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Poetry and power: the appreciation of the verse in Seljuq and Ilkhanid chronicles : the case of Rāḥat al-Şudūr and Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh

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Poetry and Power: The Appreciation of the Verse in Seljuq and Ilkhanid
Chronicles

The Case of *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* and *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh*

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Abstract

In 13th and 14th century Iran, the fields of poetry and historiography were not greatly separated. In fact, we often see verses included in Persian historical books for various purposes such as providing an example, giving a lesson, or recording a poem composed for a special occasion. However, modern scholars have mostly studied these two fields independent of each other. In the present study, I aim to bring together poetry and historiography by focusing on the verses included in two historical works, one from the Seljuq era and the other from the Ilkhanid era.

Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr va Āyat al-Surūr is a dynastic history of the Seljuqs written by ‘Alī ibn Sulaymān al-Rāvandī in the early 13th century. The author dedicated his work to the Seljuq ruler of Anatolia, Sultan Kaykhusraw I, hoping to obtain the position of, ‘boon companion’, at Kaykhusraw’s court. In his work, Rāvandī went beyond using poetry as an embellishment of the text and included many verses, both of his own creation and those of others, to legitimise the Seljuq dynasty. To achieve this goal, he took several measures including the usage of images of the celestial objects and their arrangement in the spheres and comparing them to the sultan’s court; composing verses in the style of the *Shāhnāma* to connect the Seljuqs to the ancient Iranian kings, and introducing a Sasanian king, Khusraw II, as a role model.

The 14th century work of *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh* was written by Rashīd al-Dīn Faḡl Allāh, a vizier in the court of two Ilkhanid sultans, Ghazan and Öljeitü. The work originally consisted of three volumes: a history of the Mongols, a history of the world, and a non-extant geography. Similar to Rāvandī, Rashīd al-Dīn made significant use of poetry in his work. The composition of verses in the style of the *Shāhnāma*, particularly for the history of the Mongols, and using the ancient Iranian idea of *farr*, the divine mandate, provided a link between the Mongols and the ancient Iranian kings in order to portray them as legitimate rulers of Iran.

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Transliteration Note

It is not easy to conform to one transliteration system for this research, because it tackles with various terms and words from different languages. I have tried my best to make it as simple as possible. For Persian and Arabic, I have used the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*' system. For Turkic names mentioned in Persian sources, I have treated them as they appear in Persian sources, thus Alp Aarsalān and Chaghri. For well-known geographical names, as well as dynasties, I have used a simple system of spelling, such as Khurasan instead of Khurāsān, and Khwarazmshahs instead of Khvārazmshāhs.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Poetry and Ideology

"و ذکر محامد سلجوقیان... تا نه بس مدتی سپری خواهد شد و نام ایشان از جراید خواطر محو خواهد گشت، و چون اهل فضل در ایام ایشان حظی نیافته‌اند و بشرح مقالات و مقامات و غزوات ایشان اعتنائی ننموده کس از ایشان یاد نیارد، و از معالی و مساعی ایشان یادگاری نماند."¹

'And regarding the praiseworthy deeds of the Seljuqs... Their time would be too short, and their names would be erased from the annals of memory, and because men of letters found no pleasure during their days and have taken no care to describe their writings, rankings, and wars, none of them is remembered and no monument remains to their excellence and efforts.'

Written in the early 13th century by Abū al-Sharaf Nāṣih ibn Ṣafar Jurfādaqānī, a secretary in the administration of the rulers of Azerbaijan (*atabegs*), the above passage draws attention to the importance of 'people of the pen' or 'the learned men' in keeping the memories of kings alive. In his view, the Seljuqs (1040-1194) were utterly oblivious of the importance of 'the learned men'; while as opposed to the Seljuqs, the Ghaznavids (977-1186) patronized historians to write about their achievements. One of these historians was Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Jabbār 'Utbī (d. 1036) whose book was translated by Jurfādaqānī from Arabic to Persian.² Although Jurfādaqānī does not specify here what he precisely meant by 'the learned men,' modern scholars have referred to this passage as a piece of evidence for the Seljuq rulers' lack of interest in historiography;³ especially since the first dynastic history of the Seljuqs, the *Saljūqnāma*, was only written during the reign of the last Seljuq ruler, Ṭughril III (r. 1174-1194).⁴

¹ Jurfādaqānī, *Tarjuma-yi Tārikh-i Yamīnī*, ed. Jafar Shoar (Tehran: 'Ilmī va Farhangī, 1374/1995), 9.

² *Tārikh-i Yamīnī* was written by 'Utbī on the fall of the Samanids (819-999) and the rise of the Ghaznavids. For more information on him, see: Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 53-66.

³ For example, see: Claude Cahen, "The Historiography of the Seljukid Period," in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Bernard Lewis and Peter Holt (Oxford, 1962), 59-78; Julie Meisami, *Persian Historiography*, 141-142; Julie Meisami, "Rulers and the writing of History," in *Writers and Rulers: Perspectives on Their Relationship from Abbasid to Safavid Times*, ed. Beatrice Gruendler & Louise Marlow (Wiesbaden, 2004), 82-92. For more on this, see: Elton Daniel, "The Rise and Development of Persian Historiography," in *Persian Historiography*, ed. Charles Melville (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 149-154.

⁴ Ṣaḥīr al-Dīn Nayshābūrī, *Saljūqnāma* (Tehran: Asāṭīr, 1390/2011).

What scholars have paid less notice to is the Arabic verse included in Jurfādaqānī's history preceding the aforementioned passage. According to this verse, 'if it had not been for Jarīr and al-Farazdaq, no fine story of the House of Marvān would have remained.'⁵ This verse has the same message as its following passage though it is conveyed by means of poetry. Furthermore, it points to the fact that poets were also responsible for immortalising the names of their patrons. About a century later, Rashīd al-Dīn Faḡl Allāh Hamadānī (1247-1318), though himself a historian, emphasized the role of poetry in preserving a ruler's reputation:

آثار حسن سیرت محمود غزنوی⁶

باقی به قید قافیه مانده است در جهان

'Thanks to their being recorded in verse remain on earth/ the beautiful products of Maḥmūd Ghaznavī's moral character.'

Although poetry has always been in service of kings and their deeds, in fact as much as history has ever been, modern scholarship has rarely included poetry in its considerations. The subjects of poetry and history have been mostly considered two separate fields of study, where history has been studied by historians and poetry by scholars of literary studies. Historians neglect verses, considering them as mere ornament to the texts while literary scholars only discuss historical works whenever there is a whole poem included in those works. The first step of drawing these two scholarly fields closer was taken by Julie Meisami, a renowned scholar of Arabic and Persian literature and history. In her contribution "History as Literature," she pays close attention to the literary aspects of historiographical works. In her view, "a work of history, like any other composition (written or oral) is, first and foremost, a construct of language... thus historical works are not merely records of the past, but literary texts that may be approached through literary analysis."⁷ In her work, she discusses literary style and embellishments of a few historical works by focusing more on rhetoric and its usage in historical texts. Inspired by Meisami's work on bringing two fields of history and literature together, in this work, I also attempt to fill the void between these two fields. However, in contrast to Meisami's approach which deals with 'history as literature,' I intend to approach 'literature as history' by concentrating on the role of poetry in historiography, and in particular, its ideological function.

There are several studies which analyse one particular work of Persian historiography, among which two have proved themselves to have the greatest impact on my work; the first is the work of Andrew Peacock on Bal'amī's history and the other is that of Marylin Waldman on Bayhaqī's history. In *Mediaeval Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy*, Peacock studies the *Tārīkh-nāma* written by Abū 'Alī Bal'amī who was a vizier in the court of the

⁵ Jurfādaqānī, *Tarjuma*, 9. Jarīr and Farazdaq were poets of the Marvanids' courts.

⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārikh: Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 2016), 32.

⁷ Julie Scott Meisami, "History as Literature," in *Persian Historiography*, ed. Charles Melville (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 1.

Samanids (819-999). Since the *Tārīkhnāma* is the first surviving Persian historical work, it holds great value in Persian historiographical research. The *Tārīkhnāma* has mostly been identified as the translation of the Arabic *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk* (History of the Prophets and the Kings) written by the famous jurist and scholar Abū Jarīr al-Ṭabarī in the tenth century. However, the *Tārīkhnāma* is not a simple translation, rather an abridged translation where some of its passages differ drastically from Ṭabarī's history. Thus, it is reasonable if it is considered an independent work of history.⁸ Peacock questions the possibility that the *Tārīkhnāma* was produced for the Persianization of the Turks who lived in the territory of the Samanids. He argues that the differences between Ṭabarī's history and the *Tārīkhnāma* were made consciously for the Islamic acculturation of the Turkic population in the Samanid territory.⁹ By taking a textual approach and focusing on the form, the contents, and the aims of the text, Peacock first situates the *Tārīkhnāma* in its political and cultural milieu and then delves deeper into the text of the *Tārīkhnāma*, how and why it differs from Ṭabarī's work, and how Bal'amī reshaped Ṭabarī's history in order to legitimize the Samanids as pious orthodox Muslims.¹⁰ The *Tārīkhnāma* has only a few poetic verses, most of which are in Arabic which have not been included in Peacock's analysis.¹¹

Similar to Peacock's study of the *Tārīkhnāma*, Waldman did not include poetry as a fundamental factor in her work either, even though the work she focuses on, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, applies poetry more often than the *Tārīkhnāma*. In analysing *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, Waldman focuses especially on its structure as well as the arrangement of the materials, their juxtaposition, omissions, and repetitions in order to discover the author's values and attitude towards various subjects.¹² Years later, she published a more refined version of her dissertation where she introduced five factors in her textual analysis of *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*: context, didacticism, esotericism, structure, and genre.¹³ Despite the fact that a large part of didacticism in *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī* is demonstrated by the means of poetry, Waldman's emphasis is primarily on the prose part of the text and again, considers poetry more of an

⁸ Andrew Peacock, *Mediaeval Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy* (London & New York: Routledge, 2007), x.

⁹ Peacock, 168. According to previous arguments the purpose of the composition of the *Tārīkhnāma* was the Persianisation of Ṭabarī's history. See: Meisami, *Persian Historiography*, 29-30; Elton Daniel, "The Samanid 'Translation' of Ṭabarī," in *Al-Ṭabarī: A Medieval Muslim Historian and His Work*, ed. Hugh Kennedy (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2008).

¹⁰ Peacock, *Mediaeval Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy*, 167-171.

¹¹ Similar work has also been done al-Ṭabarī's book. See: Boaz Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography Deconstructing Ṭabarī's History* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

¹² Marilyn Waldman, "*Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, An Eleventh Century Persian History: An Exercise in Textual Criticism" (PhD diss. University of Chicago, 1974), 25.

¹³ Marilyn Waldman, *Towards a Theory of Historical Narrative: A Case Study in Perso-Islamic History* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1980), 1-12.

embellishment rather than a means to convey a message. The same approach has been taken towards poetry in historical works by other scholars of Persian historiography.¹⁴

Poetry is a tool that has been applied frequently not just to convey a message, but also to demonstrate power and legitimacy. A study on the roles of poets and singers in ancient Iran demonstrates that poets used to stand on ceremony reciting their poetry in front of their kings. While they were seen mostly as entertainers, their poetry usually contained didactic subjects and notions related to kingship as well.¹⁵ Aside from that, poets, either in ancient Iran or after the Islamic conquest, used to record the historical achievements of kings in a panegyric way. They were, indeed, the governments' instrument for propaganda for establishing their legitimacy and ideology. They were doing what the media does today, in countries where the government controls the press. In other words, medieval poets were the press of their own time.¹⁶

In line with this public aspect of poetry, Gillies Tetley has done a remarkable investigation on how poetry is a source for Iranian history. Her focus is on two poets, Farrukhī Sīstānī and Mu'izzī, from the Ghaznavid and the Seljuq courts respectively. Since many of their poems were composed for the occasions such as military campaigns, festivities, and birthdays, it is through these poems that one can take a closer look at the historical details of the events.¹⁷ It is also here that Tetley points to the elements of Turkishness and pro-Turkish propaganda which increased with the coming of the Seljuqs. Though both the Ghaznavids and the Seljuqs were ethnically Turks, the Ghaznavids were considered culturally Persian at the time differing from the Seljuqs, who were open about their Turkishness and proud of their origins. This pride was publicized in the verses of their poets.¹⁸

On the same note of poetry's public benefits, Hamid Dabashi in his book, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism*, provides us a new perspective on the history of Persian literature. Dabashi shows that Persian literature had the power to serve monarchs through the poets who constantly praised the reigning ruler, but also it had the power to challenge them, since

¹⁴ See, for example: Bertold Spuler, "The Evolution of Persian Historiography," in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Bernard Lewis & Peter Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 132; Mohammad Taqi Bahar, *Sabkshināsī* (Tehran: Amīrkabīr, 1349/ 1970), vol.2, 247-8; Ṣāḥib al-Dīn Nayshābūrī, *Saljūqnāma*, ed. Alexander Morton (Great Britain: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2004), 19.

¹⁵ Mary Boyce, "The Parthian Gosan and Iranian Minstrel Tradition," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 89, no.1-2 (1957): 31.

¹⁶ On a similar subject to this dissertation, Fatemeh Shams has investigated the role of poetry in legitimising rulers after the 1979 revolution in Iran. According to her research, both leaders of the Islamic Republic, Khomeini and Khamenei applied poetry and poets in their state-building projects. Khamenei went even further in re-inventing the tradition of summoning poets to recite their poems in front of the ruler. This practice was revived in the form of annual poetry nights where approved poets read their poems and receive feedback from the leader of the Islamic Republic. These events, which are always televised and displayed to public, are aimed to legitimise, and immortalise the religious ideological state led by Khamenei. For more, see: Fatemeh Shams, *A Revolution in Rhyme: Poetic Co-option under the Islamic Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

¹⁷ Gillies Tetley, *The Ghaznavid and the Seljuq Turks: Poetry as a Source for Iranian History* (London & New York: Routledge, 2009), 2.

¹⁸ Tetely, 38-39.

the poets, through the use of hyperbole, depicted such mighty imperial rulers that no living king could match up to.¹⁹ Indeed research by Sirous Shamisa demonstrates an increased usage of hyperbole by poets in the Seljuq period. While hyperbole was also applied by the Ghaznavid court poets, usually to the level of *mubālagha*, it reached to the unbelievable degree of *ighrāq* during the Seljuq era.²⁰

Similar to Dabashi's theory, Aziz Al-Azmeh names poetry as a type of representation of power in medieval Muslim states in his *Muslim Kingship*. According to Al-Azmeh, royal power can be represented in two forms: propositional and non-propositional. The former involves discursive enunciation of power often found in written sources, while the latter is mostly seen in iconography, rituals, and ceremonies.²¹ Like ancient Iranian courts, Islamic courts were also witness to ceremonies where poets flattered their patrons by reciting poetry composed specifically for them. On such occasions, poetry was certainly a manifestation of power.²² Here I would like to expand on this argument by indicating that not just poetry in its recited form, but also poetry in written sources is a manifestation of the ruler's power and ideology. In fact, poetry is a literary form that can bridge the propositional and non-propositional demonstrations of power, because it fits in both prepositional and non-prepositional categories suggested by Al-Azmeh; It was cited orally in the courts of kings to demonstrate power among kings' courtiers, and it was included in written sources (like historiographies) to display their power and ideology even to later generations. That is why in the present study, I will be focusing on the verses that were included in two historical sources of Iran, from the 13th and 14th century.

Among scholars of Persian history in Iran, the Mongol invasion is often described as the turning point with regard to various aspects including Persian literature and historiography.²³ Here I would like to use this statement as my starting point and dig deeper into different sides of this 'turning point'. My two case studies are *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr va Āyat al-Surūr* written in the early 13th century, and *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* composed after the Mongol conquest. Both sources are historical writings which apply poetry and prose in their stylistic

¹⁹ Hamid Dabashi, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 39.

²⁰ Sirous Shamisa, *Sabkshināsī-yi Shi'r* (Tehran: Mitrā, 1391/2012), 173. Hyperbole in Persian is categorised into various stages based on their proximity to reality. In this classification, *mubāligha* is closer to the real world than *ighrāq*. See: Mohamad Reza Shafiei Kadkani, *Ṣuvar-i Khīyāl dar Shi'r-i Fārsī* (Tehran: Āgāh, 1375/ 1996), 130-138.

²¹ Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship* (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997), ix.

²² Al-Azmeh, 132.

²³ Shirin Bayani, "Dunyā-yi Mughul dar Tārīkh," *Kitāb-i Māh-i Tārīkh va Jughrāfiyā* 81,82,83 (1383/ 2004: 8; Amir Akbari, "Rashīd al-Dīn Faḡl Allāh va Tārīkh-nigārī-yi 'Ahd-i Mughul," *Pazhūhish-nāma-yi Tārīkh* 2, no.5 (1387/ 2008): 25; Ali Tatari, "Tārīkh-nigārī-yi Dawra-yi Mughul," *Payām-i Bahāristān* 60 (1385/2006): 2. Similar implications, albeit less strong, can be found among non-Iranian scholars as well. Charles Melville calls the integration of Iran into Mongol imperial system as "a complete reorientation." Charles Melville, "The Mongol and Timurid Periods 1250-1500," in *Persian Historiography*, ed. Charles Melville (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 156; and Bert Fragner believes that the Mongol period contributed to the shaping of the present day's nation-state of Iran. Bert Fragner, "Iran under the Ilkhanid Rule in a World History Perspective," in *L'Iran Face A' La Domination Mongole*, ed. Denis Aigle (Tehran: Institute Francias de Recherche en Iran, 1997), 122.

text. The present study is an attempt to reveal how their poetry contributed to establishing the imperial ideology of the Seljuqs (1040-1194) and the Ilkhanids (1258-1335).

1.2 The Seljuqs and Imperial Ideology

Ideology has always been a topic which enthralls historians, not only because it is intertwined with every state's core, but also because in most cases, it is a fluid, complex, multi-layered concept. Depending on several elements such as situation and audience, rulers will demonstrate an aspect of ideology that will be most influential. These aspects are also in a strong relation with identity-maker elements like history, language, culture, etc. In other words, to gain the utmost power, various states draw upon cultural and social factors of the societies' they aim to rule. In the case of the Seljuqs, this matter is even more complicated, as they had a Turkic background; converted to Islam; and ruled over a Muslim population in a primarily Persian speaking area.

According to Omid Safi, the Seljuqs, who were repeatedly called '*nīkū i'tiqād*' in sources, formulated their ideology based on their contrast to the Ismā'īlīs;²⁴ thus, initiating a process in which they validate a certain understanding of Islam while actively invalidating other ideas. The Seljuqs argued that in every period, God bestows his approval upon a certain group in their generation and that group was the Turks, and it was in *madrasas* that they built that this orthodoxy was strengthened and enforced.²⁵ Establishing themselves as the standard-bearers of the 'true religion' demonstrates only one aspect of their ideology, the aspect which was the most effective in confronting the Ismā'īlīs.

The Seljuqs' ideology took shape through their relationship with the caliphate as well. Before the conquest of Baghdad by the Seljuqs, the caliphate was at the mercy of the Buyids (934-1062), unable to exercise any type of power.²⁶ When Ṭughril I came to Baghdad, he restored the position of the caliph as the religious leader of the Muslim world, while preserving his own claim as the political leader and sultan. The Seljuqs acquired a part of their legitimacy by keeping a good relationship with the caliph and the caliph displayed his approval of the sultan by giving him an '*ahd*', a contract between the sultan and the caliph where both

²⁴ *Nīkū-i'tiqād* can roughly be translated as faithful, or the one keeping the right faith.

²⁵ Omid Safi, *The Politics of Knowledge in Pre-Modern Islam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), xxiv. Nizām al-Mulk, the vizier of Sultan Alp Arsalān and Sultan Malikshāh indicates the same concept in the opening of his book, *Sīyar al-Mulūk*. See: Nizām al-Mulk, *Sīyar al-Mulūk* (Tehran: 'Ilmī va Farhangī, 1383/2004), 11.

²⁶ For the Buyids and their relations with the Abbasid caliphate, see: Maryam Kamali, *Social Change in Medieval Iran 132-628 AH (750-1231 AD): The Perspectives of Persian Historiography* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2023), 157-168.

parties' rights and duties were listed. The document was granted to the sultan in an investiture ceremony at the Abbasid court.²⁷

Apart from the *'ahd*, two other elements contributed to the Seljuqs' ideology in relation to their policy towards the caliphate: The right to exercise *'nawba'* and being acknowledged in *'khuṭba'*. The *nawba* was a form of a musical band which played usually at the time of prayer, and it was a ceremonial practice in the Abbasid court. Caliphs could bestow the right to sultans as a gesture of approval.²⁸ The second element, the *khuṭba*, was also a manifestation of power when the name of the sultan was mentioned in the sermon held before the congregational prayer.²⁹

Another aspect of the Seljuqs' ideology was creating an image of piety for the sultans. Several factors contributed to establishing this picture among which was the construction of religious and public buildings. Many *madrasas*, *khānaqāhs*, *ribāṭs*, and *ḥammāms* were built by the Seljuq sultans and their officials throughout their territory, including Baghdad, the seat of the Abbasid Caliphs.³⁰ Upholding religious laws was also another approach the Seljuqs took to ensure a pious image of themselves. *Muḥtasibs* (market inspectors) were primarily appointed by the caliph to make sure of the credibility of scales and measurements in markets. This position went through some changes during Seljuq rule and seems to have become an element to advertise loyalty to religion in the society through being a form of public morality officer. During the Seljuq era the chief commander (*amīr al-umarā*) was responsible for choosing the *muḥtasibs* and they were usually chosen from among the *'ulamā*, or the nobility associated with the *'ulamā*.³¹

While the Seljuqs made use of religious elements and their relationships with the caliphate for their ideology, they did not forgo the advantages of acquiring legitimacy through ancient Iranian history and mythology. Tughril I's adoption of the title *'Shāhanshāh'* (king of kings) is an example of connecting themselves to the Sasanians.³² Apart from that, the Seljuqs situated themselves in Iranian mythology by claiming descent from a Turanian king, Afrāsīyāb, in the *Shāhnāma*. In their view, one of Afrāsīyāb's sons fled from an Iranian king, Kaykhusraw, and took refuge among Qining Turkmen who were the Seljuqs' ancestors.³³ Afrāsīyāb was not

²⁷ Vanessa van Renterghem, "Controlling and Developing Baghdad: Caliphs, Sultans, and the Balance of Power in the Abbasid Capital," in *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society, and Culture*, ed. Christian Lange and Songül Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 118.

²⁸ Carole Hillenbrand, "Aspects of the Court of the Great Seljuqs," in *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society, and Culture*, ed. Christian Lange and Songül Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 28-29.

²⁹ Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship*, 136.

³⁰ For instance, see: Deborah Tor, "Sovereign and Pious: The Religious of the Great Seljuq Sultans," in *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society, and Culture*, ed. Christian Lange and Songül Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 45.

³¹ Christian Lange, "Changes in the Office of *Ḥisba* under the Seljuqs," in *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society, and Culture*, ed. Christian Lange and Songül Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 157-181.

³² Andrew Peacock, *The Great Seljuq Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 137.

³³ Andrew Peacock, "Seljuq Legitimacy in Islamic History," in *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society, and Culture*, ed. Christian Lange and Songül Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 79-80.

the only ancient figure of interest to the Seljuqs. In the second chapter, I will demonstrate how Sasanian kings as well as the rest of *Shāhnāma* figures, were employed to ensure the legitimacy of the Seljuqs.

1.3 The Mongols and Imperial Ideology

According to Anne Broadbridge, “an ideology of kingship is the set of ideas by which a ruler defines himself as a sovereign... these ideas gave rulers models for their behaviour and helped them both assert the legality and legitimacy of their reigns and maintain their claims to rule in the eyes of various, often overlapping audiences, frequently in opposition to the claims of others.”³⁴ While the Seljuqs applied a set of ideas from Islamic and Persian cultures making their ideology multi-layered and complex, the Mongols took this complexity to another level. The Seljuqs had converted to Islam prior to their entry to Khurasan and when they entered, they presented themselves as Muslims. They expanded their territory over decades migrating gradually to the lands which were considered parts of the Persian world. Contradictory to the Seljuqs, the Mongols were seen as infidels who conquered Iranian territory swiftly and brutally. Moreover, the Mongol empire ruled over a vast territory encompassing much of modern-day China, Central Asia, Iran, the Caucasus, Turkey and Russia. They faced various ideas of legitimacy and needed to draw upon an extensive set of ideas to establish and affirm their ideology. For instance, in China, the Yuan dynasty made use of Confucian structure for the notion of heavenly mandate, while in Iran, the Ilkhanids employed the concept of *farr/farrah* from ancient Iranian ideology.³⁵

The Secret History of the Mongols, the only extant Mongolian chronicle, informs us that Temüjin, the later Chinggis Khan, was the descendant of a blue-grey wolf who was “born with his destiny ordained by Heaven Above”. He married to a doe and a few generations later Temüjin was born while he was clutching a clot of blood in his right hand.³⁶ Although he is certainly not the first ruler who was assumed to be an offspring of an animal, the blood on his hand demonstrates his extreme fierceness, a trait which a legitimate ruler must possess. *The Secret History* has its own way of explaining how Heaven protected Chinggis Khan, implying that the ideology of Mongols was formulated on this basis. According to this ideology, Chinggis Khan, inspired and empowered by Heaven (or Tengri, the sky god of the steppe) had a mission to conquer the world and place it under the dominance of his family.³⁷ Being the universal sovereign, people were divided into two groups: those who submitted (*il*: in the state of obedience) and consequently could enjoy the peace and security provided by the Mongols

³⁴ Anne Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 6.

³⁵ Jonathan Brack, “Theologies of Auspicious Kingship: The Islamization of Chinggisid Sacral Kingship in the Islamic World,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60 (2018): 1151.

³⁶ *The Secret History of the Mongols*, ed. Igor de Rachewiltz (Leiden: Brill, 2006), vol.1, 13.

³⁷ Igor de Rachewiltz, “Some Remarks on the Ideological Foundation of Chinggis Khan’s Empire,” *Papers on Far Eastern History* (1973): 22.

and those who were still rebellious (*bulgha* or *yaghi*), but basically considered to be potential members of the Mongol Empire.³⁸ The centre of the world in this ideology was in central Mongolia, near the Orkhon river.³⁹

What has been said so far is a general view of the Mongol Empire's ideology. While this ideology continued to be the basis of their sovereignty, due to the various cultural groups who submitted to them, they built in other layers of ideology later in their reign. Moreover, the disintegration of the Mongol Empire into different *uluses* widened the gap between the various parts of the empire in terms of ideology.⁴⁰ Religion played an important role in this alteration, especially when, for example the Ilkhanids encountered the Mamluk state, who claimed legitimacy by portraying themselves as successors of the Abbasid caliphate, even establishing a 'descendant' of the last caliph al-Musta'ṣim in Cairo.⁴¹

With the conversion Ghazan Khan to Islam, the Ilkhans broke further away from their overlord in China and added evident vernacular layers to their legitimacy. Instances of this greater independence can be seen in usage of the title of '*dār al-Sulṭān*' for their capital, Tabriz, in imitation of the Seljuqs using '*dār al-mulk*'; applying the name of Iran for Ilkhanid territory; and issuing coinage with Persian and Islamic titles without mentioning the sovereign khan of the Mongol Empire, Temür Khan (r. 1294-1307).⁴² The proliferation in history writing and Ilkhanid patronage of cultural production must be perceived in this line as well. As I will discuss in chapter three, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* was also a project of legitimation carried out by Rashīd al-Dīn.

³⁸ Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Ilkhānid War 1260-1281* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 9. The Mongols also stated their claim of universality in letters they wrote to other rulers, such as the Mamluks, the kings of Europe, and the Pope. See: Jacques Paviot, "England and the Mongols (ca.1260-1330)," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 10 (2000): 310; Denise Aigle, "The Letters of Eljigidei, Hülegü, and Abaqa: Mongol Overtures or Christian Ventriloquism," *Inner Asia* 7 (2005): 143-162.

³⁹ Michal Biran, "The Mongol Transformation: From the Steppe to Eurasian Empire," *Medieval Encounters: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Culture in Confluence and Dialogue* (2004), vol.10: 340-341.

⁴⁰ *Ulus* is an appanage, land, and people dedicated to a Chingissid family member.

⁴¹ Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*, 2. The Mamluk theologian, Ibn Taymīyya wrote several *fatwās* refuting the Ilkhanids and their conversion to Islam. Dorothea Krawulsky, *The Mongol Ilkhans and Their Vizier Rashīd al-Dīn* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011), 67.

⁴² Bert Fragner, "Ilkhanid Rule and Its Contribution to Iranian Political Culture," in *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 74-75; Bert Fragner, "Iran under the Ilkhanid Rule in a World History Perspective," 127-128; Thomas Allsen, "Changing Forms of Legitimation in Mongol Iran," in *Rulers from the Steppe*, ed. Gary Seaman and Daniel Marks (University of Southern California, 1991), 230. Michael Hope suggests that apart from Iranian concepts, Ghazan Khan made use of Shi'i concept of imamate to further consolidate his power. See: Michael Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition in the Mongol Empire and the Ilkhanate of Iran* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 174.

1.4 Methods and Terms

When discussing matters related to history or literature, it is easy to forget that many of the terms we are using in our arguments and counterarguments are not easily defined. Plenty of these terms have always been controversial among scholars of these fields. Moreover, a number of these terms might bear different meanings throughout history; in other words, they may not have similar meanings for a fourteenth-century scholar, an eighteenth-century scholar, or a modern one. However, the purpose of discussing them here is not to provide a solution for all the debates on the meanings of these terms, nor to present definitions for them; for due to the vagueness and borderlessness of these terms, any suggested definition can be easily challenged. What I intend to do here is to acknowledge this issue and explain how I will look at these terms in my study.

Since the subject of this study deals with historiography and literature of the eleventh to fourteenth centuries, the words *adab*, *adīb*, or phrases like *ahl-i faẓl*, *ahl-i qalam*, *ahl-i adab* or some other variations of the same concept may be applied. Even the word 'literature' itself is problematic; no definition can be presented that encompasses all aspects of what may be called literature; especially because there is no consensus regarding what is literature and what is not.⁴³

The word *adab* is an Arabic word borrowed into Persian and in this process, its meaning went through some changes. At first, it referred to respectful manners and behaviour, but gradually its meaning was extended to some fields of knowledge and literary traditions as well.⁴⁴ While scholars like Louise Marlow have defined *adab* as *belles lettres*, another scholar, Nuha Alashaar, defined *adab* as "literary traditions that seek to entertain and educate in terms of manners and morals."⁴⁵ Waldman, has taken a closer look at the term and presented a more comprehensive definition:

"*Adab* was both a constellation of qualities that made up a genteel man and also the kind of literature that expressed and stimulated these qualities. As literature, *adab* was a kind of *belles lettres* that included a wide variety of genteel study and prose writing, its materials ranging from wisdom literature, much of it translated from pre-Islamic Pahlavi and Sanskrit works; to collection of anecdotes, often historical, usually arranged according to ethical and moral qualities or faults; to animal fables; to particular type of *adab* called 'mirrors for princes', books written for the practical and ethical guidance of rulers, usually by their servants."⁴⁶

⁴³ For example, see Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (United States: Princeton University Press, 2015).

⁴⁴ Nuha Alashaar, "The Relation of Adab and Qur'an: Conceptual and Historical Framework", *The Qur'an and Adab: The Shaping of Literary Traditions in Classical Islam*, ed. Nuha Alashaar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1-9.

⁴⁵ Alashaar, 1.

⁴⁶ Waldman, *Towards the theory of Historical Narrative*, 36.

Contrary to western academia, inadequate attention has been paid to the definition of *adab* in Iranian academia. Most Iranian scholars who have made an effort in this field, focus more on the term '*adabīyāt*,' a modern equivalent for the word literature, and the plural form of *adab*. In these studies, fiction and literary language are two important factors to evaluate if a work can be considered a part of 'literature'.⁴⁷ In Persian, the person who is well-versed in *adab* is called *adīb*, which given the immensity of the areas that *adab* covers, also has vague and boundless connotations. Here, I have opted to use Waldman's vast definition of *adab* to include all matters of history and literature; firstly, because both Rāvandī and Rashīd al-Dīn were raised and educated in the milieus where education encompassed all matters of literature, history, religion, and in some cases astrology as well; and secondly, because as will be discussed later, their books also include such fields.

The terms Iran/Persia and Iranian/Persian have proven to be slightly vague both in terms of geography and culture, especially since the name of the modern-day nation state in international usage was formally changed from Persia to Iran in 1935 by the order of Reza Shah Pahlavi (1925-1941). In this study, however, I have avoided the issue of separating these terms and have chosen to use both terms for the territory established as 'Īrānshahr' by the Sasanians, while acknowledging its cultural influence on the reigns beyond. This territory encompassed the areas between Oxus and Euphrates, as was delimited both by geographical obstacles and Sasanian fortification. Considering that this study frequently makes use of the *Shāhnāma*, it is also worth mentioning that the *Shāhnāma* seem to be in line with the same boundaries when it comes to Iranian/Persian lands.⁴⁸

Similar to Peacock's study of *Tārīkh-i Bal'amī* and Waldman's study of *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, I have also used textual analysis to investigate the role of poetry in *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* and *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* focusing on their structure, the verses' positions as well as their concepts and forms. Apart from those, the writing styles of both works, their aims and authorship will be discussed as well. However, since the work's primary focus is the verses included in these books, I have also investigated their literary characteristics, both prose and poetry, by looking at the types of rhetorical devices they have employed in their works. I have also surveyed the notions included in the verses. Various themes can be discerned throughout these books; some of them are the themes which had been applied by other authors and historians before them, and some are Rashīd al-Dīn's and Rāvandī's own innovations. In this study, I intend to show that although these two books may not be comparable in terms of length, content, and

⁴⁷ See: Ahmad Samiei, "Darbāra-yi Adabīyāt," *Māhnāma-yi Āmūzish va Parvarish* 45, No.6 (1354/ 1975), 351-358, and its sequel in *Māhnāma-yi Āmūzish va Parvarish* 135 (1355/1976): 416-423; Abd al-Hussein Zarrinkub, *Naqd-i Adabī* (Tehran: Amīrkabīr, 1354/ 1975), 6-8; for the same discussion on the definition of literature in English see: Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 1-3.

⁴⁸ For the boundaries of Īrānshahr, see: Touraj Daryaee, "The Idea of the Sacred Land of Erānshahr," in *Persianism in Antiquity*, ed. Rolf Strootman and Miguel John Versluys (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2017), 393-400; for more information on the subject in the *Shāhnāma*, see: Kolsoum Ghazanfari and Sara Mirahmadi, "Jāynām-hāyi 'Aṣr-i Sāsānī dar *Shāhnāma*," in *Arj-i Khirad* (Tehran: Murvārīd, 1396/ 2018), 333-358.

patronage, they both have made efforts to demonstrate their own version of establishing imperial ideology by using these themes.

1.5 Thesis Structure

The thesis is structured in two large chapters, one dedicated to the *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* and another dedicated to *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, chapter two and three. In chapter two, in order to better understand the environment in which *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* was written, we will discuss the historical sources written during the Seljuq era up until the time of *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*'s production. This will help us to gain a better understanding of the style of historiography and patronage in the 12th and the 13th centuries. Then, I will proceed to focus specifically on the life of the author, Rāvandī, and how he structured his book, while the next three sub-chapters will investigate the methods by which Rāvandī contributed to legitimising the Seljuqs. The methods include the creation of heavenly court by making use of various literary devices; representing the figure of the Sasanian king, Khusraw II as a role model for Sultan Kaykhusraw I of the Rum Sultanate; and the composition of verses in the style of the *Shāhnāma* to place the Seljuqs in line with the ancient Iranian kings.

Chapter three is structured similarly. I begin by situating *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* in the historiographical milieu of the 13th and the 14th century. Then I will focus on the issue of authorship addressing both Rashīd al-Dīn and Qāshānī's claim in this regard. *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*'s production, language, and structure is addressed afterwards, when I stress that the book is part of an on-going project for legitimacy. The next sub-chapter will concentrate on the verses of *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*, the first volume of *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, demonstrating the role of *farrah* (fortune) as well as epic qualities to connect the Ilkhanids to the ancient Iranian kings.⁴⁹ The last sub-chapter explores the verses of the second volume of *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* and how they proved to be useful for the Timurid court as well.

⁴⁹ The topic of *farrah* will be studied in the section 3.5.1.

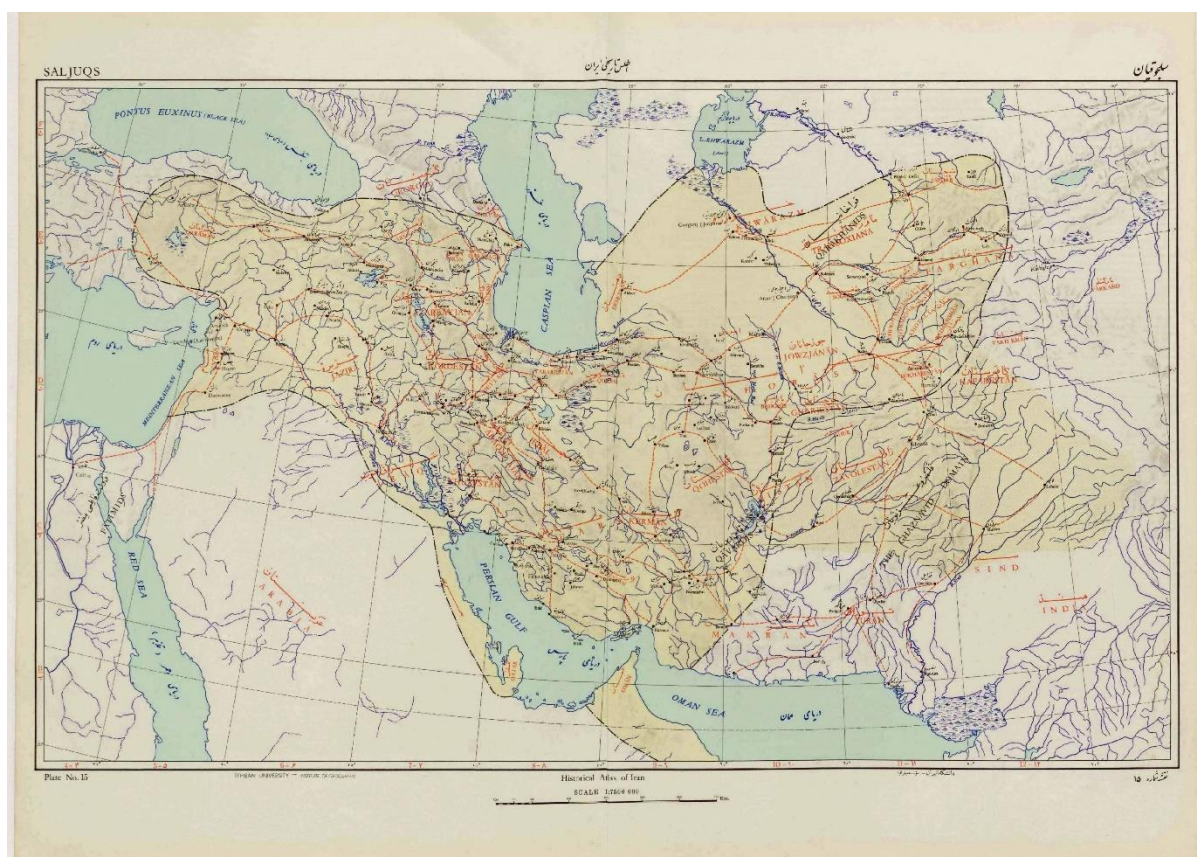


Figure 1: The map of the Seljuq Territory⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Historical Atlas of Iran, "Plate No.15," Wikimedia Commons, accessed on 14 March 2024, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Historical_Atlas_of_Iran_-_Plate_No._15.jpg

2 *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* va *Āyat al-Surūr*

This chapter consists of six subsections. I will start with situating *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* in its milieu tracking the development of Persian historiography up until the composition of *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* followed by introducing the author, Rāvandī. Subsequently, I will focus on how the work is structured as well as its writing style. The last three subsections will concentrate on the verses included in *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* with special focus on Nizāmī and Firdawsī whose verses have been applied frequently by Rāvandī.

2.1 Persian Historiography under the Seljuqs

The battle of Dandānaqān in 1040 marked the end of the Ghaznavids' rule in Iran and beginning of a new era for the Seljuqs.⁵¹ This battle pushed the Ghaznavids (977-1186) out of Khurasan for good by taking over Nishapur, their last stronghold in Khurasan.⁵² The main participants of this battle on the Seljuq side were Ṭughril Beg and Chaghrī Beg of the Seljuqs. They were both aware of the political requirements of ruling over a vast territory, thus they sought to acquire legitimacy via the traditional sources for such legitimacy in this period. As Patricia Crone says, "all legitimate power flowed from the [caliph], so that all public offices would be void in his absence." Ṭughril and Chaghrī wrote a letter to then-sitting Abbasid Caliph al-Qā'im (1031-1075), asking him for his blessing and support.⁵³ The Seljuqs continued expanding their territory outside of Khurasan; territory which was then divided between various members of the Seljuq family.⁵⁴ The caliph's letter arrived later in 1044. Unfortunately,

⁵¹ For the origin of the Seljuqs, see: Andrew Peacock, *Early Seljuq History* (London & New York: Routledge, 2010); Andrew Peacock, *The Great Seljuq Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015); Aziz Bašan, *The Great Seljuqs* (London & New York: Routledge, 2010); Edmund Bosworth, "The Origins of the Seljuqs," in *The Seljuqs, Politics, Society, and Culture*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 13-21. Claude Cahen, "The *Malik-Nāma* and the History of the Seljuqid Origins," in *The Turks in the Early Islamic World*, ed. Edmund Bosworth (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2007), 315-38. For a brief history of the Seljuqs, see: David Durand-Guédy, "New Trends in the Political History of Iran under the Great Saljuqs (11th-12th Centuries)," *History Compass* 13.7 (2015): 321-37.

⁵² For the conquest of Nishapur, see Jürgen Paul, "The Seljuq Conquest(s) of Nishapur: A Reappraisal," *Iranian Studies* 38.4 (2005): 575-585.

⁵³ Patricia Crone, *God's Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 239. For the letter, see: Rāvandī, *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* va *Āyat al-Surūr*, ed. Mohammad Eqbal (Tehran: Asāṭīr, 1386/2007), 102-3. For Seljuq and Abbasid relationships, see: Deborah Tor, "The Political Revival of the Abbasid Caliphate: Al-Muqtafī and the Seljuqs," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 137.2 (2017): 301-314; Vanessa van Renterghem, "Baghdad: A View from the Edge on the Seljuq Empire," in *The Age of the Seljuqs*, ed. Edmund Herzig & Sarah Stewart (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 74-93.

⁵⁴ Peacock, *The Great Seljuq Empire*, 40-41. This was a common practice among the Turks. In their eyes, sovereignty belong to all male members of the founding family. It is also the reason for many rebellions and succession struggles during their reign, because based on this practice, more than one person could have a claim on the throne. The best example for the rivalry between Seljuq family members is the rebellion of Arsalān Arghūn, Malikshāh's brother who sought power after Malikshāh's death. For his story, see: Jürgen Paul, "Arslān Arghūn- Nomadic Rival?" in *The Seljuqs, Politics, Society and Culture*, ed. Christian Lange and Sungül Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 99-116. Rudi Paul Lindner, who has worked extensively on

the actual letter was not preserved in our sources, but sources have provided us with a summary of its contents according to which the Seljuqs were warned not to expand further but were allowed to keep what they had conquered.⁵⁵

Sultan Ṭughril died in 1063 without producing a son. His nephew, Alp Arsalān (r. 1063-1072), the son of Chaghri seized power. He was the ruler of Khurasan after his father's death and upon hearing the news of Ṭughril's death advanced westwards. It was in Alp Arsalān's reign and that of his successor, Malikshāh (r. 1072-1092), that the Seljuq Empire reached its peak in terms of territory.

It is also during Alp Arsalān's reign that Seljuq historiography began. It is not easy to investigate Seljuq historiographical works, since not many have survived. Some have survived partially or in the form of abridgments in other sources and the ones that have come down to us only have one manuscript. The scarcity of Seljuq historiographical works is also the reason that many scholars, like Julie Meisami, believe in the Seljuq rulers' lack of interest in historiography. According to her, Iranian administrators were less eager to immortalise the actions of the Seljuq rulers, compared to the Ghaznavid rulers, and recurrent power struggle after the death of Malikshāh made history writing even more difficult.⁵⁶ In contrast, Elton Daniel focuses more on the possibility of many Seljuq sources being lost by pointing out that we are already aware of the names of a few lost works via existing sources, but the number of lost sources might have been higher.⁵⁷ Moreover, we may not have an abundant amount of historical works, but we do have significant literary production in other genres such as mirror for princes and poetry.⁵⁸

Cahen has categorized Seljuq historiography into three types of pan-Islamic, regional, and dynastic.⁵⁹ It is true that the existing works, save for one (the *Maliknāma*), were not commissioned by the Great Seljuqs themselves. Rather in this era, small courts within the Seljuq empire provided patronage for authors.⁶⁰ An important example of this is *Mujmal al-Tavārikh va al-Qiṣaṣ*, a general history written for the Kakuyid Atabegs of Yazd (1050-1141).⁶¹

nomadic tribes also mentions this traditional custom. According to him, "the tribesmen supported not the eldest son, but the candidate who best represented their interests." Rudi Paul Lindner, "What Was a Nomadic Tribe?" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24.4 (1982): 693.

⁵⁵ Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronology of Bar Hebraeus*, trans. Wallis Budge (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2019), vol.1, 203-204.

⁵⁶ Meisami, *Persian Historiography*, 142.

⁵⁷ Daniel, "Rise and Development", 149-150.

⁵⁸ The term 'mirrors for princes' will be explained later on pp.49-50.

⁵⁹ Claude Cahen, "The Historiography of the Seljuq Period," in *Les peuples musulmans dans l'histoire médiévale*, ed. Claude Cahen (Presses de l'Ifpo, 1977), 38, no.3.

⁶⁰ Aptin Khanbaghi has demonstrated how the Turkic dynasties of the Ghaznavids, and the Seljuqs participated in spreading Persian from Khurasan to the other parts of their territories. See: Aptin Khanbaghi, "Champions of the Persian Language: The Mongols or the Turks?" in *The Mongols' Middle East: Continuity and Transformation in Ilkhanid Iran*, ed. Bruno De Nicola and Charles Melville (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 193-215.

⁶¹ For more on this, see: Meisami, *Persian Historiography*, 188-209.

The first source patronized by the Great Seljuqs, the *Maliknāma*, was produced to legitimise Seljuq rule. This source is unfortunately lost, and we are only informed of it by other sources, especially by *Rawzat al-Ṣafā* of the Timurid historian, Mīrkhvānd and the Syrian historian Bar Hebraeus.⁶² The *Maliknāma* was a work of propaganda, an image given by the Seljuqs of their origin and drew on materials from their oral history.⁶³ It is not exactly clear in what language it was written; Peacock lists Turkish, Arabic and Persian for the *Maliknāma*'s language,⁶⁴ while Cahen believes it was written in Persian.⁶⁵ In whatever language it was composed, there is no evidence that it contained poetry as well.

The second state-sponsored source is a regional history called the *Fārsnāma*.⁶⁶ As the title suggests it is a local history of the province of Fars written by Ibn Balkhī in 1116. In the introduction, the author informs us that he was commissioned by Sultan Muḥammad (r. 1105-1118) to write a book on history of Fars, as it had been the centre of power for a long time and in this book, he was requested to discuss the regions of Fars, its financial resources, the people, and their customs as well as their history.⁶⁷ The author surpassed this request by not only discussing the aforementioned issues, but also by reminding his readers of the ancient glory of Fars.⁶⁸ Ibn Balkhī, unlike Rāvandī, did not apply poetry to achieve his purpose, rather his efforts are more visible through the structure based on the classes (*ṭabaqāt*) of ancient Iranian kings and in fact very similar to the structure that the historians, Bayzāvī and Rashīd al-Dīn applied one and two centuries later.

The *Maliknāma* and the *Fārsnāma* are the only works commissioned by a sultan as far as we know. In contrast, there is a significant amount of literary production, including historical works, which were supported by the Seljuq sultans and their vassals- after their composition- or dedicated to them; not to mention that the court of Sultan Sanjar (r. 1118-1157) was home to many poets. It is likely that the relationship between authors and their patrons was reversed in this period. In other words, while the rulers of pre-Seljuq era, especially the Buyids and the Samanids, were interested in commissioning historical books themselves, the Seljuq rulers welcomed and sponsored the production and did not necessarily commission them.⁶⁹

⁶² Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronology*, 195-196.

⁶³ Andrew Peacock, "Court Historiography of the Seljuq Empire in Iran and Iraq: Reflections on Content, Authorship and Language," *Iranian Studies* 47:2 (2014): 331-332 & 345.

⁶⁴ Peacock, 330.

⁶⁵ Claude Cahen, "Le Malik-nameh et l'histoire des origines seljukides," *Oriens* 2.1 (1949): 32.

⁶⁶ In this period, some sources were written based on the order of sultans, while some other were written by the authors' own initiatives and then were offered to rulers or courtiers and received a reward or an amount of money.

⁶⁷ Ibn Balkhī, *Fārsnāma*, ed. Guy Le Strange & Reynold Alleyne Nicholson (Tehran: Asāṭir, 1384/2005), 2-3.

⁶⁸ Writing regional histories is also seen an attempt to situate various regions into the history of Islam and Muslim world. See: Sarah Savant, *The New Muslims of Post-Conquest Iran: Tradition, Memory, and Conversion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 127-129.

⁶⁹ Peacock, "Court Historiography," 335.

As we get closer to the end of the Seljuq reign, more historical works were produced, especially in western regions of the empire such as the region *‘Irāq-i ‘Ajam* (translated as Persian Iraq, roughly west and northwest of modern Iran).⁷⁰ It is during this time that the most significant dynastic history was written. It is called the *Saljūqnāma* and was written in Persian by Ṣāḥib al-Dīn Nayshābūrī in 1170. The author was an *adīb* and historian at the court of Sultan Arslan (r. 1160-1177).⁷¹ As Rāvandī states in his *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*, the *Saljūqnāma* had been the basis of his work.⁷² Indeed, Rāvandī did not only use the *Saljūqnāma* for its historical information, but also, repeated some of the *Saljūqnāma*’s passages verbatim. Almost all the verses in the work were included in Rāvandī’s text as well. The main difference between the historical information of the *Saljūqnāma* and *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* concerns the reign of Ṭughril III and the aftermath of his fall, since Rāvandī himself lived in that period and was a witness to the events himself.

Historiography of the Seljuq period is by no means homogeneous. Both Cahen and Meisami have noticed a separation between Arabic and Persian works on the Seljuqs.⁷³ In other words, Arabic and Persian histories were produced in two completely different spheres and do not seem to have had significant influence on each other. Although the Seljuqs are often celebrated for connecting the east and west of the ancient Iranian territory for the first time after the Islamic conquest, the books which were written in the eastern and western territories of their empire have different focuses as well as having the authors with various backgrounds.⁷⁴ *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq* and *al-Sīyāq li-tārīkh Nayshābūr* are both regional histories, one on the city of Bayhaq (modern day Sabzivār in the northwest of Iran) and another on Nayshābūr written in the east of the empire.⁷⁵ Their authors, Ibn Funduq and ‘Abd al-Ghāfir Fārsī respectively, came from religious families (families of the *‘ulamā*). They also show a significant interest in religious history of their regions as well as relating life stories of the local *‘ulamā*. On the other hand, the works from the western part of the empire emphasize political and administrative history while having authors with administrative backgrounds (or *dīvānī*). Therefore, there seems to have been a wide gap between the courts of the east and the west.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Peacock believes that factionalism in the west was the reason for the proliferation of historical works. While the eastern administration was more stable, the western territory was the focus of struggle for sultans and as a result, they could not exert control over their bureaucrats as easily as Sultan Sanjar in the east. Moreover, many of the administrators were chosen and sent by Sultan Sanjar to the west, as Sanjar was considered the overlord at this time. See: Peacock, “Court Historiography,” 341.

⁷¹ Naser Sedqī, *Tārīkh-nigārī dar Īrān-i ‘Aṣr-i Saljūqī* (Tehran: Pazhūhishkade-yi Tārīkh-i Islām, 1393/2014), 340-341.

⁷² Rāvandī, *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr va Āyat al-Surūr*, 64-65.

⁷³ Cahen, “The Historiography of the Seljuq Period,” n.29; Meisami, *Persian Historiography*, 144.

⁷⁴ Sedqī, *Tārīkh-nigārī dar Īrān-i ‘Aṣr-i Saljūqī*, 81-94.

⁷⁵ For more, see: Sedqī, *Tārīkh-nigārī dar Īrān-i ‘Aṣr-i Saljūqī*, 134-137 & 152-157.

⁷⁶ Reproduction and distribution of manuscripts were also other issues that should be taken into account. The *Maliknāma* was commissioned by court and produced there, but none of the Seljuq writers seem to have had accessed to it or even have seen it, let alone using it in their books.

In terms of applying poetry in historiography, three books can be distinguished: the first one, *Mujmal al-Tavārīkh va al-Qiṣaṣ* written by an unknown author in 1126, is the first Seljuq history which included *Shāhnāma* verses by way of historical information.⁷⁷ As we approach closer to the time of Rāvandī, more authors start to include poetry in their work. The second noticeable example is *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq* which mostly makes use of Arabic verses, while the third, *ʿIqd al-ʿUlā lil-Mawqif al-Aʿlā*, was written by Afzal al-Dīn Kirmānī in 1189. The book is a history of the last years of Seljuq rule over Kerman and its aftermath. It is perhaps the closest source to *Rāḥat al-Sudūr* in terms of language and making use of poetry, both Arabic and Persian, as well as Qurʾanic verses. It is in this line of literary production that we can situate *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*. In the following section, I will consider closely both the author and his purpose for writing the book.

2.2 Rāvandī and His Milieu

Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr va Āyat al-Surūr (hereafter *RṢ*) is a dynastic history of the Great Seljuqs written by Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān al-Rāvandī around 1205-6.⁷⁸ Almost all our information about the author can be gathered from the introduction of *RṢ* itself. According to his introduction, Rāvandī comes from a small village, Rāvand, in the vicinity of Kashan. He lost his father when he was young and just finished his elementary studies in Persian and Arabic, so the responsibility of his education fell upon his uncle, Tāj al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Rāvandī who, according to the author, was knowledgeable in every field, including poetry, jurisprudence, exegesis, Qurʾan studies and *ḥadīth*.⁷⁹ The author spent ten years in his uncle's care while also traveling to various cities of Iraq. During these years, he acquired every skill of calligraphy to the extent that he could 'write in seventy different calligraphic styles' along with bookbinding and gilding.⁸⁰ Calligraphy was a field in which the author's family was famous. Another of his uncles, Zayn al-Dīn Rāvandī, was particularly talented, and was summoned by Sultan Ṭughril III in order to teach him the ways and secrets of this art.⁸¹

When Tughril III had become quite the calligrapher, the Sultan undertook the huge project of scribing the Qurʾan. In doing so, he did not refrain from any expense and hired painters and gilders to adorn the pages he had written. It is through this project that our

⁷⁷ Nasrin Askari, *The Medieval Reception of the Shāhnāma as a Mirror for Princes* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 68.

⁷⁸ Various translations have been suggested for the book's title, such as 'Ease for Breasts and Marvel of Happiness' (Meisami, *Persian Historiography*, 237), 'Recreation of the Breast and Symbol of Joy' (Jan Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1968), 237), and as 'Comfort of Hearts and Wonder of Delights' (Dagmar Reidel, "Searching for the Islamic Episteme: The Status of Historical Information in Medieval Middle Eastern Anthological Writing" (PhD diss, Indiana University, 2004), iii).

⁷⁹ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 40.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Rāvandī, 43. The editor of *RṢ*, Mohammad Eqbal stated that Rāvandī's family acquired such a reputation in calligraphy that a form of script, *khaṭṭ-i Kāshī* (script of Kashan) was popularised by them. Rāvandī, *RṢ*, xvii.

author was first introduced to the court.⁸² Rāvandī was so fascinated by his patron that he vowed to write a history of the reign of Sultan Ṭughril III.⁸³ The author did not get a chance to realize his wish, as his patron died in the battle with Takish Khwrazmshah (r. 1172-1200) bringing the Great Seljuq dynasty to an end.

With his patron, Sultan Ṭughril, dead, Rāvandī lost the security of having a benefactor. He retreated more into solitude, keeping himself busy with reading about poetry, jurisprudence, and other branches of religion. After a few years of living in relative poverty and at the same time, pursuing his education, he informs us that he came to the realization that it is only one's 'good name' that remains in this world.⁸⁴ Therefore, Rāvandī decided to write a book which would ensure that the name of Rāvandī would be well-remembered. Feeling indebted to the Seljuqs whose government provided him with learning opportunities, Rāvandī desired to offer the book to a member of the Seljuq family.⁸⁵ His attention was drawn to the Seljuq rulers of Anatolia. Around 1202, when Rāvandī started to write the book, Sultan Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymānshāh ruled over Anatolia. The author informs us that he was first inclined to offer the book to Rukn al-Dīn, but he learnt that he was a usurper and therefore, decided to dedicate the book to the man he considered to be the true ruler of Anatolia, Sultan Ghīyāṣ al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I, who regained the throne in 1204.⁸⁶

Despite the fact that Rāvandī allocated so many poems throughout the book to Sultan Kaykhusraw, he did not completely manage to erase the traces of his first dedicatee, Sultan Rukn al-Dīn. Occasionally, we see some passages in the book that clearly refer to Sultan Rukn al-Dīn's deeds, such as the campaign of Abkhaz and Caucasus.⁸⁷ Rāvandī became aware of some of Sultan Kaykhusraw I's achievements through Abī Bakr ibn Abī al-'Alā' al-Rūmī [*sic*], a merchant whom Rāvandī met in his place of residence, Hamadan, when he was finishing *RṢ*. Extremely enthralled by *RṢ*, al-Rūmī asked Rāvandī for his permission to present the book to Sultan Kaykhusraw I.⁸⁸ It is not clear whether Rāvandī made the journey himself as well or not. There is no evidence in the sources indicating Rāvandī's presence or the reception of the book.

⁸² A manuscript of this Qur'an known as *Qur'ān-i Rāvandī* (ms.2261 Library of Āstān-i Quds-i Razavī) has survived. It was scribed by Rāvandī's uncle, Tāj al-Dīn, in 586/1190 and illuminated by Rāvandī himself in 587/1191. Rāvandī mentioned this Qur'an in *RṢ* as well. (see: Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 44).

⁸³ Rāvandī, 44.

⁸⁴ Rāvandī, 59. This theme can be found in other sources too, see: Afzal al-Dīn Kirmānī, *'Iqd al-'Ulā lil Mawqif al-A'āl*, ed. Ali Mohammad Ameri Nayini (Tehran: Rūzbahān, 2536/ 1978), 62.

⁸⁵ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 62. "و چون تحصیل علوم در دولت آل سلجوق کرده بودم و مشایخ و استادان دعاگوی داعیان و هواخواهان ایشان بودند و مدارس عراق و خیرات در آفاق ازیشان و بندگان ظاهر شد خواستم که این کتاب بنام سلطانی سلجوقی باشد."

⁸⁶ Rāvandī, 461. "گفت این اعجوبه جهان را من بدان حضرت رسانم."

⁸⁷ Rāvandī, 26. For more examples, see xx. On this campaign, see: Ibn Bībī, *Tārīkh-i Salājaqa-yi Rūm*, ed. Mohammad Javad Mashkour (Tehran: Kitāb-furūshī-yi Tihirān, 1350/1972), 21-3. Another example of this discrepancy is a poem included at the end of *RṢ*. The poem in *RṢ* clearly states that it is in praise of Sultan Kaykhusraw. However, the same poem appears in the manuscript of *Mu'nis al-Ahrār fī Daqā'iq al-Ash'ār*, an anthology of Persian poetry completed in 1341 by Muḥammad ibn Badr al-Dīn Jājarmī, where it is addressed to Sultan Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymānshāh. See: Alexander Morton, "The *Mu'nis al-Ahrār* and Its Twenty-Nine Chapters," in *Illustrated Poetry and Epic Images: Persian Paintings of the 1330s and 1340s*, ed. Marie Lukens Swietochowsky and Stefano Carboni (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), 49-66.

⁸⁸ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 462.

The historian, Andrew Peacock believes that Rāvandī “appears to have travelled to Konya for the purpose of presenting it to the ruler.”⁸⁹ However, no evidence has been presented. The editor of *RŞ*, Mohammad Eqbal shares the same belief. He downplays the role of al-Rūmī by indicating that he only encouraged Rāvandī in his endeavours.⁹⁰ Eqbal’s evidence for holding such a belief is a sentence in the opening of the book: “since this book has come to the attention of the pillar of this world and looked upon approvingly.”⁹¹ Contrary to this vague reference (assuming that ‘the pillar of this world’ refers to Sultan Kaykhusraw I), there is a clear sentence in the epilogue of *RŞ* which demonstrates that Rāvandī had not been in the presence of Sultan Kaykhusraw I: “God almighty ... may deliver this book to His Majesty merrily and auspiciously and may God grant me the opportunity to pay him homage.”⁹² Since the author uses the phrase ‘*daryāft-i muṣul*’, which can be translated as ‘to be granted an audience’, the possibility of the book having been presented by the author seems slim.

Whether Rāvandī went to Konya or not, we do not hear about the book in our sources until 24 April 1238 (1 Ramaḍān 635 A.H.), the date of its only extant manuscript. The manuscript was written in *naskh* script by Ḥāj Ilyās ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Qūnavī, meaning that the work attracted some attention during the reign of Sultan Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46).⁹³ The book was also in the possession of the Ilkhanid official and historian ‘Aṭā-Malik Juvainī (1226-1283), the Ottoman Sultan Bayazid II (r. 1481-1512), and an unknown figure, Ḥaj Muṣṭafā (with his seal dated 1765) which speaks to its manuscript circulation to some degree.⁹⁴

The ideological foundation of the Rum Seljuq Sultanate and its development is beyond the scope of this study and the possible reason for this apparent attention to *RŞ* is not completely evident. The manuscript was scribed in the early years of Kaykhusraw II’s reign and as is suggested by the sources, Kaykhusraw II’s ascension was not a straightforward transfer of power. His father, Sultan Kayqubād (1220-37) had three sons of whom Kaykhusraw was the eldest. The other two, ‘Izz al-Dīn and Rukn al-Dīn, were from Kayqubād’s Ayyubid wife. The court historian Ibn Bībī (d. 1285) informs us that Kayqubād designated ‘Izz al-Dīn as his successor and made the emirs take an oath of allegiance to him.⁹⁵ After the death of Sultan Kayqubād, a number of the *amīrs* (commander), including Sa’d al-Dīn Köpek, assisted

⁸⁹ Andrew Peacock, “Court Historiography of the Seljuq Empire in Iran and Iraq: Reflections on Content, Authorship and Language,” *Iranian Studies* (2014): 4. [10.1080/00210862.2013.860331](https://doi.org/10.1080/00210862.2013.860331)

⁹⁰ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, xx.

⁹¹ Rāvandī, 64. "چه این کتاب در نظر قطب عالم آمده است و پسندیده"

⁹² Rāvandī, 464. "ملک تعالی ... رسیدن این کتاب بدان حضرت خجسته و مبارک گرداناد و بنده را نیز در یافت مثول در خدمت روزی کناد."

⁹³ The manuscript is kept in the National Library of France (BnF) catalogued as Supplement Persan 1314.

⁹⁴ For more on the details of *RŞ*’s manuscript, see: Riedel, “*Searching for the Islamic Episteme: The Status of Historical Information in Medieval Middle Eastern Anthological Writing*” 78- 83.

⁹⁵ Ibn Bībī, *Akhbār-i Salājaqa-yi Rūm*, ed. Mohammad Javad Mashkour (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī-yi Tihirān, 1350/1974), 205-206.

Kaykhusraw in gaining power.⁹⁶ In the first two years of Kaykhusraw II's reign, Köpek seems to have increased his influence, as he was able to discard or isolate other emirs who helped him and Sultan Kaykhusraw II before. An account of his exertion of power was recorded by Ibn Bībī where we can also find the narrative of Köpek's death in 1238. Sara Nur Yıldız suggests that the fact the *RŞ* manuscript was copied in 1238 could have been due to the state of affairs between Sultan Kaykhusraw II and Köpek. In other words, considering *RŞ*'s ethical and didactic aspects, it could have been an appropriate work to introduce just rulership to the new Sultan.⁹⁷ Apart from that, Songül Mecit has demonstrated in her work how the ideology of the Rum Seljuqs was re-formulated during the reigns of the predecessors of Sultan Kaykhusraw II, Kaykāvūs I (1211-20) and Kayqubād II (r. 1249-1257). In this course of reformulation, the Seljuq lineage came to be more important, for the Great Seljuq dynasty had come to an end following their defeat in 1194.⁹⁸ As the present study aims to demonstrate, *RŞ* is an attempt to establish legitimacy and ideology with an emphasis on Sultan Kaykhusraw I, but it could have been easily utilized for the other Seljuq Sultans as well, especially after the period of upheaval seen in the early years of Sultan Kaykhusraw II's reign.

2.3 Language and Structure

According to Waldman, it is in the structure of the work that we can find the author's values and the points which he/she wishes to communicate.⁹⁹ Analysing structure does not only entail how the chapters are organised and adjusted (in this case in the edited volume of *RŞ*, however close it might be to the original manuscript), but it also looks into the structure of the manuscript and the possible differences. In the 12th century, the purpose of copying a book was transmitting the benefits and often didactic lessons to the purported audience which meant that the roles of authors, translators and scribes were often flexible; any one of them could add, delete, or expand some point in order to make it more understandable and useful according to his own view.¹⁰⁰ That is why it is necessary first to look at the structure of the extant manuscript of *RŞ*, before taking a look at the language and structure of the text itself as transmitted in the manuscript, which will come later in this chapter.

⁹⁶ For more on this, see: Songül Mecit, "*The Rum Seljuqs (473-641/1081-1243): Ideology, Mentality and Self-image*" (PhD diss, University of Edinburgh, 2009), 170-175.

⁹⁷ Sara Nur Yıldız, "A Nadīm for the Sultan: Rāwandī and the Anatolian Seljuqs," in *The Seljuqs of Anatolia*, ed. Andrew Peacock & Sara Nur Yıldız (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 104-105.

⁹⁸ Songül Mecit, "Kingship and Ideology under the Rum Seljuqs," in *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society and Culture*, ed. Christian Lange & Songül Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 63-78.

⁹⁹ Waldman, "Tarikh-i Bayhaqi," 25 & 32.

¹⁰⁰ Peacock, *Medieval Islamic Historiography*, 172-173.

2.3.1 The Manuscript of *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*

Unfortunately, however, we do not have enough materials in order to provide a full picture of the manuscript tradition of *RṢ*, even though there must have been one; especially considering the fact that the manuscript owned by Juvainī family and found its way to the Ottoman court. However, there is only one manuscript of *RṢ* has been identified, catalogued as Supplement Persan 1314, which is kept in the National Library of France (BnF). It was written in *naskh* script by a Ḥāj Ilyās ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Qūnavī on 24 April 1238 (1 Ramaḍān 635) during the reign of Sultan Khaykhusraw II of the Rum Sultanate (r. 1237-46). The scribe’s *nisba*, Qūnavī, indicates that he may have been from Konya but that is all the information we have about this person.

It has been argued that Seljuq Konya was a centre of manuscript production.¹⁰¹ Konya with its abundant madrasas, was indeed a home to religious scholars and Sufis. However, this reputation was only established after the conquest of Anatolia by the Mongols in 1243. The only manuscript of *RṢ* was written in 1238 when the Seljuqs imperial image was at the beginning of its development in Konya; an image that is mostly demonstrated in architecture (*madrasas*, *khānqāhs*, mosques, caravanserais), starting from the reign of Qilij Arsalān II (r. 1156-1192).¹⁰² It was only in the 1270s that we can recognize a certain ‘School of Konya’ in manuscript production which displays illumination among its main features.¹⁰³ The *RṢ* manuscript thus does not fit into this category, but seems to be akin to the manuscripts produced earlier in Iran.

In the *RṢ*’s manuscript, the chapters are separated by a title, usually written in red and in a larger size.¹⁰⁴ The same visual method can also be applied to verses, parables, and didactic anecdotes found in the text. The scribe does not seem to follow a consistent system for including poetry. Verses are often separated from the main body of the text by the word *shi‘r* (poem) written in red, but there are a few examples where it says *bayt* (verse), despite the fact that more than one verse is cited.¹⁰⁵ The same method is true for proverbs and didactic anecdotes. They are distinguished by the words *ḥikmat* (wise words/didactic anecdote) and *maṣāl* (parable). These words are sometimes written properly in line with the text, as if they are part of the text and sometimes seem to be squeezed in afterwards above the line. The inconsistency in writing can also be seen in the verses themselves. There are instances (see Figure 2) where there is a ‘comma’ between two hemistiches, or one before the first hemistich, one in between two hemistiches, and one after the second hemistich, but also

¹⁰¹ Cailah Jackson, *Islamic Manuscripts of Late Medieval Rūm, 1270s-1370s* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 5.

¹⁰² Richard McClary, *Rum Seljuq Architecture, 1170-1220: The Patronage of Sultans* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 23.

¹⁰³ Jackson, *Islamic Manuscripts*, 3.

¹⁰⁴ This is a common practice in manuscript production where chapters are only separated by titles. These titles are called “*sar-faṣl*”. Ali Safari Aq Qaleh, *Nuskha-Shinākht* (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1390/2011), 69.

¹⁰⁵ This is a common practice in Persian manuscripts, where authors use *bayt* as a collective noun.

there are examples of placing ‘commas’ in other ways, such as putting three ‘commas’ after one verse or between two hemistiches, placing one ‘comma’ over another two.¹⁰⁶ There is no way of knowing if this is how Rāvandī wrote them or if this is the innovation of the scribe but playing with ‘commas’ seems to have been an attempt at improving the aesthetic aspect of the manuscript.



Figure 2: Depiction of dots and commas in *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*, BnF, ms. Supplement Persan 1314, folio 6.

My last remark on the manuscript is its paratext and marginalia which were not considered by the editor, Mohammad Eqbal, in his edition of the text. The manuscript's first page is written in various hand, some of which are unfortunately not legible. The first line in the paratext reads ‘the book of *Rṣ* in the history of Kaykhusraw and the Seljuq kings,’ even though the book does not cover the history of Kaykhusraw's reign.¹⁰⁷ The first line containing the title starts with the word ‘*kitāb*’ (book) written in an enormous size. The word is slightly smudged, but it appears that it was written over something else, since small traces of lines and words are still visible. Moreover, on the same page the name of ‘*Ṣāḥib ‘Alā al-Dīn ‘Aṭā-malik*’ appears. Assuming that he is the same ‘*Aṭā-malik Juvainī*, the author of *Tārīkh-i Jahāngusha*, we can speculate that the book was in the possession of Juvainī and that at least

¹⁰⁶ I have used the word ‘comma’ here loosely since punctuation symbols were not used in Persian at the time of the manuscript production. The coma here is merely important for its shape and it does not demonstrate the comma as a punctuational value.

¹⁰⁷ کتاب راحة الصدور في تواريخ كيخسرو و آل سلجوق

some of the lines on the first page of the manuscript were added more than a century later. It is a similar case for the paratext (a few verses written in handwriting) and the last page of the manuscript which quotes a poem from Hilāl al-Šābī in Arabic.¹⁰⁸ The existence of these various lines may not provide us more information about the author or his book, but it definitely speaks to the circulation of the book and its owners.

2.3.2 The Language of *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*

RṢ is considered a work of rhetorical prose (*naṣr-i fannī*) by scholars of Persian literature.¹⁰⁹ However, its style of writing is by no means homogeneous and not all parts of *RṢ* can be counted as rhetorical prose since there are also parts where the style is more akin to simple prose (*naṣr-i sāda*). Looking at the introduction however, with the rhetorical figures applied both in imitation of the author's predecessors and in an innovative way one can understand why this work is described by one author as a "fine example of rhetorical prose."¹¹⁰

Rāvandī opens his book with a 14-verse poem (see the poem in 2.4.3) in praise of God in *mutaqārib* meter, the meter of the *Shāhnāma*.¹¹¹ As Julie Meisami has pointed out, opening an exordium with a poem was not customary for prose historical works and the practice was mostly seen in *maṣnavī* works.¹¹² Indeed, the opening poem is a reminder of a *maṣnavī* work; it has an undeniable similarity with the *Shāhnāma*.¹¹³ What gives away that it is not from the *Shāhnāma* is the usage of several Arabic words, significantly more so than the usage of Arabic

¹⁰⁸ It is unfortunate that we cannot know more about the extras and marginalia and possible reasons of their addition to the manuscript, but it is intriguing that most of these extras are in poetry endorsing or admiring what has already been written in the book. For instance:

این شیوه نو که در جهان آوردم	جان کاسته ام تا بمیان آوردم
تو جان برو که علم خط در	چون لقمه ترا سوی دهان آوردم
هر جا که دقیقه و خط یافته ام	اندر طی این درج بهم یافته ام
یکساله رخت را بدو روز آوردم	انصاف بده که تنگ بشتافته ام

'This new method that I brought to the world/ I have suffered in inventing it// the science of the line .../ I have brought for you like a bite of food to your mouth// Anywhere that I discovered minutes and lines/ I have weaved it here (in my work)// I have shortened a one-hundred way to two days/ Be fair, I have hastened.'

(ms. supplement persan 1314, folio 172.)

¹⁰⁹ Bahar, *Sabkshināsī*, v.2, 406; Sirous Shamisa, *Sabkshināsī-yi Naṣr* (Tehran: Nashr-i Mitrā, 1398/ 2019), 125.

¹¹⁰ Bahar, *Sabkshināsī*, v.2, 406.

¹¹¹ فعولن فعولن فعل

¹¹² Julie Scott Meisami, "Rāvandī's *Rāḥat al-ṣudūr*: History or Hybrid?" *Edebiyat* 5.2(1994): 188.

¹¹³ *Maṣnavī* is a poetic template where each verse has a set of different rhyming words. Because of this feature, *maṣnavī* is a template best suited to compose long narratives such as the *Shāhnāma*.

words in the *Shāhnāma* such as *ṭarab* (mirth),¹¹⁴ and a Qur'anic concept, the story of *Rajm*.¹¹⁵ Other than these, the poet uses the same vocabulary to praise God and to discuss the creation of the world. Examples of this similarity can be found in the following hemistiches:

Firdawsī says:	Rāvandī says:
چو دریا و چون دشت و چون کوه و راغ¹¹⁶ Like sea and like field and like mountain and meadow.	چو آب و چو آتش چو باد و مغاگ¹¹⁷ Like water and like fire, like wind and chasm.
خرد را و جان را همی سنجد او¹¹⁸ He measures wisdom and life.	خرد را و جان را نخست آفرید¹¹⁹ He created wisdom and life first.

As can be seen in the first example, the structures of the two hemistiches are the same, while in the second example, the first half of two hemistiches are exactly the same. These are only two instances of the similarity of the vocabulary between *Shāhnāma* verses and those of *RŞ*. Ample examples of this can be found throughout the book.¹²⁰

As we go further in the introduction, Rāvandī makes use of language in such a way that the readers would find themselves challenged to figure out if this is prose or poetry. In other

¹¹⁴John Perry, "Šāh-nāma v. Arabic Words," *Elr*, last updated on June 23rd, 2010, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/sah-nama-v-arabic-words> ; see also: Mahmoud Omidshah, "Poetics and Projection: Nationalist and Neo-Orientalist Interpretations of Iran National Epic the Shahnameh," a Lecture on October 17th, 2007, accessed on November 23rd, 2020, <https://www.scribd.com/document/13779387/Poetics-and-Projection-Nationalist-and-Neo-orientalist-interpretations-of-Iran-s-national-epic-the-Shahnameh>

¹¹⁵ This Qur'anic story, whose details are scattered in various parts of the Qur'an, is about the devil's efforts to ascend to the higher parts of the sky where the angels are residing, in order to listen to the angels thus uncover secrets of the universe. According to the Qur'an, whenever the devil tries to climb higher, he will be attacked by stones. Fragments of this story can be found in the Qur'an 67:5 and 37:10. For more on Qur'anic interpretations of this story, see: Ruhollah Najafi, "Bāz-kāvi-yi Guzāra-yi Qur'ānī-yi Rajm-i Shayāṭīn bā Shahāb-hā," *'Ulūm-i Qur'ān va Ḥadīṣ* 86 (1390/2011): 135-164.

¹¹⁶ Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, ed. Jalal Khaleqi Motlaq (New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 1366/ 1987), vol.1, 6.

¹¹⁷ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 1.

¹¹⁸ Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, vol.1, 1.

¹¹⁹ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 1.

¹²⁰ The subject will be addressed again in this chapter where it is discussed in detail.

words, Rāvandī decreased the distance between prose and poetry by applying this specific language.¹²¹ This type of prose, known as ‘rhythmic prose’ (*naṣr-i mawzūn*),¹²² is mostly used in Sufi works, the oldest of which are the works of the twelfth century Sufi, Khvāja ‘Abd Allāh Anṣārī.¹²³ Rhythmic prose in Persian usually involves using *saj’* (rhyming words) recurrently. However, what we can attest in Rāvandī’s introduction is a higher and more complicated type of rhythmic prose called “rhythmic and well-balanced prose” (*naṣr-i mawzūn va mutivāzin*).¹²⁴ This style involves composing two sentences in which every word is matched with another word in the second sentence with regard to their meter. The following example is selected from the introduction of *RṢ*:

"صفت خالقیش نه بایجاد مخلوقانست و نعت رازقیش نه بابداع مرزوقانست"¹²⁵

Sifat-i khāliqīsh na bi-jād-i makh-lūqān-ast va na‘t-i rāziqīsh na bi-ibdā‘-i marzūqān-ast.

‘His quality as a creator lies not in the invention of creations, nor does His nature as a provider lie in the generation of provisions.’

صفت	خالقی	ایجاد	مخلوق
Si-fat	Khā-li-qī	Ī-jād	Makh-lūq
نعت	رازقی	ابداع	مرزوق
Na‘t	Rā-zi-qī	Ib-dā‘	Mar-zūq

As is demonstrated by the table, six words of this sentence were composed in the same metrical pattern two by two as well as the fact that they rhyme.¹²⁶ *Şifat* and *na‘t* in this

¹²¹ Julia Rubanovich, “Literary Canon and Patterns of Evaluation in Persian Prose on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion,” *Studia Iranica* 32(1) (2003): 51.

¹²² Though rhythmic prose, otherwise known as poetic prose, is a style between prose and poetry, it should not be confused with a prosimetrum which is a combination of prose and poetry. On prosimetrum see: Terry Brogan, “Prosimetrum,” in *The Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Roland Greene et al (Princeton University Press, 2017), 1115-6. It is also important to point out that *RṢ* is a work of prosimetrum, but while prosimetrum refers to the usage of poetry and prose together, it is not relevant to rhythmic prose. Although rhythmic prose makes use of poetics in various ways, it is still considered prose. For more on *RṢ* and prosimetrum see Julie Scott Meisami, “Mixed Prose and Verse in Medieval Persian Literature,” in *Prosimetrum: Crosscultural Perspectives on Narrative in Prose and Verse*, ed. Joseph Harris & Karl Reichl (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), 259-319.

¹²³ On Khvāja ‘Abd Allāh Anṣārī and his style see: Bahar, *Sabkshināsī*, vol.2: 240-241; Shamisa, *Sabkshināsī-yi Naṣr*, 73-74; Zabihullah Safa, *Tārīkh-i Adabīyat dar Īrān* (Tehran: Firdaws, 1369/ 1990), v.2, 882-884.

¹²⁴ This style has precedents in both Arabic literature and Middle Persian poetry. For more on this see: Johannes de Bruijn, “Arabic Influences on Persian Literature,” in *General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed. Johannes de Bruijn (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 369-384; Siroos Shamisa, *Sabkshināsī-yi Naṣr*, 74 & 335; on Middle Persian poetry see: *The Literature of Pre-Islamic Iran*, ed. Ronald Emmerick & Maria Macuch (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009).

¹²⁵ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 3.

¹²⁶ For more on Persian meters, see: Bo Utas, “Prosody: Meter and Rhyme,” in *General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed. Johannes de Bruijn (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 71-122.

sentence are also rhyming words, albeit not in the same meter, but close enough. When the readers read that sentence out loud, it will sound like two parts of a verse, rather than a prose text. In other words, even the parts that were written in 'prose' still possess poetic qualities.

The third rhetorical device is perhaps the most important one for Rāvandī to establish his talent in poetry and prose and to demonstrate his knowledge of both Persian and Arabic poetry. When praising Sultan Kaykhusraw II in the introduction, Rāvandī starts with mentioning his titles for nearly a whole page; almost all of these titles are in Arabic and written in *saj'*. Then he proceeds to a more poetic form of paying tribute to his patron by frequently applying the method of *taḥlīl* or *ḥall*.¹²⁷ *Taḥlīl* and *ḥall* both come from the Arabic root of ḥ-l-/ meaning to dissolve or to disintegrate.¹²⁸ As a rhetorical figure, it means to disintegrate a verse into small pieces of imagery or notions and reuse these images and notions in the form of prose text. The following passage is an example of such a method as utilized by Rāvandī where he re-applies the images from a verse composed originally by the twelfth century poet, Sayyid Ḥasan Ghaznavī (d.1169), known as Sayyid Asharf:

"آسمان بیسار او یمین خورده و آرزو از یمینش یسار برده

وی برده آرزو ز یمینت بسی یسار"

ای خورده آسمان بیسارت بسی یمین

'The sky has sworn to his left hand and the wish (as an entity) has acquired peace and wealth from his right hand.'¹²⁹

Both lines have the same meaning and same words. The only difference is that the first line is in rhymed prose and the second is a verse composed in the meter of *muḏārī'*.¹³⁰ It is also noteworthy that *taḥlīl* is not the only rhetorical figure used in this verse. The poet also applies the words *yamīn* and *yasār*, both of which have more than one meaning in the verse (thus, the rhetorical figure of *ihām*). *Yamīn* means the right hand and vow, while *yasār* means the left hand and wealth. Moreover, these two words are antonyms and using them in one single verse leads to the rhetorical figure of *tazād*.¹³¹

This is an example of *taḥlīl* where Rāvandī reuses other people's poetry in Persian, but he also makes use of Arabic poetry in the same way:

¹²⁷ Jalal al-Din Homa'i, *Funūn-i Balāghat va Ṣanā'āt-i Adabī* (Tehran: Mu'assisa-yi nashr-i humā, 1370/1991), 372-373.

¹²⁸ حلل

¹²⁹ The left hand is a metonym for anything worthless. In Persian literature, the right hand stands for generosity and wealth and thus is the exact opposite of the left hand.

¹³⁰ مفعول فاعلات مفاعیل فاعلن

¹³¹ On *tazād*, see: Rashīd Vatvāt, *Ḥadā'iq al-Siḥr fī Daqā'iq al-Shi'r* (Tehran: Kitābkhāna-yi Ṭahūrī, 1362/1983), 24-25.

"چهره روزگار بنور رویش روشن است..."

سعدت بگره وجهک الایام...¹³²

'The face of Time is illuminated because of his (the patron's) face.'

'Time is blessed by your forehead.'

Although they may seem different at first glance, they both describe the same concept which is showing the relationship between the shining face of the patron and the happiness of Time.

On another level, Rāvandī applies a method which not only demonstrates his deep knowledge of Persian and Arabic poetry, but also his ability to recall similar concepts in various poems. Here he includes an Arabic poem by Mu'ayyid al-Dīn Ṭuḡhrāyī (12th c.) in praise of the Seljuq ruler, Muḥammad ibn Malikshāh (r. 1105-18). Immediately after, he includes another poem by Sayyid Ḥassan Ghaznavī conveying similar concepts to the Arabic poem. An instance of this similarity is these two hemistiches:

"و الدهر کیف امرته لک طیع"¹³³

'And Time obeys whatever you command.'

"زمانه گوش بنهاده که تا رایت چه فرماید"¹³⁴

'Time is waiting for you to command it.'

As can be seen, the core concept in both hemistiches is the obedience of Time to the object of reverence.

The reverse of this method (*ḥall*) is the method of *'aqd* which means that a poet re-uses the concepts and/or imagery of a prose text in poetry;¹³⁵ in other words, the poet converts a piece of prose text into poetry. The following verses can be considered an example of this method:

"از سعادت ایام اوست که مشتری صاحبقرانی پیشه دارد وز لطافت طبع خود اوست که زهره تصنیف اغانی اندیشه دارد"

مشتری صاحبقرانی میکند

از سعادت‌ها که در ایام اوست

زهره تصنیف اغانی میکند"¹³⁶

وز لطافت‌ها که اندر طبع اوست

¹³² Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 21

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ عقد

¹³⁶ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 21.

‘It is through the auspiciousness of his days that Jupiter has become fortunate, and it is due to his tender nature that Venus is thinking of composing songs.

It is through the auspiciousness found in his days/ that Jupiter is claiming fortune.

And it is due to the tenderness found in his nature / that Venus composes songs.’

Given that both the prose text and the poem were composed by Rāvandī himself, it is hard to determine the order in which the author wrote the above pieces. In case of giving the priority to the verses, it would be another example of *tahlīl*; otherwise, it is an instance of the ‘*aqd*’ method. Both these methods are considered problematic from a modern point of view, but it may not have been considered as such during Seljuq period. In case of not having any added value, they can be classified as *sirqat-i adabī* (plagiarism).¹³⁷ It is not my intention to determine whether Rāvandī committed plagiarism or not, but in order to understand the author’s point of view, it is necessary to see how scholars in the field of eloquence regarded such techniques. In imitation of Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāt who discussed the concept and examples of plagiarism,¹³⁸ the renowned literary scholar, Jalal al-Din Homa’i has proposed a manner by which plagiarism can/cannot be assigned. According to him, if the purpose of the author/poet is to demonstrate his literary skills (especially in the ‘*aqd*’ method), then it is less of a theft. On the other hand, if the author/poet just steals the idea without adding anything new, it should be recognized as *sirqat-i adabī*.¹³⁹ Keeping in mind that this is a modern interpretation of *sirqat-i adabī*, there is a statement in *al-Mu’jam fī Ma’āyir al-Ash’ār al-‘Ajam* by Shams Qays al-Rāzī (13th c.) that is relevant to the technique that Rāvandī used here:

‘An outstanding poet and a dexterous author is the one [...] who composes in such a way that if his verse is disentangled [from rhyme and meter], it will turn into well-done (or: artful: *maṣnū’*) prose and if his prose is ordered, it will turn into natural (*maṭbū’*) verse.’¹⁴⁰

What al-Rāzī has indicated in this passage, some thirty years after Rāvandī, seems to be the exact description of the *ḥall* and ‘*aqd*’ techniques and it was clearly considered a highly appreciated practice. No matter if it was considered a theft in the later periods or not, what Rāvandī does here is a remarkable indicator of his literary talent, as are the other innovative literary devices applied by him and discussed earlier in this chapter. In the next section, I am going to investigate the way the text is structured.

¹³⁷ Homa’i, *Funūn-i Balāghat*, 371-373.

¹³⁸ Rashīd Vaṭvāt, *Ḥadā’iq al-Siḥr fī Daqā’iq al-Shi’r*, 72.

¹³⁹ Homa’i, *Funūn-i Balāghat*, 371-373.

¹⁴⁰ Shams Qays al-Rāzī, *Al-Mu’jam fī Ma’āyir al-Ash’ār al-‘Ajam* (Tehran: University of Tehran Press, 1956), 266-267. The translation is borrowed from Julia Rubanovich, “Literary Canon and Patterns of Evaluation in Persian Prose on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion,” *Studia Iranica* 32 (2003): 51.

2.3.4 The Structure of *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*'s Introduction

As mentioned in the previous section, *RṢ* begins with a 14-verse *maṣnavī* which continues by praising God using ornate prose, Persian poetry and Qur'anic verses. It was common practice to begin a book by praising God and Muḥammad and then proceed to the main body of work. In this regard, Rāvandī follows the same pattern as his predecessors. However, what makes this particular panegyric special is that he makes use of three different approaches in order to praise God; the first is by applying vocabulary related to nature to create the imagery he needed. 'Nature as the creation of God' forms the gist of Rāvandī's praise of God, using words such as day, night, winter, summer etc. Neither the rhetorical figures, nor the imagery of nature he applies is unique; rather he makes use of natural imagery which had transformed into a pattern by the 12th century.¹⁴¹ In the second part of the introduction, there is a shift towards a more complicated approach where he discusses religious and mystical concepts and applies such vocabulary as faith (*īmān*) and unbelief (*kufr*). The third approach involves a different type of nature: the universe and the celestial objects; in other words, cosmology. He builds up his imagery based on the features attributed to these heavenly bodies.¹⁴²

The next part of the introduction is dedicated to praising Muḥammad, which Rāvandī does by first taking a cosmological approach and then a religious approach; just as he did for the praise of God. However, in this instance, he does not refer to heavenly bodies and their features; rather he makes an allegory between the celestial bodies and the prophets. This analogy mirrors the earth as it is located in the centre of the spheres and the celestial bodies orbiting around it; Muḥammad also stands in the centre with relation to all prophets who circle around him.¹⁴³

The introduction is continued by praising the Rashidun Caliphs using *saj'* to introduce them and their features as well as quoting the Qur'an and certain *ḥadīths*.¹⁴⁴ At the end of each segment, the author inserts a poem in praise of the Rashidun Caliphs.¹⁴⁵ This is followed by a section praising the '*ulamā*', in particular Abū Ḥanīfa and al-Shāfi'ī, where we can see a change in the author's style. The language becomes less poetic and rhythmic and instead of praising them only by calling out their features and their virtues, Rāvandī compliments them through narrating stories about them.¹⁴⁶ Having brought up the subject of the '*ulamā*', he connects them to the next part of the introduction which is in praise of Sultan Kaykhusraw I.

¹⁴¹ Shafiei Kadkani, *Ṣuvar-i Khīyāl dar Shi'r-i Fārsī*, 206-212.

¹⁴² These heavenly bodies are the earth, Mercury, Venus, the sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. These objects and their attributions will be discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁴³ Rāvandī *RṢ*, 5.

¹⁴⁴ The Rashidun Caliphs are the first four leaders of Islam: Abūbakr (632-4), 'Umar (634-44), 'Uthmān (644-56), 'Alī (656-61).

¹⁴⁵ In the manuscript, there is no actual segmentation. The beginning and the end of each chapter are only recognizable by the coloured titles. My divisions are based on topic.

¹⁴⁶ These narratives cover six pages of the edited version while the section in praise of all the four caliphs was less than 5 pages.

The link between is a story where Abū Ḥanīfa asks God's support in promoting his sect and God answers him by saying that his sect enjoys prosperity and popularity 'as long as the sword is in the hands of Hanafid Turks,' thus referring to the Seljuqs.¹⁴⁷ In the next step, Rāvandī becomes more explicit by demonstrating the Seljuq sultans' honest faith and their efforts in patronizing the 'ulamā up to the time of Sultan Kaykhusraw I.

The author continues praising the Sultan by including a 30 verse *qaṣīda* of his own composition for Sultan Kaykhusraw I.¹⁴⁸ Subsequently, he proceeds to indicate his patron's efforts in supporting the 'ulamā, because according to Rāvandī, supporting and elevating Islam is both the root and the goal of their rule.¹⁴⁹ This is a prelude for the last part of his introduction where he discusses the disastrous situation of the realm upon the death of the last Great Seljuq ruler, Ṭughril III (d. 1194). Rāvandī finishes by praying to God that Sultan Kaykhusraw may sit on the throne of the Great Seljuqs, as their rightful successor in order to re-establish Islam's position in the world.¹⁵⁰

The next section of *RṢ* is titled 'mention of the author and praising his friends and his teachers.'¹⁵¹ Although the title refers to only these three topics (i.e. the author himself, his friends, and his teachers), the section covers broader subjects. While the primary goal of this section seems to be introducing Rāvandī's teachers and friends, in order to tell his readers how, where, and with whose assistance he was able to become an educated man, the section is an indication of the patronage network of the time as well. The names that are mentioned in this part of the introduction do not merely represent Rāvandī's process of education, they are also a clear indication of the hierarchical patronage system of the Seljuq era. That is why Rāvandī does not limit himself to just their names; he also pays tribute to them in the form of poetry or a complimentary piece of prose. In Rāvandī's time, if a well-educated man wished to get close to the sultan, it was essential for him to seek sponsors who were high up on the patronage ladder.¹⁵² That is what Rāvandī attempts to demonstrate in this section. First, Rāvandī introduces his first teacher, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Ravandī, who also happened to be his uncle. According to the book, Rāvandī spent ten years in Hamadan where his uncle gave lectures in a few *madrasas* at the request of Jamāl al-Dīn Āyba, *atabeg* of Sultan

¹⁴⁷ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 17.

¹⁴⁸ *Qaṣīda* is a template for composing poetry originating from Arabic poetry. A *qaṣīda* must include *qāfiya* (rhyming word) in both hemistiches of the first verse as well as the second hemistich of every verse. A *qaṣīda* is usually a form of panegyric poetry which also include subjects like descriptions of nature as well.

¹⁴⁹ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 29.

¹⁵⁰ Rāvandī, 38.

¹⁵¹ ذکر احوال مصنف کتاب و ثنای دوستان و استادانش

¹⁵² A good example of this system is the Khujandī family of Isfahan who were brought to Isfahan by Nizām al-Mulk and were lecturers at the Shāfi'ī *madrasa* of Isfahan for generations. Many of their students held important positions in the court of the Seljuqs. See: David Durand-Guédy, "The Khujandīs of Isfahan," in *The Seljuqs, Politics, Society, and Culture*, edited by Christian Lange and Songül Mecit (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 182-202; David Durand-Guédy, *Iranian Elites and Turkish Rulers: A History of Işfahān in the Saljūq Period* (London: Routledge, 2010).

Ṭughril III.¹⁵³ Thus, at the beginning of his study, Rāvandī was linked to Sultan Ṭughril III by two mediators, first his uncle and second, Jamāl al-Dīn. A few pages later, Rāvandī mentions a Shahāb al-Dīn Aḥmad, a friend and a pupil who had asked Rāvandī to include his name in *RṢ*. Not only did the author accept his request, but also interpolated a few poems in Persian and Arabic stating Shahāb al-Dīn's qualifications. We see how Rāvandī is using the patronage network this time for his student's benefit. Thus, in case Rāvandī was accepted by Sultan Kaykhusraw, Shahāb al-Dīn may also have had a chance of employment at the court of the sultan.

The last few pages of this section are dedicated to Rāvandī's attributable and acquisitional qualifications where he talks about his uncle, Zayn al-Dīn, who worked for Sultan Ṭughril III as a calligrapher. Similar to his other introductions, he includes verses in praise of his uncle as well as a number of poems composed by his uncle. Pointing out his uncle's achievements at court, the author informs us that his primary wish was to follow his uncle's path, but he never got the chance (due to the death of the Sultan). It is in this section that Rāvandī reveals his deepest desire, namely for employment at the court of Sultan Kaykhusraw; a desire which is accompanied by his weight of experience acquired in various cities of '*Irāq-i 'Ajam*', most notably Isfahan and Hamadan. By mentioning the names of his teachers and their roles in the upbringing and education of the Seljuq sultans, he makes his request more specific: to transfer his knowledge to the next generation of the Seljuq family.¹⁵⁴

So far, I have talked about the author's goals and wishes as they were inserted in various layers of the text. However, there is a section in the work containing the author's purpose for writing the book in his own words. The author believes that in all those years of his education and meditation, he learned that the only thing that remains after a person dies is his 'good name'.¹⁵⁵ He supports his claim by including Qur'anic as well as Arabic and Persian verses to convey the same message. Furthermore, he connects this concept with the Islamic concept of '*ṣadaqa*' (charity) which according to two prophetic *ḥadīths*, is the only thing which does not perish with death.¹⁵⁶ Rāvandī suggests that rulers construct public buildings, such as *madrasas* and *ḥammāms*, then recruit poets to praise them because of those deeds which cause their 'good name' (*nām-i nīk*) to survive.¹⁵⁷ In other words, doing good would not be sufficient to secure a good name for rulers; rather it is the authors/poets that provide them with the immortality of their names. Through connecting these rather two different concepts (the Islamic concept of *ṣadaqa* and the didactic notion of leaving a good name), not only does

¹⁵³ *Atabeg* was a Turkish title and was assigned to the nobles who were responsible for training the Seljuq princes. For more, see: Claude Cahen, "Atābak," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last updated on August 17th, 2011, <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/atabak-turkish-atabeg-lit>

¹⁵⁴ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 55.

¹⁵⁵ Rāvandī, 59.

¹⁵⁶ From the Islamic point of view, *ṣadaqa* is a voluntary offering which comes in a number of forms, one of which, known as '*ṣadaqa-yi jāriya*' is mentioned here by Rāvandī. This type of *ṣadaqa* includes the good deeds whose outcome would remain for generations, like the construction of public buildings or religious endowments.

¹⁵⁷ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 59-62.

Rāvandī divert his patron's attention to his wish for employment, but also insinuates that the Sultan's good name depends on him as well.

The last section of the introduction is what the author has titled '*fihrist*' (contents), where he lists the content of the book in a descriptive way. However, this section includes more than just a description of the content; it also covers subjects such as the titles of Sultan Kaykhusraw and the obligation of kings to exert justice and uphold religious law. It is in the latter where Rāvandī stresses the religiosity of the Seljuqs, who according to him 'were the greatest and the most religious rulers after the Rashidun Caliphs.'¹⁵⁸ It is here that we can see again the connection of a ruler's legacy and Islamic concepts. Rāvandī applauds the Seljuqs not only for doing good, but also for the deeds whose outcome would last for generations, the same notion and link that was proposed in the previous section of Rāvandī's introduction.¹⁵⁹ Constructing *madrasas* seems to be the most important good deed in Rāvandī's point of view, as he repeats this and praises the Seljuqs for doing so at any chance he gets. Moreover, the construction of *madrasas* not only produces *ṣavāb* (Islamic reward), but also will immortalise their names.¹⁶⁰

2.3.5 Rāvandī's View on Justice

After this rather long introduction (68 pages in the edition), Rāvandī commences the main body of his book. However, as the eloquent writer he is, he does not go straight to the history of the Seljuqs; rather he begins the section with an extensive discussion on '*adl*' (justice) containing several anecdotes from various sources. Stressing the importance of the sources that he applies; he sets off on this section by including a Qur'anic verse followed by a prophetic *ḥadīth*. In the next few sentences, his style takes another turn, when he breaks the Qur'anic verse into pieces in order to explain it. This is where his writing style comes close to the works of Sufis in Persian literature where a passage starts with a Qur'anic verse followed by a *ḥadīth* whose interpretation comes afterwards.¹⁶¹ In this style of writing, based on the target readers, the Sufi author either includes the Qur'anic verses and the *ḥadīth* only in Arabic, or with their translation. Afterwards, the Sufi author interprets them based on the

¹⁵⁸ Rāvandī, 65.

¹⁵⁹ Good deeds which have an ongoing impact are called *bāqīyāt al-ṣāliḥāt* in Islam. An example of such deeds is construction of public places like *madrasas*. According to Islamic ideas, as long as those *madrasas* are functioning, the builder will enjoy religious rewards (*ṣavāb*).

¹⁶⁰ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 67.

¹⁶¹ For more on this and for examples of this style, see: Mohammadreza Shafiei-Kadkani, *Zabān-i Shi'r dar Naṣr-i Ṣūfīyya* (Tehran: Sukhan, 1392/2012), 141-165.

purpose of his speech.¹⁶² Using this style, Rāvandī breaks the Qur'anic verse of 16:90 into pieces to explain the verse from his own perspective by giving examples for each phrase:¹⁶³

"ان الله يامر بالعدل والاحسان وابتاء ذى القربى وينهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر والبغى يعظكم لعلكم تذكرون"¹⁶⁴

'God commands (people) to maintain justice (*al-'adl*), kindness (*al-lḥsān*), and proper relations with their relatives (*īta' zī al-qurbā*). He forbids them to commit indecency (*al-faḥshā*), sin (*al-munkar*), and rebellion (*al-baghī*). God gives you advice so that perhaps you will take heed.'

According to Rāvandī, wishing good for people is an instance of 'justice' (mentioned in the verse); doing good is wholly represented by the concept of *iḥsān*; kindness, charity, mercy, and helping one's family are the instances of 'giving to one's kindred'; fornication and immorality are examples of indecency; Usury, eating *ḥarām* food, and oppression are examples of sin; and any reprehensible feature, such as jealousy, holding a grudge, and arrogance are seen as aspect of a rebellious nature.¹⁶⁵

Setting this verse as a preamble for a section on '*adl*', Rāvandī proceeds to further concentrate on the first concept, justice, by interpolating as much proof as he can from prophetic *ḥadīths* to Arabic poetry, Persian poetry, and historical anecdotes. The order in which this proof is organized tells us more about the value of each of them in the author's view. This hierarchy is as follows: prophetic *ḥadīth*, Arabic poetry, Persian poetry, and lastly historical anecdotes (in the sense that they were positioned in a historical context, or the protagonist of the anecdote is a real historical person). The Arabic poetry included in the beginning of this section bears the exact same meaning as the following Persian verses which were chosen from the *Shāhnāma*; that Firaydūn was not an angel, but rather that he achieved greatness by doing justice.¹⁶⁶ Within the historical anecdotes also, there seems to be an order which can once again highlight the author's goal of acquiring a job as a *nadīm* (boon companion): the narrative begins with numerous didactic (Persian and Arabic) proverbs and *ḥadīths*, all of them centring on the concept of justice and none of them longer than a few lines at most. While these short sayings underline justice as a notion, the historical narratives demonstrate the execution of justice by prominent figures such as the second Rashidun caliph, 'Umar (r. 634-644) and Hurmuzd IV of the Sasanians (r. 531-579).¹⁶⁷ Interestingly, the Seljuq Sultan, Muḥammad ibn Malikshāh is the protagonist of two stories which indicate the author's

¹⁶² Mohammad Gholamrezayi, *Sabkshināsī-yi Naṣrḥā-yi Ṣūfīyāna az Avāyil-i Qarn-i Panjum tā Avāyil-i Qarn-i Hashtum* (Tehran: Shahid Beheshti University Press, 1388/2009), 318-9. The author believes that this type of interpreting Qur'anic verses and *ḥadīths* was originally adopted from the preaching style.

¹⁶³ The editor has mistakenly recorded this verse as number 92.

¹⁶⁴ The Qur'an, 16: 90.

¹⁶⁵ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 68-9.

¹⁶⁶ Rāvandī, 69. "ان فريدون لم يكن ملكا / ولا من المسك كان معجونا // بالعدل والجد كان مكرمه / فاعدل وجد كي تكون فريدونا"

¹⁶⁷ An example of exerting justice in this section is when the second caliph, 'Umar, upheld Islamic law by flogging sinners. On one occasion, the sinner cursed 'Umar during the event. 'Umar refrained from whipping him further himself and gave the lash to another. When asked about it, 'Umar stated that it would not have been justice if he had flogged the sinner in anger; the whipping should be done for God's satisfaction and not out of a person's anger.

respect for this particular sultan. Although the preamble ends with the story of Hormizd IV, the author does not hesitate to make his point even more clear by saying that he included all these stories and those succeeding because he expects Sultan Kaykhusraw to revive those customs (i.e. justice) and take lessons from his ancestors and choose to act justly.¹⁶⁸

The concept of justice is a recurrent theme in Arabic and Persian sources of the medieval era.¹⁶⁹ The notion is mentioned in the *Saljūqnāma* as ‘an ornament of kings’ (*ḥilyat-i pādishāhān*),¹⁷⁰ and in *Mujmal al-Tavārīkh va al-Qiṣaṣ*, a twelfth century general history, as the reason for the appointment of kings.¹⁷¹ While short references to this concept can easily be found in historical sources, such as the ones mentioned above, it is usually discussed much more prominently in advice literature and the works of mirrors for princes, whose origins can be traced back to the works of *andarz* or ‘*ahd* in ancient Iran.¹⁷² A large number of mirrors for princes were written during the Seljuqs’ reign and the proliferation of these types of works has caused scholars of medieval Iran to wonder about the reason for this great tendency towards this type of literature in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

While Naser Sedqi believes that the works of mirrors for princes were written to inculcate the idea of justice,¹⁷³ Julie Meisami believes that the lack of a model for rulership among the Turks prompted the massive production of mirrors for princes during the Seljuq era.¹⁷⁴ The *Qābūsnāma* written for a Ziyarid prince allocates a whole chapter to ‘kingship’ (*dar āyīn-i pādishāhī*) where the concept of justice is discussed. According to the author of the *Qābūsnāma*, Kaykāvūs ibn Iskandar, prosperity is born from justice.¹⁷⁵ While the *Qābūsnāma* is structured in such a way as to focus on all aspects of life, but especially court life, another important work of advice, *Sīyar al-Mulūk (Sīyāsatnāma)*, reflects a perspective closer to the Seljuq court. The author, Khvāja Niẓām al-Mulk, the vizier of Alp Arslān and Malikshāh, begins his didactic book by stating that in every period God sends someone, so that he can spread

¹⁶⁸ Rāvandī, *Rṣ*, 84. (see p.78 as well.)

¹⁶⁹ For an overview of how this concept was dealt with in medieval sources, see: Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 158-61; Anne Lambton, “Justice in Medieval Persian Theory of Kingship,” *Studia Iranica* 17 (1962): 91-119.

¹⁷⁰ Nayshābūrī, *Saljūqnāma*, 9.

¹⁷¹ *Mujmal al-Tavārīkh va al-Qiṣaṣ*, ed. Mohammad Taqi Bahar (Tehran Kalāla-yi Khāvar, 1318/1940), 1.

¹⁷² Other than this, influences from Greek wisdom literature and the Arabic genre of *vaṣṣīyya* (testament, advice) can also be recognized in Persian wisdom literature. For more on Greek influence, see: Christine van Ruymbeke, “Hellenistic Influences on Classical Persian Literature,” in *General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed. Johannes de Bruijn (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 354-368; for Arabic influences, see: Johannes de Bruijn, “Arabic Influence on Persian Literature,” in *General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed. Johannes de Bruijn (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 369-84; Louise Marlow, *Counsel for Kings: Wisdom and Politics in the Tenth Century Iran* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), vol.2, 3-4; on the influences of Pahlavi advice literature, see: Ulrich Marzolph, “The Good, Bad, and the Beautiful: The Survival of Ancient Iranian Ethical Concepts in Persian Popular Narratives of Islamic Period,” in *Early Islamic Iran*, ed. Edmund Herzig & Sarah Stewart (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 16-29.

¹⁷³ Sedqi, *Tārīkh-nigārī dar Īrān-i ‘Aṣr-i Saljūqī*, 62-63.

¹⁷⁴ Julie Scott Meisami, “Rulers and Writing of History,” in *Writers and Rulers: Perspectives on their Relationship from Abbasids to Safavid Times*, ed. Beatrice Gruendler & Louise Marlow (Richert Verlag Wiesbaden, 2004), 92.

¹⁷⁵ Kaykāvūs ibn Iskandar, *Qābūsnāma* (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī-yi Ibn Sīna, 1956), 210.

justice.¹⁷⁶ Interestingly enough, while only one chapter is titled with the word justice and directly deals with it,¹⁷⁷ all the other chapters tackle the concept of justice indirectly as well. For example, in the chapter which discusses the gratitude of kings towards God, the only way for kings to show their appreciation is to do justice.¹⁷⁸ Having said that in the beginning of the chapter, the author includes a few short anecdotes in order to teach a lesson about the value of justice.

Another important work of the mirrors for princes genre is *Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk* written by al-Ghazzālī, the well-known religious scholar of the eleventh century. Similar to the previously mentioned works, the concept of justice plays a significant role in his book. However, his approach to defining justice is not similar to that of his contemporaries. In the beginning of his book, he explicitly connects the concept of faith to that of justice, giving a seemingly small turn in the way both matters are dealt with. Moreover, the issue of justice, which previously has been seen in the field of morality, now is situated in religion, meaning that one person cannot have one without the other:

"و ایزد تعالی ترا این نعمت داده است و تخم ایمان در دل پاک و عزیز تو نهاده است و پرورش آن تخم بتو گذاشته است و گفته اند که این تخم را آب عدل و طاعت می پرورد."¹⁷⁹

‘And God, the exalted, has given you this blessing and has planted the seed of faith in your pure noble heart and has appointed you to bring it up and it has been said that the water of justice and obedience would nurture this seed.’

The connection between faith and justice has also been used by Rāvandī in his section on justice. Apart from his numerous religious anecdotes, Qur’anic verses, and prophetic *ḥadīths*, he also indicates the consequences of lacking justice/being oppressive, all of which have a clear connection to the religious concept of *ṣavāb* (spiritual reward according to Islam):

"و اگر نعوذ بالله و عیاذا به من سخطه پادشاه ظلم کند رعیت از عبادت باز مانند، رعیت را خدای عز و جل از کرم خویش ثواب مضاعف کند، یکی ثواب آنک نیت عبادت داشتند و از ظلم پادشاه نتوانستند و دوم ثواب مظلومی"¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Nizām al-Mulk, *Sīyar al-Mulūk*, 11. Some scholars, including Boris Zakhoder and Marta Simidchieva, have questioned the full authorship of the *Sīyar al-Mulūk* attributed to Nizām al-Mulk. In contrast, Hubert Darke, the editor of the *Sīyar al-Mulūk*, has argued in favour of Nizām al-Mulk’s authorship. See: Neguin Yavari, “Siar al-Moluk,” in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, accessed on 16 September 2024, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/siar-al-moluk>

¹⁷⁷ اندر مظالم گاه نشستن پادشاه و عدل و سیرت نیکو ورزیدن

¹⁷⁸ Nizām al-Mulk, 15.

¹⁷⁹ Al-Ghazzālī, *Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk*, ed. Jalal Homa’i (Tehran: Kitābkhāna-yi Tīhrān, 1315-17/1936-38), 2.

¹⁸⁰ Rāvandī, *Rṣ*, 69-70. This notion aligns with broader Islamic principles on governance, as articulated by Abū Yūsuf (729-798) in his book *Kitāb al-Kharāj* and discussed by Petra Sijpesteijn in her article. According to Abū Yūsuf, a ruler is seen as appointed by God and accountable for his actions, like a shepherd caring for his flock. As Abū Yūsuf stresses, the ruler is personally responsible for the welfare of the people, and if they suffer due to his actions, he must also carry the blame. Thus, a just ruler ensures the conditions for the subjects to flourish, while an unjust ruler- oppressing worship and livelihood- leads to consequences not only for the oppressed but

‘And if God forbid, the king oppresses and (as a result) the flock would be deprived of worshipping, God, the exalted and elevated, will double their reward out of his generosity; one reward for having the intention of worship but not being able because of the king’s oppression, and another reward for being the oppressed.’

Other than this, the historical anecdotes depicting ‘Umar executing justice all centre on the religious form of justice, *qiṣāṣ*. In other words, like al-Ghazzālī, Rāvandī’s understanding of justice was affected by its Islamic connotations. Furthermore, from the middle of this rather long section on justice onward, Rāvandī begins to interpret justice as doing good deeds. This interpretation starts with an Arabic proverb declaring that ‘the best of kings is he who does good in his actions and his intentions and does justice to his army and his flock.’¹⁸¹ From this point onward we can see that didactic stories are told to encourage Sultan Kaykhusraw to do good deeds, for good deeds are the true implication of justice. The first narrative of such involves Sultan Muḥammad ibn Malikshāh curing a cripple. As narrated by Rāvandī, the cripple dreamt of the prophet Muḥammad three nights in a row where the prophet orders him to visit Sultan Muḥammad. The Sultan performed the miracle after carrying out an ablution and praying. This religious approach of Rāvandī’s is continued until the end of this section where the author urges his patron to ‘revive those customs’ (i.e. justice), prevent intolerance and bias that exist between Ḥanafīs and Shāfi‘īs, and set up *madrasas* and religious endowments, because promoting religion is the true foundation of a prosperous state.¹⁸²

2.3.6 History as Narrated by Rāvandī

After 84 pages of praise and advice (according to the edited version), Rāvandī eventually starts his journey through the history of the Great Seljuqs. For his narration of the reigns of the sultans, Rāvandī follows the same structure for all of them, beginning with mention of their titles in their entirety, the dates of their ascensions and/or the duration of their reigns and/or the dates of their birth, the names of their viziers and chamberlains, a short description of their appearance, and an overview of their skills or their virtues. At the beginning of the historical section, he provides us with a family tree of the Seljuqs starting with their eponymous founder, Seljuq and ending with Ṭughril III. The names and the titles of Seljuq, Chaghri, and the sultans are written in the manuscript with a large font and some of their sons are listed as well with a smaller font diagonally (Figure 3).¹⁸³ Family members who have reigned are distinguished by the title sultan, while some princes, including Chaghri are

also for his own soul. See: Petra Sijpesteijn, “Good Governance in Theory and Practice: Comparing Abū Yūsuf’s Kitāb al-Kharāj with Papyri,” in *The Historian of Islam at Work*, ed. Maaike van Berkel and Letizia Osti (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 183-200.

¹⁸¹ Rāvandī, *Rṣ*, 77. خير الملوك من احسن في فعله و نيته و عدل في جنده و رعيتيه

¹⁸² Rāvandī, *Rṣ*, 84.

¹⁸³ Riedel has noticed that the names were not written in the same handwriting. While the larger ones seem to have been written by the main scribe, Ḥājī Ilyās, the smaller ones were probably scribed by other people. (Riedel, *Searching for the Islamic Episteme*, 80.)

given the title *malik*. The rest do not have any title. The criteria based on which a prince gained the title of *malik* is not exactly clear. Based on Seljuq coinage, Nicholas Lowick has suggested that this title was bestowed upon governors.¹⁸⁴ However, in Rāvandī's family tree, not all of the governing princes bear this title; not even the first governor of Kirman. Regarding the other title, *sultan*, the matter is much clearer. Only the sultans have chapters of their own. Interestingly two of the sultans, Sultan Maḥmūd ibn Malikshāh and Sultan Dāvūd ibn Maḥmūd, are neither written in the larger font, nor get their own chapter. The editor, Eqbal, has concluded that the author does not recognize them as sultans.¹⁸⁵ However, this does not seem to be correct, as even though they were not treated the same, they still have the title of *sultan* in the family tree.¹⁸⁶

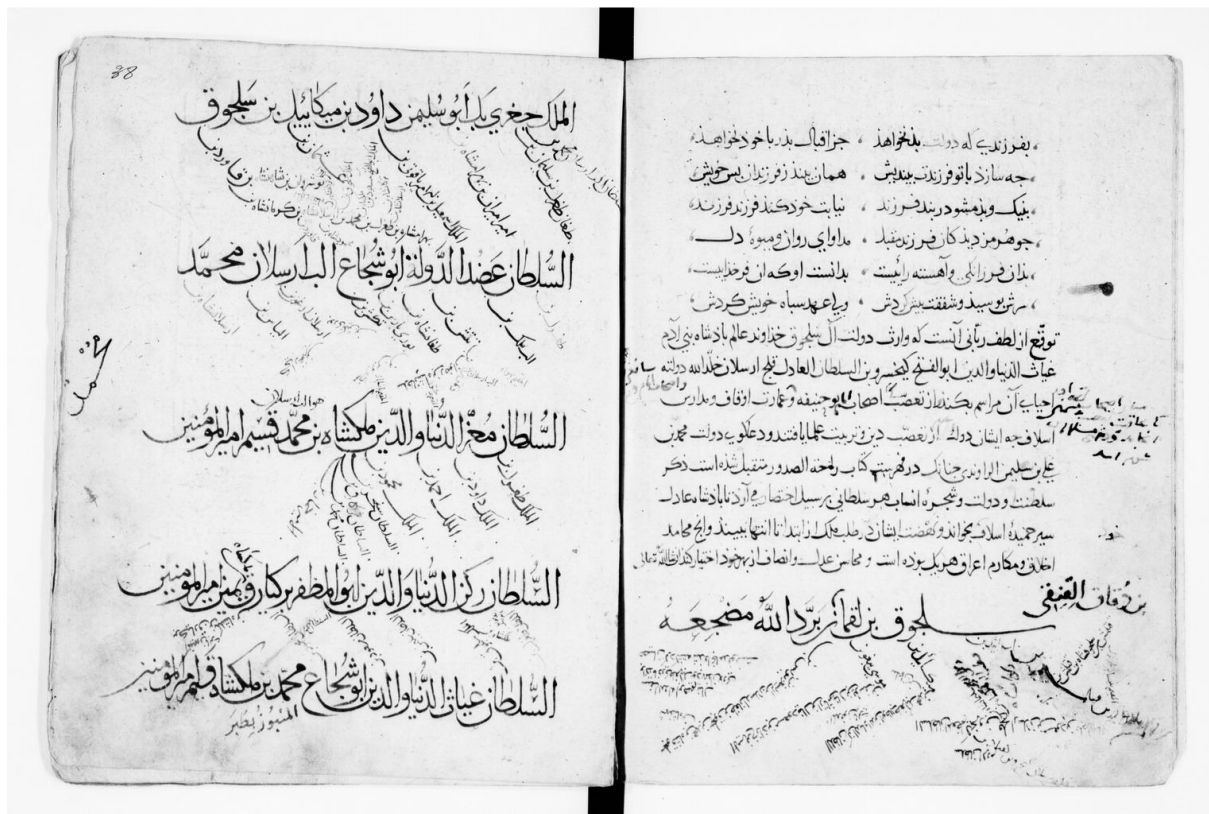


Figure 3: The Seljuq family as recorded in *Rāḥat al-Ṣudur*, Supplement Persan 1314, folio 38.

The historical part of *RṢ* is structured by the reigns of the sultans; each having their own chapter. It is in the beginning of the chapter on Sultan Tughril that we see an interesting connection to ancient Iranian history. In this section, Rāvandī quotes a sentence attributing it to Ardashir I of the Sasanians enjoining kings to recruit a vizier (*vazīr*), a chamberlain (*ḥājib*),

¹⁸⁴ Nicholas Lowick, "Seljuq Coins," *The Numismatic Chronicle* 10 (1970): 242.

¹⁸⁵ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 85.

¹⁸⁶ It is, of course, not clear whether the family tree in its present form was drawn by the scribe or copied from Rāvandī's own manuscript faithfully. However, I would suggest that the latter is more probable, because even though the manuscript was written in the Rum Seljuqs' court, there seems to have been no effort made to record the names of the Rum branch of the family properly; for they are all squashed in the bottom of the page under the name of their ancestor, Isrā'īl and many of their names are barely legible.

a boon companion (*nadīm*), and a secretary (*dabīr*).¹⁸⁷ Following this *ḥikma* (wise word), Ṭughril and all the sultans recruited their viziers and chamberlains (no names are provided for the boon companions and the secretaries).¹⁸⁸ This narrative is followed by another anecdote where the concept of justice is mentioned once again. In this anecdote, Ṭughril asks the Sufi Bābā Ṭāhir for advice. The Sufi responds with a Qur'anic verse (the same one that Rāvandī cited earlier in his introduction): 'God commands (people) to maintain justice and kindness.'¹⁸⁹ While Rāvandī, as he states himself, used the *Saljūqnāma* extensively as his source, these two stories are not found in the earlier source.

The reign of Ṭughril ends with Rāvandī paying tribute to Sultan Kaykhusraw for a page and a half (according to the edited version) where Rāvandī first attributes Arabic titles to him, all of which are in rhythmic prose (having *saj'*). This passage is followed by Rāvandī's prayers requesting God to grant him the world, especially Khurasan and 'Iraq-i 'Ajam. Although the same order can be seen at the end of each chapter, this one is the longest of all. The eulogy is followed by poetry composed by the author himself in praise of Sultan Kaykhusraw, as was promised in the introduction. The poem is titled '*qaṣīda*'. However, formally speaking, its template is *tarkīb-band*.¹⁹⁰ The author certainly knew the difference between a *qaṣīda* and a *tarkīb-band* and usage of the word *qaṣīda* here is perhaps because of the literal meaning of the word *qaṣīda* (aimed for a person) rather than its formal connotation.

Despite the importance of Alp Arslān's reign in the expansion of the Seljuq territory, his chapter is among the short ones. Even his most important battle, Manzikert (1071) against the Byzantine Empire is described in only one page where most of the lines are either poetry or wise sayings. This brevity is probably due to the length of the same chapter in the *Saljūqnāma*, because for most historical narratives, Rāvandī's source was the *Saljūqnāma*. The chapter ends by highlighting the Islamic aspect of the Seljuq legitimacy once again. Rāvandī indicated that the pillars of a state are three things: God's protection, upholding Islamic law, and elevating the '*ulamā*'.¹⁹¹

The author brings up the notion of divine support as one of the pillars of Seljuq legitimacy in the chapter on Sultan Malikshāh's reign. It begins with an Arabic saying borrowed from a didactic book called *al-Farā'id va al-Qalā'id* written by Abū Manṣūr al-Ṣa'ālābī in the 11th century.¹⁹² Rāvandī treats this passage in his own way: he includes the whole passage in Arabic and then provides his readers with a modified translation to suit his purpose. According

¹⁸⁷ Rāvandī, 97.

¹⁸⁸ "اردشير بابک گفت پادشاه باید که وزیری را بدست آرد و حاجی را بگمارد و ندیمی را بدارد و دبیری را بیارد که وزیر قوام مملکت بود و ندیم نشان عقل شود و دبیر زبان دانش او باشد و حاجب سیاست افزاید، بر قضیت این اثر و ترجمت این خبر سلطان طغرلبک و جمله سلاطین وزرا Rāvandī, RŞ, 97-8. و حجاب و اصحاب مناصب داشتند."

¹⁸⁹ "ان الله يأمر بالعدل والإحسان" The Qur'an 16:90; Rāvandī, RŞ, 99.

¹⁹⁰ *Tarkīb-band* is a template where a number of *qaṣīdas* with different rhyming words are connected to one another by a single verse in between which has its own set of rhyming words.

¹⁹¹ Rāvandī, RŞ, 123.

¹⁹² See: Abū Manṣūr al-Ṣa'ālābī, *Al-Farā'id va al-Qalā'id* (Egypt: Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabīyyat al-Kubrā).

to the Arabic saying, the sultan is God's successor on earth.¹⁹³ Rāvandī translates this sentence as the sultan is God's shadow, thereby bringing the sultan closer to God and his authority over his creation. A shadow is a reflection of God in light, while a successor is a completely different entity whose authority was bestowed upon him by God.

The chapter on Sultan Sanjar's reign stands out in Rāvandī's text, as although its structure shares some similarities with the other chapters (such as mentioning his appearance, skills, virtues, his viziers, and chamberlains, and including panegyric poetry at the end), it has a number of unique features as well. With 40 pages, this chapter is the third longest of the text. It is not because of its historical narratives or the fact that Sanjar's reign was the longest of the Seljuqs' reigns, but because it contains a lengthy panegyric text both in prose and poetry. The first four pages of the chapter deal with prosperity of his territory and all the battles ending with his victory in a concise way. Perhaps the author hoped that his praiseworthy description of Sultan's Sanjar's triumph along with his 'divine *farrah* and king-like appearance'¹⁹⁴ would make up for Sanjar's dreadful loss and disturbing defeats later in his reign.

Another important feature of the chapter on Sanjar is the number of poems included in the conclusion. Although the author first promised his readers to compose a *qaṣīda* at the end of each chapter for Sultan Kaykhusraw, he did not keep his promise here. For he includes four *qaṣīdas* from Sayyid Ashraf and another six from Anvarī in praise of Sanjar. The author's excuse for not following the pattern is that 'since Sayyid Ashraf did not live to see the time of Sultan Kaykhusraw, he said this prayer for his (Sultan Kaykhusraw's) ancestors, so that it comes to him as a legacy and such a praise fits for this benevolent sultan (Kakhusraw), even though it was meant for Sanjar.'¹⁹⁵ Given that including a poem for Sultan Kaykhusraw at the end of each chapter is one of Rāvandī's methods to demonstrate him as the rightful successor of the Great Seljuqs, here Rāvandī phrases his excuse in a way that implies both the strong family connection and a sense of predestination, as if Sultan Kaykhusraw was meant to be the successor.

The next two chapters on Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad and Ṭughril ibn Muḥammad are short and do not cover the reigns of these two sultans in any detail. Instead, the author is more focused on his patron, pointing his readers' attention to Sultan Kaykhusraw by comparing these two sultans to his patron. Obviously in Rāvandī's mind, Sultan Kaykhusraw ranks higher than these predecessors, and he explicitly indicates such a conclusion by saying that what Sultan Maḥmūd spent on his dogs' leashes, Kaykhusraw bestows upon his servants and friends.¹⁹⁶ While in the aforementioned case, Rāvandī concentrates on the generosity of

¹⁹³ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 125. السلطان خليفة الله في ارضه translated by Rāvandī as سلطان سايه خداست

¹⁹⁴ "هبيت خسروان و فره كيان داشت" Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 168.

¹⁹⁵ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 187.

¹⁹⁶ According to Rāvandī, Sultan Maḥmūd spent an excessive amount of money on his dogs and provided them with gold leashes. (Idem, 205-6)

these rulers to draw his analogy, in the second case, Rāvandī's assessment of Ṭughril is even more demeaning: 'Now we stop talking about the lesser and start praying for the greater; and we will continue going from the star to the Sun.'¹⁹⁷ The brevity of these two chapters (either because of the author's dislike for these two men or the fact that not much historical information appears in the *Saljūqnāma* on them) offers the author a chance to take his agenda further by discussing matters of military organization and battle strategies; the type of issues that can be beneficial to his desired career as a boon companion. This subject is later elaborated in detail in the third section of *RŞ*, where the author aims directly to discuss the art of war.

The rest of the historical chapters follow the same pattern. The only difference is the abundance of the historical narratives as we go further towards the end of this section. In other words, the more we get closer to the time when Rāvandī lived, the more detailed the narratives become; many of which are the author's own information and are not covered by the *Saljūqnāma*. In concluding with the Great Seljuqs, Rāvandī also records the aftermath of Ṭughril's death, when the Khwarazmshah Tekish (r. 1172-1200) conquered 'Irāq-i 'Ajam. In this chapter Rāvandī depicts the Khwarazmshah in the exact opposite way of the Great Seljuqs in order to delegitimise him. Contrary to the Great Seljuqs who were just, faithful, and true believers, as well as supporters of the 'ulamā, the Khwarazmshah appointed *bad-dīn* (impious) people and oppressors as administrators and governors; Neither did he care for the religious endowment. The Khwarazmshahs killed, oppressed, and destroyed; and because of the disarray they caused, *Rāfizīs* were empowered.¹⁹⁸ The author ends the historical section by a recurrent prayer that Sultan Kaykhusraw may conquer the territories of his ancestors in order to 'bring upon the spring and wash away the autumn from this realm with his *farr*'.¹⁹⁹

2.3.7 A Nadīm's Qualifications

The issue of Rāvandī's hopes for work at the court of Sultan Khaykhusraw was first raised by Kenneth Allin Luther²⁰⁰ and was taken up again in more detail by Sara Nur Yıldız who suggests that the particular job that Rāvandī was pining for was the position of *nadīm* (boon companion) and that is why he included a few non-historical chapters, such as on hunting and archery in *RŞ*.²⁰¹ Similar to Nur Yıldız, Elton Daniel also holds the same opinion about Rāvandī's

¹⁹⁷ "از سخن کهتران بدعی مهتران بازآییم و از ستاره به آفتاب پیوندیم" Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 214.

¹⁹⁸ *Rāfizī* is a term used for Shi'i Muslims in historical sources. Depending on the period, the term applies to various branches of Shi'ism. In this context, *Rāfizī* refers to the Ismā'īlīs; Rāvandī's opinion on the rule of Khwarazmshahs can be found in: Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 394.

¹⁹⁹ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 403.

²⁰⁰ Allin Luther, "Islamic Rhetoric and the Persian Historians 1100-1300 A.D.," in *Studies in Near Eastern Culture and History*, ed. James Bellamy (Michigan: Centre for Near Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan, 1990), 95.

²⁰¹ Nur Yıldız, "A Nadīm for the Sultan: Rāvandī and the Anatolian Seljuks," 93.

choice of career, as the didactic chapters of *RŞ* are precisely on the subjects which were among the desired qualifications of a boon companion.²⁰²

Through Letizia Osti's study on Abū Bakr al-Ṣūlī, we can get a glimpse of what it was like to be a boon companion at a ruler's court or what kind of qualifications the job called for. al-Ṣūlī (b. ca. 887-941) was born to a family of boon companions and as a result of his family heritage, served as a boon companion to three Abbasid caliphs, al-Muktafi (r. 902-8), al-Muqtadir (r. 908-32), and Al-Rāzī (r. 934-40). He was involved in playing chess, drinking wine, and composing panegyric poetry. Al-Ṣūlī was trained as a *kātib* (secretary), so he also possessed a *kātib*'s literary qualifications. Just like *kātib*s, boon companions had fixed salaries, but a significant part of their revenues came from the occasional gifts given by the ruler.²⁰³ Osti believes that the prosperity of boon companions in the Abbasid era started to decay with the death of al-Ṣūlī and there was hardly any mention of this job in the later Abbasid sources.²⁰⁴

Certainly, this assumption cannot be applied to the Seljuq era. Niẓām al-Mulk, who wrote his *Sīyar al-Mulūk* for Sultan Malikshāh, inserted a chapter on boon companions and how they were supposed to behave. According to him, a companion should be chosen from noble (*gawharī*) families; he must be knowledgeable, rightly guided, trustworthy, and particularly funny; a quality which is also emphasized by the poet 'Imād al-Dīn Iṣfahānī whose verses can be found in *RŞ*.²⁰⁵ Further on, Niẓām al-Mulk says that he must know anecdotes and he must be a fine storyteller. Moreover, a companion should know how to play chess (*shaṭranj*), backgammon (*nard*), and polo (*chawgān*) as well as being interested in hunting and drinking.²⁰⁶

Kaykāvus ibn Qābūs' *Qābūs-nāma*, written in the 12th century, has a chapter on *ādāb-i mūnādimat* (on being a boon companion). In this chapter, he lists various qualities of a boon companion such as: having a fair face; being trained in *dabīrī*; being well-versed in Persian and Arabic; having adequate knowledge of religious sciences, poetry, astrology, and medicine. While playing chess and drinking are the basic qualities of a companion, these above-mentioned qualities will make a far superior companion.²⁰⁷ Of course, we could assume that the required qualifications asked of a companion differ from one ruler to another, as the desires of rulers determined their expectations of a companion. However, it should also be

²⁰² Elton, "Rise and Development of Persian Historiography," 152.

²⁰³ Letizia Osti, "The Remuneration of a Court Companion in Theory and Practice: A Case Study," *Journal of Abbasid Studies* 1(2014): 86-90. For more on boon companions, see: J. Sadan, "Nadīm," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, ed. Peri Bearman et al. Accessed on November 4th, 2020, https://referenceworks-brillonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/nadim-SIM_5712?s.num=22&s.start=20

²⁰⁴ Osti, "The Remuneration of a Court Companion in Theory and Practice: A Case Study," 105.

²⁰⁵ Bundārī, *Tārikh-i Silsilā-yi Saljūqī*, trans. Mohammad hossein Jalili (Tehran: Bunyād-i Farhang-i Īrān, 1356/1978), 186-187.

²⁰⁶ Niẓām al-Mulk, *Sīyar al-Mulūk*, 120-122.

²⁰⁷ Kaykāvus ibn Qābūs, *Qābūs-nāma* (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī-yi Ibn Sīnā, 1956), 183-189.

taken into account that many qualities and functions were similar, if not identical, in various courts and thus there are numerous similarities between the account of the Abbasid court and those of Nizām al-Mulk and Kaykāvūs.

Not much is known about the position of boon companion in Seljuq Anatolia. The most important source for the history of the Seljuqs of Rum is *al-Avāmīr al-‘Alā’iya fī al-Umūr al-‘Alā’iya*, written by Ibn Bībī in the twelfth century. He does not go into the details of the lives and routines of boon companions and in most of his anecdotes about the court life of the Seljuq Sultans, the presence of a boon companions is mentioned, though not elaborately explained. Only once does he mention the name of a boon companion, Nūr al-Dīn Akhlāṭī, during the reign of Kayqubād I (r. 1220-1237) where he influences Kayqubād’s decision to forgive a fallen commander using a Qur’ānic verse.²⁰⁸ Even from this account, it is clear that companions were supposed to be knowledgeable and educated.²⁰⁹

As indicated above, Rāvandī dedicates the last part of *RŞ* to the matters surrounding boon companions which has prompted some scholars to consider *RŞ* as a mirror for princes rather than a historiographical work.²¹⁰ Rāvandī’s title for this section reveals the nature of the position he wished to acquire in Sultan Kaykhusraw’s court: ‘On the manners of being a *nadīm*.’²¹¹ The section covers requirements of the job, both in terms of a *nadīm*’s appearance and his skills in employing wisdom as well as Arabic and Persian poetry. While including these wise words (*ḥikma*), Rāvandī indicates that in everything there is a hidden lesson (*ḥikmat*) which can only be perceived by intelligent people.²¹² His example of this type of *ḥikma* are the games of chess and backgammon. According to him, ‘while common people play it for pleasure, it was particularly designed for boon companions to play with kings and teach them about the organization of the army.’²¹³ Both chess and backgammon were seen as metaphors for hostile situations, especially where two sides engage in military actions. We have seen that Rāvandī discusses the organization of the army briefly in the chapter on Ṭughril ibn Muḥammad. Here though, he allocates about 8 pages to discuss this issue in detail under the guise of chess. This chapter also contains the various forms of playing chess such as the Indian way, Iranian, and that of the Romans. In other words, Rāvandī’s attempt is to advise his patron on matters of war by using chess figures as metaphors; so not only does he show off his knowledge of battle strategies and his talent in playing chess, but he also informs his patron of his gift in perceiving *ḥikmas* in different matters of life.

²⁰⁸ *Akḥbār-i Salājiqa-yi Rūm*, ed. Mohammad Javad Mashkour (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī-yi Tihrān, 1350/1972), 116.

²⁰⁹ For more on this, see: Nur Yıldız, “A *Nadīm* for the Sultan,” 100-104.

²¹⁰ See: Askari, *The Medieval Reception of the Shāhnāma*, 46.

²¹¹ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 405.

²¹² Here I have attempted to show the difference by the way of spelling. *Ḥikmat* and *ḥikma* are just two ways of pronouncing one word, the former in Persian and the latter in Arabic. Here I have used them differently to show their various functions: *ḥikma* as a didact genre and *ḥikmat* as a specific didactic lesson.

²¹³ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 407.

The next three chapters of this section deal with drinking wine,²¹⁴ shooting,²¹⁵ and hunting.²¹⁶ Although all these issues were commonly included in the works of mirrors for princes, Rāvandī treats them in a slightly different manner. In works such as the *Qābūsnāma*, the focus is primarily on morality and *adab*, while here, the author's main concern is religion. That is why the author concentrates on right and wrong from the perspective of religion. It is also for the same reason that there are references made to the works dealing with such matters. The author was not a member of the clergy and in order to make his arguments about *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* aspects of something, he made sure to apply his sources correctly. Needless to say, that in these chapters, as well as all the previous chapters, quotations are included from the Qur'an and *ḥadīths*, however, there are references to works such as *Zakhīra-yi Khvāramshāhī*, a medical treatise written in the 12th century and several Ḥanafī works on law as well.²¹⁷

There is also a chapter on the shapes of the Arabic letters and the principles of calligraphy where each letter is drawn and described both in prose and poetry (Figure 4). Composing poems for this subject must have been for the purpose of teaching; if the instructions did not help amateur calligraphers to remember the rules, the poems certainly would have aided memorisation. Rāvandī himself indicates that by including this subject, he was hoping to attract more readers, so when they looked to the book for its calligraphic information, they would also be informed about the greatness of Sultan Kaykhusraw and his magnificent house.²¹⁸ In other words, Rāvandī had anticipated that there is a slim chance that his patron would not be amenable to offering him a job, so he reminded him of his skills in the field of propaganda. Furthermore, he brings up the subject of leaving a good name once again which highlights the ideological use of the work for his patron.

²¹⁴ Rāvandī, 416.

²¹⁵ Rāvandī, 428.

²¹⁶ Rāvandī, 431.

²¹⁷ Rāvandī, 426. see also: Zayn al-Dīn Jurjānī, *Zakhīra-yi Khvāramshāhī*, ed. Mohammad Reza Moharrari (Tehran: Farhangistān-i 'Ulūm-i Pizishkī, 1382/ 2003), vol. 3, 91.

²¹⁸ Rāvandī, RŞ, 446.

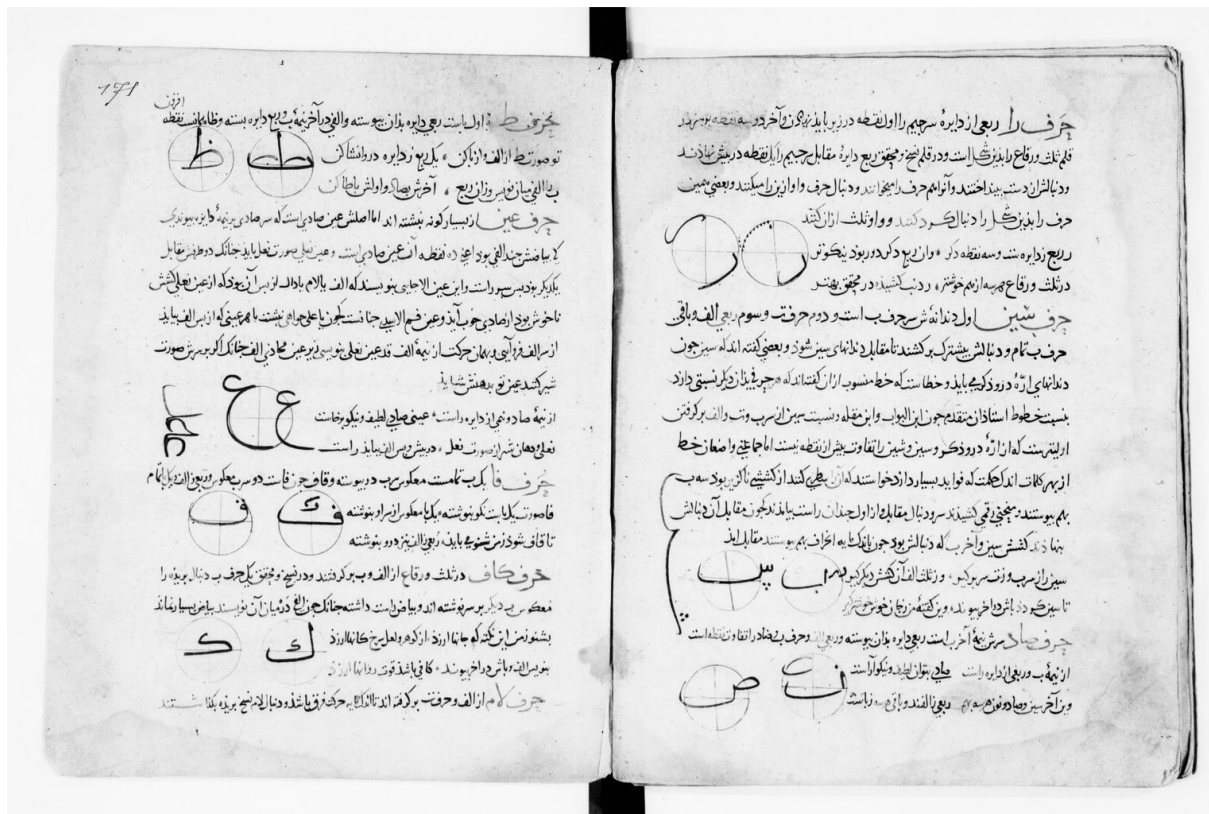


Figure 4: The letters in *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*, BnF, Supplement Persian 1314, folio 171.

The chapter on calligraphy and letters provides a nice prelude to the last chapter of *RṢ* on what is considered to be a branch of what are normally called ‘occult sciences.’²¹⁹ Having already emphasized the value of letters, Rāvandī goes into more detail on how letters can enable us to predict the future, especially in case of a battle. According to the chapter, every letter and thus every name has a calculable value. This value, when accompanied by a table (which is included in *RṢ*) would predict the outcome of a battle.

Rāvandī ends his book with an epilogue, where apart from his usual praise of Sultan Kaykhusraw, he expresses his frustration caused by his failure in finding a patron after the death of Sultan Ṭughil III. In his mind, only a person of the Seljuq family can be worthy of his work. This is where he narrates the story of how he was informed of such a worthy person through a divine dream. Having realized the divine origin of the Seljuq family, the author later became aware of Sultan Kaykhusraw’s efforts in elevating Islam and Muslims. This acts as the ultimate reason which motivated him to dedicate his work to the Sultan via a merchant, Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-‘Alā’ Rūmī.

Having looked closely at how *RṢ* is shaped, its content, from its introduction and its conclusion and how he ends it in the last pages, let us now take a step back and frame those

²¹⁹ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 437; the term ‘occult sciences’ refers to a group of esoteric supernatural beliefs and practices including alchemy and divination. An almost equivalent of this category in Persian is ‘*jāfr*’ which includes ‘*ilm al-a’dād*’ (the science of the numbers) as well. Rāvandī uses *jāfr* in this section of his work.

tiny details in the bigger picture. Rāvandī has named his book, *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr va Āyat al-Surūr dar Tārīkh-i Āl-i Saljūq* (*Comfort of Hearts and Wonder of Delights in the History of the Seljuq House*). As is evident from the title, it is a book of history (*tārīkh*), the kind of history that will bring you joy (*surūr*) and relief (*rāḥat*). In other words, the name itself says it all, that this book of history may have a different outlook from its predecessors. The next issue is the *Shāhnāma*-style poem in the beginning of the introduction which tells us that our author-historian is also a poet so good and well-trained that he can emulate Firdawsī's style, the poet whose name and style are mostly associated with the concepts of Iranian kingship and heroism. In other words, the work also demonstrates a link to the ancient Iranian kings.

By putting together pieces of information throughout the book, we can envisage the grater idea that Rāvandī seeks to capture: the idea of justice. It is for this reason that the narratives start and end playing on the concept of justice, which is mentioned repeatedly throughout the book in various forms (poetry, short story, proverbs, etc). The idea of justice and kingship was not, of course, Rāvandī's innovation. Many authors and historians defined legitimate rule as just rule. What he does in this book, however, is to connect the concept of justice to Islamic morality. Therefore, the way that Islam distinguishes right from wrong is also considered an angle of justice: the Islamic idea of 'right' (*ḥalāl*) is just and what has been declared 'forbidden' (*ḥarām*) is unjust. In this interpretation of justice, it is vital for kings to exercise what Islam commands along with ensuring that the servants of religion, i.e. the '*ulamā*', will be well-patronized. It is for the same reason that Rāvandī is keen to highlight the Seljuq rulers as the protectors of Islam, not only by depicting them as good Muslims and *ghāzī* (holy warriors), but also as kings whose God-given authority is constantly being acknowledged by their actions in elevating the '*ulamā*' and upholding Islamic law.²²⁰

What is seen immediately in *RṢ* is the constant tribute paid to Sultan Kaykhusraw I, as he is the recipient of the book. We learn from the author that Sultan Kaykhusraw I was not the original dedicatee of the work. A large part of the book had already been written before naming him as the dedicatee without having a specific patron. We also know that Rāvandī's family were in the service of the last Great Seljuq ruler, Sultan Tughril III and the author was thus very much familiar with Seljuq ideology. The book was composed based on Seljuq ideology and later found a recipient from the same family. Dedication of the book to a member of another branch of the Seljuq family is the reason for the author's efforts to strengthen the link between Sultan Kaykhusraw I and the main branch of the Seljuq family. The effort is mostly attested in the inclusion of panegyric poems at the end of each chapter on Great Seljuq rulers.

²²⁰ The Seljuqs, seeking to solidify their rule and gain legitimacy in the eyes of their subjects and neighbouring powers, adeptly crafted an image of themselves as holy warriors. By aligning their political ambitions with religious objectives, they presented themselves as champions of Islam, dedicated to defending the faith and upholding its tenets. The Battle of Manzikert in 1071 serves as a prominent example of this strategy. In a study on the battle of Manzikert, Carole Hillenbrand demonstrates how this battle served Alp Arslān to depict himself as a *ghāzī*. See: Carole Hillenbrand, *Turkish Myth and Muslim Symbol: The Battle of Manzikert* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

Apart from wishing for a second period of Islamic Seljuq rule by the Anatolian Seljuqs, there is another motive prompting Rāvandī to write this book which to some extent is also related to the issue of *Rṣ'* patronage. Rāvandī's last employer was dead and the historian, pursuing his family's career, as was customary at the time, was in need of a court job, or a patron. In the time of the Great Seljuqs, his uncles were the servants of the court, which meant that he could have been considered as a candidate for court positions because of his genealogy. As Roy Mottahedeh explains, two matters were important to acquire a patron in an early Islamic society: *ḥasab*, one's qualifications and *nasab*, one's genealogy.²²¹ While Rāvandī had both the required *ḥasab* and *nasab* for requesting a job at the court of Tughril III, he lacked the latter for the court of Sultan Kaykhusraw I which forced him to show off his knowledge, abilities, and skills in various ways. This is also the reason that he admits that the target audience is not limited to Sultan Kaykhusraw I; it is also for those who seek calligraphic skills. The fact that he did not restrict himself to this possible patron suggests that he was not sure of his employment and was mapping out a 'Plan B' for his future. We cannot be certain about what happened after the book was offered to Sultan Kaykhusraw I as our sources are silent on this matter.

Besides the obvious practical lessons, the last chapters on calligraphy and the numerical value of the letters could convey another message. Since the early years of Islamic rule, especially since the rule of the third Islamic caliph, 'Uthmān, who ordered a group of people to define a standard text for the Qur'an, the words of the Qur'an have been of great importance to Muslims; so much so that the discussions around its historicity created a chasm between various theological groups from the 8th century onwards.²²² Because of its literary importance, disciplines and skills surrounding the Qur'an became important as well. Among them is the skill of calligraphy which flourished first due to the value of the Qur'an itself and continued its prosperity along with other branches of religious science.²²³ Under the Seljuqs as well, calligraphy was affiliated to religion and since religion was a strong pillar of Seljuq claim to rulership, the Seljuq rulers did well to patronize the production of abundant copies of Qur'an in *madrāsas* and *khānaqāhs*; one example of this is the Rāvandī Qur'an mentioned earlier in this chapter.

2.4 Cosmology and Kingship

Rṣ' consists of 2680 verses of Persian poetry throughout the chapters. The verses appear in various forms; one may find complete *qaṣīdas* (such as the poems in praise of Sultan

²²¹ Roy Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1980), 102.

²²² For more on this, see: François Déroche, *Qur'ans of the Umayyads: A First Overview* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

²²³ Meena Sharifiy-Funk, "Geometry of the Spirit: Sufism, Calligraphy and Letter Mysticism," accessed on May 1st, 2021, <https://www.societyarts.org/geometry-of-the-spirit-sufism-calligraphy-and-letter-mysticism.html>

Kaykhusraw at the end of each chapter), single verses, and selected parts of the works of previous or contemporary poets.

In order to investigate how imperial ideology is represented by the poems of this book, it is essential to analyse both the poetry as well as the prose text in which the poems are situated, which is what I attempt to do in this section. Since the poems which were inserted in *RŞ* encompass numerous aspects based on which they can be interpreted, there are various angles one can take to study this subject. I aim to include all the necessary aspects of these poems which enable us to comprehend the representations of imperial ideology. Since *RŞ* includes a significant number of verses composed by Rāvandī himself, I will focus primarily on his own compositions, while looking at his choice of poems written by other poets as well. The table below shows an overview of the verses:

Source/ Poet	Amount	Date of the Source/ Poet
‘Imādī	72	12 th C. (d. 1177)
Amīr Mu‘izzī	5	12 th C. (d. 1125)
Anvarī	143	12 th C. (d. 1189)
Aṣīr Akhsīkatī	78	12 th -13 th C. (d. 1212)
Bū al-Ma‘ālī Nuḥḥās	4	12 th C. (d. 1118)
Būṭāhir Khātūnī	2	11 th -12 th C. (d. 1135)
Fakhr al-Dīn As‘ad Gurgānī	1	11 th C. (d. 1054)
Farīd al-Dīn Dabīr	4	12 th C.
Firdawsī	633	10 th -11 th C.
Jamāl al-Dīn Iṣfahānī	74	12 th C. (d. 1192)
Jamāl al-Dīn Khujandī	2	12 th C.
Khāqānī	13	12 th C. (d. 1190)
Kalīla va Dimna	2	12 th C.
Mujīr Baylaqānī	350	12 th C. (d. 1194)

Niẓāmī	247	12 th C.
Rāvandī	477	12 th -13 th C.
Rūzbihān Baqlī	1	12 th -13 th C. (d. 1209)
Sanā'ī	8	11 th -12 th C. (d. 1131)
Sayyid Ashraf	205	12 th C. (d. 1169)
Shams al-Dīn Lāgharī	3	12 th C.
Shams al-Dīn Shaṣṭ- Kulah	3	12 th C.
Sharaf al-Dīn Shafrūh	22	12 th C.
Pseudo-Firdawsī	101	
Tāj al-Dīn Rāvandī	2	12 th C.
Ṭughril III	14	12 th C. (d. 1194)
Zayn al-Dīn Rāvandī	2	12 th C.
Translation of Arabic phrases	43	
Anonymous	169	

Figure 5: Table of poets/sources of *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*'s verses.

As is demonstrated in the table, most verses were composed by Rāvandī's contemporaries corresponding to what he says about the sources of the poems who are contemporary and recent poets.²²⁴ A substantial number of verses are of the author's own composition. However it is also important to keep in mind that these verses (in total 477) are the ones whose authorship is certain, since most of them are placed at the end of each chapter and Rāvandī himself informs us that at the end of each chapter, he would praise Sultan Kaykhusraw and he would insert a *qaṣīda* in his praise.²²⁵ Given that he does not treat his sources in a consistent way, as he sometimes acknowledges his source(s) for the poems and sometimes does not, it is safe to assume that a number of the verses shown as 'anonymous' in the table might be his as well. That is why I have decided to study both categories together

²²⁴ "و ذکر شعرای متاخر و شعرهایی که در حضرت ایشان خوانده اند بیاورم" Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 63.

²²⁵ Ibid.

in terms of the themes, though the emphasis will certainly be on Rāvandī's acknowledged verses.

Among the themes that are embedded in Rāvandī's poems, celestial bodies are the most prominent. Heaven as the power above, whose bodies and their movements influence the lives of all people, including kings, has always been in interaction with imperial ideology. Paying attention to the importance of heavenly bodies and in general, 'the science of the stars,' was not restricted to the Seljuqs, but they owed much of their understanding of the stars to their predecessors in the Islamic world.²²⁶

It was during the reign of al-Ma'mūn (r. 813-833), the eighth Abbasid caliph, that an institution was established to collect and translate books from various languages, such as Greek, Middle Persian, and Sanskrit. This institution known as *Bayt al-Ḥikma* (The House of Wisdom) paid special attention to astronomical works, since their calculations were needed to determine the direction of the *qibla*. The Greek scholar Ptolemy's astronomical books including the *Almagest*, were also translated into Arabic, later influencing the works of many Muslim astronomers. This influence is also attested in the works of the 10th century polymath al-Bīrūnī. He was the first astronomer who included the positions of the planets in his work as well. His book, *Masudic Canon (al-Qānūn al-Mas'ūdī)*, dedicated to Sultan Mas'ūd of the Ghaznavids, dealt with heavenly spheres, their movements, and their characteristics.²²⁷

Before the Seljuqs, the science of the stars was mostly restricted to the treatises of court astrologers; it was during the reign of the third Seljuq ruler, Malikshāh, when the first observatory was established in the Islamic world. The observatory was built by 'Umar Khayyām, the chief astrologer and mathematician in the court of Malikshāh, in Isfahan. Malikshāh's admiration for astrology and astronomy was situated in the milieu of 11th and 12th century when the science of the stars was considered a revered subject and necessary for the courts of kings. This importance to rulers is attested in the works known as mirror for princes written during the Seljuq era. An example of this is *Chahār Maqāla (The Four Discourses)* written by Niẓāmī 'Arūzī Samarqandī, a poet and author in the court of the Ghurids (1175-1215). He dedicated the book to the Ghurid prince, Abū al-Ḥasan Ḥusām al-Dīn 'Alī.²²⁸ According to the author, a king has no choice but to have a *dabīr*, a poet (*shā'ir*), an astrologer (*munajjim*) and a physician (*ṭabīb*) in his service and thus Samarqandī has allocated a chapter to each.²²⁹ The *Kutadgu Bilig*, a Turkic mirror for prince, written in the 11th century by Yūsuf Balāsaghūnī also focuses on the importance of astrologers. In a chapter called 'Associating with astrologers,' the author indicates: "If you plan to undertake a certain business, you have

²²⁶ Early Muslims used the term 'science of the stars' for both astrology and astronomy. See: Stephen Blake, *Astronomy and Astrology in the Islamic World* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 25.

²²⁷ Blake, 35-36.

²²⁸ Gholam-hossein Yousefi, "Čahār Maqāla," *Encyclopaedia of Iranica*, last updated December 15, 1990, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/cahar-maqala>

²²⁹ "دبیر و شاعر و منجم و طبیب از خواص پادشاهند و از ایشان چاره‌ای نیست." Niẓāmī 'Arūzī, *Chahār Maqāla*, ed. Mohammad Qazvini and Mohammad Moien (Leiden: Brill, 1327/1949), 18.

first to determine the proper time. For there are lucky days and months and also unlucky ones. So, inquire of the astrologer, and choose one that is lucky.”²³⁰ Besides the sporadic references to the importance of astrology in the *Kutadgu Bilig*, a chapter is allocated to heavenly bodies and constellations and another to the position of an astrologer at court. The names of the characters in *Kutadgu Bilig* also refer to the value of planets. The character of the king in the book is called ‘Rising Sun’ and his vizier ‘Full Moon;’ it is especially significant since throughout the book, features of the sun and the moon as planets are used to describe Rising Sun and Full Moon. In the following section, I will look at the planets’ characteristic and their usage in Rāvandī’s poems.

2.4.1 Images of the Celestial Bodies

The first noticeable point in Rāvandī’s poems in *RŞ* is his recurrent usage of the imagery of celestial objects including the sun, the moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.²³¹ From the earliest stages of Persian poetry, celestial objects have been used to create poetic images. The most extensive usage of celestial bodies in Persian poetry can be attested in Nizāmī’s *Haft Paykar* (12th century). According to this narrative poem, the Sasanian king Bahram V (known as Bahrām-i Gūr) had seven wives, each from one of the seven earthly climes. Bahram built a palace with a dome for each of them and the domes were designed with regard to the seven planets. Therefore, various features attributed to the planets, such as their colour and the assigned day of the week, are prominent in this narrative.²³² Although the characteristics related to the celestial bodies play an important role in *Haft Paykar*, they did not only existed in Persian, rather they were transferred from Greek astronomy through Arabic treatises, such as *The Treatises of Ikhvān al-Şafā (Rasā’il-i Ikhvān al-Şafā)* written in the 10th century.²³³

Over time, repetitive applying of these images led to the emergence of numerous fixed images. These fixed images are usually known as themes or motifs of Persian poetry and often it is not clear who created them in the first place; especially because many of these images originate in Arabic poetry.²³⁴ The images usually bear some features which through their recurrent application by poets have become distinguished in the way that the image is always

²³⁰ Yūsuf Khāṣṣ Ḥājib, *Wisdom of Royal Glory (Kutadgu Bilig) A Turko-Islamic Mirror for Princes*, trans. Robert Dankoff (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 182

²³¹ For the poetic characteristics of the celestial bodies, see: Annemarie Schimmel, *A Two-Colored Brocade: The Imagery of Persian Poetry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1992); Riccardo Zipoli, “Poetic Imagery,” in *General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed by J.T.P. de Bruijn (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 172-232.

²³² See: Nizāmī, *Haft Paykar* (Tehran: Kitābkhāna-yi Ibn Sīnā, 1344/1965).

²³³ Van Ruymbeke, “Hellenistic Influence in Classical Persian Literature,” 359-360; Asghar Seyed-Gohrab, “A Mystical Reading of Nizāmī’s Use of Nature in the Haft Paykar,” in *A Key to the Treasure of the Hakīm*, ed Johann-Christoph Bürgel and Christine Van Ruymbeke (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011), 181-182. For an overview of Islamic cosmology, see: Samer Akkash, “Discursive Order,” in *Cosmology and Architecture in Premodern Islam: An Architectural Reading of Mystical Ideas* (Ithaca: State University of New York Press, 2005), 1-54.

²³⁴ For the examples of this derivation see: Shamisa, *Sabkshināsi-yi Shi’r*, 367-369.

accompanied by those features. For example, in the following verse, Rūdakī (858-941) associates Mercury ('*aṭārud*) with the profession of a *dabīr* (secretary):

"زیرش عطارد، آن که نخوانیش جز دبیر
یک نام او عطارد و یک نام اوست تیر"

'Underneath is Mercury that you would not call it other than *dabīr*/ one of its names is Mercury and the other one Tīr.'

The association of Mercury with the profession of *dabīr*, writing, and calligraphy is attested in the poetry of later poets including Rāvandī, for example:

"اولین روز عطارد چو بدیوان بنشست
بجهانداری از بهر تو بنبشت مثال"²³⁵

'On the first day, when Mercury sat in *dīvān*, he wrote your name down as an example of a good world-manager.'

The images related to the celestial sphere seems to have been finalised around 1200, subsequently in the later periods, poets and authors used the same images, but sometimes treated them differently depending on their knowledge and purposes in order to create 6, also images.²³⁶ The courts of the Ghaznavids Maḥmūd and Mas'ūd played a crucial role in the formation of Persian poetic imagery due to their practice of patronizing poets.²³⁷ Rāvandī, who finished his book around 1205-6, also made use of these images extensively, often adopting the same images. To gain a better understanding of the meaning of these images, let us take a look at how Rāvandī makes use of them.

2.4.1.1 The Sun (*Khurshīd*)

The sun is usually used in Persian poetry due to its brightness, its light, and its status in the sky. Its shape also attracted the attention of some poets. The sun has been considered the first heavenly sphere (*falak-i avval*) and is associated with the colour yellow.²³⁸ Persian poets created various images using the planets and their characteristics by applying rhetorical

²³⁵ Rāvandī, *Rṣ*, 249.

²³⁶ *A Two Colored Brocade*, 125.

²³⁷ Heshmat Moayyed, "Lyric Poetry," in *Persian Literature*, ed by Ehsan Yarshater (New York: The Persian Heritage Foundation, 1988), 127.

²³⁸ For the examples of usage of various characteristics of the planets by Persian poets, see: Siros Shamisa, *Farhang-i Ishārāt-i Adabīyāt-i Fārsī* (Tehran: Nashr-i Mitrā, 1377/ 1998); Zahra Khanlari, *Farhang-i Adabīyāt-i Fārsī* (Tehran: Tūs, 1366/ 1987).

figures, such as simile (*tashbīh*) and metaphor (*isti'āra*).²³⁹ Through the recurrent usage of the sun for some concepts, such as beauty or brightness, the sun has become a common symbol for beauty and magnificence. Thus, the face of the beloved is compared with the sun because of their beauty, the brightness of their skin, and the round shape of their face. Since it is the first celestial body in the sky, it has also been considered as a symbol for high status *per se* and in comparison, with the other celestial bodies.

Rāvandī's treatment of the sun in his poetry is also compatible with the aforementioned notions. He applies a range of vocabulary including 'world illuminating sun' (*hūr-i gītī-furūz*),²⁴⁰ 'the wheel's beloved' (*shāhid-i charkh*),²⁴¹ 'the doe-signed sun' (*mihr-i ghazāla-nishān*)²⁴² as well as more general words such as *khur*, *āftāb*, *hūr*, and *mihr* to refer to the sun. He makes use of the sun's brightness for his patron's wisdom (*rāy-i rawshan*) more than once.²⁴³ His second usage of the sun is due to the relationship of the sun to heaven and moreover, because of its light which reaches everywhere. The verse is:

"آسمانش کمینه خرگاهست آفتابش کمینه افسر باد"²⁴⁴

'The sky is like his royal tent and even lesser/ The sun is like his crown, even lesser.'

Therefore, he not only refers to the place of the sun in the sky, but also, he implicitly indicates that as the sun's light can reach everywhere, the Sultan is also dominant over the whole world.

In another analogy, Rāvandī notes the sun's shape and makes a comparison between the sun and the ball in the game of polo. In this verse which goes:

"شه غیاث الدین عادل بلمظفر شهریار قرص خور را روز جولان گوی میدان یافته"

'The just Ghīyās al-Dīn has become the king/ he finds the round sun as his polo-ball on the day of the match.'

Here the poet provides us with multiple images. Firstly, he makes a comparison between the sun, with regard to its round shape, and the polo-ball. He suggests that the sun, which is a resident of the first sphere and thus enjoys the highest rank, in relation to him, is like a polo-ball, inferior and easily manageable. Secondly, the words *qurṣ* (circle) and *maydān* (generally meaning the polo-field and bearing a circular shaped connotation) both refer to circular

²³⁹ For the Persian rhetorical figures, see: Ali Asghar Seyed-Gohrab, "Persian rhetorical Figures," in *Metaphor and Imagery in Persian Poetry*, ed by Ali Asghar Seyed Gohrab (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 1-13.

²⁴⁰ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 1.

²⁴¹ Rāvandī, 27.

²⁴² Rāvandī, 272.

²⁴³ Rāvandī, 115, 222, 280.

²⁴⁴ Rāvandī, 166.

shapes which are also relevant to the sun; and lastly, the Sultan's title, *muẓaffar*, meaning victor, is also in relation to polo and the Sultan being victorious.

Rāvandī's last usage of the image of the sun refers to the sun's high position in the sky. In these verses, he analogizes the Sultan's high rank to the sun's high rank.²⁴⁵ However, there is a small difference between the examples of this treatment. In the first example, Rāvandī uses the phrase '*āftāb-i qadr-i tu*' (the sun of your rank), but in the second image, the poet says: '*sar nahad bar āstānat āftāb*' (the sun bows to your threshold). While in the first example of this usage, the Sultan's rank has been elevated to reach the sun, in the second example, the sun's rank has been pulled down to the earth. The sun is not the only celestial body applied for referring to a patron's high rank. Since all celestial bodies are located in the heavenly spheres, they are all applied to indicate one's high position.

2.4.1.2 Mercury ('*Aṭārud*)

The only image of Mercury in Rāvandī's poetry is the old theme of association of Mercury with the *dīvān*, *dabīr*, and discourse (*sukhan*). 'The wheel's scribe' (*kātib-i charkh*),²⁴⁶ 'the scribe of the second sphere' (*kātib-i gunbad-i duvum*)²⁴⁷ are used to describe this planet. Mercury's position is in the second sphere, after the sun. In one of the places where Mercury plays a role, Rāvandī depicts a scene in which various celestial bodies are present at Kaykhusraw's court. In this scene, Mercury has assigned Jupiter to praise Sultan Kaykhusraw, or to be exact, to sing a song of praise to Kaykhusraw:

بیزم شاه مدحت خوان گرفته²⁴⁸

"عطارد سعد اکبر را همیشه

'Mercury has assigned Jupiter (sa'd-i akbar) to sing a song of praise at the king's feast.'

In this verse and the verses before and after, Rāvandī makes a connection between the celestial spheres and Kaykhusraw's court. This connection can also be seen in other parts of the book.

2.4.1.3 Venus (*Zuhra*/ *Nāhīd*)

Just as with Mercury, Rāvandī's usage of Venus includes only old themes. In Persian literature, Venus is situated in the third sphere and is associated with singing, dancing, and sin. Venus is also considered the 'lesser fortune' (*sa'd-i aṣghar*) as opposed to Jupiter which is

²⁴⁵ Rāvandī, 222, 281.

²⁴⁶ Rāvandī, 39.

²⁴⁷ Rāvandī, 435.

²⁴⁸ Rāvandī, 28.

the 'greater fortune' (*sa'd-i akbar*).²⁴⁹ Rāvandī's treatment of this planet also highlights its function as a singer, 'the tuneful singer' (*muṭrib-i khush-navā*),²⁵⁰ while taking notice of Venus' brightness:

"سرورا نوعروس شعر رهی که به آمد ز زهره زهرا"²⁵¹

'Oh, master, this servant, the new bride of the poem who is better than the shining Zuhra.'

In this verse, Rāvandī refers to the planet's brightness by using the adjective *zahrā* (bright) as well as applying the rhetorical figure of *jinās* between *zuhra* and *zahrā*.²⁵² The choice of using this rhetorical figure is not accidental; rather a meaningful one, as he is expressing his interest to be the Sultan's panegyrist in the poem:

"عاشق مدح شاه گشت و ز آن جمع کرد این کتاب از درها"²⁵³

'He fell in love with praising the sultan, thus he assembled pearls in this book.'

2.4.1.4 Mars (*Mirrīkh/ Bahrām*)

Mars, known as *Bahrām* and *Mirrīkh* in Persian, is located in the fifth sphere. This planet is associated with fighting and war. It is also called 'the warrior star', 'Turk of the sky,' and 'lesser misfortune' (*naḥs-i aṣghar*). Due to its red light, it is usually associated with blood, as he is a warrior whose job it is to fight and to spill blood. Its link with the Turks seems to have emerged later, highlighted by the Ghaznavid poets, when the Turks started to become associated with the 'sword' (as opposed to Iranians who were usually connected to administration, or the 'pen'). Rāvandī mentions Mars in the same way, as his predecessors, as a warrior. However, on one occasion, he demonstrates his skill in composing poetry:

"خسرو بهرام قدر شاه فریدون سیر رستم دستان برزم حاتم طی بی گمان"²⁵⁴

'Khusraw, whose position is as high as Bahrām, whose disposition is likened to that of Firaydūn; who is undoubtedly a Rustam in war and a Ḥātam in generosity.'

The ingenuity of this verse lies in the dual implication of *Bahrām*, where 1) it can be a reference to a number of the Sasanian kings, the most famous one being Bahram V, and 2) it

²⁴⁹ *Farhang-i Adabīyāt-i Fārsī*, 256; *Farhang-i Ishārāt-i Adabīyāt-i Fārsī*, 592-594; *A Two Colored Brocade*, 213.

²⁵⁰ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 435.

²⁵¹ Rāvandī, 436

²⁵² *Jinās* happens when the letters of two words are identical except for one. This rhetorical device aims to increase the musical value in a text.

²⁵³ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 437.

²⁵⁴ Rāvandī, 272.

can refer to Mars and its high position in the sky. At first glance, it would seem that the first implication is the only one befitting the verse, especially because other figures are mentioned as well. However, when the verse is read as a part of the whole *qaṣīda*, the second implication becomes relevant as well. The *qaṣīda* starts with images related to nature and moves immediately from this verse to Khusraw's skills in battle; thus, making use of Mars as a symbol for fighting.

2.4.1.5 Jupiter (*Mushtarī*)

Perhaps the most important heavenly body in Rāvandī's poetry is Jupiter. The Persian name for Jupiter is *mushtarī* coming from the Arabic root sh-r-y which means customer. Persian poets often used the similarity to create a notion with dual implications (*īhām*). A perfect example of this wordplay is a verse by the twelfth century poet Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāt:

"تو مشتری نه ای که ببازار نیکوئی صد مشتری است روی ترا همچو مشتری"²⁵⁵

'You are not Jupiter (*mushtarī*), o you for whose face there are a hundred Jupiters (*mushtarī*) like buyers (*mushtarī*) in the marketplace of beauty.'

Jupiter is located in the sixth sphere and is considered the star of judges and the 'greater fortune' as well as the star of eloquence where it comes close to the function of Mercury. As we have seen before, Rāvandī also points out this connection in a verse.²⁵⁶ Rāvandī makes use of this planet more than the others, largely because of the link between Jupiter and fortune. Once again, Rāvandī depicts a scene where the celestial bodies are all present at court; and among them stands 'the greater fortune' pulled down from the sky, in order to be placed among Kaykhusraw's courtiers, side by side with his poets:

"سعد اکبر را فلک هر شب به درگاه تو بر در عداد شاعران شه ثناخوان یافته"²⁵⁷

'The heavenly sphere finds the greater fortune (Jupiter) among the Sultan's poets praising him every night.'

Other than this image, there are a few terms which Rāvandī applies frequently in connection with Jupiter. Perhaps one reason is their similarity in root: these words are *sa'd* (fortunate) and *sa'adat* (fortune). However, the more important reason concerns Rāvandī's efforts to legitimize Kaykhusraw as a fortunate ruler.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁵ Translation in: *A Two Colored Brocade*, 201.

²⁵⁶ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 28

²⁵⁷ Rāvandī, 224. The same image can be found on page 28 as well.

²⁵⁸ The relationship between fortune and Rāvandī's poetry comes in detail later in this chapter.

2.4.1.6 Saturn (*Zuḥal/ Kayvān*)

This planet is located in the seventh sphere. Because of its black colour, it is associated with anything dark: in the images which poets create, he is often called ‘the Hindu of the sky’ referring not only to its colour, but also to his function as the doorkeeper of heaven. Saturn is ‘the greater misfortune’, but accompanied by Jupiter, its misfortune can be neutralized. Rāvandī takes advantage of this feature to indicate his patron’s fortune:

نام تو گرچه سعادت را توقیع شده است سعد اکبر شود از روی بکیوان آرد²⁵⁹

‘Although your name is like a king’s signature on fortune, it can also turn Saturn (which is the greater misfortune) to greater fortune.’

As can be seen in the verse, Rāvandī again uses celestial bodies as well as word play related to fortune to indicate Kaykhusraw’s fortune.

2.4.1.7 The Moon (*Māh*)

The images concerning the moon form an extensive and significant part of the imagery of Persian literature. Poets have made analogies to the moon in its various shapes and phases. The full moon is often analogized with the beloved’s face which is described as round, white, and bright. The new moon usually emerges in imagery when anything bent and crooked is concerned, such as the beloved’s eyebrow. In terms of Islamic concepts, the new moon is connected to the beginning and the end of Ramazan (the fasting month).²⁶⁰ Rāvandī’s usage of the moon also conforms to this style; he makes an analogy between the brightness of his patron’s face and the moon,²⁶¹ to his patron’s wisdom which is as bright as the moon²⁶² and refers to the crookedness of the new moon caused by its jealousy to his patron.²⁶³ The most significant of all are certainly the verses which form an analogy between the sultan’s court and the celestial bodies, among which stands the moon as well:

باد جاوید چرخ بنده شاه ماه و مهر و ستارگانش حشر²⁶⁴

‘May the wheel (of the universe) be the king’s servant forever and the moon, the sun, and the stars his soldiers.’

²⁵⁹ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 150.

²⁶⁰ See: “Poetic Imagery,” 196.

²⁶¹ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 27.

²⁶² Rāvandī, 115.

²⁶³ Rāvandī, 435.

²⁶⁴ Rāvandī, 358.

In the rather complicated image that Rāvandī creates in this verse at the end of a poem in praise of Sultan Kaykhusraw, he presents a scene where the Sultan is above the whole universe and heavenly objects are presented as his soldiers. Moreover, the verse contains a neat contradiction of the high position of the Sultan in the first half and the low positions of the heavenly objects in the second part of the verse. Moreover, this verse is also key in terms of the concept of the ‘wheel’; a notion which repeats itself throughout the book.

2.4.2 The Wheel, the Sphere, and Fortune

The wheel (*charkh*), fortune (*iqbāl*, *sa’d*, *sa’adat*), and the sphere (*falak*) are the words that are frequently used by Rāvandī, which alone demonstrates the importance of these concepts for him and probably for his patron. I have placed these terms in one section, because they are all related to one another and altogether they shape the author’s worldview as expressed in poetry.

The heavenly wheel is often described as a necessary force which through whose movement, time passes. It is often identified with the heavenly sphere (*falak*) and they are used interchangeably in Persian literature. Thus, they both participate in moving time forward, as Rāvandī states:

"تا زمین باشد فلک گردد شب و روز آورد
در زمان فرمان روان کیخسرو باداد"²⁶⁵

‘So long as the earth exists and the heavenly sphere brings night and day through its orbit, Kaykhusraw, the Just will be the ruler forever.’

Given the circular movements of the spheres, heaven is always envisaged as a dome where celestial bodies are located; the earth in the centre and other celestial bodies above or below it. Like the celestial bodies, which were discussed in the last section, the wheel/the sphere has also been described by Persian poets with various features. These features are indicated simply by applying adjectives or the more sophisticated method of using rhetorical figures, especially metaphors. While describing the wheel, poets pay attention to a variety of aspects, such as its behaviour, colour, and its function. For example, the wheel’s behaviour is frequently described as faithless (*bī-vafā*), bold (*gustākh*), and manipulative (*nayrang-sāz*); its colour as green (*akhzār*), turquoise (*pīrūza*), and sapphire (*lājivard*); its function as rotary (*davvār*) and circular (*gardūn*, *gardān*).²⁶⁶ Similar to his predecessors, Rāvandī uses these characteristics of the wheel and the spheres but he does not only repeat them, rather he creates images of his own as well. In the next section, I will look at his rhetorical creations.

²⁶⁵ Rāvandī, 465.

²⁶⁶ For more examples see: Hashem Rajabzadeh, “Taṣvīr-i Charkh dar Adab-i Fārsī,” *Īrānshināsī* 58: 324-325.

2.4.3 Images of the King and His Court

What makes Rāvandī's introduction stand out amongst other historical books is the opening. This is a 14 verse long *maṣnavī* composed in *mutaqārib* meter where he praises God as the one who created everything. In this poem, the time and the seasons are mentioned first followed by the creation of the earth, the spheres, and the four elements (water, fire, wind, earth).²⁶⁷ It is in this poem that we see an image of a court with a king and his courtiers:

خداوند نیسان و فصل بهار	"سپاس از جهان آفرین کردگار
خداوند هر چیزی اندر جهان	خداوند فصل تموز و خزان
که هستند مر بندها را کلید	خرد را و جان را نخست آفرید
پدید آوردست دریای نیل	همو آفریننده مور و پیل
همان هور گیتی فروز آورد	ز بعد شب تیره روز آورد
پدید آرد از آب در خوشاب	همی دارد او گوی خاکی بر آب
بیاراست او را چنان چون سزید	بر از خاک چرخ بلند آفرید
همان رجم دیوی که تخم بدیست	ستاره کزو چرخ را روشنیست
دگر ساکنان اند و غمخواره اند	ازیشان سه و چهار سیاره اند
همه سر نهاده به فرمان شاه	مه و مهر شاهند و دیگر سپاه
که بی این دو هرگز نباشد طرب	یکی شاه روز و دگر شاه شب
ز سبزه بساطی بدو درکشید	خدایی که کوه و زمین آفرید
همان چرخ را پای بر جا بداشت	ازین چار گوهر زمین را نگاشت
کزیشان چو دیبا شود روی خاک ²⁶⁸	چو آب و چو آتش چو باد و مگاک

'Thanks to the World-Creator Almighty, / the Lord who is the month nīsān and spring,

The Lord, who is *tammūz* and autumn time, / the Lord, who is the world and all therein.

Wisdom and spirit first He did create / as keys to break the bonds of suffering,

²⁶⁷ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 1.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid*.

That Maker of all, from ant to elephant / did cause the river Nile to spring forth.
 He brought the day after the darkest night, / that sun that shines glory upon the earth.
 He holds above the water the earthen sphere / and raises from the depths a shining pearl.
 He has wrought above the earth a wheel / tall and dressed it up as such befit.
 A star that lights the wheel is that rock / which strikes the demon, who is evil's seed.
 Of these there are the planets three or four / the other stars do still and sombre sit.
 The moon and sun are kings and all the rest / the army which the kings' command does heed.
 One is king of day, the other of night / without these two shall ne'er there be delight.
 God, who made the mountains and the soil, / and spread the greenery out before Him,
 Has never turned the earth from these four jewels, but held aloft that wheel in its place,
 And though water, fire, wind, and darkest pit, / he wove silk brocade o'er the face of it.'

When the wheel was created, it was adorned by God with stars and planets. These stars and planets are an army for two kings, the kings of day and night, the sun, and the moon. Thus, here we have the image of God as he creates the world as well as the image of a court with all the kings in their grandeur.

The image fits well in the introduction as we go further. Rāvandī elaborates the creation of the spheres by describing their positions and their functions. According to him, God created Saturn in the seventh sphere associating it with the seven climes, India, and the colour black. All the seven climes bore witness to the fortune of Jupiter, the resident of the seventh sphere and the one from whom all the judges in the world should seek help. The general of this universe is Mars who will draw blood from his enemies. The sun is considered the Sultan in this cosmology who bestows *iqṭā'* among the seekers.²⁶⁹ Venus sits in the third sphere providing music, songs, and joy, while Mercury runs the universe in an orderly manner. This universe is lightened by the torch-holder, the moon in the first level.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹ *iqṭā'* refers to the lands given to army officials. It was established in the 9th century and continued to be in practice during Seljuq period as well.

²⁷⁰ Rāvandī, *RS*, 4. "هزار مهره زرین بصنع بلعجب از هفت حقه مینا بنمود، اوج کیوان هفتم آسمان کرد تا بهفتم کشور زمین همد ازو مسعود شوند، هفت کشور را بر سعادت مسند نشین صدر ششم گواه کرد تا قضاة بلاد رشاد ازو طلبند، جلاذ سرخ لقای صف پنجم را از سیاه دلی چنان گردانید که چون مرغ نظر را بر کنگره کشوری نشانند برنیراند تا جوی خون در آن کشور نراند، و سلطان یک سواره را پنج نوبت بر طارم چارم بزد تا یاوگیان جهان بدان طرف رانند و اقطاع ازو ستانند، و چار بالش طرب در بزمگاه سوم برافراخت تا مطرب خوشنوا الحان بساخت و کار طرب ازو پرداخت، و سه نوبت بوزیر دوم داد تا بقلم ضبط کار عالم بکنند، و مشعله دار را بر رواق ازرق که اول ورق رقی دفتر افلاکست بنشانند تا ز نور او کار عالم بنوا بشود."

The same image is applied and reapplied in bits and pieces in *RŞ* where sometimes there are modifications as well, but the image of a kings' court and his courtiers, either in poetry or prose, remain the same. In this way, Rāvandī created a cosmological image which mirrors the court of his patron, Sultan Kaykhusraw. Thus, while many of the images Rāvandī applies are akin to those created earlier by Niẓāmī, there are also new images of heavenly bodies found in *RŞ*. Niẓāmī's influence on Rāvandī, however, is not restricted to cosmological poetic images. In the next section, we will see what role Niẓāmī's verses play in Rāvandī's plan to legitimise the Seljuqs.

2.5 Rāvandī and Niẓāmī

With 247 verses, Niẓāmī is one of the most used poets in *RŞ*. There are a few verses from the *maṣnavī* of *Laylī and Majnūn*, but the rest is all from the *maṣnavī* of *Khusraw va Shīrīn*. Despite the frequent usage of Niẓāmī's verses in the book, Rāvandī does not mention him once. However, it is clear that Niẓāmī's works were well-circulated in various courts, even though he was a contemporary of Rāvandī and one might assume that considering the difficulties of travel at the time, manuscripts might not have transferred fast from a court to another.

Ilyās ibn Yūsuf ibn Zakī ibn Mu'ayyid known as Niẓāmī Ganjavī was born and raised in Ganja (in modern-day Azerbaijan). It is not exactly clear when he was born but based on his works, scholars have narrowed it down the year 530/ 1136.²⁷¹ The Atabegs of Azerbaijan were vassals of the Seljuqs, though they maintained a degree of independence as well. As was the custom of the time, Niẓāmī paid tribute to Sultan Ṭughril III as well as a number of powerful courtiers including Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Jahān Pahlavān ibn Ilduguz and Qizil Arsalān ibn Ilduguz. Niẓāmī's most famous work is called the *Khamṣa* which consists of five *maṣnavīs*: *Makhzan al-Asrār*, *Khusraw va Shīrīn*, *Laylī va Majnūn*, *Haft Paykar*, and *Iskandarnāma*.²⁷²

In the last section, we saw how Rāvandī applied similar notions as Niẓāmī's *Haft Paykar* in his depiction of the cosmos in order to praise and legitimise his patron. Now I will focus on Rāvandī's 'direct' application of Niẓāmī's verses in his *RŞ* in two parts: how the character of the Sasanian king, Khusraw II, appears in *RŞ* and how Rāvandī modifies several verses for his own purposes.

²⁷¹ Safa, *Tārīkh-i Adabīyyāt*, v.2, 798-802.

²⁷² For more on Niẓāmī's works, see: Domenico Parrello, "Kamsa of Neẓāmi," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last updated on November 10, 2010, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kamsa-of-nezami>; Mohammad Moein, *Tahllī-i Haft Paykar-i Niẓāmī* (Tehran: University of Tehran Press, 1338/ 1960), bīst va chahār- sī va du.

2.5.1 Khusraw II as a Role Model

Khusraw II known as Khusraw Parvīz (r. 590-628) is an intriguing character in the history of the Sasanians. As a historical figure, he is considered to be the last powerful king of Persia before the Islamic conquest and a king who is also famous for his military expeditions against the Byzantines and eventually occupying considerable lands extending the Sasanians territory to its greatest limit.²⁷³ In Persian literature, he is predominantly distinguished by his wealth and treasures (*ganj-i khusrawānī*), his musicians (such as Bārbad), and his tendency to indulge himself in various forms of pleasure.

It is, indeed, this image that we find in *Khusraw va Shīrīn* of Niẓāmī. This poem is the second work in what has become known as the *Khamṣa* (after *Makhzan al-Asrār*) which narrates the love story between Khusraw II and his beloved Shīrīn, a princess of Armenia. According to Niẓāmī, their love story is not an easy one; it includes several other characters who makes their lives complicated, such as Farhād (who is in love with Shīrīn), Maryam (Khusraw's wife), and Shikar (Khusraw's consort). Moreover, political complications are also included in the story; Khusraw provokes his father by minting his own coinage. Later, Khusraw loses his throne to Bahrām, a rebellious commander, and resorts to request the help of the Byzantine emperor while living for a considerable time in exile. Eventually, he regains his throne and marries Shīrīn only to be betrayed and later murdered by his own son, Shīrūya, alongside Shīrīn. Overall, Khusraw is depicted as wilful, arrogant, and self-centred in this story which raises the question of the reason for Rāvandī's application of this narrative's verses; especially since in medieval Islamic literature, protagonists of stories function either as an example to be emulated or an example to be avoided.²⁷⁴

There is a two-fold answer to this. Firstly, like many poetic compositions, Niẓāmī's works often leave room for interpretation. While some scholars focus on the Islamic and Sufi aspects of Niẓāmī's work, others emphasize the romantic side of his stories. In other words, because of the broad knowledge of Niẓāmī in various subjects and thus implementing this knowledge in his works, scholars have been able to analyse his stories from diverse perspectives. While Julie Meisami explores the romantic aspects of *Khusraw va Shīrīn* and its link to kingship and justice; Asghar Seyed-Gohrab focuses on the Sufi angle of Niẓāmī's works and its relation to Sanāyī's poetry; while Kamran Talattof investigates the didactic side of his stories.²⁷⁵ Secondly, borrowing from Christine van Ruymbeke's study on *Khusraw va Shīrīn*, "a work always entertains relations with other writings, but this does not preclude an act of

²⁷³ For more on this, see: James Howard-Johnston, "Kosrow II," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last updated on January 1st, 2000, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/khosrow-ii>; Touraj Daryaee, *Sasanian Persia: The Rise and Fall of an Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2023).

²⁷⁴ Julie Scott Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 134.

²⁷⁵ For more, see: Christine van Ruymbeke and Christoph Bürgel (ed.), *A Key to the Treasure of The Hakīm: Artistic and Humanistic Aspects of Nizāmī Ganjavi's Khamṣa* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011); Kamran Talattof, *Nezami Ganjavi and Classical Persian Literature* (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022).

creation and a demonstration of originality by its author.”²⁷⁶ What Rāvandī does here is to perceive the story of *Khusraw va Shīrīn* through another lens. Instead of focusing on the pleasure-seeking activities of Khusraw, he carefully selects the verses related to kingship which picture Khusraw as a just king blessed by Fortune. It is also noteworthy that there are some similarities between Khusraw and Rāvandī’s patrons, such as their shared names (Khusraw and Kaykhusraw), and the fact that they both lost their throne at some point, spent time in exile, and regained power later.

Our first encounter with Niẓāmī’s verses in *RŞ* is at the end of the introduction and before the beginning of the historical section where Rāvandī discusses the subject of justice and how it is the most important feature for a king. Here Rāvandī includes an entire episode on Khusraw (56 verses) when he is not yet enthroned.²⁷⁷ Khusraw stays in the house of a farmer after a long day of hunting and takes advantage of his host’s generosity. When his father, Hurmuzd, hears of this, he punishes Khusraw severely for this act of injustice. Regretting his actions, Khusraw submerges himself in sorrow and asks for forgiveness which is granted by Hurmuzd.

At first glance, it does not seem that the passage is one which lauds Khusraw, rather it seems to emphasise Hurmuzd’s sense of justice. However, before including the story, Rāvandī informs us that Khusraw II dreams of Khusraw I (r. 531-579; Khursaw Anūshīrvān who is known for his justice), because God was glad of him (*ba ḥaq khushnūd būd*).²⁷⁸ Moreover, almost half of the verses indicate how Khusraw II atones for his bad behaviour and finally, the episode ends with the declaration that Khusraw possesses God’s fortune:

مدادای روان و میوه دل	"چو هرمز دید کان فرزند مقبل
بدانست او که آن فر خدایست" ²⁷⁹	بدان فرزانی و آهسته رایست

‘When Hurmuzd saw that his fortunate son/ that cure of soul and the fruit of heart.

(he) is so wise and prudent/ he (Hurmuzd) realized that his son possesses God’s fortune.’

The above episode is not the only time where Khusraw’s character is in the spotlight, though it is the only anecdote with a direct link to Khusraw. In the chapter on Sultan Malikshāh ibn Maḥmūd (r. 1104-1105), 15 verses of Niẓāmī are included to describe the character and disposition of the Sultan. The verses belong to a section where Shāpūr, the court painter, is describing Khusraw to Shīrīn, as Shīrīn had not seen him yet. Shapūr introduces Khusraw as

²⁷⁶ Christine van Ruymbeke, “Persian Medieval Rewriters between Auctoritas and Authorship: The Story of *Khusra va Shirin* as a Case-Study,” in *Shahnama Studies III: The Reception of the Shahnama*, ed. Gabrielle van den Berg and Charles Melville (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 270.

²⁷⁷ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 81-84.

²⁷⁸ Rāvandī, 81.

²⁷⁹ Rāvandī, 84.

young, brave, handsome, generous, a warrior, possessing fortunate and most importantly, shown by its positions in the first two verses, from the line of the ancient Iranian kings:

ز دارا و سکندر یادگاری	"سکندر موکبی داراسواری
زمین را تخمی از جمشید مانده" ²⁸⁰	بخویش آسمان خورشید خوانده

'You have a retinue like that of Alexander and you are a rider to match Dārā/ You are what has remained from Alexander and Dārā.

The sky holds you as a sun/ There remains a seed of Jamshīd on earth.'²⁸¹

It is also noteworthy to add that Rāvandī makes use of Khusraw's ascension episode for the enthronement of his deceased patron, Sultan Ṭughril III. It is doubly significant that the information found in Rāvandī's chapter on Sultan Ṭughril III is of his own authorship, and not gathered from the *Saljūqnāma*, due to the fact that the Sultan was his contemporary and he was serving in his court at the time. Apart from Sultan Kaykhusraw, Sultan Ṭughril III was the most important figure for Rāvandī, as he indicates in the introduction that given time, he would write a 'history of Ṭughril'.²⁸² Employing Khusraw's character for Sultan Ṭughril III demonstrate how highly Rāvandī deems Khusraw of the Sasanians as a role model.

Apart from including Niẓāmī's verses directly, there are instances where Rāvandī modifies them for his own purposes. I aim to discuss in the next section, how, where, and when these instances occur and how they can contribute to further legitimise the Seljuqs.

2.5.2 Modification of Niẓāmī's Verses

In her article, "The Past in the Service of the Present," Meisami demonstrates how the past is formed by the standpoint of the present by investigating two books, the *Shāhnāma* and *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī* by Abū al-Faẓl Bayhaqī, and their relationship to the Ghaznavid court and the political issues and concerns of the time. While Firdawsī seeks to display a model of ancient Iranian kingship, the history of ancient Iran was irrelevant for Bayhaqī.²⁸³ That is also the reason for having many different approaches to historical writings, even if they have been written at the same time. Two authors may choose to record the same event, but considering their point of view, their purposes, their audience, their patrons as well many other factors,

²⁸⁰ Rāvandī, 250. Niẓāmī, *Khusraw va Shīrīn*, ed. Hasan Vahid Dastgerdi (Tehran: Nashr-i Qatra, 1388/ 2009), 67.

²⁸¹ Dārā and Jamshīd are ancient Iranian kings according to the *Shāhnāma* and narratives of national Iranian history. Alexander also possesses an Iranian genealogy based on this tradition. For more on national history of Iran, see: Ehsan Yarshater, "Iranian Historical Tradition," in *Cambridge History of Iran: The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 343-380.

²⁸² Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 44.

²⁸³ Julie Scott Meisami, "The Past in the Service of the Present: Two Views of History in Medieval Persia," *Poetics Today* 14, n.2: 267.

their works will not be the same. This has also been focused on by Waldman in her study of *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī* and by Peacock in his investigation of *Tārīkh-i Bal'amī*. In both works, the way the authors chose to rearrange historical anecdotes provide a key to gain an insight into the author's goals.

However, it is not only rearranging that can shed light on the author's agenda. We have already investigated how Rāvandī applied the method of *ḥal* and *aqd* to reuse materials as well as translating Arabic wisdom to Persian in the forms of both poetry and prose.²⁸⁴ Both methods are a form of modification, and they are not the only methods Rāvandī uses. In dealing with Nizāmī's verses, he also applies modification by changing a few words; sometimes merely a name and sometimes more than one word.²⁸⁵

The modifications can be understood better when put in their specific context. For example:

"خلیفه چون از آن مقدم خبر یافت به خدمت کردن شاهانه بشتافت"²⁸⁶

'When the caliph became aware of that arrival (Tughril's), he rushed to pay his respects to his imperial majesty.'

In *RŞ*, this verse can be found in the chapter on Sultan Tughril I when he first enters Baghdad. The verse explicitly demonstrates the high position of Tughril, as it is the caliph who comes to him to pay his respects. It is even more enlightening when compared to its original context in Nizāmī's *Khusraw va Shīrīn*:

"مہین بانو چو زین حالت خبر یافت به خدمت کردن شاهانه بشتافت"²⁸⁷

'When Mihīn Bānū became aware of this situation, she rushed to pay her respects to his imperial majesty.'

Nizāmī's verse belongs to the section when Mihīn Bānū, the ruler of Arran and Armenia welcomes Khusraw II.²⁸⁸ Armenia was a vassal of the Sasanians at the time and thus, the verse conveys the higher rank Khusraw II possessed in relation to Mihīn Bānū. It is also noteworthy that Rāvandī did not only change the personage involved, 'Mihīn Bānū' to '*khalīfa*'; but also,

²⁸⁴ See the section on the language of *RŞ*, p.34.

²⁸⁵ See also: Julie Scott Meisami, "Ravandi, Nizami, and the Rhetoric of History," in *The Poetry of Nizami Ganjavi: Knowledge, Love, and Rhetoric*, ed. Kamran Talattof and Jerome Clinton (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 97-128.

²⁸⁶ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 106.

²⁸⁷ Nizāmī, *Khusraw va Shīrīn*, ed. Abdul-Muhammad Ayati (Tehran: Intishārāt va Āmūzish-i Inqilāb-i Islāmī, 1370/1991), 70.

²⁸⁸ The parts related to Shīrīn and Mihīn Bānū differ from the historical accounts such as Ṭabarī. According to Paula Orsatti, the story of Shīrīn and Mihīn Bānū is a remainder of the legend of Semiramis, an Assyrian queen whose story is associated with Armenia, Arran, and the west of Iran. See: Paula Orsatti, "*Khosrow va Shirin* and Poems of Love," in *Persian Narrative Poetry in the Classical Era 800-1500*, ed. Mohsen Ashtiany (London & New York: I.B.Tauris, 2023), 152-155.

he replaced the word '*ḥālat*' with '*maqdam*'. He could have easily kept the word and the meter would have remained intact. However, this modification aims to heighten the impact of his portrayal of the power dynamic. *Ḥālat* is a neutral word in this context, but *maqdam* refers to the high position of Ṭughril I in relation to the Caliph.

In the chapter on the reign of Sultan Ṭughril III, several other verses from *Khusraw va Shīrīn* are included; one of which was modified by Rāvandī:

"شه طغرل که سالار جهان بود" جوان بود و عجب دلکش جوان بود"²⁸⁹

‘King Ṭughril who was the world’s chief/ he was young, such a pleasant young man.’

The verse comes in the section where Ṭughril has successfully suppressed Qizil Arsalān and the commanders who had risen against him. Previously, their uprising had cost Ṭughril his throne which he regained after putting down the rebellion and punishing those responsible.²⁹⁰ In the verse that Rāvandī uses, the name of Sultan Ṭughril III replaces that of Khusraw in the *Khusraw va Shīrīn*:

"جهان خسرو که سالار جهان بود" جوان بود و عجب دلکش جوان بود"²⁹¹

‘The world’s sovereign,²⁹² Khusraw, who was the world’s chief. He was young, such a pleasant young man.’

The above verse is part of the episode where the court painter, Shāpūr, is describing Khusraw II. The fact that Rāvandī picks the verses composed for Khusraw’s character leads us again to his intention to depict Khusraw II as a role model. It is also noteworthy that just like Sultan Kaykhusraw I, Sultan Ṭughril III had lost and regained his throne as well.

Although Khusraw II might seem a peculiar choice for a role model considering his frivolous reputation, the concept of depicting a model for didactic purposes is not new in the Persian tradition of historical writing. It is well-established by several scholars that Persian historians used to present their historical facts in a particular way to suit their agenda. While one may have focused on the rise and fall of dynasties, another emphasized establishing a template for just rulership. It is, indeed, the latter that has caused some scholars such as Askari to consider *RŞ* as a work of ‘mirror for princes.’²⁹³ According to Louise Marlow, the term ‘mirror

²⁸⁹ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 368.

²⁹⁰ For more on the rebellion against Ṭughril III, see: Taef El-Azhari, *Queens, Eunuchs, and Concubines in Islamic History 661-1257* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 324-327.

²⁹¹ Niẓāmī, *Khusraw va Shīrīn*, 103.

²⁹² The name Khusraw means sovereign and in this verse, it was used with regard to both its meaning: sovereign and King Khusraw.

²⁹³ Askari, *The Medieval Reception of the Shāhnāma*, 6.

for princes' refers to a form of literary work "devoted to the ethical and practical aspects of governance, and such writings were customarily dedicated to specific rulers or rather high-ranking officers of the state."²⁹⁴ In this definition of mirror for princes, two factors have been highlighted: in terms of content, it should focus on the moral and practical aspects of governance; and it should be written for a ruler or a state-affiliate. *RŞ* while containing these criteria exceeds them; thus, making it difficult to fit it into one genre.²⁹⁵ *RŞ* was, indeed, written for a ruler (Sultan Kaykhusraw I), and in more than a few cases, it focuses on various aspect of governance. An example of this is the account of 'Amīd al-Mulk al-Kundurī's death. Al-Kundurī served as vizier during the reign of Ṭughril I, but when Ṭughril I's nephew, Alp Arsalān, gained power, al-Kundurī was stripped of his rank and Niẓām al-Mulk was appointed as vizier. Al-Kundurī, who had previously supported Alp Arsalān's brother's claim to the throne, was sentenced to death. In the account of Rāvandī, al-Kundurī sees his death as orchestrated by both Alp Arsalān and Niẓām al-Mulk. Before his death, he sends a message to Niẓām al-Mulk warning him of the consequences regarding 'killing a vizier':

"وزیر را بگوی که بدبدعتی و زشت قاعدتی در جهان آوردی بوزیر کشتن ارجو که این سنت در حق خویشتن و اعقاب بازبینی." ²⁹⁶

²⁹⁴ Louise Marlow, "The Ways of Viziers and the Lamp of Commanders (*Minhāj al-wuzarā' wa-sirāj al-umarā'*) of Aḥmad al-Isfahbadhī and the Literary and Political Culture of Early fourteenth-Century Iran", *Writers and Rulers*, ed. Beatrice Gruendler and Louise Marlow (Reichert Verlag Wiesbaden, 2004), 169. For more detailed information about mirrors for princes in Persian and Arabic see: Marlow, *Counsel for Kings: Wisdom and Politics in the Tenth Century Iran*; Louise Marlow, "Advice Literature in Tenth and Early Eleventh Century Iran and Early Persian Prose Writing," *Early Islamic Iran*, ed. Edmund Herzig & Sarah Stewart (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012); Louise Marlow, *Medieval Muslim Mirrors for Princes: An Anthology of Arabic, Persian and Turkish Political Advice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023).

²⁹⁵ The question of genres and categorization of literature has always involved a long and rather vague discussion among scholars, especially since in Persian literatures. The genres used to describe texts often overlapped. As Saghi Gazerani has pointed out, Persian literature and history were oriented and classified based on western literature, instead of being studied as a separate field. Applying western genres in Persian literature led to distinguishing and labeling some areas as 'misfits', while the comprehensiveness of criteria, even in western literature, is still in question. (Saghi Gazerani, *The Sistani Cycle of Epics and Iran's National History: On the Margins of Historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 1-2.) It is also important to note that the concept of genre, as it is perceived now, did not exist in Persian literature. Julie Meisami has suggested a few words which can be recognized as parallels to the western concept of genre, as they convey almost similar notions. These terms which can be found in primary sources when talking about literature are *shīva* (method), *ṭuruq* (ways), *anvā'* (types), and *aghrāz* (purposes). However, they were mostly applied to poetry and its various thematic types, such as *madḥ* (praise), *hajv* (satire), *marṣīyya* (elegy), *vaṣf* (description), *taqazzul* (love poem), and so on. In this attempt to suggest parallels to the western terms, the aforementioned types of poetry have been considered as various genres of Persian literature and they are classified based on their subjects. While subject is a key point in perceiving the concept of genre, it is not the only criteria. In fact, some scholars used the term genre for another concept usually known as 'template' which refers to the different systems based on which Persian poems are composed. In other words, when one talks about genre, it is not totally clear and indisputable what they are referring to: content, form, writing style, some combination of all three factors, or something else. (Julie Scott Meisami, "Genres of Court Literature," *General Introduction to Persian Literature*, ed. Johannes de Bruijn (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 233-234.); see also: Julie Meisami, *Structure and Meaning in Medieval Arabic and Persian Lyric Poetry* (London: Routledge, 2003), 27.

²⁹⁶ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 118.

‘Tell the vizier that in killing a vizier you have established a wrong innovation and preposterous tradition. I hope that this you will see this practice upon yourself and your descendent.’

The account is followed by several verses by Firdawsī indicating that the world’s favour will not last long:

نگه کن بدین گردش روزگار	"جهان تا توانی بشادی گذار
ز تیمار و دردش کند بی گزند	یکی را برآرد بچرخ بلند
همه جای ترسست و تیمار و باک	وز آنجاش گردان برد سوی خاک
بیفگند خیره بچاه دراز	هم آنرا که پرورد بر بر بناز
نهد بر سرش پر ز گوهر کلاه ²⁹⁷	یکی را ز چاه آورد سوی گاه

‘Live as happily as possible/ observe the transience of the world.

It elevates one as high as the sky/ and it gives him no pain and no harm.

Then it takes him down degrades him to the earth/ to a place full of terror and agony.

It (the world) has whom it had raised in feather/ thrown to a deep well.

It takes another from the well to the throne/ and places a jewelled crown on his head.’

It is also important to note that the modification case described earlier between Khusraw II and Ṭughril is by no means an exception and there are other figures on whom Rāvandī focuses and modifies verses for. In the next section, we will see how he creates allegories to praise his patron and how he treats Firdawsī’s verses for the same purpose.

2.6 Rāvandī and Firdawsī

Perhaps the most famous work of Persian literature is the *Shāhnāma* composed in 1010 by Abū Al-Qāsim Firdawsī. He was born in a village called Bāzh in Khurasan in a noble landowning family (*dihqān*). Primarily, it was another poet, Abū Manṣūr Daqīqī, who had taken on the task of composing the *Shāhnāma*. However, after composing 1000 verses, Daqīqī was killed by his servant, and it was Firdawsī who continued the work. While composing the *Shāhnāma*, Firdawsī benefited from the patronage of Abū Manṣūr ‘Abd al-Razzāq Ṭūsī, the governor of Khurasan. A generous governor, Abū Manṣūr had earlier bestowed his patronage

²⁹⁷ Rāvandī, *RṢ*, 118; Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, ed. Jalal Khaleqi Motlaq (California: Bunyād- Mīrās-i Īrān, 1992), vol.3, 396-397.

upon Abū Manṣūr Mu‘ammarī to write a *Shāhnāma* in prose. This prose *Shāhnāma* later served as a source for Firdawsī.²⁹⁸

The *Shāhnāma* is an account about the Iranian people from the mythical era to the fall of the Sasanians in 656.²⁹⁹ It portrays the beginning of everything for the people who lived on the Iranian plateau; how fire was discovered; how they made clothes; how they learned to read and write etc. It narrates the story of four dynasties: the Pishdadids, the Kayanids, the Arsacids, and the Sasanians.³⁰⁰ It is the story of ancient Iranian kings, how they ruled and how they were defeated.

However, what makes the *Shāhnāma* extraordinary and unparalleled among Persian literature is its drastic and long-lasting impact on later works as well as political issues surrounding legitimacy and ideology. Other *Shāhnāmas* were composed imitating the same style or dealing with spin-off stories of the *Shāhnāma*, such as the *Farāmarz-nāma* and *Bānūgushasp-nāma*. Its influence, however, was not merely limited to the stories within it; In later centuries, the meter of the *Shāhnāma*, *mutaqārib*, came to be associated with heroic stories and the meter of epic.³⁰¹ Moreover, due to its political value and interest of the rulers, copies of it were produced on the order of kings. The surviving illustrated manuscripts of the *Shāhnāma* are dated as early as the time of the Mongol Empire, while Oleg Grabar has argued that there were illustrated copies of the *Shāhnāma* from the 11th century, though they were not preserved.³⁰²

In her book, *The Medieval Reception of the Shāhnāma as a Mirror for Princes*, Askari indicates that the *Shāhnāma* was viewed primarily as a work of mirror for princes in the medieval era. Authors of the medieval period paid attention to its didactic value for kings, repeatedly citing selected verses from the *Shāhnāma*.³⁰³ Indeed, we can find *Shāhnāma* verses not only in mirrors for princes, but also in other works such as the *Marzbān-nāma* written in

²⁹⁸ Jalal Khaleghi Motlagh, "Firdowsi, Abu'L- Qāsem i. Life," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last updated January 26, 2012, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ferdowsi-i>; *Shāhnāma* studies on its own is a vast field which has enthralled scholars for decades. For Firdawsī's biography, see: Mohammad Amin Riahi, *Firdawsī* (Tehran: Tarḥ-i Naw, 1380/ 2001); For the reception of the *Shāhnāma* in the Ghaznavid court, see: Andrew Peacock, "Firdawsī's *Shahnama* in its Ghaznavid Context," *IRAN* 56 (2018): 2-12.

²⁹⁹ For more on the fall of the Sasanian Empire, see: Parvaneh Pourshariati, *Decline and Fall of the Sasanian Empire: The Sasanian-Parthian Confederacy and the Arab Conquest of Iran* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008).

³⁰⁰ While there is firm evidence for the history of the Arsacids and the Sasanians, the narratives of the Pishdadids and the Kayanids are wrapped in myth. For studies on how those stories can be seen as history see Mahnaz Farjami, *Barrasī-yi Taṭbīqī-yi Shakhshiyat-hāyi Shāhnāma va Tārīkh-i Bal'amī* (Tehran: Būālī, 1398/ 2019); Zabihollah Safa has divided the *Shāhnāma* into three parts: mythical, heroic, and historical based on their proximity to history and their characteristics. Zabihollah Safa, *Ḥamāsa-sarāyī dar Īrān* (Tehran: Amīrkabīr, 1333/ 1954), 206-215.

³⁰¹ Gabrielle van den Berg, "Early Persian Verse Romances in *Mutaqārib*: Form, Structure, Contents," *Iranian Studies* 56 (2023): 656.

³⁰² Oleg Grabar, "Why Was the *Shahnama* Illustrated?" *Iranian Studies* 43, v.1: 93-94.

³⁰³ Askari, *The Medieval Reception of the Shāhnāma*, 6.

the 12th century.³⁰⁴ Other than that, there seems to have been a change in the treatment of the *Shāhnāma* sometime between the 10th-12th centuries. While authors like Bayhaqī did not find it particularly interesting to focus on, a century later during the Seljuq period, stories of the *Shāhnāma* (either in their versified form or in prose) were found in didactic sources as well as historical works.³⁰⁵ Moreover, a collection of Firdawsī's verses was made by 'Ali ibn Aḥmad commissioned by Sultan Malikshāh containing various topics such as descriptions of nature, praising God, and wise words categorized by topics. This book, which is called *Ikhtiyārāt-i Shāhnāma* was a source of didactic words for authors to include them in their works.³⁰⁶

Rāvandī, however, does not seem to have made use of *Ikhtiyārāt*, rather he chose the *Shāhnāma* verses himself and rearranged them in his own way, as we shall see later. There are two sets of verses here that I will investigate: the verses composed by Firdawsī (633 verses in total) and the verses composed by Rāvandī in imitation of Firdawsī, or, as I call them, pseudo-Firdawsī verses (101 verses).

There is a question that need to be addressed before presenting and investigating examples of Rāvandī's treatment of these verses. The question is why Rāvandī decided to include verses of his own in imitation of Firdawsī. The reason appears to be the nature of the *Shāhnāma* as a potential model for Rāvandī's work. The *Shāhnāma* gives advice to rulers, records history as it was perceived at the time, and presents ancient Iranian kings as proper examples of rulership. It has all the elements that Rāvandī tries to establish for his own book: justice, kingship, and history. Moreover, considering the epic nature of the *Shāhnāma* and all the epic works emulating the *Shāhnāma* especially in the 12th century, choosing the meter of *mutaqārib* could provide RŞ with a heroic atmosphere for the Seljuq rulers.³⁰⁷

While *Shāhnāma* verses were included in didactic works of the Seljuq era, Rāvandī took it upon himself to not only select and rearrange *Shāhnāma* verses as he saw fit, but also to add verses of his own to it without acknowledging the addition. In some cases, the additional verses are usually what links the *Shāhnāma* verses to the situation at hand.³⁰⁸ For example:

³⁰⁴ See: Julia Rubanovich, "Tracking the *Shahnama* Tradition in Medieval Persian Folk Prose," in *Shahnama Studies II*, ed. Charles Melville and Gabrielle van den Berg (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 11-34.

³⁰⁵ Andrew Peacock, "Early Persian Historians and the Heritage of Pre-Islamic Iran," in *Early Islamic Iran*, ed. Edmund Herzig and Sarah Stewart (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 70.

³⁰⁶ For more on *Ikhtiyārāt-i Shāhnāma*, see: Mahmoud Omidshahar, "Nukta-yī dar bāb-i Huvīyyat-i Jāmi'-i Kitāb-i Ikhtiyārāt-i Shāhnāma," *Īrānshināsī* 56 (1381): 850-855.

³⁰⁷ The epic cycle was popular during the Ghaznavid and the Seljuq periods; so much so that 12 different *Farāmarznāma* existed in the 12th century. see: Marjolijn Zutphen, "Faramarz' Expedition to Qanuj and Khargah: Mutual Influences of the *Shahnama* and the Longer *Faramarznama*," in *Shahnama Studies II*, 49-78.

³⁰⁸ As Melville demonstrates, the same practice is later found in the *Ẓafarnāma*, written by Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī during the reign of the Timurids. Similar to Rāvandī, Yazdī incorporated verses from the *Shāhnāma* into his work but did not select all the verses from the same story. Instead, he chose verses from various sections of the *Shāhnāma*, rearranged them, and added his own verses in imitation of Firdawsī. See: Charles Melville, "'Ali Yazdi and the *Shāhnāma*," in *International Shahname Conference. The Second Millennium*, ed. Forogh Hashabeiky (Uppsala Universitet, 2014), 117-33.

یکی داستان زد جهان‌دیده کی	که مرد جوان چون بود نیک پی
بدام آیدش ناسگالیده میش	پلنگ از پس پشت و صیاد پیش
چو کاهل شود مرد هنگام کار	از آن پس نیاید چنان روزگار
چنان شد شهاب از بس آموختن	که مثلش نیابی تو در هیچ فن
برای و بدانش بجایی رسید	که چون خویشتن در زمانه ندید" ³⁰⁹

‘Once a seasoned ruler stated, / that should a young man be fortunate,

He would hunt a sheep effortlessly, / as well as a leopard from behind.

Should the man become lazy in the time of work, / then the fortune would not come again.

From having learned greatly, Shahāb become, / as such that you would not find his like in any field.

Of tact and knowledge, he achieved a place, / that he did not see one his like in his era.’

In the abovementioned verses, the first three are from Firdawsī, while the last two are from Rāvandī describing his friend, Shahāb al-Dīn Aḥmad. In the *Shāhnāma* verses, we hear of a young person who is wise beyond his age. The verses refer to Manūchīhr, great grandson of Faraydūn. Manūchīhr withstood the threat of his great uncles, Salm and Tūr (who had waged war against his grandfather, Iraj, and killed him earlier), and defeated them even though he was younger and less experienced. It is this aspect that Rāvandī has in mind when he talks about his friend, Shahāb al-Dīn, as he also states that Shahāb al-Dīn was wiser than 70-year-olds.³¹⁰

In other cases, the additional verses seem to have been composed for their educational merit as they often strengthen and stress what comes before and after them. Most of these verses are warnings to the readers of the transience of the world. In these cases, Rāvandī mostly applies the same sets of vocabulary in order to give a demonstration of his literary skills:

که داند که چندین نشیب و فراز	پدید آرد این روزگار دراز
چنین است گیهان آسیب و سیب	پس هر فرازی نهاده نشیب" ³¹¹

³⁰⁹ Rāvandī, *Rṣ*, 49-51.

³¹⁰ Rāvandī, 47.

³¹¹ Rāvandī, 142.

‘Who is aware of the ups and downs / that the time will put forward.

This is the universe of harm and un-harm, / after an up will come a down.’

Not only are the words *nashīb* and *farāz* repeated in these two verses, one from Firdawsī and one from Rāvandī, but the other hemistiches also discuss the same matter, the force of fate in what happens in the world.

In the case of Firdawsī’s verses applied in *RŞ*, Rāvandī follows the same rule as discussed previously. While a number of them were chosen because of their didactic contents, there is another group of verses which possess an allegorical connection to the incidents which occurred during the Seljuq era and are narrated in *RŞ*. Askari has discussed one of these occasions where the original context plays an important role in understanding of Rāvandī’s work.³¹² In this verse, which appears in the introduction of *RŞ*, Sultan Kaykhusraw I is praised with more than one poem, one of which is made up of 12 verses chosen from various parts of the *Shāhnāma*:

کچونان درخت آفریدون نکشت³¹³

"درختی بکشم بخرم بهشت

‘I have planted a tree in the verdant paradise, / like of which Faraydūn did not plant.’

The verse selected addresses the reign of Gushtāsp where he accepted Zoroastrianism and planted a cypress in Kashmar to honour the occasion. Thereafter, he sent emissaries to spread the faith among people and he held the tree as a symbol of his righteousness. It is intriguing that the verse has a connection to its previous paragraph both in terms of content and vocabulary. According to Rāvandī, Sultan Kaykhusraw I is ‘the fruit of the tree of Seljuq family.’³¹⁴ He is also a tree whose roots are spreading and strengthening religion and whose fruit is constructing public buildings, such as *madrasas*, *khānaqāhs*, mosques, and upholding justice. In other words, the verse is profoundly intertwined with the verse from the *Shāhnāma* and its original context. In both cases, the tree (real and hypothetical) is the most significant factor referring to Gushtāsp and the Seljuq family, Kaykhusraw I in particular, as righteous God-approved rulers.

Moreover, the text and its following poem suggest there is a relationship between justice and God’s approval. Strengthening religion and constructing religious buildings are considered as a way of justice, as was also indicated in the section on the structure of *RŞ*.³¹⁵ Religion and upholding religious laws were among the pillars of the Seljuq dynasty’s legitimacy. Omid Safi has demonstrated the Seljuqs’ attempts to gain legitimacy through empowering orthodox knowledge and commissioning the construction of *khānaqāhs*. An

³¹² See: Askari, *The Medieval Reception of the Shāhnāma*, 46-47.

³¹³ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 28.

³¹⁴ Rāvandī, 29. "ثمره شجره سلجوق است."

³¹⁵ See p.46.

example of the former can be seen in the figure of al-Ghazzālī whose works are centred on the relationship between the sultan and the caliph. Construction of the *khānaqāhs*, especially, was carried out to gain the approval of saints and Sufi. A practice that was called *baraka* and eventually led to legitimising the Seljuqs.³¹⁶

The allegory between the original context and the one in *RŞ* does not end with the similarities between Gushtāsp's situation and that of Kaykhusraw I. The rest of the poem comes from the beginning of the reign of Kaykhusraw of the Kayanids in the *Shāhnāma*. Beside the evident overlap of their names, Kaykhusraw of the *Shāhnāma* and Kaykhusraw of the Seljuqs, the poem addresses concepts of *hunar*, *guhar*,³¹⁷ *nizhād* (origin), and *khirad* (wisdom), concluding that whoever is in the possession of these four elements and virtues will be at peace and a be God-approved ruler who is also revered by a chaste and faithful people.³¹⁸ The passage before the poem indicates Sultan Kaykhusraw I's tendencies to patronize religion, religious establishments, and the 'ulamā, thus showing his efforts in upholding justice. The passage following the poem also demonstrates his endeavours in this line. If we take a closer look at the poem and its connection to the text, we can see the four qualities mentioned above in Kaykhusraw I: 1) He is of the pure origin of the Seljuqs (*nizhād*); 2) his very essence is strengthening the religion (*guhar*);³¹⁹ he constructs religious buildings; 3) he is well-versed in religious matters; 4) he patronizes the 'ulamā (*hunar*); and finally all this comes together in being a just ruler (*khirad*).

Instances of *Shāhnāma* verses and pseudo-*Shāhnāma* verses can be attested in almost every page of *RŞ*. What makes them significant for this study is not only the abundance of them compared to previous works, but also the close connections between the original context of the *Shāhnāma*, the history of the Seljuqs, and the link the work makes to Sultan Kaykhusraw I. It is also noteworthy that the frequency of *Shāhnāma* verses increases when it comes to the chapter on Tughril III and the events of Rāvandī's own time. We can witness this in *Jāmī' al-Tavārīkh* as well, where more *Shāhnāma* verses are included in the section on Ilkhanid history. This feature will be investigated in the next chapter.

2.7 Conclusion of the Chapter

In chapter two, I have analysed the language, the structure, the motifs, and the usage of poetry both Rāvandī's and those of others including Niẓāmī and Firdawsī in *RŞ*. What the

³¹⁶ Safi, *The Politics of Knowledge in Pre-Modern*, xxi-xxxvii.

³¹⁷ It is extremely difficult to provide a simple definition for *guhar* and *hunar* in the context of the *Shāhnāma*. Firdawsī applies these two words frequently and sometimes interchangeably. *Guhar* refers to the nature or the essence of a person and can nourish in life, while *hunar* signifies the acquisitional features of a person and positive traits that one can acquire during their lifetime. For more, see: Qadamali Sarrafi, "Guhar va Hunar dar Shāhnāma va Bāztāb-i Ān dar Adab-i Fārsī," *Justār-hāyi Adabī* 186 (1393/ 2015): 29-54.

³¹⁸ Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 29.

³¹⁹ Ibid. "بیخس تربیت و تقویت دین"

language tells is that Rāvandī made a conscious choice in his usage of *naṣr-i fannī* for his introduction while the rest of the book borders between *naṣr-i fannī* and one level easier style, *naṣr-i baynābayn* (middle prose). In this way, he could demonstrate his literary skill for the various types of audience he addressed, be it the Seljuq ruler, Sultan Kaykhusraw, his courtiers, and even those interested in skills such as calligraphy while at the same time, he structures his work in a way that every chapter ends with a reference to Sultan Kaykhusraw to ensure making a connection to the Seljuq family, and therefore emphasize the legitimate rule of Sultan Kaykhusraw I. Rāvandī made use of every strategy available to him as the time: he drew on celestial objects to make an allegory between a ruler and his court; he made use of the Sasanian king, Khusraw II as a role model; and he made use of Firdawsī's verses to connect the Seljuqs in the line of the ancient Iranian kings. Moreover, in the introduction as well as in the following chapters, Rāvandī reasons for the Seljuqs' legitimacy by focusing on notions important in Islam such as justice and its relation to good deeds.³²⁰ The author defines the notion of justice by linking it to the religion. Justice is not only about doing good, but also about doing the deeds that were deemed good by the religion. Upholding religious rules was also considered a way of ensuring that justice is served as was looking after the *'ulamā* and their needs in order to strengthen and spread the word of God.

³²⁰ See pp.48-52.

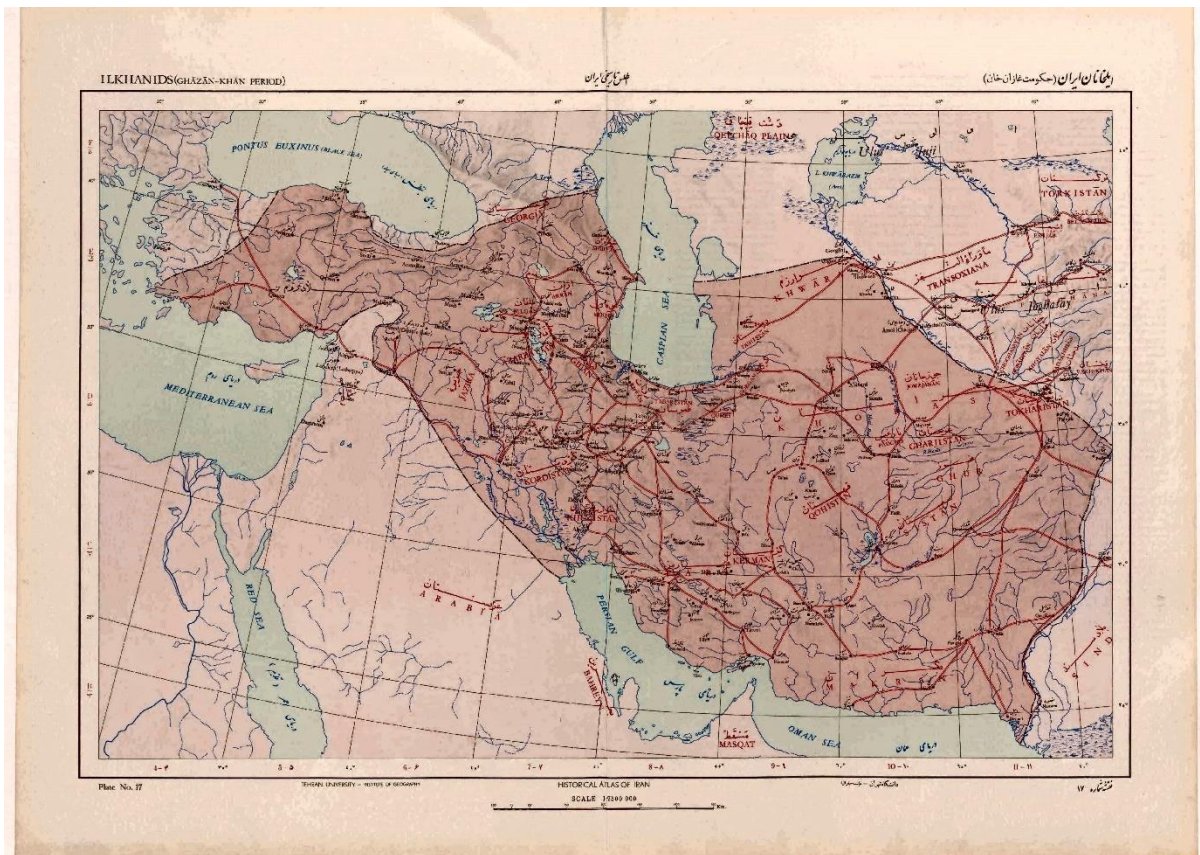


Figure 6: Map of the Ilkhanid Territory³²¹

³²¹ Historical Atlas of Iran, "Plate No.17," Wikimedia Commons, accessed on 14 March 2024, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Historical_Atlas_of_Iran_-_Plate_No._17.jpg

3. *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*

In this chapter, I aim to investigate the ideological contribution of the verses in *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*. To achieve that, I will start with situating the work in its time by taking a look at the historiographies composed before *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*. Subsequently I will study the author, Rashīd al-Dīn, as well as the authorship claim made by another Mongol historian, Qāshānī. The chapter continues with explaining how *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* was produced by giving a timeline as accurate as possible. Then I will proceed to analyse the work's language and structure, as I did for *RŞ*. The last two subchapters deal with the poetry in both first and the second volume of *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*.

3.1 Persian Historiography under the Mongols

The first wave of Mongol attacks on the Persian-speaking world came in 1219 after Sultan Muḥammad Khwarazmshah (r. 1200-1220) had made a sequence of strategic mistakes in dealing with the Mongols.³²² Sultan Muḥammad fled his stronghold in Khwarazm towards the east and Chinggis dispatched two of his generals, Jebe and Sübedei, after him. Not knowing that Sultan Muḥammad had died on an island in Caspian Sea, the generals continued their conquests through the Caucasus and beyond until 1223.³²³ In the east, Chinggis appointed his fourth son, Tolui, to conquer and re-conquer the cities of Khurasan and Transoxiana while he himself encountered Sultan Muḥammad's son, Jalāl al-Dīn (r. 1220-1231), who was in Ghazna at the time.³²⁴

It was not the first time that Iranian lands saw an invasion from their eastern neighbours; after all, the Seljuqs attacked Khurasan as well. One reason that causes this incident to be remarkably different from that of the Seljuqs is the abrupt nature of it. While the Seljuqs migrated eastwards over decades, the Mongols arrived swiftly capturing one city after another. This sudden incursion was also reflected in our sources as well, including the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* written around 1260. The sentence below does not only show the swiftness of the incident with words, but it is also reflected in its grammar as well summarizing the whole incident of the capture of Bukhara in merely a few verbs:

"آمدند و کردند و سوختند و کشتند و بردند و رفتند."³²⁵

³²² For the formation of the Mongol Empire, see: Timothy May, *The Mongols* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019); David Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986); Morris Rossabi, *The Mongols: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); For details of the Mongols' interactions with Sultan Muḥammad Khwarazmshah, see: Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World from Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 72-75.

³²³ Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World*, 79-80.

³²⁴ Jackson, 80.

³²⁵ 'Aṭā-Malik Juvainī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*, ed. Mohammad Qazvini (Tehran: Dunyā-yi Kitāb), 83.

“They came, they sapped, they burnt, they slew, they plundered, and they departed.”³²⁶

The author of these sentences, ‘Aṭā-Malik Juvainī, came from a family of administrators who had previously worked for the Seljuqs and the Khwarazmshahs.³²⁷ He wrote his book, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*, around 1260 after he came back from his journey to Mongke’s court.³²⁸ The book narrates the story of the Mongols until the capture of the Ismā‘īlī strongholds in 1256 as well as a history of the Ismā‘īlīs presumably based on Ismā‘īlī sources retrieved from their stronghold in Alamut.

In terms of his usage of poetry, Juvainī’s book is the perfect example of what literary scholars call rhetorical prose (*naṣr-i fannī*), one of its key elements is the ample usage of poetry in prose texts. Juvainī frequently draws on the verses from the *Shāhnāma*; especially the story of Rustam and Suhrāb, and Rustam and Isfandiyār.³²⁹ Out of about 440 Persian verses found in the book, roughly 80 of them were picked out from the *Shāhnāma*. He does not only attempt to apply *Shāhnāma* verses for their descriptive value, but he also makes analogies between the heroes of the *Shāhnāma* and the Mongols.

Writing at the same time as Juvainī, Sirāj al-Dīn Minhāj Jūzjānī devoted a section to the Mongols in his book, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*. He wrote his book outside of Mongol territory in India and dedicated it to the ruler of Delhi, Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh (r. 1246-1266). The book is a general history and contains 23 sections, the last which concerns the Mongols. Similar to Juvainī, there are elements of shock about the Mongol invasion reflected in his history. The section on the Mongols starts with what one could call ‘the essence of Jūzjānī’s opinion about the Mongols’. The author begins the section with a prophetic *ḥadīth* about the exact time of the Day of Judgment, according to which is some day between 600 and 610 of the Hijri calendar and the author equals it with the time that Chinggis rose to power in Mongolia.³³⁰ In Jūzjānī’s view, he lives in an apocalyptic time and the Mongols brought about the end of the world. This view is also demonstrated in several *ḥadīths* and quotations, mostly in Arabic, in the section of the Mongols.

³²⁶ ‘Aṭā-Malik Juvainī, *The History of the World Conqueror*, trans. John Boyle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), vol.1, 107.

³²⁷ For a detailed biography of the Juvainīs, see: George Lane, *The Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Iran* (London & New York: Routledge, 2003), 177-212.

³²⁸ Juvainī says that he was encouraged by his “friends” to immortalise the deeds of the Mongols. (See: Juvainī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*, 7). He does not name these friends, but we should bear in mind that “encouragement by friends” is a recurrent theme in Persian literary works often applied to demonstrate the author’s humbleness; the famous poet, Sa’dī, also made use of this theme in his *Gulistān*. See: Sa’dī, *Gulistān*, ed. Gholam-hossein Yousefi (Tehran: Khvārazmī, 1384/ 2005), 54.

³²⁹ See also: Sara Mirahmadi, “Legitimising the Khan: Rashīd al-Dīn’s Ideological Project from a Literary Aspect,” *Iran* 61:2 (2021): 221-234.

³³⁰ Jūzjānī indicates that Chinggis rose to power in 602 A.H. Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* (Kabul: Bunyād-i Farhangī-yi Jahāndāran-i Ghūrī, 1391/ 2012), 545; The year 602 A.H. corresponds to 1205-6, when Chinggis managed to unite Mongolia and was installed as Chinggis Khan in a *quriltai*. See: Michal Briran, *Chinggis Khan* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007), 39.

Unlike his peer, Juvainī, Jūzjānī rarely applies poetry in his history. The few occasions that he includes poetry are mostly concerning a poet composing a few verses at the scene. He was a poet himself and at the end of his introduction as well as at the end of the book, he inserted his own compositions. On both occasions, the poems are in the form of prayers; in the former, he implores his readers to forgive him in case of any mistakes; and in the latter, he is praying for his patron, Nāṣir al-Dīn.

It is often perceived that the four decades of 1260-1300 are a gap in Persian historiographical works which Jackson believes can be filled with two brief works of *Nizām al-Tavārīkh* by Qāzī Bayzāvī and *Akhbār-i Mughulān* by an unknown author.³³¹ The former book is a general history starting from Adam up to the Mongol period. As is apparent from the title of the author, Qāzī, he held the position of judgeship in Shiraz during the reign of Hülegü and Abaqa. *Nizām al-Tavārīkh* is his only book in Persian and is often ignored by scholars because of its brevity.³³² The book is a general history of Iran and Islam and despite having been written when technical prose was a trend, uses simple language without incorporating any verse at all. Its importance lies in its apparent popularity during the reign of the Ilkhanids which can be deduced from the numerous manuscripts from that period which have survived to this day.³³³ Moreover, Charles Melville has shown that there was a second recension of *Nizām al-Tavārīkh* produced in its author's lifetime.³³⁴ The existence of a second recension means that even in the early years of the Ilkhanids, efforts were made to legitimise them by the means of historiography.³³⁵

The second book, *Akhbār-i Mughulān*, is a brief history of the early periods of the Mongol Empire with a focus on the Ilkhanid rulers until the ascension of Arghun (1284-1291). The book was found in a collection of works scribed by Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, an astronomer who worked with Khvāja Naṣir al-Dīn Ṭūsī in the Maragha observatory.³³⁶ *Akhbār-i Mughulān*

³³¹ Jean Aubin, *Émirs Mongols et Viziers Persans dans les Remous de l'Acculturation* (Paris: Association Pour L'Avancement des Études Iraniennes, 1995), 23; Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World*, 24-25. Even if we accept that there is a void in these four decades, it can only be ascribed to the historical works about the Mongols and certainly not to other subjects and genres of historiography. An example of this is *al-Mu'jam fi Āṣār al-Mulūk al-'Ajam* written by Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvinī about the history of ancient Iranian kings up to the reign of Khusraw I of the Sasanians. See: Qazvinī, *al-Mu'jam fi Āṣār al-Mulūk al-'Ajam*, ed. Ahmad Fotouhi-nasab (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āṣār va Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 1383/2004).

³³² Qāzī Bayzāvī, *Nizām al-Tavārīkh* (Tehran: Bunyād-i Muqūfat-i Duktur Maḥmūd Afshār, 1384/2015), vi.

³³³ It is also noteworthy that *Nizām al-Tavārīkh* is the only historical work that has been concluded in the collective work of *Safīna-yi Tabrīz*. See: *Safīna-yi Tabrīz* (Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1381/2003). *Safīna-yi Tabrīz* was produced in an Ilkhanid workshop between 1323-1325 and contains several texts presumably important in the Ilkhanid period. Some texts survived only through its collection. For more on *Safīna-yi Tabrīz*, see: *Safīna Revealed, A Compendium of Persian Literature in 14th Century Tabriz*, ed. Asghar Seyed-Gohrab and Sen McGlinn (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2011).

³³⁴ Charles Melville, "From Adam to Abaqa: Qāḍī Baidāwī's Rearrangement of History (Part II)," *Studia Iranica* 36 (2007): 7-64.

³³⁵ See also: Charles Melville, "Qāḍī Baidāwī's *Nizām al-tawārīkh* in the *Safīna-yi Tabriz*: An Early Witness of the Text," in *The Treasury of Tabriz*, ed. Asghar Seyed-Gohrab (Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers, 2007), 91-102.

³³⁶ On Maragha observatory, see: Aydin Sayili, *The Observatory in Islam and its Place in the General History of the Observatory* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1960), 187-223.

was inserted alongside works on philosophy and literature, none written by Quṭb al-Dīn himself, and its authorship is in question.³³⁷ The book is structured annually relating the history of the Ilkhanids year by year, applying simple language. There is no Arabic poetry or Arabic phrases and there are only two Persian verses in the whole book which were inserted as finishing lines. What this book has in common with *Nizām al-Tavārīkh* is the simplicity of its language written in a milieu where poetry and prose poetry were flourishing. Written by Quṭb al-Dīn or not, the language of *Akhbār-i Mughulān* leads us to assume that the author was not of the administrator class (*dīvānī*) which is a feature also attested in Bayzāvī's and Jūzjānī's books.

Tajziyat al-Amṣār va Tazjiyat al-Āṣār (*The Allocation of Cities and Propulsion of Epochs*), otherwise known by its author's name as *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf* is the closest of Ilkhanid historical sources to *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* in terms of the time of composition. The author, 'Abd Allāh ibn Faḏl Allāh Shīrāzī often referred to as Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaẓrat (Court panegyrist) was born around 1265. Not much is known from his life except what he says in his book. He served as an administrator for a while in the court of the Salghurids of Fars (1148-1282), then moved to Tabriz where he met his future patron, Rashīd al-Dīn.³³⁸ Vaṣṣāf informs us that he started to write his book in 699/1300, intending it to be a sequel to Juvainī's book, thus starting from the fall of the Ismā'īlī strongholds in 1256.³³⁹ Upon finishing the third volume, Vaṣṣāf offered his book to Ghazan in 702/1303 right before Ghazan's campaign to Syria.³⁴⁰ The book was welcomed by Ghazan to such a degree that after praising Vaṣṣāf's work, he commanded him to write another book about the early history of the Mongols.³⁴¹ It is not clear why Vaṣṣāf did not perform the task as Ghazan had ordered; instead he wrote the fourth volume about the reign of Ghazan. This volume whose composition lasted about a decade was offered to Öljeitü in 1313 while Rashīd al-Dīn was present as well.³⁴²

Vaṣṣāf's history does not only cover Ilkhanid history, but it also includes local dynasties, such as the Salghurids and the rulers of Shabānkāra (1030-1355). To our knowledge, Vaṣṣāf commenced writing his book before Rashīd al-Dīn on his own initiative but was encouraged later on to continue writing by Ghazan. The last volume, volume 5, is about the reign of Sultan Abū Sa'īd (r. 1316-1335) which means Vaṣṣāf's duration of writing lasted even after the completion of *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*.

³³⁷ Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, *Akhbār-i Mughulān dar Anbāna-yi Mullā Quṭb*, ed. Iraj Afshar (Qom: Kitāb-khāna-yi Āyat Allāh Mar'ashī Najafī, 1389/ 2010), 7; George Lane, *The Mongols in Iran* (London & New York: Routledge, 2018), 10.

³³⁸ Mahboubeh Sharafi, *Zindigī, Zamāna va Tārīkh-nigārī-yi Vaṣṣāf-i Shīrāzī* (Tehran: Pazhūhish-kada-yi Tārīkh-i Islām, 1392/ 2013), 23-25.

³³⁹ Vaṣṣāf, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf*, ed. Alireza Niknezhad (Tehran: Mirmāh, 1399/ 2020), 93-95.

³⁴⁰ Vaṣṣāf, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf* (Lahore: Karīmī Press, 1929), 371.

³⁴¹ Vaṣṣāf, 406.

³⁴² Vaṣṣāf, 544.

Similar to Juvainī, Vaṣṣāf's style of writing is rhetorical prose as well. However, it is rhetorical to such a degree that the applied poems are completely intertwined with the prose passages in a way one cannot be understood without the other. In other words, Vaṣṣāf's style is a mixture of prose and poetry, in both the Persian and Arabic languages.³⁴³ The Combination of prose and poetry in Vaṣṣāf's book as well as the many rhetorical devices he used has made the book difficult to understand. It is also the reason that it has sometimes been deemed as a literary book rather than a historical one.³⁴⁴ We will overlook Vaṣṣāf's historical value if we accept such arguments. The sections on the local dynasties as well his account on the Ilkhanids is a valuable source of information. Furthermore, Vaṣṣāf was writing almost at the same time as Rashīd al-Dīn which makes his book noteworthy when analysing *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*. Having briefly looked at the books produced before *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, we now have an idea of the atmosphere when Rashīd al-Dīn was writing. In the next section, I am going to closely look at Rashīd al-Dīn and his works.

3.2 Authorship

This section consists of two parts. The first subsection will focus on Rashīd al-Dīn's life and position while the other will investigate the claim made by the historian Qāshānī regarding the authorship of *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* through looking into its context. While the focus of this study is the poetry included in *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, it is vital to gain an understanding of the composition of *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* in its entirety, who composed it, and why it was composed on such a manner. The following sections aim to clarify the relationship between the work and its possible author(s).

3.2.1 Rashīd al-Dīn

Rashīd al-Dīn Faḡl Allāh Hamadānī (1247-1318) was a vizier during the Ilkhanid era and responsible for the production of a famous world history called *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* (Compendium of Chronicles, hereafter *JT*).³⁴⁵ Being a great vizier in the Ilkhanid state, Rashīd

³⁴³ Julie Meisami has studied a number of works which are mixed prose and poetry, among them is *Rṣ*. She considers it a 'prosimetrum' if it is judged by western genres. Although she has not mentioned Vaṣṣāf's book in this chapter, the book certainly meets the criteria of being classified as prosimetrum. See: Julie Meisami, "Mixed Prose and Verse in Medieval Persian Literature," in *Prosimetrum*, 295-320. For definition of prosimetrum, see: Brogan, "Prosimetrum," 1115-1116.

³⁴⁴ For example, see: Vaṣṣāf, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf*, ed. Alireza Hajian-nezhad (Tehran: University of Tehran Press, 1388/2009), intro, bīst va panj (xxv).

³⁴⁵ According to John Boyle *JT* is "the first world history in the true sense ever written in any language." See: John Andree Boyle, "Rashid al-Din: The First World Historian," *Iran* 9 (1971): 26. Charles Melville further explains this term (the first world history) by indicating the factors which distinguishes this source from the previous works. It is not only due to the inclusion of accounts of the Chinese, the Turks, and the Europeans; rather it originates from Rashīd al-Dīn's vision in covering them; not as separate entities but as integral parts of the world. See: Melville, "The Mongol and the Timurid Periods 1250-1500," 169-170; There is a heated discussion among

al-Dīn has attracted the attention of scholars for a long time. However, despite the fact that he played a major role during the Ilkhanid period, the information regarding the earlier years of his life is, unfortunately, not as comprehensive as we might expect. Scholars of Mongol history, such as Stefan Kamola,³⁴⁶ Dorothea Krawulsky,³⁴⁷ Brigitt Hoffmann,³⁴⁸ and Hashem Rajabzadeh,³⁴⁹ have constructed a biography of Rashīd al-Dīn in their works, each shedding light on a part of this complicated issue.

Rashīd al-Dīn himself does not tell us much about himself in his *JT* and most biographical information about him is extracted either from his theological works or from his contemporaries. The collection of his theological works, called *Majmū'a-yi Rashīdī* (The Rashīdī Collection) consists of four items: *Kitāb al-Tawzīhāt* (Book of Explanations), *Miftāḥ al-Tafāsīr* (Key to the Exegesis of Qur'ān), *Mabāḥiṣ-i Sulṭānīya* (Imperial Discussions), and *Laṭāyif al-Ḥaqāyiq* (Subtle Truths).³⁵⁰ Other than these, he also wrote a number of agricultural and medical treatises which together with his theological catalogues and the endowment deed of Rab'-i Rashīdī (the Rashīdī Quarter of Tabriz) form all his written works known as *Jāmi' al-Taṣānīf-i Rashīdī* (Collection of the Writings of Rashīd al-Dīn).³⁵¹

In his *Vaqfnāma* (Endowment Deed), whose manuscript is written in his own hand, Rashīd al-Dīn introduces himself as 'Faḏl Allāh ibn Abī al-Khayr ibn 'Ālī al-Hamadānī known as Rashīd al-Ṭabīb.³⁵² There is no consensus in Rashīd al-Dīn's contemporary sources about the date of his birth, but he mentioned in the manuscript of one of his theological works, *Bayān al-Ḥaqāyiq* (Indication of truths) (dated 711 A.H.), that he was 62 years old which estimates his date of birth around 648 A.H./ 1250.³⁵³ His *nisba*, Hamadānī, suggests that his family were from Hamadān.³⁵⁴ His ancestor, Ra'īs al-Dawla, and his father, Muvaffaq al-Dawla were in the service of the Ismā'īlīs and after the Ismā'īlī defeat by the Mongols, Rashīd al-Dīn's family, who

scholars of this field about the authorship of various parts of *JT*, especially the world history section. I will discuss this in the next section.

³⁴⁶ Kamola, *Making Mongol History*, 28-58.

³⁴⁷ Krawulsky, *The Mongol Ilkhans and Their Vizier Rashīd al-Dīn*, 63-78.

³⁴⁸ Brigitt Hoffmann, "Speaking about Oneself: Autobiographical Statements in the Works of Rashīd al-Dīn," in *Rashīd al-Dīn, Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran*, ed. Anna Akasoy, Charles Burnett, and Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim (London & Turin: The Warburg Institute, 2013), 1-14.

³⁴⁹ Hashem Rajabzadeh, *Khvāja Rashīd al-Dīn Faḏl Allāh* (Tehran: Ṭarḥ-i Naw, 1377/1998), 11-70.

³⁵⁰ I have used Hoffmann's translation of book titles, except for *Mabāḥiṣ-i Sulṭānīyya*, which is my own translation. Hoffmann has stated the title as *al-Kitāb/ al-Risāla al-Sulṭānīyya* and translated it as Imperial Book. See: Hoffmann, "Speaking about Oneself," 7.

³⁵¹ For more on Rab'-i Rashīdī, see: Brigitt Hoffmann, "In Pursuit of *Memoria* and Salvation: Rashīd al-Dīn and His Rab'-i Rashīdī," in *Politics, Patronage, and Transmission of Knowledge in 13th -15th Century Tabriz*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 169-185.

³⁵² Rashīd al-Dīn, *Vaqfnāma-yi Rab'-i Rashīdī*, ed. Mojtaba Minovi and Iraj Afshar (Tehran, 2536/ 1978), 35.

³⁵³ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Bayān al-Ḥaqāyiq*, ed. Hashem Rajabzadeh (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1386/ 2007), 82. Other estimations were presented as well, such as 645/ 1247. For a detailed discussion about Rashīd al-Dīn's date of birth, see: Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, Panjāh va haft.

³⁵⁴ David Morgan has suggested that he was born in Hamadān apparently based on his *nisba*, but a *nisba* does not necessarily refer to the birthplace of every single person of that family. In fact, there is other evidence suggesting that he was not born in Hamadan. (David Morgan, "Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, accessed on February 21st, 2022, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_6237.)

were known physicians (*ṭabībs*), offered their service to Hülegü.³⁵⁵ Since then, Rashīd al-Dīn seems to have been making politically ambitious moves starting with the reign of Abaqa (r. 1265-1282) and his son, Arghun (r. 1284-1291), the second and third Ilkhanid rulers respectively. Before completely being immersed in courtly duties, Rashīd al-Dīn followed his family profession as a physician. *Tārīkh-i Yazd*, written by Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad Jaʿfarī in the 14th century, suggests that Rashīd al-Dīn stayed in Yazd for a few years to complete his medical education. Jaʿfarī also indicates that years later Rashīd al-Dīn constructed a *madrassa* and a *khānaqāh* in Yazd.³⁵⁶ The list of his properties in Yazd in the *Vaqfnāma* also demonstrate his long-standing relationship with the city.³⁵⁷

It is not exactly clear what his position was in the court before Ghazan's reign. Hashemzadeh believes that he was a physician and boon companion in the court of the Ilkhanids.³⁵⁸ We can assume that he made use of his medical skills during his service, especially considering his medical writings. However, Hashemzadeh did not offer any further evidence about Rashīd al-Dīn's possible roles in court. The historian Nāṣir al-Dīn Munshī Kirmānī, who wrote his book on vizirate and viziers in the Islamic world during the reign of Abū Saʿīd (r. 1316-1335), indicates that the position of vizier was offered to Rashīd al-Dīn during the reign of Geikhatu, but he did not accept and continued his roles as wine bearer/cook, boon companion, and physician.³⁵⁹

The name of Rashīd al-Dīn begins to appear repeatedly with the emergence of a conflict during the early years of Ghazan's reign. This conflict narrated by some Ilkhanid sources centred around Ṣadr al-Dīn Khālīd Zanjānī, Geikhatu's and Ghazan's first *ṣāḥib dīvān* (vizier/ finance minister). The nature of this conflict and Rashīd al-Dīn's possible involvement is not entirely clear, as our sources report the incident differently. Nevertheless, they do agree that Ṣadr al-Dīn was accused of a crime by two courtiers and fell from Ghazan's grace.³⁶⁰ Subsequently Rashīd al-Dīn was appointed by Ghazan alongside Saʿd al-Dīn Sāvujī to bear the responsibilities of viziers. The concept of dual vizirate had been in practice since the early years of Ilkhanid reign in order to prevent the concentration of power in any one person's hands.³⁶¹ Unfortunately we do not have any clear image of how their responsibilities were divided. The Ilkhanid sources often mention their positions as *vizārat*, *ṣidārat*, *nīyābat*, and *ṣāḥib dīvānī* without mentioning whether these positions were different and if they were, they

³⁵⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 874 & 879.

³⁵⁶ Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad Jaʿfarī, *Tārīkh-i Yazd*, ed. Iraj Afshar (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitāb, 1338/1959), 92.

³⁵⁷ See: Rashīd al-Dīn, *Vaqfnāma*, 103-45. For more on Rashīd al-Dīn and his relationship with the city of Yazd, see: Iraj Afshar, "Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh va Yazd," *Īrānshināsī* 1 (1349): 23-33.

³⁵⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawzīḥāt-i Rashīdī*, ed. Hashem Rajabzadeh (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1394/ 2016), chahārdah.

³⁵⁹ Munshī Kirmānī, *Nasāʾim al-Aṣḥār min Laṭāʾim al-Akhbar* (Tehran: Ittīlāʾāt, 1364/ 1986), 112.

³⁶⁰ Vaṣṣāf, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf* (Lahawr: Karīmī Press, 1929), 345-6; Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 1283-1285.

³⁶¹ Shams al-Dīn Juvainī and Majd al-Mulk are examples of this practice during the reign of Abaqa. For more on them, see: Kamola, *Making Mongol History*, 34-35.

did not distinguish the differences.³⁶² We may assume that grey areas of responsibilities may have been the source of conflict between co-viziers, such as the conflict between Shams al-Dīn Juvainī and Majd al-Mulk during Abaqa's reign and the later conflicts between Rashīd al-Dīn, Sa'd al-Dīn and Tāj al-Dīn 'Alīshāh.

It is interesting that Rashīd al-Dīn never once refers to his appointment as vizier after the fall of Ṣadr al-Dīn. In fact, in the whole sections of Geikhatu's and Ghazan's reigns, there are only two references to him; one is after the death of Jamāl al-Dīn Dastjirdāni, the vizier of Baidu (r. 1295), when Ghazan sent Rashīd al-Dīn as his deputy (*qā'im maqām*) to Khurasan to manage affairs of that province which given Khurasan's importance displays Ghazan's total confidence in Rashīd al-Dīn;³⁶³ and the second instance Rashīd al-Dīn is mentioned is during the story of Ṣadr al-Dīn when he ascribes a few words to Rashīd al-Dīn and refers to him as simply "*Rashid-i ṭabīb*" (Rashīd the physician).³⁶⁴

The notion of appointment of Rashīd al-Dīn as a co-vizier is expressed in other sources. The most explicit of all is in *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf*. Vaṣṣāf in a section titled as 'designation of Rashīd al-Dīn to vizierate', indicates that *nīyābat* and *ṣāhib dīvānī* were given to Rashīd al-Dīn and Sa'd al-Dīn.³⁶⁵ Once again, there is no indication of job responsibilities for either of them. Another historian of the Ilkhanid era, Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī, depicts the relationship between Rashīd al-Dīn and Sa'd al-Dīn. In his *Ẓafarnāma*, a versified history of Iran after the Islamic conquest, Mustawfī phrases their relationship as 'one knowledgeable than the other':

که مانند او در ممالک ندید	"غزان خان ز ایران ورا برگزید
بدو داد فرمان آن کار و راه	ورا نایب خویشتن خواند شاه
بدو گفت آن شاه والاثراد	زمام وزارت بدستش نهاد
ببند اندر این کار فرخ میان ³⁶⁶	بارشاد خواجه رشید این زمان

'Ghazan Khan chose him (Sa'd al-Dīn) from Iran/ as he saw no one like him in all the realms.

He called him his 'deputy' (*nāyib*)/ he gave him the command of that work.

He put the reins of vizierate in his hand/ that noble king told him then.

That he should prepare himself for this job/ with the guidance of khvāja Rashīd'

³⁶² According to Vaṣṣāf, Sa'd al-Dīn was appointed as *ṣāhib dīvān* while Rashīd al-Dīn held the positions of "*nīyābat*" (deputy) and "*vizārat*." See: Vaṣṣāf, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf*, 347.

³⁶³ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 1122.

³⁶⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, 1134.

³⁶⁵ Vaṣṣāf, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf*, 347.

³⁶⁶ Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī, *Ẓafarnāma* (Tehran: Markaz-i Nashr-i Dānishgāhī, 1377/ 1998), 1367.

Two points are noticeable in these verses: first, Sa'd al-Dīn was appointed as vizier and he was called *nāyīb* and second, he was supposed to follow the guidance of Rashīd al-Dīn. The verses clearly demonstrate a higher rank, higher than a vizier, for Rashīd al-Dīn without explaining what his role was at court.

When Ghazan died and his brother Öljeitü succeeded him, both Rashīd al-Dīn and Sa'd al-Dīn were re-appointed in their positions as 'vizier', says the historian Qāshānī in his book, *Ṭārīkh-i Uljāyṭu*.³⁶⁷ Interestingly though, the author of *Majma' al-Ansāb*, Shabānkārā'ī, phrases this appointment differently: 'the vizier of Sultan Muḥammad (Öljeitü) was still Khvāja Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvujī. He bore the name of vizier and the realm was run by Khvāja Rashīd al-Dīn Ṭabīb who was the heart and ear of the Sultan.'³⁶⁸ Similar to the *Ẓafarnāma*, this source also places Rashīd al-Dīn higher than Sa'd al-Dīn and much closer to the sultan himself. Therefore, as Kamola pointed out "he was unquestionably an important figure, probably the single most influential person at court" but we may never know the exact nature of his responsibilities.³⁶⁹

After Sa'd al-Dīn fell from grace and was killed, he was replaced by Tāj al-Dīn 'Alīshāh. Once again, the sources do not enlighten us about the responsibilities of Tāj al-Dīn and Rashīd al-Dīn. According to Vaṣṣāf, after the death of Sa'd al-Dīn, it was Rashīd al-Dīn who put forward Tāj al-Dīn for the position of vizierate.³⁷⁰ This, however, did not protect him against Tāj al-Dīn's ambitions. After long years of conspiracy, Rashīd al-Dīn was accused of poisoning Sultan Öljeitü and was killed in 1318 during the reign of Öljeitü's son, Abū Sa'īd.³⁷¹

3.2.2 Qāshānī's Claim of Authorship

Scholars have tried to answer the question of 'who wrote *JT*' for years. Almost anyone who has ever worked on the *JT* or Rashīd al-Dīn has touched upon this issue. Among the most important and extensive works are those of Edgard Blochet,³⁷² Stefan Kamola,³⁷³ Jonathan Brack³⁷⁴ and Osamu Otsuka.³⁷⁵ Despite the effort that has been put into answering this

³⁶⁷ Abū al-Qāsim Qāshānī, *Ṭārīkh-i Uljāyṭu*, ed. Mahin Hambali (Tehran, 'Ilmī va Farhangī, 1391/2013), 28.

³⁶⁸ Shabānkārā'ī, *Majma' al-Ansāb*, ed. Mirhashem Mohaddeth (Tehran: Amīrkabīr, 1363/1984), 270. "وزیر سلطان محمد همان خواجه سعدالدین ساوجی بود اما نام وزارت بر وی بود و کار مملکت او بر صاحب فاضل مرحوم خواجه رشید الدین طبیب می رفت و دل و گوش سلطان بود."

³⁶⁹ Kamola, *Making Mongol History*, 51. The same discrepancy is seen in other sources regarding the role of Rashīd al-Dīn. For more information, see: Banākatī, *Ṭārīkh-i Banākatī*, ed. Jafar Shoar (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āṣṣār-i Millī, 1348/ 1969), 475-476; Khvāndmīr, *Ṭārīkh-i Ḥabīb al-Sīyar*, ed. Mohammad Dabirsiyaqi (Tehran: Khayyām, 1380/ 2001), vol.3, 152; Mīrkhvānd, *Rawzat al-Ṣafā*, Leiden University Ms.Or.6772.

³⁷⁰ Vaṣṣāf, *Ṭārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf*, 540.

³⁷¹ Mīrkhvānd, *Rawzat al-Ṣafā*, folio.155.

³⁷² Edgard Blochet, *Introduction A L'Histoire Des Mongols De Fadl Allah Rashid Ed-Din* (Leyden: Brill, 1910).

³⁷³ Stefan Kamola, "Rashīd al-Dīn and the Making of the World History in Mongol Iran" (PhD diss, University of Washington, 2013).

³⁷⁴ Brack, "Mediating Sacred Kingship: Conversion and Sovereignty in Mongol Iran."

³⁷⁵ Osamu Otsuka, "Qāshānī, The First world Historian: Research on His Uninvestigated Persian General History, *Zubdat al-Tawārīkh*", *Studia Iranica* 47 (2018): 119-149.

question for at least a century, it seems that this problem has never been fully solved. One reason could be the fact that evidence can be found to support multiple arguments and different viewpoints. Thus, I will now take a look at the origin of the issue along with the available paradoxical evidence in sources. My aim is to see Qāshānī's claim of authorship in its context and more importantly, how and why it was made as well as what his claim meant during the Ilkhanid period with regard to rules of authorship and literary composition.

The problem arose when Abū al-Qāsim 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad Qāshānī, the Shi'ī historian of the Ilkhanid era, made a "notorious claim"³⁷⁶ indicating that he was the real author of the *JT* and that Rashīd al-Dīn presented the book to Öljeitü on 10 Shavvāl 706 (22 April 1307) and received a reward for it, but he failed to share the reward with Qāshānī as was promised before.³⁷⁷ Qāshānī later in his book claims that he is also the author of *Zayl-i Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* (*JT*'s appendix), but in the same manner, Rashīd al-Dīn stole this one as well; Rashīd al-Dīn offered the book to Öljeitü, was rewarded and did not share the reward with Qāshānī.³⁷⁸

These two claims have shadowed Rashīd al-Dīn's credibility as the author of *JT*. The matter became more complicated with the discovery of a manuscript in the *Staatsbibliothek* in Berlin. Blochet has identified this work as the *Zubdat al-Tavārīkh* of Qāshānī, but it is not exactly clear why he has given this name to the work,³⁷⁹ especially because in the text, Qāshānī says that his work is a supplement of the *JT*.³⁸⁰ What we do know from the text is that this work is a supplement of the *JT* and probably the same *Zayl-i Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* which Qāshānī talks about in *Tārīkh-i Uljāyту*. Blochet has compared this manuscript with the Perso-Islamic part of the *JT* and has concluded that Rashīd al-Dīn copied Qāshānī's text without acknowledging him.³⁸¹

³⁷⁶ Charles Melville, "Jāme' al-Tawārīkh," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last updated on April 10, 2012, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jame-al-tawarik>

³⁷⁷ Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljāyту*, 54-55.

³⁷⁸ Qāshānī, 240-241.

³⁷⁹ Blochet, *Introduction A L'Histoire Des Mongols De Fadl Allah Rashid Ed-Din*, 140-149.

³⁸⁰ "تميمه و ضميمه جامع التواريخ", Blochet, 142. Jonathan Brack has suggested a possible reason for Blochet's argument. In the text, Qāshānī says that he wants to write a history of the fourth clime which is the best (*zubdat*) of all the seven climes ("تاريخ اقليم رابع كه زبده هفت كشور... است", *Introduction A L'Histoire Des Mongols De Fadl Allah Rashid Ed-Din*, 141). Brack suggests that the usage of the word *zubdat* here may be the reason for this identification (Brack, "Mediating Sacred Kingship: Conversion and Sovereignty in Mongol Iran," 323). However, this does not seem to be a sufficient explanation, because the word *zubdat* in the sentence does not refer to the history, rather to the fourth clime. Another explanation has been put forward by Otsuka that although the name of *Zubdat al-Tavārīkh* did not come in the preface, it came in the beginning of the second chapter. Whereas on the front page of the Berlin manuscript the title is written as '*Lubb al-Tawārīkh*' (Core of Histories). (see: "Qāshānī, The First World Historian: Research on His Uninvestigated Persian General History, *Zubdat al-Tawārīkh*," 128). He also lists the available manuscripts of *Zubdat al-Tavārīkh* and it is noteworthy that except for one, none of these are from the time of the author and none of them are complete which makes it hard to be sure that they are parts of the same book.

³⁸¹ *Introduction A L'Histoire Des Mongols De Fadl Allah Rashid Ed-Din*, 145-149. Alexander Morton has also done a similar comparison for the Seljuq parts of these two works. Like Blochet, he also is of the opinion that the writer of the Seljuq part as well as other parts of the *JT* is Qāshānī. See: Alexander Morton, "Qashani and Rashid al-Din on the Seljuqs of Iran," in *Living Islamic History*, ed. Yasir Suleiman (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 166-177.

Qāshānī addresses *JT* in both the Berlin manuscript and *Tārīkh-i Uljāyту*, but his two descriptions of the *JT*'s contents are quite different. In the former, he says that this supplement (the history of the Arabs and Persians, *tārīkh-i 'ajam va 'arab*) in comparison to *JT* is like a stream to a river which implies that the *JT* being discussed here included larger areas or some other topics.³⁸² Since the *Zayl* of *JT* is a Perso-Islamic history (from what can be seen in the Berlin manuscript and based on its name), it is safe to assume that *JT* was a universal history. This assumption is supported by another of Qāshānī's statements. In the introduction to his *History of the Ismā'īlīs*, he says that after the completion of *JT*, which was a collection of the histories of other people groups, he decided to write a history of the Ismā'īlīs as well. This *JT* that he mentions in this part encompasses the history of the Turks, Indians, Jews, south China, Europeans (the Franks, the Popes, and the Caesars). He also says that *JT* was compiled in accordance with the order of Ghazan Khan. If we assume that this *JT* that Qāshānī talks about is the *JT* of Rashīd al-Dīn, and keeping in mind that he says in *Tārīkh-i Uljāyту* that *JT* is the history of the Mongols, the contradictory information regarding its content causes confusion. In order to resolve this confusion, Brack considers the possibility that Qāshānī wrote a universal history with the same name of *JT* by Ghazan's order, and the book was finished before Öljeitü's reign. In other words, assuming that there were two *JTs*, he suggests that not only did Rashīd al-Dīn extensively borrow from Qāshānī's book, but also that he adopted the same title.³⁸³

Brack's explanation may have been persuasive, if Qāshānī's works had not been replete with contradictory statements. On the contrary to what he says in the introduction of *Tārīkh-i Ismā'īliya*, in *Tārīkh-i Uljāyту*, he says that *JT* is a history of the Mongols and their descendants.³⁸⁴ Taking all Qāshānī's statements into account along with what Rashīd al-Dīn says in the main introduction of the *JT* that the *JT* is the name he gave to the whole collection (all three volumes), my impression is that Qāshānī is also referring to this same book.³⁸⁵

In light of the aforementioned assumption, I would like to go into the details of the claims that Qāshānī makes in *Tārīkh-i Uljāyту*. In the first claim which is brought up among the events of the year 706/1307, Qāshānī says that Rashīd al-Dīn presented the *JT*, 'which was the composition of this miserable one,' to Öljeitü via some 'infidel Jews' (*juhūdān-i mardūd*) and that he received a reward of 50 *toman* of wealth including properties, lands, and villages and every year, he receives a total amount of 20 *toman* cash from the revenues of those properties and although he (i.e. Rashīd al-Dīn) had promised to pay the author who had created (i.e. Qāshānī himself), he did not hold his promise.³⁸⁶

³⁸² Blochet, *Introduction A L'Histoire Des Mongols De Fadl Allah Rashid Ed-Din*, 142.

³⁸³ Brack, "Mediating Sacred Kingship," 324-325.

³⁸⁴ Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljāyту*, 2.

³⁸⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 15.

³⁸⁶ Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljāyту*, 54-55. "و آدینه دهم دستور ایران خواجه رشیدالدین کتاب جامع التواریخ که تالیف و تصنیف این بیچاره بود، به دست جهودان مردود بر رای پادشاه عرضه کرد و جایزه آن پنجاه تومان مال از املاک و دیه و ضیاع بستد و هر سال از محصول

The second reference can be found at the end of the book, in the section about the virtues and good deeds of Öljeitü. The concerned passage is the last anecdote of this section according to which 'Rashīd al-Dawla (the title Qāshānī gives the vizier here) presented the *Zayl of JT*, which was the composition of this weak one (i.e. Qāshānī) and was dedicated to Sultan Öljeitü, and Öljeitü showed him kindness and rewarded him to such a degree that had not been common before. He elevated his rank and bestowed upon him 50 *tomans* of wealth in the way of a stipend. He gave him two portions of large villages in every region whose guaranteed revenues were 20 *tomans* each year along with other blessings and endowments that no king has ever given since the time of Adam. Although he had promised to do so, he did not give a portion of it to this author (i.e. Qāshānī). Through the money, he patronized several 'infidel Jews' and gave them stipends.' Then Qāshānī inserts two verses in the voice of Rashīd al-Dīn in praise of Öljeitü's kindness and generosity.³⁸⁷

There are a few points to which I would like to draw attention here. The first point is the place of the second anecdote in the book; it is the last anecdote of the section related to the virtues and good deeds of Öljeitü. Contrary to the other anecdotes of this section, the focus is not Öljeitü or his personality, but rather on the author himself and the story where he discusses being cheated. There are some words and verses which are about Öljeitü's generosity, but those materials only lead the readers to conclude how important this event was and implicitly it acts as a way to reproach Rashīd al-Dīn. In other words, the anecdote does not quite fit into its context, and it concerns more the author's own agenda, rather than that of Öljeitü.

The second point which raises suspicions regarding Qāshānī's claims of authenticity is the uncanny similarity that exists between these two anecdotes. In both anecdotes, the story begins with the presentation of the book to Öljeitü, adding a subordinate clause to express the real author; then it states the amount of award, both using the same numbers (i.e. 50 and

مستدرکات و ربیع و ارتفاعات آنجا بیست تومان نقد عفوا و صفوا به وی می رسد و باوجود وعده بتصنیف یک درم به مولف و مصنف آن نداد که سعی بلیغ و جهد نجیح نموده بود و به سالها جمع کرده"

" ذیل کتاب جامع التواریخ که تالیف این ضعیف بود و به نام مبارکش تمام کرده، خواجه ³⁸⁷ Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Öljeitü*, 240-241. رشیدالدوله برو عرض کرد. در حق او چندان سیورغامیشی و عاطفت و اصطناع فرمود که هرگز هیچ پادشاه در حق هیچ وزیر آن چنان موهبت و احسان و عطیت و اکرام و انعام معهود و معتاد نبوده، و درجه او عالی کرد و سرش به آسمان رسانید، و پنجاه تومان مال بر سبیل موجب و ادرار در حق او انعام و احسان فرمود. در هر ناحیتی دو پاره دیه معظم و قریه معمور معتبر که مجموع آن را به مبلغ بیست تومان هر ساله به ضمان است، و همچنین دیگر کرامات و انواع تشریفات و انعامات که از عهد آدم علیه السلام تا اکنون هیچ پادشاهی به جایزه لوح محفوظ نیافته باشد. و با آنک به مصنف شرط کرده بوده دانگی از آن به مولف و جامع و مصنف آن کتاب نداد. بلی به واسطه آن دو سه نفر جهود جحد را تربیت کرد و مشاهره و ادرار رسید و این ابیات می خوانند..."

Kamola states that Qāshānī puts these verses in the mouths of two or three Jews who were paid by Rashīd al-Dīn to sing them in order to further damage Rashīd al-Dīn and question his loyalty to Islam (see: "*Rashīd al-Dīn and the Making of History in Mongol Iran*," 248-249). Though Kamola's argument regarding Qāshānī's efforts to damage Rashīd al-Dīn's Islamic reputation is correct and supported by Qāshānī's mention of Jews, his reason needs some reorientation. The verb which is used for singing in Qāshānī's passage is singular and refers to Rashīd al-Dīn himself, rather than the Jews. Nonetheless, rewarding Jews and raising them to high position seems to be a good enough reason to argue Rashīd al-Dīn's fake conversion in Qāshānī's eyes.

It is noteworthy that Otsuka did not differentiate between these two claims, passing over them as repeating the same statement (see: "Qāshānī, The First World Historian: Research on His Uninvestigated Persian General History, *Zubdat al-Tawārīkh*," 122)

20). There are also mentions of Jews in both anecdotes which do not seem to have been added for factual reasons; and finally, the promise that Rashīd al-Dīn allegedly made to the author and did not fulfil it.

Apart from the obvious similarity in structure and vocabulary, the amount of awards also seem problematic. If we assume that the author is stating the exact amount (which he probably is, considering how he felt about being cheated of his reward), Öljeitü rewarded Rashīd al-Dīn lands, villages, and properties whose values were 50 *tomans* and altogether, they will deliver 20 *tomans* revenue. This reward was for the completion of the *JT*. On the other hand, for the completion of *Zayl of JT*, Rashīd al-Dīn was awarded 50 *tomans* in cash, which was supposed to be paid periodically, and some properties whose revenues were 20 *tomans* every year. In other words, while the reward of the *JT* was only properties, the reward of *Zayl* was both cash and properties whose total amount was much higher than the amount for the much longer work. The author himself says that this amount of reward was not common which insinuates Öljeitü's kindness and generosity. Considering that *JT*'s content was presumably more important for the Mongols (because it included the history of Chinggis and his descendants), the amount of reward that was dedicated to the *Zayl of JT* is strange. In other words, the reward does not match the work.

However, there seems to be more to the story which all depends on what Qāshānī meant by *JT*. If *JT* is, as he says in *Tārīkh-i Uljāytu*, the history of the Mongols and their descendants until Ghazan Khan, and if *Zayl* is, as he says in the Berlin manuscript, a Perso-Islamic history, it is not logical that Öljeitü rewarded *Zayl of JT* more than he did *JT*; especially since Qāshānī himself admits that the *Zayl of JT* compared to *JT* itself is like a stream to a river.

Another point which is also important in these anecdotes is the manner of presentation. The patronage system in the Ilkhanid period was quite extensive and it functioned in a hierarchical manner. The courtiers who were close enough to the sultan or the king were able to present the book to their patrons themselves. On the contrary, if they were not close enough to the court, they would have needed a mediator who was able to approach the sultan and present the work on behalf of the real author.³⁸⁸ An Ilkhanid example of presenting a work via a mediator is the book of Vaṣṣāf which was also offered to Ghazan by Rashīd al-Dīn.³⁸⁹

In Qāshānī's first statement in *Tārīkh-i Uljāytu*, the author says that *JT* was not presented by Rashīd al-Dīn himself, but by a few 'infidel Jews' who were clearly not important enough to be mentioned by name. Given Rashīd al-Dīn's high status as a vizier, he did not need to present the book via a group of unknown Jews. Moreover, Qāshānī himself implicitly

³⁸⁸ There were also other factors which made authors to present their works via mediators. For example, if the author could not come to the court himself, because he lived in another city (Rāvandī presented his work via Khvāja Jamāl al-Dīn (see: Rāvandī, *RŞ*, 462). Presenting a work via a prestigious person could also add extra credit to the book and its author as well.

³⁸⁹ Vaṣṣāf, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥazra*, ed. Alireza Hajiannzhad, 24-25.

acknowledges Rashīd al-Dīn's high rank; for he calls him by the honorary title of *dastūr*, an ancient Iranian title identifiable with vizier, which draws a comparison between Rashīd al-Dīn and ancient Iranian viziers, including Būzarjmīhr, Khusraw I's famously intelligent vizier. He also calls him Rashīd al-Dīn which does not happen frequently in his work, as Qāshānī tends to use the title Rashīd al-Dawla to emphasize Rashīd al-Dīn's Jewish background.³⁹⁰ If Qāshānī, as he claims in the introduction of *Tārīkh-i Ismā'īliya* had been commissioned by Ghazan Khan to write a universal history, he would have presumably been close enough to present the book himself, but as we can see, he did not or *could* not do it.

There are other reasons which make us question Qāshānī's claim. There are references made by later authors implying or indicating that the book's author is Rashīd al-Dīn. One of these references is a story which has come in *Majma' al-Ādāb fī Mu'jam al-Alqāb*, written by Ibn Fuvvāṭī in the fourteenth century according to which Ibn Fuvvāṭī saw 'Afīf ibn Muḥammad al-Naqqāsh in Arran, in the year 705/1305, while he was sitting in the sultan's camp and illustrating Rashīd al-Dīn's book.³⁹¹ The book was probably *JT*, because it was Rashīd al-Dīn's only illustrated book.³⁹² Another piece of evidence of this sort can be found in Mustawfī's *Tārīkh-i Guzīda* from the 14th century. In his introduction, he praises Rashīd al-Dīn and later on, mentions the *JT* of Rashīd al-Dīn as one of his sources.³⁹³ A century later, the Timurid historian, Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, wrote an appendix on the *JT*. He not only acknowledged Rashīd al-Dīn in the book's title (i.e. *Ẓayl-i Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh-i Rashīdī*), but also stated that the book begins from where Rashīd al-Dīn left off, at the end of Ghazan's era (703/1304).³⁹⁴ Apart from this, one might say that Mustawfī acknowledged Rashīd al-Dīn as the author of the *JT*, because he was his protégé and took Rashīd al-Dīn's side in the conflict between the vizier and his rivals, Sa'd al-Dīn Sāvujī and later Tāj al-Dīn 'Alīshāh. While historians like Vaṣṣāf and Mustawfī supported Rashīd al-Dīn, Qāshānī supported Rashīd al-Dīn's rivals. If what Qāshānī claims is true, it would be very strange for Rashīd al-Dīn's rivals not to use these claims against him. In fact, Qāshānī's claim was not reiterated by anybody else later.³⁹⁵

Taking another approach to this matter, let us assume that by *JT* Qāshānī meant the history of the Mongols (*Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*) and by *Ẓayl of JT*, he meant the Perso-Islamic history.³⁹⁶ However, this assumption causes other problems: how could have Qāshānī acquired the detailed information in the history of the Mongols, if he was not even close

³⁹⁰ The title 'al-dawla' was common among the Jews in the Ilkhanid period and it was often considered as an indicator for one's religion.

³⁹¹ Ibn Fuvvāṭī, *Majma' al-Ādāb fī Mu'jam al-Alqāb* (Tehran: Vizārat-i Farhang va Irshād-i Islāmī, 1374/1995), 478.

³⁹² See: Abbas Zaryab Khowyī, "Si Nukta Darbāra-yi Rashīd al-Dīn," *Majmū'a-yi Khaṭāba-hā-yi Taḥqīqī Darbāra-yi Rashīd al-Dīn Faṣl Allāh Hamidānī* (Tehran: University of Tehran Press, 1350/1971): 135; Rajabzadeh, *Khvājah Rashīd al-Dīn Faṣl Allāh*, 352-353.

³⁹³ Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī, *Tārīkh-i Guzīda* (Tehran: Amīrkabīr, 1387/2008), 2-7.

³⁹⁴ Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Ẓayl-i Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh-i Rashīdī* (Tehran: Shirkat-i Tazāmunī-yi 'Ilmī, 1317/1939), ٥.

³⁹⁵ On the matter of rivalry in the Ilkhanid court between Rashīd al-Dīn and others see: Kamola, "Rashīd al-Dīn and the Making of History in Mongol Iran," 244-255.

³⁹⁶ As the name suggests, Perso-Islamic section of *JT* includes history of Islam, history of Iran from the ancient times to the emergence of the Mongols.

enough to present his work himself? What we see in the history of the Mongols must have been collected by someone who had access to the imperial archives.³⁹⁷ On the other hand, assuming Qāshānī as the writer of the Perso-Islamic history does not solve our problems either, because as we have seen in the structural analysis of *JT*, most parts of the Perso-Islamic section were adopted from other sources; they are even sometimes repeated verbatim without acknowledging the sources. Thus, considering that quoting paragraphs (sometimes intact) from other sources was not uncommon in the historiography of medieval Persia, can it even be considered stealing?³⁹⁸

Let us take a look at Qāshānī's claims while keeping the aforementioned evidence in mind in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how the claim was made. In neither of his claims does Qāshānī indicate that Rashīd al-Dīn had 'stolen' his work. In fact, in neither of those passages is the emphasis on the possible theft; rather, the centre of the anecdotes is how Rashīd al-Dīn makes a promise and fails to keep it. Sabotaging Rashīd al-Dīn's character in this way is also in line with stereotypical image in the Islamic world of Jews as oath-breakers³⁹⁹ and as we have seen before, Qāshānī desperately tries to smuggle in a few verbal attacks on Jews in both of his stories for no apparent reason.

In an overall view of this issue, I would like to argue that questions as such are best to be answered by looking at the milieu of their creations. Qāshānī's claim was made when there was an acute rivalry amongst the court and viziers, with administrators, courtiers, down to the lowest ranks of secretaries all taking part in. Switching sides and loyalties was surely possible, as can be seen in Qāshānī's case who seems to be a protégé of Rashīd al-Dīn at first. Qāshānī refers to Rashīd al-Dīn as *makhdūm-i man* (my master)⁴⁰⁰ which shows a patron-protégé

³⁹⁷ For the sources used by Rashīd al-Dīn, see the chapter on the structure of the *JT*.

³⁹⁸ The concept of literary theft or plagiarism is very vague and tricky in medieval Persia. One of the earliest definitions of plagiarism that we have is from Shams Qays Rāzī in his book, *Al-Mu'jam fī Ma'āyir Ash'ār al-'Ajam*, written the 13th century. Rāzī indicates that there are four types of plagiarism: *Intihāl* which is verbatim copy from someone else; *Salkh* which means using the same concept and words but changing only the order of the words; *Elmām* which is getting a concept from another and using it in another form; and *Naql* which happens when a poet gets a concept from someone and uses it in another context. He also says that if a person adopts a concept from another and uses it in a better form and stronger words, the concept would be of the second person. In other words, if a poet can recompose a verse or a poem better than its original poet, he would be considered as the intellectual owner of that verse or poem (no matter who the original poet is). (see: Shams Qays Rāzī, *Al-Mu'jam fī Ma'āyir al-Ash'ār al-'Ajam* (Tehran: University of Tehran Press, 1956) 457-469). It is possible that this exception in rule led to competitions between poets and as can be seen later (in divans of poets or even Rāzī's book), there are many examples of poets competing and trying to exceed each other's talents in composing poetry. One method that could help them compete, which was also part of their education, was to learn other people's work (poetry or prose) by heart. This method is attested in most rhetorical books and manuals for *dabīrs* (see *Al-Mu'jam fī Ma'āyir al-Ash'ār al-'Ajam*, 439-440; Niẓāmī 'Arūzī, *Chahār Maqāla* (Tehran: Šidā-yi Mu'āšir, 1386/2007), 21-22). Even more than that, it was advised to use quotations from others, but according to Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāt, an expert in rhetoric in the 13th century, those quotations should be famous, so no one thinks that they are plagiarized (Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāt, *Ḥadā'iq al-Sihr fī Daqā'iq al-Shi'r*, 72). Therefore, it is not always easy to draw boundaries for the concept of plagiarism in medieval Persia, given the way that writers and poets were educated and practiced their talents.

³⁹⁹ For example, see: The Qur'an 2:246; 7: 138-148.

⁴⁰⁰ Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljāyṭu*, 55.

relationship between them at least at some point. However, later more hostile behaviour is reflected in the sources. The obvious indication of Qāshānī's changing loyalty is the rededication of one of his other works to Tāj al-Dīn 'Alīshāh, Rashīd al-Dīn's rival. Qāshānī's work, titled "*Arāyis al-Javāhir*" was written around 700/1300 and was dedicated to the vizier Rashīd al-Dīn, but Qāshānī rededicated it to Tāj al-Dīn 'Alīshāh after he and Rashīd al-Dīn fell out.⁴⁰¹

Rashīd al-Dīn himself acknowledged that he acquired his information from knowledgeable and intelligible people of his own time, and he also combined pieces of predecessors' books of which he composed the second volume of *JT*.⁴⁰² He also informs us that many of the pieces from the previous sources were cited intact and without any modifications.⁴⁰³ Moreover, as other scholars have pointed out, a big project like the *JT* could not have been a work of one single person who had other responsibilities, including running the state as well. Thus, it is safe to assume that other historians, presumably Rashīd al-Dīn's proteges, including Qāshānī were involved in writing the second volume of the *JT*. Regarding Qāshānī's claims, whose texts were investigated, the passages were structured in a way to sabotage Rashīd al-Dīn's character and they are best seen as part of court rivalries. Furthermore, Qāshānī's claims does not exclude the possibility that composition of the *JT* was a group project, because in neither of the anecdotes discussed above is there anything that indicates Qāshānī as the sole writer.

3.3 *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* in Production

In the general introduction of *JT* which was written after its completion and after it was offered to Öljeitü, Rashīd al-Dīn gives us a brief explanation of how the work was produced. According to this one paragraph summary, the history of Chinggis Khan and his descendants was compiled from scattered and unorganized scrolls and fragments by the order of Ghazan Khan.⁴⁰⁴ The long version of this explanation can be found in the introduction of *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī* where Rashīd al-Dīn indicates that 'during the reigns of Chinggis Khan and his descendants, all inhabitable parts of the world came into their submission and some 'great people of era' (*akābir*) had composed a short history of Chinggis Khan's conquests, his reign, and his descendants' reigns, but these histories were not authentic and they were written based on the desires of some princes and Mongol *amīrs*.⁴⁰⁵ He also tells us that 'the Mongol histories were recorded in every period in the Mongol script and language (*khaṭ va 'ibārat-i muḡhulī*) and were kept in treasuries. However, they were not organized, and people did not

⁴⁰¹ Qāshānī, '*Arāyis al-Javāhir va Nafāyis al-Aṭāyib* (Tehran: Alma'i, 1385/ 2006), 361-2; Brack, "Mediating Sacred Kingship: Conversion and Sovereignty in Mongol Iran," 329.

⁴⁰² از جمله فضلا و معتبران طوایف مذکوره تفحص و استخبار نموده و از مضامین کتب متقدمان التقاط کرده مجلدی دیگر در باب تواریخ " (Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 8)

⁴⁰³ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 11.

⁴⁰⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, 1.

⁴⁰⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, 33.

think of them as worthy of being studied. Then came the reign of Ghazan Khan who ordered him to organize and compose the Mongols' history. Thus, he gathered and organized the histories and genealogies of the Mongols and the Turks whose stories and anecdotes were kept in the treasury. Then he composed and edited it in fine words. Those histories which were short, he tried to expand by asking knowledgeable people from various ethnicities (*aqvām*) who were also present at court."⁴⁰⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn goes on for another two pages talking about this process, most of which continues in the same vein though, in different phrases.

What these passages tell us about the production of *JT* is that it was a long project which took a great deal of effort and that other people at court from different ethnicities also participated in its production. It is not an easy task to draw out a chronological order for *JT*'s process of production for many reasons, such as shortage of dates that can be found in *JT* itself, or other sources referring to it (like *Tārīkh-i Uljāyту*). However, I will try to suggest a tentative chronology here.⁴⁰⁷

Ghazan Khan ascended the throne on 10 November 1295 (23 *Dhū al-ḥajja* 694 A.H.) and he reigned until 15 May 1304 (11 *Shawwāl* 703 A.H.); both dates were recorded by Rashīd al-Dīn. At some point in his reign, he ordered Rashīd al-Dīn to compile, organize, and compose the history of the Mongols and their conquests. There is no indication of an exact date for Ghazan's order in our sources, nor is there a start date for the composition of *JT*.⁴⁰⁸ The next date that we can find in our sources is the year 702/1302, found in the introduction of *TMG* as the date of the writing the introduction. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, Ghazan became infected by a type of eye disease (*ramad*) around the date of 16 September 1303 (25 *Muḥarram* 703 A.H.) which caused his death seven months later. Rashīd al-Dīn explicitly says that some parts of *TMG* were even written in their final version, implying that their drafts were already available during the reign of Ghazan, but the complete version was offered to Öljeitü right after his ascension (on 27 July 1304/1 *Dhū al-ḥajja* 703) and its attendant ceremonies which also insinuates that offering this book was a significant event.

After *JT*'s presentation to Öljeitü, the Ilkhan read and made some corrections in the book. Rashīd al-Dīn informs us that since it was finalized completely during the reign of Öljeitü, it was only appropriate to be in his name. However, Öljeitü ordered him to keep it in Ghazan's name, as it was originally intended.⁴⁰⁹ Mohammad Reza Ghiasian, who has worked extensively

⁴⁰⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, 33-34.

⁴⁰⁷ Stefan Kamola and Kazuhiko Shiraiwa have offered their own chronologies as well. see: Kazuhiko Shiraiwa, "Rashīd al-Dīn's Primary sources in Compiling the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*: a Tentative Survey," in *Rashīd al-Dīn: Agent and Mediator of Cultural exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran* (London & Turin: The Warburg Institute, 2013), 51-52; Stefan Kamola, "A Sensational and Unique Novelty: The Reception of Rashid al-Din's World History," *Iran* 58(1), (2020): 52-55.

⁴⁰⁸ Kazuhiko Shiraiwa has offered 1300 as the date of Rashīd al-Dīn receiving the order, but I could not find any source indicating that. (see: Shiraiwa, "Rashīd al-Dīn's Primary Sources," 51).

⁴⁰⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 7.

on the manuscripts of *JT*,⁴¹⁰ believes that the composition of the work was finished during the reign of Ghazan.⁴¹¹ However, if we consider Rashīd al-Dīn's statement, it seems that the draft was complete, though not the final version. In 1304, Öljeitü gave an order to Rashīd al-Dīn to add two other volumes, one on the history of the world and another on geography (*ṣuvar-i aqālīm*). Rashīd al-Dīn himself does not indicate the date of the second presentation. Our knowledge of this date comes from another historian, Qāshānī, who says that the book was presented to Öljeitü on 17 April 1307 (5 *Shawwāl* 706).⁴¹²

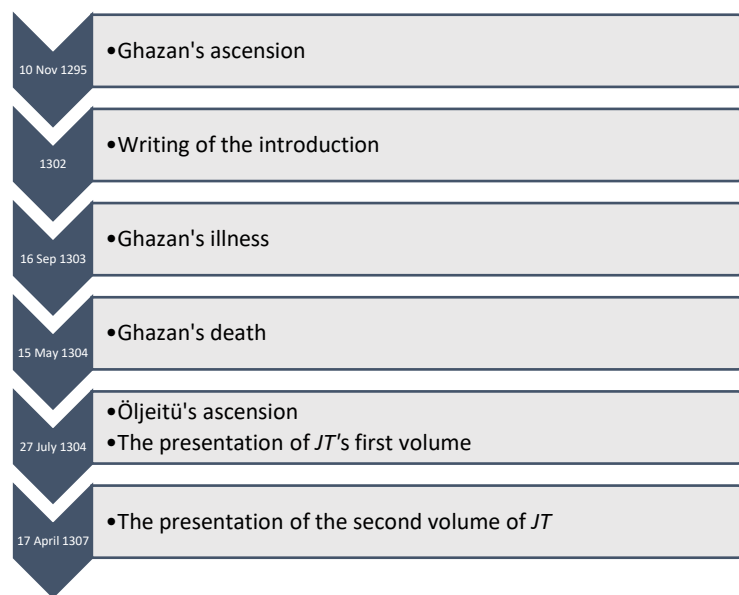


Figure 7: Production dates, Important dates offered by primary sources surrounding the production of *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*.

This is what we know so far about the chronology of the composition of *JT* based on our sources. Mapping the reproduction of its manuscripts is even more complicated. There are at least 72 manuscripts of *JT* extant, some contain only volume one or volume two, and others contain whole or parts of both volumes.⁴¹³ We have only a few manuscripts from Rashīd al-Dīn's time which were produced in the scriptorium of Rashīd al-Dīn's own foundation, *Rab'-i Rashīdī* (the Rashidi Quarter of Tabriz). These four manuscripts are two

⁴¹⁰ For example, see: Mohammad Reza Ghiasian, "The Topkapı Manuscript of the *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh* (Hazine 1654) from Rashidiya to the Ottoman Court: A Primary Analysis," *Iranian Studies* 51(3): 399-425; Mohammad Reza Ghiasian, *Lives of the Prophets* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2018).

⁴¹¹ Rashīd al-Dīn and Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh va Majma' al-Tavārīkh*, intro by Mohammad Reza Ghiasian (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1398/ 2020), xlviii.

⁴¹² Qāshānī, *Tārīkh-i Uljāyū*, 54. Ghiasian suggested the year 1306 for the presentation of the book but has not offered any reason for the selection of this date. See: Rashīd al-Dīn and Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh va Majma' al-Tavārīkh*, xlviii.

⁴¹³ Shiraiwa, "Rashīd al-Dīn's Primary sources," 39. Shiraiwa has also offered a descriptive bibliography of these manuscripts in Japanese (see: Shiraiwa, "Rashīd al-Dīn's *Compendium of Chronicles*: A Bibliography of the Extant Manuscripts," in *Sankō Shoshi Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 2000) 53: 1-33). Moreover, Stefan Kamola has also presented a descriptive bibliography of the manuscripts in appendix B of his book. See: Kamola, *Making Mongol History*.

Persian versions now kept in Istanbul (Hazine 1653, Hazine 1654) and two illustrated fragments of the Arabic version now kept in the Edinburgh University Library (Ms. Arab.20) and the Khalili Collections (Ms.727); both of which are from 1314 and contain parts of the second volume of *JT*. Hazine 1653 is also from the year 1314 and consists of the second volume of *JT*. It is important to note that not all folios of this manuscript were produced in the Rashidi quarter; the manuscript was transferred to the court of Shāhrukh of the Timurid dynasty (r. 1405-1447), but apparently some folios of the manuscript had been destroyed prior to Shāhrukh's time. Shāhrukh ordered his court historiographer, Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, to restore it.⁴¹⁴ Since Ḥāfiẓ Abrū had already written his own history of pre-Islamic Iran by the time that Shāhrukh gave this order, he inserted his own composition in place of the lost folios.⁴¹⁵ Therefore, the pre-Islamic part of Hazine 1653 does not demonstrate Rashīd al-Dīn's work. The other old manuscript, Hazine 1654 is from the year 1317. The manuscript covers the second volume of *JT* and its section on pre-Islamic Iran shows the difference to that of Hazine 1653 as reworked by the Timurid historiographer.⁴¹⁶

Regarding the manuscripts of the first volume, which according to Shiraiwa are around 30, two manuscripts seem to be older. One is Revan 1518 kept in Istanbul, whose production was completed in Baghdad a little after Rashīd al-Dīn's death and another, ms. 1620 kept in Tashkent's Abu Rayhon Beruni Institute, which is from the early fourteenth century. Kamola has argued that this manuscript was probably produced in the Rashidi quarter.⁴¹⁷

Given the ample number of the manuscripts of *JT* and the fact that most of them are not complete and furthermore that sometimes they have differences in terms of content, it is not easy to pinpoint one manuscript as the one and only authentic one. Shiraiwa and Kamola have already shown some differences between the manuscripts, what parts have been added or omitted and where possible, why and where these differences occurred.⁴¹⁸ According to Kamola, some of these changes may even have been made by Rashīd al-Dīn himself and that is one of the reasons for some additions and omissions.⁴¹⁹

Considering the various recensions, it is also noteworthy to take a look at the process of manuscript production in the Rashidi quarter. The most important source we have that talks

⁴¹⁴ Timur's descendants were keen on gathering and reproducing genealogies related to the Chingissid family. For more information see: Beatrice Manz, "Family and Ruler in Timurid Historiography," in *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Juri Bregel*, ed. Devin Dewees (Bloomington: India University Press, 2001), 57-87.

⁴¹⁵ "در این اثنا، حضرت اعلاء خلد الله تعالی ملکه و سلطانه فرمودند که کتاب رشیدی را که اولش ضایع شده بود، تمام می باید ساخت. بنده کمینه به عرض رسانید که قسم اول این کتاب که از زمان آدم است علیه السلام از ابتدای احوال حضرت رسالت صلی الله علیه و السلام، چون این کتاب که حالا نبشته شده است، بعد از مطالعه رشیدی و طبری و کامل و چند نسخه دیگرست، اگر از آنجا نقل کرده آید اولی باشد. فرمودند Rashīd al-Dīn and Ḥāfiẓ Abrū، *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh va Majma' al-Tavārīkh*, 6.

⁴¹⁶ This manuscript has been analysed along with its illustrations by Mohammad Reza Ghiasian. See: "The Topkapı Manuscript of the *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh* (Hazine 1654) from Rashidiya to the Ottoman Court: A Primary Analysis."

⁴¹⁷ Kamola, *Making Mongol History*, 223.

⁴¹⁸ See: Kamola, *Making Mongol History*; Shiraiwa, "Rashīd al-Dīn's Primary Sources."

⁴¹⁹ Kamola has classified these recensions in *Making the Mongol History*, Appendix B.

about manuscript production is the endowment deed of the Rashidi quarter, the manuscript of which was finished on 17 August 1309. Parts of this manuscript were written by Rashīd al-Dīn himself. From this manuscript, we can get information about the books that were reproduced in the Rashidi Quarter. According to this document, the scriptorium was funded to produce two copies of the Quran and a four-plus volume copy of a hadith collection (*Jāmi' al-Uṣūl fī Aḥādīṣ al-Rasūl*).⁴²⁰ The scriptorium was supposed to produce one Persian copy and one Arabic copy *JT* each year as well as Rashīd al-Dīn's theological works and his *Āṣār va Aḥyā*.⁴²¹ Therefore, even in his own time, Rashīd al-Dīn made sure that his works were properly copied and distributed.⁴²²

Editions of *JT* have been published since 1834. These editions started with Quatrèmere's edited section on Hülegü and continued by Edgar Blochet's edition on Ögedei's section and finally with Karl Jahn's works on various parts of *JT*.⁴²³ However, none of these editions are complete. Our first and only complete edition of *JT* is that published by Mīrās-i Maktūb in Tehran, edited by Mohammad Raushan and Mostafa Mousavi. Due to it being complete, it is the main edition used in this work. Charles Melville, in his article, "Rashīd al-Dīn and the *Shāhnāma*," raises some issues concerning the credibility of the volume on the history of pre-Islamic Iran in this edition. He correctly points out that this volume cannot be representing Rashīd al-Dīn's work; rather that of Ḥāfiẓ Abrū.⁴²⁴ For this part, the editors consulted Hazine 1653 and 1654 as the basis of their editions, though most verses in Hazine 1653 were added by Ḥāfiẓ Abrū and cannot be found in the other manuscripts of *JT*. Given the fact that some parts of the edition cannot represent Rashīd al-Dīn's own time, I will also use other editions and manuscripts of *JT* as far as possible to get a full picture of the usage of poetry in *JT*.

⁴²⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Vaqfnāma-yi Rab'-i Rashīdī*, ed. Mojtaba Minovi and Iraj Afshar (Tehran: Offset Press, 1971), 133.

⁴²¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, 237-238. Naurane Ben Azzouna has explained in an article the evolutionary development of the Rashidi scriptorium. See: "Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Al-Hamadhānī's Manuscript Production Project in Tabriz Reconsidered," in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 187-200.

⁴²² Sheila Blair has questioned this process of distribution by saying that even though copies of *JT* were supposed to be produced every year, it did not come to fruition and therefore, Rashīd al-Dīn's plan was, at least regarding the illustrations, a failure, because the artists could not keep the pace. See: Sheila Blair, "Illustrating History: Rashid al-Din and his *Compendium of Chronicles*," *Iranian Studies* 50, no.6 (2017): 829-830. For more about *JT*'s illustrations see other works of Sheila Blair such as, "Calligraphers, Illuminators, and Painters in the Ilkhanid Scriptorium," in *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 167-182; *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din's Illustrated History of the World* (London: Nour Foundation and Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁴²³ For more info on editions of *JT*, see: Rajabzadeh, *Khvāja Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh*, 358-60.

⁴²⁴ See: Charles Melville, "Rashīd al-Dīn and the *Shāhnāma*," *The Royal Asiatic Society* 26, 1-2(2016): 201-214.

3.4 Language and Structure of *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*

As was mentioned in the section on the production of *JT*, Öljeitü ordered Rashīd al-Dīn to expand his project adding a second volume on history of the world and a third volume on geography.⁴²⁵ Unfortunately, we do not have the third volume, but since Rashīd al-Dīn's own description of this volume has an undeniable similarity to the contents of Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's *Jughrāfiyā* (The Geography), written in the fourteenth century, it is possible that some of Rashīd al-Dīn's materials found their way into Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's work.⁴²⁶

The second volume of the *JT*, the history of the world, consists of 11 sections which have all been published in the form of 11 separate volumes by the Mīraṣ-i Maktūb publishing company in Tehran.⁴²⁷ These volumes cover the history of Iran and Islam, the history of the House of Israel, the Khwarazmshahs, the Oghuz, the Samanids, the Buyids, the Ghaznavids, the Seljuqs, the Salghurids of Fars, the Ismā'īlīs, the history of India, the history of China, and the history of the Popes and Caesars. It has been suggested before that the second volume may not represent Rashīd al-Dīn's own work.⁴²⁸ In this section, however, I will investigate the book's language and structure as a long-lasting project instead of looking at it only through Rashīd al-Dīn's eyes, meaning that I will study the text as a multi-layered literary production which was reused, even modified, in later periods because of its complexity. As we will see later in this section, many of *JT*'s sections closely follow the contents and the writing styles of their sources. Therefore, it is reasonable to reflect on the continuity of *JT* while keeping in mind that it is a composition of the Ilkhanid era.

3.4.1 The First Volume, *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*

Introductions are an important part of books in the Perso-Islamic tradition of writing, since they habitually provide readers with information about the authors' lives, their motivations and purposes for writing, their patrons and dedicatees, what or who provoked them to write and so on. Moreover, they may introduce the structure of their works and why they have decided to organize their books as they have.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁵ Page 120.

⁴²⁶ Melville, "The Mongol and Timurid Periods, 1250-1500," 171; Hiroshi Ono, "Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's Geographical Work, the So-called *Jughrāfiyā*: Its Significance and Evaluation in Relation to Rashīd al-Dīn's Works," *Journal of Asian History* 49 (2015): 65.

⁴²⁷ There are other editions such as that of Karl Jahn as well, but they do not include all volumes.

⁴²⁸ Page 123.

⁴²⁹ Writing a preface (*dibācha*) or introduction (*muqaddima*) became more important from the Timurid period onward with the emergence of albums of calligraphy and painting patronized by the Timurid rulers. Album prefaces usually include the names of the patrons and the person who was charged with its compilation, the process of compilation and the list of the masters involved. The tradition of writing album preface continued during the Safavid and the Mughal eras as well. For more information about this subject see: David Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Wheeler Thackston, *Album Prefaces and Other Documents on the History of Calligraphers and Painters* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

In the previous chapter, I have already discussed an instance of such introductions and the extent of understanding that one can gain by merely reading the introduction of *RŞ*. The case of *JT* is, however, slightly different than its predecessors. Given the broad subject it covers, and the long years spent on its composition, there is no surprise that there is more than one introduction.

The first introduction seems to have been written after the completion of the work and it was most likely meant to be the introduction for the entire text, since it is a general introduction which discusses the work as an entirety, especially in the last three pages.⁴³⁰ The structure also differs slightly from other historiographies which followed the Perso-Islamic tradition. For one, it starts with only a few sentences of praising God, the prophet, the Rashidun caliphs, and the companions of Muḥammad and it ends with a Qur'anic verse which praises God and salutes the prophets; all are summed up in less than five lines.⁴³¹

The introduction includes 31 verses of Persian poetry and almost all of them (except for one verse from Azraqī) are anonymous and it is not clear if they are Rashīd al-Dīn's own compositions. Unlike many of Rāvandī's verses in the introduction of *RŞ* which connected both in form and content to their previous passages,⁴³² the verses in the introduction of *TMG* were applied based on their general concept as a piece of literary evidence for the notions discussed in the prose text.⁴³³ Furthermore, they come in variety of meters and in the case of poems, in various templates such as *maṣnavī*, *qit'a*, and *qaṣīda*.⁴³⁴

In terms of content, after brief praise of God and the prophet, the introduction continues with an explanation of the process of the work; how Ghazan ordered him to collect information about the Mongols; how and when Ghazan died; and how Öljeitü succeeded him. While the traditional formula of praising God, the prophet, and the caliphs is much shorter and, in that sense, entirely incomparable to previous historical books, the author has put more effort into praising his patrons, Ghazan and Öljeitü.⁴³⁵ Between these two, he emphasized more the living patron, Öljeitü. In this account Rashīd al-Dīn only dedicated two paragraphs to Ghazan Khan while the account of praising Öljeitü continues for pages and it includes a great amount of poetry. Then, the author returns to continue his story about the process of

⁴³⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 11-13.

⁴³¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, 1.

⁴³² See for instance the rhetorical devices of *ḥall* and *aqd* on pages 39-41.

⁴³³ This practice is called "*shāhid-i miṣāl*".

⁴³⁴ *Qit'a* is a poetic template in which the rhyming words (*qāfiya*) are placed in the end of every second hemistich.

⁴³⁵ For this matter, from the sources that were written during the Mongol period and before *JT*, Juvainī's book has a page and a half; Vaṣṣāf has five pages; and in a previous period, *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* has 18 pages. There seems to be a relationship between the writing style of the writer and the length of this section in the introductions. If the author's style is more sophisticated with a large number of rhetorical figures and inclusion of poetry and Qur'anic verses, the introduction is usually longer, like in Vaṣṣāf's history. Other factors also play a role in this matter; one of which is the purpose of the authors in choosing their writing style. For example, if the author needs to impress his patron or their peers by his writing style, the introduction would be longer, like in the case of Rāvandī.

writing the book; in other words, how the book on the history of the Mongols was transformed to a ‘world history’. This ‘world history’ should include anecdotes of various peoples and climes (*ḥikāyāt-i ‘umūm-i ahl-i aqālīm-i ‘ālam*), classes of humans (*ṭabaqāt-i aṣnāf-i banī ādam*), and histories of other regions (*akhbār-i sāyir-i bilād*).⁴³⁶

One of the intriguing features of this introduction is the explanation given by Rashīd al-Dīn about what is known in modern scholarship as methodology. He starts this discussion by classifying different kinds of narratives; all of which seem to have a connection to religious sciences, since in many cases, historians and religious scholars used the same set of materials.⁴³⁷ The terms Rashīd al-Dīn applies for the types of narratives are *naql-i mutivātir* and *naql-i āḥād*.⁴³⁸ The former refers to the narratives which were cited by different authors more often, the latter refers to the narratives which are conceived to be controversial among the scholars. Since there is consensus in the case of the first type of narratives, Islamic scholars often perceived them as credible; a characteristic that the latter type lacks. Rashīd al-Dīn’s usage of these religious terminologies is an attestation of how he presented himself not only as a vizier or a historian, but as a religious scholar as well.

The introduction is followed by the table of contents, or rather a description of how the book has been structured. The terms that were used to describe sections, chapters, and subchapters are another reason to think that the language of every section follows the sources used for that particular section. While the words *bāb*, *qism*, and *faṣl* shape the structure of *TMG*, representing the main sections, chapters, and subchapters respectively; the structure of the second volume of *JT* (the world history) does not display such an order. *Bāb*, *qism*, and *faṣl* appear interchangeably in the second volume, following the lead of its original sources.

While the first introduction is for the whole project of *JT*, the second introduction belongs to *TMG*. In line with Perso-Islamic tradition, the introduction starts by praising God followed by praising the patron, Ghazan Khan and his conversion to Islam.⁴³⁹ According to Rashīd al-Dīn, not all people can perceive secrets of the universe and Abraham was one of the

⁴³⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 8.

⁴³⁷ Especially considering that during the 9th-14th centuries, many of historians were religious scholars themselves. There was a close connection between the emergence of *ḥadīth* and *akhbār*. *Ḥadīth* came to existence because Muslims felt that the life of the prophet is worthy of being emulated and *akhbār* emerged to record the origins of the Islamic *umma* and its constitution. At first, they both followed the same method which was mentioning a list of authorities or transmitters, in order to verify its credibility, but in the later stages, lists of authorities were omitted from historiographies. See: Andrew Peacock, *Early Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 8-9.

⁴³⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 9.

⁴³⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, 29. On Ghazan’s conversion to Islam, see: Charles Melville, “Padshah-i Islam: The Conversion of Sultan Mahmud Ghazan Khan.” *Pembroke Papers* 1(1990):159-177; Judith Pfeiffer, “The Canonization of Cultural Memory: Ghāzān Khan, Rashīd al-Dīn, and the Construction of the Mongol Past.” In *Rashīd al-Dīn: Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran*, ed. Anna Akasoy, Chaled Brunette, and Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim (London & Turin: The Warburg Institute, 2013), 57-70.

few people who could. He was monotheist among all his infidel kin, and he was extremely sincere in his faith to such a degree that he was prepared to sacrifice his long-desired child to please and obey God.⁴⁴⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn informs us that Abaraham's line was kept clean and pure and from that line Muḥammad was born.⁴⁴¹ He continues the introduction by indicating that Chinggis Khan rose when the faith had started to shake and it was by his mission that the faith became strong again.⁴⁴² At the end of the introduction, Rashīd al-Dīn draws upon the figure of Abraham as he like Ghazan was on a mission to destroy idols and spread the faith of God.⁴⁴³

The style of writing, like most introductions written in this milieu is more flowery than the main body of the text, using a remarkable number of verses (49) and rhyming words (*saj'*) as well as many Qur'anic verses. The closest translation which can be presented for *saj'* may be 'rhyming words.'⁴⁴⁴ A close examination of word usage in *TMG* reveals that out of 293 words in two pages of the introduction,⁴⁴⁵ there are 89 pairs of *saj'* (178 words); most of which are formed in *mutavāzin saj'*, the most rhythmic type of *saj'*. What these numbers indicate is Rashīd al-Dīn's knowledge of literary sources and that he was aware of the importance of the writing style of introductions in the Persian canon. An example of *saj'* in the introduction is as follows:

"حال عاشقان جمال جلال قدس و مشتاقان زلال وصال انس که سالکان راه طلب و روندگان بادیه تعب اند..."⁴⁴⁶
 عاشقان = مشتاقان / جمال = جلال / جلال = وصال / قدس = انس / زلال = وصال / سالکان = روندگان / طلب = تعب

The main body of *TMG* contains two large sections. The first section concerns the Turkic peoples and the way they were divided into different people (*qawm*). In this part, the author defines four chapters and an introduction where he gives us a brief overview of the names of Turkic tribes and the geographical areas where they usually reside. The geographical information is not very detailed or specific to tribes, rather he simply names the regions where Turkic people generally could be found.⁴⁴⁷ Regarding the chapters, the author divides Turkic people into four types: First, the Oghuz people;⁴⁴⁸ second, Turkic people who were called Mongols in the time of the author;⁴⁴⁹ third, Turkic people who had their own kingdoms or

⁴⁴⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 23-25.

⁴⁴¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, 26.

⁴⁴² Rashīd al-Dīn, 28.

⁴⁴³ Rashīd al-Dīn, 29.

⁴⁴⁴ There are three types of *saj'*: *mutavāzī*, *muṭarraḥ*, *mutavāzin*. The first one happens when two words (or more) sharing the same meter as well as rhyming. The second type only signifies rhyming words, regardless of meter and the third one is only based on meter. Homa'i, *Funūn-i Balāghat*, 39-40.

⁴⁴⁵ Not counting 62 prepositions.

⁴⁴⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 22.

⁴⁴⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, 39-40.

⁴⁴⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, 45-60.

⁴⁴⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, 61-102.

their own leaders;⁴⁵⁰ fourth, the Turkic people whose title (*laqab*) was ‘Mongols’ in the old times.⁴⁵¹ The last chapter has its own subchapter as well since it includes the most important myth of the Mongols and the story of their ancestor Bodonchar’s birth from a shaft of light which impregnated Alan Qo’a. This story is repeated more than once in this volume, sometimes briefly and sometimes in length.⁴⁵²

The second section of this volume narrates the history of the Turkic and Mongolian kings,⁴⁵³ the first chapter of which goes over the history of Chinggis’s ancestors (i.e. Alan Qo’a’s children) who were born from light.⁴⁵⁴ However, this time the story is told in full including the stories of all their children. This chapter ends with the story of Chinggis Khan’s father, Yisugei.

A certain type of pattern can be discerned in the rest of the volume while narrating the story of the Chinggisid family’s rule, according to which each of their stories begins with mentioning the names and genealogies of their children, occasionally with details, in case they were important. These are followed by narrating the story of their reigns and ending with a few sporadic anecdotes about their greatness or their virtues.

Although the pattern is the same for the various rulers, the section concerning Chinggis Khan is slightly different. His story is related in two forms: first the events have been narrated descriptively, and then they have been mentioned briefly in chronological order using the Chinese calendar. In the former form, the author deals with events of a number of years, then stops at a point where he finds significant. Then, he goes back to the same years to relate the history of other lands and kingdoms to show what was happening in those lands in order to provide the ground for his readers to acquire a comprehensive historical overview. This historical information usually includes China, Iran, Turkistan, Transoxiana, and the caliphate. This method of applying parallel history decreases as the Mongols come close to these other dynasties and their histories get more entangled with each other. In other words, in a way it represents the process of the expansion of the Mongol Empire.⁴⁵⁵ Parallel history can also be found in another source of the Ilkhanid era, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf* whose author, Vaṣṣāf, was a protégé of Rashīd al-Dīn. *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf*’s first three volumes had been finished even before Ghazan Khan ordered his vizier to write the history of the Mongols, so when Rashīd al-Dīn started to write his history, he borrowed certain elements from Vaṣṣāf’s work including parallel history.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, 103-134.

⁴⁵¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, 135-196.

⁴⁵² Rashīd al-Dīn, 136 & 169 & 202-208,

⁴⁵³ Rashīd al-Dīn, 197-691.

⁴⁵⁴ The names of her sons are Būqun Qatuqī, Būqātū Sālījī, and Būdanchar as recorded by Rashīd al-Dīn.

⁴⁵⁵ Kamola, “Rashīd al-Dīn and the Making of History in the Mongol Iran,” 226-227.

⁴⁵⁶ Kamola, 280.

There is a difference in the structure of the last section of the book which deals with the virtues of Ghazan Khan and his tendency to construct buildings and developing cities.⁴⁵⁷ Contrary to the other rulers whose virtues have been summed up in a few anecdotes, Ghazan's virtues and good deeds have been described in forty anecdotes, each of them having a specific subject. What is interesting is that some subjects are very similar to each other; so similar that it makes us wonder why they are not under the same topic. Given the importance of the number of forty in Islamic tradition and considering the author's intention to emphasize Ghazan's Islamic side, it seems that Rashīd al-Dīn actually was intentionally trying to reach the number 40. An example of this similarity can be found in anecdotes 30 and 31; whereas the first is about preparing food and wine for the great *ordu*, the latter is about preparing the food for *khatuns* (royal/noble women) and other *ordus*.⁴⁵⁸

3.4.2 The Second Volume, History of the World

Order of the second volume of *JT* might differ from one manuscript to another. Here I have opted the order of ms. Hazine 1654 which is the oldest manuscript for the second volume.⁴⁵⁹

3.4.2.1 The History of Iran and Islam (*Tārīkh-i Īrān va Islām*)

The first section in history of the world is the history of Iran and Islam and it is perhaps the most challenging section of *JT*, as the pre-Islamic section is Ḥāfiz Abrū's history.⁴⁶⁰ This part has been divided into two large sections, one dealing with the history of the prophets from Adam to Muḥammad and at the same time covering the history of ancient Iranian kings; and the second section narrates the history of Islam from the time of Muḥammad onwards.

It was mentioned earlier that the writing style of history and for the most part, the contents of the world in *JT* closely follows that of its sources. Rashīd al-Dīn himself says in the first introduction of *JT* that he completed the *JT*'s project by mixing and integrating other sources into his own.⁴⁶¹ According to Mohammad Raushan the only source of *JT* for the section of Iran and Islam was *Tārīkh-i Ṭabarī*.⁴⁶² Another possibility is the Persian translation

⁴⁵⁷ This can also be another influence of Vaṣṣāf's work, since there is a section in his book concerning Ghazan's buildings and reform works.

⁴⁵⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 1339-1343. On women during the Mongol era, see: Bruno de Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns 1206-1335* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017); Anne Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

⁴⁵⁹ For more on the manuscripts of *JT*, see: Kamola, *Making Mongol History*, 183-271.

⁴⁶⁰ *JT* in the court of the Timurids will be discussed later in this chapter on page 166.

⁴⁶¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 8.

⁴⁶² Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādishāhān-i Khutāy*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1385/2007), sīzdah.

of *Tārīkh-i Ṭabarī* by Abū 'Alī Bal'amī, known as *Tārīkh-nāma-yi Ṭabarī* or *Tārīkh-i Bal'amī*.⁴⁶³ Regardless of the impacts which these two sources may have had on *JT*'s content, the structure we see in the critical edition has nothing to do with the structural arrangements of those two sources. *Tārīkh-i Bal'amī*'s structure was clearly oriented according to a religious framework, since before starting to narrate history, Bal'amī inserts a few chapters on Jews asking questions of Muhammad to demonstrate the level of Muhammad's knowledge and literacy and thus, legitimizing and giving him credit as the rightful prophet. Moreover, the stories of the Iranian kings are narrated in Bal'amī's book alongside of the histories of the prophets. There is no trace of the classes of the Iranian kings, or the separation made by the dynasties. The author first narrates the story of Adam and Seth and then goes to the stories of Kīyumarṣ to Bīvarasp, then again comes back to the story of the prophets, in this case Noah. This pattern of moving between the kings and the prophets continues throughout the whole book.⁴⁶⁴

In contrast, *JT*'s structure seems to have a different framework, especially since it seems to be following the *Shāhnāma*'s order of the kings. Another source, *Niẓām al-Tavārīkh* by Qāzī Bayzāvī is also noticeable for the structure of this section, especially regarding the division of ancient Iranian history into four *ṭabaqas* (classes): The Pishdadids, the Kayanids, the Arsacids, and the Sasanians.⁴⁶⁵ Based on the different arrangement of the Arabic manuscript of *JT* in Edinburgh and the structure of *Niẓām al-Tavārīkh*, Charles Melville has suggested that the present structure of Raushan's critical edition is a reworking of the later periods done by Ḥāfiẓ Abrū.⁴⁶⁶

Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's account of pre-Islamic history differs significantly from that of Rashīd al-Dīn. While the former includes 1,288 verses- 711 from Firdawsī and 140 written in the style of the *Shāhnāma*- the latter rarely incorporates poetry. Nevertheless, Rashīd al-Dīn's version still follows the *Shāhnāma*'s sequence of kings, including the four dynasties: the Pishdadids, the Kayanids, the Arsacids, and the Sasanians.

The second section deals with the history of Islam and contains four chapters using the terms *ṭabaqa* (class) and *maqāla* (discourse) for chapter interchangeably. While for the first chapter which deals with the history of Muhammad and his prophetic reign, the term *ṭabaqa* is used, for the other three chapters, the term *maqāla* is applied. Chapter one contains a large number of subchapters which are separated only by headings, many of which concern the battles of the Muslims against infidels.⁴⁶⁷ The next chapter concerns the reigns of the Rashidun

⁴⁶³ Charles Melville, "Rashīd al-Dīn and the *Shāhnāmah*," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 26 (2016): 206.

⁴⁶⁴ On the *Tārīkh-i Bal'amī* and its relation to the *Tārīkh-i Ṭabarī* see: Peacock, *Medieval Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy*.

⁴⁶⁵ On Bayzāvī, see pp.101-102.

⁴⁶⁶ Melville, "Rashīd al-Dīn and the *Shāhnāmah*," 213.

⁴⁶⁷ Two terms are used for these battles: *ghazāt* and *sarīyat*. The first refers to the battles where the prophet was present, and the other refers to the battles which were fought by the prophets' commanders and representatives.

caliphs (Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, and 'Alī). In this chapter the pattern of narration slightly changes, since the headings are not only the description of the events, but also some of them are only the year such as: 'the mention of the events of the year 14 A.H. (ex. *Ẓikr-i ḥavādiṣ-i sana-yi arba'a va 'ashara*); thus, the events are narrated chronologically. At the end of every caliph's reign, there is a subchapter on their facial features (ex. *Ẓikr-i ḥillīyat-i Abū Bakr*)⁴⁶⁸ and another on their virtues (ex. *Ẓikr-i manāqib va maḥāmid-i Abū Bakr*).⁴⁶⁹ The next two chapters are classified based on the dynasties: the Umayyads and the Abbasids. Almost the entire history of their dynasties is narrated chronologically.

3.4.2.2 The History of the Buyids, the Samanids, and the Ghaznavids (*Tārīkh-i Sāmānīyān, Buvayhīyān, va Ghaznavīyān*)

It is hard to distinguish a specific pattern for the section on the Samanids, the Buyids, and the Ghaznavids, like the pattern which exists for the volume on Mongol history. The section concerning the Ghaznavids, the Buyids, and the Samanids starts with a prologue where the author talks about the benefits of history which are two; the first is for rulers and kings to know that the world is transient and the only thing that will remain of rulers is their good name and good deeds; the second is for rulers and kings to appreciate the value of the 'ulamā and the people of culture; the same topic that was the interest of Rāvandī as well.

There is another remark in this prologue which is about the author's style of writing. He informs us that he attempted to write it in a manner which is understandable for both Turks and Persians and that he tried to stay away from formality and obsequiousness as well as not including anecdotes which are not in line with the book's structure.⁴⁷⁰

As the editor, Mohammad Raushan, has pointed out, the main source of this section is the Persian translation of *Tārīkh-i Yamīnī* (written in Arabic by 'Utbi) by Jurfādaqānī.⁴⁷¹ The Persian translation was titled *Tarjuma-yi Tārīkh-i Yamīnī* and it was composed around 1206-7 by the order of Jamāl al-Dīn's Āyba's vizier, Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī ibn Ḥasan.⁴⁷² Apart from a few pages in the beginning and a few pages in the end, from the death of Maḥmūd onwards, almost everything, such as phrases, sentences, and rhetorical figures, has been adopted (or

⁴⁶⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Īrān va Islām*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1392/ 2013), vol.2, 1122.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰ "به عبارتی که به ادراک و افهام قریب بود، و ترک و تازیکی آن را بدانند، و از تکلف و تصلف دور باشیم، و از حکایتی که از اسلوب کتاب بعید بود تجنب نمایم." Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Sāmānīyān, Buvayhīyān, va Ghaznavīyān*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1386/ 2007), 5.

⁴⁷¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Sāmānīyān, Buvayhīyān, va Ghaznavīyān*, davāzdah- sīzdah.

⁴⁷² Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth century*, 256.

rather copied) from *Tarjuma-yi Tārīkh-i Yamīnī*.⁴⁷³ Therefore, we only have a few pages to assess whether Rashīd al-Dīn was true to his word about the style of writing or not and even in those pages, the author(s) seems to have made use of a massive amount of vocabulary and phrases that Jūrfādaqānī had done before.⁴⁷⁴

What we see in these few pages is simple prose, as he said in the prologue. There is no trace of extreme rhetorical figures, excessive usage of *saj'*, or heroic description of battles. Contrary to these few pages, the rest of the book contains a large amount of rhetorical figures and epic descriptions of battles, especially where it concerns the battles of Maḥmūd against infidels which seems to be totally justified and expected, since the Ghaznavids, especially Maḥmūd, aimed to establish themselves as the warriors of the orthodox faith and epic descriptions of his battle could have given him an image of a religious hero. Maḥmūd was praised as *ghāzī* (holy warrior) by his court's poets and he depicted himself as such in the *fatḥnāmas* (victory proclamations) which he sent to the caliph.⁴⁷⁵ An example of the complexity he uses in his writing style is shown in the following passage concerning the battle of Bahāṭīya, one of Maḥmūd's battles against the infidels. This part has been copied from Jūrfādaqānī's book word by word:

"و سلطان سه روز متواتر به صواعق یوارق صفاح و لوامح شوارع رماح او را در کورہ دمار و تنورہ ہوار می سوزانید. روز چهارم به رشق سهام و مشق سنان و حسام صحایف عمران مخاذیل و اضالیل تباہ و سیاہ گردانید، و چون زورق خورشید ندای تکبیر احزاب دین و مسامع اهل علیین رسانید از سر صدق و یقین و برای نصرت دین حمله کردند، تا سواد کفر از بیاض رقعه آن عرصہ محو شود."⁴⁷⁶

'And the Sultan burned him for three consecutive days in the oven of destruction and the tandoor of obliteration by the lightning bolts of blades and the luminescence of the lengths of spears. On the fourth day, with the shooting of arrows and the piercing blade of spear and sword, the pages of the prosperity of the denigrated and dejected were destroyed and blackened and when the skiff of the sun brought the cries of exultation of the parties of the faith to the ears of the heavenly host, they (i.e. Maḥmūd's army) out of their fervent fidelity mounted their attack for the victory of the faith, so that the black mark of blasphemy be wiped from the clean white page of that field.'

⁴⁷³ Raushan has compared the whole volume with *Tarjuma-yi Tārīkh-i Yamīnī* and included the results of this comparison at the end of the volume. See: Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Sāmānīyān, Buvayhīyān, va Ghaznavīyān*, 251-264.

⁴⁷⁴ An example of this similarity between their vocabulary is the part where the author is talking about his style of writing. In Jūrfādaqānī's work he tells us that his patron ordered him to translate 'Utbi's book (*Tārīkh-i Yamīnī*), in a way that it would be understandable for Turks and Persians. The sets of vocabulary that were used here is extremely similar to what Rashīd al-Dīn used. (صواب آنست که آن را بعبارتی که بافهام نزدیک باشد و ترک و تازی را دران ادراک) افتد بیاری نقل کنی و از اسلوب کتاب فراتر نشوی و از تکلف و تصلف مجانبت نمایی و بالفاظی بشیع و لغات غریب تمسک نسازی) Jūrfādaqānī, *Tarjuma-yi Tārīkh-i Yamīnī*, 14.

⁴⁷⁵ Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1963), 53.

⁴⁷⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Sāmānīyān, Buvayhīyān, va Ghaznavīyān*, 116.

All the words that have been underlined in the Persian text enjoy a type of *saj'* and this is merely one of the many rhetorical figures that Persian authors used. There are other types of rhetorical figures in the text as well. For example, when it comes to written works, the words *savād* and *bayāz* convey other meanings such as the draft and final version respectively, as well as black and white literally.

Other than this, as may be clear from the English translation, various types of analogies can be found in this passage as well which have been underlined in the English text. Some of the analogies might be more straightforward, like the 'oven of destruction' and some others may be more sophisticated, like 'the clean white page of the field.' While in the former, there is an analogy between destruction and ovens, in the latter, the field, which presumably is an analogy to religion, is likened to a white sheet which has been blackened by blasphemy.

3.4.2.3 The History of the Seljuqs (*Tārīkh-i Āl-i Saljūq*)

The section on the history of the Seljuqs contains an introduction and a number of chapters which are separated from one another only by headings. After praising God and his prophet in the beginning of the introduction, Rashīd al-Dīn opens a discussion about the status of the angels, the prophets, and the kings. According to him, these are 'the chosen ones', each of them having particular skills and certain duties. Among them, only the kings can change their status by acquiring other skills; thus, if a just king learns knowledge (the prophets' skill), then he is closer to the rank of the prophets. Then, the author introduces the Seljuqs as the greatest dynasty by providing us a brief overview of what they did in order to improve Islam and religiosity. Although the introduction is very short, it contains the most important legitimizing pillar of the Seljuq dynasty's ideology: religion.

Apart from the first and last chapter which are about the beginning of Seljuq history and their collapse respectively, all the other chapters are arranged based on the sultans (14) each possessing one chapter. The last chapter concerns the end of Tughril III's reign and his death which contains an addendum (*ẓayl*) on the *Saljūqnāma* of Ṣāḥir al-Dīn Nayshābūrī, written by Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm in 1203. Since the addendum's heading explicitly mentions the source, it is unquestionable that the author has used this source.

Like all the other sections of *JT*, the question of sources is important for us to analyse the structure. Raushan believes that for this section of *JT*, Rashīd al-Dīn used two other sources, apart from Abū Ḥāmid's book: the *Saljūqnāma* and *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr*.⁴⁷⁷ However, having compared the narratives in these three books, I do not believe that the author ever used *RṢ* as his source at all. Both *JT* and *RṢ* share the same factual narratives so much as they used the same source, i.e. the *Saljūqnāma*, but there is no narrative that is shared by *JT* and

⁴⁷⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1386/2007), yāzdah.

RŞ which does not appear in the *Saljūqnāma*. Therefore, if the differences in the text of *JT* were not made by Rashīd al-Dīn (which might also have been the case), there should have been another source in use. A study by Alexander Morton has shown that there are traces of an Anatolian source in this section as well. Morton, who has investigated the narratives of *JT* and its alterations to the narratives of the *Saljūqnāma*, indicates that some alterations are related to the events which deals with the role of Israel, the forefather of the Seljuqs of Anatolia. These particular events can also be found verbatim in an Anatolian source about the Seljuq family: *Masāmarat al-Akḥbār* written by Aqṣaray.⁴⁷⁸ Since the latter book was written during the reign of Abū Saʿīd, it could not have been the source for *JT*, but they have probably made use of the same source.

There is one structural feature that recurs in almost every chapter. At the end of the era of each sultan, Rashīd al-Dīn gives us a brief description of the sultan's facial features, his lifetime, the duration of his reign, and the names of his viziers and chamberlains. This structural feature can also be found in the *Saljūqnāma* and *RŞ*, except that in the latter, it occurs at the beginning of every chapter.

3.4.2.4 The History of the Khwarazmshahs (*Tārīkh-i Salāṭīn-i Khvārazm*)

The section on the Khwarazmshahs of *JT* has no introduction and starts immediately with the genealogy of the sultans of Khwarazm and how they were related to the Oghuz.⁴⁷⁹ Moreover, there is no division for this section either. Instead of having chapters and sections to organize the contents, the author has only used headings to separate one part from another (ex. *ẓikr-i aḥvāl-i sulṭān Jalāl al-Dīn dar Hindūstān*).⁴⁸⁰ The entire history of the Khwarazmshahs has been summed up in 67 pages of which only 16 pages have been dedicated to the Khwarazmshahs before Sultan Muḥammad (r. 1200-1220).⁴⁸¹ The rest deals with Sultan Muḥammad and Jalāl al-Dīn, 18 pages and 32 pages respectively, most of which are the stories of their conquests. In the case of Jalāl al-Dīn, it covers his expeditions to India,⁴⁸² Baghdād,⁴⁸³ Gurjistān,⁴⁸⁴ and Akhlāt (in modern day Turkey).⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁷⁸ Morton, "Qashani and Rashid al-Din on the Seljuqs of Iran," 170.

⁴⁷⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Salāṭīn-i Khvārazm*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1389/ 2010), 1.

⁴⁸⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, 41.

⁴⁸¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, 1-16.

⁴⁸² Rashīd al-Dīn, 41-45.

⁴⁸³ Rashīd al-Dīn, 46-48.

⁴⁸⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, 49-57.

⁴⁸⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, 58-68.

3.4.2.5 The History of the Salghurids (*Tārīkh-i Salghuriyān-i Fārs*)

The section on the Salghurids in *JT* seems to be the shortest section of the book, probably because it is a concise summary of the Salghurid narrative in the *History of Vaṣṣāf*. As we have seen in the other sections, Rashīd al-Dīn usually follows his sources' writing style as well as making use of their contents and this section is no exception. We can see the traces of Vaṣṣāf's more 'sophisticated' writing style, along with a relatively large number of verses. There are 38 verses throughout, and the section is 28 pages long according to the critical edition. This is the fourth highest number of instances where poetry is applied in *JT*.⁴⁸⁶ Moreover, out of these 38 verses, 29 are from unknown poets which, considering that the author used Vaṣṣāf as his source, make it likely that these verses are Vaṣṣāf's own compositions.

The whole section on the Salghurids is narrated in one piece without making use of chapters and subchapters. Except for the main heading, there is no other heading that can be found in the text. As Kamola has pointed out, Rashīd al-Dīn seems to have been sceptical about including this section in *JT*, as many of the manuscripts lack this Salghurid history.⁴⁸⁷ The concise contents of the section start with the number of the Salghurid kings and their coming to power during the time of the Seljuqs and ends with the dissolution of their state by the Mongols.

3.4.2.6 The History of the Ismā'īlīs (*Tārīkh-i Ismā'īliyān*)

The beginning of history of the Ismā'īlīs is different from all the other sections, since it starts with three verses present in three different parts of the Qur'an. It commences with the first two verses of the *sura* of Fātiḥa praising God; then another verse was added from the *sura* of A'rāf where the story of Moses and his people is narrated. In this verse Moses addresses his people who were suffering from the persecution of the Pharaoh and reassures them that 'the outcome is for the cautious.'⁴⁸⁸ The third verse is from the *sura* of Baqara and the context is not related to the Jews, rather the infidels. In the previous verse Allah orders his people to fight with infidels and gives some instructions about how and when it should be done and when it is not allowed. One of these instructions is shown in the verse we are concerned with: 'Fight against them until there is no dissension, and the religion is for Allah, but if they desist, there shall be no aggression, except against the evildoers.'⁴⁸⁹ What can be

⁴⁸⁶ It stands after the volume of Iran and Islam, the history of the Mongols, and the history of the Seljuqs. The history of the Khwarazmshas possesses the same number of verses as well. However, these other sections are significantly longer than that of the Salghurids of Fars.

⁴⁸⁷ Kamola, "Salghurid History in *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh*: A Preliminary Exploration of Its Composition and Transmission," in *New Approaches to Ilkhanid History*, ed. Timothy May et al (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 123.

⁴⁸⁸ The Qur'an 7:128.

⁴⁸⁹ The Qur'an 2: 193. Raushan has incorrectly attributed this verse to the *sura* of A'rāf.

found in *JT* is the last part concerning aggression against the evildoers. There is no clear indication of the identity of the evildoers or the type of harm they have committed, this verse is open to interpretation and could have been used to justify suppressing of any group which was considered 'evildoers'; in this case, this group may be the Ismā'īlīs who were defeated by the Mongols. This hypothesis can be supported by the evidence scattered throughout the section on the Ismā'īlīs which refers to their deviation from the 'right path.' In one of these reports, Rashīd al-Dīn informs us that there was a group of Mazdakids who were converted to Ismā'īlism,⁴⁹⁰ but they did not totally abandon their old beliefs; rather they continued to uphold them by mixing them with Ismā'īlī beliefs.⁴⁹¹

Based on the information that Rashīd al-Dīn provides us in the preface, he wrote this section after all the others and this section is important, because the Ismā'īlīs had caused a tremendous amount of troubles for previous rulers and everybody had been afraid of them until they were defeated by the Mongols. Then, as was the custom, the author praises his patron, Öljeitü, for upholding religious laws and enhancing Islam. In the next part of the preface, as was done for every section, he indicates that the responsibility of a historian is only to relate history, using the same Arabic phrase: '*al-uhda 'alā al-rāvi*' (The responsibility is with the narrator.)⁴⁹²

The preface ends with Rashīd al-Dīn's explanation of the section's structure according to which it contains two large chapters. The first concerns the Ismā'īlī caliphs in Egypt (i.e. the Fatimids; 909-1171)⁴⁹³ and the second is the story of the Ismā'īlīs of Iran starting from and focusing on Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ (c. 1050-1124).⁴⁹⁴ The first chapter has one introduction, and 14 subchapters (one subchapter for each caliph) separated only by headings. The introduction provides us with information regarding the events up to the reign of the first Fatimid caliph, al-Mahdī (r. 909-934). The author inserts an Arabic poem mentioning the names of all the caliphs in the beginning of the first chapter before the introduction. They are as follows:

و الراى و الفطنة و التمييز	"يا من له خلائق محموده
الصادق من يحبهم يفوز	اصغ على عده آل جعفر
فالمنصور والمعز والعزیز	اولها المهدي فالقائم

⁴⁹⁰ Mazdakism was a religious movement taking its name from its leader Mazdak. Mazdak claimed that he came to renew Zoroastrianism. The movement was specially flourished during the reign of the Sasanian king, Qubād I (r.488-531) and it was severely suppressed by Qubād I's son, Khusraw I (r.531-579). For more, see: Philip Kreyenbroek, "Iran ix. Religions in Iran (1) Pre-Islamic," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last updated on 30 March 2012, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/iran-ix1-religions-in-iran-pre-islamic#1>.

⁴⁹¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Ismā'īlīyān*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1387/2008), 147.

⁴⁹² Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Ismā'īlīyān*, 3.

⁴⁹³ Rashīd al-Dīn, 3-96.

⁴⁹⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, 97-162.

و نجله المستعلى المجيز

و حاکم و ظاهر، مستنصر

و فائز و عاضد معزوز

و آمر و حافظ و ظافر

و انت في حله الرموز⁴⁹⁵

عدتها "يد" كما مدتها "رعب"

'Oh you, who have praiseworthy qualities/ wisdom, intelligence, discernment.

Listen to the house of Ja'far and its members/ the honest who loves them will receive salvation.

First comes al-Mahdī (r.909-934) and then then al-Qā'im (r. 934-946)/ followed by al-Manṣūr (r. 946-953), al-Mu'iz (r. 953-975), and al-'Azīz (r. 975-996).

Then comes Ḥākim (r. 996-1021), Zāhir (r. 1021-1036) and Mustanṣir (r. 1036-1094)/ and his son, al-Must'ālā (r. 1094-1101), the rewarded.

And Āmir (r. 1101-1130) and Ḥāfiẓ (r. 1130-1149) and Zāfir (r. 1149-1154)/ and Fā'iz (r. 1154-1160) and 'Āzīd (r. 1160-1171), the honoured.

Their power is the hand of God while their reign dominance/ and you are covered with secrets.'

The second chapter is less straightforward compared to the first. It starts with an introductory subchapter giving the biography of Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ and then narrating the story of how he captured a number of castles which later on functioned as the Ismā'īlīs' strongholds.⁴⁹⁶ The subchapters are separated only by headlines until the point where his successors are discussed. From this point onward, we can see a pattern where a subchapter is dedicated to each *dā'ī* (Ismā'īlī missionary) followed by the list of the people who were assassinated during their reigns.

As for the matter of sources that Rashīd al-Dīn made use of, he himself acknowledges his sources a few times throughout the section, especially in the second chapter related to Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ, he indicates that this history was told 'based on the opinion of their (Ismā'īlī) writer.'⁴⁹⁷ The next time he mentions a source is at the end of the second chapter on the *dā'īs* which is again followed by the aforementioned Arabic phrase which places the responsibility on the shoulders of the original narrator. Rashīd al-Dīn tells us that 'until this point, it was from the dictation of Buzurg Umīd's book and hereafter, the narration of 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Alī, as it was seen, will be related.'⁴⁹⁸ The author seems to have stood by his word, because not long

⁴⁹⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, 3.

⁴⁹⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, 98-131.

⁴⁹⁷ "Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Ismā'īlīyān*, 131. و آنچه این ضعیف یاد می کند به زعم واضع تاریخ ایشان است."

⁴⁹⁸ "تا اینجا از املای کتاب بزرگ امید است، و بعد از این روایت عبدالملک ابن علی چنانکه دیده و مشاهده کرده فرمود" Rashīd al-Dīn, 141.

after, he claims again that ‘until this point, Dihkhudā ‘Abd al-Malik has narrated (the story).’⁴⁹⁹ Consequently, there is another line which indicates that the rest of the story will be related ‘from the history of the chief Ḥasan Ṣalāḥ Munshī which he composed during the time of Muḥtashim Shahāb.’⁵⁰⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn repeats this sentence once again at the end of the same subchapter.⁵⁰¹ However, the name of Ḥasan Ṣalāḥ or Ṣabbāḥ is not recorded properly; especially since this part cannot be found in all manuscripts, or if it can, the name is not legible enough. In the previous case, for example, there is no indication of the time of the composition of the source in the Süleymaniye manuscript; neither is anything about the profession of the writer (*munshī*).⁵⁰² The same goes for the edition of Mohammad Taqi Daneshpazhuh according to which the second sentence (the name of the author and the time of the composition of the source) cannot be found either in the Süleymaniye manuscript of *Majma‘ al-Sulṭānīya* or Malik Library’s manuscript of *Majma‘ al-Sulṭānīya*.⁵⁰³

Regarding the identity of the authors, Dihkhudā ‘Abd al-Malik and Ḥasan Ṣalāḥ/Ṣabbāḥ Munshī, there is not much information. The only thing that we can get from *JT* is that these two were Ismaili sources whose books were presumably also available to Juvainī, because despite the fact that Rashīd al-Dīn does not mention him as his source, he seems to have made use of the Ismā‘īlī section of *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* and in many cases, Rashīd al-Dīn has copied Juvainī’s sentences verbatim.

3.4.2.7 The History of Oghuz (*Tārīkh-i Ughūz*)

The History of the Oghuz has the closest connection to *TMG*, because it narrates the story of the Turkic peoples, starting from their origin, or in other words, their mythical history. This part has been written in 18 sections.⁵⁰⁴ Of these 18 sections, 16 concern the story of Oghuz himself,⁵⁰⁵ and only two are about his descendants showing the importance of the figure of Oghuz as an ancestor of the Turkic peoples.⁵⁰⁶ The story begins with Noah and how he gave the eastern lands and Turkistan to his son, Yafeth, the figure who was considered to be the ancestor of the Turks. Yafeth’s connection to Oghuz is explained in only two paragraphs after which the author quickly moves on to the birth of Oghuz.

Apart from the first section which deals with Oghuz before his rise to power, the rest of the 15 sections cover his conquests, firstly those over his own people followed by his uniting

⁴⁹⁹ "تا اینجا دهخدا عبدالملک روایت کرده است." , Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Ismā‘īlīyā*, 151.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid. "بعد از این نقل حکایات از تاریخ رئیس حسن صلاح منشی است که به روزگار محتشم شهاب ساخته است."

⁵⁰¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Ismā‘īlīyā*, 158.

⁵⁰² Rashīd al-Dīn, 264.

⁵⁰³ See: Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh: Qismat-i Ismā‘īlīyā va Fāṭimīyān va Nazārīyān va Dā‘īyān va Rafīqān*, ed. Mohammad Taqi Daneshpazhuh and Mohammad Modarresi (Tehran: Bungāh-i Tarjuma va nashr-i Kitāb, 1338/1959), 15 & 153.

⁵⁰⁴ The history of Oghuz is 96 pages in Raushan’s edition.

⁵⁰⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Ughūz*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1384/2005), 1-54.

⁵⁰⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, 55-96.

them, and then other lands towards the west. Geographically speaking, the furthest western land he conquered is the area which is called '*farang*' in the book.⁵⁰⁷ The last two sections, which concern Oghuz's descendants, have been written very concisely. As history approaches the era of the author himself, the events are narrated more haphazardly. For instance, the part which links the story of Oghuz's descendants to the more known part of history, the Samanids, has only been summed up in one sentence: '...And after him, they sat a noble on the throne of Transoxiana, and it is he that in the history of the Samanids they call Sāmān-khudā who is the father of all Samanids.'⁵⁰⁸

3.4.2.8 The History China (*Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādshāhān-i Khutāy*)

The History of the Peoples and Kings China begins with China's its first mythical king, Pangu, to the time of the Mongols. The volume starts with a type of linguistic-geographical discussion which acts as the preface to the main text. It indicates the names of the concerned areas along with the people living in them and what these people are called in different languages.⁵⁰⁹ Therefore, this preface is supposed to give the readers an overview of the studied areas, while the next part, called the *muqaddama* (introduction), informs readers about other important matters related to Chinese history, such as the Chinese periodization of history, the Chinese style of historiography, and Rashīd al-Dīn's sources.

In the introduction, Rashīd al-Dīn gives us two names: Lītājī and Kamsūn. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, these two people, who were knowledgeable in medicine, astronomy, and the history of China, assisted him in gathering information. He also claims that they brought some books along from China which aided Rashīd al-Dīn to write this history.⁵¹⁰ This is where he connects his sources to Chinese historiography, attempting to prove that the information he provides is infallible because the concerned books were edited a few times in every stage of the process; first by a few 'wise people' (*ḥukamāva dānāyān-i vaqt*) and then by a learned man (*ḥakīm*). In the third stage, the book was copied by a calligrapher and was checked page by page by a group of people again. In the last stage, these books were engraved on tablets, stamped and sealed,⁵¹¹ and kept in a safe place, so no one can distort them.⁵¹² Rashīd al-Dīn claims that he has made use of a few unnamed books which were produced in the

⁵⁰⁷ There is no hint to what exactly *farang* means in this section of *JT*. It seems to be referring to western Christian lands. The term is used for another section of *JT*, that is the history of the Popes and Caesars where Rashīd al-Dīn provides us with a geographical territory of *farang*. For more information see the section of *History of the Franks, the Popes and the Caesars* later in this chapter. (Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Afranj, Pāpān va Qayāṣara*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1384/2005), 43.)

⁵⁰⁸ "و بعد از او اصیل زاده ای را به پادشاهی نشاندند به ماوراء النهر، و او آن است که در تاریخ سامانیان {او را سامان} خدا گویند که پدر". Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Ughūz*, 91-92.

⁵⁰⁹ "تقریر اسامی ولایات معظم آن ممالک به حسب هر مصطلحی" (indicating the names of the great provinces of those realms based on their languages); Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādishāhān-i Khutāy*, 1.

⁵¹⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādishāhān-i Khutāy*, 8. "بعضی از آن کتب از ختای با خود آورده و آن معانی را مستحضر"

⁵¹¹ *Tamghā*

⁵¹² Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādishāhān-i Khutāy*, 8-9.

aforementioned way. It is not clear what the source was and there is no mention of any Chinese source presented to the court of the Ilkhanids, but since it mentions the name of Qubilai Qa'an and Timur Öljeitü Qa'an, it could be a source written in the early Yuan period.⁵¹³ Moreover, the author provides us with another reason for the accurateness of his source which is the Chinese script which according to him is hard to learn, but it is also unambiguous.⁵¹⁴

The section has no table of contents or the divisions that were found in the previous parts; instead, there is another sort of segmenting specific to the history of China. Rashīd al-Dīn informs us that he narrates the history based on his source without actually mentioning the title of this source: 'the mentioned book' (*ba mawjibī ka dar kitab-i mazkūr masṭūr ast*).⁵¹⁵

As it stands, the *History of China* consists of 36 *ṭabaqa* (class). These classes were inserted into two *ḥarfs* (letters); the first letter includes 21 classes (out of 36) and the second 15 classes. There is also an additional segment which related the history of the kings of the north, i.e. *Chīn* (*Khutāy*), who were contemporary to six classes of kings who ruled the south, *Māchīn*.⁵¹⁶ The word which is used in the additional segment to introduce various dynasties is *ṭā'ifa* (people) of which there are five. These five and the six classes of kings who ruled *Māchīn* form the first part of the second letter. The second part of the second letter contains the rest of the classes of Chinese history. Since there is no table of contents designed for this volume of *JT*, it can be slightly confusing for readers, even though Rashīd al-Dīn tries to make it clear by stating both the number of the classes in their own division and the number of them in the bigger division.⁵¹⁷ Even so, sometimes the divisions are confusing; especially the divisions between the two letters. While the first narrates the story of classes, or better yet, dynasties which ruled over the whole realm independently, the second letter narrates the story of the

⁵¹³ Francesesco Calzolaio, "Prophets of the East: The Ilkhanid Historian Rashīd al-Dīn on the Buddha, Laozi and Confucius and the Question of His Chinese Sources (Part One)," *Iran and Caucasus* 23 (2019): 21. To know more about the sources of Rashīd al-Dīn, see: Herbert Franke, "Some Sinological Remarks on Rašīd ad-Dīn's History of China," *Oriens* 4, no.1 (1951): 21-26.

⁵¹⁴ In this section, Rashīd al-Dīn explains the features of the Chinese script and uses some examples for every feature. Although there is no information regarding his knowledge of Chinese in this section, we know from another of Rashīd al-Dīn's works, the *Tansūqnāma*, that he learnt Chinese. See: Karl Jahn, "Rashīd al-Dīn and Chinese Culture," *Central Asiatic Journal: International Periodical for the Languages, Literature, History, and Archaeology of Central Asia*, ed. John Andrew Boyle and Karl Jahn (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1970), 134-147.

⁵¹⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādīshāhān-i Khutāy*, 12.

⁵¹⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn himself informs us about the meanings of the terms *Chīn*, *Khutāy*, and *Māchīn*. According to him, the first two are applied to the same region which is modern day northern China and *Māchīn* is the term for southern China. See Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādīshāhān-i Khutāy*, 1-2. Therefore, it should not be confused with the terms *chīn* and *māchīn* in Persian literature where the former means Turkistan and the latter China.

⁵¹⁷ For example, the third class of the second part of the second letter would be the 30th class in the whole 36 classes of Chinese history. "طبقه سوم: از دفعه دوم از حرف دوم که طبقه سیام اصل باشد." Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādīshāhān-i Khutāy*, 63.

dynasties who also ruled independently or shared their authority with others.⁵¹⁸ Thus, the line between the two divisions is quite blurry.

The way the dynasties have been organized is by mentioning the name of each dynasty's first ruler, the number of the rulers, and the duration of the dynasty as a whole. The names of the rulers appear after a short heading, *taba'a* (subject), which separates them from the first ruler and thus emphasizing the founder's role.⁵¹⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn acknowledged that he imitated the Chinese style of historiography (*mā nīz hamān ṭarīqa rā ru'āyat kardā*) in which the pictures of rulers are depicted next to their names.⁵²⁰

3.4.2.9 The History of the Jews (*Tārīkh-i Banī Isrā'īl*)

The subsequent chapter deals with the story of the house of Israel (Jacob) and its descendants while covering general history of Jewish people. The main body begins with the story of Adam and Eve and ends with the names of the Roman emperors connecting it to the next section on history of the west. The author brings up the matter of the 'historian's responsibility' which is only to narrate the history of people based on their point of view.⁵²¹ That does not mean that the author agrees with them or necessarily believes what they relate. However, the author shows that it is a historian's job is to narrate faithfully and that people should not consider him responsible or tease him for what he narrates.⁵²² This statement has been made in almost in every volume, in the introductions or in the main bodies, but contrary to other sections where it is placed in the main body or the later parts of introduction, in this case this statement is made right at the beginning of the text. Given the author's Jewish background, it seems to be of great importance to the author, who is seeking to cover his bases early on when dealing with a sensitive topic for him.

As we have seen before in *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī* and in the *History of China*, the author attempts to convince his readers of the accuracy and truth in what he relates, in the former by getting Öljeitü's approval and the latter by explaining the Chinese style of historiography. In this section, he makes the same effort again. However, in this case, he appeals to the nature of history. According to him, history includes relating narratives and since there is a possibility of fallacy as well as rearranging (adding and omitting), history will inevitably suffice to relate the 'rare narratives,' because minds cannot make mistakes in remembering them meaning that if an incident does not happen often and if it is strange in a

⁵¹⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādishāhān-i Khutāy*, 14.

⁵¹⁹ So, the division terms are as follows: *ḥarf*, *ṭabaqa*, *taba'a*; plus *ṭā'ifa* which has the same connotation as *ṭabaqa*, since both are referring to dynasties.

⁵²⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Aqvām-i Pādishāhān-i Khutāy*, 14.

⁵²¹ "شرط مورخ آن است که تاریخ هر قومی به زعم ایشان نویسد." Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Banī Isrā'īl*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1386/2008), 1.

⁵²² Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Banī Isrā'īl*, 1-2.

sense, people would remember it as it was.⁵²³ Regardless of the strength or weakness of this argument, this is what he brings up again when he classifies the narratives of the Old Testament into four groups: famous miracles (*mu'jizāt-i mashhūr*), extraordinary feats (*khavāriq-i ādat*), incidents (*ḥavādīs*) and wonders (*ʿajāyib*) followed by examples for each one of them.⁵²⁴ Among these examples, miracles have been attributed to Moses, thus giving him a high position compared to other prophets. While the names of other prophets, such as Noah, show up in the second class (i.e. extraordinary feats), Abraham is the only one whose rare deeds have been presented in the incidents category along with other non-prophetic incidents⁵²⁵ which leads readers to assume him as someone who can be imitated by ordinary people. He is not as high as Moses due to no miraculous moment, so he could be a perfect example to follow. Once again, considering the role of Abraham as an analogy for Ghazan in *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*, the author seems to have treated Abraham differently for a reason.

The author first gives us a brief overview of the classification of history according to the Jews which is divided into three sections: From the creation of Adam to the exit of people of Israel from Egypt, from their departure from Egypt to the time of Alexander, and from Alexander onward. However, the author, while not totally discarding this classification, has structured the volume slightly different.⁵²⁶ According to Rashīd al-Dīn's structure, the volume has five chapters as follows: 1. Adam to Noah; 2. Noah to Abraham; 3. Abraham to Moses (although once again Abraham has been mentioned briefly in chapter two as well); 4. From the birth of Moses until 483 years later; 5. From the birth of David to the death of Ezra. Then the author added a short chapter relating the Seleucids and the Ptolemaic dynasty and ending with the Roman emperors.

Despite having presumably five separate chapters, the divisions are not as distinguishable as we would expect, since the term chapter (*faṣl*) has also been applied to make a distinction between various subjects.⁵²⁷ Moreover, there is another way of separating subjects which is by headings. In the first four chapters there is only one heading which is in Persian while all the other headings are in Arabic, and they have only appeared in the chapter five from the story of Khizr onward. This change of language in the headings led Karl Jahn to believe that unlike all the other parts of *JT*, this part was written first in Arabic and then was translated into Persian.⁵²⁸ While this can be a possibility, it can also have to do with the source Rashīd al-Dīn used. As we have seen previously, the writing style and the structure of the

⁵²³ Rashīd al-Dīn, 3. "و چون اخبار که تاریخ بر ذکر آن مشتمل است احتمال صدق و کذب و زیادت و نقصان دارد، لاجرم تاریخ مقصور بود بر ذکر اخبار نادره چه اکثر خواطر به ضبط آن متعلق باشد و سهو و غلط و تحریف و تغییر بدین سبب از آن دور بود."

⁵²⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Banī Isrā'īl*, 10-13.

⁵²⁵ Such as the story of Pharaoh and his family.

⁵²⁶ He has indicated that these three sections contain five chapters each commencing with a prominent figure: Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, and Alexander; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Banī Isrā'īl*, 5.

⁵²⁷ The word *faṣl* literally means 'to separate'.

⁵²⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Die Geschichte der Kinder Israels des Rašīd al-Dīn*, ed. Karl Jahn (Wien: Verl. Der Österr. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1973), 14.

sources affected *JT* enormously throughout its various divisions. The author has partly introduced his sources in the introduction: 24 books of the Torah and other scattered books and histories.⁵²⁹ There is no way to definitely state which other sources Rashīd al-Dīn used. Nevertheless, Jahn proposed that given the information found in this section, the sources must have come from the Talmudic tradition.⁵³⁰

3.4.2.10 *The History of the Franks, the Popes, and the Caesars (Tārīkh-i Afranj, Pāpān va Qayāṣara)*

The History of the Franks, the Popes, and the Caesars has neither an introduction nor any poetry. All we know about the writing process of this section is the year of its composition, 705/1306 as mentioned by Rashīd al-Dīn.⁵³¹ The heading of the section is ‘History of the Franks’ (*tārīkh-i afranj*), accompanied by a subtitle, ‘and that which belongs to it and the mention of provinces and descriptions of the reigns of its kings and the period of the reigns of each one of them.’⁵³² What has been mentioned in the heading is almost all that we can expect of this section, namely geographical information, the history of the kings of the ‘Franks,’ and the years of their reigns.

This part has two divisions, one starting from Adam to the birth of Jesus and the second beginning with the birth of Jesus and ending in the author’s time, 1306, to be exact.⁵³³ According to Rashīd al-Dīn, there are ten groups of people, each one ruled over a certain realm at some point in history and they are as follows: Adam and his children (*ādam va farzandān-i ū*), the prophets of the people of Israel (*anbiyā-yi banī isrā’īl*), the kings of the people of Israel (*mulūk-i banī isrā’īl*), the Chaldean kings (*mulūk-i kaldānīyān*), the Persian Zoroastrian kings (*pādishāhān-i majūs-i ‘ajam*), the Greeks (*yūnānīyān*), the Franks (*afranj*), the Christian Greeks (*yūnānīyān-i naṣārī*), the Arabs and the Muslims (*‘arab va ahl-i islām*), Turks and Mongols (*turk va mughul*).⁵³⁴ For every group, there is a leader, a superior who represents the whole group; for example, the leader of the Turks and the Mongols is Chinggis Khan. Therefore, Rashīd al-Dīn legitimizes Chinggis Khan by placing him in the same place as Muḥammad, the leader of the Arabs, and Alexander, the leader of the Greeks.⁵³⁵

What is also noticeable in the first section is the allocation of a separate story to Abraham, thus giving him the same credit as Adam, Noah, and Jesus which makes us consider Rashīd al-Dīn’s motives for such a step. The emphasis on Abraham is not limited only to this

⁵²⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Banī Isrā’īl*, 2.

⁵³⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Die Geschichte der Kinder Israels des Rašīd al-Dīn*, ed. Karl Jahn, 11.

⁵³¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Afranj, Pāpān va Qayāṣara*, 17.

⁵³² Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi’ al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Afranj, Pāpān va Qayāṣara*, 17.

⁵³³ Rashīd al-Dīn, 19-37 & 39- 122.

⁵³⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, 19-20.

⁵³⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, 19-20. This form of legitimation can also be found in *Nizām al-Tavārīkh*.

part of *JT*, but can be seen elsewhere, such as in the *TMG*. In its introduction, Rashīd al-Dīn shows how Abraham asked his offspring to record their genealogies,⁵³⁶ just as Ghazan had done for the Mongol history and thus, he links the genealogical memory of the Mongols to that of the Arabs (the descendants of Abraham) in the Islamic world.⁵³⁷

The last chapter of this section differs organisationally, not only from the rest of history of the west, but from other parts of *JT* as well; presumably because the author was imitating his Christian sources. The question of Rashīd al-Dīn's sources on the 'Franks' was raised by Karl Jahn in 1951. He has proposed a few works which were available in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to which Rashīd al-Dīn could have had access: the *Speculum Historiale* by Vincentius Bellovacensis,⁵³⁸ the *Chronicon* of Leon d'Orvieto, Bernard Cuidonis' *Histoire des Papes*, and the *Chronicum* by Martinus Oppaviensis. Among these sources Pppaviensis' text was the most popular and widely known during the second half of the thirteenth century, due to its translation from Latin into other European languages as well. Its author was an archbishop of Gnesna in Poland who was appointed by Pope Nicholas III. His book is a catalogue of popes and emperors from the birth of Christ to the ascension of Pope Nicholas III.⁵³⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn may have used this book as one of his sources, especially for the last chapter of section two. Not only are most of its contents the same, but also, the order in which the popes and caesars are mentioned follows Oppaviensis' schema.⁵⁴⁰

Another remarkable point about the *History of the Franks, Popes, and Caesars* is that it is the only surviving part of the *JT* that was transcribed in Rab'-i Rashīdī and did not undergo alteration during the reign of the Timurids.⁵⁴¹ The layout of the pages also demonstrates how Rashīd al-Dīn followed the design found in the western sources of his era having the depictions of the popes and of the caesars next to their names.⁵⁴² This section's manuscript is patterned as a table with four columns: the first column is dedicated to the history of caesars with their pictures as the second column next to it. The third column is the names and the pictures of the popes and the last column is the history of the Popes.⁵⁴³

Chapter four starts with the emperor Augustus (Ughustūs, r. 27 B.C.- 14 A.D.) and ends with Albert I (Adālbartūs, r. 1282-1308). Rashīd al-Dīn lists the names of the emperors as if they all belong to the same dynasty. He begins to mention their names with the Byzantine

⁵³⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 23-27. This comparison will be discussed later in this chapter along with other narratives concerning the comparison between Abraham and Ghāzān.

⁵³⁷ Stefan Kamola, "History and Legend in the *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh*: Abraham, Alexander, and Oghuz Khan," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25 (October 2015): 566.

⁵³⁸ Vincentius Bellovacensis, *Speculum Historiale* (Graz: Akademische Druck, 1965).

⁵³⁹ Wolfgang Valentine, "Martinus Polonus' Chronicle of the Popes and Emperors: A Medieval Best-sellers and Its Neglected Influence on Medieval English Chronicles," *The English Historical Review* 116, No.446 (2001): 327.

⁵⁴⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Histoire Universelle de Rašīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh Abul-Khair: Histoire des Francs*, trans. Karl Jahn (Leiden: Brill, 1951), 8.

⁵⁴¹ Ms. Hazine 1653, folios 295v-328r, Topkapı

⁵⁴² Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Afranj, Pāpān va Qayāšara*, sī va haft.

⁵⁴³ Mohamad Reza Ghiasian, "Images of the Peoples of the World Encountered by the Mongols in the *Jami' al-tawarikh*," *Iran* 57, no.1 (2019): 77-78.

emperors. The last Byzantine emperor who is mentioned is Leo IV (Li'u, r. 751-780). Then the author moves to French history by discussing Charlemagne's reign (Karulūs, r. 768-814). He connects these two periods by one paragraph explaining that the Pope chose Charlemagne as the next emperor due to his assistance in removing the Lombards from power (r. 800-814).⁵⁴⁴ After this, the Holy Roman Emperors are discussed. The same issue of inaccuracy exists for the history of the Popes as well. The History of the popes starts from Jesus leading up to Pope Benedictus IX (Banaṭiktūs, b. 1012-d. 1056) and thus, assuming the popes to be the rightful successors of Jesus who were connected to him through the apostle Peter. The structure is almost the same in this chapter. The author indicates the origins of the concerned person, be they pope or emperor, then the period they reigned and how they died. Most accounts are only a few lines long. The longest account is the account of Emperor William (Gilimus, r. 1254-1256) whose reign was contemporary to the Mongols.⁵⁴⁵ In this account and a few other accounts, we can see that Rashīd al-Dīn applied parallel histories as well, like the account of Heraclius (Hiraqlīyūs, r. 610-641) where the Arab Muslims and the Sasanians have been mentioned too.⁵⁴⁶

3.4.2.11 *The History of India (Tārīkh-i Hind va Sind va Kashmīr)*

The History of India in *JT* has no introduction, but a semi-introduction where the author makes some remarks concerning the difficulty of writing a comprehensive history for the lands of India. In this part, Rashīd al-Dīn mentions the name of al-Bīrūnī as his source and as one of the scholars who despite the limitations upon him regarding this task, did a splendid job of writing a book about the history and the geography of this region.⁵⁴⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn acknowledges him as his source followed by his regular statement about holding the narrators and the sources responsible rather than the historian.⁵⁴⁸ The semi-introduction ends with explaining how the section was structured which is based on two large chapters; the first chapter is about the geography of Indian lands, chronology and periodization according to Indians, and the history of the kings of Delhi and Kashmir. This chapter consists of ten subchapters, the first six of which deal with geography and a general history of the kings of Delhi and Kashmir. The last four subchapters seem to be more organized. Having been based on the Indian periodization of history,⁵⁴⁹ they narrate the history of the kings of India. The

⁵⁴⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Afranj, Pāpān va Qayāṣara*, 95.

⁵⁴⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, 117-119.

⁵⁴⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, Rashīd al-Dīn, 85-86.

⁵⁴⁷ Al-Bīrūnī, *Kitāb fī Taḥqīq-i Mā li al-Hind* (Hyderabad: Osmania Oriental Publications Bureau, 1958); Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Hind va Sind va Kashmīr*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1384/2005), 1-2.

⁵⁴⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, 2.

⁵⁴⁹ The author informs us that according to Indians and their prophet, Shakyamuni, time is divided into four uneven sections, each bearing a particular name and we (i.e. the author and his contemporaries) live in the last era. The names of the periods, according to Mohammad Raushan's transcription, are as follows: Kṛtayuga, Tretāyuga, Duāpārayuga, and Kaliyuga. Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Hind va Sind va Kashmīr*, 4.

second chapter deals with the life and religion of Buddha, called Shakyamuni by Rashīd al-Dīn, and it consists of 20 chapters covering the life of Buddha, his principles, teachings, and death.

While Rashīd al-Dīn seems to have used al-Bīrūnī's book on India (Hind) as his source for the first chapter (especially the first four subchapters on geography and chronology and sometimes even copied him verbatim), Jahn has suggested that the rest of the subchapters are based on Jūzjānī's work.⁵⁵⁰ Jūzjānī's book called *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāsiri* was written upon the arrival of the Mongols to Iran.⁵⁵¹ The author, who was writing from Delhi, devoted most of his work to the Ghurids and the Ghaznavids. Regarding the source for the second chapter of this section, Rashīd al-Dīn does not keep us in the dark. In the semi- introduction, he indicates that his source for the life of Buddha and some of the kings of Kashmir is a *bakhshi* (Buddhist monk) called Kamālāshrī who knows a great deal about the book of Buddha.⁵⁵² His name is mentioned again in the beginning of the second chapter as the author's source for his history.⁵⁵³

What attracts attention in the Indian section of *JT* is the date of its composition. In the beginning of the first subchapter, Rashīd al-Dīn while discussing the classification of time according to Indians, mentions that he was writing in the year 703 A.H. which corresponds to 1304. Considering that Ghazan died a year later (704 A.H.), Jahn has suggested that unlike what has been believed by scholars that the history of the world was written on the order of Öljeitü, this date proves that the 'history of the world' project had already started under Ghazan's rule.⁵⁵⁴ While this can be a reasonable explanation for the appearance of the date 703 A.H. in the section related to the history of India, I believe that there is more to the story. The date 703 A.H. is mentioned twice, both in the first subchapter and in the fifth subchapter.⁵⁵⁵ Moreover, in the last subchapter of the second chapter, Rashīd al-Dīn says that he had written a rebuttal against the beliefs of Buddhism, especially in the case of reincarnation. According to him, this rebuttal can be found in full in his *Tawzīḥāt-i Rashīdī*.⁵⁵⁶ This statement demonstrates that at least this part of the *History of India* was written after the composition of *Tawzīḥāt-i Rashīdī*. It is not possible to determine the exact time of *Tawzīḥāt-i Rashīdī*'s composition. However, there are a few dates mentioned in the book which can give us a clue to the approximate time of its composition. Two dates, 705 and 706 A.H.,

⁵⁵⁰ Karl Jahn, *Rashīd Al-Dīn's History of India: Collected Essays with Facsimiles and Indices* (London: Mouten and Co, 1965), xiii and xciii.

⁵⁵¹ Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāsiri* (Calcutta, College Press, 1864).

⁵⁵² Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Hind va Sind va Kashmīr*, 2.

⁵⁵³ Rashīd al-Dīn, 101. Historical accounts, including Rashīd al-Dīn, suggest that there were lively court debates between Muslim theologians and Buddhist monks. Having considered himself as a theologian, Rashīd al-Dīn also participated in these debates. Brack has argued that the *History of India* does not only demonstrate the Buddhism, which was practiced in the Ilkhanid court, rather it is a "multilayered work that reflects the extensive geographical and social mobility enabled by Mongol rule in Eurasia." Jonathan Brack, *An Afterlife for the Khan: Muslims, Buddhists, and Sacred Kingship in Mongol Iran and Eurasia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2023), 28.

⁵⁵⁴ Karl Jahn, "The Still Missing Works of Rashīd al-Dīn," *Central Asiatic Journal* 9, No.2 (June 1964): 116.

⁵⁵⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Hind va Sind va Kashmīr*, 4 & 66.

⁵⁵⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, 165.

are mentioned when Rashīd al-Dīn narrates a couple of stories about Öljeitü which shows that the book was probably written during the reign of Öljeitü.⁵⁵⁷ Therefore, the section on the history of India seems to have not been written at one single time, rather that the composition of the different chapters must have been done in various periods. Another aspect which can also show this inconsistency is the way that Persian and Arabic manuscripts were organized. The Arabic manuscripts have an extra subchapter containing a list of Buddhist works which is not included in the Persian manuscripts.⁵⁵⁸ There are also two versions of the fourth subchapter about the Buddha's adolescence.⁵⁵⁹ Inconsistency in the language of the headings adds to this disorganization, since in the Persian version, some of the headings are in Arabic and some in Persian.

So far, we have discussed what we can expect to find in *JT* in terms of structure and language. In the next section, I am going to closely look into *TMG*'s usage of poetry, how the verses were incorporated in the text, and what possible objectives Rashīd al-Dīn might have had in mind when including them.

3.5 Poetry in *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*

In this section, I will proceed to analyse the verses of *TMG*, as well as their themes and their templates in order to show how they contribute to the topic of legitimacy and ideology for the Mongols. To achieve this, I will first explore the concept of fortune, its link to ancient Iranian kings, and how they are connected to the Mongols in *TMG*. I will then proceed to focus on the part Firdawsī and pseudo-Firdawsī verses play in this grand scheme of Rashīd al-Dīn.

3.5.1 Fortune in *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*

Legitimacy has always been an intriguing subject for historians of all eras and regions, not only due to its vitality for various governments, but also because of its complexity. In a fascinating study on the formation of early states, Thomas Allsen argues that there is a strong connection between geography and legitimacy. In other words, geography plays a significant role in how a ruler can extract ideology from a particular geographic region.⁵⁶⁰ One of the pillars for ideology acquired from steppe culture by the Mongols is the concept of heavenly mandate and fortune, *qut* in Turkic and *suu* in Mongolian. This idea of heavenly mandate and

⁵⁵⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tawzīhāt-i Rashīdī*, ed. Hashem Rajabzadeh (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1394/ 2015), 337 & 706 & 838.

⁵⁵⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Rashīd Al-Dīn's History of India: Collected Essays with Facsimiles and Indices*, xiv.

⁵⁵⁹ One version can be found in the ms. Hazina 1654 and the other in a later manuscript belonging to the reign of the Safavid shah, 'Abbās I (r.1599-1629). See: Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Hind va Sīnd va Kashmīr*, 111 & 113.

⁵⁶⁰ Thomas Allsen, "Spiritual Geography and Political Legitimacy in the Eastern Steppe," in *Ideology and the Formation of Early State*, ed. Henry Claessen and Jarich Oosten (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 116-118.

divine support is also attested in the Orkhon Inscription where the ruler, Bilge Khan, says: 'since heaven was gracious and since I was granted with fortune, I succeeded to the throne.'⁵⁶¹

A similar concept of fortune existed and was considered crucial for ruling dynasties in the history of Iran as well. This notion often referred to as *farrah* in Middle Persian and *khvarnah* in Avestan, bore various names, forms, and origins throughout time. The term *farrah* literally means 'glory,' but it was also interpreted as 'splendour,' 'luminosity,' and 'shine.' Due to these interpretations, the concept of *farrah* developed a form of association with the sun as well and at a later stage, *farrah* along with the sun, evolved to include the idea of fortune.⁵⁶²

In ancient Iranian iconography, various forms of fortune can be detected in pre-Islamic sources and most importantly, on ancient reliefs related to ancient Iranian dynasties. On a Sasanian relief at Naqsh-e Rostam near Shiraz (Figure 8), fortune is depicted as a ring. In this image, the Sasanian founder, Ardashīr I (r. 212-224) is mounted on a horse and is receiving the ring from Ahūrāmazdā, the Zoroastrian god who is also mounted. Under the hooves of their horses, we can see two other figures: Ahrīman, the devil in Zoroastrianism and the last Arsacid ruler; both trampled under the hooves of Ahūrāmazdā's and Ardashir's horses.⁵⁶³ The exchange of the ring in this scene signifies the bestowal of fortune by God and the transfer of power from the Arsacids to the Sasanians.⁵⁶⁴ Another picture of fortune is seen in a late Sasanian source known as the *Kārnāma-yi Ardashīr-i Bābakān* (The book of Ardashīr, Son of Bābak) narrating the story of Ardashīr I and the events which led to him coming to power. In this source, fortune is depicted as a ram running after Ardashīr's horse to join him.⁵⁶⁵

The above instances are not unique and there is an abundance of examples displaying *farrah* in both pre-Islamic and Islamic sources. According to these sources, various types of *farrah* exist, and scholars of ancient Iran and Iranian mythology have categorised them into five groups: *Farrah-i īzadī* (the divine *farrah*),⁵⁶⁶ *farrah-i āriyayī/īrānī* (the Arian/Iranian *farrah*),⁵⁶⁷ *farrah-i mawbadī/payāmbārī* (the *farrah* of prophets and priests), *farrah-i*

⁵⁶¹ Linda Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice from Mesopotamia to Globalization* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 86. The concept of the heavenly mandate can also be found in Chinese sources and as the Mongols and the Chinese were in contact long before the emergence of the Mongol Empire, some scholars suggest that the Mongols acquired this idea from Chinese political culture. See: de Rachewiltz, "Some Remarks on the Ideological Foundation," 24; Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West* (Harlow: Pearson Longman), 45. For the Chinese heavenly mandate, see: Jonathan Skaff, *Sui-Tang China and Its Turko-Mongol Neighbors: Culture, Power, and Connections 580-800* (Oxford & New York: University of Oxford Press, 2012).

⁵⁶² Gherardo Gnoli, "Farr(ah)," In *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last updated December 15th, 1999, <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/farrah>

⁵⁶³ On the Sasanian rock reliefs, see: Matthew Canepa, "Sasanian Rock reliefs," In *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁵⁶⁴ On the Arsacids, otherwise known as the Parthians, see: József Wolsky, *L'empire des Arsacides* (Leuven: Peeters, 1993).

⁵⁶⁵ Bahram Faravashi, *Karnama-yi Ardashir-i Babakan* (Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1390/ 2011), 39-40

⁵⁶⁶ Xwarrah-i Ohrmazd

⁵⁶⁷ Airyanām xvarəno

kīyānī/shāhī (the *farrah* of the kings),⁵⁶⁸ and *farrah-i hamigān* (general *farrah*). Since the Sasanian era, the divine *farrah* and the kings' *farrah* were applied interchangeably which caused these two previously distinguished concepts to merge. Thus, *farrah* became the divine support given to kings who were not necessarily Kīyānī.⁵⁶⁹

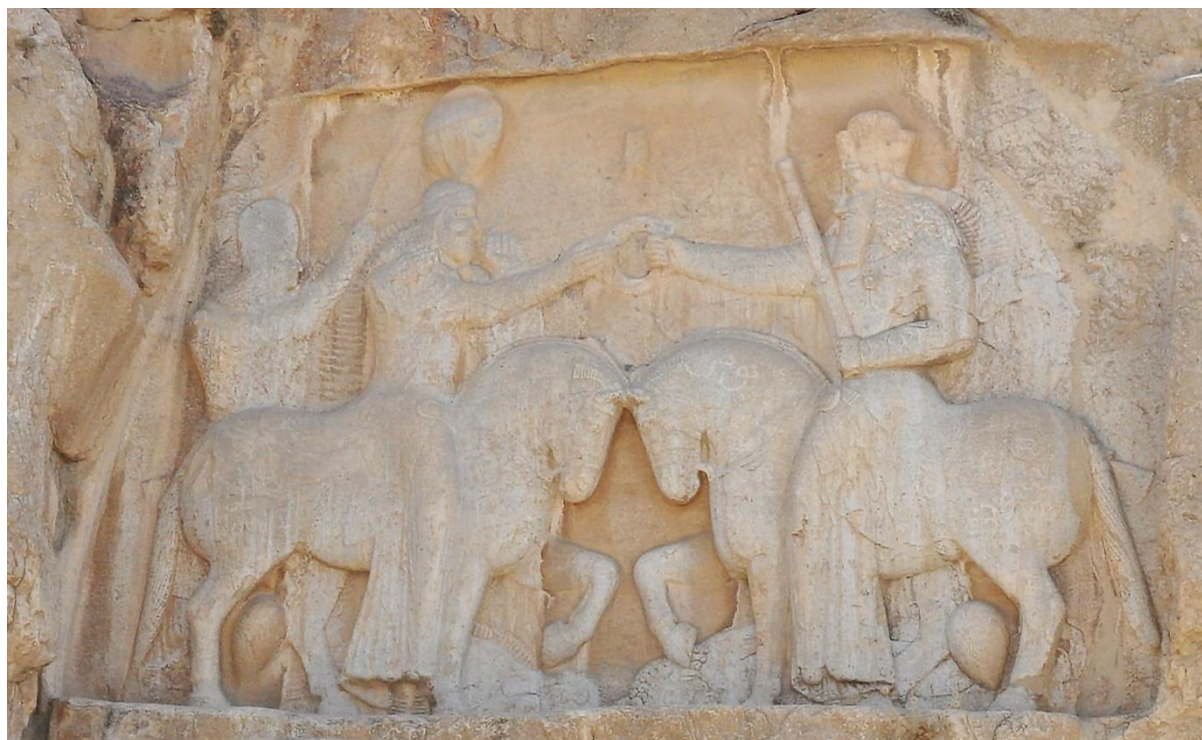


Figure 8: The Sasanian rock relief at Naqsh-i Rostam depicting the bestowal of *farrah* to Ardashir I, photo taken by Elyas Pirasteh.

In *TMG*, though the word *farrah* does not occur in its old form, it does appear in its later version, '*farr*'. This word is attested once in a verse composed by Naṣīr al-Dīn Munshī, a courtier of Jalāl al-Dīn Khwarazmshah, where he pays tribute to his patron.⁵⁷⁰ Although we only see the word *farr* once in the verses of *TMG*, there are other words which refer to the same concept of fortune. The words '*bakht*,' '*iqbāl*,' and '*dawlat*' bear precisely the same meaning. There are also the words '*rūzgār*' (time, era) and '*hūr*' (sun) which create a more subtle link with the notion of fortune. Often this set of vocabulary was applied in the verses where an account of a ruler's ascension is narrated. It is also worth noting that in these verses, there is a connection between fortune and a person's *ṭāli*' (destiny), since it was perceived at the time that one's destiny was written in the sky. Perceiving and analysing this relationship

⁵⁶⁸ Kavem xvarəno

⁵⁶⁹ Zhaleh Amoozegar, "Farrah, Īn Nīrū-yi Jādūyī va Āsimānī," *Kilk* (1374/1995): 33-35; Esmaeil Matloubkari, *Darāmadī bar Mabīnī-yi Mashrū'iyat* (Theran: Nigāh-i Mu'āṣir, 1398/2020), 111-113. Some of these *farrahs* were mentioned in the Avesta (see: Yt, XVIII.1 & Yt, XIX.9), others were mostly deductions of the Zoroastrian priests.

⁵⁷⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 492.

was among the responsibilities of a court astrologers, a practice that was called ‘omen astrology.’⁵⁷¹

A similar event occurs in *TMG*, where Öljeitü asks his court astrologer for an auspicious time to hold a *quriltai* before his ascension.⁵⁷²

به فال همایون و فرخنده اختر
به بخت موفی و سعد موفر⁵⁷³
‘With auspicious lots and happy stars/ with complete fortune and abundant happiness.’

Another responsibility of court astrologers was to be present at the births of rulers to practice ‘horoscopic astrology,’ meaning that they would read the signs in the sky to determine the child’s fortune based on the moment of his birth.⁵⁷⁴ An account of this tradition is also available in *TMG* in the section where Ghazan’s birth is narrated:

"بلند است این طالع و بخت او
به خورشید رخشان کشد تخت او"⁵⁷⁵
‘Exalted are his destiny and fortune/ his throne reaches to the shining sun.’

"در طالع تو نگاه کردم دیدم
اقطاع تو صدهزار جان خواهد بود"⁵⁷⁶
‘I gazed into your destiny and saw/ a hundred thousand souls will be in your service.’

While the above verses mention the topic of fortune explicitly, there are instances where it is referred to in a less explicit way:

"چو تیره شود مرد را روزگار
همه آن کند کش نیاید به کار"⁵⁷⁷
‘When a man’s fortune (time) has turned black/ whatever he does will not to be in his benefit.’

⁵⁷¹ George Saliba, “The Role of the Astrologer in Medieval Islamic Society,” *Bulletin d’études orientales* (1992): 57-58.

⁵⁷² The *quriltai* was a formal gathering of Mongol elders to discuss important affairs such as war and successions. The Chingissid family, both men and women, as well as commanders were customarily present and while these events usually involved feasting and drinking in addition to consultation and decision making. (Florence Hodous, “The *Quriltai* as a Legal Institution in the Mongol Empire,” *Central Asiatic Journal* 56 (2012-3): 88-89; See also: Christopher Atwood, “*Quriltai*,” in *Encyclopaedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (New York: Facts on File, 2004), 462-464. In a study on the subject of loyalty during the Mongol era, Tobias Jones has shown the importance of the *quriltai*. See: Tobias Jones, “Mongol Loyalty Networks: Cultural Transmission and Chingissid Innovation” (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2023), 124-128.

⁵⁷³ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 4; The verse is a composition of Azraqī for the new palace of the Seljuq ruler, Tughan-shāh ibn Arslān.

⁵⁷⁴ Saliba, “The Role of the Astrologer,” 58-58.

⁵⁷⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 1064.

⁵⁷⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, 1063.

⁵⁷⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, 421.

As was mentioned earlier, *rūzgār* is a word which conveys the meaning of fortune indirectly and it is this word that is of interest in this verse. At first glance, one would think that the fortune/*farrah* is the general *farrah* possessed by all people, but if we look at the context of the verse, it will lead us in a different direction. The verse appears in the story of Chinggis Khan versus Sultan Muḥammad Khwarazmshah when the latter orders the execution of the merchants sent by Chinggis. Taking a step back from *TMG*, the verse was also included in *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* for the same story and a few centuries earlier, it is found in *Tarjuma-yi Tārīkh-i Yamīnī*.⁵⁷⁸ However, in the last source, the verse is set during the battle between the Simjurids (913-997), rulers of Khurasan, and the Ghaznavids. In this scene, Sultan Maḥmūd defeated the Simjurid ruler, Abū 'Alī (r. 984-987/995-997) brought about by Abū 'Alī's own tactical mistakes leading to loss of his fortune. Similar to the relief of Naqsh-i Rostam, the verse also indicates a transfer of *farrah* from one house to another: from the Simjurids to the Ghaznavids, and from the Khwarazmshahs to the Mongols.

Another significant instance of referring to fortune indirectly is using words meaning sun in Persian, as is shown in the following verse composed by Firdawsī:

"ز بیژن فزون بود هومان به زور هنر عیب گردد چو برگشت هور"⁵⁷⁹

'Hūmān was more powerful than Bīzhan/ skill becomes a fault when the sun (fortune) turns its back on you.'

In the *Shāhnāma*, there is a story where many of the Iranian and Turanian heroes fight each other over the course of 11 battles.⁵⁸⁰ Bīzhan, an Iranian hero fights Hūmān, his Turanian peer, in a brutal battle and defeats him, even though, as Firdawsī says, Hūmān was more skilled than Bīzhan, but he had already lost his fortune. This verse seems to be a popular insertion in the whole of *JT*, since we also find it in the story of Ṭughril III, the last ruler Seljuq ruler, who lost his fortune when he was defeated in the battle against the Khwarazmshahs in 1194.

The sun, used as a metaphor in the earlier verse, has a long-standing history in Persian literature which goes back to the Iranian mythical king, Jamshīd (also known as Jam and Yima). Not only does the second part of his name, *-shīd*, mean light, but also his epithet *xšāeta* conveys radiance and shine.⁵⁸¹ Jamshīd's story is one of the most well-known mythical stories narrated in both the *Shāhnāma* and the Avesta. It is also closely connected to the loss of fortune. According to this story, after having reigned for a long time over a peaceful and flourishing kingdom, Jamshīd becomes ungrateful and arrogant and starts to claim divinity and

⁵⁷⁸ Juvainī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*, vol.2, 99. On this book, see: Daniel, "The Rise and Development," 116-118.

⁵⁷⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 316.

⁵⁸⁰ Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, ed. Jalal Khaleqi Motlaq (New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 1987-2008), vol.4, 52.

⁵⁸¹ Prods Oktor Skjaervo, "Jamšid," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last updated April 20th, 2012, <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/jamsid-i>

as a result, loses his fortune. For this event, Firdawsī uses two words to show fortune: *farr* and *rūz* (like *rūzgār*); one directly and one metaphorically:

"به جمشید بر تیره گون گشت روز" همی کاست آن فرگیتی فروز"⁵⁸²

‘The day (time) turned dark for Jamshīd/ that world-shining fortune paled.’

Moreover, because of this link between the figure of Jamshīd, the sun, and fortune, he is the only Iranian king whose name is invoked in the introduction of *JT*, where Rashīd al-Dīn pays tribute to his patrons. Ghazan is called ‘*Jamshīd-i khurshīd-ṭal‘at*’ (Sun-faced Jamshīd), and later on ‘*mihr-i sipihr-i bakhtyārī*’ (the sun of the sky of fortunateness) in connection to the sun.⁵⁸³

For his other patron, Rashīd al-Dīn inserts a verse through which he emphasises Öljeitü’s likeness to Jamshīd:

"جمشیدوار شاه نشست از فراز تخت" دربسته آدمی و پری پیش او میان"⁵⁸⁴

‘The King, like Jamshīd, sat upon the throne on high/ the whole of mankind and fairyfolk assembled before him.’

Apart from the connection of fortune with Jamshīd, the verse also refers to another part of Jamshīd’s story where the hero, after a long wait for his new throne to be made, finally makes his ascension on a day remembered as ‘Nawrūz’. Analogizing Öljeitü’s ascension to that of a great mythical king could only have spoken to Rashīd al-Dīn’s highest regard to a ruler who granted a great power to him.

3.5.2 Firdawsī’s Verses and Pseudo-Firdawsī Verses

In the last chapter on *RŞ*, I discussed a number of pseudo-Firdawsī verses, their similarities to those of the *Shāhnāma*, and the way Rāvandī interpolated them into his own work, either as simple verses or as an addition to the *Shāhnāma* verses. *TMG* contains 30 verses by Firdawsī and 58 verses of pseudo-Firdawsī. *TMG*’s pseudo-Firdawsī verses are mostly comparable to those in *RŞ* meaning that they were composed in the *mutaqārib* meter and

⁵⁸² Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, vol.1, 45.

⁵⁸³ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 28. Vaṣṣāf also makes use of Jamshīd as a sign of fortune for Ghazan’s ascension. See: Vaṣṣāf, *Tārīkh-i Vaṣṣāf*, 324. In the chapter related to *RŞ*, we have already considered the meaning of the sun from an astrological aspect (pp. 70-72). In literature, it also conveys a sense of power when used for a ruler or a highly ranked personage. See: Stefano Carboni, *Following the Stars: Images of Zodiac in Islamic Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 9.

⁵⁸⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 5.

they contain the same set of vocabulary as that of the *Shāhnāma*. The following verses will demonstrate this similarity. Firdawsī's verse is:

سپه یکسر اندیشه اندر گرفت⁵⁸⁵ "بماندند از آن کار گردان شگفت

‘The heroes remain in awe of that/ the whole army stood deep in thought.’

While the verse in *TMG* is:

ز کین هر گوی لب به دندان گرفت⁵⁸⁶ "ز کردان بماندند ترکان شگفت

‘The Turks were in awe of the Kurds/ each hero bit his lip in surprise.’

Or, in another instance, Firdawsī says:

سر بخت دشمن نگوئسار باد⁵⁸⁷ "ازیشان ترا مزد بسیار باد

‘May you be granted great reward from them/ May the fortune of your enemies be turned on its head.’

While the verse in *TMG* is:

سر بخت دشمن نگوئسار شد⁵⁸⁸ "بگفتا که دولت ترا یار شد

‘He said that fortune has befriended you/ that the fortune of your enemies turned on its head.’

As can be seen, in the first set of examples the rhyming words and the structure are the same. Moreover, *TMG* makes use of the phrase ‘*lab bi dandān giriftan/gazīdan*’ (to bite one’s lip) which is a popular phrase in the *Shāhnāma*, taking the resemblance between Firdawsī’s verse and the pseudo-Firdawsī verse to another level.⁵⁸⁹ It is also intriguing that the second set of examples is even more evident, since the second hemistich is copied verbatim from the *Shāhnāma*.

⁵⁸⁵ Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, vol.5, 227. The verse emerges in the story of Isfandiyār’s seven trials where he decides to travel through a dangerous but short path as opposed to the easy and longer route.

⁵⁸⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 19. The verse is inserted in the story of the conquest of Dīyārbakr by the Mongols.

⁵⁸⁷ Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, vol.3, 165.

⁵⁸⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 1011.

⁵⁸⁹ For instance, see: Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, vol.7, 123 & 132.

Another similarity of the pseudo-Firdawsī verses of *TMG* to those of Firdawsī is the repetition of not only the rhyming words (*qāfiya*) but repeated rhyming words (*radīf*) as well.⁵⁹⁰ The following verses are an instance of this practice. Pseudo-Firdawsī in the *TMG* has:

"برفتند و روی زمین خیره گشت" ز گرد سواران فلک تیره گشت"⁵⁹¹

‘They went and all the earth sat in daze/ as the firmament turned to darkness from the dust kicked up by the riders.’

While Firdawsī says:

"چو بشنید رستم سرش خیره گشت" جهان پیش چشم اندرش تیره گشت"⁵⁹²

‘When Rustam heard, his head sat in a daze/ as the whole world turned to darkness before his eyes.’

The underlined words are *qāfiya* and *radīf* in this case. The importance of this resemblance is not only the repetition of collocations used by Firdawsī, but also because *radīfs* are considered to add a musical effect to the poetry through their repetitive nature. Since the pseudo-Firdawsī verses appear mostly from the Ilkhanid section in *TMG* onwards, I argue that the verses are meant to create a heroic and epic atmosphere similar to what one can find in the *Shāhnāma*. It is even more powerful given that most of the verses selected from the *Shāhnāma* are from the most well-known stories, such as the story of Rustam and Suhrāb, and the story of Rustam and Isfandiyār.

There are two other ways through which an epic quality is achieved in the *Shāhnāma*. The first one is the ample insertion of single verses (*mufrads*). *Mufrads* do not narrate a whole story and their role is commonly to increase the effect of one’s words. In this case, Rashīd al-Dīn applied them to highlight the epic qualities of Ilkhanid history.

The second way is by displaying mobility. According to Shafiei Kadkani, mobility is one of the vital factors of a poetic image, along with shape, colour, and meaning.⁵⁹³ In *qaṣīda* and *ghazal* templates (panegyric and romantic poetry), colour and shape play the most important part. However, since epic poetry frequently involves descriptions of battles, the element of movement is an integral part of such set-pieces. The significance this mobility quality has been shown in a survey which investigates words related to movement in the *Shāhnāma*. The results of this work indicate that words conveying the meaning of movement and speed

⁵⁹⁰ *Radīf* is a poetical characteristic mostly limited to Persian. There are instances of this practice in Turkic poetry after the 13th century which might be the influence of Persian poetry. Mohammadreza Shafiei Kadkani, *Mūsīqī-yi Shi‘r* (Tehran: Nashr-i Āgāh, 1398/2019), 123-125.

⁵⁹¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 875.

⁵⁹² Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, vol.2, 186.

⁵⁹³ Shafiei Kadkani, *Ṣuvar-i Khīyāl*, 261.

contribute to the development of an epic quality for the story.⁵⁹⁴ In the following verse of *TMG*, we can see the significance of this element:

"درنگی مباش و بیوی و مپای
گرت رای جنگ است یکدم به پای"⁵⁹⁵

‘Do not hesitate, run, and do not dawdle/ if your intention is to go to war.’

As was the case for *RŞ*, the composer(s) of the pseudo-Firdawsī verses in *TMG* is unknown. Most pseudo-Firdawsī verses of *TMG* are included in the sections dealing with Mongol battles and they seem to be closely linked to this context to such a degree that it rules out the possibility that they were chosen from some hitherto unknown epic story written before the Mongol era. Although there were versified epic stories written during the Mongol era, as far as we know, we do not have any extant which were produced before *TMG*.⁵⁹⁶ In fact, the court historian Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī indicates that until he composed the *Ẓafarnāma*, no one had written the history of Iran after the Islamic conquest in the form of poetry.⁵⁹⁷ Mustawfī was Rashīd al-Dīn’s protégé and it is unlikely that he was unaware of his master’s project. It is more reasonable to assume that Rashīd al-Dīn did not consult any source for these pseudo-Firdawsī verses and that they were composed solely for this project.

So far, I have argued that these pseudo-Firdawsī verses contribute to the creation of a sense of epic, as well as a connection to Iranian heroes and kings in *TMG*. Invoking such sentiment and placing the Mongols in line with ancient Iranian kings and heroes continues in other means as well. One of these is making use of a number of rhetorical figures including various types of *tashbīh* (simile), *tamsīl* (analogy), and *isti’āra* (metaphor).⁵⁹⁸ However, what Rashīd al-Dīn does in his inclusion of poetry is somewhat in between all these three rhetorical devices. I have already discussed such methods in *RŞ* known as *shāhid-i miṣāl* (poetical proof), such as the following verses:

"هر آنکس که دارد روانش خرد
سر مایه کارها بنگرد
به کاری که خواهی تو اندر شدن
نگه کرد باید برون آمدن"⁵⁹⁹

‘Everyone with wisdom in their soul/ considers matters with reason.

⁵⁹⁴ Abbas Jahedjah & Leila Rezaei, “Dāyira-yi Vāzhigān va naqsh-i Ān dar Shitāb-i Ravāyat-i *Shāhnāma*,” *Funūn-i Adabī* 1 (1397/2018): 47-62.

⁵⁹⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 885.

⁵⁹⁶ On versified epic stories composed under the Ilkhanids, see: Charles Melville, “Between Firdausi and Rashid al-Din: Persian Verse Chronicles of the Mongol Period,” *Studia Islamica* 104/105 (2007): 45-56.

⁵⁹⁷ Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfī, *Ẓafarnāma*, ed. Nasrollah Rastegar (Tehran: Nashr-i Dānishgāhī-yi Īrān, 1997), 7.

⁵⁹⁸ I have used loose translations for these terms in the text, as they do not identify with their counterparts in English. For more on these rhetorical figures, see: Sirous Shamisa, *Bayān* (Tehran: Firdaws, 1370/1991); Sirous Shamisa, *Nigāhī Tāzah bi Badī* (Tehran: Mitrā, 1398/2019). On how rhetorical figures were perceived in the time of the Mongols, see: Rādūyānī, *Tarjumān al-Balāgha*, ed. Ahmad Atash (Istanbul, 1949).

⁵⁹⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 423.

Into every matter in which you wish to engage/ you must enter with awareness.'

The first line of the verse is originally from the *Shāhnāma* while the second is a pseudo-Firdawsī verse.⁶⁰⁰ Like Rāvandī, Rashīd al-Dīn also blends his own compositions into *Shāhnāmā* verses in order to achieve a better result in giving advice to his readers. These two verses appear in *TMG* in the story of Chinggis Khan and Sultan Muḥammad Khwarazmshah. The relationship between the two figures took a turn for the worst when Sultan Muḥammad confiscated the commodities of the merchants sent by Chinggis Khan. These merchants were subsequently murdered by the order of the sultan. The verses' message is to consider the consequences of one's action, a lesson which Sultan Muḥammad clearly had not learned.

While the aforementioned verse was a sound example of *shāhid-i miṣāl*, particularly one with a didactic nature, there are also instances in *TMG* which touch upon the concept of ideology:

"ز بیژن فزون بود هومان به زور" هنر عیب گردد چو برگشت هور"⁶⁰¹

'Hūmān was more powerful than Bīzhan/ skill becomes a fault when the sun (fortune) turns its back on you.'

The message of this verse, discussed in the previous section, is the precedence of fortune over skill. The verse is set during the battle between Chila'uqun of the Suldus and Tarqutay Qiriltuq, the king of Tayichi'ut. Rashīd al-Dīn informs us that Tarqutay was more talented in war than Chila'uqun, but because the latter had fortune on his side, he prevailed in their clash; precisely like the situation between Hūman and Bīzhan.

The previous examples were all employed to convey a certain message, as is the usual function of *shāhid-i miṣāl*. There are other forms of context alteration, associated mostly with allegory. Allegory, often translated as *tamṣīl/ irsāl al-maṣāl* in Persian, has a rather different connotation that it does in English. In English, it refers to "arbitrary interpretation, where something is read as an allegory of something else."⁶⁰² The Persian version is rather closer to what is perceived as a proverb or a famous didactic saying.⁶⁰³ The instances seen in *TMG*, however, do not completely fit into this category even though they certainly have shared qualities with both *tashbīh* and *tamṣīl*, as the following verse:

"هنوز از دهن بوی شیر آمدش" همی رای شمشیر و تیر آمدش"⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰⁰ Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, vol.5, 323.

⁶⁰¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 316.

⁶⁰² G. Teskey, "Allegory," in *The Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Roland Green et al (US: Princeton University Press, 2012), 37.

⁶⁰³ On parables and allegorical stories in Persian, see: J.T.P de Bruijn, "Fiction I: Traditional Forms," *Enclopaedia Iranica*, last updated December 15, 1999.

⁶⁰⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 1067.

‘Even though with the smell of milk still on his breath, / his thoughts raced to the sword and arrow.’

This verse, composed by Firdawsī, belongs to the most famous story of the *Shāhnāma*, that of Rustam and Suhrāb.⁶⁰⁵ Based on the story, Suhrāb, Rustam’s son, displays the signs of maturity from an early age. He was described as an invincible fighter and a formidable warrior. When Suhrāb was 14, he decided to fight against whoever happened to be the most powerful Iranian soldier, in fact his own father, Rustam, whom he did not know. In the first battle, despite his age, he nearly managed to defeat Rustam, while the father and the son had still not been aware of their relationship. Rustam finds out when it is too late, and his son is bleeding to death. The plot as well as the nuances of this story make it a great tragedy even for a modern audience. In *TMG*, the verse is included in the story of Ghazan’s childhood. Rashīd al-Dīn introduces Ghazan as a natural warrior even from an early age, a quality which befit him as a king and as a *ghāzī* (a warrior for Islam). The inclusion of this well-known verse leads the readers to make a mental analogy between these two figures, Suhrāb and Ghazan.

Let us take a look at another example of this form of context alteration before proceeding to the next topic. The following verse is also from Firdawsī:

"که تو شهریاری و ما بنده‌ایم" به فرمان و رایت سرافکنده‌ایم"⁶⁰⁶

‘Because you are the sovereign and we are the servants, / we bow our head to your command and whim.’

The verse appears in the *Shāhnāma* describing the battle between the Sasanian king, Khusraw I (r. 531-579) and the Hephthalites who ruled over Central Asia during the 5th to 8th centuries.⁶⁰⁷ The verse is said by Khusraw I’s commanders to him before the battle when they reaffirmed their allegiance and consent to whatever he commands. Interestingly, in *TMG*, the verse is employed in the same manner, when Abaqa requests his commanders’ support to go to war against Baraq, the khan of Chaghadaid *ulus*. Therefore, while the verses are an analogy between these two situations, it also connects Abaqa to the just ancient Iranian king, Khusraw I.

We have earlier investigated the way of the pseudo-Firdawsī verses contribute to providing a heroic atmosphere for Rashīd al-Dīn’s Mongol patrons, as well as linking them to the Iranian heroes and kings. It is intriguing that sometimes this connection seems to be rather evident, as the names of Mongol rulers appear in the verses. In other words, by mentioning their names in these verses, there will be no room to debate the verses’ originality for the

⁶⁰⁵ Firdawsī, *Shāhnāma*, vol.2, 128.

⁶⁰⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, *TMG*, 961.

⁶⁰⁷ On the Sasanian-Hephthalites relations, see: Khodadad Rezakhani, *Reorienting the Sasanians: East Iran in the Late Antiquity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017).

particular situations in which they were situated. The following verse is an instance of this practice:

نه از تخم ارغون زمین پاک شد نه زهر گزاینده تریاک شد
غزان آمد و تاج بر سر نهاد بنوی ز کینه دری برگشاد⁶⁰⁸

‘Neither was the earth cleansed from Arghun’s seed/ nor was the toxic poison neutralised.

Ghazan arrived and put the crown on his head/ with his new arrival he unlocked a door of enmity (he started to decrease the animosity).’

The verses are included in the section where Amīr Nawrūz, Ghazan’s right-hand man in the succession struggle, is punishing those commanders who opposed Ghazan and supported other pretenders to the throne. Nawrūz rebuked the commanders because they had thought no one from the line of Arghun was left alive to punish them. With the suppression of the opposition, Ghazan was finally enthroned. The first verse has an interesting sense of definition, promising the readers that ‘just like a poison will never be neutralized, the earth will always have a ruler from Arghun’s line.’ This verse fits well into the argument Brack makes according to which *TMG* is a composition to legitimise the Abaqaid line.⁶⁰⁹ In the next section, I will demonstrate how the poetry, added to *JT* during the reign of the Timurids, can be seen as the continuation of Rashīd al-Dīn’s plan to enhance the ideology and legitimization of his Ilkhanid sponsors.

3.6 Poetry in *Jāmi’ al-Tavārīkh*

The Timurids have often been perceived as the successors of the Mongol Empire, in particular of the Chaghadaids and the Ögödeids (in whose former territories Timur governed). This consideration arises mostly due to Timur’s great respect and loyalty to Mongol customs. Moreover, Timur sought to legitimize himself by connecting himself genealogically to the Mongols.⁶¹⁰ He married a Chinggisid princess, called himself *amīr*, and designated several Chinggisid puppets as Khans. He declared that he was a successor of the Chaghadaids, while occasionally linking himself to the Ilkhanids as well. Later in his reign, he connected his ancestry to Chaghadaid as well.⁶¹¹ As opposed to Timur, his son and successor Shāhrukh, who was not in fact his choice for the position of heir apparent, showed less interest in his Mongolian past compared to his father and more in the Islamic aspect of their rule. In fact, he

⁶⁰⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Mubārak-i Ghāzānī*, ed. Karl Jahn (Abadan: Nashr-i Pursish, 1388/2009), 95.

⁶⁰⁹ Brack, “Mediating Sacred Kingship,” 66.

⁶¹⁰ For genealogies concocted for the Timurid family, see: Beatrice Forbes Manz, “Family and Ruler in Timurid Historiography,” in *Studies in Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, ed. Devin DeWeese (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 2001), 65-68.

⁶¹¹ Beatrice Forbes Manz, “Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty,” *Iranian Studies* (1988), vol.21, No.1/2: 113.

did away with Mongolian courts, the *jarghus*, in favour of Islamic law, *sharī'a*.⁶¹² He moved the capital from Samarqand to the Khurasani city of Herat and preferred to focus on the Ilkhanid side of his father's claims to Mongol succession.⁶¹³ While many historians of the Timurid Empire worked to prove the connection between the Mongol Empire and the Timurid Empire to a great extent, it was Shāhrūkh's court historian, Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, who most significantly contributed to the spread of this discourse.

It was also under Shāhrūkh's rule that Rashīd al-Dīn's section on history of ancient Iran was replaced with the work of Ḥāfiẓ Abrū produced under the patronage of Shāhrūkh in Herat, though he had served in the court of Timur as well.⁶¹⁴ Like many historians of the Timurid court, Ḥāfiẓ Abrū was heavily invested in legitimising the Timurids, as can be understood from his many productions and the chronology of their compositions; all written from 1412 to 1427.⁶¹⁵ The first of these works is *Ẓayl-i Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, beginning from where Rashīd al-Dīn had left off including the events of Öljeitü' and Abū Sa'īd's reigns. The book was compiled by the order of Shāhrūkh who had a great regard for *JT*.⁶¹⁶ It was perhaps for this reason that Shāhrūkh allowed his court historian to insert his own composition on the history of ancient Iran into *JT*, since parts of the original text had been damaged and destroyed. Previously, Ḥāfiẓ Abrū had produced a general history known as *Majma' al-Tavārīkh al-Sultānīyya* by the order of Shāhrūkh and he sought to directly transfer his own materials to *JT* when he was requested to repair and restore the manuscript of *JT*.⁶¹⁷ Raushan's edition of *Tārīkh-i Īrān va Islām (The History of Iran and Islam)*, is based on this manuscript, and therefore represents the work of Ḥāfiẓ Abrū rather than Rashīd al-Dīn.

While Rashīd al-Dīn included little poetry in his section on ancient Iran, thanks to Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's intervention, this part of *JT* - or rather Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's *Majma' al-Tavārīkh* which came in its place - is replete with poetry: 1288 verses in total, most of which belong to a handful of poets/sources, as is seen in the following table:

Abū Sa'īd Abū Al-Khayr	1	Mawlavī	2
Anvarī	3	Niẓāmī	53

⁶¹² On the *arghu*, see: Florence Hodous, "Jarqu and Jarquchin," in *The Mongol World*, ed. Timothy May and Michael Hope (London & New York: Routledge, 2022), 331-340.

⁶¹³ Ghiasian, *Lives of the Prophets*, 12-13.

⁶¹⁴ For the details of his works, see: Maria Subtelny and Charles Melville, "Ḥāfeẓ-e Abrū," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, last updated December 5, 2002, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hafez-e-abru>

⁶¹⁵ See: John Woods, "The Rise of Timurid Historiography," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* (April 1987): 96-97; also: Evrim Binbaş, "The Timurids and the Mongol Empire," in *The Mongol World*, ed. Timothy May and Michael Hope (London & New York: Routledge, 2022), 946-947.

⁶¹⁶ Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Ẓayl-i Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh-i Rashīdī*, ed. Khanbaba Bayani (Tehran: 'Ilmī, 1317/1939), 1-2.

⁶¹⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn and Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh va Majma' al-Tavārīkh*, 6. Shāhrūkh's interest was not only limited to *JT*. Although being a history of the Mongols, *TMG* was certainly on the list of important books for the Timurids, but Shāhrūkh patronized the production and reproduction of other literary and historical works as well. See: Ghiasian, *Lives of the Prophets*, 23-44.

Aṭṭār	17	Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāt	2
Bahrām V	1	Sa'dī	18
Bundār Rāzī	2	Sanā'ī	6
Firdawsī	711	Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī	218
Khāqānī	2	Yūsuf va Zulaykhā	54
Khayyām	3	Ẓahīr Fāryābī	1
Khājū-yi Kirmānī	1	Pseudo-Firdawsī	140
Kalīla va Dimna	1	Unknown	52

Figure 9: Table of poets/sources in *Jāmī' al-Tavārīkh's History of Iran*

In the introduction of *Majma' al-Tavārīkh*, Ḥāfiẓ Abrū names some of his sources including *JT*, *Tārīkh-i Ṭabarī*, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, and the *Shāhnāma*. What he does not mention is a book called *al-Mu'jam fī Āṣār al-Mulūk al-'Ajam* which is the at least one of the immediate sources for the section on the history of ancient Iran. *Al-Mu'jam* was composed by Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī, when he served in the court of the Atabegs of Lur (1155-c. 1424).⁶¹⁸ According to Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī, he was ordered by his patron, Atabeg Nuṣrat al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf Shāh, to write this book.⁶¹⁹ Qazvīnī informs us that he had long desired to write such a history:

"...کتابی تالیف کرده شود، مشتمل بر ذکر اخبار ملوک ماضیه و محتوی بر آثار امم سالفه و کیفیت زمان متقدم و چگونگی اوقات متقدم."⁶²⁰

'A book should be composed covering the history of the past kings, the works and monuments of previous nations, and the events of the earlier times.'

Therefore, he wrote his work, narrating the history of ancient Iran from the mythical king, Kīyumarš, until the reign of the Sasanian king, Khusraw I (r. 531-579). According to the editor of *al-Mu'jam*, Qazvīnī wrote the book in 684/1285 and there is no mention of any date throughout the text.⁶²¹ However, the dedicatee, Aḥmad ibn Yūsūf Shāh succeeded his brother,

⁶¹⁸ Atabegs of Lur (known as Lur-i Buzurg and Hizār-asp) were a local dynasty rulling over a territory in the west of Iran. In their case, the title '*atabeg*' only refers to their position as rulers and it is not related to the *atabegs* of the Seljuqs, who were responsible for the upbringing of the Seljuq family memebers.

⁶¹⁹ Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī, *Al-Mu'jam fī Āṣār al-Mulūk al-'Ajam*, ed. Ahmad Fotouhi-nasab (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āṣār va Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 1383/2005), 30.

⁶²⁰ Qazvīnī, 28.

⁶²¹ Qazvīnī, shis.

Afrāsīyāb, in 696/ 1297 and Qazvīnī wrote *al-Muʿjam* when Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf Shāh was in power.⁶²² Therefore, *al-Muʿjam* must have been written after 1297.

Qazvīnī's style of writing certainly fits into the 'rhetorical prose' (*naṣr-i fannī*) category. It is filled with Arabic and Persian verses and proverbs, *sajʿ*, and other rhetorical figures to such an extent that is comparable to Vaṣṣāf's history, especially in the introduction. While the main body of the book, consisting of a large amount of verses in the *mutaqārib* meter, the introduction contains only a handful of verses in this meter. On the contrary, Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī demonstrates his skills in poetry by applying a variety of meters and templates both in Persian and in Arabic.

JT/ Majmaʿ al-Tavārīkh's choice of sentences closely follows Sharaf al-Dīn's text as is detectable in the following passages selected from various parts of the work:

Example 1:

<i>Al-Muʿjam</i>	<i>JT/Majmaʿ</i>
"کارآزمایان گردش روزگار و مشکل گشایان قصص و اخبار، چنین اخبار می کنند که شاه کیومرث از اسباط مهیائیل بود و امام حجه الاسلام محمد غزالی نورالله مرقده در کتاب نصیحه الملوک ذکر می کند که برادر شیث بود و جمعی گویند از اولاد نوح است علیه السلام و در زعم طایفه از مغان و آتش پرستان کیومرث آدم است."⁶²³ 'The people who have a knowledge of the transience of the world, anecdotes, and histories indicate that King Kīyumarṣ was a descendent of Mahyā'il and Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī- may God shine over his grave- in his <i>Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk</i> states that (Kīyumarṣ) was Shīs' (Seth) brother and a group of people say that he (Kīyumarṣ) was descending from Nūḥ (Noah) and according to <i>mughān</i> (Zoroastrian priests) and Zoroastrians, Kīyumarṣ was Ādam (Adam).'	"راویان آثار از آن پادشاهان کامگار اخبار چنین کرده اند که گیومرث از اسباط مهلائیل بود؛ و در بحرالانساب فرزند صلبی آدم نبشته است. و امام حجه الاسلام محمد بن محمد الغزالی رحمه الله در کتاب نصیحه الملوک آورده است که گیومرث برادر شیث بود و بعضی گویند از اولاد نوح است و در زعم طایفه ای از مغان گیومرث خود آدم است."⁶²⁴ 'Narrators of texts have indicated about those fortunate kings that Kīyumarṣ was a descendent of Mahā'il; and in <i>Baḥr al-Ansāb</i>, it has been written that he (Kīyumarṣ) was a child of Ādam (Adam) and Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī- may God bless him- has stated in <i>Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk</i> that Kīyumarṣ was Shīs' (Seth) brother and some say he was descending from Nūḥ (Noah) and according to a group of <i>mughān</i> (Zoroastrian priests), he was Ādam (Adam) himself.'

⁶²² Mustawfī, *Tārīkh-i Guzīda*, 548-549.

⁶²³ Sharaf al-Dīn, *Al-Muʿjam*, 32-33.

⁶²⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārīkh, Tārīkh-i Īrān va Islām*, ed. Mohammad Raushan (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1392/2013), 69-70.

Example 2:

<i>Al-Mu'jam</i>	<i>JT/Majma'</i>
"صدای کوس و صیت ناموس و صرامت کیکاووس چون صبای بهار و در غایت اشتها به همت عالی و نعمت متعالی از شاهان جهان بی نیاز و به کنف رحیب و مرتع خصیب از سلاطین آفاق ممتاز." ⁶²⁵ 'The sound of drums and Kaykāvūs' reputation of honour and bravery are like a breeze in spring and in utmost fame; With noble efforts and God's blessings, he will have no need of the world's kings; and (he is) distinguished among the world's sultans because of (his) expansive lands and fertile fields.'	"صدای کوس و صیت ناموس و صرامت کیکاووس چون صبای بهار در غایت اشتها است و چون ضیای نهار در نهایت انتشار. به همت عالی نعمت متعالی از شاهان جهان بی نیاز و به کنف رحبت و مربع خصبت {sic} از سلاطین آفاق ممتاز." ⁶²⁶ 'The sound of drums and Kaykāvūs' reputation of honour and bravery are in utmost fame, and they are spreading like the lightness of noon. With noble efforts and God's blessings, he will have no need of the world's kings; and (he is) distinguished among the world's sultans because of (his) expansive lands and fertile fields.'

The similarity in the prose text on the one hand and the inclusion of 218 verses from Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī in the *JT/Majma'* for the same stories on the other, make *al-Mu'jam* as one of Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's key sources. There is no doubt that both Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī and Ḥāfiẓ Abrū used Ṭabarī and Bal'amī as their references when it comes to historical information, but the construction of sentences and the selection of phrases in *JT/Majma'* signifies *al-Mu'jam* as the direct sources.

Among the poets and the sources mentioned in the Table 2, there are five groups whose verses are in *mutaqārib* meter: Firdawsī's *Shāhnāma*, *Yūsuf va Zulaykhā* ascribed to Firdawsī, Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī, Niẓāmī's *Iskandarnāma*, and pseudo-Firdawsī verses. With the exception of the pseudo-Firdawsī verses, almost all of them discuss a limited number of topics. I have categorised the verses based on their core topics as follows:

- 1- Narrative verses: The verses whose primary goal is to narrate the story. They function similarly to a prose text responsible for taking anecdotes from point A to point B and they usually contained a restricted amount of figures of speech compared to the other categories.
- 2- Descriptive verses: They are responsible for bringing the story alive by describing nature, the milieu, or the context where the story is occurring.

⁶²⁵ Sharaf al-Dīn, *Al-Mu'jam*, 205.

⁶²⁶ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Īrān va Islām*, 471. The underlined words seem to be typos in the edition.

- 3- Didactic verses: One of the widest categories, since it includes all the verses with various concepts aimed to teach. They encompass notions such as kingship, justice, fatalism, and advertising virtues.
- 4- Heroic verses: Instances of this category were discussed in the previous section on *TMG*. They were chosen to invoke a heroic atmosphere in the stories.

While the majority of pseudo-Firdawsī verses are placed to create an epic context for the stories, as they did in *TMG*, there are also instances where they appear differently. These verses are found mostly in the introduction, presumably written by Rashīd al-Dīn, and contain a greater number of Arabic words, in contrast to *TMG*'s pseudo-Firdawsī verses, and they often focus on religious matters, such as the following verses:

گناه است از حکم سلطان عدول	"پس از امر و نهی خدا و رسول
فریضه بود طاعت پادشاه	چو فرمان دارای خورشید و ماه
به دنیا هلاک است و عقبی عقاب" ⁶²⁷	خلاف سلاطین مالک رقاب

'Second to the command of God and the prophet (Muḥammad), / it is a sin to disobey the sultan's order.

Similar to the master of the sun and the moon, / it is mandatory to submit to the king's command.

Opposing the rulers who own our necks, / will bring annihilation upon you in this life and punishment in the afterlife.'

The above verses are included after a short discussion regarding how a king is chosen by God to do justice and uphold the *sharī'a*. While the verses are meant to emphasize the point made in their earlier paragraphs, the discussion about the necessity to obey sultans/kings/rulers does not end here. In the next two pages, other measures are taken to further prove this point including a well-known Qur'anic verse and two famous Firdawsī verses. According to the Qur'anic verse, one must 'obey God, the prophet, and the ruler' providing the audience with a type of hierarchy to follow.⁶²⁸ Moreover, the passage between this Qur'anic verse and Firdawsī's verses are an attempt to indoctrinate the reader that just kingship is a continuation of prophecy bringing kings and prophets closer to each other in status.⁶²⁹ The inclusion of *Shāhnāma* verses after this statement is not only an example of *shāhid-i miṣāl* (poetic proof), but also a reminder that such notions had already existed in Iranian culture. The verses are as follows:

⁶²⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Īrān va Islām*, 7.

⁶²⁸ The Qur'an 4: 59. "اطيعوا الله و اطيعوا الرسول و اولی الامر منکم"

⁶²⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Īrān va Islām*, 9.

دو گوهر بود در یک انگشتری

"چنان دان که شاهی و پیغمبری

نه بی دین بود پادشاهی به جای"⁶³⁰

نه بی تخت شاهی بود دین به پای

'Beware that kingship and prophecy/ are two gems in one ring.

Neither can religion exist without royal throne;/ Nor can kingship without religion.'

Rashīd al-Dīn includes the same Qur'anic verse in his theological book *Mabāḥiṣ-i Sulṭānīyya* where he pays tribute to the prophet Muḥammad and Rashīd al-Dīn's own patron, Öljeitü, leaving no doubt that the ruler in the Qur'anic verse refers to Öljeitü in his opinion.⁶³¹ This Qur'anic verse is only one of the multiple arguments Rashīd al-Dīn puts forward to elevate the position of his patron. In fact, he spends about 45 pages (based on the edition) elevating Öljeitü's position to that of the prophets. His arguments include his claim that water miraculously appeared in a desert upon the birth of Öljeitü;⁶³² Öljeitü was able to achieve victory by God's assistance when he had the odds stacked against him;⁶³³ the peaceful transition of power to Öljeitü as a sign of legitimacy and fortune granted by God;⁶³⁴ and the sultan's ability to receive revelations and to influence the movements of the planets.⁶³⁵

Rashīd al-Dīn's theological works as well as court debates between Muslim and Buddhist clergies, apart from their intellectual value, were supposed to demonstrate Islam' and Buddhism's potential for legitimacy and ideology. As Brack shows in his study, *An Afterlife for the Khan*, the Mongols made use of this potential for legitimacy, reinforcing Mongol rule by appropriating new religious concepts and rituals while at the same time claiming continuity with Chinggisid ideas and Mongolian identity.⁶³⁶ In other words, they chose ideas that were akin to their own. What Rashīd al-Dīn does in his *Mabāḥiṣ-i Sulṭānīyya* is in line with this argument, seeds of which are also found in the introduction of *The History of Iran and Islam* as shown earlier.

While the *JT* project and all the theological compositions of Rashīd al-Dīn seek to legitimise the Ilkhanids- the former by its epic qualities and its connection to the ancient Iranian kings and the latter by focusing on religious arguments- there are also reasons to assume that they could have attracted Shāhrukh's attention with regard to the Timurids' legitimacy and ideology. While the production of the illustrated manuscripts of *JT* had already started in Rashīd al-Dīn's own time, such as the Arabic *JT* manuscript kept in Edinburgh, the

⁶³⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Īrān va Islām*, 9.

⁶³¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Mabāḥiṣ-i Sulṭānīyya*, ed. Hashem Rajabzadeh (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 1394/2016), 49-50.

⁶³² Rashīd al-Dīn, 54-55.

⁶³³ Rashīd al-Dīn, 59-60.

⁶³⁴ Rashīd al-Dīn, 66.

⁶³⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn, 66-68.

⁶³⁶ Brack, *An Afterlife for the Khan*, 10-11.

bulk of what we have today is the work of Timurid artists many of whom served in the court of Shāhrukh, indicating Shāhrukh's interest in Rashīd al-Dīn's works.⁶³⁷

Moreover, apart from Rashīd al-Dīn's works, an abundant number of *Shāhnāma* manuscripts was produced under the Timurids' patronage. Therefore, on the one hand, there is Rashīd al-Dīn's project to link the Mongols to the ancient Iranian kings by using Firdawsī and pseudo-Firdawsī verses and on the other, the increased number of *Shāhnāma* manuscripts copied during Timurid period, demonstrating the importance of Firdawsī's verses and its connection to legitimacy for the Ilkhanids and the Timurids. The practice of including *Shāhnāma* verses and pseudo-Firdawsī verses continued under the rule of the Timurids as well. As Michele Bernardini has shown, Timurid chronicles such as the *Sa'ādatnāma*, the *Ẓafarnāma* of Shāmi, and *Zubdat al-Tavārīkh*, all made use of *Shāhnāma* verses to make allegories between the Timurids and the kings and the heroes of earlier epic.⁶³⁸

Perhaps it is most fitting to end this chapter with a verse which demonstrates best this continuity between the court of the Ilkhanids and that of the Timurids. This is a pseudo-Firdawsī verse which appears in Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's *Zubdat al-Tavārīkh*:

"همه بندگانیم شهرخ پرست
من و رستم، اسکندر و هر که هست"⁶³⁹

'We are all servants worshipping Shāhrukh. / Including me, Rustam, Alexander and everybody else.'

Two other versions of this verse appear in *JT*, the first appear in the section on history of Kīyumarṣ' reign and is copied from Sharaf al-Dīn's *al-Mu'jam*. The first version is:

"همه بندگانیم خسرو پرست
اگر پیشواییم اگر زیر دست"⁶⁴⁰

'We are all servants worshipping the king. / Either we are leaders or followers.'

And the second is in the reign of Kaykhusraw following his ascension which mentions the names of *Shāhnāma* heroes as well. The second version is:

"همه بندگانیم خسرو پرست
من و گیو و گودرز و هر کس که هست"⁶⁴¹

⁶³⁷ The illustrations of the Edinburgh manuscript alone are an example of the past in the service of the Mongols, especially when it comes to the ancient Iranian kings, since they were illustrated with Mongol facial features. Charles Melville, "The Illustration of History in Persian Manuscripts," *Iran* 56, No.1 (2018): 52-53. For *JT*'s illustrations, see: David Rice, *The Illustrations to the 'World History' of Rashīd al-Dīn* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1976); Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashīd al-Dīn's Illustrated History of the World*.

⁶³⁸ Michele Bernardini, "The *Shahnama* in Timurid Historiography," in *Shahnama Studies III*, ed. Gabrielle van den Berg & Charles Melville (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 155-172.

⁶³⁹ Ḥāfiẓ Abrū, *Zubdat al-Tavārīkh*, ed. Kamal Haj Seyyed Javadi (Tehran: Asāṭir, 1395/ 2017), vol.3, 45.

⁶⁴⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, *Tārīkh-i Īrān va Islām*, 76.

⁶⁴¹ Rashīd al-Dīn, 487.

‘We are all servants worshipping the king. / Including me, Gīv, Gūdarz, and all the rest.’

3.7 Conclusion of the Chapter

This chapter demonstrated how the ancient idea of *farrah* was employed in poetry by Rashīd al-Dīn in its later version, *farr*, in the verses included in *JT*. Similar to *RŞ*, the notion of *farr* appears in other words such as *rūz*, *rūzgār*, and *hūr* in *JT*, all of which refer to the same concept of fortune which may leave one king and join another who was assumed to have been more deserving. The transfer of *farrah* is attested in Sasanian rock reliefs, thus bringing the Mongols closer to the ideal of the ancient Iranian kings. Apart from the idea of fortune, the verses in *JT* contribute to the Mongols’ legitimacy by placing them in the line of legitimate Iranian rulers. On one hand, Firdawsī’s verses and pseudo-Firdawsī’s verses often create analogies between the Mongols, especially the Ilkhanids, and *Shāhnāma* figures. On the other hand, they have the added value of making the Mongols appear heroic like the kings and heroes of the *Shāhnāma*. This feature increases in the section on the Ilkhanids, as they were the primary focus of Rashīd al-Dīn.

While the second volume of *JT*, the world history, follows the same pattern as the first volume, *TMG*, when it comes to the verses’ epic qualities, it is also in line with Rashīd al-Dīn’s other works where he makes an effort to legitimise Öljeitü from a theological aspect. As we saw, *mutaqārib* verses in the introduction of the second volume of *JT* connect well to Rashīd al-Dīn’s plan to portray Öljeitü as a prophet-king. The epic qualities of *JT*, its link to the ancient Iranian kings, along with the connection it makes between kingship and prophethood, all attracted the attention of later rulers such as the Timurids, who made use of *JT* in their own way to acquire legitimacy among their subjects.

4. Conclusion

Empires may not always originate from a strong ideology, but in order for them to last, they are in need of an ideology. It is how they present themselves to their opponents, their allies, their subjects, and overall, to the world. It is a stage for their performance as well as fuel to their machines. Such were the Seljuqs and the Mongols who made use of whatever they had, from their past to their present, to create their world-encompassing ideologies. Bureaucrats, historians, and poets were mediators who could form, articulate, and spread their words.⁶⁴²

Since the Islamic conquest and the emergence of books written in the Persian language using the Arabic script, known as ‘New Persian’, authors have made use of what they consider to be ‘wise words,’ be it in Arabic or Persian, to intensify the effect of their message.⁶⁴³ They included Qur’anic verses, didactic anecdotes, and poetry. It is the latter that this study aimed to investigate in historical works of *RŞ* and *JT*. Situated during the Seljuq and Mongol eras, *RŞ* and *JT* are two perfect instances of applying poetry, not only as flowery ornamentation of the texts, but also as a tool to establish and spread ideology.

RŞ’ contribution to the Seljuqs’ imperial ideology and legitimacy takes place in various forms. *RŞ* was written in a time when the Seljuq family no longer had power in Iran, but a branch of them still ruled over Anatolia. Therefore, it was composed both to immortalise the Seljuqs and their history, and to legitimise the Anatolian branch. Rāvandī’s own ambition to gain a position at Sultan Kaykhusraw I’s court also played an important role in the book’s production, structure, and writing style.

Rāvandī’s ample usage of rhetorical figures, such as *saj’*, *ḥall*, *‘aqd*, and *tarjuma*, especially in the introduction dedicated to his patron, is a demonstration of his literary skills, his wisdom, and his knowledge as well as an attempt to flatter Sultan Kaykhusraw I. In his carefully written introduction, Rāvandī makes sure that his patron will learn of the author’s education, his family connections to the Seljuq court, and his loyalty to his previous benefactors. It is also in the introduction that he reveals his scheme to include a poem at the end of every chapter to praise Sultan Kaykhusraw I. In other words, while the history of the Seljuqs is narrated, it all comes back again to Sultan Kaykhusraw I, the only true heir in the Seljuq family, according to Rāvandī’s point of view. On a few occasions at the end of the chapters, Rāvandī explicitly indicates the sultan’s equality to the Great Seljuq Sultans, when

⁶⁴² In the case of the Ilkhanids, Reuven Amitai suggests that it was primarily the Iranian bureaucrats who added the Iranian layer of ideology to the Mongol’s view of the world. See: Reuven Amitai, “Political Legitimation in the Ilkhanate: More Thoughts on the Mongol Imperial Ideology, the Introduction of Muslim Justifications, and the Revival of Iranian Ideals,” in *New Approaches to Ilkhanid History*, ed. Timothy May et al (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 235.

⁶⁴³ Jennifer London argues that when authors include a wise man’s words, *ḥikma*, in their works, they implicitly reproduce the original context in which the wise words were indicated. See: Jennifer London, “Speaking Through the Voice of Another: Forms of Political Thought and Action in Medieval Islamic Context” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2009), 139.

he includes panegyric poems composed for other rulers of the Seljuq dynasty, rather than making use of his own.

By creating an analogy between the heavenly bodies and the court of Sultan Kaykhusraw I, Rāvandī seeks to assure his readers of the divine mandate bestowed upon his patron and by extent, to all Seljuq rulers. In this image, the author makes use of the pre-existing motifs of the moon, Mercury, Venus, the sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. These heavenly bodies had long been in use in Persian literature along with their associations with certain attributes, most notably in Niẓāmī's *Haft Paykar*. Rāvandī applied these motifs in an innovative way in order to establish the Seljuqs' pre-destined supremacy. As was believed in the 13th century, people's destinies and fortune were engraved in the sky. It is based on this belief that Rāvandī's poetical image of court is depicted in *RŞ*.

Haft Paykar was not the only one of Niẓāmī's works that attracted Rāvandī's attention. As is evident from the great amount of Niẓāmī's verses included in *RŞ*, Rāvandī invests deeply in the great poet's compositions. Most notably here is *Khusraw va Shīrīn*, a romantic *maṣnavī*, centring around the love story of the Sasanian king, Khusraw II, and his Armenian beloved, Shīrīn. Julie Meisami suggests that in *Khusraw va Shīrīn*, Niẓāmī intends to picture the relationship between love and justice, in the way that the qualities and abilities of a good lover demonstrates his fitness for kingship.⁶⁴⁴ As the book shows, Khusraw II is by no means a devoted lover throughout the ups and downs of the story.

Contrary to this, Rāvandī's viewpoint on this story is quite different. In his view, Khusraw II is a model of a just and wise king. He refers positively to his personality in both poetry and prose throughout the book. It is not merely his kingly attributions that interests Rāvandī, but also the similarity between the name of his patron, Kaykhusraw I, and the Sasanian king, Khusraw I. In connecting the story of *Khusraw va Shīrīn* to the history of the Seljuqs, the author modifies several verses to accommodate the new historical context while simultaneously invoking the original context of the verse.⁶⁴⁵

Rāvandī's relationship with the *Shāhnāma* varies significantly compared to that of his predecessors. As Nasrin Askari shows, the *Shāhnāma* was perceived as a work of mirror for princes during the medieval era.⁶⁴⁶ Many sources included a couple verses of the *Shāhnāma* as a poetic proof for subject they were tackling. This poetic proof would have increased their credibility while strengthening their arguments; especially as it was composed by a wise figure such as Firdawsī. Rāvandī not only makes use of *Shāhnāma* verses in the latter way, but also, he writes his own verses in the style of the *Shāhnāma* and even blends them into Firdawsī's verses at times.

⁶⁴⁴ Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, 182-183.

⁶⁴⁵ Example of this were discussed in chapter two.

⁶⁴⁶ Askari, *The Medieval Reception of the Shāhnāma*, 6.

Although Rāvandī is not the first to compose verses in the style of the *Shāhnāma* during the Seljuq era, he was certainly the first poet who wrote an abundant number of verses in such a way.⁶⁴⁷ Moreover, unlike many of his predecessors, Rāvandī did not choose Firdawsī's verses from the *Ikhtiyārat*, rather he selected them carefully with regard to their contexts. As was seen in chapter two, in many cases, the original contexts matched the stories about the history of the Seljuqs as well. In this way, Rāvandī implicitly linked the Seljuqs to the ancient Iranian kings of the *Shāhnāma*. The choice of the *mutaqārib* meter, which is mostly associated to epic poetry, could only benefit the author in his heroic depiction of the Seljuqs.

As opposed to *RŞ* which was first written and then dedicated to Sultan Kaykhusraw I hoping for his patronage, *JT* was written according to the order of Ghazan Khan and thus enjoyed patronage from its inception. Despite their differences, *JT*'s verses also made a remarkable contribution to the Ilkhanids' imperial ideology. *JT* is a world history which on its own reflects the global worldview of the Mongols, but even before Öljeitü's order for the second volume, *TMG*'s structure speaks to its globality. As the Mongols' conquests were narrated in *TMG*, so were the events of their neighbouring regions as well as, to some degree, the history of the conquered areas. The composition of the second volume only verified this worldview further.

The idea of *farrah/farr* also appears in both volumes of *JT*, though more explicitly for Ghazan and Öljeitü in *TMG*. Appealing to the mythical Pīshdādīd king, Jamshīd, to praise the Ilkhanid sultans could be seen as the first step in *TMG*'s verses to connect the Ilkhanids to the Iranian ancient past; especially considering that those verses may have been composed by Rashīd al-Dīn himself. As was investigated in chapter three, the idea of fortune recurs several times with the connection to the *Shāhnāma* and ancient Iranian kings and heroes. In these occasions, the events of the original context (i.e. the *Shāhnāma*) fit closely to those happening in *TMG*. This is the same method of context alteration seen earlier in *RŞ* as well.

The connection with the *Shāhnāma* only intensifies as we get further in the history of the Mongols in *TMG*. Firdawsī's verses aside, it is pseudo-Firdawsī's verses that make a substantial appearance in the stories of the Ilkhanids. Apart from their similarity to the *Shāhnāma* which already draws a connection between the Ilkhanids and *Shāhnāma* figures, it is their epic nature that contributes to the creation of a heroic depiction of the Mongols. Many of the pseudo-Firdawsī verses possess literary qualities, including their wording and their rhetorical figures, which give them an epic ambiance, thus making the Ilkhanids correspondingly epic.

Rashīd al-Dīn made sure that his works were reproduced periodically, demonstrating impressive foresight on his part and viewing *JT* as an on-going project. As Stefan Kamola suggests, Rashīd al-Dīn made some alterations to several stories during his lifetime. However, the major change seems to have occurred in the court of the Timurids when Ḥāfiẓ Abrū

⁶⁴⁷ For instance, see: Kirmānī, *'Iqd al-'Ulā lil-Mawqif al-A'lā*, 104.

inserted his own composition, *Majma'*, into the second volume of *JT* along with an enormous amount of poetry. There is no doubt that *JT* was intriguing for the Timurids, as it was an important work of Mongol historiography with regard to its ideological aspect and its capacity for legitimation as can be deduced from the Timurids' interest in reproducing *JT* in their workshops. However, it is the nature of the newly inserted verses by Ḥāfiẓ Abrū that is most interesting. He follows in Rashīd al-Dīn's footsteps to make use of epic poetry's potential for legitimacy by choosing to add verses from Firdawsī and Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī's work on the history of ancient Iran. However, it was not only Rashīd al-Dīn's treatment of the *Shāhnāma* that drew Ḥāfiẓ Abrū's attention to Firdawsī. As we saw earlier in case of *RŞ*, the *Shāhnāma* proved beneficial for various dynasties—for the Seljuqs as much as the Ilkhanids and Timurids—by offering a model of just kingship and portraying them as the continuation of Iranian rulers.

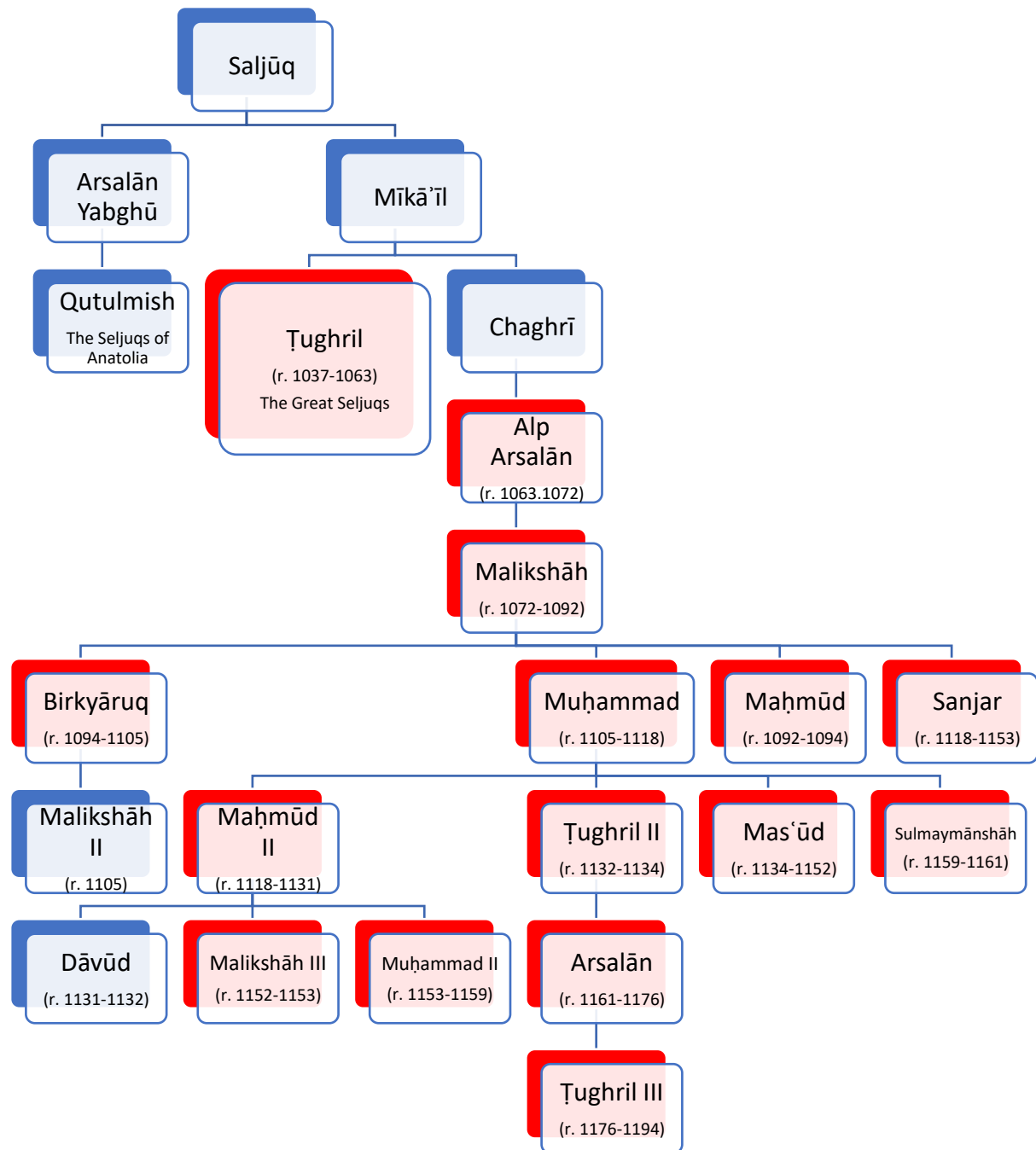
The writing styles that Rashīd al-Dīn and Rāvandī chose for their works, although being the product of their eras as well as influenced by their sources, are related to their aspirations. Rashīd al-Dīn already had a secure job at the court of the Ilkhans and the Ilkhans were entirely aware of his skills and abilities; while Sultan Khaykhusraw I did not know Rāvandī and Rāvandī had to make sure that by this one book, he could introduce himself well enough to gain a position at the sultan's court.⁶⁴⁸

The usage of Firdawsī verses, their rearrangement, and modification as well as the composition of pseudo-Firdawsī verses is the major connection between *RŞ* and *JT*. *Shāhnāma* verses had been long in use, especially for their didactic value, before *RŞ* and *JT*. However, it is in *RŞ* for the first time that we see how they are modified and rearranged with Rāvandī's own pseudo-Firdawsī verses. Subsequently, Sharaf al-Dīn's work, *al-Mu'jam fī Āṣār al-Mulūk al-'Ajam*, rewrote the story of ancient Iran until the reign of Khusraw I in the style of the *Shāhnāma* during the reign of Abaqa. Due to *al-Mu'jam*'s subject, it was a logical choice for Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī to compose the verses in the *mutaqārib* meter, but he was not the only with an interest in following Firdawsī's path. Before him, Juvainī had made use of Firdawsī's verses with special emphasis on the stories of Rustam and Suhrāb and Rustam and Isfandiyār and drew analogies between the Mongols and heroes of the *Shāhnāma*. Later, Vaṣṣāf included *Shāhnāma* verses in his history as well, composing his own pseudo-Firdawsī verses for the same purpose.⁶⁴⁹ As we saw in the last section of this study, this practice continued to thrive in Timurid historiography, no doubt due to its profound impact in spreading ideology and fixating legitimacy. The extent of this is, however, beyond the scope of this study and requires a separate investigation in Timurid historiography and poetry.

⁶⁴⁸ It is the same case for Vaṣṣāf. He was not ordered by Ghazan Khan to write a history, but he dedicated his work to the Ilkhans. His literary skills could have provided a higher chance of getting acceptance, compared to his peers.

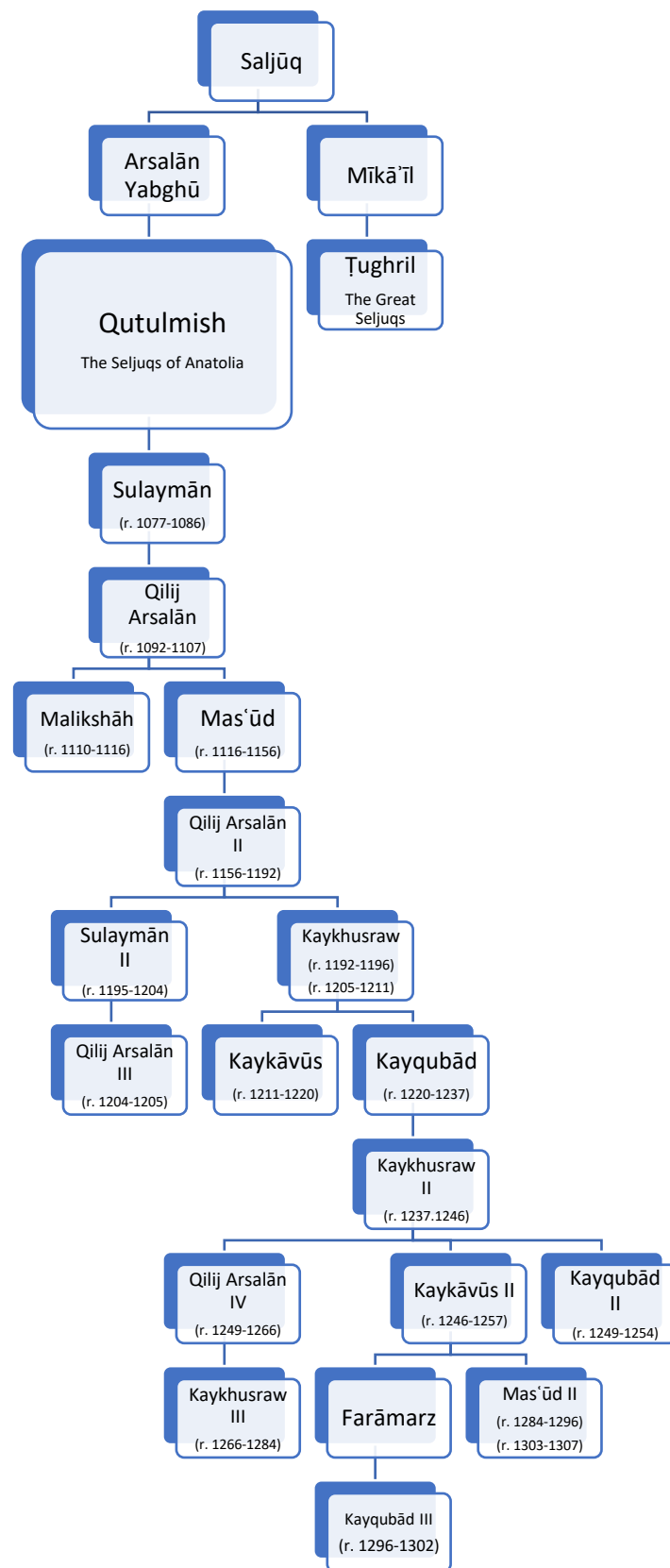
⁶⁴⁹ For more on Juvainī's and Vaṣṣāf's treatment of the *Shāhnāma*, see: Sara Mirahmadi, "Legitimising the Khan," 229-232.

Appendix 1: The Great Seljuq Dynasty⁶⁵⁰

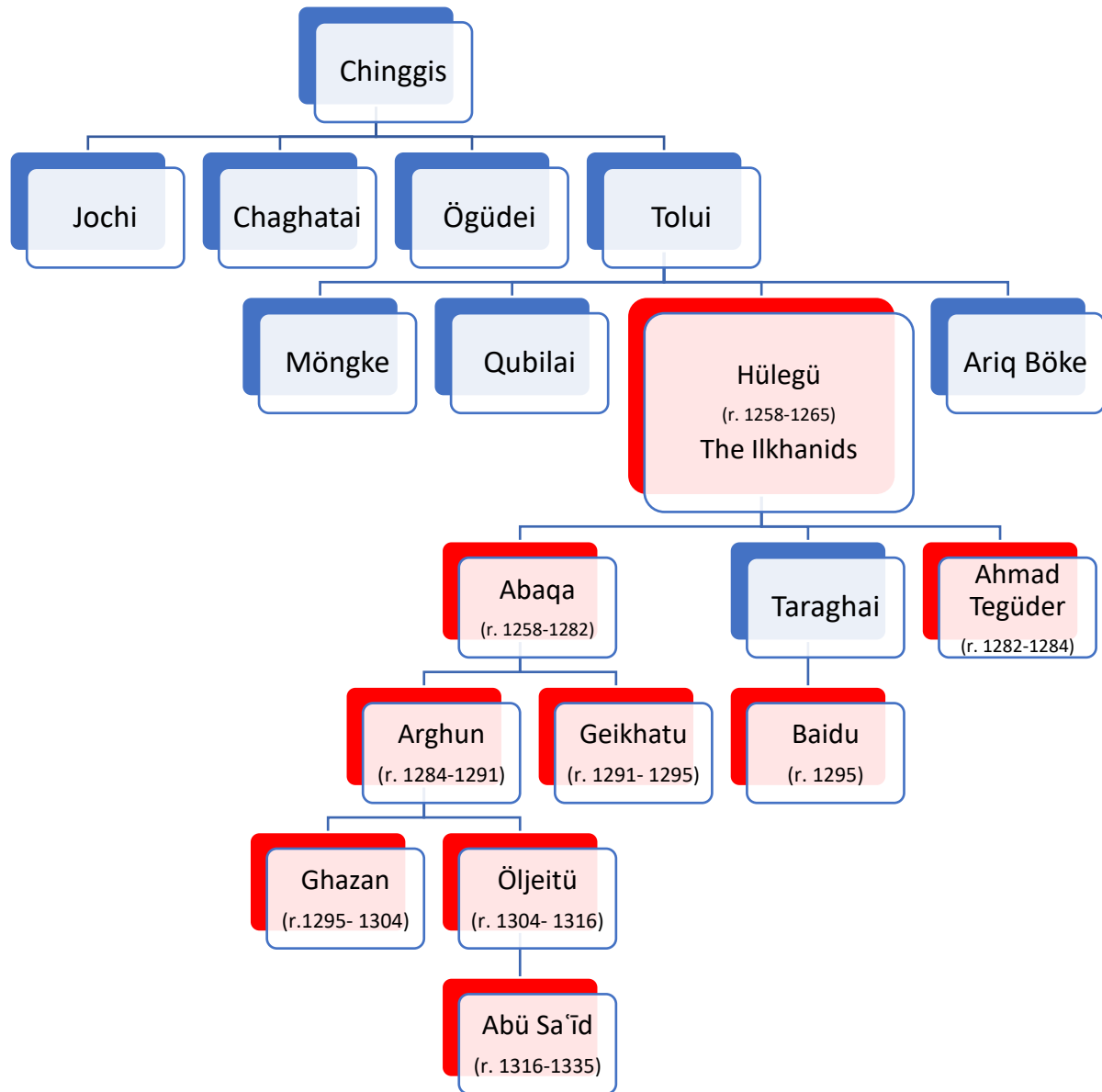


⁶⁵⁰ The colour red signifies the members of the Seljuq family who reigned according to *RŞ*. Malikshāh II and Dāvūd were not listed as rulers in *RŞ*.

Appendix 2: The Seljuqs of Rum Sultanate



Appendix 3: The Ilkhanid Dynasty⁶⁵¹



⁶⁵¹ The colour red signifies the Ilkhanid reigning rulers, thus Taraghai did not rule.

Appendix 4: The Poets in *Rāḥat al-Ṣudūr* and *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*

- **Abū al-Ma'ālī Nuḥḥās:** Known as Abū al-Ma'ālī Rāzī; Lived in the 12th century; patronized by Sultan Sanjar.

Abū Sa'īd Abū al-Khayr: Lived in the 10th and 11th centuries; his life and his words were compiled in *Asrār al-Tawḥīd fī Maqāmāt-i Shaykh Abī Sa'īd* by his descendant, Muḥammad ibn Munavvar.

Abū Ṭāhir Khātūnī: Lived in the 11th and 12th centuries; known as 'Muvaffaq al-Dawla'; patronized by Sultan Muḥammad ibn Malikshāh and Sultan Sanjar; held the position of *dabīr* in Sultan Malikshāh's court; wrote several works including *Manāqib al-Shu'arā*, a biography of poets, *Tārīkh-i Āl-i Saljūq*, a history of the Seljuqs, the *Shikārnāma*, a description of Sultan Malikshāh's hunting adventures, and *Tanzīz al-Vazīr*, a text in satire of Naṣīr al-Mulk, the vizier of Sultan Muḥammad ibn Malikshāh; only the latter is extant.

Amīr Mu'izzī: Abū Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik Mu'izzī Nayshābūrī; lived in the 12th century; titled '*amīr al-shu'arā*' (the prince of poets); patronized by Sultan Malikshāh and Sultan Sanjar.

Anvarī: Awhad al-Dīn Anvarī Abivardī; lived in the 12th century; patronized by Sultan Sanjar; eulogized several officials and courtiers of the Seljuqs.

Aṣīr Akhsīkatī: Lived in the 12th and early 13th centuries; patronized by Sultan Sanjar, Sultan Arsalān, and Atabegs of Azerbaijan.

Aṭṭār: Farīd al-Dīn Aṭṭār Nayshābūrī; lived in the 12th and 13th centuries; composed a large number of versified didactic works such as the *Mukhtārnāma*, the *Asrārnāma*, the *Ilāhīnāma*, the *Muṣībatnāma*, *Manṭiq al-Ṭayr*, as well as some prose texts including *Tazkīrat al-Awliyā*.

Bundār Rāzī: Lived in the 10th and 11th centuries; served the court of the Buyids.

Fakhr al-Dīn As'ad Gurgānī: Lived in the 11th century; eulogized Sultan Ṭughril I; patronized by Abū al-Faṭḥ Muẓaffar, the ruler of Isfahan during the reign of Ṭughril; composed a love story titled *Vays va Rāmīn*.

Farīd al-Dīn Dabīr: Known also as '*kātib*' (scribe); lived in the 12th century.

Firdawsī: His first name is disputed; lived in the 11th and 12th centuries; completed the composition of the *Shāhnāma* in 1010; eulogized the Ghaznavid ruler, Sultan Maḥmūd.

'Imādī: Mentioned as 'Amīr 'Imādī' in RŞ; lived in the 12th century; eulogized the ruler of Māzandarān, 'Imād al-Dīn Farāmarz Bāvandī, as well as Sultan Ṭughril II, Sultan Ṭughril III, and Atābeg Jahān Pahlavān.

Jamāl al-Dīn Isfahānī: Known as ‘*naqqāsh*’ (painter); lived in the 12th century; patronized by ʿUghrīl III to illustrate a poetical anthology, patronized by Sultan Sanjar as well.

Jamāl al-Dīn Khujandī: Lived in the 12th century; a Shāfiʿī leader in Isfahan.

Khājū-yi Kirmānī: Kamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn ‘Alī; lived in the 13th and 14th centuries; composed some of his works in imitation of Niẓāmī, namely *Humāy va Humāyūn*, *Gul va Nawrūz*, *Rawzat al-Anvār*, the *Kamāl-nāma*, and the *Gawharnāma*.

Khāqānī: Titled Afzal al-Dīn; lived in the 12th century; patronized by the Shirvanshahs (861-1538), the rulers of Shirvan (in modern day Azerbaijan); his works include *Tūḥfat al-ʿIrāqayn*, a versified travelogue to Mecca, and *Munshaʿāt*, the collection of his letters.

Mawlavī: Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad; lived in the 13th century; known as Balkhī and Rūmī; patronized by Sultan Kayqubād of the Rum Sultanate; founded the Sufi sect of the Mawlavīya; composed a number of works, such as 1) *Masnavī-yi Maʿnavī*, a long masnavī poem with didactic anecdotes, 2) *Dīvān-i Shams*, a collection of his ghazals, and 3) *Fīhi Mā Fīh*, a collection of 72 mystic discourses.

Mujīr Baylaqānī: Trained by Khāqānī; lived in the 12th century; patronized by Sultan Arsalān and Atabegs of Azerbaijan.

Niẓāmī: Jamāl al-Dīn Abū Muḥamad Ilyās; lived in the 12th century; composed five *masnavīs* altogether known as the *Khamṣa*: 1) *Makhzan al-Asrār*, offered to Fakhr al-Dīn Bahrāmshāh ibn Davūd, ruler of Arzangān (in modern day Turkey) in the service of the Rum Seljuqs, 2) *Khusraw va Shīrīn*, offered to Atabeg Jahān Pahlavān, Sultan ʿUghrīl III, and Qizil Arsalān ibn Ildguz, 3) *Laylī va Majnūn*, offered to the Shirvanshah ruler, Akhistān ibn Manūchihr (r. 1197-1203), 4) *The Bahrām-nāma*, known as *Haft Paykar* and *Haft Gunbad*, offered to the ruler of Maragha, ‘Alā al-Dīn Kurap Arsalān, 5) *The Iskandarnāma*, offered to the Atabeg of Azerbaijan, Abūbakr ibn Muḥammad Jahān Pahlavān.

Rashīd al-Dīn Vaṭvāt: Lived in the 12th century; the chief secretary in the court of the Khwarazmshahs Atsiz and Il-Arsalān; his prominent work is *Ḥadāʾiq al-Siḥr fī Daqāʾiq al-Shīʿr* on rhetorical figures.

Rūzbihān Baqlī: Theologian, lived in the 12th and early 13th centuries; composed more than 20 works in mysticism and exegesis.

Saʿdī: Mushrif al-Dīn Muṣliḥ; lived in the 13th century; patronized by the Salghurid rulers of Fars; composed a didactic prose text called *Gulistān* and a didactic *masnavī* called *Būstan*.

Sanāʾī: Majdūd ibn Ādam Ghaznavī; lived in the 12th century; titled ‘*hakīm*’ (wise); composed a number of works such as, 1) *Ḥadīqat al-Ḥaqīqa va Sharīʿat al-Ṭarīqa*, a didactic work dedicated to the Ghaznavid Sultan Bahrāmshāh (r. 1117-1152), 2)

Kārnāma-yi Balkh, a mixture of eulogy and satire of his past and present patrons, 3) *Sayr al-ʿIbād ilā al-Maʿād*, an account of his spiritual journey.

Sayyid Ashraf: Sayyid Ḥasan Ghaznavī, lived in the 12th century; patronized by several Ghaznavid rulers including Masʿūd ibn Ibrāhīm (r. 1099-1115), Shīrzād (r. 1115-1116), Arsalānshāh (r. 1116-1117), and Bahrāmshāh (r. 1117-1157); eulogized Sultan Sanjar.

Shams al-Dīn Lāgharī: Lived in the 12th century; not much is known about him.

Shams al-Dīn Shast-Kulah: Aḥmad ibn Manūchihr; lived in the 12th century; titled as *amīr al-shuʿarā*, a *nadīm* (boon companion) in the court of Ṭughril III.

Sharaf al-Dīn Qazvīnī: Lived in the 13th century; served Atabegs of Lur and the Ilkhanids; wrote a history of ancient Iran called *al-Muʿjam fī Āṣār al-Mulūk al-ʿAjam*.

Sharaf al-Dīn Shafrūh: Titled *ʿmalik al-shuʿarā* (prince of poets); lived in the 12th century; eulogized Sultan Ṭughril III and Atabegs of Azerbaijan.

ʿUmar Khayyām: Philosopher, mathematician, astronomer; lived in the 11th and 12th centuries; served as the court astronomer during the reign of Makishāh; known for his astronomical works such as the *Nawrūznāma* as well as his poetry, *Rubāʿiyyāt*.

Ẓahīr Fāryābī: Lived in the 12th century; patronized by various officials of the Seljuq dynasty including the ruler of Nayshābūr, Ṭughānshāh ibn Muʿayyid, as well as Sultan Ṭughril III and the Atabegs of Azerbaijan.

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