URBAN AGENCIES

MOVEMENT AND MOBILITY II

Urban Agencies:
Reframing Anatolian
and Caucasian Cities
(13th-14th Centuries)

Guest Editors:
Bruno De Nicola and Matthew Kinloch

&

Movement and Mobility
in the Medieval Mediterranean:
Changing Perspectives
from Late Antiquity
to the Long-Twelfth Century, II

Guest Editors:
Christopher Heath, Clemens Gantner
and Edoardo Manarini

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Editorial

Ingrid Hartl and Walter Pohl

For the winter edition, volume 14 of *Medieval Worlds* has moved to Anatolia and its surroundings. Starting from northern Greece, Thessalonike, it visits urban centres of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries such as Ani and Ahlat in the east and Kastamonu in the north. It meets urban power brokers, explores city markets and their regulations and is enthralled by the role fortresses play in the historical tales of Anatolia. All of this is presented in the themed section *Urban Agencies: Reframing Anatolian and Caucasian Cities (13th-14th Centuries)*, in which guest editors Bruno De Nicola and Matthew Kinloch have collected a series of compelling articles exploring the role of cities as political and economic hubs and their negotiations of power and autonomy in imperial and sub-imperial contexts.

The second instalment of *Movement and Mobility in the Medieval Mediterranean: Changing Perspectives from Late Antiquity to the Long-Twelfth Century*, with guest editors Christopher Heath, Clemens Gantner and Edoardo Manarini, leads us further south, from Sicily, where Geniza commercial letters give insight into the relationship between ruler and merchant in the Islamic Mediterranean of the 11th century, to Palestine and the interest male spiritual leaders took in female pilgrimages. The concluding article of this section takes a step back and presents the Mediterranean, and Jerusalem in particular, as seen from the distanced perspective of Henry II's court – mainly as a place to avoid.

Our stand-alone contributions explore a cultural act shared by many peoples – riddling. They provide the first extensive study of ancient and medieval verse riddles whose solutions are plants, and by using ecocritical methods and drawing on critical plant theory, they offer fascinating insights into ancient and early medieval ecosystems and the dynamic relationships of humans and plants within them.

Urban Agencies: Reframing Anatolian and Caucasian Cities (13th-14th Centuries) Preface

Matthew Kinloch and Bruno De Nicola

This thematic section in *Medieval Worlds* came about by chance. We (Matthew Kinloch and Bruno De Nicola) arrived in Vienna within a few months of each other to carry out research, in the Division of Byzantine Research at the Institute for Medieval Research and the Institute of Iranian Studies, respectively. Finding ourselves working in the same building of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, we bumped into each other and conversations over coffee turned into discussions over lunch, which led (as most things do in academia) to the organisation of a workshop.

Since our individual research, on Byzantine and Islamic history and literature, respectively, concentrated on the same period and on overlapping geographical spheres our conversations started to revolve around the various difficulties in framing our research outside of restrictive narratives dominated by specific state projects. Although our research specialisation and the disciplinary fields in which we operate present different problems and potentials, the broader similarities proved striking.

Since Matthew was investigating the agency of village and urban communities in Byzantine histories and monastic documents, as part of the Wittgenstein-Preis project *Moving Byzantium: Mobility, Microstructures, and Personal Agency* and Bruno was just finishing his monograph on the literary history of the Chobanid dynasty of Kastamonu (Routledge, 2022), the potential of using urban centres as a platform for asking questions about our shared interests presented itself more or less of its own accord.

Keen to organise the workshop outside of state-centric narrative structures, such as Byzantine or Seljuq, we sought to define at least the basic parameters of the meeting through geographical terms, eventually settling on the ugly compromise of medieval Anatolian and Caucasian cities. As is now apparent, even this framing (which did not fill either of us with much enthusiasm) proved too limited for the contributions we received, with some papers straying across the Aegean into southeastern Europe. All this terminological wrangling simply goes to illustrate the difficulties of even framing the phenomena we were interested in without reference to states.

Within the workshop and subsequently in the articles published in this issue, our collaborators approached various aspects of urban agency in different parts of medieval Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives. The first article by **Matthew Kinloch**, seeks to set out a theoretical and methodological framework for the articles that follow, as well as to offer a concrete example of that framework's potential. His paper engages with state-centric narratives and the manner in which they continue to shape much scholarship on the period. Despite scholars being well aware of the problems and seeking to cut across the often arbitrary divisions imposed by states, narratives focused on states, such as the decline of Byzantium and the rise of the

Ottomans, are simply such useful constructs for presenting action in this period that they have proved difficult to displace. Kinloch seeks to identify some of the potential that a focus on urban centres and the agencies of the people who lived in them can have for the study of the period. To do so, he offers the example of conflict around the city of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia in 1206/1207 and the manner in which analyses of this period have been integrated into and made meaningful within state-centric reconstructions of the history of the early thirteenth century.

Following this broad framing, **Andrew Peacock**'s contribution focuses on an analysis of agency in medieval Islamic Anatolian cities. He questions the tendency in Turkish historiography that sees the institution of *futuwwa* (trade-based confraternities) as evidence of urban autonomy. Instead, he suggests that there were urban elites (aʿyān) who are more representative of urban agency in Anatolia as they mediated between the *futuwwa* and the rulers. This view on Anatolia Islamic cities is complemented by **Teresa Shawcross**'s analysis of Byzantine cities in the empire's western provinces (particularly Thrace and Macedonia). In her article, she explores the negotiation of power between the Byzantine imperial centre and its increasingly assertive cities. This study explores the changing face of urban economies and politics in a period in which the gulf between the rhetoric and reality of imperial power shifted dramatically. As well as focusing on the western provinces of the Byzantine Empire, Shawcross looks yet further west for comparanda between forms of urban agency and power articulated on the contemporary Italian peninsula, thus providing an even wider transhistorical scope for this thematic section.

Urban centres in medieval Anatolia played an important role in facilitating trade and the circulation of goods. The strategic location of the peninsula between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean and its relationship to the so-called *Silk Road*, gave some Anatolian cities a relevant role in the administration of commerce. In this context, **İklil Selçuk** explores sources outlining codes of moral conduct to be used in markets in medieval Anatolian cities. Here again, the role of the *akhī*s as members of *futuwwa* organisations acquire a central role in understanding commercial exchanges in urban settlements. By exploring different narrative sources, Selçuk argues that religious and moral teachings must be considered alongside state action in order to understand market regulation in medieval Islamic Anatolia. The relationship between the state and accumulation is also central to the argument of **Nicholas Matheou**, whose article examines the specific relationship between merchant capital and taxation in processes of urbanisation and deurbanisation in the city of Ani over the course of the long thirteenth century. This study offers a thorough investigation of the relationship between urban elites and subaltern counterpower, whilst situating this story in the wider dynamics of central Eurasian processes of state building and accumulation. In a study that shifts from the contemporary theorising of Ibn Khaldūn to the built environment of Ani and back, Matheou demonstrates how to read subaltern counterpower in the accumulative practices of elite classes. His study of Ani thus not only demonstrates the potential of approaching medieval Caucasia through the dynamics of urban centres, but also what such studies have to contribute to the wider story of capitalist modernity itself.

The arrival of the Mongols in Anatolia in the mid-thirteenth century conditioned the relationship between centres and peripheries across the peninsula, affecting urban agency in different ways according to the proximity or distance of the Mongol court in Iran. **Oya Pancaroğlu**'s contribution, for example, focuses on the city of Ahlat, located on Lake Van, which was in close proximity to the Mongol centre of power in Tabriz. Relying on the survival of a series of tomb towers from the late thirteenth century, Pancaroğlu reconstructs urban agency in the city as these tombs belonged exclusively to Mongol amirs sent by the Ilkhanid rulers to control the city. Her study offers a very early account of the Islamisation of these Ilkhanid officials marked by the traces of Sufi *sawiyyas* in the outskirts of the city of Ahlat. At the other end of this geographical spectrum, in the far western parts of Islamic Anatolia in the thirteenth century, lies the city of Kastamonu, where **Bruno De Nicola** focusses his analysis on urban agency in the region as a borderland between Islam and Christianity. Using architectural and non-narrative historical sources, he reconstructs potential scenarios for the interaction between the Turkmen rulers that settled in the area from the late twelfth century and the inhabitants of Kastamonu during the thirteenth century. He argues that in a small city such as Kastamonu, urban agency can be observed in the relationship between Turkmen rulers and a *Persianised* intellectual and religious elite which materialised in the attempt to establish an administrative system for the city modelled on the theories of government developed during the period of the Great Seljuqs. The efforts and resources invested by these rulers and elites in controlling urban and fortified settlements in the borderlands with Byzantium during the thirteenth century were not limited to this period but remained in the collective memory of early Ottoman historians at the beginning of the sixteenth century. These Ottoman constructions of the past are the topic of **Dimitri Korobeinikov**'s contribution, which closes this thematic section. He argues that Ottoman self-representations of their rule over Anatolia were so deeply grounded in the memory of a line of fortified urban defences against Byzantium during the thirteenth and fourteenth century, that it impacted on the imperial aspirations of the Ottoman rulers during the time of Sultan Sulaymān the Magnificent.

Reframing Medieval Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean: Narratives, States, and Cities

Matthew Kinloch*

There is no single totalising modern historiographical narrative for thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean. The modern narration of this past is constituted by a collage of narratives, each of which is centred on specific state projects. This article sketches the limitations of the statist common sense that has framed the modern narration of this period, with specific reference to the two most prominent narratives, the decline of Byzantium and the rise of the Ottomans. It then outlines in broad terms the heuristic potential in replacing the state with the city as the foundational unit of analysis for the study of medieval Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean. This approach is intended to build on the theoretical groundwork laid by the pioneers of a holistic medieval Anatolian studies and the increasing number and quality of studies centred on urban centres. The study finishes with a case study, examining the manner in which the failed siege of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia in 1206 and the successful conquest of the city in 1207 have been integrated into and made meaningful within state-centric reconstructions of the history of the early thirteenth century. In particular, it demonstrates how the centring of these states emphasises elite male characters and obscures the roles played by the city's population. This article is intended to set out a broad framework for the other, more fine-grained contributions to this thematic section.

Keywords: Medieval history; states; narrative; historiography; cities; Anatolia; Caucasia; the Aegean

According to the classicizing Greek history of Niketas Choniates, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I (r. 1192–1196, 1205–1211), the ruler of the Seljuq sultanate of Rum, besieged the city of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia on the southwestern coast of Anatolia for sixteen days in 1206.[1] However, a coalition formed between the city's population and a contingent of Latins from Cyprus, summoned to the defence of the city by its ruler, Aldebrandinos, and other urban elites forced the Seljuqs to withdraw. Although Choniates' narrative does not describe the

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1   Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten, 639, trans. Magoulias, 351. The city is named and transliterated into English differently in Greek, Persian, Arabic, Syriac, and Latin, see below, p. 15.

subsequent fate of the city, the Seljuq historian Ibn Bībī, the Arab historian Ibn al-Athīr, and the Syriac historian Gregory Bar Hebraeus all report that in 1207 Kaykhusraw's forces returned and captured it. While Ibn Bībī narrates in detail a quasi-epic siege in which the Seljuqs overcame the Frankish defenders, Ibn al-Athīr and Bar Hebraeus narrate how the Greek-Latin coalition collapsed and the local populace allied with the Seljuqs against their erstwhile allies.[2]

The conflicts around Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia in 1206 and 1207– which will be explored as a case study in the final section of this article – exemplify how the events of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolian, Caucasian, and Aegean past have been narrativized and made meaningful in modern historiographies. Although modern historiographical and disciplinary traditions – most notably from Byzantine, Seljuq, and crusader studies – have framed these events in different ways, all display a similar logic, incorporating the city's capture into statist narratives and using the rulers of these states (and opposing factions) to supply meaning to events.

This article identifies and explicates the centrality of statist narratives in the modern narration of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolian, Caucasian, and Aegean past and both the limitations and predispositions that derive from the state's hegemonic position. It then proposes urban centres and the agencies of their populations as both an alternative unit of analysis and also an alternative framework for structuring macro-historiographical narratives of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolian, Caucasian, and Aegean past with reference to the events of 1206 and 1207.

Statist Narratives

There is no single modern historiographical narrative for thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean. The broadest modern historiographical narratives that claim this space and period as their object of description and explanation are centred on specific state projects.[3] Whether produced explicitly as a state or more often – given pre-modernists' reticence to claim statehood for their objects of study – an empire, a sultanate, a kingdom, a principality, a beylik, or a city-state, some polity almost always frames the modern narration of this past. Consequently for modern scholars, the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolian, Caucasian, and Aegean past is principally constituted of a collage of state-centred narratives. The stories of the decline and fall of the Byzantine – i.e., medieval eastern Roman – empire and the rise of the Ottomans are dominant, but they are accompanied by sub-hegemonic – predominantly national and ethno-nationalist – narratives, such as those of the Armenian Bagratuni, the Georgian Bagrationi, the Latin empire of Constantinople and its feudatories, the Seljuq sultanate of Rum, the second Bulgarian empire, and the Genoese and Venetian maritime empires.

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2   Ibn Bībī, *Al-Awāmir al-ʿalāʾiyyah*, trans. Duda, 44-46; Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, 12, ed. Tornberg, 252-253, trans. Richards, 123; Bar Hebraeus, *Makhtbhanuth Zabhne*, trans. Budge, 420-421.

3   Three influential examples from Byzantine studies illustrate both this centring of the state and the varied forms it takes when history is produced as military-political narratives or as economic or social history. Shepard, *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, Laiou, *Economic History of Byzantium*, Haldon, *Social History of Byzantium*. This centring of the state (or rather multiple states) can even be seen in studies that transcend the limits of a single discipline/state project. For example, Vryonis, *Decline*; Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*; Korobeinikov, *Byzantium and the Turks.*

The state provides a foundational common-sense framework for the disciplines from which these historiographical narratives emerge. The entire field of Byzantine history, for example, is dominated by and largely synonymous with the story of the Roman state in the medieval period. The narrative of Rome's decline and fall – which, thanks in part to Edward Gibbon's eighteenth-century intervention, remains the dominant story of Byzantine historiography – is the story of a state.[4] Its emperors are judged to be ›good‹ or ›bad‹ depending on the extent to which they enable the state to reproduce itself, especially on an expanded scale, while vast periods of the past are labelled as ›dark ages‹ or ›renaissances‹, depending on the territorial extent of the state. Even those framings which push the Byzantine world beyond the territorial confines of the empire maintain a statist framework. In practice, for example, Dimitri Obolensky's conceptualisation of the Byzantine world as a commonwealth, in part, ends up projecting the spectre of the Roman state beyond its territorial limits.[5]

The collapse of the Roman state, following the conquest of Constantinople by the forces of the fourth crusade in 1204 and the subsequent disintegration of the empire, interrupts the traditional state-centric structure typical of the narration of Byzantine historiography. This interruption, however, demonstrates the synonymity of the narrative of the Byzantine state and the discipline of Byzantine history, since not even the collapse and consequent absence of the structuring imperial state has displaced the state-centric logic that governs modern Byzantine historiography. This logic is maintained in two principal ways in the narratives that have emerged to construct the post-1204 Byzantine world. First, this new world is framed in terms of interstate anarchy, in which states are produced as competitors for dominance in a zero-sum game. This language, which is regularly deployed commonsensically, presumes the tenets of modern realist international relations theory and *realpolitik*, without explicitly engaging with the theoretical apparatus of this scholarly tradition.[6] The Byzantine empire is described as fragmenting into a number of successor states. This phrasing, which has become a trope, offers the dominant metaphorical framing of the history of the period. The states that emerged in the former territories of the empire – some formed by the Latins that had sacked the city and others created by Roman elites – and the pre-existing states, such as the Seljuq sultanate and second Bulgarian empire, that expanded into the vacuum it left behind are produced as *fragments* of and *successors* to the given hegemonic state for Byzantine studies. In the case of non-Roman polities this framing depends on an implicit assumption of a classical and early medieval Roman empire that held all Anatolia. The story of thirteenth-century Byzantine history, is consequently a narrative of interstate competition between these states for hegemony over the former territories of the twelfth-century Byzantine empire.[7] Second, one of those competitors is privileged as the natural hegemonic state

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4   Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*; Bryer, Gibbon and the later Byzantine Empires, 101-16.

5   Obolensky, *Byzantine Commonwealth*. For this phenomenon as articulated in Caucasia and specifically Armenia, see Rapp, *Caucasia and the First Byzantine Commonwealth*; *idem, Caucasia and the Second Byzantine Commonwealth*.

6   The only extended study by an international relations theorist on Byzantine history has not, in general, been either well received or particularly influential, Luttwak, *Grand Strategy*. For explicit and consistent relevant use of *realpolitik,* see Dadoyan, *Armenian Realpolitik in the Islamic World*.

7   The various competitors are typically understood as successor states, that is as successors to the east Roman state, regardless of their relationship to the pre-1204 Roman empire.

for this space throughout, since the so-called empire of Nicaea is systematically privileged and treated consistently as if it were, from the moment of Constantinople's conquest in 1204, already the Byzantine empire itself in exile, despite the power and pretentions of its various ›rivals‹. The story of thirteenth-century Byzantine history has become the story of the reconstitution of the Byzantine empire as a hegemonic state along the lines of the twelfth-century empire.[8]

States are centred in the narration of thirteenth-century Byzantium, both by framing the period in terms of the competition between states and by naturalising Nicaean hegemony at the heart of the dominant narrative and in all possible counter-narratives. Critiques of Nicaea's privileged treatment have simply offered up alternative statist narratives based on one of its ›competitors‹. Narratives arguing for the legitimacy and importance of the empire of Thessalonike/despotate of Epirus, the empire of Trebizond, or even the Latin empire of Constantinople have been offered in contrast to the Nicaean narrative, but they are underpinned by the same logic.[9] This is not the place to unpick the inconsistencies of the logic that has produced this specific narrative, which rests upon the teleology of Constantinople's so-called ›reconquest‹ in 1261 by the forces of Nicaea.[10] It is sufficient here simply to highlight the statist logic and narrative framework that underpins historiographical narration in the domain of Byzantine history.

The traditional narrative of the rise – as well as, for that matter, the fall – of the Ottoman empire is underpinned by the same state-centric logic and emerges from a discipline that is similarly aligned with a single imperial project. Just like their Byzantine counterparts, Ottoman sultans are evaluated according to their success in enabling the state to reproduce itself and expand its territorial holdings. The period immediately preceding the emergence of the Ottoman empire in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries has traditionally been reconstructed according to a similar logic as that of the collapse of the Byzantine state in the thirteenth century. The pre-Ottoman world (functionally Anatolia) has traditionally been framed as a ferment of states each competing to occupy the naturalised role of regional hegemonic power – itself partially framed by the logic of Byzantine imperial history. The history of fourteenth-century Anatolia, written from this perspective, is the history of the competing Anatolian beyliks, into which the Constantinopolitan Palaiologan/Byzantine empire and the empire of Trebizond (the Byzantine beylik) are incorporated as potential competitors. At the same time, a single state project, the Ottoman state, is teleologically singled out and privileged as the natural hegemonic state for the region.[11] Within this framework, the Seljuq sultanate of Rum has been produced as one of a string of ›authentic‹ Turkish states to which both

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8   Kinloch, *Rethinking Thirteenth-Century Byzantine Historiography*, 40-68; *idem*, The Nikaian Narrative, 471-490.

9   For examples in the case of the empires of Trebizond and Thessalonike, see Eastmond, *Art and Identity*; Karpozilos, *Ecclesiastical Controversy.*

10   For a critique of this logic see Kinloch, *Rethinking Thirteenth-Century Byzantine Historiography*, 40-68.

11   This concept and logic also travels to Byzantine studies, where the Ottoman empire is tacitly understood as the natural successor to Byzantium, since the space occupied by both states has been naturalised as a space that should be occupied by a single state. The logic of the Byzantine state thus survives 1453 not only as the spectral (and yet somehow unitary) *Byzance après Byzance*, but also in the way we talk about the Ottoman empire as a natural organisational unit for the space that the Byzantine state once inhabited. For which see, Laiou, Byzantium and the neighbouring powers, 49.

the Ottoman empire and modern Turkish nation-state are the natural heirs. At the same time, the period of Mongol domination in Anatolia was produced until recently as »an unwelcome interlude that wrecked the country and left no formative traces«.[12] This historiographical tradition and the framing of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolian history as pre-Ottoman have been systematically critiqued in the course of the twenty-first century, although the centrality of the Ottoman and other states has largely remained.[13]

As the symbiotic stories of Byzantine decline and the rise of the Ottomans make apparent, statist narratives are not discrete entities, but come into being already jumbled together.[14] Alongside the rise of the Ottomans, the story of Byzantine decline, for example, also overlaps with that of the steady expansion of Italian city-states into the eastern Mediterranean – itself a fraction of the story of the rise of the capitalist West, made manifest in the conquest of Constantinople in 1204 by the forces of the fourth crusade. The often explicitly ethno-nationalist narrative of the birth of the second Bulgarian empire, also at the cusp of the thirteenth century, similarly intersects with the story of Byzantine decline, albeit framed in terms of secession and internal collapse, rather than foreign incursion.[15]

Acknowledging that modern historiography concerning this period and space is dominated by statist narratives is not to say that these narrative traditions produce all events in the same way. Patently, the same events are presented in dramatically different ways depending on the statist narrative that informs their production. The Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204, the Mongol victory at Kösedağ in 1243, and the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, are inflected differently by the modern scholars who have come to identify with the hegemonic state of their period, space, or discipline, whether Byzantine, crusader, Mongol, Seljuq, or Ottoman. However, regardless of the variety of meanings imposed on these events by specific modern narratives and historiographical traditions, they are all made meaningful according to the same state-centric logic, which produces moments of the past as either ›good‹ or ›bad‹ for specific state projects. The Seljuq defeat by the Mongols at the so-called battle of Kösedağ (1243) offers an interesting illustration of this logic at play in multiple ways. While defeat at Kösedağ is framed as a cataclysmic and transformative moment for the Seljuq sultanate, symbolizing the end of a ›golden age‹ of Seljuq authority, it is accorded less transformative power in Mongol historiography, where it is produced as one of many major victories.[16] At the same time, this battle and the wider impact of the Mongols on the Aegean

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12   Melville, Anatolia under the Mongols, 51.

13   Peacock *et al.*, Introduction. For a critique of this tradition framed as medieval Anatolian studies, see below, p. 13.

14   For this symbiosis see Paul Linder's justification for periodisation in the *Cambridge History of Turkey: Byzantium to Turkey (1071-1453)*. Lindner, Anatolia, 1300-1451, 102, »This chapter narrates and discusses some major lines of development in Anatolia between the turn of the fourteenth century and the second accession to power of Mehmed II. The emphasis lies on the early Ottoman enterprise, thanks to the fact that it had become the major power in the peninsula by the end of the 150 years under discussion. The end point of our coverage is entirely reasonable, as there is general agreement that Mehmed the Conqueror's reign was a turning point in the creation of one imperial polity and the wreck of another, Byzantium.«

15   For a recent overview of the historiography of the second Bulgarian empire see, Madgearu, *The Asanids*, 11-28.

16   For the contrast in treatment compare the following, Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 137-138; Jackson, *Mongols and the West*, 74.

world has generally been framed in terms of its impact on various state projects. In the case of the Byzantine world, Kösedağ has been depicted as producing a moment of respite from Seljuq territorial westward expansion that allowed the empire of Nicaea to form and expand.[17] Regardless of the varied ways that this event has been narrativized and made meaningful in modern historiography, that meaning has generally been the outcome of a statist narrative logic.

The stories of Byzantine decline and the rise of the Ottomans are perhaps the most paradigmatic examples, but narratives centred on specific states that offer similar structures and logics are ubiquitous. Modern historiography of the Caucasus in this period, for example, is dominated by the story of the rise and fall of the Bagratid Georgian kingdom – which reached the zenith of its so-called ›golden age‹ at the end of twelfth century, before rapidly receding in the face of Khwarezmian and then Mongol pressure in the early thirteenth century.[18] The story of the Cilician principality/kingdom of Armenia offers a similar schema and logic: from its emergence at the end of the eleventh century and its consolidation of power – exemplified by Lewon I's coronation as king – at the end of the twelfth century, to its subordination to the Mongol Ilkhanate in the thirteenth century and collapse under the Lusignians in the fourteenth.[19]

In short, the dominant macroscopic modern historiographical narratives concerning thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean centre the state in two foundational ways: first, by focusing on specific state projects and, second, by situating those projects within a wider narrative of interstate competition. These historiographical narratives both directly construct the past as history and frame the past's modern production through its material traces. Not only does this produce the state as *the* natural unit of analysis, but it also brings with it a host of predispositions.

Statist narratives in modern historiographies about the medieval world are the product of the state's hegemony over its subjects (i.e., the majority of humanity) both in the past and today. Both the source material for modern narratives and those narratives themselves reflect a statist common sense that has become naturalised as past reality.[20] These narratives are stories of, by, and for the ruling class and reflect that class's hegemony in particular times and places that aggregate into a historical vision reflecting the successive world-views of dominant elites. Consequently, these narratives justify the hierarchy and exploitation on which the state and its concomitant elites depend, not least, by producing states as natural entities for the organisation of human societies and thus as natural units of historical analysis. The naturalisation of class violence and oppression, fundamental to these narratives, are intertwined with the story of gender violence and patriarchy, a development for the most part historically coeval with statehood, since control of the means of reproduction has proved essential to the maintenance of the division of labour and state power at the most fundamental level.[21]

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17   Generally, see Giebfried, Mongol invasions and the Aegean, 129-139; Morgan, Mongols and the Eastern Mediterranean, 198-211; May, Mongol presence, 133-156. On Nicaea in particular, see Langdon, Byzantino-Mongolica, 95-140.

18   For example, see Rayfield, *Edge of Empires*, esp. 98-117.

19   The emergence of this Armenian state has been understood as the end of what Seta Dadoyan has called the ›Armenian Intermezzo‹. Dadoyan, *Armenian Realpolitik in the Islamic World*, 7-9.

20   For the concept of hegemony, see Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*; Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, esp. 7-46.

21   For an early articulation of this, see Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy.*

The confluence of class and gender violence in modern historiographical narratives can be seen most clearly in the manner in which male rulers have become naturalised as the protagonists of traditional historiographical narratives. The decision making and personality of emperors, sultans, and kings occupy a pre-eminent position in the description and explanation of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century past. Despite the critical reappraisal of a historiography dominated by the imperial palace, explicit biographical approaches are retained and the protagonists of modern historiographical narratives concerning this period are most often the male rulers of states, who personify the state, representing it in narration in various combinations of metaphor, metonymy, and synecdoche.[22] This is a foundational problem created by textual survival, which is not sufficiently dealt with by simply acknowledging the bias of source material, if the same interpretive models are retained.

At the same time, the dominance of states exacerbates the tendency for historiographical narratives to be co-opted by modern ethno-nationalist state projects. The historic and contemporary impact of various southeastern European, Anatolian, and Caucasian statist ethno-nationalisms, have been well studied. However, it is worth acknowledging that these discourses generally depend on the identification of a modern with a medieval nation-state. Even conversations concerning Byzantium that have sought to detach Byzantine identification from specific nation-states, by stressing Romanness as an organizing identity, have fundamentally served to produce an ethno-nationalist narrative as if there were a modern Byzantine/Roman state.[23]

Cities and Urban Agencies

The state-centric framework provided by traditional historiographical narratives produces a statist vision of the past, which not only reflects but also compounds the overrepresentation of the state and the male elites, who monopolised the hegemony it established, both in the past and over the textual record. The remainder of this article will suggest that cities, and the agencies of their populations, offer an alternative organising unit of analysis to the state. The aim here is twofold, not only to denaturalise the monopoly held by the state in the domain of modern historiographical narration, but also to sketch one potential framework for a macroscopic historiography of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean, capable of sustaining comparative analysis and military-political narration without resorting to traditional statist narratives and logics.

It is worth pointing out at this stage, however, that this article's objective is not to propose *the* correct way of narrating the past by replacing statist historiography, but rather to suggest an alternative heuristic and analytic focus (understood to be one of many). It begins with the assumption that modern historiography is just that, modern, and that the narrative frameworks through which it produces the past are substantive constructions rather than transparent representations of past reality. By decentring the state, a critical reanalysis of this period and space organised around cities and their populations has the potential to produce a less elitist, hierarchical, male, and ethno-nationalist historiography. This is not so much because of any immanent liberatory qualities of cities, but rather because they offer a suitably ubiquitous, well-studied, and well-sourced unit of analysis for the organisation of alternative narratives, capable of challenging state-centric historiography.

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22   Kinloch, *Rethinking Thirteenth-Century Byzantine Historiography*, esp. 176-177.

23   Kaldellis, *Romanland*.

Urban centres constitute a common feature of Anatolia, the Caucasus, and the Aegean during the period under discussion, although one that was neither uniform nor equally distributed. Throughout most of Anatolia, the Caucasus, and the Aegean, there were large and more often medium-sized settlements, where populations of humans concentrated. This is not to say that cities were the only important constitutive elements of this world – indeed, as Philipp Niewöhner has noted, middle- and late-Byzantine Anatolia »should probably be conceptualized as a predominantly rural society«.[24] However, the ubiquity of urban settlements and the regularity with which they appear in the surviving textual record offers the potential to ground a non-statist historiography, in a way that the textual footprint of rural populations rarely allows.

When integrated into the military-political history of Byzantium dominated by the state, its male ruling elite, and military-political affairs, cities have tended to be produced in ways that subordinate their stories to the state.[25] Deurbanisation in the so-called Dark Ages, for example, is produced as an expression of the decline of the state. Cities tend to become most prominent when they are made synonymous with the state. Such cities as Constantinople and Konya became defined by their role as the central hub of a particular state. Indeed, several states have come to be known in scientific literature by reference to their metropolitan centres, from the empires of Nicaea and Trebizond, to Erzincan, which has given its name to both the Armenian principality and the Turkoman beylik that were centred on the city in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[26] Cities appear in military-political narratives of state expansion and collapse as sites and objects of action (i.e., places that are conquered or to which rulers travel), but less often as agents in their own right.[27] Even if cities are not produced as an expression of the state's success or fully assimilated into it as metonymic centres, cities and the autonomous actions of their inhabitants are defined either in opposition to it, in terms of rebellion against or resistance to some state or ruler, or as proto-states, as the case of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia addressed below will illustrate.

To date, the most sophisticated and successful critical reframing of the statist historiographical traditions that have dominated the historiography of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean has come in the form of medieval Anatolian studies. Scholars, such as Sara Nur Yıldız and Andrew Peacock, have offered the framing of medieval Anatolian studies in opposition to the traditional teleological, nationalist, and anachronistic framing of pre-Ottoman (or even medieval/Seljuq) Turkey.[28] This reframing has been dominated by scholars working on the Seljuq sultanate of Rum and Mongol Anatolia, albeit in collaboration with scholars working on Cilician and Greater Armenia and Byzantium.[29]

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24 Niewöhner, Urbanism, 59.

25 In part, this seems to be because the explicit study of cities has principally fallen to archaeologists, specialists in material culture, or social and economic historians.

26 In the cases of Nicaea and Trebizond, urban signifiers are paired with dynastic identifiers and used interchangeably with the Laskarid empire and the empire of the Grand Komnenoi.

27 Agency is understood here in the broadest possible sense as the manifestation of the capacity to act. Without precipitating a debate concerning the terminology and the metaphysics of intentionality, agency is deployed to signal a clear focus on who or what is able to act in both medieval and modern narratives concerning the period. Highlighting agency is intended to redistribute some capacities from the state and its ruler to other actors.

28 Peacock and Yıldız, Introduction, esp. 6–12.

29 E.g., Peacock and Yıldız, *The Seljuks of Anatolia.*

This critical reframing has principally served to limit the influence of the Ottoman empire on the study of the period before it existed and to challenge the ethno-nationalist logic that informed its narration. While it has not entirely dislodged the Seljuq sultanate of Rum from its position as the given hegemonic state for the study of Anatolia in this period, it has denaturalised its framing as one of a string of ›authentic‹ pre-modern Turkish states and provided a more inclusive framework for the incorporation of other histories, whether Turkoman, Mongol, Armenian, or Byzantine.[30]

Shifting the framework of analysis to the macro-level of Anatolian studies has revealed a number of potentials that can be developed, particularly its success in embedding the story of individual states in a wider context given by the geographic framing of Anatolia. Of course, as the proponents of medieval Anatolian studies have noted, and have sought to offset, semi-geographical terms, such as Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean, cannot stand entirely outside traditional statist narrative paradigms. Geographical space cannot be taken as either absolute or a natural given, and certainly cannot be uncritically used to replace state-centric frameworks, not least because of the association of the term Anatolia with Kemalist Turkish state-nationalism.[31] The area that has recently been framed by scholars working on the sixteenth century as the Ottoman east (i.e., northern Kurdistan/western Armenia/eastern Turkey) cannot really be identified geographically outside of the claims of specific states and ethno-nationalisms to the territory.[32]

Macro-geographical framings have in part managed to escape individual statist narrative frameworks by embedding them into frameworks of interstate politics and (inevitably) competition across larger geographical regions. Revisionist accounts of the potential of the Trapezuntine and Epirot states in the thirteenth century or of various beyliks in the fourteenth as opposed, respectively, to Nicaean- and Ottoman-centric teleology, retain the state and interstate competition as their organisational framework. Likewise accounts of the fourteenth century that produce Anatolia and Caucasia as outlying provinces of the Ilkhanate, despite successfully shifting the scale of analysis – to include a story of the vast Mongol empires that spanned Eurasia and their rivals, such as the Egyptian Mamluk sultanate – maintain the centrality of states.

The simple contention of this article and the workshop from which the papers in this section of the volume arose, is that there is heuristic potential in replacing the state with the city as *the* foundational unit of analysis for the kind of macroscopic and open historiography pioneered by the Anatolian studies practitioners. Instead of aggregating the stories of states and their conflicts into a macro-historical framework, why can the city not serve this function? Recent scholarship has seen an explosion of increasingly detailed and powerful studies of specific urban contexts.[33] Such studies offer promising foundations for a granular and open synthetic historiography of medieval Anatolia, Caucasia, and the Aegean.

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30 Even studies that are not explicitly produced within this tradition offer a vision of it. See for example, Eastmond, *Tamta's World*.

31 The Russian imperialist undertones of terms such as Transcaucasia and Ciscaucasia offer a similar problem. Generally on space as relational, relative, and absolute, see Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism*, 119-148.

32 For an astute treatment of this problem in the study of the nineteenth century, see Sipahi, *et al.*, Ottoman Historiography's Black Hole, 1-15.

33 For illustrative examples, see Redford, *Landscape and the State*; *idem*, *Legends of Authority*; Asp, *Trebizond and Constantinople*; De Nicola, *The Chobanids of Kastamonu*. For a broad overview and a variety of archaeological case studies, see Niewöhner, *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia*.

Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia (1206/1207)

The manner in which the failed siege of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia in 1206 and the successful conquest of the city in 1207 have been integrated into and made meaningful within modern reconstructions of the history of the early thirteenth century offers an illustrative example of how relatively typical textual material has been incorporated into traditional statist narrative frameworks. In particular, it demonstrates the point that these frameworks emphasise elite male characters and obscure the role of the city's population.

As in the study of various localities, the study of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia's turbulent history in the early thirteenth century has been recently advanced by the work of Scott Redford and Gary Leiser, whose study of the *fatiḥnāma* (*fetiḥnāme*) inscriptions, commemorating the later Seljuq conquest of the city in 1216, provides a foundation for the sort of conceptual prognostication undertaken here.[34] In their examination of events of 1206 and 1207, understood as preamble and context for their study of the 1216 *fatiḥnāma*, they have set out a firm chronology of events and identified all the relevant source material. Building on previous scholarship from various disciplines, the basic narrative that Redford and Leiser have pieced together from passages in narratives in various languages and traditions, as well as from the *fatiḥnāma*, is as follows.[35] In 1206 a Seljuq siege of the city failed thanks to military support from the Latin kingdom of Cyprus. A second Seljuq siege in 1207 was, on the contrary, successful thanks to dissension between the city's inhabitants and the Cypriots. Although Redford and Leiser's treatment offers a synthesis of various schools of thought, the narrativization of these events in modern scholarship has tended to take three distinct forms, depending on whether the Byzantine, Seljuq, or Cypriot/Crusader states have been centred. Each of these traditions produce everything from the name of the city to the meaning of events differently. However, they each do so according to the same statist logic.

At the most foundational level, each of these three historiographical traditions deploy different signifiers to identify the city itself – Attaleia (Byzantine), Antalya (Seljuq), and Satalia (Cypriot/Crusader) – necessitating the cumbersome triple naming of the city throughout this article.[36] These differences in linguistic and transliterative preferences extend to the names of characters as well, with Greek, Persian/Turkish, and Latin versions of names making the searching of indexes laborious work.[37] Beyond naming practices, however, each tradition is also organised around a different principal protagonist, in each case the male ruler of the privileged state or, in the case of Attaleia, city(-state). The Byzantine story is dominated by the mysterious figure of Aldebrandinos – according to the *History* of Niketas Choniates, »an

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34 Redford and Leiser, *Victory Inscribed*, 89-91. These events are generally treated together with the events of 1212, in which the city's inhabitants once again enlisted Cypriot aid against the Seljuks, and of 1216, when the city was again conquered by the Seljuks.

35 For example, see Hellenkemper and Hild, *Lykien und Pamphylien*, 297-341, esp. 308.

36 In fact, it is worth noting that Antalya is repeatedly mistaken for Antakya in the source material. For a more detailed list of the various terms used to identify the city, see Hellenkemper and Hild, *Lykien und Pamphylien*, 297.

37 On his first mention, for example, Redford and Leiser simultaneously use all the various options for the name of »Aldobrandino/i/us«; Redford and Leiser, *Victory Inscribed,* 90.

Italian by birth who was strictly raised according to Roman traditions« and had become ruler of the city in the early thirteenth century.[38] Modern Seljuq histories, in contrast, are dominated by the sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I (r. 1192–1196, 1205–1211), while histories focused on the Kingdom of Cyprus and the crusader states revolve around the person of Gautier de Montbéliard, the regent of the Kingdom of Cyprus (1205–1210).[39]

Beyond naming and the central characters, each tradition makes these events meaningful by incorporating them into different statist narratives. For Byzantinists, it is one of many examples of regional disintegration and separatism that started after the death of Basil II in 1180 and intensified after the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204.[40] As such it is contextualised alongside the ›rebellions‹ of other areas of the empire in the period, from twelfth-century Cyprus and Bulgaria to thirteenth-century Philadelphia, Trebizond, and the Maeander valley. For historians of the Seljuq sultanate of Rum it is a key conquest in the expansion of the Seljuq state, which along with the capture of Sinope represents a symbolic moment of expansion.[41] Historians of Cyprus and the crusader states, by contrast, have made these events meaningful through the story of the kingdom of Cyprus' dynastic, political, and economic history. Most important here are the conflict between the regent Montbéliard and the crown and the failed attempt to bring Rhodes into the political orbit of the kingdom.[42]

To some extent, these three modern traditions simply reflect the source material that scholars have privileged, their disciplinary orientation, and their linguistic training. Although Choniates' Greek history of the Roman empire does mention Kaykhusraw, it centres Aldebrandinos and contextualizes the fate of Attaleia, by reference to the other provincial rulers, with whom he is listed in the *History*.[43] While he is not constructed as important enough to be one of the heads of what Choniates terms the »three-headed monster constituted of the stupid«, a critique reserved for Manuel Maurozomes, Theodore Laskaris, and David Komnenos, his appearance in the narrative is determined by events related to these other rulers.[44] Kaykhusraw likewise dominates the Arabic account of Ibn al-Athīr, the Syriac account of Gregory Bar Hebraeus, and the Persian account of Ibn Bībī, but the prominence

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38 Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten, 639, trans. Magoulias, 351.

39 Historiography concerning the later Seljuk conquest in 1216 is likewise centred on the person of ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs (r. 1211-1220), while it is consistently made meaningful by reference to the succession struggle between Kaykāʾūs and his brother Alāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād, precipitated by Kaykhusraw's death in 1211. For illustrative examples of the three traditions compare, descriptions by Byzantinists (Hoffmann, *Rudimente von Territorialstaaten*, 69-71, 100; Cheynet, *Pouvoir et Contestations,* 147-148) with those of historians of the Seljuk sultanate of Rum (Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 119-120), and historians of crusader Cyprus (Edbury, *Kingdom of Cyprus*, 42–43; Hill, *History of Cyprus*, 74-75). Redford and Leiser (*Victory Inscribed*, 89-91) remains somewhat mixed, since the collaborative project included Byzantine specialists.

40 Hoffmann, *Rudimente von Territorialstaaten*; Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*; Cheynet, *Pouvoir et Contestations*.

41 Redford and Leiser, *Victory Inscribed*, esp. 89.

42 Edbury, *Kingdom of Cyprus*, 42-43.

43 Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten, 640, trans. Magoulias, 351.

44 Niketas Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten, 625-626, trans. Magoulias, 343.

of Montbéliard is harder to justify on closer inspection of the source material, since he is not mentioned by name in any of the four histories.[45] Indeed, since Ibn al-Athīr states that all the Franks were killed and Bar Hebraeus that they were all captured, scholars are forced to hypothesise that Montbéliard was ransomed, although there is no direct evidence for this, in order to place him in Cyprus in late 1207, where his presence is attested.[46]

Despite their (relative) correspondence with the source material's privileging of these rulers, this mode of telling the story of the capture of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia removes agency from the three group characters which appear even more consistently across all four narratives than these rulers, namely the Attaleians/Greeks, the Franks/Latins, and the Turks/Persians/Muslims.[47] The statist logic which singles out rulers and the stories of their states as the chief vectors of meaning obscures the agency of these core groups, which are subsumed into the agency of their leaders. For example, in both Bar Hebraeus and Ibn al-Athīr's accounts, which offer very similar descriptions, the Greeks – who are also identified as *ahl al-balad* [the urban populace] – repeatedly act collectively in pivotal roles, sending for aid to the Franks of Cyprus, coming into conflict with them, and then sending for aid to the Muslims outside the city.

In short, modern historiographies have moulded the conquest of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia into events that work for their own narratives. Although each tradition produces different events, dynamics, and meanings, they each produce these effects by recourse to the same logic of interpretation and construction. The first step towards breaking the stranglehold of this logic is to read for the agency of characters, like the Attaleians, who tend to be obscured by the narratives of states and rulers. The second is to produce more imaginative and less pre-determined frameworks of interpretation. Across the Anatolian, Caucasian, and Aegean world in this period, urban centres were involved in similar action, yet these happenings, as in this case study, have been produced as footnotes in statist narratives. The steady progression of Nicaea across western Anatolia, Trapezuntine conquests along the Black Sea coast in north-western Anatolia, Seljuq expansion throughout Anatolia, the conquests of crusaders across Greece, and Georgian expansion across Caucasia are all statist stories. Each of these stories, and many others, are predicated on lists of conquered urban centres, some described in more and others in less detail than the conquest of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia. However, when examined differently, those same episodes produce alternative dynamics, logics, and agencies.

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45   Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, 12, ed. Tornberg, 252-253, trans. Richards, 123; Bar Hebraeus, *Makhtbhanuth Zabhne*, trans. Budge, 420-421. Edbury, *Kingdom of Cyprus*, 42-43. Hill, *History of Cyprus*, 74-75. Scott and Leiser, *Victory Inscribed*, 90.

46   Hill, *History of Cyprus*, 75, n. 1.

47   The only exception is Ibn Bībī's narrative where the Franks and urban populace are collapsed into a single enemy.

Future Directions

The extent to which the people of Attaleia/Antalya/Satalia or their narrative construction and function, in the four short passages briefly examined here, are representative or anomalous remains in question. Less well studied and/or attested examples not only abound but dominate. It will only be after extensive, collaborative, and accumulative work that a more macroscopic lens will be able to be applied to this problem. However, placing this tiny example under the microscope is intended to illuminate a potentially fruitful avenue of investigation, capable of fragmenting and denaturalising the state's role in traditional narration of the Anatolian, Caucasian, and Aegean past. The articles in this thematic section, while they offer a rich variety of other things as well, together both demonstrate the heuristic value of and lay the foundations for this potentially liberatory framework for approaching this period and space.

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Urban Agency and the City Notables of Medieval Anatolia

A. C. S. Peacock*

Scholarship on the city in the Islamic world has generally played down the autonomy and collective agency of cities. This article explores the case of Anatolia, usually neglected in discussions of Islamic urbanism, focusing on the Seljuq period of the 13th century. While much scholarship on Anatolia acknowledges the role of *futuwwa* (trade-based confraternities somewhat analogous to guilds), I argue the independence of these organisations has been overestimated, for many were closely linked to sultanic power. The paper suggests that in fact power was negotiated between rulers and urban notables (*a'yān*), who had considerable autonomy and who brokered binding contracts (*sawgandnāmas*) with sultans that expressed their rights and obligations. *A'yān* played a crucial role in decisions such as the surrender of their cities to conquerors and in negotiating terms, a role for which analogies can be identified elsewhere in the Middle East. Finally, the article makes some preliminary suggestions as to the identities of these *a'yān*.

Keywords: Anatolia, Seljuq, urbanism, notables

Scholarship on the city in the Islamic world has generally played down the autonomy and collective agency of cities. Notwithstanding recent interest in the role of patricians or notables in urban life, the general tendency has been, following a trajectory set by Max Weber nearly 100 years ago, to emphasise that the inhabitants of the Islamic city – if we can use such a term[1] – enjoyed significantly less power compared to those of medieval Europe, with the management of their affairs largely determined by their rulers. As Boaz Shoshan put it,

> Why is it that despite the uninterrupted existence of urban life in the house of Islam, town dwellers were not entitled nor were they able to claim the right to handle their own finances and taxation, to supervise public works, to decide about matters such as fortifications and food provision, to control weights and measures in the markets, and above all to make war and conclude peace?[2]

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1 Here I do so purely in the sense of cities under Muslim rule; it is probably the case that the majority of the inhabitants of the cities under discussion here, Konya, Kayseri, Ankara and Sivas, were non-Muslim, but nonetheless Muslim political culture was dominant. Clearly such cities were far removed from the patterns of the medieval Maghrib where French scholarship of the early twentieth century first identified an allegedly quintessential »Islamic city«.

2 Shoshan, The ›Politics of Notables‹, 210

Even though this statement was made some forty years ago, the general assumptions still hold. Although some scholarship on the eastern Islamic world has drawn attention to the factional conflicts between city patricians,[3] these have rarely been seen as a force for urban autonomy that could rival or trump that of the sultan and his amirs; at best the notables or »patricians« are seen as an intermediary between ruler and ruled. Thus Michael Chamberlain's study of medieval Damascus may be taken to represent a broader trend in scholarship. According to Chamberlain, its amirs stifled the existence of urban autonomy and, along with the internecine competition between elites, prevented the emergence of a corporate city identity as a legal entity which he takes to characterise European cities and explain their different status.[4]

The extensive scholarship on political and social structures of the medieval Islamic city has not to date taken account of Anatolia.[5] Yet in contrast to the rest of the Islamic world, in scholarship on medieval Islamic Anatolia, the idea of urban autonomy is in fact quite entrenched, in particular because of the Sufi urban fraternities known as *futuwwa*, and their leading figures, called *akhī*s.[6] These have been seen as a distinctively Anatolian form of city organisation at least since the fourteenth century, when the Maghrebi traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa singled them out for comment. Writing of his travels in the 1330s, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa went to some lengths to explain what was evidently an unfamiliar organisation to his readers:

> They are in all of the Turkmen, *Rumi* land, in every town, city and village. There is no one in the world like them for great kindness to strangers, nor anyone quicker to offer food and satisfy [the traveller's] needs, or to admonish the oppressors, kill the police and their evil accomplices. The *akhī* among them is a man whom artisans and other unmarried, single young men make their leader. This is also [called] »*futuwwa*«. He builds a lodge [*zāwiya*] and places there furnishing and lamps and other necessary equipment. He serves his companions during the day while they seek their living, and in the afternoon they bring him what they earned and buy with it fruit and food and other such things which are used in the *zāwiya*. If a traveller comes that day to a city, the put him up with them, which is their hospitality, and they do not leave him till he departs. If no one comes, they gather together over food, and they eat, sing and dance, and leave to do their trades the next day. In the afternoon they bring their leader what they have earned. They are called the *fityān*, and their leader is called the *akhī*, as we mentioned.[7]

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3   Bulliet, *Patricians of Nishapur*.

4   Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice*, 4, 47-48.

5   A full bibliography cannot be given here, but examples of important edited volumes include Hourani and Stern, *The Islamic City*; Bennison and Gascoigne, *Cities in the Pre-Modern Islamic World*. One exception that should be mentioned dealing with Anatolia is Wolper, *Cities and Saints*, but her focus is primarily on the architectural development of Anatolian cities and the links of this process with Sufi communities. She does not, however, offer an extended analysis of the political and social structures underpinning the Anatolian city. Her work forms part of a broader trend in scholarship, where research on Anatolia has concentrated on the urban fabric rather than the socio-political aspects, and thus has been undertaken by architectural historians. For other examples see Blessing, *Rebuilding Anatolia*; Redford, City Building.

6   For a study of Anatolian *futuwwa* with references to recent scholarship, see Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*, Chapter 3; my discussion in the first part of this essay draws on this.

7   Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, 285-286.

Elsewhere, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa underlines the violent rivalries between different *futuwwa* groups that often resulted in public violence. The influence of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's description can hardly be overestimated. His notion of *futuwwa* as a distinctively Anatolia phenomenon, of armed Sufi communities operating beyond the state, and indeed in outright opposition to it, has long proved appealing to scholars in Turkey and beyond as a way of making sense of the structure of politics in a period when centralised political power was waning with the demise of the Seljuqs and the fragmentation of Anatolia into multiple principalities or *beylik*s.[8] For example, a recent essay by Rıza Yıldırım argues that,

> the akhi-fotovvat phenomenon is the result of the decentralisation and localisation process that took part in the cultural environment of a politically fragmented Anatolia. The lack of a powerful central authority paved the way for the *akhī*s to cultivate auto-nomous spheres of political and military influence…. Decentralisation and autonomy vis-à-vis the political authorities were two distinctive features of akhi-fotovvat.[9]

So, if we are looking for collective agency in medieval Anatolian cities, *futuwwa* seems the obvious place to start. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa himself suggests this, writing that,

> It is one of the customs of this land that in places that do not have a sultan, the *akhī* is the ruler. It is he who gives a mount to the incoming traveller, gives him clothes of honour and is good to him as far as he is able. In commanding and forbidding and riding, he is like a sultan.[10]

As a result, *futuwwa* brotherhoods are widely considered at least in Turkish historiography not merely to have challenged state power but even to have supplanted it, most famously in Ankara which has been branded an »*akhī* government« (Ankara Ahiler Hükümeti) or even an »*akhī* republic« (Ahi Cumhuriyeti) in the 14th century,[11] presumably in an effort both to assert Ankara's ancient republican credentials and to draw parallels with the city-states of contemporary Italy. Even though the notion of Ankara as an *akhī* state, a contention for which no evidence exists, was disproved by Paul Wittek in 1932,[12] it continues to feature prominently in Turkish historical writing.

In this paper I wish to take issue with the contentions that underlie this, namely that *futuwwa* represents some kind of non-governmental collective urban agency. After re-moving *futuwwa* from its pedestal, I shall then assess the evidence that we do have for forms of urban collective agency. In particular, I shall draw attention to the decisive but hitherto unnoticed role of city notables or *a'yān* in medieval Anatolian cities, drawing on evidence from the 13th and 14th centuries. I shall argue that the *a'yān*, not *futuwwa*, constituted a

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8   For some examples from early twentieth century Turkish scholarship, see Günaydın, *Ahilik Araştırmaları*, 33-55.

9   Yıldırım, From Naserian Courtly-Fotovvat, 86-87.

10 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, 296.

11 For the early historiography of this idea, see Günaydın, *Ahilik Araştırmaları*, 16-55; for the *akhī* republic, see also Arı, Ahiliğin Siyasal Boyutları, 51-2.

12 Wittek, Zur Geschichte Angoras.

genuinely independent force that played a crucial role in decisions about war, peace and political succession with whom sultans were obliged not merely to negotiate but even to draw up formal written contracts. Finally, I shall suggest that the notion of an Anatolian exceptionalism which still predominates in scholarship is misguided, and in fact the autonomous role of *a'yān*s in medieval Islamic Anatolia strongly resembled that in other parts of the Middle East such as Iran.

While the predominant tendency in scholarship has been to identify *futuwwa* with »decentralisation and autonomy«, the French scholar Claude Cahen in fact drew attention to the fact that *futuwwa* was often closely linked to political authority.[13] Elsewhere Cahen remarked that the »quasi-autonomous« nature of *akhī* government could not be compared to the situation of the city-states of medieval Italy.[14] We can get a better impression of the political role of *futuwwa* if we look beyond Ibn Baṭṭūṭa to some of our local Anatolian sources which may offer less detail but a more nuanced perspective. *Futuwwa* also appears in passing in the surviving chronicles and hagiographies, but perhaps for our purposes the most useful sources is the anonymous Persian history of the Seljuq dynasty composed in Konya in the 14th century, probably by various hands.[15] The value of this work for our purposes is that while most of the text does indeed provide an overview of the dynastic history, its final portions are largely devoted to the events in Konya in the late thirteenth century. Given that one of the distinctive features of Anatolian historiography is the lack of any local chronicles, in striking contrast to the situation elsewhere in the Middle East, this goes some way to plugging this gap and allows us for once a local perspective. *Akhī*s and *futuwwa* feature prominently in this text.

Through the anonymous chronicle, *akhī*s appear working in conjunction with the representatives of state power. For example, when Konya was faced with a concerted attack by Karamanid, Eşrefid and Menteşe Turkmen in 1278, the *akhī*s formed part of a group that also comprised the sultan's deputy as well as local dignitaries such as the town *ra'īs* and notables who went before the Mongol governor Amīn al-Dīn to demand he take action.[16] The following year when the Turkmen besieged the city in the absence of the sultan, the *akhī*s formed the main opposition.[17] Indeed this forms a repeated pattern. As the chronicle puts into the mouth of the notables (*buzurgān*) who are allied with the *akhī*s: »It is in our interests to protect the city because the sultan is occupied with the Turks and is unable to help us.«[18] The leading *akhī* of late thirteenth century Konya, Akhī Aḥmad Shāh, is said to have commanded several thousand soldiers and irregulars (*junūd wa runūd*).[19]

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13 E.g. Cahen, Mouvements populaires, 243.

14 Cahen, *La Turquie*, 321.

15 *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*; for a discussion of its composition, see Melville, Early Persian historiography.

16 *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 104.

17 *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 110.

18 *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 125.

19 Aflākī, *Manāqib al-'ārifīn*, 2, ed. Yazıcı, 611; trans. O'Kane, *Feats*, 419; *runūd* is a negative term often attached to adherents of *futuwwa*.

Sometimes, then, the *akhī*s and the notables do indeed give the impression of filling a gap left by absent state power, and indeed the command of such men and resources suggest the *akhī*s almost represent a state within a state. However, the *akhī*s' military role in defending the city is not a result of decentralisation or political collapse but simply because the sultan is physically absent; there is, in other words, a void of authority and the *akhī*s and urban notables fill it. On other occasions, the very close links between the Seljuq authorities and the *akhī*s are evident. For instance, the chronicle records that in 689/1290 »All the *jawānān* [i.e. *fityān*, members of *futuwwa* brotherhoods] put on armour at the sultan's deliberation… the sultan honoured all the *akhī*s and *jawānān*,«[20] and indeed *akhī*s evidently carried out a role as assassins or executioners for the sultan. In 698/1299 the killing of the *sharābsālār* was ordered by the sultan, and it was carried out by the hand of Akhī Jarūq.[21] The chronicle also records how the akhīs acted as intermediaries between holders of power and the local population. For example, when the Mongol governor Fakhr al-Dīn Qazwīnī tried to regulate the sale of salt and confiscated sheep, riots broke out. We are told that »The leaders of the town, Akhī Aḥmad Shāh, went with a group of officials and *jawānān* to Ṣāḥib Qazwīnī to tell him of their situation and the wrong innovations [*bid'athā*] he had introduced.«[22]

The Konya chronicle generally underlines the alliance between the Seljuq sultan and the *akhī*s against the Mongols and the Turkmen. This doubtless reflects at least one of the chroniclers' own perspectives as a Seljuq loyalist, as is suggested by the fact that the last event recorded in the chronicle is the death of an otherwise unknown member of the dynasty in 765/1364, more than half a century after it had lost the last vestiges of power.[23] Yet elsewhere we also find *akhī*s and *futuwwa* guilds tightly bound into Mongol governing structures. In Aksaray, for example, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa records that the local deputy of the Ilkhanid ruler was a *futuwwa* adherent: »We stayed there [in Aksaray] in the *zāwiya* of Sharīf Ḥusayn, the deputy of the amir Eretna. This latter is the deputy of the king of Iraq [the Ilkhan] in the parts of Rum he controls. This Sharīf is one of the *fityān*, and has a large following.«[24] Similarly, in the late fourteenth century, the close ally of the ruler of Sivas and Kayseri, Burhān al-Dīn Aḥmad (r. 1381-1398) was the local *akhī* chief, Akhī 'Isa, who served him as ambassador and deputy.[25]

Generally speaking, *akhī*s' power seems to have been informal, although we do have evidence that lists of members of *futuwwa* organisations were kept by the qāḍī of Konya.[26] However, there are no official decrees surviving that indicate appointment as chief *akhī* was made by the state, in contrast to the mysterious parallel urban organisation, the *akādisha* (Turkish *iğdiş*), whose chief does seem to have been appointed by the government.[27] *Futuwwa* was thus organisationally autonomous, up to a point, but was frequently allied to state power, and we sometimes find *akhī*s holding other official positions, such as one who is mentioned

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20   *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 117.

21   *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 132.

22   *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 118.

23   *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 134.

24   Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, 295.

25   Astarābādī, *Bazm u Razm*, ed. Rifaat, 228.

26   Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*, 138-139.

27   See the appointment decree for the *amīr-i ikdishān* in el-Hoyi, *Gunyetu'l-Katib* ed. Erzi, 32-33.

as *shiḥna* or military governor of Malatya.[28] Moreover, it is also clear that on occasion *futuwwa* groups' relations with the populace were extremely negative. The anonymous chronicle records how in 688/1289-90, *futuwwa* groups (here described as *runūd*) were involved in riots in which they came off victorious, »seizing houses and tormenting the people« (*mardum-rā muʿadhdhab mīdāshtand*), such that people were too afraid even to go to their gardens for fear of them.[29] It thus seems difficult to see *futuwwa* as an expression of urban agency in a meaningful sense; rather, if anything, it was an extension of state power.

However, there were other means by which urban agency and autonomy were articulated. The anonymous chronicle frequently refers to the town notables, variously described as the *buzurgān*, *aʿyān* or *muʿtabarān*. For example, on recording Akhī Jarūq's killing of the *sharābsālār* at the sultan's order, the chronicle notes that it was done »with the consent of the city notables« (*bi-ittifāq-i aʿyān-i shahr*).[30] For the sultan's order to be implemented, then, the agreement of the local town notables was required, who are clearly a separate group from the *akhī*s. It is evident from the major history of Seljuq Anatolia, Ibn Bībī's *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾiyya*, that this event was not an exception, but rather the townsmen and their leading figures played an active political role with which sultans were obliged to compromise. It should be emphasised that we have no independent sources against which to test Ibn Bībī's account of events as far as the role of the townsmen goes, and it would be naïve to read this notoriously problematic chronicle as a repository of factual information.[31] At the same time, for his history to achieve its literary and political aims, it must have seemed credible to its audience. Therefore even if we cannot vouch for the literal accuracy of every aspect of what follows, we can be reasonably sure that it represents a pattern of behaviour by town notables that did indeed happen in some times and places and which his audience could believe.

The most striking example of the role of city notables occurs in Ibn Bībī's account of the disputes over the succession to Qilij Arslān who died in 1192. His two sons, Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymanshāh and Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I fought over the throne; when Rukn al-Dīn advanced on Konya, »its people responded [by donning] the shield of defiance and defence and busied themselves with fighting and battle.«[32] According to Ibn Bībī's doubtless exaggerated figure Rukn al-Dīn's army was some 60,000 strong, and the siege of Konya drew on for four months. It seems the reason for the people's willingness to resist was that they had sworn binding oaths to Ghiyāth al-Dīn on his accession, but eventually, it was the town's »leaders and *iğdiş*es whose words were respected« who sent a message to Rukn al-Dīn offering him either an enormous payment to withdraw from the siege or else proposing to surrender the city if he guaranteed Ghiyāth al-Dīn's safety; the deposed sultan would be allowed to go into exile. Rukn al-Dīn readily agreed to this latter proposition, preparing a legal document of oath (*sawgandnāma*) which was registered in the presence of all the figures of the state and then sent to the people of Konya, along with decrees of appointment to land and positions for their leaders.[33] It is noteworthy that Ghiyāth al-Dīn himself plays no part in these negotiations; rather, the result is presented to him as a fait accompli by the leading townsmen.

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28   *Manaqib Awhad al-Dīn Hamid Kirmani*, ed. Furunzafar, 140.

29   *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 116.

30   *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 132.

31   On Ibn Bībī and his agenda, see Yıldız, *Mongol Rule in Seljuk Anatolia.*

32   Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾīya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 32; ed. Erzi, 32.

33   Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾīya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 34; ed. Erzi, 34.

The autonomy of the townsmen of Konya can also be observed on the return of the exiled Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I to Konya in 1204. Having lost his throne to his brother Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymanshāh, Ghiyāth al-Dīn had been forced into exile in Constantinople. On Rukn al-Dīn's death he returned to Anatolia to take up his throne. However, his accession was strongly opposed by the townsmen of Konya, and Ghiyāth al-Dīn was forced to besiege the city. Ibn Bībī describes how,

> When the people of Konya heard of the auspicious coming of the sultan, they prepared to resist out of loyalty to sultan Rukn al-Dīn and to protect his son ʿIzz al-Dīn Qilij Arslan b. Sulaymanshāh. They readied the steed of war and the stallion of fighting and defence. They sent a message saying, ›We have sworn an oath with sultan Rukn al-Dīn that [we recognise] his son as heir, and there are binding pledges accompanied by oaths and promises to this effect. The sultan should understand that we cannot break our agreement nor can that contract that we concluded be reopened.‹[34]

Unsurprisingly, Ghiyāth al-Dīn was unimpressed at this message and responded by destroying the orchards and houses that lay outside the city walls. There followed, however, a protracted series of negotiations between Ghiyāth al-Dīn and the townsmen of Konya. First, Ghiyāth al-Dīn sent a message offering material benefits and wealth if he was given safe conduct to enter the city (*agar marā bih jān amān dihad, niʿmatī-yi hanī wa ghanīmatī-yi sanī bāshad*).[35] The townsmen replied, reminding Ghiyāth al-Dīn how earlier, when he had fought his brother for the throne, they had »donned weapons of war and fighting in your interests« to protect the inheritance they had pledged to uphold, and had ensured his safety when he was forced into exile. However, as on the previous occasion, in reality the townsmen proved flexible in their adherence to the binding oaths they had sworn, agreeing to surrender the city in return for safe conduct for Rukn al-Dīn Sulayman's son.

The conduct of the people of Konya was not unique. On Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw's death in 1211, his sons ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs I and ʿAla' al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I fought over the succession. ʿIzz al-Dīn besieged ʿAla' al-Dīn in Ankara, and again the outcome was decided by the townsmen of Ankara, who wearied of the siege.[36] Their notables (*muʿtabarān-i shahr*) informed ʿAla' al-Dīn of their decision to hand the town over, and then sent a messenger to ʿIzz al-Dīn offering to surrender as long as he,

> swore tight and binding oaths that in no way would his men harm young or old, noble or humble, Turk or Tajik, near or far, and his supporters would not lay their hands on *malik* ʿAlā' al-Dīn …. and that the townsmen would not be punished for their resistance and defence and the thing they regretted, i.e. their partisanship for *malik* ʿAlā al-Dīn. And contracts (*ʿahdnāma-hā*) to this effect were written down after the oath had been pronounced to the blessed sultan and were entrusted to the messenger.[37]

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34   Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿala'īya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 84; ed. Erzi, 84.

35   Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalā'īya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 84-85; ed. Erzi, 85.

36   Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿala'īya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 135-136; ed. Erzi, 134-136.

37   Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿala'īya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 137; ed. Erzi, 138.

The exchange of oaths was thus a two-way process. The populace swore allegiance to the sultan on his accession, and might also swear to recognise his appointed heir. It is evident from Ibn Bībī's account of this oath-swearing ceremony in Konya on the accession of 'Izz al-Dīn Kaykā'ūs I that this oath-swearing was accompanied by the renewal of land grants (*iqṭā'āt*) and appointment to positions.[38] However, the sultan was himself obliged to make guarantees to the townsmen. These oaths were recorded in formal written documents called *sawgandnāma*s or *'ahdnāma*s.

The tradition of the public swearing of allegiance to the ruler by the townsmen continued into the fourteenth century, where Burhān al-Dīn Aḥmad, the qāḍī-sultan of Sivas and Kayseri, similarly rewarded the allegiance (*bī'at*) of the people of Sivas in 782/1380-1 with rich presents.[39] Such contracts might also be made not just between the people and the sultan, but between a ruler and his officials for the purpose of validating them in the court of public opinion, as we can see from a case from the late fourteenth century. Burhān al-Dīn Aḥmad appointed as governor of Sivas a certain Qilij Arslān. This was done by summoning a meeting (*anjuman*) of the people of Sivas, who assented to his appointment, and both sides exchanged oaths for the conditions of his appointment.[40] Later, Burhān al-Dīn decided to execute Qilij Arslān for attempting to assassinate him, and so »he showed to the 'ulama and the men of rank who were present the documents of oath (*sawgandnāma*) which Qilij Arslān had made with various conditions, which he had sworn upon and written with his own hand-writing and had then broken, so that they were aware of them.«[41] The aim was to prove Qilij Arslān's misconduct to the people: »When the notables (*mawālī*) and imams of the town read the contents of the *sawgandnāma*s and understood the attempted treason to the sultan [Burhān al-Dīn], they held the sultan excused from the ill-treatment that befell [Qilij Arslān] from his actions, and held Qilij Arslān blameworthy«.[42] Revealing the content of the *sawgandnāma*s was thus a crucial step in securing public assent for Qilij Arslān's execution, just as public assent had been required for his appointment.

The agency of cities was not restricted to those under Muslim control, if we are to credit Ibn Bībī's account of the fall of Sinop to the Seljuqs in 1214.[43] The city had formed part of the Empire of Trebizond, and as 'Izz al-Dīn Kaykā'ūs's forces advanced on the city, they managed to capture the Comnenian ruler, Alexios, who was on an out-of-town hunting expedition. They attempted to use the captured ruler to persuade the besieged city to surrender. However, the townsmen responded uncompromisingly to his messenger: »If lord Alexios has been taken prisoner, he has elder sons who are fit to rule in the land of Janit.[44] We should make one of them king but we will not surrender this kingdom to the Muslims.«[45] The Seljuqs then had Alexios taken to the town walls and tortured, threatening to kill the ruler unless the town surrendered:

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38 Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-'alā'īya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 118; ed. Erzi, 120.

39 Astarābādī, *Bazm u Razm*, ed. Rifaat, 222.

40 Astarābādī, *Bazm u Razm*, ed. Rifaat, 188-189.

41 Astarābādī, *Bazm u Razm*, ed. Rifaat, 217.

42 Astarābādī, *Bazm u Razm*, ed. Rifaat, 218.

43 In Byzantium, bishops often fulfilled a function similar to that of the *a'yān*, using their status to represent and advocate for the city. For a discussion of the earlier medieval period see Guillot, L'évêque dans la société méditerranéenne.

44 Janit refers to the Anatolian Black Sea coast, in other words the domains of Trebizond.

45 Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-'alā'īya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 148; ed. Erzi, 150.

The executioners tortured Alexios and he cried out. The townsmen [*shahriyān*] looked
on from the battlements. He said to the townsmen, ›O men without religion, why do
you keep the town? What good will this resistance do me or you, when they kill me
and bind you in the fetters of captivity and loss and they make your women and chil-
dren servants and slaves?‹ And his effect on them was like that of a soft breeze on hard
rock.[46]

The next day, however, the sultan ordered the unfortunate Alexios to be hung upside down
outside the walls. Eventually, the townsmen decided resistance was useless, and a group of
a'yān sent the following message to the Seljuq camp:

If the sultan swears an oath that he will not kill the *tekfur* [Alexios] and he will allow
him to go to his land in peace, and he issues an order that we, with our possessions,
children and wealth, can go to any place we wish, we will surrender the town.[47]

The sultan consented to these terms and in the presence of his amirs and Alexios swore
an oath to this effect, which was also recorded in written form. Messengers brought the
sawgandnāmas to the city. The sultan's flag was then ceremonially brought into Sinop, who-
se notables (*a'yān* and *mu'tabarān*) paid homage to the sultan and surrendered to him the
keys of the city.

In all these instances, the urban notables take key decisions about whether to surrender
and if so on what terms; on occasion, as at Sinop and Ankara, their nominal rulers are re-
duced to spectators while the notables take charge. It is evident that while *sawgandnāma*s
were regarded as crucially important documents in establishing mutual obligations between
rulers and subjects, they could also be broken by either side. Ibn Bībī suggests that the towns-
men of Konya felt able to extricate themselves from inconvenient oaths, although admittedly,
they only did this under duress. In Sivas, meanwhile, Qilij Arslān's infringement of his *saw-
gandnāma* constitutes the main public justification for his execution. Oaths, then, were not
to be broken lightly.

It is evident from the foregoing, that far from being passive spectators, the townsmen and
their leaders, the notables, constituted a major and independent political force with which
sultans had to reckon. Unfortunately, the sources rarely give us firm information about the
identity of the notables.[48] It seems likely they were largely comprised of the religious classes.
Astarābādī specifically refers to the imams being present for the disgrace of Qilij Arslān in the
passage cited above. Moreover, other events show the key role of the ulama in city life. For
example, after the Seljuq defeat by the Mongols at Kösedağ in 1243, religious figures play a
key role. The Qāḍī of Sivas, Najm al-Dīn Qirshahri, who had already rendered homage to the
Mongols some ten years before, played a key role in ensuring that the surrender terms of the
city were comparatively light, paying homage in person to the victorious Mongol commander
Baiju with the other notables (*mu'tabarān*) of the town.[49] Muhadhdhab al-Dīn, the minister

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46 Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-'alā'īya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 148; ed. Erzi, 151.

47 Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-'alā'īya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 149; ed. Erzi, 151.

48 A similar problem is noted in Wolper, Cities and Saints, 12, who describes the local aristocracy as »difficult to
classify« but suggests vaguely that they comprised »descendants, relations or freed slaves of the members of the
house of Seljuq or were connected with the Mongols«. Unfortunately, her book does not contain any subsequent
discussion of this group, so it is unclear what the basis for this statement is.

49 Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-'alā'īya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 463; ed. Erzi, 527-528.

who was left in effective charge after the sultan's flight from Kösedağ, as his first step for seeking terms of surrender to Baiju, enlisted the support of the Qāḍī of Amasya, Fakhr al-Dīn.[50] Similarly, when the Mamluk sultan Baybars conquered Kayseri in 1277, he was welcomed into the city by its leading dignitaries, who comprised the local sharif, followed by the qāḍī, the *fuqahā'*, the ulama, the Sufis and those religious functionaries who received salaries according to Seljuq custom.[51]

The religious classes gained cohesiveness through their blood ties and the existence of dynasties of religious scholars. The Qāḍī of Niğde in the early fourteenth century, Aḥmad, who composed an encyclopaedic work in Persian entitled *al-Walad al-Shafīq*, was a member of one such dynasty, who originated from Khotan in Turkestan.[52] In Aksaray, the descendants of Ghazzālī were settled.[53] In Akşehir, a local scholarly family of Bukharan origin held an important place in local society.[54] We are also aware of the existence of families of descendants of the prophets, sayyids and 'Alīds, who are mentioned, for example, in the waqfiyya of the Gökmedrese in Sivas.[55] These seem likely candidates for the vague *a'yān* of our sources, especially given the custom of rewarding the *a'yān* with *manāṣib* (appointments), of which positions such as qāḍī would have been in the sultan's gift. Only rarely can we trace the details of their activities, but one example is the family of Qāḍī Burhān al-Dīn. His grandfather, Ḥusām al-Dīn, and his father, Sirāj al-Dīn, had both held the position of qāḍī of Kayseri before him, and occasional references in the sources suggest their political involvement. Ḥusām al-Dīn personally converted senior Mongol amirs to Islam,[56] while his father, Sirāj al-Dīn, in the years around the collapse of Mongol power in the 1330s, had brokered an agreement with the Mamluks whereby the name of the Mamluk sultan al-Nasir Muhammad was mentioned in the khutba in Kayseri and was struck on the coins.[57]

We may also assume that merchants formed part of the *a'yān* class; from Konya we know of a number of émigré merchants from Tabriz who had settled in the city and disposed of sufficient resources to found a caravanserai.[58] The wealthy Christian doctor, Abū Salīm b. Abū'l-Ḥasan, who endowed the Hekimhan caravanserai outside Malatya, may have been another such influential individual, although we know nothing of him beyond the scanty information given in the building's trilingual Arabic, Syriac and Armenian endowment inscriptions.[59] At present our information is too scanty to be able to speculate much further as to the identity of the *a'yān*. However, it seems evident that these *a'yān* must have been able to dispose of military force in order to be able to make the decisions about war and peace that they are regularly shown as doing in the sources.

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50   Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾīya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 466; ed. Erzi, 532.

51   Sümer, *Yabanlu Pazar*, 123/ Qalqashandī, *al-Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshā*, 155.

52   On him and his family see Peacock, Aḥmad of Niğde's *al-Walad al-Shafīq*.

53   Oral, Aksaray'ın Tarihî Önemi, 227; *Niğdeli Kadı Ahmed'in el-Veledü'ş-Şefîk* 2, ed. Ertuğrul, 233.

54   See Leiden, University Library, MS Or 1094, comprising a *majmuʿa* of poems by a member of this family. I will discuss this manuscript further in a subsequent publication.

55   Bayram and Karabacak, Sahib-Ata Fahrü'din Ali'nin Konya, İmaret, 56.

56   Astarābādī, *Bazm u Razm*, ed. Rifaat, 45; Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*, 65-6.

57   Al-ʿUmari, *Masālik al-abṣār,* 3, ed. al-Juburi, 238; Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*, 61.

58   For a discussion of the Tabrizi immigrants in Konya, see Peacock, Islamisation in medieval Anatolia.

59   Ertuğrul, Hekim Hanı.

How unusual was the behaviour of the *a'yān* of Anatolia? If we look at the history of Iran in the earlier medieval period – which is, of course, where many of these families of *a'yān* had their origins, even if there were also local, Anatolian precedents for urban autonomy[60] – we can see a similar pattern of leading citizens making decisions about fighting or surrender. To take the example of the Seljuq conquests of the eleventh century: it was the populace of Marv who took the decision to surrender the city to Tughril and Chaghri in 1037, and negotiations were carried out by three members of the local ulama. These same ulama also informed the Ghaznavid commander in Khurasan that the people preferred Seljuq rule.[61] We find a similar situation at Nishapur, which was occupied twice by the Seljuqs. The first time, the Seljuqs were driven out by the populace. However, a subsequent council of war between the town notables and the town qāḍī decided to accept Seljuq reoccupation.[62] Again, we have city notables who do not simply make decisions about whether or not to surrender, but clearly dispose of military force to give these decisions effect – just as we have in Seljuq Anatolia a couple of centuries later. A similar pattern of urban agency can be traced in later periods, where the *a'yān* are the key figures negotiating the surrender of cities to Timur.[63]

It is perhaps not coincidental that those families we can identify as potential candidates for *a'yān* in medieval Anatolia originate from the Iranian world. In some ways, they perhaps simply continued a model of urban agency that was familiar to their ancestors. Yet it was also a model that was familiar to Anatolia's non-Muslim inhabitants. At any rate, while urban communities in medieval Anatolia certainly did not enjoy the same privileges as their counterparts in Europe, especially Italy, over taxation or weights and measures, regarding the most crucial element of all identified by Shoshan, decisions over whether to wage war or make peace, they did indeed enjoy autonomy and agency. Indeed, while the city may not have constituted a legal entity in the European sense, its notables did act and were recognised as acting collectively on behalf of the city in the crucial matter of being party to legally binding contracts. This is not a million miles away from constituting a corporate legal body. Moreover, this was a pattern that obtained across the eastern Islamic world. I would, therefore, suggest that the *futuwwa* groups are something of a red herring in the search for urban agency, as they were too closely associated with state power, even if on occasion they may have aligned themselves with the notables. There is no need to look for some form of Anatolian exceptionalism in its city politics, for they followed a pattern attested across the medieval Islamic *mashriq*. The real challenge for future research is to find ways to study and identify the shadowy but crucial group of urban notables that has so far largely been missing from the historiography on medieval Islamic Anatolia.

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60   See Guillot, L'évêque dans la société méditerranéenne.

61   Peacock, *Early Seljuq History*, 91.

62   See Paul, The Seljuq conquest(s) of Nishapur, passim.

63   Mahendrarajah, Tamerlane's conquest of Herat.

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Cities and Imperial Authority in the Western Provinces of the Byzantine Empire, 12th-14th centuries

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Chrysobulls issued »in common« to the inhabitants of cities, together with a large number of other surviving sources, shed light on the interplay in the Byzantine Empire during the long thirteenth century between, on the one hand, growing claims to civic autonomy advanced by communes and, on the other, efforts by imperial authority to control its territory. This chapter examines the emergence of a new kind of empire – based on commerce and trade – under the Palaiologoi. It analyses the changing circumstances of urban centres in the western provinces, and assesses the degree of fiscal, legal and political emancipation that these centres achieved. It discusses the creation of leagues and other types of alliances that successfully bound cities and towns together into regional associations. It also considers the mechanisms behind revolts and other forms of armed and unarmed protest that occurred against the central regime. Particular attention is paid to the region of northern Greece (Thrace and Macedonia) dominated by the city of Thessalonike, for which the evidence is most plentiful.

On 15th August 1261, Michael VIII Palaiologos entered Constantinople, which he had recently taken from the crusaders, and proceeded through its streets to the Church of the Holy Wisdom for a service of thanksgiving. He then had the church hastily cleaned and refurbished, employing funds from the state treasury to give it a »glorious aspect«, so that in a second ceremony he could be crowned emperor with appropriate pomp and circumstance.[1] In the years that followed, Michael expended considerable effort in the reconstruction of the city's fortifications and streets, and in the »beautification« of its palaces, churches and other public buildings: »hippodromes, theaters, law courts…baths and hospices«.[2] He celebrated

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1   Geanakoplos, *Michael Palaeologus*, 119-137; Macrides, New Constantine, 13-15.

2   Manuel Holobolos, *Orations*, 2, ed. Treu, 58; Talbot, Restoration of Constantinople, 249-255, 261.

his achievements by erecting in one of the main squares a monumental column topped by a statue of himself holding aloft a model of the restored city.[3] And he publicised more widely throughout his realm his status as redeemer and refounder by issuing a gold coin (*hyperpyron*) that depicted the city's walls and towers on the obverse and his own coronation on the reverse.[4]

These actions amounted to a declaration that, after a hiatus of fifty years, the exiles had returned and legitimate rule had been reinstated. Things would be as they had been before: the Byzantine Empire or the Empire of the Romans, as it was then called, would exist once more. Torn apart by invasion, imperial territory would be reunited under a single ruler (a Roman, descended from Romans) who, from his capital, would watch benevolently over the entirety of his subjects (themselves all Romans by birth).

Yet an episode that had taken place some months before Constantinople fell to Michael Palaiologos had intimated the impossibility of turning back the clock in this fashion and restoring the empire along old lines. Aware that Michael was surrounding them with his army and navy, the crusaders had sent an embassy to him that declined to offer terms of surrender and instead demanded substantial territories in Macedonia and Thrace delimited by three important cities – Thessalonike, Serres and Voleron. To these demands Michael had allegedly given the following answer. He could not relinquish Thessalonike, he had declared, because it was the city in which his father, who had been the principal figure of authority there, had died and been buried, and in which he himself had been born. As for Serres, it too was a city with which he had a close connection, since he had received his initial taste of command there, having assumed charge of both its civil administration and its military affairs when a young man. The same applied to Voleron, where as a child he had gone on his first hunting trips, learning the skills and receiving the training required of a future warrior and leader. With this, Michael had offered a curt »I shall give you nothing« and sent the embassy away empty handed.[5]

While Michael's confidence that he could prevail over the crusaders was to prove justified, the manner in which he had articulated his claim – emphasising not the abstract idea of the imperial office, but the personal nature of lordship – should give us pause. He had insisted that the three cities and their surrounding lands were his by right, not because he was the elected emperor and they constituted integral and inalienable provinces of the empire, but because his family, the Palaiologoi, had developed long-standing ties with the region – ties that he himself had then gone on to strengthen further in his youth and early manhood.

To be crowned in the former imperial capital was one thing; to establish rule over the former imperial provinces in a manner befitting an emperor was quite another. As they sought to expand into the southern Balkans in particular, Michael and his successors found themselves in competition with those who, having already established themselves as regional lords, were loath to cede what they had gained. When Michael's representative Makrynos was dispatched to the Peloponnese shortly after his master's entry into Constantinople, he

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3   Talbot, Restoration of Constantinople, 258-261.

4   Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, 290; Hendy, *Monetary Economy*, 526-528; Pachymeres, *Syngraphikon Historion*, 12.8, ed. Failler, 541.

5   Akropolites, *Chronike Syngraphe*, 78, ed. Heisenberg and Wirth, 162-163; trans. Macrides, 351-352.

was quite literally given carte blanche to make any and every concession. He was issued with »blank unwritten papers« sealed with the imperial »golden seal« on which he was to write out agreements according to the demands made to him.[6] Despite such concessions, however, Makrynos proved unable to cement the position of the Palaiologoi by non-violent means and was forced to commence a military campaign. This rapidly resulted in the defeat of his army and in his own captivity.[7]

The Palaiologan dynasty attempted to overcome its vulnerability by playing to its advantage the substantial growth of mercantile activity and urbanisation that had characterised the southern Balkans from the eleventh century onwards. As would-be imperial rulers, the Palaiologoi turned to the residents of cities and towns, whom they imagined as constituting communities that could be addressed directly in their own right. They granted to a number of urban settlements far-reaching privileges relating to fiscal obligations and commercial exchanges, while at the same time promising to use the resources of their bureaucracy to further the settlements' interests. The regime they established encouraged these communities to participate in a new kind of empire, dangling before them the prospect of integration into the global market under conditions of trade that were more expedient and profitable than had existed either in previous centuries under imperial rule or under the more recent rule of local strongmen.

Centrifugal Tendencies

During the earlier period of expansion of the Empire of the Romans, from the mid-tenth to the early eleventh century, political thinkers who had witnessed at first hand the consequences of conquest had sometimes taken it upon themselves to warn peoples beyond the empire's borders against being swayed by »fine promises« and submitting to imperial rule, reminding them that it would always be »better« to be »independent« than to be a »slave«. One retired general, Kekaumenos, in his old age counselled the warlords – against whom he had previously campaigned – to persist in their resistance, noting in his memoirs that »you« will be »praised and glorified« by »all other men« and be considered »worthy and noble« as long as »you and your children and your children's children are in your own territory and under your own jurisdiction«, however »small and insignificant« that territory might be.[8] Such thinkers could not have foreseen that, within two hundred years, imperial power would be so compromised that the long-established western provinces – the heartland of the empire in the eleventh and twelfth centuries – would identify themselves with these »outer regions« (*exo chorai*) of the empire and, increasingly prizing their autonomy, would seek to shake off their yoke.[9]

6   *Chronicle of Morea*, H, vv. 4571-4575, ed. Schmitt, 302.

7   *Chronicle of Morea*, H, vv. 5432, ed. Schmitt, 354.

8   Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes*, 89, ed. Litavrin, 314-316.

9   Magdalino, Constantinople and the ›exo chorai‹, 196-197.

By the closing years of the twelfth century, the capital was already being accused of bleeding the provinces dry by consuming the wealth of all the other cities through the dispatch of veritable armies of tax assessors and collectors. The *»praktores, praitores, apographeis, anagrapheis, dasmologoi, nautologoi«* and other officials of the »devil's brood« sent out every year to gather taxes had been »legion«, and rivers of riches had flowed to the capital without respite. »What do you lack?« Michael Choniates, the bishop of Athens, had pointedly asked of the inhabitants of Constantinople:

> Are not the grain-bearing fields of Thrace and Macedonia and Thessaly farmed for you? Do not Euboea, Cos, Chios, and Rhodes tread the grapes into wine for you? Do not Theban and Corinthian fingers weave garments for you?[10]

Another cleric – possibly Constantine Stilbes – similarly reminded those representing the regime that dominion had been made possible only by the continuing quiescence of provincial populations. Speaking in the voice of these exploited subjects, he declared: »Without us, the threshing floor would not be filled with grain, nor the wine vat with grapes; bread would not be eaten, nor meat, nor fish, nor even vegetables«.[11]

While in theory all free adult males across the empire had been equal before the law, in that they had shared the common status of »Roman citizens«, some groups had been considered more truly aligned than others with »Roman« ideals, so that in practice access to the rights of citizenship had been a gradational affair. The most privileged in this regard had been the residents of the »New Rome« that was Constantinople.[12] The events of 1204 provided the opportunity for resentments to boil over in the southern Balkans, where provincials openly revelled in the crusader invasion of the empire and the sacking of the imperial capital, commenting favourably on the losses suffered by the erstwhile ruling elite and anticipating the »equality of fellow-citizenship« that the redistribution of hoarded wealth would achieve.[13] They argued that to have been born in the capital, or to be descended from its natives and nurslings, was not to possess inherent superiority, but rather to be »the filthy spawn of courtesans and the fruits of adultery, the offspring of slave-girls bought for money«. Such a corrupt metropolitan environment could never produce respectability, let alone nobility.[14]

Only those who spring forth from the honest soil and beneficent climate of the provinces, it was argued, should be considered truly »honourable and well born«. In a provincial city such as Naupaktos even the least of the inhabitants could expect to lead a wholesome life. If the streets were not paved with gold, they were paved with the very stuff of civilisation: marble. Rather than sinking into a mire so deep that he could never hope to raise himself above it – even were he to shod himself with platformed wooden pattens – a man could go about his

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10 Michael Choniates, *Letters*, 50.6, 64, ed. Kolovou, 69-70, 87; Shawcross, Golden Athens, 82.

11 *Acrimationes adversus Ecclesiam Latinam*, ed. Cotelerius, 517. Recorded in only one manuscript, where it was apparently appended to a list of errors of the Latins, this passage may have had in its sights less the Angeloi than their crusader successors.

12 Lane, *Birth of Politics*, 183-214; Cooper, *Citizenship*, 27-40, 143-150; Magdalino, Outside world, 269.

13 Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. Van Dieten, 593-594.

14 Magdalino, Byzantine snobbery, 65; Magdalino, Constantinople and the ›exo chorai‹, 189-190; Lagopates, *Germanos o B'*, 282-283.

business tranquilly in clean streets, finding protection from the rain under the colonnades and shade in the groves, and slaking his thirst at the abundant fountains. The purity of his body and soul were respectively preserved by the bath house with its sparkling glass lamps and multi-coloured revetments, and by the cathedral whose loftiness made the spirit soar.[15]

During the first half of the thirteenth century, such statements of civic pride and local patriotism were accompanied by a dramatically accelerating centrifugal tendency. Former provinces such as the Peloponnese, Hellas, Thessaly, and Macedonia saw a proliferation of leaders who wished to govern not as intermediaries between a central authority and a community, but rather each in his own right:

> Leon Chamateros, holding sway over the vale of Lacedaemon, was ruler over the Laconians. Aitolia and the lands adjacent to Nikopolis, as well as those extending to Epidamnos, were in the possession of Michael [...]. Marquis Boniface, whose seat was in Thessalonike, had subject to him the entire coastal region extending to Halmyros. [...] Yet another man occupied the highlands above Thessaly [...] and ruled over the inhabitants there.[16]

Men such as these had encountered an opportunity and had not been scrupulous in taking advantage of it. Relatively minor players could wield an exaggerated level of bargaining power, setting would-be suzerains against each other and waiting for their own chance of expansion. A document that attempted to list these multiple rulers revealed a geopolitical situation so complex and rapidly changing that it was impossible for observers to achieve any degree of accuracy when describing it. Such was the fragmentation on the ground that the Palaiologan lord in Constantinople could be considered to represent only one of some nineteen separate regimes within the former imperial lands.[17]

Faced with these developments, what remained of the old imperial elite railed at the transformation of the empire into a »many-headed monster« from whose shoulders »fresh heads« were »constantly sprouting«. Emergent regional powerbrokers were likened to savage beasts concerned only with satiating their own »appetite« for »violence« and »bloodshed«. They had imposed their will with a drawn »sword« in their quest for »dominion«. Establishing themselves as »oppressors« and »dynasts«, they had divided up the provinces into »so many tyrannies«.[18]

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15 Lagopates, *Germanos o B'*, 282-283; Bees and Bees-Seferlis, Unedierte Schriftstücke, 122-124.

16 Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. Van Dieten, 638.

17 Hopf, *Chroniques*, 177-178.

18 Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. Van Dieten, 160, 605, 638-639. Michael Choniates, *Letters*, nos. 100, 120, 124, 134, 154, 165, ed. Kolovou, 219-221, 133-143, 200-201, 204-205, 221, 248-249, 262-264.

By contrast, those who embraced separatism praised the establishment of an open contest that the best man – he with the greatest personal charisma, who proved himself by acquiring the largest number of followers – could not but »win«. Such a contender, once sufficiently secure, not only would reject all imperial claims but also would refuse to recognise any superior other than »God Himself«. Within the limits of his jurisdiction, the new ruler expected to be treated not as a »mere man«, or even a »mere lord«, but as the ultimate temporal authority – asserting complete sovereignty as if »he were an emperor«.[19]

For an ambitious local lord, the aim, therefore, was to rule in a fashion equivalent to »a natural lord, an emperor« within the territory under his control.[20] He sought to establish his personal court, distributing to his most loyal followers »robes« fashioned of materials and in colours – purple and gold – previously reserved for the imperial family. And he created positions named after the uppermost offices of the palace, chancery and administration, such as *protovestiarios*, *logothetes*, *protonotarios*. Above all, he insisted on establishing his own jurisdiction, taking it upon himself to define the conditions of continued possession and transmission by his subjects of their homes, lands and other property – and to specify the level of taxation paid to him for these holdings.[21] For example, Guillaume de Champlitte, as well as his successors Guillaume I and Guillaume II de Villehardouin, issued multiple such documents during the incorporation of the main settlements and lands of the Peloponnese into their territory. Similar behaviour was displayed by other conquerors further to the north: in Epirus by Michael II Doukas, and in Macedonia and Thrace by John III Vatatzes. Although a hostile commentator might attempt to dismiss a document of this type as a mere »letter«, its issuer intended it to be received as a »charter« that had been »written and sealed« in the established fashion, and therefore was properly authenticated and had official force.[22]

The Palaiologan Response

Seeking to cut their rivals down to size, the Palaiologoi responded by securing the loyalty of select urban communities with whom they negotiated directly. This entailed praising the cities in question (e.g. »There is in the Peloponnese the most famous city of Monemvasia, which is acknowledged by all to deserve its fame, since it is to such a degree superior that there is none to compare with it«; »There is a city in Epirus by the name of Ioannina, not only larger in size than many other cities, but surpassing the majority of them in the advantages of its

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19 Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes*, 4, ed. Litavrin, 140; *Chronicle of Morea*, H, vv. 1463-1468, 1612-1620, ed. Schmitt, 100, 110; Ransohoff, Paranoid World, 77-91; Roueché, Commentary. in: Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes* (SAWS edition, 2013) WJ 5.9ff. Accessed 29 April 2020: ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/mss/viewer. html?viewColumns=greekLit:tlg3017.Syno298.sawsComm01.

20 *Chronicle of Morea*, H, v. 1620, ed. Schmitt, 110; see also Fawtier, *Capetians*, 82-88.

21 Longnon and Topping, *La Principauté de Morée*, 21, 33, 35, 53, 133-135, 140.

22 Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. Van Dieten, 599; *Chronicle of Morea*, H, vv. 1416, 1613, 1703, 1783, 2046, 2941, ed. Schmitt, 96, 110, 116, 120, 138, 196; Lemerle, Trois actes, 405-426; Akropolites, *Chronike Syngraphe*, 44-45, 49, ed. Heisenberg and Wirth, 75-83, 88-92; Barone, Notizie storiche, 5-30.

situation, as well as its strength and security«).[23] Though they extolled the virtues of a city's location, appearance and amenities, the Palaiologoi concerned themselves primarily with its inhabitants. For, as one imperial courtier noted, »One must remember that what constitutes a city is not the stones or the wood, nor the gymnasia, the ports, the theatres or the meeting places, nor the grandeur and beauty of the buildings, but the citizens.«[24]

The Palaiologoi gave priority to the issuing of »common chrysobulls« (*koina chryso-boulla*): charters that, while acknowledging the existence within a particular environment of a highly hierarchical society organised along class or ethnic lines, were granted not to a particular stratum of that society, but rather to the inhabitants of a city or town as a collective whole. While these charters were not entirely without precedents from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, they were issued in ever greater frequency during the second half of the thirteenth century. Especially favoured by Andronikos II, they appear to have become established practice during his reign, with numbers peaking by the 1320s. The format remained familiar in the 1330s and 1340s, with delegations being sent to ask for »common immunity for the city« and emperors duly making awards to the »common people of the cities«; however, it appears to have fallen into abeyance after the mid-fourteenth century.[25] These charters envisaged the formation of urban communities in the provinces that would be able to benefit from trading opportunities on an unprecedented scale and therefore prosper in a fashion unimaginable under local elites.

Some sense of these charters' content and scope can be gained from surviving documents. One of these, issued in 1319 to Ioannina, confirmed the rights of possession and inheritance of the inhabitants relating to their holdings both within the city walls and in the hinterland. It made clear that they were neither to be subject to censuses, inventories or inspections by imperial tax-collectors, nor expected to pay basic property taxes to the fisc. The inhabitants were also granted substantial exemptions from commercial taxes and customs duties both

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23 Andronikos II Palaiologos, *Monemvasia chrysobull B*, ed. St. Binon, 306-310; *Acta et diplomata*, 5, ed. Miklosich and Müller,78; Kalligas, *Monemvasia: The Sources*, 223-237, 265 (#13). The document is in Athens at the Byzantine and Christian Museum (BXM 00534). Accessed 30 March 2020: www.ebyzantinemuseum.gr/?i=bxm.en.exhibit&id=210.

24 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. gr.. 2629, f. 129v.; Tafrali, *Thessalonique au quatorzième siècle*, 257, n. 3.

25 For possible indications before the Palaiologoi, see Michael Choniates, *Letters*, nos. 32, 153-157, ed. Kolovou, 46, 247-253; Solovjev and Mošin, *Grčke povelje Srpskih vladara*, 316; Thallóczy and Jireček, Zwei Urkunden aus Nordalbanien, 78-79; Kalligas, *Monemvasia: The Sources*, 66; Ps. Phrantzes, *Memorii*, ed. Grecu, 538; Medvedev, Pozadine kopi vizantijski dokumentov, 223-231; Barone, Notizie storiche, 6; Akropolites, *Chronike Syngraphe*, 43-45, ed. Heisenberg and Wirth, 72-83. For specific cities (Verroia, Ioannina, Monemvasia and Thessalonike), see *Actes de Vatopédi*, no. 62, ed. Bompaire *et al.*, 333-337; *Acta et diplomata*, 5, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 77-87, 154-155, 165-168, 171,174; *Chronicle of Morea*, H, vv. 2936-2940, ed. Schmitt, 196; *Actes de Chilandar*, no. 33, ed. Živojinović *et al.*, 231; Lemerle, Un praktikon inédit, 285; *Actes de Xénophon*, nos. 17, 25, ed. Papachryssanthou, 149, 191; Lemerle, Trois actes; for Rentina, *Actes d'Esphigménou*, nos. 17, 18, 19, 21, 31, ed. Lefort, 124-134, 137-138, 177-180; and for Phanari, *Acta et diplomata*, 5, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 260-261. The privileges are discussed in Brătianu, *Privilèges et franchises*, 101-135; Theocharides, *Mia diatheke*; Kyrris, Archontes of Phanari, 73-78; Pljakov, La ville byzantine balkanique, 73-96; Maksimović, *Byzantine Provincial Administration*, 248-267; Kalligas, *Monemvasia: The Sources*, 101-134 and *Monemvasia*, 33-38; Patlagean, L'immunité des Thessaloniciens, 591-601; Kyritses, Common Chrysobulls, 229-243.

locally and throughout the empire.[26] A series of five charters issued to the city of Monemvasia from the 1260s to the 1330s suggests that progressively greater emphasis was put specifically on the lifting of obstructions to trade. Imperial imposts on commodities, especially import and export duties, were waived. [27] The renunciation by emperors of the collection of tariffs, taxes, and duties previously intended for the central treasury meant that the central administration ceased functioning as the principal force behind the circulation of money, liberating large sums from the state economy and facilitating the infusion of cash into private endeavours.[28] Control was relaxed over interest rates relating to loans made for the purpose of investment in land exploitation and industrial installations, or of participation in maritime ventures. Legislation regarding fair price was allowed to fall into abeyance, meaning that, whatever the financial damages sustained, a contract would remain valid and could not be reversed as long as it was consensual and had been entered into by parties aware of the terms.[29] By offering greater flexibility in the rules governing economic transactions, the Palaiologoi were willing to let decision-making devolve on entrepreneurs identified as better placed to develop commercial priorities and respond swiftly to changing markets.

Complete deregulation, however, while it could be expected initially to stimulate the local economy, also offered openings for the kind of predatory speculation that might undermine long-term growth. Because of this threat, the imperial administration was able to carve out a role for itself as the main provider of security, guaranteeing that commercial parties engaged in transactions would commit to the special conditions set out in the charters, and uphold them for a significant period of time.[30] The administration kept the cost of agricultural labour artificially depressed.[31] By continuing to evaluate peasant productivity and to set the levels of surplus that peasants had to produce in order to pay their taxes, it sought to ensure a minimum steady supply of the cheap raw materials needed for manufacturing and trade, and also the cheap grain and other consumables required by urban workers and merchants. The administration also negotiated treaties with other polities, seeking to assure continuous access to particularly important markets. It provided a forum for the resolution of disputes by hearing claims regarding damages sustained through defaults on contracts or by acts of brigandage or piracy. In this way, reparations to merchants totalling tens of thousands of *hyperpyra* were successfully negotiated by the state in 1278, 1294, and 1319. Such official channels for redress served to pre-empt the kind of reprisals that threatened to make the costs of ordinary transactions prohibitive.[32]

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26 *Acta et diplomata*, 5, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 77-87; Maksimović, *Byzantine Provincial Administration*, 258; Pljakov, La ville byzantine balkanique, 85-86; Patlagean, L'immunité des Thessaloniciens, 591-605; Nicol, *Despotate of Epiros*, 81-106.

27 *Chronicle of Morea*, H, vv. 2936-2940, ed. Schmitt, 196; *Acta et diplomata*, 2, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 154-155, 165-168, 171-174.

28 Oikonomides, State in the Economy, 1026.

29 *Acta et diplomata*, 1, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 400ff; 511; *idem*, 4, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 286; Laiou, Church, 456-60; Laiou and Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 227-228.

30 Ševčenko, Nicholas Cabasilas, 104.

31 Oikonomides, State in the Economy, 1027, 1033-1038.

32 Laiou, Economic Concerns, 207; Morgan, Venetian Claims Commission, 411-438; Bertolotto, Nuova serie di documenti, 511-545, especially 515, 516, 522, 528; Thomas, *Diplomatarium Veneto-Levantinum*, I:124-127 (no. 72); *Urkunden*, 3, ed. Tafel and Thomas, 159-281; *Regestes*, 4, ed. Laurent, 287-288 (no. 1493), 312-313 (no. 1520).

By such means, the Palaiologoi were able to succeed in establishing a measure of control over the former provinces of the Byzantine Empire. In the prefaces to his chrysobulls of 1284 and 1301 addressed to Monemvasia, Andronikos II declared that this city, under the influence of its local lords, had abandoned the righteous path »as it should not have done« and, turning away from obedience to the imperial regime appointed to oversee the »affairs of the whole territory under Roman rule«, had forsaken progress and experienced decline. But eventually the inhabitants had seen reason, and declared an »active, unshakeable loyalty towards« the emperor and a »sense of belonging to and communion with« the »nation«. Similarly, according to Andronikos' chrysobull of 1319, Ioannina had formerly fallen into a »state of wickedness«, but because its inhabitants now displayed »wondrous zeal and high purpose« in submitting themselves to the emperor and recommitting themselves to the »membership of the common society of the Romans«, they would experience a life of »good deeds and felicity«. Having been »inseparably joined« to imperial territory, they would be held close by the emperor and his successors »from this point on and for all time«.[33]

Charters such as these recognised the communities of cities and towns as distinct entities, and explicitly delegated certain powers to them. Even so, these communities were intended less as alternatives to the imperial regime than as constitutive components of it. They had been carefully constructed by the emperor's writ, leaving their autonomy circumscribed by the coercive authority of imperial law. This reality might seem to be forcefully contradicted by a statement Andronikos made in a charter in 1296, when he referred to previous emperors who, for a very long time, had followed one law, that is to say, their »own will«. Contrasting them with himself, he professed to having »abandoned this power« of being »above all law and all authority«.[34]

However, as Andronikos explained elsewhere, this abandonment in fact consisted only in a more discriminating use of power.[35] Ultimately, the communities were placed in a position of dependence, since they remained subject to the dominion of the emperor, who could choose whether to exercise the entirety of his prerogatives. Imperial governors were assigned to the cities and towns, and it was these governors who headed the local tribunals and courts. They would hear trials for treason, sedition, and other acts of infidelity that represented a threat against the imperial regime, including disturbances of the peace, and would preside over judgement and punishment. Governors were empowered to seize persons judged a threat to the »fitting peace and good legal government« demanded by the emperor. Those found guilty would have their homes destroyed and their estates seized, while they themselves would be banished or executed.[36] The nature of the political crimes punishable by such sentences was never precisely defined but was left to the discretion of the imperial administration.

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33   *Acta et diplomata*, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 78-80, 154-55.
34   *Jus Graecoromanum*, 1, ed. Zepos and Zepos, 560; Laiou, Débat, 121.
35   *Acta et diplomata*, 5, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 76.
36   *Acta et diplomata*, 5, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 80-81, 260-261.

What might seem therefore to be a manifestation of growing autonomy was in fact merely the extension of governance over people who previously had remained outside the jurisdiction of the empire. Though apparently binding Palaiologan emperors to a course of action, the charters offered no external guarantees, and their terms might be altered or revoked at any time without occasioning the annulment of imperial authority. Conversely, although imperial subjects were theoretically able to withdraw their consent to the imperial regime whenever they chose, in practice they could do so only by excluding themselves both from the empire and from the urban communities to which they belonged. For inhabitants of the cities that received charters, the choice was either to accept subjugation or go into exile.[37]

Liberties or Liberty?

One of the Palaiologoi, Manuel II Palaiologos, would famously state that the times no longer called for a »great emperor« (*autokrator*), but for a »good manager« (*oikonomos*).[38] Certainly, under the Palaiologan dynasty, the Byzantine Empire underwent a process of transforming itself from the territorial empire rejected by provincials at the end of the twelfth century into something which these provincials could support – namely a commercial empire. This empire, it was implied, would henceforth to all intents and purposes resemble a benevolent hegemony. Specific urban settlements, together with their hinterlands, were chosen to receive a distinctive status, and an attempt was made to channel economic activity away from centres that remained outside the empire towards those that had come within imperial control.[39] This meant attracting overland trade to interior cities such as Ioannina, whose annual fair, dedicated to the Archangel Michael, lasted several weeks; and also maritime trade to coastal cities such as Thessalonike, boasting a port whose »outstretched arms« all the year round welcomed »people from everywhere«, many of whom settled permanently and received local citizenship.[40] The transformation appears to have included the creation of commercial enclaves or zones under imperial protection offering conditions of exchange that favoured the export market and encouraged long-distance trade – conditions not yet applicable to the rest of the empire. In at least one case, that of Monemvasia, exemption from customs duties and other commercial taxes could be claimed not only within the city itself but also by citizens and their descendants who travelled or settled beyond its confines – and even for any transactions anywhere within the empire of goods associated with the city or its citizens.[41] Such encouragement of commerce was put forward as a means of boosting widespread economic prosperity. As one chronicler asserted, when a region became more interconnected both by land and sea, it then »opened up«, with the result that »all men became rich, both great and small« and »were happy and contented«.[42]

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37   *Acta et diplomata*, 5, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 80.

38   Ps. Phrantzes, *Memorii*, ed. Grecu, 58-60.

39   Matschke, Commerce, trade, markets, 780, 790.

40   Asdracha, Epire médiévale, 437-446, especially 437-438; Nikephoros Choumnos, *On Justice*, ed. Boissonade, 139-141; Matthaeus Blastares, *Syntagma Canonum*, PG 145, 64; Nikephoros Gregoras, *Demetrius*, ed. Blachakos, 218; Nikephoros Choumnos, *On Justice*, ed. Boissonade, 139-141.

41   Kalligas, *Monemvasia: The Sources*, 126-127.

42   *Chronica Toccorum*, vv. 3108-3111, ed. Schirò, 448.

The chrysobulls issued to cities and towns by the imperial administration in the context of this vision for the empire insisted that the recipients were to exist »in liberty«, benefitting from »complete immunity« and »inviolability«. The »liberties« (*eleutheriai*) granted, however, were almost completely limited to economic incentives that did not attenuate imperial authority, but effectively extended it.[43] Yet developments within the cities themselves in the second quarter of the fourteenth century suggest that out of these grants of economic concessions a more clearly political understanding of liberty gradually emerged. Taking issue with the old tag, that a man could claim to be »free and easy« when he did not »hear the voice of the tax collector«,[44] some commentators from the western cities of the empire pushed back against any definition of freedom that limited it to merely financial terms. They asserted that any acknowledgement that an emperor could rescind taxes entailed acknowledgement that he could impose them in the first place. Moreover, to accept as a privilege and benefaction in the form of a limited charter – even one claiming to be granted in perpetuity – what in fact should be an unalienable right was to agree to enslave oneself. Liberty cannot be divided into liberties and made the subject of negotiations because liberty is every man's birthright; it is an absolute good and far more precious than either security or affluence, for which it must never be traded.

The trend developed furthest in Thessalonike. There it was declared that »man is by his nature free«.[45] Human beings, it was argued, are able to satisfy their needs through their own efforts, and only with the »development of luxuriousness and idleness« had it become »necessary to use the labour of others« – a practice that over time had bred servility. A particularly pernicious form of servility was identified with the imposition of taxation on others. According to the writer Thomas Magistros, an emperor who imposes fiscal levies and confiscations – justifying these actions by saying that he is »excused by his authority« – commits an unlawful transgression since taxation is the »appropriation by force« of property from its rightful owners. A ruler who waives the collection of taxes is not gracious or generous; rather, he is merely renouncing what was never his to collect in the first place. Arrangements such as those set out in the imperial chrysobulls granted to cities were based on invalid premises. »To be more precise,« Magistros explained, imagining himself addressing the emperor directly, »that which you grant us is not a benefaction of what belongs to you, for you do not supply it out of your own means, but grant what already belongs to us«.[46]

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43 *Acta et diplomata*, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 83; Kalligas, *Monemvasia: The Sources*, 101-134; Kalligas, *Byzantine Monemvasia*, 33-38; Schreiner, I diritti, 91-98.

44 Michael Psellos, *Epistulae*, 53, ed. Papaioannou, 119-120; Kazhdan, Concept of freedom, 216.

45 Eustathios of Thessalonike, *Letters*, 26, ed. Tafel, 334.

46 Thomas Magistros, *De Regno*, 20-26, ed. Cacciatore, 63-75; Laiou, Débat, 100-101; Laiou, Economic Concerns, 206.

In the 1320s and again in the 1340s, such musings were accompanied by a series of uprisings in the city. These uprisings in turn escalated into a full-scale revolt which was accompanied, tellingly, by the burning of the chrysobulls issued by the Palaiologan emperors.[47] A new regime was then established in Thessalonike that conducted the affairs of the urban community independently and even dispatched its own embassies to foreign powers.[48] It was governed by its own »constitution« (*politeia*), as well as by two standing institutions: a »senate« (*boule* or *syngletos*) and an »assembly of the people« (*ekklesia tou demou*).[49] Other cities within Macedonia and Thrace, such as Serres, Kassandreia, Adrianople, and Herakleia, also seem to have developed some of these institutions and participated in the same revolutionary activities.[50]

Ultimately, the dynasty of the Palaiologoi during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries not only failed to break the power of the regional lords (since such lordships continued to be founded and extended),[51] but created in addition an even more formidable enemy: an embryonic anti-imperial league formed by a group of cities.[52] When the emperor imposed a trade embargo on these cities, telling them that they »would only recover and breathe again if they altogether put aside their independence«, the threat, as one contemporary noted, was ignored. Indeed, the very citizens »who ought to have been vexed« made »merry« as if they were improving instead of damaging their fortunes. The air the emperor offered them was not the air with which they wished to fill their lungs.[53]

Thessalonike and the other Thracian and Macedonian cities resisted for eight years. Where might their act of defiance against the Palaiologoi and their experimental establishment of autonomous political regimes have ultimately led? The answer is that we shall never truly know, for it all ended overnight in the spring of 1347, when a plague pandemic reached the cities and devastated them.[54] Thessalonike and its allies, from cities of dreams, were reduced to cities of ghosts. Shortly afterwards, imperial troops marched in, assisted by a faction from among the urban elite that claimed to have been serving the emperor all along.[55] Henceforth,

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47   Ioannes Kantakouzenos, *Historia*, IV.16, ed. Schopen, vol. 3, 108; Congourdeau, *Les zélotes*, 76; Nicol, *Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 227.

48   Ioannes Kantakouzenos, *Historia*, III.64, ed. Schopen, vol. 2, 393-394; Tafrali, *Thessalonique au quatorzième siècle*, 79-80, 234.

49   Nikephoros Gregoras, Historia, 8.11, ed. Schopen, 356; Ioannes Kantakouzenos, Historia, III.89, III.93, ed. Schopen, vol. 2, 546, 573; Symeon, Logos Historikos, 8.2-5, ed. Balfour, 56-57; Laourdas, Sumbouleutikos, 295-302; *Actes de Docheiariou,* no. 54, ed. Oikonomides, 279-285; *Actes d'Iviron*, nos. 97-98, ed. Lefort *et al.*, vol. 4, 151-164. See Kyrris, Byzantine Urban Classes, 21-31 and Representative Assemblies and Taxation, 43-54; Tsirpanlis, Byzantine parliaments 432-481; Tafrali, *Thessalonique au quatorzième siècle*; Browning, Byzantine Thessalonike, 91-104; Barker, Late Byzantine Thessalonike, 5-28; Runciman, Thessalonike, 27; Jacoby, Continuité, adaptation ou rupture?, 303-318.

50   Thomas Magistros, *Epistulae*, ed. Migne, 408, 409; Ioannes Kantakouzenos, *Historia*, III.28, ed. Schopen, vol. 2, 176; Philotheos, *Homilia*, ed. Triantaphylles and Grapputo, 65-66; Shawcross, Mediterranean Encounters, 77-78.

51   Bartusis, *Land and Privilege*.

52   See Shawcross, Mediterranean Encounters, 78-79; Morrisson, Emperor, 176; Akropolites, *Chronike Syngraphe*, 44, ed. Heisenberg and Wirth, 75-79; Lemerle, Un praktikon inédit, 285; *Actes de Xénophon*, nos. 17, 25, ed. Papachryssanthou, 149, 191; *Actes de Vatopédi*, no. 62, ed. Bompaire *et al.*, 336; *Actes de Chilandar*, no. 33, ed. Živojinović *et al.*, 231; Matschke, Tuchproduktion, 68-84.

53   Demetrios Kydones, *Monodia*, 5, PG 109, 644-645; Barker, Zealot rising, 285-300.

54   Benedictow, *Black Death*, 61-93; Bartsocas, Fourteenth-century Greek descriptions, 394-400; Congourdeau, La peste noire, 149-163.

55   Ševčenko, Nicholas Cabasilas; Nicol, *Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 227-229.

members of the Palaiologan dynasty – usually the son and heir of the reigning emperor who bore the titles of junior emperor or of despot (*despotes*) – would themselves reside in Thessalonike and rule it directly. Although the imperial regime defeated the rebels, this was a pyrrhic victory; after all, it is not possible to reign over dead citizens. Moreover, the dream of liberty was not easily forgotten. In 1393, half a century later, when Thessalonike came under a Turkish siege, and Manuel II Palaiologos, the junior emperor of the day and himself resident in the city, sought desperately to organise its defence, he was vexed by the obstructiveness of the citizens who, he confessed, continued to accuse his dynasty of »tyrannising over them« and indeed had never fully given up »weaving intricate plots« to break its power. Manuel recognised that the local definition of liberty was a particularly substantial one, superior not just to that of the »Romans«, but to that of all other »free men«.[56] Addressing the Thessalonians directly, he acknowledged, and perhaps grudgingly admired, their highly-developed understanding of what it meant to be free, discerning in this a trait fundamental to their identity. The hallmark of the citizens of Thessalonike was that they could »identify liberty and are most familiar with it, just as the heavens know a mountain peak when they see one ...«.[57]

56   Manuel II Palaiologos, *Letters*, 67, l. 23-29, ed. Dennis, 187; Loenertz, Manuel Paléologue, 35-46.

57   Laourdas, Sumbouleutikos, 297; Dennis, *Manuel II Palaeologus*, 81-84 for a summary of the discourse.

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Abbreviations
CFHB = Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
CSHB = Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae
PG = Patrologia Graeca

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A Conceptual Account of Market Morals that Resonated in Medieval Anatolia under Christian and Muslim Rule

İklil Selçuk*

This paper surveys several prescriptive, descriptive and narrative sources of moral conduct from patristic teachings to Islamic commanding good and futuwwa (t. *fütüvvet*) that had resonating effects on the definition of appropriate behavior in urban markets in medieval Anatolia. The purpose of this scrutiny is to highlight converging notions among central governments and religious authorities of honesty in trade, and ways to fight inequalities born out of commerce. A closer look at these resonating moral codes suggests that while actual market conditions, crises, political and economic turmoil of periods of transition gave rise to variations in the interpretation of pre-modern market morals, prevailing common themes allow for a conceptual comparison.

Keywords: Market inspector, fair trade, just price, hoarding, eparch*, commanding good,* muḥtasib*, economic morals,* futuwwa*,* akhi*, Medieval Anatolia*

This paper scrutinizes medieval Anatolian market inspection by focusing on ideals of justice that plausibly impacted the moral and economic monitoring of urban markets. The preoccupation with justice pertaining to Eastern Mediterranean urban markets can be traced since the »centralization«, or rather standardization efforts of political entities from the Bronze Age through Antiquity into medieval times including Persian, Sassanid, Byzantine, Seljuq, Mongol and Ottoman states. Numerous accounts found in the Old and New Testaments, and the Qur'ān reflect ideals of justice pertaining to markets. Although these earliest sources are not our focus here, references to honesty in commerce culminate in the idea that giving the right measure in trade also weighs one's good deeds and bad deeds accurately, paving the way to heaven upon death. Weights and measures were kept in the most significant cathedrals, in a way acknowledging this symbolic link between measuring devices and divine judgement.[1]

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1 For a discussion of balances and weights in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, see Tekin, *Balance Weights*. I thank Oğuz Tekin for his comments during and after my presentation on Ottoman marketplaces at Koç University's AKMED research center in Antalya on 11 April 2019; Oğuz Tekin, *pers. comm.*, 23 May 2020. For visuals on measuring devices from Antiquity until Ottoman times, see Tekin, *Charm of the Market.* Storage of weights and measures at the bishops' cathedral was ordered by Emperor Justinian (d. 565) in 545; see Evans, *Age of Justinian*. For the use of sacred space in the storage of measurement devices in Medieval Europe, see Huitson, *Stairway to Heaven*, 112.

Achieving salvation through divine judgement reflects the abstract side of market morals. In practice, governments strove to accomplish the continuity of production, provisions and tax collection by preventing rebellion through keeping productive tax-paying classes unharmed.

Market inspection principles in medieval Anatolia bear similarities to those observed in late antique and Byzantine cities. As these cities had a mercantile class that was comparable to those of Anatolian entities of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, their rulers showed similar concerns with economic justice.[2] These concerns, by and large, were linked to a general understanding that economic exchange in the market created inequalities that needed to be lifted from the shoulders of those who were affected by them, namely the poor and the needy. The issue of economic morality was related to the notion of »trust«; therefore leaders and authorities who imposed rules on urban markets tended to have spiritual legitimacy and a source of charisma based on their spiritual authority in both the Christian and Muslim eras of rule in Anatolia. Morality based on spiritual authority coexisted with the attention to justice paid by rulers who controlled large territories.[3] Beyond this general semblance, however, different eras present themselves with distinct geographical and ideological specificities, complexities and transformations.

With these varying features in mind, the present study underlines the two facades of market regulation, religious moral teachings on the one hand and the concerns of centralized states on the other. These two facades suggest plausible organic relationships between market regulation institutions, officials, instruments or practices throughout different periods. Rather than detailed accounts and analyses of organic relationships or queries on cultural borrowing, this study will provide a comparison – on the conceptual level – of ideals that seem to have shaped such institutions with probable organic links.

Market Morals under Eastern-Roman Rule

The late antique Eastern Roman perspective on commerce and market traders was largely influenced by the Church Fathers, whose approach to economic matters was a product of harmonizing Ancient Greek philosophers' (especially Aristotle) concepts of *just price*, *natural exchange* and *self-sufficiency* with Christianity. Converging on the notion that greed is sinful, and commerce results in lying to convince the other party while bargaining, the Fathers encouraged non-economic exchange and free gifts instead.[4] Turning non-economic exchange into one of the most cherished virtues would result in accumulating wealth in heaven, rather than on earth.[5] This accord especially defied conspicuous consumption, and encouraged wealth distribution through alms and charity.[6]

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2 I thank Claudia Rapp for drawing my attention to this point and for suggestions on related sources. Her comments, and those of others who were present during my presentation of preliminary ideas for this paper at the *International Workshop on Urban Agencies* on 7 June 2019 in Vienna, are most appreciated. I extend my gratitude to Koray Durak, who read and commented on the final draft of this paper.

3 For the coexistence and mutual exclusivity of rules that supported the governance of large territories and rules that managed local urban markets under the rubric of Islamic Law, see Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, 346-348. These views' relevance to the present paper was formulated in light of Huricihan İslamoğlu's work on global history studies and our discussions with her. Huricihan İslamoğlu, *pers. comm.*, 7 November 2019.

4 Laiou, Trade, profit and salvation, 247.

5 Angeliki Laiou puts patristic teachings into perspective, underlining their continuous emphasis on the input of labor, which provided legitimacy to production according to the principle of autarky, and their support for charity in the early period, when commercial activities of merchants were suspected of deceit. Laiou, Trade, profit and salvation, 246.

6 Laiou, Trade, profit and salvation, 263-264.

During the Roman era, the collection of urban taxes and market inspection were the responsibility of *curiales* (city councils), from whom urban officials were elected.[7] With Late Antiquity, however, an »internal structuring« of the city councils took place when state bureaucrats were sent to prevent local injustices committed by provincial governors and autonomous *curiales*. In this context, the office of *defensor civitatis*, a previously existing one that had been neglected for some time, was resurrected during Justinian's reign (527-565) to fight against injustice.[8] As Justinian's reform efforts increased the authority of *defensor civitatis*, they coincided with a transformation in the duties of bishops which expected them to partake in municipal administration.[9] Bishops' participation in civic self-governance was a sign of the recognition of their spiritual and ecclesiastical leadership.[10] In Claudia Rapp's words, this development signaled the birth of the »career bishop«.[11]

As career bishops assumed their duties in cities such as Alexandria, Pelusium, Antioch, and Constantinople, they became closely involved in market affairs, and dealt with poverty and income inequalities, drawing upon Christian ideas of wealth distribution, deciding on which category of income or commercial activity was tolerable, acceptable, or sanctioned.[12] Their responses generally sought to resolve problems of household management (*oikonomia*), determining legitimate income and acclaimed use of surplus capital, admonishing conspicuous consumption, and differentiating self-interested economic ambitions from altruistic ones.[13] As household management and redistribution of economic resources potentially involved neglect or exploitation of the poor, the teachings of Jesus Christ suggested »generalized reciprocity«, and the »Pauline work ethic«, highlighting self-sufficiency (virtuous *autarkeia*).[14] While hoarding was perceived as irrational and immoral, it further related to Graeco-Roman perceptions of the rural and the urban as the two contradicting sides of »natural and the artificial« ways of life.[15]

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7   Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 281.

8   Frakes hypothesizes that the office was created before 319. Frakes, Origin of the defensor civitatis. 347-48. In his later work the author suggests that the office underwent a reform during the reign of Valentinian I (364-375); Frakes, The Syrio-Roman lawbook, Byzantion, 353-355. The later revival of the office by Justinian expanded the duties of *defensor civitatis* by entrusting the official with minor criminal cases, and brought a system of rotation in appointment. See Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, vol. 1, 60-61, 443; vol. 2, 336, 362.

9   Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 288.

10 Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 289-290.

11 Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 302. A critical moment during the surrender of Egypt to the Muslims (641) is reflective of the extent of responsibilities handed to these bishops. John of Nikiu's chronicle reveals that Cyrus, the bishop of Alexandria (d. 642), undertook the task of negotiating the terms of peace with the Muslims. John of Nikiu, *The Chronicle*, 120, trans., Charles, 22-27.

12 Merianes and Gotsis, *Managing Financial Resources*, 1.

13 On the co-occurrence of self-interested pursuits with charity, see Merianes and Gotsis, *Managing Financial Resources*, 8; 17.

14 Merianes and Gotsis, *Managing Financial Resources*, 18, 22, 24-26.

15 Merianes and Gotsis, *Managing Financial Resources*, 28.

Basil of Caesarea (d. c. 379), Gregory of Nyssa (d. after 394), Gregory of Nazianzus (d. c. 390) and John Chrysostom (d. 407) are some prominent representatives of patristic econom-ic ideas.[16] These bishops censured self-indulgent capital accumulation and supported the use of personal wealth toward self-sufficiency and charity, promoting almsgiving both as the manifestation of selfless and impartial love and as a practical solution to inequality.[17] Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus condemned large landowners who turned to hoarding to make more money, causing further shortages in grain supply. Basil's warning against such prac-tices culminated in his oration on food shortage in Caesarea, partly caused by famine (368-369) and partly by profit-seeking hoarders, whom he addressed, saying, »Look now how the multitude of our sins forced the seasons to [be] unnatural.«[18] In his oration, Basil aimed at inducing the hoarders to either sell their product or give it away to those in need (*Hom*. 8), as they were not the owners but only the custodians of resources granted by God (*Hom*. 6). As a practical solution to inequality, Basil – hence the term *Basileias* – built a complex named *ptochotropheion*, providing lodging for passers-by, a poorhouse for the needy and a hos-pital, outside the walls of Caesarea. This complex also provided sustainable employment opportunities for the needy.[19] John Chrysostom (d. 407) lived in Antioch and, as bishop in Constantinople, sanctioned almsgiving for equitable wealth distribution instead of hoarding. According to Chrysostom, almsgiving is an exchange of »money for grace« that cancels debts from sin, and must be offered as one-tenth of income to the poor.[20] Like hoarding, usury was condemned in Christian teachings. In tune with Aristotle's view, while Gregory of Nyssa regarded interest as »unnatural income« from inanimate sources, gained without productive labor, Chrysostom prescribed self-sufficiency, whereby one tries to get out of financial stress by one's own means in times of need.[21]

Along with prescriptive patristic teachings, hagiographies also include accounts of the re-lationship of spiritual authorities, especially saints, to market activities. The life of St. Symeon Stylites the Younger (d. 592) reveals that his father's family had moved from Edessa to Antioch as professional perfume dealers. When the Saint was offered Indian sandalwood by a prominent Syrian dealer, he put the product to the test by burning it, which revealed a foul smell. This coarse odor, the Saint concluded, indicated the indecency of the dealer's deeds.[22]

16　Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 181 and 185; Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 4-5; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 5.

17　Merianes and Gotsis, *Managing Financial Resources*, 73, 60.

18　Basil, *Hom* 8.4., PG 31, 308.

19　Merianes and Gotsis, *Managing Financial Resources*, 79-82. Houses for the poor (*ptocheia*) constituted valued pro-jects of the Church led by bishops in Antioch and Alexandria. Additional ones were built in Amasea of the Pontus eparchy. Byzantine emperors, on the other hand, were equally concerned with and took part in philanthropic mis-sions to look after the poor. Until the twelfth century, numerous *ptocheion* were built in Anatolian lands, including those in Perga, Magnesia, Nicaea and Prousa. See Constantelos, *Byzantine Philanthropy*, 257-269.

20　Merianes and Gotsis, *Managing Financial Resources*, 92-94. On Chrysostom's positive attitudes towards taking care of the poor and the voluntary poor, see Mayer, Poverty and generosity, 158.

21　Merianes and Gotsis, *Managing Financial Resources*, 96-98.

22　Magouilas, The lives of saints, 306.

Several relevant incidents from the life of St. John the Almsgiver (d. 616) are narrated by Leontios of Neopolis (seventh century).[23] Leontios recounts the patriarch's effort to impose standard weights and measures in the market. For this purpose, he sends his »treasurers and ushers« around the town and orders that all weights and measures must be uniform. What is noteworthy is the fact that the punishment for not abiding by the rules for the intruder is to transfer his possessions to the poor. In other words, the transfer of wealth to the needy is enforced by Saint John the Almsgiver as a form of punishment for unjust behavior in the urban market.[24]

While lives of saints and theological or legal prescriptive texts included ideals of justice and equity, everyday lawful contractual transactions in the market readily pushed their boundaries. Particularly throughout periods of economic hardship, regulations extoled a just price, just value, and just profits. As the urban marketplace was the center of the »unnatural« way of life that facilitated accumulation, conspicuous consumption and hoarding, it was perceived as a location where evil manifested itself. Brigitte Pitarakis illustrates »indicators of evil« at the market of Constantinople, which included cheating in commercial transactions, the spoilage of food and drink, and natural disasters. A peculiar combination of faith and magic was believed to provide protection against such hazards. This combination was attained through various means, including writing prayers and protective talismans, or lucky charm stamps attached to market merchandise.[25] The negative side of magical involvement in market affairs was the use of spells in order to inflict harm on rival businesses.[26] Hagiographies relate exorcisms performed by Symeon the Fool (sixth century) and Basil the Younger (tenth century) at Constantinople's markets to get rid of the involvement of evil in economic transactions, or for blessing honesty in business.[27]

Constantinople's monuments were also perceived as protectors of economic activities in the market. Chronicles testify to the existence of two bronze hands above the bronze grain measure (*modios*) to warn potential tricksters that this would result in having their hand chopped off, an appropriate punishment for fraud.[28] Similarly, a pair of statues known as the Just Judges at the Philadelphion »settled disputes« on commodity prices. As coins were placed in the hand of one of the statues, it was understood that the *just price* was attained when additional coins were rejected.[29]

Hagiographies reflect a gradual transformation in the perceptions of profit-making commercial activities. Departing from the strict interpretations of early patristic teachings, Nikephoros, the ninth-century patriarch of Constantinople (806-815) dictated a profit margin of ten percent, embracing the idea that the risk taken and the labor exerted by merchants entitled them to a maximum rate of ten percent in profits without entering the »unreasonable« realm.[30] By the tenth century, commercial gain by the merchant becomes acceptable.[31]

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23   Gelzer, *Leontios; Three Byzantine Saints*, ed. Dawes and Baynes, 195-270.

24   Leontios, *John the Almsgiver*, supplement 3, in: *Three Byzantine Saints*, ed. Dawes and Baynes, 211.

25   Pitarakis, Byzantine marketplace, 214.

26   Pitarakis, Byzantine marketplace, 215.

27   *Basil the Younger*, ed. Sullivan *et al.*, 154-158; Pitarakis, Byzantine Marketplace, 215.

28   Pitarakis, Byzantine marketplace, 217.

29   Pitarakis, Byzantine marketplace, 219.

30   Laiou, Trade, profit and salvation, 261; Laiou and Morrison, *Byzantine Economy*, 62.

31   Laiou, Trade, profit, and salvation, 255.

»Dirty money« is then associated with large amounts of wealth concentrated in the hands of individuals who were mostly public officials such as tax collectors or fiscal agents, for they accumulate money by oppressing the poor. Commercial activity, on the other hand, deserves remuneration, as it requires effort and labor on the part of the merchant.[32] Praise for the diligent and profit-seeking merchant due to his labor is, in Laiou's words, »the middle Byzantine answer to the questions regarding trade, mercantile activity, profit, and salvation«.[33]

Since the period that followed Justinian's law, Byzantine craftsmen and urban producers were organized in corporations and were subject to the eparch of Constantinople.[34] The tenth-century *Book of the Eparch* provides information about this office that was responsible for maintaining fair trade, just prices, just value, acceptable profit margins, and unadulterated weights and measures.[35] While guilds' proximity to public interests determined their control either directly by the eparch or by his auxiliaries, these officials searched for forbidden acts, including tricking customers by using rigged weighing devices and by selling fraudulent manufactured goods, participating in more than one trade, pilfering the employee of another tradesman, and hoarding necessities for excessive profits.[36] *The Book of the Eparch* of the market of Constantinople is not comprehensive in the branches of crafts and trades to which it refers.[37] It is confined to major commercial activities concerning fiscal and financial transactions such as goldsmiths, bankers and notaries. It refers to producers and merchants of profitable trades such as the production and sale of silk textiles, and the spice trade. Everyday necessities produced by saddlers, soap makers, fishmongers, innkeepers, butchers, sheep sellers, and chandlers were supposed to be closely scrutinized by the *eparch*.[38] Prices in the market of Constantinople were attained via a combination of principles of justice and market conditions as the *Book* refers to »unreasonable profit,« and lays down »just profit« margins accordingly. In addition to limits placed on prices in order to control profit levels, the principle of enormous damage (*laesio enormis*) was widely used to prevent wages from plunging below »just« wage levels. Through the tenth to twelfth centuries, policies of government had relative success in limiting market transactions around the aforementioned principles of justice.[39] In the case of Constantinople, market regulation was as much a matter of provisioning of the palace and the capital as implementing rules of moral conduct in commerce.

These principles of justice prescribed acceptable or sanctioned ways of managing surplus wealth by divestment or redistribution, through almsgiving, *ptōchotropheion*, or support for monasteries or for particular church factions, in return for the prospect of salvation. These practices were coupled with an emphasis on honesty in trade in the markets through the proper use of weights and measures and condemnation of profiteering, usury, conspicuous

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32 Laiou, Trade, profit and salvation, 258-259.

33 Laiou, Trade, profit and salvation, 261.

34 Laiou and Morrison, *Byzantine Economy*, 71.

35 The latest edition and translation of the text is Koder's *Das Eparchenbuch*. See also *Book of the Eparch*, introd. Dujčev. For further analyses of the *Book of the Eparch* and Byzantine urban economy, see Dagron, Urban economy; Maniatis, Organization; and *idem*, Domain of private guilds.

36 Laiou and Morrison, *Byzantine Economy*, 72.

37 Maniatis, Domain of private guilds, 344.

38 Maniatis, Domain of private guilds, 72.

39 Laiou and Morrison, *Byzantine Economy*, 62.

consumption, and hoarding. Savings were accepted so long as they supported self-sufficiency, and surplus wealth was directed toward beneficence to ensure social justice and equity. Social justice and equity were of concern to the state in so far as they related to the continuity of production, taxation and provisioning. Hagiographies of saints' lives gradually change their tone towards the market and merchants over time, and start displaying positive views about them from the eleventh century onward. Commercial exchange and respect for contracts increasingly becomes legitimate in the eyes of the spiritual authorities. Merchants are no longer considered to be oppressors of the poor, at least, not any more than government officials.[40] Wealth management in the late antique Christian and Graeco-Roman world was guided by the spiritual authority of patristic teachings, saints and bishops of the early period. Despite the effects of socio-economic transformations on these ideas of justice in varying degrees over time, comparable market morals resonated throughout Byzantine history.

Market Morals under Muslim Rule

More than a few parallels exist between the ideals and institutions that induced proper standards in Byzantine markets and those under Muslim rule in Anatolia, such as the Islamic charitable endowment (*waqf*), a sound instrument in the fight against poverty while serving pious ideals.[41] Market inspection in the Islamicate world was largely based on the Qur'anic injunction of »commanding the known or acceptable practices, and prohibiting the wrong or morally outrageous ones« commonly referred to in Arabic as the duty of *ḥisba*.[42] The injunction, henceforth *commanding good*, is the universal claim for all prophetic premises in its broadest sense. In lands under Muslim rule the duty of *commanding good* was overseen by an official called *muḥtasib*, whose operations resembled the Greek *agronomos*, Byzantine *eparch*, and Iberian *el señor del zoco, zobozoque (sāhib al-sūq)* and *almotaçen*.[43] Market rules in medieval Anatolia were applied with the participation and the agency of individuals and various interest groups such as urban craftsmen, notables, and *akhī* brotherhoods, who are thought to have functioned as spiritual, chivalric, and professional figures. *Akhī* brotherhoods' moral foundation was *futuwwa* (T. *fütüvvet*) ethics – codes of conduct that guided urban craftsmen, which markedly overlapped with *commanding good*, as will be discussed further.[44] Organic relationships between corresponding functionaries from different periods and the possibility of »cultural borrowing« have been underlined by several scholars.[45] While the present study does not delve into the problem of »origins«, the rest of the paper will make occasional references to parallel institutions from distinct eras.

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40 Contempt toward merchants, in Laiou's words, was an aristocratic attitude and therefore coincided with periods of aristocratic strength, namely up to the sixth century and after the eleventh. Laiou, Trade, profit and salvation, 261-263.

41 For a comparison of Byzantine and Seljuq pious foundations, see Yıldırım, Pious foundations. On charitable institutions, see also Singer, *Charity in Islamic Societies*; Singer *et al.*, (eds.), *Feeding People.*

42 The translation of the Qur'anic injunction of »*al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wa'n-nahy 'ani'l-munkar*« is by Engin Akarlı.

43 Foster, Agoranomos and Muḥtasib; Glick, Muḥtasib and Mustasaf; *idem*, New perspectives.

44 For a recent discussion of the *fütüvvet* literature, see Peacock, *Mongol Anatolia*, 117-144.

45 Among numerous others, on the possible pre-Islamic origins of the office of the *muḥtasib*, see Crone, Roman, Provincial and Islamic Law, 108. For a criticism of Crone's views on continuity or borrowing, see Hallaq, Use and abuse.

Commanding good

The official appointed to *command good* and to collect the relevant taxes in markets under Muslim rule stood within coexisting multiple jurisdictions, including those of the judge, the police, and the court of complaints.[46] The duties of the official theoretically fell within one of the realms concerning the rights of God, the rights of the people, and a combination of both.[47] In practice, however, mundane and religious duties were immediately discernable. The former included checking the quality, weight and measure of goods sold by craftsmen and retailers in the urban market; preventing hoarding and speculation; and punishing wrong behavior. Moral or religious duties, on the other hand, comprised maintaining order in public places by segregating men and women; ensuring congregational performance of the Friday prayer; checking fasting during Ramadan; watching itinerant sellers and shop deliverers during their encounters with private households; checking alcohol consumption by Muslims; public alcohol consumption by non-Muslim people of the Book under the protection of Muslim rule; and making sure that they followed clothing regulations. Public places other than the market were bathhouses, the cemetery and brothels, where mourners, prostitutes, storytellers, merchants, builders, the people and the public/private intermingled.[48] Wealthy merchants who worked with brokers and agents in their headquarters hardly ever fell under the jurisdiction of the market inspector. The *muḥtasib* received help from experts in the crafts, who guided him or stood in for him when needed. His booth was situated in a central location of the market. Adulteration, speculation (especially in grain and other basic necessities), hoarding, profiteering and price infringements were punished directly by the market inspector without a hearing in the court of the judge, unless the official decided otherwise. Punishments often involved fines, beating with a cane, or much less frequently, exemplary justice in the form of ignominious parading.[49]

While giving the right to maintain social order to the rulers, the aforementioned Qur'anic injunction, found, among other places, in the chapter of Āl-i Imran, also paves the way for individuals to assume this role in the society: »And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.«[50] Doctrinal variations among the major schools of Sunni Islamic Law[51] generate debates on who is truly entitled to enforce this mechanism, whether or not coercion and weapons must be allowed and whether or not the permission of the ruler is necessary, who is authorized to apply the rules with their hands, and who is only authorized to impose the duty »with their tongue«.[52]

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46   Lange, Overlapping jurisdictions, 85-107.

47   »Enforcement of the right includes the three parts: enforcement of what is due to God, of what is due to man and of what is due to both jointly.« Ibn al-Ukhuwwa, *Maʿālim al-qurba* 2, ed. Levy, 34.

48   For discussions of the concepts of public and private in Islam, see Mottahedeh and Stilt, Public and private, 735-748 and Klein, Between public and private, 41-62.

49   On punishments, see Lange, Ignominious parading (*tashhīr*), 81-108 and Lange, *Justice, Punishment*, 57-60.

50   The Qur'ān, Surah Āl-i Imrān III:104.

51   *Mālikī, Hanbalī, Shāfiʿī* and *Hanafī*. See: Hallaq, *Islamic Law*.

52   Cook, *Commanding Right,* 470-479.

In addition to the Qurʾān,[53] references to commanding good are found in prophetic traditions,[54] in books and chapters in works by prominent scholars of Islamic Law such as Al-Māwardī (d. 1058), Al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), and Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328). More specifically, handbooks or legal and prescriptive manuals were produced to guide market inspectors. Among these handbooks, those authored by Al-Shayzarī (d. 1193), Ibn al-Ukhuwwa (d. 1329), and Ibn Bassām (d. c. 1440) are widely cited. Beside these works, chronicles, biographical dictionaries, works on weights and measures, general pamphlets on moral issues, appointment deeds of market inspectors, price lists and legal compilations are available. Prescriptive manuals produced by scholars like al-Shayzarī and Ibn al-Ukhuwwa provided the framework for these generally known practices of market inspectors. The ideal *muḥtasib* portrayed by these texts was a good Muslim of integrity with a fair amount of knowledge of Islamic Law.[55] Al-Shayzarī's *Book of the Islamic Inspector* based on the author's observations of twelfth-century Syrian towns is significant for its wide circulation in Eastern Mediterranean Islamicate lands as a model text for later guides.[56] Ibn al-Ukhuwwa's work on the market inspector is largely built on al-Shayzarī's text, with a wider content with the additions of artisans and different legal opinions.[57]

Al-Shayzarī's manual deserves a closer look, as it provides a practical and comprehensive guide for the market inspector. The text predicates a balanced concern for moral/religious duties and mundane commercial duties of the market inspector from how to treat beasts of burden to segregation of the sexes;[58] from checking the accuracy of weights and measures[59] to the provision of necessities;[60] from common tricks used by producers and sellers to hygiene and the morality of health professionals, and the integrity of male and female slaves.[61] Besides these chapters, two separate sections of al-Shayzarī's manual are noticeably particularized. While one of them is reserved for moral and religious issues involving public good,[62] a separate section is dedicated to proper commercial conduct and a description of lawful market transactions. The latter, which is of specific interest for the present study provides a list of impermissible acts, including collusion (to offer a high price for a commodity not for the purpose of buying it but rather to tempt someone else into purchasing it); »sale against a brother's sale« (to buy something at a fixed price when one can return it, and someone else's offer of another commodity knowing that the person can return it); »offering a commodity

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53 Such as (Sūrah al-Hūd, XI, 85): »Hence, o my people, [always] give full measure and weight, with equity, and do not deprive people of what is rightfully theirs, and do not act wickedly on earth by spreading corruption.«

54 *Ḥadīth*: »a transmitted report of the Prophet's normative practice (by saying, action, or acquiescence)« which constitute the Prophetic sunna, collectively. Stilt, *Islamic Law in Action*, 211.

55 Al-Shayzarī describes the ideal *muḥtasib* as someone with knowledge of Islamic Law in order to know what to order and what to forbid. Al-Shayzarī, *Nihāyat al-rutba*, trans. Buckley, 28-32. According to Ibn al-Ukhuwwa, he must be »sturdy in the faith, and acquainted with the provisions of the law, seeing that nothing is good or bad save what the law declares to be so.« Ibn al-Ukhuwwa, *Maʿālim al-qurba* 1, ed. Levy, 14-15.

56 Stilt, *Islamic Law in Action*, 58.

57 Stilt, *Islamic Law in Action*, 59-60.

58 Al-Shayzarī, *Nihāyat al-rutba*, trans. Buckley, 38-39.

59 Al-Shayzarī, *Nihāyat al-rutba*, trans. Buckley, 45.

60 Al-Shayzarī, *Nihāyat al-rutba*, trans. Buckley, 46.

61 Al-Shayzarī, *Nihāyat al-rutba*, trans. Buckley, 103.

62 Al-Shayzarī, *Nihāyat al-rutba*, trans. Buckley, 124-135.

for sale against their brother's offer« (to offer a better commodity for the price someone has paid, or to offer a similar one for a lower price); selling a commodity after an unspecified period, or selling it with a payment upon an unspecified future event; buying something from a merchant and selling it to another person before even getting a hold of it; selling by »touch« (to say »if you touch the item of clothing, you will have to buy it«); buying a commodity at a stated price, but reducing the price once the transaction is concluded; cooperating with other sellers or the market crier to buy merchandize at higher prices to raise the market value.[63] In addition to these unlawful transactions, money changers are warned against usury, to keep away from deeds against the religion. Selling gold for gold, or silver for silver in the same amounts was forbidden since it implied that the person made profit from money.[64] The market inspector was not to fix prices in the market; he was to prevent hoarding, monopolies, and meeting caravans (to trade) before they entered cities.

Hoarding is generally accepted as a forbidden act, and is mentioned both by al-Shayzarī and Ibn al-Ukhuwwa. The latter states, »A person who has hoarded foodstuffs in time of scarcity and waits only for an opportunity in order to sell, must be compelled by the *muḥtasib* to sell his stock, for hoarding is forbidden and the hoarder accursed.«[65] Traditions of the prophet cited in relation to hoarding are: »The one who brings food to the market is blessed, and the one who hoards it is cursed;«[66] and »Whoever hoards food for forty days, then gives its value as a charitable gift, the gift does not serve as atonement for hoarding.«[67]

Unlike the position of scholars towards hoarding, the issue of price fixing is more problematic. A tradition of Prophet Muhammed on price fixing relates that when asked to fix the prices in the market of Medina, he refused to do so, saying, »Only God establishes the prices, and I want to meet God without anyone claiming restitution from me because of an injustice I committed to person or property.«[68] A liberal price regime was generally supported by Muslim jurists. Price-ceilings were only allowed in cases of famine or dearth, in order to prevent hoarding, which was clearly forbidden due to its harm to the community of believers. Therefore, breaking the principle of free market prices was only legitimized based on the concept of public good (*maṣlaḥa*). An official announcement of dearth by the judge was necessary for the implementation of price fixing. According to prevailing circumstances, hoarders could be forced to sell their stocks at the market price or at a fixed price imposed by the authorities.[69]

Apart from the aforementioned market-inspection manuals that were widely circulated, there is scant evidence on the rules that guided the Anatolian market inspector that predates the mid-fifteenth century. Anatolia was loosely centralized under Seljuq rule before it underwent Mongol suzerainty (1243). From Seljuq to Mongol and *beylik* (post-Seljuq principalities) periods, urban commercial activity nevertheless continued within an ever-shifting web

63 Al-Shayzarī, *Nihāyat al-rutba*, trans. Buckley, 81-83.

64 Al-Shayzarī, *Nihāyat al-rutba*, trans. Buckley, 96.

65 Ibn al-Ukhuwwa, *Ma'ālim al-qurba* 89, ed. Levy, 21.

66 Ibn Māja, *Sunan Ibn Māja* 2, ed. Fuad, 728 (ḥadīth 2153); Stilt, *Islamic Law in Action*, 153-154.

67 Ibn al-Ukhuwwa, *Ma'ālim al-qurba*, ed. Levy, 65-66.

68 Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 5, ed. al-Arnāuṭ and Qarahbalalī, 320-321 (tradition 3450); Ibn Māja, *Sunan Ibn Māja* 2, ed. Fuad, 741-742 (tradition 2200); al-Tirmidhī, *al- Jāmi'al-Kabīr* 2, ed. Ma'rūf, 582 (tradition: 1314). On the topic of regulating prices, see Sabra, »Prices Are in God's Hands«; Kallek, Narh; Kütükoğlu, Narkh.

69 For the illustration of the imposition of the rules in Mamlūk Egypt, see Stilt, *Islamic Law in Action*, 154-174.

of political and economic alliances. Moreover, there is considerable variation between what is described by prescriptive treatises of economic morals and actual market practices throughout centuries, geographies, specific locations, dynasties and individual market inspectors from different backgrounds. The *moral economy* was never reducible to the real economy. It was not totally unrealistic, yet it extended beyond what was applied in the market.[70]

Several up-to date studies that employ narrative, art historical, architectural and archeological sources provide fresh insight into medieval Anatolian cultural and commercial life.[71] The period is characterized by the prominent caravanserai network constructed by the Rum Seljuqs prior to the arrival of the Mongols, which connected the region to Iran, the Silk Road, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Understanding the post-Mongol period, however, as suggested by Sara Nur Yıldız, requires a deeper grasp of the economic, artisanal and intellectual interaction of local agricultural and urban communities with their pastoralist overlords.[72] The shifting of Anatolian trade routes in the 1300s due to competition among the Ilkhanid, Mamluk, Byzantine, the Golden Horde, Venetian and Genoese powers was also the scene for the imposition of the Ilkhanid economic policy of monetization and currency standardization by Ghazan Khan (r. 1295–1304).[73] The success of such policies may be uncertain; however, each of these developments would have repercussions on urban markets and their regulation.

In the Rum Seljuq period, a council of urban inspection (*dīvān-i muḥtasib*) is mentioned in an order concerning market rules.[74] The market inspector in this organization was appointed by royal decree and paid out of the fees collected from craftsmen and retailers of the market by way of tax-farming. His duties of facilitating commerce, watching over non-Muslims; checking craftsmen, measures and scales; and making sure that transaction rules were correctly implemented, focus on market affairs. A market inspector's appointment decree from fourteenth-century Sivas reveals that he was also expected to assume the duty of disciplining those who departed from the path of God.[75] One of the conspicuous ways in which such departure occurred involved the consumption of alcoholic beverages by Muslims. Trépanier's detailed analysis of available sources on central Anatolia suggests that alcohol consumption was observed among the elites of political and military circles. Ordinary Anatolians, some sources reflect, stocked up on (grape and pomegranate) wine before winter set in.[76]

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70   »Reputation« was a significant part of the market, and it depended on debt and paying the debt. The relations between wholesalers and retailers were also credit/trust relations related to debt.

71   Izdebski, Jaworski, Üstündağ, Sołtysiak, Bread and class, 335-357; Goshgarian, Diversity in the Medieval Middle East, 140-158; Melville, Anatolia under the Mongols, 51-101; De Nicola, Letters from Mongol Anatolia, 1-14; De Nicola, On the outskirts of the Ilkhanate, 117-135; Yıldız, *Mongol Rule*, 388-414; Yıldız, Post-Mongol pastoral polities, 27-48; Trépanier, *Foodways and Daily Life*; Blessing, *Rebuilding Anatolia*, 165-203.

72   Yıldız, Post-Mongol pastoral polities, 42.

73   Blessing, *Rebuilding Anatolia*, 165-166. The encyclopedic work, *Masalik al-Absar*, by a Damascene-Mamluk official Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī (1301-1349), provides a picture of non-standard prices and currencies in Anatolia. On al-ʿUmarī's contribution to Anatolian historiography, see Trépanier, 141.

74   The head of the council was called the head of the council of rules pertaining to the order of *commanding good* (*hākim-i dīvān-ı ḥisba*). Konevî, *Teḳārīrü'l-Menāṣıb*, ed. Turan, 43-44.

75   Khūʾī, , Ġunyetü'l-Kātib, ed. Erzi, 33-34.

76   Trépanier, 118.

An early fifteenth-century manual of epistolography is noteworthy as it contains the oldest-known official records written in Turkish in Anatolia.[77] The appointment deed of the market inspector of Ladik (Denizli) found in this collection enlists his duties as follows:

1. To command good and forbid wrong; to discipline and threaten those who drink and depart from the right way;
2. To announce the prices of drinks, foodstuffs, clothing and grain among the people of the market;[78]
3. To watch over the scales and measures used;
4. To inspect grocers, (bread) bakers, sheep's-head cooks, *halwa* (sweet) confectioners and other artisans once a month;
5. If *narkh* is discovered to be short, to take a fine of 1 *asper/dirḥem*; to punish each group of craftsmen according to their deeds; not to favor anyone, and to execute the necessities of market rules.[79]

In the contemporaneous appointment deed from Konya, while the beginning is verbatim the same as the above-cited deed of investiture, the following is added:

1. This one must continue the previous market inspectors' practices.
2. Under no condition will the orders be infringed or interfered in.
3. Must oversee the prayer for the continuation of the realm.[80]

Available sources suggest that Rum Seljuq *muḥtasib*'s obligations were almost limited to commercial or market affairs. This is in contrast to the detailed account that embraced religious and mundane duties found in al-Shayzarī's manual. The focus on commercial duties in the Seljuq and Ottoman deeds of investiture overlap,[81] which brings us to the question of what was expected from an early-Ottoman market inspector.

Our knowledge of early-Ottoman policies is based on fifteenth-century chronicles written retrospectively, when humble, redistributive economic perceptions and the refusal to tax the people of the market had already changed into the fiscalist measures of the central Ottoman state.[82] According to Cemal Kafadar, influences that embodied the concepts of just price, fair trade, the *circle of justice*, the *quadripartite society*[83] and household management (*oikonomos* translated into Ottoman via Arabic as *tadbīr al-manzil*) entered the Ottoman court in

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77   The scribe is thought to have served in the court of the Germiyanid principality (1302-1428). Kırımlu Hafız Hüsam, *Teressül*, trans. Tekin.

78   The said prices are the maximum prices (*narkh*) allowed by the authorities.

79   *Narkh*, in this case, refers to the proper weight, rather than the price of commodities.

80   »He must strongly hold on to the prayers for the continuation of the state, and anticipate the increase of blessings.« Trans. mine.

81   In a comparison of four market inspector appointment diplomas from Great Seljuq, Rum Seljuq, Khwarazmshāh, and Ottoman periods, Richard Wittmann observes that the Rum Seljuq document, which sets out the duties of the market inspector of Konya, devotes all except one clause to market-related activities. Moreover, the market inspector of Konya was to hold the office as a tax farm (*muqāṭa'a*) in line with the later Ottoman practice. Wittmann, *Muḥtasib* in Seljuq Times, 108-128.

82   Kafadar, *When Coins*, 22.

83   The division of society by the Persian philosopher and theologian Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 1274) as men of the pen, men of the sword, men of agriculture, and of commerce in his *Akhlāq-e Nāṣirī* (13th century). For the influence of this division in Ottoman political thought, see Sariyannis, *Ottoman Political Thought*, 92.

the fifteenth century.[84] Geographical overlap, local knowledge to which the Ottomans had access upon their rule over Bythinia prior to the fall of Constantinople and, following the Ottoman conquest, similar concerns with provisioning of the capital city deserve further attention pertaining to parallels in Ottoman and Byzantine market administration regimes.[85]

Among the few sources that could be used for such a comparison, the aforementioned *Book of the Eparch* was a legislative text with limited objectives. Notaries; money changers; manufacturers of high-value products such as goldsmiths, silk textile weavers and merchants; trades prone to fraud; those who were imperially commissioned; and, in particular, trades that provided the people of the capital fell under the jurisdiction of the *eparch* of Constantinople.[86] Alternative networks and small traders were excluded from the *Book of the Eparch* because they had a limited number of members and small turnover; they did not involve an extensive division of labor; they sold their products themselves, or with middlemen so they would not act together to exploit consumers; the commodities they produced did not involve prohibited items; and their »dealings and infractions« were the subjects of common law. Therefore, strict supervision and governmental control were deemed unnecessary.[87] Provisioning Byzantine Constantinople and Ottoman Istanbul, albeit in distinct periods and contexts, had common objectives of provisioning the respective imperial capitals that lay in the same geographical location, sustained by a corresponding hinterland. Ottoman market regulation ideals and policies of the later period are documented in detail by sultanic law codes (*qānūnnāma*) and sources on the office of palace purchases (*ḥaṣṣa kharc amīni*) of Bursa, who was responsible for providing the Topkapı Palace of Istanbul with fresh produce from the fertile Bursa gardens.[88]

Fütüvvet *Morals*

As the injunction of commanding good guided Muslim rulers of Anatolia in the realm of market regulation, an equally noteworthy moral tradition known as *futuwwa* (henceforward T. *fütüvvet*) gained esteem in twelfth-century Anatolia.[89] A closer look at *fütüvvet* literature reveals that while influencing ceremonial functions of artisanal young men's (*fityān*) organizations, it prescribed charity, renunciation of voracity and greediness, and following »legitimate« ways of income generation to avoid poverty. As *fütüvvet* was embraced by urban spiritual, chivalric and professional brotherhoods called *akhīs* in Anatolia, it impacted perceptions of proper moral conduct in urban settings.[90] The waning of Ilkhanid

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84 Kafadar, *When Coins*, 35-36.

85 Due to provisionist concerns, price regulations of necessities, especially of grain, were implemented by Ottomans, as they were in similar circumstances by Byzantine policies, or as demonstrated by Seven Ağır, in Iberia. See Ağır, *From Welfare to Wealth*. See also Magdalino, *Studies* IX, 35-47. For comparison and continuity between Byzantine and Ottoman commercial practices in relation to the topography of the capital, see Mango, Commercial map of Constantinople, 204-207; İnalcık, Hub of the city.

86 On the *Book of the Eparch* and the Byzantine urban economy, see Gilbert Dagron, The urban economy, 407. See also *Idem*, The domain of private guilds, 339-369.

87 Maniatis, Organization, 344.

88 Ottoman market regulation is outside the scope of the present study. For my analysis on the subject, see Selçuk, Ottoman market-regulation. On the office of palace purchases, see Selçuk, Osmanlı şehir ekonomisi.

89 It was the Abbasid caliph al-Nāṣır al-Dīn Allāh (d. 1225) who admitted *futuwwa* into his court, and invited the Rum Seljuq sultanate to join *futuwwa* by sending a prestigious emissary and gifts.

90 Particularly following the defeat of Seljuqs of Rum by the Mongols (1243 Kösedağ Battle), as the prominence of *akhī*s increased in Anatolia.

power and control over Anatolia as of the 1330s resulted in the »localization« of patron-age and endowments by communities of Sufis and *akhī*s in the smaller, but nevertheless significant centers of Ankara, Amasya and Tokat.[91] The Arslanhane complex is a strik-ing example of rare survivals showing the influence of *akhī* brotherhoods in fourteenth-century Ankara. Their ties to *fütüvvet* morals and urban professions, their distinction from Sufi circles and their presumed chivalric qualities characterize *akhī*s as a manifest group of the transition period between Seljuq, Mongol and post-Mongol periods of Anatolia.[92]

While *fütüvvet* is widely accepted as an Islamic genre, Christians also subscribed to similar organizations, as shown by an inscription that mentions a Greek *akhī*,[93] and Armenian manu-scripts written in the *fütüvvet* genre to guide brotherhoods around similar moral codes.[94] Earlier works by Speros Vryonis drew attention to the similarity between institutions such as Roman *demes*, Byzantine *circus factions*, youth associations (*neaniai*) and *panegyris* with those of the Islamic East, including *futuwwa*, *fityān, ahdāth*, and *panair*, suggesting basic affinity and even probable common ancestry.[95] A much broader view of influences on urban Anatolia necessitates accounting for Iranian influences prior to the arrival of the Mongols. Carole Hillenbrand un-derlines twelfth-century Persian influence on the Seljuq court, especially regarding the Seljuq patronage of Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Rāvandī as a counterweight to lasting Byzantine impact.[96]

Recent studies that provide novel insight into medieval Anatolia in a considerably nuanced picture feature complexity. Rachel Goshgarian's studies show that *fütüvvet* texts produced in the lands of Rum by Christians and Muslims interacted with each other, a phenomenon that was probably bolstered by a striving for reform by the Armenian Church, vis-à-vis the challenge posed by Islamic institutions.[97] The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are de-scribed by the author as »a time of cultural, geographical, and political ›in-betweenness‹«,[98] which manifested itself in the form of architectural and textual hybridity of comingling, fluid identities, specifically observed in urban settings.[99] Associations around *fütüvvet*-like ethics among Muslims and Christians reflect a common influence by Shihāb al-Dīn ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī (d. 1234), who brought the insignia of *fütüvvet* to the Rum Seljuq sultanate in 1221 on behalf of the Abbasid caliph.[100] The »formal« invitation to *fütüvvet* coincided with a renewed interest in civic governance, which necessitated the formulation of inclusive and exclusive urban conduct with respect to the practice of faith, intercommunal relations and the affairs of the urban market.[101]

91 Blessing, *Rebuilding Anatolia*, 183.
92 Blessing, *Rebuilding Anatolia*, 193. On the distinction between Sufis and *akhī*s, see Selçuk, Suggestions.
93 An inscription from Konya indicates a Greek Christian *akhī*. Taeschner, Achis in Anatolien, 20.
94 Aflākī mentions Armenian *akhī*-like brotherhoods in his *Manāḳib al-ʿĀrifīn* I, 3 ed. Yazıcı 463, 489. Two *fütüvvet* manuals authored by Hovhannes Pluz (d. 1293), an Armenian priest of the Anatolian city of Erzincan have been translated and interpreted by Goshgarian; see Goshgarian, Armenian texts on *fotovvat*, 82-214.
95 Vryonis, Byzantine guilds, 314; *idem*, Circus factions, 56, 285-286.
96 Hillenbrand, Seljuk court at Konya, 168.
97 Goshgarian, *Futuwwa* in thirteenth-century Rum and Armenia, 228;
98 Goshgarian, Diversity in the Medieval Middle East, 144.
99 Goshgarian, Diversity in the Medieval Middle East, 151, 155-157.
100 Goshgarian, *Futuwwa* in thirteenth-century Rūm and Armenia, 250.
101 Goshgarian, Opening and closing, 37.

Among the oldest extant manuscripts, a *fütüvvet* manual written for the Turkish-speaking Anatolian audience by Yahyā b. Halīl b. Çoban, al-Burgāzī mentions apposite conduct and morals in economic transactions that guided those who entered the *fütüvvet-akhī* tradition in the thirteenth century.[102] As an influential text of this period, a closer look at al-Burgāzī's manual illustrates expectations from an ideal *akhī* in the *fütüvvet* path. Eligibility criteria identify people of certain character traits and members of professions that cannot be admitted to *fütüvvet*. While lack of morals in the general sense determines a good portion of these criteria, people of the market who are denied entry to *fütüvvet* are the criers of prices, collection agents, hoarders, and those who lack the knowledge to do their job.[103]

In a similar manner, al-Burgāzī provides a detailed account of the qualities of a respectable *akhī*,[104] who is a generous, chaste, and humble man making a living from a craft or a profession, and sharing his income with those in need.[105] The »tree of *fütüvvet*« grows in the bosom of the novice (*yiğit*) in the path to becoming an *akhī*, if he has the attributes of loyalty, purity, reliability, piety, kindness, courage and modesty.[106] The emphasis on honesty and modesty reverberates throughout the text, and is supported by quotations from the Qur'ān, (XVII: 35): »And give full measure whenever you measure, and weigh with a balance that is true: this will be [for your own] good, and best in the end«,[107] ordering the use of correct weights and measures regarding market transactions, as well as justice and equity in general; and praising charity and condemning conspicuous consumption:

> O you who have attained to faith! Do not deprive your charitable deeds of all worth by stressing your own benevolence and hurting [the feelings of the needy], as does he who spends his wealth only to be seen and praised by men, and believes not in God and the Last Day: for his parable is that of a smooth rock with [a little] earth upon it – and then a rainstorm smites it and leaves it hard and bare. Such as these shall have no gain whatever from all their [good] works: for God does not guide people who refuse to acknowledge the truth.[108]

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102 Oldest manuscript: Fatih Millet Library, Ali Emiri Efendi catalogue, Şer'iyye no:1154/198. For the text and its analysis, see Gölpınarlı, Burgāzī. While al-Burgāzī's manuscript was significantly (partly word for word) copied from a previous manual *Tuhfat al-Vasāyā*, by Ahmed b. Nakkaş İlyas, [Ahmed b. Nakkaş İlyas, 108a-l17b; Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, Fütüvvet Teşkilatı, 205-231], the text was also used by future contributors to the literature, namely the Turkish *fütüvvet-nāme* by Sheikh Hüseyin b. Sheikh Seyyid Gaybî (c. 1451-1481); Gölpınarlı, Şeyh Seyyid Gaybi oğlu; an anonymous manuscript written in the fourteenth century and copied in 1610. [Ayasofya Library manuscript no. 2049, (108a-117b)]; and *Miftāḥ al-Daqāiq fī Beyān al-Fütüvveti'l-Haqāiq*, also known as *Fütüvvetnāme-i Kebīr* (1524) by Seyyid Muhammad b. al-Seyyid alā-al-Dīn al-Huseyniyy al-Razavī. Breebaart, Fütüvvet-nāme-i Kebīr, 203-215.

103 Al-Burgâzî, *Fütüvvet-nāme*, 22a-26a in Gölpınarlı, Burgâzî, 121-124.

104 »He is generous both in this world and in the other world; he does not neglect the daily prayers and practices the rituals of Islam; he abandons worldly pleasures, remaining celibate, does not yearn for high positions; he earns lawful income; he has a vocation, for without one, he cannot help the ones in need; he does not have over eighteen dirhems of silver as his savings; he is not ignorant and constantly seeks knowledge.« Al-Burgāzī, *Fütüvvet-nāme*, 28a.-43a in Gölpınarlı, Burgâzî, 124-132.

105 Al-Burgāzī, *Fütüvvet-nāme*, 43b in Gölpınarlı, Burgâzî, 132-133. The fourteenth-century traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa narrates that throughout his stay in Anatolia he was hosted by *akhī*s is the towns he visited; see Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Travels*, 413-468, 426-427. Oya Pancaroğlu analyzes the hospitality of *akhī* brotherhoods in her article Devotion, hospitality and architecture, 60-72.

106 Al-Burgāzī, *Fütüvvet-nāme*, 27a in Gölpınarlı, Burgâzî, 124.

107 Al-Burgāzī, *Fütüvvet-nāme* 65 a.-b. in Gölpınarlı, Burgâzî, 145-146. Translation from: The Qur'ān, Surah al-Isrā' (The Night Journey) XVII: 35; *Message of the Qur'ān*, trans. Asad, 423-424.

108 Al-Burgāzī, *Fütüvvet-nāme*, 43a. The Qur'ān, Surah II, 264; *Message of the Qur'ān*, trans. Asad, 60.

Fütüvvet manuals continued to circulate in the Ottoman period, long after the prominence of the *akhī*s disappeared with Ottoman centralization.[109] It is noteworthy that in some of these later manuscripts, too, parallels between *fütüvvet* and *commanding good* are quite pronounced.[110]

Conclusion

This paper highlighted primarily prescriptive, descriptive, and narrative sources reflecting similar, discernable notions of economic morals from the late antique, middle Byzantine and later medieval periods. The basic assumption here is the impact of these notions on market-regulation concerns in Anatolia. Persistent warnings appear from Late Antiquity onwards against usury, hoarding, trickery, conspicuous consumption, profiteering, and price fixing. The promoted ideals are a just price, just value, just profit, value based on labor and risk, natural exchange, fighting poverty by charity, protecting sellers from enormous damage, and self-sufficiency. Perceptions of the market and merchants' profit evolved over time from the Greek patristic to middle and Late Byzantine times, eventually gaining relative respect for merchants' profit. Resilient in balancing the market with moral teachings, the Byzantine experience displayed the picture of a state-led economy with considerable success in fulfilling general concerns with justice.

Economic morals that impacted Anatolian markets in the later medieval period of political competition among various powers were notably shaped by the principle of *commanding good*, and *fütüvvet* ethics that guided urban artisanal brotherhoods. *Commanding good* provided a clear framework that strictly forbade usury, hoarding, collusion, speculation, and trickery. The Islamic perception of the market did not focus on sin and salvation regarding the corruptive potential of commerce, contrary to Christian notions. The concepts of promoting public good and preventing public harm provided the general framework for policy-makers, based on Islamic legal positions elaborated by Muslim scholars. Openly banned by Islamic schools of law, price regulations were only tolerated in times of famine or drought, until the later Ottoman period when price fixing became regular and codified. *Fütüvvet*, on the other hand, which taught chastity, generosity, modesty, piety, industriousness, and service, had counterparts among Greek and Armenian Christian communities. This picture attests both to the complexity of the period, and to the congruence of different facets of medieval economic morality. Inequalities born from market exchange were fought by a moral realm created by jurists based on Islamic Law. Moral principles were further influenced by the concepts of the *circle of justice*, the *quadripartite society*, and household management, according to which, continuity of production, taxation, provisioning and protection of the common people were intertwined under the rubric of justice.

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109 For a concise assessment of *akhī*s in Ottoman times, see Faroqhi, *Artisans of Empire*, 1-2, 28-31. How much injunctions of *fütüvvet* treatises shaped the actual behavior among institutional and hierarchical Ottoman guild members of the early-modern period is questioned by Yi, Rich artisans and poor merchants, 196-199.

110 Such as *Miftāḥ al-Daqā'iq fī Bayān al-futuwwa wa'l Haqā'iq*, known by the title *Fütüvvetnāme-i Kebīr*, written in sixteenth-century Bursa by Shaykh Seyyid Huseyn ibn Shaykh Seyyid Gaybī, which explains the fundamental knowledge necessary to distinguish between what is »permissible and despicable«, notions of just price, honesty in trade, proper weights and measures, fair profit, patron saints, and proper religious conduct in the market. For an analysis of notions of economic morals in this manual, see Breebaart, Fütüvvet-nāme-i Kebīr, 203-215; *idem*, *Turkish Futuwwa Guilds*. On parallels between *fütüvvet* and *ḥisba*, see also Selçuk, Suggestions, 106-107.

The holy scripture and traditions, within their respective historical contexts, provided the moral teachings that aimed to guide individuals in their economic and commercial endeavor. Economic morals overall, however, were also shaped by pre-modern agricultural tributary imperial systems that strove to continue their livelihood through market regulation, provisions and maintaining social justice. The present study, therefore, underlines the two facades of market regulation: religious moral teachings on the one hand, and the concerns of centralized states on the other. While these two facets suggest plausible organic relationships between relevant institutions and practices, similarity through comparison on the conceptual level is obvious.

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Merchant Capital, Taxation & Urbanisation.
The City of Ani in the Global Long Thirteenth Century

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This article addresses the themes of urban agency and state-centrism by analysing the agency of merchant capital and taxation in processes of urbanisation. The case study is the city of Ani, a now abandoned site in central south Caucasia straddling the Turkish-Armenian border, in the long thirteenth century *c.*1200-1350. This global-historical conjuncture is defined by the height of the medieval Commercial Revolution and its central Eurasian expression, the Silk Road. By 1200 Ani had developed as a thriving commercial centre for over two hundred years, with merchants coming to dominate the political economy in the city and its environs. By the mid-fourteenth century, however, this wealthy commercial class was no longer in evidence, with Ani's urbanising process fundamentally transformed, beginning a rapid deurbanisation. Utilising contemporary theories of (de)urbanisation found in Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddima*, this article first outlines Ani's development up to 1200, focusing on the role of interregional and intercontinental commerce, and the urban elite's rising dominance in landholding. Having established the mercantile and rentier regime of accumulation on which Ani's development depended, we turn to the period of Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli rule under the Georgian kingdom *c.*1200-1236, finding a wealthy commercial class hegemonic in the city's political regime as well as the regime of accumulation. The final section, then, details the urban elite's fortunes under Mongol Eurasian hegemony, and particularly the effects of drastically increased taxation in this political realisation of the medieval Silk Road. Ultimately the story of Ani in the global long thirteenth century forms a crucial case study for the combined agency of taxation and capital in urbanisation, both beneath and within the level of the state system, speaking to their contradictory symbiosis. At the same time, the city as a site of accumulation forms a crucial bridge in the Armenian merchant bourgeoisie's trajectory from the medieval Commercial Revolution into the coalescence of capitalist modernity.

Keywords: Armenia/Armenians, capitalism, cities, Commercial Revolution, Georgia/Georgians, epigraphy, Ilkhanate, merchants, Mongols, political economy, Silk Road, states, taxation, world systems

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Introduction

In his *Muqaddima* (1377), a long theoretical introduction to a multi-volume universal history, the Maghrebi jurist and scholar Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406) provides an astute analysis of the preconditions, dynamics and tendencies of urbanisation.[1] Most decisive is a political regime: cities are not socially necessary but are rather inextricable from state systems,[2] his vision of »civilisation« encompassing both state formation and urbanisation so that the latter »completes« the former.[3] Delineating further necessary factors and general tendencies, Ibn Khaldūn notes how cities differ in relative prosperity and levels of commercial activity, and identifies a general explanation: population size. Unlike modern Malthusian understandings, however, population is not an isolated factor determining resource competition and so on, but rather indicates the source of all wealth, *human labour*. As Ibn Khaldūn presciently writes, »human labour is necessary for every profit and capital accumulation«,[4] and in cities with large populations »combined labour produces more than the needs and necessities of the workers«.[5] This leads to rising commercial activity and a coeval increase in the city's total income and expenditure. So the political regime extracts commercial taxes, supporting its own further expansion and augmenting general taxation on land and households, which Ibn Khaldūn claims tend towards falling rates of return over a state system's lifetime.[6] Yet commercial taxation presents inherent dangers: prices and living costs increase, and expenditures grow faster than incomes, steadily immiserating citizens so that the population declines. Eventually:

> ...when the [available] labour is all gone or decreases because of a decrease in civilization, God permits profits to be abolished. Cities with few inhabitants can be observed to offer little sustenance and profit, or none whatever, because little human labour [is available]...This goes so far that even the flow of springs and rivers stops in waste areas. Springs flow only if they are dug out and the water drawn. This requires human labour...This can be observed in countries where springs existed in the days of their civilization. Then, they fell into ruins, and the water of the springs disappeared completely in the ground, as if it had never existed.[7]

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1   Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 263-295. Cf. Banaji, *Theory*, 263-264; I must thank Jairus Banaji for drawing my attention to these sections' relevance to this article. On Ibn Khaldūn generally, see Lacoste, *Ibn Khaldun*.

2   His term *dawla* is often translated as »dynasty«, but this has misleading connotations.

3   Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 264-265.

4   The term for capital is *mal*, generally »wealth« but also capital in the specific sense; see Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 298; and Banaji, *Theory*, 263-264. On labour theories of value generally, see Graeber, *Towards an Anthropological Theory of Value*.

5   Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 273.

6   Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 230-232.

7   Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 299.

This article focuses on one such urbanisation, the city of Ani in central south Caucasia, a now abandoned centre straddling the Akhurian River which today marks the border between the republics of Turkey and Armenia. The timeframe is Ani's final developmental arc *c*.1200-1350, closing in Ibn Khaldūn's lifetime.[8] I explore the same themes as that early proponent of globalising social history: the preconditions, dynamics and tendencies of (de)urbanisation. In particular I explore the internal relationship between tax-based political regimes and urban elite classes accumulating through commerce, as well as the reliance of both on value produced by the labour of subaltern classes.[9] This value was extracted, circulated and realised in two inextricable but mutually antagonistic forms, which together constitute the crucial combined agency in urbanisation: tax and capital.[10] In Ani this contradictory symbiosis played out to the city's eventual deurbanisation, in dynamics strikingly close to Ibn Khaldūn's general model.

Ani emerged in the second half of the tenth century as part of a constellation of cities rapidly developing on the Shirak plain and across Caucasia. Dynamic urbanisation continued up to and across the thirteenth century,[11] but in the fourteenth, crisis hit: by *c*.1350 the city's urbanising process had come to an end, beginning an afterlife as an administrative centre and more or less abandoned over the fifteenth century. I situate Ani's trajectory in a global-historical macro-conjuncture termed the long thirteenth century, lasting roughly 1200 to 1350.[12] In a 2015 monograph Alexander Anievas and Kerem Nisancioglu emphasised the importance of Mongol hegemony across Eurasia for the long-term emergence of capitalist modernity.[13] Mongol hegemony defines the long thirteenth century as a political-economic conjuncture, its end coinciding with Latin Christendom's late-medieval crisis, which engendered both economic dislocation and political turbulence, especially seen in subaltern revolts across the fourteenth, fifteenth and into the early sixteenth centuries. Likewise, the end of the long thirteenth century sees Ani's terminal deurbanisation, leaving it practically

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8   All above ground remains lie on a plateau on the current Turkish side, traditionally understood as the city as such, but thereby excluding unexcavated suburban areas currently lying on the Armenian side. For overviews of the city's history and archaeology, see Marr, *Rêve d'Arménie*; Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey*, 356-377; Cowe (ed.), *Ani: World Architectural Heritage*; Mahé, Faucherre, Karamagarali and Dangles, *L'Enceinte Urbaine d'Ani*; and Hakobyan, *Ani*. This article is part of a larger project examining the entirety of Ani's trajectory, currently titled *»The Fate of Unjust Cities«: Merchant Capitalism, Global History & the Abandoned City of Ani, 900-1400.*

9   Subaltern is used in this paper in a simple sense, referring to all those subordinated to a given political-economic order, and exploitatively dominated for its reproduction.

10 In this case specifically *merchant* capital; see Banaji, *Theory*, 251-276 and Bernstein, *Class Dynamics*, 32-35.

11 Greenwood, Emergence, 52-55 and Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities.

12 Conjuncture refers to the way in which social, political and economic dynamics come together into a particular constellation in a given set of times and places, demonstrating a level of historical coherence and specificity. A »macro-«conjuncture is such a definable period stretching across a century or more, while a »micro-«conjuncture lasts only a couple of decades.

13 The work forms a crucial intervention in Marxism's »transition debate«; see Anievas and Nisancioglu, *How the West*, 64-90. On longer histories of a specifically *commercial* capitalism, see Banaji, *Theory*, 251-276 and *idem*, *A Brief History*. Hegemony refers to a relationship state of generalised social, political and/or economic dominance, so that a given state system or class »sets the rules« for other actors in a given sphere. This generalised rule-setting can refer to the regime of accumulation, the political regime, social and cultural norms, or the world system as a whole, all of which are referred to at different points in this article. Hegemony is distinct from, albeit related to, more direct rule/governance and domination.

insignificant by the end of the fourteenth century, and the end of the Shirak plain's urban character, which more or less disappeared by the early sixteenth century.[14] In her 1989 classic, *Before European Hegemony*, Janet Abu-Lughod similarly argued for the emergence of a nascent global political economy in the period *c*.1250-1350, which constituted a distinct »world system«.[15] This system, she proposed, formed out of longer-term processes stretching back to the tenth century, is seen in the rapid growth of cities and increasing prominence of merchants across Eurasia, from China to the Mediterranean and the Atlantic littoral.[16]

In this article Commercial Revolution refers to global-historical processes lasting between the tenth and fourteenth centuries, including the Mediterranean and European phenomena normally referred to as such, and stretching across Eurasia to encompass China's contemporary »medieval economic revolution«.[17] The long thirteenth century forms the apogee of these longer-term developments, a period of quantitative to qualitative shifts in short- (regional), medium- (interregional) and long-distance (intercontinental) commercial nexuses, between increasingly complex divisions of production, appropriation and distribution within, between and across different constituent regions of the world system. Mongol hegemony over the Eurasian regions of this world system constitutes the most decisive qualitative shift, forming the Commercial Revolution's political realisation across its central Eurasian expression, the medieval Silk Road. The end of this political realisation coincides with the end of the Commercial Revolution, and the start of a series of interconnecting crises and struggles out of which capitalist modernity would eventually coalesce in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[18] Ani's dynamic urbanisation and drastic deurbanisation forms a constituent part of these global-historical processes.

Many historiographical fields note the coincidence between the end of Mongol Eurasian hegemony and the beginning of profound political and economic crises. Specific narratives vary in their details, but the general metanarrative is that »trade« had already been increasing for two centuries or so, travelling along »arteries« around which cities grew. By uniting most of Eurasia under one political authority, the empire of the Great Khans provided the necessary »peace« for this »trade« to develop further, reaching its height in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries – especially in luxury commodities moving to Europe along the Silk Road.[19] With the so-called *Pax Mongolica*'s end, however, »instability« meant that arteries dried up or moved, and so »trade« and cities »declined«.[20]

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14   Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities.

15   Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*. Here I adopt the de-hyphenated »world system« to assert a continuous global development of interlocking state systems over the long term; see Frank and Gills (eds.), *World System*.

16   Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 357.

17   On China's »medieval economic revolution«, see classically Shiba, *Commerce and Society in Sung China*; the entry at Oxford Bibliographies, www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199920082/obo-9780199920082-0020.xml, accessed 17/04/2020; and Zhang, *The River, the Plain, and the State*, 86. For the Indian Ocean, see Beaujard, Globalization during the Song and Mongol Periods. On the empire of New Rome, see Patlagean, *Byzance et les Marchés du Grand Commerce*; and for the Mediterranean and western Europe, see classically Lopez, *Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages*.

18   Cf. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I & II*.

19   Cf. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road*, 183-203.

20   This metanarrative is found more or less across the board, including Anievas and Nisancioglu, *How the West*, 73-77; Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*, 355-356; Mutafian, Ani After Ani, 161-162; Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 172-187; and Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 189.

Such arguments appear in regionally specific scholarship both for the period in general and in the specific case of Ani, particularly H. A. Manandian's discipline-defining monograph, *The Trade and Cities of Armenia in Relation to Ancient World Trade*.[21] Manandian argues that Ani and the other cities of the Shirak plain developed from merchants exercising an auxiliary role in »transit trade«, profiting from the appropriation, transport and further distribution of luxury commodities whose processes of production they did not control.[22] Ani and the other cities of the Shirak plain are situated in an area where Mediterranean and Middle Eastern nexuses meet and intermingle with Central Asian ones, positioned on the pre-eminent south Caucasian route connecting Iran and Central Asia to Anatolia and the Black Sea in the tenth to later thirteenth centuries.[23] According to the argument's logic, if another »artery« became dominant, as happened in the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, Ani's de-urbanisation would become inevitable. Manandian and, more recently, Thomas A. Sinclair have argued exactly that, seeing the end of »intercontinental trade« as definitive for Ani's end in Manandian's case, and as a fundamental shift in the city's function in Sinclair's.[24] Both scholars note that Mongol taxation apparently weighed heavily on the city in the later thirteenth century, an argument often used to bolster an understanding of Mongol rule as a disaster, but, noting the city's vibrancy up to the end of the thirteenth century and relative continuation in the fourteenth, ultimately both see shifting long-distance commerce as decisive.[25]

Medium- and long-distance commercial exchange was undeniably central to the political economy in both the region and period in general, and Ani's development in particular – the rapid proliferation of caravanserais in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia speaks for itself.[26] But overemphasis on luxury commodity circulation, especially conceived as »trade« in the abstract, obscures the local regimes of accumulation which necessarily developed integrally to interregional and intercontinental nexuses, losing sight of the source of value in human labour as Ibn Khaldūn asserts.[27] Urbanisation becomes a question of »external« factors, the presence or absence of »arteries«, without any role for the local organs and musculature through which they pass. Merchants simply arrive and leave with almost naturalised commercial fluctuations, and subaltern actors simply follow

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21   Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 173-202.

22   Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 187. Such cities are termed entrepot in Abu-Lughod, and spring up across Eurasia in the Commercial Revolution; see *Before European Hegemony*, 153.

23   Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 172-179; *idem*, *Eastern Trade*, 47-48.

24   Sinclair argues more specifically for a much-reduced commercial role, and a newly emergent administrative one, with Ani's definitive end only appearing in the later fifteenth century; see Trade, Administration, and Cities, 199-200 and *idem*, *Eastern Trade*, 75.

25   Manandian considers the evidence for heavy taxation »of the utmost value« but ultimately argues that the decline in »international commerce« proved decisive; Sinclair likewise finds the evidence for heavy Mongol taxation inconclusive, and argues that Ani only declined after 1350 with the end of »intercontinental trade«, and even then deurbanisation was arrested by the city's administrative role. See Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 99; Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 190-192.

26   Franklin, *World*, esp. 2-3 and *eadem*, *Everyday Cosmopolitanisms*; and Arakelyan, *Kaghakner'e*, 34.

27   On such processes on macro and micro scales, see Banaji, *Theory*, 251-332.

after them.[28] Similarly, Mongol taxation forms an alternative »external« explanation, with no explicated relationship to commercial and productive activity in the city and its environs. Thus we are presented with two explanations which require no analysis of the city itself: »international trade« and external taxation simply act upon Ani's urbanising process regardless of local elite or subaltern activity. Again, Ibn Khaldūn provides a crucial corrective in emphasising the *internal* relationship of labour, taxation, and mercantile costs in dynamics of population, income-expenditure and price, allowing – or not – profit-oriented production and capital accumulation.[29]

In this article, therefore, how Ani's urbanisation fits within the long thirteenth century as a global-historical macro-conjuncture is revealed, demonstrating the combined agency of merchant capital and taxation in (de)urbanising sites of accumulation – that is to say, *cities* – as well as the reliance of both on subaltern labour. The first section outlines Ani's political-economic development by 1200, in particular the role of merchant capital in constituting the urban elite and providing it with the means to generally dominate property arrangements. The second section provides an in-depth view of Ani's development under the Georgian monarchy's pan-Caucasian hegemony (*c.*1190-1236), as the pre-eminent centre in the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli sub-polity, revealing the particular regime of accumulation in the city and its environs, the subaltern exploitation this rested on, and the class power the urban elite leveraged in order to arrange the political regime to their benefit. Finally, then, we turn to the city's trajectory under Mongol rule, lasting the remainder of the long thirteenth century, when the urban elite was integrated into a powerful state system based on extensive taxation. The conclusion summarises this story, and returns to the global-historical questions outlined here.

Commerce, Land Holding and the Urban Elite by 1200

By the outset of the long thirteenth century Ani had developed as a commercial centre for more than two centuries. The site of a fortress recorded from the seventh century, Ani rapidly urbanised from *c.*950 as a centre of the Bagratuni kingdom of Great Armenia,[30] the most prominent of a constellation of commercial centres on the Shirak plain and across south Caucasia.[31] In the medieval Silk Road's heyday *c.*900-1300 the Shirak plain was a region where intercontinental Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Central Asian nexuses met, the main south Caucasian interregional nexus bringing together Anatolia, the Black Sea and northern Caucasian regions with Mesopotamia and Iran.[32] Hence medium- and long-distance exchange formed the crucial vector in Ani's urbanisation from the start. The city's commercial character is clear from its initial development in the latter half of the tenth century,

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28 This is implicit in most arguments, and explicit in Manandian: »we observe the drift away of the Armenian merchant population, and after it of the mass of the peasants, from Ani and the adjacent provinces«, *Trade and Cities*, 189.

29 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 231-234 and 297-299.

30 Greenwood, Emergence, 52-55.

31 The growth in commercial cities along these nexuses is noted in Minorsky, *Studies in Caucasian History,* 104-106; Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 136-150; and Ter-Ghevondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 115 and 139-140. For the cities of the Shirak plain, see Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 170-206.

32 On the importance of the Black Sea, see Peacock, Black Sea Trade, 65-72. For an overview of interregional intercontinental commerce, see Sinclair, *Eastern Trade*, 29-164.

with aristocrats normally resident on patrimonial estates (*hayrenikʻ*), in principal inalienable and constituting the majority of landholdings, found donating shops (*kułpak*) to religious foundations from the 990s.[33] Alongside these lordly elite actors, entering the city appear more humble urban figures, elite actors who primarily reproduced themselves as merchants supplemented by small-scale property holdings, controlling vineyards, fields and gardens.

To maintain its class position, this nascent urban elite was subject to the dynamics of competition, profit and productive reinvestment to expand the commercial enterprise, the classic characteristics of capital accumulation.[34] In particular they reinvested in lowering the relative cost and raising the amenability of transit through Ani compared to other entrepots;[35] agriculture in the city environs, reflected in their donations of fields, orchards and gardens; and, importantly, urban production too. The exact bulk commodities which they transported through Ani, or invested in the local production of, are not immediately clear from surviving evidence, but we can safely assume that key among them were the regional textiles celebrated by Arab geographers – known to be produced in cities such as Dvin,[36] another commercial centre some 250km to Ani's southeast, regionally dominant up to the mid-tenth century and still significant into the mid-thirteenth.[37] So value from human labour initially expended in commodity production far from Ani, augmented by the valorising labour also involved in transit, was realised and reinvested in the local regime of accumulation, driving urbanisation, and both integrating and diversifying labour processes in the locale.

Dependence on capital accumulation made the urban elite more precarious than the lords, who could leverage their property and status in the political regime to obtain advantage within the city's regime of accumulation, buying up urban properties like houses and shops to extract wealth from commercial profits.[38] In the mid-eleventh century, however, annexation by the empire of New Rome removed the lords from Ani and its environs, resettling

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33 Greenwood, Emergence, 62; Marr, *Rêve d'Arménie*, 69. There is one reference to the donation of five shops in Ani already in 901, which indicates a commercial character even when the site is only a fortress; see Pogossian, Foundation, 213. Ceramics is on the nexuses meeting in the Shirak plain and Ani, see: Franklin, *World*, 18.

34 Cf. Bernstein, *Class Dynamics*, 25-27. In Marxian terms this is characterised in the formula M-C-M′, the use of money to buy commodities to make more money: the basic circuit of capital's expanded reproduction. Hence elite actors who reproduce themselves on this basis are in a literal sense *capitalists*, although depending on their patterns of investment and class reproduction they are often *merchant* and/or *finance* as opposed to *industrial* capitalists. In short, commercial activity can never be reduced to simplistic visions of »truck and barter«. For an alternative characterisation of such processes as »money-begetting«, see Milios, *Origins of Capitalism as a Social System* , 97-128.

35 For example in the construction of bridges like that across the Akhurian in the later tenth century.

36 Al-Muqaddasī, *The Best Divisions for Knowledge*, 331-339.

37 Soviet Armenian historians such as Babayan and Arakelyan have done much to reveal the development of commodity production and widespread commercial activity in the cities of Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia from the late ninth to thirteenth centuries, particularly drawing on ceramic evidence. Arakelyan argues for a developing division of labour in artisanal production alongside a proliferation of commercial organisation, and a consequent decoupling and then subordination of agricultural production to urban commercial dynamics. Most importantly, this is explicitly seen as part of a broader development in caravan routes and developments in production and exchange on both a regional and global scale; see Arakelyan, *Kaghakner'e*, vols. 1-2, esp. vol. 2, 16 and 34; and Babayan, Zakarid power, 554.

38 The aristocratic Pahlavuni family are a particularly clear example; see *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 94 and 95:32.

them on estates further west and transforming their lands into imperial estates.[39] Ani's urban elite remained, negotiating with the imperial centre to take over the city's administration, obtaining East Roman titles and taking on key state roles such as maintaining the garrison, gaining tax reductions and exemptions in return.[40] Importantly, these include lowering the market tax alongside specific attempts to reduce the costs of commerce, lowering the »cart« or transit tax for everyone entering the city, and abolishing the levy entirely for Ani-based merchants as well as halving the levy on their buying and selling cotton.[41] The image emerges of a sub-imperial oligarchy run by a self-conscious urban elite heavily concerned with commodity transit and commercial exchange, including of locally produced cotton and potentially also processed textiles,[42] leveraging their class power to arrange taxation to the benefit of capital accumulation. Contemporary Greek histories written by imperial officials describe Ani's governing elite as merchants and note the numerous villages in the city's environs, as well as luxury commodities coming to Caucasian cities from far-away lands like India and China.[43]

Roman rule formed a crucial micro-conjuncture in Ani's overall trajectory, seeing the aristocratic lords' removal and forging an urban polity with its own elite conscious of their own interests, especially the profitability of commercial transit and exchange. Their oligarchy came to an end with the city's conquest by the Seljuq in 1064 and subsequent purchase in 1072 by a scion of the Kurdish Shaddadid amirs of Dvin – which in itself indicates the importance of a merchant-led cash economy, from which the ruling family profited first in Dvin, and then in Ani.[44] The empire's retreat poses the question of what happened to aristocratic *hayrenikʻ* transformed into imperial demesnes. Unfortunately the evidence for landholding, primarily donor inscriptions to religious institutions, more or less dries up in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries. Yet urban revolts in 1124, 1156 and 1161 indicate a politically self-conscious elite reluctant to see their class power contained, resulting in changes of rulership either between Shaddadid amirs, or from Shaddadid to Georgian rule.[45] The sole surviving twelfth-century inscription from the city walls proves suggestive:

> In the year 1160 in the reign of Fadlan, and the patriarchate of Lord Barsegh, I Abraham built this tower (*burj*) from my halal silver in memory of me and my parents. Let whoever reads [this] remember in their prayers me and my parents and the teacher who was sent (*zaṙakʻeal vardapet*).[46]

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39   Some estates transformed into ecclesiastical domains, but the comprehensive absence of the aristocratic elite after 1045 is striking. Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 409-412. Following recent revisionist arguments I have adopted the nomenclature »Empire of New Rome« and »(East) Roman« for the state system normally termed »Byzantium« and »Byzantine«; see Kaldellis, *Romanland*.

40   This is revealed in two inscriptions, one of 1056 and another of 1059, as well as a narrative section in Michael Attaleiates' history which aligns perfectly with the latter; see Attaleiates, *History*, 145-151; *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 106:37 and 107:38.

41   *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 107:38.

42   On the general importance of cotton, see Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, esp. 3-28.

43   Attaleiates, *History*, 147, 149 and 271; and Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, 409-412 and 423-424.

44   On the Shaddadids, see Ter-Ghevondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 119-124; Minorsky, *Studies*, 1-101; Marr, *Rêve d'Arménie*, 67; and Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 179-180. For an overview of Dvin's urban constellation and archaeology, see Babajanyan, Medieval Urban System, 327-344.

45   *Kʻartʻlis Cʻxovreba*, ed. Jones *et al.*, 350.

46   *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 4:2. The reading »teacher who was sent« could alternatively be rendered as a proper name and title, »the Vardapet Arakeal«, however this seems an unlikely specification in a donor inscription of this type, and instead has here been read as an ambiguous religious formula referring to Christ.

This dates to the reign of Faḍlūn ibn Muḥammad, who replaced his brother as amir follow-ing the 1156 revolt, and was himself replaced by royal Georgian rule in 1161. The inscription follows standard Armenian epigraphic practice, adopting the benefactor's voice in an em-phatic first person, but the amir's lack of titles and honorifics is notable: Abraham's action is recorded for posterity with no agency attributed to the ruler. Crucially, Abraham himself lists no surname or title, and notes that the tower was constructed from his »halal« silver, a technical term in medieval Armenian epigraphy indicating property gained by financial and commercial means, here specifically money.[47] Abraham takes on a key function normally fulfilled by ruling elite classes, requiring a significant outlay of wealth and indicating the class power Ani's mid-twelfth-century elite could leverage from capital accumulation. The final testament to Shaddadid rule is a bilingual Persian-Armenian mosque inscription, which stipulates a market area from »the mosque of Abul-Mamaran to the shop on Sebil street«.[48] Importantly, this market is explicitly for »the sale of cotton and cotton objects«, indicating both raw cotton and processed textiles,[49] the same commodities on which Ani's elite had lowered transit taxes a century and a half earlier. Cotton thus continued to form a primary commodity within the city and its environs, with the Shaddadid amirs attempting to regulate and tax its sale effectively, ordering »trade to take place in this very spot«.

So the urban elite's prominence and commercial character is clear, but what about land holding?[50] The corpus of donor inscriptions at Horomos Monastery, founded in the early tenth century 40 km north of Ani, provides a useful measure for elite composition and prop-erty arrangements across the city's developmental trajectory.[51] No dated donations survive before the twelfth-century's final years, with the single exception of a vineyard granted in 1174.[52] When they reappear regularly from 1197, the donors are exclusively non-aristocratic elite actors – the sole earlier twelfth-century inscription is also the sole exception, the rel-atively humble gift of a certain priest, Petros, and his nephews, the *azat*s (lords, lit. »free-men«) Yusik and Simeon. After this point, however, no donor is identified as an *azat* or any other aristocratic title, and none celebrate their noble descent in the manner of Ani's earlier aristocratic donations and elsewhere contemporaneously – a rule that holds at Horomos

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47   Abraham's name and ambiguous religious formula raises the question of ethnic and religious identifications. Epi-graphic evidence from Armenian churches necessarily only reveals Armenian Christians, but Arabic names and administrative titles indicate the situation of Ani's elite in a Middle Eastern mercantile world dominated by Arabic-speaking Muslims. Especially in the twelfth century, there must have been Muslim merchants resident in Ani, but no positive evidence survives. Nevertheless, the use of the term ḥalāl indicates the extent to which Islamic legal and cultural codes were common to Christian Armenians, especially with regard to wealth accumulation. For a source on Muslim presence in twelfth-century Ani, see Peacock, Interfaith Polemic; and cf. La Porta, Reconstruc-ting Armenia.

48   See Minorsky, *Studies*, 100-101 and Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 181.

49   For indications of processed and decorated textiles reflected in Ani's architecture, see Lessing, Silk Road without Fabrics, 155-181.

50   For Ibn Khaldūn's analysis of urban merchants' accumulation of extra-mural estates, see *Muqadimmah*, 280-281.

51   The Horomos monastery is extremely important for the city of Ani, sitting in its environs and reflecting the city's development from a royal Bagratuni site into a commercial centre dominated by the urban elite. For the monastery, see Vardanyan (ed.), *Hoṙomos*; for the inscriptions in particular, see Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé; see also Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey*, 378-384.

52   Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 29:429.

to the end of the long thirteenth century. Instead some list their fathers and grandfathers without hyperbole, some their places of origin, and many simply their first names alone, with a handful using titles from the urban administration such as *hečup* (»chancellor«, Arab. *ḥājib* originally »chamberlain«) and »amir« (»lord mayor«, Arab. »ruler«) – there is even one instance mirroring Islamic paedonymy, when in 1201 the *hečup* Grigor described himself as »father of Amir Ḥasan«.[53]

Two early emblematic examples from Horomos are an undated piece from the later twelfth century where a certain Yohanes gave half the village of Seghank and a certain Paron half of the village of Mashkakap,[54] and another of 1197 in which a certain Smbat gave half of a village named Marants Marg.[55] These represent instances of a novel phenomenon: the division of villages into shares which could then be bought, sold and donated as distinct units of property. These shares gave rights to a portion of the village's income in cash (*dang*) rather than the land itself, and originated in inheritance practices among Ani's urban elite introduced to a novel sphere,[56] village rents – seemingly the fate of the »many villages« Roman historians note in Ani's environs.[57] Importantly, chapters 101-104 of Mkhitar Gosh's *Lawcode*, written in 1184, provide precepts on inheritance explicitly framed as the division of incomes into fractions of monetary value.[58] Mkhitar was a peripatetic monastic teacher or *vardapet* who became prominent under the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli, and ended his days in 1213 at the restored Nor Getik Monastery, eponymously renamed Goshavank, ›Gosh's Monastery‹.[59] The *Lawcode* was composed in 1184, particularly in order to provide Armenian Christians with their own law and so avoid Islamic courts. Its statutes are consciously and critically compiled from biblical and canon law, the early twelfth century penitential attributed to Davit of Ganja, and, most importantly, Mkhitar's own experience of legal customs gained from wide travels across Caucasia, Upper Mesopotamia, northern Syria and Cilicia. So the composition is prescriptive and normative, like all legal texts, but also in active dialogue with customary practice's general principles and regional differences, attempting to synthesise these into a coherent body while allowing for practical variation. Putting together its precepts with the dynamics of rentier and merchant capitalist accumulation, it becomes possible to critically imagine otherwise under-sourced or unknown aspects of political economy in Ani and its environs.

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53 Horomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 31:430-431 and 21:421-422.

54 Horomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 39:439.

55 Horomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 38:438.

56 These practices are closely related to Islamic *waqf/waqfiyya*; see Peacock, Waqf Inscriptions, 183-193; Trépanier, *Foodways*, 9 and 142-145.

57 Attaleiates, *History*, 147.

58 The *Lawcode* is an under-utilised source for Armenian social history in the central Middle Ages, and although it is not known where it was composed, or if there was a specific patron, it is essential to include it in social and political-economic analyses. Nevertheless, there is an urgent need for further scholarship, especially of the manuscript tradition, especially to establish whether its precepts can be more precisely geographically situated than is possible simply by listing Mkhitar's travels. See the introduction to Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson; and for the precepts on inheritance, see pages 181-188.

59 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 11-39.

In Mkhitar's »rules of division« the whole property is reckoned as one *dahekan*, literally a gold coin but here denoting the whole of a given income, which can then be subdivided into six *dang*, the name for subsidiary electrum coins which formed a central medium for commercial exchange.[60] The precepts then delineate various divisions in different circumstances, for example that »the brother who is not from the same mother will inherit half a *dang* less than those [who share their mother]«. Thus an individual actor's rights to a given village's rents were subdivided among heirs and pious donations, over time producing a system of fractional shares which could be bought, sold, and redivided for donation and inheritance. This is mirrored by fractional shares of income from means of production such as mills, and indeed rights to all or a portion of the incomes from a given village's water sources, mills and other means were often bought and sold separately to the village shares as such. Payments were in principle cash rents, but the right was claimed over all income, a comprehensiveness implied in the formula »soil and water«.[61]

By 1200, therefore, property arrangements in Ani and its environs had been utterly transformed from the period of lordly dominance. Villages had become social units of production corporately exploited through cash rents by various elite actors and institutions, including both religious and commercial foundations such as caravanserais.[62] Tellingly, by the later twelfth century *hayrenikʻ* refers not to inalienable aristocratic patrimony but to any property which the owner could dispose of freely as their own, movable as well as immovable, and including diverse landholdings, cash and shares of villages, mills and other means of production.[63] So in a 1201 donation to Horomos, a certain Khacheghbayr and his son Avetis describe one-sixth of the incomes of Marants Marg as their *hayrenikʻ*,[64] while in another of 1231, Aslan son of Sheranik and his wife Asushah gave *hayrenikʻ* which they had »bought with money, a twelfth of the income (*dang*) of Godis, soil and water«.[65] As Kathryn Franklin aptly notes, »the concept of princely rights was being expanded to accommodate not just a new kind of wealth but a new kind of prince.«[66]

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60   *Dang* could then be further subdivided into four silver *tʻasu*, and twelve copper *gari*; see Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 187. These fractional divisions are given a striking Christian numerology in chapter 250, culminating in the statement: »The *dram* (coin) is the mystery of our nature, because its letters [spell] ›man‹ (*mard*) in reverse order«; see Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 303-304.

61   Issues of water rights separate to rights over land begin to appear from the mid-ninth century in Armenian inscriptions.

62   Cf. Trépanier, *Foodways*, 31-32.

63   Bedrosian, *Turco-Mongol Invasions*, 162; Horomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 369; Babayan, Zakarid power, 555; La Porta, Reconstructing Armenia, 259.

64   Horomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 41:441.

65   Horomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 22:424.

66   Franklin, *World*, 86.

Ani in the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli Regime, c.1200-1236

At the outset of the long thirteenth century, therefore, two points are clear: the first is that Ani was a wealthy commercial city, with a self-conscious urban elite involved in medium- and long-distance exchange as well as local auxiliary commodity circuits;[67] and the second is that, when the veil is lifted on property arrangements in Ani and its environs in the early thirteenth century, the urban elite is self-evidently hegemonic in local political economy. Importantly, therefore, this predates the 1198/1199 Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli conquest, and so forms a pre-existing factor in Ani's integration into the emerging political regime. Established in a series of conquests across the 1190s by the Kurdish-descended Armenian generals Zakare and Ivane,[68] and a constituent part of the Georgian kingdom then hegemonic across Caucasia, Ani formed this regime's most important urban centre between *c*.1200 and 1236. The family continued to govern the city under Mongol and Ilkhanate rule until *c*.1320, almost throughout the long thirteenth century, albeit articulated under two very different hegemonic state systems. The first is a sub-polity within the broader Georgian kingdom, the exact characteristics of which remain obscured by »feudal« assumptions.[69]

The Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli regime's political articulation is returned to at the end of this section, both in Ani and beyond. For the moment the important point is that the urban elite's hegemony over property arrangements in Ani, and so over the regime of accumulation, is not a result of land grants from the new rulers, as happened in other newly conquered regions. Instead, between the later eleventh and later twelfth centuries Ani's urban elite reinvested capital accumulated from medium- and long-distance commerce in buying the rights to village rents, either an inherited share or as a whole, and did the same with other means of production like mills and waterways. In such manner the urban elite made their position less immediately dependent on commercial profits, and so more secure in the first instance, but simultaneously integrated village rentierism into a regime of accumulation still defined by medium- and long-distance exchange. In this dialectical movement a factor appearing external in one moment, interregional and intercontinental commerce, appears internal the next, capital invested rents and in local commodity production. Local capital investment then dictates in turn the dynamics of interregional and intercontinental commerce as this passes through the local regime of accumulation, once again becoming »externalised«.

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67 For the various commodities produced and exchanged in regional cities up to the mid-eleventh century, especially Dvin, see Ter-Ghevondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 137-142.

68 The family itself perfectly expresses the complex identifications of Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia's elite class. Ivane and Zakare, sons of Sargis Mkhargrdzeli, who brought the family to prominence in the second half of the twelfth century, are claimed to descend from a Mesopotamian Kurd of the »Babirakan *xel*« (Kurd. *gel*, »tribe/ people«), who in the eleventh century entered first the service of the Armenian kings of Lori-Tashir and then the Georgian monarchs. The family converted from Islam to the independent Armenian Church, and in the early thirteenth century Ivane converted to Georgian Orthodoxy. The family's first connection to Ani came with the Georgian takeover of 1161, when Sargis assisted the new governor-general, and then briefly governed himself during a short occupation 1174-1175. See Minorsky, Studies, 101-103. For an analysis of the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli regime's political articulation of Armenianness, see La Porta, Reconstructing Armenia, 251-272. For the Georgian kingdom in this period, see Rayfield, *Edge of Empires*, 111-117.

69 For example in Bedrosian, Seljuk and Mongol periods, 253-255; *idem*, *Turco-Mongol Invasions*, 157; Babayan, Zakarid Power; and Mutafian, Ani After Ani, 159-160.

The wealth urban elite actors could achieve through this merchant-rentier regime of accumulation is demonstrated in Ani's most famous inscription: Tigran Honents' founding 1215 donation to his new church of St. Grigor, built by the banks of the Akhurian on land »bought by me from the owners with halal *hayrenik'*«.[70] In this lengthy piece, Tigran enumerates the many and various properties donated: half the rents of three villages, one with five *dang*s from the village stone quarry, all the rents of a different village, and two *dang*s of the rents of yet another. In addition to village rents, he grants one »hostelry-*funduq*« in the city; a private bath with its waterworks »in the square«; a hostelry-*xanapar* with shops; another hostelry-*funduq* »with the new vaulted roof«; a bathhouse and ante-chamber; stables, barns and a threshing floor »bought by me«; an oil press with two wheels; more stables and barns and a threshing-floor »bought by me«; a vegetable garden by the river »laid out by me«; half the income of a mill situated by the Dvin gate with full control over the process of milling, as well as two days of milling rights per week at two other mills; »half the river bought by me between Beshkenakap and the bridge«; four *dang*s of the hostelry-*xanapar* called Papents as well as »the shop by its door«; all the houses on Hatestonts street; »many lots of land bought near the city gates«; a garden in each of Yerivan, Oshakan, Kos, Aruch, Mren and Chmak; and, finally, »many more lands, which are in mortgage« not listed in the act but donated nonetheless, to be returned to the debtors »if they pay gold to the monastery«.

Considering this donation necessarily forms only part of Tigran's total wealth, the level is astounding. He is the most impressive surviving example of the so-called *mecatun*, a contemporary identifier for urban elite classes literally meaning the »great housed«[71] – and, indeed, Tigran's own residence, often identified with the so-called merchant's palace,[72] is mentioned for orientation in a 1218 donation to Horomos, granting »the shop which I had bought with a wine cellar below in Ani, in the upper part of the mains street, close enough to Tigran's house«.[73] His foundation inscription reveals the infrastructure both built and monopolised by Ani's urban elite. The sheer range indicates the extent of the merchant-rentiers' hegemony over the city's regime of accumulation, their generalised, rule-setting dominance in configurations of production, appropriation and distribution, directing these towards the reproduction of their class. On the one hand, this regime of accumulation was defined by profit from medium- and long-distance exchange, and Tigran donates no less than four hostelries, two *funduq*s for merchants transporting large-scale commodity stocks, and two *xanapar*s for individual travellers and merchants without large stocks, both of which came with shops attached – that is, comprehensive warehouse-cum-hostel and office complexes for commercial activity.[74] On the other hand, the regime of accumulation relied on rents,

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70 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 188:62-63; a more or less complete English translation can be found in Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 185-186.

71 Bedrosian erroneously refers to the *mecatun* as »nobility«; see Seljuk and Mongol periods, 254-255. See also Babayan, Zakarid power, 547.

72 Marr, *Reve d'Ani*, 123-125.

73 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 43:443.

74 On these property types, see Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 373; for the archaeological remains, see Marr, *Reve d'Ani*, 133-135. Also see generally Concina, *Fondaci* and Constable, *Housing the Stranger.*

and Tigran grants a diverse range of properties with various potential subsidiary uses in production and exchange, including bath houses and waterworks, travel infrastructure, various production installations, agricultural lands, houses, shops – even sections of the Akhurian River have been privatised. Alongside merchant capital and rents, Ani's urban elite accumulated through credit and debt, *finance capital*, and the donation of mortgaged but redeemable lands to a religious institution indicates the circulation of capitalised property.[75] Finally, Tigran controls several village incomes, including several properties relatively far from Ani, for example »the village of Khazats-Mahmund in the land of Kars«. This indicates merchant capital's extra-urban reach through the urban elite's rentierism, integrating further regions into a regime of accumulation defined by medium- and long-distance commerce.

But what of the role of human labour in generating the value realised in Ani's urbanisation, in the spirit of Ibn Khaldūn's model? Of course, merchant capital often realises the value congealed in a commodity far from the place where this labour was carried out, augmented by the labour involved in transportation, storage and so on, but subaltern labour is also essential to the local merchant-rentier regime of accumulation. In the first instance it is clear that this necessarily rested on the widespread exploitation of subaltern labour through cash demands, necessitating in turn widespread monetisation of social relations. Village rents formed the central demands, and these in turn would compel subaltern actors to take on debts and commodify produce to obtain coin for payment – could control of village rents sometimes be collected in commodifiable produce, or even translate into control over immediate processes of commodity production?[76] Similarly, the processes of production that developed to support and supply commercial infrastructure, especially the many caravanserais, *xan*s and *funduq*s, obviously involved subaltern labour and exploitation. The same goes for the production and transit of cotton, a classic cash crop developed for commercial exchange, as well as processed textiles most likely organised in urban workshops but potentially also through a ›putting-out system‹ in surrounding villages.[77] All this would indicate the extent of subaltern labour's integration into a regime of accumulation defined by commercial exchange.[78]

Frustratingly, however, subaltern actors themselves are entirely absent from inscriptions and documents. Property rights are articulated over the income of a village or productive installation, either a share or as a whole, and labour dues may also be implied by the phrase »soil and water«, but the actual subaltern actor's responsibilities are never mentioned. Much the same picture is presented by references to urban millstones and production installations, as well as their archaeological remains today, including bakeries, wineries and linseed oil workshops, which occasionally include well-preserved large grindstones. All such installations, of course, required now entirely obscure subaltern labour.[79] Urban production involved divisions of artisanal labour and commodity production, indicated by inscriptional references to,

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75   On the importance of debt in broader regimes of accumulation, particularly in its internal relation to the money-form and commodification, see Graeber, *Debt*, esp. 211-221.

76   Cf. Bernstein, *Class Dynamics*, 33-35; Banaji, Merchant capitalism, peasant households.

77   On the centrality of the *Verlagssystem* for capitalist production before industrialism, see Banaji, *Theory*, 273-276.

78   Cf. Franklin, Assembling Subjects, 138-143.

79   Bayram, Alp and Akture, Archaeological site of Ani, 473-474.

for example, »the street of the blacksmith«,[80] »the street of the shoemakers«, »the street of the smiths« and the »street of the saddlemakers«,[81] areas of the city dedicated to a particular craft industry and divided into a central street (*p'oloc'*) and adjacent alleys (*zukak*). One donor to Horomos in 1231 names himself Kotit the fur tailor and donates one sixth of the income of Zov village, »soil and water«,[82] indicating that some artisans accumulated enough capital from commodity production, that is, *industrial capital*, to reinvest and transform themselves into merchant-rentiers, and this no doubt involved coordinated labour on a relative scale. Archaeological finds indicate the production and exchange of ceramics, glass, bronze ware, processed textiles and presumably also the primary commodities that went into their production like metals, raw cloth and dye materials, as well as the perishable commodities transported and stored in surviving ceramics.[83] All these formed auxiliary small- and medium-distance commodity circuits based on local subaltern labour that developed around long-distance nexuses, with significant interregional circulation – hence the fame of »Armenian goods«, textiles and their various subsidiary commodities, as well as »Armenian clay«, in medieval Greek and Arabic sources.[84] But, once again, nothing survives to indicate how this commodity production and the necessary labour was organised, so that the particular relations of exploitation between elite and subaltern classes remain obscure.

Evocations of the conditions of subaltern classes can, however, be found in Mkhitar's *Lawcode*, written at the start of the late twelfth-century conquests which resulted in the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli regime. The work reflects a merchant-dominated society, for example in chapter 14's assumption that husbands would often be away from their wives »because of commerce«.[85] The composition's moral economy is often uncomfortable with commercial and financial accumulation, prescribing excommunication for deceit in commerce in chapter 185 – although chapter 99 does defend honest commercial profits.[86] Nevertheless, in chapter 240's statutes for markets, the right to their establishment is reserved to kings and princes, with rights to control prices and raise taxes also placed in their hands, while Mkhitar attacks merchants who »deprive the poor according to the needs of merchants or the wealthy«.[87] These idealistic precepts are more revealing of the composition's broader purposes, particularly constructing the potential juridical basis for a putative Armenian kingdom, than concrete realities in Ani or elsewhere in the early thirteenth century. But the city's markets were regulated and taxed: an official bearing the same title as Islamic market regulators, the *muhtasib*, is found collecting commercial taxes under Roman rule. A moral economy conditioned by the desire to construct a legal basis for an idealised traditional elite is particularly clear in chapter 31 on the division of village resources.[88] Gold mines are granted to kings,

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80 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 53:457-458.

81 Franklin, *World*, 89-90.

82 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 27:368.

83 See Marr, *Reve d'Ani*; Grigoryan *et al.*, *Haykakan*; and Grigoryan *et al.*, *Ani*.

84 Ter-Ghevondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 137-138; Grigoryan, *Haykakan*, 17; and Al-Muqaddasī, 335.

85 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 136-137.

86 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 233-234 and 180-181.

87 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 294-295.

88 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 146.

silver mines to queens, and copper and iron to princes, clearly a schematic hierarchy, but one that may speak to Mkhitar's anxiety over the extent of village integration into rentier and merchant capitalist accumulation – for example the five *dang*s of a stone quarry donated by Tigran. Mkhitar even hopefully grants princes the sole right over »tar and incense and yellow-incense, gall and mastic, agaric and scammony, and other such things which are traded for profit«, indicating the spectrum of commodifiable resources extracted from village units. Anxiety over this process is indicated in the chapter's insistence that subaltern actors retain foraging, timber and pasture rights in all territories, whoever owns them, indicating that these areas were often enclosed and access monetised.[89]

The extent of assumed wage labour is particularly striking in the *Lawcode*,[90] a form of exploitation not commonly associated with medieval Caucasia, but one that performs the important function of putting coin directly into subaltern hands. In chapter 238, for example, shepherds and herdsmen are found working for wages, the rates of which vary »according to the custom of the provinces«, detailing those situations where the worker is liable for an animal's loss and their wages can be legitimately withheld.[91] Likewise, chapter 245 details the hiring of work animals, indicating that in many situations waged workers would also need to cover the costs of using these essential means of production, necessitating yet more access to coin.[92] The same is true for artisans, who might work »by the piece or for a wage« and often hire their tools, which may break in the course of their work, making the worker liable in certain situations for their replacement. Likewise Ani's elite are commonly found controlling incomes from mills, paying the miller a fee that varied by province, as detailed in chapter 44.[93] The miller was a waged worker with no ownership of the actual mill, the incomes of which might be held in shares by various individual and institutional owners, often varying between different grindstones,[94] all of the owners having a claim to the profits and some also having defined rights over milling for a certain number of days. In Tigran's 1215 donation, for example, he grants half the income of a mill by the Dvin gate as well as the right to full control over the milling, along with two days of milling rights at two further installations. One of these is in a village named Glijor, which apparently had at least two mills, since the income of »the middle grindstone of the mill in Glijor« had already been granted to Horomos

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89 For example, in 1262 a certain Garegoyn gave a village with all its forests to the monastery of Bagnayr; see Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 468-469, note 176.

90 The exact form of wage labour, whether long contracts or day labour, is not clear – both should be assumed given the varying kinds of activity indicated, from working in the vineyards to shepherding.

91 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 293-294.

92 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 299.

93 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 153.

94 For example the Horomos one of 1234 where Zmrukht Khatun gave »the whole of [the income] of one grindstone in the mill of Karmnzhi which is called ›of the Abeleank‹«, see: Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 46:448-449.

by a certain Yohannes son of Tadeos in 1197,[95] while Tigran also gave »my mill, that I had restored from its ruins in Glijor« to Horomos in 1201 – presumably the same installation at which his new foundation gained two days milling rights in 1215.[96] Chapter 100 on the leasing of water-mills »and other such things« stipulates that the profit should »be without scruple to the lender, and let him not pay taxes on the profit«, with the lender taking responsibility for maintenance and upkeep in return, although the leaser is responsible for damage from negligent use.[97]

So the image is one of compounding pressures from rent demands resulting in subaltern actors increasingly taking on wage labour, commodifying their productive activity and entering debt relations, as well as selling and mortgaging property to Ani's urban elite. This monetisation of social relations developed along with the privatisation and capitalisation of the property subaltern classes used, making their access to this property, the means for their self-reproduction, increasingly precarious, dependent on continued access to yet more coin. Such pressures are indicated in the *Lawcode*'s moral-economic stance, for example noting in chapter 126, »Statutes for hired servants in general«, that someone only becomes »a hired servant because of poverty and his day of need«,[98] and stipulating in chapter 237 for vineyard workers that their wages should be higher in periods of scarcity and lower in times of abundance, a reverse principle of supply and demand to support precarious workers dependent on wage labour for survival.[99] Mkhitar is particularly concerned that impoverished subaltern actors who sell or pledge property as collateral for debts are able to redeem it at a reasonable price and without interest.[100] Land sales must be redeemable for up to seven years if »because of poverty one sells part of one's property«, and wealthy people who have bought and sold a poor person's house should return it »for the sake of mercy«. Similarly watermills »sold because of poverty« can be redeemed by the original owner or their relatives for up to a year, and in the statutes on pledges of property as collateral, special care is taken that poor people do not pledge the »most necessary things«, such as millstones, and so remove the means for their existence. Likewise, chapter 82 on loans is at pains to avoid usury on credit extended to the poor, although interestingly it does permit interest more generally, and chapter 83 legislates that property pledged as collateral should bear no interest.[101]

Hence demands for cash rents subjected subaltern labour to monetised forms of exploitation that themselves gave further opportunity for Ani's urban elite to accumulate. Unfortunately the organisation of subaltern labour remains more or less obscure, although chapter 237 on »the statutes for labourers who work in vineyards« indicates that some worked in »cooperative« work gangs hired as a unit, apparently self-organised and dividing wages equitably among themselves, while others were hired individually.[102] In the end, however, the

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95 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 38:438.

96 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 40:440.

97 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 180-181.

98 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 200.

99 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 292-293.

100 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 176-177.

101 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 170-172.

102 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 292-293.

chapter notes that »I am not able to describe accurately the model because of the varied customs of provinces and countries.« Nevertheless subaltern classes in Ani and its environs were certainly not the homogenised peasants found in common-sense assumptions about »feudalism«. Rather, they were actors choosing or finding themselves in different labour arrangements and with varying access to property[103] Such varying arrangements should be imagined in chapter 99, on »the statutes for the sellers and buyers of the fruit of vines and of other stocks«, when it is noted that many landowners pre-sell the year's stock wholesale »in the hope of profit«.[104] However, advance sale leaves the chance of a shortfall in the eventual crop, in which case, Mkhitar says, the seller-landowner must keep the whole principal, pushing the cost onto the would-be buyer-merchant, since the landowner would have had to pay for the workforce.

At the same time as an apparent growth in wage labour, this period sees the first evidence for the emergence of forms of unfree tenancy, notably in chapter 21 »on peasants«.[105] This states that while peasants are born free, if the head of the household became a tenant, then he and all his children could be kept on the estate until his death, at which point the children were again free to go. There is no evidence for such arrangements previously, indicating the growth of forms of unfree tenancy in a conjuncture when the dual expansion of rentierism and commercial exchange engendered new pressures to raise the rate of exploitation. As Mkhitar comments, »Our human nature was created free by the Creator, but in response to the necessities of the land and the water, it gradually came to serve masters« – necessities violently materialised in demands for rent, the phrase »land and water« notably reminiscent of the epigraphic formula »soil and water«. The simultaneous generation of »free« wage labour and »unfree« tenancy is not a contradictory argument, but rather represents contradictory drives within capital accumulation to increase monetisation of social relations on the one hand, and to raise rates of exploitation on the other.[106]

It seems, then, that the village rents controlled by Ani's urban elite did not have a direct relationship to control over immediate processes of production within village units, but instead produced a monetising dynamic in subaltern relations – although there remain many possible configurations which would have internally related rents to commodification, including immediate processes of commodity production, requiring further research into the question, and of course, collection in kind for specific institutions like monasteries must also be taken into account. Nevertheless control of rents did not equal control of labour processes: although elite actors did control immediate processes of production for commercial exchange, for example in vineyards and presumably also cotton, this was not immediately

103 This hybridity in arrangements is to be expected in agrarian capitalist configurations, see Banaji, *Theory*, 336 and Bernstein, *Class Dynamics*, 101-114.

104 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 180.

105 Gosh, *Lawcode*, trans. Thomson, 141.

106 Just as the great age of merchant capitalism between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries saw both the first mass wage-labour forces in western Europe, and the so-called »second serfdom« in central and eastern Europe, as well as history's largest recorded trade in chattel slaves; see Banaji, *Theory*, 67-102.

related to their rights to village rents. The urban elite accumulated coin from both rents and commercial exchange, which could then be reinvested in commodity production and acquisition, as well as building projects, accumulating property and buying the rights to further village rents. This coin found its way into subaltern hands through produce commodification, wage labour, debt and property sales, although some may have preferred to take on relatively unfree agricultural tenancies instead, making the landlord liable for their contribution to the total village rent.

Such dynamics of increased exploitation and increasing impoverishment necessarily incurred subaltern resistance, *counterpower*.[107] Counterpower emerges from subaltern classes' attempts to autonomously organise their own lives and productive labour within, against and beyond the wide spectrum of mechanisms through which this was subjected to exploitation – from irreducible demands backed up with violence like tax and rent, to mechanisms to meet these demands like produce commodification, debt and wage labour. Every piece of property listed in Tigran's donation must be imagined as bound up with countless such moments, entirely anonymous and unrecorded. These moments, like subaltern classes themselves, must be critically imagined in their profound empirical absence, constituting historical dark matter. For example, the accumulation of counterpolitical moments must be assumed to lie behind the many revolts by Ani's elite in the twelfth century: they leveraged hegemony in the regime of accumulation to mobilise class power not as an end in itself, but to rearrange the political regime to suit their interests, especially obtaining the coercion necessary to overcome subaltern counterpower and assure continued accumulation. As Ibn Khaldūn notes, their position means that »capitalists among the inhabitants of cities need rank and protection«.[108]

The final question before turning to the period of Mongol rule, then, is whether and how the urban elite leveraged their hegemony over the regime of accumulation to realise class power in the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli regime's articulation. Certainly within Ani and its environs there is very little evidence for feudal characterisations, nor, indeed, for any dominant Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli presence. The city was ruled by Zakare and his descendants, who held the Persian title of *amirspasalar* or commander-in-chief, while Ivane and his descendants ruled Dvin and held the Turkish title *atabeg*, denoting a vizier-like role.[109] Nevertheless, inscriptions commemorating renovations of the city walls tell much the same story as Abraham's in 1161. Of the seventeen between 1207 and 1332, only four are in Zakare's name or that of his son and successor Shāhānshāh, leaving twelve from other donors, more than two-thirds of the total.[110] Like Abraham's these take the form of first-person donor inscriptions, recording first the benefaction, usually payment for a watchtower or *burg*, and then asking for the viewer's prayers, often for named family members as well as the donor. This implies that each watchtower was paid for by one elite actor, a significant outlay of wealth rhetorically and ideologically positioned as an atonement for their sins just like a religious donation.

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107 On the crucial role of resistance in political economy, see Bernstein, *Class Dynamics*, 95-100.

108 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 281.

109 Babayan, Zakarid power.

110 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 12:5, 15:6, 17:6-7 and 23:8.

None of the donors have aristocratic surnames, titles or honorifics, while some name their fathers, like Sargis son of Georg in 1209,[111] some their towns of origin, like Mkhitar of Ganja in 1216,[112] and some giving no information at all, like a certain Simeon in 1217.[113] Two are in the voices of women, Mamkhatun and Shanush,[114] and three note how they constructed the towers from their ḥalāl wealth,[115] including Mamkhatun paying out of »my inherited (*hor*, lit. »my father's«) and halal coin (*dram*) which I was given«.[116]

Once again, therefore, Ani's mural inscriptions represent the urban elite taking on a key role normally reserved to a ruling class, paying for military-urban infrastructure out of their own pocket. All mural inscriptions from the urban elite date to after 1209, when Ani was sacked by the sultan of Ardabil, and may represent these actors responding to Zakare's failure to defend the city. They certainly place the urban elite on a more or less equal footing to the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli, although in his 1201 donation to Horomos, Tigran describes himself as »loyal to my baron Zakaria«.[117] This parity is especially clear in a unique piece from 1231, on a wall rather than a tower and seemingly naming those responsible for its renovation rather than taking the form of a single donor inscription. It reads »[Erected] in the year 670 (1231), may the Lord God protect Zaza and Baron Shāhānshāh, Gogorn, Vahram Patrik, Ohanes, Mkhitar, Mkhitarichn, Sargis«.[118] The reigning Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli appears in a list of actors without distinction or special mention, only indicated by his lordly title. It might be argued that the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli forced wealthy elite actors to »donate«, extorting rather than paying for renovations themselves. But were the rulers powerful enough, they surely would have imposed a tax instead and paid for the renovation in their own name – most mural inscriptions mention the reigning *amirspasalar*, but not all do, including Mamkhatun's of 1220,[119] and none grant the ruler honorifics like those found in an 1198 inscription at Horomos, dedicated to »the lordship, over this city and this whole country of Great Armenia, of the great generals of Christ, Za[kare] and Ivane: may the Holy Trinity protect them!«[120] Nor, for that matter, do any inscriptions mention the Georgian monarch – even Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli inscriptions are modest in their self-representation, only distinguished from the urban elite by their titles, listed without hyperbole.

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111 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 11:5.

112 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 2:1-2.

113 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 7:4.

114 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 5:3 and 8:4. For a study illustrating the potentials open to elite women in this period, see Eastmond, Tamta's World and Pogossian, Women, identity and power.

115 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 3:2 and 18:7.

116 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 5:3.

117 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 40:440-441.

118 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 10:5.

119 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 5:3.

120 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 31:430-431.

Under the *amirspasalar* the city was ruled by a kind of lord mayor named the »amir« (*amir/amira*) assisted by a council of leading urban elite actors bearing titles like *malik* (lit. Arab. »king«, here referring to a more general official), the aforementioned chancellor, the *hečup/ḥājib*, and a judge known by the Arabic title *qāḍī*,[121] alongside the high clergy, including both an archbishop for the region and a bishop for the city – one prominent holder was Barsegh, abbot of Horomos 1229-1253, bishop of Ani, and son of Amir Erkat.[122] Interestingly the urban administration is not mentioned in mural inscriptions, and none of the donors carry titles, which perhaps reflects an epigraphic culture that emphasised titular modesty, in turn reflecting the non-aristocratic urban elite's social and cultural hegemony borne of their dominance in the regime of accumulation. Offices are referenced in other inscriptions in Ani as well as at Horomos, however, and notably none of the holders come from the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli family.[123] This fact, alongside the titles' implied high status, suggests a relatively corporate urban governance in Ani reflected in the mural inscriptions. Given the prominence of Arabic titles, this urban governance may have continued more or less directly from the twelfth century, only with Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli barons appointing Armenian Christian amirs, ḥājibs, maliks and qāḍīs – a phenomenon that speaks to the fundamentally Arabic-Islamic language of urban administration in the region and period, and Armenians' intrinsic situation in the Caliphal and post-Caliphal world, as Seta B. Dadoyan has extensively argued.[124] Direct continuation from the twelfth century is especially likely since administrative titles appear from the beginning of the regime – for example, an 1198 donation to Horomos records the *hečup* Grigor, the same figure who in 1201 donated the village of Erdk »which I had bought« and described himself as father of »Amir Ḥasan«.[125]

The image, then, is of an elite hegemonic in the city's political regime as well as its regime of accumulation, together constituting an urban polity run by and for the benefit of merchant-rentiers under Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli protection. This would have allowed the urban elite to maintain low tax rates, keeping a competitive position as an entrepot in medium- and long-distance commerce, much as Ibn Khaldūn recommends.[126] Taxation took place, certainly elsewhere in the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli regime and no doubt in Ani and its environs too,

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121　The *qadi* of Ani is found participating in a legal assembly at Dvin under *atabeg* Ivane with the *qadis* of Tiflis and Dvin and the *sheikh* (*shex*) of Surmari, urban representatives adjudicating alongside court officials and clergy; see Orbelean, *History*, ed. Shahnasareants, 99-100.

122　Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 43; Mutafian, Ani After Ani, 160; and Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 180.

123　*Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 57:16-17; Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 19:418-419, 21:421-422, 31:430-431, 44:444-445 and 45:446-447.

124　Dadoyan, *Islamic World.*

125　Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 31:430-431 and 21:421-422.

126　Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 231-232.

but there is no surviving evidence for the forms this took. Indeed, the lack of inscriptions from Ani and its environs recording tax exemptions on donated property, seemingly always a prerogative of the ruler, whether royal or imperial, and evident in the Bagratuni, East Roman and Mongol eras,[127] may be telling in itself, indicating a much lighter burden than preceding or subsequent periods, as well as in other regions contemporaneously.[128]

In these other regions the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli regime was constituted by lords, whose class position provides a useful contrast to Ani's elite. Most were military newcomers installed by the brothers following conquests in a system of grants probably close in principle to Seljuq *iqṭāʿ*.[129] These lords appear to have controlled property in much the same manner as Ani's urban elite, controlling villages as fiscal units rather than the land itself. Rights to shares appear much less common, but this fits the picture of freshly granted lands rather than a long-held system of partible inheritance. For example, in a 1223 donation by Bupak, prince of princes (*išxan išxanacʿ*) under *atabeg* Ivane, to the monastery of Noravank in Siwnik, his property is described as ḥalāl *hayrenikʿ*, and he notes the granting of the village of Aghberis with full tax exemptions, given to him by »my barons (*paronaykʿ*) with a great charter« after he had conquered it from Muslims »by the strength of my arm and by the shedding of my own blood«.[130]

These actors were lords in the sense that they held juridical rights along with their control of significant property revenues, settled in fortified sites and required to provide military service, but they appear to dispose of fairly similar levels of wealth to Ani's *mecatun*, and generally far less than Tigran. The *mecatun*'s involvement in medium- and long-distance commercial exchange enabled them to accumulate more properties and village rents, giving a competitive edge within the elite. Thus lords were disciplined into likewise accumulating from medium- and long-distance commercial exchange, constituting themselves as *merchant*-lords, notably by building caravanserais.[131] A good example is the military newcomer Vache, who established the eponymous Vachutian family, and was the first holder of the title prince of princes under Zakare, given lands across the Ayrarat plain and purchasing the castle at Amberd from *atabeg* Ivane.[132] Prince Vache constructed a caravanserai in the Kasakh Valley in 1213, two years prior to Amberd's purchase in 1215, building and renovating several churches at the same time.[133] Only 500m from the caravanserai is the village of Ambroyi,

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127 For example, one of 1247 records a house gifted »free from duty«, Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 420. There are other interpretations of this absence, for example that the Shaddadid emirs and Georgian monarchs were simply disinclined to grant exemptions, but given the absence of almost two centuries, a general shift in relationship between the urban elite and the rulers seems a better explanation.

128 See, for example, the tax exemption granted to Shirakavan in 1228: Pogossian, Women, identity and power, 242.

129 Bedrosian, Seljuk and Mongol periods, 253-254; Babayan, Zakarid power; La Porta Reconstructing Armenia, 259.

130 Orbelean, *History*, ed. Shahnasareants,101-102.

131 See the discussion in Franklin, Vorderstrasse and Babayan, Late medieval village, 124-128; *eadem*., Early Results, 304-316; *eadem*., A house for trade.

132 On this figure and his position as a merchant-lord, see Franklin, *World*, 79-93 and 98; and Babayan, Zakarid power.

133 As Kathryn Franklin notes, the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli elite consisted of almost brigand-like military newcomers converting the spoils of conflict into claims to political authority, alongside the mercantile *mecatun*, an »emergent nobility, appointed to power by the Zakaryans and their peers, consist[ing] of merchants who purchased noble titles and ›immovable‹ feudal property with cash gleaned from developing trade along the mountain highways and from their widely dispersed shares in workshops, mills, and markets«. Franklin, A house for trade, 3.

and ceramic finds at both sites indicate that they were connected through socio-economic relations, including commodity production of the ceramics' perishable contents, particularly foodstuffs to support the commercial foundation.[134] Caravanserais could also own the rights to village rents in part or whole,[135] a situation which may have pertained in this case. The image emerges of a military newcomer, established as a juridical lord and able to accumulate through village rents, who used his accumulated wealth to first build commercial infrastructure predicated on medium- and long-term exchange, and then purchase further accoutrements of lordship.[136] Vache did not merely choose to invest in this manner; to a greater or lesser degree he was disciplined into doing so by the precociousness of mercantile elite actors in Ani and elsewhere.

Under the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli, therefore, although the *atabeg* and *amirspasalar* had decisive coercive force, granting lands to make lords and on occasion appointing the heads of large villages, Ani's urban elite was hegemonic in the city's regime of accumulation and political regime. This hegemonic position gave Ani's merchant-rentiers class power beyond the city's environs, disciplining military newcomers into reproducing themselves as merchant-lords. Ani's position in »transit trade« thereby constituted an internalised dynamic in the city's regime of accumulation as well as its political regime, becoming »external« again through the urban elite's patterns of reinvestment to both facilitate intercontinental exchange and dominate landholding, affecting the general configuration of the whole Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli sub-polity. By keeping tax rates low, the urban elite maintained Ani's competitive position as an entrepot in medium- and long-distance nexuses, investing accumulated capital in production for short- and medium-distance commodity circuits like cotton alongside properties exploited through cash rents. This dynamic monetised subaltern relations, and made their productive labour dependent on commercial exchange to a greater or lesser degree. Overcoming subaltern counterpower with coercive force provided by the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli, Ani continued to urbanise on the basis of a merchant-rentier regime of accumulation – the mode through which valorised subaltern labour was realised. This agency in the built environment is seen in two undated early thirteenth century donations to Horomos, one in which a certain Grigor gave two houses with three shops above them »which I have built from my halal income«,[137] and another where a certain Aryuts grants a shop »in the main street of Ani which I had bought and repaired; its lower side is close enough to Avetik's house. [I also gave] two small shops – one above the [main] shop and one in front of it: below there is a moneychanger.«[138]

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134 Franklin *et al.*, Late medieval village, 126.

135 Trépanier, *Foodways*, 31.

136 As Franklin notes: »Rather than a determinate, developmental path followed from feudal tenure to urban capitalism, the expansion of trade in the medieval period involved the opening of opportunities as old structures were manipulated by new actors, who deployed their gains on local and emerging ›world‹ scales«; see: Early results, 314.

137 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 30:430.

138 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 50:453-454.

Ani Under Mongol Rule, 1236-1350

In the margins of a manuscript copied at Horomos a scribe noted that in 1236 »the Tatar took Ani and the whole world«.[139] Thus the city, its regime of accumulation, and the whole Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli regime were integrated into the evolving empire of the Great Khans.[140] As noted, Mongol pan-Eurasian hegemony constitutes the medieval Silk Road's political real-isation, the state form apposite to the Commercial Revolution's apogee. In the last section we saw how interregional and intercontinental commerce constituted an essential vector *within* Ani's merchant-rentier regime of accumulation, disciplining subaltern labour alongside the urban elite, as well as – externalising once more – the lords beyond the city's environs. Like-wise, this section demonstrates how apparently »external« Mongol taxation constituted an internal vector in Ani's political economy, conditioning the exploitation of subaltern labour for capital accumulation and rents, and producing pressures both on and within these pro-cesses to which both subaltern and elite classes could respond in various ways. The manner of their response dictated this vector's »re-«externalisation. The question is the balance of forces at play: the extent to which interregional and intercontinental commerce was condu-cive to regional and local merchant-rentier accumulation, on the one hand, and, on the other, the extent to which the Mongol state system assured necessary levels of coercion, while not taxing to the point of endangering accumulation through capital and rents, so that subaltern counterpower could be overcome and urbanisation thereby continue.

Much secondary literature claims or implies that Ani's 1236 Mongol conquest was a dis-aster, and the violence of the initial moment is indicated by chronicles, a 1236 manuscript colophon, and three later inscriptions at Horomos Monastery mentioning bloody destruc-tion and times of troubles »caused by the Tatars«.[141] But Mongol rule did not drastically affect Ani's merchant-rentier regime of accumulation, especially at first. Rather, Mongol hegemony over Eurasia provided a significant stimulus to mercantile activity, integrating the city more directly with commercial nexuses across Eurasia. What did change was the political regime, now subordinated to and integrated within the Mongol state system.[142] Ani's elite continued to have an official role in urban governance, with civic titles attested in inscriptions, but this governance was now firmly subject to Mongol rule, much like the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli themselves. Ani became an administrative centre of the Mongol and subsequently Ilkhanate province of »Georgia«, with the Great Khan confirming the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli governor and appointing an imperial commissioner alongside him.

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139 This is MS. Yerevan 2865, held in the Matenadaran.

140 For the Mongol period in Caucasia, and relationship to various Armenians, see Dashdondog, *Mongols*. Kirakos curiously attributes the key agency in Ani's 1236 Mongol sack to the urban subaltern classes, who, he claims, killed the Mongol ambassadors while the civic elite waited for permission to surrender from the reigning Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli, see Kirakos, *History*, 220-221.

141 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 47:450-451, 56:461-462 and 57:463.

142 For an in-depth overview of Mongol administration in Caucasia, see Dashdondog, *Mongols*, 99-120. On Mongol taxation more broadly, see Schurmann, Mongolian Tributary Practices; Smith, Mongol and Nomadic Taxation; Ostrowski, »Tamma« and the Dual-Administrative Structure, 262-277.

As noted, little is known about Ani's taxation in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, but it appears to have been especially light. With the imposition of Mongol rule this was no longer the case, and the political regime oversaw steadily increasing taxation, heavy but initially relatively ad-hoc, under Mongol governors, prompting a lordly rebellion in 1248-49.[143] Taxation underwent a step change from *c.*1254-55, when Armenian histories as well as the Georgian royal chronicle, the *K'art'lis C'xovreba*, describe a huge census, part of a process of imperial stabilisation across Eurasia in the 1250s, which also witnessed the transition to regional sub-khanates or *ulus* from 1256, in Iran and Caucasia the Ilkhanate under Hulegu. The census formed a vast process of registering all the various property arrangements indicated in the previous section, generating new pressures from novel demands at the moments of appropriation and distribution. As the Georgian chronicle comments:

> Then Arghun came to Khan Ulo, who welcomed him with honors and sent him to Georgia, to King David, and to Greece (central Anatolia), and all the other lands subject to him, and he took a census and regulated the problems of government. When he came to Georgia, the whole population of David's kingdom was in great distress. And lists of everything were made, starting with people and ending with beasts, from fields to vineyards, and from orchards to vegetable gardens. And from every nine well-off peasants they took one for military service…And the size of the tribute was established; from one village for the commander of a thousand horsemen, they took one lamb and one *drahk'an* (gold coin), and for the commander of a *bevri* – one sheep and two *drahk'an*s, and the fee for a horse was three *tetri*s (silver coin) daily.[144]

The listing of property types seen in inscriptions, including fields, vineyards, orchards and gardens, as well as the people and livestock engaged in productive activity, is particularly notable. Their registration and taxation would change the manner of their use and exploitation, much as later in the narrative David of Georgia is described as »constrained by the census of Arghun«, which obliged him to put aside three silver *tetri* for every one hundred made in Tbilisi. Payment was assured by the presence of an imperial commissioner, in Tbilisi a certain Khoja-Aziz who imposed a »*kharaj* (lit. land tax, here a generalised term), which they call *t'amgha*, on the purchase of a sheep or lambs for the King's kitchen«.[145] Importantly the *tamgha* is a commercial tax, and in the narrative the king is »pressured by these circumstances«, a pressure that should be imagined more or less across the population, with some choosing to resist – as David himself chose, apparently because of the »arrogant« Khoja-Aziz »who was set above me by Arghun«. Arghun even appears a second time after the subsequent revolt to »make an inventory of the lands and find out to what extent they were ravaged or rehabilitated«.

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143 On Mongol taxation in Caucasia see: Dashdondog, *Mongols*, 111-120.
144 *K'art'lis C'xovreba*, ed. Jones *et al.*, 350.
145 *K'art'lis C'xovreba*, ed. Jones *et al.*, 352.

So the census enabled Mongol rulers to impose a wide range of novel and newly regularised taxes, all collected in silver coin. Mongol impositions necessarily engendered resistance, in particular another lordly rebellion in 1260 following the imposition of the *qubčur*, a poll tax varying in scale from one dinar to 500 depending on personal wealth.[146] Subaltern counterpower is difficult to locate in narratives focused on elite actors concerned with their own class power, but it can be critically imagined from the recording of the census in Kirakos' history and Grigor of Akner's *History of the Nation of the Archers*.[147] Kirakos claims that »They began recording everyone from age eleven up, excepting the women, and they demanded the most severe taxes, more than a man could bear, and so people became impoverished.« Likewise, Grigor describes how Arghun took a headcount across the whole country for taxation, compiled into a »*davt'ar* (Arab./Pers. *daftar*)« or register, and from this demanded tax: »in one village they recorded thirty to fifty men, each [ranging] from fifteen years of age up to sixty, and from each head they counted, they took sixty *spitaks* (silver coins).« Non-payment was met with extreme violence, as ever, and Kirakos notes the »unbelievable beatings, torments and tortures«, with those who fled and were caught suffering a special form of execution gruesomely detailed by Grigor. Finally, any unable to meet the demands had their children taken in payment of the debt. Such latent and realised violence must be imagined playing out in countless moments of registration, calculation and tax demands in Ani and its environs, as the registrars and tax collectors encountered each particular household and property arrangement, adding further demands for coin on top of pre-existing rents, further compelling subaltern actors to take on wage labour, enter debt relations, and commodify produce. Sources consistently emphasise both the comprehensiveness of the registration and the violence, both at the initial registration and subsequent moments of appropriation, forming the engine for an increased counterpolitical dynamic, empirically invisible as ever, but the dark matter structuring elite actions in this period, both in revolt against the new rulers and in collaboration with them.

This is important, since Kirakos claims that »the princes, lords of the districts, became their [the Mongols'] collaborators in harassing and demanding taxes for their own profit«.[148] The historian indicates the lords of the Georgian monarchy's integration into the Mongol's state system through tax-based accumulation, thereby asserting their domination over subaltern classes. Certainly this collaboration was not straightforward: lords were subject to taxation as much as they profited from it, and the process of registration held dangers for them too. For example, the abbot of Noravank Monastery and historian Stepannos Orbelean describes how the prince of Siwnik, Smbat Orbelean, had many lands taken from him and heavy impositions on what remained.[149] Yet this was not due to the Great Khan's representatives, but rather other Georgian lords, who apparently influenced Arghun in order to disinherit Smbat for their own benefit – a perfect illustration of »external« Mongol taxation's transformation into an internal vector within Caucasian regimes of accumulation. Unlike subaltern actors, however, Smbat's class power and political status meant he was able to visit

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146 Dashdondog, *Mongols*, 92.

147 All subsequent quotations from these historians can be found in: Kirakos, *History*, ed. Melik-Ohanjanyan, 360-362; Grigor of Akner, *History of the Nation of the Archers*, ed. Blake and Frye, 321-324.

148 Kirakos, *History*, ed. Melik-Ohanjanyan, 362.

149 Orbelean, *History*, ed. Shahnasareants, 158-160.

the Great Khan himself and leverage his position for restoration and privileges – another instance of »re-«externalisation.[150] Nevertheless, such instances notwithstanding, Mongol rule constituted a sudden assertion of taxation's hegemony over Caucasian regimes of accumulation, evoked in Kirakos' description of the broad range of newly taxed persons: artisans, »whether in the cities or the villages«, fishermen in both seas and lakes, miners, blacksmiths and fresco painters. Likewise productive resources such as salt mines were taken over by the new rulers. Overall, as Kirakos comments, »Is it necessary to explain in detail the level of profit which they extracted from people?«

This violent assertion of taxation's hegemony specifically affected the capital accumulation of merchants, from whom the Great Khans »profited greatly« and »heaped up vast quantities of gold, silver and precious stones«. Interestingly, however, Kirakos mentions one merchant, a certain Umek from Karin-Erzerum, around 250km southwest of Ani, who gave generous gifts to Arghun »and those with him«, and was greatly admired by the Khan and his representatives – admiration expressed »in writing« which also confirmed private property and granted tax exemptions.[151] This suggests that some merchants were able to leverage their class power even in the new conditions of a powerful tax-based hegemony, with the state system responsive to the needs of capital accumulation. Yet this responsiveness was conditioned not by the necessities of mercantile and rentier accumulation in itself, as under the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli, but rather by the desire to extract tax. So, as Kirakos comments, »everything became expensive and the lands became filled with lamentations and complaints«, neatly bearing out Ibn Khaldun's analysis of commercial taxation's impact on prices and so general expenditure relative to income.[152] Nevertheless the Great Khan's representatives remained ever-present, demanding »the same amount every year by list and in writing«.[153]

So the mid- to late thirteenth century saw heightening contradictions between tax-based and merchant-rentier regimes of accumulation. Mongol taxation further pressed subaltern classes already commercially and financially exploited, introducing yet more cash demands on top of pre-existing rents as well as their various exploitation through wage labour, unfree tenancy and debt, forcing them to change productive activity accordingly. For example, an inscription of 1274 records how Ukan Karimatin, Papkan Varkhatin and Pakpan's wife Dapta Khatun, bought half of Horomos Monastery »from our *halal* wealth« – a remarkable act in itself – donating in return tax-exempt properties and seemingly one peasant family.[154] Although fragmentary, inconclusive, and the sole such instance,[155] this may indicate that the pressure on subaltern actors encouraged some to take on not just unfree tenancies, but a form of legal serfdom tied to village units.[156] The counterpower necessarily emergent from increased fiscal exploitation would endanger sub-hegemonic elite classes and, coupled with increased demands on elite actors themselves, encourage their revolt.

150　He even becomes a personal vassal of the Great Khan, an *inju*; see Orbelean, *History*, 154.

151　Dashdondog, *Mongols*, 117.

152　Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 276-278.

153　Kirakos, *History*, ed. Melik-Ohanjanyan, 362.

154　Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 71:476.

155　This is the sole such instance in Ani, but a 1244 inscription at Astvatsnkal in the Kasakh Valley in the name of the local lord, Kurd Vachutyan, dedicates a peasant (*šinakan*) alongside more standard property types. See Kate Franlin, *Everyday Cosmopolitanisms*.

156　This case is mirrored by the donation of a *šinakan* to a church by the merchant-lord Kurd Vachutyan to a church in 1244; see Franklin, *Everyday Cosmopolitanisms*, 77.

These heightening contradictions can be located in the configuration of the Great Khans' state system, what Anievas and Nisancioglu term a nomadic mode of production and David Sneath the »headless state«.[157] In such configurations expanded accumulation cannot be generated by the development of productive forces or increased cultivation of land, necessitating the integration of more and more units from which to extract tax, including facilitating commercial exchange so as to tax it more effectively. Accumulated tax is then distributed through a relatively horizontal hegemonic nomadic elite, engendering a contradiction between tendencies to sedentarise and stratify into a more normative tax-based regime, like the Yüan dynasty in China, or to disaggregate and reaggregate variously over time and space, as across post-Mongol Iran and Central Asia.[158] Kirakos provides a notable vignette of a nomadic regime when he describes Mongol lords dividing up by lot »the lands of Armenia, Georgia and [Caucasian] Albania«, »each chief according to his importance receiving cities, districts, lands and fortresses«.[159]

A nomadic configuration, hegemonic across Eurasia, allowed Ani's now politically sub-hegemonic elite to continue to accumulate capital and collect rents across the remainder of the thirteenth century, but at the expense of increased taxation. The massive expansion of accumulation in general, a result of the Great Khans' deeper integration of the Commercial Revolution's interregional and intercontinental nexuses, overcame the heightening contradiction between tax-based and mercantile-rentier accumulation in the city and its environs. This was particularly the case in the Ilkhanate, where the *tamgha* directly supported the Ilkhan's court and military campaigns, indicating in turn the large revenues commercial taxation could provide.[160] The Franciscan friar William of Rubruck visited the city and region in late January and early February of 1255, and notes the many prosperous villages and Ani's impressive buildings,[161] as would two Nestorian monks two decades later.[162] These two testimonies appear during the transition to Ilkhanate regional rule following the census in 1256, and the Ilkhanate's subsequent establishment in Tabriz from 1265, indicating a relatively smooth transition – also reflected in Ambroyi's stable social life throughout the thirteenth century.[163] As the village's excavators' note, »the Ilkhanid period in Armenia not only stimulated the production and maintenance of infrastructure like road inns, but also tied villages as well as cities into regional and even larger-scale webs of shared material culture and practice.«[164]

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157 Anievas and Nisancioglu, *How the West*, 67-70; Sneath, *Headless State*. The Ilkhanate's trajectory can also be compared with Ibn Khaldūn's analysis of the general stages of state systems emerging from nomadic groups; see *Muqqadimah*, 141-142.

158 Cf. Yıldız , Post-Mongol pastoral polities.

159 Kirakos, *History*, ed. Melik-Ohanjanyan, 236-237.

160 Dashdondog, *Mongols*, 114.

161 William of Rubruck, *Mission*, 269.

162 Mutafian, Ani After Ani, 161-162.

163 Franklin *et al.*, Late Medieval Village, 113.

164 Franklin *et al.*, Late Medieval Village, 124. See also the situation at Arpa in Vayots Dzor to Ani's southeast, Babajanyan and Franklin, Everyday Life, 155-183.

In Tabriz the Ilkhanate began to mint silver coins, which quickly became the region's new standard, replacing the previous gold – a transition between the two »measures of value for all capital accumulations« which Ibn Khaldūn claims God established.[165] This represents a hegemonic shift from Mediterranean to Asian mediums of accumulation driven by Mongol taxation in silver coin, which represents in turn taxation's hegemony over merchant capital – eloquently demonstrated in the so-called empire of Trebizond minting East Roman motifs on the Ilkhanate's silver standard for a city with a strong Genoese presence. Positioned on nexuses connecting Tabriz to Anatolia, northern Caucasian regions and the Black Sea, and now subject to a wide range of taxes in silver coin, the standard was adopted in Ani too, with inscriptions revealing an almost instantaneous shift. For example, in an inscription of 1276, a certain Sahmadin describes how in 1261, during »the rule over the world of Hülegü Khan«, he bought a royal palace »with my halal *hayrenik'* for my own use and that of my children« from Artashir, son of Shāhānshāh, in the town of Mren just to the southwest of Ani on the Shirak plain, renovating the building and spending a total of 40,000 gold coins.[166] This inscription is revealing for power relations between the urban elite and the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli, with many lords selling off lands after the *qubčur's* introduction[167] and finding cash-rich merchant-rentiers able to pay in coin, in 1261 still gold. Likewise, in an inscription of 1283 at Goshavank, a certain Char, son of Umek – likely the same actor mentioned by Kirakos, especially considering that the historian was writing at the monastery in these same years – mentions how his father bought the village of Getik for 40,000 gold coins in the early thirteenth century under the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli, while Char himself bought Hovk for four thousand gold coins »during hard times when land was cheap and gold dear«, again the aftermath of the census.[168] In a 1269 donation to Horomos, however, coming four years after the Ilkhanate's establishment in Tabriz, a female elite actor named Taik-Taguhi gave »the grindstone of Abel by [Ani's] Dvin gate«, which her son Harzpek had redeemed from debt mortgage to a certain Garegoyn for 700 silver coins, and repaired for another 800.[169] Between 1261 and 1269, Ani appears to have moved from a gold to a silver standard without appreciable change in the merchant-rentier regime.

In fact, Char's donation indicates that Mongol taxation actually *reinforced* the generalised dominance of Ani's urban elite, resulting in an apparently significant concentration of capital. The sudden increase in cash demands elevated coin's value relative to property, so that owners were forced to sell off and Ani's cash-rich elite was well-placed to buy up – in this case an entire village's income, previously 40,000 gold coins, sold off for a tenth that sum. As Ibn Khaldūn notes, in moments where one state system replaces another, the turmoil lowers the value of real estate and it can be bought up for low prices.[170] The same dynamic seems

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165 This was part of a broader regional shift to silver evident from *c.*1240; see Sinclair, *Eastern Trade*, 48. For an indicator of Tabriz's new centrality, see Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, *Civitas Thauris. The Significance of Tabriz.* Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 298.

166 Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 188.

167 There was also a rebellion in 1260, and in 1261 some lords were executed for non-payment; see Dashdondog, *Mongols*, 115.

168 Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 186.

169 Horomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 62:468.

170 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 280.

to lie behind Artashir's sale of the palace at Mren in 1261, as well as the purchase of half of Horomos in 1274, with the monastery receiving specifically tax-free properties in return. In principle the monastery should have been free from all taxation, as all religious institutions under Mongol rule were, but Horomos' fiscal difficulties are indicated already in 1251, when a certain Yovanes Chkhik redeemed and renovated the monastery's mill, which had been debt mortgaged and ruined »after the ravages of the Tartars«, paying 40 gold coins.[171] Thus Mongol taxation's internalisation as a vector within the city's regime of accumulation had the effect of making coin more valuable, providing opportunities for the urban elite to further dominate property arrangements. Relatively humble-seeming actors continue to control village rents up to the thirteenth century's final decades, for example the physician Abd al-Ḥasan, who gave four-sixths of the mill in Saghuhndeler »in the valley of Aprnuts« to Horomos in 1273.[172] This indicates that Ani's urban elite continued to act as a disciplining pressure on extra-urban lords, notably reflected in the later thirteenth-century appearance of formulae in donor inscriptions guarding against the encroachments of »either our own people or foreigners (i.e. Muslims), either lords or merchants (*dzernawork'*)«.[173] Of course, this formula suggests that competition was not between lords and merchants as such, but between cash- and land-rich elite actors, with Caucasian merchant-lords continuing to build caravanserais and so obtain a competitive edge up to the end of the long thirteenth century.[174]

Yet, although Ani's urban elite remained hegemonic in the city's regime of accumulation, there were heightening contradictions between tax and merchant capital which could only be overcome by the continued expansion of accumulation in general, a process which in turn compounded contradictions further. Although it cannot be detailed here, the Ilkhanate increasingly took the form of a more normative tax-based configuration, but never completed the transition, remaining mired in contradictions with tendencies towards a nomadic regime, and entering a liquidity crisis by the 1290s. Most striking is Ilkhan Geikhatu's ill-fated attempt to switch to paper money *c.*1291-1295, modelled directly on the Yüan dynasty's – itself modelled on the Song's – and including Chinese characters but with the Muslim confession of faith, which Orbelean claims was intended to »eliminate silver money«, an »order issued with severity in all the cities«.[175] Merchants refused to recognise the currency, and riots broke out in the market – the Persian historian Rashīd al-Dīn even names the new money »the ruin of Basra«.[176] The remarkably asynchronous nature of this historical moment aside, it clearly

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171 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 57:463.

172 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 35:434-435.

173 Orbelean, *History,* ed. Shahnasareants,101-102 and 111-112.

174 For example the Orbelean caravanserai founded in 1332; see Babajanyan, Archaeological Excavations, 146-158. Notably this is built in the reign of Abū Saʿīd, the last recorded Ilkhan at Ani, and indicates a shift of investment to those nexuses connecting Tabriz to Sevan, Caspian and Tblisi, circumventing Ani and the Shirak plain.

175 Orbelean, *History,* ed. Shahnasareants,215.

176 Ashtor, *Social and Economic History*, 257.

indicates the difficulties the Ilkhans faced in assuring the necessary coin for taxation. The response was, predictably, to deepen taxation further, especially in those sites which had provided significant tax revenue up to this point.[177] In a donor inscription of 1301 to the church of the Holy Apostles in Ani, the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli governor Aghupugha claims that »the city had become impoverished and was deeply wounded, because it was overwhelmed by such taxes as had never existed since the beginning«, absolving the foundation of three of these for the sake of »the life of the land«.[178]

Simultaneously and internally connected to increases in taxation, nexuses of commercial exchange began to shift away from Ani in the later thirteenth century. As Manandian and Sinclair have demonstrated, these moved both northwards, north of the Caspian and across the Pontic steppe to the Crimea, as well as southwards, from Tabriz, north of Lake Van, to Upper Mesopotamia, northern Syria and Cilicia.[179] The movement was not uniform or total, some medium-distance nexuses continued to pass through the Shirak plain into the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the extent of long-distance movement *c*.1300 is open to debate. Yet, as a result of tax increases blunting the city's competitive advantage as an entrepot, Ani was no longer on the primary route carrying luxury commodities from India and China to Anatolia, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean beyond. Importantly, the first decades of the fourteenth century witness an »economic quickening« in the cities to the south of Ani, along the north shore of Lake Van.[180] The province of »Great Armenia« began to provide the Ilkhanate around four times the tax revenue of »Georgia« to the north, a dramatic reversal from the mid-thirteenth century when »Georgia« provided three times the revenue of »Great Armenia«.[181] The loss of capital accumulated from long-distance luxury circuits would make auxiliary short- and medium-term commodity circuits less profitable, necessarily resulting in their contraction, with obvious consequences for subaltern actors with tax receipts to pay. In this manner the ability of Ani's urban elite to accumulate capital steadily decreased, revenue which could only be made up for by raising rents, again impacting subaltern classes. But the contraction of commodity production and exchange on every level meant fewer mechanisms by which subaltern actors could obtain coin to pay these rents, while at the same time Ani's elite had less and less cash to invest in further incomes. Finally, in addition to this specific regional transformation, in the first half of the fourteenth century Latin Christendom entered its profound late medieval crisis, providing less intercontinental demand for long-distance commodities overall, and so contracting the total capital available across the Afro-Eurasian world system, thereby constituting an essential vector for its general crisis in turn.

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177 Cf. Hakobyan, *Ani,* 270-273.

178 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 84:27-28.

179 Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 189-201; Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 187-191; and *idem*, *Eastern Trade,* 75.

180 Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 200.

181 These toponyms are in quotation marks as they refer to the Mongol and Ilkhanate provinces, rather than trans-historical »countries« of this name.

Hence long-distance exchange and Mongol taxation are not alternative explanations for deurbanisation, but internally related elements of a total configuration, which, in turn, interacted with other elements to cause deurbanisation. Ani continued to have a reputation for large tax revenues, with the Ilkhans taking the step of naming the city a *khas inju*, a personal estate taxed directly. This is attested in an inscription above Ani's main »Lion Gate«, dated sometime soon after *c.*1319/20, when a Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli governor is last attested.[182] The piece opens by describing how »the long-lifed King of Kings, God-given *p'at'šah* (Pers. *pādishāh*) and God-knowing Prince of Princes of the land, and of the kingdom of this land of the Georgians, made the mother-city of Ani [their] *khasinjou*«. The change took place »in the lordship over this city of the God-loving *patronk'* Grigor *agha* and Yovhannes«,[183] who are the last known representatives of Ani's urban governance, now firmly subordinate to a hyperbolically dominant ruler. Grigor and Yovhannes are credited with renovating the city walls, presumably the main gate in particular, and charged with administering all tax collection. The remainder of the inscription describes various taxes which they removed, including the *taghma* (*dałma*). The Ilkhans had clearly seen Ani as a significant source of tax, especially drawn from commerce, which could help them overcome political-economic crisis. By this point, however, Ani's regime of accumulation had dislocated to the point that this was no longer the case. Grigor and Yovhannes were wealthy enough to pay for renovations, but the urban elite's generalised dominance in property arrangements, so evident across the thirteenth century, is no longer clear – at Horomos no donations by the urban elite survive after the end of the thirteenth century, with the possible single exception of an undated grant of two cows and two oxen.[184] Likewise, their agency in the built environment slowly fades, with no new public buildings attested after 1348, although there are numerous repairs to existing churches – yet, as Ibn Khaldūn notes, repairs may continue long after the end of the urbanisation which constructed the structures in the first place.[185] The inscription above the Lion Gate even indicates recent disruption in property relations, its closing statement noting that the *patronk'* had »restored the previous [property] boundaries«.

So capital accumulation on the scale required by Ani's regime of accumulation was simply no longer possible, and deurbanisation set in. This is seen in a Persian inscription of *c.*1330, erected by the last powerful Ilkhan, Abū Saʿīd, which abolishes all taxes bar two, customs duty and the *taghma*, stating:

> ...let nothing [else] be demanded as tax...as was done before at Ani and other cities in the province of Georgia, where under the pretext [of taxes], unlawful adscriptions and charges were collected and force used. [The city] started to become deserted, men from among the common people scattered, the elders of the city and of the province because of the [taxes]...abandoned their possessions real and movable and their families, and went away.[186]

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182 *Divan*, ed. Orbeli, 1:1.

183 The use of the title *agha* is notable, a term with a long life in the region up to this day, in Turkish and Kurdish referring to powerful landowners who control villages, potentially indicating that Grigor primarily saw himself as such. See Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and the State*, 80-81.

184 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 76:480.

185 Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 191-192; and *idem*, *Eastern Trade,* 75. Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 272-273.

186 Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 199.

This inscription clearly indicates the relationship between increased taxation and deurbanisa-tion as an external-cum-internal factor: the level of tax demands made property exploitation unprofitable, encouraging property owners to sell and leave. Likewise, the piece indicates the role of subaltern classes in this process, who exercised the most basic form of counter-power, *refusal*, and left. This has been interpreted as a result of the urban elite's decline, but the opposite is more likely: elite accumulation from both capital and rents depended on sub-altern exploitation, and with a depletion of the workforce wages would rise, increasing costs and compounding the effect of increased taxation and falling commerce. Unlike the period of imposition of Mongol taxation, ruling elite classes, including both the regional Caucasian elite and the Ilkhan's representatives, could no longer exercise extreme violence to keep subaltern classes in place. Instead the urban elite left too, as seen in the story of a group of merchants who left for Astrakhan north of the Caspian in 1331, a key site on the northern commercial nexus connecting central Asia to the Crimea.[187] Abū Sa'īd sought to alleviate the tax burden to favour commerce, and only extract tax from this form of accumulation, but the merchant-rentier regime had already reached terminal dislocation.

Manandian and Sinclair both emphasise Ani's existence into the fifteenth century: coins continue to be minted at the site by ruling Turkmen groups who used it as an administrative centre, and Timur Leng sacked the city in 1400, before turning south to Damascus where he would meet Ibn Khaldūn.[188] Likewise, it must have taken some time for property arrange-ments to totally transform, as indicated by the last donor inscription at Horomos, dated to 1336.[189] This is in the name of a Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli, Varham (*sic*, more commonly »Vahram«), *atabeg* and *patron* of the barons, who apparently still had relatively extensive holdings even after Ani's dispossession, granting three villages »with their fields, soil and water, and their four limits«, abutting »the great merchant town of Mastara« to the east. Nevertheless, notwithstanding a nuanced image up to 1350, and an afterlife as an admin-istrative centre into the fifteenth century, Ani's role is more by contingent default than its structural position, with only a micro-regional commercial function.[190] By 1350 at the latest, Ani's merchant-rentiers, merchant-lords and the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli rapidly begin to fade into obscurity, their social positions bifurcating into a choice between reproduction as landlords on the one hand, as Varham and potentially also Grigor *'agha'*, and merchants on the other, like those who left for Astrakahan. The composite regime of accumulation that had produced Ani's urbanisation, combining capital accumulation from interregional and inter-continental commerce with village rentierism, binding together elite and subaltern classes in struggle, had dissolved, and both exploiters and exploited left.

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187 Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 181.

188 Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 199 and Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 183-184. Sinclair dates the defi-nitive end of Ani's viability to the Ak Koyunlu campaigns against Georgia in the later fifteenth century; see Sinclair, *Eastern Trade*, 75. See also Mutafian, Ani After Ani, 163-165.

189 Hoṙomos inscriptions, ed. Karapetyan and Mahé, 16:415-416. There are other inscriptions in the city of Ani, and Sinclair, following Hakobyan, uses these to argue for no deurbanisation by 1350. Certainly there is a demand for nuance, but Horomos has been this study's measure and the total absence of inscriptions remains telling; see Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 182; Hakobyan, *Ani*, 278.

190 This is its connection to Karin-Erzurum; see Sinclair, Trade, Administration, and Cities, 191-192.

Conclusion

Ani's story bears out, deepens and concretises much of Ibn Khaldūn's general model, especially demonstrating that declining population is not disastrous in itself, but for the loss of subaltern labour which forms the basis for all wealth. As he writes:

> We have stated before that a city with a large civilization is characterized by high prices in commerce and high prices for necessities. [The prices] are then raised still higher through customs duties; for sedentary culture reaches perfection at the time when the state system has reached its greatest flourishing, and that is the time when the state system levies customs duties because then it has large expenditures...The customs duties raise the sales [prices], because small traders and merchants include all their expenses, even their personal requirements, in the price of their stock and merchandise. Thus, customs duties enter into the sales price. The expenditures of sedentary people, therefore, grow...The people cannot escape this [development] because they are dominated by and subservient to their customs...One person after another becomes reduced in circumstances and indigent. Poverty takes hold of them. Few persons bid for the available goods. Commerce decreases, and the situation of the town deteriorates.[191]

In Ani we find a commercial centre whose urbanisation was driven by capital accumulation from the start, personified in a precocious and increasingly self-conscious urban elite. At the outset of the long thirteenth century this elite was already hegemonic in Ani's regime of accumulation. This depended on interregional and intercontinental commercial exchange but encompassed a wider range of regionally and locally integrated production, circulation and distribution, including auxiliary short- and medium-distance commodity circuits, as well as control of village rents which could be bought, sold, and divided into shares for inheritance and pious donations. The merchant-rentier regime disciplined subaltern labour, dominated and exploited through wage labour, debt and unfree tenancy, as well as diverse processes of commodity production – although it is impossible to identify the central bulk commodities which supported short-, medium- and long-distance commerce, cotton and processed textiles are certainly among them.[192] Ani's »great-housed« elite actors leveraged their hegemony over accumulation to realise class power in the city's political regime too, constituting an urban polity within the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli regime and under the Georgian monarchy's regional hegemony, where Armenian Christian merchant-rentiers took office as amir, *malik*, *qāḍī*, *ḥājib*, and various other titles.

ˏWith Mongol rule and the imposition of heavy taxation this urban polity and its regime of accumulation became firmly sub-hegemonic to the emerging state system of the Great Khans, but the expansion of accumulation in general across the Afro-Eurasian world system overcame these new limits. Indeed, taxation's imposition provided new opportunities to further dominate landholding in the city, its environs and beyond, contributing to a consolidation of capital among the merchant-rentier elite. By 1300, however, this was no longer the case, with taxation increasing as a result of the Ilkhanate's liquidity crisis, intersecting with

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191 Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 286.

192 As Banaji notes, »The stronger the competition between commercial capitals, the greater is the compulsion on individual capitals to seek some measure of control over production«, *Theory*, 271.

and contributing to the shift in commercial nexuses to the north and the south. Ani's urban elite no longer accumulated enough capital from interregional and intercontinental commerce to meet tax demands and sustain their local regime of accumulation, which began to dislocate in the general crisis of the Commercial Revolution. Lacking the class power borne of a robust hegemony over the local regime of accumulation, Ani's merchant-rentiers could no longer overcome subaltern counterpower, and exploited classes exercised their agency to simply *leave*, with the *mecatun* beginning to do likewise. Ani survived in a much reduced form to the end of the fourteenth century and for some time thereafter, but the predicates for its previous urbanisation had been removed along with the rest of the Shirak plain's urban constellation, by the early sixteenth century leaving Kars on Shirak's western edge and Yerevan just beyond Shirak's limit on the Ararat plain to the south east.

This story speaks to debates in historiography and political economy beyond Ani and immediately related scholarship. The interrelation of commerce and tax in Ani's trajectory reveals the mystification implicit in positive characterisations of the *Pax Mongolica*'s relationship to »trade«, as well as negative visions of the Mongols' role in deurbanising and transforming landscapes. Mongol hegemony over Eurasia did »stimulate trade«, but for the very specific end of taxing commerce more effectively. The »peace« required for this effective taxation was constituted by extreme violence, latent or realised in every moment of its constitution, tranquillity the mere surface appearance of Mongol hegemony's operative integration of diverse regional elite actors and classes. On the other hand, arguments to the effect that Mongol rule de-agrarianised lands for nomadic pasture, resulting in the loss of urban centres – implicitly resting on a racist image of »non-state« barbarians versus civilisation – do not hold for Ani and its environs. Far from their nomadism, it is the Great Khans' mastery of that *sine qua non* of state civilisation,[193] *tax*, which brings about Ani's deurbanisation.

More broadly, Ani's story demonstrates how interregional and intercontinental commerce engender far more textured local and regional regimes of accumulation than common-sense characterisations imply: »transit trade« is far from transitory, it involves a profound disciplining and integration of subaltern labour in each particular short-distance configuration of production, appropriation and distribution which together constitute medium- and long-distance nexuses. Thus external factors become internal and vice versa, so that analysis of the particular sites of accumulation generated by interregional and intercontinental commerce requires a thorough investigation of the local political economy. The same goes for apparently »external« taxation, in this case Mongol but indicating more general dynamics. Although initially a demand »from outside«, taxation is internalised within local regimes of accumulation according to their pre-existing dynamics, and its effects likewise vary accordingly. Ani appears a victim of its previous commercial success, taxed to the point that it lost its competitive position as an entrepot, so that the local regime of accumulation dislocated and nexuses began to move. Yet the cities north of Lake Van to Ani's south were similarly taxed, but apparently not to the same level given their previous relative lack of commerce, so that, in a dynamic Ibn Khaldūn would recognise, both commerce and tax revenue increased simultaneously.

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193 »State civilisation« refers to the total complex of interlocking historical social systems often termed »class society«, and forming a more or less coherent world system over the long term. See Öcalan, *Manifesto*; Cf. Frank and Gills, *World System*.

In terms of political economy, then, such dynamics represent the contradictory symbiosis between capital and tax. Taxation is not simply a negative extraction from capital accumulation, it constitutes a form of value appropriation, distribution and realisation in its own right. Like capital, taxation rests on the exploitation of surplus labour in the form of money, appropriated by a state system and distributed to maintain a state elite who reinvest to reproduce their class position – in this story the Mongol elite obtaining the rights to revenues from territorial fiscal units, alongside appointed officials like Aziz-Khoja in Tbilisi.[194] As the elite class expands, so does the need to expand tax revenue, a drive distinct from but comparable to capital's constant need to grow or die, especially insofar as both dynamics generate sites of accumulation through accumulating cores' exploitation of surplus-producing peripheries. Thus both drives manifest historically in *urbanisation*, as state and mercantile elite classes reinvest appropriated surplus in expanding urban infrastructure, but for the different necessities of tax-based and capitalist accumulation. Moreover, although they represent distinct regimes of accumulation, nevertheless tax and capital *presuppose each other*: merchant and finance capital functions to provide subaltern actors with the coin necessary to pay tax; while tax creates the conditions in which capital becomes necessary and provides all its predicates: currency, a juridical regime, coercive force, and so on. However, as much as tax and capital presuppose each other, each necessarily seeks to dominate the other, either making capital handmaiden to tax-based accumulation – as for the majority of state civilisation's history – or tax auxiliary to capital accumulation – as has been the story of capitalist modernity. Tax and capital form two aspects of a single dialectic, so that in any given configuration one must be hegemonic over the other, a contradiction heightened if the regime of accumulation enters crisis. In concrete historical terms, this contradictory symbiosis between tax-based and capitalist regimes of accumulation is expressed in their representative classes' struggle for political hegemony in the state system.

In the case of Ani's urbanisation the dialectic between tax and merchant capital played out initially to the benefit of both tax-based and merchant capitalist accumulation: the city developed into an urban polity either relatively autonomous within a broader tax-based state system, as under the empire of New Rome or the early Mongol period, or in which merchant capital appears hegemonic and taxation more or less reduced to skimming from commerce, as in the twelfth century Shaddadid emirate and the Zakarian-Mkhargrdzeli regime under the Georgian kingdom. By the later thirteenth century, however, Ani's regime of accumulation was firmly subordinated to a role of providing tax revenue to reproduce the Ilkhans' state system – it had become a periphery to a new tax-accumulating core within the same region, Tabriz, and this internal connection between the two cities' (de-)urbanisations requires further research alongside a more general analysis of merchant capital and urbanisation in the Ilkhanate. Tax left Ani and its environs to reproduce Tabriz's urbanisation – in Ibn Khaldūn's terms a new state system dictating a new process of »civilisation« – which itself also rested on capital accumulation, an example of tax and capital combining as complementary vectors.[195] In Ani, conversely, the contradiction heightened to the point that the city no longer

194 Cf. Banaji, *Theory*, 15-40.
195 Cf. Wing, »Rich in Goods«; and Blair, Tabriz.

accumulated enough from capital to perform the role of a tax-producing periphery, and capital's representatives, the mercantile elite, performed a »spatial fix« and moved to Astrakhan and elsewhere, where the conditions for capital accumulation were better met.[196] Yet Ani's elite also reproduced itself through village rentierism, a political-economic category and dynamic requiring further research in this historical instance. The long thirteenth century's close thus manifested in a bifurcation in the merchant-rentier regime of accumulation, with elite actors forced into primarily reproducing themselves *either* as landlords *or* as merchants. No doubt many chose the former, integrating with and evolving into the region's class of landowning, village-dominating *agha*s and *malik*s.

Overall Ani's urbanisation was an outcome of the balance of forces between, on the one hand, intra-elite struggles to generalise the dominance of a given form of accumulation and realise class power in the political regime, and, on the other, the extent to which elite classes as a whole were able to coerce subaltern classes, overcome their counterpolitical struggles, and further expand accumulation in general. In Ani the result of intra-elite struggles was ultimately the hegemony of tax, and the relocation of capital as both commerce and subaltern classes left. Ani's merchant-rentiers had been able to leverage capital's class power in the regime of accumulation, but capital could not conquer the state system, a development which only took place in the medieval West and proved the crucial moment in capitalist modernity's eventual coalescence.[197] Nevertheless, in the story of merchants moving from Ani to Astrakhan we find a clear example of capitalists *as such*: elite actors whose class position relied on the cost-benefit analyses of competition, profit and productive reinvestment to expand the enterprise, spending money to invest in or buy commodities to sell for a return of more money,[198] relocating over 1000km to assure their social reproduction on this basis. This in itself plots Ani as a crucial site in the nascent Armenian merchant bourgeoisie's long-term trajectory of accumulation, those actors so prominent in the commercial capitalism which forged the modern world system after the fourteenth century.

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196 Cf. Harvey, Globalization.

197 Cf. Banaji, *Commercial Capitalism.*

198 In Marxian terms M-C-M′; see Marx, *Capital*, 247-269.

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Looking for Urban Agency in a City of Memorials: Tomb Towers of Late Thirteenth-Century Ahlat

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In the medieval period, the city of Ahlat was an important urban center in the Lake Van region. The medieval city suffered serious depredations in the form of military assaults and earthquakes between the 13th and the 16th centuries that caused the urban center to be rebuilt at least twice at some distance from the medieval location. While only meager traces of the medieval urban fabric remain, Ahlat preserves a remarkable medieval funerary landscape of cemeteries and tomb towers that attest to the dynamic workings of local urban agency. This essay focuses on a discrete set of tomb towers of the late thirteenth century built by Muslim amirs of the Ilkhanate in order to explore the relationship between these new urban actors and the physically elusive urban stage of medieval Ahlat, in tandem with contemporary political circumstances. These tomb towers – built in the outskirts of the medieval city in the aftermath of much destruction witnessed in the course of the thirteenth century – represent some of the earliest indications of Islamization among Ilkhanid amirs but have hitherto been studied from a purely formalistic angle. In order to situate these monuments in their historical context, the essay is grounded in an extended summary of the medieval (7th-13th centuries) political and military history and the attendant demographic changes that significantly impacted the urban structure of Ahlat. The construction of tomb towers is investigated in the light of the compromised nature of the thirteenth-century urban settlement and the contemporary emergence of nodes of Sufi inhabitation in the peripheries of Ahlat as can be deduced from Ottoman-period tax registers. Amounting to a spatial externalization of urban agency, the tomb towers and Sufi lodges represent distinct but complementary claims to reconstitute social and political influence in the face of a ruptured urban center.

Keywords: Ahlat, Lake Van, Ilkhanate, Islamization, Tomb towers

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> The monuments of the dead still stand, and have become the monuments
> of a city, itself long crumbled into dust. Amidst orchards and gardens are
> scattered here and there low houses rudely built out of the remains of the
> earlier inhabitations, and fragments of cornice and sculpture are piled up
> into walls around the cultivated plots.[1]

Modern Ahlat is spread out over a distance of about five kilometers along the northwest shoreline of Lake Van. Its ancient to medieval urban center is situated less than two kilometers inland from the lakeshore and marked by the scanty remains of a citadel. In the sixteenth century, a new Ottoman fortress was built two kilometers further east by the lakeshore, effectively breaking with the medieval citadel and city. By the nineteenth century, however, this Ottoman fortress had also lost its appeal and function, while a new administrative and commercial center emerged about two kilometers further east. Very little remains of the medieval urban fabric of Ahlat located at the western reaches of this extended settlement, a result no doubt of destructive earthquakes and recurrent assaults, especially between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. In contrast to the loss of evidence for the medieval living city, an extensive and famed funerary landscape with thousands of intricately carved tombstones, hundreds of underground burial chambers and dozens of tomb towers are the main clues to the significance of Ahlat during the same period.

Of these, the tomb towers have been documented more thoroughly in terms of their architecture and inscriptions. Yet, such studies have not ventured much beyond formal description and no attempt has been made to discern broader patterns of patronage or of construction nor to synthesize the findings into a historically contextualized set of observations that may shed light on the urban history of medieval to early modern Ahlat. This essay seeks to focus on a discrete set of tomb towers of the late thirteenth century associated with the Muslim amirs of the Ilkhanate in order to explore the relationship between these urban actors and the physically elusive urban stage of medieval Ahlat, in tandem with contemporary political circumstances.

Ahlat from the Seventh to the Thirteenth Century

According to the ninth-century historian al-Balādhurī, Ahlat (Armenian Xlatʾ, Arabic Khilāṭ, Persian and Ottoman Turkish Akhlāṭ) capitulated to the Arab-Muslim forces as early as 640 in a campaign into northern Mesopotamia led by the commander ʿIyāḍ b. Ghanm.[2] The terms of Ahlat's capitulation, negotiated with its Armenian prince (baṭrīq), were the standard taxes of *jizya* (poll tax) and *kharāj* (land tax), the responsibility for which was given to the lord (ṣāḥib) of nearby Bitlis (Arabic Badlīs, Armenian Baghesh) (*Fig. 1*). This was the tail end of the campaign of 640 and al-Balādhurī noted that ʿIyāḍ b. Ghanm did not push much further into Armenia but returned to his governorship in Homs. Although al-Balādhurī did not employ

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1   Layard, *Discoveries*, 23.

2   For the history of Ahlat, see Bosworth, Akhlāṭ; Minorsky and Taeschner, Aḵẖlāṭ; Sümer, Ahlat. On the campaign of 640, see al-Balādhurī, *Origins of the Islamic State*, 275.

the Armenian toponym, it seems clear that it was the district of Bznunik', extending approximately from Bitlis in the west to Adilcevaz (Artske in Armenian) to the east of Ahlat, that constituted the northeastern limit of ʿIyāḍ b. Ghanm's northern Mesopotamian campaign. The toponym Bznunik' was applied not only to these areas surrounding the northwestern quadrant of Lake Van but also formed the common Armenian designation of the lake as Bznuniats Dzov (»Sea of Bznunik'«).[3]
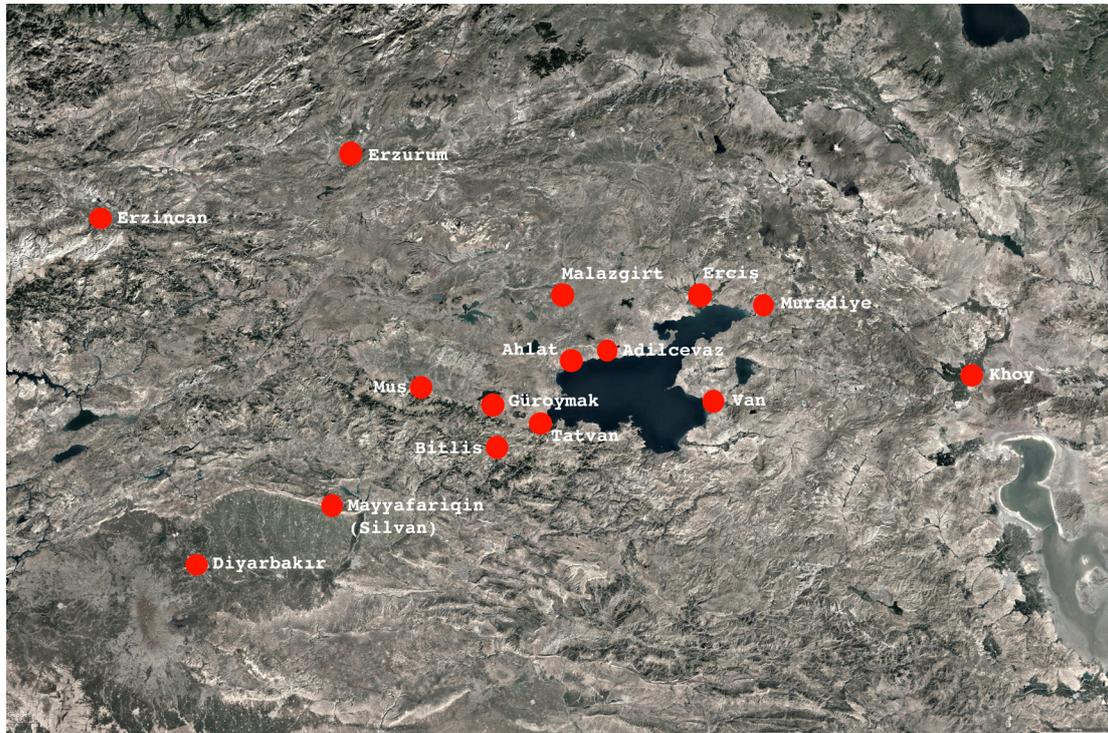
Fig. 1: Map indicating cities mentioned in the text (Source: Google Earth view, 30 September 2019)

Arab-Muslim military incursions deeper into Armenia continued in the 640s and 650s, in the context of the conflict between Byzantium and the nascent Islamic state. Formal annexation and direct control came at the end of the century, in the aftermath of the Second Civil War, when the Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Malik appointed his brother Muḥammad b. Marwān as governor and effectively created the province of Armīniya in a brutal process of subjugation.[4] Rebellions led by Armenian princes recurred from the Umayyad into the Abbasid period and culminated in the devastating Battle of Bagrevand in 775 that triggered the decline and disappearance of a number of prominent Armenian princely families. This was followed by a wave of Arab tribal settlement, especially north of Lake Van, which formed into a number of Muslim emirates.[5] Although it is probable that towns like Ahlat maintained a majority

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3   On the toponym Bznunik', see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, 328-329 and Ananias, *Geography*, 48.

4   Garsoïan, Arab invasions, 125-127 and Canard *et al.*, Armīniya.

5   Garsoïan, Arab invasions, 134-135.

Armenian population through the ninth century, demographic change towards Islamization was already underway. When the Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil sent Bughā al-Kabīr to crush the Armenian rebellion of 850-55, the Abbasid armies were divided in Ahlat and directed from there to other regions,[6] suggesting that Ahlat was recognized as a secure Muslim center by the mid-ninth century.

With Abbasid decline and political fragmentation in the tenth century, Ahlat passed into the control of the Arab Ḥamdānid dynasty in 939 but, by 983 it had become part of the possessions of the Kurdish Marwānid dynasty based at Āmid (modern Diyarbakır) and Mayyāfāriqīn (Syriac Mayperqiṭ, Greek Martyropolis, Armenian Np'rkert, modern Silvan).[7] It was during the long and stable reign of the Marwānid ruler Naṣr al-Dawla (r. 1011-1061) that the eastern Iranian poet-philosopher Nāṣir-i Khusraw visited Ahlat in 1045 and described it as a »border town between Muslims and Armenians« in which Arabic, Persian and Armenian were the common languages.[8] The Armenian lands to the north and the south (Vaspurakan) had been annexed by the Byzantine Empire earlier in the century but Ahlat remained tied to the Marwānid establishment, which maintained largely peaceful relations with the Byzantines and astutely managed the initial Seljuq incursions into the region under Tughrul Beg in 1056-1057.[9]

Thus, in the four centuries following the initial capitulation to the Arab-Muslim forces, Ahlat developed into a base for a succession of Muslim authorities but did not outshine other nearby towns such as Bitlis or Mayyāfāriqīn. This situation changed in the aftermath of the Battle of Manzikert (1071) when it became the seat of a new dynasty established by a Seljuq military officer of slave background named Sukmān al-Quṭbī (r. 1100-1112) whose chosen regnal appellation, as that of his successors, was Shāh-i Arman (»King of Armenia« or »King of Armenians«), a plain reflection of continued Armenian demographic predominance in the region.[10] The territories controlled by the Shāh-i Arman extended from Muş and Mayyāfāriqīn in the west to Bārgīrī (Armenian Berkri, modern Muradiye) and Van in the east and Malāzgird (Armenian Manazkirt, modern Malazgirt) in the north.[11] During the long reign of Sukmān II (r. 1128-1185), the sphere of Shāh-i Arman influence was extended further east, as evinced by mentions of an eponymous Sukmānābād on the road to Khoy.[12] The Armenian historian Vardan Arawelts'i praised Sukmān II as a ruler who was »friendly to Christians«

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6   Garsoïan, Arab invasions, 140.

7   Hillenbrand, Marwānids.

8   Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Book of Travels*, 6.

9   Hillenbrand, Marwānids.

10 On the history of the Shāh-i Arman dynasty, see Hillenbrand, Ṣhāh-i Arman; Sümer, Ahlatşahlar; Turan, *Doğu Anadolu*, 101-129; Sümer, *Doğu Anadolu'da Türk Beylikleri*, 67-85. Although the title Shāh-i Arman is often understood to mean »King of Armenians«, contemporary usage of *Arman* could denote both »Armenia« and »Armenians.« The title Shāh-i Arman outlived the dynasty established by Sukmān al-Quṭbī as it is found in Ayyūbid inscriptions in nearby Mayyāfāriqīn; Gabriel, *Şarki Türkiye'de Arkeolojik Geziler*, 271, 273; Eastmond, *Tamta's World*, 134.

11 Turan, *Doğu Anadolu*, 104.

12 Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey*, 269; Hillenbrand, *Muslim Principality*, 120. By 1118, Mayyāfāriqīn had passed into Artuqid control.

and who »preserved [the land] in deep peace for sixty years.«[13] The reign of Sukmān II con-
stituted the highpoint of the dynasty with accretion of wealth due both to trade revenues
and to military campaigns directed, in alliance with other Turkic dynasties, against the
Georgian kingdom.[14] In the aftermath of a particularly lucrative military campaign against
the Georgians in the summer of 1163, Sukmān II's Saltukid wife, Shāh Bānū, initiated a major
building spree in 1164, likely financed by the booty gained from the Georgian side.[15] In addi-
tion to a complete overhaul of the citadel, Shāh Bānū is said to have ordered the construction
of a number of caravanserais and rebuilt numerous wooden bridges out of stone.[16]

After Sukmān II's death, with no offspring to succeed him, the throne was claimed by
a succession of slave amirs, starting with Sayf al-Dīn Begtimūr (r. 1185-1193). The only
Shāh-i Arman ruler known to have struck a coin in his own name, Begtimūr nonetheless
acknowledged the dominance of Saladin and the ascent of the Ayyubids in Syria and Egypt.
Towards the turn of the thirteenth century, Ahlat was caught in the middle of mounting ten-
sions between the Ayyubids and the Seljuq Atābegs of Azerbaijan. This, combined with cam-
paigns of the resurgent Georgian kingdom moving as far south as the Lake Van region, even-
tually spelled the end of the dynasty of the Shāh-i Arman and Ahlat, along with Erciş (Arabic
Arjīsh, Armenian Archēsh), Malazgirt and Van, came into Ayyubid possession in 1207-8.[17]

Al-Malik al-Awḥad, the Ayyubid prince charged with seizing these cities, was immedi-
ately confronted with widespread rebellion in the region that appears to have been initiated
in Ahlat and was eventually suppressed with brutal measures. Soon after regaining control
of Ahlat, al-Awḥad had to tackle the recurrent Georgian threat in the region. In 1210, an at-
tempted Georgian siege of Ahlat resulted in the Ayyubid capture of Ivane Mqargrdzeli, chief
military commander from the Armenian Zakarian family in the service of the Georgian court.
This unexpected turn of events allowed al-Awḥad to negotiate a thirty-year truce and the
hand of Ivane's daughter, T'amt'a, in return for the release of the high-profile captive. When
al-Awḥad died very soon afterwards, it was his brother al-Malik al-Ashraf who came into pos-
session of Ahlat and the region of Lake Van and also married his late brother's wife, T'amt'a.

In the next decade, however, Ayyubid Ahlat once again became a military target, this time
of the Khwārazmshāh Jalāl al-Dīn Mangburnī (r. 1220-1231) who laid siege to the city twice,
once in 1226 and again in 1229-30. The Ayyubid governor of the city, the chamberlain Ḥusām
al-Dīn 'Alī, successfully deflected the first siege, with the participation of citizens.[18] The sec-
ond Khwārazmshāh siege, however, lasted a phenomenal eight and a half months (from late
August 1229 to mid-April 1230) and, when the city finally fell, extensive massacres, pillaging
and destruction took their toll. This brutal Khwārazmshāh assault left Ahlat as a shadow of

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13   Thomson, Historical compilation, 204.

14   Peacock, Georgia and the Anatolian Turks, 128-133.

15   On the description of this booty, see Minorsky, *Studies*, 93-94.

16   Turan, *Doğu Anadolu*, 135-136.

17   On Ayyubids in Ahlat and in Armenia, see Minorsky, *Studies*, 146-156; Demir, *Ahlât Eyyûbîleri*.

18   Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle*, trans. Richards, 276-277.

its former self, while the population was decimated as those who escaped the massacres and enslavement abandoned their city.[19] T'amt'a was apparently taken captive while her husband, al-Ashraf, remained focused on his new possession of Damascus.[20] An alliance struck between the Rum Seljuqs and the Ayyubids finally routed the army of Jalāl al-Dīn Mangburnī in the Battle of Yassıçemen in Anatolia in August 1230 and ended the Khwārazmshāh threat.

Ahlat appears to have recuperated some semblance of urban life in the aftermath of the violence of 1229-30. The Rum Seljuqs occupied the city in 1233 when, according to the historian Ibn Bībī, reconstruction activities were begun on the order of the Rum Seljuq sultan 'Alā al-Dīn Kayqubād.[21] Ibn Bībī related that 'Alā al-Dīn Kayqubād took the decision to send his amir Kamāl al-Dīn Kāmyār to Ahlat as a response to increasing Mongol presence in the region[22] and the failure of al-Ashraf, ensconced and aloof in Damascus since 1229, to take care of the »lands of Armenia« (*diyār-i Arman*). Indeed, Armenian sources indicate that Ahlat had been subject to Mongol raiding activity as early as 1232.[23] Thus, Kamāl al-Dīn Kāmyār was tasked with initiating the process of the annexation and rebuilding of the *diyār-i Arman*, ostensibly »from Akhlāṭ and Bidlīs to the districts of Tiflīs.« Ahlat was made into the base of Rum Seljuq operations, which were continued by a team of administrators and military officers who were sent to the city to set up a regional government and revive both urban and rural life. This Rum Seljuq intervention, however, was cut short when Mongol raiding activity shifted to the region of Erzurum and, according to Ibn Bībī, caused an anxious Rum Seljuq governor and his officers in Ahlat to abandon their position abruptly in 1234, lest they be cut off from the sultanate. Although it is not very clear who precisely remained in charge in Ahlat during the tumultuous events of the next several years,[24] it would appear that the Rum Seljuqs could not muster the capacity to keep Ahlat or the region, which came under Ayyūbid control once more.[25] Mongol incursions into Anatolia culminated with their victory at the Battle of Kösedağ in 1243 and the transformation of the Rum Seljuq sultanate into a Mongol vassal state.

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19 Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle*, trans. Richards, 297-298.

20 Humphreys, *Saladin to the Mongols*, 218.

21 Ibn Bībī, *El-Evāmirü'l-'Alā'iyye* [facsimile edition], 425-436, trans. Öztürk, 425-434.

22 Mongol forces, under the leadership of the commander general Chormaghan were based in Azerbaijan from 1230; Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians*, 55.

23 Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians*, 55.

24 These events included the Ayyūbid attempt to invade Anatolia in 1234 (Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols*, 223-227), the unexpected deaths of Sultan 'Alā al-Dīn Kayqubād and al-Malik al-Ashraf in the summer of 1237, the »reign of terror« instigated by the amir Sa'd al-Dīn Köpek that resulted in the murder of much of the top echelon of Rum Seljuq amirs and statesmen in the early part of Sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II's reign and, last but not least, the uprising known as the Bābā'ī Revolt of 1240 directed against the Rum Seljuq establishment.

25 Demir, *Ahlât Eyyûbîleri*, 206-218.

In 1244, Mongol forces, commanded by Baiju Noyan, captured Ahlat along with Harran and al-Ruhā (Edessa, modern Urfa).[26] Ahlat was then handed over to T'amt'a, who, freed from Khwārazmshāh captivity after Yassıçemen, evidently returned to Georgia and subsequently spent some nine years as a royal hostage at the Mongol court in Karakorum.[27] Muslim sources mention that, upon being installed in Ahlat by Mongol decree in 1245, she sought the hand of Shihāb al-Dīn Ghāzī, the last Ayyubid ruler of Mayyāfāriqīn, but he seems not to have accepted the offer.[28] Although there is no concrete information on conditions in Ahlat during T'amt'a's tenure, Armenian sources indicate that she was a generous patron, especially of Christian pilgrims and inhabitants.[29] There is also no precise information on the duration of her position in Ahlat but it is assumed that she probably died around the mid-1250s,[30] possibly just before or around the sacking of Baghdad and the establishment of the Ilkhanate by the Chinggisid scion Hülegü in 1258.

In the following year, Hülegü launched the Mongol invasion of Syria, reaching as far south as Palestine. Upon his withdrawal from Syria and return to Azerbaijan, Hülegü stopped in Ahlat.[31] Although there is no record on the nature of his stay, it is possible that he may have intended to consolidate Ilkhanid authority in the city after T'amt'a's death. The limited Mongol contingent that was left behind in Syria was ultimately defeated in the Mamlūk counterattack at 'Ayn Jālūt in 1260 and Hülegü's subsequent military engagements were directed against the Mongol Jochid dynasty of the Golden Horde. The Jochids had been the main director of Mongol western expansion and the immediate Chinggisid authority to which Baiju had answered. Following his invasion of Syria, Hülegü's relations with the Jochids deteriorated, leading to the execution of Baiju and war with the Golden Horde starting in the winter of 1261-1262.[32] Ahlat's political alignment following these events must have remained squarely within the Ilkhanid ambit, eventually being recognized, according to the Persian geographer-historian Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī writing around 1340, as the capital of the province of Greater Armenia with the administrative status of a *tūmān* that was expected to mobilize 10,000 soldiers for the Ilkhanid army.[33] Whether the city enjoyed this official status already in the 1270s and early 1280s when locally based Ilkhanid amirs under the aegis of Hülegü's son and successor Abaqa Ilkhan (r. 1265-1282) invested in funerary monuments to their name cannot be known for certain, but their investments reflect the significance of Ahlat towards the end of the thirteenth century.

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26 Jackson, *Mongols and the Islamic World*, 84.

27 On the remarkable life story of T'amt'a, see Eastmond, *Tamta's World*; Pogossian, Women.

28 Sublet, Princesse Bint al-Ašraf, 47; Demir, *Ahlât Eyyûbîleri*, 230-231. The Muslim sources diverge from the Armenian sources with regard to T'amt'a's whereabouts between 1230 and 1245, placing her in Damascus rather than on the whirlwind tour of Eurasia. Nevertheless, Muslim and Armenian sources agree on her return to Ahlat in 1245 by official Mongol decree.

29 Pogossian, Women, 235.

30 Pogossian, Women, 234.

31 Jackson, *Mongols and the Islamic World*, 130-133; Amitai-Preiss, *Mongols and Mamluks*, 26-28.

32 Jackson, Bāyjū.

33 Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī, *Nuzhat-al-Qulūb*, 100.

Tracing the Remains of Medieval Ahlat

Studying the urban fabric of medieval Ahlat is handicapped by the general absence of any standing public or institutional buildings surviving from the pre-Ottoman period, with the exception of the small and plain masjid built by the Aqqoyunlu amir Bayındır in 1477 next to his tomb tower dated 1481. Although two major military assaults – the Khwārazmshāh siege of 1229-30 and a Safavid siege in 1552 – must have played some role in bringing about this situation, further destruction of the city's non-defensive buildings must have occurred in the three major earthquakes of the thirteenth century that appear to have had their epicenters in or near Ahlat.[34] The earliest of these occurred in 1208 and was associated with landslides. Another earthquake rattled the city in 1246 and evidently caused significant damage. But it was the earthquake of 1275-76 that seems to have caused massive destruction and was recorded in a number of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century sources as a force which leveled buildings from Ahlat to Erciş. That a comprehensive reconstruction of the medieval urban center was never realized is conveyed by the seventeenth-century Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi's description of it as a *harābistān* (»land of ruins«) where abandonment and neglect turned the glorious buildings of the past into »pigeon, crow and owl nests« (*kebûter u zâğ u bûm âşiyânları olmuş*).[35]

There are also no remains within Ahlat itself of any Armenian architecture, either pre- or post-seventh century, nor are any recorded in travelers' reports prior to the twentieth century. The closest Armenian monastic site, known as Madavans (Matnavank in Armenian), is located about five kilometers to the north of Ahlat and consists of a rock-carved church with an attached *zhamatun* that was destroyed sometime in the twentieth century (*Fig. 2*).[36] The monastery was mentioned in a colophon dated 1348 and the remains of the former *zhamatun* were tentatively dated to the early fourteenth century. However, to judge by the presence of a number of associated rock-carved dwellings/chapels and an Armenian cemetery, the history of the site may well go back to an earlier medieval period. A number of other Armenian rock-carved monastic settlements have been identified in the hinterlands of Ahlat.[37] Thus, Armenian religious architecture, which must have certainly also been within Ahlat in the pre- and early Islamic periods, apparently receded to the surrounding suburban and rural areas in the course of the medieval period.[38]

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34 Sümer, *Doğu Anadolu'da Türk Beylikleri*, 57; Ambraseys, *Earthquakes*, 337, 342, 349.

35 Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, ed. Dağlı and Kahraman, 86.

36 Thierry, *Vaspurakan*, 213-218. For a description of the site in the mid- and late nineteenth century, see Layard, *Discoveries*, 30-31; Lynch, *Armenia*, 293.

37 For a map showing these sites, see Bixio and De Pascale, Underground settlements, 128. About 16 kilometers to the northwest of Ahlat, in the village of Ovakışla (formerly Prkhus), is a church dedicated to St. Stephen which is datable to the seventeenth century but which incorporates decorative material that evidently goes back to the early medieval period; Thierry, *Vaspurakan*, 219-223.

38 Al-Nuwayrī, a Mamlūk historian of the early fourteenth century, mentioned that a church was built in Ahlat for T'amt'a by her first husband, al-Awḥad; La Porta, Legitimizing land and power, 88, n. 79. No trace of a church has been documented in Ahlat, but such a church, if it existed, would most likely have been within the citadel on which no systematic survey has been undertaken.

Fig. 2: Satellite view of Ahlat and environs (Source: Google Earth view, 30 September 2019)

The Armenian historian Vardan Arawelts'i, who praised the Shāh-i Arman Sukmān II for his benevolence to Christians, recounted the story of an Armenian priest named Awet who became a wandering preacher caring for the dispossessed and crossed paths with Sukmān II who paid him great honors.[39] Subsequently falling victim to the slanders of priests, Awet was stoned to death, but the miraculous appearance of a divine light over his dead body evidently persuaded Sukmān II to arrange for the veneration of the saintly preacher's bones. An anonymous and unepigraphic tomb tower in Ahlat, locally known as Keşiş Kümbeti (»Tomb of the Monk«) and datable stylistically to the late fourteenth or fifteenth centuries, may possibly be a later reconstruction of a Shāh-i Arman funerary monument to this Christian holy man.[40]

Ahlat's medieval citadel, of which only some traces remain today, extends in a north-south direction on a ridge delineated by a ravine on either side, somewhat similar to, though less dramatic than, the much better preserved citadel of Bitlis (*Fig. 3*).

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39   Thomson, Historical Compilation, 204-205.
40   Tabak, *Ahlat*, 27-28; Uluçam, *Bitlis*, 229-230.
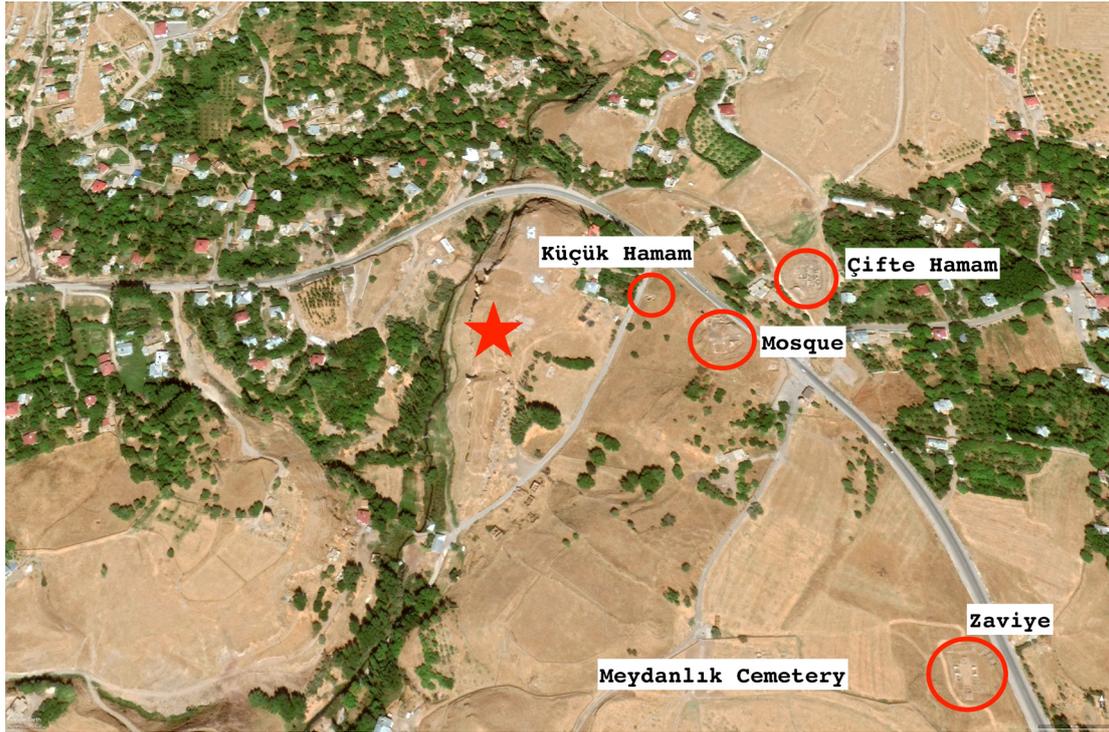
Fig. 3: Satellite view marked with Ahlat's medieval citadel and Harabeşehir (Source: Google Earth view, 30 September 2019)

Fig. 4: Satellite view marked with locations of the Ilkhanid tomb towers (Source: Google Earth view, 30 September 2019)

A stream known as Keş Deresi flows from the north through the narrow and deep western ravine of the citadel while the gentler slopes of the eastern ravine are locally known as Harabe Şehir (»Ruined City,« corresponding to Evliya Çelebi's *harâbistân*) with their distinctive rock-carved cave dwellings below the eastern citadel walls.[41] Although the scant remains of its walls and towers remain undated, it seems reasonable to assume that at least the foundations of the citadel are the oldest structures to be associated with medieval Ahlat, probably predating the Arab-Muslim conquests. The citadel evidently constituted the northwestern quadrant of Ahlat's city walls, of which very meager remains have been identified.[42] Although much battered in the Khwārazmshāh assault of 1229-1230, the citadel must have been repaired and continued to function until the sixteenth century.[43] It was in the context of the Ottoman-Safavid wars that the citadel received the final blow: the successful Safavid siege in the summer of 1552 was followed by Shāh Ṭahmāsp's order to have the citadel razed.[44] When the Ottomans regained control of the region a few years later, the old citadel was abandoned in favor of a new citadel constructed beyond the city walls, by the lakeshore (*Fig. 2*).[45]

To the east and northeast of the eastern ravine of the medieval citadel, a number of excavated buildings of uncertain dating round out the current state of knowledge on Ahlat's medieval urban fabric.[46] Of these excavated buildings, two are indubitably identified as bathhouses. One of them, of an unconventionally small size and thus labeled as Küçük Hamam (»Small Bathhouse«), is located across from the citadel on the eastern slope of the eastern ravine, at its northern end. A much larger double bathhouse (known as Çifte Hamam) is located further to the northeast and is situated immediately on the exterior side of a bastion tower that probably belonged to the northern extension of the city walls.[47] Approximately

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41 For a plan of the rock-carved dwellings below the citadel, see Bixio *et al.*, Ahlat 2010, 23.

42 For descriptions of the citadel and the remains of the city walls (mostly in the form of foundations of bastion towers), see Lynch, *Armenia*, 291-292; Beygu, *Ahlat Kitabeleri*, 66-67; Kafesoğlu, Ahlat ve Çevresinde, 171-172; Karamağaralı, Ahlat Kazıları, 84-85. The most systematic surveys of the medieval city published so far have been undertaken in conjunction with a project on the rock-carved sites in and around Ahlat carried out by Roberto Bixio and Andrea De Pascale. For a partial map of the city showing identified remains of the city walls (marked on the map as »burç« or »burçlar«), see Bixio *et al.*, Ahlat 2010, 6. More rudimentary maps were published earlier: Lynch, *Armenia*, foldout between 296 and 297; Bachmann, *Kirchen und Moscheen*, 58; Gabriel, *Şarki Türkiye'de Arkeolojik Geziler*, 210; Kafesoğlu, Ahlat ve Çevresinde, foldout between 190 and 191.

43 Ibn Bībī specifically mentions that repairs to the citadel were undertaken during the brief Rum Seljuq occupation, Ibn Bībī, *El-Evāmirü'l-'Alā'iyye* [facsimile edition], 427, trans. Öztürk, 427.

44 Musalı, Safevî-Osmanlı Savaşları, 23-25.

45 For the Ottoman citadel, see Tabak, *Ahlat*, 44-45; Top, Osmanlı Kalesi.

46 For a basic overview, see Karamağaralı, Ahlat Kazıları. More recently, see Arslan, Ahlat Şehri; Arslan, Ahlat Kazılarının Dünü-Bugünü.

47 Aksulu *et al.*, Restitution.

130 meters to the southwest of this bathhouse is another excavated site where the meager remains of what has been interpreted as an octagonal minaret base attached to a wall with a mihrab has been putatively identified as the city's congregational mosque (Ulu Cami), although questions surround this identification.[48] Neither the bathhouses nor the mosque elements have been dated conclusively, with suggestions ranging from the early Islamic period to the Ilkhanid and Aqqoyunlu periods.

Due south of these buildings (and to the east of the eastern ravine of the citadel) is the largest medieval cemetery of Ahlat, known as the Meydanlık (or Meydan) cemetery, covering an area over two square kilometers.[49] Containing thousands of tombstones that are dated or datable between the early twelfth and the early sixteenth centuries and displaying a remarkable repertoire of fine stone carving applied to a variety of tomb types, this cemetery stands as a testament to the continuity of artistic resources at the disposition of Ahlat's medieval and early modern inhabitants.[50] In addition to the tombstones, the cemetery also contains numerous underground burial chambers (locally known as *akıt*), a phenomenon encountered elsewhere in Ahlat.[51] This cemetery, along with the other five medieval to early modern cemeteries of Ahlat,[52] constitutes a great reserve of prosopographic data awaiting comprehensive documentation and analysis. The earliest tombs, which are characterized by prismatic cenotaphs bearing Kufic inscriptions and no head or footstones, date from the turn of the twelfth century to the 1160s,[53] corresponding to the ascendance of the Shāh-i Arman dynasty and lending further support to the revitalization of Ahlat especially during the reign of Sukmān II. These early tombs are concentrated in the northeastern section of this vast cemetery and indicate that the expansion of the burial ground generally occurred from the north to the south. Tombs with headstones and footstones in the form of tall stelae at either end of cylindrical or rectilinear cenotaphs appeared in the last quarter of the twelfth century and became the characteristic tomb type not only in Ahlat but also across the region.

Initial analysis of the Meydanlık cemetery tombs with stelae indicates phases of production between the late twelfth and the early sixteenth centuries with significant lacunae that correspond to periods of disastrous events, most notably in the second quarter of the thirteenth century[54] as a result of the upheaval caused by the Khwārazmshāh assault of 1229-1230 followed by the earthquake of 1246. Production picked up in the latter part of the thirteenth century, reaching a highpoint in the early fourteenth century in terms of quality and quantity but

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48 Haluk Karamağaralı, who undertook the excavation of this and other sites in Ahlat between 1967 and 1991, suggested that this so-called Ulu Cami was built in the Ilkhānid period and that Ahlat's »first« Friday mosque must have been located in the Tahtı Süleyman neighborhood located on the other side of the citadel's western ravine; Karamağaralı, Ahlat Kazıları, 91. For the latter claim, Karamağaralı referred to the remains of a brick minaret said to be in the Tahtı Süleyman neighborhood, without giving further details. No other study on Ahlat mentions such a structure.

49 Karamağaralı, *Ahlat Mezartaşları*; Karahan *et al.*, *Meydan Mezarlığı*. For a recent plan of the cemetery, see Avşar and Güleç, Analiz Çalışmaları, 4. For excavation reports, see Karahan and Güzel, Eski Ahlat Şehri Kazıları (2011-2012) and Karahan *et al.*, Eski Ahlat Şehri Kazıları (2013).

50 In the most recent publication of the current excavation team (Karahan *et al.*, *Meydan Mezarlığı*, 37), the total number tombs identified in the Meydanlık cemetery is given as 4362. Of these, around a thousand have distinctive stele-type tombstones.

51 On *akıt*s, see Karamağaralı, Tümülüs; Karamağaralı, Ahlat Kazıları, 85-90; Karahan *et al.*, *Meydan Mezarlığı*, 80-85.

52 Karamağaralı, *Ahlat Mezartaşları*, 34-35; Karahan *et al.*, *Meydan Mezarlığı*, 36-37.

53 Karamağaralı, *Ahlat Mezartaşları*, 36-44.

54 Karamağaralı, *Ahlat Mezartaşları*, 44.

leveling off towards the middle of the century (corresponding to the collapse of the Ilkhanate) and petering out thereafter until the beginning of the fifteenth century.[55] These observations tally closely with the broader social, cultural and political patterns characterizing the course of the Pax Mongolica in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and suggest that Ahlat's fortunes waxed and waned in tandem with late medieval Turco-Mongol hegemony in west Asia. Thus, the Meydanlık cemetery can be read as a mirror of urban vitality in Ahlat with the lacunae in the funerary record corresponding to periods of destruction and decline in urban life. The preservation of the Meydanlık cemetery as a space largely immune to urban obliteration is also suggested by the excavation of two underground chambers evidently repurposed into a temporary residence, possibly in the aftermath of the earthquake of 1276.[56]

Further evidence for the transformation of a funerary site into a living space comes from the foundations of a building identified as a *zāwiya* (Sufi lodge) to the northeast of the Meydanlık cemetery. Excavations carried out at this site have brought to light the crypt of an earlier tomb tower that appears to have been incorporated to the southern side of a rectangular building with two *īwāns* and rooms arranged around a courtyard. Although the dating is not certain, it has been suggested that the tomb tower may have been constructed in the twelfth century[57] while the rectangular *zāwiya* was built to develop the site, possibly in the early fourteenth century.[58] The reasons for identifying the building as a *zāwiya* have not been explained by the excavators, but the incorporation of the earlier tomb tower can be interpreted as an act of symbolic appropriation which can be reasonably contextualized in a Sufi context. In the mid-sixteenth century, two tax registers (*tahrīr defteri*) – one detailed (*mufassal*), the other summary (*icmāl*) – were compiled in the context of the Ottoman takeover of the Lake Van region.[59] The detailed tax register lists some nine *zāwiyas* in and around the sub-district (*nahiye*) of Ahlat; more are listed in the summary register. Two of the *zāwiyas* can be dated to the fifteenth century: one was built by the Aqqoyunlu amir Bayındır in the 1470s together with a mosque (masjid) and tomb tower which are still extant just north of the Meydanlık cemetery; another, named after a certain Şeyh Ammar-i Ahlati, can be dated to the early fifteenth century on the basis of its surviving endowment deed dated 1420.[60] Others, however, were founded earlier, as in the case of the *zāwiya* of Şeyh Necmeddin, of which the tomb building dated 1220 still stands in the eastern Ergezen neighborhood of Ahlat (*Figs. 2, 5*).[61]

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55 Karamağaralı, *Ahlat Mezartaşları*, 45.

56 Karamağaralı, Ahlat Kazıları, 89-90.

57 Arslan, Ahlat Kent Dokusu, 14.

58 Karamağaralı, Ahlat Kazıları, 93-94 where the early fourteenth-century suggestion is based on ceramic findings.

59 The detailed tax register (Tapu Tahrir Defteri, no. 413) pertains to the region of Bitlis, whereas the summary tax register (Tapu Tahrir Defteri, no. 297) concerns the area of Adilcevaz, including Ahlat; Tekin, *Türk Tarihinde Ahlat*, 200-202. Although Tekin gives the date of 1555-56 (AH 963) for both registers, the detailed register is apparently undated and may be earlier than the summary register; for a 1540 dating, see Altunay, *Bitlis Sancağı*, 6-7. On the detailed register, see also Yılmaz, *Bitlis Sancağı* (where the 1555-1556 dating is maintained without explanation). For the summary register, see Çal, Tapu Tahrir Defterleri; Kılıç, *Adilcevaz ve Ahlat*. Only Tekin (*Türk Tarihinde Ahlat*) utilizes both registers.

60 Tekin, *Türk Tarihinde Ahlat*, 214-217, 219-222.

61 Beygu, *Ahlat Kitabeleri*, 87-89; Tabak, *Ahlat*, 11; Tuncer, *Anadolu Kümbetleri*, 68-70; Uluçam, *Bitlis*, 241-243; Önkal, *Anadolu Selçuklu Türbeleri*, 214-217. In the fourteenth century, a tomb tower for Erzen Hatun was built several meters to the east of the Şeyh Necmeddin tomb.

Fig. 5: Tomb of Şeyh Necmeddin (photo by the author, September 2018)

At least four other *zāwiyas* were similarly located in the outskirts of Ahlat and conceivably may have been founded around the same time as that of Şeyh Necmeddin. These include the *zāwiya* of Şeyh Abdülkadir in a village called Pağdos, the *zāwiya* of Kırklar in an eponymous settlement (with a medieval cemetery containing some thirteenth-century tombstones) to the northwest of the medieval citadel (*Fig. 2*), the *zāwiya* of Baba Merdan to the north of the city on the road to Malazgirt and the *zāwiya* of Şeyh Yoldaş, recorded as being »near Ahlat.«[62]

In contrast to the apparent profusion of *zāwiyas*, the detailed tax register for Ahlat lists only a single madrasa, named Zeamiye, recorded as ruined and out of use, and only one Friday mosque, the so-called Cami'-i Ahlat.[63] Although it is not possible to know the foundation dates of either of these two institutions, it seems that both were seriously compromised prior to the Ottoman takeover as suggested by the fact that only a single source of endowed income

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62 Tekin, *Türk Tarihinde Ahlat*, 219, 222-225. The village named Pağdos is probably the same as the Patnos (later renamed Soğanlı) recorded in the early twentieth century as a village in the administrative district of Ahlat; see Dahiliye Vekaleti, *Köylerimiz*, 414. Soğanlı is located about 10 kilometers east of Ahlat. Pağdos/Patnos should not be confused with the larger settlement of Patnos north of the Lake Van region. On the Kırklar cemetery, see Karamağaralı, *Ahlat Mezartaşları*, 34.

63 Tekin, *Türk Tarihinde Ahlat*, 213, 226-227. Subsequent to the compilation of the two tax registers, two mosques (İskender Paşa Cami and Kadı Mahmud Cami) were built inside the new Ottoman citadel. That there was a Friday mosque in Ahlat in the Abbasid period can be deduced from the mention of a mosque desecrated in the context of a Byzantine incursion in 928; see Sümer, *Doğu Anadolu'da Türk Beylikleri*, 49.

was recorded for each. The meager endowment of the mosque – constituting one-eighth of the grain of a village nearby – stands in stark contrast to the Ulu Cami (Friday Mosque) of nearby Adilcevaz which was recorded as being generously endowed with income from numerous orchards, estates, houses and shops.[64] The light fiscal footprint of both mosque and madrasa in Ahlat and the clear indication of the latter's loss of function due to its ruinous state suggest a case of neglect or a deliberate reduction of endowed resources over time rather than a single discrete blow. Whatever may have been the case, it is remarkable that only one Friday mosque and one madrasa are recorded, amounting to a dearth of normative institutions that stands in stark contrast to the numerous and well-endowed *zāwiyas* in and around the city.[65] This situation probably took hold gradually in the period between the Khwārazmshāh assault of 1229-1230 and the Ottoman takeover in the mid-sixteenth century. Just before the Khwārazmshāh assault, Ḥusām al-Dīn 'Alī, the Ayyubid governor of the city, is reported to have built a Friday mosque and a hospital.[66] These two institutions probably did not escape the Khwārazmshāh attack unscathed, so that mentions of Cami'-i Ahlat and the Zeamiye madrasa in the tax registers may possibly be sixteenth-century traces of the Ayyubid foundations.[67]

On the basis of these records and observations about the urban institutions of pre-Ottoman Ahlat, the following scenario can be proposed. In the period between the pinnacle of Shāh-i Arman rule in the mid- to late twelfth century and the Khwārazmshāh attack on the Ayyubid city in 1229-1230, Ahlat must have enjoyed a vibrant urban life but the physical remains of this period have not been – and possibly cannot be – documented, except in the impressive development of the tombstones in the Meydanlık cemetery.[68] The tail end of this period appears to have witnessed the foundation of *zāwiyas* with a funerary component and a Sufi identity, such as that of Şeyh Necmeddin and Kırklar, in the area surrounding the city.

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64 For the income of the Ahlat mosque, see Altunay, *Bitlis Sancağı*, 497; Yılmaz, *Bitlis Sancağı*, 97; Tekin (*Türk Tarihinde Ahlat*, 213) gives the share as one-fourth. For the income of the Adilcevaz mosque, see Kılıç, *Adilcevaz ve Ahlat*, 88-96.

65 It is also worth mentioning that the sixteenth-century tax registers do not record any masjids (neighborhood mosques) for Ahlat. In Bitlis, by contrast, some 23 masjids were recorded in the sixteenth century, in addition to the main Friday mosque (Ulu Cami); see Koçak, Bitlis Camileri ve Mescitleri.

66 Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle*, trans. Richards, 295-296.

67 In this conjecture, the discrepancy between Ḥusām al-Dīn 'Alī's hospital and the sixteenth-century reference to a madrasa may be explained with reference to other cases of hospitals in Anatolia that were later transformed into madrasas. Such was the case for the Mengujekid hospital in Divriği that, by the fourteenth century, was functioning as a madrasa. It is interesting to note that the hospital in Divriği was also built together with a Friday mosque, around the same time as Ḥusām al-Dīn 'Alī's patronage in Ahlat and was signed by craftsmen from Ahlat; Pancaroğlu, Mosque-hospital complex.

68 The Ahlat Museum has on display in its garden a good number of sizable stone blocks with inscriptions and/or carved decoration. Some of them can be stylistically identified as belonging to twelfth- and thirteenth-century buildings which were conceivably damaged and destroyed either in the Khwārazmshāh attack, or, more likely, in the two earthquakes of 1246 and 1276. It stands to reason that the collapse of medieval buildings constituted a reserve of reusable building materials both for the construction of ordinary houses in and around Ahlat in subsequent centuries and especially for the construction of the Ottoman lakeshore citadel in the sixteenth century. Indeed, reused twelfth- or thirteenth-century building blocks with decoration can be easily observed on the walls around the gate of the Ottoman inner citadel.

The post-Khwārazmshāh period from the 1230s to the 1250s witnessed a brief period of Rum Seljuq intervention in the beginning, but no physical sign of this has been identified. The lacuna in the tombstone record and the absence of any structures that can be dated to this period suggest some degree of urban stalemate. In the second half of the thirteenth century, vibrancy appears to return to Ahlat under the aegis of the Ilkhanid amirs, as evinced both by the tombstones in the Meydanlık cemetery and the numerous and distinctive tomb towers built in the area surrounding the city center for Muslim Ilkhanid amirs. However, unlike the case of Şeyh Necmeddin whose tomb building and associated *zāwiya* in the Ergezen neighborhood was secured by an endowment that survived into the Ottoman period, it is notable that none of these late thirteenth-century tomb towers appear to have been connected to an endowed foundation such as a *zāwiya* or a madrasa. While it is possible that their endowments were somehow destroyed, abrogated or expropriated in the post-Ilkhanid period, the total silence of the Ottoman tax registers regarding these tomb towers and the figures associated with them and the absence of any physical remains other than the tombs suggest that a particular situation applies to this group of buildings which will be examined in the following sections.

Ahlat's urban vitality evidently continued into the fourteenth century, as attested by the truly impressive series of tombstones in the Meydanlık cemetery as well as the smaller Tahtı Süleyman cemetery to the west of the medieval citadel, but no large-scale construction can be associated with this otherwise bright period. A new period of stalemate seems to take hold gradually through the course of the fourteenth century in the context of the post-Ilkhanid fragmentation of power in both Iran and Anatolia. With the reconsolidation of power under the Aqqoyunlu at the beginning of the fifteenth century, a renewal in *zāwiya* activity becomes evident, this time focused on the urban center, in the form of the *zāwiyas* of Şeyh Ammar al-Ahlati and amir Bayındır.

Tomb Towers of the Ilkhanid Amirs, 1270s-1280s

Perched on the hill to the west of the citadel is the earliest dated tomb tower of the Ilkhanid period in Ahlat (*Figs. 4, 6-7*).[69] This dramatically sited monument is locally known as the tomb of Hasan Padişah (Ḥasan Pādishāh) and is largely characteristic of a series of tomb towers built in the 1270s and 1280s.[70] Consisting of a lower chamber or crypt with a square plan that is partially below ground level and an upper chamber in the form of a cylindrical body surmounted by a conical dome, it has the same lofty and soaring presence as the others but this impression is compounded here by the hilltop location. The chamfered corners of

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69 Beygu, *Ahlat Kitabeleri*, 67-68; Gabriel, *Şarki Türkiye'de Arkeolojik Geziler*, 213-214, 274; Tabak, *Ahlat*, 15-16; Tuncer, *Anadolu Kümbetleri*, 76-83; Uluçam, *Bitlis*, 211-215; Önkal, *Anadolu Selçuklu Türbeleri*, 183-186.

70 The Hasan Padişah tomb was in a ruinous state with only about a quarter of the structure standing since at least the end of the nineteenth century (as described by Lynch, *Armenia*, 292). It was restored with mostly original blocks found at the site in 1969 (see Tuncer, *Anadolu Kümbetleri*, 78-79).

the lower square chamber produce a short twelve-sided zone of transition upon which the shaft of the round upper chamber rises. Like all of the other examples in this group, this tomb tower features four openings around the cylindrical upper chamber, of which three are in the form of windows and the fourth in the form of a doorway. These openings mark the cardinal points around the cylindrical body with the doorway on the north and three windows on the east, south and west sides. The lower chamber has a subterranean entrance on the eastern side and features three small windows on the east, west and south sides (and none on the north side).[71]

The Hasan Padişah tomb is constructed of fine ashlar masonry facing a rubble core both on the interior and the exterior. The exterior decoration articulates the surface of the cylindrical body in the form of ornamental moldings forming eight large panels, each surmounted by a double arch. These panels surround the four openings and, alternating with them, four elongated niches. A muqarnas niche crowns each of the four openings and muqarnas is also featured as a frieze just below the cornice of the dome. A two-line inscription above the muqarnas niche of the doorway identifies this tomb tower as a *rawḍa* (literally, »garden«) and gives the name of one Ḥasan Āqā b. Maḥmūd, with the titles of *al-mawlā* (»master«) and *malik al-umarā'* (»king of emirs«), and the date of Rajab 673 (January 1275).[72] Although this name has not been encountered in the historical sources, the grand title and the commanding location of the tomb tower suggest that Ḥasan Āqā claimed preeminence in Ahlat in the early period of Ilkhanid domination in the region.

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71 The Hasan Padişah tomb and the others in the same group were all outfitted with double-sided stairs in the course of restoration work undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s. Orhan Cezmi Tuncer, the architect and architectural historian who was in charge of the Hasan Padişah restoration in 1969, justified this addition by claiming that the foundation of a stairway – separate from the foundation of the tomb tower but adjacent to it on the north side – was found in the course of restoration works (Tuncer, *Anadolu Kümbetleri*, 81). He published two photographs (p. 78) of stone blocks which he identified as steps belonging to the original stairs. However, the poor quality of the photographs and the lack of an explanatory drawing make it difficult to be persuaded. Tuncer also pointed out that none of the lower chambers of tomb towers in this group have a window on the north side, a peculiar feature which he offered as further evidence for a stairway (p. 80). It is curious, nonetheless, that no original stairway (nor a partial one) was preserved at any of the tomb towers. The idea of an original stairway was rejected by Ünal (*Doğu Anadolu Künbetleri*, 126, n. 3). Ünal suggested instead that the upper chambers must have been accessed by portable ladders, an idea that was earlier put forth by Albert Gabriel (*Şarki Türkiye'de Arkeolojik Geziler*, 211, n. 13). All of these scholars operated on the assumption that the upper chambers were meant to be accessed.

72 The few words at the end of the first line of the inscription (following the title *malik al-umarā'*) have not been satisfactorily deciphered. The second line begins with the name Ḥasan Āqā b. Maḥmūd.
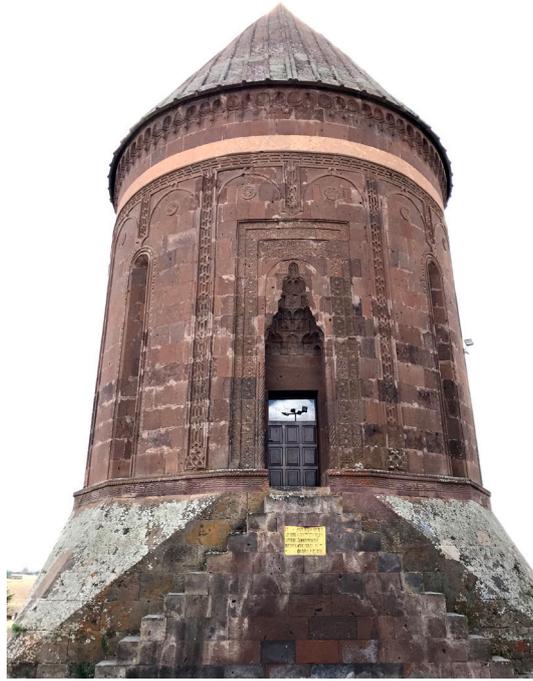
*Fig. 6: Hasan Padişah tomb tower, view from the
north (photo by the author, September 2018)*

*Fig. 7: Hasan Padişah tomb tower, view from the
south (photo by the author, September 2018)*

Some twenty meters to the north of the Hasan Padişah tomb is the lower part of another tomb tower which evidently collapsed at some point (*Fig. 8*).[73] The architecture of the extant base is similar enough (albeit smaller in size) to that of Hasan Padişah that it seems reasonable to assume that they were built approximately around the same time. Judging by the decoration of its lower chamber windows, which are the most decorative of all the examples in Ahlat, this tomb tower must have been at least as fine as its companion, the Hasan Padişah tomb. Without any inscriptional identifier, however, it is not possible to establish its relationship to Ḥasan Āqā b. Maḥmūd but, as is the case with the other pairs of tombs in Ahlat, it is probable that some familial relationship informed the construction of these two tombs next to each other. Located on a high and dominant site with broad views onto the citadel, Harabe Şehir and beyond, these two tombs would have been the most easily visible markers on Ahlat's landscape.

Fig. 8: Base of a tomb tower near Hasan Padişah, view showing stairs and entry to crypt constructed in restoration work (photo by the author, September 2018)

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73 Gabriel, *Şarki Türkiye'de Arkeolojik Geziler*, 214; Tabak, *Ahlat*, 17; Tuncer, Anadolu *Kümbetleri*, 79; Uluçam, *Bitlis*, 216-217; Önkal, *Anadolu Selçuklu Türbeleri*, 198-200.

About 300 meters to the northwest of this pair is another tomb tower, also in a partial state of preservation and thus anonymous (*Fig. 4*). Known as the Alimoğlu tomb, its cylindrical body is preserved up to the level of the window lintels on the cylindrical body.[74] Both the form and the decorative repertoire of this tomb tower allow it to be dated approximately to the same period as the Hasan Padişah. Although it has been suggested that the Alimoğlu may have been an unfinished tomb tower, examination of the masonry and the rubble fill conducted during the restoration project was interpreted as evidence of collapse. Unlike the collapsed blocks of the Hasan Padişah, which were mostly found in situ, however, the site of the Alimoğlu tomb yielded no such blocks.[75] As it stands, the Alimoğlu tomb appears not to have had a nearby companion tomb like the other Ilkhanid tomb towers in Ahlat, but this observation has not been corroborated by a systematic survey of the area.

Due south of the Meydanlık cemetery, about halfway from there to the lakeshore, is the grandest of Ahlat's late thirteenth-century tomb towers. Known locally as the Usta Şagirt (»Master Apprentice«) tomb, it is slightly larger than the Hasan Padişah tomb and is located on open flat land (*Figs. 4, 9-10*).[76] It is considered to be Ahlat's finest tomb tower on the basis of the quality of its construction and decoration, as well as the grandeur that it imparts through its fine proportions. Its architecture and decoration are similar to Hasan Padişah and, because it does not have an inscription giving a name or a date, this similarity is used to date the Usta Şagirt tomb to the 1270s. A blank panel is found at the doorway on the north side, below the muqarnas niche, probably intended for an inscription that was never carved. A Quranic inscription is carved into white stone circling the tower just below the three-tier muqarnas frieze of the cornice. This inscription consists of the Throne Verse followed by the consecutive verse declaring the absence of compulsion in religion (2:255-256).

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74 Gabriel, *Şarki Türkiye'de Arkeolojik Geziler*, 214; Tabak, *Ahlat*, 23; Tuncer, *Anadolu Kümbetleri*, 92-95; Uluçam, *Bitlis*, 219-222; Önkal, *Anadolu Selçuklu Türbeleri*, 202-203. The name of the tomb is alternatively given as Alimoğlu, Alimoğlu Hurşid, or Elimoğlu, but it is unclear what the source of this name is. Tabak mentions that it is also known with the name »Karaşık.«

75 It may be that the collapsed tomb tower was mined for its building blocks, perhaps used in the construction of the several houses in this area or elsewhere. These observations were made by Orhan Cezmi Tuncer who carried out the restoration project. Nevertheless, the idea of an incomplete tomb tower persists in the scholarship; see Önkal, *Anadolu Selçuklu Türbeleri*, 202-203.

76 Bachmann, *Kirchen und Moscheen*, 60-62; Beygu, *Ahlat Kitabeleri*, 87; Gabriel, *Şarki Türkiye'de Arkeolojik Geziler*, 211; Tabak, *Ahlat*, 12-14; Tuncer, *Anadolu Kümbetleri*, 70-75; Uluçam, *Bitlis*, 207-211; Önkal, *Anadolu Selçuklu Türbeleri*, 193-196. The alternative name of this tomb tower is Ulu Kümbet (»Great Tomb Tower«).

Fig. 9: Usta Şagirt tomb tower, view from the west (photo by the author, September 2018)
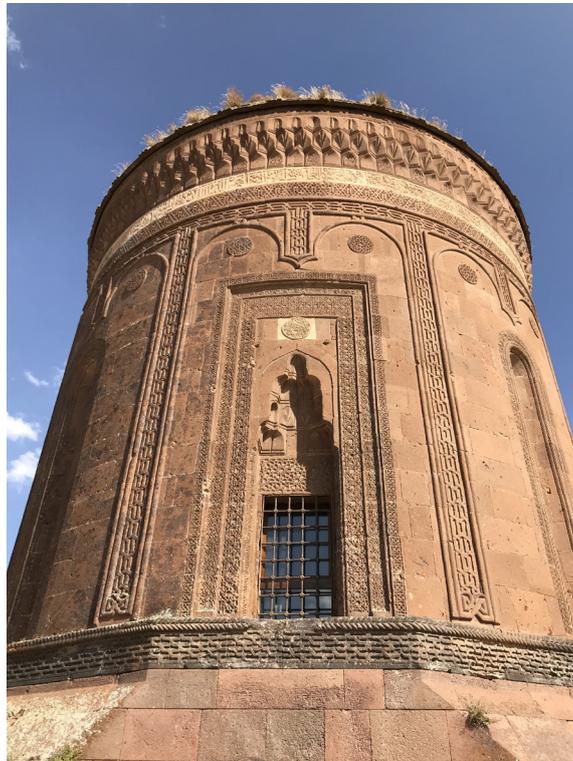
Fig. 10: Usta Şagirt tomb tower, view from the south (photo by the author, September 2018)

A second tomb tower nearby is documented as having collapsed at the end of the nineteenth century. The British traveler H. F. B. Lynch, who visited Ahlat in 1898, reported that the ruins of this tomb tower were visible and that its inscription had been recorded by a local *khoja* before its collapse two years previously. Lynch transmitted the name in the inscription as »the great and noble Amir, Shadi Agha, son of the great Amir, Saughur Agha, son of Khaghan Agha« and its date as »A.H. 672 or A.D. 1273.«[77] Abdürrahim Şerif Beygu, who published the first and somewhat systematic recording of the inscriptions of Ahlat in 1932, claimed to have seen the pieces of this inscription among the stone blocks of the collapsed tomb tower.[78] Beygu published the following reading of an apparently three-line inscription: *lammā intaqala al-marḥūm al-shāb al-qaṣīr al-ʾumr al-muḥtāj ilā raḥmat Allāh taʾālā / amīr Shādī [Shādhī] Sārghūr Āqā ibn [Ḥāghān] Jāghān Āqā / tuwuffiya fī shahr [...] sana sabʾmiʾa.*[79]

Although the two readings concur on the sequence of names (Shādī – Saughur/Sārghūr – Khaghan/Ḥāghān/Jāghān), Lynch's reading gives three generations of a family, while Beygu's reading awkwardly joins the first two names, producing only two generations.[80] Beygu's reading of an eighth-century Hijri date is unconvincing, while Lynch's specific year reading of 672/1273-1274 is more credible and corresponds to the Usta Şagirt's 1270s dating made in stylistic comparison with the Hasan Padişah tomb. The identities of Shādī Āqā and his predecessors remain unknown.[81]

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77 Lynch, *Armenia*, 290.

78 Beygu, *Ahlat Kitabeleri*, 87. Beygu also reported that this tomb tower collapsed thirty-six years earlier, coinciding with the date of 1896 given by Lynch.

79 This can be translated as »when the deceased youth of short life, in need of God's mercy, Amir Shādī Sarghūr Āqā, son of Jāghān [Ḥāghān] Āqā, died in the month of ... the year seven hundred.«

80 It is entirely possible that Beygu (or the typesetters of this rather modest publication) unintentionally left off the word *ibn* or *bin* (»son of«) between Shādī and Sarghūr Āqā. In any case, the three-generational sequence of names in Lynch's reading appears to be more correct than Beygu's two-generational sequence.

81 A contemporaneous Shādī Āqā or Shādī Küregen is named in the sources as a son of Sunjāq Āqā and the husband of Hülegü Khān's granddaughter Urgudaq/Orqudaq (hence the title *küregen*, meaning »son-in-law«); see Melville, *Fall of Amir Chupan*, 14-15; Zhao, *Marriage as Political Strategy*, 141. Sunjāq Āqā, also known as Suqunjāq or Suʾunchāq Noyan, was »senior amir, *yarghuchi* and the commander of the right wing of Hülegü's army, as well as the military governor of Iraq and Fars under Abaqa Khan« (Yıldız, Post-Mongol pastoral polities, 31 n. 22). Sunjāq Āqā was a grandson of Chilaʾun or Chilaʾugan, one of the four trusted generals of Chinggis Khān. On the family of Sunjāq Āqā, see also İlimli Usul, *İlhanlı Döneminde Uygurlar*, 128-135 (where a third variant of the name Sunjāq is given as Suqunjār). Although these names, apart from Shādī, do not exactly match the names transmitted by Lynch and Beygu, they may still be entertained as possible mutations of those names. Thus, Sārghūr/Saughur may be a distant echo of Sunjāq/Suqunjāq/Suʾunjāq/Suqunjār and, somewhat more plausibly, Beygu's Jâghân may be considered as an avatar of Chilaʾun/Chilaʾugan. The discrepancies could perhaps be explained as the effect of a threefold »translation,« first by way of the multiplicity of Persian and Arabic variants of Mongol and Turkic names, second by the creator of the inscription producing a version in Arabic script and inevitably introducing his own peculiarities of transcription, and third by Lynch's *khoja* and Beygu deciphering these names from the Arabic script. Considered from this perspective, these names could easily be »lost in translation.« However, three more issues can be cited in connection with this hypothetical identification. One is the Ilkhanid vizier Rashīd al-Dīn's mention of the death of Sunjāq Āqā together with his son Shādī in Maragha, in 1290 (thus, seventeen years after the date of the inscription; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jamiʾuʾt-tawarikh*, trans. Thackston, 573). A second issue concerns the questionability of including names of non-Muslim ancestors (as Chilaʾun most certainly was not Muslim) in a funerary inscription where the Islamic faith is claimed. The third and least problematic issue is that the inscription, in both readings, omits a generation between the would-be Sunjāq Āqā and Chilaʾun, but this may be explained by the prestige of having Chilaʾun as an ancestor; indeed, omitting an intermediate generation is not unheard of in inscriptions.

Although the local name »Usta Şagirt« is now applied exclusively to the standing tomb tower at the site, Beygu reported that this dual appellation was used to refer to the pair of tomb towers. Lynch, for his part, did not record the local name of the standing tomb tower (referring to it only as the »isolated tomb«) but relayed a local tradition about the relationship between the two towers that expounds on the dual appellation. According to this tradition, the two tomb towers were built for two brothers. The elder brother's tomb tower – identified as the collapsed one – was evidently inferior (the work of an architect as »apprentice«) to the younger brother's more accomplished example (the work of a »master«) and caused the jealous elder brother to punish the architect by having his right hand cut off. While the story is likely a later invention based on the trope of architectural jealousy, the association of the two tomb towers with members of a single family is plausible, as is some kind of a dramatic or violent turn of events linked to the second one, which would explain the absence of the inscription naming its intended or actual occupant.

A third pair of tomb towers was built in Ahlat within six years of Hasan Padişah (*Figs. 4, 11-12*). Located about one and a half kilometers to the east of the Meydanlık cemetery, the two tomb towers are locally known by their paired name of İki Kubbe (»Two Domes«) or Çifte Kümbet (»Paired Tomb Towers«).[82] The two monuments conform to the formal aspects of the Hasan Padişah and Usta Şagirt tomb towers in terms of their basic cylindrical form and the cardinal positions of their respective doorways on the north side and three windows on the east, south and west sides but also depart in certain respects such as the absence of elongated niches on the exterior of the cylindrical body. The earlier tomb tower is dated 1279 and gives the name of one Ḥusayn Timūr, son of Būghātāy Āqā and indicates that he was »killed in the path of God« (*qutila fī sabīl Allāh*) in the month of Rajab 678 (November 1279). The apparently violent nature of Ḥusayn Timūr's death also resonates with the designation of this tomb as a *mashhad* in the inscription. Both Ḥusayn Timūr and his father Būghātāy Āqā are titled »great amir« (*al-amīr al-kabīr*). Another inscription, this one installed above the eastern window, names Isān Tigīn, daughter of the »great amir« Ḥusām al-Dīn Ḥusayn Āqā, and gives the date of Shawwāl 678 (February 1280). Ḥusayn Timūr and Isān Tigīn evidently died within three months of each other; that the latter may have also met a violent end is suggested by the epithet *al-shahīda* but the remainder of the inscription is not as explicit on this matter.[83] Isān Tigīn's relationship to Ḥusayn Timūr is not established by either of the inscriptions, but a common assumption is that she was his wife.

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82   Bachmann, *Kirchen und Moscheen*, 62-63; Beygu, *Ahlat Kitabeleri*, 72-73; Gabriel, *Şarki Türkiye'de Arkeolojik Geziler*, 211-212, 274-275; Tabak, *Ahlat*, 18-20; Tuncer, *Anadolu Kümbetleri*, 83-91; Uluçam, *Bitlis*, 231-239; Önkal, *Anadolu Selçuklu Türbeleri*, 186-192. İki Kubbe is also the name of the neighborhood east of the Meydanlık cemetery and north of the Ottoman lakeshore citadel, an indication of the significance of these two tomb towers in the evolving urban fabric of post-medieval Ahlat.

83   The epithets *shahīd* and *shahīda* appear very frequently on medieval Islamic funerary inscriptions. The term *mashhad* is a noun of place derived from the same root, *sh-h-d*, with the basic meaning of »witnessing.« While these terms may indicate the specific condition of martyrdom, it is likely that they were also applied in a much more inclusive way in tomb inscriptions mainly to underscore the Muslim faith of the deceased, understood as an upholder of the Muslim confession of faith, the *shahāda*, a term likewise derived from the same root. The range of applications of these interrelated terms in a funerary context was first noted by Max van Berchem; see Blair, *Monumental Inscriptions*, 86.

Located just several meters to the east of the Ḥusayn Timūr-Isān Tigīn tomb tower is a slightly larger but quite similar tomb tower. The inscription over its doorway dates the death of Būghātāy Āqā two years to the month after his son Ḥusayn Timūr, in Rajab of 680 (October 1281). Although the inscription does not explicate the nature of his death, the tomb is once again referred to as a *mashhad* and Būghātāy Āqā, too, is afforded the epithet *al-shahīd*. More-over, the inscription gives the name of his deceased father, one Īnāl Āqā styled as *al-amīr* (rather than *al-amīr al-kabīr*). A second inscription, this one over the western window, gives the name of a Shīrīn Khātūn, daughter of ʿAbdāllah, along with the same date as for Būghātāy Āqā, who is assumed to be her husband. As in the case of the other three inscriptions, here too the epithet *al-shahīda* is applied, which, along with the concurrence of the date of Rajab 680, may be indicative of the same cause of (possibly violent) death for both Būghātāy Āqā and Shīrīn Khātūn. Her father's name Abdāllah likely indicates her non-Muslim family back-ground that may have been Christian or perhaps Buddhist.

Fig. 11: İki Kubbe tomb towers, view from the north with the Ottoman citadel in the distance (source: Lynch, Armenia, 285)

Fig. 12: İki Kubbe tomb towers, view from the north (photo by the author, September 2018)

The Būghātāy Āqā-Shīrīn Khātūn tomb tower is the last dated funerary monument to be built in Ahlat for an Ilkhanid amir. It is, however, architecturally very similar to a tomb tower built nine years later in Güroymak (formerly known as Norşin and Çukur), a settlement about 70 kilometers west of Ahlat. The inscription of this tomb tower names Qarandāy Āghā, styled *al-amīr al-kabīr malik al-umarā'* (»the great amir [and] king of amirs«) and gives his date of death as the fifth of Sha'bān 689 (13th August 1290).[84] Unlike the Ahlat inscriptions, which name two or three generations of a family, the inscription in Güroymak is silent on Qarandāy Āghā's father or grandfather. In the phrase following his name, the inscription states that »he passed from the abode of annihilation (*dār al-fanā'*) to the abode of mercy and subsistence (*dār al-baqā' wa'l-raḥma*) [as] a Muslim and a proclaimer of the unity of God (*muwaḥḥid*).«[85] This emphasis on his confessional state, coupled with the omission of his father's name, strongly suggests that Qarandāy Āghā was himself a convert to Islam. Constructed about a decade after the İki Kubbe tomb towers, the Qarandāy Āghā tomb is clearly the product of the same architectural workshop or venture, transplanted to a nearby town. The remains of the lower part of another tomb tower located to the south of the Qarandāy Āghā tomb shows that the pattern of paired tomb towers observable in Ahlat also applies here.[86]

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84 Ünal, Doğu Anadolu Künbetleri, 124-128; Tuncer, Üç Kümbet, 94-8; Önkal, *Anadolu Selçuklu Türbeleri*, 196-198; Uluçam, *Bitlis*, 266-269. The Qarandāy Āghā tomb was in a partial state of preservation but was restored in the late 1960s. In addition to its similarity to the Būghātāy Āghā tomb, the Qarandāy Āghā tomb can also be related to the Alimoğlu tomb in Ahlat as both structures were furnished with an interior lunette in the form of a shell over their southern window.

85 Evidently, the inscription has a grammar mistake: the words *muslim* and *muwaḥḥid* are active participles used as adverbs and as such should have taken the accusative case (*musliman* and *muwaḥḥidan*).

86 Uluçam, *Bitlis*, 270. The same cemetery is noted as containing the remains of two more tomb towers, of which both the upper and lower parts have collapsed; Tuncer, Üç Kümbet, 94.

Virtually nothing is known about these amirs, except for what is reflected in the surviving inscriptions on the tomb towers. On the basis of their names and the frequent use of the title *āqā*, they can be presumed to have Mongol or Turkic backgrounds, but it is not easy to distinguish between these two groups by name alone.[87] While names such as Īnāl or Isān Tigīn appear to point to a Turkic ethnicity, other names such as Būghātāy are more difficult to pin down on the spectrum of Turko-Mongol naming conventions. According to the lineage given in the inscriptions on the tombs, the deceased were mostly second- or third-generation Muslims. In the example of Ḥasan Āqā and his father, Maḥmūd, the names seem to represent a »closed case« of Muslim identity where the only hint of Mongol or Turkic ethnicity is vested in the title *āqā*. By contrast, none of the names given in the now lost inscription of Shādī Āqā are manifestly Muslim names, but the very fact that they are declared in the inscription implies that Shādī Āqā's father (and grandfather, per Lynch) also professed Islam, placing the Islamization of this family somewhere around the middle decades of the thirteenth century. Similarly, the fact that Būghātāy Āqā's own father, Īnāl Āqā, is named in his inscription indicates adherence to Islam in this particular family possibly as far back as the 1240s.[88] From a normative perspective, if any of these named members of earlier generations had not been Muslims, one would expect their names to have been either omitted or substituted by the telltale 'Abdallāh. The latter case applies to Shīrīn Khātūn, the probable wife of Būghātāy Āqā. The former case can be observed in the inscription of the Qarandāy Āghā in Güroymak. Unlike the amirs in Ahlat, Qarandāy Āghā was himself a convert to Islam.

Although it is impossible to know for certain, it is quite likely that some of these amirs came from families that previously adhered to Buddhism. Up until the conversion of Ghazan Khan in 1295, the Ilkhanid royal family by and large adhered to the Buddhist faith, with the notable exceptions of certain prominent royal women who were Nestorian Christians and of the short reign of the Ilkhan Aḥmad Tegüder (r. 1282-1284) who had become a Muslim as a prince.[89] Abaqa Ilkhan, the reigning Ilkhan at the time that Ahlat tombs were constructed, was a Buddhist, as was his father, Hülegü, the founder of the Ilkhanate in Iran and Iraq. The association of the Ahlat amirial families with Islam thus predates the first instance of royal Ilkhanid acceptance of Islam by Aḥmad Tegüder by about four decades. It is also earlier than the earliest royal Mongol conversion, that of Berke Khān, Jochid ruler of the Golden Horde between 1257 and 1267, which is said to have occurred before his accession to the throne. Thus, chronologically speaking, at the time that the tomb towers were built, these amirs, with the notable exception of Qarandāy Āghā in Güroymak, had at least a few decades of familial engagement with Islam.

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87 Morgan, Āqā.

88 This calculation is made by estimating that, at the time of his death in 1279, Būghātāy Āqā's son Ḥusayn Timūr may have been around the age of twenty (that he was not a minor is suggested by the title *al-amīr al-kabīr*). Assuming that Būghātāy Āqā himself was at least twenty years old when his son was born (c. 1260), this would put Būghātāy Āqā's birth year around 1240. Because the inscription mentions Būghātāy Āqā's father, it seems reasonable to assume that Īnāl Āqā had become Muslim either before his son's birth – in which case the Islamization of the family may even go back to a date before c. 1240 – or that the family had adopted Islam while Būghātāy Āqā was a child in the 1240s. Two of the names at the İki Kubbe – Īnāl and Isān Tikīn – suggest a Turkic rather than Mongol identity.

89 Bausani, Religion; Prazniak, Ilkhanid Buddhism; Pfeiffer, Reflections; Deweese, Islamization; Grupper, Labnasagut; De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran*, 182-241.

It seems fairly certain that the adoption of Islam by these amirial families predated the establishment of the Ilkhanate. Although their names have not been encountered in the narrative sources of the period, the period of their assumed conversion – middle of the thirteenth century – coincides with the Dominican friar Simon de Saint-Quentin's visit to the chief Mongol military commander Baiju in 1248, upon which he reported that Islam had gained ground among the military ranks of the Mongols.[90] This early, pre-Ilkhanid, phase of the Islamization of Mongol amirs appears to coalesce around the figure of Baiju, with reports mentioning the Muslim identity of the general's advisers and even claiming his own conversion to Islam on his deathbed. Based primarily in the Mūghān region of Transcaucasia, Baiju led the Mongol armies into Anatolia multiple times from the capture of Erzurum in 1242 and the Battle of Kösedağ in 1243 to the campaign of 1256 that brought the Mongol armies all the way to Aksaray and Konya. Although the Islamization of Mongol amirs has also been associated with their involvement in Anatolia,[91] any direct effect of Anatolia in this respect probably occurred after the invasion of 1256 and especially after the imposition of direct Ilkhanid control in 1277.[92]

Given that the forebears of the Ahlat amirs seem to have adopted Islam by the 1240s, it may be that their early Islamization is connected with the orbit of Baiju. This would also coincide with Baiju's capture of Ahlat in 1244-1245,[93] but there is no evidence that any of the earlier generations named in the inscriptions were based in or otherwise linked with Ahlat at that time. However, as T'amt'a was installed almost immediately as the nominal ruler of the city, it is possible that some Mongol troops were also stationed here at the same time to ensure the alignment of Ahlat with Mongol interests. When considered in connection with T'amt'a's reported attempt to broker a marriage alliance between herself and the Ayyubid ruler of Mayyāfāriqīn, the possibility of the introduction of some degree of Mongol military presence in Ahlat from the late 1240s becomes a justifiable, albeit unverifiable, idea. Speculating further, it can be proposed that the political shifts effected by Hülegü's execution of Baiju around 1260 and the Ilkhanid-Jochid war starting in 1261-1262 would have had some repercussions for any amirs previously associated with Baiju, whether in Ahlat or elsewhere. The Ilkhanid-Jochid war was, at least in part, a contestation between the two Chinggisid rulers Hülegü and Berke Khan (r. 1257-1267) over territories in Transcaucasia and Anatolia.[94] Berke Khan, the first member of the Chinggisid family to embrace Islam,[95] apparently railed against Hülegü's 1258 campaign in Iraq that culminated in the conquest of Baghdad. The ultimate outcome of the conflict was the end of the unified Mongol empire. It may not be

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90 Jackson, *Mongols and the Islamic World*, 338-340.

91 Jackson, *Mongols and the Islamic World*, 339-340; Pfeiffer, Reflections, 375-376.

92 Although the Mongol invasion of 1256 is described as a »large-scale movement of people« (Melville, Anatolia under the Mongols, 61), designed »to ease pressure on the grasslands of western Iran« prior to the coming of Hülegü Khān (Jackson, *Mongols and the Islamic World*, 126), it seems that Mongol military presence in Anatolia was a limited affair through the 1260s; Melville, Anatolia under the Mongols, 62.

93 Jackson, *Mongols and the Islamic World*, 84.

94 Jackson, *Mongols and the Islamic World*, 142-148.

95 Jackson, *Mongols and the Islamic World*, 348-349.

too farfetched to suggest that it was Hülegü who may have created or confirmed the Ahlat connection of the amirial families whose names are pronounced in the inscriptions and that their positions became consolidated under Abaqa Ilkhan. The Turkic inflection of some of the amirial names in Ahlat also strengthens the possibility of their link to Hülegü who came into Iran with an army that consisted of large numbers of Turks.[96] Ultimately, Ahlat's geostrategic importance must have increased in Ilkhanid eyes starting with the retreat from Syria in 1260. Hülegü's stay in Ahlat on his way back to Transcaucasia may reflect this shift.

Ahlat Inside Out: Suburban Agencies around a Compromised Urban Center

The tomb towers built in Ahlat between 1273 and 1281 and in Güroymak in 1290 present a remarkably cohesive picture of monumental funerary architecture, representing the amirial families embedded in the Ilkhanid domination of Ahlat and the surrounding region during the reign of Abaqa Ilkhan. The visually dominant cylindrical forms of the surviving tomb towers lend this group a unified appearance that was probably intentional on the part of the patrons and was made possible by the availability and organization of skilled builders and stonemasons for two decades. This unified appearance, combined with the pattern of paired construction, distinguishes the Ahlat-Güroymak tomb towers as an exceptional paradigm in the medieval funerary architecture of Iran, Azerbaijan and Anatolia. They may be considered as the outcome as much of the particular identities of the patrons and the political circumstances in which they operated as of the peculiar matrix of Ahlat's resources and fissures towards the end of the thirteenth century.

The relationship of the amirs named in the inscriptions to the city of Ahlat can be explored by taking note of the pattern of the paired construction of the tomb towers along with their peripheral locations. The question of whether the pairing of the tomb towers held a particular symbolic or functional meaning is difficult to answer. It may be significant that the addition of double minarets flanking portals had first emerged in Anatolia around 1258, probably as an idea imported from Iran or Azerbaijan, and became a trend towards the end of the century in cities such as Sivas.[97] Apart from visually augmenting the monumentality of the portals of mosques and madrasas, it is not known if these double minarets had any specific function or meaning. In the case of the Ahlat tomb towers, the pairing of the tomb towers seems to have less to do with visual symmetry and emphasis and more with the intention to consolidate the position of amirial families by grouping their funerary monuments in discrete locations. Of the three pairs of tomb towers, the İki Kubbe tomb towers, where two generations of amirs and women from their families were interred, represent a most explicit case of family-based consolidation of dominance. The anecdotal evidence for the Usta-Şagirt tomb also points in the direction of a family connection between the two tomb towers. While nothing can be deduced from the partially surviving companion tomb tower to Hasan Padişah, a family connection likely applied to that pair as well. Through their inscriptions, the tomb towers presented the Muslim lineage of the amirs, accentuating further the concept of family as a corporation that was also embodied by the paired monuments.

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96 Lane, *Early Mongol Rule*, 19.

97 The earliest example of a portal flanked by minarets is the Sahib Ata mosque in Konya (1258). The idea was repeated in 1271 at two madrasas built in Sivas, the Gök Medrese and the Çifte Medrese.

Interpreting the paired tomb towers as a visual consolidation of amirial families in the context of Ahlat also finds support in the seventeenth-century account of the Ottoman traveler, Evliya Çelebi.[98] Although Evliya Çelebi's narrative on the historical background of Ahlat is riddled with confusion and conflation of events and names, his account of the tomb towers is noteworthy for reflecting the survival of a local emphasis on discrete family identities. Describing Ahlat as the place where the ancestors of the Ottoman, Danishmandid, Chobanid, Aqqoyunlu and Qaraqoyunlu dynasties first settled after their migration from Transoxiana (*Māhān*) on account of the »Tatar« depredations, Evliya Çelebi claims that the funerary monuments in Ahlat belong to the founding members of these families as well as to their wives. In line with his Ottoman bias, he attributes monumental domed tombs (*kıbāb-ı azīm*) to Kuba Alp Bay, identified as the great-grandfather of Osman Bey, and his brothers and their wives. Furthermore, referring to each of the funerary sites as a separate *ziyāretgāh* (»place of visitation«), Evliya Çelebi accentuates the idea of corporate dynastic identities represented by their monumental funerary markers. Despite forcing a biased and distorted historical convergence of all of these dynasties in pre-Ottoman Ahlat, Evliya Çelebi effectively conveys the familial substance of the tombs which he relates as the main architectural highlight of a once-great city otherwise reduced to a morass of ruins (*harābistān*).

Although the location of the Ilkhanid tomb towers can be described as peripheral, little is known for certain about Ahlat's urban center in the late thirteenth century. It is probable that the ravine in between the medieval citadel and the Meydanlık cemetery – site of the so-called Harabe Şehir – continued to serve as a habitational and perhaps commercial area. The area to the north of the medieval citadel and the Meydanlık cemetery may have also functioned as an urban center of sorts, to judge by the ruins of the double bathhouse and the elusive remains of a mosque. In the current state of archaeological knowledge concerning these areas and the citadel itself, it is not possible to speculate further on the density or vitality of habitation through the thirteenth century. Nevertheless, the siting of the three pairs of tomb towers that form a triangle staking out the wider territory of these two contiguous clusters of probable urban habitation and their neighbor, the Meydanlık cemetery, reveals the endurance of their status as a spatial center. The locations of the tombs flank the presumed urban core of Ahlat on the west, south and east sides, forming an outer arc punctuated by the paired tomb towers. It seems reasonable to assume that the areas where the tomb towers were built were largely uninhabited and, furthermore, did not overlap with the locations of the suburban *zāwiyas* that can be traced from the Ottoman tax registers and from the still standing tomb of Şeyh Necmeddin in the eastern neighborhood of Ergezen. For their part, the *zāwiyas* appear to have marked the outer flanks of the city to the west, north and east. The northern hinterlands of Ahlat were also home to a number of Armenian rock-carved monastic sites.[99] Together with the sites on which the tomb towers were built on the western, southern and eastern flanks, the outer perimeter of Ahlat was fully, albeit irregularly, staked out by the end of the thirteenth century.

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98   Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, ed. Dağlı and Kahraman, 84-89

99   Bixio and De Pascale, Underground settlements, 128..

This complementary adherence of the *zāwiyas* and the tomb towers to the outer contours of Ahlat does not, however, mean that their status and functions were identical or even similar. The *zāwiyas* were embedded into *waqf* arrangements and served the function of socio-religious interaction within a variable framework of Sufi praxis. The very brief description of their functions in the Ottoman tax registers of the sixteenth century consists, without exception, of the stipulation that their incomes be spent for the provision of the needs of travelers (*āyende ve revendeye sarf olunur*). In this respect, the *zāwiyas* of Ahlat were no different from their numerous counterparts founded all across Anatolia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These *zāwiyas* were very frequently associated with the *futuwwa* organizations through which young men were initiated to brotherhoods that upheld precepts of chivalry and morality with a mystical or Sufi inflection.[100] The members of *futuwwa* organizations were known as *akhī* or *fatā* (pl. *fityān*) and were subject to a process of hierarchical advancement within the brotherhood led by a shaykh. One of the things that distinguished the *futuwwa* brotherhoods from Sufi brotherhoods, especially in Anatolia, was their integral commitment to a professional life of craft production or trade. Typically, members of a *futuwwa* brotherhood maintained a »day job« as craftsmen or tradesmen, congregating in the evenings in their *zāwiya* for communal meals, rituals and the hosting of guests.

Although it is not possible to know for certain if some or all of the *zāwiyas* of Ahlat served *futuwwa* organizations, the presence of *fityān* in Ahlat is known from the historian Ibn al-Athīr who noted them as the organizers of a regional anti-Ayyubid rebellion in the beginning of the thirteenth century.[101] This brief mention reveals that one or more *futuwwa* organizations in Ahlat exercised local authority at a time of political uncertainty and transition. The precepts and practice of *futuwwa* in Anatolia also transcended religious boundaries, the most substantial evidence for this being the late thirteenth-century Armenian treatises written on the subject in the city of Erzincan, evidently with the purpose of bringing about moral and institutional reforms to Armenian brotherhoods.[102] In fact, the existence of Armenian »*futuwwa*-like« brotherhoods has been traced as early as the 1120s and to the region of Lake Van.[103] Despite the absence of details on this early formation, cities like Ahlat where Armenian and Muslim (Arab, Iranian and Turkic) populations had a long history of encounter and coexistence would have provided the necessary conditions for the cross-cultural incubation of such organizations. Seen from this vantage point, the distribution of *zāwiyas* and Armenian monastic sites in the hinterlands of Ahlat suggests a parallel development reflecting similar socio-religious organizations in both communities.

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100 Durocher, Akhi lodge; Goshgarian, Opening and closing; Pancaroğlu, Devotion, hospitality and architecture, 60-72.

101 Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicle*, 137-138; Humphreys, *Saladin to the Mongols*, 129-130. Ibn al- Athīr's observation is paralleled by a similar identification of the rebels by Bar Hebraeus; see La Porta, Legitimizing land and power, 87. The *fityān* organization of Ahlat may even go back to the period of the Shāh-i Arman rulers since Sayf al-Dīn Begtimūr was noted to adhere to a Sufi ethos; Ibn Shaddād, *Rare and Excellent History*, trans. Richards, 67.

102 Goshgarian, *Futuwwa*.

103 Goshgarian, *Futuwwa*, 234-235.

Unlike the *zāwiyas*, the Ilkhanid tomb towers do not appear to have any civic or institutional associations or *waqf* frameworks, at least none that can be traced from the available evidence. There is no indication that any of the tomb towers were associated with another building such as a madrasa or a mosque. It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that these funerary monuments mark lands granted to or otherwise expropriated by the Ilkhanid amirs, perhaps collectively at one time – for instance, upon Hülegü's retreat from Syria when he stopped in Ahlat – or sequentially over the course of a period.[104] As apportioned lands in the western, southern and eastern flanks of the city, these could have served as the site of the amirs' encampment, including residential provisions for their households, in the typical pattern observed for medieval Turco-Mongol military and political leaders.[105] Additionally, such apportioned lands may have incorporated gardens and the types of fruit orchards for which Ahlat was well known and may have also represented some form of economic asset. Although there is no information about their specific locations, Ibn Bībī made reference to »gardens of the city« (*bāghhā-yi shahr*) in the context of the Rum Seljuq occupation of Ahlat in the early 1230s and illustrated the use of one such garden to which a group Khwārazmian warriors active in the area of Tatvan were summoned to pay their allegiance to the Rum Seljuq authorities.[106] Ibn Bībī's account makes clear that the garden was in a suburban location to which the Rum Seljuq officials »descended« from the citadel, which they were in the process of repairing. Considering the direction of the Khwārazmian warriors' arrival from the direction of Tatvan in the west, the open flat land between the city and lake where the Usta-Şagirt tomb was later built, for instance, could be a likely location for the garden that served as the setting for the process of oath-taking spread over two days and celebrated by lavish feasts. Although there is no information on what kind of gardens surrounded Ahlat, at least some of them must have incorporated orchards producing the fruit which is a noted aspect of the city recorded in the geographical works of both Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (completed in the 1220s) and Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī (completed c. 1340).[107]

Whether or not the sites of the tomb towers in Ahlat were indeed apportioned to the amirs by Hülegü or later by Abaqa Ilkhan, their immediate horizon was the territorial contestation and political fragmentation (or at least reorientation) of the 1260s. Seen from this vantage point, the particular aspects of the tomb towers built by and for the Muslim amirs emerge as a strategy of broad inclusivity. While laying claim to the city's flanks in line with both the pattern established by the influential institutional vector of the *zāwiyas* and the Turko-Mongol preference for the suburban setting, these monumental buildings also partook of an established Iranian-Anatolian tradition of tomb towers and, furthermore, reflected an alignment with the local Islamic predisposition to funerary investment as documented in the impressive tombstones of the Meydanlık cemetery.

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104 On different cases of land grants and expropriation, see Amitai, Turko-Mongolian nomads, 156-157. On the Mongol practice of apportioning, see Allsen, *Culture and Conquest*, 43-49.

105 For the Great Seljuq practice, see Durand-Guédy, Ruling from the outside. For an example of contemporary Chaghataid Mongol practice in Central Asia, see Biran, Rulers and city life.

106 Ibn Bībī, *El-Evāmirü'l-'Alā'iyye* [facsimile edition], 430-432, trans. Öztürk, 430-431.

107 Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, 380; Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī, *Nuzhat al-qulūb*, 100.

Indeed, the presence of highly competent and experienced craftsmen in Ahlat in the 1270s and 1280s and in Güroymak in 1290 is mirrored in the chronology of surviving tombstones in the Meydanlık cemetery that exhibit a revitalization of the stone carving industry in Ahlat starting around 1250 after a decline in production probably triggered by the Khwārazmshāh destruction in 1229. The beginning of this revitalization is signaled by the signature of an artisan named Aḥmad al-Muzayyin who produced tombstones from 1249 to 1261 and whose epithet *al-muzayyin*, meaning »designer« or »decorator,« suggests that he applied his art to a variety of media.[108] Among the subsequent signed tombstones are names of other craftsmen who were apparently related to Aḥmad al-Muzayyin. Uways (or Ways) b. Aḥmad, who produced tombstones between 1265 and 1275, is presumed to be Aḥmad al-Muzayyin's son and the master of another craftsmen, Asad b. Ayyūb (active between 1277 and 1291), who signed some of his works as the apprentice (*ghulām* and *shākird*) of Uways b. Aḥmad.[109] Uways b. Aḥmad's two sons, Aṣīl b. Ways and Muḥammad b. Ways, also continued in the profession of their father and grandfather.[110] Aṣīl b. Ways signed his earliest work from 1295 as the apprentice (*shākird*) of Asad b. Ayyūb and evidently had a long and prolific career lasting at least until 1327. Among this group of craftsmen, the works of Asad b. Ayyūb stand out in terms of the novel features such as the muqarnas cornice and double-dragon motif that he evidently introduced to the design repertoire of the tombstones.

This sequence of craftsmen's signatures reveals the continuity in the production of tombstones in Ahlat by way of both family and master-apprentice transmissions that were patently recorded on the tombstones. In particular, the figure of Asad b. Ayyūb and his explicit master-apprentice relationships which can be traced from the signatures on the tombstones resonate remarkably with the expected ethos of craftsmen embedded in a *futuwwa* organization where initiation to the brotherhood paralleled initiation to a craft or trade.[111] Although there is no solid evidence to link any of these craftsmen to any of the *zāwiyas* of Ahlat, both the *zāwiyas* and the signatures of the craftsmen point to the likely survival of the *futuwwa* brotherhoods that evidently had a prominent urban presence in Ahlat at least since the Ayyubid period. The endurance of the *zāwiyas* through the trials and tribulations of the thirteenth century and the additions to their numbers in the fifteenth century seem to reflect a long term urban *modus vivendi* predicated on the sustainability of social networks tangential to political stability or authority. In the case of the depredations suffered by Ahlat in the form of military assaults and severe earthquakes, the location of these *zāwiyas* on the outer perimeter of a partially or mostly impaired urban center indicate a spatial externalizing of urban agency. This is not to say that the former urban center became devoid of habitation or commerce but rather that the land around the urban center became the setting for the nexuses of socio-political and probably economic influence. In other words, through the course of the thirteenth century, Ahlat as an entity of urban vectors was, spatially speaking, turned inside out.

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108 Karamağaralı, *Ahlat Mezartaşları*, 91-92, 130-131, 146-153.

109 Karamağaralı, *Ahlat Mezartaşları*, 92-95, 132-134, 136-137, 153-170.

110 Karamağaralı, *Ahlat Mezartaşları*, 95-58, 173-193.

111 Goshgarian, Opening and closing.

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It is probably not a coincidence that Asad b. Ayyūb's documented career between 1277 and 1291 overlaps significantly with the period in which the tomb towers were constructed. None of the tomb towers were signed by the craftsmen who executed them, but by correlating their construction with the production of tombstones, the 1270s and early 1280s in Ahlat emerge as a period of particularly dynamic artistic and architectural activity. The organization of this activity most likely involved the spheres of social, economic and spiritual influence emanating from the numerous *zāwiyas* and their established claim on the suburban land. Despite the lack of direct information regarding the connection between the *zāwiyas* and the presence of Ilkhanid amirs, their complementary claims on the outer contours of Ahlat suggests a synergetic relationship turning on the Muslim identities of the amirs. Such a relationship, though conjectural, makes sense in the context of the 1270s and early 1280s when conversion of Mongol amirs to Islam was picking up pace but when the conversion of the Ilkhanid royals had barely been triggered and the Buddhist sanctuary at Aladağ, located to the northeast of Lake Van, was still in its heyday.[112] As presumed newcomers to Ahlat, the Muslim Ilkhanid amirs marked their presence at the perimeter of the city, inscribing their Muslim identity onto its immediate horizon and against the shifting political landscape of the early Ilkhanate. The construction of their tomb towers can be read as an initiative to establish a permanent physical presence while also linking to Ahlat's best asset, its craftsmen and their professional networks.

The ultimate purpose of the tomb towers built for the Ilkhanid amirs and their families in Ahlat appear not to have exceeded the function of memorializing their corporate identities in the local context. In this respect, they stand apart from later Ilkhanid funerary projects begun at the very end of the thirteenth century such as the Rab'-i Rashīdī of the vizier Rashīd al-Dīn or the Shanb-i Ghāzān of the Ilkhan Ghāzān – both constructed in the outskirts of Tabriz – in which the founder's tomb formed the nucleus of extensive *waqf*-secured socio-religious and commercial enterprises approximating small cities.[113] These projects, however, were born of the impact of Ghazan Khan's conversion and the ensuing reorientation of the religious policies of the Ilkhans. As such, they signify the motivations of their founders – the bureaucrat and the king – to be associated with grand foundational projects combining Islamic institutions with funerary monuments and to endow them with their personal fortunes. The Ilkhanid amirs of Ahlat in the 1270s and early 1280s would have had neither the prerogative nor, presumably, the means to undertake such grand institutional projects. Moreover, the institutional backbone of Ahlat was already constituted by the *zāwiya* networks that preceded the Ilkhanid domination and managed the process of socio-economic recovery. They did this not by rebuilding or reconstituting the urban fabric but by fostering a diffusely robust suburban environment attuned to and benefitting from agents of social and economic mobility. The Ilkhanid amirs may have been the new brokers of power, but they did not supplant the suburban agency of *zāwiyas*, opting instead to become privileged customers of exceptional artistic resources allowing them to imprint their identities on the edge.

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112 Grupper, Labnasagut.

113 Hoffmann, Gates of Piety and Charity; Blair, Rab'-e Rašidi; Haneda, Pastoral city.

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Urban Agency in the Borderlands: Turkmen Rulers and Administrative Elites in 13th-century Kastamonu

Bruno De Nicola*

After the Battle of Manzikert (1071), in which the armies of the Great Seljuqs defeated the Byzantine Empire, different waves of Turkmen people settled across Anatolia. By the 12th century, many of these groups had organised under the command of local warlords and established military control over different areas of Asia Minor under the tutelage of the Seljuqs of Rum. However, the mechanisms by which the new rulers articulated their control, especially over the urban settlements located in the regions they conquered, are poorly understood. This is even more dramatic in the case of northwestern Anatolia, a region that, during the 13th century, was a borderland between an expanding Turco-Islamic world and a defensive Christian Byzantium. The lack of narrative sources dealing with this particular part of Asia Minor has aggravated this lacuna, often excluding the city of Kastamonu from the studies of urban settlement in 13th-century Anatolia. This article attempts to change this situation by looking at surviving architectural evidence and non-narrative-literary sources that offer a particular view of the agents and agencies at work in the interaction between Turkmen rulers and urban elites in 13th-century Kastamonu.

Keywords: Kastamonu, Chobanids, medieval Anatolia, administrative literature, urban agency, Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī, Rum Seljuqs

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»The circumstances in which the principality of Kastamonu
was established are difficult to determine since, on account
of its remoteness from the political centres, it attracted
little attention from the chroniclers.«[1]

Introduction

The region of Kastamonu, which by and large corresponds geographically with the former
Byzantine region of Paphlagonia, occupies a marginal position in the major Muslim histor-
ical narratives produced in Anatolia during the 13th century.[2] Byzantine sources, such as
Pachymeres or Gregoras, are not very helpful either.[3] They offer confusing accounts, often
contradicting themselves, with imprecise chronologies that describe actors that are difficult to
identify with historical personalities.[4] However, one certainty about the history of the region
in this period is the early presence of Turkmen groups in the area, documented from at least
the late 11th century as a factor of conflict and confrontation.[5] The majority of the accounts we
have for this period vary from the catastrophist narratives of Greek sources depicting a territo-
ry flooded with Turkmen warriors to references of doubtful historical origin scattered in later
Muslim sources to heroic *ghazi* warriors.[6] After a short-lived reconquest of the region from the
Danishmandids by John Comnenus in the 1130s, Turkmen groups continued to migrate and
settle in the area until, by the mid-12th century, Byzantine forces had retreated completely and
Turkmen groups seemed to have established military control over the Kastamonu countryside.
During the reign of the Seljuq Sultan Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymān Shāh II (r. 1196-1204), the region
of Kastamonu became closely bound to the Seljuqs of Rum, despite maintaining an important
degree of political autonomy. By the 13th century, Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī, an Andalusian trav-
eller who visited Anatolia, mentions that this region was a »stronghold of the Turkomans«.[7]

The main urban settlement in northwestern Anatolia during the 13th century was the
city of Kastamonu, with the smaller towns of Taşköprü (Pompeiopolis) and Safranbolu
(Zalifre) to the east and west respectively.[8] In previous works we have centred our atten-
tion on the political position that the Chobanids of Kastamonu occupied in relation to the
Seljuq and Mongol polities in 13th century Anatolia.[9] The present article, however, aims

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1   Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 310.

2   Major narrative sources in Persian for the history of medieval Anatolia are Ibn Bībī, *El-Evamirü'l-ʿAlâ'iyye*, ed.
     Sadık Erzi; Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾīyah*, ed. Muttaḥidīn; Aqsarāʾī, *Musāmarat al-akhbār*, ed. Turan; Anonymous,
     Tārīkh-i Āl-i Saljūq dar Ānāṭūlī, ed. Jalālī.

3   Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, ed. and trans. Failler; Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopen; Akropolites,
     George Akropolites, trans. Macrides.

4   For an overview of Byzantine sources in this period, see Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 237-242
     and Korobeinikov, *Byzantium and the Turks*, 7-39.

5   Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 73; Vryonis, *Decline of Medieval Hellenism*, 111-112.

6   See, for example, the legend of *amir* Karatekin, the renowned Turkic conqueror of the Greek province of
     Paphlagonia (i.e. Kastamonu), in Sevim and Yücel, *Türkiye Tarihi*, 181; Yınanç, Anadolu Selçukiler tarihine, 96;
     Döğüş, Osmanli Fütuhatina Candarli Sahasindan Gelen Yardimlar, 415-416.

7   Quoted in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, s.v. »Ḳasṭamūnī«, accessed on 3 March 2021: dx.doi.
     org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_4008.

8   The town of Safranbolu has also been connected to the former Byzantine town of Dadybra, which, according to
     some sources, was taken over by the local Turkmen ruler of Ankara in the late 12th century. See Choniates, *O city
     of Byzantium*, 260.

9   De Nicola, In the outskirts of the Ilkhanate.

to explore alternative literary and archaeological evidence from the region to unveil differ-ent agents and agencies that participated in the establishment and consolidation of a new Turkmen dynasty (the Chobanids) in Kastamonu. We argue that the relationship between Turkmen rulers and urban settlements in the region was not homogenous and rather fol-lowed a number of stages in which both rulers and subjects actively contributed to the polit-ical, religious and cultural symbiosis that characterised Kastamonu during the 13th century.

Chobanid Occupation of Kastamonu: An Overview of Architectural Evidence

The political history of 13th-century Kastamonu is marked by the Chobanid dynasty (r. c. 1211-c. 1309). The Chobanids belonged to the Turkmen groups that entered Anatolia in successive waves after the Battle of Manzikert (1071). At the turn of the 13th century, an elite military group of Turkmen commanded by Ḥusām al-Dīn Chūpān (d. c. 1240) established themselves in northwestern Anatolia.[10] Although the Chobanids occasionally extended their influence into areas such as Tokat, Ankara or Sinop, their military and political authority was mainly circumscribed by the region of Kastamonu. Although in recent years we have advanced in forming a more nuanced idea about the political development of Chobanid rule in the area, we still know very little about the relationship between these Turkmen military elites and the territory they controlled. The area of Kastamonu in the 13th century consisted of hilly terrain dominated by forests. Although it was not among the more fertile areas of Anatolia, it none-theless sustained some agricultural activity. Its location at the crossroads of trade routes connecting the Black Sea with the Mediterranean on the one hand and Central Anatolia with Constantinople on the other resulted in moderate but lucrative commercial activities that produced important economic benefits to the Turkmen rulers and favoured the consolida-tion of urban centres in the region.

The first historical reference to the Chobanids does not appear until 1211, when Ḥusām al-Dīn Chūpān intervened militarily in support of the Seljuq prince Kayqubād at the Battle of Ankara against his brother Kaykā'ūs I (r. 1211-1220). The Chobanids lost this battle, but their early support for the defeated prince would become a political asset a few years later when Kayqubād I (r. 1220-1237) replaced his brother as Sultan of Rum. It is in the early 1220s when a new reference to the military capabilities of the Chobanid ruler appears in local chronicles. Ibn Bībī dedicates part of his historical narrative to highlighting the important role played by Ḥusām al-Dīn (now referred to as *amīr*) in the reconquest of the city of Sudak in Crimea in 1223.[11] The Chobanid ruler is praised for successfully commanding the only maritime ex-pedition of the Seljuqs of Rum, after which he returned to Kastamonu as a victorious and loyal commander of the Seljuq sultan.[12] However, between his return and the 1280s, we lack any concrete documentary evidence of how this local Turkmen dynasty controlled the region under their command.

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10   On the political history of the Chobanids of Kastamonu, see Yücel, *Anadolu Beylikleri Hakkında Araştırmalar,* vol. 1, 33-51; De Nicola, *Chobanids of Kastamonu.*

11   Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾiyya*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 281-284.

12   Peacock, Saljūq Campaign, 133-149.

Although modern historiography has generally considered that the Chobanids were »in charge« of the region throughout this period, they apparently had little, if any, control over the city of Kastamonu itself. Claude Cahen has suggested, for example, that »all that can be said with certainty is that Ḥusām al-Dīn Chūpān governed for a long time, and that Kastamonu was a city belonging to the Sultan.«[13] In fact, it seems that the city of Kastamonu, like the region, remained somehow under the nominal control of the Seljuqs of Rum in the form of an *iqṭāʿ* territory. This meant that the Seljuqs of Rum could transfer fiscal and administrative control over Kastamonu to officials or local rulers and it was not considered part of the sultan's personal property (*khāṣṣ*).[14] This special political and fiscal status of the city might explain why, during the central decades of the 13th century, Kastamonu passed into the hands of various administrators belonging to either the Seljuq royal family or the Mongol administration.[15] Hence, while the city of Kastamonu remained under the administrative control of Seljuq and Mongol officials, the Chobanids were important military and political actors in the area, possibly acting as military protectors of the region and obtaining tribute from the residents of the town.

The architectural footprint of the Chobanids in Kastamonu is certainly modest and hardly spectacular when compared to other regions of Anatolia. This explains why the majority of archaeological surveys published recently on medieval Anatolia often do not include references to the architectural legacy of Chobanid Kastamonu. However, the few remaining structures still standing in the region offer some interesting insights into the relationship between these Turkmen rulers and the Kastamonu countryside. Because these buildings have been reconstructed in modern times, they offer little information regarding original architectural style or construction techniques. However, the mapping of these structures dating to the first half of the 13th century offers a unique perspective on the settlement of Turkmen populations in northwestern Anatolia during a period when we lack any documentary evidence.

The surviving structures from the early period of Chobanid presence in the region all have a religious component. The majority of them are small mausoleums (*türbeler*) of early Sufi shaykhs or Muslim ghazi-martyrs that allegedly died in battle against Byzantine forces during the Turkmen conquest of northwestern Anatolia in the 12th century. The earlier example of this type of construction in the region is the tomb of the Khurasani martyr Şeyh Ahmet, who allegedly came to Anatolia before 1206 and fought against the Byzantines in the area. The structure, highly restored and rebuilt in subsequent periods, is located outside of the city, in the present district of Gölköy, around 12 km north of the city centre.[16] Similar mausoleums dating from before the 1270s appear to have spread across the territory around, but

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13   Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 244.

14   Korobeinikov, Revolt of Kastamonu, 90-91.

15   Mongol officials might have received rights of usufruct over the region as a way to pay for the sultanate's debts following the Seljuq defeat by the Mongols at the Battle of Kösedağ in 1243; see Korobeinikov, *Revolt of Kastamonu*, 90-91. On the battle, see Yıldız, *Mongol Rule*, 182-187.

16   Yaman, *Kastamonu tarihi*, 85.

not inside, urban settlements. Shrines are especially numerous along the road connecting the cities of Kastamonu and Sinop. The latter became not only an area of Chobanid influence during this period but also channelled modest but regionally important commercial activity that connected the Black Sea with Inner Anatolia and the Mediterranean.[17] These individual tombs and mausoleums played an important role as centres of pilgrimage, reunion and worship for travellers and Turkmen populations that protected the territory.

The surviving architecture in the region of Kastamonu gives evidence that it was in the countryside where Islam began to take root in the region. The first documented mosque to be built in the area belongs to this early period of Turkmen domination of the region. A few kilometres south of the city of Kastamonu, in the Akçasu neighbourhood of the modern town of Kuzyaka, is the Akçasu Mosque, apparently founded during the first half of the 13th century.[18] Little survives today of the original structure of the building; renovations done during the 20th century appear to have changed the shape and the appearance of the building. However, its early date is important in establishing the progress of Islamisation in the area. This small structure, constructed on the outskirts of Kastamonu, likely had little impact on the city itself or the religious life of its inhabitants. It is possible that by the 1250s, when the Akçasu Mosque was built, the majority of the population of the city of Kastamonu was still Christian. However, as an early Islamic building in the region, it might have served as a place of worship for the recently Islamised Turkmen who had been dwelling in rural northwestern Anatolia since the late 12th century.

The architectural landscape of the region of Kastamonu changes from the 1270s onwards, when the first Islamic buildings began to be constructed inside the city walls. Perhaps the best example of this transformation is the construction of the Atabey Gazi (Ghāzī) Mosque, built in the same rectangular shape as the rural Akçasu Mosque but on a larger scale.[19] This new building, however, would be located inside the city, only a few metres downhill from the surviving Byzantine castle that oversees the city of Kastamonu. The mosque takes the name of the legendary figure of Atabey Gazi, a hero-like figure who allegedly fought in the region against the Byzantines in the 12th century. Traditions around the foundation of the mosque mention that the original Christian church that stood on the site was converted into a mosque on a Friday by the Turkmen general who took the city from the Byzantines. This commander allegedly expelled the Christian clerics while they were delivering a sermon and from that day onwards the building became the congregational mosque where Friday prayers were conducted by Muslims.[20] The story may well be a fabrication, since the only thing we know for certain about the foundation of the building is that it was consecrated in 1273, according to an inscription which has survived on the wall of the mosque. No archaeological

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17   Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 320; Peacock, Black Sea trade, 69-70. For an overview of trade in the Black Sea, see Ciocîltan, *Mongols and the Black Sea.*

18   Kara, *Her yönüyle*, 197.

19   For a comprehensive overview of the building, see Çal and Çal, *Kastamonu Atabey Gazi Camisi.*

20   Acar, *Çobanoğulları Beyliği*, 43; Çiftçi, *Kastamonu Camileri-Türbeleri ve Diğer Eserler*, 91-93.

evidence of a pre-existing church in the place has been found so far, but the popularity of the story may indicate how the Muslim occupation of the city was presented to Muslim and non-Muslim inhabitants alike after the construction of the mosque.[21] This monument, together with similar monuments found in other parts of northwestern Anatolia, may reveal very early attempts to create a memory of a Muslim past during the 13th century for the region of Paphlagonia possibly remained largely inhabited by Christian populations.[22]

Mirroring what occurred in the countryside decades earlier, secular and religious *türbeler* (mausoleums) also began to appear side by side with mosques inside the city walls in the second half of the 13th century. Mausoleums containing the bodies of Turkic military commanders were erected in different parts of the city. One dedicated to Aşikli Sultan, supposedly a Seljuq commander who became a martyr after falling during the conquest of the Kastamonu Castle from the Byzantines in the early 12th century, is still standing in the northern part of the medieval city.[23] Another mausoleum, allegedly holding the mortal remains of Ḥusām al-Dīn Chūpān, founder of the dynasty, was erected next to the Atabey Gazi Mosque.[24] In addition, a number of Sufi shrines were constructed in the city during this period. Under the later Ottoman Naṣr Allāh Mosque in the centre of the city of Kastamonu there is a grave that has been dated to 671 AH [1272 CE]. Apparently, in the 13th century, the building functioned as a hospital where Shaykh Abd al-Fattāḥ-i Walī (Abdülfettah-ı Veli, d. 1272) used to reside and perform healings.[25] It became an important centre of pilgrimage in the 13th century, reinforced by the claim that the shaykh was a son of ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 1166), the founder of the Qādiriyya Sufi order.[26] It seems that the foundation of a mosque and the mushrooming of these *türbeler* inside the city after 1270 had a dual function. On the one hand, they functioned as places of pilgrimage to satisfy the religious needs of a growing Muslim population inside the city walls. On the other, they acted as visual representations to the inhabitants of a growing Turkmen presence in the city.

This Turkmen patronage of architecture in the urban landscape of 13th-century Kastamonu was not limited to the capital city. In the city of Taşköprü, located some 50 kilometres northeast of Kastamonu, a public fountain and a public bath were also built during the 1270s.[27] Unfortunately, the fountain was destroyed during a fire in 1927 but the bathhouse (*ḥammām*) and a bazaar are mentioned by the Maghrebi traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa as being endowments by the Chobanid Muẓaffar al-Dīn, grandson of Ḥusām al-Dīn Chūpān, to the congregational mosque in the town.[28] In addition, the Chobanid ruler also founded a Sufi

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21 Acar, *Çobanoğulları Beyliği*, 41-42.

22 A parallel case could be the castle of the town of Çankırı, located only one hundred kilometres south of Kastamonu, where there is a türbe (tomb) allegedly containing the remains of *amir* Karatekin, a semi-legendary Muslim hero who conquered the city in the second half of the 12th century; aee Kuru, Çankırı Fatihi Emir Karatekin'in Türbesi, 63-84.

23 Kara, *Her yönüyle*, 202; Çiftçi, Kastamonu *camileri, türbeleri ve diğer tarihi eserler,* 173.

24 Acar, *Çobanoğulları Beyliği*, 46.

25 Kara, *Her yönüyle*, 199

26   *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 1/2, s.v. ʿAbd-al-Qāder Jīlānī; an updated version is available online at www.iranicaonline. org/articles/abd-al-qader-jilani.

27 Yakupoğlu, Kastamonu-Taşköprü, 46.

28 Ibn Battuta, *Travels of Ibn Battuta*, 2, ed. Gibb, 464, fn. 186.

zāwiyya (located in the nearby village of Tokaş) and a madrasa was built in the town of Taşköprü to provide religious education to its residents.[29] According to some surviving later endowments (*awqāf*), both the madrasa and the mosque remained important centres of religious life during the subsequent Jandarid and Ottoman dynasties that ruled Taşköprü after the Chobanids.[30] Evidence suggests that Muẓaffar al-Dīn Chūpān acted as a governor in the name of his father before assuming control of the emirate in 1280.[31] Thus, patronage of urban architecture was not isolated to the capital. Instead, it appears that a coordinated building strategy was carried out by the Chobanids in order to demonstrate their direct involvement in the urban landscape under their control from the 1270s onward.[32]

Consolidating Turkmen Rule: Chobanid Literary Patronage

The architectural patronage that began to emerge in the cities of the region of Kastamonu in the 1270s was led by Alp Yürek (d. 1280), son of Ḥusām al-Dīn Chūpān. Alp Yürek's son, Muẓaffar al-Dīn, who resided in the city of Taşköprü, moved to the capital to become the new ruler of Kastamonu after the death of his father. Muẓaffar al-Dīn's ascension to the throne would be a crucial moment in the history of the region. In an unprecedented move among the Chobanids, he would extend his father's policy of patronage from architecture into literature. However, the realisation that literary patronage could play a role in legitimising Turkmen rule in the region did not come as an epiphany to the young ruler but rather seems to have originated on a particular trip that Muẓaffar al-Dīn had to make to the Ilkhanid capital of Tabriz.

In the complex political scenario of 13th-century Anatolia, Muẓaffar al-Dīn's ascension to the throne needed the approval of the supraregional powers in the area, not only to renew his ancestor's military rights over the region but also to legitimise the closer political, economic and religious control of the Chobanids in the area. The new ruler quickly got involved in the ever-unstable political arena of the Seljuqs of Rum by supporting the claims of Prince Masʿūd (Mesud) to the sultanate against the claims of his brother Rukn al-Dīn. Muẓaffar al-Dīn captured Rukn al-Dīn on his arrival in Anatolia from the Crimea and imprisoned him in the castle of Kastamonu before handing him over to his brother Masʿūd. This move by Muẓaffar al-Dīn played out well for him, and he became the main ally of the new pretender to the Seljuq throne.[33]

With Rukn al-Dīn removed from the political scene, both Masʿūd and Muẓaffar al-Dīn needed the support of the major political and military power of the region, the Mongol Ilkhans of Iran. In search of Mongol approval for their political alliance, both Masʿūd and Muẓaffar al-Dīn made a journey to the Mongol capital of Tabriz shortly before 1282 with the idea of requesting the sultanate for Masʿūd and the emirate for Muẓaffar al-Dīn from the Ilkhan Abaqa (r. 1265-1282). Unfortunately, by the time of their arrival in the Mongol capital, the Ilkhan had died. The delicate political balance of the Ilkhanid court during the reign

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29 The madrasa was destroyed in the 1927 fire. Yakupoğlu, Kastamonu-Taşköprü, 48.

30 Yakupoğlu, Kastamonu-Taşköprü, 51-64.

31 Yakupoğlu, Kastamonu-Taşköprü, 48.

32 For a more in-depth description of the architectural patronage of the Chobanids, see Bruno De Nicola, *Chobanids of Kastamonu*, chapter 3.2.

33 Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾiyah*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 634-635.

of his successor Tegüder Aḥmad (r. 1282-1284) forced the two Anatolian rulers to remain in Tabriz for longer than originally planned in order to secure the political endorsement they needed from the Mongols. After a number of intrigues and political disputes, Masʿūd was confirmed as Sultan of Rum and Muẓaffar al-Dīn as *Sipahsālār* of Kastamonu in 1284.[34] However, the almost three years that Muẓaffar al-Dīn apparently spent in the Ilkhanid capital seem to have had a special impact on the mind of Muẓaffar al-Dīn. In the late 13th century, Tabriz was not only the capital of the Ilkhanate, but also one of the cultural, economic and political centres of the Islamic world.[35] In comparison, Kastamonu, with its rudimentary Islamic architecture financed by the Chobanids, seemed like nothing but a rural town on the outskirts of the world, described by a visitor as a rather desolate place (*mawṭin-i nuzūl*).[36] Therefore, in the eyes of a Turkmen warlord such as Muẓaffar al-Dīn, Tabriz would have been a sharp contrast to his hometown.

It appears that Muẓaffar al-Dīn was especially impressed with the cultural life of the Mongol capital, which at the time had some of the most prominent scholars, men of letters and artists in the Islamic world. Consequently, on his return to Kastamonu in 1284, Muẓaffar al-Dīn was now a political ally of both the Mongols and the Seljuq sultan, which allowed him to develop an ambitious policy of literary patronage. Influenced by his experience in the Ilkhanid capital, he actively tried to make Kastamonu into a centre of literary activity that mirrored, to a much lesser extent, Mongol Tabriz and Seljuq Konya.

In terms of prestige, the most remarkable achievement of Muẓaffar al-Dīn was to obtain the dedication of *Ikhtiyārāt-i Muẓaffarī,* an astronomical treatise in Persian by the famous scholar Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311).[37] The circumstances under which this book by such a famous author was named after a rather marginal warlord of a distant border zone are not clear. Niazi has studied this matter and has suggested two possible scenarios in which both the Turkmen ruler and the scholar could have met. One possibility is that they met in Tabriz when Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī paid a visit to the court of the Ilkhans during Muẓaffar al-Dīn's stay in the Mongol capital. The other possibility is that Muẓaffar al-Dīn might have made contact with the Persian scholar and requested the work while passing through Sivas or Malatya, two cities where Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī lived in the second half of the 13th century.[38] Because the *Ikhtiyārāt-i Muẓaffarī* appears to have been composed in 1282, a date when we know that the Chobanid ruler was in Tabriz, the first hypothesis seems more plausible. The proximity between the date of composition of the work and the arrival of Muẓaffar al-Dīn in Tabriz also suggests that the text might not have been commissioned by Muẓaffar al-Dīn but rather dedicated to him after it had already been written. In other words, it seems that an opportunity was recognised by both Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, who certainly received a financial reward for his work, and Muẓaffar al-Dīn, whose name became attached to one of the most prestigious scholars of his time.

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34 Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾīyah*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 635; Aqsarāʾī, *Musāmarat al-akhbār*, ed. Turan, 134.

35 See different contributions in Pfeiffer, *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge.*

36 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Fatih 5406, fols. 101v-102r.

37 This work, written in Persian, is a rescission of two more extensive works by Shīrāzī composed only a few years previously in Arabic; see Niazi, *Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī*, 87-95. For an early manuscript of this work, see Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Fatih 5302, fol. 2r.

38 Niazi, *Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī*, 80-82.

The dedication of Shīrāzī's book was not an isolated act by Muẓaffar al-Dīn. After returning to Kastamonu in 1284, he developed a policy of literary patronage that would continue until the end of the dynasty. That same year, for example, a book entitled *Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla fī qawāʿid al-salṭana*, composed in 683 AH (1284-5 CE) was dedicated to Muẓaffar al-Dīn.[39] Because only one incomplete manuscript survives of this work, its author and place of composition are disputed.[40] However, it appears that the author may have composed the work in the city of Aksaray before offering it to Muẓaffar al-Dīn.[41] Whether the author visited Kastamonu to offer the work or the Chobanid ruler met the author during his trip to Tabriz is difficult to ascertain. The *Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla* is a very different text from that composed by Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī. It includes a rewriting of the famous administrative treatise *Siyar al-Mulūk*, complemented by a particular concern for advising rulers on how to reinforce Islamic values, law and Islamic orthodoxy against the spread of heresies.[42] It contains the earliest descriptions of Antinomian Sufis as heretical groups (*qalandars*), followed by a long didactical exposition of the commonalities between Shafiʿī and Ḥanafī schools of law.

The most prolific of the authors receiving patronage from the Chobanid court was Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī, who not only lived and worked in the Chobanid territories but also played a crucial role in developing a theoretical framework and practical tools for the Turkmen administration of Kastamonu, as will be discussed below. No works by Ḥusām al-Dīn composed prior to the 1280s have survived; he might have been attracted to northwestern Anatolia by the policies of literary patronage initiated by Muẓaffar al-Dīn Chūpān after his return from the Ilkhanid court in 1284. The works composed by Ḥusām al-Dīn differ from those mentioned above in scope and contents. Unlike the astronomical treatise of Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī and the religious component of the *Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla*, Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī's works show a particular interest in administrative literature and a concern for the correct use of language in the administration of the realm. Seven works are attributed to him, although he can really only be credited with authoring six of them.[43] Of these six, two were dedicated to Chobanid rulers, dealing mostly with treatises on *inshāʾ* literature and vocabularies.[44] The first, the

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39 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Turc 1120.

40 The author is possibly Muḥammad al-Khāṭīb, according to the description given by Çelebi, (*Keşf-el-Zunun*, ed. Yaltkaya and Bilge, col. 1259) of another alleged copy of the same work, now lost.

41 Çelebi, *Keşf-el-Zunun*, ed. Yaltkaya and Bilge, col. 1259.

42 De Nicola, Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla, 49-72.

43 The *Toḥfa-yi Ḥusām*, a vocabulary of Persian words translated into Turkish and commonly misattributed to Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī, was authored by Ḥusām b. Ḥasan al-Qūnavī (fl. c. 1400). Boz, Farsça-Türkçe ilk Manzum Sözlük, 69-74.

44 The vocabulary written by Khūʾī is the *Naṣīb al-fityān*, a very popular interlinear translation of the original Arabic work entitled *Niṣāb al-Ṣibyān* by Abū Naṣr Muḥammad Badr al-Dīn Farāhī (d. 1243). The date of composition of this work is unknown. Khūʾī also composed a collection of quatrains entitled *multamasāt*. On this work, see Ḥasanʾzādah, Darbārah-i ādabī āl chūpān, 47-64; Khūʾī, Majmūʿah, ed. ʿAbbāsʾzādah, 129-153. A manuscript of this work has survived in Tehran, Malek Library 1196/4, fols. 114-157.

Nuzhat al-kuttāb wa tuḥfat al-aḥbāb, includes different types of citations from the Qurʾān, the Ḥadīth, advice to Caliphs and Arabic poetry (with Persian translation) that can be used in the writing of letters.[45] This work, composed in 684/1285 and dedicated to Muẓaffar al-Dīn Chūpān, is considered the best of Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī.[46] The second work, the *Qawāʿid al-rasāʾil wa farāʾiḍ al-faḍāʾil* is a manual on diplomatic letter-writing composed in Rajab of 684 AH [1285 CE] and apparently dedicated to Amīr Maḥmūd b. Muẓaffar al-Dīn Chobanid.[47]

Even if not comparable to the cultural effervescence and sophistication of other Islamic cities of the time, the literary patronage of Muẓaffar al-Dīn was not random. Some of these texts had a clear role as legitimizers of the rule of the Chobanids. On the one hand, the work of Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī played a role in elevating the prestige of Muẓaffar al-Dīn as a respected ruler in the political context of Mongol Anatolia. On the other, the *Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla* served to portray the Chobanid *amir* as a rightful Islamic ruler, committed to orthodoxy and diplomatic in bringing together both Shafiʿī and Ḥanafī schools of law. It might be argued that both the *Ikhtiyārāt-i Muẓaffarī* and the *Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla* are *ad hoc* compositions dedicated to Muẓaffar al-Dīn by individuals with whom no further connection to Kastamonu or its rulers can be attested. However, Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī did live and work in the Chobanid territories and left a corpus of administrative literature that provided a theoretical framework and practical tools for the Turkmen administration of the city of Kastamonu at the crucial moment when the Chobanids were moving into the cities and taking full control over the urban settlements of the region. Inspired by his trip to the Ilkhanid capital, Muẓaffar al-Dīn understood that literary patronage could be another important way to consolidate his rule. These authors and their works helped him to legitimize his position beyond the traditional role as a Turkmen military commander. Instead, they offered him the chance to be seen as a ruler interested in the sciences, concerned with religious orthodoxy and preoccupied with the administration of his territories by an urban population that might have questioned both his Islamic credentials and his capacity to rule over the city.

The Role of the ›Persianised Elite‹

Following a wider cultural trend that occurred in different local courts of 14th-century Anatolia, Chobanid literary patronage developed a clear preference for Persian as a literary language.[48] The use of Persian as the main literary language of works dedicated to the court was favoured by the migration of men of letters, scholars and religious personalities with a Persian cultural background from the eastern parts of the Islamic world to Anatolia beginning in the late 12th century. The consolidation of a social class of Persian origin in medieval Anatolia has traditionally been connected with the development of Islam in urban settlements across Asia Minor.[49] The presence of these individuals sharing a common Persian background (or instructed in Persian literature) has been documented across medieval

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45 For an edition of the *Nuzhat al-kuttāb*, see Khūʾī, *Majmūʿah*, ed. ʿAbbāsʾzādah, 155-219.
46 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Fatih 5406, fol. 33r.
47 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Fatih 5406, fol. 60r. For an edition of the *Qawāʿid al-rasāʾil*, see Khūʾī, *Majmūʿa*, ed. ʿAbbāsʾzādah, 222-294.
48 Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*, 175; Riyāḥī, *Zabān va ādab*.
49 On the presence of individuals of Iranian origin in the early Turkic conquest of Anatolia, see Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*, 33.

Anatolia. Recent research has suggested that these individuals did not act in isolation but rather formed an interconnected network of literate men sharing similar common cultural backgrounds, religious affiliations and career aspirations.[50] Their role in the social fabric of urban Anatolia and their relationship with the local Turkmen rulers of Asia Minor is poorly documented and has generated debate among scholars.[51]

However, the relatively rich literary corpus that survives from Chobanid Kastamonu helps us to visualise the role played by some of these individuals in securing patronage in urban settlements. All the men that dedicated works to the Chobanid rulers occupied (or were willing to occupy) positions in the administration of Anatolia. For example, Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī was famously appointed as Qaḍī of both Malatya and Sivas, either by the Mongol official Shams al-Dīn Juwaynī or by the governor of Anatolia Muʿīn al-Dīn Sulaymān Parwānā (d. 1277).[52] Similarly, based on the works he wrote, we know that Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī would ascend in the Chobanid administration to become a secretary (*munshī*) at the court in Kastamonu. In the *Nuzhat al-kuttāb wa tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, dedicated to Muẓaffar al-Dīn, he mentions how he wrote this work for the pleasure of the ruler but also in the hope that, once the book was studied and became useful, he would be given the opportunity to enter into the service of the Chobanid ruler. Speaking of himself, he expressed his wishes in this way: »This poor man [Ḥusām al-Dīn] has risen from the lowest humility (*ḥaẓīẓ-i khumūl*) to the highest degree of fame (*ẕurwat-i darajat-i shuhrat*) by the appointment of His Supreme Highness (*ḥaẓrat-i ʿulyāsh*) [Muẓaffar al-Dīn] to the position of scribe (*manṣab-i kitābat*).«[53]

Whereas some from this literate class succeeded, others failed, or at least, it is unknown whether they ever reached the position they aspired to. A large part of the of the *Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla* is an adaptation of the famous *Siyar al-Mulūk*, a famous treatise on government produced in the 12th century, with the aforementioned section on heresies added at the end. Nonetheless, the author never mentions his sources, writes the text as if this were his original work, removes the name of the original author and replaces the original dedicatee of the work with the name of Muẓaffar al-Dīn of Kastamonu in the qaṣīda that closes the work.[54] Surely, the author of the *Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla* was willing to produce a book that suited the taste of his patron, but he also seemed to have a more prosaic objective: the author was especially concerned with proving to his patron his capabilities in writing Persian and Arabic, his deep understanding of Islam and his knowledge of various aspects of court administration. It has been established that the author of the work most probably had a religious background. Therefore, he seems to have anticipated not only a financial reward in presenting this work to the ruler of Kastamonu, but also a position among the religious authorities at the court.

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50 De Nicola, Letters from Mongol Anatolia, 77-90.

51 Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*, 46.

52 Walbridge, *Science of Mystic Light*, 181-183.

53 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Fatih 5406, fol. 33r; Khūʾī, *Majmūʿah*, ed. ʿAbbāsʾzādah, 158-159.

54 For the *qaṣīda*, see Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Turc 1120, fol. 69r-v; Khismatulin, Attribution of an anonymous qasida.

On occasions, the intentions become rather evident in the text itself: »(…) [The King should] appoint wise and reasonable people to his court (*dīvān*) and chambers (*īwān*), so whatever he does, he does it in consultation with wise and elderly people, [those who are] experienced and who know the job.« And then, the author adds that the king should command that »all the religious scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*), people of virtue (*ahl-i afẓāl*), the pious (*dainidār*) and devout (*zah*) should preserve their ranks according to their position.«[55]

The name of Muḥammad al-Khaṭīb, possible author of the *Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla*, does not appear in any other source connected to Kastamonu, and consequently, we do not know if he ever accomplished his goal of working for the court. However, we do know that he was not alone in his pursuit of a better professional future. A collection of letters (*munshaʾāt*) written by a certain Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥaqq, a physician who lived in northern Anatolia in the second half of the 13th century, showcase the struggles and complications that these men of letters endured in trying to secure a position in the administration of northern Anatolia.[56] In some of his writing he complains about the difficulties he had to overcome while working in the region of Zalifre (modern Safranbolu), a city over which control was disputed between the Chobanids and the Byzantine Empire in the 13th century, before beginning a long journey in search of work across different urban settlements of northern Anatolia. In some of these missives, Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥaqq describes his travels visiting not only Kastamonu but also Sinop, Tokat, Samsun or Bafra, where he approaches various local Turkmen rulers, trying to secure a role in the administration.[57] Unlike Khaṭīb, we know that he secured different positions both as a physician and, thanks to his literary ability, as the Head of Religious Endowments (*Daftar-i dīvān-i awqāf*).[58]

As I have shown elsewhere, the case of Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥaqq or Muḥammad al-Khatīb are not isolated stories, but a common pattern that shows a network of men belonging to a Persianised literary elite who attempted to capitalise on the need that local Turkmen rulers of Anatolia had for their literary skills.[59] Some of the letters included in Saʿd al-Dīn's compendium have the name of a certain Ḥusām al-Dīn as the addressee. Recent research has suggested convincingly a possible identification of this person with Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī, the prolific author of Chobanid Kastamonu.[60] The letters addressed to him include commentaries on classical Persian literature, impressions of new literary composition and suggestions about how to improve career prospects in the fragmented administration of Seljuq Anatolia. Unfortunately, only the letters written by Saʿd al-Dīn al-Ḥaqq replying to Ḥusām al-Dīn have survived in this collection and only scattered information about the letters of the latter can be inferred from the responses of the former. However, if the identification is correct, this compendium reinforces the idea of a close network of intellectually active men with a shared Persian cultural background who were actively participating in the administration of different urban settlements in 13th-century Anatolia.

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55   Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Turc 1120, fol. 118v.

56   De Nicola, *Letters from Mongol Anatolia*, 80-84.

57   De Nicola, *Trip of a medieval physician*.

58   Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Fatih 5406, fol. 120r.

59   De Nicola, *Letters from Mongol Anatolia*.

60   Yakupoğlu and Musalı, *Selçuklu inşâ sanatı*, 73-74.

Members of this network of literate Muslim men, educated in Persian and Arabic and trained in the art of administration, played a crucial role in facilitating Turkmen control over urban settlements in northern Anatolia. However, we do not know whether these works dedicated to Turkmen rulers ever made it out of the rulers' personal libraries. For example, did Muẓaffar al-Dīn Chūpān or his court ever implement the advice found in the *Fusṭāṭ al-ʿadāla* or the elaborate *Nuzhat al-kuttāb* composed for him? Or did these works only serve the authors, as proof of their literary capabilities, in their efforts to achieve positions in the court? The answer may be found not in the most elaborate works of Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī dedicated to the Chobanids, but rather in the »lesser« works he composed while part of the administration of Kastamonu.

Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī as an urban agent of medieval Kastamonu

It is unclear whether the templates prepared by Khūʾī in the *Nuzhat al-kuttāb* or the *Qawāʿid al-rasāʾil* were ever used in real diplomatic endeavours or whether they were only a literary exercise produced by the author for the amusement of his patrons. We know that in other parts of the medieval Islamic world, *inshāʾ* literature was often a genre patronised for its elaborate prose and the possibility of elevating the prestige of the ruler rather than for its application to daily administration.[61] However, the literary legacy of Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī includes other works that, although dealing with topics similar to those two, offer a different perspective on the relevance which men such as Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī had for the administration of Chobanid Kastamonu. These works are shorter and not dedicated to rulers but rather to members of his family or social class.

The *Rusūm al-rasāʾil wa nujūm al-faḍāʾil*, for example, was composed in 690 AH (1291 CE).[62] Only one copy of this work has survived to our day, but in the preface the author mentions that he composed this work for beginners (*mubtadiyān*) in the job of writing and on request by a group of benevolent and sincere friends (*muḥibbān-i munʿam va mukhlaṣān*) to help them in the art of administration.[63] Another work, entitled *Ghunyat al-ṭālib wa munyat al-kātib*,[64] is very similar in contents to the *Qawāʿid al-rasāʾil* but presented as an abridged version,[65] apparently composed in Rabīʿ II of 709 AH (1309 CE). The author tells us that he dedicated this work to his son Naṣr al-Dīn ibn Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī but that his father (*vālid*) inspired the composition.[66] Hence, unlike those texts dedicated to rulers, these two works seem to have been conceived not to embellish the personal book collection of a ruler but rather as useful literary tools that could serve the daily administration of the kingdom while consolidating the presence of family and friends in different court offices.

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61 Paul, Inshāʾ collections as a source, 535-550; Paul, Some Mongol Inshāʾ collections, 277-285; Peacock, Niẓām al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, 13-38.

62 Edition of the *Rusūm al-rasāʾil* in Khūʾī, *Majmūʿah*, ed. ʿAbbāsʾzādah, 343-373.

63 Istanbul, Hacı Selim Ağa library, Nurbanu 122, fol. 1b.

64 Edition of the *Ghunyat al-ṭālib* in Khūʾī, *Majmūʿah*, ed. ʿAbbāsʾzādah, 295-342. Both works have also been edited by Adnan Sadık Erzi; see Khūʾī, *Gunyetuʾl-kātib ve munyetuʾṭ-ṭālib*, ed. Erzi.

65 Turan, *Türkiye Selçuklulari*, 176.

66 Özergin, Selçuklu sanatçisi, 229; *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, online edition, s.v. »Ḥasan b. ʿAbd-al-Moʾmen«, accessed on 3 March 2021: www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hasan-b-abd-al-momen.

In both the *Ghunyat al-ṭālib* and the *Rusūm al-rasāʾil* Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī reproduces a schematic view of the structure that can be used to organise the administration of the realm. However, his design of a hierarchical administration is not new but is based on a traditional Seljuq idea of social order that is readapted for his time and context.[67] In the *Ghunyat al-ṭālib*, Khūʾī presents society as divided into different groups (*ṣinf*), with each group divided into two different strata (*ṭabaqāt*).[68] The first group consists of the administrative ranks of a realm, with an upper stratum reserved for members of the court and the highest officials, and a lower stratum consisting of administrators generally found in provincial areas. The second group includes members of society that occupy an important role for their religious or literary capabilities – the group in which Ḥusām al-Dīn himself and other members of the literary elite would be located. A final group, including the family connection related to the person in question, closes the diagram of an ideal society.

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67 Korobeinikov, Byzantium and the Turks, 84-86.

68 The term *ṣinf* (pl. *aṣnāf*) is often associated with urban artisans and guilds. In this case, however, Khūʾī uses the term to refer to a social group or administrative hierarchy in the court. See *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, s.v. »Ṣinf«, accessed on 3 March 2021: dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_1085.

1. Category (*ṣinf*)	1. Stratum (*ṭabaqat*)	1. Sultans (*salāṭin*).
		2. Kings (*mulūk*).
		3. Empresses (*mukhaddarāt*).
		4. Viziers (*vuzarāʾ*).
		5. Atabegs (*ātābik*).
		6. Sultan's deputies (*nāʾib-i ḥaẓrat-i sulṭān*).
		7. Generals of the army (*lashkarkish mimālik*).
		8. Office of the treasury (*mustawfī*).
		9. Inspectors (*mushrif*) of the kingdom.
		10. Royal inspectors (*nāẓir-i malik*).
		11. Royal family (*muqarrabāni ḥaẓrat*).
		12. Treasurers (*khāzin*).
		13. Ambassadors (*rasūlān*).
		14. Translators (*tarājimah*).
		15. Army commanders (*amīr ʿāriẓān*).
		16. Imperial secretaries (*ṭughrāyī*).
		17. Administrators of religious foundations (*mutawalī*).
		18. Minister of Justice (*amir-i dād*).[69]
		19. Army commanders (*amir-i sipah*).
		20. Castle guardians (*kutvālī*).
		21. Prefects or governors (*amir-i ʿalam*).
		22. Army inspector (*ʿārizī*).
		23. Soldiers (*sīpāhiyān*).
	2. Stratum (*ṭabaqat*)	1. Deputies [of local governors] (*nāyib*).
		2. Princes or provincial governors (*vālī*).
		3. Provincial inspectors (*mushrif*).
		4. Local inspectors (*nāẓir*).
		5. Tax collectors (*qābiẓ*).
		6. Āmir-i Ikdishān.[70]
		7. Notables (*khwājagān*).
		8. Clerks or administrators of the court (*ʿummāl*).
		9. Supervisor of markets and trade (*muḥtarifah*).

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69 Could also be described as Chief Magistrate.

70 The origin of the term is obscure. It appears to be a word brought from Turkish into Persian that, as an adjective, refers to someone of a mixed religious or ethnic origin. As an administrative office, the term appears in Aflākī, *Manāqib*, 2, ed. Yaziçi, 751, trans. O'Kane, *Feats*, 652.

2. Category (ṣinf)	1. Stratum (ṭabaqat)	1. Judges (quẓāt).
		2. Army judges (qāẓī-yi lashkar).
		3. Islamic jurists (muftī) and teachers (arbāb-i tadrīs).
		4. Preachers (khuṭṭāb).
		5. Descendants of the Prophet (sādāt).
		6. Shaykhs and religious personalities (mashāyikh-i va zuhhād).
		7. Advisors (muẕakkirān).
		8. Deputy judges (nauwāb-i quẓāt).
		9. Lower rank teachers (muʿīdān).
		10. Lower rank mutawalī.
		11. Ḥāfiẓ.[71]
	2. Stratum (ṭabaqat)	1. Physicians and doctors (iṭibbāʾ va ḥakīm).
		2. Astronomers or Astrologers (munajjimān).
		3. Poets (shuʿarā).
		4. Learned men and elegant letter writers (ādabā va ahl-i inshāʾ).
		5. Relatives on the father's side (aqārib-i pidar).
		6. Sons (farzand).
		7. Brothers (badudar).
		8. Sons (valadah).
		9. Daughters (dukhtar).
		10. Sisters (khuāhar).
		11. Spouses (mankūḥat).
		12. Female singers (maghniyat).
		13. Other women in the court (dar marātib-i zanān)
		14. Servants (khuddām).
		15. Veiled [women] (pardadār).

Table 1: Offices listed in the Ghunyat al-ṭālib wa munyat al-kātib.

In Khūʾī's schematic representation of the administration, each office is accompanied by a short formulaic address mixing Persian and Arabic to be used when talking to the person holding that particular office. In other words, Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī provides useful templates for his professional colleagues (secretaries, scribes, officers) and job apprentices, in order to facilitate the development of a coherent protocol for written communication across the administration. Nevertheless, the diagram resulting from the stratification of these posts also reflects a world-view regarding how the court should be organised, a world-view to be transmitted to court officials working for the rulers of Kastamonu. It is not surprising that, in the first group, the author places the higher ranks in the central administration at the top of the hierarchy, with those ranks dealing with regional administration in the second stratum. Presumably, this helps to situate the relationship between the central administration in the first stratum of the group (whether it is the Seljuqs or the Ilkhanate) and the local or provincial official in the second stratum, which could be applied to the region of Kastamonu. The

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71   Generally referring to a person who has memorised the Quran, but may also refer to an imam in general.

second group lists the local administration in terms of justice, religion and economy, but also emphasises the importance of local teachers, men of letters, poets and family members. The two *strata* in this second group represent, in my view, a proposal for the organisation of the administration at a local level that Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī is promoting in the region. The list of ranks mentioned in the second group would resonate with members of professions often associated with urban centres, who had an important role to play in the Islamic community.

This schematic presentation is largely based on the traditional model of administration developed during the Great Seljuq period.[72] Although some of these offices might have remained in use in certain parts of the Ilkhanate or at the court of the Rum Seljuqs, with the consequent need for the address formulae to be used, it is unlikely that the model was fully deployed in the more humble administration of Chobanid Kastamonu. Perhaps a more accurate picture of the specific institutions that Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī and his fellow administrators dealt with on a daily basis appears in two sections of the *Rusūm al-rasāʾil*, the other work that he composed for his peers.

In parts three and four of this work, entitled respectively »Court reports on various positions (*dar taqrīrāt-i divānī bih munāṣab-i mukhtalif*)« and »Reports on legal positions (*dar taqrīrāt bih manāṣib-i sharʿī*)«, a number of administrative posts are listed, one after the other, to serve as a guide for the appointment of individuals to these offices. Instead of formulae for writing letters, however, this list serves to explain the role and responsibilities of a given position in the overall administrative structure. Each report (*taqrīrāt*) includes the word *fulān* in places where the scribe using the text would include the corresponding name of the person being appointed. The structure of these texts is comprehensive, explaining the reasons for appointment and the merits of the person, as well as emphasising how the new appointee should carry out his new duties by, for example, exerting all his physical and mental effort (*ijtihād*) on the task.[73]

What is relevant for this essay, however, is that the work presents only a selection of appointments and omits many of the positions listed in the aforementioned schema provided in the *Ghunyat al-ṭālib*. Here, in the *Rusūm al-rasāʾil*, only sixteen specific ranks are provided by Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī. The motives behind this selection are not explained in the text; thus, we do not know why these particular positions (and not others) have been included in this section. However, since the text was composed to help his professional colleagues and to provide material for training officials during his time in Kastamonu, the selection may well indicate those posts that actually needed to be filled during the period of Chobanid rule. The offices included in these sections of the *Rusūm al-rasāʾil* are as follows:

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72 The Great Seljuqs remained an important source of legitimation across Anatolia in the 13th century; see Peacock, Seljuq legitimacy, 79-95.

73 Khūʾī, *Majmūʿah*, ed. ʿAbbāsʾzādah, 358.

N.	Name of the Office	Explanation of the Duties
Appointments included in part 3		
1	Ziʿāmat	The ruler of a fief granted by the sultan to govern and extract taxes.
2	Kutwālī	The person responsible for protecting the common people within the wall of a castle or citadel (*qilāʿ*).
3	Niyābat	The vice-regent or deputy who was able to act in the name of the *Sipahsālār*. In Seljuq times, the holder of this office functioned as a counsellor to the ruler.[74]
4	Iyālat	The governor of a region responding to the *Sipahsālār*.
5	Inshāʾ	A scribe or secretary.
6	Ashrāf	A notable member of the council responsible for determining tax amounts and increasing private income.
7	Nāẕirī	An inspector.
8	Ikdishān	The head of the city responsible for managing commercial life.
9	Qābiẕī	A tax collector.
10	Iḥtisāb and ʿummāl	Agents in charge of collecting taxes from markets and workers.
Appointments included in part 4		
11	Quẕāt	A judge.
12	Tadrīs-i madrasa	A madrasa instructor.
13	Khaṭābat	A religious preacher.
14	Ṭabībī	A physician.
15	Shaykh-i khāniqāh	The head of a Sufi hospice.
16	Tawaliyat	The administrator or procurator of a religious or charitable foundation.

Table 2: Offices listed in the Rusūm al-rasāʾil wa nujūm al-faẓāʾil.

The roles of administrative offices and the duties of officials cannot be easily extrapolated from the classical Seljuq period to medieval Anatolia. The terms used to refer to these ranks often referred to different roles in Iran or Anatolia and had different connotations when used in the classical Seljuq administration versus later historical periods.[75] Unfortunately, Khūʾī is not precise in describing the exact duties of these offices; his indications of the actual administrative tasks of these institutions are vague, being more interested in stressing, instead, the moral virtues required by the office holder willing to access these offices. However, the selection of offices listed here includes a number of characteristics that allow us to speculate on how these positions would have served the administration of medieval Kastamonu.

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[74]   In Ilkhanid Iran, the *nāʾib* acted as deputy to the vizier. Spuler, *Mongolen in Iran*, 309-310.

[75]   Korobeinikov, Byzantium and the Turks, 84.

Different institutions (i.e. *niyābat* and *iyālat*) are specifically subordinated to the authority of the *Sipāhsālār*, the title received by Muẓaffar al-Dīn from the Mongol Ilkhan Arghun after his visit to Tabriz in the early 1280s.[76] This suggests that, while many of the offices listed in the *Ghunyat al-ṭālib* may be only a theoretical representation of society based on an ideal Seljuq past, those included in this part of the *Rusūm al-rasāʾil* may well be specifically tailored to Chobanid Kastamonu. In the Seljuq context, for example, the *ziʿāmat* is understood to refer to the person in charge of controlling a large fief.[77] However, while the post (in the classical understanding of this office) needed to be assigned by the sultan, the same institution in Khūʾī's work is placed under the jurisdiction of the Chobanid ruler. Since the Chobanids were expanding their domains in the late 13th century, specifically adding territories on their western frontier at the expense of Byzantium, this institution could have provided the rulers the privilege of appointing men to be in charge of fiefs in the newly conquered lands.[78]

Additionally, the appointments selected for this section of Khūʾī's work are associated with urban settlements. The appointments listed in part three pay special attention to the organisation of government, the regulation of trade and the fiscal administration of the city. While some of these appointments – such as the *niyābat*, the *iyālat*, the *inshāʾ* or even the council of notables (*ashrāf*) – seem to be conceived as political roles, others are clearly associated with the collection of revenues for the ruler's treasury (*nāẓirī*, *qābiẓī*, *iḥtisāb* and *ʿummāl*). Furthermore, although the aforementioned Byzantine castle remained the main building in the city of Kastamonu throughout the 13th century, it is possible that the responsibility of the *kutwālī* for the Chobanid capital was not limited to the castle alone, but rather included the entire citadel. In this case, Khūʾī might be providing the Chobanid rulers with an institution with which the new Turkmen ruler could establish direct control over the urban population now under his jurisdiction.

The office of the *ikdishān* also requires some special consideration. It is generally considered an urban institution in charge of collecting taxes on trade and organising the defence of the city against an enemy siege. The meaning of the word seems to carry an inter-racial component, suggesting that the appointee was selected from people of mixed origin.[79] Men descending from Turkic fathers and local Christian mothers were especially promoted to this position across medieval Anatolia. They seem to have acquired a high position in different urban settlements in Asia Minor and their mixed origin may have played an important role in facilitating tax collection among the culturally diverse population that inhabited medieval Anatolian cities.[80]

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76 Ibn Bībī, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾiyah*, ed. Muttaḥidīn, 635.

77 *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. »Zeâmet«; *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, s.v. »Ziʿāmet«, accessed on 3 March 2021: dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_8163.

78 See, for example, the Chobanid military campaigns against two Byzantine castles in the bay of Gideros, some 150 kilometres northwest of Kastamonu on the coast of the Black Sea. The letter of victory commemorating this event is included in one of Ḥusām al-Dīn's works; see Khūʾī, *Majmūʿah*, ed. ʿAbbāsʾzādah, 282. Peacock, Seljuk sultanate of Rum, 267-287; Musali and Yakupoğlu, Çobanoğulları Uc Beyliği Dönemine, 77-134.

79 The person holding the office might be of mixed ethnic background (partly Turkmen and partly something else); see Aflākī, *Feats*, trans. O'Kane, 741.

80 *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. »İğdiş«.

While the appointments listed in part three are more concerned with organising political power and economic administration, the fourth part of the *Rusūm al-rasāʾil* is centred on religious appointments. As we have seen, religious buildings were not constructed in the city of Kastamonu until the 1270s, but only a few decades after the confirmation of Muẓaffar al-Dīn Chūpān, the city of Kastamonu needed to appoint personnel to take care of religious institutions that had been established in the city. The reference to judges (*quẓāt*), instructors for religious schools (*tadrīs-i madrasa*), preachers for the mosques (*khaṭābat*) or individuals responsible for Sufi hospices (*shaykh-i khāniqāh*) and religious foundations (*tawalīt*) suggests that at the turn of the 14th century, when this work was composed, a consolidation of Islamic institutions was well underway in medieval Kastamonu. Because they were not conceived as literary masterpieces for the satisfaction of a patron, but rather as practical manuals for the administration of the realm, both the *Ghunyat al-ṭālib* and the *Rusūm al-rasāʾil* bear testimony to the simultaneous processes of Islamisation and Turkmen appropriation of urban centres that occurred in northwestern Anatolia under the Chobanids. They offer a social and administrative model based on an idealised Seljuq past, as well as providing pragmatic documentary evidence of the effort to consolidate the Chobanid administration in an urban settlement such as Kastamonu, which, by the end of the 13th century, was being claimed by the Turkmen rulers who had once acted solely as military protectors of the urban population. Ḥusām al-Dīn Khūʾī and other members of this administrative elite rooted in a Perso-Islamic tradition were crucial in facilitating these processes.

Conclusion

The lack of references to the region of Kastamonu in the main narrative sources of the period has left northwestern Anatolia out of the larger historical debates about the relationship between Turkmen rulers and urban settlements. However, we hope that by giving an overview of some of the archaeological and literary evidence surviving from the period, we have shed some light on how this interaction evolved throughout the 13th century. The proliferation of shrines and the foundation of modest rural mosques in the area during the first half of the 13th century shows that the Turkmen population initially remained outside the city, inhabiting the countryside outside Kastamonu and controlling the trade routes that connected the Black Sea with Central Anatolia and Byzantium. Because no Christian buildings survive inside the city of Kastamonu for this earlier period, with the exception of the renovated Byzantine castle, it would be misleading to make a clear distinction between a Turco-Muslim rural population and a Christian urban population before the 1270s. However, if Muslim populations lived inside the citadel prior to that date, they left no monumental evidence that has been discovered so far. Instead, the Muslim (and especially Turkmen) presence seems clear after this time, when the presence of Chobanid rulers in the urban landscape of Kastamonu and other cities of the region becomes apparent.

Beginning in the early 1280s, and coinciding with the ascension of Muẓaffar al-Dīn Chūpān to the throne, the religious transformation of Kastamonu into a Muslim territory documented in the archaeological evidence is mirrored in the textual evidence. Literary patronage becomes a way to authenticate the political recognition obtained from the larger regional powers in Konya and Tabriz, legitimising Turkmen rule in the eyes of the local urban population. In addition, the active role of these rulers in financing the production of literary works in Persian visualises the presence of an administrative elite that appears to play a crucial role in providing the knowledge, the manpower and the theoretical tools to facilitate the establishment of Turkmen rule in cities such as Kastamonu.

Overall, both architectural and literary sources provide evidence of the presence of Turkmen rulers and a *Persianised* literary and religious elite acting as agents in facilitating Chobanid rule in 13th-century Kastamonu. It is impossible, with the available sources, to ascertain whether the urban Christian populations saw the proliferation of Islamic buildings as an imposition or whether the appearance of these buildings was the unavoidable culmination of a process of Islamisation which the Chobanids only accompanied as rulers. However, whereas details on the interaction between Christian populations and the Chobanid rulers is missing from the available sources, the policies of literary patronage initiated by Muẓaffar al-Dīn reveal the different agencies actively participating in Chobanid Kastamonu. The architectural legacy and the production of a rich literary corpus of scientific, religious and administrative literature stand as evidence of a collective agency that consciously or unconsciously shaped the landscape and social fabric of the city of Kastamonu and its surroundings during the 13th century.

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»These are the narratives of bygone years«: Conquest of a Fortress as a Source of Legitimacy

Dimitri Korobeinikov*

In 1502 or 1503 Kemāl paşa-zāde (d. 1534), also known as Ibn-i Kemāl, the future Şeyh'ül-İslam (chief Muslim judge) under Sulaymān the Magnificent, described the world of Byzantium which the Ottomans had conquered. There, he reproduced the realia of the »fortress past« of the Ottomans. Ibn-i Kemāl described Byzantium as a commonwealth of fortresses, each headed by a *tekvur* (»emperor«), which was at odds with historical accuracy. This pointed to the period of the second half of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century as a time of transition, when the cities in the frontier zone in Anatolia were sometimes reduced to the size of a fortress, and their inhabitants were forced to find a new location. The extant tales about the initial fortress, from which a new state formation (*beylik*) had begun, and the stories about the conquests of the chain of neighboring fortresses, per se reflected the growing importance of the small cities as chief colonization centers in the boundary zone in Asia Minor. The vision of the »fortresses' past«, still remembered at the time of Sulaymān the Magnificent, even affected the imperial aspirations of the Ottomans and their self-representation as the new masters of the conquered lands.

Keywords: Ottomans, Byzantium, Karamanoğulları, Karamanids, Asia Minor, Ak-koyunlu, Sulaymān the Magnificent, Ibn Kemal, Bender inscription, Cilician Armenia

The Ottoman Memory
In 1502 or 1503 a professor (*müderris*) at the medrese of 'Ali Beg in Edirne, Kemāl paşa-zāde (d. 1534), also known as Ibn-i Kemāl, the future Şeyh'ül-İslam (chief Muslim judge of the Ottoman Empire) under Sulaymān the Magnificent (1520-1566), wrote his famous *History of the Ottomans*. His work was considered as a Turkish counterpart of the *Hasht Bihisht*, the history of the Ottoman dynasty in Persian, of Idris Bidlisi (d. 1520), who completed his chronicle a bit later, in 1506. Both works summarized the previous achievements of early Ottoman historiography. When describing Mehmed II Fatih's campaign against Trebizond in 1461, Ibn-i Kemāl gave a short explanation to his readers for why the Sultan should have undertaken the long and laborious campaign outside the easternmost borders of the Ottoman Empire:

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The famous nation (*taife*), called Romans (*Erum dimekle*), from the malicious faith of the Christians, of old took (*eline girübdurdı*) the lands of the climate of Rūm (*iklim-i Rūm*), famous for its pleasant weather and charm of landscape. They lived in the littoral of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, in the fortified places, and every region (*nahiye*) had its own independent ruler (*bir müstakil vali*), whom they customarily called Tekvur, and whom they showed submission and paid land tax (*haraj*) and military taxes (*rüsum-ı sipahı*). Some time ago some of those beys were defeated (*makhur idüb*), and the [Sultan] wanted to expel the rest, as he wished to raise high the banners of the sultanate inside the aforementioned community (*millet*) of the false Scripture. According to that plan he first destroyed by the hand of war the Tekvur[1] of Istanbul, who was the seminal ruler in the house (*re'isi belgi re'si menzilesindeydi*) of that community. Then he forced to bow one by one the Tekvur of İnöz, the Tekvur of Mora and the Tekvur of Amasra...[2].

The statement was noteworthy for its total dismissal of Byzantium as a single political and cultural entity, though the idea behind it was the title of the Ottoman sultan as *Sultan-ı Iklim-i Rūm* (›Sultan of the climate of Rum‹),[3] albeit the latter was based on geographical considerations: the ›climate of Rum‹, strictly speaking, meant the territory of the former Roman empire but hardly the empire itself, as the ›climate‹ suggested no political connotations. However, the ›climate of Rum‹ in Ibn-i Kemāl came as a distorted political entity. This came as no surprise. For the Ottoman historical tradition, be it the *Tevārīkh-i āl-i ʿOsmān* of ʿĀşıkpāşāzāde (composed in 1485 and continued until 1502) or the *Kitâb-i Cihân-nümâ* of Meḥmed Neşri (composed in the 1490s), does not recognize Byzantium as a single unity. On the contrary, the Ottomans created the unified political space out of the possessions of the various *tekvurs*, each a master of a city: of Harman-Kaya, of Bilecik, of Bursa, to name but a few.

Ibn-i Kemāl's statement was by no means limited to a declaration of the military superiority of the Ottoman Empire, which, by way of conquest, made harmonious and unified the distorted political landscape of Christian possessions. That the Ottomans might have had a different view was demonstrated by Sultan Sulaymān the Magnificent, who called himself the shah of Baghdad in ʿIraq (*Shah-i Bagdād-i ʿIrāq*), the Caesar of Rome (*qayṣar-i Rūm*), and the sultan in Egypt (*Miṣra* (i.e. *Mısıra*) *Sulṭān*) in the inscription in the fortress of Bender (Bendery, Tighina) in Moldova, AH 945 (29 May 1538-18 May 1539).[4] The title *qayṣar-i Rūm* (Caesar of Rome) was a traditional designation of the Byzantine emperor in Persian and Ottoman sources (from the Arabic *al-qayṣar al-Rūm*).

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1   *Takwūr* (*t'agawor, tākvar, tekfur, tekvur*) was a traditional Turkish designation for a Christian ruler, usually before 1453, from the Armenian, *t'agawor*, ›king‹.

2   İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-ı Osman*, ed. Turan, 180.

3   Nuri Yurdusev, Ottoman Attitude, 33.

4   Marks, *K istorii Benderskoi kreposti*, 7-8; Sapozhnikov and Levchuk, Iz istorii Benderskoi kreposti, 306-337, accessed on 22 April 2020: docplayer.ru/57202915-Iz-istorii-benderskoy-kreposti-k-100-letiyu-knigi-n-a-marksa.html; Guboglu, L'inscription turque de Bender , 175-187; Çulpan, Moldavya'da Bender Kalesi Kitabesi, 49-51 (881-883); Eyice, Bender Kalesi, accessed on 24 April 2020: islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/bender-kalesi. The inscription in Bender is popular enough to have been cited in Turkish newspapers – sometimes with the translation and the picture of the inscription. Cf. Karakaş, Kanuni'nin kitabesi 101 yıl sonra yerinde, accessed on 30 May 2020: www.milliyet.com.tr/gundem/kanuni-nin-kitabesi-101-yil-sonra-yerinde-2833045. The translation of the inscription: »*Ben Allah'ın kuluyum, bu dünyanın sultanıyım. Tanrı'nın inayetiyle Ümmet-i Muhammed'in başındayım. Allah'ın faziletleri ve Muhammed'in mucizeleri benimle beraber gelirler. Adına Mekke ve Medine'de hutbe okunan Süleyman'ım ben. Ben, Bağdat'ta şah, Bizans diyarlarında kayser, Mısır'da sultanım. Donanmalarını Akdeniz, Mağrip ve Hind'e yollayan sultanım. Macar taht ve tacını alan ve onları bir kuluna bağışlayan sultan benim. Voyvoda Petru başkaldırdı, ancak atımın ayakları onu toz eyledi; Boğdan'ı da fethettim. Sene 945 Kaleyi yapan tarihini yazan Osman'ın soyundan gelen Süleyman (Hicri 945/ Miladi 1538).*«

Sulaymān saw himself as a successor of the Byzantine emperors of old,[5] though how exactly he expressed this depended greatly on the language employed by the respective department of the Ottoman chancery. For example, the Greek chancery of the sultan employed the Byzantine (or rather Byzantinized) translations of the Ottoman titles, e.g. Mehmed II Fatih (1444-1446; 1451-1481) conferred on himself the title »the great *authentes* (›ruler‹) and the great emir« (*ὁ μέγας αὐθέντης κ(αὶ) μέγας ἁμοιράς*) in his Greek charters,[6] though, following the ḥadīth »If *qayṣar* perishes, there will be no *qayṣar* after him« (which was emphatically rendered as »the *qayṣar* will perish, and there will be no *qayṣar* after him«, سيهلك قيصر و لا قيصر بعده, after the conquest of Constantinople),[7] he usually did not use the title in his Ottoman charters.[8] His son Bayezid II (1481-1512) called himself, besides his father's title *μέγας αὐθέντης*,[9] »Sultan Bayezid khan, by the grace of God the greatest *autokrator* in both Asia and Europe«, *Σουλτὰν Μπαγιαζετ χὰν θ(εο)ῦ χάρητι μέγιστος αὐτοκράτωρ ἀμφοτέρων τῶν ἠπείρων Ἀσίας τε καὶ Εὐρώπης.*[10] Its variant »*autokrator* of the East and the West«, *αὐτοκράτωρ Ἀνατολῆς καὶ*

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5   Abrahamowicz, Osmanskii sultan kak vostochnorimskii imperator, 103-105.

6   See, for example, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana* 3, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 293; *Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Miscellanea documenti turchi*, 1454-1813, b.1 (accessed on 14 July 2020), document 1: *Meḥmed II's letter to the Greek Archons of Morea*, p. 1 (26 December 1454), www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=39572 (on the letter, see Wright »Eskisinden Daha Gönençli Olansınız«, 34-37); document 2: *Ahdname. The Treaty of Constantinople between Venice and Meḥmed II*, p. 1 (25 January 1479), www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=39573 (see Wright and MacKay, When the Serenissima, 269); document 3: *After receiving Giovanni Dario the sultan announces the conclusion of peace and sends Lütfi bey to Venice as his representative*, p. 1 (29 January 1479), www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=37555; document 6: *Meḥmed II's letter to Doge Giovanni Mocenigo after the mission of Ambassador Benedetto Trevisan; permission for the citizens of Venice to travel in Ottoman domains*, p. 1 (7 October1479), www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=37558; document 10: *Meḥmed II's letter to Doge Giovanni Mocenigo on the border disputes between Venice and the Ottoman Empire,* p. 1 (7 January 1480), www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=37562

7   Gelibolulu Muṣṭafa 'Ālī, *Künhü'l-Aḫbār*, ed. Hüdai Şentürk, 53.

8   Köhbach, Çasar oder imperaṭor?, 231-232. The ḥadīth can be found in al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. The translation, trans. Muhsin Khan, vol. 4, 3027 (book 56:157), 3120-3121 (book 57:8), 3618 (book 61:25), pp. 165, 217, 492-493; vol. 8, 6629-6630 (83:3), p. 332; al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, ed. Ṣuhayb al-Karamī, 3027, 3120-3121, 3618, 6629-6630, pp. 579, 596, 692, 1267. Cf. Sahih al-Bukhari, 3027 (sunnah.com/bukhari/56/235), 3120 (sunnah.com/bukhari/57/29), 3121 (sunnah.com/bukhari/57/30), 3618 (sunnah.com/bukhari/61/125), 6629 (sunnah.com/bukhari/83/9), 6630 (sunnah.com/bukhari/83/10); Sahih Muslim, 2918 a-b (sunnah.com/muslim/54/93 and sunnah.com/muslim/54/95); Jami' at-Tirmidhi, 2216 (sunnah.com/tirmidhi/33/59) (all accessed on 27 May 2020).

9   *Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Miscellanea documenti turchi, 1454-1813*, b.1 (accessed 15 July 2020), document 27: *Sultan Bayezid II asks Doge Giovanni Mocenigo via Ambassador Antonio Vitturi to renew the peace treaty between Venice and the Ottoman Empire*, p. 1 (12 January 1482), www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=37579.

10 Lefort, *Documents grecs dans les archives de Topkapı Sarayı*, 15-16, 67, 79, 100, 131, charter 19, line 2, charter 22, line 2; *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana* 3, ed. Miklosich and Müller, 309-310; *Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Miscellanea documenti turchi*, 1454-1813, b.1 (all accessed on 16 July 2020), document 44: Sultan Bayezid II receives Ambassador Andrea Zantani and confirms the peace treaty with Venice, p. 1 (15 March 1499), www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=37596, document 77: Preliminary peace treaty ('ahidnāme), p. 1 (24 December 1502), http://www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=37629, document 103 (has elements of the Byzantine chrysobullos logos): Letter of Bayezid II to Doge Leonardo Loredan concerning the exchange of the ambassadors and the oaths to observe the peace treaty, p. 1 (8 August 1503), www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=37655, the Greek text of document 103 was the translation of the Ottoman letter of Bayezid II (document 101, 5-14 August 1503, www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/ua.htm?idUa=37653). See also Selim I's 'ahidnāme (document 161, date: 17 October 1513), www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/document.htm?idUa=37714&idDoc=39753&first=0&last=1. Selim I's Greek title: Σουλτὰν Σελιμ χὰν θ(εο)ῦ χάρητι μέγιστος αὐτοκράτωρ ἀμφοτέρων τῶν ἠπείρων Ἀσίας τε καὶ Εὐρώπης can be found in document 163 (renewal of the previous treaty with the Republic of Venice, granted to Ambassador Antonio Giustinian, 25 October 1513), url: www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/document.htm?idUa=37716&idDoc=39755&first=0&last=1 .

Here, the expression »fortunate lord of the domains of the Romans, Persians and Arabs«, the *ṣāḥib qirān-i mamālik-i Rūm va ʿAjam va ʿArab* (صاحب قران ممالك روم و عجم و عرب) combined the honorific *ṣāḥibqirān* (lit. – ›the one who is under the lucky combination of stars‹), so popular in the Timurid times, possession of the lands of Byzantium, and the ancient Arab title *mawalī al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam* (»Lord of the Arabs and non-Arabs (i.e. the Persians)«, employed *inter alia* by the Great Seljuqs (in particular, by Sultan Malik-shāh (1073-1092) in his famous inscription at Nishapur (AH 465-485/1065-1085)).[17]

The notions of Rum in the inscription in Bender, in the letter of Sulaymān I the Magnificent to Francis I, and in the title of 1565 were starkly different. While in the first case Rum meant the Byzantine Empire as a single unit, the Rum in the letter addressed to Francis I was just a territory alongside other provinces, like Karaman or Anadolu. In that sense, Rum was the province (*eyalet*) of Sivas (also called ›*eyalet* of Rum‹), which of old was the northeastern part of the Seljuq sultanate of Rum and the territory of the emirate of Aratna/Eretna and his successors (1336-1380), including the state of Qāḍī Burhān al-Dīn Aḥmad (1381-1398);[18] these, however, did not include Erzurum (Arzan al-Rūm, the Erz-i Rūm of Sulaymān I's charters) and Diyarbakır (Diyār Bakr).[19] Sulaymān I's title in 1565 was far more ›universal‹ than the one in the letter to King Francis I, but again, the Rum there was a combination of ›kingdoms‹, not a single united empire.

Yet the inscription in Bender was by no means addressed, nor a concession, to a Christian audience. The Latin translation of the title of Sulaymān I (made in Hungary) might have comprised the traditional titles of the Byzantine emperors employed in Western chanceries for centuries, like, for example, *imperator Constantinopolitanus*; or the Latin title *rex regum* (›king of kings‹) of the Byzantine coins.[20] However, the Ottoman inscriptions in Hungary, a country with a predominantly Christian population, listed no Byzantine titles.[21] On the contrary, in his inscriptions on the candlesticks brought from the cathedral of St Stephan in Buda (Budin), now at either side of the *miḥrāb* (mihrab) of the Hagia Sophia, dated to AH 933 (8 October 1526-26 September 1527), Sulaymān the Magnificent called himself »Cihān Sahib-kıran-ı Hān« (»The Khan of the world, the one who is under the lucky combination of stars«) and »Sultan of al-Aqṣā, Egypt, Kaaba, and Syria«.[22] All the components correlated to the titles which were used by Sulaymān in his letter to the king of France: the mosque al-Aqṣā symbolized Sulaymān's power over Jerusalem, the *Kuds-i Şerīf* in his letter to Francis I; Kaaba was a symbol of Mecca; while Mısır (Egypt) and Şam (Syria) were mentioned in the list of countries which Sulaymān ruled.

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17 Blair, *Monumental Inscriptions*, 170, n. 64.

18 Kennedy (ed.), *An Historical Atlas of Islam*, maps 50 and 51: »Anadolu and Rumeli in the later 13th/19th century«.

19 Schaendlinger (with Römer), *Die Schreiben Süleymāns des Prächtigen*, . 12, 16, N 7.

20 Papp, *Die Verleihungs-, Bekräftigungs- und Vertragsurkunden der Osmanen für Ungarn und Siebenbürgen*, 150, 153: *ego szultan Szoleymanus Schyak caesar caesarum Dei gratia gloriosus magnus et invictissimus imperator Constantinopolitanus, rex regum, dator coronam* (correxi: *coronas*, see below the title of the Ottoman Sultan »the one who distributes the crowns«), *umbraculum Dei super terram dominator Magni Maris et Inferioris, dominus Maioris et Minoris Asiae, Aphrice et Europe*

21 Tollius, *Epistolae Itinerariae*, ed. Hennin, 150, 198-200, 205-206, 235; Tütüncü, Osmanlının Kuzey-Batı Sınırı Macaristan ve Slovakya'da Osmanlı Anıtları, 645-655.

22 Tütüncü, Osmanlının Kuzey-Batı Sınırı Macaristan ve Slovakya'da Osmanlı Anıtları, 647-649.

Even so, the inscription in Bender was by no means an isolated phenomenon. Besides the representation of the sultan's power as an agglomeration of the provinces under his sway (which resulted in the prolix titles of Sulaymān I in his letter to the king of France), there was another approach, focusing on the Ottoman Empire as the heir of empires of old.

Qayṣar-i Rūm *and the Universal Aspirations of the Ottomans*

The tradition listed five sovereigns of all the lands, »who because of their greatness were not called by their names«, but were known by their special titles: the padishah of India (*Hindūstān*), whose title was *rāy*;[23] the pādishāh of Rum, *qayṣar*; the pādishāh of China (*Chīn wa Māchīn*), *faghfūr*;[24] the pādishāh of Turkestan, *khāqān*; and the pādishāh of Iran (*Irān wa Tūrān*), *shāhanshāh*.[25] Although the cited version of the theory of five rulers was from the *Tuzik-i Tīmūrī*, or the *Autobiography of Tamerlane*, which is considered by some scholars a Mughal fake, the theory of five kings was formed at the beginning of the Islamic era, in the ninth century, if not earlier. The four most powerful potentates in the universe were mentioned for the first time by Suleymān al-Tājir (fl. 851) (though the theory itself was thought to have originated in India): the most prominent was the king of the Arabs (*malik al-ʿarab*), the second was the emperor of China (*malik al-Ṣīn*), the third was the Byzantine emperor (*malik al-Rūm*) and the fourth Ballaharā, the king of the people »whose ears are perforated«, which might have suggested a Rāshṭrakūta king of the Deccan.[26] A later list, dated to 872, whose alleged author was the Chinese emperor himself (he might have been Emperor I-Tsung (859-873) of the T'ang dynasty), stated that the richest and most powerful was the king of ʿIrāq, called *king of kings* (*malik al-mulūk*, an Arabic translation of the title *shāhanshāh*); then he, the emperor of China, also called *king of the mankind* (*malik al-nās*); then the king of the Turks (*malik al-Turk*), or *king of the wild beasts* (or *the lions', malik al-sibāʿ*); and after him, the king of India (*malik al-Hind*), who was appropriately called *king of the elephants* (*malik al-fiyala*) and also *king of wisdom* (*malik al-ḥikma*), because India was the motherland of philosophy. The Byzantine emperor (*malik al-Rūm*), or *king of the great men* (*malik al-rijāl*) was the last in the list of the five rulers.[27] The theory of five kings obviously had traces of the Sasanian period, hence the title *shāhanshāh* and the mention of the Turks of the Great Turkic Khaganate, who were noted as »the neighbours of China« in the list of 872 and who were indeed destroyed by the Chinese and other fellow Turks in 744. The list supposedly originated in a Buddhist milieu, but was seemingly adapted to Islamic practices, hence the first place of the »king of ʿIrāq«, whose title, *malik al-mulūk* or *shāhanshāh*, suggested an ʿAbbasid caliph as successor of the Sasanian shahs. It survived for centuries. In the first quarter of the thirteenth century, the geographer Yāqūt al-Hamawī (d. 1229) mentioned the legend of Kirmanshah where Khusrau II Parvēz (590-628) had gathered four kings in his castle, and these were the *faghfūr*, king of China; the *khāqān*, king of the Turks; the *dāhir*, king of India;

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23 In other variants Dārā (Darius), as the name was understood as a title.

24 Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo* 2, entry 227: *Fagfur*, ed. Hambis, 652-661. I am grateful to Professor Qui Yihao (Shanghai) for his consultations on Pelliot.

25 *Institutes political and military*, ed. White, 58-59; *Ulozheniie Temura*, trans. Karomatov, 58.

26 Sulaymān al-Tājir, *Ajāʾib al-dunyā wa-qiyās al-buldān*, ed. Shāhīn al-Mirrīkhī, 45; Sulaymān al-Tājir, Akhbār al-Ṣīn waʾl-Hind. An Account of China and India, trans. and comm. Maqbul Ahmad, 42, 65-66.

27 Al-Sīrafī, *Silsilat al-tawārīkh* 2, ed. Reinaud, 79; see also *idem*, *Silsilat al-tawārīkh* 1, ed. Reinaud, 81-82.

and the *qayṣar*, king of Rum or Byzantium.[28] The Timurid chronicles repeatedly called Sultan Bayezid I Yıldırım (1389-1402) *qayṣar-i Rūm*, because he ruled one of those great kingdoms which was defeated by *amīr* Timur Gurgan (Gūrgān, Güregen) (1370-1404).[29] However, in the famous correspondence between Bayezid I and Timur, the title *qayṣar-i Rūm* was not employed. In his first letter to the Ottoman sultan,[30] Timur addressed Bayezid I as »the King in Rum«, *al-malik fī al-Rūm*.[31] In his replies to Tīmūr's letters, Bayezid I used the title ›Tekvur‹ as an offensive word: »Know this, you rapacious dog, who is called Tīmūr and who is more infidel than the Byzantine Emperor (lit. ›the king Takfūr‹, *al-malik al-Takfūr*)«.[32] The notion of the five kingdoms was presented in one of the honorific titles (*laqab*s: *elqāb, alqāb*) of the Ottoman sultans, preserved in the »Münşeat üs-Selātīn« by Feridun Bey Ahmed (d. 1583).[33] Though the work of Feridun Bey was full of forgeries, nevertheless the titles which he listed were genuine.[34] In any case, they might have represented the history of ideas at the time of the younger contemporary of Sulaymān the Magnificent. One of the *laqab*s preserved by Feridun Bey in a special chapter, reads:

> His majesty [the second] Iskandar, the banner of the Possessor of knowledge, the Saturn of sublimity of the sphere, [the one who belongs to] the rank of Khusrau, the palace of supremacy and power of Nushirwan, the throne of justice, the rule of the Caesar (*āyīn-i qayṣar*), Jamshid of the realm (lit. – place), Khurshid of the world, the khāqān, the one who distributes the crowns, the possessor of the countries, the sultan, the one who sits on the throne, the *ṣāḥibqirān*, the padishah of the kingdom, the successful one.[35]

It is easy to see that the Ottoman sultan was presented as the master of three out of five kingdoms: the Persian pādishāh (*pādshāh*), the Byzantine emperor (*qayṣar*), and the Turkic hakan (*khāqān*).

Thus, Ibn-i Kemāl had a choice. That he knew those theories is confirmed, first, by the place of his description of the *Iklim-i Rūm* within the structure of the *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*: he wanted to describe the world the Ottomans were about to finish just before the campaign of Mehmed II Fatih against the Empire of Trebizond in 1461, conquest of which made the sultan an undisputed sovereign of what once was the Byzantine empire. And secondly, on the verbal level, he used the expression »heir to the kingdom of qayṣer« (*vārith-i mülk-i qayṣar*), which he applied to Bayezid II in his encomium to Mehmed II. He also praised

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28   Yāqūt ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 4, 9555, ed. Farīd ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Jundī, 375-376; *idem*, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 4, ed. (Beirut, 1977) 330-331; Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo* 2, ed. Hambis, 653, 655.

29   Cf. Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī, *Ẓafar-nameh*, MS Nuruosmaniye Kütüphanesi 3268, fols. 233a-234a; *idem*, *Zafar-name. Kniga pobed amira Timura*, trans. Akhmedov, 265-266; Navāʾī, *Asnād*, 95-96.

30   Timur sent four letters to Bayezid I between 1399 and 1402.

31   Navāʾī, *Asnād*, 92.

32   Navāʾī, *Asnād*, 94. The expression »the infidel Takfūr«, *Takfūr-i kafūr*, was used in the letter of Bāyazīd I sent to Sultan Aḥmad Jalāyirid (1382-1410) of Baghdad circa 10 May 1396 (*idem*, *Asnād*, 83-84). The *Takfūr-i kafūr* was either Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (1391-1425) or his co-emperor John VII Palaiologos, who acted as a regent in 1399-1403. A similar mention of the »accursed Takfūrs« (*Takfūrān-i malāʾīn*) occurred in Bāyazīd I's reply to the second letter of Tīmūr (*idem*, *Asnād*, 102). Anooshahr, *Ghazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam*, 120-128; Kaçar, *A Mirror for the Sultan*, 273-276.

33   On him, see Özcan, Feridun Ahmed Bey, accessed on 30 May 2020: islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/feridun-ahmed-bey.

34   Cf. İnalcık, Power relationships between Russia, the Crimea and the Ottoman Empire, 192-199.

35   Feridun-bey Ahmed, *Münşaat-i Selatin*, vol. 1, 4.

Mehmed for destruction of the community of the *tekvur*s of Istanbul, Tarabuzan (Trebizond), Mora (Morea), Amasra (Amastris), and Midillü (Mytilene, Lesbos).[36] The arbitrariness of his construction is evident from the fact that one of the rulers of the list, the ›tekvur‹ of Amasra, was actually a member of the Genoese administration in the city outside Byzantine control.

A Kingdom or Just a Genoese Castle? Ibn-i Kemal's Narrative of Amasra

I do not suggest that Ibn-i Kemal *invented* the *tekvur* of Amasra: the same story of how Amasra and its *tekvur* surrendered to Mehmed II was narrated in Ibn-i Kemāl's primary sources, the chronicles of ʿĀşıkpāşāzāde (d. between 1491 and 1502) and Meḥmed Neşrī (d. circa 1520).[37] However, he masterfully transformed the story for his own purposes. To understand the context of the Ottoman sources, one needs to recall the real circumstances of Amasra in the fifteenth century.

Amasra (Amastris in the Byzantine, and Samastro in the Genoese documents), was a Genoese colony with its own consul. Its foundation should be dated to the period of the dogate of Simone Boccanegra (1339-1344, 1356-1363), or even later, between 1374 and 1378.[38] In March 1454, Mehmed II demanded that Samastro should recognize his authority (*samastrensem locum in suam jurisdictionem postulauit obtinere*)[39] instead of being under the sway of a ›Tatar empire‹ (*Samastram non subesse Imperio tartarorum, set esse potius in Turchia*). The Ottoman demands were met by the signoria, who recommended its ambassadors Luciano Spinola and Baldassarre Maruffo agree with the Ottoman terms (on 11 March 1454), but the embassy never reached the sultan.[40] During the summer of 1454 the Ottoman and Tatar (under Ḥājjī Giray I (1441–1466)) forces attacked Caffa, the capital city of Genoese Gazaria. As a result, Caffa agreed to pay a tribute to both the Ottomans and the Crimean Tatars, without the consent of Genoa. Caffa began to pay its tribute to the Tatars on 23 July 1454.[41] The tribute to the Ottomans was settled much later, by 11 September 1454.[42] It is unlikely that the signoria, when giving instructions to Luciano Spinola and Baldassarre Maruffo in March 1454, already knew that Caffa would be jointly attacked by the Ottomans and the Crimean Tatars, and that the tribute of Caffa, whose administration ruled Samastro, would be an issue of the future talks with both Mehmed II and Ḥājjī Giray I. Though the ›Tatar empire‹ mentioned in the instructions was most likely the Crimean Khanate (there was evidence from 1458 that the *imperator tartarorum* had possessions near Tana, which suggested Ḥājjī Giray I),[43] it is not completely excluded that in the case of Samastro in March 1454, an

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36 İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. Turan, 540, 544.

37 *Âşıkpaşazâde*, ed. Öztürk, 212-214; Dervīš Aḥmed ʿĀšiqī, *Menāqib ve-tevārīḫ-i Āl-i ʿUṭmān*. MS Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. oct. 2448, fols. 247b-249b. Accessed on 20 May 2020: digital. staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN683354299&PHYSID=PHYS_0008; Neşrî, ed. Öztürk, 300; *Gihānnümā. Die altosmanische Chronik des Mevlānā Meḥemmed Neschrī*, 1: MS Cod. Menzel, ed. Taeschner, 189-190.

38 Karpov, *Ital'ianskiie morskiie respubliki*, 71.

39 Codice diplomatico, ed. Amédeo Vigna, 106: document xxxiii. Accessed on 20 May 2020: www.storiapatriagenova. it/BD_vs_contenitore.aspx?Id_Scheda_Bibliografica_Padre=99&Id_Progetto=0.

40 Prima serie, ed. Belgrano, 269. Accessed on 20 May 2020: www.storiapatriagenova.it/BD_vs_contenitore. aspx?Id_Scheda_Bibliografica_Padre=150&Id_Progetto=0.

41 Dzhanov, Kaffa, Krymskoie khanstvo i osmany, 95-105.

42 Dzhanov, Kaffa, Krymskoie khanstvo i osmany, 105-107.

43 Codice diplomatico, ed. Amédeo Vigna , 832: document cccc (24 March 1458).

earlier tribute (and jurisdiction) was meant, *before* any Crimean attack against Caffa. If so, the expression *Imperio tartarorum* actually suggested an Anatolian power, as in March 1454 Samastro was far from the Tatar realms across the Black Sea, be these the Crimean Khanate or the Golden Horde under Küçük Muḥammad (1435-1459) (or his successors till 1502). The *Imperio tartarorum* in Asia Minor could only have been the state of the *amīr* Timur Gurgan (1370-1404), the powerful master of Samarqand, who destroyed the army of Sultan Bayezid I in 1402 and acted as a supreme ruler in Asia Minor when imposing tributes and restoring the states which had been conquered by the Ottomans. The Timurid state under Abū Saʿīd b. Muḥammad b. Mīrān Shāh (1451-1469) still existed as a shadow of the once first-ranking power in Transoxiana, and in the eastern, central and western parts of Persia as far as ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam. Its prestige slowly faded. The old tribute, which might have been established by Timur, was imposed on the Genoese city officially located on Turkish land. The dubious status of Samastro was promptly mentioned by Ruy González de Clavijo, the Castilian ambassador, who visited the city on 25 March 1404 en route to Samarqand: *La cual dicha villa de Samastro es de Genoveses, y está en la tierra de la Turquía junta con el mar en un otero muy alto*[...].[44] The text of the Genoese document evidently suggested that Samastro enjoyed the so-called double suzerainty, being a part of both the Genoese colonial empire and the local Muslim power, and thus within the lands of *dār al-ʿahd*, the lands of the covenant, which, strictly speaking, were part of the lands of Islam, the *dār al-Islām*, from 1402-1403 or 1454, although the Genoese authorities insisted that it was a remote outpost of the Genoese empire.[45]

An additional aspect of Amasra's judicial status was the circumstances of how the city's tribute was actually paid. Samastro's tribute to the Ottomans had to be paid separately from Caffa's.[46] Moreover, the city of Samastro was excluded from the terms of the Genoese-Ottoman treaty of 18 July 1455.[47] It seems that Samastro had to deal with the sultan on its own, as the books of the massaria of Caffa for 11 April 1458 reported a visit of the embassy of Samastro to the ›Lord of the Teucri‹ (*ad dominum teucrum*), which meant the Ottoman sultan.[48]

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44   Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán.* Accessed on 30 July 2020: www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/vida-y-hazanas-del-gran-tamorlan-con-la-descripcion-de-las-tierras-de-su-imperio-y-senorio--0/html/feed4b6c-82b1-11df-acc7-002185ce6064_1.htm#1; *idem*, *Itinéraire de l'Ambassade Espagnole*, 109; *idem*, *Embassy to Tamerlane*, 57.

45   Codice diplomatico, ed. Amédeo Vigna, 594, document cclvii (23 March 1456).

46   Codice diplomatico, ed. Amédeo Vigna, 866 (1459), 917: document ccccxxvi (4 April 1459).

47   Codice diplomatico, ed. Amédeo Vigna, 299: document cxvii.

48   Archivio di Stato di Genova, San Giorgio, Sala 34, 590, 1241: Massaria Caffae 1457-58, fol. 143r. I thank Dr Alexander Dzhanov (Kiev, Ukraine) for checking the books of the massaria of Caffa for the years 1457-1460. The data concerning Samastro in the unpublished text of the massaria's books was collated and transcribed by him.

The city had been besieged by the Ottomans by 9 September 1459,[49] and was surrendered to them sometime in September or October 1459.[50] The destruction (*perdicionum*) of Samastro was mentioned in the massaria's books on 10 March 1460.[51] The enigmatic *tekvur* of Amasra was either its last consul, Francesco Spinola, elected in February-March 1459 (though he never took the office)[52] or, more likely, its penultimate consul, Bartolomeo di Lavello, who was elected on 1 December 1456[53] and whose mandate officially ended on 16 May 1459.[54] The unfortunate Bartolomeo survived *in situ* the *perdicionum* in 1459 of Samastro, which he tried in vain to defend; his debts to the commune of Caffa, caused by the Ottoman siege and the subsequent fall of Amasra, were mentioned in the massaria's book on 10 March 1460.[55]

Like ʿĀşıkpāşāzāde and Meḥmed Neşrī before him, Ibn-i Kemāl decided to omit all these details. But he went further: in the narratives of ʿĀşıkpāşāzāde and Neşrī the story of Amasra was that of the excellent fortress, inhabited by the infidels, whose ›padishah‹ was a Frank (Fireng) and who gave shelter to fugitive slaves from all over Anatolia, who committed piracy and »without questions« (*sorıcak gayrı*) expropriated even the Ottoman state ships. Ibn-i Kemāl deleted the »Fireng Pādishāh« from the narrative and replaced him with the »independent ruler« (*müstakil valisi*),[56] but his most important innovation was a structural one: instead of just mentioning the conquests of Meḥmed II in a strict chronological order, he tried to differentiate these by groups. Contrary to all the historical circumstances, still traceable in ʿĀşıkpāşāzāde and Neşrī, the consul of Amasra lost his ›Frankish‹ characteristics and became one of those *tekvur*s whose chief master was the emperor of Byzantium. The ruler of Amasra was not the only Genoese who was treated in this way. As far as Asia Minor was concerned, other Genoese possessions on the peninsula and the islands, namely the

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49 Archivio di Stato di Genova, San Giorgio, Sala 34, 590, 1240: Massaria Caffae 1457-58, fol. 72r. Cf. Mioni, Una inedita cronaca bizantina, 77 (#57), 86: September AM 6968 = September AD 1459. The same year of AM 6968 is given in almost all other short Greek chronicles which mentioned the fall of Samastro: *Die byzantinischen Klein-chroniken* 1, ed. Schreiner, 476 (#16), 536 (#46), 581 (#12); *idem* 2, ed. Schreiner, 498 (with a suggestion of the date of AM 6969 = 1 September 1460-31 August 1461). The year of AM 6968 of the Byzantine era began on 1 September 1459 and ended on 31 August 1460; see Grumel, *La chronologie*, 128, 263; Kuzenkov, *Khristianskiie khronologicheskiie sistemy,* 330, 519.

50 The date is based on the discrepancy in the Ottoman sources. They mention the fall of Amasra either in AH 863 (8 November 1458-27 October 1459) or AH 864 (28 October 1459-16 October 1460). The surrender of Amasra and the repopulation of the city on the orders of the sultan did not take place momentarily but required the presence of Meḥmed II for some time, probably from the end of AH 863 to the beginning of AH 864 (October 1459). İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. Turan, 179; Neşrî, ed. Öztürk, 300; *idem*, 2, ed. Unat and Köymen, 740-741; *idem*, 1, ed. Taeschner, 190; Tursun Beg, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, ed. Inalcik and Murphey, 44-45; Karpov, *Ital'ianskiie morskiie*, 76.

51 Archivio di Stato di Genova, San Giorgio, Sala 34, 590, 1228: Massaria Caffae 1459-1460, fol. 27v.

52 Codice diplomatico, ed. Amédeo Vigna, 858, 891: document ccccxvi (14 February 1459), 908: document ccccxxii (9 March 1459), 929: document ccccxli (16 May 1459), 866 (1459): document ccccxxvi, 917 (4 April 1459).

53 Codice diplomatico, ed. Amédeo Vigna, 664 (1453-1457): document cccxvi (1 December 1456).

54 Codice diplomatico, ed. Amédeo Vigna, 929: document ccccxli (16 May 1459).

55 Archivio di Stato di Genova, San Giorgio, Sala 34, 590, 1228: Massaria Caffae 1459-1460, fol. 27v: +*MCCCCLX die X marcii. Bartholomeus lauelus debet nobis pro Introitu massarie Samastri per ipsum exactis in diversis partitis ab anno de 1458 citra usque ad perdicionum (=perditionem) Samastri ut per eius racionem destinte apparet asperos de ottomano sex milia sex centum sex decim valent ad racionem asperorum CX de ottomano pro asperis ducentorum caffe et dicta pro comune Ianue (in Caffa) de LVI asperos XII XXVII* (transcription by A. Dzhanov). I am grateful to Dr A. Dzhanov (Kiev) for his help with, and transcriptions of, the books of Massaria Caffae.

56 İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. Turan, 176-179.

Gattilusio state in Lesbos, also belonged to the »community of the *tekvur*s«, a late Byzantine commonwealth of sorts in Anatolia. The Gattilusio rulers, and in particular the last master of Lesbos, Niccolò (1458-1462), were traditionally called *tekvur*s on the pages of ʿĀşıkpāşāzāde and Meḥmed Neşri, but both failed to mention any community to which the *tekvur* might have belonged (though the Gattilusio maintained close matrimonial connections with the Byzantine imperial dynasty). Likewise, the early Ottoman chroniclers were perfectly aware that the consul of Amasra was a ›Franc‹.[57] For them, a bare fact of the conquest had spoken for itself.

And yet the attempt at universality in Ibn-i Kemāl's chronicle was not without fault. Had he wanted to elevate Mehmed II, he would have used a more appropriate notion of one of five kingdoms, and the Ottoman sultan as a master of Rum. Instead, in his encomium to Mehmed II, he created a more nuanced picture. Mehmed II had conquered three groups of states: the city-states of the *tekvur*s (Constantinople/Istanbul, Morea/Mora, Trebizond/Trabuzan, Mytilene/Midillü on Lesbos, and Samastro/Amasra); the countries ruled by dynasties or kings, like the king of Bosnia (Bosna Kıralı, which means Stephen II Tomašević (1461-1463)), or the duke of St Sava (Hersek, Herzegovina, under Stjepan Vukčić Kosača (1435-1466) and his successor Vlatko Hercegović (1466-1482)); and the whole assembly of the Bosnian, Montenegrin and Serbian noble families, such as Pavlı-oğlu, which means Duke (Vojvoda) Petar II Pavlović-Radosavljević (1450-1463) of Bosnia and his brother Lord (Knez) Nikola Pavlović (1450-1463), or Çirni-oğlu, who was Lord Stefan Crnojević (Stefanica (1451-1465), or his successor Ivan the Black Crnojević (1465-1490) of Zeta. The list ends with the despotate of Serbia (Laz) and the possessions of the Republic of Venice, which included, as Ibn-i Kemāl mistakenly insists, even Caffa.[58]

It is easy to see how artistically the list was composed: it included two hierarchical orders – one descending, and another ascending. The descending order was that of titles and nobility: it began with »emperors« (*tekvur*s), continued with kings and lords, and ended with the state whose ruler was no king in the Ottoman eyes, the master (Doge) of Venice, called just Venedik beği (the title of beğ was one of the lowest in the Ottoman hierarchy). The ascending list was that of territories: the smallest ones (the *tekvur*s') were mentioned at the beginning, and the largest (Serbia) and most powerful (Venice) ones were listed at the end.

The discrepancy between the universal aspirations of the Ottomans and the »nucleotide« description of the *Iklim-i Rūm* in Ibn-i Kemāl, in which each ›*tekvur*‹ had a region (*nahiye*), rooted not only in the perception of the Byzantine cities on the part of the Ottomans, but also in the Ottoman historical tradition, which emerged sometime at the end of the fourteenth century and described the Ottoman advance of the thirteenth and the first half of the fourteenth century as ›frog leaps‹ within the chain of towns and castles of the boundary zone, often with overlapping viewsheds. Almost every town had its own *tekvur*.

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57 *Âşıkpaşazâde*, ed. Öztürk, 212-214, 229-231; Dervīš Aḥmed ʿĀšiqī, *Menāqib*, MS Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. oct. 2448, fols. 247b-249b, 264a-266a; Neşrî, ed. Öztürk, 300, 307; *idem* 1, ed. Taeschner, 189-190, 196.

58 İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. Turan, 540-541.

Fortresses Where a New State Began: The Cases of the Ottomans and the Karamanids
According to the Ottoman tradition, the springboard of the Ottoman expansion was the
Seljuq territory within the triangle of small towns of Sultan Öyüğü-Eskişehir, Sögüt, and
İnönü.[59] Further west there was the castle of İnegöl (Angelokomis), whose *tekvur* had the
name of Hagios Nikolaos (Aya Nikola), which was obviously the name of a local church tak-
en as a person's name. According to ʿĀşıkpāşāzāde and Neşri, Bilecik (Belokomis) with its
own *tekvur* and his brother Kalonoz, Yar-hisar (also with its own *tekvur*, whose daughter,
Lülüfer Hatun, once a bride of the *tekvur* of Bilecik, became wife of Orhan I (1324-1362)),
Köprühisar (also with a *tekvur*) and Yenişehir (Melangeia) had been conquered by Osman by
AH 699 (28 September 1299-15 September 1300),[60] whilst the *Tavārīkh-i al-i Osmān* (MS
Bodleian Library) gives another date: AH 687 (6 February 1288-24 January 1289).[61] The com-
munity of the *tekvur*s (which also included the *tekvur*s of Bursa, Adranoz, Batanoz/Bidnos,
Kestel (Kastellon), and Kite), seemingly connected with Nicaea (Iznik) and Qustantiniyye
(Constantinople, Istanbul), became a part of the first scene of the Ottoman advance.[62] It fin-
ished with the last *tekvur*s, conquered by Meḥmed II.

The nucleus of these possessions was precisely described: it was a *hisar*, a fortress, which
controlled the adjacent territory, in the same way as Köprühisar controlled access to the en-
virons of Yenişehir; and the fall of the former meant a conquest of the latter.[63] Most interest-
ingly, the »fortress story«, or the memory of a location where a future polity came into being,
became an essential part of historical tales throughout Anatolia. In this, the Ottomans, with
their eponymous fortress of Sögüt (in Neşri's wording: Sögüd Dervendi kalʿası)[64] as the first
possession of Ertoğrul-gazi, the founder of the Ottoman state, were not unique. A similar
tale can be found in other primary sources in Anatolia.

For example, the foundation of the Karamanoğulları (Karamanids, Qarāmān ōghlānlarī)[65]
beylik was described by Ibn Bībī (d. after 1284/85), whose account gave interesting details of
how a new state could have been established. According to Ibn Bībī,

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59   Neşrî, ed. Öztürk, 33-35; *idem*, 1, ed. Taeschner, 23-24.

60   Dervīš Aḥmed ʿĀšiqī, *Menāqib*, MS Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. or. oct. 2448, fols.
      18a-31a; *Âşıkpaşazâde*, ed. Öztürk, 18-29; Neşrî, ed. Öztürk, 30-46; *idem*, 1, ed. Unat and Köymen, 60-105; *idem*,
      1, ed. Taeschner, 20-32.

61   *Tavārīkh-i āl-i Osmān*, MS Bodleian Library, Rawl. Or 5, fol. 17; cf. *İstanbul'un fethinden önce yazılmış tarihî takvim-
      ler*, ed. Turan, 16-17 (AH 650), 52-53 (AH 655); Idrīs Bidlīsī, *Tāʾrīkh-i Hasht-Bihisht*, MS Bodleian Library, Ouseley
      358, fols. 61b-63b (AH 698).

62   Neşrî, ed. Öztürk, 36-51; *idem*, 1, ed. Taeschner, 25-35.

63   Neşrî, ed. Öztürk, 42, 46; *idem*, 1, ed. Taeschner, 28-29, 32.

64   Neşrî, ed. Öztürk, 26; *idem*, 1, ed. Taeschner, 18.

65   On this variant of the name of the Karamanoğulları, see Yazıcızāde ʿAlī, *Selçuḳ-nāme*, ed. Bakır, fol. 400a.

The father of the sons of Qarāmān at the beginning of his career was from Turkmen coalminers on the borders of Armenia, known as the province (*vilāyet*) of Qamar al-Dīn. He continually carried charcoal from the mountains to Lāranda, and by this he sustained his family and children. During the time of disturbance in the kingdom of Rūm, [when] Bāyjū-nūyan appeared for the second time, he seized the opportunity as is customary among the rebellious and corrupted people, and with the group of his companions (*bā qaumī az abnā'i jins-i khwēsh*) he began to collect the mob (lit. ›assembly‹, *jam'īyat*) and became engaged in highway-robbery (*rāh-zanī*) and violence (*ḥarāmī-garī*). When the late Sultan ʿIzz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs Gharīb (the Stranger, i.e. ʿIzz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II) – let Allah illuminate [him] with His proof – was forced to leave his protected kingdoms, and the Sultan Rukn al-Dīn Kılıç Arslān[66] – let Allah cover him with the cloth of His atonement – now possessed both parts of the realm, he gave promises to, and [instigated] hopes of, Qarāmān and lured him to a trap of obedience and a net of submission. And he granted him the office of an amīr (*amārāt*), a high dignity (*manṣab*), and a great estate (*iqṭāʿ-i buzurg*).[67]

The grant of the estate (*iqṭāʿ*) and the title took place after Rukn al-Dīn Qilij Arslān IV entered Konya on 14 Ramaḍān AH 659 (12 August 1261)[68] – the date is confirmed by one of the short chronicles.[69] It is understandable why he was forced to bribe Qarāmān-bey with grants and titles, because at the same time the Seljuq and Mongol troops tried to put down the rebellion of Meḥmed-bey of Denizli,[70] and the Sultan, whose resources were limited, could not have afforded another military campaign at that time. However, Qarāmān-bey, who was a supporter of the exiled sultan ʿIzz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II (1246-1256; 1257-1261),[71] did not want to remain loyal to Qilij Arslān IV. Soon Qarāmān-bey and his kinsmen rebelled again in the province of Armenia. A hard-fought battle, in which the army of *parwāna* Muʿīn al-Dīn Sulaymān, the uncrowned head of the sultanate, managed to defeat the joint army of Qarāmān-bey and the Turks of Ermenak, took place at the fortress of Kāvala (Kabal(l)a, modern Gevale Kalesi, 11 km northwest of Konya)[72] in the autumn or winter of 1261.[73] When Qarāmān-bey died (seemingly some time after the battle), his brother Būñsūz, the *amīr-i jāndār* (the head of the sultan's bodyguards) of the sultanate, submitted himself to the sultan. It is not clear what forced Būñsūz to surrender. He was imprisoned and, it seems, soon died. The elder, grown-up sons of Qarāmān-bey were sent to the fortress of Kāvala. However, after the death of Sultan Rukn al-Dīn Qilij Arslān IV in 1265 the sons of Qarāmān-bey were dispatched (obviously as prisoners) to various fortresses across the sultanate. Only afterwards did the *parwāna* Muʿīn al-Dīn

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66 ʿIzz al-Dīn Kay-Kāwūs II's middle brother and rival, Sultan Rukn al-Dīn Kılıç Arslān IV (1248-1254, 1256-1265).

67 Ibn Bībī, ed. Erzi, 687-688; *idem*, ed. Zhālah Mutaḥaddīn, 590-591; *idem*, trans. Duda, 308-309; *idem*, ed. Houtsma, 321-322.

68 *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 99; *Anadolu Selçukluları Devleti Tarihi*, ed. Uzluk, 54-55.

69 *İstanbul'un fethinden önce yazılmış tarihî takvimler*, ed. Turan, 32-33: the »enthronement« of Qarāmān-bey took place fifteen years before the capture of Konya by his son in AH 675. This means AH 660 (26 November 1261-14 November 1262).

70 Baybars al-Manṣūrī al-Dawādār, *Zubdat al-Fikra fī ta'rīkh al-Hijra*, ed. Richards, 73.

71 Aksaraylı Mehmed oğlu Kerîmüddin Mahmud, *Müsâmeret ül-ahbâr*, ed. Turan, 71 (hereafter Aksarayi).

72 Pictures of the magnificent ruins of the fortress of Gevale were published on the site »Gevale«, accessed on 24 March 2021: gevale.com/fotograf/. See also Belke and Restle, *Galatien und Lykaonien*, 182-183.

73 See the tentative date in Aksarayi, ed. Turan, 71: *dar ān sāl wa zamān*, »in that year and time«, i.e. this and next year, which was a typical expression in Aksarayi. The year in question was AH 659, which ended on 25 November 1261. The battle took place sometime around that date.

Sulaymān, the uncrowned head of the sultanate decide to release them. This was a mistake. The Karamanoğulları at once resumed their rebellion in the province of Armenia sometime in 1276. The expedition of the troops of the *parwāna* was totally fruitless, as they were unable to lure the Karamanoğulları from their mountains.[74] By the time the campaign of the Mamluk sultan Beybars I al-Bunduqdārī (1260-1277) against Ilkhan Abaqa (1265-1282) started, the uprising of the sons of Qarāmān had reached Antalya.[75] Once the Mamluk sultan appeared in Anatolia, Meḥmed-bey Karamanoğlu formed a coalition of three Turkmen confederations (Karamanoğulları, Eşrefoğulları[76] and Menteşeoğulları) under the banner of Beybars. They marched towards Konya, taking and plundering it on Thursday, 8 Dhū al-Ḥijja AH 675 (13 May 1277). There they proclaimed a certain Cimri to be ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Siyāwush, the son of the exiled sultan ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs II. Meḥmed-bey Karamanoğlu became his vizier. It is interesting to note that in his search for a true Seljuqid prince, Meḥmed-bey was going to send an embassy to the Byzantine emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259-1282), who kept a son of Kaykāʾūs II at his court, thus resuming the precedent of appointing a Seljuq hostage from Constantinople to the throne in Konya.[77] Under Cimri as sultan of Rum, Turkish for a while became an official language at the court, though Persian still remained an undisputed language of office and literature.[78] Yet this remarkable achievement did not turn into a moment of a »political beginning« of the Karamanoğulları emirate. In the *History of the Karamanoğulları* composed by Şikārī (fl. c. 1450) the conquest of Asia Minor was described as an outcome of an epic struggle by the Turks, sent by Pādishāh Hürmüz of Iran, against three rulers of Byzantium: the *qayṣar-i Rūm* Yūnānūs, who resided in Kayseri; his brother Khiraql, who lived in Lārende (Laranda); and Khiraql's man Fişandūn, who was in Constantinople.[79] What was interesting in this story was a typical *quid pro quo* of substituting a person's name with a placename. This was a commonplace in early Turkish historiography: we already saw this in the case of the *tekvur* of İnegöl, whose name was Hagios Nikolaos (Aya Nikola), if we are to believe ʿĀşıkpāşāzāde and Neşri, seemingly after a local church's name. Likewise, Fişandūn was not the name of a real person. Almost all the names in the first chapter of Şikârî were fictitious: Yūnānūs was derived from ›Yunan‹, ›Greece‹; while Khiraql was the name of Emperor Heracleus (610-641) transcribed in a vernacular Arabic form which can sometimes be found in the Christian-Muslim polemics. Fişandūn was a rare place name, a village or a small town Dere köyü, 9 km southeast of Lārende (Laranda), named after the beautiful Byzantine ninth- or tenth-century church, now a mosque, which is still called

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74 Ibn Bībī, ed. Erzi, 688-689; *idem*, ed. Zhālah Mutaḥaddīn, 591; *idem*, ed. Houtsma, 322-323; *idem*, trans. Duda, 309.

75 Aksarayi, ed. Turan, 110-113; Turan, *Selçuklular zamanında Türkiye*, 558-559.

76 The next mention of the Turkmens of the Eşrefoğulları occurs in AH 679 (3 May 1280-21 April 1281), when they, together with the Karamanoğulları, plundered Konya and Akşehir. By 1287, the Eşrefoğulları had conquered Ghurghurūm and made it their capital; see *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 107-108, 113; *Anadolu Selçukluları Devleti Tarihi*, ed. Uzluk, 64, 70. Little is known about them; cf. Sevim and Yücel, *Türkiye tarihi*, 308-309.

77 On the Byzantine-Seljuk relations, see Korobeinikov, *Byzantium and the Turk*, 111-159.

78 Ibn Bībī, ed. Erzi, 688-697; *idem*, ed. Zhālah Mutaḥaddīn, 592-598; *idem*, ed. Houtsma, 323-326; *idem*, trans. Duda, 310-314; Aksarayi, ed. Turan, 122-124; *Tārīkh-i āl-i Saljūq*, ed. Jalālī, 103-103; *Anadolu Selçukluları Devleti Tarihi*, ed. Uzluk, 59-60; Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, 205-206; Turan, *Selçuklular zamanında Türkiye*, 560-564; Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society*, 45-46, 59-60, 147-148; Yıldız, Karamanoğlu Mehmed Bey.

79 Şikârî, *Karamanoğulları tarihi*, ed. Koman, 2; *idem*, *Karamannāme*, ed. Sözen and Sakaoğlu, 99, 608; *idem*, *Karamannāme*, MS Yusufağa (Millî) Kütüphanesi 562, fol. 2a.

Fisandon Kilisesi Camii.[80] The name »Fiṣandūn« was actually a Persian or Turkish rendering of the word Byzantion, understood as an adjective ›Byzantine‹ of sorts; it seems, judging from the usual way of making new placenames, that the name Fiṣandūn first appeared as the name of the church, and only then of the town. The location of Fiṣandūn church was suspiciously close to the early routs from the Taurus mountains to Lārende. Despite the very picturesque description of the struggle all over »Rūm, Yunān, Shām, Ermeni, and Maǧrib«, the first conquest, which, according to Şikārī, became the springboard of the emirate of the Karamanoğulları, was a fortress called Khiraql (خرقل) on the Armenian border. The attack was launched by Nūreddin (or Nūre Sufī), father of Qarāmān-bey. Khiraql's governor Qīṣūn took the side of the Seljuqs, turned Muslim, and married the daughter of one of the nomad leaders, Turgut bey.[81] If we exclude a possible play on the part of Şikârî who might have toyed with the name of Khiraql, which appeared earlier in his chronicle as a name of the brother of the Byzantine emperor Yūnānūs, then the most plausible explanation is that Khiraql meant Herakleia Kybistra, the famous Byzantine city. Herakleia had been under Seljuq rule at the beginning of the twelfth century and was large enough to have been mentioned among those cities which the aging ʿIzz al-Dīn Qilij Arslān II (1156-1192) distributed between his sons and a nephew.[82] It was taken by the Armenians in 1211, but was soon returned back to the Seljuqs; and it was mentioned as a Seljuq city after 1246.[83] Thereafter Herakleia was in decline, and sometime in the second half of the thirteenth century its inhabitants moved to a new location, thirteenth kilometres to the northwest, where nowadays we find the city of Ereğli. The old Herakleia survived as a fortress Tund/Tont Kalesi. The city of Irākliye in Ibn Bībī and Aqsarāyī meant the old Herakleia before 1246.[84] The text of Şikārī, which most likely referred to the events in the 1250s, is explicit: Khiraql was a fortress. Its strange name Khiraql, which contrasts with the Medieval Greek pronunciation of Herakleia as [Iraklia] (the correct Irākliye of the Seljuq sources and Ereğli of the Turkish ones), might have indicated that in the second half or at the end of the thirteenth century, when the oral tale was composed, there were two Herakleias: the new city with the old name of Irākliye at the location of modern Ereğli, and the old city, now a castle, whose name was rendered as Khiraql for reasons unknown, at the location of ancient Herakleia, which later became Tund Kalesi.

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80 Belke and Restle, *Galatien und Lykaonien*, 165.

81 Şikârî, *Karamanoğulları tarihi*, ed. Koman, 10-11; *idem*, *Karamannāme*, ed. Sözen and Sakaoğlu, 103-104. The name was written in two ways: as Qīṣūn (قيصون) and then as Q-ṣūn (قصون); see Şikârî, *Karamannāme*, MS Yusufağa (Milli) Kütüphanesi 562, fols. 6a-7a. Obviously this was the name of one and the same person, named Qıṣūn in both cases. The name of Q-ṣūn was erroneously rendered as Kosun in the first publication of the *Karamannāme* in 1946, and repeated as such in the edition of 2005, despite the published facsimile of the manuscript. One should note that the manuscript offers no vocalization of the Q-ṣūn.

82 Ibn Bībī, ed. Erzi, 22; *idem*, ed. Zhālah Mutaḥaddīn, 23; *idem*, ed. Houtsma, 5; *idem*, trans. Duda, 19; Aksarayi, ed. Turan, 30.

83 Ibn Bībī, ed. Erzi, 545-548; idem, ed. Zhālah Mutaḥaddīn, 478-480; idem, ed. Houtsma, 249-250; idem, trans. Duda, 238-239; Smbat Sparapet, Taregirkʿ, ed. Agĕlean, 234-235; trans. Bedrosian, 111: in 1259 the Cilician Armenian army under Smbat Sparapet (1208-1276) pursued the Seljuks »as far as Aṙakli«.

84 See the previous note.

The oral tale about the capture of Herakleia (the *terminus a quo* was 1256) left almost no traces in self-representation of the Karamanoğulları: at least, they were never called ›masters of Khiraql‹. It simply shows that Nūreddin (or Nūre Ṣūfī), father of Qarāmān-bey, was portrayed as a loyal commander of the eponymous Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn; the latter, given the chronological context, must have been the famous Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād I (1219-1237).[85] Only after the conquest of two important fortresses, Ermenāk and Mut, sometime before 1259 did the Karamanoğulları manage to establish their own emirate. Henceforth they were remembered as the Turks of Ermenāk (with whom the »sons of Qarāmān« had formed an alliance by 1265) not only in the scornful references of Ibn Bībī (*avlād-i Qarāmān va atrāk-i qalʿa-i Armanāk*, »sons of Qarāmān and the Turks of the fortress Ermenāk«, or, more elegantly, *rahzanān-i Armanāk*, »the bandits of Ermenāk«)[86] but also in the Ottoman chronicles[87] and, most importantly, in diplomatic correspondence: the Mamluks of Egypt addressed the beys of Karaman as »Ṣāḥib ʾArmanak« (and not of Konya, or Lārende, or any other more prominent city of the Karamanoğulları beylik).[88]

Ermenak and Mut, which formed the nucleus of the state of the Karamanoğulları and served them as a shelter from the Seljuq and Mongol troops, were last in the chain of fortresses, which Nūreddin (or Nūre Ṣūfī) and his son Qarāmān-bey took or tried to take when they became »tired of nomadic life« (cf. the statement of a certain Türkmān beg Hayreddin, addressed to Nûreddin before the conquest of Khiraql: *»Ey Nüreddin Beg! Konub göçmekden usandık«*).[89] The springboard of their state was, according to Ibn Bībī, the province (*vilāyet*) of Qamar al-Dīn. This was a precise reference to the earlier Seljuq expedition against Cilician Armenia in 1225-1226, which resulted in the conquest of the important fortress of Janjīn/Chanchi, north of the important Cilician stronghold of Gaban (modern Geben), in the same country of Gaban, now in the subdistrict of Andırın of the province of Maraş,[90] by the army of the *chāshnīgīr* Mubāriz al-Dīn Çavlı and *amīr* Manuel Maurozomes (*amīr* Kumninūs Mafruzūm). When narrating the outcome of the expedition, Ibn Bībī mentioned that the land of Janjīn was given to a certain *amīr* Qamar al-Dīn. Ibn Bībī only twice mentioned the rare name of the *amīr*: the first time in relation to the expedition of Mubāriz al-Dīn Çavlı and the second time in the story about Qarāmān-bey.[91] The importance of the fortresses of Kapan/Gaban was perfectly described by Sara Nur Yıldız, and the same description could be applied to Janjīn/Chanchi in the country of Gaban:

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85 Yıldız, Reconceptualizing the Seljuk-Cilician Frontier, 116-117.

86 Ibn Bībī, ed. Erzi, 689, 692, 696, 703; *idem*, ed. Zhālah Mutaḥaddīn, 592, 594, 597, 603; *idem*, ed. Houtsma, 323, 329; *idem*, trans. Duda, 310, 317, 345 (note 438).

87 Neşrî, ed. Öztürk, 22-27; *idem*, 1, ed. Taeschner, 15-18.

88 al-ʿUmarī, *al-Taʿrīf biʾl-Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, ed. al-Drūbī, 55.

89 Şikârî, *Karamanoğulları tarihi*, ed. Koman, 10; *idem*, *Karamannāme*, ed. Sözen and Sakaoğlu, 103; *idem*, *Karamannāme*, MS Yusufağa (Millî) Kütüphanesi 562, fol. 6a.

90 On the location, see Hewsen, *Armenia: a Historical Atlas*, 140, map 124.

91 Ibn Bībī, ed. Erzi, 305, 334-342, 687; *idem*, ed. Zhālah Mutaḥaddīn, 282, 307-314, 590; *idem*, ed. Houtsma, 129, 138-141, 321; *idem*, trans. Duda, 131, 140-142, 308.

Hidden among the high peaks of the Taurus, this Armenian mountain fortress was an important baronial seat and strategic stronghold for the Rubenid dynastic family. It was here that the kings of Cilician Armenia traditionally kept their treasures and retired in case of danger. Gaban guarded one of the major routes going into Cilicia through the mountains, and control of it was essential in the defence of the Armeno-Cilician kingdom. The importance of Gaban also for the control over the passage of trade can be seen in the agreement made in 1201 between Lewon I and the Genoese which specified that the Genoese were required to pay an extra toll when passing through the region controlled by the lord of Gaban.[92]

The geographical location of Gaban in Cilicia suggested a long road to Ereğli and Lārende. The information between the lines of the text of Ibn Bībī suggested that despite his animosity towards the Karamanoğulları, nonetheless he did not hide the fact that Qarāmān-bey was not just a coal miner who by chance managed to unite nomadic Turks around him, but rather a member of a larger nomadic group following long-distance pasture routes that moved along the Seljuq-Armenian border zone. They tried to control the coal trade between the mountains and the major Seljuq cities. From this point of view, the statement by Yazıcıoğlu Ali (Yāzījīoghlū ʿAlī), the Ottoman translator of Ibn Bībī for the Sultan Murad II (1421-1451), was noteworthy. He wrote that Qarāmān-bey and his descendants were from the tribe of Afşar (Awshār),[93] one of the largest Oghuz tribal groups in Anatolia, sometimes believed to have influenced some dialects of Turkish in Asia Minor.[94] Be that as it may, this perfectly suited the context.

The Armenian sources confirm how desperately Qarāmān-bey and his sons fought for the fortresses in the grey zone between Rum and Cilician Armenia. In particular, Smbat Sparapet (1208-1276), the commander-in-chief of the Armenian army in Cilicia and the brother of King Het'um I (1226-1269, d. 1270), wrote in his *Chronicle* under the year 712 of the Armenian era (AD 1263):

> Now prior to the death of the king's father, Kostandin (on 24 February 1263), a certain [individual] named Qaraman (Kharaman) arose from the tribe of tent-dwelling Ishmaelites and came [on an expedition], and as he was traveling many others from the same tribe joined with him. He had them call him sultan and [Qaraman] had grown so strong that the sultan of Rūm, Rukn al-Dīn (Ěřugnatin), out of fear of him, did not dare to reproach him. And so, many areas with their fortresses were forcibly taken by him. He also caused great harassment in the area of Isauria (Sawrioj) and Selewkia, enslaving them. Twice he had destroyed troops of King Het'um, [including] the praiseworthy Halkam who had been designated as governor [of that area] who was slain there. As we mentioned earlier [Halkam] was of Byzantine nationality. Then Qaraman became hostile toward the king's brother, Smbat, because in the district Qaraman was inhabiting

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92 Yıldız, Reconceptualizing the Seljuk-Cilician Frontier, 108. I slightly correct Sara Nur Yıldız's identification of fortress Janjīn in Ibn Bībī: the fortress's name better corresponds to Chanchi, and not Gaban, as the names Janjīn and Chanchi almost completely coincide (given the interactions of [j]-[ch] sounds and letters in Persian and/or Turkish). The fortress Chanchi was a gate to the land of Gaban, where the fortress of Gaban occupied a dominant position.

93   Yazıcızâde Ali, T*evârîh-i Âl-i Selçuk*, ed. Bakır, 824; Yazıcızāde ʿAlī, *Selçuḳ-nāme*, MS Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi Revan Bölümü nu. 1391, fol. 400a.

94 Korkmaz, Die Frage des Verhältnisses 2, 191; *eadem*, Anadolu Ağızlarının Etnik Yapı ile İlişkisi Sorunu, 182.

was a keep called Maniōn which had been wrested from the infidels through much labor and numerous gifts. Previously it had belonged to the Christians. Smbat, the king's brother and sparapet [commander-in-chief] of the Armenians, held [Maniōn] for three years in the midst of such a multitude of infidels. The boastful Qaraman harassed him fiercely and subjected Smbat to all kinds of dangers, causing him to spend a great deal of gold and silver for the needs of his soldiers and for the fortress. Qaraman came against this fortresses and surrounded it for nine months, severely harassing it. Then he began to speak insultingly and to give orders to the Armenian king, Het'um, saying: »If you want to come to me, you need not come to my feet, rather wait a bit until the autumn wind cleanses the bitterness from your country. That way, when I come I will not be weakened and unable to accomplish anything.« As soon as King Het'um heard this, he arose and went to his father, Kostandin, and informed him... So the king arose and went to Tarsus, assembled his troops and went to Selewkia. There were gathered cavalry, infantry and bearers, since they were going to take 1000 k'or of grain to the [besieged] fortress. When the Christian troops and the king reached the borders of the fortress, the infidels who were besieging the fortress fled from its rear. When the king arrived at the fortress with his troops, they did not find the impious Qaraman there. The king ordered that the grain be unloaded at the fortress and they removed guards who had gone into exile and designated new ones in their place. Then they took to the road and returned to their land without a care. Now that impious Qaraman came to a swampy and harsh place, with a mound of stones and a tight pass like a tunnel, and there he waited in ambush. When the Christian forces reached that place, the infidels raised a shriek and struck the believers with arrows. The clamor reached the king and the bravest left their brigades and coursed on to the place of battle. Striking the infidels, they turned them to flight and pierced Qaraman with spears and arrows. [Qaraman] retreated in shame and this impious man died several days later of his wounds. And the impious man's brother, named Bunsuz (Pōnsuz), died in the place of battle, as well as his son-in-law...[words missing] and those slain from the king's troops included Kostandin of Soma, and prince Grigor who was the lord of Mazot Khach', whose right hand was cut off by the point of a sword and fell, and few were those lost by the Christians on that day. Now Smbat, Bakuran's and Kostandin's brother, who was of Byzantine nationality and still a boy, and who was related to King Het'um on his father's side, attacked along with the other braves and covered the ground with the infidels' corpses. When the king and many others saw this, they praised him and sent the glad tidings to Kostandin, the king's father. And when he heard it, he was overjoyed and sent [the lad] back home to his brothers and to his mother, lady (tikin) Shahandukht, with generous awards and gifts. Then the king came joyfully to his own land, in great delight that he had put to shame such an irritant with so little labor.[95]

The chronology of the lengthy piece in Smbat's *Chronicle* accords with Ibn Bībī. The latter wrote that *parwāna* Muʿīn al-Dīn Sulaymān defeated Qarāmān-bey and the Turks of Ermenak in the hard-fought battle at the fortress of Kāvala near Konya; and the chronology in Aqsarāyī suggested that the battle took place in the autumn or winter of 1261. The *Chronicle* of Smbat says that Qarāmān-bey's death took place one year later, in 1262, before the death of Constantine of Paperˇawn (Çandır Kalesi), father of King Hetʿum I (1226-1269) of Cilician Armenia[96] on 24 February 1263. The news of the death of Būñsūz in the same battle,

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95　Smbat Sparapet, *Taregirkʿ*, ed. Agĕlean, 237-240; trans. Bedrosian, 113. I use here the translation of Bedrosian with some light modifications.

96　Toumanoff, *Les dynasties de la Caucasie chrétienne*, 283-284, 288.

which ended the life of his brother Qarāmān-bey, was probably wrong, as he died later in the Seljuq prison. But what forced him to surrender in 1263? The answer can be found in an anonymous Armenian chronicle, which stated that in the year 711 of the Armenian era (AD 1263), King Het'um I met Sultan Rukn al-Dīn Qilij Arslān IV in Herakleia (Ereğli), seemingly on Seljuq territory, and made an agreement which divided the border fortresses between them.[97] This was a joint attempt to finish off the rising emirate of the Karamanoğulları.

Thus the combination of the chief sources gives the following picture: the Karamanoğulları began moving near the country of Gaban (Kapan, Geben), in the rich coalfields (important even nowadays), and they moved along the trade route, along which the coal was brought from Upper Cilicia to Lārende. They may or may not have taken the fortress of the old Herakleia en route, though the story seems plausible, but when they passed it, they began to search for a territory of their own. And they found it in the grey zone of in the land between Cilicia and Pamphylia, neither under strong Seljuq, nor Armenian control. The fortress of Maniōn, whose location is still uncertain, but thought to have been south of Papeṙawn (Baberon, Çandır Kalesi),[98] on the mountainous road from Mut to Silifke, was besieged by Qarāmān-bey for three years before he managed to take it in 1262. This means that the fall of the fortresses of Ermenak and Mut to the Karamanoğulları had taken place by 1259, when the siege of Maniōn began. And after 1263, when all seemed to have been lost for the Karamanoğulları, they still continued to control Ermenak and Mut, whence the revival of their state took place in 1276. Hence the importance of Ermenak in the titles of the Karamanoğulları in their correspondence with the mightiest Muslim state, the Mamluk sultanate of Egypt.

Boundary Zone and the »Fortress Narrative«:
From Byzantine Aristocratic Possessions to a Turkic Beylik

In the grey zone, the Karamanoğulları did not meet the armies of Cilician Armenia, nor were they within the reach of the Seljuqs. Outside the big cities of the sultanate, they encountered a chain of fortresses and small towns controlled by the remnants of the Byzantine aristocracy. It was no coincidence that Smbat the Constable mentioned that the master of Maniōn, Halkam, was »of the Byzantine nationality«, or, more precisely, of the »Greek nation« (*Yoyn azgaw*). The same is said in relation to the young Smbat, »Bakuran's and Kostandin's brother, who was related to King Het'um on his father's side«, the hero of the battle at Maniōn in 1262. It was the same Hetoumid dynasty, but a special branch, different from the royal one. Halkam, killed by Qarāmān-bey in 1259-1262, was »mentioned earlier« by Smbat Sparapet as a person of »Greek nationality«, but the only previous mention of the same name was that of Halkam, lord of Maniōn, Lamōs, Zheṙmanik and Anamuṙ in 1198. He headed an embassy of King Levon (Leo) I (1187-1219) of Cilician Armenia to Constantinople in 1197.[99]

The ancestry of Halkam, lord of Maniōn, Lamōs, Zheṙmanik and Anamuṙ, went back to the Hetoumid lords of Baberon. According to Cyril Toumanoff, Constantine of Papeṙawn/Barbaron was the father of King Het'um I; and Constantine's father and Het'um I's grandfather was Prince Vasak of Papeṙawn/Barbaron principality, whose elder brother was Bakuran of Barbaron. Their younger brother was Halkam, mentioned as lord of Maniōn, Lamōs,

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97   Galstian, *Armianskiie istochniki o mongolakh*, 73.

98   Hewsen, *Armenia: a Historical Atlas*, 140, map 124.

99   Smbat Sparapet, *Taregirkʻ*, 207; trans. Bedrosian, 95.

Zheṙmanik and Anamuṙ in 1198. It is not clear why Halkam, who defended the Armenian faith in front of the Byzantine theologians in 1197 and who was a great uncle of King Het'um I, was labeled as a man »of the Greek nation« by his grandnephew Smbat the Constable, brother of the king and the author of the *Chronicle* (who by no means considered himself a »Greek«). The discrepancy allowed Arutiunova-Fidanian to suggest that the name Bakuran, which was initially applied in the *Chronicle* to *sebastos* Gregory Pakourianos (d. 1086), the famous commander of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118), was used as a sobriquet of the Pakouriani dynasty, which had branches in Armenia, Georgia, and Byzantium (including the Balkans).[100] Smbat the Constable wrote the name of Gregory Pakourianos as »*paron* Grigor, Bakuran's son«, though the name of Gregory's father was most likely Aluz, and Bakuran could only have been the name of his grandfather.[101] It was not impossible that the Hetoumids of Barbaron were related to, or were descendants (via marriage) of, the Pakouriani family. If this was so, then old Halkam and young Smbat, »Bakuran's and Kostandin's brother«, all »of the Greek nation«, who on their father's side were relatives of King Het'um I himself, were the Pakourianoi (and Halkam the Hetoumid of 1197-1198 could have been a different person from the Halkam killed in Maniōn in 1259-1262). Thus, when establishing their emirate, the Karamanoğulları encountered another world, which resembled the Ottomans' in Bithynia (although the geographical patterns in Bithynia and Cilicia were very different) – the world of the twelfth century, with the great fortresses in the border zone still kept by the members of the Byzantine aristocratic families, the survivors of the Seljuq conquest after 1071. The image of Rum before the Ottomans, as a conglomeration of fortresses with their own *tekvur*s, as was described by Ibn-i Kemāl, receives additional justification.

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100 Gregory Pakourianos had a prominent career. He was duke of Theodosioupolis (Erzurum) and grand domestic of the East, also called ›*zorvari* of the East‹ in the Georgian sources, until 1074-1075. He became grand domestic (*megas domestikos*) of the West sometime from 1081. *Zorvari* was a Georgian *calque* of the Armenian title *zawrawor*, the latter being the translation of the Byzantine title *stratēgos-autokratōr*, i.e. the commander-in-chief of the Byzantine eastern army. *K'art'lis Ts'khovreba* 2, ed. Qaukhch'ishvili, 317; Thomson, *Rewriting Caucasian History*, 308. On Gregory Pakourianos, see Garsoïan, Pakourianos; Jeffreys *et al.*, *Prosopography of the Byzantine World*, 2016. Accessed on 24 March 2021: pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk, Gregorios 61: pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/person/Gregorios/61/; Annae Comnenae, *Alexias* 1, ed. Reinsch and Kambylis, 63-64, 126, 132, 151, 153, 200; *Typicon Gregorii Pacuriani*, ed. Tarchnischvili; ed. Kauchtschischvili; trans. Arutiunova-Fidanian; ed and trans. Gautier; Shanidze, *Gruzinskii monastyr' v Bolgarii i ego tipik*. On the family of the Pakourianoi, see Kazhdan, *Armiane v sostave gospodstvuiuschego klassa*, 58-65.

101 Arutiunova-Fidanian, Armiane-khalkidonity, 15-17. Cf. similar wording (»Grigor, son of Bakurian«) in the Georgian sources, mentioning the sebastos Gregory Pakourianos; see Shanidze, *Velikii domestik Zapada Grigorii Bakurianis-dze i gruzinskii monastry'*, 40-43.

The »fortress narrative« survived not only in the writings of the Ottomans or the Karamanoğulları. Its traces can be seen in the pages concerning the foundation of the Candaroğulları emirate, whose first possessions, the fortresses of Safranbolu and Eflani, were remembered long after they had become masters of the far more important cities of Kastamonu and Sinop.[102] The narrative influenced even the perceptions of the early Aqqoyunlu (Aq-qoyunlu). The latter were remembered in the Empire of Trebizond as »Amitiotai«, or masters of the fortress Omidia in the Pontus (the wording was almost on a par with Ibn Bībī's »Turks of Ermenāk«, as in both cases a Turkic nomadic entity was designated by a fortress which these Turks controlled).[103] The analysis of the Aqqoyunlu historical tradition in the *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya* by Abū Bakr-i Ṭihrānī (fl. 1447-1478 or 1482), which was focused in the city of Āmid (Diyarbakır, Diyār Bakr) as a center of the Aqqoyunlu empire, and which tried to represent their past as grandiosely as possible, allowed R. Shukurov to suggest that the city of Āmid (Omid), which, as Abū Bakr-i Ṭihrānī insisted, was supposedly the first possession of the Aqqoyunlu, was in reality an intentional substitution for the fortress of Omidia, a real springboard of the Aqqoyunlu, located in the territory of the Empire of Trebizond.[104] Indeed, while the Amitiotai were active in the Empire of Trebizond from 1341 to 1358,[105] the Aqqoyunlu had not conquered Āmid by 1401. Their post-1401 tradition was unable to come to terms with the »fortress narrative« and preferred the greater and more ancient city of Āmid (Omid) to the obscure Pontic fortress Omidia in infidel territory. And yet, even Abū Bakr-i Ṭihrānī's disdain did not allow him to rewrite his sources completely. According to him, before the Aqqoyunlu had become masters of Āmid (in reality Omidia), they controlled the fortress of Alancık (*qal'a-yi Alanjıq*, another possible reading Alıncak: قلعهء النجق),[106] which, given the Pontic context, could have been identical to the modern town of Alancık on the road between Şebinkarahisar (Koloneia, Kūghūnīya) and Kelkit in the country of Gümüşhane in the Pontus. For Abū Bakr-i Ṭihrānī, however, the »fortress of Alancık/Alıncak« more likely sounded like the famous fortress Alıncak, the Armenian Ernchak, east of Nakhchivan, under the sway of the sworn enemy of the Aqqoyunlu, Iskender-beg b. Qara Yūsuf Qara-qoyunlu (1420-1438).[107] It would have been appropriate to lay claim to the Qara-qoyunlu territory by way of referring to the »possessions of old« of the Aqqoyunlu.

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102 In his translation of the work of Ibn Bībī, Yazıcıoğlu Ali described the end the Çobanoğulları emirate and the beginning of the Candaroğulları. According to him, Suleyman Pasha Candaroğlu, who was one of the sipahi of the environs of Kastamonu, in the year when the power of the Mongols had weakened (c. 1309), gathered the Turks from Iflughān (Eflani) (where his ›timar‹ was) and marched against Kastamonu. »He besieged Mehmed-bey (son of Yavlak Arslan Çobanoğlu, the descendant of the old Seljuk aristocratic family of the Çobanoğulları), and took him captive, and destroyed him, and became master of Kastamonu and Būrghulū, which was the fortress known at that time as Zalifre (Dhālīfre)«; see Yazıcızâde Ali, *Tevârîh-i Âl-i Selçuk*, ed. Bakır, 909-910; Yazıcızāde 'Alī, *Selçuḳ-nāme*, MS Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi Revan Bölümü nu. 1391, fol. 445a. »Būrghulū, known as Zalifre« is the modern-day city of Safranbolu. At that time Iflughān (Eflani) was a strategically important fortress in Paphlagonia.

103 Panaret, *O Velikikh Komninakh*, ed. Kriukov, trans. Karpov and Shukurov, 82, 84, 86, 90, 94; Bryer, Greeks and Türkmens, 133-134.

104 Shukurov, Between Peace and Hostility, 47-51.

105 The dates of the first and the last mention of the Aq-qoyunlu in the chronicle of Panaretos.

106 Abū Bakr-i Ṭihrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya* 1, ed. Lugal and Sümer, 15, 17. Alancık was the reading advanced by Shukurov, Between Peace and Hostility, 49.

107 Zachariadou, [no title], 368.

It was not unusual to start making a principality from the conquest of a fortress. The most unusual thing, however, was the longevity of the memory about it. Instead of forgetting at a later stage those small locations in favor of more prominent and important cities, the Ottomans, the Karamanoğulları, and a great host of other Turkish beys not only carefully recorded their initial conquests but also used the fortresses' names in diplomatic correspondence by way of asserting their political legitimacy. To understand the context, it would have been equivalent to the kings of England continuing to refer to themselves as kings of Winchester throughout the centuries, long after the unification of Anglo-Saxon England into one kingdom and the Norman conquest – just because Winchester was a capital city of Alfred the Great (871-886).

The memory of the »fortresses' past«, so acute even in the sixteenth century, could have pointed to the period of the second half of the thirteenth century as a time of transition, when the cities in the frontier zone in Anatolia were sometimes reduced to the size of a fortress, and their inhabitants were forced to find a new location (and that also suggested a change of trade routes in the zone).[108] Under these circumstances, the importance of the strongholds in the new key locations increased. There, the new formations began. The vision of the »fortresses' past« was still remembered at the time of Sulaymān the Magnificent. It influenced not only the Ottoman perception of Byzantium but also affected Ottoman self-representation as the new masters of the conquered lands.

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108 Herakleia Kybistra with its previous location abandoned, and the old city transformed into a fortress, was by no means a solitary example – one can mention, for example, similar changes in the fate of the city of Laodikeia (Denizli): Korobeinikov, Byzantine-Seljuk Border.

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The Sicilian Tithe Business: State and Merchants in the Eleventh-Century Islamic Mediterranean

Lorenzo M. Bondioli*

In the mid-eleventh century, Sicilian authorities levied the »Sicilian tithe«, a customs duty hitting foreign merchants. The imposition of this tax put in motion a long chain of events that would be lost to us were it not for the exceptional evidence of the Cairo Geniza. This article focuses on a handful of Geniza commercial letters and legal queries in Judeo-Arabic that chronicle the unfolding of the Sicilian tithe business, from the initial attempt by a group of Geniza merchants to evade it, through the harsh reaction of state authorities, to the eventual abolition of the tax through merchant lobbying at the Fatimid court in Egypt. The events surrounding the Sicilian tithe not only shed light on a chapter in the history of Islamic Sicily; they also offer fresh insights into the much broader question of the relationship between state and merchants in the Islamic Mediterranean of the Central Middle Ages. Addressing this theme, this article will advance three interrelated claims. First, it will argue that Sicilian state administrators adopted what we might call a protectionist fiscal policy with the aim of maximizing tax revenues while at the same time supporting a domestic merchant class. Second, it will show that to accomplish this goal state administrators categorized merchants on the basis of administrative procedures that were largely detached from the complex and shifting forms of identity that merchants themselves adopted. Third, it will argue that the state's protectionist calculus clashed against the trans-territorial character of contemporary merchant consortiums, highlighting the fundamental misalignment between the tributary logic that animated state officials and the capitalist logic that animated merchants.

Keywords: Cairo Geniza, Islamic Sicily, Fatimid history, medieval Mediterranean, commercial taxation, medieval economic history.

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Introduction

Among the Geniza documents in the Taylor-Schechter Collection of Cambridge University Library there is a legal query from 1059 addressed to Daniʾel b. ʿAzaria, Gaon of the Palestinian Yeshiva from 1052 to 1062 CE.[1] In the query, Daniʾel, as the head of an illustrious academy of higher learning, is asked to express his authoritative opinion on a thorny legal case that embroiled Jewish communal authorities in Fusṭāṭ, Egypt, and Tripoli, Ifrīqiya (present-day Tunisia, Libya, and Algeria). The query and the legal dispute that occasioned it were the result of a long series of events stretching back a few years. These events were set in motion by the imposition of a particular tax, a tithe, on the island of Sicily.[2] Yet we start our story from its epilogue, rather than its beginning, because the legal dispute on which Daniʾel b. ʿAzaria was asked to pronounce himself encapsulates all the main questions with which this article is concerned.

In a nutshell, the subject of the dispute laid out in the legal query was as follows. Two Jewish merchants, Ḥasan ha-Kohen b. Salmān al-Dallāl (»the broker«) and Moshe b. Yehuda ha-Ḥazan (»the cantor«), had formed a partnership. The terms of the partnership were that Ḥasan would supply the goods for the common commercial venture, and Moshe would transport them from Alexandria to Sicily and sell them there. Two-thirds of the ensuing profits would go to Ḥasan, who supplied the capital for the venture in the form of the commodities to be traded, and one third would go to Moshe, who contributed his own labor and expertise as a traveling merchant. If the venture were unsuccessful, the two would share losses in the same proportions.[3] The query generically calls this arrangement a *shutafut*,[4] »partnership«, but the provision about losses allows us to firmly establish the nature of the deal as a commenda of the *ʿisqa* type, where, following Jewish law, part of the capital was regarded as a loan from the sleeping to the active partner. The latter was in turn held liable for loss of the capital (unlike the contemporary Islamic *qirāḍ*, where the active partner was not liable).[5]

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1   T-S 20.152. Diplomatic editions of all the Geniza documents cited in this article can be found in Gil, *In the Kingdom of Ishmael;* Geniza documents pertaining to Sicily have also been edited by Ben-Sasson, *The Jews of Sicily*, with some occasional variations between Gil and Ben-Sasson's editions. English translations can be found in Simonsohn, *The Jews in Sicily*; though they are a wonderful resource, they are to be treated with some caution. The shelf mark abbreviations used in this article are those adopted by the Princeton Geniza Project (PGP) of Princeton Univeristy's Geniza Lab: genizalab.princeton.edu/, last accessed on 30 August 2021. The underlined shelf marks are linked to the online document entry of the PGP; when the entry includes a virtual edition of the document, line references are to this edition. On Daniʾel's controversial accession to the gaonate see Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics*, 321-323. For the history of the discovery of the Cairo Geniza and the transferal of most of its contents to Cambridge University Library, see Hoffman, *Sacred Trash*. For the diverse origin of the fragments that are now generally collectively referred to as »Cairo Geniza«, see Ben-Shammai, Is »the Cairo Genizah« a proper name.

2   For the importance of Geniza documents for the history of Islamic Sicily, see Goitein, Sicily and Southern Italy; Udovitch, New materials; Nef, La Sicile.

3   The query paraphrases the actual contract between the two merchants, a copy of which also survives in the Geniza (probably as part of the dossier of the lawsuit): T-S 12.5.

4   T-S 20.152, line 18.

5   Cohen, Partnership gone bad, 233-234; *idem, Maimonides and the Merchants*, 53-55; Ackerman-Lieberman, *Partnership Culture*, 108-109; Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit*, 238-239; *idem*, At the origins.

The arrangement was common enough in the period. Unfortunately, this particular venture had a tragic, unforeseen outcome that went beyond the provisions of the partnership. Moshe died while traveling with the goods on a ship sailing from Alexandria, and the crew threw his body overboard. The ship docked in Tripoli, in modern-day Libya, where the local Jewish court took the now unaccompanied goods into custody.[6] This is where the matter became thorny from a legal point of view: what was to be done with the merchandise? Ḥasan, the sleeping partner, was the sole proprietor of the goods, but they were labeled with Moshe's name only. Taken at face value, the labeling suggested that Moshe, and not Ḥasan, was the proprietor. Hence, Ḥasan now had to prove his claim against that of Moshe's widow and orphan, who had a competing right to the possessions of the deceased. The question posed to the Gaon was therefore: could Ḥasan send an agent to retrieve his goods in Tripoli? Did he have to swear an oath to corroborate his claim that he was in fact the sole proprietor of the goods? And if the court in Tripoli refused to accept the oath and kept the goods in custody on behalf of Moshe's heirs, who was responsible for the losses accruing before the matter was settled for good – the court or the heirs?[7]

We do not know the Gaon's answer, or how the matter ended. But what interests me the most is why Ḥasan's goods were labelled with Moshe's name. To avoid any confusion on this crucial point, the legal query spells out the reason clearly: the goods were labeled in Moshe's name only »on account of the tithe«.[8] We thus encounter the main culprit of our story: the tithe, an import duty that Sicilian authorities levied on non-Sicilian merchants. To circumvent it, Jewish merchants based in Egypt and Ifrīqiya devised a stratagem that would eventually result in our legal dispute: they would register their goods in the name of their Sicilian partners, who were not liable to pay the tithe.

In what follows I will try to explore three interrelated questions arising from this story. As we shall see, the existing literature has already offered some factual answers; nevertheless, there remain many interesting implications that are worth analyzing in greater depth.[9]

The first and most basic question is: what exactly was the tithe? A first answer is that the tithe was an import duty levied on foreign merchants, and as such it would not strike any historian of the medieval Mediterranean as exceptional. Foreigners paid heightened import duties in most ports of the Middle Sea, be they under Muslim or Christian rule. Yet applying this discriminatory tax meant drawing a distinction between Sicilian and non-Sicilian subjects of the Fatimid Caliphate – a noteworthy alteration to the ecumenical framework of Fatimid sovereignty, which on paper extended to Sicily as well.[10]

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6   T-S 20.152, lines 24-25.

7   T-S 20.152, lines 25-28.

8   T-S 20.152, line 19: *bi sabab al-ʿīshshūr (al-ʿīssūr)*.

9   The main studies discussing the incident are Gil, Sicily; *idem*, Jews in Sicily; Nef, La Sicile; Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 171-172 and 293-294.

10 On the position of the island within the Fatimid maritime space, see Bramoullé, La Sicile fatimide; Davis-Secord, *Where Three Worlds Met*, 111-173; and Chiarelli, *A History of Muslim Sicily*, 67-144.

This might explain why the non-Sicilian merchants who had to pay the tithe perceived it as unjust and extortionate. Of course, it was in their material interest to think of it in this way, but their objection seems to have been circumscribed to the treatment as »foreigners« rather than to the principle of commercial taxation in general, since they generally paid (reasonable) import duties without much complaint.[11] This leads us to the second key question: who counted as Sicilian in the mid-eleventh century?

Finally, the ideological opposition of the merchants to the tithe leads us to the third question: how could eleventh-century merchants operating between the Islamic shores of the Mediterranean organize against the tax demands of the state? As the legal query suggests, a first answer is that they could decide to defy state authority and circumvent taxation through a sophisticated use of commercial partnership. A second answer is that they could forge personal relationships with state officials to gain preferential treatment, as Jessica Goldberg has argued.[12] As we shall see, however, in the long run our merchants tackled the issue more directly: they made their opposition to the tithe manifest to the political authorities and succeeded in having it rescinded altogether. While the former two solutions speak to legal sophistication and commercial acumen, the latter implies a high degree of class solidarity among merchants and the ability to actively lobby state authorities – an ability that scholarship on the economic history of the medieval Islamic world has traditionally tended to belittle or deny altogether.

The Sicilian Tithe

There are eight Geniza documents in total unequivocally referencing the Sicilian tithe: six commercial letters and two legal queries.[13] Among these, the only one carrying a complete date is the above-quoted legal query, which was written in the year 1370 of the Seleucid Era (commonly employed in the period for dating legal contracts), i.e., 1059 CE. The dating of all the other documents is tentative, but they all seem to fall between 1055 and 1060. Two of the five letters are part of a larger dossier of seventeen documents that Jessica Goldberg was able to relate to a single sailing season, that of summer 1056, thanks to cross-references to the same transactions and mentions of the Sicilian tithe itself.[14]

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11 Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 1, 339-345.

12 Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 164-179.

13 Letters: <u>DK 230.1</u>; <u>T-S 12.270</u>; <u>T-S 12.372</u>; <u>T-S 16.13</u>; <u>T-S 20.122</u>; <u>T-S 10J12.26</u>. Legal queries: <u>Bodl. MS heb. a 3/9</u>; <u>T-S 20.152</u>.

14 Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 93 footnote 1. The documents in question: BL OR 5542.9; Bodl. MS heb. d 66/81; DK 230.1; ENA 2727.38; ENA 4020.43; ENA NS 13.85; ENA NS 19.25; T-S 10J15.15; T-S 10J15.4; T-S 10J20.12; T-S 12.270; T-S 12.275; T-S 12.372; T-S 13J16.19; T-S 8.66; T-S 8J20.2; T-S 8J21.7. Most of these documents only mention the day of the month, making a precise dating arduous. The only document that offers elements for a more precise dating is Bodl. MS heb. d 66/81, a short letter from Ibrāhīm b. Faraḥ al-Iskandarānī writing from Alexandria to Abū l-Faraj Yeshuʿa b. Ismaʿīl in Fusṭāṭ. The letter is dated to Friday Rāsh (sic.) Ḥodesh (i.e., the festivity marking the beginning of the month) of Marcheshvan. The first day of Rosh Ḥodesh was actually celebrated on the last day of the previous month, Tishri 30th, which fell on a Friday only in 1053 and 1056. The date of the document is therefore most likely Friday 11 October 1056 of the Julian Calendar. I am grateful to Nadia Vidro for her kind assistance on this matter of dating.

Let us start from the first of these two letters, a missive by the merchant Maymūn b. Khalfa al-Qābisī writing from Palermo to Nahray b. Nissim, most likely in Egypt, where the latter was usually based.[15] Nahray was among the most prominent and well-documented Geniza merchants of his generation, and Maymūn was a close associate and friend of his.[16] In the letter Maymūn reports,

> I cannot sell anything at the moment, because our local associates[17] are being asked for the tithe[18]; today the tithe was taken on the goods of my brother, who had travelled from al-Andalus (the Iberian Peninsula). May God almighty abolish the decree, for it is a great misfortune. We console ourselves that maybe the enemies of Israel will not succeed in this matter.[19]

Later on in the same letter Maymūn returns to the topic, cautioning Nahray and their common associates against sending any merchandise to Sicily:

> By God, I insist my lord, put pressure on our associates[20] not to send a single silver coin[21] to Sicily, since, by God almighty, the whole matter and anything connected with it is risky. You know in fact that nothing is hidden before our associates[22] and that they never speak the truth without adding some fancy stories. And this was the cause for the demand of tithe[23] by the authorities:[24] rumor reached them that locals form partnerships with foreigners and pass off their wares under their own names.[25]

The rumor was not unfounded: the 1059 legal query discussed above shows that the expedient was indeed practiced, and we also know that Ḥasan ha-Kohen b. Salmān was not the only merchant to have resorted to it. Maymūn's letter to Nahray obliquely references another merchant, Sulaymān b. Shaʾul, who likewise availed himself of the services of the ill-fated Moshe to avoid paying the tithe.[26] The identity of the informants who exposed the expedient remains mysterious. Maymūn calls them »our associates«, *aṣḥabunā* (a variant spelling of the

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15 DK 230.1. The letter is dated Elul 5th, which most likely corresponds to 18 August 1056.

16 Ackerman-Lieberman, Nahray Ben Nissim; Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 33-37, 136, and 146.

17 *Aṣḥabunā* (sic.) *ahl al-balad.*

18 *Bi-l-ʿushr.*

19 DK 230.1, lines 29-31.

20 *Aṣḥabinā* (sic.).

21 *Dirham.*

22 *Aṣḥabinā* (sic.).

23 *Al-ʿushr.*

24 *Al-sulṭān.*

25 DK 230.1, verso, lines 2-4.

26 DK 230.1, verso, line 6. Sulaymān found himself in the same predicament as Ḥasan when Moshe unexpectedly died in transit. The second legal query mentioning the tithe, Bodl. MS heb. a 3/9, relates to the parallel lawsuit that he initiated to recover his goods.

more orthographically correct *aṣḥābunā*), but the tone seems sarcastic. While *aṣḥabunā ahl al-balad*, »our local associates«, are clearly actual business partners whose misfortunes worried him, these *aṣḥabunā* come across as nosy gossipers – most likely competitors. It is possible that they were other Jewish merchants who had fallen out with the influential Ḥayyim b. ʿAmmār, who served as representative of the merchants, *wakīl al-tujjār*, in Palermo, over a shipment of indigo.[27] In a letter addressed to an unknown associate in Fusṭāṭ, Ḥayyim reports the incident in some detail:

> The two of them [Ismāʿīl b. Harūn and his brother] tormented me and informed against me to the all-seeing ones[28] and others, and then one of them said »here's a Jew who disrespects the houses of the Muslims[29] and evades the tithes[30]!«[31]

A large lacuna in the text prevents the reading of the following part, but it is clear that Ḥayyim was very distressed: being accused of tax evasion in front of state authorities, *al-sulṭān*, was no light matter, and put him in a dangerous position (»so I was dragged into a thing I could not solve«).[32]

Whether it was this particular incident or a different one that raised the suspicion of the Sicilian authorities, once the expedient was exposed, the reaction was harsh. The first step that the authorities took was to demand the tithe from the local merchants, *ahl al-balad*, as Maymūn b. Khalfa laments. A second letter probably pertaining to the 1056 summer season, also addressed to Nahray b. Nissim, references this measure. The writer, whom Moshe Gil identified paleographically as the merchant Salāma b. Mūsā b. Isḥaq al-Ṣafāqusī, laconically remarks in the upper margin: »Our associates[33] in Sicily are in great trouble; tithe is demanded from the locals[34].«[35]

But the authorities did not stop at that. At the very end of his letter to Nahray, Maymūn b. Khalfa adds another grim piece of news: five Jewish merchants, one of whom was a prominent communal official, a *dayyan*, had been detained for three days on account of the tithe, *ʿalā sabab al-ʿushr*.[36] It seems that the five were singled out as offenders. One of them was the aforementioned Sulaymān b. Shaʾul, who we know had indeed attempted to evade the tithe in partnership with Moshe. As for the *dayyan*, he was one of the people involved in the indigo incident that resulted in Ḥayyim b. ʿAmmār being accused of tax evasion in front of the authorities – suggesting that he, too, was somehow involved in attempts to evade the tithe.[37]

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27 On Ḥayyim, see Gil, Jews in Sicily, 93; on this particular incident, see Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 1-2; on the role of the representative of the merchants, see Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society,* vol. 1, 186-192, and Margariti, *Aden and the Indian Ocean Trade*, 178-181.

28 *Al-fiqqaḥīm*, Hebrew *piqqeḥīm* – on this curious word see Gil, Sicily, 143.

29 *Buyūt al-muslimīn.*

30 *Al-aʿshār* (plural of *ʿushr*; *ʿushūr* is also attested).

31 T-S 20.122, lines 39-41.

32 T-S 20.122, lines 39-41.

33 *Aṣḥābuna.*

34 *Ahl al-balad.*

35 T-S 12.270, top margin. The letter is dated to New Year's, i.e., most likely 2 October 1056. On Salāma, see the biographical sketch in Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 296-300.

36 DK 230.1, verso, lines 27-28.

37 Gil, Sicily, 165-166.

Imprisonment was a harsh but common measure taken against debtors, especially when the creditor was the state: the Geniza bears witness to many cases of taxpayers in arrears or insolvent tax-farmers rotting in jail. Paying up or petitioning for debt remission and release were the only two options available to the victims.[38] We do not know which course the five unfortunate merchants chose, but the lack of further comments on the matter suggests that they were eventually released. Even then, pressure on the local Jewish community remained high. Writing from Alexandria to his nephew Abū l-Surūr Faraḥ b. Ismāʿīl b. Faraḥ in Fusṭāṭ, the merchant Yūsuf b. Faraḥ al-Qābisī reports more calamitous news out of Sicily: »The matter of the tithe worsened and [...] Yosef b. Shabbetay the cantor[39] converted to Islam in Palermo.«[40]

At this point we must interrupt our narrative and come back to the question of what exactly the tithe was, and what one's religious affiliation had to do with it. The Arabic word designating the tithe, ʿushr, is semantically problematic. It literally means »a tenth«, but in the eleventh century (and long before then) it also referred to a particular type of tax. The Islamic legal literature, fiqh, on ʿushr is vast and labyrinthine. Most of it deals mainly with taxation on land and its produce, since in general ʿushr was a tax levied on Muslim landowners. There was, however, another possible meaning: ʿushr was also a tax that artisans and merchants had to pay, and the rate at which they paid depended on their politico-religious status. There were three tiers: Muslims paid 2.5% on their annual earnings; dhimmīs (non-Muslim protected subjects living under Muslim authority in the dār al-Islām, the Abode of Islam), 5% on their annual earnings; and ḥarbīs (non-Muslims living outside the dār al-Islām in the dār al-ḥarb, the Abode of War), 10% on the value of the merchandise that they imported.[41]

The existence of these three tiers would explain why Yosef b. Shabbetay resorted to conversion to Islam to escape the fiscal vexations of Sicilian authorities. But it does not explain why Jewish Egyptian merchants would have needed to pass off their merchandise under their Jewish Sicilian colleagues' names. Both Egyptian and Sicilian Jews were dhimmīs, and should therefore have been theoretically entitled to the same rate (5%). This means that the eleventh-century Sicilian ʿushr worked differently than the jurists had originally theorized. The key distinction was not between Muslims, dhimmīs, and ḥarbīs, but rather between »locals«, ahl al-balad, and »foreigners«, al-ghurabā(ʾ): these are the two categories that, according to Maymūn b. Khalfa, were forming partnerships, yushārikū, to avoid paying the tithe.[42] Another legal query related to the unfortunate death of our Moshe b. Yehuda ha-Ḥazan likewise states that the tithe was imposed »on those coming from another country«, ʿalā l-ṭurrā(ʾ).[43]

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38   On imprisonment and petitioning, see Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 2, 372-373; Cohen, *Poverty and Charity*, 130-138; Khan, *Arabic Legal and Administrative Documents*, 332, 350-351, and 354-358.

39   *Al-ḥazān.*

40   T-S 12.372, lines 18-19. The latter is dated Elul 24th, i.e., most likely 6 September 1056.

41   Forand, Notes on ʿušr and maks.

42   DK 230.1, verso, line 4.

43   Bodl. MS heb. a 3/9, line 10. See above, footnote 26.

The incongruity between legal theory and fiscal practice is not surprising. The fiscal tax-onomy developed by early Abbasid jurists was panimperial and ecumenic in character. Their fiscal reasoning presupposed the ideal legal and political framework of a universal Caliphate with a clear »inside« and »outside«.[44] This framework entailed two categories of taxpayers (Muslims and *dhimmī*s) internal to the *dār al-Islām* and another one (*ḥarbī*s) external to it, comprising outsiders entering the *dār al-Islām* from the *dār al-ḥarb* for the purpose of trad-ing.[45] Such a framework was ill-suited to reflect the reality of the multi-state system of the mid-eleventh-century Mediterranean, where multiple polities – and even multiple caliphs – vied for supremacy.

Sicilian authorities therefore employed a novel criterion to determine who was liable to pay *ʿushr*. »Locals«, *ahl al-balad*, were exempted, be they Muslim or *dhimmī*s, while foreigners had to pay – probably irrespective of their religion. The imposition of *ʿushr* upon our unfor-tunate local merchants was therefore an exceptional measure taken in retaliation for their illegal collusion with foreigners, *al-ghurabāʾ*. The conversion of Yosef b. Shabbetay the cantor is therefore perhaps better interpreted as a form of public atonement under duress rather than an attempt to enter a different fiscal category, at least with regard to the *ʿushr*: Muslims and Jews, as long as they were local, were apparently both exempt from the tithe.[46] The key question is therefore what made a local, and what made a foreigner.

Who's Sicilian?

The eleventh-century merchants whose documents were preserved in the Cairo Geniza moved quite seamlessly between the many port cities of the Mediterranean, especially those of its Islamic shores.[47] It was not uncommon for a merchant who had started his career in Ifrīqiya to end up living in Egypt, or indeed in Sicily, and vice versa. The close commercial connec-tions between these three regions were in part a product of their shared legacy as provinces of the Fatimid imperial commonwealth.[48] The dynasty had established its first power base in Ifrīqiya in 909, then subjected Sicily to its authority in 910-917, and finally conquered Egypt in 969.[49] By the mid-eleventh century, however, the political ties linking these three regions had significantly loosened, with the local governors of Sicily and Ifrīqiya increasingly asserting their independence vis-à-vis the caliphal court in Egypt. The fourth ruler of the line of governors, the Zirids, that the Fatimids had left in control of Ifrīqiya, Muʿizz b. Bādīs (r. 1016-1062), had even attempted to shift his allegiance to the Abbasid Caliph, precipitating an open military confrontation with the Fatimids that eventually resulted in his return to his

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44 Calasso and Lancioni, *Dār al-islām / dār al-harb;* Ahmad, Notions of dār al-ḥarb.

45 From a legal point of view, *ḥarbī* merchants entered the Abode of Islām under safe conduct, *amān*. See Hatschek, *Der Mustaʾmin*.

46 In other respects, his fiscal status would have changed: he would have been exempted from the capitation tax paid by non-Muslims, and would have had to pay various alimonies burdening Muslims only, such as the *ṣadaqa* and *zakāt*.

47 Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*.

48 Bramoullé, *Les Fatimides et la mer*.

49 Brett, *Rise of the Fatimids*; *idem*, Realm of the imām.

original allegiance.[50] As for Sicily, the first half of the eleventh century witnessed the collapse of the faithful Kalbid line of governors who had ruled the island in the name of the Fatimid Caliph. Internal revolts and external invasions from both Zirid Ifrīqiya and the Eastern Roman Empire shattered the administrative unity of the province; by the 1040s, various petty regional rulers had filled the vacuum, vying for control of the main cities.[51]

Notwithstanding the tumultuous and increasingly segmented nature of this political landscape, Geniza merchants continued to operate in all three regions – Egypt, Ifrīqiya, and Sicily. The slippery term »our associates«, *aṣḥābunā*, often denoted a consortium of merchants active across this vast space. Thus, we saw that Maymūn b. Khalfa could write of »our local associates«, *aṣḥabunā ahl al-balad*, to refer to his and Nahray's partners who were based in Sicily. Incidentally, *ahl al-balad* is itself a slippery term. Literally, it can be translated either as »the people of the country« or »the people of the city«, namely Palermo, since *balad* could denote both a region and its capital (conversely, the name of a region could also designate the capital: thus Ṣiqilliya, »Sicily«, could also mean Palermo, and Miṣr, »Egypt«, could also mean Cairo-Fusṭāṭ). Either way, the expression *aṣḥabunā ahl al-balad* designated a recognizable group of merchants who, unlike Maymūn and Nahray, were regarded as »local« in Sicily (hence my loose translation as »our local associates«) but were tied to the latter by the link of *ṣuḥba* association – which, as Goldberg has shown, designated a strong personal as well as commercial relationship.[52]

These intersecting and potentially competing forms of belonging and the mechanisms of identification that accompanied them must have been sufficiently readable to Geniza merchants. But how could state officials establish whether a merchant was »local« or »foreign« if, say, he was born in Ifrīqiya, spent his time between Egypt and Sicily, and regularly conducted business ventures in all three regions? Moshe Gil guessed the answer to this question in analyzing a long letter by the wealthy Ifrīqiya-based merchant Salāma b. Mūsā b. Isḥaq al-Ṣafāqusī, who at some point in the 1050s decided to relocate to the port city of Mazara in western Sicily.[53] In the letter, addressed to his associate Yehuda b. Moshe b. Sughmār, Salāma declares, »I have put down my name in the register[54] and I am going to buy a house in the neighborhood, or leave quarter-gold coins with Abū Abraham Isḥaq b. Khalaf to buy the house.«[55] As Gil noted in passing, putting down one's name in the register, *al-qānūn*, meant two things. On the one hand, by this act Salāma became liable to pay his capitation tax as a non-Muslim protected subject, *dhimmī*, to the city authorities. On the other hand, he officially became »a local«, and as such would not have been required to pay taxes imposed on foreigners, such as the tithe/ʿ*ushr*.[56]

50   Brett, Diplomacy of empire; Idris, *La berbérie orientale.*

51   Metcalfe, *Muslims of Medieval Italy*, 70-87; Prigent, La politique sicilienne.

52   Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, esp. 133-150.

53   On Salāma, see above, footnote 35.

54   *Al-qānūn.*

55   IOM D 55.14, lines 12-13.

56   Gil, Sicily, 144.

We thus encounter another form of identification: tax residence. Like most things related to taxation, it might strike us as less intriguing than the more complex and textured social relations that determined our merchants' sense of belonging to their class, religious community, neighborhood, city, region, and so on.[57] But it was precisely the dry, bureaucratic nature of this particular form of identity that made it preferable to others in the eyes of the state. Unlike other more elusive identifiers, tax residence could be firmly established by state officials; in fact, it was fiscal officials who bestowed it in the first place with a line of ink on their paper registers.

Tax residence was therefore solely a matter of administrative procedure. While we lack information on how exactly such a procedure worked in eleventh-century Sicily, we have ample comparative documentary evidence from contemporary Egypt.[58] Here we know that the names of taxpayers had to be inscribed in the registers of the bureaus responsible for the collection of the capitation tax, *jizya* or *jāliya*, that every adult non-Muslim male subject had to pay in his area of residency.[59]

The late twelfth-century fiscal manuals of two high-ranking Fatimid officials, Ibn Mammātī (d. 1209) and al-Makhzūmī, describe the procedures connected with the collection of the capitation tax in some detail, mentioning a number of different registers in which fiscal officials noted the taxpayers' names and their payments.[60] Fragments of some of these registers survive, and Geniza documents in Judeo-Arabic occasionally make explicit reference to the bureaus that kept them.[61] Though we do not have the same rich documentary evidence for the functioning of the capitation tax bureaus in Sicily, it is extremely likely that parallel procedures were in place in the island as well. Arabic lists of taxpayers survive for the Norman period, and were most likely a direct legacy of the administrative practices of the preceding period.[62] Admittedly, these lists are called *jarāʾid* (singular *jarīda*), not *qawānīn* (singular *qānūn*), the term that Salāma employed to describe the register where he put down his name. The discrepancy could be a matter of local usage, official versus colloquial language, or maybe indicate the existence of multiple types of registers for different officials to check each other's operations, as Ibn Mammātī and al-Makhzūmī prescribe. Either way, Salāma's phrasing is unequivocal: he employs the expression *nazzaltu ismī*, »I put down my name«; in the context, the verb *nazzala* has the unmistakable technical meaning of officially entering information in the records of a bureau.

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57   Wagner, Language and identity.

58   For the fiscal administration of Islamic Sicily, see Abdul Wahab and Dachraoui, Le régime foncier; Johns, *Arabic Administration*, 13-30; Nef, La fiscalité en Sicile; De Simone, In margine alla fiscalità; Chiarelli, *A History of Muslim Sicily*, 248-273. For a comprehensive survey of the evidence shedding light on the capitation tax in Fatimid Egypt, see Bondioli *et al.*, A typology.

59   Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 2, 380-394; Cohen, *Poverty and Charity*, 130-138.

60   Ibn Mammātī, *Qawānīn al-dawāwīn*, 304 = Cooper, *Ibn Mammati's Rules*, 242; al-Makhzūmī, *Minhāj*, 38-39; Cahen, Contribution à l'étude des impôts, 248-252.

61   Bondioli *et al.*, A typology.

62   Johns, *Arabic Administration*, 42-62; Nef, La fiscalité en Sicile, 148-149; De Simone, In margine alla fiscalità, 64.

The other type of document connected to tax residence were the capitation tax receipts that state officials released to taxpayers upon payment. A large number of such receipts survive for eleventh- and twelfth-century Egypt.[63] They generally state the name, religion, and profession of the taxpayer, as well as the place where they were liable to pay their capitation tax; then follows the amount paid and the date when the receipt was written.[64] In sum, a capitation tax receipt had all the necessary elements to function as a sort of identity document or passport. We know that Geniza merchants carried their capitation tax receipts with them when traveling within or outside Egypt. A traveler caught without his (only men paid the capitation tax) receipt could be forced to pay again by the officials of the district he was traversing.[65] When it came to tax residence, all that mattered was documentary proof: on the one hand, the registers held by fiscal bureaus, and on the other, the receipts held by taxpayers themselves.

So, after putting down his name, Salāma became »local« in the eyes of the authorities, the *sulṭān*. Establishing his position within the Jewish community of western Sicily and the local merchant milieu was a different matter altogether, one that worried him and required much planning and diplomacy. In the above-mentioned letter, he asks Yehuda b. Moshe to »gather all our Sicilian associates«, *al-jamīʿ al-siqilliyīn min aṣḥābinā*, to put pressure on another group of hostile Sicilian merchants.[66] Salāma clearly did not regard himself as »a Sicilian« just because he had put down his name in the register of Mazara, but from a fiscal point of view, he was one: his identity as a fiscal subject was settled. He was now a tax-paying *dhimmī* resident of the city.[67]

Lobbying the State

We left our story on a dark note: five Sicilian notables imprisoned, one conversion, and business opportunities foreclosed for the foreseeable future. But the authorities' crackdown was in reality just a temporary setback for our merchants, though a grave one. After the initial moment of chaos and uncertainty, they were eventually able to have the extraordinary imposition of the tithe on local merchants revoked.

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63 For a survey of this incredibly rich but still largely unpublished corpus, see Bondioli *et al.*, A typology.

64 For a sample eleventh-century Fatimid capitation tax receipt from Egypt, see Frantz-Murphy, *Arabic Agricultural Leases*, 353 (doc. no. 89). More published receipts can be found in Diem, *Arabische Steuerquittungen*, 55-56 (doc. no. 27) and 66-67 (doc. no. 34) and Gaubert and Mouton, *Hommes et villages*, 131-137 (docs. nos. 29-33).

65 Bondioli *et al.*, A typology. See also two Geniza letters in which Nahray b. Nissim asks for his capitation tax receipt, which he had left at home, to be forwarded to him: ENA 2805.14, recto, lines 14-18, and CUL Or. 1080 J170, recto, lines 12–14 and right margin.

66 IOM D 55.14, verso, lines 23-24. See also Gil, Sicily 827-1072, 152-153.

67 T-S 20.152, line 20. Similarly, our unfortunate Moshe b. Yehuda (the merchant who died while in transit from Egypt), though »Sicilian« in the sense that he was a Sicilian fiscal resident not liable to pay the tithe, is referred to in the legal query with which we started our narration as »al-Maghribī.«

Unfortunately, we do not know the details of this impressive feat. The only reference to the matter is in a letter by Nahray b. Nissim to Abū Isḥaq Barhūn b. Mūsā al-Tāhartī. Gil tentatively dated it to around 1060, that is, some four years after the crackdown on the tithe evaders, but an earlier date cannot be excluded and might, in fact, be more likely. The reference itself is rather elliptical. In the middle of a request to buy him a bale of flax, Nahray tells Barhūn, »The matter of the decree[68] destined to our associates[69] with the removal of the tithe[70] from Sicily has been accomplished at the hand of Abū l-Ḥasan b. Ḥayyim, may God reward him.«[71]

The incidental character of the remark leaves many details unclear. Gil supposed that the decree, *sijill*, in question must have been by the Fatimid caliph al-Mustanṣir bi-llāh (r. 1036-1094) himself, which is indeed likely.[72] But what exactly was its content? Did the decree abolish exacting the tithe in Sicily altogether, as a literal reading would suggest, or was it simply a reversal of the punitive measures that the Sicilian authorities had adopted against Nahray and Barhūn's associates in the island? There is also little information about the exact role played by Abū l-Ḥasan b. Ḥayyim, who was clearly instrumental in securing the decree. None of these questions can be answered with certainty, but there are nonetheless some important conclusions to draw from the little we know of this abrupt epilogue to the Sicilian tithe business.

Let us start with Abū l-Ḥasan b. Ḥayyim. This was no less than Eli ha-Kohen b. Ḥayyim, also known as Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAllūn/ʿAlī b. Yaʿīsh, a prominent Jewish communal official, a *parnas*, of Fusṭāṭ.[73] Numerous Geniza documents ranging between 1057 and 1107 mention him.[74] Obtaining the decree would therefore have been one of the early feats of his long career. Such a coup would have required some greasing at the very top echelons of Fatimid society, suggesting that already in the late 1050s, Eli had direct access to al-Mustanṣir's court, or to people who did.[75] The most common course to obtaining a caliphal decree was a petition, and it is therefore likely that Eli's key contribution was to gather support for a petition presented by our merchants. As Marina Rustow showed in her recent book, petitions were a cornerstone of the ideological and administrative edifice of Fatimid sovereignty. It was theoretically possible for any Fatimid subjects to address a petition to the Fatimid court, and in practice a wide range of people from the middle and upper classes took advantage of this instrument.[76]

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68   *Al-sijill.*

69   *Aṣḥābinā.*

70   *Bi-zawāl al-ʿushr.*

71   T-S 10J12.26, lines 19-20.

72   Gil, Sicily, 142-143.

73   On this office, see Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 2, 77-82.

74   See Eli's biographical profile in Cohen, *Jewish Self-Government*, 110-113, and Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 2, 78.

75   On the Jewish community's ability to access the Fatimid court, see Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics*, esp. 91-100 (on petitioning).

76   Rustow, *Lost Archive*, 207-244; *eadem*, Petition to a woman.

Yet this particular case would have been more sensitive than most. In general, petitions were meant to either elicit charity or to demand redress for injustice suffered at the hands of state officials. The matter of the tithe was a particularly delicate instance of the second case: delicate because while on the one hand our merchants could claim to have been harshly persecuted, on the other they had in fact circumvented customs regulations. An additional difficulty was that the desired decree would have needed to be addressed to the administrators of a very far-flung and increasingly independent province of the caliphate. That the Fatimid court was willing to scold some of its most distant and potentially recalcitrant representatives on a matter in which the latter could claim to have acted legitimately speaks to the degree of influence that our merchants, through the offices of Eli ha-Kohen, were able to exercise.

This brings us back to another open question: what exactly did the decree accomplish? Nahray's wording, »the removal of the tithe from Sicily«, allows for different interpretations. It is possible that the plea of the Sicilian merchants who had been subjected to the payment of the tithe as if they were foreigners offered the opportunity for the petitioners to denounce the tax as a fundamentally oppressive practice that needed to be abolished altogether. Another possibility is that the tithe remained in place, but that merchants with tax residence in Egypt and Ifrīqiya were recognized as belonging to the same fiscal categories as those residing in Sicily. Lastly, the decree might have simply reversed the retaliatory practice of exacting the tithe from the Sicilian merchants suspected of fraud.

At first sight, the third possibility seems the most plausible: a circumscribed measure reversing a decision that the petitioners could easily frame as oppressive, unjust, and contrary to custom. But a key fact militates against this more reductive interpretation. We do not hear further complaints about the tithe in the commercial correspondence of the following years.[77] We are therefore left with the first or second possibility: either the tithe was completely abolished, or merchants based in Egypt and Ifrīqiya no longer had to pay it. Either way, our merchants had won a very significant victory, allowing them to resume their normal business as privileged members of the expansive transmarine Fatimid commonwealth. The Norman conquest of Sicily would have subtracted Sicily from that imperial space only a few years later, but they could not have foreseen this reversal in the second half of the 1050s, nor was it in their power to prevent it.[78] For the time being, business as usual could resume: nobody had to refrain from sending »a single silver coin to Sicily« any longer.

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77 In fact, we do not hear any reference to it at all, except possibly in a letter addressed by either Ḥayyim b. ʿAmmār or his brother Zakkār to Yūsuf b. Mūsā al-Tāhartī. The writer mentions having paid 150 gold quarter-*dīnār*s as »the tithe for all our associates«, *al-ʿushr* (sic.) *ʿan jamīʿ aṣḥābinā* (T-S 16.13, verso, line 29). Gil proposed dating the letter to 1069, which would mean that the tithe was still in place some nine years after the decree was secured. However, a gap of some nine years since the previous reference seems quite unlikely. In fact, the very reference to the tithe makes an earlier dating more likely – probably between 1056 and 1060, at a time when foreign merchants would have been paying the tithe.

78 Nef, *Conquérir et gouverner.*

Conclusions: State and Merchants in the Fatimid Mediterranean

The events surrounding the imposition and abolition of the Sicilian tithe offer precious insights into the complex relationship between state authorities and merchants in the mid-eleventh-century Islamic Mediterranean. To stress the broader significance of these events, let us return to our three guiding questions.

In answering the first question (what was the tithe?), I diagnosed a dissonance between Islamic legal theory and fiscal practice on the ground in Sicily. Legal theory conceptualized the tithe/*ushr* as a tax that merchants had to pay at differential rates depending on their politico-religious status (Muslims, protected non-Muslims, non-protected non-Muslims). Mid-eleventh-century Sicilian authorities instead deployed it as an import duty on foreign merchants. At a time when a growing number of claimants to state authority vied for limited resources in an increasingly fragmented and competitive political landscape, merchants, or more precisely the commercial capital that they circulated in the form of money and commodities, represented a valuable resource into which state actors sought to tap. The simplest way to extract revenue from commercial capital flows was to tax merchants; however, Sicilian authorities refrained from taxing them indiscriminately. Rather, they acted on the basis of what we might describe as a protectionist calculus, exempting from the tithe those merchants who paid other types of taxes (such as the capitation tax) and who were more likely to reinvest profits locally. This suggests that an extractivist attitude to trade was balanced by an understanding of the need to support a class of domestic merchants capable of keeping capital streams flowing.[79]

In order to enact their protectionist agenda, Sicilian state administrators needed to clearly differentiate between domestic and foreign merchants. In answering the second question (who counted as Sicilian?), we saw how the instrument that they adopted to accomplish this goal was tax residence. This peculiar form of identification was independent of the merchants' self-representation and was not conditional upon recognition by other members of the various communities of belonging in which they participated. Tax residence was rather based on administrative and documentary procedures that conclusively established one's status as a taxpayer of a given locale. Official registers and receipts attested to such status. Documentary proof was the only form of evidence required, and the only one that state administrators admitted.[80]

Thus, to the various complex and shifting forms of identification and belonging that defined the subjectivity of eleventh-century Geniza merchants, one should add another, far less elusive, category: the fiscal relationship of the individual vis-à-vis the state, as officially enshrined in state documents. The case of tax residence suggests that Sicilian authorities categorized their subjects first and foremost based on their status as taxpayers – an approach that we also find in Fatimid Egypt, and one that probably characterized most other eleventh-century Islamic states around the Mediterranean and beyond.[81]

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79 On the parallel protectionist attitude of Fatimid state administrators in Egypt, see Bondioli, *Peasants, Merchants, and Caliphs*, 262-265.

80 For a broader discussion of documentary proof in the context of state administration, see now Rustow, *Lost Archive*, esp. 343-377.

81 Bondioli *et al.*, A typology.

Lastly, we offered some answers to the question of how merchants could organize against the fiscal demands of the state. Before further glossing these answers, a key point needs clarifying. The Islamic states of the eleventh-century Mediterranean were tributary entities: their continued existence depended on their ability to continuously extract revenue (tribute) from their subject population.[82] As such, they were keenly interested in distinguishing between those human beings who collectively constituted their permanent revenue base and those who did not. Geniza merchants knew well that state administrators reasoned in these terms, but they themselves did not. Nor did other members of the broader merchant class of which, it bears stressing, they were just one fraction, albeit a disproportionately well-documented one. As we saw, a group of business associates, *aṣḥāb*, could easily comprise merchants based in Sicily, Ifrīqiya, and Egypt.[83] In fact, such internal diversity was a key to commercial success: it allowed merchants to closely monitor prices in distant markets, access credit, and draw on personal favors across a vast connected maritime space.[84]

There was therefore a fundamental misalignment between the tributary logic that governed the conduct of state administrators and the capitalist logic that governed the conduct of merchants. The former logic was markedly bound to a specific territory and the people inhabiting it. The material constraints of fiscal extraction made it so that state administrators thought in terms of the space under their control, where they could tax and therefore valorize human activity, and the space that escaped their control, where no such valorization was possible.[85] Opposed to this dichotomous, territory-bound logic was the markedly trans-territorial logic of commercial capital accumulation. Merchants constantly traversed tributary boundaries. At least in part, their ability to generate profits depended precisely on their capacity to bridge between connected but unevenly integrated markets that were physically located under different state jurisdictions. In this, our merchants vaguely resembled modern multinationals. They were not fully wedded to any one political entity, but rather extended their business operations across political borders to procure commodities wherever they could be bought cheap and transfer them wherever they could be sold dear – all along striving to pay as little in taxes as possible.

Given the fundamental misalignment between tributary and capitalist logic, the protectionist intent of the Sicilian authorities ended up clashing against the trans-territorial character of the form of business association that Geniza merchants, and no doubt many of their less documented colleagues, favored. The Sicilian merchants whom we encountered in our story could have regarded the tithe as a welcome barrier to foreign competition. But instead they valued the stable and profitable links of association with their Ifrīqiyan and Egyptian

82 On the centrality of surplus extraction through tribute for the maintenance of pre-industrial states, see the classic study of John Haldon, *State and the Tributary Mode*. With specific reference to the Byzantine and early Islamic states, see *idem*, La estructura.

83 For the geography of Geniza trade in the eleventh century, see Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions.*

84 As Jairus Banaji recently put it, the link of association between merchants operating across distant »trading colonies« is a key infrastructure of commercial capitalism at large: Banaji, *Brief History*, 15-20.

85 I am indebted to Nicholas S. M. Matheou for his innovative and rigorous conceptualization of tributary territory, soon to appear in a dedicated article.

colleagues, their *aṣḥāb*, more than the possibility of acquiring a competitive edge over them. It is possible that other Sicilian merchants thought differently. Perhaps those with less stable partnerships in far-flung markets had more to gain and less to lose from a protectionist import duty. Either way, the calculus of the Sicilian authorities backfired, at least in part: not all domestic merchants were willing to stand behind it.

At first, the opposition of this disgruntled fraction took the form of fiscal evasion. Our merchants employed a legal gimmick (ostensibly transferring property over the goods imported to Sicilian partners) to avoid payment.[86] It was a practicable path, but it harbored dangers.[87] As we saw, the outcome of this particular ploy was rather calamitous. But as we also saw, fiscal evasion was not the only option at our merchants' disposal. When evasion became unfeasible, they resorted to a different, more overt form of opposition: direct appeal to the state. Although the details of this last act of the play remain unclear, it seems that in the end petitioning accomplished what commercial acumen could not.

Historians of medieval western Europe might not be surprised to see a consortium of merchants petitioning a political authority for fiscal privileges. But the fact is noteworthy in Islamic Studies, where scholarship has long held that merchants were generally unable to resist the extortionate demands of unsympathetic rulers singularly uninterested in the wellbeing of their more commercially-inclined subjects.[88] The Sicilian tithe business shows that this was not always the case: in this instance, Geniza merchants were able to lobby for fiscal privileges as effectively as their Pisan or Venetian counterparts. Furthermore, if we consider that Geniza merchants were most likely neither the wealthiest nor the best-connected merchants of their time, then the episode appears even more remarkable, leaving us to wonder what degree of influence bigger merchants could exercise in the eleventh-century Islamic Mediterranean.

The relationship between merchants and the state is a fundamental topic on which Geniza documents can shed much new light. Goitein's initial forays into this question, though foundational to all subsequent research, were somewhat hampered by the great scholar's insistence on the Fatimid state's limited reach and interest in the economic sphere – the paradigm of so-called ›Fatimid *laissez-faire*‹.[89] Already in 1988, a pioneering article by Abraham Udovitch cast some doubt on Goitein's assessment.[90] Yet it was only a couple of decades later that a new generation of scholars started returning to the fundamental question of the relationship between Geniza merchants and the state, with the invaluable contributions of Roxani Eleni Margariti, Jessica Goldberg, David Bramoullé, and Marina Rustow breaking new ground.[91] Others will hopefully follow in their steps in the coming years.

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86 On other forms of fiscal evasion, see Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 164-177.

87 On the mechanisms ensuring that merchants complied with customs regulations and the perils of attempting to circumvent them, see Bondioli, *Peasants, Merchants, and Caliphs*, 217-265.

88 See, e.g., the paradigmatic judgement of Patricia Crone, *Pre-Industrial Societies*, 160.

89 Goitein's most explicit pronouncements on the question can be found in *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 1, 61, 66, and 272. He nonetheless devoted important sections of his work to the state; see in particular Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 1, 266-272 and *idem, A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 2, 345-407. For the fortune of the *laissez-faire* paradigm, see Shoshan, Fatimid grain policy, 181, with bibliography. Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, 171, returns to the question, offering a fresh new assessment. See also my own discussion of Fatimid *laissez-faire* in Bondioli, *Peasants, Merchants, and Caliphs*, xx-xxiii and 276-283.

90 Udovitch, Merchants and *amīr*s.

91 Margariti, *Aden and the Indian Ocean Trade*, esp. 109-140 and 176-205; Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*, esp. 164-179; Bramoullé, *Les Fatimides et la mer*, esp. 588-700; Rustow, *Lost Archive*, esp. 424-444. See also Bondioli, *Peasants, Merchants, and Caliphs*, esp. 266-299.

The relevance of the question goes far beyond the field of Geniza studies. Islamic economic and social historians have tended to assume a profound gap between the commercial and ruling classes of the Islamic Mediterranean in the central Middle Ages, a period often seen as the onset of a long phase of economic decline after the effervescence of the early caliphal centuries. As the story goes, the rise to dominance of rapacious military aristocracies narrowly interested in squeezing revenue out of land would have halted the rise of a commercial proto-bourgeoisie of the type that was gaining power and influence in contemporary western Europe.[92] The Sicilian tithe business is but one case that can be offered to suggest that this narrative is long overdue for revision – a delicate, difficult, and yet necessary task that will require much research, and much collaboration.

Biographical Statement
Lorenzo Bondioli is a social and economic historian specializing in the medieval Mediterranean and the Middle East. His research aims to shed light on the interplay of commercial capital and state structures in the preindustrial world. His recent doctoral dissertation, *Peasants, Merchants, and Caliphs: Capital and Empire in Fatimid Egypt* (Princeton 2021), reconstructs the political economy of Egypt at a time when the country was a pivot of the Afro-Eurasian world system, employing the unique evidence afforded by the Cairo Geniza in conjunction with Arabic documentary and literary sources to call for a recentering of Egypt in the global, longue durée history of capitalism.

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92   See the classic judgment of Roberto S. Lopez, *Commercial Revolution*, 57-58, more recently echoed by Avner Greif, *Institutions and the Path*. However, the paradigm of economic decline originated within Islamic studies themselves; see, e.g., Cahen, Quelques mots sur le déclin; Dūrī, *Taʾrīkh al-ʿIrāq*; Issawi, Decline of Middle Eastern trade.

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ENA = New York, Jewish Theological Seminary
IOM D = Saint Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies
T-S = Cambridge University Library, Taylor-Schechter Collection

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»Eager to Go to the Desert«: Ambiguous Views on Ascetic Women's Holy Travels in Late Antiquity

Andra Jugănaru*

Starting with the fourth century, when religious travels to the Holy Land had gained popularity, Greek and Latin male Christian writers expressed their views on pilgrimages by women. While some of them advised their spiritual daughters to focus rather on the internal spiritual journey towards the Jerusalem of the heart, others acknowledged the merits of physical presence in holy places. The aim of this paper is to contextualize these views in order to explain why they varied.

Keywords: pilgrimages, nuns, Gregory of Nyssa, Evagrius of Pontus, Jerome, Melania the Elder, Marcella, Paula, Eustochium

Introduction

As early as the second century, Christians used to embark on religious travels to the Holy Land.[1] The fourth century brought an increase in these travels with the conversion of Constantine and the trip which his mother, Helena, undertook to the Holy Land, where she supposedly discovered the tomb and the cross of Christ. From the fourth century on, many writers cited Helena's trip to Jerusalem as an example of female religious devotion.[2] According to

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1 Melitus of Sardis's journey is the earliest account. An indirect testimony of this story has survived, through the pen of Eusebius of Caesarea. In the fourth book of his *Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius quotes a lost letter from Melitus, addressed to a certain brother, Onesimus, with the purpose of providing explanations about the books of the Old Testament; see Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.26, ed. and trans. Lake, 392. In this letter, according to Eusebius, Melitus wrote: »when I went East and was in the place where these things were preached and practiced [i. e. the events accounted for in the books of the Old Testament – my note], and after I had learned the books of the Old Testament accurately and had set down the facts, I sent them to you.« For a newer English translation, from which the previous quote is provided, see also Eusebius Pamphili, E*cclesiastical History* 4.26, trans. Deferrari, 266.

2 Although there is no evidence for her as the discoverer of the cross on which Christ was crucified, a legend of this supposed discovery was created about sixty years after Helena's death. Among the authors and texts praising Helena for this event, one can count the composer of the *Life of Peter the Iberian*, or the *Novellae* of Justinian. Helena is praised as a pilgrim to the Holy Land by Eusebius, Ambrose and Cyril of Jerusalem; see Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage*, 28-49.

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the sources that have survived, travel to the Holy Land, motivated by a desire to see biblical places and interest in the study of the Scriptures,[3] increased so much in the fourth century that writers such as Ammianus Marcellinus complained bitterly of the afflux of pilgrims using the imperial carriages and the fuss created around them.[4] Many of these travelers were women, as the accounts inform us.[5] For ascetic women, Jerusalem could have been either a travel destination or the proper location for a monastic foundation which would offer shelter for future pilgrims.[6] But travel by women over long distances was seen as problematic. On the other hand, the evolution of the monastic movement coincided with a greater variety in pilgrimage destinations. Ascetics, men and women alike, were not only interested in treading in the footsteps of the biblical characters, but they were eager to meet »living saints«, not only in Palestine, but also in Egypt.[7] Interest in pilgrimages from both men and women is illustrated in various stories, increasingly demanded by the so-called »armchair pilgrims«, who enjoyed reading them.[8] For a man or a woman dedicated to asceticism, such religious travels were supposed to provide an impetus for their ascetic progress. However, was such a journey, albeit a religious one, compatible with the ascetic ideal itself? By traveling abroad, were consecrated women not giving up on their commitment, which first and foremost required stability? The focus of this article is to analyze several late antique testimonies which reacted to ascetic women undertaking pilgrimages to the Holy Land. These testimonies were chosen so as to reflect the points of view of influential spiritual fathers, Greek and Latin, especially concerned with their spiritual daughters' ascetic progress.[9]

Scholars have largely discussed the late antique pilgrimage accounts from various perspectives, from the narrative strategies of the travelogues to the plausibility of the reports. However, very few of them, and then only to a very limited extent, have analyzed the positions of the authoritative Church Fathers on the matter of religious travel[10] in general and on the question of the difference between their views on men's and women's journeys in particular. Alice-Mary Talbot has scrutinized some of the Church Fathers' views concerning ascetic women's religious travels in Late Antiquity and Byzantium,[11] and some reflections on this particular topic can be found in Georgia Frank's monograph, *The Memory of the Eyes. Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity*.[12] Kenneth G. Holum discusses

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3   Williams, *Holy Land*, 21-25.

4   »And since throngs of bishops hastened hither and thither on the public post-horses to the various synods, as they call them, while he sought to make the whole ritual conform to his own will.« See Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum Gestarum* 21, 16, trans. Rolfe..

5   Frank, *Memory of the Eyes*, 7-9.

6   Elm, Perceptions, 220.

7   Frank, *Memory of the Eyes*, 102-104.

8   One of these stories has as its protagonist the virgin Litia of Thessaloniki. According to a Coptic translation of the *Lausiac History*, referred to in Georgia Frank's monograph, she was a »scribe writing books« who wished to visit Macarius of Egypt, about whom she had heard previously. Her interest might have been kindled by the stories about the saint, whom she herself copied; see Frank, *Memory of the Eyes*, 3-4.

9   There is an abundance of studies on the religious life of late antique ascetic women. One should mention especially the pioneering works of Elizabeth Clark; see, among other works, Clark *Reading*, 20-25.

10   I will avoid using the term »pilgrimage« since its equivalent, *peregrinatio*, exists only in Latin sources. As Alice Mary Talbot remarked, Greek does not have an equivalent term, but uses instead the word »proskynesis« (προσκύνησις), which represents the act of veneration of a saint's relics at his tomb; see Talbot, Female pilgrimages, 73-74.

11   Talbot, Female pilgrimages, 73-88.

12   Frank, *Memory of the Eyes*.

the presence of prominent Western women in the Holy Land,[13] while Dominique Montserrat mentions instances of women waiting to be cured at the tomb of Saints Cyrus and John,[14] and Ora Limor discusses the fashion among women of the late antique high aristocracy for travelling to the Holy Land.[15] In her monograph, Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony contextualizes various attitudes of Latin, Greek and Syrian Church Fathers with regard to pilgrimages.[16] Susanna Elm, on the other hand, analyzes the perception of pilgrimages to Jerusalem in two sources which mention such journeys undertaken by women,[17] while the rise and the fast decline of Western women's pilgrimages was discussed in Manon Williams's thesis.[18] Scholarship has yet to reflect on the antagonism of the views expressed by the ecclesiastical writers concerning men's and women's pilgrimages. Either those with real authority or influence, or those just aspiring to make their own voice heard more loudly, they took time to expound opinions on the matter. Thus, the purpose of this article is to make a contribution to the study of pilgrimages in Late Antiquity by shifting the view towards the Church Fathers who reflected on the women's religious journeys. In so doing, I will analyze several fourth-century examples which illustrate the divergences in their opinions and propose an explanation for them.

Are Pilgrimages Needed at All?

Gregory of Nyssa, known as one of the Cappadocian Fathers, younger brother of the more famous Basil of Caesarea and supporter of his impressive episcopal and ascetical reforms, was one of the most vocal ecclesiastical writers concerning ascetic women's religious travels. He first stated his views on the matter in his *Letter 2*, where he clearly expressed his opposition to travel to Jerusalem and his negative impression about the city, in which heresy was widespread. He addressed the letter to a certain Kensitor (Κηνσίτορ), who might have been a public magistrate (*censitor*), but, as Pasquali, an editor of Gregory's letter collection suggests, could also have been an abbot of a monastery.[19] The topic of this letter is the spiritual travels of monks, and those of nuns occupy a special place. Anna Silvas (who translated the letters into English and analysed the collection) supports the idea that »Kensitor« might have been a superior of a monastery in which not only monks but also nuns lived. This monastery's organization and arrangement could have been similar to that which developed in the community led by Macrina, Gregory's elder sister. This monastery, which evolved in Annisa, on the family estate and in the household of Macrina, also inspired some answers recorded in the *Asketikon* of Basil of Caesarea.[20] One cannot exclude the hypothesis that a »Kensitor« led a so-called »double monastery«, but sources do not offer too much evidence for supporting it. I suggest that one can assume with greater certainty that the addressee of the letter was a spiritual father of a group of nuns. Anna Silvas hypothesizes that, as a spiritual father

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13   Holum, Hadrian and St. Helena, 66-83.

14   Montserrat, Pilgrimage, 257-279.

15   Ora Limor, Reading sacred space, 1-16.

16   Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering.*

17   Elm, Perceptions, 219-223.

18   Williams, *Holy Land*.

19   Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, trans. Silvas, 115-117.

20   See the vast discussions of Anna Silvas in *Asketikon*, ed. Silvas, 20-37; *Macrina the Younger. Philosopher of God*, ed. Silvas, 1-53.

of nuns, he wrote a letter to Gregory, asking him for advice, since some nuns had taken the initiative to embark on a journey to Jerusalem. The supposed letter which »Kensitor« might have sent to Gregory has not been preserved, but the style of Gregory's *Letter 2* suggests that he was responding to a previously sent epistle.[21] Gregory answered in a negative tone. Even if a pilgrimage to Jerusalem has the potential to offer some spiritual benefits, those who have already chosen the perfect life, and the nuns in particular, do not need it. Instead, Gregory advised, ascetics should embark on an inner journey to the Jerusalem of their heart, for which the real Jerusalem is only a metaphor.

A terminus *ante quem* for the letter is the year 381, following the Second Ecumenical Council, which Gregory presided over in Constantinople for a while. At that time, the Council entrusted Gregory to travel to Jerusalem and Arabia in order to reform the local churches. The theological context was not favorable for the Nicaean-Constantinopolitan dogma, since the supporters of Apollinarianism and of some problematic views regarding the cult of Virgin Mary were very influential.[22]

Gregory wonders rhetorically whether pilgrimages have any value for a life totally dedicated to Christ, as the life of monks and nuns should be. If for laymen, some facts might be tolerable, for those dedicated to monasticism this could not be the case:

> Even if there were profit in the venture, nevertheless the perfect would do well not to pursue it. But when we learn from an accurate observation of the practice that it also imposes a harmful worldly preoccupation on those who have undertaken to lead the strict life, it is worthy not so much of a blessed zeal, as of the greatest vigilance if one who has chosen to live according to God is not to be infiltrated by any of its harmful effects (cf. 1 Tim 6.18).[23]

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21 In addition, the fact that this letter was lost is not surprising. Unlike the letter collections of Basil of Caesarea or Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa's epistolary corpus has lost many of its letters throughout the centuries, so that it now comprises only 37 pieces. The explanations for this loss are many and complex and they are summarized in Anna Silvas' introduction to the translation of Gregory of Nyssa's letters (Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, trans. Silvas, 59-72) and in the article by Radde-Gallwitz, The letter collection, 102-109.

22 In 1608, the Jesuit Jacob Gretscher published a book with which he aimed to respond to the publication by the Calvinist Pierre de Moulin, who blamed Gregory of Nyssa for his opposition to pilgrimages, which, at that time, were much favored by the Catholics. Seven years later, Morell, the royal printer, did not include the second letter of Gregory at all in the edition which he published. However, in 1618, three years later, Gretscher published this letter and added to it an appendix with his own notes. He explained that Gregory expressed a negative opinion on pilgrimages in order to prevent moral decadence among the nuns and not because he disagreed with pilgrimages in general. See Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, trans. Silvas, 115-116.

Gregory mentions that he had been appointed by the Second Ecumenical Council in Constantinople to travel to Arabia and Jerusalem in order to settle conflicts within the Church. He also mentions the public carriages provided to him after Emperor Theodosius I mediated for this privilege. In fact, clergymen had become accustomed to travelling with the means provided by the political authorities. They were taking advantage of these to such an extent that Ammianus Marcellinus complained; see Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, trans. Silvas, 120.

23 Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters,* 2, trans. Silvas.

Further, Gregory explains the nature of the »harmful effects«, especially for nuns:

> A mark of the philosophic life [τοῦ κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν βίου] is dignity. But this is accomplished by an unmixed and separate life, in which nature is not mixed up and confused. Neither are women bolting for the safeguards of propriety among men, nor men among women. But the necessities of a journey [ἡ τῆς ὁδοιπορίας ἀνάγκη] constantly break down exactitude in these matters and foster indifference to safeguards. For it is impracticable for a woman to pursue so long a journey [ἀμήχανον γὰρ γυναικὶ τοσαύτην ὁδὸν διαδραμεῖν] unless she has a conductor, for on account of her natural weakness she has to be put on her horse and be lifted down again, and she has to be steadied in rough terrain. Whichever we suppose, that she has someone known to her to fulfil this service or a hired attendant – in either case such conduct cannot avoid blame. Whether she leans on a stranger or on her own servant, she fails to observe the law of modesty. Moreover, as the inns and caravanserays and cities in the east are so free and indifferent towards vice, how will it be possible for one passing through such fumes to escape without smarting eyes? Where the ear is contaminated and the eye is contaminated, how is the heart not also contaminated by the unsavoury impressions received through eye and ear? How will it be possible to pass through such places of contagion without contracting infection?[24]

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24 Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, 2, ed. Maraval, 106-123; trans. Silvas, 5-7: »ἴδιον δὲ τοῦ κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν βίου ἡ εὐσχημοσύνη, αὕτη δὲ ἐν τῷ ἀμίκτῳ καὶ ἰδιάζοντι [βίῳ] τῆς ζωῆς κατορθοῦται, ὡς ἀνεπίμικτον καὶ ἀσύγχυτον εἶναι τὴν φύσιν, μήτε τῶν γυναικῶν ἐν ἀνδράσι μήτε τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐν γυναιξὶ πρὸς τὰ παρατετηρημένα τῆς ἀσχημοσύνης ὁρμώντων. ἀλλ' ἡ τῆς ὁδοιπορίας ἀνάγκη ἀναιρεῖ τὴν ἐν τούτοις ἀκρίβειαν καὶ πρὸς ἀδιαφορίαν τῶν παρατετηρημένων ἄγει· ἀμήχανον γὰρ γυναικὶ τοσαύτην ὁδὸν διαδραμεῖν, εἰ μὴ τὸν διασώζοντα ἔχοι καὶ διὰ τὴν φυσικὴν ἀσθένειαν ἀναγομένη ἐπὶ τὸ ὑποζύγιον κἀκεῖθεν καταγομένη καὶ ἐν ταῖς δυσχερείαις παρακρατουμένη. ὅπερ δ' ἂν ὑποθώμεθα, εἴτε γνώριμον ἔχει τὸν τὴν θεραπείαν ἀποπληροῦντα εἴτε μισθωτὸν τὸν τὴν διακονίαν παρεχόμενον, καθ' ἑκάτερον μέρος οὐ διαφεύγει τὴν μέμψιν τὸ γινόμενον· οὔτε γὰρ τῷ ξένῳ ἑαυτὴν προσαναπαύουσα οὔτε τῷ ἰδίῳ τὸν τῆς σωφροσύνης φυλάττει νόμον. τῶν δὲ κατὰ τοὺς ἀνατολικοὺς τόπους πανδοχείων καὶ καταλυμάτων καὶ πόλεων πολλὴν τὴν ἄδειαν καὶ πρὸς τὸ κακὸν τὴν ἀδιαφορίαν ἐχόντων, πῶς ἔσται δυνατὸν τὸν διὰ καπνοῦ παριόντα μὴ δριμυχθῆναι τὰς ὄψεις, ὅπου μολύνεται μὲν ἀκοή, μολύνεται δὲ ὀφθαλμός, μολύνεται δὲ καρδία δι' ὀφθαλμῶν καὶ ἀκοῆς δεχομένη τὰ ἄτοπα; πῶς ἔσται δυνατὸν ἀπαθῶς παρελθεῖν τοὺς ἐμπαθεῖς τόπους; τί δὲ καὶ πλέον ἕξει ὁ ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐκείνοις γενόμενος, ὡς μέχρι τοῦ νῦν σωματικῶς τοῦ κυρίου ἐν ἐκείνοις τοῖς τόποις διάγοντος ἡμῶν δὲ ἀποφοιτῶντος, ἢ ὡς τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος παρὰ τοῖς Ἱεροσολυμίταις πλεονάζοντος πρὸς δὲ ἡμᾶς διαβῆναι ἀδυνατοῦντος; καὶ μὴν εἰ ἔστιν ἐκ τῶν φαινομένων θεοῦ παρουσίαν τεκμήρασθαι, μᾶλλον ἄν τις ἐν τῷ ἔθνει τῶν Καππαδοκῶν τὸν θεὸν διαιτᾶσθαι νομίσειεν ἤπερ ἐν τοῖς ἔξω τόποις· ὅσα γάρ ἐστιν ἐν τούτοις θυσιαστήρια, δι' ὧν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου δοξάζεται, οὐκ ἄν τις τὰ πάσης σχεδὸν τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐξαριθμήσαιτο [θυσιαστήρια]. ἔπειτα καὶ εἰ ἦν πλείων ἡ χάρις ἐν τοῖς κατὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα τόποις, οὐκ ἂν ἐπεχωρίαζε τοῖς ἐκεῖ ζῶσιν ἡ ἁμαρτία· νῦν μέντοι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀκαθαρσίας εἶδος ὃ μὴ τολμᾶται παρ' αὐτοῖς, καὶ πορνεῖαι καὶ μοιχεῖαι καὶ κλοπαὶ καὶ εἰδωλολατρεῖαι καὶ φαρμακεῖαι καὶ φθόνοι καὶ φόνοι· καὶ μάλιστά γε τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐπιχωριάζει κακόν, ὥστε μηδαμοῦ τοιαύτην ἑτοιμότητα εἶναι πρὸς τὸ φονεύειν ὅσην ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐκείνοις, θηρίων δίκην τῷ αἵματι τῶν ὁμοφύλων ἐπιτρεχόντων ἀλλήλοις ψυχροῦ κέρδους χάριν. ὅπου τοίνυν ταῦτα γίνεται, ποίαν ἀπόδειξιν ἔχει τὸ πλείονα χάριν εἶναι ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐκείνοις;«.

In the second half of the fourth century, it was well known that the taverns of the main ancient roads did not have a good reputation. Both Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzus complained about the lousy character of the cities: »I'll chuck back at you hucksters and any other lousy thing that the cities offer.«[25] Gregory's warnings resemble Basil's remarks about people with unseemly behavior »loitering in taverns«.[26] It is plausible that Gregory was referring to such obstacles when he stated that pilgrimages are not part of a Christian's duty.[27]

Gregory concludes without equivocation:

> Therefore, beloved, counsel the brothers to *quit the body to be with the Lord* [2 Cor 5.8], rather than quit Cappadocia to be in Palestine [συμβούλευσον οὖν, ἀγαπητέ, τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ἐκδημεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς τὸν κύριον καὶ μὴ ἀπὸ Καππαδοκίας εἰς Παλαιστίνην], specially the nuns [ἐξαιρέτως τὰς μοναζούσας]. Indeed the virgins ought to refrain from public squares and all-night vigils [δεῖ δὲ ἐκ φόρων καὶ παννυχίδων ἀπείργειν τὰς παρθένους], for I know the resourceful craftiness of that serpent who disseminates his poison even through useful practices. Virgins should stay behind walls on every side and go forth from their house only a few times in a year, when their excursions are required and it is necessary.[28]

In spite of this firm recommendation in *Letter 2*,[29] in his *Letter 3* Gregory expressed more nuanced views. The context in which he wrote this letter may provide an explanation for his change of tone. Gregory composed it after his return to Caesarea in Cappadocia from his mission to Jerusalem, in the aftermath of the Second Ecumenical Council in Constantinople in 381.[30] Prior to the council, he had been in painful exile, due to a deposition in front of the vicarus of Pontus, Demosthenes, a close collaborator of the philo-Arian emperor, Valens.[31] The addressees of his third letter were three ascetic women whom he had met in Jerusalem. The supporters of Apollinarianism had been disturbing their community, and for

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25 »ἢ καὶ ἡμεῖς σοι προσοίσομεν ἀντὶ τῶν πηλῶν τοὺς καπηλοὺς καὶ ὅσα αἱ πόλεις μοχθηρὰ φέρουσιν.« Grégoire de Nazianze, *Lettres*, 2, to Basil, ed. Gallay, 2; trans. Storin, 58.

26 *Asketikon, Longer Responses*, 22, 23 trans. Silvas, 222.

27 Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, 2, trans. Silvas: »When the Lord invites the blessed to their inheritance in the kingdom of heaven [cf. Mt 25.34-36], journeying to Jerusalem is not listed among their good deeds. When he proclaims the blessed life [cf. Mt 5.3-12, Lk 6.20-22] he does not include any such object of zeal. *Let anyone who has understanding* [Rev 13.18] ask himself why a practice that neither renders us blessed nor directs us to the Kingdom should be made an object of our zeal?«

28 Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, 2, trans. Silvas.

29 Gregory is not the only one who expresses such views on ascetic women traveling to the Holy Land. Earlier than him, Athanasius of Alexandria had addressed a letter to the virgins who had been to Jerusalem. The letter was published in Syriac in *Le Mouséon* and accompanied with a French translation. The references to the original text are based on Susanna Elm's article on two fourth-century sources related to female pilgrims; see Elm, Perceptions, 220-221. See also Lebon, Athanasiana Syriaca, 169-216. In an attempt to comfort a group of ascetic women who were bitterly sad because their travel to Jerusalem had ended, Athanasius explains that physical presence in Jerusalem is not at all important. Instead, the quest for sanctity can become an internal journey, at the end of which the ladies attain a purified soul.

30 Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters,* 3, trans. Silvas, 123.

31 Gregory was arrested, summoned to a trial, and deposed, probably at the beginning of 385 (although the date is still debated). See, for details about the context of this trial, Basil's letters 225, 231, 232, 237, and 239 in the critical edition: Basil, *Letters*, trans. Deferrari. See also Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, ed. Silvas, 29-31.

this reason, the nuns wanted to move elsewhere. Gregory urged them to keep following the teachings of Basil, whom they knew as a spiritual father, and not to succumb to the Apollinarian doctrine, no matter how sophisticated the arguments might be. Visiting the holy places here occupies a secondary place, since Gregory's main purpose is to demonstrate the distinct and equal presence of the human and divine natures in the person of Christ. On this occasion, he seems to take a more favorable view of presence at the holy places:

> The festival according to God is revealed to me from either side: both when I see the saving tokens of the God who gave us life [Rom 4.17, 1 Tim 6.13] and when I meet with souls in whom such signs of the Lord's grace are so spiritually discernible that one understands that Bethlehem and Golgotha and Olivet and the *Anastasis* are truly in the heart that possesses God [διὰ τοῦ ψυχαῖς συντυχεῖν ἐν αἷς τὰ τοιαῦτα τῆς τοῦ Κυρίου χάριτος σημεῖα πνευματικῶς θεωρεῖται, ὥστε πιστεύειν ὅτι ἀληθῶς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ἐστὶ τοῦ τὸν θεὸν ἔχοντος ἡ Βηθλεὲμ ὁ Γολγοθᾶς ὁ Ἐλαιὼν ἡ Ἀνάστασις].[32]

These places are not just key elements of the life, passion, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ. In fact, the addressees of Gregory internalized their spiritual dimension. Not only were the three nuns living in the proximity of holy places, but their hearts became sanctuaries where God himself lived.

The idea of the Christian heart becoming the innermost sanctuary, where the secret liturgy is celebrated, similar to the Old Testament ἄδυτον, where the high priest could enter only after having purified himself, is not new in Gregory's writings. In his *Homilies to the Lord's Prayer*, Gregory described the offering of spiritual sacrifices inside the purified heart.[33] In the *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, he explained that »souls that have been purified are prepared for the reception of the divine.«[34]

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32 Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, 3, ed. Maraval, 124-147; trans. Silvas.

33 See a commentary on this idea in Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Our Father*, trans. DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz 128-136. The Greek text was published in a new critical edition in Grégoire de Nysse, *Homélies sur le Notre Père*, ed. Seguin, Boudignon and Cassin; trans. DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz 128-129: »But when the spiritual lawgiver, our Lord Jesus Christ, strips the law of its corporeal veils and brings the types' hidden teachings into the open, he does not first select one person out of the whole to bring him alone into conversation with God, but bestows this dignity upon all equally, making the grace of priesthood available to those who want it. Then the priest's beauty is not contrived by any external make-up concocted from a dye and a weaver's tricks, but rather [Christ] clothes him with the adornment that is proper and connatural to him, coloring him with the graces of the virtues rather than with a many-colored robe. And he does not adorn the breast with earthly gold but rejuvenates the beauty of the heart with an unsullied and pure conscience. Into this guard he also inserts the gleams of precious stones; these are the brilliant rays of what the Apostle calls the holy commandments. Moreover, that part whose adornment requires this kind of garment is protected by the leg-band; for surely you are not unaware that the clothing of self-control is this part's adornment. And when he had hung intelligible pomegranates, flowers, and bells on the fringes of the life-style's garment – one might reasonably understand these to be the conspicuous elements of the virtuous life, which publicize this way of life – and so instead of the bell he attached to the garment-fringes the resounding doctrine of the faith, instead of the pomegranate the hidden preparation for the coming hope, covered by a strict way of living, and instead of the flowers the ever-blooming grace of paradise, only then did he bring the person into the priest's innermost sanctuary and its most interior part. Yet this innermost sanctuary is not lifeless nor built by hand but is his *mind's* [heart] secret chamber, provided that it is truly closed off to evil and inaccessible to wicked reasoning.« For a longer exposition about Gregory's conception of the ἄδυτον, see especially Daniélou, *Platonisme*, 182-189.

34 »ἀφαγνισθεῖσαι αἱ ψυχαὶ πρὸς τὴν ὑποδοχὴν τῶν θείων παρασκευάζονται.« Gregory of Nyssa, *Song of Songs*, ed. and trans. Norris Jr., 78-79. Mateo-Seco and Maspero point out Gregory's sources on the use of the innermost sanctuary in Clement of Alexandria and Philo. See also Mateo-Seco, Maspero (eds.), *Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, 6. Further dimensions of philosophical ideas in these texts go beyond the scope of this paper. Many early Christian texts were heavily influenced by Neoplatonism, and texts about pilgrimage are, of course. no exception. On this aspect, see, for example, Frank, *Memory of the Eyes*, esp. at 122-124.

Why was Gregory so keen on denying the benefactions of pilgrimages and why did he not encourage spiritual travels at all? One answer might be, as Anna Silvas suggests, the idea that stability is indispensable to a monk's spiritual progress.[35] In the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, the idea of staying in one's cell was repeated by many of the fathers. Besides desert father Moses' famous sentence, »Go, sit in your cell, and your cell will teach you everything«,[36] the similar sayings of other fathers became very popular too.[37]

In addition, one has to note that Gregory's negative view on pilgrimages was not unique. Even though, in theory, pilgrimages were supposed to advance one's faith, some Church Fathers (such as John Chrysostom and even Jerome) claimed that, in fact, they could have the opposite effect. From this concern comes a cautious tone regarding pilgrimages. Exaggerations in this respect too, as always. were considered a danger, since they had the potential to become an abuse.[38]

I suggest that another reason was at the forefront of Gregory's negative attitude towards nuns travelling. Since the disarray in the churches of Jerusalem and Cappadocia was not easily manageable (Gregory himself complained in *Letter 3* that his mission in Jerusalem was not a success), travel to such places, which had the potential for spreading worrying theological views, was better avoided. Thus, the bishop's control would be better manifested too.

Visiting the Heavenly Family on Earth

Adopting a totally different tone, another Church writer, lacking in authority in spite of his erudition, gave his advice on women's travels. Jerome seems to approve of pilgrimages. Prior to his conflict with Rufinus of Aquilea, Jerome praised him: »I ... hear you are penetrating the secret recesses of Egypt, visiting the companies of monks and paying a round of visits to the heavenly family upon earth.«[39]

I suggest that Jerome's expression of an apparently positive view on religious travel in fact had a much deeper motivation. During that period, Jerome found himself at a turning point in his life. His protector, Pope Damasus, died in 384, and the new pope, Siricius, opposed the monks present in Rome at that time. In addition to these conditions, Jerome was accused of indecent relations with his female disciples, all members of the Roman aristocracy. Thus, he was forced to leave Rome in August 385, never to return. After travelling to Cyprus and Antioch, he went to Jerusalem.

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35   Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, trans. Silvas, 117.

36   *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, Moses 6, trans. Ward, 139.

37   See also *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, Ammonas 4, Evagrius 1, Herax 1, trans. Ward, 26, 63, 104; *idem*, Macarius the Great 1a, 27, 41 trans. Ward, 126, 133, 138; *idem*, Paphnutius 5, Serapion 4, trans. Ward, 203, 227.

38   Gregory of Nyssa, *Letters*, trans. Silvas, 116.

39   *Audio te Aegypti secreta penetrare, Monachorum invisere choros, et coelestem in terris circumire familiam.* Jerome, *Letters* 3.1, ed. Labourt, 11; trans. Fremantle, Lewis and Martley. Accessed on 10 November 2021: www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001003.htm.

In the meantime, Paula and Eustochium, his rich spiritual daughters, went on a pilgrimage to Egypt and to the Holy Land, leaving in Rome the youngest son of Paula, Toxotius; a married daughter, Paulina; and an engaged daughter, Rufina, all disciples of Jerome. Using his rhetorical skills, Jerome presented his own unhappy episode as a much-desired spiritual journey to the holy places and his final arrival in Jerusalem as a return to his true homeland. In a letter sent to Asella,[40] another ascetic Roman lady whose spiritual instructor he was, Jerome confessed: »I myself clung to my long-settled abode in the East and gave way to my deep-seated love for the holy places.«[41] Moreover, he included in it the story of the pious aristocratic ladies, Paula and Eustochium, whom he presented as being eager to escape the social pressure of the Roman aristocracy for a total commitment to asceticism (thanks, of course, to his spiritual advice).

At the end of their long journey, Paula and Eustochium met Jerome in the Holy Land, where together they founded a (double) monastery.[42]

Furthermore, one year after the establishment of the monastery in Bethlehem, in 386, Jerome wrote a letter in the name of Paula and Eustochium in which he invited Marcella, another noble lady of Rome, on a pilgrimage to their monastery. Marcella had been his spiritual daughter for a long time. In this lengthy epistle, he described the blessings that come from Christ, the apostles, the prophets, the martyrs and the saints, while refuting the idea that Bethlehem had always been a cursed place. He even emphasized the tradition of pilgrimages, by both monks and nuns, to the place.

He concluded:
Forgetting what is required of us, we are taken up with what we wish. Will the time never come when a breathless messenger shall bring the news that our dear Marcella has reached the shores of Palestine, and when every band of monks and every troop of virgins shall unite in a song of welcome? In our excitement we are already hurrying to meet you: without waiting for a vehicle, we hasten off at once on foot. We shall clasp you by the hand, we shall look upon your face; and when, after long waiting, we at last embrace you, we shall find it hard to tear ourselves away. Will the day never come when we shall together enter the Saviour's cave, and together weep in the Sepulcher of the Lord with His sister and with His mother?[43]

Jerome added to this undeniable invitation a promise to accompany Marcella in visiting the Mount of Olives, Samaria, Jordan, the caves of the prophets, Nazareth, Galilee, Cana, Tabor, Gennesaret, Endor, Nain, Capernaum, Shiloh, and Bethel.

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40 See also Maraval, Jérôme, 345. Jerome presents the tumultuous history of his wandering from one ascetic place to the other as a spiritual journey, and not as a situation that occurred due to the conflicts between him and other ascetics.

41 *Nos in Oriente tenuerunt jam fixae sedes, et inveteratum sanctorum Locorum desiderium.* Hieronymus, *Epistulae*, 77, ed. Hilberg; trans Fremantle, Lewis and Martley. Accessed on 10 November 2021: www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001077.htm.

42 See also Rebenich, *Jerome*, 16-24.

43 *O quando tempus illud adveniet, cum anhelus nuntium viator apportet, Marcellam nostram ad Palaestinae littus appulsam: et toti Monachorum chori, tota virginum agmina concrepabunt? Obviam jam gestimus occurrere: et non expectato vehiculo, concitum pedibus ferre corpus. Tenebimus manus, ora cernemus; et a desiderato vix avellemur amplexu. Ergo ne erit illa dies, quando nobis liceat speluncam Salvatoris intrare? in sepulcro Domini flere cum sorore, flere cum matre?* Jerome, *Letters* 46, ed. Labourt; trans. Fremantle, Lewis and Martley 13.

However, as the first lines of the letter point out, Marcella did not seem to be eager to travel to the Holy Land, as she did not find this place more advantageous than her native Rome. Jerome justified the decadence of Jerusalem by stating that after the crucifixion of Christ, »all the spiritual importance of Judea and its old intimacy with God were transferred by the apostles to the nations.«[44] Furthermore, he attempted to anticipate all of Marcella's questions and objections with regard to the recent curse which shadows the city.[45]

Why was Jerome so excited about Marcella visiting him and the entire Holy Land? One of the main reasons, as Pierre Maraval observes, was Jerome's own competitive spirit in relation to the clergy of Rome. The apparent possible objections of Marcella, which he attempted to combat, where, in fact, criticisms supported by priests in Rome. In addition, Jerome drew a parallel between the holy places of Rome, where Marcella lived, and those in Palestine, where he would like her to come without hesitation. Rome, where the blood of Peter and Paul was shed, was not a better place than Jerusalem, where the blood of Christ was shed.[46] Besides, Palestine was the place where, according to Jerome's description, monasticism attained a superior degree, if compared to the same lifestyle in Egypt. For this reason, wrote Jerome, his venerable disciple Paula, almost accepted as one of them by the monks in Nitria, chose to continue her ascetic devotion in Bethlehem (under his guidance).[47] I suggest that Jerome's eagerness was also motivated by the idea of consolidating his own position in the competitive ascetic environment of the Holy Land. Marcella was a member of one of the wealthiest Roman families and her presence in the Holy Land would have brought with it economic support for the monks. Such a visit would have benefitted Jerome significantly. Besides a most welcome donation for his monastery (about which he testified to the need for support elsewhere),[48] Jerome would have gained increased authority and a strengthened position as spiritual leader, since it would have been on his initiative that one more aristocratic Roman lady turned to ascetic travels. In addition, Jerome feared that Marcella's staying in Rome and her refusal to embark on a journey in which she could have followed her spiritual guide would be perceived as a lack of trust in him. In order to combat a worsening of his reputation after the scandal which had forced him to leave Rome for good, in his letters Jerome publicly portrayed Marcella as the pillar of the urban monasticism that had developed in Rome.[49]

Otherwise, when circumstances were not so favorable to himself, Jerome was less positive towards the idea of pilgrimages. In a letter addressed to Paulinus of Nola in 395, nine years after the invitation written to Marcella, Jerome discouraged him from traveling to Jerusalem. He mentioned:

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44   Jerome, *Letters* 46, ed. Labourt; trans. Fremantle, Lewis and Martley,
45   Jerome, *Letters* 46, ed. Labourt; trans. Fremantle, Lewis and Martley,
46   Maraval, Jérôme, 349-350.
47   Jerome, *Letters* 108, ed. Labourt; trans. Cain.
48   See Jerome, *Letters* 108, ed. Labourt; trans. Cain.
49   Cain, *Letters of Jerome*, 96-97.

What is praiseworthy is not to have been at Jerusalem but to have lived a good life while there. The city which we are to praise and to seek is not that which has slain the prophets and shed the blood of Christ, but that which is made glad by the streams of the river, which is set upon a mountain and so cannot be hid, which the apostle declares to be a mother of the saints, and in which he rejoices to have his citizenship with the righteous.... Nothing is lacking to your faith although you have not seen Jerusalem and ... I am none the better for living where I do.[50]

He ended his argument by stating:
Access to the courts of heaven is as easy from Britain as it is from Jerusalem; for the kingdom of God is within you. Antony and the hosts of monks who are in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Pontus, Cappadocia, and Armenia, have never seen Jerusalem: and the door of Paradise is opened for them at a distance from it.[51]

Laborious Route with No Gain
Prior to Jerome's settlement in Bethlehem, Palestine received a visit from another rich Roman lady, of Spanish origin, the disciple of Rufinus, who soon became Jerome's fiercest enemy. Melania the Elder became widow at the age of 22 and, leaving her son, Publicola, in the care of a guardian in Rome, she visited Egypt, where she brought considerable gifts to the monks. In 377, she founded a monastery on the Mount of Olives, living there with about fifty women and supporting other monastic travelers during their stay in Jerusalem.[52] However, her travel was not fully supported by ascetic men.

Evagrius of Pontus wrote about her:
I praise her intentions but I do not approve of her undertaking. I do not see what she will gain from such a long walk over such a laborious route; ... Thus, I beseech your holiness to prevent those [women] who have renounced the world from needlessly walking around over such roads; ... Such behavior is misguided for those who live in chastity.[53]

In a letter which Evagrius addressed to Melania herself, he urged:
teach your sisters and your sons not to take a long journey or to travel through deserted lands without examining the matter seriously. For this is misguided and unbecoming to every soul that has retreated from the world. ... And I wonder whether a woman roaming about and meeting myriads of people can achieve such a goal.«[54]

However, Melania did not take account of this piece of advice. On the contrary, she traveled on an entire tour and, on the way back to Rome in 399, she visited the monastery of Paulinus of Nola, bringing her a precious gift: a cross which contained part of the relics of the Holy Cross.[55]

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50 Jerome, *Letters* 58, ed. Labourt; trans. Fremantle, Lewis and Martley,
51 Jerome, *Letters* 58, ed. Labourt; trans. Fremantle, Lewis and Martley,
52 See Moine, Melaniana, 3-79.
53 Dietz, *Wandering Begging Monks*, 123.
54 Dietz, *Wandering Begging Monks*, 123.
55 Moine, Melaniana, 3-79.

Conclusions

The fragments commented on in this paper are just a few examples which illustrate the ambivalent positions of the fourth-century Church Fathers concerning ascetic women's religious travels. First, the very existence of such texts, sometimes repeated, shows that, even though only scarce sources authored by women which describe their own pilgrimages survive, women were, without doubt, frequent travelers. Not only did their journeys change the »ascetic landscape« of the fourth century, but they also had a significant social and economic impact.

I suggest that, in this context, the Church Fathers' positions on women's religious travels were determined by more than just theological reasons. When expressing their positive or negative thoughts about the undertaking of pilgrimages, they envisioned, on the one hand, the dynamics of the ecclesiastical arena both in the Holy Land and in other regionsand the benefits or harm which could accrue to them from the travels of well-positioned and influential rich ladies. The church political context, the social standing of the ascetic leaders, as well as their own position, determined by the conflicts between different factions within the Church, were factors that shaped the way in which male attitudes regarding women's pilgrimages were expressed.

Indeed, Palestine could have been a »promised land« for spiritual growth. But Gregory of Nyssa, freshly returned to his diocesan see after a long exile planned by the neo-Arian supporters, and without the support of his brother Basil (who had died) in ecclesiastical matters, had to combat alone the ongoing challenges of the neo-Arian factions and to continue Basil's efforts at suppressing tendencies of extreme asceticism. Therefore, it is not surprising that he would not advise nuns to travel to Palestine, where they could corrupt their eyes with the indecencies of the caravanserais or defile their ears with the threatening heresy of the Apollinarians. Evagrius would not be eager to allow Melania the Elder and her nuns to travel continuously for fear that, in this way, such women would remain out of his ecclesiastical control. Thus, an internal pilgrimage to the celestial Jerusalem of the heart was preferable.

On the other hand, Jerome, who acquired his influence through the social position of his aristocratic spiritual daughters, was quick to praise their eagerness to visit the Holy Land and the holy men. The presence of these ladies (and of their donations) in his own *entourage* would give him the chance to strengthen his own authority against his contesters in Rome, by placing these women under his own influence.

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Where the Long Way Ends: Descriptions of the Mediterranean Sea and Holy Land and the Criticism of Crusading at the Court of Henry II of England (1154-1189)

Fabrizio De Falco*

The purpose of this essay is to explore Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica* and Walter Map's *De Nugis Curialium*, to assess how the authors treated and described the Mediterranean space, with particular reference to the Holy Land. The selected texts are often cited as typical of the style of literary production that took place at the court of Henry II of England (1154-1189) and of the strong correspondence that existed between the policies of the English king and the works of his courtiers. The first version of the *Topographia Hibernica* was written between 1186-1188 and is the first treatise on Ireland composed by a non-Irish author. The *De Nugis Curialium*, a collection of satirical invectives, folktales, and personal experiences, was written during the latter half of the twelfth century. In their respective texts, Gerald of Wales and Walter Map focus primarily on topics regarding the British Isles. Noticeably, however, both writers make relevant digressions in order to report information about Sicily, Greece and the Holy Land, and that both authors witnessed the arrival of the patriarch of Jerusalem in London. The present article has two goals: first, bearing in mind Henry II's reluctance as a response to possible crusade, the aim of this analysis is to see if and how the descriptions of the Mediterranean space coincided with Henry II's reluctance to travel to Jerusalem. The second aim is to show how such descriptions accorded with the structure of both works and, in particular, how they might serve the authors' specific interests beyond their adherence to Henry II's policies.

Keywords: Crusades, Anglo-Norman, Henry II, courtly literature, Walter Map, Gerald of Wales

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From the northern European perspective, the Crusades were not only points of contact with Eastern and Islamic cultures, but also with a more broadly intended Mediterranean space. The Normans, who had conquered the kingdoms of England and Sicily and became consistent actors in European politics during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, actively participated in the crusading movement.[1] More specifically, the Anglo-Norman kingdom became part of greater Crusade narratives about the long Mediterranean journey to Jerusalem and the fight in defence of the Holy Land. The Anglo-Norman participation in the First Crusade saw Duke Robert Curthose (1087-1134), the eldest son of King William the Conqueror (1066-1087), as one of its leaders; the Second Crusade saw, as a collateral effect, the involvement of the Anglo-Norman nobility in the Siege of Lisbon of 1147, reported in the *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*; while the Third Crusade created the image of the crusader king par excellence: Richard I of England.[2] In the story of the Anglo-Norman, and later English, participation in the Crusades, the absence of King Henry II, whose father was a crusader himself, whose cousin was the king of Jerusalem, and whose reluctance to ship to the Holy Land most likely postponed the Third Crusade, is noticeable. The ambiguous political stance of Henry II toward the Crusades might have determined the cultural production coming out of his court. Comparing the literary interests indicated by Anglo-Norman and English authors before and after his reign reveals that the royal court of Henry II was quite silent about the issue.[3] As Henry II's court is considered one of the most prolific cultural centres of twelfth-century Europe, this study aims to determine how Henry II's scepticism influenced the works of two of his courtiers: Gerald of Wales (1146-1223) and Walter Map (c. 1130-c. 1210). I will critically examine the description of the Mediterranean space given by these authors, while contextualising their opinions within the political scene of Henry II's reign and the authors' personal goals.

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1   Hurlock and Oldfield (eds.), *Crusading and Pilgrimage*. During the twelfth century, the Norman kingdom of Sicily showed little interest in the Holy Land; see Russo, Bad Crusaders?.

2   Aird, Robert `Curthose', *Duke of Normandy*, 153-190; Villegas-Aristizábal, Revisiting the Anglo-Norman crusaders' failed attempt; Gillingham, *Richard I,* 155-221; Nelson (ed.), *Richard Coeur de Lion*.

3   By contrast, the works of William of Malmesbury and Orderic Vitalis show a complete awareness of Norman participation in the Crusades; see Grabois, Description of Jerusalem by William of Malmesbury; Roach, Orderic Vitalis and the First Crusade.

A Gentle Rebuttal, Henry II and the Crusades

Between the expedition that stopped in Lisbon in 1147 and the crusading adventures of Richard I in 1190 came the reign of Henry II (1154-1189) and the fall of Jerusalem (1187) – a period considered to be a watershed in the political and institutional history of the Anglo-Norman kingdom.[4] When Henry II was crowned king of England, England and Normandy became part of a larger and more heterogeneous political and territorial entity. Henry II was the son of the count of Anjou Geoffrey and Matilda the Empress, and therefore the grandson of Henry I Beauclerc. After a long war with Stephen of Blois, he was named heir to the English throne in 1153. His long rule (1154-1189) transformed the English kingdom into a part of a heterogenous territorial and political structure, the Angevin/Plantagenet space, which assumed a central role in western history between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and for the successive political and institutional evolution of the kingdom of England.[5] A peculiarity of Henry II's reign was the large cultural and administrative production of his court. The members of the *curia regis* were the protagonists and witnesses to his long reign, producing many documents related to administration and a great number of literary works. Historical studies have shown great interest in Henry II's court, not least due to the attention that the courtiers themselves exhibited in describing their commitment to the royal business. Walter Map, Gerald of Wales, John of Salisbury, Richard fitzNigel, Roger of Howden, Peter of Blois and Stephen of Fougères are just some of the names of the authors who wrote about the court of Henry II.[6] This abundance of contemporary sources and research allows us to investigate many aspects of Henry II's reign, including his involvement in the Crusades, or rather his reluctance to participate in them.[7]

Although he never saw the Holy Land, Henry II was directly connected to and involved in the fate of the crusader kingdoms. The first Plantagenet king of England was related to the kings of Jerusalem: Henry II's grandfather, Fulk of Anjou, was himself king of Jerusalem (1131-1143). Fulk had transferred his French titles and inheritance to his son Geoffrey before going to the Holy Land and marrying Melisende, the heiress to the kingdom of Jerusalem. Thus, Geoffrey of Anjou, Henry's father, was half-brother to Baldwin III (1143-1162) and Amalaric I (1162-1174), kings of Jerusalem. Consequently, Henry II himself was cousin to Baldwin IV of Jerusalem (king from 1174 to 1185) and his sisters, Sibylla (1186-1190) and Isabella (1190-1204), both queens of Jerusalem.

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4   See Warren, *Henry II*; Harper-Bill and Vincent (eds.), *Henry II: New Interpretations*; White, *Restoration and Reform*; Amt, *Accession of Henry II in England.*

5   Aurell, *L'Empire des Plantagenêt*; Gillingham, *Angevin Empire.* I prefer the more neutral expression of »space«, a perspective that challenges the centrality of the royal court and the total adherence of royal courtiers to their king's ambitions and goals; see De Falco, Una riflessione storiografica.

6   Aurell, La Cour Plantagenêt; Kennedy and Meecham-Jones (eds.), *Writers of the Reign of Henry II.*

7   Henry II's ambiguity towards the Crusade is well known; see Mayer, *Henry II of England.*

The first time Henry II exacted a crusading tax was in 1166 when, moved by the requests of Pope Alexander III (1159-1181), both the kings of England and France chose to levy five-year taxes for crusading activities.[8] In 1177, as part of the Treaty of Ivry, both Henry II and Louis VII (1137-1180) pledged to go on a crusade, a promise that Henry II had made previously in 1170 and in 1172 as part of the Compromise of Avranches and that was intended as penitence for the murderer of Thomas Becket.[9] In 1185, as a response to Patriarch Heraclius' plea for assistance, Henry promised new crusading funds. The patriarch of Jerusalem had travelled west to appeal for the help of both the kings of England and France, Henry II and Philip II (1179-1223), even offering them the keys to the Holy Sepulchre. His purpose was to come back with more than just an army, it was to come back with a prince capable of succeeding Baldwin V.[10] As a cousin to the king of Jerusalem, Henry II was the principal candidate. However, not only did Henry II fail to answer the appeal, but he also avoided the possibility of one of his sons going in his place. He sent his youngest and landless son John to Ireland instead.[11] Only in 1188, after the fall of Jerusalem, did Henry II finally consent to go on crusade. However, his death a short time later, in 1189, prevented him from ever truly fulfilling his vow. The Third Crusade saw both the kings of England and France sailing in 1190 to reach the Holy Land, but this was a new generation of rulers, the kings at this time being Philip II and Richard I (1189-1199).[12] Henry II's involvement in the Crusades was therefore limited to financial support, however substantial. The king of England always preferred to deal with the problems inherent to his territories, the enemies inside and outside his kingdom, and the consolidation of his authority within the Plantagenet space. His reluctance and continued procrastination regarding fulfilling his vow reveals the image of a king who had little to no interest in the events relating to the Holy Land. The reign of Henry II marked a pause in the involvement of England in the affairs of the kingdom of Jerusalem, where many of his predecessors and his successors were leading figures.

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8   The revenue from such collections was to be transferred straight to Jerusalem. Yet, the funds, after being raised, were deposited at Tours and waited there while the two kings discussed whose ambassadors should follow them to the Holy Land.

9   The English king's promises were more likely formulated to achieve a sort of peace with the papacy and other political opponents; he did not take the cross. On the taxes, see Round, Saladin Tithe; Constable, Financing of the crusades; Cazel, Tax of 1185. For the Crusade as an act of penitence for the murder of Becket, see Duggan, Ne in dubium; Forey, Henry II's crusading penances.

10 Henry II's cousin Baldwin IV, the king of Jerusalem, was dying of leprosy and Baldwin V, his young nephew with whom he shared the crown and co-ruled, was also suffering from an illness. Baldwin IV's sister Sybilla was next in line to take the throne, but her husband Guy de Lusignan had acquired a significant number of enemies, which put the would-be king and queen in too precarious a position to safely guarantee the stability of the kingdom. See Hamilton, *Leper King.*

11 The story is reported in William of Newburgh, *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, 3.13-15, ed. Howlett, vol. 1, 246-254; Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines Historiarum*, A.D. 1185, ed. Stubbs, vol. 2, 32-34.

12 See Hosler, *Henry II*, 166-170, Tyerman, *England and the Crusades,* 57-85.

Sketching the Mediterranean Sea, Thinking of Home: Gerald of Wales's Topographia Hibernica *and Walter Map's* De Nugis Curialium

The aforementioned abundance of cultural production in the court of Henry II allows us to compare the reluctance of the English king with the accounts penned by his courtiers in their own literary works. This contribution will analyse the texts of Gerald of Wales and Walter Map, who described the Mediterranean and the Holy Land in significant examples of this cultural production. The selection of these two authors, despite there being many others, stems from their being considered archetypical examples of Henry II's courtiers and from their direct experiences with the matter of the Crusades. In 1188, when Henry II took the cross, Gerald of Wales preached the Crusade alongside Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury (1185-1190), and himself vowed to sail for Jerusalem.[13] Walter Map saw and reported the arrival of the patriarch of Jerusalem in England and Henry II's monetary response to his request for support.[14]

Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica* is the first text I will consider in my analysis. The first version of the *Topographia Hibernica* was written between 1186 and 1188, making it the only work Gerald of Wales composed during Henry II's lifetime and presented to his court. It is for this reason that I chose to analyse the *Topographia Hibernica*, although Gerald of Wales also offered brief sketches of the Holy Land and the Near East in other successive works.[15] To understand Gerald's first work, it is important to take into account the Anglo-Irish political situation in the middle of the twelfth century. Gerald of Wales wrote the *Topographia Hibernica* in the aftermath of the conquest of Ireland.[16] The story of the invasion begins some years earlier in 1166 when a group of Cambro-Norman adventurers agreed to help the exiled king of Leinster, Diarmait Mac Murchada (1126-1171). Within a year Diarmait had his throne back, his power restored in Dublin, and his allies, headed by the earl of Pembroke Richard de Clare (1148-1176), began settling in Ireland. At this point, Henry II, who had refused to support Diarmait, anticipated the danger that a settlement in Ireland could cause.[17] The conquest of Ireland could possibly lead to the birth of another unreliable signory under his formal dominion, as in the case of duchies of Aquitaine and Brittany. So, Henry II crossed the Irish Sea with an army during the winter of 1171. When the English king arrived in Dublin, the Irish kings and the heads of Irish religious institutions paid homage to him. Henry II called a truce: half of the island became part of the English king's dominions and the other half remained under Irish rule; later, in 1177, Henry II named his son John (known as Lackland) Lord of Ireland.[18]

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13 For the recruitment in Wales, see Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades*, 58-91.

14 Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 5.6, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 482: *proposui cum oportunitatem habuero loca santa Christique atque sepulcrum visitare, sed pro modo meo donec id fieri posset et succurram [...] sexaginta milia marcarum illuc per ipsum et meos hac vice transmittam.*

15 He did talk of or briefly refer to the history of Jerusalem and coeval struggles in the *Expugnatio Hibernica*, the *Itinerarium Kambriae*, the *De Gemma Ecclesiastica*, the *Speculum Ecclesiae* and the *De Principis Instructione*, all edited in the GCO. None of these works were completed during the reign of Henry II, and the *Topographia Hibernica* is the only one devoting more than a few lines to the matter.

16 See Davies, *Domination and Conquest*; Flanagan, *Irish Society*, *Anglo-Norman Settlers*, *Angevin kingship*; Smith, *Britain and Ireland*.

17 Hays and Jones, Policy on the run, 298-302.

18 Duffy, Henry II and England's insular neighbours.

At this point, the story of the *Topographia Hibernica* began. Gerald of Wales, at the time a courtier of Henry II, was sent on behalf of John on his first journey to Ireland. Henry II chose him due to his family's ties with part of the nobility settled in Ireland with the first wave of the Cambro-Norman invasion. Gerald was part of the kin-group known as Geraldines, who were the first to land in Ireland and took on a role in the following centuries as some of the main actors of Irish history.[19] Gerald's career was that of a churchman: he was archdeacon of Aberhonddu (Brecon, in Wales) and later bishop-elect of St. David's (in Wales). He was also a prolific author, and his masterpiece is the *Topographia Hibernica*, the first account of Ireland and its early history written by a non-Irish author.[20] Besides being a prolific author, Gerald of Wales was an attentive one, and changed themes, styles, and arguments when he needed to address a different public. After the death of Henry II, Gerald of Wales continued to revise the *Topographia Hibernica*, presented the *Expugnatio Hibernica* to Richard I, wrote a life of the bishop of Lincoln Remigius while a guest of Lincoln Cathedral and far from royal circles, and completed the *De Jure et Statu Menevensis Ecclesiae* when striving to be elected bishop of St. David's.[21] The *Topographia Hibernica* is arranged in three parts, the first concerning the description of the natural features and characteristics of the island, the second revealing its wonders and miracles, and the third part focusing on its inhabitants and their history, from ancient days to the arrival of Henry II.[22]

In this work dedicated to Ireland, the references to the Mediterranean and the Holy Land are present within the *First Distinctio* and are used by Gerald to make a comparison between the extreme eastern and western borders of the world. The *First Distinctio* describes Ireland's geographical position, establishing how far the isle is from Britain and the European continent, showing its geomorphological and climatic characteristics and offering a list of its animals. His approach to the natural characteristics of the island emerged as a result of the teachings and naturalistic reflections of the twelfth century and particularly of the lessons advanced by the Parisian schools, where Gerald was educated.[23] In explaining the climatic and geographical peculiarities of the Irish island, Gerald recalls its liminality and isolation:

> *Terra nimirum mari immenso et ex omni latere ventis exposita, nullam penitus partibus ex illis seu propinquam seu remotam solidi obstaculi defensionem habet.* (This land is surrounded on all sides by the vast sea and open to the winds not having in those parts any concrete shelter and protection, either distant or near.)[24]

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19 Pryce, Giraldus and the Geraldines.

20 Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*; Henley and McMullen (eds), *Gerald of Wales: new perspectives.*

21 The timeline of the different versions of the *Topographia Hibernica*, also concerning their relation to other works and to the death of Henry II, is given in Sargent, *Visions and Revisions*, 13-32.

22 The latest studies on the *Topographia Hibernica* are: Rooney, *Manuscripts*; David, *Looking East and West*; Ní Bheaglaoi, Two topographies of Gerald of Wales?; Sargent, *Visions and Revisions*.

23 Barry, A wild goose chase; Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World*, 46-70. Gerald of Wales was also the author of a now lost cosmography and other treatises concerning the nature of the world.

24 Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernic*a, 1.6, ed. Dimock, 27.

The geographical liminality of Ireland warrants the presence of all sorts of naturalistic *prodigia* such as the incredible beasts that inhabited the isle and other bizarre natural characteristics.[25] In explaining those strange events, Gerald of Wales reports that similar things occurred in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, specifically in southern Italy. He reports the cicadas' ability to sing after being beheaded in Puglia and, in the *Second Distinctio*, the existence of a spring in Sicily where waters became agitated if anyone dressed in red approached them.[26]

Overall, the compendium of literary descriptions and frames used by Gerald throughout his text effectively lend themselves to the development of a certain image of Ireland as an island on the western borders of the known world, an extreme border region at the edges of the unfathomable ocean.[27] Ireland was placed in direct comparison with oriental shores, whose wonders were, as Le Goff suggests, the oneiric horizon of the medieval West.[28] In this way, Gerald of Wales populated Ireland with barbarian inhabitants, hybrid animals and monstrous creatures.[29] The chapters from I.34 to I.40 have iconic titles and tell of the most incredible dangers of the East.[30] The source of all poisons is positioned in the East, but Gerald has more to say about these lands. He enumerates their deadly dangers, the beasts that inhabit them (dragons, snakes whose bite melts the flesh, scorpions), and their horrible inhabitants, treacherous and wicked men. Gerald's university education probably gave him an awareness of more novel geographical work, such as Honorius Augustodunensis's *Imago mundi*, as well as the authoritative texts of Solinus and Isidore.[31] By relying on these authors and their accounts on the marvels of the East, Gerald explains how by advancing to the Eastern shores the likelihood of encountering dangers and monsters gradually intensifies. From this perspective, Gerald's reports on the Mediterranean space and the Holy Land show this progression from the safest nature (Ireland) to the most brutal one (the extreme East).

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25 Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 104-127; Ritchey; Rethinking the twelfth-century discovery of nature; Cohen, Hybrids, monsters, borderlands.

26 Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica*, 1.21 and 2.8, ed. Dimock, 53-54 and 90.

27 Byrne, *Otherworlds*, 167-180.

28 Le Goff, *L'Occident médiéval*, 298.

29 Mittman, The other close at hand.

30 Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica, Incipiunt Capitula*, ed. Dimock, 11 *[XXXIV.] De comparatione orientis et occidentis/[XXXV.] Quod omnia elementa in oriente pestifera. / [XXXVI.] De venenorum ibidem malitia, et aeris inclementia. /[XXXVII.] De aeris nostri clementia incomparabili. /[XXXVIII.] De laudabilibus hic quarundam rerum defectibus. /[XXXIX.] Quod fons venenorum in oriente. /[XL.] Quod occidentalia commoda sunt orientalibus praeferenda.*

31 Rooney, Gerald of Wales and the tradition; Flint, Honorius Augustodunensis.

Travelling to the East was not a good idea, and even the Near East was dangerous.[32] The only explicit passage about the Holy Land in the *Topographia Hibernica* exemplifies this through the tale of a British man. Gerald of Wales tells the story of a pilgrim who travelled to Jerusalem just to die a horrible death from the bite of a tiny snake that turned his flesh into black mud.[33] Chapter I.36, which tells this story, is part of a detailed list of Eastern dangers and thus makes it clear that the East to which Gerald refers does include the Holy Land.[34] One could object that the East was famous for its richness and exotic pleasures and that the vision proposed by the *Topographia Hibernica* focused on the worst part of the medieval eastern imagery. Gerald knew that, and he wrote:

> *Sed dicas; lapidibus pretiosis, et radicibus virtuosis oriens praecellit. Provido gestum est naturae consilio, ut ubi multa mala, ibi et malorum remedia pullularent. Cogunt enim multas invenire medicinas multorum experimenta morborum. Hic vero ubi rarissima pericula, et rariora remedia.* (But you will say: »The East is distinguished for precious stones and medicinal roots.« It is, indeed, a wise supply of nature, that where evils abound, there remedies for the evils should flourish. Where many diseases are so common, they require medicines to be discovered for their cure; but here, where the dangers are so rare, the remedies are even more scarce.)[35]

Certain observations and impressions can be gleaned from the imagery employed by Gerald of Wales to describe the Mediterranean space. Southern Italy is already seen as an exotic place – a place far, far away and full of wonder. However, this description does not reveal anything new about the south of Italy, which at the time was part of a well-known Norman kingdom that had close relations with the English one. The descriptions of the wonders of Sicily are warnings for those who were directed to the Eastern corner of the world where cicadas were replaced by dragons and snakes. The final comparison between Ireland and the Holy Land is clear: Gerald did not see why or how he would prefer such a distant and dangerous journey and advised against it. Instead, he proposed to continue his quest to discover the wonders of the island so much closer to the English kingdom. This venture had the potential to be safer, cheaper, and lead to more profitable lands.

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32 Gerald of Wales's East is indefinite, but I believe that the author was not referring to India, as he did not report any of the semi-human races that were thought to inhabit the antipodes. On the contrary, Gerald implicitly addressed the similarities between the Irish and Saracen societies; see Byrne, *Otherworlds*, 174-175. The only geographical reference to Asia in the *Topographia Hibernica* is the planned conquest of Asia by the king of England Henry II. This was a reference to Henry II's never fulfilled crusading vow and clarifies how Gerald of Wales's interest in the East is limited to the Mediterranean space and the Holy Land; see Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica*, 3.48, ed. Dimock, 190.

33 *Contigit temporibus nostris quemdam de Britanniae partibus Ierosolymam, ut assolet, peregre transvectum, cum annonam equis apponendam manu forte purgaret, a vermiculo ibidem latitante in digito percussam esse; statimque totum corpus ejus, cum carnibus et ossibus, in massam quamdam informem et quasi piceam est resolutum,* Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica*, 1.36, ed. Dimock, 69-70.

34 See notes 31 and 33.

35 Gerald of Wales, *Topographia Hibernica*, 1.40, ed. Dimock, 73.

By looking at the life of Gerald of Wales, we can confirm how the approach to certain themes and the ways they were handled were directly related to the political choices of Henry II and the environment of the royal court. When Henry II took the cross in 1188, Gerald of Wales actively participated in the Crusade, both by preaching and by writing a detailed account of the experience in his *Itinerarium Cambriae*.[36] A changed attitude to the Crusade was justified by Henry II's decision but also by the different contexts in which his work would have been read. Gerald of Wales wrote the *Itinerarium* during the early nineties of the 12th century when the new king of England Richard I was leading the Third Crusade.[37] Gerald found himself in an environment that viewed the journey to the Holy Land favourably and chose to remind his readers how much he had spent to make it possible. Thus, the description of the eastern lands provided in the *Topographia Hibernica* is consistent with the more general goal of legitimising the intervention of the Plantagenet king in Ireland. Moreover, the example of the *Itinerarium Cambriae* showed how Gerald of Wales was very conscious of the chosen themes and the target audience of his works.[38]

In order to interpret the analysis that has unfolded thus far in the light of the utilitarian nature of Gerald of Wales's work, I will now turn my attention to Irish history and the kin group of the Geraldines in the second half of the twelfth century. Henry II's intervention in Ireland had created a frontier appearing in many ways similar to that of the Welsh Marches,[39] the difference being that Henry II conferred extensive powers on men he trusted and who were active in Ireland as royal officials. Henry II's policies and the indifference of John deprived the early conquerors of the possibility of autonomous organisation, but left a power vacuum filled by the royal officials, who took advantage of the circumstance.[40] Considering the modes of intervention used by the English kings in Ireland, the presence of the parental group of the Geraldines, and the belonging of these last to the group of the first conquerors, it is possible to explain how the *Topographia Hibernica* may be useful to Gerald's and his kinship's ambitions. Gerald of Wales himself clarified in a later work that the *Topographia Hibernica*'s first two versions were conceived as part of a larger project including another of his works, the *Expugnatio Hibernica* – the history of the conquest of Ireland until 1189.[41] Gerald composed these two works to persuade the English rulers to intervene in Ireland.[42]

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36   Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, ed. Dimock.

37   See Sargent, *Visions and Revisions*, 115-118; Henley, Quotation, revision, and narrative structure.

38   See Sargent, *Visions and Revisions*.

39   Liebermann, *Medieval March of Wales.*

40   Flanagan, *Irish Society, Anglo-Norman Settlers, Angevin Kingship*; Smith, *Colonisation and Conquest in Medieval Ireland.*

41   Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, ed. Scott and Martin.

42   Gerald of Wales, *De Rebus a se gestis,* 13, ed. Brewer, 65: *Videns ergo quod comes ibi nil proficeret, sed de die in diem deteriorem per ejus adventum terra statum haberet ; considerans etiam multa ibidem nova et notabilia, aliis aliena regnis et prorsus incognita ; ut vel ipse quaestum aliquem vel conquaestum suo saltem labore faceret ; primum Topographiae suae, deinde Expugnationis Hibernicae materiam ibi colligere studio grandi et diligentius inquisitione curavit.*

Thus, as a result, the *Topographia Hibernica* is an expression of the wishes of the Geraldines, brought to the attention of the *curia regis* by one of its members. Gerald of Wales did not compose the *Topographia Hibernica* to justify the expansionism of the English crown but to inspire the kings of England to move towards such an effort in the hope that royal intervention would restrain the power of royal officials and support the demands of the early Cambro-Norman conquerors. The use of Eastern scenes is thus relative to this personal goal of the author and the general goal of the work. Gerald of Wales used the comparison of an enterprise that Henry II did not like, the Crusade, confident that he would find a favourable environment for such a description and use it to propose a conquest that would probably favour his own family.

The other author, Walter Map, was a royal cleric and also had an ecclesiastical career. He was a canon of Hereford, archdeacon of Oxford, in the diocese of Lincoln, and finally bishop-elect of Hereford. The only work of his that survives – contained in a single and late manuscript – is the *De Nugis Curialium*, written in the second half of the twelfth century, originally between 1172 and 1189 (at least). This temporal uncertainty is due to the confusing structure of the text and the adjustments made by the author during the creation of the work and by later copyists. The debate about the puzzling composition of the *De Nugis Curialium* has engaged scholars for a long time.[43] Following Joshua Byron Smith's latest study on the text, I consider the *De Nugis Curialium* as a work »frozen in revision«: Walter Map was still reviewing his text in the last decade of the twelfth century, adjusting stories and sketches previously written during his stay at Henry II's court.[44] Moreover, I think that Walter Map was reviewing his text to use it in the different political situations occasioned by the death of Henry II, just as Gerald of Wales did. The differences are that Walter Map never finished his work and that he probably addressed his words to a public of former members of Henry II's entourage. The *De Nugis Curialium* introduces itself as a collection of anecdotes and stories in which the author, drawing on his personal experiences at court in a kaleidoscope of styles and themes intended to amuse the courtiers, touches on almost all of the themes near and dear to the Plantagenet court. Specifically, the *De Nugis Curialium* is famous for its folkloristic stories and satirical attacks. While scanning this text for traces of the long journey from England to the Holy Land, it immediately appears full of legends and myths. For example, Sicily, located in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea, is the place where a merman is fished out in the time of King William II's reign (1171-1183). This aquatic man was the famous Nicola Pesce who became the subject of the now-classical legend in southern Italy thanks to Walter Map, who was the first to articulate the tale in writing.[45] The wonders of Sicily were part of a

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43 See, Hinton, Walter Map's De nugis curialium; Rigg, Review of *De nugis curialium; Courtiers' Trifles. Walter Map, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors.*

44 See, Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain*, particularly chap. 1 and 76-82.

45 Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 3.13, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 369-375; Colapesce started out as part of Mediterranean folklore; see Benedetto Croce, *Storie e leggende napoletane*, ed. Galasso, 265-267. Cf. Giammattei, *Il Pensatore*, 35-36.

sort of Italian matter during the reign of Henry II, despite the knowledge and the long-time exchanges between the two kingdoms of England and Sicily.[46] Hugh of Rhuddlan, a coeval writer of Walter Map, set his chivalrous and exotic romance the *Ipomedon* in southern Italy.[47] Yet, the awareness of twelfth-century English authors about the latest event occurring in the kingdom of Sicily connected the Italian island to the Holy Land. Roger of Howden reported the expedition to the Holy Land made by a Sicilian fleet in 1188, and William of Newburgh wrote that the death of the king of Sicily William II postponed the Third Crusade.[48] More-over, considering that Walter Map updated his work to include an account of the Crusade expedition led by Richard I, for his later readers Sicily would have been an established stop for a maritime journey to Palestine. I am particularly referring to the well-known arrival of the English fleet at Messina when Richard I almost burnt down the Sicilian city.[49]

Venturing further to the East, the *De Nugis Curialium* reports the story of the Cobbler of Constantinople.[50] The story centres on a shoemaker who, with supernatural help, becomes an emperor. This assistance originated from the child he had borne from a dead woman, and the fruit of this labour was wretched and unwholesome, as it was a human head *sub inter-dicto ne uideatur nisi ab hostibus interimendis* (which he was forbidden to show except to an enemy who was to be slain).[51] Indeed, the shoemaker used his son to kill his enemies and in the end was himself killed by his own monstrous weapon. The monstrous head was launched into the sea, which initially rejected the gruesome gift. Later, the site in which the head was thrown became a wild whirlpool.[52] The story terminates with a little etymological comment: *et, quia nomen erat uirgini Satalia, uorago Satalie nominator, et euitatur ab omnibus, quod uulgo dicitur Gouufre de Satalie.* (and because the maiden's name was Satalia, it is called the whirlpool of Satalie and is shunned by all. In common speech it is named Gouffre de Satalie.)[53]

The story itself is not an invention by Map but rather comes from a reinterpretation of the myth of Medusa, and was reported by other Anglo-Norman and English authors and even entered into the Arthurian cycles.[54] This myth provides an explanation for the strong sea currents in front of the Attic Peninsula, with which the crusaders had experience.[55] More-over, Walter Map, and likewise Gerald of Wales, painted the Mediterranean path to the Holy Land as filled with marvels and perils. But once he reached Jerusalem, Walter Map preferred to write about the political intrigues of Templars and Hospitallers, a subject on which he ex-hibited a deep knowledge.

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46   Loud, Kingdom of Sicily.

47   Hugh of Rhuddlan probably composed the Ipomedon near Hereford; see Cartlidge, Masters in the art of lying?; Hugh of Rhuddlan, *Ipomedon*, ed. Holden.

48   William of Newburgh, *Historia,* 3.28, ed. Howlett, 285-286; Roger of Howden, *Gesta Henrici II Regis*, 2, ed. Stubbs, 54.

49   Gillingham, *Richard I,* 132-137.

50   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 4.12, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 365-369.

51   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 4.12, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 366-367.

52   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 4.12, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 368.

53   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 4.12, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 368.

54   Koble, Connaissance par les gouffres, 139-145.

55   Harf-Lancner and Polino, Le gouffre de Satalie.

The *First Distinctio* of *De Nugis Curialium* presents most of the tales concerning the Holy Land and the military orders of the Templars and Hospitallers and is a part of the *De Nugis Curialium* that Walter Map extensively revised.[56] As noted, Walter Map was at court when Patriarch Heraclius asked Henry II for support, and he gave notice of the conquest of Jerusalem by Saladin in chapter I.15 of the *De Nugis Curialium*: *»De capcione ierusalem per Saladinum«* (Of the Taking of Jerusalem by Saladin).[57] Starting from this chapter, Walter Map began a long-drawn critique of the Templar and Hospitaller Orders that involves six chapters of the *First Distinctio* (I, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23).[58] Walter Map accused the Order of the Temple of the accumulation of enormous fortunes, which they received as donations for the protection of the Holy Land and used for other purposes.[59] Also, Walter Map blamed the Templars for violating the dictate of the Gospel which requires Christians to respond with tolerance to violence and to turn the other cheek.[60] The charges Walter Map made against the monastic orders of the Templars and the Hospitallers, criticised by various exponents of the Anglo-Norman clergy such as John of Salisbury (1120-1180), were levelled with precise references to Walter Map's personal experiences and knowledge, and with a little bit of imagination.[61] The critique of the Templar order begins with a remodelling of the origins: the name of the founder of the order Hugues de Payns becomes »Paganus«.[62] In keeping with Walter Map's sense of humour and satirical writing, I think that was a wordplay which was meant to cast a negative light on Hugues de Payns.[63] Then, the *De Nugis Curialium* reports that the original motivations of the Templars were excellent but that they were later influenced by concupiscence and a desire for power:

> *Postmodum autem reges et principes opinati sunt propositum eorum bonum et uitam honestam et interuentu paparum et patriarcharum eos quasi Christianismi defensores honoaurenunt, et copiis infinitis onerauerunt. Iam quod placet possunt et quod affectant assequuntur.* (Later on, kings and princes came to think that the object of the Order was good and its way of life honourable, and by the help of the popes and patriarchs honoured them as the defenders of Christendom and loaded them with immense wealth.)[64]

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56 Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain*, 49-62.

57 Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.15, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 41-51. See, Barillari, La presa di Gerusalemme.

58 Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.18-23, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 55-73.

59 Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.20, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 63.

60 Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.15, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 60: *Gladium accipiunt et gladio pereunt*. The reference is to Matthew 26.52.

61 Cf. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 7.21, ed. Webbs, 192. See also Menache, Rewriting the history of the Templars.

62 Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.18, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 54: *Miles quidam a pago, Burgundie, nomine pagano, paganus ipse dictus, uenit Ierusalem peregrinus.*

63 Levine, How to read Walter Map.

64 Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.20, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 60-61.

While the Templars expanded their influence, their arrogance increased. Moved by hubris, the Templars started to antagonise the Muslims who wanted to become Christians, also endangering the whole outcome of the Holy War. On this, Walter Map described the case of the son of the sultan of the city of Cairo, killed by his people due to his attempted conversion to Christianity. The Templars, inspired by greed, preferred to sell him to his fellow countrymen rather than welcome him into the Christian community.[65] The *De Nugis Curialium* also details a story that was very famous in the twelfth century: the Old Man of the Mountain, the legendary leader of the sect of Assassins, who would have converted to Christianity if the Templars had not killed the priests sent by the patriarch of Jerusalem to baptize him. Walter Map explained how the Old Man of the Mountain understood that no king could remedy this injustice due to the protection given by Rome to the Order of the Temple.[66] Likewise, the Hospitallers' order is described as corrupt despite their original and noble purposes. The Hospitallers are accused of using papal protection to fleece the laity and elude episcopal authority. Walter Map revealed that he had personally attested Hospitallers' influence over the papal court during the Third Lateran Council held in 1179.[67]

Considering the great power of both the Templars and the Hospitallers as a result of their importance in the crusading warfare, Walter Map expresses a suspicion that the true purpose of these orders was not to operate as the last stand for Christianity in the East, but to perpetuate a state of permanent conflict between the Muslims and the Christians. The military order would have disappeared without the war for the Holy Land, and not one person would have provided them with even a cent. Walter Map depicted this panorama of intrigues, recalling it in the mysterious death of the marquis of Monferrato for which the French suspected Richard to be the instigator[68]. This accusation was part of the anti-English propaganda managed by the king of France and could have potentially affected the English kingdom.[69]

The *De Nugis Curialium* is a different work compared to the *Topographia Hibernica*. Its declared intention was to amuse the courtiers and in doing that Walter Map primarily used his personal experiences, his thorough knowledge of the dynamics of the royal court and of the Welsh Marches. He was a courtier of Henry II, royal justice, archdeacon of Oxford, and had declared his goal of becoming bishop of Hereford, which he only partially achieved.[70] In

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65   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.18, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 54.

66   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.22, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 67-68. Hinton notes that the same novel was reported by William of Tiro and Jacques de Vitry: Hinton, Notes on Walter Map's »De Nugis Curialium«, 450. On conversions to Christianity in the Holy Land, see Mallett, *Popular Muslim reactions to the Franks*, 105-120; Kedar, Multidirectional conversion in the Frankish Levant.

67   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.23, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 70.

68   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 5.6, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 484: *Nam antequam uenisset, capta fuit Ierusalem et Acra, et his marcis defensa fuit Sur et residuum terre Ierusalem per manum Bonefacii marchionis de Monteferrato, quem post presentibus Philippo rege Francorum et Ricardo Anglorum duo Hassasisi occiderunt in foro exercitus eorum, quos rex Ricardus statum fecit in frusta coincide. Dicunt Franci quod ipse Ricardus fecit hoc fieri per insidia, et quod procurauit mortem Bonifacii*. This marquis of Monferrato was not Boniface, as Map said, but Conrad.

69   Gillingham, *Richard I*, 5-6.

70   Walter Map reported that his servants used to spend all his money as his election as a bishop was coming soon, Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.10, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 22-23.

1199 the canons of Hereford elected him bishop, but Richard I denied royal confirmation. If the story of the shoemaker of Constantinople was arguably relayed to him by someone who participated in the previous crusade,[71] Walter Map's experience at court led him to witness directly the arrival of Patriarch Heraclius. The account of the misdeeds committed by Templars in the Holy Land ends with a reference to their activities in England: *quid agant Ierosolimis, nescio; nobiscum satis innocenter habitant* (How they behave in Jerusalem I do not know: here with us they live harmlessly enough).[72] The Templars settled in England in 1128, at which time Hugues de Payns located the general headquarter of the Order in London; in 1144 the Hospitallers settled in Suffolk, where they were granted some lands.[73] As far as can be gleaned from studies on the subject, the installation of the Hospitallers in England had similar features to those observable in other European areas and based itself on the acquisition of the property of the lesser nobility, which Walter Map deplored. The activities of the Templars have been studied to a greater extent, and the role they held within the social framework of many rural areas of the English kingdom is well known. This activity was also evident to contemporaries; in 1185, the Exchequer began a survey in order to quantify the territories which the order held either as owners or tenants.[74] However, in comparison with other European kingdoms, the Templars in England were small in number, had little influence, and were mainly administrators of the lands granted to them.[75]

In looking at the English activities of the two orders, Walter Map appears to be well-informed. Yet, it remains to be seen why Map decided to report all these Eastern misdeeds in a work that largely focuses on the English court and events that occurred within Plantagenet space. To understand this, I will highlight two points inherent to the narration of the stories and the structure of the whole text: the origin of the corruption of the two orders and the position of the chapters in the *De Nugis Curialium*. The narrative makes it explicitly clear that the corruption of the original intentions of Templars and Hospitallers was due to the influence of Rome: it is the greedy Roman hand that is responsible for the malevolent actions of both orders.[76] The chapters that follow the ones on the Templars and Hospitallers focus on the corruption of Roman influence and in particular on its emissaries in England: the Cistercians.[77] The divide between Walter Map and the order founded by Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) is a subject well known to scholars.[78] Walter Map bitterly attacked the Order of

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71   In 1311, the Templars were accused of the possession and veneration of the monstruous head; see Montesano, *Ai margini del Medioevo*, 146-147.

72   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.22, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 68-69.

73   During the 12th century, the two orders received donations from the English and Scottish kings and nobility, but they were not a particularly privileged order. The aristocracy of the British islands continued to prefer more traditional monastic orders and their own familiar foundations. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, 81-84.

74   Lees, *Records of the Templars.*

75   Gervers, Pro defensione sancte; Higounet, Hospitaliers et Templiers; Morton, Templar and Hospitaller attitudes.

76   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.22, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 68-69.

77   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.24, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors. 73-84. On the Roman Church in Map's work, see Cantarella, R.O.M.A.

78   Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 1.24-25, ed. James, Brooke and Mynors, 76-113. Cf., Sinex, Echoic Irony.

Cîteaux whose actions he knew well, especially along the border of the Welsh Marches. We have already identified the rigorous attack that *De Nugis Curialium* promoted against the Cistercians which aligned with Walter Map's personal aim of episcopal preferment at Hereford.[79] Here, we can note that the diocese of Hereford had some problems about enforcing its jurisdiction over the Cistercian abbeys, which boasted privileges of immunity granted to them by Rome.[80] So, the attacks by Walter Map appear to be an attempt to secure for himself the sympathy of the canons of Hereford, whose support was essential to his election.[81] Considering that the long treatise on the malign Roman influence and the Cistercians starts immediately after the chapters about the monastic orders active in the Holy Land, it is possible to outline some conclusions about the way Walter Map used the accounts on Hospitallers and Templars. The long discussion on the Holy Land occupying chapters I.18 to I.23 served as an introduction to a theme dear to the author: the problems concerning the diocese of Hereford and the presence of the Cistercians. The obscure panorama of the Holy Land flows into the description of the actions of one of the monastic orders closest to Rome that was increasing its importance in the kingdom of England and was also one of the favourite targets of Walter Map's acrimony. Thus, Walter Map used the bad reputation of the events that shook the kingdom of Jerusalem instrumentally to look at Hereford, the place where his interests and ambitions resided.

Conclusions: The Crusades, a Theme for Particular Interests

In conclusion, the aim of this study was to examine the descriptions of the Mediterranean journey to the Holy Land within the context of the cultural production that took place inside the court of Henry II, a king who showed little interest in the Crusades, when he wasn't simply rejecting participation. To understand how much Henry II's reluctance to go on Crusade affected the literal production of his court, even if not explicitly commissioned by the king, I chose to examine two texts which did not have the Holy Land as their principal topic. The second aim was to investigate how the authors used this theme in their works, drawing attention to their personal goals.

This survey confirms the strict relationship between Henry II's politics and the cultural production of his court. By presenting a dangerous vision of the East, both authors discouraged any English involvement in the Crusades and all travel to Jerusalem, an obligation that Henry II had been avoiding since 1172. Gerald of Wales and Walter Map did so by way of their style of writing and the general structure of their works. The *Topographia Hibernica* was presented as a scientific report of Ireland's landscapes and natural wonders. Thus, Gerald of Wales used his naturalistic competencies for a comparison between Ireland and the East. By describing the geographical characteristics of both of the world's ends, he saturated the East with dangerous monsters and mortal perils. Gerald implicitly discouraged the Crusade and proposed a more suitable and profitable adventure — an Irish one. The *De Nugis Curialium*

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79   De Falco, Narrazione pubblica.

80   Cariboni, Three privileges.

81   Walter Map obtained the support of the canons of Hereford, but it was not enough to be consecrated bishop of Hereford; see Adam of Eynsham, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, 5.10, ed. Douie, vol 2,132.

is a combination of personal experiences, satirical attacks and folktales, and Walter Map's chapters on the Mediterranean space contain the full range of these topics. Map's descriptions provide an inhospitable panorama, characterised by dangerous political intrigues. His stories depict well-known crusading myths and lore that he had the opportunity to hear himself. Walter Map cast a lot of shadows over opportunities to enter the political game of the kingdom of Jerusalem and the genuine interests of those involved in the defence of the Holy Sepulchre.[82] The objection both authors moved against the Crusade was an underlying one. Indeed, implicitness was one of the characteristics of courtly language, but our authors had two more reasons for not penning open critiques.[83] The first is that they were part of the clergy and opposition to the reconquest of Jerusalem could have been antithetical to their position. The second was that Henry II took the cross, and so did Richard I. Openly talking about refusing the Crusade would have positioned these authors in conflict with their kings' public vows and wills, even if Henry II had never been an ardent crusader.

Starting from these results, I moved to a discussion of the personal interests expressed by the authors in addressing these themes. The considerations regarding the cultural context of Henry II's court and its authors made it possible to consider courtly literature as part of a pragmatic communicative process.[84] I maintained this interpretative approach as an argument against the notion that courtly writing in this context was primarily intended to construct or consolidate the image of Henry II and his reign. I argued that literary works were principally instruments employed in the promotion of authors' personal objectives, even though the texts actively participated in the process of construction and legitimation of royal power. Returning to the *curia regis* of Henry II and considering the promotion of the personal interests of the authors as the primary objective of their works, the stylistic and conceptual adherence to the political cultures expressed at the Plantagenet court is, therefore, considered fundamental to the sphere of language and context. Thus, we have on the one hand the common space in which the communicative function of the text operated, shared by the authors and their public; and on the other, the authors' objectives communicated through the text to the readers.

In these case studies, the common themes that appear to both author and readers are those relating to the marvels of the East and the rumours reported by crusaders. Both authors used these themes in a way that was consistent not only with the explicit aims of their works but also with their personal ambitions. Gerald of Wales proposed Ireland as a better alternative to the Crusade because his own family was involved in Irish politics at the time, and he tried to persuade the Plantagenet family to operate actively in favour of his kinship. Walter Map's interest in the Crusade was unusual compared to his usual topics (i.e. English issues), reported the scandalous conduct of the Hospitallers and Templars as a part of a crescendo, the culmination of which was his diatribe against the Cistercian order and his criticism of the power exercised by the Roman Church. In particular, the attacks by Walter Map were part of his dispute with the Cistercians who settled alongside the borders of the Hereford diocese, promotion to the bishopric of the latter being the author's key aim.

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82 The corruption of the Crusader kingdoms is a theme used by Walter Map and Ralph Niger; both authors were critical about English involvement in the Crusades; see Aurell, *Des chrétiens contre les Croisades*, 108-109.

83 See Aurell, *Des chrétiens contre les Croisades*.

84 The interpretation has its basis in literary theories; see Mostert, Communication; Andorno, *Che cos'è la pragmatica linguistica*; Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*; Clark, *History, Theory, Text*. More specifically, see Chartier, *Culture écrite et Société*, 48-56.

Thus, the descriptions corresponded to the political scene in which the authors were writing and to their ambitions. This correspondence makes it possible to check how authors connected to the Plantagenet court changed their texts according to their objectives and to the goals of their referents. By moving to a slightly different chronology, patrons, and authors, we can find different descriptions of the Near East and its importance to the English kings. At the start of Henry II's reign, the prior of Westminster Abbey, Osbert of Clare, recalled the new king's connections with the kingdom of Jerusalem and foresaw his involvement in Palestine.[85] During the actual years of the reign of Henry II, authors did not renew exhortations or previsions like these; they continued to hail the king of England but accorded their eulogies with Henry II's reluctance to go on Crusade. By contrast, the age of Richard I saw the English historians writing reports on the crusader adventure as part of the war of propaganda between the English and French kings.[86] Looking at Henry II's times, it is possible to compare the works of Gerald of Wales and Walter Map with the writings of another ambitious courtier, also often regarded as archetypical of the Plantagenet court: Peter of Blois (c. 1135-c. 1212).[87] In his letters, Peter of Blois talked about Sicily, and while the Sicilian *mirabilia* disappears in his words, he recounts the dangerous life that one has to face on the island, struggling between natural disasters (volcanic eruptions, earth quakes) and infamous men.[88] On the other hand, he wrote an enthusiastic life of Reginald de Châtillon (1125-1187), who died in the defeat of the Hattin Corns in 1187.[89] The motivation for such different descriptions could be sought in Peter of Blois' different profile and objectives and in the fact that he had actually travelled to Sicily and Palestine. The harsh treatment he reserved for Sicily is due to his personal experience: called to be the tutor of the young king William II, he was expelled from the kingdom of Sicily as part of the crushed French faction of the Sicilian court.[90] The *Passio Reginaldi* was written between 1187 and 1189 and glorifies the defence of the Holy Land. After the death of Henry II in 1189, both Gerald of Wales and Walter Map rapidly departed from the court, but a similar fate did not happen to Peter of Blois. He continued his service at court, following King Richard I to the Holy Land and writing Eleonore of Aquitaine letters during Richard's captivity.[91] Probably, Peter of Blois' passionate view of the Crusade could be read as a part of his involvement in a political faction linked to Richard the Lionheart, who fought his father until 1189 and was an enthusiastic crusader. Different referents and different objectives made Gerald, Walter and Peter describe different Mediterranean spaces.

While these last speculations require further study, this article confirmed that both Gerald of Wales and Walter Map encouraged Henry II's reluctance to travel east, but more importantly for the authors themselves, also promoted and advanced their own specific, insular and personal objectives. In this way, the Mediterranean space became a foil for the »new« Cambro-Norman space in Ireland and a spotlight for the disputes happening in Hereford.

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85   Osbert of Clare, Letter, ed. Williamson, 131: *Reges Jerosolymorum /te condecorant decorum / Tui patruus et avus quibus cedit quisque pravus [...] Hique proximi sunt tibi qui sic nunc triumphant ibi. / Tribulantur Sarraceni immenso dolore pleni / Et exultant Christiani cultus casu iam profani.*

86   Gillingham, Royal newsletters.

87   Peter of Blois, *Epistolae*, 10, 46, 90, 93, ed. Migne, 207, cols. 27-30, 133-134, 281-293, 291-293

88   Peter of Blois, *Epistolae*, 116, 131, ed. Migne, 207, cols. 345-346, 224.

89   Peter of Blois, *Passio Reginaldi Principis olim Antiocheni*, ed. Migne.

90   See Cotts, *Clerical Dilemma*, 20-28, 40-43, 138-156.

91   Lees, Letters of Eleanor of Aquitaine.

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Abbreviations

GCO = *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera Omnia*, eds. John Sherren Brewer, James Francis Dimock and George Frederic Warner (London, 1861-1891).

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»I am a virgin woman
and a virgin woman's child«
Critical Plant Theory
and the Maiden Mother Conceit
in Early Medieval Riddles

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While early medieval riddles in Old English and, to a lesser extent, Latin, have been studied extensively from ecocritical perspectives in recent years, the large corpora of riddles in other languages of western Eurasia have yet to benefit from or feed back into these methodological developments. Meanwhile, ecocritical research generally has focused on animals at the expense of plants. We respond to both problems by providing the first extensive study of riddles whose solutions are plants, through the lens of one recurrent conceit in ancient and medieval verse riddles in Arabic, Greek, Latin, Old Norse and, we argue, Hebrew. The conceit is that a plant is a virgin woman who nevertheless reproduces. By examining different permutations of this motif, we show how these riddles use plants to comment on human gendering, and how, while usually fundamentally patriarchal in their world-views, they register patriarchal anxiety at women's reproductive capabilities, acknowledge critiques of patriarchal constraints on women, and queer gender norms in other ways; *inter alia* we note that the Old Norse riddle studied here may be the only explicit (albeit metaphorical) representation of female homosexual eroticism in the Old Norse corpus. However, we also draw on critical plant theory to explore how the riddles situate plants in medieval Abrahamicate cultures, uncovering implicit recognitions of the dynamic and reciprocal relationships between human farmers and their family structures, the plants that domesticate them, people's and plants' mutual shaping of the ecosystems they inhabit or colonise, and the economies that these interactions constitute.

Introduction
This article examines a single conceit in early medieval riddles from the Mediterranean basin and the northeastern Atlantic seaboard: the idea that a thing might be a mother, yet a virgin. The solution to these riddles is not Mary, the mother of Jesus, but various species of plant. By analysing this conceit, this article looks at early medieval culture from a number of unusual

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angles. Perhaps most importantly, we contribute to critical plant studies, a relatively young movement within the more established field of ecocriticism. Within critical plant studies, as the recent survey of Allor and Swenson emphasises, the Middle Ages are relatively neglected, and the work that is being done focuses on trees.[1] The texts on which we focus here are about roses, artichokes, palms, angelicas, and grapevines, calling attention to the interactions and interdependencies between medieval culture and other kinds of vegetal life. We also work to move research on medieval riddles beyond Old English and Latin. The last two decades have seen an explosion of insightful, increasingly ecologically orientated research on these riddles.[2] Yet the substantial early medieval corpora of riddles in other languages have enjoyed far less attention. Showing that the maiden mother conceit was found on both sides of the Indo-European/Semitic language divide in early medieval riddling – and also, we suggest, resolving some doubt as to the correct solutions to a couple of riddles – we identify a small but well-defined corpus of true riddles (that is, riddles whose puzzle depends on metaphor rather than puns or other linguistic play) across Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, and Old Norse. Our linguistic limits have constrained us to these languages, but other examples are certainly found in medieval riddle-like Persian verse,[3] and the conceit might have a wider distribution again. The demonstrable participation of those riddles that we have studied in a shared literary culture indicates the validity of comparing the same riddles in other ways. We build on work on Old English riddles to start to write a cultural-ecological history reaching beyond the redoubts of Eurocentric medieval studies and the Anglophone focus of much ecocritical literary research. And while there is burgeoning ecotheological research on medieval Christian culture, there is little – at least in English – on Judaism and Islam. This study hints at the possibilities that await a wider-ranging Abrahamic ecotheology.

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward W. Said enjoined his readers to understand territories and regions as overlapping, rather than segmented by borders or into recent national projects, and to understand the knowledge produced in them as a product of exchange.[4] We argue that it also serves the notion of ecology and plant studies to think about literary texts as cross-fertilised through shared literary forms. More recently, contemplating the possibilities for studying the »Muslim world system« within global history, Francis Robinson has advocated the investigation of its »shared worlds of knowledge and experience«, highlighting the merits of studying »the world of storytelling«, »astrology«, and »commodities of global impact«.[5] We can readily extend Robinson's ideas to contemplate an »Abrahamic world system« incorporating those parts of the world where Abrahamic religions were culturally dominant, and adapt to this purpose Marshall Hodgson's term *Islamicate*, which Hodgson used to denote »the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and the Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims«. Though

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1   Allor and Swenson, Writing with plants.

2   Major studies include Niles, *Old English Enigmatic Poems*; Bitterli, *Say What I am Called*; Murphy, *Unriddling the Exeter Riddles*; Price, *Human and NonHuman*; Dale, *Natural World in the Exeter Book Riddles*; Paz, *Nonhuman Voices in Anglo-Saxon Literature*; Sebo, *In Enigmate*.

3   Seyed-Gohrab, *Courtly Riddles*, 48-52.

4   Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 3-61.

5   Robinson, Global history from an Islamic angle, 136-141.

named after a religion, the Islamicate complex — unlike Islam *per se* — was not narrowly defined by religion but also non-religious cultural contiguities.[6] Some of the riddles that we address here can usefully be read as being Abrahamic – purposefully meditating on Abrahamic religious ideas – but most or all can be read as Abrahamicate. Although Robinson's interest in astrology is not addressed in this article – notwithstanding the fact that heavenly bodies fall firmly within the purview of early medieval riddling across Eurasia – the present article does study Robinson's »world of storytelling«. Moreover, our plant riddles also afford food for thought regarding the long-distance transmissions of agricultural crops and practices to which Robinson adverted when advocating the study of global commodities. Just as riddles have the power to defamiliarise and re-enchant the mundane, they allow us to look again at the banal observation that international folkloric motifs travel widely and that Abrahamicate cultures had a lot in common and instead trace historical particularities in the continuities and disjunctions of those cultures.

Mapping the Maiden Mother Conceit
We begin by establishing our primary sources, and with a riddle whose solution past scholarship has found obscure. It is the last of ten two-line riddles attributed to the seminal medieval Hebrew poet (and husband to probably the only known female Hebrew-language poet of the Middle Ages), Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi (920×925-after 985).[7] Following spells in both the Maghreb and Iraq, Dunash was writing in al-Andalus.[8] The earliest manuscript of the riddle is the Cairo Geniza fragment Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Center for Advanced Judaic Studies Library, Cairo Genizah Collection, Halper 317, f. 2v (lines 29-30), from between the tenth and twelfth century.[9]

וּבָאֵר לִי בְּנִי מָה הֵן בְּתוּלוֹת * לְעוֹלָם לֹא תְּהֵא לָהֶן בְּעִיל[וֹת]
וְהֵן טוֹבוֹת יְפֵיפִיוֹת כְּלוּלוֹת * מְסוּתָּרוֹת כְּמוֹ ֿגַנּוֹת נְעוּלוֹת

Explain to me, my son, what are the virgins * that never receive a man.
They return beautiful, intact, * enclosed with fenced gardens.

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6   Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, I 59.

7   With the exception of recent authors whose names are conventionally spelled otherwise, we romanise all non-Latin scripts using the American Library Association-Library of Congress *ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts* at https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/roman.html.

8   Delgado, Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi.

9   Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi, ḥidot ed. Aluny, 146. Translations are, unless otherwise stated, our own; in this case our translation draws on Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi, diwan, trans. Rodríguez, 228. Rodríguez's translation reads »Explícame, hijo mío, cuáles son las vírgenes * que jamás reciben varón. | Hermosas tornan, íntegras, * cerradas con jardines cercados«. Aluny's edition is impressively cryptic, giving no call numbers for the three manuscripts it cites and only patchy bibliographical information on secondary sources; Rodríguez refrained from trying to unravel these problems, contenting himself with translating Aluny's edition of Halper 317 (which happily is now available in an open-access facsimile: openn.library.upenn.edu/Data/0002/html/h317.html). If our ongoing endeavours to fill in the blanks left by Aluny succeed, we will add the information to en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riddles_of_Dunash_ben_Labrat.

Editing the same riddle as the second of seven which they attributed to the eleventh-century Shelomo ben Yehuda ibn Gabirol (an attribution no longer accepted), Hayim Nahman Bialik and Yehoshua Hana Rawnitzki recorded earlier speculation that the riddle might concern agriculture.[10] Bialik and Rawnitzki did not develop this suggestion, however, while Nehemya Aluny offered »new verses or ideas« as the solution.[11] But Aluny did not make a substantive case for this, and Rodríguez, in his Spanish translation of Dunash's *diwan*, wrote simply that »la solución no aparece clara« (»the solution is unclear«).[12]

Some debate also surrounds the solution to a Greek riddle, first attested as verse forty-two of book fourteen of the Palatine Anthology, the principal manuscript of the so-called *Greek Anthology*, a massive collection of Greek poetry which came into its present form in the years around 900 and comprises one of our main repositories of ancient and early medieval Greek verse. The Palatine Anthology is a tenth-century manuscript of this collection from Constantinople, preserved now as the *disiecta membra* Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, Cod. Pal. graec. 23 and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément grec. 384:[13]

παρθένος εἰμὶ γυνή, καὶ παρθένου εἰμὶ γυναικός,
καὶ κατ᾽ ἔτος τίκτω παρθένος οὖσα γυνή.

I am a virgin woman and a virgin woman's child,
and being a virgin woman I bring forth every year.

Medieval Greek riddles are fond of family metaphors, including fathers begetting children without mothers,[14] but the formulation here, which parallels Dunash's image of maidens reproducing without men, is distinctive. The antiquity of this riddle is uncertain; Milovanović did not include it in her collection of Byzantine riddles,[15] perhaps because its elegiac form suggests pre-Byzantine composition.[16] The Palatine Anthology records no solution to the riddle, but the margin of Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plutei 32.16, f. 382v, an independent witness to the *Greek Anthology*, copied by the Byzantine monk Maximus Planudes in the last two decades of the thirteenth century, gives the solution, in what looks like the same ink as the manuscript's rubrications, as »βάλανος φοινίκων« (*balanos phoinīkōn*, literally »acorn of the Phoenicians«, meaning »fruit of the date-palm«).[17] The manuscript does not record a solution for every riddle and it is not certain why Maximus included this one – was he confident as to the answer to this riddle, but not sure of some of the others? Or, conversely, did he find this riddle obscure, thinking that his readers would be grateful if he offered his own guess? Either way, W. R. Paton endorsed the date solution in his Loeb translation, with the observation that date palms are unique in that the trees are either male

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10   Ibn Gabirol, shire Shelomoh ben Yehudah ibn Gabirol, ed. Bialik and Rawnitzki, V 35 (text), 41 (commentary).

11   Ten Dunash Ben Labrat's riddles, ed. Aluny, 146.

12   Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi, diwan, trans. Rodríguez, 228 n. 237.

13   *Greek Anthology*, ed. and trans. Paton, V 46-47 [XIV 42].

14   Milovanović-Barham, Aldhelm's *Enigmata* and Byzantine riddles, 55-56.

15   *Byzantina aenigmata*, ed. and trans. Milovanović.

16   Milovanović-Barham, Aldhelm's *Enigmata* and Byzantine riddles, 53 n. 10.

17   The manuscript is available in facsimile at mss.bmlonline.it/s.aspx?Id=AWOIfIkII1A4r7GxMILA#/book; cf. Ohlert, *Rätsel und Rätselspiele der alten Griechen*, 152 n. 2; *Diccionario griego-español*, s.v. βάλανος.

(pollen-producing) or female (flower- and fruit-producing): since, in the wild, the pollen is carried by the wind rather than insects, the female trees might be thought ostensibly to reproduce self-sufficiently. However, Konrad Ohlert, in the first edition of his major study of Greek riddling, was for some reason dissatisfied with the evidence of Plutei 32.16 and suggested »grapevine« on the grounds that this is the solution to Symphosius's riddle 53, which also uses the maiden mother conceit (and is discussed below).[18] Meanwhile, Félix Buffière disliked both solutions and proposed that this riddle shares its solution with the two that precede it in the Palatine Anthology, which are agreed to be on »day and night«.[19]

What at least some of these commentators appear not to have known is that the conceit of the maiden who reproduces is well attested in early medieval riddles; moreover, the solutions to these riddles are recorded in the manuscripts, and are usually plants. In this conceit, the fact that virgins are people indicates that the solution to the riddle will not be a person; the fact that the virgins reproduce hints that the subject will be a life form; and the fact that the reproduction does not ostensibly involve sexual intercourse indicates that the life form will be a plant. Admittedly the conceit is not always used in this way: the Bern Riddles (on which more below) also use it of an egg.[20] But its deployment for plants is widespread. The earliest example of which we are aware occurs as the fifty-third of the hundred Latin riddles of Symphosius, thought to have been composed in the late fourth or early fifth century, possibly – but far from certainly – in North Africa.[21]

> nolo toro iungi, quamvis placet esse maritam.
> nolo virum thalamo: per me mea nata propago est.
> nolo sepulchra pati; scio me submergere terrae
>
> I do not want to be joined in marriage, although being married is pleasing.
> I do not want a husband for my bedchamber: my offspring is born through me.
> I do not want to encounter tombs: I know how to bury myself in the earth.

Like Greek riddlers, Symphosius made extensive use of family metaphors,[22] but the maiden mother conceit here is distinctive in his oeuvre. The conceit recurs in the riddle »de rosa« (»on the rose«) in the so-called Bern Riddles, no doubt composed under the direct textual influence of Symphosius, probably in the Mediterranean region (and perhaps specifically northern Italy) around the seventh century.[23] In the critical edition of Glorie, the riddle runs:[24]

> Mollis ego duro de corde genero natos;
> In conceptu numquam amplexu uiri delector.
> Sed dum infra meis concrescunt fili latebris,
> Meum quisque nascens disrumpit uulnere corpus.
> Postquam decorato uelantes tegmine matrem
> Saepe delicati frangunt acumine fortes.

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18   Ohlert, *Rätsel und Rätselspiele der alten Griechen*, 152.

19   *Anthologie Grecque*, ed. and trans. Buffière, 177.

20   *Aenigmata in Dei nomine Tullii,* ed. Glorie, 554 (no. 8).

21   Symphosius, *Aenigmata,* ed. and trans. Leary, 46, 157; on the riddles' origins, see 1-6 and Sebo, Was Symphosius an African?

22   Mogford, Moon and stars, 231-32.

23   Klein, Latin Bern Riddles; Mogford, Moon and stars, 231.

24   *Aenigmata in Dei nomine Tullii*, ed. Glorie, 599 (no. 52).

> Soft as I am, I produce sons from my hard heart;
> in conceiving I am never delighted by the embrace of a man.
> But as my sons grow strong beneath my hiding places,
> each ruptures my body with a wound as it is born.
> Thereafter, covering their mother with an ornate blanket,
> the weak often break the strong with a sharp point.

Most of the riddles studied in this article are attested in just one, two, or three primary manuscripts, with little significant textual variation (while Symphosius's are found in over thirty, but with a well-established critical text). Being sure of the best text of this Bern riddle is trickier; there are at least five witnesses to Riddle 52, yet editors have had to introduce conjectural readings to create a legible critical text.[25] As Neville Mogford has recently discussed, the metaphors of the Bern Riddles sometimes become convoluted,[26] making it harder for medieval scribes and modern editors alike to infer the best reading. But for the purposes of our argument, the text and meaning of the riddle is clear enough. On balance, in lines 1-3 the riddle seems most likely to be describing the formation of seeds in rose hips, which burst in line four. In this reading, the riddle goes on in the remaining two lines to describe the beautiful flowers of the new plants which (implicitly the next summer) cover their parent rose (line 5), but which are also associated with the rose's defensive thorns (line 6): though the delicate flowers of the rose plant are ostensibly »delicati« (»weak«), its thorns are able to break the plant's stronger assailants (»fortes« – perhaps animals? And perhaps specifically human ones?). Quite why, within the metaphorical world of the poem, sons would cover their mother with a blanket is not obvious to us: Mogford suggests that the poem is evoking real-world sons covering their late mother with a funeral shroud.[27] If this interpretation is right, it implies that roses change sex from being sons in youth to being mothers as they reproduce, but whatever the precise meaning of the riddle, line two clearly presents the conceit of the self-generating maiden mother.

Two riddles whose solutions are plants exist in the Old Norse riddle corpus, both in the probably thirteenth-century *Heiðreks saga*, in a riddle contest between the god Óðinn and the protagonist Heiðrekr which accounts for nearly all attested Old Norse riddles. While one of us has previously opined that the riddles were composed especially for the saga,[28] Burrows has pointed out that the stylistic diversity of its riddles, its demonstrable predilection for integrating pre-existing poems, and the existence of a few other riddles elsewhere in the Old Icelandic corpus make it more likely that the saga drew on pre-existing written riddles – a conclusion with which, on reflection, we agree.[29] One runs as follows:[30]

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25   *Aenigmata in Dei nomine Tullii*, ed. Glorie, 599 (no. 52).

26   Mogford, The moon and stars, 232-37.

27   Mogford, Commentary on Bern Riddle 52.

28   Hall, Changing style and changing meaning, 9-10.

29   Burrows, Enigma variations, 195-186; Wit and wisdom, 116; *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. and trans. Burrows, 407.

30   *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. and trans. Burrows, 429.

Hverjar eru þær rýgjar   á reginfjalli,
elr við kván kona?
Mær við meyju   mög um getr,
ok eigut þær varðir vera.
Heiðrekr konungr,   hyggðu at gáta!

Who are those ladies   on the great mountain;
a woman gives birth by a wife?
A maid by a maiden   has a son,
and those wives do not have husbands?
King Heiðrekr,   consider solving that!

Heiðrekr – at this point in the story famed for his wisdom – is quick to present the solution: »þat eru hvannir tvær ok hvannarkálfr á milli þeira« (»it is two angelicas, and a young angelica in between them«), reflecting the fact that angelicas can in certain conditions reproduce by putting out side shoots.[31] Christopher Tolkien once asserted that, with only two exceptions, »there are no parallels to« the *Heiðreks saga* riddles »in the riddle-literature of any other country«[32] – a claim to which more recent commentators have deferred.[33] But the participation of this riddle in the maiden mother tradition means that we must raise the count of exceptions to three.[34]

Our final early medieval attestation of the maiden mother conceit is closer to Dunash's home and literary sphere, in the form of a poem »fī ḥarshūfa« (»on the artichoke«) by the eleventh-century ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Ṭallāʾ. It is recorded in the anthology *Rāyāt al-mubarrizīn wa-ghāyāt al-mumayyazīn* by ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī (1213-1286), who was widely travelled but most closely associated with al-Andalus:[35]

وبِنْتِ ماءٍ وتُرْبٍ جُودُها أَبداً * لمنْ يُرَجِّيهِ في حِصْنٍ من البَخَلِ
كأَنَّها في بَياضٍ وامتناعِ ذُراً * بِكْرٌ من الرُّوم في جُنْدٍ من الأَسَلِ

Lo, a daughter of water and earth, her abundance continual * for anyone who aspires to her fortress (also: chastity) of withholding,
as if she, in the whiteness and aloofness of her topmost part, * were a virgin from Byzantium amidst a troop of spears (also: slender twigs/shoots).

It is worth noting that the verb *yurajjī* is masculine: although »anyone« is the most literally correct translation of the subject of this verb, the verb connotes a male challenger to the maiden's fortress. The text of this riddle, like the Bern rose riddle, is not entirely settled: despite working from the same unique manuscript as Dāyah, Gómez's edition reads *khidrin* (»veil«) where Dāyah's reads *jundin* (»troop«) (no doubt reflecting the similarity in Arabic script of خدر and جند respectively, and perhaps the absence of consonant pointing in the

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31 *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. and trans. Burrows, 430.

32 *Saga of King Heidrek the Wise,* ed. and trans. Tolkien, xix.

33 Hall, Changing style and changing meaning, 9; *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks,* ed. and trans. Burrows, 407.

34 And for a fourth, see Hall, Latin and Hebrew analogues.

35 Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī, *Rāyāt al-mubarrizīn wa-ghāyāt al-mumayyazīn*, ed. Dāyah, 268-269 (with full vocalisation added by us).

36 Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī, *Rāyāt al-mubarrizīn wa-ghāyāt al-mumayyazīn*, ed. Gómez, 110 [verse 305].

manuscript).[36] Gómez's reading inspired A. J. Arberry to render the poem's last four words with the elegant couplet »bashfully she peers | through her veil of spears«, but Dāyah's reading is clearly the more direct.[37] We have not been able to consult the manuscript; what is important for our purposes is that, either way, the white virgin is the edible artichoke heart, which forms as part of the flower at the top of the plant's long stalk. The spears of the final hemistich reflect the scales that cover the bud; here, in a turn characteristic of the last word of Arabic epigrammatic poems,[38] the poem plays with the meaning of *al-asalu*, which, within the world conjured up by the poem's metaphors, must have the poetic and somewhat arcane meaning »spears«; but the usual meaning of *al-asalu* is »slender twigs, shoots«, which hints at the vegetal solution to the riddle.[39] How far the cultivated artichokes of eleventh-century al-Andalus had diverged in form from the wild cardoon of which they are a cultivar is a rather vexed question,[40] but it is worth noting that cardoon scales can boast a covering of thorn-like spines that would fit ibn al-Ṭallāʾ's image of spears admirably.

Ibn al-Ṭallāʾ does not provide a straightforward attestation of the maiden mother conceit: the artichoke is certainly a chaste virgin, but the text is not explicit that she has daughters. Rather, the maiden/artichoke heart's »jūdu« (»abundance«) can be read as the maiden/artichoke heart herself. But the »continual« nature of this abundance can be read to reflect how the artichoke is a perennial, returning year after year, the chaste virgin in a sense the mother of the next year's growth. Alternatively, the riddle can also be read, like some of the others here, as contemplating the artichoke heart as the flower and subsequently seed head that it will become if not harvested. Ibn al-Ṭallāʾ was evidently at least exploring similar ideas to the maiden mother motif in a riddle in the Arabic-speaking Mediterranean of the eleventh century.

»Artichoke« strikes us as the most likely solution to Dunash's riddle as well as ibn al-Ṭallāʾ's. As a topic for a riddle, it is paralleled elsewhere in the Mediterranean region: of the three true riddles whose solutions are plants in Milovanović's collection of Byzantine riddles, one is on *agkinara*, which might be translated either as »cardoon« or specifically as »artichoke«.[41] Milovanović's edition corresponds to the text in the Palatine Anthology:[42]

Ἐγκέφαλον φορέω κεφαλῆς ἄτερ. εἰμὶ δε χλωρὴ,
αὐχένος ἐκ δολιχοῦ γῆθεν ἀειρομένη.
σφαίρῃ δ᾽ ὡς ὑπὲρ αὐλὸν ἐείδομαι. ἢν δὲ ματεύσῃς,
ἔνδον ἐμῶν λαγόνων μητρὸς ἔχω πατέρα.

I have a brain without a head, and I am green
and rise from the earth by a long neck.
I am like a ball placed on a flute, and if you search
within my flanks I have there my mother's father.

37 Ibn Saʿīd al-Maghribī, *Rāyāt al-mubarrizīn wa-ghāyāt al-mumayyazīn*, trans. Arberry, 182. ī
38 Talib, *How Do You Say ›Epigram‹ in Arabic?*, 19-31.
39 Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*.
40 Wright, Did the Ancients know the artichoke?; Weingarten, The rabbi and the emperors, 59-63.
41 *Byzantina aenigmata,* ed. and trans. Milovanović, 19 [no. 6].
42 *Greek Anthology*, ed. and trans. Paton, V 54-55.

Moreover, Milovanović noted that the second half of this text circulated as a riddle in its own right, while consultation of Plutei 32.16, f. 382v reveals that the manuscript gives the first couplet alone, showing that it too circulated independently.[43] Since it is unusual for a riddle to describe the same parts of its subject twice, switching metaphors as it does so, it may be that the four-line riddle in the Palatine Anthology represents the conflation of two two-line riddles on the same subject, which would evidence greater salience again of the cardoon in medieval Greek riddling. Dunash's »they return beautiful, undamaged, * enclosed with fenced gardens« fits the perennial cardoon. Likewise, the enclosure of the virgins by fenced gardens would, within the metaphorical world of Dunash's riddle, denote the enclosure of the artichoke heart by its scales or spines, while playfully making a literal statement about how artichokes grow in gardens.

Meanwhile, there is no longer any need to doubt that the Greek riddle exhibiting the reproducing maiden conceit is, as most commentators have recognised, about a plant. The motif is used of too wide a range of species for us to read it as being particularly well suited to the date palm, but there is no reason to doubt the relatively early manuscript evidence in favour of this solution. The date palm was, after all, an especially popular topic for early medieval plant riddles: it is the solution to the only riddle plausibly attributed in the ḥadīth to the Prophet,[44] to one of two riddles on plants by the later tenth-century Abū Abdallāh al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad al-Mughallis, and appears several times in the Latin tradition.[45]

The maiden mother conceit could have travelled between the literary cultures represented by these riddles at least in part in writing. The Greek example is potentially the earliest, but as far as we know, there is no strong evidence for links specifically between the Greek date riddle and the other riddles examined here. Greek influence on epigrammatic Arabic writing seems to be negligible,[46] but it is not impossible that Greek writing influenced Anglo-Latin riddles.[47] Symphosius's vine riddle was almost certainly known to the composer of the Bern rose riddle, and Hall has shown elsewhere that a literary link between the Bern Riddles and those of *Heiðreks saga* is possible.[48] We might also speculate that there were opportunities for the riddles of Symphosius to influence Arabic- and Hebrew-speakers in early medieval al-Andalus; although ibn Saʿīd associated ibn al-Ṭallāʾ with Mahdia, in what is currently Tunisia, sources also associate him with Iberia. The depictions of earth, enclosure and defences in the artichoke riddle by ibn al-Ṭallāʾ (and to a lesser extent Dunash) recall Symphosius's portrayal of the rose in his riddle 45:[49]

purpura sum terrae, pulchro perfusa rubore,
saeptaque, ne violer, telis defendor acutis.
o felix, longo si possim vivere fato!

43 *Byzantina aenigmata*, ed. and trans. Milovanović, 126.

44 Keegan, Islamic legal riddles, 221-222.

45 al-Thaʿālibī, Abū Manṣūr, *Tatimmat al-Yatīmah*, ed. Radwan, 67-69 [ch. 66]. Latin examples include *Aenigmata in Dei nomine Tullii*, ed. Glorie, 561 (no. 15).

46 Talib, *How Do You Say ›Epigram‹ in Arabic?*, 159-160.

47 Cf. Milovanović-Barham, Aldhelm's *Enigmata* and Byzantine riddles.

48 Hall, Latin and Hebrew analogues.

49 Symphosius, *Aenigmata*, ed. and trans. Leary, 45, 143 [no. 45].

I am the purple of the earth, steeped in a beautiful blush,
and, being hedged around so that I am not attacked, I am defended by sharp weapons.
Happy, indeed, if I were able to live a long life.

On the other hand, the conceit could just as well have travelled orally (through international riddle culture of the kind examined by Antti Aarne's *Vergleichende Rätselforschungen*).[50] It is interesting to consider that Symphosius might plausibly have been composing in North Africa, later the home of ibn al-Ṭallāʾ: both writers might reflect the *longue durée* of riddle culture in that region. For the most part, then, it is at least as easy to explain the shared conceit of the maiden mother as a product of oral riddle culture as one arising from written transmission.

Plants on Gender

Though work in critical plant theory spells out convincingly the ecological value of developing plant-centric understandings of the world, that does not mean that we will necessarily find such perspectives in early medieval riddles. Moreover, despite the vegetal solutions to the maiden mother riddles, the metaphors from which those riddles are woven tell us first and foremost about people. It is worth exploring this anthropomorphic dimension both for its intrinsic value as evidence for human culture and *en route* to ascertaining what, if anything, the riddles can tell us about plants. In particular, the exploration of gender and sexuality is inherent in the maiden mother conceit, as, however light-heartedly, the motif harnesses plants' obvious drive to grow and reproduce along with their ostensible lack of sexual desire and sexual intercourse to the contemplation of women's reproduction and the role of reproduction in gendering.[51] This initial focus on what the riddles tell us about people will show, however, that from a plant-theory point of view, we can see poetry imagining analogies between plant and human life with great fluency, even in cultures deeply embedded into the Abrahamic positioning of humans on a hierarchy of being apart from animals and even more so from plants, and in cultures which produce profoundly anthropocentric literature.

Notwithstanding the close association between Mary the mother of Jesus and the date palm in Islamic tradition (and the willingness of early medieval Arabic poets to make risqué allusions to this association), none of the maiden mother riddles takes up the challenge thrown down by Abū al-Najm Minūchihrī Dāmghānī in Ghaznavid Persia around the 1030s, in a long *qaṣīda* on wine, to relate the maiden mother conceit to Mary:[52]

بی شوی شد آبستن چون مریم عمران * وین قصه بسی خوبتر و خوشتر ازانست

like Mary, ʿImrān's daughter, she's pregnant with no husband, * yet her tale is stranger and sweeter than the tale of Mary.

But the riddles do put the conceit to a great deal of other work.

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50 Antti Aarne, *Vergleichende Rätselforschungen*.

51 Cf. Keetley, Six theses on plant horror, 13-16; Salvador Bello, The sexual riddle type.

52 Minūchihrī Dāmghānī, *Dīwān*, ed. Kazimirski, ٦١-٧١; trans. Seyed-Gohrab, *Courtly Riddles*, 49.

Of the examples of the maiden mother conceit presented above, ibn al-Ṭallāʾ's is the most remarkable for the range of cultural themes it encapsulates: the artichoke is revealed in the riddle not only through environmental conditions, but through familial relations, greed and the guarding of wealth by weapons, skin-colour and perceptions of beauty, and gender and sexual desire.[53] If the artichoke seemed to ibn al-Ṭallāʾ an exotic and perhaps high-status vegetable,[54] that might account for its characterisation as a Byzantine maiden, but the key factor is more likely the stereotypical reputation of Byzantine people in Arabic literature – and especially women – for exhibiting great beauty and, specifically, white complexions,[55] evoking both the white heart of the artichoke and the pigmentocracy operative in early medieval Arab culture.[56] A racial dimension is not apparent in the other poems.[57]

All of the riddles comment on gender, however, if only as a necessary corollary of using the maiden mother device. El-Cheikh's account of medieval Arab attitudes to the women of Byzantium emphasises how they were imagined not only as beautiful but also as wanton.[58] None of this comes through in ibn al-Ṭallāʾ's riddle; like the other maiden mother riddles studied here, it focuses on the paradoxical contrast between its subject's fecundity and her chastity. Nevertheless, the power of the beautiful Byzantine virgin to provoke jealous desire is part of how ibn al-Ṭallāʾ's riddle constructs the desirability of the artichoke: the consumer's breaching of the artichoke's defences is construed as a violation, both of the artichoke herself and of the maiden through whom she is represented. And yet, by invoking men's desire to violate the chastity of beautiful maidens and access their »abundance«, the poem implicitly adverts to the possibility that the artichokes would rather be left to thrive in peace; however patriarchal and anthropocentric, the riddle is an acknowledgement, of sorts, of both female and vegetal subjectivity. Dunash's riddle construes its subject in a similar way to ibn al-Ṭallāʾ's, focusing on associating beauty with chastity and both with enclosure. Dunash's riddle, in noting that (in our reading) the perennial plants will return the next year »kelulot« (»intact«), implicitly contrasts this state with the impending violation of the artichokes that stand before the riddler's eyes in the poem's narrative present. Ultimately, given that the consumption of artichokes must have been seen as a perfectly acceptable undertaking, the riddle serves to normalise this violence.

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53 Meghani, Seeing the obscured.

54 Watson, The Arab agricultural revolution, 24-25.

55 El-Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs*, 123-124.

56 On which, see Hunwick, A region of the mind; Sharawi, African in Arab culture.

57 It is tempting to seek a racial dimension in the Old Norse angelica riddle. Burrows has read the word *rýgjar* (»ladies«) in the opening line as meaning not only »ladies« but also »giantesses«: Burrows, Enigma variations, 203-204; Burrows, Wit and wisdom, 125; *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. and trans. Burrows, 429-430. In turn, giants stand as mythological proxies for racial others in Old Norse texts: Cole, In pursuit of an Æsirist ideology. But the only time in Old Norse when this word and its compounds do not straightforwardly denote mundane and culturally Norse women is in one eclectic, inventive, and alliterative list of names and epithets for *trǫllkonur* (»witches/troll-women«): *Anonymous* Þulur, ›Trollkvenna heiti‹ *5*, ed. Gurevich, 730; cf. Sveinbjörn Egilsson, *Lexicon poeticum*, s.v. *rýgr*; *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*, s.v. *rýgr*. Accessed on 28 December 2020: onp.ku.dk/onp/onp.php. This is hardly evidence that, as a common noun, *rýgr* meant »giantess«.

58 El-Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs*, 123-129.

The maiden's desire to be spared the attentions of men comes through far more explicitly, however, in Symphosius's riddle – this time with a cheerful sketch of a vivacious and wilful vine, straining against cultivation, surely evoking the licentiousness associated with wine and perhaps evoking Symphosius's integration into, or at least debt to, non-Abrahamic religious culture. Leary has pointed out that the first hemistich (rendered in his translation above as »I do not want to be joined in marriage«) can also be understood to mean »I do not want to be joined [to the vine-support] with a tie-for-binding-vines«, while the last line may refer in its first hemistich (»I do not want to encounter tombs«) to a custom of planting grape vines around tombs, and in its second (»I know how to bury myself in the earth«) to a method of training the plant by running a vine along a furrow and burying all but the tip, which then takes root and grows from that new location.[59] The vine is emphatic that it wants to grow in its own way, in its own place (and away from the dead); the human woman who provides the metaphor for the vine implicitly feels much the same: neither wants to be tied down.

The Old Norse riddle takes this challenge to patriarchal control of women to another level again – perhaps unsurprisingly, since, as we note below, the story troubles patriarchal gender norms at other moments too. Since angelica was important as a food plant and noted for its sweetness, the riddle may be evidence for a mutual association of plant and mother with fertility.[60] But its representation of gender is more complex than this. All the riddles evoke (only to foreclose) the subversive fantasy of women who are able to reproduce without men, but Óðinn's riddle further challenges heteronormativity by imagining that the reproduction takes place through women's sexual congress. Since representations even of friendships between women are rare in Old Norse literature, this is in its way momentous:[61] however metaphorical, the riddle is to our knowledge the only representation of female homosexual sex in the corpus. Of course, since the point of the riddle is to set up a paradox which has to be resolved, it is depicting women reproducing with each other precisely to negate the real-world possibility of that, and implicitly the same-sex relationship it depicts is portrayed as no more possible than homosexual reproduction. And yet, as with other riddles in *Heiðreks saga*, the metaphors in this riddle have a literary resonance that suggests that more than this is at stake. It might first be noted that sagas are more forthcoming about intimacy between kinswomen, including women who are kin by marriage, than about non-kin friendship, and in a sense the riddle is consonant with this:[62] Burrows translated the third line (»elr við kván kona«, translated above as »a woman gives birth by a wife«) as »woman begets with woman«, but while *kona* is both the usual word for a woman and for a wife, *kván* certainly means »wife«, making it clear that the riddle imagines women who are married, implicitly to one another.[63] Meanwhile, the challenges that this riddle poses to the gender norms of Abrahamicate cultures fit with how the riddles of *Heiðreks saga* evoke and play with non-Christian Scandinavian mythological traditions. Hannah Burrows has explored *Heiðreks saga*'s evocative series of »wave-riddles«, in which the waves of the sea are personified as powerful

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59 Symphosius, *Aenigmata,* ed. and trans. Leary, 157-159.

60 Teixidor-Toneu *et al.*, Sweetness beyond desserts, 296-297.

61 Van Deusen, Sworn sisterhood?

62 Van Deusen, Sworn sisterhood?, 66-67.

63 *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. and trans. Burrows, 429; Cleasby and Vigfússon, *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, s.vv. *kona*, *kván*; cf. Sveinbjörn Egilsson, *Lexicon poeticum*, s.vv. *kona*, *kvánfang*.

and dangerous women, and has shown the subtle interplay of this series with non-Christian mythology, positioning them as daughters of the sea god Ægir. This interplay helps the riddles to explore how the waves are, »like Ægir's daughters, both seductive – a source of food and of adventure – and dangerous and unpredictable, taking lives at will«.[64] The angelica riddle likewise participates in an intense interest in gender transgression in medieval Icelandic writing:[65] the primeval giant Ymir's asexual reproduction and the transformation of the male god Loki into a sexually active female horse in the early thirteenth-century *Snorra Edda*; a well-established discourse for expressing one man's power over another through the language of male homosexual sex;[66] warrior maidens, of whom one of the most renowned is Hervör Angantýsdóttir, the mother of the man to whom the riddle is posed;[67] and the misogamous maiden-kings of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Icelandic romance.[68] Indeed, medieval Icelandic romances, which enjoy fantastic continental settings, are a little more forthcoming on female friendship than sagas set in Iceland, and do sometimes interrupt their fixation on male homosocial relationships for long enough to gesture to homosocial relationships between women, by far the strongest example being the (arguably homoerotic) friendship between the princesses of France and India in the perhaps fourteenth-century *Nítíða saga*.[69] Thus, although the angelica riddle fundamentally negates the homosexuality it portrays, the fact that it represents homosexuality amidst a wide-ranging probing of gender norms in medieval Icelandic writing forbids us from accepting too readily the riddle's implication that women having sex with one another is no more possible than women reproducing with one another. Our surviving evidence affords us only the slightest glimpses into the medieval reception of *Heiðreks saga*'s riddles,[70] but we can contemplate that, like many erotic riddles, for at least some listeners to the saga, the angelica riddle served to acknowledge taboo realities rather than to deny them.[71] At the same time, the children of the union between the angelicas are »mög« (»sons«) – unlike the clearly female offspring in the Greek fig riddle and the Symphosius and Dunash riddles. The desirability of sons over daughters in Old Norse culture positions this homosexual reproduction as especially fruitful, but in doing so it reinscribes patriarchal gender expectations: it positions sons as the prototypical offspring. Perhaps, just as in *Heiðreks saga* marriage and childbirth marks the end of Hervör Angantýsdóttir's career as a male viking, the birth of a son returns the queer angelicas to the patriarchal fold. Several ancient and medieval texts from India contemplate reproduction through two women having sex, on the one hand positing this possibility, yet on the other describing how men begotten in such a way are born deformed (specifically through bonelessness).[72]

64 Burrows, Enigma variations, 213.

65 Cf. Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir, *Women in Old Norse Literature*.

66 Meulengracht Sørensen, *The Unmanly Man.*

67 On whom, see Clover, Warrior maidens and other sons.

68 Kalinke, *Bridal-Quest Romance in Medieval Iceland*.

69 McDonald Werronen, *Popular Romance in Iceland*, 171-193; Murath, Invisible kingship.

70 Cf. Hall, Changing style and changing meaning.

71 Cf. Salvador-Bello, Sexual riddle type.

72 Vanita, Born of two vaginas.

Were similar assumptions or anxieties to have circulated in medieval Iceland, then, arguably, the success of homosexual women in producing sons accentuates the paradoxes at the heart of the angelica riddle, as if sons are an even more surprising product of the union of two women than daughters would have been. On the one hand, the riddle gives the stamp of re-productive success to the angelicas' supposed coupling; on the other, it again circumscribes its own radicalism with patriarchal measures of success.

It is the Bern rose riddle that focuses most intently on offspring, and here too they are masculine (*natos*), apparently growing up over their mother and enfolding her into hetero-normativity – yet implicitly the sons become mothers in turn as they produce their own seeds. Hard though this riddle is to interpret, the sinister image of the sons' birth constitut-ing the wounding of their mother points more than the other riddles analysed here to the alienness of plants, and, however light the tone, the final comment about the rose's thorns defending it emphasises the rose's antagonistic relationship with its environment.[73]

In portraying plants as human maidens and mothers, these riddles explore, in their dif-ferent ways, women's reluctance to participate in patriarchal sexual relationships (even if the riddles ultimately normalise those relationships). In its simplicity, even the Greek *parthénos* riddle is heroically insistent on the date palm's self-sufficiency and the irrelevance of male intervention to its production of fruit. The Latin, Arabic, and Hebrew examples develop this theme by positioning the plant as a woman or girl facing unwanted sexual attention, or even predation, from men. On the other hand, the Old Norse angelica riddle both highlights the gender conservatism of most of the plant riddles studied here and the capacity of the peri-pheral Icelandic culture to cast up subversive perspectives on medieval Abrahamicate norms. All the riddles hint at a patriarchal envy at women's capacity for reproduction, or indeed, in the plants' more alien moments here, fear of it; for all their mentions of chastity, the riddles implicitly recognise that the women have desires, and options.

Critical Plant Studies

After this long exposition of how riddles write plants as people, it may seem otiose to say that they indicate a readiness to see plants and humans as similar forms of life. Yet recent work in critical plant studies has demonstrated how profoundly Judaeo-Christian theology, Western philosophy, and most ecocriticism have turned away from reading plants as a life form on a continuum with animal, and specifically human, existence.[74] As Matthew Hall emphasised in his analysis of plants in the Tanakh/Bible, »where plants are ascribed qualities such as perception and sensation, it is clear that these metaphors firmly locate such attributes first and foremost in the human being when they appear«.[75] This is undeniably also true of the metaphorical logic of the maiden mother riddles: riddles present plants in human terms precisely because plants are recognised not to be human. Where the Bible talks about plants, it tends to focus on plants cultivated for human consumption,[76] and this anthropocentric focus on cultivated plants likewise extends to most of the maiden mother riddles. Never-

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73   On the alienness of plants, see Keetley, Six theses on plant horror.

74   E.g. Hall, *Plants as Persons*; Nealon, *Plant Theory*.

75   Hall, *Plants as Persons*, 63.

76   Hall, *Plants as Persons*, 64-65.

theless, it is hard to read the portrayals of plants given above without concluding that early medieval commentators perceived and empathised with plants' vivacity. The triple repetition of *parthénos* (»virgin woman«) in the Greek date riddle alone constitutes an insistence on personhood, and the other riddles take this much further. As Dale has emphasised regarding trees in Old English riddles, even an anthropomorphic portrayal of plants is a basis – to some extent a necessary one – for empathy.[77] Perhaps correspondingly, the riddles for the most part tack away from emphasising the alien dimension of vegetal life – for example, they tend to focus on individual plants rather than a »multiplying mass« of plants, which is liable to evoke horror.[78] Through this intimate focus on individual plants, the riddles implicitly position plants as being to (human) animals what women are to men: restricted in movement and speech, subject to the gaze or violence of their more vocal and mobile dominators – but having their own subjecthood nonetheless, as well as a capacity for reproduction denied to their oppressor and needed by them. Moreover, since the subjects of most of the maiden mother riddles are food crops, the riddles enable us to contemplate how humans and plants constitute each other through the co-evolutionary interspecies relationships that are agricultural economies, and in turn the way that those economies shape space and constitute place.[79]

Notwithstanding its broad brush-strokes, Matthew Hall's sketch of plants' place across a range of (mostly pre-modern) cultures plausibly identifies a trend in pre-Christian Graeco-Roman mythology and in Old Norse accounts of non-Christian Scandinavian mythology whereby plants (admittedly primarily trees) are accorded greater animacy than in Judaeo-Christian culture, and our corpus of riddles chimes with this.[80] Picking up on the Old Icelandic angelica riddle again: it is not known how intensively angelica was managed or cultivated by people in medieval Iceland – or even whether it was first brought there by human settlers or by birds – but it was certainly found on mountainsides in the Middle Ages as in the present day,[81] and the emphasis of the riddle is firmly on awe at an untamed environment. The riddle opens panoramically, picturing women on a *reginfjall*. *Fjall* straightforwardly means »mountain«, but the word *regin* in Old Norse is rich in metaphysical valences: it means »powers«, and was also a traditional term for »pagan gods« and even »the world«. As the first element of a compound (as here) it generally means »mighty, great« or sometimes »holy«; *reginhaf*, for example, means »open ocean« (as opposed to the simplex *haf*, »sea«), while in modern Icelandic *reginfjall* means »a wild fell, mountain wilderness«.[82] Correspondingly, the image of the angelica plants as women on a mountainside implies the plants' mobility, wandering beyond the farmstead (as would the human gatherers of angelica itself). And in Heiðrekr's solution to the riddle, the young angelica plant is a *hvannarkálfr*, literally an »angelica calf«. All this evokes not only a putative heritage of pre-Christian animacy in medieval

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77 Dale, *Natural World in the Exeter Book Riddles*, 117-118.

78 Keetley, Six theses on plant horror, 14.

79 Cf. Price, *Human and NonHuman*, 91-102; Sheshia Galvin, Interspecies relations, 242-244.

80 Hall, *Plants as Persons*; cf. Bintley, Plant life in the *Poetic Edda*; Dale, *Natural World in the Exeter Book Riddles*, 103-121; Fay, The farmacy; Abram, *Evergreen Ash*, 84-102.

81 Teixidor-Toneu *et al.*, Sweetness beyond desserts.

82 Cleasby and Vigfússon, *Icelandic-English Dictionary,* s.v. *Regin*; cf. Sveinbjörn Egilsson, *Lexicon poeticum*, s.v. *regin* and following.

83 Cf. Abram, *Evergreen Ash,* 103-107.

Scandinavian culture, but also the riddle's production in a society which was predominantly pastoral rather than agricultural.[83] Human settlement on Iceland was determined by access to grazing; grazing in turn reshaped the island's ecology; and the angelicas, eking out their survival in this new ecosystem, are read in terms of the animals – human and bovine – with which they contend, gaining a kind of parity with them, and are shown to survive through modes of reproduction alien to their mammalian neighbours.

Meanwhile, Leary's recent edition and translation of Symphosius's riddles expounds thoroughly the degree of viticultural detail which Symphosius wove into his portrayal of the vine as a young woman.[84] In Symphosius's world, imbued with non-Christian Roman culture, the vine, in her first-person voice, experiences yet strives against intensive training and propagation: though far from the pastoral setting of the angelica riddle, this poem likewise generates a more animate subject than the Abrahamicate Mediterranean texts studied here.

Let us accept the hypothesis that Dunash ben Labraṭ's maiden mother riddle indeed concerns food plants. If so, the riddles of ibn al-Ṭallāʾ and Dunash, in contrast to the riddles of Symphosius and *Heiðreks saga*, emphasise plants' sessile nature: respectively, the artichoke flower as the virgin at the top of a tower and plants as enclosed maidens. Both riddles, of course, can also be read against the grain: although the enclosure is ostensibly for their protection, the implicit effort to contain these virgins implies that they might be both willing and able to break out of these constraints, for plants are not as sessile as at first glance they might seem, especially in their reproduction. Nevertheless, it is easy to read the Hebrew and Arabic poems as evoking the intensive regime of Mediterranean gardening and cultivation, perhaps specifically in the context of Andrew Watson's celebrated vision of »The Arab agricultural revolution and its diffusion, 700–1100«, in which the artichoke enjoys a significant (if contested) role.[85] Ibn al-Ṭallāʾ's representation of the artichoke as the daughter of water and *turbu* does not merely present a marriage of water and earth (as our translation above would suggest), but specifically »dust, dry earth«:[86] while resonating with the elemental and therefore the cosmic, the simplicity of the image of water bringing fertility to dry soil in the context of the poem's tight focus on the individual plant expresses the care and attention paid by the agriculturalist to the plant and its environmental conditions of life.

Dunash, we suggest, presents the artichoke heart surrounded by its scales or spikes as a virgin fenced into a garden, but the fact that artichokes might be fenced into a garden in reality is one of his clues to the reader as to the solution to the riddle. Gardens are fabulously rich sites of symbolic adventure in the Hebrew Andalusi poetry of Dunash and his successors,[87] and Dunash's maiden mother riddle could be contextualised in relation to this. But here we look instead to a comparison with a different part of his *dīwān*, a fragmentary verse found in the Cairo Geniza on a letter by Ḥasdai ibn Shaprut (c. 915-70), thought to be a complaint from Dunash to his master Ḥasdai, following what appears to have been an enforced sepa-

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84 Symphosius, *Aenigmata*, ed. and trans. Leary, 157-159.

85 Cf. Watson, *Agricultural Innovation in the Early Islamic World*; Wright, Did the Ancients know the artichoke?; Squatriti, Of seeds, seasons, and seas, 1209.

86 Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. تُرابٌ.

87 E.g. Decter, *Iberian Jewish Literature*, 79-95.

ration of Dunash from his wife and son. S. J. Pearce has emphasised the degree to which the poems attributed to Dunash and his wife at the moment of their parting contemplate their mutual affection in economic terms through their exchange of arm-rings – key repositories of moveable wealth in the early medieval world – and the following poem by Dunash continues that theme by referring to commerce in agricultural produce.[88] The first two lines are illegible; the remainder read:[89]

בְּיָגוֹן לְעָבְדְּךָ כִּי אִם סְחוֹרַת יָד [גְּ]אוּלָה
בְּתבוּאוֹת לֹא אֲעוֹלֵל וְלֹא אֶקְטוֹף מְלִילָה
בָּגַדְתִּי בְּאֵשֶׁת נְעוּרִים סֵפֶר כְּרִיתוּת לְשַׁלְּ[חָ]ה
נָטַשְׁתִּי נַחֲלָתִי וְעָזַבְתִּי בְּנִי אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה

I served you in sorrow, for all your wares are loathsome.
I will glean no grapes, nor will I gather corn.
I betrayed a young wife and sent her a writ of divorce.
I left my home, and abandoned the son that she bore.

The composition of this complaint could have been widely separated in time from the composition of Dunash's maiden mother riddle; there is nothing to say which was composed first; and there is no demand to read Dunash's riddle as addressing an actual son. Yet the comparison with the riddle is striking. The riddle is the only one of the ten in Halper 317 to specify the addressee as *bni* (»my son«). The relationship between the implicit speaker and his son stands in contrast with the maidens who are the subject of the riddle, the men's gaze ranging over the enclosed women, their words defining them as they contemplate chaste women who nonetheless »return, undamaged«, in what we have read as literal agricultural fecundity and metaphorical human women's reproductive self-sufficiency. By contrast, in the poem to Ḥasdai, Dunash positions himself as severed from his son, while still contemplating a young single mother, and rather than associating the woman with fruitfulness, the estranged husband conversely associates his abandonment of his wife and son with either a refusal or inability on his part to reap a harvest. The conceptual structure here is along the same lines as the injunction of Qurʾān 2:223: »nisāʾukum ḥarthun lakum fatū ḥarthakum annā shiʾtum waqaddimū li-anfusikum« (»your wives are [like] your fields, so go into your fields whichever way you like, and send [something good] ahead for yourselves«).[90] There are several hierarchical relationships implied in Dunah's poem: Ḥasdai has some kind of mastery over Dunash; Dunash has (or had) a patriarchal superiority over his wife and son; and the men in the poem also view themselves as standing above grapes and corn in the order of things. Reading Dunash's complaint alongside the riddle, we can glimpse men blurring admiration for women's capacity to reproduce with enthusiasm for reaping agricultural bounty, and a man lamenting his severing from his progeny by describing his

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88 Pearce, Bracelets are for hard times.

89 Fleischer, le-toldot shirat ha-ḥol ha-ivrit bi-sefarad bi-reshitah, 218; trans. Hoffman and Cole, *Sacred Trash*, 181.

90 Qurʾān, ed. Quranic Arabic Corpus; trans. Abdel Haleem.

alienation from the harvest whose commodification has demanded their separation. When agriculture ceases to be primarily about sustaining the material needs of Dunash's family and their proximity in space, the metaphorical bond between the human and the cultivated plant breaks. In these ways, Dunash positions his superiority over his wife and child as metaphorically equivalent to superiority over crops – but he turns away from presenting his own state of oppression in the same terms, presenting himself as a frustrated harvester rather than in any sense a harvest. The intersection of Dunash's recognition of the suffering of his wife and son and, in the riddle, his reading of plants as maidens whose harvest is, implicitly, a violation, implies a recognition of plants' suffering – but in both cases, Dunash reads that relationship through a patrician lens of superiority and responsibility.

Conclusions

This study, the first extensive examination of riddles whose solutions are plants, has established some useful facts in the study of early medieval riddles – a genre which, beyond Old English and Latin, has enjoyed scant attention. Across Latin, Arabic, Greek, Old Norse and, we argue, Hebrew riddles on plants, we can see the circulation of a conceit whereby the plant is construed as a maiden who is paradoxically a mother. By extending the scope of our primary sources beyond Latin and English – the hegemonic languages of the Western academy – to range across the early medieval riddle corpus, we have shown that there is no need to doubt the manuscript solution to the Greek date riddle; that a plausible solution is available for one of Dunash ben Labraṭ's that has hitherto perplexed scholars; and that the Old Norse riddles of *Heiðreks saga* are not as isolated from wider Eurasian riddling traditions as has been supposed. We have also drawn attention to the angelica riddle as possibly the only portrayal of female same-sex coupling in the Old Norse corpus.

One of the various Arabic terms for ›riddle‹ is *muʿammā*, which literally means »obscured, blinded«, a term which engages us with the problem of perception: not being able to see what is nevertheless there, or seeing only what gives the obscured object shape. Crucially, it invites us to reveal the unseen. The relevance of the riddles we have studied here to ameliorating what Wandersee and Schussler labelled »plant blindness« will be obvious.[91] While critical plant theory has focused – justifiably – on enabling human understanding of the Earth's current ecological crisis, these plant riddles also remind us of the extensive diffusions in Western Eurasian history and pre-history of cultivable plants and agricultural technologies, and likewise the degree to which linguistically, culturally, and geographically disparate people nonetheless participated in shared literary cultures and shared methods for exploring human culture by contemplating the plants with which they co-existed.

The riddles studied here are on the whole far shorter than most of their Old English counterparts, making it harder to see in them the sprawling, rhizomatic assemblages that ecocritically minded scholars have come to celebrate in Old English riddles. Their neglect thus recalls Adam Talib's argument that scholars steeped in Western poetic traditions have struggled to come to grips with the short poems of the epigrammatic traditions found in Arabic and beyond.[92] Yet we have shown how dense and evocative these short riddles can be,

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91 Wandersee and Schussler, Preventing plant blindness.

92 Talib, *How Do You Say ›Epigram‹ in Arabic?*, esp. 183-212.

and how concertedly they explore human relations – particularly gender and its relationship with movement and reproduction. And we have been able to show that these riddles are not merely anthropocentric. The sample of literature determined for us by a particular motif provides a small but independent correlation for Matthew Hall's survey of the ideological position of plants in pre-modern cultures (and has extended his focus from Christianity some distance into wider Abrahamicate culture). By drawing on his and other recent work in critical plant theory, we have been able to find implicit recognitions in several of these riddles of the dynamic and reciprocal relationships between human farmers and their family structures, the plants that domesticate them, their mutual shaping of the ecosystems they inhabit or colonise, and the economies that these interactions constitute.

The dominant tone in the riddles is perhaps the patrician one that we have identified in Dunash ben Labraṭ's work, whereby men see themselves as above both women and plants, reading the two subjected groups as metaphorically equivalent, gazing upon them and gathering their offspring to themselves, and understanding themselves as bearing a responsibility towards them. Yet these riddlers cannot avoid recognising the restrictions that this hierarchy places on the oppressed, and the desire of plants and women to flourish and grow (and reproduce) without constraint or violence. And as we probe the edges of the Abrahamicate world – Symphosius, writing relatively early in the conversion of the Mediterranean to Abrahamic religions, *Heiðreks saga*, geographically at the periphery of the medieval Abrahamicate world – we see a less patrician tone, the plants livelier, queering gender from their own distinctive ecologies.

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Latin and Hebrew Analogues to the Old Norse Leek Riddle

Alaric Hall*

It has been thought that of the forty or so surviving Old Norse riddles, only two have close parallels in the wider international riddle tradition. This note shows, however, that the riddle on the leek in the probably thirteenth-century *Heiðreks saga* has a close parallel in one of the late antique or early medieval Bern Riddles, on garlic. Moreover, the larger conceptual structure of the leek riddle, which positions the leek as an inverted person situated between the earth and the sun, is paralleled by one of the riddles of the tenth-century Hebrew poet Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi, which figures the sun and its light as a tree with its roots in the sky and its branches in the ground. The riddles of *Heiðreks saga* are more integrated into wider riddle culture than has been realised, and comparison of Dunash's work with the Old Norse and Latin material helps to settle debate about the solution to Dunash's riddle.

Keywords: riddles, Heiðreks saga*, Bern Riddles, Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi, allium*

This note brings together three medieval verse riddles, in Old Norse, Latin, and Hebrew, to reveal hitherto unappreciated similarities between the riddle literature of these languages. Our Old Norse riddles have been thought to show few overlaps with wider riddle traditions, but I show that the riddle on the leek in *Heiðreks saga* uses the same conceit as one of the riddles on garlic in the Latin Bern Riddles. In both riddles, the allium is figured as a person with their head in the earth and their feet in the air; and both harness this image to religious or mythic ideas about death. Meanwhile, one of the riddles of the tenth-century Hebrew poet Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi uses similar imagery. This indicates that the conceptual structure seen in the Latin and Norse had a wider circulation, and the comparisons between the three riddles help us to resolve debate about the solution to Dunash's composition, supporting the idea that his riddle is on the sun.

All but four of our surviving Old Norse riddles are preserved in the various manuscripts of the probably thirteenth-century *Heiðreks saga*, which features a riddle contest in which Óðinn, chief of the traditional Old Norse gods, disguised as a man called Gestumblindi, poses riddles in verse to the saga's eponymous anti-hero, King Heiðrekr. The riddles total thirty-seven in Burrows's recent critical edition.[1] In his edition and translation of the saga, Christopher Tolkien asserted that

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Gestumblindi's riddles are unique, in more senses than one. They are unique in that there are no others in ancient Norse; and even more surprisingly, there is no record in the poetry or in the sagas of a riddle ever having been asked. They are unique also in that there are no parallels to them in the riddle-literature of any other country, apart from the ancient ›Cow-riddle‹ (verse 70), which is known all over Europe, and the very curious riddle of the ›Sow with the Unborn Litter‹ (verse 69).[2]

Tolkien's implication that there are no other Old Norse riddles was wrong: three are known outside *Heiðreks saga*, with their earliest manuscript being AM 625 4°, from c. 1300 – no younger than Hauksbók, the first witness to *Heiðreks saga*.[3] Philip Lavender has recently called attention, moreover, to the fact that a riddle is posed in another Old Icelandic text, *Þjalar-Jóns saga*.[4] But although Hannah Burrows and others have recently done valuable work demonstrating the degree to which the *Heiðreks saga* riddles are embedded in Old Norse poetic and mythological tradition,[5] Tolkien's claim that all but two of the riddles are unparalleled has stood unchallenged.[6]

Shamira A. Meghani and I have recently argued that, contrary to Tolkien's claim, one of the *Heiðreks saga* riddles, on angelica, has parallels in the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic riddling of the early Middle Ages.[7] The present note shows that the other riddle about a plant in the collection also has a close medieval Latin parallel and more distant Hebrew ones:[8]

Hvat er þat undra,   er ek úti sá
fyrir Dellings durum?
Höfði sínu   vísar á helvega,
en fótum til sólar snýr.
Heiðrekr konungr,   hyggðu at gátu.

Góð er gáta þín, Gestumblindi, getit er þessar; þat er laukr; hǫfuð hans er fast í jǫrðu, en hann kvíslar, er hann vex upp.

What is that marvel which I saw outside,
in front of the doors of Dellingr?
With its head it indicates the roads to Hel,
but with its feet it turns to the sun.
Consider the riddle, King Heiðrekr.

Your riddle is good, Gestumblindi; it has been guessed. That is a leek/allium: its head is firmly in the earth, but it forks as it grows upwards.

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2   *Saga of King Heidrek the Wise*, ed. and trans. Tolkien, xix.

3   Hall, Changing style and changing meaning, 9; *Gátur*, ed. Burrows; Stefán Karlsson, Aldur Hauksbókar.

4   Lavender, Þjalar-*Jóns saga*, 88.

5   Burrows, Enigma variations; Wit and wisdom; *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. Burrows; Vijūna, On the Old Icelandic riddle collection; to which we can belatedly add the commentary by Björn Jónsson á Skarðsá (1574-1655), Útlegging *Bjarna Jónssonar uppá* þessar *gátur Gests ins blinda*, ed. Lavender.

6   Cf. *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. Burrows, 407, and 422-423 on the sow with the unborn litter.

7   *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. Burrows, 429 [verse 65]; Hall and Meghani, »I am a virgin woman«.

8   For the verse, *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. Burrows, 417 [verse 55]; for the prose *Saga of King Heidrek the Wise*, ed. Tolkien, 35 [verse 50]; translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

The best translation of *laukr* is somewhat uncertain: its English cognate is *leek* and this reflects the prototypical meaning of *laukr*, but the semantic range of *laukr* extended across the allium family.[9] Either way, it is unsurprising that one of our two Old Norse riddles on plants should be about an allium: while domesticated alliums seem to have been introduced into the Germanic-speaking world from the Mediterranean in the Iron Age, they were so well embedded into early medieval Germanic (and Insular Celtic) culture as to constitute the prototypical vegetable.[10] Indeed, of the ninety-five or so Old English riddles of the Exeter Book, only two are likely to have plants as their solutions, and both are on alliums (probably the onion).[11]

I offer two analogues to the *laukr* riddle. The first and closer is from the Latin Bern Riddles, probably composed in the Mediterranean region (and perhaps specifically northern Italy) around the seventh century.[12] In the critical edition of Glorie, it runs:[13]

> De alio.
>> Multiplici ueste natus de matre productor
>> Nec habere corpus possum, si uestem amitto.
>> Meos, unde nasco, in uentre fero parentes;
>> Viuo nam sepultus, uitam et inde resumo.
>> Superis eductus nec umquam crescere possum,
>> Dum natura caput facit succedere plantis.

> On garlic.
>> I am brought forth, born from my mother, with many-layered clothing;
>> I cannot have a body if I lose my clothing.
>> I carry my parents, from whom I am born, in my womb/stomach;
>> I live though interred, and from that place I resume my life.
>> I can never grow up, nurtured, to a great height,
>> since Nature makes my head go beneath my shoots/the soles of my feet.

It is the second half of this poem which parallels the Old Norse leek riddle. In both, the allium is metaphorically an inverted person, the bulb their head, its forked shoots their legs, and both riddles take the opportunity to counterpose human death with vegetal life. The metaphor may in both cases build on the everyday use of words for »head« to denote the bulb of an allium: according to the *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*, Heiðrekr's response to the *laukr* riddle is the only Old Norse evidence for this usage, but it is attested in Old English, suggesting that the usage might have been more widespread in the Germanic languages than our medieval sources reveal, and is also attested, albeit perhaps not extensively, in Latin.[14] According to *Heiðreks saga*, the *laukr* »hǫfði sínu / vísar á helvega | en fótum til sólar snýr« (»with its head indicates the roads to Hel, but with its feet turns to the sun«). In Burrows's estimation,

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9   Markey, ›Leeks‹ in their early folk contexts.

10   Markey, ›Leeks‹ in their early folk contexts.

11   *The Exeter Book*, ed. Krapp and Dobbie, 193, 230 (nos. 25 and 65).

12   Klein, Latin Bern Riddles; Mogford, Moon and stars, 231.

13   *Aenigmata in Dei nomine Tullii,* ed. Glorie, 598 (no. 51).

14   *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*, s.v. *laukr*; *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. *head*, n. 1 §15a; Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary*, s.v. *căpŭt* § I.2.a.

the riddle sets this vegetable into a cosmic world-view, consonant with the pre-Christian setting of *Heiðreks saga*, as »a bridge between the underworld and the sun«.[15] With a firmer optimism, consonant with a cultural context more extensively infused with Christian ideas, the garlic bulb of the Bern Riddles says »uiuo nam sepultus, uitam et inde resumo« (»I live though interred, and from that place I resume my life«). The resonances between the Norse leek riddle and the Bern garlic riddle, then, are strong.

It is not impossible that the Bern garlic riddle influenced the Norse *laukr* riddle directly. We have no direct evidence that the Bern Riddles were known in medieval Iceland. But, as Tolkien noted, the riddle on the Sow with the Unborn Litter is best paralleled by Enigma 84 of the early medieval West-Saxon poet Aldhelm, who wrote in Latin and whose work probably drew on the Bern Riddles.[16] If Aldhelm influenced *Heiðreks saga*, directly or indirectly, it is not unlikely that the Bern Riddles could have too. Moreover, part of *Heiðreks saga*'s riddle about a dead snake on an ice-floe also appears, in a section of the Old Icelandic *Third Grammatical Treatise* translated from Donatus's *Ars maior*, as a Norse equivalent to a riddle about ice quoted by Donatus.[17] This does not suggest that the Norse dead snake riddle is a translation of the Latin – quite the opposite – but does indicate that vernacular verse riddles were circulating in a not entirely separate sphere from the world of Latin learning in Iceland.

On the other hand, it is self-evidently plausible that these Norse and Latin allium riddles might owe their similarity to the oral circulation of riddle tropes. This being so, it is worth noting the conceptual similarities in these two riddles with the eighth of ten two-line riddles attributed to the seminal medieval Hebrew poet (and husband to probably the only known female Hebrew-language poet of the Middle Ages), Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi (920×925-after 985), who undertook his most noted literary endeavours in al-Andalus, but who seems to have been born in the Maghreb and also to have studied in Iraq.[18] The earliest manuscript of the riddle is the Cairo Geniza fragment Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Center for Advanced Judaic Studies Library, Cairo Genizah Collection, Halper 317, f. 2v (lines 29-30), from between the tenth and the twelfth century; its riddles were edited by Nehemya Aluny in 1945.[19]

וּמָה הוּא עֵץ עֲנָפָיו בֶּאֲדָמָה
וְשָׁרְשָׁיו בְּרָאָם אֵל בְּרוּמוֹ
אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן פְּרִי נָעִים בְּעִתּוֹ
וְאִם יַתַּשׁ בְּכָל יוֹם מִמְּקוֹמוֹ

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15   Burrows, Wit and wisdom, 123.

16   *Saga of King Heidrek the Wise*, ed. Tolkien, 90; *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. Burrows, 422-423; Klein, Latin Bern Riddles.

17   *Saga of King Heidrek the Wise,* ed. Tolkien, 37 [verse 54]; *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, ed. Burrows, 438-439 [verse 72].

18   Delgado, Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi.

19   Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi, ḥidot, ed. Aluny, 145. Halper 317 is available in an open-access facsimile: openn. library.upenn.edu/Data/0002/html/h317.html.

Apparently without knowledge of Aluny's edition, Dan Pagis, working from the earlier edition of Hayim Nahman Bialik and Yehoshua Hana Rawnitzki, or one like it, translated the riddle into English as »What tree is it whose branches are in the earth, its roots the Lord created in the heavens / Who bears pleasant fruit in its season, though be it uprooted at any moment?«.[20] A manuscript from St Petersburg, for which Aluny gave no shelf mark or other information and which I have not yet identified (but which presumably lies in the collections of Abraham Firkovich held in the National Library of Russia), gives the riddle's solution in Judaeo-Arabic as ›פי אלעלם‹ (fi al-ʿilm, »on knowledge«), and several commentators of the nineteenth and earlier twentieth century accepted this interpretation. Others have ventured »a wise man« or simply »a man«.[21] Bialik and Rawnitzki, however, suggested the solution »sun«. Their solution fits the text of Halper 317 better than it does the later manuscripts on which they themselves were relying, since in the final hemistich Halper 317 reads ›יוֹם בְּכָל‹ (b-khol yom, »each day«) where their edition gives ›בְּכָל עֵת‹ (b-khol et, rendered by Pagis above as »at any moment«). The sun, located in the heavens, is the point of origin (and therefore the roots) of the sunbeams which extend, like tree-branches, to the earth; the sun's heat and light are its fruit, and the sun disappears each day. It is hard to make »wisdom« fit the riddle so neatly. Accordingly, Rodríguez, translating the Halper 317 text, accepted the solution »sun« without comment in his translation of Dunash's diwan, and Pagis too supported this solution. He agreed with Bialik and Rawnitzki that this interpretation is supported by the following description of the sun in an epigrammatic verse-capping contest – a poem that is not therefore a riddle but also not unlike a riddle – portrayed in chapter 32 of the *Taḥkemoni* by Yehudah ben Shelomo al-Ḥarizi (d. 1225).[22] The poem runs:[23]

וישורר הבחור ויאמר
ראו שמש אשר יפרוש כנפיו עלי ארץ להאיר את נשפיו
ויען הזקן
כעץ רענן אשר צמח בשחק והגיעו עדי ארץ ענפיו

Then the Youth sang and said:
    See the sun which spreads its wings
    Upon the earth to illumine its twilight.
And the Old Man answered and said:
    Like a leafy tree that sprouts in the skies
    And its branches reach to the earth.

Al-Ḥarizi's poem certainly attests to the viability of using an inverted tree as a metaphor for the sun's light in medieval Hebrew verse. Given the paucity of research on Dunash's riddles, it seems reasonable to accept Rodríguez and Pagis's apparently independent views to constitute a consensus among modern scholars that Dunash's eighth riddle is indeed on the sun.

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20 Ibn Gabirol, shire Shelomoh ben Yehudah ibn Gabirol, ed. Bialik and Rawnitzki, V 35.

21 Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi, ḥidot, ed. Aluny, 145-46; Pagis, Toward a theory, 105-106 [n. 36].

22 Ibn Gabirol, *shire Shelomoh ben Yehudah ibn Gabirol*, ed. Bialik and Rawnitzki, V 41 (commentary); Dunash ben Labraṭ ha-Levi, diwan, trans. Rodríguez, 228.

23 Al-Harizi, Taḥkemoni, 131; trans. Reichert, II 184.

In the Old Norse riddle, the plant is the solution and the sun is part of the metaphor which positions the plant as an inverted being that links the sun to the earth. In Dunash's riddle, it is the sun that is the solution, and the inverted plant constitutes the metaphor. Like the other riddles, Dunash's takes the opportunity of this cosmic image to give a mythological (and specifically theological) angle to the riddle, in this case explicitly positioning the sun and its light as the creation of the Abrahamic God in the heavens.

There is no likely prospect of a direct, written connection between Dunash's sun riddle and the Old Norse leek riddle; mutual influence from the Bern riddle, which could have been read in both medieval Iceland and Iberia, is conceivable, but Dunash's riddle has much less in common with the Bern riddle than with the Old Norse one. There were perhaps more opportunities for spoken conversations to arise between medieval Scandinavians and Iberians than literary contacts, and so potentially for the oral exchange of literary ideas.[24] But it is equally easy to imagine the similarities between the texts presented here as arising either from a potentially older and certainly more diffuse Eurasian riddle culture, or from independent innovation. Whatever the case, it is clear that in the instance of the leek riddle, the riddles of *Heiðreks saga* are not as different from Eurasian riddling as commentators have thought, if only because of a clear Latin analogue. Meanwhile, the leek riddle helps to consolidate recent arguments that Dunash's eighth riddle is about the sun by showing the viability of a similar set of images in a roughly contemporary riddle elsewhere.

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24   See, for example, Christys, *Vikings in the South.*

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Abbreviations

Halper 317 = Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, Center for Advanced Judaic Studies Library, Cairo Genizah Collection, Halper 317.

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