

Cultural Exchange and Iconographic Borrowings in Ilkhanid Painting

by

Hasret Kılıçoğlu

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Cultural Exchange and Iconographic Borrowings in Ilkhanid Painting

Koç University

Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities

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Hasret Kılıçoğlu

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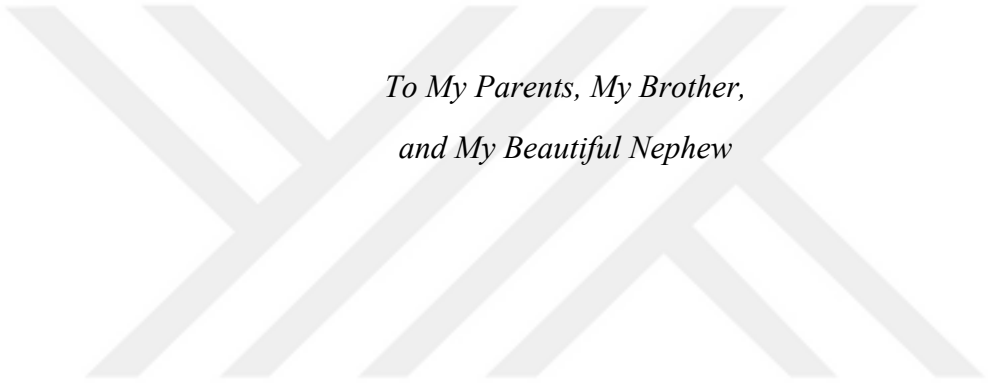
Committee Members:

Asst. Prof. Suzan Yalman (Advisor)

Asst. Prof. Ivana Jevtic

Asst. Prof. Sara Nur Yıldız

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*To My Parents, My Brother,
and My Beautiful Nephew*

ABSTRACT

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Hasret Kılıçoğlu
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This thesis examines how the Ilkhanid dynasty, a cultural crossroad during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, integrated Persian, Islamic, Armenian, and Byzantine traditions using art as a tool to forge political and cultural identity. The *Jami al Tawarikh* (*Compendium of Chronicles*), a monumental manuscript commissioned by the Ilkhanid ruler Ghazan Khan and written by the Vizier Rashid al-Din, is a case study. Following the Mongol rulers' conversion to Islam under Ghazan Khan (r.1295-1304), the Ilkhanid court had influences from both Muslim and Christian traditions. This study analyses how Ilkhanids employed artistic representations to construct a new cultural and political identity, particularly through the visual and textual narratives in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. This illustrated manuscript merges Mongols' religious and artistic understanding with Persian, Islamic, and Christian art. The manuscript's comparative analysis of religious scenes, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, emphasizes shared Abrahamic narratives and iconographic parallels with contemporaneous Armenian and Byzantine churches and manuscripts in medieval Anatolia. This study demonstrates the fluidity of artistic borrowing across religious boundaries and underlines the significant cultural exchanges between these two Christian entities in Anatolia and the Ilkhanids. Moreover, the thesis explores the pivotal role of Rashid al-Din and Rab-i Rashidi workshop in creating and disseminating *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Rashid al-Din's cultural and religious background and scholarly vision shaped the manuscript's illustrations, guiding their interpretation of historical and religious narratives. This master's thesis contributes new dimensions to the studies of *Jami al-Tawarikh* in terms of emphasizing the two leading Christian entities' role in transitioning the Christian iconography in Anatolia to the Ilkhanid court, which is the distinguishing part of the thesis considering the recent Ilkhanid studies since most of the publications partly indicates these similarities. It aims to reveal the political and cultural exchanges and artistic borrowings taken from Anatolia's Byzantine and Armenian arts and how the Ilkhanids created a new Islamic genre and blended iconography through the religious representations of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*.

Keywords: The Mongols, the Ilkhanids, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah, Ghazan Khan, iconography, cultural exchange, borrowing, Persian art, Islamic art, Armenian art, Byzantine art, manuscript, illustrations, Rab-i Rashidi.

ÖZETÇE

İlhanlı Resim Sanatında Kültürel Karşılaşmalar ve İkonografik Alıntılar Hasret Kılıçoğlu Arkeoloji ve Sanat Tarihi, Yüksek Lisans 2024

Bu tez, İlhanlıların on üçüncü ve on dördüncü yüzyıllar boyunca bir kültürel kavşak olarak, sanat yoluyla siyasi ve kültürel bir kimlik inşa etmek amacıyla Pers, İslam, Ermeni ve Bizans geleneklerini nasıl birleştirdiklerini incelemektedir. İlhanlı hükümdarı Gazan Han tarafından yaptırılan ve Vezir Reşideddin tarafından yazılan anıtsal el yazması *Camiü't-Tevarih* (*Tarihler Tophuluğu*), bu çalışmanın temel konusudur. Gazan Han'ın (h. 1295-1304) yönetimi altında Moğol hükümdarlarının İslam'a geçişlerinin ardından, İlhanlı sarayı hem Müslüman hem de Hristiyan geleneklerinden etkilenmiştir. Bu çalışma, İlhanlıların özellikle *Camiü't-Tevarih*'teki görsel ve yazılı anlatımlar aracılığıyla yeni bir kültürel ve siyasi kimlik oluşturmak için sanatsal temsilleri nasıl kullandığını analiz etmektedir. Bu el yazması, Moğolların dini ve sanatsal anlayışını Pers, İslam ve Hristiyan sanatıyla birleştirmektedir. *Camiü't-Tevarih*'teki dini sahnelerin karşılaştırmalı bir analizi, dönemin Orta Çağ Anadolu'sundaki Ermeni ve Bizans kiliseleri ve el yazmaları ile ortak İbrahimi anlatıları ve ikonografik paralellikleri vurgulamaktadır. Bu çalışma, sanatsal alıntılama sürecinin dini çerçevede ne kadar akışkan olduğunu göstermekte ve Anadolu'daki bu iki Hristiyan topluluğu ile İlhanlılar arasındaki önemli kültürel alışverişleri ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca bu tez, *Camiü't-Tevarih*'in yaratılması ve yayılmasında Reşideddin ve Rab-i Reşidi atölyesinin oynadığı kritik rolü incelemektedir. Reşideddin'in kültürel ve dini geçmişi ile entelektüel vizyonu, el yazmasının tarihsel ve dini anlatımlarının yorumlanmasında rehberlik eden illüstrasyonları şekillendirmiştir. Bu yüksek lisans tezi, Anadolu'daki iki önde gelen Hristiyan topluluğunun ikonografisini İlhanlı sarayına taşımadaki rolüne vurgu yaparak *Camiü't-Tevarih* çalışmalarına yeni boyutlar katmaktadır. Bu vurgu, mevcut İlhanlı çalışmalarını farklı bir bakış açısıyla ele alırken, birçok yayının yalnızca kısmen belirttiği bu benzerlikleri ayrıntılı bir şekilde incelemektedir. Tez, Anadolu Bizans ve Ermeni sanatından alıntılanan unsurları incelerken ve siyasi ve kültürel alışverişleri açıklarken, İlhanlıların nasıl yeni bir İslami üslup yaratarak *Camiü't-Tevarih*'in illüstrasyonları aracılığıyla alıntılanan bu ikonografiyi nasıl harmanladığını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Moğollar, İlhanlılar, *Camiü't-Tevarih*, Reşidüddin Fazlullah, Gazan Han, ikonografi, kültürel alışveriş, ödünç alma, alıntılama, İran sanatı, İslam sanatı, Ermeni sanatı, Bizans sanatı, el yazması, illüstrasyonlar, Rab-i Reşidi.

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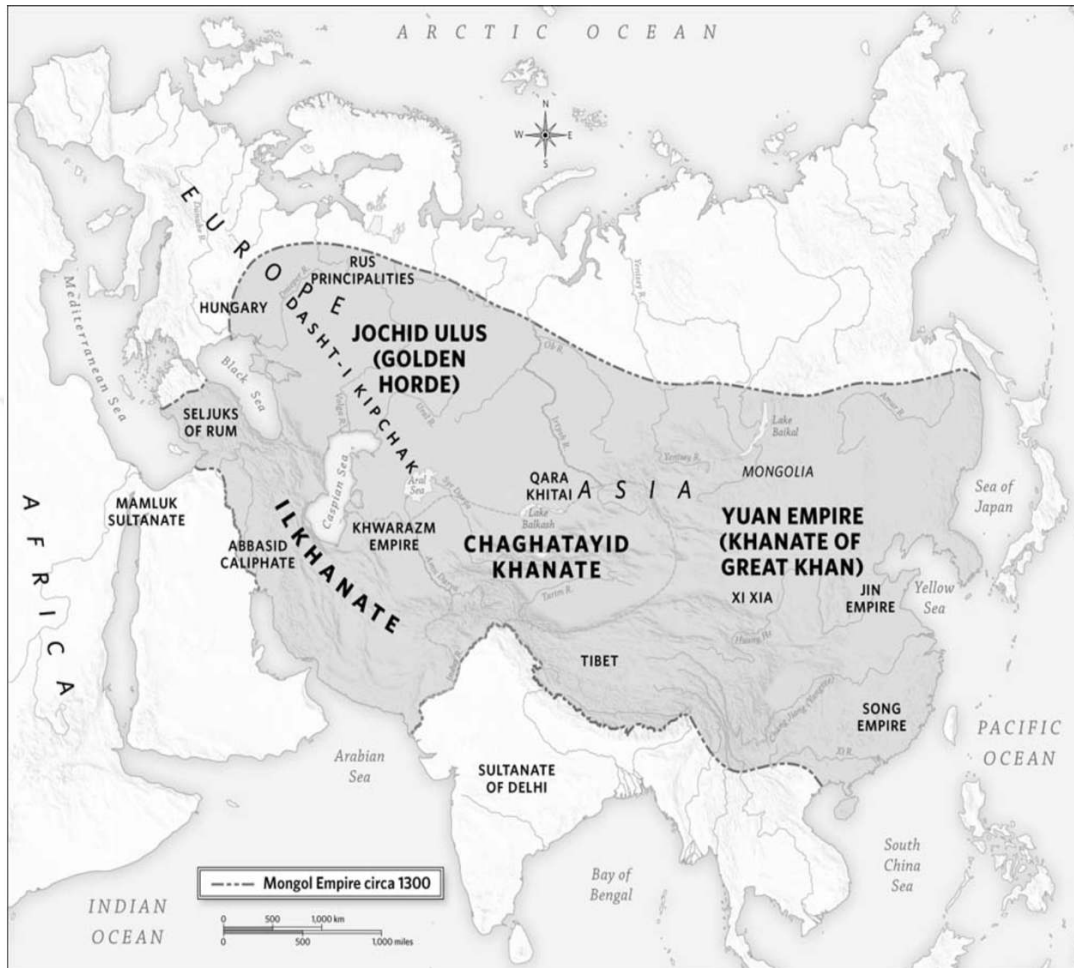
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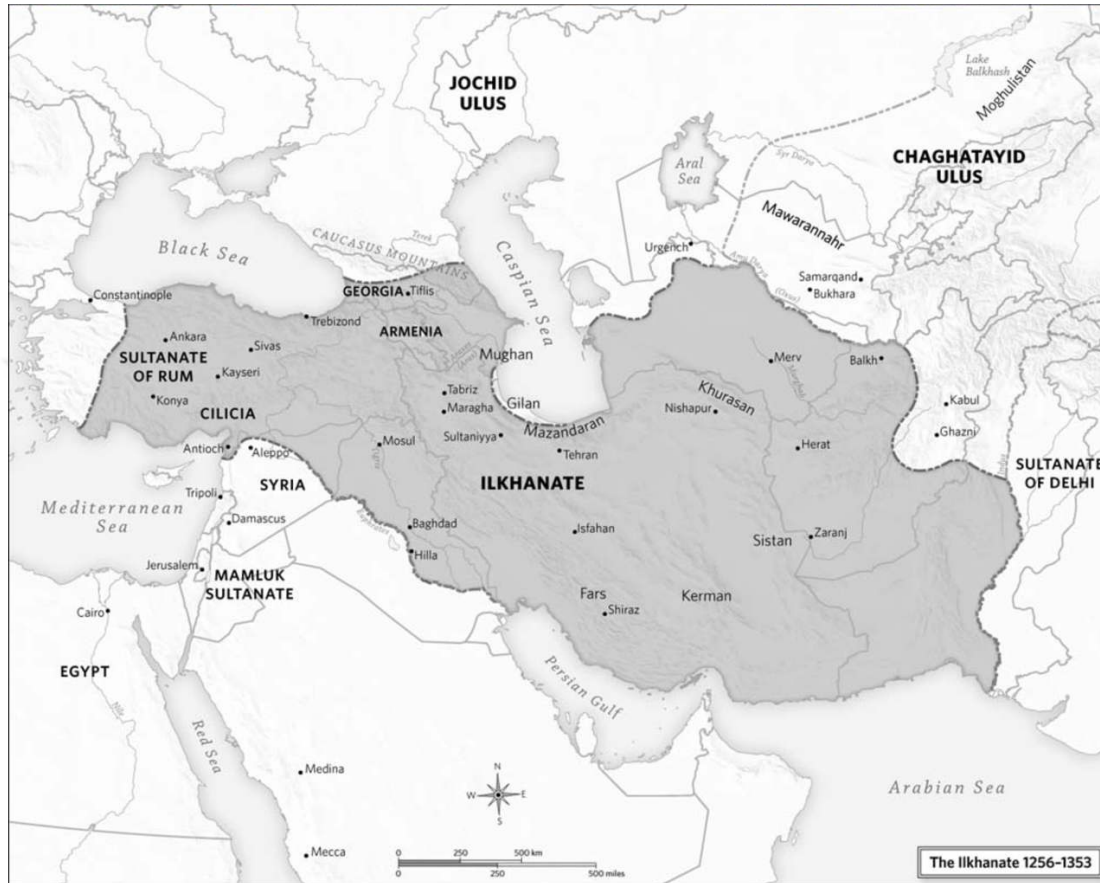
ABBREVIATIONS

Fig. Figure
f. Folio
r. Recto
v. Verso
A.D. Anno Domini
H. Hijri Calendar

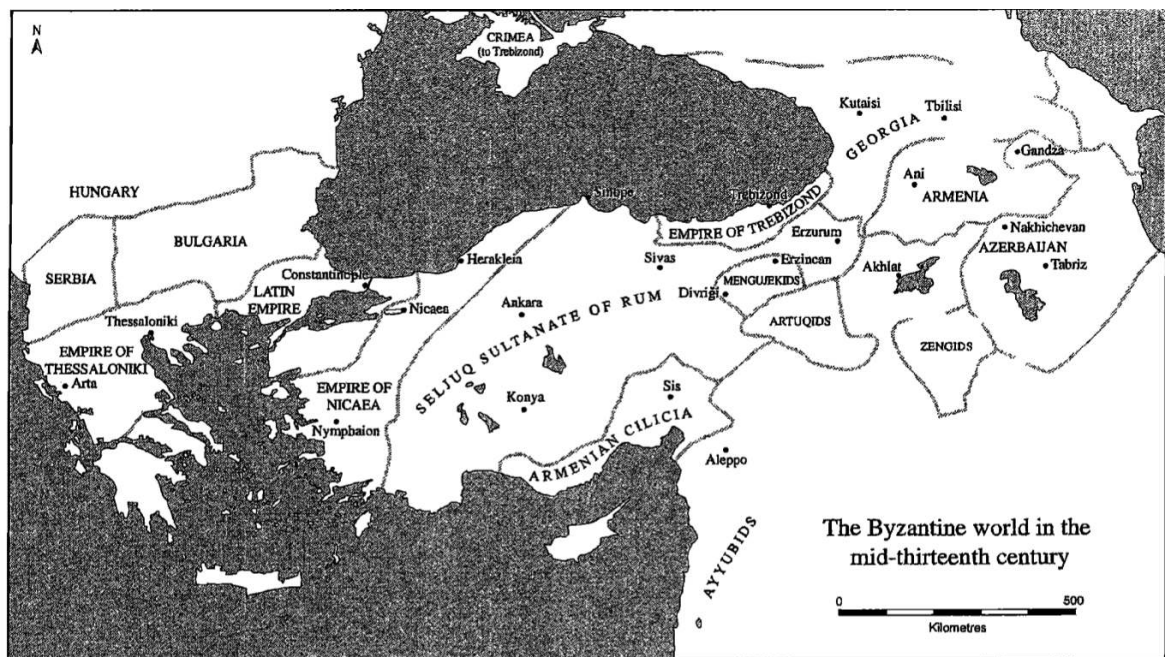




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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

*The kingdom was illuminated by him,
religion became strong through him,
the throne was ennobled by him,
and fortune was rejuvenated.¹*

Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah

This thesis (*Cultural Exchange and Iconographic Borrowings in Ilkhanid Painting*) focuses on the Islamization of the Ilkhanids and their cultural and artistic interactions with the Armenians and Byzantines in Anatolia. Renowned Ilkhanid work *Jami al-Tawarikh*, which was commissioned by the Ilkhanid ruler Ghazan Khan (r.1295-1304) and his brother Oljaytu Khan (r.1304-1316) and written by the Ilkhanid vizier Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah (1247-1318), will be the main source to analyze the iconography of its illustrations, particularly religious representations.² The thesis aims to reveal iconographic borrowings in the depictions of prophetic scenes in *Jami al-Tawarikh* from the Armenian and Byzantine artistic tradition in Anatolia in the medieval period, especially in the second half of the thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth century. Since the thesis concentrates on Anatolia, the “Byzantine” will refer to Anatolia’s central and eastern parts and Greek-speaking communities living under the Seljuk or Mongol rule. It is necessary to note that the iconography that will be discussed in this thesis might have Middle Eastern and Mesopotamian roots, and considering the geography’s ancient past, here the thesis draws attention to the transition of the iconography from the Armenian and Byzantine culture to the Ilkhanid art. Therefore, it does not mean that the “creation” or the “root” of the Christian iconography and motifs are derived from either the Armenians or the Byzantines; they are considered as “carriers” of the iconography to the Ilkhanid art in this thesis. The artistic and cultural interaction between the Byzantines, Armenians, and the Ilkhanids will be discussed, and the iconographic similarities will be evaluated. Considering the studies made about the Ilkhanid book painting, iconographic elements

¹ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami’u’t-Tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles: A History of Mongols Part One*, trans. W.M. Thackston, eds., Şinasi Tekin and Gönül Alpaz Tekin, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 4.

² Michael Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition in the Mongol Empire and the Īlhānate of Iran*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 10.

are mostly discussed in a section of a book or article. What distinguishes this thesis is that it tackles two specific Christian entities in Anatolia and their political, cultural, and artistic engagement with the Mongols and, later, the Ilkhanids. Therefore, this work aims to contribute a new dimension to the studies of Ilkhanid book art and *Jami al-Tawarikh* by emphasizing and discussing the artistic exchanges between these cultures and their impact on the iconography and art of illustration of the Ilkhanids.

The Ilkhanid Empire extended from Balkh to Konya on the east and west axis and from southeastern Black Sea shores and Caucasus to Basra and Hormuz on the north and south axis. The Ilkhanid land consisted of present-day central and eastern Turkey, a big part of Azerbaijan, Iran, and some parts of Georgia, Armenia, Iraq, and Afghanistan.³ The Mongols ruled the Ilkhanid state (ca.1258-1350s), and the fourth khan of the Great Mongolian Empire, Möngke (r. 1251-1259), invited his brother Hulagu (d.1265) to his *Kurultay*, the Mongolian assembly, in Mongolia so as to charge him of setting campaigns to Anatolia and Arab lands and establish a state in Iran and its surroundings.⁴ Thus, the Ilkhanate was founded by Hulagu Khan in ca. 1258, and he expanded his territory towards east and south of Anatolia and Iraq.⁵

The Mongols of the Ilkhanate, as the ruling class, governed a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious community. They brought their own faiths and heritage from Central Asia and China, mingling with those in Iran. Upon establishing their power in Iran, Iraq, and eastern Anatolia, their interactions with Muslims—including Arabs, Persians, and Turkmen—and Christians, such as Armenians, Byzantines, Georgians, Nestorians, and Crusaders, increased. They also engaged with the Jewish community in Iran.⁶ The Ilkhanid realm, therefore, became a melting pot of the three Abrahamic religions, manifesting uniquely in the Middle Eastern context. When Ghazan Khan, the seventh Khan of the Ilkhanids, converted to Islam with his soldiers in 1294, he initiated economic, social, and political reforms within an Islamic framework.⁷ Ghazan desired a comprehensive history and genealogy of the House of Genghis Khan, a task assigned to

³ Charles Melville, “The Mongols in Iran,” eds., Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni, *The Legacy of Genghis Khan. Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353*, (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art and New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 43-46.

⁴ Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition in the Mongol Empire and the Ilkhānate of Iran*, 80.

⁵ Ibid., 4-5.

⁶ Ibid., 100, 145.

⁷ Osman G. Özgüdenli, *Moğol İranında Gelenek ve Değişim: Gazan Han ve Reformları* (1295-1304), (İstanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları, 2009), 233-234.

his vizier, Rashid al-Din. Following Ghazan's death, his brother Oljaytu expanded this work into a *Compendium of Chronicles*, or world history.⁸

The *Jami al-Tawarikh*, the first known world history, was adorned with illustrations and copied in Arabic and Persian in the atelier of Rab-i Rashidi in Tabriz in the early fourteenth century.⁹ These copies were distributed to significant centers of the time. The thesis focuses on the Arabic copies in the University of Edinburgh Library and the Khalili Collection in London, as well as the Persian copy in the Topkapı Palace Library in Istanbul.¹⁰ This study examines the common Abrahamic narratives and their representations in the Christian art of Anatolia and the Islamic art of the Ilkhanids, such as stories from the lives of Moses, Jonah, and Mary. These narratives predominantly derive from the Old Testament or Judaic traditions. Moreover, it examines the depiction of angels, focusing on their attire, accessories, mannerisms, architectural backgrounds such as buildings and columns, and motifs in the illustrations. Through an iconographic analysis of *Jami al-Tawarikh*, the thesis aims to uncover the cultural interactions and artistic exchanges that carry political goals like legitimation for the Ilkhanid rulers. The study highlights how these artistic elements reveal the blending of diverse cultural influences and the Ilkhanids' efforts to forge a unique artistic identity.

A number of questions guided this thesis regarding the formation of the Ilkhanid state, the religious background of the Khans and the vizier, the religious dynamics of Anatolia, particularly the Christian communities, and the political entities in the region. These research questions aimed to answer how the Ilkhanid rulers utilized art to forge a new Islamic identity following their conversion to Islam and how *Jami al Tawarikh*'s illustrations reflect the cultural and religious syncretism of the Ilkhanid period. Moreover, the questions sought the iconographic similarities that exist between the *Jami al-Tawarikh* paintings and Christian narrative scenes in Armenian and Anatolian Byzantine churches and manuscripts. What is more, the study tries to answer how the Ilkhanids adapted common Abrahamic narratives in their art to serve their political and cultural agendas and the significance of architectural elements reflecting the Ilkhanids' cultural

⁸ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami 'u't-Tawarikh*, 18.

⁹ Sheila S. Blair and Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din's illustrated history of the world*, The Nasser Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, (Vol. XXVII), eds. Julian Raby, (Oxford: The Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1995), 14.

¹⁰ Zeren Tanındı and Filiz Çağman, "Topkapı Sarayı'nın Kitap Hazinesinin İki Câmî 'ü't- Tevârîh Nüshası Hakkında (H.1653-H.1654)," *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı*, no: 30 (June 2021): 191.

interactions along with the depictions of angels in the manuscript compared to those in Byzantine and Armenian illustrations. Furthermore, the thesis tried to shed light on how the religious and political dynamics of Anatolia influenced the art and iconography of the Ilkhanid period, the role Rashid al-Din and the atelier of Rab-i Rashidi played in the creation and dissemination of *Jami al-Tawarikh*, and how Rashid al-Din's origin affect the selection of the illustrations.

The research questions crafted for this study serve as guiding beacons, illuminating various facets of the complex interplay between cultural exchange, religious syncretism, and artistic innovation within the Ilkhanid realm. Firstly, we uncover the intricate nexus between political exigencies and artistic expression by probing how Ilkhanid rulers strategically employed art to fashion a new Islamic identity post-conversion. Secondly, examining *Jami al-Tawarikh*'s illustrations unveils nuanced narratives of cultural convergence and divergence, enriching our understanding of the interconnectedness of diverse religious traditions. Thirdly, the comparative analysis of iconographic elements between Ilkhanid paintings and Christian narrative scenes in Anatolian churches offers insights into cross-cultural artistic borrowing and adaptation dynamics. These inquiries deeply focus on the fabric of Ilkhanid society, unraveling layers of religious and political symbolism embedded within artistic motifs. Transitioning from these inquiries, the significance of this thesis becomes evident. By shedding light on the multifaceted dynamics of cultural exchange and identity formation of the ruling Mongol class in Iran, this study contributes to scholarly discourse on the Ilkhanid period and offers broader insights into the complexities of intercultural dialogue and artistic innovation in the pre-modern world.

Exploring the existing body of literature becomes essential for grasping the intricacies of cultural exchange, religious syncretism, and artistic evolution within the Ilkhanid domain. Scholarly investigations into this historical period provide rich insights spanning political dynamics, religious shifts, and artistic movements. By scrutinizing these scholarly contributions, I can posit my study within the larger academic conversation, pinpointing areas where further exploration is needed and leveraging past research to deepen my comprehension of the intricate processes involved in intercultural interaction and shaping identities of the Ilkhans.

1.1 Literature Review

This thesis explores Ilkhanid, Armenian, and Byzantine iconography in Anatolia during the medieval period, focusing on the twelfth to the very early fourteenth century. Consequently, the literature review encompasses primarily art history books and publications relevant to these regions and eras. Since modern scholarship has largely developed over the past century, this literature review will examine academic research conducted over the last hundred years, providing a comprehensive overview of the field.

1.1.1 Major Scholarship in Islamic, Persian, and Ilkhanid Art

The discussion about the development of Mongol painting and its impact on the art of book painting in Iran drew the attention of twentieth-century scholars because there were many fragmented manuscript pieces that were spread among European countries and the U.S. For instance, Basil Gray (1904-1989), a British art historian specializing in Oriental and Islamic art, made significant contributions to Islamic and Iranian art. Gray's works represent some of the earliest modern approaches to studying Persian and Ilkhanid art. *Persian Painting*, published in 1930, was a pioneering work that was one of the first to explore the perception of Persian art.¹¹ It is a concise introductory volume with sections on Persian art and history, the role of painting in Persia, the Abbasid School, the Tatar invasions, and the Safavid period, concluding with the influence of European art. Gray argues that Persian painting was as developed as European painting until 1400 in this book.¹² Gray's other book, *La Peinture Persane*, published in French in 1977, extends his analysis from the Ilkhanid period to the end of the Safavid era.¹³ The section titled “Le Style Mongol sous Les Il-Khans” is particularly relevant to this thesis, as it provides insights into the understanding of Persian and Ilkhanid painting from the perspective of the British school of thought. Gray highlights the cultural interactions between the Ilkhanids and Anatolian Christians in terms of iconography, as follows:

A curious detail gives this manuscript a special place; it uses almost systematically silver to highlight not only the blue of the water, which is quite natural but also the folds of the clothing and even the heads of the bearded figures. This strange habit could originate from the illuminated manuscripts of the Eastern churches of Christianity and, more precisely, from the Jacobites. Christian learned men or scholars were known to be working at the Rab-i Rashidi, the literary

¹¹ Basil Gray, *Persian Painting*, (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1930).

¹² Gray, *Persian Painting*, 26.

¹³ Basil Gray, *La Peinture Persane*, (Switzerland, Skira Flammarion, 1977).

center founded by Rashid al-Din, on universal history, and the influence of the schools of Syria and Mesopotamia was noticeable.¹⁴

Significantly, Gray emphasizes the attire and contributions of non-Muslim artists, particularly the Jacobites and scholars working at Rab-i Rashidi. This paves the way of thinking and discussing the cultural exchanges and artistic borrowing happening in the Rab-i Rashidi atelier. Thus, Gray was among the first scholars to draw attention to the cultural and iconographic exchange between the Ilkhanids and the Anatolian Christians. In addition to these introductory works, he co-authored *Illustrations to the "World History" of Rashid Al-Din* with David Talbot Rice in 1976, which features illustrations from the Arabic copy of *Jami al-Tawarikh* housed in the University of Edinburgh Library.¹⁵ This book is particularly important as it provides seventy detailed illustrations from the Edinburgh collection. The co-author, David Talbot Rice (1903-1972), was a pioneering scholar studying Byzantine and Islamic art. One of his classic works is *Islamic Art*, which was published in 1965, and the book provides a comprehensive overview of Islamic art and its development and key characteristics.¹⁶ It covers a chapter about the Mongol period in Iran, which might give an insight into understanding the attitudes in the second half of the twentieth century towards the Mongol entity in Iran.

In addition to these two prominent figures, Richard Ettinghausen (1906-1979) significantly contributed to studying Islamic and Persian art. His book *Arab Painting* (1962) provided an in-depth analysis of the development of painting in the Arab world, highlighting its unique characteristics and influences.¹⁷ He contributed to explaining the formation of Islamic painting through his classification as "Arab" and "Persian" paintings. What is more, he expanded his research area with *From Byzantium to Sasanian Iran and the Islamic World: Three Modes of Artistic Influence* (1972) and explored the artistic exchanges between Byzantium, Sasanian Iran, and the Islamic world, emphasizing

¹⁴ Gray, *La Peinture Persane*, 25.

"Un détail curieux assure à ce manuscrit une place à part; il utilise l'argent de façon presque systématique, non seulement pour mettre en relief le bleu de l'eau, ce qui est assez naturel, mais aussi les plis des vêtements, et même les têtes des personnages barbus. Cette étrange manie pourrait provenir des manuscrits enluminés des églises orientales de la chrétienté, et plus précisément des Jacobites. Des lettrés chrétiens travaillaient, on le sait, à Rab-i-Rashîdî, le centre littéraire fondé par Rachîd ed-Dîn, à l'histoire universelle, et l'influence des écoles de Syrie et de Mésopotamie ne se manifeste pas seulement à ce détail, mais aussi aux plis des draperies, ceci surtout dans l'al-Birûnî, l'ouvrage le moins touché par la Chine." (translated by the author).

¹⁵ Basil Gray and David Talbot Rice, *Illustrations to the "World History" of Rashid Al-Din*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1976).

¹⁶ David Talbot Rice, *Islamic Art*, (New York and Washington: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965).

¹⁷ Richard Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, (Switzerland, Skira, 1962).

the interconnectedness of these artistic traditions.¹⁸ This study might help to see the first interactions between Iranian and Byzantine art. His article “An Illuminated Manuscript of Ḥāfīz-i Abrū in Istanbul” (1955) examined some illustrations from *Jami al-Tawarikh*’s Persian copy that was restored under the Timurid ruler Shahrukh’s patronage and in the hand of historian Hafiz-i Abru at the beginning of the fifteenth century.¹⁹ The article is useful for this thesis because it provides one of the first introductions and analyses of the Persian copy of the work and its restoration process in Herat. Moreover, he refers to the three styles of illustrations in this copy, which is valuable in terms of pointing out the attention to the Timurid influences.²⁰ However, since the thesis mostly focuses on the original Ilkhanid depictions from the beginning of the fourteenth century, it will touch on the general composition and some artistic elements, but the Arabic copy will be seen more because it reflects the original early fourteenth-century Ilkhanid style.

The place of Richard Ettinghausen is invaluable in Islamic painting as he impacted the development of this field in the U.S. with his colleague Oleg Grabar (1929-2011), who was a towering art historian known for his extensive and influential scholarship. In *Persian Art Before and After the Mongol Conquest* (1959), Grabar examined the transformative impact of the Mongol invasions on Persian art, highlighting the blending of Persian and Mongol artistic elements.²¹ *The Formation of Islamic Art* (1973) is considered a foundational text, offering a comprehensive analysis of the early development of Islamic art and architecture.²² The book also supports understanding Islamic art’s development in Iran. Grabar’s important work written with Sheila Blair on the Ilkhanid painting is *Epic Images and Contemporary History: The Illustrations of the Great Mongol Shahnama* (1980).²³ Grabar focused on the illustrations of the *Great Mongol Shahnama*, an illustrated manuscript that was produced in Ilkhanid Iran in the 1330s and is about the epic stories of pre-Islamic Iran, exploring their historical and artistic significance, which might be a model for tackling the iconography of the Ilkhanid figures and decorations. Therefore, Grabar contributed to the Ilkhanid painting and drew

¹⁸ Richard Ettinghausen, *From Byzantium to Sasanian Iran and the Islamic World: Three Modes of Artistic Influence*, (Leiden: Brill, 1972).

¹⁹ Richard Ettinghausen, “An Illuminated Manuscript of Ḥāfīz-i Abrū in Istanbul,” *Kunst Des Orients* 2 (1955): 30–44.

²⁰ Ettinghausen, “An Illuminated Manuscript of Ḥāfīz-i Abrū in Istanbul,” 30.

²¹ Oleg Grabar, *Persian Art Before and After the Mongol Conquest*, (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1959).

²² Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

²³ Oleg Grabar and Sheila Blair, *Epic Images and Contemporary History: The Illustrations of the Great Mongol Shahnama*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980).

attention to this field in the studies of art history. After Grabar focused on the art of Persia and his publications related to the formation of the Ilkhanid art and analyzing Islamic art at the same time, he collaborated with Richard Ettinghausen in *The Art and Architecture of Islam 650-1250* (1987), provided an authoritative survey of Islamic art and architecture, integrating their extensive research and insights, which provides art historians a strong handbook for having an idea about the Islamic art.²⁴ In addition to these, *La Peinture Persane: Une introduction* (1999)²⁵ and its translation, *Mostly Miniatures: An Introduction to Persian Painting* (2000), further expanded on Grabar's expertise in Persian painting, offering accessible yet detailed introductions to the subject.²⁶

What else profoundly influenced Islamic and Persian art studies is Robert Hillenbrand's scholarship. His book *Imperial Images in Persian Painting* (1977) explored the depiction of imperial themes in Persian painting, analyzing these works' artistic and political contexts.²⁷ Besides this, in *Islamic Art and Architecture* (1999), Hillenbrand provided a comprehensive overview of Islamic art and architecture development, integrating his extensive research and insights.²⁸ Also, his two-volume work, *Studies in Medieval Islamic Art and Architecture*, provides comprehensive scholarship and perceptive analyses, significantly enhancing the understanding of Islamic cultural and artistic heritage.²⁹ Finally, *The Great Mongol Shahnama* (2022) is a vital source for researchers who work in medieval Iran or the Ilkhanids.³⁰ It provides a comprehensive and insightful examination of one of the most important manuscripts of the medieval Islamic world. Moreover, Hillenbrand renewed the topics and contributed new dimensions to the topics studied before. Hence, *The Great Mongolian Shahnama* is a new blood for contemporary studies happening today.

Sheila S. Blair, who is a leading figure in the Ilkhanid painting and Ilkhanid art today, has significantly contributed to understanding Islamic art and architecture. As a

²⁴ Oleg Grabar and Richard Ettinghausen, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 650-1250*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

²⁵ Oleg Grabar, *La Peinture Persane: Une introduction*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999).

²⁶ Oleg Grabar, *Mostly Miniatures: An Introduction to Persian Painting*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

²⁷ Robert Hillenbrand, *Imperial Images in Persian Painting*, (Edinburgh: Scottish Art Council, 1977).

²⁸ Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999).

²⁹ Robert Hillenbrand, *Studies in Medieval Islamic Art and Architecture Vol. I*, (London: Pindar Press, 2001), and Robert Hillenbrand, *Studies in Medieval Islamic Art and Architecture Vol. II*, (London: Pindar Press, 2006).

³⁰ Robert Hillenbrand, *The Great Mongol Shahnama*, (London: Hali Publications Ltd., 2022).

student of Grabar with Jonathan Bloom, she and her colleagues formed a second generation of the school in Islamic and Ilkhanid arts. *The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250-1800* (1994), co-authored with Bloom, provides a comprehensive survey of Islamic art and architecture development during this period.³¹ Chapter 3 of this book covers “The Arts in Iran and Central Asia under the Ilkhanids and Successors.” It focuses on both the decorative arts and art of the books and the formation of art under the influence of the Mongols. This can provide a background for the formation of Mongolian art in central and western Asia. In addition to the general look at Islamic art and architecture, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din’s Illustrated History of the World*, published in 1995 by Blair, examines the Khalili copies of the illustrated manuscript of Rashid al-Din’s historical work, highlighting its artistic and historical significance.³² This thesis used the meticulous work of Blair, and it became one of the leading sources throughout this study. Besides this particular work on the Ilkhanid painting, Sheila Blair explores the interplay between text and image in Persian art, offering insights into these works’ cultural and artistic contexts in *Text and Image in Medieval Persian Art* (2014).³³ Moreover, the thesis utilized her different articles related to Ilkhanid architecture and painting.³⁴

It is worth mentioning Jonathan M. Bloom’s scholarship and contributions to understanding early Islamic art and architecture. His book *Early Islamic Art and Architecture* (2002)³⁵ offers a comprehensive analysis of the formation and development of Islamic art in its early centuries, providing valuable insights into its foundational characteristics and influences. Also, he published *Islam: A Thousand Years of Faith and Power* in 2004.³⁶ In this book, Bloom provides a detailed analysis of Islamic civilization’s achievements in art, architecture, science, and literature, highlighting the religion’s role in shaping an empire from the seventh century to the seventeenth century.

³¹ Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250-1800*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1994).

³² Sheila S. Blair and Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din’s illustrated history of the world, The Nasser Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, (Vol. XXVII)*, eds. Julian Raby, (Oxford: The Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1995).

³³ Sheila S. Blair, *Text and Image in Medieval Persian Art*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014).

³⁴ See Sheila S. Blair, “Tabriz: International Entrepot Under the Mongols,” *Politics, Patronage, and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th- 15th Century Tabriz*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer, (Leiden: Brill, 2014). Sheila S. Blair, “Ilkhanid Architecture and Society: An Analysis of the Endowment Deed of the Rab’-i Rashīdī,” *Iran* 22 (1984), 67-90.

³⁵ Jonathan M. Bloom, *Early Islamic Art and Architecture*, (London: Routledge, 2002).

³⁶ Jonathan M. Bloom and Sheila S. Blair, *Islam: A Thousand Years of Faith and Power*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

Considering all introductory and far-reaching publications, mentioning Sheila R. Canby's book *Persian Painting* (1993) is inevitable.³⁷ It is a comprehensive study of Persian miniature painting, exploring its development, themes, and techniques. Canby's work provides a detailed analysis of Persian painting, highlighting its distinctive features and artistic innovations. To support the historical side of art, Charles P. Melville's research focuses on Persian historiography, which can help understand art and literature's historical and cultural contexts. His contributions provide valuable insights into the broader historical and cultural framework within which Persian art developed.

Furthermore, Linda Komaroff's and Stefano Carboni's edited volume and exhibition catalog, *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353* (2002)³⁸, explores the artistic and cultural impact of the Mongol invasions on Western Asia. The interdisciplinary approach of Komaroff and Carboni's volume combines art history, archaeology, and historical analysis, offering a holistic understanding of the period's cultural dynamics. For instance, the book meticulously documents key artifacts and architectural sites, providing high-quality reproductions and detailed descriptions that underscore the technical and aesthetic achievements of the time. This scholarly work is crucial for understanding how the Mongol rule shaped artistic production and cultural exchange, contributing significantly to Islamic and Mongol art history. This exhibition happened in the MET, aroused great interest, and changed the clichés and established perceptions about Mongolian art and legacy.

Stefan Kamola's *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and the Jami al-Tawarikh* (2019) comprehensively examines the historical chronicle *Jami al-Tawarikh*, authored by Rashid al-Din. Kamola explores how this monumental work was commissioned by the Ilkhanid ruler Ghazan Khan and is a critical source for understanding Mongol history and Persian historiography. He analyzes Rashid al-Din's role as a historian and the political and cultural influences that shaped the production of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Kamola's study sheds light on the interplay between history writing and power, emphasizing the work's impact on the documentation and interpretation of Mongol rule in Persia. His detailed scholarship offers valuable insights

³⁷ Sheila R. Canby, *Persian Painting*, (London: British Museum Press, 1993).

³⁸ Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni, eds., *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353*, (New York: Yale University Press, 2002).

into the complexities of Mongol and Persian historical narratives, making this book an indispensable resource for scholars of medieval Islamic history.

After considering all these art history sources related to Ilkhanid art, I believe that among the recent scholars, Christiane Gruber is one of the leading art historians who has contributed much to the field with her two successful books. Her scholarly contributions provide significant insights into the cultural and religious dimensions of the Ilkhanid period through Islamic art and literature. In *The Ilkhanid Book of Ascension: A Persian-Sunni Devotional Tale* (2010), Gruber examines the *Mi'rajnama*, an illustrated manuscript that depicts the Prophet Muhammad's night journey and ascension to heaven.³⁹ Her analysis emphasizes how the Ilkhanids utilized such narratives to assert their legitimacy and promote Sunni devotional practices within their realm. She interprets the visual and textual elements of the manuscript, revealing the intricate interplay between Persian artistic traditions and Islamic devotional themes. In 2018, she expanded her scope to a broader historical and geographical perspective with *The Praiseworthy One: The Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Texts and Images* and explored different representations of the Prophet Muhammad in Islamic art over the centuries.⁴⁰ This comprehensive study focuses on the diverse ways that Muhammad has been visualized, offering a nuanced understanding of his evolving iconography in different Islamic cultures. These two works by Gruber provide a profound understanding of how Islamic art was shaped by religious identity, specifically in the context of the Ilkhanids.

In addition to the sources about paintings, manuscripts, and texts in the Ilkhanids, it is useful to mention Patricia Blessing's *Rebuilding Anatolia After the Mongol Conquest: Islamic Architecture in the Lands of Rum 1240-1330*.⁴¹ The book examines architectural and cultural transformations in Anatolia after the arrival of the Mongols. Blessing reveals that mosques, madrasas, and caravanserais that were built after the conquest did not only mean religious and practical reasons but also political and cultural shifts. The book contributes to the Ilkhanid art in terms of the changeable atmosphere and adaptable political dynamics of Anatolia through architecture. Since the Ilkhanid realm

³⁹ Christiane Gruber, *The Ilkhanid Book of Ascension: A Persian-Sunni Devotional Tale*, (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

⁴⁰ Christiane Gruber, *The Praiseworthy One: The Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Texts and Images*, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2018).

⁴¹ Patricia Blessing, *Rebuilding Anatolia After the Mongol Conquest: Islamic Architecture in the Lands of Rum 1240-1330*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

includes an important part of Anatolia, in order to understand the relationship between the formation of the Ilkhanid art and the political and religious dynamism in the region, her work significantly contributed to the field in this sense. Considering the scope of the thesis, the main idea can be applied to analyzing religious scenes depicted in *Jami al-Tawarikh*.

Besides these works related to Islamic art, Persian art, and Ilkhanid art, it is inevitable that the political background of the history of the Ilkhanids will be given. Since the thesis focuses on *Jami al-Tawarikh* and its illustrations, the story of the process of *Jami al-Tawarikh* is based on the political legitimization of the newly converted Mongols in Iran. First, the primary sources are useful for understanding Anatolia and Iran's thirteenth-century atmosphere. *Tarikh-i Jahan-Gusha*⁴² (*the History of the World Conqueror*),⁴³ was written between 650-658 A.H. /1252-1260 A.D. by Ata Malik Juwayni (d.1283A.D.), which corresponds with the establishment of the Ilkhanids in Iran and reign of Hulagu Khan (d.1265).⁴⁴ The book is considered the first major work in Persian in the Ilkhanid era.⁴⁵ It begins by explaining the situation of the Mongols before the rise of Genghis Khan to the reign of Hulagu and his expansion to the West.⁴⁶ Regarding the scope of the thesis, it might have been a source for Rashid al-Din while writing his world history. Moreover, *Tarikh-i Jahan-Gusha* possibly used the *Secret History of the Mongols*⁴⁷ as a source of information. The *Secret History* was completed in 1240, covering the life of Genghis Khan and the political developments that happened until 1240. It is the oldest known book in the Mongolian language.⁴⁸ Besides the books produced under the Mongol sovereign, other Muslim sources also refer to the Mongols. For instance, Iranian historian Ibn Bibi (d.1285), who worked under the Seljuk court, completed his renowned work *al-Avamir al-'aliyye fi'l-umuri'l- al-'aliyya* (*The Most Exalted Orders Regarding the Most*

⁴² Ata Malik Juwayni, *Tarikh-i Jahan-Gusha*, part I-II, eds. Mirza Muhammad, (Leyden: Brill, 1912).

⁴³ Ata Malik Juwayni, *Tarikh-i Jahan-Gusha, the History of the World Conqueror*, trans. A. John Boyle from the text of Muhammad Qazvini, vol. I-II, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958).

⁴⁴ Charles Melville, "Jahangosha-ye Jovayni," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, XIV/4, pp. 378-382, available online at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jahangosa-ye-jovayni>.

⁴⁵ Melville, "Jahangosha-ye Jovayni," pp. 378-382.

⁴⁶ Ata Malik Juwayni, "contents," *Tarikh-i Jahan-Gusha, the History of the World Conqueror*, trans. A. John Boyle from the text of Muhammad Qazvini, vol. I-II, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958).

⁴⁷ Francis Woodman Cleaves, *The Secret History of the Mongols*, (Cambridge, Mas: Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1982) and Ahmet Temir, *Moğolların Gizli Tarihi*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2023).

⁴⁸ Melville, "Jahangosha-ye Jovayni," 378-382

Sublime Affairs)⁴⁹, or in short *Seljuknama*, in 1282.⁵⁰ The book explains the political events, wars, administrative issues, and treaties, and it is one of the greatest sources for the history of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum.⁵¹ Sara Nur Yıldız states, “Ibn Bibi composed his history in the context of, and, as a reaction to the political crises of the Seljuk sultanate.”⁵² Therefore, the work transmits the political developments of the Seljuks along with the Ilkhanids. Ibn Bibi explains that the idea of writing a book like this came from Ata Malik Juwayni, and Ibn Bibi presented his work to Juwayni after he finished. The second important historical source for the history of the Seljuks and the Ilkhans after *Seljuknama* is *Musamarat al-Ahbar* (*Narrative of the News*), which was written by Kerim al-Din Aksarayi (d.1332).⁵³ Aksarayi completed his book in 1323 and dedicated it to the Ilkhanid governor of Anatolia, Timurtash.⁵⁴ According to Charles Melville, *Musamarat al-Ahbar* is a more professional history writing than Ibn Bibi’s work regarding methodology.⁵⁵ It is a significant book that reflects the political events that happened in the thirteenth and fourteenth century Anatolia and Iran from a person who worked in Anatolia under the Ilkhanid dominion.

1.1.2 Major Christian Primary Sources About the Ilkhanid Art

Similar to the Muslim accounts related to the Mongols and Ilkhanids, Christian and European sources documented their interactions with the Mongols in their chronicles and travel narratives. These Western Christian sources are useful in understanding the Mongols’ relationship with the non-Muslim communities and the views of Christians about the Mongols’ perception of religion, state traditions, and social lives. These non-Muslim narratives help interpret the artistic exchange between the non-Muslim societies

⁴⁹ Sara Nur Yıldız, “Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Seljuk Anatolia: The Politics of Conquest and History Writing, 1243-1282,” (PhD Dissertation, The University of Chicago, 2006), 500.

⁵⁰ Ibn Bibi El-Hüseyin B. Muhammad B. Ali El-Ca’feri Er-Rugadi, *El-Evami’ü’l-Ala’iyye fi’l-Umuri’l-Ala’iyye Seljuknama*, trans. Mürsel Öztürk (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2020).

⁵¹ Abdülkerim Özeydin, “Ibn Bibi,” *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1999).

⁵² Yıldız, “Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Seljuk Anatolia: The Politics of Conquest and History Writing, 1243-1282,” 502.

⁵³ Kerimüddin Mahmud-i Aksarayi, *Müsameretü’l Ahbar*, trans. Mürsel Öztürk, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000).

⁵⁴ İsmail Aka, “Aksarayi,” *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1989), <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/aksarayi-kerimuddin>.

⁵⁵ Charles Melville, “The Early Persian Historiography of Anatolia,” *History and Historiography of the Post-Mongol Asia and the Middle East*, *Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, eds. Judith Pfeiffer, Sholeh A. Quinn, and Ernest Tucker, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 146.

and the Ilkhans, along with the cultural encounters for both sides, as this is the thesis's main focus. The earliest and most notable of these is the *Historia Mongalorum quos nos Tartaros Appellamus (1245-1247)* (*The Story Whom We Call Tartars*) by the Franciscan friar Giovanni da Pian del Carpine (John of Plano Carpini), which details his journey to the Mongol Empire between 1245 and 1247.⁵⁶ Pope IV sent Carpini as an envoy to the court of Güyük Khan (r.1246-1248) to establish political relations, conduct missionary activities, and seek an alliance against the Muslim powers threatening Europe in the thirteenth century.⁵⁷ Following Carpini's journey, William of Rubruck, a Flemish missionary, traveled to the Mongol Empire in 1253 on a mission commissioned by King Louis IX of France. Rubruck aimed to establish diplomatic relations and promote Christianity, which was similar to Carpini's mission.⁵⁸ His observations were published as *The Journey of William of Rubruck*.⁵⁹ Written in Latin, Rubruck's account provides detailed insights into the cultural, political, and religious structures of the Mongols. Rubruck also referenced the final chapter of Carpini's work.⁶⁰ Following the missions of Carpini and Rubruck, the most renowned and comprehensive European account of the Mongol Empire came from the Venetian merchant and explorer Marco Polo. His journey began with his father, Niccolo Polo, and uncle Maffeo Polo in 1271 and lasted in 1295, which took him through Asia to the court of Kubilai Khan in China. His account title is *Il Milione*, known in English as *The Travels of Marco Polo*.⁶¹ The book documents his experiences and observations during his twenty-four-year journey and includes detailed descriptions of the Mongol Empire. It is valuable for these descriptions of the wealth, sophistication, and administrative efficiency of the Mongol Empire under Kubilai's House. However, since Marco Polo did not write his own account and only narrated what he lived during his imprisonment in Genoa, the narration has some exoticism and exaggeration, making question marks in minds about whether he visited China or not.⁶²

⁵⁶ Giovanni da Pian del Carpine, *Mongalorum quos nos Tartaros Appellamus (1245-1247)*, trans.to Turkish by Altay Tayfun Özcan (*Tatarlar Olarak Andığımız Moğolların Tarihi*), (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2022).

⁵⁷ Carpini, *Mongalorum quos nos Tartaros Appellamus (1245-1247)*, XI-XII.

⁵⁸ Peter Jackson and David Morgan, *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke (1253-1255)*, eds. Peter Jackson, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), VIII.

⁵⁹ William of Rubruck, *The Journey of William of Rubruck to Eastern Parts of the World (1253-1255)*, trans. from Latin and eds. by with an introductory notice by William Woodville Rockhill, (London: Bedford press for Hakluyt Society, 1900).

⁶⁰ Jackson and Morgan, *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke (1253-1255)*, VIII.

⁶¹ Marco Polo 1254-1323, *The Travels of Marco Polo, the Venetian*, (England: G. Bell & sons, 1854).

⁶² Frances Wood, *Did Marco Polo Go to China?* (London: Martin Secker & Warburg, 1995).

It is known that he was commissioned to bring Princess Kokachin to marry Arghun in 1292; however, upon Arghun's death in 1293, she was married to Ghazan,⁶³ and considering this event, it is highly possible that Marco Polo met the Vizier Rashid al-Din at that time.

Building upon the European accounts of the Mongol Empire, it is also essential to consider the Christian sources from Anatolia, particularly those belonging to the Armenians, which offer additional attitudes and valuable insights into the region's historical and cultural context. A significant work in this regard is İlyas Kemaloğlu's translation of A.G. Galstyan's account *Ermeni Kaynaklarına Göre Moğollar (The Mongolians According to the Armenian Sources)*.⁶⁴ A.G. Galstyan collected Armenian sources including Sebastatsi, bishop Stepanos, VanakanTavuşetsi, Simbad Sparapet, Grigor Sisetsi, Armenian King Hethum II, Mhitar Ayrivanetsi, etc., and he selected the Mongolian parts from these primary sources and translated them from Armenian to Russian. İlyas Kemaoloğlu provided a Turkish translation of this account, which is a big contribution to Turkish literature in medieval studies.⁶⁵ What is more, Syriac historian Bar Hebraeus (d.1286), also known as Ibn al-Ibri or Abu Farac, has his famous work *The Chronographia*.⁶⁶ His *Chronographia* includes the sack of Baghdad by Hulagu and the Ilkhanid rulers until Gaykhatu.⁶⁷ It is a valuable primary source written in Anatolia by a non-Muslim observer of the time.

1.1.3 Major Modern Scholarship on the Ilkhanid History and Art

Having explored the historical perspectives and primary sources provided by the Islamic and Christian worlds, it is now pertinent to look at modern scholarship that sheds light on the political background and narratives of the Ilkhanids. Many books about the history of the Mongols and Ilkhanids discuss their wars, political upheavals, treaties, intricacies, etc. Notable historical sources include Bertold Spuler's (1911-1990) *Die*

⁶³ Francis Woodman Cleaves, "A Chinese Source Bearing on Marco Polo's Departure From China and a Persian Source on His Arrival in Persia," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 36 (1976): 181.

⁶⁴ A.G. Galstyan, *Ermeni Kaynaklarına Göre Moğollar*, trans. İlyas Kemaloğlu, (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2017).

⁶⁵ Galstyan, *Ermeni Kaynaklarına Göre Moğollar*, 9.

⁶⁶ Abdülkerim Özaydın, *İbnü'l İbri*, TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2000), <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ibnul-ibri>.

⁶⁷ Gregory Abu'l Farac (Bar Hebraeus), "İçerik (Content)," *Abu'l Farac Tarihi*, trans. from Assyrian to English by Ernest A. Wallis Budge and from English to Turkish by Ömer Rıza Doğrul, vol.I-II (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1950).

Mongolen in Iran, Politik, Verwaltung und Kultur der Ilchanzeit 1220-1350,⁶⁸ Jean-Paul Roux's (1925-2009) *Histoire l'empire de Mongol*,⁶⁹ David Morgan's (1945-2019) *The Mongols*,⁷⁰ and his co-edited volume with Reuven Amitai-Preiss *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*,⁷¹ Peter Jackson's *The Mongol World Empire 1206-1370*⁷² and *The Mongols and the West*,⁷³ and Timothy May's *The Mongol Empire*.⁷⁴

Spuler's *Die Mongolen in Iran* provides an exhaustive account of the Mongol administration, politics, and cultural contributions during their rule in Iran, offering critical perspectives about the governance of the Ilkhanids. Jean-Paul Roux's *Histoire de l'empire mongol* delivers a comprehensive narrative of the rise and expansion of the Mongol Empire. David Morgan's *The Mongols* is accepted as a basic introductory book, while his co-edited book Reuven Amitai-Preiss brings scholarly essays together to explore Mongol rule in a broader context. Peter Jackson's works *The Mongol World Empire 1206-1370* and *The Mongols and the West* offer detailed analyses of the Mongol Empire's worldwide influence and emphasize their interactions with Europe and the Islamic world. Timothy May's *The Mongol Empire* provides a modern synthesis highlighting the empire's vast territorial expanse and administrative and military bravery.

Besides these general, political, and introductory books that shed light on the structure of the Mongolian empire and their expansion to vast territories, it is important to place more specific topics about the Mongols, such as the impact of the Mongolian Khatun's on courtly decisions. The Mongolian khatuns had different beliefs, varying from Paganism and Buddhism to Christianity and Islam.⁷⁵ As will be discussed in Chapter Two, some Mongolian tribes were Nestorian. Moreover, the khatuns had contact with the Christian missionaries and Sufi shaykhs.⁷⁶ The multi-religious atmosphere of the leading Mongolian khatuns might have impacted the khans and their decisions. Thus, it requires looking at the khatuns' role in the Mongol and Ilkhanid courts. For instance, Shrine

⁶⁸ Bertold Spuler, *Die Mongolen in Iran, Politik, Verwaltung und Kultur der Ilchanzeit 1220-1350*, (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1939) and Bertold Spuler, *İran Moğolları Siyaset, İdare ve Kültür İlhanlılar Devri, 1220-1350*, trans. Cemal Köprülü, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2011).

⁶⁹ Jean-Paul Roux, *Histoire l'empire de mongol*, (Paris: Fayard, 1993) and Jean-Paul Roux, *Moğol İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, trans. Aykut Kazancıgil-Ayşe Bereket, (İstanbul: Dergâh, 2022).

⁷⁰ David Morgan, *The Mongols*, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1986).

⁷¹ David Morgan and Reuven Amitai-Preiss, *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

⁷² Peter Jackson, *The Mongol World Empire 1206-1370*, (London, Variorum, 1999).

⁷³ Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, (New York, Routledge, 2005).

⁷⁴ Timothy May, *The Mongol Empire*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018).

⁷⁵ Bruno de Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns, 1206-1335*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 185.

⁷⁶ Bruno de Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns, 1206-1335*, 185.

Bayani's *Zen der Iran Asr-i Mogol (Woman in Iran during the Mongol Period)* (1974)⁷⁷ is an introductory book that explains women's place in Islamic and Mongolian culture. She touches on the Gaznavids, Seljukids, and Khawarazmshahs and then moves on to the customs of marriages, estates, and women's positions in different strata. In the end, she gives place to the leading Mongolian ladies. On the other hand, Bruno de Nicola's book *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns 1206-1335* (2017) analyzes the role and status of the women in Mongol Iran from a broader perspective and focuses on the ladies in the court who are known as khatuns.⁷⁸

In addition to the sources above, Osman G. Özgüdenli's meticulous work *Ortaçağ'da Türkler, Moğollar ve İranlılar: Kaynaklar ve Araştırmalar (The Turks, Mongolians, and Iranians in the Middle Age: Sources and Researches)*⁷⁹ is beneficial because one can reach medieval historical sources related to the Turks, Mongolians, and Iran. It is divided into four parts, and it analyzes the studies on Seljuk history, Turco-Mongolian history, language, literature, and cultural history, as well as studies on Islamic manuscripts. Özgüdenli provides a strong list of sources for a researcher who is about to start studies on Medieval Iran and Anatolia. His other book is *Gazan Han ve Reformları 1295-1304 (Ghazan Khan and His Reforms 1295-1304)*⁸⁰, and he provides in-depth analyses of Ghazan's reforms to stabilize his state and centralize his sovereignty via his reforms. Ghazan's effort to integrate a blend of Iranian, Mongolian, and Islamic mindsets in different fields of his reforms gives a profound understanding of the formation of *Jami al-Tawarikh*.

Additionally, Andrew C.S. Peacock's book *Islam, Literature, and Society in Mongol Anatolia* (2019)⁸¹ provides a comprehensive examination of the cultural and literary developments in Anatolia under Mongol rule during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Peacock analyzes the intricate process of Islamization in the region, highlighting the significant roles played by the rise of Sufism, the influence of political elites, and the consequent emergence of literary Turkish during this transformative

⁷⁷ Shrine Bayani, *Moğol Dönemi İran'ında Kadın*, trans. Mustafa Uyar (from Farsi to Turkish), (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2023).

⁷⁸ Bruno de Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns, 1206-1335*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017).

⁷⁹ Osman G. Özgüdenli, *Ortaçağ'da Türkler, Moğollar ve İranlılar: Kaynaklar ve Araştırmalar* (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2020).

⁸⁰ Osman G. Özgüdenli, *Gazan Han ve Reformları 1295-1304*, (İstanbul: Kaknüs, 2009).

⁸¹ A.C.S. Peacock, *Islam, Literature, and Society in Mongol Anatolia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

period. His detailed analysis underscores how these elements collectively contributed to the cultural exchange and borrowing that characterized Mongol Anatolia. A thorough understanding of Peacock's work is essential to fully appreciate the complexities of these cultural interactions and their lasting impact.

Building on this foundation, *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*, edited by A.C.S. Peacock, Sara Nur Yıldız, and Bruno De Nicola, further explores the dynamic interactions between Islamic and Christian communities in the region.⁸² This edited book has a collection of essays examining various aspects of religious, social, and cultural exchanges between two sides from the eleventh to fifteenth centuries. The book's authors examine interfaith relations, the impact of religious institutions, and the role of art and architecture in shaping interactions.

To complement these studies, *Cultural Encounters in Anatolia in the Medieval Period: The Ilkhanids in Anatolia Symposium Proceedings 21-22 May 2015* by VEKAM, Koç University Vehbi Koç Ankara Studies Research Center, provides a collection of essays and highlights important artistic exchanges between the Ilkhanids and Anatolia.⁸³ The contributors offer a detailed insight into how the Ilkhanid entity in Anatolia acted as a driving force for cultural interactions that influenced the region's evolution.

1.1.4 Major Modern Scholarship on Armenian Art

Having explored the rich body of scholarship on Ilkhanid painting and the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, it becomes evident that the cultural and artistic achievements of the Ilkhanid period were not developed in isolation. The Ilkhanid realm was a vibrant nexus of cultural exchange, influenced by and influencing the surrounding regions, including Anatolia and the Western world. To fully appreciate the depth and breadth of Ilkhanid art and culture, getting into more detail about the dynamic intercultural interactions that shaped this era is essential. This examination enriches our understanding of the Ilkhanid artistic legacy and situates it within the context of medieval Eurasian cultural currents. Therefore, the thesis will focus on the Armenian and Byzantine literatures in order to understand these two cultures' improvement in art and their interaction and relations with the Ilkhanids.

⁸² A.C.S. Peacock, Sara Nur Yıldız, and Bruno De Nicola, eds. *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*, (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015).

⁸³ Suzan Yalman, Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu, Alev Ayaokur, Defne Karakaya, and VEKAM, *Cultural Encounters in Anatolia in the Medieval Period: The Ilkhanids in Anatolia: Symposium Proceedings, 21-22 May 2015*, vol, publication no: 54, (Ankara: Vehbi Koç Ankara Studies Research Center, 2019).

Sirarpie Der Nersessian (1895-1989) was a leading art historian in Armenian art and specialized in Byzantine studies. One of her major works, *Armenia and the Byzantine Empire* (1945),⁸⁴ provides the relationship between the Armenians and the Byzantines through Armenian artistic expression. Nersessian discusses the religious controversies between these two Christian states and analyzes how these conflicts influenced Armenian architecture, sculpture, and painting.⁸⁵ Considering Nersessian's prominent role in Armenian studies, her book is an essential resource for understanding the dynamics of the medieval era under two major Christian powers in Anatolia. Following her insightful exploration of Armenian Byzantine relations, Nersessian further focuses on Armenian art with her detailed study of the *Aght'amar Church of the Holy Cross* (1964).⁸⁶ She examines the tenth-century Armenian church at the Island of Aght'amar, which is located in Lake Van, in terms of its historical background, architecture, sculptural decoration, paintings, and tombstones.⁸⁷ In addition to these two useful sources, Nersessian published *Armenian Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery* in 1973.⁸⁸ She analyzes the Armenian illustrated manuscript housed in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, Maryland. Nersessian gives a physical and iconographic description of the illustrations and historical backgrounds.⁸⁹ Lastly, her meticulous two-volume work, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century*, gives a comprehensive study of Armenian painting in medieval Cilicia.⁹⁰ The first volume examines the Armenian monasteries at Drazark, Hromkla, and Skevra, which were key centers of manuscript production. It then focuses on the significant thirteenth-century manuscripts and highlights the work of the period's most notable figure, Toros Roslin (d. circa 1270). Nersessian also addresses the contributions of various artists working in this scriptorium. She provides separate analyses of royal and princely manuscripts before transitioning to the manuscript production of the fourteenth century. The first volume

⁸⁴ Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Armenia and the Byzantine Empire*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1945).

⁸⁵ Der Nersessian, *Armenia and the Byzantine Empire*, 3.

⁸⁶ Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Aght'amar Church of the Holy Cross*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964).

⁸⁷ Der Nersessian, *Aght'amar Church of the Holy Cross*, 1-6.

⁸⁸ Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Armenian Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery*, (Baltimore, Maryland: Walters Art Gallery, 1973).

⁸⁹ Janet Backhouse, *The Burlington Magazine* (book review) 117, no. 871 (1975): 675-675.

⁹⁰ Sirarpie Der Nersessian and Sylvia Agémian, *Miniature painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the twelfth to the fourteenth century*, vol. I-II, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1993).

contains all the written analysis, while the second volume presents the illustrations discussed in the text.⁹¹

Following Der Nersessian's thorough examination of Cilician miniature painting, Lydia Dournovo's *Armenian Miniatures* provides another essential perspective on the rich tradition of Armenian manuscript illumination.⁹² She analyzed stylistically and thematically and characterized Armenian miniatures from different periods and regions. She gives an iconographic description and provides the illustrations subsequently. Dournovo's book allows readers to see Armenian paintings and compare and contrast them with the illustrations.

Building on the foundations laid by Der Nersessian and Dournovo, Jean-Michel Thierry's *Armenian Art* gives a broader overview of the artistic heritage of Armenia.⁹³ This work spans from the sixth century to the eighteenth century. Thierry finely tackles the meaning of Armenian, the geography of Armenia, the neighbors of Armenians, the principles of Armenian architecture, sculpture, and painting, problems in Armenian studies, and chapters in chronological order. Moreover, briefly gives place to pre-Christian Armenian art. He emphasizes the distinctiveness of the Armenian art style, which is comparable to the region. His work is more expanded and detailed considering Der Nersessian's *Armenian Art*.

Transitioning from Thierry's comprehensive overview, Thomas F. Mathews' work provides detailed studies of specific aspects of Armenian art, focusing on gospel iconography and illuminated manuscripts. In *Armenian Gospel Iconography: The Tradition of the Glajor Gospel*, Thomas F. Mathews meticulously examines the iconographic traditions of the Glajor Gospel, a masterpiece of Armenian manuscript illumination (1991).⁹⁴ Mathews analyzes the rich visual language used in these gospels, exploring how the iconography reflects theological and cultural themes specific to Armenian Christianity. The book explains the unique artistic conventions developed in the region. Also, the same scholar continuously explored Armenia's manuscript art as an

⁹¹ Der Nersessian and Agémian, *Miniature painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the twelfth to the fourteenth century*, XI-XVI.

⁹² Lydia A. Dournovo, *Armenian Miniatures*, (New York: Harry N. Abrahams, 1961).

⁹³ Jean-Michel Thierry, Patrick Donabédian, and Nicole Thierry, *Armenian Art*, trans. Celestine Dars, (New York: Harry N. Abrams in association with Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America-Catholicosate, 1989).

⁹⁴ Thomas F. Mathews, Avedis K. Sanjian, Mary Virginia Orna, and James R. Russell, *Armenian Gospel Iconography: The Tradition of the Glajor Gospel*, vol.29, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1991).

editor with his co-editor Roger S. Wieck in *Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts* (1994)⁹⁵, many contributors wrote about the history, religion, and art of Armenia, along with the tenth and eleventh-century illuminations in Armenia and Cilician painting from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. The book gives a general overview to the reader about the process and formation of Armenian manuscript production and illumination. Supportively, in the same title with a bit of change, *Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Art, Religion, and Society* (1998).⁹⁶

In addition to these comprehensive works, Christina Maranci's books on Armenian art greatly contributed to the field. Her work *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction* (2018) discusses the thesis framework.⁹⁷ Maranci offers art and architecture of Armenia from antiquity to the modern period. The work is accessible to both scholars and general readers. The authors focus on the key monuments and aspects of Armenian art. Maranci's engaging writing makes this book an essential resource for everyone. The book successfully overviews Armenian art since the thesis tackles the interactions and cultural exchanges. Christina Maranci's other books include *Medieval Armenian Architecture: Constructions of Race and Nation* (2001),⁹⁸ *Vigilant Powers: Three Churches of Early Medieval Armenia* (2015)⁹⁹ and are also rewarding books for understanding the architectural innovations, cultural context and the role of architecture in shaping Armenian identity.

Concluding the exploration of seminal works on Armenian art, *Armenia: Art, Religion, and Trade in the Middle Ages* is a groundbreaking exhibition that happened in the MET, and Helen C. Evans edits the book, offers a broad and multifaceted perspective on the rich cultural heritage of medieval Armenia.¹⁰⁰ This work is a significant complication in analyzing artistic, religious, and commercial exchanges that shaped medieval Armenia. The volume brings together the leading scholars in the field, such as Helen C. Evans, Christina Maranci, and Rachel Goshgarian. The book examines various

⁹⁵ Thomas F. Mathews and Roger S. Wieck, eds., *Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts*, (New York: Pierpoint Morgan Library, 1994).

⁹⁶ Thomas F. Mathews and Roger S. Wieck, eds., *Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Art, Religion, and Society*, (New York: Pierpoint Morgan Library, 1998).

⁹⁷ Christina Maranci, *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

⁹⁸ Christina Maranci, *Medieval Armenian Architecture: Constructions of Race and Nation*, (Leuven: Peeters, 2001).

⁹⁹ Christina Maranci, *Three Churches of Early Medieval Armenia*, (Turnhout, Brepols, 2015).

¹⁰⁰ Helen C. Evans and Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Armenian art, Armenia: Art, Religion, and Trade in the Middle Ages*, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018).

artifacts, metalwork, textiles, and architecture. Suzan Yalman, who is my advisor and one of the contributors to this work, has the article “Artistic Exchange Between Armenia and the Islamic World”¹⁰¹ particularly inspired me to decide the borders of this thesis and gives an idea about how I can elaborate on this artistic exchange between the Ilkhanids and Christian communities in Anatolia.

Having looked at the twentieth and twenty-first-century studies on Armenian art regarding their contribution to this thesis. Since the Armenian kingdoms were neighbors of the Ilkhans and had close relationships with the Mongols, the Ilkhans, and their vassal, the Seljuks, therefore, it is required to search the Armenian historiography and Armenian art to understand the encounters between the two along with the artistic exchanges and borrowings. With an established comprehensive perception of Armenian art, it is equally important to explore the extensive literature on Byzantine art and its impact on the region.

1.1.5 Major Modern Scholarship on Byzantine Art

The general art history books on Byzantine art collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of the artistic and cultural achievements of the Byzantine Empire. David Talbot Rice’s *Art of Byzantine Era* (1963) successfully explores Byzantine art, emphasizing its development and distinctive aesthetic qualities from its inception to the fall of Constantinople.¹⁰² His revised and extended later work, *The Byzantine Art* (1968), focuses on the thematic and stylistic elements that characterize Byzantine art, highlighting its religious and imperial contexts.¹⁰³ Cyril Mango’s *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453* (1972) offers a chronological narrative that traces the evolution of Byzantine art through its historical and political transformations.¹⁰⁴ He explains the artistic developments in the sections divided into the Byzantine rulers. Furthermore, Robin Cormack’s *The Byzantine Art* (2000) integrates modern scholarship and methodological approaches and offers new insights into Byzantine art.¹⁰⁵ The book, like the previous ones, explains the 330s to 1453 and provides a good introductory book for the readers.

¹⁰¹ Suzan Yalman, “Artistic Exchange Between Armenia and the Islamic World,” eds. Helen C. Evans, *Armenian art, Armenia: Art, Religion, and Trade in the Middle Ages*, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018), 122-128.

¹⁰² David Talbot Rice, *The Art of the Byzantine Era*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963).

¹⁰³ David Talbot Rice, *The Byzantine Art*, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1968).

¹⁰⁴ Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: 1972- Later, Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1986).

¹⁰⁵ Robin Cormack, *The Byzantine Art*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Also, The Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibitions and edited volumes, *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843-1261*, published in 1997,¹⁰⁶ and *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557): Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture*, published in 2006,¹⁰⁷ further enrich the field by presenting comprehensive collections of essays by leading scholars. These volumes explore the Middle and Late Byzantine periods' artistic and cultural developments, highlighting the intricate connections between art, politics, and theology. Together, these works provide a robust foundation for understanding Byzantine art's complexities and enduring legacy, each contributing unique perspectives and critical analyses that enrich Byzantine studies. In addition to the broader studies of Byzantine art, in the framework of this thesis, Byzantine art in Cappadocia, particularly Byzantine painting, has a significant and special position. Since the thesis focuses more on the painting programs and iconography of the narrative scenes, the painting program inside the churches generates the main scope of the Cappadocian section.

Nicole Thierry's *Nouvelles Eglises Rupestres De Cappadoce (New Rock-Cut Churches of Cappadocia)*¹⁰⁸ was first published in 1963 and explores the newly discovered rock-cut churches in Cappadocia at that time. The book provides the earlier research and gives the newly identified sites that were not studied before. Therefore, Thierry gives descriptions and assessments of the architectural and artistic characteristics of the churches. Her work was a significant contribution to discovering the region better. Moreover, Thierry's *La Cappadoce de L'Antiquité au Moyen Age* (2002) provides a successful historical and archaeological study of Cappadocia from antiquity through the medieval period.¹⁰⁹ The book focuses on the Cappadocia's historical evolution, continuity, and cultural and political developments. Thierry meticulously analyzes this time's artistic, architectural, and religious shifts. Her work is important in placing Cappadocia in the true, correct context in the mind.

¹⁰⁶ Helen C. Evans and Metropolitan Museum of Art, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843 - 1261*; (in Conjunction with the Exhibition "The Glory of Byzantium" held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York from March 11 through July 6, 1997), (New York, NY: Abrams, 1997).

¹⁰⁷ Sarah T. Brooks and Metropolitan Museum of Art, eds., *Byzantium, Faith, and Power (1261-1557): Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture*, (The Metropolitan Museum of Art Symposia), (New York: New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2006).

¹⁰⁸ Nicole et Michel Thierry, *Nouvelles Eglises Rupestres De Cappadoce*, (Paris, Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1963).

¹⁰⁹ Nicole Thierry, *La Cappadoce De l'Antiquité Au Moyen Age*, vol. 4, (Belgium: Brepols, 2002).

Besides Nicole Thierry, Catherine Jolivet-Lévy's work *Les Églises Byzantines De Cappadoce: Le Programme Iconographique De l'Abside Et De Ses Abords* (1991) offers an in-depth examination of the interplay between architecture and fresco decoration, focusing on the iconographic programs specific to Cappadocian churches.¹¹⁰ What is more, her later work *La Cappadoce Médiévale: Images Et Spiritualité* (2001) examines the architecture and painting programs of the medieval churches in Cappadocia.¹¹¹ It gives a broader perspective between context and representation.

It is indispensable to mention the late Robert Ousterhout's¹¹² contributions to Cappadocia. His work *A Byzantine Settlement in Cappadocia* (2005) analyzes the archaeology and architecture of the settlement of Çanlı Kilise in Cappadocia.¹¹³ He examines the architectural remains along with the frescoes to reconstruct the historical and cultural context of the region in the Byzantine era. He documents in-depth analyses and descriptions of monastic complexes and other buildings with social functions. His masterpiece *Visualizing Community: Art, Material Culture, and Settlement in Byzantine Cappadocia* (2017) comprehensively discusses the Cappadocia, its geography and history, and etymology, and he goes into detail about the architecture and painting in the Cappadocia in the Byzantine context.¹¹⁴ According to the results, he attempts to construct the social history of Cappadocia through art, as he aims in his title, which is to visualize the Byzantine community of Cappadocia. The book became one of the leading sources of this thesis, focusing on Cappadocia and its relationship with the Ilkhanids. Lastly, it is significant to refer to Tolga Uyar and his works on Cappadocia, especially his PhD thesis *Art et société en pays de Rûm : les peintures "byzantines" du XIIIe siècle en Cappadoce* (*Art and Society in the Land of Rum: Thirteenth Century "Byzantine" Paintings in Cappadocia*).¹¹⁵ His dissertation tackles the thirteenth-century Byzantine Churches'

¹¹⁰ Catherine Jolivet-Lévy, *Les Églises Byzantines De Cappadoce: Le Programme Iconographique De l'Abside Et De Ses Abords*, (Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1991).

¹¹¹ Catherine Jolivet-Lévy, *La Cappadoce Médiévale: Images Et Spiritualité: Images et Spiritualité*, vol. 14, (Saint Léger-Vauban: Zodiaque, 2001).

¹¹² I was fortunate to attend Cappadocia Summer School organized by Koç University and ANAMED, led by Professors Robert Ousterhout and Tolga Uyar in 2022 and met Ousterhout a few months before he passed away. May he rest in peace.

¹¹³ Robert Ousterhout, *A Byzantine Settlement in Cappadocia*, vol.42, (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2005).

¹¹⁴ Robert G. Ousterhout and Dumbarton Oaks, *Visualizing Community: Art, Material Culture, and Settlement in Byzantine Cappadocia*, vol. XLVI, 46, (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2017).

¹¹⁵ Tolga B. Uyar, *Art et société en pays de Rûm: les peintures "byzantines" du XIIIe siècle en Cappadoce*, (PhD diss.: Sorbonne Université, 2011).

painting programs, which is a useful source for comprehending the formation and transformation of the paintings in terms of iconography and context in the thirteenth century that corresponds with the Ilkhanid rule in the east and the Seljuks' vassalage under the Ilkhanid rule.

The thesis touches on the Byzantine Empire of Trebizond and creates a link between the Ilkhanids regarding the artistic exchange and inspiration that happened between the two. Therefore, following the emergence and transformation of Byzantine art in Cappadocia and its meaning for the cultural exchange, another significant Byzantine place, a harbor, Trebizond, offers its own unique contribution to the Byzantine tradition and cultural exchange with the Eastern world. In *Byzantine Painting at Trebizond* (1936), Gabriel Millet and David Talbot Rice examined the interplay between Byzantine and Islamic artistic traditions in the context of Trebizond.¹¹⁶ Millet's part depends on the general study and survey of the Byzantine monuments in Trebizond, while Rice's research focuses on the Byzantine monuments in Trebizond along with the iconography of the churches and monasteries. In addition to Millet and Rice, Anthony Bryer's book *The Empire of Trebizond and the Pontos* is a collection of essays that gives a general insight for the readers.¹¹⁷

On the other hand, Antony Eastmond's recent publications on Trebizond tackle the Byzantine entity, and Trebizond's significant location as a harbor and a spot for cultural exchange is vital for the region's study during the Byzantine period. His work *Art and Identity in the Thirteenth Century Byzantium: Hagia Sophia and Empire of Trebizond* is an important work for understanding the architecture of the Byzantine Empire of Trebizond upon its most symbolic building, Hagia Sophia.¹¹⁸ His noteworthy examination shows how art and architecture could be used to reveal identity and legitimacy. The main point of the book is directly related to this thesis scope. Therefore, it becomes one of the beneficial sources in the sections under the Trebizond Empire. In addition to this book, Eastmond's other book, *Byzantium's Other Empire: Trebizond*, was

¹¹⁶ Gabriel Millet and David Talbot Rice, *Byzantine Painting at Trebizond*, vol.1, (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1936).

¹¹⁷ Anthony Bryer, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos*, (London: Variorum Reprints, 1980).

¹¹⁸ Antony Eastmond, *Art and Identity in the Thirteenth Century Byzantium: Hagia Sophia and Empire of Trebizond*, vol.10, (Chesterfield: Ashgate, 2004).

exhibited by the Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations in 2016.¹¹⁹ The book is a collection of essays that handles the different aspects such as the history and topography of Trebizond, the foundation of the Byzantine Empire of Trebizond, manuscript production, and architecture, etc., of Trebizond as a Byzantine outpost empire. Together, Eastmond's two books serve the studies for the Byzantine Empire of Trebizond and expand the city's role in cultural exchange, interaction, and construction of a new identity.

These scholarly works collectively enhance our understanding of the cultural and artistic exchanges between the Ilkhanids, Anatolia, and the West, offering a nuanced perspective on the intercultural dynamics that defined this period. By examining these interactions, we gain a deeper appreciation for the complex web of influences that contributed to the Ilkhanid art and culture. It is now essential to outline the structure of this study. The following chapters will discuss the historical background of the Ilkhanids, present the traditional and religious structure of the Ilkhanid court, the life of Vizier Rashid al-Din and his role in constructing a manuscript production center in Tabriz, briefly describe the Armenian and Byzantine presence in Anatolia and their political and cultural relations with the Ilkhanids, and go into detail and discuss the artistic exchanges and how the Ilkhanids borrowed and made use of the composition and iconography from these two prominent neighbors and implied it to the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. This overview will guide the reader through each chapter's main arguments and findings, setting the stage for thoroughly exploring the intricate web of influences and innovations that characterized this period. In the end, the thesis aims to claim that transitioning Christian composition and iconography to the *Jami al-Tawarikh* happened through cultural interactions and artistic exchanges between the Greek-speaking communities in Anatolia, as heirs of the Byzantines, Armenians, and the Ilkhanids. The thesis will demonstrate that although the Ilkhans interacted with all extant Christian communities in Anatolia and its realms, such as Georgians and Syriacs, the Byzantine and Armenian cultures in Anatolia had a leading role related to their significant part in political relations. Finally, this study reveals that it contributes new dimensions for interpreting the artistic exchanges and

¹¹⁹ Antony Eastmond, Egemen Değirmenci, Yiğit Adam, Buket Coşkun, and Koç University, *Byzantium's Other Empire: Trebizond: Exhibition June 24-September 18, 2016, Koç University, Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (RCAC)*, (İstanbul: Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, 2016).

creates a single work that only focuses on the Anatolian Byzantines' and Armenians' contributions to the Ilkhanid borrowed iconography.

1.2 Overview of the Chapters

Chapter 2: "The Khans, the Vizier, and the Atelier: Illuminating the Historical Genesis of a Chronicle," investigates the life and influence of Vizier Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah, emphasizing his conversion and his pivotal role in the Ilkhanid court. It examines the political and religious dynamics among the Mongol Khans, highlighting their religious inclinations and the multi-religious composition of the Ilkhanid court. The chapter offers background information on the Khans up to Ghazan, detailing the transformation of the Ilkhanid state following the conversions of Ghazan and his brother Oljaytu. This section explores the impact of Ghazan's conversion on state policies towards non-Muslims in Iran and its effects on diplomatic relations with neighboring kingdoms. The chapter also traces the origins of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* under Oljaytu following Ghazan's death in 1304. It analyzes the changes in the text, and the palace intrigues that affected Rashid al-Din during his co-vizierate in the early fourteenth century. Additionally, it considers the significant roles of Mongol Khatuns in shaping the religious landscape of the Ilkhanid court.

Chapter 3: "Jami al-Tawarikh-Compendium of Chronicles" explores the Mongolian Empire's division and the foundation of the Ilkhanid State, hence paving the way for understanding the political and religious structure of the Ilkhanids. The chapter then examines the cultural and artistic exchange between the East, particularly the far eastern branch of the Mongol Empire, and the Ilkhanids' ally, the Yuan dynasty in China, illustrating the Ilkhanid state's artistic use of Chinese elements. This section is followed by an analysis of Rashid al-Din's sources while composing *Jami al-Tawarikh*. The sources the vizier used and the possible references he might have employed are discussed. Furthermore, the chapter addresses contemporary history-writing traditions, including the concept of writing "a world history" and potential models for the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, covering earlier attempts at historiography by the Mongols during their thirteenth-century expansion. Towards the end, the chapter examines Rashid al-Din's Rab-i Rashidi complex in Tabriz and provides preliminary insights into the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, setting the stage for the subsequent iconographic analysis and exploration of cultural exchanges with Armenian and Byzantine communities.

Chapter 4: “Cultural Exchange and Iconographic Borrowings in *Jami al-Tawarikh*” forms the core of the thesis, focusing on the iconographic borrowings in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*’s illustrations from neighboring two Christian communities: the Armenians and the Byzantines in Anatolia. While acknowledging other Christian groups, such as the Assyrians and Georgians, the chapter concentrates on the Armenians and Anatolian Byzantines to maintain the thesis’s clarity and depth. The chapter categorizes the paintings, carvings, and frescoes into two main sections based on geographical and political interactions: Armenian (Greater Armenia and Armenian Cilicia) and Byzantine (Cappadocia and Trebizond). It examines religious scenes from the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, including depictions from the lives of Prophet Muhammad, Moses, Jonah, and Mary, alongside parallel examples from the narratives of Jesus’ life in these regions. This chapter discusses the cultural interactions facilitated by artisans’ missionaries and considers the influence of Rashid al-Din’s Jewish heritage and conversion. An iconographic analysis of *Jami al-Tawarikh*’s illustrations is conducted as well.

Chapter 5, “Conclusion,” synthesizes the discussions from Chapters 2, 3, and 4, offering a comprehensive evaluation and addressing the research questions posed in the thesis. It presents ideas for future research, highlighting potential areas for further exploration as well.

Chapter 2: THE KHANS, THE VIZIER, AND THE ATELIER: ILLUMINATING THE HISTORICAL GENESIS OF A CHRONICLE

Cultural productivity serves as a potent vehicle for disseminating ideological perspectives, concurrently reinforcing the sovereign's authority while giving novel principles of imperial governance. The arrival of the Mongols in Iran, characterized by rapid territorial expansion and formidable military tactics, engendered a disconcerting perception within the Muslim and Christian communities. Consequently, a proactive response became imperative following the conversion of Ghazan Khan to Islam in 1294 to secure acceptance within the predominantly Muslim ruling territories. This necessitated strategic initiatives, including constructing an expansive complex in Tabriz, commencing manuscript production, and composing the first world history.¹²⁰ These cultural endeavors constituted a deliberate effort to legitimize Mongol rule in contemporary Iran, substantial portions of present-day Turkey, and selected regions of the Caucasus, demanding concurrent cultural exchanges.¹²¹ This chapter aims to present the political structure of the Ilkhanid state, the varied beliefs of the Khans, and vizier Rashid al-Din's life and the groundwork for the *Jami al-Tawarikh*.

Beyond the Muslim demographic, the local populace of the Ilkhanid region encompassed diverse communities such as the Georgians, Armenians, and Rums, the Greek-speaking community in Anatolia. These communities are known for their remarkable churches, monasteries, manuscripts, and many types of artistic productions. They ornamented their buildings and works of art with Christian symbolism and depicted narrative scenes from the Old and New Testaments on their churches.

Moreover, they actively created illustrated and illuminated manuscripts, gospels, and bibles throughout history. Thus, there is a potential for incorporating cultural elements and religious imagery from diverse sources into the manuscript production process in Tabriz. Chapter Two aims to elucidate the dynamics of interaction and artistic exchange between the Ilkhans and non-Muslim communities in Anatolia through the lens of manuscript production within the Rab-i Rashidi atelier.

¹²⁰ Blair, "Ilkhanid Architecture and Society: An Analysis of the Endowment Deed of the Rab'-i Rashidi," 67.

¹²¹ John Andrew Boyle, "Rashid Al-Din: The First World Historian," *Iran* 9 (1971), 20.

2.1 *Rashid al-Din Tabib's Life and Political-Religious Situation at the Ilkhanid*

Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah or Rashid al-Din Tabib (the physician) was born in ca 645 A.H./1247 A.D. in Hamadan in western Iran. He had Jewish origins, and his hometown, Hamadan, was one of the significant hubs for Rabbinic College, *Yeshivah*.¹²² Therefore, it is possible that he knew Judaist tenets and the history of the Jews and could read Hebrew as well. This might have given him a better perspective to consider and evaluate the history of the Jews or Old Testament stories. Although it is not certain when he converted to Islam, scholars mainly believe that Rashid al-Din embraced Islam around the age of thirty.¹²³ Rashid al-Din Tabib entered the court of Abaqa (r.1265-1282) as *Tabib* (physician) towards the end of his reign.¹²⁴ He even witnessed the birth of Abaqa's grandson, Oljaytu¹²⁵, which is ironic that the future Khan's birth would lead to Rashid al-Din's death in 718 A.H /1318 A.D because Rashid al-Din was accused of being the murderer of Oljaytu Khan¹²⁶.

Following Abaqa's death in 1282, Tegüder (r.1282-1284) emerged as the new Khan through the *Kurultay*. However, Arghun opposed his rule. Tegüder, seeking to align himself with the prevailing Islamic faith, converted and assumed the name Ahmed, becoming the first Muslim Khan in the Ilkhanid dynasty.¹²⁷ He endeavored to improve ties with the Mamluks, a significant adversary of the Ilkhans. In 1284, Arghun prevailed in the struggle for the throne, leading to the execution of Ahmed Tegüder and Arghun ascending to power.¹²⁸

In the initial years of Arghun's reign (r.1284-1291), he followed an anti-Islamic policy to prevent the Islamization of the Mongol ruling elite.¹²⁹ He even prohibited Muslims from participating in administrative issues.¹³⁰ On the other hand, Arghun Khan adopted a similar, maybe stricter, behavior against the Jews at that time. He executed the

¹²² Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din's illustrated history of the world*, The Nasser Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, 13.

¹²³ Blair, 13.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 13.

¹²⁵ Kamola, *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and Jami' al-Tawarikh*, 33.

¹²⁶ Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles*, 14.

¹²⁷ Hamid Algar, "Ahmed Teküder," *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1989), <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ahmed-tekuder>.

¹²⁸ Algar, "Ahmed Teküder," <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ahmed-tekuder>.

¹²⁹ Kamola, 37.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 38.

vizier Sa'ad al-Daula, who was of Jewish origin, and his deputies in 1291.¹³¹ Stefan Kamola argues that although Rashid al-Din was a Muslim who converted from Judaism when Arghun was on the throne, the vizier may have saved himself from being purged and survived at the Mongol court.¹³²

Gaykhatu (r.1291-1295) ascended to the throne after Arghun's death. He was known for his lavishness and wrong political approaches.¹³³ The harm he caused to the economy would burden Ghazan Khan in the following years. Gaykhatu's attempt to introduce paper money *chao* proved to be an unmitigated failure.¹³⁴ Rashid al-Din explains his wastefulness: "*Since Gaikhatu was an extremely generous ruler and carried his liberty to such excess that the wealth of the entire world would not have been enough for him...*"¹³⁵

Gaykhatu's inability to rule the empire and maintain the stability of human affairs created dissatisfaction around the imperial court. However, his issues in management brought his end. He refused to meet Ghazan during his reign and insulted Prince Baydu, who was considered a khan before Gaykhatu, at a dinner when he was drunk.¹³⁶ Baydu rebelled against Gaykhatu, and the prince defeated the Ilkhan and executed him in March 1295.¹³⁷ On the other hand, as opposed to Arghun, Gaykhatu was indulgent to the Muslims. It may have been caused that one of his first wives was Muslim, who was Aishah Khatun.¹³⁸ Rashid al-Din Tabib was a steward in the court of Gaykhatu¹³⁹, and he gained authority during this time.¹⁴⁰ He witnessed all these internal disturbances from Abaqa to Baydu; at the same time, he was a rising power towards the end of the thirteenth century.

2.2 Ghazan Khan and The Changing Face of the Ilkhanid Court

Ghazan (r.1295-1304) spent his childhood with his grandfather Abaqa. Although he had been influenced by Abaqa's wife, Despina Khatun, and was interested in Christianity,

¹³¹ Ibid., 39.

¹³² Ibid., 39.

¹³³ Abdülkadir Yuvalı, "Geyhatu Han", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1996), <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/geyhatsu-han>.

¹³⁴ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami' u't-Tawarikh*, 583. And Hope, 149.

¹³⁵ Rashiduddin Fazlullah, 584.

¹³⁶ Spuler, *İran Moğolları: Siyaset, İdare ve Kültür İlhanlılar Devri, 1220-1350*, 102.

¹³⁷ Spuler, 102.

¹³⁸ Yuvalı, "Geyhatu Han," <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/geyhatsu-han>.

¹³⁹ Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles*, 13.

¹⁴⁰ Boyle, "Rashīd Al-Dīn: The First World Historian," 20.

he adopted Buddhism just like his grandfather.¹⁴¹ Ghazan converted to Islam with 100.000 Mongol soldiers in June 1295, three months after Baydu seized the state, with the incentive of Nauruz, who was an *amir* and husband of Ghazan's aunt.¹⁴² Nauruz's encouragement had a pivotal role in launching a rebellion against Baydu, and according to Rashid al-Din, Ghazan's conversion to Islam had a positive effect on him.¹⁴³ On October 4, 1295, he achieved victory over Baydu, subsequently executing him. Following this triumph, Ghazan ascended to the throne.¹⁴⁴ The new Khan entered Tabriz and embarked on demolishing all places of worship associated with Buddhism, Christianity, and Judaism.¹⁴⁵ Rashid al-Din explains this incident in his work:

On the first of Dhu'l-Hijja, the prince arrived in Tabriz, and after him Taghachar. The good news of Baidu's dethronement and the elevation of Ghazan Khan to the throne was announced to the people, and by imperial command on Saturday the 8th of Dhul'l-Hijja 694 (October 19, 1295), the destruction of temples, Christian churches, and Jewish synagogues was begun, and temples in which idols were entirely eliminated from the region of Azerbaijan, particularly Tabriz.¹⁴⁶

So far, there were mostly Buddhists and one Muslim ruler in the Ilkhanid state, and it appears that they had many wives with various religious identities. Here, what distinguishes Ghazan from the previous ones is that he converted to Islam with many Mongol soldiers. Therefore, it was not an individual conversion but a collective. After all the political catastrophes and internal struggles, Ghazan's conversion might have been a political action to unite all these different entities, including the Jewish and Christian minorities and several non-Mongol communities under *Pan-Ilkhanica*. Considering the dominant religion in the geography, which was Islam, and the military struggle with the Mamluks¹⁴⁷, who were the most influential Muslim states in the Middle East, Ghazan's adoption of the Islamic faith and attempt to erase many non-Muslim worshipping places reveals his determination to gather people under a single roof and put an end to the rapid decay of the state.

¹⁴¹ Abdülkadir Yuvalı, "Gazan Han," *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1996), <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/gazan-han>.

¹⁴² Ibid., <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/gazan-han>.

¹⁴³ Kamola, 44-45.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 45.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 45.

¹⁴⁶ Rashiduddin Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh*, 627.

¹⁴⁷ Spuler, *İran Moğolları: Siyaset, İdare ve Kültür İlhanlılar Devri, 1220-1350*, 112-114.

There are expressions about the changing face and policy of the Ilkhanids after Ghazan's ascension in some anonymous chronicles of the Armenians. One of them emphasizes Ghazan's oppression of the Christian churches and Cilician King Hethum II's (r.1289-1293/1295-1296/1299-1303) travel to the east to deal with the Khan in political relations 1296.¹⁴⁸ In contrast to Möngke Khan's reception of King Hethum I (r.1226-1270) in 1253,¹⁴⁹ Ghazan followed a different sentiment. This demonstrates the rapid transformation of the Mongolian dynasty and its policies over a few decades. Ghazan Khan engaged in multiple military campaigns against the Mamluks, yet his relatively brief rule hindered his accomplishments.¹⁵⁰ Additionally, he established diplomatic ties with the Franks.¹⁵¹ Following the final conflict with the Mamluks around Damascus in 1303, Ghazan Khan experienced defeat. Subsequently, he fell ill and passed away in 1304 in the vicinity of Qazvin.¹⁵² Beyond these political endeavors, Ghazan orchestrated significant transformations within his Khanate through political measures and sponsored public infrastructure projects supporting his newly adopted Islamic faith. He entrusted Rashid al-Din with constructing architectural complexes such as *Shamb-i Ghazan*, comprising educational institutions, charitable establishments, mosques, and other facilities across Azerbaijan, particularly in northern Iran.¹⁵³

In 1298, Rashid al-Din was assigned the role of deputy to vizier Sadr al-Din Zanjani. Following the execution of the vizier, Rashid al-Din was elevated to the position of associate vizier, serving under Sa'd al-Din Savaji.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, Ghazan tasked Rashid al-Din with chronicling the history of the Mongol Dynasty from its inception under Genghis Khan to Ghazan's own reign.¹⁵⁵ Regrettably, Ghazan did not live to witness the completion of this work, which later became known as the *Tarik-i Mubarak-i Ghazani* (*The Blessed History of Ghazan*).¹⁵⁶ The subsequent chapter will be about Rashid al-Din's Rab-i Rashidi complex in further detail.

¹⁴⁸ Galstyan, *Ermeni Kaynaklarına Göre Moğollar*, trans. İlyas Kemaloğlu, 141.

¹⁴⁹ Galstyan, 116-122.

¹⁵⁰ Spuler, *İran Moğolları: Siyaset, İdare ve Kültür İlhanlılar Devri, 1220-1350*, 113.

¹⁵¹ Yuvalı, "Gazan Han," <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/gazan-han>.

¹⁵² Ibid., <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/gazan-han>.

¹⁵³ Özgüdenli, *Ortaçağ'da Türkler, Moğollar, İranlılar (Kaynaklar ve Araştırmalar)*, 247.

¹⁵⁴ Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles*, 13.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 13.

¹⁵⁶ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh*, 3.

2.3 The Peak and The End: Oljaytu Khan and the Vizierate of Rashid al-Din

Oljaytu (r.1304-1316) ascended to the throne on July 19, 1304, succeeding his brother, Ghazan, who had passed away a month earlier.¹⁵⁷ As with numerous Mongol Khans and princes, Oljaytu boasted a multifaceted background and a range of interests. He was the offspring of Arghun, who was Buddhist, and Uruk Khatun, who was a Nestorian Christian.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, the Khan was born a Buddhist and underwent baptism in 1291, acquiring the Christian name Nicolas.¹⁵⁹ However, in 1295, he and Ghazan had both converted to Islam.¹⁶⁰ While Ghazan blended Mongolian and Islamic traditions, Oljaytu exhibited a stronger inclination towards embracing Islam to become a more “universal ruler.”¹⁶¹ This inclination is evidenced by various actions, notably in his naming conventions; he chose Muslim names for his sons, such as Bayazid, Abu Sa’id, Suleyman Shah, etc., instead of adhering to Mongol or Turkic customs.¹⁶² Hence, while Rashid al-Din designated Ghazan and Oljaytu as “Padishah of Islam,”¹⁶³ I will employ the titles “Khan” for Ghazan and “Sultan” for Oljaytu. Additionally, when Oljaytu was enthroned, one of the first things he did was follow a more reconciliatory policy towards the Mamluks than Ghazan Khan’s aggression.¹⁶⁴ This might be the reason that he was more willing to follow a balanced policy after the subsequent defeats of Ghazan because Ghazan wanted to capture almost all the Muslim ruling lands after his grandfather Hulagu, who put an end to the Abbasids. What distinguished Oljaytu from his brother is that he tried to demolish the Mamluks by backing allies. Oljaytu’s diplomatic efforts extended to both the Eastern and Western fronts, as seen in his dispatch of envoys to the Great Khan in China and to the Franks in Europe.¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, he strengthened ties with the northern borders of the Khanate through his marriage to Maria, daughter of Byzantine Emperor Andronikos II.¹⁶⁶ Considering all these international, diplomatic, and military efforts that Oljaytu performed, it is obvious that the Sultan wanted to consolidate his

¹⁵⁷ Özgüdenli, *Ortaçağ’da Türkler, Moğollar, İranlılar (Kaynaklar ve Araştırmalar)*, 271.

¹⁵⁸ Osman G. Özgüdenli, “Olçaytu Han,” *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/olcaytu-han>.

¹⁵⁹ Jean-Paul Roux, *Moğol İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, 406.

¹⁶⁰ Özgüdenli, “Olçaytu Han,” <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/olcaytu-han>.

¹⁶¹ Kamola, *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and Jami’ al-Tawarikh*, 91.

¹⁶² Özgüdenli, “Olçaytu Han,” <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/olcaytu-han>.

¹⁶³ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 8.

¹⁶⁴ Özgüdenli, *Ortaçağ’da Türkler, Moğollar, İranlılar (Kaynaklar ve Araştırmalar)*, 271

¹⁶⁵ Amitai and Morgan, *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy*, 58.

¹⁶⁶ Spuler, *İran Moğolları: Siyaset, İdare ve Kültür İlhanlılar Devri, 1220-1350*, 121.

throne and move his crown into a more inclusive and “universal” place. Concurrently, Oljaytu embarked on the construction of a new imperial capital, Sultaniya, which means “the Imperial,” distinct from Ghazan’s *Shamb-i Ghazan* complex, signifying his commitment to a new era of rule denoted by Islamic ideals.¹⁶⁷

Meanwhile, Rashid al-Din Fadl-Allah served as co-vizier along with Saad al-Din Savaji when the Sultan was enthroned in 1304.¹⁶⁸ Upon completing the *Tarikh-i Mubarak-i Ghazani* (*The Blessed History of Ghazan*) in 1304, Rashid al-Din received a commission from Oljaytu to undertake the writing of a comprehensive world history. Subsequently, Rashid al-Din presented his monumental work, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, to the Sultan on April 14, 1307.¹⁶⁹ Under the rule of Oljaytu, Rashid al-Din’s influence flourished even further, solidifying his position as a pivotal figure within the Oljaytu’s realm. His control extended over expansive territories, including orchards and vineyards in Azerbaijan, date palm plantations in Southern Iraq, and fertile lands in Western Anatolia. Notably, Rashid al-Din’s family held a virtual monopoly over the administration of the state, with eight of his fourteen sons assuming governorship positions across key provinces, spanning from Western Iran to Georgia, Iraq, and a significant portion of what is presently recognized as Turkey.¹⁷⁰ Also, according to the *Waqfnama-i Rab'-i Rashidi*, Rashid al-Din possessed real estate holdings in various regions, including Tabriz, Sultaniya, Hamadan, Maragha, Shiraz, Isfahan, and Mawsil, alongside properties in Yazd and Abarquh. The exact means and timeline of acquiring these properties remain uncertain. However, it is presumed that Rashid al-Din obtained them before 709 A.H. /1309-10 A.D., the documented date of the *Waqfnama*, indicating his possession of these assets prior to that time.¹⁷¹ In order to reinforce the examples of Rashid al-Din’s significant position in the court, it is proper to give the case of Oljaytu’s joining Shi’ism. In 1310, the Sultan accepted the Shia tenets, and this caused conflicts among learned men and *ulema*; therefore, speculations started to turn out about Rashid

¹⁶⁷ Kamola, *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and Jami’ al-Tawarikh*, 103.

¹⁶⁸ Osman G. Özgüdenli, “Reşidüddin Fazlullah-ı Hemadani,” TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2008), <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/residuddin-fazlullah-i-hemedani>.

¹⁶⁹ Kamola, 99.

¹⁷⁰ Boyle, “Rashid Al-Din: The First World Historian,” 20.

¹⁷¹ A.K.S Lambton, “The Athar Wa Ahya of Rashid-al-Din Fadl- Allah Hamadani and His Contribution As An Agronomist, Arboriculturist And Horticulturist,” *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy* vol. 24, (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 128.

al-Din.¹⁷² An enduring challenge during the Ilkhanid era was the instability within the vizierate, which often experienced short tenures due to prevalent political turmoil and intrigue at court. Despite this volatility, Rashid al-Din's sustained involvement in various roles serving the Khans indicates his adeptness at navigating the complexities of the Ilkhanid court and securing his position over an extended period. In 1312, Saad al-Din Savaji faced allegations of embezzlement from the treasury and was subsequently put to death.¹⁷³ Following this incident, Rashid al-Din shared the vizierate with Taj al-Din Ali Shah, who was a merchant and jeweler.¹⁷⁴ Ali Shah issued a threat against Rashid al-Din upon uncovering a letter inscribed in Hebrew, alleging an attempted poisoning of the Sultan. Additionally, a dispute over financial matters arose between the two figures. Consequently, Oljaytu intervened by partitioning administrative responsibilities into two spheres: Ali Shah was tasked with overseeing Western Iran, Iraq, and Anatolia, while Rashid al-Din assumed authority over central and southern Iran.¹⁷⁵ Oljaytu's health had significantly declined, prompting him to summon his son Abu Said from Khorasan. He passed away on December 14, 1316, corresponding to the 27th of Ramadan, 716 A.H. According to accounts from Mamluk sources, his death was attributed to poisoning.¹⁷⁶

The political landscape was marked by escalating crises and internal strife during this turbulent period. Ali Shah and his faction launched a barrage of accusations against Rashid al-Din, with the most damning being the alleged poisoning of the late Sultan Oljaytu. Ali Shah's machinations proved successful, resulting in Rashid al-Din's removal from the vizierate in 1317.¹⁷⁷ The official record of Rashid al-Din's demise, along with his son Izz al-Din Ibrahim, was made by Sultan Abu Sa'id on June 17, 1317 (Jumadi awwal 17 / 718 A.H.).¹⁷⁸ Subsequently, Rashid al-Din's body underwent public display in the streets for several days before finding its resting place in the Rab-i Rashidi complex in Tabriz, a site of significance to be explored further in subsequent discussions.

¹⁷² Özgüdenli, "Reşidüddin Fazlullah-ı Hemadani," <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/residuddin-fazlullah-i-hemedani>.

¹⁷³ Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles*, 14.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 14.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 14.

¹⁷⁶ Spuler, 130-131.

¹⁷⁷ Özgüdenli, "Reşidüddin Fazlullah-ı Hemadani," <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/residuddin-fazlullah-i-hemedani>.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/residuddin-fazlullah-i-hemedani>.

Ultimately, the remains of Rashid al-Din were exhumed by Miran Shah, the son of Timur, and reinterred in a Jewish cemetery.¹⁷⁹

Rashid al-Din, a physician, steward, and vizier of Jewish descent, enjoyed a lengthy tenure in the court under several khans. The diverse backgrounds of the aforementioned Khans led to cultural diversity within both the court and society at large. Diplomatic intermarriages were a notable aspect that contributed to the dynamic nature of the court. Additionally, as previously mentioned, the religious affiliations adopted by Mongol khatuns played a significant role in the lives of the khans. It is essential to underline the importance of the khatuns in highlighting the role of religion within the Ilkhan's House.

2.4 *Impact of Khatuns and Their Faiths*

The Mongols' perception of religion provides a foundational framework for understanding the influence of Mongolian khatuns on courtly decisions. The Mongols stayed away from institutionalized religions or entrenched belief systems, viewing them as potential threats to their authority.¹⁸⁰ Dependency on religious groups that wielded societal influence would have hindered the Mongols' expansionist ambitions, thus prompting them to eschew affiliations with specific faiths or institutionalized religious structures. To support that, Bruno de Nicola states that the Mongols are often viewed as tolerant towards various religions, granting them freedom as long as they did not challenge Mongol supremacy.¹⁸¹ This approach was evident in regions like Iran, where Christians and Jews held significant governmental roles, at least until Ghazan Khan's conversion in 1295.¹⁸²

During Genghis Khan's rule, Mongol religion was diverse, including elements of polytheism, ancestor worship, and shamanistic practices. Unlike sedentary societies, they lacked formal religious institutions. This openness allowed them to support faiths like Taoism, Nestorian Christianity, Tibetan Buddhism, and Sufism, favoring those without rigid hierarchies.¹⁸³ On the other hand, they allowed flexibility to the royal members for

¹⁷⁹ Blair, 14.

¹⁸⁰ Bruno de Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns, 1206-1335*, 183.

¹⁸¹ De Nicola, 183.

¹⁸² Ibid., 185.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 185.

their religious decisions. Thus, having more than one religious identity was common. Mongol khatuns had the liberty to choose their faiths as well. Many non-Muslim khatuns had an influence on the Mongol princes and khans. Therefore, khatuns impacted the khans' dual identities, indirectly and sometimes directly in their policy towards the people they ruled. Three Mongolian tribes were converted to Nestorian Christianity: Naimans, Oirats, and Keraites.¹⁸⁴ These tribes accepted Christendom via Christian missionaries who visited Mongol courts.¹⁸⁵ They even chose the Nestorian Christendom because Nestorians were the least Christians attached to the church.¹⁸⁶ Considering the time from Genghis Khan (d. 1227) to Hulagu (d.1265) and Hulagu to Ghazan (d.1304), there were Christian Khatuns, and those Khatuns were already Christian when they came to Iran.¹⁸⁷ New brides were welcomed from the aforementioned tribes; however, conversions to Christianity did not happen that much among the Mongols in Iran due to the rapid expansion and consolidation of Islam, which I will be holding in the subsequent pages.¹⁸⁸

Dokuz Khatun (d.1265) was one of the first influential Christian figures in the Ilkhanid court as Hulagu's wife, Tolui's former wife, and a Kerait princess.¹⁸⁹ She was one of the chief wives of the Ilkhanid dynasty. The marriage was unconsummated with Tolui, and after Tolui died in 630 A.H. /1233 A.D., she was taken care of by his son Hulagu, who married Dokuz during his expedition to Iran.¹⁹⁰ Rashid al-Din explains the importance of Dokuz Khatun in his *Jami al-Tawarikh*:

Since she had been his father's wife, she was greater than the other wives, even though he had married some of them before her. He married her after crossing Oxus River. Tolui Khan had not touched her. She had influence and was extremely domineering. Since the Kerayit tribes were originally Christian, she constantly favored Christians, and during her time that group became strong. For her sake, Hülagü Khan also favored them and held them in honor, so much so that they built churches throughout the realm. A church was always made at the gate to Doquz Khatun's ordu.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 202.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 188.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 183.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 202.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 203.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 91.

¹⁹⁰ Charles Melville, "Dokuz Katun," *Iranica*, vol. VII, (2011), 475-476.

¹⁹¹ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh*, 472.

According to this statement by Rashid al-Din, it appears that Dokuz Khatun played a crucial role in endearing Christians among the Mongols. In addition to Rashid al-Din's example, it is known that she did not have a child behind but represented concubines from her own tribes to the Mongol court, who were probably Christians.¹⁹² Other than this, local sources such as *Jami al-Tawarikh*, and Christian sources mention Hulagu's sympathy towards Christians. Thirteenth-century Armenian historian Grigor Akanc's book describes Hulagu Khan's affinity for the Christians:

Hulawu Han (Hulagu Khan) was very good, loving Christians, the church, and priests. Likewise, his blessed wife Tawvus Xattun (Dokuz Khatun), who was good in every way, and was compassionate to the poor and needy. She very much loved all Christians, Armenians, and Syrians, so that her tent was a church, and a sounder traveled with her and many Armenian and Syrian priests.¹⁹³

This statement suggests that Hulagu Khan's connection with Christians was substantial, facilitated through his wife, Dokuz Khatun, indicating a coherence in mindset with them. This is evident in his granting liberty to his khatun to associate with and safeguard Christians. The same account continues with these words: "Hulawu Han (Hulagu Khan) liked the Armenian and Georgian forces greatly because of their extreme bravery which they evidenced before him in every battle. Because of this, he called them bahaturs."¹⁹⁴ The title "Bahatur, bahadur, or bahadır in modern Turkish" is a commonly used name with disputable origins in both Turkish and Mongolian languages, signifying heroism and bravery.¹⁹⁵ Considering Hulagu's praises and military engagements with Armenians and Georgians, one could argue that the intense encounters of Ilkhanid Iran with Anatolian and Caucasian Christian societies transcended mere political interactions to encompass social and artistic activities within the state and court. In this context, the contributions of Dokuz Khatun, the Kerait Khatuns, and Oirat Khatun were inevitable, given their status as royal members and female partners, shaping this cultural dynamic.

¹⁹² Anne F. Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 264.

¹⁹³ Robert P. Blake and Richard N. Frye, "History of the Nation of the Archers (The Mongols) by Grigor of Akanc; Hitherto Ascribed to Matak the Monk: The Armenian Text Edited with an English Translation and Notes," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 12, no. 3/4 (1949): 341.

¹⁹⁴ Blake and Frye, "History of the Nation of the Archers (The Mongols) by Grigor of Akanc," 343.

¹⁹⁵ See Orhan F. Köprülü, "Bahadır," TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/bahadir>, or Türk Dil Kurumu (Turkish Language Society), "Bahadır," <https://sozluk.gov.tr/?q=bahad%C4%B1r&aranan=>, or Nişanyan Sözlük, "Bahadır," <https://www.nisanyansozluk.com/kelime/bahad%C4%B1r>.

Perhaps the presence of Christian artisans in the Ilkhanid court began during this period, a topic that will be further explored in subsequent chapters.

In addition to Christian women of Mongolian descent, such as Dokuz Khatun, there were marriages between neighboring communities, including the Byzantine Empire. Given the fragmented political landscape of Anatolia, which involved the Seljuk Empire, Armenian and Georgian Kingdoms, military conflicts with the Mamluk Army, and the presence of the Crusades, forming family alliances became necessary for the Byzantines. Apart from strengthening ties with the Mongols, the Byzantines aimed to Christianize Mongol Iran.¹⁹⁶ However, relying on sending women from the Byzantine court to foreign, non-Christian courts was seen as a sign of weakness.¹⁹⁷ Therefore, they chose illegitimate ones to marry the Khans.¹⁹⁸ These unions were mutually beneficial, and the Byzantines sought to expand their religious influence in the East. As part of this strategy, princesses were accompanied by religious figures and established churches, providing places of worship for Christians, particularly the Orthodox community.¹⁹⁹

The first marriage happened in 1264 between Michael VIII Palaiologos' illegitimate daughter Maria and Hulagu Khan. However, Hulagu passed away by the time Maria arrived in 1265.²⁰⁰ Therefore, arranged marriage was consummated between the Byzantine princesses and Abaqa. Since the Byzantines turned over to the ladies to become religious and artistic patrons of their new community, Maria built a Greek Orthodox Church in Tabriz, and it is assumed that she was the patron of the Church of Our Lady Mary in Urumiya.²⁰¹ As mentioned above, the first Ilkhanid ruler, Hulagu Khan, had sympathy, or at least tolerance towards the Christians, probably through the influence of his Khatun, Dokuz. Christian influence via khatuns continued in Hulagu's successor, Abaqa, but in a different way. First, Maria was not a Mongol nor a Nestorian Christian. Therefore, Maria's guardianship of the Orthodox community was a new phenomenon in the Mongol court in Iran. This increased the popularity of Christianity and influenced the Khans and their political perspectives; however, interestingly, conversions to

¹⁹⁶ AnnaLinden Weller, "Marrying the Mongol Khans: Byzantine Imperial Women and the Diplomacy of Religious Conversion in the 13th and 14th Centuries," *Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Greek Studies*, no.2 (2016): 187.

¹⁹⁷ Weller, "Marrying the Mongol Khans: Byzantine Imperial Women and the Diplomacy of Religious Conversion in the 13th and 14th Centuries," 179.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 185.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 180.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 187.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 188-189.

Christendom were not something common both in the court and the society.²⁰² As Bruno de Nicola suggested, the expansion of Islam and the later flourishing of Sufism in Iran and Anatolia had caused more conversion and impact in the Mongol court and multicultural structure of Iran.²⁰³ As mentioned in the section of Ghazan Khan, Maria, also known as Despina Khatun, influenced Ghazan during his childhood.²⁰⁴ Maria stayed in Iran until the death of Abaqa in 1282.²⁰⁵ Given the Byzantine objection to the Christianization of the infidel Mongols, it appears that Maria's coming to the court was a first attempt to introduce Byzantine Christianity, that is to say, Orthodoxy.²⁰⁶

The second intermarriage happened between Irene, who was again the illegitimate daughter of Andronikos II, and Ghazan Khan in 1302.²⁰⁷ According to AnnaLinden Weller, Maria's responsibility was a representation of Christianization, while Irene's was a religious assimilation.²⁰⁸ In terms of the Byzantine mission, this statement was true. However, it is a question mark how much this mission achieved its goal. Because the period of Ghazan corresponds with the destruction of non-Muslim worshipping places and the collective adoption and adaption of Islam in the Mongol court and around.²⁰⁹

Essentially, the Majority of the khatuns who came from Mongolia and settled in Iran in the early phase of the Ilkhanid state preserved their own religions like Nestorian Christianity, Shamanism, and Buddhism, and Christian ladies were the most influential ones during this period.²¹⁰ Also, within the Mongol court in Iran, Orthodox women were embraced as spouses, and liberated in terms of finance, religion, and patronage. Although Christian ladies of the Mongol court provided guardianship for the Christians and had an impact on their husbands' policy towards Christian neighbors, the process of Christianization of the Mongol court did not flourish due to the rise of Sufism in Anatolia and Iran. Since Ghazan's conversion paved the way for collective Islamization, Sufi shaykhs' interaction increased with the Mongol ladies during this time.²¹¹ Detailed information about the affiliation between the Mongolian Khatuns and Sufi shayks was

²⁰² De Nicola, 203.

²⁰³ Bruno de Nicola, "Patrons or Murids? Mongol Women and Shaykhs in Ilkhanid Iran and Anatolia," *Iran* 52 (2014): 153.

²⁰⁴ See page 30 in Ghazan's section.

²⁰⁵ Weller, 189.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 191.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 190.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 191.

²⁰⁹ See page 31 in Ghazan's section.

²¹⁰ De Nicola, "Patrons or Murids?" 144.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 145.

not provided.²¹² Therefore, explaining the transition between Christian influence and the flourishing of Islamic faith and Sufi belief is difficult. However, this era created a new identity for the Mongols and represented them with many literary and artistic works. Many of them were conducted and produced in the renowned vizier's complex, Rab-i Rashidi.

The role of khatuns in shaping the religious and political landscape of the Mongol Empire is a testament to the fluidity of cultural and spiritual identity in this era. From the influence of Christian khatuns like Nestorian Dokuz Khatun and Orthodox Maria Despina Khatun acted as both patrons and intermediaries between different faiths. Their presence, though significant, did not necessarily lead to widespread conversions to Christianity, as the Mongol elite retained their pragmatic approach to religion. Instead, the eventual dominance of Islam, particularly with Ghazan Khan's conversion, marked a shift in the religious trajectory of the Ilkhanid court. Yet, the earlier Christian influence remained embedded in the court's multicultural framework, visible in the artistic, religious, and diplomatic spheres.

As we transition to the next chapter, it becomes essential to explore the process of composition of *Jami al-Tawarikh*, the sources that Rashid al-Din used while writing his "world history," and the foundation of the Rab-i Rashidi Atelier, and the manuscript production. Moreover, the two copies of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* and their journey will be examined in greater detail in the following sections. The next chapter will complete the comprehension of the groundwork of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* and help us to go into detail about the iconographic analysis of the illustrations and cultural exchange between the Armenians, the Greek-speaking community in Anatolia, heirs of the Byzantines, and Ilkhanids.

²¹² Ibid., 146.

Chapter 3: JAMI AL-TAWARIKH - COMPENDIUM OF CHRONICLES

*“A historian’s duty, as we have said,
must be to extract and write from
what reliable people have said
and from reliable standard books.
If he makes any change therein
according to his imagination,
it will become positively worthless
and incorrect.”*²¹³

-Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah

As a world history, the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, in other words, “Compendium of Chronicles,” is one of the most significant medieval histories that has survived until the present. As explained so far, Ghazan Khan (r. 1295-1304) had commissioned Rashid al-Din to write the history of the Genghis’ house. Since the Khan passed away before the completion of the work in 1304, his brother and successor Oljaytu Khan (r.1304-1316) dedicated it to Ghazan’s memory as *Tarikh-i Mubarak-i Ghazani*, “The Blessing History of Ghazan.”²¹⁴ The *Blessing History* was expanded into world history by the will of Oljaytu Khan, and it was composed and copied in Rab-i Rashidi Atelier, a manuscript workshop in Tabriz, till Rashid al-Din’s death in 1318.²¹⁵ Stefan Kamola explains the distinctive sides of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* and provides a better compilation of the origins, customs, beliefs, and lives of the early Mongols and Genghis Khan (d.1227).²¹⁶ Secondly, it represents a new historiography among the Muslim chronicles due to Rashid al-Din’s adoption and integration of foreign sources and contents into his work, such as the history of China, India, the Franks, and Jews. This is because the former and contemporary Islamic sources focused on the history of Islam.²¹⁷ Thirdly, the work shows a remarkable shift in the Persian book painting due to an infusion of new Chinese artistic elements that were not encountered before.²¹⁸ Finally, Rashid al-Din includes a geography section in

²¹³ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami ’u’t-Tawarikh*, 8.

²¹⁴ Stefan Kamola, “A Sensational and Unique Novelty: The Reception of Rashid al-Din’s World History,” *Iran* 58:1, (2020), 52.

²¹⁵ Kamola, “A Sensational and Unique Novelty,” 52.

²¹⁶ Kamola, 51.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 51.

his world history, which did not survive. It is valuable that he brought together his dynastic story, world history, and geography, making his work distinguishing from the others.²¹⁹ Considering these details, *Jami al-Tawarikh* generated a new genre for history writing in the Islamic world and created a good model for writing genealogies and world history as a dynastic legacy and legitimization tool. Moreover, its blended contents and illustrations represent the time's cultural exchange between the Ilkhanid lands and Asia Minor and beyond. Since the *Jami al-Tawarikh* was written at the beginning of the fourteenth century, it reflects the cultural and political exchanges of the Ilkhanids with both Eastern and Western societies. Rashid al-Din's combination offers insights into fourteenth-century Iran and Anatolia's historical and artistic context.

The text and illustrations of the surviving copies of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* encapsulate the changes in the thirteenth century of Islamic art and the Mongol and Ilkhanid artistic heritage. Political developments that happened from the time of Genghis Khan to Ghazan prepared the basis for the formation of the book. In 1229, two years after the death of Genghis Khan, Ögedai Khan (r.1229-1241) was elected as the new Great Khan of the Mongolian Empire. During his reign, he brought artisans, craftsmen, and weavers from Herat and Nishapur to Besh Baliq and paved the way for increasing artistic exchange.²²⁰ After him, his Khatun Töregene became his regent until 1246, when she made his son Güyüg (r.1246- 1248) as the new Great Khan.²²¹ After Güyüg passed away, Tolui's son Möngke was elected as the Great Khan and reigned between 1251 and 1259.²²² In 1253, Möngke commissioned his brother Hulagu (r.1256-1265) to set campaigns towards the West, particularly Anatolia, Iraq, and Iran, and establish a new Khanate called Il-Khan, the subordinate Khan.²²³ After 1259, the Khanate was divided into four: The Golden Horde in the Northern West (today remains within Russia), the Chagatai Khanate in Central Asia, the Ilkhanate in the Iranian Plateau, some part of

²¹⁹ Ibid.,51.

²²⁰ C. Y. Watt James, "A Note on Artistic Exchanges in the Mongol Empire," *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353*, eds. Linda Kamaroff, Stefano Carboni, and Metropolitan Museum of Art, (New York: [New Haven]: Metropolitan Museum of Art; [Distributed by Yale University Press], 65.

²²¹ Peter Jackson, "Güyük Han," *Iranica*, vol. XI, (2001), 410-411, <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/gyk-khan>.

²²² Charles Melville, "The Mongols in Iran," *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353*, eds. Linda Kamaroff, Stefano Carboni, and Metropolitan Museum of Art, (New York: (New Haven): Metropolitan Museum of Art; (Distributed by Yale University Press), 42.

²²³ Melville, "The Mongols in Iran," 42.

today's Iraq, Eastern Anatolia, and Khubilai's Yuan Dynasty in China.²²⁴ Hulagu submitted to his brother Khubilai Khan (r.1260-1294), who established himself as the Great Khan, and they became allies against Jochi's (d.1227)²²⁵ successors, Batu Khan (d. 1255) and Berke Khan (r.1257-1266) of the Golden Horde.²²⁶ Therefore, there was a cultural interaction, political connection, and a friendly relationship between China and Iran. For instance, Khubilai Khan sent ambassadors and monks to Iran²²⁷; he even sent Marco Polo to the Ilkhanid court to bring Kokachin as a bride to Arghun (r.1284-1291).²²⁸ Furthermore, China impacted the monetary reforms in the Ilkhanate, as mentioned in Chapter 2, and Gaykhatu (r. 1291-1295) introduced paper money, *chao*, to his state.²²⁹ In addition to these, Khubilai Khan commissioned his representative Bolad Jingsang to go to Iran and become an advisor for the "lesser khans."²³⁰ Bolad's role was significant in terms of creating cultural and political ties between these two Khanates²³¹, and he was also a good source of information for the vizier Rashid al-Din.²³²

The intense contacts, cultural exchanges, and political alliances brought new artistic techniques and helped to create a new Ilkhanid genre in Islamic art. For instance, Takht-e Suleyman, which was a summer palace of Abaqa (r.1265-1282) located in the northwestern part of Iran, also known as western Azerbaijan, has turquoise and blue tiles. These tiles were decorated with phoenixes, dragons, deer, and lotus flowers, which are commonly used iconographic elements in Chinese art.²³³ One of the tiles displayed in the National Museum in Iran from the Takht-e Suleyman has a Chinese-style dragon (Fig. 3.1). The dragon of the Takht-e Suleyman is quadrupedal, has horns, a pair of wings, a twisted body, and almond eyes. Its body is large, and it is painted with lapis lazuli color. The dragon's face is painted yellow, and its body is framed in the same color as well. The

²²⁴ Ibid., 42.

²²⁵ See the family tree in the appendix A.

²²⁶ Ibid., 50.

²²⁷ Ibid., 51.

²²⁸ Francis Woodman Cleaves, "A Chinese Source Bearing on Marco Polo's Departure From China and a Persian Source on His Arrival in Persia," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 36 (1976): 181, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2718743>.

²²⁹ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh*, 583.

²³⁰ Melville, "The Mongols in Iran," 51.

²³¹ Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 73.

²³² Melville, "The Mongols in Iran," 51.

²³³ Suzan Yalman "The Art of the Ilkhanid Period (1256–1353)," in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*, (Based on original work by Linda Komaroff), (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/ilkh/hd_ilkh.htm.

tongue, wings, and nails are red. Its head looks back, and its mouth is open, and it flicks its tongue out. The combination of blue, yellow, and red colors is significant in terms of iconography. Yellow and red are popular colors in China, and lapis lazuli is mostly used inside relatively wealthy buildings' decorations. Hence, the use of these three colors and the huge mythological reptile, the dragon in Takht-e Suleyman, result from artistic exchange. A similar dragon motif can be seen in a piece of textile dating to the Yuan period (Fig. 3.2). In this textile, there are many dragons. However, most of their bodies are painted fully yellow on a red background. They are quadrupedal and have whitish wings, horns, and nails. The line above their eyes and their nails is green. Compared to the Ilkhanate dragons, the Yuan dragons' faces are more elongated, and their facial expressions are more aggressive. Nevertheless, the general composition and color selections are similar. In addition to these, it is possible that the Ilkhanid summer palace in the foothill of Ala Dağ, in the north of Lake Van, may have had similar tiles to the Takht-e Suleyman, and it means there is the possibility of carrying Chinese influence on Anatolia via the summer palace in Van region; however, this can be discovered with the upcoming archaeological excavation in the following years.²³⁴

Moreover, the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279) had a tradition of producing Chinese imperial portraits and copying the illustrations of the previous Chinese dynasties' emperors in scrolls and handing them out among court officials and other high-status people via trade or diplomatic relationships.²³⁵ According to Sheila Blair, Rashid al-Din would have obtained some of these Chinese imperial portraits (Fig. 3.3) at the beginning of the fourteenth century and been influenced by these illustrations for his section of the Chinese emperors in *Jami al-Tawarikh* (Fig. 3.4).²³⁶ Although the Southern lands of China belonging to the Song dynasty have more importance in terms of economy and trade flows,²³⁷ It possible that the Khubilai's Khanate centered in today's Beijing might have been a channel in providing these illustrations to the Ilkhanid court.

²³⁴ Here: <https://www.dailysabah.com/arts/turkish-mongolian-scientists-trace-ilkhanid-palace-in-turkeys-van/news>, and <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/kultur/turk-ve-mogol-akademisyenler-ilhanli-sarayinin-bulundugu-degerlendirilen-alanda-kazi-yapacak/2985853>.

²³⁵ Blair, *Compendium of Chronicles*, 49.

²³⁶ Blair, 50.

²³⁷ Ibid., 50.



Figure 3.1: Tile with Dragon, Takht-e Suleyman, West Azerbaijan, the Ilkhanid Period, 13th Century, from the Exhibition of “The Glory of Iran” held in April 2024, at the Palace Museum of Beijing, China. Photo: İrem Alpay



Figure 3.2: Fragment of a Textile, Yuan Dynasty, China, 13th century, The National Museum of Tokyo, Japan.



Details of the fragment of the textile in China and tile in Iran.



Figure 3.3: A section from the scroll showing a Chinese emperor, *The Thirteen Emperors*, the handscroll is attributed to Yan Liben, T'ang Dynasty, 7th century, Denman Waldo Ross Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Figure 3.4: Chinese Emperors, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, f.254a, the Khalili Collection, London.

In addition to the mythological creatures, Chinese influence is seen in the landscape depictions in the illustrations of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. The rock-cut, wavy background drawings are emphasized in Chinese painting (Fig. 3.5), and it was successfully implied in the visuals of the manuscript (Fig. 3.6). Besides this, considering the heavy impact of Buddhism on the Mongol court in China and the exchange between the Yuan and Ilkhans, it is possible that Rashid al-Din interacted with the Buddhist or Buddhist culture, and this might have inspired Rashid al-Din about including a section for the “Life of Buddha” both in context and illustrations (Fig.3.7).

The *Jami al-Tawarikh* is a work that originated with a long tradition of historical writing. Rashid al-Din inevitably drew as much as he could from the earlier chronicles of the Mongol, Chinese, Islamic, and Christian sources. The chronicles he applied to use in his text are important in terms of assessing the *Jami al-Tawarikh*’s reliability, as Rashid al-Din indicates in his own words, understanding the Ilkhanid court’s accession to different sources of information, and Ilkhanids’ exchange between the East and West.

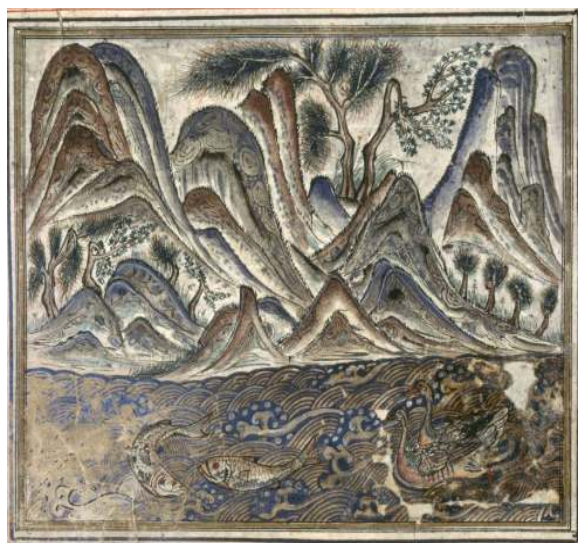


Figure 3.5 (Left): Scholar viewing a waterfall, Ma Yuan, early 13th century, China, Album leaf; ink and color on silk, Ex coll.: C.C. Wang Family, Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973, acc. num: 1973.120.9, The MET, New York.

Figure 3.6 (Right): The mountains of India, *The Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, f.21a, the Khalili Collection, London.



Figure 3.7: Shakyamuni offering fruit to the devil (from the life of the Buddha), *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, f. 34a, the Khalili Collection, London.

3.1 History Writing Before the *Jami al-Tawarikh*

The emergence of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* cannot be considered without recognition of the artistic and literary trends of the medieval world. Writing genealogies and keeping chronicles gained interest among the rulers and patrons of the thirteenth century due to an effort to leave a legacy about their identity and reinforce their presence in the lands they ruled. For instance, *Altan Deft̄er* (*The Golden Book*) was an official history of the Mongols' earlier times. Since the work was lost, its complete contents, author, and date of writing are unknown.²³⁸ To obtain any information about this source, it is necessary to look at and analyze the Chinese, Mongolian, Turkish, and Persian sources.²³⁹ It was kept in the Mongol court, and non-Mongols were prohibited from seeing it.²⁴⁰ According to David Morgan, Rashid al-Din saw and obtained the *Altan Deft̄er* to make use of it as a source for the origin of the Mongols and the life of Genghis Khan.²⁴¹ In addition to him, Maria Ivanics indicates that the *Altan Deft̄er* was kept in the Ilkhanid court according to Rashid al-Din's account.²⁴² It became a primary source also for *The Secret History of the Mongols*, which was written in 1228 after the death of Genghis Khan.²⁴³ *The Secret History's* author is unknown, and the text covers the origins of the Mongolian dynasty, the life of the Great Khan, and his first successor, Ögedai.²⁴⁴ Another text derived from the *Altan Deft̄er* is *Sheng-wu c'hin- cheng-lu*, (*The Campaigns of Genghis Khan*) written in Chinese for the Yuan Dynasty, Khubilai's house in China.²⁴⁵ It is obvious that the death of a notable leader like Genghis Khan in the first half of the thirteenth century created a power vacuum, and composing a dynastic history became inevitable because it would make a heritage and help keep his legacy among his successors. Genghis Khan's rapid and vast expansion toward the West brought sudden fame and serious control to himself

²³⁸ Mária Ivanics, "Das Neugefundene Altan Deft̄er? Textkritische Untersuchungen Zum Dāft̄ar-i Cinggis Nāmā," *Studia Uralo-Altaica* 39, (01, 1997): 127, <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/das-neugefundene-altan-defter-textkritische/docview/2379616874/se-2>.

²³⁹ Ivanics, "Das Neugefundene Altan Deft̄er? Textkritische Untersuchungen Zum Dāft̄ar-i Cinggis Nāmā," 129.

²⁴⁰ David Morgan, *The Mongols*, (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 11.

²⁴¹ Morgan, *The Mongols*, 11-12.

²⁴² Ivanics, "Das Neugefundene Altan Deft̄er? Textkritische Untersuchungen Zum Dāft̄ar-i Cinggis Nāmā," 127.

²⁴³ "Am Anfang des 14. Jahrhunderts befand sich das Altan Dāft̄ar im Besitz der Ilkhaniden, wie Rasid ad-Din in seinem monumentalen Werk *Jāmi-et-tevārih* berichtet." ("Rashid al-Din states in his monumental work that *Altan Dabtar* was possessed by the Ilkhanids in the beginning of 14th century"). I would like to thank Ülgen Andaç Akın for this translation.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 9.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 9-11.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 12.

and his successors for the empire. Therefore, in order to keep the empire united and reinforce sovereignty, it was inevitable that a mythological or semi-human semi-divine figure, Genghis Khan, would be created. Carrying his memory and maintaining imperial control in the aftermath of his death was reinforced by dynastical records and history writing. The *Altan Defter*, *Secret History of the Mongols*, and *Sheng-wu chin- cheng-lu* are the primary examples of this history writing tradition of the Mongols.

The Ilkhans, as heirs of Genghis in West Asia, maintained the tradition. The Ilkhanid governor of Baghdad and historian Ata al-Din Ata Malik Juwayni wrote a book named *Tarikh-i Jahan-Gusha* (*The History of the World Conqueror*). Juwayni (d. 1283) completed his book between 1252 and 1260s, and it explains the events from Genghis Khan to the first Ilkhan Hulagu Khan.²⁴⁶ This significant work had two main functions. First, Juwayni started to compose the book during the foundation of the Ilkhanids, and he witnessed the sack of Baghdad and the Muslims' reaction to the Mongols and the Mongol rule. Therefore, it has a remedial function on one hand. Secondly, Juwayni influenced the following history books written in the Islamic lands, popularized history writing, and promoted imperial propaganda. For instance, he commissioned Ibn Bibi (d. after 1285), who was a historian at the Seljuk court, to write the history of the Seljuks from their conquest of Rum and onwards, *al- Avamir al- 'aliyye fi'l-umuri'l- al- 'aliyya* (*The Most Exalted Orders Regarding the Most Sublime Affairs*).²⁴⁷ Ibn Bibi provides the only Seljuk Sultanate of Rum history under Ilkhanid rule. The work was completed around 1282 and remained one of the main sources for the history of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum.²⁴⁸

In addition to Mongolian and Ilkhanid works, Arab historian Ibn al-Athir's (d. 1233) famous chronicle *Al-Kami'l fit-Tarikh*, (*The Complete History*) is another key source that stands out for the thirteenth century. Ibn al-Athir's father was in the service of the Zangids.²⁴⁹ His chronicle begins from the world's creation and reaches in the 1230s. The text includes Persian and Roman histories, the life of the prophet Muhammad, the Crusades, and the Seljuks; it also carries the Hebraic tradition until the period of the

²⁴⁶ John Andrew Boyle, "Introduction," In *The History of the World Conqueror* by Ala-ad-Din 'Ata Malik Juvaini translated from the text of Mirza Muhammad Qazvini, vol.1, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958), xxv.

²⁴⁷ Ibn Bibi El Huseyin B. Muhammed B. Ali El-Caferi Er-Rugadi, *El-Evamirü'l- Ala'iyye F'il Umuri'l- Ala'iyye Selçukname*, trans. Mürsel Öztürk, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2020), 3 and 5.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 9-10.

²⁴⁹ D. S. Richards, *The Annals of the Saljuq Turks: Selections from Al-Kamil Fi'l-Ta'Rikh of Ibn Al-Athir*, eds. Carole Hillenbrand, (Oxford: Routledge, 2002), 1.

emergence of Islam.²⁵⁰ *Al-Kami'l fit-Tarikh* was completed around 1230-31, and Ibn al-Athir used Tabari's *History* (completed in 915) as a primary source for his work.²⁵¹ Moreover, Rashid al-Din indicates in *Jami al-Tawarikh* that Ibn al-Athir tried to write his history chronologically. However, he could not order stories and rulers in a true sequence.²⁵² Therefore, it is understood that Rashid al-Din had the opportunity to read *Al-Kami'l fit-Tarikh* and comment on it. Considering the history writing of the Islamic world in Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and Iran, it is possible to say that before Rashid al-Din's *Jami al-Tawarikh*, an advanced level of history writing had been developed through the thirteenth century. Thus, these chronicles written by Muslim scholars paved the way for Rashid al-Din to compile histories at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

Besides the Mongolian and Islamic sources, chronicles were also popular in the Armenian and Byzantine worlds. As the literature review and Chapter 2 mentioned, Armenian accounts recorded events in the thirteenth century, such as bishop Stepanos, Sebastatsi, Simbat Sparapet, Hethum II, and Nerses Palients.²⁵³ The importance of the Armenian accounts is that they explain the phases of the Eurasian and Anatolian conquests by the Mongols and Mongols' policy towards themselves and other Christian communities. These chroniclers give modern historians their points of view about the Mongols.

Moreover, the Byzantine Empire is well-known for its tradition of historical records. These records are significant in terms of their capacity to provide sources for the Roman, Byzantine, and Crusader histories and give an idea about the general structure of a chronicle. The ones that Rashid al-Din obtained might have guided him for *Jami al-Tawarikh*. The most outstanding Byzantine chronicles can be listed as *Vaticanus Graecus 163* by John Kinnamos, covering the reigns of John II and Manuel I and years between 1118 and 1176²⁵⁴, *Chronographia en Synopsei*, "Summary of Chronicle," by Joel includes from the creation of Adam to the sack of Constantinople in 1204²⁵⁵. Also, the chronicles explaining the years 1204 and onwards are *The History of George Akropolites* (1203-

²⁵⁰ Richards, *The Annals of the Saljuq Turks*, 4.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 4.

²⁵² Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh*, 151.

²⁵³ Galtsyan, *Ermeni Kaynaklarına Göre Moğollar*, 14.

²⁵⁴ Leonora Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing, with the assistance of David Harrisville, Irina Tamarkina, and Charlotte Whatley*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 186

²⁵⁵ Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 216.

1261), which focuses on the history of Nicaea,²⁵⁶ *The History* by George Pachymeres (1260-1307),²⁵⁷ *The History of the Romans* by Nikephoros Gregoras (1204-1359),²⁵⁸ *The Chronographia of Ephraim* (from Caligula to 1261), *Constantine Akropolites the Grand Lagothete* (from Aeneas to 1323),²⁵⁹ *The Chronicle of Morea*, covering the history of Frankish Peloponnese and Principality of Morea.²⁶⁰ This chronicle is more significant in terms of its similarity with the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. *The Chronicle of Morea* was written at the beginning of the fourteenth century, just like *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Also, it begins with the sack of Constantinople, and its aim in writing is to explain the events of the Franks' rule in Greece and the Crusaders' reign over the island of Morea.²⁶¹ Therefore, it has similar goals to the *Jami al-Tawarikh* as Mongols were the newcomers to Iran and its surroundings in the thirteenth century, just like the Latins in Morea and Constantinople. Moreover, *The Chronicle of Morea* was written in four different languages: Greek, French, Aragonese, and Italian, while *Jami al-Tawarikh* was copied in Persian and Arabic each year.²⁶² Therefore, this chronicle is quite a significant example of the rising trend of new historiography not just in Asia, the Islamic world, or Anatolia but also in the West and Europe. These Byzantine chronicles were written in the second half of the twelfth and in the thirteenth centuries. A significant aspect of the chronicles is that they have a long tradition of writing history, and they generally designate a time period beginning from the creation of the earth or Adam and Eve to the Byzantine emperor living at the time. The contents generate a basic formula that is repeated in later chronicles in the Byzantine peripheries. *Jami al-Tawarikh*'s explanation for the origins of the Turks from Noah's son Yafeth appears to be a similar kind of creation myth based on an Abrahamic starting point for his history.²⁶³ In this way, perhaps the Byzantine chronicles might have provided models for Rashid al-Din regarding format, contents, and goals and transferred the Byzantine legacy of history and dynastic writing as well.

In addition to the Armenian and Byzantine sources, Syriac sources are invaluable for understanding the Ilkhanid history and providing sources of information about the

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 226.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 237.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 243.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 252.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 254.

²⁶¹ Teresa Shawcross, *The Chronicle of Morea: Historiography in Crusader Greece*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 22-23.

²⁶² Shawcross, *The Chronicle of Morea: Historiography in Crusader Greece*, 24.

²⁶³ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami 'u't-Tawarikh*, 27.

thirteenth century. Bar Hebraeus, also known as Ibn al-Ibri or Abu Farac, was a leading Syriac historian, physician, and theologian, and he is famous for his *The Chronographia*.²⁶⁴ His father was a Meletine (from present-day Malatya) Jewish physician who converted to Christianity and was commissioned as a medical doctor for a Mongolian commander in 1243.²⁶⁵ Considering this, the origins and the household of Bar Hebraeus lived with and his past in Meletine, which was a frontier for many empires and had a geo-strategic position, perhaps provided him with multiple perspectives for historical analysis. His *Chronographia* covers the history from Adam to Moses, kings of Iran, Babylonia, Meds, Roman Emperors, Arab sovereigns, the Crusaders, Genghis Khan, and his successors, the Latin sack of Constantinople, and the sack of Baghdad by Hulagu and the Ilkhanid rulers until Gaykhatu.²⁶⁶ He wrote his book in Syriac and finalized it around the 1280s.²⁶⁷ He started to translate it into Arabic before his death in 1286 in Maragha.²⁶⁸ Bar Hebraeus has many similarities with Rashid al-Din; for instance, they both had Jewish origins; in spite of joining different religions, they wrote theological books, interacted with the Mongols, and wrote histories. Considering that Bar Hebraeus spent his last years in Tabriz and Maragha and passed away in 1286,²⁶⁹ it is possible that they met each other, or Rashid al-Din probably saw or knew his *Chronographia*.

The chronicles mentioned above significantly reflect the political atmosphere and breaking points in the thirteenth century. Moreover, they have created a tradition in medieval historiography. The renowned vizier Rashid al-Din Fadlallah possibly obtained some of them and made use of them as references in his monumental work *Jami al-Tawarikh*.

Given that Rashid al-Din's words at the head of the chapter that were recorded in *Jami al-Tawarikh*, he highlights the "reliability" of the sources. His journey of the gathering of the histories, which is an exact translation of the *Jami* (gathering) *al-Tawarikh* (of histories), is understood to be based on a meticulous work that has been made by examining various medieval sources, as he states that "...from what reliable

²⁶⁴ Abdülkerim Özeydin, *İbnü'l İbri*, TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2000), <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ibnul-ibri>.

²⁶⁵ Özeydin, *İbnü'l İbri*. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ibnul-ibri>.

²⁶⁶ Gregory Abu'l Farac (Bar Hebraeus), "İçerik (Content)," *Abu'l Farac Tarihi*, trans. from Assyrian to English by Ernest A. Wallis Budge and from English to Turkish by Ömer Rıza Doğrul, vol.I-II (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1950).

²⁶⁷ Abu'l Farac, *Abu'l Farac Tarihi*, 26.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 26-27.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 25-28.

people have said and from reliable standard books...” His indication of this matter is valuable regarding the need for objectivity in historiography, and it serves as a type of validation by demonstrating his reliability as a writer as well.

3.2 Sources of *Jami al-Tawarikh*

The *Jami al-Tawarikh* has three volumes, and some subsections are counted as one volume; therefore, the text is sometimes discussed as consisting of four volumes. The first volume was dedicated to Ghazan Khan, and thus, it is called *Tarikh-i Mubarak-i Ghazani*.²⁷⁰ It contains the history of the Mongols and is divided into two sections. The first part includes the history of the Turkic and Mongolian tribes, genealogies, and legends. The second section is composed of the history of Genghis Khan and his successors until Ghazan.²⁷¹ Volume two has two parts: the life of Oljaytu Khan until the time of the texts’ composition (not survived), and the history of the non-Mongol peoples of Eurasia, which has two sections. The first section explains the ancient kings of Iran and Arabia, and the second section is a compilation of the history of Prophet Muhammad, the caliphate, the post-caliphate dynasties of Iran, the Turks, Chinese, Jews, Franks, and Indians.²⁷² Volume three was a geography book that is not extant today. It is thought that this volume was first composed in Persian and translated into Arabic.²⁷³

There are speculations about the original language of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Since we have some surviving copies today, it is unknown whether the texts were written in Mongolian, Turkish, Persian, or Arabic. In the *waqfiyya* of Rab-i Rashidi, Rashid al-Din indicates that *Jami al-Tawarikh* was copied in Persian and Arabic every year.²⁷⁴ Zeki Velidi Togan claimed that the *Jami al-Tawarikh* was first written in Mongolian, and later, it was translated and edited into Persian. His claim is based on a passage in the Nur-i Osmaniye fragment²⁷⁵ of the text and translated into English.

May God make the rule (of Sultan Uljaytu) eternal. In protecting science, he has shown many favors to his servant as this latter has completed his books, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, the books of

²⁷⁰ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami 'u't-Tawarikh*, 17-19.

²⁷¹ Blair, 23.

²⁷² Ibid., 23.

²⁷³ A. Zeki Velidi Togan, “The Composition of the History of the Mongols by Rashid al-Din,” *Central Asiatic Journal* 7, no.1 (1962), 63-64.

²⁷⁴ Blair, “Appendix 1: Articles of Endowment of the Rab-i Rashidi, by Rashiduddin Fazlullah,” *A Compendium of Chronicles*, 114. (This part of the *Waqfiyya* is derived from Blair’s book *Compendium of Chronicle’s* appendix 1, which W.M. Thackston translated).

²⁷⁵ Nur-i Osmaniye no. 3415 f. 144b.

Taudihat (books which are known otherwise under the name of *Majmu'a-i Rashidiya*), the book of *Miftah al-Tafasir*, the exegesis of the Koran, and finally the *Fava'id Sultaniya* and some other books in Mongolian, all of which are dedicated to his blessed name.²⁷⁶

What Togan stressed might be possible because Ghazan must have been inspired by the *Secret History of Mongols*, written circa 1240 for the royal family of Genghis.²⁷⁷ Both texts, *Secret History of the Mongols* and *Tarikh-i Mubarak-i Ghazani* (*Jami al-Tawarikh*'s first volume), had the same purpose of recording family history and representing their strong roots. Considering that the *Secret History of the Mongols* was written in Mongolian and transcribed in Chinese, it is attainable that *Jami al-Tawarikh* was first written in Mongolian and then transcribed in Persian, which was a dominant language in Iran, just as Chinese in the Khubilai's court. Moreover, considering that Rashid al-Din would have used *Secret History* as a model for his work and, as mentioned above, he had an opportunity to look at the *Altan Defter* and utilize it as a primary source, it is not unlikely that the original language of the work was in Mongolian. On the other hand, the vizier mentions in his *waqfiyya* that he produces manuscripts in Persian and Arabic each year, but he does not mention in which language he originally wrote the *Jami al-Tawarikh*.²⁷⁸ Hence, beyond the scope of this thesis, more research is needed on the question of the text's original language of composition.

Given the emulation of preceding literary endeavors by the Ilkhanids, exploring the source materials that informed Rashid al-Din's composition of the *Compendium of Chronicles* becomes imperative. It is asserted that the genesis of the initial volume, *Tarikh-i Mubarak-i Ghazani*, owes a debt to Baydawi (d. 1319), an Iranian jurist and theologian renowned for his *Nizam al-Tawarikh* completed in the 1280s.²⁷⁹ Moreover, the foundational segments of this volume are believed to have drawn inspiration from the *Altan Defter*.²⁸⁰ Furthermore, Rashid al-Din's elucidation of non-Mongol societies purportedly drew from the eleventh-century scholarship of Abu'l Rayhan al-Biruni

²⁷⁶ Togan, "The Composition of the History of the Mongols by Rashid al-Din," 63-64. (Togan's translation).

²⁷⁷ Ahmet Temir, *Moğolların Gizli Tarihi*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2023), XV.

²⁷⁸ Blair, "Appendix 1: Articles of Endowment of the Rab-i Rashidi, by Rashiduddin Fazlullah," *A Compendium of Chronicles*, 114. (This part of the *Waqfiyya* is derived from Blair's book *Compendium of Chronicle's* appendix 1, which W.M. Thackston translated).

²⁷⁹ Kamola, 94.

²⁸⁰ Ramazan Şeşen, "Cami'ut-Tevarih," *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/camiut-tevarih>.

(d.1048), particularly his *Tarikh al-Hind (History of India)*.²⁸¹ Additionally, the cosmopolitan insights of Nasir al-Din Tusi (d.1274), vizier to Hulagu Khan and celebrated mathematician, contributed to Rashid al-Din's portrayal of Chinese affairs, leveraging data sourced from the Chinese astronomers employed at the Maragha observatory.²⁸² Noteworthy among Rashid al-Din's contemporaneous informants was Abd-Allah Qashani (d.1335), a historian during Oljaytu's reign (r. 1304-1316).²⁸³ Ghazan Khan's directive to Qashani to compile a comprehensive world history, resulting in the *Collected Histories*, underscores his significance.²⁸⁴ Subsequently, Rashid al-Din entrusted Qashani with chronicling Oljaytu's biography, yet upon Rashid al-Din's demise in 1318, Qashani asserted sole authorship of the *Compendium of Chronicles*.²⁸⁵ Kamola conjectures that Rashid al-Din's multifaceted responsibilities, including theological pursuits and Rab-i Rashidi administration, might have precluded him from single-handedly crafting the "world history" segment merely three years later, thus lending credence to Qashani's pivotal role.²⁸⁶ However, the veracity of Qashani's claim remains enigmatic, despite Rashid al-Din's reliance on his expertise and commissioning of Oljaytu's biography, leaving uncertainty regarding the attribution of authorship.

3.3 *Copies of Jami al-Tawarikh*

The fragmentary manuscripts had a long journey and are fortunate to survive until today. In the present day, the Arabic copies are preserved in the Library of the University of Edinburgh (MS20) and The Royal Asiatic Society as a part of the Khalili Collection (MSS727) or the Khalili folios.²⁸⁷ The two fragments share the same volumes but different pages, although there is speculation about this.²⁸⁸ The Edinburgh copy has 151 folios, and 70 of them are illustrated, with dimensions of 42x32 cm, featuring a written space of 37x25 cm, hosting 35 lines per page scripted in *Naskhi* script.²⁸⁹ This copy is derived from the second volume and contains the "History of pre-Islamic Persia and

²⁸¹ Kamola, 95.

²⁸² Ibid., 99.

²⁸³ P. P. Soucek, "Abu'l- Qasem 'Abdallah Kasani," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, I/4, pp. 362-363; an updated version is available online at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/abul-qasem-abdallah-kasani-historian-of-the-reign-of-the-il-khan-olaytu-r>.

²⁸⁴ Kamola, 102.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 102.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 102.

²⁸⁷ Blair, 16.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 23.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 17.

Arabia.”²⁹⁰ The Khalili Collection has 59 folios, and 35 of them are illustrated; its page size is 43.5 by 30 cm, which is slightly different from the Edinburgh version.²⁹¹ Both sections date back to 706 A.H./ 1306-1307 A.D. or 714 A.H. / 1314-1315 A.D..²⁹² According to Sheila Blair, the Arabic manuscript was kept in Herat by the fifteenth century, and it was probably taken as war booty by the Timurids during their campaigns in Iran.²⁹³ After the Timurids’ preservation, the manuscript passed to the Mughals in India during the rule of Akbar (r.1556-1605).²⁹⁴ It was divided into two parts in 1175 A.H./ 1761 A.D. One part, corresponding to the Edinburgh copy, was presented to someone called Ali Ahmad Araf Sahib.²⁹⁵ The other part of the book was the Khalili copy; however, after the division, the Khalili part of the section was not well-preserved.²⁹⁶ The manuscript sections remained in India until the nineteenth century. One part was obtained by the British Colonel John Baillie (1772-1838), who was a servant of the East India Company, and he brought the fragmentary manuscript to Edinburgh in 1876.²⁹⁷ Meanwhile, the Khalili section was taken by another servant, John Staples Harriot, in 1813.²⁹⁸ Subsequently, Harriot transported the Khalili manuscript to England, where it came into the possession of Major General Thomas Gordon.²⁹⁹ Later, Gordon gave the fragments to the Royal Asiatic Society in 1841. Following this, in 1948, the Royal Asiatic Society temporarily housed the manuscript at the British Museum and Library until its eventual auction in 1980. Procured by the Rashidiyyah Foundation in Geneva, the manuscript became their possession. Finally, in 1990, it was acquired by the Khalili Collection.³⁰⁰

The Persian copies of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, MS1653, and MS1654, are housed in the Topkapı Palace Library. MS1653, dating to 713-714 A.H. / 1314 A.D., spans 435 pages with a page size of 54.1x38.³⁰¹ The written area varies from 33.5x27 to 37x25.3,

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 21.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 23-24

²⁹² Ibid., 21.

²⁹³ Ibid., 31.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 31.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 34.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 34.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 34.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 36.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 36.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 36

³⁰¹ Zeren Tanındı and Filiz Çağman, “Topkapı Sarayı’nın Kitap Hazinesinin İki Câmi ‘ü’t- Tevârîh Nüshası Hakkında (H.1653-H.1654),” 194.

accommodating 35 lines of text.³⁰² Notably, it features 143 illustrations, with 68 rendered in the distinctive Ilkhanid style.³⁰³ The content of MS1653 comprises sections authored by Rashid al-Din in the early fourteenth century, intertwined with segments from the fifteenth century commissioned by Shahrukh Khan (r.1405-1447).³⁰⁴ The thematic coverage encompasses a wide array of topics, including the creation of humanity, pre-Islamic Iran, Prophet Muhammad, the caliphates, and various dynasties such as the Ghaznavid, Seljuks, Khwarazmshahs, and Salghurids. Moreover, it focuses on the histories of regions such as Maghreb, Egypt, Ismailis, Oghuz, China, Efren, and India.³⁰⁵

On the other hand, MS1654, dating to AH 717/AD 1317, spans 350 pages, with a slightly larger page size of 54.7x38 and a written area of 36.2x25.4.³⁰⁶ This copy features 204 illustrations and is structured similarly to MS1653, with thematic sections encompassing the creation of humanity, the first prophets, pre-Islamic Iran, Prophet Muhammad, and various dynasties, including the Ghaznavid, Seljuks, Khwarazmshahs, and Oghuz. Notably, the majority of the sections were penned during Rashid al-Din's tenure in the early fourteenth century.³⁰⁷ Both manuscripts bear pages tinged with a pinkish hue, reflecting their historical character and preservation over the centuries.³⁰⁸

In the early fifteenth century, the manuscript arrived in Timurid territory, likely through the Jalayrids, and found its way to the scholarly circle of Iskandar Sultan in the Fars region.³⁰⁹ Acquired by the Timurid historian Hafiz-i Abru (d.1430), it was later taken to Herat for restoration, overseen by Hafiz-i Abru from 1426 to 1430.³¹⁰ The restoration involved replacing missing pages with Hafiz-i Abru's text and filling blank spaces for illustrations by Herat artists.³¹¹ Concurrently, the original pages and illustrations underwent restoration in the same workshop.³¹² MS1654 arrived in Fars alongside MS1653, and artists in Shiraz added paintings to vacant spaces. After relocation to Herat, the remaining illustrations were likely based on original sketches.³¹³ The dedication to

³⁰² Tanındı and Çağman, 194.

³⁰³ Ibid., 197.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 193.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 193.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 199.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 199.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 194.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 188.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 188.

³¹¹ Ibid., 188.

³¹² Ibid., 188.

³¹³ Ibid., 188-189.

Farhad Khan Karamanlı (d.1559) hints at Safavid-era repairs. The presence of the Shaykh Safi shrine's *waqf* seal suggests the manuscript's presence in Ardabil in the early seventeenth century.³¹⁴ By the early eighteenth century, both manuscripts were housed in the Topkapı Palace treasury.³¹⁵ They were later transferred to the Yıldız Palace bindery and then returned to Topkapı Palace after the evacuation of Yıldız Palace in 1909. MS1653 was divided into four volumes in 1970 for conservation, with the first volume rebound at the Yıldız Palace bindery.³¹⁶

The *Jami al-Tawarikh* is a product of long years of Mongol interactions with the West and East. As a historical text, its predecessors and contemporaries provided a good amount of knowledge. The political atmosphere, Rashid al-Din's multi-sided life as a vizier, and the changing face of the Ilkhans as the new Muslim rulers in the region in spite of their pagan and Buddhist background prepared a basis for the composition of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. The production of the manuscripts in Persian and Arabic, the dissemination of these copies, and the journey of the fragments of the manuscripts through centuries make this work unique. Therefore, Rab-i Rashidi, as the place of the production of *Jami al-Tawarikh*, is of great importance in terms of understanding the circumstances and place in which the work was written and produced.

3.4 *The Atelier of Rab-i Rashidi and Manuscript Production*

Rashid al-Din constructed different pious foundations in different places in the Ilkhanid state.³¹⁷ The largest one was the complex of Rab-i Rashidi, which was located in the eastern suburb of Tabriz in the north of the Mihran River.³¹⁸ Thankfully, its *waqfiyya*, which dates back to 709 A.H. /1309 A.D., gives detailed information about the complex, which helps us reconstruct the foundation's activities.³¹⁹ There were some appendixes in the *waqfiyya* in the years 713 A.H. /1314 A.D., 715 A.H./1315 A.D., and

³¹⁴ Ibid., 189.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 189.

³¹⁶ Ibid., 189.

³¹⁷ Sheila S. Blair, "Rab-i Rashidi," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, online edition, 2016, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/rab-e-rashidi>.

³¹⁸ Blair, "Rab-i Rashidi," *Encyclopedia Iranica*.

³¹⁹ Nourane Ben Azzouna, "Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh al-Hamadhānī's Manuscript Production Project in Tabriz Reconsidered," *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th–15th Century Tabriz*, eds., Judith Pfeiffer, (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 188-189.

716 A.H./ 1316 A.D..³²⁰ The construction of the complex started before 700 A.H. /1300 A.D. and most part of the construction was completed until 709 A.H. /1310 A.D..³²¹ Rab-i Rashidi Complex consisted of three parts: Rabaz-i Rashidi, Shahrastan-i Rashidi, and Rab-i Rashidi.³²² Rabaz-i Rashidi is a settlement located next to Rab-i Rashidi. It consisted of Turkish slaves and their households, caretakers, and security guards. In other words, it was a private settlement for the people and their families who worked in the Rab-i Rashidi.³²³ Shahrastan-i Rashidi was a place where the city of Tabriz and Rab-i Rashidi met with the outer world; in short, it was a neighborhood that assembled socio-economic buildings such as *dar al-Masakin* (almshouse), *matbah* (soup kitchen), *bazaar*, etc.³²⁴ Finally, Rab-i Rashidi was the main section of the complex and buildings were connected to each other through passageways and *dihliz* (corridors).³²⁵ The buildings were enlightened with firebrands, and access to water was provided through water canals for agriculture and *imarat*.³²⁶ There were twenty-six units in the complex, such as *rawda* (garden), mosques or masjids, madrasa, soup kitchens, houses belonging to the officials, teachers, slaves, etc., orphanages, libraries, *khanakah*, hospice, hospital, pharmacy, stores, *hammam*, etc.³²⁷ According to the *waqfiyya*, the function of the complex was divided into four: inheritance, commemoration, piety, and charity.³²⁸ Sheila Blair presents a “Schematic Reconstructure of the “Site Plan of the Rab-i Rashidi” in her article.³²⁹ (Fig. 3.8) While the *waqfiyya* of the complex describes its architecture and section, it also explains the occupational groups and their wages in the complex.³³⁰ Moreover, the *waqfiyya* explains the process of manuscript production, the names of the books, the number of copies and their languages, the places that the books were sent, how long book production took, the meticulous selection of the artists, the judgment of the artists in the case of any mistake, information about the materials used for the paper and binding, and

³²⁰ Osman G. Özgüdenli, “Bir İlhanlı Şehir Modeli: Rab’-i Reşidi’de Meslekler, Görevliler ve Ücretler,” Osmanlı Öncesi ile Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet Dönemlerinde Esnaf ve Ekonomi Semineri, May 9-10, 2022, İstanbul Üniversitesi Tarih Araştırma Merkezi, I, İstanbul 2003,109.

³²¹ Özgüdenli, “Bir İlhanlı Şehir Modeli: Rab’-i Reşidi’de Meslekler, Görevliler ve Ücretler,” 108.

³²² Ibid., 109.

³²³ Ibid., 109.

³²⁴ Ibid., 110.

³²⁵ Ibid., 110.

³²⁶ Ibid., 110.

³²⁷ Ibid., 111-115.

³²⁸ Blair, “Rab-i Rashidi,” *Encyclopedia Iranica*.

³²⁹ Blair, “Ilkhanid Architecture and Society: An Analysis of the Endowment Deed of the Rab’-i Rashīdī,” 78.

³³⁰ Ibid., 86-87.

the responsibilities of the superintendent and his deputy, etc.³³¹ According to the *waqfiyya*, the manuscripts that were produced in the Rab-i Rashidi as follows:

- a. *Majmu'a-i Rashidiyya (Rashidian Collection)*: The manuscript consists of four books: *Tawzihat (Explanations)*, *Miftahu't- Tafasir (The Key to Commentaries)*, *Sultaniyya (Royal Treatise)*, and *Latayif (al-haqayia) (Subtle Verities)*
- b. *Jami al-Tawarikh (Gatherer of Histories)*
- c. *Asar-u Ahya (Monuments and Living Things)*
- d. *Bayan al-Haqayiq (Expositions of Verities)*
- e. *Tahqiq al- Mabahis (Verification of Topics)*
- f. *As'ila-u Ajwiba-u Taliqat (Questions, Answers, and Comments)*³³²

All the manuscripts above had two copies in Persian and Arabic. Both copies were sent to important centers of the medieval Islamic regions according to the region's lingua franca.³³³ The complex of Rab-i Rashidi was plundered following the execution of the vizier Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah in 1318.³³⁴ Rashid al-Din's meticulous explanation of the book production and its phases enlightens how the works were conducted in the complex. Since hardly anything has remained, *waqfiyya* provides invaluable evidence as a written source. Moreover, the existence of the *waqfiyya* is a great opportunity for historians and art historians to contemplate Rab-i Rashidi.

³³¹ Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles*, 114.

³³² Ibid., 114.

³³³ Ibid., 114.

³³⁴ Ibid., 31.

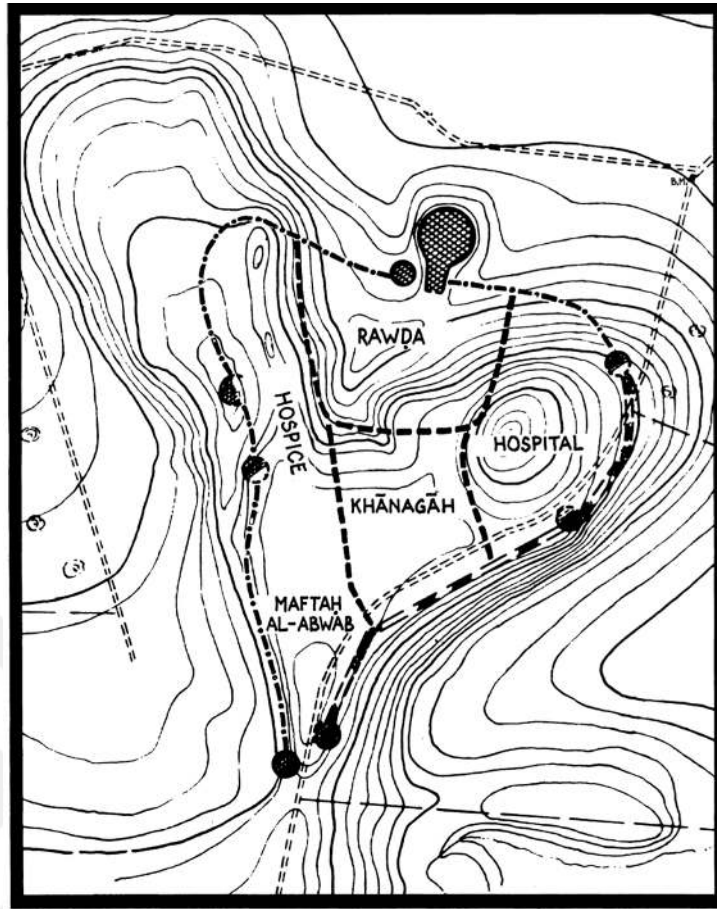


Figure 3.8: Schematic Reconstructure of the Site Plan of the Rab-i Rashidi (Sheila Blair, “Ilkhanid Architecture and Society: An Analysis of the Endowment Deed of the Rab-i Rashidi” in Iran, Vol.22, (1984),78).

Considering the profound impact of Ilkhanid history and heritage, shaped by the Khans’ interactions with non-Muslim communities, diplomatic relations with neighboring kingdoms and empires, and their inclusive approach to different religions, the motivation behind the compilation of world history becomes increasingly apparent. The conversion to Islam brought about significant transformations in the culture of the ruling class and the Turco-Mongol entourage, altering their names, titles, and ideologies while preserving certain traditions. This process, largely driven by political considerations, aimed at legitimizing their authority and securing their future legacy in the region by integrating with the local cultures. The synthesis of Mongolian culture with the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural structure of the Ilkhanid lands fostered rich interactions with other regions and peripheries. Furthermore, the continued relations with Khubilai’s China ensured continuity in relations with the East. These factors contributed

to a surge in patronage activities, reinforcing the Ilkhanid mission through artistic endeavors epitomized by creating the complex of Rab-i Rashidi. Rashid al-Din's remarkable life journey, marked by his conversion to Islam and extraordinary rise in status, uniquely embodied and advanced this mission. Thus, it is inevitable that Rashid al-Din's seminal work, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, was meticulously written and enriched with illustrations. Having established the historical and contextual background, the subsequent chapter will focus on the religious representations within the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, shedding light on its iconography that had been generated under cultural and stylistic exchange with neighboring communities.



Chapter 4: CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND ICONOGRAPHIC BORROWINGS IN *JAMI' AL-TAWARIKH*

*The reason I have said all this is that
when this poor one was ordered
to compose the Compendium of Chronicles,
I copied out everything I found written
in the well-known books of every nation,
everything that was known to every tribe
through uninterrupted tradition,
everything that the wise and learned of every group
reported according to their belief...*³³⁵

-Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah

The thesis' main focus is the cultural exchange and the iconographic borrowings of the Ilkhanids from the Christians over the illustrations of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. However, since the Christian world extends from the Far East to Europe and between Kipchak steppes to Ethiopia in the medieval world, it is vital to designate what this chapter refers to with the word "Christians" or "Christian communities." First, considering the journey of the Ilkhanids from Mongolian lands to Iran, Iraq, and Eastern Anatolia, the Christian impact will be discussed through this geography. Second, due to the vast size of this geography and the intricate details involving each community, I will mainly focus on the art of the Armenian and Anatolian parts of the Byzantine Empire. Since the topic covers mostly Central and Eastern Anatolia and Iran, I would like to emphasize that the Georgians and Syriacs will not be part of this thesis, although they had critical roles in shaping the cultural, artistic, and political sphere at the time.

The Ilkhanids absorbed and digested all novelties coming from the Christian culture within a short time. Therefore, probing at the background of the relationship between the Mongols and Christians in the first half of the thirteenth century may help better analyze the Ilkhanids' borrowed iconography. Cultural exchange between the Mongols and Christians started as early as the Mongolians' leaving their mainland and expansion to the West under the leadership of Genghis Khan. Naturally, they encounter people from different religions and thoughts, such as Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, and Islam, and nations like Afghans, Persians, Arabs, Slavs, etc. After the election of

³³⁵ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh*, 8.

Ögedai in the *Kurultay* of 1229, his army arrived and captured the Caucasus between 1230 and 1240, and the Mongol's encounter and interaction commenced with the Anatolian Christians. After Ögedai's death in 1241, his wife Töregene Khatun stayed as regency for five years, and she helped his son reign as the successor in the *Kurultay* of 1246.³³⁶

During these years, it is known that the Mongolian Empire was in contact with Europe and welcomed the letters and missionaries in their court. In 1245, Pope Innocentius IV sent a letter to the Mongols with an envoy, friar John of Pian de Carpine, to ask for the Mongols to give up campaigning against the Christians and learn their intentions for them.³³⁷ Carpine arrived at the *Kurultay* in August, delivered the letter to Güyük, and received his renowned letter to the Pope about the Mongols' summoning them to subjugate themselves. Carpine explains Güyük's interest and behavior to the Christians as follows:

Also, Christians who were of the emperor's household told us they firmly believed that he would become a Christian and that they had an obvious sign of this because he himself supported Christian clerics and paid their expenses, and he always had a Christian choir before his largest tent, and they sang publicly and openly, and rang the hours according the Greek custom, as other Christians do, whenever there is a large gathering of Tartars or other foreigners, which the other dukes do not do.³³⁸

Considering Carpine's narrative, expansion of the Mongols, and the multi-religious structure of the Mongol House, as mentioned in Chapter 2, it is obvious that the court, servants, and the army were already intertwined with each other and were familiar with the Christian faith. According to Carpine's statement above, Güyük has the choir in front of the largest tent that sings publicly and rings the hours, which gives a clear opinion about the Mongols' acceptance of the Christians and their religious practices. Moreover, allowing Christians to satisfy their faithful desires publicly is interesting, and it shows the Mongols' curiosity and sympathy towards Christians despite having occupied their lands in recent times. In addition to these, Carpine's mention of the religious performance of the Christians, just as the "Greek customs," might raise questions such as "Have some

³³⁶ Osman G. Özgüdenli, "Ögedey Han, TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2007).

³³⁷ Plano Carpinili Johannes, *Tatarlar Olarak Andığımız Moğolların Tarihi: Bir Papalık Elçisinin Moğolistan Seyahati Gözlemleri 1245-1247*, XXIV, XXIX.

³³⁸ Jackson and Morgan, *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke (1253-1255)*, 114-116.

learned these Orthodox customs from the Greeks or the Greeks themselves been to the Mongol court?” It is possible that the Mongols had ideas about the Greek-Orthodox culture.

After Güyük Khan’s short reign, he passed away in 1248, and in 1251, Möngke Khan was elected as the new Khan in *Kurultay*. In addition to Friar John of Pian de Carpine, Franciscan missionary William of Rubruck was sent by the King of France to the court of Möngke in 1253. William of Rubruck transmits what he saw in the Mongol court as follows:

While we were on our way back, I saw in front of the eastern end of the court, at distance from it of two crossbow shots, a dwelling on top of which stood a little cross. At this I concluded to my great joy that some Christian element was to be found here, and went in boldly, to find and altar which had been really beautifully decked out. Embroidered on cloth of gold were the images of the Savior, the Blessed Virgin, St. John the Baptist and two angels, with the contours of the bodies and of the garments picked out in pearls; and in its center, and many other ornaments, and an oil lamp with eight lights burning in front of the altar. An Armenian monk sat there, swarthy and lank, wearing a tunic of the roughest hair-cloth that reached half way down his shins; over it he had a black silk cloak padded with squirrel fur, and beneath the hair-cloth he was girded with iron.³³⁹

This statement of William of Rubruck supports Carpine’s account regarding the freedom of the Christians in the Mongol court. Moreover, the richly ornamented instruments and the presence of the Armenian monk are obvious proof of the Anatolian Christians’ entity in Mongolia. Considering that Hulagu established the Ilkhanids in 1256 and the Armenians were one of the significant communities for the Ilkhanids as neighbors, allies, and artists, it is important to highlight that before Möngke commissioned his brother Hulagu to go to the West, the cultural and political background had already been made in Karakorum. To support these, Rubruck indicates there were Armenian translators in the court: “...since the translators had been Armenians from Greater Armenia, who loathe the Saracens bitterly, that from hatred of the Saracens and to do them harm they had given a more forceful rendering just as suited them.”³⁴⁰ Here, it is significant to emphasize that the Armenians were accepted as translators in the Mongol court and used their language knowledge for political benefits. Thus, it can be

³³⁹ William of Rubruck, *The Journey of William of Rubruck to Eastern Parts of the World (1253-1255)*, 173-174.

³⁴⁰ William of Rubruck, 171.

said that the Armenians impacted the political actions, and their similar communication continued with the Ilkhanids later, against Seljuks and Mamluks as well.

Considering the two European envoys' narratives and the Mongols' reception of them gives an opinion about their relationship with the Christians, particularly the Greeks and Armenians. As discussed in Chapter 2, the presence of the Nestorian Mongol Khatuns might have influenced the welcoming of the Christians as religious, political, and intellectual figures. Since the Mongolians had more flexible attitudes towards other faiths and married women who were not from their beliefs, it is understandable that they allowed Christians in the court. Moreover, it is obvious that the Mongols were already in touch with the Anatolian Christians in the 1240s. Considering the Mongols' contact with the Armenians in the 1240s, despite the first meeting happening via occupation of the Seljuk lands, the battle of Kösedag in 1243, the Mongols brought some to Mongolia and interacted with them in their court.

Hulagu went to Möngke's *Kurultay* in 1253, and Möngke commissioned him to set up campaigns in Luristan and Iraq. In 1256, the Ilkhanid state was founded by Hulagu as a dependent state on the Great Empire, and later the Yuan dynasty of Khubilai, until Ghazan Khan's ascension to the throne in 1294.³⁴¹ As mentioned and discussed in Chapter 2, although Hulagu himself was Buddhist, he was sincere and tolerant of the Christians during his time, and Dokuz Khatun was an influential figure with this understanding.³⁴² It is important to point out that the Ilkhanid region had multi-religious and ethnic structures. Therefore, local Christians lived in Iran just like the Iraqi and Anatolian parts of the empire. According to Mustawfi's work *Nuzhat al-Qulub*, there was a Christian community in Ujan, a district of Tabriz.³⁴³ Since his work was written in 1340, it is clear that even after Ghazan made his capital Tabriz, Islamicated his empire, and demolished non-Muslim sanctuaries, there were still Christian people living after decades of his death. This demonstrates that although the state had shifted in its political actions via Islamization, the alliances with the Armenians and Franks might have been a soft power to keep the local Christian community in its own place.

³⁴¹ Abdülkadir Yuvalı, "Hulagu," TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1998).

³⁴² Yuvalı, "Hulagu."

³⁴³ Hamd-Allah Mustawfi of Qazvini, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat-Al-Qulub Composed by Hamd-Allah Mustawfi of Qazvin in 740 (1340)*, trans. G. Le Strange, (Leyden: E.J. Brill, 1919), 83.

Considering the Khans until Hulagu and the rest of the Ilkhans and their stance on the Christians, it is probable that they were familiar with the Christian narratives. However, since the Ilkhanids were established in a region surrounded by a huge Muslim population, did they have knowledge about Islam? The letter that Hulagu wrote to Malik Nasir of Damascus, which Aksarayi transmits, indicates that Hulagu was aware of Islamic belief as well, and he even used sentences from the Qur'an to make Malik Nasir terrified and yielded to himself.³⁴⁴ Although Anatolia and Iran's demography was quite rich and diverse, the Ilkhanid state was ruling a large population of Muslims as well, and even in the middle of the thirteenth-century of Anatolia, the Mongolian soldiers were converted to Islam, which shows that the political applications were not effective alone³⁴⁵ and exchanging cultures and religion circulation was rapid long before Ghazan's conversion. Thus, it is appropriate to claim that the Ilkhanids had an idea about the tenets and culture of Islam.

Given the cultural and political interactions that happened among the Christians, Muslims, and the Mongols, the history writing tradition in the Mongol court, the Mongols' meeting with the Muslim caliphs through the sack of Baghdad, the presence of the non-Muslim populations in the Ilkhanate region brought an intense cultural impact on the Ilkhanid court. Ghazan, Oljaytu, and Rashid al-Din, who were all converts, were already familiar with the Armenian and Greek-speaking communities and probably had the Christian artists work in the atelier of Rab-i Rashidi in Tabriz. Moreover, as explained in Chapter 3, Rashid al-Din not only worked with world history or dynastic history but also occupied himself with theological works, which required a good knowledge of the religion of Islam. In conclusion, considering these multicultural, multi-ethnicity, and multi-religious structures of the Ilkhanid state, Ilkhanate house, the Ilkhanate region, and its neighbors, it was inevitable to have artistic exchange and influence in the Ilkhanid art, this artistic effect is reflected in the art of book painting as well.

The Ilkhanids' masterpieces, such as the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, *Mirajnama*, and *Great Mongolian Shahnama*, represent a blended iconography in their illustrations. For instance, Prophet Muhammad explains his night journey to his friends and remembers the city's view in one of the scenes of the *Mirajnama* (Prophet Muhammad's ascension and

³⁴⁴ Aksarayî, *Müsâmeretü'l-Ahbâr*, 41-42.

³⁴⁵ Andrew C.S. Peacock, Sara Nur Yıldız, and Bruno de Nicola, eds., "Introduction," *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 2-3.

night drive) (Fig. 4.1). Here, although it was (and still today) a piece of hesitant to depict the Prophet, we see his face, just as in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Furthermore, an angel flies and shows the city's vision towards Muhammad. The angel has a crown, a pair of wings, and a human shape. This depiction of the city reminds a mosaic in the inner narthex of Hagia Sophia. Byzantine Emperor Constantine I presents the city of Constantinople and Justinian I presents the Hagia Sophia to Mary and Jesus (Fig. 4.2). Since Constantine founded the city and Justinian built this unique monument, the mosaic symbolizes the Virgin's protection of Constantinople St. Sophia.³⁴⁶ This mosaic and the scene from the *Mirajnama* have kind of similarities in terms of the relationship among the cities, as symbols, holistic and imperial figures, as owners and protectors.



Figure 4.1: The Prophet Muhammad has a miraculous vision of Jerusalem, *Mi'rajnama*, ca. 1317–35. TSK H. 2154, f.107r. (The illustration is taken from Christiane Gruber's book *The Ilkhanid Book of Ascension*)

³⁴⁶ Cormack, 12.



Figure 4.2: Virgin Mary Holding Christ and Constantine I on the right and Justinian I on the left, *Hagia Sophia* in İstanbul, the southwestern entrance of the basilica. 10th century.

In addition to the *Mirajnama*, the *Great Mongolian Shahnama* has similar representations that make one think of religious depictions in Christian art, although it covers an epic history rather than religious. The “Bier of Alexander” (Fig. 4.3) scene resembles the “Lamentation” in Christian iconography.³⁴⁷ In this depiction, Alexander’s coffin is placed in the center, and his coffin is surrounded by mourning people with deep expressions on their faces. The man in the center next to Alexander’s coffin, crying and holding a handkerchief, represents Alexander’s teacher, Aristotle. Moreover, a female figure leaning on Alexander’s coffin and lamenting for him is his mother.³⁴⁸ Considering the spatial composition, facial and bodily expressions, and figure of “Mother” in the center with his late “holistic and legendary” son, it is obvious that the composition of the “Bier of Alexander” resembles the “Lamenting for Christ.”

³⁴⁷ Blair and Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250-1800*, 30.

³⁴⁸ Blair and Bloom, 30.



Figure 4.3: The Bier of Alexander, *The Great Mongolian Shahnama*, F1938.3, 1328, Tabriz, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

The influence coming from Christian representations is based on the stories from the Old and New Testaments. Therefore, the Ilkhanid depictions did not only have a place for common holistic figures such as Jesus, Moses, and Mary, but they also incorporated the shared stories in the Bible and the Quran, and they illustrated these. For instance, the story of the “Seven Sleepers” (Fig. 4.4) is a popular incident in both religions, and Rashid al-Din wrote the story and illustrated it in *Jami al-Tawarikh* (Fig. 4.5). Considering that Rashid al-Din had access to observe various chronicles and holy books, the representation of the “Seven Sleepers” or the idea of illustrating and narrating the story might have influenced him. In his work, he states, “Nonetheless, I was desirous of making a most concerted effort in my selection of stories...”³⁴⁹ It is important to point out that the art of book painting focuses on compositional and iconographical decisions and signifies the deliberate selection of the topics to be illustrated.

³⁴⁹ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, 8.



Figure 4.4: The Seven Sleepers, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, f. 23r, the University of Edinburgh Collection, Edinburgh.



Figure 4.5: The Seven Sleepers, *Menologion of Basil II*, 10th century, Constantinople, Vat. gr.1653, Vatican.

Given the three outstanding works, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, *Mirajnama*, and the *Great Mongolian Shahnama*, along with their illustrations, the Ilkhanid painting was shaped by the Christian representations in terms of iconography, selection of the contexts, and general compositions. Moreover, these works demonstrate the continuity of artistic patronage and the use of art for legitimizing power during the first half of the fourteenth century. Within the framework of this thesis, this chapter aims to illuminate the artistic

exchange and iconographic influence between the Ilkhanids, Armenians, and the Greek-speaking community in Anatolia in the religious scenes portrayed in the illustrations of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*.

4.1 *Exchange and Interaction with Armenian Artistic Tradition*

The previous chapters discussed the Mongols' encounters and the Ilkhanids' relationship with the Armenians. This section will briefly describe the development and importance of Armenian art. Moreover, it will compare the *Jami al-Tawarikh*'s religious representations with the Armenian paintings and carvings to observe the iconographic elements borrowed by the Ilkhanids.

The origins of Armenian illustration and miniature art can be traced back to the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.³⁵⁰ With the creation of the Armenian alphabet in 396 A.D.,³⁵¹ Armenians began producing Gospels in their own language and script, marking the inception of their written tradition. Before adopting a written Armenian language, Armenians were renowned for their proficiency in masonry and carving, which was evident in the architectural features and stone carvings of the time. The evolution of Armenian art, particularly painting, was closely intertwined with the prevailing political climate. Periods of Persian dominance, the incursions of Arab, Turkic, and Mongol forces, and interactions with neighboring Georgians often interrupted artistic development for the Armenians.³⁵²

Armenian art exhibits a dual categorization concerning its developmental trajectory. Firstly, it encompasses Greater Armenian painting, an expansive geographical region spanning present-day Eastern and southeastern Turkey, Azerbaijan, southeastern Georgia, Nakhcivan, and Armenia. Secondly, Lesser Armenian or Armenian Cilician painting, encompassing contemporary Turkish cities such as Hatay (Antakya), Adana, and Mersin, held considerable sway over European and Crusader artistic expressions (Fig. 4.6).

³⁵⁰ Lydia A. Dournovo, *Armenian Miniatures*, 12.

³⁵¹ Dournovo, 11.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, 19.

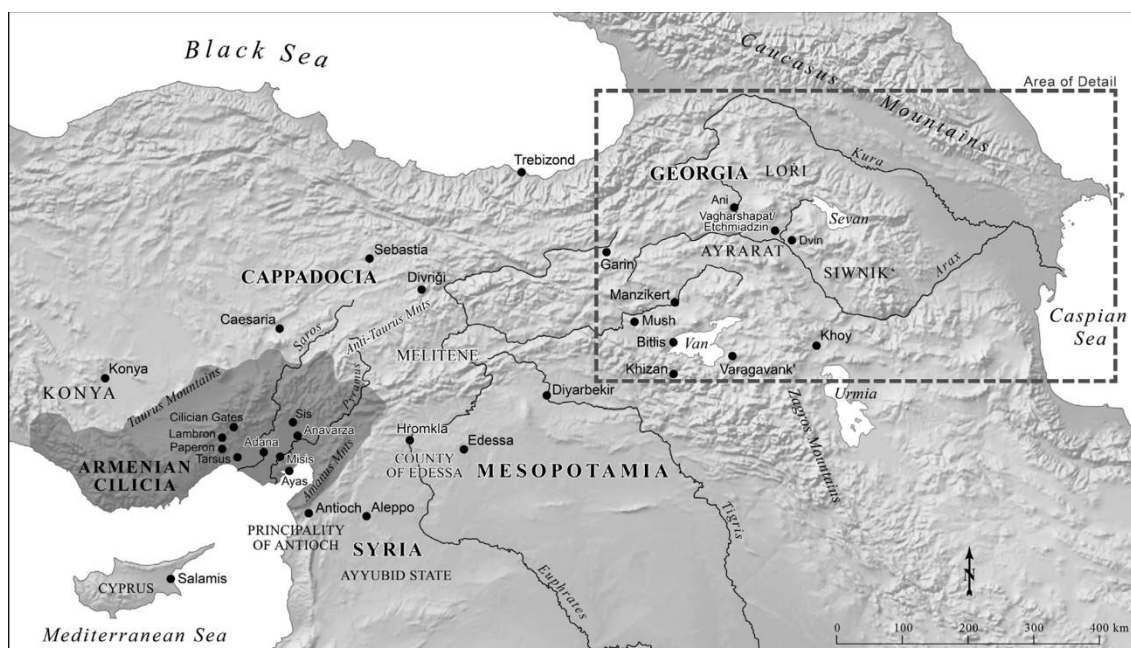


Figure 4.6: Map of the Greater Armenia and Armenian Cilicia in the Middle Ages. (The Map is taken from Cristina Maranci's book *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction*).

Manuscript production predominantly took place within the scriptoria of monasteries, which also served as centers for educational endeavors. Establishing schools within these monastic institutions was pivotal in fostering artistic development. Notably, the Haghpat School, founded by Simeon Vardapet in the tenth century, stands out for its prolific output, including renowned manuscripts like the eleventh-century Mughni Gospel and the 1211 Haghpat Gospel.³⁵³ This institution served as a prominent hub for artistic production in Greater Armenia until the thirteenth century, alongside other scriptoria such as Ani, Goshavank, Noravank, and Sevan.³⁵⁴ The emergence of educational figures like Nerses Mshets'i, a disciple of the esteemed historian and geographer Vardan Aravelts'i, further underscored the importance of these educational centers. Mshets'i's appointment as the inaugural schoolmaster of T'anahat in 1279 marked the commencement of the Gladzor College.³⁵⁵ Subsequently, under the leadership of Yovhannes Orotnets'i, this institution evolved into a university, with Gregory of Ta'tev as its final scholarly steward until the advent of the Timurids.³⁵⁶

³⁵³ Anna Leyloyan-Yekmalyan, "Schools and Scriptoria: Haghpat and Gladzor," *Armenia: Art, Religion, and Trade in the Middle Ages*, 111.

³⁵⁴ Leyloyan-Yekmalyan, "Schools and Scriptoria: Haghpat and Gladzor," 111.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 111.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 111.

Most artists from Gladzor University had itinerant lifestyles, traversing from Cilicia to Tabriz and from Tiflis to Sultaniya. Notably, Taros Taronets'i stands as an exception, as he primarily executed his works within the confines of Gladzor.³⁵⁷ Others, such as Awag and Mkhit'ar, ventured into Iran during the Mongol era, drawing inspiration from diverse cultural milieus.³⁵⁸ For instance, the 1311 Tabriz Gospel features four illuminations: the Presentation to the Temple (Fig. 4.7), the Baptism (Fig. 4.8), the Transfiguration (Fig. 4.9), and the Entry into Jerusalem (Fig. 4.10).³⁵⁹ The rough, rocky backdrops in these illustrations echo the stylistic backdrop seen in the *Jami al-Tawarikh* (Fig. 4.11).

It is documented that these four illustrations resided in Tabriz since 1444; however, their origin in Tabriz remains uncertain.³⁶⁰ Given the itinerant nature of Armenian artists who frequently traversed eastern Anatolia and Iran, I suggest that the artist was indeed in Tabriz. When one looks at these paintings, one finds that ordinary people with similar backgrounds are paired with sacred figures resting on rocky terrain reminiscent of Chinese landscapes, akin to the scene of Moses's dead body reclining on similar ground in the Khalili Collection's *Jami al-Tawarikh*. This suggests an iconographic exchange or evolution among Armenian artists of that era. With both manuscripts dating back to 1311 and the Khalili folio from 1314-1315, coupled with the flourishing manuscript production in Tabriz, it is conceivable that the artists of these illustrations may have visited the atelier, witnessing the production process firsthand. Furthermore, they likely shared cultural and social environments with the artists of Rabi Rashidi in Tabriz during the early fourteenth century.

³⁵⁷ Alice Taylor, "Chapter IV: Armenian Illumination under Georgian, Turkish, and Mongol Rule: The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries," *Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts*, 94.

³⁵⁸ Taylor, "Chapter IV: Armenian Illumination under Georgian, Turkish, and Mongol Rule: The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries," 94.

³⁵⁹ Leyloyan-Yekmalyan, 116-117.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 116.

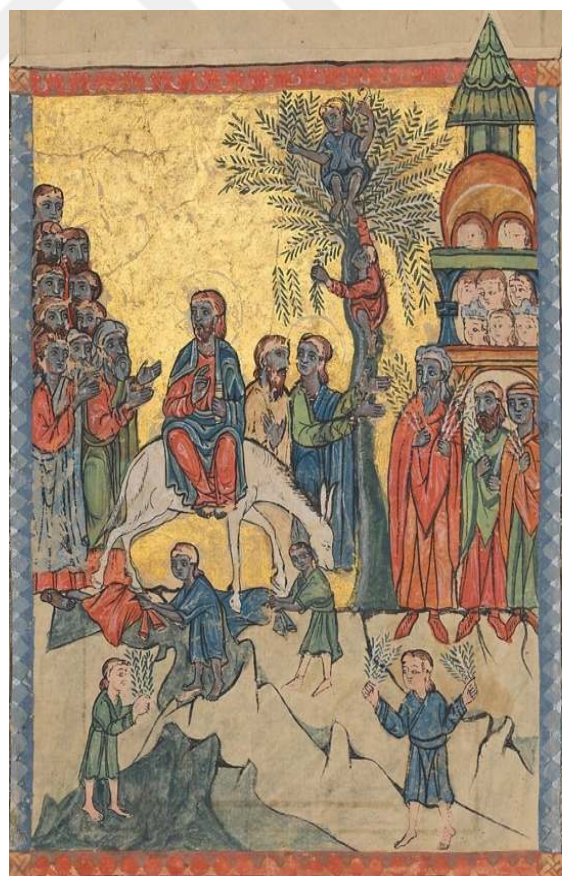
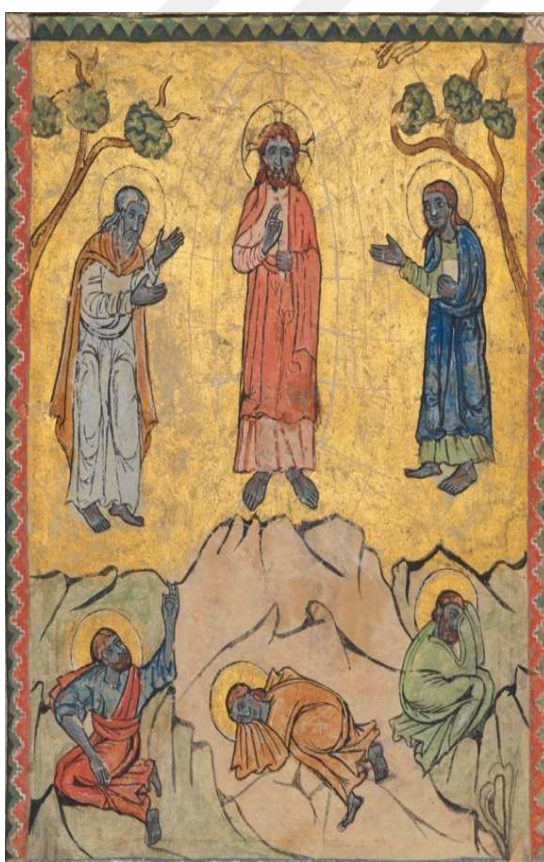
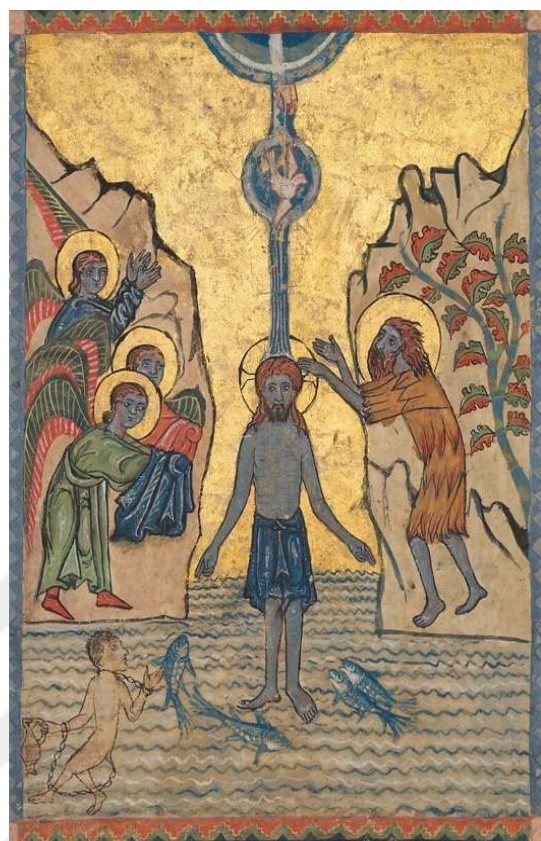
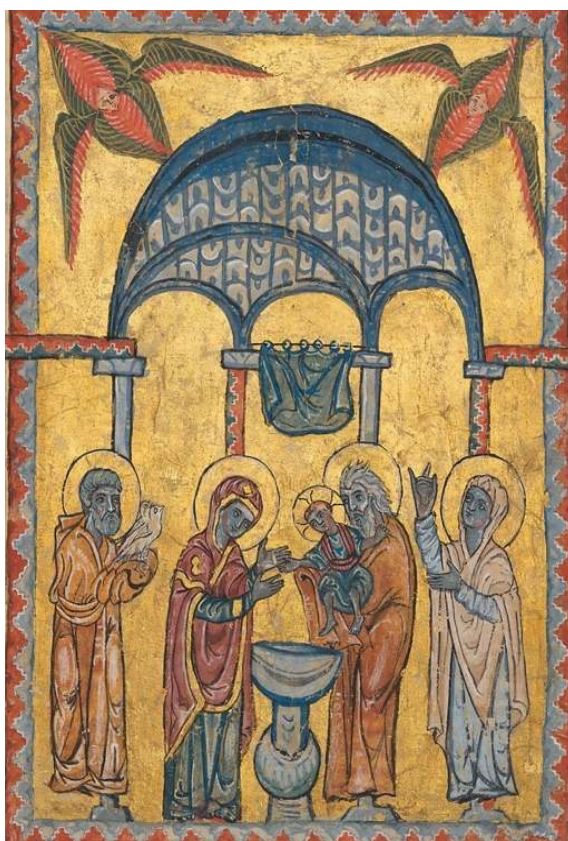


Figure 4.7: Presentation to the Temple, *the Gospel book of 1311*, illuminated by Toros the deacon, early 14th century, Tabriz or Gladzor, ink and pigments on oriental paper, Sam Fogg, London.

Figure 4.8: Baptism, *the Gospel book of 1311*, illuminated by Toros the deacon, early 14th century Tabriz or Gladzor, ink and pigments on oriental paper, Sam Fogg, London.

Figure 4.9: Transfiguration, *the Gospel book of 1311*, illuminated by Toros the deacon, early 14th century, Ink and pigments on oriental paper, Tabriz or Gladzor, Sam Fogg, London.

Figure 4.10: Entry into Jerusalem, *the Gospel book of 1311*, illuminated by Toros the deacon, early 14th century, Tabriz or Gladzor, ink and pigments on oriental paper, Sam Fogg, London.

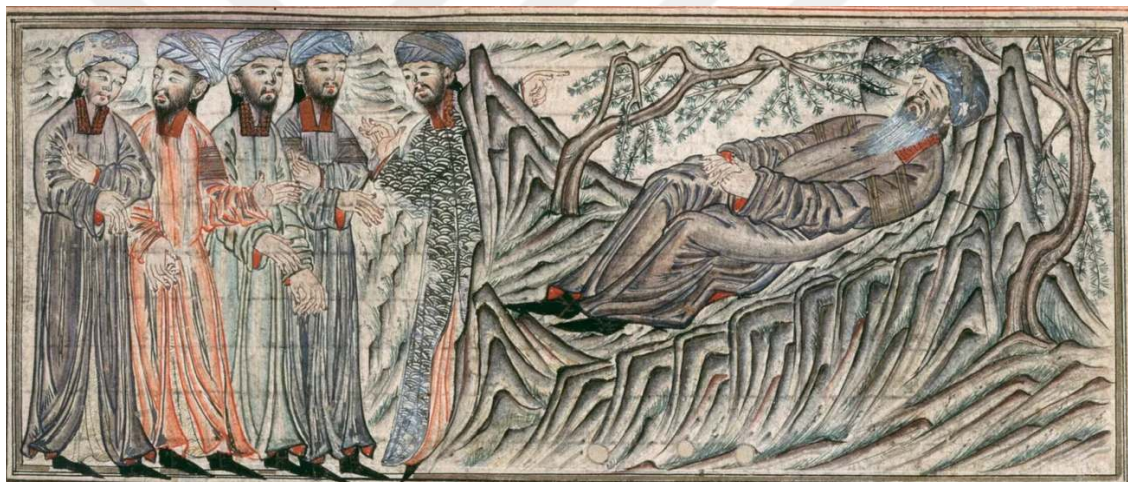


Figure 4.11: The Death of Moses, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, f. 294r, Khalili Collection, London.

To ease into the discussion of iconographic borrowings characteristic of the Ilkhanids, begin with a subtle architectural borrowing. In this depiction (Fig. 4.12), a man garbed in a deep blue attire, enveloping half of his figure, stands perplexed, gazing at a decrepit donkey. Behind him looms an architectural structure. The narrative of this tableau draws from Quran 2:259 (Surah al-Baqarah):

Or are you not aware of the one who passed by a city which was in ruins? He wondered, “How could Allah bring this back to life after its destruction?” So, Allah caused him to die for a hundred years and then brought him back to life. Allah asked, “How long have you remained in this state?” He replied, “Perhaps a day or part of a day.” Allah said, “No! You have remained here for a hundred years! Just look at your food and drink—they have not spoiled. But now look at the

remains of your donkey! And so We have made you into a sign for humanity. And look at the bones of the donkey, how We bring them together then clothe them with flesh!” When this was made clear to him, he declared, “Now I know that Allah is Most Capable of everything.”³⁶¹



Figure 4.12: A man looking at his donkey, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, f. 285r, Tabriz, Edinburgh University Library Collection, Edinburgh.

According to the Quranic passage, the man’s house was ruined, and he slept for a hundred years and was resurrected. As evidence, the God (Allah) showed him his decayed donkey. The abovementioned man is accepted as the holy figure, a disputable prophet, Uzair.³⁶² His ruined house behind was depicted as two floors. The entrance had three columns with triangular-like capital and pedestal, and each column was made up of three colors. A yellow body, dark blue capital, and pedestal are together with red segments. The division between the floors is depicted in brown with vegetal ornamentation, while the upper floor showcases a solitary yellow column flanked by blue segments in the upper corners, with a hedge in the foreground. This habitation portrayal resembles the canonical tables found in Armenian Gospels (Fig. 4.13). The simplicity of the columns, their number, predominant colors, and geometric shapes exhibit striking similarities, as do the inclusion of vegetal motifs.

³⁶¹ Q. 2:259, “Surah al-Baqarah, trans. Dr. Mustafa Khattab, accessed from: <https://quran.com/al-baqarah/259>.

³⁶² Baki Adam, “Üzeyir,” *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2012).



Figure 4.13: Canon Table, In Vellum, ca1040, 9 folios; 16.5 × 11.8 in. (42.0 × 30.0 cm), Armenia or Turkey, Museum of the Bible, Washington D.C. USA, MS.000468.1r. Accession: <https://collections.museumofthebible.org/artifacts/42501-gospels-of-matthew-and-john-with-canon-tables?theme=illuminated-manuscripts-1>.

Right: Detail of Fig. 4.12 (The ruined house).

In Greater Armenia, one of the most significant regions was Vaspurakan, which encompasses the area surrounding Lake Van. This region is strategically located at a crossroads, bordered by a vast lake, and serves as a transition zone from Anatolia to Iran and a connection to Mesopotamia. Vaspurakan can be considered a hub for cultural exchange. It is, therefore, essential to examine the artistic production that emerged from this area. One of the most renowned edifices in Vaspurakan is the Holy Cross Church of Aghtamar. Armenian King Gagik I commissioned the architect Manuel to construct this church on the island of Aghtamar, with construction commencing in 915 and concluding in 921.³⁶³ The Holy Cross Church of Aghtamar exemplifies the influence of Islamic art on Armenian craftsmanship and demonstrates how Armenians transmitted the influence in their works. The church is richly adorned with carvings on its exterior and frescoes on its interior. Built during a period of peace with the Abbasids, the church exhibits Arabic

³⁶³ Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Aght'amar, Church of the Holy Cross*, 5.

influences.³⁶⁴ According to Thierry, although the origins of the artists remain uncertain, it is possible that Christian or Muslim craftsmen from the Abbasid workshops in Samarra were involved, as evidenced by the incorporation of scenes from the Old Testament on the exterior.³⁶⁵ The story of “Jonah and the Whale” is one of the popular narratives that is shared by the Abrahamic religions and has been depicted throughout history. Some of the carved scenes on the exterior sculptures of the Aghtamar Church include “Prophet Jonah Cast into the Sea” (Fig. 4.14), “Pantocrator Christ and Mother Mary,” “The Struggle of David and Goliath,” and “Adam and Eve Eating the Forbidden Fruit.”³⁶⁶ Notably, several narratives from the Old Testament depicted here align with common Islamic themes, such as David and Goliath and Jonah and the Whale (Fig. 4.15, 4.16, and 4.17).

The Quranic narrative of Jonah’s story has many commonalities and carries some details from Jewish and Christian sources.³⁶⁷ His story from the Old Testament is more extensive and unified, and his characterization is more complex than the Quranic explanation.³⁶⁸ According to the Biblical narrative, God commissions Jonah to go to Nineveh, and he disobeys God and escapes to Tarshish and boards a ship. The sailors in the ship, who are pagans, cast him into the sea, and a large fish swallows him. Jonah repents and promises God not to disobey him anymore. Later, he arrives at Nineveh and completes his mission. The Ninevites repent, are forgiven by God, and are saved from destruction. Due to this surprising mercy by God, Jonah gets angry with God, and he wishes to die. He leaves the city, sits and complains, and God provides him with plants to please and comfort him. Jonah gets pleased, and God then commissions a worm to punish Jonah and attack the plants. The end is inconclusive in the biblical story.³⁶⁹ On the other hand, Yunus (Jonah) is explained more straightforwardly in the Quranic narrative.³⁷⁰ God (Allah) commissions Yunus to go to Nineveh. The city’s name is not mentioned in the Quran, but he abandons his mission and boards a ship. The ship owners cast him into the sea, and a large fish swallows him, and Yunus stays inside the fish’s

³⁶⁴ Jean Michel Thierry, Patrick Donabédian, and Nicole Thierry, *Armenian Art*, 172.

³⁶⁵ Thierry and Donabédian, *Armenian Art*, 172.

³⁶⁶ Maranci, *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction*, 68-69.

³⁶⁷ Ayaz Afshar, “A Comparative Study of the Art of Jonah/Yunus Narrative in the Bible and the Quran,” *Islamic Studies* 48, no.3, (2009), 320.

³⁶⁸ Afshar, “A Comparative Study of the Art of Jonah/Yunus Narrative in the Bible and the Quran,” 321.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 327-332.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 335.

stomach. He repents and begs God to be saved from the fish's stomach. God saves him, and the fish vomits him to the shore and God grows plants to recover Yunus, who got sick.³⁷¹ Considering these two narratives, Jonah's story is unique in his rebellious characterization and treatment, distinguishing him from the other prophetic figures. Moreover, the Bible points out the interesting relationship between Jonah and God, and besides the point of repentance, it focuses on the enigmatic decisions and treatment of God, while the Quranic narrative apparently aims to give the point directly to the reader and emphasizes the importance of repentance. Given the two different versions of Jonah's story, due to the nature of the story, it became popular throughout history and became one of the most depicted Biblical and Quranic stories. It is useful to indicate that the name Yunus is mentioned six times in the Quran, and he is mentioned as *Sahib al-hut* (the Man of the Fish), representing the story's significance in the Islamic sphere.³⁷²

The narrative of Jonah and the Whale (the large fish is often considered a whale) is depicted on the south façade of the Holy Cross Church of Aghtamar in a continuous representation. On the left side, Jonah is shown being cast into the sea naked while a large fish with a monstrous head opens its jaws, poised to swallow him.³⁷³ The whale's body is depicted with a fish-like form and a tail, yet its head resembles a dog's, characterized by a triangular-shaped mouth and pointed ears. On the right side of the façade, the story continues with the whale vomiting Jonah, who is then seen resting on some vegetation.³⁷⁴ In the Bible, this representation is explained as follows:

He (Jonah) sat under it (booth) in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. And the Lord God appointed a plant, and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort. So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm which attacked the plant, so that it withered.³⁷⁵

³⁷¹ Ibid., 326-327.

³⁷² Ibid., 321.

³⁷³ Maranci, *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction*, 70.

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 70-71.

³⁷⁵ Afshar, 339.



Figure 4.14: Prophet Jonah Cast into the Sea, relief, tuff-stone, early 10th century, The Holy Cross Church of Aghtamar, Van, Türkiye. Photo Credit: Hasret Kılıçoğlu

This depiction clearly illustrates the influence of Judaic narratives and Middle Eastern artistic traditions on the artists of the Aghtamar Church. In examining Islamic narratives, we find that shared stories between Christianity and Islam are often rooted in the Judaic or Old Testament, as explained above. On the other hand, it is important to note that the Abrahamic religions arose in the Middle East and Mesopotamia; therefore, seeking the roots of the Abrahamic narratives may bring us to the Mesopotamian mythologies and narratives as well. Hence, it is the nature of art that it does not develop within one nation, society, belief, or geography. Art and iconography are products of political and cultural exchanges between societies for thousands of years. Considering the nature of art may help us evaluate the artistic exchanges between the communities. This chapter and the thesis aim to represent the artistic exchange coming from the Armenians and Anatolian part of the Byzantine to the Ilkhanids upon the borrowed iconography of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* illustrations. Therefore, while going into detail about the illustrations and depictions, it is significant to consider that the thesis uses the words “Armenian or Byzantine iconography” due to these two Anatolian Christian entities’ impact and closeness to the Ilkhanids, not because the root of iconography is based upon

the Armenians or Byzantines. Moreover, Rashid al-Din's Jewish background and knowledge of Judaism as a convert are important points in selecting the topics of the illustrations, although Jonah's life is a popular theme in Islam.

To continue with the story of "Jonah and the Whale" and the borrowed iconography in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, one must look at the three copies of *Jami al-Tawarikh*, the Topkapı, the Khalili, and the Edinburgh copies. The Topkapı version portrays (Fig. 4.15) Jonah (Yunus) aboard a ship with a gigantic whale opening its mouth towards him. In this depiction, the whale retains a more traditional fish-like appearance. However, this copy of *Jami al-Tawarikh* was likely restored around 1425 in Herat under the patronage of Timurid Sultan Shahrukh, who commissioned Hafiz-i Abru to restore the manuscripts and repair the damaged pages.³⁷⁶ Consequently, this scene reflects a Timurid interpretation. Despite the modifications by the Herat artists, it is possible that Hafiz-i Abru and his atelier adhered to the original essence of the illustration. Unlike the Aghtamar depiction, the Persian copy features clothed figures and a more naturalistic representation of the whale.



Figure 4.15: Prophet Jonah is in the Ship, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, the beginning of the 15th century, MS.1654, f. 291b, Herat, Topkapı Palace Museum. (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, Milli Saraylar İdaresi Başkanlığı'na aittir/ Belongs to the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, National Palaces Administration).

In the Khalili folio, the scene is titled "Yunus Spewed Up by the Whale" (Fig. 4.16). The waves are depicted in a distinctly Far Eastern style, characterized by their curvy and expressive forms. Moreover, the curve of the whale's body is reminiscent of depictions of dragons in China as well. Similar to the Topkapı folio, there are vegetal

³⁷⁶ Tanındı and Çağman, 209.

ornaments in the background. Given that this folio is from an Arabic copy dating back to 1314-15, Jonah (Yunus) is portrayed with Mongolian features and a visibly emotional expression. As the whale vomits Jonah, it expels other fish it had previously swallowed. These scattered fish are similarly depicted on the southern façade of the church in Aghtamar, as mentioned earlier.

Finally, the whale resembles a large version of an ordinary fish in the Edinburgh folio (Fig. 4.17). While the depiction of the sea retains its Far Eastern influences, it is less dynamic than in the Khalili folio. Notably, this scene illustrates Jonah resting after being vomited by the whale. The Quranic narrative explains this moment of the story as: “We cast him upon the wilderness, and he was sick, and We caused to grow over him a tree of gourds”³⁷⁷ Here, Jonah is clearly depicted naked, leaning on vegetation, similar to his portrayal of the exterior relief of the Church of Aghtamar.

In the book of Jonah, he introduces himself to the sailors as “Hebrew.”³⁷⁸ Considering this narrative in the Old Testament, its place in the Quran, and its popularity in the three religions, the illustration of Jonah carries importance in two aspects. First, since the *Jami al-Tawarikh* covers themes such as the history of the Jews and the prophets’ lives, it must have been inevitable for Rashid al-Din to include illustrations from the life of Jonah. Moreover, there was enough representation of Jonah’s story as a model for the illustrations. Second, since Rashid al-Din was a former Jewish person and became a well-educated vizier to write theological books about Islam, he must have had a good command of the subject from both sides and might have deliberately chosen to depict Jonah’s story. Additionally, this argument is supported by the detailed depictions of other prophets’ lives, such as Moses and Solomon, who have great importance for the Jewish people, in the manuscript (excluding Prophet Muhammad here due to his unique position in Islam).

³⁷⁷ Afshar, 336.

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 337.



Figure 4.16: Yunus spewed up by the Whale, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-15, MSS 727, f. 59v, Tabriz, The Khalili Collection, London.



Figure 4.17: Jonah and the Whale, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, MS 20, f. 23v., Tabriz, The University of Edinburgh.



Left: Detail of Figure 4.17



Right: Detail of Figure 4.14

In the Middle Ages, there were prominent Armenian figures as converts in the Muslim courts. Some notable figures include Fatimid Vizier Badr al-Din Jamali (r. 1087-1092), ruler of Mosul Badr al-Din Lu'lu (d. 1259), and Mahperi Khatun, the wife of Seljuk Sultan Ala al-Din Kayqubad (d. after 1254).³⁷⁹ Badr al-Din Jamali, for instance, brought Armenian masons to Cairo to build new walls and gates, while Badr al-Din Lu'lu was known for his artistic patronage. Mahperi Khatun emerged as one of the leading female patrons of the thirteenth century.³⁸⁰ These Armenian-origin figures are important in artistic patronages in the Islamic world. Besides the converts, some noble Armenian families joined the Mongol troops in 1232 and later supported the Mongol advance towards Ani, Kars, and Erzurum.³⁸¹ This collaboration allowed Armenians to enter the Mongol court, fostering an interest among the Khans in Greater Armenia. The Khans even established summer residences in the Vaspurakan region near Lake Van.³⁸² Considering the Armenians' presence in the Muslim and Mongol courts, it is obvious that they were part of the political and artistic actions in the Middle Ages and in the Middle East. Therefore, their presence might have provided the circulation of the Armenian artistic genre in the Islamic and Ilkhanid spheres.

The Armenians were on the Mongolians' side against the Seljuks of Rum and the Mamluks, and they had a close relationship with the Franks through their Cilician canal.³⁸³ This alliance between the Armenians, the Mongols, and the Franks indicated that the Ilkhanids were well-acquainted with both Anatolian and Western Christian narratives and iconography. Considering that a Mongol general sent Nestorian messengers in 1248 to Louis IX of France, prompting the king to commission a tenth church featuring key Christian depictions such as the Annunciation, the Baptism, and the Ascension,³⁸⁴ it appears that the Armenians supported the earlier encounters of the Mongols and Franks with their political attempts. The presence of Nestorian Khatuns, servants, Armenian artists, and courtly figures further exposed the Mongols to Christian influences.

³⁷⁹ Yalman, "Artistic Exchanges Between Armenia and Islamic World," 120.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 120.

³⁸¹ Priscilla P. Soucek, "Armenian and Islamic Manuscript Painting (A Visual Dialogue)," (Paper Presentation, *Armenian Art, Religion, and Society*, The Pierpoint Morgan Library, May 21-22, 1994), 116.

³⁸² Soucek, "Armenian and Islamic Manuscript Painting (A Visual Dialogue)," 116.

³⁸³ Maranci, 104.

³⁸⁴ Soucek, 121.

The transmigration and patronage between these groups significantly increased artistic interaction, leading to a rich cultural and iconographic exchange. For example, Armenians incorporated Islamic decorative motifs, as seen in the Holy Cross Church of Aghtamar, and utilized symbols like dragons and phoenixes, which denoted imperial ranks in the Mongol court.³⁸⁵ Conversely, the Mongols integrated notable elements from Armenian manuscripts into their own works, such as the *Jami al-Tawarikh*.

The *Jami al-Tawarikh* integrates significant iconographic elements from a Gospel book produced in Vaspurakan in 1294.³⁸⁶ Notably, two illustrations from this manuscript have influenced certain representations in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. One prominent example is the illustration of the Baptism of Christ (Fig. 4.18), which features Christ centrally positioned with John the Baptist next to him. Additionally, four of John's disciples are depicted on the right, while an angel stands on the left.³⁸⁷ This angel is depicted holding a flask of chrism, symbolizing the use of holy oil in the Armenian Church's baptismal ceremonies.³⁸⁸ This particular ritual and its accompanying iconography, where the angel carries the chrism, is distinctly Armenian and is uniquely found in the manuscripts of Vaspurakan.³⁸⁹

One of *Jami al-Tawarikh*'s Edinburgh folios depicts Bahira's recognition of Muhammad (Fig. 4.19). Bahira was a Nestorian priest who saw Muhammad in Busra, Syria, when he was 12 years old while traveling by camel train. According to the story of Islamic transmissions throughout the centuries, Bahira understands that the twelve-year-old boy was the future prophet.³⁹⁰ The story is relevant to baptism because while Jesus Christ is purified via baptism and holy oil, Muhammad is recognized by a priest, which indicates a turning point in his life. I can call this an "Inception moment" for both holy figures. In this illustration, an angel dangles from the sky and holds Chrism in the left hand, a scroll in the right, and the camel bow before him. Priest Bahira shows Muhammad to a man next to him.³⁹¹

³⁸⁵ Ibid., 120.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 123.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 126.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 126 and Yalman, 126.

³⁸⁹ Soucek, 128.

³⁹⁰ Mustafa Fayda, "Bahira," *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1991), <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/bahira>.

³⁹¹ Yalman, 127.

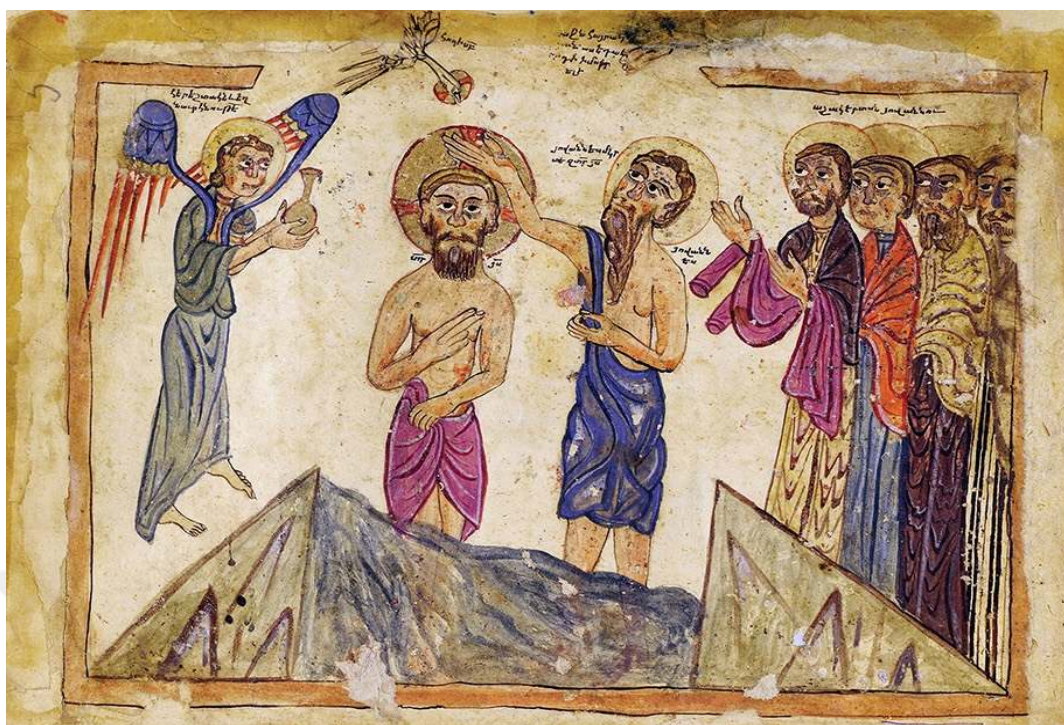


Figure 4.18: The Baptism, *Armenian Gospel Book of 1294*, MS4814, f.5r., 1294, Monastery of Argelan, Berkri, Lake Van region (Vaspurakan), 31.4x 26.5x 12.4 cm, Matenadaran” Mesrop Mashtots’Institute-Museum of Ancient Manuscripts, Yerevan, Armenia.



Figure 4.19: Bahira’s Recognition of Muhammad, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, MS20, f. 43v., 1314-1315, Tabriz, University of Edinburgh.

The second illustration from the same Gospel book of 1294 is Entry to Jerusalem (Fig. 4.20). At the center of the illustration, Jesus rides a donkey with a crossed halo, symbolizing his divinity. Surrounding him are figures likely representing the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as well as his disciples and followers, who welcome him with gestures of reverence. In the background, the city of Jerusalem is shown with distinct architectural elements like an onion-domed baldachin, including a prominent building that Jesus is pointing towards, likely representing the city's entrance. Palm trees and branches are present throughout the scene.³⁹² Overall, the image conveys a triumphal atmosphere, capturing the celebratory nature of Jesus's entry into Jerusalem.

The illustration in the Khalili Collection of *Jami al-Tawarikh* called Muhammad Accepts the Submission of the Banu'l Nadir (Fig. 4.21) is a striking scene in terms of similarities with the Entry into Jerusalem. The two illustrations have some common features. First, Muhammad has an obvious triumphal position in the center of the image, just like Jesus Christ. In each scene, the central figure is welcomed by a crowd, with architectural buildings in the background and people greeting the prophet or messiah from above. As mentioned before, an angel pours holy oil on top of Muhammad, and there are people behind him, just like the disciples behind Christ. The two holy figures get on a mount, and Christ is on a donkey while Muhammad is on a horse.³⁹³ Finally, there is a remarkable shining sun on the top as a symbol of victory. It is worth mentioning that the Banu Nadir was a Jewish tribe in Medina³⁹⁴, and it is likely that Rashid al-Din chose this submission story with a specific iconography in mind. By borrowing elements from the Entry into Jerusalem, he created a powerful and triumphal image. This example also highlights the vizier's background, as he often included illustrations of Moses and selected narratives common to Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions.

³⁹² Mathews, Sanjian, Orna, and Russell, *Armenian Gospel Iconography: The Tradition of the Glajor Gospel*, 124-125.

³⁹³ Soucek, 129.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., 128.



Figure 4.20: Entry into Jerusalem, *Armenian Gospel Book of 1294*, 1294, MS4814, f.1., Monastery of Argelan, Berkri, Lake Van region (Vaspurakan), Matenadaran” Mesrop Mashtots’ Institute-Museum of Ancient Manuscripts, Yerevan, Armenia.



Figure 4.21: Muhammad Accepts the Submission of Banu'l Nadir, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, MSS 777, f. 3r., Tabriz, The Khalili Collection, London.

After examining the rich painting traditions of Greater Armenia and their notable influence on Ilkhanid art, it is important to shift our focus to another significant region of Armenian artistry: Armenian Cilicia. This region, located along the Mediterranean coast,

encompasses present-day Turkey's Adana, Mersin, Alanya, and Gulf of İskenderun ³⁹⁵ and developed into a vibrant cultural and artistic center during the medieval period.

Starting in the tenth century, Armenians began leaving eastern Anatolia, primarily due to the arrival of the Turks.³⁹⁶ In Cilicia, two noble families played prominent roles, the Rubenids and the Hetumids. During the same period, Pope Innocent IV (r. 1243–1254) dispatched members of the newly established Franciscan and Dominican Orders to the Mongols. Among these Western missionaries was the Franciscan William of Rubruck, who traveled through Cilicia on his way to the Mongol capital of Karakorum to convert the animist Mongols under the auspices of Louis IX.³⁹⁷ Rubruck's account of his journey highlights the significant support he received from Hetum I, the Armenian king of Cilicia, which was crucial for his and his companions' survival. Notably, Rubruck mentions that he carried illuminated manuscripts gifted by Louis IX and his queen, which he showed to those he encountered during his travels.³⁹⁸ This detail is particularly significant in understanding the cross-cultural exchanges that influenced Mongol art. The illuminated manuscripts Rubruck carried were likely rich with intricate illustrations and religious iconography, representative of Western artistic traditions. By showing these manuscripts to the Mongols, Rubruck directly exposed them to the sophisticated art of manuscript illumination. This encounter would have given the Mongols a tangible example of the visual and textual beauty valued in Western Christian art.

Given this context, it is possible to argue that the Mongols, impressed by the detailed and vibrant illustrations, sought to incorporate similar artistic techniques into their own works. This influence can be seen in the production of illustrated manuscripts, particularly in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. The stylistic elements and the intricate detail of the illustrations in *Jami al-Tawarikh* may reflect the impact of Western illuminated manuscripts that missionaries like Rubruck introduced to the Mongol courts. Thus, Rubruck's missionary activity and the illuminated manuscripts he shared could have played a role in shaping the artistic endeavors of the Mongols, blending Eastern and Western traditions in their manuscript production.

³⁹⁵ Maranci, *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction*, 92.

³⁹⁶ Ibid., 92.

³⁹⁷ Evans, "Armenians Expand the West: The Kingdom of Cilicia," *Armenia: Art, Trade, and Religion in the Middle Ages*, 131-132.

³⁹⁸ Evans, 131-132.

By the mid-thirteenth century, the Cilician Armenians faced increasing threats from Seljuk attacks and Mamluk expansion. To strengthen their presence in the region, the Rubenid and Hetumid families intermarried and established alliances with the Byzantines, Crusaders, and Mongols against the Mamluks.³⁹⁹ During the early period of Cilicia, monastic complexes flourished, producing manuscripts in their scriptoria that were primarily intended for high ecclesiastics. These manuscripts often featured illustrations incorporating Byzantine and Eastern (Greater Armenian) elements from the tenth and eleventh centuries.⁴⁰⁰ One of Cilicia's earliest and most significant monastic establishments was the Monastery of Skevra, founded in the twelfth century. Skevra played a crucial role in the region's religious, cultural, and educational life, located near the strategic fortress of Lambron.⁴⁰¹ The monastery was renowned for its scriptorium, where numerous manuscripts, including religious texts, theological treatises, and literary works, were copied, illuminated, and preserved, contributing significantly to Armenian literature and scholarship.⁴⁰² Similarly, Hromkla, also known as Rumkale (Roman Castle), was another key monastic center with a notable scriptorium.⁴⁰³ This fortress and monastery produced many illuminated manuscripts known for their artistic quality and preservation of Armenian cultural and religious texts.⁴⁰⁴ This depiction from Hromkla represents evangelist Mark (Fig. 4.22), who writes his Gospel in Armenian and sits in front of a desktop resembling the Byzantine compositions.⁴⁰⁵ I would like to point out the vegetal drawing on the chair behind Mark, the cushions he sits on, and the decorations of the rug he steps on. The blend of Byzantine and European influences shows itself in terms of color, composition, and architectural and decorative details in this illustration.

³⁹⁹ Maranci, 104.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 97.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 100.

⁴⁰² Evans, "Skevra," *Armenia: Art, Trade, and Religion in the Middle Ages*, 138.

⁴⁰³ See Christina Maranci, "The Architecture of Rumkale/Hromkla: Description and Remarks," in *Rumkale from the Medieval Period to the Present Day*, eds. Scott Redford, (Gaziantep: Türk Arkeoloji ve Kültürel Miras Enstitüsü, 2022), and Pelin Kalafatoğlu. "Review: Redford, Scott, Ed. Rumkale from the Medieval Period to the Present Day. Istanbul: Ofset Yapımevi Yayınları, Forthcoming." *TARE: Türk Arkeoloji ve Kültürel Miras Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 2 (2022): 243–48.

⁴⁰⁴ Evans, "Hromkla," 141.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., 145.



Figure 4.22: Evangelist Mark, *Bardzrberd Gospel Book*, 1254, MS8, f.103v., Hromkla, Holy See of Cilicia, Antelias, Lebanon.

Hromkla was also the workplace of a prominent thirteenth-century Armenian manuscript illuminator, Toros Roslin, who created his masterpieces between the 1260s and the 1280s.⁴⁰⁶ There are seven works attributed to Toros Roslin: Zeytun Gospels, Second Constantine Gospels, Leop and Keran Gospels, Gospels of the Priest Toros, Lady Keran Gospels, Ritual of Toros Roslin, and Malatia Gospels.⁴⁰⁷ Five of them are in the Library of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, with dates ranging from 1256 to 1268.⁴⁰⁸ Roslin preferred smaller illustrations, focusing on faces and human forms in various poses. Despite their tiny size, his faces, some only two to three millimeters, vividly express emotions like sorrow, fear, pride, and anger.⁴⁰⁹ He was influenced by Western art, which entered Cilicia through princely marriages; Roslin sought to bring more fluidity to the stiff figures he observed in Latin manuscripts. He selectively

⁴⁰⁶ Dournovo, *Armenian Miniatures*, 110.

⁴⁰⁷ Helen C. Evans, "Cilician Manuscript Illumination: The Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Centuries," *Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts*, eds. Thomas F. Mathews and Rogers S. Wieck, (New York: Princeton University Press, 1994), 74.

⁴⁰⁸ Dournovo, 110.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 110.

incorporated Western motifs into his vibrant and imaginative compositions.⁴¹⁰ Byzantine art influenced him as well, but primarily in specific iconographic details. The broader revision of pictorial principles in the thirteenth century significantly shaped his original style.⁴¹¹ His miniatures often overflowed into the margins, imbuing life and movement into human figures, animals, plant motifs, and decorated initials (Fig. 4.23).⁴¹² His ability to blend various artistic influences while maintaining a unique style marks his enduring legacy in Armenian art.

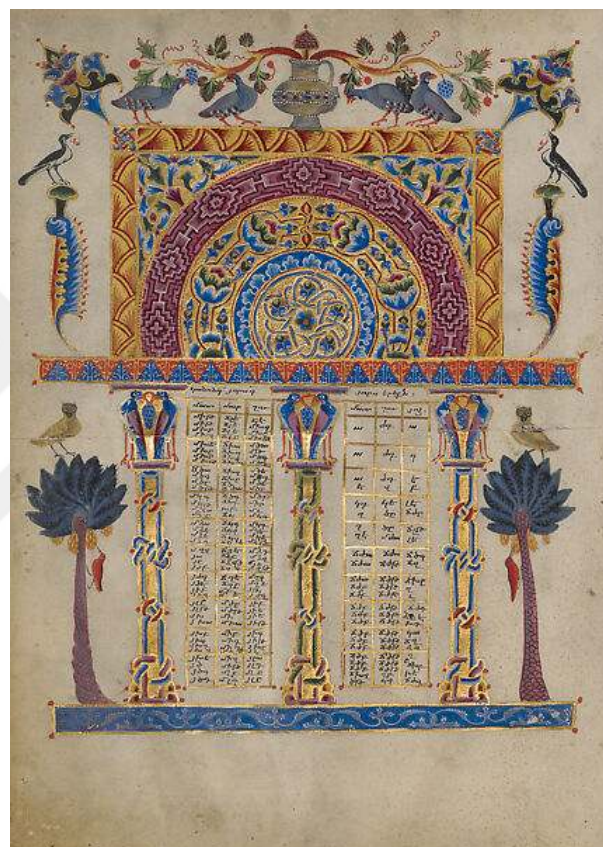


Figure 4.23: Canon Table, *Gospel Book*, 1256, MS59, f.3v., Hromkla, Cilicia, by Toros Roslin, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Gift of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia.

In the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, some small artistic instruments resemble Western decorations. One of the scenes from the *Jami al-Tawarikh* represents Prophet David and his brothers (Fig. 4.24). In the illustration, David sits crossed legs on a rug. The rug is decorated with small squares of duo-chrome, which one might think are textiles in

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., 111.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., 111.

⁴¹² Ibid., 111.

contemporary European miniatures. Moreover, he leans on a cushion, and it has floral motifs. Inside, the house is framed with walls and arches. The arches and columns are blue in color, and the base and pedestals of the columns are more like the Western style. The outside is represented by fruit trees. The floral motifs and decorations, along with the cushion, arches, and columns, give a sense of Western iconography. Considering William of Rubruck's travel to Cilicia and the Mongol court, the Mongols and Ilkhanids' interaction with the Armenian Cilicia makes one might think that Rashid al-Din may have been influenced by some decorative elements from the Cilician manuscript, and therefore, the Western iconography.

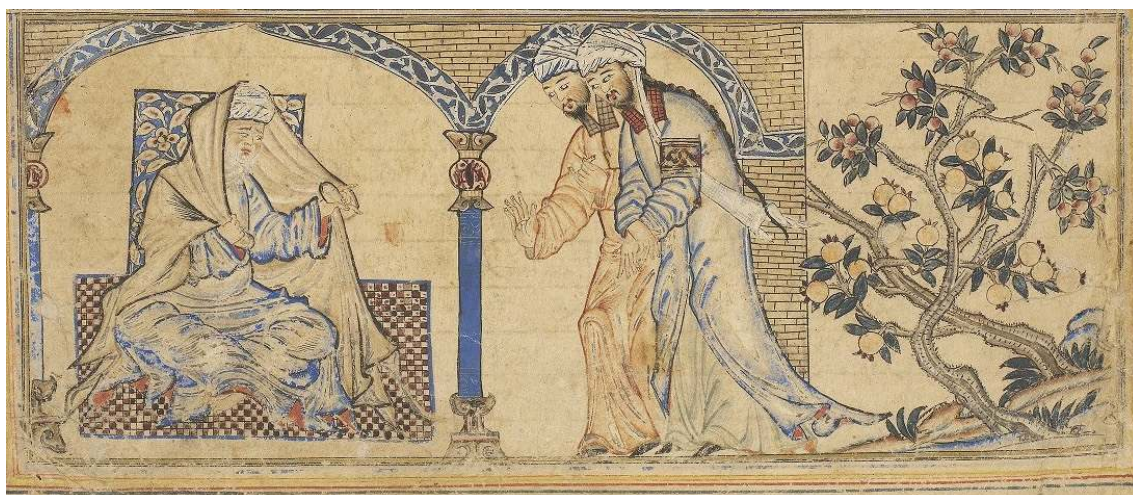


Figure 4.24: David judges between two brothers, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, MS20, f. 17r., 1314-1315, Tabriz, University of Edinburgh.



Details from Fig.4.22, 4.23, 4.24.

Armenian Cilicia's strategic position facilitated interactions with Byzantine, Crusader, and Islamic cultures, resulting in a unique artistic style. This style is particularly evident in the region's manuscript illuminations and religious iconography, which showcase a blend of native Armenian elements and external influences. By focusing on the painting traditions of Armenian Cilicia, we can further appreciate the diversity within Armenian art and its connections to the broader medieval world.

Dournovo claims that despite the economic and political upheaval of the Mongol invasion in the mid-thirteenth century, Armenian painting experienced a notable resurgence and reached its zenith by the mid-fourteenth century near Lake Van.⁴¹³ This resurgence, I contend, could be intricately linked to the collapse of the Rab-i Rashidi complex in 1318 and the eventual decline of the Ilkhanids around the 1340s. It is possible that Armenian painters were involved in Rashid al-Din's workshop, thereby affording them the opportunity to perpetuate their artistic endeavors and refine their craft in the aftermath of Rashid al-Din's demise and the despoliation of the Rab-i Rashidi. Considering Lake Van's proximity to Tabriz, the proposition holds considerable merit. Armenian illustrations from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries show signs of Ilkhanid influence, particularly in their depiction of backgrounds.

Including such elements highlights the cultural and religious exchanges between the Armenian and Mongol artistic traditions, underscoring the *Jami al-Tawarikh*'s role as a confluence of diverse influences. These visual connections reflect a broader pattern of cultural intermingling and the transmission of artistic motifs across regions and traditions during this period. Having examined the artistic interactions between the Armenians and the Mongols through the illustrations in Armenian gospel books and the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, it is now pertinent to explore the relationship between Byzantine art and Ilkhanid art.

4.2 Exchange and Interaction with Byzantine Artistic Tradition

Cultural encounters did not only happen between the Ilkhanids and Armenians. The Byzantines, as an imperial power, were among the most influential political and cultural entities neighboring the Ilkhans, Armenians, Arabs, and Europeans. As carriers and leading powers of the Roman heritage and Orthodox Christianity, it is inevitable for

⁴¹³ Ibid., 19.

the Ilkhanids to encounter them and start diplomatic and cultural exchanges. Since the Byzantines lived in interregnum after the sack of Constantinople in 1204, the Nicaean Empire and the Empire of Trebizond had more intense interactions with the eastern realms, such as the Seljuks and the Mongols and had the opportunity to shape the art of the Byzantine empire in this period. For instance, Lascarids had sovereignty in Nicaea in 1204 and onwards, and Ivana Jevtic emphasizes that the Lascarid house helped to build a new artistic and architectural genre and shaped Byzantine art and architecture in the thirteenth century, particularly the Paleologos period after 1261.⁴¹⁴ Moreover, a rivalry happened between the Seljuks and the Empire of Trebizond for Sinop, and it is one of the much-debated topics among scholars due to insufficient written evidence.⁴¹⁵ However, scholars such as Kursanskis and Shukurov claim that Manuel I (r. 1238-1263), the emperor of Trebizond, aimed to take back Sinop from Möngke Khan, and the Seljuks sought redress from Batu Khan in 1254 upon the capture of Sinop by Manuel I.⁴¹⁶ Considering the competitive relationships continued between the Byzantines and Seljuks, it is obvious that the Ilkhanids had contact with the Byzantines directly or through their vassals, the Seljuks. It is understood that due to the vassal status of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum, the Empire of Trebizond had attempted to make use of their situation and seize the Seljuk lands, which meant an attack on the Mongols. Besides these, as explained in Chapter 2, Maria Paleologos married Abaqa Khan in 1265, demonstrating the efforts to develop the political ties between the Ilkhanids and Byzantines through intermarriages.⁴¹⁷ Given the political atmosphere of the fragmented Byzantine Empire in the thirteenth century and the connection between the Mongols and the Byzantines, the political lacunae and the artistic attempts may have inspired and impacted the Ilkhanid art.

The formation of Byzantine painting and iconography represents a distinctive and influential period in art history, characterized by its spiritual depth and stylistic coherence. Emerging in the early Byzantine period, this art form was deeply rooted in the religious and cultural milieu of the Byzantine Empire, serving primarily as a medium for religious

⁴¹⁴ Ivana Jevtic, "Re-thinking the Role of Nicaea in the Development of Byzantine Art during the Thirteenth Century," in *Iznik/Nicaea on Its Way to become UNESCO World Heritage Site International Symposium Proceedings*, ed. Şahin Kılıç and Kutlu Akalın, (Bursa, 2020), 590.

⁴¹⁵ Yıldız, "Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Seljuk Anatolia: The Politics of Conquest and History Writing, 1243-1282," 240.

⁴¹⁶ Yıldız, 239.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., 306.

expression. However, it has secular paintings and topics as well.⁴¹⁸ The creation of icons, frescoes, and illuminated manuscripts played a central role in this artistic tradition, reflecting a fusion of classical Greco-Roman techniques and Eastern influences. Icons, in particular, were seen as sacred objects, believed to provide a direct link to the divine, and were meticulously crafted to adhere to theological guidelines that ensured their spiritual efficacy.⁴¹⁹ Manuscripts, often lavishly illustrated, were textual repositories and visual spectacles that conveyed complex religious narratives through elaborate miniatures and decorations.⁴²⁰ As the Byzantine painting evolved, regional variations emerged, with distinctive styles developing in areas such as Macedonia, Nicaea, Cappadocia, and Trebizond. These regions contributed uniquely to the broader Byzantine artistic tradition, showcasing local adaptations and innovations while maintaining Byzantine art's overarching aesthetic and symbolic framework. This section focuses on the rich heritage of Byzantine painting, beginning with exploring its foundational elements before examining the specific contributions of the Anatolian part of the Byzantine Empire, particularly Cappadocia.

The artistic evolution of the Byzantine Empire can be broadly divided into several distinct phases: The Early Byzantine period (330-843), the Iconoclasm (725-843), The Middle Byzantine period (843-1204), and The Late Byzantine period (1204-1453). The Early Byzantine period (330-843) saw the establishment of Christian iconography, heavily influenced by Roman art, culminating in the rich mosaics of Ravenna and Hagia Sophia.⁴²¹ This phase flourished during the reign of Emperor Justinian (r. 527-565).⁴²² The Iconoclastic Controversy (726-843) introduced a period of turmoil where the production of religious images was fiercely debated, resulting in the destruction of many works and a significant impact on artistic expression.⁴²³ The Middle Byzantine period (843-1204), following the restoration of icon veneration, witnessed a resurgence of artistic activity, characterized by the creation of grand churches and the refinement of mosaic art, exemplified by the Church of Hosios Loukas and Nea Moni of Chios.⁴²⁴ The

⁴¹⁸ Cormack, *Byzantine Art*, 5.

⁴¹⁹ Mango, *The Art of Byzantine Empire 312-1453: Sources and Documents*, 34.

⁴²⁰ Kurt Weitzmann, *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, 3rd to 7th Century Catalogue of the Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, November 19, 1977, through February 12, 1978*, (New York Princeton (N.J.): Metropolitan Museum of art Princeton university press, 1979), 56.

⁴²¹ Cormack, *Byzantine Art*, 23.

⁴²² Mango, 124.

⁴²³ Ibid., 151-157.

⁴²⁴ Cormack, 57.

Late Byzantine period (1204–1453) was marked by the empire’s political fragmentation and eventual fall. Yet, it experienced a cultural renaissance with a renewed interest in classical heritage and the proliferation of frescoes and panel icons, as seen in the churches of the Monastery of Chora and the Pammakaristos Church in Constantinople.⁴²⁵ Each phase reflects the dynamic interplay between political events, religious debates, and cultural exchanges, shaping Byzantine art’s distinctive and enduring legacy.

Terry Allen asserts that the Byzantine tradition primarily influences the biblical and Quranic representations found in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, overshadowing the impact of Western and Syriac sources. She states that:

Rashid al-Din used not Islamic sources but Jewish sources, including the Torah and probably a good selection from the exegetical literature too, though the stories illustrated have not been treated to an analysis of their specific sources. No illustrated Jewish manuscripts appear to exist that would fill the bill, so it is no surprise that Christian manuscripts offer the closest prototypes for the scenes illustrated in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Neither Western European nor Syriac manuscripts provide suitable models, but Byzantine prototypes lie close at hand.⁴²⁶

Considering the religious scenes in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, which mostly cover the common holistic figures in Abrahamic religions, such as Noah, Solomon, Moses, etc., and the statement of Terry Allen above, questions are raised about the relationship between the narrative of the Old Testament and Byzantine perception of it. Naturally, the Old Testament was not a book that everyone could access. That is why lectionaries called the *Prophetologions* were compiled to transmit the Old Testament stories to the Byzantine Christians.⁴²⁷ The Byzantines could listen to these lectionaries in public worship services.⁴²⁸ Therefore, it is understood that the Byzantine people knew about the prophets’ lives, and they might have transmitted these stories in their daily lives. The *Prophetologions* do not contain the whole narratives in the Old Testament; it is a compilation, and there are one hundred seventy-four extant manuscripts, and the oldest one dates back to the ninth century.⁴²⁹ From the ninth century to the thirteenth century, the representations of the Old Testament stories in the Byzantine might have formed a

⁴²⁵ Mango, 195.

⁴²⁶ Allen, “Byzantine Sources for the *Jami al-Tawarikh* of Rashid al-Din,” 122.

⁴²⁷ James Miller, “The Prophetologion: The Old Testament of Byzantine Christianity,” *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, eds. Paul Magdolino and Robert Nelson, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2010), 57.

⁴²⁸ Miller, “The Prophetologion: The Old Testament of Byzantine Christianity,” 59.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

certain type. Considering the mural paintings of the Cappadocian churches, which are geographically far from the capital, it appears that the general composition of the paintings shares the same iconography as the Constantinople churches. Moreover, the Cappadocian churches demonstrate development from the eighth century onwards. Therefore, Terry Allen's claim supports the idea that forming the Byzantine iconography for the Old Testament might have been a primary role model for Rashid al-Din. According to Allen's statement, Jewish, Western European, and Syriac manuscripts do not provide a suitable prototype for representations of the Old Testament stories. Moreover, Elizabeth Jeffreys claims that "But the Old Testament also has a role as "history" in a rather less theological sense. It narrates events involving the Jewish peoples, starting with their origins in remote myth and legend."⁴³⁰ She emphasizes that as the precursor of the New Testament, the Old Testament actually provides a model of world history, at least the history of the Middle East, for the Byzantine Christians.⁴³¹ In Chapter 3, the topics of some leading Byzantine chronicles were given, and most of them start with the creation stories. Hence, it supports Jeffreys that the Old Testament narratives had become the source of information for the chronicles, which might have influenced Rashid al-Din in terms of the structure of the contents. Furthermore, the accessibility of the *Prophetologies* mentioned above and their presence helps spread the biblical information since the Old Testament is not a book everyone can afford to get and read.

In order to understand the relationship and similarities between the Byzantine composition and iconography and *Jami al-Tawarikh*, it is necessary to examine the illustrations and frescoes. An example of this influence is evident in the scene titled "The Finding of Musa" (Fig. 4.25), where Asiya, Pharaoh's wife and her attendants are depicted standing by the Nile, gazing upon the floating chest.⁴³² This depiction resonates with iconographic elements frequently found in Byzantine Octateuchs (Fig. 4.26), such as the chest buoyantly adrift on the Nile and Asiya's contemplative stance on the riverbank.⁴³³ The recurrence of these motifs across various manuscripts underscores the

⁴³⁰ Elizabeth Jeffreys, "Old Testament 'History' and the Byzantine Chronicle," *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, eds. Paul Magdolino and Robert Nelson, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2010), 155.

⁴³¹ Jeffreys, "Old Testament 'History' and the Byzantine Chronicle," 155-156.

⁴³² Allen, 125.

⁴³³ Mika Natif, "Rashid al-Din's Alter Ego: The Seven Paintings of Moses in the Jami al-Tawarikh," *Rashid al-Din. Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran*, eds. A. Akasoy, C. Burnett and R. Yoeli-Tlalim, (London: Warburg Institute, 2013), 18.

profound imprint of Byzantine artistic conventions on the visual narrative of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. This interplay between cultures demonstrates a synthesis of artistic traditions and imbues the visual storytelling within the *Jami al-Tawarikh* with a universal visual language that transcends cultural and religious boundaries.



Figure 4.25: Finding of Musa, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, MS 20, f. 7r., Tabriz, The University of Edinburgh.



Figure 4.26: The Finding of Moses, *Menologion of Basil II*, 10th century, Constantinople, Vat. gr.1653, Vatican.

In addition to “The Finding of Moses,” “The Crossing of the Red Sea” (Fig. 4.27) shares commonalities with the biblical narrative of Moses’ story. Drawing from both the

Bible and the Quran, this tale recounts the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, as Moses, wielding his staff, parts the “sea,” allowing the Israelites to pass safely while the waters engulf the pursuing army of Pharaoh.⁴³⁴ While the Quran refers to it as the “sea,” it is widely understood as the Red Sea.⁴³⁵ Notably, in this scene, Moses is depicted with a halo, and his attire and sandals adhere closely to Judeo-Christian iconography, emphasizing the religious significance of the event (Fig. 4.28).⁴³⁶

This convergence of Judeo-Christian and Quranic narratives, along with the numerous illustrations of Moses, is particularly intriguing given Rashid al-Din’s Jewish background. Mika Natif raises a pertinent question regarding the number of Moses’ illustrations in each copy of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*: “Why did Rashid al-Din order the depiction of the entire life-circle of Moses in the Arabic manuscript while in other copies of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* Moses appears only twice?”⁴³⁷ This query can be extended to, “Why does the life of Jesus have fewer depictions than that of Moses?” If there were any depictions of Jesus, they might have been damaged over time. However, it remains notable that Moses is featured extensively, much like Muhammad, the last prophet of Islam. The Quran mentions Moses’ name one hundred thirty-six times, more than other prophets, and there are indirect connotations.⁴³⁸ Moreover, Jane Dammen McAuliffe lists the similarities between Moses and Muhammad, like divine protection in infancy, prophetic assignment, public rejection, scripture given by God, defeating the enemy, and final triumph.⁴³⁹ Thus, this tendency to depict Moses might be related to the similarities and challenges in the lives of both prophets. Moses is a revered figure in both Christianity and Islam, predating their central figures, Jesus and Muhammad. Moreover, the emphasis on Moses might also be related to the availability of appropriate iconography from the Old Testament in the Byzantine illustrations. On the other hand, Rashid al-Din’s Jewish heritage might have influenced his decision to emphasize Moses and allocate more space for his story due to the respect he feels towards Moses or the knowledge he has about the prophet.

⁴³⁴ Natif, “Rashid al-Din’s Alter Ego: The Seven Paintings of Moses in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*,” 19.

⁴³⁵ Quran 42:63 and Quran 20:77.

⁴³⁶ Natif, 19.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., 23.

⁴³⁸ Jane Dammen McAuliffe, “Connecting Moses and Muhammad,” *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, eds. Paul Magdolino and Robert Nelson, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2010), 288.

⁴³⁹ McAuliffe, “Connecting Moses and Muhammad,” 288.



Figure 4.27: The Crossing of the Red Sea, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, MS20, f. 8v., The University of Edinburgh.

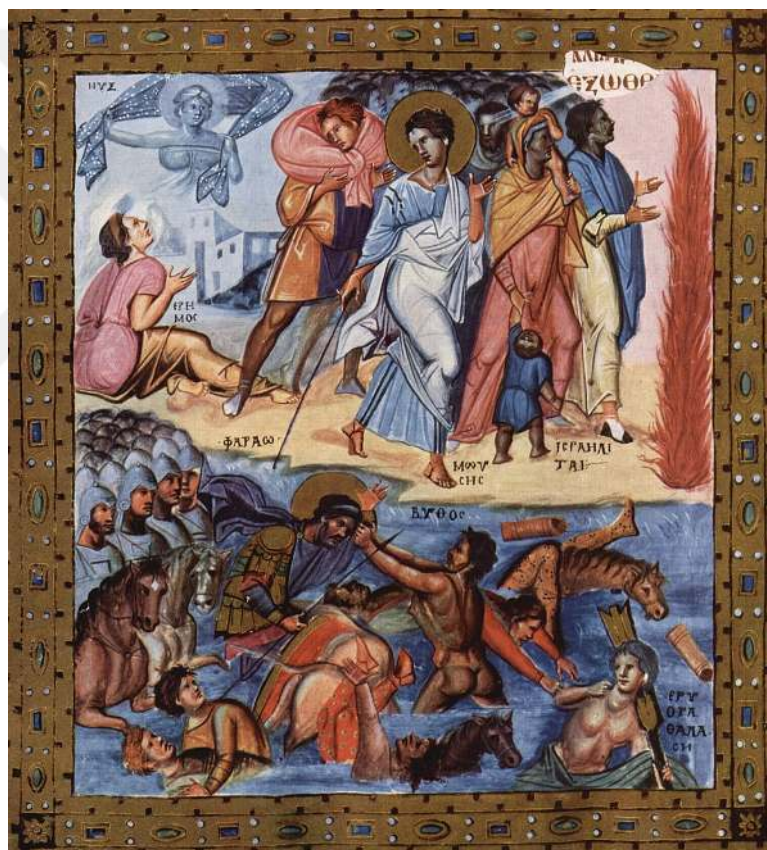


Figure 4.28: The Crossing the Red Sea, *Paris Psalter*, 10th century, gr. 139 f. 419v., Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

In order to tackle artistic exchanges and iconographic borrowings between the Anatolian Byzantine entities and the Ilkhanids, it is important to examine the significance of Tabriz at the time. Ibn Battuta emphasizes that the Ghazan's bazaar of Tabriz was rich and mesmerizing, and each artistry had different sections. There was astonishing jewelry

that Turkish women were even competing to buy.⁴⁴⁰ Furthermore, the famous traveler Marco Polo transmits that Tabriz was a large industrial city with inhabitants living with trade. It is the center of merchandise, and many traders come here to obtain foreign products.⁴⁴¹ According to Blair, Tabriz was providing to import and export artistry. She claims that Iranian textiles and architecture imported and exported artistic elements from the Far East to Egypt.⁴⁴² She adds that although books with pictures had been produced in Iran, the foundation of the ateliers for book production was a new idea there.⁴⁴³ Considering the vivid structure of the city of Tabriz and the high potential of cultural exchanges, it could have shown itself in the art pieces. For instance, Blair transmits that the Plantagenet Kings of Edward I and II commissioned an embassy to send to the Ilkhanid court to create an alliance against the Mamluks in 1292. The embassy brought many diplomatic gifts to the Ilkhanids, and she adds that some might have been “devotional literature.”⁴⁴⁴ She states that the book *Apocalypse* became popular in the mid-thirteenth century in England.⁴⁴⁵ Moreover, she links the depiction of “St. John on Mt. Patmos” (Fig. 4.29) with the depiction of the “Death of Moses” (Fig. 4.11). Both illustrations contain holy figures in their religions, and these male figures are reclining on the ground with similar baggy medieval attires. The compositions are mostly alike in terms of giving the same sense with groggy expressions. However, since in one scene, St. John is reclining on the mountain and, in another scene, Moses is dead, the exact facial expressions and positions of their bodies are different. For example, St. John has a sleepy face, while Moses’ face seems somber. Moreover, Moses lies down in a straighter position, considering St. John, since he is no longer alive. Lastly, Moses wears shoes while St. John’s feet are naked. Taking into account these small differences in the depiction of these two holy figures, it is obvious that the artist or artists paid attention to the stories, and instead of copying the whole iconography and composition, they adapted the iconography to the story.

⁴⁴⁰ Ebu Abdullah Muhammed Ibn Battuta. Tanci, *Ibn Battuta Seyahatnamesi*, trans. Ramazan Şeşen, (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2023), 169-170.

⁴⁴¹ Sheila S. Blair, “Tabriz: International Entrepot Under the Mongols,” *Politics, Patronage, and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th- 15th Century Tabriz*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer, Leiden: Brill, 2014), 321.

⁴⁴² Blair, “Tabriz: International Entrepot Under the Mongols,” 330-333.

⁴⁴³ Blair, 322.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., 325.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., 324.



Figure 4.29: St. John on Mt. Patmos, Dyson-Perrins' copy of the *Apocalypse*, c.1255-1260, London, MS Ludwig III, f.2., J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.



Details of Figures 4.29 (left) and Fig. 4.11 (right).

Hence, regarding the intense trade and artistic activities happening in Tabriz and the high potential of the city to obtain instruments from Europe during the thirteenth-century Mongol rule, it is quite possible that Tabriz had a commercial and cultural interaction with some centers in Anatolia in terms of being the political and commercial capital of the Mongols at the time. Cappadocia and Trebizond were leading Byzantine peripheries and hubs in Anatolia.

The Cappadocia region is bounded by the Taurus Mountains in the south, the Anti-Taurus range and the Euphrates River in the east, The Salt Lake and the Lycaonian Plain in the west, and the Northern Anatolian massif in the north.⁴⁴⁶ The region is surrounded

⁴⁴⁶ Ousterhout, "Introduction," *Visualizing Community: Art, Material Culture, and Settlement in Byzantine Cappadocia*, 5.

by the cities Kayseri (Caesarea) in the east, Aksaray (Koloneia) in the west, and Niğde (Tyana) in the south.⁴⁴⁷ Since the region is confined to the ex-volcanic Erciyes Dağı and Hasan Dağı (Mounts Argaios), the volcanic activities of these two mountains in the Upper Miocene and Quaternary periods formed present-day Cappadocia's geomorphology with ash and lava.⁴⁴⁸ The natural human settlements, which are called Peri Bacaları (Fairy Chimneys), were adorned with mural paintings throughout the Byzantine Period.⁴⁴⁹ (Fig. 4.30) The Fairy Chimneys were appropriate for easy carving, and the locals decorated the inside of these settlements from tuff formed like columns, barrel vaults, and domes, which are not essentially necessary (Fig. 4.31).⁴⁵⁰



Figure 4.30: Morphology of Fairy Chimneys in Cappadocia. Photo credit: Hasret Kılıçoğlu

⁴⁴⁷ Ousterhout, 5.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., 5-6.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid., 10.



Figure 4.31: Arches and vaults carved in the Fairy Chimneys. Photo credit: Hasret Kılıçoğlu

Cappadocian artisans were supposed to travel to Constantinople every year to receive their salaries, and in this way, they had the opportunity to contact imperial art and architecture, so both artists and patrons were mobile until the late eleventh century.⁴⁵¹ Considering this thesis's framework, four significant incidents formed Cappadocian art and architecture. The Persian incursions happened between the fourth and sixth centuries, and the Christian style of architecture in Cappadocia started before the late fifth century.⁴⁵² Later, the region was attacked by the Arabs in 646. With the arrival of the Arabs, Cappadocia became an outpost of the Byzantine Empire, and following this incident, the Iconoclasm started in the capital (746-843).⁴⁵³ The Arab invasions brought the end of the antiquity in the region.⁴⁵⁴ Robert G. Ousterhout assesses the iconoclastic period and its afterward, including the late seventh and early tenth century, as the “transitional period” for forming the Byzantine art of Cappadocia.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., 12.

⁴⁵² Ibid., 13.

⁴⁵³ Ibid., 13.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., 13.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., 13.

The last significant halt happened with the arrival of the Seljuks in the late eleventh century. Most part of the Cappadocia was captured by the Seljuks in 1074, Caesarea fell in 1082, and the full Seljuk suzerainty started in the twelfth century.⁴⁵⁶ The twelfth century was disruptive for the Greek-speaking Christian community in Cappadocia, and except for a few graffiti in Göreme, there were almost no remains of paintings. However, the thirteenth century became a recovery period for the Orthodox art in Cappadocia.⁴⁵⁷ Ousterhout suggests that the Seljuks might have provided subsidies to the Christian communities in central Anatolia.⁴⁵⁸ Moreover, the relationship between the Cappadocia and Constantinople was weakened, and instead of individual patrons, religious groups supported the artists to maintain the Byzantine Christian identity in the region.⁴⁵⁹ The paintings from this period were less sophisticated than the early examples.⁴⁶⁰ Considering that the capital of the Seljuks was Konya, which is not that far from the Cappadocian region, and the closeness of the Seljuk capital and authority to the Cappadocia reflected itself in mural paintings. Saints in Byzantine military clothes were one of the popular images in the churches of Cappadocia in the thirteenth century (Fig. 4.32) due to referencing the protection of the region against the sovereignty of the Seljuks in the Cappadocian region. The revival of the paintings in the thirteenth century was dated with inscriptions of nine rock-cut churches and twenty-two other monuments attributed to this century.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 15.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 16.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 16.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., 17.

⁴⁶¹ Tolga B. Uyar, "Thirteenth Century 'Byzantine' Art in Cappadocia and the Question of Greek Painters at the Seljuk Court," *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*, 216.



Figure 4.32: St. Procopius, Karşı Kilise or St. Jean's Church, 13th century, Gülşehir, Nevşehir, Cappadocia. Photo credit: Hasret Kılıçoğlu.

The relationship between the Mongols, Seljuks, and the Greek-speaking Orthodox community in Cappadocia is complex, and it is difficult to speak of the artistic exchanges between the Greek-speaking community in the region and the Mongol court in Tabriz due to the lack of certain evidence. However, a Seljuk work *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq* might hint at the iconographic exchanges and artists' mobility. This manuscript contains fifty-one illustrations about supernatural creatures such as jinn, angels, and planetary bodies.⁴⁶² It was written in the Seljuk court in Aksaray in April 1272-73, and it is called *Fine Points of Eternal Truths* as well.⁴⁶³ The book's content covers astrology, supernatural creatures, magic, and poetry.⁴⁶⁴ The author intended in composing seven different treatises, yet only three seem to have been executed as seen in the manuscript, Paris Persan 174: Sanhajal

⁴⁶² A.C.S. Peacock, "A Seljuq Occult Manuscript and Its World: MS Paris Persan 174," *The Seljuqs and Their Successors Art, Culture and History*, eds. S. Canby, D. Beyazit, M. Rugiadi, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 165.

⁴⁶³ Peacock, "A Seljuq Occult Manuscript and Its World: MS Paris Persan 174," 167.

⁴⁶⁴ Peacock, 165.

al-Arwah, *Daqa'iq al-Hadhiqin*, and *Kunuz al-Muazzimin*.⁴⁶⁵ The work was incomplete and it was written for Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw III (r.1264-1284).⁴⁶⁶ The writer of the manuscript was Nasir al-Din Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. Abdallah al-Rammal al-Muazzim al-Sa'ti al-Haykali, or in short Nasiri as he refers to⁴⁶⁷, was from Sistan on the border of Iran and Afghanistan and a habitant of Sivas.⁴⁶⁸ In the thirteenth century, there were immigrations from the East to central Anatolia due to the Mongol invasion and seeking positions related to their occupations.⁴⁶⁹ Andrew Peacock states that the angelic names in *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq* derive from Hebrew and, thus, Kabbalistic literature.⁴⁷⁰ He adds that Nasiri might have learned these angelic names from Ahmad al-Biruni, who lived in Egypt in the early thirteenth century, and he has several books related to magic and use Hebrew features in names.⁴⁷¹ Considering the impact of the Old Testament stories along with the Kabbalistic tradition on Islamic geography, it appears that the circulation of the Old Testament narratives and Jewish mysticism was intensive, and the mobility of the scholars and artists in the thirteenth century is one of the important factors to keep alive this circulation in Anatolia. Peacock exemplifies these angelic names with the angel of Metatron, the recording angel, and he states that Nasiri gives the Persian, Greek, Turkish, and Armenian names of this angel in his book.⁴⁷² Metatron (Fig. 4.33) is depicted in a green cloth with a pair of yellow wings. It holds a spear with a quadrangle crown and a conic raise. The angel's name is written on the front of the crown, and Metatron's face resembles the Seljukid faces seen in the tiles, particularly the eyebrows. Given the attempt to compose an occult text and flourishing it with illustrations inspired by the Jewish mysticism, and the circulation of the scholars, and therefore knowledge, one thinks that the Ilkhanid court might have heard of the process of this incomplete manuscript and been aware of the popularism of the occult thoughts in the Seljuk Anatolia as they were vassals of the Mongols in the 1270s.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid., 165.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 167.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., 167.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., 170.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 170.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., 173.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 174.

⁴⁷² Ibid., 174.



Figure 4.33: The Angel Metatron, *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq*, 1272-1273, Aksaray, Ms persan 174, f.73b, Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

For the case of artisans, Tolga Uyar claims by using the Islamic accounts that the Greek painters were renowned as the foremost artists in the land of Rum and serviced in the Anatolian Seljuk workshops.⁴⁷³ Uyar states this idea by referring to *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq*, and one of the depictions of the book represents the angel Shamhurash on horseback slaying the dragon (Fig. 4.34), and he reveals that the representation of the angel Shamhurash has strong similarities with the Byzantine dragon slayer iconography.⁴⁷⁴ Since the manuscript was written in the late thirteenth century, it corresponds with the presence of the Ilkhanids in Anatolia, and since Shamhurash represents an angel, it might have similarities with the angel depiction in *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Beyond Byzantine combat and dragon iconography, I wish to highlight the portrayal of a non-human figure, an angel. In *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq*, Shamhurash is shown

⁴⁷³ Uyar, "Thirteenth Century 'Byzantine' Art in Cappadocia and the Question of Greek Painters at the Seljuk Court," 218-219.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 222.

wearing a Persianate crown, with a serious man's face and angel wings on his back, dressed in traditional medieval attire. These medieval-styled angel garments are seamlessly incorporated into Ilkhanid paintings. For instance, the paintings in the churches located in Cappadocia might be examples of the depiction of the angels because the geography is not far from each other and, therefore, comparable in this sense. The angel representations in Saklı Kilise (Fig. 4.35 and Fig. 4.36), dating to the first half of the tenth century ⁴⁷⁵, may have served as a model for the classical depiction of angels in *Jami al-Tawarikh*. This is evident in the Ascension scene (Fig. 4.37). In the Revelation scene in *Jami al-Tawarikh*'s Edinburgh folio (Fig. 4.38), Gabriel is depicted with a human body and face but with wings on his back and a Persianate crown, similar to Shamhurash. Considering that the Greek painters were working at the Seljuk court and the Seljuks were the puppets of the Ilkhans, it is a possibility that the Cappadocian Greek artists might have been brought or have come to the Ilkhanid court. However, since there is no certain evidence, this may stay an idea for now.



Figure 4.34: The Angel Shamhurash Slaying the Dragon, *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq*, 1272, Aksaray, MS pers. 174, f.83, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

⁴⁷⁵ Ousterhout, 220.



Figure 4.35: An Angel, Saklı Kilise, 10th Century, Göreme, Nevşehir
Photo: Hasret Kılıçoğlu



Figure 4.36: An Angel, Saklı Kilise, 10th Century, Göreme, Nevşehir
Photo: Hasret Kılıçoğlu



Figure 4.37: The Ascension or Night Ride of Muhammad (Mi'raj), *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, MS20, f.57r., The University of Edinburgh



Details from Fig. 4.37 (*Jami al-Tawarikh*) and Fig. 4.26 (Saklı Kilise)



Figure 4.38: The Revelation, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, MS20, f.45v., The University of Edinburgh

Another instance is from the New Church of Tokalı Kilise in Göreme, adorned with paintings in the 960s.⁴⁷⁶ Although this painting is from the tenth century, the iconographic program is significant in terms of understanding the Greek-speaking artists' development and tradition in the region. The artist depicted Christian narrative scenes continuously on large interior surfaces, creating a cohesive program for the successive scenes. The program begins with the Annunciation (Fig. 4.39) on a large, framed panel.⁴⁷⁷ The background is a deep Lapis Lazuli color, with Mary positioned on the right in front of a building. She is depicted with a halo, wearing dark blue attire, and displaying an aghast expression. An ewer is placed at her feet. On the left, angel Gabriel is depicted, positioned a step ahead, stretching out the right hand towards Mary and holding a stick in the left hand. While Mary's attire is a single color, Gabriel's clothing is composed of three colors: blue, orange, a brown-like color, and white. The angel has a halo and two large white wings, with "GABRIEL" inscribed above.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., 226.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., 226.

⁴⁷⁸ Understanding the iconography requires familiarity with the narrative, which is explained in the Bible as follows: And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt

The biblical narrative provides a rich context for understanding the iconography of the Annunciation. Similarly, a comparative illustration can be found in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, further illuminating the intercultural artistic influences of the period. In the Annunciation scene from *Jami al-Tawarikh*'s Edinburgh folio (Fig. 4.40), the background features a Chinese-style rocky landscape instead of an architectural setting. Maryam (Mary) stands on the right, dressed in orange-brown attire with a dark blue pelerine, displaying a shy expression. A hole in the center possibly indicates a water source Maryam came to.⁴⁷⁹ She holds an ewer in her left hand and places her right hand to her face, reflecting her shyness. On the left, the angel Gabriel appears in human form. As in the Tokalı, representation just as in many churches in Cappadocia, Gabriel's hand stretches out towards Maryam, announcing her pregnancy. Gabriel is dressed similarly to Maryam, in orange-brown clothes and a dark blue pelerine. In the *Jami al-Tawarikh*'s Topkapı copy, although later restored with Timurid influences, the general composition of the narrative remains the same, preserving the original expressions crafted by the Herat artists (Fig. 4.41).⁴⁸⁰ In the Quran, the story of Maryam is given as:

And mention in the Book Maryam, when she withdrew in seclusion from her family to a place facing east. She placed a screen from them; then We sent to her Our Ruh (which means soul but indicates angel Gabriel), and he appeared before her in the form of a man in all respects. She said: "Verily! I see refuge with the Most Beneficent (Allah) from you if you do fear Allah." The angel said: "I am only a Messenger from your Lord, to you the gift of righteous." She said: "How can I have a son when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?" He said: "So, your Lord said: 'That is easy for Me (Allah): And to appoint him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from Us, and it is a matter decree...'⁴⁸¹

It is important to note that Gabriel is depicted in a human-like form in the latter. This indicates that Rashid al-Din remained faithful to the Quranic narrative while the visuals and iconography were adopted from the Christian tradition.⁴⁸² When considering both Biblical and Quranic accounts, three figures and one event are consistently present:

call his name JESUS. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom, there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, how shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:26-35).

⁴⁷⁹ Inal, "Some Miniatures of the Jāmi' al-Tawarikh in Istanbul, Topkapı Museum, Hazine Library No. 1654," 168.

⁴⁸⁰ Inal, 172.

⁴⁸¹ Quran 19: 16-22.

⁴⁸² Inal, 168.

Gabriel, Mary, Jesus (Isa), and Gabriel's annunciation to Mary. Given the similarities in the story and characters, it was relatively straightforward to adapt these depictions to an Islamic context. Additionally, Rashid al-Din transformed these religious and historical figures into Islamic figures, as seen in the Nativity scene (Fig. 4.42), where Mary and Jesus are replaced with Muhammad and his mother, Amina (Fig. 4.43).



Figure 4.39: The Annunciation, Tokalı Kilise, 10th century, Göreme, Nevşehir

Photo credit: Hasret Kılıçoğlu



Figure 4.40: The Annunciation, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, MS20, f. 22r.,
The University of Edinburgh.



Figure 4.41: The Annunciation, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1425, Herat, MS1654, f. 31v., Topkapı Palace Museum, Istanbul. (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı, Milli Saraylar İdaresi Başkanlığı'na aittir/ Belongs to the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, National Palaces Administration).

The Nativity scene depicted in the fresco at Tokalı Kilise in Cappadocia vividly illustrates the birth of Jesus with great detail. The central focus is the infant Jesus, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger with a halo, signifying his divinity. The Virgin Mary is shown reclining next to the manger, her haloed head turned towards Jesus, highlighting her importance in the scene. She wears dark robes and has a calm, contemplative expression. Joseph is depicted seated to the right, resting his head on his hand in a thoughtful pose, dressed in traditional attire. Above the manger, a host of angels with golden halos fills the sky, their wide-spread wings and joyful faces celebrating the birth of Christ, adding dynamic and spiritual energy to the composition. To the right, an angel, possibly Gabriel, announces the birth to a shepherd or another figure who stands with raised arms in awe, symbolizing the dissemination of the news of Jesus's birth. In the foreground, an ox and a donkey are present near the manger, representing the humble circumstances and fulfilling prophetic Christian imagery. The scene is set against a dark, rocky grotto, in line with the Byzantine tradition of depicting the nativity in a cave, contrasting with the vibrant Lapis Lazuli blue sky that signifies the sacred and heavenly nature of the event. The fresco is richly detailed and colored, with each figure

meticulously rendered to convey the nativity story's humanity and divinity. The use of halos, the positioning of figures, and the expressive faces all enhance the spiritual and narrative depth of the scene.⁴⁸³



Figure 4.42: The Nativity, Tokalı Kilise, 10th century, Göreme, Nevşehir

Photo credit: Hasret Kılıçoğlu

In the *Jami al-Tawarikh* illustration of the “Birth of Prophet Muhammad,” Amina, the Prophet’s mother, lies on an ornate bed attended by three women, reminiscent of the three Magi in Christian Nativity scenes.⁴⁸⁴ Abd al-Muttalib, the Prophet’s grandfather, stands to the right, similar to Joseph in Nativity depictions. The scene’s opulent setting, intricate designs, and vivid colors contrast with the humble manger typical of Christian art. These visual parallels suggest a cross-cultural exchange of iconographic motifs, indicating possible influences from Christian representations on Islamic artists.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸³ Ann Wharton Epstein, *Tokalı Kilise: Tenth Century Metropolitan Art in Byzantine Cappadocia*, (Washington D.C., Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1986), 69.

⁴⁸⁴ Blair, “Tabriz: International Entrepot Under the Mongols,” 324.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 324.



Figure 4.43: The Birth of Prophet Muhammad, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, MS20, f. 42r., The University of Edinburgh

Regarding iconographic elements, the Biblical scenes are usually represented similarly in the whole Christian world. However, Cappadocia might have a transitional place here, as it is in the heart of Anatolia. Moreover, although the Mongols encountered Christian iconography via European missionaries and travelers before coming to Iran and Anatolia, as discussed in the previous chapters, Cappadocian wall paintings make one think that although the region's relationship was cut with Constantinople, the Greek artists had the condition to continue their art in the region and they found a place in the Seljuk court where they could make their art. Thus, despite the lack of direct evidence, the similar iconography in the Cappadocian churches, the Seljuk manuscript, and *Jami al-Tawarikh* make sense to create a link between Rashid al-Din's scriptorium and the Greek artists in Aksaray and its around, where is called Cappadocia.

Moving forward, the thesis lastly turns the attention to the Byzantine art of the Empire of Trebizond, where the continuation and adaptation of Byzantine artistic traditions were influenced by the region's strategic position and diverse cultural interactions.

The Byzantine Empire of Trebizond is a unique and often overlooked outpost of the Byzantine Empire.⁴⁸⁶ Situated in the northeast corner of Anatolia, it served as a crucial harbor for European traders and those from the Silk Route and an important entrepot for Iran.⁴⁸⁷ In April 1204, Constantinople faced the threat of the Latin forces from the Fourth

⁴⁸⁶ Eastmond, *Byzantium's Other Empire: Trebizond*, 31.

⁴⁸⁷ Eastmond, 11.

Crusade. Alexios and David Komnenos, grandsons of the last emperor of the Komnenian house, Andronikos I (r. 1183-1185), established their rule in Trebizond with the support of Queen Tamar of Georgia (r.1185-1213).⁴⁸⁸ Despite its Hellenistic (since 765 B.C.) and Roman heritage, the empire formed in the early thirteenth century developed a distinct style separate from Constantinople. This new style was exemplified in the empire's renowned buildings, such as the Hagia Sophia of Trebizond, the Cathedral of the Panagia Chrysokephalos, the Church of St. Eugenios, and the Monastery of St. Sabbas, Matzouka, Soumela, and Vazelan, which artistically bolstered its legitimacy.⁴⁸⁹ Although the Byzantine Empire of Trebizond identified itself as a Greek state, its geographic location fostered a multi-ethnic society. Due to their colonies, Genoese and Venetians primarily settled around their castles. Armenians and Georgians also had a presence; Armenians even established a monastery at Kaymaklı. Additionally, Turks were present as traders, allies, and enemies. This multicultural structure was reflected in Trebizond's art, which featured Caucasian sculptures, significant muqarnas decorations, and fine paintings, particularly from the thirteenth century, along with manuscripts from the fourteenth century.⁴⁹⁰ The art of the Empire of Trebizond has two fractions. One of these is Constantinople, which has an effect due to the politics, and the second is a regional effect, including Georgia, Armenia, Iran, and Turkmen of Anatolia.⁴⁹¹

The Church of Hagia Sophia is an ideal example to discuss the art of Trebizond during the Byzantine period because it symbolizes the new empire and its religious and imperial identity. The painting program of the church is not composed of a single program but a combination of a series of programs that connect the parts of the churches to each other.⁴⁹² The Annunciation scene over the door between the narthex and naos shows similarity with the Annunciation in *Jami al-Tawarikh* and the Annunciation depictions in Cappadocian churches (Fig. 4.44). Here, the movement of the angel Gabriel and the cloth and the depiction of the wing show the classical medieval Orthodox angel. Mary's architectural background is a usual decoration in this scene as well. The color of Mary's attire is a dark tone of blue, just as in most of the scenes we have seen so far. However,

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., 31 and 48.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., 32.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., 33.

⁴⁹¹ Glen Peers, "Trebizond and its World Through Manuscripts," *Byzantium's Other Empire: Trebizond*, 103.

⁴⁹² Eastmond, *Art and Identity in the Thirteenth Century Byzantium: Hagia Sophia and Empire of Trebizond*, 131.

interestingly, the rest of the scenes do not share a big similarity with the Cappadocian narrative scenes in terms of style. David Talbot Rice states that frescoes in the architectural sites in Trebizond look more like the Russian iconography and depiction rather than Cappadocia.⁴⁹³



Figure 4.44: The Annunciation, *The Holy Church of Hagia Sophia*, 13th century, Trabzon.

Besides the frescoes, manuscripts related to Trebizond should be touched on, although there is a challenge indicating manuscripts' provenance as Trebizond. An almanac dates back to 1336⁴⁹⁴ and gives comprehensive information about the society of Trebizond for all strata.⁴⁹⁵ The artists and writers of the work are not known, and the work explains the astrological activities in the empire at that time. It refers to both Greek and Islamic calendar reckoning,⁴⁹⁶ which also means an interaction with the Persians because Trebizond depended more on Tabriz than Constantinople.⁴⁹⁷ Moreover, the manuscript *Romance of Alexander the Great*,⁴⁹⁸ dates back to the fourteenth century and contains two hundred fifty illustrations.⁴⁹⁹ The place of the origin of the manuscript is not known, but a Byzantine emperor was depicted in the manuscript; however, his name is not indicated. The illustrations have Frankish, Greek, and Islamic influences.⁵⁰⁰ Scholars mostly agree that the emperor Alexios III commissioned the book and was known for his

⁴⁹³ Millet and Rice, *Byzantine Painting at Trebizond*, 148.

⁴⁹⁴ Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, gr.525, 155v-171v.

⁴⁹⁵ Peers, "Trebizond and its World Through Manuscripts," 104.

⁴⁹⁶ Peers, 104.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid., 116.

⁴⁹⁸ Hellenic Institute in Venice gr.5.

⁴⁹⁹ Trachoulia, *To Mythistorēma Tou Alexandrou*, 29.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., 33.

artistic patronage in that period.⁵⁰¹ Although Alexander the Great was not a religious figure, some scenes from this book are similar to the *Jami al-Tawarikh* illustrations, especially regarding the general compositions.

In one of the scenes of *Jami al-Tawarikh*'s Edinburgh folio, the Christian ruler of Abyssinia, Negus, refuses to give the Muslim refugees who escaped from Mecca to save their lives from persecution. The king was seated on a throne with his Ethiopian attendants next to him. There are two Muslim delegates kneeling before the king (Fig. 4.45). In *Romance of Alexander the Great*, one scene depicts King Poros', who reigns in the region of Panjab, sending 50.000 soldiers to Dareios against Alexander (Fig. 4.46). The general setting of the two scenes is similar. Moreover, the kings' situation and manners give a similar sense.



Figure 4.45: Negus, the Christian ruler of Abyssinia, refuses to hand in the Muslim Refugees, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1314-1315, Tabriz, MS20, f. 52r, The University of Edinburgh Library.

⁵⁰¹ Peers, 115.



Figure 4.46: King Poros sent fifty thousand soldiers to assist Dareios, *Romance of Alexander the Great*, 14th century, Trebizond(?), codex gr.5, Hellenic Institute in Venice.

The second depiction from the story of Alexander the Great is his return to Macedonia with great victory and the Macedonians' enthusiastic reception of their king (Fig. 4.47). The illustration resembles Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, and Muhammad's Accepts the Submission of Banu'l Nadir. The victorious riding of Alexander, the Macedonians' excitement, and the architectural background are like a borrowed setup from the common Christian narratives and their iconography.



Figure 4.47: (bottom) When Alexander returned to Macedonia victorious and bearing trophies, they (the Macedonians) heard all about him, *Romance of Alexander the Great*, 14th century, Trebizond(?), f.26r codex gr.5, Hellenic Institute in Venice.

Here, the important thing is that the possible composition of this manuscript corresponds to the middle of the fourteenth century, and as indicated previously, although Rab-i Rashidi was plundered after Rashid al-Din's execution, the manuscript production was maintained, and the *Mi'rajnama* and the *Great Mongolian Shahnama* are evident for it. The Empire of Trebizond was under a challenge to legitimize its identity and nobility against Constantinople through writing and illustrating the successful historical figure Alexander, and it shared the same aim with the Ilkhanids after the conversion of Ghazan Khan because Ilkhanids needed to prove themselves to the Islamic world and became the top Islamic state and power in the region against the Mamluks and their relatives the

Golden Horde by using the Genghis' lineage. Therefore, the writing purpose of these two manuscripts and using the figures Alexander and Genghis was a kind of attempt to recreate an identity by reviving the glorious past. Thus, thesis argues that Alexios III's commission to produce *Romance of Alexander the Great* as a role model carries the same reasons Ghazan's commission of *Jami al-Tawarikh* and Christ's Entry into Jerusalem became an iconographic inspiration for both. Considering all these artistic productions and legitimate issues, I argue that this time, Tabriz and the Ilkhanids might have created a model for the Empire of Trebizond and its artistic production. Moreover, economic and political ties between Tabriz and Trebizond were vivid, and it may help to know the artistic developments happening in both cities as well. Lastly, it is important to remember that Trebizond is closer to Tabriz than Constantinople, and artistic exchange is mutual.

At the head of this chapter, one of the quotes of Rashid al-Din was given: "The reason I have said all this is that when this poor one was ordered to compose the *Compendium of Chronicles*, I copied out everything I found written in the well-known books of every nation, everything that was known to every tribe through uninterrupted tradition, everything that the wise and learned of every group reported according to their belief.." ⁵⁰² Considering his statement, it is clear that the Rashid al-Din made use of "uninterrupted traditions," "books of every nation" along with the "reports given by the wise groups regarding their beliefs" and he reveals that he transmitted and copied anything he could found to his monumental work *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Given his discourse, it is possible to apply his sentences to the illustrations in the manuscript. If he collected and copied any sources, books, and reports from any nations and beliefs, it is achievable that he took to model the Christian iconography via the European encounters and the Ilkhanids' close neighbors, the Armenians and the Anatolian Byzantines, as well.

In this chapter, we have explored the intricate cultural and iconographic exchanges between Greater Armenia and Armenian Cilicia, the Byzantine territories of Cappadocia and Trebizond, and the Ilkhanids through the lens of painting. By examining stylistic influences and thematic interconnections, it is obvious that these regions engaged in a dynamic and reciprocal artistic dialogue despite their distinct political and cultural identities. This analysis has shed light on the ways in which artistic traditions were shared, adapted, and transformed across these interconnected regions, revealing an intensive

⁵⁰² Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, 8.

cultural interchange that transcended geopolitical boundaries. As we move into the final chapter, we will synthesize these findings, discuss their broader implications, and suggest directions for future research.



Chapter 5: CONCLUSION

This thesis demonstrated the artistic results of the Islamization of the Ilkhanids and their political and cultural interaction with the Armenians and the Byzantines through the religious representations of the monumental work *Jami al-Tawarikh*. The thesis examined the Mongol's approach toward the new religions, the political situation of the Ilkhanids, and their treatment of the Christians in Anatolia and the West in order to reveal the relationship and cultural exchange between the two worlds. Moreover, this work concentrated on the renowned vizier Rashid al-Din's manuscript production center Rabi Rashidi in Tabriz, and the process of writing *Tarikh-i Mubarak-i Ghazani* (*The Blessing History of Ghazan Khan*) and *Jami al-Tawarikh* (*Compendium of Chronicles*). The sources he was inspired by and used as models were important in generating a new genre in historiography. What is more, his selection of religious narratives for the illustration was discussed in terms of his knowledge of the Old Testament and Judaism and his possible tendency towards Judaist narratives. Also, the changing face of the Ilkhanids with Ghazan Khan was visualized and modeled in the leading religious figures of the manuscript.

This study tried to answer some questions. One of the first questions was the Mongols' familiarity with Christendom and its iconography. The Mongols were familiar with Christianity, as explained in the Chapters 2 and 4. There were already Armenian translators in Mongolia, and the Christians were performing their rituals according to Greek-Orthodox tenets.⁵⁰³ Also, the Armenians were one of the closest allies of the Ilkhanids against the threat of the Mamluks.⁵⁰⁴ Therefore, it is understood that the Mongol court interacted with the Anatolian Christian entities, the Armenians, and the Greeks. Although these two communities shared the same faith, they had sectarian differences. Therefore, the Mongols not only met some Christian communities of Anatolia, but they also witnessed the differences in their beliefs and rituals. In addition to these, Nestorian Christianity was already adopted by some Mongolian tribes, such as the Naimans, Oirats, and Keraites.⁵⁰⁵ Thus, another branch of Christianity had already been practiced by the

⁵⁰³ Jackson and Morgan, *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke (1253-1255)*, 114-116. Also, see page 66.

⁵⁰⁴ Maranci, *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction*, 70. Also, see page 87.

⁵⁰⁵ De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns, 1206-1335*, 183. Also, see page 37.

locals. Some of the Mongolian Khans' mothers and wives were Nestorian, like Dokuz Khatun, Hulagu's wife. She was quite an influential and respected female figure in the Ilkhanid court, and as discussed in Chapter 2, she brought Nestorian young ladies to the Ilkhanid court as wives or concubines.⁵⁰⁶ Rashid al-Din states in *Jami al-Tawarikh* that "A church was always made at the gate to Doquz Khatun's ordu"⁵⁰⁷, and Armenian historian Gregor Akanc writes that "She very much loved all Christians, Armenians, and Syrians, so that her tent was a church, and a sounder traveled with her and many Armenian and Syrian priests."⁵⁰⁸ According to these two statements, Dokuz Khatun's influential capacity is clearly seen, and it generates a friendly relationship between the Christian allies in neighboring countries and the Christian community in the Ilkhanid state. It is useful to remember that there are rooted Christian communities in Iran and it's around, and there were Christian neighborhoods in one of the Ilkhanid capitals, Tabriz, at the time.⁵⁰⁹ What is more, the Ilkhans had intermarriages such as Maria Despina Khatun, wife of Abaqa Khan, and Irene, wife of Ghazan Khan.⁵¹⁰ Maria's marriage with Abaqa was political and meant to strengthen the ties between the Byzantines and the Ilkhanids. Maria built a Greek Orthodox Church in Tabriz, and it is possible that she was the patron of the Church of Our Lady Mary in Urumiya.⁵¹¹ Besides the presence of the Nestorian Mongol ladies and Christian figures serving at the Mongol court, the intermarriages paved the way for expanding the influence of Christianity by generating the atmosphere at the court and artistic patronages. Considering the religious diversity in the Mongol and Ilkhanid courts, one can see that the Ilkhanid court was highly familiar with Armenian and Byzantine Christianity and tradition. Thus, the Christian figures' flow at the court increases the cultural and artistic interaction between the Ilkhans, the Armenians, and the Byzantine Christians.

⁵⁰⁶ Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, 264. Also, see pages 37-38.

⁵⁰⁷ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-tevarih*, 472. Also, see page 37.

⁵⁰⁸ Blake and Frye, "History of the Nation of the Archers (The Mongols) by Grigor of Akanc; Hitherto Ascribed to Matak the Monk: The Armenian Text Edited with an English Translation and Notes," 341. Also, see page 38.

⁵⁰⁹ Hamd-Allah Mustawfi of Qazvini, *The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat-Al-Qulub Composed by Hamd-Allah Mustawfi of Qazvin in 740 (1340)*, trans. G. Le Strange, (Leyden: E.J. Brill, 1919), 83. Also, see page 68.

⁵¹⁰ Weller, "Marrying the Mongol Khans: Byzantine Imperial Women and the Diplomacy of Religious Conversion in the 13th and 14th Centuries," 190. Also, see page 40.

⁵¹¹ Weller, 188-189. Also, see page 39.

Moreover, the thesis sought to answer the relationship between the Islamization of the Ilkhanids and the increase of artistic patronage. After Ghazan's collective conversion to Islam as the head of the state, it was a landmark to task Rashid al-Din to write a family history, which would be later called *Tarikh-i Mubarak-i Ghazani*.⁵¹² This means that the Ilkhanid state's face is turning to the other side, and Ghazan aimed to create a new Central Asian-rooted state, but one that is more Iranian and Islamic in the region. Therefore, it affected the image of the country as he demolished many worshipping places in the Ilkhanid lands as well.⁵¹³ As discussed in Chapter 2, Ghazan's conversion to Islam with his soldiers just before his capture of Baydu was the first step to generating one solid Muslim empire in the Middle East against the threat of the Mamluks and Golden Horde. What he attempted might be called "Pan Ilkhanica" rather than "Pax-Ilkhanica" since he demolished sacred spaces belonging to the non-Muslims living under the Ilkhanid rule.⁵¹⁴ Ghazan's attempt and thought of the "Pan-Ilkhanica" stopped the state's decay and constituted one single Muslim identity, preventing the dominion or influence of the non-Muslims and reducing them to a minority position. Although Ghazan had Christian allies such as the Armenians and Franks, it does not mean that he was tolerant of the Christians. These alliances were mostly based on having support against the one common enemy, the Mamluks. Therefore, his commission of writing genealogy in the Genghis house until Ghazan himself is an important step for political legitimization. Moreover, his artistic patronage flourished the architecture during his short reign.⁵¹⁵ Rabi Rashidi was a symbolic monument and the result of the architectural and artistic productivity of the Ghazan's era. Considering the religious diversity in the Mongol court in Karakorum and the Ilkhanid court in Tabriz, this shift of Ghazan can be described as a radical transition that impacted the destiny of the Ilkhanid state. Artistic patronages and writing genealogy were a kind of definition and description of this new state. Moreover, it is important to indicate that writing genealogies and histories was a trend in the thirteenth century in the Middle East and Europe.⁵¹⁶ Therefore, the Ilkhanids adapted this

⁵¹² Kamola, *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and Jami' al-Tawarikh*, 99. Also, see page 34.

⁵¹³ Rashiduddin Fazlullah, 627. Also, see page 31.

⁵¹⁴ See page 32.

⁵¹⁵ Özgüdenli, *Ortaçağ'da Türkler, Moğollar, İranlılar (Kaynaklar ve Araştırmalar)*, 247. Also, see page 32.

⁵¹⁶ See pages 53-55.

tradition to themselves, which opened the way for adapting the iconography of the illustrations.

Another issue that the thesis tackled is the sources Rashid al-Din's Fadl Allah applied while writing the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Many chronicles and historians from the East and West nourished Rashid al-Din. As discussed in Chapter 3, there was a rising trend in writing history, especially in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the Byzantine and European worlds. These chronicles mostly begin from the creation of the world and cover the mythologic, religious, and political incidents until the time they lived in. It is known that Rashid al-Din was doing literature research in order to write his *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Also, regarding format, contents, and goals, the Byzantine legacy of history and dynastic writing was transferred to the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Especially the way Rashid al-Din explains that the roots of the nations and the creation of the world had many things in common with the Byzantine chronicles' explanation of the creation of the world or the root of the Romans.⁵¹⁷ What is more, Rashid al-Din mentions some chronicles like Ibn al-Athir *Al-Kamil fit-Tarikh* as a source of information while writing the text.⁵¹⁸ Furthermore, he had access to the *Altan Defter* in the Ilkhanid court, which is quite significant in terms of accessing the life of Genghis Khan. Also, the thirteenth-century Meletine historian Bar Hebraeus spent time in Maragha in the 1280s, and he passed away in 1286.⁵¹⁹ Bar Hebraeus probably met Rashid al-Din because there was an observatory of Hulagu in Maragha, and Rashid al-Din was in the service of Abaqa, Tegüder, and Arghun during this six-year period. What distinguishes Bar Hebraeus' presence in Maragha is that, as discussed in Chapter 3, both Bar Hebraeus and Rashid al-Din were Jewish before their conversions. They both wrote history books, interacted with the Mongols, and had close ties with them.⁵²⁰ Since Rashid al-Din wrote *Jami al-Tawarikh* around twenty years later than Bar Hebraeus wrote his *Chronography*, in the framework of the contents, it is useful to examine both works and compare them in order to understand if Rashid al-Din made use of the *Chronography* or not. Besides this, in the same century, Ata Malik Juwayni's *Tarikh-i Jahan-Gusha*, which was completed in the 1260s, and Ibn Bibi's *al-Avamir al-'aliyye fi'l-umuri'l-'aliyya* which was finished in

⁵¹⁷ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, 27. Also, see page 54.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid., 25-28.

⁵¹⁹ Abu'l Farac, *Abu'l Farac Tarihi*, 26. Also, see page 54.

⁵²⁰ Özaydın, *İbnü'l İbri*. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ibnul-ibri>. Also, see page 54.

1282, generated a base for dynastic chronicles.⁵²¹ These two works were written for the sake of the royals at the time, and Rashid al-Din, as a renowned vizier, advanced these examples and presented a more developed and stylistically more modern history of genealogies and the world. Considering that the completion date of these three important works, the *Chronicle* of Bar Hebraeus, *Tarikh-i Jahan-Gusha* of Juwayni, *al-Avamir al-'aliyye fi'l-umuri'l-al-'aliyya* of Ibn Bibi, corresponding with the growing and glowing phase of the Rashid al-Din's life, it is just before he reached his peak in his career. Before he entered the Ilkhanid court, there were already examples of the dynastic writings such as *Altan Defter*, *The Secret History of the Mongols*, *Sheng-wu c'hin-cheng lu*, and *Tarikh-i Jahan-Gusha*. Hence, it can be said that he had first-hand sources for writing the *Tarikh-i Mubarak-i Ghazani* and then *Jami al-Tawarikh*. In addition to these, considering that Juwayni came to Tabriz in 1281 to visit Abaqa, it is highly possible that Rashid al-Din met Juwayni face-to-face two years before Juwayni's death because Rashid al-Din entered the Ilkhanid court in the reign of Abaqa as a *tabib*, physician.⁵²² Therefore, it can be argued that the vizier definitely made use of these prominent works, maybe directly accessing them and knowing about their writing process.

Furthermore, this thesis presented and discussed the meaning and function of Rashid al-Din's Rab-i Rashidi atelier in Tabriz. Rashid al-Din already had a significant position at the Ilkhanid court. However, his power increased during the reign of Ghazan. Rashid al-Din built his manuscript production atelier around the 1300s, and it was completed around 1310s.⁵²³ During this process, Oljaytu enthroned and commissioned the vizier to expand the "genealogy of the Genghis' house" to "world history."⁵²⁴ The rebuilding of the Ilkhanate state successfully went on, and this artistic attempt even became a more universal propaganda. While Ghazan transformed the state, redefined and redescribed it regarding artistic, religious, financial, and governmental reforms, Oljaytu expanded the artistic and cultural frames and generated a "universal ruler" image.⁵²⁵ His move of capital from Tabriz to Sultaniya is proof of this propaganda. Hence, the Rab-i

⁵²¹ Sara Nur Yıldız, "Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Seljuk Anatolia: The Politics of Conquest and History Writing, 1243-1282," 19. Also, see page 51.

⁵²² Kamola, 33. Also, see page 29.

⁵²³ Özgüdenli, "Bir İlhanlı Şehir Modeli: Rab'-i Reşidi'de Meslekler, Görevliler ve Ücretler," 108. Also, see page 61.

⁵²⁴ Rashid al-Din Fazlullah, 18.

⁵²⁵ Kamola, *Making Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and Jami' al-Tawarikh*, 91. Also, see page 31.

Rashidi complex is a kind of architectural representation of this universalism and the new identity of the Ilkhans. Moreover, it represented the power of the vizier as he was the chief of this complex. Therefore, the production of *Jami al-Tawarikh* as an illustrated manuscript makes more sense when it is considered with the new policy of the Ilkhans and the building of the Rab-i Rashidi atelier. *Jami al-Tawarikh* was a significant component of the changing face of the Ilkhans and generated this universalism propaganda's literal and visual aspects as comprehensive world history and introduction of the Genghis dynasty.

In Chapter 4, the art of Armenians and Byzantines in Anatolia is briefly explained to provide a foundation for discussing the cultural and artistic exchanges between the two worlds. Shared narratives of key Abrahamic figures such as Jonah, Jesus, Moses, and Mary and discussed how these were represented in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Religious representations inspired by the iconography from the Armenian and Byzantine sources were incorporated in two ways. First, certain narratives were adopted as both visual elements and thematic content. For instance, the scenes from Jesus' life, such as Nativity, Baptism, and Entry into Jerusalem, were interpreted to align with the life of Prophet Muhammad. In the Baptism scene (Fig. 4.18), as illustrated in an Armenian manuscript, Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist, symbolizing purification from sin. Although Jesus was sinless, his baptism was a model for the Christian followers.⁵²⁶ In a parallel manner, Bahira's scene (Fig. 4.18) in the *Jami al-Tawarikh* depicts Muhammad's symbolic "inception moment," where Bahira recognizes his purity and prophecy.⁵²⁷ Here, Jesus is replaced by Muhammad, and John is replaced by Bahira, underlining as an indicator of the main figure's holiness. Similarly, in both scenes, the "holy oil" is poured over the main figures, an element of Christian iconography absent in Islamic ritual but borrowed through Armenian depictions.

A similar adaptation occurs in the Nativity (Fig. 4.42) scene, where the Birth of the Prophet Muhammad (Fig. 4.43) is depicted with his mother Amina, surrounding attendants, and his grandfather Abd al-Muttalib, who observes the newborn. Divided into

⁵²⁶ Matthew 3: 13-17. Source is from:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%203%3A13-17&version=NIV>.

⁵²⁷ Fayda, "Bahira," *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/bahira>. Also, see page 88.

three sections with red columns. This scene parallels Christian representations of Mary, here replaced by Amina, and Joseph, represented by Abd al-Muttalib.⁵²⁸ Moreover, the Entry into Jerusalem (Fig. 4.20) is almost identical to Muhammad's submission of the Banu'l Nadir tribe (Fig. 4.21) regarding its general composition, perspective, the position of the welcomers, the architectural background in the corner as a symbol of the city or town. In the Entry into Jerusalem, Jesus again is replaced by Muhammad; the horse replaces the donkey, and the people of Banu'l Nadir replace the people of Jerusalem. Also, there is an angel pouring the holy oil down on top of the prophet again. Thus, the *Jami al-Tawarikh* does not merely adopt Christian elements but also adapts narratives to align with Islamic themes.

Secondly, shared figures across the Abrahamic religions, such as Jonah, Mary, and Moses, were also depicted. As discussed in Chapter 4, the story of Jonah has ancient, possibly Mesopotamian roots, which need further study. In the chapter, the Old Testament and Quranic narratives of Jonah's story are explained, and the differences between the two are shown. Although frequently depicted scenes in the life of Jonah on Christian churches' walls, frescoes and manuscripts successfully borrowed in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, the artists who worked in the Rab-i Rashidi were aware of the Quranic narrative, and they paid attention to the coherence between the depiction and the story in the holy book. The same application is seen in Mary's scene, the Annunciation (Fig. 4.40 and 4.41) as well. The artists depicted the angel Gabriel in human form because the annunciation had been made by Gabriel in a human shape according to the Quranic explanation.⁵²⁹ Although Moses' stories are depicted in the same way as those of Jonah and Mary, one thing distinguishes Moses's illustrations. In the Arabic manuscript of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, Moses' whole life circle is depicted, while he is illustrated only twice in comparison to the other copies.⁵³⁰ Moreover, unlike Jonah, the Quran mentions Moses' name one hundred thirty-six times, more than other prophets. This frequent mention of Moses in Islamic narrative and depiction in *Jami al-Tawarikh* raises the question of how the stories are selected for the illustrations. Here, the thesis argued that Rashid al-Din's Jewish background could be one of the reasons for the tendency to allocate that much

⁵²⁸ Inal, 168. Also, see pages 117-118.

⁵²⁹ Quran 19: 16-22 and Inal, 168. Also, see page 117.

⁵³⁰ Natif, 19. Also, see page 103.

space for Moses. Rashid al-Din's earlier life and its impact was one of the research questions that this thesis sought an answer.

The vizier's Jewish background is an open-to-debate topic in the thesis and affects the selection of the stories in *Jami al-Tawarikh*. He converted to Islam in his thirties, and he was steadily promoted in the Ilkhanid court and gained the vizierate. Besides his renowned works like *Jami al-Tawarikh*, he wrote about Islamic theology as well.⁵³¹ One may argue that it is not possible for a renowned vizier to reflect the tendencies of his past while he was making a serious effort in order to be accepted by Muslim society and court. However, although this idea is understandable, it is also worth considering the number of Moses' illustrations in the manuscript and the number of Islamic or Quranic stories that are common to the Old Testament and, therefore, Judaism. It is also possible that Rashid al-Din chose these scenes to illustrate because there are many examples of the composition and depiction of these stories and figures in Christian art. Nevertheless, we do not encounter Jesus' depiction, while Moses has several illustrations in the manuscript. There are two possibilities for the destiny of Jesus' illustrations. First, Jesus has depictions in the manuscript, but they are lost or demolished. Second, he is not depicted deliberately. Considering that there is an illustration belonging to Mary, there might be an illustration of Jesus since he is mentioned as a prophet in the Quran.⁵³² It is probable that Jesus was illustrated; however, not many. This might be because Muhammad replaced Jesus in general compositions that were borrowed from Christian narratives and iconography, as discussed above. However, Rashid al-Din's visual emphasis on Moses is worth considering because Moses is the holiest figure in Judaism, and Muhammad is the holiest figure in Islam; while Judaism refuses Jesus as a divine being, Islam only accepts Jesus' prophecy. This might have driven Rashid al-Din to decide which stories and figures would be depicted.

⁵³¹ Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles*, 114. Also, see page 62.

⁵³² Quran 5:116. Accessed from: <https://quran.com/5/116>.

"And on Judgment Day Allah will say, 'O Jesus, son of Mary! Did you ever ask the people to worship you and your mother as gods besides Allah?'" He will answer, 'Glory be to You! How could I ever say what I had no right to say? If I had said such a thing, you would have certainly known it. You know what is hidden within me, but I do not know what is within You. Indeed, You alone are the Knower of all unseen.'"

One of the most significant problems to answer and the key to this thesis is the issue of working artists in Rab-i Rashidi. The main idea of the thesis is that the artists working in the Rab-i Rashidi atelier applied the iconography from the Armenian and Anatolian parts of the Byzantine. This application is discussed in terms of the meeting of the Mongols with the Armenians and Byzantines in Karakorum,⁵³³ European missionaries' introduction of the illustrated Bibles to the Mongols with the help of Anatolian Christian entities (such as William of Rubruck's coming to the Ilkhanids from the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia),⁵³⁴ intermarriages with the Byzantine princesses,⁵³⁵ and possible artistic exchange with the Greek-speaking community in Cappadocia through the Seljuks.⁵³⁶ In addition to these, geographically, Tabriz's closeness to the Vaspurakan region and Cappadocia, hence, accession to the artists working at the Armenian scriptoria and Greek artists working at the Seljuk court in Konya, might have made easier the import of the artists to the Ilkhanid court and Rab-i Rashidi atelier in Tabriz. Scholars like Basil Gray discussed the presence of non-Muslim artists in the Rab-i Rashidi by examining the paintings in *Jami al-Tawarikh*.⁵³⁷ This thesis examined the paintings and searched for political developments that indicated the Armenian and Greek artists' visits or travels to Tabriz. Two main arguments are implicated in the thesis from the data provided about Armenian and Greek artists' active presence in the Rab-i Rashidi atelier. First, some of the Armenian artists had an itinerant lifestyle like many artists at the time.⁵³⁸ Dournovo suggests that, despite the economic and political disruptions brought on by the Mongol invasion in the mid-1200s, Armenian painting flourished anew, reaching a peak near Lake Van region by the mid-1300s.⁵³⁹ This revival, I argue, may have been closely tied to the collapse of the Rab-i Rashidi complex in 1318, when Rashid al-Din was executed, and the subsequent decline of the Ilkhanids in the 1340s. Armenian artists possibly participated in Rashid al-Din's workshop, which would have allowed them to sustain their artistic practice and advance their skills after his death and the dismantling of the Rab-i Rashidi. Given Lake Van's proximity to Tabriz, this idea

⁵³³ Evans, "Armenians Expand the West: The Kingdom of Cilicia," 131-132. Also, see page 92.

⁵³⁴ Ibid., 131-132.

⁵³⁵ Spuler, *İran Moğolları: Siyaset, İdare ve Kültür İlhanlılar Devri, 1220-1350*, 121. Also, see page 33.

⁵³⁶ Uyar, "Thirteenth Century 'Byzantine' Art in Cappadocia and the Question of Greek Painters at the Seljuk Court," 218-219. Also, see pages 112-113.

⁵³⁷ Gray, *La Peinture Persane*, 25. Also, see page 5.

⁵³⁸ Alice Taylor, "Chapter IV: Armenian Illumination under Georgian, Turkish, and Mongol Rule: The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries," 94. Also, see page 76.

⁵³⁹ Dournovo, *Armenian Miniatures*, 110. Also, see page 97.

carries weight. Armenian artwork from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries displays Ilkhanid influence, especially in the background treatments. The second argument is that the manuscript of *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq*, which was completed in 1272-1273 in Aksaray for the Seljuk Sultan, is based on Hebrew and Kabbalistic literature.⁵⁴⁰ There are distinguishing angels depicted in this manuscript, as discussed in Chapter 4, such as Metatron and Shamhurash. These angels are represented by a crown, a pair of wings, and a face, which we encounter in the Byzantine and Armenian manuscripts and have strong similarities with the angel depictions in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. Moreover, Tolga Uyar mentioned that Greek artists were active in the Seljuk workshops in Konya.⁵⁴¹ The Seljuk Sultanate of Rum was subjugated by the Mongols, and they were in a vassal status. Furthermore, the completion of the *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq* corresponds with the reign of Abaqa Khan (1265-1282), the time Rashid al-Din entered the Ilkhanid court. The vizier was born circa 1247 and considering that he converted to Islam in his thirties (circa 1277), Rashid al-Din might have heard and maybe had the opportunity to see the illustrations of *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq*. Although there are around twenty-five years between the two works, *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq* and *Jami al-Tawarikh*, it is a possibility that the Greek artisans and their heirs in the Seljuk court might have been brought to Tabriz or sent by the Seljuk Sultan to the Ilkhanid capital. Artists' circulation between Konya and Tabriz in the second half of the thirteenth and initial years of the fourteenth century is worth considering and requires deeper research. Although it is difficult to present direct evidence if Rashid al-Din knew and received *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq* and the Greek artists of the Seljuk court visited the atelier of Rab-i Rashidi, *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq* might have created a model for Rashid al-Din, especially for the angel depictions, and the vizier may have brought Greek artists from Konya. It is an incontrovertible possibility that the Greek artists painted *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq* or their apprentices, considering the time gap, in the Rab-i Rashidi workshop maintained the Cappadocian artistic tradition on *Jami al-Tawarikh*.

Finally, this thesis suggests the possibility of “reversed borrowing” between the Ilkhanids and the Empire of Trebizond, whereby cultural and artistic influences may have flowed from Tabriz to Trebizond. Although the Empire of Trebizond adhered to

⁵⁴⁰ Peacock, “A Seljuq Occult Manuscript and Its World: MS Paris Persan 174,” 173. Also, see page 111.

⁵⁴¹ Uyar, “Thirteenth Century ‘Byzantine’ Art in Cappadocia and the Question of Greek Painters at the Seljuk Court,” 218-219. Also, see page 112.

Byzantine traditions and was geographically influenced by Caucasian styles, its capital, Trebizond, was closer to Tabriz than to Constantinople.⁵⁴² Notably, the illustrations within the *Romance of Alexander* share similarities with the *Jami al-Tawarikh* in their overall compositions and their purpose as politically significant manuscripts.

During the thirteenth century, as the Empire of Trebizond sought to establish itself as a distinct dominion in northeastern Anatolia, Emperor Alexios III became the artistic patron of the *Romance of Alexander*.⁵⁴³ Alexios III's intentions can be understood similarly to those of Ghazan Khan, as both leaders aimed to expand their territories, assert a distinct presence in the region, and legitimize their rule through strategic artistic productions. Using renowned historical figures to enhance their authority served as a convincing propagandistic tool for both. In this regard, Alexander the Great became a symbolic figure for Alexios, and his portrayals in the *Romance of Alexander* parallel the compositions in the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. This parallel also recalls how Muhammad's image replaced that of Jesus in *Jami al-Tawarikh*, analogous to how Ghazan redefined his identity from Buddhism to Islam.

Additionally, it is worth noting that Ghazan Khan initially commissioned Rashid al-Din to write a genealogical account and life of Genghis Khan, a figure comparable to Alexander Great in terms of imperial conquest and legendary status. *Jami al-Tawarikh* was produced in the initial years of the fourteenth century, and this thesis suggests that its unique blend of cultural compositions and content may have influenced the *Romance of Alexander*. Consequently, the thesis proposes a potential exchange of artistic influence between Tabriz and Trebizond, challenging conventional notions of reversed cultural borrowing.

Cultural Exchange and Iconographic Borrowings in Ilkhanid Painting is the first study that handles the religious representations of the *Jami al-Tawarikh* and its borrowed iconography from the Armenians and the Greek-speaking community in central Anatolia, as heirs of the Byzantine traditions in the periphery, in one single work. *Jami al-Tawarikh* is a well-known and highly studied area by art historians; however, many works related to this field use the borrowed iconography of the Ilkhans from the Armenians and the

⁵⁴² Eastmond, *Byzantium's Other Empire: Trebizond*, 33. Also, see page 112.

⁵⁴³ Peers, "Trebizond and its World Through Manuscripts," 104. Also, see page 124.

Byzantines, partly in articles, catalogs, and works as evidence or explanatory aims; however, this thesis only focuses on these two politically and artistically important presences in Anatolia and reveals the exchanges over the illustrations of the *Jami al-Tawarikh*. It contributes new dimensions to reconsider the artistic exchanges between the Armenians, Byzantines, Greek-speaking communities as the carriers of the Anatolian Byzantine art under Seljuk and Mongol rulership, and as well as the Ilkhanids. It proposes new ideas and answers to problematic issues like Rashid al-Din's conscious or unconscious interventions in the selection of illustrations and artists worked at the Rab-i Rashidi atelier. Overall, this master's thesis functions as filling the gap about being the first study directly and only tackling the abovementioned entities and their impacts on the *Jami al-Tawarikh* and offering new attitudes to the critical questions in the Ilkhanid paintings and its blended and borrowed iconography.

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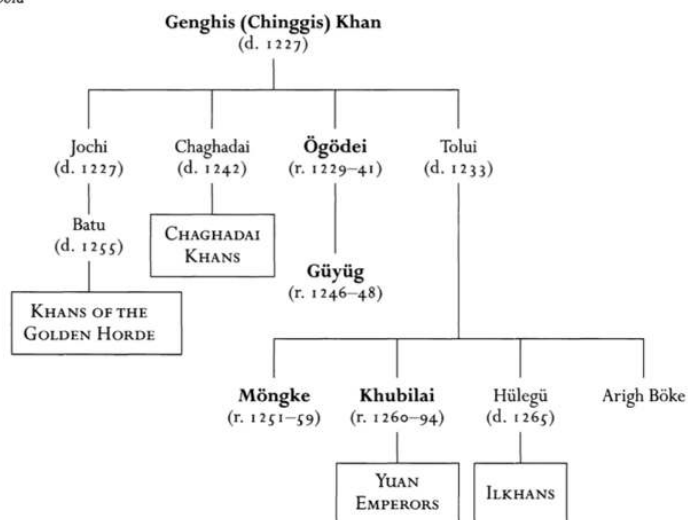
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Appendix A: Dynastic Lineage of the Mongols and the Il-Khans

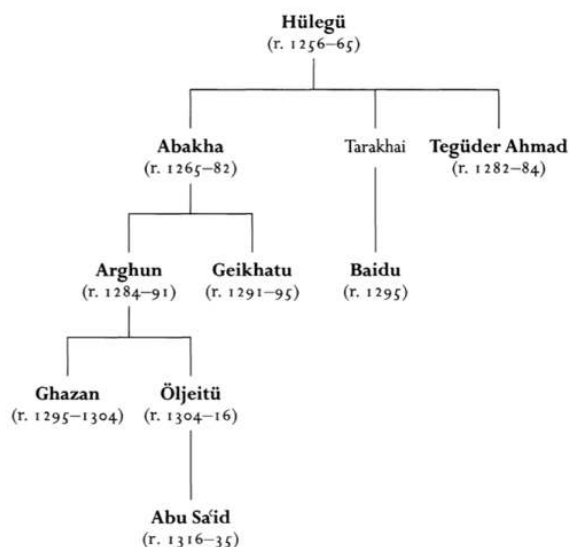
The Mongol Khans

Great Khans shown in bold



The Ilkhans

Ilkhans shown in bold



The chart is taken from *The Legacy of Genghis Khan. Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353*, p. 11.