Reflecting Mirrors, East and West

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Reflecting Mirrors, East and West

Transcultural Comparisons of Advice Literature for Rulers (8th - 13th century)

By

Enrico Boccaccini

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Cover illustration: Alexander the Great discusses the origins of the universe with seven wise men, including Aristotle, Socrates, Thales, Porphyry, Apollonius of Tyana, Hermes Trismegistus and Plato. From a fifteenth-century manuscript of the Iskandar-nāma (The book of Alexander) by Niẓāmī-yi Ganjawī (1141–1209). Reproduced with kind permission of Musée d'art et d'histoire, Ville de Genève. Legs Jean Pozzi. Photo credits: © Musée d'art et d'histoire, Ville de Genève, photographe : André Longchamp.

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Abbreviations

AHR	*The American Historical Review*
AEM	*Anuario de Estudios Medievales*
Arabica	*Arabica: Revue d'Études arabes*
BMGS	*Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*
BJMES	*British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*
Bustan	*Bustan: Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kultur u. Politik der islamischen Länder*
CEHM	*Cahiers d'Études Hispaniques Médiévales*
CLHM	*Cahiers de linguistique hispanique médiévale*
Comparativ	*Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung*
CSSAAME	*Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*
DAEM	*Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*
DMA	*Dictionary of the Middle Ages*
DSTFM	*Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale*
EB	*Encyclopædia Britannica*
EG	*Études Germaniques*
EI[2]	*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., Leiden 1954–2004
EI[3]	*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 3rd ed., Leiden 2007-
EIr	*Encyclopaedia Iranica*, London 1982-
ELEM	*En La España Medieval*
EMedE	*Early Medieval Europe*
EMP	*Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy*
EQ	*Encyclopaedia of the Quran*, Leiden 2001–2006
FMSt	*Frühmittelalterliche Studien*
Francia	*Francia: Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte*
GG	*Geschichte und Gesellschaft*
GWU	*Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*
HEI	*History of European Ideas*
HistC	*History Compass*
H&T	*History and Theory: Studies in Philosophy of History*
HWPh	*Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*
HZ	*Historische Zeitschrift*
ICS	*Illinois Classical Studies*
Int Sociol	*International Sociology*
IOS	*Israel Oriental Studies*
Iran	*Iran: Journal of the British Persian Studies*

IS	*Iranian Studies: Journal of the Society for Iranian Studies.*
JAL	*Journal of Arabic Literature*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JOP	*The Journal of Politics*
JQS	*Journal of Qur'anic Studies*
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JSAI	*Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*
LexMA	*Lexikon des Mittelalters*
LthK	*Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*
Manag. Learn.	*Management Learning*
Al-Masāq	*Al-Masāq. Studia Arabo-Islamica Mediterranea*
Médiévales	*Médiévales. Langues, textes, histoire*
Medievalismo	*Medievalismo. Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* (*Sevilla*)
MW	*The Muslim World*
NHL	Neues Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft
Oriens	*Oriens. Zeitschrift der internationalen Gesellschaft für Orientforschung*
PER	*Parliaments, Estates and Representation*
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*
PoT	*Poetics Today*
RAAD	*Revue de l'Académie Arabe de Damas*
RAC	*Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*
RANL	*Rendiconti dell'Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*
RBPH	*Revue Belge de philologie et d'histoire*
RRR	*Review of Religious Research*
SCSML	Smith College Studies in Modern Languages
SI	*Studia Islamica*
StudStor	*Studi Storici*
TRE	*Theologische Realenzyklopädie*
Writ Commun	*Written Communication: A Quarterly Journal of Research, Theory & Application*
YCIS	*Yale Classical Studies*
ZDMG	*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*
ZrP	*Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*

Notes on transliteration and style

Throughout the book I adhere to the following transliteration system for Arabic and Persian script, which is based on the scheme used in Brill's *Encyclopaedia of the Quran*:

Consonants

ʾ	d	ḍ	k
b	dh	ṭ	l
t	r	ẓ	m
th	z	ʿ	n
j	s	gh	h
ḥ	sh	f	w
kh	ṣ	q	y

Vowels

Long vowels	**Short**	**Diphthongs**
ā	a	
ū	u	aw
ī	i	ay

Proper names and geographic designations that are commonly used in English are not transliterated. The standard system of dating all post-Hijri events that occurred in an Islamic context is Hijri/Christian, e.g., 786/1384–1385 and 786–796/1484–1493. For all other events, pre-Islamic or not related to Islamic societies, only the dates of the Gregorian calendar are provided. References in the footnotes are given, from their very first appearance on, in brief form. The full bibliographical data of all publications cited may be found in the bibliography included at the end of the study. The Arabic article "al-" is disregarded in the alphabetical ordering of the bibliographical entries, while "ibn" is taken into account. For abbreviations of frequently cited periodicals and reference works, see the list of abbreviations.

All translations are mine unless otherwise stated.

Introduction

1 Approaching *Mirrors for Princes*

The excitement in the room is tangible. The king's audience hall is filled with the realm's nobles and scholars, dressed in colorful robes, their heads covered by either black or golden headgear. They stand at the sides of the room, brimming with anticipation and curiosity, their eyes glued to what is happening in the center of the room. The event is significant, this they know. Why else would they all have been summoned by the king? No word, no gesture will escape their attention. Neither, we may well imagine, will anything that happens in front of this audience remain unknown to the rest of the realm once those in attendance will have reported back what they witnessed to others outside the court. In the center of the room sits the king, a majestic figure dominating the scene, towering over all his courtiers. Dressed in a purple robe, he has made himself comfortable on a beautifully decorated, colorful throne, covered with a green, red, and light brown checkered carpet. His hand indicates his readiness to receive, or rather listen to, what he has longed for. In front of him, on a small stool, sits the man whom he charged with an important mission. The man has aged significantly since the king had ordered him to seek out the desired object. His hair and his beard have turned white. But now that he has finally returned, he seems confident that he has succeeded in his mission. He presents a large book to the ruler, gesturing at it with his left hand, while a servant holds it in front of him. The whispers in the crowd immediately go silent as he begins to read out the book to the king.

In a different time, in a different place, a young man, dressed in a precious robe with an ermine collar, hesitantly steps before the king who is seated on his throne. The young man kneels down in front of him, fearfully awaiting what the king has to tell him. A crown on his head and a sword in his right hand, the king calmly observes his young visitor. He can sense the young man's tension, but he will let him wait just a little longer before he starts to speak. He is about to deliver an important lesson to this young man, who will one day succeed him on this throne. It is his fatherly duty to instruct his son. Yet the significance of the role for which he is preparing his son dictates that he must not let his paternal feelings diminish the severity with which this lesson must be enforced on its young recipient. As he finally begins with his speech, the wrinkles on his forehead, which bear witness to the many years that he has fought to sit on this throne, gradually deepen. As he speaks, he points admonishingly with his left hand toward his kneeling son, adding emphasis to every

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point he makes by quickly moving his hand up and down, as if he is underlaying his speech with the beats of a drum. His son looks at him in a mixture of puzzlement and consternation at the intensity of his father's lesson. His right hand is turned toward his breast, gesturing his surprise, while his left hand is stretched in parallel to his body, with his palm facing toward his father, as if trying to protect himself or temper the severity of the exhortation. But the king's admonishment has only just begun.

What these two scenes have in common is that they both cast us into a world of rulers, heirs and advisors that is structured and sustained by the intersections of knowledge, power, lineage, representation, and legitimacy. The first scene describes the physician Burzūya's return to the court of the ancient Persian king Anūshīrvān Khosrow I (r. 531–579)[1] whom he presents with the book of *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, a famous collection of animal fables. As the story goes, according to the majority of the Arabic manuscripts of *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, Burzūya's voyage to India begins when Anūshīrvān hears about a book that contains everything a king needs to know. Its title is *Kalīla wa-Dimna*. He eventually decides to send Burzūya to India where, upon arrival, the physician attaches himself to the ruler's court without revealing his mission. Once Burzūya finally gets hold of this marvelous book and translates it into Persian, he returns to Anūshīrvān to present him with the *Kalīla wa-Dimna* in front of all his courtiers.[2] The scene, and the story that stands behind it, brings together the themes of the exemplary wisdom-seeking ruler, the text containing all necessary knowledge about rulership, and the text's public and ritualized reception by the ruler. The second scene probably depicts Sancho IV, King of Castile and León (r. 1284–1295), who lectures his son Ferdinand IV (r. 1295–1312) on the foundations of faith and the principles of kingship. It thus captures the moment in which the ruler fulfills his paternal duty by educating his son and successor about the subtleties of rulership. Both scenes also have in common that they are depicted in illustrations found in manuscripts of texts that, on first sight, seem to fulfill comparable functions. The first illustration appears in a sixteenth- or seventeenth-century manuscript of an Arabic version of *Kalīla wa-Dimna*.[3] Far from being a children's book, this collection of animal fables holds shrewd advice for rulers and everybody else who lives and works at court. The second illustration is part of a fifteenth-century manuscript of the *Castigos e documentos para bien vivir* (*Lessons and treatises for a righteous life*; c. 1292),

1 See Khaleghi-Motlagh, Borzūya.
2 For a survey of the five distinct versions of this story, see de Blois, *Burzōy's voyage* 40–43.
3 See Figure 1 below.

FIGURE 1 Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Cod.arab. 615, fol. 17r

FIGURE 2
Biblioteca Nacional de España, mss. 3995, fol. 2r

attributed to Sancho IV and dedicated to his son Ferdinand IV.[4] It too contains lessons (*castigos*) for rulers and courtiers. Both works thus can be said to function as advice texts for rulers.

In the pre-modern period, advice literature for rulers was a widespread phenomenon and a popular branch of literature in various cultures and societies around the Mediterranean.[5] Pictorial representations such as those described above not only illustrate the integration of this type of literature in daily court practices, but also suggest the texts' importance in the workings of the courts. This is further emphasized by the continuous compositions, re-compositions and receptions of advice literature for rulers throughout time. Finally, the importance of these texts is evident from the significant amount of scholarly research that has been produced on these works.[6] The continuing fascination

4 See Figure 2 below. For a description of the manuscript, see Pavón Casar, *Imagen de la realeza*; esp. 221 on the discussed illustration.

5 For a preliminary survey of *Mirror* texts from this region between the eighth and thirteenth centuries, see Appendix B.

6 See, e.g., Marlow, Surveying recent literature.

with advice literature for rulers seems to be commonly linked to a (modern) perception or expectation of the texts' role in 'speaking truth to power', as well as to their (supposed) blatant pragmatism and opportunism, which is famously identified with the most popular specimen of the genre, *Il principe* (*The prince*) by the fifteenth-century Florentine politician and diplomat, Niccolò Machiavelli. In the European context, this type of literature is traditionally called *Mirror for princes* or *Fürstenspiegel*. As the name of a literary genre, the syntagma *Mirror for princes* dates back to the Middle Ages when the chronicler Godfrey of Viterbo entitled one of his works *Speculum regum* (*Mirror for kings*; c. 1183). The term *specula* had previously been used to label manuals and handbooks in general.[7] In the Arabic and Persian-speaking context, however, although the metaphor of the 'mirror' can also be found in the titles of works[8] and even as an explicit reference to the possibility of using texts—in this case the Quran—as a mirror,[9] it was used less frequently and never to define a specific type of literature. This is why Bosworth suggests the syntagma *naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, literally 'advice for rulers', to denote the vast corpus of pre-modern Islamic advice literature for rulers that can be said to correspond most closely in themes to the medieval European literary genre of *Mirror for princes*.[10] Works under this title usually offered ethical and practical advice on governance. In the Persian context, advice literature is commonly marked by the term *andarz*, which in a wider sense denotes all wisdom literature that provides, in a literary style, advice and instruction on the proper behavior for a large variety of settings and aspects of life.[11] Throughout this study, the term '*Mirror*' will be used to refer to this type of texts regardless of where and in what language they were written. This use of what is admittedly a specifically Western term is based on both practical grounds, given that the term has gained a certain universal recognizability and can therefore be used as shorthand for what is a transcultural phenomenon, and the fact—as will become clear throughout this study—that the self-reflective move implied by the specular image lies at the heart of all texts presently considered.

Mirrors are in general linked by an underlying idea; that is, the education of rulers. Thus, one way to approach the contents of *Mirrors* is through the

7 See Schulte, *Speculum regis* 10.

8 Zakeri, Proposal for the classification 174, mentions two works with the title *Mirʾāt al-muruwwāt* (*The mirror of manly virtues*), one by Abū Mansūr al-Thaʿālibī (d. 429/1037), and the other by Jaʿdawayh al-Qazwīnī (fifth/eleventh century).

9 See 254.

10 Bosworth, Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk.

11 See Shaked and Safa, Andarz.

terms *adab* and *paideia*. The term *adab*, which in modern Arabic denotes the concept of 'literature', carries the notion of 'manner', 'habit' or 'behavior' and was originally used as a collective term for all knowledge and maxims of behavior, religious and non-religious, that are suitable for the formation of a person's intellect and character.[12] Isabel Toral-Niehoff further specifies that, in contrast to *ʿilm*, indicating knowledge in a particular field or science, *adab* designates "a broader wisdom that includes a certain attitude, morality, and behavior" or "knowledge which results from 'taking a little bit of everything' (*al-akhdh min kull shayʾ bi-ṭaraf*)."[13] As a branch of literature, *adab* referred to educational and entertaining anthologies of poetry, anecdotes, proverbs and maxims aimed at the members of particular social groups.[14] The term *adab* entered the Persian language, which possessed its own equivalents in the terms *farhang* (New Persian) and *ēwēn* (Middle Persian).[15] *Paideia* refers to the education that produces the quality of *arete*, the defining virtue—not merely in a moral sense—of an ideal courtier and warrior, which manifests itself in a person's manners and conduct.[16] The Greek philosopher Isocrates (436–338 BC) went as a far as defining *arete*, and not the rule of succession, as the sole base of a ruler's legitimacy.[17] Although different in many aspects,[18] *adab* and *paideia* (or *arete*) intersect in their indications of specialized education aimed at members of the ruling classes and based on cultural refinement and a broad, anthological formation. This is what *Mirrors*, at least on the surface, tend to offer to their readers.

Mirrors come with a large diversity of contents, themes, images and philosophical premises. In brief, *Mirrors*' advice can touch on anything, ranging from (the ruler's) virtues to religious beliefs and practices; philosophical, economic, social and political questions; history; personal interactions; private matters; public behavior; bureaucratic, military, dynastic and ritualistic issues; etc. The diversity of *Mirrors* also extends to other aspects such as their authors and addressees or their form (structures, styles, etc.). Apart from the many

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12 See Hämeen-Anttila, Adab.

13 Toral-Niehoff, Book of the pearl 134.

14 See Gutas, Arabic wisdom literature 59. See also Fähndrich, Begriff 'adab'; Günther, Islamische Bildung; and the introduction to Günther, *Knowledge*.

15 See, e.g. Khaleghi-Motlagh, Adab.

16 See Jaeger, *Paideia* i, 24–26.

17 See Jaeger, *Paideia* iii, 159.

18 On the relation between the two concepts, see, e.g., Gutas, Arabic wisdom literature 67; Günther, Education; Günther, Bildung und Ethik; Günther, Principles of teaching 72; and Khalidi, *Arabic historical thought* 83.

works written by theologians and other scholars, some *Mirrors* have allegedly been composed by rulers, such as Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn's *Risāla* (*Epistle*) to his son (c. 206/821), ʿUnṣur al-Maʿālī Kaykāwus b. Iskandar's *Qābūs-nāma* (*The book of Qābūs*; c. 460/1082–1083), Louis IX's (1226–1270) *Enseignements* (*Teachings*) or James I of Aragon's (1208–1276) *Libre de saviesa* (*Book of wisdom*). Others were written by ministers, such as the *Barīd al-saʿāda* (*The courier of happiness*; c. 609/1212–1213) by the Rum Seljuq vizier Muḥammad-i Ghāzī Malaṭyavī, the *Demandes faites par le roi Charles VI* (*The questions of King Charles VI*; c. 1409) by Pierre Salmon, or the *Maqāma fī l-siyāsa* (*a session on discipline*; also referred to as *A letter* (risāla) *on discipline*) by Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb (713–776/1313–1375), a vizier to the Nasrid dynasty of Granada. In a very limited number of cases we encounter female authors of *Mirrors* such as Christine de Pizan (b. 1364) who wrote *L'épître d'Othéa* (*The letter of Othea*) and *Le livre du corps de policie* (*The book of the body politic*). Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn's *Risāla* might likewise be counted toward a group of *Mirrors* produced in the form of epistles and admonitory letters, along with Lupus of Ferrieres's (c. 805–862) letters to the Carolingian Emperor Charles II and the *Risāla* by ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib (d. 132/750) to the son of the Umayyad Caliph Marwān II (r. 127–132/744–750). Some authors gave their work a specific form, such as Godfrey of Viterbo, who wrote his entire *Speculum regum* in verse, or Peter of Blois, who presented his work of advice for Henry II, the *Dialogus cum rege Heinrico* (*Dialogue with King Henry*; c. 1174–1189), in the form of a fictitious dialogue with the monarch. Another form of *Mirrors* consists of works that offer a mystical reading of the traditional corpus of advice for worldly rulers. This category is represented by Ibn al-ʿArabī's (560–638/1165–1240) *Kitāb al-Tadbīrāt al-ilāhiyya fī iṣlāḥ al-mamlaka al-insāniyya* (*The book of divine measures for the reform of the human kingdom*) and Mir Sayyid ʿAlī l-Hamadānī's (714–786/1314–1385) *Dhakhīrat al-mulūk* (*The Provisions of Kings*), to name but two examples. However, as we will see in the comparisons to come, since the practical needs and attitudes of monocratic rulers were very similar throughout history, authors of *Mirrors* necessarily addressed similar matters and often even drew from a shared quarry of old practical wisdom. In terms of their form, *Mirrors* were mostly shaped by their anthological nature, which meant that authors would combine a large variety of material, as long as it was deemed useful for a ruler.

Despite the obvious currency of the *Mirror* phenomenon and the amount of scholarly work that has already been produced on the subject, Linda T. Darling, as recently as 2013, criticized that the study of European *Mirror for Princes* is characterized by a "lack of a holistic view" and that "the historiographical or critical tradition has taken two extremely similar phenomena [i.e., 'European'

and 'Middle Eastern' *Mirrors*] and rendered them incommensurable."[19] In her article, Darling provides ample evidence that the two traditions of *Mirrors* receive mostly separate treatments in reference works.[20] In her conclusion, Darling admits that while "the strong resemblances between European and Middle Eastern works certainly make it appear as if advice literature in the form of *Mirrors for Princes* was a transnational phenomenon, … actual contacts have yet to be traced."[21] Darling thus formulates a desideratum for the exploration of links, potentially textual, between the two traditions. However, there is another, more basic desideratum that requires attention and scholarly dedication first. The question that needs to be addressed is what this 'strong resemblance' actually consists of and what it suggests with regard to the kind of relationship that might exist between these texts. This question might be answered by adopting a new premise, different from those that have so far dictated the study of *Mirrors*, and starting out by considering the literary traditions, mentioned by Darling, as a single phenomenon. This premise can be tested by simply comparing *Mirrors* from these traditions without taking their essential (cultural/religious) differences for granted, given that this assumption is what has until now been driving the study of these texts. The result of such an experimental study would be a new understanding of *Mirrors* as a transcultural phenomenon. Put differently, what the present study suggests is to step into this hall of *Reflecting Mirrors, East and West* and let go of a geography that is grounded in colonial regimes of knowledge.

2 The Heritage of Late Antiquity

But what are the elements that suggest the possibility of such a comparative and inclusive approach to texts produced in the vast region that today is referred to as 'Europe' and the 'Middle East', during a period that European medievalists would define as the 'Middle Ages'? What is the paradigmatic framework that would allow us to bring these texts together and assume that they are, in fact, commensurable? The most promising paradigm to my mind is that of an inclusive Late Antiquity that re-integrates the Arabian Peninsula into the history of its geographical surroundings and thus links Islam to the world into which it was born. To be clear, what is commonly referred to as Late Antiquity, chronologically largely precedes the timeframe discussed in the

19 Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 225.
20 Ibid., 223.
21 Ibid., 242.

present study. Late Antiquity nevertheless offers an important springboard for the present analysis, as will be argued below following a brief summary of the debates around the paradigm of Late Antiquity.

The entanglement of the Arabian Peninsula in the imperial context of the wider Late Antique world, which underlies the paradigm of Late Antiquity, is suggested by the large number of findings on economic links, a shared monotheistic tradition, Roman and Persian imperial interventions in the Peninsula, and the entrenchment of the Quran in Late Antique debates, among other things.[22] Although today the paradigm of an inclusive Late Antiquity is at risk of becoming a fashionable academic truism,[23] it still holds a powerful vision of history that challenges two conventional narratives: first, the view of Late Antiquity as the exclusive springboard of Europe's inevitable march, via the Renaissance, to Modernity, and second, the idea of Islam's self-sufficiency, orthogenetic emergence and ultimately radical otherness.[24] In fact, an inclusive Late Antiquity deconstructs any historical narrative that is founded on the dichotomies of East and West, Europe and Islam. These narratives are replaced with a view of the Late Antique oecumene as a tight-knit network for the trade of ideas and products that covered certain geographical areas to various degrees and that bequeathed its cultural heritage to all later inhabitants of these areas. And although, in principle, Teresa Bernheimer and Adam Silverstein are right when they state that Late Antiquity "is an intellectual construct devised by what might be called—for lack of a better term—'westernists' to study 'westerners'",[25] because it is ultimately rooted in the idea of (a European) 'Classical Antiquity', an extended Late Antiquity has the additional ability to decentralize the West in the history of Antiquity itself.

But on what basis does the paradigm of Late Antiquity actually rest? Scholars tend to define Late Antiquity in one of two ways: either as an "Age of Empires",[26]

22 See Marsham, Early caliphate 482–483. See also the contributions to Neuwirth et al., *Quran in context*. For a concise summary of the military history of the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula in the context of the Perso-Roman struggle, see Retsö, Road to Yarmuk. On the development of the Arabic language and script in pre-Islamic Arabia, see al-Jallad, Linguistic landscape. Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient*, even argues for the existence of extensive economic networks connecting Asia, Europe and Africa since the fourth millennium BC.

23 For a brief survey of the 'history' of this trend in the study of Late Antiquity, see Cameron, Late Antiquity 165–176.

24 See, e.g., Fowden, *Empire to commonwealth* 9–10; Fowden, *Before and after* 3–5; Hoyland, Early Islam; Neuwirth and Sinai, Introduction 12; and Robinson, Reconstructing early Islam.

25 Bernheimer and Silverstein, *Late Antiquity* 2.

26 Bowersock et al., *Late Antiquity* viii. For an economic foundation to the late Antique 'Age of Empires' see Frank, *ReOrient*.

shaped by the Roman and Sasanian empires and their imperial inheritance, which was shared by their successors, or as the period in which the three major monotheistic traditions emerged and/or reached a certain degree of maturity, in the sense of having "a clear sense (or senses) of what it is *and what it is not*."[27] In geographical terms, the Late Antique landscape usually combines the Greco-Roman and Persian worlds and thus extends from the eastern limits of the Iranian sphere of influence to the shores of the Atlantic in the west.[28] Al-Azmeh, for example, speaks of the "Late Antique Mediterranean-West Asian (or Near Eastern) civilisation belt which had a particular coherence in terms both of spatial and temporal coherence."[29] Compared with the conventional narrative of the 'European' (Late) Antiquity, this means not only a spatial expansion of the Late Antique 'world' or oecumene, but also a shift to the east as the center of gravity becomes located in what is now called the Middle East. This shift is momentous because it reflects both the fundamental significance of the monotheistic traditions for Late Antiquity by centering on their place of birth, and the distinct peripherality of most of Western Europe to many of the decisive developments that shaped this period.[30] In temporal terms, the incorporation of Islam into Late Antiquity means an extension of the period to include at least the seventh century, if not in fact the entire first millennium, following Fowden's chronology of a 'mature' Islam.[31] However, it has been noted that the end of Late Antiquity might be placed differently depending on which region we are looking at,[32] which ultimately raises the question of how useful such a vague periodization can be for historical and literary research. Yet, given that any grid that is retrospectively imposed on the past is merely a construct, Fowden is right when he describes a wider Late Antiquity as a "parallel periodization with its own logic and usefulness" that is not meant to replace other periodizations, but offers new perspectives on the past.[33]

To be clear, the paradigm of an inclusive Late Antiquity comes with its own pitfalls. For example, the rejection of the orthogenetic model ought not to result in the adoption of the equally monist view of a completely heterogenetic

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27 See Fowden, *Before and after* 55. On the engagement with Greek thought as a marker of Late Antiquity, see also Hoyland, Early Islam 1067–1069.

28 See, e.g., Bowersock et al., *Late Antiquity*; Fowden, *Empire to commonwealth*; Fowden, *Before and after*; Hoyland, Early Islam; and Morony, *Muslim conquest*.

29 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* x.

30 See Fowden, *Empire to commonwealth* 4.

31 See 10 n. 27. On the debates around the end of Late Antiquity, see also Bernheimer and Silverstein, *Late Antiquity* 8.

32 See Bernheimer and Silverstein, *Late Antiquity* 9; and Cameron, Late Antiquity 168–170.

33 Fowden, *Before and after* 213.

Islam that is nothing but the sum of borrowings from the Roman and the Sasanian empires.[34] The expansion of Late Antiquity to include the history of early Islam thus runs the risk of producing a (European or Iranian) historiographical appropriation of Islam that bereaves Muslims of all historical agency and turns Islam into a mere sub-narrative of or deviation from other dominant histories. A particular trend of revisionist studies even goes as far as detaching the history of Islam from the Arabian Peninsula by re-locating the emergence of Islam to the Fertile Crescent, based on the belief that a major religion could not have originated in a supposedly remote, isolated and barren environment.[35] Moreover, studies adopting the paradigm of Late Antiquity sometimes project overly simplistic notions of 'continuity' that betray a bias against change and suggest a constancy that is far from reality. Others seem to mistake the sort of cultural, ceremonial and administrative continuities that can be observed after the Islamic conquests as proof of Islam's Late Antique origin. These observations regarding the syncretism of post-conquest culture are without doubt significant for our understandings of how the aforementioned 'floating repertoire', as a shared Late Antique heritage, came into being and was carried on. However, they cannot per se be used to reinstate Islam into Late Antiquity because they could be the result of a simple process of assimilation by conquerors. This reinstatement can only be achieved by an approach that focuses on the pre-conquest period, such as the project of re-reading the Quran as a Late Antique text, commonly linked to the name of Angelika Neuwirth. In her own words, this type of re-reading means that

> the Qur'anic texts are reintegrated into their original cultural context and seen for what they were before they were canonized into the foundational document of a new religion—namely, answers to pressing contemporary questions and problems, answers that engaged, modified, adapted, and re-interpreted narratives and motives with which their audience must already to some degree have been familiar.[36]

The emphasis that this project puts on the earliest period of Islam might appear like a fixation on origins. Yet it must be understood as a resolute refutation of any position that holds Islam—and in consequence Muslims—to be essentially different and separate from the environment in which it evolved.

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34 See Morony, *Muslim conquest* 5.

35 For a list of examples of this trend, see Hoyland, Early Islam 1070; and Neuwirth and Sinai, Introduction 2–10.

36 Neuwirth and Sinai, Introduction 5.

What all this suggests is the need for balanced, multidimensional approaches to the explanation of cultural transmissions and the gradual and multifaceted transitions that characterize the period of Late Antiquity. This means, for instance, as Morony notes, not treating cultures or peoples as monolithic entities or indeed turning them into agents of choice.[37] When we think about 'Islam' and how it fits into the Late Antique world, we ought to do so in terms of the choices of individuals in the context of social, economic and cultural needs and traditions. Moreover, it is important that we carefully consider what paradigms we employ to describe cultural transmissions. James Montgomery, for example, characterizes his own approach to this question as driven by the desire

> to hold on to the contingencies and permutations of invention, of borrowings and lendings and returns (culture as collage and collecting), together with a determination not to shy away from the possibilities of endogenous development, whilst emphasizing the unitary aspects of diversity and the simultaneity of lived narratives of destruction/extinction and creation/transformation.[38]

The paradigm of Late Antiquity per se does not provide us with a solution to these problems. It thus ought not to stand at the end, but at the beginning of a rethinking of how we imagine cultural transmissions and formations.

Coming back to the present study, many of its primary sources cannot be described by the paradigm of Late Antiquity because they stem, in part, from a period that lies outside even the longest time frames that have been proposed for it. The analysis of these sources thus rather sheds light on some of the outcomes of Late Antiquity, or rather, on what impact its heritage had on subsequent centuries. Late Antiquity therefore represents more of a formative period for what is analyzed in the present study. The specific understanding of Late Antiquity described above provides a strong justification for the comparisons undertaken in the present study, as it suggests that their objects (i.e., the primary sources) are indeed commensurable because they originate from a space or context that is shaped by a shared heritage. This heritage of Late Antiquity refers to the practices and enunciations inherited and adopted by the legatees of the Late Antique oecumene, including taxation systems, court rituals, bureaucratic practices and forms of sacralized rulership.[39] This

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37 See Morony, *Muslim conquest* 6–8.
38 Montgomery, Islamic crosspollinations 164.
39 See, e.g., Kennedy, Islam 225; and Marsham, Early caliphate 491.

is not to say that nothing changed in the centuries following Late Antiquity, as this would mean that, in a way, Late Antiquity never ended. For example, the rise and fall of the Abbasids did not leave the region unchanged. Yet change occurred gradually, never just in one direction, and at different velocities depending on its object.

In the last three decades, a series of studies have shed light on the consistency of Late Antique forms of rulership and their representations among the legatees of the Late Antique heritage.[40] The findings of these studies offer a concrete basis for an investigation of *Mirrors*, a phenomenon that is so closely linked to the position and the figure of the ruler. To sum up the function of Late Antiquity in this study, it represents not only a formative period that precedes and shapes the things presently analyzed and compared, but also a space, a *Denkraum*, whose dynamics did not suddenly stop, but had a lasting impact. This *Denkraum* has no sharply defined expiration date and, as a paradigm, it challenges the division into separate monolithic historiographical categories of the sort that Darling outlines in her survey of the study of *Mirrors*.

The overall tenor of the aforementioned body of research is that Late Antique rulers and their legatees had at their common disposal a repertoire of enunciations of power. This suggests that the shared cultural framework was mirrored to some extent in shared political structures. In his enlightening book *Muslim kingship* (1997), Aziz al-Azmeh observes that "there appears to exist a limited set of archetypal forms of representation for the construal of royalty in terms of sacredness which show remarkable constancy, over time and space."[41] When Muslim polities appeared on the scene of Late Antiquity they, as al-Azmeh puts it, "had available a floating repertoire of immensely ancient and awesomely persistent institutions, metaphors, iconographies, and propositions concerning power, and most particularly concerning power in relation to the sacred, which they welded into distinctive forms."[42] He thus concludes that "the classical forms [of royal enunciations] associated with Islamic history were specific and highly elaborate reworkings, over a period of many centuries, of earlier oecumenical, imperial, and politico-soteriological traditions."[43] Almut Höfert also argues that the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs were essentially a continu-

40 See, e.g., al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship*; Canepa, *Two eyes*; Drews, *Karolinger*; Fowden, *Empire to commonwealth*; Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat*; Marsham, Early caliphate; and Oesterle, *Kalifat und Königtum*.

41 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 18.

42 Ibid., 10.

43 Ibid., x.

ation of the Late Antique models of imperial-sacralized rulership.[44] One of the distinctive features of these shared models of rulership is their link to the sacred. Divine or sacralized kingship, al-Azmeh argues, is defined by one or the other form of the rulers' partaking of the divine and their role as representatives of divinity, either as its extension into the world or through their preservation of its order.[45] Sacralization can adopt a variety of forms, ranging from simple divinization or apotheosis to all kinds of filiations with divinity, vice-regency and the reception of divine favor.[46] Other scholars, such as Fowden and Höfert, point to the alliance between monotheism and imperialism as the defining feature of Late Antique rulership. As their approach goes, the combination of universalist monotheistic religions and the expansionist drive of imperialism produced highly centralized, autocratic governments that were headed by sacralized rulers who could draw justification for their aspiration to world domination from their unique knowledge of and link to the One God.[47]

These understandings of the continuities and commonalities between Roman emperors, Persian kings of kings and their Byzantine, Carolingian, Umayyad and Abbasid legatees, provide a unique basis for the present study. The hypothesis that the present study puts forward is that if these rulers presented themselves and were seen in similar ways, it is conceivable that advice literature produced for them is equally comparable. Besides, the study of monarchic rule is particularly apt for the deconstruction of the East–West dichotomy, because it has traditionally been used to construct, support and represent this very binary, in the form of the juxtaposition of the tyrannical Oriental despot and the secular Occidental monarch.[48] In her comparison of Christian emperorships and Islamic caliphates, Höfert provides the reader with a short overview of the history of the study of monocratic rulers from the nineteenth century to the present. Starting with the concept of sacral kingship ("Sakralkönigtum") and continuing with the particular categories ("Partikularkategorien") of European kingship and Islamic caliphate, Höfert recapitulates the field's quest for a comparative apparatus that neither promotes a concept that has come out of a particular, local history to a global phenomenon, nor proposes a series of different categories based on the a priori assumption

44 See Höfert, Königtum 167.

45 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 35.

46 Ibid., 18.

47 See, e.g., Canepa, *Two eyes* 100–106; Fowden, *Empire to commonwealth* 3–11; Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 24–41; Hoyland, Early Islam 1058; Kelly, Empire building 171–172; and Marsham, *Rituals* 1–2.

48 See Flüchter, Einleitung 1.

of ontological difference between cultures, nations or civilizations.[49] Höfert finally opts for the term 'imperial monarchy', but she mentions explicitly that her understanding of monarchy is very much akin to al-Azmeh's concept of kingship.[50]

Having set the historical stage of the present study by embedding the phenomenon of *Mirror* literature in the larger history of Late Antiquity and its social, political and cultural heritage, we will now consider transculturalism as a method that, to a certain extent, has the ability to upset the culture- (or nation-) based grid of historiography that has led to the division of the *Mirror* tradition into distinct and incommensurable units.

3 Transculturalism

Transculturalism emerged as one of several reactions to the widespread understanding of cultures as isolated systems, a view commonly associated with the late eighteenth-century philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder.[51] Characterized by internal homogeneity, external delimitation and a correlation between culture and ethnicity, this conception of culture gained further prominence with the appearance of Samuel Huntington's thesis of *The clash of civilizations*. In basic terms, transculturalism might be provisionally defined as the transcending and questioning of cultural delimitations. In contrast, other 'reactions', such as multiculturalism and interculturality, do not challenge but ultimately reaffirm the idea of cultures as independent islands.[52] Both interculturality and multiculturalism suggest, in the words of Afef Benessaieh,

> that some sort of "pure" (in the sense of non-mixed) culture exists or precedes the mixture, or that cultural diversity and change are novel features of a globalizing world marked by accelerating and more volatile migrational flows.[53]

Also, the latter argument—that is, that modern day globalization and migration have brought about a change in the relationship between originally isol-

49 Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 24–41.
50 Ibid., 82.
51 See Welsch, Transculturality 194.
52 On interculturality and multiculturalism, see Benessaieh, Multiculturalism 15–19; and Welsch, Transculturality 196–197.
53 Benessaieh, Multiculturalism 15.

ated cultures, leading to new permeations and entanglements—ultimately still relies on an understanding of cultures as essentially separate, monolithic entities. This juxtaposition of an interconnected modernity with a more isolated and ordered past also underlies some transcultural approaches.[54] Yet, as Benessaieh argues, "increasing migrational flows and geographical mobility have only rendered the dynamic state of continuous proximity and cultural mixedness more visible."[55]

As opposed to interculturality and multiculturalism, transculturalism is more difficult to define. It is sometimes treated as a synonym for other concepts, such as cross-culturalism or *créolité* (creoleness), both of which, however, still rely on the idea of cultural borders, which are either crossed or retained despite movement and deterritorialization.[56] What is missing from both concepts, and what the present study considers to be the very essence of transculturalism, is the transcending of cultural categories. We find this particular understanding of transculturalism in, for example, the writings of the German philosopher Wolfgang Welsch, who defines transculturality as a network or web characterized by entanglements, intermingling and blurry lines between supposedly distant cultures.[57] It also underlies Benessaieh's definition of transculturality as "a fluid transformative process in which people no longer perceive themselves under one single culture", which emphasizes the "*cultural plurality* lived by many individuals and communities of mixed heritage and/or experience."[58] Applied to cultural productions, his understanding of transculturality refers to the combination of

> material from differing cultures to create new shapes, genres and discourses that seek not only to remain significant for the cultures they reference, but also to produce new meanings that can no longer be proclaimed authentic or otherwise with regard to their original components.[59]

Mikhail N. Epstein's definition of transculturalism places the emphasis on the individual's liberation from cultural determinations. Epstein argues that, while culture frees humans from natural and physical dependencies, transculture has

54 See Welsch, Transculturality 197.
55 See Benessaieh, Multiculturalism 15–16.
56 Ibid., 21–25.
57 See Welsch, Transculturality; Benessaieh, Multiculturalism 11; and Herren et al., *Transcultural history* 46–48.
58 Benessaieh, Multiculturalism 25.
59 Ibid., 27–28.

the ability to liberate people from the limitations and determinants of culture's symbolic order.[60] Epstein's transculturalism thus poses an immediate challenge to any monolithic and deterministic vision of culture, both of societies and of the individual. Yet he insists that this transcendence over, or liberation from, culture does not imply a complete abandonment of cultural origins, just as culture has not relieved mankind from all bodily needs. Instead, according to Epstein, transculture indicates an expansion of our multiple identities as it "builds new identities in the zone of fuzziness and interference and challenges the metaphysics of discreteness so characteristic of nations, races, professions, and other established cultural configurations that are solidified rather than dispersed by the multiculturalist 'politics of identity'."[61]

In their application of transculturalism, the scholars of the research cluster "Asia and Europe in a Global Context" at the University of Heidelberg go beyond merely transcending the concept of culture per se. In fact, they use transculturalism to question "the territoriality of historical concepts" by offering "a narrative that aims to overcome cultural essentialism by focusing on crossing borders of all kinds."[62] They see culture as challenging a historiography that prioritizes the economic and political 'reality' over the creative power of cultural symbols. The main intentions of their transcultural approach are to overcome notions of cultural coherence and to critically scrutinize the categories, methods and function of history that are traditionally intimately linked to the nation as the ultimate ordering principle. They call for the recovery of moving, border-crossing persons, objects and ideas that are often neglected by the *order of things* of national history. It is these entanglements of people, objects and ideas that are the focus of transcultural history.[63] Entanglements are not "simple events," but ongoing, fluid, border-crossing networks. The entangled history of these networks does not revolve around separate, independently existing and locally rooted cases or units. Instead, it sheds light on the question of how "both sides were generated and became conceivable as units only after their encounter."[64] Ultimately, unlike a comparative approach that presupposes the analytical separation of the units of comparison, transculturalism "focuses on the fluid and interwoven dimensions of the historical process, studying societ-

60 Berry and Epstein, *Transcultural experiments* 24–26.

61 Ibidem. Epstein uses the term *interference* to describe interactions between cultures that produce "more diversification within existing diversity" by reinforcing some of the differences and neutralizing others (9).

62 Herren et al., *Transcultural history* v.

63 Ibid., 3–9; and 41–43.

64 Margrit Pernau, quoted in Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 43.

ies in the context of the entanglements that have shaped them, and to which they have contributed in turn."[65] It thus takes into consideration the modes of exchange and transmission that linked supposedly 'separate' contexts and recuperates their shared history. However, the history is not shared merely from a genetic perspective, in the sense that it has common roots, but in the sense that it is continuously connected and intertwined.[66] As a concrete example of the application of transculturalism, the Heidelberg research cluster refers to the history of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and the countless transcultural entanglements that characterized and surrounded this event in the aftermath of World War I. They point at the inaptitude of national and international perspectives for the study of, for instance, the global fear of the Spanish Flu, transnational mourning, the transnational circulation of photographs of war graves, and the transport of cultural heritage items as spoils of war.[67]

In any case, there is no doubt that the transcultural approach is of a constructivist nature and that it does not offer a 'more real' image of the past.[68] In fact, the scholars in the Heidelberg excellence cluster admit that the analysis of "places and situations of dense transcultural interaction presumes cultural authenticity in less entangled fields."[69] By virtue of their intention to transcend cultures, transcultural approaches reproduce them as defined and confined units.[70] This shows that transculturalism, while being a powerful tool for the analysis of processes, moments and places of contacts, interferences and border crossing, as well as the politics of identification, legitimization, attribution, and claims of heritage that surround the contested origins of transcultural source material, cannot resolve the issue of cultural determinism and essentialism for all cases. However, if we presuppose, as Höfert suggests, that the "civilization paradigm" ("Zivilisationsparadigma")—that is, the idea of the existence of separate and distinguishable civilizations or cultural units—"has adopted since the nineteenth century a discursive reality, by influencing the organization and concepts of the academic discipline of history on various levels",[71] then we can use the transcultural perspective as "an approach that problematizes not the borders of 'civilization', but the historiographic borders that the civiliz-

65 Conrad, *Global history* 44.

66 See Flüchter, Einleitung 9. For the concepts of shared or entangled history, see Kaelble, Vergleich und Transfer.

67 Ibid., 1–5.

68 See Ibid., 69.

69 Ibid., 76.

70 See Höfert, Anmerkungen 17.

71 Ibid., 22.

ation paradigm imposes on our research and thought."[72] Transculturalism thus represents, according to Sebastian Conrad, a "turn against the methodological nationalism of conventional historiography," as a result of which "entities such as nation-states and societies are not simply taken as givens."[73] In doing so, we do not reiterate cultural borders, but we first acknowledge the existence of the historiographic discourse of cultural borders and subsequently challenge them. In the case of the present study, the historiographic discourse that we acknowledge and try to overcome is the narrative of separate *Mirror* traditions.

Mirrors, understood as transcultural texts, represent a product of (or for) a more or less tightly knit transcultural network of ruling systems. The texts, their authors and their addressees are seen as being part of a shared or entangled history. The transcultural entanglements that characterize this history range from the abstract, reciprocal awareness of regal customs and rituals across all major dynasties to the concrete exchange of embassies between the Carolingians and the Abbasids.[74] In terms of the *Mirror* genre, concrete exchanges include the Byzantine translations of works such as *Kalīla wa-Dimna* and the Spanish translations of Arabic wisdom literature.[75] However, the particular transcultural processes between the cases to be compared are unlikely to play a major role in the present study. Instead, it will follow the approach to transculturalism that underlies the collective study *Monarchische Herrschaftsformen der Vormoderne in transkultureller Perspektive* (*Pre-modern monarchical forms of rule from a transcultural perspective*) by Wolfram Drews, Antje Flüchter et al., in that the transcultural and diachronical comparisons will be made from a transcultural perspective. A transcultural perspective implies the awareness that every unit of comparison might be significantly shaped by 'outside' forces; that is, impulses by or interactions with entities or relations that are not considered internal to the immediate context or environment of the object of analysis, regardless of whether it is located in a contact zone with distinct exposition to such forces or not.[76] Thus, transcultural in the present study refers to both a perspective and a method. The transcultural perspective imagines *Mirrors* as a transcultural and transepochal phenomenon, the origins or sources of which are contested. In other words, *Mirrors* did not emerge *ex nihilo* in a confined geographical and temporal space, but developed across multiple timeframes

72 Ibidem.
73 Conrad, *Global history* 51.
74 See Heck, *Arab roots of capitalism* 179–181.
75 See 33.
76 See Flüchter, Einleitung 9. See also Herren et al., *Transcultural history* 3.

and cultural, religious, political and social borders, not simply as the sum of previous phenomena, but as something new in every moment, informed by and drawing on a quarry of ancestral models. As a method, transculturalism implies a two-stage procedure: first of all, the recognition of the historiographic division of advice literature for rulers into distinct cultures as a discursive reality that can be observed in most of the research on this issue; and secondly, the questioning not only of the historiographic boundaries of cultures, but also of ordering grids, territories of knowledge, and academic disciplines. The present study is intended to achieve this by comparing texts that are selected to represent not cultures or religions per se, but stages of the development of two corpi that have been discursively created by historiography as the distinct (and incommensurable) corpi of 'Western' and 'Eastern', or 'Christian' and 'Islamic' *Mirrors*.

4 Research Procedure

In brief, in order to provide an alternative to the separation of *Mirrors* into a binary of monolithic culturalist categories, as described by Darling, the present study proposes a series of transcultural comparisons of *Mirrors*. These comparisons will directly address the ways in which scholars have traditionally discussed and systematized *Mirrors* by taking current typologies and periodizations as the basis for the selection of primary texts. By comparing texts that have so far been treated as incommensurable, primarily because of an essentialist fetishization of their presumed cultural or religious origins, the present study suggests the possibility of viewing them as representatives of a single, transcultural phenomenon and thus implicitly questions the traditional perspective on *Mirrors*. Chapter 1 will set the stage for the comparisons by juxtaposing the history of 'Islamic *Mirrors*' with that of 'Christian *Mirrors*', in the way that they have so far been described by scholars in the field. After laying out what is essentially a cross section of the current typologies and periodizations of *Mirrors* from the geographical area of Late Antiquity, the present study will propose a tentative analysis of potential reasons for the current historiographical separation of *Mirrors*. Here, the focus will be laid on the concept of genre and its problematic application to the transcultural phenomenon of the *Mirror* literature. This leads to the introduction of an alternative approach to 'genre', followed by the proposal of a heuristic definition of the *Mirror* genre and a discussion of its impact on our understanding of the primary texts. Chapter 1 concludes with a survey of previous attempts at comparative studies of *Mirrors* and a detailed explanation of the methodology of the present

study, including the criteria for the selection of the primary sources. This is followed, in Chapter 2, by a thorough introduction and contextualization of the four primary sources.

In Chapters 3 and 4, the present study will suggest two different types of comparison, each with a different set of *tertia comparationis*. The *tertia* of the present comparisons are directly informed by the heuristic definition of *Mirrors* that is proposed in Chapter 1. Instead of being rigid molds into which each text is fitted to determine its degree of aptness based on some arbitrary ideal, the *tertia comparationis* function as potential perspectives on and ways of approaching a text that generate new understandings thereof. The first type of comparisons (Chapter 3) will be based on an extrinsic reading that focuses on each text's content and its relationship to the historical context by shedding light on the specific points of advice it gives. The focus of the analysis and comparison of the advice will rest on two main aspects: the traits and the roles of a ruler. Thus, the first element to be analyzed and compared in the present study is characteristics that authors of *Mirrors* expect a ruler to possess or to avoid. *Mirrors* are located, as Anton puts it, between "Sein und Sollen", between (how the ruler) is and (how he) ought to be, or in other words, between the political reality and the political ideal.[77] The presentation of a "Tugendkanon" (canon of virtues) represents a defining feature of all *Mirror* traditions under consideration, as suggested, for example, by the use of terms referring to 'virtues' specifically (*akhlāq*, *faḍā'il*, *fawā'id*, *virtutes*, *moralia*) or 'conduct' in general (*ādāb*, *sulūk*) in the texts' titles.

The second element to be compared are the duties that authors of *Mirrors* expect rulers to fulfill. This includes advice on concrete policies and the various ways in which the ruler ought to interact with his subjects as the immediate 'recipients' of his rule. The comparisons of the duties and roles that *Mirrors* attribute to rulers will allow us to answer a number of questions. For one, they will shed light on the culmination of (personal) education and political reasoning by revealing the relationships between advice on personal virtues and the exercise of a public office. Moreover, they will further our understanding of how advisors imagine the ruler's position in the cosmos, his relationship towards the divine and his subjects, as well as the aim of rulership and the obstacles that rulers have to overcome. In light of the discussion of the works' historical contexts, this analysis of the texts' contents will contribute to our understanding of the roles that *Mirrors* (and their production) played in moments of change or crisis, and in the diffusion of concepts of legitimacy. Furthermore, it

77 Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1041.

might bring to light strands of perennial advice, recipes and ideas, recast into a variety of socio-politico-religious contexts and welded into multiple forms.

The second set of comparisons (Chapter 4) combines extrinsic and intrinsic criticism in dealing with issues of intertextuality, sense-making and situated authorships, as well as discourses of authority and knowledge, in an attempt to further our understanding of the authors' discursive strategies. The analysis of these strategies will focus on two key processes within the texts: the authors' construction and presentation of advice to the rulers, and the negotiation of their relation with the ruler. The analysis of the first process will tell us more about the authors' characterization of their advice's origin, authority, field of application and function. Moreover, it will provide us with insights on their use of sources by revealing the strategies and methods that they adopted in weaving supporting material, such as narratives, into the *Mirrors* to serve their argument. Finally, the present study will consider how the power, usage and effectiveness of language are reflected, and reflected upon, in *Mirrors*. The analysis of the second process will deal with negotiations of power in *Mirrors* through the authors' self-representation and self-positioning, both within a tradition of advice-giving and in relation to their powerful addressees. This means that we will look at how authors of *Mirrors* evoke notions of immediacy, performativity and rituality in order to embed their works in established advisory models, including advice requested by the ruler or paternal advice. As a result, the present study examines how advice is entangled in discourses of utility (and harmfulness), naturalness, genealogy and gender.

Finally, a few statements regarding the primary sources are in order. Anticipating the discussion to come, there are multiple ways in which we can read *Mirrors*. Their advice intersects with praise, criticism and observations on the status quo. For example, every mention of a particular virtue can indicate its current absence in the ruler or even its general absence from contemporary discourses on rulership. Another level of complexity, as will become clear throughout this study, is added by the multiplicity of potential audiences that each *Mirror* addresses. Moreover, a fundamental prerequisite of the second set of comparisons and, indeed, the present study as a whole, is that *Mirrors* are treated as a 'discourse'. This means that instead of viewing the texts' language as a precise mimesis of 'reality', it is considered a creative power that generates and structures social realities. In the specific case of *Mirrors*, these social realities include such categories as knowledge, legitimacy and stability. On the one hand, texts exhibit to a certain extent their authors' assumptions, explanations and expectations, as well as their attempts to react to, make use of, manipulate or reject those of their audience in order to influence the world as they experience it. On the other hand, however, their language is structured and

sanctioned by the dominant assumptions, explanations and expectations of their time, since discourse is, in the Foucauldian sense, a rule-governed system that determines what can and what cannot be said. This "social logic" of texts reflects the "local or regional context of human relationships, systems of communications and relations of power."[78] Text can thus be said to both "mirror and create social realities, constitute and at the same time be constituted by social and discursive formations."[79] One of the consequences of understanding verbal discourse as a social phenomenon is, according to Mikhail Bakhtin, that "form and content in discourse are one."[80] Bakhtin argues that, instead of being merely a matter of the author's "private craftsmanship", stylistics is part of the "discourse in the open spaces of public squares, streets, cities and villages, of social groups, generations and epochs."[81] The present study will provide an analysis of *Mirrors* in terms of both form and content; that is, their linguistic and social structures, and their aesthetic and ideological character.

Another fundamental aspect of the *Mirrors*' language is that they are intertextual. Of course, from a Bakhtinian perspective, all text is intertextual, in the sense that no text is written in a vacuum but always rooted in its contexts. Indeed, the contextualization of the four *Mirrors* studied here will provide us with a first glimpse of the many potential debates, genre-perceptions and discourses—not least those that are conditioned by political crises—that these texts might echo, react and contribute to or be otherwise influenced by. In that sense, all of the four *Mirrors* are intertextual, both *manifestly* and non-*manifestly*.[82] Leaving all that aside, the present study will only deal with *manifest intertextuality*; that is, explicit references to prior utterances that the four advisors evoke as supportive material or authorities for the purpose of exemplifying or vouching for the reliability of their arguments. Instances of manifest intertextuality include quotations or paraphrases of and references or allusions to specific textual or oral traditions, as well as the evocation of known events and persons. Whether these utterances have actually been uttered before is arguably irrelevant, as long as they are understood and recognized as such by the audience. The precise function of every intertextual occurrence in the *Mirrors* studied here must be analyzed for each case separately. In principle, intertextual references can function as supporting material for the given advice by providing examples or counter-examples, case-studies, comments, explan-

78 Spiegel, Geschichte 180.
79 Ibid., 181.
80 Bakhtin, *Dialogic imagination* 259.
81 Ibidem.
82 On *manifest intertextuality*, see Tannen et al., *Discourse analysis* 44.

ations or (mnemonic) summaries. By linking a text to a source text and its context, intertextual references can evoke emotional associations in the reader or draw on the source's authority and credibility, as it is the case with references to canonical (religious) texts. In this sense they can function in manipulative ways; for instance, by injecting emotional arguments into rational thinking or masking controversial or blatantly false arguments with accepted truths.[83] To all these potential functions the present study will add others, such as narrative enactments of virtues or (un-)favorable comparisons with the past.

In terms of their results, all the above comparisons are expected and, for that matter, suited to reveal both similarities and differences between the various *Mirrors*. Both types of findings will contribute in their own way to our understandings of the phenomenon of *Mirrors*. Whenever the sources display certain universal aspects, the analysis will thus help to define this type of literature more closely. Potential disparities and particularities on the other hand will throw into relief differences in context that ought to be analyzed, while they might equally suggest possible typologies of subtexts that are not primarily defined by cultural or religious idiosyncrasies. What the study as a whole cannot and, in fact, does not seek to accomplish is to unearth filiations and textual lineages. First of all, Montgomery is right when he argues that this sort of text-archaeology, the search for direct influences and filiations, is ultimately motivated (explicitly or implicitly) by "the determination of 'originality'",[84] which in turn wants to suggest a sort of 'indebtedness' of the influenced to the 'original source'. Moreover, we must seriously ask ourselves how useful the collection of intertextual snippets is for our understandings of texts, given that their meanings might be completely transformed by the (discursive) context of the 'receiving' text.[85] Finally, every quest for textual filiations cannot but rely on the researcher's own awareness of possible literary sources, depending also on textual survival and ignoring the potential of lost sources that were still available in the author's time. Closely linked to the study of filiations is the notion of the *contact zone* as, in the words of Montgomery, a "nexus of copresence and improvised identities, of intercultures, inter-references and interferences, as site of ideational intersections and intertexts", and as a "locus of contiguity"

83 See, e.g., van Ruymbeke, *Kashefi's Anvar-e Sohayli* 243–257, who discusses a large variety of functions that are fulfilled by anecdotes, verse insertions and Quranic quotations, including the "manipulative" or "disingenuous" use of *iqtibās*, in advice literature for rulers.

84 Montgomery, Islamic crosspollinations 150.

85 On the limited usefulness of tracing the textual origins of Quranic passages, see Neuwirth and Sinai, Introduction 13.

that "permits travel and traversal (*translation*)."[86] But while the present study will at best be able to suggest the possibility of such engagements with texts across the historiographic divide, with the entire Late Antique oecumene, especially Byzantium, Spain and Sicily, as a potential locus of *crosspollinations*, more target-oriented research is likely to be able to trace actual contacts.[87]

In general, the present study is suggestive, exploratory, critical, and continuously self-reflective, rather than exhaustive, systematic, affirmative, and straightforward. This study will not be able to provide an exhaustive impression of the *Mirror* literature from the eighth to the thirteenth century, just as it does not intend to provide a systematic analysis of the history of the texts' production, with all its interrelations in terms of text and content. Nor does it seek to follow or affirm existing perceptions or narratives regarding human interactions and cultural productions, and its contribution may not be exclusively constituted of its net results, but also of the questions it raises along the way. Instead, in light of the fact that *Mirrors* represent a token and an artifact of the connected history of the societies that emerged from the Late Antique oecumene, the present study will explore a number of specific redactions and inflections of a general phenomenon in order to develop a number of alternative understandings of this generality. As this exploratory mission consciously deviates from the beaten track of traditional epistemes and theories, the study poses a challenge to the dominant historiography and views of knowledge production in modern scholarship. Finally, it should be noted that the present author embarks on this journey in the full awareness of his endeavor's constructivist nature and will therefore try to continuously reflect, and if necessary, reconsider the direction his study has taken.

86 Montgomery, Islamic crosspollinations 165.

87 For a brief survey of such contacts, see Goddard, *Christian-Muslim relations*.

CHAPTER 1

The Traditions

The scholarly approach to the study of *Mirrors for Princes* that Darling describes in her article separates the genre's history into two traditions. Before attempting to pose questions to this construct through analyses and comparisons of texts from both historiographically defined traditions, a more detailed account of the current understandings of *Mirrors* will explain how the approach of the present study can contribute to their disruption. This account will be provided through a summary of the histories and pre-histories of the pre-modern *Mirror* literature in Europe and the Middle East. The tracing of intellectual and cultural tendencies and currents within the two histories, which have been shaped by modern historiography, will disclose differences in the epistemological approaches to the literary traditions of both regions that might have led to the aforementioned historiographic incommensurability. The account of how the literary phenomenon of advice literature for rulers has been forged into two separate histories will lead into a discussion on the problem of the concept of 'genre', in terms of both its application to the transcultural phenomenon of *Mirror* literature, and its own development as a category. As a result, a heuristic definition of the *Mirror* genre will be offered, which takes into consideration the function of *Mirrors* and the specific contexts in which they were composed. This will be followed by further reflections on our understandings and readings of *Mirrors*. The final part of this chapter will provide a detailed survey of previous attempts at comparing *Mirrors* from multiple cultures. The survey will add to the list of epistemological and methodological problems that were detected in the first part by shedding light on the comparative method and its inherent problems, such as its constructive nature, its tendency to produce binaries (between nations, cultures, etc.), and the cultural and historical contingency of its parameters (for example, the selection of objects of comparison and *tertium comparationis*). Thereafter, the methodological details of the present attempt to deal with these issues will be introduced, including a discussion of the criteria and consequences of the selection of the primary sources.

1 The Two Histories of *Mirrors for Princes*

The historiography on *Mirrors for Princes* consists of two relatively consistent and almost exclusively separate histories: the European or Christian and

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the Islamic tradition. Yet the scholarly narratives on these two traditions are hardly comparable. As Darling notes, the historiography of *Mirror* production in Europe tends to tell the history of the literature's intellectual development without placing it in its social and political context, while the latter is generally the main focus of the history of the 'Eastern' *Mirrors*.[1] In the following, short summaries of the two histories of *Mirror* literature will be presented. By necessity, the narratives and periodizations presented throughout the following pages merely sketch certain tendencies and currents that scholars of both traditions have described. The resulting breaks in periodization are by no means intended to imply an abrupt conclusion or *ex nihilo* beginning of trends or developments.

1.1 *'Islamic' and 'Christian'* Mirrors for Princes

Modern historiography does not offer a unitary narrative for the history of what is traditionally referred to as the 'Islamic *Mirror* tradition'. However, there is a degree of consensus when it comes to this tradition's pre-history and its sources, for which al-Azmeh coined the phrase 'floating repertoire'. The main sources for this large repertoire were the literary and social traditions of Arabia, the region's Hellenistic heritage and an extensive corpus of Pahlavi advice literature.[2] In Late Antiquity, advice literature in the form of testaments was already a well-known literary form in the political culture of Arabia, in which the offering of advice, usually by a small advisory group called the *shūrā*, constituted an important element.[3] Another important role in the history of the 'Islamic' *Mirror* tradition is generally assigned to the Greco-Hellenistic heritage, whose contribution Marlow divides into three aspects: the ethical branch, consisting of works such as Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean ethics*; collections of aphorisms attributed to Greek philosophers and sages (*gnomologia*); and the corpus of alleged correspondence between Aristotle and his pupil Alexander.[4]

Finally, pre-Islamic Persian heritage also contributed significantly, in various ways, to the development of advice literature for rulers in the Middle East. In fact, Frank R.C. Bagley presents *Mirror* literature as one of the best examples

1 Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 228.

2 See Marlow, Advice and advice literature. There is no mention in studies on Arabic or Persian literature of authors using Latin texts, probably because the main language of the Eastern Roman Empire, which Muslim polities succeeded in the Eastern Mediterranean, was Greek and not Latin. On the few translations of Latin texts into Arabic see Christys, *Christians* 11.

3 Marlow, Advice and advice literature. See also Duri, *Early Islamic institutions* 2–4.

4 Marlow, Advice and advice literature. See also Bosworth, Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk.

of the "Perso-Islamic synthesis" that constitutes, in his view, "Muslim civilisation."[5] In terms of the concrete sources representing the pre-Islamic Persian contributions to the Islamic *Mirrors*, scholars have referred to a large variety of genres, ranging from texts dealing with the conduct of Sasanian emperors and the culture and customs (Pahlavi: *ēwēn*) at the Sasanian court in general,[6] to collections of fables—often involving animals, such as the aforementioned *Kalīla wa-Dimna*—to the Persian *andarz* ('teachings', 'advice') and *pand-nāmak* ('book of counsels') literature, which in a wider sense denotes all wisdom literature that provides, in a literary style, admonitions, advice and instructions on proper and ethical behavior in a large variety of settings and many aspects of life.[7] But while the circumstances and results of the synthesis of different traditions attract a significant amount of scholarly attention, the sheer breadth of potential pre-Islamic sources of the Islamic *Mirror* tradition, in addition to the difficulties surrounding the search for unambiguous cultural origins of metaphors, principles and ideals, means that the debates around such categories as 'Persian', 'Islamic' or 'Perso-Islamic' *adab* are characterized by considerable vagueness and confusion.

In the early stages, *adab* literature in general was characterized by the use of plain Arabic prose, a lack of emphasis on Islamic notions, and an explicit reliance on the material that Muslim polities had inherited.[8] Large parts of this material entered the corpus of Arabic literature in the second/eighth century, when Greek (usually via Syriac), Pahlavi and Sanskrit (via Pahlavi) texts were translated into Arabic. Modern historiography unanimously credits the Umayyad caliph Hishām (r. 105–125/724–43) with having fostered the translation, adoption and adaptation of these texts. Apparently his chief secretary Abū l-ʿAlāʾ Sālim also composed his own collection of epistles, which he probably derived from Greek sources, containing advice on ruling given by Aristotle to Alexander.[9] A crucial role in the foundation not only of the 'Islamic' *Mirror* tradition, but Arabic prose as a whole is usually attributed to caliphal scribes and secretaries (*kuttāb*; sing. *kātib*), in both the Umayyad and Abbasid administrations. Non-Arab (*mawlā*) secretaries in particular shaped the first chapter of

5 Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel* ix.
6 Marlow, Advice and advice literature.
7 Shaked and Safa, Andarz. See also Bosworth, Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk; and Luce, Mirrors for Princes 1916. On various examples from the large corpus of *andarz* literature, see also Klima, Avesta 37–45.
8 See Pellat, Adab.
9 See Bosworth, Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk. See also Crone, *God's rule* 151; and Latham, Beginnings 154–155.

the history of the development of *Mirrors* in the 'Islamic East'.[10] As Najm al-Din Yousefi argues, "their feat consisted in appropriating ancient ideas, such as perennial knowledge, divinely ordained kingship, justice, and legitimate government, and refashioning them for a cosmopolitan Islamic society and the Arab Empire."[11]

In the history of the 'Eastern' *Mirrors* the late fifth/eleventh and early sixth/twelfth century is often presented as a turning point, or in fact the moment of the genre's birth. Clifford Edmund Bosworth argues that, whereas the first centuries of Islam had been characterized by occasional appearances of *Mirror* material, the fifth/eleventh and early sixth/twelfth century saw the emergence of a "full blown, independent Mirror for Princes genre."[12] John Dereck Latham speaks of a crystallization "into a well-developed and clearly defined genre through a fusion of the ornate epistle and literary testament (*waṣiyyah*) with belles-lettres (*adab*)."[13] Whether they see that period as the completion of a process or the beginning of a new stage, most scholars agree that it is marked by the appearance of three defining works: the *Qābūs-nāma* by Kaykāwus, the *Siyāsat-nāma* attributed to the Saljūq vizier Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092) and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* attributed to Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (450–505/1058–1111).[14] The fact that all of these works were written in Persian, unlike the early Islamic Arabic *Mirrors*, is interpreted by Bosworth as signaling the authors' recognition "that the center of gravity of the orthodox Sunnī world was now Persia rather than 'Irāḳ or Syria or Arabia, that the division of caliphate and sultanate—the latter under the Saldjūḳs, now at the height of their power—was permanent and irrevocable, and that treatises on statecraft and kingship ought to take account of these changed conditions."[15] In a similar vein, Djalal Khaleghi-Motlagh sees these works—which he characterizes as a combination of Islamic *adab*, which had formed through the fusion of Iranian *adab* with Islamic culture, and the "the purely Iranian *adab*" that was

10 See Bosworth, Early Arabic Mirror 25; Bosworth, Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk; Luce, Mirrors for Princes 1916; and Pellat, Adab. On the secretaries' role in the development of the *Mirror* literature, see also Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 228; Gutas, Arabic wisdom literature 61; Marlow, Advice and advice literature; and Yousefi, Islam without fuqahā'.

11 Yousefi, Islam without fuqahā' 6.

12 Bosworth, Early Arabic Mirror 26.

13 Latham, Beginnings 168. Marlow, *Hierarchy* 117, defines the early Arabic epistles and testaments as "the predecessors of mirrors for princes."

14 See Bosworth, Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk; Luce, Mirrors for Princes 1917; and Tauer, Learned literature 426–427.

15 Bosworth, Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk.

an expression of Iranian cultural resistance—as a reaction to the weakening of the Abbasid Arab caliphate and the shift of power toward Persia.[16]

According to a different narrative, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* marks a new stage in the impact of Islam on the *Mirror* tradition. For Darling, al-Ghazālī's work embodies the tension between Islam and Persian notions of royalty.[17] Al-Azmeh argues that the late fifth/eleventh century homiletic works by al-Ghazālī and Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb al-Māwardī (d. 449/1058) are the result of the Islamization of the available concepts and symbols of power, "not in the sense of conversion to Islam, but in the sacralization of the world and its reading, under the Islamic signature, in terms of conformity or non-conformity with the prophetic type."[18] The agents of this change were, according to al-Azmeh, the *ʿulamāʾ*, who by that time had crystallized as a group and an institution and had started to influence politics.[19] As a result, the *ʿulamāʾ* contributed to the *Mirror* tradition by reformulating "certain common themes and sentences of political wisdom in terms of Koranic and prophetic textual paradigms and genealogies."[20] Al-Azmeh concludes that this development led to a change in *Mirrors*' topical content, but not their structure or conceptual content.[21] Based on a perception of the world within the textual boundaries of the Quran and *ḥadīth*, the *Mirror* tradition now occupied a place "at the intersection of legal writing (*fiqh*) and writings on politics."[22]

The history of what modern historiography refers to as medieval European or Christian *Mirrors* is usually divided into two main stages: the Carolingian and the high medieval *Mirrors*.[23] Yet the roots and sources of medieval *Mirrors* lie in Antiquity and Late Antiquity. While admitting that, as a genre, *Mirrors* were a medieval phenomenon, Pierre Hadot argues that there was a continuous tradition of advice literature for rulers stretching back to Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.[24] According to Hadot, this proto-*Mirror* tradition, which

16 Khaleghi-Motlagh, Adab.

17 Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 223. Elswhere she labels the seventh/thirteenth century as "a period of reconciliation between the Islamic and the classical Greco-Persian traditions" (235).

18 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 102.

19 Ibid., 101–102. See also Fowden, *Before and after* 164–165. For the development of the *ʿulamāʾ*'s role in society, see also Gilliot, ʿUlamāʾ. For the *ʿulamāʾ*'s contribution to the *Mirror* tradition, see also Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 228.

20 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 99.

21 Ibidem.

22 Ibid., 100.

23 See Bratu, Mirrors for Princes; Eberle, Mirror of Princes; Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes; Schmidt, Fürstenspiegel; and Singer, Fürstenspiegel.

24 Hadot, Fürstenspiegel 556–557.

can be found in passages of the Hebrew Bible or Homer's epics, is characterized by the consistent ideal of the king as God's deputy as well as a relatively homogeneous corpus of ethical demands for rulership.[25] However, Hadot's narrative of a monolithic tradition, which has been challenged by scholars such as Christian Bratu,[26] is probably more a discussion on the history of the ideal of kingship than a survey on *Mirrors for Princes*. Moreover, several scholars have denied any continuity, both in terms of content and form, between antique, early medieval and high medieval advice literature for rulers due to the different images of rulership that they portray and the contexts (philosophical, eschatological, courtly, etc.) in which these images are placed.[27] Nonetheless, Hadot's findings regarding the recurrence of certain elements throughout the pre-history of medieval *Mirrors* remain a valuable contribution to our understanding of the development of this type of literature. In fact, scholars generally agree that, as sources, (Late) Antique texts such as the Bible or works by Seneca, Cicero, Ambrose and Augustine played an important role in the medieval *Mirror* tradition.[28] The patristic tradition, based on Augustine's (354–430) *De civitate Dei* (*The city of God*) and Gregory the Great's (c. 540–604) *Liber regulae pastoralis* (*The book of the pastoral rule*) had a lasting influence on medieval *Mirrors* and represents the main source of inspiration for works from the Carolingian epoch.[29]

According to Western historiography, after the royal image had been gradually Christianized in the proto-*Mirrors* of the Merovingian and early-Carolingian period, the ninth century finally witnessed the appearance of a fully developed *Mirror* genre that was "primarily moral in emphasis" and that "explored the relations between church and king in general and ethical terms, emphasizing the king's role as vicegerent of Christ for the earthly kingdom and his consequent need to practice the virtues."[30] Written primarily by monks and clerics, the Carolingian *Mirrors* focus on the kings' personal Christian virtues as they "share the implicit assumption that the well-being of the kingdom

25 Ibid., 623–624.

26 Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1924.

27 See Eberhardt, *Via regia* 296–310; Graßnick, *Ratgeber* 53; and Klinkenberg, Karolingische Fürstenspiegel 83.

28 See Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1924–1929; and Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes 792.

29 Eberle, Mirror of Princes 434. See also Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1928–1930.

30 Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 229. Anton, *Herrscherethos*, has dedicated an entire book to the Carolingian *Mirror* tradition. There he argues that the number of *Mirrors* that were produced in the ninth century demonstrates reconsiderations of the nature and duties of kingship (132).

depends almost exclusively on the moral righteousness of the ruler."[31] Dominated by political Augustinism, the king is pictured as a reflection of the divine (*imago dei*), while his role on earth is that of God's minister (*minister dei*) who guides and corrects (*rector animarum*) the souls of his subjects.[32] Other typical subjects of the Carolingian *Mirror* tradition include, according to Anton, the definition of the term *rex*, in contrast to the tyrant, the duties of the king's office (*ministerium*) and the royal virtues (*virtutes regiae*), including the governing of the self.[33] Jonas of Orléans (760–843) (*De institutione regia*), Hincmar of Reims (806–882) (*De regis persona et regio ministerio*), Smaragdus of St-Mihiel (d. 830) (*Via regia*) and Sedulius Scottus (840–860) (*De rectoribus christianis*) are usually mentioned in the modern literature as the most prominent exponents of the Carolingian tradition.[34]

The second stage of the history of the medieval European *Mirrors* is traditionally described as being heralded by John of Salisbury (c. 1118–1180) who "gave a renewed impulse to the genre, exerting a long-lasting influence with his *Policraticus*."[35] For Berges too, the *Policraticus* must stand at the beginning of every discussion of the medieval European *Mirror* tradition. In his seminal work on medieval European *Mirrors*, Berges argues that, although the thematic scope of the *Policraticus* might arguably be seen to disqualify it as a specimen of the *Mirror* genre, many of the later *Mirrors* could only be understood in light of John's work. In contrast, according to Berges, the Carolingian *Mirrors* left no mark on the medieval *Mirror* tradition, which was completely rebuilt ex novo in the twelfth century.[36] However, the *Policraticus*, in which the state is depicted as a natural organism with the king as its head having the duty to promote the common good, is often described as an attempt to reconcile the religious ideals of the Bible and the patristic tradition with the classical ideals as they are found in Cicero, Plato and pseudo-Plutarch's *Institutio Traiani*.[37] Since the high medieval *Mirror* tradition displays a shift of attention away from the sal-

31 Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes 792. See also Eberle, Mirror of Princes 434.

32 See Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1041; Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1939; and Singer, Fürstenspiegel 708.

33 Anton, *Herrscherethos* 89 n. 64.

34 See Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1043–1044; Eberhardt, *Via regia* 305–307; Graßnick, *Ratgeber* 53–55; Hadot, Fürstenspiegel 621–623; Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes 792; and Singer, Fürstenspiegel 708. Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1931, however, lets the Carolingian tradition begin with Alcuin (735–804) and his *De virtutibus et vitiis* (*On virtues and vices*).

35 Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes 791.

36 Berges, *Fürstenspiegel* 3–4. See also Graßnick, *Ratgeber* 55.

37 Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 232. See also Eberle, Mirror of Princes 434; and Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes 791.

vation of the subjects' souls, and toward the practicalities of governing people, territories and economies, a tendency of secularization of the theory of state is sometimes attributed to the *Policraticus*, which widened the gap between moral and politics.[38] Yet John's work did not have an immediate impact on the *Mirror* tradition, as documented by Godfrey of Viterbo's *Speculum regum* and Gerald of Wales's *De principis instructione* (*Instruction for a ruler*; c. 1180–1217).[39] Only later, in the course of the thirteenth century, did Europe witness "an outburst in Europe of *Mirror* production, mostly in the vernacular that did follow John's lead in emphasizing the political over the moral."[40] The *Mirrors* of the high Middle Ages were also characterized by the pronouncement of a courtly ideal of rulership that was accompanied by a codex of etiquette for life at court.[41] The stronger focus on the royal court went hand in hand with the development of the understanding of a transpersonal state, which in turn meant that *Mirrors* began to discuss legislative, as well as financial and economic issues.[42] Moreover, informed by a new reading of the recently rediscovered works of Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) and Giles of Rome (1243–1316) strengthened the ethical and political outlook of the European *Mirror* tradition.[43]

Apart from the fact that, from the thirteenth century onward, *Mirrors* were increasingly written in the vernacular (Spanish, English, French), the high Middle Ages witnessed the appearance of non-clerical authors (such as kings and courtiers) and *Mirrors* composed specifically for particular territories or even cities.[44] Between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, the high medieval European *Mirror* production received an additional impulse through the entrance of Arabic didactic literature into the Spanish literary tradition. Through translations and adaptations of works such as *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, the pseudo-Aristotelian *Sirr al-asrār* (*The secret of secrets*), *Nawādir al-falāsifa* (*The anecdotes of the philosophers*) by Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq al-ʿIbādī (192–260/808–873)

38 See Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1044–1045; Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1939; and Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 232.

39 Eberle, Mirror of Princes 435.

40 Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 235. Jean-Philippe Genet, *English political tracts* xii, argues that "it was the Capetian court which gave birth, in the second half of the thirteen century, to the true *Miroir au Prince*."

41 Graßnick, *Ratgeber* 55–58.

42 Ibidem.

43 See Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes 791. See also Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1044–1046; Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 235; Eberhardt, *Via regia* 317–318; and Leppin, Christianisierung.

44 See Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1044–1046.

and *Mukhtār al-ḥikam wa-maḥāsin al-kalim* (*Selected wise sayings and fine aphorisms*; c. 440/1048–1049) by al-Mubashshir b. Fātik, under Fernando III (r. 1217–1252), Alfonso X (r. 1252–1284) and Sancho IV (1284–1295), Arabic works not only played a major role in seventh/thirteenth century Spain's cultural panorama, but also influenced the European *Mirror* tradition as a whole.[45] Especially the spread of collections of *exempla* in that period can be attributed to the influence of Arabic-Islamic literature.[46] In light of this, the omission of Arabic wisdom literature as a potential source for European *Mirrors* from the conventional narrative of the European tradition's history demands critical reflection. The end of the history of the high medieval *Mirrors* is normally placed in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, when the European *Mirror* tradition, with the appearance of the image of the *princeps literatus* and a further intensification of interest in the classical sources, took a new direction by adopting a 'humanistic' spin.[47]

The focus on 'Islamic' and 'Christian-European' *Mirrors* of course ignores the fact that advice literature for rulers was written in all parts of the world, including for instance in China and Central Asia.[48] But we need not go that far to find another *Mirror* tradition that is often treated separately from the 'European' or the '(Latin) Christian' tradition and occasionally omitted altogether from the dichotomous narrative of the 'Christian and Islamic *Mirrors*', although, or perhaps because, it destabilizes this construct from the outset: the Byzantine *Mirror* tradition. The *Encyclopedia of medieval philosophy* and the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* make no mention of Byzantine *Mirrors*, possibly because the Byzantine tradition follows a different periodization. In fact, to some extent Byzantine *Mirrors* represent an immediate continuation of the gnomological advice literature of Greek Antiquity. Synesius of Cyrene's speech to emperor Arcadius in 399 and Agapetus's exhortations for Justinian I (482–565) are usually mentioned as the tradition's earliest examples. The ubiquity of references to Isocrates or the four cardinal virtues of Plato in the later texts also bear witness to this continuity. At the same time, scholars have observed an increasing Christianization of Byzantine *Mirrors* throughout the Middle

45 See Haro Cortés, *Imagen del poder* 10–12. See also Menéndez y Pelayo, *Orígenes de la novela* 15–124; Mettmann, Spruchweisheit 103–104; and Peirce, Aspectos de la personalidad. On the transfer of knowledge from Islamic societies to medieval Europe in general, see Goddard, *Christian-Muslim relations* 96–104.

46 See al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 91.

47 See Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1046–1048. Berges, *Fürstenspiegel*, concludes his study with works of the fourteenth century. See also Singer, Fürstenspiegel 708–709.

48 See, e.g., Dankoff, *Wisdom of royal glory*; or Weber, Drei Konfuzianische Fürstenspiegel, an article on three Chinese *Mirrors*.

Ages, whereby piety and the fear of the Day of Judgment gained importance within the texts.[49] The most prominent Byzantine *Mirrors* in the period that we examine in this study are the pseudepigraphical *Kephalaia parainetika* (*Hortatory writings*) attributed to Basil I (811–886), the eleventh-century *Strategikon* attributed to a member of the Kekaumenos family, Theophylact of Ohrid's (d. after 1107) *Paideia basilike* (*The education of kings*) and Nikephoros Blemmydes' *Andrias basilikos* (*King's statue*) for Theodore II Doukas Laskaris (c. 1221–1258). Finally, late Byzantine translations (seventh to eleventh century) of (parenetic) prose narratives, such as *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, the legend of *Barlaam and Josaphat*, and the tales of *Sindbad*, mark the Byzantine literature as a potential early link between the (Latin-) 'Christian' and the 'Islamic' *Mirror* traditions.[50]

1.2 *Two Separate Histories*

These short summaries of the two histories of *Mirrors*, as they are described by their respective historiographic traditions, reveal a number of things. On a basic level, it can be observed that the two histories are narrated separately. The separation of the traditions and the texts that constitute them is marked by a variety of qualifiers that attribute them to religions ('Islamic'/'Christian'), languages ('Arabic', 'Latin'),[51] geopolitical entities ('Middle Eastern'/'European') or other discursive units ('Eastern'/'Western'). These labels reflect a "classificatory rigidity, dependent on the twin notions of origin and internal continuity."[52] They are used to subsume things under a general term, and as such, they are necessarily generalizing and homogenizing in nature, tendentially essentializing whenever they refer to an entity that is imagined as perennially stable and monolithic, and at times also dichotomizing. Such categories can never reflect the totality of human experience since, as Susan Buck-Morss argues, they "capture only a partial aspect of their [i.e. people's] existence, as they travel across cultural binaries, moving in and out of conceptual frames and in the process, creating new ones."[53] Even if we concede that, as primary indicators of 'affiliation' and 'origin', these signatures, which can include temporal categories ('medieval', 'modern', etc.), give us a clue to the contextualization of whatever thing or phenomenon they qualify, we might equally argue that they deny the

49 See Blum, *Byzantinische Fürstenspiegel* 3–6; Hunger, *Literatur der Byzantiner* 159; and Schmalzbauer, Fürstenspiegel.

50 See Kehayióglou, Translations.

51 In many cases qualifiers referring to a language cannot be distinguished entirely from attributions to 'nations' or cultures (e.g., French, Spanish, Persian, etc.).

52 See al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 6.

53 Buck-Morss, *Universal history* 111.

historian any actual historical contextualization because they tend to place any object of study in a preconceived, historiographically constructed and generalizing context or category. Binaries, such as the one suggested by the terms 'pre-Islamic' and 'Islamic', even imply a narrative of pivotal breaks in history that are marked by sudden and profound change, brought about by a single defined moment (the 'appearance' of Islam).

What then is 'Islamic'? What is the nature of an 'Islamic' *Mirror*? Is a text 'Islamic' because its author is Muslim, or because it invokes, among various authorities, Islamic religious texts and values? That *Mirrors* of both traditions tend to contain significant amounts of religious language and references is just as unsurprising an observation as that religious language is put to many 'non-religious' usages, not only in *Mirrors*, but in pre-modern writing in general.[54] Yet the question as to whether a *Mirror* is religious, and in what way, runs the risk of universalizing and projecting backward the modern European notion of "the idea of religion as a sphere of life separate from politics, economics, and science."[55] As Brent Nongbri and others have noted, for people in pre-modern societies the divine (potentially) had an impact on all aspects of their lives.[56] The *Mirrors* under consideration thus necessarily contain, to various extents, references to the divine and its power to affect human life, because the form of rulership that they discuss and address is, as mentioned in the introduction, sacred due to its links to the divine. The usefulness of religious denominators such as 'Islamic' and 'Christian' for the labeling of *Mirrors* is, however, questionable, not only because the texts' references to the divine are not a distinctive feature in the context of pre-modern thinking, but because the "framework of World Religions" whereby "the world is divided among people of different and often competing beliefs about how to obtain salvation" does not reflect the way people at the time in question thought about the world, and only emerged as a consequence of the coalescence of the concept of religion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[57]

Yet, with references to Islam in particular, there is more at stake than just the issue of the construction of an ahistorical dichotomy between a religious and a secular sphere. In his discussion on the orientalist category of 'Islam', al-Azmeh shows that the identification of things as Islamic not only implies their reduction to a textual Islamic origin, but also informs the binary discourse of 'things

54 See, e.g., Nieto Soria, Imágenes religiosas; and Nieto Soria, Origen divino.
55 Nongbri, *Before religion* 7.
56 Ibid., 2–3. See also Asad, *Genealogies* 27–54.
57 Ibid., 6.

Islamic' as different and distant from 'things normal'.[58] Höfert points in a similar direction when she highlights that the identification of the 'Islamic civilization (or culture)' with a religious denominator, as opposed to the 'Chinese' or 'Japanese culture', is by no means a coincidence. Instead, it is part and parcel of the master narrative on Islam that emerged during the nineteenth century and is based around the dichotomy of the 'secular West' and the 'religious East'.[59] Paul adds that, as a result, scholars sometimes treat non-religious aspects of 'Islamic culture' as extraneous to it or ignore them altogether.[60] In her critique of the concept of World Literature, Emily Apter notes that in Western literary criticism non-European literatures "are often grouped under monolithic rubrics such as 'Islam' or 'Asia'," and that "even when the purview is World Literature, Occidental genre categories invariably function as program settings."[61]

It might seem difficult to imagine not using any of these labels to subsume, in an approximating manner, a number of texts under a certain category that can easily be located in the human experience of this world. It is equally difficult and moreover otiose to discuss which of the potential qualifiers is 'less' essentialist and generalizing and which of the connotations that come with each of them we want to 'avoid the most'. Not only would such discussions go beyond the objectives of this study, but they also ignore the fact that we can hardly describe human experience without reductions and omissions. However, since each qualifier tends to prioritize one factor over all other factors that might have shaped the individual work, we ought to carefully consider the implications and consequences of our choices. 'Islamic' and its counterpart 'pre-Islamic', as well as dynastic labels, such as 'Carolingian', can be used to refer to temporal rather than religious or cultural/political units, placing a text in a historical context. While such temporal qualifiers emphasize a text's historicity, they also rely on—and reproduce—simplification and constructivist periodization. The present analysis of the historiographical traditions on *Mirror* literature has repeatedly employed the geopolitical terms 'Europe' and 'Middle East', not as an anachronistic qualifier of the geographical or cultural region of origin of the primary texts, but as an indicator of the two corpi that modern historical studies have created.

On a deeper level, the two histories presented above suggest different scholarly approaches and intentions toward a single phenomenon. As mentioned before, Darling believes that the scholarship on European *Mirrors* differs from

58 Al-Azmeh, *Islams and modernities* 105–145.

59 Höfert, Europa und der Nahe Osten 577–594. See also Menocal, *Arabic role* 1–25.

60 Paul, Komparatistisches Arbeiten 149–151.

61 Apter, *World literature* 59.

that on Middle Eastern *Mirrors* in the evidence and knowledge it seeks to extrapolate from the study of advice literature for rulers. She argues that scholars of European *Mirrors* are mainly concerned with "the development of European political theory", while they tend to ignore the way the texts' contents and the societies' political and socio-economic situation might have influenced each other.[62] As a result, encyclopedia articles on European *Mirrors* "trace the development of their political thought rather than their production."[63] They discuss *Mirrors* as expressions and "carriers of political ideas" such as Augustinism and Aristotelianism.[64] Larry Scanlon points in a similar direction when he criticizes the fact that scholars have ignored the issue of rhetoric in their study of *Mirrors* "because, in accordance with the general tendency of the field, they have been less interested in its immediate historical and political significance, and much more interested in the degree to which the ideas it expressed anticipated modern constitutional thought."[65] Scanlon concludes that "this tendency gives the entire field a teleological character, in which the meaning of a particular utterance is determined less by its significance to its immediate audience and more by its contribution to the ultimate emergence of the constitutional state."[66] Book-length studies on the European *Mirror* tradition are likewise seen to adhere to this particular reading of their sources. For example, Berges treats *Mirrors* as "Zeugnisse der politischen Ethik" (testimonies to political ethics), with his study being intended as a contribution to the history of political ethics in the Middle Ages.[67] It thus appears that in many cases the history of medieval European *Mirrors* is primarily written as a history of ideas. In fact, surveys on this type of literature contain far fewer references to historical events or developments than surveys on Middle Eastern *Mirrors*.[68] Yet we can find a few examples of scholars who have inquired into the relation between *Mirrors*' contents and the social, political, religious and intellectual development during the time of their production. A prime example of this approach is the study by Klinkenberg on Carolingian *Mirrors* in which he probes the political and

62 Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 225.
63 Ibid., 228.
64 See Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes 791.
65 Scanlon, *Narrative* 84.
66 Ibidem.
67 Berges, *Fürstenspiegel* xiii. Anton, *Frühen und hohen Mittelalters*, too, in his study of *Mirrors* from the Early and High Middle Ages, places a distinct focus on the political theory that can be extrapolated from the sources.
68 Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1045, among others, merely mentions the emergence of 'nation states' and the impact this had on the territorial scope of medieval European *Mirrors*. See also Singer, Fürstenspiegel 708.

intellectual crisis that led to the appearance of a distinct Carolingian tradition of advice literature for rulers.[69] Another example is Ulrike Graßnick's study on late medieval English *Mirrors*, which focuses on the interaction between the texts and their cultural, social, political and religious contexts.[70]

On the contrary, Middle Eastern *Mirrors* have for a long time been treated primarily as a literary phenomenon from whose examination conclusions might be drawn regarding people's moral considerations, the practical workings of authorities, life at court, and intercultural influences. For example, Jan Rypka argues that the *Qābūs-nāma* "gives a faithful reflection of the social conditions of the times",[71] while Felix Tauer claims that it "gives a revealing insight into the disposition and methods of the ruling circles, and particularly into the state of culture at that time."[72] They are studied with a focus on language, style, literary purpose, topics, and intertextuality (i.e., the reception of other texts). In fact, Leder argues that the writing of *Mirrors* was primarily a literary discipline, characterized by references to a literary tradition, rather than the expression of ideas.[73] In *The Cambridge history of Arabic literature*, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, *Neues Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft* and *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, advice literature for rulers is discussed in the context of *adab*, for the role it played in the development of prose writing and as an example of educational literature alongside other specialized branches of *adab*-literature addressing specific professions, such as *adab al-kuttāb* (the *adab* of secretaries) or *adab al-muʿallimīn* (the *adab* of teachers).[74] Yet, when *Mirrors* are listed under 'entertaining literature', for example, as is the case in the volume *History of Iranian literature*, with scholars pointing to the genre's links to folk-literature and its "'popular' flavor",[75] this arguably undermines the sophistication of the texts' political, sociological and psychological arguments. As a result of this rather broad approach, most studies on Middle Eastern *Mirrors* stress the literature's heterogeneity, its many overlappings with other branches of *adab*, and the difficulty of defining it as a genre in parallel to its European cousin.[76] In terms of their approach, surveys on Middle Eastern *Mirrors*, both in encyclopedia articles and in introductions to critical editions and translations of single *Mirrors*,

69 Klinkenberg, Karolingische Fürstenspiegel.
70 Graßnick, *Ratgeber*.
71 Rypka, Persian literature 221.
72 Tauer, Learned literature 427. See also Bosworth, Early Arabic Mirror 25.
73 Leder, Aspekte 24.
74 On the *adab* of teachers, see Günther, Advice for teachers, and Günther, Principles of teaching.
75 Cejpek, Folk-literature 662.
76 See Leder, Aspekte 22.

tend to list a number of 'important' *Mirrors* accompanied by summaries of the topics treated by each work, and occasional comments on the works' intertextual relations to other texts.

The importance that the scholarship on Middle Eastern *Mirrors* places on intertextuality is closely related to the way scholars approach the sources and the material that is received in *Mirror* texts. The historiographic narratives of both the European and the Middle Eastern *Mirror* traditions reflect the significance of authors' implicit or explicit reception of older concepts and images. This is based on the observation that wisdom literature in general, in both Europe and the Middle East, was usually of an anthological nature, collecting and transmitting the knowledge and experiences of the past. Otto Eberhardt even describes the anthological approach as one of *Mirror* literature's governing principles, since it implies (and complies with) two of its key characteristics: brevity and artfulness of expression, which derive directly from *Mirrors*' educative function and their addressees' exalted position respectively.[77] Yet the study of filiations, whether of text or content, can lead us to assume different forms that carry different connotations. In the history of medieval European *Mirrors*, frequently used sources such as ancient Greek or Roman texts, the Bible or the writings of the Church Fathers, are considered integral to the tradition.[78] As a quarry of political concepts and royal role models, they stand at the beginning of the history of the development of European political thought, of which the *Mirror* literature is the locus of manifestation. Along the lines of this self-contained narrative these sources are repeatedly quoted, interpreted and revisited.

The tracing of textual origins—and consequently of content—equally represents an important discipline in the study of 'Islamic' *Mirrors*, as can be gleaned from the relevant articles in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*.[79] Several studies even seem to be predominantly concerned with the reconstruction of textual filiations.[80] However, what is most important at this point is that the resultant insertion of 'Islamic' *Mirrors* into a larger cultural and intellectual context is, in fact, performed to different effects. On the one hand, for modern scholars like al-Azmeh and Fowden, continuities between Late Antique and Islamic

77 Eberhardt, *Via regia* 351–361. See also Busse, Fürstenethik 17; and Gutas, Arabic wisdom literature 51–52.

78 See Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1922–1930, and Hadot, Fürstenspiegel, which consider these texts as proto-*Mirrors* or even *Mirrors* proper, and include them in the tradition's prehistory.

79 See Bosworth, Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk; and Marlow, Advice and advice literature.

80 For instance, Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel*; Maróth, Arabischer Fürstenspiegel; and Richter, *Studien*.

societies are indicative of the connected history of the region of the ancient oecumene, in which Islamic and Christian societies take the role of legatees of the antique cultural heritage. Consequently, pre-Islamic (or Late Antique) views on kingship represented a quarry or repertoire of ideas in which later authors of *Mirrors* could dig for political enunciations. Thus there is no doubt that the time-consuming reconstruction of these ideas' histories sheds light on authors' methods and the currency of texts and concepts, especially since, as Marlow notes, advice literature played an important role in the integration of Late Antique political-cultural ideas and motifs into Arabic and Persian literature.[81]

On the other hand, the way in which scholars of Middle Eastern *Mirrors* from the second/eighth to the seventh/thirteenth century sometimes treat the aforementioned Persian, Greek and Indian sources reflects a slightly different perception of Islam's place in history. Instead of looking at royal enunciations in these *Mirrors* as what al-Azmeh has called "an interpretatio Islamica of Late Antique kingship",[82] thereby staunchly placing Islamic societies into the region's cultural and intellectual genealogy, occurrences of images and concepts that can be traced to pre- or non-Islamic texts are depicted as foreign influences from outside 'Islam'. As a result, 'Islam' is perceived as a definite entity that appeared on the scene of history and tried to 'Islamize' the world around itself, thus supposedly putting an end to Late Antiquity. Yet everything that 'Islam' incorporates seems to be ultimately destined to retain its non-Islamic origins, because of the self-enclosed and sui generis character of 'Islam'. These perceptions are at work, for instance, when Patricia Crone claims that the "Persian tradition was deeply alien to the early Muslim thought world",[83] or when she argues that in the fifth/eleventh century the views on kingship of the "pre-conquest population" returned to the forefront.[84] As al-Azmeh notes, the latter "position can only be maintained if one were to suppose that, after the passage of five centuries of Muslim rule, Islamic traditions remained foreign to Persia and that traditions in place since the seventh century remained unchanged."[85] The 'return' of the 'Persian' ideal of kingship and its dichotomous relationship with the 'Islamic' model is a recurrent theme in studies on

81 Marlow, Mirrors for Princes 349.

82 Al-Azmeh, God's caravan 233.

83 Crone, *God's rule* 148.

84 Ibid., 164. The same preconception seems to underlie Dihqāniyān and Nīkūbakht, Naqd-i akhlāq-girā-yi 134, when they describe the *Qābūs-nāma* as one of the "most traditionally Iranian advice texts."

85 Al-Azmeh, God's caravan 257.

Middle Eastern *Mirrors*.[86] Elsewhere, Crone also returns to "Gibb's dictum that Sassanid tradition constituted a kernel of derangement in Islam, being 'never wholly assimilated yet never wholly rejected'."[87] In contrast, Deborah Tor argues that the use of Iranian ideals of rulership by Muslim authors, which she terms an "act of reconciliation and synthesis rather than of conflict",[88] was based on a view of the Islamic and the Persian models "not even as two complementary co-existing traditions, but rather as one double-stranded, internally consistent, and intertwined heritage."[89] Crone's concept of an authentic, pristine, and unchanging Islam ultimately allows her to define every form of government that does not reflect the perfect unity of state and religion of the Prophet's mythical primordial *umma* as fundamentally 'un-Islamic'.[90] She thus turns all examples that might be seen as posing a challenge to her understanding of the 'typical Islamic state' into counter-examples that supposedly prove her point of view. The quest for non-Islamic influences also dominates Gustav Richter's study on early Arabic *Mirrors*, in which he discusses the various "Wandlungen des westländischen Denkens im Orient" (transformations of Western thought in the Orient).[91] Lambton, too, seems to differentiate between political theories based on their 'cultural purity' when she argues that "of all the constitutional theories the juristic theory is the most purely Islamic."[92] Such approaches are ultimately based on an assumption of unchanging and homogeneous cultures, and a prioritization of origins over processes of change and modification.

Ultimately, chasing after textual origins and then labeling texts and ideas with ethical or religious denominators obscures the complex ways in which enunciations are diffused, misread, interpreted, and claimed by multiple actors, with no implication of conceptual similarity needed. For one, the value of uncovering textual borrowings for the understanding and interpretation of any text should not be overestimated, since the meanings of words, images and beliefs are never univocal, and every borrowed enunciation might acquire additional or different meanings in its new context. Textual filiations shed light on cultural and intellectual traditions, as well as authorial practices, but they do not provide us with a master key for the understanding of a given text. Marlow argues that "if portions of the material that appear in Mirrors for Princes can

86 See, e.g., Busse, Fürstenethik 17.
87 Crone, Did al-Ghazālī write 191.
88 Tor, Islamisation 116.
89 Ibid., 121.
90 See Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 35. See also Arjomand, Political ethic.
91 Richter, *Studien* 93.
92 Lambton, Justice 93.

often be traced through a large number of earlier texts, their deployment in any given literary context carries its own significance."[93] On the issue of attribution of authorship, al-Azmeh notes that

> there is ample evidence in the medieval Arabic texts of the transference of attribution for particular sayings and acts, indeed of the interchangeability of authorities according to discursive need or other leaning … It is thus difficult and probably otiose to make up general classes of textual influences which could then be referred to Persians and Greeks. This procedure betrays an unjustifiable privileging of the correct printed text over other manners for the transmission of knowledge.[94]

He explains that the interchangeability or fluidity of authorities and attributions of authorship also played a role in the attempts by societies to construe "their genealogical parity or filiation with dominant groups", ultimately leading to the emergence of various topoi, such as Persian political sagacity, Greek philosophical wisdom and Arab eloquence.[95] Marlow too argues that ideas and motifs in *Mirrors* "were shaped according to the exigencies of the specific environments in which they were articulated."[96] She speculates that the prevalent association of *Mirror* material with Persian political-cultural ideas might derive from the popularity of the three eminent Persian *Mirrors Qābūs-nāma, Siyāsat-nāma* and *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*. Only in recent years has the discursive nature of such attributions been given its place by reconstructing potential trajectories of the material found in *Mirrors*.[97] However, as mentioned above, the search for origins of text or content often suggests a certain notion of indebtedness of the later to the earlier, as well as an idea of continuity, constancy, and invariability of things throughout time, obfuscating the complexity of the processes of cultural transmission, production, and reproduction.

And while all these differences in the scholarship become obvious to every reader of the relevant studies, the question remains as to why they came into existence. We have already mentioned the sui generis nature that is sometimes attributed to Islam, leading to an overemphasis on the non-Islamic origin of

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93 Marlow, Mirrors for Princes 349.
94 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 86.
95 Ibid., 88.
96 Marlow, Mirrors for Princes 349.
97 One of the most recent examples is Marlow, Kings and sages, a study on Greek and Indian material in al-Māwardī's *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, in which she differentiates between direct, indirect and fictional filiations.

enunciations that appear in 'Islamic' texts. Another reason might be the relative absence of a more or less unified narrative of a respective history of political thought to which the development of the Arabic and Persian *Mirror* literature could be linked. Recent attempts at holistic, 'textbook'-like surveys on what is often termed 'Islamic' political thought have meanwhile exhibited a number of conceptual problems that are intrinsic to the topic per se. For example, in his elaborate and severe criticism of Crone's *God's rule* and Anthony Black's *Islamic political thought*, two recent works on the topic, al-Azmeh argues that the variety of political thought in the multiple 'Islamic' groups is entirely effaced if it is reduced to a religion (and its impact on political culture) that is itself, at times, cut down to its canon.[98] However, several studies on 'Islamic' political thought simply do not include *Mirrors* in their source material because they do not consider them works on political theory. William Montgomery Watt, for instance, dedicates only two pages of his book *Islamic political thought* to *Mirrors* because, in his view, they do not "attempt to give a systematic political theory."[99] In fact, he completely rejects the relevance of all political writing for this kind of study because "in the Islamic world the concepts implicit in men's practice are more important than the writings of political theorists."[100] While he does not generally consider advice literature for rulers to be expressive of political theory, Erwin Rosenthal, in his well-received book *Political thought in medieval Islam*, briefly discusses a number of *Mirrors* in so far as they "offer advice to rulers on the basis of a political theory."[101] Yet, in his discussion of the contents of a small selection of exemplary *Mirror* works, Rosenthal emphasizes the very limited significance they bear on political thought in Islam. Instead, he argues, *Mirrors* might be gainfully read as examples of tendencies toward political realism or as loci of the blending of Persian and Islamic elements. In fact, for Rosenthal *Mirrors* are "part of the Persian heritage now adapted to the peculiar character of Islam", with their 'non-Islamic' origin significantly limiting their relevance for the study of 'Islamic' political thought.[102] In the introduction to his translation of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, Bagley argues that "the confusion between ethico-religious and practical criteria, and the quest for rhetorical effect, impede rational consideration of subject-matter in such works. 'Mirrors for Princes' do not venture upon systematic treatment

98 See al-Azmeh, God's caravan 229–230.
99 Watt, *Political thought* 81.
100 Ibid., x.
101 Rosenthal, *Political thought* 3.
102 Ibid., 67.

of the problems of government and of state and society. … Authors of 'Mirrors', however, keep clear of both constitutional law and political theory."[103]

Exception to these approaches include Lambton's study *State and government in medieval Islam*, which features discussions on a small number of *Mirror* texts, as well as Marlow's more recent contribution to *The Princeton encyclopedia of Islamic political thought*, where she argues that, although authors of Arabic and Persian *Mirrors*, like their European counterparts, "did not necessarily, or even frequently, set out to expound a comprehensive political vision", modern scholarship has come to recognize *Mirror* texts as important sources for the study of political thought.[104] Leder too, after having previously downplayed *Mirrors*' role in expressing ideas, offers in his most recent contribution an analysis of the political discourse in Middle Eastern *Mirrors*, which, as he states, tends to be overlooked due to the texts' "daunting and prevalently manifest" literary character.[105] However, this new approach is often limited to articles, rather than comprehensive monographs. Another factor that—as has already been noted—not only contributes to the primarily literary approach to Arabic and Persian *Mirrors*, but also hampers transcultural accesses to the *Mirror* phenomenon, is the concept of genre and the difficulty involved in its application in both cultural contexts.

2 *Mirrors for Princes*—A genre?

Looking at the two historiographical traditions of the study of *Mirror* literature, one might argue that the ways in which scholars have tried to deal with the overtly difficult issue of genre definition lie at the core of the traditions' incommensurability. Due to the difficulties in subsuming 'Christian' and 'Islamic' *Mirrors* into a single genre category, conducting a holistic study is a delicate task. Yet the importance of developing a working definition of the subject matter can hardly be overstated, given its impact on the selection of sources and our perception of the context in which these sources meet and interact. Moreover, generic definitions are normative for both the reception of a text and its production. This means that how we define *Mirrors* determines how we read and

103 Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel*, xi. However, it should be noted that also in the European context *Mirrors* are not universally considered as valuable sources for the study of political thought, as suggested by the almost complete disregard for *Mirrors* in *The Cambridge history of medieval political thought*.

104 Marlow, Mirrors for Princes 349.

105 Leder, Sultanic rule 94.

interpret texts belonging to that category and what shared set of premises we consider their authors to have possibly followed. It is therefore necessary to look not only at the way genre as a topic has so far been dealt with in the study of *Mirrors*, but also at how its conventional definition in terms of form and content was itself shaped in a specific context and what this means for its application in other contexts.

2.1 *The Problem of Genre*

As noted by Marlow, debates on genre seem to be a staple of the scholarship on *Mirrors* written in medieval Europe.[106] As a result, the 'European' *Mirror* genre has been defined in numerous ways. For example, in one of the most general definitions, Hadot considers *Mirrors* a separate genre that offers advice to rulers and appears in the form of handbooks, biographies, didactic treatises, eulogies, and imprecations.[107] Approaches that are as inclusive as Hadot's usually result in a corpus that exceeds the 'traditional' body of medieval European *Mirrors*, to include—as in the case of Bruno Singer—Ancient Egyptian, Indian, and Chinese texts.[108] A much more exclusive definition is offered by Berges, who considers *Mirrors* a branch of the larger genre of parenetics (i.e., exhortative literature) intended for a ruler's education and the definition of ethical guidelines for a monarchical reign. Since the necessities of the political situation are only a matter of secondary importance, Berges excludes purely political writings from the genre.[109] His fellow historian Anton further excludes treatises on political theory and socio-political philosophy from the genre of *Fürstenspiegel*, because he sees the genre as mediating between how a rulership is (*Sein*) and how it ought to be (*Sollen*).[110] Lambertini, for whom *Mirrors* represent an independent literary genre that offers advice to rulers, allows for both an exclusive definition that restricts the corpus to "independent works explicitly aiming at instructing kings", and a more flexible understanding that includes all texts carrying notions of rulership.[111]

Some scholars also reject the idea of a *Mirror* genre all together. For example, Einar Már Jónsson argues that, based on traditional factors such as formal aspects, subject matter, and literary approach, *Mirrors* cannot be considered

106 See Marlow, Surveying recent literature 525.

107 Hadot, Fürstenspiegel 556.

108 Singer, Fürstenspiegel 707. See also Eberle, Mirror of Princes, who briefly mentions 'Muslim' *Mirrors*.

109 Berges, *Fürstenspiegel*, xiii.

110 Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1041.

111 Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes 792.

a genre. For Jónsson, the only characteristic that might be used to define 'occidental' *Mirrors* as a unified literary genre is the specific author-ruler relationship.[112] Similarly, Genet argues that the emphasis laid on genre is misleading because the focus on subject matter, which he sees as the only element that links all texts that are commonly referred to as *Mirrors*, does not help us to understand the texts themselves. As a result, he continues, current attempts at genre definitions thwart the study of *Mirror* texts because they tend to be "too restrictive and yet insufficiently precise to be really effective."[113] He concludes that the genre label *Mirror for Princes* should be restricted to the Capetian tradition of advice literature, while all other texts ought to be treated as political literature of the court.[114]

Notwithstanding the difficulties that scholars of European *Mirrors* encounter in defining the exact limits of their subject matter, the 'genre' of *Mirrors for Princes* or *Fürstenspiegel* represents an established field of study in Western scholarship. In the case of Arabic and Persian advice literature for rulers the situation is more complicated. While the syntagma '*Mirror for Princes*' has found its way into the terminology of scholars of Arabic and Persian literature, many hesitate to use it as a genre definition. In one of the earliest comprehensive studies on early Arabic *Mirrors*, Richter notes that, while there is no unified literary type of *Mirrors* in early Arabic literature, a continual propagation of the idea of ethical rulership can clearly be discerned. Texts that took up this idea as their main topic could thus be said to constitute the corpus of Arabic *Mirror* literature.[115] A number of scholars, including Leder, reject the definition of Arabic and Persian advice texts for rulers as a distinct genre based on uniformity of form or content.[116] The same reasoning underlies the opposition of some scholars of Byzantine literature to the categorization of Byzantine texts under the genre of *Mirrors*.[117] Marlow too argues that

> traditional criteria for establishing generic categories, such as content and form, apply only to a degree to the Arabic and Persian literatures of advice. Works of counsel for rulers frequently take up a range of topics, not all of which are directly or obviously related to governance or governed by liter-

112 See Jónsson, Genre littéraire.
113 Genet, *English political tracts*, x.
114 Ibid., xii–xvi.
115 Richter, *Studien* 1–2.
116 Leder, Aspekte 22.
117 See, e.g., Coufalová Borhnová, Mirrors for Princes.

> ary convention; and the thematically arranged book-length structure was sufficiently flexible to allow for innumerable individual treatments.[118]

Marlow's assessment encourages us to take a step back and re-examine our understanding of the concept of genre itself.

The application of concepts and definitions that were forged in a specific cultural and historical context to other contexts, to which they may apply only partially or, in fact, not at all, is a typical pitfall of transcultural and transepochal studies. The result is that the 'other' (and its history), when it is compared to the 'self', is exclusively described in relation to the latter (as a subaltern version of the master narrative of the self), that is, in terms of its sameness (or 'not-sameness', i.e. difference) to it. The *tertium comparationis* in such a comparison becomes a reflection, to various degrees abstracted, of a property of the self and thus does not represent the third level to the two levels that are to be compared. Instead, the *tertium comparationis* is a universalization of one of the units of comparison, usually the 'self'.[119] As a result the comparison runs the risk of becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy as a proposed phenomenon is simply rediscovered in the other.[120] Talal Asad's rejection of a transhistorical category of 'religion' that is both universal and irreducible to any other human practices is probably one of the most compelling critiques of universal definitions in cultural studies.[121] Asad's problematization of religion is particularly pertinent to the transcultural study of *Mirrors*, not only because of Höfert's remark regarding the prevalence of religious denominators in the labeling of things outside the presumably 'secular West',[122] but also since religion—with all the fuzziness that surrounds the competing understandings of Islam as a religion, a culture, or a polity—is frequently used as the defining binary variable that distinguishes the multiple *Mirror* traditions.

The study of literature and its history is particularly prone to Westernizing typologies because it is significantly influenced by classical genre theory and Western literary examples. As a field it is thus governed by what Dipesh Chakrabarty has termed an 'asymmetric ignorance', in which only knowledge of the West and its theories is deemed necessary.[123] For example, the categorization of *Kalīla wa-Dimna* as "entertainment folk-literature" in *History of Iranian*

118 Marlow, Surveying recent literature 526.
119 See Matthes, Vergleichen 77–84.
120 See ibid., 83.
121 Asad, *Genealogies* 27–54.
122 See 37.
123 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe* 28–29. See also Apter, *World literature* 57.

literature[124] is a good example for confirming Apter's observation that "Eurocentric standards of literariness and readability" often lead to a classification of non-European literatures as "folklore and oral culture", thus assigning them "a more tenuous position in World Literature."[125] The aforementioned (literary) phenomenon of *adab*, which includes all Arabic and Persian *Mirrors*, poses a particular problem to the classical Western genre theory based on form and content. In fact, as Teresa Garulo argues, faced with *adab*, classical Western genre theory is "completely overwhelmed by this hodgepodge of verse and prose, quotations from the Quran and *ḥadīth*, historical and pseudo-historical anecdotes and stories (sometimes very brief) of all sorts: tales of love, witty rejoinders, satirical or apologetic texts, etc."[126]

Confronted with the difficulties of applying a genre definition based on content and form to Arabic and Persian advice literature for rulers, the question arises as to what other understandings of genre we might have at our disposal. A promising alternative is offered by Bakhtin's theory of speech genres. For Bakhtin, every utterance, written or oral, can be traced back to a specific speech genre that comes with semantic and pragmatic properties reflecting its specific contexts, conditions, and goals. In his words, "a particular function (scientific, technical, commentarial, business, everyday) and the particular conditions of speech communication specific for each sphere give rise to particular genres, that is, certain relatively stable thematic, compositional, and stylistic types of utterances."[127] Bakhtin differentiates between primary or simple speech genres, which are used in everyday speech communication, and secondary or complex speech genres, which are formed through the combination of multiple primary genres producing organized, sophisticated forms of cultural communication, including literary and scientific texts.[128] *Mirrors* could thus be described as written expressions of the utterance of advice in the sphere of government or, more specifically, as the combination of various types of utterances, such as narratives, lists, and allegories, framed by the genre of advisory speech. In this study, *Mirrors* shall thus be defined exclusively by their explicit function as advice literature for monocratic rulers.

As opposed to a purely theoretical concept that is retroactively imposed on a phenomenon of the past, a genre definition of *Mirrors* rooted in the offering of advice has the crucial advantage of reflecting the cultural and social

124 See Cejpek, Folk-literature 660.
125 Apter, *World literature* 58.
126 Garulo, Women 26.
127 Bakhtin, *Speech genres* 64.
128 Ibid., 60–102.

milieu in which these texts were produced. For one thing, it echoes the defining element of the social (and literary) tradition—denoted by terms such as *shūrā*, *naṣīḥa* (pl. *naṣāʾiḥ*), *andarz* or *pand*—that culminated in what historiography has termed the 'Islamic' or Middle Eastern *Mirror* tradition. In other words, and more generally, advice literature represents, as Marlow notes, a literary expression of the social functions that the offering and receiving of advice fulfilled from Antiquity onward.[129] That the offering of advice, in particular to rulers, lay at the heart of the *Mirrors*' composition, both in Europe and the Middle East, is suggested by the works' programmatic titles (and introductory remarks), among other things. These titles often include terms promising instruction (*enseignement*, *institutio*, *eruditio*, *paideia*, *ishāra*), religious and moral exhortation (*admonitio*, *castigo*, *mawʿiẓa*), counsel (*andarz*, *pand*, *consejo*, *naṣīḥa*), specialized knowledge as well as cultural and professional formation (*adab*, *saviesa*), or the cultivation of personal virtues or ethics (*akhlāq*, *faḍāʾil*, *fawāʾid*, *virtutes*, *moralia*), alongside indications of its intended royal recipients (*rex*, *princeps*, *prince*, *malik*, *khalīfa*, *sulṭān*).

Tzvetan Todorov argues that the "study of genres … has as its starting point the historical evidence of the existence of genres."[130] The persistent appearance of the above-mentioned terms in pre-modern advice literature for rulers represents such historical evidence as it indicates an awareness of the existence of the *Mirror* genre in the period of their composition. Another piece of evidence comes from ʿAmr b. Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ's (b. 160/776) disparaging comments on the education and self-image of the *kuttāb*:

> No sooner can a novice secretary quote the sayings (*amṯâl*) of Buzurgmihr, the testament (*ʿahd*) of Ardašîr, the epistles (*rasâʾil*) of ʿAbd al-Ḥamîd, and the *adab* books of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, and make the book of Mazdak the source of his knowledge and the collection (*daftar*) of *Kalîla and Dimna* the treasure chest of his wisdom (maxims?), than he thinks he is ʿUmar the Great (i.e. the caliph) when it comes to administration.[131]

Al-Jāḥiẓ's list of texts, all of which scholars usually consider as being part of or having influenced the *Mirror* genre, suggests the awareness of a defined canon of works providing instruction—albeit not in a sufficient manner, according to al-Jāḥiẓ—on matters of government. Machiavelli, too, acknowledges

129 Marlow, Advice and advice literature.
130 Todorov, *Genres* 17.
131 Quoted in Gutas, Arabic wisdom literature 67.

the existence of a recognizable genre of advice texts for rulers to which he intends to contribute, while simultaneously emphasizing the novelty of his own approach, when he explains that

> it remains to be seen what must be a prince's ways and manners in dealing with subjects and friends. And because I know that many have written on this subject, I fear that by also writing on it myself I might be considered presumptuous for deviating widely in my discussion of the matter from the ways that others have taken. Yet, since it is my intention to write something useful for whomever will read it, it seemed more convenient to me to look for the actual truth of the matter, rather than an illusion of it.[132]

Lists of instructive texts, often including biographies of previous rulers as well as statements of the author's own parenetic intention, are found in many of the works that will be subsequently treated as *Mirrors* in the present study.[133] What these enunciations suggest is that authors had a specific understanding of a type of text whose function it was to offer advice on matters of government.

In the study of Arabic and Persian *Mirrors*, the recourse to the "explicitly functional description"[134] *advice literature* has proven to be very fruitful, because it allows scholars to emphasize the diversity and 'generic' fluidity of Arabic and Persian advice literature for rulers by illustrating the wide range of works that can be said to fulfill the function of a *Mirror*, such as testaments (*waṣāyā*; sing. *waṣiyya*), historiographies, juristic treatises, epistles (*rasāʾil*; sing. *risāla*), administrative handbooks, panegyric poetry, epics and works on political philosophy.[135] An example of the successful application of a functional genre definition to the 'European' *Mirror* tradition is provided by Eberhardt's study on the *Via regia* (*Royal way*) by the Benedictine monk Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel (c. 760–840). Eberhardt starts by arguing that a continuous tradition of *Mirror* writing in Europe, in which defining features of form or content had been handed down, simply never existed. Therefore he reverts to the

132 Machiavelli, *Il principe* 60. On authors' awareness of their works' genre affiliation, see also Singer, *Fürstenspiegel in Deutschland* 20–21.

133 See the analysis in Chapter 4.

134 Marlow, Surveying recent literature 525.

135 See Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 226; Leder, Sultanic rule 94; Marlow, Advice and advice literature; Marlow, Surveying recent literature 526; and Marlow, Mirrors for Princes 349.

concept of *Sitz im Leben*, normally used in biblical studies, referring to a complete contextualization of a text. For Eberhardt, the *Mirror* genre might thus be defined by the particular relationship between author and addressee, and the works' purpose as educative and exhortative writings for a ruler.[136] The apparent redundancy of offering advice on matters of government to rulers who were often considered infallible was, according to Eberhardt, not seen as diminishing the value of such compositions. In fact, explicit references to the advice's redundancy is a recurrent topos in *Mirrors* that was used by authors to express their admiration for the ruler and to forestall any accusation of criticism against the ruler.[137] He adds that although many authors of *Mirrors* did not hold the position of the ruler's tutor or teacher, they were able to effectively assume that position by virtue of their role as philosophers, sages, scholars, clerics, or, at the very least, transmitters of perennial philosophical or religious wisdom, which gave them the responsibility to pass on the 'true' knowledge that they were associated with.[138]

Applied to individual *Mirrors*, the obvious weakness of the concept of *Sitz im Leben* is its dependence on our fragmentary knowledge about the texts' context, authorship, and audience. The problems arising from this can be avoided if the particular relationship between author and addressee is taken first and foremost as an abstract literary model that might or might not reflect an actual relationship outside the text, but which is in any case detectable in and defining of all texts appertaining to the genre. Eberhardt's definition allows him to draw on examples from a variety of languages and literary traditions, including three 'Islamic' examples, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's *al-Ādāb al-kabīr*, Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn's *Risāla*, and al-Ghazālī's *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, all of which he draws on repeatedly throughout his study to support various points. The productiveness of Eberhardt's approach is attested by his findings. For example, he identifies in *Mirrors* a number of tenets that are both temporally and culturally universal. For Eberhardt, these universal tenets, such as the necessity of being a decent human before being a decent ruler, emerge from the texts' shared *Sitz im Leben*,

136 Eberhardt, *Via regia* 272–280 and 322–328. The particular relationship, often times either parental or pedagogical, between author and addressee is also what according to Herbert Hunger, *Literatur der Byzantiner* 157, differentiates the Byzantine *Mirror* literature from the genre of eulogies (*encomia*).

137 Ibid., 327–328. Marlow, Surveying recent literature 530, and Marlow, Performance of advice, also hint at various strategies that authors employed to avoid the risk of their counsel being perceived as an insult to the ruler.

138 Ibid., 333.

and therefore do not represent topoi that are passed down within a continuous literary tradition, but rather fundamental human ways of thinking about ruling.[139]

Altogether, the shift from the conventional understanding of genre as defined by form and content, to Bakhtin's concept of situational, pragmatic speech genres has allowed us to formulate a genre definition for *Mirrors* rooted in its parenetic function, which reflects the social, pragmatic, and literary context of the texts' composition. Yet, if the very purpose of the present study is to provide a holistic characterization of *Mirror* literature, the definition that the present study proposes can barely be anything more than a preliminary description, a heuristic foundation on which the experimental setup can be built. What this heuristic definition of the *Mirror* genre means for our understanding and readings of the primary texts will be discussed in the following.

2.2 *A Heuristic Definition*

The heuristic definition of the *Mirror* genre proposed and adopted by the present study places the texts' advisory function center stage. The definition's focus on *Mirrors*' function as advice literature for monocratic rulers does not, however, exclude the possibility that the texts belonging to this corpus simultaneously fulfilled, implicitly or explicitly, a range of other purposes that are not linked to the offering of advice. As vehicles for advice, perennial wisdom and experiences, *Mirrors*' role in the culture of courts and societies as a whole exceeded the simple transfer of knowledge. Marlow notes that "advice literature was amenable to multiple purposes", including "the consolidation of ties between the writer and the addressee or professional advancement."[140] In her aforementioned analysis of al-Iṣfahbadhī's *Minhāj al-wuzarāʾ* she shows that authors of *Mirrors*, once they had satisfied the audience's expectations that come with the genre, enjoyed "considerable literary freedom in negotiating their own relationships with the royal and influential figures to whom they presented their works."[141] And yet, despite this fluidity, Marlow has no doubt that "much of the Arabic and Persian advisory literature reflects authors' consciousness of an established literary tradition in relation to which, usually without explicit acknowledgment, they situated their compositions."[142] To deny that there is room for fluidity and authorial choices within a conscious tra-

139 Ibid., 286–289 and 393–400.

140 Marlow, Surveying recent literature 527. See also von Hees, Function of a "mirror for princes".

141 Marlow, Surveying recent literature 527.

142 Ibidem.

dition that transports widely known connotations, images, and expectations, would mean ignoring the myriad social, economic, and cultural exigencies that are part of texts' 'social logic' and that determine the authors' creative process.

Yet our understanding of the multiple functions of *Mirrors* is severely hampered by our scarce knowledge about how *Mirrors* were produced and received at the time. In general, the pre-modern texts that reach us rarely come with much information on how they were produced and consumed at the time. In fact, the manuscripts themselves, usually copies that were produced many years after the conception of the ur-text that scholars often yearn for, are more likely to bear evidence of the discursive practices at the moment of their physical production than of the time in which the text's author lived. Yet, as *Mirrors* were requested, produced, presented, and received in the context of rulership, it is safe to assume that they also participated in the many complex ways in which power was constructed, communicated, negotiated, and reaffirmed. This also implies that, although *Mirrors* might have been requested by, written for, and dedicated to single rulers, they did, in fact, address a whole network of agents who were involved in the constitution of the ruler's power. As such, *Mirrors* might have played a role in regal propaganda and practices of legitimization. In his study of Castilian advice literature for rulers, David Nogales Rincón describes *Mirrors* as "vehicles for the transmission of a new royal image" and as tools for the legitimization of rulers whose accession to the throne was not entirely 'regular'.[143]

Furthermore, *Mirrors* might have been used in a more suggestive way to legitimize their addressees. In fact, as Marlow notes, "the act of the ruler's listening attentively to a portrayal of the exemplary virtue to which he should aspire, and especially to pious admonition and exhortation, was itself a legitimating practice."[144] Elsewhere she suggests that *Mirrors* "in the courts of medieval Islam, Byzantium, and the Latin West, belonged to the trappings of kingship."[145] Thus the composition of *Mirrors* as the act of offering advice gave the addressee the opportunity to show himself as a considerate, dutiful person of moral integrity, and therefore a legitimate ruler. The image of the wise, advice-seeking ruler was propagated through anecdotes, for example, such as those depicting Marwān II reading the traditions of the Persian kings.[146] *Mirrors* can be said to participate in what al-Azmeh describes as the "classicization" of the conventional treatment of monocratic rulers in a variety of written

143 Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 38.
144 Marlow, Advice and advice literature. See also von Hees, Function of a "mirror for princes".
145 Marlow, Performance of advice 63.
146 Arjomand, 'Abbasid Revolution 18.

sources which, akin to iconographic representations of rulers with their repetitive usage of a limited set of images, represents a form of ritual that consists "of punctilious and scrupulous repetitions, at set times and in set locations."[147] For the Ottoman context, Douglas Howard argues that the genre of advice literature (*naṣīḥat-nāma*) "worked to affirm the structures of bureaucratic monarchy and its values."[148] In other words, *Mirrors* had the potential to contribute to the pervasive and ubiquitous discourse of monocratic rulership by repeatedly evoking, performing and affirming conventional tokens of rulership. The force and effectiveness of this otherwise transparent act lay in its unrelenting ritualistic repetition and its embeddedness in a ubiquitous social and discursive practice in which *Mirrors* were but one of many vehicles used to transport the message of the legitimate ruler. However, when considering the impact that *Mirrors* might have exerted beyond the giving of advice to the ruler, we have to keep in mind how illiteracy and restrictions of access to the court significantly reduced *Mirrors*' actual audience. In fact, Barker argues, "those who practise legitimation most do so in relation to their own referential hinterland, rather than to the wider community. Legitimation is an activity conducted in the first place within groups, and only secondarily between them."[149]

All this by no means lessens the role that *Mirrors* played as vessels for valuable advice and even constructive criticism addressing the practical needs of rulers who themselves requested and appreciated their composition. While it is true, as Syrinx von Hees argues, that a significant part of the *Mirrors*' material does not offer itself as advice to be followed to the letter and thus needs to be interpreted,[150] the present study will show that for those who can decode the *Mirrors*' discourse, the texts do supply advice on a number of subjects, including governance. As the present study will show, *Mirrors* contain practical and pragmatic advice for rulers with regard to both specific scenarios that a ruler might encounter and fundamental aspects of rulership. In fact, given that *Mirrors* tend to touch upon certain arguably 'timeless' issues, such as the ruler's dealings with courtiers, nobility, and subjects; the dispensation of justice; and the assessment of all the advice that he is offered by various actors at court, some of their advice did not diminish in relevance and usefulness throughout time. This also implies that *Mirrors* could exert their parenetic effect regardless of whether they were presented as ad hoc admonitions or used on a daily basis as general handbooks. To what extent authors composed *Mirrors* for personal

147 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 11.

148 Howard, Genre and myth 140.

149 Barker, *Legitimating identities* 31.

150 Von Hees, Function of a "mirror for princes".

advancement or the legitimization of the ruler's or any other agent's position of power, in addition to the text's function as advice literature, can only be decided for each specific text within its own context.

Apart from their immediate reception, we can assume that some texts enjoyed a significant interest that went beyond the historical context of their authors and addressees. This is suggested by, for example, the number of copies, redactions, and translations of *Mirrors* that have come down to us and the occurrence of textual borrowings from *Mirrors* in other texts. The continuous reproduction of some *Mirrors* at various moments in history can be seen as evidence of the works' universal validity.[151] Some texts, as al-Jāḥiẓ's comments suggest, quickly earned a reputation as classics in the genre of advice literature for rulers. The fact that, even as 'old' *Mirrors* were copied, authors also composed new *Mirrors*, often providing answers to the same questions and relying on the same sources, can be attributed to any of a number of factors. For example, it is conceivable that in light of what has been said on the social function of a ruler's requesting a *Mirror* and an author's composing, dedicating, and presenting it to the ruler, an original composition would have carried a certain value. Moreover, as the present study will show, every new composition was shaped by the forces of both occasionality and tradition.[152]

Coming back to the issue of reception, due to the genre's anthological nature, *Mirrors* were also received as quarries for anecdotal and proverbial material which they had in turn received from elsewhere. In his study of *exempla* in John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*, Peter von Moos therefore defines John's text metaphorically as an "Umschlagsplatz"; that is, a site where goods (or in this case *exempla*) are transferred from one means of transport to another.[153] In her study of inventories indicating books in the possession of, produced for, or gifted by Queen Isabella I of Castile (1451–1504), Elisa Ruiz García reveals the wide currency of *Mirrors* in pre-modern regal libraries.[154] In the case of Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn's *risāla*, Ibn Abī Ṭayfūr relates that many of the text's copies were in circulation and that it exerted a lasting impact on the governance of al-Ma'mūn, who supposedly sent copies to all his provincial governors.[155] Yet the mere physical presence of *Mirrors* in the libraries of rulers hardly contributes to our understanding of the practices of the texts' receptions and whether rulers who possessed these *Mirrors* actually did read them, and perhaps even

151 See Eberhardt, *Via regia* 397–398.

152 See 118 *et passim*.

153 Von Moos, *Geschichte als Topik* 134. See also Marlow, Performance of advice 76–77.

154 See Ruiz García, *Libros de Isabel* 428–431, 438 and 441.

155 See al-Qāḍī, Political document 93.

acted upon the advice that they contained. A case in point is Steven J. Williams's study on the reception of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum*, in which he investigates whether rulers who owned one of the works' many copies actually read the text and were influenced by its advice. Having found no evidence for such a reception of the text by rulers, Williams concludes that, while it cannot be ruled out that *Mirrors* such as the *Secretum secretorum* were read by rulers or had an impact on their decisions, "scholars will have to do a better job arguing for that influence."[156] Moreover, we must take into consideration that reports describing a ruler's reception of *Mirrors* might be part of the aforementioned legitimizing discourse, since the request for and reading of *Mirror* texts was part of the image of a wise and considered ruler, which *Mirrors* themselves often promote.

Whether a ruler was in fact able to practically implement a *Mirror*'s advice—and, for that matter, actually enjoyed the privileges, fulfilled the functions, and displayed the required attributes of a monocratic ruler—is arguably irrelevant for the definition of *Mirrors* as advice literature for monocratic rulers. We simply do not have access to reliable data about each ruler's specific situation and their roles in decision making processes. Equally irrelevant to the usefulness of the proposed definition of *Mirrors* as advice literature is the question of whether rulers actually requested or implemented any of the given advice. Hanne is right in emphasizing the importance of considering a variety of potential motives for the composition of *Mirrors*, such as revitalizing the institution of the caliphate.[157] However, the fact that not all of the *Mirrors*' advice was put into action, and that they were not meant as instructions to be followed to the letter, does not mean that, in the context of the court and the formulation and performance of the monocratic discourse, *Mirrors* were not requested, composed, offered, and received as texts that transported knowledge and advice. In fact, anticipating the discussion to come, the applicability and scope of each piece of advice found in *Mirrors* must be deciphered separately for each case.

Naturally, the effective rule of a monocratic ruler was likely to be curtailed, to various degrees, by different institutions and interest groups within his realm. Thus Bernd Schneidmüller famously introduced the term "Konsensuale Herrschaft" (consensual rulership or rule by consensus) to emphasize the need of medieval rulers to seek consensus with other wielders of power within their realm.[158] Verena Postel explains that Schneidmüller's concept of 'Konsensuale

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156 Williams, Giving advice 156.

157 Hanne, Abbasid politics.

158 See Schneidmüller, Konsensuale Herrschaft. See also Patzold, Alleinherrscher. On the applicability of the concept on non-European rulers, see Ertl, Konsensuale Herrschaft.

Herrschaft' comes with a view of 'Herrschaft' (rulership or authority) not in terms of institutionalized structures of power or state, but in the form of concrete instances of (political) decision-making that occur as formal and informal processes of communication between the ruler and his advisors.[159] This understanding of rulership seems to be particularly fruitful for the present study, since *Mirrors* are instruments of precisely these processes of communication between the ruler and his advisors. Yet, as an abstraction of power, the idea of the monocratic ruler was a widespread discourse and a recurrent literary convention. Whether in the metaphor of the body politic or those that describe the ruler's relationship with his subjects, the ruler is considered as controlling his people's fate, leading the army in battle, dispensing justice, keeping peace and order, and delegating orders to chosen individuals.[160] In this sense, *Mirrors* participate in the construction of the myth of the monocratic ruler as the locus of absolute power, which was at all times a far cry from the realities of rulership. As a result of the ruler's responsibilities, offering him advice, at times even in the form of explicit praise and recognition for his rulership, was deemed a valuable (literary) endeavor. A case in point: Ibn al-Jawzī justifies his composition of a *Mirror* by arguing that "the first upon whom counsels (*naṣāʾiḥ*) should be bestowed is the sultan, may God extend his glory, because in his integrity lies the integrity (*ṣalāḥ*) of all [his] people."[161]

Two terms in the proposed definition remain to be clarified: 'literature' and 'monocratic'. Literature is an infamously problematic concept to define because it has the tendency to involve, among other things, value judgments and culturally specific preconceptions on, for example, the formal aspects of literature. The result is a multiplicity of (unsatisfactory) attempts at a definition that range from literature as a designation of fictional and imaginative writings to the Marxist understanding of literature as a product of consciousness, an engagement with social conditions, and an act of emancipation; to the formalist view of literature as defined by the alienating effect of its particular use of language.[162] The understanding of literature that underlies the present definition of the *Mirror* genre is necessarily broad, in part because it is

Steffen Patzold, Konsens, subsequently refined the concept of consensual rulership to include the element of competition that existed between those agents who sought to be part of the consensus-based process of decision-making.

159 See Postel, Herrschaft als Beratung 1–2.

160 See Marlow, Advice and advice literature, on the recurrence of strikingly similar metaphors for the representation of the relationship between the ruler and his subjects across multiple cultures. See also al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 16–17.

161 Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-muḍīʾ* 162.

162 On the range of definitions of literature, see Winko et al., *Grenzen der Literatur* 5–11.

informed by the concept of *adab* and its inclusive nature. In fact, as Sebastian Günther states, *adab* in the sense of literature "stands for a larger category of exemplary Arabic writings and thought in the pre-modern period, rather than merely the main form of classical Arabic *belles-lettres*."[163] As a result, the present understanding of literature, just as the present genre definition as a whole, does not comprise any restrictions on the works' authors, forms, structures, styles, themes, or imageries in order to represent the aforementioned wide diversity that characterizes the corpus of advice texts for rulers. However, based on pragmatic considerations of availability, here 'literature' does exclude non-written texts, which is not to deny that *Mirrors* often rely on non-written sources or paradigms, nor that their functioning and reception is intimately linked to—and potentially to some extent even dependent on—non-written acts of communication. Apart from that, in view of its breadth, the use of the term 'literature' in the proposed heuristic definition of the *Mirror* genre fulfills more of a descriptive and less of a discriminatory function. In other words, the labeling of *Mirrors* as literature is not a contribution to debates on literary or non-literary texts and what defines their distinction. Instead, in the present study, the concept of literature is meant to draw attention to a number of characteristics that are part of many definitions of literature and play an important role in the present analyses of *Mirrors*.

These literary characteristics can be divided into 'intrinsic' traits, which are found on the level of the text's internal structure, such as forms of fictionality and poeticity, and 'extrinsic' traits, which refer to functions and usages of texts.[164] With regard to notions of fictionality and poeticity, but without going into a debate about the extent to which language can ever refer to a pre-textual reality, *Mirrors* do not simply consist of factual statements. Instead, as suggested above, *Mirrors* are discursive texts that participate in the formation of social realities by, for instance, propagating the ruler's legitimacy or insinuating the monocratic power of the advised ruler. They are located between *Sein und Sollen* and thus fulfill the role of calling attention to the distance between reality and ideal. The same can be said of panegyric poetry, which has been shown to have played a central role in the admonition of pre-modern rulers,[165] a function that had in fact already been recognized by contempor-

163 Günther, Introduction xviii–xix. See also Günther, Education.

164 See Winko et al., *Grenzen der Literatur* 16.

165 See, e.g., Meisami, Ghaznavid panegyrics; and Sperl, Islamic kingship. For informative examples from a non-Islamic context, see Frankopan, Advice meets criticism; and Angelov, Imperial panegyric.

ary literary analysis.[166] Rather than the imaginative fictionality that is often associated with *belles-lettres*, the fictionality of *Mirrors* reflects the normative, moralizing and educating functions of *adab*.[167] For Wolfgang Iser, it is the very distance between the perspectives that a literary text offers on the world and the reader's experience of reality that defines literature. This distance constitutes the text's *Unbestimmtheit* (indeterminacy), which is felt by the readers as a tension to which they can react in various ways.[168] The readers' reactions range, according to Iser, from a complete acceptance of the text's perspectives, which he describes as a 'normalization' of the indeterminacy, to a perception of the text as an irreconcilable, alternative reality to the extratextual world; that is, to the world outside the text, which can result in the reader's violent rejection of the text.[169] In the case of *Mirrors*, the readers' reactions to the text can become a matter of life and death to the authors, and we will see in the course of the present analysis how they tried to steer the reception of their works.

With regard to extrinsic traits, *Mirrors* fulfill several of the individual and collective-social functions listed by Winko et al.[170] These include the aforementioned parenetic function, which works on the cognitive, moral, and emotive levels, as well as the propagandistic and ritualistic functions. Moreover, anticipating the analysis to come, *Mirrors* have the potential to function as sociocritical commentary on the status quo, or become part of efforts of collective remembrance. Finally, Winko et al. emphasize the importance of the specific context in which literary texts are produced and consumed. In other words, literature is also defined by the fact that it is created and received in the context of specific social practices or rituals.[171] The definition of *Mirrors* as literature is thus also meant to raise our awareness of the genre's embeddedness in social and discursive practices, which will play a critical part in its analysis. In conclusion, to understand *Mirrors* as literature means to be aware of the importance of their discursiveness, multiple social functions, and the way they are produced and consumed for the understanding of the genre.

In the present study the term 'monocratic' is used instead of 'autocratic' to characterize the type of rulers that were the addressees of *Mirrors*. One of the

166 See Marlow, Performance of advice 67.
167 See Fähndrich, Begriff 'adab'.
168 Iser, *Appellstruktur* 11.
169 Ibid., 12–13.
170 Winko et al., *Grenzen der Literatur* 22–28.
171 Ibid., 30–33.

reasons for this choice is that the prefix 'mono-' carries a stronger emphasis on the (nominal) concentration of power in one individual, who is consequently a suitable receiver of advice on rulership. It thus reflects one of the key notions transported by *Mirrors*—previously identified as the myth of the monocratic ruler[172]—which portrays the addressed ruler as sole carrier of power, thus justifying his instruction. By contrast, autocracy implies a rule that stands outside any framework and carries no accountability. Thus, unlike monocracy, autocracy carries a distinct connotation with regard to the nature of rulership that is too specific for the purpose of this study. The validity and usefulness that the (analytical) concept of what is here termed monocratic rulership has for the study of the societies that inherited the Antique cultural heritage of the Mediterranean and Mesopotamia has been suggested by the aforementioned studies elucidating the recurrence and intense trade of royal representations, enunciations and strategies of legitimization in that area.[173] These studies have laid the groundwork for the present research, which focuses on *Mirrors* as one particular vehicle and locus of enunciation of the recurrent royal representations. The choice of the term 'monocratic' is not intended to indicate a significant deviation from the path that the above-mentioned scholarship has embarked on. Instead, in addition to its aforementioned advantages, it is born out of the desire to avoid the Christian connotations that accompany the term 'monarchy'.

3 Transcending the Historiographic Divide

The review of the historiography on *Mirrors* offered in the first part of this chapter reveals an obvious discrepancy between the apparent similarities, inter-references, and shared sources of many *Mirrors* from multiple contexts, and the scholarship's division of this literature into distinct traditions, genealogies and territories of knowledge. As will become clear shortly, this is equally true for a majority of the studies that cover texts from both sides of the historiographic divide. However, the shortcomings of these studies can also show us the way toward different approaches to the same phenomenon that have the potential to produce alternative understandings. The second part of this chapter will introduce the key elements of the present approach.

172 See 58.
173 See 14.

3.1 *Comparisons of* Mirrors *across the Historiographic Divide*

While Darling is certainly correct in pointing out that there is a lack of studies on *Mirrors* that exceed historiographically determined cultural units, one can find a limited number of studies that explicitly seek to bring together both 'Christian'/'Western', and 'Islamic'/'Eastern' *Mirrors*. They range from occasional cameos of Arabic and Persian *Mirrors* in studies on European advice literature to straightforward (cross-cultural) comparisons of individual *Mirrors*, to attempts at comparisons of both traditions. Yet every comparison is, necessarily, determined by its theoretical framework and the question it is meant to answer. Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann argue that a comparison is a tautological endeavor because it can only prove or answer what is already inherent in its construction.[174] This means that when these 'inclusive' studies are based on essentializing and generalizing dichotomies, instead of resolving the historiographic divide, they end up reiterating and stabilizing the *imagined geography* that maps the other culture in terms of, or in opposition to, the authors' own culture. It is a *geography* that not only propagates the immutability of its divides and the internal homogeneity of its poles, but is also representative of the power to objectify, identify, and define every entity on the map. A cursory probe into the comparative study of 'Christian'/'Western' and 'Islamic'/'Eastern' *Mirrors* suggests a number of key assumptions underlying these studies, some of which will be presented in the following by way of example.

Besides the problem of universalization of the self; that is, the definition and description of the 'other' in terms of (sameness to) the self, the construction of a comparison implies that the units compared are imagined as separate and independent from each other. This can lead to an emphasis on difference and distinctness between the units of comparison and a disregard for the relationships and exchanges between them as, in the words of Jürgen Kocka, "the comparison breaks continuities, cuts entanglements, and interrupts the flow of narration."[175] When the units of a comparison—in this case *Mirrors*—are consequently attributed dichotomizing labels and defined as representatives of distinct categories, such as the 'Islamic' and the 'Christian' *Mirror* traditions, then the comparison ultimately contributes to reinforcing, rather than overcoming, narratives of dichotomy. The many comparisons of Machiavelli's *Il principe* with what is presented as its 'Islamic' or 'Eastern' counterpart, such as

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174 Werner and Zimmermann, Vergleich 610.

175 Kocka, Comparison 41. See also Conrad, *Global history* 42; and Werner and Zimmermann, Vergleich 612.

Kalīla wa-Dimna, combine the unreflecting reduction of entire literary traditions to a single popular, but often misinterpreted, text, with the essentializing juxtaposition of two representatives of supposedly monolithic and contrastive cultures.[176]

Notions of pristineness and authenticity further emphasize the units' distinctness and the purity of their affiliation (and filiation) with the category that they represent, as can be observed in Richard Hrair Dekmejian's otherwise informative comparison of Ibn Ẓafar al-Ṣiqillī's (b. 497/1104) *Sulwān al-muṭāʿ fī ʿudwān al-atbāʿ* (*Consolation for the ruler confronted with the hostility of subjects*) with Machiavelli's work. In fact, while noting that Ibn Ẓafar was a "thoroughgoing empiricist" who sought "empirical grounding for his maxims in historical events" and anecdotes,[177] Dekmejian characterizes Ibn Ẓafar as the member of a category of thinkers from a "more authentic Islamic mold" than those who were influenced by Greek thought,[178] attributing to him a dogmatic usage of Quranic references, which he interprets as an adherence to "the confines of the Muslim *umma* and its religio-political legality and morality, which imposed certain constraints on his political thought and advice to the prince."[179] However, the interpretation of the application of Quranic quotations as a sign of religious dogmatism not only obscures the intricate connections between the Quran and wisdom literature,[180] but also ignores the process of bestowal of meaning on references to sacred canonical texts through the specific "hermeneutical or pragmatic program" of the individual texts in which they are incorporated.[181] By contrasting Ibn Ẓafar's supposed dogmatism with Machiavelli's rebellion "against the ideological constraints of the Roman Catholic church", Dekmejian further feeds into the historiographical juxtaposition of the rational 'West' and the dogmatic 'East'.[182]

Employing religion or culture as the binary variable that defines the two categories from which the units of comparisons are drawn also suggests that the authors' and audience's religious or cultural affiliation, rather than their

176 See, e.g., Dihqāniyān and Nīkūbakht, Naqd-i akhlāq-girā-yi; Ghafūrī and Riḍwāniyān, Tabyīn-i shikāf; and Akhlāq, Fārābī, who pronounces al-Fārābī as the founder of Islamic philosophy and makes Machiavelli the herald of modern Western political thought. See also Dekmejian's and Thabit's study with the (telling) programmatic title *Machiavelli's Arab precursor: Ibn Ẓafar al-Ṣiqillī.*

177 Dekmejian and Thabit, Arab precursor 128.

178 Ibid., 118.

179 Ibid., 137.

180 See Gutas, Arabic wisdom literature 51–57.

181 See al-Azmeh, God's caravan 222.

182 Dekmejian and Thabit, Arab precursor 136.

language, socio-economic situation, or any of their stylistic preferences, may have played the defining role in shaping the texts under consideration. Richter's characterizations of the 'Islamic' *Mirrors* are paradigmatic for the overwhelming role and impact that is attributed to religion, and first and foremost to Islam.[183] The automated text analysis of forty-six *Mirrors* from the "Christian European and Islamic traditions" by Lisa Blaydes et al. provides yet another informative example of the prioritization of religion as binary variable, which in this case leads to the construction of two (linguistically) very diverse corpi of texts.[184] After analyzing their data, the authors come to the conclusion that "there are not large differences in aggregate (i.e., time-period average) emphasis on the four major themes."[185] They thus end up quantitatively confirming the observations on the numerous similarities, in terms of authorial intentions, generic conventions, themes, and sources, between the two presumably distinct traditions which they had taken from qualitative research, including al-Azmeh's notion of the "floating repertoire", to legitimize their comparison in the first place. The differences that Blaydes et al. deduce from their data are interpretations that are arguably just as plausible as the observation that the two non-linear, scattered point clouds, which are displayed on their graphics and are meant to represent two distinct categories (i.e., 'Christian' and 'Islamic' *Mirrors*), are really just an illustration of a single, very heterogeneous phenomenon.[186]

Another particular motif of essential difference in cross-cultural comparisons of *Mirrors*, especially in older studies, is the dichotomy of the liberal 'Occident' and the despotic 'Orient'. Based on this view of the respective types of rulers to whom the advice literature is addressed, the political and philosophical concepts and ideas of the Western *Mirrors* are juxtaposed with the Eastern *Mirrors*' amoral "Weltklugheit"[187] (worldly wisdom) that only teaches how to deceive other human beings. This motif is part of a wider narrative of essential and insurmountable differences between the 'East' and the 'West', with the former emerging as the epitome of a despotism that triggers fatalism and an egoistic behavior of self-preservation, both of which find expression in the 'Oriental' *Mirror* literature. For scholars such as Berges, this difference is fundamental to an extent that any impact on moral views in medieval Europe by the 'Arab-Oriental tradition' can hardly be imagined, making a comparison

183 Richter, *Studien* 2–6.
184 Blaydes et al., Mirrors for Princes 1153.
185 Ibid., 1160.
186 Ibid., 1159–1161.
187 Berges, *Fürstenspiegel* 110. See Guenée, *States and rulers* 73.

of the two literary traditions superfluous, if not impossible. Berges notes that Arab models of *Mirror* writing, especially collections of aphorisms and fables most prominently represented by the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum secretorum* and *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, were copied by numerous European authors, above all in medieval Spain. He claims that 'Occidentals' did not read 'Oriental' *Mirrors* for their ethical advice, and even if they did so, they were unable to conceive the content's 'sociological' implications. 'Too foreign' is how they must have deemed the maxims that had been formulated in an environment dominated by despotism, cronyism, and intrigues, all allegedly unknown in the West.[188] Berges's reader is thus left wondering why European authors would copy and translate 'Oriental' texts at all. In a similar vein, Anton claims that the relatively small 'Oriental' tradition of advice literature had no significant influence on the medieval European tradition.[189] Blaydes et al. even adduce *Mirrors* to illustrate the beginning of the teleological master narrative of the presumed European *Sonderweg* toward secular "impersonal political institutions … that facilitated later economic growth."[190]

By now it may be sufficiently clear that to simply bring together multiple *Mirrors* between two book covers is not a cure for the malady of the separate treatment of literary traditions. It treats only a symptom, whereas the underlying cause is reiterated and stabilized. What is really needed is an approach that transcends the grid of supposedly distinct cultures in order to introduce alternative modes of interaction. In academic practice, the transcendence of historiographically constructed social units (nations, cultures, societies, etc.) at times coincides with a surpassing of academic disciplines (Arabic Studies, Islamic Studies, Area Studies etc.), two intimately connected entities that reflect and legitimize each other. Cultures and nations often become territories of knowledge, fields or units of study, that require experts to explain them. The significant political stakes of this form of knowledge production are brought to light by Rey Chow, who points out that the systematization of the study of history, language and literature "under the rubric of special geopolitical areas" originated as a phenomenon of the United States' militaristic post-war logic of gathering information on possible targets.[191] She argues that in

188 Ibid., 108–111.

189 See Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1041. On the categorical exclusion of the occurrence of Arabic-Islamic influences on medieval Europe and its function in the narrative of European history, see Menocal, *Arabic role* 1–25.

190 Blaydes et al., Mirrors for Princes 1150.

191 Chow, *World target* 39.

> the establishment of area studies, language and literature are rather tools with which to hypostatize the targeted culture areas—Asia, Africa, Latin America, the former Soviet Union, and the Middle East—and make them more legible, more accessible, and more available for 'our' use.[192]

These territories of knowledge produce separate faculties and departments whose members are keen to emphasize their field's distinctness and relevance, as they are competing with each other for resources and constantly trying to legitimize their independent existence. In Area Studies, appeals are made to a variety of ostensible constants as defining foci of stable and distinct cultures. In turn, experts produce knowledge in a field that for economic and methodological reasons must be clearly defined and demarcated from other fields, thereby reproducing their subject of study as an independent unit. It is in this fashion that a master narrative of Europe developed that has laid exclusive claims to the heritage of Antiquity, whereas Islam, with few exceptions, has been neatly sealed off from everything that preceded it on the lands it acquired. Thus the parochialism of separate research projects on allegedly different and distinct cultures or areas contributes, in the same way as a conventional comparison does, to the very division of humanity that Edward Said questions when he asks

> Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanly?[193]

With all these studies, and the various problems in mind that we have revealed in their pairing of texts from both historiographic traditions, we will now turn to the specific methodology by which the present attempt seeks to transcend the historiographic divide.

3.2 *Towards a Transcultural History of Mirrors*

The aim of the present study is to produce a holistic overview or characterization of the transcultural and transepochal phenomenon of *Mirror* literature by analyzing and comparing the contents and argumentative strategies of advice texts at four different moments and places in time. This means that it is both descriptive, as it wants to give a simultaneously more comprehensive and more

192 Ibid., 15.
193 Said, *Orientalism* 45.

nuanced picture of *Mirror* literature, and critical, as it implicitly calls into question the separation of a single phenomenon. In fact, it seeks to open up an auspicious field of transcultural comparisons by remedying this questionable division and bringing together, for the first time, European and Middle Eastern *Mirrors* in a single study to add to our understanding of this widespread type of literature. The present study's comparative approach is meant to allow for the identification of the characteristics that will eventually comprise the holistic description of the phenomenon. However, this does not imply a comparison of the 'Western' and 'Eastern' *Mirror* traditions, as this would not only reinforce two of the discursive categories that we seek to overcome, but also reproduce precisely the historiographic separation of a single phenomenon into two allegedly monolithic and different corpi that the present study calls into question. Instead, a plurality of comparisons will be undertaken between all the primary sources, as incidences or snapshots of royal enunciations, regardless of their belonging to one or the other of the traditions. Altogether, the present study follows a three-stage model:

I. the above analysis of the discursive reality of the current understanding, representation, and study of *Mirrors*;
II. a thorough contextualization of the study's primary texts, taking into consideration both the works' specific socio-politico-religious contexts and their position in the development of the literary tradition in which they are situated;
III. the transcultural comparisons of the primary texts; i.e., comparisons between all selected *Mirrors* while pointedly challenging the divisive binary category of culture (or religion) into which they have been placed by historiography and abstracting and placing them on a common ground for comparison. This common ground is represented by the works' function as advice literature for monocratic rulers. The findings of each comparison will then be considered again in the light of the specific context of each individual *Mirror*.

The present study combines two models of literary research that are often considered antithetical: a socio-historical approach that considers texts and the knowledge that they contain in their historical context, and an immanence-based approach that detaches texts from their context.[194] This process of decontextualization (or rather re-contextualization) that accompanies the present comparison of texts traditionally considered to stem from different contexts is a sacrilege to many historians. The historiographical insistence on

194 On these two approaches, see Günther, Introduction xvi–xvii.

context and historical contextualization is identified by Regula Forster and Neguin Yavari as "a particularly consequential barrier for the study of non-Western and premodern political thought."[195] Differences of context are seen as one reason, among other factors, for the artificiality and illegitimacy of a comparison. However, as a historiographical construct, context is just as dependent on historically and culturally determined epistemes as any other historiographical practice. These epistemes are the historical foundation that provides us with a "grid of identities, similitudes, analogies" for the ordering of all things.[196] They constitute the rules for the reflection on our experiences; establish, institutionalize and localize sciences (in archives, museum etc.) and territories of knowledge; and determine the threshold that separates different and similar things. However, a comparison can upset the order of things to productive effect. Previously unthought knowledge as well as new understandings of established facts, which make knowledge as a whole more nuanced, can be generated by bringing together for comparison things that are conventionally not imagined as occurring in the same context or discipline, and thus by recontextualizing them in an imaginative way. For example, diachronic comparisons can destabilize historiographic periodizations that declare two points in history as incommensurable based on a retrospective division of the past into epochs with distinct identities ('Epochenidentität').[197] Moreover, diachronic comparisons upset the causality that chronologies, implicitly or explicitly, establish between the events they align as a progressive chain. With this being said, no transepochal and therefore ahistorical approach is presently proposed. While the *Mirror* 'genre' might be characterized as a transpeochal phenomenon that has shown a certain continuity across time (and contexts), each *Mirror* per se remains a historical manifestation and must be contextualized, as far as possible, in order to be 'understood'. The de- and recontextualization that is implied in the present approach is intended to produce a challenge to those epistemes that have created the historiographical divide of *Mirrors* that we are witnessing today. Yet the findings of the comparisons will at all times be interpreted with reference to the specific context of the respective text.

Since the dissolution of the very distinction that the historiographical traditions have drawn is one of the aims of the present study, individual and groups of *Mirrors* will be marked with linguistic qualifiers referring to the language in which they are written. These qualifiers are meant purely as markers of a given

195 Forster and Yavari, *Global medieval* 2. For a critique of historical contextualization, see King, Historical contextualism.

196 Foucault, *Order of things* xxi.

197 See Stierle, Renaissance 453–454; and Lutz et al., *Äpfel und Birnen* 12–13.

linguistic area at a given moment in time and do not suggest an untenable fixity of any given language, nor a certain univocality that does not allow for a multiplicity of readings, re-readings and misreadings. If we insist on these qualifiers referring exclusively to linguistic categories from a literary study point of view, they bear significant advantages. For one, they indicate the literature's target audience beyond the ruler whom they address; that is, the people who could read that particular language or understand it when read to them. In the case of *Mirrors*, we can probably narrow the target audience down to a group of people that might be vaguely defined as the 'ruling class' or the associates of the 'court'. As a result, a linguistic qualifier has the potential to place a work and its reception into a social-economic context and help us thinking about the work's function. Moreover, unlike religious labels ('Islamic'/'Christian'), references to a language contain no a priori judgment on the forces that have shaped a work beyond the observation that it was written in a particular language.

Since the present comparisons bring into proximity texts that occupy different positions, on both a temporal and a spatial scale, the choice of terms and concepts—for instance when comparing the various virtues that the authors deem necessary for the rulers—ought to avoid, on the one hand, a universalization of culturally, religiously and historically specific terms and, on the other hand, a culturalistic separation and fragmentation that would reinforce the historiographic division of *Mirrors*. According to the comparative method laid out above, the search for a terminology begins with an analysis of the primary texts for the identification of terms and concepts that are specific to them. The abstraction of these (culturally and historically) specific terms and concepts then provides the definitions for a common terminology for the comparisons of the various texts. All elements of this terminology are polythetic concepts, which means that they are flexible and open to the historical and cultural experience of each specific case.[198]

A similar flexibility applies to the definition of *Mirror* literature, which is probably one of the most decisive aspects of the study's theoretical framework because it determines the phenomenon that is assumed to exist in a variety of forms, yet to be described, and in a multiplicity of cultural and historical contexts. In its formulation an attempt has been made to give a very broad definition that is both informed by previous observations from different fields of study and accommodating of a heterogeneous corpus of texts. Despite being

198 For an extended discussion on the choice of terminology in a transnational study, see Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 69–74.

an a priori heuristic model, the definition used in the present study is strictly speaking not meant as a Weberian *Gedankenbild*, an ideal type or a conceptual construct that does not 'really' exist, but as a continuously expanding list of contingencies (rather than characteristics) that in every case interact to produce a text that is more than just the sum of its actualizations. Moreover, by nature of being a heuristic tool, this definition is expected to undergo continuous re-examination throughout the study, based on the comparisons' findings.

Finally, in the selection of primary texts that are commensurable and that make for a meaningful comparison, two criteria are taken into consideration:

I. the texts must be able to act as *pars pro toto* for particular stages of the history of *Mirrors*;
II. the texts must have been written in similar socio-political situations.

The first criterion refers to the previous analysis of the representation of the medieval 'Eastern' and 'Western' *Mirror* traditions in historiographic studies, which has revealed the possibility of heuristically dividing the histories of both traditions into several stages, from which the present study will focus on two main stages of each. The result is a total of four stages covering the period from the eighth to the thirteenth century. The decision to focus on this period (or these stages) is born out of the practical limitations of a research project and the observation that it covers the beginnings as well as the (first) maturation of this literary tradition in both contexts. These will be referred to as the Carolingian, the medieval 'European', the early formative 'Islamic' and the later 'classical Islamic' stages. Since these labels are part and parcel of the periodization(s) that are found in previous studies on *Mirrors*, their use runs the risk of reproducing the very structures that the present study attempts to overcome. Yet these labels represent only the starting point of the present study, and they cease to play a role once we come to the comparisons, which in fact call these labels into question. From each of these stages, one *Mirror* will be selected for detailed analysis. In addition, other texts produced during these four (historiographically defined) stages will occasionally be considered in order to supplement the findings.

The second criterion that is meant to ensure a certain degree of comparability refers to the circumstances under which texts have been produced. While *Mirrors* have been composed in a variety of historical contexts, some scholars seem to have identified particular circumstances that have prompted authors to dedicate themselves to this branch of literature. In fact, they noted that the production of *Mirrors* followed the tide of politics as they were frequently composed in times of political and social re-orientation. For example, Heribert Busse observes that the demise of the Umayyad caliphate led to a

notable increase in the production of *Mirrors*.[199] Robert Dankoff argues that advice literature for rulers "embodies a conservative tradition", which is why "it is especially useful during times of crisis in the state—for example, a change of dynasty, an outside threat, or inner disintegration."[200] Seyed Sadegh Haghighat points in a similar direction when he defines "the preservation of power" as the overarching objective of *Mirror* literature,[201] while Marta Simidchieva highlights in her analysis of a Persian *Mirror* the genre's role in reshaping the criteria for royal legitimacy in times of social and political shifts.[202] Castilian *Mirrors* are also attributed with having a role in the reformulation of monarchy, as suggested by Hugo O. Bizzarri, who argues that the Castilian tradition of wisdom literature was not born in isolation, but was instead enveloped in a program of legal reform that gave it its identity and social function.[203] In fact, it seems that in general, moments of crisis lead to an increase in rulers' readiness to seek counsel.[204]

This is not to say that *Mirrors* were written exclusively in the context of social and political upheaval or change, as this would necessarily imply reducing the literature's purpose to a mere political instrument and ignoring the multitude of intentions that an author could accommodate within this branch of literature, such as securing employment at court, providing ethical instruction, or truly striving for human growth. Yet the significant advantage of focusing on *Mirrors* written in a climate of political instability lies in the fact that we are facing a defined socio-historical context in which, as has been previously observed, works of advice for rulers are likely to fulfill a particular role as instruments for the affirmation or reformulation of a conservative tradition. As a relatively stable factor, the selected socio-historical context promises a degree of comparability that is particularly valuable in a comparison that transcends cultures and would therefore be likely to confront us with so many potentially untranslatable variables as to dilute a study's worth. Moreover, comparing works that were written under similar circumstances will allow us to see what the multiple cultural and literary traditions and their effects on a text actually consist of, and how they influence the authors' response to a comparable situ-

199 Busse, Fürstenethik 12. See also Klinkenberg, Karolingische Fürstenspiegel 84; and Hanne, Abbasid politics 49.
200 Dankoff, *Wisdom of royal glory* 4.
201 Haghighat, Persian Mirrors 85.
202 Simidchieva, Kingship and legitimacy 97.
203 Bizzarri, Colecciones sapienciales castellanas 66. See also Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 16.
204 See, e.g., Althoff, *Kontrolle der Macht* 36; and Ruiz, Oligarchy and royal power 96.

ation. In other words, by keeping one variable constant (the socio-historical context) we will be able to identify the impact of changes in the second variable (the multiple cultural and literary traditions).

Based on these two criteria, four paradigmatic *Mirrors* have been selected to represent—in terms of their authorship, language, form, addressee and sources—four stages of the traditional historiography of the medieval 'Eastern' and 'Western' *Mirror* traditions as described at the outset of this chapter. The selected texts are the second/eighth-century *Risāla to the crown prince* from the Umayyad caliphate, the third/ninth-century *De institutione regia* from the Carolingian empire, the sixth/twelfth-century *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* from the Seljuq sultanate, and the seventh/thirteenth-century *Castigos e documentos para bien vivir* from the kingdom of Castile and León. Anticipating the discussion to come, the paradigmatic nature of the four sources shall be briefly laid out. Mentioned by various scholars as a prime example of the Carolingian *Mirror* tradition,[205] *De institutione* encapsulates Carolingian advice literature for rulers not only due to its clerical authorship and its significant reliance on patristic sources, but also through its history as a defining historical document in the ongoing confrontation between the Carolingian monarchy and episcopate. The *Risāla* too, as one of the earliest examples of a series of Arabic texts written by *kuttāb* (secretaries) in the form of an epistle or testament, occupies a seminal position in the tradition of early Arabic *Mirrors*. The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, despite all the uncertainties around its authorship, also specifically represents a defined stage in the genre's history, in a way that the *Qābūs-nāma* and the *Siyāsat-nāma*, the two other famous Seljuq *Mirrors*, do not: at a time when Persian speaking sultans had usurped the caliphs of Baghdad and the *ʿulamāʾ* had risen to become a significant power player, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, written in Persian and addressed to a Seljuq sultan, is a typical example of the fusion of the homiletic and the administrative traditions. Written in a vernacular under the direct influence of the court and with a focus on courtly etiquette, the *Castigos* is in many ways paradigmatic for the medieval 'European' *Mirror* tradition. The fact that the *Castigos*, like all other Spanish *Mirrors* of the time, is to various extents influenced by translations of Arabic texts makes it no less representative of the corpus of medieval European *Mirrors*. On the contrary, the very exposure to 'external' influences makes the medieval Spanish *Mirrors* a reflection of the genres' history in Europe and the interconnectedness of the traditions under consideration.

205 See Anton, Fürstenspiegel 1043; Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1932; Eberle, Mirror of Princes 434; Hadot, Fürstenspiegel 622; and Lambertini, Mirrors for Princes 792.

Finally, there is no doubt that other paradigmatic texts could have been chosen according to the same criteria and that the selection of primary sources carries important implications for the outcome of the analysis. Based on the very historiographic grid that the study seeks to overcome, the selection of sources is necessarily imperfect. Given its numerous blind spots, every additional *Mirror* that is analyzed is likely to add to or change the findings of the present study. The choice of maximally paradigmatic texts significantly reduces the study's potential to reflect the genre's entire variety and heterogeneity. Texts by female authors, such as Christine de Pizan, or from religious contexts not covered by the present study, such as *Mirrors* from the Fatimid empire, would undoubtedly enrich our understanding of the genre as a whole. The present analysis is thus nothing more than a first step that seeks to establish some of the most common basic features of a highly diverse genre. The fact, however, that in a few cases one or more of the chosen *Mirrors* do not contain all aspects that are analyzed in the comparisons does not reduce the texts' suitability. Whether a text contains all relevant aspects did not factor into the selection process, as this would have implied an anticipation of the textual analysis that could lead to a circular logic. Moreover, as will become clear, the absence of certain features is as noteworthy and deserving of reflection as their presence.

CHAPTER 2

The Texts

A transcultural analysis requires that its units of comparison are first thoroughly presented and contextualized before they are brought together for the development of new understandings that transcend the particular spatial and temporal limits, defined historiographically, within which we imagine these phenomena to have been formed and determined. Thus, this chapter will introduce the four main texts in terms of their textual tradition, form, structure, content, and most importantly the socio-politico-religious context of their composition. An additional focus will lie on the reception of the *Mirrors* and their performance or usage, despite the paucity of historical evidence. All this will generate new insights on the works' specific historical contexts; i.e., the various situations of crisis and re-orientation that make them comparable. The analysis of the works' potential functions and the historical context of their production will shed light on the roles that *Mirrors* played at court, and add to our understanding of the complex relations between author and addressee, advisor and ruler, teacher and pupil. Moreover, based on the aforementioned histories of the *Mirror* traditions, the present study will expand upon the significant positions that the four main texts hold in their respective literary histories by discussing the works' conceptual and formal tendencies, as well as the sources that they draw on and the impact on their respective traditions that is attributed to them. Finally, the contextualization of the texts will provide an impression of the ways they have been traditionally studied by scholars; i.e., what role they have been credited with and what aspects have attracted particular scholarly attention.

Anticipating one of the observations of the present study, the question of authorship is given significant space in the study of the four *Mirrors* presently discussed, with some offering more conclusive evidence than others. These discussions around the question of authorship are not particular to the *Mirror* genre, but relate to most pre-modern texts. Whether as a debate on a specific aspect of the author's biography or as a discussion on the authenticity of the text and its attribution, the importance that is often lent to the link between the text and its designated author is notable. Yet in each case it will become clear that, apart from being a historiographic construct with all its inherent biases, attributing a text to an author who is previously defined on the basis of what is recognized as their oeuvre fulfills, as argued by Foucault, an interpretative function.[1] As a result, we have to ask ourselves with regard to each of the

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primary sources what the author's functions are and how these contribute to the specific readings and categorizations of the texts that are put forward by historiography.

In order not to impose any interpretations on the texts that derive from preconceptions about the presumed authors, which are subject to change should new historical evidence come to light, the present study poses the question of authorship only for the purpose of the socio-cultural-religious contextualization of the texts. In the context of the textual analysis and comparisons, authorship of the texts will not be taken into consideration. Instead, the textual analysis and comparisons will only refer to the figure of the advisor within the text, who in literary terms is the narrator or narrative voice that speaks or narrates the text. Only when the discursive practices are considered, including the socio-economic conditions of the text's production and its connection to contemporary texts and discourses, does the author—as the creator of the text—enter the picture of the present study. The choice to refer to the advisors in the masculine form is based on the notion of paternal or quasi-paternal advice that underlies all four texts studied here.[2] In the same way that the present study differentiates between the author and the advisor, when referring to the textual level on the receiving end we will speak of the ruler, who in literary terms is the narratee to whom the advice is spoken/narrated. When referring to the extratextual level—that is, the world outside the text—the study will speak of the addressee or dedicatee (*Widmungsträger*). As for the works' reception, the present study will further distinguish between the addressee, with whom the ruler-narratee is identified, and other potential and intended readers. At the end of the analysis, the intra- and the extratextual level—what happens within the text and what happens outside the text—will be brought together through an investigation of what, in light of the texts' socio-historical-context, which will be elucidated in the course of the present chapter, the advisor–ruler relationship within the texts can reveal about the writing and the writers of advice literature for rulers and more specifically the relationship between author, addressee and the other intended readers.

1 *Risāla to the Crown Prince*

As the preceding chapter has shown, modern historiography characterizes the early stages of *Mirror* writing in Islamic societies as a period of adaptation and

1 See Foucault, Author.

2 See 226 *et passim*.

translation of existing material.[3] Also mentioned was the role that the class of secretaries played in this process. However, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's legacy goes further than the 'mere' translation of Pahlavi *andarz*, such as the *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, into Arabic. He is also credited with the composition of two early Arabic *Mirrors*, the *Risāla fī l-ṣaḥāba* (*Epistle about companionship*) and the *al-Ādāb al-kabīr*. The *Risāla fī l-ṣaḥāba* stems from the last years of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's life and was probably addressed to the second Abbasid caliph Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr (r. 136–158/754–775). As the title suggests, the letter gives advice on the ruler's selection of companions and officials. In addition, it offers a definition of the institution of the caliphate and proposes reforms to the state administration, the judiciary, fiscal policies, and the military. In *al-Ādāb al-kabīr* Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ provides practical advice in gnomic form to the ruler's son, the courtiers and any member of the upper class. Another epistle conferring advice on rulership is the previously mentioned *Risāla* (c. 206/821) by the Khurāsānian commander Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn to his son ʿAbdallāh, on the occasion of the latter's appointment as provincial governor. The epistle emphasizes the ruler's absolute dependence on God, mentions the importance of a number of virtues, including piety and justice, and urges the ruler to treat his subjects with kindness and equity. In the third/ninth century *Mirrors* grew in length as authors began incorporating them in large *adab* compendia. One of the earliest examples of this model is the *Kitāb ʿUyūn al-akhbār* (*The book of choice narratives*) by the famous theologian and *adīb* Abū Muhammad b. Muslim b. Qutayba al-Dīnawarī l-Marwazī (213–276/828–889). Advice on rulership can be found in several of the work's sections, such as the *Kitāb al-Sulṭān* (*The book of rulership*), the *Kitāb al-Ḥarb* (*The book of war*) and the *Kitāb al-Su'dud* (*The book of leadership*). Another example comes from Andalusia, where the official panegyrist of the Marwānid dynasty Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih (246–328/860–940) produced a large *adab* collection under the title of *al-ʿIqd al-farīd* (*The unique necklace*). Intended as a sort of encyclopedia of useful knowledge, the work contains sections on government (*sulṭān*), war (*ḥarb*) and the history of the caliphs (*khulafā'*), among others.[4]

One of the earliest of the secretarial letters to play a foundational role in the development of the genre is the *Risāla to the crown prince* attributed to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib (d. 132/750). ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, who was probably born in al-Anbār, is usually identified as a *mawlā* (i.e., non-Arab client) of the Qurashī clan of ʿĀmir b. Lu'ayy. He worked as a traveling pedagogue before

3 The following list of authors is roughly based on a sketch of the history of advice literature in Dekmejian and Kechichian, *The just prince* 43–65.

4 Brockelmann, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih.

he began his service at the Umayyad court as an assistant to Caliph Hishām's famous chief secretary Abū l-ʿAlāʾ Sālim. He became attached to Marwān b. Muḥammad (72–132/691–750) when the latter was governor of Armenia, and he continued working for him as a chief secretary when Marwān became caliph. Widely known for his foundational work in Arabic epistolary writing and literary prose, he is said to have composed more than 1000 folios of *rasāʾil* (epistles) and documents, of which all but six *rasāʾil* and a few private letters and other documents have disappeared. Beside the *Risāla* addressed to Marwān's son and designated successor ʿAbdallāh, the most famous work attributed to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd is probably the *risāla* to the *kuttāb* (secretaries), in which he essentially describes his own office.[5]

The *Risāla*[6] is a *Mirror* written for the crown prince of a dynasty on the brink of extinction. When in 129/747 the last Umayyad caliph Marwān II (r. 127–132/744–750) is said to have instructed his chief secretary ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd to compose an epistle to his son and designated successor ʿAbdallāh, the Umayyad caliphate had already been in steep decline for years. Marwān, who had been appointed governor of Azerbaijan and Armenia by Hishām in the 730s, came to power by beating the nominated successor Ibrāhīm, nephew of Hishām and brother of the deceased Caliph Yazīd III, to the throne. However, Marwān only gained full control over Syria after three years of civil war, in which he had to fend off challenges from other members of the Umayyad family. Later, too, his reign was dominated by uprisings and attacks, especially in Mesopotamia, including a revolt in the Mosul area by the Khārijites, against whom Marwān decided to dispatch his son.[7] On this occasion, the caliph seems to have requested a letter to be written for his son containing his admonitions and general remarks on how to be a ruler. Hannelore Schönig notes that the *Risāla* is both influenced by and reflective of its historical context. Yet, she adds, the Khārijite rebellion should not be considered the sole motivation behind Marwān's commission of the *Risāla*, as it contains more general remarks on rulership that Marwān might have wanted to pass on to his son.[8] Francesco Gabrieli goes even a step further and identifies the rebellion as a mere pretext for a ruler to give advice to his son, and one in fact similarly employed by Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn in his

5 For biographical information on ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, see ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd* 26–31; Brinner, ʿAbd-Al-Hamid B. Yahya; Kurd ʿAlī, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd 515–518; Latham, Beginnings 165; al-Qāḍī, ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Katib 4–10; al-Qāḍī, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib; al-Qāḍī, Identity formation; and al-Zankarī, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd* 11–30.

6 In what follows, *Risāla* (as opposed to *risāla*) is used to indicate specifically ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's letter to ʿAbdallāh.

7 See Hawting, Marwān II. See also Hawting, Umayyads.

8 Schönig, *Sendschreiben* 7–9.

risāla to his son.[9] And while ʿAbdallāh and his father eventually succeeded in driving out the Khārijite forces from Mesopotamia, with the rise of the Hashimiyya shortly afterwards, the Umayyad caliphate headed toward its definite end. After the final defeat of the Umayyad troops at the battle of the Greater Zab in the month of *Jumādā al-thānī* 132/January 750, Marwān fled to Egypt, where he was eventually caught and killed by an Abbasid force.[10]

Altogether, Marwān's reign fell into a period of constant upheaval that eventually brought about the downfall of the Umayyad dynasty. The unrest that marked the final stage of the caliphate can be seen as the culmination of the growing factionalism, both within the army and in the civilian population, that had destabilized the Umayyad state for the better part of its history. Throughout the Marwānid period the provinces of the caliphate had witnessed an intensification of the rivalry between different army factions, but with the third civil war (*fitna*) (126–129/744–7), from which Marwān emerged as the new caliph, the factionalism of the provinces reached Syria, the center of the empire, which had remained untouched by the rivalries within the army because it was ruled directly by the caliphs, not as "army commanders but a sort of hereditary aristocracy."[11] But when Marwān came to power on the back of an army that consisted predominantly of members from the Qaysī tribe from the northern Mesopotamian frontier by overcoming a predominantly Kalbī army of central and southern Syria, the "close identification of the caliph with a particular faction clearly diminished the religious and moral claims of the Umayyad caliphate."[12] Another source of discontent and division in that period was the Umayyads' treatment of non-Arabs wishing to become Muslims. In fact, as Gerald R. Hawting notes, there was "a tension between the needs of the state and the demands of Islam",[13] since the conversion of non-Arabs, which in theory should have freed them from the payment of the *jizya*, a poll tax for non-Muslims, led to a decline in revenue for the state. As a result, the government, or local notables who had to pay an agreed annual tribute, "either tried to prevent conversion to Islam or took no account of it when collecting taxes."[14] Especially in the province of Khurāsān, where the Hashimiyya movement was later to find significant support, the civilian Muslim population was alienated by the

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9 Gabrieli, Epistolografia 323.
10 See Hawting, Marwān II.
11 Hawting, *First dynasty* 102.
12 Hawting, Marwān II. Hugh Kennedy, *Prophet* 113, argues that it was the feud between these two tribes, "more than anything else, which destroyed Umayyad government." For Qaysī, see Watt, Ḳays ʿAylān. For Banū Kalb, see Dixon, Kalb b. Wabara.
13 Hawting, *First dynasty* 79.
14 Ibidem.

Umayyads as they felt discriminated against by the taxation practices of the local non-Muslim notables. This led not only to rebellions among the Muslim population against the Umayyads, but also "enabled Arab rebels to find support among the non-Arabs and invest their movements with a religious coloring."[15] In conclusion, when the Hashimiyya revolt succeeded in getting entangled with and capitalizing on the rampant factional conflicts within the Umayyad caliphate, Marwān's fate was sealed.[16]

In the contextualization of the *Risāla*, few authors have gone beyond commenting on the cause, occasion, or pretext of its composition. What has been noted, though, is a marked emphasis throughout the text on the antithetic notions of obedience (*ṭāʿa*) and disobedience (*maʿṣiya*) toward the ruler. In his analysis of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's writings, Iḥsān ʿAbbās observes that toward the end of his career, at a time when Marwān was struggling to retain his power, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd was increasingly advocating the importance of obeying the caliph. In ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's texts from that period, *ṭāʿa* features as the cause for everything good in life, whereas *maʿṣiya* and all notions of opposition or discordance (*khilāf*, *fitna*) emerge as the root of all evil.[17] In the *Risāla*, the advisor repeatedly suggests the importance of the subjects' obedience and support for the ruler by insisting that one of the purposes of the implementation of many of his pieces of advice is the improvement of the ruler's reputation. This preoccupation with reputation, or loss thereof, is found in expressions such as "praising mention (*maḥmūd al-dhikr*)",[18] "bad reputation (*sūʾ al-qāla*)",[19] "satisfaction of the public (*riḍā l-ʿāma*)"[20] and "gaining a reputation/name for excellence (*intiḥāl ism al-faḍl*)."[21] The terms *ṭāʿa* (obedience) and *maʿṣiya* (disobedience) carry strong religious connotations, with *aṭāʿa* (to obey; verbal form of *ṭāʿa*) denoting the unquestioned obedience toward God and the Prophet in the Quran, while *ʿaṣā* (to disobey; verbal form of *maʿṣiya*) indicates disobedience toward God (only!).[22] It seems therefore that the *Risāla* is not only a general reaction to the infighting in the empire, but also an attempt to counter specific elements of

15 Ibid., 85.
16 See Hawting, Umayyads. For a further analysis on the collapse of the Umayyad caliphate, see Kennedy, *Prophet* 112–117.
17 See ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd* 84. See also Kurd ʿAlī, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd 529–530; al-Qāḍī, ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Katib 8.
18 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 479, 486 and 488.
19 Ibid., 480, 482, 486 and 490.
20 Ibid., 478.
21 Ibid., 489.
22 See Gimaret, Ṭāʿa.

the opposition's narrative, in this case the religious coloring that it had given to its rebellion.[23] This image is further supported by William Brinner's observation that the *Risāla* underscores "the protection that should be given both to non-Arab Muslims (*mawālī*) and to non-Muslim subjects (*ḏemmī*)",[24] thereby addressing the grievances of another significant faction of the empire's population. The *Risāla*'s emphasis on obedience and the Umayyads' legitimacy as God's viceregents might just as well be directed to other members of the court, hence suggesting an audience other than just the heir. A swift glance at the themes that the *Risāla* addresses offers an additional way in which the work reflects its historical context. In fact, on two occasions the advisor emphasizes the preferability of a victory gained without fighting. The connection of this principle with the idea of welcoming "the repentance (*tawba*) of those who turn away from error (*ḍalāla*), and the return to obedience (*ṭāʿa*) of those who have sinned"[25] seems particularly appropriate for the overcoming of an intrasocial and intrareligious conflict the likes of which rattled the late Umayyad caliphate. Again, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's distinctly Quranic diction (*tawba*, *ḍalāla*, *ṭāʿa*) adds a notable religious tinge to his illustration of the conflicting parties.

Until now the *Risāla*, like all *rasāʾil* attributed to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, has been primarily examined for its style rather than its content, as his works are often seen as prime examples of the Arabic epistolary genre, as well as early instances of Arabic prose. This goes back to the fact that scholars credit ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd with the introduction of many innovations to Arabic chancery style and Arabic prose in general; for instance, lengthy circumstantial clauses.[26] The author function plays an important role in the 'explanation' of many of the features of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's writing style, with authors referring to his biography and (alleged) ethnic origin to 'justify' their potential Persian or other 'non-Arab' roots. The elaborateness or verbosity of his writings, in particular, is sometimes attributed to Persian influence.[27] However, others have argued that one need not look further than the Quran to find an example in Arabic literature of this kind of balance (*tawāzun*) and elaboration in prose writing.[28] The renowned Arab literary critic Taha Hussein, on the other hand, strongly argued

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23 For the employment of *rasāʾil* for propagandistic purposes under the Umayyads, see Marsham, *Rituals* 168–180.
24 Brinner, ʿAbd-Al-Hamid B. Yahya.
25 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 499.
26 See Latham, Beginnings; and Gabrieli, Epistolografia.
27 See, e.g., Ḥijāb, *Balāghat al-kuttāb* 71.
28 See, e.g., Maqdisī, *Taṭawwur* 151.

for a Greek influence in ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's writings.[29] As to the linguistic side of the argument, however, Hussein's theory of Greek origins has not found wide acceptance.[30]

While many historians of Arabic literature, whether early or modern, do in fact consider ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd the founder of Arabic prose, most historians recognize that the innovations he is credited with are not restricted to him and did not come *ex nihilo*, but have roots in developments that predated ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. Thus the Umayyad period as a whole is now seen as a crucial era in the history of the Arabic language and literature, in both its oral and written forms. According to Wadād al-Qāḍī, "Arabic literary prose grew hand in hand with the rise and establishment of Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries."[31] As the Islamic polity developed into a vast empire with an extensive apparatus of administration, the need for a language of simple prose for written communications emerged. John Dereck Latham argues in his contribution to *The Cambridge history of Arabic literature* that in the Umayyad period Arabic developed "under the hands of the secretarial class, into a language of written prose composition suited to the needs of the court and the administration."[32] The *dīwān al-rasāʾil*, the chancery, represents for Latham the "fertile ground" on which the seeds of Arabic written expression "were to germinate, take root and flourish."[33]

In terms of its content, the very elaborate *Risāla* can be roughly divided into two parts: an "ethico-political homily",[34] in which the advisor provides ʿAbdallāh with advice on ceremonial conduct, the qualities of a ruler, and the form of education that can produce these, and a second part that deals exclusively with matters of warfare. The first part, which is somehow reminiscent of Sassanid advice literature on court ceremony, begins with an indication of the occasion of the letter's composition, in which the advisor makes reference to Marwān as the source and prime example of the advice given in the letter and describes the Khārijites, without mentioning them by name, as enemies of God and Islam. This is followed by an explicit expression of the text's parenetic function when the advisor declares that "the commander of the Believers … wished

29 Hussein, *Ḥadīth* 43–46.
30 See, e.g., Latham, Beginnings 178; and Gabrieli, Epistolografia 331–332. Gibb, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, however, on the basis of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's employment of qualifying clauses, supports Hussein's theory. On the potential influences on the style of the letters attributed to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, see also al-Zankarī, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd* 125–137.
31 Al-Qāḍī, ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Katib 3.
32 Latham, Beginnings 154.
33 Ibidem.
34 Latham, Beginnings 168.

to charge you with the subtleties and generalities of your affairs, insights into your situation and the disarray caused by the changes around you, by imposing his *adab* on you and giving you his admonition."[35] The advisor concludes the opening passage with the topos of the advice's redundancy by informing the ruler that his father wanted to provide him with these lessons although his aptitude for the position was already proven by the fact that God had chosen him as a successor.[36] The advisor goes on to praise God and His role as supporter of mankind. Directly linked to this is a passage on God as the ultimate source of knowledge, and consequently on knowledge as a divine blessing that must be sought and passed on. In the rest of the first part, the advisor dispenses advice on the ruler's behavior, both in public and in private, and his selection and treatment of officials and friends. What stands out here, apart from the aforementioned preoccupation with the ruler's reputation and the issue of loyalty, is the text's focus on the regulation of access to the ruler.[37] The part on warfare can be divided into advice on the different types of victories and their desirability; the use of spies; equipment; troop formations; the selection of spies, commanders and soldiers; the erection of camps; and fighting itself. Despite the second part of the letter being most directly linked to the specific occasion of its composition, it will feature less prominently in the present analysis as it provides almost exclusively technical information and does not touch upon the issues presently discussed, such as the ruler's virtues and duties.

In terms of its structure, the text as a whole is divided into sections according to various topics. The sections are marked and introduced by set words or phrases which reoccur frequently throughout the text. In general, repetitions and parallelisms, both in terms of content and form, play an important role in the meticulous construction and arrangement of the text. At times the text's sheer elaborateness comes at the cost of intelligibility. This casts doubt on whether the *Risāla* could have been read aloud or performed in some way. However, according to Marsham, it was not uncommon under the late Umayyads for state or caliphal epistles to be read out in front of large audiences for propagandistic purposes,[38] and Gabrieli compares ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's letters to the similarly elaborate (oral) genre of sermons (*khuṭab*; sing. *khuṭba*),[39] in regards to which al-Qāḍī notes that the orality of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's letters suggests that they were probably read out to an audience, rather than read privately by

35 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 474.
36 Ibidem. On the topos of redundancy, see 231 *et passim*.
37 For an analysis of this aspect, see 175 *et passim*.
38 Marsham, *Rituals* 168–180.
39 Gabrieli, Epistolografia.

the addressee.[40] The text's elaborateness suggests that the communication of advice might not necessarily have been the work's sole or even main purpose. Instead, as the analysis will show, the *Risāla* can be read primarily as part of a legitimizing effort. However, this is by no means to say that the *Risāla* did not also function as a parenetic work for a ruler, or that readers or listeners would have been unable to grasp some of the text's key concepts. On the contrary, the repetition of meanings, the long string of synonyms and the frequent use of topicalizations can equally be interpreted as an attempt at emphasizing certain key messages.[41] However, every analysis that reads the *Risāla* as a dialogue between a monocratic ruler and an author in which the work functions as a vehicle for advice must take into account the role that the display of literary artistry played in the composition of this text. This means that the question of the audience of the *Risāla* becomes even more pressing, as very few people would have been able to comprehend this kind of text. One way the *Risāla* differs significantly from large parts of the *Mirror* tradition that followed is that it contains neither poetry (*ashʿār*) nor narrative reports (*akhbār*) that interrupt the advisor's prose. The Quranic excerpts, too, are carefully inserted into the text and modified wherever it is necessary for the author's argument to proceed smoothly.[42]

The text of the *Risāla* has survived only as part of anthologies, namely in the *Kitāb al-Manẓūm wa-l-manthūr* (*The book on prose and poetry*) by the Baghdadi littérateur and historian Aḥmad b. Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr (d. 280/893) and in the *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā fī ṣināʿat al-inshā* (*Morning for the night-blind in the art of composition*) by the Mamluk legal scholar and secretary Abū l-ʿAbbās al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418).[43] Naturally, the authenticity of the *Risāla*'s text, which has come down to us exclusively through non-contemporary sources, must be treated with caution, the more so because it has only been preserved only in anthologies. Yet, in terms of the authenticity of the letter itself, as a work of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, al-Qāḍī sees no reason for doubts "mainly because of a physical, continuous, and living ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd literary legacy', and because of the nature

40 Al-Qāḍī, ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Katib 6. See also Latham, Beginnings 175.

41 For an analysis of of the functions of some of some of the text's literary devices, see Schönig, *Sendschreiben* 87–111.

42 For an analysis of the Quranic references in the *Risāla*, see 213 *et passim*. For studies on ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's usage of the Quran in the letters attributed to him, including the *Risāla*, see al-Qāḍī, Impact of the Qur'an, and al-Zankarī, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd* 129–130.

43 The present study refers to Ṣafwat's edition, which both Schönig, *Sendschreiben*, and Gabrieli, Epistolografia, have judged to be the most accurate rendition of the existing manuscripts. Ṣafwat's edition is based on two Cairene manuscripts of Ṭayfūr's *al-Manẓūm wa-l-manthūr*.

and degree of preservation and selection in the Arabic literary sources."[44] In fact, al-Qāḍī shows that letters attributed to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd were continuously studied, copied and preserved at the hands of his pupils and later scholars in the period between his death and the time of their earliest recording available to us.[45] This attested extension of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's literary legacy into the centuries after his death are a testimony to the high esteem in which he was held by following generations. Al-Qāḍī claims that up until the fourth/tenth century ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's style was seen as a model for the *kuttāb*'s writing.[46] This is particularly important in light of what has been said on the elaborateness of the *Risāla*'s style and the potential impact it has on its interpretation.

Yet, generally speaking, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd and the letters attributed to him usually enjoy far less scholarly attention than his pupil Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, who is often depicted as a pioneer of Arabic political literature. The *Risāla* to ʿAbdallāh too, as Gabrieli notes, does not always find the consideration of scholars researching Arabic *Mirror* literature.[47] Regarding the role of the *Risāla* in the history of Arabic *Mirrors*, Latham speaks of "a marked generic relationship to the *Fürstenspiegel*, or 'Mirror for princes' types of literature."[48] Latham's comment reflects both an awareness of the *Risāla*'s importance as a pioneering work for an entire tradition, and a latent hesitation as regards the text's unconditional affiliation to the *Mirror* 'genre', which brings us back to the tedious genre debates of the Western scholarship on *Mirrors*. However, the text fulfills the conditions of the 'genre definition'—advice literature for a monocratic ruler—applied in the present study. Moreover, due to its transmission through Ṭayfūr's *Kitāb al-Manẓūm wa-l-manthūr*, an anthology that was to provide models for the composition of chancellery letters, the *Risāla* is a good example of the genre's fluidity that results in a reception of *Mirrors* that went far beyond their expressed function as advice literature for rulers. The text's specific form and its choice of topics, specifically its omissions of such (e.g. justice), are arguably not only to be considered as owing to the specific historical context, but might also be seen as indicative of a particular stage in the development of Arabic *Mirrors* from personal testaments to increasingly elaborate literary works that might have been part of a kind of court ritual for the ruler's legit-

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44 Al-Qāḍī, State letters 269.

45 Ibid., 235–245. See also Gabrieli, Epistolografia 322.

46 See al-Qāḍī, ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Katib 10. See also ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd* 65; and Arjomand, ʿAbbasid Revolution 35–36.

47 Gabrieli, Epistolografia 323, notes that, most prominently, Richter ignores ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's opus entirely and instead begins his history of Arabic *Mirrors* with Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's works.

48 Latham, Beginnings 168.

imization. Yousefi underlines the importance of the epistles attributed to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd in setting "the tone for the secretarial discourse which manifested itself in the syncretism of the mirrors genre and Islamic ideas grounded in the Quran."[49] It is in this light that the present study will include the *Risāla* to ʿAbdallāh as a preeminent example of what has been termed the 'early Islamic *Mirror* tradition'.

2 *De institutione regia*

Due to its direct link to a specific dynasty, the Carolingian *Mirror* tradition comes with a relatively clearly defined corpus of texts.[50] Apart from the tradition's strong Augustinian imprint and its clerical authorship, its earliest examples in particular bear testimony to the strong impact of insular authors and ideas on Carolingian *Mirror* writing. In 775 the Anglo-Saxon churchman Cathwulf composed an admonitory letter to Charlemagne (742–814), in which he presents eight principles of good government, including patience in negotiations, generosity, modest taxation, and equality of judgment, while he urges the king to preserve monasteries and seek advice. Another author from the British Isles to provide the Carolingians with advice was the English scholar and clergyman Alcuin of York (730–840) who, after settling in the Frankish kingdom in 793, went on to play an important role in what is termed the 'Carolingian Renaissance', a period of increased cultural activity that was accompanied by reforms to education. He is also said to have composed eleven letters to a variety of rulers on and off the continent. In his letters Alcuin advises his addressees to follow the example of their predecessors, employ trustworthy advisors and judges, receive and support the downtrodden, and display truthfulness, patience, generosity and humility while avoiding dissoluteness, greed and arrogance.

Some Carolingian *Mirrors*, such as Smaragdus's *Via regia*, draw an image of kingship that is largely based on monastic ideals. Dedicated to Charlemagne, the *Via regia* consists of thirty-six thematic chapters that discuss a range of virtues from wisdom to prudence, to patience and justice.[51] Another 'monastic' *Mirror*, again penned by an Aquitanian author, is the *In honorem Hludowici christianissimi Caesaris Augusti* (c. 828) by Ermoldus Nigellus. In it,

49 Yousefi, Islam without fuqahāʾ 5.

50 The subsequent list of authors is roughly based on overviews of the history of the Carolingian *Mirror* tradition by Anton, *Herrscherethos*, and Born, Specula principis.

51 See Eberhardt, *Via regia* 584–597.

Ermoldus urges Pepin I of Aquitaine (797–838) to follow the example of his father, Emperor Louis I, called 'the Pious' (r. 813–840), as he extensively praises the latter's exploits. The writings of the Irish grammarian Sedulius Scottus and the Benedictine monk Lupus of Ferrieres (c. 805–862), also known as Lupus Servatus, show a stronger reliance on pagan (Late) Antique sources. Lupus of Ferrieres's letters to the Carolingian emperor Charles the Bald (823–877) are not always included in the canon of Carolingian *Mirrors* because they do not constitute a single work. Yet the letters bear a decidedly admonitory character as they present the ruler with a concise catalog of royal virtues that are to be exercised for the common good (*utilitas publica*). The notion of the *utilitas publica* similarly plays a role in the *De rectoribus christianis* of Sedulius, composed for either Charles the Bald or the Lotharingian king Lothair II (835–869). Apart from its specific classical element, the *De rectoribus christianis* exemplifies again the impact of the insular tradition on the Carolingian *Mirrors*. The last significant contribution to the Carolingian tradition comes from Hincmar, the archbishop of Reims. Written for Charles the Bald in 873, the *De regis persona et regio ministerio* (*On the person of the king and the royal ministry*) is characterized by the continued use of classical material, as well as a remarkable, in-depth engagement with Augustinian war ethics.

Representative of the significant influence that the Carolingian episcopal synods exerted on the contemporary advice literature for rulers is the *De institutione regia* (*On the royal education*), attributed to the bishop Jonas of Orléans (760–843). Born and educated in Aquitaine, Jonas was known among his contemporaries for his profound theological knowledge, his rhetorical talent, and his abilities as negotiator and administrator. He emerged as one of the most loyal servants of Louis I, son of Charlemagne, and it was precisely Jonas's indubitable loyalty to the emperor that most probably earned him the position as bishop of Orléans around the year 818. Louis chose Jonas to replace the renowned and popular Theodulf of Orléans (c. 750(/60)–821), who was ousted under controversial circumstances for his alleged involvement in the rebellion led by Louis's nephew, Bernard of Italy (797–818). As Bishop, Jonas broadly continued the work of his predecessor by promoting a stronger focus on religious education and discipline among clerics and laymen. Moreover, Jonas stood out as a dedicated patron and supporter of the empire's monasteries, which was very much in line with Louis's benevolent policies toward the monastic class. Throughout his reign, Louis employed Jonas in various ways: He used him as judge in litigations between monasteries; he repeatedly entrusted Jonas with the writing and redacting of the protocol at various councils and synods; and he commissioned him to present the Carolingian refutation of iconoclasm vis-à-vis the Vatican. When Louis sent Jonas to Pope Eugenius II in the context of

the iconoclastic controversy, he described him and his companion Archbishop Jeremias of Sens in an introductory letter as "educated to full measure in the sacred script, and no less trained in the arguments/methods of the disputers (*rationibus disputatoriis*)."[52] Unlike many other clerics, Jonas remained faithful to Louis during the turbulent years of the final decade of the emperor's reign, despite his close ties with some of the competitors, such as Matfrid (d. 836), Count of Orléans, and Louis's son Pepin. Jonas outlived the emperor and died around 843. Besides the *De institutione regia*, Jonas's main works are the *Vita Sancti Hucberti*, a biography of Saint Hubertus in medieval Latin; the *De institutione laicale* (*On the lay education*), a parenetic writing on a Christian way of life for laymen (a *Laienspiegel* or *Mirror for laymen*), dedicated to Matfrid; and the *De cultu imaginum* (*On the cult of images*), a treatise on iconoclasm dedicated to Charles the Bald, the youngest son of Louis.[53]

Composed during the reign of Louis I, the *De institutione*'s production came at a time of far reaching reforms, social changes, shifts of power, and internal struggles. As a result of several twists of fate, in 814 Louis inherited the unified Frankish empire from his father Charlemagne. Right from the outset, Louis's reign was marked by a strong determination to reform state and church. Louis pushed for the standardization and formalization of a form of centralized government through written edicts, letters and acts (capitularies) that were meant, among other things, to enforce reforms of the legal and commercial system and provide legal certainty for the securing of internal peace.[54] On the ecclesiastical front, Louis intensified the formation and standardization of the Benedictine rules in the empire's monasteries for the spiritualization of the monastic realm, confirmed and expanded the church's privileges (e.g. the immunity of monasteries; that is, the protection of their goods), and strengthened the autonomy of abbeys by giving them the right to elect their abbots.[55] In his attempt to establish what Egon Boshof has called a "Königskirche"[56] ("a king's church"), Louis granted his personal patronage to a number of monasteries. Taken together, these reforms resulted in a closer interdependence and synergism between emperor and church that was based on the offer of patronage and protection on the one hand, and joint responsibility and spiritual service, including regu-

52 Quoted in Amelung, *Leben* 12.

53 For biographical information on Jonas of Orléans, see Amelung, *Leben* 3–21; Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur* 374–376; and Reviron, *Idées* 23–36.

54 See Boshof, *Ludwig der Fromme* 109–120; and Ubl, *Karolinger* 167.

55 See Anton, *Herrscherethos* 202–204; Boshof, *Ludwig der Fromme* 108–109; Schieffer, Krise 4–5; Schieffer, *Karolinger* 116–117; and Ubl, *Karolinger* 168.

56 Boshof, *Ludwig der Fromme* 109.

lar prayers for the ruler and his family, on the other. The intensification of the interpenetration of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* further affected the understanding of kingship, which experienced a distinct spiritualization by being included in the Christian sphere and turned into a *ministerium* (office) as a defined position within society.[57]

As for the overall historical assessment of Louis's reign, scholars have engaged in lively debates for decades now. The question around which large parts of these debates revolve is whether—and if so, in what way—Louis contributed to the final fragmentation of the Frankish empire, cemented by the treaty of Verdun in 843. Earlier scholarship on Louis's reign tends to paint a decidedly negative picture of the Emperor, characterizing him as weak and subservient to those around him.[58] Yet what no scholar disputes is that during Louis's reign, especially in the period in which the composition of the *De institutione* is usually placed, the Carolingian empire faced multiple crises, some of which are linked to Louis's decisions or policies.[59] For example, some scholars see Louis's decision to depart from an order of succession that he had previously established as the root cause of the series of civil wars between the Emperor and his sons, as well as among the sons themselves, that dominated Louis's reign after 829 and eventually culminated in the final fragmentation of the Frankish empire.[60] Others argue that at least the first outbreak of internecine conflict was not triggered by Louis's inclusion of his youngest son Charles into his succession, but was rather the result of an ongoing conflict at court between Bernard of Septimania (795–844), who had recently been promoted to act as chamberlain and Charles's custodian, and the 'old guard' of the emperor's advisors, including Pepin's commanders Matfried of Orléans and Hugh (c. 780–837), Count of Tours and father-in-law of Louis's eldest son Lothair.[61] Still others criticize the assessment of Louis's reign as an era of decay and collapse of the Carolingian empire for its one-sided fixation on issues of political power. For example, Theodor Schieffer argues that in terms of power politics in the West, Louis's reign was "the story of a major failure without visible consequences."[62] In fact, for Schieffer the importance of the late Carolingian era lies in the defining questions and problems it brought out surrounding the dualism of religious and worldly power, the meaning of kingship, and the political duties and rights

57 See Boshof, *Ludwig der Fromme* 109; and Schieffer, Krise 6.
58 See, e.g., Noble, Louis the Pious 306–314.
59 For a concise summary of these crises, see Ganshof, Vorabend.
60 See, e.g., Boshof, Einheitsidee 161.
61 See, e.g., Collins, Pippin 377–381.
62 Schieffer, Krise 14.

of the clergy.[63] Karl Ubl too emphasizes the role of Louis's reign as a phase of transition, in which the image of a Christian ruler, which was to significantly characterize the German and French kingdoms—the two successor states of the Carolingian empire—was formulated and introduced for the first time.[64] Be that as it may, in conclusion it seems reasonable to describe the reign of Louis as a period of significant developments and debates on the relationship between the 'state' (represented by the king, the court and the nobility) and the church, the emergence and formation of the image of Christian kingship, and eventually of unrest and internecine warfare that culminated in the collapse of the unified Frankish empire.

The exact temporal placement of the *De institutione* in this historical context has always been a matter of debate, with some scholars arguing for the year 831 and others preferring 834.[65] Yet in either case this means that the *De institutione* falls into a period of internal crisis, in which parts of the extended court, including the addressee Pepin I of Aquitaine, had already (at least once) rebelled against the emperor. A series of military defeats (including against the Normans, the Danish and the Basques) that put the empire on the defensive made the Emperor and the bishops believe that they were being punished by God for the moral decay of Frankish society. Thus they convened four synods—in Mainz, Paris, Lyon and Toulouse—during the year 829 to discuss reforms for the *correctio* and *emendatio* of the entire society. Of the resulting acts, all of which were addressed to Louis, only the acts of the synod of Paris have survived.[66] These acts, which are usually attributed to Jonas, make up a large portion of the *De institutione*'s text.[67] Wilfried Hartmann notes that the acts are by no means a mere protocol of the synod, but display the character of a carefully drafted treatise.[68] Generally speaking, the acts contain an attempt to define the spheres of kingship and episcopacy, while they clearly reveal the clergy's

63 Ibidem.

64 Ubl, *Karolinger* 64–65. For a discussion on the shift in the symbolic communication of Carolingian royal authority from Roman to Christian enunciations during the reign of Louis, see Garipzanov, *Symbolic language* 286–305.

65 Amelung, *Leben* 40–42, for instance, places the *De institutione* in 834, while Dubreucq in Jonas d' Orléans, *De institutione regia* 45–49, Reviron, *Idées* 51–53, and Scharf, Studien 367–371, rather compellingly, argue for 831 as the date of the *De institutione*'s composition.

66 Hartmann, *Synoden* 179–180.

67 See Amelung, *Leben* 44; Anton, *Herrscherethos* 204, 212; and Dubreucq's introduction in Jonas d' Orléans, *De institutione regia* 35–42. For comparisons of the *De institutione laicale*, the *De institutione regia* and the council acts of 829, see Amelung, *Leben* 41–44, Reviron, *Idées* 56, and Scharf, Studien 353–363.

68 Hartmann, *Synoden* 182.

agenda of sacralization of the church and Christianization of society ("Entweltlichung der Kirche" and "Verchristlichung der Welt").[69] The division of spheres is reflected in the acts' structure, with the introduction, which describes the church as a corpus consisting of two *personae*, the *persona sacerdotalis*, and the *persona regalis*, being followed by two books, each of which discusses the role and duties of one of these *personae*.[70] The acts might thus be characterized, as Anton suggests, as a sort of "Gesellschaftsspiegel" ("Mirror for the society") that combines a "Bischofspiegel" ("Mirror for bishops") with a "Fürstenspiegel."[71]

The *De institutione* is often described as a "Mahnschreiben"[72] (an admonitory letter) that reminds Pepin of his duty to obey his father by presenting him with the ideal of a Christian ruler.[73] However, due to the work's strong dependence on the Paris synod acts, this characterization is sometimes called into question. For example, Anton notes that owing to its dependence on the synod acts, the *De institutione* is characterized to a certain degree by a slightly impersonal tone as well as an inclusion of more general passages on society as a whole and an overall stronger dedication to 'political' theory (i.e., on the office of kingship and its relation to God and the church) than to (the ruler's) personal education.[74] Roger Collins argues that the *De institutione* is not necessarily to be seen as an admonition, because its contents "belong firmly in the mainstream of Carolingian thinking about government in the first half of the ninth century."[75] Others tend to emphasize the *De institutione*'s role in the negotiation between spiritual and temporal power as a "political mediation attempt"[76] or "an expression of the relative strength of the church over the royal institution."[77] However, Bratu adds that in a time of political crisis for the Carolingian monarchy, which was in need of the clergy's support, the *De institutione* represents "a project of cooperation between the *auctoritas* of the Church and the *potestas* of the king."[78] Jean Reviron points in a similar direction when he argues that the *De institutione* represents Jonas's attempt to lay out the principles of a new working relationship between spiritual and temporal power,

69 Anton, *Herrscherethos* 205.
70 For summaries of the acts' contents, see Anton, *Herrscherethos* 205–210; Anton, Gesellschaftsspiegel 58–59; and Hartmann, *Synoden* 182–186.
71 Anton, Gesellschaftsspiegel 55–59.
72 Anton, *Herrscherethos* 214.
73 See Reviron, *Idées* 57.
74 See Anton, *Herrscherethos* 215–216.
75 Collins, Pippin 365.
76 Scharf, Studien 370.
77 Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1932.
78 Ibidem.

following the collapse of the equilibrium that Charlemagne had succeeded in building.[79] While the *De institutione*, through its kinship with the council acts, is a product and a part of a larger discussion that addresses all agents of power in the Frankish empire, the prefixed dedication letter adds a personal note as it significantly narrows down the work's intended audience. Yet it cannot be ruled out that the *De institutione* perhaps also reached other members of Pepin's or even his father's court, since it portrays the image of an obedient son, whether as a factual statement or an invitation, we do not know.

The *De institutione* consists of four parts and is preceded by a letter of dedication that indicates explicitly the work's function as "a small present of admonition (*admonitionis munusculum*)",[80] the redundancy of its advice[81] and as its immediate goals, which are the defense of the "Christian people (*populus Christianus*)" from the turbulence that resulted from the sons' rebellion and the securing of the addressee's salvation.[82] The advisor further hints at his duty, as bishop, to admonish the king when he states that he is doing so "bearing in mind my [i.e. his] office and your health/salvation (*officii mei memor et salutis vestrae*)."[83] Throughout the work the addressee is given the prospect of joining the ranks of "the holy kings (*sanctorum regum*)" if he was to be a good king, that is, follow the advice given by the advisor.[84] Moreover, the letter of dedication summarizes a number of religious truths, including the certainty of death and the transience of the temporal world, and reminds every reader to do everything necessary during the pilgrimage that is life to earn personal salvation on Judgment Day. Finally, it offers several hints regarding the text's historical contextualization, such as a reference to the author's temporary absence from Pepin's court, a mention of the conflict and reconciliation between Pepin and his father, and a paragraph on a son's duty to obey his father.[85] The *De institutione*'s introduction, or rather its first two chapters, lays out the aforementioned vision of the church as a corpus consisting of the *persona sacerdotalis* and the *persona regalis* and defines the bishops' mission as administrators and admonishers of temporal rulers.

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79 Reviron, *Idées* 113–115.

80 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., l. 50.

81 In Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., l. 43–45, the advisor explains that he wishes to give Pepin a work of advice "although you know very well, through the gift from Him from whom comes every good and perfect gift, what you should do and what you should avoid."

82 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., l. 52–53.

83 Ibid., ADM., l. 259.

84 Ibid., III, l. 19.

85 Ibid., ADM., l. 17–25; and 153–170.

This is followed by a *Mirror* proper that discusses kingship in terms of a *ministerium* (office) that is awarded by God. The office of the king is defined by the correction and protection that he must provide to his subjects and his legitimacy is dependent on his exercise of *justitia*, which emerges as defining virtue of kingship.[86] Other issues are the demand on the king to surpass all other humans in terms of love, piety, justice, and mercy, the king's duty of protection of the church, the selection of officials, and the king's duty to help widows, orphans, and the poor.[87] However, while the *De institutione* calls for unity between the king and the bishops, it notably gives more importance to the bishops by assigning them the role of supervising and admonishing the ruler and society as a whole, and mediating between mankind and God. Ultimately, unlike the king, the bishops are solely responsible to God, because of their role in securing the king's salvation.[88] The third part of the *De institutione* represents a discussion on the general moral and spiritual duties of Christians and Christian subjects in particular. The advisor frequently laments the moral decay of his time and admonishes all Christians to return to the religious practices and beliefs of the apostles. The final chapter features an extended quotation from Augustine's *De civitate dei*, containing the image of the *imperator felix*, a list of criteria for the measurement of a ruler's 'happiness' (i.e. goodness).

The *De institutione*'s text has survived in three manuscripts and the considerable number of editions and translations available today are a reflection of the continuous interest in this text.[89] In the manuscripts the work bears no title. Only in the seventeenth century was it given the title under which it is known today, by Luc d'Archery (1609–1685), a French Benedictine and the text's first editor.[90] However, Anton notes, mention of the work has also been found in a ninth-century library catalog of the Reichenau monastery, where it is listed under the title *Admonitio Ionae episcopi ad Pippinum* (*Bishop Jonas's Admonition to Pepin*).[91] This mention as an admonitory work, in addition to the discovery of a manuscript at the Bibliothèque nationale de France that combines extracts of the *De institutione* with other material on rulership, arguably points toward the work's reception as an advice text for rulers. In terms of sources

86 See Reviron, *Idées* 77–86; Schmidt, *Verfassungslehren* 31–37; and Wallace-Hadrill, Via regia 34.

87 See Born, Specula principis 597–598; Bratu, Mirrors for Princes 1932; see Dubreucq's introduction in Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* 49–55; and Reviron, *Idées* 56–57.

88 See Anton, *Herrscherethos* 217–218.

89 See Dubreucq's introduction in Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* 118–138. See also Anton, *Frühen und hohen Mittelalters* 13 n. 31.

90 See Anton, *Frühen und hohen Mittelalters* 14.

91 Ibidem.

for its conception of kingship and its relation to spiritual power, the *De institutione*, like most Carolingian *Mirrors*, is based to a large extent on patristic writings and the Bible.[92] In fact, the authors of Carolingian *Mirrors* are often attributed an important role in the reception of patristic and Biblical material and their combination with lay and contemporaneous writings.[93] According to Anton, Jonas occupies a particularly prominent role in the reception of political Augustinism, as well as in the revisiting of Pope Gelasius's (d. 496) theory of the division of spiritual and temporal power.[94] Both Jonas's importance in the development of what might be referred to as 'Carolingian political thought', which was to have a significant impact on medieval Christian understandings of government, and his contribution to the reception of patristic and Biblical material, form the center of gravity of scholarly work on the Bishop of Orléans.

Preceded only by the aforementioned epistolary advice texts, the *De institutione* is part of a group of writings that represent the "*specula* in full-developed forms."[95] In writing advice literature for rulers with a focus on the role of kingship in a Christian society, these texts are paradigmatic for a period of social and intellectual transformation in which the episcopate presented itself, for the first time, as an organized and self-conscious *ordo* that occupies an important role in an increasingly Christianized society.[96] Despite a tendency toward a distinctly theoretical and almost universal nature (in terms of a broadening of the works' subject from a text dedicated exclusively to rulers into advice literature for laymen or, in fact, for society as a whole), these *Mirrors* are often attributed an important role in the coining of the ideal of a Christian ruler, which did not present itself merely as an abstract reflection, but became a part of rulers' political agenda due to the church's influence on the court.[97] Thus, as a synopsis of the image of a Christian ruler that the Carolingian episcopate had drawn at the Paris synod, the *De institutione* is representative and indicative of the ambitions and self-confidence of a clergy that felt called upon to define the foundations, conditions, duties, and limits of temporal power. The fact that at that point the Carolingian emperor had come to oversee not just a

92 For a breakdown of the *De institutione*'s sources, see Reviron, *Idées* 56–75.

93 See Born, Specula principis 596.

94 Anton, *Herrscherethos* 244, 355.

95 Born, Specula principis 588. For the pre-history of Carolingian *Mirrors*, see also Schmidt, *Verfassungslehren* 14–17.

96 See Delaruelle, En relisant 186. On the transformation of the Carolingian episcopate's understanding of its political role during the 820s, see Patzold, *Episcopus* 50–184.

97 See Anton, *Herrscherethos* 198; and Anton, Gesellschaftsspiegel 51–53.

political entity, but a large part of Christendom, made it even more important for the church to actively execute its role in the 'forming' of a government that would secure the empire's unity and stability.

3 *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*

In the fifth/eleventh century Islamic societies witnessed a sharp rise in the number of advice texts for rulers.[98] The emergence of increasingly powerful sultans, atabegs and other forms of monocratic rulers that sidelined the caliph in Baghdad required new theoretical and practical models of rulership. *Mirrors* penned by viziers and *ʿulamāʾ* testify to their significant influence on rulers and governments. With the rise of the class of legal scholars (*fuqahāʾ*) some *Mirrors* took on a distinctively legal perspective, such as al-Māwardī's *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* (*The ordinances of government*). A classic work on public law, the *al-Aḥkām* outlines the details of the caliph's election by discussing the procedure, the traits that qualified or disqualified a candidate, and the caliph's duties. The *al-Aḥkām*'s other chapters cover topics such as the appointment of judges, commanders and other officials, as well as matters of taxation, land grants and water supply. Animal fables continued to play a role in *Mirrors*; for instance, in the aforementioned *Sulwān al-muṭāʿ fī ʿudwān al-atbāʿ* by the Sicilian author Ibn Ẓafar al-Ṣiqillī. Placed within a frame tale, the *Sulwān*'s fables and anecdotes advise the ruler to secure his rule by embracing trust in God (*tawfīd*), fortitude (*taʾassī*), patience (*ṣabr*), contentment (*riḍāʾ*), and self-denial (*zuhd*). With many of the newly emerging dynasties coming from Iran and Central Asia subjugating the Abbasid caliphs, such as the Buyids and later the Seljuqs, many *Mirrors* were now both written in Persian and adapted to a new dual power structure of caliph and sultan. Darling argues that one of the intentions behind the dedication of *Mirrors* to the Seljuq sultans was to familiarize them with the practices of Muslim society and rulership that had crystallized over the past centuries from the wide repertoire of social practices circulating in the region.[99] In these *Mirrors*, as Arjomand notes, "the aphoristic and fable-centered modes of presentation are replaced by systematic treatment of topics in rulership and administration, with many of the examples drawn from recent political and administrative history."[100]

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98 For a very useful overview of the *Mirrors* that came out of this period, see Marlow, Advice and advice literature.

99 Darling, *History of social justice* 91.

100 Arjomand, Perso-Indian statecraft 462.

Among this new wave of *Mirrors* are some of the most famous specimens of the genre, such as the *Qābūs-nāma*. Attributed to Kaykāwus b. Iskandar and dedicated to his son Gīlānshāh, the *Qābūs-nāma* offers the young ruler advice on a large array of matters, many of which are however not specific to a ruler, such as gratitude to parents, the etiquette of (drinking) parties, buying slaves, child rearing, or the details of different occupations, including trading and farming. Another well-known Persian *Mirror* is the pseudo-epigraphic *Siyāsat-nāma* attributed to Niẓām al-Mulk. Illustrated with anecdotes from pre-Islamic Iran and contemporary history, the *Siyāsat-nāma* provides a comprehensive treatment of many aspects of government and life at court, including tax-collection, intelligence, the organization of the army, and the hosting of banquets. Finally, the emergence of the *ʿulamāʾ* as an influential social and political force that led to the institutionalization of religious and legal learning in the Seljuq *madrasa* system also left its mark on the genre. Homiletic *Mirrors* combine elements of legal writing with the large repertoire of *exempla* from the genre's tradition that were now recast in Quranic and prophetic terms.[101] From the homiletic tradition of *Mirror* writing comes the anonymous sixth/twelfth-century *Baḥr al-fawāʾid* (*The sea of precious virtues*) for the atabeg Arslān Aba b. Aq Sunqur Aḥmadīlī of Maragheh in present-day western Iran. Based exclusively on religious material, the *Baḥr* discusses a wide range of topics, from advice for kings to matters of etiquette, to child rearing, pilgrimage rites, and dream interpretation. Other homiletic *Mirrors* include Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī's *Kitāb al-Jalīs al-ṣāliḥ wa-l-anīs al-nāṣiḥ* (*The good companion and the counseling friend*; c. 612/1216) for the Ayyubid Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Muẓaffar al-Dīn (r. 626–635/1229–1237), the *al-Miṣbāḥ al-muḍīʾ fī khilāfat al-Mustaḍīʾ* (*The illuminating lamp on the caliphate of al-Mustaḍīʾ*) by Ibn al-Jawzī (510–597/1126–1200), and a series of texts by Sufi authors, such as the *Mirṣād al-ʿibād min al-mabdaʾ ilā al-maʿād* (*The path of God's bondsmen from origin to return*) by Najm al-Dīn Rāzī Dāya (573–654/1177–1256) and the *Kitāb al-Tadbīrāt al-ilāhiyya* by Ibn al-ʿArabī.

Another famous Persian text is the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, routinely attributed to the theologian, jurist and mystic al-Ghazālī and a prime example of a *Mirror* written for the ruler of an empire rattled by internal conflicts. Born at Ṭūs in Khurāsān in 450/1058 and educated in Nishapur by the famous jurist and theologian Abū l-Maʿālī ʿAbd al-Malik al-Juwaynī, al-Ghazālī was appointed in 484/1091 as professor at the Niẓāmiyyā *madrasa* in Baghdad by the Seljuq vizier Niẓām al-Mulk. There al-Ghazālī established a close association

101 See al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 99–106.

with the Abbasid caliph al-Muqtadī (d. 487/1094), during whose caliphate he acted as *rasūl* (mediating messenger) between the caliph and the Seljuq sultan Malikshāh, as well as with his successor al-Mustaẓhir (d. 512/1118), for whom he wrote a refutation of Ismāʿīlī doctrines. In 488/1095 he suddenly quit teaching and left Baghdad on the pretext of making the pilgrimage to Mecca. While al-Ghazālī himself, in his autobiographical work *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl* (*Deliverance from error*), says that he was driven by a deep spiritual crisis, the motives for his abrupt escape are still a matter of debate. Yet scholars have linked al-Ghazālī's decision to political reasons, such as his fear of being assassinated by the Ismāʿīlīs, or Sultan Barkiyārūq's execution of his uncle and al-Ghazālī supporter Tutush, while others hold it possible that al-Ghazālī wanted to free himself from the political influence of Baghdad's institutions, namely the caliphal court and the Seljuq *madrasa* system (*Niẓāmiyyā*).[102] According to *al-Munqidh*, al-Ghazālī spent parts of the following ten years in Damascus, Jerusalem, Hebron, Medina and Mecca, living mainly in solitude, dedicating himself to the spiritual practices of the Sufis. In 500/1106 al-Ghazālī finally yielded to the pressure of Fakhr al-Mulk, son of Niẓām al-Mulk and vizier of Sanjar (d. 552/1157), the Seljuq ruler of Khurāsān, and returned to teach at the *Niẓāmiyya* in Nishapur. In 508/1111 al-Ghazālī died in the city of his birth, Ṭūs.

Undoubtedly one of the most famous Muslim intellectuals and authors of the pre-modern era, al-Ghazālī's large corpus of writings covers a variety of fields. Al-Ghazālī's rejection of Ismāʿīlī theology is most famously expressed in his polemic *Faḍāʾiḥ al-Bāṭiniyya* (*The infamies of the Bāṭinites*, c. 488/1095), which he dedicated to the Abbasid caliph al-Mustaẓhir. With the *Māqāṣid al-falāsifa* (*The objectives of the philosophers*, c. 487/1094) and the *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* (*The incoherence of the philosophers*, c. 488/1095), we have a summary and a criticism of neo-Platonic doctrines. Another work in the field of philosophy is the *al-Qisṭās al-mustaqīm* (*The correct balance*, c. 489/1096), an expression of al-Ghazālī's enthusiasm for Aristotelian syllogism, in which he justifies the application of logic in religious matters. Al-Ghazālī's greatest work, the *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* (*The revival of the religious sciences*), which he composed after his escape from Baghdad, appertains to his Sufi writings and represents a complete guide for a spiritual life. Apart from the aforementioned autobiographic *al-Munqidh* and a number of early legal works, al-Ghazālī wrote a number of texts that are sometimes described as 'political' writings, such as parts of his dogmatics *al-Iqtiṣād fī-l-iʿtiqād* (*Median in belief*, c. 488/1095) or his *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, as well as parts of the aforementioned *Faḍāʾiḥ al-Bāṭiniyya* and *Iḥyāʾ*

102 See Fück, Bekehrung; and Safi, *Politics of knowledge* 107–110.

ʿulūm al-dīn. The gradual changes of al-Ghazālī's political thought that can be observed in his writings are seen by Safi as immediate responses to the shifting political scene of his time.[103] This interpretation is particularly significant in the context of debates on the authenticity of the works attributed to al-Ghazālī.

The era in which al-Ghazālī lived and wrote was one of major changes for the Seljuq empire. As Simidchieva observes, at the end of the fifth/eleventh century the central Seljuq authority tried to break with the nomadic and pastoralist tradition of its Turkic military base. Throughout the fifth/eleventh century the Seljuqs had come to reign over a vast empire that stretched from Anatolia and the Levant in the west to the borders of China in the east, after they had crossed the Oxus, defeated the Ghaznavids and the Buyids, and assumed control over the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad. With the empire having reached its greatest extent during the reign of Malikshāh (r. 465–485/1072–1092), the Seljuq central authority, personified by Niẓām al-Mulk, made attempts at social and political reforms to improve the empire's administration and secure its stability. However, a lack of fiscal resources that led to a loss in bureaucratic control over the army, in combination with the tribal commanders' resentment at the civilian oversight imposed by Niẓām al-Mulk and the vizier's attempt to bring the entire system of *iqṭāʿ* (land grants) under bureaucratic control. This led to normalizing the system as a whole and thereby weakening the central government, ultimately intensifying the empire's decentralization, which resulted in the internecine wars between the different Seljuq leaders that broke out after the assassination of Niẓām al-Mulk and the death of Malikshāh in 485/1092. And while Muḥammad b. Malikshāh (r. 498–511/1105–1118) succeeded, to some extent, in restoring order, years of internal conflict had eroded the Seljuqs' central authority and strengthened the segregating forces to such a degree that the empire's decline continued once Muḥammad died.[104]

The composition of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* (between 498/1105 and 505/1111) falls in the years of relative recovery and attempts at re-organization under the guide of Sultan Muḥammad. A number of manuscripts state that al-Ghazālī had originally composed the work in Persian and that it was subsequently translated into Arabic by Ali b. Mubārak b. Mawhūb of Irbil. The Persian version seems to have eventually gone out of circulation, while its Arabic trans-

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103 Safi, *Politics of knowledge* 110. For biographical information on al-Ghazālī, see Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel* xxxii–xxxviii; Fück, Bekehrung; Safi, *Politics of knowledge* 105–110; and Watt, al-G̲h̲azālī.

104 See Hodgson, *Venture of Islam* ii, 43–56. See also Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel*, xxvii–xxxii; Bosworth, Dynastic history 102–119; Bosworth, Malik-S̲h̲āh; Bosworth, Sald̲j̲ūḳids; and Garden, Islamic reviver 22–25.

lation was copied multiple times in the Mamluk and Ottoman periods.[105] The Arabic version normally bears the title *al-Tibr al-masbūk fī naṣīḥat al-mulūk* (*The melted gold on advice for kings*). Most of the Arabic manuscripts state that the work was written for Sultan Muḥammad, the 'King of the East and West', whereas the only existing Persian manuscript points to the 'King of the East'; i.e., Muḥammad's brother Sanjar, who was then *malik* of Khurāsān, and later heir of Muḥammad as supreme sultan of the Great Seljuqs. Bagley favors Muḥammad as the work's addressee because he holds it "possible that at some stage in the transmission of the Persian manuscript a copyist may have overlooked the words 'and West' in the royal title."[106] However, Fouchécour, Khismatulin and Lambton, among others, argue for Sanjar as the receptor.[107] Yet, regardless of who is to be seen as the true addressee of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, what is significant for our understanding of the context in which the work was composed is that the Seljuq dynasty was in steep decline. And while this did not yet bring about significant changes in the imbalance of power between the sultan and the caliph, the Seljuq rulers were certainly in need of legitimizing enunciations of their power.

As a text, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* consists of two parts, and the fact that both of them have also circulated as two independent treatises is often mentioned as indicating the spuriousness of the work, or rather parts thereof. While the extant manuscript tradition of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* attests to a reception of the work as a single text, starting roughly two and a half centuries after its probable composition,[108] the question of its authenticity remains a significant issue since authors and transmitters are known to have sometimes attributed texts to famous authors, such as al-Ghazālī, in order to boost a work's importance in the eye of the reader.[109] In the case of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, scholars tend to agree that the first part can safely be considered authentic, whereas they usually reject the attribution of the second part to al-Ghazālī. For the sake of brevity, not all positions that have been expressed so far will be repeated.[110] Let it suffice to summarize here, by way of example, a number of arguments against

105 See Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel* xviii–xxi.

106 Ibid., xvii.

107 See Fouchécour, *Moralia* 391; Khismatulin, Two Mirrors for Princes; and Lambton, Justice 104 n. 4.

108 On the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s manuscript tradition, see Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel* xvi–xxiv; and Meier, Al-Ġazzālī 398–405.

109 See, e.g., Watt, Authenticity. For a general discussion of the authenticity of al-Ghazālī's works, see Watt, al-G͟hazālī.

110 Summaries of the various arguments made by scholars for or against the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s authenticity can be found in almost every study on this work. For the potentially

the second part's authenticity. Crone's argument, for instance, rests mainly on the observations that the second part lacks any mention of the imamate; displays a view on women that is allegedly inconsistent with al-Ghazālī's usual treatment of them; and is thoroughly 'Iranian', rather than 'Islamic' as would be expected from an author such as al-Ghazālī.[111] Yet, as Safi shows, there is an argument against each of Crone's objections.[112] For example, the allegedly suspicious omission of the imamate in the text's treatment of rulership might be equally well interpreted as a timely development of al-Ghazālī's thought in response to political shifts in his lifetime. And Crone's dichotomy of 'Iranian' and 'Islamic' approaches to or treatments of political writing is yet another example of the narrative of Islam as an unchanging and isolated entity that was discussed in Chapter 1. Crone thus uses the author function, which in this case means the negation of a specific authorship, to solidify her narrative of two distinctive and monolithic literary and intellectual traditions (Iranian and Islamic).

The inherent problem with Crone's argument, as well as most of the wider debate on the validity of the attribution of any work to al-Ghazālī, is that it is often based on some sort of narrative of who the author al-Ghazālī was and what and how he would have written. Hence scholars often refer to inconsistencies of thought or style when they shed doubt on al-Ghazālī's authorship of a certain text. However, such a line of reasoning runs the aforementioned risk of neglecting the possibility of developments and changes having been made (for instance, to suit different audiences) in the interest of retaining a preconceived, immutable image of the author. In fact, an authentication of this sort, as it is also described by Foucault, imposes an alleged unity over an author and his works; it makes the author "the principle of unity in writing."[113] Moreover, this method is susceptible to a circular logic, whereby the unified narrative of al-Ghazālī's authorial identity according to which a text is deemed a part of his oeuvre is itself partly a product of what is believed to characterize his body of work. A different line of argument is deployed by Alexey A. Khismatulin, probably one of the most vocal critics of the attribution of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s second part to al-Ghazālī. Although Khismatulin also embraces the aforementioned arguments by Crone, he primarily backs his position with his findings

most complete, because most recent, summaries, see Safi, *Politics of knowledge* 115–117; and Said, *Ghazālī's politics* 20–24.

111 Crone, Did al-Ghazālī write 173–187.

112 Safi, *Politics of knowledge* 116.

113 Foucault, Author 128.

on the probable circumstances in which the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* was composed. Based on a correspondence between al-Ghazālī and Sanjar, which supposedly led to the composition of the work's first part, he argues that because it is too extensive, the second part would make for an unlikely addition to a self-contained, ad hoc text, included in an exchange of letters. Khismatulin concludes that the second part was most likely written about twenty years later by a *nadīm* who hid his text, for fear of consequences, by attaching it to the existing first part.[114] Apart from Khismatulin's speculative attribution, what appears important for the present study is that he locates the second part in a historical context comparable to that of the first part. Altogether, the present purposes are better served by leaving aside the issue of al-Ghazālī's authorship and instead focusing on the likely historical context of the work's composition. This also means that, although the text possesses a long history of being read as a single text of advice for monocratic rulers[115] and it cannot be ruled out that the two parts of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* constitute a single, authentic work by al-Ghazālī, the possibility of them being separate works, one written by an author other than al-Ghazālī, must be taken into account, especially where they purport different opinions.

In the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, Bagley identifies two basic teachings: "that rulership is a gift bestowed, i.e. predestined, by God, and that the ruler will be accountable for it to God on the Judgment Day."[116] This implies that the ruler does not owe his power to the caliph. In terms of the ruler's duties, this means that there is a distinct emphasis on his spiritual life and a rule in accordance with religious prescriptions. In his illustration of the roots and principles of faith, the advisor employs the image of a tree, which is probably derived from al-Ghazālī's *Kīmiyāʾ al-saʿāda*, a Persian abridgment of the *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*. The ten roots of the tree of faith describe the "beliefs of the heart" (*iʿtiqād-i dill*); that is, mostly elements of the nature of God, such as His purity, power and knowledge, whereas its ten branches represent the principles of royal conduct, including the seeking of the *ʿulamāʾ*'s advice, the enforcement of justice, the overcoming of pride, the duty of attending to petitions, and the avoidance of indulgence of passions. The advisor declares that he "explains these ten roots and branches so that the ruler of Islam (*malik-i Islām*) may nourish this tree (i.e. Islam)."[117] The remainder of the first part consists of a discussion of the

114 Khismatulin, Two Mirrors for Princes.
115 See Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel* xvi–xxiv.
116 Ibid., xxxix.
117 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk* 3.

knowledge of the world and of death, as the two sources that water the tree of faith. The advisor supports his remarks on faith with anecdotes, mostly from an Islamic context.

The second part consists of seven chapters. The first three discuss the necessary qualities of rulers, viziers, and secretaries. The advisor urges the ruler to reign with justice, as he provides a history of the Persian kings from Adam to Yazdgard III, emphasizing their exemplary justice. Other issues include the ruler's piety, reputation, enforcement of discipline (*siyāsat*), appointment of officials, reception of petitioners, relation toward material goods, and interaction with the *ʿulamāʾ*. The chapter on viziers not only describes the ideal candidate for this position, but also explains its importance and how the ruler ought to treat a vizier. Chapter 4 deals with the magnanimity demanded from a ruler, which essentially translates to the dispensation of generous gifts, paired by a lack of interest in material wealth. Chapter 5 is a collection of aphorisms on a wide range of subjects by various sages, including sufi saints, the Sassanid king Ardashīr, Alexander the Great, Aristotle, and Socrates. This is followed by a chapter on intelligence and its relation to knowledge, *adab* and faith. The final chapter has as its subject women, their defects, and the danger that they represent to men.[118] In terms of its sources, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* makes a number of explicit references to specific texts, some of which can be clearly identified, such as al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* and the *Kitāb al-Farāʾid wa-l-qalāʾid* (*The book of gems and necklaces*), attributed to a certain Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Ahwāzī. Others, such as the *ʿAhd-nāma-yi Ardashīr* (*The covenant of Ardashīr*) and the various *waṣiyyat-nāma-hā* (*testaments*) attributed to Sasanian rulers, cannot at present be matched with any surviving text. Not mentioned by the advisor is the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s indebtedness to al-Ghazālī's *Kīmiyāʾ al-saʿāda* and his *Faḍāʾiḥ al-Bāṭiniyya*. Moreover, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor makes extensive use of Quranic citations, *ḥadīth*, Talmudic references and, especially in the work's second part, Islamic and Sasanian narratives, of which several are similarly found in other contemporary *Mirrors*, such as the *Qābūs-nāma* and the *Siyāsat-nāma*, leading Bagley to the conclusion that they might all share the same unidentified (Pahlavi) sources. Finally, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* further contains a number of poetic verses, some of which Jalāl al-Dīn Humāʾī believes to be by al-Ghazālī himself.[119]

As mentioned above, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* was written in the context of the steep decline of the Seljuq sultanate that had been dominating Abbasid

118 See Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel* xxxviii–xlix. See also Laoust, *Politique de Ġazālī* 147–152; Meier, Al-Ġazzālī 397; and Safi, *Politics of knowledge* 118–121.

119 On the sources of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, see Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel* lv–lxxiv.

caliphs for several decades. It is thus no surprise that scholars looked to the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* for an understanding of the way that an—admittedly rather favorable—author describes the power and position of Seljuq sultans vis-à-vis the caliph in Baghdad. Their studies are part of a wider field of discussions on the changing role and authority of the caliph, especially, but not exclusively, vis-à-vis the office of the sultan. The results of these debates are usually referred to as the various theories of the caliphate. Moreover, the scholarship on al-Ghazālī has tried to trace throughout his writings the development of his view on the matter, as well as political thought in general. The evolution of al-Ghazālī's opinions on the caliphate is often seen reacting to the political changes and shifts of power that occurred during his lifetime. The general impression is that al-Ghazālī was gradually adjusting his views to the growing imbalance of power in favor of the Seljuq sultanate. The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, if considered a work by al-Ghazālī, stands at the end of his series of works, namely the *Faḍāʾiḥ al-Bāṭiniyya*, the *al-Iqtiṣād fī l-iʿtiqād* and the *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, that are traditionally seen to contain his ideas on this matter. Safi even attributes a special importance to the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* as he argues that, in the context of the theory of the caliphate, it represents a "significant departure from al-Ghazālī's earlier political treatises."[120] Safi explains that in the *Faḍāʾiḥ al-Bāṭiniyya*, the Seljuqs are only mentioned, albeit in passing, because of their *shawka* (political and military power; lit. raw force). Later, in the *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, al-Ghazālī is already prepared to attribute a certain value to the Seljuqs' *shawka*, given its role in the defense of the caliph. In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, however, according to Safi, al-Ghazālī even goes one step further by arguing that, in times of *fasād* (social discord), the Seljuqs' *shawka* was an indispensable necessity for securing social order. Safi notes that at that point al-Ghazālī proceeded to adopt the way the Seljuq sultans referred to themselves, namely as the 'Shadow of God on Earth' (*ẓill allāh fī l-arḍ*), a conventionally caliphal title.[121] He further emphasizes that these developments in al-Ghazālī's thinking are by no means confined to the work's potentially spurious second part, but that already the first part "contains material in favor of the Saljūqs, justifying and legitimizing them so long as they maintain justice."[122] Hillenbrand interprets the development in al-Ghazālī's political thought as the result of an "increasing disillusionment with the political systems" that led al-Ghazālī to place a greater emphasis on personal piety.[123] However, she insists on the consistent primacy of the caliphate

120 Safi, *Politics of knowledge* 117.
121 Ibid., 111–121.
122 Ibid., 118.
123 Hillenbrand, Islamic orthodoxy 93.

throughout al-Ghazālī's oeuvre, which means that she excludes the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* from her analysis as inauthentic.[124] Al-Azmeh and Laoust come to a slightly different conclusion with regard to al-Ghazālī's political thought, as they consider him to be advancing a 'mixed theory' of the caliphate, in which the caliph and the sultan are, in terms of their function, largely concurrent.[125]

4 *Castigos e documentos para bien vivir*

The increase in reliance on classical authors that could already be observed, to some extent, in the later Carolingian *Mirrors* became one of the characteristic features of the Christian *Mirror* tradition of the High Middle Ages. Especially the reception of Aristotle's *Politics* is often named as a key influence on the *Mirror* writing of the thirteenth century, although some elements of Aristotle's thought had already been circulating during the previous century via authors such as Avicenna and Cicero.[126] Initiation of the tradition is often attributed to the English philosopher and bishop John of Salisbury, author of the *Policraticus*. Based on the pseudo-Plutarchian *Institutio Traiani*, John famously uses the metaphor of the body politic to illustrate the organic interdependence between the members of the state and the ruler, as its head. The Aristotelian element appears most conspicuously in the *De regno*, written by Thomas Aquinas, sometimes also referred to as *De regimine principum*, and the *De regimine principum* by one of his most famous students, Giles of Rome. Of the *Mirror* attributed to Thomas Aquinas, the famous Dominican friar is believed to have composed no more than one and a half chapters, with the remaining parts being the work of the historian Ptolemy of Lucca (c. 1236–1327). The Aquinian part of the text deals with the kingdom and the king's office and discusses good and bad kinds of government. Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum*, which he wrote for Philip IV (1285–1314) at the request of his father Philip III of France (r. 1270–1285), is probably the most widespread *Mirror* of the Middle Ages. The text's three parts cover, in Aristotelian fashion, the ruler's individual behavior (*ethica*), his conduct of family matters (*oeconomia*) and his government of the state (*politica*).

One indicator of the success of Giles's *Mirror* is the large number of translations into many 'national' vernaculars. However, apart from translations, the vernacular was also increasingly used for the composition of original works of

124 Ibid., 92.
125 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 112 and 186; and Laoust, *Politique de Ġazālī* 88.
126 See Flüeler, Einfluß der Aristotelischen 2–6.

advice. Moreover, the so-called high medieval Christian *Mirror* tradition was characterized by the introduction of the notion of courtly ideals and the shift from an eschatological understanding of the ruler's role to the government of societies and territories. Robert de Blois's thirteenth-century *Enseignement des princes* (*Instruction of princes*) stands for both the growing concern for the teaching of courtly etiquette to lay individuals and the usage of a vernacular in the composition of advice literature. One of the founding texts of the rich medieval Spanish tradition of *sententia*-collections is the *Libro de los doze sabios* (*Book of the twelve sages*), also known as the *Tractado de la nobleza y lealtad* (*Treatise on nobility and loyalty*), which is said to have been requested by Ferdinand III of Castile (1217–1252) around the year 1237. The text states that it is the product of an assembly of twelve philosophers and holy men from all parts of the realm who had gathered at the request of Ferdinand to provide him with spiritual and temporal advice. Another specimen of this tradition and a showcase example of the incorporation of Arabic maxims into this nascent genre appeared less than ten year later, when James I of Aragon (1208–1276) composed a small treatise for the education of his sons, bearing the title *Libre de saviesa* (*Book of wisdom*).

Another example of a Spanish *Mirror* written by, or at the request of, the king is the *Castigos e documentos para bien vivir* (c. 1292), attributed to Sancho IV and dedicated to his son Ferdinand IV. Sancho's reign falls in a critical period of the history of Spain. Many historians have described the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as a prolonged period of economic and social crisis for the Kingdom of Castile and León. Since the end of the twelfth century, Castile was haunted by a deep economic decline. While the significant successes of the 'Reconquista' in the first half of the thirteenth century helped mask the consequences of the crisis, they equally magnified the economic difficulties as the conquest of large areas of land led to an unfavorable imbalance of population distribution and a host of bureaucratic and organizational problems. The attempts of the renowned Alfonso X, called *el Sabio* (the Wise) for his patronage of a cosmopolitan court culture, fix prices and wages, as well as his monetary policies that were meant to counter inflation, contributed to the crisis as they were more often designed to increase the court's tax revenues than to resolve the society's economic problems. In fact, it has been argued that one of the main political projects of Alfonso's reign was the strengthening of the royal authority at the expense of Castile's influential nobility. Hence the period under discussion was also dominated by the flaring up of the smoldering conflict between the monarchy and the nobility, which constituted a lasting threat to Alfonso's successors in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, including Sancho, and eventually culminated in the Castilian Civil War of the 1360s.

The nobility similarly played a decisive role in the succession conflict following the death of Ferdinand de la Cerda, the older brother of Sancho and designated heir to the throne. Born in 1258 as the second son to Alfonso X, Sancho was suddenly presented with a chance to become king when his older brother died in 1275 at the Battle of Écija against the Marinids. In the beginning of what would eventually turn out to be a nearly decade-long conflict of succession involving a variety of competing parties, Alfonso supported the claim of his second son and appointed him first his successor in 1276 and two years later his co-regent. This decision aroused opposition from those who wanted to see Ferdinand's sons succeeding their father, most notably the French king Philip III (r. 1270–1285), the brother of Ferdinand's widow Blanche. In the course of this civil war with international ramifications Alfonso gradually turned in favor of Ferdinand's sons, despite the fact that Sancho had the support of the local church, large parts of the nobility, and most of the Castilian and Leónese cities. Thus, when on October 8th, 1282 Alfonso declaimed Sancho's disinheritance in front of an immense crowd in Seville and two months later set up a testament, in which he established his grandsons as designated heirs, Sancho's bid for the throne did not suffer any immediate harm. In fact, in April 1284 Sancho was eventually crowned king in Toledo.

Yet the first part of Sancho's reign (until 1291) was still heavily conditioned by the aftermath of this long conflict, as Sancho had to ward off his most powerful supporters among the nobility, who had capitalized on the monarchy's instability to increase their influence. In fact, while the sons of Ferdinand de la Cerda, who for the entirety of Sancho's reign refused to resign their claims to the throne, had been backed by the House of Lara, Sancho had been supported by the *hombre fuerte* Lope Díaz III de Haro (d. 1288), head of the House of Haro. However, after Sancho had gained the noblemen's support by dispensing privileges, once he had ascended to the throne he was confronted with an even more powerful nobility that threatened to interfere with his rule. As a result, in 1288 Sancho saw no other way to restore his authority than to kill Lope Díaz, which antagonized parts of the nobility that had previously sided with him. In the remaining years of his life Sancho dedicated himself primarily to the 'Reconquista', to which he contributed the capture of Tarifa in September 1292. Sancho died in 1295, leaving the kingdom to his wife María de Molina, who acted as regent for his nine-year-old son Ferdinand.[127] Altogether, in the early

127 For biographical information on Sancho IV, see Álvarez Borge, *Plena edad media* 150–153 and Vones, *Geschichte der Iberischen Halbinsel* 149–156.

nineties of the thirteenth century, when Sancho is said to have written the *Castigos*, a book of royal advice for his son Ferdinand, the crisis of the Kingdom of Castile and León was in full swing.[128]

In order to understand the specific historical context of the *Castigos*'s composition, two additional aspects ought to be taken into consideration: the effect of the succession conflict on Sancho's legitimacy as king and the lack of papal dispensation for his marriage with María de Molina. Various scholars have noted that, throughout his entire reign, Sancho seems to have been driven by an unabated determination to prove the legitimacy of his kingship. For example, Peter Linehan describes Sancho's coronation as a reflection of the king's "obsession with crown and regalia both in life and in death."[129] Linehan adds that Sancho's troubled conscience also dominates the *Castigos* with its recurrent references to the story of David and Solomon, with "himself cast in the role of Solomon to Alfonso's David, and his son and heir, the future Ferdinand IV, in that of the doomed Rehoboam."[130] Throughout the *Castigos*, the paternal advisor also stresses the right of primogeniture, which could never be overruled, if not by the kind of divine plan that had Sancho's brother predecease the father, leaving Sancho as the rightful heir to the throne. This emphasis on the right of primogeniture can be seen as a pre-emptive measure intended to cement Ferdinand's legitimacy, which was called into question not only by his father's contested succession, but also by the circumstances of his parents' marriage. In fact, the marriage between Sancho and María de Molina, the granddaughter of Alfonso IX (r. 1188–1230), was both incestuous and bigamous, and had consequently not been approved by the pope. As a result, the effort to have his marriage recognized occupied a significant part of Sancho's reign.[131] All this has a bearing on the work's intended audience. Ferdinand, Sancho's son and addressee of the *Castigos*, was only seven years old at the time of the work's composition and thus would have hardly been able to appreciate the advice the text offers. Even if we were to concede that Sancho's illness brought forth in him the desire to have produced for his son a work of advice that he might consult throughout his entire life, the fact that a considerable part of the text addresses the two issues that were seen to weaken Sancho's legitimacy strongly suggest that the intended audience of the *Cas-*

128 See Álvarez Borge, *Plena edad media* 144–157; Iradiel Murugarren et al., *Historia medieval* 395–401; Valdeón Baruque et al., *Feudalismo y consolidación* 153–160; and Vones, *Geschichte der Iberischen Halbinsel* 148–157.

129 Linehan, *History and the historians* 445.

130 Ibid., 486.

131 Ibid., 447.

tigos included those who needed to be convinced otherwise—that is, those who held power and attended the court; i.e., the nobility and city representatives.[132]

Altogether it clearly emerges from the contextualization of the *Castigos* that one of the main functions of this work is the pronounced promotion of the legitimacy of Sancho's, and in consequence his son's, kingship.[133] However, apart from this propagandistic function, scholars have attributed a series of other purposes and intentions to the composition of the *Castigos*. For one, in the text itself, it is explicitly mentioned that the work represents the fulfillment of a paternal duty (*deber*); that is, to provide the son with *castigos*—admonitions or lessons regarding good conduct.[134] This didactic and ethical intention represents for Richard P. Kinkade the decisive difference to Alfonso's encyclopedic mission of a comprehensive and indiscriminate collection and transmission of knowledge.[135] After noting that the *Castigos*, despite being explicitly addressed to Sancho's son, does in fact offer knowledge for everybody, Kinkade even goes so far as to speak of a "manifestation of democracy (manifestación democrática)."[136] In a comparative study of medieval Spanish exemplary literature, Eloísa Palafox argues that the *Castigos* promote the image of Sancho as a Christ-like messianic figure who leads his subjects to salvation. For Palafox, in the *Castigos* Sancho's salvational act consists both in his revocation of the Christians' exile from their lands through the conquest of Tarifa, constructed as parallel to a return of man to paradise after the Fall, and in his providing of *castigos*, through the *Castigos*, parallel to divine commandments, for the individual's attainment of salvation.[137] Fernando Gómez Redondo argues that the *Castigos* marks Sancho's introduction of a new cultural model for the replacement of Alfonso's tradition of religious tolerance. For Gómez Redondo, this new model is characterized by an ecclesiastic ideology that stood in contrast to the heterodox Aristotelianism of Alfonso's period. In place of Alfonso's ideology of a royal dominion over the nobility based on wisdom (*saber*) came a monarchical identity based on divine legitimization, the

132 See Fournès, Idéalité royale 294.

133 See Gómez Redondo, *Prosa medieval castellana* i, 914; Haro Cortés, *Imagen del poder* 56; and Palafox, *Éticas del exemplum* 41.

134 See Palafox, *Éticas del exemplum* 57. See also *Castigos* Pról.:10.

135 Kinkade, Sancho IV 1040–1048.

136 Ibid., 1044.

137 Palafox, *Éticas del exemplum* 33–60. See also Gómez Redondo, *Prosa medieval castellana* i, 890–891. On the link between the *castigos* (in the *Castigos*) and divine commandments, see Cacho Blecua, El título.

unity of God and monarch, and the king's exalted authority.[138] Bizzarri points in a similar direction when he identifies the message of the *Castigos* with a sacralization of the monarchy that turns the members of the divinely chosen dynasty into direct representatives of God on earth.[139]

Approached from the perspective of motive, the question of the *Castigos*'s authorship yields a number of potential answers: if not written by Sancho himself, the *Castigos* might have been compiled by one or several other authors; for instance, in order to gain the king's favor, whether solicited by Sancho or not. Throughout the text we repeatedly encounter the formula "we, King Don Sancho, who made this book (*nos, el rey don Sancho, que fezimos este libro*)",[140] and in the prologue we find the additional indication that he did so "with the help of the wise scientists (*çientíficos sabios*)."[141] However, these statements are not to be taken at face value, as they both serve a certain purpose. The insistence on Sancho's authorship is most probably meant to highlight the congruence of Sancho with the royal ideas expounded in the text. The gathering of wise men, which is a traditional motif of Classical Antiquity that also appears in a series of other works of wisdom literature, such as the *Libro de los doze sabios* (*The book of the twelve sages*), the *Libro de los buenos proverbios* (*The book of the good proverbs*), the *Bocados de oro* (*Morsels of gold*) and the *Sindibad* romance,[142] is intended to add to the legitimacy and authority of the offered advice. If we assume that Sancho was not the author, there is a series of potential candidates to choose from. Among others, scholars have discussed the names of Pedro Gómez Barroso (d. 1345), author of a *Mirror* with the title *Libro del consejo y de los consejeros* (*The book of advice and the advisors*) as well as Sancho's tutor, the Franciscan friar Gil de Zámora (d. c. 1320).[143]

Gómez Redondo mentions two different origins for the *Castigos*: the cathedral school of Toledo, and Queen María de Molina. Apart from the fact that clerical authors would account for the work's religious tone, the historical context also hints at the possibility of the *Castigos* being a product of the cathedral school of Toledo. Sancho had been backed by the church in his bid for the throne and, once he was king, he continued to rely on the clergy. In all this, a preeminent position was occupied by the cathedral of Toledo, where Sancho was crowned, and its archbishop Gonzalo García Gudiel (1238/9–99),

138 Gómez Redondo, *Prosa medieval castellana* i, 861–920.
139 Bizzarri, Empresa cultural 433.
140 *Castigos* XV:22, XIX:29, XLVI:4 and L:79.
141 Ibid., Pról.:10.
142 See Haro Cortés, *Imagen del poder* 18.
143 See Bizzarri, Empresa cultural 430–431.

who became one of the most influential figures in Sancho's reign. In his article on the circle of intellectuals that Gonzalo García Gudiel gathered at the cathedral school of Toledo, Germán Orduna argues that the archbishop and his colleagues were deeply involved in the Castilian royal chancellery and were thus able to imprint their political and cultural ideas, such as their rejection of Aristotelianism, onto large parts of the period's literary output. Orduna too attributes the *Castigos* to the clerics of the cathedral school of Toledo.[144] Deeply entrenched in cultural production for the promotion of Sancho's new cultural model we furthermore find, according to Gómez Redondo, María de Molina. In fact, Gómez Redondo speaks of a veritable period of "Molinism" (*molinismo*) that continued even after Sancho's death when María de Molina acted as her son's regent and in which Sancho's wife became the central figure of the post-Alfonsine cultural enterprise.[145] However, while there is no evidence that might help us to asses María de Molina's concrete role in the composition process, what we might take from Gómez Redondo's argument is that the cultural production at Sancho's court was potentially a multilayered and multiparty endeavor. In his *Reflections on the cultural enterprise* of King Sancho IV of Castile (*Reflexiones sobre la empresa cultural del rey Don Sancho IV de Castilla*) Bizzarri too comes to the conclusion that there must have been a number of agents in Sancho's inner circle who wrote for, and potentially in the name of, the king, including Archbishop Gudiel and the cathedral school of Toledo.[146] Moreover, it is worth remembering how 'royal authorship' is described in the *General Estoria* attributed to Sancho's father Alfonso:

> The king makes (*faze*) a book, not by writing it with his hands, but by establishing its arguments (*razones*) and by amending them, making them balanced and straight and showing how they are made. Then, whoever he calls upon to do so, writes it that way, but because of all that we [still] say that the king makes the book.[147]

This suggests that at the time royal authorship might have been understood in a wider sense to include all forms of contributions by the king to the work of

144 Orduna, Élite intelectual 58. For a discussion of the mutually beneficial relationship between Sancho and the city and clergy of Toledo, see Linehan, *History and the historians* 447–451. On the possibility of a clerical authorship of the *Castigos*, see Menéndez y Pelayo, *Orígenes de la novela* 72.

145 Gómez Redondo, *Prosa medieval castellana* i, 856–863.

146 Bizzarri, Empresa cultural 443–444. In an earlier article Bizzarri, Colecciones sapienciales castellanas 56, had also entertained the possibility of the involvement of legal scholars.

147 Alfonso el Sabio, *General estoria* 477. See also Kleine, Carácter propagandístico 27.

his scribes. Altogether, the *Castigos* are a product of Sancho's (extended) court. The composition potentially involved some or all of the above-mentioned contributors, but in any case, it occurred under the eye (and maybe at the hands) of the king.[148]

The *Castigos* would thus be part of a significant corpus of works that were produced under Sancho's patronage, at his court or in his inner circle. For a long time the entire literary production under Sancho (including the *Castigos*) had mostly been ignored by scholars and his reign had come to be considered something of a cultural hiatus. Kinkade attributes this fact to Sancho's chronological position between his father Alfonso and his cousin and student Juan Manuel (1282–1348), who are usually accredited with the significant literary developments, such as the prosification of epic literature in Castilian, that took place in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Spain.[149] Kinkade argues that Sancho's reign represents a "puente literario" (literary bridge) between Alfonso and Juan Manuel as he introduced new "cauces" (channels or paths) that were later pursued by Juan Manuel.[150] As mentioned before, he notes that, while Alfonso's period stands for the translation and collection of knowledge, Sancho's cultural output is characterized by its ethical and didactic purpose that in every case overrides the intellectually and historically sound transmission of knowledge. Among the most notable works to be written under Sancho are the encyclopedic *Lucidario* (*The lampstand*), the *Tesoro* (*The treasure*), a translation of Brunetto Latini's *Li livres dou trésor*, and the *Castigos*. Works that were completed under Sancho, but whose composition was started under Alfonso, include the *Gran conquista de Ultramar* (*The great conquest in overseas*), a novelistic chronicle of the conquest of Jerusalem during the First Crusade, and the *Libro de los cien capítulos* (*The book of the hundred chapters*), a collection of moralizing maxims. At the same time, Sancho continued to promote the production of translations like his father and grandfather had done before him.[151] Apart from these literary works, Bizzarri brings to our attention the various documents that were produced in Sancho's chancellery and which he uses for the analysis of the political ideas that were circulating in that period.[152]

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148 We might also take into consideration the possibility of a composition in multiple stages. See Bizzarri, Colecciones sapienciales castellanas 430; and Gómez Redondo, *Prosa medieval castellana* iv, 4027.

149 Kinkade, Sancho IV 1039.

150 Ibid.

151 Ibid., 1039–1040. On the production of translations and adaptations of Arabic wisdom literature in medieval Spain, see Haro Cortés, *Imagen del poder* 10–13, 41–49.

152 Bizzarri, Empresa cultural. For a comprehensive overview and analysis of the literary production at Sancho's court, see Gómez Redondo, *Prosa medieval castellana* i, 853–1092.

The manuscript tradition of the *Castigos* indicates a long-lasting interest in the text and a widening of its audience.[153] However, it does not provide any evidence regarding the work's author(s). Instead, it imposes its own difficulties on the study of the work resulting from the significant textual variances that the different manuscripts display. According to Bizzarri, who has provided us with the most recent and most detailed analysis of the *Castigos*'s textual tradition, the extant manuscripts, of which four are complete and three are fragments, can be attributed to two separate lines of transmission. For Bizzarri, only one of these lines (α) might be consulted for the reconstruction of an early version (c. 1293; Bizzarri holds it impossible to reconstruct the ur-text), since the manuscripts of the other line (π) are more indicative of the literary preferences of the fourteenth century, during which there was an active reception of the *Castigos*. The 'original' textual corpus that Bizzarri determines therefore does not include the so-called "Anteprólogo" that only appears in the manuscripts of line π and which Agapito Rey and Pascual de Gayangos had included in their editions of the *Castigos*. Instead, the corpus consists of fifty chapters and a short prologue that can only be found in line α.[154] A look at the manuscript tradition of the *Castigos* also gives us evidence of the work's reception as advice literature for rulers, since in a fifteenth-century manuscript we find the text expanded by parts of Giles's *De regimine principum*, the most popular medieval *Mirror* in Europe.

In terms of the work's structure, it has been frequently noted that there is no consistent line of reasoning or narrative that links all chapters. In terms of their content, the chapters are self-contained and fairly independent from each other, with each chapter addressing one specific topic. Nearly every chapter, and at times several individual paragraphs within a single chapter, are introduced by the paternal advisor's direct appeal to the son ("*Mío fijo*"—"My son") and many chapters conclude with the *beatus-ille* motif that recapitulates the positive effects of adhering to the given advice. In general, the use of direct speech in the *Castigos*, a fairly unusual element for a work of advice in that period, is attributed by Bizzarri to the influence of the growing importance of sermons in the thirteenth century.[155] Palafox adds that the interlocutor's (i.e. the son's) complete passivity contributes to the text's sermonic character which emphasizes the omnipotence and authority of the only voice that is heard: the exemplary and unquestionable voice of the king who promises to lead his sub-

153 See Francomano, Castilian 186.

154 Bizzarri, *Castigos* 20–62.

155 Bizzarri, Sermones y espejos 172.

jects to salvation.[156] Other similarities to sermons include the use of *exempla*, exegesis, and an enumerative style, among others.[157] In the text itself, however, the *Castigos* is introduced explicitly as the fulfillment of the duty of fathers to instruct their sons, which "pertains even more to kings and princes who have to govern kingdoms and peoples."[158]

The prologue of the *Castigos* thematizes the Fall of Man and especially Eve's susceptible nature. From this the paternal advisor transitions to people's need for divine *castigos* (lessons) in a world filled with temptations, which ultimately justifies the work's 'intention' of providing advice for a better life. The first eight chapters, defined by Emily Francomano as "catechistic chapters",[159] discuss religious matters and principles, including creation, religious practices, the Ten Commandments, the giving of alms, and true faith. This is followed by eight chapters (chapters 9–16) that address issues directly related to kingship, ranging from justice to the obedience of servants, the king's attire, the value of forgiveness and moderation, the king's fear of God, advice on giving promises, royal succession, and the necessity of being informed about one's subjects. In chapters 17 and 18 the paternal advisor turns to the clergy, their ideal characteristics, and their relationship with the ruler. This is followed by three chapters in which the paternal advisor develops a sexual ethics, which consists mainly of advice on which women are suitable for marriage. Throughout the remaining chapters the *Castigos* treats a large variety of topics with only passing references to their bearing on kingship. These topics include specific virtues and vices, such as greed, envy, compassion, truthfulness, and patience, as well as advice on the interaction with certain types of people, such as friends, flatterers, fools, traitors, and liars. In the final chapter the paternal advisor again emphasizes the importance of seeking and providing *castigos*.[160] Various scholars have offered different ways of interpreting the choice and succession of topics in the *Castigos*, with Gómez Redondo arguing for the text's promotion of a view of the world in which God instructs and chastises the king, who in turn instructs and chastises society,[161] while Rafael Beltrán reads parts of the

156 Palafox, *Éticas del exemplum* 142–143.

157 See Moreno, Retórica del sermón.

158 Translation quoted from Francomano, Castilian 194. The *Castigos*'s relation to the fulfillment of the paternal duty frames the work with the paternal advisor referring to it in the prologue (Pról.:10), the first (I:1) and the last chapter (L:48).

159 Francomano, Castilian 187.

160 See Peirce, Aspectos de la personalidad 7–36.

161 Gómez Redondo, *Prosa medieval castellana* i, 938–940, proposes an interpretation based on the text's thematical division into five sections of ten chapters each: the king's submis-

Castigos as a reflection of an atmosphere of distrust and intrigues during the reign of Sancho, which the text juxtaposes to true and good knowledge.[162]

In terms of its historical context, the *Castigos* has been linked to a number of developments: Gómez Redondo, among others, deems the *Castigos* one of the most explicit expressions of the political ideas and cultural model of Sancho's reign, while Bizzarri sees it as both an example of a confluence of the political and the religious discourse in thirteenth-century Castile that materialized in a sort of 'sermonization' of political writings,[163] and a reflection of the interrelated development of the Castilian tradition of wisdom literature and the region's legal tradition.[164] Yet, as a *Mirror*, the *Castigos* also stands at an important stage of the Spanish tradition of advice literature for rulers, if not of the entire 'Christian' *Mirror* tradition. To some extent, the *Castigos* could even be said to represent a transitional form between the early and the late medieval 'European' *Mirror* traditions. In fact, as we have seen, in the *Castigos* the attainment of the subjects' salvation is still counted as one of the central duties of a king, who is given the authority to provide the people with *castigos*. In addition, the clerical influence is very noticeable throughout the *Castigos* and we cannot exclude a clerical authorship. At the same time, the *Castigos* belongs to the new wave of *Mirrors* composed in a vernacular and written specifically for the local or 'national' context. In the case of the *Castigos* the historical context is late thirteenth-century Spain and the national discourse of the 'Reconquista'.

Moreover, as discussed in the first chapter, Spanish advice literature of the thirteenth century is marked by the reception, adaptation and translation of the Arabic tradition of wisdom literature, which makes the study of medieval Spanish advice literature, according to Darling, uniquely suitable to give us insights into the impact of Middle Eastern *Mirrors* on the European tradition.[165] Generally it is argued that the primary influence of the Arabic wisdom literature on the *Castigos* pertains to its formal aspects, especially in its use of *exempla* and its didactic outlook, which makes it one of the first of its kind in Castilian literature.[166] Whether the Arabic influence extends to the work's contents is still a matter of debate, although most scholars seem still to agree with Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo's assessment that, while the form of the

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sion to God, the virtues of a king, religious virtues, moral qualities, and a model of society that incorporates all of the above.

162 Beltrán, Valor del consejo 112–120.

163 Bizzarri, Sermones y espejos.

164 Bizzarri, Colecciones sapienciales castellanas.

165 Darling, Historiographical incommensurability 232.

166 See Gómez Redondo, *Prosa medieval castellana* i, 931–932; and Palafox, *Éticas del exemplum* 33.

Castigos is akin to that of the tradition of 'Oriental' didactic literature, its content has a far more Latin than Arabic origin.[167] In fact, Palafox even argues that the author(s) of the *Castigos* must have deliberately avoided 'Oriental' material so as to keep their formation of Sancho as a messianic figure strictly Christian.[168] Among the sources that are mentioned by scholars are chronicles, legal compilations, patristic texts (for example by Augustine and Gregory the Great), Antique philosophical texts, collections of proverbs and, above all, the Bible.[169] Also major Alfonsine works, in particular the *Siete partidas* and the *Crónica general*, are said to have exerted a significant influence on the form and style of the *Castigos*.[170] In light of this diverse array of materials, the *Castigos* is intimately linked with a variety of contemporary genres, such as historiographic prose, Latin exemplary literature, pious narratives, and Christian homiletics.[171]

These, then, are the four *Mirrors* that will be looked at in detail. They originate from comparable historical contexts as they were all written in situations of political crisis. Moreover, they stand for certain types of *Mirrors*, or stages in the genre's history. The results that the analyses and comparisons will produce can thus give us tentative insights into the genre as a whole. In order to further support the validity of this generalization of the results from these case studies, evidence for the conclusions will occasionally be provided from some of the other *Mirrors* mentioned above.

167 Menéndez y Pelayo, *Orígenes de la novela* 72.
168 Palafox, *Éticas del exemplum* 38–39 and 59. See also Orduna, Élite intelectual 58; and Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 16.
169 See Segre, Tradizioni didattiche 100–101. For a short overview of the debate around the potential sources of the *Castigos*, see Palafox, *Éticas del exemplum* 36–37.
170 See Alvar et al., *Prosa y el teatro* 106. For a comparative analysis of the *Castigos* and the *Siete partidas*, see Fournès, Idéalité royale 301–308.
171 See Palafox, *Éticas del exemplum* 31.

CHAPTER 3

The Advice

The amazing variety of forms and communication strategies that authors employ in *Mirrors* means that in order to reach a level of comparability, we cannot follow the structures that the individual authors have given to their texts. Instead, we have to pose our own questions specifically to each of the texts under discussion, while at the same time asking ourselves how these questions shape our perception of the texts. If we accept that a text belongs to the previously defined genre of advice literature for monocratic rulers, we can arguably expect that as a whole it will draw, explicitly or implicitly, the image of an 'ideal' ruler. The ideal presented in the text is subjective and primarily reflective of the author's opinion. It can be expressed negatively through counter-examples of non-ideal rulers, and it can even be constructed as a negative depiction of the addressee in order to emphasize the latter's shortcomings. We can also assume that the ideal portrayed in a given *Mirror* is largely conventional for its time and in tune with how the addressee would have wanted to be seen. Yet the opposite is also true, given that *Mirrors* can be used by dynasties to reformulate ideas on rulership in moments of crisis, and because the authors of *Mirrors* are usually part of a certain class, be they secretaries, high ministers, or religious authorities, and have distinct interests that show up in their works and might have an impact on the ideal of rulership that they describe. In other words, beneath that conventionality there was ample nuance and originality waiting to be deciphered by the attentive reader. The forms and ways in which authors of *Mirrors* convey their advice to rulers are numerous, and so are the topics they discuss and the questions they answer. Yet, regardless of how authors arrange their topics, questions, and advice—whether offering guidance on how to act in specific scenarios, conveying an ideal manner of conduct through an allegory, stringing together a series of admonitions and warnings, or squarely discussing a number of virtues—we will always be able to extrapolate from the text a catalog of what is portrayed as ideal or non-ideal traits, as well as a list of duties that the ruler is expected to fulfill.

The benefit of analyzing regal virtues and duties is that these shed light on the advisory mechanisms of *Mirrors* and thus further our understanding of the genre and the influence that cultural, religious, political, and socio-economic factors exerted on the texts' compositions. More specifically, these analyses and comparisons provide insights into how *Mirrors*' advice on personal virtues is linked to the exercise of a public office. They also reflect how advisors ima-

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gine the ruler's relationship to the divine and his subjects, as well as the goal of rulership and the threats that rulers have to face. The comparisons will reveal similarities and variances in the way advisors approach and discuss certain traits and duties of a ruler. In some cases, similar understandings of specific topics can be linked to the shared repertoire of Late Antique enunciations of rulership and sometimes even to specific Greek, Persian or Abrahamic models. However, no exhaustive analysis of the genealogy and history of these ideas will be provided, because it would hardly further the understanding of the specific perceptions of these ideas in the four *Mirrors* studied here. Instead, we will probe the possibility of contextualizing the variances in the discussions of these concepts in a way that challenges the broad lines dividing *Mirrors* into monolithic categories defined by culture or religion.

1 Traits of the Ideal Ruler

In one way or another the advisors of all four *Mirrors* under investigation name traits that the ruler should ideally possess. Discussions on virtues and vices have a long history in the area of the Late Antique oecumene, ranging across Plato's four cardinal virtues, Aristotle's doctrine of the mean (*mesótēs*), the eight patterns of evil thought (*logismoi*) of the Egyptian monk Evagrius Ponticus (345–399), the 'civilized behavior' (*frahang*) and 'protocol' (*ēwēn*) of the Sasanian *andarz* compositions, the manly virtues of *muruwwa* that Islam adopted from the ancient Arabs, the virtues (*akhlāq*) derived from the Quran and the *sunna*, the seven cardinal sins of Christianity, and the courtesy and norms of conduct (*adab*) of the famous Persian epic *Shāh-nāma* or Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's *al-Ādāb al-kabīr*. Although the questions of how a ruler ought to be and what he ought to do are arguably essential to the genre of advice literature for monocratic rulers, *Mirrors*—unlike many of the above-mentioned examples—tend not to offer systematic accounts of virtues and vices (or duties for that matter) such as lists or extended allegories, but rather mention desirable traits in passing. And although the line between general lists of virtues and specialized discussions for rulers is rarely drawn explicitly, *Mirrors* generally take into account the exceptional role that their recipients occupy in society. This awareness finds expression in various ways, and particularly in the explicit dedication of chapters to everything that concerns rulers. Such chapters are found, for instance, in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* ("On the exercise of justice and discipline and the qualities of kings (*sayrat al-mulūk*)"), the *De institutione* (chapter 3: "What the king is, what he ought to be and what he ought to avoid") and the *Qābūs-nāma* (chapter 42 "On rulership (*pādshāhī*)"). Moreover, in chapters that are

not specifically dedicated to rulers, advisors sometimes point out that the issue discussed is particularly relevant for those in power. For example, in the *Castigos*, as part of the chapter on greed (*codiçia/cobdiçia*), the paternal advisor warns that greed is especially problematic in kings and emperors "because they occupy a higher position (*logar*) than others."[1] The *Risāla* includes a paragraph on "the subtle shortcoming that is inherent (*lāzim*) to people of power" and elsewhere the advisor also warns that some of "the king's faults (*maʿāyub al-mulūk*)" that remain unnoticed by "common people (*al-sūqa*)" will be recognized by "the people of *adab* (*ahl al-adab*)."[2]

The list of virtues for these comparisons follows for the most part the practical demands that the four main texts pose to the rulers, and extrapolates traits from them. They tend to correspond roughly to the virtues commonly mentioned in the long-standing tradition of the compilation of virtue catalogues. In view of the multiple approaches observable across various *Mirrors* to the offering of advice to monocratic rulers, we will consider both virtues that are demanded explicitly from a ruler and all desirable traits that are otherwise implied in the practical advice given in the texts. As the latter suggests, demands for virtues in *Mirrors* must be seen as intimately linked to practical advice, meaning that most virtues indicate certain kinds of approaches or reactions in practical situations. More generally speaking, taken together these virtues provide a rough sketch of the profile of an ideal ruler, in terms of his duties and operating principles. In order to avoid imposing a specific understanding of a given trait on a multiplicity of texts and contexts, all virtues will be treated as polythetic concepts, meaning that each of them is open to the multiple implementations and meanings that authors have attached to them in each text. As a result, the comparisons reveal perennial ideas regarding the components of a royal virtue catalog, as well as multiple ways in which authors filled these abstract concepts with practical meanings based on the specific situation that their addressees were facing. The virtues analyzed and compared here include justice, forgiveness, patience, prudence or sound judgment in the process of decision-making, humility, piety, and the absence of greed. A preliminary conclusion that might be drawn from this list is that the dispensation of justice and the making of (political) decisions are a ruler's primary tasks. Moreover, the list suggests that the ideal ruler is required to impose certain checks on his desires and impulses. In addition to this list, there are a number of virtues that play only a minor role in these four *Mirrors*, either because they are not present

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1 *Castigos* XXII:2. See also *Castigos* IX:3; and XI:46. For further examples from the Castilian *Mirror* tradition, see Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 10 n. 7.

2 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 483; and 492.

in all these texts, or because they emerge as quantitatively and/or qualitatively less significant. These include sagacity, courage, strength, and truthfulness.

The study of these virtues sheds light on how the *Mirrors*' advice on virtues is related to the practice of rulership. In fact, *Mirrors*' virtue catalogues are more than just discussions on personal decorum and etiquette in the context of the court. They possess 'political' implications, in the sense that they suggest how to govern subjects and officials. These implications go far beyond the abstract belief that the ruler's virtuousness has immediate cosmological (and thus political) consequences, a belief that underlies to various extents all four of the *Mirrors* under consideration. The political ramifications are manifest in the concrete functions and effects of certain virtues—for instance, on subjects—as they are described in the texts. But before we turn to the analysis of specific virtues and their political dimensions, we will take a closer look at the virtue of justice to demonstrate, in a sort of case study, how virtues are discussed in these four *Mirrors*. The *Risāla* will be treated separately from the other *Mirrors* due to the apparent absence of justice from its virtue catalog. The other virtues will be discussed in passing as the stated questions are investigated.

1.1 *A First Approach: On the Virtue of Justice*

Justice is an ideal virtue to demonstrate how virtues are discussed in *Mirrors* because it is almost ubiquitous in these texts and seems to occupy a central position in the image of the ideal ruler among the legatees of Late Antiquity. In fact, al-Azmeh notes that "the correlation of absolute rule and justice, and between justice and the perpetuation of order is almost universal."[3] Schoenfeld adds that, in admonishing the ruler to adhere to justice, clerical authors stand in the tradition of Judeo-Christian morality as expressed in the Hebrew Bible, according to which religious authorities acted as guardians of the justice of all holders of power.[4] However, despite its ubiquity and importance in most discussions on ideal rulership, justice adopts a multiplicity of meanings and usages throughout the history of advice literature for rulers. Rulers are expected to be *just*, rule *justly* or enforce *justice* in their realm or among officials. Yet in every case justice can mean something different. To borrow a concept from evolutionary biology, justice is a homologous trait of the ideal ruler. This means that the term justice is identifiable as the same lexeme in most *Mirrors*. Its meanings or functions, however, are different in every case. Rather than being merely a result of linguistic differences and the impossibility of seamless translation, the following analysis will suggest that

3 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 61.
4 See Schoenfeld, Justice 1989.

the meanings or functions of abstract concepts such as justice were forged by the texts' immediate contexts and the needs of their authors and audiences.

In the *Castigos*, justice (*justiçia*), as an attribute of the ruler,[5] is thought of entirely in terms of punishment and reward. The Justinian definition of justice, which demands that people be given 'their due' (*ius suum*), is echoed in the *Castigos*'s explanation that "justice means to give to each his right/desert (*derecho*)."[6] The paternal advisor goes on to emphasize the importance of knowing the subjects and what they deserve and need by extending the allegory of the shepherd (*pastor*) to warn the young ruler against exploiting and punishing his subjects beyond measure.[7] For a ruler's judgments and punishments to be considered just, the paternal advisor explains, they must be impartial. He thus urges that the young ruler "not be partial (*vandero*) in [his] judgments."[8] Elsewhere he compares justice to a sword that cuts equally well on both sides, an image that likewise occurs in other texts of the Castilian *Mirror* tradition.[9] In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, justice (*ʿadl*) as the defining trait of rulership[10] means first and foremost that the ruler passes impartial judgments and treats litigants equally, regardless of their social status.[11] However, in addition to the notion of impartial judgment that is also found in *Castigos*'s concept of *justiçia*, justice (*ʿadl*) in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* also carries the connotation of a divinely ordained state of balance which the ruler ought to protect, as suggested by the advisor's definition of *ʿadl* as "God's balance (*tarāzū*) on earth."[12] Lambton explains that, according to what she terms the 'medieval Persian theory of kingship', the just ruler maintains said balance "by giving each group within society its due place and function."[13] The Arabic term *ẓulm* (oppression), as one of the antonyms of justice (*ʿadl*) in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, alongside terms such as *sitam* or *jawr*,[14] might, according to Roy Mottahedeh, be translated more accurately as "putting a thing in a place not its own", thus indicating

5 *Castigos* IX ("On how one should always love justice"), also contains a long passage on divine justice, which combines elements of reificatory justice (IX:19–35) with elements of divine mercy (IX:48).

6 *Castigos* IX:6.

7 Ibid., XIII:8.

8 Ibid., IX:9.

9 Ibid., IX:10. See Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 28 n. 134.

10 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 82. See also Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 297–299.

11 Ibid., 121.

12 Ibid., 105.

13 Lambton, Justice 119. Elsewhere Lambton argues that, when acting as judges, rulers had to consider people "equal before the law but the difference in function between them was to be maintained" (132).

14 See, e.g., al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 82; 101; 106; and 111.

the upset of the divine order or balance that the exercise of justice is meant to preserve.[15] We might compare this understanding of justice to Plato's discussion in the *Republic* (VIII–IX) of the different polities (timocracy, oligarchy, democracy and tyranny) and the degree to which they are just. For Plato a society is just when all members fulfill the roles that they were given by the gods.[16] In the Islamic context, this idea was most famously expressed by the Persian philosopher Nasīr al-Dīn al-Tūsī (597–672/1201–1274).[17] The *De institutione* proposes a very similar understanding of justice in a famous passage taken from Ps. Cyprian's *De duodecim abusivis saeculi* (*On the twelve abuses of the world*), an Irish treatise on the moral ills of its time (seventh century), falsely attributed to the Bishop of Carthage.[18] Here just government means the ruler correcting and protecting his subjects, in order to set them on the divine path:

> The king must not be unjust (*iniquum*), but the corrector of the unjust ones (*correctorem iniquorum*); he must preserve the dignity in his own name. Because the name 'king' (*regis*), as a concept, means that he has to attend to the duty/office of leading/ruling over (*rectoris officium*) all subjects.[19]

The *De institutione*'s advisor thus suggests that for a ruler to be just and act as a corrective force vis-à-vis his subjects means to be true to the very essence of his position.

However, both in the *De institutione* and in the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the virtue of justice indicates far more than merely the ruler's impartial exercise of corrective measures. Instead, both works treat justice as a polysemous concept that brings together various principles, virtues, and duties that seem to be crucial for the works' understanding of what characterizes ideal rulership. The ten principles of justice of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* are know-

15 Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and leadership* 179. On *ẓulm*, see also Izutsu, *Ethical terms* 152–161. On the juxtaposition of oppression against justice in 'Islamic' *Mirrors*, see Ohlander, Enacting justice 237–239.

16 On justice as balance in the Hellenistic and Islamic traditions, see Rosenthal, Political justice 100–101. See also Canepa, *Two eyes* 103–105.

17 Lingwood, *Politics* 20.

18 The quotation itself is based on yet another pivotal work, the *Etymologiae* by Isidore of Seville. On the *De duodecim abusivis saeculi* and its far-reaching impact on the Carolingian *Mirror* tradition and the Frankish concept of kingship, see Hellmann, *Pseudo-Cyprianus*. For a comparable definition of kingship, in terms of justice, in the *Baḥr al-fawāʾid*, see Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 297.

19 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, l. 58–61.

ledge about the dangers of authority/power (*wilāyat*), seeking of advice from the *ʿulamāʾ*, enforcement of justice among officials, control over one's emotions, the rule of reciprocity, reception of petitioners (*arbāb-i ḥājāt*), abstention from indulging in passions (*shahwāt*), avoidance of harshness (*durushtī*) toward one's subjects, the importance of satisfying one's subjects, and the absoluteness of divine law.[20] According to Nasrin Askari, these principles, with the exception of the consultation with the *ʿulamāʾ* and the reference to divine law, can all be traced back to the *Shāh-nāma*'s Ardashīr-cycle.[21] In the *De institutione regia*, the advisor defines the "justice of a true king (*Iustitia vero regis*)" as abstention from oppression; impartial judgment; protection of strangers, widows and orphans; prevention of robbery; punishment of adultery, impiety, injustice, shamelessness, crime, and perjury; distribution of alms; appointment of just officials; protection of the church; employment of sober advisors; disregard for magicians; deferral of anger; protection of the homeland; piety and religious worship; enforcement of piety in one's sons; humility; and forbearance.[22] The extended definitions of justice in the two works feature a number of common elements that indicate similar concepts regarding the conditions for just rulership. For instance, both *Mirrors* include in their extended definitions of justice the importance of the ruler's seeking advice. In fact, the advice to rulers to seek and accept counsel is a universal feature of *Mirrors*. The *Risāla*'s advisor includes the ability to provide the young ruler with advice in the lists of ideal traits for multiple positions at court or in the army.[23] In the *Castigos*, which ubiquitously emphasizes the benefits of good advice (*buenos castigos*), the paternal advisor urges the young ruler to consult with God, his heart, and "good, knowledgeable and wise men" when he has doubts on how to establish justice.[24] Chapter 18 of the *Siyāsat-nāma* also addresses "the ruler's consultation (*mushāwarat kardan*) with sages and elders" and chapter 4 of *De regis persona* addresses the question of "which advisors (*consiliarios*) the king should consult."[25] The valuing of advice can even be traced back to several passages of the Bible, such as Prov 12:15, Tob 4:19 or Sir 32:24.[26] The

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20 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 14–51.

21 Askari, *Medieval reception* 192–196.

22 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 64–82.

23 See, e.g., ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 481; 514; 515; and 529.

24 *Castigos* IX:11.

25 Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 837C–839B.

26 On the *virtus consili* in Smaragd's *Via regia*, see Schwandt, *Virtus* 184–186. For more examples, see also Lupus of Ferrieres, Epistolae 82:36–83:14; Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 30; Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 83 and 213; Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 29; Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, Fī l-ṣaḥāba 120; Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Adab al-kabīr* 70; and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihī, *al-ʿIqd al-farīd*

suggestion that every ruler needs advice and that justice cannot be achieved without it is of course meant to add legitimacy and significance to the *Mirrors* themselves and to secure for the authors a munificent reward or a position at court. The emphasis on the ruler's need for *consilium* (counsel) in the Carolingian *Mirror* tradition is, according to Klinkenberg, also a reflection of the appropriation of monastic ideals in the creation of the ideal image of rulership in these texts.[27] Already the fifth- or sixth-century *Regula Bendicti* (*The rule of Saint Benedict*) considers the request for advice as an expression of humility (*humilitas*) and its complete rejection as a sign of arrogance (*superbia*).[28]

The notion of a more comprehensive justice beyond the ruler's personal conduct is further supported by references to the ruler's officials and their justice, which suggest that a ruler's justice is only complete if the entire government apparatus works according to the principles of justice.[29] For example, the *De institutione*'s advisor urges his ruler to choose officials with care and to "appoint just ones over the kingdom's affairs (*iustos super regni negotia constituere*)."[30] Elsewhere, Isidore is quoted stating that "it pertains to the misdeeds (*delictum*) of the rulers when they place bad judges against God's will in front of the faithful peoples (*prauos iudices contra uoluntatem Dei populis fidelibus*)."[31] In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, all injustice on account of the ruler's officials that goes unpunished is defined as the ruler's injustice, which is why the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* focuses on the need for the ruler to always keep an eye on his staff.[32] The advisor also draws the image of the "sun of justice (*āftāb-i ʿadl*)," according to which justice must radiate or emanate from the ruler to successively reach his household, officials, and subjects.[33] The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor goes into particular detail regarding the many ways that government officials undermine the ruler's policies, and

61–64. For more examples from the Castilian *Mirror* tradition, see Peirce, Aspectos de la personalidad 34–36; and Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 31 n. 155–156. Also, Byzantine *Mirrors* routinely urge the ruler to seek counsel (*boulē*). See Hunger, *Literatur der Byzantiner* 160. See also Buchheim, Rat; and Grünbart, Anleitung zum guten Regieren 74.

27 Klinkenberg, Karolingische Fürstenspiegel 93.

28 See Casagrande, Virtù della prudenza 1–2.

29 Nardoni, *Rise up* 1–20, explains that the idea that rulers were responsible for controlling the excesses of the state was also part of ancient Mesopotamian theories of justice.

30 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 71–72. See also Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* V, I. 84–88.

31 Ibid., V, I. 63–65.

32 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 37 and 159. See also 53–54; and 156–158.

33 Ibid., 38.

his justice in particular. He explicitly warns the ruler about the effects of bribery (*rishwat*), plots against the realm or the harem, and the revealing of secrets.[34]

A very prominent concern in Arabic and Persian *Mirrors* in general, not only the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, is the extortion of money from subjects through tax-collectors and local governors (*ʿāmilān*).[35] For instance, in the *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* the advisor mentions the "injustice of the tax-collectors (*jawr al-ʿummāl*)" and the need to observe them and redress their wrongs.[36] In the *Risāla fī l-ṣaḥāba*, we read that "the administration of taxes (*wilāyat al-khurrāj*) brings humiliation (*dhilla*), abasement (*ʿuqūba*) and shame (*hawān*)" for whoever is charged with it.[37] The problem of the extortion by tax-collectors is also mentioned in Byzantine *Mirrors*; for instance, the *Strategikon*.[38] The solution commonly offered by Arabic and Persian *Mirrors* consists in the deployment of intelligence officers to supervise the fiscal bureaucracy, as well as other administrative areas.[39] It appears that during the Seljuq period, the insistence in *Mirrors* on the use of internal spies was a reaction to the dynasty's departure from that practice.[40] In contrast, most 'Latin-Christian' *Mirrors* seem to lack both the concern with the loyalty of tax-collectors and the advice to establish an internal intelligence office. We do find some mention of the issue of taxation in Cathwulf's letter to Charlemagne[41] and, although only implicitly, in the *Castigos*'s allegory of the shepherd who is urged to show restraint in shearing his sheep.[42]

How can this discrepancy with regard to the treatment of fiscal policies be explained? Looking at the immediate context in which the *Mirrors* under consideration were written, a number of factors become apparent that might have contributed to this divergence. For one, until at least the end of the ninth century the Carolingians seem to have overseen a fairly simplistic fiscal system, consisting mainly of semi-voluntary annual donations (*dona annualia*) paid by lay and ecclesiastical magnates, which might not have necessitated discussion

34 Ibid., 153–154 and 160.
35 Ibid., 136.
36 Al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 101. See also Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 30–42.
37 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, Fī l-ṣaḥāba 123.
38 See Hunger, *Literatur der Byzantiner* 162.
39 See Canard, Djāsūs. Examples include Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 32; Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 173; Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 85–96; and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, Fī l-ṣaḥāba 124.
40 See Peacock, *Seljuk empire* 200.
41 See Wallace-Hadrill, Via regia 31.
42 *Castigos* XIII:8. On this particular usage of the allegory of the shepherd, see Peil, *Untersuchungen zur Staats- und Herrschaftsmetaphorik* 63–64.

in a *Mirror*.[43] Another reason might lie in the authors' professional background. Unlike the legal scholars, bureaucrats, and secretaries who are responsible for many Arabic and Persian *Mirrors*, the Carolingian *Mirrors*' clerical authors seem—as we will see repeatedly throughout this study—to have generally been less interested in the nitty-gritty of governance and more focused on the ruler's virtues and his soteriological role. The same might be argued for the *Castigos*, which was most likely produced by members of the cathedral school of Toledo in an attempt to defend Sancho's legitimacy as a (Christian) king. As mentioned in the previous chapter, fiscal equity (or lack thereof) had been central to debates on (social) justice in Islamic societies since the Umayyad period.[44] While the actual collection of taxes was often delegated or farmed out, creating the system of local bureaucracies that raised so much suspicion in *Mirrors*, directing fiscal policy was increasingly seen as one of the caliph's main duties.[45] The significance of the issue is suggested by Abū Yūsuf's (d. 182/798) composition of the *Kitāb al-Kharāj* (*The book on taxation*), a treatise on taxation for the fifth Abbasid caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 170–193/786–809).[46] The fact that the caliph's responsibility to protect his subjects against unjust taxation was, as Drews notes, particularly pronounced under the Abbasids[47] might be seen as a reaction to the role that fiscal equity played in the Umayyads' downfall. The frequent treatment of fiscal matters in Arabic and Persian *Mirrors* also reflects the necessities caused by rulers' rapid conquests of vast territories (especially the Abbasids and Seljuqs) or the rise to power of nomadic dynasties and their encounter with an established bureaucratic tradition.[48]

Returning to the problem of the officials' injustice or corruption, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor also mentions the punishment of high-ranking officials and kinsmen and the establishment of a system of direct access to the ruler for petitioners and plaintiffs as ways to fight injustice within the state.[49] In terms of the idea of justice in general, the advisors of both the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* thus seem to think of justice not only as a personal virtue that a ruler has to adopt, but to some extent also as an institutional quality that can only be exercised by government as a whole. We will come back to this matter in the course of this chapter.

43 See Bachrach, *Charlemagne's early campaigns* 45–46.
44 See 78.
45 See Lambton, Khalīfa.
46 See Marlow, Advice and advice literature.
47 Drews, *Karolinger* 248.
48 See Darling, *History of social justice* 91; and Marsham, Early caliphate 491.
49 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 154–158. On how to punish officials, see also Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 166–168.

In both the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, as well as in the *Castigos*, the advisors also link justice to notions of self-restraint in terms of the ruler's emotions and power. One of these notions is humility, the antagonist of pride. In the *De institutione*, humility (*humilitas*) translates into the ruler's adherence to or respect for the limitations of his power and role.[50] The same is the case in a passage of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* where the advisor reminds the young ruler that "when one becomes powerful not to take more than one deserves."[51] In general, however, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor discusses the avoidance of pride (*takabbur*) in the larger context of the ruler's need to control his emotions, especially anger (*khashm*).[52] For instance, the advisor demands that "the ruler must be careful not to be overcome by pride (*mutakabbir*), because out of pride (*takabbur*) arises anger (*khashm*)."[53] The ruler's control of anger (*iracundia*) is also part of the *De institutione*'s definition of justice,[54] as it is in the *Castigos* where the paternal advisor urges the young ruler to "strip all anger (*sanna*) from his heart" when he has to judge in court.[55]

Finally, regal justice is also defined by the ruler's beneficence toward his subjects; that is, the ruler's unlimited power exercised in the service of those who occupy the opposite end of the social hierarchy. In the *De institutione*, this understanding of justice finds expression in the advisor's emphasis on the ruler's need to support the underprivileged members of society; that is, widows, orphans, and strangers. The specific mention of the 'downtrodden' in the context of royal justice goes back to Ancient Near Eastern legal and wisdom literature and can be found in the various Scriptures.[56] While there is no exact

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50 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 35–44; III, I. 142–152 and VI, I. 23–28. The reference to the virtue of *humilitas* in discussions on the ruler's obligation to respect the limits of his role is, as Anton, *Herrscherethos* 45–49, argues, a recurring element of various sources of the Carolingian *Mirror* tradition. See also Little, Pride goes before avarice 31–35. Chapter 3 of Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona, is dedicated entirely to *humilitas*. As with *consilium*, Klinkenberg, Karolingische Fürstenspiegel 92, traces the virtue of *humilitas* back to monastic ideals.

51 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 42.

52 Ibid., 39–46. See also Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 166.

53 Ibid., 39.

54 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 74.

55 *Castigos* IX:8. See also *Libro de los doze sabios* XLI; and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Adab al-kabīr* 73.

56 See, e.g., Fensham, Widow. For an analysis of the notion of justice in calls for the support of the downtrodden in the Hebrew Bible, see Wolterstorff, *Justice* 75–95. For this concept in the medieval reception of classical and patristic sources, see Kuttner, Forgotten definition. On the downtrodden in the Quran, see Zaman, Oppressed. On support for the downtrodden in Carolingian political thought, see also Anton, *Herrscherethos* 49–55; and Steiger, *Ordnung der Welt* 620–621.

equivalent to this in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, other 'Islamic' *Mirrors*, such as the epistle attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, make reference to the imperative of supporting the downtrodden.[57] However, the notion that it belongs to the ruler's most important duties to ascertain the well-being of his subjects and to satisfy their request plays an important role not only in the work's extended definition of justice, but throughout the entire *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*. In fact, one of the ten principles of justice is for the ruler to "make sure that all subjects are satisfied (*khushnūd*) with him" by appointing "trustworthy persons to spy (*tajassus*) on people and find out his standing among them."[58]

Beside these similarities, there are also a few differences between the two extended definitions of justice. Most of these variations seem to be of minor significance, especially if we disregard those that, while not part of the extended definition of justice in one of the two works, are mentioned elsewhere in the texts. For example, as part of the extended definition of justice in the *De institutione*, that advisor urges the ruler to "prevent robberies (*furta cohibere*)"; in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, this notion is covered by the *Circle of Justice* in the second part of the work.[59] One of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s ten principles of justice that does not appear anywhere in the *De institutione*, on the other hand, is the demand for the "reception of petitioners (*arbāb-i ḥājāt*) in one's court" for the "redressing of grievances (*guzārdan-i ḥājāt*)."[60] The importance of these receptions and the granting of audience (*bār dādan*) is reiterated throughout the entire work. For instance, the advisor claims that there "is nothing more ruinous for a king and more detrimental for the subjects than royal elusiveness (lit. 'few audiences') and isolation (*tang-bārī wa ḥijāb-i pādshāh*)," because it lets oppressive officials have free rein.[61] Elsewhere he mentions that it was the "custom of the Persian kings (*rasm-i mulūk-i ʿajam*)" to grant all subjects an audience once a year to have their legal disputes resolved by the king. On these occasions the king himself could become the subject of a legal complaint, in which case he would rise from his throne and sit next to the claimant for the entire duration of the trial. The alleged custom of the ruler rising from his throne and putting himself on the claimant's level conveys an impressive image that is meant to prove the ruler's commitment to the ideal of justice. This manner of holding court begins with the dispatch of a herald (*munādī*) who announces the occasion and emphasizes the absoluteness of people's access

57 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 32–33. See also Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 21.
58 Ibid., 50. On the employment of spies, see also 123.
59 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 68. On the *Circle of Justice*, see 128 *et passim*.
60 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 47.
61 Ibid., 158.

to the ruler in this particular moment by proclaiming anybody who prevents others from entering the court an outlaw.[62] This ideal of the ruler's accessibility for his subjects and responsiveness to petitions, complaints, and legal claims also forms a recurring topic in the other major Seljuq *Mirror*, the *Siyāsat-nāma*. There the ruler is urged to regularly receive subjects (*raʿiyyat*) in order to talk to them without intermediary (*bī-wāsiṭa*).[63] The advisor explains that such a practice is necessary because "when the king sits in his place behind doors, gates, locks, vestibules, veils (*parda*) and the chamberlain (*parda-dār*), malevolent and oppressive people (*ṣāḥib-gharaḍān wa sitam-kārān*) might hold others back and not let them before the king."[64] Here too the ruler's practice of receiving petitioners and dispensing justice is presented as a 'Persian' custom.[65] Advice to receive petitioners similarly appears in the epistle attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn.[66] However, instead of a Persian custom, Bosworth interprets the policy as a return to the more egalitarian understanding of rulership of the old Arab tribal traditions that, under the Umayyads, had been "obscured by Persian monarchical traditions which favored the rise to prominence of the *ḥājib* or court chamberlain and the increased withdrawal of the Caliph from public view."[67]

Historically, the institution through which Muslim rulers took direct responsibility for their justice was called *maẓālim*, precedents of which can be found in both Sassanid and Byzantine bureaucracy. With the growth of the Islamic polity and the subsequent increasing delegation of judicial authority to local judges (*quḍā*ʾ), the institution of the *maẓālim*, where high-ranking state administrators could be held accountable, became the most immediate expression of the ruler's justice. And while the *maẓālim* too was eventually delegated to the viziers, the institution remained intact and apparently even proliferated under the Seljuqs.[68] For our understanding of the *Mirrors* this means that, although the description of the rulers' reception of petitioners is to a certain extent idealized, it is based on an actual, widespread institutional practice that played a significant role in the rulers' public exercise of justice in Islamic societ-

62 Ibid., 167–169.

63 Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma*, ch. 3.

64 Ibid., 19. See also ch. 49, "On answering to complainants (*mutaẓallimān*), dealing with their matters and dispensing justice." The *Siyāsat-nāma* also contains a series of other chapters relevant to present approach to the court, such as a ch. 16, "On the steward of the household (*wakīl-i khāṣ*)" or ch. 28, "On private and public audiences (*bār dādan*)."

65 Ibid., 56.

66 See Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 33.

67 Bosworth, Early Arabic Mirror 29.

68 See Lange, *Justice* 40–41.

ies.[69] In contrast, the absence of a comparable institution in medieval Europe means that, although 'Christian' rulers were indeed expected to receive petitioners, as Volker Scior has shown for the Carolingian context,[70] this advice is largely absent from the 'European' *Mirror* tradition. The ruler's accessibility seems not to be part of the *De institutione*'s ideal of rulership and the advisor merely mentions, in a passage on the injustice of state officials, that the ruler ought to let the "causes of the poor (*causam pauperum*)" reach him that he might deal with them.[71] A rare exception to this is the *Libro de los doze sabios*, which contains a chapter on the importance of the ruler conceding "audience (*abdiençia*) to all those who come before him."[72]

The same relative consistency that the *De institutione*, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, and the *Castigos* display with regard to their conceptions of the essence of justice is also seen in the texts' portrayals of the advantages of just rulership. All three texts agree that a ruler's justice yields stability, prosperity, and peace for his subjects. In the *Castigos*, for example, the paternal advisor states that "everything is governed (*gouierrnan*) and maintained through justice,"[73] while in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, we read that "justice (*ʿadl*) is the strength of faith/law (*ʿizz-i dīn*)[74] and the power of the sultan (*quwwat-i sulṭān*). It produces well-being (*ṣalāḥ*) for the subjects and leads to peace (*sāz-gārī*) and a life in security (*aymanī*) and prosperity (*ʿāfiyat*)."[75] In order to visualize the causal relationship between just rule, social stability, economic strength and widespread private wealth, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor evokes the so-called *Circle of Justice*.[76] This mnemonic description of the circular relationship between the ruler and his subjects, which appears regularly in texts from the Middle East dating back as far as the third millennium BC, points to the practical interdependence of military power, economic vitality, a thriving agrarian production, and an effective and just administration. Investments in irrigation systems, taxation,

69 See Nielsen, Maẓālim. The function of the *maẓālim* courts is discussed in al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 300–305. For literary examples of the redressing of injustice from the Umayyad period, see Scheiner, Monarchische Aspekte 593 n. 144.

70 Scior, Ohr des Herrschers. Based on a study of various court documents, Scior notes that it was part of the Carolingian ideal of rulership to receive petitioners, especially from among the clergy and the nobility, and to grant their requests, provided they were considered to be just (*iustae petitiones*). In return the ruler was presented the prospect of gratitude, stability of his reign, and personal salvation (305–307). See also Garnier, *Kultur der Bitte* 16–24.

71 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* V, I. 43–47.

72 *Libro de los doze sabios* ch. XX.

73 *Castigos* IX:51.

74 On the concept of *dīn* and its translation, see Nongbri, Before religion 39–45.

75 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 149. See also al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 129, and 153.

76 Ibid., 100–101, 111, 129, and 153.

and legal and military safety thus come to be seen as matters of the ruler's justice.[77] The notion of the collaboration of various socio-economic groups is again linked to the concept of justice as a tool for the maintenance of a social equilibrium. The *Circle of Justice* can equally be read as a system of unmediated collaboration between a ruler and his subjects that bypasses officials and nobility who, as we have already seen, are considered potential sources of injustice. It exalts the ruler's role in the implementation of justice, lends him authority, and requires his accessibility "to information and requests from the productive classes of society."[78] At the same time it can work as "a measuring stick for royal effectiveness"[79] as well as a reminder to rulers that they are dependent on, if not in fact at the mercy of, the productive classes, given that, turned on its head, the *Circle of Justice* can be read as justifying a rebellion against unjust rulers.[80] Darling interprets the fact that the *Circle of Justice* appears only in the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* as evidence that the two parts are independent works.[81] However, in the work's first part we find among the ten principles of justice a reminder to the ruler that every act of injustice on his behalf that causes adversity to his subjects will inevitably raise animosity against him and thus weaken his rule. For instance, the advisor reminds the ruler that "whatever he does not accept for himself, he should not accept for other Muslims."[82] Elsewhere we also read that the ruler should serve God the way he wants his subjects to serve him and that he should treat his subjects as he would want a ruler to treat him if he was a subject.[83]

In the *De institutione*, just rulership not only provides safety and peace for the subjects, but its absence also has wide reaching cosmological consequences. The *De institutione*'s advisor quotes Ps. Cyprian, who warns that through the ruler's injustice

> often the peace between the peoples (*pax populorum*) is broken, obstacles (*offendicula*) are promoted within the realm, the soil's fruits are diminished and the services of the (subordinate) peoples (*seruitia populorum*)

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77 Darling, Circle of Justice. See also Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 297; and Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 125 and 134.

78 Darling, *History of social justice* 3.

79 Darling, Do justice 5.

80 See Darling, Do justice 7. For an analysis of the *Circle of Justice* in the context of the Mazdakist social revolt in the Sasanian empire, see Pourshariati, *Decline and fall* 93, 324–327, 354–355.

81 Darling, *History of social justice* 93–94.

82 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 46.

83 See ibid., 14.

> are limited. Furthermore, many sufferings (*dolores*) afflict the prosperity (*prosperitatem*) of the realm, the death of dear ones and children brings sadness (*tristitiam*), hostile invasions devastate entire provinces, wild animals shred flocks of cattle and sheep, spring and winter storms prevent the soil's fertility and the sea's service and finally strokes of lightning burn crops, fruits of trees and vines.[84]

While the mechanics of these beliefs regarding the cosmological effects of a ruler's injustice, which are found in a number of early medieval 'European' texts on kingship, differ from those of the *Circle of Justice*, both models seem to amount to the same thing for the subjects in terms of their livelihoods.[85] The way the *De institutione*'s advisor links the misconduct of individuals to divine collective punishment, for which he draws on a list of examples from the Bible—including the Fall of Man, the Great Deluge and the Tower of Babel—reflects the Carolingian elite's interpretation of the roots of the political and military crisis at the time.[86]

Ultimately, in all three *Mirrors* justice also contributes, directly or indirectly, to the final goal of rulership; that is, to lead the subjects to salvation. For instance, the *De institutione*'s advisor concludes the chapter in which he emphasizes the centrality of justice among the ruler's virtues by demanding that the king fulfill his soteriological duty by making sure that "his people display an abundance of piety (*pietate*), peace (*pace*), love (*caritate*), justice (*iustitia*), forgiveness (*misericordia*), harmony (*concordia*), unity (*unanimitate*) and other good works (*bonis*), in order to thereby earn for themselves God's favor (*Dominum secum habere mereantur*)."[87] Only in the *Risāla* are the temporal concerns of the dynasty so pressing and the occasion of the work's composition so specific that the ruler's need to preside over a functioning and reliable administration and military apparatus, and to secure the support of his sub-

84 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, l. 84–93.

85 However, Darling, Do justice 3, argues that also the *Circle of Justice* can be read as suggesting a causal link between a ruler's justice and favourable climatic conditions. Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 157, provides an example of this link from the Andalusian scholar Ibn Abī Randaqa al-Ṭurṭūshī's (d. 520/1126 or 525/1131) *Sirāj al-mulūk* (*The lamp of kings*). For more examples, see Ringgren, Religious aspects 740–743. On the cosmological consequences of unjust rulership in early medieval thinking (in Europe), see Meens, Politics.

86 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* X, l. 40–42.

87 Ibid., III, l. 161–166. In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, humans are essentially seen as doomed if left on their own, with no ruler to enforce order and justice. See 132–133.

jects, somewhat eclipses his soteriological role. Yet the discursive linkage of obedience toward the ruler with obedience toward God suggests that the soteriological aspect of rulership is not entirely absent.

In addition to (political) stability and safety, being just holds for the ruler the reward of personal salvation. For instance, the *De institutione*'s advisor defines justice as the king's "hope for future beatitude (*spes futurae beatitudinis*)"[88] and in the letters attributed to Lupus of Ferrieres, the advisor promises the just ruler earthly power (*terrenam potestatem*) and God's reward (*Deum meritum*).[89] The paternal advisor of the *Castigos* characterizes justice as the quintessential regal duty,[90] repeatedly quotes King Solomon as saying that truth and justice (*verdat e justiçia*) preserve the king and his realm,[91] and warns that "many kings have lost [their] realms for a lack of justice."[92] The *De institutione*'s advisor extends the impact of just and unjust rulership to include the entire dynasty when he concludes that "correct exercise of justice allows not only the king but also his sons to rule for a long time."[93] The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor even explicitly mentions the causal relationship between the subjects' prosperity, which according to the *Circle of Justice* depends on just rulership, and the duration of a ruler's reign.[94] In contrast, in the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the emphasis clearly lies on the link between the ruler's exercise of justice and his salvation. For instance, the advisor informs the ruler that "if he treats them [i.e. his subjects] with justice (*ʿadl*), they will all be his intercessors (*shafīʿ*) [on the Day of Judgment]."[95]

An additional aspect of the ideal of justice in our four *Mirrors* that reflects the genre's pragmatism and situatedness is suggested, for example, in the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* where the advisor explains that

> it is the duty of the king to enforce discipline (*siyāsat*), because the sultan is God's caliph. He must inspire such awe (*haybat*) that when his subjects see him from afar they do not dare to stand up. The king of our times must enforce discipline and inspire awe in this way, because

88 Ibid., III, I. 105.

89 See Lupus of Ferrieres, Epistolae 82:28–29. See also Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 15–17.

90 *Castigos* IX:3.

91 Ibid., XIII:9 and XXXIII:35.

92 Ibid., XII:48.

93 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 40–41. On the positive effects of justice on the ruler's position, see also III, I. 63; or ch. VI ("Just judgment stabilizes the realm, injustice destroys it").

94 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 100.

95 Ibid., 79.

> people today are not as they were in the past. This is a time when they are shameless (*bī-sharmān*) and without manners (*bī-adabān*) and compassion (*bī-raḥmān*). If, God forbid, their sultan were weak and without strength (*ḍaʿīf wa bī-quwwat*), without doubt universal ruin (*wīrānī-yi jahān*) would come about and destruction and confusion (*ziyān wa khalal*) would arise in matters of faith/law (*dīn*) and in the world. One hundred years of a sultan's injustice (*jawr*) are less damaging than one year of injustice (*jawr*) by the people.[96]

As mentioned before, justice in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* means the preservation of the divinely ordained social order or hierarchy. Any upset of this order leads, as the quoted passage emphasizes, to universal ruin. What is thus required from a ruler is the exercise of *siyāsat*, that is, the enforcement of discipline through the punishment of misdemeanor. The concept of *siyāsat* represents one of the most important duties of the ruler in the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, as well as many other texts on statecraft in the Islamic tradition. The root of *siyāsat* (from the Arabic *siyāsa*), denotes 'managing' or 'tending', originally of animals. In the political realm it thus came to mean the 'management of public affairs' or 'statecraft'. A further development saw the term *siyāsa* acquire the notion of punishment or "the violence which the ruler has to use in order to preserve his authority."[97] Said Arjomand argues that the centrality of punishment in the thinking on statecraft, suggested by the concept of *siyāsat*, goes back to pre-Islamic Indian and Persian ideals on rulership.[98] In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, *siyāsat* denotes the ruler's ability to enforce justice or his authority on the subjects.[99] The advisor explains that it is the duty of the ruler to apply *siyāsat*, "because he is God's caliph."[100] The ruler's exercise of *siyāsat* produces safety by inducing fear (*bīm*) and awe (*haybat*) in the subjects. The subjects' dread of their ruler is deemed necessary because they would otherwise pounce on each other and plunge the realm into chaos. In fact, the advisor laments that, unlike in the past, a ruler today needs punishment or discipline (*siyāsat*) and awe (*haybat*) to keep the people safe from each other. He adds that without discipline (*siyāsat*) from and fear (*bīm*) of the ruler, people will have no piety/obedience

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96 Ibid., 131.

97 See Bosworth, Netton and Vogel, Siyāsa. See also al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 118; and Lange, *Justice* 42–44.

98 Arjomand, Perso-Indian statecraft.

99 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 107, 110, and 148.

100 Ibid., 131.

(*ṭāʿa*) nor honesty (*ṣalāḥ*).[101] The link between discipline (*siyāsat*) and justice (*ʿadl*) is repeatedly made clear throughout the text.[102] While *siyāsat* per se is by no means synonymous with injustice, its usage in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* suggests the preservation of the social order through maximal deterrence. In order to forge a just society, the advisor deems it necessary that the ruler not shy away from resorting to tough measures, including the induction of fear through exemplary punishment.

The advisors of the *Castigos* and the *De institutione* also recognize the advantage of the subjects' fear of the ruler.[103] For instance, the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* identifies fear (*themor*) and shame (*vergüença*) as the sole impediments to misdemeanor, which is why he argues that a king is blessed when his subjects feel shame and fear toward him.[104] The *De institutione*'s advisor comes closer to justifying unjust acts on behalf of the ruler when he quotes Isidore's *Sententiae libri tres* saying that a temporal ruler was necessary because "what the bishop has no power to accomplish with the word of instruction (*doctrinae sermonem*), the power [of the ruler] imposes through the terror of discipline (*disciplinae terrorem*)."[105] Borrowing again from Isidore's *Sententiae*, the *De institutione*'s advisor states that "when God is wrathful, the peoples receive the ruler that they deserve for their sins."[106] Apart from delineating the spheres of the bishops and the ruler, which was one of the main goals of the Carolingian episcopate at the time, the advisor seems to legitimize the ruler's potential violence as part of the divine plan by characterizing the ruler and his violence as a divinely ordained punitive measure. Also, in the *De regis persona* attributed to Hincmar, the advisor mentions holy men's recourse

101 Ibid., 148–149.

102 See, e.g., ibid., 99 and 114.

103 On the advantages of the subjects' fear of their king in Castilian *Mirrors*, see Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 33 n. 175. See also Dekmejian and Kechichian, *The just prince* 80–84.

104 *Castigos* X:9–10.

105 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* IV, I. 59–62. Also, in the *De duodecim abusivis saeculi*, another important source of Carolingian thinking on kingship, the advisor holds terror as a necessary tool for rulers. See Anton, *Herrscherethos* 67–71, and Schieffer, Karolingische Texte 12–17. On fear of the king as a premise of just kingship in Isidore, see Schmidt, Fürstenspiegel 80. The *De institutione*'s pairing of episcopal instruction with regal discipline is mirrored in the *Baḥr al-fawāʾid* where the advisor quotes a maxim saying that "the pen [i.e. the *ʿālim*] and the sword [i.e. the ruler] are brothers; neither can do without the other" (translation quoted from Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 294). In *Libro de los doze sabios* IV:2–3, we read that only a strong ruler is able to enforce justice.

106 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* VII, I. 35–36 (quoted from Isidore, Sent. III, 48, 11). See also ch. 1 of Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona.

to capital punishment for the "induction of fear (*incutiendum metum*)" and argues for the permissibility of a ruler's "avenging (*propter vindictam*)" use of the sword against culprits.[107] The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor explicitly rejects the idea that subjects receive the type of ruler that they deserve. Instead, he argues that it is the subjects' character that depends on the goodness of their ruler.[108] Yet, in the context of the necessity for the ruler to practice *siyāsat* in order to stop the violence among his subjects, the advisor states that "when the subjects become unjust (*sitamkār*) God Almighty forces a violent (*qāhir*) ruler on them."[109] Putting aside the causality dilemma that emerges from these two opposing statements, the advisor tries to emphasize both the ruler's ability to influence (and his responsibility for) the conduct of his subjects and the divine sanction of his punitive measures.[110] Altogether, justice in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* and the *De institutione* is primarily thought of as an objective or a state, somehow akin to the aforementioned Platonic idea of justice, rather than only a means or a virtue. It is the ruler's role to preserve the state of order in any way possible. The underlying assumption that the members of a society will necessarily upset this order if they are not constrained by a ruler is rooted in a specific view of humanity, to which we will return at a later point in this chapter.

At this point we will turn to the *Risāla*, where justice (*ʿadl*) plays virtually no role as a regal virtue. In fact, this advisor mentions justice only once, in the context of (emotional) restraint, when he urges his ruler to "cure your [i.e. the ruler's] hatred with equity (*inṣāf*), and master your appetitive soul (*nafs*) with justice (*ʿadl*)."[111] This omission is noteworthy not only because it runs against the previously noted importance of justice in *Mirror* literature at large, but also because justice plays an important role in the Quran.[112] There are numerous possible explanations for the relative absence of justice in the *Risāla*. For example, one might ask how significant justice might have been as a virtue of the ideal ruler in the Sasanian tradition, which represents one of the most likely quarries of political ideas for the *Risāla*. A superficial study of Sasanian political theory shows that justice was not absent from this tradition, based on two cursory observations: first, justice appears as a royal virtue in an import-

107 Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona ch. 23, and ch. 26. See also ch. 17 and ch. 18.

108 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 109–110.

109 Ibid., 132.

110 The idea of the caliph as God's punishment against a people can be found, for instance, in a work by the second/eighth-century Hanafi jurist Abū Yūsuf. See Duri, *Early Islamic institutions* 48–49.

111 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 479.

112 For instance, in Q 4:58 we read "and when you judge between people, judge with justice (*bi-l-ʿadl*)."

ant, although problematic testimony of Sasanian political thought, *The letter of Tansar*. Although justice is mentioned only once in the text, it stands right at the beginning of the letter's main part and must thus be considered a fundamental aspect of the work's idea of rulership.[113] The second observation refers to the continuous use of the *Circle of Justice* in the region's political literature since the third millennium BC, including in Sasanian texts. Furthermore, justice features in the discussion on ideal government in other early Arabic *Mirrors* that were produced shortly after the *Risāla*, such as the *al-Ādāb al-kabīr* attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ. Written within ten years of the *Risāla*'s composition, its advisor states that "more than anybody else the governor (*wālī*) is obliged to constrain himself to justice (*ʿadl*) in his thinking, speaking and acting, because whatever he says and does is a forceful order that is not objected (*amran nāfidhan ghayr mardūd*)."[114]

Yet the present writer holds the following three explanations to be the most likely: for one, while being nominally absent in the *Risāla* as a virtue, the notion of justice is still present in the text, in an Aristotelian fashion, in the form of the omnipresent call for moderation. According to the Aristotelian principle of *mesótēs* or the Sasanian ideal of *paymān* (right measure), a trait constitutes a virtue as long as it is practiced moderately; i.e., by avoiding both excess and deficiency. For Aristotle, a person achieves universal justice when they adopt moderation in all their dealings. We might compare this to al-Māwardī's use of the term *ʿadl* in his *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* to indicate the notion of 'probity' or 'moral aptitude'.[115] The notion of moderation in the *Risāla* is particularly prominent in the work's taxonomic arrangements of virtues. While the virtues in the other three *Mirrors* are arranged, if at all, primarily into what might be termed hierarchical or genealogical structures, whereby one major virtue produces or consists of a number of minor ones,[116] the *Risāla* includes a number of taxonomies that arrange virtues horizontally. In the passage that contains probably the most explicit delineation of the *Risāla*'s virtue catalog, the advisor lists a series of virtues together with their excesses, which the ruler is urged to avoid, and occasionally additional virtues or measures which the ruler is advised to use in order to strengthen a specific virtue. For instance, the advisor urges the ruler to "protect your [i.e. his] patience (*anāa*) from inertia (*malāl*) and inaction (*fawt al-ʿamal*) and equip your perseverance (*maḍāʾa*) with con-

113 See Boyce, *Tansar* 36.
114 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Adab al-kabīr* 77.
115 See Rosenthal, Political justice 98.
116 Examples of this in the *Mirrors* under investigation are justice in the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, and shame in the *Castigos*, see 146 and 159.

sideration (*rawiyyat al-naẓar*) and support it with the patience of mercy (*anāat al-ḥilm*)."[117] In the same passage the notion of moderation is further reinforced by the advisor's predominant use of verbs from the semantic field of 'limitation' and 'control', such as *ḥudda* ("limit!") or *aqim* ("correct!"), with which the advisor urges the ruler to 'moderate' a series of his behaviors, traits, and passions.[118] In some cases the *Risāla*'s characterization of virtues could be represented in a quadripartite scheme, where two complementary traits function as the virtuous mean, each having its own reprimandable excess. One example is the advisor's warning against exaggeration in relation to both punishment and mercy. He urges the ruler to "avoid exaggeration in punishment and direct it to people who deserve it; do not inject the crippling of the law (*taʿṭīl al-ḥuqūq*) into your mercy and perform it as a divine obligation."[119] Such a quadripartite taxonomy of virtues has been identified by Shaul Shaked in his study of the fourth/tenth-century Pahlavi religious compendium *Dīnkard*. Shaked argues that this model might be seen as "either originally Iranian, or as an Iranian development of the Aristotelian scheme, perhaps by incorporating into it the traditional Iranian notions."[120]

All this suggests that the advisor considers moderation in itself as a virtue, even if he does not mention it as such. Thus, in addition to 'absolute' virtues such as forgiveness and generosity, the *Risāla* proposes moderation as a sort of 'relative' (meta-)virtue that suggests a general attitude (rather than concrete maxims) and at the same time emphasizes the need to assess every specific situation. With all the ambiguity that stems from the *Risāla*'s sheer linguistic elaborateness, the emphasis on moderation, as a disposition in relation to a passion that is neither characterized by excess nor by deficiency, emerges as one of the work's most explicit teachings. It might thus be conceivable that, rather than a state of social or cosmological balance that the ruler must secure through impartial corrective measures, good rulership in the *Risāla* denotes first and foremost the ruler's perfection of all virtues through moderation.

Another way to explain the absence of justice in the *Risāla* is to consider the work's context and its potential impact on the work's vision of rulership. For instance, the advisors in the other three *Mirrors* consistently understand justice both as a state of society and a way of ruling it; that is, a way of approaching and treating both subjects and officials. The antonym of justice in these texts is oppression, tyranny, or cruelty against subjects. For example, the *De*

117 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 479.
118 Ibid., 480.
119 Ibidem.
120 Ēmētān, *Sasanian sages* xli.

institutione's advisor juxtaposes just kings with tyrants (*tyranni*) who rule "with impiety, injustice and cruelty (*crudeliterque*)"[121] and in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the antonym of justice (*ʿadl*) is oppression (*ẓulm*; *sitam*; or *jawr*).[122] In the *Castigos*, the paternal advisor considers injustice to be accompanied by "bad faith (*mala piedat*), ignorance (*nesçia*), cruelty (*crueldat*), dishonesty (*desaguisada*) and senselessness (*sin razón*)."[123] However, there is no mention of tyranny or oppression in the *Risāla* and the advisor seems hardly occupied with the subjects' (economic) interests and (legal) rights, or society as a communal entity that the ruler has to correct and guide with impartial measures. This is not to say that the *Risāla* differs from the other three *Mirrors* in its definition of rulership as a soteriological role. Yet it seems that in light of the dynasty's perilous situation, the *Risāla*'s advisor chose to focus on advice on how to stay in power, for example by securing the loyalty and obedience of one's subjects, rather than on how to rule and treat them justly and contribute to their prosperity and safety.

Finally, we might consider the *Risāla*'s approach to justice as a reflection of a specific understanding of rulership, in the full awareness that it cannot give us a comprehensive account of the contemporary political thinking. Given the absence of notions of society, or of a social balance and order that the ruler ought to retain through distributive and corrective measures, the *Risāla*'s form of rulership seems to be rather one of multiple immediate relationships between the divine vicegerent and individuals who receive protection and salvation in exchange for unconditional obedience and support. The ruler's power is an individualizing one because it focuses only on the individual and their reliability, loyalty and abilities as government official. We will come back to this notion of individualizing power at a later stage of this chapter.

In conclusion, the example of justice in these four *Mirrors* demonstrates both the genre's consistency and its occasionality.[124] As has been argued elsewhere,[125] with regard to their discussions of virtues and their choice of topics in general, *Mirrors* tend to partake in established traditions and discourses of rulership that were received and perceived as having universal validity. At the same time, they reflect specific interpretations of these ideas that are contin-

121 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 6–7.

122 See, e.g., al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 82, 101, 106, and 111.

123 *Castigos* XII:46.

124 We might add to these findings the observations by scholars of Byzantine advice literature who have identified a similar catalog of virtues. See, e.g., Coufalová Borhnová, Mirrors for Princes 6. On the actualization or re-definition of pre-Islamic heroic virtues in the standardized sets of moral qualities in Abbasid panegyric poetry, see Sperl, Islamic kingship 20–21.

125 See Boccaccini, A ruler's curriculum.

gent on the works' particular contexts.[126] As the example of the *Risāla* shows, the particular conditions of the context sometimes mean that certain topics, or virtues in this case, are not discussed at all, or if they are, then in an entirely different manner. The present comparisons also exemplify the abstractness, polysemy, and flexibility of the proposed virtues, as well as the expediency with which the advisors approach them. Rather than theoretical discussions on ethics or philosophy, *Mirrors* are practical textbooks; vademecums for rulership.

1.2 *Virtues of the Ruler—Virtues of Ruling*

One of the implications of the extensive discussions on virtues in *Mirrors* is that the virtuousness of the ruler is significant. At first this may sound rather banal and unsurprising. Already in Stobaeus' compilations (c. fifth century AD) we read that Socrates had supposedly argued that "the superior king would be one who could rule over his own passions."[127] However, if a perspective is assumed that differentiates between the ruler as a person and as an office, questions arise regarding the scope of the proposed virtues. One such perspective is offered by Ernst Kantorowicz in his classic study of medieval thought, *The king's two bodies* (1957). Kantorowicz traces the development of the conceptual separation between what is called the ruler's 'body natural'—his mortal, fallible, human existence—and his so-called 'body politic'—the transpersonal, authoritative, institutional entity. The fusion of the two bodies in one person eradicates all imperfections of the body natural and all its actions are henceforth validated by the majesty of the body politic. Once the body natural dies, it separates from the immortal body politic, which in turn unites with another body natural and thus secures the continuity of kingship. No attempt will be made to verify Kantorowicz's findings on the basis of the four *Mirrors* studied here. Neither shall it be suggested that the texts make this particular distinction. Instead, Kantorowicz' theory of the king's two bodies represents a productive starting point for analyzing the functionalities of *Mirrors*' discussions of regal virtues; that is, how advice on personal virtues translates into advice on rulership and governance. That there should be links between the ruler's attention to his personal conduct and his management of the realm is not surprising, considering Aristotle's classification of practical knowledge into the rule of the self (ethics), the household (economics) and the polity (politics). Eberhardt goes so far as to claim that in all the cultures and periods he has looked at, people were convinced that only a virtuous person could be a good ruler.[128] Yet what makes the *Mirrors*' treat-

126 See also Marlow, *Counsel for kings* ii, 252.
127 Translated by Goodenough, Political philosophy 70.
128 Eberhardt, *Via regia* 396.

ments of these types of rules particular is the lack of any explicit differentiation between the scopes and intended effects of some of the proposed virtues. In other words, the question is how *Mirrors* provide advice on governance through the language of virtues and vices. The investigation of the specific scopes and effects of each virtue allows for a consideration of their relation to the ruler's two bodies and the ways and places where the two spheres overlap.

On the broadest scale, the *Mirrors*' emphasis on discussions of regal virtues succeeds in legitimizing the status quo of the social hierarchy and the institution of monocratic rulership because it puts the ruler's conduct, rather than any flaws of the social and political system, at center stage. The texts' treatments of this subject inherently bear critical undertones—a matter that will be further discussed in Chapter Four. None of the *Mirrors* considered in this study question the legitimacy of the ruler's office. By focusing on the qualities of the position holder, the advisors suggest the unquestionability of the office's legitimacy and deny a priori any need for political reforms. In fact, Gilbert Dagron argues that the purpose of Byzantine *Mirrors* "was to provide a cure for the inevitable diseases of absolute power not by a change of political system but by the personal 'conversion' of the prince."[129] Ultimately, this means that having no ruler is portrayed as being worse than having a bad ruler, as suggested by both the previously quoted passage form the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* regarding the preferability of 100 years of unjust rule over a year of social disorder,[130] and a statement in the early Castilian *Mirror*, the *Libro de los cien capítulos*, saying that "it is better for the people to live forty years under the rule of an insolent king (*rey desmesurado*), than to be just one hour of the day without a king."[131] Instead, the office holder himself runs the risk of losing his position if he does not act in the ways suggested by the *Mirrors*. Especially a ruler's lack of justice, as noted before, is seen as causing his demise.[132] In addition, according to the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, exceptionally severe punishment awaits the inept ruler on the Day of Judgment. The *De institutione*'s advisor emphasizes this point with two quotes; one from Ps. Cyprian and one

129 Dagron, *Emperor and priest* 18.

130 See 131.

131 *Cien capítulos* IV:36–38.

132 The *De institutione*'s advisor supports this view with a number of biblical quotations. See Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* VI, I. 17–28. See also Anton, *Herrscherethos* 411–415, and Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 28. In the *Baḥr al-fawā'id* we find Q 3:26, "Thou givest the Kingdom (*mulk*) from whom Thou wilt, Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt, and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt" (translation quoted from Arberry, *The Koran interpreted*), quoted three times. See Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 3, 52 and 214.

from the apocryphal *Book of wisdom*,[133] while in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s first part the knowledge of the particular danger of being in power represents the first principle of justice.[134] In the *De regis persona*, too, the advisor believes that rulers await a particularly severe punishment as "they devastate their souls through their greater liberty to do wrong,"[135] whereas the advisor of *De regimine principum* stresses both the particular reward and the punishment that await rulers in the afterlife according to the virtuousness of their rule.[136] The advisors thus send a clear warning to their rulers as they confront them with a vision of their demise. Yet at the same time the texts convey the promise of a fail-safe solution: a catalog of virtues.

The four *Mirrors* studied here leave no doubt that the ruler's body natural is 'human' in terms of its defects and weaknesses. For instance, all four advisors remind their rulers of their mortality and the implications it carries for their perception of the material world.[137] However, apart from its transience, the physical conditions of the ruler's body natural find almost no attention in our four *Mirrors*. It appears that, since the rulers in these *Mirrors* are not expected to fight on the battlefield themselves, physical strength, just as courage in battle, is not considered necessary. The *Risāla*'s advisor merely urges the ruler not to let his caution (*ḥadharāt*) turn into cowardice (*al-jubn*)[138] and there is only one occasion in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* where courage (*mardānigī*) is mentioned as a desirable quality in a ruler.[139] However, this is immediately followed by a brief exchange between Alexander and Aristotle, in which the latter argues that "when a ruler rules with justice (*dād*), he has no need for courage (*mardānigī*)."[140] This seems to confirm Toshihiko Izutsu's theory that the pre-Islamic virtue of bravery was seen as boastful and aggressive, and thus at odds with the Islamic ideal of *ḥilm* (forbearance). Instead, he argues, the Quran produced a new sort of courage that is firmly based in true belief and allows the believer to fight the enemies of God.[141] Even in

133 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 105–109, and IV, I. 50–56.
134 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 14–27. See also Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 294–295.
135 Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 840B.
136 Aquinas, De regimine principum 11–12 and 15.
137 In a quotation from Isidore's *Sententiae libri tres* in Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 150, the temporal rulers are reminded that "they too are mortals (*mortales*)" like all other human beings. The *memento mori* topos is further found in ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 480, and al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 65–79.
138 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 480.
139 See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 127.
140 Ibid., 128.
141 Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-religious concepts* 83–86.

the *al-Ādāb al-kabīr* where the advisor urges the ruler to adopt "bravery and courage (*ba's wa-l-shajāʿa*)," this is followed by an admonition not to throw caution (*ḥidhr*) to the wind.[142] In the case of the *Castigos*, the predominant silence regarding the ruler's courage marks a break with the way Spanish chroniclers had imagined the ideal ruler in the centuries preceding the reign of Sancho, especially during the 'Reconquista' when Spanish rulers were expected to display *fortitudo*.[143] In fact, instead of the ideal of the wise and courageous king that his predecessors had promoted, the type of ruler that Sancho and his (clerical) collaborators developed in the *Castigos* was, as we will see throughout the analysis, more thoroughly 'Christianized'. Probably the most explicit discussion of a ruler's physical conditions in a *Mirror* occurs in al-Māwardī's *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya*, where the advisor provides a list of minimal requirements regarding the ruler's physical integrity. The text's seven conditions for rulership include both "the soundness of the senses of hearing, vision and speech so that what is perceived through them can be put into action immediately" and "physical fitness and the absence of any impediment to movement and quickness of action."[144] The advisor also considers courage a prerequisite for rulership as he requires the ruler to have the courage and bravery (*al-shajāʿa wa-l-najda*) to fend off enemies.[145] The scarcity of discussions on the ruler's courage and physical properties in the four *Mirrors* studied here is linked to the limited role that warfare plays in the texts. We will come back to that in the course of this chapter. Yet it should be noted that the ruler's physique was in fact given a certain importance in other contexts. According to Canepa, for example, the Sasanians—and consequently the Byzantines—saw physical integrity as a prerequisite for kingship[146] and Hans-Joachim Schmidt argues that there was a trend in high medieval *Mirrors* to treat

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142 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Adab al-kabīr* 66.

143 See Rodríguez de la Peña, Rex strenuus 35. Another way in which the virtue catalog of the *Castigos* seems to break with how the ideal ruler was imagined in the chronicles under Sancho's predecessors (between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries), especially under his father Alfonso, is the minor significance that it gives to wisdom (*sapientia*) as a royal virtue. During Alfonso's reign authors had sometimes chosen King Solomon, widely known for his wise and just rulership, as their model of kingship par excellence. On the knowledge and wisdom as regal traits in the Castilian *Mirror* tradition, see also Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 23–26.

144 Al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 6. Elsewhere the advisor goes into more detail regarding the extent to which certain physical disabilities disqualify a person from rulership (19–23).

145 Ibid., 6.

146 Canepa, *Two eyes* 20.

physical beauty as an important asset of rulership.[147] In the *Mirrors* presently studied, however, other aspects of the ruler's body natural dominate the discussion.

Instead of physical weakness, the four *Mirrors* studied here focus on other defects of the ruler's body natural, such as his susceptibility to desires or appetites. In the *Castigos* and the *De institutione*, the advisors oppose the ruler's indulgence in his passions mainly on pious grounds. For instance, the *De institutione* contains both a general and a ruler-specific condemnation of *luxuria*, both of which are formulated in faith-related terms. In a general sense, the advisor declares that "the Christian faith is miserably neglected by many people for the sake of carnal pleasures (*delectatio carnales*), the most different vanities (*uanitates*) of this world and the most perverse habits (*peruersissimas consuetudines*)."[148] With regard to the ruler, the advisor quotes Deut 17:17, saying "he must not acquire many wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; also silver and gold he must not acquire in great quantity for himself."[149] Elsewhere he also emphasizes how praiseworthy a ruler is who practices abstinence despite his power to satisfy all his desires.[150] The paternal advisor of the *Castigos*, too, generally treats desire as a faith-related issue, but he emphasizes that it affects all people equally. The opposing force to humans' carnal desire (*voluntad de la carne*) and greed (*cobdiçia*) in the *Castigos* is their shame (*vergüença*) before God, which is one of the key virtues in this text.[151] *Vergüença*, which is defined in the *Castigos* as "an impediment to all evil (*freno de toda maldat*)" thus representing the deciding force in people's strife to abstain from sinful deeds,[152] derives from the fear of God and knowledge of Him.[153] Moreover, the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* applies the concept of *vergüença* to the ruler's relationship with his subjects when he argues that the subjects' shame and fear toward their ruler ensures their submissiveness and obedience.[154] Moreover, *vergüença* stands at the heart of the *Castigos*'s codex of sexual ethics that explains to the (male) reader which women are suitable for marriage. A significant portion of the *Castigos*'s text is dedicated to remarks on women. The paternal advisor mostly paints a rather negative image of women, characterizing them as inferior to

147 Schmidt, Fürstenspiegel.
148 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* XI, l. 23–26.
149 Ibid., III, l. 28–29. Translation quoted from Coogan et al., *The new Oxford annotated Bible*.
150 Ibid., XVII, l. 34–35. On greed (*avaritia*), see IV, l. 39–40; V, l. 29–32; or IX, l. 26–31.
151 *Castigos* VI:2. On greed (*cobdiçia*) see Ch. XXII.
152 Ibid., VI:3.
153 Ibid., VI: 20.
154 Ibid., X:9–10.

men, to whom they pose a serious threat. In the prologue to the *Castigos* the paternal advisor states, after having recounted Eve's role in the Fall of Man, that

> Origen says that man's great burden is bearing his wife in her passions and miseries. Therefore, he who invented the English language called the female 'woman,' which means woe to man. As a punishment for all this Our Lord God ordained that if a man gives his power to woman, she will always be against him.[155]

Apart from the discussion on women in the context of desire, there are a number of chapters dedicated specifically to relations with women and the selection of a wife, such as chapter XIX on "How man should not offend God with unsuitable women and which women are unsuitable," chapter XX "On the great error committed by whom sins with a married woman" and chapter XXI "On how noble a thing virginity is before God." The significance of the issue of a legitimate wife in the *Castigos* seems to be an immediate reaction to the doubts that were shed on Sancho's marriage.[156] It is here, however, in the context of the *Castigos*'s treatment of the ruler's sexuality, that *vergüença* ceases to be only a matter of the body natural. The paternal advisor warns the young ruler against wrongdoing with the wife of his vassal, lest he wants to suffer the same fate as King Roderic who brought much disaster upon Spain because of what he "did with la Cava, the daughter of Count Julian."[157] Since, according to Larry Scanlon, "making the king's sexuality a matter of public policy reaffirms his person

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155 Ibid., Pról.: 7. Translation quoted from Francomano, Castilian 192.

156 See 106. For more on the role of women in the *Castigos*, see Dyer, Decoro femenino. Also, the *Qābūs-nāma* contains a chapter called "On choosing a wife", but its focus lies less on ethical considerations and more on the 'practical' side of the matter (i.e. the importance of the wife's obedience, etc.). On women in *Mirrors*, see 226 *et passim*. The *Risāla* and—with one exception—the *De institutione* lack any mention of women, but while for the former this omission might be explained with the specific occasion of the work's composition, in the case of the *De institutione*, with its abundance of religious-ethical advice, the absence of any reference to chastity is slightly more noteworthy, but might best be considered as being linked to the *De institutione*'s predominant silence on the royal household.

157 *Castigos* VI:28–29. Two further negative examples of rulers who have sinned with married women are given elsewhere (see XXI:21–22). Later on, the paternal advisor also declares that the "virginity (*virginidat*) and chastity (*castidat*) of a king or an emperor are like a cloth covered in gold without a single stain" (XXXVII:38). However, these are the only specific references to rulership in the discussion on pleasures and desires. For instance, chapter XLVII on the good and bad pleasures (*sabores*) contains no such reference.

as the locus of public order,"[158] the discussion of sexual ethics in the *Castigos* not only suggests the appropriateness of Sancho's sexual conduct, but portrays it as a guarantor for the realm's survival.

In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the ruler's ability to control his desires is treated as partly a matter of political expediency. Throughout the work, desires are opposed both by piety and, in a somewhat Platonic fashion, by reason (*ʿaql*) as their main antagonists. For instance, the advisor explains that "justice (*ʿadl*) means to restrain oppression (*ẓulm*), desire (*shahwat*) and anger (*khashm*) with reason (*ʿaql*), so that they become prisoners of reason and faith/law (*asīr-i ʿaql wa dīn*), and not the other way round."[159] Apart from reason, the text juxtaposes desire with abstemiousness (*parhīzkārī*) and modesty/shame (*sharm*).[160] As noted by Daiber, the same struggle between anger and reason (*ʿaql*) is found in Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's *al-Ādāb al-kabīr*.[161] But while, for instance, in the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the ruler's attitude toward material wealth is discussed in light of the transience of physical existence,[162] in the work's second part, as mentioned before, the text adds a political or pragmatic layer to the argument through its repeated references to the appropriate use of the public treasury and the collection of taxes.[163] The epistle attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn also contains a passage in which the paternal advisor discusses the vice of greed in pragmatic terms by warning that a greedy (*ḥāriṣ*) ruler who deprives his subjects of their wealth loses their trust.[164] In the *Risāla*, where desire (*hawā*) is defined as "the enemy of reason (*khasm al-ʿaql*),"[165] the advisor links the discussion of passions and desires to the duties of the ruler's office because of the negligence and distraction that they provoke.[166] We will come back to this shortly.

As we have already seen in our discussion of justice, another deficiency of the ruler's body natural that the advisors of the four *Mirrors* are preoccupied with concerns his emotions, especially anger and pride. In almost all of the four *Mirrors*, the ideal of emotional restraint is rooted in the dichotomy of emo-

158 Scanlon, *Narrative* 292.
159 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 37.
160 Ibid., 120, and 27.
161 Daiber, Ausdruck griechischer Ethik 278.
162 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 65. The first part also offers a dialogue between Iblīs and Moses, in which Iblīs warns that he deprives the one who succumbs to greed (*bukhl*) of religion and all material wealth (44).
163 Ibid., 120; and 137.
164 Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 30.
165 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 477.
166 Ibid., 481.

tional impulsiveness versus cautiousness and rationality. For example, the *De institutione*'s advisor explains that saints were called kings, "because they act right, control their feelings well (*sensusque proprios bene regant*), and appease with rational judgment (*rationabili discretione*) any emotion (*motus*) that withstands them."[167] The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor defines anger (*khashm*) as a "demon (*ghūl*) and the enemy of reason."[168] Only in the *Castigos*, with its decisively ecclesiastical rather than Aristotelian outlook,[169] is emotional restraint based not on rationality, but instead on the more faith-related virtues of patience (*pasçiençia*) and moderation (*mesura*). *Pasçiençia* is portrayed as a distinctly faith-related virtue and conveys among other things an unshakable trust (*esperança*) in God and His interventions—an understanding of patience that can equally be found in Islam, as Izutsu observes.[170] Elsewhere the paternal advisor illustrates the virtue of *pasçiençia* through an extended list of examples that recount incidents from the Bible where people have endured pain without feeling anger or resentment against those who wronged them. Moreover, he defines *pasçiençia* as the sister (*hermana*) of mercy (*misericordia*) and as one of the three pillars of Christianity, alongside justice (*justiçia*) and *misericordia*.[171] *Mesura* is described as consisting of good manners (*buenas costunbres*) and shame (*vergüença*), applying to a person's words, deeds, reactions, and expression of anger. A person who lacks *mesura* treats people not as they deserve.[172]

In the *Risāla* emotional restraint is partly a matter of the ruler's public image and his ability to disguise his opinion. This means that not only anger, but all kinds of emotions must be held in check. For instance, the advisor admonishes the ruler not to display too much attention or joviality to members of his "convoy (*mawākib*)" in order to demonstrate his ability to hide his thoughts.[173] The *Risāla*'s advisor also advises the ruler to curb his joy lest it might turn into "boastfulness (*al-baṭar*)" and not to betray his "pressing need (*ḥāja muwhisha*)" for his favorite by showing special attention to him.[174] Elsewhere he notes that, when sitting in the assembly, the ruler should spread his attention among those present, and listen with "calm kindness (*daʿa hādiʾa*)" and "no weariness (*qilla*

167 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 139–142.

168 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 39. The advisor also warns against forgetting what is right and lawful in the moment of bliss (42).

169 See 107.

170 *Castigos* XXX:39. See Izutsu, *Ethico-religious concepts* 101–104.

171 Ibid., XXX:4–30.

172 Ibid., XIV:6–18.

173 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 483–484.

174 Ibid., 480, and 490.

taḍajjur)" to the speaker.[175] The public display of extreme anger is, according to the *Risāla*, a display of "disgraceful foolishness (*sukhf shāʾin*), devastating rashness (*khiffa murdiyya*) and blatant ignorance (*jahāla bādiyya*)."[176] Yet the principle of moderation that pervades the *Risāla* dictates that patience ought not to turn into complete passivity.[177] Thus, as a virtue, emotional restraint is much more independent and significant in the *Risāla* than it is in the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*. It is not exclusively a sign of piety, as it is in the *Castigos*, but it is part of the *Risāla*'s wider political agenda in a context of concrete threats to the dynasty. The advice to the ruler to disguise his emotions and shield his intentions and his persona from what lies outside the innermost circle of power not only suggests an acute awareness of the vulnerability of his body natural and the detrimental consequences it can have for his body politic, but it also reflects the immediacy with which the last Umayyads perceived the threats to their dynasty. It thus becomes increasingly manifest that there is a decidedly political dimension in the *Mirrors*' discussions of the deficiencies of the ruler's body natural.

The most straightforward approach to the ruler's need to compensate for the damaging character of his body natural vis-à-vis his body politic occurs around the discussion of the need to rely on caution and (rational) considerations rather than emotions in the process, methods, and practicalities of opinion-formation and decision-making. Among the four cardinal virtues of Classical Antiquity and Christian theology such an approach is embodied by *phronesis*/*prudentia*; that is, prudence or practical knowledge. *Phronesis* is also found among Aristotle's five intellectual virtues and plays a crucial role in his thinking on virtues. According to Aristotle, only through prudence can we understand how to act in accordance with virtue—that is, what action leads to virtuous behavior in a specific situation. In contrast to wisdom (*sophia*), which denotes the knowledge derived from theory, prudence is the ability to attain truth through the exercise of rational thought. *Phronesis* is based on a series of 'skills', namely deliberative excellence (*eubolia*), good judgment (*sunesis*, *eusunesis*), discernment (*gnome*), and intelligence (*nous*).[178] In European medieval art, the mirror image that has become associated with advice literature also features representations of prudence, with *Prudentia*, the allegorical

175 Ibid., 489.
176 Ibid., 491.
177 Ibid., 479.
178 See Russel, Phronesis 203–206. On *phronesis*, see also Aubenque, Prudence. On prudent decision-making in the Byzantine *Mirror* tradition, see Grünbart, Anleitung zum guten Regieren 72–74.

personification of prudence, often carrying a mirror to 'see' reality. At the same time, mirrors appear in medieval representations of the sin of *superbia* (pride).

While there is no explicit reference in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* to any specific virtue that might be understood along the lines of 'prudence', it emerges from the text that the ruler's decisions should stand at the end of a process of gathering information and advice, followed by rational thinking and considerations. In an anecdote reporting a conversation between Alexander the Great and one of his advisors, the latter proposes an etymological analysis of the term *qalb* (heart) that links it to the notion of 'vacillation' or 'restless change' (*taqallub*), from which the advisor concludes that rather than acting on his fickle heart, Alexander should rely on thought (*andīsha*), wisdom (*khirad*), and consultation (*mashūrat*).[179] This is followed by the advisor's conclusion that "a ruler must be forbearing (*ḥalīm*) and not precipitous (*shitāb-zada*)," and that the worst thing in a ruler is "quick temper (*tundī*)".[180] The paternal advisor in the *Qābūs-nāma* depicts a very similar approach to a ruler's decision-making as he urges the young ruler to always "first consult with wisdom (*khirad*)," to avoid "precipitousness (*shitāb-zadagī*)," and to exercise "circumspection (*mudārā*)."[181] At the same time as the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* warns the ruler against precipitousness and quick temper, it also urges him to avoid "calmness (*āhistagī*) and hesitation (*dirang*) when urgency (*shitāb*) is required."[182] Moreover, the advisor repeatedly mentions the ruler's need for 'making plans' (*tadbīr*)[183] and he warns that a ruler's inability to put plans into practice can lead to him losing his position.[184]

Careful consideration and the crafting of plans also plays a major role in the way the ruler's day-to-day operations are illustrated in the *Risāla*. Time and again it emerges from the text that the ruler's defining action[185] is forming an opinion or passing judgment on people or issues, all of which seems to be included in the term *ra'y*. Derived from the Arabic verb for 'seeing', *ra'y* is usually translated as 'view', 'opinion' or 'reason'. Yet, according to Hallaq, in Islamic law *ra'y* came to denote a 'discretionary opinion', to which one could resort as a

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179 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 138–139.

180 Ibid., 139.

181 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 130. See also ch. 38 of the *Siyāsat-nāma* "On not being hasty (*shitāb nā-kardan*) in royal affairs" and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Adab al-kabīr* 71.

182 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 165.

183 Ibid., 127; and 151.

184 Ibid., 165.

185 To be more precise, the advisor seems to consider *ra'y* as the defining ability of all people with power, since he also associates it with other positions at court or in the government. See ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 481 and 494.

"source of legal reasoning and thus of judicial rulings," beside or instead of the revealed texts and exemplary precedents (*sunan*).[186] Hallaq argues that at least in the first/seventh century the 'people of *raʾy*' (*ahl al-raʾy*) where considered "persons whose judgment and wisdom is to be trusted and, more importantly, emulated."[187] Josephson observes that in the *al-Ādāb al-kabīr* attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *raʾy*—which occurs more than sixty times throughout the text—is equally used in the sense of advice or of counsel.[188] The *Risāla*'s advisor stresses that the ruler will be judged for his *raʾy* as he explains that "if it [i.e. your *raʾy*] is correct you will gain prestige (for it), and if it is wrong an ignorant may attack you for it."[189] He warns the ruler that offending people from the inner circle might provoke them to make public the "intellectual weaknesses (*sakhāfa*)" of his *raʾy*.[190] Elsewhere he notes that the true quality of the ruler's *raʾy* will inevitably reveal itself to "people of reason (*nuhā*)."[191] The conclusion is that the ruler's *raʾy* should neither be rushed nor, in fact, be confused by excessive fearfulness, but must instead be freed from the "burden of improvisation (*badīha*)" through careful consideration.[192] Throughout the entire passage the liberating effect that careful considerations in advance can bear on a decision-making process is reflected by the juxtaposition of nouns from the semantic field of confinement or pressure ("burden"; "ropes"; "tangledness") with verbs denoting liberation or the removal of said pressure ("raise"; "loosen"; "relieve"). Sound judgment occupies a similarly important position in the *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* where the advisor includes *raʾy*, "which contributes to the tending (*siyāsat*) of the people and the securing of their interests," among his seven conditions for rulership.[193] In the *risāla* attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, the paternal advisor warns the young ruler that arrogance (*ghurūr*) will damage his *raʾy*.[194]

In the *Castigos* we encounter the virtue of *cordura*, which denotes 'sanity', 'having good sense', and 'reasonableness', as well as 'prudence'. It is defined by the paternal advisor as the "daughter of good understanding/perception

186 Hallaq, *Origins and evolution* 52.
187 Ibid., 53. On *raʾy* in Islamic law, see also Wakin and Zysow, Raʾy.
188 Josephson, Multicultural background 184–185. For more on the significance of *raʾy* for rulers in the *al-Ādāb al-kabīr* and its relation to Aristotelian *phronesis*, see Daiber, Ausdruck griechischer Ethik.
189 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 485.
190 Ibid., 481.
191 Ibid., 479.
192 Ibid., 480 and 487.
193 Al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 6.
194 Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 28.

(*entendimiento*)"[195] and the "root and foundation of all good things,"[196] as it prevents humans from taking bad decisions in any situation.[197] Strictly speaking, *cordura* is slightly different from the Aristotelian *phronesis* because it carries connotations of cautiousness, risk-prevention and skepticism. The notion of *cordura* in the *Castigos* seems to mark a particular stage in the development of the virtue of prudence in European *Mirrors* after the eleventh century. According to Lambertini, initially many of the *Mirrors* that came after the *Policraticus* tended to advise their rulers to turn to wisdom (*sapientia*) for guidance, instead of prudence in the Aristotelian sense. When in the thirteenth century authors such as Godfrey of Viterbo mentioned prudence as a regal virtue, they intended a sort of cautiousness that, if taken too far, turned into the vice of skepticism.[198] A similar understanding of prudence seems to prevail in the *Castigos*. While *cordura* is generally not treated as a specifically regal virtue, it does acquire a political dimension when it is exercised by a ruler. In fact, *cordura* helps people to make decisions, prevents them from taking risks, and provides them with the ability to judge situations and other people, all of which are essential parts of the ruler's office.[199] Given the emphasis on the ability to distinguish between good and bad, rather than on Aristotelian *phronesis*, the *Castigos*'s notion of *cordura* might be better compared to the Ciceronian understanding of prudence as *discretio*.[200]

Only the *De institutione* lacks notions of prudent decision-making or rational judgment comparable to what is present in the other texts. The only mention of prudence occurs in the dedication letter where the advisor praises Pepin for his "prudence (*prudentia*) toward the royal office."[201] However, it remains unclear what the advisor's understanding of *prudentia* is. Rational judgment, too, is mentioned only once in the context of controlling one's emotions.[202] It is notable that with the exception of the ubiquitous reference to the need for "old, wise and sober advisors (*senes et sapientes et sobrios consiliarios*),"[203] the *De institutione* does not touch upon the methods and practicalities of the ruler's opinion-formation and decision-making. Given the *De institutione*'s authorship

195 *Castigos* XLVIII:2.
196 Ibid., XLVIII:5.
197 See Peirce, Aspectos de la personalidad 20, for an analysis of *cordura* in the *Castigos*.
198 Lambertini, Tra etica e politica 134–137.
199 *Castigos* XLVIII:7–25.
200 See Casagrande, Virtù della prudenza 7.
201 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 12.
202 Ibid., III, I. 142.
203 Ibid., III, I. 72. On the link between prudence and counsel, see Casagrande, Virtù della prudenza 7–14.

and its genesis in the context of the Paris synod, the emphasis of its concept of *regere* lies more on the aspect of correcting and leading the subjects (to salvation) than on the minutiae of the government's strategic groundwork for which prudence seems like a useful trait to have. Unlike the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* and the *Risāla*, which show a concern with the ruler's approach to decision- and policy-making, the *De institutione*'s advice is limited to the ruler's soteriological role. However, there is a place in the *De institutione*'s virtue catalog where the ruler's two bodies merge: the virtue of forgiveness.

What might be conveniently called forgiveness is mentioned without exception by the advisors of the four *Mirrors* as one of the defining virtues of a ruler.[204] Forgiveness, which often amounts to the abstention from revenge and the repression of anger, is intimately linked to the ruler's justice and his passing of judgment. In the *De institutione*, for example, the advisor urges the young ruler to practice justice "without abandoning mercy (*misericordiam*)."[205] Moreover, forgiveness is part of the *De institutione*'s triad of royal virtues (piety, justice, and forgiveness) that appears several times throughout the text.[206] In the *Castigos*, forgiveness is said to have an affirmative effect on the ruler's position, as the paternal advisor declares that "mercy (*clemençia*) and justice (*justiçia*) affirm and maintain the king's throne."[207] The *Policraticus* too, demands the ruler's justice to be paired with forgiveness (*clementia*) and humility (*humilitas*).[208]

In all four *Mirrors* the exercise of forgiveness by the ruler is also described as a religious duty. For instance, the paternal advisor in the *Castigos* states that, by virtue of occupying God's place (*lugar*) on earth, the young ruler must seek to resemble (*semejar*) Him and that it is in forgiveness that one can resemble God the most.[209] A similar notion of *imitatio*, although not *imitatio dei* as in the *Castigos*, can be found in the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, where the

204 In our primary sources this notion is conveyed by a variety of terms. See Appendix A. In the *De institutione* forgiveness or mercy is denoted by *misericordia* and *uenia*. Apart from *ḥilm* (forbearance), the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor also refers to *ʿafū* (forgiveness), *karm* (generosity), and *burdbārī* (forbearance). See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 40. The *Castigos* features a number of terms that all denote forgiveness. Apart from *clemençia* we also encounter *misericordia*, which is however mostly used in the context of divine mercy. See *Castigos* XXXI. Also, the term *piedat* (piety) occasionally appears in the sense of forgiveness or mercy. See *Castigos* XII:13–14.

205 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, l. 119–120.

206 Ibid., III, l. 5, and VI, l. 31–35.

207 *Castigos* XII:45. See also XIII:9; and 12.

208 See Lambertini, Tra etica e politica 128.

209 *Castigos* XII:16. See also XXXI:18.

advisor explains that he who fights his anger (*khashm*) with forgiveness (*ʿafū*) resembles prophets (*anbiyāʾ*) and saints (*awliyāʾ*), and he adds that no one will be saved on the Day of Judgment, except for those who have practiced forgiveness (*ʿafū*).[210] Elsewhere he quotes a prophetic saying stating that forbearance (*ḥilm*) and forgiveness (*ʿafū*) have the same value before God as fasting and praying.[211] In the *De institutione* we read that "God loves the practice of mercy and the passing of just judgment (*miseridcordiam et iudicium*) more than sacrifices."[212] Moreover, the advisor also refers repeatedly to the beneficial effect of forgiveness on the stability of a king's rule.[213] Koziol argues that, in Carolingian thought, the ruler's justice always meant a discretionary justice that "required not the consistent application of rules but the moral authority to decide when to apply judgment and when mercy."[214] Showing mercy, he adds, thus became part of the (liturgical) manifestation of the ruler's imitation of divine (discretionary) justice.[215] For Koziol, the "recognition that maintaining order required flexibility and discretion explains why early medieval writers so often defined royal justice by rehearsing a litany of virtues; for royal (or princely) justice could not be subsumed under a single, constant quality."[216]

However, the four present advisors do not depict forgiveness purely as a religious obligation or an act of benevolent rulership, and their promotion of it is not merely an attempt to tame a reckless ruler, as has been argued for the Byzantine *Mirror* tradition and the courtly literature of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Europe.[217] Instead, they recognize the practical advantages that forgiveness can bear for a ruler. For instance, the *Risāla*'s advisor emphasizes the crucial role that granting forgiveness can play in gaining people's gratitude and loyalty.[218] In both the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* and the *De institutione*, we

210 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 40–41.
211 Ibid., 43–44. See ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 480.
212 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* VI, I. 6–7.
213 Ibid., III, I. 46–47, and VI, I. 5–6.
214 Koziol, *Begging pardon* 217.
215 Ibid., 229–234.
216 Ibid., 219–220.
217 See Dagron, *Emperor and priest* 14–19, and Jaeger, *Courtliness* 3. See also Jiří Cejpek, Folk-literature 662, who argues that Iranian "moralistic and didactic literature of all ages has always tried to impress upon those in power that the ancient and praiseworthy models advocate a benevolent form of government."
218 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 486. Also, in the *Siyāsat-nāma* the propagation of forgiveness is not free from practical considerations, as the advisor argues that punishing officials causes them to lose their honour in the eyes of the public, while forgiving them will make them more attentive to their conduct in the future. See Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 166.

find references to the dichotomy of forgiveness and anger (or vengefulness) that exalts the just ruler's power (to forgive) and forbearance by acknowledging the injustice of the perpetrator. The concept of *ḥilm*, which in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* is defined as the virtue of forgivingness,[219] has been described by various scholars as a pivotal element of Islamic ethics that was moreover often linked to rulership. In his seminal study on the *Ethico-religious concepts in the Qurʾān*, Izutsu argues that *ḥilm*, as the abstention from revenge, was "adopted by Islām as the central point of its moral system."[220] Izutsu sheds light on the special relevance of *ḥilm* for rulership when he explains that "*ḥilm* is a particular behavior pattern backed by a clear consciousness of one's own superiority and power."[221] The fact that, in the Quran, *ḥilm* represents a divine attribute, as for example in Q 2:225, Q 2:235, Q 3:155, and Q 33:51, adds to its significance.[222] This might be compared to the *imperator felix* image that is quoted at the end of the *De institutione*, according to which rulers are blessed

> when they hesitate to take revenge (*uindicant*) and readily forgive (*ignoscant*); when they carry out such a revenge because of the necessity of ruling and for the benefit of the public (*pro necessitate regendi et utendi re publica*) and not to satisfy a hostile hatred; when they grant forgiveness (*ueniam*) not to let unfairness go unpunished, but out of hope for improvement (*spem correptionis*); when they balance the drastic measures that they are often forced to decree with the mildness of mercy and an abundance of good deeds (*misericordiae lenitate et beneficiorum largitate*).[223]

In the moment of forgiveness, the ruler's body natural and his body political seem to be identical. Forgiveness is a political act "for the benefit of the public" and the improvement of the subjects. Yet forgiveness operates in the realm of the body natural where it suppresses the anger that the ruler feels at every violation of the law as if the law was, in the Foucauldian sense, an extension of his body. Only the advisor in the *De regis persona* seems to explicitly propose a contrary opinion, as he differentiates between crimes committed against the

219 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 239.
220 Izutsu, *Ethico-religious concepts* 69.
221 Izutsu, *God and man* 208.
222 For *ḥilm* in the *Kitāb al-adab al-kabīr*, see Daiber, Ausdruck griechischer Ethik 278. For more on *ḥilm*, see Pellat, Ḥilm; Griffel, Moderation; and Goldziher, *Muslim studies* II–44.
223 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* XVII, I. 28–34.

body natural and the body politic by arguing that those who offend against the "divine order (*divinis praeceptum*)" do not deserve to be forgiven seventy-seven times, as suggested by Matt 18.21–22.[224]

The sensitivity of the issue of the ruler's exercise of forgiveness lies in its impact on justice. The virtue of forgiveness implies that in some cases the ruler is meant to abstain from corrective measures although the culpability of the accused is recognized. This suggests again that the justice that rulers are advised to aim for through their rulings is arguably of a different nature than the balance that Aristotle had in mind. Ultimately, the tension between (reciprocal) justice and forgiveness makes for a precarious balancing act, as the ruler has to avoid slipping into the vice of injustice. A case in point: In the *Castigos* the paternal advisor declares explicitly that forgiveness "is a very good thing for the one who uses it well, but it is a very bad thing and very damaging (*dannosa*) for the one who uses it badly and ignorantly."[225] The four advisors try to clarify how a ruler ought to practically navigate the moments where forgiveness and justice are mutually exclusive. For instance, we have seen above that the *De institutione*'s advisor urges his ruler "not to let unfairness go unpunished, but out of hope for improvement."[226] In the *Risāla* the advisor admonishes the young ruler to both avoid extreme punishments and prevent his mercy from leading to "the crippling of the law (*taʿṭīl al-ḥuqūq*)."[227] The most extensive treatment of this matter occurs in chapter XII of the *Castigos* where the paternal advisor proposes a series of conditions for the pardoning of a perpetrator, which he defines as an exclusive right of the ruler.[228] Apart from a few ethical considerations regarding the culprit's motives and the extent of his remorse, the list betrays a strong sense of expediency as the paternal advisor urges the young ruler to consider how he himself might be able to benefit from choosing forgiveness over punishment. Among other things, the paternal advisor mentions ways a pardoned criminal might help the young ruler in combat.[229] The *De regis persona*, attributed to Hincmar of Reims, even contains an entire chapter on the necessary "discretion" in the granting of forgiveness, in which the advisor reproduces Ambrosius' explanation of Deut 19:13: "Show no pity." Ambrosius argues that "levity in forgiveness provides an incentive to

224 Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 847D.
225 *Castigos* XII:14.
226 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* XVII, I. 28–34.
227 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 480.
228 *Castigos* XII:18.
229 Ibid., XII:22–25.

do wrong (*facilitas enim veniae incentivum tribuit delinquendi*)."[230] The ruler's exercise of forgiveness that is predicated on suppression of the body natural's anger and urge for revenge thus becomes a very expedient tool for the body politic's interests.

In conclusion we might say that while the texts, through their virtue catalogues, intervene to various degrees in the rulers' personal conduct, mostly in order to show them the way to salvation, they are generally focused on the political impact of their actions. The *Mirrors*' virtue catalogues thus seem to combine the fallible nature of the ruler as a person—that is, his body natural—with the indispensable and transpersonal institution of rulership—the ruler's body politic. In fact, *Mirrors*' virtue catalogues are where the idea of the infallible body politic is formulated and presented to the ruler in the form of a list of recommended traits, or even a list of demands that he must fulfill in order to meet the ideal of the body politic. This is nowhere as clear as in the *Risāla* where the virtue catalog can easily be read as a warning about the numerous ways in which the addressee's virtues are perpetually on the brink of descending into vices if they are not moderated.[231] The subversive power that *Mirrors* display through their unapologetically normative virtue catalogues prompts Judith Ferster's reading of the phrase "governance of princes" as a programmatic pun for the entire genre.[232] These attempts at constructing and defending the prestige and dignity of the office by shielding, covering and 'veiling' the body natural are further supported by the *Risāla*'s advice to hide the ruler's consideration and decision-making processes from the public's eye, and to carefully regulate the sight of and access to the ruler himself. The ruler's spatial separation, which will be discussed in more detail toward the end of this chapter, is significantly more prominent in the *Risāla* than in any of the other three *Mirrors*, where this idea is expressed in a more implicit fashion. This might be reflective of the introduction of new ceremonial practices at the caliphal courts in the late Umayyad period.[233] Finally, regardless of whether we construe *Mirrors*' virtue catalogues as the place where body natural and body politic meet or as the place where the latter is formed, this analysis has shown that they are not simply an end unto themselves. These virtue catalogues do not present mere philosophical, ethical or even just religious ideals, even though they tend

230 Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 846C.

231 See 135 *et passim*.

232 Ferster, *Fictions of advice* 40. Ferster goes as far as characterizing the prescriptive nature of the virtues demanded from rulers in *Mirrors* as "a discipline of the kind Foucault describes as the regimen of prisoners in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*" (45).

233 See El Cheikh, ʿAbbāsid ceremonial 356–362.

to be based on such, but they offer, to different degrees, practical solutions for government and recipes for the creation of the ruler's image. This reaffirms the impression that *Mirrors* are to be seen as vademecums of rulership, rather than treatises on political philosophy or ethics.

2 Roles of the Ideal Ruler

"*Rex a recte regendo vocatur*"—the king receives his name from reigning 'rightly'. Thus, as we learned, Isidore of Seville explained the meaning of kingship. But what does it mean to reign 'rightly' in the eyes of our advisors? We can assume that the ruler would have to possess all or some of the virtues that have already been discussed. What concrete tasks does reigning entail? What are the duties our advisors expect a ruler to fulfill? The aim of these questions is to produce an account of the roles that are attributed to rulers in *Mirrors*. On the one hand, the term 'role' emphasizes the specific ideals and contexts that come with the various duties of a ruler, while on the other hand, it reflects the potential distance between the illustration of royal activity in the text and the actual reach of the ruler's authority. *Mirrors* usually depict a multiplicity of royal duties or roles. Which role(s) each author chooses to mention, or give weight to, often depends on the specific historical context. What the following analysis wants to elucidate is the recurrence—at least nominally—of various roles in all or most of the *Mirrors* under investigation, as well as the ways in which each role manifests itself in each *Mirror*. The *Mirrors* display a distinct constancy in terms of the roles that they expect rulers to fulfill. This is largely in accord with what we have previously observed in terms of the traits that advice literature demands from an ideal ruler. Ultimately, both observations seem to confirm the existence of a certain ideal model of monocratic rulership that was present among the societies that could draw on the Late Antique heritage. However, while these traits and roles seem to constitute a perennial catalog of themes for *Mirrors*, the following comparisons will suggest that, according to historical context, advisors give them different weight or discuss them to multiple effects. The concrete regal roles that have been identified in the four *Mirrors* studied here include those of military commander, head of state, judge, educator, and religious leader.[234]

234 For an analysis of a very similar set of royal roles, see Westermann, Sacred kingship. Goodenough, Political philosophy 66, mentions that in Stobaeus' compilations we find a passage attributed to Diotogenes, in which he enumerates the duties of kingship,

Moreover, all four advisors paint their rulers as vicegerents of the divine and as soteriological figures.

Thinking about the ruler's roles makes us attentive to a number of things that come with his performance of different duties, such as the subjects' perceptions of him, his approach to the different duties, and the spaces and contexts in which he exercises them. The analysis of the roles that the advisors of our *Mirrors* attribute to their rulers allows us to shed light on two sets of questions. First, by looking at regal roles we understand what place in the cosmos the advisors assign to their rulers. In practice, this means that we are dealing with two types of relationships: the rulers' relationship to the divine, which carries implications for both their legitimacy and dependency, and their relationship vis-à-vis their subjects, which tells us about the aims of rulership and its effects on people. In both cases the underlying question is addressed as to how authors of *Mirrors* use their texts to define what rulership consists of and what its goals, extents, limits, capacities, and duties are. The second set of questions deals with the concrete threats, especially through betrayal and deceit within the realm or the court, against which the advisors warn the rulers. Through the analysis of regal roles, we will gain insights into what advice advisors offer regarding the sometimes subtle challenges that they imagine that the rulers are confronted with on a daily basis before they can even think about their subjects' salvation.

2.1 *The Ruler's Place in the Cosmos*

As we have come to expect from pre-modern political thought, the four texts under consideration imagine forms of rulership that are intimately linked to notions of the divine. As suggested above, divine or sacralized rulership can adopt a variety of forms and links with the divine.[235] None of the *Mirrors* under investigation portrays a God-like ruler or demands explicitly that the ruler become the object of worship of his subjects. Instead, the four rulers partake in the divine through vice-regency, as representatives of God on earth, and as images of the divine that ought to be imitated. As a result, the four *Mirrors* all consider their recipients to be divinely chosen. The *De institutione*'s advisor even explicitly rejects the idea that a ruler might inherit his office from his predecessors. This idea is conveyed, for instance, throughout the entirety of the *Castigos*'s seventh ("The kingdom is not conferred by humans, but by God in Whose hand all kingdoms rest") and eighth chapters ("The royal power (*potestati regali*), which is not appointed if not by God, must be devotedly

including acting as a military commander, dispensing justice and supervising the cult of the gods.

235 See 14.

and faithfully obeyed by all subjects"). In the former, the paternal advisor also quotes Prov 8:14–16, which is similarly used in other Carolingian *Mirrors*, such as the *Via regia* and the *De regis persona*.[236] In practice however, all four *Mirrors* were written for dynasties in which inheritance of office was the rule. From the rulers' election by God the advisors derive the duty to obey them. For instance, in the *Castigos*, the paternal advisor states that it is God who causes people to be born as kings or paupers and he argues that the fear of God makes it obligatory to "fear one's king who occupies God's place on earth in the realm in which He placed him."[237] The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor plainly declares that because the ruler has been appointed by God "it is mandatory to obey and fear him."[238] As proxies of the divine, obedience toward them is considered tantamount with obedience toward God, which is ultimately a requirement for salvation.

In addition to the office, the ruler is endowed with a certain power or grace. In the *De institutione*, for instance, as it is the case for most Carolingian *Mirrors*, the ruler's temporal *ministerium* comes with a power (*potestas*) that originates in God.[239] In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, where we are confronted with what has been termed the 'mixed theory of the caliphate' according to which caliph and sultan are largely concurrent,[240] the advisor explains that kingship (*pādshāhī*) is given alongside *farr-i īzidī*, the divine grace, without which no ruler can rule.[241] The advisor mentions a list of expressions of *farr* that includes such virtues or abilities as sharpness of mind (*tīzhūshī*) and horsemanship (*suwārī*), as well as certain customs such as the frequent reading of reports (*akhbār*) and biographies of kings (*siyar al-mulūk*).[242] Apart from the notions of vice-regency and divine election, the advisors of the four *Mirrors* agree in the depiction of their rulers as leaders of communities of believers. As such it is their duty, as we will discuss shortly, to lead the members of their community to salvation, whether on their own or in collaboration with other religious figures

236 See Anton, *Herrscherethos* 357 n. 2.

237 *Castigos* I:39, and X:5.

238 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 171. Elsewhere the advisor quotes two passages from the Quran (Q 4:62; and Q 3:25) that convey the same message (82). See also Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 294.

239 Jonas d' Orléans, *De institutione regia* VIII, I. 24–27.

240 See also 103. In al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 81, the advisor refers to the sultan not only with the caliphal title of "shadow of God on earth (*ẓill allāh fī l-arḍ*)," which, as he explains in Persian, identifies the ruler as "God's delegate (*bar-gumāshta-yi khudā*) over His creation," but also explicitly as "God's caliph (*khalīfa-yi allāh*)" (131).

241 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 81. In the context of kingship the old Persian concept of *farr* denotes a divine gift that marks legitimate kingship and secures its success. See also Gnoli, Farr(ah); and Yarshater, Common beliefs 345–346.

242 Ibid., 127.

and institutions. As a result, their policies for this world are at times formulated in religious terms. In the *Risāla*, for example, the advisor characterizes the upcoming military struggle as a holy war against the enemies of God[243] and he continuously employs religiously charged terms to discuss the significance of subjects' loyalty.[244] Notwithstanding al-Qāḍī's argument,[245] however, references to the divine or people's piety and worship play only a subordinate role in the *Risāla*, probably as a result of the work's close dependence on the immediate occasion for its composition. This is suggested by—among other things—the omission of justice as a virtue despite the fact that it is significant in the Quran, particularly for those who judge and command others. In fact, it seems that the advisor is merely covering a number of basic aspects that establish the ruler's role as part of "His deputyship (*khulāfatihi*)" and his affiliation to "the faith/law (*dīn*) of God" via his election by God, before he moves on to advice on how to stay in power.[246] In terms of specific advice on pious conduct, the *Risāla* merely contains such general recommendations as fighting one's desires, being thankful for all of God's gifts, and supplicating Him for help.[247] And while the advisor urges the young ruler to read a part of the Quran every morning because it offers "the healing (*shifāʾ*) of the hearts from their sicknesses, the removal of the devil's whisperings and frivolities (*wasāwis al-shayṭān wa-safāsifihi*), and the brightness of the signs of enlightenment (*maʿālim al-nūr*) that illuminates everything as an act of guidance and mercy (*hudā wa-raḥma*) for all those who believe," he also seems to suggest a more profane benefit when advising him "to reiterate (*turaddid*) your opinion (*raʾyaka*) in its verses and adorn your speech (*tuzayyin lafẓaka*) by reading it."[248]

Altogether, the depiction of rulers as vicegerents of the divine and leaders of God's flock comes with a strong claim of absolute legitimacy and authority. As leaders of a community of believers, these rulers were, as Höfert argues, considered to be in charge of *Kultaufsicht*; i.e., 'the supervision of the cult'. With regard to the Umayyad caliphs, Höfert describes the role of cult supervision as entailing participation in theological debates, overseeing or leading faith-related practices (such as the organization of pilgrimages or the delivery of

243 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 474.
244 See, e.g., 79 *et passim*.
245 Al-Qāḍī, Religious foundation.
246 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 474.
247 See ibid., 477 and 494–495.
248 Ibid., 477.

sermons), and passing legal judgments (based on divine laws).[249] Yet, with the exception of the role as judge, which will be discussed shortly, the four *Mirrors* studied here do not specifically refer to any of these duties. In the case of the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, this omission can be traced back to the clerical background of the works' alleged authors and their own claims to authority in cult supervision. The debates surrounding the demarcation of the sphere of the ruler and that of the 'religious' authorities have a particularly strong bearing on the *De institutione*, where the advisor goes to great lengths to differentiate between the temporal (political) power (*potestas*) of the ruler and the transcendent moral authority (*auctoritas*) of the bishops.[250] In the *Castigos*, the paternal advisor depicts the clergy and the ruler as the two arms (*braços*) of a single body or two daggers (*cuchillos*) that sharpen one another. Both clerics and rulers are expected to act as shepherds that care for their flock, chastise them, enforce piety in them and lead them by example in order to secure their salvation.[251] However, the paternal advisor adds that if the clergy "fails with its power (*poder*), it must ask the temporal dagger [i.e. the king] for help."[252] The portrayal of the ruler as the work's author finally suggests his involvement in theological debates. A *Mirror* in which *Kultaufsicht* seems to be considered more definitively part of the ruler's duties is the *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya*, where the advisor demands that the caliph engage in theological debates with heretics and skeptics.[253] This finding arguably confirms the prevalent reading of the work as an attempt to salvage or bolster the institution of the caliphate.

Another entry on Höfert's list of duties of imperial monotheist kingship that is omitted in the *Mirrors* under consideration is the drafting and administration of the law (*cura legis*).[254] In fact, in none of the four texts do the ruler's duties in the legal sphere seem to include any legislative aspect. In the *Risāla*, for instance, unless we are to consider the ruler's *ra'y* as referring to legal matters, there is no indication as to how laws are decided on. It has been argued that in

249 Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 295–298. See also Dagron, *Emperor and priest* 13–124; Scheiner, Monarchische Aspekte 589; and Widengren, Sacral kingship.

250 On the relationship between *potestas* and *auctoritas* see also Dubreucq's introduction to Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* 74.

251 *Castigos* XVII:6–12.

252 Ibid., XVII:13. For a similar example from the *De institutione*, see 133. For an analysis of the entire passage, see Nieto Soria, Imágenes religiosas 724–725. On the duties of the clergy, see XVII:17–20.

253 Al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 18.

254 Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 423–463.

the relevant period, legal practice was already strongly informed by legal scholars.[255] Rincón argues for the Castilian case that, with few exceptions, the ruler's role as legislator only entered *Mirror* literature in the second half of the fifteenth century.[256] In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, too, no mention is made of whether the ruler possesses legal authority. The importance that the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor attributes to the *ʿulamāʾ* suggests that the text largely reflects what is known about legal authority during the Abbasid period.[257] The *De institutione* even explicitly excludes the *cura legis* from the list of regal tasks by referring to Deut 17:14–20,[258] a passage that plays an important role in the Carolingians' understanding of kingship and the episcopate's mission to limit the ruler's legal authority.[259]

Coming back to the ruler's relationship with the divine, the advisors remind their rulers of the basic human duty to embrace the virtue of piety; worship; and obey divine precepts. Yet occasionally they dedicate some words to the particular relationship between God and His deputy. In general, piety in the present *Mirrors* denotes fear and love of God, knowledge of the divine and of the Last Judgment, obedience toward God and the divine laws, and gratefulness for God's mercy. For instance, the three main components of godliness in the *Castigos* are fear of God (*themor de Dios*), knowledge/awareness of Him (*conosçimiento*), and true belief (*creençia*). They are mentioned among the most important 'weapons' (*armas*) that humans can resort to in fending off the devil. The other weapons are "firmness and strength of heart (*firmeza e fortaleza de coraçón*)," justice (*justiçia*), humility (*homildança*), and chastity (*castidat*).[260] The paternal advisor of the *Castigos* defines *piedat* as the grace (*graçia*) that God placed in people's souls and that enables them to 'know' God.[261] He also states that all good deeds are "born from piety."[262] The term used for piety in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* is *ṭāʿa*, which carries the connotation of 'obedience' or 'devo-

255 See 147 *et passim*.

256 Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 28–29.

257 See Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 346–348; and 358.

258 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 22–37.

259 Anton, Gesellschaftsspiegel 99–100. Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 423–463, refers explicitly to the Paris synod, the contents of which the *De institutione* reflects, as an attempt by the Carolingian episcopate to wrest the *cura legis* from the emperors.

260 *Castigos* I:16.

261 Ibid., XXIX:1–2.

262 Ibid., XXIX:17. As mentioned before, *piedat* can also occur in the context of forgiveness. See 150 n. 204. On piety as (an instrument for the attainment of) the knowledge of God in Christianity, see Kaufmann-Bühler, Eusebeia 1024–1030.

tion'. In this context it denotes the practical side of *īmān* (faith or belief) and includes praying (*namāz*), fasting (*rūza*), and abstaining from everything that is forbidden (*ḥarām*).[263]

Many of the aforementioned virtues, such as forgiveness and the abstention from desire, are part of piety.[264] In the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the advisors closely link the ruler's piety to his justice. *Pietas* is one of the *De institutione*'s three fundamental royal virtues and pertains to a number of components of the extended definition of *iustitia*.[265] In the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* we learn that the two components of faith (*īmān*) are justice (*ʿadl*)—in relation to one's subjects—and piety (*ṭāʿa*)—in relation to God.[266] In the work's second part the advisor declares *dīn* (faith, divine law) and kingship (*pādshāhī*) to be twins.[267] This famous analogy suggests an essential connection between the two institutions that provides a strong divine legitimacy for the continuous existence of rulership. The advisor continues explaining that "the best thing a ruler can bring about is good *dīn*"—i.e., correct worship and adherence to the divine laws—for example, by enforcing piety among his subjects and strengthening the "glory of Islam (*ʿizz-i Islām*) and the *sunna* of the prophet" in the borderlands of his realm.[268] We might thus say that in the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* justice and piety emerge as the most significant regal duties because they determine the ruler's conduct vis-à-vis the entities to and for which he is responsible. By placing piety next to justice at the top of the catalog of regal virtues, the advisors suggest, among other things, that a ruler must understand the limits of his power, both with regard to who is more powerful, i.e. God, and those who are less powerful, i.e. his subjects. In other words, the advisors of the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* urge their rulers to understand their position in terms of their relations to the divine, whom they must fear and worship, and their subjects, whom they must not

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263 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 13–14. On the notion of piety in Islam, see Kinberg, Piety.

264 See above. According to Nieto Soria, Imágenes religiosas 719–720, Castilian representations of the (most) virtuous king (*rex virtuosissimus*) presented the love of God as the highest virtue on which all other virtues hinge. Also in the *Castigos* the love and fear for God are crucial catalysts for virtuous conduct. See, e.g., *Castigos* XIII:1–3.

265 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 75–78.

266 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 13–14. On justice as a divine attribute of the ruler in the *Sirr al-asrār*, see Rosenthal, Political justice 99.

267 Ibid., 106. See also Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 80. On the Sasanian sources for this conception of the ruler's control over religious affairs, see Shaked, From Iran to Islam 31–40.

268 Ibidem. In al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 19, the relationship between justice and piety is similarly close. In fact, notions of piety, such the ruler's resistance to desires (*shahwa*) and his absolute certainty in matters of faith, is what seems to define justice in the *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya*.

oppress, unless doing so ultimately leads to a more just society. These definitions of the ruler's position ought also to be read in the context of the aforementioned role of *Mirrors* as attempts to tame the absolute power of (sacralized) monocratic rulers,[269] as well as indications of the authors' understanding of their own position vis-à-vis the divine.

Finally, in both works the advisors seem to define piety as one of justice's forms of expression, in the sense that they envisage a just ruler who corrects his subjects by both imposing piety on them—i.e., admonishing them to a life lived in accordance with divine precepts—and acting as a role model for this kind of conduct. The notion of the ruler's role as an example of virtuousness is a common feature of *Mirrors*. In the *De institutione regia*, the advisor declares that

> since the king gets his name from reigning (*rex a regendo dicitur*), he must first of all seek to cleanse, with the help of the grace of Christ, himself and his house from vile works (*operibus nequam*) and perform many good deeds, so that the other subjects might always take him as a good example (*bonum exemplum*).[270]

The paternal advisor of the *Castigos* explains that a ruler must avoid sin, because "everybody pays attention to what he says and does and everybody beholds him as an example and he is the mirror (*espejo*) in which all others consider themselves."[271]

In the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the relationship of justice and piety changes fundamentally. In fact, the advisor quotes a *ḥadīth* according to which "one day of justice (*ʿadl*) by a sultan is better than sixty years of worship (*ʿibādat*)."[272] Furthermore, the advisor provides a list of exemplary rulers of the past,[273] all of whom belong to the canon of pre-Islamic Persian kings that form a topos on ideal kingship in Arabic, Persian and even Greek writings on rulership.[274] Unlike many other homiletic *Mirrors* of that period, which according to al-Azmeh display a sacralization in Islamic terms of the Late Antique rep-

269 See 151.

270 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 8–12.

271 *Castigos* XIII:15–16. For further examples from the Castilian *Mirror* tradition, see Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 10 n. 5.

272 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 124. The *Baḥr al-fawāʾid* contains a variation of this *ḥadīth*. See Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 297.

273 Ibid., 84–96.

274 See al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 85; Knauth, *Altiranische Fürstenideal* 3–13; and Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 288.

ertoire of royal enunciations, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor staunchly places the pre-Islamic Persian rulers alongside authorities from the Quran and *ḥadīth*, indicating that it is the supreme justice of their rule, rather than their piety, that marks them as exemplary rulers. As part of the build-up to the passage on Persian rulers, the advisor seeks to legitimize his choice of 'non-Islamic' examples for the illustration of ideal rulership by quoting a *ḥadīth* that explains that "kingship (*mulk*) stays with unbelief (*kufr*), but not with injustice (*ẓulm*)."[275] Through justice, he continues, these kings "have made the world habitable (*ābādān*)."[276] Following the biographies, the advisor quotes another *ḥadīth* in which the prophet explains that he was born "in the age of the just king (*al-malik al-ʿādil*)."[277] Rather than suggesting any notion of unorthodoxy, this probably goes to show the unparalleled importance of justice in the text's virtue canon. In fact, Joseph Sadan has identified this maxim in 30 texts from the sixth/twelfth century onward. In one case it is even attributed to the prophet. He construes this maxim as a purely hypothetical example that is used to stress the importance of justice and adds that very few contemporaries would have perceived this statement as unorthodox.[278] In terms of the nature of the ruler's sacralization in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* this means that rulers, regardless of whether they are Muslim or not, are part of a divine plan because—and so long as—they dispense justice and discipline (*siyāsat*) among humanity. In fact, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor explicitly mentions the exemplary *siyāsat* of the pre-Islamic Persian kings.[279] What can thus be witnessed in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, if considered a single work, is the fusion and adaptation of multiple traditions that is so typical for the period.

The ruler's relationship toward subjects is primarily characterized by the ruler's duty to lead his subjects toward salvation. This soteriological role lies at the center of al-Azmeh's idea of monotheistic kingship. In his analysis of the tropes and archetypes of the sacralization of kingship al-Azmeh argues that in monotheistic religions, "sacralized kingship has as its task the maintenance of mundane affairs in a manner that ensures their course is constantly correc-

275 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 82. The same *ḥadīth* is quoted in Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 15.

276 Ibid., 83.

277 Ibid., 99.

278 Sadan, Community 107–115. On the concept of the just infidel in Persian *Mirrors*, see also Lingwood, *Politics* 48.

279 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 98–99. See also Leder, Aspekte 31–32. In reference to a passage of al-Ṭabarī's historical chronicle, Höfert, *Kaisertum und Kalifat* 287, speaks of a transepochal and transreligious *mulk*-discourse that proposes a model of rulership that has been legitimized by God since creation.

ted so that it is not diverted into an independent rhythm but inscribed within the rhythm of sacred time."[280] It is thus the role of good rulers to intervene whenever the perfect order that God puts in place in the moment of creation is distorted. Rulers (re-)establish order by ensuring that "subjects implement the will, pleasure, or purpose of divinity."[281] As a result of their corrective intervention, they bring about the salvation of people. We have already seen that in some cases, the ideal of the preservation of balance is conveyed through the virtue of justice. However, the soteriological duty of the ruler also encompasses several normative roles and duties that *Mirrors* urge rulers to fulfill, other than just the enforcement of pious conduct.

Given the importance of justice in the texts under consideration, one of the most common (normative) tasks required of a ruler is, again, the passing of legal decisions. The image of the ruler as a judge who punishes wrongdoers and establishes justice is a common one in sacred canonical texts. David (only in Islam) and Solomon are especially praised as exemplary judges.[282] The judiciary role gives the ruler the opportunity to establish justice through corrective measures and exercise forgiveness, and thereby exhibit some of the most crucial royal virtues, namely his justice, mercy, and emotional restraint. Moreover, the assignment of judiciary duties to the ruler is an integral part of his divine vice-regency, with the analogy of God as judge in heaven and the ruler as judge on earth appearing in almost all of the four *Mirrors*. For instance, in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the advisor warns the "terrestrial judge (*dāwar-i zamīn*)" regarding the day he will face the "celestial judge (*dāwar-i āsmān*),"[283] and the *Castigos* offers a long list of God's judgments (*juyzios*) for the young ruler to consider as ideal models.[284] On two occasions the young ruler is also urged to imitate God in terms of His mercy, since he occupies His position on earth.[285] Also the *Risāla*'s advisor, who emphasizes the importance of the judiciary role (*al-qaḍāʾ*)

280 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 36.

281 Ibid., 35.

282 See, e.g., Q 38:26 and Q 21:78–79 or 1 Kgs 3:16–28. On the role of judge as part of the (ideal) type of ruler in the Quran, see Busse, Herrschertypen 59–64.

283 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 21.

284 *Castigos* IX:21–35.

285 Ibid., XII:16; and XXXI:18. For examples of the *rey justiciero* in the Castilian *Mirror* tradition, see Peirce, Aspectos de la personalidad 20–25; and Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 27–28. For examples from the *De institutione*, see, e.g., Jonas d' Orléans, *De institutione regia* IV, I. 14–24; or 45–52. God(s) practicing as judge(s) are also found in Ancient Near Eastern polytheistic religions. See Fensham, Widow 137–138. On the link between *justitia regia* and *justitia divina* in the image of the ideal ruler in thirteenth-century Castile, see Nieto Soria, Imágenes religiosas 720–721. On this analogy, see also Eberhardt, *Via regia* 433.

because of "the momentousness of judgments and the execution of punishments (*maghālīẓ al-aḥkām wa-majārī l-ḥudūd*)" which it entails,[286] depicts the ruler acting as a judge.[287] Yet, in contrast to the other three *Mirrors*, it can hardly be argued that in the *Risāla* the subjects' salvation represents the main purpose of the ruler's involvement in jurisdiction. Instead, as a result of the dynasty's struggle for legitimacy and acceptance in the context of a situation akin to civil war, the text illustrates that the ruler can secure the subjects' obedience through a carrot-and-stick approach alternating severe punishments with generous pardons.[288]

However, punishment and reward are not the only corrective tools that the ruler has at his disposal.[289] At one point in the *Risāla* the advisor illustrates the ruler's normative role through a string of antitheses, consisting of nouns indicating problems and verbs referring to the ruler's corrective measures. The advisor urges the ruler to inform himself about the people's (*ʿāma*) needs "in order to revive the poor among them (*ʿadīmahum*), restore the broken (*kasīrahum*), straighten the bent, educate the ignorant (*jāhilahum*) and seek to better the corrupted (*fāsidahum*)."[290] The range of problems and solutions suggests that it is the ruler's duty (and ability) to rectify all kinds of wrongs with all kinds of suitable measures. By stating that rulers are given "a treasury (*bayt-i al-māl*), a sword and a whip … to keep the people out of hell," the advisor of the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* includes the ruler's role in the development of his subjects' economic security as part of his soteriological duty.[291] Elsewhere, however, the role of leading people to God is explicitly reserved for the prophets.[292] This means that, while the work's first part charges the ruler with the salvation of his subjects, its second part explicitly attributes the soteriological mission to the prophets and restricts the ruler's role to the securing of peace and prosperity in the world. According to Arjomand, this 'theory of the two powers' developed as a result of the "bifurcation of sovereignty into caliphate

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286 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 508.

287 Ibid., 485–486. The advisor also mentions the appointment of a specialized judge for army matters (508), which probably refers to the early practice of deployment of judges to garrison towns, where they also fulfilled the role of arbitrators and administrators. See Hallaq, *Origins and evolution* 55.

288 Ibid., 486.

289 The parallel mention of punishment and reward, or positive and negative motivation, occurs, for instance, in al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 107 and 132, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 499; and Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* XVII, I. 32–34.

290 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 493. For an analysis of this passage, see Schönig, *Sendschreiben* 91.

291 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 28.

292 Ibid., 81.

and sultanate" and "represented the synthesis between Islam and Perso-Indian statecraft."[293] However, Arjomand adds that starting from the seventh/thirteenth century this theory was modified by the ideal of 'Islamic royalism', which envisions a ruler (sultan) who is responsible for both political and religious order.[294] These various developments might explain the simultaneous presence of two seemingly contradictory views on the ruler's eschatological role in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, which combined various traditions and, potentially, different texts. Yet ultimately these views are not entirely incompatible, given that both of the work's parts agree that justice is the ruler's primary objective and that a just, peaceful and prosperous society is a prerequisite for the people's salvation.

In the *Castigos* the ruler's soteriological role also combines a multiplicity of normative roles:

> People who are well educated (*bien castigadas*) obey God and their terrestrial lord, whereas the badly educated do not obey Him and despise their lord .... Blessed are the people whom God gives a king or lord who knows how to educate (*castigar*) and command them and who distances himself from (*estranne*) and chastises (*escarmiente*) evil people for the bad that they do and rewards the good deeds of good people.[295]

What emerges as the principal way in which the ruler executes his soteriological mission in the *Castigos* is the education (*castigar*) of the people. The entire text highlights the giving of lessons, chastisements, and commandments. To find such an emphasis on the education of the people in a Christian context is not unusual considering the growing impact that Pope Gregory's *Regula pastoralis*—a treatise on the duties and the role of the clergy that proposes a view of the bishop as rector of the people who leads them to salvation through instruction and admonition—exerted on the medieval Christian understanding of the role of the ruler from Charlemagne's reign onward.[296] As the presumed author of the *Castigos*, Sancho assumes the role of the educator who teaches by example.[297] Ghislaine Fournès sees this self-ascription by the mon-

293 Arjomand, Perso-Indian statecraft 461.

294 Ibid., 463.

295 *Castigos* L:33–36.

296 Under Charlemagne; for example, in Alcuin's *Admonitio generalis*, the role of the educator was increasingly applied to the Carolingian kings. See Suchan, Gerechtigkeit in Christlicher Verantwortung 7–13. On the Carolingian rulers' duty to correct others through *admonitio*, see de Jong, *Penitential state* 131–135.

297 The notion of the ruler's role as an example of virtuousness is a common feature of *Mir-*

arch as his attempt to claim for himself, in the context of his power struggle with the nobility, the normative authority of a moral and religious guide for the people.[298] This claim is implicitly justified by the assumption that his (military) success sanctions his own moral qualities. A glance at the text's list of model-educators that the ruler should seek to imitate, which includes Christ and Moses, indicates the soteriological nature that the paternal advisor intends for the young ruler.[299] This supports Palafox' conclusion that the *Castigos* is a testament to the (self-ascribed) messianic mission of Sancho as it depicts Sancho's contribution to the 'Reconquista' of Spain (namely the conquest of Tarifa) as indicating his role as savior, leading mankind in its return to paradise.[300] The construction of the analogy between Christ and Sancho in the *Castigos* is an example of what al-Azmeh describes as the sacralization of history through the production of "equivalences between textual and contemporary personalities and institutions."[301]

The necessity for the ruler to correct and guide his subjects in order to secure their salvation is premised on the assumption that they would otherwise go astray. Indeed, the image that the four *Mirrors* studied here draw of humanity is distinctly negative and dominated by violence. For example, the *Risāla*'s advisor urges his ruler to beware of "the evil force of character that is latent (*quwwat ṭibāʿ al-sūʾ al-kāmina*) in mankind like the fire that hides in a solid stone; if it is beaten a spark flashes, a flash blazes and a flame burns."[302] Ultimately, this negative image of mankind in the four *Mirrors* suggests, a Hobbesian fashion, the necessity of rulership as a consequence of discordant human nature.[303] It legitimizes the sort of unjust violence mentioned above in the context of justice and stylizes the ruler as his subjects' only hope for salvation. This "pessimistic anthropology," as al-Azmeh describes it,[304] is particularly evident

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rors. See Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 8–12; and *Castigos* XIII:15–16. For further examples from the Castilian *Mirror* tradition, see Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en 10 n. 5. For a more general discussion of this matter, see Johannesson, Portrait of the prince 16–22. While not explicitly Castilla stated in educational terms, 'Islamic' *Mirrors* too, consider the ruler's conduct as having an exemplary force on his subjects. See, e.g., al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 109–110.

298 Fournès, Idéalité royale 308.

299 *Castigos* L:29–30.

300 Palafox, *Éticas del exemplum* 33–60.

301 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 43.

302 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 482.

303 See Hobbes, *On the citizen* 29. However, this is not to say that the present advisors do not also claim other, sometimes superordinate reasons for the necessary existence of a monocratic ruler, such as divine will. See, e.g., al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 5–6.

304 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 115.

in the *Castigos* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*. As noted before, in the latter the advisor concludes from the people's inability to coexist peacefully the need for the ruler's exercise of *siyāsat*. As part of an extended 'history of mankind' that starts with Adam and ends in the era of Sancho, the *Castigos* refers to the genesis of Jewish kingship as a consequence of the rampant violence among the Israelites.[305] The patristic tradition offers a similar account of the origins of kingship linking it to the Fall of Man.[306] While there is no explicit reference to this idea in the *De institutione*, the work picks up on one of its components. In fact, when the *De institutione*'s advisor argues that rulers are given their position under the condition "that they recognize the people of Christ (*plebem Christi*) as equal to themselves in nature," he points to the basic equality of all humans and the original absence of hierarchies and servitude in human society that in the patristic conception was only overturned when violence and chaos took hold of society.[307]

Altogether, as vicegerents of God, rulers carry responsibility for maintaining the divine order in the world and leading people to salvation. The *Mirrors* depict their presence in the world as an absolute necessity and thereby legitimize not only their addressees and their normative measures, but monocratic rulership in general. However, the texts' emphasis on the rulers' chosenness provides not only legitimacy to the rulers' normative and restrictive interventions toward their subjects; it also suggests the rulers' dependency on a higher power and the volatility of their position. Moreover, we have seen that in some points the advisors seem to set certain limits to the ruler's roles and authorities as they negotiate their own position in the social, political or cosmological hierarchy. Many aspects of the four *Mirrors*' understanding of soteriological rulership have previously been laid out in Foucault's characterization of pastoral rule, which he developed throughout his lectures at the Collège de France. Foucault describes pre-Christian and Christian pastoral rule as organized around the relationship between God and king, whereby the latter, as the subaltern shepherd, is entrusted with the flock of his subjects by God and must guide them to salvation. The pastoral ruler has to provide for his flock's subsistence and directly intervene in his subjects' conduct. Foucault distinguishes the pre-

305 *Castigos* X:22–32. Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 117–118, points to the existence of numerous interpretations and adaptations of this Jewish history. For examples from the Castilian *Mirror* tradition of such a pessimistic anthropology and the regal duty of corrective intervention that results from it, see Rincón, Espejos de príncipes en Castilla 19 n. 78–80.

306 See Anton, *Herrscherethos* 56–57; Tang, Royal misdemeanour 102; and Töpfer, *Urzustand und Sündenfall* 93–122.

307 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* V, I. 79–80.

Christian from the Christian form of pastoral rule in a number of ways, none of which, however, seem to be particularly relevant for the present study. Pastoral rule then is defined as the governing of men; that is, to lead, monitor, and manipulate them, which is different from reigning or ruling over a territory or a state.[308]

The allegory of the pastoral ruler traces its origins back to Antiquity and is also found in many 'Islamic' *Mirrors*.[309] Etymologically, the image of the shepherd is also evoked by the aforementioned concept of *siyāsat*. However, it seems that, unlike *siyāsat* with its emphasis on discipline and punishment, in the Christian discourse pastoral rule—according to Peter Brown—was primarily understood as a particularly benevolent form of leadership that had initially only been attributed to the priesthood.[310] This convergence, in the Christian context, of the spheres of the bishop and the ruler in the role of the shepherd might be read as another symptom of the power struggle between church and crown that we see playing out, for instance, in the *De institutione*. Yet, in terms of their meanings and connotations, the various references to the allegory of the pastoral ruler in *Mirrors* from both traditions seem to agree on the basic assumption of the dependent, helpless and 'sheepish' nature of the ruler's subjects and their need for superior guidance by an informed and adept leader; that is, someone who not only 'knows the way', but possesses an essentially different understanding of the world.

One of the key aspects to emerge from Foucault's understanding of pastoral rule is its individualizing power or approach, which ultimately produces the individual subject so central to his theory of governmentality. In the four *Mirrors* studied here, the relationship between the ruler and his subjects might also be described as individualizing. For instance, as mentioned before, in the *Risāla* the ruler exerts an individualizing power as he seeks to redeem his subjects' needs individually and thereby gain the support of each one of them or even appoint them in his administration. In the three other *Mirrors* this notion of individualization is reflected in the definition of justice as a way of treating each subject as they deserve; that is, according to their place and role in society. On a deeper level, however, for Foucault the individualizing power of the Chris-

308 Foucault, *Security* 115–226.

309 See, e.g., Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 27, 28 and 31; Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 16; and Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 131–132. Examples from Castilian *Mirrors* include *Castigos* XIII:8 and XVII:9; *Cien capítulos* III:40–45; and *Libro de los doze sabios* IX:9–10. On the usage of the allegory of the shepherd from Antiquity to Modernity, see Peil, *Untersuchungen zur Staats- und Herrschaftsmetaphorik* 29–165.

310 Brown, *Through the eye* 504–505.

tian pastoral ruler entails the paradox that the ruler has to save his whole flock and at the same time each of its members.[311] This is where the advisors' perception of the ruler's soteriological duty differs fundamentally from Foucault's characterization of the pastoral ruler's relationship with his flock. The *Risāla*'s attention to the ruler's public image at the expense of a comprehensive attempt at correction and salvation and the pragmatic approach to justice in the other three texts, as shown above, suggest that the four *Mirrors* under consideration subordinate the issue of salvation to the just ruler's retention of power, for which they offer practical advice. This is by no means surprising, given that the authors' personal (economic) existence depended on the survival of the dynasty for which they wrote. Moreover, instead of urging the ruler to take care of all his subjects, they seem to suggest the active exclusion of certain individuals. The texts are thus also involved in the process of defining the respective communities of believers and who is to be considered a part thereof. Al-Qāḍī identifies this process in several of the letters attributed to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, specifically in their extensive treatment of the issue of obedience. This leads her to the conclusion that the Umayyads were heavily involved in defining Islam and who was to be considered part of its community.[312] With similar attempts at defining the community found in *De institutione*'s definition of justice[313] and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s passage on piety, where the advisor urges the ruler to either punish or exile impious subjects,[314] it might be argued that these mechanisms of community formation are generally linked to the conflict situations in which the *Mirrors* were produced.

2.2 *Retaining Rulership*

Our analysis so far has shown that the four *Mirrors* discuss a number of approaches, ranging from the punitive to the educative, to how rulers can fulfill their essential duty; that is, the salvation of their subjects. However, the texts also display the advisors' awareness that the rulers' soteriological mission is entirely dependent on their retention of power. Given the aforementioned circumstances in which authors were most likely to compose advice literature for monocratic rulers—that is, usually moments of social and political crises—*Mirrors* are replete with warnings about specific threats and advice for the addressees as to how to safeguard themselves. A look at the roles that the four

311 Foucault, *Security* 168–169.
312 Al-Qāḍī, Religious foundation 273.
313 See 121.
314 See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 106.

advisors attribute to their rulers reveals which are the most common threats that rulers are warned about in *Mirrors* and what approaches the advisors suggest their rulers adopt against those threats.

The advisor in *Il principe* states that "every prince ought not to have any other objective, nor hold any other thought in mind, nor consider anything else his art, than the art of war, its rules and its discipline; because it is the only art that is required from he who commands."[315] Yet warfare is hardly discussed in detail by any of the *Mirrors* presently analyzed. Eberhardt observes that while warfare is among the three regal duties mentioned by Diotogenes, *Mirrors* tend to treat the topic in very general terms; for instance, by focusing on the maintenance of the military.[316] In fact, even *Il principe* does not contain strategic or technical advice on warfare per se, but focuses on more general aspects such as the advantages of standing armies over mercenaries. Many *Mirrors*, such as the epistle attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, do not discuss military matters, with the exception of the advice to keep the soldiers satisfied by paying adequate salaries.[317] In contrast, the *Qābūs-nāma* features two chapters on warfare, the latter of which does, in fact, contain a few remarks on formations and tactics.[318] The most advice on military matters is found in the *Strategikon* attributed to Kekaumenos, which might partly be classified as a manual of warfare.[319] In the texts under consideration, only two of our four advisors mention the role of the military commander who protects his realm on the battlefield. The absence of concrete advice on military matters in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* is probably linked to the magnitude of the internecine struggles that the Seljuqs were facing at the time.[320] In the *De institutione*, where we merely come across a biblical quotation (Exod 18:21–26) that deals with the appointment of military leaders, this particular omission reflects the (episcopate's) belief that the outcome of military conflicts depends mainly on a people's morals.[321] In contrast, the *Castigos*

315 Machiavelli, *Il principe* 58.

316 Eberhardt, *Via regia* 436. On warfare (*ḥarb*) with special attention to *Mirrors*, see Cahen, Ḥarb.

317 Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 30. See also Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 134–137; and 164; *Cien capítulos* ch. XII–XVIII, *Libro de los doze sabios* ch. XXVI–XXXV; and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, Fī l-ṣaḥāba 121–122.

318 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* ch. 20; and ch. 41.

319 Regarding specialized treatises on military matters, see Scanlon, *Manual of war* 1–21. Warfare was also discussed in writings on horsemanship (*furūsīyya*). See, e.g., al-Sarraf, Close combat weapons 149–152.

320 In al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 147, the advisor even urges the ruler not to personally participate in a war.

321 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* V, I. 29–42. Other Carolingian *Mirrors*, such as the *De regis persona*, dedicate more attention to the ruler's role as military commander, although

contains an entire chapter on the preparations for war, giving advice on the conditions for success, the advantages of employing spies, and the recruitment of military leaders.[322] The fact that the paternal advisor hints at a correlation between morality and military success is not without implications for Sancho's own rule, given that he famously succeeded in conquering the city of Tarifa in September 1292.[323]

Only the *Risāla* seems to confirm the credo expressed about 750 years later in *Il principe*. Written in the wake of a battle, the *Risāla*'s emphasis on military matters and its concrete advice on strategies, formations, and weaponry is not surprising, as is the text's insistence on the preferability of a victory gained through stratagems and without loss of life that seems to be particularly suitable for the civil-war-like nature of the conflict that Marwān and his son were facing.[324] A significant part of the *Risāla*'s advice on the duties of a military leader deals with the appointment of suitable people to different positions, the delegation of tasks to them and the supervision of the execution of these tasks. Unlike military matters, the ruler's appointment and supervision of officials and servants, not only in the context of the army, but as the head of a state and/or a court, is ubiquitously discussed in the advice literature for rulers. For instance, chapter V of the *De institutione* is specifically dedicated to government officials, namely judges and scribes, and in the *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* the appointment (*wilāya*/*taqlīd*) of officials is explicitly listed among the ten duties of a ruler.[325] *Mirrors* are thus generally more concerned with the government of the state and the threats that originate from it, in particular in the context of the ruler's interaction with all its members or his management of people, and less with the things that occur outside the realm's borders.

Since rulership in *Mirrors* is mainly defined as government of the state, it pertains to the ruler's practical duties to first of all select its members. In this context, the aforementioned pessimistic anthropology that shines through in all four texts stands as a warning to the rulers to be cautious in their reliance

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the focus of the eight chapters related to warfare lies more on the issue of the 'just' war and the development of some sort of war ethics.

322 *Castigos* XLII.

323 Ibid., XXXVI:21–28.

324 In ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 498, such a victory's benefit to the ruler's reputation (*ḥusn al-dhikr*) and the return of the rebels (*dhawī al-ṣudūf*) to obedience (*ṭāʿa*) is underscored. See also, Schönig, *Sendschreiben* 81–82.

325 Al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 18. See also al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 143–145; 150 and 152; *Castigos* XI:37–38; Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, Fī l-ṣaḥāba 121; Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 30–32, Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 130–132; Machiavelli, *Il principe* 86–87; Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Adab al-kabīr* 70; and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihī, *al-ʿIqd al-farīd* 19–22.

on people. In the *Castigos* the paternal advisor even dedicates a whole chapter to the necessity of the young ruler having good insight into human nature so that he might

> know (*saber*) how to distinguish between them, how to treat each as they deserve, whom to place in which office or state, how to repay each what they deserve, whom to seek advice (*consejo*) from and from whom not, whose words to believe (*creer*) and whose not, whom to bind to your entourage (*conpanna*) and whom to remove, whom you must not trust with your affairs (*fazienda*) and whom you must trust, whom are those who love you honestly (*te aman derecha mente*) and care about your affairs and whom are those who do not love you as they should, whom you treated well and should therefore trust (*fiar*) for the good that they will reciprocate and whom you treated badly (*feziste mal*) and should therefore not trust, whom you should entrust with your secrets (*poridat*) and from whom you should hide them. You must know how to choose to whom you can entrust your body, wife, sons, castles and fortresses and whom not.[326]

The paternal advisor adds a reference to John 10:14 that reiterates the work's analogy of Sancho with Jesus.[327] Throughout the *Castigos* the paternal advisor mentions a number of types of people that the young ruler ought to avoid, including the flatterer (*lisonjero*), the fool (*nesçio*), and the traitor (*traydor*). Such lists of 'deviant' types appear in many *Mirrors*, where they seem to function as a shorthand description of the types of behavior by subjects that might endanger rulers. The *De institutione*'s advisor warns against unjust (*iniquos*), shameless (*inpudicos*) and impious (*impios*) people, as well as against traitors (*parricidas*) and perjurers (*periurantes*).[328]

Among the acts of treason against the ruler that the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* seems most preoccupied with is the revelation of his secrets.[329] In fact, he describes in detail with whom the young ruler might share his secrets and he repeatedly advises him to avoid those who are known to reveal them.[330] Also

326 *Castigos* XVI:3–6.

327 Ibid., XVI:13.

328 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 68–74. See also Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 29–30; and *Libro de los doze sabios* ch. XIII. On warnings against flatterers in Byzantine *Mirrors*, see Grünbart, Anleitung zum guten Regieren 74–75; and Hunger, *Literatur der Byzantiner* 162–163. On women, see 226 *et passim*.

329 *Castigos* XL:6.

330 *Castigos* ch. XXVIII describes "the man with whom one can share one's secret," ch. XXV

the advisor of the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* shows concern for the ability of the ruler's servants and officials to keep his secrets.[331] The *Risāla*'s advisor simply counsels the ruler to "preserve [his] secrets through concealment."[332] Elsewhere he urges him to share his secrets only with distinguished family members.[333] Ultimately, however, the advisor concedes that the veils (*al-sutūr*) and doors (*al-abwāb*) that confine and define the household will not prevent secrets from reaching the public.[334] This slightly more nuanced take on a common theme in advice literature for rulers might be attributed to the *Risāla*'s overall focus on interpersonal relations in the context of the ruler's need to distinguish between trustworthy and disloyal officials and courtiers.

A ruler's roles as judge, educator, and religious leader or head of state, as well as his soteriological mission, all imply direct interaction with subjects and officials. In Seljuq *Mirrors* this is accompanied by the aforementioned significance that is given to the ruler's personal reception of petitioners. Yet, at the same time, the four advisors seem to be acutely aware of the vulnerability of their rulers' position and the possibilities that access to the ruler can open for others. Their pessimistic anthropology means that the four texts are replete with warnings about the threats posed to rulers by their subjects and officials.[335] As a result, in many *Mirrors* from the 'Islamic' tradition the advisors seem to propose the establishment of an internal intelligence service.[336] In addition, *Mirrors* generally tend to consider cautiousness and distrust as hallmarks of rulership.[337] For instance, several chapters of the *Castigos* convey the sense that one is well-advised not to trust others, whether in the context of warfare, the divided loyalty of servants, or acts of treason in general.[338] However,

warns about "the man who reveals secrets (*mesturero*)," and ch. XXXVIII advises not to associate with "the man who presumes to give advice and to attend the [ruler's] secret without being asked."

331 In al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 160, the advisor argues that those who reveal the ruler's secrets must always be punished. He also counts the preservation of secrets among the necessary traits of a good vizier. See 177 and 180. See also Lupus of Ferrieres, Epistolae 64:22–25.

332 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 479.

333 Ibid, 481.

334 Ibid., 481–482. The paternal advisor in Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 27, explains to the young ruler that "if you utter a secret, do not consider it to be a secret any more." See also Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihī, *al-ʿIqd al-farīd* 65–67.

335 See, e.g., Lupus of Ferrieres, Epistolae 64:11–17.

336 As a result, in many *Mirrors* from the 'Islamic' tradition the advisors seem to propose the establishment of an internal intelligence service. See 123.

337 See, e.g., Kekaumenos, *Vademecum* 8.

338 *Castigos* XLII:31–34; XLV; and XL. See also Beltrán, Valor del consejo 112–120.

the *Castigos* also features a chapter that warns against the detrimental consequences of distrust (*sospecha*), although here distrustfulness seems to be primarily understood as the readiness to believe disparaging stories against others.[339] The damaging results of slander and the ruler's misguided trust in slanderous courtiers is a central topic of *Kalīla wa-Dimna*. In contrast, the paternal advisor in the epistle attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn first emphasizes the disadvantages of adopting distrust (*sūʾ al-ṭann*) as a general approach toward others, before encouraging the young ruler to closely watch his officials' conduct.[340]

One of the results of all of this is that the advisors discuss the ruler's role as head of state equally in terms of distance and separation. Hence they provide their rulers with advice on the regulation of access to them. For instance, the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* notes that

> you should not want to tie to you, nor to your entourage, or your house, or anything that is linked to you, or anybody who is indebted to you or whom you love, a treasonous (*traydor*) or deceitful (*falso*) man who will cause you harm whenever you do not beware of him.[341]

The advice identifies several spaces and groups of people close to the young ruler that ultimately suggest different spheres around the ruler to which access, according to the paternal advisor, needs to be regulated. In the *Risāla*, where, as a result of the particular threats to the Umayyad dynasty, the emphasis on the ruler's seclusion is particularly strong, the different spheres are discussed in terms of the ruler's *majālis* (sing. *majlis*), i.e., the assemblies or councils of notables (also *majlis al-malīʾ*), or his private time (*al-khalawāt*) to which only trusted associates (*al-biṭāna*) or comrades (*al-julsāʾ*), who generally seem to belong to the ruler's family (*ahl al-bayt* or *al-ḥāmma*), and personal servants (*biṭānat al-khudim* or *khāṣṣat al-khudim*) have access.[342] The advisor even suggests the establishment of an emergency refuge as a safe space in which the ruler can attend to his planning (*tadbīr*).[343] The responsibility for the regulation of the access to the ruler lies with the commander of police (*ṣāḥib al-shurṭa*) and the secretary (*kātib*). The advisor urges the ruler not to

339 Ibid., XXIV.
340 Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 27–28.
341 *Castigos* XL:1.
342 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 481–488.
343 Ibid., 487–488.

> let one of your soldiers (*jundika*), comrades (*julsāʾika*), companions (*khāṣṣatika*) or associates (*biṭānatika*) come to you and confront you with a problem or surprise you with a request without them having raised it to your secretary (*kātibika*), whom you appointed and assigned to it.[344]

Furthermore, the *Risāla*'s advisor suggests a process according to which the ruler would never have to personally punish or sentence somebody so that "no cruel judgment (*makrūh raʾy*) or harsh punishment would come from [his] hand."[345] In other words, legal cases would only be brought before the ruler if he had previously established the defendant's innocence. The advisor proposes a similar treatment for dealing with foreign delegations (*wufūd*) according to which they would only be allowed to meet the ruler in person if the latter had decided to accept the request they had come to make.[346]

In all these discussions on access, spaces, and seclusion, ultimately the difference and distance between the ruler and others is at stake. This is particularly evident in the *Qābūs-nāma*, where the paternal advisor explicitly warns the young ruler not to show himself too often to his troops and subjects, lest they lose their respect for him.[347] Al-Azmeh considers "royal distance" the primary topic of theoretical and practical enunciations of kingship and he explains that "it is on such distance that obedience and veneration are premised, and it is across the space of this distance that the relationship of activity and passivity operates, as between two entirely independent substances."[348] As argued in the analysis of *Mirrors*' virtue catalogues, the distancing of the ruler from all other humans constitutes an important part in the formulation of the ideal of the body politic. According to Maria Parani's analysis of the use of curtains in Byzantine imperial ceremonies, which might have had reverberations in the late Umayyad and early Abbasid context, the curtains' "main functions were to help control and ritualize access to the sacred person of the Byzantine emperor and to help safeguard his prestige and, most importantly, that of his office."[349] Parani goes on to mention the telling example of the Byzantine

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344 Ibid., 486.

345 Ibid., 485.

346 Ibid., 486–487.

347 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 130.

348 Al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 124.

349 Parani, Mediating presence 11. On Byzantine imperial ceremony, see also Dagron, *Emperor and priest* 84–124. We might also compare this to Sasanian court ceremonies. See, e.g., Diez, *Ancient worlds* 92–94. For a comparison of Roman and Sasanian court ceremonies, see Canepa, *Two eyes* 144–153. On the use of curtains in Fatimid court ceremony, see Halm,

emperor Michael IV (1034–1041) who, in order to preserve imperial dignity, was swiftly hidden behind curtains whenever he showed signs of an epileptic seizure during public functions.[350]

This emphasis on distance, however, does not take anything away from the fact that the four advisors imagine rulership mainly as an individualizing power that links the ruler and every other individual in terms of mutual rights and duties. As Marlow notes in her study of the conception of rulership in the Samanid context, the distance that is suggested by the "semi-sacralised representation of kingship and the exclusive place of kings in the divine order" goes along with an understanding of "the indirect and contingent nature of governance."[351] These mutual rights and duties further suggest that the ruler is as much, if not more, dependent on the other members of the court as they are on him. In fact, the texts' mentions of various officials and servants who, in a sense, form the state that the ruler is governing and facilitate his fulfillment of the soteriological mission that he is assigned, come with a subtext reminding the ruler of his dependency on a functioning and loyal state apparatus. In some cases, references to the ruler's dependency go beyond the aforementioned responsibility of the ruler for his officials' conduct. This is particularly the case in the *Risāla*, where every position is described meticulously in terms of its duties, the characteristics that the ruler ought to look for in a candidate and the way he has to treat and support the office holder. The purpose of this information is not necessarily to instruct the ruler on how to interact with his officials. It seems rather improbable that a ruler would have been involved in the selection of all the positions that the text mentions—especially those further down the hierarchy—and some of what is said on the ideal characteristics of the office holders amounts to stereotyping. For instance, the ubiquitous requirement for experience and obedience is not only repetitive, but also seems basic to an extent that one might be surprised to even find it mentioned. In contrast, other positions, such as spies (*jawāsīs*), are described with a high level of detail and insight.[352] The text could read as constructing the image of an ideal ruler who is informed about and in control of all aspects of the state. It depicts a ruler who supposedly possesses (or is urged to possess) all necessary (technical) knowledge to be able to instruct all members of the state on their specific tasks.

Verhüllung und Enthüllung. See also in the same collective volume: Shalem, Manipulations of seeing.

350 Ibidem.

351 Marlow, Intermediaries 46.

352 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 502–505. See also Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 101–116. On advice regarding internal spies in Arabic and Persian *Mirrors* see 123.

However, the amount and the level of detail of information on all the people who surround the ruler and constitute his state and court, in addition to the text's emphasis on obedience (*ṭāʿa*), also draw the image of a highly dependent ruler, whose reign and survival is contingent on others.

That this state of dependency is something a ruler should avoid is reflected in many texts. For example, in Lupus of Ferrieres's letters the advisor warns his ruler not to become dependent on others, such as his sons and advisors, and thereby give them too much power.[353] The paternal advisor in the *Qābūs-nāma*, too, warns the young ruler about becoming dependent on his vizier.[354] That the appearance of dependency was something rulers were keen to avoid is suggested as well by a passage in the *al-Ādāb al-kabīr*, where the advisor explains to the ruler that seeking advice from others will make him appear in need.[355] The *Risāla*'s advisor defines dependency (*ḥāja*) as "distressful (*muwḥish*)" and a source of "defamation (*sūʾ al-qāla*)."[356] This suggests that the *Risāla*'s advice on the ruler's interaction with members of the state is linked to the genre's sense of distrust and sends a clear warning to a dynasty in the midst of internal turmoil. On first sight, these warnings against a ruler's dependency might seem to be contradicting the aforementioned reminders of his need for reliable officials and advisors. What the advisors are suggesting here, however, is that the ruler inevitably finds himself in a position of dependency and that the only way for him to reduce the risks that this bears for himself is to be extremely cautious in his selection of and collaboration with his own state officials. Moreover, the advisors seem to imply that the issue of the ruler's dependency is also a matter of public image. That is, regardless of how reliant the ruler is on various members of the court, he has to appear independent in order to retain the idea of an all-powerful monocratic rulership in the eyes of the public.

A specific form of dependency that all four advisors mention is the rulers' need for consultation and advice. In *Mirrors* advisors rarely fail to mention the ruler's need for advisors, not at least because it gives them the opportunity to add value and legitimacy to their own parenetic endeavor, and because it was often part of the ideal of kingship to seek advice.[357] Advice was already mentioned in the context of the process of decision-making and, in the case of the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the broader understanding of

353 Lupus of Ferrieres, Epistolae 63:35–64:7. See also 82:29–36.
354 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 130.
355 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Adab al-kabīr* 70.
356 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 490.
357 See 121.

justice.[358] With the exception of the *De institutione*, where the mention of the "old, wise and sober advisors"[359] in the definition of justice is one of only two references to the ruler's need for advice,[360] seeking advice generally occupies a lot of space in the *Mirrors* under investigation. For instance, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor urges the ruler to be "always thirsty to meet pious *ʿulamāʾ* and eager to hear their advice (*naṣīḥat*)" and he repeatedly emphasizes the ruler's need to bind people of wisdom and faith (*dīn*).[361] The four advisors thus suggest in no uncertain terms that it is an absolute necessity for the ruler to seek advice before he makes a decision. It is notable that the advisors also dedicate significant space to warnings against bad and possibly harmful advice.[362] We will come back to this in the next chapter.

The above has certainly shown that the overwhelming majority of the threats and dangers that the four advisors caution their rulers against originate from within the realm, and more precisely from the ruler's interaction with his subjects and officials. Subsequently, thoughts on human nature and advice on how to deal with it occupy large parts of the four *Mirrors* studied here. Only the *De institutione*'s advisor has markedly little to say on these matters. In fact it seems that, as a result of the advisor's understanding of *regere* as *corrigere*, the details of leading a state apparatus or even just a household, including all the problems that come with it, are of minor concern. Considering the *De institutione*'s authorship, this preponderant silence regarding everything that concerns the court and the government apparatus might be interpreted as an intentional reduction of the role of the palace as the place where decisions are made, not only by the ruler, but also, for instance, by the nobility, to the advantage of the synods.[363] Besides, by disregarding most of the perils that the other advisors describe, the *De institutione*'s advisor lays an even stronger emphasis on the one threat that he does warn about: impiety, whether by the ruler himself or by any other member of the Carolingian society. This of course goes back again to the Carolingian episcopate's—and the *De institutione*'s—main message; namely, that the empire was being punished for society's moral decay and that it was the ruler's responsibility to re-enforce, under the bishops' supervision and guidance, piety on all members of society.

358 See 120 *et passim*.

359 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, l. 72.

360 In the dedication letter, in Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., l. 45–48, the advisor mentions, as part of the topos of the advice's redundancy, that Pepin has already "many servants of Christ as advisors at hand" and that she wishes to join them.

361 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 27. See also 143, 152 and 160.

362 See 222 *et passim*.

363 See Airlie, Palace complex 289.

Altogether, the comparisons of the catalogues of virtues and roles in advice literature for monocratic rulers have opened a world of far-reaching similarities and poignant variations and differences that both question the separation of the *Mirror* genre into two monolithic traditions and highlight the explanatory potential of a thorough contextualization of historical phenomena. We have seen that virtues and roles represent a language for the communication of a whole range of perceptions and ideas on rulership, such as a ruler's duties, the limitations of his power, the scope of his actions, and the threats that he is most likely to face. The fact that the four *Mirrors* feature similar catalogues of regal virtues and roles provides further evidence for what has been said about the repertoire of conceptions and representations of rulership that were inherited by the various legatees of Late Antiquity. However, the comparisons have shown that the four *Mirrors* also use this repertoire to draw comparable images of the day-to-day lives of monocratic rulers, and in particular their interactions with subjects, officials, and advisors. We will add more detail to our understanding of the last group's interactions with rulers in the following chapter by exploring the roles and functions that *Mirrors* adopted in them and the discourses and power relationships that these texts reinforced and participated in.

CHAPTER 4

The Advisors

As mentioned in the introduction, there are multiple ways in which *Mirrors* and their advice can be read, not least because they are discursive texts. Given the texts' parenetic function and the particular constellation of people involved in their production and reception, the specific discourses that are likely to come up in advice literature for monocratic rulers are concerned with—and reflective of contemporary ways of thinking about—in the broadest sense knowledge, education, political stability, legitimacy, and power structures. All these have already been dealt with in the preceding analysis of the virtues and roles that are discussed in *Mirrors*. In the following they will be revisited through a discourse analysis of the four main sources with a focus on two key aspects; namely, the authors' construction and presentation of their advice and their self-positioning vis-à-vis their addressee. Based on Norman Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis, the present study will examine three dimensions of discourse simultaneously: discursive practice, text, and social practice.

Discursive practice refers to the production and consumption of the text and includes questions on the impetus behind and occasion of the composition, the author's socio-economic situation, the text's form, intertextual chains, and the text's reception. The textual analysis is meant to show how, through the use of language, the discourses are activated and manifested in the texts. Finally, the analysis of the social practices will shed light on how the texts, their discourses, and the discursive practices out of which they are born relate to the wider social context; that is, how they are linked to institutions, public discussions, and socio-economic developments.[1]

Given the aforementioned difficulty of writing about discursive and social practices in pre-modern times, the following analysis will give significantly more space to the textual evidence. What we can say, though, about the four *Mirrors* studied here is that they were most probably intended for a wider audience than just the addressee and must therefore have circulated to some extent in the court. For instance, the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* declares explicitly that the work's advice is directed not only to the work's addressee, but to whoever "may want to take some good from it and learn in the service of

1 See Jørgensen and Phillips, *Discourse analysis* 60–95.

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God and the glorious Virgin Mary, the profit and good of souls and consolation and happiness of bodies."[2] This is on top of the fact that Ferdinand IV, Sancho's son and addressee of 'his' *Mirror*, was only seven years old at the time of the *Castigos*'s composition and thus would hardly have been able to appreciate the advice that the text offers. Even if we were to concede that Sancho's illness brought forth in him the desire to have produced a work of advice that his son might consult throughout his entire life, the fact that a considerable part of the text addresses the two issues that were seen to weaken Sancho's legitimacy most severely suggest that the intended audience of the *Castigos* included those who needed to be convinced otherwise—that is, the nobility. Similarly, the *Risāla*'s emphasis on obedience and the Umayyads' legitimacy as God's vicegerents seems to be intended for an audience other than just the heir. Through the council acts, the *De institutione* is from the outset part of a larger discussion that addresses all agents of power in the Frankish empire. The prefixed dedication letter narrows down significantly the work's intended audience. Yet the possibility cannot be ruled out that the *De institutione* also reached other members of Pepin's or even his father's court, since it depicts the image of an obedient son; whether as a factual statement or an invitation, we do not know. What all this seems to indicate is that we ought to look further than just the addressee when considering a work's target audience. In terms of the immediate reception by the addressee, the present study will be able to provide a number of insights through triangulations based, on the one hand, on our understandings of the socio-economic and political standing of the author, the ruler, and those who participated in his authority and, on the other, on a close reading of the *Mirrors* that is attentive to the negotiations over authority and material wealth within the texts.

1 Constructing Advice

By giving advice, *Mirrors* participate in the education of their addressees. In fact, based on the initial definition of *Mirrors* as advice literature, the texts' parenetic function is essential for their reception as *Mirrors* and consequently their inclusion in the corpus. Comparisons of how authors approach the genre's educative function in their texts are thus likely to further our understanding of the functions of the genre as a whole, and the educational patterns and

2 Translation quoted from Francomano, Castilian 194. See also Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 5; and Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 4.

methods that characterize *Mirrors* across time and space. The textual analyses, together with the analyses of the discursive and social practices, allow us to shed light on a number of aspects of the authors' educational approaches. They tell us about the different forms of authority with which the authors invest their advice. Moreover, they shed light on the relationship between theory and practice in the authors' parenetic enterprise and how they try to situate their advice in the world that their addressees are experiencing on a daily basis. As a result, the analysis will deal with various strategies for representation of knowledge and its substantiation, including through abstract and concrete examples. In a second step, the present analysis will look in detail at how and to what effects the authors weave concrete examples into their advice.

1.1 *Educational Discourses*

In order to guide the reception of the texts, the four authors studied here try to impose a hermeneutic framework by characterizing the texts' scopes and contents. All four authors are explicit about the parenetic and admonitory purpose of their texts; for example, the *De institutione*'s advisor explicitly characterizes the text as being written "for the purpose of admonition (*admonitionis gratia*)"[3] and as a "small present of admonition (*admonitionis minusculum*)."[4] Early in the *Risāla* the advisor sets out the text's program by urging the reader to acquire knowledge (*ʿilm*).[5] He continues by specifying the scope and content of the knowledge that the *Risāla* offers its readers. He starts by pointing at the teachings' simultaneous comprehensiveness and specificity when he points to the *amīr*'s wish to teach his son the "subtleties and generalities of your [i.e. the ruler's] affairs, insights into your situation (*laṭāʾif umūrika wa-ʿawāmm shiʾūnika wa-dakhāʾil aḥwālika*)."[6] He further specifies the intention of the instruction that he offers when he warns the ruler that "ignorance of the objectionable and the praiseworthy traits (*akhlāq*)" leads to hardship,[7] which is ultimately a formulation of precisely the desideratum that the *Risāla* seeks to address. Finally, the advisor urges the ruler to employ the work's "collection of

3 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 34.
4 Ibid., ADM., I. 50. The paternal advisor in Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 5, characterizes his work as providing "words of advice (*pandhā*)."
5 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 474.
6 Ibidem. The advisor of the *De regis persona* is arguably even more explicit regarding the knowledge he intends to impart on the ruler. In Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 839C, he states that the greatest blessing for people is to be ruled by those who possess knowledge of governing (*regnandi scientiam*).
7 Ibid., 478. See also Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Adab al-kabīr* 67.

dispositions (*jawāmiʿ khiṣāl*)" as "guidance (*murshid*) and adhere to its instructions (*awāmiriha*) and abstain from its prohibitions (*zawājiriha*)."[8]

In order to add to the authority of their teachings, the authors attribute, to various degrees, a divine origin or nature to the knowledge they offer and the wisdom they portray. For instance, early on in the *Risāla* we encounter a digression on the nature of knowledge and learning that emphasizes the impossibility of successful knowledge acquisition without divine support.[9] The advisor argues that

> if the seekers of *adab* (*muʾaddibūn*) had acquired knowledge (*ʿilm*) on their own (*min ʿind anfusihim*) and only through their own inspiration, and if they had not learned a thing from a source other than themselves, we would attribute to them knowledge of the unseen (*ʿilm al-ghayb*) and raise them to the level of their creator (*bi-manzilat khāliqihim*) who is the exclusive possessor of this knowledge on account of his uniqueness and singularity (*bi-waḥdāniyyatihi wa-fardāniyyatihi*) in his divinity.[10]

By employing the irrealis mood and offering a comparison that the reader must reject, the advisor emphatically dismisses the possibility that there is a source of knowledge other than God. At the same time, he characterizes the knowledge that he is offering to the ruler as divine. The divinity of the given advice is probably most pronounced in the *Castigos*, since the paternal advisor identifies the text's contents as "the teachings (*castigos*) that your celestial father (*padre çelestial*) gives you for your soul and which I teach on His behalf (*por Él*)."[11] The paternal advisor thus firmly positions himself in this line of knowledge transmission, which once again reflects Sancho's persistent and emphatic claim to a soteriological mission. Moreover, in the final chapter of the *Castigos*, which reiterates the benefits of good advice (*buenos castigos*), the paternal advisor emphasizes the direct link between being well advised or instructed (*bien castigado*) and piety or obedience to God, which suggests that the implied knowledge that people have acquired is synonymous with divine teachings. Furthermore, the chapter contains a long list of mostly biblical examples of both well and badly instructed figures and their relationship with God.[12] Subsequently,

8 Ibid., 494.

9 Ibid., 474–475. The advisor emphasizes that the only way to succeed on the difficult path to wisdom (*ḥikma*) is to excel in piety (476).

10 Ibid., 474–475.

11 *Castigos* I:1. See also Pról:9.

12 Ibid., L:7–30.

the paternal advisor concludes that "people who are well instructed (*bien castigadas*) obey God and their earthly lord."[13] As mentioned before, Cacho Blecua argues that there is a continuous connection in the *Castigos* between the work's lessons (*castigos*) and the Ten Commandments, for example with regard to the consequences of their violation.[14] The attribution of divinity also extends to some of the supportive material on which the authors rely to corroborate their arguments, as suggested for instance by the conclusion of the *De institutione*'s advisor that his ruler, if truly desirous to learn about what secures salvation, will "give up royal arrogance (*regium fastum*), show [his] service to [his] creator and lend the ear of [his] heart and body to His salvational precepts (*eius salutifera praecepta*)."[15] Yet, as we will see below, the *De institutione*'s advisor equally acknowledges the importance of the Church Fathers as sources of knowledge and authoritative evidence. The idea behind all this is for the advisor to set up his sources and to establish their link with the advice provided in the text.

That the advisors in the four *Mirrors* studied here would claim divine origins for their knowledge, if not all knowledge, is hardly surprising for the times in which the texts were written.[16] What is thus noteworthy is that in the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the advisor does not, strictly speaking, make this claim. While in the first part the advice seems to stem from God and His worship, in the second part the advisor instead presents the advice as perennial, divinely sanctioned wisdom. For instance, he does not claim divine provenance for the advice that is conveyed by the many anecdotes (*ḥikāyāt*) on the exemplary rulers of the past, especially those of the pre-Islamic Persian kings. As Marlow notes, "authors of advisory literature frequently presented themselves as purveyors and renewers of the accumulated wisdom of previous peoples and polities."[17] By suggesting that it is the imitation of the Persian's just kingship that guarantees the ruler's salvation on the Day of Judgment, the advisor of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* implies the testedness and divine sanction of the perennial practices that inform an essential part of the advice that the work offers to the contemporary ruler. Instead of merely claiming a divine origin for the offered advice, the advisor of the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* thus employs notions of empiricism and precedence to prove its worth. Finally, in *Il principe*,

13 Ibid., L:33.
14 Cacho Blecua, El título.
15 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 41.
16 On the divine origin of all knowledge, see also Rosenthal, *Knowledge triumphant* 28–32.
17 Marlow, Wisdom and justice 405. See also Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 11.

historical precedence becomes the main source of knowledge, as the advisor claims no divine origin for his advice, but instead defines his counsel as rooted in the study of the "deeds of the great men."[18]

Apart from such explicit characterizations, the four advisors revert to more indirect ways of linking the knowledge in the works to certain connotations. For instance, presenting impersonal models of ideal or non-ideal rulership which the rulers are (implicitly) expected to follow or strictly avoid lends a sense of objectivity to the advice, as it implies the reliance on a constructed canon of socially established ideals and knowledge. Furthermore, it lends itself to praise *ex eventu*, meaning that the addressee is attributed with a praiseworthy trait through the proposal of an abstract model to which the addressee is already known to correspond. Moreover, the appeal to presumably established norms diminishes the author's personal involvement and thus functions as a hedge. Especially the *Castigos* and the *De institutione*, perhaps due to their more general concern with an ideal (religiously informed) society of which good rulership is only one of many expressions, repeatedly refer to abstract models of good or bad rulership that exemplify certain ideal or non-ideal traits or modes of behavior, without attributing them to a specific exemplary ruler. For instance, the *imperator felix* image in the final chapter of the *De institutione* that lays out when a ruler might—or might not—be considered blessed is an excellent example of juxtaposing an ideal model with its opposite.[19] Apart from employing the *beatus ille* motif to portray an ideal, abstract model of rulership,[20] occasionally the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* simply lays out what a generic good (*el buen rey*) or just king (*el rey justiçiero*) would do.[21] As John K. Walsh observes, the *Libro de los doze sabios* contains several couplets of immediately consecutive chapters depicting diametrically opposed situations with which a ruler might have to deal, such as interactions with friends and enemies.[22] In the *De institutione* the notion of the advice's objectivity is further strengthened through the author's framing of his advice in the language of common knowledge; for instance, by employing impersonal constructions and the passive voice.

18 Machiavelli, *Il principe* 13.

19 Jonas d' Orléans, *De institutione regia* XVII, I. 13–42. Augustin's *imperator felix* model is also quoted in Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 839C–840A.

20 See, e.g., *Castigos* XII:49.

21 See, e.g., Castigos IX:10, IX:40, or XIII:13. On a few occasions the advisor of the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* also draws a generic image of the ideal—i.e. just—ruler. See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 82 and 120.

22 Walsh, *Libro de los doze sabios* 20–21.

Due to their anthological and accumulative nature and their decisive situatedness in context and responsiveness to its necessities, the four texts also betray the attempt to forge their proposed knowledge into a more comprehensive and systematized education for rulers. For instance, all but the *Risāla*, with its distinctively epistolary form, have a treatise-like structure that arranges the knowledge into thematic chapters to which the reader can refer according to interest and necessity. Another example of a systematic structure is the Aristotelian division of the *De regimine principium*, attributed to Giles of Rome, into three levels of practical knowledge. In addition, the argumentation within each chapter of the *Castigos* tends to follow a certain pattern starting with a proposition and ending with a summarizing conclusion. The more the treatise form became prevalent in *Mirror* writing, the more authors seem to have relied on organizational elements, such as lists and juxtapositions, in structuring the (increasingly) large amounts of eclectic material. So while the Carolingian *Mirrors* and the Arabic *rasāʾil* lack such elements, we find them playing an important role in later *Mirrors*, such as the *Castigos* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*.[23]

Furthermore, together with schematic arrangements or allegories, these organizational elements are used to indicate the interrelations between multiple pieces of information by mapping them in a space. In the first of a series of examples from the *Castigos*, the paternal advisor offers an analogy between regal virtues and the five holy wounds (*llagas*) of Christ,[24] thus making full use of the mnemonic and admonitory function that they were given in contemporary Christian theology.[25] The most extensive use of allegory as a structure for the organization of advice in the *Castigos* occurs in the description of the king's attire, in which the paternal advisor attributes to each object a quality or virtue that a ruler must embody.[26] The passage is too long to be cited in full here, but the few examples below should suffice to illustrate how the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* draws the image of the wholly (or most) virtuous king (*rex virtuosissimus*):[27]

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23 See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 127–128; 139; 143; 151; and 165. The *Castigos* and *Baḥr al-fawāʾid* consist mainly of lists. Also, al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 6, contains many lists, such as the list of "conditions" for becoming a ruler. Apart from a number of lists, the *Cien capítulos* is characterized in particular by the structure provided by the contributions expressed in turn by each of the twelve sages on most of the work's subjects.

24 *Castigos* IX:38–39.

25 See, e.g., Eckermann, Wunden Christi 350–351; or Sauser and Schmucki, Wunden Christi 1249–1251.

26 *Castigos* XI:2–39.

27 On Castilian representations of the (most) virtuous king (*rex virtuosissimus*), see Nieto Soria, Imágenes religiosas 719–720.

> And this king, about which I tell you, was dressed in clothes covered in gold and silk. The gold stands for [lit. is understood as] the riches and nobilities (*noblezas*) that the king of the realm has. And the silk is the elegance (*aposturas*) that he must have in himself, because he cannot display it entirely nor constantly if he has no riches that he can show. … On his arms were ten golden bracelets with precious stones like the ten commandments that God gave to Moses. … The throne on which the king was seated was covered in gold and silver with many precious stones, demonstrating the kings and the power that he has under him. The stool (*escabello*) on which the king puts his feet was richly decorated like the throne. It is like the enemies that he has to put under his feet, according to what God said to King David: Put your enemies under the stool of your feet.[28]

By linking regal virtues and qualities to precious pieces of a king's attire the paternal advisor suggests not only their value and decorativeness, but also their communicative force in the context of the court, where he expects the ruler's appearance and demeanor to perform an exemplary function. The virtues made visible become part of the spectacle that is the *rex virtuosissimus*. Elsewhere, the *Castigos* contains a passage where a series of virtues are presented in an allegorical fashion as parts of armor:

> if you want to guard yourself against the devil's deceptions (*engannos*) and evil, you must arm yourself with defensive armor and weapons to wound him (*armas para ferirle*), which are the following: The armor (*loriga*) that covers your body and your soul will be your fear of God (*themor de Dios*). The helmet (*capellina*) you carry on your head will be your knowledge/awareness of God (*conosçimiento a Dios*) who protects and covers your head. The shield (*escudo*) you hold in front of you will be your good, true and firm belief (*creençia*). Your spear (*lança*) will be the firmness and strength of your heart (*firmeza e fortaleza de coraçon*), which the devil cannot break by hurting it. Your sword (*espada*) will be justice (*justiçia*) which, like a sword that cuts equally well on both sides [of the blade], must be even in your hand and ought not to rest on one side more than on the other. Your legs and feet will be covered by humility (*homildança*) toward those to whom you owe it. Your hands will be

28 *Castigos* XI:13–19.

> covered by chastity (*castidat*) and they will not engage in fornication or the lust of the flesh.[29]

This 'weaponization' of virtues, which has biblical origins and is also found in the *Libro de los doze sabios*, emphasizes their agency and power in the ruler's struggle against his own innate human weaknesses.[30]

None of the Arabic and Persian *Mirrors* under consideration features a comparable allegory based on attire or weaponry. The *Risāla*'s advisor comes close to a weaponization of virtues—in this case multiple derivatives of the virtue of determination—when he suggests their usability and usefulness in the fight against the devil, who in turn employs desires or passions (*ahwāʾ*) to trick his opponents:

> Know that each of your desires (*ahwāʾika*) is an enemy of yours trying to destroy you and interfere with your negligence (*ghaflataka*). [This is] because they are the ploys of *Iblīs*, the snares of his cunningness (*ḥabāʾil makrihi*) and the traps of his intrigue (*maṣāyid makīdatihi*). Be wary of them by avoiding them, protect yourself by guarding yourself from them and seek protection in God—may He be exalted and glorified—from their evil. If they gang up against you, fight them with true determination (*ʿazm ṣādiq*) that is free of languor (*wanya*), pervasive resoluteness (*ḥazam nāfidh*) that does not allow for an exception to your decision once you have taken it, absolute truthfulness (*ṣidq ghālib*) that generates no desire to deny it, rigorous perseverance (*maḍāʾa ṣārima*) without leniency (*anāa*) and true intention (*niyya ṣaḥīḥa*) without a quiver of doubt.[31]

Instead, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* contains the allegory of the tree of faith, which combines descriptions of the nature of God as the tree's roots with a list of the principles of royal conduct as its branches.[32] This allegory underscores how (the ruler's) virtues are rooted in and organically grow out of faith, which provides them with nourishment and stability. Unlike the clothing or weapons allegory of the *Castigos* that focus on the virtues' collective effects and their

29 *Castigos* I:16. See also X:41.

30 See, e.g., Eph 6:13–17 and chapter 5 of the deuterocanonical *Book of wisdom*. See also Walsh, *Libro de los doze sabios* 36–37. On the weaponization of virtues in the *Enseignement des princes* see Fox, *Robert de Blois* 23–24.

31 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 478.

32 Arboral allegories are a staple of pre-modern ethical teachings and not restricted to Islamic societies. See, e.g., Salonius and Worm, *Tree*.

communicative function in the performative context of the court—precisely the ambience in which Sancho needed to showcase his authority and legitimacy—the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s tree of faith places their origin and pre-condition center stage. The aforementioned *Circle of Justice* combines both the origins/pre-conditions of the virtue of justice and its effects in a circular image that illustrates the interdependence of the ruler's justice and the economic success of his subjects. In addition, the closedness of the *Circle of Justice* suggests the separation between the interior space—that is, the ruler's realm, which is the object of the *Mirror*'s teachings—and the exterior space, over which the ruler has no control. We have seen before that the *Risāla*, too, engages in spatial representations by defining multiple spheres in which the ruler is exposed to various encounters and influences.[33]

Another way in which information is structured and presented in *Mirrors* are the aforementioned taxonomies of virtues that presumably indicate to the recipient the relative importance of specific virtues and vices.[34] We have already seen that the *Mirrors* under consideration display multiple strategies of arranging and presenting virtues and vices. We noted that the arrangement on a spectrum can be used to suggest the general importance of moderation, as is the case in the *Risāla*, whereas hierarchies and genealogies of virtues allow an underscoring of the overarching importance of one particular virtue or vice. The latter model also includes the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s allegory of the tree of faith, which emphasizes the virtues' rootedness in and dependence on faith. The case of justice in the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* also shows that in a vertical model the prime virtue does not simply represent a virtue per se, but rather functions as a sort of umbrella term containing all virtues that are deemed important for a ruler. Moreover, as the precedence of the ruler's justice over his piety in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* suggests, the hyperbole that accompanies the hierarchical model is again a rhetorical device for the purpose of emphasis, rather than an absolute statement. The tendency toward a rhetorical usage of hyperbole of this kind in the context of virtues is just as evident in the *Castigos*, where the advisor first states that "all good deeds … are born from piety (*piadat*),"[35] only to later claim that "prudence (*cordura*) is the root and foundation of all good things."[36]

33 See 175 *et passim*.
34 See 135.
35 *Castigos* XXIX:17.
36 Ibid., XLVIII:5. The Bible, too, defines both pride as "the beginning of all sin" in Sir 10:13 and cupidity as "the root of all evil things" in 1 Tim 6:10.

Ultimately, what both these taxonomies and some of the employed allegories suggest is that the educational discourse in the four *Mirrors* under consideration is by no means limited to the presentation of (theoretical, abstract) teachings. Visual and spatial arrangements such as the *Circle of Justice*, the tree of faith and the allegory of the king's attire in the *Castigos* serve a didactic purpose, not only through their mnemonic function, but by expressing the interrelation between the various elements that they incorporate and positioning them in the world as the addressees experience it. They are thus meant to provide an insight into the possible implications, ramifications, and consequences that the practical application of the given advice might have. Both the weapons allegory and the taxonomies, for instance, give an impression of order and suggest the possibility of controlling or defeating vices, because they suggest an immediate causality between the exercise of a specific virtue and the remedial of the corresponding vice. What these causalities lack in rationality, they make up for with emotional weight, given the religious load that is attached to the discourse of virtues and vices. The virtues themselves are given further agency and power wherever they appear in the text as active agents; for instance, when the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* declares that "shame (*vergüença*) is an impediment to all evil (*freno de toda maldat*),"[37] or when we read in the *De institutione* that "mercy (*misericordia*) and truthfulness (*veritas*) protect the king"[38] and in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* that justice (*ʿadl*) "produces well-being (*ṣalāḥ*) for the subjects and leads to peace (*sāz-gārī*) and a life in security (*aymanī*) and prosperity (*ʿāfiyat*)."[39] Regardless of how theoretical or abstract the teachings might be that these *Mirrors* transport, the authors seem to adopt various strategies to present this knowledge as practical advice and as solutions for concrete problems that rulers might encounter on a daily basis. The sources of the teachings are divine, but the authors never lose sight of the fact that learning and the betterment of the self relies on human agency.

While the *Mirrors*' implication is that society as a whole can be saved by educating the monocratic ruler, the ultimate purpose of this transformative education and self-betterment is in fact the preservation of power and the status quo in times of crisis. This conservative agenda of the genre that scholars have occasionally noted shows up prominently in the analysis of the discourses in our four *Mirrors*. The most notable example of this is the way in which authors recreate in their works the challenges that the addressees face outside the text by evoking an atmosphere of threat and looming damnation. One

37 Ibid., VI:3.

38 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 46.

39 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 149.

threat that, as we have seen, looms over unjust rulers in all four *Mirrors* is divine punishment on the Day of Judgment.[40] But in addition to this relatively distant damnation, the advisors refer to more specific and immediate challenges, which often reflect the specific crises that the addressees were experiencing. For example, both the *Risāla* and the *Castigos* begin by setting out a threatening scenario, although in different ways. The *Risāla*'s advisor starts out by describing the ruler's enemies in terms of brutality and haphazard violence. This description of the Khārijite insurrection introduces, and makes necessary, the caliph's advice to his son. The advice gains further urgency as the advisor conveys it in terms of ordinance (*yaʿhad ilayka*—"he charges you"), imposition (*yuḥammiluka*—"he imposes on you"), and prescription (*yashraʿ laka*—"he prescribes to you") on behalf of the caliph. The *Castigos* begins with the story of the Fall of Man from which the paternal advisor derives the importance of countering the many temptations with advice inspired by God's words and lessons.[41] As argued before, by virtue of being (presented as) the transmitter of the divine advice, Sancho assumes a messianic role in a world full of evil. In the *De institutione*, the notion of threat does not appear right at the beginning of the text. Yet the advisor's warning is not less unambiguous as he contextualizes the work in the aftermath of the devastating internal conflicts of the Carolingian dynasty that had "turned the realm into a magnificent dance of joy (*tripudium*) for the devil and his members."[42] The *De institutione* and the *Risāla* thus create this atmosphere by referring to their immediate historical context; i.e., the specific crises for which they were written.

In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the context is alluded to in more generic terms, such as in a metatextual[43] passage in the second part of the work, where the advisor declares that his reason for giving advice is to be found in the dire conditions of the present, where "the people are bad and heedless and the sultans are taken in by worldly affairs and are in love with material wealth (*bi-dunyā mashghrūl wa māl-dūst*)."[44] In the context of the Seljuqs' internecine conflicts and their challenge to the caliph in Baghdad for religious authority, the advisor's justification seems to hint at the need for the addressee to fulfill his (soteriological) role by focusing on his duty as guardian of the divinely ordained social order. Negative motivation is nevertheless an important strategy throughout the entire

40 See 139.

41 *Castigos* Pról:6–10.

42 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 182–183.

43 Metatext refers to a text's self-referential moments; that is, a text's references to itself; its composition, function, and reception as a text.

44 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 147–148. See also 131.

Naṣīḥat al-mulūk, as the many references to the ruler's fate on the Day of Judgment indicate. In the first part, while addressing the dangers for those who hold authority, the advisor even quotes a maxim according to which all holders of authority will be punished on the Day of Judgment because there "is not one who has not been unjust (*jawr*), has not accepted a bribe when judging a case or has not lent his ear to one contestant more [than to the other]."[45] However, there is more to this than a simple warning about the seemingly inevitable damnation that awaits all rulers. In fact, by stating that rulers must fail the high moral standards set out by the traditional narratives, the advisor seems to suggest that they might as well ignore them, especially since they will not have to face the consequences of their failure until they leave this world. This would be in line with the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s discourse on justice and *siyāsat* that ultimately prioritizes the preservation of power and order over benevolent rule.[46]

Be that as it may, at the end of that section the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor reassures the ruler that "he can find safety (*salāmat*) by being always close to pious (*dīn-dār*) *ʿulamāʾ* so that they might teach him the way of justice (*ʿadl*) and refresh from time to time his memory as to the danger of his role."[47] Assuming the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s author was part of the *ʿulamāʾ*, he thus seems to unambiguously offer his advice as the only way out for the ruler. In the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the advisor resorts to the same strategy when, on two different occasions, he advises the ruler to read the reports of past rulers, while evoking the unspecific threat that stems from the unpredictable volatility of fortune, which is so famously illustrated by Machiavelli's depiction of *Fortuna*, the Roman goddess of fortune.[48] Machiavelli's treatment of this matter highlights the importance of rulers preparing themselves for any eventuality,[49] as do the warnings about the unpredictability of fortune in one of al-Manṣūr's testaments[50] and the *Qābūs-nāma*, where the paternal advisor explains that his advice is meant to protect the young ruler from being crushed by "the hand of fortune (*dast-i zamāna*)."[51] Moreover, the volatility of fortune, especially on the battlefield, contributes to the atmosphere of threat in the *Risāla*. In fact, with the immediate threat of the upcoming battle against the Khārijites looming over the entire text, the *Risāla*'s advisor points to the "changing odds

45 Ibid., 23.
46 See 131 *et passim*.
47 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 27.
48 Ibid., 97; and 162.
49 Machiavelli, *Il principe* 91–94.
50 Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh* 106.
51 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 5.

(*sijāl*)" of war in order to underline the advantages of a victory gained through stratagems.[52] Elsewhere he includes the fact that people have "tasted the changing odds (*sijāl*)" of war, that is, the first-hand experience of the volatility of war's fortunes, as an asset that the ruler should look for in the leaders of his scouts (*ṭalāʾiʿ*).[53] Given the specific nature of the conflicts that were rattling the Umayyad empire, the advisor seems to push for a non-military solution to the dynasty's problems of legitimacy.

By making the *Mirrors*' advice appear like a necessity or indeed a lifeline for these rulers through the construction of the notion of both specific and unspecific threats surrounding the addressees and looming over their reigns, the authors primarily try to ensure the text's positive reception and their compensation by the ruler. The same effect is produced by the explicit promises of personal and collective salvation, safety of kingship, and eternal fame made in all four *Mirrors* examined here. For instance, in the *De institutione*'s introductory letter, which the author added to the council acts to 'smooth' their reception, the advisor claims that "it cannot be expressed how useful it will be (*quantum profutura fient*)" for the young ruler to read or listen to the work's advice.[54] Also the paternal advisor in the *Qābūs-nāma* claims that his advice consists of "the most necessary and useful" of what he could think of.[55] Moreover, the notion of threat provides a point of culmination between the discourses of conservation and education, by virtue of defining a context and a functionality for these *Mirrors*. More specifically, it offers certain interpretations of the social, political and religious circumstances in which the *Mirrors* were composed and indicates how these texts operate and have to be practically used as indispensable manuals in these dire situations. The *Risāla*'s advisor initially defines the enemies of God as the most significant threat to the ruler, which is a direct rebuttal to the challenges to the Umayyads' religious legitimacy. By giving advice on how to secure people's loyalty and how to fight the enemies, not only on the battlefield, but also by winning them over, he suggests that the text is, in fact, also addressing the more general problem of disobedience toward God and His vicegerent in the realm at large, which conforms with the Umayyads' perception of the problem that they were facing. As mentioned before, the *De institutione* is an expression of the Carolingian credo that the empire's crisis was rooted in the moral decay of the Frankish society. Thus, the text offers instruction on the *correctio* of the people through the king. The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, written in

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52 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 498.

53 Ibid., 509.

54 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 254–255.

55 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 5. See also Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 4 and 14.

a period of repeated internecine warfare and intradynastic conflicts, provides the ruler with advice on justice and how to establish it both among his subjects and high-ranking officials (e.g., through *siyāsat*) in order to bring peace and stability to the realm and avoid the threat of eternal damnation for himself. The paternal advisor of the *Castigos* identifies bad advice and temptations as the main threats and thus provides good advice, a large extent of which regards religious problems. As mentioned before, the advice of the *Castigos* is meant to evoke divine commandments, which in turn projects Sancho as a messianic figure.

Due to the large diversity of their forms, it does not come as a surprise that *Mirrors* display a multiplicity of ways in which they transport and communicate knowledge. The spectrum ranges from the immediacy of the letter to the structured lecture of the treatise and the symbolic nature of the (frame) narrative. But the analysis of the *Mirrors*' discourses has shed light on a number of recurrent strategies of representation, such as the texts' offer of divine knowledge and abstract models of ideal rulership, which they combine with indications regarding the ramifications of their practical implementation. The authors present their works as ready solutions for the specific problems that endanger their addressees and the stability of the entire realm. In doing so they pair a call for education, in the sense of transformation and self-betterment, with a conservative message that knows only one way to salvation for the realm: the four monocratic rulers, that is, their addressees. This conservative program is equally reflected in the *Mirrors*' frequent references to an idealized past that needs to be preserved and imitated. The images and narratives illustrating this past are one of the contributions to the texts made by the ample supportive material that links each *Mirror* to various intertextual chains and perennial discourses. In which ways and to what effects this material is employed and integrated by the authors of the four *Mirrors* studied here will be analyzed in what follows.

1.2 *Advising with the Words of Others*

Unlike the *Risāla*, which will be discussed separately below, the other *Mirrors* studied here display a high degree of *manifest intertextuality*.[56] Analyzing this promises a glimpse of the authors' understanding of their sources and of the function and worth that they attribute to them within and for their arguments. The influence that intertextuality in general, when it is recognized by the audience as such, exercises on the reception of a text as a whole

56 See 23.

and its arguments—which the intertextual material is meant to support in particular—depends in part on the audience's perceptions of the material's supposed origin and the credibility and authority that comes with it. In some cases these origins can be textual sources. In fact, these three *Mirrors* are replete with links to other texts and participate in a number of intertextual chains. Their choice of sources is representative of the respective contexts of their composition and contemporary *Mirror* writing, and reflects the position of the court and those who had relative access to the ruler.[57] Moreover, it is safe to assume that authors made use of sources that would have been accepted as authoritative, in the respective discourses on rulership of their time, by their intended audiences and addressees. For instance, the *De institutione*'s reliance on patristic writings and the Bible is typical for all Carolingian *Mirrors*, just as the inclusion of chronicles, legal texts and proverbs in the *Castigos* mirrors a development in the *Mirror* literature during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Even the use of anecdotes on the exemplary Persian rulers of the pre-Islamic era in the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, as well as in other *Mirrors* of the time,[58] is by no means surprising. Apart from the emphasis on justice as the essential gauge for exemplary rulership that these references provide, they mark an adjustment of the cultural landscape that, according to Ohlander, followed the shift in power from the caliph to the sultan.[59] Indeed there is a telling passage in the *Baḥr al-fawāʾid*:

> O Prince! no one expects the justice of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar from you, for you are unable to do as they; but they do ask from you an unbeliever's justice, an unbeliever's generosity, and an unbeliever's honor, and the repentance of those who are destined for Paradise. As for an unbeliever's justice: Nūshīrvān the Just was an unbeliever, and did not believe in Resurrection. But he did justice for the sake of good repute.[60]

Kennedy explains that Muslim rulers and their bureaucrats had no problem admitting that they were consciously adopting elements of the Sasanian legacy because, unlike the Byzantines who had perhaps just as much influence

57 For the sources of the four *Mirrors* studied here, see Chapter 2.

58 Most importantly, the *Baḥr al-fawāʾid*, the *Qābūs-nāma* and the *Siyāsat-nāma*. In fact, various anecdotes appear in several of these *Mirrors*. On the sources of the *Baḥr al-fawāʾid*, see Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues*, xiv–xvii.

59 Ohlander, Enacting justice. On the impact of Persian language and historiographic practices on the Islamic writing of history, see Humphreys, Taʾrīkh.

60 Translation quoted from Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 220.

on Umayyad and Abbasid institutional and ceremonial practices, they were simply not around anymore and "their memories could be called on to sanction present practice."[61] By the time the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* was composed, pre-Islamic figures such as Ardashīr, Alexander the Great, and Buzurgmihr had already become part of the *adab* tradition.[62] In that context, the advisor's anticipation of the potential rejection of his claim that non-Muslims ruled in an exemplary manner for several hundred years[63] is not an admission of the unorthodoxy and subversiveness of his argument. Rather, it is a rhetorical strategy to both introduce and justify the subsequent passages on the history of the pre-Islamic Persian kings and, most importantly, to demonstrate the lengths to which the advisor is supposedly ready to go to emphasize his belief in the importance of justice. Since the choice of sources in the four *Mirrors* studied here seems to reflect contemporary discourses on rulership—most likely the rulership of the texts' addressees—the authors' selection of sources adds to their works' conservative outlook.

In many cases, the authors themselves indicate their presumed sources. However, these 'sources' do not necessarily represent either the actual textual sources that the author consulted nor, for that matter, the historical origin of that material. Instead, these attributions serve to a large extent a discursive function and are thus very flexible, as noted before.[64] One of the results of this flexibility is the attribution of large bodies of material to *focusees*, specific peoples or individuals that serve "as the basis for the crystallizing of narratives,"[65] such as Anūshīrvān (Khosrow I) in the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*. The attributions of the supportive material are not limited to written or oral texts, with or without mention of the author. As we will see later on, these attributions can come in the form of mere allusions to historical events and their characters that are part of contemporary cultural knowledge. The attributions in these texts are with few exceptions specific.[66] The con-

61 Kennedy, Islam 225.

62 On Buzurgmihr, see Fouchécour, *Moralia* 58–69. On Buzurgmihr's role in Islamic literature, see Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel* lxviii–lxx. Askari, *Medieval reception*, on the reception of the *Shāh-nāma* in Persian *Mirrors*, shows the extent to which certain texts were used over and over again as sources for certain *Mirror* traditions.

63 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 83.

64 See 42 *et passim*.

65 See Marzolph, Focusees 123.

66 The four *Mirrors* contain only few unspecific attributions, such as the unnamed poem in Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 62–64 and the references to generic sayings and proverbs in al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 2 and *Castigos* IX:37, XV:13 or XVII:21. The very limited reliance on such unattributed materials in these texts might be a result of

sistent attribution of supportive material to specific 'sources' in three of the *Mirrors* bears witness to the significance of the material's perceived nature and origin in the writing of advice literature for rulers. This kind of attribution is part of the evaluative metadiscourse that indicates, inter alia, the author's attitude toward the text.[67] The attribution of certain material to specific 'sources' can function both as a hedge that allocates the responsibility for the expressed opinion elsewhere and as a source of authority and hermeneutic context through the linkage of the text with an established discourse and/or one of its agents.

In the *Mirrors* studied here, the authors not only name the presumed sources of the intertextual material that they include in their texts, but they also explicitly characterize these sources, as well as the nature and function of the material itself.[68] For instance, the advisors are very explicit about the intended function of the material as supporting evidence for their arguments, as is suggested by the discourse of proof and testimony that enwraps it. The *De institutione*'s advisor consistently introduces or concludes the intertextual material with terms denoting proof, such as "*adstruitur*," "*manifestat*" or "*demonstrat*."[69] Examples from the *Castigos* include the verbs "*prueua*"[70] and "*demuestra*."[71] In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* anecdotes are routinely introduced by the phrase "as is shown (*āmāda ast*) by the anecdote."[72] Occasionally, this is further supported by an organizational metadiscourse that prescribes the meaning of the intertextual material through interpretative summaries and code-glosses. For instance, in the *Castigos*'s chapter on justice, the paternal advisor combines in a particular passage two stories from the book of Daniel—namely, the story of Susanna and the Elders and the story of Daniel in the Lions' Den—and concludes by stating that "from this you [i.e. the young ruler] can see, my son, that who does good, receives good for it."[73] Like the attribution of material

the authors' awareness of the views of Aristotelian rhetoric and its low appreciation for 'artificial', non-anecdotal *exempla*. See von Moos, *Geschichte als Topik* 48–66.

67 On evaluative or interpersonal metadiscourse, see Crismore et al., Metadiscourse in persuasive writing.

68 Of course this sort of metatextual appraisal of sources by an author is by no means limited to the *Mirror* genre. See, e.g., Günther, Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī.

69 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* IV, I. 75; Ibid., V, I. 13–14; and V, I. 31.

70 See, e.g., *Castigos* Pról:3.

71 *Castigos* Pról:5.

72 See, e.g., al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 97.

73 *Castigos* IX:17–18. See also, e.g., I:27 or IX:5. Also the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor occasionally engages in the interpretation of his sources. See, e.g., al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 104 or 113. See also Aquinas, *De regimine principum*; and Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 125. Code gloss, or rather the providing of suggested interpretations for narratives, is also very prominent

to presumed sources, this organizational metadiscourse provides a hermeneutic context for the works and thereby guides the reception of the intertextual material that it qualifies. Moreover, in their employment and categorization of supportive material, the authors seem to betray an awareness of the aforementioned distinction between theoretical or abstract teachings and practical advice. This is particularly the case in the *De institutione*, which, according to the advisor, is based on two types of material; namely, "divine precepts and the words of the Holy Fathers (*oraculis diuinis et sanctorum patrum dictis*)."[74] The *De institutione*'s advisor treats the Bible passages as laws or precepts, referring to them repeatedly as *praecepta*,[75] and thus as theoretical insights, whereas he seems to employ the statements of the Church Fathers in order to give practical examples and move the audience, as the following passage suggest:

> Since we have no doubt that the testimonies (*documenta*) of the saints (*sanctorum*) who reign with God, which were given with the grace of the Holy Spirit, have more influence on the hearts of the audience than our meager words (*in cordibus auditorum plus ualere quam nostrae exiguitatis uerba*), we have therefore inserted a few of the words of the holy Cyprian,[76] martyr of Christ, to this humble work (*opusculo paruitatis*) of ours.[77]

With the term *documenta* denoting the instructive retelling of an event or example,[78] the advisor thus presents the *dicta* of the Church Fathers as contributing not only emotive charisma, but also historical precedence. However, the advisor's (rather candid) indication of the *documenta*'s emotive, rather than rational, force shows what role the supportive material plays in the *De institutione* (and what role it does not play). This emotional force that religious material adds to the advice and arguments in *Mirrors* is identified by van Ruymbeke

throughout *Kalīla wa-Dimna*. This kind of intervention in a narrative and its reading was part of a development in Islamic historiographical practice that will be discussed below. On organizational metadiscourse, see Crismore et al., Metadiscourse in persuasive writing.

74 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 251–252.

75 See Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 272; II, I. 39; and VIII, I. 18. On the antique notion of the precedence of *exempla* over *praecepta*, see von Moos, *Geschichte als Topik* 178. On the patristic differentiation between *praecepta* and *consilio*, see Kersting, Rat 34.

76 This refers to the aforementioned crucial passage on justice from Ps. Cyprian's *De duodecim abusivis saeculi*. See 120.

77 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 48–52.

78 See von Moos, *Geschichte als Topik* 144.

as one of the prime reasons for their inclusion in this genre.[79] The presentation of this material by the *De institutione*'s advisor is equally to be understood as a collection of ready-made and emotionally effective statements that he puts at the ruler's disposition for his own acts of communication. The differentiation between the two types of sources is equally reflected by the advisor's tendency to place Bible passages at the beginning of a chapter, where they lay out an essential belief and set the tone through their inherent credibility, followed by practical and historical examples. In fact, the *De institutione*'s advisor explicitly indicates the function of historical examples in corroborating biblical propositions when he concludes a series of Bible quotations declaring that

> the collapse of many kingdoms (*multorum regnorum conlapsio*), because they had no stability through piety, justice and mercy (*pietatis, iustitiae et misericordiae*), gives clear evidence to what has been said/proposed (*quae praemissa sunt*, *patenter fidem*) [here i.e. through the words of the Bible].[80]

In the introduction to the *De regimine principum*, the advisor makes a similar distinction when he names and defines his sources as "the decree (*auctoritatem*) of the Holy Scripture, the teaching (*dogma*) of the philosophers and the examples (*exempla*) of the lauded rulers."[81] To some extent this distinction is present, although not explicitly, in the *Castigos* too, since the individual *castigos* that the work offers are, strictly speaking, lessons or teachings of a theoretical nature. The practical dimension of the advice is provided by the exemplary narratives that play an immensely important role, also in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, for the illustration of the advice's implementation.

As mentioned in the introduction, supportive material can fulfill a plethora of functions in *Mirrors*. For instance, the narratives in the *Castigos* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* can function, as Larry Scanlon defines it, qua "narrative enactment of cultural authority,"[82] or in other words, the reproduction or embodiment of a moral or communal value through narrative. Both the *Castigos* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* feature *exempla* with elaborate narratives that not only allude to an ideal, or in fact an anti-ideal, but also "reenact[s] the actual, historical embodiment of communal value in a protagonist or an event, and then, in [their] moral, effect[s] the value's re-emergence with the obligatory force of

79 Van Ruymbeke, *Kashefi's Anvar-e Sohayli* 255–257.
80 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* VI, I. 34–37.
81 Aquinas, *De regimine principum* 1.
82 Scanlon, *Narrative* 34.

moral law."[83] Thus the *Castigos*'s reference to the story of Alfonso VIII's affair with a Jewish woman, who is usually identified as Rahel la Fermosa, is only on the surface a mere *exemplum* for the negative consequences of a ruler's sexual transgression.[84] Instead, it is important that the narrative establishes an immediate causal correlation between the ruler's sexual deviation and his defeat on the battlefield, as it thus proposes Sancho's military success as proof of the legitimacy of his marriage. Marlow seems to describe a similar process of re-enactment of a communal value when she points to the narrative performance of the Quran's transformative power in an *exemplum* in the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*. In the anecdote a caliph, upon hearing an ascetic's recitation of a Quranic verse (Q 45:21), recognizes his mistakes and pledges to mend his ways, while his advisor reproaches the ascetic for having upset the caliph.[85] According to Marlow, the different reactions to the Quranic verse extend its very meaning as it reminds people that in the end they will inevitably be judged on the basis of their faith and conduct.[86] Scanlon describes a similar process of narrative re-enactment of the effects and powers of sacred acts and pious rituals, in this case the recitation of the Quran, when he analyses how in the Christian context 'sermon *exempla*', as he terms them, were used to assert the rituals' efficacy by exemplifying their material force.[87] The *Castigos* too contains an *exempla* that illustrates the force of sacred artifacts by turning these inanimate objects into active agents of a narrative. The narrative illustrates the benefits of worship of Mary, by relating how a young nun, tempted by an evil knight, is eventually physically confronted and prevented from sinning by Mary's statue and a crucifix.[88]

In addition, the *Mirrors*' narratives themselves occasionally form an integral part of the advice, namely when they depict someone—sometimes a ruler—posing a question to an interlocutor or even specifically asking for advice. This creates a frame narrative that projects the ideal of the (ruler's) inquiry for advice by re-enacting the interaction between advisor and advisee. Most of the examples from the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, for instance, routinely start with an introduction of both characters followed by the advisee's explicit request: "Give me advice (*Ma-rā pandī dih*)!"[89] These narratives seem to be particularly common

83 Ibidem.
84 *Castigos* XXI:22. For other examples of *exempla* with elaborate narratives in the *Castigos*, see, e.g., VII:9, IX:16, X:8 and XL:10–18.
85 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 29–30.
86 Marlow, Wisdom and justice 417–418.
87 Scanlon, *Narrative* 70–74.
88 *Castigos* XIX:8–23.
89 See, e.g., al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 27–29, 31–32, 35 or 97–98.

in 'Islamic' *Mirrors*, since they tend to contain more and longer narrational passages than their 'Christian' counterparts.[90] In fact, the *Castigos* merely contains typologies indicating the effects of good or bad advice.[91] A different type of advice narrative that can be found in some 'Christian' *Mirrors*—a type which is however most likely based on Arabic models—are the convocations of sages that form the frame narrative in a number of Castilian works, such as the *Libro de los doze sabios*, *Libro de los buenos proverbios*, *Libre de saviesa*, *Bocados de oro* and the Castilian versions of *Sindibad*.

Apart from offering practical models for the exercise of the theoretical teachings that underlie the *Mirrors*' advice, these narratives function as warnings or counter-examples that display behaviors that rulers ought to avoid. The *Castigos* contains many such counter-examples, including the aforementioned narrative of Alfonso VIII's affair with a Jewish woman, and that of King Roderic with Count Julian's daughter.[92] Also the plethora of narratives on the Day of Judgment in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* and many other Seljuq *Mirrors* function almost exclusively as counter-examples. Other narratives seem to widen the scope of the passage's main idea, or add nuance to it. For instance, the narratives on the 'good' judgments of Solomon and the prophet Daniel in the *Castigos*'s chapter on justice do not explain the idea of justice itself, but rather illustrate the reputation that comes with what is portrayed as just judgments.[93] The specific association with biblical figures, too, resonates with the way Sancho wanted to be represented. Also the story of the caliph Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik—who is so shocked upon learning how little a famous *ʿālim* eats when breaking fast that he fasts for three days and nights, for which he is subsequently rewarded with a son who goes on to become a just ruler—not only exemplifies good advice, but adds to it the notions of exemplary moral and pious conduct (by the *ʿālim*) and immediate reward for "good intention (*nīyat-i nīkū*)."[94]

In some cases, the narratives in *Mirrors* do not seem to fulfill any of these functions, meaning that their decoding requires more effort on the part of the reader. For instance, we have already seen how the advisor of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, toward the end of a passage in which he repeatedly emphasizes the

90 See, e.g., Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 64 and 252–253. For an example from the *Baḥr al-fawāʾid*, see Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 83.

91 *Castigos* L:7–30. On typologies, see 211.

92 *Castigos* ch. L offers a whole series of counter-examples warning about the consequences of being badly advised or instructed (*mal castigado*).

93 Ibid., IX:16–17.

94 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 32–34.

particular harshness with which rulers will be judged on the Day of Judgment, seems to insinuate that rulers should probably not let themselves be affected by this fate, because they cannot influence it. The same applies to a group of anecdotes that presents the model of a hands-on ruler who, in disguise, takes on simple tasks in and around the court.[95] Rather than displaying an exemplary way of conduct that other rulers ought to imitate, these anecdotes suggest the importance of rulers taking responsibility, not giving too much control out of their hands, and not acting solely out of desire for public praise. Another intriguing example is the aforementioned anecdote on the presumed custom of the Persian kings to hold audiences in which they would allow their subjects to bring forward complaints against them. The advisor explains that on the day of the audience

> if there was a case of complaint against the king he would rise and kneel in front of the *mobed*, facing his adversary. Then he said: 'First of all, judge this man's case against me and do not be partial or biased … O *mobed*, be careful not to favor me, because every question that God asks me, I will ask you. I put the matter on your shoulder' … When the king had finished with these cases, he returned to his throne, placed the crown on his head, turned to his officials and said: 'I went first restoring justice [in the cases against me] so that thereafter nobody would dare to do injustice to someone else. If any of you has an adversary, you have to grant him satisfaction'. On that day, whoever had been closest to the king was farthest from him, and whoever had been the strongest, was the weakest.[96]

At first appearance, this anecdote seems to aim at suggesting the lengths to which rulers ought to go to restore absolute justice. However, the symbolic weight of the image of the kneeling king alerts us to another layer of meaning; one that must have particularly resonated with a Seljuq audience that was living through a period of intradynastic conflict that pitched the highest members of court, including powerful viziers and the mothers of rulers, against each other. In fact, instead of descending to the level of a regular litigant, the ruler rather conspicuously remains in control of orchestrating what essentially amounts to a ritualistic performance. If read this way, rather than suggesting that a ruler should actually follow the example of the Persian kings

95 Ibid., 17–18; and 66–67.
96 Ibid., 168–170.

by the letter, the anecdote seems to both hint at the power of ritualized performance and emphasize the importance of the ruler staying in control. The latter is further supported by the unambiguous threat at the end of the anecdote that shifts attention to the consequences of the potential sins of even the most high-ranking among the king's officials. Finally, some supportive material functions outside the argumentative logic of the given advice. Examples of this sort of material include the aforementioned religious references with their emotive force, such as in the *De institutione*, and anecdotes that are based entirely on puns.[97] All these examples illustrate that the decoding of the more elaborate anecdotes, which throughout the history of the genre seem to have gradually gained in prominence as components of *Mirrors*—especially in the Arabic and Persian traditions—requires a close reading that is attentive to the deviations they occasionally introduce to the works' overall progression of thought.

Like most of the supportive material, and in particular religious references, narratives in *Mirrors* add authority to the works' arguments and make them appear more believable by virtue of the aforementioned attributions to certain 'sources' or authorities. What is crucial about the attributions of deeds (*facta*) and testimonies (*dicta*) to specific people or sources in the *Mirrors* is that they are located (mostly) in the past, and thus function not only as illustrations of the practical exercise of ideal rulership, but most importantly also as historical examples or counter-examples. The invocation of authorities or rulers from the past to exemplify models of rulership that are worthy of emulation or must be avoided at all costs is a significant aspect of the *Mirror* genre as a whole and reflective of a wider attitude toward the function of history that was common in pre-modern thinking. Scanlon goes as far as defining "the logic of exemplarity … as an essential condition of the genre, irrespective of the extent to which individual *Fürstenspiegel* availed themselves of the exemplum as an expository strategy."[98] In a similar vein Marlow notes that "invocation of the experiences and pronouncements of bygone kings and sages, adduced by way of indirect commentary on the circumstances of the present, constitutes a prevalent feature of the advisory genre."[99] In *Il principe*, the advisor comments on the logic of exemplarity that he adopts throughout the text by referring to the human tendency to aim to emulate the great personalities of the past.[100] Also the paternal

97 See, e.g., al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 111; and 138–139.

98 Scanlon, *Narrative* 82.

99 Marlow, *Counsel for kings* ii, 7.

100 Machiavelli, *Il principe* 28–29. See also Eberhardt, *Via regia* 357–359; and Johannesson, Portrait of the prince 12–16.

advisor of the *risāla* attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn explicitly urges the young ruler to consider what his predecessors did.[101]

This does not mean that the historical examples in *Mirrors* offer a precise recipe for success. They often simply act as warnings, or as encouragements to think. A good example of this is found in the ubiquitous warnings about the volatility of fortune, for which rulers cannot prepare other than being generally ready to react swiftly and decisively when a problem arises. To read about the virtues and ways of past rulers was widely seen as an edificatory practice for rulers. In fact, in the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the advisor explicitly urges rulers to follow the "nature (*nihād*) and manner (*rawish*)" of their predecessors and read their advice texts "because they lived long lives, experienced many things and were able to distinguish good from bad."[102] It is therefore no surprise that the writing of advice literature for rulers is intimately intertwined with historiography. This is evidenced by the significant reliance of many *Mirrors*, including the *Castigos*, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the *Siyāsat-nāma* and the *Qābūs-nāma*, on accounts from the past,[103] as well as the (intended) potential of historical works to function as *Mirrors*, setting out the mistakes and successes of previous rulers.[104] The *Risāla*'s relative lack of invocations of history or any exemplary ruler of the past, other than the ruler's father, is part of the overall absence of *exempla* and any textual references in the work, and is moreover consistent with the text's limited concern with history. Instead, as noted before, the threat to the dynasty is so immediate that the ruler's reputation in the *Risāla* is discussed in terms of his perception by contemporary subjects and their obedience.[105]

To what extent these retellings of the past meet today's standards for historicity, or in fact even those of their own time, is a futile debate. Even on a discursive level it is hardly conclusive whether and for which of their supportive materials the advisors of these *Mirrors* are claiming historical authenticity. For instance, in the *Castigos* and the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the characterization of the supportive material referencing the past does not indicate a consistent effort to reflect on and establish its historicity. The *Castigos*

101 See Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 33.

102 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 112.

103 See also Marlow, Teaching wisdom; Rosenthal, *Muslim historiography* 115; and Simidchieva, Kingship and legitimacy.

104 E.g., Gottfried of Viterbo's *Speculum regum* and Ibn al-Tiqṭaqā's *Al-Fakhrī fī l-ādāb al-sulṭāniyya wa-l-duwal al-Islāmiyya* (*The honourable in the etiquette of the Islamic sultanates and states*; c. 701/1302).

105 See 79 *et passim*.

lacks any consistent metadiscourse that discusses the historicity of the supportive material. This is partly a result of the attribution of many narratives to one of their characters, rather than to a witness, transmitter, or narrator. The fact that some of the sources are identified as 'history' (*estoria*) does not indicate that all other narratives are to be seen as non-historical. In the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the advisor seems to differentiate between *ḥadīth*s (*akhbār*) and anecdotes (*ḥikāyāt*).[106] However, the understanding and usage of the latter term in Arabic and Persian historiography underwent many changes over time, although it has been argued that it always primarily indicated the verisimilar retelling of an event, rather than its historically accurate recording.[107] In general, the advisor of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* employs a large variety of terms to characterize his material, each of which suggests to some extent a retelling of the past, without commenting on their claims to historicity. For example, the historicity—both perceived and actual—of the accounts in *adab* that are termed *akhbār*, which in the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* refers to both *ḥadīth*s and reports about the rulers of the past, primarily from the pre-Islamic period,[108] seems impossible to establish. In fact, Hilary Kilpatrick considers the *akhbār*'s relationship to reality "of secondary importance."[109] This probably accounts for the nearly complete omission of *isnāds* from *ḥadīth*s and anecdotes in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the *Siyāsat-nāma* and the *Baḥr al-fawāʾid*.[110] Instead, Kilpatrick argues, they contribute "to the establishment of an ideal in the realms of values, knowledge, or behavior, especially thought and verbal expression."[111] As a result, the *akhbār* in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* can be said to function mainly as a parenetic exposition of behaviors that are continuously attributed to figures of the past. The other terms that the advisor uses in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* to characterize the section on the pre-Islamic rulers, such as *taʾrīkh* (history) and *anṣāb* (genealogies), are almost reminiscent of the 'classical' Arabic approach to historical writing; i.e., based on the genealogies of rulers.[112] The lack of reflection on questions of historicity in the *De institu-*

106 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 45.
107 See Pellat, Ḥikāya.
108 See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 81, 97, 119 and 162.
109 Kilpatrick, Ashʿab 95.
110 The omission of *isnāds*, especially in works of *adab*, was a general trend that has been attested for as early as the third/ninth century. See, e.g., Khalidi, *Islamic historiography* 23–27; Meisami, Past in service of the present 264; and Werkmeister, *Quellenuntersuchungen* 44–46.
111 Kilpatrick, Ashʿab 95.
112 See Humphreys, Taʾrīkh. Nevertheless, the main focus of that section lies on the moral character of the individual rulers. See Bagley, *Ghazālī's book of counsel* 47 n. 2.

tione is less surprising, given that all history in the *De institutione* is salvation history and thus comes with an inherent authority and claim to truth. The problem of historicity in pre-modern historical writing is not new to scholars of both Islamic and Christian historiography. Representatives of both fields have concluded that, in the period under consideration, historical writing mainly followed philosophical and ethical concerns.[113] This means that, rather than trying to reconstruct the past as accurately as possible, historians then seem to have reflected on its meaning for the present, especially when it came to issues of rulership. As a result, any historiographical work had the potential to be read as a *Mirror*.

Instead of labeling these retellings as historiographical reports, it seems more accurate to speak of *fictional narratives*. 'Fictional' here is different from fictitious, in the sense that it does not indicate an absence of 'truth'. Instead, 'fictional' describes a way of creatively modifying and presenting experiences. Or, as Günther explains in his analysis of the fictional elements in *ḥadīth*s, "in texts classified as 'fictional,' the primary focus is not on criteria such as genuineness vs. fabrication, truth vs. falsification, history vs. fantasy, or fact vs. fiction, but on the character of portrayal."[114] The acts of modification, or of fictionalization, include the selection, omission, replacement and addition of material, as well as the use of emphasis or commenting.[115] The fictionalization enhances the educational potential of the accounts by producing narratives that are gripping, easy to understand, and that provoke a reaction from the readers through their indeterminacy; that is, the distance between the world that the narratives describe and the 'reality' that the readers experience.[116] However, to say that the accuracy of historical reconstruction was not a priority does not imply that the purported 'pastness' of the evidence is without significance. Instead, it is crucial for our understanding of the workings of supportive material in *Mirrors* that, while the aforementioned abstract models that are not linked to any specific individual exist outside any idea of history and gain authority from their independence from context, the examples that advisors locate in the past come with the authority and legitimacy of 'historical' precedent and experience.[117] They also contribute in two essential ways to the very functioning of the texts as advice literature for monocratic rulers.

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113 See Humphreys, Ta'rīkh; Meisami, Past in service of the present 252; Coleman, *Ancient and medieval memories* 317; and Partner, New Cornificius.

114 Günther, Modern literary theory 172.

115 See Günther, Modern literary theory 174. See also Iser, *Fiktive* 24–59, who identifies the fictionalizing acts of selection, combination and self-disclosure.

116 On Iser's concept of indeterminacy, see 60.

117 On the experiential dimension of the teachings and admonitions provided by Arabic wis-

The two main concerns that our authors of *Mirrors* seem to have had when they employed a mechanism of 'historification' of their advice; that is, the shaping of their supportive material as historiographical records, are the construction of continuity and the proposal of a schematic reading of history. The construction of continuity through the invocation of historical examples, which is part of the conservative tradition that is represented by the *Mirror* genre, operates on two levels. On the one hand, the authors participate in the construction and perpetuation of existing narratives about the past, to which contemporary readers could relate. On the other hand, the historical examples provide time-tested practical models of rulership that demonstrate how rulers in the past solved certain problematic situations and secured social stability. As suggested before, these models were not necessarily meant as precise recipes that needed to be followed to the letter, but instead functioned in a variety of discursive and figurative ways. In cases where the *Mirror* is presented as paternal advice, such as the *Risāla*, the *Castigos* or the *Qābūs-nāma*, the continuity of practice overlaps with and is reinforced by a genealogical continuity. For instance, the paternal advisor in the *Qābūs-nāma* recounts at great length the fame of the young ruler's royal ancestors. By emphasizing that the young ruler should understand the "value of [his] origin" and avoid "disgracing" it, the paternal advisor reminds him in no uncertain terms of the responsibilities that come with his origin.[118] A result of or reward for a ruler's (supposed) adherence to historical models of rulership that many *Mirrors* seem to hold out is the ruler's possibility to enter the canon of exemplary rulers to which future office holders will look for guidance. For instance, the *De institutione*'s advisor hints at a presumably shared canon of exemplary rulers when he promises the ruler that good rulership will earn him a place among "the holy kings (*sanctorum regum*)."[119] However, the text rarely mentions specific representatives of this canon. Apart from a biblical reference to Moses' selection of military leaders,[120] the most explicit invocation of a ruler of the past comes when the advisor refers to "the example of David's humility (*exemplum humilitatis David*)."[121] Constantine and Solomon are merely mentioned for what they have

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dom (*ḥikma*) literature, see Gutas, Arabic wisdom literature. On the 'Perso-Zoroastrian' tradition of invoking past authorities, see Josephson, Multicultural background 168–169. Thomas Buchheim, Rat 29–30, notes that, in the Homerian period, counsel (*boulē*) was often understood to mean an engagement with the past in the search for guidance.

118 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 6.

119 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 259, and III, I. 19.

120 Ibid., V. I. 37–42.

121 Ibid., III, I. 130.

said regarding the episcopate's role and justice respectively.[122] As a (negative) example of regal arrogance the *De institutione* mentions Nebuchadnezzar.[123] A hint as to who might have been generally considered to be among these holy kings comes from visual representations of Carolingian emperors, where they were routinely placed in a lineage with rulers of the past, including David, Constantine and Theodosius, as well as previous members of their own dynasty, such as Charles Martel, Pepin the Short, or Charlemagne.[124] In the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, an anecdote that tells the story of Anūshīrvān asking Yūnān, his *dastūr* (minister), to inform him on the "ways of the predecessors (*pīshīnagān*)," ends with Anūshīrvān proposing a toast to "those brave men (*jawān-mardān*) who will come after us and take over our throne and crown. They shall remember us, just like we remember those that came before us."[125] This anecdote not only re-enacts the ruler's enquiry about the exemplary ways of his predecessors and alerts rulers that rulership requires 'bravery', but also points to a further level of the mechanism of 'historification'—or *Traditionsbildung* (formation of tradition)—whereby the present has the potential to be transformed into history as a coherent continuation of the narrative of the past for the (supposed) purpose of future imitation. What is important here is not the promise of eternal fame, which in most cases would have been of little practical relevance to rulers, but the discursive insertion of the present (ruler) into a continuing history of exemplary and therefore legitimate rulership. To some extent, the invitation to the rulers to follow the example of the great rulers of the past thus suggests even more than the mere possibility of them becoming themselves exemplary rulers of history. In the specific case of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s Seljuq addressees, this means the insertion of a dynasty with roots outside the region in the Middle East's long-standing tradition of just rulers.

These invocations of past rulers boost the ruler's legitimacy by placing him in the company of exemplary rulers. A similar process occurs in the *Risāla*, where, as part of the topos of the advice's redundancy, the advisor points to the ruler's particular "desire for his [i.e. the caliph's] virtues (*akhlāqihi*), adoption of his praiseworthy dispositions and acceptance of the same maxims."[126] This implies that continuity is not a mere desideratum, but is supposedly already a fact. The advisor combines genealogy and recourse to custom in order to add

122 Ibid., II, I. 21–31; and VI, I. 3–10.
123 Ibid., VI, I. 17–27; and VII, I. 13–16.
124 See Garipzanov, *Symbolic language* 224–235.
125 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 112–113.
126 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 474.

to the ruler's legitimacy and emphasize his commitment to social stability. He thus discursively suggests the continuation of a dynasty in the very moment its survival is jeopardized by an uprising. In other words, the above references to a canon of presumably ideal rulers of the past can work suggestively by integrating the ruler into the referential frame or network of these models and types, whereby his success in imitating them is not only deemed possible and desirable, but, on a discursive level, is already established. The historical narration forges the ruler's identity as part of a tradition of ideal rulership in which he is both a successor and a (future) exemplary predecessor. As a suggestive process, this is comparable to what Scanlon describes when he states that *Mirrors* dissolve the division between secular monarchy and divine authority and invest the former with the latter by "simply asserting that the ideal Christian prince is possible."[127] The invocation of past rulers not only demands or propagates continuity, but also produces it discursively. Ultimately, this adds to the legitimacy of the office holders as they are included in the canon of exemplary rulers that future rulers ought to imitate.

Yet, just as the genre as a whole, the *Mirrors*' invocation of examples from the past can communicate both a message of legitimization and an admonition. References to a past that is depicted in very positive terms generally possess the potential to function as criticism of the present. As Jan Assmann explains, in order to become an identifiable entity that can be remembered and invoked, the past needs to be characterized by a difference from the present. When the present is experienced as deficient the past is, by contrast, remembered—and thereby constructed—as better.[128] Invocations of an idealized or heroic past therefore imply that the present is experienced as different and thus worse. For understandable reasons, none of the authors of the *Mirrors* presently under consideration dared to pronounce this criticism in an explicit fashion. Yet, the markedly positive way in which the pre-Islamic Persian rulers are mentioned in the *Baḥr al-fawāʾid*, the *Siyāsat-nāma* and the second part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* can be read, as they are by Ohlander,[129] as a criticism of the status quo. Assmann's difference between the good and sane past and the corrupt present becomes particularly obvious in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, where the heedless people and the greedy sultans of the present[130] are directly juxtaposed to the just Persian rulers of the past who "made the world prosperous."[131] Such

127 Scanlon, *Narrative* 82–83.
128 Assmann, *Kulturelle Gedächtnis* 32 and 79.
129 Ohlander, Enacting justice 246.
130 See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 131 and 147–148.
131 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 99.

invocations of the exemplary rulers of the past can thus contribute to the strong critical potential of *Mirrors*.

The demand for and possibility of the recreation of an idealized past in moments of crisis betrays an understanding of history as an archive of instructive patterns, such as the 'good ruler' who acts as the source of social stability in a period of unrest. We find one form of such a patterned reading and structuring of history in a variation of the narrative *exemplum* that can only be observed in the *Castigos*. It consists in the employment of what Gabrielle M. Spiegel terms *secular typologies*; that is, the "exemplarist and stereotypical use of historical events and persons."[132] Spiegel's concept of *secular typologies* is based on the typological interpretation of the Bible used by the medieval exegetical tradition. Karl Ohly seems to describe a similar phenomenon when he speaks of semi- or extra-biblical typologies.[133] The typological usage of historical examples implies the transformation of past events or people into original types, to which present events or people are placed in correspondence. This transformation is accomplished by largely stripping the examples of their 'historicizing' narrative, a process that might be compared to the aforementioned reduction or omission of *isnād*s, if we consider the *isnād* not only as a reference to tradents and authorities, but also as an attempt to situate an account in a specific historical context. The past is thus seen as explaining, foreshadowing, and legitimizing the present, which in turn confirms the prophecy of the past. In the words of Spiegel,

> by means of typological interpretation, the significance of the past is reaffirmed for the present; the old becomes a prophecy of the new and its predeterminant in the sense that its very existence determines the shape and interpretation of what comes later. In this way the past becomes an explanatory principle, a way of ordering and making intelligible a relationship between events separated by vast distances of time.[134]

The accumulation of original types, as exemplified by the *Castigos*'s lists of rulers and heroes who gained rulership through great effort (*grand esfuerço*)[135] or of those who fell victim to treason,[136] interlinks different points in history

132 Spiegel, Political utility 320.
133 Ohly, *Schriften* 366. On the typological representation of rulers in the Quran, see Busse, Herrschertypen. On typology, see Gurevič, *Weltbild* 166–167; and Ostmeyer, Typologie.
134 Spiegel, Political utility 320.
135 *Castigos* XXXVI: 21–26.
136 Ibid., XL:31–38. For other examples of typologies in the *Castigos*, see, e.g., IX:24–35, XVII:27

to produce a pattern that provides a reading of history from which a logic can be extrapolated that serves as moral guidance for the present. The use of anaphoras further emphasizes the formulaic nature of each of the examples in these lists that describe a specific type. Just as the narrative reproduction of history, this patterning of the past is as much "guided by present necessities" as "the historical understanding of the past for its part determined the rhetorical presentation of contemporary events."[137] The same creative, constant interplay between the perceptions and representations of past and present is described by Ohlander when he states that in *Mirrors* there is

> a pedagogical orientation which looks to generate a pattern, a *habitus*, of political action predicated on the repetition of the salubrious acts of paradigmatic figures whose exempla are as much a recuperation and renaming of older (although long since acculturated) non-Islamic wisdom traditions as they are instruments for engaging contemporary concerns in a specifically Islamic discourse rooted in the Qur'ānic *ẓulm / ʿadl* opposition.[138]

However, in contrast to the narrative re-enactment of historical events, which deals with the inevitable moral consequences of certain acts and behaviors, the typologies seem to be more concerned with the understanding of history's rhythm and the question of how the ruler ought to react to it.

The scarcity of manifest intertextuality and supportive material in the *Risāla* is arguably conditioned to a large extent by the work's more intimate testamentary style. As a comparison with some of the extant caliphal testaments (*waṣāyā*) shows,[139] the complete absence of external authorities, with the exception of the Quran, is the rule rather than the exception for the genre of the political testament in which the ruler provides his successor with final advice and instructions. Although the epistolary *Mirrors* of the early 'European' tradition of advice literature contain references to external authorities other than the Bible, over time authors in Europe, too, seem to have relied more and

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and L:7–30. The use of anaphoras further emphasizes the formulaic nature of each of the examples in these lists that represent a specific type.

137 Spiegel, Political utility 316.

138 Ohlander, Enacting justice 250.

139 See, e.g., the testaments of al-Manṣūr in al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh* 102–107, al-Muʿāwiya in al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān* 131, or al-Maʾmūn in al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh* 647–649. However, since these texts come down to us as part of later historiographic works, where they themselves function as supportive material, it remains unclear to what extent they provide an accurate reflection of how caliphal testaments were written at the time.

more on non-scriptural *exempla* and *dicta*.[140] For the Islamic context, Meisami observes that the employment of historical narratives for the legitimization of rulers by court officials only gained traction in the fourth/tenth century.[141] However, strictly speaking the *Risāla* is, as a whole, intertextual because it claims to report Marwān's advice, thus participating in a speech chain. By referencing a paternal model, the *Risāla* can be said to suggest the same continuity of practice and rootedness in tradition that the other *Mirrors* communicate through the evocation of historical models.[142] Nevertheless, in terms of their argumentations and the specific pieces of advice that they give, the *Risāla*'s author employs no supportive material. Instead, the text relies almost entirely on immediate instructions and the notions of threat and divine knowledge. As a result, the *Risāla* appears as a very situational attempt by an experienced and trusted government official to instruct a specific ruler in a particular moment—on the eve of a battle, in the midst of a widespread insurrection—instead of making a general point about good rulership. In terms of language, the advisor addresses his ruler directly, using the imperative to convey urgency, and he seems to make no effort to modulate his instruction, either because of the urgency of the occasion, or because he considers his advice to carry sufficient authority since he is supposedly conveying the caliph's (and ultimately God's) advice.

The bottom line is that the *Risāla*'s intertextuality is limited to references to the Quran, whether in the form of the occasional employment of Quranic vocabulary or a small number of longer quotations. In terms of their function, al-Qāḍī argues, the Quranic references in ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's letters not only play an ideological role by investing the Umayyad cause with overt religious notions in an attempt to counter the discourse of the Umayyad's lack of religious legitimacy.[143] The Quran also has a literary impact on ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's letters, since he manages to integrate Quranic excerpts in such an artful manner that it suggests the Quranic-like quality of his own writing.[144] In fact, at no point does the *Risāla*'s advisor indicate the text's reliance on the Quran, a rhetorical method that is traditionally referred to as *iqtibās*. Instead, the *Risāla*'s author has gone out of their way to blend the Quranic references into the main text by amending the quotations to fit the progression of the letter's text wherever it

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140 See, e.g., the letters of Lupus of Ferrieres and Alcuin of York.

141 Meisami, Past in service of the present 252.

142 On paternal advice see 226 *et passim*.

143 A concrete example of how Quranic language was used in political speeches in the early period of Islam is described by Dähne, Context equivalence.

144 See al-Qāḍī, Impact of the Qur'an.

was necessary. This type of seamless appropriation and imitation of the Quran was seen as proof of an author's talent and became a widespread practice in Arabic literature, and met with hardly any resistance until the doctrine of the Quran's inimitability gained traction.[145] State secretaries in particular, as ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's letter to the *kuttāb* suggests, were expected to use the Quran in their writings.[146]

There is an additional layer to the *Risāla*'s use of the Quran, namely a distinct concern with the power and use of language, which it shares, to varying degrees, with most other *Mirrors*. Apart from providing knowledge and practical advice, the four *Mirrors* can be seen as laying out rhetorical models that the ruler should seek to imitate. For instance, the *Risāla* contains a number of instructions on how to speak, such as the invitation to the ruler to "adorn (*tuzayyin*)" his speech with the Quran.[147] The *Qābūs-nāma* features an entire chapter on speech, in which the paternal advisor provides several pieces of advice that betray a marked concern with the extent to which speech determines how an individual is perceived and judged by others. For instance, the *Qābūs-nāma*'s paternal advisor emphasizes that it is more important to appear truthful than to be it.[148] Moreover, he quotes an Arabic saying according to which "the man is hidden under his tongue," and thus concludes that it is better to stay silent in order not to reveal too much of oneself.[149] The narratives, maxims and proverbs that we find in large numbers in our other *Mirrors* can equally be seen as offering rulers an effective, aesthetic, authoritative, and tested shorthand language.[150] Moreover, the *Risāla*'s adaptation of the Quran, the *De institutione*'s combination and accumulation of scriptural and patristic quotations, and the narrative re-enactments of the past in the *Castigos* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* all represent examples of the rhetorical production of authority in speech and writing that rulers require for their own speech acts. Besides that, the *Mirror* genre stands for the power and effectiveness of speech. Not only do many *Mirrors* themselves represent a speech act directed from an advisor-narrator to a ruler-narratee, but the genre as a whole is based on the very idea of advice as effective speech; that is, speech intended to prompt changes in the behavior of its addressee. The notion of effective (advisory) speech is moreover encoded

145 See Orfali, Defense of the use of the Quran; al-Qāḍī and Mir, Literature and the Quran; Al-Sha'ar, Introduction 24–27; and Vasalou, Miraculous eloquence.

146 See al-Qāḍī and Mir, Literature and the Quran.

147 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 477. See also 492.

148 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 24.

149 Ibid., 26.

150 See Gutas, Arabic wisdom literature 67–68; and van Ruymbeke, *Kashefi's Anvar-e Sohayli* 258.

in many of the anecdotes found in *Mirrors*, most explicitly in those in which a character changes their behavior upon hearing someone else's speech, whether as de facto advice or as an answer to a question. In examples from the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* and the *Siyāsat-nāma*, the advisee's change of mind is accompanied by expressions of regret and repentance that are meant to emphasize the decision's sincerity.[151] Also Dimna's deceitful advice to both the lion and the bull eventually proves to be effective when they are finally lured into a fatal struggle against each other.[152]

Both the *Castigos* and the *Risāla* also directly address the power of the spoken word and its significance for rulers. For instance, the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* defines the spoken word (*palabra*) as the ruler's most important instrument of power.[153] In addition, in a chapter on the necessity of considering one's words before saying them, the paternal advisor emphasizes the power of words by comparing them to an arrow (*saeta*) "that flies from a bow, which no one can stop before it lands where it must wound. Words, if they are not weighed carefully before they are said, once spoken must land and wound the person against whom they are said."[154] The *Risāla*'s advisor underscores the power and importance of the spoken word by admonishing the ruler not to remain silent "because of an inability to speak."[155] In both contexts, where the works played a role in the respective dynasty's propagandistic endeavors, this suggestive language on the power of speech is meant to enhance the texts' effectiveness. At the same time, the aforementioned warnings against the courtiers' and petitioners' flattery,[156] as well as the ubiquitous discussion on harmful advice,[157] suggests that the four advisors are far from treating speech as an invariably 'positive' force. Also the episode of Dimna's trial in, for instance, al-Muqaffaʿ's and Wāʿiẓ Kāshifī's (b. 867/1463) versions of *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, which recounts Dimna's impressive self-defense in court by means of his rhetorical superiority, illustrates, according to van Ruymbeke, "how the power of rhetorical skills is, in fact, divorced from ethical codes of conduct and may successfully be wielded even in defense of a morally questionable case."[158] Finally, the non-verbal aspect of the ruler's com-

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151 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 32–34; and Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 64.

152 Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Kalīla wa-Dimna* 121.

153 *Castigos* XI:21–22.

154 Ibid., XXVI:2; translation quoted from Francomano, Castilian 228. See also Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 41–42.

155 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 480.

156 See 173.

157 See 222 *et passim.*

158 Van Ruymbeke, Dimna's trial 576.

munication also receives attention in the *Mirrors* under consideration. The *Risāla*'s advisor in particular seems acutely aware of the communicative value of the ruler's conduct as he continuously points out how the ruler's actions are perceived and interpreted by subjects and courtiers alike. The paternal advisor of the *Castigos*, too, specifically points at the communicative value of ritual by depicting the ruler's ritualized display of his attire and translating the encoded reference to the regal traits.[159] The *De institutione* seems to lack this element completely, given that it refers to the inner workings of the court, which is not a matter of concern in the *De institutione*, as has been noted before.

Altogether, we have seen that the *Mirrors*' educational approaches are generally characterized by strong (authorial) interventions that provide hermeneutic contexts to the works. The authors adopt multiple strategies to enhance the authority, legitimacy and urgency of their advice in the eyes of their audience. Moreover, the authors try to bridge the gap between theoretical teachings and political practice by situating their advice in the addressees' everyday lives; for example, by providing narrative enactments of their advice through invocations of authorities and events that are located in the past. Through the employment of the supportive material that is so defining of *Mirror* literature, the authors also suggest their texts' functions, both as handbooks of continuity and stability and as guides for the navigation of the present and future. The analysis of its functions within *Mirrors* has shown that the supportive material does not merely offer examples or counter-examples of regal conduct, but also provides advice in a number of manners, some of which require significant effort to decode. Furthermore, the ways in which intertextual material is used in *Mirrors* seem to reflect general tendencies in the respective literary traditions, whether with regard to the condensation of familiar narratives and their accumulation into typologies or to the attitude toward the historicity of anecdotes and the importance of its assertion through a reliable chain of transmitters. Moreover, the analysis has also shown that the *Mirrors*' advice carries a significant potential for criticism, or implied criticism. How authors deal with this and how they frame their advice vis-à-vis their mighty addressees will be examined in the following.

159 See 187 *et passim*.

2 Negotiating with Power

The communication situation that is encoded in *Mirrors* entails a very particular constellation of participants that carries far-reaching implications for the entire works. In advice literature for monocratic rulers, an author, usually a member or aspiring member of the royal court, addresses a ruler or heir apparent. This constellation is what defines the genre's *Sitz im Leben*. It translates into a sensitive power imbalance between educator and student that carries more potential for conflict as the advice's critical implications become more salient. Within the texts, however, the power structure is subject to continuous (re-)negotiation as the authors—in their attempts to enhance the authority of their advice—confirm, react to, manipulate, or reverse the social hierarchy. The above-mentioned invocation of historical authorities and current crises as well as the casting of the offered advice as tailored solutions for the addressee's problems are all part of the authors' re-negotiation of the power structure. The present chapter will investigate a number of additional strategies that authors of *Mirrors* apply in representing and positioning their works—as valuable advice texts—and themselves—as authoritative advisors and educators—vis-à-vis their regal addressees. The first part provides an investigation of how the authors link their works to an established tradition of giving advice to rulers by evoking notions of immediacy, performativity, and rituality. In addition, the analysis will consider the discourse of good versus bad or harmful advice and the gendered nature of the process of advice-giving. The second part will discuss how power is negotiated in *Mirrors* by looking at a number of strategies that advisor-narrators rely on to modulate their advice, with the intention of either softening the implied criticism or bolstering their own authority. In a final step, the present study will offer a number of conclusions drawn from the present analysis with regard to the relationship between the authors and addressees of *Mirrors*.

2.1 *Models of Advice-Giving*

Antiquity and Late Antiquity provide a myriad of examples for the important role that advisors played in the lives of rulers and leaders, ranging from Aristotle and Buzurgmihr to David's advisors Nathan, Abiathar and Ahitophel, and from Abū Bakr as advisor to Muhammad, to the advisory councils of the *shūrā* and the Spartan *gerousia*.[160] Giving advice to rulers—as well as receiving advice from wise advisors—was thus a widespread paradigm to which authors of *Mir-*

160 For a brief survey of the immense importance of advice-giving in the (Late) Antique prac-

rors could relate their texts interdiscursively by employing the elements that make up the discourse of advice-giving, such as register, voices, styles, plots, characters, or genres. In doing so, the authors not only provide their readers with a heuristic framework for the reception but also endow their works with the legitimacy and authority that is attributed to the paradigm. Hence it comes as no surprise that authors would relate their works to this particular paradigm by adopting some of the aforementioned discursive elements. In what ways and to what effects they did so will be the subject of the following analysis. Furthermore, the present study will try to answer a number of other questions. In what ways are the elements of orality and ritual reflected in the four texts? What is the function of the ubiquitous discourse on good and bad advice? What role does gender play, not only as an embodiment of authoritative advice, but also in the construction of regal power?

A straightforward way in which the authors of the four *Mirrors* establish the connection between their texts and the paradigm of advice-giving is through the textual reproduction of the immediacy and intimacy of the face-to-face interaction between advisor and ruler, which in the Islamic context is also an echo of the close, personal relationship between teacher and student that is regarded "a way of safeguarding the transmission of religious knowledge."[161] One such strategy involves the aforementioned narratives that (re-)enact the advisory process.[162] In a study on the function of these narratives in *Mirrors*, Marlow suggest that they "attest to a pervasive advisory culture, a mentality of wisdom and ethics, in which the central position belonged to the ruler, who both dispensed and received advice in instances of public display."[163] On a grammatical level, the immediacy of the advisory interaction is produced through the introduction of an imaginary interlocutor, such as in the *Risāla* and the *Castigos*, which are both presented as a father's advice to his son. The most conspicuous interaction with the interlocutor in the *Castigos*, apart from the direct address to the son, is marked by the recurrent rhetorical question: "What else shall I tell you (*Qué te diré más*)?"[164] The reliance on an imaginary or implicit reader whom the advisor-narrator addresses is defined by María Jesús Lacarra as 'characteristic' of *Mirrors*.[165] Due to its epistolary nature and

tice of rulership, including useful references for further reading, see Postel, Herrschaft als Beratung.

161 Günther, Education.

162 See 201 *et passim*.

163 Marlow, Performance of advice 65.

164 For a less formulaic example, see *Castigos* IX:50.

165 Lacarra, *Cuentística medieval* 73.

the lack of supportive material, the *Risāla*'s advisory process remains, at least on the surface, largely uninterrupted by other voices, since the voices of the Quran and the young ruler's father are largely restricted to the work's introduction. In the case of the *De institutione*, the immediacy of the advisory process is created by the dedication letter, which, as a paratext,[166] establishes the work's function as a *Mirror*. In fact, while the council acts appear more like a treatise, with their thematic division, argumentative internal structure of the chapters, and the address to a generic third-person ruler, the *De institutione*'s dedication letter evokes immediacy by turning the text into a direct message from the first-person advisor-narrator to the second-person ruler-narratee and by explicitly referring to the *De institutione* as a work of admonition[167] and an epistle.[168] This characterization of the work as a letter comes with a stated commitment to brevity, as the advisor declares that

> there remains a lot more that the (Christian) love (*caritate*) would have prescribed me to write for your Highness, if I had not feared to both exceed the limits of a letter and to become in some way a burden to your excellence.[169]

Apart from providing a disclaimer on the completeness of his arguments, the advisor thus adds a more personal tone to a text whose original use as a public or state document Pepin was certainly aware of. In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* which, beside the first part, is not consistently directed to a second-person ruler-narratee, the direct interaction between advisor and advisee is instead encoded in many of the narratives. Both parts of the work feature numerous anecdotes in which the role of the advisor-narrator is significantly reduced as they consist mainly of direct speech acts of the kind in which a question is posed to and answered by an authority.[170] The question-answer pattern that these advice

166 Paratext refers to everything that accompanies the main text and guides its reception, such as front and back matter, or in the case of the *De institutione*, a dedication letter.

167 See Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 50. Already Anton, *Herrscherethos* 216 noted the role of the dedication letter in providing the *De institutione* with an admonishing spin.

168 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 249–250.

169 Ibid., ADM., I. 248–251. On other occasions the advisor also points to the existence of further evidence, which he has chosen not to mention. See, e.g., ADM., I. 171–174; IV, I. 74–77; or V, I. 101.

170 On the strategies involved in the strengthening of a *khabar*'s alleged objectivity, such as the usage of direct speech, see Leder, Literary use of the khabar.

narratives rely on was a key element in Islamic pedagogical thought.[171] The most conspicuous reference to the long-standing tradition of oral advice specifically addressed to rulers are the narratives in which a ruler asks for advice.[172] These advice narratives display instances of advisory practice and suggest how advice can effectively help a ruler and what the role of the 'good advisor' is. Two anecdotes involving Anūshīrvān and his minister Yūnān even set a precedent for the unsolicited giving of advice to a ruler.[173] The *Mirror* authors thus highlight or announce their own advice by framing it within an advice narrative.

Another example of how authors tie the textual offering of advice to the oral advice tradition is the encoding of the *Mirrors*' performativity. For instance, in both the *Castigos* and the *De institutione* the works' reception finds expression in the texts through the advisors' allusions to and anticipations of the persuasive effect on the reader (or the interlocutor) of specific claims or pieces of evidence. The paternal advisor of the *Castigos* does so by repeatedly introducing evidence with phrases such as: "And so that you may see that what I say is true."[174] On another occasion, he guides the reader's reception by emphasizing an argument with a direct rhetorical question that requires a negative answer. He asks: "Do you believe that Jesus Christ would have been born to the holy Mary, his mother, if not out of justice (*justiçia*)?"[175] Elsewhere the paternal advisor even anticipates the young ruler's unwillingness to accept his father's teachings when he warns him that, while he can flee from his father "whenever he wants," he will never be able to escape God.[176] The paternal advisor of the *Qābūs-nāma*, too, anticipates that his son will reject his advice since "today no child pays attention to a father's advice, because there is a fire in today's youth that persuades them in their carelessness to see their own knowledge as superior to that of the elders."[177] In the *De institutione*, the advisor reflects on the text's reception when he characterizes the patristic material as having "more influence on the hearts of the audience (*in cordibus auditorum plus ualere*)" than his own words.[178] Elsewhere he concludes a number of quotations by

171 See Günther, Education; and Günther, Principles of teaching 74.

172 See 201.

173 See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 125 and 139. See also al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 19.

174 *Castigos* I:13. See also I:23 and IX:18. Elsewhere, the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* also anticipates the reader's disbelief. See I:15.

175 *Castigos* IX:48.

176 Ibid., I:18.

177 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 5.

178 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 49–50.

claiming that they "clearly (*liquido*)" prove his point.[179] Furthermore, he makes explicit suggestions on how the ruler ought to consume the text. At the end of the dedication letter he explains to the ruler that "it cannot be stressed enough how beneficial it will be, if you [i.e. the ruler], with the help of God, care to read them [i.e. the *De institutione*'s chapters] or have them read to you by somebody else."[180] Later on, the advisor notes that he composed the work so that the ruler may have it

> at hand and read and consider [it] frequently (*prae manibus habenda et saepe legenda atque tractanda*), so that you [i.e. the ruler] might continuously contemplate yourself, like in a mirror (*quasi in quodam speculo*) that you might know how to be, what to do and what to avoid (*quid esse, quid agere quidue cauere debeatis*).[181]

Another example occurs in the *risāla* attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, where the paternal advisor concludes the work by urging the young ruler to "seek to understand my letter to you, look at it frequently and act accordingly."[182] These statements do not necessarily reflect the way in which *Mirrors* were, in fact, performed and consumed in a courtly context. Although Marlow strongly argues that reception and performance were public (ritualized),[183] as stated before we possess hardly any evidence that could tell us how *Mirrors* were performed and received. Instead, statements like the above show how authors hint at the performance of advice-giving in order to situate their written texts in a long-standing tradition of interpersonal oral education and thereby establish an interpretative frame for their works' reception.

Apart from these references to the *Mirrors*' performance, in some cases the texts even seem to suggest a ritualistic application; for example, by repeating certain key terms or concepts over and over again, such as 'justice' (*ʿadl*) in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 'obedience' (*ṭāʿa*) and 'reputation' in the *Risāla*,[184] or the triad of fundamental royal virtues in the *De institutione*.[185] In the *Castigos*, and to some extent in the *Risāla*, a ritualistic reading of the text is insinuated by

179 Ibid., V, I. 31.
180 Ibid., ADM., I. 293–295.
181 Ibid., III, I. 53–55.
182 Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 34.
183 Marlow, Performance of advice.
184 On obedience and the notion of reputation in the *Risāla*, see 79 *et passim*.
185 See, e.g., Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 5; and VI, I. 31–35.

extensive passages dominated by parallel constructions. Apart from lists and juxtapositions, the *Castigos* contains numerous anaphoras: strings of sentences that start with the same sequence of words. Common examples are the invitation to "consider (*para mientes*)" a certain argument or piece of evidence and the adverb *otrosí* (moreover).[186] The use of anaphoras, which is also found in the *De institutione*, the *Cien capítulos* and the *Libro de los doze sabios*,[187] not only adds emphasis to the text's message and gives structure to lengthy deliberations on a single subject, but also infuses the work with a rhythm and contributes to the sermonic nature of the *Castigos*. The latter is further reinforced by the recurrence of the *beatus ille* motif,[188] which according to Francomano "characterizes both the pseudo-canonical tone and the pedagogical ethos of medieval Castilian wisdom literature and conduct books."[189] The anaphora thus attaches the *Castigos* to an authoritative religious education. All this is not to say that the texts reflect or propagate the inclusion of *Mirrors* in specific court rituals, although such usage is not entirely unlikely, given for instance the aforementioned role of panegyrics in court rituals.[190] Instead, regardless of whether *Mirrors* were in fact employed in such rituals or not, the authors make use of the language of ritual to add to their works' gravity and insinuate the need for its ritualistic, i.e. repetitive, consumption. Finally, this notion of ritual in the texts can also be read as an acknowledgment of the sacralized nature and soteriological mission of the rulers addressed by the present *Mirrors*. The encoded ritualism thus marks *Mirrors* as partaking in the continuous (ritualized) enunciation of sacralized rulership by setting the rhythm and patterns not only of their own performance, but of the courtiers' addressing of and approach to the ruler in general.

The significance of the process of advice-giving for successful rulership and its effectiveness are further emphasized by the ubiquitous warnings against false or harmful advice. In fact, in all our *Mirrors* but the *De institutione*, the advisors' counsels are interspersed with such warnings and recommendations.[191] Another example of this is the *Castigos*'s inclusion of bad advice (*mal consejo*) among the acts of treason that have caused the deaths of many

186 Apart from that, the *Castigos* also contains numerous descriptive (or prescriptive) passages that continuously refer back to their respective subjects. See, e.g., *Castigos* XI:40–114.

187 See Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* XVII, I. 13–42.

188 See, e.g., *Castigos* X:50, XI:39, XI:115, XII:49 or XV:33.

189 Francomano, Castilian 185. On the sermonic character of the *Castigos*, see also Bizzarri, Sermones y espejos 172; and Moreno, Retórica del sermón 477.

190 See 59.

191 See Dekmejian and Kechichian, *The just prince* 93–96.

rulers.[192] In the chapter on flattery (*lisonja*), the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* specifies the consequences of bad advice:

> The bad advisor (*mal consejero*) will make you fall out with God, set you on a path to lose your soul, make you abandon good manners and good customs and take up bad ones; he will make you lose the health of your body through vain and harmful things. He will make you fall out with the lord with whom you live and whose vassal you are. He will make you fall out with your vassal. He will make you fall out with your friends. He will make you lose your good reputation and earn a bad one. He will make you fall out with the woman to whom you are married and he will have you do things that displease God and her. He will make you fall out with your sons. He will make you fall out with your relatives. He will make you fall out with all those over whom you have power.[193]

The bad advisor, who appertains to the deviant types that *Mirrors* warn against,[194] is thus seen as having a detrimental effect on all aspects of the ruler's life. The paternal advisor of the *Castigos* leaves no doubt that in his view the power and reach of advice to rulers is significant, making the ruler's choice of advisors a pivotal one. Most *Mirrors* seem to contain warnings against ill-intentioned and deceptive advisors.[195] By dedicating so much attention to harmful advice and juxtaposing it to their own advice, authors not only emphasize the significance and legitimacy of their own arguments, but also potentially discredit the advice of other members of the court. Ferster suggests that, rather than being self-defeating, authors' warnings against advice within their own works of advice could have been an attempt to prove that they were not self-serving in their counsel to the ruler.[196] Moreover, these warnings alert rulers to the fact that seeking and obtaining advice is only the first step in a process of reflection and consideration, at the end of which it falls upon the rulers to choose which advice to follow. For advisors, the discussion about good and bad advice offers a lesson on the importance of gaining and retaining a ruler's trust. In fact, as the preceding quotation from the *Castigos* shows, advice is deemed false or harmful when it comes from untrustworthy types of people.

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192 See *Castigos* XL:5, and XL:32–37.

193 *Castigos* XXXIV:14. See also XXXIV:20–28.

194 See 173 *et passim*.

195 See, e.g., Machiavelli, *Il principe* 87–89; Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 30; and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Adab al-kabīr* 69. The prime example of the deceptive advisor is, of course, Dimna.

196 Ferster, *Fictions of advice* 168.

If a ruler trusts his advisor, he will necessarily trust the advice, which in turn shows why the choice of advisors is assigned so much importance in *Mirrors*. Finally, this paradoxical yet widespread topic in *Mirrors* gives us a glimpse of the realities at court, as authors warn their addressees of the intrigues that surround them.

In discussing the coexistence and competition of multiple advisors and opinions, advisors display an acute awareness of the court's inner machinations in which various people compete for the ruler's attention and try to influence him. For instance, the paternal advisor of the *Castigos* takes up the problem of advisors holding back uncomfortable truths in order not to anger the ruler:

> He who does not flatter you and wants to be loyal and truthful (*leal e verdadero*) to you will tell you many times things that you will not like (*non plazeres*). You should not want your close courtier (*priuado*), when you ask him for advice, to do so according to your preference (*voluntad*) and not based on the truth (*verdat*). Who wants to give you good advice must truthfully consider your advantage, because he does not do so by pleasing you with a lie (*mentira*).[197]

Similarly, in the epistle attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, the paternal advisor explains to the young ruler that the best advisor is he who "when he notices a shortcoming in you, is not held back by his awe for you from revealing it to you in private."[198] In the *Risāla*, bad advice is more clearly linked to people's attempts at instrumentalizing the ruler for their own purposes. In a section on the difficulties involved in obtaining useful and trustworthy advice, the advisor urges the ruler:

> Know that people will rush to you and seek you out under the pretext of advice (*naṣīḥa*), whilst they seek to make you inclined toward them by provoking [your] pity (*shafaqa*), force you into taking action through seduction (*ighrāʾ*) and obscure arguments (*shubha*) and make you pursue a course of confusion (*ḥayra*), in order to make you their means of preying on the common people (*istiʾkāl al-ʿāmma*).[199]

The same depiction of the ruler as a fast track to wealth and power features in the first half of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* where the advisor, after having

197 *Castigos* XXXIV:9–11.
198 Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 33.
199 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 484.

urged the ruler to seek the *ʿulamā*'s advice, warns him that a ruler must avoid "*ʿulamā*ʾ with worldly ambitions (*ḥariṣ bar dunyā*), who flatter, praise, seduce, and seek to please him in order to capitalize on his weak-willed physical existence (*murdār-i ḥarām*) through artifice and deception."[200] The aforementioned anecdote of the caliph who mends his ways upon hearing an ascetic's recitation of a Quranic verse points in a similar direction by juxtaposing the advisor's flattering and gentle advice with the harsh but honest words of the ascetic.[201] The paradox that lies in the combination of praise for advice-seeking rulers and warning against deceptive advisors is probably best encapsulated in the *Baḥr al-fawāʾid*, where the advisor states that "the worst kings are those who keep themselves distant from the *ʿulamā*, and the worst *ʿulamā* are those who seek closeness to kings."[202] Apart from illustrating and thereby warning the addressee about these attempts to instrumentalize the ruler, the authors seem to openly confront, potentially as a pre-emptive measure, certain presumptions regarding the hidden agenda of regal advisors of which they themselves might be suspected. In fact, the authors seem to engage with their extended audience by addressing the potential negative reception of their parenetic endeavor by other agents of power around the ruler. The complete absence of the issue of bad advice in the *De institutione* might be a result of the text's overall lack of concern for the court, its members and its inner machinations that is so prominent in *Mirrors* such as *Kalīla wa-Dimna*.

Moreover, these discussions on the dangerous effects of bad advice carry a strong warning to the ruler. In her analysis of late medieval English advice literature, Ferster argues that the condemnation of bad advisors who had led the ruler astray, and the seemingly contradictory counsel not to trust advice, were the only safe ways for an author to criticize the ruler for his actions because it suggests that he did so upon the bad advice of others.[203] While Ferster goes too far when she implies that rulers generally did not accept any criticism, the above examples from three of the four *Mirrors* are still meant to remind individuals, who are continuously presented as divinely chosen, of their fallible human nature and the potential threat of treachery from those whom they are accustomed to trusting. Moreover, these examples draw the image of a vulnerable ruler, who is emotionally and intellectually susceptible to the attempts of others to influence him. The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s aforementioned reference to the ruler's "weak-willed physical existence (*murdār-i ḥarām*)," literally his "ille-

200 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 27.

201 See 201.

202 Translation quoted from Meisami, *Sea of precious virtues* 297.

203 Ferster, *Fictions of advice* 126–127. See also Marlow, *Counsel for kings* i, 198–199.

gitimate or unholy carrion," that places the focus on the ruler's fallible human nature or, in fact, his body natural, expresses sincere doubts in the ruler's ability to discern between good and bad (advice), and to withstand attempts to influence him. The *Castigos*'s characterization of the bad advisor in terms of some of the most significant vices that the young ruler himself is urged to avoid suggests that ultimately the absence of these virtues in the ruler's advisors can be just as devastating as their absence in the ruler.[204] Therefore the issue of good and bad advice ultimately re-draws to some extent the power structure, as the authors dispel the myth of monocratic rulership to portray governance as a joint venture that is as dependent on (virtuous) advisors as it is on a virtuous ruler.

In many *Mirrors* the issue of good and bad advice is also an inherently gendered one. For instance, besides mimicking in their texts various aspects of the process of (oral) advice-giving, the authors of many *Mirrors* seem to pick up on the specific constellation of persons that is fundamental to the tradition of advice-giving: the advice of the father to the son. Paternal and quasi-paternal advice via surrogates is an age-old literary convention in the Late Antique oecumene, and among its legatees, that has found expression in a myriad of forms. The Bible provides a number of examples for this convention, such as Prov 1:8 and Sir 32:24, and Greek mythology offers a tragic case exemplifying the consequences of ignoring paternal advice, in the story of Icarus. The prototype of the quasi-paternal advisor is, of course, Aristotle, who famously acted as the teacher of Alexander the Great. Similarly, authors of Roman educational handbooks tended to frame their texts as paternal gifts.[205] This claim of (quasi-)kinship between narrator and narratee is a rhetorical strategy and does not need to find correspondence in the extratextual reality of the work. Among the four *Mirrors* studied here, the *Castigos* is written as straightforward paternal advice given by a ruler to his son and successor,[206] while the *Risāla* represents the model of quasi-paternal advice, in which a male authority is either employed by the ruler to educate his son or replaces the ruler as paternal figure. To some extent the *De institutione*, too, functions as quasi-paternal advice, given the close relationship between Jonas and Louis and the advisor's appeal to Pepin in the dedication letter, urging him to obey his father.[207] Apart from giving the

204 *Castigos* XXXIV:20–24.
205 See Lemoine, Parental gifts.
206 Strictly speaking, in *Castigos* I:1, the paternal advisor presents the text as the work of two fathers, the physical and the spiritual. Also, the epistle attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn and the *Qābūs-nāma* are, in the fashion of the caliphal testaments, written as paternal advice.
207 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 158–200.

text the character of a gift from a loving and dutiful father,[208] the notion of paternal or quasi-paternal advice links the *Mirror* to notions of paternal authority, wisdom and experience[209] and thereby justifies the inversion of hierarchy between advisor and ruler that occurs in *Mirrors*. The concept of paternal or quasi-paternal advice is also intimately linked to ideas of natural succession, transition of power, and stability. This is particularly evident in the preface of the *Qābūs-nāma*, where the paternal advisor explains to his son and narratee that it is his own imminent death that led him to compose a work of advice in order to transmit to him his "share of fortune (*naṣīb*)."[210] The death of the ruler and the transition of power to his son is a crucial moment in terms of the realm's stability because it puts consistency and continuity to the test and eventually, if successful, reaffirms the institution of transpersonal rulership and the social and political status quo. Speaking of the transmission of power after the death of the ruler, Dagron describes it as "a moment of danger and fascination" and "a sort of theophany" that relied on "historical and moral references, accumulated examples which eventually came to constitute a rule of the game."[211] Assmann notes that death, which he describes as the archetype of the fracture that separates the past from the present, is the moment in which those who are left behind decide what will be part of the deceased's intellectual legacy and thus become meaningful, and what will be forgotten.[212] The (supposedly) paternal *Mirror* can therefore also be seen as the ruler's attempt to forge the memory of himself that is his legacy. In doing so, the father-narrator elevates himself to the position of an exemplary ruler of the past, as showcased by the *Castigos* and its role in the legitimization of Sancho's rule. Apart from the advice on rulership, the insights on the retaining of power, and the warnings about the threats of fate that it offers to the addressee, the (supposedly) paternal *Mirror* contributes to a successful transition by suggesting continuity and the absence of the type of fracture that Assmann describes. The merging of genealogical lineage and the lineage of power further lends the transition an aura of naturalness and materiality.[213] In other words, the

208 See ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 475; and *Castigos* Aról.:10. Also in the prologue to Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 5, the paternal advisor refers repeatedly both to the "father's duty (*sharṭ-i pidarī*)" to educate the own son and the "fatherly love (*mihr-i pidarī*)" that compels him to do so. On the antique notion of education as a gift from the affectionate father, see also Lemoine, Parental gifts 340.

209 See Francomano, Castilian xvii.

210 Kaykāwus, *Qābūs-nāma* 5.

211 Dagron, *Emperor and priest* 21.

212 Assmann, *Kulturelle Gedächtnis* 33–38.

213 See Spiegel, Geschichte 184–186.

idea of paternal advice projects a sense of concrete, natural, stabilizing and comforting continuity. This continuity is what a paternal-advice-giving *Mirror* promises.

In contrast, the presence of women in *Mirrors* is, according to Yavari, a signal for "the faltering of the rational faculties of men."[214] She explains that "women and heresy are the rhetorical devices used in the genre to warn of political and social unease."[215] We can see this in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s chapter "On the qualities of women, their virtues and their vices," which mostly characterizes women in terms of heresy and deception ending in the conclusion that "it is a fact that all which befalls men in terms of misery (*miḥnat*), affliction (*balā*) and perdition (*halāk*), all of it stems from women."[216] Moreover, the work features an anecdote among its advice for rulers that warns against women's detrimental effect on the ruler's virtuousness and the latter's susceptibility to their debauchery.[217] Women thus seem to appear in *Mirrors* exclusively in the form of the female body—especially in terms of their chastity[218]—and female subjectivity, both of which are treated as sources of instability in the realm of rational male politics.[219] A point in case is the extensive program of sexual ethics in the *Castigos* that purports to protect the (rational) man from the (irrational) woman. Fedwa Malti-Douglas notes that in *adab* literature in general women do not represent persons, but rather a deviant character type of the likes of the 'traitor' or the 'flatterer', against whom the readers ought to prepare themselves.[220] Furthermore, in many *Mirrors* the female is more specifically associated with false and harmful advice in immediate juxtaposition to the supposedly valuable paternal advice that the texts claim to offer. For example, mention of the Fall of Man—that prototype of detrimental female counsel and seduction—in the *Castigos* signals the presence of temptations, deceit, and bad harmful advice and, through its prominent placement in the work's prologue, provides the backdrop for the narrator's introduction of his own paternal advice.[221] By arguing that, if a father does not chastise his son, he exposes him to the ruinous influence of the all too lenient mother, the paternal advisor of

214 Yavari, Polysemous texts 335.
215 Ibid., 336.
216 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 285.
217 Ibid., 120–121.
218 See Peirce, Aspectos de la personalidad 32.
219 According to Fouchécour, *Moralia* 410, warnings against women are a defining trait of Persian *Mirrors*.
220 Malti-Douglas, *Woman's body* 31.
221 *Castigos* Pról:6–10.

the *Castigos* dismisses women not only as advisors, but also as educators.[222] The most obvious example of warnings against women in a Castilian *Mirror* is *El libro de los engaños e los asayamientos de las mugeres* (*The book of the tricks and deceits of women*), a thirteenth-century translation of a collection of Indian tales, usually referred to as the *Book of Sindibad*. Also, in al-Ṭabarī's first version of the testament of al-Manṣūr, the caliph urges his son not to let women enter his counsel on political matters.[223] Finally, the *Siyāsat-nāma* features an entire chapter dedicated to the detrimental impact of women on governance. The advisor's warning that "their orders are in most cases the opposite of what is right" epitomizes the perception of women as anti-advisors.[224] The *Siyāsat-nāma*'s advisor, too, makes reference to Eve's role in the Fall to support his poor view on the reliability of women's advice.[225]

The issue of advising rulers is thus an overtly gendered one and betrays a notion of power that is constructed patriarchically through not only lineage, but also advice. Ruling, as a set of skills and virtues, is thought of as masculine and only to be taught patriarchically. The general exclusion of women from education and power that the *Mirrors* suggest is, however, not necessarily indicative of the reality of female participation in these areas. Apart from their involvement in scholarly work,[226] women in the period in question were engaged in politics, with prominent examples including Zubayda bt. Jaʿfar (d. 216/831–832), wife of the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, the Ayyūbid sultana Shajarat al-Durr (d. 655/1257), the Ṣulayḥid queen al-Sayyida Arwā bt. Aḥmad (b. 440/1048), and the sultana of Delhi Raḍiyyat al-Dunyā wa-l-Dīn (d. 638/1240).[227] How powerful a role women could play at court is already suggested by the influential character of the lion's mother in *Kalīla wa-Dimna*. It thus seems possible that *Mirrors* were occasionally employed by authors who were competing for influence at court against the wives and mothers of rulers, in an attempt to actively propagate the removal of women from the spheres of power. For instance, the *Siyāsat-nāma*'s—and, in fact, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s—strong allegations of female disruptiveness in the political sphere can equally be seen as part of—or reference to—Niẓām al-Mulk's power struggle with

222 Ibid., I:26–31.
223 Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh* 104.
224 Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 242.
225 See Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 242–243.
226 See Afsaruddin, Reinstating women; Berkey, *Transmission of knowledge* 161–181; and Haredy, Women scholars of ḥadīth.
227 See Calderini and Cortese, *Women and the Fatimids*; Hambly, *Women in the medieval Islamic world*; Mernissi, *Forgotten queens*; and Peirce, *Imperial harem*.

Malikshāh's ambitious wife Terken Khātūn.[228] In a more metaphorical sense, the topos of the erosion of (rational) male authority through (irrational) female intervention represents a general warning about human susceptibility to emotions posing a particular threat to rulers who have to make important decisions. And while advice literature for rulers continued to be an intensely gendered field, Misty Schieberle's study of late medieval English *Mirrors* suggests a complete reversal of the role of women in the genre, whereby advising poets came to use female counseling-figures "to acknowledge their own perceived lack of authority and status in order to address political topics safely."[229] Schieberle adds that the emergence of women as regal counselors, which coincided with the vernacularization of the *Mirror* genre, resulted "in the elevation of the status of women and vernacular texts simultaneously."[230] Paternalization and feminization thus seem to stand for two different approaches to the education of so powerful an addressee as a monocratic ruler: one that emphasizes the authority of advice and advisor, and one that defuses the advice's critical potential by emphatically acknowledging the advisor's own subordination. In both cases the issue at stake is the power structure between the advisor and the ruler.

By evoking the tradition of oral advice, including all its gendered undertones, and discursively linking their parenetic endeavor to a long-standing history of advice-giving, the authors provide an interpretative frame for the reception of their work and add legitimacy to their advice in the eyes of the addressee, among others. Together with the authority that derives from their supportive material and the notion of urgency that stems from the evocation of the threatening historical context, the legitimacy of this approach suggests the quality and utility of the advice given. Moreover, by invoking a recognized model of communication, the authors can hope to soften the aforementioned connotation of criticism that is inherent in the offering of advice. In the following, other strategies that authors had at their disposal to modulate the impact of their advice on their relationship with the addressees will be discussed.

2.2 *The Ruler and His Advisors*

The ways in which the authors of the four *Mirrors* studied here position themselves and their advice vis-à-vis their addressees range in broad terms from praise, reassurance, and the softening of the advice's critical potential to a confident, authoritative, and even critical didacticism. The relationship between advisor-narrator and ruler-narratee in all our *Mirrors* is far from being solely

228 See Hillenbrand, Seljuq women 159–162.

229 Schieberle, *Feminized counsel* 5.

230 Ibidem.

one of deference, praise, justification, apology, and fear on the part of the former vis-à-vis the latter. The texts do not simply mirror the hierarchy at court. Instead, the four *Mirrors* form spaces in which this relationship is constantly renegotiated. The texts thus represent instructive examples for how intricately linked praise, propaganda, advice, and criticism can be in any form of address to a ruler. Ferster argues that the language of advice was the safest way for authors to express criticism or, in fact, any political opinion, "for under the mantle of the Fürstenspiegel tradition they could speak more freely than if they addressed contemporary issues in their own voices and in the present tense."[231] In her discussion of the practices and forms of admonishing the ruler during the reign of Louis the Pious, Mayke de Jong explains that *admonitio* "had its own accepted modes of delivery, with an idiom and style derived from Scripture and patristic writings as well as from an early medieval tradition of admonition of kings by bishops and holy men."[232] Yet the numerous strategies that the authors rely on to embed their advice and thereby defuse the criticism that the addressee might perceive in their very offer of counsel show that their addressee's reception and reaction to their work was still a major concern for authors of *Mirrors*. The extent to which every single author feels the need to employ these strategies can tell us something about the relationship between author and addressee.

In general, *Mirrors* tend to make less use of these strategies when they are presumably given directly from father to son, such as the *Castigos*, regardless of whether they actually represent paternal advice or are merely made to appear as such. For instance, in terms of providing an explanation for the impetus behind their offer of advice, authors of such *Mirrors* can simply point to the father's duty to educate his son. Two texts in which the advisors dedicate significantly more space to the development of a rationale for their offering of advice are the *Risāla* and the *De institutione*. It is in these texts, too, that we encounter the aforementioned topos of the advice's redundancy. The basic narrative of this strategy that goes straight to the core of the particular author-addressee constellation of advice literature for rulers suggests that in reality the advice that is given in the *Mirror* is redundant because the ruler is already displaying good rulership.[233] For instance, the advisor in the *Siyāsat-nāma* declares early on in the text that his ruler's reign is so successful that he "has no need for any advisor or guide."[234] He concludes that when the ruler

231 Ferster, *Fictions of advice* 176.

232 De Jong, *Penitential state* 112–147. See also Althoff, *Kontrolle der Macht*.

233 See also Marlow, Performance of advice 69.

234 Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma* 14.

ordered him to compose a work of advice, "he might have wished to put his servants to the test and learn the level of their intelligence and knowledge."[235] In the *De regis persona* we see a slightly different strategy, as the advisor minimizes the weight of his advice by describing it as a couple of "gleaming sparkles (*scintillas micantes*)" that he is adding to the ruler's shining "light of knowledge (*lumini scientiae*)."[236] He goes on to assure the ruler that he is not trying to flatter him. Finally, he adds that if the ruler was to perceive any criticism in his words, he should consider the advice as either redundant or as the expression of a desire for the ruler to act accordingly.[237] The *Risāla*'s advisor starts out by identifying his advice as solicited by the ruler's father:

> the caliph wanted to charge you with the subtleties of your affairs … although (*wa-in*) you are, praise to God, of God's faith (*dīn*) and his caliphate, inasmuch as He chose you as crown prince, whereby He distinguished you from your relatives and brothers.[238]

We do not know whether this indicates an entirely factual incident or simply represents a way to portray Marwān as a wise, advice-seeking ruler and the author as having something to offer. Assuming ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd was the author of the *Risāla*, it seems nevertheless possible that the text was indeed written on Marwān's request, given ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's position as secretary and his particular standing with the caliph. In fact, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd is often described as a key figure of Marwān's government, as well as the caliph's most loyal servant.[239] For instance, al-Qāḍī defines ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd as a "spokesman" of the Umayyads who "wrote letters in their behalf," and "could clearly envisage what they wished to say, in what tone it should be said, and what message it had to carry."[240] She adds that at the same time ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd probably enjoyed significant freedom in his writing.[241] To what extent ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd would have felt the need to compose a *Mirror* to improve his socio-economic position is difficult to assert. In his analysis of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's social and economic position, Ḥammādī al-Zankarī refers to various accounts, including one of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's letters, that sug-

235 Ibidem.
236 Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 833B–C.
237 Ibid., 833C.
238 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 474.
239 See, e.g., ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd* 41–42; al-Qāḍī, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib; and al-Zankarī, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd* 21–53.
240 Al-Qāḍī, Religious foundation 235.
241 Ibid., 236.

gest that Marwān's chief secretary suffered financial hardship.[242] Also al-Qāḍī admits that "'Abd al-Ḥamīd's career was not all rosy," as she points to a number of the secretary's disagreements with Marwān and the fact that he might not have been all that satisfied with his economic situation.[243] The fact that the *Risāla*'s advice regarding the various positions at court also tends to include instructions on material rewards might be read as a hint at the importance of a ruler financially supporting his officials, including the secretary.

Coming back to the *Risāla* and the passage quoted above, the concessive clause starting with *wa-in*, which identifies the ruler as the divinely chosen vicegerent, introduces the topos of the advice's redundancy. The topos is repeated when the advisor goes on to justify the caliph's decision to request the composition of the *Risāla*, regardless of the divine sanction for the ruler, by defining the offering of advice as a divine duty.[244]

> If God Almighty and the wise men (*ḥukamāʾ*) had not ordered and commanded to offer advice and admonition (*al-ʿiẓa wa-l-tadhkīr*) to the people of knowledge (*ahl al-maʿrifa*), even though they excel in merit (*faḍl*) and knowledge (*ʿilm*), the Commander of the Believers (*amīr al-muʾminīn*) would have relied on the fact that God chose you and favored you with what He saw you as deserving of, such as your position as the Commander of the Believers, your precedence in desire for his virtues (*akhlāq*), your adoption of his praiseworthy dispositions (*shiyam*) and your takeover of his exact maxims (*tadbīr*).[245]

The *Risāla*'s advisor thus not only secures his own position by praising the ruler, but also cloaks his agency by turning the composition of the *Mirror* into a regally solicited and divinely sanctioned endeavor. If we assume that ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd was the author of the *Risāla*, the above suggests that he bore at least some responsibility for the work and would have been held accountable for it, which is why he felt the need to explain his (supposed) thinking behind its composition. Other examples of the presentation of a work's underlying rationale include the *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya*, where the advisor pre-emptively provides an excuse for the ruler's need for advice by acknowledging his preoccupation

242 Al-Zankarī, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd* 21–23.
243 Al-Qāḍī, Identity formation 151.
244 The topos of the duty of those who possess knowledge to share it with others was a staple among rhetoricians of Classical Antiquity. See Curtius, *European literature* 87.
245 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 474.

with the daily business of "ruling and planning."[246] Apart from characterizing the work as unworthy of his ruler, the advisor in *Il principe* tries to dismiss the notion of pretentiousness on his behalf by arguing for the value of his perspective as somebody who stands outside the sphere of power.[247] In the *De regis persona* the advisor declares, as part of the exordium, that he was asked explicitly for advice by the ruler, and the advisor in *Libro de los doze sabios* explains that the council of the eponymous twelve sages was convened by the ruler himself.[248]

The *De institutione* features an even more elaborate approach that combines praise for the ruler's piety, wisdom, and obedience toward the father with subtle admonition and the topos of redundancy. The work starts with a classical exordium that pairs exuberant praise for the ruler with a modest self-representation by the orator.[249] The notion of modesty further pervades the dedication letter in the form of an evaluative metadiscourse, through which the author mitigates his admonitions to the ruler. On three occasions the *De institutione*'s author inserts the adverb "modestly (*humiliter*)" to modify the verbs of admonition and advice directed to the addressee.[250] The exordium is followed by the advisor's apology for his absence, which he however uses to emphasize both his strong connection to the ruler's realm and his consequential legal obligation and sense of duty toward the ruler.[251] The advisor then goes on to stress his good intentions by defining his advice as coming directly "from the modest treasure of my [i.e. his] heart (*ex modico pectoris mei thesauro*)."[252] He reiterates this idea in the final chapter when he declares that he composed the *De institutione* "out of love for your [i.e. the ruler's] salvation (*ob amorem salutis uestrae*)."[253] Shortly after the exordium the advisor accentuates his praise for the ruler by making it the very reason for his decision to offer him advice:

> I would not have presumed (*praesumerem*) to write Your Highness a work of admonition (*admonitionis*), if I had not come to trust your magnanim-

246 Al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 3.

247 Machiavelli, *Il principe* 13–14.

248 Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 833B, and *Libro de los doze sabios* Pról:1–10. See also al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 3.

249 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., l. 7–10. The advisor further expands on this topos in the subsequent passage (ADM., l. 11–16). See also in Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 833B.

250 See Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., l. 54; ADM., l. 147; and ADM., l. 158–159.

251 Ibid., ADM., l. 17–25.

252 Ibid., ADM., l. 51–52.

253 Ibid., XVII, l. 3–4.

> ity (*sublimitate*) and if I had not learned from experience that you are fervently eager to learn and happy to hear about what pertains to the love and fear of God and the salvation of the souls (*amorem et timorem Dei animarumque salutem*).[254]

The advisor thus almost inverts the educational logic by making the presence, rather than the absence, of qualities the cause for his instructions. The qualities that the advisor praises in his ruler are very specific, referring to the image of the magnanimous and humble ruler who is prone to learn. Simultaneously this praise, to which the advisor adds the expectation that the ruler will "renounce regal arrogance (*regium fastum deponitis*),"[255] works as a presupposition that commits the ruler to this particular ideal. This is followed by the topos of redundancy proper, in which the advisor admits to the ruler's knowledge of how to act as a ruler. However, the advisor states, it is out of a sense of duty (*officium*) and preoccupation with the ruler's salvation (*salus*) that he admonishes him to consider the transience of human fate.[256] The lengthy passage, illustrating in various ways the idea of transience, somehow balances the topos of redundancy by reinstating the urgency and relevance of the advice given. Later on, the advisor concedes that the ruler does not need his admonition because he has proven himself to be an obedient son to his father in the past.[257] By explaining why he "dared (*praesumerem*)" to offer advice, the *De institutione*'s advisor not only stresses his confidence in the ruler's praiseworthy attitude toward advice, but he also makes use of the widespread topos of the risk of advising or serving the ruler.[258] The advisor's emphasis on his providing advice despite his awareness of the dangers involved in serving the ruler suggests his bravery and commitment to helping the ruler. Altogether, the *De institutione*'s elaborate exordium gives the impression that the work was part of a delicate attempt by Jonas to re-approach Pepin in the hope of gaining employment as his advisor and thereby improving his own socio-economic position. Also striking is the fact that Jonas left Aquitaine the same year (817) that Pepin became king. In the dedication letter we read that Jonas had fled Aquitaine because people had defamed him to Pepin, but that he now wanted to return because he

254 Ibid., ADM., I. 35–36.
255 Ibid., ADM., I. 39–40.
256 Ibid., ADM., I. 52–64.
257 Ibid., ADM., I. 151–157.
258 The topos is also mentioned, although not explicitly, in conjunction with the advisor's own dealings with a ruler, in *Castigos* XXXVIII:4–7, and al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 143–146. See also Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *Kalīla wa-Dimna* 87. For further examples of this topos, see al-Azmeh, *Muslim kingship* 125.

saw it as his duty to support him. Moreover, the advisor declares that the work is meant as a gift and that it comes with the author's hope of being summoned as an advisor to the ruler.[259] Finally, the relative lack of explanatory para- or metatext in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* that could dispel the impression that the work is intended as criticism is probably most plausibly explained as evidence of the author's confidence that comes with carrying, or in fact hiding behind, a name as great as al-Ghazālī's. The only explanation that the advisor gives is his suggestion of the work's usefulness and the reference to its approval by the young ruler's assembly.[260]

In addition to offering rationales for their decision to give advice, the advisors position themselves by discursively defining their role in the advisorial process. For instance, through the use of supportive material—that is, the invocation of recognized and recognizable authorities—the advisors significantly reduce their stake in the advice as they appear to act as passive transmitters of the knowledge of others. This is particularly evident in the *De institutione*, where on two occasions the advisor makes the precedence of the authorities' voices over his own explicit.[261] In the *De regis persona*, too, the advisor emphasizes that, rather than offering his "own bare word (*nudo meo sermone*)," he is summarizing "what the Holy Spirit has said in the holy scriptures and then through the Church Fathers."[262] The advisors of the *Castigos* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* also depict their roles as that of mouthpiece of the divine and chronicler respectively. The invocation of supportive material thus functions as a hedge that allows the advisor to distance himself from the expressed opinion. Even in the *Risāla*, despite its non-usage of external authorities, the advisor's involvement in the advice is initially very understated. The driving forces behind the ruler's instruction are two: the *amīr* who initiates the work wants to impose on the ruler the idea of rulership that he exemplifies, seeks to fulfill his duty as a father, and pleads for divine protection of his son; and God, who has pledged for the ruler's qualities as a ruler by choosing him as successor to the throne, represents the ultimate source of all knowledge, and without whose support no one can succeed.[263] However, once this purported distance is established, the advisor's voice completely dominates the text and explains to the ruler, in unapologetic terms, how to rule. Altogether, also considering the previous findings regarding ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's standing and the work's overall situated-

259 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., l. 17–25.
260 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 3.
261 See Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, l. 48–52, and XVII, l. 9–12.
262 Hincmarus Rhemensis, De regis persona 833B.
263 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Risāla 474–477.

ness, it is hardly surprising that the *Risāla*'s advisor would confront his ruler with a certain confidence. The result is a rather fluent power structure between a confident and authoritative advisor and a young ruler who is punctiliously reminded of the supreme forces, his father and God, who are supposedly the ultimate sources of his instruction.

This fluidity is not limited to the *Risāla*. In fact, at the same time that our advisors seem to be eager to minimize their stake in the advisory process, portray their advice as redundant, and defuse the potential criticism that it might imply, they emerge as confident educators, convinced of the value of the knowledge that they can offer to a ruler. They do so in a number of ways, many of which have already been discussed, such as anticipating the usefulness or instructive impact of their advice, suggesting the ruler's dependency on his courtiers and their counsel, bluntly depicting the threats that their rulers are facing, including those of the afterlife, and thus setting the stage for tailored solutions or framing their advice as paternal—and therefore authoritative—instruction. Also mentioned was the urgency that is conveyed by the *Risāla*'s use of the imperative. This is paralleled by a language of duty and the employment of assertive verbs and other metadiscursive certainty markers in the *Castigos*, the *De institutione* and the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*. For instance, when talking about rulership the *De institutione*'s advisor frequently uses the modal verb *debere* (must).[264] Other certainty markers include "doubtlessly (*procul dubio*)" and "without doubt (*sine dubio*)."[265] On a syntactical level, the *De institutione* conveys the notion of duty through the gerundive form.[266] In the *Castigos* we encounter both the modal verb *deuer* (must),[267] and the less emphatic expression "it falls to the king (*cae al rey*)."[268] Only on few occasions is the advice in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* explicitly defined as a duty (*wājib*) or something that a ruler must (*bāyad*) adhere to.[269] The paternal advisor of the epistle attributed to Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn starts the work by explicitly reminding the young ruler of his duties and responsibilities.[270] The main vehicles for these discourses are metatexts. On account of the genre's eclectic nature, the metatext represents a fundamental tool of *Mirrors*' parenetic mission as it influences the works' reception by guiding the reader or listener through the texts' arguments

264 See, e.g., Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* IV, l. 4–8; V, l. 4–8; and VIII, l. 5.
265 Ibid., VII, l. 25, and VII, l. 31.
266 See, e.g., Ibid., ADM., l. 174; III, l. 8; and V, l. 89.
267 See, e.g., *Castigos* IX:10, and XI:11.
268 Ibid., IX:9, or as negation XI:40–114.
269 See al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 65, 96, 107 and 112.
270 Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn, Risāla 26. For other examples of metadiscursive certainty markers, see al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* 7 and 17.

and lines of reasoning and, as argued before, by classifying the supportive material, indicating its function in the argument and offering interpretations of its meanings. Moreover, as suggested throughout this chapter, the metatextual interventions in *Mirrors* form the space where advisors (re-)negotiate the power structure by affirming their authority and challenging that of their rulers.

An obvious way in which authors challenge the power structure is by pointing to the vulnerability of the ruler and the institution of monocratic rulership. The supposed precariousness of the ruler's position also serves as backdrop against which advisors characterize or situate themselves in the *Mirrors* under consideration. For instance, in the above-mentioned exordial passages of the *De institutione*, in which the advisor humbles himself before the ruler, he also repeatedly emphasizes his affiliation to the episcopate. He defines himself, for example, as one of the "servants of Christ (*famulorum christi*)" and he goes on to emphasize his affiliation to "Christ's militia (*Christi militiae*)."[271] Furthermore, he tellingly praises the ruler for his "humility toward the office of the bishops (*humilitatis erga sacerdotale ministerium*)."[272] This means that the advisor-narrator explicitly affirms his authority and legitimacy as advisor by highlighting his membership of the very group to which the Paris council acts assigned the authority to admonish and instruct the ruler. A similar consciousness of and pride in the affiliation with a certain class is displayed by the advisor in the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, who emphasizes the authority of the *ʿulamāʾ* of which the supposed author is a part. Moreover, the confidence of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor shines through when he points to the work's approval by the ruler's council (*majlis-i aʿlī*) or refers to his previous works, thereby situating himself as an established author and reliable authority.[273] In contrast, the *Risāla*'s advisor does not give any indication of how he views his position vis-à-vis his ruler. In fact, the texts lack any reflexive discourse or attempt by the advisor to influence his own image in the text. Nonetheless, the extent to which the advisor's voice dominates the text and the directness of his advice show how rapidly the *Risāla*'s advisor leaves behind the passive position of transmitter of the *amīr*'s advice, which he attributed to himself at the beginning, to assume the role of the insistent and seemingly omniscient instructor. It could equally be argued that the author sees no need to define his role because he can assume that his addressee is already aware of it. That ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd was

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271 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* ADM., I. 9, and ADM., I. 19.
272 Ibid., ADM., I. 14–15.
273 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 3, 40 or 55.

heavily involved in forming and promoting the secretaries' consciousness of belonging to a defined class that claimed a significant influence on the ruler is documented in his letter to the *kuttāb*.

In conclusion, the analysis and comparison of the discourses in these four *Mirrors* bring to light the existence of a series of discursive strategies that appear in all or most of the texts. What do these strategies on the textual level tell us about the extratextual practice of the composition and dedication of *Mirrors*? What does the relationship between advisor-narrators and ruler-narratees tell us about the relation between the authors of *Mirrors* and their addressees/dedicatees? By way of recapitulation, with the exception of the *De institutione*, the *Mirrors* studied here tend to display confident advisor-narrators and passive ruler-narratees. Initially, the *Risāla*'s advisor appears as a mere transmitter of the caliph's advice. As the text continues, however, the caliph fades into the background and the advisor emerges as an independent, confident and knowledgeable educator for a ruler who is presented with a triad of authorities: God, his father, and the advisor. The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s advisor(s) appears equally confident, as he shows himself having control over a vast amount of material, consisting of religious truth and received wisdom. Furthermore, this material is the only hedge that the advisor builds for himself, as he makes no attempt to soften the urging of his message. The paternal advisor of the *Castigos*, who identifies himself as King Sancho, portrays himself as a dutiful father, wise educator, and exemplary ruler. Again, the extensive use of intertextual material seems, initially at least, to function less like a hedge than as an indicator for the paternal advisor's embeddedness in tradition. In contrast, the *De institutione* appears to offer us two different advisors. Whereas the advisor of the *De institutione*'s main text employs the voice of a powerful class that seeks to define the limits of the ruler's power, knowing that it wields the authority of a long-standing tradition (represented by the biblical and patristic material), the advisor of the dedication letter is significantly more careful. As we have seen above, he makes extensive use of rhetorical strategies to weaken the impression of criticism. Moreover, by expressing the hope of entering the ruler's service he reveals both his economic dependency and the intention behind the offer of advice. The only source of confidence and authority that he seems to cling to is, again, his affiliation with the episcopate.[274]

From this, we might draw a number of conclusions regarding the extratextual situations of the four *Mirrors*, although, necessarily, they cannot be anything but speculative. First of all, our analysis of these *Mirrors*' advisors-

274 See 238.

narrators corroborates many of the explanations that have been put forward regarding the texts' authors. The confidence with which the *Risāla*'s advisor speaks for the caliph and lectures his son, for example, points to the author's close relationship with the ruler. The advisor's emphasis on legitimacy, as suggested by his equation of obedience to the divine and obedience to the caliph, indicates both a concern for the dynasty's survival and a personal investment in its fate. Both observations speak for ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd as the author of the *Risāla*, given the important role that he played in the administration of the last Umayyad caliph. Similarly, the choice of topics, the confident use of religious material and language, and the patent idealization of Sancho in the *Castigos* seem to confirm that the work was written for him, rather than by him, while the absence of rhetorical hedges and the paternal advisor's self-identification with the king suggest that the author(s) cannot have produced the text without Sancho's knowledge and blessing. The text's sermonic nature, moral tone, and persistent portrayals of Sancho as a messianic figure arguably support the theory of the *Castigos*'s clerical authorship. In terms of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s authorship, our analysis cannot give an answer as to whether the confidence of the advisor(s) derives from the author's status as a famous scholar or from the anonymity that is provided by the false attribution. What we might say, though, is that the directness of the advice, together with the criticism of the status quo—which underlies the nostalgia for the just rulers of the past—and the strong endorsement of a justice-restoring discipline (*siyāsat*) mark the work as an urgent appeal to the ruler for a change of policy.

Similar conclusions concerning the social, political and discursive practices in which these *Mirrors* might have been embedded can be drawn for the other texts. The comprehensiveness, length and elaborate language of the *Risāla* are at odds with the urgency of the supposed occasion of the work's composition, and rather suggest an attempt by the author to position the addressee as a legitimate and informed ruler in the eyes of the elite, who thereby emerge as a potential wider audience for the work. And while it cannot be excluded that the *Castigos* was meant as a comprehensive program of government and Christian kingship for a future king, it was also probably part of a public campaign, initiated and supervised by Sancho and addressed to the local elite. Finally, the *De institutione* a particular case for the analysis of its narrational voice(s) and the conclusions that we can derive from it regarding the work's role in the mentioned processes is the dedication letter, and its relation to the council acts that form the *De institutione*'s main text. In its function as a paratext to the council acts, the dedication letter represents an authorial intervention that provides a hermeneutic frame to the reception of the work's main text, in addition to the hermeneutic guidance that comes from the text's advisor. The above ana-

lysis of the paratext suggests that, given his request for an appointment, the *De institutione*'s author felt the need to equip the advice of the council acts with an elaborate hermeneutic frame that forestalls any suggestion of criticism of the addressee. At the same time, the main text retains the decisiveness that it had when the Carolingian episcopate first handed the council acts to Louis. In addition, the addressee's father plays an important role in the dedication letter, as the author seems to remind the addressee of his subordinate position by repeatedly evoking the emperor, the need to obey him, and his failure to do so in the past.

Altogether, by way of a general conclusion, the analysis of the discourses in the four *Mirrors* has confirmed what we had concluded in the preceding chapter. The absence of certain elements or the differences in their application in some of these texts can generally be explained by their immediate contexts or more general literary developments at the time, rather than through the affiliation to larger cultural or religious categories. For instance, the specific constellation of people that (presumably) underlies the *Mirrors*—that is, the relationship between author and addressee—determines to a great extent how authors approach the advisory process. Furthermore, models of advice-giving, such as the notion of paternal or quasi-paternal advice, which seems to be deeply rooted in the literatures coming out of the Abrahamic religions, suggest that authors were aware of the connotations and benefits of constructing or claiming specific constellations. This awareness allowed authors to impact the reception of their works by effectively engaging with their audience's expectations and understanding of the giving of advice and its literary expressions. All these observations form a new, transcultural image of *Mirrors* and bring us closer to a more inclusive and comprehensive definition of this genre.

Conclusion

The present book is to be understood as a first, by no means exhaustive, analytical study of *Mirrors* as a transcultural genre. It covers a number of issues in a small sample of texts from a limited spatial and temporal area. Nevertheless, it makes a valuable and necessary contribution to the field by opening a new path of research, proposing a novel approach to a well-studied phenomenon, and pointing toward a more nuanced understanding of it. In doing so, it also highlights the theoretical and methodological choices made in previous studies and the effects they have. To be clear, the vast majority of conclusions that have been drawn in previous studies apropos the *Mirror* genre still hold true. In fact, the present study would not have been possible if those studies had not gone before. Yet, as stated at the outset, previous approaches to the *Mirror* genre have been found to represent, by and large, only one perspective. It is a point of view that insists on the primacy of stable cultural and/or religious origins and identities over pragmatic, structural, or occasional processes and decisions. As a result, the phenomenon is rendered incommensurable. By challenging these fossilized epistemological structures and grids of knowledge, the present study has brought back to light the richness of the primary texts and added significantly to our understanding of them.

Moreover, the present study cannot be regarded as anything other than a first step in a new direction because it is, strictly speaking, still so deeply embedded in the very structures and patterns that it sets out to overcome. Especially in terms of its choice of primary sources, the study is rooted in the same dichotomous taxonomy that Darling lamented. One of the many problems arising from this choice is the extent to which the selected texts can in fact be paradigmatic for the different types of *Mirrors* described by historiography. As laid out at the beginning of this study, the reliance on the traditional taxonomy of *Mirrors*, representing the 'discursive reality' of the history of advice literature, made it possible to show that it can be challenged by comparisons that transcend its divides. Yet, in doing so, the present study simultaneously reproduced these divides and allowed them to influence the results of its comparisons. As an immediate reaction to the conventional approach to the *Mirror* genre, the present study is still essentially and necessarily linked to the previous perspectives and understandings. This involves the danger of ultimately sanitizing the language of cultural essentialism. Building on the basic finding of the present study; that is, that the traditional views on *Mirrors* can be deconstructed and then reconfigured, future research on the subject must find a way to break free altogether from previous paradigms and propose entirely new understandings of this phenomenon.

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1 The Transcultural Genre of *Mirrors for Princes*

Apart from initiating epistemological and theoretical shifts, the present study has provided new understandings of the *Mirror* genre by looking at four *Mirrors* in great detail. As a result, the comparisons have also produced specific insights into the four *Mirrors* under consideration. Beginning with the *Risāla to the crown prince* attributed to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib, the present analysis has repeatedly led to the conclusion that we are dealing with a very occasional text written for a dynasty threatened by a civil-war-like conflict. This might explain the text's focus on advice on how to stay in power, as well as the puzzling absence of justice from its virtue catalog. The particular context is most likely also the cause of the constant appeals for caution; for instance, in terms of the ubiquitous calls for the ruler to moderate and restrain various aspects of an otherwise precarious human nature. Moderation, prudence, caution, and circumspection certainly represent the pragmatic heart of an otherwise markedly idealistic, if not outright unrealistic virtue catalog. While the text does not dispense a lot of advice on piety or worship, it strongly emphasizes the link between correct belief and obedience to the dynasty, in an attempt to boost the Umayyads' religious legitimacy. The work's length and elaborateness, which are somewhat at odds with the urgency of the occasion, suggest that the *Risāla* also fulfilled another important purpose apart from providing urgent advice in a dire situation. In fact, parts of the *Risāla* can be read as an attempt to position the caliph's son as the legitimate successor in a moment where the dynasty's legitimacy as a whole was in question. Moreover, while the *Risāla*'s mesmerizing stylistic elaborateness poses a challenge for its reception, the work's main thrust will not have escaped any of its recipients. How, by whom, and in what setting the *Risāla* might have been read or presented remains unclear. Yet, given the structure and rhythm of its language, the possibility of some sort of ritualistic performance of parts of the text cannot be excluded out of hand, as others have done. Finally, the *Risāla* contains valuable insights into the contemporary developments of ceremonial practices at the caliphal courts that deserve to be analyzed in more detail.

With regard to the *De institutione regia*, attributed to the bishop Jonas of Orléans, the analysis has confirmed many findings of previous studies. For instance, it has shown that, in its employment of the 829 Paris council acts, the work reflects the Carolingian elite's interpretation of the roots of the political and military crisis and its understanding of kingship as a primarily soteriological role. Since the council acts were the product of the Carolingian episcopate, it comes as no surprise that the *De institutione* mirrors the bishops' desire to define and confine the scope of the ruler's role and power to the bene-

fit of the church. The *De institutione*'s virtue catalog too, with its emphasis on justice and piety, is very typical for the period's views on rulership and the texts that were used to explain them. However, reading the *De institutione* in light of the other main sources has equally revealed new aspects of the work. For instance, the absence of prudence from the virtue catalog, and the lack of more practical pieces of advice in the *De institutione* and other contemporary *Mirrors*, suggest that the main function of Carolingian *Mirrors* seems to have been to provide a definition of kingship, rather than offering advice on the fundamentals of government. Moreover, the analysis of the dedication letter shows that it not only narrows down and specifies the intended audience, but also adds many components to the *De institutione* that the present study has found to be specific to the transcultural *Mirror* genre. Most importantly, the dedication letter provides a hermeneutic frame to the *De institutione*, as it contains an extensive negotiation of power between narrator/advisor and narratee/ruler and signals the author's underlying desire to earn for himself a position at the addressee's court.

The analysis of the *Castigos e documentos para bien vivir*, attributed to Sancho IV, too, confirms many of the observations that scholars have made in the past. Of these, the most important aspect is that the *Castigos* was probably part of a campaign to assert Sancho's legitimacy in the eyes of the Castilian elite. The text directly addresses the controversies surrounding Sancho's marriage and his rise to power by dealing at length with sexual ethics and the rule of succession. The advice to his son, including the virtue catalog, must also be read as an idealized portrayal of Sancho, wherein the king is presented as a messianic figure who restores Spain to Christianity and educates his people through his Commandment-like lessons (*castigos*). How this image was practically delivered and received, we do not know. But the analysis has shown that the text contains a series of elements that benefit a public reading or other form of ritualistic performance. Moreover, a number of findings suggest that Sancho was in some way involved in the *Castigos*'s composition (although he probably did not write it himself), making it an example of the evocation of the model of paternal advice in *Mirrors*.

As for the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, the present analysis has not been able to answer the many questions that the text poses. Most importantly, the relationship between the work's two parts still remains obscure, as does the question of authorship. It was possible to demonstrate, though, that despite their differences both parts of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* contain elements that are typical for the *Mirror* genre and for the Seljuq *Mirror* tradition in particular, such as a pronounced emphasis on the ruler's justice and its legitimizing function. The difference in material and epistemology (divine or tested knowledge) between

the two parts reflects a fusion of traditions that was typical of the period in question. Together with the detailed information on bureaucratic practices, these traditions represent a sort of essence of the region's ideas on rulership. While the text's factual leveling of caliph and sultan shows the confidence with which the Seljuqs where claiming for themselves the highest authority in Islam, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*'s emphasis on *siyāsat* continues to hint at the root of their power; that is, the enforcement of discipline and order. Moreover, the intradynastic conflicts that dominated the immediate historical context of the work's composition are reflected in the prominent treatment of mechanisms for punishing government officials (*maẓālim*) and the issue of female influence (in politics). Finally, like the *Castigos*, the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* displays a sophisticated use of intertextual material (narratives, typologies, etc.) and (evaluative) metadiscourse that marks an evolved and mature stage in the development of the *Mirror* genre.

As for the *Mirror* genre as a whole, the present study offers a number of conclusions based on—and as recapitulation of—the findings of the preceding analyses. These conclusions recapitulate tendencies that have emerged throughout the present study, and are thus intended to state neither universal truths about *Mirrors* that are necessarily found in every specimen of this genre, nor exclusive properties that are unique to this literature and distinguish it from any other type of text. They are not meant in any way to deny that each *Mirror* is a unique universe on its own, written in a specific socio-political, religious, and economic context. Apart from the fact that new compositions, in contrast to the use of existing *Mirrors*, gave both the author and the recipient or dedicatee the opportunity to publicly re-enforce their respective positions as wise (prospective) advisor and prudent ruler, it is precisely this specificity of the works' context that led to the frequent composition of new *Mirrors*. Yet it does seem consistent to attempt a description of the genre as a whole, since this research is a response to the larger problem of the questionable division of a single phenomenon along historiographically and culturally defined limits, and since it stands on the hypothesis that the legatees of Late Antiquity produced comparable advice literature for rulers, an observation based on both shared ways of imagining and representing monocratic rulers and the seemingly universal existence of a practice of advice-giving.

First of all, *Mirrors* are polyvalent texts. They can be read differently by different audiences and can thus simultaneously fulfill a multiplicity of social and political functions that are at least partly antithetical. For instance, apart from providing practical advice on rulership, they can function as warnings or expressions of criticism and calls for change. Yet, in times of crisis, *Mirrors* can be used, conversely, to transmit a conservative message and provide stabil-

ity for the status quo, by emphasizing the ruler's legitimacy or making a case for the necessity of the institution of rulership itself. In this way, *Mirrors* such as the *Risāla* and the *Castigos* function not only as advice for the designated successor, but also as propaganda for the promotion of the reigning dynasty. Others, such as *Il principe* or *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, have been read as both cautionary texts for rulers and as handbooks for their overthrow.[1] Finally, as seen in the *De institutione*, authors employ *Mirrors* to promote themselves; for example, when seeking a position at court. This multiplicity of functions, in addition to the choice of certain topics and, as in the case of the *Castigos*, the unlikelihood of specific addressees being able to benefit from the advice offered in the text, also suggests a multiplicity of audiences. In fact, while the address to a ruler is generally part of the very definition of the genre, *Mirrors* are often intended for a wider audience than just the addressee. This has far-reaching implications for our understanding of the modalities and circumstances of both the production and reception/consumption of *Mirrors*, as it suggests the possibility of, for instance, the request for and production of advice literature as part of regal propaganda efforts, or the performance of *Mirrors* (in a ritualistic fashion) as part of ceremonial acts of communication at court.

Secondly, *Mirrors* provide practical and pragmatic advice, even though they address issues as abstract as virtues or as complex as the factors that contribute to economic and social decline. This is not to say that they cannot offer complex theological debates or sophisticated analyses of society, economic mechanisms, or human psychology. It does mean, however, that *Mirrors* rarely produce comprehensive theories of state and instead tend to explain the world in terms of immediate causalities between specific problems, threats, or vices and matching solutions in the form of virtues or certain types of behavior. As suggested by the overlappings of body natural and body politic, the omnipresent virtue catalogues and discussions on regal roles are 'simply' a language for the communication of the various concrete aspects of rulership. The element of pragmatism is most salient in moments in which *Mirrors* deviate from universal (religious or moral) tenets to offer solutions to (hypothetical) special cases or emphasize the importance of the virtue of prudence in decision-making. This is not to say that all advice in *Mirrors* is to be understood literally and put into practice or that the anecdotes, maxims and proverbs offer a blueprint for ideal regal practice. Some *Mirrors* require extensive decoding and some advice, as suggested by the example of moderation in the *Risāla*, reveals itself only at a certain level of abstraction.

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1 See Ferster, *Fictions of advice* 169–172.

The selection of topics, themes and materials presented and evoked in *Mirrors* is characterized by consistency and occasionality. The element of consistency marks *Mirrors* as part of certain traditions: these include cultural and political traditions, such as the Late Antique tradition of sacralized rulership with its characteristic implications regarding the nature and roles of rulers; religious traditions, each of which contributes its own normative and authoritative textual material containing connotations on regal virtues, natures, and roles; and literary traditions, such as the Seljuq *Mirrors* with their recurrent reliance on pre-Islamic Persian narratives and their habitual discussions on taxation, intelligence agencies, and regular receptions at court. However, since *Mirrors* are simultaneously highly occasional compositions, often written in acute moments of crisis, this consistency of topics, themes and materials does not produce series of nearly identical texts. Instead, each *Mirror* shows a strong dependence on the social, historical, economic, cultural, and religious context in which it is produced. Especially the immediate context, such as the specific challenges that the ruler is facing, his relationship with the author and the latter's socio-economic situation, significantly influences how the authors of each *Mirror* interpret and implement the elements that are provided by tradition.

Regardless of context, *Mirrors* seem to trace the threats and problems that rulers have to overcome back to human nature, rather than to structural factors. This means that *Mirrors* do not speak about threats to rulers in terms of economic, administrative or social problems, such as issues of inequality, inflation or labor shortage. Instead, they refer to the inability of humans to coexist peacefully (or efficiently) as the main factor that makes the institution of rulership an absolute necessity in the first place, and their virtue catalogues address the ruler's own fallible human nature (body natural) because it poses a risk to his institutional role (body politic). The intervention in the ruler's personal flaws, desires, and habits can go as far as suggesting a subversion of the hierarchy between ruler and advisor. This subversion finds expression in a subtext of the ruler's dependency on those who can advise, educate and protect him. The focus on human nature also means that most of the *Mirrors*' advice centers on the ruler's dealings with his officials, courtiers, and subjects, with a strong concern for the threats that they can pose to his rulership. This is particularly evident in the long lists of deviant types of people that the ruler might be surrounded by and of which he has to beware. Also, matters of warfare are generally discussed with regard to how to manage and maintain the army, rather than in terms of the strategies and practicalities of actual combat. Similarly, matters of bureaucracy become entirely contingent on the trustworthiness of individuals and the efficacy of their surveillance.

Moreover, *Mirrors* are characterized by a high degree of manifest and non-manifest intertextuality. *Mirrors* often adopt an anthological nature, serving as repositories for the choicest perennial wisdom. Intertextuality fulfills a multiplicity of functions in *Mirrors*: it serves as a hedge that protects the authors from accusations of criticism against the ruler; it lends authority to the advice and adds explanations and (practical) examples or counter-examples to it; and it provides 'historical' precedence for the suggested measures. This latter function also establishes a link to the (imagined) past. Depending on how this past is constructed and situated vis-à-vis the here and now, it can provide legitimacy to the current ruler by making him part of a tradition of ideal rulers, suggest a critique of the status quo by depicting a 'better' past, and provide time-tested patterns for the understanding of the present and future. The articulated narrative figures or intratextual personae that emerge from the intertextual material also contribute to the polyphonic nature of *Mirrors*. The most important voices in *Mirrors*, however, are the advisor-narrator and the ruler-narratee. The voice of the narrator, who often takes on the role of the wise educator or astute advisor, emerges most strongly in the metadiscourse that frames, inter alia, the intertextual material, individual pieces of advice, or the advisory endeavor as a whole. These metadiscursive interventions by the advisor-narrator suggest an assertive attempt by the author to impact and guide the reception of the text. Neither advisor-narrator nor ruler-narratee must necessarily be identical with the work's author and its intended audience, as suggested by the *Castigos*. Yet the dynamic between the two intratextual personae can be used as evidence for shedding light on the interpersonal networks outside the text that surround its production and reception.

The advisors-narrators in *Mirrors* also actively seek to attach their advisory endeavor to established paradigms of advice-giving, which reflects an awareness in the texts of a long-standing and recognized tradition of giving advice to rulers that goes back to such prominent examples as Aristotle advising Alexander the Great. These paradigms are evoked through narratives that (re-)enact an advisory process, sometimes specifically that of a ruler, through the addressing of the ruler-narratee (as an imaginary interlocutor), which recalls a situation of interpersonal, oral advice, or through encoded performativity/ritualization, which alludes to the real-life performance and reception of the text. The evocation of these paradigms endows the texts with the legitimacy of a perennial practice. Moreover, the various advisory models that are part of these paradigms all carry specific connotations. For instance, the model of paternal advice conjures up ideas of natural succession, transition of power, and stability, all of which contribute to *Mirrors*' embodiment of a conservative tradition. Moreover, paternal advice suggests the precedence of rationality and piety in

decision-making over heresy, emotionality, and deception, which are associated with women and their purported destabilizing effect.

Finally, *Mirrors* highlight the issue of the wide-reaching impact and effectiveness of advice, as well as of its necessity. Evidence of this is provided by the emphasis that *Mirrors* place on the immediate effects of advice, both positive and negative; for instance, in narratives that reenact the giving of advice and mention the outcome of the advice's implementation. The same narratives also play an important role in transporting the theme of the ruler's need for and openness (or susceptibility) to advice. The effectiveness of advice is also suggested by the recurrent discussions on the properties of good and bad advice, or good and bad advisors. While in general *Mirrors* support what has been termed the myth of the monocratic ruler by addressing and advising the individual supposedly in charge, they simultaneously undermine this myth by enhancing the role of advice in decision-making processes at court, at the expense of the ruler's power, the limitations of which the texts define both explicitly and implicitly. *Mirrors* thus also exhibit the authors' keen awareness of the participation of advice and advisors in power. All of this can equally be read as reflective of the reality of the court context, which is characterized by the constant negotiations, the search for consensus, and the fierce competition between a multiplicity of actors of power.

With advice being an act of speech, the notion of the effectiveness of advice also promotes the idea of effective, powerful language. *Mirrors*' acute concern with the power and use of language is also manifested on the compositional level, since the inclusion of a large amount of intertextual material betrays the attempt to provide concise, effective and tested expressions of perennial wisdom and religious dogma. Also, on the level of content, many *Mirrors* explicitly advise the ruler on how to speak and communicate. This emphasis on language is probably based on the authors' awareness of the role of language in the ruler's practice of power.

These conclusions relating to topics, themes, styles, and other discourse conventions constitute the vertical intertextuality that links texts paradigmatically across different specific personal, social, economic, cultural, and religious constellations as occurring in the same discursive event; that is, the offering of advice to a (supposedly) monocratic ruler. In other words, this vertical intertextuality marks texts as participating in the genre of *Mirrors for Princes*. But what do these findings mean for the heuristic definition of the genre of *Mirrors* as 'advice literature for monocratic rulers' that was formulated at the beginning of this research? First, what our analysis has done is to reinforce the importance of recognizing the genre's discursiveness—especially with regard to the texts' advisory intention—their understanding of (monocratic) power,

and their addressing of rulers. This means that, rather than merely identifying deficits and describing (ideal) solutions, *Mirrors* actively engage in the formation of the social reality that surrounds them. A definition of the *Mirror* genre thus has to do justice to the fact that *Mirrors* are significantly characterized by their potential as political instruments in debates on legitimacy, struggles for power, attempts of consensus-building, and proposals of reform. However, at times *Mirrors* can even subvert the logic of change and reform that lies at the heart of their educational discourse to promote stability and defend the status quo, as is suggested by the frequent appearance of *Mirrors* in the context of political and social crises. To recognize the potential of *Mirrors* to contribute to these debates also has implications for our understanding of the ways *Mirrors* were consumed, performed, and received in the context of the court.

Second, *Mirrors* are defined by the practicality, practicability, and pragmatism of their concern and outlook. They should therefore be distinguished from purely theoretical treatises on political thought, regardless of the fact that they often share the same (textual) sources and that there is no shortage of intertextual links between them. This is not to say that *Mirrors* cannot be used for the study of political thought, for example. In fact, the opposite might be argued given the fruitfulness of the aforementioned first attempts at using *Mirrors* for the study of political thought in pre-modern Islamic societies. Yet in none of the *Mirrors* examined here do their respective authors make an effort to lay out a consistent and comprehensive theory of government or rulership. Instead, the texts are rather practical handbooks for rulers that offer eclectic series of conduct rules. As such, they tend, as suggested before, to reflect the immediacy of the discursive event of advice-giving that dictates the genre's conventions. In light of their literary nature, *Mirrors* thus represent a hinge between the practical and the aesthetic.

Third, the observations offered in the above discussion shed light on the defining impact that the educational and advisory metadiscourse has on the nature of *Mirrors*. This discourse, which is vocalized by what here has been termed the advisor-narrator and which can be said to mimic the oral, interpersonal advisory process between the advisor/teacher and the ruler/student, guides the text's reception in various ways. It leads through the text; introduces, attributes, and evaluates intertextual material; positions the work as a whole in terms of its supposed function, origin and the occasion of its composition; and directly addresses the ruler-narratee and the extratextual audience. If taken as a necessary condition in the definition of the *Mirror* genre, this educational and advisory metadiscourse would significantly reduce the number of texts that can be considered as belonging to the genre. In fact, texts such as the

Bible, the Quran or the *Shāh-nāma*—to mention the arguably most authoritative texts of 'advice' in the area of the wider Mediterranean at the time when the *Mirrors* analyzed in this study were written—would thus be unequivocally excluded from the *Mirror* genre. How productive such an exclusive genre definition would be remains to be studied in more detail in the future. In fact, it is important to recall here that the prominent position given to the educational and advisory metadiscourse in the present study is also linked to the heuristic genre definition adopted at the beginning, which requires texts to function explicitly as advice literature for rulers. This definition has certainly impacted this study's choice of sources and thus contributed to its results. A less exclusive way of defining the genre might thus be taken into consideration, conceding texts such as the Bible, the Quran or the *Shāh-nāma* the potential to function like *Mirrors*, even though they are not *Mirrors* per se.

The aim of this transcultural analysis of *Mirrors* was to question the binary division of the genre along cultural and religious lines that has so far dominated the study of this literature. The results of these comparisons exhaustively confirm the initial skepticism and thus suggest the need for different typologies. However, this does not mean that none of the findings can be used to support the categories of 'Islamic' and 'Christian' *Mirrors*. For instance, advice on fiscal bureaucracy and intelligence officers is far more prevalent in *Mirrors* from Islamic societies, while more Christian *Mirrors* seem to lay emphasis on the ruler's role as educator. However, it remains doubtful how macro-units, such as Islam, whether defined as a set of beliefs and practices, a culture, a vast geographical area, or a discourse, really *explain* a continuous engagement with issues of taxation, when the concrete challenges that the region's dynasties were historically faced with provide us with a more immediate cause for these discussions. In other words, the broad labels, in this case referring to religions or large cultural entities, that have traditionally been used to differentiate between supposedly separate *Mirror* traditions have merely a nominal value, since they can hardly explain the defining traits of these traditions. The only tangible way in which the texts seem to identify themselves as 'Islamic' or 'Christian' are explicit references to religious concepts, material, and authorities, including the adaptation and integration of pagan—mostly Classical—thought, concepts, and virtues into their respective theological systems. This process of 'sacralization', as it has been previously described by al-Azmeh,[2] is particularly evident in the first part of the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, confirming al-Ghazālī's leading role in the 'Islamization' of Aristotelian ethics.

2 See 30.

These instances of adaptation, integration and re-labeling in *Mirrors* bespeaks the role that the genre might have played in societies' wider cultural and intellectual reception processes.

However, what the present study has certainly shown is that the more narrowly the texts' context is defined, the more meaningful it becomes for our analysis. Hence narrower categories, such as Carolingian or Seljuq *Mirrors*, produce a more precise typology, because the texts subsumed under these labels tend to make use of the same material/sources and promote similar understandings of rulership. Such a typology has the advantage of mirroring continuities and developments within literary traditions, and of encouraging more 'granular' comparisons of texts within those categories, including studies on their potential intertextual relations. However, the transcultural comparisons have emphatically suggested that, regardless of how narrowly these cultural and religious categories are defined, they inevitably overshadow the elements of the vertical intertextuality that link *Mirrors* attributed to them. So, what then are the alternative typologies that emerge from the preceding analyses? In what follows, three transcultural typologies of *Mirrors* are offered: form, intra- and extratextual constellations, and scope.

1.1 *Form*

As the present study has repeatedly emphasized, *Mirrors* from the geographical and temporal area that is of interest here display an enormous variety, in terms of their types of author, form, structures, style, themes, or imagery. This broad range of types of *Mirrors* is a testimony to the genre's very heterogeneity, which made it impossible for its definition to be based on formal aspects in the first place. Yet one possible way to categorize *Mirrors* would be on the basis of formal aspects, such as text types (epistles, treatises, chronicles, poetry, etc.), the discursive area they originate from (legal, historiographical or philosophical), the material that they contain (narratives, historiographical material, authoritative opinions, religious dogma, etc.), or their form of composition (collections of aphorisms and/or narratives, with or without frame narrative). Such a typology would come with a number of analytical advantages. For example, it reveals the manifold overlapping of *Mirrors* with other genres, as well as with different fields of knowledge or scholarship (legal, homiletic, philosophical, historiographical, etc.). Furthermore, it sheds light on how these formal aspects impact the use of intertextual material and the choice of topics that are discussed, among other things. Finally, such a typology reflects certain historical developments of the *Mirror* genre.

1.2 *Intra- and Extratextual Constellations*

The findings of the present study support the view that *Mirrors* are always entrenched in communication processes between multiple agents, on both intratextual and extratextual levels, and that the involvement of these agents shapes *Mirrors* in significant ways. In turn, the relationships between these agents are, in one way or another, formed by the texts' immediate context, most often situations of crisis or change. The texts' immediate context includes the social and discursive practices that surround their production and (intended) reception. A typology based on these relationships therefore has the advantage of underlining the genre's occasionality. The extratextual level that differentiates between the types of authors, addressees, and wider (intended) audiences of *Mirrors* can, as shown above, be mapped on the genre's historical development. Apart from that, the present analyses suggest that the specific socio-economic situation of authors—whether they are already part of the court or are seeking employment—their personal relationship with the addressees, their educational background and their professional experience, all have a bearing on the authors' choice of material and topics, their attitude toward the cause of the addressee, and how confidently they express advice or criticism. The situation of the addressee; for instance, the extent of his power, or whether he is an office-holder or a designated heir, has also been shown to significantly impact *Mirrors* and their intended functions. A particular type of *Mirror* is represented by those texts that are not addressed or dedicated to any specific ruler and are thus charged with a different set of intentions and functions. As suggested by the preceding analysis, the relationship between the intratextual voices does not necessarily reflect the extratextual 'reality'. Instead, we have seen that *Mirrors* sometimes evoke certain advisory models in order to exploit specific notions that come with these models. The tension that might thus arise between the extra- and the intratextual levels must be addressed by any typology based on constellations of people or voices. Such typologies would, for instance, differentiate between paternal *Mirrors*, intra-court *Mirrors* (by government officials), commissioned *Mirrors*, abstract or non-specific *Mirrors*, and preparatory *Mirrors* (for future rulers).

1.3 *Scope*

A third, slightly more tentative typology to emerge from the preceding analyses distinguishes *Mirrors* according to the scope of their advisory endeavor. The spectrum of scopes ranges from the description of the ideal ruler—his virtues, best practice, and selection of officials—to the representation of the ideal state or best form of governance—including a differentiation between the roles, duties and virtues of the ruler and the various other members of government—

to the illustration of the ideal society (*Gesellschaftsspiegel*), adopting an almost anthropological view to discuss the virtues and vices of humanity, the forms of its coexistence, and the need for the ruler to be 'the most virtuous (*virtuosissimus*)' of his people. The widening of the *Mirrors*' scope tends to go hand in hand with a stronger inclusion of explanations regarding the particular role and legitimacy of the monocratic ruler within society. The boundaries between these types are, no doubt, rather fluid. Yet the analysis and comparisons of the present *Mirrors* have shown that their scope is reflected in, for instance, the authors' choice of topics and materials. Moreover, there seems to be a correlation between *Mirrors*' scope and their form, since the more 'immediate' the texts are (e.g. epistles), the more they tend to be focused on the ruler. Such a correlation would suggest a potential link between the historical development of *Mirrors* and changes in their scope.

These new perspectives that have been revealed by the analyses and comparisons in the present study will add to our readings of the four primary texts, our understandings of *Mirrors* as a transcultural genre, and the possibilities of studying and differentiating between them based on other variables than preconceived, essentialist cultural markers. What thus remains to be reconsidered is the metaphor of the 'mirror' itself and what implications the present conclusions carry, beyond the specific subject of the present study.

2 In the *Mirror* and Beyond

What is the analytical or epistemological benefit of insisting on such a culturally specific term as *Mirror* (or *Spiegel*) for the designation of a transcultural phenomenon? In the context of the present attempt to overcome culturally specific understandings and to approach the phenomenon transculturally, this is a question we cannot avoid. And it becomes all the more necessary given that not all texts make reference to the idea of the mirror. Of the present four *Mirrors*, only the *De institutione* features the metaphor of the mirror. Here the advisor urges the ruler to read the text and "continuously contemplate [himself], like in a mirror (*quasi in quodam speculo*), that [he] might know how to be, what to do and what to avoid."[3] In the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* the mirror image merely appears in relation to a different text when 'Umar is quoted saying that every ruler should "make God's book [i.e. the Quran] his mirror (*āyīna*)."[4] The

3 Jonas d'Orléans, *De institutione regia* III, I. 53–55.
4 Al-Ghazālī, *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* 21.

quotation from the *De institutione* points to the essential quality of the mirror metaphor: *Mirrors* provide more than a mere reflection of what 'is'. Instead, as Anton notes, *Mirrors* take a position between "Sein und Sollen"; that is, between how the ruler is and how he ought to be. The reading of the *Mirror* might thus be described as a specular moment in which the ruler can achieve a recognition of the self and how it differs from the ideal.

The image of the mirror and its involvement in such processes of self-recognition has been picked up by multiple thinkers. For instance, Diogenes reports that Socrates used to urge young people to contemplate themselves in mirrors so that, if they were beautiful, they would start to act accordingly, but if they were ugly, they would seek education to hide their ugliness.[5] The French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901–1981) made the mirror the centerpiece of his theory on the development of the human subject.[6] According to Lacan's theory of the 'mirror stage', which he first presented at a congress in 1936 and continuously re-worked throughout his career, the first time an infant recognizes itself in a mirror sets in motion a fundamental psychological process of identification and alienation. Seeing its image in the mirror, the infant—which until then had not thought of itself as an individual separate from its environment—perceives for the first time a sense of identity and unity. This primary identification brings into existence the infant's ego. However, the infant's identification with its reflection—or its self-recognition (*"me"-connaissance*)—constitutes, so Lacan, a misrecognition (*méconnaissance*) because the image in the mirror is not the infant itself, but rather an 'other' that lies outside the infant. The infant thus develops a sense of alienation toward the unified image in the mirror, which Lacan refers to as the ideal-ego, since at this stage the infant still perceives a feeling of fragmentation because its body lacks motor coordination (unlike the ideal-ego in the mirror). According to Lacan, the subject can ultimately only come into existence by entering or subordinating itself to the symbolic order and intersubjective structures of culture and language, where subjectivity is secondary to social structure. This is however accompanied by a 'castration' of the subject as it is forced to adopt language, which on account of its arbitrariness and disconnection between signifier and signified makes it impossible for the subject to express its own desires.

So how can Lacan's theory of the mirror help our thinking about the relevance and usefulness of the mirror metaphor as a designation for the genre

5 See Diogenes, *Lives* II, 33.

6 See Lacan, *Ecrits* 1–6. See also Meredith Skura, Psychoanalytic criticism, who provides a concise summary of Lacanian thought.

of advice literature for monocratic rulers? Putting aside the blatant anachronism of the proposed application of Lacanian thought to pre-modern literature, as well as the frequent contradictions that emerged in Lacan's theory over the course of several decades, his ideas draw our attention to the *Mirrors*' role in the development of the royal subject, in terms of its construction and subversion. As suggested before, *Mirrors* contribute significantly to the propagation—or 'classicization' as al-Azmeh terms it—of the institution of monocratic rulership. It was argued that *Mirrors*' virtue catalogues are the locus from which the idea of the ideal body politic originates. By seeing the image of the ideal ruler and his place in the body politic in the *Mirror* and identifying himself with it, the ruler gains a (stronger) sense of his role, responsibilities, and the scope of his powers. However, eventually the ruler realizes the separation between his own rulership, i.e. his *Sein* (being), and the ideal rulership, the *Sollen* (ideal), that he sees in the *Mirror*, at which point the text starts to exert its critical function.[7] As he is reminded of the instability of his power and his dependency (on officials, God, subjects, etc.), the illusion or myth of monocratic rulership is disrupted. Faced with the separation between the perspective in the *Mirror* and his own experience, which, as mentioned earlier, Iser defines as the text's 'indeterminacy', the reader-ruler can react by rejecting the text (and possibly confronting the author), or by recognizing the intersubjectivity of his position and making an effort to find his place in the social structure of the wider body politic.

This is, of course, a very simplistic alignment of Lacanian thought to the functions of *Mirrors*, which is doomed to fail in many ways. After all, the image of the "mirror" covers only a very small facet of the nature of advice literature. However, notwithstanding the limited applicability of Lacan's mirror theory to advice literature for rulers, the above alerts us to a central dialectic in *Mirrors*, which is that of recognition and misrecognition, or identification and alienation. In turn, this dialectic suggests the centrality of the texts' reception and consumption as it focuses on the ruler's look into the *Mirror* (and not, for instance, on the author's composition). Of course, the question of the reception of *Mirrors*, their offering, reading, understanding, and implementation, remains the most conspicuous desideratum of the study of this genre. Given the genre's high degree of intertextuality and the frequent re-readings of certain *Mirrors* by multiple rulers throughout history, the study of reception ought to take into account issues of language, such as its ambiguity and iterability

7 The same idea of the reflection in the mirror functioning as an admonition underlies the usage of the mirror as a symbol of *vanitas*, reminding humans of their mortality (*memento mori*) and the impending judgment for the present conduct.

(or citability). There is no need to embrace the same absolute skepticism that Lacan nurtures toward the potential of language or text to signify a concrete meaning to recognize that the specular moment when the ruler glances into the *Mirror* is a creative instance with its own context and participants. It is a "meaning experience," as Stanley Fish terms it,[8] in which the text affects the readers whose interpretative strategies in turn are (largely) pre-determined by their personal experiences and the conventions of their interpretative community, or in other words, the social, historical, economic, cultural, and religious context of the reader's experience of the text.[9] What the mirror metaphor thus ultimately tells us is that, in order to gain a fuller understanding of the *Mirror* genre, we have to look for evidence not only in its production, the historical context in which texts were written, and the sources and discourses that their authors used, but also in the modes of its reception in the context of ceremonies, rituals and council meetings.

Finally, we might ask ourselves what implications the present conclusions have beyond the suggested understandings of the four particular *Mirrors* and their specific contexts. First of all, the present study supports the idea of the Late Antique *Denkraum* and its lasting impact, in view of the consistency that it has revealed across texts from a large geographical space. It therefore manifests the necessity for historians to consider the Arabian Peninsula, Islam, and everything 'Islamic' in the context of the Late Antique oecumene. The productiveness of the transcultural study of *Mirrors* that were written in the societies that emerged from the Late Antique oecumene shows that these societies and their cultural and intellectual output are commensurable. Any approach to the study of these societies that insists on their culturalist separation must thus present better arguments for the validity of cultures as analytical categories.

Furthermore, the essential link that the present study has brought to light between *Mirrors* and the myth of the monocratic ruler, which they simultaneously re-enforce and question, might provide an answer to the question of whether anything comparable to that genre exists today. While the role of advice in politics might have even increased in the modern era, as suggested by the development of an entire consulting industry, the *Mirror* genre per se seems to have mostly died out. Its demise is probably linked to the formal decentralization of power (through the rise of democracy), the expansion of an abstract and impersonal state apparatus as the ruling body, and the disappear-

8 Fish, *Is there a text* 4.

9 Ibid., 3–17.

ance of the court(-society) with its culture of patronage in which authority and rank were awarded through interpersonal relationships. In general, however, the advisory function of *Mirrors* has not disappeared, but is instead performed today by a multiplicity of genres or forms of texts. Especially managerial handbooks containing advice on negotiation techniques, leadership, and human resources management,[10] and (auto-)biographies of past leaders, which function as portraits of exemplary leadership, bear a striking functional resemblance to the *Mirror* literature. Moreover, the focus that the public today (still) places on individual 'rulers', or rather political leaders, even in democratic systems, and their perceived personality, strongly echoes the world view that underlies advice literature for monocratic rulers. Furthermore, a significant amount of today's political discourse seems to center around the analysis and assessment of politicians' demeanor, appearance, charisma, (religious) beliefs, or personal life choices; all issues that are regularly discussed in *Mirrors*. This means that, although *Mirrors* as such are not composed any more, elements of this type of literature continue to be relevant for how leadership is seen and discussed today.

The present study also shows that *Mirrors* can be used as historical sources, despite the fact that they represent discursive texts that try to impact reality and influence their audience. In fact, when not taken at face value, but considered as literary texts that were composed within a defined social and economic context, *Mirrors* can be read for information on the realities of various aspects of pre-modern life. For one, they offer insights into the history of specific dynasties and rulers by revealing the various problems that they were facing including, for example, challenges to their authority and legitimacy or struggles with other agents of power. In addition, they shed light on the dynasties' responses to these problems, such as attempts to (re-)state their legitimacy by (re-)formulating their public image and the narrative of their authority. However, depending on the author's position or role at court and in the realm's network of power, *Mirrors* can also show the perspective of other agents of power, as suggested by the case of the *De institutione*, which conveys the views of the Carolingian episcopacy. Moreover, as argued before, the mention of, and advice to adopt, certain traits, modes of behavior, or practices can also point to their absence in the addressees and their ways of governing. A good example of this seems to be the insistence of *Mirrors* on the value of an internal intelligence system during the Seljuq period.

10 The resemblance between *Mirrors* and managerial handbooks has been noted before. See, e.g., Knudsen, Media for reflection, who analyzes *Mirrors* as a potential medium for reflection in contemporary management education.

Mirrors also provide evidence of intellectual history, since they display the reception of specific historical sources and theories. They shed light on the history of the enunciations and concepts of power and (sacralized) rulership and their manifestations in advisory practices, rituals, and literature. As parenetic texts, they also offer examples of pedagogical theories and practices, such as the application of sermonic language, allegories, typologies, or historical examples; the emphasis they place on the educational value of a close, personal relationship between advisor (teacher) and ruler (student); and the link they establish between an intellectual education and ethical admonition. The knowledge that is communicated—including knowledge on the nature of the opposite gender and how they should be treated—and the way that it is offered in *Mirrors* also reveals the gendered nature, not only of advice, but of educational practices in general. This means *Mirrors* can be used to fill some of the gaps—described by Günther in his introduction to *Knowledge and education in classical Islam*—that still exist in our understanding of the foundations, practices and theories of pre-modern Islamic education, including its reception of earlier pedagogical models.

The findings of the present study with regard to the texts' educational methods, combined with their ethical propositions, their call for the refinement of personal virtues as part of a comprehensive education, their focus on a particular social class, and their stylistic elaboration that simultaneously functions as an example of eloquence, also mark *Mirrors* as prime examples for the complex phenomenon of *adab*. The functional overlap between *adab* and *Mirrors* goes so far that many works of *adab* can, strictly speaking, be read as *Mirrors*. *Mirrors* might even have played a foundational role in the tradition's development, given that they represent some of the earliest examples of *adab*. Works such as the *Risāla*, attributed to ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, were not read and lauded exclusively as advice literature for rulers, but for many of their features that (came to) characterize *adab* in general, such as their stylistic finesse. *Mirrors* might thus have exerted an influence on other *adab*-genres and thereby set the tone for what was to become one of the most significant branches of Arabic literature. Moreover, by producing such popular texts as *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, *Mirrors* probably contributed to the dissemination and growth of *adab* as a whole.

With all this being said, something which immediately catches the eye when the present results are seen in light of the previous approaches to *Mirrors* is the problem of context, or rather contextualization, in historical studies. As suggested by Darling, broad contextualizations have so greatly shaped our readings of *Mirrors* that the potential for comparisons is buried under narratives of essential difference. The solution to this is not to revert to a pure form of textualism. Instead, it is a matter of choosing the appropriate context. In fact,

by giving preference to the texts' immediate environments over their wider 'civilizational' (i.e. religious or cultural) contexts, the present study throws into relief the question of how to define the (relevant) context of a given historical phenomenon. Essentially, the present findings underscore the immense significance of historians asking themselves how far they have to go, both spatially and temporally, in collecting influences that might have shaped their subject of study. This question is as crucial to any historical study as it is difficult to answer. The present study contributes two elements to a possible answer: first, that the (chosen) context ought not to overshadow the text and its potential (for comparison); and second, that looking at the details and micro-histories, rather than macro-narratives surrounding a given historical phenomenon, can lead to valuable results. And while the present study has provided a plethora of evidence for the superior value of this approach, both in terms of theoretical considerations and of findings from the comparative textual analysis, it remains a choice that is doomed to leave out other (potentially valuable) options.

Ultimately, such excursions into the choice of context or the problematic business of forming and defining categories, groups of phenomena, and units of comparison for the productive and methodologically seamless analysis of an otherwise contested, uncertain, and fluid reality may be continued ad infinitum. To choose one ordering grid to map a space, one list of traits to define a thing, and one perspective from which to make observations, is to miss an infinite number of alternative approaches to the same subject. For instance, the particular geographical focus of the present study not only excludes *Mirrors* originating from other areas, but also carries significant implications for the way we see the world. It creates an area based on a twofold assumption of difference vis-à-vis the 'outside' (or the 'other') and of internal homogeneity. There are good reasons for focusing on the region of the Late Antique oecumene or an extended Mediterranean, including extensive (trade) interactions, a common Abrahamic heritage, and shared ideas on sacralized rulership, to name the most important ones. However, instead of overemphasizing these similarities and their effects and ending up with yet another essentialist space in which, supposedly, a certain type of *Mirrors* was produced, this space is not a 'reality', but rather a framework for analysis that, while being arbitrary and constructed in nature, has proven a fruitful paradigm for research. More studies within this framework are needed, as well as research into *Mirrors* beyond the limits of the present study.

Of course, the choice of a certain ordering grid, method, or perspective for the study of the past is not accidental and tells us a great deal about the present. Contemporary interest in transcultural perspectives and entangled

history reflects our experiences of a seemingly ever more globalized world in which commodities, information, ideas, and people move, cross borders, and thereby link distant places. The extension of transcultural history into the premodern era, as performed in the present study, is born out of the conviction that the past was indeed entangled and global. Mohammed A. Bamyeh even argues that "globalization today can be regarded as an attempt, so far inconclusive, to return from the age of nation-states and colonial power politics to older political, social, and cultural concepts that once regulated and humanized a well-connected global life."[11] For him, "globalization is a very old story that is yet to be fully remembered."[12] What stands in the way of this remembering are the definite categorizations, typologies, and epistemes that shape our knowledge and experience of the world. Forged and solidified by colonialism and imperialism, they set limits on human thought concerning and movement in the world. As a result, current discourses on globalization, in the sense of movement through a borderless world, are sealed off behind impenetrable borders of their own. People's participation in globalization and access to its benefits is limited on the basis of ethnicity, origin, class, and gender. The borders, material and immaterial, that define the world are constantly enforced and reinforced through multiple forms of violence. Yet what many participants and champions of this form of globalization, including, for instance, advocates of a free-market economy, perceive to be the true and only source of violence are the attempts of border crossings by those from the 'outside'.

To write a transcultural history of past societies that are conventionally imagined as neatly defined along cultural divides thus reflects the belief that present crosspollinations, entanglements, interferences, and border crossings might be perceived and received differently, more *humanly*, when they are understood as a productive and constitutive constant of human life, rather than a threatening phenomenon. In fact, Fowden states that the paradigm of Late Antiquity and the history that derives from it has the advantage of being able to foster "inclusive social attitudes and policies."[13] Buck-Morss points to the emancipatory force of inclusive approaches to history when she explains that

> universal history engages in a double liberation, of the historical phenomena and of our own imagination: by liberating the past we liberate

11 Bamyeh, Global order 218.

12 Ibidem.

13 Fowden, *Before and after* 83. On the pitfalls of drawing conclusions for the present from studies on Late Antiquity, see Giardina, Tardoantico 157–163.

> ourselves. The limits to our imagination need to be taken down brick by brick, chipping away at the cultural embeddedness that predetermines the meaning of the past in ways that hold us captive in the present. We exist behind cultural borders, the defense of which is a boon to politicians. The fight to free the facts from the collective histories in which they are embedded is one with exposing and expanding the porosity of a global social field, where individual experience is not so much hybrid as human.[14]

However, we must be wary of overestimating the effects of such theoretical work, lest it should remain an indulgence in an empty rhetoric of emancipation and revolution that might obscure more acute and tangible struggles against inequalities and injustice. It is no doubt important for scholars, as Max Horkheimer postulates, to overcome the separation of theory and practice and to recognize their (critical) thinking as part of the political struggle that is integral to their profession as scholars.[15] But changes on the level of perspectives, theories, paradigms, and epistemology must be accompanied by concrete changes on the level of structures, institutions, education, practices, and politics. The transcultural study of *Mirrors* calls for a fundamental change to how we see, represent, study, and teach cultural practices, past and present.

14 Buck-Morss, *Universal history* 149.

15 See Horkheimer, *Gesammelte Schriften*.

Appendix

Virtues (the Texts Are Listed in Chronological Order)

	Risāla	_De institutione regia_	_Naṣīḥat al-mulūk_	_Castigos_
Justice	*_inṣāf_, _ʿadl_	_iustitia_	_ʿadl_	_justiçia_
Forgiveness	_ʿafū_, _ṣafḥ_ (forgiveness)	_venia_ (forgiveness) _misericordia_ (mercy)	_ʿafū_ (forgiveness) _ḥilm_ (clemency) _raḥmat_ (mercy)	_clemençia_ (clemency) _merçed_, _misericordia_ (mercy)
Emotional self-restraint, controlling anger, patience	(only ex negativo)	*_lenitas_ (leniency, mildness) *_sensusque proprios bene regant_	_karm_ (clemency, generosity) _burdbārī_, _ṣabr_ (patience, forbearance)	_pasçiençia_ (patience, 'tolerating pain and anger') *_saber bien regir a sí mesmo_
	ghaḍab, _ghayẓ_ (anger) *_riḍā_ (contentment)		_tīzī_, _tundī_ (quick temper) _khashm_ (anger)	_sanna_ (anger)
The virtue of planning, deciding, discerning good and bad	_raʾy_ ('the ability to judge and decide') _anāa_ (perseverance, patience; 'between restlessness and inaction') _ʿazm_, _ḥazam_, _maḍāʾa_ (determination) _niyya_, _qaṣd_ (intention) *_ḥidhr_ (caution)	*_senes et sapientes et sobrios consiliarios habere_ (having old, wise, and sober advisors)	_tadbīr_ (consideration, planning) _siyāsat_ (ruling, 'enforcing discipline') *_farq miyān-i haqq wa bāṭil_ (difference between just and wrong)	_cordura_ (prudence)
	ghafla, _tahāwun_ (negligence) *_ʿajalat al-raʾy_ (rushed judgment) *_jubn_ (cowardice)		_shitāb-zadah_ (precipitous)	

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(*cont.*)

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Risāla</th><th>De institutione regia</th><th>Naṣīḥat al-mulūk</th><th>Castigos</th></tr>
<tr><td>Religious devotion, piety</td><td>taqwā (piety)
ṭāʿa (obedience),
shākir (gratefulness)</td><td>pietas (piety)</td><td>taqwā (piety),
īmān (faith)
ṭāʿa (obedience),
pārsāyī (piety)</td><td>piedat/piadat (piety, mercy)
buena creençia (good faith)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Modesty/ humbleness</td><td>*ḥayāʾ (modesty)</td><td>humilitas (humility)</td><td></td><td rowspan="2">mesura (moderation)
buenas costunbres (good manners)
*homildança (humility)</td></tr>
<tr><td>zahū, baṭar, ibṭār, ʿujb, ṣalaf, nakhwa (arrogance, pride)
*khajal (shame)</td><td>superbia (pride)</td><td>ghirra, khayulā, takabbur (arrogance, pride)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Generosity, contentment (approach to giving and taking things)</td><td>(only ex negativo)</td><td>(only ex negativo)</td><td>parhīzkārī (abstemiousness)
sharm (modesty, shame)
andāzah (moderation)
siflagī (magnanimity)
ṣadaqat (alms)</td><td>vergüença (shame, ‘resisting desires’)
castidat/virginidat (chastity/virginity, abstemiousness, ‘opposite of lust’)
*alimosna (alms)
*escasso/franco (‘between stinginess and liberality’)</td></tr>
<tr><td>hawā (desire, lust)
*saraf (wastefulness)</td><td>avaritia (avarice)
delectatio carnalis, cupiditatibus (carnal desires)
luxuria (lust)
*saturitas et habundantia (‘material abundance’)</td><td>bukhl (stinginess)
hawā, shahwat (desire, lust)</td><td>cobdiçia (greed)
ocçiosidat (negligence)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Truthfulness</td><td></td><td>veritas (truth)</td><td>ṣidq (truth)</td><td>verdat (truth)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Sagacity</td><td>ḥikma, ʿilm (wisdom, knowledge)</td><td rowspan="2">*sapientia (wisdom)</td><td rowspan="2">dānish, ḥikmat, ʿilm (wisdom, knowledge)</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>jahāla (ignorance)</td></tr>
</table>

(*cont.*)

	Risāla	***De institutione regia***	***Naṣīḥat al-mulūk***	***Castigos***
Kindness, good temper	**iḥsān* (kindness)		*shafaqat* (kindness, compassion) *nīkū-nīyatī* (good intention)	*benignidat* (kindness)
envy		**invidia* (envy)	**ḥasad* (envy)	***enbidia* (envy)

*: mentioned only once
**: with a positive connotation

Mirrors (Eighth—Thirteenth Century)

This list of *Mirrors* belonging to the traditions studied in the present study makes no claim to completeness and is merely meant as a preliminary survey.

Approx. year/period of composition	**Title**	**(Supposed) author**	**(Supposed) dedicatee**	**Language**
747	*Risāla* (*Epistle*)	ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib	Abdallāh b. Marwān II	Arabic
775	*Epistola ad Carolum* (*Epistle to Charles*)	Cathwulf	Charlemagne	Latin
8th century	*Kalīla wa-Dimna* (*Kalīla and Dimna*)	Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ	?	Arabic
8th century	*Kitāb al-Ādāb al-kabīr* (*The major book on customs*)	Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ	?	Arabic
8th century	*Risāla fī l-ṣaḥāba* (*Epistle about companionship*)	Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ	Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr ?	Arabic
8th/9th century	*Kalīla wa-Dimna* (in verse)	Abān b. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Lāḥiqī l-Raqāshī	?	Arabic
8th/9th century	*Tadbīr al-mulk wa-l-siyāsa* (*The disposition of the king and of governance*)	Sahl b. Hārūn	?	Arabic
811–814	*Via regia* (*Royal way*)	Smaragdus of St-Mihiel	Louis the Pious	Latin

(*cont.*)

Approx. year/period of composition	Title	(Supposed) author	(Supposed) dedicatee	Language
814	*Monitorium* (*Admonitory letter*)	Smaragdus of St-Mihiel	Pepin I of Aquitaine	Latin
821	*Risāla* (*Epistle*)	Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn	ʿAbdallāh b. Ṭāhir	Arabic
828	*In honorem Hludowici christianissimi Caesaris Augusti* (*In honor of the most Christian emperor Louis*)	Ermoldus Nigellus	Pepin I of Aquitaine	Latin
831	*De institutione regia* (*On the royal education*)	Jonas of Orléans	Pepin I of Aquitaine	Latin
855–859	*De rectoribus christianis* (*On Christian rulers*)	Sedulius Scottus	Charles the Bald or Lothair II	Latin
873	*De regis persona et regio ministerio* (*On the person of the king and the royal ministry*)	Hincmar of Reims	Charles the Bald	Latin
877	*Novi regis instructio ad rectam regni administrationem* (*instruction to the new king for the right administration of the realm*)	Hincmar of Reims	Louis the Stammerer	Latin
860–877	*De cavendis vitiis et virtutibus ad Carolum Calvum regem* (*On the vices to be be avoided and the virtues for King Charles the Bald*)	Hincmar of Reims	Charles the Bald	Latin
882	*Admonitio ad episcopos et ad regem Carolomannum apud Sparnacum facta* (*Admonitory letter to the bishops and the King Carloman, written near Épernay*)	Hincmar of Reims	Carloman II	Latin
882	*De ordine palatii* (*On the governance of the palace*)	Hincmar of Reims	Carloman II	Latin
9th century	*Kephalaia parainetika* (*Hortatory writings*)	(Pseudo-)Basil I	?	Greek
9th century	*Epistolae* (*Epistles*)	Servatus Lupus/ Lupus of Ferrières	Charles the Bald	Latin
9th century	*Kitāb al-Tāj fī akhlāq al-mulūk* (*The book of the crown in the ethics of kings*)	Pseudo-al-Jāḥiẓ/Muḥammad b. al-Ḥārith al-Thaʿlabī?	al-Fatḥ b. Khāqān	Arabic

(*cont.*)

Approx. year/period of composition	Title	(Supposed) author	(Supposed) dedicatee	Language
9th century	*Kitāb ʿUyūn al-akhbār* (*The book of choice narratives*)	Abū Muhammad b. Muslim b. Qutayba al-Dīnawarī l-Marwazī	al-Fatḥ b. Khāqān	Arabic
9th century	*Siyāsat al-mulūk* (*The governance of kings*)	Abū Dulaf al-Qāsim b. ʿĪsā al-ʾIjlī	?	Arabic
9th century	*al-Imāma wa-l-siyāsa* (*The imamate and governance*)	Abū Muhammad b. Muslim b. Qutayba al-Dīnawarī l-Marwazī	?	Arabic
10th century	*Polipticum quod appellatur perpendiculum* (*The polipticum, referred to as the perpendicular*)	Atto of Vercelli?	?	Latin
10th century	*Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* (*Advice for kings*)	(Pseudo-)al-Māwardī	?	Arabic
10th century	*al-ʿIqd al-farīd* (*The unique necklace*)	Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih	?	Arabic
10th/11th century	*Pand-nāma* (*The book of counsels*)	Abū Manṣūr Sabuktigin	Maḥmūd of Ghazni	Persian
10th/11th century	*Muḥāḍarāt al-udabāʾ wa-muḥāwarāt al-shuʿarāʾ wa-l-bulaghāʾ* (*Ready replies of the littérateurs and the conversations of poets and prose stylists*)	Abū l-Qāsim Ḥusayn Muḥammad al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī	?	Arabic
1002–1003?	*Durar al-sulūk fī siyāsat al-mulūk* (*The pearls of conduct in the governance of kings*)	al-Māwardī	Bahāʾ al-Dawla?	Arabic
1012–1017	*Ādāb al-mulūk* (*The custom of kings*)	Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad al-Thaʿālibī	Khwārazm-shāh Maʾmūn b. Maʾmūn?	Arabic
1028–1030	*Proverbia* (*Proverbs*)	Wipo of Burgundy	Henry III	Latin
Early 11th century	*Kitāb Fī l-siyāsa* (*The book on governance*)	al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī l-Wazīr al-Maghribī	Naṣr al-Dawla Aḥmad b. Marwān?	Arabic
Early 11th century	*Luṭf al-tadbīr fī siyāsat al-mulūk* (*The subtle handling in the king's governance*)	Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Khaṭīb al-Iskāfī	?	Arabic
1041	*Tetralogus* (*Tetralogy*)	Wipo of Burgundy	?	Latin
1045–1058	*al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya* (*The ordinances of government*)	al-Māwardī	?	Arabic
1075–1078	*Strategikon*	Kekaumenos?	?	Greek

(*cont.*)

Approx. year/period of composition	Title	(Supposed) author	(Supposed) dedicatee	Language
1082–1083	*Qābūs-nāma* (*The book of Qābūs*)	ʿUnṣur al-Maʿālī Kaykāʾūs b. Iskandar	Gīlānshāh	Persian
1095	*Kitāb Faḍāʾiḥ al-bāṭiniyya wa-faḍāʾil al-Mustaẓhiriyya* (*The infamies of the bāṭinites and the excellences of the supporters of al-Mustaẓhir*)	Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī	al-Mustaẓhir	Arabic
Late 11th century	*Siyāsat-nāma* (*The book of governance*)	(Pseudo-)Niẓām al-Mulk	Malikshāh I	Persian
Late 11th century	*Paideia basilike* (*The education of kings*)	Theophylact of Ohrid	Constantine Doukas	Greek
11th century	*Kitāb al-Ishāra ilā adab al-imāra* (*The book of advice on the custom of the princedom*)	Abū Bakr al-Murādi	?	Arabic
11th century	*Kitāb al-Tadhkira fī l-siyāsa wa-l-ādāb al-malakiyyā* (*The book of prescription on the royal governance and customs*)	Bahāʾ al-Dīn Abū l-Maʿālī Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī Ibn Ḥamdūn	?	Arabic
11th century	*Tashīl al-naẓar wa-taʿjīl al-ẓafar* (*Facilitation of the administration and acceleration of the triumph*)	al-Māwardī	?	Arabic
1109–1111	*Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* (*Advice for kings*)	(Pseudo-)Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī	Muḥammad b. Malikshāh or his brother Sanjar	Persian
1122	*Sirāj al-mulūk* (*The lamp of kings*)	Ibn Abī Randaqa al-Ṭurṭūshī	al-Maʾmūn b. al-Baṭāʾiḥī	Arabic
Early 12th century	*De regia potestate et sacerdotali dignitate* (*On the royal power and the sacerdotal dignity*)	Hugo of Fleury	Henry I	Latin
1159	*Policraticus*	John of Salisbury	?	Latin
1159	*Sulwān al-muṭāʿ fī ʿudwān al-atbāʿ* (*Consolation for the ruler confronted with the hostility of subjects*)	Ibn Ẓafar al-Ṣiqillī	Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. Abī l-Qāsim	Arabic
1159–1162?	*Baḥr al-fawāʾid* (*Sea of precious virtues*)	?	Atabeg Arslān Aba b. Aq Sunqur Aḥmadīlī	Persian
1183	*Speculum regum* (*Mirror for kings*)	Godfrey of Viterbo	Henry VI or Frederick Barbarossa	Latin

(*cont.*)

Approx. year/period of composition	Title	(Supposed) author	(Supposed) dedicatee	Language
Late 12th century	*al-Minhāj al-maslūk fī siyāsat al-mulūk* (*The followed path in the king's governance*)	ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Shayzarī	Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, al-Malik al-Nāṣir	Arabic
Late 12th century	*Dialogus cum rege Heinrico* (*Dialogue with King Henry*)	Peter of Blois	Henry II	Latin
Late 12th century	*Ādāb al-mulūk* (*The customs of kings*)	ʿAlī Ibn Razīn	al-Malik al-ʿĀdil Nūr al-Dīn Arslān-Shāh I b. Masʿūd ?	Arabic
12th century	*al-Shifāʾ fī mawāʿiẓ al-mulūk wa-l-khulafāʾ* (*The healing sermons of the kings and caliphs*)	Ibn al-Jawzī	?	Arabic
12th century	*al-Miṣbāḥ al-muḍīʾ fī khilāfat al-Mustaḍīʾ* (*The illuminating lamp on the caliphate of al-Mustaḍīʾ*)	Ibn al-Jawzī	al-Mustaḍīʾ	Arabic
12th/13th century	*Kitāb al-Tadbīrāt al-ilāhiyya fī iṣlāḥ al-mamlaka al-insāniyya* (*The book of divine measures for the reform of the human kingdom*)	Ibn al-ʿArabī	?	Arabic
12th/13th century	*Tahdhīb al-riyāsa wa-tartīb al-siyāsa* (*The refinement of leadership and the order of governance*)	Abī ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. ʿAlī l-Qalaʿī	?	Arabic
12th/13th century	*De principis instructione* (*Instruction for a ruler*)	Gerald of Wales	?	Latin
c. 1200	*Carolinus*	Aegidius of Paris	Louis VIII	Latin
1200–1210	*De bono regime principis* (*On the good government of the ruler*)	Helinand of Froidmont	?	Latin
1212–1213	*Farāʾid al-sulūk fī faḍāʾil al-mulūk* (*Gems of rules on the virtues of kings*)	Isḥāq b. Ibrāhīm Sajāsī	Atabeg Uzbig b. Nuṣrat al-Dīn Muḥammad Pahlavān	Persian
1212–1213	*Barīd al-saʿāda* (*The courier of happiness*)	Muḥammad-i Ghāzī Malaṭyavī	ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs I b. Kaykhusraw	Persian
1216	*Kitāb al-Jalīs al-ṣāliḥ wa-l-anīs al-nāṣiḥ* (*The good companion and the counseling friend*)	Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī	al-Malik al-Ashraf Muẓaffar al-Dīn	Arabic
1214–1224	*Philippis*	William the Breton	Louis VIII	Latin

(*cont.*)

Approx. year/period of composition	Title	(Supposed) author	(Supposed) dedicatee	Language
1221–1223	*Mirṣād al-ʿibād min al-mabdaʾ ilā al-maʿād* (*The path of God's bondsmen from origin to return*)	Najm al-Dīn Rāzī Dāya	ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād	Persian
1229–1236	*Ādāb al-ḥarb wa-l-shajāʿa* (*The etiquette of war and valor*)	Fakhr-i Mudabbir	Sultan Iltutmush	Persian
1235	*Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī* (*Nasirean ethics*)	Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī	Nāṣir al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Abī Manṣūr	Persian
1237	*Libro de los doze sabios / Tractado de la nobleza y lealtad* (*Book of the twelve sages / Treatise on nobility and loyalty*)	?	Ferdinand III of Castile?	Medieval Spanish
1246–1252	*De eruditione filiorum regalium* (*On the education of regal sons*)	Vincent of Beauvais	Margaret of Provence	Latin
c. 1250	*Libre de saviesa* (*Book of wisdom*)	(Pseudo-)James I of Aragon	?	Catalan
1253	*El libro de los engaños e los asayamientos de las mugeres* (*The book of the tricks and deceits of women*)	?	?	Medieval Spanish
1256	*Sulūk al-mālik fī tadbīr al-mamālik* (*The conduct of the master in the administration of the kingdoms*)	Ibn Abī l-Rabīʿ	al-Mustaʿṣim	Arabic
1257	*Laṭāʾif al-ḥikma* (*Subtleties of wisdom*)	Sirāj al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Abī Bakr Urmawī	ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs II	Persian
1255–1260	*Morale somnium Pharaonis sive de regia disciplina* (*The moral of the pharaoh's dream or on the royal discipline*)	Jean de Limoges	Thibaut of Champaign	Latin
1259	*Eruditio regum et principum* (*The education of kings and princes*)	Gilbert of Tournai	Louis IX	Latin
1258–1263	*Bonum universale de apibus* (*On the common good as taught by bees*)	Thomas of Cantimpré	?	Latin
1260–1263	*De morali principis institutione* (*On the education of royal morals*)	Vincent of Beauvais	Louis IX	Latin

(*cont.*)

Approx. year/period of composition	Title	(Supposed) author	(Supposed) dedicatee	Language
1262–1268	*Li livres dou tresor* (*The book of the treasure*)	Brunetto Latini	Charles of Anjou	French
c. 1265	*De eruditione principum* (*On the education of princes*)	William Perault	?	Latin
c. 1265	*De regimine principum* (*On the education of princes*; completed by Ptolemy of Lucca)	Thomas Aquinas	Hugo III?	Latin
1266–1267	*Speculum principis* (*Mirror for the prince*)	Petrus de Pretio	Conradin	Latin
1277–1280	*De regimine principum* (*On the government of princes*)	Aegidius Romanus/ Giles of Rome	Philip IV	Latin
1278–1282	*De preconiis hispaniae* (*On the praises of Spain*)	Juan Gil de Zamora	Sancho IV the Brave	Medieval Spanish
1290s	*De regimine principum* (*On the government of princes*)	Engelbert of Admont	?	Latin
1292–1293	*Castigos e documentos para bien vivir* (*Lessons and treatises for a righteous life*)	(Pseudo-)Sancho IV	Ferdinand IV	Medieval Spanish
13th century	*Andrias basilikos* (*King's statue*)	Nikephoros Blemmydes	Theodore II Doukas Laskaris	Greek
13th century	*Allocutio christini* (*Speech of the little Christ*)	Arnald of Villanova	King Frederick III of Sicily?	Latin
13th century	*al-ʿIqd al-farīd lil-malik al-saʿīd* (*The unique necklace of the blessed king*)	Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa al-Qurashī	?	Arabic
13th century	*Ḥadāʾiq al-siyar* (*The gardens of biographies*)	Niẓām al-Dīn Yaḥyā b. Ṣāʿid	ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād	Persian
13th century	*Breviloquium de virtutibus antiquorum principum et philosophorum* (*Short account of the virtues of the ancient rulers and philosophers*)	John of Wales	?	Latin
13th century	*Enseignement des princes* (*Instruction of princes*)	Robert of Blois	?	French
13th century	*Enseignements* (*Teachings*)	Louis IX	Philip III	French
13th century	*Liber de regimine civitatum* (*Book on the government of cities*)	Giovanni da Viterbo	?	Latin
13th century	*Akhlāq-i Muḥtashamī* (*The Muḥtashamid ethics*)	Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī	Nāṣir al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Abī Manṣūr	Persian

(*cont.*)

Approx. year/period of composition	Title	(Supposed) author	(Supposed) dedicatee	Language
13th century	*Kanz al-mulūk fī kayfiyyat al-sulūk* (*The treasure of princes on the fashion of behavior*)	Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī	?	Arabic
13th century	*Tuḥfat al-mulūk* (*The gift for kings*)	ʿAlī b. Abī Ḥafṣ al-Iṣfahānī	?	Persian

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