns are dominating, a market may be added, but markets are not immediately recognized as examples of monumental architecture. In the specific Perso-Turkic context one can add to this list gardens as examples of royal construction. Furthermore, depending on historical circumstances, one can see the creation of entire districts in the city as a constituent of an imperial construction program.<sup>2</sup>

Tabriz as an urban settlement has been unlucky as it has been subject to almost systematic destruction, either because of natural disasters or human action. Throughout history, earthquakes consistently destroyed

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<sup>2</sup> Examples are the Shanb-i Ghazan of the Ilkhanid ruler Ghazan Khan (d. 703/1304), or Mehmed II's (d. 886/1481) commissioning of the creation of districts to the leading members of his court in the recently conquered Istanbul. In Mehmed II's urban construction program most of the builders were not from the royal family but their activity should still be considered as part of Mehmed II's program since it was his imperial vision that brought about the construction activity. In that regard, should the construction of Rab'-i Rashīdī by the Ilkhanid minister Rashīd al-Dīn be considered an 'imperial project' given that it took place at the same time with Ghazan's project both of which will be mentioned below? Is it plausible to argue in favor of a shared (or propogated) 'imperial' vision between the ruler and his minister in the Ilkhanid context, too?

monumental buildings and houses in the city.<sup>3</sup> Although earthquakes were occasionally followed by waves of reconstruction, these efforts did not always fully make up for the damage of the earthquakes. For example, the earthquake in 1050/1641 reduced what was left of Shanb-i Ghazan into merely the remnants of the original structure, yet, it was the earthquake of 1193/1780 that inflicted the heaviest damage on historical buildings. Almost no historical buildings in the city came out of these two earthquakes undamaged including the Mosque of Uzun Ḥasan which will be discussed below.<sup>4</sup> As for human agency, the Timurid Mīrānshāh is reported to have pulled down many fine buildings in the city, and the Ottoman-Safawid conflict in the following centuries also had its share in the destruction of works of architecture.<sup>5</sup> As a result, only a few examples of what was constructed in Tabriz of the Aqquyunlu era and earlier periods survived physically.

In addition to the waves of reconstruction following earthquakes, Tabriz received other significant waves of construction, the most intensive one being perhaps during the reign of the Ilkhan Ghazan Khan.<sup>6</sup> Thanks to the patronage of Ghazan Khan and his two viziers, Rashīd al-Dīn and Tāj

<sup>3</sup> For the period between 244/858 and 1193/1780 Ambraseys & Melville mention seven earthquakes. The most severe one in terms of casualties was in 434/1042, killing forty thousand people. 8, 37, 39–40, 43, 47, 49, 55. N.N. Ambraseys and C.P. Melville, *A History of Persian Earthquakes* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1982). C.P. Melville, "Historical Monuments and Earthquakes in Tabriz," *Iran* 19 (1981): 159–177. 159, 164. Ḥāfiẓ Ḥusayn Karbalā'ī Tabrizī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān va Jannāt al-Janān*, ed. Ja'far Sulṭān al-Qurrā'ī. 2 vols. (Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, Tehran: 1344–1349/1965–1970), 1: 16, 276.

<sup>4</sup> Ambraseys & Melville, *A History*, 49, 55. After the earthquakes in 244/858 and 1194/1780, rulers promptly ordered the reconstruction of the city. Karbalā'ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 1: 17; Ambraseys & Melville, *A History*, 55.

<sup>5</sup> Ruy González de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane*, trans. Guy le Strange, 1928. Reprint: ed. Fuad Sezgin. (Frankfurt/Main: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, 1994), 153. The destruction of the cities of conquered peoples is a show of power: Melek Ahmed Pasha took pride in laying waste hundreds of cities and regions in Iran on the return journey of Murād IV's Rawān campaign. One of the cities that Evliya Çelebi specifically mentions in this respect is Tabriz. *Evliya Çelebi in Bitlis. The Relevant Section of the Seyahatname Edited with Translation, Commentary and Introduction*, ed. and trans. Robert Dankoff (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1990), 168. Shāh 'Abbās ordered the destruction of the buildings in Shanb-i Ghazan so that the Ottomans could not use them for military purposes. Nādir Mīrzā, *Tārīkh va Juġrāfi-yi Dār al-Salṭana-yi Tabriz*, ed. Ghulam-Riḍā Ṭabāṭabā'ī Majd (Tabriz: Intishārāt-i Sutūda, 1373), 122. Mehmed II seems to be an exception to the rule: After the Battle of Bashkent in which he defeated Uzun Hasan he was generous enough not to destroy the latter's country. Ashikpashazade, *Die altosmanische Chronik des 'Āshikpašazāde*, ed. Friedrich Giese. Reprint of the 1929 edition (Osnabrück: Otto Zeller Verlag, 1972), 174.

<sup>6</sup> Birgitt Hoffmann, *Waḡf im mongolischen Iran: Rašiduddīns Sorge um Nachruhm und Seelenheil* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2000), 108.

al-Dīn ‘Alī Shāh, two entirely new districts,—the Shanb-i Ghazan and the Rab‘-i Rashīdī—and a monumental mosque with the claim to surpass the gigantic arch in Ctesiphon, namely, the Mosque of ‘Alī Shāh, were built. Both the Shanb-i Ghazan and Rab‘-i Rashīdī fell out of favor once their patrons passed away, and especially the Rab‘-i Rashīdī suffered heavy damage as it was plundered right after its patron’s execution. The Mosque of ‘Alishāh gradually acquired a new use as a castle (Arg) which can be explained through its central location in the city.<sup>7</sup>

The next rulers of Tabriz, the Jalayirids, put their seal on Tabriz with their Dawlatkhāna, a palace building, in the middle of the fourteenth century.<sup>8</sup> The Dawlatkhāna, built by the Jalayirid Sultan Uvays, was one of the major monumental buildings that the Aqquyunlus inherited.<sup>9</sup> It was a well-planned structure with an astonishing number of rooms and apartments that were decorated with paintings. The statement about twenty thousand rooms, which it reportedly had, is interpreted as an exaggeration in the literature; nevertheless, it implies that the building was enormous and the question of why Sultan Uvays wanted such a large building continues to await an answer.<sup>10</sup> The Dawlatkhāna could very well be one of the buildings that impressed the Spanish envoy Clavijo, who visited the

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<sup>7</sup> With its gigantic proportions, 65 by 30 meters, the Mosque of ‘Alishāh claimed to surpass the Sasanian arch at Ctesiphon, which measured 50 by 25 meters. It was also a model for future buildings, even as far as Cairo, namely, the Mosque of Sultan Ḥasan (1357–64). Sheila Blair, “Tabriz: International Entrepôt In the 14th and 15th centuries,” keynote address. International workshop “Beyond the Abbasid Caliphate: Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th–15th Century Tabriz,” Istanbul, Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, 1–2 October, 2010, 9, 10 (see Sheila Blair’s contribution to this volume). I am again thankful to Dr. Blair for kindly providing me with the text of her keynote address. See also Sheila Blair, “Ilkhanid Architecture and Society: An Analysis of the Endowment Deed of the Rab‘-i Rashīdī,” *Iran* 22 (1984): 69. If it was a model for Cairo it must have been a model definitely for the Aqquyunlus. For its collapse in the 1090 Armenian era/1641 earthquake see C.P. Melville, “Historical Monuments,” 164. According to Chardin’s panorama, the Shanb-i Ghāzān and Rab‘-i Rashīdī were somehow situated off the center. Johannes Chardin, *The Travels of Sir Johannes Chardin into Persia and the East-Indies*, 2 vols. (Westminster, London: Printed for Moses Pitt in Duke Street, 1686), 1, between 352 and 353.

<sup>8</sup> Sheila Blair, “Tabriz,” *EL* 10 (2010): 49–50.

<sup>9</sup> Clavijo, *Embassy*, 153, 155. On the other hand Barbaro, visiting the court of Uzun Ḥasan in April of 1474, did not seem to be impressed by the architectural features of Tabriz, but he reported extensively on the activities in Uzun Ḥasan’s palace and precious gems that Uzun Ḥasan showed him. Josaphat Barbaro, *Anadolu’ya*, 73–5. Apparently, Uzun Ḥasan granted the Dawlatkhāna to Baba Ḥasan Majzūb. Karbalā’ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 1: 470.

<sup>10</sup> Blair, “Tabriz;” Clavijo, *Embassy*, 153. The Qaraqyunlu rulers prior to Jahānshāh used it as a palace; Jahānshāh transformed it into a castle.

city in 1404 before the establishment of Turkoman rule. He reported that there were many rich, fine buildings throughout Tabriz, the bathhouses were the most splendid in the entire world, and the mosques were especially beautifully adorned with tiles in blue and gold.<sup>11</sup>

*Al-Muẓaffariyya/Masjid-i Kabūd*

After more than half a century following Clavijo's visit the Qaraqyunlus built another outstanding example of those mosques described by Clavijo. The Masjid-i Kabūd was built as part of a larger complex, al-Muẓaffariyya, the imperial construction program of Jahānshāh the Qaraqyunlu. The name is derived from Jahānshāh's epithet al-Muẓaffar, the victorious, and attests to the imperial claim of the enterprise. Its patron was Khātūnjān Begum, Jahānshāh's wife. It was located outside the south-east entrance of Tabriz on the boulevard called Khiyābān, where the main trade route from Khurāsān connected to the city. Khātūnjān intended this complex as the burial ground for the Qaraqyunlu family as attested by the fact that she, Jahānshāh and most of their children were later buried there.<sup>12</sup>

Apart from being the best surviving example from the Turkoman period, and the only one from the Qaraqyunlu period, the Masjid-i Kabūd is significant in its scale which refers back to the last great monumental Timurid structure, that is, the Madrasa al-Ghiyāthiyya at Khargird. This *madrasa*, completed in 848/1444, was built by Ghiyāth al-Dīn Pīr Aḥmad Khvāfi, a vizier of Shāhrukh, whose architect was the Timurid royal architect Qivām al-Dīn Shīrāzi.<sup>13</sup> By building a structure comparable to this *madrasa*, the Qaraqyunlus must have been conscious of the fact that they were assuming the role of the next great builders after the Timurids.<sup>14</sup>

The complex, the construction of which finished in Rabīʿ I 870/October 1465, consisted of a mosque, *khānqāh*, court-yard (صحن), library, a series of water basins (حوضخانه), *madrasa* and a graveyard.<sup>15</sup> The variety of

<sup>11</sup> Clavijo, *Embassy*, 153, 155.

<sup>12</sup> Karbalāʾī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 1: 524.

<sup>13</sup> Bernard O'Kane, "The Madrasa al-Ghiyāthiyya at Khargird," *Iran* 14 (1976): 79.

<sup>14</sup> Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250–1800*, Pelican History of Art (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1994), 51.

<sup>15</sup> Muḥammad Javād Mashkūr, *Tārīkh-i Tabrīz tā Pāyān-i Qarn-i Nuhum-i Hijrī*, (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-yi Bahman, 1352/1973), 652–3. Mashkūr adds that today these buildings are no longer existent except for the still standing remains of the mosque. Karbalāʾī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 1: 598.

colors used the Masjid-i Kabūd, with an emphasis on blue, and the variety of designs in the tile revetments on the interior and exterior walls shows a refined taste and high level of technical expertise. The adaptation of an unusual plan for the mosque, a domed square hall with a u-shaped corridor on three sides covered by smaller domes, which was probably based on a plan followed in the Rashīdiyya complex (Rab‘-i Rashīdī) in Tabriz, and the unusual calligraphic designs bring into mind the question of whether this was an attempt at a novel architectural statement.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps one is justified to say that this was one step further in developing the Timurid artistic vocabulary, although it was located beyond the Timurid domains.

It is not possible to sketch a detailed usage history of the Muẓaffariyya complex in the following centuries, but we know that the Masjid-i Kabūd was still in a good condition in the sixteenth century. The travelogues we have are exclusively about the mosque of the complex, therefore, it is not easy to tell when the other accompanying buildings fell out of usage. Two later travellers, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (in Tabriz in 1636) and Mme Jane Dieulafoy (in Tabriz in 1881) made the point that the Shi‘ī rulers of the city ignored the Masjid-i Kabūd deliberately since it had been built on behalf of Sunnī patrons. Hence, one can propose that the maintenance of the complex faced a sharp decline not long after the vanishing of the Sunnī section of the population in Tabriz.<sup>17</sup> This is not surprising, considering the highly complex web of financial relationships that was created to support the complex. The endowment deed of the complex, in a manuscript entitled *Şariḥ al-Mulk*, show that its patrons allocated the revenues of hundreds of gardens, shops, and bath houses to this complex. A systematic study of these resources, which is beyond the scope of the present paper, is necessary to appreciate the level of financial and administrative organization required in order to maintain a complex of this magnitude.<sup>18</sup>

Its later usage aside, al-Muẓaffariyya must have turned into a prestigious, if not the most prestigious, center of learning as soon as it was built. The well-known theologian of the late fifteenth century, Jalāl al-Dīn

<sup>16</sup> Blair and Bloom, *The Art and Architecture*, 51, 52. Blair, “Tabriz.”

<sup>17</sup> Mashkūr, *Tārīkh-i Tabrīz*, 651, 677–8, 680–1.

<sup>18</sup> Mashkūr, *Tārīkh-i Tabrīz*, 653–76. Unfortunately, *Şariḥ al-Mulk* was not available to me at the time of the writing of this essay, therefore, I depend on Mashkūr’s extensive excerpts from the text. A systematic study of it could shed light not on the working of al-Muẓaffariyya but also on the socio-economic history of Tabriz in the second half of the fifteenth century.

Dawānī, finished his *Shawākil al-Hūr fi Sharḥ Hayākil al-Nūr* in Shawwāl 872/May 1468 at the Muẓaffariya Madrasa. Again at the same institution he copied his *Risāla Zawra*, since the original copy, which had his glosses on it, was lost in the battle between Jahānshāh (d. 872/1467) and Uzun Ḥasan (d. 882/1477).<sup>19</sup> One can say al-Muẓaffariyya was not only the architectural manifestation of the Qaraqyunlu imperial claim but also the intellectual/cultural reflection of it as shown by the employment of a top caliber scholar like Dawānī in that institution.

### *al-Naṣriyya*

Yet, that claim could not live long. Uzun Ḥasan's expansionist policy in Iran in the 1460's brought both the end of the Qaraqyunlu dominance and a new political power in Iran with an imperial claim which found its architectural expression in Tabriz.<sup>20</sup> According to Karbalā'ī, Uzun Ḥasan built several complexes (*imārats*) consisting of mosques, *madrasas*, gardens, and public baths contributing to the prosperity of Tabriz significantly.<sup>21</sup> Although detailed information about Uzun Ḥasan's and later Aqqyunlu rulers' construction activity is indeed limited, it seems safe to propose that the most illustrious product of that activity was al-Naṣriyya, a complex comprising of a mosque, *madrasa*, kitchen, market, and two gardens.<sup>22</sup> The construction history of the complex lacks clarity, and it seems that Uzun Ḥasan developed the initial idea and started the project, and his son Sulṭān Ya'qūb brought it to completion.

How can one compare al-Naṣriyya to al-Muẓaffariyya? Despite its challenges, a basic comparison seems plausible beginning with the role of imperial claims in the founding of both institutions: As was the case with al-Muẓaffariyya, the complex was named after Uzun Ḥasan's epithet Abū al-Naṣr (conjoined with (divine) 'help'), attesting to the imperial/universal claims of a ruler who was perceived as divinely assisted.

<sup>19</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī, *Sab'a Rasā'il li al-'Allāma Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Dawānī (al-mutawaffā 908 h.q.) wa al-Mullā Isma'il al-Khwāju'i al-Isfahānī (al-mutawaffā 1173 h.q.)*, ed. Sayyid Aḥmad Tūysirkānī (Tehran: Mirāth-i Maktūb, 1381/2002), 19, 20, 25. Mashkūr, 652, 653.

<sup>20</sup> John E. Woods, *The Aqqyunlu. Clan, Confederation, Empire*, revised ed. (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1999), 99, 109, 112, 114.

<sup>21</sup> Karbalā'ī also adds that Dawānī mentions this in his *Risāla-yi 'Arḍ-i Lashkar* without going into specifics. Karbalā'ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 1: 524.

<sup>22</sup> Blair and Bloom, *The Art and Architecture*, 52.

Market, a feature also seen in the earlier model setting Rabʿ-i Rashīdī, but not in al-Muzaffariyya, must be an indication of the importance given to commercial activity. The inclusion of a market can be also explained through the location of al-Naṣriyya. According to Chardin's depiction of Tabriz, al-Naṣriyya was situated very much in the center of the city, whereas as al-Muzaffariyya remained, as already mentioned above, outside the city walls. A market in the center of the city seems economically meaningful, especially, within the context of Aqquyunlu policies that favored commerce. At this stage it seems safe to assume that the choice for the location of the newly founded market indicates Uzun Ḥasan's desire to cherish the economic life of the city, nevertheless, full economic implications of this choice deserve further scrutiny which is beyond the scope of the present paper.<sup>23</sup> This also brings to mind a question about the differences between the Qaraqyunlu and Aqquyunlu economic policies. Whether the Aqquyunlus emphasized the economic prosperity of Tabriz more than the Qaraqyunlus is a question that deserves further study. Nevertheless, the specific location of the complex, Bāgh-i Şāhibābād, which was a development area, makes one think that economic concerns might have had a greater role in the construction of al-Naṣriyya.

Unfortunately, very little remains from al-Naṣriyya, only a few stones from the mosque of Uzun Ḥasan with partial epigraphs.<sup>24</sup> The Masjid-i Ḥasan Pādshāh must have been the foremost monumental structure of the complex, and the nineteenth century account of Nādir Mīrzā confirms that the Masjid-i Ḥasan Pādshāh was greater in size than the Masjid-i Kabūd.<sup>25</sup> Chardin's panorama of Tabriz depicts it somehow larger than the Masjid-i Kabūd, too.<sup>26</sup> Arriving at a conclusive statement for the artistic quality of the building is more difficult. Nādir Mīrzā notes the high quality marble and glazed tiles used for its decoration, and Karbalā'ī's

<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, a market location outside the city walls could actually be preferable for long-distance traders, or perhaps for nomadic tribal groups that could sell livestock to the sedentary city population. This is an issue that requires further research. I thank Dr. Judith Pfeiffer for bringing this point to my attention.

<sup>24</sup> Sa'īd Hidayī, *Tabriz va Mirāthā-yi Farhangī* (Tabriz: Shahr-dāri-yi Tabriz, 1375), 30.

<sup>25</sup> Chardin, *Travels*, 1, between pp. 352–3, Ambraseys & Melville, *A History*, 56. Nādir Mīrzā, *Tārīkh va Jugrāfi*, 148, 149. Nādir Mīrzā's account on Masjid-i Kabūd reflects a feeling of enchantment with almost every aspect of the Masjid-i Kabūd; one wonders whether the Masjid-i Uzun Ḥasan could surpass it in anything but size! Nādir Mīrzā, *Tārīkh va Jugrāfi*, 108–113.

<sup>26</sup> It is nevertheless necessary to be cautious with using this type of visual evidence as observers who produced such visual presentation may have used conventional types to represent what they saw, thus sacrificing precision in physical dimensions.

narrative on the construction of the building suggests that due care for a building of this calibre was shown. Perhaps one is justified to assume that since al-Naṣriyya as a complex matched and possibly surpassed al-Muẓaffariyya, the Masjid-i Ḥasan Pādshāh was at least at the same level with the Masjid-i Kabūd.<sup>27</sup>

As mentioned above, reconstructing the construction history of al-Naṣriyya is problematic. According to Karbalā'ī, at the end of his life Uzun Ḥasan was regretful for not having constructed a mosque, *zāviya* and tomb for himself, and made the building of a complex his will, about which he told Darvīsh Qāsim, a prominent religious figure in the Aqquyunlu circles. Darvīsh Qāsim conveyed Uzun Ḥasan's will to Sulṭān Ya'qūb who accepted it wholeheartedly. In Karbalā'ī's narrative, since Sulṭān Ya'qūb moved to act after hearing his father's will, one is in a way led to conclude that it was all Ya'qūb's enterprise. Also, Karbalā'ī's narrative exclusively conveys the construction of the mosque without mentioning any other buildings in al-Naṣriyya.

Although it is not entirely implausible that Ya'qūb was the sole commissioner behind al-Naṣriyya, it is necessary to take into account the fact that Uzun Ḥasan had already built a *qanāt* system extending to the site of al-Naṣriyya. Nādir Mīrzā states that this *qanāt* system started from outside the city in the east, had the purest water in Tabriz, supplied water to the *madrasa* and mosque of Uzun Ḥasan, and it was very well-known.<sup>28</sup> Considering the intricacies of the water economy in the medieval socio-economic system, it is hard to conceive that Uzun Ḥasan did not envision starting a significant construction project at a location where he had already provided the infrastructure.

Karbalā'ī gives further details of the Masjid-i Ḥasan Pādshāh's construction as follows. It was a crowd of *sayyids*, Sufi shaykhs, scholars, astrologers and wise men (*hukamā*) who determined the hour for starting the project and the direction of *qibla*, and laid down the foundations in 882/1477. The construction required an amount of skilled labor in proportion to the size of the project which Sulṭān Ya'qūb had to supply from the

<sup>27</sup> Blair and Bloom, *The Art and Architecture*, 52. Nādir Mīrzā's narrative shows that he sincerely admired the Masjid-i Kabūd, and lamented its destruction. He does not show the same kind of emotions when he describes Masjid-i Ḥasan Pādshāh. Nādir Mīrzā, *Tārīkh va Juḡrāfi*, 108–111, 148, 149. Probably, the destruction of the latter was at a much more advanced stage when he saw both buildings. After all, people used the construction material from these buildings/complexes as they needed, and its location in central Tabriz may have worsened the situation for the Masjid-i Ḥasan Pādshāh.

<sup>28</sup> Nādir Mīrzā, *Tārīkh va Juḡrāfi*, 47, 49.

surrounding regions. Master builders and peerless architects were summoned to Tabriz, and the project employed a huge number of workers. Sixteen hundred pairs of oxen had to be used, probably to transport soil and construction materials. The entire project took seven years to complete, and an enormous amount of money, 100 million (*dirhams*?) was spent on it.<sup>29</sup>

An important question to consider is how this complex was used. One can argue that Tabriz continued to be a center of learning under Uzun Ḥasan and possibly Ya'qūb. It was probably in the early 1470's that Qāḍī Ḥasan, an administrator in Uzun Ḥasan's court, prevented young Ibrāhīm-i Gulshanī from leaving Tabriz and pursuing his studies in Transoxania by arguing that the [same kind of] knowledge was attainable in Tabriz.<sup>30</sup> Again during Uzun Ḥasan's reign one sees scholars of the surrounding regions drawn to Tabriz in order to discuss with the prominent scholars of the city a popular subject of the time, namely, the *waḥdat al-wujūd* (unity of being) doctrine. This doctrine propogated by the works of Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-'Arabī (d. 638/1240), the well-known Sufi of the thirteenth century, had turned into a one of the most debated topics in the intellectual/cultural centers of the Islamic world in the subsequent centuries, and apparently Tabriz was no exception.<sup>31</sup> One should also mention that Uzun Ḥasan was able to keep 'Alī Qushji, the well-known astronomer of the fifteenth century, in Tabriz if even briefly, in the early 1470's.<sup>32</sup>

Yet, al-Naṣriyya was completed in the early 1480's and the question of whether it contributed to the role of Tabriz as a center of learning remains to be answered. Information about who was employed in al-Naṣriyya is almost non-existent: Other than Darvīsh Qāsim who was the rector of the complex, it has not been possible to figure out other individuals who worked at this institution.<sup>33</sup> Rather than for its scholarly import, however,

<sup>29</sup> Nādir Mirzā, *Tārīkh va Juḡrāfi*, 169. Woods, *The Aqqyunlu*, 137. Karbalā'ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 1: 90, 91. Karbalā'ī does not state the unit of currency but it seems plausible to assume that it was dirham, a standard currency in the region. Whether the figure of 100 million is a realistic reflection of the actual money spent, or a symbolic figure to indicate an enormous sum is a valid question: A dirham weighed around 3 gr. which implies that 300 tonnes of silver were used in the project.

<sup>30</sup> Muḥyī uses the term *qāḍī 'askar* and *jumlat al-mulk* for Qāḍī Ḥasan. Muḥyī-yi Gülşenī, *Menākīb-i İbrāhīm-i Gülşenī*, ed. Tahsin Yazıcı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1982), 25.

<sup>31</sup> Gülşenī, *Menākīb*, 212.

<sup>32</sup> Abdülhak Adnan [Adivar], "Ali Kuşçu," *İslam Ansiklopedisi* 1 (1950): 321–323.

<sup>33</sup> Woods, *The Aqqyunlu*, 141. Apart from Dawānī, Jahānshāh brought Qāḍī Majd al-Dīn to Tabriz for his knowledge and piety. He turned out be so popular with the population of

al-Naṣriyya comes to the foreground as the stage for a violent incident in the city in 891/1486.

The chain of events leading to the execution of the aforementioned Darvīsh Qāsim started in the mosque of al-Naṣriyya. An ecstatic Turkoman soldier who was a devotee of the Prophet Muḥammad and called himself Mahdī fell asleep during the Friday Prayer in the Masjid-i Ḥasan Pādshāh, and saw the Prophet in his dream. The Prophet told him to wage religious war (*ghazā*) on a certain Christian in the city who had made it a habit to insult the Prophet. When Mahdī woke up he went to the shop of that Christian, invited him to convert to Islam, and when the Christian ridiculed and insulted him he cut his head. He took it around the market where a large group of people gathered around him and praised him. When the news reached Sulṭān Ya'qūb, he was furious; Mahdī was brought before him and executed.

This time the Christians took Mahdī's head to their neighborhood and insulted it causing extreme distress among the Muslims. Allegedly after getting permission from the ruler, a large group including religious leaders went to Mahdī's house to prepare the body for burial. The funeral ceremony turned into an almost open protest: The coffin was taken to Ṣāhibābād through markets and streets while people loudly recited greetings upon the Prophet. A huge crowd was present at the funeral prayer at Ṣāhibābād, the garden where al-Naṣriyya was located. On the way to the burial ground the crowd passed by Ya'qūb's residence. Ya'qūb was so scared from the huge procession that when certain 'envious' people told him that Darvīsh Qāsim was the reason of this 'mischievous' he had the popular rector of al-Naṣriyya killed the very same night, on 18 Rabi' I 891/24 March 1486.<sup>34</sup>

Whether Darvīsh Qāsim was as innocent as Karbalā'ī depicts him, to what extent he played a leading role in escalating tensions, and whether there were other political interests and conflicts involved in Ya'qūb's execution of Darvīsh Qāsim are questions that have to await further research. What is clear is that almost immediately after its construction had been

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Tabriz that in his funeral the entire population of Tabriz was reportedly present. Karbalā'ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 1: 114.

<sup>34</sup> Karbalā'ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 1: 92–95, 570. This incident also shows the existence of a very significant Christian section among the population and reflects tensions between confessional groups. This issue certainly deserves to be further studied in terms of the history of conversion. Woods adds that this caused a rift between the people of Tabriz and Ya'qūb, and after this incident Yaqub did not really spend much time in Tabriz. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu*, 141.

completed,—since the construction began in 882/1477 and lasted seven years, it must have come to conclusion around 889/1484—, al-Naṣriyya assumed a central role in the city's life. Even if one assumes that the area already had a significant social function in the city prior to al-Naṣriyya, one can still propose that that function was further emphasized by its construction.

Apart from construction programs at the imperial level, the Aqqyunlus patronized relatively smaller scale projects in Tabriz. Sulṭān Ya'qūb had a *maşjid*, *zāviya*, and rooms constructed for the followers of Dede 'Umar Rūshānī, the Khalvatī sufi of the fifteenth century. The *Menākub-i Gülşenī* informs us that once the construction was finished just cleaning the ground for the opening of the complex would require a month's work of several hundred men, but thanks to Dede 'Umar Rūshānī's and Gulshānī's spiritual support the dervishes finished it all in a mere three hours.<sup>35</sup> Despite the obvious exaggeration in this account one might still think that this project was probably not a small one.

The Akhī Khayr al-Dīn Zāviya in Chahār Minār neighborhood must have been a significant institution as we are told that Jāmī (d. 898/1492) stayed there when he visited Tabriz on 24 Jumāda II 878/16 November 1473.<sup>36</sup> This *zāviya* was established around the tombs of a certain Akhī Khayr al-Dīn, a noteworthy Sufi, and Bahlūl, an ecstatic (*majdhūb*) who was killed by an Aqqyunlu prince, suggesting that a shrine institution was at stake. Karbalā'ī states that it was functioning and prosperous until the end of Aqqyunlu rule, yet at the time Karbalā'ī was writing there was no trace of the *zāviya*. Therefore, we may infer that the prosperity of the *zāviya* was related with the Aqqyunlu patronage. This is one of the rare indications of Aqqyunlus as patrons of a shrine and it takes us to the final section of the current discussion.

### *The Aqqyunlu Rulers and Religious Life in Tabriz*

The Aqqyunlus did put their seal on Tabriz through their construction activity, but a close reading of the *Rawḍāt al-Jinān* suggests that they did

<sup>35</sup> Gülşenī, *Menākub*, 167–8. When Sultan Ya'qūb saw the miraculous performance, he fell at the feet of Rūshānī with perplexion and supplicated him. The word Muḥyi uses the double plural '*hujurat*' for 'rooms,' which is not uncommon in Ottoman Turkish.

<sup>36</sup> The Chahār Minār neighborhood was home to another *zāviya*, too, namely, the *zāviya* of a certain 'Imād al-Dīn who was a disciple of Şadr al-Dīn al-Ravāsī, a Zaynī shaykh. Karbalā'ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 1: 162, 164, 167.

not penetrate into every dimension of the religious and spiritual life in Tabriz. Specifically, it seems that the Aqquyunlus did not actively pursue to create or patronize shrines in Tabriz. This point comes into contrast especially when one compares Tabriz with Herat and Istanbul, the major contemporaneous capitals of the Islamic world in the east and west. If Istanbul can be seen as an exception since it was only recently conquered and the development of the shrine of Ayyūb al-Anṣārī served the Islamization of the city, the case of Herat was certainly comparable to that of Tabriz in terms of shrine patronage. The Timurids, starting with Shāhrukh (r. 807–1405/850–1447), paid special attention to the shrine of ‘Abd Allāh Anṣārī (d. 481/1089). In the 1460’s Sulṭān Abū Sa‘īd (d. 873/1468) built a large avenue leading to the shrine, and throughout the entire Timurid rule it was promoted it as the spiritual center of the city.<sup>37</sup> For the Aqquyunlu there does not seem to be one such shrine that rose to a prominent position under the patronage of political authority.

There were several shrines that were significant in the religious life of Tabriz, and Karbalā’ī introduces a religious hierarchy by devoting his first chapter to the companions of the Prophet buried in Tabriz. The locals recognized Muḍar b. ‘Ujayl as *ka’ba-yi ḥājat* (the refuge of the needy), visited his tomb especially for the removal of the plague, and according to Karbalā’ī, quickly attained their wishes. Similarly, prayers were accepted at the tomb of Abū Miḥjan al-Thaqifī (d. 30/650), and all the people of Tabriz, notables and ordinary men, favored ‘Ukkāsha (d. 11/632) extensively, whose tomb in the cemetery (*gūristān*) was discovered through dreams.<sup>38</sup> Definitely, the city had its religious centers, and a very vivid religious life.<sup>39</sup> In Surkhvāb the most central figure buried turned out to be Baba Ḥasan who was served by seventy saints in his lifetime.<sup>40</sup> A dream story in which the Prophet’s light came out of Baba Ḥasan’s grave

<sup>37</sup> ‘Abd al-Vāsī‘ Niẓāmī-yi Bākharzī, *Maqāmāt-i Jāmī*, ed. Najīb Māyil Haravī, new edition (Tehran: Nashr-i Nay, 1377/1999), 147.

<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately, I could not find any information pertaining to the biography of Muḍar b. ‘Ujayl. Mehmet Talu, “Ebū Mihcen es-Sekafi,” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* 10 (1994): 188. The person referred to here is possibly ‘Ukkāsha b. Miḥṣān al-Asadi who died in Ridda Wars in Buzakha approximately 200 miles northeast of Madina, in the central part of Arabian peninsula. The discovery of his tomb in Tabriz may be indicative of an attempt to create a mythical past for the city. *Kitāb Āthār Ibn Bādīs*, vol. II/2, ed. ‘Ammār al-Tālibī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1983), 110.

<sup>39</sup> Karbalā’ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 24–5, 34, 42–4.

<sup>40</sup> When Baba Ḥasan lived is not clear. Yet, since Maḥmūd Shabistārī (d. ca. 718/1318) mentioned him in one of his poems he probably lived before Shabistārī. Karbalā’ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 53.

associated him with the Prophet, and this probably meant the establishment of a spiritual connection between the Prophet and Tabriz.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps this is why the tombs of the great (*akābir*) and wealthy ones, especially those of merchants, were conglomerated around Baba Ḥasan's tomb.<sup>42</sup>

The list of shrines in the fifteenth century Tabriz can certainly be extended, but one observation that comes out of the *Rawḍāt al-Jinān* is that the Aqquyunlus neither tried to associate their tombs with these already established grave(yard)s, nor did they favor one among them to the disadvantage of others. Above it was mentioned that the Aqquyunlus built an imperial complex and supported the construction of more modest complexes for Sufis. In that respect, they continued the tradition of monumental construction and religious patronage. Nevertheless, at least tentatively, one can say that the control of the ruling dynasty does not seem to have penetrated Tabriz's socio-religious life extensively at the shrine level.

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<sup>41</sup> It is also necessary to mention that Karbalā'ī emphasizes the city's connection to the Prophet and the early Islamic period through those companions of the Prophet who were buried in Tabriz. Karbalā'ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 40, 41.

<sup>42</sup> For the containment of the plague and high prices (*ghalā*). Karbalā'ī, *Rawḍāt al-Jinān*, 49, 50, 52, 53. Another spiritual reference point was Baba Mazīd's tomb, *ibid.*, 105.

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