

Rashīd al-Dīn and the making of history in Mongol Iran

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Abstract

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The *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* (*Collected histories*) of Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb (d. 1318) has long been considered the single richest witness to the history of the early Mongol Empire in general and its Middle Eastern branch, the Ilkhanate, in particular. This has created a persistent dependence on the work as a source of historical data, with a corresponding lack of appreciation for the place it holds within Perso-Islamic intellectual history. This understanding of Rashīd al-Dīn and the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, however, does not match certain historiographical and ideological strategies evident in the work itself and in other works by Rashīd al-Dīn and his contemporaries. This dissertation reads beyond the monolithic and uncritical use of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* that dominates modern scholarship on Mongol and Ilkhanid history. Instead, it fits Rashīd al-Dīn and his work into the difficult process of transforming the Mongol Ilkhans from a dynasty of foreign military occupation into one of legitimate sovereigns for the Perso-Islamic world. This is the first study to examine a full range of Persianate cultural responses to the experience of Mongol conquest and rule through the life and work of the most prominent statesman of the period. Drawing on the example of

cultural projects undertaken in the early decades of the Ilkhanate, Rashīd al-Dīn canonized a narrative of Ilkhanid history in which his patrons embodied a model of sacred kingship that adhered both to contemporary intellectual trends in the Middle East and to Mongol dynastic traditions emphasizing descent from Genghis Khan. This new model, which first enters political discourse in the writing of Rashīd al-Dīn in response to the vacuum of authority created by the fall of the Abbasid caliphate, laid the groundwork for later Timurid, Safavid and Mughal court ideologies. By fitting Rashīd al-Dīn and his works within their historical context, this dissertation disentangles seven centuries of literary elaboration that have accrued to his historical memory.

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Note on transliteration and translation

For Arabic and Persian words, names, and text I have adopted the transliteration system of the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (IJMES). When titles of works are Arabic constructions (such as *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*), I have used the Arabic transliteration scheme, even when the text of such works is in Persian. For Turkic and Mongolian words and names, I have adopted a simplified transliteration, avoiding diacritics for consonants and indicating hard and soft vowels for Turkish short vowels only (u/ü, o/ö, ı/i). For the Eastern Turkic text treated in Chapter Five, I have followed Mehmet Ölmez’s transliteration, which preserves certain additional aspects of Uyghur orthography, such as the soft ğ. Arabic, Persian, Turkic, and Mongol words and titles not in common usage in English have been kept in italics and are explained the first time that they appear. When titles refer to specific individuals, they are given in Roman type with initial capital. Thus *amīr*, but Amīr Qutlughshāh; *sulṭān*, but Öljeitü Sulṭān.

Qur’ān citations are Şaḥīḥ International. All other translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

Acknowledgments

The seed of this dissertation was planted during a graduate seminar on the Mongol Empire co-taught by Joel Walker and Florian Schwarz in the winter of 2008. In an assignment for that class, I identified certain literary parallels between Rashīd al-Dīn's account of Ghazan Khan's youth and Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*. From that beginning, Professor Schwarz encouraged me to pursue further intertextual analysis of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* as a dissertation project. When he left the University of Washington, Professor Walker stepped into his shoes as my advisor. Over the past few years, Professor Walker has been both an advocate and a model for exploring the material and intellectual ties that bind cultural spheres to one another. Between Professor Schwarz's insistence that literary analysis belongs in historical research and Professor Walker's strategic eye for building a project that is both innovative and engaging, my own skepticism about this dissertation has been frequently overridden by the sustained encouragement of good mentoring.

I owe a debt of incredible gratitude to Charles Melville of Cambridge University, who agreed to provide topical expertise for the project and who in many respects acted as a thesis supervisor in the British tradition, even though he could not sit as chair of my committee in the American sense. It is safe to say that, without Professor Melville's contribution, my grasp of the material and the field (not to mention my bibliography) would be woefully inadequate for the task I had taken up. Purnima Dhavan similarly stepped into an advising role after the departure of another original committee member. The way Professor Dhavan keeps her thumb on the pulse of Persianate studies has been instrumental in helping me find relevance for my work; her fine editorial eye has saved me from several lapses of judgment and style.

Any such lapses that remain, of course, reflect my own shortcomings. Shahrzad Shams has been generous with her time and her enthusiasm for Persian literature in helping to unlock obstinate passages of text. Across the hall from her, Selim Kuru has shared my almost unhealthy fascination with the peculiar trivia of manuscripts. These two, while not in my department or on my committee, have been a great source of encouragement and assistance, particularly in the final year of the process.

Intellectual history is, at its root, the study of how ideas are passed around and preserved. I would be remiss, then, not to mention the assistance of numerous librarians, most importantly Mary St. Germain at the University of Washington and Ursula Sims-Williams of the British Library. The staff of these two libraries, and of other libraries worldwide keep the wheels of scholarship moving. A number of academics have offered guidance in particular matters, sometimes in response to unsolicited e-mails. In this regard I thank Wheeler Thackston, David Roxburgh, Sheila Blair, Birgitt Hoffmann, Jo-Ann Gross, and Nadia Eboo-Jamal. Kazuo Morimoto provided valuable assistance with the works of Ibn 'Inaba and, along with Naofumi Abe and Osamu Otkuda, opened my eyes to a world of Japanese scholarship, the surface of which I have only been able to scratch.

The most thankless task in this process has probably belonged to the members of my dissertation writing group. Amanda Swain, Mira Green, and Catherine Warner have read some rather raw versions of several of these chapters. Their patience and valuable suggestions are largely responsible if any of what follows makes sense. Other colleagues, particularly Jen Webster, Monica Meadows, and Oscar Aguirre Mandujano have left their mark on my life and thought in ways I probably haven't yet recognized.

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Many members of my immediate and extended family have been involved in this process in ways too numerous to list. In a noteworthy but not entirely uncharacteristic act of foresight, my great-uncle Vern Faillettaz sent me my first book about al-Ghazālī when I was a sophomore in college, long before I had any reason to know about al-Ghazālī. Of particular significance to the more immediate process of writing a dissertation have been my siblings: Isaac for expounding the wisdom gained from his own time in academia, and Anni for sharing the creative process of her work, which has developed in parallel with my own over the past three years. My wife, Mia, has provided invaluable perspective while tolerating years of incoherent mutterings and infantile frustrations. As I agonized over writing this sentence, she offered an absolutely indicative piece of advice: “why don’t you just stop worrying about it so much.”

Introduction

On a July day in 1318, an elderly man and his seventeen year old son faced execution on a trumped up charge of regicide. The father had once been the most powerful man in Persia, guiding rulers in their policy, sponsoring entire industries of intellectual and artistic production, and authoring works across genres as diverse as history, theology, and natural philosophy. His accuser, by contrast, was a semi-literate *arriviste*, a jeweler-turned-politician whose greatest claim on history is being the one who killed Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb.

After watching the beheading of his son, Rashīd al-Dīn asked the executioner to pass on a modest *memento mori* to the ambitious young colleague who had framed him, Tāj al-Dīn ‘Alīshāh. One contemporary account written in epic verse less than two decades after the event by a client of the condemned man gives poetic weight to Rashīd al-Dīn’s reported last words:

“Tell ‘Alīshāh: ‘Since your deed has caused innocent blood to flow,
The world will seek revenge from your soul; you shall gain nothing from this day.
Nothing will come of it except this: that your tomb will be new and mine will be old.’”¹

Indeed, Tāj al-Dīn ‘Alīshāh gained little from eliminating the senior statesman. Although ‘Alīshāh was the only vizier to the Mongol Ilkhans to die in his own bed, and although one wall of his monumental congregational mosque stands to this day as the so-called *Arg-i Tabrīz*, he has been reduced to a footnote in the history of the Mongol Middle East. That history has been written, by contrast, largely by and about Rashīd al-Dīn. Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī’s eulogy for his patron echoes across five centuries of Persian historiography and enters European scholarship

¹ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī Qazvīnī, *Zafarnāma von Hamdallāh Mustaufī und Šāhnāma von Abu’l-Qāsim Firdausī* (Tehran and Vienna: Markaz-i nashr-i Dānishgāh-i Īrān and Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 1451.

in 1836. In that year, Étienne Quatremère produced the first modern study of Rashīd al-Dīn, praising him as the author of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* (*Blessed history of Ghazan*):

Any impartial man who carefully weighs the information . . . on the circumstances that led to the composition of the history of Rashīd al-Dīn will remain convinced, it seems to me, that this book is the best guide one can choose to acquire a thorough knowledge of the ancient history of the Mongols: indeed, his book, written from the archives of the empire and the memories preserved by great families, compiled by a conscientious and able man, has all the characteristics of authenticity, and no other writer among those who wanted to deal with this period of history, has had the necessary means, as our author has had, to fix the course of events and offer his readers a factual account.²

While the tone of Western scholarship has become less effusive since Quatremère, it has largely retained his admiration for Rashīd al-Dīn as the unique polyglot genius of his age, a renaissance man in medieval Persia.

This modern “cult of Rashīd” is due in large part, as Quatremère indicates, to the fact that his history of the Mongols, the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, remains one of the single richest sources of information on the Mongol Empire in general and its Ilkhanid branch in particular. The importance of this source is in turn compounded by the prominence of its creator, who spent much of his life at the Ilkhanid court as a doctor, governor, financial minister, and theologian, and whose activities are thus well attested in contemporary chronicles and biographical collections and, to a lesser degree, in his own writings.³ Given the overlapping prominence of his political position and his historical writing, Rashīd al-Dīn is one of the most heavily studied figures in Persian intellectual history, and so another study of his life and work may seem unnecessary. This dissertation, however, aims to unravel the processes by which

² Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse*, ed. and tr. Étienne Quatremère (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1836), cii.

³ The most comprehensive compilations of biographical information on Rashīd al-Dīn to date are Birgitt Hoffmann, “Der Stifter,” in *Waqf im mongolischen Iran: Rašīduddīn's Sorge um Nachruhm und Seelenheil* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2000), 53-98; Hāshim Rajabzāda, *Khawāja Rashīd al-Dīn Faḏl Allāh* (Tehran: Ṭarh-i Naw, 1998), 30-65. The Arabic sources have been collected by ‘Abbās ‘Azzāwī, *Ta’rīkh al-‘Irāq bayna iḥtilālayn* (Qum: Intishārāt al-Sharīf al-Raḏī, 1990), i.451-58.

Rashīd al-Dīn became historically important, both as an author and as a subject in the retelling of Ilkhanid history. It is a study of Rashīd al-Dīn's historiographical setting, and not simply of his personal history or the history that he wrote.

Other recent studies of Rashīd al-Dīn, as discussed below, have begun to unravel the literary and ideological accretions that have attached to him in the seven centuries since his execution. None of these, however, has examined those accretions in their own right. In undertaking such a study, this dissertation provides an archaeology of Rashīd al-Dīn as a historical being. To this end, this dissertation avoids simple reconciliation of conflicting accounts about Rashīd al-Dīn. Instead, it embraces such inconsistencies as meaningful witnesses to the processes of historical production during a period of intense political and intellectual activity, as Persian scholar-bureaucrats struggled to make sense of their world in the wake of the Mongol conquest and the fall of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate. Rashīd al-Dīn's prominent role in these processes make his life a natural focus for such a study.

The difficulties and possibilities of uncovering the historiographical setting of Rashīd al-Dīn are illustrated by the scholarship that has already accumulated around a body of letters purportedly from his own hand. This collection, the *Sawāniḥ al-āfkār*, offers the researcher an enticingly rich amount of information about Rashīd al-Dīn's life, his family, and the administrative function of the Ilkhanid state. Quatremère and other early editors were unaware of the work's existence, as no other contemporary source mentions it. It was brought to the attention of European scholarship by Edward Browne, who acquired two manuscripts, one of them a copy of the other, from Guy le Strange.⁴ Browne summarized the contents of

⁴ On these manuscripts and le Strange's own manuscript *Summary* of them, see R.A. Nicholson, *A descriptive catalogue of the Oriental MSS belonging to the late E.G. Browne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), 146-47.

these manuscripts in his *Literary history of Persia* and undertook to publish an abbreviated English translation prepared by Mohammad Shafī.⁵ That publication never came to light, though Shafī produced the first edition of the text, based on Browne’s manuscripts, in 1947.⁶ A Russian translation in 1972 and a new edition in 1980 based on fifteen separate manuscripts helped draw further attention to these letters as possible sources for the autobiography of Rashīd al-Dīn and Ilkhanid administrative practices.⁷ Already by this point, however, there was a robust debate surrounding the question of their authenticity.

In 1946, before Shafī had even published the letters, Reuben Levy identified several stylistic characteristics and dating irregularities that cast doubt on Rashīd al-Dīn’s authorship of them.⁸ Over the following decades, several scholars alternately challenged or defended Levy’s methods and his conclusion that the *Sawānīḥ* was a late forgery.⁹ In 1998, A.H. Morton performed a new and more thorough examination of the contents of the *Sawānīḥ* in order to present a stronger case than Levy had that the letters had indeed been forged.¹⁰ Morton concluded that the *Sawānīḥ* was invented by scribes in the Timurid bureaucracy upset at their

⁵ For the contents, see Edward G. Browne, *A literary history of Persia, vol. 3. A history of Persian literature under Tartar dominion (A.D. 1265-1502)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), 80–86. Browne referred to the work as the *Munsha’āt-i rashīdī* based on the evidence of what was then the only known pre-modern manuscript of the work. That manuscript lacks its second folio, which originally included the work’s proper title. In turn, Mohammad Shafī used the title *Mukātibat* for his edition of 1947. The title *Sawānīḥ al-afkār* was applied to the work after the discovery of another manuscript, used by Dānīshpazhuh for his edition of 1980.

⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Kitāb-i mukātibat-i rashīdī*, ed. Mohammad Shafī (Lahore: University of Panjab Press, 1947).

⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Perepiska*, tr. A.I. Falina (Moscow: Nauka 1971); *idem, Sawānīḥ al-afkār-i rashīdī*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānīshpazhūh (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānīshgāh-i Tīhrān, 1980). For more on these editions, including the dating of Shafī’s edition, which is incorrectly printed on the book itself as 1945, see A.H. Morton, “The letters of Rashīd al-Dīn: Ilkhānid fact or Timurid fiction?” in *The Mongol Empire and its legacy*, ed. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 159.

⁸ Reuben Levy, “The letters of Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl-Allāh,” *JRAS* 78 (1946): 74–78.

⁹ For an overview of these treatments, see Morton 1998, 155–56, nn. 4 and 5.

¹⁰ Morton 1998, *passim*.

own relative irrelevance at court.¹¹ Unlike Levi, who based his critique largely on stylistic grounds, Morton identifies several instances where the letters seem to contradict the historical record preserved in other sources. One striking example is the thirtieth letter in the collection, in which the author describes a trip to the court of Sulṭān ‘Alā’ al-Dīn of Delhi at the behest of the Ilkhan Arghun.¹² Since Arghun’s reign never overlapped with that of Sultan ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, and since Rashīd al-Dīn elsewhere does not demonstrate first-hand familiarity with India that one would expect from someone who had been there, Morton rejects the authenticity of this letter.¹³

Morton’s critique of the letters’ authenticity has led European scholars to reject them out of hand as a source of historical data.¹⁴ On the other hand, Hāshim Rajabzāda, whose book on Rashīd al-Dīn was published the same year as Morton’s analysis of the *Sawāniḥ*, accepts the letters as authentic and includes the trip to India in the biography of Rashīd al-Dīn without comment.¹⁵ Since then, Abolala Soudavar has responded to Morton’s challenge to the authenticity of the *Sawāniḥ*, arguing that the collection adheres to scribal practices of the early fourteenth century and that Morton’s article suffers “from incomprehension of the motives of Persian scribes and history writers, wrong assumptions, and neglect of crucial evidence.”¹⁶ It would be foolish, Soudavar concludes, to discard the letters.

Some of Soudavar’s arguments are effective ripostes to Morton’s critique, such as the idea that Rashīd al-Dīn might address a son as *ḥakīm* without his holding the formal position of governor of a province or that the names listed in one letter are at least consistent with the

¹¹ Morton 1998, 199.

¹² Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Dānishpazhūh, 146-51.

¹³ Morton 1998, 166-69.

¹⁴ See, for example, the discussion by Birgitt Hoffmann, 56-59.

¹⁵ Rajabzāda 1998, 318-24, 36-39.

¹⁶ Abolala Soudavar, “In defense of Rašid-od-Din and his letters,” *Studia Iranica* 32.1 (2003): 79.

independent historical record, even if they are not independently verified by it.¹⁷ Soudavar defends other letters by presenting historical scenarios which, though feasible, beg the question of why they are not mentioned in other sources. For instance, concerning Rashīd al-Dīn's purported trip to India, Soudavar argues that such an embassy could have occurred during the reign of Ghazan Khan (1295-1304) – in the wake of the failed invasion of Syria in the winter of 1300-1301, to be precise.¹⁸ Similarly, he argues that a campaign against India described in the fifty-third letter of the collection actually refers to one by Öljeitü Sultān (1304-16) against Daud Khwāja in Central Asia, a sort of analogical historiography that Soudavar has famously applied to other Ilkhanid-era documents.¹⁹ Unfortunately, Soudavar does not even acknowledge what is perhaps Morton's most compelling argument for rejecting the letters, namely their literary qualities as a collection. Chief among these, Morton demonstrates that the letters construct an alternate, ahistorical life for Rashīd al-Dīn's best documented son, Jalāl al-Dīn.²⁰

In short, the letters attributed to Rashīd al-Dīn contain a wealth of seemingly authentic information, indeed too much to have been easily constructed whole-cloth by a later scribe. Yet they also include certain anachronisms and historical errors that would have made little sense to contemporary reader. For actual biographical data on Rashīd al-Dīn himself, the *Sawānīh* must be treated with a great deal of care. It is entirely possible that the *Sawānīh* has at its core a collection of Rashīd al-Dīn's letters and that these letters preserve authentic

¹⁷ Soudavar 2003, 92-95, 112-13.

¹⁸ Soudavar 2003, 100-104.

¹⁹ Soudavar 2003, 85-87. For Soudavar's similar treatment of book paintings, see Abolala Soudavar, "The saga of Abu-Sa'id Bahādor Khān. The Abu-Sa'idnāmé," in *The court of the Il-khans, 1290-1340*, ed. Julian Raby and Teresa Fitzherbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 95-218. This latter study is further discussed in Chapter Eight.

²⁰ Morton 1998, 177-81. It is indeed unfortunate that, rather than address this point, Soudavar resorts to *ad hominem* attacks against Morton.

information about Rashīd al-Dīn's administrative and financial affairs. Since the collection was evidently at least edited and supplemented by later hands, however, it is impossible to tell exactly where the authentic letters end and their later literary elaboration begins.

Such an unsatisfying resolution to the question of the *Sawāniḥ*'s historicity could breed despair for one whose aim is to reconcile historical accounts to reconstruct the facts of the Ilkhanid period. It does not, however, entirely negate the value of the collection, which in any case bears witness to a lingering fascination with Rashīd al-Dīn and his political and economic activity well after his death. As Morton has demonstrated, the *Sawāniḥ* shows the significance of Rashīd al-Dīn's life, not necessarily during his lifetime, but as it continued to hold the imagination of writers in subsequent decades and centuries. Similarly, this dissertation examines other witnesses to the life and work of Rashīd al-Dīn, including those which were without doubt written by Rashīd al-Dīn and his contemporaries. The aim is not to arrive at a definitive verdict of their historicity, which in any case is an exercise of only limited value, but rather to shed light on what the increasingly prominent figure of Rashīd al-Dīn meant to contemporary and later commentators.

This dissertation consists of two parts, each comprised of four chapters. The arguments of the various chapters are outlined in the short introductions to each of the two parts. Here I limit myself to a few comments on the larger structure of the work. The division between Parts One and Two falls chronologically in the year 1298, when Rashīd al-Dīn joined the highest rank of the Ilkhanid administration as deputy vizier to Sa'd al-Dīn Sāwajī (d. 1312). Until that point, Rashīd al-Dīn remains an obscure figure in the historical record. However, certain cultural and administrative processes of the first seventy years of Mongol rule in the Middle East created the pathways by which Rashīd al-Dīn rose to prominence; they also

established patterns of genre and patronage within which his later scholarly and cultural work would operate. Part One traces the events of these years and the major cultural artifacts produced under the early Mongol administration in the Middle East. Beyond offering a survey of relevant intellectual and administrative background to Rashīd al-Dīn, these chapters pay closer attention than previous studies have done to the geographic origins and personal contacts that influenced the administrators and writers of the early Mongol period. Without descending into any sort of historical determinism, these chapters show how an individual with Rashīd al-Dīn's background could be situated, by 1298, to make such a remarkable impact on political and intellectual history in the Middle East.

From 1298 until his death twenty years later, Rashīd al-Dīn was closely involved with the administration of Ghazan and Öljeitü, under whose patronage he produced all his known scholarly work. These include: a dynastic and universal history and accompanying gazetteer and genealogical tree, a handful of collections of theological treatises, and a number of works relating to medicine and agriculture.²¹ This activity is the subject of Part Two of this dissertation. The chapters of this second part portray emerging notions of Ilkhanid legitimation as reflected in Rashīd al-Dīn's historical, theological, and scientific writing. These drew on Turko-Mongol as well as Perso-Islamic precedents and engaged current trends in Islamic thought, particularly in the emergence of Illuminationist philosophy, Sufi ethics, and Shī'ism to create a new basis for royal legitimacy in the Middle East in the wake of the caliphate. Over time, the signifiers of legitimation were extended to Rashīd al-Dīn himself, as his clients and later historians drew him into the literary web of associations surrounding the figures of previous notable Iranian viziers. In the attempt to reconstruct Rashīd al-Dīn's life

²¹ For a tabular presentation of Rashīd al-Dīn's own description of his collected works and a discussion of their publication history, see Appendix A.

and work, therefore, we are confronted with ambiguity at its beginning and its end – while Rashīd al-Dīn’s birth and youth were obscure, he rose by the end of his life to a position of such prominence that he is better understood as a literary figure than simply a historical one. The last chapter of this dissertation traces the efforts by Rashīd al-Dīn’s client and protégé Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī (d. after 1344) to mobilize tropes familiar from Persian literature to create a historical image of his patron that has survived into the modern period.

Situating the study

The comprehensive approach to Rashīd al-Dīn described above necessarily engages several fields of study, including political and cultural history, historiography, theology, art history, administrative practice, and literature. To provide a comprehensive literature review of all of these would prove unwieldy, and so notes and comments on the major works in these various fields are to be found in the appropriate chapters. A few studies deserve discussion here, however, as they form the scholarly foundation on which this dissertation is built.

The field with which this study most immediately identifies is that of Persian historiography, recently revived with an appreciation of the literary characteristics of Persian narrative chronicles and other historical works. Edward Browne’s four-volume *Literary history of Persia* takes a step in this direction, of course, by including Rashīd al-Dīn and other historians alongside more explicitly belletrist writers such as Sa’dī and Ḥāfiẓ.²² In general, however, the field of Islamic historiography through much of the twentieth century focused on its Arabic

²² Edward G. Browne, *A literary history of Persia* (4 vols.) (London: Fisher, Unwin, 1902-1924) with various reissues and reprints.

origins and its development into canonical genres.²³ Persian sources found their place in this discipline as little more than a vernacularization of Arabic forms.

A major change came in 1980, when Marilyn Waldman published her study of the life and work of Abū'l Faẓl al-Bayhaqī, which not only challenged the prevailing focus on Arabic historiography and historians, but also attempted the first analysis of the literary structure and patterning of a Persian historical text.²⁴ That study stands, in many respects, as a predecessor to this one for the way it approaches its subject text through the life of its author and the social processes that affected its creation. However, given the relative paucity of extant biographical information for Bayhaqī and the contrasting richness of literary and stylistic embellishment of his writing compared to Rashīd al-Dīn, Waldman's study necessarily focuses heavily on the text itself. This study, by contrast, will deal with several aspects of Rashīd al-Dīn's style and presentation, but it will do this primarily to illuminate Rashīd al-Dīn's involvement in processes of intellectual and cultural production. In this respect, this dissertation falls closer to Andrew Peacock's study of the Sāmānid vizier and historian Abū 'Alī Bal'amī, which reconsiders the rise of New Persian literature not as an inevitable historical development, but as a conscious element of Sāmānid programs of legitimation.²⁵

In the decades since Waldman's work first appeared, other scholars, including Peacock, have examined the literary and ideological aspects of Persian historiography. The emerging

²³ Standard works in this register include Franz Rosenthal, *A history of Muslim historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 1952); 'Abd al-'Azīz Dūrī, *Baḥth fī nash'at 'ilm al-ta'rīkh 'inda al-'arab* (Beirut: al-Maṭba'a al-kāthūlikīya, 1960), translated as *The rise of historical writing among the Arabs* by Lawrence I. Conrad (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Tarif Khalidī, *Arabic historical thought in the classical period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

²⁴ Marilyn Robinson Waldman, *Toward a theory of historical narrative* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980).

²⁵ A.C.S. Peacock, *Medieval Islamic historiography and political legitimacy: Bal'amī's Tārīkhnāma* (London: Routledge, 2007).

shape of this new field is aptly demonstrated in a recent volume titled simply *Persian historiography*, edited by Charles Melville as Volume Ten of Ehsan Yarshater's ongoing series on Persian Literature.²⁶ During the nearly two decades that it took to shepherd this volume from inspiration to publication, many of its contributors were busy creating the field that it represents. As a result, the volume maintains an uncanny, though not inappropriate, sense of self-awareness, as the various contributors populate each others' notes and the volume's general bibliography. Besides Melville, who has done more than perhaps anyone to demonstrate the contemporary preoccupations lurking behind historical chronicles of the Mongol period, one name in particular evidence in this regard is Julie Meisami. In contrast to the historian Melville, Meisami comes to the field of Persian historiography with a strong background in literature, having published extensively on Arabic and Persian poetry. Nevertheless, her *Persian historiography to the end of the twelfth century* has become a foundational study in this emerging field.²⁷ Reviewers have criticized Meisami for focusing on Persian works to the exclusion of Arabic, though given the previous marginalization of Persian in the field of Islamic historiography and the fact that Meisami explicitly sets out to study literary and political characteristics of Persian works, this criticism rather misses the point of her study.²⁸

Meisami surveys major historical works from the Sāmānids through the Saljuqs, touching on thematic topics along the way and ending with a discussion of several

²⁶ Charles Melville, ed., *Persian historiography* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012).

²⁷ Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian historiography to the end of the twelfth century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999).

²⁸ See, for example, reviews by C. Warner in *British Journal for Middle Eastern Studies* 28.1 (2001): 101-03; Elton L. Daniel in *Iranian Studies* 33.3/4 (2000): 449-52. Daniel goes on to lament that Meisami "further blurs the already difficult-to-define line between history and historically-informed imaginative literature," seemingly missing the point of the entire new sub-field under discussion here. His contribution to Melville 2012, in turn, is a rather encyclopedic and methodologically safe catalog of historical writing from the Sāmānid through Saljuq period.

considerations of genre, style, and rhetoric that in turn became central to Melville's 2012 edited volume. In some respects, this dissertation functions as a sequel to Meisami's study, as it surveys the histories and historians of thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries with an eye to the political and literary considerations that help explain the changing shape of historical writing under the new Mongol rulers of the Middle East. While the life, work, and legacy of Rashīd al-Dīn remain at the center of this dissertation's attention, the sections treating other Ilkhanid-era historians, namely Chapters Two, Seven, and Eight and the Introduction to Part Two, expand outward to a broad survey of historical processes through the Ilkhanid period.

A second body of literature into which this study fits relates to the political ideology of the Ilkhans. The ongoing struggle with the Mamlūk *sulṭāns* of Egypt over the command of Syria and the relative legitimacy of each dynasty's claim to sovereignty defined the geopolitical contours of the Middle East for most of the period of the Ilkhanate. As Ilkhans and *sulṭāns* learned what it meant to rule as foreign dynasts of steppe-nomadic heritage over portions of what was once an (at least theoretically) unified caliphal empire, they deployed a succession of claims and counter-claims leveraging Turko-Mongol and Perso-Islamic notions of legitimacy off one another. Reuven Amitai discussed the many stages of this struggle in a series of articles; more recently, Anne Broadbridge has outlined the contours of the conflict in a single monograph.²⁹ Both Amitai and Broadbridge draw for their reconstructions of the ideological debate primarily on diplomatic exchanges preserved in Mamlūk chronicles. While Broadbridge acknowledges the shortcomings of these sources, she admits to frequently

²⁹ Amitai's articles on this matter have been collected, along with many others in Reuven Amitai, *The Mongols in the Islamic lands: studies in the history of the Ilkhanate* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate/Variorum, 2007); Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and ideology in the Islamic and Mongol worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

adopting “an abashedly Cairo-centric view of the ideological debate.”³⁰ Persian histories, like those produced for the Ilkhans, Broadbridge states, “compound the problem of their scarcity either by routinely implying that the Mamluks were unimportant, or by failing to acknowledge their existence.”³¹ This dissertation contends that, even if Ilkhanid chronicles like that of Rashīd al-Dīn have little to say about the Mamlūks (and this silence itself is worthy of note), they still reveal much about the Ilkhans’ ideological program. Rashīd al-Dīn’s use of Turko-Mongol and Perso-Islamic intellectual traditions helped Ghazan and Öljeitü legitimize their own reigns. On the whole, this evidence bolsters the basic ideological outlines that Broadbridge sketches from the Mamlūk chronicles. It expands on her conclusions, however, by providing a more nuanced look at the ideological ramifications of Ghazan’s conversion to Islam and Öljeitü’s subsequent embrace of Shīism.

Looking at a later period, Azfar Moin has identified the emergence of the embodied sanctity of the saint-king as a site of legitimation at the early Şafavid and Mughal courts.³² Moin traces this common association back to the shared origins of the Şafavids and Mughals in the Timurid political context of Western Asia, and particularly the coalescence of Islamic, especially Shīite ideas of emanation with the genealogical dispensation of the Mongols in the person of Amīr Timur (d. 1405). Moin’s treatment of “the Mongol period” in setting up this study is remarkably flat, recognizing almost no development in political, administrative, or intellectual patterns between the time of Genghis Khan (d. 1227) and that of Timur, with the result that the latter emerges whole-cloth as the prototype for the “millennial sovereign.” Without dismissing the validity of what Moin has identified for later periods, this dissertation

³⁰ Broadbridge 2008, 4.

³¹ Broadbridge 2008, 3-4.

³² A. Azfar Moin, *The millennial sovereign: sacred kingship and sainthood in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

shows that all of the major elements of this ideological formation were active at the Ilkhanid court a century before Timur's death, even if they had not crystallized into an articulate vision of sacred kingship.

By locating the early stages of Perso-Mongol sacred kingship in the Ilkhanid period, we get a more compelling origin story for the uniquely Persianate saint-king at the center of Moin's study. That is, given the high degree of contact that the Şafavid progenitor, Shaykh Şafi al-Dīn (d. 1334), and his immediate followers enjoyed with the Ilkhanid court, we can see the emerging Şafavid order adopting the signifiers of Ilkhanid legitimacy even before Timur came to power. This allows us to trace the origins of the millennial sovereign ideological complex back to the immediate intellectual response to the cultural trauma of the Mongol conquest and the end of the caliphal state. Thus, if this dissertation is in some way a sequel to the work of Julie Meisami, it provides a prequel to that of Moin. Anyone familiar with Persian historiography will recognize at once that the methods and motivations of historical writing in the Timurid period had changed dramatically from those of the Saljuq period. This dissertation sheds light on the political and intellectual processes through which that change occurred.

On a final note concerning the state of the field, this dissertation reaches its completion just as a new volume of conference proceedings goes to press, edited by Anna Akasoy and titled, *Rashīd al-Dīn: agent and mediator of cultural exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran*. From the table of contents for this volume, provided by Professor Akasoy, it is clear that several of its chapters will pertain directly to the matters discussed here. In addition, I am aware that several other scholars and candidates around the world are working on topics as diverse as the reception of the *Jāmi' al-tawārikh*, the role of Sufis and Sufi rhetoric in the maintenance of Ilkhanid royal

ideology, and the historiographical implications of Rashīd al-Dīn's collected writings. Needless to say, the scholarly ground for this study will expand significantly in the coming months and years.

Sources and studies on the life of Rashīd al-Dīn

Contemporary witnesses to the life of Rashīd al-Dīn are relatively rich, but still patchy enough to defy quick and confident reconstruction. Most frustrating in this regard is the fact that the great biographer of Ilkhanid society, Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Fuwaṭī (1244-1323), was a close associate of Rashīd al-Dīn, and yet the portion of his biographical compendium, the *Talkhīṣ majma' al-ādāb fī mu'jam al-aqāb*, which would have included his entry on his friend and patron is not known to have survived.³³ As a result, we rely for information on three basic types of sources: contemporary court chronicles, fleeting autobiographical notices in Rashīd al-Dīn's own writings, and contemporary and later biographies written by individuals other than Ibn al-Fuwaṭī.

As discussed in Chapters Three and Four, the chronicle of Bar Hebraeus may provide the single candid contemporary mention of Rashīd al-Dīn's early life. Otherwise, Ilkhanid and Mamlūk chronicles offer only surprisingly rare glimpses of Rashīd al-Dīn's official duties. All of these portrayals of Rashīd al-Dīn, furthermore, were produced within a context of trenchant factionalism that plagued the Ilkhanid court and its relations with the Mamlūk Sulṭānate. On the one hand, 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī wrote the only contemporary account of the reign of Öljeitü, a period in which Rashīd al-Dīn was at his most active as a politician and a theologian. Qāshānī was a partisan of some of Rashīd al-Dīn's detractors at court and at one point famously claimed

³³ On Ibn al-Fuwaṭī and the *Talkhīṣ*, see F. Rosenthal, "Ibn al-Fuwaṭī, Kamāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Razzāk b. Aḥmad," *EI*²; Devin DeWeese, "Cultural transmission and exchange in the Mongol Empire: notes from the biographical dictionary of Ibn al-Fuwaṭī," in *Beyond the legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 11-29.

to have been the actual author of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārikh*.³⁴ In his *History of Öljeitü*, Qāshānī emphasizes those aspects of Rashīd al-Dīn’s personal past and activity at court that fed contemporary doubts about his religious and political allegiances. On the other hand, beneficiaries of Rashīd al-Dīn’s political and cultural patronage, including Shihāb al-Dīn Vaṣṣāf (d. after 1326) and Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī present a largely encomiastic portrait of their patron.³⁵

As Reuven Amitai-Preiss has shown, the limited information that Mamlūk chronicles provide on Rashīd al-Dīn suggests that his influence over Ilkhanid policy was more limited than the prevailing historical record holds.³⁶ Explicitly biographical Mamlūk sources are somewhat more helpful, but here too we must keep in mind the authors’ political and religious affiliations. For example, the Christian administrator Ibn al-Ṣuqā‘ī (d. 1326) preserves an account of Rashīd al-Dīn’s execution that echoes certain biblical themes of martyrdom and dismemberment.³⁷ Another Mamlūk biographer, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣafadī (d. 1363), cites an unnamed immigrant from Ilkhanid Isfahan as the source of his information on Rashīd al-Dīn.³⁸ The third contemporary biographical account is that of Nāṣir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī, better known as the author of the only surviving local history of Kirmān from the Ilkhanid period.³⁹

³⁴ On Qāshānī, his work, and his claim to authorship of the *Jāmi‘*, see Chapter Seven.

³⁵ Vaṣṣāf is treated alongside Qāshānī in Chapter Seven, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī in Chapter Eight.

³⁶ Reuven Amitai-Preiss, “New materials from the Mamluk sources for the biography of Rashīd al-Dīn,” in *The court of the Il-khans, 1290-1340*, ed. Julian Raby and Teresa Fitzherbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 28-31.

³⁷ Faḍl Allāh ibn Abī al-Fakhr ibn al-Ṣuqā‘ī, *Tālī kitāb wafayāt al-a’yān: Un fonctionnaire chrétien dans l’administration mamelouke*, ed. Jacqueline Sublet (Damas: Institut Français de Damas, 1974), entry 312 (Arabic text on pages 183-84, French translation on pages 211-12). For more on Ibn al-Ṣuqā‘ī, including further bibliography, see J. Sublet, “Ibn al-Ṣukā‘ī,” *EF*².

³⁸ Khalīl ibn Aybak Ṣafadī, *Das biographische Lexikon des Ṣalāhaddīn Ḥalīl ibn Aibak aṣ-ṣafadī [=Kitāb al-Wāfi bi-al-wafayāt]*. Vol. 23, ed. Muḥammad ibn Mūsā Sharīf (Beirut: Franz Steiner, 1993), 78-79.

³⁹ Nāṣir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī, *Nasā’im al-aṣḥār min laṭā’im al-akhbār: dar tāriḥ-i vuzarā’*, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Muḥaddis (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Iṭṭilā’āt, 1985), 112-14. For his history of Kirmān, see *idem*, *Simt al-‘ulā lil-ḥaḍrat al-‘ulyā*, ed. ‘Abbās Iqbāl (Tehran: Asāṭir, 1983).

In the absence of Ibn al-Fuwaṭī's account, Kirmānī and the Mamlūk biographers provide the most immediate explicitly biographical accounts on Rashīd al-Dīn.

While helpful and problematic each in his own right, all of these biographers pay special attention to Rashīd al-Dīn's fall from grace, conviction, and execution. This tradition ramified in later accounts derived from them, so that the death of Rashīd al-Dīn is the single aspect of his life most frequently reported by later chroniclers and biographers. In the end, it was not Ibn al-Ṣuqā'ī's version with its biblical allusions, nor Ṣafadī's, in which Rashīd al-Dīn's corpse is burned after being dismembered, that informed later chronicles but rather the pathos-laden account by Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī. This was the image extended by late medieval and early modern writers that European scholars encountered beginning in the nineteenth century. These scholars, beginning with Quatremère, turned for supplemental information to Rashīd al-Dīn's own writing, preserved in the manuscript collections of the great European imperial libraries. For his part, Quatremère had access to the various manuscripts of the French Imperial collection, including a large volume containing the first four items of Rashīd al-Dīn's collected works.⁴⁰ Using this and other manuscript materials, including several of the biographical notices mentioned above, Quatremère prepared the first systematic sketch of Rashīd al-Dīn's life and work. The tone of this portrait is highly adulatory, as indicated above; it casts Rashīd al-Dīn as a quintessentially just and upright scholar-administrator, never the instigator and ever the victim of court intrigue.

The body of evidence on which Quatremère draws for his biography, as well as the tone of his work, set a standard for discussions of Rashīd al-Dīn in subsequent surveys of his life and work. Edward Browne cites Quatremère explicitly in the relevant section of his *History of*

⁴⁰ This is Paris Bibliothèque Nationale ms. arabe 2324, discussed at greater length in Chapter Seven.

Persian literature, and his brief biographical sketch of Rashīd al-Dīn is little more than an encapsulation into three pages of what Quatremère lays out in fifty-six.⁴¹ John Andrew Boyle offers a similar distillation of Quatremère’s biography in the introduction to his 1971 English translation of a portion of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*.⁴² In their respective encyclopedic entries on Rashīd al-Dīn, Zeki Velidi Togan and David Morgan occasionally disagree with Quatremère on the interpretation of individual events, but in general follow his approach and reconstruction.⁴³

Quatremère, Browne, Boyle, and Morgan were all primarily concerned with Rashīd al-Dīn’s historical writings, and in particular the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. For his part, Togan offers a more balanced discussion of Rashīd al-Dīn’s various writings, but keeps his attention narrowly focused on the man and his works. The goal of all of these early biographers is to rectify discrepancies in the historical record to produce a stable and “true” portrait of Rashīd al-Dīn and his scholarly output. This very modern approach culminated with a seminar on Rashīd al-Dīn held in Tehran and Tabriz in November 1969.⁴⁴ In the course of this seminar, its participants resolved to monumentalize Rashīd al-Dīn’s presence in the modern world by erecting a statue of him in Tabriz and renaming avenues in that town as well as in Tehran and Rashīd al-Dīn’s home town of Hamadan.⁴⁵ They also sought to undertake a full publication of

⁴¹ Browne 1920, 69-71.

⁴² Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *The successors of Genghis Khan*, tr. John Andrew Boyle (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 3-6.

⁴³ Zeki Velidi Togan, “Reşid-üd-Din Tabīb,” in *İslâm ansiklopedisi. İslâm âlemi coğrafya, etnoğrafya ve biyografya lûgati*, ed. M.T. Houtsma, vol 9.1 (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1960), 705-709; David O. Morgan, “Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb,” *EI*².

⁴⁴ For the proceedings of this seminar, see the special issue of *CAJ* 14.1-3 (1970) and *Majmū‘a-i khiṭāba-ha-yi taḥqīqī dar bara-yi Rashīd al-Dīn Fażl Allāh Hamadānī*, ed. Sayyid Hossain Nasr *et al.* (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tihhrān, 1971).

⁴⁵ J.A. Boyle and K. Jahn, “Rashīd al-Dīn celebration seminar, 1-6 November 1969,” *CAJ* 14.1-3 (1970): 1-4.

Rashīd al-Dīn's complete works, an effort that led to a spate of publication in the 1970s but that ultimately fell short of its goal.

The move away from this monumentalizing instinct was first signaled in 1981, when Josef van Ess offered a précis of Rashīd al-Dīn's theological writings in an effort to construct a prosopography of scholars at the Ilkhanid court.⁴⁶ Van Ess opens his work with a brief "biographical background," which focuses less on the life of its subject than on his (largely unsuccessful) efforts to preserve his theological works through a carefully prescribed process of reproduction, verification, and distribution.⁴⁷ While van Ess does not contribute much to the personal biography of Rashīd al-Dīn, he is the first to use the vizier's life, career, and works as a point of entry into the study of contemporary social and political processes.

This is the same approach taken by another German scholar writing two decades after Van Ess. Birgitt Hoffmann's study of the institution of charitable endowment in the Ilkhanid period includes a lengthy narrative of the life of Rashīd al-Dīn, updating and in some places reinterpreting the evidence on which Quatremère drew.⁴⁸ Hoffman is significantly more skeptical than Quatremère of the motives behind some of Rashīd al-Dīn's activities as prime minister of the Ilkhanid state. While Quatremère's portrait of the vizier draws heavily from medieval encomiasts in the tradition of Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, Hoffmann opens the door for a more critical discussion of Rashīd al-Dīn's role in the formation, administration, and corruption of the Ilkhanid state. In doing this, she dismisses perhaps too quickly the valuable evidence of Mustaufī in favor of the less flattering accounts of Qāshānī and Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Shabānkārā'ī (d. 1358).

⁴⁶ Josef van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten: zu Inhalt und Entstehungsgeschichte der theologischen Schriften des Rašīduddīn Faḡlullāh (gest. 718/1318)* (Wiesbaden: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, 1981).

⁴⁷ van Ess 1981, 1-11.

⁴⁸ Hoffmann 2000, 53-98.

The converse of Hoffmann's almost hyper-critical approach is to be found in a collection of articles on Rashīd al-Dīn produced by Hāshim Rajabzāda just two years earlier and not consulted by Hoffmann.⁴⁹ Many of Rajabzāda's chapters address similar topic areas in similar ways as the various scholars whose work appears in the proceedings of the 1969 seminar. For example, using the same primary sources about which Hoffmann was so skeptical, Rajabzāda constructs a highly panegyric and uncritical portrait of the Iranian statesman, echoing and expanding on the portrait offered by 'Abd al-Hayy Habībī.⁵⁰ In their edition of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, meanwhile, Muḥammad Raushan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī offer a brief biography that amounts to little more than a collection of the evidence for Rashīd al-Dīn's life, but they make little effort either to rectify or to explain the many inconsistencies in this evidence.⁵¹ These modern Iranian biographies, which share a source base with their European contemporaries, generally discount Rashīd al-Dīn's involvement in the intrigue of the Ilkhanid court, instead preserving the highly encomiastic portrait of the great vizier and man of state seen in the works of Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, and Quatremère and the resolutions of the 1969 seminar.

Most recently, Dorothea Krawulsky has included a biographical sketch of Rashīd al-Dīn in a collection of articles about his work.⁵² Krawulsky asserts that her biography corrects certain mistakes in other modern biographies, including those of Morgan and van Ess, by consulting new evidence from a manuscript of Rashīd al-Dīn's theological writings.⁵³

⁴⁹ Rajabzāda 1998.

⁵⁰ Rajabzāda 1998, 30-65; cf. 'Abd al-Hayy Habībī, "Rūzīgār va āsār va shakhṣiyyat-i Rashīd al-Dīn vazīr," in Nasr *et al.*, eds., 1971, 80-100.

⁵¹ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī (Tehran: Alburz, 1994), lxviii-lxxiii.

⁵² Dorothea Krawulsky, *The Mongol Ilkhāns and their vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 119-34.

⁵³ Krawulsky 2011, 119.

Unfortunately, this promising claim is unfounded, as the manuscript that Krawulsky consults is the same one from which Quatremère based his 1836 reconstruction of Rashīd al-Dīn's life.⁵⁴ Thus, even while promising a new approach to the biography of Rashīd al-Dīn, Krawulsky reveals how much modern European scholars have perpetuated Quatremère's approach for the basic material and narrative of that biography.

Quatremère's approach, and that of European scholars after him, is to privilege the autobiographical data found in the works of Rashīd al-Dīn, interpreting them in cases of inconsistency to establish the most plausible reconstruction, and treating later sources as secondary and supplemental to the first-person voice. For his fall and execution, which Rashīd al-Dīn could not possibly have recorded himself, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī's account, filtered through the works of Timurid historians such as Hāfiz-i Abrū (d. 1430) and Khwāndamīr (d. c. 1535), remains the most frequently repeated, though those of Ibn al-Ṣuqā'ī and Ṣafadī are often mentioned for dramatic flourish. This dissertation, by contrast, is as much concerned with the emergence of narratives surrounding the figure of Rashīd al-Dīn as it is with reconstructing the course of his actual life. To that end, I will reevaluate not only the accounts of writers such as Ibn al-Ṣuqā'ī and Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, but also those moments of autobiography that we have from Rashīd al-Dīn himself. No previous study has adequately addressed the fact that the majority of these autobiographical data appear in the context of Rashīd al-Dīn's theological writing. Quatremère's preface, like those of subsequent scholars, presents these snippets detached from their context as authentic data for biographical reconstructions. By appreciating the generic constraints and possibilities of Rashīd al-Dīn's various works, we see

⁵⁴ This oversight may be due to the fact that the manuscript in question, Paris BN ms. arabe 2324, was known to Quatremère by its old cataloging number, arabe 356: William MacGuckin Baron de Slane, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1883-95), i.801. See also my review of Krawulsky's book in *Iranian Studies* 45.5 (2012): 717-21.

that these moments of autobiography, like the letters discussed above, often have more to say about the circumstances of their composition than about the life of Rashīd al-Dīn. As I intend to show, Rashīd al-Dīn, like his biographers from Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī to Birgitt Hoffmann, had good reason to present his life in a particular way.

As both an author and a subject of Ilkhanid historiography, Rashīd al-Dīn stands at the center of important processes in historical production, both in his own time and in the modern period. The choice to open this dissertation with Rashīd al-Dīn's last words as reported by Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī is entirely deliberate. Were it not for Rashīd al-Dīn's political and intellectual activity, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī would have been in no position to record (or more likely, invent) these final words. The voice of Rashīd al-Dīn, preserved in enticing moments of self-reference in his own writings and in the writings of his successors has helped create a durable fascination with this individual who rose to such heights of power and yet suffered the same ignominious fate as other paradigmatic viziers from Persian history. The death of Rashīd al-Dīn reveals much about his life and his legacy, as he was instrumental in bringing together Perso-Islamic literary and historical traditions with the administrative and dynastic demands of the Mongol state. By approaching that life with an awareness of the dense literary fabric in which it is preserved, we can appreciate better the power of Rashīd al-Dīn, not only as a man of state or a historian, but as a perennially compelling historical figure.



Figure 1. Greater Iran and environs at the time of the Ilkhanate

From *The legacy of Genghis Khan: courtly art and culture in Western Asia 1256-1353*, ed. Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002), 10. Reproduced by permission of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Map by Anandaroop Roy. Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

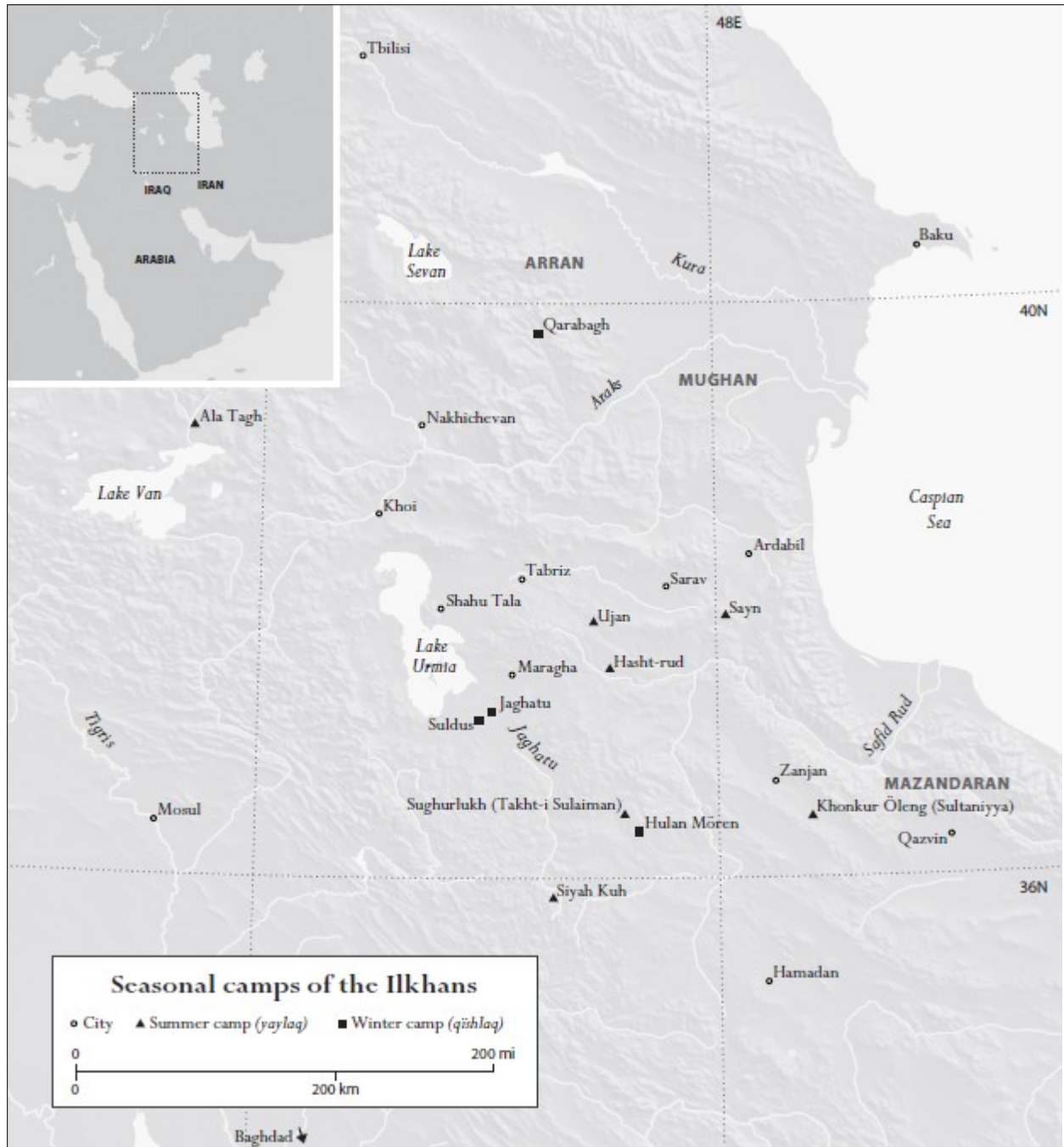


Figure 2. Seasonal camps of the Ilkhans

From *The legacy of Genghis Khan: courtly art and culture in Western Asia 1256-1353*, ed. Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002), 76. Reproduced by permission of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Map by Anandaroop Roy. Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

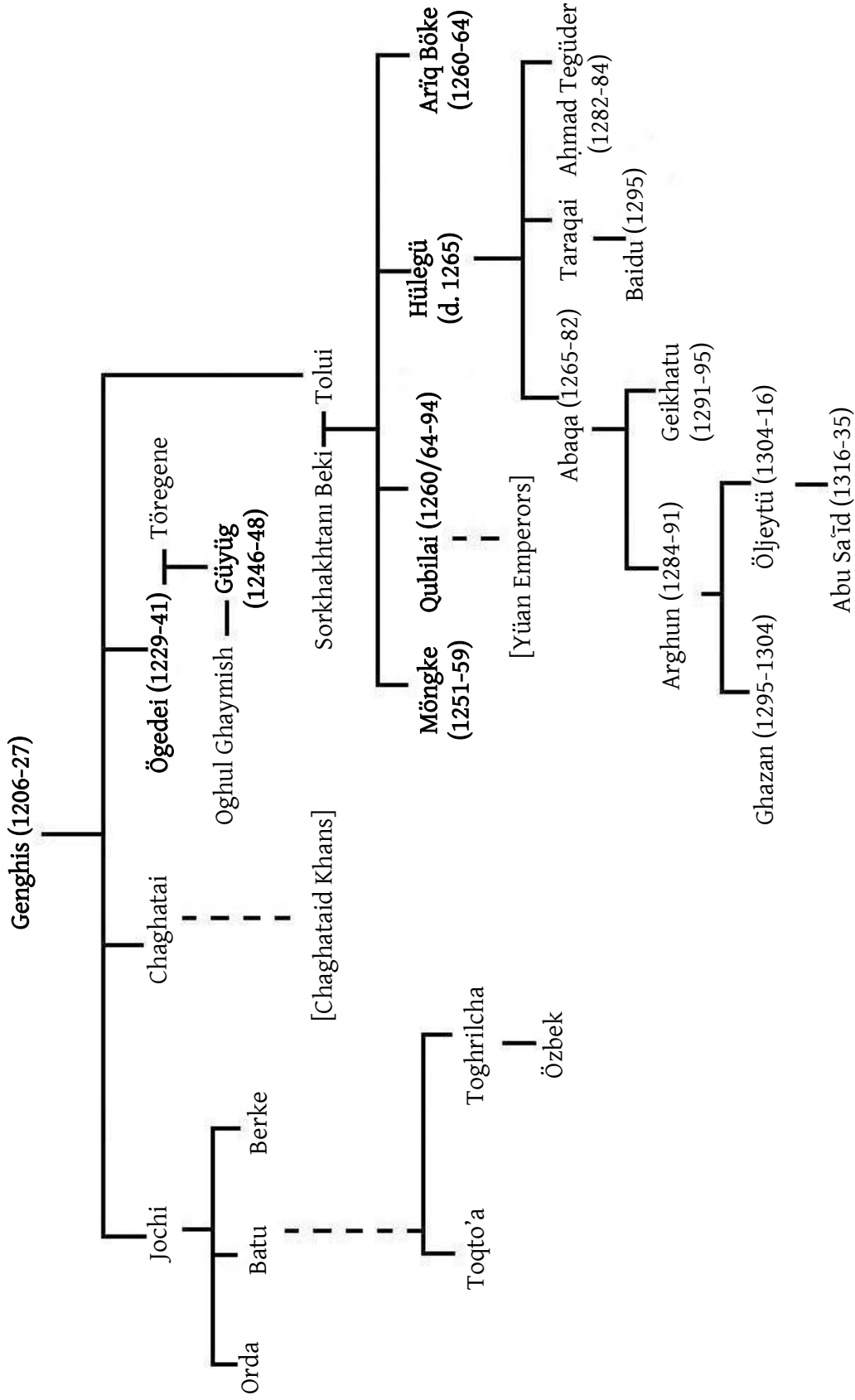


Figure 3. Partial tree of the Mongol royal family
 Regnal years given for Great Khans and Ilkhans; Great Khans indicated in boldface.

Part One. Apocalypse to Ilkhanate

In 1218, the Governor of Uṭrār, in what is now southern Kazakhstan, ordered the massacre of a caravan of merchants from the realm of Genghis Khan (d. 1227). This act, and the failure of the Khwārazmshāh Sulṭān Muḥammad (d. 1220) to offer suitable redress to the Mongol ruler, set in motion a series of invasions that shook the Islamic world to its core.¹ Beginning in 1219, the armies of Genghis Khan and his descendants overran not only the lands of Khwārazm, but also much of the eastern Islamic world.² The world that Genghis Khan invaded was already facing a crisis of political legitimacy as the Great Saljuq Empire dissolved into a constellation of minor Islamic dynasties across the Eastern Mediterranean region. Khwārazmshāh Sulṭān Muḥammad was the leader of one of these successor states to the Saljuqs. Originally Turkish appointees of the Saljuq *sulṭāns*, the Khwārazmshāhs had become increasingly well situated to consolidate control of the region in the wake of their moribund patron dynasty. Meanwhile, in Baghdad, the long-reigning ‘Abbāsīd Caliph al-Nāṣir (r. 1180-1225) saw in this situation of political decentralization an opportunity to reassert the preeminence of his office as the central spiritual and secular authority across the Islamic world. In this effort, he enlisted a new type of ally, the Sufi Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Umar Suhrawardī (1145-1234), who hoped to find space within this resurgent caliphate for his own newly articulated ideas of mystical brotherhoods.³

A confrontation was imminent between the emboldened caliph and the similarly ambitious Khwārazmshāh Muḥammad, who had been tutored in his youth by the staunchly anti-mystical theologian Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 1209), when events at Uṭrār provoked the Great

¹ The massacre at Uṭrār, and the difficulty of locating it within the course of diplomatic and commercial contacts between Sulṭān Muḥammad and Genghis Khan, are treated by W. Bartol’d, *Turkestan down to the Mongol invasion*, ed. C.E. Bosworth (London: Luzac, 1968), 393-99.

² For a detailed account of the first Mongol campaign to the West, see Bartol’d 1968, 403-49.

³ For more on Suhrawardī’s efforts in concert with al-Nāṣir, see Erik S. Ohlander, *Sufism in an age of transition: ‘Umar al-Suhrawardī and the rise of the Islamic mystical brotherhoods* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 249-303.

Khan of the Mongols. Local reactions to the invasion of Genghis Khan speak in horrified terms of the appearance of these horsemen from the East and of the butchery they committed in the cities and lands of Islam. Writing in Zangid Mosul a decade after the event, the Arab chronicler ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr (d. 1233) struggled to include it in a work that was meant to chronicle all of human experience:

For several years I continued to avoid mention of this disaster as it horrified me and I was unwilling to recount it. I was taking one step towards it and then another back. Who is there who would find it easy to write the obituary of Islam and the Muslims? For whom would it be a trifling matter to give an account of this? Oh, would that my mother had not given me birth! Oh, would that I had died before it occurred and been a thing forgotten, quite forgotten! (cf. Qurʾān, 19:23) However, a group of friends urged me to record it, although I was hesitant. I saw then that to leave it undone was of no benefit, but we state that to do it involves recounting the most terrible disaster and the greatest misfortune, one the like of which the passage of days and nights cannot reproduce. It comprised all mankind but particularly affected the Muslims. If anyone were to say that since God (glory and power be His) created Adam until this present time mankind has not had a comparable affliction, he would be speaking the truth. History books do not contain anything similar or anything that comes close to it.⁴

Other writers fled before the Mongol onslaught and wrote about it from the relative security of neighboring regions such as Anatolia and India.⁵ One of these, the Kubrāvī Sufi Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, also known as Dāya (1177-1256), wrote a manual of Sufi doctrine and practice for the Turkish Mengüjekid ruler of Erzincan, in Eastern Anatolia, in the late 1220s. In it, Dāya presents the Mongols as the fulfillment of the apocalyptic signs foretold by the Prophet Muḥammad:

⁴ Translation is slightly modified from ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athīr for the crusading period from al-Kāmil fī l-tārīkh. Part 3: the years 589-629/1193-1231: the Ayyubids after Saladin and the Mongol menace*, tr. D. S. Richards (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2006), 202.

⁵ Besides Rāzī, quoted here, first-hand accounts that associate the Mongols with the coming apocalypse can be found in Abu ʿAbdallāh Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Kitāb muʿjam al-buldān*, ed. F. Wustenfeld (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1866), vol. 1, 250, translated by Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic historical thought in the classical period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 184; Minhāj-i Sirāj [Jūzjānī], *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣiri, ya Tārīkh-i Irān va Islām*, ed. ʿAbd al-Hayy Habībī (Tehran: Dunyā-yi Kitāb, 1984), ii., 90-91, 97-98. H.G. Raverty published a translation of the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣiri* in 1873, but did not include passages speaking of the Mongol invasion in apocalyptic terms, “since the world has not yet come to an end, although more than six centuries have elapsed since [Juzjānī] foretold it,” (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal), 869, cf. 935.

But the meaning of all these accounts in various traditions is that an account is preserved of the Prophet – peace and greetings be upon him – that he said: “Soon it will be that the descendants of Qiṭūrā b. Karkar will come, and they are the Turks, and they will drive the people of Khurāsān and the people of Sīstān hard before them; Turks with flat broad faces and small eyes and flat noses and red countenances and their skin will be stretched out like shields and they will wear furs and on their feet will be shoes of hair,” – and these are the *chārūq* of undecorated cow skin that these Tatārs wear. And he said: “They will come three times and slaughter the people. The first time, those who escape them will be delivered safely, and on the second time they will kill some of them and pass over some, and the third time they will kill them all, God Forbid!” And he said that they will tie their horses to the pillars in the mosques of the Muslims.⁶

Between 1219 and 1258, three Mongol campaigns brought an end to the Khwārazmian state, as well as the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate and the resurgent network of Ismā‘īlī fortresses south of the Caspian Sea and in Qūhistān.⁷ In the early 1260s, Genghis Khan’s grandson Hülegü instituted a new royal Mongol dynasty, that of the Ilkhans, that ruled the region for three quarters of a century.

After 1298, when Hülegü’s great-grandson Ghazan Khan appointed Rashīd al-Dīn as deputy vizier of the Ilkhanate, the latter championed a coherent program of Ilkhanid royal ideology and practices of patronage that integrated the Mongol dynasty into the Perso-Islamic cultural world they ruled. That program of ideology and patronage and its effect on the memory of Rashīd al-Dīn is the subject of Part Two. It engaged both Ibn al-Athīr and Najm al-

⁶ Translated from Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, *Marmūzāt-i Asadī dar mazmūrāt-i Dā’ūdī*, ed. Muḥammad Rizā Shāfīī Kadkanī (Tehran: Sukhan, 2002), 151. The figure of Qiṭūrā b. Karkar is frequently associated with the apocalyptic tribes of Yā’jūj and Ma’jūj (Gog and Magog). Properly, Qiṭūrā (Keturah) is the biblical figure of Abraham’s wife after the death of Sarah. Some identify her with Sarah’s handmaiden Hagar (Ar. Hājar), by whom Abraham bore Ishmael, the legendary ancestor of the Turks. The use of the masculine *ibn* instead of *bint* in Rāzī’s text suggests that he does not know or chooses to ignore the details of this biblical genealogy, though he retains the association of the Turks with Qiṭūrā. The patronymic “Karkar” means simply “Lord,” probably in reference to the tradition that Hagar was the daughter of the King of Maghreb before the latter was killed by the Pharaoh of Egypt. See Afnan H. Fatani, “Hajar,” in *The Qur’an: an encyclopedia*, ed. Oliver Leaman (London: Routledge, 2006), 234-36. On the continuing role of Qiṭūrā and her descendents for incorporating the Mongols into Islamic eschatology in later Perso-Islamic historiography, see Judith Pfeiffer, “‘Faces like shields covered with leather:’ Keturah’s sons in the post-Mongol Islamicate eschatological traditions,” in *Horizons of the world: festschrift for İsenbike Togan*, ed. İlker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kılıç-Schubel (Istanbul: İthaki, 2011), 557-94.

⁷ For a survey of the three invasions, see J.A. Boyle, “Dynastic and political history of the Il-khāns,” in *The Cambridge history of Iran. Volume 5: The Saljuq and Mongol periods*, ed. J.A. Boyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 303-49.

Dīn Rāzī's work; the two scholars would have been surprised to learn that their writings had become foundational sources for the official history of the Mongol Ilkhanid dynasty. However, the process leading to that strange appropriation was already underway by the time Ibn al-Athīr died in 1233. The chapters of Part One set out the processes of intellectual accommodation that marked the period of direct central Mongol imperial administration of the Middle East and the first decades of the Ilkhanate.

Of the four chapters of Part One, the first three trace the early stages of the interaction between Turko-Mongol rulers and Perso-Islamic intellectuals that turned the former into legitimate sovereigns of the Middle East. Chapters One and Three rehearse a fair amount of narrative administrative history. Several survey histories exist of the Mongol Empire and the Ilkhanate, and Jean Aubin in particular has traced the changing administrative structure of the period.⁸ These chapters add to existing scholarship by emphasizing how individual administrators' attachments to particular geographic regions, cultural practices, and dynastic factions influenced the development of Mongol rule in the Middle East. Chapter One traces the efforts of these administrators during the early decades of Mongol rule, culminating in two processes in the 1250s: the shift in administrative allegiance of the Mongol Middle East away from the Jochid court of the Volga Basin and towards the imperial court at Qaraqorum and the creation of the first Persian history of the Mongols written from within Mongol patronage. Chapter Three traces similar concerns in a later period, as the future Ilkhan Ghazan created a new administrative corps to replace that of the previous generation, which had been eviscerated by successive fiscal crises and succession struggles at the Ilkhanid court.

⁸ The best survey history remains Boyle 1968. For administrative history, see Jean Aubin *Émirs mongols et vizirs persans dans les remous de l'acculturation* (Paris: Association pour l'avancement des études iraniennes, 1995). Aubin is perhaps too quick to reach broad conclusions, for example by identifying different individuals with identical *laqabs* as the same person.

While Rashīd al-Dīn is the best known member of Ghazan's new administrative apparatus, and the best known minister to serve the Mongol Ilkhans, Chapters One and Two will highlight the work of a number of other scholar-bureaucrats who gave shape to the Ilkhanid state and produced the first intellectual response to the experience of Mongol rule. The aim here is to demonstrate that Rashīd al-Dīn's writing, like his other activities at court and as a patron of religious, artistic, and scientific activities, drew heavily on the work of his predecessors. His most immediate predecessors, the bureaucrats and scholars treated in Chapters One and Two, were engaged with the difficult projects of reestablishing a working administrative system and explaining a fundamental shift in political authority: the end of the caliphate and the beginning of a dynastic dispensation based on descent from Genghis Khan.

One reflection of the cultural negotiation involved in this encounter, and one barometer of Mongol political allegiance as it oscillated between the Sino-Mongol traditions of the Mongol central court and the Perso-Islamic ones indigenous to the region is the interchange of terms for political offices and officers. The use of terminology from Perso-Islamic (vizier, *ṣāhib-dīwān*, etc.) or Sino-Mongol (*chingsang*, *ulugh bitikchi*, *tamghachi*, etc.) traditions gives some indication of the cultural orientation of the region's administration at any given moment. To capture this, the two sets of terms will be used as they appear in the narrative sources from the period. However, because actual governing practice underwent dramatic changes during the period covered in the following chapters, it is almost impossible to assign stable definitions to any of these terms. In general, the offices of vizier, *ṣāhib-dīwān* (financial minister), *bitikchi* (scribe, secretary), and *tamghachi* (seal bearer) denote secretarial duties, though some distinction is to be drawn between the advisory role of the vizier and the more fiscal duties of the *ṣāhib-dīwān*.

Chapters Three and Four provide a bridge between the central administrative and intellectual history of the Ilkhanid court and the period of Rashīd al-Dīn's political activity. Chapter Three traces the rise of Ghazan Khan. Again, these events have been treated elsewhere, but not with an adequate appreciation of their historiographical setting. Since Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* is our main source for these events, scholars have been quick to accept the version of events presented in various editions of his work. However, Rashīd al-Dīn was personally involved in these events, and a crucial portion of them is preserved in two distinct versions of his text. For these reasons, a considered discussion of the textual tradition around Ghazan's rise and its relation to canonical Persian historiography will give a better understanding of the importance for later writers of Ghazan's early career and conversion to Islam. Chapter Four treats the biography of Rashīd al-Dīn during the period covered in the first three chapters. Once again, this is not simply from an effort to reconstruct the facts of his life, but to unravel some of the historiographical preoccupations that mark the various early sources on Rashīd al-Dīn.

Chapter One. The Middle East in the Mongol Empire

While inspiring visions of apocalyptic doom, Genghis Khan did not establish any meaningful system for ruling the Middle East. Local political structures remained, including the 'Abbāsid caliphate in Baghdad, a network of Nizārī Ismā'īlī fortresses in the mountains of northern Iran and Syria, and the remnants of the Khwārazmian state, now led by Sulṭān Jalāl al-Dīn (1220-31), son of Muḥammad. In the years after Genghis Khan withdrew from the region, Jalāl al-Dīn reasserted his father's claim to sovereignty in Central Asia and eastern Persia, over and against the 'Abbāsid caliph. To counter the new Khwārazmian threat and to consolidate the Mongol hold on Central Asia and the Middle East, Genghis Khan's son and successor, Ögedei (r. 1229-41) sent a second military campaign to the Middle East in 1231 under the general Chormaghun (d. 1241).

This chapter traces the political processes within the Mongol ruling family that came to define the Middle East among other regions of the Empire between the time of Chormaghun's occupation and the arrival of Hülegü, grandson of Genghis Khan, in the mid-1250s. By understanding the administrative history of the region during this period, we can understand the arrival of Hülegü, and the consequent establishment of the Ilkhanid dynasty, as more than just a third, definitive conquest of the Middle East. Instead, we see particular economic and administrative motives behind the decision to launch this third campaign into the region. We also see the effect that local and regional concerns had on the shape of the Mongol state as it evolved into the Ilkhanate. In particular, we can better identify the origins of cultural projects of the 1260s and 1270s if we understand the geographic and cultural origins of the administrators who undertook those projects.

Within the context of Mongol imperial politics, the period from 1231 to 1258 is best understood as consisting of two iterations of a feud within the royal family. In its basic form, this feud pitted the family of Genghis Khan's eldest son, Jochi, who ruled over the Kipchaq steppe and Volga Basin, against other branches of the family descended from younger sons who held the seat of Mongol imperium at Qaraqorum, in Mongolia. The first phase of this feud lasted from 1231 until 1251, during which time Genghis Khan's first two successors, his son Ögedei and Ögedei's son Güyüg, along with their senior wives, struggled unsuccessfully to limit Jochid influence in the Middle East. Acting on behalf of these two branches of the family was a series of individuals from the lands of Central and Inner Asia who had either been dislocated by the destruction of the Khwārazmian state or else imported by Mongol military governors. These individuals, among them the Khitan Chin Temür (d. 1235), the Uighur Kōrgüz (d. 1241), and the Mongol Arghun Aqa (d. 1275), gave the Mongol administration in the Middle East its basic shape by modifying 'Abbāsīd and Khwārazmian precedents to fit within the contours of the Mongol Empire.

This first phase ended with a reorientation of imperial power within the Mongol Empire. While this realignment effectively eliminated the Ögedeids from imperial Mongol politics, it did not put an end to the feud. The second period treated in this chapter, spanning the decade of the 1250s, saw a second cycle of the same basic conflict, now waged between the Jochids and the descendants of Genghis Khan's youngest son Tolui. During this period, the Mongol Middle East emerged as a semi-sovereign state, led by a Toluid dynasty of "Ilkhans"

and in particular need of cultural and political institutions that would legitimize their rule in the region.¹

The Jochid-Ögedeid feud

Having hunted down Khwārazmshāh Jalāl al-Dīn, Chormaghun established a military occupation of the western conquered lands, reaching from the Oxus River into Anatolia. Chormaghun fixed his military headquarters in the rich pastures of Azerbaijan, establishing that region as the hub of Mongol political activity in the Middle East. According to the Mongol tradition of *tamma*, the army that Chormaghun brought to the Middle East contained representatives from each of the four branches of the Mongol ruling family descended from Genghis Khan's four sons by his chief wife, Börte. Over the course of the decade during which Chormaghun occupied the region, the Jochid branch of the family succeeded in asserting a near monopoly over the administrative function of the Middle East. They were able to do this by virtue of the fact that Genghis Khan had left no clear directive about the governance of the region, which had only very loosely come under Mongol control after his initial campaign against Sulṭān Muḥammad.

Before his death, Genghis Khan divided the immense pasturage of his nomadic empire, as well as his many subjects into four divisions, or *uluses*, among his four sons by Börte.² While

¹ For a discussion of the term “Ilkhan” and of the dating of its use as a royal title, see Dorothea Krawulsky, “An investigation into the dynasty of the Mongol Īlkhāns: its foundation and its name,” in *The Mongol Īlkhāns and their vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 53-62. For surveys of Ilkhanid dynastic history, see John A. Boyle, “Dynastic and political history of the Il-khāns,” in *The Cambridge history of Iran. Volume 5: the Saljuq and Mongol periods*, ed. John A. Boyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 303-421; Reuven Amitai-Preiss, “Il-khanids i. dynastic history,” *EI*; B. Spuler, “Īlkhāns,” *EI*².

² For a description of this division, and an overview of how they developed into the Mongol states of the late thirteenth century, see Peter Jackson, “From ulus to khanate: the making of the Mongol states, c. 1220-1290,” in *The Mongol Empire and its legacy*, ed. Reuven Amitai and David Morgan (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 12-38.

his youngest son, Tolui, took the role of *otchigin* (Prince of the Hearth), assuming command of his father's camps, grazing grounds, and army, the older brothers inherited bands of territory expanding outward concentrically from the Mongol homeland (See Figure 4).

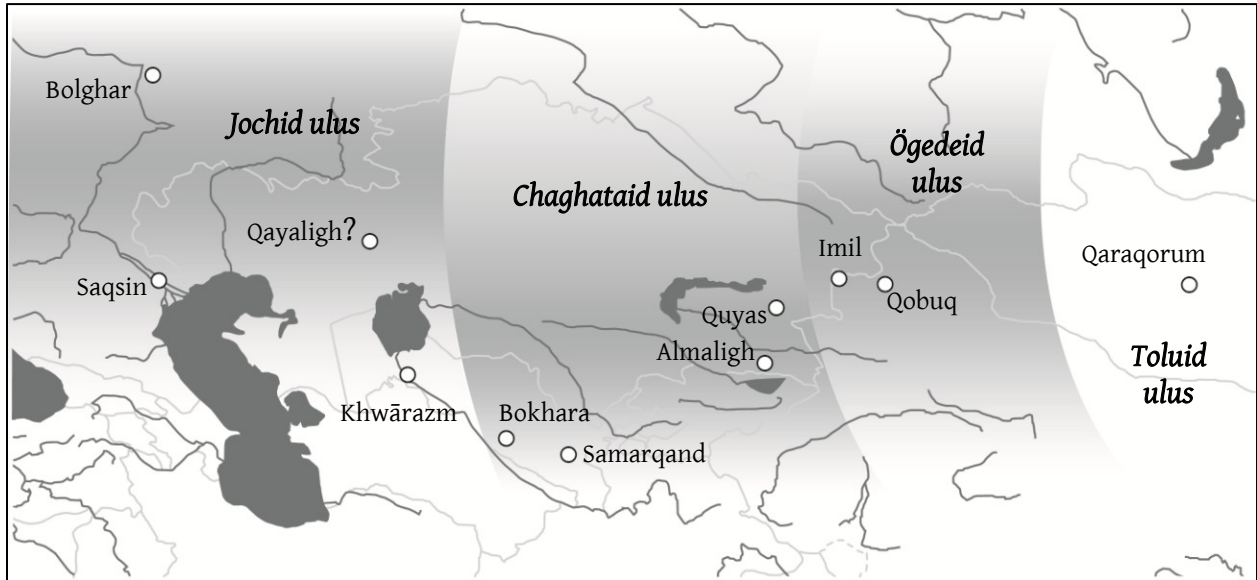


Figure 4. The dispensation of Genghis Khan
 Modern political boundaries indicated for reference only.

This division of the territory of the empire is described by ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Aṭā-Malik Juvaynī:

To his eldest son, Tushi [Jochi], he gave the territory stretching from the regions of Qayaligh and Khwarazm to the remotest parts of Saqsin and Bolghar and as far in that direction as the hoof of Tartar horse had penetrated. Chaghatai received the territory extending from the land of the Uighur to Samarqand and Bokhara, and his place of residence was in Quyas in the neighborhood of Almaligh. The capital of Ögedey, the heir-apparent, during his father’s reign was his yurt in the region of the Emil and the Qobuq . . . Tolui’s territory, likewise, lay adjacent thereto, and indeed this spot is the middle of their empire like the centre of a circle.³

³ ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Aṭā-Malik Juvaynī, *The history of the world-conqueror*, tr. John Andrew Boyle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), 42-43; for the Persian text, see *idem*, *The Ta’rīkh-i-Jahān-Gushā of ‘Alā’u ‘d-Dīn ‘Aṭā-Malik-i-Juvaynī*, ed. Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazvīnī (London: Gibb Memorial Trust, 1912-1958), i.31. There is some confusion about the location of Qayaligh. Boyle notes that “Qayalīgh or Qayalīq, the Cailac of Rubruck, lay a little to the west of the modern Kopal,” which would place it in southern Kazakhstan: *idem*, tr. Boyle, 42 n. 9. However, elsewhere Juvaynī mentions a Qayaligh within a week’s journey of Ala Qamaq, where the *quriltai* that elected Möngke was held: *idem*, 557, 263. On this evidence, Barthold has located Ala Qamaq also in southern Kazakhstan: *idem*, 263 n. 3, yet Juvaynī’s narrative, as well as Rashīd al-Dīn’s corresponding account, places the *quriltai* of Ala Qamaq in Jochid territory. Qayaligh and Ala Qamaq are generic Turkic toponyms (meaning approximately “place with cliffs” and “striped poplar”) and were probably applied to numerous locations. Given the spatial

Genghis Khan had, of course, conquered Khwārazm himself, while Jochi and the Mongol general Sübedei had invaded the Volga region in the aftermath of Genghis Khan's campaign to the west. Beyond assigning all known western lands to Jochi, Genghis Khan's designation of patrimonial territory leaves his eldest son's share undefined, limited only by the expansionist capacity of the empire. This unbounded patrimony invited further conquest by the successors of Jochi, who predeceased his father by several months.

Jochi's son and successor, Batu (d. 1256) enjoyed the distinction as *aqā* among Genghis Khan's many grandsons. He never became Great Khan of the empire, but as a respected senior figure in the social dynamics of the ruling family, his opinion carried great weight at *quriltais*, the great meetings where major imperial affairs, including the selection of Great Khans, were decided.⁴ Because of Batu's privileged position within the Mongol ruling clan and his unlimited patrimonial claim to western lands unconquered at the time of Genghis Khan's death, he was largely successful, in the decade following Chormaghun's occupation, in folding the Middle East into his own sphere of direct control. Towards that goal, Batu was aided by the efforts of a Khitan administrator, Chin Temür, who accompanied the 1231 campaign as Chormaghun's deputy and acted on his behalf in Khurāsān.⁵ Like the more famous Khitan of the early Mongol period, Yeh-lü Chu-ts'ai (d. 1243), who advocated at the central Mongol court

distribution of other cities names in this passage, Qayaligh should be located in the Jochid *ulus*, east of Saqsin and Bolghar and perhaps north of the Aral Sea.

⁴ On Batu's prominence at *quriltais*, see Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī (Tehran: Alburz, 1994), 720. Jochi had one son, Orda, older than Batu, about whom little is known except that he consented to Batu's succession and established a *de facto* independent state east of Batu's known as the White Horde. Rashīd al-Dīn reports that Orda's name appeared above that of Batu on imperial decrees as late as the 1250s. On Orda and his descendents, see Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 710-19. Rashīd al-Dīn also reports that Orda's fourth son, Qungqiran, took Orda's place as head of the *ulus* after the latter's death. This is confirmed by the *Akhbār-i mughūlān*, which further names Jochi's fifth son, Shibān, as the successor of Qungqiran: *Akhbār-i mughūlān (650-683) dar anbāna-i mullā-i Quṭb*, ed. Īrāj Afshār (Qum: Mar'ashī, 2010), 20.

⁵ On Chin Temür and his role in the early Mongol administration, see Jean Aubin 1995, 12-14.

for preserving the Chinese system for managing sedentary lands in the Far East, Chin Temür approached his work in Khurāsān not from the perspective of the nomadic Mongol elite, but always with an eye to maximizing the agricultural and commercial potential of the subject region.⁶ Chin Temür's sensitivity to the management of sedentary populations, along with a well-timed embassy to Ögedei at Qaraqorum, allowed him in 1234 to secure independent civil governance over the eastern Iranian provinces of Khurāsān and Māzandarān.

While Chin Temür was gaining *de facto* administrative independence in Eastern Iran, he employed a number of fugitive administrators from the dissolved Khwārazmian state. A group of these administrators had taken refuge at Ṭūs in Khurāsān until the residents of that town surrendered them to Chin Temür. Among them was Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad Juvaynī, to whom Chin Temür gave the title *ṣāhib-dīwān*, even though he had been living as a private individual in his family's home town of Juvayn, near Nīshāpūr, during the years before his flight to Ṭūs.⁷ Bahā' al-Dīn's appointment as *ṣāhib-dīwān* does not necessarily mean he carried great administrative responsibility during the following decades.⁸ So many members of his family had borne the title in the preceding centuries that it sat on him more as a hereditary designation than an administrative one during the latter 1230s and 1240s. During that period,

⁶ On Yeh-lü Chu-ts'ai, see Igor de Rachewiltz, "Yeh-lü Chu'ts'ai, Yeh-lü Chu, Yeh-lü His-liang," in *In the service of the Khan: eminent personalities of the early Mongol-Yuan period (1200-1300)*, ed. Igor de Rachewiltz et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), 136-75, with additional bibliography.

⁷ Most of the information about Bahā' al-Dīn Juvaynī comes from the *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā* of his son, 'Alā' al-Dīn. Members of the Juvaynī family had served Seljuk Shahs as early as Sanjar (1118-57) and, later, the Khwārazmshāhs. The family traced its own origins back to a manumitted slave of the third Caliph Uthmān by way of a family of administrators who had served under the 'Abbasids after the fall of the Barmakids at the turn of the ninth century CE. See Boyle's valuable biographical introduction in his translation. See also George Lane, *Early Mongol rule in thirteenth-century Iran: a Persian renaissance* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 177-212; *idem*, "Jovayni, 'Alā' al-Dīn," *EIr*, with extensive bibliography; Wilhelm Barthold and J.A. Boyle, "Djuwaynī, 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā-Malik b. Muḥammad," *EF*²; B. Spuler, "Djuwaynī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad," *EF*²; Nāhīd Muḥammadiyūn Shabistārī, *Ṭalayhdārān-i 'aṣr-i Mughūl: khānadān-i Juvaynī* (Tehran: Tālār-i Kitāb, 2007).

⁸ Ögedei confirmed the appointment in 1235 and again in 1236 after Nosal was deputed to the Middle East. Möngke renewed Bahā' al-Dīn's confirmation in 1252, shortly before the latter's death.

as the Mongol Empire was divided over the extent of centralized control, various individuals, all of them dependent on the Jochids, cycled through the Middle East with various titles that designated their relationship with the current Central Asian or Mongol governor as that of a Persianate advisor (*vazīr*) or deputy (*naʿīb*), Turko-Mongol scribe (*ulugh bitikchi*), or other similar role.

Throughout this period, Bahāʾ al-Dīn was largely uninvolved in the more noteworthy conflicts over the allegiance of the administration or management of its finances, to the degree that one recent study of fiscal policy during the period mentions him only once in passing, and then only as “the father of the historian, ʿAtaʾ Malik Juvayni.”⁹ Over the next two decades, as a succession of centrally-appointed governors and their Jochid-dependant *ulug bitikhchis* directly managed both fiscal and executive matters, the position of *ṣāhib-dīwān* faded from the prominence it had held under previous dynasties.¹⁰ Chin Temür’s appointment of Bahāʾ al-Dīn Juvaynī provided an important point of continuity during these turbulent years and catalyzed the earliest efforts to incorporate the Mongol conquerors into the society and culture of their subject population.

Chin Temür was not able to enjoy his new administrative autonomy for long; he died in 1235 and Nosal (d. 1241), an elderly Mongol general attached to Batu, was appointed to his place. Nosal’s activity was largely limited to military affairs; Chin Temür’s ambitious deputy, the Uighur Kōrgüz, who was also a dependent of the Jochid *ulus*, assumed responsibility over

⁹ Judith Kolbas, *The Mongols in Iran: Chingiz Khan to Uljaytu* (London: Routledge, 2006), 92 for the brief mention. Kolbas reconstructs a minute history of monetary policy in the Mongol Middle East, tracing the activities of the regional administrators to a degree of detail that stretches or even misrepresents the textual and numismatic evidence. Kolbas’s general reconstruction of administrative appointments and the relationship of the region to the central Mongol court is largely correct; her extrapolations from this based on coin evidence must be treated with caution.

¹⁰ Ann K.S. Lambton, *Continuity and change in Medieval Persia: aspects of administrative, economic and social history, 11th-14th century* (Albany: State University of New York, 1988), 50-53.

the civil administration. Nosal and Körgüz were further assisted by the Khwārazmian secretary and Jochid dependent, Sharaf al-Dīn (d. 1245), called in the sources both by the Persian term *vazīr* and the Mongol *ulugh bitikchi*. Finally, while Chormaghun had been appointed by Ögedei, his deputy, Baiju (d. 1259?), was by all indications a representative of the Jochid branch of the family.¹¹ Thus, by the end of the 1230s, the entire senior administration in the Mongol Middle East was dependent on the Jochid *ulus*. In 1240, Körgüz succeeded in extending the independent administrative and fiscal jurisdiction that Chin Temür had won to cover the entire region of Chormaghun's military occupation, further extending the Jochid Batu's influence over the Mongol Middle East.¹²

1241 marked a crucial turning point both in Mongol imperial history and in the Jochid monopoly over the administration of the Middle East. That year saw the culmination of a Mongol invasion of Russia and Eastern Europe led by Batu that had begun in 1237.¹³ Like Chormaghun's invasion into the Middle East and other early Mongol imperial campaigns, Batu's westward campaign included representatives from all four branches of the family of Genghis Khan, including Batu's cousins Güyüg, son of Ögedei, and Möngke, son of Tolui. During the campaign, Güyüg's cruel behavior led to a deep rift between him and Batu *aqā*. Despite the fact that Güyüg was son of the Great Khan, Batu was allowed to discipline him after

¹¹ Peter Jackson, "The dissolution of the Mongol Empire," *CAJ* 22.3-4 (1978): 216-18.

¹² The fiscal policies of Chin Temür and Körgüz has been summarized by Kolbas 2006, 87-120, but must be read with all the caution suggested above, n. 9. Kolbas refers to the region of Chin Temür and Körgüz's autonomous authority as a "third imperial province," on the level of Turkestan and Northern China. While it did share with these areas in having non-Mongol fiscal experts managing economic policy, it did not enjoy the same recognition of Turkestan or China among Mongols, given Batu and Chormaghun's respective claims of authority in the region.

¹³ For the Mongol invasion of Europe, see Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221-1410* (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), 58-86. A more accessible, if less rigorous account is James Chambers, *The Devil's horsemen: the Mongol invasion of Europe* (New York: Atheneum, 1979).

Möngke convinced Ögedei not to intervene.¹⁴ The rift that this opened between Batu and Güyüg pitted the Jochid and Ögedeid families against one another, with enormous subsequent consequences, as it drove the *ulus* of Jochi further from the imperial center and fueled a rivalry over influence in the Middle East.

Despite these quarrels, the campaign in Eastern Europe continued unchecked. After annihilating the major forces protecting the edge of the Christian world in two near-simultaneous battles at Liegnitz, Poland, and Mahi, Hungary, the Mongol force crossed the frozen Danube on Christmas Day of 1241, storming into the Balkans in pursuit of the fugitive Hungarian King Béla. While one branch of the army sacked the royal palace at Esztergom, another lay siege the city of Spalato, modern Split, Croatia. There, the archdeacon, Thomas, described the appearance of these horsemen of the East in terms of the miraculous and divine, just as Ibn al-Athīr and other Arab and Persian writers had remembered the initial campaign of Genghis Khan.¹⁵

The armies of Batu and his cousins did not follow up their successes in Eastern Europe with a further drive to the west. Instead, as other Mongol armies had done before them, they withdrew into the steppe-lands of the Volga basin, leaving the Christians of Europe almost as puzzled at their disappearance as they had been shocked at their arrival. Several factors may have contributed to Batu's withdrawal, one of which certainly was the death of the Great Khan Ögedei on 11 December 1241.¹⁶ On Ögedei's death, the attention of the Mongol Empire turned

¹⁴ Igor de Rachewiltz, *The secret history of the Mongols: a Mongolian epic chronicle of the thirteenth century* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 206–09 (§§275–77); Jackson 1978, 198–99.

¹⁵ Archdeacon Thomas Spalatensis, *History of the bishops of Salona and Split*, ed. and tr. by Damīr Karbić, Mirjana Matijević Sokol, and James Ross Sweeney (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 254–55, 278–81, 302–05.

¹⁶ For a discussion of the possible motives for withdrawal and the literature surrounding it, see Jackson 2005, 71–74. Jackson seems to favor the tidy hypothesis that Batu withdrew simply because he had accomplished his goal of punishing the Hungarian King Béla.

inward towards the central court at Qaraqorum, where a *quriltai* would select the new Great Khan. During his life, Ögedei had expressed his desire that his grandson by a junior wife be named his successor. Upon Ögedei's death, however, his senior wife and widow, Töregene Khatun, assumed the regency of the Empire and advocated for her own son Güyüg to become the next Great Khan.¹⁷ Having withdrawn from Europe, Batu stopped short of returning for the *quriltai* at Qaraqorum. Instead, he held his armies in Western Asia, refusing to assist in the election of the cousin against whom he felt such antipathy.

Whether or not the death of Ögedei precipitated Batu's withdrawal from Europe, it marked the point at which the central Mongol court at Qaraqorum began to reassert direct imperial command over the Middle East. The campaign to wrest control of the region away from Batu was waged in the appointment of civil and military administrators.¹⁸ Just a year before the culmination of Batu's campaign and Ögedei's death, Körgüz had come to enjoy full administrative powers over the region conquered by Chormaghun; his authority was further bolstered by the deaths, also in 1241, of Chormaghun and Nosal. Although Körgüz was a dependent of the Jochid house, his personal ambitions attracted the attention of other branches of the royal family. Since his confirmation as regional executive, he had worked to unseat the *ulugh bitikchi* Sharaf al-Dīn and assume sole authority over the civil administration.¹⁹ In 1240, buoyed by his newly expanded jurisdiction, Körgüz had his rival arrested and was in

¹⁷ On Töregene and her regency, see Bruno De Nicola, "Unveiling the Khātūns: some aspects of the role of women in the Mongol Empire" (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Cambridge, 2011), 68-75; Christopher Atwood, *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (New York: Facts on File, 2004), 544. An informative but sometimes uncritical account of the role of women at the Mongol court is Jack Weatherford, *The secret history of the Mongol queens: how the daughters of Genghis Khan rescued his empire* (New York: Crown, 2010), esp. 95-105 for the regencies and familial feuding of the period from 1241-51.

¹⁸ For the details of this battle over administrative influence, see Jackson 1978, 198-200, 212-220; Aubin 1995, 11-17.

¹⁹ On Körgüz and his struggles with Sharaf al-Dīn, see Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, ii.225-42, 269-74; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 489-505, 533-39.

the process of referring the case to the central court at Qaraqorum when two events interfered. First, *en route* to the central court, Körgüz insulted and antagonized a descendent of Genghis Khan's second son Chaghatai, whose *ulus* stretched across Turkestan and Transoxania. Second, news arrived of Ögedei's death, throwing Körgüz's appeal into confusion. After returning to his regional capital of Ṭūs, in Khurāsān, Körgüz was arrested by agents of the Chaghataid court. The Chaghataids, however, were unable to reach a verdict in his case and referred it again to the queen regent Töregene Khatun at Qaraqorum. Rather than resolve the issue, Töregene sent it back to the Chaghataids, who promptly had Körgüz killed for his insulting manner.

Töregene's appointed replacement for Körgüz was a member of the Oyirat tribe named Arghun. Arghun had previously served at the Chaghataid court; he had played a central role both in investigating the conflict between Sharaf al-Dīn and Körgüz and in arresting the latter, though he is best remembered as the governor who finally establishing durable Mongol fiscal policies in the Mongol Middle East.²⁰ He also, however, was the most important figure in stewarding the region, whether intentionally or not, away from the orbit of Batu and towards the seat of Mongol imperium at Qaraqorum. At the time of Arghun's appointment, Sharaf al-Dīn was confirmed as *ulugh bitikchi* and Baiju was allowed to assume command over military operations in Anatolia. Thus, the leading civil and military officials surrounding Arghun remained dependants of the Jochid family. However, Arghun made clear his preference for central imperial authority in 1246, when he travelled to Qaraqorum to lavish Güyüg and his

²⁰ On Arghun, see George Lane, "Arghun Aqa: Mongol bureaucrat," *Iranian Studies* 32.4 (1999): 459-82; Aubin 1995, 15-17; Kolbas 2006, 121-89.

courtiers with gifts, winning confirmation in his position at the head of the government of the Middle East directly from the new Great Khan.²¹

Once enthroned, Güyüg continued his mother's drive to reconsolidate power at the central court.²² He dispatched a new commander in chief, Eljigidei, to the Middle East to take the position left empty after Chormaghun's death. Peter Jackson has argued that Eljigidei's appointment was an attempt to curb Baiju and other Jochid military leaders and assert central command over the regions of Anatolia, Georgia, and northern Syria.²³ This struggle for influence almost came to a head in 1248 when Güyüg left Qaraqorum with an army, ostensibly on a tour of his Jungarian holdings, but probably intending to confront Batu directly. This campaign came to a halt with the alcoholic Güyüg's sudden and premature death, postponing the final showdown between Batu and the central court.

Güyüg's death precipitated a new period of regency under his widow Oghul Ghaymish (d. 1251) pending the selection of a new Great Khan.²⁴ As he had in 1241, Batu asserted his influence over this process from afar. However, this time Batu was not the one delaying the process; dissent among the princes and dependants of the Ögedeid line prolonged the selection process from within the royal household. Instead of boycotting the process, Batu initiated it, calling a *quriltai* to select the new Great Khan at Ala Qamaq, southeast of Lake Balkash and far

²¹ Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, ii.245-46; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 508-09.

²² Güyüg is generally vilified in sources as a cruel, inept, and drunken ruler, an evaluation that stems ultimately from Rashīd al-Dīn's assessment of his reign: Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 797-811; for more on the portraits of Great Khans, see below, Chapter Seven. This view has recently and convincingly been replaced by one that appreciates the practical exigency of Güyüg's rule and the causes for the later negative portrayal: Hodong Kim, "A reappraisal of Güyüg Khan," in *Mongols, Turks and others: Eurasian nomads and the sedentary world*, ed. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 309-38.

²³ Jackson 1978, 200, 216-18.

²⁴ On Oghul Ghaymish and her regency, see Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 822-23.

from the Ögedeid *ulus* and the imperial center.²⁵ Contrary to expectations, Batu nominated neither himself, as the most prominent grandson of Genghis Khan, nor the grandson whom Ögedei had favored during his life. Instead, he offered the throne to Möngke, the eldest son of Genghis Khan's fourth son, Tolui, who had supported Batu's authority over Güyüg during the campaign to the west.

This coup, by which the Ögedeids were removed from imperial power and the Toluid Möngke was enthroned, might have settled the feud between Batu and the central court. The elevation of Möngke involved an agreement by which the new Great Khan confirmed his cousin Batu Aqa's preeminence over the territory south of the Caucasus.²⁶ Möngke, however, had greater ambitions for his position as Great Khan than his alliance with Batu could sustain and in the decade following his accession, the same tensions that had driven apart the Jochid and Ögedeid families, namely the relative authority that each family enjoyed in the Middle East, came to divide the formerly allied cousins.

The assertion of Toluid imperial power

The sudden and unexpected transfer of imperial power to the youngest branch of the royal family, carried out far from the traditional homeland of the Mongols and site of all previous royal elections, met steep opposition from members of the dispossessed Ögedeid branch. To counter this opposition and cement his legitimacy on the throne, Möngke called a second *quriltai*, this one to be held in the Mongol heartland.²⁷ This gathering survived, "by happy

²⁵ For the organization and consequences of this *quriltai*, see Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, i.216-221., iii.15-21; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 262-66, 557-62; Jackson 1978, 203-07; Thomas T. Allsen, *Mongol imperialism: the policies of the Grand Qan Möngke in China, Russia, and the Islamic lands, 1251-1259* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 22-27.

²⁶ On the difficulties surrounding the question of later Jochid claims over this region, see Jackson 1978, 208-10.

²⁷ On this second *quriltai*, see Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, iii.21-38; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 562-74.

chance” in Juvaynī’s words, an armed attack planned and led by members of the Ögedeid house.²⁸ The resulting investigation and executions initiated a spate of show trials and purges of Ögedeid royalty and supporters, including those among the Chaghataid branch of the family who had joined the reaction against Möngke’s accession. These purges liquidated the opposition to Möngke’s rule, while the show trials gave them a veneer of customary sanction.²⁹ While this put an effective end to any Ögedeid opposition to Batu, Möngke and the other Toluids succeeded where the former Great Khans had failed. Over the decade of the 1250s, the Toluid family neutralized the Jochid claim to the Middle East and secured its own sovereignty in the region. This was made possible in part through a realignment of the region’s administration out of the hands of Jochid dependents, most of who came from the Central Asian lands of the Khwarazmian state, and into those of individuals native to the Middle East and loyal to the Toluid family. Thus, while the administrative apparatus of the region developed steadily, its demographics signalled a shift in allegiance towards the imperial center.

At the heart of this demographic transition in the administration of the Mongol Middle East away from Jochid-dependent Khwārazm to the regions of Eastern Iran was the family of Bahā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī. Bahā’ al-Dīn, as described above, had served quietly since 1234 as *ṣāhib-dīwān* of an administration headed by the Central Asians Chin Temür and Körgüz and the Mongol Arghun. While other high-level administrators subordinate to Arghun were native to Central Asia and thus dependents of the Jochid *ulus*, Arghun increasingly employed the Khurāsānī Bahā’ al-Dīn as his personal deputy right at the time that Mongol imperium came into the hands of the Toluid family. When Arghun departed for Qaraqorum on the election of

²⁸ Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, iii.39-53; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 574-85.

²⁹ Allsen 1987, 30-44.

Güyük as Great Khan, he turned over joint management of the region to Bahā' al-Dīn Juvaynī and the Mongol Amīr Buqa as overseer (*basqaq*).³⁰ On Arghun's return to Azerbaijan, Bahā' al-Dīn met him *en route* with luxury items that he had commissioned in Tabriz for the purpose. By performing the Mongol court ritual of obeisance (*tikishmishi*), the Khurāsānī Bahā' al-Dīn ingratiated himself with and marked his loyalty to Arghun. In 1248, when Arghun again set out towards Qaraqorum to settle a dispute over the management of artisans at Tabriz, he was accompanied both by Bahā' al-Dīn and his *ulugh bitikchi*, Khwāja Fakhr al-Dīn Bihishtī. This embassy never reached Qaraqorum and the dispute in question was settled at the Chaghataid court. With Möngke's accession election as Great Khan, Arghun once again departed for Qaraqorum, arriving there in May 1252.³¹ This time, he appointed Bahā' al-Dīn as his sole deputy over the entire Middle East and took with him the latter's son, 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā-Malik, as a personal secretary.

In Qaraqorum in 1252, Arghun signaled the administrative realignment of the region he governed by declaring his allegiance to Möngke and the Toluid imperial family. As he had in his earlier embassy to Güyük, Arghun curried imperial favor by telling Möngke about the disturbed state of financial administration in the Middle East and by planning, in consultation with Möngke, a new fiscal administration dependent on the new Toluid imperial authority. In exchange, Arghun – who had begun his career under at the Chaghataid court and then been made governor in the Middle East by the Ögedeid regent Töregene Khatun – was again confirmed in his position, now as a Toluid appointee and administrative ally of Möngke. In both Juvaynī and Rashīd al-Dīn's accounts of this event, Arghun's confirmation immediately follows Möngke's reappointment of the administrative heads of the two main imperial

³⁰ For this and what follows, see Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, ii. 242-51; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 505-14.

³¹ On this embassy, see Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, ii.251-56, iii.74; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 514-19, 597-98.

provinces of China and Turkestan/Transoxania, suggesting that Middle East held a similar, if slightly subordinate position to the two “branch secretariats” the imperial administrative system.³²

The continued importance of the Middle East within the Mongol imperial administration and Arghun’s renewed allegiance to the central court made Möngke’s agreement with Batu over the administration of the region increasingly difficult to sustain. Two simultaneous processes – one a political process within the Mongol imperial system, the other an intellectual process within a Persianate bureaucratic milieu – originated in Arghun’s embassy of 1252 and resolved this new tension between the Jochids and Qaraqorum, this time in the favor of the Toluid imperial family.

The first process took the form of a new Mongol campaign to the Middle East under Möngke’s brother Hülegü.³³ The motives and chronology for Hülegü’s campaign to the Middle East are somewhat obscured by the particular preoccupations of the sources that relate it.³⁴ In narrating the early reign of Hülegü, Rashīd al-Dīn asserts that the general Baiju sent an embassy to Qaraqorum requesting military support against the Ismā‘īlīs and the ‘Abbāsīd

³² The new Great Khan redeployed the head of the branch secretariat in Transoxania, Maḥmūd Yalavach (d. 1254), to oversee the administration in China, elevating Maḥmūd’s son Mas‘ūd Beg (d. 1289) to his father’s position. On these two individuals, see Thomas T. Allsen, “Maḥmūd Yalavach, Mas‘ūd Beg, ‘Alī Beg, Safaliq Bujir,” in *In the service of the Khan: eminent personalities of the early Mongol-Yuan period (1200-1300)*, ed. Igor de Rachewiltz et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), 122-35, with additional bibliography. On Möngke’s administrative reforms in general, see Allsen 1987, 77-115.

³³ Jackson 1978, gives a detailed account of Hülegü’s campaign into the Middle East and how it helped secure the Middle East for the Toluid house. Jackson does not, however, adequately acknowledge the role of Persianate administrative appointments in effecting the transfer of authority.

³⁴ According to Juvaynī, Hülegü had been given military command of the West after Möngke’s accession, but did not immediately set out on campaign, though an advance party led by the Mongol general Ket-Buqa departed in the summer of 1252: Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, iii.72; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 596. Hülegü’s main force did not get underway until 1253. While both Ket Buqa and Hülegü’s departure fell during the *hijrī* year 650, Rashīd al-Dīn specifies the “Year of the Ox”: Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 848.

Caliph in Baghdad.³⁵ In the same passage, Rashīd al-Dīn asserts that the *qāḍī* of Qazvīn, Shams al-Dīn, had arrived at the Mongol court to protest the activities of the Ismāʿīlīs, an episode previously mentioned by Juzjānī in the 1260s and Ibn al-Tiḡtaqā in 1302.³⁶ Elsewhere, Rashīd al-Dīn only mentions “a group of plaintiffs” (*jāmiʿ-i dādkhwāhān*) complaining about the Ismāʿīlīs at Möngke’s court in the spring of 1252, at which time Möngke assigned his brother Hülegü to lead a new campaign to the Middle East.³⁷ By contrast, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī credits Möngke with spontaneously deciding upon the campaign, as he had “seen in the character of his brother Hülegü the indications of sovereignty.”³⁸

Juvaynī’s history, discussed in Chapter Two, was written in praise of the Toluid family, and Möngke in particular, and so it comes as little surprise that it credits the Great Khan with the decision to send Hülegü to the west. Similarly, Rashīd al-Dīn’s account was written after the Mongols had established a stable government in the wake of the Ismāʿīlīs and the caliphate, so Baiju’s appeal reads as an anachronistic explanation for eliminating specifically these two political entities. Some clarification of these competing explanations can be found by investigating the story of Qāḍī Shams al-Dīn.³⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn’s account elaborates on that of Juzjānī and Ibn al-Tiḡtaqā by portraying the *qāḍī* dramatically appearing at court in armor to demonstrate his constant fear for his own safety. Since Juvaynī never mentions Shams al-Dīn Qazvīnī, and since Rashīd al-Dīn does not specify him among the “group of plaintiffs” who

³⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 973-74.

³⁶ Juzjānī, ed. Habībī, ii.181-82; *idem*, tr. Raverty, 1189-97. See also Ṣafī al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Tiḡtaqā, *al-Fakhrī*, ed. Ahmad ‘Abd Allāh Farhūd and ‘Abd al-Qādir Muḥammad Māyū (Aleppo: Dār al-Qalam al-‘Arabī, 1997), 36. This scene was further elaborated in late Ilkhanid verse histories: Charles Melville, “Between Firdausī and Rashīd al-Dīn: Persian verse chronicles of the Mongol period,” *Studia Islamica* 104/105 (2007): 58-59.

³⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 848.

³⁸ Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, iii.90; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 607.

³⁹ My thanks to Nadia Eboo-Jamal for bringing to my attention some of the problems involved with this story.

appealed to Möngke, we might read the entire episode as a literary elaboration, were it not also reported by Juzjānī and Ibn al-Tiḡtaqā. However, neither of these earlier writers mention the *qāḏī*'s wearing armor out of concern for protection, though both mention rather generically that the people of Qazvīn did indeed fear for their safety. Juzjānī adds that the *qāḏī* provoked Möngke to launch a new campaign not by complaining of Ismā'īlī violence, but rather of their political intransigence. In the face of Mongol attempts at securing sovereignty in the Middle East, he suggests, the Ismā'īlīs had rebuilt a number of their fortifications with the hope outlasting the Mongol presence.

Juzjānī gives reason to tie Hülegü's campaign to Möngke's attempts to consolidate imperial financial control over the subject territories. That Shams al-Dīn was involved in instigating the new campaign of Hülegü is fairly certain, though his dramatic appeal, like that of Baiju, can best be read as a literary elaboration by Rashīd al-Dīn wishing to tie his account into extant historical traditions. Since the people of Qazvīn had been embroiled in long property disputes with the Ismā'īlīs, Shams al-Dīn's presence among the plaintiffs of 1252 further suggests a fiscal motivation for Hülegü's campaign.⁴⁰ This is confirmed in a passage from the *Akḥbār-i muḡhūlān*:

“When he [Möngke] had brought order (*rāst kard*) to the affairs of the regions of Turkeṣtān and China and Māvr al-Nahr and Tibet and Tangut and many other regions, he ordered his brother Hülegü to bring order (*rāst kunad*) to the other side of the Jayḡhūn, namely to the regions of ‘Arab and ‘Ajam.”⁴¹

Just as Rashīd al-Dīn and Juvaynī both relate Arghun's management of the Middle East to that of the Branch Secretariats of China and Turkeṣtān, this passage lists other regions under direct imperial command before describing the situation in the Middle East. However, here Hülegü

⁴⁰ On the property disputes between Qazvīn and the Ismā'īlīs of Rūdbār, see Farhad Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs: their history and doctrines* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 372-406.

⁴¹ *Akḥbār-i muḡhūlān*, 21.

takes Arghun's place as the imperial representative in this last region, signaling that the increased status of the Middle East within the Mongol Imperial structure was to include a transfer in governing authority from the appointed non-royal Arghun to the Toluid brother of the Great Khan. Indeed, when Hülegü crossed the Oxus River at the beginning of 1256, he was met by the Oyirat governor Arghun, who performed *tikishmishi* just as Bahā' al-Dīn Juvaynī had done for him a decade earlier. Arghun then proceeded on to Qaraqorum, leaving the Middle East in Hülegü's hands.⁴²

Hülegü's campaign to the West began, by all appearances, with the active support of Batu, who contributed troops to the venture, probably with the intention of subduing the restive elements of a region already largely under his own control.⁴³ Around the time that the Mongol army crossed the Oxus, however, Batu *aqā* died, setting in motion a rapid realignment of political authority in the western reaches of the empire that brought the Middle East firmly under Toluid control. On the death of his cousin, Möngke immediately promoted Batu's son Sartaq, then in Qaraqorum, to succeed his father. When Sartaq died on his way to the Jochid *ulus*, Möngke dispatched a delegation to invest Sartaq's son, Ulaghchi, under the regency of Batu's wife Boraqchin.⁴⁴ Coupled with similar dynastic unrest among the remnant Ögedeid and Chaghataid princes of Central Asia, this left no mature Mongol ruler anywhere besides Möngke

⁴² When Arghun eventually returned to the Middle East, he had been invested with the honorific title of *aqā*, lacking executive authority but continuing to exercise important judicial and military functions under Hülegü and his son and successor Abaqa (1265-82) until his death in 1275. See Aubin 1995, 20.

⁴³ For an account of Hülegü's campaign, see Boyle 1968, 340-51; John Masson Smith, Jr., "Hülegü moves west: high living and heartbreak on the road to Baghdad," in *Beyond the legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 111-34. Lane 2003, 15-27 argues that Hülegü's legitimacy in the Middle East was accepted by the Jochids, based on the fact that no counter-claim survives, save for a reflection in the writings of the Mamluk historian 'Umari. This is an argument *ex silentio*, since no documents or histories produced under the Jochid Golden Horde have survived. For a discussion of the evidence offered by Vaṣṣāf, which Lane does not acknowledge, see Chapter Five.

⁴⁴ Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, 1.223; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 1.268.

and his brothers Qubilai and Hülegü.⁴⁵ However, when Ulaghchi died, probably in the winter of 1257-58, Batu's brother Berke assumed command of the Jochid *ulus*, a result that Mönke's persistent interventions were probably specifically intended to prevent.⁴⁶

Berke's accession posed a two-fold threat to the newly constituted Toluid imperial system. First, as Batu's brother, he was a mature and experienced leader, unlike Sartaq and Ulaghchi. Secondly, Berke had converted to Islam in his youth; his accession introduced a new realm of contestation, namely that of religion, into the deteriorating relations between the Jochid family and the central Mongol court.⁴⁷ Berke's accession corresponded closely to Hülegü's triumph over the Ismā'īlīs and the beginning of his campaign against the 'Abbāsīd Caliph in Baghdad. The Muslim Berke had managed to prevent this latter attack on the capital of the Sunni world as long as his brother was alive by appealing to Batu Aqa's filial seniority over Mönge.⁴⁸ When Hülegü accepted the surrender of the last 'Abbāsīd Caliph al-Musta'şim in early 1258, it added a religious dimension to the political coup that the Toluid brothers Mönge and Hülegü had executed by annexing the Middle East for themselves, cementing the break between the Toluid and Jochid houses.

To support the Toluid assertion of direct command of the Middle East, Hülegü had made a series of administrative appointments before the fall of Baghdad that distanced the region from the Jochid *ulus*. We know of only one administrator who accompanied Hülegü on

⁴⁵ Allsen 1987, 62 mentions this concentration in the hands of the Toluid brothers, but he oversimplifies the situation in Central Asia. For Ögedeid and Chaghataid dynastic politics before the rise of Qaidu in the mid 1260s, see Michal Biran, *Qaidu and the rise of the independent Mongol state in Central Asia* (Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1997), 19-23.

⁴⁶ On dating the death of Ulaghchi, see Allsen 1987, 62.

⁴⁷ On Berke's conversion, see Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and native religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and conversion to Islam in historical and epic tradition* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 83-85. On Mönge's fear that Berke would be alarmed by Hülegü's campaign in Muslim territory, see Jackson 1978, 223-24.

⁴⁸ Jackson 1978, 224.

his entrance into the Middle East, his personal advisor Sayf al-Dīn *bitikchi*.⁴⁹ Once in the region, Hülegü gained the assistance of three administrators from the entourage of Arghun. These were Arghun's son Gerai Malik, a Central Asian Muslim named Aḥmad *bitikchi*, and 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā-Malik Juvaynī.⁵⁰ Their diversity – one Mongol, one Central Asian, and one Iranian – speaks to the divided allegiances of the administrative apparatus in the Middle East at the time. In the following years, Hülegü marginalized the Jochid-dependent Central Asian component of this administration, concentrating leading administrative positions in the hands of prominent Iranian scholars and bureaucrats. These individuals spearheaded the first efforts at an intellectual response to the Mongol conquest that painted it not as the end of the world, but as part of the ongoing history of the Islamic and Iranian world.

⁴⁹ Aubin 1995, 19.

⁵⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 980.

Chapter Two. Early Ilkhanid cultural production

In establishing his new dynastic state, the first Ilkhan, Hülegü, son of Tolui and brother of the Mongol Great Khan Möngke, employed a new corps of administrators, made up of individuals indigenous to the central Iranian world rather than the Central Asian lands of the former Khwārazmian state. The three most prominent of these were all native to the province of Khurāsān, where Mongol administration had the longest ties to the Mongol central court. In addition to having no connection to the Jochid *ulus*, Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and the brothers ‘Alā’ al-Dīn and Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī represented a culture of scholar-bureaucrats with deep roots in the pre-conquest Muslim Middle East.¹ Between 1258 and 1284, these three men facilitated a series of cultural projects that invested the Ilkhanid government with markers of cultural legitimacy drawn from Islamic and pre-Islamic Iranian traditions.

This chapter traces the impact of this first generation of fully Iranian scholars to work within the Ilkhanid administrative apparatus. In the works that Ṭūsī, the Juvaynīs, and other Persian scholars produced during this period reveal the sometimes tense relationship between rulers and subject, as the Ilkhans were often unaware of the level of cultural production occurring among the ranks of their administration. They also demonstrate the local allegiances of individual scholars. These reveal themselves in the particular characteristics of the works produced and they quickly became central elements of Ilkhanid ideological and iconographical representations. In this way, they influenced the later writings and works of Rashīd al-Dīn and his contemporaries in genres as diverse as historiography, philosophy, and architecture. This period also laid the groundwork of the Ilkhanid administrative system,

¹ For an overview of the culture of scholar-bureaucrats and the considerations it raises for the study of Persian historiography, see Charles Melville, “The historian at work,” in *Persian historiography*, ed. Charles Melville (I.B. Tauris, 2012), 57-64.

marked by certain particular features that resulted from the sometimes tense relations between the new foreign rulers and indigenous bureaucratic elites.

Because of their origins in Khurāsān, Ṭūsī and the Juvaynī brothers brought to their work a vision of kingship, statecraft, and history based in the literary traditions of the eastern Iranian world, exemplified by the *Shāhnāma* of Abū'l-Qāsim Firdausī (d. 1019 or 1025). As the leaders of the new Ilkhanid administration, Ṭūsī and the Juvaynī brothers undertook or patronized a number of cultural projects that reveal their dual allegiance to Mongol secular rulers and a Perso-Islamic intellectual and literary tradition. These cultural projects built an ideology of rule based in Islamic institutions of patronage and endowment, Iranian historical traditions inflected by the local traditions of Khurāsān (and to a lesser degree, Fars), and the science of astronomy, which was of native interest among the Mongols as well as among their Middle Eastern and Chinese subjects. Along with forming a new administrative corps under Hülegü and his son Abaqa (r. 1265-82), Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and the Juvaynī brothers put a distinctly Iranian stamp on the new Ilkhanid state.

Juvaynī's Toluid history

The first great cultural project produced under the Ilkhans had its roots in Arghun's embassy to Qaraqorum that also helped inspire Möngke and Hülegü to neutralize the Jochid claim to the Middle East through conquest and appointment. During the embassy of 1252-53, 'Alā' al-Dīn Juvaynī, personal secretary to Arghun, was encouraged to write a history of the family of Genghis Khan.² The resulting work, the *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā* (*History of the world conqueror*), tells of the rise of Genghis Khan and of his descendants through Möngke and Hülegü down to the

² 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā-Malik Juvaynī, *The Ta'rikh-i-Jahān-Gushā of 'Alā'u 'd-Dīn 'Aṭā-Malik-i-Juwaynī*, ed. Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazvīnī (London: Gibb Memorial Trust, 1912-1958), i.2-3; *idem*, *The history of the world-conqueror*, tr. John Andrew Boyle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), 4-5.

fall of the Ismāʿīlī strongholds in 1256.³ Beyond being one of the earliest Persian accounts of early Mongol imperial history, Juvaynī's writing integrates the Mongol conquests of the Middle East into a vision of history that casts human experience as an expression of God's plan for the continued revelation of Islam. Throughout the work, Juvaynī avoids the apocalyptic impression given by early witnesses such as Ibn al-Athīr and Najm al-Dīn Rāzī. Instead, he represents Genghis Khan and his Mongols as agents of God, their role culminating with the eradication of the heretical Ismāʿīlīs.⁴ As part of this, Juvaynī offers a unique description of traditional Mongol law (*yasa*) that casts it largely in accord with Islamic *sharīʿa*.⁵ His writing works to show the potential of the Mongols as normal, and perhaps ultimately desirable elements of Perso-Islamic society.

Besides framing the Mongol past within an Islamic vision of history, Juvaynī makes extensive use of Iranian historical traditions to illuminate his narrative. Most prominently, he frequently cites the *Shāhnāma*, the heroic epic poem presented by Abū'l-Qāsim Firdausī to Maḥmūd of Ghazna (998-1030). The *Shāhnāma* tells of the history of the world according to various Iranian traditions, patched together into a contiguous narrative spanning from the legendary first man Gayumars up through the time of the Arab conquest.⁶ As Assadullah

³ On 'Alā' al-Dīn Juvaynī and his work, see W. Barthold and J.A. Boyle, "DJuvaynī, 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā-Malik b. Muhammad," *El'*; George Lane, "Jovayni, 'Alā' al-Dīn," *Elr*; Charles Melville, "Jahāngošā-ye Jovayni," *Elr*; Nāhīd Muḥammadiyūn Shabistārī, *Ṭalayhdārān-i 'aṣr-i Mughūl: khānadān-i Juvaynī* (Tehran: Tālār-i Kitāb, 2007), 165-205.

⁴ George Lane, *Early Mongol rule in thirteenth-century Iran: a Persian renaissance* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 26-27.

⁵ Juvaynī, ed. Qazvini, i.16-26; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 23-34. For a discussion of the *yasa* and Juvaynī's effort to equate it to *sharīʿa*, see Denise Aigle, "Le grand jasaq de Gengis-khan, l'empire, la culture mongole et la *sharīʿa*," *JESHO* 47.1 (2004): 30-79, esp. 47-48 on Juvaynī's unique portrayal.

⁶ The literature on the *Shāhnāma* is too vast to review here. For a recent discussion of its historical and literary context, see Charles Melville, "The *Shahnameh* in historical context," and Firuza Abdullaeva, "The *Shahnameh* in Persian literary history," both in *Epic of the Persian kings: the art of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh*, ed. Barbara Brend and Charles Melville (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 3-15 and 16-22, respectively.

Melikian-Chirvani has demonstrated, Firdausī's poetic treatment of this material gives it a reflexive patterning, in which the history of the Sasanian period (224-651 CE) echoes that of the semi-legendary Kayanians.⁷ In the *Shāhnāma*, two great cycles of Persian history, culminating with the conquests of Alexander the Great and then Muḥammad, set the stage for new periods of Iranian greatness, expressing Firdausī's confidence in the contemporary resurgence of Iranian dynasties and the Iranian language alongside Arabic and the Caliphate.

Firdausī's poetic treatment of the pre-Islamic past did not receive early acceptance as a vision of history, even at the court of Maḥmūd, whose court poet Farrukhī called the work "a lie from end to end."⁸ Indeed, only scant references survive of the poem or its author from the first two centuries of the work's existence.⁹ While this historical patterning was not picked up, the general practice of invoking the pre-Islamic Iranian rulers as exemplars of particularly virtuous became popular among panegyric poets at the Eastern Iranian courts of the Ghaznavids and Qara Khanids.¹⁰ These dynasties, centered in Afghanistan and Central Asia, respectively, straddled the land of the Sāmānids, who held their court at Bukhara and for whose governor at Ṭūs Firdausī had begun his epic work. As the Ghaznavids and Qara Khanid courts divided the Sāmānid state in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, they each adopted the poetic images of individual pre-Islamic kings into their own programs of

⁷ Assadullah Melikian-Chirvani, "Conscience du passé et résistance culturelle dans l'Iran mongol," in *L'Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institute français de recherche en Iran, 1997), 135-37.

⁸ G.E. Tetley, *The Ghaznavid and Seljuq Turks: poetry as a source for Iranian history* (London: Routledge, 2009), 5. Ghazzal Dabiri, "The Shahnama: between the Samanids and the Ghaznavids," *Iranian Studies* 43.1 (2010): 13-28 agrees with this assessment with respect to Mahmud and his court, but gives a fuller retrospective analysis of the role of the *Shāhnāma* within changing historiographical sentiments.

⁹ These have been collected by Muḥammad Amīn Riyāhī, *Sar chashmah-hā-yi Firdausī-shināsī* (Tehran: Mu'assasa-i Muṭāla'āt va Taḥqīqāt-i Farhangī, 1993), 115-477.

¹⁰ Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani, "Le livre des rois, miroir du destin," *Studia Iranica* 17 (1988): 7-46, esp. 9-27.

legitimization and ideology, even though direct citation to the *Shāhnāma* were very limited and no recourse was made to its larger historical patterning.

Even more limited was the literary use of the *Shāhnāma* in historical writing in Western Iran before the Mongol period. In the regions of western Iran and Iraq, the narrative of pre-Islamic Iranian history was transmitted through various translations of the late-Sasanian *Khwadaynamag* (*Book of lords*) into Arabic prose historiography.¹¹ The only eleventh century poet from Western Iran who attempted to popularize Firdausī's poetry was Qaṭrān-i Tabrīzī (d. after 1088?), who was also the first poet from Azerbaijan to write in Khurāsānian Persian.¹² Qaṭrān's unique efforts to engage the *Shāhnāma* in his panegyrics is perhaps best understood as part of a personal philological effort to master the literary idiom of the Eastern Iranian world, and not as evidence for a systematic attempt to engage Firdausī's historical model.

The practice of citing verses from the *Shāhnāma* took the step from panegyric poetry to prose historiography only in the half century before the Mongol conquests. The first work of note to make such use of Firdausī's text is the *Rāḥat al-ṣudūr va āyat al-surūr* (*Comfort for breasts and marvel of happiness*) written by Muḥammad Ibn 'Alī Rāvandī for the Saljuq Sultan of Rūm, Toghril b. Arslan (r. 1176-94).¹³ Rāvandī's limited use of the *Shāhnāma* as a moralizing text suggests that he may have only had access to it through a collection of extracts prepared for

¹¹ For an overview of the early translators of the *Khwadaynamag*, see Moshen Zakeri, "Al-Ṭabarī on Sasanian history: a study in sources," in *Al-Ṭabarī: a medieval Muslim historian and his work*, ed. Hugh Kennedy (Princeton: Darwin Press, 2008), 30-35.

¹² The well-travelled stylist Nāṣir-i Khusrau (d. ca. 1075) famously had to help Qaṭrān read the eastern poets Manjīk and Daqīqī: Nāṣir-i Khusrau Qubādiyāni Marvazī, *Safarnāma*, ed. Muḥammad Dabīr-Siyāqī (Tehran: Zavvār, 1990), 9. Later, Qaṭrān purportedly composed a dictionary of the Persian language to help others to learn and understand the dialect of Khurāsān: I. Dehghan, "Qaṭrān, *Et*."

¹³ Muḥammad Ibn 'Alī Rāvandī, *Rāḥat al-ṣudūr va āyat al-surūr*, ed. Muḥammad Iqbāl (Leiden: Brill, 1921); discussed by Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian historiography to the end of the twelfth century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 237-56, building on her earlier studies of the text.

that purpose by one ‘Alī b. Aḥmad for Sulṭān Malikshāh (r. 1073-92).¹⁴ By contrast, Rāvandī makes extensive use of the more contemporary writer Niẓāmī Ganjavī (d. after 1200) to illustrate the lives and deeds of his patrons.¹⁵ ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī, raised in the same eastern intellectual milieu as Rāvandī, builds on the latter’s use of the *Shāhnāma* by juxtaposing events from the recent past with episodes from the *Shāhnāma* in order to finally draw his own patrons into Firdausī’s cyclical pattern of Persian history.¹⁶ In Juvaynī’s treatment, not only do the Mongols no longer signal the end of the Islamic world, they in fact become one Iranian *daula* (dynasty, cycle) among and alongside others.

Juvaynī ends his history with the fall of the Ismā’īlī strongholds of Alamūt and Maymūndiz. George Lane speculates on why Juvaynī did not extend his history to cover the fall of ‘Abbāsīd Baghdad, arguing that Juvaynī had ample reasons not to “finish” the work, which even in its current form does not seem to have received final editing by the author.¹⁷ One reason clearly is that the end of the caliphate was still so recent that it was difficult for Juvaynī to spin it as a positive event for Muslims; had he included it, the fall of Baghdad could pose a serious challenge to Juvaynī’s idea of the Mongols as agents of God’s plan for Islam. In view of Juvaynī’s adoption of Firdausī’s cyclical model of Iranian history, the Mongol sack of Baghdad must have also seemed more like the end of a historical cycle, like Alexander’s sacking of Persepolis, than the beginning of a new age. By ending where he does, Juvaynī marks his strongest contrast from the initial historiographical reaction to the Mongols, casting them as beginning a new historical moment rather than as harbingers of the end of the world.

¹⁴ Tetley 2009, 34.

¹⁵ Meisami 1999, 248-49.

¹⁶ Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani, “Le livre des rois, miroir du destin. II – Takht-e Soleyman et la symbolique du Shāh-nāme,” *Studia Iranica* 20 (1991): 54-74; *idem* 1997, 137-49.

¹⁷ Lane 2003, 28.

Juvaynī did not finish writing his history until after 1260, by which time Hülegü had appointed him governor of Baghdad. Despite the fact that Juvaynī worked under the first Ilkhan, the *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā* belongs more to the Toluid political moment that brought Hülegü to the Middle East and led Möngke to intervene in Jochid dynastic politics. Open hostilities finally erupted between Hülegü and Berke in 1262 over the command of the rich pasture lands of the Caucasus where Chormaghun had first established a durable Mongol presence in the region. By then, thanks in part to the work of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī both as an administrator and a historian, Hülegü had set in motion a program of patronage that integrated himself and his family into the administrative practices and historical thinking of the Persian Islamic world.

The first generation of Ilkhanid intellectuals (1262-1284)

Another reason for ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī to have not written about the sack of Baghdad was his appointment, in 1259, as governor of the former ‘Abbāsīd capital. Juvaynī was not popular as governor; in the year after being appointed, he was denounced and sentenced to death, a sentence that was later revoked. His fortunes improved somewhat after 1262, with the outbreak of open hostilities between Hülegü and Berke. In that year, a number of Mongol and Persian officials were denounced and tried; some were flogged and others executed, including Hülegü’s personal secretary, Sayf al-Dīn.¹⁸ In his place, Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī, the younger brother of the historian and governor of Baghdad, was appointed *ṣāhib-dīwān*.¹⁹ Even having his brother in such a high position did not protect ‘Alā’ al-Dīn from attacks; he was again

¹⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī (Tehran: Alburz, 1994), 1045. The reasons for these purges in the top levels of the government are unclear. Rashīd al-Dīn only mentions that one of the executed men, the astrologer Ḥisām al-Dīn was punished for having called inauspicious the invasion of Baghdad four years earlier.

¹⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1049.

arrested in 1264 and only reinstated as administrator of Baghdad under the nominal governorship of the Mongol Sughunchaq Aqa, who was simultaneously given oversight over the perennially mismanaged province of Fars.

For the next twenty years, corresponding roughly to the reign of Abaqa (1265-82), the Juvaynī brothers and Sughunchaq directed the administration of the Ilkhanid state from Tabrīz and Baghdad.²⁰ These years saw constant pressure on the borders of the Ilkhanid state, as Abaqa faced opposition in Central Asia first by the Chaghataid Baraq and later by rebellious Mongol factions, as well as an escalating military and diplomatic conflict with the Mamluk sultans of Egypt over the contested sovereignty of Syria.²¹ Within these contested border regions, and perhaps because of them, Abaqa's reign was a period of relative stability and prosperity within the Ilkhanate, thanks in large part to an unprecedented level of cooperation between the head Persian and Mongol administrators, Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī and Sughunchaq Aqa.²² Tabriz became Abaqa's capital while Baghdad remained an important political, economic, and intellectual center and became one of two main winter camps for the still transhumant court (See Fig. 2: Seasonal camps of the Ilkhans). From Tabriz and Baghdad, and from Hülegü's capital of Maragha, the Juvaynī brothers and their fellow Khurāsānī, Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, created a pattern of cultural production that expanded on the historical vision of the

²⁰ On the reign of Abaqa, see J.A. Boyle, "Dynastic and political history of the Il-khāns," in *The Cambridge history of Iran. Volume 5: The Saljuq and Mongol periods*, ed. J.A. Boyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 355-64.

²¹ On the unrest in Central Asia, see Michal Biran, *Qaidu and the rise of the independent Mongol state in Central Asia* (Surrey: Curzon, 1997), 23-30. On the military conflict with the Mamluks, see Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: the Mamluk-Ilkhānid war, 1260-81* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); for its diplomatic manifestation during the reign of Abaqa, see Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and ideology in the Islamic and Mongol worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 32-38.

²² On Sughunchaq and his cooperation with the Juvaynīs, see Jean Aubin, *Émirs mongols et vizirs persans dans les remous de l'acculturation* (Paris: Association pour l'avancement des études iraniennes, 1995), 22-24.

Tārīkh-i jahāngushā to further invest the Ilkhans as legitimate sovereigns of the Perso-Islamic world.

The prominence of these Khurāsānī administrators did not mean that their lives were untroubled. As Jean Aubin has almost comically understated, “it was not always easy to be Abaqa’s vizier.”²³ In the late 1270s the Juvaynī brothers again came under attack, this time by one of Shams al-Dīn’s own administrative appointees, Majd al-Mulk Yazdī.²⁴ Shams al-Dīn was arrested, but managed to secure his release by soliciting letters of support from his followers; ‘Alā’ al-Dīn was chained and beaten after promising under duress to pay an exorbitant fine for charges of embezzlement. Two aspects of this court drama are worthy of note, as they affected the course of the later Ilkhanid administration. First, as a result of his accusation, Majd al-Mulk was appointed co-vizier with Shams al-Dīn. This situation, namely the division of vizierial duties as a check against the abuse of power by a single individual, had a precedent as early as 1246 in Arghun Aqa’s joint appointment of Bahā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī and Amīr Buqa as his deputies and, in 1264, in Sughunchaq’s appointment alongside ‘Alā’ al-Dīn as governor of Baghdad. The division of prime administrative duties would become a hallmark of the Ilkhanid administration. The practice of appointing two viziers was meant to prevent the undue concentration of state power (and wealth) in the hands of a single individual but too frequently it crippled the apparatus of state through the factional conflict that it inevitably created.²⁵ A second aspect of Ilkhanid court politics that emerges in Majd al-Mulk’s charge against the *ṣāhib-dīwān* was the formation of alliances between individual Persian administrators and Mongols *amīrs*. Thus, while Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī retained the support of

²³ Aubin 1995, 24.

²⁴ For Majd al-Dīn’s machinations against the brothers, see Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1110-15; Muḥammadiyūn Shabistarī 2007, 193-200.

²⁵ Ann K.S. Lambton, *Continuity and change in Medieval Persia: aspects of administrative, economic and social history, 11th-14th century* (Albany: State University of New York, 1988), 55-57.

the powerful Sughunchaq, Majd al-Mulk advanced his accusation by bringing it to Amīr Yesü Buqa Güregen. Such alliances, paired with the institution of the dual vizierate, had in later years the effect of dividing the Ilkhanid court against itself along fault lines that carried across the divide between the Persian civil and the Mongol military apparatuses.²⁶

‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī was still in custody and being transported to Abaqa’s court for trial when word came of the latter’s death. His son and chosen heir, Arghun (not to be confused with Arghun Aqa, who had died in 1275), had been made governor of Khurāsān during his father’s reign and had long been an outspoken critic of the Juvaynīs’ influence. His accession to the throne would certainly spell an end to the Juvaynīs’ prominence. The brothers won a respite, however, in the person of Aḥmad Tegüder (r. 1282-84), a younger son of Hülegü whom Qubilai Khan had designated as the successor of Abaqa and who had already converted to Islam.²⁷ When Aḥmad won the acclamation of the majority of princes and *amīrs*, Arghun deferred to his election as Ilkhan. Aḥmad immediately released ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī, whom he had patronized since his arrival in the Middle East.

The election of a Muslim Ilkhan saw a brief period of Islamization in the court, as Mongol terminology for the institutions of government was replaced by Persian and Arabic ones and churches and temples were transformed into mosques.²⁸ This did not prevent Majd al-Mulk from renewing his attack on the Juvaynīs. He accused Shams al-Dīn of having poisoned the late Ilkhan Abaqa, for which he was eventually found guilty of slander and executed in August 1282. In his wake, Arghun, the late Abaqa Khan’s son and governor of Khurāsān, pursued the charges against the Juvaynī brothers himself. While spending the

²⁶ For a discussion of these factions at the time of Rashīd al-Dīn, see Birgitt Hoffmann, *Waqf im mongolischen Iran: Rašīduddīns Sorge um Nachruhm und Seelenheil* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2000), 83.

²⁷ On Aḥmad Tegüder’s reign, see Boyle 1968, 364-68.

²⁸ Aubin 1995, 31.

winter of 1282-83 in Baghdad, Arghun demanded full repayment by ‘Alā’ al-Dīn for charges previously brought against him. The renewed attack reputedly drove ‘Alā’ al-Dīn to death of an apoplectic fit. By the time of Arghun’s election and reaction against the Islamizing tendencies at court, however, the Juvaynīs and Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī had laid the foundations, literally and intellectually, for a cultural program of Ilkhanid ideology rooted in Iranian and Islamic precedents. Four of these deserve particular attention.

Naṣīr al-Dīn and Ilkhanid sciences

When the Ismā‘īlī Imām Rukn al-Dīn surrendered from his stronghold of Maymūndiz in the Daylamān region south of the Caspian Sea, his entourage included a number of intellectuals who had been living and working under his patronage.²⁹ Among these, Rashīd al-Dīn identifies Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and “the children of Ra‘īs al-Daula and Muvaffaq al-Daula,” who received honors from Hülegü along with horses with which to transfer their households from the stronghold to the court.³⁰

Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī was one of the most prominent philosophers of the Medieval Islamic world and had been pursuing his studies under Ismā‘īlī patronage at the time of the third Mongol invasion.³¹ Once taken into Hülegü’s service, he assisted the new ruler in establishing

²⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn follows Juvaynī in locating Rukn al-Dīn Khwārshāh in Maymūndiz at the time of his surrender: Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 990; cf. Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, iii.264; *idem*, tr. Boyle 715. However, *Akhbār-i mughūlān (650-683) dar anbāna-i mullā-i Quṭb*, ed. Iraj Afshār (Qum: Mar’ashī, 2010), 28 names Lamasar as the site of Rukn al-Dīn’s surrender. Juvaynī was in Hülegü’s entourage during the event, but the *Akhbār* may be based on the account of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, who was living under Rukn al-Dīn’s protection, as discussed below. Either might therefore be considered an eye-witness account. In any case, the two fortresses are quite close to one another. Some modern scholars have identified simply “Alamūt” as the location of Rukn al-Dīn’s surrender, but this should be read simply as the region where both Maymūndiz and Lamasar are located, and not the fortress of that name.

³⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 985.

³¹ For autobiographical information on Naṣīr al-Dīn, see Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, *Contemplation and action: the spiritual autobiography of a Muslim scholar*, tr. S.J. Badakhchani (London: I.B. Taurus, 1998). For general information, see F.J. Rageb, *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī’s Memoir on astronomy (al-tadhkira fī ‘ilm al-hay’a)* (New

a personal appanage in ‘Iraq and Azerbaijan.³² In addition to his political activity, Naṣīr al-Dīn created the first great monument of Mongol patronage in the region, an astronomical observatory and research institute at Hūlegü’s new capital of Maragha, in Azerbaijan.³³ Naṣīr al-Dīn also served as Hūlegü’s vizier and administrator of Islamic endowments, or *waqfs*, for the entire realm; from the proceeds of these he was allowed to finance operations at the new observatory.³⁴ The Maragha observatory was the first such institution to be funded by *waqf* revenue, but it set a precedent for other Ilkhanid institutions; by the end of the century, Ghāzān Khan had endowed a second observatory at Tabriz to be funded by charitable endowments.³⁵

York: Springer-Verlag, 1993), 3-23; Hamid Dabashi, “The philosopher/vizier: Khwāja Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī and the Isma‘īlis,” in *Medieval Isma‘ili history and thought*, ed. Farhad Daftary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 231-45. For more on the impact of his philosophy, see Chapter Six.

³² Judith Kolbas sees evidence that the eastern provinces of the Iranian world, her “third imperial province,” were originally intended to remain an imperial province administered on behalf of Möngke: Judith Kolbas, *The Mongols in Iran: Chingiz Khan to Uljaytu* (London: Routledge, 2006), 155-56.

³³ Rashīd al-Dīn reports that Hūlegü commissioned Naṣīr al-Dīn to build at Maragha in order to avoid sending him to Qaraqorum, where Möngke was also eager to commission a new observatory: Rashīd al-Dīn ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1024-25. Vaṣṣāf credits Ṭūsī with the idea: ‘Abd Allāh ibn Faḏl Allāh Vaṣṣāf al-Haḏrat, *Kitāb-i mustaṭāb-i Vaṣṣāf al-Haḏrat dar bandar-i Mughūl* (Bombay lithograph edition, 1853), 51-52. Ṭūsī himself seems to take a middle position, saying the Hūlegü ordered the observation of stars, but that he and his staff chose the location: J.A. Boyle, “The longer introduction to the ‘Zij-i ilkhani’ of Nasir-ad-din Tusi,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 8.2 (1963): 245-46, reproducing Arberry’s translation. In any case, the decision to build at Maragha, rather than at Qaraqorum or at Ṭūs, Naṣīr al-Dīn’s home town and the former Mongol regional capital, demonstrates a conscious decision to mark Azerbaijan as the new center of imperial activity and patronage. For more on the process of commissioning the observatory at Maragha, see Bar Hebraeus, *The chronography of Gregory Abū’l Faraj*, tr. E.A. Wallis Budge (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), 451. For general information on the observatory, see Aydin Sayılı, *The observatory in Islam and its place in the general history of the observatory* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1960), 189-93.

³⁴ On the financing of the observatory, see Sayılı 1960, 207-11. On the instruments of the observatory, some of which reflect the royal nature of its funding, see Moya Carey, “The gold and silver lining: Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Mu’ayyad al-‘Urḏī’s inlaid celestial globe (c. AD 1288) from the Ilkhanid observatory at Marāgha,” *Iran* 47 (2009): 97-108; W. Hartner, “The astronomical instruments of Chamalu-ting, their identification, and their relations to the instruments of the observatory of Marāgha,” *Isis* 41 (1950): 184-94.

³⁵ The observatory at Maragha was still in operation through the reign of Öljeitu, though a report from an astronomer at the time of Abu Sa‘id speaks of it in the past tense and Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī reports the site in ruins by 1339: Sayılı, 211-12.

At the new observatory, Naṣīr al-Dīn oversaw the creation of a new set of astronomical tables, known as the *Zīj-i Ilkhānī* (*Astronomical tables of the Ilkhans*).³⁶ As part of the effort to refine observational astronomy, Ṭūsī developed a mathematical system known as the “Ṭūsī couple” for modeling the observed behavior of planets. These astronomical and planetary observations were applied to the Mongol Ilkhan’s desire to determine astrologically auspicious dates and times for major events, such as coronations.³⁷ For example, Ṭūsī personally established the date for Abaqa’s coronation, which took place on 19 June 1265.³⁸

To assist in his astronomical work, Ṭūsī recruited astronomers from across the Mongol Empire; the prominence of this new research center and its founder attracted other scholars across various disciplines.³⁹ One of the scholars was Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (1236-1311), a member of the prominent Kāzarūnī family of physicians who had taken his father’s position at the

³⁶ A manuscript facsimile of the *Zīj* has recently been published, but has not been consulted for this dissertation: Naṣīr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ṭūsī, *Zīj-i Ilkhānī (nuskahā’ bargardān) az rū-yi nuskahā-i khaṭṭ-i kuhan-i Kitābkhāna-i Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Islāmī, shumārah-i 181* (Qum: Majma‘-i Zakhā’ir-i Islāmī, 2012). Boyle 1963 gives the text and translation of the introduction of the *Zīj*.

³⁷ George Saliba has advanced the argument that Ṭūsī and his contemporaries at Maragha made use of their patrons’ naïve desire for coronation horoscopes in order to pursue their own study of Greek astronomy: George Saliba, “Horoscopes and planetary theory: Ilkhanid patronage of astronomers,” in *Beyond the legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill 2006), 357-68. While Saliba’s conclusion is perhaps overly cynical, there is no reason to doubt that Ṭūsī and his staff engaged in scholarship beyond the ken of their Mongol patrons, and perhaps used the Ilkhans’ interest in astrological tables as cover for other scientific work. The fact that these activities, formerly patronized by Ismā‘īlī *īmāms*, could continue under Mongol patronage, and the novel system of funding them with *waqf* endowment revenues, still deserves the Mongol Ilkhans an important position in preserving and advancing Islamic astronomy, even if they were unaware of the extent of their own influence.

³⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1059; Vaṣṣāf 1853, i.53. Vassaf preserves a poem describing the horoscope. While not naming Ṭūsī as the author of this verse horoscope, Vaṣṣāf ascribes it to “the tongue full of fragrant praise and victorious prayer [*do‘ā-ye fātih*],” the second element of which may allude to the astronomer’s *laqab*, Naṣīr al-Dīn, the “victory of the faith.”

³⁹ For a list of the most prominent of these, see John Walbridge, *The science of mystic lights: Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī and the illuminationist tradition in Islamic philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 10-11.

hospital in Shīrāz at the age of fourteen.⁴⁰ Quṭb al-Dīn was disappointed in his efforts to advance his medical training at Maragha, but he soon became Ṭūsī's most prominent student of mathematics. In the astronomical activities of the observatory, Quṭb al-Dīn developed a new algorithm, using the Ṭūsī couple, for modeling the movement of the planet Mercury.⁴¹

Quṭb al-Dīn also studied philosophy under Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, and several of the latter's minor philosophical works survive in Quṭb al-Dīn's hand.⁴² Ṭūsī's writings demonstrate some undeveloped features of Illuminationist philosophy, which had originated in the twelfth century but was only beginning to take formal shape as a school in the late twelfth century.⁴³ Quṭb al-Dīn later wrote treatises on Illuminationism that remain canonical elements of the Iranian philosophical tradition to this day. That Quṭb al-Dīn could be exposed to Illuminationism at Maragha and become one of its primary theorists demonstrates how the scientific institution sponsored by Hülegü became a crucial conduit not only for astronomical sciences, but also for a philosophy that had never previously enjoyed broad popular or political support. This gains particular importance when it is recognized that another prominent doctor and scribe, 'Imad al-Daula of Hamadan, had relocated to Maragha after the Mongol conquest and must have been acquainted with Quṭb al-Dīn. 'Imad al-Daula's son was

⁴⁰ For an overview of Quṭb al-Dīn's life, with particular emphasis on the development of his philosophical thought, see Walbridge 1992, 1-26. For more general survey of his life, see E. Wiedemann, "Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī," *EP*.

⁴¹ E.S. Kennedy, "The exact sciences in Iran under the Saljuq and Mongols," in *The Cambridge history of Iran. Volume 5: The Saljuq and Mongol periods*, ed. J.A. Boyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 669-70, fig. 4, and pl. 16.

⁴² For a discussion of the manuscripts copied by Quṭb al-Dīn, see Reza Pourjavady and Sabine Schmidtke, "The Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 710/1311) codex (ms. Mar'ashī 12868)," *Studia Iranica* 36.2 (2007): 280-84.

⁴³ For more on Illuminationist philosophy, see Chapter Six. On Ṭūsī as an Illuminationist, see Hossein Ziai, "The Illuminationist tradition," in *History of Islamic philosophy. Part I*, ed. Seyyid Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (London: Routledge, 1996), 470-73

Rashīd al-Dīn; the influence of Quṭb al-Dīn's work with Illuminationist philosophy is evident in Rashīd al-Dīn's later writing as demonstrated in Chapter Six.

An Iranian palace at the Mongol summer camp

Naṣīr al-Dīn's influence on the ideology and iconography of Abaqā's reign can be seen also in his contribution to the building of a new palace at the royal Mongol summer camp of Sughurluq, between Lake Urmia and Hamadan. The palace was built on the ruins of Adhargushnasp, the Sasanian fire temple of Azerbaijan.⁴⁴ The temple site is situated around the elevated rim of a large calcinating thermal spring, which provides a dramatic setting for a sacred precinct, as well as an easy point of reference for identifying the site as it appears under different names in various sources over time. In the centuries after the Arab conquest, the site of Adhargushnasp gave rise to a village, named Shīz in Arabic geographical accounts.⁴⁵ Despite this repurposing of the site, two ninth-century geographers preserve the memory of the site's pre-Islamic significance. Ibn al-Faqīh attributes the temple to the Kayanian Kay Khusrau, while Ibn Khurradādhbih mentions the tradition that Sasanian rulers, after their coronation at the Sasanian capital near Baghdad, performed a pilgrimage on foot to Adhargushnasp for a second spiritual investment at what was believed to be the site of Zoroaster's birth.⁴⁶ In the tenth century, Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Mas'ūdī mentions Shīz in a list of fire temples, and the travelling

⁴⁴ On the excavation of the fire temple, see Rudolf Naumann, "Die Ausgrabungen am Feuertempel," in *Takht-i-Suleiman: Vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen 1959*, ed. Hans Henning von der Osten and Rudolf Naumann (Berlin: Verlag Gebr. Mann, 1961), 54-65. For a review of the site's history and the history of excavation there, see Dietrich Huff, "The Ilkhanid palace at Takht-i Suleiman: excavation results," in Komaroff 2006, 94-110.

⁴⁵ For the evidence of Adhargushnasp in Islamic geographical writing, as well as Byzantine sources, see V. Minorsky, "Roman and Byzantine campaigns in Atropatene," *BSOAS* 11.2 (1944): 243-265, reprinted with addenda in *idem, Iranica: twenty articles*, 86-109 (Hertford, UK: Stephen Austin & Sons, 1964), at 97-101; B.M. Tirmidhi, "Zoroastrians and their fire temples in Iran and adjoining countries from the 9th to the 14th centuries as gleaned from the geographical works," *Islamic Culture: The Hyderabad Quarterly Review* 24.4 (1950): 271-84.

⁴⁶ Tirmidhi 1950, 272-74.

poet Mis‘ar b. Muhalhil Abū Dūlaf notes its importance in relation to other fire temples of the Iranian world.⁴⁷ Mis‘ar’s work was quoted and cited by later writers, including Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, but in the centuries after Mis‘ar, the memory of Shīz as the site of a fire temple disappears from geographic literature.⁴⁸

Beyond the dwindling importance of Adhargushnasp in the geographical literature of the immediate pre-Mongol period, evidence for the Western Iranian indifference to the Zoroastrian site is seen in the emergence of a new historical association of the site with Islamic history. This is indicated by the new name applied to the ruins, namely Takht-i Sulaymān, the Throne of Solomon. This name, which Minorsky attributed to the post-Safavid period, is evidenced already in the eleventh century work of Qaṭrān, who elsewhere tried and failed to popularize Eastern Iranian literature in the West but who here betrays the rise of inventive Islamic associations for ancient sites in the west.⁴⁹ Similarly, the Salghurids of Fars had come to associate the Achaemenid ruins at Pasargadae with Solomon, further indicating the Western Iranian preference for Islamic, rather than pre-Islamic Iranian associations for ancient monuments.⁵⁰

The memory of Adhargushnasp’s Zoroastrian function was preserved, however, in the Eastern Iranian historical tradition, including the *Shāhnāma*. Melikian-Chirvani first connected the Ilkhanid palace at the site of Shīz with the tradition of the *Shāhnāma* as utilized by ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī and the related scholarly activity of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and others.⁵¹ Melikian-

⁴⁷ Tirmidhi 1950, 275, 277-80.

⁴⁸ Minorsky 1964, 101.

⁴⁹ Melikian-Chirvani 1991, 39.

⁵⁰ Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani, “Le royaume de Salomon. Les inscriptions persanes de sites Achéménides,” in *Le monde Iranien et l’Islam: sociétés et cultures. I*, ed. Jean Aubin (Geneva: Droz, 1971), 3-20; *idem*, “The light of heaven and earth: from the Chahār-ṭāq to the Miḥrāb,” *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 4 (1990): 119-20.

⁵¹ Melikian-Chirvani 1991, *passim*; cf. *idem* 1997, 149-56.

Chirvani correctly associates the decision to rebuild the site with an effort at reviving the Iranian historical memory as a tool for legitimizing the Mongol Ilkhans. While he is perhaps correct in connecting Firdausi's knowledge of the fire cult at Adhargushnasp with the grand tour of the Sāmānid Amīr Naṣr ibn Ahmad (914-42) through Iran from 942 to 952, he does not recognize that the memory of Adhargushnasp had subsequently fallen out of the western tradition. Instead, he goes to perhaps excessive lengths to construct a historical continuity between the former Zoroastrian use of the site and its revival under the Ilkhans. Melikian-Chirvani suggests that the esoteric Zoroastrian movement in Azerbaijan may have directly influenced the origins of Illuminationist philosophy in the region, and that Qutb al-Dīn's interest in this philosophy in turn led him to propose the rebuilding of the fire temple.⁵²

Some uncertainty remains as to who commissioned the rebuilding of the ruins at Sughurluq. The most contemporary writer to mention the rebuilding of the palace is Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, discussed below, who credits Hülegü with the decision.⁵³ Writing in 1339, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, who was born around the time of Abaqa's accession, credits the latter with rebuilding the palace when he describes the site:

In the region of Anjarud, there is a town that the Mongols call Sughurlugh, on the top of a rise. Kay Khusrau the Kayanian built it and there is a great mansion (*sarā-ye buzurg*) in that town and at the center of the mansion is a spring in the form of a great pool, such that it forms a lake the bottom of which divers could not reach. Two streams, each of which could run a mill, flow out from it constantly, and when they are blocked the level in the pool does not rise and when they are opened they resume their normal flow. They are neither more nor less [in flow] in any season. And this is one of the wonders. The Mongol Abaqa Khan raised this mansion to the state of a monument (*'imārat*) . . .⁵⁴

⁵² Melikian-Chirvani 1991, 47-54. This question will be revisited in Chapter Six.

⁵³ Charles Melville, "From Adam to Abaqa: Qaḍī Baiḍāwī's rearrangement of history," *Studia Iranica* 30 (2001): 58.

⁵⁴ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, *Nuzhat al-Qulūb*, ed. Guy Le Strange (Leiden: Brill, 1915), reprinted (Tehran: Dunyā-ye Kitāb, 1983), 64. For more on the palace building, including an argument that it contained the treasury of Abaqa's favored wife, Bulughan Khatun, see Tomoko Masuya, "Ilkhanid courtly life," in *The legacy of Genghis Khan: courtly art and culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353*, ed. Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002), 84-91.

Melikian-Chirvani reads both of Ḥamd Allāh’s descriptors of the site (*sara* and *‘imārat*) as “palace” and interprets Abaqa’s building project as one of simply restoring the royal Sasanian temple as a royal residence.⁵⁵ Ḥamd Allāh’s distinction between the relatively quotidian *sarā* and the more regal *‘imārat*, however, suggests a qualitative change in the status of the ruined building that Abaqa restored. In the centuries during which Adhargushnasp disappeared from Arabic geographical writing, its physical presence had dwindled, becoming a simple ruin at the center of the town of Shīz. When Abaqa rebuilt this ruin as a palace, he abandoned the contemporary association of the site with the prophet Solomon, instead reviving the association of the fire temple preserved in Eastern Iranian literature.

The walls of the Ilkhanid palace reflected its association with the pre-Islamic fire temple by employing citations of the *Shāhnāma* in the same reflexive manner that ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī had done in his historical writing.⁵⁶ Melikian-Chirvani discusses other surviving examples of decorative art from the Ilkhanid period that draw on motifs and episodes from the Iranian past as transmitted in the *Shāhnāma*.⁵⁷ Such coordination in visual motifs at the new Ilkhanid palace and in decorative arts suggests that the reign of Abaqa and his successor, Ahmed Tegüder (r. 1282-84), witnessed the development of a pictorial and literary program for Ilkhanid legitimacy. While the patronage and production of these objects was no doubt centered on the Ilkhanid palace and capitals in Azerbaijan, the use of the Iranian heroic tradition, rather than Judeo-Islamic prophetic history, for the visual and poetic language of the pre-Islamic past was largely a legacy of the eastern influence introduced by those

⁵⁵ Melikian-Chirvani 1991, 72-73; cf. Huff 2006, 94.

⁵⁶ Melikian-Chirvani 1991, 82-147; *idem*, 1997, 152-56, 163-65. For a discussion of the tiles, with several color images, see Masuya 2002, 91-103.

⁵⁷ Melikian-Chirvani 1997, 167-76.

administrators with family origins in the political and intellectual circles of the Eastern Iranian world.

Even while eastern historical traditions provided the foundation for the new Ilkhanid ideological program, however, Ṭūsī and the Juvaynī brothers further facilitated the production of two dynastic histories that demonstrate ties to western regions, particularly Fars and its capital of Shīrāz. These two works, discussed below, introduced a distinctly western inflection into the largely Eastern ideological program developed by Ṭūsī and the Juvaynīs for the early Ilkhans.

Bayḍāwī's new historical order

Just as Maragha became a destination for Islamic scholars, so too did the new government apparatus in Azerbaijan attract individuals interested in gaining or retaining administrative positions under the Ilkhans. One such figure was a *qāḍī* from Shīrāz, Nāṣir al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1316?).⁵⁸ Bayḍāwī is well known as a Shāfi‘ī cleric and Qur’ānic exegete. His Arabic writings also cover subjects as diverse as theology and grammar, though they tend to summarize and condense the works of other writers, rather than make original contributions to any of these fields. He also wrote a short universal history in Persian, the *Niẓām al-tawārīkh* (*Order of histories*). Charles Melville has suggested that Bayḍāwī intended this work as a tribute to the Mongol Amīr Sughunchaq, whom Abaqa had sent to Fars to investigate tax revenues.⁵⁹ In 1279, Sughunchaq attempted to establish Bayḍāwī as chief *qāḍī* of Fars, a position that Bayḍāwī’s father had once held. The *Niẓām al-tawārīkh* thus stands as the earliest history written to secure political appointment under the Mongols.

⁵⁸ On Bayḍāwī, see J. Robson, “al-Bayḍāwī, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Abu’l-Khayr Nāṣir al-Dīn,” *EI*².

⁵⁹ Melville 2001: 81-83.

Unlike Juvaynī’s work, which justifies the Mongol conquest as a divine corrective similar to the earlier conquests of Alexander and Muḥammad, Bayḍāwī’s Perso-Islamic universal history fits the Mongols directly into the pattern of Iranian rule, making them one turn (*tā’ifa*) in the ongoing rotation of dynasties. Like other examples of Islamic universal history, the *Nizām al-tawārīkh* tells of the pre-Islamic Iranian past, followed by the story of Muḥammad and the Rāshidūn, Ummayyad, and ‘Abbāsīd caliphs, and continuing with histories of the independent rulers of Iran from the Ṣāffarids through the Khwārazmshāhs.⁶⁰ Bayḍāwī adds to these Iranian and Turkic dynasties a section on the Ilkhans.⁶¹ As with Bayḍāwī’s Arabic writings, these brief dynastic summaries are, for the most part, condensed versions of other accounts. Indeed, Bayḍāwī makes explicit his intent to abridge and explain the course of human existence since Gayumars as recorded in “reliable chronicles” in order that it might have widespread benefit.⁶² His contribution is not in the content of the work, but in the symbolic value of its organization, as the Mongols take their place alongside the Sasanians and Sāmānids as legitimate rulers of the Middle East. In this, he validates the cyclical vision put forth by Firdausī and picked up by Juvaynī by which the Mongols represent a new moment of Iranian greatness.

Charles Melville has expressed some surprise at the inclusion of the Ismā’īlīs and Salghurid *atabegs* of Fars among the summary dynasties of the *Nizām al-tawārīkh*. As in the

⁶⁰ There are now three highly divergent editions of Bayḍāwī’s text: ed. Shams Allāh Qadrī (Hyderabad: Tarikh Press, 1930); ed. Bahman Karīmī (Tehran: Kitābkhāna-i ‘ilmī, 1935); ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddis (Tehran: Afshār, 2003). The high degree of variation in manuscripts and editions is explained by Charles Melville, “From Adam to Abaqa: Qāḍī Bayḍāwī’s rearrangement of history (part ii),” *Studia Iranica* 36 (2007): 7-64.

⁶¹ The first version of the work, produced around 1279, only makes brief mention of Hülegü and Abaqa. Bayḍāwī later extended the work through 1295, while other later continuators made further additions. For a discussion of these recensions and a translation of one version of the work through the early reign of Öljeitü, see Melville 2007, *passim*. One significant alteration made to the later versions of the text is discussed in Chapter Five.

⁶² Melville 2001, 75-76.

writing of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī, the Ismā‘īlīs serve as a historical foil for the arrival of the Mongols, a role that Melville has also seen in Bāydawī’s treatment of the Khwārazmshāhs.⁶³ Similarly, Melville notes that the Salghurids, in addition to being of local interest to Baydāwī, consciously cultivated their own credentials as an Iranian and Islamic dynasty in part through their association of Achaemenid ruins with the history of pre-Islamic prophets.⁶⁴ It is worth noting in particular that Baydāwī, as a *qāḍī* of Shīrāz, studs his account of the Salghurids with numerous references to the Islamic institutions and clergy of that city. This introduces a discussion of Islamic practice and patronage into Ilkhanid historiography. If Juvaynī’s equation of the Mongol *yasa* with Muslim *sharī‘a* shows the two cultures to be compatible, Baydāwī actively solicits both conversion and cultural patronage on the part of the Mongol Ilkhans.

At the end of his text, Baydāwī praises Sughunchaq and Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī for their generosity and justice. Baydāwī says of Shams al-Dīn that he was “from among the hereditary lords of Khurāsān, and during the time of former *sultāns*, the binding and loosing of Khurāsān was in their possession.”⁶⁵ Baydāwī’s specification of Khurāsān as the purview of Shams al-Dīn’s family serves as a fitting homage to the eastern Iranian iconography that the brothers helped introduce to the Mongol court in Azerbaijan. In the text of his work, however, he demonstrates his own connection to the region of Fars, and he emphasizes the Salghurids as an example of Iranian and Islamic kingship. Fars and the Salghurids continued to hold an outsized position in the later historiography of the Ilkhanate; Baydāwī’s influence in this regard is evident in the later writings of Rashīd al-Dīn and Vaṣṣāf, who both base their own

⁶³ Melville 2001, 80.

⁶⁴ Melville 2001, 83.

⁶⁵ Baydāwī, ed. Muḥaddis, 133.

histories of the Salghurid dynasty on that of the *Nizām al-tawārīkh*. In later decades, even as the staff of the Ilkhanid court was increasingly drawn from the cities of Azerbaijan and Northwest Iran, the legacy of the Salghurids, like that of the *Shāhnāma*, persisted as a source for the language and imagery of Ilkhanid historiography.

An anonymous history by Quṭb al-Dīn

One of the manuscripts that survive in Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī's hand is his autograph of a *majmū'a* (collection) of various works he assembled in Konya in 1286.⁶⁶ Three of the works included in this collection are treatises by the two other major thirteenth century Illuminationist writers: one by Shams al-Dīn Shahrāzūrī (d. after 1288) and two by Ibn Kammūna (d. 1284). Also included is Samaw'al b. Yaḥyā al-Maghribī's (d. 1175) polemic against Judaism, from which the author had converted to Islam, as well as a correspondence between Samaw'al and an unnamed critic challenging the sincerity of his conversion.⁶⁷ Inserted among these theoretical works are several selections of poetry, as well as a short historical work titled *Akhbār-i mughūlān* (*Accounts of the Mongols*). The *Akhbār* covers thirty-four manuscript pages and offers a brief dynastic history of the Mongols and Ilkhans from 1203 to the accession of Arghun in 1284.

Unlike the other significant texts included in Quṭb al-Dīn's manuscript, the *Akhbār* bears no ascription, though certain aspects of the text suggest that it might be original to Quṭb al-Dīn.⁶⁸ Whether Quṭb al-Dīn was the work's author or simply copied it from an unnamed

⁶⁶ On this manuscript, see Maḥmūd Mar'ashī, *Fihrist-i nuskhah'hā-yi khaṭṭī-i kitābkhāna-i 'Umūmī-i Ḥaḍrat Āyat Allāh al-'Uẓma Najafī Mar'ashī*, Vol. 32 (Qum: Mihr-i Ustuvār, 2004), 637-43; Pourjavady and Schmidtke, *passim*.

⁶⁷ Pourjavady and Schmidtke, 293-98. For more on Samaw'al, see R. Firestone, "Samaw'al b. Yaḥyā al-Maghribī, Abū Naṣr," *Et*. For the text and translation of the polemic against Judaism and subsequent correspondence, see Samaw'al al-Maghribī, *Ifḥām al-Yahūd. Silencing the Jews*, ed. and tr. Moshe Perlmann (New York: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1964).

⁶⁸ This argument has been made by Sanae Takagi, "Akhbār-i mughūlān as a source of early Ilkhanid history," *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 82 (2011): 95-143. As the article is in Japanese, I have only

source, the *Akhbār* demonstrates certain historiographical methods and priorities also evident in the later writings of Rashīd al-Dīn.⁶⁹ The *Akhbār* is organized chronologically, but makes no structural divisions between years or reigns.⁷⁰ The large number of exact dates preserved in the text, as well as the title *Akhbār*, suggests that the author had access to an official court journal or record of events. The same style of reporting court activity is evident in portions of Rashīd al-Dīn's historical writing and the *Tārīkh-i Uljaytū* of 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī, both discussed in subsequent chapters. The *Akhbār* demonstrates a particular interest and close familiarity with the marital and blood relations that connected the Ilkhanid royal family to the highest stratum of Mongol *amīrs*. The narrative is structured around the course of military campaigns and battles (including significant detail about the siege of Ismā'īlī fortresses in 1256), punctuated by anecdotal accounts of events at court, including a dramatic account of Majd al-Mulk Yazdī's attacks against the Juvaynī brothers. Throughout, events are dated using the Muslim *hijrī* system, with the sole exception of the opening passage that collates Muslim, Persian, Greek, Uyghur, and Chinese calendrical systems to locate the beginning of Genghis Khan's rise to prominence in his retreat to Lake Baljuna in the summer of 1203.⁷¹ It is probably not coincidental that this same event, and the same synchronization of calendars is found in the longer form of Nasir al-Dīn Ṭūsī's introduction to the *Zij-i ilkhanī*.⁷² In sum, the work's author had access to court documents and a familiarity with traditional Mongol history, the dynamics of the Ilkhanid court, and the astronomical activity at Maragha. In addition, the

been able to consult the abstract. The following interpretation is my own; any similarity to Takagi's is coincidental.

⁶⁹ Ownership seals on four folios reveal that the manuscript that includes the *Akhbār* was part of the collection of the *Rab'ī-rashīdī* library: Pourjavady and Schmidtke, 284. This suggests that Rashīd al-Dīn knew about Quṭb al-Dīn's codex and may have used it as a direct source for the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*.

⁷⁰ In his edition of the text, Afshār inserts headings according to *hijrī* years mentioned in the text, giving it an inconsistent annular structure that does not match the text.

⁷¹ *Akhbār-i mughūlān*, ed. Afshār, 19.

⁷² Boyle 1963, 250-51.

work demonstrates familiarity with Ilkhanid campaigns in Anatolia, where Quṭb al-Dīn lived for several years, and with Hülegü's campaign against the Ismā'īlīs, at which Naṣīr al-Dīn had been present. Quṭb al-Dīn could easily have written the *Akḥbār*, perhaps with the benefit of his close collaboration with Ṭūsī.

Almost a third of the *Akḥbār-i muḡhūlān* is dedicated to Arghun's revolt against Aḥmad Tegüder in 1284. The account largely justifies the coup in the face of Aḥmad's inept governance, suggesting that someone at Arghun's court, perhaps the Ilkhan himself, was the intended recipient of the work. While we cannot speculate on the motives for an anonymous work's composition, the *Akḥbār*, alongside the *Niḡām al-tawārīkh*, demonstrates that the Mongol Ilkhans, by the early 1280s, had become the subjects of a dynastic historiography based on court documents and attuned to the internal dynastic politics, even if they were not directly responsible for commissioning such works. This recognition provides additional ground for seeing Quṭb al-Dīn as the author of the *Akḥbār*, since he had an immediate reason to pen such a work in favor of Arghun's rule. When Aḥmad Tegüder had taken the throne in 1282, Quṭb al-Dīn had led a delegation to the Mamluk Sultan Qalawun offering to end the war between their two states. With the reactionary rise of Arghun just two years later, Quṭb al-Dīn's personal involvement in the previous Ilkhan's peace overture must have become a political liability. In this light, the *Akḥbār* becomes a piece of apologetic historiography, situating its author as the supporter of the new regime. Understood alongside the observatory at Maragha, the palace at Sughurluq, and Bayḏāwī's universal history, the *Akḥbār* is further evidence that, in the early decades of the Ilkhanate, a succession of cultural projects, undertaken by Persianate bureaucrats in the course of administrative work, gradually endowed the Mongol dynasty with the markers of Perso-Islamic cultural and political legitimacy.

Taken together, the cultural projects discussed in the chapter lay the intellectual groundwork for later Ilkhanid histories, including that of Rashīd al-Dīn. This includes the incorporation of the Mongols into the succession of dynasties to rule the Middle East and the introduction of such concepts as a uniquely Persianate political space. The work of Qutb al-Dīn reveals, too, how the previously subversive philosophical school of Illuminationism came under the umbrella of official patronage, even if the Ilkhans themselves were not aware of it at this early date. These early works, like Illuminationism, existed on the periphery of court life, as they were produced by and for administrative officials with very specific and personal ends in mind. The age of formal patronage of historiography and other genres was yet ahead, and the Ilkhanid had to weather one more period of sustained turmoil before arriving there.

Chapter Three. The time of trouble, 1284-1298

Even if Arghun's successful rebellion against his uncle Aḥmad in 1284 provided the immediate inspiration for Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī to write the *Akḥbār-i muḡhūlān*, this did not initiate a flush of royal patronage for Islamic scholarship. The accession of Arghun ushered in a conservative Mongol backlash against the gradual process of Islamization that had accompanied the long tenure of the Juvaynīs with the various cultural projects that they facilitated. Between 1284 and 1294, factional conflict at the Ilkhanid court made further cultural projects impossible, though Arghun did begin several building projects, some of which his sons later completed. Nevertheless, this period laid the foundation – and a very unstable one at that – for later Ilkhanid administrative practices, including an increased awareness of religious affiliation as a marker of political allegiance.

This period of instability at the Ilkhanid court also created the circumstances for the rise of Ghazan Khan and Rashīd al-Dīn. Ghazan came to prominence as governor of the eastern provinces of Khurāsān and Māzandarān, where the Mongol imperial government of the Middle East had already once been incubated under Chin Temür and Körgüz. Having served in the east for over a decade, Ghazan was well situated to seize the Ilkhanid throne by 1295, when the chronic instability and disunity of this period finally brought the central court to its knees. As later chapters will demonstrate, however, continuity with the intellectual and cultural projects of the early Ilkhanate was not severed, as the influence of Juvaynī, Bayḍāwī, and the *Shāhnāma* remained active in later works. The experience of Arghun's reign and the turbulent years that followed established a number of defining dynamics in Ilkhanid history and historiography, including the concern for the unity of the state and the role of various religious communities within it. In turn, this period of internal dynastic instability created a need for a new

framework for dynastic legitimacy, the immediate precipitant of the dynastic histories of the early fourteenth century.

The collapse of the early Ilkhanate

One of the first victims of Arghun's accession was the standard bearer of Islamization at the Mongol court.¹ Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī was executed on 16 October 1284 near the town of Abhār, outside of Qazvīn. His death, like so much of his life and the works that he and his brother undertook, lurks in the background of the career of Rashīd al-Dīn. It also initiated the first of three cycles of reactionary violence that brought three successive factions to the head of the Ilkhanid administration. Each of these factions consisted of both Mongol *amīrs* and Persianate administrators and was led by a single, powerful individual. Each of these individuals: Amīr Buqa, Sa'd al-Daula, and Ṣadr al-Dīn Zanjānī, in turn made administrative appointments and policies intended to stabilize his position that in fact hastened a new backlash.

The execution of Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī was delayed by Amīr Buqa Jalayir, who had once been his patron but who also had deep ties to the Ilkhanid ruling family and to Arghun in particular. Buqa, whose father, Elgai Noyan, had served under Hülegü, supported Arghun's claim to the throne already in 1282 and had played a leading role in affecting the coup that replaced Aḥmad Tegüder with Arghun two years later.² In September 1284, even before the execution of Shams al-Dīn, Arghun transferred the vizierate to Buqa.³ As *ṣāḥib-dīwān*, Buqa promoted his own allies among the Persianate administrative corps to positions of influence,

¹ On Arghun's rebellion and reign, see J.A. Boyle, "Dynastic and political history of the Il-khāns," in *The Cambridge history of Iran. Volume 5: the Saljuq and Mongol periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 365-72.

² Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī (Tehran: Alburz, 1994), 1124-26, 1141-48.

³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1155-56.

including sending Sayyid ‘Imad al-Dīn ‘Alavī to Fars as governor-general of that province.⁴ Perhaps the most important of Buqa’s appointments was to make his brother Aruq the *shahna* (governor) of Baghdad. At Baghdad, Aruq promoted and protected a number of those who had earlier worked for ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī while purging a number of the collaborators who had brought Buqa to power at the expense of the Juvaynīs. In short, Buqa and Aruq’s coup was less a purge than a decapitation, as they assumed the position of the Juvaynīs without significantly disrupting their administrative structure.

The nature of the new government – still largely Persianate but with a new Mongol face – is evident also in the way Arghun and his supporters situated themselves vis-a-vis Qubilai’s court in China. In early 1286, a delegation from Qubilai and led by Amīr Ordu Qiya arrived at the Ilkhanid court with decrees confirming Arghun as Ilkhan and investing Buqa with the title of *chingsang* (Ch. *ch’eng-hsiang*, chancellor). The prominence of Buqa and another *chingsang*, the Dörben Mongol Amīr Bolad, who had come from China to the Ilkhanid court in 1285, mark a return to a governmental apparatus dominated by Mongols and at least partly beholden to Chinese, rather than Perso-Islamic institutions.⁵

The reaction against Islamizing tendencies among the ruling Mongols escalated in the latter half of Arghun’s reign. If Buqa and Aruq had been hesitant participants in the downfall of their former clients, the Juvaynīs, their moderate approach was soon supplanted by

⁴ ‘Imad al-Dīn’s assassination in December 1294 sparked the investigation that led ultimately to the arrest of the last independent Salghurid *atabek* of Fars, Abish Khatun, and the imposition of direct Mongol rule in that province: ‘Abd Allāh ibn Faḏl Allāh Vaṣṣāf al-Hazrat, *Kitāb-i mustaṭāb-i Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥazrat dar bandar-i Mughūl* (Bombay lithograph edition, 1853), 216-22.

⁵ On Bolad Chingsang and his contribution to the Ilkhanid court and Mongol cultural exchange, see Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), esp. 59-80; *idem*, “Biography of a cultural broker. Bolad Ch’eng-Hsiang in China and Iran,” in *In the court of the Il-khans, 1290-1340*, ed. Julian Raby and Theresa Fitzherbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 7-22. In his later retelling of events, Rashīd al-Dīn downplays Arghun’s return to a Sino-Mongol ideology of rule, but Vaṣṣāf’s account of Arghun’s accession preserves a rhetoric of Mongol recidivism against the Islamizing tendencies of the previous two reigns: Vaṣṣāf 1853, 137-39.

elements at court more eager to purge the administration of its Islamic character. In part, this was due to a backlash among the *amīrs* against Buqa and Aruq, whose excessive and haughty consolidation of power alienated other powerful Mongol commanders from the highest exercise of power. In 1288, Arghun replaced Aruq as governor of Baghdad with Ordo Qiya. The latter had gained favor by promising to collect unpaid taxes from Iraq with the aid of Sa'd al-Daula al-Abhārī, a Jewish doctor who had served as deputy to Aruq. Around the same time, Amīr 'Alī Tamghachi, the governor of Tabriz and ally of Buqa, was also replaced; control of the *injū* (royal estates) of the south was transferred from Buqa to Taghachar; and Buqa's policies on the rule and fiscal management of Kirmān and Fars were reversed. This movement turned into an outright attack against Buqa and his brother when Sa'd al-Daula and Ordo Qiya informed Arghun of Aruq's extensive extortions from the imperial treasury during his term at Baghdad. Faced with these reversals, Buqa led an attempted coup against Arghun in the name of the latter's cousin, prince Jūshkeb. When Jūshkeb himself revealed the plot to Arghun, it triggered a swift and bloody end to Buqa and to much of his family and followers in the first months of 1289. These purges reached deep into the Persianate administrative apparatus, so that by 1292 almost the entire administrative corps cultivated during the reign of Abaqa had been eliminated.⁶

Two factions, each led by one Mongol *amīr* and one Persian bureaucrat, were involved in the unwinding of Buqa's influence. These were on the one hand Ordo Qiya and Sa'd al-Daula, and on the other Taghachar with his Persian deputy, Ṣadr al-Dīn Zanjānī. Between 1289 and 1294, these two pairs of individuals took turns holding the reins of the Ilkhanate. The purge of the administrative corps that Buqa and Aruq had inherited from the Juvaynī brothers,

⁶ Jean Aubin, *Émirs mongols et vizirs persans dans les remous de l'acculturation* (Paris: Association pour l'avancement des études iraniennes, 1995), 42.

as well as Arghun's injunction that Muslims were no longer to serve in the *dīwān*, left a crisis of staffing, which Sa'd al-Dīn was able to fill by drawing on family connections within in the Jewish community of northern Iran.⁷ Having gained favor with Arghun Khan for repeatedly filling the imperial coffers with funds collected at Baghdad, Sa'd al-Daula increased his personal influence by limiting access to the Ilkhan to three sympathetic *amīrs*, whom he named as his deputies: Ordo Qiya, Joshi, and Quchan. Other *amīrs*, including Taghachar and Toghan, were stripped of influence at court and assigned to military and administrative posts in the outer regions of the state.

Vaṣṣāf preserves an account of the excess of Sa'd al-Daula's ambitions for his patron Arghun, an account that Aubin deems absurd.⁸ Vaṣṣāf relates that Sa'd al-Daula, late in 1290, floated a proposal that the influence of Islam at court could be further checked by claiming that final religious prophecy had been transferred from the Arabs to the Mongols. According to Vaṣṣāf, Sa'd al-Daula managed to persuade some *īmāms* to recognize Arghun as the *ṣāhib qirān*, or Lord of Auspicious Conjunction, and proposed that the *ka'ba* in Mecca be converted into an idol temple and that naval preparations be made for an invasion of India. Such a plot presents Arghun as the culmination of religious prophecy, arrogating for him the role rightly held within Muslim society by the Prophet Muḥammad. Sa'd al-Daula's plot hyperbolizes the intellectual program of 'Alā' al-Dīn Juvaynī's history: instead of fitting the Mongols into God's plan for the triumph of Islam, it makes them a corrective measure for the excesses of Muslims such as the Juvaynīs and Aḥmad Tegüder. Vaṣṣāf, writing two decades after the events he purports to relate, is here almost certainly guilty of elaborating the excesses of a disgraced politician, yet the rhetoric that he employs indicates that religious affiliation was, by the late

⁷ For Arghun's injunction, see Vaṣṣāf 1853, 241.

⁸ Vaṣṣāf 1853, 239-43; Aubin 1995, 44.

1280s, a matter of concern in determining the social and political legitimacy of the Ilkhan. Nothing came of this plot, if in fact it was ever really proposed, though the title of *ṣāḥib qirān* assumed a significant connotation in the ideology of rule that emerged in later historiography, as discussed in Chapter Six. Much sooner than that, however, the figure of the Mongol Ilkhans had assumed a comfortable equilibrium in the narrative of Islamic history between the apocalyptic doom of Ibn al-Athīr and the prophetic claims of Sa‘d al-Daula. If the reign of Arghun was largely a setback for the Islamization of the Ilkhanid court, it heightened the level of religious rhetoric employed to explain Mongol kingship in the wake of the caliphate.

Sa‘d al-Daula’s term as vizier was short. He was executed in March of 1291, along with the three Mongols whom he had named as his deputies. The period of his administration was significant, as Aubin has shown, in that it marked the first attempt to create and “absolute vizierate,” in which the head of the *dīwān* held uncontested influence over both the Persianate and Mongol branches of the administration.⁹ The plot that Vaṣṣāf attributes to Sa‘d al-Daula suggests that this period was also connected, at least in the eyes of later chroniclers, with the emergence of a special religious dispensation embodied in the Ilkhan. Beyond these innovations, Arghun followed his father’s example by employing indigenous bureaucratic professionals and in commissioning major architectural projects as a marker of his position within the society of the Middle East. In late 1290, Arghun monumentalized a neighborhood of Tabrīz known as Sham or Shamb, renaming it Arghunia after himself; he also began a new city on the pastures of Qonqur Öleng in Azerbaijan.¹⁰ His sons, Ghazan and Öljejtü further monumentalized these two projects, as discussed in later chapters. He is probably also

⁹ Aubin 1995, 43.

¹⁰ On these projects, see Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*. Vol. 3, ed. Abdülkerim Ali Oğlu Alizada (Baku: Azarbayjan CCR Elmler Akademiyasy Neshriyyaty, 1957), 229, n.1. This account survives only in the “P” recension, discussed below.

responsible for a remarkable but unfinished rock-cut precinct, framed in Islamic architectural styles but decorated with Buddhist motifs, near the pastures of Qonqur Öleng.¹¹

Arghun was a devotee of Buddhism and subscribed to the teachings of alchemists, and his death in 1291 may have been brought on by the administration of potions meant to extend his life. Arghun's final sickness afforded disaffected Mongol *amīrs* and Persian administrators the opportunity to discredit and execute Sa'd al-Daula, whose power and influence both groups could equally resent, on the pretense of being involved in a plot to murder the Ilkhan. The death of the discredited vizier was by this point a well-established trope in Persian historical literature as an opportunity at which an author might comment on the merits of loyal service and the fickleness of political authority.¹² During the Mongol period, this phenomenon became disturbingly common; given that dynastic histories written during this period and later were overwhelmingly written by individuals who, like Rashīd al-Dīn, were personally invested in the appointments and punishments meted out at court, this trope takes a particularly reflective turn during the Mongol period.¹³ The added dimension of Sa'd al-Daula's Jewish heritage, and the anti-Jewish violence that erupted in Ilkhanid cities after his death, makes this event particularly relevant to – and particularly difficult to disentangle from – the life and death of Rashīd al-Dīn.

After Arghun's death, the Ilkhanid state faced a potential crisis of succession. Arghun's eldest son, Ghazan, was 18 years old, but was occupied putting down an insurrection in Khurāsān. The Mongols who had led the backlash against Sa'd al-Daula, Taghachar and

¹¹ On the Viar precinct, see Sheila Blair, "Monumentality under the Mongols: the tomb of Uljaytu at Sultaniyya," in *Text and image in medieval Persian art* (forthcoming, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013).

¹² Julie Meisami, "History as literature," in *Persian historiography*, ed. Charles Melville (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 42-52.

¹³ Charles Melville, "The historian at work," in *Persian historiography*, ed. Charles Melville (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 73-86.

Toghan, nominated Arghun's uncle Baidu for the throne but their failure to act decisively allowed Arghun's brother Geikhatu, who had served as governor of Anatolia since 1284, to seize the throne. Toghan was executed, but Taghachar and the other conspirators were pardoned, the first of several acts of clemency that marked Geikhatu in strong contrast to his brother. While the question of the throne had been decided, the condition of the administration remained uncertain and the Mongol Shiktür Aqa led an interim government with Sharaf al-Dīn Simnānī as the head of the *dīwān* for much of 1292, being replaced in November of that year by Taghachar's deputy Şadr al-Dīn Zanjānī.¹⁴

Despite Rashīd al-Dīn's later vilification of Şadr al-Dīn, this new *şāhib-dīwān* personifies the institutional development of the Ilkhanid administration in some of the same ways as Rashīd al-Dīn himself.¹⁵ Born into a family of *qāḍīs* from Qazvīn, his coming to court was aided both by that city's proximity to the Mongol royal camps in Azerbaijan and by his own intellectual upbringing.¹⁶ He had entered the service of Taghachar when very young and was active in the factional conflicts that toppled the Juvaynīs, Buqa, and Sa'd al-Daula in turn. Under his administration, the roles of the Mongol and Persianate elements of court were more fully distinguished and he rebuilt the state apparatus at all levels.

Şadr al-Dīn ultimately served three terms at the head of the Ilkhanid administration, first under Geikhatu from 1291-1294 and then twice in the early years of Ghazan's reign. His first administration was a period of strong consolidation, in which he appointed new *qāḍīs* and fiscal agents and refloated the state treasury by contracting out the revenue collection of Fars and by reining in court spending. In consolidating his own authority, he attracted rivals, but

¹⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed Raushan and Mūsavī, 1192-96.

¹⁵ On Şadr al-Dīn and his administration, see Aubin 1995, 46-51.

¹⁶ On the prominence of Qazvīnīs in the administration of the Ilkhanate, see Aubin 1995, 25-28.

he had a free hand in deflecting these, largely due to the fact that Geikhatu was too concerned with the pleasures of court life to intervene in its politics. In the end, Şadr al-Dīn's downfall, and that of Geikhatu was brought on by the mounting fiscal difficulties of the state, a circumstance that Şadr al-Dīn did not create and was unable to correct. In desperation, he turned in the fall of 1294 to Bolad Chingsang for advice on introducing a Chinese-style paper currency. The resulting fiasco, in which the population refused to recognize the state-issued *chao* despite threats of severe punishment, destroyed Şadr al-Dīn's credibility and that of Geikhatu himself.¹⁷

The first contemporary evidence that may refer to Rashīd al-Dīn dates to this moment of fiscal ruin that doomed the reign of Geikhatu Khan and the first vizierate of Şadr al-Dīn. The reference in question is a fleeting episode in the continuation of Bar Hebraeus' chronicle in which a Jewish cook named Rashīd al-Daula attempts to maintain Geikhatu's table in the face of the financial crisis and is forced to flee the capital when his resources run out.¹⁸ The episode, and the question of whether it relates to Rashīd al-Dīn are outlined in the following chapter. While the episode is brief, and while its subject disappears into obscurity almost as soon as he appears, it suggests that the future vizier entered the upper levels of Ilkhanid society through a pattern of advancement familiar from the lives of Sa'd al-Daula and Şadr al-Dīn, so that, by 1294, he enjoyed privileged access to the Ilkhan and significant private financial resources. The figure that appears briefly in the continuation of Bar Hebraeus conforms to patterns of administrative service as they developed in the turbulent last decades of the thirteenth century. As the mild and decadent reign of Geikhatu collapsed, Rashīd al-Dīn

¹⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1197-99; Vaṣṣāf 270-75; Bar Hebraeus, *The chronography of Gregory Abū'l Faraj*, tr. E.A. Wallis Budge (London: Oxford Univ. Press, H. Milford, 1932), 496-97.

¹⁸ Bar Hebraeus, 496.

was well situated to assume a major role in the next, most remarkable period of Ilkhanid history. His road from Hamadan to Tabriz, however, likely lay through Khurāsān, where Geikhatu's nephew Ghazan was engaged in building a new state apparatus.

The rise and early reign of Ghazan, 1284-98

There is no direct evidence that Rashīd al-Dīn was present at the court of Ghazan before the latter's accession to the Ilkhanid throne in 1295. However, the fact that the leading roles in the Ilkhanid administration after 1295 were held by key figures from Ghazan's military and civilian government while he was governor of the eastern provinces strongly suggests that Rashīd al-Dīn had also been involved in this formative period of Ilkhanid history. Ghazan's eleven years in Khurāsān, and Rashīd al-Dīn's account of them, set the groundwork for the next generation of Ilkhanid court culture, and so they deserve to be retold. The period is dominated by the personal relationship between Ghazan and Amīr Naurūz, who was alternately Ghazan's tutor and adversary and who ultimately led the young prince to convert to Islam and to contest the Ilkhanid throne. Furthermore, during the early 1290s, Ghazan established a shadow court in the eastern provinces to rival the central Ilkhanid courts of Geikhatu and Baidu. Rashīd al-Dīn emphasizes the difference between his patron's royal behavior and that of Geykhatu and Baidu, creating an argument for Ghazan as the legitimate successor to his father, Arghun.

Naurūz retained significant influence in the first years of Ghazan's reign, shaping the policies of the young ruler. His eventual fall from grace in 1297 marks the emergence of Ghazan as an independent sovereign. One year later, the elevation of Rashīd al-Dīn and Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvajī to the head of the Ilkhanid administration inaugurated the most dynamic period of Mongol rule in the Middle East. That period, along with the major historiographical

monuments it produced, including the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, forms the subject of Chapters Five and Six.

Rashīd al-Dīn marks the significance of Ghazan's pre-accession career by beginning the portion of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* dedicated to Ghazan in 1284, rather than with his coronation in 1295. Among other Mongol rulers treated in the work, only Genghis Khan and Hülegü are treated similarly, but even they do not compare, since they each inaugurated new dynastic lines. As we will see, this is only one way in which Rashīd al-Dīn signals a similarity among Ghazan, his great-grandfather Hülegü, and the latter's grandfather Genghis. However, the study of the period from Ghazan's appointment as governor of Khurāsān in 1284 until his accession in 1295 is complicated by the fact that two recensions of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* survive for this portion of text. These recensions, while largely in agreement about the facts of Ghazan's life, present the period in sharply divergent ways. Thus, before relating the process by which Prince Ghazan became Ilkhan and Pādishāh of Islam, a note is in order about these two recensions.

The version of Ghazan's early career found in most manuscripts of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* is consistent in tone with the rest of the work. That is, it demonstrates the same concision as much of the rest of the dynastic history, with relatively little direct speech and almost none of the ornate *inshā'* style of prose featured in the works of Juvaynī and Vaṣṣāf. Furthermore, while both versions refer to Ghazan at different times as "prince" (*shāhzāda*) and khan, only the official version uses the more imperial *pādishāh-i islām*, suggesting that it represents Rashīd al-Dīn's final, ideologically latent text.

The alternate version, which I here call the "P" recension because of the manuscript mark that twentieth-century editors assign to its earliest and most prominent witness, is

found in two main witnesses. The first, for which the recension is named, is a fragmentary illustrated copy now in Paris.¹⁹ Based on the style of the paintings and an attributable line of verse found in one of them, Francis Richard has dated this manuscript to the Timurid atelier at Herat in the early 1430s.²⁰ Kazuhiko Shiraiwa has argued that the manuscript was produced at the Ilkhanid court by comparison to other early manuscripts.²¹ The paintings may have been later additions to an incomplete manuscript (which Rieu also dates to the early fourteenth century); in any case, it was either produced at the Ilkhanid court with space left for illustration or else copied from such a manuscript, as both the format and selection of images matches other copies produced under Ilkhanid patronage.

The Paris manuscript originally contained the alternate version of the early career of Ghazan under discussion here, though because of its fragmentary nature, it includes a lacuna spanning the episode of Ghazan's conversion to Islam, so that Karl Jahn's edition of the history of Ghazan Khan omits this portion of the "P" recension.²² As a result, the premier article on the scene of Ghazan's conversion laments that this alternate version has not survived.²³ However, a second manuscript at the Institute for Oriental Studies in St. Petersburg, dated to late 1576 and thus significantly later than the Paris manuscript, preserves the entire alternate

¹⁹ Bibliothèque Nationale ms. Supplément Persan 1113. For a description of the manuscript, see Edgar Blochet, *Catalogue des manuscrits persans* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1905), 201-02.

²⁰ Francis Richard, *Splendeurs persanes: manuscrits du XII^e au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997), 76.

²¹ Kazuhiko Shiraiwa, "The Paris Manuscript of the *Jāmi' al-tavārikh* of Rashīd al-Dīn (Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément persan 1113)," *Bulletin of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan* 34.1 (1991): 17-31. Only the abstract of this article has been consulted; the article is in Japanese.

²² Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Geschichte Gāzān-Ḥān's aus dem Ta'riḥ-i-mubārak-i-gāzānī*, ed. Karl Jahn (London: Luzac & Co., 1940), 75-76. Raushan and Mūsavī do not include the "P" recension in their edition at all.

²³ Charles Melville, "Pādshāh-i Islām: the conversion of Sultan Maḥmūd Ghāzān Khān," in *Persian and Islamic studies in honour of P.W. Avery*, ed. Charles Melville (Cambridge: Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, 1990), 172 n. 2.

version of the passage in question, including the story of Ghazan’s conversion, so that the text of the conversion scene is available in full in an appendix of the Soviet edition of 1957.²⁴

The “P” recension holds an important place in accurately reconstructing the history of Ghazan’s rise and reign, and should be considered alongside the official recension of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* as well as the history of Vaṣṣāf. The fact that many of Ghazan’s early administrative appointments are not preserved in the official redaction of the text has led to some confusion in modern reconstructions of the period that do not appreciate the individual value of each recension.²⁵ In terms of historical data, the “P” recension gives much more detail about affairs in the eastern provinces between 1289 and 1295, particularly Naurūz’s rebellion and subsequent submission and Ghazan’s insurrection against Baidu. This includes information on several local dignitaries scrubbed from the “official” version, such as Shāh ‘Alī of Quhistān, Amīr Dibāj of Fūman, and Malik Fakhr al-Dīn of Rayy.

On the whole, the “P” recension includes more dates and reports more daily court activities, suggesting that it closely follows official Ilkhanid court journals, a practice also evident in the *Akhhār-i muḡhulān* and the later *History of Öljeitü* of ‘Abd Allāh Qāshānī (on which, see Chapters Six and Seven). For example, the “P” recension preserves more information than the official version does concerning Ghazan’s early administrative measures, including the detail that he allowed Naurūz to change the imperial seal from a square Chinese type to a round Islamic one, a fact that Vaṣṣāf corroborates.²⁶ Thus, while the manuscripts containing the “P” recension may post-date the earliest copies of the main textual tradition, the material of this alternate version seems to preserve more of the detail of the court journals

²⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Alizada, 604-07. For a translation of this passage, see Appendix B.

²⁵ As just one example, Bertold Spuler’s otherwise very helpful list of Ilkhanid first ministers omits Ṣadr al-Dīn Zanjānī’s second appointment as *ṣāhib-dīwān* in late 1295: Bertold Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1968), 286.

²⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Alizada, 618; Vaṣṣāf 1853, 325.

on which these chronicles were based. It thus probably reflects an early iteration of the text, one that was redacted out of the version found in most manuscripts.

In addition to the minutiae of court activity, the “P” recension contains a large amount of direct speech, verse, and folk wisdom. Most of this occurs in scenes featuring Naurūz, and indeed it is in the presentation of Naurūz where the two redactions differ the most. Scenes of Naurūz deliberating with his wife about submitting to Ghazan and, later, of him presiding at Ghazan’s conversion are prominent in the “P” recension but are absent or significantly redacted in the main version. This, combined with the extra attention the “P” recension pays to his exploits in battle and at court, lend the sense of a “Naurūznāma” lurking behind this version of the text – a heroic narrative surrounding the figure of Naurūz.

Given Naurūz’s prominence as alternately the advisor, adversary, and vizier of the young Ghazan, it is no surprise that such a heroic saga about him would emerge. By comparison, we might look to the early fifteenth-century Noghay rebel and warlord Edige, whose exploits remain the subject of heroic epic across Inner Asia.²⁷ Of course, in the absence of an independent witness, any discussion of a “Naurūznāma,” is pure speculation. However, appreciating the “P” recension as an independent witness to Ilkhanid history requires us to consider contemporary Turko-Mongol epic tradition among the sources for the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. In reconstructing the history of Ghazan’s early reign, it is worth noting that the *Jāmi’ al-tawārīkh*, even as the official dynastic history of the Ilkhans, was not immune to modification in later years (on which see Chapter Seven) and so must be read always with an

²⁷ On the epic of Edige, see Karl Reichl, *Singing the past: Turkic and medieval heroic poetry* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 104-34; *idem*, *Edige: a Karakalpak heroic epic as performed by Jumabay Bazarov* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 2007), esp. 14-115; Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and native religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and conversion to Islam in historical and epic tradition* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 411-20, all with extensive additional bibliography.

eye to the ideological considerations of its composition. Also, the “P” recension reveals that, in addition to court journals, Rashīd al-Dīn had at his disposal a host of other source materials, including narratives in an epic tone, which he tamed and aligned into his final text and that at some point in the early fourteenth century, these sources offered a convenient alternate version of the story of Ghazan’s early life.²⁸

Ghazan had been born in Māzandarān while Arghun served as governor of the east under his own father, Abaqa. When he returned to the land of his birth as governor twelve years later, Ghazan was accompanied by Amīr Naurūz. Naurūz was the eldest son of Arghun Aqa, the veteran administrator who had welcomed Hülegü to the Middle East in 1256 and who performed important fiscal, judicial, and military service until his death in 1275. Naurūz and Ghazan had both been active participants in Arghun’s rebellion against Aḥmad Tegüder.²⁹ Despite this record of support for Arghun’s rebellion, Naurūz revolted against Arghun and Ghazan in January 1289 for fear of being caught up in the ongoing purges of Buqa’s allies.³⁰ For most of the next six years, during which time Sa’d al-Daula and Şadr al-Dīn Zanjānī served successively at the head of the Ilkhanid administration and Geikhatu drove the Ilkhanid

²⁸ One possible inspiration for the “P” recension is a series of events from early in the reign of Öljeitü. In the spring of 1306, conflict between the Chaghataid and Ögedeid *uluses* of Central Asia drove several prominent Mongol Amirs, including Nauruz’s brother Orday Qazan, to the court of Öljeitü: Vaṣṣāf 1853, 511. A year later, when Öljeitü launched his ill-fated campaign to Gīlān, the senior general Qutluḡshāh was killed; his death is framed in Qāshānī’s account of the event as vengeance for the death of Naurūz, whom Qutluḡshāh had personally cut in half: Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 68. With Naurūz present at court in memory and in the person of his brother, the Paris manuscript may well fit within a temporary rehabilitation of the disgraced *amīr*.

²⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Alizada, 183-94. Ghazan served as envoy for his father during an ill-fated attempt to settle the conflict between Arghun and Aḥmad Tegüder in May 1284: Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1139. Thackston names Arghun himself as the envoy, a textual variant found in two manuscripts of the early fifteenth century (National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg, cabinet V,3,1, fol. 262b.; British Library ms. Add. 7628, fol. 646b). In the episode in question, Aḥmad Tegüder’s envoy is his own son, Umar, and Aḥmad later challenges Arghun to come offer his submission in person, suggesting that Ghazan, and not Arghun, was the original envoy.

³⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1217; Vaṣṣāf 1853, 314.

treasury to ruin, Naurūz waged a periodic rebellion against Ghazan from the border region of the Ilkhanid and Chaghataid Khanates.

After being put to flight by Ghazan in the spring of 1289, Naurūz sought the help of the Chaghataid Qaidu Khan in Turkestan.³¹ Naurūz spent close to three years in the Chaghatai *ulus*, during which time Arghun Khan died. While Ghazan did not actively contest Geikhatu's accession, he used the opportunity of relative peace afforded by Naurūz's absence to establish an alternate court and administrative system in the east of the Ilkhanate. Aubin reads Ghazan's formation of a shadow government during these years as evidence that he entertained the notion of establishing an independent state in Khurāsān.³² However, Rashīd al-Dīn's portrayal of Ghazan during this period suggests that even if he initially entertained notions of an independent *ulus*, Ghazan soon came to understand himself as the legitimate heir to his father's throne in Tabriz. Rashīd al-Dīn alludes to Ghazan's claim to superior legitimacy over Geikhatu with a brief but telling juxtaposition of the two rival courts:

When news of the reign of Geikhatu was confirmed, Amīr Qutlughshāh was sent as a messenger to him to report on the ruined state of Khurāsān and the efforts of the army there. A group of *amīrs* – Horqudaq, Qara son of Jawurchi, Qutlugh Timur, and others – were sent to Khurāsān. In the summer of 690 [1291], [Ghazan] set camp at Asrān, which is between Fīrūzkūh and Simnān and which they call Nukatu Yaylaq, and he was constantly engaged in hunting and feasting (*tui*) and the *aṣḥāb-dīwān* [pl. of *ṣāhib-dīwān*] oversaw the provisioning of the army and the collection of taxes of the districts of the region. Amīr Qutlughshāh arrived in Arrān in attendance on Gaikhatu and reported on affairs, but since [Geikhatu] was distracted with pleasure and parties (*ishrat*) and play and mirth, he couldn't pay much attention.³³

While Ghazan engages with the activities of a Mongol and Iranian sovereign – hunting, throwing the Turko-Mongol *tui* feasts, and arranging the logistics of an upcoming campaign –

³¹ Naurūz's flight to Qaidu is the first episode treated more fully in the "P" recension of the text. The fuller version is not included in the edition by Raushan and Mūsavī, but is found in that of Alizada, here 577-78. The subsequent narrative of events from the time of Naurūz's revolt to that of Ghazan's accession and early reign is drawn from: Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1226-67 (for the main recension); cf. *idem*, ed. Alizada, 577-619 (for the "P" recension); Vaṣṣāf, 313-27.

³² Aubin 1995, 56.

³³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1232.

Geikhatu revels in the luxuries of court, including feasts described using the Arabic *ishrat*, emphasizing his indulgence in pleasant society. Such a contrast is sustained in relation to Baidu and in the account of Ghazan's conversion, as demonstrated below.

In the winter of 1291-92, Naurūz returned to Khurāsān in active rebellion at the head of an army given him by Qaidu. After raiding as far as Nīshāpūr, he was defeated by Qutlughshāh in late summer 1292 and again put to flight. Faced with remobilizing his army in response to this new active phase of rebellion, Ghazan replaced his *dīwān* chief, Mu'īn al-Dīn Mustaufī, with Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvajī, who had previously been a member of the household of Amīr Nurin Aqa.³⁴ Presumably, Sa'd al-Dīn had accompanied Nurin Aqa to the east when the latter had come, along with Prince Baidu, to reinforce Ghazan's army in the wake of Naurūz's initial rebellion in 1289.³⁵ Now, three years later, Sa'd al-Dīn was appointed head of the *ashāb-dīwān* with the unenviable task of provisioning Ghazan's army without overburdening the already weary population of the war-ravaged eastern provinces. Apparently he succeeded in this task, as he was reappointed to it the following year. In 1294, Sa'd al-Dīn was called upon to negotiate the surrender of the city of Nīshāpūr, which had risen in rebellion against Prince Ghazan. In managing the collection of taxes and negotiating the surrender of cities, Sa'd al-Dīn is thus portrayed engaged in the very activities that he and Rashīd al-Dīn would later undertake as heads of the administration for the Ilkhans Ghazan and Öljeitü.

Late 1294 and early 1295 saw three other events that set the course of Ghazan's rise to the throne. Presented with the order to circulate the new paper *chao* currency, Ghazan

³⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1232; for Mu'īn al-Dīn, *ibid.*, 1230; for Sa'd al-Dīn in the household of Nurin, see Charles Melville, "The *keshig* in Iran: the survival of the royal Mongol household," in *Beyond the legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 160.

³⁵ Nurin Aqa remained a close supporter of Ghazan until his death in the winter of 1303. He was one of four generals who accompanied Ghazan in negotiating a settlement with Baidu in the spring of 1295, and Rashīd al-Dīn reports that Ghazan was greatly saddened by news of his death. See Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1247-48, 1310.

refused, claiming that the humidity of Māzandarān made paper currency impractical.³⁶ At around the same time, Naurūz rendered his final submission to Ghazan, ending two years of continued brigandage. Finally, shortly after Naurūz's surrender, news arrived in the east of the rebellion against Geikhatu that brought Baidu to the throne in early 1295. Between 1289 and 1295, Ghazan had come of age, cut his teeth as a military leader, engaged Sa'd al-Dīn from the household of Nurin Aqa as the head of his administrative apparatus, repudiated the central fiscal policy of Geikhatu, and made peace with Naurūz, his former mentor and adversary. The new change in government at the central court provided him a ready opportunity to claim the sovereignty that he had thus cultivated.

Ghazan responded to Baidu's coup by launching his own insurrection aimed at taking the Ilkhanid throne.³⁷ During the summer of 1295, Baidu offered to divide the territory of the Ilkhanate between himself and Ghazan. Despite the efforts of the *amīrs* Qutlughshāh and Nurin to make such a settlement succeed, Ghazan rejected the offer and committed himself to seizing the western capitals. In this decision, he was encouraged by Naurūz, his former mentor and rival. Prince Ghazan's deference to the son of Arghun Aqa caused some degree of resentment for Qutlughshāh and Nurin, who had spent so much energy fighting Naurūz during his rebellion. Nevertheless, in the summer of 1295 Naurūz emerged once again as the most influential voice in Ghazan's circle of *amīrs*. The most emblematic demonstration of this fact is the central role that he plays in all narratives of Ghazan's conversion to Islam, discussed in Chapter Six. While accounts of this conversion are encrusted with narrative embellishments meant to portray Ghazan as an ideal sovereign, the fact of the conversion clearly brought Ghazan in touch with an important source of political legitimacy in the Middle East. By

³⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1244.

³⁷ For Ghazan's rebellion against Baidu, see Boyle 1968, 375-79.

contrast, Rashīd al-Dīn portrays Baidu as a staunch supporter of various Christian groups.³⁸ As with his earlier treatment of Geikhatu, Rashīd al-Dīn contrasts his patron to his immediate predecessors who had seized the throne in the wake of Arghun's death.

Immediately after Ghazan's conversion, he received emissaries from Baidu, including Shaykh Maḥmud Dīnavarī, who was evidently displeased with Baidu's support for Christian groups. This embassy provided an opportunity for several disaffected *amīrs* in Baidu's court to transmit messages of support to Ghazan in secret through Shaykh Maḥmud. Prominent among the disaffected was Amīr Taghachar, who had been instrumental in bringing Baidu to power but who chafed at having been assigned – probably in fearful recognition of his significant influence at court – to govern the distant province of Anatolia along with his Persian liege, the discredited Ṣadr al-Dīn Zanjānī. By highlighting the agency of Shaykh Maḥmud in catalyzing the defection of some of the most powerful *amīrs* in the Ilkhanate, Rashīd al-Dīn emphasizes the instrumental role of Islam in facilitating Ghazan's rebellion and eventual rule. This point is further elaborated when Baidu's capture and execution is followed immediately – even before Ghazan enters the Ilkhanid capital – by an edict stipulating the destruction of all Buddhist, Christian, and Jewish places of worship within Tabriz, Baghdad, and other Islamic cities.³⁹

In the first weeks after Baidu's execution on 4 October 1295, Ghazan took several measures to consolidate his command of the Ilkhanate. These measures fit into two basic categories: extraordinary powers assigned to Naurūz to stabilize the state in the wake of successive *coups d'état*, and the judicious accommodation of various court factions in the new government. Ghazan appointed Naurūz as head of the military, vizier, *amīr* of the entire realm

³⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn lists *naṣāri* (Nazarenes, *i.e.*, Christians in general), *jāthalīq* (from Gr. καθόλικος, “priest”), *qasis* (from Syr. *qashshīshā*, “bishop”), and *ruhbānīn* (from Syr. Rabban?, “monk”) as the groups favored by Baidu: Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Alizada, 608.

³⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1259.

and, according to Vaṣṣāf, even granted him the viceregency (*niyābat*).⁴⁰ This account, paired with a similar suggestion of Naurūz’s absolute power in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, has resulted in some unnecessary simplification in modern reconstructions of this crucial period. For example, Spuler names Naurūz as serving as chief minister from 1295 until 1297, despite the fact that Naurūz was soon reassigned to a purely military role in Khurāsān to deal with a renewed Chaghataid invasion into that region.⁴¹ Rashīd al-Dīn makes clear that Naurūz’s appointment was intended as a temporary measure aimed at stabilizing the realm in the months immediately after Ghazan’s accession, after which the *amīr* was to rejoin his patron and sovereign at the latter’s winter camp in Arran. The “P” recension clarifies that, even while Naurūz held extraordinary military and governing powers, Ghazan appointed a full contingent of Persianate administrators. What is more, these individuals represented several of the preceding civil governments. Şadr al-Dīn Zanjānī, who had served as vizier under Geikhatu and been central in effecting the defection of Taghachar and others to Ghazan in the summer of 1295, was rewarded with the office of *sāhib-dīwān*, while the position of *ulugh bitikchi* went to Sharaf al-Dīn Simnānī, who had worked alongside Sa’d al-Daula and Ordo Qiya in Baghdad. Mu’in al-Dīn Mustaufī, who had preceded Sa’d al-Dīn as *sāhib-dīwān* to Prince Ghazan, was retained as *mustaufī al-mamālīk*, a position he had held under Arghun, now to be assisted by a certain Malik Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥasan.⁴²

Despite these efforts to both ensure stability and accommodate various groups within the Ilkhanid administrative elite, the first year of Ghazan’s reign saw a continuation of the instability and factionalism of previous years. Some of this was internal to the Mongol royal

⁴⁰ Vaṣṣāf, 325

⁴¹ Spuler 1968, 286; cf. Vaṣṣāf, 326.

⁴² Aubin identifies this last individual with the individual of the same *laqab* then serving as governor of Rayy, presumably based solely on the form of the name and not any direct textual evidence to their identity: Aubin 1995, 62.

family, as Taraqai Küregen defected to the Mamluks with a company of Oirats. Much of it, however, centered around the figure of Amīr Naurūz, who continued to wield considerable influence over the young sovereign. Aubin is probably correct in seeing the hand of Naurūz behind the persecution of non-Muslim religious institutions during the winter of 1295-96.⁴³ During 1296, Naurūz promoted Baidu's vizier, Jamāl al-Dīn Dastjirdānī, into the top ranks of the administration in direct opposition to Ṣadr al-Dīn. The latter had become exposed at court after Taghachar was re-appointed as governor of Anatolia. Finding himself once again marginalized, Taghachar seems to have thrown his support behind yet another Ilkhanid claimant, backing a grandson of Hülegü named Sögei in the latter's attempt to seize the throne. Taghachar's support for Sögei finally undid Ghazan's patience for the inveterate kingmaker. Taghachar was executed, an act that a perhaps overly cynical Aubin pins to Naurūz's influence.⁴⁴ By contrast, Rashīd al-Dīn portrays the execution as the prudent act of a wise ruler, illustrating this position with an analogous story from Chinese history in the voice of Bolad Chingsang, an early example of how Rashīd al-Dīn engaged Sino-Mongol tradition in forming the image of his patron.⁴⁵

The fact that Ṣadr al-Dīn was not executed along with his Mongol patron Taghachar demonstrates that Naurūz's influence was, in the summer of 1296, finally beginning to wane. During this same period, Ghazan put an end to the systematic religious persecutions spearheaded by Naurūz. The latter also returned from his posting as military governor in Khurāsān to the Ilkhanid court without being summoned, earning Ghazan's rebuke and leading to widespread desertions among the eastern armies. Late in 1296, Ṣadr al-Dīn and Shaykh

⁴³ Aubin 1995, 62-63.

⁴⁴ Aubin 1995, 63.

⁴⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1265-67.

Maḥmud were involved in denouncing Jamāl al-Dīn Dastjirdānī, leading to the latter's prosecution and execution and the third appointment of Ṣadr al-Dīn Zanjānī as *ṣāhib-dīwān*. On the execution of Jamāl al-Dīn, Ghazan deputed his brother Öljeitü as his personal representative in Khurāsān; together the two events mark the end of Naurūz's influence both at court and as the primary military commander in the politically powerful eastern provinces. Early in 1297, Naurūz himself came under suspicion for having conducted independent communication with the Mamluk court in Egypt. Rashīd al-Dīn presents a vast conspiracy masterminded by Ṣadr al-Dīn, who supposedly planted a series of forged letters in the baggage of Naurūz's associates to further implicate the *amīr*. Whether this is to be read as an accurate reflection of events or as a literary trope designed to cast aspersions on Ṣadr al-Dīn (a similar trope was later applied to Rashīd al-Dīn himself, as discussed in Chapter Seven), the charges against Naurūz led to his flight and eventually execution in the summer of 1297, by which point most of his family had already been purged.

Vaṣṣāf reports that the purges surrounding the rebellion of Sögei and the fall of Naurūz resulted in the deaths of five Mongol princes, thirty-eight *amīrs*, and numerous soldiers.⁴⁶ Even with such a thorough liquidation of real and potential political enemies, one final round of court intrigue was in store before Ghazan's reign was secured. This was the struggle between Rashīd al-Dīn and Ṣadr al-Dīn that resulted in the latter's death and the appointment of Sa'd al-Dīn and Rashīd al-Dīn to the head of Ghazan's administration, discussed in Chapter Four. Alongside Ghazan, these two created a troika of power that oversaw a period of relative internal stability lasting through the end of Ghazan's reign and well into that of Öljeitü.

⁴⁶ Vaṣṣāf, 329.

Thus, the appointment of Sa'd al-Dīn and Rashīd al-Dīn brought some closure to a decade and a half of turbulence at court, a period during which the Ilkhanid throne changed hands four times, each time involving retributive violence against the sitting Ilkhan or, in the case of Sa'd al-Daula, the Ilkhan's chief minister. At the end of this violent period, the family of Arghun gained unchallenged control of the throne, more from the elimination of potential rivals than from their acquiescence. The liquidation of much of the Chinggisid house in the Middle East later had dire consequences for the dynasty. In the years immediately following 1298, it created a need for Ghazan to redefine the nature of his own legitimacy. That need, coupled with the precedents for histories about the Mongol dynasty discussed in Chapter Two, created the opportunity for the great dynastic histories of the early fourteenth century by Rashīd al-Dīn and Vaṣṣāf. Before seeing how this happened this, it is necessary to reconstruct how Rashīd al-Dīn, the son of a Jewish doctor, became the vizier and ideological standard bearer of Ghazan Khan.

Chapter Four. The biography of Rashīd al-Dīn

At the very beginning of one of his theological treatises, Rashīd al-Dīn introduces himself as

Master of the Worlds, Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction (*ṣāhib qirān*), Great Minister, Manager of Affairs of the World, Trustee of the Interests of the Race of Adam, Servant of the Men of the Sword and of the Pen, adorned with the thrones of the vizierate, arrayed with the pillars of state . . . Ṣultān of Viziers and of Doctors and of the ‘Ulamā of Creation, Rashīd al-Haqq wa al-Dunyā wa al-Dīn Faḡl Allāh son of the Maula the Grand Lord the Fortunate Ṣultān of Philosophers and of Princes of the Age, ‘Imād al-Daula wa al-Dīn Abu’l-Khayr son of the Maula the Late Lord Muvaffaq al-Daula Eli the medical practitioner [*al-mutaṭabīb*] from Hamadan, the one known as Rashīd the Doctor [*al-rashīd al-ṭabīb*].¹

Written at a time when Rashīd al-Dīn enjoyed unrivaled power and influence as the lifelong companion and advisor to the ruling *ṣultān*, these titles suggest their author’s supreme confidence about the role he played in moderating the state and, indeed, the very order of the Islamic world. And yet, Rashīd al-Dīn ends his list of titles with two *nisbas* betraying a relatively pedestrian origins in the medical community of Hamadan.

This chapter reconstructs, as much as possible, the biography of Rashīd al-Dīn. The sources for Rashīd al-Dīn’s life necessarily divide his biography into three periods: his early life to 1298, his public career from 1298 to 1317, and his fall from grace and execution in 1318. For the last twenty years of his life, Rashīd al-Dīn was intimately involved both in the political history of the Ilkhanate and in its memorialization. His death, in turn, became as much a literary event as a historical one, as Rashīd al-Dīn was cast among the pantheon of semi-legendary Persian viziers, as discussed in Chapter Eight. This chapter will sketch out the contours and themes of Rashīd al-Dīn’s later life, though the events and sources for those years will be treated in greater detail over the course of Part Two of this dissertation. This chapter is primarily concerned with discussing the sources for and reconstructing the first half century

¹ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Laṭā’if al-ḥaqā’iq*, ed. Ghulāmriżā Ṭāhir (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tih-rān, 1976), ii.2. Ṭāhir did not include the introduction of the *Laṭā’if* in the first volume of his edition, where it belongs, and was compelled to include it in the second volume, published two years later: *ibid.*, ii.ix.

of Rashīd al-Dīn's life up to his appointment as deputy vizier in 1298. While several scholars have reconstructed Rashīd al-Dīn's life from extant textual evidence, this chapter brings two additional contexts to the biography. The first is the textual setting of the evidence, as the primary sources on Rashīd al-Dīn's life are here appreciated in light of their authors' relationships to their subject and to the genres in which they cast his life. Secondly, this chapter puts the life of Rashīd al-Dīn within the context of the various communities, societies, and geographies in which it unfolded. Thus, by understanding the condition of the Jewish community of northern Iran at the time of the Mongol conquest, as well as the administrative history of the early Ilkhanate as outlined in Chapters One and Three, we can better appreciate how Rashīd al-Dīn rose to the vizierate of Ghazan Khan.

These two contexts are not unrelated. What direct textual evidence there is for Rashīd al-Dīn's life from his birth until 1298 is beset by uncertainty and anachronism. Even if we cannot exactly locate the details of this life, we can come to understand how the son of a medical family from Hamadan rose to the highest ranks of the Ilkhanid administration by reconstructing the family and social circumstances of his early life. Rashīd al-Dīn's emergence as a prominent political appointee within the Ilkhanid state was facilitated by a number of historical circumstances: the proximity of his home town to the new center of political power, the proclivity of the ruling Mongols to employ and trust medical professionals regardless of their religious affiliations, and a timely conversion to Islam. The circumstances and experiences of the first half century of Rashīd al-Dīn's life positioned him for the prominence he held during his final twenty years. They also help to explain the intellectual and political positions that he took during his career as vizier.

Reconstructing Rashīd al-Dīn’s early life in the face of the scarcity of evidence is necessarily a speculative and imperfect exercise. A sense of the troubles involved is the fact that Rashīd al-Dīn himself, in the passage quoted above, makes no explicit reference to his own Jewish heritage.² Fortunately for us (if unfortunately for him), Rashīd al-Dīn’s detractors at court repeatedly reminded him and each other of his origins in Jewish society, using this fact to question the sincerity of his conversion to Islam.³ These aspersions survived Rashīd al-Dīn, so that the Timurid prince Mīrānshāh, on arriving in Tabriz, exhumed the body of Rashīd al-Dīn and had it reinterred in the city’s Jewish cemetery.⁴ Perhaps best demonstrating the dilemma facing modern scholars wanting to uncover Rashīd al-Dīn’s early life is John Boyle, who laments that, “concerning the period of his youth and early manhood, we possess no information whatsoever” and then offers a reconstruction of this supposedly silent period.⁵ The aim of this chapter is to pierce this silence not only with yet another recitation of the direct evidence, but with a contextual appreciation of that evidence and of the circumstances of Rashīd al-Dīn’s early life.

Origins

Hamadan is situated in the mountainous north of Iran, the region known as *al-Jibāl* (“The Mountains”) and *‘Irāq al-‘Ajam* (“Barbarian” i.e. Persian Iraq).⁶ Medieval Islamic geographers

² Birgitt Hoffmann has argued convincingly that the name of Rashīd al-Dīn’s grandfather, by analogy with his history of the Israelite prophets in the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārikh*, can be read as the name of the Hebrew prophet Eli: Hoffmann 2000, 62. I have translated the above passage accordingly, though many still read Rashīd al-Dīn’s grandfather’s name as ‘Alī or Ghālī.

³ On the origins of this line of attack against Rashīd al-Dīn, see Chapter Seven.

⁴ Daulatshāh Samarqandī, *Tazkirat al-shu‘arā*, ed. Fāṭima ‘Alāqa (Tehran: ‘Ulūm-i Insānī va Muṭāla‘āt-i Farhangī, 2007), 587. Mīrānshāh was governor of Azerbaijan from 1405 until his death in 1408.

⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *The successors of Genghis Khan*, tr. John Andrew Boyle (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 3.

⁶ For general information on Hamadan, see Guy Le Strange, *The lands of the eastern caliphate: Mesopotamia, Persia, and, and Central Asia from the Moslem conquest to the time of Timur* (London: Cambridge University

speak of the natural and economic riches of Hamadan, typically mentioning one or more traditions of the city's founding as well as the region's bitter winter cold.⁷ To this basic account, al-Muqaddasī (d. 1000) adds that some of the city's intellectual and economic prosperity had by the end of the tenth century relocated to Rayy, in the east of the province.⁸ Writing just before the city was sacked by the early Mongol invasions, Yāqut al-Hamawī depicts a still-prosperous city, listing twenty-four dependent districts.⁹ Concerning the Jewish community of Hamadan specifically, Benjamin of Tudela reports in the mid-late twelfth century that it numbered some 30,000 individuals.¹⁰ At the beginning of the thirteenth century, around the same time that Yāqut al-Hamawī described the economic prosperity of the city, the *Igroth of R. Samuel b. Eli* mentions a well organized community with its own yeshiva in contact with the academies of Talmudic learning in Baghdad.¹¹

Situated as it is between Alamūt and Baghdad and just south of the pasturelands of Azerbaijan, Hamadan became important in Mongol history in the spring of 1257 when Hülegü moved his headquarters there from Qazvīn during the lead-up to his assault on Baghdad.¹² In 1282, Hülegü's son and successor, Abaqa, died in Hamadan and the city later hosted imperial

Press, 1905), 194-96; R.N. Frye and C.E. Bosworth, "Hamadan," in *Historic cities of the Islamic world*, ed. C. Edmund Bosworth (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 151-53. In preferring *al-Jibāl* to 'Irāq al-'Ajam, I follow the example of Yāqut al-Hamawī, *Dictionnaire Géographique, historique et littéraire de la Perse et des contrées adjacentes*, tr. Charles Barbier de Meynard (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1861), 151.

⁷ See, for example, Abu'l-'Abbās al-Ya'qubī, *Les pays [Kitāb al-Buldān]*, tr. Gaston Wiet (Cairo: l'Institut Français d'archéologie orientale, 1937), 72-73.

⁸ Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Muqaddasī, *The best divisions for knowledge of the regions: a translation of Ahsan al-taqasim fi ma'rifat al-aqalim*, tr. Basil Anthony Collins (Reading, UK: Garnet, 1994), 348-49.

⁹ Yāqut al-Hamawī, tr. Meynard 597-608.

¹⁰ Marcus Nathan Adler, *The itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela: critical text, translation and commentary* (New York: Philipp Feldheim Inc., 1907), 56-57 (Hebrew text, 81).

¹¹ Walter J. Fischel, *Jews in the economic and political life of Medieval Islam* (New York: Ktav, 1969), xxi, n.27.

¹² Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī (Tehran: Alburz, 1994), 993-94. For a concise overview of Hamadan in the Mongol period, including a list of medieval and modern sources, see Dorothea Krawulsky, *Irān - Das Reich der Īlhāne: eine topographisch-historische Studie* (Weisbaden: Reichert, 1978), 263.

armies and entourages during the succession struggle in 1295 and in regular transmigrations between the summer capitals of Azerbaijan and winter camps around Baghdad.

Rashīd al-Dīn's family originated from this prosperous city, which in the thirteenth century found itself between the two centers of political activity in the Middle East. One seventeenth century author, the Shaybānid Uzbek prince of Khiva, Abū'l-Ghāzī Bahador Khan (d. 1663), places Rashīd al-Dīn's birth in Qazvīn, while Dorothea Krawulsky offers Maymūndiz as a possible birthplace, rejecting the idea that Rashīd al-Dīn grew up in Hamadan.¹³

Regardless of where Rashīd al-Dīn was born and raised, his family *nisba* betrays durable ties to Hamadan. Given the devastation of the early Mongol invasion, one branch of which chased Khwārazmshāh Muḥammad across the Jibāl, it is entirely possible that Rashīd al-Dīn's family left Hamadan for the safety of Maymūndiz before his birth. By comparison, Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī came under Ismā'īlī patronage some time in or shortly after 1224; perhaps the same is true of the doctors of Hamadan, 'Imād al-Daula Abu'l Khayr and his father, Muvaffaq al-Daula Eli.

The date of Rashīd al-Dīn's birth remains elusive. Scholars have been quick to disregard accounts giving particularly early or late dates. Rashīd al-Dīn's near contemporary, Ibn al-Suqāṭī (d. 1325), the Damascene continuator of Ibn Khallikān, reports that Rashīd al-Dīn died at the age of 80, which would put his birth as early as AH 638/1240-1 CE.¹⁴ Such a round number as 80 years invites suspicion, especially coming from a writer far removed geographically from his subject. Also unlikely is the evidence of an untidy chronogram for

¹³ Abū'l-Ghāzī Bahador Khan, *Histoire des Mogols et des Tatares*, ed. Baron Desmaisons (St. Petersburg: Academie Impériale des Sciences, 1871), 35; Dorothea Krawulsky, *The Mongol Ilkhāns and their vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 120.

¹⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse*, ed. Étienne Quatremère (Paris: Imprimerie Royale 1836), v.

Rashīd al-Dīn's birth, reported by Khwāndamīr, which can be read to date the birth between 1256 and 1268.¹⁵

Rashīd al-Dīn himself seems to offer some assistance in determining the time of his birth. However, just as we should question sources too far removed from his birth, so too should we be wary of the testimony of one so intimately involved as the subject himself. Autobiographical data is almost entirely absent from the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, but twice in his theological writings Rashīd al-Dīn makes reference to his age. In one of these instances, he mentions that he was around 60 years old in the year AH 705/1305-06 CE.¹⁶ On the basis of this report, which he considers "would be difficult to oppose," Quatremère dates Rashīd al-Dīn's birth to ca. AH 645 (beg. 8 May 1247).¹⁷ On the whole, modern scholars, finding Quatremère just as difficult to contradict as Quatremère found the testimony of Rashīd al-Dīn, have adopted 1247 or 1248 as the year of the latter's birth.¹⁸

The second autobiographical mention of Rashīd al-Dīn's birth comes in a work written around the 1310.¹⁹ At the time that Quatremère wrote, this work was not available for consultation; as late as 1920 Edward Browne expressed regret that it was lost.²⁰ In it, Rashīd al-Dīn mentions that at the time of composition he was 62 years of age.²¹ On its face, this claim

¹⁵ Ghiyās al-Dīn ibn Humām al-Dīn Khwāndamīr, "Khwāja Rashīd Ṭabīb," in *Dastur al-vuzarā'*, ed. Sa'īd Nafīsī (Tehran: Iqbāl, 1938), 315. The verse containing the chronogram is:

حکمت اویبک سریر قلم باز کرده است گوش جذر اصم
در طبیعی شناخته بتمام راز مولود و عنصر و اجرم

The variation in readings depends on whether the two vavs are counted.

¹⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Tauḍihāt*, Paris Bibliothèque Nationale ms. arabe 2324 (ancien fonds 356), fol. 162b, cited by Krawulsky 2011, 119.

¹⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Quatremère, v; c.f. Krawulsky 2011, 119.

¹⁸ See, for example, Edward G. Browne, *A history of Persian literature under Tartar dominion (A.D. 1265-1502)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), 69.

¹⁹ This is the *Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq*, discussed in Chapter Six and Appendix A.

²⁰ Browne 1920, 76f.

²¹ Josef van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten: zu Inhalt und Entstehungsgeschichte der theologischen Schriften des Rašīduddīn Faẓlullāh (gest. 718/1318)* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1981), 42.

seems to be more candid than the first, since it avoids the conveniently round number of 60 years. Based on it, Togan mistakenly subtracts 62 solar years from the converted date of 1310, with the result that he validates Quatremère’s calculation based on the Paris manuscript, viz. that Rashīd al-Dīn was born in 1248.²² Birgitt Hoffmann and Hashim Rajabzāda, following van Ess and Mujtabā Minuvī, each calculate Rashīd al-Dīn’s birth by subtracting 62 lunar years from AH 710 to arrive at a birth date some time during AH 647 or 648 (i.e., between April 1249 and March 1251).²³ Allowing Rashīd al-Dīn some grace for misrepresenting his own age on one or the other occasion, we can do little better than say that he was born between 1247 and 1251.

There is little reason to doubt that Rashīd al-Dīn was born Jewish, although of the contemporary chroniclers only Shabānkāra’i and Ibn Suqā’i explicitly mention this and some modern scholars have argued to the contrary.²⁴ Similarly, there is no reason to doubt the medical background into which he was born. When Rashīd al-Dīn reports on “the children of Ra’is al-Daula and Muvaffaq al-Daula,” who came out of Ismā’īlī protection with Naṣīr al-Dīn Tusī in 1256, he says that they were “famous as great physicians and their origins were from the city of Hamadan.”²⁵ A little over a decade after the fall of the Ismā’īlī fortresses, Rashīd al-Dīn’s father, ‘Imād al-Daula, was in Maragha, site of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī’s observatory, where he

²² Zeki Velidi Togan, “Reşid-üd-Din Tabīb,” in *İslâm ansiklopedisi. İslâm âlemi coğrafya, etnoğrafya ve biyografya lûgati. Vol. 9.1*, ed. M.T. Houtsma (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1960), 706.

²³ Birgitt Hoffmann, *Waqf im mongolischen Iran: Raşiduddīns Sorge um Nachruhm und Seelenheil* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2000), 59 and n. 45; Hāshim Rajabzāda, *Rashīd al-Dīn Fażl Allāh* (Tehran: Tarḥ-i Nau, 1998), 30.

²⁴ Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad Shabānkāra’i, *Mujma‘ al-ansāb*, ed. Mir Hāshim Muḥaddis (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1984), 270; Faḍl Allāh ibn Abī al-Fakhr ibn al-Şuqā’ī, *Tālī kitāb wafayāt al-a’yān: Un fonctionnaire chrétien dans l’administration mamelouke*, ed. Jacqueline Sublet (Damas: Institut Français de Damas, 1974), 183-84. The idea that Rashīd al-Dīn was born Muslim dates back to Étienne Quatremère, who makes that case based on Rashīd al-Dīn’s own testimony to his father’s sincere faith, as well as the name of his grandfather, which Quatremère reads as Muvaffaq al-Dīn ‘Alī and the fact that Muvaffaq al-Dīn kept company with such notable and devout Muslims as Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and Ra’is al-Dīn while living under Ismā’īlī protection, suggesting that he, too, was a “sincere and zealous” Muslim: Rashīd al-Dīn, ed Quatremère, v-vi. The evidence for Rashīd al-Dīn’s religious affiliation, along with interpretations of it by previous scholars, has been exhaustively gathered by Rajabzāda 1998, 100-31.

²⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed Raushan and Mūsavī, 990-91.

asked Ibn al-Fuwatī to copy a book for him.²⁶ Ibn al-Fuwatī refers to ‘Imād al-Daula and his brother as “highly respected physicians and philosophers.” Rashīd al-Dīn’s detractors mention his Jewish and medical background, though as a way to vilify, rather than praise their subject; Ibn Kathīr, the Mamluk historian and student of Ibn Taymiya, slanders him as the son of a Jewish perfumer/druggist [*atṭār*].²⁷

As already demonstrated, Hamadan hosted a large Jewish community before the arrival of the Mongols. With the gravitation of political and intellectual activity away from Khurāsān, Māzandarān, and Baghdad towards Northwest Iran and Azerbaijan outlined in Chapters One and Two, a family of prominent doctors of Hamadan would have been well positioned to find appointment within the Mongol government. The new Mongol capitals in Azerbaijan attracted scholars of all types; for example, Naṣīr al-Dīn’s observatory employed a staff of trained astronomers from across the Mongol Empire. What meager evidence survives concerning Jewish institutions in Baghdad suggests that the rabbinic and Talmudic authorities also relocated to the north. The Jews of Baghdad had originally considered the arrival of the Mongols as a reprieve from at least eighty years of persecution under the latter ‘Abbāsids; the Exiliarch at the time of the conquest welcomed Hülegü into the city.²⁸ Ibn Kathīr reports that only Jews and Christians survived the Mongol sack of Baghdad, though some caution should always be exercised in reading Mamluk sources on the Mongols.²⁹ Talmudic activity in the former ‘Abbāsīd capital seems to have declined or ended altogether for the first decades of Mongol rule, as no evidence survives on the Geonim, or heads of the Talmudic academy, in this

²⁶ ‘Abd al-Razzāq ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Fuwatī, *Talkhīs madjma’ al-ādāb fi mu’djab al-alqāb*. Vol. iv.2: *Kitāb al-qyn*, ed. Muṣṭafa Jawād (Damascus: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa wa al-Irshād al-Qawmī, 1963), 719-720 (#1043);

²⁷ ‘Imād al-Dīn Ismā’īl ibn ‘Umar ibn Kathīr, *Al-bidāya wa an-nihāya* (Beirut: Maktaba al-ma’ārif, 1966), vi.87, cited in Rajabzāda 1998, 102. For more on the animosity between Rashīd al-Dīn and Ibn Taymiya, see Chapter Six.

²⁸ Moshe Gil, *Jews in Islamic countries in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 429-31.

²⁹ Cited in Gil 2004, 433.

period.³⁰ Similarly, information about the exiliarchy during this time is limited to a mention by Ibn al-Fuwatī, who supplemented his meager income by copying books for private clients, including a copy of the lineage of exiliarchs for the contemporary exiliarch at Tabriz.³¹ Walter Fischel, citing Ibn al-Fuwatī, considers it “probable,” though admittedly lacking documentation, that the seat of the Jewish exiliarchy moved from Baghdad to Tabriz with the transfer of political authority to the north.³² By comparison, the Jacobite Bishop of Aleppo, Bar Hebraeus, spent a significant portion of the last years of his life rebuilding churches in the Northwest of Iran, dying at Maragha in 1286.³³

Thus, Rashīd al-Dīn was born into a significant, if not thriving Jewish community of northern Iran, whether at Hamadan, Qazvīn, or at the fortress of Maymūndiz in the nearby region of Daylām. By simple virtue of proximity, the son of a doctor from Hamadan living under the protection of the Ismāʿīlī *imām* in the mid thirteenth century was better situated for a life at court than he would have been just a few decades earlier under the last ‘Abbāsīd caliphs. The “children of Ra’is al-Daula and Muvaffaq al-Daula” whom Rashīd al-Dīn reports joining Hülegü must have included his own father, ‘Imād al-Daula b. Muvaffaq al-Daula. Rashīd al-Dīn suggests that these men and their families formed an immediate and lasting bond with the ruling strata of the Mongol state. “Until now,” he wrote fifty years later, “they and their children have constantly been and still are attendant and esteemed at the court of Hülegü Khan and his illustrious offspring.”³⁴ While there is no more direct evidence than this that ‘Imād al-Daula participated in the administration of the new Mongol state, his *laqab*, ending as

³⁰ Gil 2004, 465-67.

³¹ Cited in Gil 2004, 446.

³² Walter J. Fischel, “Azarbaijan in Jewish history,” *Proceedings of the Americal Academy for Jewish Research* 22 (1953): 6.

³³ For the life of Bar Hebraeus, see Hidemi Takahashi, *Barhebraeus: a bio-bibliography* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2005), 1-55.

³⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 990-91.

it does in “al-Daula,” fits an onomastic pattern of Jews and Christians serving at the Mongol court.³⁵ We have already seen that Ibn al-Fuwaṭī knew him and his family in al-Fuwaṭī’s role as librarian to the Ṭūsī’s scientific establishment at Maragha. Muvaffaq al-Daula’s son, Rashīd al-Dīn, of course, eventually came to embody the administrative and intellectual life of the Ilkhanid court.

Before beginning his career at court, however, the young Rashīd al-Dīn pursued his medical training. His initial training most likely came at the hands of his father and uncle, whom Ibn al-Fuwaṭī and later Rashīd al-Dīn himself acknowledge as prominent doctors in the young Mongol state.³⁶ Later, he travelled to Yazd to study with two prominent doctors of that city.³⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn maintained a bond with the elite of Yazdī society, intervening on their behalf and marrying his children into their families after he became vizier of the Ilkhanate.³⁸ He also made significant financial investments in Yazd: Hoffmann identifies over five hundred of the close to one thousand land holdings listed in Rashīd al-Dīn’s surviving endowment deed

³⁵ Vaṣṣāf 1853, 238.

³⁶ For Rashīd al-Dīn to have learned medicine from his father and uncle would have been entirely normal in the medieval Middle East, where medicine was often a hereditary profession, though no specific mention of this early training survives. Hoffmann incorrectly cites Togan to the effect that a manuscript of Rashīd al-Dīn’s *Bayān al-haqā’iq* mentions his early medical training under his father and uncle: Hoffmann 2000, 64, n. 84. Togan’s reference is to folios 50a and 269a [sic] of the Arabic version of this work (Kılıç Ali Pasha ms. 834) and relates to the question of Rashīd al-Dīn’s birth, and not the circumstances of his medical training: Togan 1960, 706 (Hoffmann follows Van Ess in citing p. 705 [sic]); cf. Van Ess 1981, 40-42, which cites portions of the Kılıç Ali Pasha manuscript including those folios cited by Togan. Rajabzāda’s recent edition of the *Bayān* uses the Arabic Kılıç Ali Pasha manuscript only to reconstruct portions of the text not found in the fragmentary Persian copy (Majlis ms. 1329; see Appendix A.ii) and does not include the information that Togan cites.

³⁷ Ja’far ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan Ja’farī, *Ta’rīkh-i Yazd*, ed. Īrāj Afshār (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1959), 92; Aḥmed ibn Husayn ibn ‘Alī Kātīb, *Tārīkh-i jadīd-i Yazd*, ed. Īrāj Afshār (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1967), 134.

³⁸ On the connections of Rashīd al-Dīn with Yazd, see Īrāj Afshār, “*Rashīd al-Dīn Faḏl Allāh va Yazd*,” in *Majmu’ā-yi khatābi-ha-yi tahaqīqī dar bāra-i Rashīd al-Dīn Faḏl Allāh Hamadānī*, ed. Sayyid Ḥussayn Naṣr et al. (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tehrān, 1971), 25-32; Rajabzāda 1998, 66-70.

as located in and around that city.³⁹ Furthermore, as mentioned below, Yazd may have played an important role in Rashīd al-Dīn's entrance to administrative responsibilities.

Rashīd al-Dīn's medical background was an important factor in his winning the confidence of the Mongol amirs of Abaqa's court.⁴⁰ The most contemporary biographical account of Rashīd al-Dīn, that of his protégé Nāṣir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī, testifies to the fact that the future vizier came to attention of the Mongol *amīrs* under Abaqa and continued to rise in prominence and in the trust of the Mongol amirs under Arghun.⁴¹ Later, Rashīd al-Dīn credited the strength of his relationship with Öljeitü to the time that he spent at the court of the latter's grandfather, father, and brother.⁴² While the young Rashīd al-Dīn's role at the court of Abaqa is unclear, his presence there set in motion an alliance that was as much familial as it was official. In March of 1282, just a month before the death of Abaqa, while Arghun was governor of Khurāsān, Rashīd al-Dīn attended the birth of prince Khudabanda, the future Sulṭān Öljeitü, who eventually took the same *laqab* and *ism* as Rashīd al-Dīn's own son and heir: Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad.⁴³ Later, Öljeitü treated Rashīd al-Dīn as a trusted family doctor as well as vizier. In 1304, Rashīd al-Dīn stood as advocate for Öljeitü's wife Qutluḡshāh in her marriage to the Sulṭān and later was entrusted with raising their daughter, who died in

³⁹ Hoffmann 2000, 65. On the endowment deed, see Chapter Seven.

⁴⁰ Again, this fits an established pattern of medical practitioners gaining privileged access to the Mongol court; Sa'd al-Daula is one particularly proximate precedent. This notion, like the idea that Rashīd al-Dīn first studied medicine from his father and uncle at Hamadan, has become a standard element in biographies (for example, see 'Abd al-Hayy Habībī, "Ruziḡār va Āsār va shakhṣiyat-i nikūkār-i Rashīd al-Dīn vizīr," in *Majmu'a-yi khatābi-ha-yi tahaqīqī dar bāra-ie Rashīd al-Dīn Faḡl Allāh Hamadānī*, ed. Sayyid Ḥusayn Naṣr et al. (Tehran: Dāneshgāh-e Tehrān, 1971), 82, though the only direct textual evidence is a formulaic mention by Nāṣir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī, *Nazā'im al-aṣḡar min laṭā'im al-akhbār: dar tārikh-i vuzarā'* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Iṭṭilā'āt, 1985), 113.

⁴¹ Munshī Kirmānī, 112-113.

⁴² Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Kitāb al-sulṭāniya*, Istanbul Nur Osmāniya ms. 3415, fol. 134a, cited in Rajabzada 33, n. 2.

⁴³ Hoffmann 2000, 77.

his care.⁴⁴ In 1306, when Öljeitü campaigned against Gīlān, he dispatched Rashīd al-Dīn to attend another wife who had fallen ill, and when Rashīd al-Dīn was bed-bound with gout, the Sulṭān visited him personally.⁴⁵

Such close ties between the descendants of Hülegü and those of Ra'is al-Daula and Muvaffaq al-Daula, as well as the textual evidence written by Rashīd al-Dīn and Munshī Kirmānī, suggest that the young Jewish doctor from Hamadan was present at the Ilkhanid court during the reigns of Abaqa and Arghun. Direct evidence for this is limited to Rashīd al-Dīn's own claim to have attended the birth of Öljeitü.⁴⁶ More problematic is the account in the *Sawāniḥ al-afkār* of a trip Rashīd al-Dīn purportedly made to India on behalf of Arghun to open diplomatic channels with the *sulṭān* of Delhi and collect medicinal plants available only in that country.⁴⁷ As discussed in the Introduction and further in Chapter Eight, this letter is better evidence for the literary elaboration of Rashīd al-Dīn's historical memory than for his actual life. However, it still stands to reason that he held a position of some trust already at the court of the father of his two main patrons. Arghun's reign, it will be remembered, saw the rise of Sa'd al-Daula, himself a Jewish doctor of Northern Iran, to the highest level of the administration.

A silent conversion

The reign of Geikhatu (1291-94) was a crucial turning point for the Ilkhanate and, by all indications, for Rashīd al-Dīn, and yet contemporary sources are all but silent on the future vizier during this period. Munshī Kirmānī suggests that Rashīd al-Dīn attained prominence

⁴⁴ Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljāytū*, ed. Mahīn Hambly (Tehran: Bangāh-i Tarjumah va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1969), 8, 42.

⁴⁵ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 44, 195.

⁴⁶ This claim comes in the preface to the *Kitāb al-sulṭānīya*, discussed in Chapter Six: Van Ess 1981, 18.

⁴⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Sawāniḥ al-afkār-i rashīdī*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tih-rān, 1979), 146-51, discussed in the Introduction.

during the reign of Geikhatu, stating that “when Geikhatu Khan became Padishah, the mark of vizierial authority [*raqm-i ikhtiyār*] came to him.”⁴⁸ Hoffmann reads this simply to mean that Rashīd al-Dīn turned forty during this period and thus became eligible for the post; Khwāndamīr suggests that he was offered the position and declined it.⁴⁹ As these competing readings indicate, this reference by Munshī Kirmānī offers no firm evidence about Rashīd al-Dīn’s position during this turbulent period.

One other textual reference may refer to Rashīd al-Dīn during the reign of Geikhatu. This is an episode in the continuation of Bar Hebraeus’ chronicle in which a Jew named Rashīd al-Daula assumes the unenviable task of providing for the Ilkhan’s table during the fiscal crisis of late 1294.⁵⁰ If this is in fact a reference to Rashīd al-Dīn, then it is the earliest textual mention of the future vizier and the only such mention written before he had risen to the highest levels of the Ilkhanid administration. Even if it does not refer to Rashīd al-Dīn, however, this episode raises one of the most intractable questions about Rashīd al-Dīn’s early life, namely the question of dating his conversion to Islam. In the wake of the disastrous vizierate of Sa’d al-Daula, it would come as a surprise that a Jewish doctor, and particularly one attached to the house of Arghun, would retain a position of trust at the Mongol court, yet the episode from Bar Hebraeus suggests that a Jew (whether this was our doctor from Hamadan or not) still enjoyed privileged access at court as late as 1294.

Given that, in 1295, Rashīd al-Dīn appears as a governor of Yazd and several other provinces within the intolerantly Muslim administration of the newly converted Ghazan Khan,

⁴⁸ Munshī Kirmānī, 112; cf. Rajabzāda 1998, 32 stating that the same information is to be found in Hajjī ibn Niẓām ‘Aqīlī, *Aṣār al-vuzarā*, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Husaynī Muḥaddis (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tih-rān, 1959), 284-86.

⁴⁹ Hoffmann 2000, 66; Khwāndamīr, ed. Nafīsī, 316.

⁵⁰ Bar Hebraeus, *The chronography of Gregory Abū’l Faraj*, tr. E.A. Wallis Budge (London: Oxford Univ. Press, H. Milford, 1932), 496.

the question of when and why Rashīd al-Dīn converted becomes all the more acute.⁵¹ If the Rashīd al-Daula of Bar Hebraeus' chronicle is to be identified with Rashīd al-Dīn, then either his conversion came after 1294, and thus several years after the anti-Jewish reaction in the wake of the vizierate of Sa'd al-Daula, or else the chronicle is mistaken in identifying its subject as a Jew. That Rashīd al-Dīn's Jewish origins followed him as a source of accusations concerning the sincerity of his conversion has already been noted and will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Seven. Perhaps Bar Hebraeus' chronicle is simply the earliest extant witness to the durable association of Rashīd al-Dīn's Jewish heritage. Indeed, the episode of Rashīd al-Daula falls within the context of a section of text dedicated to rehearsing the corrupt practices of the Jewish administrators of the Ilkhanate. Rashīd al-Daula's failure to sustain Geikhatu's royal table makes sense within the anti-Jewish polemic of the surrounding text only if its subject is identified as a Jew, providing one reason for its author to overlook Rashīd al-Dīn's conversion to Islam.

Modern scholars have proposed various theories about the time of Rashīd al-Dīn's conversion, ranging from the time of his youth to as late as fifty years old. Arguing for a late interpretation, Barthold and Spuler draw from the reports of Rashīd al-Dīn's political adversaries, after the conversion of Ghazan Khān in 1295.⁵² Modern Jewish scholars of the medieval Middle East downplay the fact that Rashīd al-Dīn converted at all in order to maintain his place as an eminent Jewish personality.⁵³ For Rashīd al-Dīn's conversion to have come late in life or to have been only superficial, he would have had to survive the violent

⁵¹ Munshī Kirmānī, 112; Shabānkāraī ed. Muḥaddis, 214. On Ghazan's conversion, see Chapter Six.

⁵² Discussed in I.P. Petrushevsky, "Rashīd al-Dīn's conception of the state," *CAJ* 14.1-3 (1970): 152 n. 16. For his part, Petrushevsky follows Blochet in concluding that Rashīd al-Dīn was Muslim from birth.

⁵³ See, for example, Fischel 1969, who refers to the conversion only in a footnote (!), calling Rashīd al-Dīn "one of the victims of a wave of conversions which swept over the intellectual strata of Babylonian-Persian Jewry in the second part of the 13th century," xx n. 26.

reaction against Jews following the deaths in 1291 of Arghun Khan and his Jewish vizier, Sa‘d al-Daula. In any case, a Jewish Rashīd al-Dīn could hardly have gained a position in Ghazan’s administration anytime before the death of Naurūz in 1297.

Hāshim Rajabzāda cites two letters attributed to Rashīd al-Dīn as evidence that he converted before Ghazan’s accession, though as always, the authenticity of these letters must be questioned.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the mass violence perpetrated against Jews after 1291 suggests that Rashīd al-Dīn either had converted by that time or else converted out of a sense of self preservation. Arguing of an even earlier date of conversion, Krawulsky cites an autobiographical passage in which Rashīd al-Dīn describes learning about and gaining a respect for Islam from the company of Islamic scholars and Sufis who sought the company of his father.⁵⁵ This account does not mention conversion specifically, yet Krawulsky reads it as validation of the idea that ‘Imād al-Daula, and by extension his son, had converted by 1267. This is somewhat milder than, but in the same vein as Quatremère and Blochet’s argument that Rashīd al-Dīn was Muslim from birth based on the fact of his father’s association with Naṣīr al-Dīn Tusī. However, given that the account in question comes in a collection of Rashīd al-Dīn’s theological writing, it could easily be read as an attempt by the author to establish his credentials as a scholar of Qur’ānic commentary by emphasizing his early exposure to Islamic theology.

Two further facts militate against such an early date of conversion. First is the fact that Rashīd al-Dīn demonstrates a deep understanding of Jewish lore, exegesis, and law, even

⁵⁴ Rajabzāda 1998, 127-28.

⁵⁵ Krawulsky 2011, 123, citing Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Kitāb al-tauḍīḥāt*, Bibliothèque Nationale ms. arabe 2324 fol. 119a.

employing Hebrew vocabulary in his writing.⁵⁶ Second is the abovementioned fact that accusations of his insincere conversion followed him to the grave and beyond. These facts taken together suggest that Rashīd al-Dīn was exposed to some degree of Jewish education and that his contemporaries knew him as a Jew. In all likelihood, Rashīd al-Dīn grew up Jewish among the still-strong, or even expanding, Jewish community of Northern Iran in the 1250s and 1260s. Only after reaching some degree of education and social exposure as a Jew did he convert, leaving himself open to later attacks of insincerity in his Muslim faith.

Faced with such uncertainty, the safest course is to accept the evidence of the Mamluk historian al-‘Aynī (d. 1451). Writing a century after Rashīd al-Dīn’s death, ‘Aynī credits Rashīd al-Dīn with claiming to have converted to Islam at the age of 30.⁵⁷ Of course, we must remain cautious of accepting purportedly first-person claims from Rashīd al-Dīn about his own life, especially when they contain round numbers and appear in sources far removed from him in time and place. The fact that al-‘Aynī claims to preserve Rashīd al-Dīn’s own statement about his conversion may speak to a more or less reliable transmission of information from the Ilkhanate, and perhaps ultimately from Ibn al-Fuwatī, though this can probably never be definitively established. If, however, this report were at least true enough to be believed by near-contemporaries, it opens the door to dating Rashīd al-Dīn’s conversion to the late 1270s or early 1280s, exactly the period when the Juvaynīs were promoting their new brand of Iranian kingship. When we further consider that one of their allies in this effort was the renowned Shāfi‘ite theologian Bayḍāwī, it becomes entirely reasonable that Rashīd al-Dīn’s conversion was neither the result of youthful exposure to Islamic teaching nor an act of

⁵⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Die Geschichte der Kinder Israels des Rašīd ad-Dīn*, ed. Karl Jahn (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1973), 9-16.

⁵⁷ Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad ‘Aynī, *Iqd al-jumān fī ta’rīkh ahl al-zamān: ‘aṣr salāṭīn al-Mamālīk*, cited in ‘Abbās ‘Azzāwī, *Ta’rīkh al-‘Irāq bayna iḥtilālāyn* (Qum, Iran: Intishārāt al-Sharīf al-Raḏī, 1990), i.455.

desperation in the early 1290s but rather a conscious choice in the face of a new political reality then being promoted in Iranian and Shāfiʿite Sunnī terms. We know that Bayḍāwī travelled to Tabriz at least once in 1279, and Rashīd al-Dīn was evidently familiar with his historical writing.⁵⁸ In sum, the latter part of Abaqa’s reign and the reign of Aḥmad Tegüder, when Muslim Persian administrators were enjoying increased influence at court, is by all evidence the most likely context in which a young Jewish doctor with connections to the Ilkhanid court would embrace Islam. While the fall of the Juvaynīs did precipitate some anti-Muslim repression, this was not systematic, and the new heads of the administration, the brothers Buqa and Aruq Jalayir, continued to protect and patronize members of the Juvaynī administrative corps. For a Muslim Rashīd al-Dīn to have survived the relatively haphazard purges of 1284-89 is far more likely than for a Jewish Rashīd al-Daula to have survived the violent persecution of Jews subsequent to the death of Sa’d al-Daula and Arghun Khan.

The period of Geikhatu’s reign also saw the formation of Ghazan’s administrative apparatus, centered on Amīrs Naurūz and Qutlughshāh and the *sāhib-dīwān* Sa’d al-Dīn Savājī. Unlike Sa’d al-Dīn and other prominent Persianate administrators for the Ilkhans, Rashīd al-Dīn’s early career cannot be definitively tied to the retinue of one or another Mongol amīr.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the Amīrs Qutlughshāh and Chupan each demonstrate particularly close ties to Rashīd al-Dīn later in his life and may have served as his patron early in his career. Both men

⁵⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn’s history of the Salghurid dynasty of Fars is clearly patterned on that of Bayḍāwī. See London British Library ms. Add. 7628 fol. 268a-271b; cf. ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar Bayḍāwī, *Nizām al-tawārīkh*, ed. Mīr Hashim Moḥaddiṣ (Tehran: Afshar, 2003), *passim*. Vaṣṣāf’s history of the Salghurids also generally follows Bayḍāwī’s model.

⁵⁹ For the Mongol patrons of other viziers, see Charles Melville, “The *keshig* in Iran: the survival of the royal Mongol household,” in *Beyond the legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 160: “in the time of Arghun, Ordoqiya promoted Sa’d al-Dawla; under Geikhatu, Taghachar promoted Ṣadr al-Dīn Khālidi; Sa’d al-Dīn Sāwajī was advanced by Nurin Aqa under Ghazan, and Tāj al-Dīn ‘Alīshāh by Amīr Ḥusayn Küregen under Öljeitü.”

played crucial roles in Ghazan's rise to the throne, and thus could have and provided Rashīd al-Dīn access to imperial appointment.

Qutlughshāh enjoyed privileged access to the royal family at least since Ghazan's childhood.⁶⁰ Later, Qutlughshāh became Ghazan's brother-in-law and served as one of his staunchest supporters throughout the period of his rebellion against Baidu. In telling of the events precipitating his own rise to the vizierate, Rashīd al-Dīn mentions that he and Qutlughshāh emerged from the same *keshig* (guard), suggesting that the two had a history together in Ghazan's military and civil administration.⁶¹ Elsewhere, Rashīd al-Dīn reports on Qutlughshāh suffering alcohol poisoning, adding that Qutlughshāh swore off wine after that experience, and vouching for his having never since touched a drop.⁶² In this rare moment of near-autobiography, we can almost sense Rashīd al-Dīn the doctor concerned for the health of his ally and patient.

A second possible early patron for Rashīd al-Dīn is Amīr Chupan, who was able in 1318 to convince the retired vizier to return to court service. After the death of Arghun Khan, Chupan had coordinated the transfer of the dead khan's wives and household to the camp of Geikhatu, stifling Amīr Taghachar's indecisive efforts to enthrone Baidu at that time.⁶³ If we see Rashīd al-Dīn in the entourage of Chupan, then the later rivalry between Taghachar's deputy Şadr al-Dīn Zanjānī and Rashīd al-Dīn finds an explanation as an extension of the rivalry between these two powerful *amīrs*. Further, Chupan was central to the defection of *amīrs* from Baidu to Ghazan mediated by Shaykh Maḥmud in 1295: Chupan literally rode off with a large number of Baidu's horses straight into Ghazan's camp, a move that obligated

⁶⁰ It was Qutlughshāh who delivered the young Ghazan to Abaqa when the latter expressed his interest in raising his grandson himself: Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1208.

⁶¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1284.

⁶² Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1238.

⁶³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1184.

Ghazan to Chupan and, by extension, to his retinue just before Rashīd al-Dīn gained his appointment as governor of Yazd.⁶⁴

Qutlughshāh's service and Chupan's defection provide two possible moments when the future vizier Rashīd al-Dīn might have come into the service of Ghazan Khan. A third, of course, is the episode from the continuation of Bar Hebraeus' chronicle of Rashīd al-Daula fleeing the Ilkhanid court in late 1294. Though certainly not conclusive, when seen against the backdrop of factionalism among groups of Mongol *amīrs* and Persianate scholar-bureaucrats, all this evidence suggests that Rashīd al-Dīn had access to the shadow court created by Ghazan and Sa'd al-Dīn during the years of Geikhatu's reign and Naurūz's rebellion. After Ghazan's accession, Rashīd al-Dīn was awarded the governorship of several southern provinces, and from there, was elevated into the higher levels of the administration.

Man of state

Rashīd al-Dīn emerges unambiguously in the contemporary chronicles with the rise of Ghazan Khan (r. 1295-1304). Shabānkāraī mentions his appointment as the governor of Yazd early in Ghazan's reign, adding that the province flourished under his management.⁶⁵ His first attested assignment at Ghazan's own court was as deputy vizier to Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvajī in 1298. The idea that the Ilkhans maintained a dual vizierate is largely based on the fact that Rashīd al-Dīn, beginning in 1298, performed the duties of chief minister alongside another head administrator in a sometimes friendly but often antagonistic dynamic. Here, as elsewhere, scholars generally follow Quatremère, who suggests that the practice of a divided vizierate was the Ilkhans' check against the concentration of too much power in the hands of a single

⁶⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Alizada, 607-08, 611.

⁶⁵ Shabānkāraī ed. Muḥaddith, 214; cf. Munshī Kirmānī, 112.

individual, despite the factionalism implicit in such an arrangement.⁶⁶ A.K.S. Lambton has identified the Ilkhanid period as a “temporary break” in the Perso-Islamic institution of the vizierate, as the long process of rectifying Mongol and Persian modes of administration created discontinuity in the actual practice of the office.⁶⁷ Before 1298, as has been demonstrated, single individuals wielded increasingly monolithic administrative power, which they shared among their family and partisans. Thus Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī, Amīr Buqa, Sa’d al-Daula, and Ṣadr al-Dīn had all buttressed their individual authority by appointing their relatives and associates to various administrative positions. Furthermore, as has been seen, the terms applied to certain administrative positions in the early decades of the Ilkhanate alternated between Sino-Mongol and Perso-Islamic nomenclature and both Chin Temür and Körgüz served as deputy to their superior officers before attaining the highest administrative positions in the Mongol imperial province of Khurāsān and Māzandarān.

All these factors have led to significant confusion in the nature and title of administrative positions at the Ilkhanid court. For the most part, however, the division of responsibilities between Rashīd al-Dīn and Sa’d al-Dīn Sāvajī (and later Tāj al-Dīn ‘Alīshāh), can be read as the gradual rearticulation of the division between the offices of vizier and *sāhib-dīwān*. These titles are sometimes applied to Rashīd al-Dīn by his contemporaries and protégés, though these applications are largely anachronistic and hide the fact that, from 1298 until 1317, Rashīd al-Dīn held a unique place in the administration of Iran, performing the duties of such offices while retaining a personal tie to his sovereigns based as much in his medical background and scholarly activity as his administrative activities.

⁶⁶ Quatremère, xxxii.

⁶⁷ Ann K.S. Lambton, *Continuity and change in Medieval Persia: aspects of administrative, economic and social history, 11th-14th century* (Albany, NY: Bibliotheca Persica, 1988), 50-51.

As related in Chapter Three, Ghazan came to the throne at the age of 23 after defeating his father's cousin Baidu for control of the Ilkhanid realm. At the time of Ghazan's ascension, Rashīd al-Dīn was nearly twice as old as the sultan and had served at the court of Ghazan's grandfather, father, and uncle.⁶⁸ Also, he had embraced Islam, a step that Ghazan himself took during the course of the struggle with Baidu. Rashīd al-Dīn was, at this point, trusted both as a doctor and as an administrator, and had been allowed into the ruler's family and system of governance: the Mamluk biographer Ṣafadī reports that Rashīd al-Dīn was Ghazan's "counselor and kin and companion and confidant and doctor and cook, so that Ghazan only ate from Rashīd al-Dīn's hands and the hands of his sons."⁶⁹

Despite these close connections with the ruling family, there is significant ambiguity about what formal role Rashīd al-Dīn played in the central Ilkhanid administration. Nāsir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī tells of the great confidence that the Mongol *amīrs* placed in Rashīd al-Dīn even before Ghazan's ascension, but he describes his relationship with the latter as one of a

⁶⁸ Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Jalīl Aybak Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-wāfi bi-al-wafayāt*. Vol. 25, ed. Muḥammad al-Ḥujayrī (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 1999), 227. There is no surviving indication of Rashīd al-Dīn's relationship with Baidu. In the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, Baidu's short period on the throne (amounting to little more than five months during 1295) does not stand alone as a separate reign, but rather as the first of several instances of rebellion during the early reign of Ghazan. See Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1244-61. Similarly, the *Shu'ab-i panjgāna* gives no independent entry for Baidu: Judith Pfeiffer, "Reflections on a 'double rapprochement': conversion to Islam among the Mongol elite during the early Ilkhanate," in *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 374.

⁶⁹ Ṣafadī, 227. There are numerous reasons to accept that Rashīd al-Dīn was involved, at least at some time, with the preparation of food at court. Of course, the episode from the continuation of Bar Hebraeus, discussed above, if it indeed refers to Rashīd al-Dīn, gives direct evidence to this. Otherwise, as a student of Galenic medicine, Rashīd al-Dīn would have been aware of the effect of various foods on the body's humors: see Peter E. Pormann and Emilie Savage-Smith, *Medieval Islamic medicine* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 41-71. Rashīd al-Dīn is reported as holding the title *ba'urchi* (cook) within the household (*keshig*) organization of the Mongol court: Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 127-29. Such titles were frequently symbolic, though Rashīd al-Dīn may have been called *ba'urchi* in deference to the Galenic connection between diet and health.

privy councilor and regional administrator, and not a dossiered minister.⁷⁰ The final disgrace of the vizier Şadr al-Dīn allowed for Rashīd al-Dīn's appointment, along with Sa'd al-Dīn Savāji, to the head of the Ilkhanid administration. As the first episode in which Rashīd al-Dīn becomes directly involved in Ilkhanid politics at the highest level, the sources for this event are somewhat better than for his life preceding this point. They reveal not only the special relationship with Ghazan that Rashīd al-Dīn enjoyed, but also how historians in subsequent decades emphasized this pivotal moment in the process of reasserting the regular titulature of vizier and *sāhib-dīwān*.

As discussed in Chapter Three, Şadr al-Dīn had been reappointed to the vizierate by Ghazan twice, first after his role in catalyzing the latter's revolt against Baidu in 1295 and again in the lead-up to the fall of Amīr Naurūz. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, less than six months after Şadr al-Dīn's final appointment in 1297 two men accused the vizier of embezzlement.⁷¹ While other sources do not mention these accusations, they agree that Şadr al-Dīn fell from grace after failing to impress Ghazan with his own accusations against Rashīd al-Dīn.⁷² While Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī blandly accuses Şadr al-Dīn of harboring "guile" (*tazvīr*), Rashīd al-Dīn and Munshī Kirmānī each report a dramatic court scene in which Ghazan rebukes his vizier in favor of Rashīd al-Dīn. Rashīd al-Dīn's involvement and investment in this affair lends his account particular narrative drama, directly quoting Ghazan's rebuke of Şadr al-Dīn.⁷³ A number of narrative elements of the story, most notably the denunciation of the vizier by named bureaucrats and the manner of his execution – being cut in half by the side of

⁷⁰ Munshī Kirmānī, 112.

⁷¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1283-85.

⁷² Munshī Kirmānī, 112; Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī Qazvīnī, *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā'ī (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1983), 604.

⁷³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1283-85.

a canal – fit Şadr al-Dīn’s execution into the narrative pattern applied to other disgraced viziers across medieval Persian historiography.⁷⁴

The death of Şadr al-Dīn, and perhaps more importantly Ghazan’s rebuke of his vizier in favor of his confidante Rashīd al-Dīn, positioned the latter to assume a leading position in the administration. Contemporary chronicles, however, give no clear indication of Rashīd al-Dīn’s official role after this event. Vaṣṣāf asserts quite clearly that the position of finance minister (*mansab-i sāhib-dīwāni*) fell to Sa’d al-Dīn, while the regency and vizierate fell to Rashīd al-Dīn.⁷⁵ Elsewhere, Vaṣṣāf again implies that Sa’d al-Dīn was *sāhib-dīwān* and Rashīd al-Dīn vizier during Ghazan’s first campaign to Syria.⁷⁶ Other reports are not as certain. Most notably, Rashīd al-Dīn himself does not claim to have become vizier, instead naming Sa’d al-Dīn Sāvajī in that post.⁷⁷ Hoffmann has pointed out that both Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī and Shabānkāraī distinguish between the title of vizier, which was bestowed on Sa’d al-Dīn, and the actual work of managing the state, which remained in the hands of Rashīd al-Dīn.⁷⁸

Hoffmann considers “not entirely outlandish” Barthold’s argument that Rashīd al-Dīn rejected the title of vizier, something that Khwāndamīr suggests he already had done under Geikhatu, in order to protect his personal and professional position. Indeed, we get confirmation of this from Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī’s other historical work, the poetical *Zafarnāma* (discussed in Chapter Eight), where he periodizes the history of the late Ilkhanid period both by the reigns of sultans and the administrations of viziers. While the elevation and death of Şadr al-Dīn, Sa’d al-Dīn, and Tāj al-Dīn ‘Alīshāh are set apart with heading titles, no such mention is made of

⁷⁴ Julie S. Meisami, “History as literature,” in *Persian historiography*, ed. Charles Melville (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 42-52; Charles Melville, “The historian at work,” in *Persian historiography*, ed. Charles Melville (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 73-80.

⁷⁵ Vaṣṣāf 1853, 347.

⁷⁶ Vaṣṣāf 1853, 374.

⁷⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1286.

⁷⁸ Hoffmann 2000, 70-71.

Rashīd al-Dīn as vizier. Finally, Vaṣṣāf is directly contradicted by Mamluk chronicles, which mention Rashīd al-Dīn on Ghazan's first campaign into Syria, but only as a seemingly obscure advisor.⁷⁹

These various accounts can be rectified if we read Vaṣṣāf's description as an anachronistic attempt to apply a traditional Perso-Islamic structure – that of *sāhib-dīwān* and vizier – onto the complex and shifting mechanism by which the Mongol Ilkhans distributed favor and protected against the consolidation of administrative power into one individual's hands. While Rashīd al-Dīn's titulature may not have matched his responsibilities during Ghazan's reign, he was unquestionably an important figure, if not the single most influential person at court. In this regard, a parallel might be drawn between Rashīd al-Dīn and Bahā' al-Dīn Juvayni, who served as *sāhib-dīwān* to the early governors of the Mongol Middle East, even when that position did not carry any apparent official duty. In addition to Rashīd al-Dīn's presence on the first Syrian campaign, he was instrumental in negotiating the surrender of Raḥba al-Sham during the third campaign of 702/1303. In his own account of this event, Rashīd al-Dīn calls himself simply “the physician” (*ṭabīb*) in contrast to the *sāhib-dīwān* Sa'd al-Dīn.⁸⁰ On the same campaign, the two men stood as co-sponsors of Vaṣṣāf, presenting him and the first three books of his history to the Ilkhan, as discussed in Chapter Five.⁸¹ As Ghazan's most trusted advisor, Rashīd al-Dīn also co-sponsored great administrative and endowment projects with his patron and undertook the great dynastic history for which he is most famous.

The ascension of Öljeitü in 1304 solidified the influence of Rashīd al-Dīn, who was already deeply personally invested in the new Sulṭān. Öljeitü followed his brother Ghazan's

⁷⁹ Reuven Amitai-Preiss, “New material from the Mamluk sources for the biography of Rashīd al-Dīn,” in *The court of the Il-khans*, ed. Julian Raby and Teresa Fitzherbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 28.

⁸⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1311.

⁸¹ Vaṣṣaf 1853, 405-7.

example in relying on Rashīd al-Dīn for advice in matters of state. In a frequently cited, though somewhat unclear episode, Rashīd al-Dīn seems to have devised a test for determining the sincerity of a group of Jewish doctors expressing their intent to convert to Islam, suggesting that Öljeitü have the converts eat a meal of camel meat boiled in milk, thereby breaking two Jewish dietary strictures at once.⁸² Through this period, however, there remains no clarity on Rashīd al-Dīn's official role at court. Narrating events around the ascension and coronation of the new Sulṭān, Qāshānī names both Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvajī and Rashīd al-Dīn as viziers, yet Shabānkāraī echoes Vaṣṣāf's account of the situation in 1298 by stating that Öljeitü's vizier was the same (*hamān*) as before, namely that Sa'd al-Dīn retained the "title of the vizierate" (*nām-i vizārat*) while the work of the state (*kār-i mamlakat*) remained in the hands of Rashīd al-Dīn.⁸³

Whatever his title, Rashīd al-Dīn's position at the court of Öljeitü can best be described as one of intercessor. This likely included diplomatic work like that he had already performed for Ghazan; Rashīd al-Dīn may have been involved in negotiating between the Sulṭān and the leaders of Gīlān to bring a diplomatically acceptable end to Öljeitü's ill-fated assault of that intractable province.⁸⁴ It also, however, took a new form, as Rashīd al-Dīn became a theological guide to the religiously curious Öljeitü, as discussed in Chapter Six. Despite his somewhat quasi-official role, Rashīd al-Dīn was as polarizing a figure at court as he was diplomatic. His conflicts with fellow administrators, particularly the men with whom he shared the duties of the vizierate, are well documented in contemporary chronicles. Beyond

⁸² Quatremère, xiv-xv, reports this episode, attributing the test to Rashīd al-Dīn. Hoffmann 2000, 63, points out, the reference that Qāshānī makes to such a test does not explicitly credit it to Rashīd al-Dīn, though he is discussed in close proximity to the episode in question. See Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 49.

⁸³ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 49; Shabānkāraī ed. Muḥaddith, 270.

⁸⁴ For the sources on this campaign and the difficulties in interpreting them, see Charles Melville, "The Ilkhan Öljeitü's conquest of Gīlān (1307): rumour and reality," in *The Mongol Empire and its legacy*, ed. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 73-125.

the conflict with Ṣadr al-Dīn that brought him to the vizierate, Rashīd al-Dīn had a sudden falling out with Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvajī that resulted in the latter's decline and death, and a long simmering feud with the man who had helped Rashīd al-Dīn defeat Sa'd al-Dīn and who took his place in the vizierate, Tāj al-Dīn 'Alīshāh. These partisan court conflicts are the most thoroughly reported events of Rashīd al-Dīn's late life. Because they are inseparably imbedded in the contours of partisan historiography as it emerged in the late Ilkhanate, they are treated at length in Chapters Seven and Eight.

Thus we see the last years of Rashīd al-Dīn's life, like his first half century, clouded by historiographical difficulties, though of a different kind. While Rashīd al-Dīn endeavored to portray his own early life in a particular way to validate his work as vizier, his last years became the subject of other contemporary historians concerned with establishing his historical memory. This is perhaps entirely appropriate, as Rashīd al-Dīn was intimately involved with the creation of an active culture of court historiography. It is to that culture that this dissertation now turns.

Part Two: Rashīd al-Dīn and Ilkhanid historiography

During the winter of 1301-02, the *naqīb* of the ‘Alid community of Iraq, Ṣafī al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, took shelter from heavy rains in the city of Mosul, on the upper Tigris.¹

Beginning on the first of February, Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā wrote out an Arabic treatise combining a short essay on governance with a history of the caliphs from Abū Bakr (d. 634) to al-Musta‘īm (d. 1258), which he dedicated to the city’s governor, Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Īsa ibn Ibrāhīm on 3 June.²

The work, known generally as *al-Fakhrī* after the name of its dedicatee, drew on well-established traditions of dynastic and biographical history and advice literature. It enjoyed some popularity in the latter years of the Ilkhanate, being translated into Persian in AH 723 (beg. 10 Jan 1323).³

In the *Fakhrī*, Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā occasionally gives unique insight into Middle Eastern history, including the text of his correspondence with Baidu’s vizier Jamāl al-Dīn Dastjirdānī

¹ On Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, see F. Rosenthal, “Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā,” *El*²; Charles Melville, “Ebn al-Ṣafī al-Dīn Muhammad,” *EIr*.

² On the *Fakhrī*, see C.A. Storey, *Persian literature: a bio-bibliographical survey*, Vol. 1, pt. 1, sec. 2 (London: Luzac & Co. 1935), 80-81; *idem*, *Persidskaya literatura: bio-bibliographicheskiy obzor*. Vol. 1, tr. and suppl. Yuri E. Bregel’ (Moscow: Central Department of Oriental Literature, 1972), 325-26. The *Fakhrī* has been edited several times, most recently by Ahmad ‘Abd Allāh Farhūd and ‘Abd al-Qādir Muḥammad Māyū (Aleppo: Dār al-Qalam al-‘Arabī, 1997), and translated into French and English: Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, *Al-fakhrī: histoire des dynasties musulmanes*, tr. Émile Amar (Paris: Leroux, 1910); *idem*, *Al fakhrī*, tr. C.E.J. Whitting (London: Luzac, 1947). Given the work’s composition at Mosul, it is entirely appropriate that the narrative history is largely extracted from that of Ibn al-Athīr. Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā dates the completion of the work to 5 Shawwāl 701/3 June 1302, though the latest anecdote he includes is from AH 698/1298-99, and so the work may have been largely completed several years earlier and only revised and dedicated during the author’s time at Mosul.

³ Hindūshāh ibn Sanjar ibn ‘Abd Allāh Ṣāhibī Nakhjivānī, *Tajārib al-Salaf dar tavārīkh-i khulafā va vuzarā-yi īshān*, ed. ‘Abbās Iqbāl (Tehran: Ṣahūrī, 1965), 3. Perhaps another sign of the work’s popularity in the fourteenth century is the fact that Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā’s etymological explanation of the term “vizier” as meaning both “refuge” and “burden,” reappears in an abbreviated form in one of the letters attributed to Rashīd al-Dīn: Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, ed. Farhūd and Māyū, 150; cf. Rashīd al-Dīn Ṣabīb, *Sawāniḡ al-Afkār-i rashīdī*, ed. Muḥammad-Taḡī Dānishpazhūh (Tehran: University of Tehran Press, 1980), 14.

and an account of Hülegü’s siege of Baghdad from the perspective of the caliphal court.⁴ When his historical anecdotes touch on the Ilkhans, Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā generally acknowledges their legitimacy as sovereigns in the Muslim world.⁵ His most noteworthy historiographical contribution, however, is in depicting the Mongols as ignorant of the importance of historiography. Early in the *Fakhrī*, Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā asserts that historical anecdotes and biographies form the most important field of study for rulers, adding that “ministers of old” (*wuzarā’ al-qadīma*) hid such works from their sovereigns in order to keep them dependent on the administrative class.⁶ Elsewhere, Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā criticizes writers of ornate chancery prose.⁷

This disdain for stylistic writing and the high-handed behavior of ministers is particularly directed against ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Atā Malik Juvaynī.⁸ In the course of his text, Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā accuses Juvaynī of not understanding the importance of the ruler’s education and of misrepresenting aspects of Mongol royal culture, such as the scope of Genghis Khan’s hunting operations or the purpose for the Mongol system of postal relays.⁹ While Juvaynī bears the brunt of this accusation for keeping his Mongol patrons in the dark about the didactic quality of history, Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā does mete out a share of blame to the Ilkhans themselves, whom he

⁴ Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, ed. Farhūd and Māyū, 43-44, 319-21.

⁵ Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā portrays Hülegü as the “just infidel” who deserved to rule by virtue of having defeated the corrupt political hierarchy of the late caliphate: Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, ed. Farhūd and Māyū, 23, 52, 74-75, 139-40. Elsewhere, he attributes to Ghazan a unique concern for the proper reverence of the Qur’ān: *idem*, 38-39.

⁶ Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, ed. Farhūd and Māyū, 13.

⁷ Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā singles out the *Qānūn fi’l-ṡibb* (*Canon of medicine*) of Ibn Sīnā (d. 1037) and the *Maqāmāt* (*Sessions*) of al-Ḥarīrī (d. 1122) as works that people had abandoned in favor of more accessibly written ones, such as the medical *Kitāb al-malikī* of ‘Alī b. al-‘Abbās (Haly Abbas, d. ca. 990) and moralizing historiography such as the *Nahj al-balāgha* (*Highway of eloquence*) attributed to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib or the *Kitāb al-Yamīnī* of Abū Naṡr al-‘Utbī (d. 1036 or 1040): Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, ed. Farhūd and Māyū, 20-21.

⁸ This is entirely understandable, as Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā’s father had worked in the fiscal administration of the Juvaynī brothers until 1281, when he lost his life in a political struggle against the historian and governor of Baghdad: F. Rosenthal, “Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā,” *EI*², citing Aḡmad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Inaba, *Umdat al-Ṭālib fi ansāb-i Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, ed. Muḡammad Ḥasan Ṭāliqānī (Najaf: al-Maṡba‘a al-Ḥaydarīya, 1961), 180f.

⁹ Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, ed. Farhūd and Māyū, 24-25, 59, 112.

claims dismissed all scholarship not directly contributing to affairs of state.¹⁰ In this criticism of the Mongol Ilkhans as poor students of history, Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā echoes a scholar-bureaucrat writing almost a century earlier about another dynasty of nomadic origin. At that time, Abū'l-Sharaf Jarbādhqānī prepared a Persian translation of 'Utbī's *Kitāb al-Yamīnī*. In the introduction to this translation, Jarbādhqānī laments that the Saljuqs under whom he wrote had taken no interest patronizing dynastic history. As a result, Jarbādhqānī asserts, "the memory of the Saljūqs . . . will soon vanish, and their name will be erased from the rolls of mind . . . no one will remember them, and there will remain no memorial to their efforts."¹¹

Beyond their nomadic heritage and initial reticence to sponsor written histories, the relative approach of the Saljuqs and Ilkhans to ruling the Middle East, and their appreciation of historiography diverge sharply. The following chapters argue that the political circumstances that set the Ilkhans apart from the Saljuqs were intimately related to the shape that intellectual patronage, and particularly historical writing, took in the first decades of the fourteenth century. Ilkhanid historical patronage was directed at integrating the Mongols' Turko-Mongol heritage into Perso-Islamic traditions of historical thinking. In doing this, the Ilkhans situated themselves as heirs to the Saljuqs in ruling over the central Islamic world. They – and particularly Öljeitü – distinguished themselves from their Turkic nomadic predecessors, however, by also arrogating supreme religious authority to themselves in the absence of the caliph. The Saljuqs had exercised their authority under the shadow of the

¹⁰ Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā, ed. Farhūd and Māyū, 25. This critique serves as a convenient opportunity for Ibn al-Tiḡṡaqā to praise the rulers of Mosul for having maintained a tradition of scholarship despite such royal disdain.

¹¹ Abū'l-Sharaf Nāṡiḡ b. Zafar Jarbādhqānī, *Tarjuma-i ta'riḡh-i yamīnī*, ed. Ja'far Shi'ār (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1966; reprinted Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i 'Ilmī va Farhangī, 1995), 9, translated in Julie Scott Meisami, "Rulers and the writing of history," in *Writers and rulers: perspectives on their relationship from Abbasid to Safavid times*, ed. Beatrice Gruendler and Louise Marlow (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2004), 73; see also Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian historiography to the end of the twelfth century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 256-68.

‘Abbāsīd caliphs and for most of the period of their dynasty power was divided between eastern and western branches of the family. By contrast, the reigns of Ghazan and Öljeitü saw the Persian world, from Mesopotamia to the Oxus River, ruled by a single dynastic power without any contravening secular or sacred authority, a situation that had not transpired since the Arab conquest of the Sasanian Empire in the mid-seventh century.

Several factors beyond the fall of the Caliphate precipitated the Ilkhanid embrace of historical and theological patronage right at the time that Ibn al-Tiqṭaqā criticized them for their ignorance of the didactic importance of the past. Changing circumstances in the social and political ties between the Ilkhans and their subjects, their Mamlūk, Jochid, and Chaghataid adversaries, and their cousins of the Yüan court made their embrace of historical patronage at the turn of the fourteenth century appropriate, if not inevitable. The Toluid family and Mongol cultural ties to Yüan China are evident in the methodological and theoretical approaches that Ilkhanid histories share with Chinese chronicles.¹² While Ilkhanid histories drew from the methods of Chinese historians, political changes within the former Mongol Empire inspired the genre into an ideological space of its own. The near simultaneous death of Qubilai Qa’an and conversion of Ghazan Khan have been identified as catalysts of a reevaluation among Ilkhanid elites over their place in the Mongol and Middle Eastern cultural worlds.¹³ Also, by the time of Ghazan’s conversion to Islam, the Mongols were becoming increasingly acculturated into Perso-Islamic society. All these factors made Perso-Islamic cultural practices, including historical writing, a viable alternative to an increasingly marginalized Mongol tradition. At the same time, certain aspects of Mongol tradition were

¹² Dorothea Krawulsky, *The Mongol Ilkhāns and their vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 29-42.

¹³ See, for example, Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 32-33.

preserved within the framework of Persianate historiography, such as the idea that the ruling clan, or *urugh*, of Genghis Khan enjoyed a unique mandate to rule over its various dependent peoples.

The following chapters demonstrate how intellectual developments in the Ilkhanid Middle East in the early fourteenth century adapted the Ilkhans' Turko-Mongol heritage to extant Perso-Islamic traditions in the service of creating a new symbolic claim for supremacy of leadership within the Islamic world. Chapter Five demonstrates how historical writing under Ghazan, and especially the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, deploys various historiographical traditions in the service of the new ruling ideology. Two modes of historical thinking will receive particular attention. The first is how Mongol tribal relationships, including the importance of descent from Genghis Khan and the relationship of ruler and slave, were rearticulated for the circumstances facing Ghazan after his rise to the throne. The second is the use of "Iran" as a designation for a political territory. Each of these ideas has been recognized as an important factor in the self-identification of the Ilkhanid dynasty. Chapter Five expands on this scholarship by tracing specific innovations that Rashīd al-Dīn introduces into the historical tradition in his effort to recast his patrons as both Mongol and Muslim sovereigns of the Iranian world.

Chapter Six addresses the changing relationship with Islam of the Ilkhans Ghazan and Öljeitü. Ghazan's conversion to Islam in the summer of 1295 has become the defining moment in Ilkhanid dynastic identity. Chapter Six challenges this assumption, first by examining the process by which Ghazan's conversion became historiographically significant and then by investigating the complicated religious life of Öljeitü. Rashīd al-Dīn's writings were involved in and reveal much about each of these processes. In the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* and in his

theological writings, Rashīd al-Dīn began to synthesize an image of kingship that resonated both with contemporary trends in Shī'a and mystical Islam and with Mongol social hierarchies. By historicizing his theological works, Chapter Six demonstrates how the precursors to later Timurid and Mughal notions of kingship emerged already in the early fourteenth century.

As Rashīd al-Dīn increasingly became the standard bearer of Ilkhanid royal legitimation, other historians active at court began to reflect on his activities and his character. In response, Rashīd al-Dīn struggled to ensure his own legitimacy as a scholar and political figure. At the end of the first decade of the fourteenth century, Rashīd al-Dīn began to collect his various historical, theological, and scientific works in ever larger compendia, culminating in the vast *Jāmi' al-taṣānif al-rashīdī* (*Collected writings of Rashīd*). As Chapter Seven shows, Rashīd al-Dīn's instinct to preserve his own memory through monumental works – both literary and architectural – and the ambivalent responses that his activities elicited from contemporary chroniclers led to bifurcated image of the man in contemporary sources as the state's greatest mind and its worst enemy. While modern historians have revived the bifurcated image of Rashīd al-Dīn, the intermediate centuries preserved a particular vision of him as one of the quintessential viziers of the past. Chapter Eight examines how that image came into existence through the verse chronicle of one of Rashīd al-Dīn's intellectual and political protégés.

Chapter Five. The Mongol dynasty and the Iranian state

Beginning with the fall of Naurūz and his associates and the rise of Saʿd al-Dīn and Rashīd al-Dīn to head the Ilkhanid administration, the Mongol state in the Middle East entered a long period of relative internal stability. The extensive purges of potential claimants to the throne during the early years of Ghazan's reign meant that, for the next forty years, the descendants of Arghun Khan enjoyed absolute rule of their state, free of any serious challenge by contesting secular or sacred authorities. This internal stability corresponded, as it had under Abaqa, with continuous conflict along the borders with neighboring states. In the east, the Chaghataid Qaidu (d. 1301) posed a temporary threat to the Ilkhanid state, while the Jochids of the Volga, under the strong leadership of Toqto'a (d. 1312) renewed their claims over the Southern Caucasus. Most dramatically, Ghazan renewed his grandfather's practice of campaigning into Mamlūk controlled Syria.

These conflicts over the limits of the Ilkhanid state, combined with the death of Qubilai Qa'an in 1294 and Ghazan's conversion to Islam the following year, necessitated a new articulation of the bases for Mongol authority in the Middle East. Just as Ibn al-Tiḡṡaḡā was criticizing Ghazan and his predecessors for their ignorance of history, Ghazan was creating a new image of his dynasty as the legitimate sovereigns of the Iranian world, an image that drew support from both Turko-Mongol and Perso-Islamic historical traditions. The *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* is of course the most famous piece of Ilkhanid historiography produced under Ghazan Khan. Certain aspects of it have been read as conscious reinterpretations of the historical record to serve Ilkhanid or Toluid political considerations.¹ However, when read against the backdrop of other contemporary historiography and political activity and with a

¹ See, for example, Dorothea Krawulsky, *The Mongol Īlkhāns and their vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 19-28.

fuller sensitivity to Rashīd al-Dīn's manipulation of historical traditions, the work reveals itself as a systematic presentation of a Mongol mandate to rule in Iran. This mandate responds to the ongoing conflict between Mongol Ilkhans and the Mamlūk *sultāns* of Egypt. After reviewing the Ghazan's campaigns against the Mamlūks that necessitated this intellectual response, this chapter demonstrates how the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, as well as other histories written during this period, deploys Turko-Mongol and Perso-Islamic ideas of genealogy and geography to meet the political challenge of the day.

The history of Ghazan's reign and the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* are difficult to disentangle from one another. Writing a century apart, Henry Howorth and Ann Lambton each demonstrate how modern historians have found it hard to separate this history from its presentation:

With the accession of Ghazan [the Ilkhanate] entered upon a new lease of power. He was not only the greatest of the Ilkhans, but also one of the most important figures in Eastern history, while he was fortunate in having as his vizier the famous historian, Rashid ud din, to whom we are indebted for so many details of the Mongol polity, and we consequently have abundant materials for illustrating his reign.²

Thanks to Rashīd al-Dīn we know rather more of Ghazan Khān, in many ways the most remarkable of the Īl-Khāns, than we do of the other Īl-Khāns.³

Ghazan Khan is remembered as the “greatest” and “most remarkable” of the Ilkhans and Rashīd al-Dīn was “his vizier,” despite Ghazan's short and troubled reign and the fact that Rashīd al-Dīn held more power for a longer period under Öljeitü. This fact is due solely to the nature of the sources. Indeed, no other Persian chronicle better demonstrates than does the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* the twin facts that such works are as much products as they are records of their time and that they in turn have shaped modern conceptions about what

² Henry H. Howorth, *History of the Mongols from the 9th to the 19th century. Part III: The Mongols of Persia* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1888), 393; cf. *idem*, 487.

³ Ann K.S. Lambton, *Continuity and change in Medieval Persia: aspects of administrative, economic and social history, 11th-14th century* (Albany, NY: Bibliotheca Persica, 1988), 252.

historical narratives are worth retelling. If Ghazan elevated Rashīd al-Dīn into the highest ranks of administrative authority, Rashīd al-Dīn “fixed for posterity the image of the great man of state, reformer, and founder, the Ilkhan Ghazan.”⁴

The blessed history of Ghazan Khan

During the years 1298-1303, Ghazan incorporated an increasing array of Islamic and Iranian elements into his self-identification as a ruler. While doing this, he preserved particular elements from Turko-Mongol tradition, creating a hybrid foundation for his family’s command of the Middle East over and against the Mamlūks. This section demonstrates how Ghazan’s activities as sovereign between 1298 and 1303 amounted to a performance of this new hybrid dynastic ideology.

After appointing Sa‘d al-Dīn and Rashīd al-Dīn to the head of the administrative apparatus, Ghazan spent the winter of 1298-99 in and around Baghdad, including a visit to the shrine of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib at Najaf. Ghazan had previously spent the winter of 1296-97 in Baghdad and may have commissioned a series of small illustrated *Shāhnāma* manuscripts on these visits to the former ‘Abbāsīd capital, though this attribution of these early manuscripts is by no means certain.⁵ In the summer of 1299, he held a *quriltai* at Ūjān in northwest Iran, at which he proclaimed his brother Öljeitü as his intended heir.⁶ Beyond securing his succession, Ghazan’s choice to spend the summer in Ūjān, where he had recently ordered the creation of a new royal summer camp, was an opportunity to recall his father and grandfather’s efforts to

⁴ Jean Aubin, *Émirs mongols et vizirs dans les remous de l’acculturation* (Paris: Association pour l’avancement des études iraniennes, 1995), 53.

⁵ Marianne Shreve Simpson, *The illustration of an epic: the earliest Shahnama manuscripts* (New York: Garland, 1979), 321-22.

⁶ Öljeitü was also present at the *quriltai* held the following summer, but Rashīd al-Dīn reports that, on his death bed in May 1304, Ghazan confirmed his choice of Öljeitü “which he had decreed five years earlier”: Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī (Tehran: Alburz, 1994), 1324.

memorialize their reigns through monumental building.⁷ These early commissions demonstrate that Ghazan, already by 1299, recognized the importance of cultural patronage for securing his position as ruler of the Middle East, but had not yet ventured into commissioning a history of his own dynasty.⁸

In Tabriz in the fall of 1299, Ghazan received news of Mamlūk raids along the Euphrates frontier. That winter, he embarked on his first campaign into Syria, which was also the first excursion by Ilkhanid forces against the Mamlūks since 1282.⁹ Crossing the Euphrates in early December, Ghazan fought and defeated the Mamlūk forces at the Wādī al-Khaznadār, near Ḥimṣ, on 22 December.¹⁰ This victory, the only major Mongol field victory over the Mamlūks, led to the submission of Damascus, Rashīd al-Dīn's account of which is discussed below. Ghazan returned from Damascus in the spring of 1300, leaving his top generals Qutluḡshāh and Chupan in the city to maintain the Ilkhanid occupation, which collapsed in the face of local rebellion by late March.

After spending another summer at Ūjān, Ghazan again decamped for Syria in September of 1300, sending Qutluḡshāh ahead in the vanguard as he had the previous year.¹¹

⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1282; ‘Abd Allāh ibn Faḏl Allāh Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḏrat, *Kitāb-i mustaṭāb-i Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaḏrat dar bandar-i Mughūl* (Bombay lithograph edition, 1853), 384.

⁸ In his history of the Ismā‘īlīs, ‘Abd Allāh Qāshānī, claims to have written a universal history (though not a dynastic one) titled the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* on the order of Ghazan Khan: Abū’l-Qāsim ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Qāshānī, *Zubdat al-tawārīkh: baksh-i Fātimiyān va Nizāriyān*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh (Tehran: Mu’assasa-yi Muṭāla‘āt va Taḥqīqāt-i Farhangī, 1977), 3-4; discussed in Ḥaḥr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī, *Saljūqnāma*, ed. A.H. Morton (Chippenham: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2004), 24. For more on this, see Chapter Seven.

⁹ On Ghazan's first Syrian campaign, see Vaṣṣāf 1853, 371-81; Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1289-96; J.A. Boyle, “Dynastic and political history of the Il-khāns,” in *The Cambridge history of Iran. Volume 5: the Saljuq and Mongol periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 387-89.

¹⁰ On this battle, see R. Amitai, “Wādī ‘l-Khaznadār,” *El’*; *idem*, “The logistics of the Mongol-Mamlūk war, with special reference to the battle of Wādī ‘l-Khaznadār,” in *Logistics of warfare in the age of the Crusades*, ed. John H. Pryor (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 25-42.

¹¹ On the second Syrian campaign, see Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1297-99; Boyle 1968, 389. Vaṣṣāf ends the third book of his history with the first invasion of Syria and begins Book Four with the lead-up to the third invasion, omitting this short and ineffective campaign.

This second campaign halted around Aleppo from early November until early February, when Ghazan finally turned back because of heavy rains. He spent several months in a slow withdrawal from the Mamlūk frontier. Having crossed the Euphrates on 2 February, he visited the shrine of a partisan of ‘Alī and other martyrs of the Battle of Şiffin and then spent three months in upper Mesopotamia. During this time, Rashīd al-Dīn tells us, Ghazan engaged in hunting and performed a miraculous shot which Rashīd al-Dīn explicitly compares to the legendary feat of archery the Sasanian Shāh Bahram V Gūr (r. 421-38) performed on behalf of his slave, Azada.¹² As part of that story, Bahram strips a buck gazelle of his horns with a two-headed arrow and then pins a gazelle’s head, foot, and back together with a single arrow. By contrast, Rashīd al-Dīn describes Ghazan piercing all four feet and the body of an antelope, leaving a total of nine wounds on the body using not a two-headed arrow, but rather the distinctly Mongol type of missile called *tona*.¹³

Thus, Rashīd al-Dīn’s portrayal of Ghazan’s slow retreat across Mesopotamia in 1301 shows three strands of historical legacy that came together in Ghazan’s performance as ruler, or at least in its representation in court-sponsored historiography. Ghazan is at once portrayed as a reverent Muslim with a particular devotion to the party (*shī’a*) of ‘Alī, a Mongol hunter and warrior, and a living manifestation of the royal power of Sasanian kings. On his way back to his summer camp at Ūjān, Ghazan also dispatched a letter to Sulṭān Qalāwūn blaming the Mamluks for the continued conflict and accusing Qalāwūn of cowardice for having failed to confront Ghazan after the Mongols’ victory at Wādī al-Khaznadār.¹⁴

¹² For a tidy summary of the story and the question of identifying related scenes on Sasanian-era silver to Bahram V, see Richard Ettinghausen, “Bahram Gur’s hunting feats or the problem of identification,” *Iran* 17 (1979): 25-31.

¹³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1298-99.

¹⁴ On this letter, and the Mamluk response, see Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and ideology in the Islamic and Mongol worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 81-85.

At Ūjān in the summer of 1301, Ghazan appointed Saʿd al-Dīn Savājī as *sāhib-dīwān*, giving him command of the “royal seal” (*tamgha-yi āl*).¹⁵ Almost at once, a group of courtiers launched a plot against Saʿd al-Dīn. Rashīd al-Dīn’s account of the plot and of Ghazan’s swift execution of its instigators is followed immediately by an anecdote about the Ilkhan being literally unable to harm a fly that had innocently landed in his soup.¹⁶ This “morbid mixture of sentiment and cruelty,” in the assessment of Howorth, “reminds one of Robespierre and others of the same kidney.”¹⁷ It also, however, bears witness to the task which Rashīd al-Dīn had before him when he wrote his history, namely to portray as an enlightened and merciful sovereign a man who built a career from fighting rebellions both on the borders of the Ilkhanate and within his own court and who, when the opportunity arose, attempted to expand the territory under his control to include Syria.

Ghazan did not cross the Euphrates again until January of 1303. The intervening period between Ghazan’s withdrawal from Aleppo in 1301 and this later campaign saw a continuous escalation of Ilkhanid ideology. In early October 1301, Ghazan arrived at Ala Tagh, in the mountains of Arrān, a fact that has earned Ala Tagh mention as one of the Ilkhanid winter camps.¹⁸ Elsewhere, however, Ala Tagh is mentioned in the context of royal court camps only as a summer residence for Hülegü and Geikhatu.¹⁹ Less than two weeks before arriving at Ala Tagh, and thus presumably around the time he left the Ilkhanid capitals for the north, Ghazan had dispatched Qutlughshāh to Diyar Bakr, but in early November the Ilkhan recalled his general and withdrew from Ala Tagh towards the Caspian Sea. The pattern of dispatching

¹⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1299-1300.

¹⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1300-01.

¹⁷ Howorth 1888, 457.

¹⁸ Boyle 1968, 390; cf. Figure 2.

¹⁹ Dorothea Krawulsky, *Īrān – Das Reich der Īlhane: eine topographisch-historische Studie* (Weisbaden: Reichert, 1978), 418-19; Bertold Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran: Politik, Verwaltung, und Kultur der Ilchanzeit 1220-1350*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1968), 332-34.

Qutlughshāh ahead of himself and the unprecedented act of moving to Ala Tagh in the fall suggest that Ghazan intended to invade Mamlūk territory during the winter of 1301-02, this time taking a northerly route, rather than the direct route across Mesopotamia that he had taken the previous two years. His reason for turning back is not reported, though it is worth remembering that this was the same winter that forced Ibn al-Tiqṭaqā to seek shelter in Mosul from the heavy rains. The embarrassment of having retreated from the Syrian frontier in successive years could only have made his need for ideological support for his reign more acute.

Ghazan spent the spring of 1302 in the Southern Caucasus around the coast of the Caspian Sea. From here, he wrote a letter to Pope Boniface VIII, the text of which suggests that it fit within a larger correspondence concerning a joint expedition against the Mamlūks.²⁰ That summer, Ghazan held a *quriltai* at Ūjān that marks the ceremonial beginning of the next campaign into Syria. During his grand processional advance through Iraq, Ghazan engaged in activities redolent with both Mongol and Islamic history, projecting a particular image of himself as the embodied synthesis of these two traditions. At Ūjān, Ghazan declared his own humility in the service of God and ordered the distribution of alms and recitations of the Qurʾān. Departing the Ilkhanid capitals, he travelled south, stopping to visit a shrine he had commissioned at Buzinjird and then at the site of a tree under which he had once camped while hunting down Naurūz and his family. On this later visit, according to Rashīd al-Dīn,

²⁰ For this letter, see Antoine Mostaert and Francis Woodman Cleaves, “Trois documents Mongols des Archives secretes vaticanes,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 15.3/4 (1952): 467-78. On locating its composition, see John A. Boyle, “Ghazan’s letter to Boniface VIII: where was it written?” in *Proceedings of the twenty-seventh International Congress of Orientalists, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 13th-19th August, 1967*, ed. Denis Sinor (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, 1971), 601-02.

Ghazan listened to a story told by Bolad Chingsang about his royal ancestor Qutula Qa'an who had similarly achieved victory over an enemy after having supplicated God at a tree shrine.²¹

A further episode from this tour illustrates the image that Ghazan projected of himself as a full synthesis of Mongol and Muslim tradition. 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī reports the murder and cremation of a descendent of 'Alī during Friday prayers in Baghdad sometime during AH 702 (beg. 26 August 1302).²² While Qāshānī does not give a specific date for this event, the fact that the scope of his chronicle is narrowly limited to affairs in and around the royal court suggest that it took place while Ghazan was in the area of Baghdad.²³ Qāshānī reports that Ghazan reacted to the event by declaring religious tolerance for all Muslim sects, citing the precedent of both Muḥammad and Genghis Khan. The particular concern for the killing of a direct descendent of 'Alī, and by extension of the Prophet Muḥammad, is repeated in later Ilkhanid history, so that Öljeitü hesitated to execute a Sayyid on the grounds that the blood of a descendent of the Prophet should not be spilled.²⁴ Such an association between the bloodline of the Prophet and the sanctity of Mongol royal blood, marks a crucial step towards the formation of a new model of Mongol kingship in the Islamic world.²⁵

Ghazan proceeded through the region south of Baghdad, visiting at least one other shrine, ordering improvements to irrigation, and engaging in several hunts along the way. All during this time, Ghazan was engaged in extensive diplomatic activity with the rulers of Egypt, the Golden Horde, and Byzantium (and perhaps England). He crossed the Euphrates only in

²¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1307-08.

²² Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad Qāshānī, *Ta'rīkh-i Uljāytū*, ed. Mahīn Hambly (Tehran: Bangāh-i Tarjumah va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1969), 90-91.

²³ The narrative setting of this event within Qāshānī's chronicle will be discussed in Chapter Six.

²⁴ On this episode, see Chapter Seven.

²⁵ On the more explicit transition of royal legitimacy from the bloodline of Genghis Khan to the spiritual succession of 'Alī, see A. Azfar Moin, *The millennial sovereign: sacred kingship and sainthood in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 31-39.

late January 1303 to visit the Imām Ḥusayn shrine at Karbalā, finally ending his processional march in early March at ʿĀna, an island city in the Euphrates. Here he spent about a week before proceeding against the Mamlūk frontier post of Raḥba al-Sham.

Beyond the ceremonial activities outlined above, the campaign of 1302-03 saw the beginning of Ghazan’s patronage of original dynastic historiography. The year AH 702, which corresponded almost exactly with the campaign of 1302-03, is the only year that Rashīd al-Dīn mentions as the time of composition for the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*.²⁶ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī similarly connects the commission of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* to Ghazan’s calendrical reform, in which he inaugurated a new age, calculated by solar years beginning on the Persian New Year (*naurūz*) in 1302.²⁷ Thus, Rashīd al-Dīn’s commission for a dynastic history of the Mongols came as part of an extended program of ideologically charged activity on the part of Ghazan Khan as he repositioned himself in preparation for a new assault of Mamlūk Syria.

In addition to the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, Ghazan extended patronage during this campaign to the other main historical chronicle of his reign, the *Tajziyat al-amār va tazjiyat al-aʿšār* of Shihāb al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh Vaṣṣāf. While the imperial camp was stopped at ʿĀna, Vaṣṣāf presented Saʿd al-Dīn and Rashīd al-Dīn with the historical chronicle that he had composed on

²⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 28. During this same year, while at Ūjān, Ghazan appointed Abū Sulaymān Banākatī as “prince of poets” (*malik al-shuʿaraʿ*): Abū Sulaymān Banākatī, *Tārīkh-i Banākatī: Rauzat ulā al-albāb fi maʿrifat al-tawārīkh va al-ansāb*, ed. Jaʿfar Shiʿār (Tehran: Anjuman-i Asār-i Millī, 1969), 465. Banākatī later wrote a summary of Rashīd al-Dīn’s universal history: Edward G. Browne, *A literary history of Persia, vol. 3. A history of Persian literature under Tartar dominion (A.D. 1265-1502)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), 100-103; C.A. Storey, *Persian literature: a bio-bibliographical survey, Vol. 1, pt. 1, sec. 2* (London: Luzac & Co. 1935), 79-80; *idem, Persidskaya literatura: bio-bibliographicheskiy obzor. Vol. 1*, tr. and suppl. Yuri E. Bregel’ (Moscow: Central Department of Oriental Literature, 1972), 323-25.

²⁷ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī Qazvīnī, *Zafarnāma von Hamdallāh Mustaufī und Šāhnāma von Abuʿl-Qāsim Firdausī* (Tehran and Vienna: Iran University Press and Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 1414.

his own initiative as a continuation of the history of Juvaynī.²⁸ The work, originally consisting of three books, tells the history of the Mongol Empire and the Ilkhanate since the death of Möngke, up to and including Ghazan’s first campaign into Syria. Because of his previous experience in the administration of the Salghurid *atabegs* of Fars, Vaṣṣāf includes in his history a significant amount of information about Iranian political and administrative history during the early Mongol Empire, including an extensive account of the Salghurid dynasty. The *ṣāhib-dīwān* and vizier introduced the historian to Ghazan, who approved of his work, granted him significant favors, and asked for a continuation to include the history of the second and third Syrian campaigns and the life of Genghis Khan.

This initial installment of Vaṣṣāf’s history, containing three books covering the Ilkhans and the parallel histories of other regional dynasties including the Salghurids, provides part of the immediate historiographical precedent for the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. The fact that it demonstrates structural similarities with the work of Rashīd al-Dīn suggests not only that the two works were part of the same ideological program, but that Rashīd al-Dīn’s history was modeled at least in part on that of Vaṣṣāf. In particular, the third book of Vaṣṣāf’s history ends with an account of the building projects and administrative reforms undertaken by Ghazan, a model that Rashīd al-Dīn adopted for his own work. Both works invoke the Chinggisid past alongside the careful presentation of Ghazan’s own career in order to further the “greatest” Ilkhan’s political ideology.

Politically, the campaign of 1302-03 accomplished little more than had the aborted campaigns of the previous two years. Ghazan’s actions, however, and the histories he commissioned redefined the symbolic basis for Ilkhanid kingship, associating it with Islamic,

²⁸ Vaṣṣāf 1853, 405-06.

Iranian, and Turko-Mongol historical significance. In particular, as the following sections demonstrate, Rashīd al-Dīn's use of the Turkic legend of Oghuz Khan and of pre-Islamic Iranian traditions defining the scope and nature of sovereignty in the region created a compelling argument for Ghazan's claim to rule.

Genealogy in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*

In their ideological sparring with the Mamlūks of Egypt, Ghazan and Öljeitü retained one immutable advantage, namely their ability to trace their dynastic lineage back to Genghis Khan and, through him, the entire historical and legendary tradition of Mongol rule. In the fabric of Inner Asian nomadic society, the Ilkhans belonged to the “golden seed” (Mong. *altan uruq*) of Genghis Khan.²⁹ The Mamlūks, by contrast, originated as a succession of slave captives, each unrelated from the next and removed from any larger genealogical framework. Indeed, as Charles Halperin has convincingly shown, it was the maddening combination of the Mamlūks' slave origins and military might that kept the Mongols invading their territory despite repeated defeats on the battlefield.³⁰ That Turko-Mongol, as well as Perso-Islamic notions of slavery and mastery could easily be rearticulated in a way that favored the Chinggisid Ilkhans at the expense of the Mamlūks and their slave origins made these historical traditions particularly convenient for a new ideological program.³¹

²⁹ On *uruq*, see Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung älterer neupersischer Geschichtsquellen, vor allem der Mongolen- und Timuridenzeit* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1963), 47-52 (#468).

³⁰ Charles J. Halperin, “The Kipchak connection: the Ilkhans, the Mamluks and Ayn Jalut,” *BSOAS* 63.2 (2000): 229-245.

³¹ Broadbridge 2008, 6-16.

Evrin Binbaş has asserted that “it is obvious to every reader of Rashīd al-Dīn that the concept of genealogy plays an important organizational role in his historical thinking.”³² For Binbaş, this serves as a general disclaimer in introducing his valuable study of how Rashīd al-Dīn and other medieval Persian historians (including Ibn al-Tiḡtaḡā) developed the mechanism of the genealogical tree; he notes that a full examination of Rashīd al-Dīn’s genealogical thinking is “indeed the subject for a separate study.”³³ While a single chapter cannot provide an exhaustive study of Rashīd al-Dīn’s use of genealogy across his various works, an examination of select passages and innovations within the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* can demonstrate how genealogy fits into the emerging program of Ilkhanid legitimacy.

Both Islamic and Mongol traditions of genealogy are rooted ultimately in a concern for preserving the hierarchies of nomadic tribal society. This concern, as it was held among the Arab tribes of late antiquity, became the earliest impulse in Islamic historiography.³⁴ While genealogy had indeed been a major determinant of the structure and content of Arabic historiography in the early centuries of Islam, no great genealogical history had been written since al-Balādhurī at the end of the ninth century. Despite this fact, Rashīd al-Dīn invokes the Islamic setting for genealogy in the opening passage of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* with a comparison between his patron and the prophet Abraham.³⁵ At the end of the comparison, Rashīd al-Dīn notes that Abraham enjoined his progeny to preserve a written record of their genealogy, establishing written history – and particularly genealogy – as a primary mode for

³² İlker Evrim Binbaş, “Structure and function of the genealogical tree in Islamic historiography,” in *Horizons of the world: festschrift for İsenbike Togan*, ed. İlker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kılıç-Schubel (İstanbul: İthaki, 2011), 486.

³³ Binbaş 2011, 486. Another portion of Rashīd al-Dīn’s conception of genealogy will be taken up in Chapter Six.

³⁴ On the genealogical impulse among early Muslims, see Franz Rosenthal, *A history of Muslim historiography*, second revised edition (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 95-100.

³⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 23-31.

expressing sacred and secular authority. In response to this injunction, the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* arrogates for the Mongols a privileged position under this Abrahamic injunction to record genealogical history. For example, in the opening to the story of Genghis Khan's ancestors, Rashīd al-Dīn invokes the significance of genealogy for the Arab tribes as a marker of the Mongols' exceptionalism:

The many descendents and tribes who came from Alan Qo'a, and their numbers reach such an extent that if they were all counted they would exceed a million, and all of their lineages are clear and lucid. There is a custom of the Mongols that they remember their descent from their fathers and ancestors, and each child who is born they teach and instruct his lineage, just as they do with all the others of that nation. And for this reason there is none among them who does not know his lineage and descent. And besides the Mongols, there is no such custom among other tribes except the Arabs, who preserve their own descent.³⁶

Rashīd al-Dīn thus consciously connects the genealogical memory of the Mongols with the corresponding practice in early Islamic society.

If the analogy to Abraham reveals Rashīd al-Dīn's use of Islamic notions of genealogy, his use of the corresponding Mongol tradition is apparent in his account of Ghazan's conquest of Damascus at the beginning of the year 1300. On 3 January, Rashīd al-Dīn reports, the people of Damascus presented themselves to Ghazan at his camp outside the city, where the Ilkhan interrogated them:

The Pādishāh of Islam asked them, "Who am I?" They agreed that [he was] Shāh Ghazan, son of Arghun Khan, son of Abaqa Khan, son of Hülegü Khan, son of Tolui Khan, son of Chinggis Khan. Then he asked, "Who is Nāṣir [al-Dīn]'s father?" They said, "Alfī." He said, "Who was Alfī's father?" They all drew a blank (*furū māndand*) and then they realized that the sovereignty of that tribe (*salṭanat-i ān qaum*, i.e., of the Mamlūks) was an on account of accident (*ittifāqī*) and not of merit (*istihqāqī*), and they were all slaves (*banda*) to the renowned clan (*urugh* < Mon. *uruq*) of the Pādishāh of Islam's ancestor.³⁷

Whether Rashīd al-Dīn faithfully reports an actual event, or whether this is a later interpolation into the historical record (Vaṣṣāf does not report the scene), this episode demonstrates the role genealogy came to play in Ilkhanid claims to legitimacy. Within the

³⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 223.

³⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1293-94.

context of Inner Asian nomadic society, the idea of genealogy and tribal affiliation was expressed in terms of mastery and slavery.³⁸ Within Mongol society, the consanguineous members of a tribe or band were designated as *uruq*, to distinguish them from various foreign elements of society, such as exsanguinous wives and slaves. While a clan included members of all groups, the *uruq*, who all descended from a single forefather (*äbügä*), retained a distinct position of privilege.³⁹ With the rapid expansion of Mongol tribal organization during the thirteenth century conquests, the terminology for slavery also expanded, though the distinction between slaves (*boghol*) and *uruq* remained intact.⁴⁰

Throughout his account of Genghis Khan's conquest, Rashīd al-Dīn refers to conquered and subordinate tribes as *qaum*, to distinguish them from the royal *uruq* of Genghis Khan. By establishing this same contrast between the Mamlūks and Ghazan Khan, Rashīd al-Dīn marks each dynasty's relative status within the socio-political world of Inner Asian nomadism. This contrast is further emphasized by the rhetorical flourish of rhyming "accident" with "merit" – *ittifāqī* with *istihqāqī* – to describe Mamlūk and Ilkhanid claims to sovereignty. Here "merit" is defined in its Turko-Mongol context, namely as membership in the ruling *uruq* of Genghis Khan; the Mamlūks, whose tribal affiliations were stripped from them in the fact of their slave origins, were simply accidental sovereigns.

Thus, by the beginning of the fourteenth century, Islamic and Mongol tradition each supported discourses of genealogy as a central aspect of dynastic legitimacy. Furthermore, the Ilkhans' particular conflict with the Mamlūks of Egypt predisposed them to adopt an

³⁸ The best survey of the Mongol institution of slavery remains B. Vladimirtsov, *Le régime social des Mongols. Le féodalisme nomade*, tr. M. Carsow (Paris: A. Maisonneuve, 1948), 73-89; for further bibliography, see Igor de Rachewiltz, *The secret history of the Mongols: a Mongolian epic chronicle of the thirteenth century* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 505-07.

³⁹ Vladimirtsov 1948, 89-99.

⁴⁰ Vladimirtsov 1948, 86.

ideological position emphasizing their own descent from the *uruq* of Genghis Khan, introducing Turko-Mongol notions of slavery into the genealogical discourse of their chronicles. The following two examples further demonstrate how Rashīd al-Dīn applies both Islamic and Turko-Mongol ideas of genealogy in the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* to legitimize his patrons’ claim to rule the Middle East.

The legend of Oghuz Khan

Rashīd al-Dīn’s most systematic use of genealogy as a mode of transmitting the legitimacy of his patrons is found in his treatment of the Turkic legend of Oghuz Khan, a cycle of stories commonly known as the *Oghuznāma*, an appellation first applied by Ibn al-Dawādārī (fl. ca. 1335).⁴¹ Rashīd al-Dīn treats the Oghuz legend twice over the course of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*. His first use of it comes in the first chapter of Part One of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*.⁴² Here, Rashīd al-Dīn gives a highly condensed synopsis of the birth of Oghuz and his struggles against his unconverted relatives as a way to establish a unified stemma of Inner Asian nomadic tribal origins, as discussed below. Rashīd al-Dīn also promises to give an extended version of the story as an appendix (*dhayl*) to the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. This original appendix is probably to be identified with the summary history of Oghuz and his descendents found in the later second volume of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*.

As the earliest lengthy prose elaboration of the *Oghuznāma*, Rashīd al-Dīn’s account of the Oghuz legend has been extensively studied and translated.⁴³ These efforts have emphasized the story’s position within Turkish history and historiography. In an effort to

⁴¹ For information on the origins and development of the Oghuz etiologies, see İlker Evrim Binbaş, “Oğuz Khan narratives,” *Elr*, with extensive additional bibliography.

⁴² Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Musavī, 48-52.

⁴³ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Die Geschichte der Oğuzen des Rašīd ad-dīn*, tr. Karl Jahn (Vienna: Der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1969); Zeki Velidi Togan, *Oğuz destanı: Reşideddin Oğuznâmesi, tercüme ve tahlili* (Istanbul: Enderun, 1982).

integrate Rashīd al-Dīn's Oghuz history into "the first attempt at a systematic view of Turkic history," Karl Jahn went so far as to propose that it appears out of chronological order in the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* simply because Oghuz and his followers were not Muslim and therefore their history was relegated to the company of those of the Chinese, Jews, Franks, and Indians.⁴⁴ However, as already discussed, Rashīd al-Dīn originally planned the story of Oghuz not as part of a Turkic history but as an appendix to the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. While Rashīd al-Dīn never portrays the Chinese, Jews, Franks, and Indians as Muslim, Oghuz emerges from the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* as a proto-Muslim monotheist. Finally, the inclusion of the Oghuz story in the first chapter of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* suggests that Rashīd al-Dīn saw it as an integral part of the story of Mongol history before the second volume was ever commissioned.

Rashīd al-Dīn's presentation of the story of Oghuz confirms that he considered it not as part of a systematic view of Turkic history, but rather as an instrument for constructing a new genealogical basis for Ilkhanid legitimacy that resonates both with Turko-Mongol and Islamic precedents. The primary purpose of the *Oghuznāma* genre is to create a tribal etiology for the Turkic confederacy which, in the centuries before the Mongol conquests, had been headed by the Saljuq clan. With the appearance of the Mongols, the Oghuz legend was appropriated into the service of a new genealogical system focusing on descent from Genghis Khan. By examining other early reflections of the Oghuz story, it becomes apparent that Rashīd al-Dīn's version was carefully chosen, if not intentionally crafted, to suit the needs of the Mongol dynastic history that Ghazan asked him to compose. In particular, a pattern of likening Genghis Khan to Oghuz is discernible in early sources, so that Genghis Khan's life becomes, in some senses, a reenactment of the Oghuz legend just as Genghis was coming to replace Oghuz

⁴⁴ Karl Jahn, "Zu Rašid al-Dīn's „Geschichte der Oğuzen und Türken", " *Journal of Asian History* 1.1 (1967): 45-46.

as the *äbügä* of a new royal *uruq*. As the Oghuz legend served in the Middle East as an etiological system for describing Turkic tribal rule, this association integrates Genghis Khan and his *uruq* within extant institutions for expressing royal legitimacy.

While tribes named Oghuz are found already in the eighth century Orkhon Turkic inscriptions, the earliest witness for Oghuz Khan as the eponymous ancestor of the Oghuz or Ghuzz Turks is found in Mahmūd al-Kāshgharī's eleventh century Arabic language dictionary of Turkic, the *Dīwān lughāt al-turk*.⁴⁵ In that work, al-Kāshgharī names twenty-two Oghuz tribes, along with two tribes of "Khalaj" Turks who comprised the confederation headed by the Saljuq clan.⁴⁶ Beyond this, two brief narrative versions besides that of Rashīd al-Dīn survive from the Mongol period. One of these, the so-called Ūzünköprü Narrative, is a verse rendition that largely aligns with that of Rashīd al-Dīn.⁴⁷ Its origins and relation to Rashīd al-Dīn's history of Oghuz are uncertain and it cannot be confidently located within a discussion of the development of the text.

Perhaps the most helpful early witness to the legend of Oghuz Khan for understanding the significance of Rashīd al-Dīn's rendition is a short text in an eastern Turkic dialect preserved in a unique manuscript in Uighur script from the thirteenth or fourteenth century Ilkhanate or Central Asia.⁴⁸ Mehmet Ölmez suggests that this text might be a gloss on Mongol history: "Oghuz Qaghan mentioned in the text might be Chinghiz Qaghan. The wars engaged

⁴⁵ Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī, *Türk şiveleri lügati = (Dīwānū Luḡāt-it-Türk)*, ed. and tr. Robert Dankoff (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982-1985).

⁴⁶ Kāshgharī, 101-02, 362-63.

⁴⁷ Binbaş, "Oğuz Khan narratives," *EIr*.

⁴⁸ Paris Bibliothèque Nationale ms. supp. turc 1001, edited and translated several times, most recently by Mehmet Ölmez, "Commentary of OGHUZ-NAMA," Commentary Project of the Center for Central Eurasian Civilization Archive," <http://cces.snu.ac.kr/com/15ogze.pdf>, with comprehensive bibliography, including previous editions. Ölmez dates the manuscript (though not explicitly the text) to the fifteenth century.

are the ones fought after the great councils held by Chinghiz in 1206.”⁴⁹ This is not immediately evident from the text: Oghuz here campaigns against the Roman Emperor (*urum qaǵan*) and his younger brother, the Russian Prince (*urus beg*). The only figure who might refer to one of Genghis Khan’s contemporaries is the Golden Qaghan (*altan qaǵan*) who submits to Oghuz, a possible reference to the submission of the last Chin emperor Hsüan-tsung to Genghis Khan in 1215. Otherwise, the Eastern Turkic Oghuz narrative makes a poor fit to the geography or chronology of Genghis Khan’s conquests: here Oghuz campaigns across the Volga, then back to the east into the plain of Jurjet before venturing into “India and Tibet and Syria” (*cındu taqı tangǵut takı shaǵam*), regions that exist in an otherwise undifferentiated legendary space.

While Ölmez’s suggestion that the Eastern Turkic Oghuz narrative represents a gloss on Genghis Khan’s career is difficult to substantiate, the narrative of the text is replete with motifs from Turkic folklore. The newborn Oghuz here matures with miraculous speed (§§1-2), nursing only once before requesting solid food (*et ash sorma*), speaking from the cradle, and reaching maturity after forty days. His body is described zoomorphically: “his feet like an ox’s feet, his wrists like a wolf’s wrists, his back like a sable’s back, his breast like a bear’s breast” (§2). Indeed, Oghuz’s entire body is hairy, one of the better known features of Turkic legend appropriated into Islamic stories of legitimacy.⁵⁰ Oghuz’s two wives come to him from a ray of light and from a lake, and on his campaigns of conquest he is led by a gray male wolf (*kök . . . erkek böri*, §16 *et al.*), all common motifs from Turkic folklore.

⁴⁹ Ölmez, 6.

⁵⁰ Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and native religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and conversion to Islam in historical and epic tradition* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 323-31.

The net result of Oghuz's conquests in the Eastern Turkic narrative is to establish the origins of a number of Turkic tribes and their subjects through etiological stories in which Oghuz rewards his commanders for their heroic exploits. Thus, the grandson of Urus Beg becomes Saklap, the progenitor of the Slavic peoples, and various *begs* from Oghuz's army become the eponymous founders of the Kipchak, Karluk, Kalach, and Qangli tribes. In the end, a wise old man (*aq saqalluġ, moz sachluġ uzun usluġ bir qart kishi*) with a high military rank (*tüshimel*) dreams of the discovery of a golden bow and three silver arrows by Oghuz's six sons, an event that, when realized, becomes an opportunity for Oghuz to appeal to his sons to act in unison in campaigns, a folklore motif applied also to Alan Qo'a in the *Secret history*.⁵¹ The narrative ends with a great feast, at which Oghuz performs an enigmatic ceremony of tying gold and silver birds and white and black sheep to two trees erected on either side of his throne, which establishes the division between two confederations of tribes, the *boz oq* and *uch oq* – grey arrows and three arrows.

This Eastern Turkic narrative, built around motifs from Turkic legend and only mildly, if at all inflected with events and names from Genghis Khan's conquests, stands in sharp contrast to the version of the Oghuz legend that Rashīd al-Dīn includes in his *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*.⁵² Rashīd al-Dīn's account contains some of the same tribal etiologies, but engages a very different set of legendary elements in presenting them. In the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, Oghuz's childhood is still portrayed as miraculous, though here his refusal to nurse is not followed by a demand for meat and soup but rather for his mother to embrace monotheism. Oghuz demands the same from each of his three wives; the last agrees, while the first two wives, unconverted

⁵¹ de Rachewiltz 2006, 4-5, 262-63 (§§19-22 and commentary).

⁵² Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*. Vol. 3: *Tārīkh-i Ughūz*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan (Tehran: Miras Maktūb, 2005), hereafter *Tārīkh-i Ughūz*.

and spurned by Oghuz, provide the inspiration for a war between Oghuz and his infidel relatives. Thus, like Abraham, Oghuz contravenes custom on behalf of his monotheistic faith.⁵³ After defeating his uncles and their adherents, Oghuz resettles them in the eastern reaches of Inner Asia, including the city of Qaraqorum. These individuals, in Rashīd al-Dīn's account, become the ancestors of the Mongols through the mediation of yet another Turkic legend, as described below.

Rashīd al-Dīn further develops the significance of Oghuz in the genealogical thinking of the Mongols by creating a complex analogy between the eponymous Turk and Genghis Khan. This association is mediated through the figure of Alexander the Great, to whom both Oghuz and Genghis are compared. In Rashīd al-Dīn's treatment, Oghuz's "world conquest" (*jahāngīrī*) begins with legendary exploits, but instead of drawing from Turkic lore, these now draw from a body of stories familiar from the Alexander Romance tradition of Western Asia.⁵⁴ In particular, Oghuz campaigns against the dog-men of the Qil Baraq tribe and enters the land of darkness (*zulamāt, tārikī*) before arriving at the region of Darband.⁵⁵ Elsewhere, these same legendary exploits are attributed to Genghis Khan: John of Plano Carpini relates an account of Genghis's armies conquering the Dog-Men, while Marco Polo lists the Land of Darkness as one of Genghis Khan's own conquests.⁵⁶ Both Carpini and Polo's accounts originate in direct

⁵³ By comparison, see verses 21:51-71 of the Qur'ān, in which Abraham defies his family and destroys their idols.

⁵⁴ For an overview of how this tradition spread through Inner Asia, including some discussion of how it became entangled with the stories of Oghuz and Genghis Khan, see John Andrew Boyle, "The Alexander legend in Central Asia," *Folklore* 85.4 (1974): 217-28.

⁵⁵ *Tārīkh-i Ughūz*, 13-19.

⁵⁶ John of Plano Carpini, "History of the Mongols," tr. Christopher Dawson in *Mission to Asia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 30-31. For an extended version of Carpini's account, see George D. Painter, "The Tartar relation," in *The Vinland map and the Tartar relation*, ed. R.A. Skelton et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 70-72. On Genghis Khan in the Land of Darkness, see Marco Polo, *The book of Ser Marco Polo the Venetian concerning the kingdoms and marvels of the East*, ed. and tr. Henri Corbier (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), 484-85.

contact with the Mongols of Eastern Inner Asia in the mid- to late thirteenth century. While it is impossible to know whether Rashīd al-Dīn was the first to insert the Alexander Romance tales into the story of Oghuz Khan, the fact that the same body of stories came to be associated with Genghis Khan and Oghuz during the first century of the Mongol Empire indicates that these two figures occupied a shared space in the historical thinking of Mongols across Eurasia by the end of the fourteenth century.

Escaping from the murky realm of legend and folklore, Rashīd al-Dīn's text draws the legend of Oghuz into the story of Mongol history and the Ilkhanid cultural project through a vocabulary of administrative and court culture completely absent from the contemporary Eastern Turkic narrative. During his campaigns in Western Asia, according to Rashīd al-Dīn, Oghuz regularly appoints governors (*shahna*) of conquered cities and regions and distributes honors (*soyurghamishi*) to his advisors and generals. During all these conquests, Oghuz is led not by a male wolf, but by a wise old man named Būshī Khwāja. In introducing this figure, Rashīd al-Dīn asserts that the Turks, and not the Persians, were the first to use the title *khwāja* for men of distinction.⁵⁷ During the main narrative, Būshī does not interact directly with the Oghuz; instead, his son Qarasuluk acts as intermediary, bringing Būshī Khwāja's advice for how to defeat various opponents to the stymied Khan. At the end of his campaigns, Oghuz rewards Būshī Khwāja with a land grant (*iqṭā'*) around Samarqand and names Qarasuluk his grand vizier.⁵⁸

Rashīd al-Dīn's story of Oghuz ends, as does the Eastern Turkic narrative, back in the traditional Turkic pasture lands of Inner Asia. Also like the Eastern Turkic narrative, Rashīd al-

⁵⁷ *Tārīkh-i Ughūz*, 10-11.

⁵⁸ *Tārīkh-i Ughūz*, 53-54.

Dīn describes a giant feast that Oghuz throws to celebrate his accomplishments.⁵⁹ Here, the story of the discovery of the golden bow and arrows by Oghuz's sons no longer resonates with the story of Alan Qo'a from the *Secret history* but instead takes the place of the enigmatic ceremony as an explanation for the division between Buzuq and Uchoq tribal confederacies. Similarly streamlined is Rashīd al-Dīn's schema for the genealogical structure of the twenty-four Oghuz tribes. Under Oghuz's son and first successor Kun Khan, according to Rashīd al-Dīn, Irqin Khwāja establishes the division between the twenty-four tribes of Oghuz Turks. Here, instead of Kashgharī's twenty-two-plus-two arrangement, the twenty-four eponymous ancestors of the Oghuz are the grandsons of Oghuz – four by each of his six sons. This arrangement of tribes, as well as the similarities between Oghuz's exploits and those of the Alexander Romance, became the basis for later versions of the Oghuz story and for the self-identification of Turkmen tribal reconsolidations under the Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.⁶⁰

Right at the end of Rashīd al-Dīn's narrative of Oghuz's life, the author departs from the account of the Eastern Turkic narrative by mentioning a revolt among the Qil Baraq people of the Volga region.⁶¹ In the Eastern Turkic narrative Oghuz establishes one of his *begs* over the region and named him Qipchaq after he devised a bridge for crossing the Volga. In place of this in Rashīd al-Dīn's account, the wife of a soldier in Oghuz's army gives birth to a son after her husband is killed in battle. Oghuz names this orphan child Qipchaq because the child had been born in the hollow of a tree (Tr. *qobuq*). After returning to his homeland, Oghuz sends

⁵⁹ *Tārīkh-i Ughūz*, 52-53.

⁶⁰ V.V. Barthol'd, *Four studies on the history of Central Asia. Volume 3: history of the Turkman people* (Leiden: Brill, 1956), 121-45; Osman Turan, "Rashīd ūd-dīn et 'Histoire des Turcs,'" in *Majmū'a-i khiṭāba-ha-i taḥqīqī dar bara-i Rashīd al-Dīn Faḏl Allāh Hamadānī*, ed. Sayyid Husayn Nasr et al. (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān, 1971), 68-80.

⁶¹ *Tārīkh-i Ughūz*, 54.

Qipchaq to put down the rebellion and to govern over the land of the Qil Baraq and Darband. By making Qipchaq an orphan in Oghuz's camp, Rashīd al-Dīn establishes him as a subordinate figure in the ruler's household. Since, as Rashīd al-Dīn specifies, "all the Qipchaq tribes were born from [Qipchaq's] progeny," the Mamlūk *sultāns* of Egypt, all of whom originated as Turkic captives from the Qipchaq steppe, become by extension collectively subordinate to the ruling line of Oghuz Khan. Paired with the analogy drawn between Oghuz and Genghis Khan, this creates a mythic etiology for understanding the Mamlūks as hereditary subordinates to the Ilkhans, reinforcing the relationship between *boghol* and *uruq* established in Ghazan's interview with the dignitaries of Damascus.

This narrative of Oghuz, introduced early in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* and elaborated as an appendix to the same work, provides a comprehensive genealogical tribal structure for Inner Asian nomads that equates the *uruq* of Genghis Khan with that of Oghuz and recasts the Qipchaqs – and by extension the Mamlūks – as hereditary dependents to these ruling groups. Within the main text of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, however, Rashīd al-Dīn presents an account of Mongol history largely aligned with the first fifty-eight sections of the *Secret history* and the Chinese *Yüan shi*. To synthesize these two etiological traditions, Rashīd al-Dīn employs yet another Turkic origin story. This is the story of Ergene Qun, according to which two families escaped the destruction of their tribe by a group of Turks by taking refuge in a mountain enclosure, where they flourished until the time came that they could emerge once again.⁶²

⁶² For Rashīd al-Dīn's account of Ergene Qun, see Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Musavī, 147-49. For more on the myth, see Denise Aigle, "Les transformations d'un mythe d'origine: l'exemple de Gengis Khan et de Tamerlan," *Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 89-90 (2000): 151-68; DeWeese 1994, 273-75, with additional bibliography.

Like the Oghuznāma, the myth of Ergene Qun finds its earliest elaboration in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, and the lack of known narrative precedents makes it difficult to pin down specific narrative innovations. However, several factors indicate that its presence here is a conscious accretion by Rashīd al-Dīn. The idea of a mountain enclosure was a motivating mythic structure among the Turks as early as the sixth century CE.⁶³ However, the story does not form part of the Mongol traditional history familiar from the *Secret history* or *Yüan Shi*. When Rashīd al-Dīn elaborates on the Mongols' tribal history, he is forced to anthropomorphize the totemic Wolf and Doe ancestors who begin the *Secret history* account to create a feasible biological link to the residents of Ergene Qun.⁶⁴

Rashīd al-Dīn includes of the Ergene Qun myth in the history of the Mongols to connect the Mongols to Turkic tribal history and to explain the other non-Mongol and non-Oghuz tribes that had become part of Genghis Khan's confederacy. To draw together the histories of these many tribes, Rashīd al-Dīn conflates the idea of intertribal warfare found in the Ergene Qun myth with the conflict between Oghuz and his idolatrous uncles.⁶⁵ In this rendering, the Mongol ur-ancestors constitute one portion of the descendants of Japheth who fell into conflict with another group of Turks, leading to their near annihilation and flight to Ergene Qun. The fact that the Mongols retain their tribal history, Rashīd al-Dīn asserts, suggests that this division from the main line of Oghuz history relatively late; he suggests that the flight to Ergene Qun occurred "more or less two thousand years ago."⁶⁶ To explain the lack of a coherent historical tradition among the other nomadic tribes of Inner Asia, Rashīd al-Dīn

⁶³ Paul Pelliot, "Neuf notes sur des questions d'Asie Centrale," *T'oung Pao* 26 (1929): 201-66; DeWeese 1994, 275-77.

⁶⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Musavī, 218.

⁶⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 42-45.

⁶⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 147-48.

pushes the point of their break with the Oghuz back to a more distant point in time, before they were able to record their own history.⁶⁷

Thus, by fitting the Mongol mythic past familiar from the *Secret history* into the genealogy of Oghuz Khan, which itself draws on the biblical story of the sons of Noah as the progenitors of the various regions of the earth, and by explaining how other tribes fit into this genealogy, even when no recorded history survives for them, Rashīd al-Dīn creates a stemma for understanding the entire Turko-Mongol world within the broader contours of Judeo-Islamic prophetic tradition. Within this scheme, Genghis Khan and his descendants appear not as the creators of a new world empire, but as the reunifiers of the descendants of Japheth. Three privileged groups among the descendants of Abraham, namely the Arabs, Oghuz Turks, and Mongols, are presented as preserving their tribal genealogies, and Rashīd al-Dīn deftly weaves these into a coherent system for explaining the fact of Mongol rule within the contours of Perso-Islamic and Turko-Mongol tradition.

Arghun Aqa

Rashīd al-Dīn's redeployment of Mongol traditional history and discourses of slavery is apparent also in his description of the history of Arghun Aqa, who featured in Chapter One as the key figure in transferring the loyalty of the Mongol administration in the Middle East away from the Batuid and Ögedeid lines to that of the Toluids. Sources on Arghun are frustratingly spare, given his long prominence in the early Mongol Empire.⁶⁸ However, discrepancies

⁶⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 42-44, 147.

⁶⁸ One manuscript of Juvaynī's work includes a space equivalent to seven or eight lines of text at the end of the chapter dedicated to Arghun, suggesting that, were the work completed, we might know more than we do. See Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā-Malik Juvaynī, *The Ta'rikh-i-Jahān-Gushā of 'Alā'u 'd-Dīn 'Aṭā-Malik-i-Juvaynī*, ed. Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazvīnī (London: Gibb Memorial Trust, 1912-1958), ii.262; *idem*, *The history of the world-conqueror*, tr. John Andrew Boyle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), 525, n. 26.

between the accounts of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī and Rashīd al-Dīn allow us to see the latter as a reinterpretation of the past in the service of Toluid imperial claims.

Juvaynī, who worked as a personal secretary to Arghun from 1243 until 1256, portrays his patron as the son of Taichu, a prominent Oyirat and leader of a *minggan*, or a thousand troops.⁶⁹ By contrast, writing a half century after the rise of the Toluid family to the imperial throne, Rashīd al-Dīn twice writes of how Arghun’s father traded him for a leg of beef to the Jalayir commander Ilüğe Qada’an, who was attached to Ögedei.⁷⁰ Boyle and Lane each note this discrepancy between Juvaynī and Rashīd al-Dīn’s accounts, but neither attempts to explain how the story came to change between them.⁷¹ Read in the context of contemporary Mongol politics, however, this account offers an explanation for Arghun’s appointment to the Middle East by Töregene that downplays his family’s allegiance to the Jochid *ulus*. It also represents a possible case of *damnatio memoriae* for the family of the recently disgraced Amīr Naurūz, son of Arghun Aqa.

Of interest in Rashīd al-Dīn’s story of Arghun’s origins are the terms of the exchange, which recall an episode from the *Secret history of the Mongols*, where Genghis Khan’s ancestor in the tenth generation, Dobun Mergen, exchanges the thigh of a deer he has just killed for the son of a member of the Ma’aliq Baya’ut tribe.⁷² Just as the orphan Qipchaq does for Oghuz, this boy becomes a dependent member of Dobun Mergen’s clan. This etiology explains the Baya’ut’s later status as hereditary servants (*ötägü boghol*) of the family of Genghis Khan. By comparison, Rashīd al-Dīn’s seemingly apocryphal story about Arghun casts the young Oyirat

⁶⁹ Juvaynī, ed. Qazvīnī, ii.242; *idem*, tr. Boyle, 505.

⁷⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 68-69, 103.

⁷¹ Juvaynī, tr. Boyle, 505; George Lane, “Arghun Aqa: Mongol bureaucrat,” *Iranian Studies* 32.4 (1999): 460.

⁷² Rachewiltz 2006, 3 (§§14-16), 258-59; Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 179-81. On the father’s near-total command over the fate of his children in Mongol society, see Paul Ratchnevsky, “Die Rechtsverhältnisse bei den Mongolen im 12.-13. Jahrhundert,” *CAJ* 31.1-2 (1987): 69-80.

as a dependent of the Ögedeid family by reshaping his personal history into the contours of this paradigmatic example of the *ötägü boghol* relationship from the *Secret history*. Since by the time that Rashīd al-Dīn wrote the Toluids had assumed the imperial seat from the Ögedeids, they could claim Arghun as their own *ötägü boghol* by virtue of *translatio imperii*, having replaced the Ögedeids as the true successors to Genghis Khan.

Rashīd al-Dīn's purpose in emphasizing Arghun's *ötägü boghol* position under the Ögedeids and, subsequently, the Toluids becomes clear from the problematic position of Arghun's tribe of origin, the Oyirat. According to the *Secret history*, the Oyirat leader Quduqa Beki submitted to Genghis Khan in 1207 and was rewarded by having his sons marry into the Mongol ruling family. One of his sons married Genghis Khan's own daughter Chächäyigän and the other married a daughter of Jochi.⁷³ Rashid al-Din lists the descendants of these marriages.⁷⁴ From Chächäyigän, three sons and their families remained in the patrimony of Tolui. The eldest, Buqa Temür, served prominently under Hülegü during his campaign in the west, while the other two served at the same time in China under Qubilai. Of the four daughters born to Chächäyigän, one married Batu's son Toqoqan; another was Orghina Khatun, chief wife of Chaghatai; and the other two married Hülegü. All the descendants from the other marriage, between a son of Quduqa Beki and a daughter of Jochi, remained within the Jochid *ulus*, where they rose to command four *hazaras* (units of 1000) Jalayir troops.

From this, it follows that the princes of Arghun's birth clan, the Oyirat, had, since the time of Genghis Khan, been divided into two lines, each of them descended in agnatic lines from Quduqa and cognatically from Genghis Khan. One of these lines, born of Chächäyigän,

⁷³ Rachewiltz 2006, 164 (§239), 854-56.

⁷⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed Raushan and Mūsavī, 99-102. Rashid al-Din switches the names of the sons of Quduqa from the *Secret history*, though this has no effect on the structural relationship established by the story.

served under the sons of Tolui; the other served the house of Jochi. Furthermore, we know from Rashid al-Din that Quduqa was left in command of the entire Oyirat army as a result of his willing surrender and that after his death, his command was divided between his sons.⁷⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn suppresses this prominent family history, instead portraying Arghun as the son of an obscure family dependent on the *uruq* of Genghis Khan. Such a portrayal might result if Taichu and his *minggan* had been assigned to an Oyirat prince who served Jochi after the death of Quduqa. Juvaynī, who knew Arghun before antagonism between the Jochid and Toluid families arose, faces no dilemma in reporting his patron's origins as he knew them. The account of Rashīd al-Dīn, who was born during the governorship of Arghun but came to Mongol service only after his death, may reflect an official whitewashing of Arghun's past propagated after the rift that divided the formerly allied branches of the royal family. A second possible explanation, which is not mutually exclusive with the first, lies in the resentment felt by other *amīrs* against the influence of Naurūz, son of Arghun Aqa, on the young Ghazan. That resentment led to Naurūz's execution, and this story serves to emphasize Arghun's family as hereditary subordinates to the ruling clan.

Territory: the Iranian shape of the Mongols state

In addition to weaving Mongol history into dynastic traditions familiar to the Middle East, Rashīd al-Dīn links his patrons' legitimacy to the geographic space of Iran. Towards the end of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, Rashīd al-Dīn writes that, on the death of Ghazan, the population "in all the cities of the lands of *Īrān-zamīn* dressed the minarets in sackcloth and poured into the markets and thoroughfares and squares and old and young, man and woman

⁷⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 597.

tore their clothes and dressed in sackcloth and mourned for seven days.”⁷⁶ The use of *Īrān-zamīn* to designate the Iranian Middle East, and the concomitant use of *Tūrān* for other territories, including Inner Asia, is one prominent way in which Rashīd al-Dīn borrows pre-Islamic territorial designations to legitimize the presence of a Toluid state stretching from the Oxus River to Syria. He also has recourse to pre-Islamic Iranian traditions to justify the Ilkhanid claim to the region of the South Caucasus over and above that of their Jochid cousins to the north. All of these appeals to geographic space help to reify Ilkhanid claims as sovereigns of the Middle East.

Despite the example given above, this territorial mode of legitimacy is not particularly attached to the figure and career of Ghazan Khan; the mention of all *Īrān-zamīn* mourning his death is one of only four places where Rashīd al-Dīn uses the term in relation to his patron. Instead, *Īrān-zamīn* appears most frequently in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* in relation to Hülegü Khan and, to a lesser degree, Genghis Khan. As the founders of the Ilkhan and Mongol dynasties and conquerors of the Middle East, these two assume some of the historical role of the first Sasanian, Ardashir Papakan (r. 224-42), by reestablishing *Īrān-zamīn* as a sovereign state. Just as the story of Oghuz served to recast Genghis Khan’s accomplishments as the reunification of the descendants of Japheth, Sasanian precedents allow Rashīd al-Dīn to portray Hülegü as the creator of a sovereign Iran. In this sense, the territorial designation of Iran, as it continues to be understood to this day, can perhaps best be understood as the *ulus* of Hülegü, as constructed in the histories written under his successors.

In 1989, Dorothea Krawulsky first recognized the emergence of “*Īrān-zamīn*,” the New Persian calque of Middle Persian “*Ērānshahr*,” as a designation for a political entity in Ilkhanid

⁷⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Musavī, 1325.

chronicles.⁷⁷ That same year, Gherardo Gnoli demonstrated how the “idea of Iran” developed through antiquity, originating as a cultural marker in the pre-Achaemenid period and maturing as a political reality only under the Sasanians.⁷⁸ In two recent position papers, Bert Fragner has developed on these ideas, arguing that, despite the fact that the ancient political division between the Eastern Iranian highlands and the West Iranian complex of Media and Persis had been reestablished during the intervening centuries, the Ilkhans, by reuniting these regions under a single government, revived the need for a Sasanian-type designation for their territory such as that found in the *Shāhnāma*.⁷⁹ Given the pattern of using *Shāhnāma* imagery and text in the cultural products of the early Ilkhanid administration discussed in Chapter Two, it stands to reason that Firdausī’s vision of the past found its way into court historiography under Ghazan.⁸⁰ The possibility has already been mentioned that the earliest extant illustrated *Shāhnāma* manuscripts were produced in Baghdad under Ghazan’s commission in the late 1290s.

That geo-political notions from the *Shāhnāma*, including the designation of *Īrān-zamīn*, gained traction in Ilkhanid political discourse during the early years of Ghazan’s reign is demonstrated also by Bayḍāwī’s *Nizām al-tawārīkh*. As Charles Melville has shown, Bayḍāwī

⁷⁷ Dorothea Krawulsky, “Zur Wiederbelebung des Begriffes ‘Iran’ zur Ilkhânzeit,” in *Mongolen und Ilchâne. 5 Studien* (Beirut: Verlag für Islamische Studien, 1989), 113-30; updated in English as *eadem*, “The revival of the name Īrān under the Mongol Īlkhāns (r. 656-736/1258-1336),” in Krawulsky 2011, 43-51.

⁷⁸ Gherardo Gnoli, *The idea of Iran: an essay on its origin* (Rome: Istituto italiano per il Medio et Estremo Oriente, 1989).

⁷⁹ Bert Fragner, “Iran under Ilkhanid rule in a world history perspective,” in *L’Iran face à la domination Mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institut français de recherche en Iran, 1997), 121-31; *idem*, “The concept of regionalism in historical research on Central Asia and Iran (a macro-historical interpretation),” in *Studies on Central Asian History in honor of Yuri Bregel*, ed. Devin DeWeese (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 341-54. Fragner also incorporates these ideas in *idem*, “Ilkhanid rule and its contributions to Iranian political culture,” in *Beyond the legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 72-73.

⁸⁰ Fragner 2001, 349 calls it “hardly surprising” that the Ilkhans would adapt Firdausī’s work to their own needs, though he doesn’t recognize the instrumental role of Ṭūsī and the Juvaynīs in mediating this adaptation.

produced a second recension of this work in 1295, updating it to include the Ilkhans who had reigned during the two decades since he first wrote.⁸¹ Of interest here, however, is his reworking of the reigns of rulers that he had already treated in the first recension, namely Genghis, Hülegü, and Abaqa, as it reveals a change in attitude towards the relationship between the Ilkhans and the land they ruled. In the first recension, Bayḍāwī credits Genghis Khan with having subdued *Īrān-zamīn* and mentions that his descendents, including Hülegü, ruled in that same region.⁸² In the second recension, Bayḍāwī repeats this information about Genghis Khan. For Hülegü, however, he elaborates that Möngke sent his brother to rule the land “which they call *Īrān-zamīn*” and then lists the regions that Hülegü conquered or received submission from: Khurāsān, Qūhistān, ‘Irāq, Fārs, Kirmān, Luristān, and finally Baghdad.⁸³ Here Bayḍāwī makes explicit the identification between the Sasanian territorial designation of *Īrān-zamīn* and the lands controlled by the first Ilkhan.

It is in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, however, that the association of Hülegü with the land of *Īrān-zamīn* is most fully developed. In about seventy places, Rashīd al-Dīn invokes *Īrān-zamīn* as a designation for the Ilkhanid realm. In about twenty other places, he uses the shorter designation *Īrān*, usually in contrast to the land of *Tūrān*. An inordinate concentration of these fall during Rashīd al-Dīn’s account of Hülegü.⁸⁴ In other sections of the work, invocations of *Īrān-zamīn* are almost exclusively reserved for when reference is made to Hülegü’s conquest. Thus, by the early years of the fourteenth century, the first Ilkhan and his

⁸¹ Charles Melville, “From Adam to Abaqa: Qāḍī Baiḍāwī’s rearrangement of history (part II), *Studia Iranica* 36 (2007): 7-64.

⁸² Qāḍī Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, *Niẓām al-tawārīkh*, ed. Mirhāshim Muḥaddis (Tehran : Bunyād-i Mawqūfāt-i Duktur Maḥmūd Afshār, 2003), 132.

⁸³ Melville 2007, 58.

⁸⁴ The term appears fifteen times in the space of ninety-seven pages dedicated to Hülegü (once per 6.5 pages), compared to only four mentions in the 336 pages dedicated to Ghazan Khan and approximately ninety instances in the entire 1540 printed pages of text (once per 59 and 17.1 pages, respectively).

campaign of 1253-58 had become inextricably linked with the Sasanian name for the land that had recently become the Ilkhanid realm.

Darband and the threat from the north

As part of defining the geographical space of Iran over which his patrons ruled, Rashīd al-Dīn presents a historical argument for why the rich pasturage of the southern Caucasus, long a source of animosity between the Toluid and Jochid branches of the Mongol royal family, should belong to the Ilkhans, and not their cousins of the Golden Horde. While his argument for this appears in the second volume of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, which was commissioned by Öljeitü, it relates to events occurring during Ghazan's reign and as discussed above, the universal history portion of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* may have been largely composed already during the reign of Ghazan.⁸⁵ Furthermore, Vaṣṣāf preserves an account of events which, when read alongside Rashīd al-Dīn's text, suggests a deliberate ideological construction around establishing the boundary between the two *ulus*es.

In 1302-03, as Ghazan prepared for his final invasion of Syria, the Jochid Khan Toqto'a (1291-1312) sent an embassy to the Ilkhan with a message reasserting his family's claim to the region of the southern Caucasus.⁸⁶ According to Vaṣṣāf, Toqto'a expressed this claim in terms of the original Chinggisid dispensation discussed in Chapter One, claiming that it was Genghis Khan's will that Jochi and his successors should rule over the southern Caucasus region. While this claim is consistent with the terms of Genghis Khan's dispensation of territory as preserved by Juvaynī, Vaṣṣāf describes the dispensation in a way that repudiates the Jochid claim. Vaṣṣāf

⁸⁵ Maddeningly, the main manuscript of Qāshānī's surviving universal history, known commonly as the *Zubdat al-tawārīkh*, contains a lacuna exactly over the section on Alexander the Great, so it is impossible to determine his role in crafting the ideological statement discussed here: Berlin Staatsbibliothek – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung ms. Pertsch 368 (Minutoli 237), fol. 50a.

⁸⁶ Vaṣṣāf 1853, 398.

explains that Jochi's initial realm had stretched as far as Darband and that his successors had wintered south of this boundary and pursued further operations into the Southern Caucasus regions of Azerbaijan and Arran.⁸⁷

In the second volume of the *Jāmi' al-tawārikh*, Rashid al-Din reinforces this view by invoking a specific version of historical precedent to counter Toqto'a's claim. As in his account of Oghuz Khan, Rashīd al-Dīn makes this case with the help of the flexible Alexander Romance tradition, associating the land of the Golden Horde with the land of darkness and emphasizing the role of Darband as a boundary between that land and the Islamic world. Like the fire temple at Adhargushnasp, the architectural history of Darband dates to the Sasanian period, though its reappropriation by Islamic historians gave Rashīd al-Dīn ample precedent for making his case.

Fortification of the narrow strip of land between the Caucasus Mountains and the Caspian Sea began in earnest after the region fell to the Sasanians in the demarcation of Armenia with Byzantium in 387.⁸⁸ A series of fortification projects culminated in a massive complex of fortified harbor and defensive wall at Darband traditionally attributed to Khusrou I Anushirwan (531-79).⁸⁹ These fortifications were originally built to protect the Sasanian realm from the Hunnic and Turkic peoples of the north. Under the Abbasids, Darband, known in Arabic as *Bāb al-abwāb* (The gate of gates), was held by the Hāshimid dynasty as a fortified bastion against the Khazars of the lower Volga River.⁹⁰ The eleventh century *Ta'rikh-i Bāb* (*History of the Gate*), quoted by the seventeenth century writer Ahmad b. Luṭf Allāh Munajjim

⁸⁷ Vaṣṣāf 1853, 50.

⁸⁸ Richard Frye, "The Sasanian system of walls for defense," in *Studies in memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. M. Rosen-Ayalon, 7-15 (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1977), 11-12.

⁸⁹ On the dating of this wall, see Murtazali Gadjiev, "On the construction date of the Darband fortification complex," *Iran and the Caucasus* 12 (2008): 1-16.

⁹⁰ C.E. Bosworth, *The new Islamic dynasties* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 143-44.

Bāshī, tells of how the Hāshimids stopped a raiding party of Rus' in 1031.⁹¹ Indeed, this is only one of several known incursions by Rus' raiders into Islamic lands in the tenth and eleventh centuries. In 913, a group of Rus' travelled down the Volga River and raided coastal areas of the Caspian, particularly Gilan and Tabaristan.⁹² As a response to such incursions, writers as early as Nizāmī Ganjavī began to associate the Rus with the tribes of Yā'jūj and Ma'jūj, which Alexander the Great had detained behind a great rampart to keep them from threatening the civilized world. Ibn Fadlan, who led a mission from Baghdad to the Bulgars of the upper Volga in the early 930s, reports on a giant body found floating in the river that some believed to be from the tribes of Yā'jūj and Ma'jūj; elsewhere he mentions that "some believe that [Yā'jūj and Ma'jūj] are the Khazars."⁹³

Thus, long before the Mongol period, there existed ample precedent for associating various peoples of the north with the apocalyptic tribes of Yā'jūj and Ma'jūj and the wall of Darband with the boundary between the civilized world of Islam and those same northern tribes. Writing in the mid 1270s, however, the Arabic cosmographer and geographer Zakariyyā' Abu Yahyā Qazvīnī fails to describe Darband as a boundary marker between Islam and the outside world.⁹⁴ This is due, perhaps, to the ongoing process of Islamization within the Mongol and Turkic elite of the Golden Horde in the late thirteenth century that had inverted the familiar order on which that association was based. However, for a half century beginning at the death of Berke in 1267, the Golden Horde was once again ruled by non-Muslim Mongols. During this same period, the Ilkhanid elite underwent its gradual conversion to Islam, culminating with the conversion of Ghazan in 1295.

⁹¹ D.M. Dunlop, "Bāb al-Abwāb," *El²*.

⁹² Richard Frye, *Ibn Fadlan's Journey to Russia: a tenth-century traveler from Baghdad to the Volga River* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2005), 105.

⁹³ Frye 2005, 58, 77.

⁹⁴ D.M. Dunlop, "Bāb al-Abwāb," *El²*.

Thus, when the Jochid Toqto'a laid his claim over the Southern Caucasus in 1302, he did so by invoking the dispensation of Genghis Khan, rather than any Islamic or other justification. In response, Vaṣṣāf and Rashid al-Din invoked an Islamic tradition that saw Darband as a boundary marker against the infidels of the north to deny the Jochid claim to the southern Caucasus. Rashid al-Din makes very clear the association of the wall of Darband with Alexander's wall, tying together the various strands of association seen in the *Ta'rikh-i Bāb*, Nizami, and Ibn Fadlan:

The compiler of these documents heard a story from the companions of a merchant that Iskandar entered [the land of] darkness and appeared at the region of Yā'jūj and Ma'jūj and that they were a tribe (*qaum*) in rebellion there. But it is more accurate that they were a tribe (*qaum*) of Ṣafālī and numerous Turks, from whom nothing comes but ruination and corruption. And in the region that is adjacent to them they cause great harm and burden. Iskandar wanted to uproot their corrupted essence from other lands and he erected a strong rampart across the narrow distance between the two mountains which were between them [i.e., the two lands] and across their path which lay between these two mountains. A mention of it is preserved in the *sura* of the cave.⁹⁵ Indeed, this is the wall of Darband on the side of the region of Shirvān and Lakzī and the Sasanians built this entirely. It was finished in the days of Khusrow Parviz and it will be mentioned in its time.⁹⁶

Rashīd al-Dīn's immediate source for this passage is evidently Ibn al-Athīr, who calls the people of Yā'jūj and Ma'jūj "numerous and warlike Turks."⁹⁷ He adds the mention of the Ṣafālī tribe, one element of the Bulghar confederation of the seventh to the thirteenth century.⁹⁸ The Bulghar and Khazar states had of course been replaced by the Mongols and Turks of the Jochid Golden Horde, yet Rashid al-Din invokes the association of the former with the apocalyptic Yā'jūj and Ma'jūj to delegitimize their claims to territory south of Darband.

⁹⁵ Qur'ān 18:82-96 tells of Dhu'l-Qarnayn and his making of the rampart of Gog and Magog from iron and brass.

⁹⁶ London British Library mss. Add. 7628, fol. 28b.; IO Islamic 3524, fol. 27b.

⁹⁷ Ibn al-Athīr, 'Izz al-Dīn, *al-Kāmil fī al-ta'rikh*, ed. Carolus Johannes Tornberg (Beirut: Dar Ṣādir, 1965-67), i.288.

⁹⁸ "Ṣafālī" conforms to the ethnonym preserved in Latin sources as Savali. In other Arabic and Persian sources, it is given as Suvar, Suvar, or Sabir. The form Ṣafālī, which is clear in both manuscripts, suggests that Rashid al-Din had access to Latin sources on the Volga Bulghars.

Elsewhere, Rashid al-Din lists the major cities of the region as “Bolghar and Sarai, which they call the capital city there, and Saqsin,” thereby confirming his conflation of the Golden Horde with the former Khazar and Bolghar states. Furthermore, Rashid al-Din clearly specifies the location of the boundary marked by Alexander’s rampart: it is the wall of Darband on the side of the region of Shirvān and Lakzī. This comes immediately after Rashid al-Din’s mention of the apocalyptic Qur’ānic passage that credits Dhu’l-Qarnayn (commonly identified as Alexander) with building the wall of Yā’jūj and Ma’jūj. For Rashid al-Din, writing for a Muslim sovereign facing the threat of an infidel power from the north, the numerous associations in earlier literature of Darband as a boundary provide ample material for confirming the Ilkhanid usurpation of the Southern Caucasus away from the infidel Jochids.

In summary, in matters pertaining both to genealogy and geography, Rashīd al-Dīn makes careful use of Turko-Mongol as well as Perso-Islamic historical traditions in order to construct a mandate for his patrons to rule the Middle East. In both areas, Rashīd al-Dīn invokes aspects of religious legitimacy, either by linking his sovereigns’ Turko-Mongol tribal origins into a broader prophetic framework or by casting the wall of Darband as the boundary between the Islamic and infidel worlds. However, both genealogy and geography were relatively secular aspects of the new Ilkhanid claim for legitimacy in the Middle East. The following chapter traces Rashīd al-Dīn’s explicit engagement with Islam as part of his patrons’ claim to legitimacy in the Iranian world. This engagement with Islamic religious discourses began already in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, but developed more fully in the theological works produced for Öljeitü.

Chapter Six. Converting history: Rashīd al-Dīn's theological works

“The accession of Gházán, the great-grandson of Húlágú,” writes Edward Browne, “marks the definitive triumph of Islám over Mongol heathenism.”¹ As discussed in Chapter Three, Ghazan converted to Islam in the course of his counter-rebellion against his uncle Baidu in the summer of 1295. This act lives in modern historiography as the defining moment of Ilkhanid history, the ultimate corrective to the sack of Baghdad. David Morgan has pointed to it as the moment when the “barbarians” might have become “civilized,” adding that the Mongols had previously made for only superficial Muslims.²

Compared to the attention paid to Ghazan's conversion, Öljeitü's religiosity has received little serious attention, part of a pattern of imbalance in the historiographical treatment of the two brothers.³ In a survey of religion during the Mongol period, Alessandro Bausani calls Ghazan's conversion, “a very important day in the history of religion in Īl-Khānid Persia,” but dismisses Öljeitü's religious life as one of vacillation:

Originally a Christian, he subsequently became a Buddhist and eventually a Muslim. But even after embracing the Muslim religion he still seemed uncertain, since he was first a Ḥanafī, then a Shāfi', until, disgusted with the sectarian squabbles among the various Sunnī schools, and influenced by Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī of Mashhad and by Jamāl al-Dīn Muṭahhir, Öljeitü finally went over to Shī'ism, despite the efforts to win him back to Buddhism made by the *bakhshis* who had remained in Iran.⁴

¹ Edward G. Browne, *A history of Persian literature under Tartar domination (A.D. 1265-1502)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), 40.

² David Morgan, *Medieval Persia 1040-1797* (London: Longman, 1988), 72-73.

³ This imbalance has already been noted by Charles Melville, “The itineraries of Sultan Öljeitü, 1304-16,” *Iran* 28 (1990): 56.

⁴ A. Bausani, “Religion under the Mongols,” in *The Cambridge history of Iran. Volume 5: the Saljuq and Mongol periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 541-43. Jamāl al-Dīn Muṭahhir is ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, discussed below; the fate of Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī is discussed in Chapter Seven. In the survey of political history in the same volume, John Boyle spends seventeen pages on Ghazan's nine-year reign and fits Öljeitü's twelve-year reign into nine pages: J.A. Boyle, “Dynastic and political history of the Il-khāns,” in *The Cambridge history of Iran. Volume 5: the Saljuq and Mongol periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 379-406

This depiction of Öljeitü's spiritual peregrinations as the defining feature of his religious experience has become a trope in modern historiography on Ilkhanid religion.⁵ This is true despite the facts that Öljeitü was the first Mongol Muslim sovereign anywhere to succeed another Mongol Muslim and that at least one contemporary local history is silent on Ghazan's conversion but identifies Öljeitü's adoption of Shī'ism as the most important moment of Ilkhanid dynastic history.⁶

The modern predilection to emphasize the historical significance of Ghazan's conversion at the expense of Öljeitü's rather more complicated religious life is due in large part to the nature of the sources on these matters. Historians' general unwillingness to challenge the historicity of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* has reified that text's presentation of Ghazan's conversion as the great watershed moment in Mongol history.⁷ By contrast, our main sources for Öljeitü's religious experience are the *Tārīkh-i Uljaytū* of 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī and the theological writings of Rashīd al-Dīn, neither of which has held the imagination of scholars to the degree of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. It is somewhat ironic that Rashīd al-Dīn's theological writings are one of the main casualties of his historical creation of "the greatest of the Ilkhans." This is exemplified by the verdict of David Morgan, who has dismissed Rashīd al-Dīn's theological writings as "orthodox rather than important," on the

⁵ See, for example, Jean Calmard, "Le chiisme imamite sous les Ilkhans," in *L'Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institute Français de Recherche en Iran, 1997), 270-71, where a similar distillation of Öljeitü's religious experience is sandwiched more nuanced discussions of Ghazan and on Öljeitü's son and successor, Abū Sa'īd (1316-35).

⁶ Isabel Miller, "Local history in ninth/fifteenth century Yazd: the *Tārīkh-i jadīd-i Yazd*," *Iran* 27 (1989): 78.

⁷ On the formation of this presentation, including the concomitant suppression of the historical memory of Aḥmad Tegüder as a Muslim, see Peter Jackson, "Mongol khans and religious allegiance: the problems confronting a minister-historian in Ilkhanid Iran," *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies* 47 (2009): 109-22.

grounds that, “their production may have been a necessary precautionary measure for a convert from Judaism.”⁸

This chapter reexamines the relationship between religion and the Mongol court during the reigns of Ghazan and Öljeitü as reflected through Rashīd al-Dīn’s historical and theological writings. Like the previous chapter, it takes as a basic premise the fact that Rashīd al-Dīn’s works were produced in a court setting, causing them to be particularly concerned with the legitimacy of Ghazan and Öljeitü to rule the Middle East. However, since the topic in question, namely religion, is a broad social practice and not a narrow court-focused activity like historical production, Rashīd al-Dīn’s theology must be further situated within contemporary popular religious history. History and religion are combined in two ways here. First, previously unstudied theological and philosophical aspects of Rashīd al-Dīn’s historical writing show how he turned the experience of conversion into the defining feature of Ghazan’s legitimacy as sovereign. Second, by historicizing Rashīd al-Dīn’s theological writings within the historical record of Öljeitü’s reign, this chapter evaluates the latter’s religious life not as one of vacillation, but as a reflection of contemporary Iranian religious identity.

The historical record on Ghazan and Öljeitü attributes a single moment of profound change in the religious orientation of each leader. For Ghazan, this was his choice to adopt Islam in the summer of 1295. At that time, the cultural significance of Ghazan’s conversion was subordinated to the immediate strategic value of embracing the faith of the majority of the indigenous population and an increasing number of the Mongol *amīrs*.⁹ Only with Ghazan’s

⁸ David Morgan, *The Mongols*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 19.

⁹ For the argument that Ghazan’s conversion followed, rather than preceded that of his *amīrs*, see Charles Melville, “*Pādshāh-i Islām*: the conversion of Sultan Maḥmūd Ghāzān Khan,” in *History and literature in Iran: Persian and Islamic studies in honour of P.W. Avery* (London: British Academic Press, 1990), 159-77. For a prosopographical demonstration of accelerated conversion among Mongol amirs in the decades before Ghazan’s ascension, see Judith Pfeiffer, “Reflections on a ‘double rapprochement’:

later conscious cultivation of an Islamic cultural program, including the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, did his reign come to mark the definitive identification of the dynasty with Islam. This chapter contributes to the extensive literature on Ghazan's conversion by recognizing a stratum of theological and philosophical rhetoric in the conversion account and other portions of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*. By comparing this to other accounts of Ghazan's conversion, it becomes apparent that Rashīd al-Dīn consciously harnessed the Illuminationist philosophical tradition, along with a sympathetic tradition of political ethics from Kubrāvī Sufism, to promote an image of his patron as an ideal ruler.

The religious experience of Öljeitü, whose early life is poorly documented and whose conversion to Islam occurred before his rise to the throne, is known mostly through 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī's account of his decision to embrace Shī'ism.¹⁰ This account, discussed below, provides the grounds for Bausani and others to describe Öljeitü as spiritually impressionable. The only serious treatment of Öljeitü's move towards Shī'ism is Judith Pfeiffer's mapping of folklore *topoi* in Qāshānī and other historians' accounts of the episode.¹¹ Pfeiffer explicitly treats the event as a conversion experience, an approach which inevitably devalues Öljeitü's religious experience by virtue of the "failure" of his conversion to outlast his own reign.¹²

conversion to Islam among the Mongol elite during the early Ilkhanate," in *Beyond the legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 372-76.

¹⁰ Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljaytū*, ed. Mahīn Hambly (Tehran: Bangāh-i Tarjumā va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1969), 90-100.

¹¹ Judith Pfeiffer, "Conversion versions: Sultan Öljeitü's conversion to Shi'ism (709/1309) in Muslim narrative sources," *Mongolian Studies* 22 (1999): 35-67. Pfeiffer has since done important work on conversion in the early Ilkhanate: see Pfeiffer 2006, which presumably draws on her 2003 dissertation on Aḥmad Tegüder. Anne Broadbridge, *Kingship and ideology in the Islamic and Mongol worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 64-98 is indicative of many of the historiographical considerations discussed to this point. She calls the period of Ghazan and Öljeitü's reigns "the age of Ilkhanid conversion," giving thirty pages to Ghazan and only five to Öljeitü.

¹² Pfeiffer 1999, 47. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa suggests that Öljeitü may have abandoned Shī'ism for Sunnī Islam late in his life: Melville 1990 "Itineraries," 57 and n. 30

This chapter argues that Öljeitü's evolving religious position, culminating in his embrace of Shīism, was neither a matter of personal whim nor a true conversion experience, but rather the gradual broadening of the Ilkhan's religious identity into something more like that of the population over which he ruled. Such an understanding is accessible through Rashīd al-Dīn's theological writings. These works reveal that between 1306 and 1310 Öljeitü learned to perform and Rashīd al-Dīn came to articulate a new vision of kingship less in line with the Kubravī Şufī identity embraced by Ghazan and more heavily influenced by *īmāmī* and emanationist ideas. Within this new notion of kingship, Shīism provided a point of access for sacred authority by which a Mongol dynast could hold the place vacated by the caliphs as the head of the Islamic community. This vision of sacred kingship, like Öljeitü's "conversion" to Shīism, did not find traction immediately after his death, though it approximates the vision of sovereignty that came to signify rule in the Timurid, Mughal, and Şafavid courts in subsequent centuries.

Illuminating Ghazan

The *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* is celebrated as a dynastic history of the Mongols, though as demonstrated in Chapter Five, it engages significant literary and mythic elements from Turkic, Iranian, and Islamic tradition to cast the Ilkhans within the cultural sphere of the land they ruled. Another such area of appropriation is that of religion. In order to invest the memory of Ghazan's conversion, initially an act of political expedience, with a distinctly Islamic character, Rashīd al-Dīn engages two discourses of Islamic political theory. Given that significant influence of Kubravī *shaykhs* at the Ilkhanid court (Ghazan himself converted in the presence of the Kubravī Şadr al-Dīn Ibrāhim Ḥammūya), it is little surprising that the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* demonstrates a strong valence of Kubravī ethics. On the other hand, Rashīd al-Dīn's

portrayal of Ghazan marks the first entrance of Illuminationist philosophy into political discourse. After reviewing the history of the political theory of these two schools of thought in the decades before the Mongol conquest, this section demonstrates how Rashīd al-Dīn's portrayal of Ghazan – the vision that has populated all modern histories of the period – is to be read as a study in dynastic legitimacy.

The itinerant ascetic and mystic Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Futūḥ Suhrawardī (d. 1191) is called the “Master of Illumination” (*Shaykh al-Ishrāq*) for having articulated a radical theory of immediate and inspired cognition in place of prevailing Peripatetic (*mashshā'ī*) philosophy.¹³ After enjoying some influence in Ayyubid Aleppo, Suhrawardī was executed on the order of Saladin, earning him his sobriquet, al-Maqtūl “the executed.” While Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl's followers scattered after his death, over the course of the thirteenth century Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Shahrazūrī (d. ca. 1288), and Ibn Kammūnah (d. 1284) began the process of systematizing his ideas.¹⁴ Independently, the prodigious mystical philosopher Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240) developed the basic premise of Illuminationist thought into a mystical philosophy that his critics attacked as monist.¹⁵

During the early Ilkhanid period, Qutb al-Dīn Shīrāzī learned about Illuminationist philosophy from Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī; from another teacher, Sadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (d. 1274), he absorbed the mystical philosophy of Ibn 'Arabī, making Shīrāzī a leading figure in esoteric philosophy at the turn of the fourteenth century.¹⁶ In his writings, including an important

¹³ On Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl, see Hossein Ziai, “Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī: founder of the Illuminationist school,” in Nasr and Leaman, eds. 1996, 434-64.

¹⁴ Hossein Ziai, “The Illuminationist tradition,” in Nasr and Leaman, eds. 1996, 465-96.

¹⁵ On Ibn 'Arabī, see William C. Chittick, “Ibn 'Arabī,” in Nasr and Leaman, eds. 1996, 497-509.

¹⁶ Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani sees a common source, namely the esoteric Zoroastrian practice at Adhargushnasp, behind Firdausī's portrayal of Iranian kings as proto-monotheists and Suhrawardī

commentary on Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl’s most important work, the *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* (*Philosophy of Illumination*), Qutb al-Dīn Shīrāzī synthesized Ibn ‘Arabī’s gnostic mysticism with Illuminationist Philosophy and the Peripatetic tradition for which Ṭūsī is better known. The result was the basic shape of a school of thought that emerged as the dominant philosophical movement in Iran through the work of the “school of Isfahan” three hundred years later.¹⁷

Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl’s writings are not explicitly political, yet the outlines of a political doctrine can be traced through his various philosophical works.¹⁸ This doctrine, like much of Suhrawardī’s thinking, draws on a number of independent but complementary pre-Aristotelian Greek, Islamic, and pre-Islamic Iranian traditions concerning the divine inspiration of authority understood as a spiritual or manifest light associated with the holder of secular or spiritual authority.¹⁹ Suhrawardī’s conception of authority looks to a ruler who enjoys divine enlightenment not as the member of a privileged class, but as a result of his personal pursuit of wisdom. As Suhrawardī writes in his *magnum opus*, the *Philosophy of Illumination* (*Ḥikma al-ishrāq*), “should it happen that in some period there be a philosopher proficient in both intuitive philosophy and discursive philosophy, he will be the ruler by right and the vicegerent of God.”²⁰ For Suhrawardī and the Illuminationists, divinely sanctioned

al-Maqtūl’s development of Illuminationism, further crediting Shīrāzī, as the preeminent Illuminationist of the day, with having proposed the rebuilding of the fire temple as Abaqa’s palace: “Le livre des rois, miroir du destin. II – Takht-e Soleymān et la symbolique du Shāh-nāme,” *Studia Iranica* 20 (1991): 39-54.

¹⁷ Ziai 1996 “Illuminationist,” 469.

¹⁸ Hossein Ziai, “The source and nature of authority: a study of al-Suhrawardī’s Illuminationist political doctrine,” in *The political aspects of Islamic philosophy: essays in honor of Muhsin S. Mahdi*, ed. Charles E. Butterworth (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 304-44. Ziai speculates that it was the ascetic’s intervention in Ayyubid politics that earned his execution on the order of Saladin.

¹⁹ For a summary of the various traditions on which Suhrawardī draws, see Ziai 1992, 307-08.

²⁰ Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Futūḥ Suhrawardī, *The philosophy of Illumination* (*Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*), ed. and tr. John Walbridge and Hossein Ziai (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1999), 3.

authority becomes available to a ruler who is both capable of scientific study and who pursues it actively.

A contemporary development that informed Rashīd al-Dīn's portrayal of Ghazan is the application of Sufism as a model for personal and political behavior. During the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, Shihāb al-Dīn 'Umar ibn Muḥammad Suhrawardī (1145-1234) worked closely alongside the Caliph al-Nāṣir (r. 1181-1223) in the latter's effort to bring the various spiritual groups that had proliferated in the wake of the Great Saljuq state back under the command of the caliphate.²¹ He was acting as a representative of the Caliph to the Saljuq Sulṭān 'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād of Rūm 1221 when he met another Sufi, Najm al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 1256), a *murīd* of Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, who had fled to Kayqubād's realm in the face of the initial Mongol invasion of the Middle East. In Anatolia, 'Umar Suhrawardī encouraged Rāzī to present a version of his celebrated manual of Sufi doctrine and method, the *Mirṣād al-'ibād* (*Path of God's bondsmen*) to Kayqubād.²²

The *Mirṣād* is a handbook for ethical behavior. Such works were a hallmark of the early Kubrāvī order – 'Umar Suhrawardī's uncle and Najm al-Dīn Kubrā had each produced works in the same genre which, like the activities of 'Umar Suhrawardī, applied Sufi theory to political

²¹ On 'Umar al-Suhrawardī and the emergence of Sufi *ṭarīqa* lineages, see Erik S. Ohlander, *Sufism in an age of transition: 'Umar al-Suhrawardī and the rise of the Islamic mystical brotherhoods* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 249-302.

²² For an edition of the *Mirṣād*, see Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, *Mirṣād al-'ibād*, ed. Muḥammad Amīn Riyāḥī (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i 'Ilmī va Farhangī, 1986). For a translation, see *idem*, *The path of God's bondsmen from origin to return*, tr. Hamid Algar (Delmar, NY: Caravan Books, 1982). Disappointed with his efforts to secure patronage with Keyqobad, Rāzī traveled to Erzincan, where he produced yet another rendition of his guidebook for Sufi practice. This last version, titled *Marmūzāt-i asadī dar mazmūrāt-i Dā'ūdī* (*Symbolic expressions of Asadī [Rāzī] concerning the Psalms of David*), covers much of the same material as the *Mirṣād*, but greatly elaborates on the conduct and character of the just ruler. Najm al-Dīn Rāzī, *Marmūzāt-i asadī dar mazmūrāt-i dā'ūdī*, ed. Muḥammad Rezā Shafī'ī Kadkanī (Tehran: Sukhan, 2002). Since this work was not widely circulated, I have not considered it as a likely influence of Rashīd al-Dīn's thinking and have limited my comparison of the *Ta'riḫ-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* to the *Mirṣād*, which was almost certainly known to Rashīd al-Dīn, especially since Rāzī spent the last phase of his life in Baghdad.

activity. In his contribution to this genre, Rāzī outlines the characteristics of the just ruler.²³ Rāzī describes three states or qualities (*ḥāl*) of the just ruler, concerning his soul, his subjects, and his God. In the pursuance of justice, the ruler is expected to perform all necessary religious observations and recognize the unity (*tauḥīd*) of God without becoming overly occupied with supernumerary religious practice. Having ordered his own soul in this way, the ruler should dispense justice, refrain from tyranny, and maintain an equilibrium among his subjects so that the powerful are treated with respect but do not oppress the weak. All subjects should realize the benefits of the ruler's generosity and justice, which like his religious practice should neither be excessive nor inadequate.

As part of his religious and social function, the ruler is to support and encourage students, scholars, ascetics, *sayyids*, and other pious groups, and provide for the poor and weak. Failure to do so would allow for unscrupulous members of powerful classes to levy unjust taxes and burdens upon the defenseless. Beyond ordering his own actions, the just ruler is to abolish evil customs and the tyrannical or impious policies of previous rulers. In addition to these policy measures, Rāzī stipulates that a ruler must respect the terms of all endowed properties (*awqāf*, sing. *waqf*). He dedicates a significant portion of text to emphasizing the importance of this last point, including an illustrative anecdote from the career of Saladin.²⁴

The Illuminationist philosophy of Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl and the institutional Sufism of ʿUmar Suhrawardī and Najm al-Dīn Rāzī became, in later centuries, central elements of Iranian Islam. In the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, these trends were just being

²³ Rāzī, ed. Riyāḥī, 432-64; *idem*, tr. Algar 411-32. Rāzī's criteria for the just ruler are also summarized by A.K.S. Lambton, "Justice in the medieval Persian theory of kingship," *Studia Islamica* 17 (1962): 110-15.

²⁴ Rāzī, ed. Riyāḥī, 458-61; *idem*, tr. Algar 428-30.

articulated as philosophical and political doctrines. In the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* we see them paired as central elements in the process of turning Ghazan into an Islamic sovereign and his conversion into a major historical event.

The first place to look for such evidence is, of course, the scene of Ghazan's conversion itself. This episode has attracted the greatest concentration of attention in studies relating to Ilkhanid religion. Scholars have mainly approached the account of Ghazan's conversion with the intent of determining its historicity, the sincerity of Ghazan's conversion, and how it fit into political and literary discourse at the Ilkhanid and Mamluk courts.²⁵ Most recently, Peter Jackson has demonstrated how Rashīd al-Dīn's portrayal of Ghazan's Islamic faith can be read as an apologetic not only for the author's own conversion, but also for Ghazan's syncretic and assimilative approach to Islam.²⁶

The Kubravī component of Ghazan's conversion is overt and has already been mentioned: his attendant *shaykh* was the Kubravī Ṣadr al-Dīn Hammūya. In an Arabic version of the conversion purportedly preserving Shaykh Ṣadr al-Dīn's own account, he invests Ghazan with a robe and woolen cloak (*ṣūf*), further identifying Ghazan as a follower of the Kubrāvī path.²⁷ An examination of the language of the conversion account reveals an additional layer of Illuminationist rhetoric and symbolism. The official recension retains some of this language, but it is most apparent in the "P" recension.²⁸ The content of this account largely

²⁵ Melville 1990 "Pādshāh"; Pfeiffer 2006; Jackson 2009; Reuven Amitai-Preiss, "Ghazan, Islam and Mongol tradition: a view from the Mamluk Sultanate," *BSOAS* 59.1 (1996): 1-10. For a follow-up on how at least one narrative of Ghazan's Islamic practice developed in later periods, see Charles Melville, "History and myth: the persianisation of Ghazan Khan," in *Irano-Turkic cultural contacts in the 11th-17th centuries*, ed. Éva M. Jeremiás (Piliscsaba, Hungary: Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, 2003), 133-60.

²⁶ Jackson 2009, 118-20.

²⁷ Melville 1990 "Pādshāh", 163.

²⁸ For a translation of this account, see Appendix B. As discussed in Chapter Three, the "P" recension likely predates the main redaction of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. As such, it is likely not influenced

agrees with the purportedly eye-witness account of Shaykh Ṣadr al-Dīn. This makes the systematic use of Illuminationist language all the more remarkable, as it signals a conscious casting of the episode into a particular philosophical mold.

The “P” recension account of Ghazan’s conversion opens, like many scenes that were later redacted, with a speech by Amīr Naurūz:

From those learned in Islam and those endowed with astrological prognostication and the keepers of the calendar, it is recorded and affirmed that in 690 9beg. 4 Jan. 1291) a great king would give strength to the Islamic faith, and Islam, which has been worn out, would become powerful again. . . . Time and again it has come to the mind of this servant that [this prophesied king] might be Ghazan Khan, that the mark of this quality and the signs of this nature are strewn manifest from the image of good character and the breadth of good works on the revealing brow of the prince.

In addition to casting Ghazan as the renewer of Islam, Naurūz here makes explicit the idea that Ghazan, and not the usurpers Geikhatu and Baidu, is the true successor of Arghun, who had died in the year 690/1291. Also he states that the sign of kingship is evident on Ghazan’s face, an idea borrowed from Sasanian and *īmāmī* precedents into Suhrawardi’s philosophical writing. After this, the moment of conversion is described in terms of Neo-Platonic Illuminationist imagery. Ghazan’s heart is opened by the words of Naurūz, so that “the dark place became light (*jā-yi zuḥmat nūr girift*).” Ghazan declares that it had always been his intention to embrace the true faith, “but continuous and compelling attachments and entanglements were an impediment to the guidance of the light of faith (*nūr-i īmān*).”

Having declared the foolishness of idolatry, Ghazan performs ablutions and, “dressed in clean garments, ascended the sublime height and stood like a candle as a servant in front of God.” Inspired by his examples, a throng of Mongol *amīrs* and soldiers “were purified and were

by theological considerations facing Rashīd al-Dīn during the reign of Öljeitü. The fact that the main textual tradition tones down the Illuminationist rhetoric of this passage may be a reflection of Öljeitü’s movement to a different combination of religious signifiers in expressing his legitimacy, as discussed below.

honored by honoring the guidance of the light of faith (*nūr-i imān*).” The Sufi association of Ghazan’s conversion is strengthened as Ghazan busies himself after his conversion with visiting shrines and tombs.

One particularly enigmatic element of Ghazan’s conversion story is the priceless ruby that Naurūz is said to present to the prince when first broaching the subject of conversion.²⁹ The image of the ruby exists in contemporary Sufi literature signifying the state of annihilation (*fānī*) in which the Sufi becomes entirely identified with the nature (*vaṣf*) of God, just as the ruby, when filled with the light of the sun, loses its stony quality to become a manifestation of sunlight.³⁰ Also pertinent is a story from the hagiography of Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl in which the mystic scholar, on arriving in Aleppo in 1183, magically produced an enormous ruby, attracting the attention of the young Ayyubid prince. Given that Naurūz’s speech, and the entire scene of Ghazan’s conversion, is laden with imagery from Illuminationist philosophy, the ruby becomes a double-edged referent to Suhrawardī as both a guide to political and spiritual kingship and as a potential political liability.

Rashīd al-Dīn further engages Kubrāvī notions of just political behavior in the last section (*qism*) of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. This is the longest single section of the work, consisting of forty anecdotes, most of which tell of Ghazan’s efforts at administrative, military, and cultural reform.³¹ This reform program has drawn significant attention. Several scholars,

²⁹ The presentation of the ruby occurred before the conversion scene, after a meeting between Ghazan and Baidu Khan. In the “P” recension, the ruby is mentioned at the appropriate point in the narrative and again during the conversion scene: Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*. Vol. 3, ed. Abdulkerim Ali Oğlu Alizada (Baku: Azarbayjan CCR Elmler Akademiyasy Neshriyyaty, 1957), 600, 604. In the main recension, the original presentation of the ruby is omitted, but recalled during the scene of Ghazan’s conversion: Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī (Tehran: Alburz, 1994), 1254.

³⁰ Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *Masnavī*, 5.2020-49. For more on the ruby in Sufi literature, see Sayyid Ja‘far Sajādī, *Farhang-i Iṣṭilāḥāt va ta‘bīrāt-i irfānī* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Ṭahūrī, 2000), 687.

³¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed Raushan and Mūsavī, 1327-1540.

including early survey histories of the Ilkhanate, simply reproduce the reforms reported by Rashīd al-Dīn, accepting them at face value.³² Others have recognized that the program of reforms described by Rashīd al-Dīn is unlikely to have been instituted, given Ghazan’s short reign and Rashīd al-Dīn’s personal stake in presenting his patron’s reign as an administrative success.³³ Vaṣṣāf and Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī each report a much more modest program of reforms which confirm Rashīd al-Dīn’s account in some respects but nevertheless suggest that his report of the reforms in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* has been significantly elaborated.³⁴

While the historicity of the reforms Rashīd al-Dīn attributes to Ghazan will probably never be entirely understood, their appearance in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* contributes to the portrait of Ghazan within the political framework of contemporary Kubrāvī Sufism. Najm al-Dīn Rāzī’s prescription for an ideal ruler fits neatly with the reform program that Rashīd al-Dīn attributes to Ghazan Khan. In general, the forty anecdotes of this section progress from a description of Ghazan’s personal characteristics (his chastity, eloquence, steadfastness, honesty, generosity to various groups including *sayyids*, piety, and leadership of soldiers and

³² Constantin D’Ohsson, *Histoire des Mongols, depuis Tchinguiz-Khan jusqu’a Timour Bey ou Tamerlan* (The Hague: Les Frères van Cleef, 1834), i.370-477; Henry H. Howorth, *History of the Mongols from the 9th to the 19th century* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1876), iii.495-530; Ann K.S. Lambton, *Continuity and change in Medieval Persia: aspects of administrative, economic and social history, 11th-14th century* (Albany: State University of New York, 1988), esp. 135-27, 140-48, 176-80.

³³ Beatrice Forbes Manz, “The rule of the infidels: the Mongols and the Islamic world,” in *The new Cambridge history of Islam. Vol. 3: The Eastern Islamic world, eleventh to eighteenth centuries*, ed. David O. Morgan and Anthony Reid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 156-58; Birgitt Hoffmann, *Waqf im mongolischen Iran: Rašīduddīns Sorge um Nachruhm und Seelenheil* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2000), 71-72; Morgan 1988, 75-77. Morgan is a little less cynical than the others about Rashīd al-Dīn’s intent in his presentation of Ghazan’s the reforms as he does, suggesting that “more would have been achieved had Ghazan’s reign lasted longer than a mere nine years.”

³⁴ ‘Abd Allāh ibn Faḏl Allāh Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaẓrat, *Kitāb-i mustaṭāb-i Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaẓrat dar bandar-i Mughūl* (Bombay lithograph edition, 1853), 386-91; I.P. Petrushevsky, “The socio-economic condition of Iran under the ĩl-khāns,” in *The Cambridge history of Iran. Vol. 5: the Saljuq and Mongol periods*, ed. J.A. Boyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 495. Vaṣṣāf confirms that Ghazan improved the *yam*, forbade public drinking, standardized weights and measures, curtailed the powers of certain magistrates, and sponsored public charity. Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī gives some evidence for a revival of agriculture during this period.

scholars) through a series of measures intended to protect his subjects (from falsehood and forgery, extraordinary taxation, brigands, and the like) to another series of moral and practical reforms (the prohibition of wine, management of court expenses, and reorganization of state armories and flocks). This list of characteristics and reforms is punctuated by three anecdotes telling of Ghazan's building and endowment activities, including the entire endowment deed of his *Abwāb al-birr* complex at Tabriz.³⁵ Beyond the special attention of endowed properties, many of the specific measures described respond exactly to Rāzī's description of just kingship, such as the abolition of excessive tax measures and impositions that had come into being during the reign of previous Ilkhans.

In the first of these forty anecdotes, Rashīd al-Dīn pairs the Kubravī political ethic of Ghazan Khan with the rhetoric and imagery of Illuminationist philosophy.³⁶ This anecdote begins with a brief mention of Ghazan's early life as an idolater and how God chose him to spread justice and renew and propagate Islam. There follows a rare moment of self-reference, as Rashīd al-Dīn tells of Ghazan speaking to "the author of this book" about the unforgivable sin of idolatry and outlining the false premises of idolaters. After this, Rashīd al-Dīn attests to Ghazan's own pursuit of wisdom, spending time in contemplative study and in discussion with scholars. The anecdote ends with a laundry list of Ghazan's areas of expertise: from the religions, languages, and customs of many people to the sciences of alchemy, medicine, mineralogy, spells, and astronomy. Ghazan's facility with these various sciences, and the initiative he takes to acquire them mark him as a rightful ruler as described by Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl.

³⁵ These are anecdotes twelve (on various shrines and other structures), thirteen (on the *abwāb al-birr*), and twenty-eight (on public baths and mosques). See Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1369-86, 1502.

³⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1331-41.

The language of this anecdote is rich with vocabulary and imagery from the Illuminationist tradition. Most noteworthy is the vocabulary of light (*nūr*, *raushanā'ī*), which is said to have descended into the breast of Ghazan at his moment of rejecting idolatry. In his speech on idolatry, Ghazan talks of having been given “illumination and guidance” (*raushanā'ī va dānīsh*) from God and of the human soul’s need to detach from worldly affairs to ascend from the world of darkness to the world of light (*az ‘ālam-i tārikī be ‘ālam-i nūr*).³⁷ In this, Ghazan echoes Suhrawardī’s notion of an intermediate realm or eighth clime (*al-iqlīm al-thāmin*), occupied by beings of light and accessible to the enlightened human mind.³⁸ As if to emphasize Ghazan’s enlightened state, Rashīd al-Dīn asserts that he frequently spoke profound words (*sukhanān-i amīq*) that no scholar or mystic (*ḥakīm, ‘arīf*) could understand. The correlation of wisdom and enlightenment is extended with the account of Ghazan’s conversations with scholars and wise men and his knowledge of occult and scientific disciplines.

Reading Rashīd al-Dīn’s portrayal of Ghazan Khan as a reflection of Sufi and Illuminationist ideas helps clarify an enigmatic passage concerning the construction of Ghazan’s tomb at Shamb, in Tabriz. Asked by the builders how many windows they should leave in the dome to let in light, Ghazan responds in a way that has puzzled translators: “the light there should come from here, otherwise the accidental illumination (*raushanā'ī-i ārizī*) of the sun in that place is of no benefit to anyone.”³⁹ Key to understanding this remark is the idea of “accidental” (*ārizī*) illumination, a term that Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl employs to distinguish physical light from the spiritual enlightenment of the wise sage or ruler.⁴⁰ In other words, the

³⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1334.

³⁸ Suhrawardī 1999, 160-61.

³⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1282.

⁴⁰ Suhrawardī 1999, 77-78 *et al.*

number of windows in the dome would not affect the quality of spiritual “light” emanating from the presence of Ghazan himself.

Thus, in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, we see the deployment of the vocabulary and images of Illuminationist philosophy, as well as Sufi political ethics as developed in the writings of *shaykhs* from the Kubrāvī order, the same order represented at the conversion of Ghazan Khan. Illuminationist philosophy, as expressed by Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl and Ibn ‘Arabī, has undergirded Iranian Islamic thought to the current day. As a political ideology, it developed in later Persianate courts, particularly those of the Timurids and Mughals.⁴¹ This philosophical system provides a source of imagery for the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, but Rashīd al-Dīn does not develop it into a systematic political statement. In later years under Öljeitü, as the following sections demonstrate, Rashīd al-Dīn took further steps towards the development of such a system, though he never articulates anything as systematic as the hagiography surrounding Amīr Timur or the *dīn-i ilāhī* of Akbar the Great.

The Timurid and Mughal saint-king complex that Azfar Moin distinguishes centers on the charismatic millenarian identification of Amīr Timur and other such figures as *ṣāhib-qirān*, or “Lord of [Auspicious] Conjunction,” though Moin sees no significant precedent for the political use of this term in the pre-Timur period.⁴² We have already seen Vaṣṣāf’s account of Arghun’s vizier Sa’d al-Daula attempting to attach this title to his patron. In the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, the idea of the *ṣāhib-qirān* is still somewhat inchoate, though begins to assume the sacred and political contours that were further refined in later Persianate courts. Rashīd al-Dīn includes *ṣāhib-qirān* in the titles of Öljeitü in the opening of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i*

⁴¹ A. Azfar Moin, *The millennial sovereign: sacred kingship and sainthood in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012); John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 45-47.

⁴² Moin, 23-55.

ghāzānī and he uses it in one other place to refer to Hülegü, but he also applies it to himself in the opening of one of his theological works, quoted already at the beginning of Chapter Four, suggesting that he did not consider the term strictly as a royal title.⁴³

More suggestive of the fact that the saint-king complex was beginning to take shape already during this period are two further uses of *ṣāhib-qirān* within the text of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* itself. In the story of Alan Qo'a, Rashīd al-Dīn relates that, despite the early death of her husband Dobun Bayan, a *ṣāhib-qirān* was destined to come from her progeny, justifying the intervention of a man of light by whom Alan Qo'a gave birth to three sons, including the ancestor of the Chinggisids.⁴⁴ As Moin has demonstrated, the story of Alan Qo'a (from whom the non-Chinggisid Timur was also descended) became, a century later, a central mythical conceit that allowed Timur's successors to transfer the source of their royal authority from the Chinggisid dispensation to a divinely illumined sainthood.⁴⁵ Finally, in another of the forty anecdotes about Ghazan Khan, Rashīd al-Dīn describes how the words that Ghazan spoke inevitably came true, identifying such a quality with the Lord of Conjunction.⁴⁶ Even if the "millennial sovereign" did not come fully into view until the Timurid period, he makes his entry around the peripheries of Perso-Islamic political and religious thinking a century earlier.

Islam under Öljeitü

Ghazan's stars did not align for him to see his dynastic history completed. He died in May 1304, after which Rashīd al-Dīn prepared a clean copy of the work and presented it to Ghazan's brother and successor, Öljeitü Sulṭān. The latter proclaimed that the history was to retain the

⁴³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 5, 1489; *idem*, *Laṭā'if al-ḥaqā'iq*, ed. Ghulāmriżā Ṭāhir (Tehran: University of Tehran, 1976), ii.2.

⁴⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 222.

⁴⁵ Moin, 37-39.

⁴⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1348-49.

name of its patron, calling it the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. Öljeitü further ordered a second historical volume conceived as universal in two ways: chronologically presenting the history of the Perso-Islamic world in a form familiar from such writers as Ibn al-Athīr and Ḥamza al-Isfahanī, and geographically including summary histories of various peoples of Eurasia. Together with the dynastic history of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, this was to comprise the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*. ‘Abd Allāh Qāshānī tells us Rashīd al-Dīn presented the complete work to Öljeitü on 14 April 1307.⁴⁷

Even before he completed the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, Rashīd al-Dīn found himself facing a new philosophical and theological question concerning his patron. Since Öljeitü’s personal conversion to Islam played no role in his accession to the throne, it also could not serve as a cornerstone to a program of political legitimacy. At the same time, as the Ilkhanid court was increasingly Islamized, it faced certain existential dilemmas about its relationship with Islam as a practice (and not simply a destination of conversion). In short, under Öljeitü the debate over Islam within Mongol political space ceased to be concerned primarily with the question of conversion and instead settled into more mature legal and theological questions about governance.

In response to this new demand, Rashīd al-Dīn turned his attention from historiography to theology. Zeki Velidi Togan has noted that Rashīd al-Dīn’s attention shifted from matters of science and state during the reign of Ghazan to those of faith and philosophy after the accession of Öljeitü.⁴⁸ However, as seen above, a distinctly Islamic philosophy is present already in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. Similarly, matters of state were never far

⁴⁷ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 54-55. Howorth, iii.539 misdates this to 14 April 1306, which has been the cause for some subsequent misdating.

⁴⁸ Zeki Velidi Togan, “Reşid-üd-Din Tabīb,” in *İslâm ansiklopedisi. İslâm âlemi coğrafya, etnoğrafya ve biyografya lûgati*. Vol. 9.1, ed. M.T. Houtsma (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1960), 709.

from Rashīd al-Dīn’s mind even when writing explicitly theological works under Öljeitü. Indeed, by the time Rashīd al-Dīn wrote his last theological work around 1310, he had sketched the broad theoretical contours for the new mode of kingship, the political aspect of which he had already outlined in the dynastic history. Crucially, this new theory of kingship, in which a uniquely enlightened sovereign embodied both secular and sacred authority, required bringing aspects of “popular” Islam into the register of theology. This new mode of legitimacy failed to gain traction among Öljeitü’s immediate successors, but it became a defining feature of Mongol rule in Central Asia and India in later centuries.⁴⁹ While Rashīd al-Dīn’s writings may not have been the immediate inspiration for Timurid, Şafavid, and Mughal ideas of kingship, we see in his theological works all the elements of those later ideas.

In her study of religion under the Ilkhans, Monika Gronke has unhelpfully drawn a stark distinction between “high” and “popular” registers of the faith.⁵⁰ One of the arguments of this chapter is that “popular” Islam as understood by Gronke was increasingly integrated into formal religious discourse at the Ilkhand court, and particularly in the theology that Rashīd al-Dīn wrote for Öljeitü. For now, however, her distinction provides the start of a convenient rubric for discussing Islam during the reign of Öljeitü. The following pages review three relevant contexts for Rashīd al-Dīn’s theological writing: first, the development of “high” theology and philosophy leading up to the fourteenth century; second, the contemporary practice of “popular” Islam in Iran; and finally, the historical context of Öljeitü’s religious experience. After this, the chapter examines Rashīd al-Dīn’s theological writing to show how it engages these contexts in an effort to formulate a new theory of sacred kingship.

⁴⁹ Moin 2012, esp. 23-55.

⁵⁰ Monika Gronke, “La religion populaire en Iran mongol,” in *L’Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institute Français de Recherche en Iran, 1997), 205.

The theological setting

The Ilkhanid period was one of crucial maturation for a number of ideas and schools of thought that originated before the Mongol conquest but only came into full fruition much later. As Hamid Dabashi remarks,

The Mongol invasion of Islamic lands in the seventh/thirteenth century was a landmark in an intellectual history which by then had already produced and legitimated its major paradigmatic discourses. Despite the massive material devastation that the invasion caused, the enduring patterns of intellectual engagements survived and, in some respects, even flourished.⁵¹

Rashīd al-Dīn lived and wrote during this period of rich synthesis. We have already seen how Qutb al-Dīn Shīrāzī recombined Illuminationism with mystical and Peripatetic philosophy and how the resulting synthesis informed the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. Rashīd al-Dīn's theological works engage independently with the "paradigmatic discourses" of Islamic intellectual history. The roots of these discourses lie in developments in the tenth and eleventh centuries, when the first flush of Shī'ism as a political system enervated philosophical thought in the Islamic world.

The installment of the young Fāṭimid caliphate at Cairo in 969 CE gave political sanction to Shī'ite, and particularly Ismā'īlī speculative theology, which privileged human reason (*'aql*) alongside the soul (*rūḥ*) in deriving truths (*ḥaqā'iq*) in matters of scriptural interpretation.⁵² The subsequent spread of Nizārī Ismā'īlīs into the central Islamic lands brought this system into contact with an extant debate between the "Primacy of Reason," exemplified by the early ninth-century rationalist Mu'tazilite movement, and the "Primacy of Revelation" propounded by traditional Sunnī jurists such as Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 767), Mālik ibn Anas (d. 795), and Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (d. 820). While Abū'l Ḥasan al-Ash'arī (d. 936)

⁵¹ Hamid Dabashi, "Khawājah Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī: the philosopher/vizier and the intellectual climate of his time," in *History of Islamic philosophy*, ed. Seyyid Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (London: Routledge, 1996), 539.

⁵² For an overview of Ismā'īlī philosophy under the Fāṭimids, see Azim Nanji, "Ismā'īlī philosophy," in Nasr and Leaman, eds. 1996, 144-54.

had formulated an intellectual compromise between Mu'tazilism and traditionalism in the early tenth century, the rise of Ismā'īlī thought and Shī'ite political influence gave new life to a form of political philosophy expounded by Ash'arī's contemporary, the Neo-Platonic writer Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī (d. 950).

The main figure in this new Ismā'īlī-inflected speculative philosophy was Abū 'Alī al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Abd Allāh Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna, 980-1037).⁵³ Educated in Bukhara under the Sāmānid Amīr Nūḥ b. Maṣṣūr (976-97), Ibn Sīnā became famous for systematizing the precepts of Aristotelian or Peripatetic (Ar. *mashshā'i*) logic and applying them to the numerous scientific disciplines in which he worked. In his best known work, the *Qanūn fi'l-ṭibb* (*Canon of medicine*), for example, Ibn Sīnā removed medicine from the stoic materialist bounds described for it by Galen in the second century CE and systematized its principles and practices within a comprehensive epistemological framework in a form that dominated practice across the Mediterranean world for centuries.⁵⁴ While Ibn Sīnā's belief in the capacity of human reason to derive certainty in unknown matters would come under fierce criticism in subsequent centuries, after him Aristotelian logic became the undisputed (though frequently unacknowledged) framework in which even such criticisms were voiced.

⁵³ The literature on Ibn Sīnā, who coincidentally died in Rashīd al-Dīn's home town of Hamadan, is immense. A useful overview is that of Jon McGinnis, *Avicenna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). See also A.-M. Goichon, "Ibn Sīnā," *El'*; Shams Inati, "Ibn Sīnā," in Nasr and Leaman, eds. 1996, 231-46. His autobiography, which was collected and completed by his student Abū 'Ubayd al-Jūzjānī and used by numerous later writers, has been edited and translated by William E. Gohlman, *The life of Ibn Sina: a critical edition and annotated translation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1974).

⁵⁴ Ibn Sīnā applied his systematizing mind to Islamic literature as well as medicine. His Qur'anic commentary was the first by a philosopher, and he even engaged the emerging genre of narratives of the Prophet's ascension (*Mi'rājnāma*) to present a metaphorical rendition of his logical system. See Christiane Gruber, *The Ilkhanid book of ascension: a Persian-Sunni devotional tale* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 13.

Peripatetic philosophy as developed by Ibn Sīnā came under sharp attack by Ghazālī.⁵⁵ Ghazālī worked as a Shāfiʿī jurist at the Nizamiyya colleges, first from 1091 until 1095 at Baghdad under the colleges' founder, the Great Saljuq vizier Niẓām al-Mulk, and, after the latter's death and an eleven year period during which al-Ghazālī lived in relative obscurity, at Nīshāpūr from 1106 until his own death in 1111. During his time at Baghdad, Ghazālī composed a number of treatises dealing with Ibn Sīnā's philosophical system. Most of these, and most famously the *Maqāṣid al-falāsifah* (*Aims of the philosophers*), were expository works, explaining and summarizing the positions of Ibn Sīnā and al-Fārābī. Shortly before renouncing his teaching position in 1095, Ghazālī penned his *Tahāfut al-falāsifah* (*Incoherence of the philosophers*), in which he demonstrates, using Ibn Sīnā's logical system, a number of inconsistencies within the Aristotelian tradition, even while preserving a belief in the instrumental role of logic (*manṭiq*) for intellectual argumentation.

The sudden rejection of Peripatetic philosophy, which had been nurtured during the rise of Ismāʿīlī political influence in the late tenth century, was linked with a new anxiety about Ismāʿīlī interference with the Saljuq political system (the Ismāʿīlīs assassinated Niẓām al-Mulk in 1092). In other works written during this time, Ghazālī denounced disorder and disobedience in general and Ismāʿīlism in particular.⁵⁶ Just as Ibn Sīnā's epistemological construction had occurred in the context of Ismāʿīlī strength, its rebuttal came at the moment of fiercest state reaction to Ismāʿīlism. This correlation between Shīʿa Islam, here in its Ismāʿīlī form, and the capacity of human reason (*ʿaql*) for resolving theological dispute remained durable in later centuries.

⁵⁵ Again, the literature for al-Ghazālī is extensive. See W. Montgomery Watt, *Muslim intellectual: a study of al-Ghazali* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1963); *idem*, "al-Ghazālī," *Et*²; and Massimo Campanini, "Al-Ghazzālī," in Nasr and Leaman, eds. 1996, 258-74, all with additional bibliography.

⁵⁶ On Ghazālī's polemic against the Ismāʿīlīs, see Farouk Mitha, *Al-Ghazālī and the Ismailis: a debate on reason and authority in Medieval Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001).

Ghazālī does not pair his rejection of Peripatetic philosophy in the *Tahāfut* with any alternate epistemological system. Instead, on his return to teaching at Nīshāpūr he embraced a form of Sufi mystical doctrine undergirded with the same Aristotelian logic with which he had framed his earlier critique.⁵⁷ During this same period, he wrote the *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* (*Kingly advice*), a work in the mirror-for-princes genre in which he builds on earlier writings about the *īmāms* and caliphs to present an image of a secular ruler, or *sulṭān*, as distinct from the caliphate.⁵⁸ In terms reminiscent of Nizām al-Mulk’s *Siyar al-mulūk* (*Lives of kings*), Ghazālī explains that “in all periods of time God most High manifests His power in the world by selecting certain groups of His servants, such as kings, wazirs, and learned men (*‘ālimān*) for the purpose of making the world prosperous.”⁵⁹ The *sulṭān*, in turn, acted as “the shadow of God on earth” and deserved obedience by virtue of the Qur’ānic injunction, “obey God, and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you” (4:59). Ghazālī’s notion of kingship, in other words, predicts the basic Illuminationist notion that divine authority was accessed through immediate cognition granted on God’s initiative, and not through rational speculation. In laying out this position, Ghazālī makes extensive use of Neo-Platonic light imagery, again predicting the symbolic language developed by Suhrawardī eighty years later.⁶⁰ It is particularly suited to the situation of his time, when sacred and secular power were divided between caliph and *sulṭān* and when Ismā‘īlī activity brought renewed suspicion to bear on speculative rational theology.

⁵⁷ On Ghazālī’s Sufism, in addition to the works cited above, see Alexander Knysh, *Islamic mysticism: a short history* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 140-49.

⁵⁸ Ann K.S. Lambton, *State and government in medieval Islam: an introduction to the study of Islamic political theory: the juris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 107-26.

⁵⁹ Translated by Lambton 1981, 117-78.

⁶⁰ On Ghazālī’s use of light imagery, see Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Studies in al-Ghazzali* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press of Hebrew University, 1975), 264-348.

From his deliberate synthesis of esoteric and Peripatetic philosophy, law, political theory, and Sufism, Ghazālī became known as the “proof of Islam” (*ḥujjat al-islām*) and took on the mantle of the centennial renovator (*mujaddid*) of the faith.⁶¹ From the intellectual synthesis he forged, we can trace three regional lines of Islamic philosophy as they developed in the central, eastern, and western Islamic lands over the next hundred years. Hossein Ziai has called these the “Peripatetic,” “Averroist,” and “Illuminationist” traditions.⁶² The last named of these was the direct result of Ghazālī’s rejection of the Aristotelian tradition. After Ghazālī, the central Islamic lands saw no great *mashshā’ī* writers. Instead, theologians in these regions came to blend esoteric wisdom with speculative theology to create a new theosophical epistemology that privileged intuitive knowledge over reason as the source of ultimate knowledge, culminating in the mystical systems of Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl and Ibn ‘Arabī.⁶³

The most direct continuation of philosophy in the tradition of Ibn Sīnā – Ziai’s “Peripatetic tradition,” occurred in the far eastern reaches of the Islamic world, in Khwārazm. There, a student of Ibn Sīnā in the third generation, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209), effectively created a new encyclopaedic survey of Peripatetic philosophy, even as he disputed some of Ibn Sīnā’s positions in his effort to address certain questions of faith.⁶⁴ Rāzī’s encyclopaedic tendencies extended to natural sciences, as well; his *Jāmi‘ al-‘ulūm* (*Collected sciences*) provides an intellectual model for Rashīd al-Dīn’s later encyclopaedic efforts (on which, see Chapter

⁶¹ Campanini 1996, 264-71.

⁶² Ziai 1996 “Illuminationist,” 465-66.

⁶³ This turn towards notions of intuitive and emanationist knowledge is already apparent in a work by Ibn Sīnā, titled the *Manṭiq al-mashriqiyyīn* (*Logic of the orientals*), which seems to have originally been the first part of a larger work called the *Ḥikma al-mashriqiyyah* (*Oriental philosophy*), in which he predicts Ghazālī’s critique of the shortcomings of Peripatetic logic, concluding that “real knowledge” is reserved for those with intuitive insight. See Seyyid Hossein Nasr, “Ibn Sīnā’s ‘Oriental philosophy’,” in Nasr and Leaman, eds. 1996, 247-51. If more of Ibn Sīnā’s writing had survived, then he might be credited as the progenitor of this branch of Islamic philosophy, as well as so many others.

⁶⁴ On Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, see G.C. Anawati, “Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī,” *El*².

Seven).⁶⁵ This work, written after the fall of the Saljuq Empire and in the context of a renewed Ismāʿīlī mission (*al-daʿwa al-jadīda*), presents a more cynical approach to the role of the *sulṭān*.⁶⁶ Rāzī lays out a rather more conservative set of ethical requirements for the *sulṭān* than had Ghazālī, though he retains the association between secular power and the role as “God’s shadow on earth.”

Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī’s ideas were not as influential on Rashīd al-Dīn as were those of Ghazālī. However, he does provide two important points of precedence for the Ilkhanid vizier. The first is the preservation of a series of “controversies” (*Munāẓarāt*).⁶⁷ These take the form of discourses, in which Rāzī is confronted with difficult theological questions by a series of often unidentified scholars representing Ḥanafī, Shāfiʿī, Ashʿarī, and other intellectual positions. Naturally, Rāzī bests all his interrogators, sometimes in rather acerbic style and with total disregard for their allegiance to any particular theological school. By remaining unidentified with any single dogmatic position, and by virtue of his systematic treatment of Islamic sciences, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī earned recognition, like Ghazālī, as the centennial *mujaddid*.

Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī’s student in the second generation was Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, who self-identified with Ibn Sīnā in his efforts to resystematize Islamic Peripatetic philosophy.⁶⁸ As part of this effort, he responded to a series of criticisms that Rāzī had posed of Ibn Sīnā’s writing. While primarily a Peripatetic figure, Ṭūsī makes occasional recourse to the works of Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl, signaling the potential reintegration of these traditions. A number of

⁶⁵ Živa Vesel, “Le *Jāmeʿ al-ʿOlum* de Fakhr al-Din Rāzī et l’état de la connaissance scientifique dans l’Iran Médiéval,” in *Proceedings of the First European Conference of Iranian Studies held in Turin, September 7th-11th, 1987 by the Societas Iranologica Europaea. Vol. II: Middle and New Iranian studies*, ed. Gherardo Gnoli and Antonio Panaino (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1990), 571-78.

⁶⁶ Lambton 1981, 130-37.

⁶⁷ These have been translated and commented on by Fathalla Kholeif, *A study on Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and his controversies in Transoxania* (Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1966).

⁶⁸ On Ṭūsī’s philosophy, see Dabashi 1996, 544-75.

Ṭūsī's works, in particular those dealing with political ethics, were influenced by his time spent under Īsmā'īlī patronage in the interval between the first and third Mongol invasion, though the main thrust of his prodigious output was directed at developing the philosophical articulation of the Twelver Shī'ite doctrine that he himself followed.

We have encountered Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī already, of course, as the founder of Hülegü's observatory at Maragha. The decision to build an observatory and assemble a community of scholars at Maragha was, as discussed in Chapter Two, directed chiefly at developing new astrological tables for Hülegü; the scientific and philosophical work that Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and his staff undertook there occurred largely on the edge of their patron's knowledge. Mongol patronage generally was directed at technologies and sciences that could, in their view, yield practical results. This did not entail a suspension of Islamic theoretical scholarship during the period of Mongol rule, though it has translated into a modern scholarly focus on the Mongol patronage of astronomy, medicine, and other practical arts.⁶⁹ Ṭūsī's activity at Maragha, and the fact that he was able to quietly revolutionize Islamic mathematics and philosophy while producing the *Zij-i ilkhānī*, perfectly summarizes the state of theoretical sciences under the Ilkhans. That two of his students – Qutb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, discussed above, and 'Allāma al-Ḥillī, discussed below – laid the groundwork for later philosophical and theological traditions in the Iranian world only strengthens this point.⁷⁰

Ghazālī's writings were also influential in the western Islamic world, and particularly in al-Andalūs. There, however, his original expository works on Peripatetic thought found followers, but not his mystical and intuitive bent. In particular, the great Maliki jurist and

⁶⁹ There remains no dedicated study of natural and speculative philosophy under the Ilkhans. Perhaps the best overview of this topic is that included in Dabashi 1996, 536-43

⁷⁰ John Cooper, "From al-Ṭūsī to the School of Iṣfahān," in *History of Islamic philosophy*, ed. Seyyid Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (London: Routledge, 1996), 588-89.

polymath, Abū Walīd Ibn Rushd (Averroes, d. 1198) launched a rebuttal of Ghazālī's *Tahafūt*, preferring philosophy and medicine over theology by virtue of the scientific structure they offered for arriving at certainty in complex matters.⁷¹ Central to Ibn Rushd's critique is the nature of prophecy. For him as with most Peripatetic philosophers, prophecy is achieved through individual self-perfection, while Ghazālī insists that such a position denies God a role in determining prophethood.⁷²

In promoting his philosophical position, Ibn Rushd enjoyed the unique philosophical curiosity of the Abū Ya'qūb Yusuf (1163-84) and the support of Abū Ya'qūb's court physician and advisor Ibn Ṭufayl. After Abū Ya'qūb's death, his son Ya'qūb al-Manṣūr (1184-99) renewed the Almohad dynasty's generally fundamentalist opposition to philosophy, sending Ibn Rushd into exile. As a result, speculative thought in the Islamic west was limited to the realm of medical science. Ibn Rushd's student, the Jewish writer Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides, d. 1204), brought this correlation between speculative philosophy and medical sciences to its apogee. For Maimonides, the practice of medicine became itself a sort of instrumental science, in which theoretical questions could be addressed through applied natural philosophy.⁷³

Theology in the Islamic west, meanwhile, developed along conservative lines, which privileged received tradition (*naql*), rather than human reason (*'aql*), as a source of authority. The primary figure in this development is the Syrian Ḥanbalite theologian Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiya (d. 1328), who attacked the very basis of speculative theology and philosophy shared

⁷¹ On Ibn Rushd and his critique of Ghazālī, see Iyssa A. Bello, *The medieval Islamic controversy between philosophy and orthodoxy: ijma' and Ta'wil in the conflict between al-Ghazālī and Ibn Rushd* (Leiden: Brill, 1989); Dominique Urvoý, "Ibn Rushd," in Nasr and Leaman, eds. 1996, 330-45.

⁷² For a readable summary of this dispute, see Oliver Leaman, "The developed *kalām* tradition," in *The Cambridge companion to classical Islamic theology*, ed. Tim Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 80.

⁷³ David Eisenman, "Maimonides' philosophic medicine," in *Moses Maimonides: physician, scientist, and philosopher*, ed. Fred Rosner and Samuel S. Kotttek (Northvale: Aronson, 1993), 145-50.

by Ibn Sīnā and Ghazālī, as well as the holistic emanationist theosophy of the Illuminationists. In particular, Ibn Taymiya argued strongly against the use of universal definitions in rational argumentation, arguing that such universals had no independent existence of their own.⁷⁴ As demonstrated below, the criticism of Ibn Taymiya, and the association of philosophy with medicine in the Mamlūk world created intellectual obstacles around which Rashīd al-Dīn had to negotiate in staking out a theory of kingship that was supremely Islamic but did not accede to Mamlūk claims as the superior protectors of the faith.

“Popular” Islam

It has long been recognized that Sufi *shaykhs* enjoyed significant influence at the Ilkhanid court, even during the relatively anti-Islamic reign of Arghun. Ghazan himself, as discussed above, embraced Islam in the presence of the Kubrāvī Shaykh Saḍr al-Dīn Hammūya and may have taken on Sufi robes as part of his conversion ceremony. Reuven Amitai Preiss has thankfully put to rest the notion that the Ilkhans were attracted to Sufis because of their similarity to Mongol shamans, demonstrating that it was “institutional” Sufis, and not antinomian dervishes, who exercised significant influence in attracting the Ilkhans to Islam.⁷⁵ In doing this, however, Amitai-Preiss has had to acknowledge that dervishes enjoyed increased status at the Ilkhanid court in the years following Ghazan’s conversion.⁷⁶ Of particular interest in this regard is the career of Barāq Bābā (d. 1307), the Anatolian mendicant who gained enough of Öljeitü’s respect that the latter built a tomb shrine for him in his new capital of

⁷⁴ For a summary of Ibn Taymiya’s position, see Leaman 2008, 82-83.

⁷⁵ Reuven Amitai-Preiss, “Sufis and shamans: some remarks on the Islamization of the Mongols in the Ilkhanate,” *JESHO* 42.1 (1999): 27-46, following Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *God’s unruly friends: dervish groups in the Islamic later middle period, 1200-1500* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994) for the distinction between dervishes and “institutional” Sufis.

⁷⁶ Amitai-Preiss 1999, 34-35.

Sultāniya.⁷⁷ Among Barāq Bābā's many peculiarities, he held that his sole religious obligation was devotion to 'Alī. Barāq Bābā's proximity to Öljeitü and his love of 'Alī led Judith Pfeiffer to propose him as the *shaykh* "missing" from historical accounts of Öljeitü's conversion to Shī'ism, despite the fact that he died three years before that conversion.⁷⁸

While distinctions such as those between antinomian dervishes and institutional Sufis or between "high" and "popular" Islam are perhaps sometimes useful (if often difficult to establish), they obscure the fact that the Islam practiced by most people in Iran at the time did not observe such distinctions. Studies of religion in Iran during the Ilkhanid period speak of a hybrid and heterodox practice that blended orthodoxy with folk beliefs and the increasing popularity of Sufi orders based around the charismatic spiritual authority of *shaykhs*, both in life and after death.⁷⁹ Furthermore, mystical Islam provided some cover for the popularization of Shī'ism during the Ilkhanid period.⁸⁰ As Michel Mazzaoui has shown, this revival of Shī'ite practice and theory was important in the eventual rise of the Şafavid dynasty from its roots as a Sufi order in Ardabil.⁸¹ Shī'ism should thus be placed alongside Sufism as a natural framework for viewing the rise of "popular" Islam into political discourse during the later fourteenth and fifteenth century. During the Ilkhanate, Naşīr al-Dīn's student Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥillī, known as 'Allāma (1250-1325), canonized much of Imāmī Shī'ite theology and legal scholarship in the basic form that it holds to this day. This naturally entailed a renewed

⁷⁷ On Barāq Bābā, see Karamustafa 1994, 1-2, 62-63; Hamid Algar, "Barāq Bābā," *EIr*.

⁷⁸ Pfeiffer 1999, 43-48.

⁷⁹ See, for example, Gronke, 205-06. For the development of this form of saint cult practice, see Ahmet T. Karamustafa, *Sufism: the formative period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 143-71.

⁸⁰ Bausani 1968, 545-47; Manuchihr Murtażavī, *Tahāqīq dar bāra-yi daura-yi ilkhānān-i Īrān* (Tabriz: Shafaq, 1963), 40-43.

⁸¹ Michel Mazzaoui, *The origins of the Şafawids: Šī'ism, Şūfism, and the Gulāt* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1972), 22-40.

engagement of Shī'ite theologians with political life and with active interpretation (*ijtihad*) of revealed scripture.⁸²

Institutional Sufism was for the Ilkhans a convenient and accessible point of initiation into Islam. It was also, however entangled with other theological positions that we now consider Shī'ite or antinomian. It is not accidental that Öljeitü's experience of Islam began with Sufism and culminated in his decision to embrace Shī'ism, though the general sense of Öljeitü's religious infidelity has kept scholars from appreciating the combination of these two orientations. Jean Calmard, for example, has traced the political setting and implications of the rise of Shī'ism, but has explicitly downplays the importance of Öljeitü's embrace of Shī'ism.⁸³ As the following sections demonstrate, the heterodoxy of contemporary Islamic practice should be seen not just in the subject population of the Ilkhanate, but in the religious discourse at court. This has been done to some degree with regard to Ghazan's conversion as presented in the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*.⁸⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn's theological writings, meanwhile, give us an opportunity to see this discourse as it developed under and about Öljeitü.

Öljeitü's religion

Öljeitü presumably embraced Islam during the reign of his brother Ghazan. During that time, he served as governor of Khurāsān, where Sufi practice took a very different form than the political ethical engagement of 'Umar Suhrawardī and Kubravī shaykhs such as Najm al Dīn Rāzī. Two mystical figures from Khurāsān in particular caught Öljeitü's early religious imagination, so much so that their names became those of his three sons. The ninth century renunciant Bāyazīd Ṭayfūr ibn Īsā al-Baṣṭāmī gained significant renowned for his ecstatic

⁸² For more on the role of the Shī'ites of Ḥilla in the Mongol period, see Calmard 1997, 275-76, 284-85, 289. For 'Allāma' al-Ḥillī's specific influence on Ṣafavid Shī'ism, see Mazzaoui, 27-34.

⁸³ Calmard 2007, 278-80.

⁸⁴ Melville 1990 and 2003; Amitai-Preiss 1996; Jackson 2009.

utterances (*shaḥḥ*) pronounced directly in the voice of God.⁸⁵ Two centuries later, Abū Saʿīd-i Abū'l-Khayr (d. 1049) established an important Sufi community in Nishapur.⁸⁶ Trained in Shāfiʿī jurisprudence, Abū Saʿīd engaged in disputes with Ḥanafī and Mutazilite scholars, but also drew criticism from leading Shāfiʿītes of Nishapur. In subsequent centuries, Abū Saʿīd-i Abū'l-Khayr's shrine at Mayhana (Meana) became recognized as one of the most powerful of the various such local cult sites in Khurāsān.⁸⁷

Öljeitü was not the first to bring shrine-centered devotional practice to the Ilkhanid court. Rashīd al-Dīn reports that Ghazan visited the shrines of Bāyazīd al-Baṣṭāmī and Abū Saʿīd-i Abū'l-Khayr, among others, and that the experience influenced him to build his own complex of endowed charitable institutions outside of Tabriz.⁸⁸ At the center of this complex stood Ghazan's own tomb, the “Lofty Dome” (*gunbad-i ʿālī*). Qāshānī mentions four visits by Öljeitü to Ghazan's tomb in the first five years of his reign, two of these coming during his first year on the throne.⁸⁹ Öljeitü's commitment to devotional practice at shrines, including that of his brother, demonstrates his persistent adherence to Khurāsānī forms of devotional practice, and must be kept in mind when considering his later religious experience.

Öljeitü's visits to his brother's tomb shrine end, in Qāshānī's narrative, after his decision the spring of 1310 to change the formulas of the *khuṭba* (homily) and *sikka* (minting

⁸⁵ Karamustafa 2007, 4-5; Gerhard Böwering, “Beṣṭāmī, Bāyazīd,” *Elr*. Qāshānī explicitly mentions that Öljeitü's three sons (by his third wife), Baṣṭām, Bāyazīd, and Ṭayfūr, were named after this Shaykh: Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 49, 7.

⁸⁶ Karamustafa 2007, 122-24; Gerhard Böwering, “Abū-Saʿīd Abi'l-Kayr,” *Elr*.

⁸⁷ Karamustafa 2007, 142-45; Beatrice Forbes Manz, *Power, politics and religion in Timurid Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 209.

⁸⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1375-76.

⁸⁹ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 31, 44, 74, 83. No visit is recorded for AH 705 (beg. 24 July 1305), when Öljeitü doesn't seem to have ever visited Tabriz, or for AH 706 (beg. 13 July 1306), during which year the scaffolding begin used to decorate the dome collapsed: *ibid.*, 53; C. Adle, “Le pretendu effondrement de la cupole du mausolée de Qâzân Xân a Tabriz en 705/1305 et son exploitation politique,” *Studia Iranica* 15 (1986): 267-71.

mark), thereby signifying his formal acceptance of Shī'a Islam. This act is frequently considered a conversion to Shī'ism; though besides Judith Pfeiffer's study of the *topoi* of various accounts of this event, it has received little independent attention except as part of Öljeitü's inveterate spiritual wandering. The main contemporary source for this event is the chronicle of Qāshānī, which by its annalistic structure and frequent exact dating of events is too frequently accepted as an accurate historical account of Öljeitü's reign.⁹⁰ However, as Charles Melville has already shown concerning Öljeitü's campaign into Gīlān in the spring of 1307, Qāshānī's chronology is often confused and his narrative modified for particular political aims.⁹¹ Indeed, the lists of dated events that begin and end each annual entry in Qāshānī's chronicle often amount to little more than a frame, within which the author embarks on sometimes extensive narrative set-pieces, such as the campaign to Gīlān, that reveal the work's literary value as a construction of historical identity for Öljeitü and his court.

Two such literary set-pieces pertain to the ongoing religious and political re-identification of the Ilkhanid court and Rashīd al-Dīn's role in this process. One of these, tracing the emerging hostility between Rashīd al-Dīn and his colleagues in the vizierate, will be taken up in Chapter Seven. Of interest here is a long passage under the entry for year AH 709 (beg. 11 June 1309) on Öljeitü's spiritual evolution, culminating in his embrace of Shī'ism.⁹² The narrative begins with a mention of Öljeitü's visit to the shrine of 'Alī in Mashhad in April of 1310, where he adopts the Shī'ite *khuṭba* and *sikka*. After thus laying out the destination of the

⁹⁰ Qāshānī frequently gives both the *hijrī* date, along with the day of the week, and the corresponding date from the Uighur calendar, with its twelve-year animal cycle and months numbered in Turkic. The correspondence between the dates is often inexact. See Charles Melville, "The Chinese Uighur animal calendar in Persian historiography of the Mongol period," *Iran* 32 (1994): 83-98. Charles Melville has also demonstrated how far the itinerations of Öljeitü's court can be plotted from Qāshānī's work: *idem* 1990 "Itineraries," *passim*.

⁹¹ Charles Melville, "The Īlkhān Öljeitü's conquest of Gīlān (1307): rumour and reality," in *The Mongol Empire and its legacy*, ed. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 73-125.

⁹² Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 90-100.

narrative, Qāshānī shifts back eight years to AH 702/1302-03, when a descendent of ‘Alī was killed as a result of sectarian conflict during Friday prayers in Baghdad. In reaction, Ghazan ordered freedom of religious practice for all sects, citing the examples of the tolerant policies of Muḥammad and Genghis Khan. In the process of relieving sectarian tensions, Ghazan learned about the story of the family of ‘Alī and the Prophet’s daughter Fāṭima and their persecution at the hands of Sunnī caliphal dynasties, from which he became particularly partial to the *ahl al-bayt*, or the descendants of ‘Alī and Fāṭima. Qāshānī suggests he was only dissuaded from converting to Shī‘a Islam by Rashīd al-Dīn, who suggested he focus on conquering Syria first.⁹³

The central episode of Qāshānī’s conversion narrative is a religious debate between Ḥanafī and Shāfi‘ī scholars at Öljeitü’s court in 1306.⁹⁴ This episode is famous less for the content of the dispute than for Amīr Qutlughshāh’s reaction:

“What have we done that we have set aside the *yasaq* and *yosun* of Genghis Khan and taken up the ancient religion of the Arabs that is divided into seventy-odd sects? And the choice of either of these *madhhabs* is a disgrace and an infamy, in that one of them allows marriage to one’s daughter, and the other to one’s mother and sister-in-law, God forbid either! We ought to return to the *yasaq* and *yosun* of Genghis Khan.”⁹⁵

This passage is regularly cited to demonstrate the Mongols’ slow and uneven adoption of Islam; in the words of David Morgan, “If Qutlugh-shāh was at all typical, the Mongols were taking some little time to acquire a knowledge or understanding of Islam that bore much relation to the faith as it is generally understood.”⁹⁶ Seen within its narrative setting, however, Qutlughshāh’s outburst functions not as the frustrated screed of a conservative Mongol, but a

⁹³ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 90-95.

⁹⁴ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 95-98. Pfeiffer 1999, 38 dates this debate to “around 708 or 709,” presumably based on the fact that it occurs under the annalistic header for AH 709. However, Qutlughshāh’s participation places it before the campaign to Gīlān in early 1307, when Qutlughshāh was killed.

⁹⁵ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 98.

⁹⁶ Morgan 2007, 142.

literary device, establishing the Sunnī *madhhabs* as a foil for Öljeitü's eventual embrace of Shī'ism.⁹⁷

After this debate and Qutlughshāh's exasperated outburst, according to Qāshānī, the question of marriage to one's daughter or mother became a sort of humorous litmus test for identifying one's allegiance to Ḥanafī or Shāfi'ī jurisprudence. For several months this continued until Öljeitü launched his campaign into Gīlān, during which a lightning strike killed a number of members of the royal household. As a result, Öljeitü's faith in Islam was shaken and he was encouraged by *bakhshis* (presumably Buddhist monks and/or Mongol shamans) to reject Islam on the premise that its sanction of incest (as understood by Mongol custom) had incited the wrath of heaven. In the end, Amīr Taramtaz informed Öljeitü that Shī'ism, while considered heretical by some, was at least a heresy that aligned with the *yasaq* of Genghis Khan.⁹⁸ Only at this point does Qāshānī return his narrative to April of 1310, recapitulating Öljeitü's pilgrimage to Mashhad and his adoption of Shī'ite signifiers of rule.

There is much about this account that suggests literary elaboration, but in the absence of alternate contemporary accounts, it became the source for the Timurid historian Ḥafīẓ-i Abrū and has become the normative narrative for Öljeitü's spiritual development.⁹⁹ This narrative emphasizes the choice of Shī'a Islam as a way to heal a growing rift among factions at the Ilkhanid court. The starring roles in all permutations of this narrative go to Öljeitü and Amīr Taramtāz; Rashīd al-Dīn's part is limited to dissuading Ghazan from converting to Shī'ism

⁹⁷ Qutlughshāh plays a similar narrative role in the *Şafvat al-şafā*, the hagiography of Shaykh Safī al-Dīn Safavī: Ibn Bazzāz Ardabīlī, *Şafvat al-şafā*, ed. Ghulāmriẓā Ṭabāṭabā'ī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Zaryāb, 1997), 149-51. There, Qutlughshāh is the advocate of the Kubravī Shaykh 'Alā' al-Dīn Nāmī whom Shaykh Şafī al-Dīn Ardabīl, supported by Ghazan Khan, defeats in a court debate. In the scheme of Şafavid historiography, this episode serves to highlight the rightness of Şafī al-Dīn's practice compared to main-line Kubravī Sufism and its revanchist hero, Amīr Qutlughshāh.

⁹⁸ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 98-99.

⁹⁹ See, for example, Murtaẓavī 1963, 32-34, 48-55 and above, n. 6.

and promoting the Shāfi‘ī scholar Niẓām al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Malik as *qāḍī al-quḍat* of all of Iran. When examined diachronically alongside Qāshānī’s conversion narrative, as the following section does, Rashīd al-Dīn’s theological works reveal additional factors at work behind Öljeitü’s gradual embrace of Shī‘ism.

The city of knowledge and its gate

Most reconstructions of the chronology of Rashīd al-Dīn’s theological writing group together his earliest three works, the *Kitāb al-tauḍīḥāt* (*Book of clarifications*), *Miftāḥ al-tafāsīr* (*Key to commentaries*), and *Kitāb al-Sulṭānīya* (*Book of the Sulṭān*). This is due to the fact that Rashīd al-Dīn himself reports having produced these works in a very short period of time, usually interpreted to have fallen between the spring of 1306 and the spring of 1307.¹⁰⁰ However, while Rashīd al-Dīn locates a moment of inspiration for the *Sulṭānīya* on 14 March 1307, his description of the first two works implies that, while they were indeed collected in 1306 and 1307, they consist of material composed earlier. For this reason, his body of theological writings is here divided into three phases: one falling between 1304 and 1306 in which Rashīd al-Dīn produced the *Tauḍīḥāt* and *Miftāḥ*, the second spanning 1307 and 1308 including the *Sulṭānīya* and *Laṭā‘if al-ḥaqā’iq* (*Subtle truths*), and the third covering 1309 and 1310, during which time Rashīd al-Dīn wrote the *Bayān al-ḥaqā’iq* (*Account of truths*) and the treatises collected in the *As’ila va ajviba* (*Questions and answers*).

Given their limited publication and certain complications in the manuscript tradition (on which, see Appendix A), a full appreciation of Rashīd al-Dīn’s theological and scientific writings may be some decades away. However, using available descriptions of them as provided in secondary sources and extant editions and studies, we can at least trace the broad

¹⁰⁰ The evidence for this dating is outlined in the subsequent discussion. Further details are found in Appendix A.

political and historical implications of Rashīd al-Dīn's *oeuvre* for Mongol legitimation in the Islamic world. Because these works were composed over the same period that Öljeitü and his court wrestled with the role of Islam in the Mongol state, they can and should be read as reflections of the theological concerns active during this process.

The following discussion of these works treats three areas of particular interest simultaneously. The first, and most important, is Rashīd al-Dīn's effort to formulate an understanding of Islam that was consistent with Mongol notions of authority and social customs. A second and related concern was the role that Öljeitü, as the Muslim Sulṭān of a region without an individual independent religious authority, held within this new model of Islam. Finally, Rashīd al-Dīn makes significant effort to define his own role within the new Mongol Islamic state. In all of these areas, we see the framework of later Persianate ruling ideologies, including the embodied sanctity of the ruler and the importance of his vizier, who offered advice simultaneously on matters of state and religion.

Rashīd al-Dīn's early works, the *Tauḍīḥāt* and *Miftāḥ*, are relatively conservative collections of Qur'ānic commentary. In the *Tauḍīḥāt*, Rashīd al-Dīn indicates that he received his commission from Öljeitü to write a commentary only after presenting his *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*.¹⁰¹ If Qāshānī's dating of the latter event is to be believed, then this happened in the spring of 1307, just before the campaign to Gīlān and thus some time after the debate at court between Ḥanafī and Shāfi'ī jurists. However, Rashīd al-Dīn's subsequent description of the process of producing the *Tauḍīḥāt* suggests that some or all of the treatises contained in it were written significantly earlier. This description falls in the midst of a lengthy self-defense

¹⁰¹ Josef van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1981), 13.

against accusations brought against Rashīd al-Dīn by an unnamed opponent.¹⁰² While the beginning of the account introduces the slanders in generic terms, at the end we learn that the unnamed accuser drew on Rashīd al-Dīn's Jewish heritage to question the sincerity of his conversion to Islam after the latter had failed to extend largess to him from the testament of Ghazan Khan.

Thus framed, the account endeavors to prove the sincerity of Rashīd al-Dīn's faith against these accusations. Here Rashīd al-Dīn describes his early efforts to write theology, according to which he presented a series of his own reflections concerning the illiteracy of the Prophet Muḥammad to Tāj al-Dīn al-Mu'minī. The latter encouraged him to continue his speculations, which other religious scholars in Tabriz eventually embraced. The proof of this clerical support is a series of endorsements (*taqrīzāt*, sing. *taqrīz*) preserved in manuscript copies of the *Tauḍīḥāt*.¹⁰³ Since a number of these endorsements are dated to the year AH 706 (which ended on 2 July 1307), there would have been little time for Rashīd al-Dīn to both write the *Tauḍīḥāt* and collect the *taqrīzāt* after having already presented the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*.

Emboldened by this initial success, Rashīd al-Dīn explains, he continued his theological speculation, claiming inspiration and protection from the Prophet Muḥammad. The end result, he states, was his first three books of theology, written in a short space of time and accepted by leading religious scholars of the time. That the treatises of the first two of these collections were written before Rashīd al-Dīn's official commission for a Qur'ān commentary is

¹⁰² Rashīd al-Dīn, *Kitāb al-tauḍīḥāt*, translated in *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse* by Étienne Quatremère (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1836), cxx-cxxx.

¹⁰³ van Ess 1981, 22-38 discusses various versions of the lists of these *taqrīzāt* and identifies many of the individuals who wrote them.

further signaled by the introduction of the *Miftāh*, in which Rashīd al-Dīn explicitly states that he had long been interested in theology and had tried his hand at it.¹⁰⁴

As mentioned already, the contents of these first two collections are for the most part traditional commentaries on verses from the Qurʾān, *hadīth*, and other matters of religious and philosophical concern. In several places, however, Rashīd al-Dīn engages the idea of creating a new Islamic synthesis like that formulated by Ghazālī. After an opening treatise on created beings, he offers three on Qurʾānic verses dealing with the limits of human knowledge; it is perhaps a defensible speculation, in the absence of their publication, that these treatises constitute the early writings on Muḥammad’s illiteracy that Rashīd al-Dīn presented to Tāj al-Dīn al-Muʾminī. After these, the author addresses *sūra* 109, the *sūra* of the Infidels.¹⁰⁵ In this treatise, Rashīd al-Dīn follows the tenth-century Mutazilite Abū Muslim al-Iṣfahānī in rejecting the doctrine of abrogation, by which one verse of the Qurʾān is thought to supersede a contradictory earlier verse. The Qurʾān, Rashīd al-Dīn argues, is eternally valid; inconsistencies can be rectified with proper study. As Krawulsky has noted, this position deviates from Shāfiʿī doctrine, which privileges late-revealed verses in favor of early ones in instances of intractable contradiction.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ van Ess 1981, 16.

¹⁰⁵ Discussed and partially translated by Dorothea Krawulsky, *The Mongol Ilkhāns and their vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang 2011), 94-98.

¹⁰⁶ Krawulsky 2011, 98. The contradiction in question with *sūra* 109 is the “verse of the sword” (9:5; incorrectly cited as 9:6 by Krawulsky), which exhorts Muslims to kill unbelievers, rather than allowing them to practice their own religion, as suggested in *sūra* 109. This particular question of verse abrogation is further complicated by a second form of abrogation, namely that of other religions by Islam. Rashīd al-Dīn’s position, which points to the conversion of Ghazan as evidence of the power of persuasion, rather than militancy against unbelievers, drew heated rebuttal from Ibn Taymiya, who issued a *fatwa* declaring Rashīd al-Dīn an apostate because of his tolerance of infidel behavior and who later called for *jihād* against the Ilkhans: Krawulsky 2011, 97, 110-111. This charge may provide a second inspiration for Rashīd al-Dīn’s defense against charges that he remained Jewish; in his defense, he explicitly states that Judaism and Christianity remain abrogated and Islam is the one true religion: Quatremère, cxxiv.

Rashīd al-Dīn further argues for renewed interpretation of Islamic scripture in a chapter of the *Miftāḥ* in which he explicitly criticizes both Muʿtazilite and literalist Sunnī theologians (including, presumably, his Shāfiʿī colleagues) as having upset the balance between reason (*ʿaql*) and tradition (*naql*).¹⁰⁷ In place of these approaches, Rashīd al-Dīn promotes two schools of theology. The first is that of al-Ashʿarī, whom Rashīd al-Dīn calls the “greatest authority for Sunnīs and the collective” (*muqtadā ahl al-sunna wa al-jamāʿa*). The second is Shīʿa Islam, and particularly ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī, whom Rashīd al-Dīn credits with having reopened the possibility of independent reason (*ijtihād*).

Rashīd al-Dīn’s support of the Shīʿa theology of ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī, along with his own efforts at original Qurʾānic interpretation and his invocation of the divine emanation (*al-faiḍ al-ilāhī*) of God has led Felix Klein-Franke to portray Rashīd al-Dīn as having proclivities towards Shīʿa Islam.¹⁰⁸ However, we must remember that, even as Rashīd al-Dīn was collecting these early works, he was simultaneously gathering *taqrīzāt* in support of the orthodoxy of his *Tauḍīḥāt* and that he continued to promote Sunnī figures at court, including the *qāḍī al-quḍāt* Niẓām al-Dīn. Instead of seeing Rashīd al-Dīn as a sympathizer of the Shīʿa, we can best understand his inclusion of emanationist doctrine and praise for ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī as an attempt to open discursive space within Islamic theology where a new brand of Islam might be conceived, one that would contravene the sectarian tensions so dramatically described by Qāshānī and others. At least some of Rashīd al-Dīn’s contemporaries took Rashīd al-Dīn’s hint

¹⁰⁷ This *risāla* is discussed by Felix Klein-Franke, “Rashīd al-Dīn’s treatise ‘On free will and predestination.’ An attempt to overcome inner-Islamic differences,” *Le Muséon* 117.3-4 (2004): 527-45, with Arabic text at 540-45.

¹⁰⁸ Felix Klein-Franke, “Rashīd ad-Dīn’s self-defence through his commenting on al-Ghazzālī’s ‘Reply to the opponents of the “Proof of Islam”.’ A philosophical interpretation of the Koranic expression ‘al-amāna’,” *Le Muséon* 115.1-2 (2002): 213.

on this: the *taqrīzāt* declare Rashīd al-Dīn a *mujtahid*, that is, a scholar qualified to undertake *ijtihād*.¹⁰⁹

Rashīd al-Dīn's choice to praise of Ash'arī, who rectified *'aql* and *naql* in Islamic speculative theology, alongside the preeminent Shī'ite scholar of the age crucially offers a model of discursive reasoning not only for Sunnī Muslims but for the entire Islamic *jamā'a*. Klein-Franke has identified the importance of the term *jam'* for Rashīd al-Dīn's theological position, calling it "a *terminus technicus* that means combination, integration, harmonization and is known from attempts to merge and melt different systems of thoughts into a single one."¹¹⁰ At the root of this is the notion of *ijmā'*, or consensus among the Muslim community on aspects of faith. As the original community of Muslims expanded both in numbers and geographic dispersion after the death of Muḥammad, the difficulty of applying the scriptural tradition to new circumstances became more acute, and approaches to solving it diverged, until by the late Umayyad period a rift between traditionalists (*ahl al-ḥadīth*) and rationalists (*ahl al-ra'y*) made further consensus among all Muslims practically impossible.¹¹¹ For Ghazālī, a definitive interpretation of scripture could be attained through *ijtihād* and analogy (*qiyās*) even in cases when not all living *mujtahidīn* had been consulted.¹¹² As part of Ibn Rushd's critique of Ghazālī, the Cordoban jurist asserted that pronouncements based on *ijtihād* and *qiyās* could become definitive only once a full *ijmā'* had been achieved among *mujtahidīn*, a standard of proof out of reach of possibility by the twelfth century.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Krawulsky 2011, 113.

¹¹⁰ Klein-Franke 2004, 532. This same term of course became crucial in Rashīd al-Dīn's own intellectual life, as he used it to describe the various collections of his own writings (the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, *Majmū'a-i rashīdiya*, and *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf-i rashīdī*), as described in Chapter Seven.

¹¹¹ For a concise summary of this process, see Bello 1989, 17-28.

¹¹² Bello 1989, 29-43.

¹¹³ Bello 1989, 44-51, at the end of which he demonstrates several flaws in Ibn Rushd's argument against Ghazālī.

By adopting a standard of religious certainty based on the position of Ghazālī, Rashīd al-Dīn revived the status of inspirational or emanationist realization as a source of theological certainty. This intellectual project, furthermore, is closely linked to the expansion and fragmentation of the Islamic world, a fact which had become even more evident with the simmering conflict between the Mamluks and their now Muslim rival Ilkhans. As part of Rashīd al-Dīn's case for the possibility of attaining a definitive Islamic certainty within only a portion of the Islamic world, Rashīd al-Dīn's praise of Ash'arī and 'Allāma al-Ḥillī in the *Miftāḥ* inserts two theological arguments into this conflict. The first of these is the notion of God's divine emanation as a source of human knowledge, an idea that resonated with emerging theosophic ideas in Iran and which the Syrian Ḥanbalī scholar Ibn Taymiya explicitly condemned. The second is Rashīd al-Dīn's idea that, by practicing independent reason in interpreting scriptural contradictions, the community of Muslims can avoid confusion (*ḥayrat*).¹¹⁴ By thus invoking Ibn Maymūn's famous *Guide to the perplexed* (*Dalālat al-ḥā'irīn*) and rejecting the premise on which it was written, viz. that certain individuals are incapable of achieving true knowledge, Rashīd al-Dīn, following Ghazālī and rejecting the Averroist tradition, allows even uneducated and recently converted Muslims such as his patron to participate in religious discourse.

Beyond his dependence on Ghazālī in his criticism of what he sees as Mutazilite and Sunnī extremism, Rashīd al-Dīn associates himself with both Ghazālī and Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī. In the same treatise of the *Tauḍīḥāt* in which he outlines his defense against his detractors, Rashīd al-Dīn reports a conversation with Öljeitü about the animosity his position at court was bound

¹¹⁴ Klein-Franke 2004, 548, 553.

to attract, drawing a comparison to these two earlier figures.¹¹⁵ Later in the same collection comes one of Rashīd al-Dīn’s most well studied early theological exercises, a commentary and addendum to Ghazālī’s self-defense against his own critics.¹¹⁶ In his study of this treatise, Felix Klein-Franke has argued that Rashīd al-Dīn imperfectly summarized Ghazālī’s position as holding that philosophy was the source of revelation, calling this position “extreme” and indicating that the “the school of al-Ash‘arī has at the end disappeared in a blaze of philosophy.”¹¹⁷ However, as indicated above, even after waging his assault on Peripatetic philosophy, Ghazālī laid the framework for a new synthesis of faith and reason by rectifying Neo-Platonic light imagery with orthodox Islam within the mystical epistemology of Sufism.¹¹⁸ By equating his own position to that of the great *mujaddids* Ghazālī and Rāzī, Rashīd al-Dīn claims for himself the right to reinterpret Islamic doctrine in a way that subverts sectarian conflict like that which Qāshānī reports occurring in 1306, just as these early treatises were being written.

Within the *Tauḍīḥāt* and *Miftāḥ*, Öljeitü’s role is limited to that of the royal patron. While the Sulṭān is presented as interested in scientific and theological questions, he remains generally unlearned in matters of Islamic theology. In Rashīd al-Dīn’s middle works, however, Öljeitü begins to take a more instrumental role in the process of theological interpretation. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, the *Sulṭānīya* was inspired by a court audience held on 14 March 1307, at which Öljeitü instigated a discourse on prophecy.¹¹⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn uses this

¹¹⁵ van Ess 1981, 9, 15; Klein-Franke 2002, 201f.

¹¹⁶ This is treatise fourteen of the *Tauḍīḥāt*, consisting of an introduction, the text of Ghazālī’s self-defense, and additional comments by Rashīd al-Dīn. A discussion of the treatise and English translation of the original portions by Rashīd al-Dīn is available in Klein-Franke 2002, *passim*.

¹¹⁷ Klein-Franke 2002, 211.

¹¹⁸ Lazarus-Yafeh, 265.

¹¹⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Kitāb al-sulṭānīya*, cited by Quatremère, cxviii, in turn cited incorrectly by Van Ess 1981, 9 n. 49 as “Quatremère cviii” [*sic*].

opportunity to explain to Öljeitü and to his readers that the miraculous circumstances of Öljeitü's birth and reign made the Sulṭān himself proof of that prophecy. It is here that Rashīd al-Dīn tells of his own presence at Öljeitü's birth, casting himself as the literal midwife of the Sulṭān, a role he later claimed in regard to Öljeitü's religious declamations as well.

In the *Sulṭānīya* we also see the development of the Ilkhanid interest in Fāṭimid legitimacy suggested already in Ghazan's reaction to the killing of an 'Alavī in Baghdad in 1302, discussed above. The main text of the *Sulṭānīya* contains a list of the companions of the Prophet, their followers, and the Umayyad, 'Abbāsīd, and Fāṭimid caliphs, followed by a genealogical tree showing the relationship of these peoples.¹²⁰ Evrim Binbaş has demonstrated that the work shows a particular 'Alīd – and specifically Fāṭimid – prejudice, given the central position in which the Faṭimid caliphs are presented and suggests that this “should not be unrelated to” Öljeitü's conversion to Shī'ism.¹²¹

By clearing up some chronological errors in Binbaş's study, we begin to understand the relation between this genealogical text and Öljeitü's embrace of Shī'ism. In addition to dating this event to 709/1309, presumably by virtue of its narrative setting in Qāshānī's chronicle, Binbaş considers the genealogical tree in the *Sulṭānīya* later than a separate genealogical tree associated with the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*. This second tree is the so-called *Shu'ab-i panjgāna*, discussed in Appendix A. Following Togan, Binbaş dates the completion of the *Shu'ab* to the year 1300.¹²² However, Rashīd al-Dīn's description of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* included in the

¹²⁰ Discussed by İlker Evrim Binbaş, “Structure and function of the genealogical tree in Islamic historiography,” in *Horizons of the world: festschrift for İsenbike Togan*, ed. İlker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kılıç-Schubel (İstanbul: İthaki, 2011), 494-99. Judith Pfeiffer is evidently preparing this work for publication, which will allow for a much fuller discussion than is possible here: Binbaş 2011, 495 n. 100. Rashīd al-Dīn mentions already in the *Tauḍīḥāt* that such a genealogical tree was in process, perhaps as early as 1306: van Ess 1981, 14.

¹²¹ Binbaş 2011, 498-99.

¹²² Binbaş 2011, 490 and n. 71.

preface of that work makes no mention of such a work; only in 1310 does he mention a universal genealogical tree as part of historical compendium. In the *Shu'ab-i panjgāna*, Twelver Shī'i *īmāms* are presented alongside the Faṭimid and 'Abbasid caliphs. Such a presentation makes more sense at the moment of Öljeitü's conversion to Twelver Shī'ism. The Fāṭimid prejudice of the *Sulṭānīya* genealogy, by contrast, fits a pattern of Ilkhanid sympathy to the *ahl al-bayt* that isn't necessarily Shī'ite in a religious sense, but rather concerned with finding an Islamic equivalent to the strong Mongol sense of biological descent as a key factor in legitimacy.

In the other work from his middle period, the *Laṭā'if al-ḥaqā'iq*, Rashīd al-Dīn resumes his discourses on theological questions, displaying heightened confidence in his own authority as a theologian. We have already seen at the beginning of Chapter Four the titles that Rashīd al-Dīn assigns to himself in the *Laṭā'if*. As part of demonstrating his authority in this work, he revisits the origins of his theological studies. This time he does not mention the accusations brought against him or his efforts to gain the support of other scholars; instead he tells of a dream he witnessed on 26 Ramadan 705 (11 April 1306) in which the early caliphs encouraged him to take up theology, after which he embarked on a feverish bout of writing, producing three works, the *Tauḍīḥāt*, *Miftāḥ*, and *Sulṭānīya*, in the space of eleven months.¹²³ As mentioned above, Josef van Ess and others have rectified this account with that in the *Tauḍīḥāt* to establish a chronology for Rashīd al-Dīn's theological works, surmising the three books named above were produced in under a year beginning with the *Tauḍīḥāt* in the spring of 1306 and

¹²³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Ṭāhir, 44-45. According to van Ess 1981, 19-20, the Paris Arabic copy does not list 'Alī among the caliphs who visited Rashīd al-Dīn in his dream. While far from enough for a definitive statement, this is intriguing evidence that Rashīd al-Dīn recognized a difference in the audience for the Persian and Arabic copies of his work.

finishing shortly after the court audience on 9 Ramadan 706 (14 March 1307) which supposedly inspired the writing of the *Kitāb al-sultānīya*.¹²⁴

However, as already demonstrated, the *Tauḍīḥāt* and *Miftāḥ* consist of material previously composed and only collected after 1307. A distinction should be drawn, then, between the relatively conservative theology of the *Tauḍīḥāt* and *Miftāḥ* and the more panegyric and triumphal tone of the *Sultānīya* and *Laṭā'if*. Rather than rectify the two accounts of how Rashīd al-Dīn began to write theology, we should appreciate their distinctly divergent tones. In the *Laṭā'if*, Rashīd al-Dīn makes no mention of gathering *taqrīzāt* or even needing the validation of other scholars. Instead, the direct visionary dream experience serves as both the inspiration and legitimation of his writing, setting Rashīd al-Dīn in a league of his own as a theologian. Writing in 1312, Vaṣṣāf validates this when he includes Rashīd al-Dīn in the list of *mujaddids*, right after Ghazālī and Rāzī.¹²⁵

One of the ways that Rashīd al-Dīn associates himself with the former *mujaddid* Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī in the *Laṭā'if* is in the presentation of a number of the work's treatises, which take the form of interrogations. As Rāzī does in the *Munāẓarāt*, Rashīd al-Dīn here answers questions posed to him by others. The first and last of these, furthermore, portray Rashīd al-Dīn's authority as a theologian specifically in contrast to the inability of others to answer certain questions. In the first treatise, Rashīd al-Dīn relates being asked the age-old question "which came first, the chicken or the egg" by a group of *bakshis* at Öljeitü's court.¹²⁶ Though all others had failed to answer the question, Rashīd al-Dīn describes that God revealed (*dar faiz bigushūd*) the answer to him in an analogy to the createdness of Adam. In the final treatise of

¹²⁴ van Ess 1981, 57-60; Krawulsky 2011, 79.

¹²⁵ Vaṣṣāf 1853, 539.

¹²⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Ṭāhir, i.36-37.

the work, Rashīd al-Dīn tells of Öljeitü presiding over a gathering of scholars outside of Maragha, where the royal camp had stopped on one of its hunting trips.¹²⁷ There, the Sulṭān encourages a debate on numerology; while Rashīd al-Dīn does not participate at first, he later takes the opportunity provided by writing to assemble a definitive answer on the topic. The *Sulṭānīya* and *Laṭāʿif* thus reveal an emerging formulation of the relationship between Rashīd al-Dīn, Öljeitü, and revealed truth. Rashīd al-Dīn appears not simply as capable of *ijtihād*, but as uniquely qualified to answer questions that elude others at the court of Öljeitü. In this, he is aided by divine inspiration, whether in the form of dreams or in revealed answers for intractable questions.

Rashīd al-Dīn's prominence as a theologian is even further expanded in his later writings, the *Bayān al-ḥaqāʾiq* and *Asʿila va ajviba*. These two works demonstrate significant overlap in their contents, making it difficult to disentangle the order of their composition and their relationship to one another.¹²⁸ They both consist of a number of discourses, largely presented in the same question and answer format seen already in the *Laṭāʿif*. The *Asʿila* raises several questions on scientific subjects not covered in the *Bayān* which are of interest in their own right but not under consideration here.¹²⁹ The only published fragmentary manuscript of the *Asʿila*, furthermore, consists largely of material duplicated from the *Bayān*, and so is of little additional value to the present discussion of Rashīd al-Dīn's theology.¹³⁰ The form of the

¹²⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Ṭāhir, ii.773-84; translated by Henri Massé, "L'epitre de Rachīd-od-dīn Faḏl-ollāh sur les nombres," in *Études d'orientalisme dédiées à la mémoire de Lévi-Provençal* (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1962), ii.649-60.

¹²⁸ A discussion of this is provided in Appendix A.

¹²⁹ The *Asʿila* has been discussed by Felix Klein-Franke, "The relationship between knowledge and belief in Islam. Annotations to Rashīd ad-Dīn's 'Book of questions and answers'," *Le Muséon* 113.1-2 (2000): 205-19, though Klein-Franke largely ignores Rashīd al-Dīn's answers to the questions.

¹³⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Asʿila va ajviba-i rashīdī*, ed. Rizā Shaʿbanī (Islamabad: Markaz-i taḥāqīqāt-i fārsī-yi Īrān va Pākistān, 1993).

question and answer session, however, became associated with Rashīd al-Dīn in later verse historiography, as discussed in Chapter Eight.

The last theological collection that survives in a form that seems to have been intended by Rashīd al-Dīn is the *Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq*.¹³¹ In this work, all the aspects of Rashīd al-Dīn's new articulation of religious authority come into their fullest fruit: Öljeitü appears as a uniquely enlightened and inspiring sovereign, for whom Shī'ism was not simply one stop along a hectic spiritual journey, but rather one facet of a newly synthesized, if highly heterodox Islamic faith. Meanwhile, Rashīd al-Dīn presents himself as the mouthpiece of Öljeitü's divine inspiration. Since the discourses of the *Bayān* are dated between October 1309 and September 1310, this new notion of divinely inspired authority for sovereign and vizier must be examined alongside Öljeitü's "conversion" to Shī'ism, which occurred exactly during this period.

Before turning to the *Bayān*, it is worth examining a pivotal episode in Öljeitü's transition from a patron of religious disputation to inspired embodiment of religious truth. This episode appears in the chronicle of Qāshānī, immediately before he begins the narrative of Öljeitü's move to Shī'ism. At the end of the brief entry for AH 708 (21 June 1308-10 June 1309), Qāshānī tells of a dream witnessed by the "sulṭān of sayyids and of naqībs," Razī al-Dīn Muḥammad Abharī.¹³² Abharī relates having seen a group of prophets, among whom was a "saint of light" (*pīr-i nūrānī*). Öljeitü Sulṭān approached and sat before this saint, who placed on his finger a ring inscribed with glowing letters (*khatt-i raushan*). Unable to read the inscription, Öljeitü turned to Abharī, who read on the ring the verse, "This is our gift, so grant or withhold without account" (Qur'ān 38:39). There follows a versification of the same scene,

¹³¹ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq*, ed. Hāshim Rajabzāda (Tehran: Mīrās Maktūb, 2008), based on Tehran Majlis ms. 1329, which was unavailable to van Ess.

¹³² Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 84-86.

in which Abharī adds that, on awakening he interpreted the dream to mean that God had given Öljeitü the ring of kingship and said, “I have given you to the kingship of the world, however much you may desire.” The verse written on the ring comes from the Qur’ānic story of Solomon (38:30-39) in which the king neglects his daily prayers out of his love for horse racing. Realizing his error, Solomon has his horses killed and repents, for which God grants him command over the winds and *jinns*. Its meaning, Abharī states, is plain: just as the sun cannot be called anything but the sun, so too does innate beauty not require any improvement.

This extensive dream sequence, the only one of its kind in Qāshānī’s chronicle, presents the idea that Öljeitü, illiterate as he is (he is unable to read the ring placed on his finger), is still God’s choice for worldly sovereignty. Here we see Ghazālī’s notion of the *sultān*, indicated through the intermediacy of a “saint of light” in a dream experience of a prominent ‘Alid. Rashīd al-Dīn, the Shāfi’ī theologian, presents a matching vision of Öljeitü as *sultān* in the *Bayān al-ḥaqā’iq*. In the opening treatise of this collection, Rashīd al-Dīn establishes his patron as the divinely inspired source of knowledge despite his inability to read. The treatise begins with a discourse on the nature of wisdom and learning, likening these to a jewel from a mine, which is a stone among other stones but that gains value from undergoing the difficult process of refining.¹³³ In extolling Öljeitü’s authority, Rashīd al-Dīn deploys the same Qur’ānic exhortation about obedience as Ghazālī had done before: “obey God, and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.”

From here, Rashīd al-Dīn relates how Öljeitü spoke wise words that amazed the ‘*ulamā*’, so that they asked how an illiterate man could speak with such authority.¹³⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn replies that it is more amazing that those of learning have nothing to say, completing the

¹³³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 81-82.

¹³⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 84.

association with the illiterate Prophet Muḥammad by citing another verse of scripture: “[God] has taught you that which you did not know. And ever has the favor of God upon you been great” (4:113). Finally, Rashīd al-Dīn returns to the metaphor of the jewel when he explains that he recorded Öljeitü’s words and deeds so that the ‘*ulamā*’ might draw on them for analogies (*qiyās*), like a source of rubies and a mine of gems.¹³⁵

At the same time as he creates this image of an enlightened *sulṭān*, Rashīd al-Dīn creates space for himself as the uniquely privileged recorder of Öljeitü’s inspired statements, which he calls “the theology of royalty, the royalty of theology” (*kalām al-mulūk mulūk al-kalām*). The attribution of divine inspiration to the illiterate Öljeitü and of exceptional sanction to Rashīd al-Dīn as his scribe continues throughout the *Bayān*. Still within the work’s first treatise, Rashīd al-Dīn testifies to having experienced Öljeitü’s divine wisdom himself, as he had served the rulers since his youth until the age of sixty-two and had “gained all sorts of benefits from the rays of their internal sovereign light (*az nūr-i partau-i darūn-i pādishāhānī-yi īshān*).”¹³⁶ In the second treatise, dated to within a few weeks of Öljeitü’s visit to the shrine of ‘Alī that purportedly precipitated his embrace of Shīism, Öljeitü berates the *amīrs* of his court to live according to the *sharī’a* as well as the *yasaq*, confirming that his embrace of Shīism was thought to mediate the divide between sectarian Sunnī Islam and Mongol tradition.¹³⁷

In the third treatise, the focus turns to Rashīd al-Dīn, who fields questions from the other scholars of Öljeitü’s court, repeating almost verbatim much of the discussion of illiteracy and learning from the first treatise.¹³⁸ The longest treatise in the *Bayān* deals with the origins

¹³⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 85-86.

¹³⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 82-83.

¹³⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 97-101.

¹³⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 105-06.

of color.¹³⁹ In this treatise, Rashīd al-Dīn cites the works of Rāzī, Ghazālī, and ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī alongside one another, drawing their opinions into a unified opinion on a scientific matter redolent with the imagery of light shared by the Illuminationist and Sufi traditions. In later treatises, Rashīd al-Dīn treats such topics as the visitation of shrines and the transmigration of souls, expressing throughout the work the idea that spiritual authority can be transmitted through the veneration of individuals such as ‘Alī and Salmān Farsī without contravening orthodox dictates against metempsychosis. The conflation of ‘Alid and Sufi notions of spiritual succession is most apparent in a treatise on the mantle (*khirqā*) that Muḥammad got from Gabriel and in turn passed on to ‘Alī.¹⁴⁰

Immediately after the treatise on the *khirqā*, Rashīd al-Dīn offers the culminating expression of the state of Öljeitü’s religiosity at the time of his embrace of Shī’ism. Dated to 21 September 1310, this treatise deals with the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet, “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī its gate.”¹⁴¹ After ascribing a long list of titles to Öljeitü, including “Shadow of God’s favor,” and calling him, “a drop from the sea of favor and mercy, the commander of the faithful and leader of the pious (*Amīr al-mū’minīn wa imām al-muttaqīn*) ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib,” Rashīd al-Dīn presents a scenario by which an individual named ‘Alā’ al-Dīn from Khurāsān posed a question about this *ḥadīth* to the effect that, if ‘Alī is the gate of the knowledge represented by Muḥammad, then who might be its walls and floors and ceilings? After Öljeitü expresses an interest in getting a good answer to this question, it is brought to both ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī (in Arabic) and to the Shāfi’ī *qāḍī al-quḍāt* Nizām al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Malik. Each of these scholars in turn provides an unsatisfying answer, after which Öljeitü comments to the effect

¹³⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 175-273.

¹⁴⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 66-67. On the *khirqā* as a symbol of authority, see Jamal Elias, “The Sufi robe (*khirqā*) as a vehicle of spiritual authority,” in *Robes and honor: the medieval world of investiture*, ed. Stewart Gordon (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 275-89.

¹⁴¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 393-99.

that what sets the gate apart from these other parts of the city is its instrumental function, namely that certain knowledge is achieved by the one who “opens” the access to Muḥammad through an affinity with ‘Alī. Inspired by this answer, Rashīd al-Dīn (after repeating the maxim *kalām al-mulūk mulūk al-kalām*) wrote it down.

With the *Bayān*, therefore, Rashīd al-Dīn has come full circle to discussing the special knowledge of the illiterate agent of God that occupied his early private dabbling in theology. However, his late theological works are of a very different sort than the sketches that he timidly presented to Tāj al-Dīn al-Mu’minī. Whereas in 1307 Rashīd al-Dīn was compelled to seek out the support of prominent scholars to prove the orthodoxy of his writings, by 1310 he presents himself answering the most trenchant of questions posed by those same scholars. The source of this authority, furthermore, is Öljeitü, whose sovereignty entails a direct access to divine wisdom, initiated and granted by God, and not by any effort of his own. In this way he is very different from his rather “institutional” brother Ghazan. While Ghazan’s more conventional conversion story also engages the imagery of light, it limits Ghazan to the role of a candle standing at the throne of God, while he attains knowledge through the very Peripatetic mode of personal endeavor. Here we see the significance of the respect that Öljeitü showed to Barāq Bābā, not from any particular teaching or act of Barāq himself, but rather as a reflection of the heterodox Islam active in Iran in the early fourteenth century. Öljeitü’s interest in the faith and practice of Barāq Bābā, along with that of Abū Sa’īd Abū’l-Khayr and ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī, shows his own faith to be more engaged with contemporary practice, even if he never experience a paradigmatic conversion.

Chapter Seven. The historiographical setting of Rashīd al-Dīn

Sometime before 1309, Rashīd al-Dīn endowed a series of properties according to the Islamic practice of *waqf* to fund a complex of charitable institutions east of the Ilkhanid capital of Tabriz which he called the *Rabʿ-i rashīdī* (Rashīdī quarter).¹ Rashīd al-Dīn’s deed of endowment for this complex – its *waqfiya* or *vaqfnāma* – survives, much of it written in his own hand.² As with other *waqf* endowments, the allocation of properties to support the *Rabʿ-i rashīdī* offered its patron an opportunity to protect his significant fortune from dissolution after his death.³ Rashīd al-Dīn extended this capacity of the *waqf* to preserve its endower’s legacy by including in the *Rabʿ-i rashīdī* a comprehensive book-production facility and by stipulating in an addendum to his endowment deed conditions for the reproduction, dissemination, and teaching of his own works.⁴ The surviving volumes produced at the *Rabʿ-i rashīdī* stand among the finest examples of early Persian book art.⁵

¹ The date of Rashīd al-Dīn’s original endowment is not known, though Qāshānī mentions Öljeitü encouraging haste in the construction of the *Rabʿ-i rashīdī* as early as July 1305: Abū’l-Qāsim ‘Abd Allāh Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljaytū*, ed. Mahīn Hambly (Tehran: Bangāh-i Tarjumā va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1969), 44.

² For the facsimile and print editions, see Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Vaqfnāma-yi Rabʿ-i rashīdī*, ed. Īraj Afshār and Mujtabā Minuvī (Tehran: Anjuman-i āsar-i millī, 1971); *idem*, *Vaqfnāma-yi Rabʿ-i rashīdī*, ed. Īraj Afshār and Mujtabā Minuvī (Tehran: Anjuman-i āsar-i millī, 1977), hereafter *Vaqfnāma facs.* and *Vaqfnāma ed.* On this document, see Irej Afshar, “The autograph copy of Rashīd-al-dīn’s *vaqfnāmeḥ*,” *CAJ* 14.1-3 (1970): 5-13; Birgitt Hoffmann, “The gates of piety and charity. Rašīd al-dīn Faḍl Allāh as founder of pious endowments,” in *L’Iran face à la domination Mongol*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institut Français de recherche en Iran, 1997), 189-201; *eadem*, *Waqf im mongolischen Iran: Rašīduddīn’s Sorge um Nachruhm und Seelenheil* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2000), 21-52.

³ On the history and practice of *waqf*, see R. Peters *et al.*, “Waqf,” *IE²*.

⁴ *Vaqfnāma facs.* 292-95, ed. 237-41; translated in part by Wheeler Thackston, *Rashiduddin Fazlullah’s Jami’ u’t-tawarikh: Compendium of chronicles. A history of the Mongols* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), xi-xii.

⁵ The most famous and well published example are the fragments of a 1315 copy of the Arabic translation of the *Jami’ al-tawārīkh*, now divided between the private collection of Nasser D. Khalili and the University of Edinburgh. A study of the manuscript, including color plates of the Khalili portions, has been published by Sheila Blair, *A compendium of chronicles: Rashid al-Din’s illustrated history of the world* (London: Oxford University Press, 1995). The Edinburgh portions of the manuscript have been the subject of several studies, including David Talbot Rice and Basil Gray, *The illustrations to the world history of Rashīd al-Dīn* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1976); Min Yong Cho, “How land came into the

Rashīd al-Dīn's measures aimed at the promotion of his own works, paired with the survival of his *vaqfnāma*, has fed a sub-field of study on Rashīd al-Dīn as a patron of charitable institutions and book production.⁶ The detailed stipulations of the endowment deed, meanwhile, provide rare evidence for a study of social and economic processes in the Ilkhanate that cannot be elicited from the royal chronicles that form the bulk of our evidence for the period.⁷ The *Rab'-i rashīdī*, however, was only part of Rashīd al-Dīn's involvement in the Ilkhanid culture of patronage, and this involvement was not solely charitable. Hoffmann has described a cycle of patronage in which Ilkhans rewarded the works of Rashīd al-Dīn and his contemporaries at court with money which they were expected in turn to invest in further cultural works.⁸ We have already encountered Rashīd al-Dīn presenting cultural products to various Ilkhans in the hope of political or economic benefit: besides producing the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, he also introduced Vaṣṣāf to Ghazan Khan and, depending on our reading of Bar Hebraeus' continuator, was active already at the court of Geikhatu attempting to shelter the court from the larger economic disaster of the state.

picture: rendering history in the fourteenth-century *Jami al-tawarikh*," (Ph.D. diss.: University of Michigan, 2010). High quality digital images of these portions have recently been made available online by Edinburgh University: http://images.is.ed.ac.uk/luna/servlet/view/all/what/Or.Ms%2020?sort=Work_Creator_Details,Work_Shelfmark,Work_Source_Page_No,Work_Title. Other illustrated copies of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* produced at the *Rab'-i rashīdī* include Topkapı Saray Palace Museum mss. H.1653, H.1654, and R.1518. Non-illustrated copies that date to the same period and may have been produced at the *Rab'* include Tehran Majlis ms. 2294 and a manuscript in St. Petersburg which in Soviet times bore the shelf mark Leningrad Saltykova-Shchedrina ms. V,3,1.

⁶ In addition to Blair 1995, see *eadem*, "Patterns of patronage and production in Ilkhanid Iran. The case of Rashid al-Din," in *The court of the Il-khans, 1290-1340*, ed. Julian Raby and Teresa Fitzherbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 39-62; Hoffmann 1997 and 2000. See also bibliography entries for Mashkur 1971; Rahnāma 1971; Salim 1971 and 1973; Blair 1984 and 1986; and Hoffmann 1995.

⁷ Hoffmann 2000 is explicitly aimed at reconstructing the scope, structure, and social function of the endowment in order to see beyond the monolithic image of Rashīd al-Dīn's political activity presented in court chronicles (p. 17). A similar approach is Hani Khafipour, "A hospital in Ilkhānid Iran: toward a socio-economic reconstruction of the *Rab'-i Rashīdī*," *Iranian Studies* 45.1 (2012): 97-117, which attempts to reconstruct the inner workings of the hospital portion of the *Rab'* in order to "explore the daily lives of ordinary people whose endeavors, however significant, often went unnoticed" (97).

⁸ Hoffmann 2000, 87-89.

This chapter examines several implications of this culture of patronage on historical production in the early fourteenth century. As Rashīd al-Dīn and his clients and rivals at court competed for the attention and rewards of Öljeitü, they produced, reproduced, and revised a series of historical chronicles. When examined alongside one another, the various prose chronicles of the late Ilkhanate shed light on a number of historical processes. The first two sections of this chapter examine Rashīd al-Dīn's efforts – and some of the unintended consequences of those efforts – to continually update and monumentalize his own works to secure his position at court and for posterity. The last section looks at Rashīd al-Dīn as he was presented in the writings of his contemporary clients and rivals. Here we see an emergent bifurcation in the historical image of Rashīd al-Dīn that has been revived in modern biographical scholarship.

The changing shape of history

As mentioned in Chapter Six, Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī reports the presentation of the finished *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* by Rashīd al-Dīn to Öljeitü on 14 April 1307.⁹ At the end of the preface to the finished work, Rashīd al-Dīn describes a three-volume structure for the collection.¹⁰ The first volume consists of the dynastic history prepared for Ghazan Khan, the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. This is divided into two parts (*bāb*), one on the Turkic tribal genealogies and the second on the Mongol dynastic history itself. Volume Two contains a universal history of the world as well as the life and reign of Öljeitü Sulṭān. This material is also divided into two *bābs*, however here the division is less self-evident than in Volume One. Rashīd al-Dīn describes Part One of Volume Two as containing the life of Öljeitü from his birth until the time of the binding

⁹ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 54-55.

¹⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, ed. Muḥammad Raushan and Muṣṭafa Mūsavī (Tehran: Nashr-i Alburz, 1994), 15-20.

of the book.¹¹ Part Two, containing the universal history, is further subdivided into two *qism*: the first of these includes a Perso-Islamic universal history, while the second contains the summary histories of the Oghuz Turks, Chinese, Jews, Franks, and Indians. This second *qism* of Part Two then continues with the reign of Öljeitü, covering the portion of his reign that would occur after the binding of the book. The third volume of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* that Rashīd al-Dīn describes in his preface is a lost *Ṣuwar al-aqālīm* (*Plan of the regions*), described as a universal atlas or gazetteer intended to chart all the lands and territories mentioned in the first two volumes of the collection.¹²

Rashīd al-Dīn builds several structural devices into his historical compendium to promote not only the ideological position of its patrons, but the ongoing relevance of the work itself. Both of these concerns are apparent in Rashīd al-Dīn’s unusual design for Volume Two. By including a section for events that would occur after the book had been published, Rashīd al-Dīn provides an opportunity for himself or other writers to update his work as Öljeitü’s reign progressed, making the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* a complete record of a period that had not yet come to a close. Furthermore, by inserting this section at the end of Volume Two, instead of as an extension of the earlier section on Öljeitü, Rashīd al-Dīn presents his patron’s life and reign as bookending, and thus encompassing the history of the world, making the work a manifestation of the notion of Öljeitü as a universal sovereign. Two other structural devices within the text reinforce these considerations. The first, namely the presentation of parallel histories, recalls the itinerary of Oghuz Khan discussed in Chapter Five in the way it roots the

¹¹ The space intended to date the binding of the book is left incomplete as “the year seven hundred . . .”: Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 19.

¹² Karl Jahn is right in calling the *Ṣuwar al-aqālīm* the “most grievous missing portion” of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, as it would have almost certainly provided great insight into Rashīd al-Dīn’s understanding of the administrative organization of the Ilkhanate and its relationship to the larger Mongol and non-Mongol world. Karl Jahn, “The still missing works of Rashīd al-Dīn,” *CAJ* 9.1 (1964): 113-22.

Ilkhans' claim to sovereignty over the Middle East in historiographical precedents familiar to the region. The second device, namely the insertion of various opportunities for later writers to expand on Rashīd al-Dīn's collection, allows the text to evolve with time. It also provides a point of entry to a discussion about the nature of authorship and authenticity regarding Rashīd al-Dīn's collected writings. After reviewing these devices, I will look to the evidence for how one scribe engaged them in shaping the text of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. On the one hand, Rashīd Khwāfī accepts Rashīd al-Dīn's invitation to modify the text; on the other, he wrestles with Rashīd al-Dīn's awkward organization for Volume Two and begins to shape the text into a more chronologically sensible, if less ideologically charged form.

Parallel histories

In Chapter Five we saw how Rashīd al-Dīn creatively adapts Mongol, Turkic, and Iranian historical traditions to create a genealogy of legitimacy for his sovereigns and patrons. There, the legend of Oghuz became a synthetic and allegorical story presenting at one and the same time an etiology for Turkic tribes and an argument for the Ilkhans' claim of dynastic primacy over the Mamlūks. In telling the history of Genghis Khan and his descendents, Rashīd al-Dīn takes a different approach to making foreign historical traditions relevant to Mongol imperial history. Instead of forging a synthetic narrative, Rashīd al-Dīn presents parallel histories from different traditions covering the same period of time, allowing him to present two historical visions without the difficulty of collating their every detail. In the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, Rashīd al-Dīn tells of the reigns of fifteen Mongol rulers, from Genghis to Ghazan, denoted in the text as *dāstāns* (stories); within them, the personal histories of the Mongol rulers are interspersed with the histories of other dynasties and regions. As the narrative of Mongol conquest grows to incorporate more and more of these regions, the sections dedicated to

parallel histories become less frequent and less involved. In this way, the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* becomes a narrative map of the expansion of the Mongol Empire.

In the deployment of parallel histories, the *dāstān* of Genghis Khan provides a model for those of subsequent rulers. Rashīd al-Dīn divides life of Genghis Khan is into six periods (1155-67; 1168-94; 1195-1203; 1204-10; 1211-19; and 1219-27). After telling the events of Genghis Khan's life for each period, he gives the political history of the regions that would later form the Mongol Empire (North and South China, Central Asia, the Caucasus, Southern Russia, Anatolia, and the Middle East, called *Īrān-zamīn*) as well as the regions of the Mamlūk Sulṭānate (Syria, Egypt, and North Africa). Over the course of the six periods of Genghis Khan's life, the summary histories become fewer as several of these regions come under the command of the Mongol conqueror. As other parallel histories are folded into that of the Mongols, that of the Khwārazmshāhs 'Alā al-Dīn and Jalāl al-Dīn remains independent and expands to include significant portions of text. This betrays Rashīd al-Dīn's main source on the Khwārazmshāhs, namely Juvaynī, who retained a respect for the dynasty residual from his father's service to it. It also, however, casts the Khwarazmshahs as the staunchest of holdouts against Mongol suzerainty, inflating the narrative value of their eventual conquest.

The prominence of the Khwārazmshāhs continues into the account of Ögedei, which is divided into two sections (1229-34; 1235-41). As the last Khwārazmshāh, Jalāl al-Dīn, was killed during Ögedei's reign, however, the parallel histories given in the *dāstān* of Ögedei shift from those of competitor dynasties to tell instead of the various governors of the western imperial provinces and of Batu's campaign into Eastern Europe. Thus, while the *dāstān* of Genghis Khan presents the history of the Mongol Empire in parallel with that of dynasties external to it, during the *dāstāns* of subsequent Great Khans the device of parallelism becomes a mechanism

for recording events at the central court alongside those of the distant regions of the Empire, including the Middle East. For the *dāstāns* of these subsequent Great Khans, the parallel histories are grouped at the end of the regnal accounts, making them subsidiary and supplemental to the main history of the Empire, and they come to include only the minor *atabeg* dynasties of the Middle East and, for most of the reign of Qubilai, the Song Dynasty of southern China. On the whole, the parallel histories serve, during the *dāstān* of Genghis Khan, to anchor Mongol dynastic affairs into the extant Middle Eastern historical tradition, while in later *dāstāns* of the book they illustrate the Mongols' political predominance across Eurasia. In both functions, they serve as a literary manifestation of the Mongol mandate to rule.

Elaborating the character of the Khans

Rashīd al-Dīn divides each of the fifteen *dāstāns* of Mongol rulers into three sections (*qism*) treating: the ruler's family, his career, and miscellaneous events and anecdotes associated with him and his reign.¹³ Despite this uniform structure, the fifteen *dāstāns* of the dynastic history are of widely divergent lengths, so that sections on Genghis Khan and Ghazan together make up almost half of the dynastic history (282 and 336 pages respectively, from a total of about 1452 pages of edited text). In part, this discrepancy is due to the fact that Genghis and Ghazan receive the most extensive biographical treatment in their respective second *qisms*. Beyond this, the third *qism* of the *dāstāns* of Ghazan and Genghis, namely those sections dealing with their character and miscellaneous acts, are among the most developed in the work.

¹³ In his translation, Thackston preserves the three *qism* of the *dāstān* of Genghis Khan as Sections 1-3 of Part Two, Chapter Two, yet he assigns each subsequent ruler to a single "section," up to and including Section Seventeen, concerning Ghazan Khan. Thackston then subdivides these "sections" (which correspond to Rashīd al-Dīn's *dāstāns*) into "parts" (corresponding to Rashīd al-Dīn's *qisms*), but does not include these "parts" in his table of contents as he does for the three *qism* of Genghis Khan. The resulting numbering of Sections One through Seventeen, in which the first three pertain to Genghis Khan and the subsequent fourteen each pertain to a single ruler, does not match the original structure of the text.

Within the historiographical project of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, the third *qism* of the various rulers provides an opportunity to present essentialized portraits of each ruler's character and reign. For Genghis Khan, this section consists of twenty-seven anecdotes in an obscure language that seems to have been rendered from Mongolian.¹⁴ Except for one seemingly fragmentary story about the Mongol general Muqali Guyang's experience conquering fortresses in northern China, these anecdotes preserve Genghis Khan's words and deeds revealing his concern for order and propriety; honor, respect, and sobriety; the care of the family; the marks of a good ruler and commander (and in one instance, a good horse); and the efficacy of supplicating God. Set as they are in the context of steppe life, these stories mark Genghis Khan as the ideal nomadic ruler and patriarch of the royal system.

Among Genghis Khan's sons, only Ögedei's character receives extensive treatment in this way, though Rashīd al-Dīn includes headers indicating that such sections were intended for the other sons as well. For Ögedei, Rashīd al-Dīn gives forty-eight anecdotes.¹⁵ Of these, the first four demonstrate Ögedei's mercy; the fifth and penultimate show his ability to punish wrongdoers, and four of the last eight give miscellaneous accounts of events from his reign, including his appointment of Maḥmūd Yalavach, Mas'ūd Beg, and Körgüz as the heads of the imperial provinces. The remaining thirty-eight anecdotes tell of Ögedei's largesse, depicting him overpaying his subjects for the most menial services and goods, often against the express discontent of his courtiers. If Genghis Khan emerges as the ideal Turko-Mongol sovereign, Ögedei appears as an emperor generous to a fault. This trait is portrayed also in Ögedei's son and successor as Great Qa'an, Güyüg. The third *qism* of the *dastan* of Güyüg does not include distinct anecdotes, but tells generally of how he inspired dread, indulged in constant

¹⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 581-91.

¹⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 684-705.

debauchery, favored Christians, and took his father's liberality to excess.¹⁶ Similarly brief is the corresponding section relating to Möngke, which gives only a single story of how Möngke honored the exorbitant financial promises of Güyüg despite their cost to his treasury.¹⁷

Thus, while the sections dedicated to Mongol rulers' character portray Genghis Khan as an ideal nomadic ruler, those of the subsequent Great Qa'ans establish a narrative of Ögedeid excess and Toluid generosity and justice. As the closest contemporary portraits of these rulers, these accounts have been widely adopted by modern scholars to explain the character of the central court of the Mongol Empire. No third *qism* survives from Rashīd al-Dīn for the other Great Qa'ans covered by the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, namely Qubilai and Temür, or for the Ilkhans from Hülegü to Geikhatu no third *qism* survives from the pen of Rashīd al-Dīn, though the author leaves space for such sections to be added later, as discussed below.

It is only with the *dāstān* of Ghazan Khan that we see a third *qism* as developed as those of Genghis and Ögedei. This section has been discussed in Chapter Six for the way it portrays Ghazan in the light of Kubravī notions of kingship. The length of this third *qism* further serves to cast the *dāstān* of Ghazan alongside that of Genghis as the monumental bookends of the history of the Mongol Empire.¹⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn includes headers for the third *qism* of the *dāstāns* of the rulers between Möngke and Ghazan. For all these section headers – nine in all – there survives only individual brief anecdotes in the third *qisms* of the *dāstāns* of Abaqa, Ahmed

¹⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Djami el-tévarikh: Histoire générale du monde par Fadl Allah Rashid ed-Din. Tarikh-i Moubarek-i Ghazani: Histoire des Mongols*, ed. Edgar Blochet (Leiden: Brill, 1911), 252-54. This anecdote, not found in other editions, may be a later interpolation into the text based on the account by Juvaynī: ed. Qazvīnī 213-14, tr. Boyle 259. See n. 34 below for a further discussion of the possible author of this passage.

¹⁷ This section is also not found in all manuscripts, but again Blochet's apparatus explains little. Raushan and Mūsavī include it, noting that they have taken it from Blochet's edition (pp. 861-62, 1830).

¹⁸ Indeed, the third *qism* of the *dāstān* of Ghazan Khan is the single longest *qism* of the entire dynastic history (214 pages of printed text, or close to 15% of the total *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*).

Tegüder, and Arghun, all of which (with the possible addition of the third *qism* of the *dāstān* of Güyüg) are later interpolations, as demonstrated below.

While Rashīd al-Dīn himself does not provide any text under these headers, he invites later writers to add material to the sections in order to build essential portraits of these rulers and their reigns. For example, the header of the third *qism* of Abaqa's *dāstān* reads as follows:

Section three of the story of Abaqa Khan, on his praiseworthy affairs and select character and the good orders that he gave and anecdotes and incidents that occurred during his time other than those included in the previous two sections and which have been extracted from various books and people.¹⁹

These techniques for augmenting the dynastic history of the Ilkhans, both by presenting their collective history as parallel to and ultimately subsuming that of other dynasties and by providing a mechanism for updating their individual histories as additional information became known or pertinent, are also to be seen in the writings of Waṣṣāf, as discussed below. By recognizing them not just as inconsistencies or lacunae in the text, but as conscious efforts to maintain and expand the ideological project of the text, we can better appreciate the activity of at least one other scribe in addressing these questions. It is to that scribe that I now turn.

The other Rashīd

The Persian manuscript collection of the British Library includes a fragmentary copy of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*.²⁰ Because of its fragmentary state (about half of the work is missing, including the beginning through part of the reign of Jochi and from the end of Abaqa's reign through the beginning of that of Aḥmad Tegüder), this manuscript has not had much impact

¹⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1119.

²⁰ London, British Library ms. Add. 16,688; Charles Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1879), i.78-79.

on modern treatments of the text.²¹ Nevertheless, the surviving portions of the manuscript match several dated early copies not only in its text, but by containing the drafted beginnings of several genealogical trees that Rashīd al-Dīn included in his text.²² This manuscript stands out from other early copies, however, for including three passages of text not found in most witnesses to the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*. These interpolations open a window into the life of one scribe who copied the text, and into the early textual life of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*.

The first passage of text found in the fragmentary London manuscript and not most others is a chronogram on the death of the Shams al-Dīn Kurt of Ghur, who died in Abaqa's custody in 1278.²³ The second is an account of a stolen slave inserted into the otherwise blank third *qism* of the *dāstān* of Aḥmad Tegüder.²⁴ The author of this anecdote identifies himself as “the writer of this blessed book” (*nāsukh-i īn kitāb-i mubārak*) and describes the Mongol commander Eljidai Quschi stealing a slave from him while he was in the service of the Juvaynīs during the reign of Abaqa. Rather than seek justice from Abaqa, he waited until the reign of his successor, putting his trust in the Muslim faith of Aḥmad Tegüder. Tegüder's failure to

²¹ For example, Browne passes over it in favor of two more complete, though later copies in the British Museum, those now housed at the British Library under the shelf-marks Add. 7628 and IO Islamic 3524: E.G. Browne, “Suggestions for a complete edition of the Jami'u't – Tawarikh of Rashidu'd – Din Fadlu'llah,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (Jan. 1908): 17-37.

²² On the use of genealogical trees, including contrasting views on the provenance of one of the most important manuscript witnesses to them (Tashkent Oriental Institute Library ms. 1620), see Charles Melville, “Genealogy and exemplary rulership in the *Tarikh-i Chingiz Khan*,” in *Living Islamic history: studies in honour of Professor Carole Hillenbrand*, ed. Yasir Suleiman (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 129-50; İlker Evrim Binbaş, “Structure and function of the genealogical tree in Islamic historiography,” in *Horizons of the world: festschrift for İsenbike Togan*, ed. İlker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kılıç-Schubel (İstanbul: İthaki, 2011), 488-89.

²³ On the episode, Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1105-07; for the chronogram, Add. 16,688, fol. 136a.

²⁴ Add. 16,688, fol. 143a-b; cf. Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1149.

make amends provides an opportunity for the author of this passage to reflect on his imperfect manifestation of Islamic justice.²⁵

The final addition to the text of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* found in the fragmentary London manuscript is also the most remarkable. At the end of the book, after the *dāstān* of Ghazan Khan, we find a short note from a scribe written while Rashīd al-Dīn was still vizier and Öljeitü still Sulṭān.²⁶ The author of this note describes the three-volume organization of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* and explains that, if a reader read the universal history of the second volume, he would also see the account of Öljeitü Sulṭān included there. However, in the case that a reader might copy only the first volume but want to include the reign of Öljeitü, the scribe has taken the liberty to include it at the end of the first volume. What follows is a brief account of Öljeitü’s return from Khurāsān to Tabriz to assume the Ilkhanid throne.²⁷ In the note describing his decision to append this passage, the scribe again identifies himself as *nāsukh-i īn kitāb-i mubārak*, the same self-identification as found in the anecdote of the stolen slave. Here, however, he also gives his name as Muḥammad ibn Ḥamza, known as Rashīd Khwāfī.²⁸

Rahīd Khwāfī is known elsewhere as the scribe of the earliest surviving copy of ‘Aṭā Malik Juvaynī’s *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā* dated to December 1290.²⁹ In the fragmentary London copy of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, he makes two important innovations into the textual tradition. First, he accepts Rashīd al-Dīn’s invitation to make additions to the narrative itself,

²⁵ Charles Melville and Judith Pfeiffer, among others, have both accepted the story of the stolen slave as Rashīd al-Dīn’s own first-person account: Charles Melville, “Jāme‘ al-tawārīk,” *Elr*; Judith Pfeiffer, “Reflections on a ‘double rapprochement’: conversion to Islam among the Mongol elite during the early Ilkhanate,” in *Beyond the legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 383. Further evidence against such an identification is the fact that nowhere else in the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* does Rashīd al-Dīn offer such candid autobiographical information; the few bits of autobiography we have in this source refer to his government service.

²⁶ Add. 16,688, fol. 291b.

²⁷ Add. 16,688, fol. 291b-293a.

²⁸ Rieu misreads this name as “Rashīd reader” (*rashīd-khwānī*): Rieu 1879, i.78.

²⁹ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale ms. suppl. persan 205, fol 176b.

filling in the empty header for Aḥmad Tegüder’s third *qism* and providing more detail about the date of and circumstances surrounding the death of Shams al-Dīn Kurt. Secondly, he challenges the clumsy, if ideologically important organizational scheme that paired the reign of Öljeitü with the universal history of the work’s second volume. Instead, Rashīd Khwāfī attempts to consolidate at least part of the *dāstān* of Öljeitü with the rest of the Mongol dynastic history.³⁰

Rashīd Khwāfī’s impact on the text and textual tradition of the *Jāmi’ al-tawārīkh* are further documented by the Vienna manuscript which Karl Jahn used for preparing his two partial editions of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*.³¹ This manuscript contains the chronogram and the account of the stolen slave described above.³² In addition, within the intervening portion of text lost from the London manuscript, the Vienna manuscript gives three further interpolations. The first of these is another chronogram, this one for Abaqa himself.³³ Immediately after this, the Vienna manuscript includes a passage under the header for the third *qism* of the *dāstān* of Abaqa Khan, telling of an earthquake at Nishapur during his reign.³⁴

³⁰ Rieu suggests that, “Rashīd ud-Dīn seems to have adopted the suggestion of his scribe, for in his summary of the contents of the *Jāmi’ ut-Tawārīkh*, Quatremère’s edition, p. 56, the first volume is made to conclude with an account of Ülġaitü’s accession”: Rieu 1879, i.79. The manuscript that Quatremère used for his edition, Paris Bibliothèque Nationale ancien fonds ms. persan 61a, has not been consulted for this dissertation. Its seeming inclusion of this short appendix marks it as a possible witness of the “Khwāfī recension” identified here, though the majority of other extant manuscripts continue to list the reign of Öljeitü as part of the second volume of the *Jāmi’ al-tawārīkh*.

³¹ A full facsimile of Vienna Österreichische Nationalbibliothek ms. Mixt. 326 has not been consulted for this dissertation, and so the following remarks are limited to that portion of the text edited by Jahn: Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i Ghāzānī des Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Abī-l-ḥayr. Geschichte der Ilhāne Abāqā bis Gaiḥātū (1265-1295)*, ed. Karl Jahn (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1957). Further additional passages may exist in the unedited portion of the Vienna manuscript that would shed additional light on Rashīd Khwāfī and his contributions to the text. A further manuscript bearing Rashīd Khwāfī’s name and dated to the early fifteenth century was auctioned at Christies on 10 October 2000 (Lot 68/Sale 6373) and is thus unavailable for examination. Sale information is available online: <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/LotDetailsPrintable.aspx?intObjectID=1879525>.

³² Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Jahn 1957, 35, 59.

³³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Jahn 1957, 42.

³⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Jahn 1957, 42.

The date of the earthquake is left incomplete in the text, though elsewhere Rashīd al-Dīn reports an earthquake in Nishapur in 1270.³⁵ While the account of the stolen slave served to illustrate the character of Aḥmad Tegüder, this passage provides additional factual information about the period; both types of interpolation fit within the invitation that Rashīd al-Dīn extends in the headers to these third *qisms*.

The third passage unique to the Vienna manuscript concerns the execution of Majd al-Mūlk Yazdī, the tireless detractor of the Juvaynī brothers.³⁶ In place of the brief mention of Majd al-Mūlk being torn limb from limb by a mob at Ala Tagh as found in most manuscripts, the Vienna copy gives a detailed account of ‘Alā al-Dīn Juvaynī’s interrogation of his accuser, as well as the specific location of his death “in Ajighi’s tent behind Aḥmad’s *ordu*.” The identity of the author of this passage is given in the dramatic climax of the scene, when he writes of Majd al-Mūlk:

While they stuffed his head with straw to send it to Baghdad, just then the writer of this document (*nāsukh-i īn nushka*), Rashid Khwāfī, gave voice to these words: ‘That head, which was ripe with much desire, full of ambition for the vizierate,/ we saw full of straw, to the delight of his enemy’s heart; each tender limbs was in someone’s hand.’³⁷

Beyond the repeated identifications, both by name and as the “writer of this book/document,” several aspects of the various interpolations in these two manuscripts draw them together and

³⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, ed. Raushan and Musavī, 937. This passage is not found in most editions and manuscripts; Raushan and Musavī take it from Rashīd al-Dīn, ed Blochet, 558. Blochet indicates that this passage comes from his manuscript “B,” though in his description of manuscripts he does not specify which manuscript this is: Blochet 1912, 14-27. Thus, this could perhaps be yet another unique passage from the Vienna manuscript. Another such episode found only in Blochet’s edition is the text of the third *qism* of Güyüg, discussed above. The temptation is to read Blochet’s manuscript “B” as Paris Bibliothèque Nationale anecin fonds ms. persan 61a, cited by Quatremère as listing Öljeitü’s accession as part of Volume One (see n. 29 above). On the difficulty of establishing the date of the 1270 earthquake, see Charles Melville, “Earthquakes in the history of Nishapur,” *Iran* 18 (1980): 110-111.

³⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Jahn 1957, 46-47.

³⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Jahn 1957, 47. By contrast, all other manuscripts used by Jahn and Alizada contain an account of Majd al-Mulk’s early life that is not found in the Vienna manuscript, perhaps a result of Rashīd Khwāfī cutting it as irrelevant in the face of his own added portion of text: Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, ed. Alizada, 154, n.35.

illuminate the role that Rashīd Khwāfī played in Ilkhanid book production and the culture of court patronage more generally. The story of the stolen slave and the detailed account of the death of Majd al-Mūlk betray Rashīd Khwāfī's proximity to the Juvaynīs, a fact also borne out by his role in producing the *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā*. Furthermore, the practice of versifying chronograms or other memorializing lines on the death of prominent individuals locates the author of these passages squarely within the Islamic intellectual milieu surrounding the Juvaynīs in the early 1280s. His report of the earthquake at Nishapur reveals his personal connection to that region, as he was himself a native of the nearby village of Khwāf.

From these moments of interpolated text, a portrait emerges of Rashīd Khwāfī, who despite not holding high government position seems to have had ties to the administrative and cultural establishment that migrated from Khurāsān to Marāgha and Tabriz with the Juvaynīs in the early years of the Ilkhanate. From his relatively minor position, however, he shaped what might be called the “Khwāfī recension” of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*. These textual modifications are significant for a number of reasons. First, since they follow an explicit invitation by Rashīd al-Dīn for other writers to expand on his dynastic history, they reveal that the work was not intended, in its initial creation, to be a stable text but rather an evolving reflection of the Mongols as their place in Middle Eastern history developed. Secondly, Rashīd Khwāfī's efforts to restructure Rashīd al-Dīn's awkward Volume Two reveals an instinct that became stronger in later years to renormalize the ideologically latent text – with its presentation of Öljeitü's reign as literally encompassing the history of the world – with a more standard chronological format. Along with the “P” recension discussed in Chapter Three, this demonstrates the flexibility of the text of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* in the early years of its existence.

Gathering a legacy

Around the time that Rashīd al-Dīn expanded his endowment for the *Rabʿ-i rashīdī* and penned the extant *vaqfnāma*, he began to gather his various historical, theological, and scientific writings into a series of increasingly large collections, culminating in the massive *Jāmiʿ al-taṣānīf-i rashīdī* (*Collected writings of Rashīd*). The fact that Rashīd al-Dīn himself produced a description of this collection, described below, has given modern scholars a convenient starting point from which to catalog and appraise the relative merits of the surviving manuscript evidence.³⁸ However, this autobiobibliography is only a relatively late snapshot of the collection, the idea for which emerged gradually over several years. By recreating the chronology of this emerging idea and putting it in conversation with the notion of divinely sanctioned authority that Rashīd al-Dīn claimed for Öljeitü and himself during these years as discussed in Chapter Six, we can better understand the concern that Rashīd al-Dīn felt for preserving his legacy, both in the buildings of the *Rabʿ-i rashīdī* and in producing manuscripts of his works there. These efforts at securing a physical legacy take cues from, but greatly enlarge on the Juvaynīs' earlier patronage program. Their effect has been to protect Rashīd al-Dīn's historical memory from a backlash against his increasing consolidation of power. While Rashīd al-Dīn, like the Juvaynīs, Buqa, and so many others, fell victim to the jealousies of court rivalry, his success in reifying his prominence through programs of building and book patronage set him apart from these other viziers of the period.

The collecting of Rashīd al-Dīn's writings into the *Jāmiʿ al-taṣānīf* occurred in two stages. The first stage consisted of gathering of smaller collections, beginning with the original three-volume *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh*. In subsequent years, Rashīd al-Dīn gathered his four earliest

³⁸ See, for example, Jahn 1964; Hāshim Rajabzāda, *Rashīd al-Dīn Fazl Allāh* (Tehran: Tarḥ-i Nau, 1998), 302-25.

theological writings into a single volume, the *Majmū'a-i rashīdīya*. This was completed at least by 24 Dhu'l-Qa'da 708/5 May 1309, which is the date given on a Persian manuscript from the Tehran Sulṭanatī Library. This manuscript has unfortunately gone missing since the mid-1970s.³⁹ However, by then Mahdī Bāyānī had published general cataloging information about it, as well as the text of a note giving a table of contents for the volume.⁴⁰ The note begins:

A description of all the writings (*az jumla-i taṣānīf*) and all the observations which the Lord of the Worlds, the Master of Cyclical Conjunction, the Pivot of the Affairs of the World, Support of Scholars, Rashīd al-Dunyā wa al-Dīn, the honored assistant of God has made in four books and a mention of those are given below.⁴¹

This is followed by a table of the four books of the *Majmū'a*, namely the *Tauḍīḥāt*, *Miftāḥ al-tafāsīr*, *Sulṭāniya*, and *Laṭā'if* and then a list of the various treatises of each book. Give the manuscript's early date (the earliest copy of the *Laṭā'if* is dated just five months earlier), as well as its lavish decoration and the presence of the ownership seal of the *Rab'-i rashīdī*, this lost manuscript seems to have been Rashīd al-Dīn's original copy of the *Majmū'a*.⁴² Several factors of note are apparent in the table of contents it provides. First, we see in the titles applied to Rashīd al-Dīn a taste of the grandiose position that he claimed for himself during the last years of the first decade of the fourteenth century. These are even further elaborated in the introduction to the *Laṭā'if*, already quoted at the beginning of Chapter Four.

Regarding the process of collecting his various works, however, we see here that by the middle of 1309 Rashīd al-Dīn clearly understood his early theological works as comprising a

³⁹ Josef van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten: zu Inhalt und Entstehungsgeschichte der theologischen Schriften des Rašīduddīn Faḥr al-Dīn* (gest. 718/1318) (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1981), 12 n. 3; Dorothea Krawulsky, *The Mongol Ilkhāns and their vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 78.

⁴⁰ Mahdī Bāyānī, "Rasa'il-i Farsī-yi Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh," *Mehr* 8 (1952): 549-52

⁴¹ Bāyānī, 549.

⁴² Bāyānī, 549.

cohesive collection and he ordered the production of an appropriately deluxe edition.⁴³ Rashīd al-Dīn makes no mention of a larger collection, but he is here already using the vocabulary that would later give that collection its name as a collection of literary writings (*taṣānīf*). Indeed, just three months after the lost Sulṭānī manuscript was made, Rashīd al-Dīn gives the first textual evidence that he planned a larger, more comprehensive collection of his written work. This mention is found in the original portion of the autograph copy of his *Vaqfnāma*, dated to 9 August 1309. In that work, after describing the water allocations for the various buildings of the *Rab'-i rashīdī*, Rashīd al-Dīn mentions that a plan of these allocations is also included in the *Ṣuwar al-aqālīm wa ṣuwar al-buldān* (*Plan of regions and plan of cities*), which is further identified as one volume of the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf-i rashīdī*.⁴⁴ A short lacuna in the manuscript may have initially been left to indicate the volume number of the *Ṣuwar* within the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*, suggesting that, while Rashīd al-Dīn had at least conceived of the collection at this time, it had not taken definitive shape.

The shape of Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf* is best known through Rashīd al-Dīn's own description of it, an autobiobibliography found in the introduction to one Arabic and one Persian version of the *Latā'if al-ḥaqā'iq* (see Figure 6 in Appendix A).⁴⁵ The more famous of these is the Arabic version, preserved in a deluxe manuscript now in Paris that also contains

⁴³ The *Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq* is not included in this collection, of course, because it had not been written by this time. The dated treatises in the *Bayān* all fall in late 1309 and early 1310.

⁴⁴ *Vaqfnāma* facs. 268, ed. 212.

⁴⁵ The text of the Arabic version, from Paris Bibliothèque Nationale ms. arabe 2324, has been published and annotated by Étienne Quatremère, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse* (Paris: Impr. Royale 1836), cxlvii-clxxv. The Persian version, from Istanbul Aya Sofya ms. 3833 fols. 44a-76b, has been published in Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Latā'if al-ḥaqā'iq*, ed. Ghulāmriżā Tāhir (Tehran: Chāpkhāna-yi Dānishgāh-i Īrān, 1974), ii.2-15. Discussions of this catalog are to be found in van Ess 1981, 5-6; Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Athār va aḥyā': matn-i fārsī dar bāra-yi fann-i kishāwarzī*, ed. Īrāj Afshār and Manuchehr Sutūda (Tehran: McGill University Press, 1989); Rajabzāda 1998, 302-25.

the four books of the *Majmū‘a*.⁴⁶ The copying of the manuscript began in December 1307, though the last work in the collection, the *Laṭā‘if*, was not copied until AH 710 (beg. 31 May 1310).⁴⁷ This explains why the autobiobibliography comes in the *Laṭā‘if* and not earlier in the collection, since by the time the earlier works had been copied, Rashīd al-Dīn had not yet conceived of the larger *Jāmi‘ al-taṣānīf*.⁴⁸ Presumably, the manuscript now in Paris was originally intended as the Arabic translation to the lost Sulṭānī Persian copy of the *Majmū‘a* (which gives no indication that it was part of a larger collection); only when this book was partially completed was it repurposed as the first volume of a now much expanded collection, at which point the autobiobibliography was inserted into the next copied work, the *Laṭā‘if*.⁴⁹

As Figure 6 demonstrates, by the time Rashīd al-Dīn described his *Jāmi‘ al-taṣānīf* in 1310, the three-volume *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* had gained a fourth volume of genealogies, the *Shu‘ab-i anbiyā va mulūk va khulafā*. The larger collection was intended to include the two four-volume collections already discussed, namely the *Majmū‘a-i rashīdīya* and *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, along with

⁴⁶ For a description and discussion, see van Ess 1981, 12-13; Krawulsky 2011, 78-80. An example of the ornate decoration of this manuscript, the elaborate two-page frontispiece (fol. 3b-4a) is shown in color in Francis Richard, *Splendeurs persanes: manuscrits du xii^e au xvii^e siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997), 44.

⁴⁷ Krawulsky 2011, 79 and n. 314.

⁴⁸ Of course, since the Sulṭānī manuscript of May 1309 is lost, we cannot know the exact shape the *Laṭā‘if* took in that volume. However, by comparison, the earliest extant copy of the *Laṭā‘if*, dating to 5 Jumada II 708/ 20 November 1308, does not contain the introductory section including the autobiobibliography: Tehran Kitābkhāna-i Malik ms. 1281: Īrāj Afshār *et al.*, *Fihrist-i kitābhā-i khaṭṭī-i Kitābkhāna-i Millī Malik-i vābasta bi Āstān-i Quds-i Razavī* (Tehran, Kitābkhāna-i Millī Malik-i va Āstān-i Quds-i Razavī, 1973), iv.706; also discussed in van Ess 1981, 19 and n. 31; Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Tāhir, x.

⁴⁹ The creation of the *Jāmi‘ al-taṣānīf* is often dated to 1312, presumably because of the setting of Vaṣṣāf’s description of the collection, discussed below. Karl Jahn discusses a Persian-language copy of the *Kitāb al-sulṭānīya* dated to 1316 in St. Petersburg (cited in 1964 as Leningrad Academy of Sciences of the USSR ms. C 357) that includes the autobiobibliography: Jahn 1964, 114. From this, Jahn concludes that the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* was finished and the *Jāmi‘ al-taṣānīf* planned by 1306, when the *Sulṭānīya* was originally written. Since no other copies of the *Sulṭānīya* contain this portion of text, it is probably an anomalous later transposition of the autobiobibliography into the St. Petersburg manuscript.

several other titles unconnected with either of these collections.⁵⁰ Despite the tidy appearance of this proposed collection, two other descriptions of the *Jāmi‘ al-taṣānīf* diverge from it significantly. The first of these is found in fourth book of Vaṣṣāf’s chronicle, completed in 1312. Like Rashīd al-Dīn’s *Vaqfnāma*, this fourth book survives in its author’s own hand.⁵¹ In its original form, it included the end of the life and reign of Ghazan Khan and the early reign of Öljeitü, followed by a summary of the *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā* of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Juvaynī supplemented with additional information not found in Juvaynī’s original work. Like the earlier books of his history, and like Rashīd al-Dīn’s history of the Mongols, Vaṣṣāf occasionally interrupts his narrative of Ghazan and Öljeitü’s reigns to give parallel histories of other regions, including the Chaghataid Khanate of Central Asia and the Sulṭānates of Delhi and Egypt.

At some point (or at several points) after completing this fourth book, Vaṣṣāf interfoliated additional pages into his holograph manuscript. These stand out as lacking the ruling of the pages of the original book. One such addition, consisting of eight folios, contains the events of the spring and summer of 1312.⁵² The first two of these eight folios contain a section headed *mauḍu‘-i ifrād dhikr* (“space for individual recollections”). Similarly titled sections appear throughout Vaṣṣāf’s chronicle; they offer opportunities for the author to add material to his historical record without disrupting the integrity of the previously produced text. The beginning and end of this section are important for Vaṣṣāf’s depiction of Rashīd al-

⁵⁰ Of these additional volumes, the *Bayān al-ḥaqā‘iq* has been discussed in Chapter Six; the others are discussed in Appendix A.

⁵¹ This holograph manuscript, Istanbul Nuruosmaniye ms. 3207, has been published in facsimile: Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh Vaṣṣāf, *Tazjiyat al-amṣār va tazjiyat al-a‘ṣār (Ta‘rīkh-i Vaṣṣāf)*, ed. Īrāj Afshār *et al.* (Tehran: Talāyah, 2009).

⁵² These are folios 242-49 of the manuscript, pages 483-98 of the facsimile edition.

Dīn, as discussed below. The middle section gives a description of the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*.⁵³ In this description, Vaṣṣāf lists eleven works, though he says the collection was to consist of ten volumes. The titles he gives are modified for stylistic reasons, though most of them can be identified as works in Rashīd al-Dīn's autobiobibliography, as indicated in Figure 5.

Three of the titles that Vaṣṣāf names cannot be immediately equated with those from Rashīd al-Dīn's autobiobibliography of 1310. The first of these, which is also the first work listed by Vaṣṣāf, is the fairly generic *Tau'īlāt-i qur'ānī* (*Qur'ānic commentaries*), which may refer simply to the *Majmū'a-i rashīdī* on the whole or any of its constituent parts. The second is the *As'ila va ajviba* (*Questions and answers*). As mentioned in Chapter Six and further discussed in Appendix A, this work demonstrates significant overlap with the *Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq*; Rashīd al-Dīn's failure to include it in his 1310 list may indicate that it was not initially intended as a separate work. The final unique title that Vaṣṣāf lists is a certain *Ibtāl-i madhāhib-i tanāsukh wa*

Titles given by Vaṣṣāf	Corresponding work from Rashīd al-Dīn's autobiobibliography
1. <i>Tau'īlāt-i qur'ānī</i>	
2. <i>Tauḍihāt-i burhānī</i>	1a. <i>Tauḍihāt</i>
3. <i>Mubāḥith-i sulṭānī</i>	1c. <i>Sulṭānīya</i>
4. <i>Laṭā'if-i ṣāhibqirānī</i>	1d. <i>Laṭā'if al-ḥaqā'iq</i>
5. <i>As'ila va ajviba</i>	
6. <i>Aḥyā' wa āsār</i> ⁵⁴	1f. <i>Āsār wa aḥyā'</i>
7. <i>Ibtāl-i madhāhib-i tanāsukh wa nāsikh-i īshān</i>	
8. <i>Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq</i>	1e. <i>Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq</i>
9. <i>Ṣifat-i aqālīm</i>	2d. <i>Ṣuvar al-aqālīm</i>
10. <i>ʿIlm-i tavārīkh</i>	2.a-b <i>Jāmi' al-tawārīkh</i>
11. <i>Ansāb-i mubtanī bar jadāvil-i inshī'āb</i>	2.c <i>Shu'ab-i anbiyā va mulūk va khulafā</i>

Figure 5. Vaṣṣāf's description of the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*, compared to that of Rashīd al-Dīn
Numbers in right-hand column correspond to numbering of Figure 6

⁵³ Vaṣṣāf, ed. Afshār *et al.*, 484-85. The corresponding passage of the Bombay edition does not name the collection by name: *idem*, (Bombay lithograph edition, 1853), 538-39, though a marginal note in the holograph manuscript includes the title *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*.

⁵⁴ The Bombay edition, Vaṣṣāf 1853, 539, calls this the *Akhbār wa āthār*, though the holograph edition, Vaṣṣāf, ed. Afshār *et al.*, 484 clearly gives *Ahyā' wa āthār*.

nāsikh-i ishān (Refutation of the schools of metempsychosis and their abrogation). This title matches the original title of the treatise on metempsychosis in the *Miftāḥ*, a title which Rashīd al-Dīn changed when he wrote his first appendix on the topic.⁵⁵ The fact that Rashīd al-Dīn revisited the topic of transubstantiation several times may have earned it its own entry in Vaṣṣāf's list, whether or not it was ever produced as an independent work.

Rashīd al-Dīn also presents evidence that his initial plans for the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf* were altered in the years after the *Majmū'a* was collected and he penned his autobiobibliography. In an addendum to his *Vaqfnāma* dated to early Dhu'l-Ḥijja 713/March 1314, Rashīd al-Dīn gives instructions for the reproduction and distribution of his various works to the cities of the Islamic world.⁵⁶ In describing his works, Rashīd al-Dīn lists the four titles of the *Majmū'a*, then the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, and then the *Āsār wa aḥyā* and *Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq*.⁵⁷ To this list, he adds a *Taḥqīqu'l-mabāḥith* (Inquiry into topics) and *As'ila va ajviba*, two titles not included in his earlier autobiobibliography.⁵⁸ One possible explanation emerges when we revisit the holograph copy of Vaṣṣāf's description. From the list of titles given in Figure 5, numbers five through nine appear in a marginal note added later than the original text was written. If these are removed from Vaṣṣāf's list, the resulting (original) description of the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf* includes only of the *Majmū'a-i rashīdī* and the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*. Similarly, Rashīd al-Dīn's list of books to copy in his addendum from 1314 lists these two collections and then a couple of miscellaneous works. In

⁵⁵ Bayānī 1952, 550; van Ess 1981, 16-17. See also Appendix A.

⁵⁶ *Vaqfnāma* facs. 292-95, ed. 237-41; translated by Thackston 1998, xi-xiv.

⁵⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn mentions that the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* is to be produced in as many volumes as the *waqf* administrator finds appropriate, perhaps a nod to the editorial difficulties of his original organization that Rashīd Khwāfī had tried to ameliorate.

⁵⁸ The section of the *vaqfnāma* that includes this list does not survive in Rashīd al-Dīn's holograph. Of the two extant copies, only one includes these two titles, so their authenticity may be doubted: *Vaqfnāma* ed., 237 n. 1.

neither list is any mention made of several translations from Chinese proposed in the autobiobibliography.⁵⁹

The conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing investigation into the changing representations of Rashīd al-Dīn's collected works is that the exact number and shape of those works was under considerable flux between 1309 and 1314. What began as the limited collection of histories and theological works grew into a grand proposition to consolidate all sorts of scholarly knowledge, from geography and history to Chinese medicine and statecraft. By 1314 (and perhaps already by 1312), this plan for a larger collection had again been pared down to the original collections *Majmū' a-i rashīdī* and *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, supplemented by a number of minor works. When mapped onto the developments of legitimizing ideology charted in Chapter Six, we see Rashīd al-Dīn's supreme confidence in the authority of Öljeitü as a divinely inspired sovereign and himself as Öljeitü's mouthpiece translated into a claim to mastery of all knowledge that reached its peak in the year AH 710, that is, right as Öljeitü officially embraced Shī'ism and Rashīd al-Dīn penned the *Bayān*. In subsequent years, however, this grand scheme went unrealized and Rashīd al-Dīn focused his attention not at producing new collections of knowledge, but on reproducing those he had already produced. The following section examines a set of incidents from the year 1312 to show how Rashīd al-Dīn's position as the standard-bearer of Ilkhanid ideology began to waver in the years after 1310.

The bifurcating image of Rashīd al-Dīn

Abū'l-Qāsim Qāshānī, author of the only contemporary history dedicated to Öljeitü's reign, is perhaps best known for his famous (Melville calls it "notorious") claim to have been the real

⁵⁹ For one perspective on why the Chinese medical works may have been abandoned, see Persis Berlekamp, "The limits of artistic exchange in fourteenth century Tabriz: the paradox of Rashid al-Din's book on Chinese medicine, part I," *Muqarnas* 27 (2010): 209-50, which also includes facsimiles of several illustrations from the one extant manuscript, Istanbul Aya Sofya ms. 3596.

author of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*.⁶⁰ This claim has been much discussed; A.H. Morton has recently demonstrated convincingly that Qāshānī probably was heavily involved in the collection of material for the second volume of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*.⁶¹ The significance of this, paired with the previous discussions of the “Khawāfi” and “P” recensions of the text, disallows a view of Rashīd al-Dīn as the monolithic author of a stable dynastic history. That said, the debate surrounding Qāshānī’s claim is worth rehearsing for two reasons. First, since Qāshānī makes the claim within the context of a historical chronicle, it sets up his larger historiographical portrayal of the elder statesman Rashīd al-Dīn. Second, it reveals a systematic projection by modern scholars of Rashīd al-Dīn as an academic, jealously competing for recognition of authorship against a peer group of academics. This projection has obscured the appreciation of the instability of the text and its authorship.

In two places in the *Tārīkh-i Uljaytū*, Qāshānī accuses Rashīd al-Dīn of having stolen his historical writing, and the reward that it earned, from him, its rightful author.⁶² In both instances, Qāshānī frames his accusation in a particular narrative form: he begins by mentioning Rashīd al-Dīn’s presentation of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* to Öljeitü, then describes the rich reward granted in exchange for the work, bemoaning the fact that he himself received no part of this reward, and ends with a passage of verse emphasizing the favor that Rashīd al-Dīn realized from his theft. In both instances, Qāshānī also mentions an agreement (*va'de, shart*) by which Rashīd al-Dīn promised him payment which he later failed to provide. Using a fragmentary manuscript copy of a universal history in Qāshānī’s name, Edgar Blochet

⁶⁰ Charles Melville, “Jāme' al-tawarīk,” *EIr*.

⁶¹ Zāhīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī, *Saljūqnāma*, ed. A.H. Morton (Chippenham: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2004), 23-32; A.H. Morton, “Qashani and Rashid al-Din on the Seljuqs of Iran,” in *Living Islamic history: studies in honour of Professor Carole Hillenbrand*, ed. Yasir Suleiman (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 166-77.

⁶² Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 54-55, 240-41.

sympathized with this claim.⁶³ Given its textual similarity to the second volume of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, Blochet asserts that this manuscript provides the otherwise unknown preface to the second volume of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*. In that preface, Qāshānī describes the process by which the Perso-Islamic portion of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* was to be compiled and the relationship that it held to the entire work:

And for the beginning, [Öljeitü] wanted the history of the fourth *iqlīm*, which is the choicest of the seven kishvar and the most select of the four inhabited *aqālīm*, containing the lives of the Padishahs and sultans of each distant⁶⁴ period and the sovereigns of *zamīn-i irān* and the lives of the princes and prophets and caliphs of each age from the time of Adam Ṣafi (peace be upon him) until the end of the period that was the lunar year 700 by Muslim reckoning. It was to be composed through selection and abridgement and from exemplary/previous books and extant accounts of the age and selected from each period and the excerpts were gathered from a selection of esteemed and famous history books, such as Kamāl al-Dīn ibn Athīr⁶⁵ and the History of Ibn Sa'īd, writer of misfortunes and battles and others, to become the completion and continuation of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, and to speak the whole truth the Persian and Arab history . . .⁶⁶

Based on this evidence, Blochet states that Qāshānī was the undisputed author of the second volume of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* and furthermore made a valid claim to having written the dynastic history of the first volume, as well.⁶⁷

Blochet's argument was severely denounced by V.V. Bartol'd, based on the idea that the dynastic history of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* is written in the voice of one who had direct experience with the events described and who was not a trained historian and stylist such as Qāshānī.⁶⁸ Bartol'd does not deny Qāshānī any role in the creation of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, but he reserves the primary authorship of the work for Rashīd al-Dīn: "Qāshānī's participation in

⁶³ Blochet 1905, 132-40. The manuscript is Berlin Staatsbibliothek ms. Pertsch 368/Minutoli 23.

⁶⁴ *muhtar* indistinct in text.

⁶⁵ Here Qashani seems to conflate the name of the historian 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, with his work, the *Kāmil fi'l-Ta'rikh*.

⁶⁶ Berlin Staatsbibliothek ms. Pertsch 368/Minutoli 23, fol. 2a.

⁶⁷ Blochet, 150.

⁶⁸ V.V. Bartol'd, "E. Blochet, *Introduction à l'histoire des Mongols de Fadl Allah Rashid ed-Din*," [review] *Mir Islama* 1.1 (1912); republished in *idem, Sochineniya. Vol. viii: raboty po istochnikobedeniyu* (Moscow: Nauka, 1973), 270-310.

the work of Rashīd was limited, it seems, by the division of labor, where the author was the primary compiler.”⁶⁹ Here, as in many aspects of Turko-Mongol history, Bartol’d’s judgment has become doctrine. In an introductory essay to an intended full edition of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*, Il’ya Petrushevsky expands on Bartol’d’s rather simple formulation of Qāshānī’s involvement, casting it in terms of the editorial project in which he himself was involved:

Without dwelling on this episode, treated in detail by the two named scientists, we observe that the correct thing is to recognize that Rashīd al-Dīn was the principal author of the work and the editor of the whole work. Such recognition does not detract from the merits of Rashīd al-Dīn: the general idea, plan, and construction of the work and its individual parts, as redacted, apparently quite thoroughly, undoubtedly belonged to him. In his employees we are right to recognize co-authors, but only as minor contributors to a collective labor.⁷⁰

This idea of co-authorship, with the implicit understanding of Qāshānī (and unnamed others) as subordinate partners in the work, finds its full expression in a later conference paper by David Morgan, who completes the analogy to modern academia that Petrushevsky had begun by referring to Qāshānī and any other unnamed contributors to the project as “research assistants.”⁷¹

A scholarly consensus has thus developed around a metaphorical understanding of Rashīd al-Dīn as a senior scholar presiding over any number of underappreciated research assistants. However, in understanding the validity of Qāshānī’s claim, we need to distinguish between the composition of the two original volumes of the *Jāmi’ al-tawārīkh*. While the first volume certainly required the direct involvement with an individually as closely involved with the Ilkhanid court and ruling family, such as Bartol’d has argued, the second volume, which is

⁶⁹ Bartol’d 1912, 94.

⁷⁰ Il’ya Petrushevsky, “Rashid-ad-dina i ego istoricheskiy trud,” in Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Sbornik letopisey. Tom I, kniga pervaya*, tr. L.A. Khetagurova (Moscow: Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1952), 26.

⁷¹ David Morgan, “Rašīd al-dīn and Ġazan Khan,” in *L’Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1997), 184.

derived from extant sources on Islamic, Iranian, and world history, could be compiled much as Qāshānī describes having done. Along these lines, Qāshānī elsewhere mentions that his history of the Ismāʿīlīs was to be part of a collection titled the *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh* commissioned by Ghazan and consisting of a universal history and *not* a dynastic history.⁷² Indeed, Blochet’s speculation that Qāshānī’s preface should be read as the preface to the second volume of the *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh* can now be tested against an extant manuscript copy of the latter work that preserves the opening of its second volume.⁷³ The work’s exordium is indeed an abbreviated version of that of Qāshānī’s work, simplified of much of Qāshānī’s baroque *sajʿ* rhetoric and scrubbed of any reference to Qāshānī himself. Furthermore, as Morton has demonstrated, portions of Qāshānī’s text published since Blochet wrote do in fact correspond closely with the universal history from the second volume of the *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh*.⁷⁴ Thus, both Blochet and Bartol’d analyses can stand if we see Qāshānī as the prime author – or rather compiler – of the universal history of its second volume.

This question is worth rehearsing because the tone of Qāshānī’s accusation sets up his broader historiographical presentation of Rashīd al-Dīn. As mentioned above, Qāshānī finishes each instance of his accusation with a passage of verse, which has the effect of moralizing the episode and setting it off from the rest of the text. In the second instance of his accusation, Qāshānī puts this verse in the voice of a group of Jewish clients of Rashīd al-Dīn, whom the vizier had taught to disavow the truth of the situation.⁷⁵ Here we see the emergence of what became a durable trope surrounding the figure of Rashīd al-Dīn, namely the question of his

⁷² ‘Abd Allāh Qāshānī, *Zubdat al-tawārīkh: baksh-i Fātimīyān va Nizāriyān*, ed. Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh (Tehran: Mu’assasa-yi Muṭāla‘āt va Taḥqīqāt-i Farhangī, 1977), 3-4; discussed in Morton 2004, 24.

⁷³ London British Library mss. IO Islamic 3524, fol. 1b.

⁷⁴ Qāshānī, ed. Dānishpazhūh; Ṣāḥīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī, ed. A.H. Morton, 23-32; Morton 2010, 166-77.

⁷⁵ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 241.

enduring loyalty to his faith of origin. Rashīd al-Dīn's own anxiety over the potential liability his Jewish origins posed has been demonstrated in Chapter Six as he consciously distanced himself from the tradition of Jewish medical philosophers writing under the Mamlūks.

The implication of Rashīd al-Dīn's Jewish heritage in the historical record becomes even more evident from another passage where Qāshānī reproaches Rashīd al-Dīn. This is a passage taking up almost the entire entry for the year AH 711 (beg. 20 May 1311) dealing with a series of political executions in early 1312.⁷⁶ Because these events are the most thoroughly developed narrative accounts of Rashīd al-Dīn's activities in the last decade of his life, they provide a unique opportunity to compare the historiographical preoccupations of the two main chroniclers of the period, Qāshānī and Vaṣṣāf, as they relate to Rashīd al-Dīn. Both authors treat the two sets of executions, but their respective presentations diverge sharply from one another. From these depictions, we see a historiographical ambiguity emerging around the figure of Rashīd al-Dīn already during his lifetime. These competing images of the vizier have their roots in the factionalism that divided Öljeitü's court; they have in turn entered modern scholarship as two very different visions for Rashīd al-Dīn's role at that court and his involvement in its partisan struggles.

The primary narrative of Qāshānī's account is the deteriorating relations between the viziers Rashīd al-Dīn and Sa'd al-Dīn Savajī, resulting in the latter's torture and execution on 29 February 1312. Into this account, Qāshānī weaves that of a second political execution, that of Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī, culminating on 9 April. Qāshānī makes use of the rhyme between the names of the two victims, fitting them into a passage of *saj'* prose that immediately sets a literary tone for the passage. Qāshānī's narrative can be summarized in this way: Tāj al-Dīn 'Alīshāh [not to

⁷⁶ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 121-34.

be confused with Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī], a jeweler in Baghdad, had gained the good favors of Öljeitü through his extensive building programs. Sa'd al-Dīn attempted to check his rise by auditing his accounts, but fortune was on Tāj al-Dīn's side and he continued to rise in prominence while the vizier fell out of favor. Rashīd al-Dīn promoted the rise of Tāj al-Dīn, which led to conflict between the two viziers. Sa'd al-Dīn's cleintele abandoned him and things reached such a pass that one might expect to see the royal entourage consist entirely of Jews. Tāj al-Dīn exacerbated Sa'd al-Dīn's position by creating a farcical show for Öljeitü Sulṭān to demonstrate the amount of money lost from the state coffers through Sa'd al-Dīn's corruption. Sa'd al-Dīn resorted to a series of increasingly desperate measures, at first trying to restore state funds by reappropriating the wealth of members of the court, including Rashīd al-Dīn's endowments. He finally sought refuge from Rashīd al-Dīn, who made an empty promise of protection. Finally, in February 1312, Sa'd al-Dīn was arrested, tortured, and executed. Here Qāshānī switches to a second narrative connected to the affair of Sa'd al-Dīn, in which Najīb al-Daula, another Jewish doctor elsewhere reported to have converted to Islam, conspired with certain rivals of Rashīd al-Dīn to have letters written in Hebrew implicating Rashīd al-Dīn in a scheme to assassinate Öljeitü.⁷⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn managed to reverse this scheme, pinning the letters to a deputy of Sa'd al-Dīn.

At this point, Qashānī transitions to the affair of Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī. Qāshānī explains that this Tāj al-Dīn, a prominent Shī'a *sayyid*, had been entrusted with the management of a number of tombs and shrines. Having built a mosque at the tomb of Ezekiel, between Najaf and Hilla, and thus appropriated this holy site away from the Jewish community of the region, he attracted the anger of Rashīd al-Dīn. The latter brought his grievance to Öljeitü, who asked on

⁷⁷ On Najīb al-Daula's conversion, see Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 49.

what basis he might kill a *sayyid*. In response, Rashīd al-Dīn doctored the document on which Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī preserved the record of his *sayyid* genealogy, making it appear as if he had erased the name of another and written his own name in its place. Öljeitü declared Āvajī's genealogy void and gave permission to spill his blood. A number of Hanbalī *qāḍīs* became overzealous in carrying out this permission and were in turn punished, after which Öljeitü ordered that, as per the teachings of Īmām Shāfi'ī, no Hanbalī should be allowed to be *qāḍī*.

A number of features of this narrative deserve note. The first of these is its dramatic structure (Hoffmann calls it a "Psychodrama").⁷⁸ Individual scenes are set off by passages of verse and, often, by sayings in the voice of "the learned" (*ulamā*) that have the effect either of exonerating Sa'd al-Dīn as the victim of fate or else of censoring Rashīd al-Dīn for improper behavior, such as his empty promise of protection. On a larger scale, each account is made up of two basic narrative elements, one telling of the political maneuverings that brought about the executions and the other relating Rashīd al-Dīn's devious use of text to implicate his detractors in crimes for which they are innocent. The second of these instances, namely Rashīd al-Dīn's manipulation of Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī's genealogy, also validates and illuminates the special reverence that Öljeitü held for descendents of the Prophet Muḥammad, since it is the alleged forgery of this, and not Rashīd al-Dīn's original accusation, that precipitates the *sayyid's* death.

The first instance of textual manipulation related by Qāshānī, namely the affair of Najib al-Daula and the forged Hebrew letters, reminds the reader once again of Rashīd al-Dīn's Jewish heritage and medical background. The Jewish threat is also implicit the comment concerning the royal entourage; whether Qāshānī intended this also as a reference to the

⁷⁸ Hoffmann 2000, 84.

stranglehold on royal access that the Jewish doctor Sa'd al-Daula enjoyed during Arghun's reign is unclear. However, throughout this narrative, and for most of his history, Qāshānī refers to Rashīd al-Dīn as Rashīd al-Daula only, using the onomastic pattern employed for non-Muslims, and particularly Jews, in government service at this time. In short, Qāshānī is highly critical of Rashīd al-Dīn's role at the Ilkhanid court and he uses, among other devices, the memory of Rashīd al-Dīn's Jewish heritage, his medical background, and his secretarial capacities as a way to impugn his subject.

A very different vision of Rashīd al-Dīn emerges from the account of these same events presented by Vaṣṣāf. As with Qāshānī, Vaṣṣāf presents the two executions alongside one another.⁷⁹ Here, too, they are linked by common literary devices, but instead of the dramatic narrative structure of Qāshānī's account, Vaṣṣāf glosses these events as two judicial actions and their results as due punishment for Sa'd al-Dīn and Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī's corrupt practices. Further, these episodes are contained on the same holograph page as Vaṣṣāf's description of the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*. A further examination of this page reveals more about how Vaṣṣāf constructed this counter-image of his patron. As mentioned above, this folio is part of an eight-folio gathering inserted into Rashīd al-Dīn's holograph of Book Four of his history after the base text had been written. The original text of folio 242a contains a bare account of the execution of Sa'd al-Dīn before passing on to the description of the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*. To this, Vaṣṣāf later added a series of marginal notes, one giving additional detail about the date of Sa'd al-Dīn's execution and the names of those executed along with him, and another giving his account of the execution of Tāj al-Dīn Āvajī. While it is impossible to know the exact chronology in which these notes were accreted to the text, Vaṣṣāf's marginalia make his

⁷⁹ Vaṣṣāf 1853, 538.

otherwise spare account of the spring of 1312 into a compelling response to that of Qāshānī. Not only does his first marginal note repeat information found in Qāshānī's account, but the pairing of Tāj al-Dīn's execution with that of Sa'd al-Dīn six weeks earlier is a direct parallel to Qāshānī's pairing of the same two episodes, though here Rashīd al-Dīn is absolved of any involvement in devious activity.

This bifurcation of the image of Rashīd al-Dīn as either an inveterate schemer or an upright civil servant extends through other late Ilkhanid historians. In the *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī reports in his typically understated way that adversity broke out between the two viziers, so that friends of Rashīd al-Dīn accused the latter's colleague before the Sulṭān, leading to the execution of Sa'd al-Dīn.⁸⁰ In the *Zafarnāma*, Ḥamd Allāh blames Sa'd al-Dīn, whom he calls the "weaker vizier," of acting out against Rashīd al-Dīn from pride and thus bringing evil into the world.⁸¹ On the other hand, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Shabānkāra'ī paints Rashīd al-Dīn as acting opportunistically to eliminate a political rival.⁸² Here, as elsewhere, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī's tempered account became the main source for the Timurid portrait of Rashīd al-Dīn, but the alternate image preserved by Qāshānī and Shabānkāra'ī has resurfaced in modern historiography.

Quatremère, ever eager to praise Rashīd al-Dīn, naturally favors the account of Vaṣṣāf, whom he calls "a true and well-educated writer."⁸³ Quatremère compares Vaṣṣāf's account to that of the Ṭalībīd genealoger Ibn 'Inaba (d. 1424).⁸⁴ Unsurprisingly, Ibn 'Inaba excoriates

⁸⁰ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī Qazvīnī, *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā'ī (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1983), 608.

⁸¹ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1436.

⁸² Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Shabānkāra'ī, *Majma' al-ansāb*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Moḥaddiṣ (Tehran: Intishārāt Amīr Kabīr, 1984), 270.

⁸³ Quatremère, xxviii.

⁸⁴ Quatremère, xxi-xxxi. Vaṣṣāf's account is to be found in the Bombay lithograph edition of 1853, p. 538; for that of Ibn 'Inaba, see Jamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn 'Alī Ibn 'Inaba, *Umdat al-ṭalīb*, ed. Muḥammad

Rashīd al-Dīn for his involvement in the death of the *sayyid*. In response to this, Quatremère spends more time discussing the affair of Tāj al-Dīn than that of Sa’d al-Dīn in his effort to exonerate Rashīd al-Dīn of the charge of intrigue. This, of course, fits into Quatremère’s larger profile of Rashīd al-Dīn as a tireless civil servant. Vaṣṣāf presentation of the condemnation of Sa’d al-Dīn and Tāj al-Dīn as ordinary court proceedings lends a sense of legal process well in keeping with the tone of Quatremère’s study. Similarly, in his 1998 collection of studies on Rashīd al-Dīn, Hāshim Rajabzāda goes to great length to exonerate Rashīd al-Dīn of Sa’d al-Dīn’s fall.⁸⁵ Rajabzāda’s analysis is largely an apologetic for Qāshānī’s accusations; he notes that even Qāshānī does not directly accuse Rashīd al-Dīn and points to other authors who portray relations between the two viziers as friendly. Instead, in Rajabzāda’s eyes, the main instigator of Sa’d al-Dīn’s fall is Tāj al-Dīn ‘Alīshāh, who takes advantage of a temporary disagreement between the two viziers to leverage Sa’d al-Dīn from Öljeitü’s graces and secure the disgraced vizier’s position for himself.

Two years after Rajabzāda, Birgitt Hoffmann published a highly contrasting view, in which she accepts much of Qāshānī’s “Psychodrama” of court intrigue, including its implication of Rashīd al-Dīn in the attack against Sa’d al-Dīn.⁸⁶ Like Quatremère, Hoffmann compares one contemporary account against one from the Timurid period, in this case the prose chronicle of Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū. She notes that Edgar Blochet had already compared these two accounts.⁸⁷ However, whereas Blochet attempts to rectify these accounts with a hypothetical reconstruction that could explain the emergence of both, Hoffmann simply dismisses Ḥāfiẓ-i

Hussain al-Ṭāliqānī (Najaf: al-Maṭba‘ah al-Ḥaydarīyah, 1961), 341-43. Ibn ‘Inaba also produced a Persian version of his genealogy that includes this episode: *idem*, *Al-fuṣūl al-Fakhrīyya*, ed. Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Muhaddis Urmavī (Tehran: Shirkat-i Instishārāt-i ‘Ilmī va Farhang, 1984), 188-90.

⁸⁵ Rajabzāda 1998, 39-50.

⁸⁶ Hoffmann 2000, 83-87.

⁸⁷ Hoffmann 2000, 87 and n. 207.

Abrū's version as a literary elaboration. This preference, and indeed all of Hoffmann's biographical chapter on Rashīd al-Dīn, is to be read within the context of her larger study of his endowment properties, which is explicitly aimed at piercing the legendary image of Rashīd al-Dīn in search of his socio-economic influence.⁸⁸ Thus, her embrace of Qāshānī's account fits into a broader pattern of hypercritical interpretation of the evidence for Rashīd al-Dīn's life.

Modern scholars have thus worked to justify one contemporary vision of Rashīd al-Dīn at the expense of another. The real value of these divergent images, however, lies in recognizing their contemporary implications. Each account speaks to Rashīd al-Dīn's prominence at Öljeitü's court; seen together, they reveal that he was as polarizing as he was influential. Lurking behind the events of these accounts is the fact that, just two years after he proposed his grand *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*, Rashīd al-Dīn felt threatened enough in his position to orchestrate the execution of two rival factions among the elite of Ilkhanid society. This occurred, furthermore, in the same year that Waṣṣāf penned his description of the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*, a description which suggests the ambitions for the work had already been severely attenuated. Two years later, Rashīd al-Dīn would admit to the same when he gave orders for the copying not of the entire *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*, but rather his two earlier collections, the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* and the *Majmū'a*. By 1312, and certainly by 1314, Rashīd al-Dīn's influence was in decline. Already, however, his life had become the subject of some of the same processes of historical writing in which he had once participated. The resulting bifurcation in his historical image has been revived in the nuances of modern biographical reconstructions such as those of Quatremère and Hoffmann. The core image of Rashīd al-Dīn that dominated Persian

⁸⁸ Hoffmann 2007, 17.

historiography in the intervening centuries, however, was initially promulgated by another of Rashīd al-Dīn's contemporaries at court, his client and protégé Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī.

Chapter Eight. Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī and the making of Rashīd al-Dīn

Rashīd al-Dīn's administrative alliance with Tāj al-Dīn 'Alīshāh, forged in orchestrating the decline of Sa'd al-Dīn, did not last long. As early as 1315, 'Alīshāh's disrespectful behavior invited the elder vizier's resentment.¹ Rashīd al-Dīn requested that Öljeitü pick one or the other to administer the state, perhaps hoping that his deep personal ties to the family of the young *sultān* would serve him as they had when Ghazan sided with him over Ṣadr al-Dīn close to two decades earlier. However, Öljeitü refused to do away either with the aging and reliable advisor or the young, capable, and ambitious manager. Instead, he divided their authority geographically, creating a new form of split jurisdiction in which Rashīd al-Dīn was to administer the East and South while 'Alīshāh managed Iraq, Azerbaijan, and Anatolia. Unsatisfied with this arrangement, Rashīd al-Dīn withdrew from the new capital of Sulṭāniya to Tabriz to nurse his rheumatic legs, leaving Tāj al-Dīn to bear the brunt of the resentment of the Mongol *amīrs*, who had become jealous of the influence the two Persian administrators held over Öljeitü. Rashīd al-Dīn attracted his share of resentment, however, when shortly after the squabble with 'Alīshāh he once again expanded the endowment of the *Rab'-i rashīdī*, fueling accusations of his extortion of wealth.²

The final struggle with 'Alīshāh began, like the first fall of Ṣadr al-Dīn in 1294 and the fall of Sa'd al-Dīn, with a fiscal crisis in the government, this one coming early in the reign of Öljeitü's son, Abū Sa'īd (1316-35). Each of the viziers tried to defer responsibility onto the other for raising money to pay the army. In this setting of financial hardship and mutual

¹ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī Qazvīnī, *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā'ī (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1983), 608f.; Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljaytū*, ed. Mahīn Hambly (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjumā va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1969), 127-30.

² Birgitt Hoffmann, *Waqf im mongolischen Iran: Rašīduddīns Sorge um Nachruhm und Seelenheil* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2000), 86.

distrust, Rashīd al-Dīn sent a gift to the Mamlūk sultān in Egypt.³ Accusations of disloyalty, extortion, and mismanagement forced Rashīd al-Dīn into retirement in September of 1317 in Tabriz, where he remained through the last winter of his life.

During that winter of 1317-1318, the Ilkhanid court languished in fiscal mismanagement, so that one of Rashīd al-Dīn's allies, the future king-maker Amīr Chupan, asked him to return to his previous duties.⁴ This aroused the jealousy of 'Alīshāh, who continued his instigations against Rashīd al-Dīn, culminating in charges against the elder statesman and doctor that he had arranged to have Öljeitü Sultān poisoned. Rashīd al-Dīn was condemned with the grudging acquiescence of his former Mongol ally Chupan, just as the protection of Amīr Buqa had forestalled but not ultimately prevented the execution of Shams al-Dīn Juvaynī a generation earlier. On 17 July 1318 outside of Abhār, in the district of Qazvīn, Rashīd al-Dīn was executed along with his son, who had been condemned of administering the poison his father had prepared.

After Rashīd al-Dīn's death, his *Rab'-i rashīdī* was ransacked and his property seized. Abū Sa'īd apparently repented his decision, however, as he appointed Rashīd al-Dīn's son Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad, as vizier in 1327. Ghiyās al-Dīn rebuilt the *Rab'-i rashīdī* to some degree and resumed his father's work as a patron as well as statesman.⁵ Under Ghiyās al-Dīn's patronage, dynastic historiography never reached the level of the works of Rashīd al-Dīn or Vaṣṣāf. Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Shabānkāra'ī produced a summary history of the independent

³ Étienne Quatremère, *Histoire des Mongols de la Perse* (Paris: Impr. Royale 1836), xxxvi, citing Maqrīzī.

⁴ On the reign of Abū Sa'īd and the role of Amīr Chupan, see Charles Melville, "Abū Sa'īd and the revolt of the amirs in 1319," in *L'Iran face à la domination mongole*, ed. Denise Aigle (Tehran: Institute français de recherche en Iran, 1997), 89-120; *idem*, *The fall of Amir Chupan and the decline of the Ilkhanate, 1327-37: a decade of discord in Mongol Iran* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

⁵ Sheila Blair, "Patterns of patronage and production in Ilkhanid Iran: the case of Rashid al-Din," in *In the court of the il-khans, 1290-1340*, ed. Julian Raby and Theresa Fitzherbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 56.

dynasties of Iran since the Ṣaffārids of the late ninth century; it functions more as an expanded version of the *Nizām al-tawārikh* of Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī than a successor of the great dynastic histories of the intervening decades.⁶ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, whom Rashīd al-Dīn had appointed as revenue collector over his home district of Qazvīn, produced a prose universal history even more indebted to Bayḍāwī.⁷ This is the *Tārīkh-i guzīda* (*Selected History*), at the beginning of which Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī lists twenty-three works he consulted for its preparation, including those of both Bayḍāwī and Rashīd al-Dīn.⁸

Though Mustaufī owed much to Rashid al-Din for factual information on the early Ilkhanate, the structure of his history follows that of Bayḍāwī. An opening prosopography (*ṭabaqāt*) of major and minor prophets and sages and their sayings incorporates the early sacred history of Islam without disrupting the core narrative of universal history, which begins in the second chapter. After tracing political history from the Pishdadians through the Ilkhans in chapters two through four, the *Tārīkh -i guzīda* gives another *ṭabaqāt*, this one of various religious dignitaries and poets, before finishing with a dedicated study of the author's home city of Qazvīn. This organization of *ṭabaqāt* followed by chronology and then another *ṭabaqāt*, with the appended regional history, provides a more balanced narrative structure than the histories of Vaṣṣāf and Rashīd al-Dīn, both of which suffered from having been inspired and commissioned in multiple stages and regularly amended, as discussed in Chapters Five and Seven.

⁶ Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Shabānkāra'i, *Majma' al-ansāb*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Moḥaddis (Tehran: Intishārāt Amīr Kabīr, 1984). On Shabānkāra'i, see C.A. Storey, *Persian literature: a bio-bibliographical survey*, Vol. 1, pt. 1, sec. 2 (London: Luzac & Co. 1935), 84-85; *idem*, *Persidskaya literatura: bio-bibliographicheskii obzor*. Vol. 1, tr. and suppl. Yuri E. Bregel' (Moscow: Central Department of Oriental Literature, 1972), 334-35.

⁷ Biographical information on Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī is limited to that which he offers in his own works. These have been collected by Leonard James Ward, "The Zafar-Nāmāh of Hamdallāh Mustaufī and the Il-Khān dynasty of Iran," (Ph.D. diss., University of Manchester, 1983), i.8-16. See also Storey, 82-84; *idem*, tr. and suppl. Yuri E. Bregel', 327-34.

⁸ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, ed. Navā'i, 6-7.

While prose historical writing settled into more satisfying structures in the later decades of the Ilkhanate, this period saw an upsurge in verse historiography inspired by the *Shāhnāma* of Firdausī. This chapter examines this late turn in Ilkhanid historical writing towards epic verse. In particular, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī's grand verse epic, the *Ẓafarnāma* (*Book of victory*), for which the *Tārīkh-i guzīda* was a mere warm-up exercise, reveals how Mongol history became increasingly integrated into the forms and content of Iranian tradition. As part of this, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī established a particular image for his deceased patron using tropes from Persian historical literature, creating the image of Rashīd al-Dīn as the quintessential Persian vizier that has persisted into modern historical studies.

The *Shāhnāma* in the late Ilkhanate

Late Ilkhanid historiography is marked by a surge of interest in Firdausī's epic *Shāhnāma*.⁹ Four surviving manuscripts of the *Shāhnāma* originating in Shīrāz between 1330 and 1354 indicate the power that the work held for the Muẓaffarid dynasty of that city in the wake of the Ilkhanate.¹⁰ In addition to these new manuscripts, the period saw a burst of activity in the production of texts in imitation of Firdausī's work by such writers as Shams al-Dīn Qāshanī, Aḥmad Tabrīzī, and Nūr al-Dīn Azhdārī.¹¹ These works draw on the aesthetic values of the *Shāhnāma*, but they also create a series of comparisons between the heroic tradition and recent history. While identifying exact analogies is always a somewhat speculative exercise, there exists enough

⁹ Oleg Grabar and Sheila Blair, *Epic images and contemporary history: the illustrations of the great Mongol Shāhnāma* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 25 calls the Ilkhanid use of the *Shāhnāma* the emergence of a "proto-national consciousness."

¹⁰ Eleanor Sims, "Thoughts on a *Shāhnāma* legacy of the fourteenth century: four Īnjū manuscripts and the Great Mongol *Shāhnāma*," in *Beyond the legacy of Genghis Khan*, edited by Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 269-286.

¹¹ Charles Melville, "Between Firdausi and Rashīd al-Dīn: Persian verse chronicles of the Mongol period," *Studia Islamica* 104/105 (2007): 45-65; *idem*, "The Mongol and Timurid periods, 1250-1500," in *Persian historiography* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 192-97.

evidence to see that the tradition of epic verse had, by the late Ilkhanate, become a source of analogical thinking for historians. At the center of this reimagined historical tradition was Rashīd al-Dīn's former client, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī.

Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī's earliest scholarly work was an edition of the *Shāhnāma*, completed around 1320, which by his own account Mustaufī spent six years preparing and for which he consulted over fifty unique manuscripts of the text.¹² In preparing this text, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī added some 5,000 lines to Firdausī's text, as well as new title headings and elements of Turko-Mongol vocabulary not available in the early eleventh century.¹³ These interpolations, Abolala Soudavar has argued, may have been intended to suggest analogical associations between Mongol history and the heroic tradition that do not emerge immediately from the original *Shāhnāma* text. Soudavar offers as an example the wife of the first Sasanian Ardashir I Papakan (224-42), who appears for the first time in Mustaufī's version of the *Shāhnāma* and who may have been interpolated as an analogy to Baghdad Khatun, the controversial daughter of Amir Chupan and wife of Abū Sa'īd.¹⁴

The most famous example, however, of the late Ilkhanid interest in Firdausī's work is the so-called Great Mongol *Shāhnāma*. Since its dispersal by Georges Demotte in the early 20th century, this manuscript has attracted the attention of art historians for the compositional complexity and emotional depth of its images.¹⁵ Because of its fragmentary nature, the provenance of the book is uncertain, though on grounds of painting style and palaeography it

¹² Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī Qazvīnī, *Zafarnāma von Hamdallāh Mustaufī und Šāhnāma von Abu'l-Qāsim Firdausī* (Tehran and Vienna: Iran University Press and Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 7.

¹³ Abolala Soudavar, "Zafarnāma va Shāhnāma-yi Firdausī," *Iranshinasi* 7 (1996): 754.

¹⁴ Soudavar 1996 "Zafarnāma", 754.

¹⁵ On this manuscript, and efforts to reconstruct it, see Grabar and Blair; *passim*; Sheila Blair, "Rewriting the history of the Great Mongol *Shahname*," in *Shahname: the visual language of the Persian book of kings*, edited by Robert Hillenbrand (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2004), 35-50.

can be confidently dated to the early-mid fourteenth century. Two recent attempts have been made to more closely identify the origins of this monumental manuscript. Oleg Grabar and Sheila Blair attribute the manuscript to the patronage of Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad, son of Rashīd al-Dīn.¹⁶ During the chaotic period following the death of Abu-Said in 1335, Ghiyās al-Dīn struggled to secure the ascension of Arpa Ke'ün, a distant Toluid cousin descended from Hülegü's brother Ariq Böke, against competing claims to the throne. Grabar and Blair suggest that the Great Mongol *Shāhnāma* was produced between 30 November 1335, when Ghiyās al-Dīn arranged the ascension of Arpa to the throne of Persia, and April of 1336, when Arpa's armies were decisively defeated. While the need to legitimize Arpa as Ilkhan argues for a concerted iconographic campaign such as the production of a great royal *Shāhnāma*, such a short period of time would scarcely allow time to complete such a massive project as the Great Mongol *Shāhnāma* in a moment of dynastic decline.

A counter-proposal about the origins of the Great Mongol *Shāhnāma* is that of Abolala Soudavar, who attempts to identify the manuscript as the enigmatic “square-format *Abū Sa'īdnāma*” mentioned by the Safavid librarian, calligrapher, and art historian Dust Muḥammad.¹⁷ As part of this effort, Soudavar correlates individual images from the Great Mongol *Shāhnāma* with episodes from the Mongol past to show the manuscript as a gloss on Mongol dynastic history. Sheila Blair has convincingly disproven this argument on various grounds, not least of which is the likelihood the Great Mongol *Shahnāma* could not have been available to Dust Muḥammad at Herat, casting doubt on whether he knew about the manuscript at all.¹⁸ Furthermore, it should be recognized that, in presenting his argument,

¹⁶ Grabar and Blair, 48.

¹⁷ Abolala Soudavar, “The Saga of Abu-Sa'īd Bahādor Khān: The Abu-Sa'īdnāmé,” in *The Court of the Ilkhans 1290-1340*, ed. J. Raby and T. Fitzherbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) 95-218.

¹⁸ Blair 2004, 40-47.

Soudavar takes full advantage of the dispersed state of the manuscript to attribute individual images to specific historical events with no consideration for the larger narrative structure of either the *Shāhnāma* or the chronology of Mongol history. When reassembled in the order they would have appeared in the original manuscript and interpreted according to Soudavar's hypotheses, the images become a patchwork of disconnected metaphors to moments of the past, rather than a sustained analogy between heroic tradition and contemporary history. Furthermore, some of Soudavar's proposed correspondences rely on relatively obscure details of the images or the events they purport to portray; his scheme would hardly have been obvious even to a contemporary audience.

Thus, neither Soudavar's explanation for the Great Mongol *Shāhnāma*'s origins or that of Grabar and Blair is entirely satisfactory. However, both hypotheses are probably correct in assigning a political motive for the book project; the sheer scale of the undertaking and the quality of the result could only be sustained by elite patronage, particularly at a time when the Ilkhanid state was in decline. The politicization of the *Shāhnāma* indicates a belief that the heroic Iranian past of Firdausī's text held some contemporary value in the political contests of the late Ilkhanate. Building on this idea, Soudavar has thus twice proposed that renditions of Firdausī's *Shāhnāma*, whether in the form of Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī's redacted text or the Great Mongol *Shāhnāma*, be read as analogies for Ilkhanid history.

We might test Soudavar's approach to this material against a manuscript of what has recently received attention as the most remarkable invocation of Firdausī's *Shāhnāma* from the late Ilkhanate: Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī's own verse epic, the *Ẓafarnāma* (*Book of victory*). This 75,000-verse continuation of the *Shāhnāma* survives in three copies, the earliest and finest of

which is British Library manuscript Or. 2833, copied in Shiraz and dated to late March 1405.¹⁹

The consistent high quality of the book's ruling and decoration suggests royal patronage, likely a product of the early Timurid resurgence of interest in Ilkhanid historiography that also produced some of the finest surviving copies of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*. Four text columns of twenty-seven lines per page allow for fifty-four lines of *mutaqārib* verse per page, except where interrupted by headers. In all, the *Ẓafarnāma* occupies 736 of the manuscript's 779 folios of text. Written obliquely in the margins in a single row of hemistiches is Mustaufī's edited text of Firdausī's *Shāhnāma*. This extends beyond the end of Ḥamd Allāh's original text and occupies the main and marginal spaces of the final forty-three manuscript folios. This deluxe manuscript, copied some 70 years after the work's composition and likely from Mustaufī's autograph, provides our clearest window into various aspects of the late Ilkhanid interest in verse epic historiography.

Despite the survival of this manuscript, its value as a witness to historical processes has only begun to be appreciated. The survival of Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī's *Tārīkh-i guzīda* long led modern scholars to overlook the significance of the *Ẓafarnāma*, treating it as a mere literary exaggeration of the prose chronicle. Edgar Blochet expressed this discomfort most vituperatively:

The literary value of this work is precisely zero . . . we see the vain efforts that Ḥamd Allāh makes aspiring to his incomparable model and in doing so to attain the ridiculous; it would have fallen into oblivion, just as the verse chronicle of Shams al-Dīn Qāshanī, immediately after its composition and, but for the Timurid revival that rescued them momentarily from limbo, these histories would now be completely lost.²⁰

¹⁹ For a description of this manuscript, see Charles Rieu, *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1895), #263 (172-4). This manuscript forms the basis of Ward's partial translation and the facsimile edition of 1999. Two other copies are housed in Istanbul Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum Evkaf 2401 and 2402. A fourth, partial copy was made for Edward G. Browne from British Library ms. Or. 2833 and is of little interest.

²⁰ Edgar Blochet, *Introduction à l'histoire des Mongols de Fadl Allāh Rashid ed-Dīn* (Leiden: Brill, 1910), 107-08.

By contrast, the *Tārīkh-i guzīda* offers a plain, unadorned history of the entire Ilkhanid dynasty, an accessible source for any modern reconstruction of the period and a sharp contrast to the stylistic elaborations of Juvaynī and Vaṣṣāf. However, this preference for the *Tārīkh-i guzīda* as a source does not accord with Mustaufī’s own estimation of the work. Late in the *Ẓafarnāma*, Mustaufī explains that the *Tārīkh-i guzīda* was only a preliminary study in the process of writing the later verse epic. Furthermore, Mustaufī describes both of these works as part of a single historiographical project to transform and perfect the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, an intention also expressed by Shams al-Dīn Qāshānī in his *Shāhnāma-yi chingīzī*.²¹ Writing of Rashīd al-Dīn, he says:

When the record of the affairs of kings was complete
 he gave it the name *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*;
 I put that prose into order (*nazm*) with such
 consideration of knowledge and golden judgment.
 Each word that is revealed in it
 I checked with those who know;
 I passed nothing off contradictory
 and gave this account truthfully.
 When the material of this famous book was complete,
 it was like the beauty of a bride in color and appearance.
 But the garment was not beautiful in a small way
 A flaw in its clothing was its ruin.
 How can the face of the sun look good to the eye
 when one has dressed it in muslin?
 I removed this garment from the body;
 I clothed this composition in brilliant verse (*sha‘r*).
 With this fine image and meaning,
 Its form became like the face of the sun.²²

Other scholars interpreting this passage have read *nazm* of the second quoted verse explicitly as “verse”, concluding that Ḥamd Allāh refers in this passage to a one-step process of

²¹ Melville 2007, 52-53.

²² Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1415.

versifying the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*.²³ However, Mustaufī has here laid out a two-step transformation of his patron's work. First, he reordered the sections of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* to correct the chronological incongruities caused by its double commission. Significantly, he chooses the same Arabic root, *naẓm*, as Bayḍāwī had chosen to title his *Nizām al-tawārīkh*, the first work to situate the Mongols within the dynastic progression of Iranian history and the work after which the *Tārīkh-i guzīda* was modeled. Only with this order established in the resulting *Tārīkh-i guzīda* did he clothe the work in the form of verse. Contrary to Blochet and other modern scholars, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī and other verse chroniclers of the fourteenth century saw their versifications of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* as great improvements on the original text.²⁴

Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī was of course well qualified to render Islamic and Mongol history into epic verse, having spent six years editing Firdausī's text. In presenting the result, however, he does not simply give his original epic continuation, but literally surrounds it with his edited *Shāhnāma* text. In recent decades, each of the two texts presented in manuscript Or. 2833 has received attention for different reasons. Nasratollah Rastegar and Abolala Soudavar have each emphasized the importance of the manuscript as a witness to Mustaufī's edition of Firdausī.²⁵ On the other hand, the *Ẓafarnāma* has only gradually overcome Blochet's disdain, so that it now is recognized as a key source for Timurid histories of the late Ilkhanate.²⁶ None of these approaches has adequately examined how the two texts of the manuscript – one a redaction of Iranian heroic tradition, the other a versification of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* – interact

²³ Ward, iii.542; Soudavar 1996 "Ẓafarnāma," 755-56.

²⁴ Melville 2007, 55.

²⁵ Nasratollah Rastegar, "Ḥamdu'llāh Mustawfī's historisches Epos Ẓafar-nāme," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 79 (1989): 185-95.

²⁶ Charles Melville, "Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī's *Ẓafarnāmah* and the Historiography of the Late Ilkhanid Period," in *Iran and Iranian studies: Essays in honor of Iraj Afshar*, ed. Kambiz Eslami (Princeton: Zagros, 1998), 1-12.

with one another and reveal the role of the Iranian heroic tradition in late Ilkhanid historiography.

A full examination of manuscript Or. 2833 would undoubtedly reveal instances in which the heroic tradition in its margins provide commentary to the main text of the *Ẓafarnāma*. Three immediate examples are apparent from the portion of the manuscript treating the Ilkhanid dynasty. In one, Genghis Khan's accession as ruler of the unified Mongol tribes appears alongside Ardeshir Papakan's defeat of the rebel Mehrak Nushzad in a way that seems suggests both as the reunifiers of their respective communities.²⁷ In another, the death of Genghis Khan occurs in close proximity to that of Yazdegird I (399-421), invoking the tradition that Genghis Khan died from a fall from his horse, an account otherwise unknown in Persian literature.²⁸

Perhaps the most convincing juxtaposition is Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī's strange choice to locate his dedication to Abū Sa'īd not at the beginning of the *Ẓafarnāma* nor even during the account of Abū Sa'īd's reign, but rather during the reign of Hülegü, Abū Sa'īd's great-great-grandfather and founder of the Ilkhanate.²⁹ An explanation for this might be seen in the fact that the corresponding section of the marginal *Shāhnāma* text includes one of Firdausī's own dedications to Maḥmūd of Ghazna. This dedication falls during the Ashkanian interlude preceding Sasanian history. Thus, the *Ẓafarnāma* turns its attention to the Ilkhanid lands just as the *Shāhnāma* in its margins turns to its own most ideologically potent and geographically focused section.

²⁷ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 975.

²⁸ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1055-6, 1059-60; cf. Rashid al-Din, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 540-41.

²⁹ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1165.

While intriguing, all of these juxtapositions are made possible only by a transposition of text, by which twenty pages of marginal *Shāhnāma* text from the late Kayanian dynasty have been transposed with one hundred pages of early Sasanian history.³⁰ Since it is impossible to know whether this transposition of text was intentional, the juxtapositions just mentioned can only be considered coincidental. To try to draw such exact correlations between moments in the historical tradition and others from Mongol history is a similarly perilous exercise. However, by looking not at such isolated instances but rather at sustained patterns of association, we see a developed program of analogistic thinking between the individuals of the Ilkhanid court and those of Persian history. In the following section, I examine how Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī creates the image of his patron Rashīd al-Dīn as the quintessential Persian vizier, by situating his text in a tradition of Persian advice literature, which allows him to cast Rashīd al-Dīn in the company of great viziers of the Iranian past. In so doing, he establishes a hagiographical image of his patron Rashīd al-Dīn that has persisted into modern scholarship.

A book-length mirror: the *pandnāma* of Rashīd al-Dīn

A common feature of fourteenth century verse histories is their explicitly didactic function.³¹

Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī clues his reader to this aspect of his verse epic through its title.

Ẓafarnāma is the Arabacized form of the Pahlavi *Piruzinamak* (*Discourse of Victory*), the title of a work of advice literature purportedly translated into Persian by Ibn Sīnā (d. 1037).³² The

Piruzinamak conforms to other examples of Middle Persian *andarz* (advice) literature, taking the form of an audience between ruler and subject in which the latter responds to a request for a

³⁰ That is, the *Shāhnāma* text found on pages 975-1074 have been transposed with that on pages 1175-94. Rastegar 1989, 190 makes note of the resulting discontinuities in the *Shāhnāma*, but does not decipher their cause.

³¹ Melville 2007, 57-61.

³² Ghulāmḥusayn Ṣadīqī, *Ẓafarnāma mansūb be shaykh al-ra'is Abū 'Alī Sīnā* (Hamadan: Dānishgāh-i Abū 'Alī Sīnā, 2004).

discourse on moral, ethical, or courtly conduct.³³ In the case of the *Piruzinamak*, it is the Sasanian king Khusrau I Anushirvan (531-579) who puts eighty questions to his semi-legendary vizier Buzurgmihr. Firdausī includes this episode in his *Shāhnāma*, but he significantly modifies its format. In place of the sequence of questions, Firdausī dramatizes Buzurgmihr’s discourse of wisdom to match a narrative motif that dominates other episodes featuring the great Sasanian vizier. Buzurgmihr first comes to the attention of Anushirvan when he successfully interprets the king’s dream after all other dream interpreters had failed to do so.³⁴ Once at court, Buzurgmihr attends a series of seven weekly audiences (*majālis*, sing. *majlis*) at which Anushirvan solicits answers from his advisors to various moral questions, many of which correspond to those of the *Piruzinamak*.³⁵ The other advisors fail to respond to the questions, but Buzurgmihr answers them to the satisfaction of Anushirvan, who rewards him for his wisdom. Firdausī titles this episode the *pandnāma* (discourse on wisdom) of Buzurgmihr; like the *Piruzinamak*, it demonstrates the vizier’s wisdom, but it does so within a narrative motif of wisdom in the face of other ministers’ ignorance specifically associated with Buzurgmihr in the *Shāhnāma*.

The earliest extant Persian version of the prose *Piruzinamak* is found in Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī’s *Tārīkh-i guzīda*.³⁶ Rather than prosifying the *pandnāma* presented by Firdausī, Mustaufī presents the work in the form familiar from Ibn Sīnā’s translation. Of course, he did not ever versify this portion of history, deferring instead to Firdausī’s account of Sasanian

³³ For a discussion of the genre of advice literature, including the forms that it took in pre-Islamic Pahlavi literature, see L. Marlow, “Advice and advice literature,” *EP*³. Marlow’s article provides the phrase “book-length mirror” borrowed here as a section header.

³⁴ Abū’l-Qāsim Firdausī, *Shāhnāma*, ed. Djalal Khalighi-Mothlagh and Abolfazl Khatibi (New York: Persica, 2007), vii.167-77.

³⁵ For a demonstration of the parallels between the *Piruzinamak* and the questions of the seven *majālis*, see Ṣadīqī, 23-5.

³⁶ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, ed. Navā’ī, 68-70.

history, including the seven *majālis* of Buzurgmihr. However, he applies the Arabicized title of the *Piruzinamak* to his own verse history, suggesting that this work shares something with the didactic *Zafarnāma* of Buzurgmihr.³⁷ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī was not the only fourteenth century verse chronicler to draw on the *piruzinamak* to invest his work with a didactic quality. In his *Ghāzānnāma* dedicated to the Jalayirid Shaykh Uvays (1356-74), Nūr al-Dīn Azhdārī regularly uses a dialogic structure in Ghazan’s interactions with wise men.³⁸

A second clue to Mustaufī’s didactic aims in reformulating universal history can be seen in his list of sources at the front of the *Tārīkh-i guzīda*. In addition to the *Niẓām al-tawārīkh* and *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, Mustaufī includes in this list the *Siyar al-mulūk* (*Conduct of Kings*) of Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 1092), who served as vizier to the Saljuq sultans Alp Arslan (1063-73) and Malīkshāh (1073-92). Niẓām al-Mulk wrote this handbook for governance to address areas of the Saljuqid administration that he felt needed reform, but he presents his proposal in the form of a general didactic treatise. The work includes historical anecdotes, but it has no overall narrative structure.³⁹ Nevertheless, it provides two types of material for Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī. First, it offers a structure for framing individual episodes that gives Ilkhanid history a didactic quality, justifying the *Zafarnāma*’s title. Secondly, it allows Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī to present Rashīd al-Dīn as a historical reflection of Niẓām al-Mulk and to draw both of them into the symbolic orbit of Buzurgmihr as paradigmatic Persian viziers.

³⁷ Mustaufī’s title was later adopted other historical chronicles, most famously the biography of Amīr Timur by Niẓām al-Dīn Shāmī. For a list of works with this title, see Ṣadiqī, 11-15. These works, and their relation to didactic genres, fall beyond the scope of the current work.

³⁸ Cambridge University Library ms. Browne Or. v. 28, fol. 123a-134b, 192a-201a, 251b-23b. This manuscript has been edited, but the edition has not been consulted for this dissertation: Nūr al-Dīn ibn Muḥammad Nūrī Azhdārī, *Ghāzānnāma-yi manẓūm*, ed. Mahmūd Mudabbirī (Tehran: Afshār, 1991). The first of these sessions is discussed and edited by Charles Melville, “History and myth: the persianisation of Ghazan Khan,” in *Irano-Turkic cultural contacts in the 11th-17th centuries*, ed. Éva M. Jeremiás (Piliscsaba, Hungary: Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, 2003), 133-60.

³⁹ For a consideration of several literary aspects of the *Siyar al-Mulūk*, see Nequín Yavari, “Mirrors for princes or a hall of mirrors? Niẓām al-Mulk’s *Siyar al-mulūk* reconsidered,” *Al-Masāq* 20.1 (2008): 47-69.

The first impact of the *Siyar al-mulūk* on the *Zafarnāma* of Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī is the example it sets for framing episodes from the past as models of ethical behavior. Nizām al-Mulk’s work presents its advice to the Saljuq Sulṭāns not in the form of a royal audience, like the prose *Piruzinamak* and verse *pandnāma* of Buzurgmihr, but rather as a series of moral lessons. Each of these begins with an exhortation, substantiated by one or more stories from Islamic and Persian history, and ending with a restatement of the intended moral. This same framing technique is evident throughout Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī’s verse history. Many episodes in the *Zafarnāma* are framed with such a nested structure in which a general header introduces a moral exhortation, followed by another announcing, “the beginning of the story.” Two such examples will suffice to demonstrate that the *Zafarnāma* is more than simply a versification of the *Jāmi’ al-tawārīkh* or the *Ta’rīkh-i guzīda*; it goes beyond these source texts by investing the recent Mongol past with an explicitly didactic quality, cued for the reader through the structural parallel to the *Siyar al-Mulūk*.

One example of the nested framing technique in the *Zafarnāma* is Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī’s account of the Mongol siege of Baghdad in 1258.⁴⁰ The basic events of this episode are familiar from other accounts. As Hülegü approaches Baghdad and engages the caliph in negotiations, the city administration is crippled by a power struggle between the vizier, Mu’ayyid al-Dīn ibn ‘Alqamī, and the “Lesser” Dawatdar, Mujāhid al-Dīn Aybak. This conflict, and the caliph’s resistance to paying his troops despite the severity of his situation and the extent of his wealth, leads to the breakdown of the city’s defenses. Hülegü sacks Baghdad and kills the caliph, who realizes no benefit from his amassed wealth. Mustaufī’s account largely

⁴⁰ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1192-1221.

matches that of Rashid al-Din's *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*.⁴¹ However, Mustaufī frames the episode as a moral lesson. The section of the *Ẓafarnāma* under the header “The battle for the City of Peace, Baghdad,” opens in the first-person voice of the author, Mustaufī, declaring his intention to tell the how the hearts of the ‘Abbāsids became haughty (*pur za khūn*, literally “full of blood”). He next exhorts the reader to notice how power transfers to the hands of those who deserve to rule and how the ‘Abbāsids earned the hatred of the people and the displeasure of God as Hülegü's fortune rose.⁴²

The actual narrative follows a second header, labeled simply, “The beginning of the story.” Mustaufī relates the fall of Baghdad to the Mongols, emphasizing the deceit and avarice of the caliph, who repeatedly spurns Hülegü's calls for submission and the wise counsel of his vizier. At transitional moments in the narrative, Mustaufī interjects moral lessons in the first person, such as when he declares after the caliph refuses to pay his army that avarice is contemptible, especially in the actions of rulers.⁴³ This exhortation closes one episode of the narrative and introduces another, in which an “aged friend” of the caliph tries to advise him on the virtue of generosity, to no avail. Such episodes, interspersed with moral utterances in the voice either of Mustaufī or of elderly wise individuals at the caliph's court, continue for the duration of the story. Throughout, the caliph remains deaf to the lessons presented to or about him. Ultimately, he loses his throne and his life to Hülegü, but not before his spurned vizier has a chance to lecture him on the error of his ways.⁴⁴

Another such didactic episode from Ilkhanid history follows closely after the fall of Baghdad. This time the subject is Ket Buqa Noyan, the general whom Hülegü had left in the

⁴¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 994-1021.

⁴² Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1192.12-22.

⁴³ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1201.3-4.

⁴⁴ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1221.11-21.

Middle East to continue his campaign against Mamlūk Egypt in 1260, while he himself withdrew towards Central Asia on receiving reports of the death of the Great Khan, Möngke. Left alone, Ket Buqa engages the Mamlūk Sulṭān Quduz in battle but the latter catches the Mongol army in an ambush at ‘Ayn Jālūt and annihilates it. In Rashid al-Din’s account, Ket Buqa is captured, brought before Quduz, and executed after expressing disdain for the slave-born ruler.⁴⁵ In the *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, Mustaufī provides a typically spare account:

News of the death of Möngke Qa’an reached [Hülegü] in Damascus. He turned back and gave Amīr Ket Buqa Noyan authority for the liberation of Egypt and Syria. From Egypt, Sultan Quduz came to war with him. Amir Ket Buqa was killed in that war and the Mongol army was routed.⁴⁶

In the *Ẓafarnāma*, this episode becomes a lesson about arrogance. As in the case of “The battle for Baghdad,” here a general header, “The story of the invasion of Egypt,” introduces an exhortative introduction in the first person, after which the beginning of the narrative is signaled by a second header announcing, “The beginning of the story.”⁴⁷ In Mustaufī’s rendition of events, Ket Buqa launches a hasty attack and is drawn by trickery into Quduz’s ambush, dying on the battlefield. Another Mongol commander, Baidar, escapes to Hülegü’s court, only to be killed by his own son for failing to stand by his commander. Here again, Mustaufī interjects a moral in the voice of a disembodied “wisdom” (*khīrad guft*) before beginning the next episode, a *quriltai* called by Hülegü at Ala Tagh to address the setback.⁴⁸

Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī’s second use of the legacy of Niẓām al-Mulk concerns the flexibility that epic verse offers for significant innovation and interpolation in the narrative of history. This flexibility lies behind the reticence of historians to use epic poems as sources, as

⁴⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1031-33.

⁴⁶ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī, ed. Navā’ī, 589-90.

⁴⁷ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1237-38.

⁴⁸ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1242.13-15.

exemplified by the foregoing quote from Blochet.⁴⁹ However, when such poetic license occurs in a work like the *Zafarnāma*, which is explicitly a reworking of an extant prose history, they become valuable witnesses to the historiographical aims of the work’s author. In this regard, the *Zafarnāma* is noteworthy in that it assigns *pandnāmas* to both Niẓām al-Mulk and Rashīd al-Dīn that do not correspond to anything in the independent historical record.

The first of Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī’s interpolated *pandnāmas* is assigned to Niẓām al-Mulk.⁵⁰ The Saljuqs, who ruled after the period covered by the *Shāhnāma*, do not figure in Firdausī’s work, but instead find their place in the *Zafarnāma*. Mustaufī’s account, as in the *Tārīkh-i guzīda* and all other narrative histories of the Saljuqs, stems ultimately from the single contemporary dynastic history, the *Saljuqnāma* of Ẓahīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī (d. 1187).⁵¹ Because the contemporary source base for the Saljuqs is so limited, the various renditions of it from later centuries demonstrate only minor variations. Mustaufī’s account stands out, then, for including this *pandnāma* in the voice of Niẓām al-Mulk not found in any other renditions of Nīshāpūrī’s history.

The *pandnāma* of Niẓām al-Mulk is not only unprecedented among histories of the Saljuqs, its format also stands out among works of advice literature. At its root, it is a series of disconnected exhortations, a third type of advice discourse found, among other places, in

⁴⁹ In a moment of poetic justice against Blochet’s dismissal of the *Zafarnāma*, it is only the work’s poetic form that has preserved the exact location of Rashīd al-Dīn’s execution. Ḥamd Allah Mustaufī reports the name of the place first in the *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, but later copyists have corrupted it variously as خشکدره (*khushkdarri*, “dry valley”), حسکدریه (*ḥasakdarya*, “milk thistle river”), and جکدو (*jakdau*, possibly “running foal”).⁴⁹ In the *Zafarnāma*, the place name falls at the end of a hemistich verse, preserving its original form by virtue of rhyme: تبه شد بزاری پسر و پدر / بنزدیک ابهر بر حسکدر [Near Abhār, at Ḥasakdar/ father and son were divided], *Zafarnāma*, 1452. Mustaufī’s use of the vague تبه شد, meaning “to be divided or separated” may also help explain why Hāfiẓ-i Abrū reports that Rashīd al-Dīn was cut in half, a relatively mild report than the full dismemberment reported by Shabānkārāī and Ibn Suqāī.

⁵⁰ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 662-77.

⁵¹ The close reliance of later witnesses to Saljuq history has made possible a reconstruction of Nīshāpūrī’s work based on a single corrupt manuscript with reference to the various later derivative works: Ẓahīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī, *Saljuqnāma*, ed. A.H. Morton (Chippenham: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2004).

three works of wisdom literature preserved in a late-Ilkhanid miscellany assembled by a certain Abū'l-Majd.⁵² However, rather than simply delivering these in his own voice, Nizām al-Mulk attributes his exhortations to a parade of historical figures. Beginning with Adam, Nizām al-Mulk reports the wise sayings of pre-Islamic prophets and then of members of Muḥammad's family, including 'Umar, 'Uthman, 'Alī, and Āisha. After this, he turns to the sayings of members of the pre-Islamic Iranian dynasties, from Hushang through the end of the Sasanian line, followed by pre-Islamic Arabic political leaders and Greek philosophers, and finishing with several caliphs and Shīite political figures.⁵³

Occasionally, these utterances relate to characteristics or episodes associated with the figures who utter them, such as when Elias (*Khidr*) refers to learning as the true water of life.⁵⁴ On the whole, however, the pairing of historical figure and wise saying seems on initial inspection to be arbitrary. The presence and ordering of figures from the Iranian and Islamic historical traditions, however, makes the *pandnāma* of Nizām al-Mulk match the format of the *Tārīkh-i guzīda*, beginning with prophets and sages and progressing through the kings of the great dynasties of Middle Eastern history. Here, Nizām al-Mulk himself relates the order (*naẓm*) of the past as articulated by Bayḍāwī and Mustaufī. In this way, the Saljuq vizier becomes like Buzurgmihr in his delivery of a *pandnāma*, but like Rashīd al-Dīn in creating a survey history of the Perso-Islamic tradition.

⁵² Gabrielle van den Berg, "Wisdom literature in the *Safīna-yi Tabrīz*: notes on the *pandnāma-yi Anshirvān*," in *The treasury of Tabriz: the great Il-khanid compendium*, ed. A.A. Seyed-Gohrab and S. McGlinn (Amsterdam: Rozenberg, 2007), 171-82.

⁵³ A similar sort of didactic passage is found in the *Shāhnāma-yi chingīzī* of Shams al-Dīn Qāshānī: Melville 2007, 60-61.

⁵⁴ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 664.17-9.

Perhaps the most extensive literary innovation of Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī is the *pandnāma* that he puts in the voice of his own patron, Rashīd al-Dīn.⁵⁵ This *pandnāma* evokes the seven weekly *majālis* of Buzurgmihr in the *Shāhnāma*: Rashīd al-Dīn appears before Sulṭān Ghazan and, over the course of twelve months, delivers twelve homilies on the virtues of a good ruler. Unlike the *pandnāma* or *Piruzinamak* of Buzurgmihr, however, this advice is unsolicited. Also, it takes the nested form of exhortation, anecdote, and moral dictate seen in the *Siyar al-mulūk* of Niẓām al-Mulk and in the framing of episodes in the *Ẓafarnāma* narrative. In this way, Mustaufī uses both Buzurgmihr and Niẓām al-Mulk as historical and literary models for his portrayal of Rashīd al-Dīn.

Rashīd al-Dīn in the *Ẓafarnāma* is drawn into the symbolic orbit of Buzurgmihr already by the very presence of his *pandnāma*, a genre particularly associated with the iconic Sasanian vizier. Beyond this, the location of Rashīd al-Dīn's *pandnāma* within the manuscript helps to strengthen the association of Mustaufī's patron with the archetypal Sasanian vizier. In manuscript Or. 2833, the pages immediately preceding and following the *pandnāma* of Rashīd al-Dīn include two episodes in the *Shāhnāma* that demonstrate Buzurgmihr's wisdom. The first of these is his *pandnāma* of seven *majālis* described above. Following Rashīd al-Dīn's *pandnāma* in the *Ẓafarnāma*, the *Shāhnāma* text in the margin turns to the story of how Buzurgmihr deciphered the Indian game of chess and invented backgammon.⁵⁶ Like Buzurgmihr's *Piruzinamak*, this story originates in Middle Persian literature and holds the related function of demonstrating the wisdom of Anushirvan's vizier in the face of other advisors' failure. In the Middle Persian text, Buzurgmihr explains backgammon as a microcosm of cosmic Mazdaean

⁵⁵ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1369-86.

⁵⁶ For text and commentary on the *Vičārišn ī čātrang u nihišn ī nēv-artaxšēr*, see C.J. Brunner, "The Middle Persian explanation of chess and invention of backgammon," *The Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 10 (1978): 45-53; Manijeh Abka'i-Khavari, "Schach im Iran," *Iranica Antiqua* 35.4 (2002): 329-359. For further bibliography, see Yavari, 51 n. 12.

order, in which light and dark battle one another and each number of the die has a particular cosmological significance.

Between the *pandnāma* of Rashid al-Din and the two demonstrations of Buzurgmihr's wisdom, more than sixty contiguous pages of manuscript Or. 2833 extol the wisdom of royal viziers. Internal aspects of the text further cement the association between Rashīd al-Dīn and Buzurgmihr. With its twelve *majālis* delivered over the course of twelve months and including lengthy descriptions of the passage of astronomical time, Rashīd al-Dīn's *pandnāma* gives the same sense of cosmic rectitude in Rashid al-Din's wisdom that the invention of backgammon and the seven weekly *majālis* do for Buzurgmihr. Similarly, throughout the *pandnāma* of Rashid al-Din, Mustaufi refers to the speaker as vizier and chief priest (*sar-i mubadān*), both designations used of Buzurgmihr in the *Shāhnāma*.

By extension of the analogy between Rashīd al-Dīn and Buzurgmihr, the two viziers' patrons are drawn into comparison with one another. Ghazan's conversion and administrative reforms appear in the manuscript alongside Khusrau's purging of the Mazdakite heresy and enlightened rule. That this sort of analogistic connection between Anushirvan and Ghazan was present in late Ilkhanid historiography is attested by 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī, who explains in his *History of Öljeitü* that different Ilkhans were associated with different characteristics: Hülegü with conquest and scholarship, Abaqa with agriculture and building, and so forth.⁵⁷ In this scheme, "the time of Ghazan the Just Khan was characterized by ingenuity and governance and justice and equity and devotion." The prominence of justice, political reform, and religious devotion marks Ghazan's reign as renewal of the characteristics most prominently displayed by Anushirvan. Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufi makes this comparison explicitly

⁵⁷ Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 106-07.

in his introduction to the reign of Ghazan Khan by comparing Ghazan's qualities to those of Anushirvan.⁵⁸ By drawing Rashīd al-Dīn and Buzurgmihr and their respective *pandnāmas* together thematically and physically, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī strengthens this association, so that the court of Ghazan, and particularly the figure of his vizier, Rashīd al-Dīn, assumes the legendary luster of the court of Khusrou Anushirvan.

In his analysis of the Great Mongol *Shāhnāma* illustrations, Abolala Soudavar correlates only one of five images of Khusrau Anushirvan to an event from the reign of Ghazan Khan. This is Khusrou I's enthronement scene, the header of which names Anushirvan "the just", an appellation that Qāshānī consistently uses for Ghazan Khan.⁵⁹ An argument could be made for reading the other images of Khusrau I from the Great Mongol *Shāhnāma* as glosses on the reign of Ghazan rather than Öljeitu and Arghun as Soudavar does, but it is not my goal to revisit this analysis. The preponderance of the associations that build up around Anushirvan and Ghazan and their respective viziers in the writings of Rashīd al-Dīn, Mustaufī, and Qāshānī, strongly suggests that Anushirvan had, by the end of the Ilkhanate, become a common historical metaphor for Ghazan Khan. Both kings had advanced programs of religious and administrative reform, defeated uprisings from among the ranks of their military establishment, and reached out to China in the face of nomadic threats from Inner Asia.

The analogy between Rashīd al-Dīn and Nizām al-Mulk in the *Zafarnāma* is not limited to the fact that each vizier speaks a *pandnāma*. As evident from the foregoing, these *pandāmas* serve to portray Nizām al-Mulk as a universal historian and Rashīd al-Dīn as a vizier. The historical record of Nizām al-Mulk's life gives Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī ample material on which to base a comparison to Rashīd al-Dīn. Each was a scholar and statesman who served and advised

⁵⁸ Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī 1999, 1351.

⁵⁹ Soudavar 1996 "Saga," 126-7.

the most enlightened members of a nomadic dynasty ruling over the Middle East. Each directed a major program of administrative reform on behalf of his ruler, yet fell out of favor and died in disgrace. Each was succeeded as vizier by his son, who was also ultimately executed. By drawing his patron into the orbit of Niẓām al-Mulk and Buzurgmihr, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī effects perhaps his most enduring influence on Persianate historiography: he establishes a vision of Rashīd al-Dīn as the unimpeachable man of state and wise vizier and author of the crucial base text for the understanding of Ilkhanid history. This image, which ignores Rashīd al-Dīn’s own involvement in the partisan and cutthroat practices of the Ilkhanid court and the contemporary ideological nature of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, gives the doctor from Hamadan an image “like the face of the sun” that has survived for seven centuries.

Conclusion

David Morgan has called Rashīd al-Dīn, “perhaps the most remarkable public figure to have been thrown up by the Mongol regime in Persia.”¹ This assessment rings as true now as it did a generation ago. Other central tenants of the fields of Mongol history and Ilkhanid studies, many of them expressed by Morgan just as elegantly, require in the light of this dissertation to be reevaluated.

First among these is the idea of Rashīd al-Dīn as the author of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*, or even as the lead author among a staff of “research assistants.” Rashīd al-Dīn acknowledges early in his text the important roles that Bolad Chinsang and Ghazan Khan played in reporting early Mongol history, as well as the practice of seeking out experts from across Eurasia to help write the universal history of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*. Modern scholars have come to a somewhat grudging acceptance that ‘Abd Allāh Qāshānī was closely involved in creating the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh*. As this dissertation has shown, not only was Qāshānī largely responsible for writing that work’s second volume, but other identifiable figures played important roles in giving shape to the Rashīd al-Dīn’s historical compendium. Shihab al-Dīn Vaṣṣāf, long recognized as one of Rashīd al-Dīn’s clients, produced the first three volumes of his history before Rashīd al-Dīn was even commissioned to write the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. When it came time for Rashīd al-Dīn to write, he borrowed certain structural elements from Vaṣṣāf’s original three-volume history, such as the use of parallel histories and the decision to end with a section dedicated to Ghazan’s building and reform works.

Rashīd al-Dīn also took cues from Vaṣṣāf in such matters as recalling the pre-Mongol association of Darband as a barrier protecting the Islamic world from the infidels of the north

¹ David Morgan, *The Mongols*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 17.

and, most remarkably, inserting spaces within his work where later information and accounts might be inserted. This characteristic of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* left the door open for others – among whom we can identify at least Rashīd Khwāfī – to continually refresh the work. Khwāfī in turn shows us that the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* was beginning to come apart at the seams already in its author’s lifetime, as he took it on himself to correct Rashīd al-Dīn’s strange initial organization of the work’s second volume. Meanwhile, the enigmatic “P” recension reveals that someone, perhaps Rashīd al-Dīn himself, found it opportune to present a version of Ghazan’s young life in a way that rings of Turkic oral epic and glorifies the disgraced Naurūz.

Other historians influenced the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* in less immediate ways. Rashīd al-Dīn did not have to look far into the past for much of his material: Juvaynī and Bayḍāwī’s voices emerge almost verbatim in large sections of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* and Rashīd al-Dīn’s own ownership stamp betrays his use of the *Akhbar-i mughūlān*. Once written, the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* itself became a source for later renditions of history, most remarkably in the didactic verse epics of the fourteenth century. In a sense, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī completes with the *Ẓafarnāma* what Rashīd Khwāfī began by releasing the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* from the demands of immediate political expedience surrounding its creation and recasting it fully within a Perso-Islamic cultural idiom. If the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* takes great liberty with Turko-Mongol and Perso-Islamic history to explain the Mongols as sovereigns of the Middle East, the *Ẓafarnāma* perfects that feat by assuming that there is no conflict in inserting Ghazan and Öljeitü, like Alexander, into the course of Iranian heroic history.

In tracing the influences and impulses behind Ilkhanid history and historiography, this dissertation has on several occasions demonstrated the often overlooked significance of geography. The cultural upbringing, personal loyalties, and political and religious orientations

that individuals assume are to at least some degree determined by their setting in space. Any study of the Mongol period, which saw unprecedented relocation of individuals and populations, must account for this. This dissertation has shown the significance of geography on several levels. The emergence of the Ilkhanate as a sovereign Toluid state, and not just one more peripheral sedentary region overseen by the Jochid Golden Horde, was due not just to the feud between Möngke and Batu, but also to the shifting loyalties of local actors. Once the Ilkhanid dynasty had established a political center on the pastures of Azerbaijan, the first attempts to integrate it into Iranian Islamic society came not from that region, but from the administrators who had relocated from Khurāsān along the route of conquest. Twice more the course of Ilkhanid governance would be set in the Iranian east, first when Ghazan built a shadow administration in opposition to the Ilkhans who had succeeded his father and again when Öljeitü applied a form of Islam learned from the Sufi cult centers of Khurāsān to his religio-political ideology. Rashīd al-Dīn himself, like so many others from the cities of northern Iran, benefitted from the unforeseen relocation of political activity from Baghdad to Maragha.

One of the most remarkable things about the study of Rashīd al-Dīn's historical writing is that, unlike other great medieval Persian historians such as Bayhaqī, his life is well attested in sources that he himself did not write. In fact, if the *Jāmi' al-tawārikh* were the only source to have survived the Ilkhanid period, we would know little about Rashīd al-Dīn at all. The study of his life and legacy, therefore, entails all the benefits and pitfalls of having multiple perspectives on a topic. While the general contours of Rashīd al-Dīn's life emerge fairly quickly from the sources, intractable inconsistencies soon emerge. One of the major theses of this dissertation has been the idea that these inconsistencies are best left unresolved. Rather

than insisting on a cohesive biographical narrative, we can use the sources on Rashīd al-Dīn as an allegory for historical processes both during the Ilkhanid period and in modern scholarship. On the one hand, Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī's "perfected" version of the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* also gives us the "perfect" image of Rashīd al-Dīn. On the other hand, the conflicts that embroiled the Ilkhanid court helped create two nuanced images of Rashīd al-Dīn as the greatest asset and greatest enemy to the state. Similarly, the few pieces of autobiography that Rashīd al-Dīn does give us become particularly intriguing. As they come primarily in his theological works, these morsels of information are best taken as part of Rashīd al-Dīn's project of clearing space within the contours of contemporary politics and culture for his patrons and their government apparatus, at the head of which sat Rashīd al-Dīn himself.

Even while revealing the self-supporting patterns of historiography on Rashīd al-Dīn, this dissertation opens new avenues for discussion on the man, his work, and his time. By seeing past the highly streamlined image of Rashīd al-Dīn as the great historian and vizier foremost and only secondarily as the convert, theologian, doctor, etc., we clear space for ourselves to treat his works somewhat more productively, if irreverently. Strong strata of literature and theology run through his historical writing, while in his theology we can trace a distinct historical development towards the saint-king complex of royal ideology that prevailed in the Persianate world in later centuries. Also, we can see that, while Rashīd al-Dīn's attempts to compile his works in a grand collection were probably not as successful as is often assumed by the survival of his own ambitious proposal for it, there exists rich ground for further study of his works across genres in relation to those of other writers. For example, a comparison between the question and answer portions of the fourteenth century verse chronicles and the discursive treatises of Rashīd al-Dīn's theological works will, once

completed, provide a much richer view of Rashīd al-Dīn's legacy not just as a historian but as a cultural and historical figure. Hopefully this dissertation has laid some of the groundwork for such studies by putting Rashīd al-Dīn's works in different genres in conversation with one another and with the works of other authors.

Appendix A. The works of Rashīd al-Dīn

The following is a series of notes concerning Rashīd al-Dīn's works intended to relieve the main chapters of some amount of technical detail. They are not coordinated with one another except in how they relate to Rashīd al-Dīn's own description of his *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf* (Collected works). This description is represented in tabular form in Figure 6 on the following page.

Rashīd al-Dīn's *vaqfnāma* for his *Rab'-'i rashīdī* has been discussed in Chapter Seven; the semi-spurious letters of the *Sawānīḥ al-afkār* are discussed in the Introduction.

i. Dating the early theological works (1a-1c)

Rashīd al-Dīn states that Öljeitü commissioned a Qur'ān commentary from him only after he had presented the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*, an event which Qāshānī dates to 14 April 1307.¹ However, the fact that several of the endorsements (*taqrīzāt*, sing. *taqrīz*) to the *Tauḍīḥāt* date to AH 706, which ended on 2 July 1307, makes it difficult to believe that Rashīd al-Dīn only began writing the work that April. On the other hand, we also know from Qāshānī that Tāj al-Dīn Mu'minī, who encouraged Rashīd al-Dīn to pursue theology, died probably in the fall of 1307. For both these reasons, the process of gathering *taqrīzāt* likely began before Rashīd al-Dīn received his formal commission for a commentary.² Given that Rashīd al-Dīn's account of collecting the *taqrīzāt* is imbedded in the middle of the *Tauḍīḥāt* and mentions the completion of the *Miftāḥ* and *Sulṭānīya*, it is evident that Rashīd al-Dīn's "earliest" theological work, the *Tauḍīḥāt*, did not take its current form until sometime after the composition of the *Sulṭānīya* and that the three earliest works evolved in their form and content over the course of the years 1306 and 1307.

¹ Josef van Ess, *Der Wesir und seine Gelehrten: zu Inhalt und Entstehungsgeschichte der theologischen Schriften des Rašīduddīn Faḡlullāh* (gest. 718/1318) (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1981), 13; Abū'l-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Ūljaytū*, ed. Mahīn Hambly (Tehran: Bangāh-i Tarjumā va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1969), 54.

² Qāshānī, ed. Hambly, 74-75.

Division One on theological and natural philosophy, composed of two parts

Part One: Four books comprising the *Majmūʿa al-rashīdiyya*

- a. *Kitāb al-tauḍīḥāt* (*Book of clarifications*), of an introduction and nineteen treatises
- b. *Miftāḥ al-tafāsīr* (*Key to commentaries*), of eight treatises in two parts
- c. *Kitāb al-Sultāniyya* (*Book of the Sultān*), of a main text and its continuation
- d. *Latāʾif al-ḥaqāʾiq* (*Subtle truths*), of an introduction and fourteen treatises

Part Two: Two books not in the *Majmūʿa*

- e. *Bayān al-haqāʾiq* (*Account of truths*), of seventeen treatises
- f. *Āsār wa aḥyāʾ* (*Works and living things*), of twenty-four chapters

Division Two on history, narratives, and geography, composed of two parts

Part One: the *Jāmiʿ al-tawārikh* in four volumes

- a. *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* (*The blessed history of Ghazan*).
- b. *Tārīkh-i ʿālam* (*Universal history*)
- c. *Shuʿab-i anbiyā va mulūk va khulafā* (*Genealogies of prophets and kings and caliphs*)
- d. *Šuvar al-aqālim* (*Depiction of the regions*)

Part Two: Translations from Chinese

- e. *Ṭibb-i ahl-i khitāi az ʿilmīyāt wa ʿamliyyāt* (*Scientific and folk medicine of the Chinese*)
- f. *Adviyat-i mufradat-i khitāi* (*Simple Chinese medicines*)
- g. *Adviyat-i mufradat-i mughūlī* (*Simple Mongol medicines*)
- h. *Dar bāb-i siyāsāt-i khitāi va tadbīr-i mulk-i khitāiyān* (*On Chinese government and the management of the Chinese state*)

Figure 6: Rashīd al-Dīn's collected works, the *Jāmiʿ al-taṣanīf al-rashīdī*

as described in Istanbul Aya Sofya ms. 3833, fol. 44a-76b and Paris Bibliothèque Nationale ms. arabe 2324, fol. 284b-288a.

Further evidence for the evolving shape of these early works is found in the earliest extant Arabic copy of them, a manuscript completed in 710 (beg. 31 May 1310) containing them and the *Latāʾif al-ḥaqāʾiq*.³ The first treatises of the *Tauḍīḥāt* copied into this manuscript, as well as the entire *Miftāḥ*, are dated to AH 707/1307-08. However, much of the intervening sections of the *Tauḍīḥāt*, including the passage in which Rashīd al-Dīn describes his early theological writings and the accusations brought against him as an insincere convert, are dated to AH 710/1310-11.⁴ Also, the *Miftāḥ* and *Sulṭānīya* found in this manuscript each end with an appendix elaborating on one of the treatises of the *Miftāḥ* dealing with the question of metempsychosis. By contrast, a now lost Persian copy of the same collection of four works completed in May 1309 includes the appendix at the end of the *Sulṭānīya*, but not at the end of the *Miftāḥ*, and the treatise on transubstantiation within the *Miftāḥ* is given a different title.⁵ This suggests that the *Miftāḥ* was completed and included in the Persian manuscript in its original form along with the *Sulṭānīya*, only after which Rashīd al-Dīn penned the appendix on transubstantiation. When creating the Arabic copy, the scribe was able to include the appendix with the *Miftāḥ*, for which it was originally intended, as well as any changes to the treatise on metempsychosis, including its revised title, all by the end of 707 (June 1308).

ii. The publication history of the later theological works (1d, 1e, and the *Asʾila*)

Of Rashīd al-Dīn's theological works, only the *Latāʾif* has been published in a form consistent with the autobiobibliography.⁶ The *Bayān al-ḥaqāʾiq* and *Asʾila va ajviba* share a more complicated publishing history. Josef van Ess presents the contents of the *Bayān al-ḥaqāʾiq*

³ Paris Bibliothèque Nationale ms. arabe 2324, discussed alongside other manuscripts by Dorothea Krawulsky, *The Mongol Ilkhāns and their vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 77-84.

⁴ van Ess 1981, 14-15.

⁵ Mahdī Bayānī, "Rasaʾil-i Farsī-yi Rashīd al-Dīn Faḏl Allāh," *Mehr* 8 (1952) 549-52.

⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Latāʾif al-ḥaqāʾiq*, ed. Ghulāmriżā Ṭāhir (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tihārān, 1974); *idem*, *Bayān al-ḥaqāʾiq*, ed. Hāshim Rajabzāda (Tehran: Mīrās Maktūb, 2008).

according to the single manuscript available to him, an Arabic copy in Istanbul dated to 31 July 1311.⁷ Van Ess lists nineteen treatises in this witness to the text, without commenting on the fact that Rashīd al-Dīn's autobiobibliography lists only seventeen.

In 2008, Hāshim Rajabzāda published an edition of the *Bayān* based on a fourteenth-century Persian manuscript of the text in Tehran.⁸ This manuscript contains several lacunae, though the surviving portion of the list of contents at its beginning lists twenty treatises, several of which are missing from the manuscript. Comparing this list of contents to that given by van Ess, it is apparent that van Ess has counted Jamāl al-Dīn 'Allāma al-Hillī's discourse on color, which appears at the end of the seventh treatise in the Persian manuscript, as a distinct treatise.⁹ In addition to a treatise on the nature of the self which van Ess includes in his contents but which does not appear in the autobiobibliography, the list of contents in the Persian manuscript also contains a treatise on medicine and one giving guidance for his sons, though none of these treatises have survived in the Persian manuscript.

In preparing his edition, Rajabzāda drew on the Arabic copy consulted by van Ess to fill certain lacunae in the text.¹⁰ For the treatise on colors, which includes lengthy quotes from the works of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī and Ghazālī, Rajabzāda imported edited texts of those works, so that his edition does not preserve any innovations or alterations that Rashīd al-Dīn might have introduced into them. This limits the usefulness of Rajabzāda's edition for a study of Rashīd al-Dīn's appropriation of the philosophical tradition.

A second area of confusion in this regard is the relationship between the *Bayān* and the *As'ila*, a further collection of theological and scientific discourses. Discussing the latter work,

⁷ Istanbul Kılıç Ali Paşa ms. 834, described by van Ess 1981, 39-42.

⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Bayān al-ḥaqā'iq*, ed. Hāshim Rajabzāda (Tehran: Mīrās Maktūb, 2008).

⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, 266-73.

¹⁰ See Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Rajabzāda, xxiii-xxxiv for a description of how the edition was assembled.

van Ess collates the contents of five manuscripts, two in Arabic and three in Persian.¹¹ He does not describe the contents using the titles of the various treatises, but rather by listing the names of those who posed questions to Rashīd al-Dīn, turning his description of the work into a prosopographical list to supplement those of the *taqrīzāt* found in earlier works.¹² Van Ess notes that the oldest manuscript, an Arabic copy dated 14 June 1315, omits the last question found in other copies and instead includes a series of twelve further treatises that duplicate material found in the *Bayān* and that van Ess finds out of character with the rest of the work.¹³

A later edition of a fragmentary Persian copy of the *As'ila* in Islamabad and not used by van Ess contains the last several items of van Ess's list of contents, as well as most of the "uncharacteristic" treatises found in the Arabic copy from 1315 and a few further treatises of the same type.¹⁴ The close (though not exact) correspondence of the contents of the earliest Arabic copy of the *As'ila* and the undated Persian copy in Islamabad suggest that certain of the treatises that Rashīd al-Dīn lists in his autobiobibliography as part of the *Bayān* were, at least at one point, also considered part of the *As'ila*. Since Rashīd al-Dīn did not list the latter work in his autobiobibliography, we might consider it a working portfolio of treatises, some on which were then included in the *Bayān*. The shorter versions of the *As'ila*, containing only those items that van Ess includes in his main list of contents for the work, probably represents a later, abbreviated version of the remnant text after the *Bayān* had been produced. One

¹¹ van Ess 1981, 43-54.

¹² Felix Klein-Franke takes a similar approach, ignoring the structure of the *As'ila* and Rashīd al-Dīn's answers to the questions and instead focusing on the identity of his interrogators to demonstrate the respect in which he was held: "The relationship between knowledge and belief in Islam. Annotations to Rashīd ad-Dīn's 'Book of questions and answers'," *Le Muséon* 113.1-2 (2000): 205-19.

¹³ van Ess 1981, 53-54.

¹⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *As'ila va ajviba-yi rashīdī*, ed. Rīza Sha'bānī (Islamabad: Markaz-i Taḥaqqīqāt-i Fārsī-yi Īrān va Pākistān, 1993).

manuscript of Rashīd al-Dīn's *vaqfnāma* appendix includes the *As'ila* among his works, as does Vaṣṣāf in his discription of the *Jāmi' al-taṣānīf*.¹⁵

The significant overlap between the contents of the Islamabad *As'ila* and Rashīd al-Dīn's autobiobibliography description of the *Bayān* has led Rajabzāda to interpolate significant portions of text from the former into lacunae of the latter in preparing his edited text. This further marks his edition as a rather artificial reconstruction. Based on Rajabzāda's description, very little of the edition actually represents material from the Tehran manuscript of the *Bayān*.

Besides the full-volume editions described above, individual treatises from Rashīd al-Dīn's theological works have been edited and translated.¹⁶

iii. The *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* (2a-2d)

Rashīd al-Dīn's historical writings have, of course, received the greatest share of scholarly attention, and among these, the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* (2a) is the single most studied entry from Rashīd al-Dīn's autobiobibliography. Most of the universal history (2b) has been edited and translated into European languages.¹⁷ The portions on pre-Islamic and caliphal history, as well as the history of the Salghurids, are still awaiting attention. Item 2c, the *Shu'ab-i anbiyā va*

¹⁵ *Vaqfnāma* ed., 237 n. 1.

¹⁶ Henri Massé, "Un essai de Rachid-od-din Fadl-ollah sur les discours énigmatiques et la promptitude de rédaction," *Archiv Orientalní* 18.4 (1950): 1-6; *idem*, "L'épître de Rachid od-Din Fazl-Ollah sur la résurrection," in *Mélanges Louis Massignon. Vol. 3* (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1957), 151-59; *idem*, "L'épître de Rachīd-od-Dīn Fazl-Ollāh sur les nombres (Risālat ol-'adad)," in *Études d'Orientalisme dédiées à la mémoire de Lévi-Provençal. Vol. 2* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1962), 649-60; Felix Klein-Franke, "Rashīd ad-Dīn's self-defence through his commenting on al-Ghazzālī's 'Reply to the opponents of the "Proof of Islam".' A philosophical interpretation of the Koranic expression 'al-amāna'," *Le Muséon* 115.1-2 (2002): 197-214; *idem*, "Rashīd al-Dīn's treatise 'On free will and predestination.' An attempt to overcome inner-Islamic differences," *Le Muséon* 117.3-4 (2004): 527-45; Felix Klein-Franke and Zhu Ming, "The book of heat from Rashīd al-Dīn's *Kitāb bayān al-ḥaqā'iq*, ms. Kılıç Ali Pasha 834, fol. 208b-241b: Chinese medicine from a source in 14th century Persia," *American Journal of Chinese Medicine* 31.6 (2003): 977-82.

¹⁷ See bibliography entries for Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Ateş, Dabīr Siyāqī, Dānishpazhūh and Mudarrisī, Jahn, Togan, and Raushan; *idem*, tr. Klaproth, Jahn, Togan, Shukyurova, and Luther.

mulūk va khulafā (*Genealogies of prophets and kings and caliphs*) is almost certainly to be identified with the *Shu‘ab-i panjgāna* (*Five genealogies*), extant in a single manuscript copy.¹⁸ This work traces the lineages of the Arabs, Jews, Mongols, Popes and Emperors of Europe, and Chinese Emperors, essentially presenting the world history of the *Jāmi‘ al-tawārīkh* in tabular form. The gazetteer (2d) has not survived.

Figure 7 outlines the modern publication history of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*. Full bibliographical information for the editions and translations listed here can be found in the bibliography. I have divided the text into six sections, to give an indication of the relative attention that different portions of the text have received at different times. These sections are defined as:

1. The tribal history of Turks and Mongols
2. The life and reign of Genghis Khan
3. The successors of Genghis Khan at Qaraqorum and in China
4. Hülegü Khan
5. Ilkhans from Abaqa to Geikhatü
6. Ghazan Khan

As is evident from Figure 7, interest in the text of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī* has been concentrated at certain times and in certain places: Imperial Russian centers in the nineteenth century, London in the early twentieth century, the Soviet Union in the mid twentieth century, and more recently in Iran itself. Unsurprisingly, the scholarship surrounding the text closely follows its publication history.

¹⁸ Istanbul Topkapı Saray Müzesi Kütüphanesi ms. Ahmet III, discussed by Ilker Evrim Binbaş, “Structure and function of the genealogical tree in Islamic historiography,” in *Horizons of the world: festschrift for İsenbike Togan*, ed. İlker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kılıç-Schubel (İstanbul: İthaki, 2011), 489-94.

Edition	Published	1	2	3	4	5	6
Quatremère 1836	Paris				P		
Erdmann 1841*	Kazan	P					
Berezin 1854*	Kazan		T ¹⁹				
Quatremère /Berezin 1858*	St. Petersburg	P/R	P/R				
Bloch 1911	London			P			
Jahn 1940	London						P/G
Jahn 1941	Prague					P	
Arends 1946	St. Petersburg				R	R	R
Khetagurov 1952	St. Petersburg	R					
Smirnova 1952	St. Petersburg		R				
Jahanbiglu 1957*	Isfahan						P
Alizada/Arends 1957	Baku				P/R	P/R	P/R
Verkhovskiy 1960	St. Petersburg			R			
Romaskevitch <i>et al.</i> 1965	Moscow	P					P ²⁰
Boyle 1971	New York			E			
Alizada 1980*	Moscow			P ²¹			
Karīmī 1988 ²²	Tehran	P	P	P	P	P	P
Thackston 1998	Cambridge, MA	E	E	E	E	E	E
Raushan and Mūsavī 1994	Tehran	P	P	P	P	P	P

Figure 7: Publication history of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*

Edited Persian text indicated with “P”. Translations indicated by “R” (Russian), “G” (German), “T” (Chaghatay Turkish), “E” (English). Entries marked with an asterisk (*) have not been consulted for this dissertation.

iv. The miscellaneous works (1f, 2e-2h)

The other works mentioned in Rashīd al-Dīn’s autobiobibliography, namely the *Āsār va aḥyā’* and the translations from Chinese, survive in only highly abbreviated forms. For the *Āsār va aḥyā’* (also called the *Āsār va akhbār*), Rashīd al-Dīn describes twenty-four chapters dealing with agricultural topics from the seasons and soil to irrigation practices, the cultivation of various

¹⁹ Chaghatay Turkish translation prepared by an anonymous writer, completed in 1641 and edited by Berezin. This translation is highly selective of the early career of Genghis Khan and the genealogies of his sons, in particular that of Jochi, which is updated to 1641. A similarly selective approach is seen in an Ottoman translation from ca. 1425, which includes only the introduction and the history of the Oghuz Turks (Istanbul Topkapı Saray ms. R. 1390; Thackston 1998 x, 779).

²⁰ Reprint of Alizada/Arends 1957.

²¹ According to Thackston, includes Ögedei only.

²² Karīmī did not prepare his edition directly from manuscript, but assembled it from Quatremère 1836, Berezin 1858-88, Blochet 1911, Jahn 1940, and Jahn 1957, with some additional reference to the work of Hafiz-i Abru. See Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi’ al-tawārīkh*, ed. Bahman Karīmī (Tehran: Iqbal, 1988), v.

kinds of plants and animals, and the management of buildings and bridges, with the final two chapters dedicated to matters of mining and minerology.²³ Of this, only a hastily prepared summary survives, so that important parts of the work have been lost entirely and others treated only briefly.²⁴ Another manuscript in the Aya Sofya collection preserves a Persian rendition of a Chinese medical work, the *Mai Jue* (*Pulse poem*) of the sixth or seventh century scholar Gao Yang-Sheng that may be the first of four translated Chinese works that Rashīd al-Dīn lists in his autobiobibliography.²⁵

²³ Rashīd al-Dīn, ed. Ṭāhir, ii.11-13; *idem*, ed. Quatremère, clvi-clviii.

²⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Asār va aḥyāʾ: matn-i fārsī dar bāra-yi fann-i kishāvarzī*, ed. Īrāj Afshār and Manuchehr Sutūda (Tehran: McGill University Press, 1989); Rajabzāda 1998); A.K.S. Lambton, “The *Āthār wa aḥyāʾ* of Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Hamadānī and his contribution as an agronomist, arboriculturalist, and horticulturalist,” in *The Mongol Empire and its legacy*, ed. Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 126-54.

²⁵ Istanbul Aya Sofya ms. 3596 has been published in facsimile: Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Tanksūqnāma, yā ṭibb-i ahl-i Khitā*, ed. Mujtaba Mīnuvī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishkada-i Adabīyāt va ‘Ulūm-i Insānī, 1971). See also Mujtaba Mīnuvī, “Tanksūqnāma-yi Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh,” in *Majmū‘a-i khiṭāba-ha-i taḥqīqī dar bara-i Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Hamadānī*, ed. Sayyid Husayn Nasr *et al.* (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tihrān, 1971), 307-17. Its introduction has been translated into Turkish and published with a facsimile of several diagrams from the manuscript: Abdūlbâki Gölpınarlı and Ahmet Suheyl Ünver, *Tanksuknamei ilhan der fūnunu ulūmu Hatai mukaddimesi* (Istanbul: Milli Mecmua Basımevi, 1939), though the accompanying essay misidentifies the source of the work. For a discussion of the manuscript and its source, see Felix Klein-Franke and Zhu Ming, “Rashīd ad-Dīn as a transmitter of Chinese medicine to the West,” *Le Muséon* 109.3-4 (1996): 395-404; *idem*, “Rashid ad-Din and the Tansuqnamah: the earliest translation of Chinese medical literature in the West,” *Le Muséon* 111.3-4 (1998): 427-45.

Appendix B. The conversion of Ghazan Khan

Translated from the “P” recension of the *Tārīkh-i mubārak-i ghāzānī*.¹

How fortunate, the blessed countenance consulted with the *amīrs* and agreed that the expedience of warding off the enemy and suppressing the violence of foes should be pursued by whatever means so that the enemy might be brought to destruction and trampled into obscurity. Each *amīr* contributed to the assembly, bringing the capacity of his office and ability. Inasmuch as Amīr Nauruz had presented a gift² beforehand, he kneeled and declared to the World-Protecting King the following:

“Oh you, fundamentally fortunate king,
Your justice brings spring in January.
May you always remain fortunate in this world;
May the world be your slave, just as I am.

From those learned in Islam and those endowed with astrological prognostication and the keepers of the calendar, it is recorded and affirmed that in 690 (beg. 4 Jan. 1291) a great king would give strength to the Islamic faith, and Islam, which has been worn out, would become powerful again. His reign will be like a ewe protected from the force of the wolf and like a gazelle from the oppression of the hound because of the infusion of his justice; like a defenseless finch from the hardness of the royal falcon and like a partridge from the raptor’s glory and awe from the infusion of his equity. And may the crown and throne of the kingship be secure in his house for many years.

“Time and again it has come to the mind of this servant that [this prophesied king] might be Ghazan Khan, that the mark of this quality and the signs of this nature are strewn

¹ Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh*. Vol. 3, ed. Abdülkerim Ali Oğlu Alizada (Baku: Azarbayjan SSR Elmler Akademiyasy Neshriyyaty, 1957), 604-07.

² *bilak*, also possibly “counsel”, but here probably referring to the ruby which the main text, also using the Turko-Mongol term *belag/bilak*, says Nauruz presented to Ghazan during a previous audience: Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb, *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh*, ed. Raushan and Mūsavī, 1254.

manifest from the image of good character and the breadth of good works on the revealing brow of the prince. If the prince would take up Islam and be obliged to the tenets and tracts of faith, he will always be the foremost commander of the age. He will provide to the faithful, who are captive in the lowest depths and the most oppressive declivity, an increase of security and an advance of improvement, so that they might afterwards spread the victory of their leaders (*mavāli*) and the ruination of their enemies and nourish justice by means of the faith. Then he shall be free from compulsory obedience to biting necessity and indeed will be lord of the command. Then all Muslims will become supplicant and gracious, and on account of his sincere deeds and genuine intentions and heartfelt inclinations God [605] Glorious and Exalted will bless him. The religion of Islam, which had been obliterated and destroyed from the infidel subjugation of the Tatars and the domination of tyrants and sinners, will be revived by the empowerment bestowed by the prince.”

And when God Glorious and Exalted had caused the heart of the prince forever to be adorned and enlightened with the light of oneness (*nūr-i tauhīd*), and his noble Existence (*dhāt-e sharifesh*) had become a storehouse of sacred mysteries (*asrār-i quds*) and a bearer of knowledge (*marafat*) and the indication of eternal blessing had arisen on his face and the veil [*ghastāvah*] of imperfection and calamity had been lifted from the discernment of vision, the wise words of Nauruz worked on his blessed heart. In deliberation and conversation with Nauruz the flower of his heart opened and the white hand of Moses appeared from the invisible sleeve [reading *jīb* for *hīb*], the veil of darkness (*hijāb-i zulamat*) and the gauze of ignorance were lifted from his eye and ear and the dark place (*jā-yi zulamat*) became light (*nūr*). And he declared that,

“The inclination to this desire and the glory of this motive (*bā'isa*) has always been in the view of my mind, since how can it be consistent with reason that a wise man should put his head to the ground before a created object and not seek the proximity and notice of God for the

perfection of the soul, but rather call out a request for assistance from a physical being of whom that idol is the image? It is an embarrassment to be in awe of an idol and to perform the acts of kissing and the rituals of osculation, and the adoration of idols was the extremity of error and ignorance and the stuff of disdain [? *istifavā*] and scorn. And the religion of Islam is the choicest of all religions and the purest of divine honors, but continuous and compelling attachments and entanglements were an impediment to the guidance of the light of faith (*nūr-i īmān*). When the well is shallow [lit. when the water is close], you don't need a long rope . . .”

The extemporaneous speech of Nauruz was heard and rewarded. He requested the ruby that had been entrusted [to him] and on the fourth of Sha‘bān in the year 694 (19 June 1295) in a villa that had been Arghun’s throne-hall, in a pasture of Lar in Damavand, he offered a great feast (*tui*) and the prince performed the ritual ablutions in the bathhouse and dressed in clean garments and ascended the sublime height (*qaṣr-i raḥī*) and like a candle stood as a servant in front of God. Shaykh Ṣadr al-Dīn Ibrāhīm, the true successor of Shaykh Sa‘d al-Dīn Hammuyā, mercy be upon him, prompted the declaration of faith. Prince Ghazan intoned the declaration of devotion with pure intention from the depth of his heart and several times gave glorious voice just as the Messiah had done to the declaration of monotheism like pure balm.

The prince raised his hands,
declared the unity of God.

And all the *amīrs* and soldiers, close to a million restive polytheists (*mushrik*), became believers and adherents. And even if in the days of youth and the time of childhood, *bakhshis* had instructed them in the veneration of statues and the worship of idols, and they had remained constant and steadfast in that, nevertheless, when he adopted Islam and established tranquility in his breast, having declared himself – to the ears of those listening and the ken of those hearing – to the nation of the Prophet and the Ḥanafī rite, he became purer in his

sincerity [606] than Uvays and Salmān. With this they joyously and cheerfully and happily spent several days in feasting and celebration, and out of sincerity and faith all the peoples – Turks and Persians – scattered *dirhams* and *dinars* and precious gems and a wealth of treasures on the blessed throne, and they said:

Wealth, health, portents, years, origins, descent, fortune, and throne [be yours]
for a reign most rare in its stability and duration:
Abundant wealth, good health, fortunate portents, happy years,
immortal descent to match your origins, sublime fortune, and affluent throne.

And the *amīrs* and *noyons* and *īmāms* and *shaykhs* were present and infidel Tatar armies from all sides and directions and cities, from seven to seventy years of age, willingly and freely converted from infidelity to the faith of Islam, thronging to follow the Pādishāh of Islam to the true creed. Darkened with doubt and hypocrisy, they were purified and were honored by honoring the guidance of the light of faith (*nūr-i īmān*) so that the swelling ranks of their children and offspring would be faithful. The faith of the monotheists was revealed to the praiseworthy nation and the manifestation of the faith of Muḥammad, peace be upon him, and the true devotion of the faithful became more steadfast.

On that day he decreed offices and presents and stipends and pensions for the community of *īmāms* and *shaykhs* and *sayyids* and bestowed pledges and alms on the poor and beggars and turned his face towards the shrines of saints and the tombs of holy men and desired to supplicate and implore Dhu'l-Jalāl for the strength to avenge his foes and repulse his enemies.³ And he ordered a lodge (*khāniqāh*) and shrines (*mashāhid*) be created and he sent runners and messengers with this news to the sides and edges and corners of the realm and caused the sweetness of joy which is the source of life and the fruit of the eternal joy and fortune to reach the mouths of the inhabitants of the horizons. From the edges of Iraq and

³ Dhu'l-Jalāl is one of the names of God, signifying the one who bestows majesty.

Khurāsān the people of faith and the *shaykhs* and *īmāms* inclined themselves to royal service. In the month of Ramadan he observed the obligatory fast in the empty place of the idols and every evening great numbers of Taziks and Turks from the regions and districts broke the fast with the bounty of his table.

He repaired and strengthened the loop on the firm handle of faith which had been broken and cut. His intentions turned to laying the foundation of faith and spreading the platform of certainty and strengthening the pillars of religion and honoring original principles and strict doctrines (*far‘-i maqṣūr*) and his inclination was to follow the prescription of god-fearing and his charge was the purity and strength of the emanation (*bā‘is*). In the deluge of calamities and disasters, God Powerful and Mighty made the royal existence of the Pādishāh of Islam Ghazan Khan a security [607] for the affairs and prosperity of servants and the cause of safety and security for humankind, so that thousands of innocent souls were protected from the injury of pain and fear of the infidel Tatar force, until by necessity the fame of his tenure of administering justice and the reverberation of the marketplace of his glory became a resounding call to prayer for the world. In sum, after that it became obligatory and necessary that the kings and *sulṭāns* of Islam submit to him . . .

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Abbreviations

<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>CAJ</i>	<i>Central Asiatic Journal</i>
<i>EIr</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Iranica Online</i>
<i>EI²</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam Online, 2nd Edition</i>
<i>EI³</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam Online, 3rd Edition</i>
<i>JESHO</i>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>

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