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Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn Tabrīzī and the Establishment of Mongol Rule in Iran

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Abstract: Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn Tabrīzī (d. 668/1269–70) was one of the most important individuals to the establishment of Mongol rule in Iran. His biography illustrates like few others not only themes of mobility and cross-cultural contacts across Eurasia but also the importance of local elites to the formation of the empire of Chinggis Khan and his descendants. Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn belonged to a notable family of Tabriz and served as governor of his native city soon after the definitive Mongol conquest of 628/1231. He traveled to Mongolia in 649/1251 and was put in charge of implementing a revised imperial taxation system in north-western Iran by Great Khan Möngke. Then Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn remained a key player in the financial administration of the emerging Ilkhanate as Möngke's brother Hülegü asserted his claims to the northwestern core area of Mongol Iran against his enemies from the house of Jochi. Despite connections of Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's family to the Jochids, he continued as governor of Tabriz where he also acted as a patron of Persian literature until his death. So far Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn has gone almost unnoticed in historical scholarship.

Keywords: Tabriz local elites, Mongol Empire, Ilkhanate, administration, literary patronage

1 Introduction

Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn belonged to a notable family of Tabriz and was one of the most influential individuals during the establishment of Mongol rule in Iran. He served as governor of his native city as it developed into the principal urban center of Mongol Iran in the middle decades of the seventh/thirteenth century. In this capacity, Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn traveled to Mongolia at least twice and must have continuously mediated between the new ruling elites and the population of his northwestern Iranian homeland, the extended region of Azerbaijan and Arran. Throughout his career, Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn fulfilled military as well as administrative functions and also acted as a patron of Persian literature in

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Tabriz until his death in 668/1269–70. Nonetheless, Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn Tabrīzī has passed almost unnoticed by historians of Iran and the Mongols alike.

The biography of Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn sheds new light on the period when the Eurasian empire founded by Chinggis Khan (d. 624/1227) dissolved into relatively distinct polities under his descendants. As one of these polities, the Ilkhanate (654/1256–735/1336) ultimately centered in Azerbaijan and Arran, areas where Chinggisid rule was already firmly in place when this polity began to take shape. Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn exemplifies the political importance of the indigenous Muslim elites, especially of the notables of Tabriz in this decisive transitional phase. To contextualize Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's career, it is helpful to briefly present his family in the local setting of Tabriz and review some of the relevant sources and scholarly works. I will then proceed in two steps, concentrating first on his involvement in politics during the westward expansion of the Mongol Empire and then during the emergence of the Ilkhanate.

2 Scholarship, sources and the Malikān family

Most of the available information about Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn was gathered by Jean Aubin in his groundbreaking but unreferenced study of early Mongol rule in Iran.¹ However Aubin paid little attention to him and the local elites of Tabriz focusing instead on the notables of the city of Qazvin and of the eastern Iranian region of Khurasan, in particular the Juwaynī family.² Bertold Spuler merely listed Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn as governor of Tabriz in 665/1263 and may have been unaware of his local origin.³ More recently, Judith Kolbas noted that he played a quite important role in the financial administration of early Ilkhanid and pre-Ilkhanid Mongol Iran. However she made the unfounded claim that the Mongols sent Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn from Khurasan to Tabriz to take up office there.⁴

The biographical dictionary of Ibn al-Fuwaṭī (d. 723/1323) is perhaps the only source to make clear that Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn was as a native of Tabriz and to indicate the year of his death. It features an entry on his son, who is introduced as 'Imād al-Dīn Abū Naṣr Muḥammad b. al-Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī Muḥammad al-Tabrīzī and likewise further designated as *al-malik*.⁵ In one of its standard meanings, this term denoted indigenous local or regional governors

1 Aubin 1995: 16–22, 81.

2 Aubin 1995: 21–38. Also see Lane 2015, for a discussion of the same families from Khurasan and Qazvin.

3 Spuler 1955: 347.

4 Kolbas 2006: 133–135, 151–158, 167, 181, 388.

5 Ibn al-Fuwaṭī 1995: 2:163 (No. 1247).

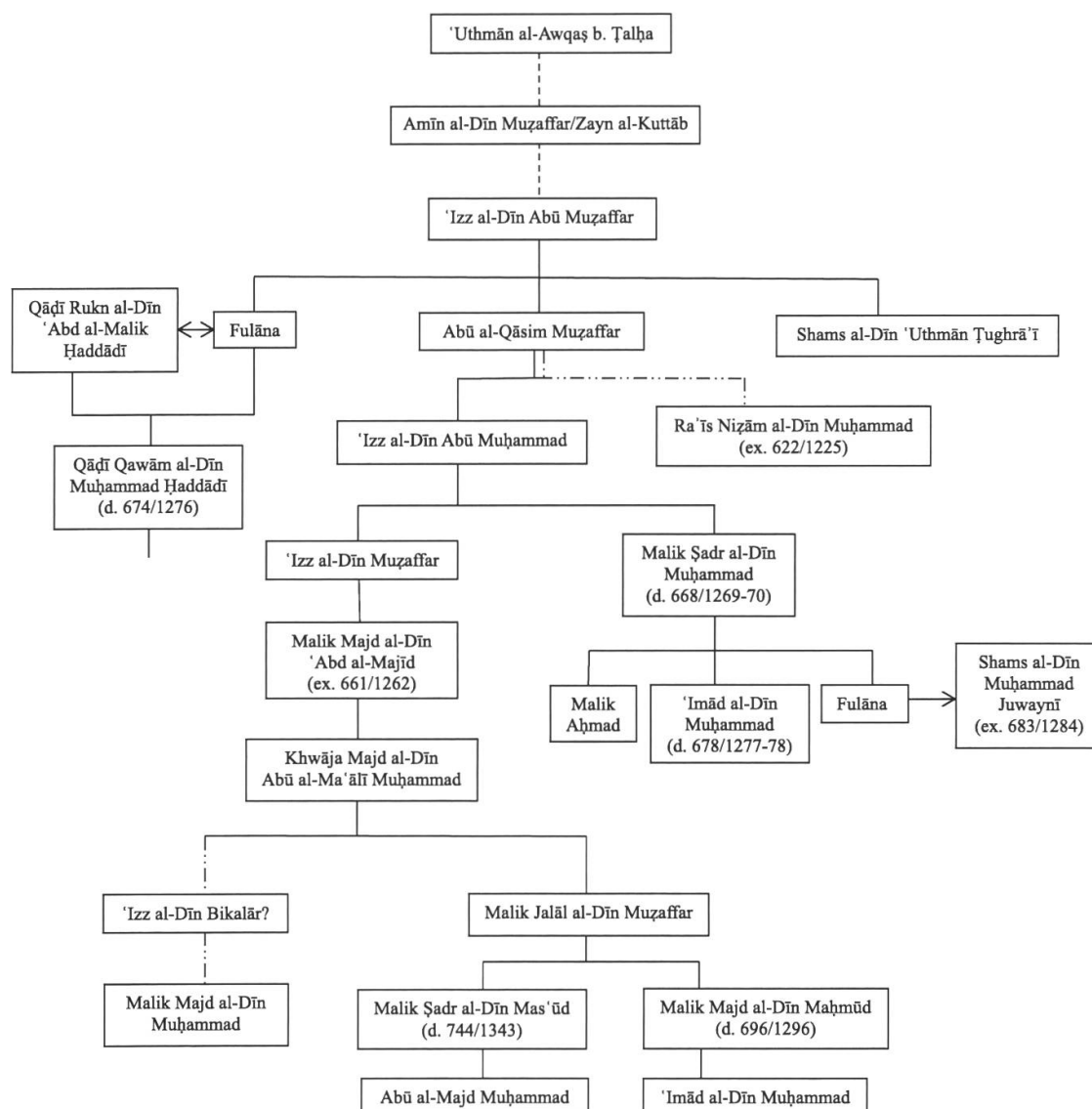


Figure 1: Genealogical table of the Malikān family.

under the Mongols.⁶ In Malik Şadr al-Dīn's case, the Persian plural *malikān* turned into a family name either during his lifetime or shortly afterwards.

The Malikān family has aroused interest among specialists on Persian literature in connection with the precious manuscript collection known as *Safīnah-i Tabrīz* – a sort of portable private library compiled by Abū al-Majd Malikānī Tabrīzī in the final decades of the Ilkhanate. Despite conclusive evidence in the genealogies of Abū al-Majd and of his father, Malik Şadr al-Dīn's relationship to the family has not been recognized.⁷ He has also not been

⁶ Aigle 2008: 73–74.

⁷ See Seyed-Gohrab 2003; for an English introduction to the *Safīnah*, its compiler and the Malikān. The most advanced but still incomplete and not wholly accurate survey of the family is

properly identified as the original patron of a poet in early Mongol Tabriz who was nicknamed Zajjāī and composed a versified universal history in emulation of the *Shāhnāmāh*. The work, entitled *Humayūnnāmāh*, consists of two parts; the first is a biography of the prophet Muḥammad and the second the actual universal history. After Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's death in 668/1269–70, Zajjāī obtained the patronage of the celebrated vizier Shams al-Dīn Juwaynī (ex. 683/1284), brother to the famous historian, for the first, but not for the second part of his work.⁸ I will come back to this point at the end of the paper.

Zajjāī reports surprisingly little about his original patron. Yet the *Humayūnnāmāh* provides genealogical details that match those of Abū al-Majd Malikānī and his father and permit to identify a leading notable of pre-Mongol Tabriz as Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's granduncle.⁹ This man, known as Shams al-Dīn Ṭughrā'ī, was closely attached to the Eldigüzid Atabegs of Azerbaijan, who had dominated the declining Saljuq Sultanate in the second half of the sixth/twelfth century. Focusing on notables of Tabriz, the history of pre-Mongol and early Mongol Iran appears in a slightly different light than it does with a focus on notables of Qazvin or Khurasan. Thus it seems worthwhile to say a few words about Ṭughrā'ī and the Eldigüzids to better understand Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's family background and the local history context which provided the basis for his subsequent career.

The Eldigüzids took over Tabriz in 572/1176 and lost it to the Khwārazmshāh Jalāl al-Dīn in 622/1225.¹⁰ Shams al-Dīn Ṭughrā'ī was a high-ranking courtier under the two Eldigüzids, who ruled the city after the end of the Saljuq dynasty in Iran in 590/1194. On at least one occasion he negotiated the surrender of Tabriz to the Mongols at the time of the first invasion in 617–18/1220–21. During this first invasion Chinggis Khan's generals came to the city repeatedly and all encounters remained peaceful.¹¹ Assisted by two relatives, Ṭughrā'ī then led resistance to the Khwārazmshāh Jalāl al-Dīn, who had to besiege Tabriz for about a week. The new ruler quickly alienated even his initial supporters such

Gulī 2014. The relevant genealogies are preserved in a colophon in the *Safīnah* and in a local pilgrimage guide at least partly transcribed from a tomb inscription. Afshār 2008: 294 (No. 60). Ibn Karbalā'ī 1965–1970 [2004]: 1:468–469.

⁸ Zajjāī 2004–2011: 1:19 (Intr.), 351, 854, 2:18–27 (Intr.), 461–463, 857–858. The editor mistook Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn for the later Ilkhanid vizier Ṣadr al-Dīn Zanjānī (ex. 696/1297). He found that the first part was copied on Juwaynī's order but passed over the fact that Zajjāī deplores the death of his original patron in both parts.

⁹ Zajjāī 2004–2011: 2:1274, 1323–1324.

¹⁰ See Luther 1987, for a summary of Eldigüzid dynastic history.

¹¹ Zajjāī 2004–2011: 2:1198–1200, 1208–1211, 1218–1220; Ibn al-Athīr 2006–2008: 3:214–20; Rashīd al-Dīn: 1998–1999 1:259; Minorsky [Bosworth] 2010: 43.

as a rival of Ṭuġhrā'ī; this man intrigued against the Malikān to become qadi of the city but then provoked his swift dismissal for disrespectful statements about the Khwārazmians.¹²

When the Mongols returned in 628/1231 to finish with the Khwārazmshāh, they reportedly remembered Shams al-Dīn Ṭuġhrā'ī as their interlocutor from ten years before. The notables of Tabriz immediately surrendered once more having obviously no reason to lament the imminent demise of their Muslim ruler.¹³ Even Shams al-Dīn's principal opponent and Jalāl al-Dīn's most fervent supporter at the Khwārazmian conquest was qadi of the city again by 630/1233.¹⁴ It is uncertain whether Ṭuġhrā'ī was still alive when the Mongols eventually established themselves as lords of Tabriz but like his erstwhile rival his grandnephew must have entered their service very soon.

The well-known Ilkhanid court historians, 'Aṭā-Malik Juwaynī (d. 681/1283) and Rashīd al-Dīn (d. 718/1318) do not elucidate the local background of Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's career. They do, however, cover his political activities under the Mongols sufficiently well to serve as main sources. I am not aware of any additional evidence on Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn Tabrīzī in other sources usually consulted for the history of Iran and neighboring lands under early Mongol rule. The most thorough scholarly analysis of the period spanned by his career is still Peter Jackson's classic article on the dissolution of the Mongol Empire.¹⁵ As will be seen, the rising tensions within the Chinggisid dynasty which characterized Mongol westward expansion and the emergence of the Ilkhanate directly affected Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn and his family.

3 Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn Tabrīzī and the westward expansion of the Mongol Empire

The conflict that produced the greatest tensions during the first phase of Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's career pitted the houses of Chinggis Khan's eldest and third sons, Jochi and Ögödei, against each other. Ögödei sent the general Chormaghun

¹² Nasawī 1996: 133–134, 137–45, 178, 253; Zajjāji 2004–2011: 2:1222–4; Ibn al-Athīr 2006–2008: 3:256–260.

¹³ Ibn al-Athīr 2006–2008: 3:308–309; Rashīd al-Dīn 1998–1999: 1:321.

¹⁴ Gronke 1982: 414–445. Ṭuġhrā'ī's opponent was a renowned Islamic jurist and qadi named 'Izz al-Dīn Qazwīnī (d. 648/1250). I plan to discuss 'Izz al-Dīn's family in pre-Mongol and Mongol Tabriz in greater detail expanding on Gronke's findings in future publications.

¹⁵ Jackson 1978.

westward after his enthronement as the second Great Khan. It was to Chormaghun's armies that Tabriz tendered its peaceful submission in 628/1231 and they remained based in Azerbaijan and Arran. Around the time of Ögödei's death in 639/1241, Jochi's son Batu established his main base north of the Caucasus. Thereby this branch of the imperial dynasty became the only one within easy reach of the region and its principal city. Soon after, Batu advanced to a position of seniority among the Chinggisid princes and also emerged as the most powerful. His opposition was the primary factor that initially prevented a successor ascending the throne in Mongolia, where Ögödei's widow Töregene acted as regent.

Jackson argued convincingly that the general Bayju, who replaced Chormaghun as chief commander of the regional armies was a representative of Batu.¹⁶ As new regional commander, Bayju led the 641/1243 campaign against the Rûm Saljûqs of Anatolia. This campaign entailed the Mongol conquest of that region and is the earliest event in connection with which Malik Şadr al-Dîn appears in person. Zajjâjî mentions his dispatch to the city of Sivas, most likely as commander of auxiliary troops enlisted by the Mongol masters of adjacent Azerbaijan and Arran.¹⁷ Malik Şadr al-Dîn had probably already served as local governor and, given their spatial proximity, the notables of Tabriz necessarily maintained the most intimate contacts with the Jochids. It is, however, important to note that Azerbaijan and Arran were integral parts of the expanding empire, unlike Anatolia, nearby Georgia or Mosul, where pre-Mongol dynasties remained in place under Chinggisid suzerainty.¹⁸

In the years just prior to the campaign, Persian officials based in Khurasan had begun the integration of Azerbaijan and Arran into the nascent civilian administration of the Mongol far west. Their leader likewise represented Batu, as did another major tax administrator who made his headquarters in Tabriz in 642/1244.¹⁹ Juwaynî's history which depicts the latter as an arch-villain, features verses composed by Zajjâjî on the occasion of his death in Khurasan the next year.²⁰ There is no concrete information on relations between that tax administrator and the poet's original patron but numismatic evidence might suggest that

¹⁶ Jackson 1978: 216–219.

¹⁷ Zajjâjî 2004–2011: 2:1088, “*Malik Şadr-i Dîn andar ân khayl bûd, fîristâd mîrâsh bih Sîvâs zûd.*”

¹⁸ Kolbas 2006: 84, 87, 102, wrongly claims that the Mongols reinstated the Eldigüzids after the demise of the Khwārazmshāh.

¹⁹ Juwaynî 1958 [1997]: 501, 508, 538–539. The first person was named Nîzām al-Dîn Shāh and the second Sharaf al-Dîn Khwārazmî.

²⁰ Juwaynî 1958 [1997]: 545. Also see Manz 2013, on Juwaynî's hostility towards Sharaf al-Dîn Khwārazmî.

they were on good terms with each other.²¹ Malik Šadr al-Dīn also forged ties to the new Mongol imperial governor of the Iranian lands, Arghun Aqa (d. 673/1275) who first came to Tabriz in those years following his appointment by Töregene.²² In any case, the enormous significance of the city as center of the financial administration of Mongol Iran has its roots in this period.

In 644/1246 Ögödei's son Güyüg was finally enthroned as Great Khan but it is unclear whether Malik Šadr al-Dīn accompanied Arghun Aqa to Mongolia to attend the assembly (*quriltai*). Juwaynī does not name the notables of Azerbaijan who went with the imperial governor. He stresses, instead, that his own father Bahā' al-Dīn (d. 652/1254) deputized in the region, under the supervision of a Mongol official.²³ During the return journey in 645/1247, Arghun Aqa learnt that a Mongol named Mengü-Bolad and a grandson of the last reigning Eldigüzid Atabeg were challenging his (as much as Malik Šadr al-Dīn's) authority in Tabriz.²⁴ In-depth discussion of the matter would require a terminological analysis beyond the scope of this paper. Space permits only some basic remarks and a suggestion for a slight revision of Boyle's translation of the relevant passage in Juwaynī.

Mengü-Bolad had been supervisor of the city artisans (*bar sar-i muhtarifa bi-ism-i bāsqāqī*) since the time of Chormaghun. Through a court connection, he was then confirmed in a military governorship (*bāsqāqī va imārat*), apparently with wider powers. As regards his Eldigüzid ally, Mengü-Bolad's supporter at court, "[...] procured for the atabeg [...] who [...] had in that period just come out of Anatolia and reappeared after having been hiding, a decree with imperial red seal appointing him as military governor (*amīr*) of the district (*tūmen*) of Tabriz and Azerbaijan in opposition to Malik Šadr al-Dīn."²⁵ Boyle obviously understood *tūmen* as a military term translating that the Eldigüzid was appointed as commander of a Mongol army unit of nominally ten thousand troops which is highly improbable. In this passage, Juwaynī seems not to speak about army commanders at all but rather uses *tūmen* to refer to the administrative unit of Tabriz and Azerbaijan. It is unclear how the atabeg's position as military governor may have differed from Mengü Bolad's except in that he would not

21 Kolbas 2006: 128–134, 154, stresses similarities between two relevant series of coinage. But she remained unaware that Malik Šadr al-Dīn was a native of Tabriz and does not discuss the possibility that he collaborated with Sharaf al-Dīn Khwārazmī there.

22 On Arghun Aqa, also see Lane 1999.

23 Juwaynī 1958 [1997]: 249–250, 507–508.

24 Juwaynī 1958 [1997]: 511.

25 Juwaynī 1912–1937: 2:248, "*atābak [...] rā kah [...] va ham dar ān muddat az Rūm bīrūn āmadah va ba'd az ikhtifā rūy namūdah bi-ẓiddiyyat-i Malik Šadr al-Dīn bi-amīr-i tūmānī-i Tabrīz va Āzarbayjān farmānī bi-āl-tamghā girift.*"

exercise authority over Mongols. The reasons for the antagonism between Malik Şadr al-Dīn and this scion of the last regional dynasty are also obscure but it appears that his consent to such an appointment was expected, at least in the local context.

Malik Şadr al-Dīn reacted by requesting permission from Arghun Aqa to accompany him to court; this was granted and he set out from Tabriz in winter 645/1247–1248. Developments farther east, including Güyüg's death in 646/1248, prevented them from reaching Mongolia then. According to Juwaynī, none of Mengü-Bolad's orders was obeyed in Tabriz and he had to join Arghun Aqa when the imperial governor actually went to court once more in 647/1249.²⁶ His ally is not heard of again and his own later whereabouts are likewise unknown. Malik Şadr al-Dīn is not mentioned as having gone with Arghun Aqa on this occasion but definitely traveled to court in Mongolia two years later. By then dramatic changes in the constitution of the empire were already underway and would continue to redefine the framework of Malik Şadr al-Dīn's political activities.

The throne again remained vacant after the death of Güyüg, whose widow Oghul Qaimish acted as regent. Eventually Batu managed to transfer supreme leadership from the house of Ögödei to that of Chingis Khan's youngest son Tolui. The latter's son Möngke was enthroned as Great Khan thanks to the backing of the powerful Jochid²⁷ and Malik Şadr al-Dīn joined a host of dignitaries arriving at the *quriltai* in spring 650/1252, shortly after Arghun Aqa.²⁸ Seen in the light of Batu's conflict with the Ögödeids, Malik Şadr al-Dīn's success against Mengü-Bolad and the Eldigüzid scion in Tabriz indicates Jochid protection and support. An even clearer hint to such ties exists for a relative of his. This matter shall be discussed in connection with the emergence of the Ilkhanate as a new phase of Mongol westward expansion inaugurated by Möngke's enthronement.

4 Malik Şadr al-Dīn Tabrīzī and the Emergence of the Ilkhanate

Malik Şadr al-Dīn stayed in Mongolia for about a year, being confirmed as governor of Azerbaijan and Arran at the *quriltai*. Juwaynī singles him out as

²⁶ Juwaynī (1958) [1997]: 511–513.

²⁷ Jackson 1978: 186.

²⁸ Juwaynī (1958) [1997]: 514–515; Zajjāji 2004–2011: 2:1098, “*Malik Şadr-i Dīn shud bih dargāh-i shāh; buzurgān-i Tabrīz bā ū bih rāh.*”

one of four indigenous regional governors in Iran who received a tiger-headed tablet of authority (*paiza*), just like their Mongol superior Arghun Aqa.²⁹ The latter directed the implementation of the newly ordered empire-wide reform and centralization policies in the Iranian lands after the return of senior officials in 652/1254. Thomas Allsen showed that the primary aim of Möngke's policies was an increase of monetization of the economy to be achieved mainly through the imposition of a poll tax understandably preceded by the taking of a census.³⁰ Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn carried this out in Azerbaijan and Arran under the supervision of two high-ranking Mongols. But Juwaynī does not make explicit that the governor as well as a colleague of his from Tabriz were in charge of their home region and Allsen omitted them from his discussion.³¹

With the help of Ibn al-Fuwaṭī's biographical dictionary and the above-mentioned genealogies of later family members, Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's colleague can be identified as his nephew Malik Majd al-Dīn.³² Zaijājī notes that Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn then went to Mongolia once more, probably to report on the census and the imposition of the poll tax and with Arghun Aqa; the latter set out to court again in spring 654/1256.³³ At this time, Möngke had already sent his brother Hülegü off to resume the westward expansion of the empire. Zaijājī claims that Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn and Malik Majd al-Dīn together prepared a welcome meal (*tuzghu*) for the first Ilkhan on the way but dating is one of his weak points. Time and place the poet-historian from Tabriz specifies for this incident, 9 Muḥarram 654/7 February 1256 at Qum, do not match Hülegü's schedule and itinerary as reconstructed from other sources.³⁴ Be that as it may, both members of the Malikān family fulfilled various tasks serving the founder of the Ilkhanid dynasty.

²⁹ Juwaynī (1958) [1997]: 518–519.

³⁰ Allsen 1987: 116–171.

³¹ Juwaynī (1958) [1997]: 521; Allsen 1987: 131–132, does mention their Mongol supervisors Turumtai and Naimatai.

³² Ibn al-Fuwaṭī 1995: 4:457 (No. 4211), confused the name of Malik Majd al-Dīn's son with that of his father in the relevant entry; otherwise the details exactly match the genealogies preserved in the local pilgrimage guide and several colophons in the *Safīnah*. Ibn Karbalā'ī 1965–1970 [2004]: 1:469; Afshār 2008: 287, 294–295, 309, 315 (No. 1, 60, 69, 163, 208). Juwaynī 1912–1937: 2:258, calls him Khwāja Majd al-Dīn Tabrīzī and the editor notes that one manuscript adds the *nisba* 'Alikānī (علکائی), apparently a scribal error for Malikānī (ملکائی).

³³ Zaijājī 2004–2011: 2:1101, “*az ān jāyghah Majd-i Dīn bāzgasht; Malik sūy Qā'ān rah andar nivisht.*”; Juwaynī (1958) [1997]: 521–522.

³⁴ Zaijājī 2004–2011: 2:1100–1101, “*Malik Ṣadr-i Dīn raft turghū (tuzghū) bi-burd, [...]; bi-shud Majd-i Dīn Khwājah bā ū bih Qum, dar ān māh būd az Muḥarram nuhum; z hijrat guzar kard panjāh va char, z shish-ṣad fuzūn būd rūz shumār.*” See Masson Smith, Jr. 2006, for a reconstruction of Hülegü's westward advance.

As outstanding notables of Tabriz, they were also drawn into one of the fiercest conflicts that accompanied the emergence of the realm of Hülegü and his house. The choice of Azerbaijan and Arran as the center of Hülegü's own emerging dynasty necessarily threatened Jochid interests in this core area of Mongol Iran. Batu had died in 653/1255 and after a succession struggle his brother Berke eventually imposed himself as ruler. Jackson's analysis of Jochid claims to northwestern Iran suggests that they were primarily based on a grant from Chinggis Khan himself. He attached secondary importance to another dimension of the Jochid-Ilkhanid conflict, namely that Berke, as the first Chinggisid Muslim ruler, strongly disapproved of Hülegü's order to kill the last Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad in 656/1258.³⁵ On the whole, this assessment is not unjustified from a Mongol perspective. But regardless of whether Chinggis Khan had indeed formally assigned Azerbaijan and Arran to the Jochids, their claim had a firm foundation in pre-Ilkhanid administrative practice.

Hülegü came to Tabriz a few times, before and after the sack of Abbasid Baghdad.³⁶ He charged Malik Majd al-Dīn with the construction of a fortified building in Azerbaijan to store booty taken from the caliphal seat and elsewhere; the money was supposed to be melted into gold bars.³⁷ In the context of the first Mongol invasion of Syria, the ruler of Mosul defected to the rising Mamluk Sultans in Egypt. Rashīd al-Dīn reports that Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn commanded an army of auxiliary troops assisting in the siege of the city in 659/1261 and that he was injured in battle. Thereupon he received permission to return to Tabriz, passing by the royal summer camp to meet Hülegü and inform him about the situation in Mosul.³⁸

Both Malikān as well as several other officials were then subjected to a Mongol legal trial (*yarghu*) in the buildup to a war between Hülegü and Berke in 660/1262. While Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn got away with lashes, Malik Majd al-Dīn was among those sentenced to death.³⁹ Jackson makes a valid argument that the first Ilkhanid-Jochid war "may be said to signify the dissolution of the Mongol Empire".⁴⁰ After Möngke's death in 657/1259 all branches of the Chinggisid dynasty were involved in the ensuing succession struggle. That war was of particular importance, however. The anti-Ilkhanid alliance between Berke and the Mamluks would have a profound and lasting influence on inter-dynastic

³⁵ Jackson 1978: 208–212, 220–227.

³⁶ Juwaynī (1958) [1997]: 524; Rashīd al-Dīn 1998–1999: 2:488, 501, 512,

³⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn 1998–1999: 2:501; Allsen 1987: 182.

³⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn 1998–1999: 2:509–510.

³⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn 1998–1999: 2:511.

⁴⁰ Jackson 1978: 238.

politics in the Middle East. And never before had a Mongol ruler allied with a non-Mongol power against a fellow descendant of Chinggis Khan. Berke defeated Hülegü but the Jochid Khans of the Golden Horde could reassert their claim to the core area of Mongol Iran with any measure of success only after the collapse of the Ilkhanate in the middle of the eighth/fourteenth century.

Ibn al-Fuwaṭī gives a valuable clue to explaining the different fates of Malik Şadr al-Dīn and Malik Majd al-Dīn in the context of that conflict. He remarks that the latter was considered a scribe or secretary (*kātib*) of Berke (d. 665/1267)⁴¹ and as such, Malik Majd al-Dīn may well have been an official accountable to the Jochids. Malik Şadr al-Dīn was perhaps less intimately attached to Hülegü's enemy or simply too important to be killed. In any case, the first Ilkhan reconfirmed his governorship of Tabriz and when Hülegü died in 663/1265 his son and successor Abaqa (d. 680/1282) again assigned the city to him. It is noteworthy that Rashīd al-Dīn does not name a Mongol who would have been Malik Şadr al-Dīn's direct superior and actually in charge as governor in these instances.⁴²

This deviation from the practice considered characteristic of Mongol government in Iran might result from the personal standing of Malik Şadr al-Dīn, from the special significance of the city as center of the financial administration or from a combination of both. Kolbas credited Malik Şadr al-Dīn with having devised what she terms the *imperial hexagon coinage* that appears to signal the progressing centralization of finances with Tabriz as sole imperial mint; she notes that this money was issued there from the time of Möngke's enthronement to AH 668/1269–70.⁴³ Unfortunately Kolbas not only remained unaware of Malik Şadr al-Dīn's local origin but also of the year he died which obviously coincided precisely with the last issue of this series. If he introduced the *imperial hexagon coinage* its end and his death might be more than a coincidence and officials from Azerbaijan were perhaps rather more influential in administration and government than generally thought. Malik Şadr al-Dīn probably played a greater role in the development of that coinage than many individuals who figure more prominently in Kolbas' discussion, such as successive anonymous mint masters at Tabriz.

Malik Şadr al-Dīn's son 'Imād al-Dīn took over his father's post but the Malikān were gradually pushed out of the top levels of politics. Ibn al-Fuwaṭī

⁴¹ Ibn al-Fuwaṭī 1995: 4:457 (No. 4211).

⁴² Rashīd al-Dīn 1998–1999: 2:513, 3:518.

⁴³ Kolbas 2006: 151–154, 196–197. Her explanations of the significance Tabriz gained for Mongol financial administration are partly based on erroneous assumptions, for example that the city had lost its local leaders during the few years of Khwārazmian rule.

reports that ‘Imād al-Dīn died young a few years later and was buried in an Islamic college (*madrasa*) Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn had built in their native city. The author further states that in reality the governor in Tabriz and elsewhere was Shams al-Dīn Juwaynī; Aubin concluded from the biographical note that Juwaynī had married Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn’s daughter but this is not evident from Ibn al-Fuwaṭī’s wording that ‘Imād al-Dīn’s sister was with him.⁴⁴ Juwaynī became indeed the most influential migrant to Tabriz in the middle of the seventh/thirteenth century, but his influence in the city resulted from his position at the Ilkhanid court.

Shams al-Dīn Juwaynī was appointed as Hülegü’s vizier after his predecessor had been executed along with Malik Majd al-Dīn in the opening stages of the first Ilkhanid-Jochid war.⁴⁵ He appeared more or less out of nowhere at this time but scholars tend not to address the war as part of the context of Juwaynī’s appointment.⁴⁶ This may impede full appreciation of the circumstances and it is not only with regard to Shams al-Dīn’s appointment and Malik Majd al-Dīn’s execution that a study of relations between the Juwaynīs and the Malikān and a comparison of both families would be worthwhile. The patronage which Zaijājī obtained from Shams al-Dīn at some point after Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn’s death is another thread such a study could pursue.

It has been mentioned above that Juwaynī supported the first part of Zaijājī’s *Humayūnnāmah*, a biography of the prophet composed in the same meter as the *Shāhnāmah*. He was famed as a patron of Persian literature and a pious Muslim so this is not surprising. But why would the celebrated vizier not patronize the universal history part of Zaijājī’s work? A plausible answer can be found in the historical vision Zaijājī expounds in the second part of the *Humayūnnāmah*. This vision had no appeal to a notable from Khurasan recently transplanted to Azerbaijan through an attachment to the emerging Ilkhanid dynasty. An important aspect of this vision is that the Eldigüzid Atabegs of Azerbaijan appear as the undisputed dynastic heroes of the second part of the *Humayūnnāmah*. It provides systematic treatment of post-Saljuq history only for the Abbasid Caliphs and the rulers of Tabriz beginning with the Eldigüzids. Moreover, Zaijājī does not cover the period after Hülegü’s sack of Baghdad except for praise of the Juwaynīs.

⁴⁴ Ibn al-Fuwaṭī 1995: 2:163 (No. 1247), “[...] wa-kāna al-ḥākīm fi’l-ḥaqīqa bi-Tabriz wa ghayrihā al-ṣāhib Shams al-Dīn [...] al-Juwaynī wa-kānat ‘ukht ‘Imād al-Dīn ‘inda al-ṣāhib [...].” Aubin 1995: 22.

⁴⁵ Rashīd al-Dīn 1998–1999: 2:511, 513.

⁴⁶ Lane 2003: 74–6, 195–6; Biran: 2009. Hülegü’s first vizier was named Sayf al-Dīn Bitikchī and had served since the Ilkhan’s westward advance.

The local poet-historian certainly died before Shams al-Dīn's execution in 683/1284 after which the Juwaynī family was virtually extinguished.⁴⁷ As newcomers to Tabriz they derived their influence in the city from their prominence at the Ilkhanid court but the future of the dynasty was still uncertain when Zajjāji composed the *Humayūnnāmah*. Zajjāji does acknowledge, however, that Chinggisid rule was a fact positing a link between Tabriz and the Mongols that stretched back to the time of the first invasion. He records the generals of Chinggis Khan who negotiated with Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's granduncle Shams al-Dīn Ṭughrā'i as saying, "[...] that this pleasant city has peacefully surrendered to us, supporting our army and cavalry; this golden city here forms private property of the khan, for no [city] is more amiable than it in the world."⁴⁸

Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn had undoubtedly endorsed this vision with its distinctly local focus and most likely commissioned the *Humayūnnāmah* as a whole. Zajjāji's work inscribes itself into the Persian tradition by adopting the *Shāhnāmah* as literary model and affirms the superiority of Islamic standards over the Mongol order. Nonetheless the *Humayūnnāmah* also testifies to the cross-cultural contacts that the Chinggisid conquests inevitably entailed as evinced by a chapter on dating systems which the author included. In this chapter he compares the *hijrī* with the Chinese-Uighur animal calendar, declares that the former is the best and the latter false and yet explains it to his Persian audience.⁴⁹

The *Safīnah* shows that the Malikān after Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn were still involved in government and administration but more active in the field of culture, for instance composing Persian poetry. Furthermore the collection provides evidence that as notables of Tabriz, they outlived both, the Juwaynīs and the house of Hülegü. The Malikān are just one example for the persistence of the local elites of the city throughout Mongol rule as it can be observed elsewhere too. Aubin noted that the leading families of Qazvin were very much the same before Chinggis Khan and at the end of the Ilkhanate.⁵⁰ In the case of Tabriz this may be more surprising given the political, economic and cultural significance the city acquired under Mongol rule. It may also not be so surprising given that Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn himself had helped turn Tabriz into the principal urban center of Mongol Iran.

47 Zajjāji 2004–2011: 2:22 (Intr.). The editor remarked that the author makes no reference whatsoever to Juwaynī's execution but did not take into consideration the likelihood of his death before this happened.

48 Zajjāji 2004–2011: 2:1219. "*bi-guftand ka-īn shahr-i khūsh īl-i māst, kah yārī-dah-i lashkar wa khayl-i mā-st; chinīn shahr-i zarīn būd khāṣṣ-i khān, kah khūsh-tar nabāshad az īn dar jahān.*"

49 Zajjāji 2004–2011: 1:205–208. On the Chinese-Uighur animal calendar in later Mongol period Persian historiography, see Melville 1994.

50 Aubin 1995: 25.

5 Conclusion

This outline of Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn's career exemplifies the political importance of the local elites of Tabriz during the establishment of Mongol rule in Iran. As a highly influential man of both the pen and the sword, he successfully maneuvered through the conflicts that accompanied imperial westward expansion and culminated in the emergence of the Ilkhanate. Relatives of Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn had already forged a connection to the Mongols at the time of Chinggis Khan mainly by ensuring the peaceful surrender of their native city to the conquerors from the outset. The first encounter between the people of Tabriz and the Mongol armies is an important point of reference for the author of the *Humayūnnāmah*. This versified universal history was probably commissioned by Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn who patronized the author until his death. It places the history of early Mongol Tabriz in a distinctly local and regional context in which the Eldigüzid Atabegs of Azerbaijan and the Malikān themselves figure prominently. The Ilkhans turned out to be the Mongol dynasty of Iran and Tabriz their principal city but these outcomes were by no means predetermined. For an adequate understanding of the initial stages of this process it is crucial to take into account the pre-Mongol and pre-Ilkhanid Mongol history of Tabriz and to give due consideration to its local elites.

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