

CONCEPTION OF POLITICAL POWER AND THE TIMURID
CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE REIGN OF SULTAN HUSAYN
BAYQARA

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SULTAN HUSAYN BAYQARA**

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ABSTRACT

CONCEPTION OF POLITICAL POWER AND THE TIMURID CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE REIGN OF SULTAN HUSAYN BAYQARA

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After Temür's death, a multi-centered political structure emerged in the Timurid geography. The system, based on Temür's personality was fragmented after his death and caused the emergence of some local powers. While Temür's charismatic presence kept different centers under control as a balance factor, this control disappeared with his death. Therefore, as in the Turco-Mongol tradition, seen in the previous periods, the patrimony was shared horizontally and as a result of this division, the Timurid princes took their share and started to rule in a multi-centered system.

It is possible to explain the phenomenon, which manifested itself as political rivalry on the one hand, and joint rule of the country on the other by compromise, within the framework of the understanding of power-sharing (ülüş), which was an important part of the Turco-Mongol political tradition. According to this understanding, the realm was considered the common property of the ruling family and was shared by the family members. Thus, each member of the dynasty had the right to sovereignty. In this sense, the lands, shared among the Timurid princes (mirzas), were autonomous both politically and economically. In the 15th century, the background of the cultural and artistic revival seen in the Timurid geography and called the "Timurid Renaissance" by western scholars, thus, constitutes a structure in which sovereignty was shared. In other words, this revival was the result of the cultural and artistic patronage of the Timurid rulers, who were in a transition period in the

multi-centered competitive environment created by the principle of power-sharing.

Keywords: Power-sharing, Ülüsh, Husayn Bayqara, Timurids, Timurid Renaissance

ÖZ

SULTAN HÜSEYİN BAYKARA DÖNEMİNDE HÂKİMİYET TELAKKİSİ VE TİMURLU KÜLTÜREL KAZANIMLARI

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Timur'un ölümünden sonra Timurlu coğrafyasında çok merkezli bir siyasi yapı ortaya çıktı. Temür'ün kendi kişiliğine dayanan sistem, ölümünden sonra parçalanarak bazı yerel güçlerin ortaya çıkmasına neden olmuştur. Temür'ün karizmatik varlığı bir denge unsuru olarak farklı merkezleri kontrol altında tutarken, ölümüyle bu kontrol ortadan kalkmıştır. Dolayısıyla önceki dönemlerde görülen Türk-Moğol geleneğinde olduğu gibi miras yatay olarak paylaşılmış ve bu bölünme sonucunda Timurlu prensleri de paylarına düşeni alarak çok merkezli bir sistem içinde hüküm sürmeye başlamışlardır.

Bir yanda siyasi rekabet, diğer yanda uzlaşmayla ülkenin ortaklaşa yönetimi şeklinde kendini gösteren olguyu, Türk-Moğol siyasi geleneğinin önemli bir parçası olan ülüş anlayışı çerçevesinde açıklamak mümkündür. Bu anlayışa göre memalik, yönetici ailenin ortak malı olarak kabul edilir ve aile üyeleri tarafından paylaşılırdı. Böylece, hanedanın her üyesi egemenlik hakkına sahipti. Bu anlamda Timurlu şehzadeleri (mirzalar) arasında paylaşılan topraklar hem siyasi hem de ekonomik olarak özerkti. 15. yüzyılda Timurlu coğrafyasında görülen ve batılı bilim adamları tarafından "Timurlu Rönesansı" olarak adlandırılan kültürel ve sanatsal canlanmanın arka planını, böyle, egemenliğin paylaşıldığı bir yapı oluşturmaktaydı. Diğer bir deyişle bu canlanma, gücün paylaşımı ilkesinin yarattığı çok merkezli rekabet ortamında, bir geçiş döneminde olan Timurlu hükümdarlarının kültürel ve sanatsal himayesinin bir sonucuydu.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gücün Paylaşımı, Ülüő, Hüseyin Baykara, Timurlular,
Timurlu Rönesansı

To my family,
for their endless love, support, and encouragement

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is generally thought that political fragmentation is an obstacle to cultural flowering and that cultural florescence coincides with times of political stability. However, it can be said that this is not quite right. One of the most outstanding examples is the Timurid period (15th century) which is called the "Timurid Renaissance" by Western scholars¹. This period was the most prominent period of the cultural history of the Islamic world. This period became famous as it was a scene of artistic and literary achievements. This exceptional cultural blossoming of the Timurid policy occurred in a highly contestable atmosphere as a result of the disintegration of Temür's centralized empire.

The fifteenth century of the Timurid world witnessed internecine struggles among several Timurid mirzas (princes). After the death of the nomadic conqueror, Temür, his descendants began struggling for control of his conquests in Central Asia, Iran, and Afghanistan. Except for dynastic struggles, Timurid mirzas were subject to pressure from the Turkman Qaraqoyunlu and the Aqqoyunlu dynasties in the west, from the nomadic Uzbeks in the north, and the Moghuls in the east. As a result of these internal and external battles, Temür's centralized empire fragmented into small political centers and therefore competing princely courts. As a result of these competitions between political courts the cultural florescence of the Timurid period emerged.

All these strifes arose after Temür's death and named as "succession struggle" reflecting the reactions to Temür's centralized rule and the contradictions and problems created by the integration process of Turco-Mongol elements to Transoxiana and Khurasan's political and cultural elements of regional and settled life. That is to say,

¹ Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*, Naomi Walford (Trans from the French). Rutgers University Press. 1970; Roemer, Hans Robert. "The Successors of Timur", in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. VI: The Timurid and Safavid Periods, ed. P. Jackson & L. Lockhart, Cambridge University Press 1986, p. 142.

the fifteenth-century Timurid world was a region in the process of adaptation and articulation of political ideas, perceptions, and values of steppe formation with those of the agricultural and urban world. One of the aims of this study is to analyze this integration process and its structural and cultural transitions. While all the contradictions and problems that arose as a result of these integration processes did not emerge under the centralist rule of Temür, with his death this process proceeded and gained a new form. This time the process pursued a decentralized way and created new social, cultural, and economic elements.

By the fifteenth century, the world of Central Asia became a witness to the process of regionalization. In that century, the universal empire of Chinggis Khan fragmented, and new political formations and groupings replaced it. These new policies had regional or local characteristics. We can find the roots of all these developments in the thirteenth-century Chinggisid world. In the first half of the thirteenth century, Chinggis Khan established an empire extending from China to the Mediterranean. Chinggisid Empire changed this world's geographical and cultural image and aggregated the steppe and settled zones from China to Iran and East Europe under one umbrella.

Through Chinggisid Empire deep blending and mutual interaction between the world of nomads and settled were experienced and the differences in geography and lifestyle became flexible. The biggest transition, Chinggisid Empire created in Central Asia, took place in political culture. This new model of political culture changed the previous perceptions.

With his personal charisma and military leadership, Chinggis Khan changed and subjugated traditional tribal loyalties and built an army of conquest, organized on a decimal-based system of units from ten to thousand rather than the traditional groupings of the Turco-Mongol warlords. He created a state-army system. Yasa formed the rules of this system which was conceptualized by Isenbike Togan as "detrribalization² and the right of the sovereignty that "khanate" only belonged to members of the Chinggisid family. Another step in the growth and establishment of

² Isenbike Togan, "Retribalization in the Fourteenth Century: Flexibility and Limitation in a Steppe Formation", International Seminar on the Unesco Program "*Interaction Between Nomadic and Sedentary Cultures on the Silk Road*", Alma ata, Kazakh SSR, June 15-16, 1991, p. 2.

the Chinggisid system or state model in the settled and steppe zones of Central Asia was Chinggis Khan's division of his state army among his sons as the four different uluses.

Starting in the mid-thirteenth century Chinggis Khan's state which had been divided into four sections began to disintegrate and become an independent state. During this disintegration Chinggisid states and their political-cultural elements articulated to the elements of the region they were located and formed new forms. In this regard, Chinggisid states began acquiring different characters although they had common features. They did not lose their Mongol custom but prospered with the elements of the subject cultures they ruled over. It was this political atmosphere from which Temür rose.

Temür who was not Chinggisid and challenged the Chinggisid right of sovereignty achieved the Chinggisid state model in Transoxiana which was on the borders of a nomadic and settled world and in which settled and urban life was strong. Temür achieved it through sharing a political and cultural lifestyle of settled and steppe in a centralist way and gave a place to different sections such as settled and nomadic origin. While Temür on the one hand, gave a place to military elites and tribes of nomadic origin, on the other hand, gave different sections such as ulama, and mashayikh of settled origin and achieved it in a centralist way.

Although this polity of Temür provided a balance between the people of settled and nomad origin and between their political and cultural elements, this balance instead of institutional was personal and depended on control. In other words, Temür ensured an environment in which neither Turko-Mongol military-ruling elites could increase their power nor the local people and notables transited their economic power to political authority. Although Temür gave his powerful amirs efficient political authority, he engaged them with conquests and kept his family members in this control mechanism.

While Temür attempted to keep settled and nomadic people under a single authority, he sought to solve the legitimation problem by getting support from different segments of the community in terms of his policies and could establish himself.

As the local acceptance of political legitimacy and power dictated that a person who claimed power had to attach himself to the Chinggisid line, Temür was forced to

recall Chinggisid symbols and images for legitimizing his claim to power over former Mongol territories. Because he was not a member of Chinggisid descent, Temür built and fostered his political presence by arranging his claim to power in conformity with the local perception of political legitimacy. He recognized the power of the Chinggisid lineage and he did not attempt to be blind or overwhelm regional necessities for the rule.

On the other hand, the circumstances in Central Asia had changed. The Chinggisid legitimacy was not enough alone to firm the political power. Because by the fourteenth century, Turco-Mongol tribes of Central Asia converted to Islam, it was necessary for a claimant to power to utilize Islamic legitimacy along with the legacy of Chinggis Khan in that region. Therefore, Temür used another source of legitimation that existed among the Turco-Mongol tribes of Transoxiana; Islam. Because not only the majority of his Turco-Mongol followers had converted to Islam but also most of the sedentary population he conquered was Muslim, Temür was forced to affirm his Islamic identity.

On the other hand, Temür also attempted to create his image. For that reason, he patronized artistic and architectural activities. He also commissioned illustrated manuscripts of both old and new historical works, nearly all of them in Persian. He captured the artisans and craftspeople from conquered cities of his empire, shipped them as slaves to his capital city, Samarqand, and glorified his image through the labors of these artisans. All these efforts are evidence of his self-image, as the ruler of a new and unique, urban-based Islamic empire. Through using this multiple legitimacy, Temür developed his model of political legitimation for rulership. Thus, his charisma and that of his dynasty were enhanced and he could transfer the sovereignty to his descendants.

When Temür died in 1405 he left a society that included settled and nomadic elements that had different social, political, and economic expectations. The period after Temür was the environment in which these expectations appeared, the problems created by the integration process came to the surface and decentralized tendencies gained power. The external political mobility turned to inside and those who had attained power in Temür's service attempted to strengthen their position economically and politically. Thus, apart from Temür's family members, the Chaghataid military-

ruling elite, local segments such as ulama, and mashayikh intervened in this struggle.

Internal strife among Temür's descendants known as the "succession struggle" arose after Temür's death reflects the reaction to Temür's centralist rule and the problems and contradictions of the process of integration of the Timurid ruling elite to the settled life of Transoxiana and Khurasan. After Temür's death, the balances were shifted and Temür's descendants started to search for new political formulas, especially about the legitimation, land system, administration, and taxation.

Moreover, while rival Timurid mirzas were competing with each other, they were also subjected to pressure exerted by Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu Turkman dynasties from the west, by the nomadic Uzbeks from the north, and by the Chaghataid Moghuls from the east. By the mid-fifteenth century, Timurid control in Iran and Azerbaijan was captured by Qaraqoyunlu and then Aqqoyunlu Turkmans and Timurid rule were restricted to Transoxiana and Khurasan broadly.

While he was alive, Temür had distributed his conquest territories among his descendants as appanages following the traditional Turco-Mongol system according to which all male members of the ruling dynasty had the right to claim political sovereignty. After Temür died in 1405, all these Timurid appanages developed into independent territories.

The existence of multiple political centers, and therefore of competing courts, in place of the political and cultural dominance of the single imperial court of Samarqand, provided various options for the Timurid rival princes. Now, with the death of Temür, his descendants were forced to reinvent the Timurid political identity to preserve their dynastic legitimation. As Temür had created a Timurid imperial identity and legitimacy, his successor did not require governing in the name of a Chingisid puppet khan. They evolved and reshaped Temür's identity to establish and bolster their presence in the dynasty of Temür. They utilized Timurid historiography and created a cult of artistic patronage to continue their right to rule. Thus, Temür's lineage would become a ruling dynasty as Chinggis Khanids. Each prince developed a Timurid identity to supply the needs of the individual rivals for power.

On the other hand, because Temür's strict political pattern prevented the Timurid princes from becoming too powerful in his lifetime, they were forced to rely on the powerful Turco-Mongol amirs for their political power after Temür's death.

Additionally, as the princes did not have enough to offer their supporters, they began granting lands (suyurghal) to their followers. Thus, the decentralized environment strengthened.

Furthermore, with the death of Temür and the decentralized atmosphere of the Timurid Empire, the Sufi orders grew increasingly. Especially, the Naqshbandi order developed intimate relations with Temür's descendants in Transoxiana.

Under the rule of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, the ideal of power-sharing grew stronger. He granted his territory to the ulama, shaykhs, his Turco-Mongol elites along with his brother, his sons, and cousins. Thus, Sultan Husayn became an arbiter regularizing the balance between these multiple power centers. Through the granting of lands and other privileges, these groups obtained access to large resources. This economically decentralized atmosphere produced great artistic patronage. By the end of the fifteenth century and later Timurid artistic concerns became a standard for other dynasties in that area. The Uzbeks of Transoxiana (1500-8), the Safavids in Iran, and the Ottomans in Turkey followed Timurids' artistic patronage. That is, cultural and artistic patronage emerged due to the Timurid rulers' efforts to legitimize their political power. At that time the characters such as Ali Sher Nawai, and 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami played important roles in the political and economic along with artistic and cultural life of Herat.

In summary, as it has been seen, Temür created a specific Timurid ideology by responding to the Chinggis Khanid legitimacy. After his death, Temür's legitimacy began to grow and affected the notions of legitimacy as the Chinggis Khanid model did. With the death of Temür, every Timurid prince who claimed power had to find some way to justify his position and rule by using Temür's ideology and legitimacy. The writing of histories and genealogies became vehicles to aspire to rulership. In another word, Temür's acts, personality, wish, and intents became very important elements for his descendants to justify their rules.

Therefore, an analysis of steppe and Islamic political tradition can provide us with a framework to understand this entire political atmosphere. A discussion on Turco-Mongolian steppe ideals and their components in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries can give insights into analyzing the dynamics behind Timurid state formation. Moreover, an analytical view of the Iranian Islamic mold and its

legitimizing principles and institutions will help for clarifying the political bases of Temür's descendants in the fifteenth century.

Furthermore, it is maintained here that an analysis of the political atmosphere of Timurids in the late fifteenth century by the use of the framework of power-sharing renders a different and clearer picture of the situation. Such an approach makes it possible to see what was not visible by the application of the 'theories of dominance.' This approach at the same time overshadows aspects such as decentralization, fragmentation, contestation, and conflict and focuses more on aspects of agreement, reconciliation, compromise, and a perception of belonging to the same cultural and political milieu.

The concept of power-sharing derives its origins in the long-established practice of inheritance among the steppe nomads. According to the tradition of inheritance in Turco-Mongol nomadic societies, the father's property was divided among all the sons of the head wife. At the dynastic level, the property subject to this division was the entire country, which was seen as the common property of the ruling dynasty. The division of conquered lands among members of the ruling dynasty was the norm. As a result of this sharing, which was seen as redistribution in each generation, the established policy was exposed to what we call disintegration today.

One of the main aspects of power-sharing at the political level was a belief that each member of the ruling house had a right to sovereignty. In other words, qut which legitimized the right to rule was shared by the members of the ruling family. The power-sharing idea suggested that territories were the shared property of the members of the ruling family. The concept of sharing economic resources including the territories was formulated by Zeki Velidi Togan by the use of the terms *ülüş* in Turkish and *qubi* in Mongolian, both meaning "share." This idea of *ülüş* was later reformulated by İsenbike Togan as redistributive ideology (*ülüş*) which included economic as well as political aspects of life. It also led to marriage alliances in the social sphere and power-sharing in the political sphere.

After Temür's death appearance can be seen as an indicator of power-sharing. As it is stated about Timurid mirzas within the framework of a power-sharing idea shared territories. As a result of this sharing, shared lands among the Timurid mirzas were not temporarily granted from a center but were units that brought about the

politically and economically autonomous centers. Thus, mirzas perceived these shares as personal property and their right as a member of the family and converted each of them into independent centers. The mirzas in these centers were regarded as equal in terms of the right of sovereignty. That is, in this system multiple political centers co-existed, and administration was in the hands of the mirzas and their amirs. They had revenues from their lands and administered these regions in their name. This political system provided an atmosphere that gave place to local parties. Timurids shared economic sources not only among themselves but also with Turco-Mongol nomadic and sedentary urban elements. So, these local authorities gained economic power which gave them an important role in the social and cultural life of the society.

This process which brought about the process usually called "decentralization" formed the background of the cultural and artistic activities in the fifteenth century. In other words, cultural florescence was a consequence of the artistic patronage of the Timurid administration, and the atmosphere of political and cultural competition created by the power-sharing idea and division of patrimony.

After Temür's death, when political authority in Central Asia and Iran became fragmented, many Timurid princes' appanages developed into independent territories. Just as Temür had modeled his presentation of imperial identity and legitimacy in Mongol territories Temür's descendants developed and shaped Temür's identity to define and reinforce their legitimacy as individuals within the dynasty of Temür and Timurid territories.

Temür's successors created a Timurid imperial identity through some symbols to define themselves. In the fabrication of imperial identity, they rediscovered and re-described their past just as today's national states utilize parallel strategies. For their social and political identity, the Timurids employed "myths and symbols of the Timurid dynasty".

Understanding Timurids' efforts to establish a Timurid identity requires an examination of the process by which the Timurids coordinated and organized their cultural personality in the interest of their dynastic legitimacy and imperial identity. The detailed and peculiar perception of cultural identity and legacy shaped Timurid's imperial identity. Manipulating their legacy, the Timurids constructed a Timurid imperial identity that legalizes, bolsters and supports their exciting imperial success in

their territories.

Based on this fact, this study aims to analyze the atmosphere after the great empire builder, Temür's death in which political strife arose among his successors that brought about a cultural florescence in Timurid territories and to review efforts the late Timurids made for legitimating their political power both in Central Asia and in Iran.

The basic questions this dissertation addresses are: "What are the dominant ideas of legitimate kingship in this period? What specific choices did individual Timurid rulers did to legitimate themselves and why? Who the audiences were they addressed? To what extent rulers attempted to buttress their claims of legitimacy affect their actions?"

According to classic Turco-Mongol tradition, Temür divided his empire among his sons and grandsons during his lifetime. But his death brought a succession struggle among his sons and grandsons which disintegrated and decreased the size of his empire. During these conflicts, Temür's descendants were compelled to re-formulate Temür's imperial identity and political legitimacy for the sake of their dynastic right to rule. They established and formalized Temür's identity to buttress their assertion of power. Through using of historiography, illustration, calligraphy, literature, painting, architecture, and artistic patronage, Timurid successors flourished and evolved their dynastic imperial identity.

This study aims to throw a new light on the causes of this cultural and artistic florescence of the Timurid world at the end of the fifteenth century by analyzing the political atmosphere of Timurids. The basic idea of the study is that cultural florescence was a consequence of the artistic patronage of the Timurid administration, and the atmosphere of political and cultural competition created by the power-sharing idea and division of patrimony. The dynamics of the political, cultural, social, and economic atmosphere in which the development of cultural and artistic experiences, and how this florescence was experienced and perceived are the questions that formed this study. Seen from this aspect, the period of Husayn Bayqara (1470-1506) when the process of cultural florescence was seen intensively is the period this study contained. But, to understand this period's conditions, it is necessary to look at it before. For this reason, the history of Timurids before Husayn Bayqara will be included. Notwithstanding, to display the influence and the dimension of the Timurid

Renaissance over the long term, the period after Husayn Bayqara will also be briefly mentioned.

1.1. Approaches

This study has used Zeki Velidi Togan's discussion of the *ülüş* (share) system to analyze the evolution of political authority in Central Asian steppe polities which Chinggis Khan had utilized and Temür had inherited. Togan argues that the struggles that emerged according to social and economic conditions in the history of Central Asian polities resulted in an alteration of political authority between the khans and the begs (tribal chiefs). Because the territory was divided among the members of the ruling family as an *ülüş* (share), in 4-6 generations, that is in approximately 100-150 years, the portions get smaller. This caused a conflict between khans and begs. Togan claimed that the history of Turco-Mongols had periods of repetition of such situations. In this context, the wars between the khans and the noyans in Chinggisid history resulted in the defeat of the khans in the mid-14th century, but again in the victory of the khans at the beginning of the 16th century. Ilkhanid, Jochid, and Chaghataiid khans left their positions to the begs who rebelled as rivals and wanted to make the khans their puppets³.

On the other hand, Isenbike Togan's studies and approaches shape the conceptual and theoretical framework of our problem. She presents the models of state formation and political culture from the point of alteration and continuity in Central Asia. Accordingly, Chinggisid Mongol Empire, established throughout Central Asia in the thirteenth century had a centralist and universal perception but then it was replaced with regionalization and localization, emerged by the mid-fourteenth century, and strengthened in the sixteenth century. In this atmosphere of regionalization new political and spiritual groups appeared and began forming the political culture of the regions in Central Asia. The period of Timurids was one of these cultural, political, and economical developments and formations.

A large number of important works on the Timurids had appeared. On the

³ Zeki Velidi TOGAN, *Umumi Türk Tarihine Giriş*, 2. Baskı, İstanbul: Enderun, 1970, p. 296.

historical side, we have benefited greatly from the excellent studies on Temür and the early Timurids by John E. Woods and Beatrice Forbes Manz. Manz's "*The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*"⁴ is one of the leading books we utilize. It is a study that includes valuable observations about the political and cultural environment in which Temür rose to power. Manz represents the historical, political, and cultural background of the atmosphere, creating a powerful warlord, Temür, and the political structure and power sources that Temür employed, altered, and created his own political and dynastic model. Additionally, in her other work, "*Power, Politics, and Religion in Timurid Iran*"⁵, Manz analyzes the relationship between political administration and society of Iran in the period of Timurid ruler Shahrukh (1409-1447). She offers fresh descriptions of the political figures, provincial rulers, religious classes, in short, political dynamics of late medieval Iran.

Woods, who has valuable studies⁶ on the Timurid period and Turkman confederations such as the Aqqoyunlu, has been particularly useful in our study, with his ideas on the interactions of the settled and nomadic peoples of the period.

For the role of Islamic culture and the effects of Sufi orders on the Central Asian population, we consult the studies of Robert D. McChesney mainly, and that of Devin Dewese and Jo-Ann Gross. McChesney, in his work "*Waqf in Central Asia*"⁷, reveals the flexibility and continuity of this system by discussing the political system of the period through the foundation established in Balkh. Dewese, interprets the Islamization adventure of Inner Asia through conversion narratives in his "*Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde; Baba Tukles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition*"⁸, reveals the religious and identity dynamics

⁴ Beatrice F. Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989.

⁵ Beatrice Forbes Manz, *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

⁶ John E. Woods, 'The Rise of Timurid Historiography', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 46, 1987. John E. Woods, *The Aqqoyunlu Clan, Confederation, Empire*, Minneapolis and Chicago, 1976; John E. Woods, *The Timurid Dynasty*. Bloomington Indiana: Indiana University, 1990; John E. Woods, "Timur's Geneology." in *Intellectual Studies on Islam*, Essays Written in Honor of Martin B. Dickson, ed. by M.M. Mazzaoui and V.B. Moreen, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990: 88-125.

⁷ R. D. McChesney, *Central Asia: Foundations of Change*. Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1996.

of the period while doing this. Gross in her studies⁹, focuses on different aspects of Sufism in Central Asia and the multifaceted effects of the Naqshbandi order and shrine culture.

Moreover, in Thomas Lentz and Glenn Lowry's work named "*Timur and The Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century*", it is revealed how Temür and his successors turned artistic and cultural works into ideological tools to create a Timurid dynasty image in their palaces. Lisa Golombek's studies about the artistic works produced in Timurid courts, provide the groundwork for our work¹⁰.

One of the most important and precious studies on Timurids is "*Timurids in Transition: Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran*"¹¹ of M. Subtelny. She considers that the period of Temür's descendants was a transitional stage in which a nomadic empire transformed into a sedentary polity based on the Perso-Islamic model. She explains the components, that affected that stage by using the Weberian concept of "*routinization*" of charismatic authority and the patrimonial household state. She emphasizes the influences of the Perso-Islamic political model on the formation of Timurid policy and explains the growing agrarian economy in the Timurid region, especially in Khurasan as a result of pious endowments in the period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara (r. 1469-1506). In her other brilliant study¹², Subtelny deals with the dilemma of artistic, literary, and architectural production in the politically and economically fragmented atmosphere of the late Timurid period in terms of land grants and tax exemptions. The article, titled, "*The Curriculum of Islamic Higher Learning*

⁸ Dewin Deweese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde; Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition*, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.

⁹ Jo-Ann Gross, "A Central Asian Waqf of Naqshbandi Sufi Master Khwaja Ahrar", in *Windows on the House of Islam: Muslim Sources on Spirituality and Religious Life*, ed. John Renard, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press., 1998: 231-235; Jo-Ann Gross, "Naqshbandi Appeals to the Herat Court," in Devin A. DeWeese, e.d, *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, Bloomington, Indiana: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2001, pp. 113-128.

¹⁰ Lisa Golombek "Discourses of an Imaginary Arts Council in Fifteenth-century Iran" in Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny, *Timurid Art and Culture*, Brill, Leiden, 1992; L. Golombek and D. Wilber, *The Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan*, Princeton, N.J., 1988.

¹¹ Maria E. Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition: Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran*, Leiden, 2007.

¹² Maria E. Subtelny, "Socioeconomic Bases of Cultural Patronage Under the Later Timurids", in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 20, no: 4, November, 1988.

in *Timurid Iran in the Light of the Sunni Revival under Shāh-Rukh*¹³, which Subtelny and Khalidov wrote, deals with Shahrukh's policy of reviving Sunni orthodoxy through the Hanafi traditionalist Jalalu'd-Din Qayini (d. 1435) and the program of higher Islamic studies in 15th-century Iran. Subtelny's other study, titled "*The Cult of 'Abdullah Ansari under the Timurids*"¹⁴, the Ansari cult that developed around the tomb of the Hanbali traditionalist 'Abdullah Ansari (d. 1089), and the efforts of the Timurid sultans in this regard are discussed.

1.2. Sources

The period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara is affluent in terms of the written sources, which are mostly in Persian, but also in Chaghatai Turkish and Arabic. They consist of historical chronicles, dynastic genealogies, illustrated manuscripts, local histories, historical geographies, biographies, diwans, and literary works.

While we benefit mostly from historical chronicles, we have also relied on biographies, autobiographies, *tadhkiras* (collection of biographies), and geographic histories. The major part of these different types of sources was written in the fifteenth century and by the people who personally took place in circumstances. The sources belonging to the following periods are used for the accomplishment of the contemporary sources and a different perspective. Here the distinctive features and the main characteristics of the sources will be mentioned and the main sources, utilized for this study will be analyzed.

Before mentioning the works that have valuable information about the period of Husayn Bayqara, it would be appropriate to start with the analysis of the works that were dedicated to the Timurid sultans in previous periods and had a key impact on the shaping of Timurid historiography.

One of the known contemporary sources about Temür's reign is the work

¹³ Maria Eva Subtelny & Anas B. Khalidov, "The Curriculum of Islamic Higher Learning in Timurid Iran in the Light of the Sunni Revival under Shah-Rukh," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 115: 2, 1995.

¹⁴ Maria E. Subtelny, "The Cult of 'Abdullah Ansari under the Timurids," in Christoph Bürgel and Alma Giese (eds.), *Gott ist schön und Er liebt die Schönheit: Festschrift für Annemarie Schimmel*, Bern: Peter Lang, 1994.

named *Zafarnama* (The Book of Victory) compiled by Nizamu'd-Din Shanh-i Ghazani Tabrizi (d. 1409) known as Nizam-Shami in 1404 by Temür's order¹⁵. In Woods's words, this work, which has special importance in terms of the birth and development of Timurid historiography, also served as a source for chronicles written during the 15th and 16th centuries. Based on the testimonies of the court officials of the period and the contemporary Persian and Turkish works, the first redaction of the *Zafarnama* was dedicated to Temür, and the second one to his grandson Omar b. Miranshah¹⁶. Shami's *Zafarnama* covers the political and military activities of Temür and Timurids in Central Asia, Altinorda, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Iran, Syria, Iraq, and other regions in the 14th and 15th centuries.

One of the most famous and important works among Timurid histories was *Zafarnama* (The Book of Victory) compiled in Persian by Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi (d. 858/1454). Commissioned by Temür's grandson Ibrahim Sultan b. Shahrukh, *Zafarnama* is a historical text covering the events from Temür's birth in 1336 to the accession of Temür's grandson Khalil Sultan to the throne in Samarqand in 1405. Completed probably in 1424-1425, the work was created by a group of scholars working in Ibrahim Sultan's court in Fars under Yazdi's supervision, by compiling the Persian and Chagatay narratives that existed at that time. In this sense, Shami's *Zafarnama* was used as the main source of the work.

According to John Woods, in *Zafarnama*, the Timurids are depicted as devout Muslims, and Islamic elements are brought to the fore. Another feature of the work is that Shahrukh, the patron's father, is depicted as a mujaddid. The work was copied and illustrated in various ways until the seventeenth century and became a main source for Timurid ideology¹⁷.

Known as Hafez Abru, Shahabu'd-Din 'Abdullah b. Lutfullah Bihdadini Khwafi, was one of the great historians of Iran in the 14th and 15th centuries. Hafez Abru, one of the scribes in Temür's court in his youth, later entered the service of Shahrukh and compiled many works on behalf of both Shahrukh and his son

¹⁵ Zabihullah Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiyat dar Iran*, VI vols., Tehran, 1363, vol. IV, pp. 476-480.

¹⁶ Woods, "Historiography", p. 85.

¹⁷ Woods, "Historiography", pp. 99-105.

Baysunghur.

His most important work is *Mujmalu't-Tawarikh-i Sultani* (The Collection of Chronicles) a four-volume general history book, of which *Zubdatu't-Tawarikh* is the fourth volume of this work. The work includes events from the beginning of creation to the year 1427. Hafez Abru dedicated this work to Shahrukh's son Baysunghur Mirza. Another work of Hafez Abru is *Zayl-i Jamiu't-Tawarikh-i Rashidi*. This work, which describes the events from the death of Ghazan Khan in 1304 to 1335, was presented to Shahrukh. His other famous work is *Jughrafya-yi Tarikhi*. In the first volume of this geographical history, which consists of two volumes, inhabited countries, seas, rivers, mountains, and deserts are mentioned and the history of Fars and Kerman rulers and sultans is discussed. The second volume of the work contains information about the geography of Khurasan and the sultans who ruled in this region¹⁸.

As for the works containing information about the Husayn Bayqara period, one of the remarkable sources, this study relies on, is "*Habibu's-Siyar*" of Khondmir. Known as "Khondmir", Ghiyasuddin b. Khwaja Hamamuddin Muhammad Haravi was one of the famous authors of the late Timurid period and the beginning of the Safavid period. Born in 1475, Khondmir's mother was the daughter of the famous Timurid historian Mir Muhammad b. Khondshah, known as Mirkhond, is the author of "*Rawzatu's-Safa*". Khondmir started his career under the patronage of Mir Ali Sher Nawai and was mostly in the service of Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza, son of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. After the end of the Timurid rule, he came under the patronage of Habibullah Savji, the vizier of Durmush Khan, who was the governor of Herat on behalf of the Safavids for a while and wrote his work for him. In 1527/8 he went to India and entered the service of Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur. After Babur died in 1530, he stayed on to serve Babur's son Humayun until he died in 1535¹⁹.

Habibu's-Siyar covers the period from the pre-Islamic prophets to 1524. The main importance of the work for our study is the first-hand detailed information about the Timurid world of the fifteenth century, especially the reign of Sultan Husayn

¹⁸ Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiyat*, pp. 487-488.

¹⁹ Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiyat*, pp. 541-542.

Bayqara. The work which has biographical information about the members of the Timurid dynasty, their officials, scholars, shaykhs, and artists, is very rich in content. *Habibu's-Siyar* is considerably important for analyzing how Timurid intellectuals saw and responded to the improvements and transition.

Another work of Khondmir that we used in this study is "*Dasturu'l-Wuzara*". The work is dedicated to the history of viziers who lived from the beginning of Islam to the time of the author. Dastur contains detailed information about the viziers who lived in Khondmir's own time. Khondmir compiled this book in the name of Sultan Husayn Bayqara and his vizier Qamaluddin Khwaja Mahmud in 1500/1501²⁰.

Another important work for the late Timurid history is "*Rawzatu's-Safa*" (Garden of Purity) by Muhammad b. Khondshah b. Mahmud is commonly called Mirkhond. *Rawza* is a general history from the creation of the world to the author's time. His grandson Khondmir, the author of *Habibu's-Siyar* does not give details about his life. According to him, Mirkhond spent most of his life at Herat under the patronage of Ali Sher Nawai to whom his work is dedicated, and died there in 1498, at the age of sixty-six. Mirkhond compiled his work in seven volumes; after an introduction about the benefits of the science of history, the author devoted the first volume to the history of the patriarchs, prophets, and the shahs of Iran before Muhammad, the second, to the period of Prophet Muhammad and the four caliphs, the third, to the time of twelve Imams and Umayyads and Abbasids, the fourth, to dynasties of Iran after Muhammad until the Temür's occupation, the fifth, to Temür and his successors, the seventh volume, which Mirkhond could not complete due to his illness and was completed by Khondmir, to the history of Abu'l-Ghazi Sultan Husayn Bayqara from his birth to his death, and an account of his sons²¹.

One of the important historical chronicles from that period is "*Matla'u's-Sa'dayn*" of Qamaluddin 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Samarqandi. Samarqandi, who was born in 1413/1414 in Herat, entered the service of Shahrukh at the age of 25 and after his death

²⁰ Charles Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, III vols. London: British Museum, 1879-1883, vol. I, p. 335; Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiyat*, p. 543.

²¹ Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiyat*, vol. IV, p. 522; Arthur John Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature*, London, 1958, pp. 390-391.

in 1447, he served respectively to Mirza ‘Abdu’l-Latif b. Ulugh Beg, Mirza ‘Abdullah b. Ibrahim Sultan, Mirza Abu’l-Qasim Babur and lastly to Sultan Abu Sa’id Mirza. So far as is known, Samarqandi produced only one great work, to wit the history entitled *Matla’u’s-Sa’dayn* (The Dawn of the two Auspicious Planets), which had two volumes; the first part starts from the reign of the last Ilkhanid ruler, Sultan Abu Sa’id Bahadur Khan and covers the history of Temür's reign from its beginning to the end, while the second part describes the events from the accession of Shahrukh to the end of the reign of Sultan Abu Sa’id Mirza and ended with the second accession of Sultan Husayn in 1470/1471. This work, written by Samarqandi under the patronage of Abu Sa’id Mirza, is important because it witnessed firsthand the Shahrukh and Abu Sa’id periods²².

Another famous source from that period is the "*Tadhkiratu'sh-Shu'ara*" (Memoirs of the Poets) of Amir Dawlatshah. Amir Ali Sher Nawai says in his *Majalisu-n Nafais* that Dawlatshah was one of the nobles (amirzadah) of Khurasan. Dawlatshah completed his tadhkira in 1487, in his fifties in the name of Ali Sher Nawai. He gives very remarkable information about the poets and political figures of his time and provides valuable details about the social background of the fifteenth-century Timurid world. The last part of the work, which includes the narration of contemporary poets and the princes who patronized them, is dedicated to Sultan Husayn Bayqara²³.

Muinuddin Esfizari's work, "*Rawzatu'l-Jannat fi Tarikh-i Madinat-i Herat*" is a particularly prominent work on the history of Herat. *Rawza* includes the history of Herat/Khurasan from the spread of Islam to the enthronement of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, to whom the work was dedicated. Written between 1491-1494 and consisting of 26 *rawzas* (gardens) dealing with the city of Herat, its surroundings, and geography, the work gives first-hand information, especially for the Sultan Abu Sa’id and Sultan Husayn Bayqara periods²⁴.

²² Edward Granville Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, III vols., The Tatar Dominion (1265–1502), Cambridge University Press, 2009, vol. III, pp. 428-429.

²³ Browne, *A Literary*, vol. III, pp. 436-437; Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiyat*, vol. IV, pp. 531-534.

²⁴ Rieu, *Catalogue*, vol. I, pp. 206-207; Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiyat*, vol. IV, pp. 537-538.

Another remarkable source in terms of historiography is "Memoirs of Babur", known as "*Baburnama or Vakayi*", which was written by Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur. Born in 1483 in Farghana, Babur is descended from Temür on the paternal and Chinggis Khan on the maternal side. Babur, who ascended the throne in Farghana after his father's death in 1494, captured Temür's capital, Samarqand, at the age of fourteen. He, expelled from his homeland by the Uzbeks, established the Baburid Empire on lands that included present-day Afghanistan, Pakistan, and northern India. Babur describes his life and memories from his birth to 1530 in this autobiographical work. Babur wrote his work in Turkish instead of Persian, which was the literary language of that period, which indicates that the work was written for the literate Turco-Mongol elites that Babur saw as the main audience.

Babur, as one of the last representatives of the Timurid world in terms of political culture, personally witnessed both the political and cultural environment of the period in his struggles for the Transoxiana heritage. The fact that he expresses his understanding as a Timurid prince with great sincerity in his work makes *Vakayi* very important for our research.

"*Tarikh-i Rashidi*" written by Mirza Muhammad Haydar Dughlat is another important source for our study. What makes this work valuable for us is the first-hand information it gives about the events narrated by its author, just like Babur. Mirza Haydar belonged to the Dughlats, one of the Mongolian tribes who played an important role in the politics of the Eastern Chagatay Khanate in the fourteenth century. Written in Persian, *Tarikh-i Rashidi* includes narratives on the history of the Mongol dynasty and the activities of the khans from the second half of the fourteenth century to the middle of the sixteenth century. This work of Mirza Haydar, who revealed the events of the period in terms of his Mongolian identity, enables us to interpret the political culture of the period with different insights.

"*Rashahatu'l-Aynu'l-Hayat*" [Beads of Dew from the Source of Life, written by Fakhruddin Ali, poetically pen-name Safi, contains significant information about the life, teachings, miracles, and disciples of Khwajagan Sufi shaykhs of the Naqshbandi order, especially about Khwaja Nasiru'd-Din Ubaydullah. Safi composed his work in 1503-1504²⁵.

We also benefit from the precious works of Mir Ali Sher Nawai. Nawai, a member of the Turco-Mongol elite of the period, was born in 1441 in Herat, one of the leading artistic and intellectual centers of the Islamic world. He was a generous and successful patron of talent in the period of Husayn Bayqara. Apart from his art patronage Nawai was one of the most prominent political figures in the period. He enjoyed the friendship and confidence of Sultan Husayn Bayqara and played a key role in the political events of the period.

The "*Majalisu'n-Nafais*" [Galaxy of Poets], one of his numerous works, was composed in 1490-1491 and completed in 1498, contains useful biographical information about the life of the poets of his time. *Majalis*, which is considered the first biographical work in Turkish, consists of eight *majlises* (assemblies), which provide information about poets who lived and were active in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries²⁶.

Muhakamatu'l-Lughatayn [Judgment between the Two Languages or The Comparison of the Two Languages], one of the masterpieces of Nawai and completed in 1499, was written to argue that Turkish is superior to Persian in terms of literature²⁷. With this work, Nawai defended Turkish against Persian in geography where Persian had dominated as an official and literary language for centuries. In this period, with the increase in the use of Turkish in literary works and its patronage by Turkish-speaking rulers and elites, Turkish eventually emerged as a literary language.

We also utilized Kashifi's "*Akhlaq-i Mohsini*", a treatise on moral philosophy to get an insight into the political perception of that period. Husayn Waiz-i Kashifi was one of the most renowned preachers of his time and was patronized by Ali Sher Nawai and enjoyed the protection of Sultan Husayn Bayqara²⁸. *Akhlaq*, written in the name of Sultan Husayn Bayqara's son Abu'l-Muhsin Mirza and completed in 1495, is a moral book consisting of forty sections²⁹.

²⁵ Rieu, *Catalogue*, vol. I, p. 353; Browne, *A Literary*, vol. III, p. 441.

²⁶ Rieu, *Catalogue*, vol. I, pp. 365-367.

²⁷ Browne, *A Literary*, vol. III, pp. 505-506.

²⁸ Arberry, *Literature*, pp. 401-410.

²⁹ Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiyat*, vol. IV, p. 475; Rieu, *Catalogue*, vol. II, p. 443.

1.3. The Content of the Study

In this study, which deals with the Timurid conception of power and its place in the Timurid cultural achievements, the focus of the second part is on the analysis of the key elements of the two great political traditions from which Temür, the founder of the Timurid empire, utilized while establishing his politics; Turco-Mongol and Perso-Islamic. It is possible to see the background of the Timurid political culture, which was shaped within the Turco-Mongol and Perso-Islmic traditions, and the artistic and cultural florescence that emerged in the 15th century in the aforementioned forms of political culture.

The third chapter focuses on how Temür, who started his political career in the power struggles in the nomadic Chaghatai Khanate, used the existing ideological tools for his interests while creating his political system. Temür created a model of legitimacy that was consistent with both the Central Asian Turco-Mongol tradition and the Perso-Islamic one, providing continuity to his successors for more than a hundred years. Although his successors who came to power after him could not continue his military success, they paved the way for the cultural revival for which Temür planted the seeds and prepared a suitable ground. In this period, Timurid sultans, who had no booty to distribute to gain supporters, had to bestow the lands that Temür had allocated to them while he was alive, as tax-exempt *soyurghals*. This situation, which led to decentralization, was also a stepping stone for artistic revival.

The fourth part of this study identifies the political groupings in the Husayn Bayqara period, when the Timurid cultural development reached its zenith, and reveals the rivalries between them. The focus is on Ali Sher Nawai's key role in political intrigues, not his cultural side.

In the fifth and last chapter, it is revealed how the Timurid princes, who were trying to create a Timurid dynastic identity, used the cultural protection program for their political purposes. These princes, who patronized artistic and cultural activities, which were the most important tools of the ruling ideology, tried to show that they were the legitimate rulers of the Perso-Islamic world with all their works put forward.

CHAPTER 2

THE ORIGINS OF THE TIMURID POLITICAL SYSTEM

2.1. Turco-Mongol Political Tradition

One of the main aspects of the Turco-Mongol political system was a belief that each member of the ruling dynasty had a right to sovereignty which caused tension between the ruler and other dynasty members. Another important element of the Turco-Mongol political system was the relationship between the ruler and his followers whose military support was essential for the ruler. These notions were rooted in Turco-Mongol political culture which had been created by Inner Asian steppe empires and also had benefited from Chinggis Khan. To understand the nature of the Timurid authority it is first necessary to analyze the background of the perception of power whose origins reached to pre-imperial Tuco-Mongol tribal order. Examination of some aspects of the pre-imperial tribal system in Inner Asia shows us in which conditions the formation and evolution of the Turco-Mongol political system and thus the perception of power occurred and was shaped. This chapter provides an overview of studies on Inner Asian tribal structure from which numerous empires (or confederations) –the Hsiung-nu, the Turks, the Uighurs, and others- emerged.

2.1.1. Inner Asian Tribal Order:

The Central Asian steppe environment in which the Turco-Mongol empires emerged had an arid climate in which the extremely cold winters and droughty summers rendered those areas inconvenient for agriculture. For this reason, for the communities that lived in such an environment the main way for subsistence was pastoral nomadism the basis of which was the utilization of grasslands and pastures³⁰.

The pastoral nomads' main economic activity was composed of livestock production and performed through the movement of animals and their owners between grasslands in a year. This was not a random wandering in search of pastures, as Chinese chronicles depict, but the movements were within a defined range³¹. The pastoral nomad, first of all, had to find the most suitable places for his herd. This put him in contradiction with the interests of his neighbors³². The requirements of such an economic system in which the inhabitants were in motion and engaged in large-scale pastoralism produced a specific pattern of social and political organization and culture³³.

In this economic system, there were few differences in products since everybody produced the same goods³⁴. Moreover, differently from the sedentary societies that maintained their life depending on determined pieces of land and could accumulate their grain at the storehouse, the nomadic peoples needed to move for finding suitable grassland for their animals and could not store their pastoral products. It was impossible to concentrate a great herd since the maximum size of animals was defined by the pastures' capacities. Even if a large number of animals were amassed, there was always a risk of losing because of infectious diseases, drought, severe weather conditions, or theft. Consequently, while the steppe economy was self-sufficient for subsistence since the most needs of the pastoral nomads such as food, clothing, housing, transport, and fuel were provided by their animals, it could not provide a strong economic base to support large groups of people such as imperial political organization³⁵. For this reason, the nomadic societies of Central Asia appealed

³⁰ Thomas Barfield. "The Shadow Empires: Imperial State Formation along the Chinese – Nomad Frontier," Susan E. Alcock et al., *Empires: Perspective from Archaeology and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 14.

³¹ Thomas Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, Cambridge: Mass., B. Blackwell, 1989, p. 22, Peter B. Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples: Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Central Asia and the Middle East*. Otto Harrassowitz, 1992, p. 3; Nikolay N. Kradin, Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia, in *Complexity of Interaction along the Central Asian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE*; Vfgarchpress: Bonn, Germany, 2015; p. 20.

³² Mahmut Arslan, *Step İmparatorluklarında Sosyal ve Siyasi Yapı*. İstanbul: İ.Ü. Ed. Fak. yay., 1984, p. 4.

³³ Anatoly M. Khazanov, *Nomads and The Outside World*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994., p. 17; Nikolay N. Kradin, "Nomads", in *The Encyclopedia of Empire*, 2016, p. 1.

³⁴ Barfield, "Shadow Empires", p. 14.

to their sedentary neighbors for benefitting from a wide range of products such as grain, metal goods, and luxury items and for finding a channel for their regular surpluses such as hoarded, milk products, meat, wool products and hide³⁶. It naturally produced a border relationship between these two economic zones. And the nomad and sedentary relationships were determined by the political and economic requirements of these two societies in a certain period. The sedentary supplies were accessed by the nomads through plundering, extorting tribute, or obtaining trade agreements by diplomacy. However, for acquiring agrarian products the nomads usually did not hesitate to utilize their military advantages over their sedentary neighbors³⁷. Therefore, it can be said that as a result of the fragility of the pastoral economy and the interaction between the nomads and their sedentary neighbors, a specific pattern of social and political and social organization emerged and developed in the steppe.

2.1.2. Social and Political Structure of Central Asian Nomadic Societies

The Turco-Mongol nomadic societies of Central Asian steppes displayed a variety of social organizations. They were generally tribal and dominated by kinship relations. The individual position was defined by the kinship group. In these societies which were engaged in pastoral nomadism while the livestock was private property, the pastures were commonly shared. Since there was a need for wide grassland for the herds, these nomads lived in divided small units.

The basic social unit was the family, consisting of the husband, wife, and unmarried children. While elder sons received their shares from the property as they attained maturity during their father's lifetime, the youngest son, lived with his parents and inherited what the father kept for himself after his father's death³⁸.

³⁵ Barfield, "Shadow Empires", p. 15

³⁶ Thomas Barfield, *The Nomadic Alternative*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1993, 137.

³⁷ Golden, *Introduction*, pp. 8-9.

³⁸ Khazanov, *Nomads and The Outside World*, p. 126; Golden, *Introduction*, p. 4.

Several separate and independent families formed primary kin groups which were connected by kinship ties and were descended from the same ancestor. When it was possible the primary kin groups, composed of closely related families, shared the common pastures, helped and supported each other, and camped together³⁹. In other words, principal relatives following pastoral production created the basic and temporal camp groups. In such units, all the families oversaw their households and had their livestock. Although such camp groups were the principal units for pastoral nomads' lives, they were not long-lasting forms. For example, when the number of animals exceeded the capacity of the pastures, large families divided. In short, flexibility in movement and adaptation to new forms of the organization was the basis of the nomadic life⁴⁰.

The pastoral nomadic societies of Central Asia were structured by patrilineal kinship groups and displayed characteristics of a conical clan. According to Basilov, kinship turned the individual into a part of a clan (a group of blood relatives) and various clans formed a conical clan which in turn formed a higher level of organization: tribe⁴¹. Briefly stated a conical clan is an extensive patrilineal kinship organization whose members had common descent and were positioned and segmented according to genealogical lines. Furthermore, senior generations were regarded as superior to younger generations and t, and his lineages and clans were ranked hierarchically according to seniority. In addition, this genealogical regulation was determinant for rights to pasture, social and military obligations between kinship groups, and legitimacy for local political power. However, when it comes to the tribal level or supra-tribal level political factors were more important than the kinship⁴². Since the creation of the tribal or supra-tribal organization was based on alliance or conquest and consisted of non-kin groups, the issue of kinship had an important to determine legitimacy for leadership among the ruling elite. Because of the matter of

³⁹ Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, pp. 15, 145, Khazanov; *Nomads and Outside World*, pp. 127-128.

⁴⁰ Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, p. 147, Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*, pp. 121-122, 128.

⁴¹ Vladimir N. Basilov, *Introduction to Nomads of Central Asia*, Los Angeles, California: 89. Natural History of Museum of Los Angeles Country, February-April 1989, pp. 5-6.

⁴² Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 26.

seniority in such societies, the elder generations were superior in rank to the younger generations. Accordingly, lineages and clans were hierarchically ranked in terms of seniority. As a result of this system ruling lineages emerged: The shina lineage of the Hsiung-nu and the Turk Empires, the Chinggisid lineage (Altan Urugh) of the Mongol Empire, and the Osmanid lineage of the Ottoman Empire retained their authority for centuries⁴³.

Since the basic economic processes were fulfilled within the family, the family and camping groups were the most important units for daily life, but dealing with the world beyond herding required organizing into larger units⁴⁴. As Golden states that while the clans within the same tribe or tribal union could have a dispute with one another they formed a "common front" with the outside world⁴⁵. Large-scale military activities necessitated more distantly related clans to take joint action. In that case, clan leaders elected a war leader whose authority was temporary and limited to certain situations. Briefly, common military activities such as the raids or seizure of new pastures necessitated the nomads to unite their power and form a tribe. As is seen, it was the case when the nomads encountered other nomads or a sedentary world. As Lindner asserts "*the tribe served, first and foremost, a political purpose: the protection and enhancement of the position of its tribesmen in the face of the wider world.*"⁴⁶ Therefore, nomads' becoming organized at a tribal or supra-tribal level were inherently more political than at the family and clan level⁴⁷.

The tribe was a basic socio-political unit that was open to all who wanted to attach themselves to its chief and had the same concern as its members. It was composed of a variable number of clans and lineages involving various families. The lineages' common interests had great importance in tribal formation.

Tribe's political role came into existence when it had to deal with the outside

⁴³ Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, pp. 148-149.

⁴⁴ Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, p. 147, Kradin, *Tribal to Empire*, p. 151.

⁴⁵ Golden, *Introduction*, p. 4, Khazanov, *Nomads*, pp. 144-147.

⁴⁶ R. Paul Lindner, "What was a Nomadic Tribe?", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 24, no. 4 (Oct., 1982), p. 699.

⁴⁷ Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*, p. 148.

world, to a certain extent nomadic and principally sedentary. Although the tribal organization was sufficient for meeting the daily needs of the nomads such as determining the routes of migration, assigning pastures, and settling the conflicts and small-scale raids, it was limited to large-scale activities. Political integration and centralization of power in nomadic society were closely related to interaction with other nomadic and sedentary societies⁴⁸.

2.1.3. Supra-Tribal Organization Among Central Asian Nomadic Societies

It is generally agreed that the nomads' interaction with the outside world was determinant of their political organization. According to Barfield, there was a synchronism in the processes of the emergence and collapse of nomadic empires and China. Since the steppe empires were economically dependent on united China, they emerged "*with the unification of China and disappeared when China's political and economic organization collapsed.*"⁴⁹ For this reason, to understand their political organization at the supra-tribal level it is sufficient to explain their external relations with other tribes and the sedentary world. In this way, we can see the regular patterns in forming political organizations by Central Asian nomads.

Since the pastoral economy was not enough to support an elaborated state structure, supra-tribal political organization among the nomads could only be financed and stabilized by obtaining revenue from the outside world. For this reason, empires that emerged in Central Asian steppes were based on extracting revenue from sedentary societies. The rulers of such empires utilized the nomadic military force for bringing in revenue from outsiders and redistribute it among their followers to sustain their loyalty⁵⁰.

In a normal situation, a single tribe could not deal with a centralized China but an organization on the supra-tribal level could constitute a power that China could not ignore. The nomadic tribes of central Asia united under a ruler and used their military

⁴⁸ Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*, p. 151, Lindner, *Nomadic Tribe*, p. 698.

⁴⁹ Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, p. 152.

⁵⁰ Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, p. 149.

power for economic benefits they could not acquire themselves. Accordingly, after uniting the nomadic tribes under his authority, a nomadic ruler had to offer economic opportunities for his followers to maintain his political position. The tribal chiefs accepted a subordinate political position in exchange for access to Chinese luxury goods and trade opportunities. Therefore, the ruler could continue his empire's economic and political stability through the exploitation of resources from a sedentary world by taking the control of foreign affairs which was the basis of his power⁵¹.

The nomadic empire of Central Asian steppes extracted benefits from China through raiding directly or through subsidies indirectly and establishing a treaty for border trade. To achieve these aims, the nomads threaten the frontier by taking full advantage of their military force. It revealed three main ways: they carried out destructive raiding to threaten the Chinese imperial court then made use of war and peace to increase the number of subsidies and trade privileges given by the Chinese government. When their demands were rejected the nomads could keep raiding and plundering the frontier and causing chaos for the Chinese population. The tension created by nomadic attacks left the Chinese government no choice but to accept the nomads' requests. In general, instead of countering with aggressive military campaigns, because of the expensiveness of these campaigns and the mobility of the nomads, the Chinese emperor preferred to appease the nomads⁵².

To deal with a sedentary state, ruled by a powerful centralized government, Central Asian nomads created a supra-tribal organization that retained the principles of tribal structure. In other words, even if the nomads formed a supra-tribal organization, the unity was grounded on tribal relations. While the ruling elite carried out the military and administrative functions the main part of the army was composed of ordinary nomads⁵³. The rulers were chosen as supreme military leaders and obtained

⁵¹ Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, p. 150.

⁵² Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, 152. For the detailed information about political relations between Hsiung-nu and Chinese government see: Ying-Shih Yü, "The Hsiung-nu", in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, ed. Denis Sinor, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 118-150; and the case of the Türks see: Denis Sinor, "The Establishment and Dissolution of the Türk Empire", *Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, (1990), pp. 285-316.

⁵³ Nikolay N. Kradin, "State Origins in Anthropological Thought", in *Social Evolution & History*, Vol. 8, 2009, No 1, p. 42.

a monopoly for representing nomadic polity in foreign affairs. In exchange for such a privilege, the ruler had to redistribute the booty and other earnings from the sedentary world. But, in internal affairs, the authority of the supra-tribal ruler was limited, and the political decisions were usually made by tribal leaders. Barfield has well revealed this structure in the case of Hsiung-nu. According to him, while in wartime the Shan-yü (the name of the ruler among the Hsiung-nu) carried out raids, and in peacetime, he mediated between the steppe and China and obtained tributes and trade rights for redistributing among his supporters⁵⁴.

This structure had three main levels of an organization. At the top, the imperial leadership was held by the ruling lineage of the tribe that founded the nomadic empire. At the second level, the imperial appointees had collateral relations with the ruler and served as governors managing indigenous tribal leaders. The third level of the organization consisted of local tribal leaders who were elites of each tribe and retained significant autonomy since they derived their power from their people⁵⁵.

The Hsiung-nu, the first empire on the steppes of Central Asia had the same organizational structure and became a model for subsequent Turco-Mongol empires. In the case of Hsiung-nu, the empire was organized into left and right (that is, east and west), each of which was under the control of the members of the ruling family. According to Chinese accounts, the administration of the state had three levels. At the top, the imperial government was conducted by Shan-yü, the supreme ruler assisted by Ku-tu marquises in administration. Under the Shan-yü, twenty-four imperial leaders were appointed with the title of "(Commander of) Ten Thousand Horsemen" who acted as governors across the empire and were usually close relatives of the Shan-yü. In the domain, under their control, each of these imperial leaders was free to appoint his officials without political interference from Shan-yü. Di Cosmo states that the members of the top rank controlled the regions which had been given to them as a private domain. Consequently, the Shan-yü's authority was restricted by these governors' authorities. The third level was composed of a large class of indigenous tribal leaders who were under the command of imperial governors. But their power

⁵⁴ Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 45.

⁵⁵ Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, p. 150.

was based on their tribal groups which had their territory. Naturally, they enjoyed quite an autonomy⁵⁶.

In the Turk Qaghanate (Kök-Türk Empire), founded in the same geographical area after the Hsiung-nu, the political traditions of its predecessors can be observed in the administrative organization. As in the case of Hsiung-nu, at the beginning of its formation, the empire was divided into two parts, east and west. Like Hsiung-nu, the administration of the Turk had three main levels. The top rank belonged to Qaghan (supreme ruler). The imperial appointees named shad governed the local tribes and indigenous tribal chiefs, begs, and conducted the local affairs. The distinctive feature of the Turk Qaghanate from the Hsiung-nu was that the supreme qaghan sometimes appointed lesser qaghans who were generally autonomous, to some regions of the domain. Naturally, since such appointments led to fragmentation in the structure, the empire was not so centralized⁵⁷.

Here, although the structure of a nomadic empire appeared to be quite solid from the outside, it was a fragile system. First of all, the power of the ruler was not absolute and was limited by numerous factors. The dynamic structure and economic independence provided tribal leaders to be independent of the center. Moreover, the ruler maintained his power and coherence of the polity only by providing his tribesmen with benefits from raiding, redistribution of booty and tribute, and trade opportunity with sedentary societies. For this reason, his power was not stable. In addition, the martial character inherent in nomadic society prevented the center from putting political pressure. Additionally, if tribesmen were not pleased with the policy of the center there was always a potential for abandonment or rebellion.

2.1.4. Leadership Among Central Asian Nomadic Societies

In the tribal system of pastoral nomads, a dynamic way of life was the norm.

⁵⁶ Nicola Di Cosmo, "Aristocratic Elites in the Xiongnu Empire as Seen From Historical and Archaeological Evidence", in *Nomad Aristocrats in a World of Empires* (Von Jurgen Paul Ed.), Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2013, pp. 26-27; Barfield, *Perilous*, pp. 37-38; Ying-Shih Yü, "The Hsiung-nu", pp. 135-136.

⁵⁷ Barfield, *Perilous*, pp. 132-133; Denis Sinor, "The Establishment and Dissolution of the Türk Empire", *Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 297-298.

Movement of people with their livestock between long distances required considerable adaptability and organizational skill. The responsibilities conferred to tribal leaders were specified for such a lifestyle. In this manner, some of the duties of a tribal chief included allocating and protecting the pastures, scheduling and organizing the migration of his people between the pastures safely. Accordingly, a person to be a tribal leader was expected to have the ability in organizing, diplomacy, and military⁵⁸. These characteristics manifested themselves, especially in succession practice.

The mobile way of life provided the nomads freedom and enabled displeased groups to leave and search for new alliances. Under this considerable flexibility, nomadic people could readily unite and reunite. Moreover, at the tribal level, there was no need for a supra-tribal organization for the basic economic activities, also "tribal chiefs were not eager to forfeit their autonomy."⁵⁹

Therefore, the dynamic character and centrifugal tendencies in this structure were the great obstacles to the centralization of nomadic tribes. For this reason, one who aimed at creating a supra-tribal organization that required the integration of various tribes under his rule had to offer particular benefits which could not obtain without a supra-tribal organization. "*Essentially this benefit boiled down to booty, the spoils of war -war which the tribes could not wage on a worthwhile scale without a supra-tribal leader. Social organization above the tribal level, therefore, came to be predicated on warfare.*"⁶⁰ The most prominent feature of supra-tribal leaders (shan, yü among Hsiung-nu, khaqan, khan, qaghan among the Turks and the Mongols) within this framework was the military leadership. His power depended on his skill in organizing military campaigns, redistributing wealth obtained through raids, tribute, and trade from sedentary societies, and conducting diplomatic and military affairs⁶¹. Since the continuation of the system depended on constant benefits from outside

⁵⁸ Joseph Fletcher, "The Mongols: Ecological and Social Perspectives", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Jun., 1986), pp. 14,19.

⁵⁹ Fletcher, "Mongols", p. 15.

⁶⁰ Joseph Fletcher, "Turco-Mongolian Monarchic Tradition in the Ottoman Empire", *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Eucharisterion. Essays Presented to Omeljan Pritsak on his Sixtieth by his Colleagues and Students, Edited by Ihor Sevce, Frank E. Sysyn, 3-4, 1979/1980, p. 237.

⁶¹ Kradin, "State Origins", p. 42.

wealth, the supra-tribal leaders had precedence in leading the tribal military force, controlling foreign affairs, and solving disagreements that affected the internal order negatively⁶². Therefore, it can be said that the steppe polity of the nomads witnessed rulership evolving from a military leader to a khan. The political power of a khan depended on his talent in attracting a wide range of supporters. And enlarging the number of supporters depended on the benefits the khan provided for them.

On the other hand, at the supra-tribal level personal leadership was the norm. That is to say, the political power was gathered under the grand khan's person. He was not a representative of an institution such as a sedentary empire. The person of the khan was crucial for the union of the tribal people. Therefore, the continuation of the supra-tribal organization was considerably based on his existence. Since his supporters' ties of obedience to the khan were personal, his death or inefficacy and failure mostly caused a breakdown of these allegiance ties and then execution, succession struggles, and even the collapse of the state or empire. So, the survival of a nomadic empire was highly dependent on the ruler's person not on his office⁶³.

As mentioned before, the solidarity among the pastoral nomadic societies was bolstered by a common interest. For example, large-scale military activities gave a reason to fragment nomadic groups for constituting unity. In such a situation the tribal leaders elected a leader whose authority was temporal and limited to certain circumstances. When it came to a supra-tribal unity, while the core of this structure could be composed of people who had blood ties to the ruler, others could be enrolled voluntarily, through marriage and conquests. The bonds developed between the ruler and his followers remained personal.

Once the fragmented tribal groups united under the rule of a khan, he had to continue acquiring resources from sedentary societies to sustain his distribution. Because tribal leaders renounced their autonomy in return for certain expectations and attached themselves to the khan voluntarily, to maintain the loyalty of his followers, the ruler had to supply satisfying spoils which meant leading them in external wars.

⁶² Barfield, "Shadow Empires", p. 17

⁶³ Joseph Fletcher, "Bloody Tanistry: Authority and Succession in the Ottoman, Indian Muslim, and Later Chinese Empires," a paper presented at the Conference on the Theory of Democracy and Popular Participation, Bellagio, Italy, in 1978, pp. 13, 17; Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 27.

"A leader who won battles won followers. A leader who lost battles lost his followers."⁶⁴

In these structures, the tribal organization never disappeared and tribal chiefs retained autonomy to a certain extent at a local level. For this reason, if the opportunity presented itself tribal chiefs could feel free to rebel and leave⁶⁵. When this was the case, the khan was supposed, to some degree, to show tolerance. Because, if the khan was unable to satisfy the expectations of the tribes who demanded a share in the wealth that the khan extracted, the unity of tribes was at risk of disintegrating⁶⁶. Since the tribal people elected the khan by voting with their feet, if they were not pleased, they showed their dissatisfaction by leaving the union or supporting another candidate⁶⁷.

The supra-tribal structure was maintained by a distribution of wealth. For this reason, the relationship between the khan and the tribal chiefs was vital. Any deformation of the ties between khan and his followers caused a rebellion and dissolution. Therefore, "*the grand khan had to earn and re-earn the tribal chiefs' loyalty.*"⁶⁸ So, khan's first and foremost responsibility was leading his people on military expeditions outside. Through the instrument of war, the khan could bring the tribesmen under his authority. As long as the people gained success in expeditions, they kept the coherence. The wealth, the khan acquired through raids and war "*gave the tribes a reason to continue to follow him.*"⁶⁹

Here, the critical point for a ruler was to build and maintain trustworthy loyalty from those who were not bonded with him by blood ties. The companions (beg in Turks, *nöker* among Mongols, and amir after Islam) who voluntarily became the supporter of a ruler were the most essential and the most common ones. Their loyalty

⁶⁴ Fletcher, "Mongols", p. 29; Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 8.

⁶⁵ Barfield, "Tribe and State Relations: The Inner Asian Perspective," in *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, ed. Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (London, New York: I.B. Tavis Co Ltd Publishers), p. 167; Fletcher, "Mongols", p. 29.

⁶⁶ Fletcher, "Mongols", p. 22.

⁶⁷ Lindner, "Nomadic Tribe", p. 700.

⁶⁸ Fletcher, "Monarchic", p. 241.

⁶⁹ Fletcher, "Monarchic", pp. 241-242.

to the ruler was supposed to take precedence over all kinship ties. In exchange for their support, the ruler was supposed to protect, feed, clothe, and accommodate his followers. In virtue of such loyalties, the ruler was in less need of his kinsmen's support. In this way, the ruler could achieve freedom of action and opportunity for centralization of his authority. The stronger and more personal loyalties of the ruler, the less power the tribal leaders and their followers have. When the ruler enlarged his followers and gave them increasing responsibility, he could create an alternative to the fickle support of the great tribal chiefs and their retinues. This provides a chance to act independently and more centralized power for the khan. But, because of the instability and fluidity of the social and political system in the steppe, the tension between personal and kinship ties and consequently personal and collective authority was inevitable. It particularly came to the surface when it comes to succession.

2.1.5. Inheritance and Succession System

In establishing a centralized and stabilized rule, Turco-Mongolian policies had to deal with two major difficulties: the absence of a fixed rule for succession and the inheritance tradition which assumed that the territory was the common property of the ruling family. These two factors, pertain to Turco-Mongol political tradition, continued to exist even after they accepted Islam and formed sedentary political formations in the Middle East.

The non-existence of a certain system for succession meant that after a ruler's death, any member of the ruling family could exercise sovereignty. However, the issue of which member would be the next ruler depends on the competition. For this reason, the death of a ruler generally caused succession struggles among the male member of the ruling family, and the winner was accepted as a legitimate ruler. The succession problem afflicted almost all Turco-Mongolian policies during their known history and was contended with in different ways.

According to the tribal kinship system among the Central Asian nomads the election of a tribal chief depended on, as Fletcher terms, the principle of tanistry. It was one of the main issues for the dynamics of Turco-Mongolian politics. The principle of tanistry was based on the notion that "*the tribe should be led by the best-*

qualified member of the chiefly house." Thus, the succession did not transfer following a certain principle. Instead, it was preferred that the most qualified among proper heirs should assume the chieftainship⁷⁰.

On the other hand, sometimes it showed a tendency to two traditions of succession -lineal and lateral-. According to lineal tradition, succession is passed from father to son. For lineal tradition, the senior male of the ruling family assumed the chieftainship. Thus, when the chief died the chieftaincy passed to his eldest brother and so on till the youngest brother and then to the next generation⁷¹. For example, in the beginning, the Hisung-nu Empire adopted the lineal succession system but then it turned to a lateral one⁷². In the case of the Turk Qaghanate, on the other hand, the lateral system was the norm but eventually, it caused a civil war which left the empire permanently divided⁷³. But, in any case, since the main goal in the succession issue was to choose the candidate who would best represent the tribe's interest, it could not be subjected to a determined rule and remained open to competition. This fact continued its existence in a supra-tribal organization founded by Turco-Mongol societies till the Ottomans' time.

Confronted with the same problems about succession, the Ottomans, the Turco-Mongolian origin empire, gradually systemized their succession practices. In early periods almost all succession occurred through violent struggles among rival shahzadas (Ottoman princes). Following the reign of Murad I (r. 1362-89) till the beginning of the seventeenth century, the succession was based on competition, that is whichever shahzada could execute his rivals could achieve the throne. Around the 1400s, the Ottoman poet Ahmadi wrote for Murad I: "*His brothers became enemies to him/ The affairs of all of them were ended at his hands/ They were all destroyed by the sword.*"⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Fletcher, "Mongols", pp. 16-17.

⁷¹ Fletcher, "Mongols", p. 17.

⁷² For the detailed information about succession practices among the Hisung-nu see: Yings-Shih Yü, "Hisung-nu", pp. 136-138.

⁷³ Barfield, *Perilous*, pp. 133-134.

⁷⁴ Halil İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire; the Classical Age, 1300-1600*, Translated by Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973, pp. 97-99.

Temür's invasion of Anatolia at the beginning of the fifteenth century caused protracted wars between the sons of Bayezid I. The Ottoman sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444-6, 1451-81), hoping to prevent the destructive succession wars, modified the succession system by issuing a decree stating: "*For the welfare of the state, one of my sons to whom God grants the sultanate may lawfully put his brothers to death. A majority of 'ulama' consider this permissible.*"⁷⁵ As it is seen from the expression "God grants the sultanate" the Ottomans regarded that the sovereignty was granted by God. Although the systemized succession system led to tragic executions, it prevented succession struggles that had resulted in fragmentation in previous Turco-Mongol empires. İnalçık interprets the succession struggles that occurred at the beginning of the Ottoman Empire as the conflict between the traditional perception of power and the new one⁷⁶. In addition to the institutionalized fratricide, at the end of the sixteenth century, the Turco-Mongolian appanage system was abandoned and the shahzadas were no longer appointed as governors of a sanjak (district) and then the principle of seniority was put in practice in the Ottoman succession system⁷⁷.

Going back to Central Asian steppe policy, at a tribal level the succession was not a problematic issue. When a tribal chief died the main issue for the members of the tribe was who became the leader. As for the supra-tribal level, it was a complicated matter. First of all, when a khan died the component tribes of the state/empire had to settle on a continuation of unity. If they wanted to maintain the supra-tribal structure the next step was deciding which eligible candidate would be best fit for the rulership. It was a critical stage for the destiny of a nomadic state/empire. Since there was no fixed rule for succession, several possibilities arose. The heir apparent designated by the last khan might have been acknowledged by the tribal chiefs. Or following lateral succession, the senior member of the ruling family could be the khan. Or the empire was divided into two parts and was ruled peacefully by two brothers, one of whom

⁷⁵ İnalçık, *The Ottoman Empire*, p. 59.

⁷⁶ Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlılar'da Saltanat Veraseti Usulü ve Türk Hâkimiyet Telakkisiyle İlgisi", *SBF Dergisi*, vol. 14, 1959, p. 94; For more information about the fratricide cases in Ottoman policy see: Mehmet Akman, *Osmanlı Devletinde Kardeş Katli*, Eren, İstanbul 1997; Ali Aktan, "Osmanlı Hanedanı İçinde Saltanat Mücadelesi ve Kardeş Katli", *Türk Dünyası Dergisi*, Vol. 10 and 11, 1987.

⁷⁷ İnalçık, "Veraset", p. 94.

subjected the other. Or, a non-member of the ruling family for instance a tribal chief as was the case of Temür himself, a tribal chief might have usurped the power and ruled on behalf of a puppet khan. But, the most common way to the determination of a khan among the nomadic empires, as mentioned before, was bloody tanistry. It was a sort of election that was carried out through alliance, abandonment, fratricide, and fighting among the candidates from the ruling lineage. In this case, since all male members of the ruling family were assumed to have the right to sovereignty, on the death of a khan his uncles, brothers, sons, nephews, and cousins began struggling with each other⁷⁸.

Occasionally, the struggle for succession erupted while the khan was still alive. It generally occurred if the khan took the part of his favorite candidate. In such cases to attract followers, the princes formed factions and competed for the khanship. Even sometimes, the situation could go so far as to parricide⁷⁹.

Furthermore, another practice in choosing the next ruler was assembling the tribal councils named *quriltai* which normally functioned as the privy council. The participants of the assembly were composed of tribal chiefs, who came as representatives and members of the ruling family. Such meetings were convened for acclaiming the supported candidate as the khan. But the acclamation was not always binding. Rival factions might have continued to support another candidate and not preferred to attend the *quriltai*. And sometimes, the succession struggles terminated with *quriltai* in which the winner was acclaimed as a great khan⁸⁰.

Such practice of determining a ruler originated from traditional family inheritance rules. Accordingly, during their father's lifetime elder sons left the family at marriage, and they were given their share of the property. The youngest son, called *odchigin*, lord of the "fire", took his share, the remaining property of his father, after the father's death⁸¹.

⁷⁸ Fletcher, "Mongols", pp. 24-25, 27.

⁷⁹ Fletcher, "Mongols", p. 25.

⁸⁰ Fletcher, "Mongols", p. 26; Fletcher, "Monarchic", p. 239; Mehmet Seyitdanlıoğlu, "Eski Türklerde Devlet Meclisi "Toy" Üzerine Düşünceler", *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vo. 28, No: 45, 2009, p. 7.

⁸¹ Barfield, *Nomadic Alternative*, p. 147, Fletcher, "Mongols", p. 26; Halil İnalçık, "The Ottoman Succession and Its Relation to the Turkish Concept of Sovereignty" in *The Middle East and the Balkans*

When it comes to a ruling family, that is a dynasty, since the property of a father was composed of all conquered lands and the matter of sovereignty was in question, the division of patrimony was problematic. In this case, since the conquered territories were regarded as the private property of the ruler, the elder sons were given their share of the lands when they reached maturity while the ruler was alive, and after his death, the youngest son inherited his father's domain, the center of the realm⁸². In this system, each son had an equal share in the father's property and every member of the ruling family had a right to ascend to the throne which was open to competition.

The division of the father's patrimony among the sons at the level of a dynasty is known as the appanage system. According to this system, the sons of a ruler were assigned to distinct regions as governors at an early age. In conformity with Turco-Mongol's common inheritance tradition, these young princes who had different individual political passions formed their courts and governed the territory in the name of their father. However, there was always a possibility that the governors of these distinct power centers could threaten the central rule by rebelling or fighting among themselves. For this reason, the ruler tried to keep them under his control through agents, denouncers, and officers.

On the other hand, according to logic inherent in this system, since it was assumed that all members of the ruling family had the right to power and the ruler was *primus-inter-pares*, other claimants to the power, felt free about insubordination or rebelling against the center. When this was the case, the rebels were usually tolerated and before being sentenced they were allowed to express remorse. But of course, such opposition did not always go unpunished⁸³.

Although the members of the ruling family had relatively political and economic independence in their regions, their position was not safe. Apart from their rival kinsmen, they had to be careful about tribal chiefs who felt free to shift their

under the Ottoman Empire, Bloomington: Indiana University, Turkish Studies and Turkish Ministry of Culture Joint Series vol.9, 1993, p. 50.

⁸² Denis Sinor, *Studies in Medieval Inner Asia*, Aldershot, Hampshire and Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing Co., 1997, p. 251; İnalçık, "The Ottoman Succession", p. 50.

⁸³ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 145.

loyalty⁸⁴. In an atmosphere where there were many contenders for power, it was important for the royal princes to gain reliable supporters. Otherwise, they could be exposed to many disobedience, infidelity, and desertion. For this reason, obtaining loyalty as much as possible was vital for these competitor princes. Especially when there were many contenders for power, the unification and continuation of the empire were at risk⁸⁵. Contention for loyalty created many factions, backing different princes in different regions. So, it can be said that the future of the empire depended on the dynamics among the royal family members.

As it has been mentioned before, sharing power among the members of the ruling family always caused tension in the Turco-Mongol polities. In theory firstly, the ruler enjoyed sovereignty in the name of the dynasty, and secondly, other members had the right to claim sovereignty. The second notion was put into practice through the tradition of division of territory (appanagement) among the sons or brothers. But the first one required that only one of these members would be the next ruler. Here the differentiations between the interests of the ruler and others increased the tension. From the ruler's point of view, the appanage-holders should have shown loyalty, obeyed him, and given militaristic support in case of need. On the other side, the princes hoped for as much share as possible from a property and maximum independence. Since the tradition provide the princes an opportunity to regard themselves as the next ruler, they used every means possible; rebelling during the ruler's lifetime or gaining victory in the succession struggle after his death. The tension between the ruler and other members of the dynasty was an almost natural consequence of the conception of power-sharing since it turned them into rivals. This tension became violent, especially during the succession struggle since the victorious would acquire the power and right to redistribution of the territory. During such struggles losing members were eliminated and so their appanages became a possession to redistribute.

On the other hand, to succeed in an internecine war for power, each member had to cultivate as many loyal supporters as possible. Therefore, the tribal chiefs'

⁸⁴ Golden, *Introduction*, p. 4.

⁸⁵ Barfield, "Tribe and State Relations", pp. 176-177, Fletcher, "Tanistry", pp. 7-8.

support became vital for the princes. As the number of the rival princes increased, the power of the tribal begs increased. In the political atmosphere in which there were many contenders to ally with, tribal leaders had many alternatives for choice and possibilities to increase their power. Even sometimes their power reached such a degree that tribal leaders became khan-maker as in the case of Temür⁸⁶.

2.1.6. The Ideology

During their emergence and development, the Central Asian steppe empires created an ideology that legitimated their sovereignty in the eyes of their nomadic subjects. According to this ideology, the right to political power was bestowed by Tenggri (Heaven), the sky-god of the steppe, as divine favor. In other words, the ruler's authority and the capability to rule were given by Tenggri. This ideology made it possible for the steppe ruler to create and maintain the supra-tribal structure and control the military power of nomadic people.

As mentioned before, the starting point in the emergence of a supra-tribal leader was predatory war. Unlike institutionalized election or mutual covenant, the designation of a ruler was based on violent struggle. The ideological base of the ruling depended on the notion that the ablest person should have ruled tribesmen and gaining a victory in the struggle was a sign of divine mandate (qut). Accordingly, once the leader won the victory since it was regarded that God blessed his fortune, the tribesmen were expected to support him. In other words, military success implicitly provided legitimacy and sovereign power⁸⁷. But the failure in war, on the other hand, indicated that God broken fate with him.

On the other hand, the idea of rulership sanctioned by Heaven made the ruler's lineage a charismatic one "in which every member shared the attributes of sovereignty, though not actual rulership."⁸⁸ Although the divine mandate made the dynasty legitimate sovereigns, it did not make the rulers monarchs but held them responsible

⁸⁶ Fletcher, "Tanistry", pp. 7-8.

⁸⁷ İnalçık, "Ottoman Succession", p. 43.

⁸⁸ Findley, *The Turks*, p. 32.

for their actions. The sovereignty of the ruler was not absolute but limited by *töre* (the customary laws). The legitimacy of the ruler's sovereignty was directly proportionate to his conformity with *töre*. Accordingly, in the eyes of the nomadic subjects, the steppe rulers were a kind of officially appointed by Tenggri to enforce the *töre*⁸⁹.

Apart from *töre*, another element restricting the authority of the steppe ruler was the tribal elite. In the steppe the power-sharing idea was prevalent, and the power of the rulers was limited by tribal elites (*begs*)⁹⁰. In the steppe policy, the power of the ruler, based on personal gain, was not seen as perpetual and was continually tested. The main decision-makers for affirming the ruler as he had a divine mandate or not, were the political notables, that is tribal elites. The restricting power of tribal elites also can be seen clearly in the accession ceremony performed among the Türks and the Khazars. According to information cited by Sinor in Chinese and Arabic sources,

When the Turks elect a ruler, the high dignitaries of the realm bundle him in a felt rug and spin him nine times from east to west. After each turn, they bow to him. Then the ruler-elect is put on horseback and has to ride -probably to ascertain whether he can still mount a steed in a dizzy state. After the ride, he is strangled with a silken shawl until he almost chokes. When the shawl is loosened, those standing around a fire at his question "How will you be our kagan?" The kaghan, dazed, is unable to give a clear answer, but from his mutterings those assisting at the ritual take a clue to the length of his reign.

In the case of the Khazars, if the kaghan reaches the year that he said he is killed⁹¹.

2.2. Chinggis Khanid Political System

With his Mongol Empire, Chinggis Khan gave a new impulse to the political culture of the steppe world. Emerging from a decentralized tribal structure, he formed

⁸⁹ Halil İnalçık, "Turkish Iranian Political Theories and Traditions in Kutadgu Bilig" in *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire*, Bloomington: Indiana University, Turkish Studies and Turkish Ministry of Culture Joint Series vol.9, 1993, pp. 12-13.

⁹⁰ İsenbike Togan, *Flexibility and Limitations in Steppe Formations; The Kerait Khanete and Chinggis Khan*, Leiden: Brill, 1998, p. 10.

⁹¹ Sinor, "Türk Empire", p. 315.

a central rule by transforming the steppe people into an army of conquest the lines of which had a non-tribal character. His power was based on his personal following who joined him during his rise and whose loyalties to him were personal. In this new order advancement "was based on merit, thus creating a society open to talent, irrespective of background." Kinship lost its dynamic role in society, shed its political and economic components, and became a social and cultural phenomenon⁹². The success underlying this system depended on organizational skills and strict discipline. The Chinggisid model dominated the policies throughout Central Asia, Iran, and Anatolia for centuries.

2.2.1. Early Career

Temüjin, the future Chinggis Khan, was born in 1167 at a time when the Mongols were fragmented. Before he reorganized the steppe peoples under his rule, the last steppe empire, that of the Uighurs, had been abolished by the Kirghiz in 840 and political conflicts prevailed in the steppe⁹³. Ata Malik Juvaini, a Persian historian of the Ilkhanid court, describes the political situation before the rise of Chinggis Khan as follows:

*Before the appearance of Chinggis Khan, they had no chief or ruler. Each tribe or two tribes lived separately; they were not united with one another and there was constant fighting and hostility between them. Some of them regarded robbery and violence, immortality, and debauchery (fisq va fujur) as deeds of manliness and excellence. The Khan of Khitai used to demand and seize goods from them.*⁹⁴

According to the primary source of Mongol history, "*The Secret History of the Mongols*", the origins of Temüjin were rooted in the line of Bodancar. He was one of the four sons of Alan-Qoa who was made pregnant by the intervention of a ray of light

⁹² Togan, *Flexibility*, p. 12, 147; Peter B. Golden, "‘I will give the people unto thee’: The Cinggisid Conquests and Their Aftermath in the Turkic World", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2000, p. 35.

⁹³ Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 189; Togan, *Flexibility*, pp. 60-76.

⁹⁴ Ata Malik Juvaini, Ala al-Din, *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conquerer*, translated by J. A. Boyle, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997, p. 21.

coming from the vent of her tent⁹⁵. The divine paternity provided the future Chinggis Khan with unquestionable legitimacy in power⁹⁶.

The early periods of his life were full of deprivation, danger, and hardship. Although he was born into a ruling clan, he lost his father when he was a child and his father's following deserted him and his family⁹⁷. It is assumed that the struggle for survival during this period had a great impact upon that Chinggis Khan had a tough, decisive, and cruel personality. Such a hard period also provided him to develop his military skills and to ground his empire not on unreliable tribal loyalties but on a personal following⁹⁸.

His entering into the service of Tughrul, the Khan of Kerait confederation who also had been anda, sworn brotherhood, of his father Yesügei Baatur⁹⁹ was the beginning of his political career. The support of Tughrul culminated in the unification of Temüjin's father's people under his leadership¹⁰⁰. Besides Tughrul Khan, the support of Jamuqa, who was the anda (blood brother) of Temüjin and another important figure in the rising of Chinggis, enabled him to form his followings (nöker). Temüjin was proclaimed as khan by his followers in 1196. Temüjin's rise caused him to break up with his allies, Tughrul Khan and Jamuqa who regarded him as a threat to their supremacy. Temüjin eliminated the opposition against himself and became the undisputed leader of the steppe. In the quriltai of 1206 on the banks of Onan River, Temüjin was elected as the Great Khan, received the title of Chinggis Khan (Universal Ruler), and the Mongol ulus was reorganized as Army of Conquest (yeke cherig). After he consolidated his power in the steppe Chinggis Khan led his army of conquest to neighboring territories in the east and west. Thus, the Chinggis Khanid rule dominated not only the nomadic world but also the sedentary one. At the time when

⁹⁵ Igor de Rachewiltz, *The Secret History of the Mongols, Mongolian Epic and Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2004, p. 21.

⁹⁶ Igor Rachewiltz, "Some Remarks on the Ideological Foundation of Chingis Khan's Empire," in *Papers on Far Eastern History*, 7 March 1973, pp. 27-28.

⁹⁷ *Secret History*, pp. 72-73.

⁹⁸ Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 191, Togan, *Flexibility*, p. 127, 131.

⁹⁹ *Secret History*, p. 104.

¹⁰⁰ Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 190.

Chinggis Khan died in 1227, a large part of Asia had come under his rule.

2.2.2. Chinggisid Political Tradition

Before the unification of the steppe people under Chinggis Khan's rule, in consequence of their structure, the nomads were occupied with fighting among themselves, and the political environment was dominated by a decentralized atmosphere. Such struggles were a big obstacle in the centralization of power. It was a serious problem for Chinggis Khan to overcome the partitional loyalties caused by kinship structure. As it has been mentioned before, the traditional political organization depended on clan leaders whose power came from their kinship groups. In the time of political crises, the loyalty of such leaders was not trustable. Chinggis Khan's political experiences about the unreliableness of clan structure and the fickleness of his agnates had a strong influence on his policy¹⁰¹. Therefore, to shift the people's loyalties from their kinship groups to the ruler, Chinggis Khan based his sovereignty on Heaven, not on the choice of his relatives or followers. In this way, Chinggis Khan became the focus of loyalty as the highest command¹⁰². Moreover, he organized the ulus in the form of decimal lines as part of the conquest army. The old kinship groupings were broken up and scattered in decimal lines. In this way, a new form of social units emerged. Furthermore, Chinggis Khan built a personal following (nöker) whose loyalty depended on a close personal relationship with Chinggis Khan and he also created a personal bodyguard (keshig). Therefore, service ties substituted kinship ties, and the principle of seniority was turned into a rank system¹⁰³.

The unification and reorganization of the steppe people were accomplished mainly through Chinggis Khan's use of political perceptions and institutions of his time efficiently. In the new system instead of genealogy loyalty, talent, and service gained prominence. Chinggis Khan's successes served for attracting many followers. Thus, his nökers and his commanders (noyan) formed most of his whole force. To manipulate

¹⁰¹ Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 192.

¹⁰² David Morgan, *The Mongols*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, p. 79; Togan, *Flexibility*, p. 140.

¹⁰³ Togan, *Flexibility*, p. 137; Golden, "Chinggisid Conquests", p. 23; Morgan, *The Mongols*, p. 79.

this new manpower efficiently, Chinggis Khan reorganized the ulus in the form of decimal lines and established a chain of command. The highest positions in this new organization were delegated to his most loyal noyans, not to his kinsmen. "*None of Chinggis's uncles, cousins, brothers, sons or nephews initially received any direct control over military units.*"¹⁰⁴

The arrangement of people into units of ten, one hundred and one thousand, each put under the control of a noyan, personally loyal to Chinggis Khan himself, produced plenty of returns ¹⁰⁵. The tribes, especially resisted Chinggis Khan, were deliberately dismantled and scattered to different military units. But the tribes which submitted without resistance remained under the units of thousand¹⁰⁶. Here the originality of Chinggis Khan's policy was that this organization was permanent. No one was allowed to leave his troop and otherwise, they were punished with death. These new permanent social units did not replace old kinship ties and loyalties but weakened them. Consequently, in due course, numerous clans were called in the names of the noyans to whom Chinggis Khan gave the assignment. All these new arrangements created a new form of loyalty through personal relationships, not kinship ties and resulted in centralization and monopoly of power. İsenbike Togan summarizes the new system as saying that;

The main objective of these policies was to create a society in which individuals, irrespective of their tribal, ethnic or religious background, could participate around common goals. In this case, the common goal evolved to be the common good of the steppe society. This idea was expressed in many ways revolving around the term ulus "nation" or törö "customary law." For each member of the ulus, on the other hand, this new order meant "a career open to talent," without restrictions on the nature of the talent¹⁰⁷.

On the other hand, there was a change in the origins of political legitimacy. At the beginning of his career, Chinggis Khan was elected as the khan in the quriltai of

¹⁰⁴ Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 191,193; Togan, *Flexibility*, p. 139; İsenbike Togan, "Evolution of the Four Ulus and the History of the Four Ulus Ascribed to Ulugh Beg," in *Civilizations of Nomadic and Sedentary Peoples of Central Asia*, ed. Kadicha Tashbaeva, Samarkand: Bishkek, 2005, pp. 227-228.

¹⁰⁵ Golden, "Chinggisid Conquests", p. 24.

¹⁰⁶ Morgan, *The Mongols*, pp. 78-79.

¹⁰⁷ Togan, *Flexibility*, p. 138.

1196 by his kinsmen and followers. But in the quriltai of 1206, he declared that he derived his authority from Heaven (Köke Tengri). Consequently, the status and the legitimating authority of those who elected him were undermined. As it has mentioned before, the kin groups regarded that the khan exercised the authority in their favor and the benefits. According to them, sovereignty belonged to the kin group and had to be shared among its members of it. By claiming his sovereignty blessed from Heaven directly, Chinggis Khan averted such obstacles. At the quriltai of 1206, he proclaimed that he had conquered all the tribes through the protection and assistance of Tengri¹⁰⁸. To bolster his claim Chinggis Khan also patronized the shamans who gave supported his claims. One of these was Kököchü Teb Tengri continually declaring that Tengri had given all the face of the earth to Chinggis Khan and his children¹⁰⁹. Chinggis Khan's innumerable military successes had already affirmed his claims.

In addition to his claim for sovereignty, Chinggis Khan also allowed some of his close agnates to share on sovereignty. He determined the members of this ruling group through allotting appanages (*qubi*) to certain family members. These qubis were composed of particular territories and peoples of the ulus. The ruling group defined by Chinggis Khan involved only his brothers, sons, and mother. Other relatives, such as cousins, uncles, and nephews were not given any qubi. The members of this ruling group and their descendants were known as *Altan Urugh* "the Golden Lineage"¹¹⁰.

In conformity with traditional inheritance law, the major shareholders of this division were Chinggis Khan's three older sons; Jochi, Chaghatai, and Ögedei were given their qubis when they reached maturity while Chinggis Khan was alive. The youngest son, Tolui, received his share after Chinggis Khan's death. According to an account, provided by Juvaini, the great Persian historian who wrote his work in the 1260s, the distribution of Chinggis Khan occurred as follows:

When during the reign of Chingiz Khan the kingdom became of the vast extent he assigned to everyone his place of abode, which they call yurt. Thus to Otegin Noyan [Temüge-Otchigin], his brother, and some of

¹⁰⁸ *Secret History*, p. 205. For Chinggis Khan's other references to Tengri see: *Secret History*, p. 113, 125, 187, 260, 265, 267.

¹⁰⁹ Juvaini, p. 39; *Secret History*, p. 244.

¹¹⁰ Togan, *Flexibility*, p. 142.

his grandchildren, he apportioned territory in the regions of Khitai [China]. To his eldest son, Tuchi [Jochi] he gave the territory stretching from the regions of Qayaligh and Khorazm to the remotest parts of Saqsin and Bulghar and as far in the direction as the hoof of Tartar horse had penetrated. Chaghatai received the territory extending from the land of the Uighur to Samarqand and Bokhara, and his place of residence was in Quyas in the neighborhood of Almaligh. The capital of Ögedei, the heir-apparent during his father's reign was his yurt in the region of the Emil and the Qobaq; but when he ascended the throne of the Khanate he removed it to their original homeland, between Khitai and the land of the Uighur, and gave that other fief to his son Güyük. Toli's territory, likewise, lay adjacent thereto, and indeed this spot is the middle of their empire like the center of a circle.¹¹¹

As it is understood from this narration Jochi was given the western region of the empire, extending from southern Siberia to the Rus' principalities, his second son Chaghatai received West Turkestan, Ögedei was granted the region in Jungaria, Tolui, the youngest son, received the original Mongol homeland in eastern Mongolia¹¹².

These allotments, denoted as ulus in the sources, did not mean that these princes had political independence in their regions. Just the contrary, they remained to be subject to their father's authority. Chinggis Khan kept them under his control in many ways. When he granted lands and people to the princes, he also assigned the great noyans to supervise distinct units whose loyalty was direct to Chinggis Khan himself. He also assigned some officials who were directly liable to him. Chinggis Khan always remained suspicious of his family members until his death.

This political system worked well while Chinggis Khan was alive but after his death, the conception of power-sharing and the connected political problems came to light. Although Chinggis Khan determined the limits of shareholders of sovereignty since they formed a ruling group and had a share in the realm, the idea of power-sharing continued to exist.

To prevent the tensions caused by the power-sharing idea, before his death Chinggis Khan determined his third son Ögedei as his heir apparent for khanate by receiving the other sons' consent. But the appanages of the princes, allotted by Chinggis Khan remained. The maintenance of joint rights on sovereignty and

¹¹¹ Juvaini, p. 42-43.

¹¹² Findley, *The Turks*, p. 79; Morgan, *The Mongols*, pp. 99-100.

allocation of appanages eventually caused the empire to be fragmented.

2.2.3. Chinggis Khanid Political System Under His Successors

After Chinggis Khan's death, his descendants did not confront any problems about their right to claim sovereignty and the divine mandate of Chinggis Khan. But it was difficult for them to maintain the political organization and unification Chinggis Khan had created.

Chinggis Khan's successors succeeded in continuing to monopolize the Chinggis Khanid political legitimacy. First of all, the Chinggis Khanid ulus was traditionally their share of the inheritance. In addition, the military achievements of Chinggis Khan had already guaranteed that the divine mandate to sovereignty was on Chinggis Khan's family. Moreover, *yasa*, the specific order Chinggis Khan had created in his lifetime, was counted as sanctified and permanent. Thus, the sovereignty automatically passed to his heirs and they enjoyed the monopoly of political legitimacy through the centuries in Central Asia and the Middle East.

On the other hand, in the long term, the ambiguity in the policy, Chinggis Khan had established, created many difficulties for his heirs. They had to deal with the centrifugal tendencies caused by the perception of power-sharing and the appanage system. The uncertain status of the khan and the right to claim the sovereignty of other members of the Chinggisid family became a subject of dispute. During his lifetime, the existence of Chinggis Khan limited the power of appanage-holders but when the throne of khanate became free, succession struggles for the election of a new khan inevitably reappeared. The internecine struggles that emerged after Chinggis Khan's death indicated the tension between the central authority and regional Chinggisid rulers.

As mentioned before, Chinggis Khan designate his third son, Ögedei, as heir-apparent by taking the consent of his other sons. Although Ögedei achieved to continue the union of the empire after his father's death in 1227 and the empire continued to expand under his rule, eventually the conflicts caused by the political system began to arise in the 1240s. These conflicts originated from the power-sharing idea of Turco-Mongol political tradition. According to power-sharing apart from sharing

sovereignty, the lands were also required to be divided. When the existing resources were not enough for redistribution it became inevitable to eliminate other components and take their share for redistribution¹¹³.

With the death of Ögedei in 1241 The Mongol Empire witnessed an interregnum. Although Ögedei's eldest son Güyük was elected as a khan in the quriltai of 1246 Batu Khan, Jochi's eldest son, made opposition to his khanate. The death of Güyük in 1248 revealed other oppositions in the Chinggisid dynasty. The political crisis resulted in passing the khanate from the line of Ögedei to that of Tolui, the youngest son of Chinggis Khan, and ultimately the fragmentation of the empire. After Güyük's death, Möngke, the Toluid prince became a khan of the empire through the support of Batu¹¹⁴.

After ascending to the throne of the khanate, Möngke made a new distribution. Accordingly, Qubilai, one of his brothers was allotted Khitai (North China), and Hülägü, his other brother, was granted Iran, Syria, Egypt, Rum, and Armenia. With this new redistribution, the Toluid became the most powerful Chinggisid line. For this reason, the khanate of Möngke was opposed by other Chinggis Khanid lines¹¹⁵.

At Möngke's death in 1259, succession struggles erupted among his brothers Qubilai and Ariq Böqe, accelerating the fragmentation of the empire. Finally, Qubilai proclaimed himself as a great khan and moved his capital from Qaraqurum to China. Thus, by the end of the thirteenth century the original distribution of Chinggis Khan became distinct autonomous khanates which are called "joint satellite administrations": Under the rule of Qubilai (r. 1260-1294), The Khanate of the Great Khan, known as Yuan dynasty (1271-1368) in modern Beijing, Hülägü, another brother of Möngke and his heirs later known as Ilkhans ("the subordinate khanate"), ruled over the regions in the Middle East where Qubilai granted to him in return for

¹¹³ Thomas Allsen, "Sharing Out the Empire: Apportioned Land Under the Mongols", *Nomads in the Sedentary World*, ed. Anatoly M. Khazanov and André Wink, Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2001, p. 173; Peter Jackson, "From Ulus to Khanate: The Making of the Mongol States c. 1220-c. 1290", in *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, Reuven Amitai-Preiss, David O. Morgan (eds.), Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000, p. 13. For the discussion about correlation between the high rate of elite reproduction and insufficient resource see: Kradin, "Nomadic Empires", p. 33.

¹¹⁴ Morgan, *The Mongols*, pp. 101-102.

¹¹⁵ Allsen, "Sharing Out", p. 174, Morgan, *The Mongols*, p. 104.

his support to Qubilai against Ariq Böqe. The descendants of Chaghatai, known as Chaghataids, had control over Turkestan and Transoxiana, the region under the rule of Jochi's descendants, known as Golden Horde, was centered in Qipchaq steppes. As is seen, the Ögedeids had taken no part in this division. Despite the fragmentation of his great empire, the political legacy of Chinggis Khan continued to have an impact on the policies that emerged from China to Anatolia¹¹⁶.

The fragmentation of the Mongol Empire did not mean a decline. The khanates could sustain their power in their territories. They still had the monopoly of sovereignty and continued their specific political and military traditions throughout their realms. On the other hand, however, these rival Mongol Khanates began to adapt themselves to local conditions and populations they ruled.¹¹⁷ Thus, the distinct historical and geographical characteristics of each area had significant impacts on the execution of the Chinggisid political system in each region. In the khanates, such as the Yuan dynasty and Ilkhans, centered in the regions in which the sedentary culture was dominant, acculturation for the nomads was inevitable. But as to khanates in Central Asia and Mongolia where the nomadic way of life was prevalent, the rulers of these khanates confronted problems caused by the tension between the nomadic and the sedentary civilizations.

2.3. Perso-Islamic Political Tradition

Temür, the creator of the Timurid Empire emerged politically in Transoxiana, the border between the nomadic steppes and the agricultural Middle East. As a restorer of the Mongol Empire and a Muslim ruler, Temür was an inheritor of two political legacies: The Turco-Mongol and the Perso-Islamic. While he invoked Turco-Mongol steppe traditions on the one hand, he also claimed supremacy in the Perso-Islamic world on the other hand.

¹¹⁶ Michal Biran, *Chinggis Khan. Makers of the Muslim World Series*, Oxford: Oneworld, 2007, pp. 79-80; Peter Jackson, "The Mongol Age in Eastern Inner Asia, in *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia, Chinggisid Age*, xxvii, ed. Nicola Di Cosmo, Allen J. Frank, Peter B. Golden, Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 39-40; Findley, *The Turks*, p. 79, Allsen, "Sharing Out", p. 173.

¹¹⁷ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 6.

In this section, the formation of Islamic civilization and of the Perso-Islamic political tradition which had a heavy impact on the Turco-Mongol nomadic structures which Temür functionally utilized, and the implementation of Islamic law (shari'a) and customary law (töre/yasa) are analyzed. In this regard, first of all, examining the major components of the Islamic civilization and then reviewing the general framework of the development of the shari'a provide insight for understanding its impacts on the Turco-Mongol societies.

2.3.1. Evolution of Islamic Political Tradition

2.3.1.1. The Birth of Islam

The rise of Islam was directly linked to the history of the geography of its birth. In the early seventh century, Mecca, the birthplace of Islam, was surrounded by the two great empires of the time: mainly Christian Byzantine Empire and the mostly Zoroastrian Sassanid Empire. The community of Mecca was governed by the Quraish tribe to which the Prophet Muhammad belonged.

When the Prophet Muhammad started to spread the divine messages, he received from God in 610, the majority of Meccans rejected to believe his teachings and began to oppose him. Eventually in 622 (at which the Islamic Hijri calendar begins), because of the growth of the oppressions, Muhammad migrated to Medina and there he met with many of his followers. Thereby, Medina developed into a station for Islam and the actual expansion of Islam began in this town. Centered in Medina, the Prophet founded a state which had control over a large part of Arabia. By this period the Prophet established a Muslim community, called an umma, and thus, the Arab tribes and sub-tribes regarded themselves as forming a new kind of group in which the bond of a common religious faith preceded tribal ties. This new community depended on common religious faith, rituals, morals, and laws, thus predominated the traditional social structure grounded on families, clans, and tribes and unified the distinct groups into a new society¹¹⁸. In this way, the status of Muhammad turned

¹¹⁸ Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, p. 24.

gradually into a political and legal sovereign. When Muhammad died in 632, the number of his followers reached a hundred of thousand¹¹⁹.

The death of the Prophet Muhammad, because he had died without designating any successor nor he had not detailed how the political rule should be formed after his death, created chaos. The young Muslim community, a composition of various elements, was under threat of disruption. It was known that the prophecy concluded with the death of Muhammad but someone should continue Muhammad's political role as the head of the Muslim community. Therefore, among the prominent Arab-Muslim community, the debate began on who should be elected as the successor of the prophet.

Eventually, with the election of Abu Bakr, one of the closest companions of the prophet, as a caliph, the Muslim community, created by Muhammad, entered the period of the Rashidun. During this period, the close associations of the prophet, Abu Bakr (632-634)¹²⁰, Umar (634-644)¹²¹, Uthman (644-656)¹²² and Ali (656-661), ruled the community with the authority, come from loyalty to Islam. The Islamic conquests turned those caliphs into the military and administrative leaders of the newly conquered areas. In this task, the caliphs of the Rashidun era claimed to be the deputies of God by assuming the title of "Khalifatu'r-Rasulu'llah" (deputy or successor of the messenger of God)¹²³. Under the leadership of those caliphs, the Arabs began a series of raids into Iraq, Palestine, and Syria. The Arab armies destroyed the Sassanid Empire and seized most of the Iranian lands.

In 656, the murder of Uthman and the proclamation of Ali, who was the cousin of the prophet and his son-in-law, as caliph marked the beginning of a five-year factional civil war (fitna) which would divide and damage the Muslim community up to the present. Finally, Ali was murdered by one of the rebels and Muawiya (the cousin of Uthman) had himself proclaimed as caliph thus with the period of the Umayyad

¹¹⁹ Abdullah Saeed, *Islamic Thought: An Introduction*, New York, 2007, pp. 1-5.

¹²⁰ Montgomery Watt, "Abu Bakr", *E.I.*, vol 1, pp. 109-11.

¹²¹ G. Levi Della Vida and M. Bonner, "Umar (I) b. Al-Khattab", *E.I.*, vol 10, pp. 818-821.

¹²² G. Levi Della Vida and R. G. Khoury, "Uthman b. Affan", *E.I.* vol. 10, pp. 946-949.

¹²³ Ira Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 45.

dynasty (661-750)¹²⁴ a new phase started for the Muslim community.

As a consequence of the civil war, an enduring dichotomy within the Muslim community emerged. Those who acknowledged the succession of Muawiya and the following chains of caliphs are called Sunni and those who claim that Ali was the only rightful caliph and that only his descendants should succeed him are named the Shi'a¹²⁵.

The Umayyad period witnessed strong attacks from Arab forces led by Qutayba bin Muslims to Khurasan and Mavaraunnahr. However, both the regional resistance and the conflicts among the Arabs prevented Qutayba from establishing Arab power in this region¹²⁶. Moreover, by the middle of the eighth century, the Umayyad caliphate began to be weakened because of factious conflicts among the ruling elite¹²⁷. As a result of the administrative injustices and the nationalist attitude of the Umayyads, the local people who were not satisfied with the Umayyad rule revolted in many regions¹²⁸.

The death of the caliph Abu Hisham in 743 revived the caliphate debate. It created an opportunity for opposition groups that did not see the Umayyad rule as legitimate. One of the prominent of these groups was Shiite, while the other was the supporters of the lineage of Abbas, uncle of the Prophet. In 747, groups dissatisfied with the Umayyad rule in Iran and Khurasan gathered behind Abu Muslim and started a great opposition movement. Abu Muslim, who finally defeated the Umayyad army

¹²⁴ G. R. Hawting, "Umayyads", *E.I.* vol. 10, pp. 840-847.

¹²⁵ W. Madelung, "Shi'a", *E.I.* vol. 9, pp. 420-424; Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 47; N. J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, Edinburgh University Press, 1964, p 103. Findley explains the political division among the early Muslims as follows: "*Questions of how to choose a new leader for the community after the death of the Prophet and how to understand that leader's role had given rise to political split that evolved over time into sectarian differences, most notably between Sunni and Shi'i Muslim, of whom the former ultimately became the majority. For those who became Sunnis, seniority and experience were the most important qualifications for leadership; and maintenance of communal unity was a paramount value in its own right. For those who became Shi'is, direct descent from the prophet in a specific charismatic line was essential criterion in determining the leader. With time, what had started as a political difference gave rise to contrasting and at times antagonistic religious cultures.*" Findley, *The Turks*, p. 59.

¹²⁶ Frederick S. Starr, *The Lost Enlightenment: Central Asia's Golden Age from the Arab Conquest to Tamerlane*, Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013, p. 112.

¹²⁷ Jonathan P. Berkey, *Formation of Islam: Religion and the Society in the Near East, 600-1800*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 102.

¹²⁸ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, pp. 112-116

in 750, put an end to the Umayyad regime by dethroning the last Umayyad caliph in Damascus. After the victory of abu Muslim's army, which consisted mostly of Iranian and Turkic elements, the Abbasids who belonged to the Hashimite clan, the branch of the Quraysh tribe, came to power¹²⁹. The new dynasty of caliphs moved the capital of the Islamic Empire to the newly founded city of Baghdad, known in Arabic as the City of Peace (Madinatu's-Salam).

In the Muslim tradition, the Umayyad dynasty is blamed for turning the caliphate into a secular kingship (mulk)¹³⁰. In this regard, Gordon states that the Abbasids attempted to differentiate themselves from the Umayyads, and for this purpose, they patronized the scholars who portrayed the Umayyads as ineligible to rule over the Islamic community. The works of those scholars called the Umayyad rulers "kings" (muluk sing. malik) rather than caliphs¹³¹. Under the rule of the Umayyads, centralization and gradual transformation of the government into a monarchy occurred and in administration, the Greek and the Persian apparatus began to be used. In utilizing those administrative systems of former empires, the Umayyads put the old modes in new content. That is to say, the imperial ideology, that originated in previous empires was interpreted in the Islamic model.

The Persian political tradition began to be influential heavily when the Arabs conquered the Sassanid Empire and finally subjugated the independent principalities in eastern Iran. As a result of such a wide conquest, the Iranian constituted the greatest ethnic group in the caliphate. Those Iranian people also had their own imperial political culture. With the participation of the Persians in the Islamic community, their political thoughts and traditions rapidly had an impact on the Muslims.

These translations made by the Iranian elements were a continuation of the literary movement, which originated in the Umayyad period and peaked in the Abbasid period and was called Shuubiyah in the literature. The word Shuub was used in the sense of non-Arab (al-Ajam) tribes to distinguish it from the Arabic word qabail, which

¹²⁹ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, p. 121.

¹³⁰ G. R. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate Ad 661-750*, London: Routledge, 1986, pp. 11-18.

¹³¹ Matthew S. Gordon, *The Rise of Islam*, Greenwood Publishing Group, U.S.A., 2005, p. 35.

was used for Arab tribes¹³². Literature was one of the most important tools of the Shuubiyah movement, the main goal of which was to restore Iran to its splendor in the period of the Sassanid Empire. In this context, a translation movement was initiated and Persian scientific, literary, social, political, and administrative works belonging to the Sassanid period were translated into Arabic. Thus, the socio-political institutions of the established Islamic Empire and the Islamic culture began to take shape in the model of Sassanian institutions¹³³.

During the Umayyad period, the oppression and humiliation of non-Arab Muslims led to the emergence of national, political, and religious rebellion movements, especially among the Iranians, who had lost the glory of the Sassanid Empire. It was Iranians formed the majority of those who supported these rebellions, which were carried out against the discriminatory policy of the Umayyads, who used Islam to justify the Arab domination over the Iranians.

However, during the Abbasid rule, the Islamic empire became more inclusive. The emphasis, laid on the supremacy of the Arabs during the Umayyad period, disappeared and the non-Arabs elements took more parts in the Islamic state¹³⁴. The Iranian and Turkic elements of Central Asia, which played the main role in the Abbasids' coming to power, gained a great influence in the caliphate over time. While the Iranians, whom the caliphs assigned to the bureaucracy, transferred many practices and attitudes of the Sassanid Empire, the caliphs became largely dependent on the Turks in a military sense¹³⁵.

In the Abbasid period, the Iranians translated the Persian texts about behavior and protocol tradition (*adab*) of the ancient Sassanid Empire into Arabic for their Abbasid patrons. These advice works contained many anecdotes and stories about the

¹³² Susanne Enderwitz, "Shubiyya", E.I. vol. 9, p. 513.

¹³³ Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, ed. S.M. Stern, Translated from the German by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern, Chicago, 1966, p. 148.

¹³⁴ According to Barthold the Abbasids differed from the Umayyads with their political purpose. While the Umayyads were firstly the representatives of the Arab people, the Abbasids aimed at establishing a system in which the Arabs and non-Arabs had equal rights. They imitated the balanced political system of the Sassanids. The viziers of the Abbasids regarded themselves as the successors of the statesmen in the period of the Sassanids. V.V. Barthold, *Moğol İstilasına Kadar Turkestan*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1990, p. 213.

¹³⁵ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, p. 125.

Sassanid rulers. Thus key elements of the Iranian heritage became part of Islamic civilization, and Persian political ideas began to seriously influence the practices of Islamic governments¹³⁶. Goldziher states that the prominent Iranian families who had great favor and benevolence in the Abbasid court expressed their resentment against the racial arrogance of the Arabs for a long time, and the free language they used was encouraged by the caliphs¹³⁷.

The growing influence of non-Arab elements in the political and administrative cadres in the Islamic empire led to the decline of the power of the caliphs and ultimately the collapse of their rule. The Shuubiyah movement that prepared the infrastructure for the emergence of autonomous states in Central Asia was undoubtedly a product of the socio-political atmosphere created by the development of the national consciousness of the central Asian peoples conquered by the Arabs¹³⁸.

The Barmakis, an old Buddhist family of Marv, played the first important role in the Abbasids' gradual adoption of the Iranian model of government. The members of the Barmaki family, who were also viziers during the period of the first three Abbasid caliphs, gained a serious influence in the administration¹³⁹. Moreover, through this influential family Sanskrit, Babylonian, and Greek texts translated during the old Sassanian Persia entered the Islamic world and the basic works of Indian and Greek thoughts began to be translated into Arabic¹⁴⁰. These translation activities, which were patronized by the Barmakis, gained widespread popularity over time, a paper mill was established and many bookstores emerged in Baghdad¹⁴¹.

The Abbasids' move of Islamic capital to Baghdad, near the former Sassanid capital of Ctesiphon, and as time passed, the Persian influence in the Abbasid dynasty increased due to Iranian bureaucrats, the translation of books on Sassanid administration practices into Arabic, the emergence of new offices such as vizier, chief

¹³⁶ Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 76.

¹³⁷ Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. I, p. 137.

¹³⁸ Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. I, p. 144, 148.

¹³⁹ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, pp. 129, 133.

¹⁴⁰ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, p. 135.

¹⁴¹ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, p. 136.

adviser or minister in the old Sassanid administration practices and the division of the administration into different departments under the name of the diwan, caused the Abbasid regime to be interpreted as the cultural conquest of the Persians¹⁴².

The emergence of new authorities such as vizier, chief adviser, or minister in the old Sassanid administration practices and the division of the administration into different departments under the name of diwan caused the Abbasid reign to be interpreted as the cultural conquest of the Persians. But the popularity of the Barmakis ultimately brought the end of this family. Caliph Harun Rashid blamed them for increasing taxes and the resulting discontent, and in 803 ended the domination of this family¹⁴³.

After Harun Rashid's death in 809, Ma'mun, one of his sons won the power struggle with his brother thanks to his army, which was mostly made up of Turks. His rule also became the scene of cultural patronage, just like in his father's period¹⁴⁴. Perhaps the most striking aspect of Ma'mun's reign was the Bayt'ul-Hikma (House of Wisdom) established in his time. In this science academy, in which the scientists worked with the financial support of the palace, Muslims, Jews and Syrian Christians who knew both Arabic and Greek brought the most distinguished works of literature, philosophy, and sciences from other cultures into Arabic¹⁴⁵. And all these scientific and cultural activities, which were continued during the reign of his successor Mutasim after Ma'mun died in 833, paved the way for the emergence of great intellectuals such as al-Khwarazmi (870-950), al-Razi (865-925), al-Farabi (d. 950), Ibn Sina (980-1037), Ibn Rushd (d. 1198), al-Biruni (973-1048).

Perhaps one of the most important results of these translation activities was the effect of pre-Islamic Iranian administrative practices and Greek philosophy on the perception of rulers and administration in the Islamic world. Just like the Umayyads,

¹⁴² Michael Axworthy, *A History of Iran: Empire of the Mind*, New York, N.Y.: Basic Books, 2008, p. 78.

¹⁴³ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, p. 139.

¹⁴⁴ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, pp. 141-142.

¹⁴⁵ Axworthy, *Empire of the Mind*, pp. 81-82; Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 78; Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, pp. 143-148.

the Abbasid caliphs also utilized the Byzantine and Sasanian imperial institutions and administrative models and gave more places for non-Arab personnel¹⁴⁶. They organized new armies with new staff. The conquests of much of the Middle East by the Arab Muslims had constituted a new Islamic civilization in which the Sasanian Empire and the eastern part of the Byzantine Empire were attached to the Islamic empire. This situation made a way for a new mode of rule, population movements, and a wide range of habitation of the Arabs in the cities and towns of the Middle East and more comprehensive urbanization and economic growth¹⁴⁷. The Islamic conquests also transformed the concept of the ruler and the legitimization principles. While in the very beginning, the caliphs claimed that they were the heirs of the prophet's religious and political authority, they gradually adopted the monarchical apparatus of the systems they had conquered. In this respect, starting with the Umayyad period, particularly in the Abbasid era, the caliphate absorbed the art, and architecture styles of Byzantine, and the caliphs patronized the science, philosophy, and literature of Persian and Greek culture in an Islamic form. In this manner, they asserted their legitimacy in historic Middle Eastern terms¹⁴⁸.

These developments also led to a social transformation in which Arabs and non-Arabs amalgamated to a certain extent and evolvment toward a multi-cultured society and Islamic imperial culture. In the beginning, the new Muslim non-Arab population was received by the Arabs within the scope of the old tribe structure as clients (mawali, sing. Mawla) and was seen as an inferior platform. But with the Abbasid revolution in 750, the political and social privileges of the Arabs ended¹⁴⁹. Especially since the second half of the ninth century, as the caliphate lost its central control over its distant lands, Persian-language dynasties began to emerge in Khurasan and Transoxiana as "governors of the caliphs", to which the caliphs had to give autonomy: Nishapur-based Tahirids, Seistan-based Saffarids, and Bukhara-based

¹⁴⁶ Matthew S. Gordon, *The Rise of Islam*, Greenwood Publishing Group, U.S.A., p. 57.

¹⁴⁷ Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 31; Gordon, *Rise of Islam*, p. 51.

¹⁴⁸ Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 80, Ira Lapidus, "Tribes and State Formation in Islamic History", in *Tribe and State Formation in the Middle East*, ed. Philip Khoury and Joseph Kostiner, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1990, p. 36; Gordon, *Rise of Islam*, p. 58.

¹⁴⁹ Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 42.

Samanids.

On the other hand, with the politicization of the caliphs, various debates emerged about the religious and political functions of the caliphate. In this sense, new and autonomous religious elite emerged within the major cities. In such an atmosphere, the ulama (religious scholars) and the Sufis (mystics) emerged as protectors of the Qur'an and the creeds of the prophet. Although the caliph and his governors formally ruled the Muslim society, the learned and pious people who had no official rank but became famous for their knowledge of and loyalty to religion, in the community, were acknowledged as the real authority of Islam by the Muslim people¹⁵⁰.

In such a situation, those faithful people arose as circles of disciples in which the studies of hadith, law, theology, or mysticism were done. Consequently, the religious authorities independent from the caliphate were formed and thus sectarian groups appeared in the Muslim community. Henceforth, although the caliphate continued its existence as the leader of the umma and a symbol of Muslim unity, the gap between the state and religious communities began to widen. Thus, the caliph symbolized the governmental and executive aspects of Islam, and the scholars and the Sufis represented the religious parts¹⁵¹.

By the beginning of the mid-ninth century, since the caliphs increasingly lost authority in the provinces in the border regions, the Abbasid caliphate fell into decline. Because of the weakening of the military and economic situation, the central power of the caliphate had difficulty ruling the empire. By the late ninth century, various factions appeared in government. The breakup in the central authority brought provincial independence; in the words of Hodgson "*the former society of the caliphate was replaced by a constantly expanding, linguistically and culturally international society ruled by numerous independent governments.*"¹⁵²

As a result of internal problems and external challenges to their authority from local governors, the Abbasid Caliphate became no more than figureheads. Eventually,

¹⁵⁰ Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 81.

¹⁵¹ Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 102.

¹⁵² Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *Venture of Islam; The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods*, vol. 2, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1974, p. 12.

in 945, the Buyids¹⁵³ occupied Baghdad and the region around it and ruled in the name of the Abbasids until the Turkish conquests of the eleventh century. Thus, the Buyid rulers were recognized as amirs and granted the title of "Mu'izzu'd-Dawla" (Strengtheners of the State [the Abbasid Dynasty])¹⁵⁴ while the caliphs had symbolic authority. In the words of Starr, the conquest of the Buyids "*transformed the caliphate into an Iranian empire.*"¹⁵⁵ After the Buyid occupation of Baghdad, the Abbasid caliphate began to lose its military power. And the caliph became purely a legitimating authority for numerous secular rulers¹⁵⁶.

On the other hand, different from the Abbasids, the Buyids were not Sunni but as Mottahadeh expression "*Shi'is of a very vague cast*"¹⁵⁷. Therefore, while the Buyids preserved the caliphate as an institution, disclaimed its legitimacy as religiously installed rulers. Because the subjects were non-Shi'i, the Abbasids were left in power symbolically by the Buyids¹⁵⁸.

Additionally, the Buyid reign also witnessed the resurrection of the Persian idea of kingship. "Their capital at Rayy (just east of modern Tehran) became a center for the recovery of Persia's political identity, which had been smothered since the rise of Islam, and also the scene of serious intellectual activity."¹⁵⁹ The Buyid rulers began to assume the ancient Persian royal title of "*Shahanshah (king of kings) and so, they revealed the caliphal legitimacy*"¹⁶⁰. After a century of rule, the Buyids gradually lost their power due to internal strife and division in the army.

¹⁵³ Cl. Cahen, "Buwayhids or Buyids", *E.I.*, vol. 1, pp. 1350-1357.

¹⁵⁴ Roy P. Mottahadeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980, p. 38.

¹⁵⁵ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, p. 242.

¹⁵⁶ "Abbasids", *E.I.* vol. 1, 20.

¹⁵⁷ Mottahadeh, *Loyalty and Leadership*, p. 38.

¹⁵⁸ The Buyids were aware of keeping instead of expelling the caliph to "legalize his authority over the Sunnis in his states and to strengthen his diplomatic relations with the world." Cahen, "Buwayhids", *E.I.*, vol. 1, p. 1350. Acquiring the authority from the caliph, the Buyids pretended as they acknowledged the legitimacy of the caliph.

¹⁵⁹ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, p. 242.

¹⁶⁰ Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004, p. 78.

Aside from the Buyid dynasty, after the breakup of the Abbasid Empire, another important provincial regime was of the Samanids (819-1005)¹⁶¹, a Persian dynasty, that had accepted Islam and emerged in eastern Iran and Transoxiana. The Samanids traced their descent to the ancient Sassanian shahs which had been conquered by the Muslim Arabs. They ruled those regions and then Khurasan in the name of the Abbasid caliphate. The importance of this dynasty in our study is their participation in slave trading and their promotion of art and scientific studies.

While the decline of the Abbasid authority was seen in Baghdad, under the Samanid rule, Bukhara, their capital city, emerged as the center of the new Islamic civilization based on the Persian language and arts. "*Thus, for the first time the religion and culture of Islam became available in a language other than Arabic.*"¹⁶² Barthold defines their reign as "*intellectual absolutism*"¹⁶³. During the Samanid period, an Islamic new Persian literature emerged, the most important representatives of which were Rudaki (d. 941), Daqiqi (d. 977), and Firdawsi (d. 1020). However, eventually with the downfall of the Samanid reign in the tenth century; their realm was divided between the Qarakhanids and the Ghaznavids.

On the other hand, while the Muslim community developing, the legislation process also began. For turning the conditions of rights and obligations into an acknowledged standard of administration and for offering solutions in case of infraction, it was required such accepted standards. In this way, the divine messages of Muhammad began to transform into a basic standard of the Muslim community, and thus, the primary legal issues of the Qur'an were composed of general suggestions about the main aims and desires of the Muslim community.

Until the death of Muhammad, the legislation process was shaped by the revelation of the Qur'an and the guidance of the Prophet. During his life, Muhammad was considered the ideal figure to arbitrate conflicts. However, instead of elaborating a code of laws Muhammad was contented with provisional solutions for the

¹⁶¹ C. E. Bosworth, "Samanids", *E.I.* vol. 8, p. 1025.

¹⁶² Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 114.

¹⁶³ Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 229.

problems¹⁶⁴. From the death of the Prophet in 632 and on with the successful conquests and expansion of Islamic territory, the successors of the Prophet encountered new problems, and required new regulations. That is, in the words of Coulson "*During the Medinan period, the principles of the Qur'anic legislation were developed by the Prophet and his successors to the degree that was required by the practical problems confronting the Muslim community in Medina.*"¹⁶⁵ Such regulations were the beginnings of the growth of the Islamic legal system.

2.3.1.2. Development of Islamic Law (Shari'a)

With the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Muslims confronted problems concerning how to live in the absence of the prophet who had assumed religious, social, and political leadership of the community. It created a need to put the Islamic revelations and to gather and protect his sayings and acts. Thus, the Qur'an was written out and the Sunna and the Hadith were developed. For characterizing how Muslims should act and live according to those sources a system of religious law, named "sharia" emerged. By analyzing the Qur'an and hadith the disciplines of Islamic religious studies spread¹⁶⁶.

Shari'a is an Islamic legal system, that arose from the religious doctrines of Islam, especially the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad namely the Hadith and Sunna. The Shari'a contains matters about social, political, economic as well as personal issues in every sphere of life. Fazlullah defines the concept of Shari'a as follows; "*It is the way, ordained by God, wherein man is to conduct his life to realize the Divine Will....It includes all behavior –spiritual, mental, and physical*"¹⁶⁷.

One of the main sources of Sharia is the Qur'an which is the religious text of Islam and is believed to be composed through inspiration from God. The principal object of the Qur'an is to ensure forming of an ethical and just society consisting of

¹⁶⁴ Noel J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1964, pp. 9-22.

¹⁶⁵ Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, p. 26.

¹⁶⁶ Findley, *The Turks*, p. 59.

¹⁶⁷ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, The University of Chicago Pres, Chicago, 2002, p. 101.

religiously faithful men who possessed a keen and vivid awareness of a God who orders goodness and forbids evil¹⁶⁸.

Along with the Qur'an, the Sunna which is composed of the Prophet Muhammad's sayings and deeds are another source for the Shari'a. According to Muslim belief, Muhammad was the ideal exemplar for Muslims, and his traditions and practices should be followed for implementing the commandments of God, performing religious ceremonies, and regulating life in conformity with the desire of God¹⁶⁹.

Throughout the early Islamic state of Medina, the principles of the Quranic orders were established through the Prophet and his successors whenever the new problems encountering the Muslim society¹⁷⁰. Of course, the Medinian community was not complicated and the orders and laws for dealing with the issues were not difficult. However, the death of Muhammad and the expansion of the Islamic conquests triggered the establishment of Islamic states and empires and for governing and controlling those states and their populations, new regulations and laws were required. For resolving the problems which were absent in Qur'an and managing the governmental functioning, the rulers needed to adopt regulations and laws from the previous civilizations like Byzantine and Sasanian as long as they were not contrary to Islamic morality.¹⁷¹

During the time after the period of the first four Caliphs (up to about 660), the general political approach was not to modify the socio-political and cultural formations of the conquered lands and peoples. The Umayyad rulers for example maintained their governance in Damascus, majorly using the Qur'an and Sunna as their base. But these were interpreted by their advisers and officers based on practicality and in consideration of local practices in different regions¹⁷². Such an approach made way for the admission of more external elements to the law¹⁷³.

¹⁶⁸ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, p. 85.

¹⁶⁹ Qur'an: 3: 163.

¹⁷⁰ Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, p. 21, 26.

¹⁷¹ Crone, *Political Thought*; p. 145; Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 50.

¹⁷² Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, p. 79.

By the end of the ninth century, about two ages after the emergence of Islam, shari'a was formulated by the scholars (ulama) for governing and ruling the newly founded Muslim community extended from Central Asia to Spain. While their primary references were the Qur'an and Sunna, those scholars had different social and cultural backgrounds which influenced their perceptions and approaches to those sources. In addition, they benefited from the local codes and rules of the former civilizations such as Byzantine and Iran. The cultural accumulation of those civilizations ensured the apparatus, required for solving the complicated problems of expeditiously expanding new Islamic states and empires.

During the Umayyad period, new problems were tried to solve through practical solutions. However, with the impetus of the Abbasids, sharia began to be formulated. Throughout the Abbasid era, Islamic legal thought began to take shape, and theological studies gained acceleration. In the progress of time, while the caliphate was transformed into a military and imperial institution in the form of the Byzantine and Sassanid empires, the religious elite gained more authority on the social, personal, religious, and dogmatic parts of Islam.

Throughout the eighth and ninth centuries, under the hegemony of the Abbasids, four main religious schools of thought, each of which represented shari'a in respect to their views emerged in various socio-political and cultural centers of the Islamic world: Iraq, the Hijaz, Syria, and Egypt. The differentiations among those legal thoughts were substantial because of the different interpretations of the Qur'an and the Sunna in considerations of local customary law. As a consequence, the local opinion differed in details in different regions and gradually crystallized into schools of thought¹⁷⁴: The Hanafiyya School¹⁷⁵ associated with the name of Abu Hanifa¹⁷⁶ (d.

¹⁷³ Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, p. 27. Coulson also describes the adoption of existing local administrative institutions and its outcomes as follows: "Under the Umayyads, the basic material of the local customary law had been modified by the elaboration of the Qur'anic rules, overlaid by a corpus of administrative regulations and infiltrated by elements of foreign legal systems." Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, p. 35.

¹⁷⁴ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, p. 81.

¹⁷⁵ W. Heffening and J. Schacht, "Hanafiyya", *E.I.* vol. 3, pp. 162-164.

¹⁷⁶ J. Schacht, "Abu hanifa al-Numan", *E.I.* vol. 1, pp. 123-124.

767) in Kufa; the Shafi'i School¹⁷⁷, called with the name of Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi (d. 819)¹⁷⁸ in Fustat,; the Maliki School¹⁷⁹, took its name from Malik ibn Anas¹⁸⁰ (d. 795) in Medina and the Hanbali School, founded by Ahmad ibn Hanbal¹⁸¹ (d. 855) in Basra. From those law schools, the Hanafi law became a system adopted by the central Abbasid government and it, therefore, led to an extensive appointment of people, who studied in that school to judicial office in the regions¹⁸².

Those four classical schools of law formed during the heydays of the Abbasids. These Muslim scholars, specialists in Islamic theology, tradition, and law (ulama), and their pupils utilized the method of jurisprudence (usul al-fiqh)¹⁸³.

They attempted to formulate shari'a rules to organize the social, political, and economic life of the expanding Islamic community. Their major bases were Qur'an and the Sunna.

While those scholars' primary source was the Qur'an, they differed from each other in terms of the interpretation of the Quranic text since they each had their commentaries. Furthermore, in formulating the doctrine and practice of the Muslim society, the scholars also used the methods of ijma (consensus) and qiyas (analogy) on religious issues. Those scholars (ulama) benefited from the same methods but showed alterations in the formulations of the shari'a.

By the ninth century, Muslim societies or empires became the pursuers of those four schools and legislative arrangements in compliance with them. Various Turco-Mongol states began to emerge in the Middle East and Central Asia after the ninth and tenth centuries during which the Muslim community and the Islamic civilization were in the process of change and progress. With the appearance of Turks in the Muslim

¹⁷⁷ E. Chauomont, "Al-Shafiyya", *E.I.* vol. 9, pp. 185-189.

¹⁷⁸ E. Chaumont, "al-Shafi'i", *E.I.* vol. 9, pp. 181-185.

¹⁷⁹ N. Cottart, "Malikiyya", *E.I.* vol. 6, pp. 278-283.

¹⁸⁰ J. Schacht, "Malik b. Anas", *E.I.*, vol.6, pp. 262-265.

¹⁸¹ H. Laoust, "Ahmad b. Hanbal", *E.I.*, vol. 1, pp. 272-277.

¹⁸² Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, p. 87.

¹⁸³ N. Calder, "Usul alFikh", *E.I.*, vol. 10, pp. 931-934.

world, Islamic culture began to take its Turkic shape under such changes¹⁸⁴.

During this period, the leading figures among those who had a heavy impact on such alteration were al-Ghazzali and Nizamu'l-Mulk. Al-Ghazzali as a scholar and Nizamu'l-Mulk as a statesman placed their non-Islamic notions about social, political, and cultural issues in the Islamic context without not too conflicting with the sharia and legitimating them within the scope of religion. It opened a door into a new period for the Muslim world. It can be said that during the mentioned period, with the conversions of non-Arabic societies to Islam, the Sunnis orthodox world began to be dominated by Persian tradition and the separation of the caliphate and sultanate became permanent and irreversible. The treatises written about statecraft and kingship at that time indicate the transformation in the Muslim world.

2.4. Turco-Mongol Dynasties in the Islamic World

After the campaigns of Qutayba bin Muslim (705-715) and the victory of the Muslims over the Chinese at Talas in 751, Islamic rule extended to Central Asia. Therefore, from then on, Central Asia grew into a component of the Islamic world¹⁸⁵. The indigenous population composed of Turks, Sogdians and Iranians began to convert to Islam. The Persian Samanid Empire (819-1005)¹⁸⁶, ruling in Khorasan and Transoxiana, nominally appointed by the Abbasid caliph took a leading part in evolution of Perso-Islamic tradition. As a result of such a development, Central Asian

¹⁸⁴ Findley, *The Turks*, p. 59.

¹⁸⁵ R.N. Frye and Aydın Sayılı express their assertion about the existence of Turks in the Near East as follows: "Our studies had led us to believe that the supposed conditions of exclusively nomadic life and small population did not exist, but that: a) Turks were already in the regions of Khurasan and Transoxiana at the time of the Arab conquest, and remained there after the Arab domination. The Turkicization of these districts had, therefore, begun long before the Seljuqs. b) Turks were town and village dwellers except in regions where natural conditions imposed a nomadic life on them. c) They probably had a relatively large population in Central Asia and infiltrated in fairly large numbers into the Near East." R. N. Frye and Aydın Sayılı, "Turks in the Middle East Before the Seljuqs", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. LXIII, New Haven, 1943, p. 195. In addition, Bosworth writes: "There had long been commercial contacts between the Iranians and steppe-dwellers, but the process of Turkicisation in Iranian Central Asia was only in its infancy, and even with the political and military domination of such Turkish dynasties as the Seljuks and Qarahanids, has taken many centuries to accomplish." C. E. Bosworth "The Turks in the Islamic Lands up to the Mid-11th Century", in *The Turks in the Early Islamic World*, ed. C. Edmund Bosworth, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, p. 194.

¹⁸⁶ Yolande Crowe, "Samanids", *E.I.*, vol 8, Leiden (1986): pp. 1025-1031.

society embraced the Islamic culture by refining in Perso-Islamic tradition.

From the tenth century to the fifteenth century the majority of Turkic people adopted Islam and entered the greatest transformation process in their history. Those people became part of Islamic civilization in the Middle East and immediately began to play major roles in military and political matters and consequently, the Turco-Islamic culture began to develop.

Such a conversion did of course not occur suddenly. The Turkic access to the Islamic world began firstly in the ninth century and they were captured in the frontier zones between Khurasan and Transoxiana and were removed to the Islamic heartland, converted to Islam, and used as slave soldiers in Baghdad¹⁸⁷.

Particularly during the caliphate of the al-Mu'tasim (833-842) a large military unit, consisting of Turkish slave soldiers (ghulam, and ghilman in plural form) was composed. Caliph had a new capital built, called Samarra¹⁸⁸ as residence for those slave soldiers¹⁸⁹. Most of those slaves were trained as soldiers and some of them were utilized in domestic service. Bosworth states that the main factor behind the Abbasid demand for those slave soldiers was the need for a "*body of troops brought in from outside, untrammelled by local ties and able to give single-minded loyalty to their master; al-Mu'tasim believed he had found such a body in his Turkish ghulams.*"¹⁹⁰ Those Turkish soldiers had an important role in the Caliphate, and at certain times the Turkish generals became the real masters of the state and regularly acted as king-makers¹⁹¹. If we look at the records in contemporary sources, we can gain insight into the feature and significance of such a slave-soldier system for the Abbasid Caliphate.

Al-Istakhri, one of the important representatives of the Muslim geographers in the classical period, says; "*And the Turks constituted [the Caliph's] armies because of*

¹⁸⁷ Golden, *Introduction*, pp. 191-194 and pp. 211-212. According to Bosworth the slave trade reached its peak under the Samanid rule. Bosworth, "The Turks", p. 197.

¹⁸⁸ A. Northedge, "Samarra", *E.I.* vol. 8, 1039-1041.

¹⁸⁹ For more information, see: Matthew S. Gordon, *The Breaking of a Thousand Swords: A History of the Turkish Military of Samarra (A.H. 200-275/815-889 C.E.)*, New York, 2001.

¹⁹⁰ Bosworth, "The Turks", p. 198.

¹⁹¹ Bosworth, "The Turks", p. 199.

their superiority over the other races in prowess, valor, courage, and intrepidity."¹⁹²

Al Jahiz, a ninth-century Islamic theologian, intellectual, and litterateur write: "[The Turks] became to Islam a source of reinforcement and an enormous army and to the Caliphs a protection and a shelter and an invulnerable armor as well as an innermost garment worn under the upper garment." The successor to Istakhri, Ibn Hawqal, states: "*The most precious slaves are those arriving [in Khurasan] from the land of the Turks. There is no equal to the Turkish slaves among all the slaves of the earth.*"¹⁹³

Apart from the Abbasids, the autonomous local dynasties maintained this tendency of the time for military organization and formed their military forces from Turkish slave soldiers. For instance, the Samanids (819-1005), the native Persian dynasty, governing the borderland of Transoxiana gave Turkish slaves in their army. Nizamu'l-Mulk, the great vizier of Saljuqids, in his best-known treatise, *Siyasatnama*, gives valuable information about the utilization of slave soldiers in the Samanid era:

*If somebody bought a slave, he would command him to be in his service dismounted (without using any horse) for one year and with a poor dress. This slave was not permitted to ride a horse either obviously or hidden during this year and if he did, he would be punished. After one year if he became sure he would tell his chamberlain to give him a Turkish horse with a rawhide saddle and cheap bridle and strap. While he served him for another year with horse and lash, for the third year he would be given a wraparound to wind round his waist and for next year And each year his dignity, luxuriance, and status would increase until he became the head of horsemen and then chamberlain if his sufficiency and art were verified in all the fields and if he could manage jobs and was sociable and obedient then until he had not been 35 years old, he would not be given the command of troops and a nomination for a province.*¹⁹⁴

As can be seen in these lines, the system of slave soldiers was not only a military affair but also had social, political, and economic aspects. The Turkic slaves, in the service of the Samanids, became familiar with the Perso-Islamic political and

¹⁹² Abu Ishaq Ibrahim b. Muhammad al-istakhri, *al-Mamalik wa'l-Mamalik*, Leiden, (1927): 291; translation in D. Ayalon, "The Mamluks of the Seljuks: Islam's Military Might at the Crossroads", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd ser. 6, 1996, p. 311.

¹⁹³ Al-Jahiz (Abu, Uthman, Amr b. Bahr), *Manaqib al-Atraq*, in *Tria Opuscula Auctore*, ed. G. Van Vloten, Leiden, 1903, p. 49; translation in Ayalon, "The Mamluks of the Seljuks", p. 311.

¹⁹⁴ Nizam al-Mulk, *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings: The Siyar al-Muluk or Siyasat-Nama*, 2nd ed. Trans. Hubert Sarke, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978, pp. 103-104.

cultural structure and the slave-soldier system paved the way for the establishment of various Turkish governments and empires. Over time, those Turkic slave soldiers, some of whom were assigned to high governmental and military ranks, gained power, enhanced their influence in the Samanid army and court, and found their dynasties.

2.4.1. The Emergence of Turco-Islamic States

With the conversion to Islam, Turkic people became a part of the Muslim community and adopted the ideological role of defender of Islam and the Muslim world against non-believers. As a result, adaptation to Islam caused several fundamental changes and transformations in the social and political life of those societies. While they were sustaining their tribal lifestyle, culture, and certain traditions, as a component of the Islamic civilization, they established their Turco-Islamic culture. With the conversion in mass in the tenth century, those Turkic nomadic people founded central bureaucratic states and empires. They merged their martial and organizational power with the Perso-Islamic state tradition.

By the ninth century, Turkic elements began to take a significant part in the military side of the eastern Islamic world. Gaining powerful positions, the Turkish commanders could form and sustain dynastic states. They also achieved independence from the authority of the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad and handled the actual power.

The Turks had emerged in the Islamic world as slaves, and they had been utilized for military purposes. It was followed by conversion to Islam and as freemen, they began to play an active role in the army of the caliph and other high-level positions.

From the second half of the tenth century Islam was embraced by some Turkish tribes in the eastern borders of the Islamic world and at the beginning of the eleventh century among those Turkish elements, a large migration to the west, into the Islamic Middle East began and consequently, the control of most of Iran and Iraq, above all, of Baghdad, the center of the Abbasid caliphate, passed to the hands of those Turkish nomads. The process of migration and conversion to Islam allowed those nomadic groups to adopt the urban life of the Middle East and adopt the predominant Perso-Islamic tradition by synthesizing their steppe tradition.

The Qarakhanids were the first Muslim Turkic dynasty that arose on the steppes of Central Asia and ruled over the eastern and western parts of Turkestan. The scholars attach their leaders' origins to the great tribal group of the Qarluq Turks. The Qarakhanids first conquered Bukhara in 992 and then Samarqand in 999 from the Samanids and became the new patrons of Perso-Islamic culture.

Their socio-political structure possessed the characteristic features of the Turco-Mongol tribal confederations of Inner Asia. In compliance with Central Asian nomadic tradition¹⁹⁵. In compliance with Central Asian nomadic tradition¹⁹⁶, the Qarakhanid rulers divided their domains into western and eastern khanates. While the Great Khan ruled over the eastern section of the khanate, centered on the Balasaghun or Kara Ordu, the associate Khan, under the supreme authority of the Great Khan, was the ruler of the western part centered on Taraz and then in Kashghar¹⁹⁷. Aside from these two khans, the members of the Qarakhanid ruling family served as regional governors in a hierarchical ruling system. They all assumed Turkish regal titles, consisting of totemistic ones (onghuns) and after the conversion to Islam, they took Muslim names and titles¹⁹⁸.

With the conversion to Islam, the Qarakhanids acknowledged the symbolic authority of the Abbasid caliphate and acted as the spreader of Islam among the people in Transoxiana, Kashghar, and the Tarim Basin. They also became the patrons of new Turkish literature, in Arabic and Persian models, which served for recreating the Islamic civilization of the Middle East in a Turkish style. Thus, just as the Samanids had led the development of a Perso-Islamic culture, the Qarakhanids headed a new Turko-Islamic civilization¹⁹⁹.

The Ghaznavids²⁰⁰ were also one of the first headings in the process of creating

¹⁹⁵ Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, p. 33.

¹⁹⁶ C. E. Bosworth, "Ilek-khans or Karkhanids", *E.I.* vol. 3, p. 1113.

¹⁹⁷ Omelyan Pritsak, "Karahanlılar", *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 6, pp. 251-273; Bosworth, "Ilek-khans or Karakhanids", p. 1113.

¹⁹⁸ Pritsak, "Karahanlılar", p. 253. In fact, in the tenth century the Qarluqs, the nucleus of the Qarakhanids, became Muslim and the first ruler, converted was seen as Satuq Bughra Khan (d. 955), who took the Islamic name Abdul-Qarim.

¹⁹⁹ Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 117.

of Turco-Islamic culture. The founders of the Ghaznavid Empire began their careers as slave commanders-in-chief in the service of the Samanid Empire in Khurasan. After the collapse of the Samanids, the Ghaznavids in west Persia emerged as one of the major rulers in Persia. The empire was established in the region of Afghanistan in the present day and had its center in Ghazna or Ghazni. Bosworth interprets the establishment of the Ghaznavids as "*the first breakthrough of Turkish power in the east against the indigenous Iranian dynasties.*" By weakening and destroying the regional Iranian powers the Ghaznavids set the scene for the Saljuqids²⁰¹.

The Ghaznavids, as their founders had been in the service of the Samanids, the native Iranian dynasty, assumed themselves as the legal inheritors of the Samanids and its socio-political traditions²⁰². Therefore, they tried to create a political system by synthesizing the Iranian and particularly Islamic principles. Humphrey asserts that the Ghaznavids were the real founders of the Perso-Islamic model of government²⁰³. In adopting the Perso-Islamic culture, the Ghaznavids organized their court on traditional Persian hierarchical lines and the theologians and scholars were the participants of the court²⁰⁴. The Ghaznavid sultans utilized the Iranian governmental instruments and officials and secretaries who had been shaped by Perso-Islamic culture. Enjoying such a model the Ghaznavids represented themselves as the champions of Islam who endeavored to extend the Islamic realm, as advocates of Sunni Islam, and the eliminators of deviancy and devoted deputies of the Abbasid caliphs²⁰⁵. In this regard, Bosworth states that;

The Ghaznavids display the phenomenon of the rapid transformation of a line of barbarian, originally Turkish slaves into monarchs within the Irano-Islamic tradition who presided as authoritarian rulers over a multi-ethnic realm comprising Iranians or

²⁰⁰ B. Spuler, "Ghaznavids", *E.I.* vol. 2, pp. 1050-1053.

²⁰¹ Bosworth, "The Turks", p. 206.

²⁰² Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 280.

²⁰³ R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry*, Princeton University Press, 1991, p. 163.

²⁰⁴ Bosworth, "The Turks", p. 208.

²⁰⁵ Humphreys, *Islamic History*, p. 164.

*Tajiks, Turks, Afghans, Indians and others.*²⁰⁶

After the Ghaznavids, by the mid-eleventh century, the Saljuquids developed into a dominant political power in the Middle East. Defeating the Ghaznavids in 1040 they became the major power in the Muslim lands and vanquishing the Buyids in 1055, they acquired control of Baghdad and the caliphate²⁰⁷. The defeat of the Ghaznavids enabled the Saljuqid rulers to form diplomatic relations with the Abbasid caliph. Those relations became supportive of Tughril Beg to strengthen his claims to legitimacy. At the beginning of 1058, the caliph granted Tughril al-kab or honorific titles of "Rukn al-Dawla and Malik al-Mashrik wa'l-Maghrib"²⁰⁸. After that, the Saljuqid rulers were given the title of Sultan and were acknowledged as the rulers of a new empire from Khurasan to Iraq²⁰⁹. In addition, after defeating the Byzantine in 1071, the Saljuquids opened the way of Anatolia to Turkish invasions.

Taking the title of Sultan, because he had a power given by the caliph, provided Tughril Beg a great prestige²¹⁰. The bestowment of the title of Sultan gave Tughril Beg "*an authority quite different in nature from the limited authority which he had enjoyed under Turkish tribal custom.*"²¹¹ According to Mottahadeh, in this era, the agreement between the caliph and his amirs functioned as a "sign that one claimed military authority," not only as a "deputized" ruler²¹². That is to say, the title of sultan did not provide the Saljuqid rulers with the support of the Muslim population. What mattered was that the title indicated the caliph's approval of the Saljuqid power. Therefore, the

²⁰⁶ Bosworth, "The Ghaznavids", p. 117.

²⁰⁷ Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, p. 118.

²⁰⁸ C. E. Bosworth, "Toghril Beg (I)", *E.I.* vol. 10, p. 553.

²⁰⁹ According to Lambton, the early Saljuqid sultans were insistent on the diplomas from the caliphs for positioning themselves on the level with Ghaznavids and for justifying their rule and moreover, for establishing themselves as the defenders for orthodox Islam. A.K.S. Lambton, "The Internal Structure of the Saljuq Empire", in *the Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5, Cambridge University Press, 1968, p. 206.

²¹⁰ Claude Cahen, "The Turkish Invasion: The Selchukids," in *A History of the Crusades*, ed. Kenneth Setton, Madison: WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969, p. 146.

²¹¹ R.E. Darley Doran, "Saljukids", *E.I.*, 2nd ed., p. 939.

²¹² Mottahadeh, *Loyalty and Leadership*, p. 51.

Saljuqids obtained legitimation and strong backing in Islamic society through the recognition of the caliph in the political arena. On the other hand, Makdisi asserts in his article "The Sunni Revival" that by supporting the caliph Tughril Beg gained the support of the ulama, the most effective support basis for people of power to consult their support of religion. According to Makdisi, "*the ulama's first loyalty was to God and His Prophet; then to the caliph whose function was to guard and maintain the Prophet's religion.*"²¹³ That is to say, through the caliph's support Tughril Beg achieved the loyalty of the ulama.

Reuniting most of the former Abbasid dominion, the Saljuqids whose origins can be traced to the Turkish tribes "Oghuz", emerged with the claim of being Sunni heroes ²¹⁴. They presented themselves as the benevolent patrons of Sunni religious scholars, faithful supporters of the Abbasid caliphs, and decisive defenders of Islam and the Muslim community against infidels. While they were maintaining the conquests in the name of the caliph who still had great legitimacy in the eyes of the public as the leader of the Muslim community, and Sunni Islam, the Saljuqid sultans were still in need of assignment diplomas from the caliph. In this context, George Makdisi states:

*...it was the force of attraction between authority and power which brought into conflict the interests of the Caliph and Sultan. In the golden age of the Caliphate, the Caliph possessed both authority and power. When power slipped from the Caliph's hands, the struggle began between him and the holder of power. But the Sultan was always at a disadvantage, for he was always in need of being legitimized; hence his struggle to achieve stability through reintegration of power and authority to his advantage*²¹⁵.

On the other hand, the Saljuqid rulers began their career as nomadic tribal chiefs, the followers of whom consisted of Turcoman tribes, and the military

²¹³ George Makdisi, "The Sunni Revival", in *Islamic Civilizations, 950-1150: A Colloquium*, published under the auspices of the Near Eastern History Group, Oxford, the Near East Center, University of Pennsylvania, ed. D.S. Richards, London: Cassirer Press, 1973, p. 166.

²¹⁴ Lambton states that "the early period saw not merely the reimposition of Sunnism after a time of Shi'i supremacy, but a reaffirmation of the caliph's position as head of the Islamic community, together with the incorporation of the sultanate as a necessary element into the ideal of Islamic government." A.K.S. Lambton, "The Internal Structure of the Saljuq Empire", p. 207.

²¹⁵ George Makdisi, "The Marriage of Tughril Beg", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 1, No. 3, Jul., 1970, p. 261.

achievements of those chiefs depended on their capacity of providing pasture and spoils to their supporters "*who if dissatisfied would break away to join some rival chiefs.*"²¹⁶ Such a nomadic heritage brought some difficulties for the Saljuqid rulers in consolidating their power.

According to Barthold, the Iranian idea which considered the ruler as the sole authority was strange to those nomads. In their eyes of them, the state was the joint property of the ruling family. Reading the khutbah in some cities of Khurasan in the name of Tughril Beg and concurrently in other cities in the name of his brother Chaghri Beg indicates in the beginning how the conception of the autocrat ruler was stranger to the Saljuquids²¹⁷.

As was the norm in the former tribal state structures, the Saljuquids also had no determined succession law and regarded the right to rule as given to whole members of the ruling family. Therefore, the imperial realm was shared among the members of the dynasty. While the Sultan exercised nominal authority, the Saljuqid princes, known as maliks, were assigned to the provinces of the realm as governors. Although those assignments were not permanent, over the time, each branch of the Saljuqid dynasty was liable to regard specific region as their own province. It paved the way for integration of the Saljuquids into various parts: Saljuqs of Kerman, Rum and Syria²¹⁸. After the reign of Malik-Shah (1072-1092), the internal struggles for succession to the Sultanate caused the decline of the power and the role of the Saljuquids.

2.4.2. The Saljuqid Ideology

The political ideology of the Saljuquids became a major model for subsequent Turco-Islamic politics in the Middle East and Central Asia. When they came to power, the Seljuquids adopted the political norms and institutions, created and practiced by their predecessors, the Caliphate, the Samanids, and then the Qarakhanids and the

²¹⁶ A.C.S. Peacock "Seljuq Legitimacy in Islamic History" in *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society and Culture*, ed. Christian Lange, Songul Mecit, Edinburgh, 2011, p. 80.

²¹⁷ Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 327.

²¹⁸ Lambton, "The Internal Structure", p. 235.

Ghaznavids in eastern Iran. It was a useful and practicable model for the Saljuqids to employ in compliance with the exigencies, the needs, and the political realities of their time. That is to say, the political tradition of the Saljuqids had multiple dimensions, shaped by the earlier cultures. According to Peacock the period before Alp Arslan's death in 1072 "*witnessed the Seljuqs' transformation from obscure tribesmen to sultans, rulers of an empire that inherited the synthesis of Islamic and Iranian ideals of government and culture.*"²¹⁹ In other words, The Saljuqid rulers as the leaders of the numerous tribes transformed into the rulers of a territorial empire.

Furthermore, Barthold states that as the ideal of an autocratic ruler was deep-rooted in those conquered provinces; eventually it was natural to be influential on the nomadic conquerors. While their autocratic inclinations alienated their nomadic followers, they made familiar them to Iranian bureaucratic agents. The Saljuqid sultans who at first, were the stranger to the complicated bureaucracy of his domain, left those affairs to their viziers. Consequently, the viziers became dominant figures in the political era²²⁰. By the rule of Alp Arslan the power of the vizier widened as becoming "the most important civil official in the state."²²¹ Apart from other various duties, the vizier was in charge of the economic, military, and judicial situation of the Sultanate²²². The great vizier of the time, Nizamu'l-Mulk, who had been in the service of the Ghaznavids, was a pious Sunni Persian Muslim. His political perspective had been shaped in an environment in which ancient Persian political institutions, inherited from the Samanids, were prevalent. He attempted to regulate the administrative organization of the state on the ancient Iranian model. In this way, naturally, since there was no eligible Turkish personnel, the Persians were assigned to this idea. While, in the long term, Nizamu'l-Mulk achieved his goal of training Sunni bureaucrats for a centralized administration through his madrasas, his attempts on creating a centralized power failed against local amirs²²³.

²¹⁹ Lambton, "The Internal Structure", p. 243.

²²⁰ Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 329.

²²¹ Klausner, *The Seljuk Vizierate: A Study of Civil Administration, 1055-1194*, Harvard University Press, 1973, p. 142.

²²² Klausner, *The Seljuk Vizierate*, pp. 39-49.

Klausner discusses that the political structure of the Saljuqid collapsed because they could not form a powerful civil administration of government, and this era "marked an important stage in the post-Abbasid development of a new institutional framework and supporting political theory which corresponded more exactly to the government in the eastern Muslim world as it evolved historically."²²⁴ In this manner, undoubtedly, Nizamu'l-Mulk was one of the most prominent viziers in Saljuq history who achieved to systemize "the offices and duties of the bureaucracy as well as promoting the madrasa system of education."²²⁵ The vizierate, with Nizamu'l-Mulk, gained an important governmental power that indicates the transition of power from the sultanate to other members of the political system. Bosworth states that Nizamu'l-Mulk functioned as an atabeg for the sultan, governing the empire on behalf of the young ruler²²⁶. After all, as the power of the sultans weakened vis-à-vis the different figures of the political system, the period became a scene of the emergence of the powerful amirs as atabegs to effective positions and thus it paved the way for a powerless sultanate.

On the other hand, as the Saljuqid rulers transformed from khans to Iranian autocrats the dissensions between the settled and the nomadic population became inevitable. Because those contentions were mostly solved on behalf of the sedentary people, the nomadic population was confronted with some difficulties. The prominent Saljuqid vizier Nizamu'l-Mulk attempted to suggest some ideas to combine the sedentary interests with those of the nomads who did not want to abandon their nomadic life²²⁷.

Since the Saljuqids were ruling over an urban and agrarian society it was

²²³ Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, pp. 44-45.

²²⁴ Klausner, *The Seljuk Vizierate*, p. 77.

²²⁵ Klausner, *The Seljuk Vizierate*, p. 15.

²²⁶ C.E. Bosworth, "The Political and Dynastic History of the Iranian World, (A.D. 1000-1217)", in *the Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 5, p. 68. "Malikshah, who was very young when he came to power, added the term atabeg to the lakab of his wazir Nizam al-Mulk, thereby indicating that he conferred up on him the entire delegation of his own authority, as though he were his father.", Cahen, "Atabak", *E.I.* vol. 1, p. 731.

²²⁷ Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 330.

required to be supported by certain components of the indigenous population. Thus, the political system of the time was based particularly on three main groups: the Iranian bureaucracy, the urban prominent people, and the Sunni religious elite (ulama)²²⁸.

One of the most important aspects of the Saljuqid reign was the iqta system which had utilized by the Buyids in Iraq and western Persia. The main purpose of the institution of iqta²²⁹ was to finance the state's operations and to pay the state's civil and military officers. Therefore, starting with the military commanders and the state's nobles, the regions of the state were given to administer and collect the taxes²³⁰. Thus, those assigned regions were called iqta, and their holders muqti.

In explaining the responsibilities of muqti and his limits, Nizamu'l-Mulk, the experienced Saljuqid vizier stated:

Officers who hold lands in iqta [muqti'an] must know that they have no authority over the peasants [ra'aya] except to take from them [in a good way] –and that with courtesy- the due amount of revenue which has been assigned to them to collect; and when they have taken that, the peasants were to have security for their persons, property, wives, and children, and their goods and farms are to be inviolable; the assignees are to have no further claim upon them...They must know that the country and the peasants belong to the ruling power [sultan]; assignees and governors [valiyan] are like prefects[shahna] over the peasants [on their iqta], in the same relation to them as the king is to other peasants²³¹.

As it is seen from these sentences, Nizamu'l-Mulk's main aim was to bring all land assignments under the control of centralized power in the imperial bureaucracy. But this purpose could not be accomplished. Iqtas were intended to bring in a certain sum of money and in return, the iqta-holder equipped a specified number of troops. "They were simply", as Lambton states, "*delegations of authority and did not contain*

²²⁸ Humphreys, *Islamic History*, p. 158.

²²⁹ Lambton states that during Saljuqid period the term of iqta was used to cover numerous different types of grant such as: a) a grant on the revenue, or a grant of land for military service and for salary; b) the grant of district, and jurisdiction over it, Saljuq amirs, and others, which was virtually a grant of provincial government; c) a tax farm and d) the grant of a personal estate and an allowance or pension. Lambton, "The Internal Structure", pp. 233-234.

²³⁰ Lambton, "The Internal Structure", pp. 231-232.

²³¹ Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulkulmuluk Abu Ali Hasan Tusi, *Siyarumuluk (Siyasatnama)*, ed. Hubert Darke, Tehran, 1347, p. 43, tr. Hubert Darke: *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings: The Siyasat-nama or Siyar al-Muluk of Nizam al-Mulk*, London, 1960, p. 33.

any implication of vassalage or permanent rights."²³² But when it came to the large areas, it was easy for those military leaders to constitute their independence. Moreover, the members of the Saljuqid family were in the tendency to consider certain regions as their iqta. Therefore, when it came to a weak ruler, the power of the military leaders increased and it led to political disintegration just as in the case of the Saljuquids²³³.

In addition to this, the institution of the atabeg²³⁴ (literally "father lord" in Turkish) led to the fragmentation of the Saljuqid governmental capability. Atabegs were the tutors or the mentors who were granted a governance of a province and were entrusted with raising, educating, and watching over a non-adult son of the sultan (malik) in exchange for that territory. In the meantime, those figures began to utilize the princes for their own political ambitions and attempted to establish their power in the provinces the sultan granted. As the sovereignty was assumed as inherent in the Saljuq family, those amirs in the position of the atabegate should have acted in the prince's name. Therefore, the atabeg supplied him with the necessary means of doing so²³⁵. In addition, the atabeg also had the right to get married with the mother of the prince, under his care, and to rule in his own right. It led to the weakening of Saljuqid's centralized power and the emergence of various independent Saljuqid principalities. As the power of those amirs increased the institution of atabegate began to be used not for watching over the Saljuqid malik and preventing them from rebellion but for maintaining the allegiance of the powerful amirs²³⁶. Eventually, this institution became one of the causes of collapse of the Saljuquids.

In the later eleventh century, with the death of Sultan Malikshah and the great vizier Nizamu'l-Mulk, the Saljuqid lands witnessed succession struggles, and hence collapse of central administration of the Saljuquids and rise of provincial dynasties as the new political actors.

²³² Lambton, "The Internal Structure", p. 235.

²³³ Lambton, "The Internal Structure", pp. 235-239.

²³⁴ C. Cahen, "Atabak", p. 731-732. Lambton explains this institution as follows: "The atabegate was an institution belonging especially to the Seljuq period, though its origins are possibly to be sought in the social organization and customs of the Turkman" Lambton, "The Internal Structure", p. 239.

²³⁵ Lambton, "The Internal Structure", p. 243.

²³⁶ Lambton, "The Internal Structure", p. 240.

2.4.3. Perso-Islamic Political Tradition and Its Impacts on Turco-Mongol Political Ideologies

The adoption of Islam is one of the millstones in the history of the Turco-Mongolian societies in Central Asia and the Middle East. Analyzing the socio-political aspects of the conversion brings us in an insight to understand the incorporation between the nomadic steppe culture and Islamic civilization and culture.

The conversancy of Turkic people with Islam first began while they were in the service of the Islamic states in the ninth and tenth centuries. Although they were not many in number, they heavily took part in politics and the military in the development of the Islamic empires and made a significant contribution through their own socio-political, economic, and cultural factors to Islamic civilization.

Throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries, a large number of Turkic populations in Central Asia came to the Middle East in groups. Their first encounter with this geography took place in the way of raids, and then they gradually began to settle in those areas and founded several states and empires, like Qarakhanids, Ghaznavids, Saljuqids, and the Ottomans²³⁷. Additionally, during the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, a great number of Turkic and Mongolian people came to the Islamic world and adopted Islam.

By the Mongol invasions to the Middle East started in the thirteenth century, Turkic people had already participated actively in the Islamic world. While the Turkic people established Turko-Islamic dynasties with the ideology of the defender of Islam, the Mongols seized the Islamic world as the conquerors and integrated it into their Chinggisid World Empire. As Fletcher states that the arrival of the Turks in the Middle East and conversion to Islam occurred step by step, therefore, their adoption of Islamic culture and politics was a smooth transition. But on the other hand, as the Mongols entered swiftly into the Islamic world they transferred their own culture to the Middle East²³⁸.

²³⁷ Dewese, *Baba Tükles*, p. 8; İsenbike Togan, “5th-9th centuries in Migrating Turkish Dynasties,” in *Encyclopedia on Women in Muslim Cultures*, vol. 1, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003, pp. 22-23.

²³⁸ Fletcher, “Mongols”, pp. 41-42.

With Islamization, the Turkic societies in Central Asia and the Middle East did not sever all ties with their past. Although many social, political, and cultural transformations took place, they also transferred their values to Islamic civilization²³⁹. They enable to merge their own pre-Islamic traditional cultural elements with Islamic ones and formed a Turko-Islamic civilization.

As it has been mentioned before, Islam emerged among the nomadic and semi-nomadic Arab clans and tribes. When they adopted this new religion its prophet Muhammad (c.570-652) attempted to form a new Muslim community "umma" over several tribal and clan organizations. This community was created by Muhammad for implementing God's order concerning faith, morals, family, trade, politics, and war. It was a transition from a socially based blood relationship to a form based on a common religious faith.²⁴⁰ In this way, Islam became a junction on which various lineage groups united over common ground and formed a supra-lineage system²⁴¹. Accordingly, through converting to Islam, Turco-Mongol people who also had their own tribal structuring became a part of this "umma".

On the other hand, creation of umma did not conclude the existence of the tribal structures. As long as the Muslim empires grew those tribal structures turned into a new form of military arrangements²⁴². For example, with the adoption of Islam and becoming a component of the umma the Turco-Mongol societies merged their religious and tribal identities. In this way, those tribal societies could gain a place in umma.

The embracement of Islam was not only a matter of religion but also an adoption of various social, political, and cultural elements of Islamic civilization which consisted of several traditions. In addition, the conversion brought a new lifestyle such as from nomadic to sedentary, and a new political understanding from nomadic decentralization (power-sharing) to a centralized political system of the Middle East.

²³⁹ Deweese, *Baba Tükles*, p. 54.

²⁴⁰ Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, p. 23; Ira Lapidus, "Seperation of State and Religion in the Development of Early Islamic Society," in *International Middle East Studies*, 1975, p. 383.

²⁴¹ Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, pp. 21-35.

²⁴² Crone, *Political Thought*, p. 397.

Nevertheless, the adoption of Islamic civilization did not modify completely the social, political, and cultural system of Turco-Mongol societies. Rather, those peoples formed a synthesis by melting both civilizations in the same pot. It did not of course occur suddenly and peacefully but lasted for a long and caused various tensions. The contradiction between those two civilizations revealed itself at most between shari'a and *tore/yasa*. In this transitional period, balancing both laws, especially when it came to the implementation of social and political affairs, sometimes harmony and sometimes tension arose.

Since Arabic tribal society was in egalitarian form, the establishment of states and empires in the Arab world was not very easy²⁴³. But for Turco-Mongol structuring, dynastic norms and hierarchical order were valid²⁴⁴. Hence, they were more inclined to acknowledge political and military authorities unless they were prevented to share power with those authorities. Traditionally, for those societies sharing power and avoiding the accumulation of power on absolute rulers was the norm²⁴⁵.

In addition to all these, the perception of the leadership with concerning the religious aspect of Central Asian societies resembled to Perso-Islamic one. For Turco-Mongol nomads while the charismatic military champion for the leadership was vital, it also was required for the leader that he should have spiritual character²⁴⁶.

It is possible demonstrate those similarities by looking at the writings which produced during the reign of the first Turkish Muslim rulers. In this connection, in analyzing the “*Kutadgu Bilig*” (Wisdom of Royal Glory) of Yusuf Khas Hajib, written in 960s, Carter Findley remarks those similarities as follows; “...the “royal glory” of the title is conveyed by a word derived from the same term, *kut*, that was used in the earliest Turkic states to refer to the “mandate of heaven,” an idea that this work equates with the *farr* claimed by pre-Islamic shahs of Iran and with the Arabic term *dawla*, originally meaning a turn of good fortune but coming by extension to

²⁴³ Barfield, *Perilous*, p. 160.

²⁴⁴ Golden, *Introduction*, p. 16.

²⁴⁵ İsenbike Togan, “Patterns of Legitimization of Rule in the History of the Turks,” in *Rethinking Central Asia*, ed. Korkut A. Ertürk, Ithaca Press, 1999, p. 49.

²⁴⁶ Golden, *Introduction*, p. 16.

mean dynasty or state²⁴⁷. Such common features of Perso-Islamic civilization enabled Turco-Mongol tribes to adopt Perso-Islamic state tradition for their socio-political rule. It also paved the way for centralization of nomadic political structures and power of the rulers. Nevertheless, after the adoption of Islam and emergence of Turco-Mongol Muslim states and empires, there was always a tension between the political ideologies of both traditions; the notion of power-sharing in Turco-Mongol policy and central despotism of Perso-Islamic custom.

Under the Mongol domination, the rulers had made efforts for monopolization of power in the hands of a person who had belonged to a tradition structured on the idea of power-sharing. It had been necessary for avoiding from the tribes' tendency for decentralized policy and to preserve the continuity of their new created order²⁴⁸. If not, tribes would become a threat by taking active roles in succession struggles and playing an influential part in politics²⁴⁹. To sum up, with the adoption of Islam by Turco-Mongol people, various aspects of Islamic civilization began to have an impact on most parts of the life among Turco-Mongol societies. Such a transformation of social and political structures did not occur suddenly but took a long time. In addition to this, during the process of adaptation, there was always tension between the political ideologies of Turco-Mongol and Perso-Islamic traditions. Under the reigns of the Ottomans, the tribal power-sharing ideology could be abolished and a central bureaucratic state system could be created.

2.4.4. Advice Literature

The history of the literature of advice in the Middle East is rooted in ancient times. This kind of political writing gained popularity in the Islamic world, are works addressing the kings and high-ranking officers and dealing with governmental matters on moral grounds.

Such texts termed "mirrors for princes" in the European tradition, were written

²⁴⁷ Findley, *The Turks*, p. 76.

²⁴⁸ Togan, *Flexibility*, p. 12.

²⁴⁹ Barfield, "Tribe and State Relations", p. 177.

in a large number in the Islamic Middle East until the early twentieth century²⁵⁰ and reflected the political essentialities of their day. Thus, we can gain a venerable understanding of the development of a medieval way of governance. Those books can also be approached as pictures that reflect the political and cultural sense of their times. According to general consent, the essence of such works put the political problems the medieval monarchs confronted and the strategies proposed. Thereby, advice works open an alternative door into the internal political world of blurred forms of government.

As for the content of the mirror literature, almost all mirrors touched on the moral goals which the ruler should pursue. In general terms, the mirrors comprised wisdom literature, books of ethical admonition, moral writings, and testaments²⁵¹. In that tradition, the kings were assumed chosen by God and vital for the social order; therefore, the personal qualifications and virtues of the ruler were the essential matters²⁵². The morality of the ruler also was connected with the abundance and ethical dimension of the political circle. Accordingly, the primary objective of the advice literature was training the ruler and forming his personality for the welfare of his subjects.

Another dimension of the mirror is its revealing an image of the ruler that fostered his legitimacy and sovereignty. Additionally, receiving such works by the ruler was an indication of his royal morality, his personal virtue, and his excellent reign²⁵³.

In the Islamic period, the mirrors began to be covered with Islamic Shar'i elements while the Iranian governance tradition sustained its existence²⁵⁴. The Mirror for Princes genre is a useful attester for the medieval Muslim world from the early

²⁵⁰ Ann K.S. Lambton, *Islamic Mirrors for Princes*, in *Atti del Convegno Internazionale sul Tema: La Persia del Medioevo*, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1971, p. 420.

²⁵¹ L. Marlow, "Mirrors for Princes", in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, Princeton University Press, 2013, p. 349.

²⁵² Crone, *Political Thought*, p. 149.

²⁵³ Marlow, "Mirrors", p. 349.

²⁵⁴ Ann K. S. Lambton, *Continuity and Change in Medieval Persia: Aspects of Administrative, Economic and Social History, 11th and 14th Century*, London: I. B. Tauris, 1988, p. 7.

periods. These texts, produced by various authors –scholars, bureaucrats, philosophers, and historians- contain a synthesis between Arabo-Islamic and ancient Persian principles and utilize exemplary models from Sasanian kings, Muslim caliphs, Islamic scholars, ancient Zoroastrian texts, and Hellenistic statecraft. Those Mirrors display a broad Islamic interest in just government and the nature of kingship²⁵⁵.

In the second half of the eleventh century, the three impressive canons of mirrors for princes were produced; the Qabus-nama (The Book of Qavus) of Kay-Kaus, written in 1082, one of the principal work of Persian literature, The Siyaru'l-Muluk (The conduct of kings) or the Siyasatnama (The book of government) of Nizamu'l-Mulk, written in the period 1086-1091 and the Nasihatu'l-Muluk (The Advice for Kings) of al-Ghazali. Among those, al-Ghazzali had the most conservative perspective.

Qabusnama was one of the most prominent examples of Persian advice literature. Its author Unsur al-Ma'ali Kaykaus b. Iskandar belonged to the Ziyarid family who ruled over the Caspian vicinities of Tabaristan and Gurgan in northern Iran²⁵⁶. In his Qabusnama, Kaykaus addresses his son for teaching him about the customs and practices of kingship.

Siyasatnama written by Nizamu'l-Mulk, the vizier first of Alparslan and then of Malikshah the Saljuqid, was one of the most important works for the formulation of the Islamic political thought in the Saljuqid period. Nizamu'l-Mulk was the leading figure who formed the Saljuqid tradition of state administration which became a model for subsequent Turco-Mongol states established in the Middle East. In his work, Nizamu'l-Mulk attempted to reconcile, as Simidchieva states, "the Persian imperial tradition of government with the political realities of a new era, shaped by nomadic conquest"²⁵⁷.

²⁵⁵ H.D. Isaacs (ed.), *Ghazali's Book of Counsel for Kings (Nasihah al-Muluk)*, London, 1964, ix; Carole Hillenbrand, "A Little-known Mirror for Princes of al-Ghazali" in *Words, Texts and Concepts Cruising the Mediterranean Sea*, ed. R. Arnzen and J. Thielmann, Keuven, 2004, p. 593.

²⁵⁶ C.E. Bosworth, "Kay Ka'us b. Iskandar", *E.I.*, vol. 4, p. 815.

²⁵⁷ Martha Simidchieva, "Kingship and Legitimacy in Nizam al-Mulk's Siyasatnama, Fifth/Eleventh Century" in *Writers and Rulers: Perspectives on Their Relationship from Abbasids to Safavid Times (Literaturen Im Kontext. Arabisch-Persian-Turkisch)*, ed. Beatrice Bruendler and Louise Marlow, Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2004, p. 97.

The thing that Nizamu'l-Mulk had the most difficulty in overcoming under the Seljuqid administration was the perception of power that the Saljuqids brought from the steppes of Central Asia. Just like the Qarakhanids, the Saljuqids belonged to a clan, each member of which claimed sovereignty over the land they owned. Furthermore, the Saljuqids, who came to power from nomadism, did not have a central bureaucracy in the model of Perso-Islamic tradition²⁵⁸. For Nizamu'l-Mulk, who worked with bureaucrats who had served in the Ghaznavid administration system, the old Sasanian administration practices were the basis of a successful political system²⁵⁹.

According to Nizamu'l-Mulk kingship and religion were "two brothers", interdependent and inseparable²⁶⁰. He states that "*the most beautiful thing for the king is the right religion because kingship and religion are two brothers.*"²⁶¹ Nevertheless, the base of Nizamu'l-Mulk's theory was not religion but justice²⁶². He asserted that "*the kingdom remains with infidelity but not with tyranny.*"²⁶³

In addition, Nizamu'l-Mulk believed that the only source behind the kingship was God. According to him in each century and each era God selects a ruler among the people and equips him with royal features, holds him responsible for social order, and maintains the justice²⁶⁴. As it is seen, the kingship was a divine choice and the royal virtues were granted by God. Accordingly, there was no reason for questioning the ruler's legitimacy. Nevertheless, the result of the misrule was the emergence of a new king who "sets things right."²⁶⁵

According to Nizamu'l-Mulk the main object of the rule was to spread justice

²⁵⁸ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, pp. 387-388.

²⁵⁹ Starr, *Lost Enlightenment*, p. 389.

²⁶⁰ Martha Simidchieva, "Kingship and Legitimacy", p. 101.

²⁶¹ Nizamu'l-Mulk, *Siyaru'l-Muluk*, p. 80.

²⁶² A.K.S. Lambton, Justice in Medieval Persian Theory of Kingship, in *Studia Islamica*, vol. 17, (1962): p. 104.

²⁶³ Nizamu'l-Mulk, *Siyaru'l-Muluk*, p. 11.

²⁶⁴ Nizamu'l-Mulk, *Siyaru'l-Muluk*, p. 11.

²⁶⁵ Simidchieva, "Kingship and Legitimacy", p. 104.

throughout the world. It could only be fulfilled through holding each one in his rightful place so that stability could be ensured²⁶⁶. The ruler was also supposed to make the world prosperous by developing irrigation and communication systems, establishing new cities, erecting magnificent buildings and residences, and establishing madrasas²⁶⁷.

Apart from Nizamu'l-Mulk, another key figure in the evolution of medieval political thought was al-Ghazali who was attached to Nizamu'l-Mulk in 1085 and then became the professor (mudarris) of the madrasa (Nizamiyya) which had established by Nizamu'l-Mulk in Baghdad.

Ghazali formulated a new relationship between the caliph and the sultanate. He believed that there was a corporation between the caliph and the sultan. While the caliph was designated by the sultan, the validity of the sultan's rule was authorized by the caliph. Thereby, the sultan accepted that the Sharia was the regulatory principle of the Sunnis community and the caliph recognized that the sultanate actualized the necessary conditions for the continuation of Islamic institutions²⁶⁸.

Furthermore, according to Ghazali, "the sultan is God's shadow on earth", in other words, he is God's delegate over His creatures. The kingship and the divine light (farr-i izadi) are granted by God, therefore, "they must be obeyed, loved and followed."²⁶⁹ Although echo the theme of "kingship and religion are like brothers"²⁷⁰ is heard in *Nasihah*, according to Ghazali, the main qualification of the sultan is justice.

²⁶⁶ Lambton, "Justice", p. 102.

²⁶⁷ Nizamu'l-Mulk, *Siyaru'l-Muluk*, pp. 12-13.

²⁶⁸ Lambton, "The Internal Structure", p. 207. In other work Lambton states that "Al-Ghazali recognizes that the actual government of Islam was carried out by the sultan. The only way in which his government could become valid and authorized was through his recognition of the imam [caliph]. No government other than that of the imam was valid under the Shari'a and subordinate officials had only delegated authority and not functional authority. The validity of the government of the sultan was established only upon the sultan's oath of allegiance to the imam and the imam's appointment of the sultan. The sultan for his part by his exercise of constitutive authority recognized in fact the institutional authority of the caliphate, which rested primarily on the Islamic Sunni community and in theory its functional authority, which rested with the Shari'a proper." A.K.S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam: An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory: The Jurists*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 114.

²⁶⁹ Ghazali, *Nasihah*, p. 45.

²⁷⁰ Ghazali, *Nasihah*, p. 59.

"*The Sultan in reality*", Ghazali wrote;

*..is he who awards justice, and does not perpetrate injustice and wickedness, among God's slaves; for the unjust Sultan is ill-starred and will have no endurance because the Prophet stated that 'sovereignty endures even when there is unbelief, but will not endure when there is unjust.'*²⁷¹.

Accordingly, "the development or desolation of this universe depends upon kings; for if the king is just, the universe is prosperous, and the subjects are secure."²⁷²

Addressing the justice of pre-Islamic Iranian kings, Ghazali also stated that;

*The efforts of these kings to develop the world were (made) because they knew that the greater the prosperity, the longer would be their rule and the more numerous would be their subjects. They also knew that the sages had spoken rightly when they said: 'The religion depends on the kingship, the kingship on the army, the army on supplies on prosperity, and prosperity on justice.'*²⁷³

Apart from the caliph and the sultan, according to Ghazali, there was a third element of the imamate [caliphate] which dealt with religious and legal duties established by the Shari'a: the ulama. The main political role of the ulama was the interpretation of Islamic Shari'a concerning the matters, encountered by the community and approving the expression of the Shari authority in their fatwa.

2.5. The Mongol Conquests

From the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Muslim rulers encountered the rise of Mongol power and the destruction it created. Between 1219 and 1221, certain developed Muslim cities in Central Asia were destroyed by the Mongol invasions under the leadership of Chinggis Khan. After the death of Chinggis Khan in 1227, as a result of refreshed Mongol invasions in the 1240s, a large part of the Muslim world fell under the hegemony of the Mongol rulers. One of the most significant results of those raids was the seizure of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258. The Mongols, who

²⁷¹ Ghazali, *Nasihah*, p. 61

²⁷² Ghazali, *Nasihah*, p. 46.

²⁷³ Ghazali, *Nasihah*, p. 56.

had no use for the advantages of maintaining the caliphate, killed the caliph, al-Musta'sim, and ceased that institution which is traced to the earliest Islamic periods.

From this time, the caliphate had no longer primary importance for religious and political life in the Muslim world. As a matter of fact, although some caliphs could have had a chance to raise the political authority of their office, by the middle of the ninth century the institution of the caliphate had lost its religious authority to the religious scholars (the ulama) and Baghdad had become a symbol of the union of Sunni Islam.

2.5.1. The Chinggisids in the Islamic World

When the Mongol armies under the leadership of Chinggis Khan first attacked Islamic lands in 1219, the steppe people of Central Asia had been in relation for five centuries with Muslims. The Mongol domination of the Muslim world began in the thirteenth century and it ended with the establishment of three Chinggisid Khanates in Islamic lands; Ilkhanids in the Middle East, Golden Horde in Volga Basin, and Chaghatai Khanate in Central Asia.

With Möngke's accession to the throne of the Chinggisid Empire in 1251, the Mongols attempted a new wave of expansion. The new khan appointed his brothers for this new campaign: Qubilai was sent to the east, toward China, and Hülagü to the west, toward the Middle East, the Muslim lands. On this assignment, Hülagü set out for mentioned lands with an enormous army (1253-1254). There were two main missions for this army: to destroy the fortresses of the Assassins, the Shi'ite Ismaili sect stationed in Alamut Castle in northern Iran, and to subjugate the Abbasid Caliph to Mongols. After defeating the Assassins in 1256, Hülagü headed for Baghdad and has the Abbasid caliph executed in 1258. The annihilation of the caliphate created a power vacuum in the Muslim world. One of the most distinctive features of this period was the loss of importance of the caliphate system in Islamic lands and its transformation from an Islamic political government to a government ruled by non-Muslims. Thus the conquests of the Mongols who did not have a religious motive to impose their supremacy on the Islamic world ended the more than five centuries of political and cultural domination of the caliphs over these lands and led to the era of

new systems of government. In the current situation, Muslims had to accept a form of government that distinguished between the concepts of caliphate and government. This created a new model of government in Islamic political thought, in which those who governed the society were accepted as rulers without publicly claiming to be caliphs, and holding the leadership of the political system did not contradict the concept of the holy caliphate. It ensured the Mongols, who later converted to Islam, took part in the struggle for Muslim leadership and benefit from the advantages being offered by the Islamic legitimacy in their lands.

Another crisis brought about by the abolition of the caliphate by the Mongols concerned the issue of legitimacy. Before the Mongols, the Baghdad-based Abbasid caliphs claimed legitimate sovereignty over Islamic lands based on their kinship ties with the Prophet Muhammad. As for the Mongols, legitimacy for them was based on membership in the Chinggisid lineage, which was believed to be endowed with divine authority.

After Möngke's death, a succession struggle occurred between his two brothers Qubilai and Ariq Böqe, which ended with the defeat of Ariq Böqe. Qubilai ascended to the throne as the Great Khan in 1264 and then as mentioned before, the Yeke Mongol Ulus created by Chinggis Khan transformed into four independent khanates each had significant power in its own right; the Yuan dynasty in China (1271-1368), the Golden Horde in Russia (1240-1502), the Chaghatai Khanate in Transoxiana (1225-1607), and the Ilkhanate in Iran (1245-1343). Over time, the Mongol khans converted to the religions of their subjects, and the three of these khanates embraced Islam while the khans of the Yuan dynasty adopted Buddhism.

The Chinggisid princes who at first became infidel rulers over the Muslim world began to convert to Islam over time. In 1295 the conversion of Ghazan Khan of the Ilkhanids led to the Islamization of the khanate and its institutions and the khans became the just protector of the Muslim community. During the fourteenth century, Islamization among the Mongols accelerated. Although Berke Khan (d. 1267), the second khan of the Golden Horde, the Jochid Ulus became a Muslim, the decisive Islamization of the Golden Horde occurred during the reign of Uzbek Khan (r.1313-1341). The Chaghataiids embraced Islam around the 1330s. The great majority of the settled populations of Transoxiana, the western part of the khanate, had been Muslim

before the Mongol conquest but the spread of Islam in the eastern part of the khanate known as Moghulistan, was a difficult process²⁷⁴. Each khan who attempted to contact Islamic culture was accused of having opposed the yasa and their attempts were met by opposition from conservative nomadic elements²⁷⁵.

The political fragmentation occurred in the Chinggisid Empire and then the Islamization of some of which encouraged an important alteration in the Chinggisid policy in each region. First of all, the conversion provided the Chinggisid khans to obtain Perso-Islamic legitimacy. Then, it caused the khans' identification with the sedentary Muslim population and their demands and "a regionally oriented policy."²⁷⁶ Such a local cultural orientation within Perso-Islamic civilization led to Persian becoming the language of political culture and literature.

About the mid-fourteenth century the heyday of the Chinggisid Khanates ended, and they confronted some political problems. At the end of the fourteenth century, the Yuan Dynasty was ended by a Chinese revolt in 1368, and the Ilkhanid domain was divided among distinct independent dynasties²⁷⁷, one of which was the Timurid Empire.

As for the Chaghataids, the khanate was divided into two halves; western, centered in Transoxiana, and eastern known as Moghulistan. As it was mentioned before, aside from succession struggles, the different demands of the settled Muslim population of Transoxiana, the western part of the khanate, and the Turco-Mongol nomadic ones in Moghulistan, the eastern part, caused such problems. In consequence of increasing conversion among the Chinggisid princes and the tribal leaders (noyan) in Transoxiana make way for the displeasure of conservative Turco-Mongol nomadic elements in Moghulistan and therefore, dethrone a khan who had been converted to Islam. The growing gap in culture and belief between the two parts of the Khanate eventually led each part to elect its own khan and separation²⁷⁸.

²⁷⁴ Michal Biran, "The Chaghataids and Islam: The Conversion of Tarmashirin Khan (1331-1334)", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, CXXII/4, 2002, p. 748.

²⁷⁵ Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol 2, p. 416.

²⁷⁶ Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol 2, p. 410.

²⁷⁷ Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol 2, pp. 416-417.

Apart from Islamization, another issue, the Chinggisid princes encountered, was the power struggle, inherent in Turco-Mongol political system. Especially in Transoxiana, the main problem was the growing numbers of the Chinggisid princes struggling for power. Among the nomadic elements of the Khanate, Muslim or not, the notion that the sovereignty belonged to the Altan Urugh (the descendants of Chinggis Khan) survived.

On the other hand, the great noyans (amirs) who had been assigned to each ulus by Chinggis Khan, gained significant power during the competition for power among the Chinggisid princes. Since the contender Chinggisid princes tried to get their support against their rivals, these amirs began to seize control of the rule which was legitimized by the Chinggisid princes. But, although the actual power was in the hands of the amirs, the Chinggisid princes preserved their monopoly of sovereignty. Here, the main concern for those princes was that there were numerous shareholders of this sovereignty. When this was the case, there were many alternatives for the amirs to support. Thus, the great amirs of leading tribes, even if they could not be khan, became khan-makers.

The amirs who were controlling the khan were named ulus-begi. This situation caused the powerful amirs and their followings to engage in competition for supreme power. The ulus begi used the Chinggisid khan and his legitimacy for receiving the support of the Turco-Mongol nomads.

All these developments paved the way for some alternations in the Chinggisid political system. While the members of the Altan Urugh preserved their monopoly in sovereignty and legitimacy, the demands and the interests of the Islamic sedentary population and their political tradition started to play an important part in the political system.

Conclusion

In the pre-imperial Turkish-Mongolian tribal order, where the Timurid concept of sovereignty originated, there was a social and political system shaped around the

²⁷⁸ Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, p. 416.

pastoral economy. As a result of economic instability, the nomads, who turned to the resources of a settled and agricultural world, established supra-tribal organizations in line with their goals. In this system, the tribal leaders (beg, after Islam amir) gave up their independence in return for their share of the raids that brought booty and united under the authority of a khan they had chosen as their leader. The bond between the khan and his followers was therefore personal, and thus the steppe state was based on the person of a khan, not his office. In this case, the khan had to offer a useful benefit to subjugate tribes who were mobile by nature. The relationship between the Khan and the begs was vital, and any deformation there would cause rebellion and disintegration.

On the other hand, there was a belief in steppe societies that the right to political power was bestowed by the sky god of the steppe (Tenggri) as divine favor. In other words, the ruler's authority and ability to rule were given by Tenggri. This ideology made it possible for the steppe ruler to establish and maintain the supra-tribal structure and control the military power of the nomadic people.

By the 13th century, the emergence of Chinggis Khan, who established a universal empire, created critical transformations in the existing order. Using the institutions and concepts existing within the current socio-political system to unite the nomadic tribes and create an army of conquest out of their active dynamism, Chinggis Khan grounded his khanate on a divine basis, not on his supporters. Thus, he raised both himself and his descendants to a position above the tribes and religions. He also diverted loyalty from the kinship group to the leader, breaking apart the groupings built on old kinship relationships. For this purpose, the tribes were disintegrated into this new organization and dispersed into military units formed in decimal units. Each military unit was placed under the command of noyans (commanders) loyal to Chinggis himself. This state-army system, created by distribution and assignment, abolished the old kinship-centered social structure. In the traditional Turco-Mongol political structure, the kin groups regarded that the khan exercised the authority in their favor and the benefits. According to the sovereignty belonged to the kin group and had to be shared among its members of it. By claiming his sovereignty blessed from Heaven directly, Chinggis Khan averted such obstacles. The power was centralized in the person of Chinggis Khan. Chinggis Khan also limited the right of sovereignty by granting possessions of certain lands and nations to certain family members. The four

sons of Chinggis received the main share in this distribution; Jochi, Ögedei, Chaghatai, and Tolui. The group included in this distribution was also known as "Altan Urugh" (Golden Lineage).

On the other hand, when he granted lands and people to the princes, Chinggis Khan also assigned the great noyans to supervise distinct units whose loyalty was direct to Chinggis Khan himself. He also assigned some officials who were directly liable to him. During his lifetime, Chinggis Khan did not lose his control over those territories as the princes' submission to him was clear.

After Chinggis Khan died in 1227, the union of the empire continued for a while but by the end of the thirteenth century, Chinggis Khan's empire became the scene of succession struggles caused by the *ülüş* system and the original distribution of Chinggis Khan became four distinct autonomous khanates (Uluses).

Moreover, the great noyans (amirs) who had been assigned to each ulus by Chinggis Khan, gained significant power during the competition for power among the Chinggisid princes. Since the rival Chinggisid princes needed their support against their rivals, these amirs began to seize control of the rule which was legitimized by the Chinggisid princes. But, although the actual power was in the hands of the amirs, the Chinggisid princes preserved their monopoly of sovereignty. Here, the main concern for those princes was that there were numerous shareholders of this sovereignty. When this was the case, there were many alternatives for the amirs to support. Thus, the great amirs of leading tribes, even if they could not be khan, became khan-makers.

On the other hand, over time, the Mongol khans converted to the religions of their subjects, and the three of these khanates embraced Islam. These Islamized Chinggisid khanates adopted the political norms and institutions created and implemented by the Turko-Islamic states (Qarakhanids, Ghaznavids, and Saljuqids) that had a place in the Islamic world before them, and which were largely influenced by pre-Islamic Iranian political traditions.

CHAPTER 3

THE TIMURID POLITICAL SYSTEM

3.1. Early Career of Temür

The Timurid Empire had a central importance in both Islamic and world history. The great armies of its founder, Temür (Tamerlane in the western version comes from the Persian Temür-i lang, Temür the lame), overrun Central Asia, from Delhi to Moscow, from the T'ien Shan Mountains of Central Asia to the Taurus Mountains in Anatolia, conquering, destroying some cities. Throughout his life, Temür sustained his military activities and kept his armies on the move.

Temür, who was a member of the Barlas tribe, was born in 1336 in the town of Kesh (Shahr-i Sabz in the present day), near Samarqand²⁷⁹. At that time, the region was part of Chaghataid khanate, the land of Chinggis Khan's second son Chaghatai, and the Barlas tribe was one of the components of it.

Temür grew up throughout the chaotic period while the Chaghatai ulus which had been divided into two parts under the different khans in Transoxiana and Moghulistan and powerful ulus amirs (commanders) began to acquire actual power and affairs in the ulus via puppet khans.

Hence, Temür rose to power within a nomadic khanate and the formation of this khanate had a great influence on the polity he created. Temür's options and actions were shaped by the principal aspects of the political system that Chinggis Khan had established. Nevertheless, differently from his predecessor nomadic rulers such as Chinggis Khan, Temür established his sovereignty not only in the steppe zone but also in the Islamic settled territories. Thereby, Temür was the heir to the political legacy of the two important traditions; Turco-Mongol and Islam.

According to Ibn Arabshah, Temür began his career as a freebooter in

²⁷⁹ Sharifuddin Ali Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, ed. Muhammad Abbasi, vol. 1, Tehran, 1336/1956-1957, p. 12.

Transoxiana²⁸⁰ and was leading a small band of followers which gradually increased as Temür's plundering was successful²⁸¹. The first chance for Temür to emergence to a powerful position was the invasion of Tughluq Temür Khan, the khan of Moghulistan, to Transoxiana in 1360 with the intent of reuniting the two parts of the khanate under his rule²⁸². Although Hajji Beg, the chief amir of the Barlas tribe resisted the Khan eventually he fled to Khurasan and was killed by brigands²⁸³. Temür was appointed by Tughluq Temür as the successor of Hajji Beg and he was given control of the vicinity of Kesh²⁸⁴. While Tughluq Temür returned to his own region, he appointed his son Ilyas Khwaja and some of his chief amirs to rule Transoxiana. Temür fell out with those powerful amirs and fled with a few followers to near Khiva where he established an alliance with Amir Husayn who was the first powerful amir, ruling through puppet khans in Transoxiana²⁸⁵. Those two amirs spent about three years in Khurasan with small numbers of followers.

Eventually, the death of Tughluk Temür in 1363 allowed Amir Husayn and Temür to advance toward Transoxiana and oblige Ilyas Khwaja to retreat to Moghulistan. After that, they enthroned their own puppet khan and started the consolidation of power over Transoxiana²⁸⁶.

However, over time, the relations between these two allies began to be destroyed and they became opponents. During the next five years, the former allies continuously conspired against each other, sometimes they clashed and sometimes came to terms with acquiring the power. Eventually, Temür raised his own khan to the throne and then attacked the lands of Amir Husayn and defeated him in Balkh. Amir

²⁸⁰ Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, trans. J.H. Saunders, London, 1936, pp. 2-3.

²⁸¹ Manz states that this story was probably a fabrication or exaggeration to Show Temür as a dynastic founder. Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 45.

²⁸² Mirza Haydar Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi, A History of the Khans of Moghulistan*, trans. W.M. Thackston, Harvard University, 1996, p. 16.

²⁸³ Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, Vol. 1, p. 45.

²⁸⁴ Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, pp. 18-20; Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, vol. 1, p. 36.

²⁸⁵ Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, vol. 1, pp. 47-52.

²⁸⁶ Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, vol. 1, pp. 73-74.

Husayn and his Chinggisid puppet khan were executed, thus Temür became ulus begi in Transoxiana²⁸⁷

After acquiring the supreme power Temür spent the remaining thirty-five years of his life in outstanding series of military campaigns which extended from Anatolia to India, and from Iran to Russia. Those conquests were essential to maintain his power and preserve his position and transfer the Chaghatai khanate which was composed of tribal affiliation into a loyal and compliant army of conquest²⁸⁸.

The main factor underlying these successful conquests was the military support of the Turco-Mongol tribes of Transoxiana. Probably, Temür's use of the Chinggisid political legacy was the most important means for recruiting those nomadic elements for his army. Especially ruling in the name of a Chinggisid puppet khan and Temür's devotion to the Chinggisid Yasa enabled him to gain and sustain their support throughout his career.

3.2. Construction of Timurid Political Legitimacy

The development and transformation of political legitimacy in the lands under the Timurid rule were marked by the synthesis of many different religious, philosophical, and intellectual discourses of different ethnic and geographical origins. This is quite true for post-1258 periods when the authority of the Abbasid caliphate disappeared and the Mongol domination brought new forms of authority and legitimacy. How Temür's authority was expressed in his own time and in the period of his successors shows the complexity of the political legitimacy process in the mentioned period.

After the long rule of the caliphate in the Islamic world was legitimized by the ulama, their legitimacy was officially recognized in this domain. Although the authority of the caliphs was challenged first by the local rulers and later by the powerful Saljuqid and Khwarazmshah sultans, the principle of legitimacy of the caliphate was not rejected.

²⁸⁷ Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, vol. 1, pp. 142-154.

²⁸⁸ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 66.

Until the appearance of the Mongols in the Islamic world, the official source of legitimacy was based on the caliphate, especially the Abbasid caliphs. The Abbasids had established their caliphate claims based on kinship with the prophet. "*They claimed to be the ahl-i bayt, the legitimate heirs of the prophet and the warriors for God and His law par excellence*"²⁸⁹ Therefore, all pre-Mongol Islamic governments had to appeal to the Abbasid caliphs to gain legitimacy. With the fall of the caliphate in 1258, this traditional belief was severely damaged. The Mongols tried to fill the gap in legitimacy with another source. Thus, a new source of legitimacy emerged in some parts of the Islamic world, arising from the divine rights of the Chinggisid dynasty.

The Mongol conquest changed not only the economic, social, and cultural spheres but also the political sphere and the foundations of the legitimacy of the sovereignty and challenged the above-mentioned religious foundations of legitimacy. This transformation started with the collapse of the Baghdad caliphate in 1258 at the hands of the Mongols and the formation of a new legitimation model based on the beliefs of the sovereigns who saw their sovereignty over the world as an indispensable right and followed a fluctuating course and included the Timurid dynasty.

Indeed, in the period after the Mongol conquest, numerous models emerged to gain legitimacy, unlike when the model based on the authority of the caliphate prevailed. It is possible to see the reflections of this situation under the rule of Temür, who used both Islamic and Turco-Mongol sources of legitimacy. He first utilized Turco-Mongol sources of legitimacy, and as his dominance spread to the west, Temür turned to Islamic sources of legitimacy. And in the final analysis the founder of the Timurid state, despite his intense military career, achieved minimal acceptance by both the Turco-Mongol elite and the public.

Although his military successes attracted numerous nomads to his command, Temür also considered it necessary to create an infrastructure for the political legitimacy of himself and his family to maintain the ruling power in their own right. Through various methods, Temür intended to establish a base of legitimacy for himself and his offspring. Therefore, just as the legitimacy used by the Chinggis Khanids through birth, Temür also could assert such claims for himself and his descendants.

²⁸⁹ Lambton, *State and Government*, pp. 47-48.

While the Chinggisid legitimacy became a vehicle for Temür to establish his power by gathering Turco-Mongol tribes under his command and Chinggis Khanid political system became a model for Temür and his descendants. The problems that originated from the Chinggis Khanid legacy which Temür faced at the beginning of his career, were overcome by Temür through means of functional political apparatus which Chinggis Khan had used in his own rise to power. Since radical changes in the existing system could give rise to strong dissensions and adverse effects, just as Chinggis Khan, instead of abolishing, Temür regarded the political institutions and legitimacy patterns of the time as suitable means with which he could manipulate. Therefore, Temür utilized multiple bases of legitimacy and therefore, he could operate quite flexibly which relieved him of depending on one single support.

Beatrice Manz states that;

*The world of Temür's time was one in which nomad power remained paramount while the Chinggisid dynasty was in decline, in which the Mongol traditions remained a powerful source of legitimacy while the settled population, formerly subject to Mongol khans, slowly regained some of its former independence*²⁹⁰

Temür himself was a member of the Barlas tribe, one of the many groups that composed the Chaghatai ulus, the allocation of Chinggis Khan's second son Chaghatai. He grew up during the unstable era when the Chaghatai khanate split into two parts under different khans in Transoxiana and Moghulistan. While the Mongols in Moghulistan sustained their traditional customs and tribal association many of those who were in Transoxiana adopted local affiliation and converted to Islam. About hundred years of Turco-Mongolian rule had blurred the differences between nomad rulers and settled subjects and softened the boundary between the steppe and settled regions which surrounded it²⁹¹.

On the other hand, after the death of Chinggis, his successors, who continued their political dominance by being divided into different khanates, were largely Islamized in the fourteenth century. But, this situation did not bring about a change in their perception of sovereignty, and they continued to legitimize their monopoly of the right to rule, not based on a new faith, but by being a member of the Chinggisid lineage.

²⁹⁰ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 12.

²⁹¹ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 9.

However, different authority structures emerged as circumstances that prevented the Chinggisid khans from centralizing power. Some great amirs who were not members of the ruling dynasty centralized the administration by seizing the de facto power of the khans²⁹². These new non-Chinggisid power holders tried to legitimize their rule by appointing the Chinggisid princes as puppet khans on the one hand and establishing marriage ties with the Chinggisid dynasty on the other hand, taking the title of *küragan*.

The most prominent of these amirs, that emerged as khan-makers were Nogay (d. 1300) Mamay (d. 1381)²⁹³ and Edigü (d. 1419) who became the power behind the throne in the Jochid Ulus²⁹⁴. Although they could not claim legitimate sovereignty as they were not Chinggisid, they strengthened their own authority and maintained their legitimacy by using the rulers of the Chinggisid lineage as puppets. The emergence of powerful amirs as khan-makers was not restricted to the Jochid Khanate. The Ilkhanate had the same experience with Chuban, Bolad Chingsang, Husayn Küregen, and his son Shaykh Hasan Jalayir and Esen Qutlugh. The Chaghatai Khanate also experienced the puppet khan practice, just like the Ilkhanid and Jochid Khanates. After the division of the khanate into two halves, Qamaruddin Dughlat used the Chagatayid princes as puppet khan in the eastern part, while in the west Amir Qazghan Qaraunas and then his grandson Amir Husayn and his ally Amir Temür assumed the same role²⁹⁵.

The monopoly of sovereignty enjoyed by Chinggis Khanids was the one of

²⁹² Fletcher, “Tanistry”, p. 8.

²⁹³ In 1380, after the overthrow of Amir Mamay by Toqtamish Khan, the power in the Golden Horde again passed into the hands of a Chinggisid. But Toqtamish, who had a legitimate claim as a Chinggisid, was a serious danger to Temür’s claim on the Chinggisid domain. The expansion of Temür on the Chinggisid realm was a kind of usurpation of rights of sovereignty. Temür averted this danger thanks to his military successes, if not ideologically. With the weakening of Toqtamish power by Temür in 1395 and finally his death in 1407, the rule of Jochid Khanate fell into the hands of non-Chinggisids and eventually the Golden Horde was divided into the Kazan Khanate (1438), The Nogay Horde (1440s), the Crimea Khanate (1441), the Kazakh Khanate (1456), the Astrakhan (1466), and the Tyuman Khanate (1468) later known as the Sibir Khanate. Maria E. Subtelny, “Tamerlane and His Descendants: From Paladins to Patrons”, in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, ed. David Morgan and Anthony Reid, Cambridge University Press, vol.3, 2011, p. 174; Khondmir, Habibu’s-Siyar, pp. 462-464; Timothy May, *The Mongol Empire*, The Edinburgh History of the Islamic Empires Series, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2018, p. 342.

²⁹⁴ Golden, *Introduction*, p. 301. Timothy May, *The Mongol Empire*, p. 342.

²⁹⁵ Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, p. 12, Woods, *Timurid Dynasty*, p. 6; Togan, “Retribalization”, p. 3; Golden, *Introduction*, p. 303; Manz, *Tamerlane*, pp. 43-44.

most important problems Temür was faced with just like other khan-makers before him. When he came to power, Temür had to maintain Chinggisid tradition. Because according to general acceptance, Chinggis Khan's descendants retained the right of sovereignty. His lack of royal descent was an obstacle to the formal legitimation of his rule. He remained loyal to this restriction and used the modest title of amir (commander) "*embellishing it with some adjectives such as buzurg or kalan (great)*"²⁹⁶.

To strengthen his position he obeyed Chinggisid legacy by installing a Chinggisid puppet khan²⁹⁷ and issued his orders and had the khutbah in the name of those puppet khans²⁹⁸. Of course these Chinggisids did not have only symbolic functions. In most of Temür's military expeditions the khan accompanied the army and even he took place in the vanguard during the campaigns²⁹⁹. The existence of the khan in Temür's army provided legitimacy for tribal nomadic elements. Otherwise he could not subjugate any of the other amirs in the ulus. Because despite Islam growing, Chinggisid tradition also was powerful in Transoxiana.

Furthermore, Temür confirmed his adherence to Chinggis Khan through adopting the title *küragan* (son-in-law) after he had married to Chinggisid princesses³⁰⁰. He also married his sons and grandsons to Chinggisid noble women³⁰¹. Although those marriages did not raise the Timurids to membership of

²⁹⁶ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 14.

²⁹⁷ After the last confrontation with Amir Husayn, Temür set up a Chinggisid Khan to the throne to maintain the loyalty of tribal people in his army, This Chinggisid puppet, Soyurghatmish Khan, served for his purpose until he died in 1388. After Soyurghatmish Temür enthroned Sultan Mahmud Khan to the throne. Shamsuddin Shami, *Zafarnama*, 57-58, 111.

²⁹⁸ Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, p. 83.

²⁹⁹ Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, 48.

³⁰⁰ The first marriage with the Chinggisid princess was took place when Temür defeated Amir Husayn in 1370. From the harem of Amir Husayn, Temür took Qazan Khan's daughter, Saray Mulk Khanum, and made her his chief wife. As a consequence of this marriage Temür received the title of "*küragan*". After that, Temür married with Tukul Khanim, known as Kichik Khanum, the daughter of Khizr Khwaja Khan. Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, p. 246, 315; Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, *Embassy to the Court of Tamerlane*, trans. Guy Le Strange, London, 1928, p. 242; H.R. Roemer, "Temür in Iran", in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 6, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 45.

³⁰¹ Jahangir was married with Khanzada Begim who remarried with Miranshah after Jahangir's death. Miranshah married the daughter of Soyurghatmish Khan who was the first Chinggisid puppet of Temür. Umar Shaykh married with Milkat Agha who remarried with Shahrukh after Umar Shaykh's death.

Chinggisid dynasty (*Altan Urugh*) the offspring from these marriages would have Chinggisid descent through their mothers³⁰². By establishing direct links between his family and the Chinggisids, while Temür gained power and high status he also pretended like a restorer of the Chinggisid Empire.

Temür also followed the military and governmental pattern established by Chinggis Khan. Like Chinggis Khan, he also altered the tribal structure by transforming people of Chaghatai ulus into a nontribal army of conquest. Thus, he could transfer the power from tribal leaders to individuals whose loyalty was to Temür himself. At the center of this new organization were Temür and his family members who were assigned as governors of conquered territories. His military troops were led by commanders personally loyal to Temür. During his reign, tribes remained intact and largely unchanged in structure. Temür removed the control of troops and the land of the ulus Chaghatai from tribes by appointing his own followers to govern regions previously held by the tribes³⁰³.

Additionally, like Chinggis Khan, Temür created a new elite composed of his personal followers and his family members. He replaced the tribal aristocracy with this new elite group gradually. Thus, at the center of power were he and the people loyal to him personally. He used his elite group to provide command over the whole of the army and removed troops from the tribal chiefs to put them under the leadership of his following³⁰⁴.

Temür also made the sons and grandsons governor of his dominions when they came of age and appointed amirs to serve them as Chinggis Khan did. But he never allowed them to emerge as a local power. He limited these princes' power by appointing his following to the regional armies, treating princes' armies as part of his own, and reassigning them to different provinces frequently.

Moreover, Temür's grandsons, Muhammad Sultan b. Jahangir and Ulugh Beg b. Shahrukh were also married to Chinggisid princesses. Muizz al-Ansab, fol. 115b, 140b. in John E. Woods, "Timur's Genealogy," in *Intellectual Studies on Islam*, ed. by M.M. Mazzaoui and V.B. Moreen, Salt Lake City, 1990, pp. 85-86.

³⁰² For more information about marriage with Chinggisid princess see: Musa Şamil Yüksel, "Türk Kültüründe "Levirat" ve Timurlularda Uygulanışı", *Turkish Studies*, vol. 5/3, Summer, 2010.

³⁰³ Manz, *Tamerlane*, pp. 79-80.

³⁰⁴ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 84.

On the other hand, Temür and his followers were products of a culture somewhere in the transition between traditional steppe nomadism and Perso-Islamic urban. There was an increasing belief in the local form of Islam among his subjects and followers. At that time Sufis and other religious groups were very active and common. These conditions required Temür to find alternative bases for Islamic support and legitimacy³⁰⁵. He achieved this through patronage of ulama and Sufi shaykhs.

When he was a child, Temür was attached to Sufi shaykh Shamsuddin Kulal who had been the spiritual adviser of Temür's father, Amir Taraghay. He also had his own spiritual adviser, Mir Sayyid Baraka. In the sources, it is stated that Temür won some of the battles that he was about to lose, such as his victory over Toqtamish, with the miracle of Baraka. In addition, Temür donated some regions in Khurasan with all their income to Sayyid Baraka, and these lands were inherited by his children³⁰⁶. Both of these religious men provided Temür sacred prestige and strengthened his standing among his followers and subjects. Patronizing of holy men was also continued during the 15th century by Temür's descendants.

Moreover, he also patronized several shrines, madrasas, mosques, and other religious buildings. Again these building programs set a pattern for his successors after his death. He also presented himself by declaring that most of his military campaigns were carried out for protecting and defending Islam³⁰⁷.

All these legitimating strategies enabled Temür to claim an independent sovereign. His successful conquests were also a sign of divine favor. Therefore, the Timurid successors did not have to deal with legitimacy problems like him, and being a descendant of Temür became a source of legitimacy in its own right for them.

In summary, Temür's rule was similar to the other nomad rulers which preceded and followed him. He had received two well-developed systems of government; Turco-Mongolian and Perso-Islamic. He combined and used them according to his own demands. He benefited the bureaucracy of his settled provinces to govern

³⁰⁵ For Temür's use of religion for political purposes, see: Musa Şamil Yüksel, "Arap Kaynaklarına Göre Timur ve Din", *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, vol. XXIII, N. 1; July 2008, pp. 244-247.

³⁰⁶ Yüksel, "Timur ve Din", p. 241.

³⁰⁷ Beatrice Manz, "Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty", *Iranian Studies*, vol. XXI, no: 1-2, 1988, p. 10.

conquered lands while imposing above this bureaucracy another administration systemized in the Turco-Mongolian tradition and staffed by members of the Chaghatai ruling elite³⁰⁸. Although during his lifetime the administration he established functioned extremely well but, right after his death his state fragmented.

After a reign of 36 years, Temür died in 1405 and on his deathbed he designated as successor his grandson. His death caused political and ideological conflicts within the dynasty. These disputes identified the structure and progress of Temür's successors' political cultures in Transoxiana and Iran. Temür's realm split into four main regions and each one became the scene of a power struggle. In several ways, the political conditions after Temür's death resembled those of the mid-14th century. In this situation, the dynasty's members competed with each other, political power was also difficult to obtain and the powerful amirs were not reliable since they shifted their loyalty from one prince to another.

Numerous Timurid dynasty members were struggling with each other for power and on the other hand, there were a great number of powerful amirs with their own followings and provinces. As rival princes competed for their services, the amirs became even stronger through the privileges and resources granted them to attract their services. After Temür's death, several princes tried to assert their claims to the throne; the amirs who were no longer attached to a central authority began to act according to their own desires.

The seeds for these succession struggles go back to the Turco-Mongolian political tradition. According to this notion, the country was the joint property and inheritance of the ruling family. Thus, the estate was divided among all male members of the royal dynasty. These princes had the right to claim political sovereignty through their share. Because no fixed rule prevailed for succession, the death of the ruler resulted in struggles among the princes and political fragmentation. Authority was not institutionalized in the form of an office and loyalty and obedience were personal, after the descent ruler's death the rival candidates started to compete for the support of the leading men.

In brief, the princes found themselves insecure situation after Temür's death

³⁰⁸ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 107.

since the system Temür established was personal and could not function without him. In terms of legality, each prince was equal for being a descendant of Temür. Thus, they felt in need to justify their own rule in different ways. Temür's using multiple bases of legitimacy was reflected in his successors' various claims they asserted. Some of them gave priority to Islamic legitimacy over Chinggisid, while for others Chinggisid legitimacy was predominant and others acknowledged the two. Timurid princes' descent from Temür was not enough to legitimate their authority over the sedentary Islamic region. They had to adapt to sedentary rule and adopt the model of the Perso-Islamic state³⁰⁹. Thus during the 15th century, Islamic legitimating principles and institutions began to replace nomadic ideals. Especially under the rule of Temür's youngest son Shahrukh who succeeded in the succession struggles by eliminating his rivals after his father's death, Islamic legitimacy started to replace the nomadic one. His transfer of the capital from Samarqand in Transoxiana to Herat in Khurasan in which Perso-Islamic civilization was predominantly confirmed the dynasty's new orientation.

Since the Timurid princes were not sufficient to legitimate their authority over the sedentary Islamic regions of Iran and Central Asia, they had to reorient the ideological and economic bases of the empire. There was a need to adapt to the requirements of the sedentary rule and adopt the model of the Perso-Islamic state. Furthermore, with the disintegration of centralized political control after Temür's death various religious groups, especially Sufi or mystical orders enjoyed great popularity. Many Timurid princes realized the importance of attracting support from these groups for their authority and patronized these religious figures. In the complicated atmosphere of especially the second half of the 15th century charismatic Sufi leaders played important roles by conferring on rulers temporal legitimacy and religious prestige. In return, they were rewarded with political favors and land grants³¹⁰. Thus, Sufis shaykhs and ulama gained remarkable power in Timurid realm socially,

³⁰⁹ Maria E. Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition: Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran*, Leiden: Brill, 2007, p. 4.

³¹⁰ Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century*, Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Washington DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989: p. 251.

politically and economically.

Furthermore, in the competitive atmosphere of this century, all Timurid princes were required to attract the support of the military elites against their rivals. Since after Temür's death, the external military campaigns and thus, booty incomes did not exist anymore the main instrument in the hands of Timurid princes for acquiring support from military elites was their own territories. Consequently, each prince began to grant their lands not only to their military elites but also to sedentary Iranian elements including ulama and shaykhs. These land grants, named *soyurghal*, were characterized, Maria Subtelny states, by exemption from taxation and administrative interference on the part of the central government³¹¹. After a while, increasing these land grants resulted in a shortening of the tax revenues from the central treasury. For this reason, Timurid rulers periodically tried to reform the system of landholding and taxation for their centralization of fiscal administrations³¹². But since such reforms caused the reduction of the privileges of the Turkic elite, it was reacted by this group.

Moreover, the restructuring Timurid policy from a nomadic empire to a Perso-Islamic state caused tensions between two challenging ideological trends; centripetal, represented by the promoters of the Persian bureaucratic tradition who wanted to establish a bureaucratic state on Perso-Islamic model in which the Sharia represented the chief ideological basis for centralization and centrifugal, represented by the Turco-Mongolian military elite who sought to preserve the decentralized system according to *yasa*³¹³.

Under the administrative system of Timurids, there were two main branches; military, represented by the Turkic military elite, and civilian, represented by Persian bureaucratic intelligentsia. After Temür's death, the distinctions between these two branches of government became blurred when Persian bureaucrats became stronger in the Timurid household establishment. Tensions between these two competing

³¹¹ Subtelny, "Socioeconomic Bases, p. 480; Halil İnalcık, "Autonomous Enclaves in Islamic States: Temliks, *Soyurghals*, Yurdluk-Ocaklık, Malikane-Mukata'as and Awqaf", in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East Studies in Honor of John E. Woods*, ed. Judith Pfeifer and Sholeh A. Quinn, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2006, pp. 112-134.

³¹² Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 38.

³¹³ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 41.

ideological forces came to a head particularly at the end of the century at the time of the reign of Husayn Bayqara, one of the offspring of Temür. Timurid princes' efforts to transform the state from a nomadic polity to a centralized bureaucratic Perso-Islamic state were restrained by opposition from the members of the Turco-Mongolian elites who wanted to protect their identity by loyalty to Chinggisid custom.

The result of political decentralization was the multiplication of rival centers, each competing with the other for prestige and dominance. One of the most widespread and most effective ways in which this competition between courts founds its expression was in court patronage of cultural activities – primarily of literature, including poetry and historical writing, but also of the arts- miniature painting and architecture. The result of this competition was arising of cultural, primarily literary production. The late Timurid period of the second half of the fifteenth century exemplifies well this connection between political instability and decentralization of power on the one hand and the flourishing of cultural activity on the other.

Furthermore, the main motivation was not only greatness and aesthetic considerations. Timurids used this cultural patronage for their political purposes. They aimed to legitimize their claims through Islamic forms of art. The princes' courts developed as artistic centers, competing with each other for artists and poets who could bring them pleasure and prestige. The cultural programs and interests of princes encouraged a direct relationship between art and ideology. These cultural activities and patronizing the artists demonstrated them as the legal rulers in the Persian world. When we look at the manuscripts and inscriptions of this period we can see that the Timurid rulers used these works of art as vehicles for their royal ideology. That is, the purpose of developing this cultural reputation was to obtain power and recognition of their rule.

Through the *soyurghals* and land grants all of its beneficiaries, religious men, Turkic amirs, and Iranian bureaucrats, had access to large resources. This situation enforced a decentralization atmosphere which formed the background of cultural and artistic activities. In this atmosphere members of the Timurid dynasty and their followers became acculturated by the surrounding Persianate atmosphere, adopted Persian cultural models, and acted as patrons of literature, painting, architecture, and music. Concurrently, they encouraged the creation of a Chaghatai language (Eastern

Turkish) and literature to preserve their Turkic cultural heritage³¹⁴.

In conclusion, the Timurid dynasty rose to power within Muslim society as a follower of the Chinggisid tradition and a defender of Islam. Temür and his descendants were both Muslim and loyal to the Chinggisid heritage and legacy. This duality identified Temür's and his descendants' policies. While Temür's descendants gave priority to one of them they did not undermine the other completely. They used each of them for their political ambitions. In the regions, Temür reigned the Chinggisid sovereignty ended but its legacy was dominant. Thus, he had to be loyal to the Chinggisid legacy. At the center of the state organization, Temür established himself and his family. While he used the values of Islamic civilization and Chinggisid tradition he put himself and his family members at the center of this arrangement. "Temür presented a picture of himself, Beatrice Manz says, "*as an equal to Chinggis Khan and as the supreme Muslim ruler of his time, restorer of Mongol order and fighter for the Islamic faith.*"³¹⁵

During the period after the death of Temür in 1405, his empire was weakened by the succession struggles of his descendants and fragmented. Each prince used the tradition of Chinggisid and Islamic civilization for their own political purposes. They gave priority to *yasa* sometimes to *sharia* in conformity with their policies. According to the general assumption among the scholars, Timurid princes were not loyal to the Chinggisid *yasa* as Temür. But *yasa* did not lose its importance during Temür's successors' reign. However, they legalized their power and authority by using the Perso-Islamic state tradition.

The succession struggles that emerged after Temür's death in 1405 made a lasting impact on the notion of sovereignty, framed during the reign of Temür. Although the Chinggisid and Perso-Islamic traditions combined by Temür did not completely disappear, how they were conceived and exercised evolved to adapt to the new emerging political realities.

³¹⁴ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 37.

³¹⁵ Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Family and Ruler in Timurid Historiography," in Devin Deweese, ed., *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, Bloomington, Indiana University, 2001, p. 57.

3.3. Timurid Empire Under His Successors

During the 15th century, territories under Timurid rule were the scene of the interaction of Central Asian steppe culture with Iranian settled civilization which produced new cultural, economic, and social elements. While during Temür's reign, this process of interaction became stronger in a central way, after his death, it developed into a decentralized form.

Two key aspects of the Chinggisid and Timurid political systems shaped fifteenth-century Timurid politics: Turco-Mongol inheritance patterns and the nature of late Timurid authority. Because of the absence of an established pattern of succession in a Turco-Mongolian society, the death of a ruler brought about an internal war and dissolution of the polity. In a word, at the ruler's death, because the succession did not transfer automatically, internecine war emerged. After a ruler's death, the male members of the dynasty, his brothers, sons, uncles, nephews, etc. were candidates to succeed him and started to compete for the throne. Joseph Fletcher named this principle of succession that the most talented male member of the dynasty should inherit the throne, commonly by murder and war, as "tanistry"³¹⁶. The purpose of this process was to choose the best-qualified scion of the dynasty. Nobles of the dynasty had to see which son, brother, uncle, grandson, or nephew of the deceased ruler would win the chieftaincy. Because "*..the succession to the throne was a matter of destiny, left in the hands of God.*"³¹⁷ Once a member of the dynasty seized the power, there was no more legality issue. The winner was supposed that he was confirmed by God.

After the sovereign's death, each candidate for the throne had to organize an alliance of supporters behind him. The loyalty of these supporters was for the candidate himself not for the office of the ruler. That is why the sovereign's relationships with the tribal chiefs were essential. He had to earn and re-earn their loyalty. It was not enough to win the succession struggle. To keep his people's obedience, the ruler had to provide them revenues. As soon as he eliminated his rivals he began to lead them in

³¹⁶ Fletcher, "Monarchic", p. 239.

³¹⁷ İnalçık, "Succession", p. 38.

external war to continue his distribution of booty³¹⁸. “A leader who won battles won followers. A leader who lost battles lost followers.”³¹⁹

For the Central Asian Turco-Mongol tribal people, any powerful member of the ruling family was eligible for political leadership of the state. Because in this tradition conquered territories were considered the private possession of the ruler and would be divided among the members of the dynasty³²⁰. That is to say, the internecine struggles for succession were connected with the practice of division of conquered territories among the members of the dynasty³²¹. According to the system, older sons received their share of inheritance while their father was alive, generally on their attainment of majority and marriage³²². “This is the pattern for all sons but the youngest”³²³. The youngest son inherited the father’s own property and was named as “*od-chigin*” (the prince of the fire). It narrowed to brother and sons sometime involving all male members.

This system of appanage was perpetual in Turco-Mongol states and practiced from the old times. Barthold describes the model of succession among the Qarakhanids as follows:

*In the Kingdom of the Qara-Khanids, as in all nomadic empires the conception of patrimonial property was carried over from the domain of personal law to that of state law. The Kingdom was considered the property of the whole family of the Khan and was divided into number of appanages, the larger ones being in turn subdivided into many small ones.*³²⁴

In the empire of Chinggis Khan, the same form of succession was practiced.

³¹⁸ Fletcher, “Monarchic”, pp. 241-242, Fletcher, “Tanistry”, pp. 6-7.

³¹⁹ Fletcher, “The Mongols”, pp. 29-30.

³²⁰ Stephen Frederic Dale, *The Garden of the Eight Pradises: Babur and the Culture of Empire in Central Asia, Afghanistan and India (1483-1530)*, Leiden and Boston; E.J. Brill, 2004, p. 68.

³²¹ “The rules of the inheritance within the family were applied to the rules of succession in the empire.” Wilhelm Barthold, *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, London, 1928, p. 268.

³²² Lawrence Krader, *Social Organization of the Mongol-Turkic Pastoral Nomads*, Bloomington and The Hague, 1963, 349; Barthold, *Turkestan*, 268; Sechin Jagchid and Paul Hyer, *Mongolia’s Culture and Society*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press; Folkestone: Dawson, 1979, p. 252.

³²³ Krader, *Social Organization*, p. 350.

³²⁴ Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 269.

Like other nomad rulers Temüjin (later Chinggis Khan), after consolidating his power among Turco-Mongol nomads, his acquiring divine mandate from Enduring Sky (möngke tenggri) was confirmed by his military successes and his growing power. While he claimed the right to rule through divine mandate, Chinggis Khan also recognized the rights of his close relatives by granting appanages (qubis) to various family members. But this granting was limited to only his brothers, sons, and mother³²⁵. The members of this sovereignty-sharing group became known as the "Altan Urugh (the golden clan)". The main recipients of Chinggis Khan's distribution of appanages were his sons. According to Mongol inheritance rule, the three oldest sons, Jochi, Chaghatai, and Ögedei³²⁶ received their shares when they came of age during their father's lifetime, while the youngest son, Tolui, took possession of his share on Chinggis Khan's death in 1227. Chinggis Khan also assigned the chief noyans (commander) to each appanage holder who was directly answerable to Chinggis Khan and during his lifetime, Chinggis Khan did not lose his control over those territories as the princes' submission to him was clear.

To preserve and transfer the political authority to his descendants Chinggis Khan received the approval of all his sons to the selection of Ögedei as his heir apparent. But his other sons and their siblings continued to rule their uluses which Chinggis Khan had assigned to them. Correspondingly, in the first generation after his death, the question of succession was not at issue, but after Ögedei died in 1241, the succession struggle reasserted itself as Chinggis Khan had not left a clear system of succession and the Chinggisid Empire broke down³²⁷.

Furthermore, after Chinggis Khan's death, his descendants claimed that "the divinely granted good fortune had passed to them"³²⁸. While the Mongol rulers

³²⁵ *Secret History*, p. 242.

³²⁶ Jochi's lands stretched from Khwarazm to the Volga and would also include any further conquests to the West, Chaghatai's yurt was extended from Bukhara and Samarqand to the territory of the Uighurs and Ögedei's yurt was centered on the Emil and Qabaq Basins near Ala Kul Lake. Tolui inherited the Ulugh Yurt (Great Yurt), stretching between the Onan and Kerulen rivers and including the original Mongol homeland. Alauddin Ata Malik, *Tarikh-i Jahan Gusha*, ed. By Muhammad Qazvini, 3 vols, London and Leiden, 1925-1937, vol. 1, p. 31.

³²⁷ Fletcher, "Tanistry", p. 15.

conformed themselves to the needs of the regions they ruled they continued to keep their nomadic tradition and combined steppe principles with the custom of their subjects and produced a new culture. Nevertheless, the sovereignty was restricted to the lineage of Chinggis Khan, and only the descendants of Chinggis Khan had the right to rule³²⁹.

Moreover, by the mid-fourteenth century, the Mongol rulers of the west of Mongolia had converted to Islam. Thus, they began to rule both as divinely favored descendants of Chinggis Khan and as Muslim sultans, advised by Islamic scholars. It may have been seen as a way of attracting support for Chinggisid princes who lacked the traditional basis of power among the regular nomadic troops of the ulus³³⁰. As there were many contenders for power, the support of the components of the subject population became significant and even decisive. Hence, this competence led princes into a natural affiliation with the Muslim sedentary population of Transoxiana and the nomads who were influenced by them.

Perso-Islamic legitimacy required that rulers establish their rule by maintaining just and peaceful conditions under which the faith could be properly practiced and the Shariat obeyed. This Islamic sovereignty theory directed Chinggisid candidates to identify themselves with the interests of the Islamicized population.

This required a conciliation between the Chinggi Khanid legitimacy and Islamic theory. The nomads of Transoxiana still considered that the sovereignty was the monopoly of the descendants of Chinggis Khan. So, they accepted any descendants as answering the requirement. Once the minimum requirements of being Chinggis Khanid were met treatment and adequacy to the Muslim population became an important criterion.

Because the number of candidates for power had increased the support of the

³²⁸ Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds*, Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 6-7. At the quriltai of 1206, Chinggis Khan claimed he had conquered all tribes through the protection and assistance of Tenggri. *Secret History*, p. 208.

³²⁹ Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Asia from the Bronze Age to the Present*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009, pp. 185-196; Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, trans. J.H. Saunders, London, 1936, pp. 56-57.

³³⁰ The fourteenth century witnessed the growth of popular religious movements throughout the Islamic World. Many of these groups were influenced by Sufi ideas and leaders. Woods, *The Aqqoyunlu*.

great commanders (amirs, noyans) began to be crucial. The amirs who did not want to lose their importance and wanted to continue their power rather than prefer powerful khans chose weak puppet khans who could be easily controlled.

The transfer of power from khans to their great noyans was the result of Chinggis Khan's appanagement of his empire among his four sons. While he assigned numerous tribes and people to each appanage he also appointed strong noyans and nökers (warriors) and their families to the retinue of each son. The amirs and their families were allotted certain lands and people for their own survival. These arrangements were not ephemeral and transferrable. Over time, these tribes grew in numbers and the amirs of these tribes hold a remarkable military force of kinsmen. Conversely, as their relatives were their rivals for the throne, the Chinggisid princes had no kin they could depend on and they did not have considerable possession since their appanages were re-divided in every change of succession. The princes needed to attract the great noyans and their nökers into their service to be successful. Because they did not have anything to offer other than their small territories, the amirs of some tribes became stronger than the princes and their support became crucial for the princes who wanted to be khan.

In the first half of the fourteenth century, as numerous princes could fulfill the obligation of being Chinggisid, the amirs had many options for their power. Consequently, powerful amirs of principal tribes began to depose the Chinggisid khans and assumed sovereignty directly. Hence, the great amirs became khan-makers but they could not become khan themselves³³¹. Furthermore, Islamic kingship models became satisfactory to these non-Chinggisid rulers. One of these powerful amirs was Temür of the Barlas tribe. He grew up during the turbulent period of Chaghatai ulus. When he emerged the khanate split into two halves under separate khans in Transoxiana and Mogulistan. At that time the powerful amirs began to seize the real power in the uluses through puppet khans. After he defeated his rivals, Temür became the unchallenged leader of Transoxiana. For the remaining thirty-five years of his life, Temür was engaged in a series of military expeditions. These campaigns included the regions from Anatolia to India and from southern Iran to the borders of Siberia. He

³³¹ Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, Tehran, 1383, p. 32.

accomplished these conquests with the help of the Turco-Mongol tribes of Transoxiana. He recruited these nomads by manipulating the Chinggis Khanid political legacy. He took his decision and ruled in the name of a Chinggisid puppet khan and adhered to Chinggis yasa and thus mobilized and maintained the support of the nomadic tribes.

Additionally, Temür also needed to establish some basis for the political legitimacy of himself and his family members in their own right. To achieve such a status, Temür established direct links between his family and the Chinggis Khanids through marriage ties. In this way, Temür and his siblings could assert legitimacy which was under the monopoly of Chinggis Khanids.

While he utilized Chinggis Khanid legitimacy for achieving his empire, Temür also modeled Chinggis Khanid political system. The Timurid dynasty became a ruling family in which sovereignty and its benefits were to be shared among them. Each of the competing members of the dynasty built their own followings and service ties. These service relationships became critical for Temür's descendants just like it was for Chinggis Khanid princes.

In summary, like Chinggis Khan, Temür also accepted the political institutions and forms of the legitimacy of his time and operated in these parameters and also utilized existing institutions for his own advantage. While he encountered several legitimate restrictions, Temür overcame those problems by utilizing the political and legal means of his time successfully. One of those restraints was the Chinggis Khanid political legacy; the "*monopoly of sovereignty which was accorded to Chinggisid descendants*". Secondly, Temür and his followers belonged to a world in which there was a transition between traditional Turco-Mongol nomadism and a Perso-Islamic culture. Temür realized that he needed to obtain alternative bases of support and legitimacy that Islam could provide, especially for his conquests spreading to the Islamic civilization. He also utilized Islamic law to neutralize the challenges of Chinggis Khanids. Consequently, he created a personal political perception of sovereignty by using multiple bases of legitimacy for his own goals. It gave him more flexibility in his actions and thus, he did not depend on the support of a single group. He sometimes benefitted from Islamic legitimacy by appearing as a good Muslim ruler for the support of Islamic audiences and sometimes took advantage of Chinggis

Khanid legitimacy for the support of the Turco-Mongol nomads of the Chaghatai ulus. Because he could not use directly the sovereignty which was in the hands of Chinggis Khan's descendants, instead of creating a new political structure to cope with this problem, Temür enjoyed a means which had already been created and formalized by the great amirs over twenty-five years; "Chinggis Khanid puppet khan."³³² For obtaining the obedience of the amirs of Transoxiana and for bolstering the loyalty of his army, Temür enthroned the Chinggis Khanid khans and issued all decrees and coined money in the names of these khans³³³. He had the khutbah read in the khans' names throughout all conquered territories.

Furthermore, to strengthen his and his own lineage's status and to establish a bond with Chinggis Khanid legitimacy, Temür also benefitted the wedlock. He arranged marriages with Chinggis Khanid princesses for himself and his sons and elaborated the Timurid genealogy by raising some of his ancestors to Chinggis Khanids. As a consequence of this marriage, Temür adopted the title "küragan" (son-in-law of the khan) to mark his connection to the lineage of Chaghatai khans. He used this title on all of his official documents and correspondences as "Amir Temür Küragan".

Although the Chinggisid and Islamic sovereignty ideologies synthesized by Temür remained valid, their conception and implementation were transformed to adapt to the realities created by the political and religious developments of the period. Despite his miraculous military success and the central rule he created, Temür had to cope with the ideological restrictions of the period, and another creative method used by Temür was a creation of a personal myth³³⁴.

The width of his successful conquests and grandiose construction projects were indicative of Temür's Divine mandate, and he expressed this by adopting the title of "Sahib-Qiran", the Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction. It provided an alternative to Temür, who lacked the accepted legitimation criteria of the period, to justify his

³³² Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, p. 231.

³³³ Temür first enthroned Suyurghatmish Khan (d. 1388) and then his son Sultan Mahmud Khan, Shami, *Zafarnama*, ed. F. Tauer, 2 vols., Prague, 1937-1956, p. 111; Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, pp. 231-234.

³³⁴ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 15.

sovereignty. Temür, who presented himself as the protector and restorer of the Chinggisid order at the beginning of his career, produced a more inclusive myth as a result of his successful military and administrative career. With the title of Sahib-Qiran "Temür was not only restorer of the Chinggis Khanid order but himself a second, equal, Chinggis Khan"³³⁵.

Originating from pre-Islamic Iran, this title denoted the divine choice of a ruler whose birth coincided with a major planetary conjunction. Although the term Sahib-Qiran was used in many poems and historical works before Temür³³⁶, the direct reference to Temür with this title, especially in the period of his successors, made the Sahib-Qiran and epithet almost exclusive to Temür. *Zafarnama* of Shami, who used the title of Sahib-Qiran for Temür for the first time, became a model for works written in later periods³³⁷, and thus, starting from Nizamu'd-Din Shami, most of the Timurid histories of the fifteenth century referred Temür and some of his successors with this title³³⁸.

Chann states that although Shami mentions Temür as Amiri-i Bozorg Temür-i Küraghan in his *Zafarnama*, Yazdi eliminated the Chinggisid connection by referring to Temür as Hazrat-i Sahib-Qiran in his own *Zafarnama*, which he wrote with different ideological motives. According to Chann, these changes are a reflection of Temür's exalted position as a source of legitimacy and his successor's abandonment of the practice of puppet Chinggisid khan, and thanks to the popularity of these works, temür's charismatic image was codified with the title of Sahib-Qiran³³⁹.

On the other hand, the sixteenth-century Ottoman bureaucrat Mustafa Ali, in

³³⁵ Manz, *Symbolism*, p. 107.

³³⁶ Jonathan Brack, "Theologies of Auspicious Kingship: The Islamization of Chinggisid Sacral Kingship in the Islamic World" *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 60, no. 4, 2018, p. 1160.

³³⁷ Woods, "Historiography", p. 99.

³³⁸ Christopher Markiewicz, *The Crisis of Kingship in Late Medieval Islam: Persian Emigres and the Making of Ottoman Sovereignty*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019, p. 47, 171.

³³⁹ Naindeep Singh Chann, "Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction: Origins of the Şāhib-Qirān", *Iran & the Caucasus*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2009, p. 99.

his world history titled “*Künhü’l-Ahbar*” (Essence of History), defined a hierarchy of sovereignty in two categories; muayyad min indullah, "succored by God," and sahib-qiran, "master of an auspicious conjunction."³⁴⁰ According to him, the first term was for a sovereign who was never defeated in a war, while the second one signified a world conqueror who established a universal dominion³⁴¹. Mustafa Ali named only three rulers in the sahib-qiran category; Alexander, Chinggis Khan, and Temür. In the hierarchy Mustafa Ali designated, while success in war was key in the first category, which pointed to divine mandate, the category of sahib-qiran referred to being a world conqueror. Therefore, for Mustafa Ali, sahib-qiran identified the supreme form of sovereignty. Chann states that this title was used to denote a new form of sovereignty, based on personal charisma and achievements, created instead of old forms of dynastic legitimacy³⁴².

Temür's frequent statements that he owed his miraculous achievements to God and the supernatural stories about him in the Timurid histories created a charismatic and legendary image of Temür. Thus, as a divinely favored ruler registered with the title of Sahib-Qiran, Temür created an alternative to the Chinggisid claim of divine mandate³⁴³.

Temür also confirmed his family's status as a ruling dynasty by assigning his sons and grandsons to his conquered lands. Although he switched the territories allotted to his offspring at different times, these assignments were confirmed during the last years of his life. Only two of Temür's four sons were still living when he died, and one of these, Miranshah, had been ineffectual as he had fallen from his horse which caused brain damage. Miranshah still retained Azerbaijan and Iraq but the actual government had held by his sons Umar and Abubakr, placed in Tabriz and Baghdad

³⁴⁰ Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali, *Künhü’l-Ahbar*, ed. Prof. Dr. Ali Çavuşoğlu, Ankara, 2019, p. 11.

³⁴¹ Abdullah Gündoğdu, Türkiye ve Türk Dünyası tarih Bilincinde Cengiz ve Halefleri Algısı, in *Cengiz Han ve Mirası*, ed. Doç. Dr. Cem Korkut, Dr. Mürsel Doğrul, Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, Ankara 2021, pp. 82-83; Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600)*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986, p. 279.

³⁴² Chann, “Sahib-Qiran”, pp. 99-100.

³⁴³ Manz, “Symbolism”, pp. 117-118; Beatrice Manz, “Family and Ruler In Timurid Historiography”, in *Studies On Central Asian History In Honor Of Yuri Bregel*, Edited By Devin DeWeese, Indiana University Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies Bloomington, Indiana 2001, pp. 63-64.

respectively. Temür's other living son Shahrukh was the governor of Khurasan. Temür's eldest son's offspring, Pir Muhammad bin Jahangir who was designated as Temür's heir apparent, hold Afghanistan. The appanage of Temür's second son Umar Shaykh had been given to his son Pir Muhammad after he died in 1394.

Although Temür bestowed some power to the mirzas³⁴⁴ in their granted lands, he did not let them govern freely. He usually appointed a group of amirs "*ateke*" (tutors) to watch over and guide each prince and they were answerable directly to Temür himself. Clavijo said that Temür spread false rumors about his death to see who would revolt against his will³⁴⁵.

Temür's efforts may be interpreted as his response to Chinggis Khanid political system. To mobilize and maintain the Turco-Mongol nomads who built his military force Temür used puppet khans to establish his family as a ruling dynasty which was similar status to Chinggis Khanids, he designated marriages with Chinggis Khanids and elaborated the genealogy. But, even if Timurids would become a ruling dynasty that had equal status with Chinggis Khanids, they could not claim to rule in their own right and required legitimating their rule with Chinggis Khanid puppet khans. Because they could not ignore the claims of Chinggis Khanids, the Timurids elevated their own status by emphasizing Chinggis Khanid connections.

Apart from those, Temür encountered another problem that arose from the quarrel between Islamic and Turco-Mongol legitimation. Temür rose to an environment in which Islamization continued among Turco-Mongol nomads. He could not reject Chinggis Khanid legitimacy for support of Islamic norms as the supporters of Temür kept believing the priority of Chinggis Khanid claims. But he needed to affirm his Islamic identity. For achieving this, Temür cultivated sufi shaykhs of Transoxiana and Khurasan to strengthen his situation both among his Chaghataid followers and his settled subjects. These sufi shaykhs not only attested to Temür's superior spiritual powers but also served to justify his invasion and conquest of Islamic lands. Before beginning his campaigns in the Middle East, Temür paid attention to

³⁴⁴ The title "mirza" was using for the Timurid princes. It is come from "amir-zadah" (son of amir).

³⁴⁵ Clavijo, *Embassy*, p. 317. Temür had suspicions about the princes, because he saw some disloyal behavior from princes' side and punished directly not the princes but their advisors and supporters.

obtaining the blessing of Muslim men of religion³⁴⁶. He also used some means to appear as a guardian of Islamic norms like protecting pilgrims, ousting tyrants and conducting religiously sanctioned warfare (ghaza)³⁴⁷. To invite the obedience of rulers within the Middle East, he also maintained an attitude his puppet khan as an Islamic monarch –padshah-i Islam-³⁴⁸.

Temür's patronage of religion served to enhance his charisma and that of his dynasty. The ambiguity about the status of the Chinggis Khanids and Timurids and Temür's utilization of multiple legitimating concepts to build an extensive basis of support continued to occupy the agenda of Timurid descendants in Central Asia.

After a reign of thirty-six years, Temür died in Otrar, in 1405. On his deathbed, he designated as his successor his grandson Pir Muhammad b. Jahangir. But this prince who was the governor of conquered North India could not acquire the bonds and loyalties that Temür had created for himself³⁴⁹. As it has been said, the death of a strong nomad ruler often brought about a political breakdown and an armed succession struggle. In the Timurid realm, within a few days of Temür's death his sons, grandsons, together with his closest followers, began to struggle for power³⁵⁰. Because all of Temür's sons and grandsons saw themselves as valid candidates who had independent bases of power and influence, they did not feel that they should accept Temür's designation. Instead, Temür's sons, grandsons, and great-amirs were involved in a multi-sided contest for the succession³⁵¹. The reasons for these succession struggles

³⁴⁶ Manz, "Symbolism", pp. 111-112.

³⁴⁷ Beatrice F. Manz, "Temür and the Problem of a Conqueror's Legacy", *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd Series, 1 April, 1998, pp. 25-26.

³⁴⁸ Manz, "Symbolism", p. 112.

³⁴⁹ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 128.

³⁵⁰ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 129.

³⁵¹ Temür's realm broke down into four different regions, each one became the scene of a separate fight for power: In Transoxiana, Miranshah's son Khalil Sultan Seized the throne and struggled against threats from Temür's designated successor Pir Muhammad, from Shahrukh and from rebellious members of Temür's following. Shahrukh had ruled Khurasan, Sistan and Mazandaran since 1396-1397, but he had to contend with numerous local dynasties and a series of rebellions by powerful members of Temür's personal following. In Fars three sons of Umar Shaykh b. Temür, each based in a different city, vied among themselves for control. Azerbaijan was held by Temür's son Miranshah and his children, Umar, Ababakr, fighting for power among themselves and, unsuccessfully, against the Qaraqoyunlu confederation. Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 131.

actually lay down under the policy maintained by Temür. Because Temür created a system in which control was in the hands of Temür himself and the loyalty of people depended on Temür's personality. Thus, mirzas were equal to use Temür's own legitimacy since they were the members of a ruling dynasty³⁵². In addition, Temür's use of different sources of legitimacy caused that mirzas could not gain power over each other. While it is not possible to chronicle all the details of these conflicts over the throne, some aspects concerning especially to the utilization of legitimacy should be mentioned.

The obscurity of Temür's own legitimacy and his desire to use various bases of legitimacy for different segments can be seen in the multiple claims asserted by his descendants. While some princes were concerned primarily about Islamic forms of legitimacy, others observed some points of the Chinggisid political legacy, and others attempted to merge the two. It was based on where the prince was settled and what advantage he could gain. Senior members of the dynasty tended to appeal to their aqa status while some junior members claimed their joint rights to the throne. The designated heir-apparent invoked Temür's desire.

The Umar Shaykhid mirzas in Fars and Iraq planned to give up adherence to Chinggisid law (*yasa*) altogether and establish their legitimacy through the shadow of the Abbasid caliph in Cairo³⁵³. The princes in Transoxiana found it necessary to pay attention to Chinggisid forms of legitimacy. Some of events in Transoxiana during this period illustrate this ambiguity and utilization of political legitimacy.

As was said before, Temür divided up his realm among his four sons and grandsons during his lifetime by holding central control in his own hands. Soon after his death, the empire disintegrated into so many parts as a result of internecine warfare among the various Timurid princes. Temür's designated successor Pir Muhammad was set aside by his cousin Khalil Sultan b. Miranshah was murdered by an amir in 1407. After that, the main struggle for power soon narrowed to Shahrukh and his nephew Khalil Sultan.

Khalil Sultan seized Samarqand and its treasury and attempted to acquire

³⁵² Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 2.

³⁵³ Hafiz Abru, *Zudatu't-Tawarikh*, vol. 3, ed. by Sayyed Kamal Haj Sayyed Javadi, Tehran, 1379, p. 44.

loyalty by scattering it over soldiers and subjects. His only claim was that he won the throne in Transoxiana with his sword as Temür himself had done and this confirmed that God had chosen him³⁵⁴. Moreover, when he realized that this claim could be challenged by other princes, Khalil Sultan offered a sharing of the Timurid realms, offering that all mirzas remain in the appanages which Temür had assigned them and that he be allowed to control Transoxiana.

Additionally, to bolster his claim he also installed a khan in whose name he would rule. But Khalil Sultan's choice was not a Chinggisid but a Timurid, Muhammad Jahangir, the nine-year-old son of Muhammad Sultan b. Jahangir, the nephew of Temür's heir-apparent Pir Muhammad b. Jahangir. In fact, it is possible to attribute this attempt of Khalil Sultan to two main reasons. The first was that Muhammad Sultan was seen as Temür's heir-apparent until his death in 1403³⁵⁵. Khalil Sultan tried to legitimize his position by asserting that he complied with Temür's will. The second important point was that Chinggisid legitimacy still persisted in the background of this appointment. As a matter of fact, the most important reason underlying Temür's declaring not one of his own sons, but his grandsons as heir to the throne, was that the mothers of these princes had Chinggisid lineage. "*Khalil Sultan emphasized the dynasty's connection to Mongol traditions by honoring Chinggisid princes at his court.*"³⁵⁶

After Temür's death, the integration of nomadic steppe culture into Transoxiana's political and cultural elements was more problematic. Because the Turco-Mongol legitimacy was predominant in that area at that time, the Timurid princes in Transoxiana were obliged to give place to Chinggisid legitimacy. Khalil Sultan's attempt to combine both Timurid and Chinggisid legitimacy in the office of khanate is important in terms of showing the legitimacy dynamics of the Timurid world, which was in a transitional period.

³⁵⁴ Hafiz Abru, *Zubda*, vol. 3, pp. 99-100.

³⁵⁵ Khondmir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 478.

³⁵⁶ Beatrice Manz, "Temür and the Early Timurids to C. 1450", in *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia: The Chinggisid Age*, ed. Nicola Di Cosmo, Allen J. Frank, and Peter B. Golden Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 189.

In the end, Khalil Sultan's position was destroyed increasingly and he was forced to give his place to his uncle Shahrukh. Thus, Shahrukh became the head of the dynasty in 1409. By this time, many of his rivals had died or been disqualified; the lines of Miranshah and Jahangir no longer competed for the throne. Shahrukh was now Temür's only surviving son.

Under the reign of Temür's youngest son Shahrukh who succeeded in the succession struggles by eliminating his rivalries after Temür's death, Islamic legitimacy started to replace the nomadic one. Because the Timurid rule after Temür was not based on the personal rule of a war-conquering steppe leader. The interests of the ruling class accorded with the needs of the Iranian-Islamic urban tradition. Therefore, Timurid rulers inevitably had to rely on Iranian-Islamic legitimacy symbols instead of Turco-Mongol ones. The actions of Shahrukh, who became the head of the Timurid state, were also an indication of this orientation of the dynasty.

Shahrukh moved the Timurid center from Samarqand in Transoxiana to Herat in Khurasan³⁵⁷ in which Iranian Islamic civilization was predominant. He started to rule in his own name in Khurasan by manipulation Islamic symbols such as khutbah and sikke (coinage)³⁵⁸ as vehicles of legitimation. Additionally, he abandoned proclaiming a Mongol puppet khan and did not use the title of küragan despite his being married to a Chinggisid princess. He also refused to have any affairs with Yasa, the pagan Mongol laws ascribed to Chinggis Khan by declaring instead his allegiance to the Sharia, the law of Islam³⁵⁹.

When he gained control of Transoxiana in 1409, Shahrukh installed his son, Ulugh Beg as governor in Samarqand and thus, Transoxiana became Ulugh Beg's

³⁵⁷ This decision of Shahrukh may have been influenced by the continuing importance of Chinggisid legitimacy in Transoxiana.

³⁵⁸ Unlike Khalil Sultan, Shahrukh used only his own name on the coins. But once he seized the control of Samarqand he issued a coin and added the title of "amir" which had used by Temür on his own coins. Furthermore, the coins issued by Shahrukh between 1410-1420 at Herat and in Iran, the word "sultanate" replaced by "caliphate". These differences suggest that there were distinctions in Shahrukh's claims to legitimacy in Transoxiana and Khurasan and in Iran. Sheila Blair, "Timurid Signs of Sovereignty", *Oriente Moderno*, Nuova serie, Anno 15 (76), La Civiltà Timuride Come Fenomeno Internazionale, vol. 2 n.s. 15, Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente C. A. Nallino, 1996, p. 559; Subtelny & Khalidov, "The Curriculum", pp. 211-212.

³⁵⁹ David Morgan, *The Empire of Tamerlane*, New York, (1988): p. 95.

appanage. Although Shahrukh gave his son some authority in Transoxiana, Ulugh Beg never claimed sovereignty in his own name during his father's lifetime. By using his father's name on the coinage and in the khutbah till Shahrukh's death in 1447, he accepted his father's authority. He also used puppet khans of Chinggisid descent³⁶⁰ and the title of "küregen" through marriages with the Chinggisid princesses. Furthermore, under his reign, a tombstone was erected over Temür's grave which shows the genealogical tie between Temür and Chinggis. In addition to that, the sources mention his concern about the Chinggisid Yasa³⁶¹.

Nevertheless, Ulugh Beg's these policies were not approved in some Shari'at areas like Naqshbandi order whose influence was growing throughout the fifteenth century. He was also accused of undermining Shari'at and introducing the custom of infidels³⁶². But, because Ulugh Beg used Islamic symbols such as khutbah and coinage in the name of Shahrukh who was a pious Muslim ruler, they could not show their dissatisfactions clearly while his father was alive. However, death of Sharukh in 1447 changed this situation.

From his base at Herat, Shahrukh took Mazandaran on the Caspian, Transoxiana with Temür's capital of Samarqand, Fars in south Persia, Kerman further east, and for a time he also held Azerbaijan in the northwest. He had to win the realm he ruled through battle and diplomacy and he had to balance numerous separate centers of power –dynastic, provincial, and local-³⁶³. During the first fifteen years after his father's death, Shahrukh struggled to achieve supremacy over his relatives and he had to bring his Chaghatai amirs into order. Perhaps the most troublesome to Shahrukh were the Chaghatai amirs, who had been appointed to his entourage by the Temür.

³⁶⁰ It may have showed that the legitimacy of Chinggisid descent was still important in that area.

³⁶¹ Ulugh Beg's interest in Yasa is attested by a number of sources: When Mirza Haydar Dughlat, one of East Turkestan's amir came to his court, Ulugh Beg requested him saying; "No one knows the Chinggisid Yasa like you. Tell me all its regulations, for I have need of it in ruling my kingdom." Mirza Haydar Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi, A History of the Khans of Moghulistan*, trans. W.M.Thackston, Harvard University, 1996, p. 38; Dughlat, *Rashidi*, p. 70.

³⁶² Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, Tom Three; The Reign of the Mongol and the Turk, translated by W. Thackston. 3 vols. Cambridge, Mass.: Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 1994, p. 369.

³⁶³ Manz, *Tamerlane*, pp. 134-135

Because these amirs were primarily answerable not to Shahrukh but to Temür himself. With Temür's death, these amirs felt free to change their allegiance following the traditional Turco-Mongol pattern and started uprisings.

Undoubtedly, the most important Turco-Mongol military group that came to prominence during Shahrukh's reign was the Tarkhanids. In particular, Shahrukh's wife, Ghiyasuddin Tarkhan's daughter, and Gawharshad's brothers sided with Shahrukh in suppressing the rebellions of the Timurid princes and amirs and princes. Perhaps the most prominent member of the Tarkhanid group was Shahrukh's wife, Gawharshad Agha. Timur married her to Shahrukh in 1393, and Gawharshad had an influential presence in the most important political and cultural developments of the period after his husband became head of the Timurid dynasty³⁶⁴. She was also the mother of three great Timurid princes, Ulugh Beg, Baysunghur, and Ibrahim Mirza. After Shahrukh's death, the Tarkhanids led by Gawharshad continued to play a decisive role in political developments. Sources often mention the conspiracies of Gawharshad and Tarkhanids in the power struggles that followed the death of Shahrukh. Eventually, with Sultan Abu Sa'id's ascension to the Timurid throne, Gawharshad was killed³⁶⁵ and the dominance of the Tarkhanid amirs came to an end.

Shahrukh was not jealous like his father about sharing power. By 1410 Shahrukh distributed various provinces and districts as *soyurghals* or grants, free from government interference³⁶⁶. During his reign, his sons and his amirs were assigned to appanages and Shahrukh gave the governors fiscal autonomy³⁶⁷. His eldest son Ulugh Beg was assigned to Transoxiana, Ibrahim Sultan was given the governor of Fars, his third son Mirza Baysunghur was appointed to Mazandaran, and eastern Khurasan Mirza Soyurtghatmish was entrusted to Kabul, and his youngest surviving son Muhammad Juki. As Manz says, they were active not only as provincial governors and

³⁶⁴ Kamal al-Din 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Samarqandi, *Matlau's-Sa'dayn va Majmau'l-Bahrayn*, edited by 'Abdu'l-Husayn Nava'i, Tehran: Mu'assasa-yi Mutala'at va Tahqiqat-i Farhangi. 1372 H.sh./1993-94, p. 424.

³⁶⁵ Dawlatshah Samarqandi, *Tadkhiratu'sh-Shu'ara*, ed. Muhammad Ramazani, Tehran, (1366):p. 355.

³⁶⁶ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, p. 136.

³⁶⁷ Manz, *Power, Politics*, p. 113.

military commanders but also in central administrative affairs³⁶⁸. Shahrukh's appointment of the princes, mainly his sons, as governors may have strengthened political independence and caused a cultural decentralization and growth. The activities of patronage were concentrated not only in the capital but also in each prince's court.

In the absence of an authoritarian ruler like Temür, his successors were unable to win the loyalty of the Timurid amirs who challenged them. Deprived of victories and spoils, the Timurid princes had to create financial resources to buy the loyalty of their followers. So, tax-exempt *soyurghal* grants became a means of gaining the loyalty of both amirs and local governors. Since after he consolidated his position in Khurasan Shahrukh needed to maintain the loyalty of members of the nomadic Turkic military elite and to attract the support of representatives of the sedentary Iranian elements of the Timurid society, he began to distribute *soyurghals* freely. With these grants he legitimized his rule and accelerated the process of integration with local and sedentary elements.

Shahrukh died in 1447 while on campaign in the west without choosing an official heir. Same as when Temür died, members of the dynasty again started to struggle among themselves and political power was difficult to maintain. Ulugh Beg was the eldest and only surviving son and he considered himself as Shahrukh's successor. But he had to fight for the inheritance throughout his short reign³⁶⁹ and he could not possess to Khurasan and was contented with Transoxiana. Shahrukh's favorite son Baysunghur's sons hoped to win the succession for themselves. One of these, Alau'd-Dawla who was in Herat when Shahrukh died could seize and distribute the treasury to raise troops and had the khutbah read in his name. Ulugh Beg and his eldest son Albdullatif could drive out Alau'd-Dawla of Herat in 1448 but they were coolly received by the Khurasanis³⁷⁰. Ulugh Beg was forced to return to Transoxiana.

³⁶⁸ Manz, *Power, Politics*, p. 40.

³⁶⁹ During his reign Ulugh Beg issued coins which had differed from the coins issued by his father. It reads; "Temür Küragan Himmat-i din Ulugh Beg Küragan, Ulugh sözüüm [or sözüümü]" (protected by the spirit of Temür Küragan, Ulugh Beg Küragan, my [or our] Word), Blair, "Signs", p. 560.

³⁷⁰ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 42.

A short while later, his son ‘Abdu’l-Latif revolted against him and Ulugh Beg was obliged to surrender. Two years after Shahrukh’s death, Samarqand was fallen upon the hands of Ulugh Beg’s son ‘Abdu’l-Latif and he killed his father and his brother ‘Abdu’l’aziz who was Ulugh Beg’s favorite son³⁷¹.

After Abdu’l-Latif³⁷² enthroned to the Samarqand he set up a Chingisid upon the khan’s throne. And he had his father killed for a reason that Ulugh Beg had behaved against Shari’a. This decision of death penalty was given by the appointed puppet khan. Abdu’l-Latif’s use of a puppet khan, had his father killed according to Shar’i rule and making this decision by the puppet khan can be indicator that Chingisid legitimacy was still significant in that area. In making a Shar’i judicial decision by using a Chingisid puppet khan could be perceived as legitimizing the decision according to the Shari’a with Yasa. Again, such manipulations of political legitimacy were attempted again demonstrate the transitional character of Timurid society in the 15th century.

After six months that ‘Abdu’l-Latif seized the throne in Samarqand, he was assassinated by Ulugh Beg’s amirs in 1450 and another Shahrukhid ‘Abdullah (son of Ibrahim son of Shahrukh) replaced him on the throne. His supporters were Ulugh Beg’s followers. Thus, the Muslim conservatives who had been under Abdu’l-Latif Mirza’s service were disturbed ‘Abdullah’s accession and the notables of Bukhara enthroned another Timurid Mirza, Abu Sa’id (son of Sultan Muhammad son of Miranshah) as an alternative to ‘Abdullah³⁷³. He then captured Samarqand and killed ‘Abdullah with assistance from Abu’l-Khayr Khan who was then the ruler of the Jochid nation³⁷⁴, in 1451³⁷⁵.

³⁷¹ Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 45.

³⁷² On his coinage, he named both his grandfather Shahrukh and his great-grandfather Temür by skipping his own father, Ulugh Beg’s name. Blair, “Signs”, p. 561.

³⁷³ Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, pp. 49-51.

³⁷⁴ Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 51. Abu’l-Khayr was paid off with considerable presents and the hand of one of Ulugh Beg’s daughters in marriage.

³⁷⁵ For more information about the period of Sultan Abu Sa’id see: Hayrunnisa Alan, “Sultân Ebû Said Devri Timurlu Tarihi (1451-1469)”, Unpublished Phd Thesis, Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İstanbul, 1996.

Because of interfamily struggles nearly all the Shahrukhids in Transoxiana were eliminated. Thus, Abu Sa'id established a new branch of the Timurid dynasty in that area; Miranshahids instead of Shahrukhids. He also did not proclaim any Chinggisid khan just as Shahrukh had done³⁷⁶. So, he undertook the sovereignty in his own name. He was the first Timurid who did not use a puppet khan and ruled in his own name in Transoxiana³⁷⁷. Moving here, it can be said that after Abu Sa'id, Timurid sovereignty much strengthened in Transoxiana and none of the Timurid mirzas who ruled in Transoxiana did not have to appoint a Chinggisid as a khan and thus, Islamic legitimacy was to be gradually approved in that region.

Sultan Abu Sa'id was aware of growing strength of Sufism among many tribes in Transoxiana and he tried to establish Timurid sovereignty legitimately. On the other hand, Sultan Abu Sa'id brought Yunus Khan, one of the Chaghataid khans of Moghulistan who was engaging in fighting with his brother Esen Bugha for power. Mirza Haidar's account of Abu Sa'id's instructions to Yunus Khan shows the situation between Timurid and Chinggisid legitimacy. After a conversation about the reason why Temür and his descendants in Transoxiana had always ruled through khans, Abu Sa'id says:

But from the reign of Amir Temür down to the time of Mirza Ulugh Beg, the power of these khans was only nominal; and in my own time the khans have generally been oprisoners in Samarqand. Since I have ascended the throne, my power is so absolute that I have no need of a khan; so now I have divested you (Yunus Khan) of the garments of poverty and, having clothed you in princely robes, am sending you back to your native country on the following conditions; ...For the future, you must not follow the example of your ancestors and say, 'Amir Temür and the race

³⁷⁶ These Chinggisid Khans had always helped the Timurids by mobilizing the military power of the Turco-Mongol tribes in the Chaghatai Ulus. Abu Sa'id Mirza also came to power with the help of nomadic military forces. But his allies were Jochids and they did not recognize loyalty except their own khans. Additionally, the Arghuns, a Turkman tribe in Abu Sa'id's army was strongly influenced by the Sufi shaykhs. The chief Arghun amirs were closely associated with Khwaja Ahrar's ascendancy over Samarqand in the last part of the fifteenth century. Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, *The Baburnama: Memoirs of Babur, Prince and Emperor*, Translated, edited, and annotated by Wheeler M. Thackston. New York: Modern Library, 2002: p. 120.

³⁷⁷ However, with Abu Sa'id's abrogation of the puppet khanate, Timurid mirzas lacked one of the most important sources of legitimacy. Thus, they inclined to establish their own personal relationship. Especially Abu Sa'id's sons who were married with Chinggisid princesses used their ties with Yunus Khan, their father-in-law. Furthermore, their grandsons also used these ties during their struggles. Especially Babur Mirza took advantage of his being Mongol through his mother. He often requested assistance from his maternal uncles, Mahmud Khan and Ahmad Khan (Alacha Khan).

of Amir Temür are our vassals, and have been for generations.’ For although it was formerly so, things have changed now, and I am padshah in my own right; thus, now if you are going to be my vassal, you must bear the name of ‘servitor’ (khadim-i makhdum) and do away with the name of ‘friend’. You need not, however, write to me in the way the khans used to write to the Timurid Mirzas, but in a friendly way; and these conditions are to apply to your sons and your sons’ sons.” Yunus Khan agreed to all these conditions and swore a solemn oath to abide by them. He was allowed to depart, accompanied by all the Moghuls who were in that district.³⁷⁸

These sentences indicate that Abu Sa’id saw these Moghul nomads as object to his direct assumption of sovereignty. By sending Yunus Khan to Moghulistan he would rid his domain of those elements’ threat. If Yunus Khan would conquer his patrimony Abu Sa’id would have a Chaghataid khan in Moghulistan who acknowledged legitimacy of his direct assumption of sovereignty and the subordination of Chinggis Khanids to the Timurids.

However, Abu Sa’id’s other actions show that he still gave value in using the Chinggisid legitimating authority. Like the other Timurids before him, Sultan Abu Sa’id also made linkage to Chinggisid lineage by arranging marriages with Chinggisid princesses. By marrying Abu’l-Khayr Khan’s daughter and Yunus Khan’s sister he adopted the title of “*küregen*”. In addition, he arranged marriages with Yunus Khan’s daughters for his three sons, Sultan Ahmad, Sultan Mahmud, Umar Shaykh. These marriages indicate that the Chinggisid legitimacy was still alive in that area.

He also completed his attempts to balance the hostility of the Moghuls to his direct assumption of sovereignty by broadening his Islam-based support. He established close relationships with conservative Sufis like the Naqshbandis who formed an important part of the Samarqand ulama. He gave high position and influence to Khwaja Ahrar³⁷⁹, the leader of this faction³⁸⁰.

³⁷⁸ Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, p. 42.

³⁷⁹ Gross, Jo-Ann, “A Central Asian Waqf of Naqshbandi Sufi Master Khwaja Ahrar”, in *Windows on the House of Islam: Muslim Sources on Spirituality and Religious Life*, ed. John Renard, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press., 1998, pp. 231-235.

³⁸⁰ Barthold, V. V. *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*, trans. Vladimir Minorsky, vol. II, Leiden: Brill, 1958, pp. 170-172.

On the other hand, after Shahrukh's death Khurasan became a scene of struggles among Baysunghur's sons and Qaraqoyunlu Turkmans. In these bloody struggles many Shahrukhid princes died at the hands of their own relatives. After the death of Abu'l-Qasim Babur (son of Baysunghur son of Shahrukh) in 1457, Abu Sa'id headed for Khurasan, entered Herat and mounted the throne³⁸¹. He made Herat his capital and distributed Transoxiana to his sons³⁸².

After Sultan Abu Sa'id had captured Herat, he was aware that it was impossible to hold on to it without breaking the power of Shahrukh's widow Gawharshad and her relative Tarkhanid amirs, whom he saw as a strong rival to himself. So, he had her executed in the same year on the pretext of having secret relations with Sultan Ibrahim (son of Alau'd-Dawla son of Baysunghur son of Shahrukh). Sultan Abu Sa'id thus, blocked the possible sovereignty claims of the princes belonging to the Shahrukhid branch.

Sultan Abu Sa'id believed that Timurid domains in Khurasan and Iran were more important than Transoxiana as in those regions Chinggisid legitimacy was not necessary. Shahrukh had ruled in his own right as a Muslim sovereign. Thus, Sultan Abu Sa'id could put his own legitimacy on the same basis. And finally in 1469 in his campaign of Azerbaijan Abu Sa'id was captured by Hasan Beg of Aqqoyunlu and was handed over to Yadgar Muhammad to avenge his grandmother Gawharshad³⁸³.

Abu Sa'id's policies introduced some new elements into Transoxianian politics which were very important for the remaining century. Firstly, his support of Yunus Khan and marriage ties with his family caused the political events in Moghulistan and Transoxiana to become closer and the Moghuls took more places in Transoxiana politics. Additionally, Sultan Abu Sa'id was the first Timurid who brought the Uzbeks into Transoxiana as a military force³⁸⁴. Finally, Abu Sa'id bestowed significant

³⁸¹ Abu Sa'id was identified on the coinage as kūrāgan. Blair, "Signs", p. 561; Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 33.

³⁸² He appointed his eldest son Ahmad Mirza to Samarqand and Bukhara, Sultan Mahmud Mirza was appointed to the governorship of Jurjan, Umar Shaykh Mirza was given the governorship of Farghana including Andijan and appendages, Ulugh Beg Kuragan was made the ruler of Kabul and Ghazni.

³⁸³ Woods, *The Aqqoyunlu*, pp. 109-112.

political power to the Naqshbandi Sufis by patronizing Khwaja Ahrar. By the end of the century nearly every ruling prince attached a Naqshbandi member to his court³⁸⁵.

Like other Chinggisid and Timurid rulers before him, Abu Sa'id appanaged his domain to his sons, but by the time of his death in 1469, only a few of his many sons had received shares. Like Shahrukh had done before, Abu Sa'id gave Samarqand and Bukhara to his eldest son Sultan Ahmad Mirza when he had transferred his capital to Herat. While his second son Sultan Mahmud Mirza had been given Mazandaran and Hisar, Umar Shaykh Mirza took the province of Farghana in eastern Transoxiana. Abu Bakr Mirza was assigned to Badakhshan and Ulugh Beg Mirza was granted Kabul and Qandahar³⁸⁶. When the news of Abu Sa'id's death reached Transoxiana, these princes found themselves in succession conflicts.

Furthermore, Abu Sa'id also granted *soyurghals* to several tribal leaders and to secular and religious figures as a means to consolidate his political power. After the death of Abu Sa'id the sovereignty passed to his sons in Transoxiana but this region became the scene of the struggles of Miranshahid princes. It continued till 1494-1495. In these years the deaths of Ahmad Mirza and Umar Shaykh Mirza changed the balances of Transoxiana.

Then Umar Shaykhid branch of the Timurids removed Abu Sa'id's sons from the territories they controlled outside of Transoxiana and Afghanistan and Sultan Husayn Bayqara (1470-1506), the grandson of Temür by his son Umar Shaykh Mirza, succeeded Abu Sa'id Mirza after his death and established his reign in Khurasan.

Conclusion

During Temür's career, Chinggisid legitimacy continued its influence on Temür's ideological and political priorities. Temür's experiences were creative responses to the Chinggis Khanid legacy. Notwithstanding, Temür's own legacy also

³⁸⁴ After the death of their leader Abu'l-Khayr in 1468, the Uzbeks union broke up. They united again under Shaybani Khan as a powerful military and political force in Transoxiana by the end of the century.

³⁸⁵ "It was the practice of all the princes of that time to employ one of the disciples of his Holiness (Khwaja Ahrar) as a medium of communication with him." Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, p. 78.

³⁸⁶ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 60.

flourished and influenced the notions of legitimacy like the Chinggis Khanid model³⁸⁷.

As it is seen, by the 15th-century Islamic legitimacy became predominant in the Timurid realms. At the same time, Chinggisid political tradition also remained an important fact, especially in Transoxiana. Since according to the Islamic perception of power, justice is the key element for governing and whoever establishes justice his sovereignty is loyal, Timurid mirzas could rule in their own names without Chinggisid puppet khans and base their claim on the Islamic understanding of sovereignty.

When Temür came to power he upheld Chinggisid customary law and Turco-Mongolian forms of socio-political organization. Temür did not allow religious and bureaucratic classes as representatives of Sharia to become effective in the state mechanism. But, since his descendants were not sufficient to legitimate their authority over the sedentary Islamic regions of Iran and Central Asia, they had to reorient the ideological and economic bases of the empire. There was a need to adapt to the requirements of the sedentary rule and adopt the model of the Perso-Islamic state. This resulted in tensions between two competing ideological tendencies; Turco-Mongolian "yasa" and Perso-Islamic "sharia".

Moreover, in the 15th century in Iran and Central Asia various religious groups, such as Sufi and mystical orders appeared. Many Timurid princes realized the importance of getting support from these groups for their authority and patronized these religious figures. These people provided religious legitimacy and prestige for their patrons. In this way, Sufi shaykhs and ulama gained notable power in the political, economic, and social life of the Timurid realm. Especially, during the reign of Abu Sa'id Mirza (1451-1469) decentralized structure became stronger, land granting increased and the ulama and Sufi shaykhs, such as Khwaja Ubaydullah Ahrar who was the leader of the Naqashbandiyya order started to take a part in the political and economic life of Transoxiana. After Abu Sa'id Mirza's death, his sons pursued this policy.

On top of all these, within this century, in the competitive atmosphere after Temür's death, all Timurid mirzas tried to get the support of their military elites to keep their realms' control. They did not have so much to offer except for their

³⁸⁷ Manz, "Family and Ruler", pp. 57-78.

territories to powerful people for gaining their support. Because of the empire, Temür built up, depending on a "booty economy" which could only survive with perpetual conquests, and after his death, the external military campaigns and thus, booty incomes did not exist anymore, the Timurid mirzas used their territories as the means to acquire the support of their military elites. Thus, starting with the period of Shahrukh, Timurid mirzas; sons of Shahrukh, Sultan Abu Sa'id, and later Sultan Husayn Bayqara granted their lands not only to their military elites but also to sedentary Iranian elements including ulama and shaykhs. While the Timurid rulers needed to acquire the loyalty and support of the prominent elements of the society, the granted immunities often transferred the revenue from the state treasury to the local ones which resulted in decentralization.

These land grants, called *soyurghals*, were characterized by full immunity from taxation as well as by complete freedom from judicial and administrative interference on the part of the central government. Because the owners of *soyurghals* were exempted from all kinds of taxes and had the right to refuse the state's agents' interference in their territories, this system strengthened the decentralized structure and laid the ground for the emergence of multiple local politic centers. This process which brought about the sharing of economic resources and political and economic decentralization formed the background of cultural and artistic activities. This decentralized atmosphere facilitated the cultural and artistic activities at provincial princely courts and provide the Timurid princes the opportunity to develop their own political discourses through artistic and literary works. Therefore, many of the Timurid mirzas became great patrons of cultural activities.

CHAPTER 4

THE TIMURID EMPIRE DURING THE REIGN OF SULTAN HUSAYN BAYQARA

4.1. The Political Career of Sultan Husayn Bayqara

In the transitional period after Sultan Abu Sa'id's death, the Timurid world was divided between Khurasan and Transoxiana. After him, Sultan Husayn b. Mansur b. Baykara b. Umar Shaykh b. Temür (1438-1506) defeated the other claimers and ascended to the Timurid throne in Herat in 1470. Under his thirty-seven years of rule, Herat became a center of cultural, artistic, and literal for the Turco-Islamic world. Although he could not achieve military success due to the conflicts with his sons, especially in the second half of his rule, Zahiru'd-Din Babur, one of the cousins of Sultan Husayn, stated in his renowned memoir, Baburnama, that Herat under the rule of Sultan Husayn was "a town unequaled in the rest of the world" in the sense of splendor³⁸⁸. In addition, during his reign, Khurasan attained a certain level of stability thanks to both agricultural and commercial economic developments. However, the cultural achievements of the Timurids could not replace their military weakness and the heyday of Khurasan's cultural period ended badly. After Husayn died in 1506, his sons could not form a union to defend their inheritance, and the Uzbek leader Shaybani Khan, who occupied the Timurid Herat in 1507, ended the Timurid rule in Central Asia and Iran. The remaining Timurid princes were never able to reclaim their ancestral lands. Timurid sovereignty was re-established in India by Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, the grandson of Sultan Abu Sa'id.

³⁸⁸ Barthold, *Four Studies*, vol. II, p. 176.

4.1.1. His Birth and Ancestry

Sultan Husayn, born in Herat in 1438, was the son of Ghiyasuddin Mansur b. Bayqara b. Umar Shaykh b. Amir Temür. He was the fourth generation offspring of Amir Temür from the branch of his eldest son, Umar Shaykh Mirza. His father was not a remarkable Timurid prince who had died in 1445-1446 when Sultan Husayn was only seven years old. Thus, Sultan Husayn's success was not mentioned in historical sources of the period until the succession conflicts following Shahrukh's death.

According to Khwandamir and Dawlatshah, Sultan Husayn had noble lineage from both sides; Timurid and Chinggisid³⁸⁹. His mother Mahd-i Ulya Firuza Begim was the granddaughter of Temür from his own daughter. According to Khondmir, he had a Chinggisid connection;

*The Victorious Khaqan's mother was Firoza Begim, the daughter of Amirzada Sultan Husayn son of Amir Muhammad Beg son of Amir Musa of the Tayichiut. Amirzada Sultan Husayn was the son of Her Highness Aka Begim, daughter of Amir Temür Küragan. Lady Firoza Begim's mother was Qutlugh Sultan Begim, whose father was Mirza Miranshah, and whose mother was Urun Sultan, the daughter of the Soyurghatmish Khan son of Danishmandcha Khan son of Qaidu Khan son of Na'ur Khan son of Ögö dai Qa'an.*³⁹⁰

Khondmir also stated that Sultan Husayn's paternal grandmother was descended from Chinggis Khan as well³⁹¹.

Additionally, apart from the Timurid and Chinggisid connection, it was stated in Habibu's-Siyar that he had a descent from the renowned Persian Sufi Khwaja 'Abdullah Ansari (1005-1089) known as "*Pir-i Herat*"³⁹² (sage of Herat)³⁹³. What is

³⁸⁹ According to Khondmir he "was descended on both his father's side and his mother's side from ruling branches of the *Sahib-Qiran* [Temür] and from the family of the world conquering khans." Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p.412. According to Babur Sultan Husayn was "noble on both side, a king born", Babur, p. 193.

³⁹⁰ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 412.

³⁹¹ Sultan Husayn's paternal grandmother Qutlugh Sultan Begim was the daughter of "Amirzada Iskandar of the Eljigidai tribe, who was descended in the sixth degree from Genghis Khan", Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 412.

³⁹² S. De Beaucueil, "al-Ansar al-Harawi", *E.I.* vol. 1, pp. 515-516.

³⁹³ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 412.

interesting here is that aside from Khondmir any contemporary writers mentioned such a genealogical link. Subtelny, based on two chancery documents about the Ansari shrine of Herat, asserts that such a claim was asserted by Sultan Husayn himself and it was probably spurious³⁹⁴. But here, what matters for us is that Sultan Husayn's not contenting with genealogical descent of Temür and Chinggis Khan and his effort to claim a genealogical connection with a Sufi master.

In explaining the name of Sultan Husayn, Subtelny states that while his name came from his maternal grandfather Amir Sultan Husayn and his brother Bayqara named after his paternal grandfather Bayqara b. Umar Shaykh. And to show the filiation to his paternal grandfather, his name was rendered as Sultan Husayn Bayqara³⁹⁵. The word of "Qara" may have been used for indicating that his lineage reached supreme dynasties. The victories which Sultan Husayn won against the contenders for political power enabled him to be called as "Ghazi" or "Abu'l-Ghazi". Although throughout the Islamic history, the title of "ghazi" was used only for those who battled with the infidels and non-Muslims, Sultan Husayn received this title even though he did not fight against any non-Muslim.

4.1.2. His Youth in the Cousins' Service

The first report about Husayn's appearance on the political scene was in 1452 when he was only fourteen years old. With the suggestion of his mother Firuza Begim, Sultan Husayn Mirza joined the court of his elder cousin Abul-Qasim Babur and stayed two years in his service. In 1454 when Babur marched to Samarqand, siege the city and Sultan Abu Sa'id who was at that time the ruler of Samarqand could not resist and sued for peace, Sultan Husayn went to Abu Sa'id's service since he was closer in respect of the lineage³⁹⁶. This event corresponded to same time with the revolt of

³⁹⁴ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 46. In an assignment document about the Ansari tomb, Sultan Husayn emphasized this bond by saying "A part of the branches of our pure and noble race branched off from that lofty roof". Nizamu'd-Din 'Abdulvasi' Nezami Bakharzi, *Munshau'l-Ensha*, compiled by Abul-Qasim Shehabuddin Ahmad Khwami, ed. by Ruknuddin Humayunfarrukh, vol. 1, Tehran, 1357/1978, p. 138.

³⁹⁵ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 47.

Uvays Mirza bin Muhammad Bayqara. Since Uvays Mirza was Husayn's uncle's son Abu Sa'id lost his trust to Sultan Husayn and other Umar Shaykhid princes and imprisoned him and other thirteen relatives to Samarqand fort. How long Sultan Husayn exactly stayed in prison is unknown, according to Barthold he was imprisoned in the Samarqand citadel and spent "a long time" in captivity³⁹⁷.

When the news of imprisonment reached his mother Firuza Begim in Herat she went to Samarqand worriedly and asked Abu Sa'id for releasing his son³⁹⁸. Her request was indulged and Sultan Husayn re-attached to Abu'l-Qasim Babur's retinue and remained until the death of Mirza Babur. Babur, with due regard, granted him 100 thousand dinar *kepeki* as service pay (*ulufe*)³⁹⁹.

After Abu'l-Qasim Babur's death, when another succession struggle started among Timurid princes and created trouble in Khurasan, Sultan Husayn Mirza, making advantage of this chaotic environment, with the intent to strengthen his hand, went to Marv to enter his cousin Sanjar's service. Sultan Sanjar was also the grand grandson of Umar Shaykh Mirza just like Sultan Husayn. At that time, he was the ruler of Bam and Kerman. After Babur's death, Sanjar was unwilling to obey the sons of Babur Mirza and declared his independence hegemony. Sultan Sanjar gave his daughter Biga Sultan to Sultan Husayn Bayqara in marriage⁴⁰⁰.

Sultan Husayn, after establishing close relations with Mirza Sanjar⁴⁰¹, on

³⁹⁶ "Ba mulahaza-i gurb-i garabat". Khondmir Ghiyasu'd-Din b. Humamu'd-Din al-Husayni, *Habibu's-Siyar*, ed. Muhammad Dabir Siyaqi, Tehran, 1380, p. 115. (hereafter Khondmir, Habib)

³⁹⁷ Barthold, *Four Studies*, vol. II. p. 1.

³⁹⁸ Most probably, because she was a granddaughter of Miranshah and a cousin of Abu Sa'id, her intercession was accepted and Sultan Husayn Bayqara was released.

³⁹⁹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 115.

⁴⁰⁰ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 115. Khondmir and Babur did not mention about her in a good way. According to Babur she was "ill-tempered, and Sultan Husayn Mirza, who suffered greatly from her, came to such grief that in the end he put her away and was delivered. "What was he to do? He had every right". Additionally, Babur prayed as follows; "May God not afflict any Muslim with this catastrophe. O God, may there be no more ill-tempered, irascible women in the world." Babur, pp. 168-169. Khondmir wrote; "Bika Sultan Begim, the daughter of Mirza Sultan Sanjar, was an irritable and profane lady, and she thought herself superior to all the Victorious Khaqan's [Sultan Husayn's] other wives because of her exalted lineage. Whenever he paid more attention to any of the other royal ladies, the begim would have a jealous fit and hurl vile execrations at the khaqan. When this had gone on long enough, his majesty pronounced the formula of divorce and met her no more." Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 445.

disagreement with Hasan Arlat, one of the great amirs of Sanjar, seized Marv in the absence of him⁴⁰². Then he fell into trap and fled to the direction of Marvchaq and passed his days as freebooter “qazaqliq”⁴⁰³ in the deserts between Marv and Khwarazm⁴⁰⁴.

In the meantime, taking the advantage of the authority gap arose as a consequence of the fight for the throne in Khurasan among the Timurid princes, Amir Jahanshah, the ruler of the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmans, occupied Herat (June 28, 1458)⁴⁰⁵. Thereupon, Abu Sa’id Mirza who was the ruler of Timurid Mawaraunnahr at that time, set out for fighting with Jahanshah for the Timurid Khurasan. But because of Jahanshah’s army’s greatness pushed him to sue for peace. After several negotiations through messengers the peace was concluded and while Jahanshah and his Turkman army returned Azerbaijan and, Khurasan, Jurjan and Mazenderan remained under the Timurid rule⁴⁰⁶. After Sultan Abu Sa’id acceded to the Herat throne, he attempted to break out a coalition formed between Ibrahim and his father Alau’d-Dawla who were grandsons of Shahrukh and Sanjar Mirza who was the cousin and father-in-law of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. In a battle occurred in March 1459, while Sanjar Mirza was taken prisoner and martyred by the command of Sultan Abu Sa’id, the other two were

⁴⁰¹ Khondmir expressed their closeness as “father-son relation” “*wa chand gahi ba yak-digar dar maqam-i peder o farzandi basar borde*” Khondmir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 116.

⁴⁰² According to Khondmir, during the Sanjar’s absence a disagreement arose between Sultan Husayn and one of Sanjar’s favorite man who intended to imprison him, thereupon Sultan Husayn left Marv and after he was joined by about sixty-five men entered the city and seized the throne. Khondmir. *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 117.

⁴⁰³ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 194, 195, 202, 207. Subtelny describes the qazaqliq as follows; “...the period of qazaqliq (Persianized form, qazaqi) or political vagabondage, during which an aspiring tribal leader assembled a loyal following and forged political alliances that were often strengthened by marriage and commercial ties. The socio political institution of qazaqliq was informed by the patrimonial and highly personal nature of relations in the early Timurid state, and those who supported Temür during his period of political vagabondage were subsequently appointed to leading military administrative positions.” Maria E. Subtelny, “Tamerlane and His Descendants: From Paladins to Patrons”, in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, ed. David Morgan and Anthony Reid, Cambridge University Press, vol. 3, 2011, p. 187.

⁴⁰⁴ In the words of Khondmir he spent the winter in the desert between Khiwaq and Marv, waiting for divine favor. “*entezar-i latifa-i ghaybi mi kashid*” Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 117.

⁴⁰⁵ Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 391.

⁴⁰⁶ Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 392.

forced to flee⁴⁰⁷.

4.1.3. Accession to the Throne of Jurjan

On the other hand, after the winter of 1458 was over, Sultan Husayn Bayqara left his winter quarter with twenty-two followers, mostly without horses, and set out for Marv. In about seven-eight months he could recruit about three hundred men around him and headed for Jurjan and occupied this province. This triumph occurred between May 15 and June 13, 1458, and opened a new door to other several victories. In Jurjan Sultan Husayn was joined by about a thousand men consisting of the Jurjan soldiers and Jalayirid horsemen and offered to rule Astarabad, the capital city of the Jurjan province. With new followers, Sultan Husayn headed for Astarabad and was able to conquer it from Qaraqoyunlu Turkmans (October 19, 1458)⁴⁰⁸. After mounted to the throne of Astarabad, Sultan Husayn “ordered the khutbah read and coins struck in his own name.”⁴⁰⁹ However, other resources mentioned that Sultan Husayn made the silver and golden coins in the name of Abu Sa’id and sent it with an envoy to him

In the meantime, Sultan Abu Sa’id had reconquered Herat and sent Sultan Husayn Mirza’s son Badi’u’z-Zaman Mirza, who had been under arrest in Ikhtiyaru’-d-Din Fortress and his mother Bika Sultan Begim with an envoy to Sultan Husayn Bayqara in Astarabad⁴¹⁰.

⁴⁰⁷ Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 393.

⁴⁰⁸ Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 414.

⁴⁰⁹ Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, pp. 414-415. According to Khondmir Sultan Husayn was proposed by several amirs having the khutbah read in Sultan Abu Sa’id’s name but Sultan Husayn did not accept that; “khutbah-i ‘id benam-i Sultan sa’id mazingardad ta baynu’l-canibin tariqa-i pasandida-i mowafaqat o ettihad ba-zuhur payvand..” Khondmir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 121. According to Samarqandi’s narration, Sultan Husayn sent an envoy to Abu Sa’id to with proper presents to tell the matter of khutbah and sikka and Abu Sa’id accepted them and released Sultan Husayn’s wife and the daughter of Sanjar Mirza who had been prisoner in Ikhtiyaruddin Castle.

⁴¹⁰ Khondmir wrote that Abu Sa’id Mirza also sent a letter with “expressions of good will and amity.” The envoy stated that Sultan Abu Sa’id said, “Our brother must strive to repel Turcoman power and to repulse the enemies of this family, and he must not excuse himself either from eliminating opponents of from assisting us. Be it decreed that any territory liberated from the control of the Turcomans is settled upon your servants, and let no one contravene.” Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 415

In the beginning, the relationship between Sultan Husayn and Abu Sa'id was on good terms. But then, according to the story, this relationship was breakdown because that one of Sultan Husayn's servants took the envoy of Abu Sa'id. Khwandamir wrote that Sultan Husayn sent this envoy back to Abu Sa'id with the following message: "Although Muhammad Mushtaq (the mentioned envoy) did not abide by our treaty and entered the territory we had taken from the enemy by the sword, we have favored him and sent him back to the throne, and thus we have not sullied the brotherliness and friendship that exists between us."⁴¹¹ As this message indicates that Sultan Husayn seems to legitimate his rule with his own military success emphasizing that "we had taken from the enemy by the sword". But not accepting and ignoring Sultan Husayn's "right", Abu Sa'id imprisoned his envoy. According to Khondmir, "from that time on there was an enmity between the Victorious Khaqan (Sultan Husayn) and Sultan Sa'id that increased day by day"⁴¹². Eventually, Sultan Abu Sa'id undertook a campaign to Jurjan with the armies of Khurasan (February 26, 1460). Meanwhile, Sultan Husayn had been abandoned by Jalayirid forces and lost his power against the army of Khurasan. Thereupon, he left Astarabad with five hundred men and again withdrew to Khwarazm⁴¹³. Sultan Abu Sa'id then seized Astarabad and assigned his son, Sultan Mahmud, as governor.

Again entering the period of "qazaqliq" in Khwarazm Sultan Husayn sought help to declare his sovereignty and for this purpose, he got in contact with Mustafa khan and Pir Budaq Khan, the khans of the Uzbeks in Khwarazm⁴¹⁴. At the end of 1460 and the beginning of 1461 hearing Abu Sa'id's departure from Herat for Turkestan, Sultan Husayn, seized the opportunity, set out for Astarabad, defeated Sultan Mahmud Mirza, who was his father Abu Sa'id's governor there, and re-ascended to the throne of Astarabad on May 26, 1461. The khutbah was again read in his name⁴¹⁵. After consolidating his power in Jurjan, Sultan Husayn set out with the aim

⁴¹¹ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 415.

⁴¹² Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 415.

⁴¹³ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 416.

⁴¹⁴ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 416.

⁴¹⁵ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 416.

of conquering Khurasan but he encountered strong resistance from Heratis. On Abu Sa'id's return to Khurasan, Sultan Husayn realized that he could not take a stand against the large army of Abu Sa'id, headed for Khwarazm⁴¹⁶.

In 1468 Sultan Husayn again set out for Khurasan. Along the way, his forces plundered and pillaged the cities they passed. On hearing it, Abu Sa'id assigned his amirs with troops to repel Sultan Husayn's forces. A battle took place in Turshiz, and Sultan Husayn gained victory. Khondmir claimed that Sultan Husayn Bayqara narrated his adventure of Turshiz to him in person. After a while, Abu Sa'id's amirs attacked Husayn's train and forced him to flee towards to Khwarazm desert which whenever Sultan Husayn was defeated went⁴¹⁷.

After Sultan Husayn spent his days in qazaqliq in the "wilderness of Khwarazm and Bukhara"⁴¹⁸ he went to Abu'l-Khayr Khan, the supreme khan of the Uzbek in the Dasht-i Qipchaq to request assistance to conquer Khurasan. Sultan Husayn remained in the khan's camp for a week and it was written that the khan had the intention about help him for conquering Khurasan but before he achieved it, the khan deceased (1468). After the khan's death, political chaos arose among the Uzbeks, thus Sultan Husayn was obliged to leave the Qipchaq Steppe⁴¹⁹. Such a contact was one of the causes which the Uzbeks gaining influence over the east of their territory.

4.2. The Accession to the Throne of Khurasan

4.2.1. The First Period of Rule in Herat

Despairing of the Uzbek's assistance, Sultan Husayn set out for Khurasan with his thirty followers. When he reached the near of Abiward the report was received that Sultan Abu Sa'id was defeated in Qarabagh against the Aqqoyunlu Turks⁴²⁰. On

⁴¹⁶ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, pp. 416-418.

⁴¹⁷ The information in the chronicles is not clear about the Turshiz Battle was victory or not.

⁴¹⁸ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 419.

⁴¹⁹ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 420.

the other hand, when the news of Sultan Husayn's marching arrived in Herat, the amirs of Abu Sa'id sent a message to Sultan Ahmad Mirza, the son of Sultan Abu Sa'id, in Samarqand, prepared to defend the city against him. In the meantime, the news arrived reporting that Sultan Abu Sa'id was captured and killed in the vicinity of Arran as a consequence of his unsuccessful venture to capture Azerbaijan from the Aqqoyunlu leader Uzun Hasan. Upon this news, the two sons of Abu Sa'id, Sultan Mahmud Mirza and Sultan Ahmad Mirza, who were approaching Herat to defend the city against Sultan Husayn, abandoned Khurasan and headed for Samarqand⁴²¹. According to Khondmir when the report of the death of Abu Sa'id was disseminated among the people, most of them supported Sultan Husayn and went out to his camp⁴²². With the disappearance of obstacles to the rule of Khurasan, Sultan Husayn seized Herat on March 24, 1469, and had the khutbah read in his own name⁴²³.

4.2.2. An Attempt to Adorn the Khutbah and Coinage with the Names of Twelve Shi'ite Imams

After occupying Herat, and proclaiming himself as the new ruler, Sultan Husayn Mirza attempted to re-establish the Timurid order in that province. According to records, when Sultan Husayn came to power, he decided to mention the names of twelve Shi'ite imams in the khutbah and coinage. But *"a group of Hanafite fanatics who held great power in Herat at that time hastened to the throne and spoke in preference of the Sunnis, and Sultan Husayn decided not to change the khutbah."* Khondmir stated that since Sultan Husayn always had great respect for the house of the Prophet and thus he attempted to have the khutbah read in the imams' names, but because the conditions of the time were not proper for ignoring the Sunnis' request, the khutbah was read as before⁴²⁴. Subtelny asserts that Sultan Husayn seriously

⁴²⁰ For more information about Aqqoyunlu Turkmans see, V. Minorsky, C.E. Bosworth, "Uzun Hasan", *E.I.*, vol. 10, pp. 963-967.

⁴²¹ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 421.

⁴²² Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, pp. 420-421.

⁴²³ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 421.

misjudged the religiopolitical situation in Herat and took such a step. According to her, the underlying reason for Husayn's act should be sought in popular belief about the imams and in the power of charismatic Sufis among Turco-Mongol peoples⁴²⁵.

The issue of khutbah is important in terms of revealing the religious and political atmosphere in the early days of Husayn's rule. Sultan Husayn may have wanted to get closer to the Shiite groups in Herat to find support for his own rule and create a basis for his political legitimacy in the environment of uncertainty he faced at the beginning of his rule in Herat. However, he abandoned this plan due to the emergence of an opposition faction that included the majority of pressure groups in Herat.

Although this event is included in most of the sources of the period, the main problem is that those who gave all this information were close to those who opposed the change of the khutbah. According to contemporary sources, one of the first acts of Sultan Husayn capturing Herat was to deliver sermons and issue coins in the name of twelve imams. Although such a decision may seem inappropriate and dangerous in such an uncertain political atmosphere, Sultan Husayn may have considered maintaining public support based on popular beliefs among the people of Khurasan and consolidating his power by attracting potential Shiite forces.

On the other hand, due to the love of the Ahl-i Bayt, which emerged as a result of the spread of popular beliefs after the Mongol conquests, mentioning the names of the twelve imams in the sermon and on the coins could have gained legitimacy in the eyes of a Sunni community⁴²⁶.

Khondmir and Babur considered Husayn's attempt as a personal decision and do not mention any person or group⁴²⁷. However, according to Samarqandi's narrative, a group of malicious people believed that the sultan would have desire in the Shii faith and declared that the khutbah would be read in the name of twelve imams and the

⁴²⁴ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 421.

⁴²⁵ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 62.

⁴²⁶ H.R. Roemer, "The Safavid Period", in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6, p. 191.

⁴²⁷ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 194, Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 421.

names of four caliphs would be removed. When Sultan Husayn became aware of the allegations of this group, he sent a group of amirs and high officials (sudur) to ‘Abdu’r-Rahman Jami for negotiation and investigation of the situation. Then, Jami forbade him to change the norm and to oppose the way of the predecessors and decided that the khutbah should have been read as usual⁴²⁸. In the group of those who opposed the change of the khutbah, the only person who mentioned the name of Ali Sher Nawai is Babur. He says when Sultan Husayn wanted to have the names of the 12 imams in khutbah "Ali Sher Beg and others kept him from doing."⁴²⁹ But the issue of changing the khutbah did not end here. After Sultan Husayn ordered the khutbah to be read as before, a preacher named Sayyid Ali Qayini went up to the pulpit on the festival of sacrifice (*'iyd-i adha*) and used words that supported the Shiite sect and slandered the Sunnis. Qayini's action caused a rebellion by a Sunni group who marched to the sultan's palace, but on the way, they met the Sultan and conveyed the event to him. In this way, according to Samarqandi, Husayn's faith (*husn-i itiqad*) became evident to everyone, especially to the grandee of Khurasan⁴³⁰.

According to the narration of Esfizari, who was also a Sunni, a group of Shiites thought that the sultan might have been an inclination towards superstition because he used the pseudonym of "Husayni" in his poems. Even, they attempted to read a khutbah from the pulpit in the name of twelve imams and tried to remove the names of four caliphs from the khutbah. Esfizari mentioned a person named Sayyid Hasan Karbalayi and said that he took refuge in the court at a time when the door of the palace was not yet decorated with the ulama and virtuous people (fuzala), and found a way with deceit and lies and had a full effort in this regard⁴³¹. The same author also mentioned that another person named Sayyid Ali Vahidu'l-Ayn, gave a speech from the pulpit that denigrated the Sunnis and supported the Shiites, and then a group of Sunnis rose up and marched to the palace. The sultan, who was aware of the incident on the way,

⁴²⁸ Samarqandi, *Matla'*, pp. 1021-1022.

⁴²⁹ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 194.

⁴³⁰ Samarqandi, *Matla'*, p. 1022.

⁴³¹ Muinu'Din Muhammad Zamchi Esfizari, *Rawzatu'l-Jannat fi Avsaf-i Madinat-i Harat*, ed. By Sayyid Muhammad Kazim Imam, 2 vols., Tehran, 1338-1339/1959-1960, vol. 2, p. 328.

ordered Sayyid to be removed from the pulpit. Esfizari added that in this way the immaculacy of the sultan's disposition and the purity of his religion became clear to all of the people of Khurasan⁴³².

Esfizari's information that Husayn's court was deprived of great ulamas is important in showing how little Husayn's rule was supported by the notables of the city. Therefore, Husayn's lack of sufficient strength to ensure victory over his opponents at that time may have prompted him to make such a move.

After all these narratives, it would be wrong to perceive this action of the Sultan solely as an attempt to accept and formalize the Shiite Sect. While he was trying to change the khutbah Sultan Husayn probably wanted to use Shiite elements to take advantage of the love and sanctity of the Ahl-i Bayt in the eyes of the public. Thus, the Sultan, who had just come to power, may have aimed to obtain the maximum possible support by relying on popular beliefs due to the uncertainty of his rule. In fact, the short-term success of Yadgar Muhammad can also be seen as an indication of the unconsolidated power of Sultan Husayn. In conclusion, regardless of the influence of political concerns and benefits on Husayn's approach to Shiism, his inclination to Shiism was limited to the love of Ahl-i Bayt.

Throughout his reign, Sultan Husayn struggled with three groups: the Timurid contenders, his own sons who rebelled towards the end of Husayn's reign, and the non-Timurid provincial governors who gained power as decentralization in the Timurid territory was increased.

4.2.3. Struggles with Timurid Rivals

The first phase of Sultan Husayn's rule in Herat was not long duration. At the beginning of his reign, the struggle with Yadgar Muhammad Mirza, (son of Mirza Sultan Muhammad, son of Mirza Baysunghur, son of Mirza Shahrukh, son of Amir Temür), had a significant influence on the development of Sultan Husayn's socio-political connections. As it has been mentioned before, Jahanshah Qaraqoyunlu had occupied Herat and then he made peace with Sultan Abu Sa'id and returned to his

⁴³² Esfizari, *Rawza*, vol. 2, p. 329.

territory. When he had headed for Azerbaijan, Yadgar Muhammad joined his retinue with his smart aunt Payanda Sultan Begim. After Jahanshah was killed, Uzun Hasan Aqqoyunlu showed great respect to Yadgar than Jahanshah. When Abu Sa'id Mirza was captured in Qarabagh, Uzun Hasan handed him to Yadgar Muhammad for execution, as reprisal for Abu Sa'id's killing of Yadgar's grandmother Gawharshad in 1457. Thus, when a prince from the branch of Miranshahid, Yadgar Muhammad, as an heir of the Shahrukhid branch, put a claim for the rule of Khurasan. Taking advantage of this situation, Uzun Hasan patronized him and "*sent Yadgar Muhammad off with some Khurasan amirs and a large contingent of soldiers, encouraging him to conquer his hereditary kingdom.*"⁴³³

The first major battle between Yadgar Muhammad and Sultan Husayn on the plain of Chanaran, near Mashhad, in September 1469, ended up with the victory of Sultan Husayn. But this defeat was not the final for Yadgar Muhammad; he again requested assistance from Uzun Hasan and receiving "two thousand totally armed horsemen" set out for Khurasan. In addition to this, Sultan Khalil, the son of Uzun Hasan sent reinforcement to Yadgar Muhammad. But when this news reached Herat, some amirs, and their soldiers deserted Sultan Husayn and joined Yadgar Muhammad. In particular, Amir Hasan Shaykh Temür's joining to Yadgar's side caused the soldiers of Sultan Husayn Bayqara'a camp to desert him "in droves and joined the enemy."⁴³⁴ Under this circumstance, Sultan Husayn lost confidence and gave up doing battle. He withdrew to the banks of Murghab.

On the retreat of Sultan Husayn, the way of conquering Khurasan opened for Yadgar Muhammad. His aunt Payanda Sultan Begim entered Herat and held the city for her nephew. On July 5, 1470, the khutbah was read in Yadgar Muhammad's name. According to Khondmir, Yadgar entered Herat on July 8, and "mounted Shahrukh's throne, which had remained empty for so many years of that emperor's offspring." It was decided that in the khutbah the name of Uzun Hasan would be mentioned first and then Mirza Yadgar Muhammad's name would be read⁴³⁵.

⁴³³ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 422-423. "wa u ra ba-taskhir-i mamlakat-i movrus targhib namud", Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 139.

⁴³⁴ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 424, 425.

As a matter of fact, looking at the underlying reasons for the Yadgar Muhammad's success in seizing the rule of Khurasan we can have insight into several socio-political factors which paved the way. First of all, it was the heavy burden, the officers of Sultan Husayn Bayqara imposed on the people of Herat for the Chanaran Battle. It was mentioned in Yadgar Muhammad's proclamation (fath-nama), issued after his conquest of Herat. Subtelny gives the content of this fath-nama as follows; He blames Sultan Husain for imposing severe burdens on the people of Khorasan when he first took power in Herat and chastises him for "*stretching out the hand of tyranny and carelessness to seize illegally the property of Muslim*" to assemble his army. This was even though he had already amassed a large quantity of booty. Now, "in the shadow of Yadgar Muhammad's justice," the people of Herat had finally found refuge from Sultan-Husain's rapaciousness."⁴³⁶

At the beginning of Sultan Husayn's reign, when he was not in the city of Herat, 'Abdullah Akhtab, the overseer of the supreme diwan, with Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulku'd-Din Bakhtiyar Semnani imposed exactions upon the citizens and acted unlawfully in the collection of the taxes. The affairs got out of hand and the people attacked and stoned Khwaja Akhtab. When the news arrived to Sultan Husayn, he sent one of his retainers to Herat for arresting the Akhtab, and Amir Nizamu'd-Din Ali Sher was dispatched to investigate the situation and to reestablish justice. The imperial writ was issued and read from the pulpit and eventually, people calmed down⁴³⁷. All those occurrences were helpful for Yadgar Muhammad in capturing the throne of Khurasan.

Other than Yadgar Muhammad, other Timurid claimers in Khurasan were the sons of the deceased ruler Sultan Abu Sa'id. When Sultan Husayn retreated from the province of Herat, Sultan Mahmud Mirza b. Abu Sa'id, crossed the Oxus and began raiding in the Balkh region and thus making the situation more difficult for Sultan Husayn⁴³⁸.

⁴³⁵ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 427.

⁴³⁶ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 65.

⁴³⁷ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 425.

⁴³⁸ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 426.

In the meantime, ascending the throne Yadgar Muhammad attempted to legitimize his claim on the throne of Herat. Subtelny cites this part of the fath-nama of Yadgar Muhammad as follows; "from the very beginning of this dynasty," sovereignty had belonged to the Shahrukhid branch, to which Yadgar-Muhammad belonged. But when his father (Sultan Muhammad) and uncle (Abu'l-Qasim Babur) died while he was still a child, his patrimony was taken from him by Sultan Abu Sa'id, a member of the Miranshahid branch. As for Sultan Husain, who belonged to the Umar-Shaikhid branch of the family, Yadgar Muhammad states that, because Sultan Abu Sa'id held power, Sultan Husain "had washed his hands of all claims to rule, just like his forebears."⁴³⁹

When Yadgar Muhammad entered Herat he was accompanied by the amirs of Azerbaijan, Amir Uzun Hasan's relatives, who were assisting the mirza. Having taken up residence in Herat, those amirs began oppression the habitants of the province.

According to Khondmir, Yadgar spent his time drinking wine and did not care about the affairs of his kingdom or take a step toward ceasing the tyrannies. Eventually, as a consequence of the despotism created by Turkmen amirs the people of Khurasan began to desert their homes⁴⁴⁰.

On the other hand, receiving the news about the chaotic situation in Khurasan and Yadgar Muhammad's neglect of the administration and military affairs, Sultan Husayn decided to attack Herat. He gathered eight hundred fifty horsemen and set out for Herat. They arrived at Herat on August 21, 1470, and made a surprise attack on Yadgar Muhammad. Yadgar was captured and executed and thereupon the Turkmens came from Azerbaijan and fled in terror⁴⁴¹.

⁴³⁹ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 65.

⁴⁴⁰ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 426.

⁴⁴¹ According to Khondmir, "because of his generosity nature the Victorious Khaqan began to speak to Yadgar Muhammad and wanting to spare his life, but the great commanders, who considered the prince's continued existence equivalent to their own extinction, refused to agree." Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 428.

4.2.4. The Second Period of Rule in Herat

After solving the problem about the claim of the contender from the Shahrukhid branch Husayn re-ascended to the throne, and attempted to re-establish his order. On August 23, 1470, after visiting the shrine of Khwaja ‘Abdullah Ansari and Sultan Husayn summoned Mawlana Kamalu’-d-Din Shaykh-Husayn and said, "*It is necessary to organize the capital Herat as it was during the time of Sultan Sa'id, and if a legal parameter is established by me, my brother, or my son, it must be carried out without delay.*" In this manner, Sultan Husayn issued orders approving all officers who held the posts⁴⁴². Husayn's attempt to maintain order at the time of Sultan Abu Sa'id was related to the new regime's desire to reconcile both the bureaucracy employees and the aristocracy with its own rule by guaranteeing their old positions. The reason for this attempt Husayn was probably the desire to legitimize his rule in the uncertainty of the first days of his power.

On the other hand, just as in previous Timurid rulers, the reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara had its own legitimacy bases. When he rose to power in Herat, the Perso-Islamic sedentary model had already begun to replace with Turco-Mongol state tradition. This process began with Shahrukh's official declaration of abrogation of Chinggisid Yasa on behalf of Islamic law and continued throughout the subsequent Timurid ruler's reign. In particular, in the sphere of administration, the domination of Iranian bureaucratic intelligentsia can be observed⁴⁴³.

As it has been mentioned before, in the Turco-Mongolian states established in the Islamic regions, the Iranian highly educated bureaucrats played major roles in the development of the bureaucratic administration. As heir to those policies, the Timurid also adopted various aspects of the Perso-Islamic bureaucratic state. As a result of the adoption of such a tradition two major opponent political inclinations emerged. While the Turco-Mongol military elite had attempted to maintain the decentralized system and its ideological basis, Yasa, the supporters of the Perso-Islamic bureaucratic tradition represented the centralist system and Shari'a. In the progress of time, since it

⁴⁴² Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 429.

⁴⁴³ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 39.

occurred in sedentary districts, the dissension between both ideologies resulted in the Perso-Islamic sedentary tradition. It did not mean that the Turco-Mongolian ideology disappeared completely, but melting in the same pot was in question. During this process, Turco-Mongolian ideals mingled with Perso-Islamic ones by force of time and space. It caused the Timurid rulers to maintain inconsistent policies for fulfilling the expectations of various interest groups. While when the rulers were powerful politically and economically they could equilibrate among those groups, when they became weaker, the Turco-Mongol military elite could limit their power⁴⁴⁴.

The second one was Chinggisid Yasa under the shadow of which Temür came to power among the Turco-Mongolian people. However, while by the time of Shahrukh's rule, the yasa ostensibly lost its primary importance, the Timurid ruler gained power through their Turco-Mongol followers among whom the Yasa preserved its validity.

The third legitimacy base for the Timurid rulers was their loyalty to the Sufi mystics and confirmation of their legitimacy through those Sufis. Just as the existence of Khwaja Nasiruddin Tusi in the retinue of Hulagu Khan the Ilkhanid, Temür himself took his legacy from Baba Sanku. And later on, each Timurid ruler was loyal to one or several Sufis of their time. Even, the situation reached a condition that Sultan Abu Sa'id ruled under the heavy influence of Khwaja Nasiruddin Ubaydullah Ahrar and took his decisions with the Khwaja's consent.

As for Sultan Husayn Bayqara, when he seized power in Herat for the first time, he could not hold it for a long time. One of the reasons for such a failure was his inability to establish such a bond. When Sultan Husayn was on his way for besieging Herat for the second time he met with a Sufi named Baba Khaki, "qudva-i ahl-i jazba", and took from his hand a spear. After this meeting, Sultan Husayn achieved the conquest of Herat and thus removed the doubts and concerns about the legitimacy of his power.

Husayn apparently also drew on the cult of the Ansari to form the legitimate ideological foundation he needed for his rule. According to Dawlatshah, Sultan Husayn owed his victory over the Yadgar Muhammad to the miraculous spirit of the

⁴⁴⁴ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 40.

Khawaja ‘Abdullah Ansari, the Pir of Herat⁴⁴⁵. The miracles in Sultan Husayn's achievements did not end there. Dawlatshah, who was personally present in Husayn's war with Sultan Mahmud Mirza in Andkhod, states that he witnessed the voices of Allahu Akbar coming from the invisible realm during the war⁴⁴⁶. Dawlatshah, who describes Sultan Husayn as an ideal Perso-Islamic ruler, refers to him as "Padshah-i Islam" (Emperor of Islam). Dawlatshah's stories about Sultan Husayn's visiting the Ansari tomb and the success he gained thanks to the help he received from this holy man and the help of the invisible world in his struggles served to show that Husayn was a sultan who received the heavenly mandate to rule.

4.2.5. Appanagement as Soyurghals

Just as previous Timurid rulers, Sultan Husayn Bayqara also, following the tradition of appanagement, granted his close relatives including his cousins, brother, and in particular his sons, appanages and provided them military and administrative experiments when they reached their early teens. As the head of the dynasty and the rightful ruler, Sultan Husayn expected those appanage-holders to remain loyal to him and obey his rule as well as sent military assistance whenever he requested. Moreover, those appanage-holders had to accept their subordinate status to Sultan Husayn ceremonially for instance occasionally paying homage to him at the court, offering presents (*peshkash*), and using Sultan's name in the khutbah and on the coinage in their provinces. In return, Sultan Husayn recognized their right to share in sovereignty and meddled very little with the administration in their own appanages. As a matter of fact, although his sons were involved in rebellions, Sultan Husayn forgave their misconduct again and again and punished them very seldom by any means. All of these acts indicated his inherent recognition of the Turco-Mongol form of sovereignty and power-sharing.

As Sultan Husayn's sons came of age he gave them the governorship of the provinces in his realm. By these means he, as other Timurid rulers had done before

⁴⁴⁵ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, p. 394.

⁴⁴⁶ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, p. 396.

him, created a regional military base. The first princely appointment Sultan Husayn made was that of his eldest son Badiu'z-Zaman Mirza, who was assigned in 1490/91 to rule the province of Astarabad⁴⁴⁷. After his protracted rebellion, eventually, in 1496/97, the governorship of Balkh was given to Badiu'z-Zaman Mirza with its dependencies from the Oxus to the Murghab which remained his main station until the Uzbek invasion. In about 1491/92 another son of the sultan, Haydar Muhammad Mirza was granted the governorship of Balkh. Sultan Husayn also assigned Amir Mubarizu'd-Din Wali Beg to carry on the affairs as the mirza's regent⁴⁴⁸.

Muzaffar Husayn Mirza, was assigned to the governorship of Astarabad after Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza in about 1497⁴⁴⁹. But that province was seized by his rebellious brother Muhammad Husayn Mirza in 1498⁴⁵⁰. And finally Astarabad left in the hands of Muhammad Husayn Mirza⁴⁵¹. After his died in 1504 his brother Faridun Husayn Mirza took his place⁴⁵². Thus, Muzaffar Husayn was given the province of Sabzawar⁴⁵³. Other appointments made by Sultan Husayn to his son as follows; Muhammad Ma'sum Mirza was appointed to the province of Farah and Seistan whereupon mirza's death passed to the hands of his sibling Ibrahim Husayn Mirza in 1501⁴⁵⁴, Abu'l-Muhsin Mirza was granted the governorship of Marw, his sibling Muhammad Muhsin Mirza (Kipik Mirza) was made the governor of Tus, Mashhad, Abiward, Nasa, Yazar and Durun⁴⁵⁵.

⁴⁴⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 187; Mirkhond, Mir Muhammad b. Sayyid Burhan al-Din Khondshah, *Tarikh-i Rawzatu's-Safa*, ed. Reza Quli Khan, Vol. 6. Tehran: Markaz-i Khayyam Piruz, 1338/1959–1960, p. 114. At first Astarabad was given to control of Amir Shaykh Zahid Tarumi and then to Amir Hasan Shaykh Temür and then to Amir Moghul, then to Ali Sher Nawai and after him, Amir Moghul was reappointed and upon his rebellion the region was given the control of Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza.

⁴⁴⁸ Khondmir, *Habib*, 194; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 124.

⁴⁴⁹ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 142.

⁴⁵⁰ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 170.

⁴⁵¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, 247; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 181.

⁴⁵² Khondmir, *Habib*, 258; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 197.

⁴⁵³ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 181.

⁴⁵⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 257; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 195.

⁴⁵⁵ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 153; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 180.

Apparently, at the beginning of Sultan Husayn's rule, his offspring consented to their share, but when their father, even if not declared it officially, showed a tendency on behalf of Muzaffar Husayn Mirza, caused Badiu'z-Zaman Mirza, being in the first place, and other living sons started to rebel one by one. In addition, these initial tensions between the father and his sons were emblazed by some Turco-Mongol amirs, each taking advantage of different mirza to strengthen their hands. When each mirza had been granted provinces, an ateke, and some amirs were also assigned to their retinue. Because the careers of these amirs and household members depended on the achievements of the mirza to whom they were linked, when an opportunity presented itself, they usually incited or gave support for the rebellious behaviors of the mirza to improve their interests.

Apart from his sons, Sultan Husayn also gave his brother Bayqara Mirza the governorship of Balkh in about 1473⁴⁵⁶. After eleven years rule, Bayqara Mirza was summoned by the sultan to the court and the governorship of the city was given to Amir Nizamu'd-Din Darwesh Ali Kükaltash⁴⁵⁷.

With granting appanages to the adolescent sons of course the atekes also were assigned by Sultan Husayn to supervise their affairs. But despite Sultan Husayn's endeavor for controlling them from a distance, long-term separation from the central court of their father and the development of their own courts, households, and retinues made way for independence when those mirzas became mature. For example, when Badiu'z-Zaman reached his older teen, occasional tension occurred between him and his father and then these strains paved the way for subsequent conflicts with Sultan Husayn.

The unsteady tension and conflicts or harmony in Sultan Husayn's relations with his sons also manifested itself in his relations with his other relatives. The relatives from his own generation such as the sons of the deceased Sultan Abu Sa'id were his first major natural rivals for sovereignty and the territory. He battled with his cousins, Sultan Ahmad Mirza and Sultan Mahmud Mirza over the control of Khurasan.

⁴⁵⁶ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 166.

⁴⁵⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 178; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 101. In nearly 1492 upon the rebellion of Amir Darwesh the governorship of the city was given to Haydar Muhammad Mirza and in 1496/97 Badi'u'z-Zaman was assigned as the governor of Balkh.

Another agnatic rival of Sultan Husayn was Yadgar Muhammad Mirza from the Shahrukhid branch. However, Sultan Husayn's not attempting to seize the control of Mawaraunnahr from the hands of Abu Sa'id's offspring might be interpreted as his respect for the joint nature of the sovereignty.

To sum up, Sultan Husayn's relations with his relatives indicated the strain and contradictions in the Turco-Mongol perception of sovereignty. On the one hand, Sultan Husayn acknowledged that sovereignty was enjoyed collectively by the Timurid dynasty and that each Timurid prince had a right to share in that sovereignty through their appanages and other benefits, on the other hand, he continually competed for the supreme authority and sometimes for independence within the dynasty.

According to Turco-Mongol tradition, one member of the ruling dynasty should have exercised the sovereignty on which all members of the ruling group had a share. For designating who that person should be, although some features such as age status (aqa), maternal lineage, and proven capability were all significant factors, there was no specific principle or regulation to evaluate those norms, and thus no smooth and given succession system could be created. However, what was certain was that each member of the ruling dynasty was aware that a successful military leadership could predominate over other factors. Thereby, all princes of the ruling dynasty became reciprocal rivals for leading the dynasty.

As it has been seen, those competitions could not be escaped and created strain and mistrust and of course, also caused animosity and battle. For this reason, Sultan Husayn's relations with his relatives and sons indicated the expectation of cooperation through the acceptance of joint rights and responsibilities and anxiety of enmity by rivalry for territories and the superior position within the dynasty.

As well as a member of the ruling dynasty, from the beginning of his reign, Sultan Husayn fulfilled various assignments to his amirs who had helped him for power. Accordingly, Amir Zaynul'abidin Arlat was assigned to Balkh and Sheberghan, Amir Shaykh Zahid Tarumi was assigned to the province of Astarabad⁴⁵⁸ which was later granted to Amir Hasan Shaykh Temür⁴⁵⁹ and Tarumi was made the governor of

⁴⁵⁸ Khondmir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 138; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 42.

⁴⁵⁹ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 47.

Quhistan, Amir Moghul was made governor of Balkh, Shah Yahya was appointed as the governor of Seistan⁴⁶⁰. After dealing with the problem of Yadgar Muhammad, and consolidating his power in Khurasan the number of these assignments increased. Sultan Husayn assigned Amir Mubarizu'd-Din Wali Beg as the governor of Mashhad⁴⁶¹ and one of his commanders, Ahmad Mushtaq who had show great courage and received several wounds in the battle with Mahmud Mirza, was assigned as governor of Balkh⁴⁶². According to Khondmir, after being governor of Balkh, Ahmad Mushtaq imagined himself autonomous and rebelled by forming an alliance with Sultan Ahmad Mirza and Sultan Mahmud Mirza the sons of deceased Sultan Abu Sa'id, the rulers of Transoxiana. Thus, Sultan Husayn besieged the city of Balkh for three to four months and regretting his rebelliousness Ahmad Mushtaq turned over Balkh⁴⁶³. After this attempt at rebellion, the governance of Balkh was transferred to Bayqara Mirza, the brother of Sultan Husayn.

One of the most powerful amirs in the period of Sultan Husayn was Amir Shuja'uddin Zunnun Arghun. During the reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id, Amir Zunnun served in the court. After the defeat and death of Abu Sa'id in Qarabagh, although came to Herat and entered Sultan Husayn's court retinue Amir Zunnun did not receive the favor that he expected and went to Sultan Ahmad Mirza in Samarqand. After living there for two or three years, due to some quarrels, he returned to Khurasan again. This time Sultan Husayn patronized him and granted him the military governance of Ghur and Zamin Dawar in 1479-1480. Upon his excellent service, Sultan Husayn added to his province the realms of Qandahar, Farah, Ghur, Sakhar, and Tulak. However, for several years various mirzas were sent as governors of Qandahar. But finally, Amir Zunnun acquired independence in the governorship of the whole region⁴⁶⁴.

⁴⁶⁰ Khondmir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 142; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 49.

⁴⁶¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 153; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 64.

⁴⁶² Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 156; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 69.

⁴⁶³ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 161–166; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 76. Ahmad Mushtaq explained the reason as follows: “My purpose in making such bold was to make it clear to His Majesty that I am capable of acting, and Amir 'Abdulhal can not get me into trouble.”

⁴⁶⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 170-171, Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 90.

As a result of such great resources Amir Zunnun possessed of massive treasury and a great number of followers and soldiers, so attained political autonomy. He acted as if he was an independent ruler and revealed it through being negligent in remitting a determined amount (eda-i mal-i muqarrar) to court and appointing his eldest son Shuja Beg to the governorship of Qandahar, ‘Abdul Ali Tarkhan to Sakhar and Tulak and Amir Fakhruddin and Amir Darwesh to Ghur. Such a mighty status Amir Zunnun gained was naturally perceived by an envious group and used as a pretext to denigrate him in the eyes of the emperor. Although Sultan Husayn ignored the rumors at first, in the end he decided to deal with this matter. But, before Sultan Husayn took any action, his eldest son Badi’u’z-Zaman Mirza rebelled against his father, and took advantage of this situation, Amir Zunnun took sides with Badi’u’z-Zaman against the emperor⁴⁶⁵. Although Badi’u’z-Zaman gained notable success in the battles against his father, the support of great amirs such as Amir Khusrawshah and in particular Amir Zunnun enabled him to achieve his goal⁴⁶⁶. At the end of the struggles between the father and son, it was decided that the city of Balkh and its dependencies from the Oxus to the Murghab would be ruled autonomously by Badi’u’z-Zaman Mirza and his name would be mentioned in the khutbah and on the coinage⁴⁶⁷.

Another notable beneficiary of *soyurghal* system during Sultan Husayn's reign was Amir Muzaffar Barlas who was a high-ranking member of the Turco-Mongol military elite, Sultan Husayn's chief Barlas amir. Sources began to mention him from Sultan Husayn's brigandage days⁴⁶⁸. After consolidating his power in the region of Khurasan, Sultan Husayn patronized him greatly and according to Babur the Sultan guaranteed him that whatever realms were conquered two-thirds would be the Sultan's and one-third would be his. Babur was astonished over this act and said that "*one does*

⁴⁶⁵ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 171.

⁴⁶⁶ According to Khondmir during the negotiation for peace between Sultan Husayn and Badi’u’z-Zaman Mirza in 1498, Badi’u’z-Zaman laid down his conditions as follows: “*If the excellency will be kind and favorable enough to grant an enough proportion of the territory for my retainers to live at ease, I will come into path of obedience and submission and shoulder the cloak of servitude. Otherwise, no.*” Moreover, it was reported to the emperor that Badi’u’z-Zaman Mirza was desirous of the governorship of the province of Balkh. Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 237.

⁴⁶⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 250.

⁴⁶⁸ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 126–131.

not make such a commitment to one's own brother or son much less to a beg." Babur also stated that although after ascending the throne Sultan Husayn regretted having made such an oath, it was too late⁴⁶⁹. Based on this account, although the sources did not give specific information about his granted lands, we can conclude that Amir Muzaffar was granted considerable large lands by the Sultan. Moreover, when Ali Sher Nawai was elevated to the rank of amir, the imperial edict was issued implying that "*other than Amir Muzaffar Barlas, none from high-ranking amirs would place his seal higher than Amir Ali Sher's.*"⁴⁷⁰ It looks like that apart from possession of large lands; Amir Muzaffar also reached a powerful position in the imperial court⁴⁷¹.

Undoubtedly, during Sultan Husayn Bayqara's reign, the most prominent and influential figure who benefited from such land grants and other types of immunities and privileges was Amir Ali Sher Nawai (1441-1501). Coming from a Uighur bakhshi family⁴⁷², Ali Sher was not a member of the Turco-Mongol military elite. Nevertheless, afterward, Sultan Husayn Bayqara elevated him to the rank of amir, and in the progress of time as Sultan Husayn's intimate (*muqarrab*), Ali Sher reached an exalted position in the court. According to the information given in contemporary sources, Ali Sher must have been one of the wealthiest figures of his time. In fact, according to Babur, Nawai did not receive any payment from Sultan Husayn, but he gave him every year of substantial sums of money in the form of a present (*peshkash*)⁴⁷³.

Mirza Haydar Dughlat, the author of "*Tarkh-i Rashidi*", asserted that the daily revenues of Nawai from his own estates varied between 18,000 shahrukhis or *kepeki* dinars and 75,000 dinar⁴⁷⁴. Another contemporary writer, Dawlatshah stated that to prevent inheritors from dissipating his possessions, Nawai spent it on the construction

⁴⁶⁹ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 202.

⁴⁷⁰ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 159; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 73.

⁴⁷¹ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 85.

⁴⁷² Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, p. 310.

⁴⁷³ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 203.

⁴⁷⁴ Haydar Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, p. 310.

of various buildings and public charities in Khurasan. According to this author, the value of all the pious foundations Nawai established was nearly five hundred *kepeki tūmans*⁴⁷⁵. When we look at his political activities and their outcomes at the court and his cultural and artistic patronage Ali Sher's unchallenged power and influence can be seen better.

Apart from the members of the Turco-Mongol military elite as had been mentioned, during Sultan Husayn's period the religious figures also benefitted from the institution of *soyurghal*. The most worth mentioning person among them was 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami 1414, the representative of the Naqshbandiyya order in Khurasan. After Sultan Husayn ascended to the throne in 1469, Jami began to hold a high status at the court in particular after Sultan Husayn's intimate companion, Ali Sher Nawai joined the Naqshbandi order. He was also a respected well-known figure among the religious group and the population. Therefore, by his spiritual status and influence, he reconciled the problem encountered in the court and sometimes appeased the people during times of disturbance and unrest. As for his possession, Subtelny stated about this matter that Jami had possession of significant landholding in Herat along with tax immunities and received generous gifts and sums of money from his close friend Ali Sher Nawai⁴⁷⁶.

As it is seen, with the succession struggles, that emerged after Temür's death, various Timurid mirzas each of whom, according to Turco-Mongolian tradition, had an equal claim on the throne, started to use land grants to buy the support of tribal elites. Although such *soyurghal* grants were used as a political tool by those mirzas, they also paved the way for a decentralization process. While Temür's political model had always focused on centralization and Temür always kept the Timurid mirzas under his control, after his death his successors who needed the support of military elites, were forced to share their political power with their amirs. Since those mirzas had not an adequate political power to prevent the amirs from becoming too powerful, the *soyurghal* land grants consequently turned into a means for transferring political power to the amirs. Apart from Turco-Mongolian military elites the representatives of Iranian

⁴⁷⁵ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, p. 375.

⁴⁷⁶ Subtelny, "Socioeconomic Basis", p. 494.

sedentary elements became involved in the process. And even during the reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara with the amirs, Sufis and the ulama, the poets and literati began to be owners of *soyurghal*. Thus, the political power of the elements who were not members of the ruling house began to acquire power at the expense of the Timurid mirzas. While this situation caused a decentralized political atmosphere, it also established a ground for great artistic and literal flourishing.

4.2.6. Struggles with the Sons

The thirty-seven-year reign of Sultan Husayn, who won the power struggles with the members of the Timurid dynasty and sat on the Timurid throne in Herat was marked by the conflicts he had with his own sons, especially Badiu'z-Zaman Mirza. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the tradition of the division of property among the members of the ruling dynasty and the uncertainty of political succession brought by the understanding of *ülüş*, one of the key elements of Turco-Mongol policies, also caused problems in Sultan Husayn's rule. Sultan's inclination towards one of his sons caused the others to revolt, factionalize and begin the contest for power, putting their claim to sovereignty before their father's death⁴⁷⁷.

Badiu'z-Zaman was the eldest son of Sultan Husayn and Biga Sultan Begim, the daughter of Sultan Sancar who had been the governor of Marv. He was born in 1469. When he grew up he was granted the governance of Jurjan province in 1490-1491. After maintaining his order in that province⁴⁷⁸, Badi'u'z-Zaman began to rule independently⁴⁷⁹. It seemed that over time, Badiu'z-Zaman became his father's fervent

⁴⁷⁷ Fletcher, "Mongols", p. 25.

⁴⁷⁸ It seemed that the government of Badi'u'z-Zaman in the province of Jurjan had the same organization with that of the imperial center. According to Khondmir Badi'u'z-Zaman assigned Amir Shamduddin Muhammad Amin Abbasi to the post of chief amir and delivered all administration and fiscal affairs to the hands of him. He instated Khwaja Shamsuddin Muhammad to the vizierate and diwan affairs and confirmed Sayyid Nizamu'd-Din Sultan Ahmad as comptroller and chief of clerics. Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 452.

⁴⁷⁹ We can clearly see Badi'u'z-Zaman's relative autonomy in those lines recorded by Khondmir; "When chaos afflicted the affairs of the Aqqoyunlu sultans, many Turcoman amirs took refuge with the prince [Badi'u'z-Zaman], increasing his splendor, and in 1493-1494 the Azerbaijan amirs encouraged Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza to invade Azerbaijan. He went from Astarabad to Rayy, but he was unable to accomplish anything and returned to Jurjan. Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 453.

rival. According to Khondmir, in consequence of the intrigues of the chief amir, Muhammad Amin, and the vizier, Khwaja Shamsuddin, "the unity of the inhabitants of" Jurjan began to break down. Furthermore, a report reached Sultan Husayn that the mirza's chief amir Muhammad Amin incited Badiu'z-Zaman for rebelling. Although Sultan issued an order for Badiu'z-Zaman to have the amir arrested and sent to court, the prince disregarded it. But having understood the increasing power and influence of the amir would be dangerous for him; Badiu'z-Zaman seized the amir and sent him to Herat. On the way, the amir was beheaded at the Sultan's order⁴⁸⁰.

Apparently, after that event, the tension between the son and father continued. In 1495, when Sultan Husayn decided to mount an expedition against the powerful governor of Qunduz and Baghlan, Amir Khusrawshah, he summoned Badiu'z-Zaman for joining the imperial army with his Jurjanian troops. Sources state that Badiu'z-Zaman hesitated to comply with this order at first, and then "*obeyed the paternity law and set out for the imperial camp.*"⁴⁸¹ Apparently, during this expedition, there was an argument between Badiu'z-Zaman Mirza and Muzaffar Husayn Mirza, Sultan's other son, and "Muzaffar Husayn lorded it over Badiu'z-Zaman Mirza and wanted to have his naqqara sounded equally with that of his older-brother among the cavalry."⁴⁸² This friction between the two brothers was perhaps the first foreshadowing of later events.

After that expedition, Badiu'z-Zaman conferred the governorship of Balkh, and his previous station Astarabad was given to Muzaffar Husayn Mirza, the favorite son of Sultan Husayn. This event occurred contrary to expectations of Badiu'z-Zaman about the Sultan would give Astarabad to Badiu'z-Zaman's eldest son Muhammad Mu'min Mirza, causing the enmity of the prince against his father⁴⁸³ and then rebellion of Sultan Husayn's other sons.

When Sultan Husayn returned to Herat, Badi'u'z-Zaman, took "*counsel with his amirs and intimates, decided to go out of the way of obedience to his father.*"⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸⁰ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 199.

⁴⁸¹ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 133.

⁴⁸² Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 136.

⁴⁸³ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 142.

⁴⁸⁴ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 143.

Badiu'z-Zaman who was not able to take a stand against the Sultan allied with two powerful amirs, Khusrawshah and Shujauddin Zunnun Arghun. According to Habibu's-Siyar, Amir Zunnun was "in trepidation of the emperor"⁴⁸⁵. Failing in dissuading his rebellious son from his insurrection, Sultan Husayn sent Amir Ali Sher Nawai for persuading Badiu'z-Zaman. According to Khondmir, although Badiu'z-Zaman was persuaded at first by the intermediacy of Ali Sher, he abandoned the agreement as a result of a letter, sent by the Sultan to the castellan of Balkh ordering that when Badiu'z-Zaman left the city close the gates and not allow him to re-enter⁴⁸⁶. But the content of the letter was learned by Badi'u'z-Zaman, the all efforts of Ali Sher came to naught.

The first battle between the son and father occurred at Pilcharagh Valley (May 1497)⁴⁸⁷ and resulted in the victory of Sultan Husayn. Despite of defeat of Badiu'z-Zaman, his province Balkh was besieged by the imperial troops and it continued for forty days, "there was a severe scarcity of goods inside the city."⁴⁸⁸ In the meantime, the wife of Badiu'z-Zaman gave birth to a boy, named Muhammad Zaman. The infant was sent as a means of intercession to his grandfather. This action saved Balkh from the siege. Sultan Husayn returned to Herat giving the governance of Balkh and its dependencies to his other son Ibrahim Husayn Mirza⁴⁸⁹.

Around that time Sultan Husayn had sent an army under the leadership of Muzaffar Husayn Mirza to Astarabad in which Badiu'z-Zaman left the governance in the hands of his eldest son Muhammad Mu'min Mirza. After a battle against his uncle, Muhammad Mu'min Mirza was defeated and captured (May 1497). Muzaffar Husayn Mirza sent his nephew to Herat and he was imprisoned at Ikhtiyaruddin Fort. Khadija Begi Agha, Muzaffar Husayn's mother, one of the wives of Sultan Husayn, who

⁴⁸⁵ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 457.

⁴⁸⁶ Khondmir stated that this letter was written by the efforts of the vizier Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulkulmulk and some other intimates who did not want the problem to be solved by favor of Amir Ali Sher. Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 457.

⁴⁸⁷ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, pp. 145-146.

⁴⁸⁸ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 458.

⁴⁸⁹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 211.

assumed the captive mirza and his father Badiu'z-Zaman as an obstacle for his own son's future, organized a conspiracy with the help of the vizier Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and his sons and could obtain an order for execution from Sultan Husayn when he was unconscious from alcohol⁴⁹⁰. According to Khondmir, the murder of Muhammad Mu'min Mirza, since he had been popular among the people of Herat, dealt the reign of Sultan Husayn a death blow. Muhammad Mu'min Mirza was described as a young "who had no equal among the house of Amir Temür Kūragan."⁴⁹¹ Most of the sources mentioned this event as tragically⁴⁹². Even Khondmir said that Amir Ali Sher Nawai several times compared Muhammad Mu'min's death with the murder of Shaykh Majdu'd-Din Baghdadi and said that just as when all Transoxiana, Khurasan, and Iraq was destroyed by the Chinggisid army so now it will result in the massacre of the territory. Khondmir said that this prediction was on target and a short time later the Uzbek army seized Khurasan⁴⁹³.

As for Badiu'z-Zaman Mirza, he and his several amirs and intimates had escaped from Pilcharagh war and gone to Qunduz. After negotiating with Amir Khusrawshah, he went Qandahar for a meeting with Amir Zunnun who had been appointed by Sultan Husayn as the governor of Ghur, Zamin Dawar, and Qandahar. In Qandahar, Badiu'z-Zaman married Amir Zunnun's daughter for strengthening his relationship with Arghun amirs⁴⁹⁴.

Despite all of those alliances, the prince could not gain a victory against his father and he sustained his second defeat at Alang Nishin (Nishin Meadow) in June 1498⁴⁹⁵. After this defeat, with the intermediacy of Amir Ali Sher, an agreement took place in 1498 between the son and the father. Although he was desirous of the government of Balkh again, Badiu'z-Zaman was obliged to consent to the

⁴⁹⁰ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, pp. 150-152.

⁴⁹¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 213.

⁴⁹² Zaynuddin Mahmud Vasifi, *Badayiu'l-Vaqayi*, ed. by Alexandr Nikolaevich Boldyrev, Intisharat-i Bunyad-i Farhang-i Iran, Tehran 1349, vol. 2, p. 337.

⁴⁹³ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 214.

⁴⁹⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 211-212.

⁴⁹⁵ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 221-222.

governorship of the province of Farah and Seistan which Sultan Husayn offered⁴⁹⁶. With this agreement the conflict between the son and the father did not finish, it rather continued the last years of Sultan Husayn's life.

Another rebellion of Badiu'z-Zaman against his father occurred in 1499-1500. While Sultan Husayn was dealing with the revolts of his other sons, Badiu'z-Zaman with the support of Amir Zunnun headed for Herat. In the battle that occurred in Nishin Meadow the Heratis troops took flight⁴⁹⁷.

Over Badiu'z-Zaman's mighty force, Sultan Husayn was obliged to sue for peace and accordingly, Balkh and its dependencies from Oxus to the Murghab would belong to Badiu'z-Zaman and he would rule autonomously (*min haythu'l-istiqlal*) there. Furthermore, throughout that territory, the name of Badiu'z-Zaman would be read in khutbah with the name of his father⁴⁹⁸.

Apart from Badiu'z-Zaman, Muhammad Husayn Mirza was one of the rebellious sons of Sultan Husayn. According to Khondmir, Muhammad Husayn Mirza, becoming suspicious of several of his brothers, fled with his sibling Abu Turab Mirza to Iraq and Azerbaijan which Aqqoyunlu Turkmens was ruling. After spending some time forlornly at that territory he was joined by a group of Turkmen warriors and with their support, he returned to his homeland. Khondmir stated that although Muhammad Husayn sent emissaries to the court for informing his father about his longing and Sultan Husayn was pleased with this news, in the meanwhile Sultan Husayn was reported that the coming of the prince was not out of service but rather from malicious intentions. This situation put the son against his father. The battle took place between the imperial troops under the leadership of Muzaffar Husayn Mirza and Muhammad Husayn's forces resulting in the defeat of Muhammad Husayn⁴⁹⁹.

In 1497-1498 Muhammad Husayn Mirza again gathered the forces and set out for Astarabad which Muzaffar Husayn Mirza was governing. This time, in the clash

⁴⁹⁶ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 238-239.

⁴⁹⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 247-248.

⁴⁹⁸ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 250.

⁴⁹⁹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 217.

between the two sides, Muhammad Husayn triumphed⁵⁰⁰. After consolidating his power in Astarabad, Muhammad Husayn subjugated most of the dependencies of the province.

In 1499-1500, he headed for other parts of Khurasan with his army. After battling with his brother Muzaffar Husayn and defeating him, Muhammad Husayn led his troops to Herat. Thereupon Sultan Husayn gathered the army of Khurasan and set out for Astarabad (1500) and thus, Muhammad Husayn took flight. And finally, the disobedience of that rebellious son ended and he was granted governor of Jurjan⁵⁰¹. After the death of Muhammad Husayn Mirza his appanage was given to his brother Faridun Husayn Mirza⁵⁰².

As it has been mentioned, during the last years of his life Sultan Husayn was the subject of the rebellions of his several sons. When he was dealing with the attack of Muhammad Husayn Mirza on Astarabad, his other two sons, Abu'l-Muhsin Mirza and Muhammad Muhsin Mirza rebelled. The insurrection of both mirzas occurred as a result of the martyrdom of Muhammad Muhsin Mirza. According to records, when Muhammad Muhsin Mirza was murdered in Herat each of those two princes was ruling in a part of Khurasan. According to Khondmir, Abu'l-Muhsin Mirza, the governor of Marv, and his sibling Muhammad Muhsin Mirza, who was known as Kipik Mirza the ruler of Abiward, because of the deceits of Hadija Begi Agha, became anxious and imitating Badiu'z-Zaman rebelled. Although Sultan Husayn dispatched someone to advise his sons it came to nothing. Eventually, the battle took place between imperial troops and the forces of both rebellious mirzas ended up with the flights of the princes (1499). While Abu'l-Muhsin Mirza went toward Marv and Muhammad Muhsin Mirza headed for Astarabad where Muhammad Husayn Mirza had captured from Muzaffar Husayn Mirza. Finally, when Sultan Husayn issued a writ of governance of Mashhad in Muhammad Muhsin Mirza's name, the mirza ceased his rebellion and began governing in that city. Moreover, in the year 1500, the prince was elevated to the office of head of the supreme diwan, thus, the imperial edicts were sealed with the prince's

⁵⁰⁰ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 239.

⁵⁰¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 253.

⁵⁰² Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 258.

own seal⁵⁰³. And also the Sultan in addition to Mashhad made him the governor of Tus, Abiward, Nasa, Yazar and Durun⁵⁰⁴.

On the other hand, when Abu'l-Muhsin Mirza learned about his father's generosity to his brother, he went for re-entering his father's service and the government of Marv left in his hands⁵⁰⁵.

4.3. Sultan Husayn and His Relationship with Turco-Mongol Elites

One of the essential requirements of the Turco-Mongol political system was the capability to gain, enlarge and sustain a sufficient number of military followers. The success or failure of the prince was based on numerous factors such as his lineage, age, personal characteristics, talent of leadership, military skills, networks, alliances, etc. In the beginning, although Sultan Husayn met with difficulties in gaining and sustaining sufficient followers, later he could consolidate his power and developed an operative political system in his domain.

One of the most important aspects of Sultan Husayn's reign was the structure of Turco-Mongol tribes and their political connections. According to their status and positions, each tribe had an influence and privilege. This structure was deep-rooted and irrevocable. For that reason, Amir Ali Sher Nawai abstained from accepting the post of amir. Apart from this structure, several protocol practices of the Turco-Mongol tradition continued its existence.

On the top of the political structure, the sultan himself who had absolute power took place. One of the Turkic amirs, in particular from the Barlas tribe, was always present by the side of Sultan Husayn. Babur wrote that Amir Muzaffar Barlas had been with Sultan Husayn during his period of qazaqliq and he was so regarded that "Sultan Husayn guaranteed that whatever realms were conquered" a third would be Muzaffar Barlas'⁵⁰⁶.

⁵⁰³ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 479.

⁵⁰⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 253.

⁵⁰⁵ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 257.

⁵⁰⁶ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 202.

Apart from powerful tribal amirs, one of the most important Turkic figures in Sultan Husayn's reign was Amir Ali Sher Nawai. Although he was not a member of ruling tribes Ali Sher gained remarkable power and became a distinguished person who was influential in the political and cultural dimensions of Sultan Husayn's government. His family had been in the service of Temür himself, his successors, and Barlas amirs. Ali Sher's mother's grandfather, Saedchek was amiru'l-umara (amir of amirs or chief amir) of Mirza Bayqara the grandfather of Sultan Husayn. In beginning, his father Ghiyasuddin Köchkina Bakhshi or Köchkina Bahadur was in Bayqara Mirza's retinue. Dawlatshah described this Köchkina Bahadur as a virtuous person and said that Köchkina Bahadur was from the notables of Chaghatai Ulus and that during Abu'l-Qasim Babur's reign, Köchkina was from reliable leading men of the state⁵⁰⁷. On the other hand, Ali Sher's mother was a milk mother in the Timurid court, and for this reason, he had a foster brotherhood (kükaltashi) relation with Sultan Husayn.

When Ali Sher Nawai was born in 1441, his father was in the service of Shahrukh, after the sultan's death, he went to Shiraz with a group in about 1446-1447. The sources told that in his teens Nawai was at the service of Abuqasim Babur in Khurasan, in 1450-1451. During this time Sultan Husayn was also in Herat and took courses with Nawai.

After Babur's death, Nawai settled in Mashhad and was occupied with education. It was the time Sultan Abu Sa'id seized Khurasan and Mashhad was in chaos and apparently out of political activities. But the other provinces of Khurasan were the scene of the succession struggle of the Timurid contenders. Köchkina Bahadur, the father of Nawai could not be freed from that environment of disorder and died in 1457.

After a while, Nawai, came to Herat which was under the rule of Abu Sa'id and was not well-received, and thus he went to Samarqand. Although Khondmir stated that Nawai went to Samarqand for his education⁵⁰⁸, he explained the cause of Nawai's departure as the lack of respect and compliance. On the other hand, according to Babur Sultan Abu Sa'id banished him from Herat⁵⁰⁹.

⁵⁰⁷ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, p. 369.

⁵⁰⁸ Khondmir, *Maqarim*, p. 120.

In Samarqand, Nawai was patronized by Khwaja Fazlullah Abul-Lays who was one of the renowned scholars and an expert of Islamic jurisprudences of the time and studied in this scholar's khanqah⁵¹⁰. This little khanqah was a haunt of luminaries, poets, ulama, and astrologers of the time. During this period Nawai made contacts with the outstanding people of his time.

Apart from Khwaja Fazlullah, Ali Sher had two other protectors in Samarqand; Amir Darwesh Muhammad Tarkhan and Amir Ahmad Haji Poshteban. Amir Ahmad Haji was an influential person who was called as "the master of Mawaraunnahr"⁵¹¹.

With the death of Abu Sa'id in 1468 and Sultan Husayn's accession to the throne of Herat in 1469, Nawai went to Herat and entered the service of Sultan Husayn⁵¹². After Sultan Husayn came to power, the relations between the sultan and Ali Sher can be examined in two periods; the first was the period of trust when the sultan had a close relationship with Amir Ali Sher and the second was a period of skepticism when the sultan was uncomfortable with the increasing authority of Amir Ali Sher and tried to limit his span of authority.

The contemporary writers described the deep relationship between Nawai and Sultan Husayn and the influence of Nawai on Sultan Husayn exaggeratedly. According to Khondmir, the situation reached such a degree that eventually all state affairs submitted for Ali Sher's approval⁵¹³.

According to historical resources, Nawai was prone to be Sultan's intimate even if the tribe to which he belonged had a lower level in proportion to other tribes.

⁵⁰⁹ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 203. According to Subtelny, Ali Sher might have been banished from Herat, since in those days Herat was one of the most important centers for education and "no one left Herat to study in Samarkand, which had become a provincial town in comparison with the capital." M.E. Subtelny, "Mir Ali Shir Nawai", *E.I.*, vol. 7, p. 90.

⁵¹⁰ Khondmir, *Maqarim*, p. 120.

⁵¹¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 137.

⁵¹² The contemporary sources were not in agreement about the matter of Ali Sher's being attached to Sultan Husayn. It was said that after Sultan Husayn ascended to the throne Nawai received permission from Amir Ahmad Haji and went to Herat and presented him with his famous kasida named, Hilaliyya. Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 137. On the other hand, Sam Mirza stated that when Sultan Husayn seized the power he sent a herald to Samarqand and requested Nawai from Sultan Ahmad Mirza b. Abu Sa'id through a letter. Sam Mirza Safavi, *Tuhfa-i Sami*, ed. by Vahid Dastgard, Tehran, 1314/1936, p. 335.

⁵¹³ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 138.

According to Turco-Mongol tradition, the Uighur tribe which Nawai was affiliated, took lower positions in court than those of Qonqirat, Qiyan, Tarkhan, Arlat, and Barlas amirs. Accordingly, Nawai who regarded himself as the closest person to the Sultan reached the same level as other amirs through the acceptance of the position of amirate.

Before long, Nawai resigned from the office of keeping the seal of the Sultan. In 1471-1472 Nawai was assigned to "the amirate of diwan-i 'a'la" which was one of the most important positions in the Timurids. At first, he abstained from accepting this duty saying;

I am presently enrolled in the circle of ichkis of the throne. I do not have an official post, but I sit closer to the throne than any of the great amirs. If I am given the post of amir, according to the Tōra some of the Barlas and Arlat amirs will take precedence over me, and therefore to receive the rank of amir would be a demotion for me.

Thereupon the Sultan through disregarding the old tribal traditions, ordered that "other than Amir Muzaffar Barlas, no amir would place his seal higher than Amir Ali Sher's." In this way, Nawai obtained a position for saying his opinions to the sultan personally, as the closest person to the Sultan⁵¹⁴.

Despite being a member of the Turkic amirs group Nawai was a prominent cultivated and sophisticated person. It should be emphasized that Nawai's father Köchkina Bahadur was from the bakhshi class the members of which were cultured and intellectual people. Nevertheless, rather than be bakhshi Nawai received the title "bigi" in 1472. The most distinctive feature of Nawai among the amirs of his time was having a cultural personality rather than a military. Insomuch that, from time to time he suffered from humiliations of his opponents who regarded him as being deprived of military talent.

The influence Nawai gained, in some respects, gave him the right to play a key role in political affairs. As Sultan's intimate, he tried to have an influence on the Sultan, and on the other hand, although some amirs from other tribes like Amir Muzaffar Barlas had a superior position, Amir Ali Sher was in a position, sort of the representative of the military elite. Such positions enabled him both to be a member of traditional Turkic amirs and to have a right to interfere in bureaucratic

⁵¹⁴ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 432; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 73.

administration invisibly or explicitly.

Despite all the influence and power, he gained, Nawai continued to contend with the Iranian viziers who reached power consecutively and were then overthrown. Sultan Husayn Bayqara attempted to restrain this contention of superiority and to redress the balance between the military elite and bureaucracy. Despite the emphasis of historical resources on exaggerative friendship and intimacy between Nawai and Sultan Husayn, the Timurid sultan several times took a stand against Nawai and was on the Iranian viziers' sides. It seems that Ali Sher's growing influence started a disagreement between him and the sultan. In the intangible conflict between these two powerful characters, the great power of Ali Sher is clearly visible. So much so that the sultan appointed Ali Sher as the governor of Astarabad to remove him from the center of power. Furthermore, according to Vasifi, Sultan Husayn appointed someone as a spy to report all his affairs to him⁵¹⁵. The troubled relationship between the sultan and Ali Sher reached its peak with the emergence of the sultan's plan to annihilate Ali Sher. Apparently, this event caused the sultan to bring Ali Sher back to Herat to placate him. Nevertheless, the accuracy of this event is ambiguous since it was only reported by Khondmir, who was patronized by Ali Sher, and other contemporary writers did not mention it. Nevertheless, in the end, those Iranian viziers were discharged or killed.

Another significant matter is that there is little information about the superiority and the dominance of Ali Sher in the field of culture of the time, the confrontation of Nawai with Iranian bureaucracy and viziers, and the struggles and opinions of those viziers. The writers of those sources can be gathered into two groups; those who were patronized by Ali Sher Nawai or those who were close to Iranian viziers and were opponents of Nawai. For example, Khondmir was from the first group and because of his service relationship with Nawai he did not mention Iranian viziers positively, and his first judgment of Iranian viziers was insulting them.

Kamalu'd-Din 'Abdulvasi' Nizami Bakharzi, another writer of this period, was from the second group. He was one of the outstanding scholars and experts of his time in the art of composition and in writing correspondence and edicts. For a time, Bakharzi consorted with Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and his sons and composed treatises

⁵¹⁵ Vasifi, *Badayi*, vol. 1, p. 414.

for them. In addition, he was close to Ali Sher Nawai and offered service as a clerk in the court of Sultan Husayn. Sultan Husayn requested him to write a history of his own career, and thus Bakharzi wrote his history work by the name of "Jami'ul-Badayi". However, before he completed his work, Sultan Husayn was not pleased with his work and prevented its publication and reproduction. According to Khondmir, because of too many similes and metaphors in his writing, his composition could not gain favor from Sultan Husayn Bayqara⁵¹⁶. Moreover, it seems that Nawai was acquainted with Bakharzi and mentioned his ability at the art of correspondence and of prose⁵¹⁷, but although Nawai was aware of Bakharzi's history work, he never made a reference to it.

In addition, another field, Nawai contended with Iranian bureaucrats was cultural. The reason for Nawai's contention with Iranian officers was not only for their restriction of his own political power but also for that they were regarded as representatives of Persian culture and literature. It might be said that Nawai attempted to show that the Turks in proportion to Iranians, had higher dignity in both the political sphere and cultural domain.

4.4. The State Structure Under the Rule of Sultan Husayn Bayqara

The Timurid governmental structure was similar to those of previous Turco-Islamic polities. Temür was heir to two systems of government; Turco-Mongolian and Perso-Islamic. He combined these two and adapted them according to the requirements of his time. While he used the bureaucracy of his settled population to administer the regions which he had conquered, and he also put another administration organization that formed in Turco-Mongolian tradition above this bureaucracy. The mentioned Turco-Mongolian administration was composed of the members of the Chaghataid ruling elite⁵¹⁸.

⁵¹⁶ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 339.

⁵¹⁷ Mir Nizamu'd-Din Alisher Nawai, *Majalisu'n-Nafais*, translated and expanded by Sultan Muhammad Fakhri Haravi and Hakim Shah Muhammad Qazvini, ed. by Ali Asghar Hikmat, (English Title: The Majalisu'n-Nafais "Galaxy of Poets," of Mir Ali Shir Navai: Two 16th Century Persian Translations), Tehran, 1323/1945, p. 99.

⁵¹⁸ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 107.

The Timurid government had two major layers: settled and nomadic. Thus, there were two main offices, one of which was staffed by Persian bureaucrats with a long history of bureaucratic affairs, and the other one was for the Turco-Mongolian followers. As in other nomadic policies, while the military affairs were handled by the Turkic amirs, the Persian bureaucrats administered the financial affairs, tax collection, and much of the local government. The Timurid administration consisted of two central diwans: The Diwan-i 'A'la, known as Diwan-i Sart which was staffed by the Persian bureaucrats, and the Chaghataid diwan, known as the Diwan-i Tovachi or Diwan-i Türk whose staff consisted of Turco-Mongol elements.

The Iranian members of the Diwan-i 'A'la were generally the people who came from vizierate families, the members of which had served in the administrations of previous rulers. Diwan-i Tovachi, on the other hand, was in the hands of Turco-Mongolian amirs⁵¹⁹.

We can witness that in the Timurid government, the Turkic amirs held the upper hand against the Iranian bureaucrats since some of them came from the tribes on which the Timurid state depended militarily. Because the state depended on military power, they had the right to say about the order. Consequently, they were closer to the center of power than other staff.

Throughout his reign, Temür used various methods to limit the powers of the staff of both administrations. As Manz points that although the Persian personnel did not have military resources, they were not completely deprived of sources of power. They had specialization and distinct independent networks of influence and patronage and even connection with the subjects⁵²⁰. In Temür's time, the Persian administration was of relatively low status, and instead of depending on his Persian officers, Temür made use of his Turco-Mongolian amirs familiar with Perso-Islamic sedentary tradition and thus restricted their power and independence⁵²¹.

Apparently, under the rule of a powerful figure like Temür, the members of both diwans had little power. But after Temür's death, with the change in the power

⁵¹⁹ Subtelny, *Transition*, pp. 68-69.

⁵²⁰ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 113.

⁵²¹ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 113.

balances, those officials began to gain more power politically and economically and have more influence over the Timurid policy.

4.4.1. The Structure of the Administration

To have a good grasp of the period under discussion, it is necessary to become familiar with its administrative structure. Understanding the administrative organization and the characteristics and functions of its institutions and their executors also helps to clarify emerging power centers of the period. It is necessary to reveal the high positions in the Timurid government to reach an idea about state structure in the period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara.

The basic structure of the Timurid administrative system was similar to the administrative heritage that existed in the previous periods, that is, it was shaped around the axis of a sultan, Iranian viziers, and Turco-Mongol amirs.

After emerging in the political scene of the Timurid state, the periods of qazaqliq and the difficulties, infidelities, desertions, socio-political alliances, etc. experienced by Sultan Husayn Mirza in the Khwarazm Deserts and Dasht-i Qipchaq were determinant for his later political life. When he first ascended to the throne of Khurasan in 1469, Sultan Husayn gave the place to the amirs in his administration who had been with him during his qazaqliq times, while leaving the experienced Iranian bureaucrats in their posts who had been in the service of preceding Timurid rulers.

As we have seen in previous chapters that the Turco-Islamic policies emerged in the Middle East had a dual administrative system consisting of military offices which were based on Turco-Mongol amirs (begs) and civilian office which was composed of Iranian bureaucrats. In the Timurid governmental structure, also there were two parts one of which was called "Diwan-i Tovachi or Diwan-i Türk" and the other which was called "Diwan-i Sart or Diwan-i Mal".

In the beginning, when Sultan Husayn came to power, sustaining Timurid tradition, he assigned his nephew, Muhammad Sultan ⁵²², known as Kichik Mirza, to

⁵²² Sultan Husayn's sister's son whose father was Mirza Sultan Ahmad b. Mirza Saydi Ahmad b. Mirza Miranshah b. Amir Temür. Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 138.

the head of the administrative and fiscal affairs⁵²³. He also, as it has been mentioned, left the Persian bureaucrats in their own posts which they had been appointed by Sultan Husayn's predecessors. One of them was Khwaja Qutbuddin Taus Semnani who had been in the service of Abu'l-Qasim Babur and Abu Sa'id Mirzas as vizier, was made overseer of the royal diwan (Mushrif-i Diwan-i Humayun). Apart from Semnani, Khwaja Sayfuddin Muzaffar Shabanqara was granted the vizierate⁵²⁴. He was a member of a prominent family from Fars province.

During the Sultan Husayn period, more than ten viziers were appointed to the post, and the insecurity of the vizierate's survival caused those viziers to accumulate wealth by embezzling money and putting pressure on the people. As a result of the conspiracies and intrigues of the viziers against each other by making alliances both with the Turco-Mongol amirs of the time and other Iranian bureaucrats, it became common for the viziers to be dismissed and even sentenced to death during this period.

On the other hand, one of the most noticeable aspects of Sultan Husayn's reign was the contention between these two groups. When Sultan Husayn acceded to the throne of Herat for the first time in 1469, the powerful Turkic amir Nizamud-Din Ali Sher (906-1501)⁵²⁵, later called as Mir Ali Sher Nawai, the pen-name (*takhallus*) who was at that time in the Abu Sa'id's son Sultan Ahmad Mirza's camp in Samarqand came to Herat and joined the Sultan Husayn's retinue.

Nawai, a man of culture and politician, was one of the active actors in the political scene in the last decades of the Timurid state. During his long political life, he held various positions such as sealer, amirate of the diwan, and the governor of Astarabad. However, what made his character more important and respected in the hierarchy of power of his time was that he was an intimate counselor of Sultan Husayn Bayqara.

The family of Nawai had been in the service of the Timurid dynasty, in particular the Umar Shaykhid branch. According to information Khondmir gave,

⁵²³ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 95.

⁵²⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 138.

⁵²⁵ Subtelny, "Nawai", pp. 90-93.

Nawai's "*fathers and forefathers were old retainers of the family of Mirza Umar Shaykh Bahadur son of Amir Temür, where they held the hereditary post of kükaltash.*"⁵²⁶ In the beginning, when Sultan Husayn was in Mirza Abu'l-Qasim Babur's retinue, Ali Sher was in their service. But when Babur died and Sultan Husayn went to Marv, Ali Sher stayed in Mashhad and continued his education. During the reign of Abu Sa'id in Herat, Ali Sher went there, but in the words of Khondmir, "*not finding adequate patronage, he left Khurasan for Samarqand.*"⁵²⁷ In Samarqand, Ali Sher lived in a khanaqah where he was studying and established relationships with Amir Darwesh Muhammad Tarkhan and Amir Ahmad Haji who were influential persons in the political affairs of Mawarau'n-Nahr. After the death of Abu Sa'id, when Sultan Husayn occupied Herat, Ali Sher received permission from Amir Haji and went to Herat and he presented his "Hilaliyya" qasida to Sultan Husayn.⁵²⁸

According to contemporary sources, rather than a certain administrative assignment, Nawai was entrusted with the task of ichki (intimate, counselor) and served as an advisor to Sultan Husayn. The appointment of Ali Sher to an official duty took place in later years. In the sources, Ali Sher was mentioned as "Muqarrab-i Hazrat-i Sultani". Most probably, this situation was based on that the nobility of the Uyghur tribe which Ali Sher belonged, was lower concerning other Turco-Mongol tribes such as Barlas, Arlat, Tarkhan, Qiyat, and Qongirat of the Timurid state. According to Turco-Mongol tradition (*töre/yasa*), the begs of the Uyghur tribe should have taken part after the begs of those mentioned tribes. For that reason, although Ali Sher was the second person after Sultan Husayn in respect of the rank order, he had to take part in the above-mentioned tribal begs during the council (*diwan*) meetings and ceremonies and affix a seal under those of others. Therefore, having a more esteemed position before the sultan, it was the sole remedy was renouncing an official position

⁵²⁶ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 422.

⁵²⁷ The underlying reasons of such a disfavor was expressed in the letter by Ali Sher which he wrote to Hasan Ardasher as follows; "i am a poet, and superior to Nizami and Ferdowsi, although i am a preeminent person, i am offended and oppressed in Herat. The rule of Samarqandis in Herat (Abu Sai's rule) means the rule of vulgarity and plunderage... Here i do not have any companion for conversation. And they did not put on any salary and even did not give a room, thus i do not have any chance other than leaving the homeland..." Z.V. Togan, "Ali Shir", *İslam Ansikolpedisi*, vol. 1, p. 350.

⁵²⁸ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 422.

and being intimate to the sultan⁵²⁹.

At the beginning of his rule, Sultan Husayn assigned Ali Sher as the "keeper of the great imperial seal (Muhr-i Bozorg-i Humayun)", but after serving for a time, Ali Sher resigned from that post and offered that Amir Nizamu'd-Din Shaykh Ahmad Suhayli be charged with this position. In 1472 Sultan Husayn promoted him to the post of the "amirate of the supreme diwan (Amarat-i Diwan-i 'A'la)", one of the most important posts in the Timurid state. At first, Ali Sher refrained from accepting the post saying;

I am presently enrolled in the circle of ichkis of the throne. I do not have an official post, but I sit closer to the throne than any of the great amirs. If I am given the post of amir, according to the Töre⁵³⁰ some of the Barlas and Arlat amirs will take precedence over me, and therefore to receive the rank of amir would be a demotion for me⁵³¹.

Thereupon, the sultan, challenging the tribal traditions, issued an edict ordering; “*other than Amir Muzaffar Barlas, no amir would place his seal higher than Amir Ali Sher’s.*”⁵³²

4.4.2. The Contention between Iranian Viziers and the Turkic Amirs During the Sultan Husayn Bayqara’s Reign

During the thirty-seven years’ reign of Sultan Husayn, he assigned more than ten people to the post of vizierate. Some of those figures made their marks in the Timurid policy of their time. With this regard, it is necessary to give some details about the political figures such as Khwaja Alau’d-Din Sanei, Khwaja Qiwamu’d-Din Nizamu’l-Mulk Khwafi, Khwaja Afdhalu’d-Din Muhammad Kermani, and Khwaja Majdu’d-Din Khwafi, who played an important role at the center of the political conflicts in the period under examination. Throughout their vizierate periods, by some means or other, each of them participated in the political maneuvers performed by Ali

⁵²⁹ Togan, “Ali Şir”, p. 351.

⁵³⁰ Behasb-i türe, Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 159.

⁵³¹ Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 432.

⁵³² Khwandamir, *Habibu’s-Siyar*, p. 432.

Sher Nawai who was the representative of the Turkic amirs in the political arena. But in all cases, the existing conflicts resulted in dismissions, arrests, tortures, confiscations of property, exile, and even execution of the viziers.

Khwaja 'Alau'd-Din Ali Sanei⁵³³ was one of the first viziers in Sultan Husayn's rule and falling victim of Sultan's wrath, being prisoned and eventually executed. He was from the notables of the province of Bakharz. At the beginning of Sultan Husayn's rule, Khwaja Sanei was assigned to the vizierate. According to Khondmir, "*since he was in complete command he allowed extortion of the weak and the peasantry, and he continually practiced deception on the other viziers.*" In this way, he turned various people against himself. Ali Sher Nawai was one of the opponents of Sanei. Apparently, Sanei did not find Ali Sher adequate in military affairs, which was the most important qualification of the Turkic amirs. Khondmir wrote that one of the important causes of such an enmity Ali Sher bear was a satirical couplet, composed by Sanei for Ali Sher: "*Tomorrow, when there are sword blows in battle, the strength of Ali Sher's arm will be known.*"⁵³⁴ The rivalry between this vizier and the amir ends up in the victory of Ali Sher. According to a story narrated by Khondmir, one day Khwaja Sanei was standing in the circle of the viziers (jarga-i vüzera), an order a servant untied the Khwaja's turban which was extremely large, and bent it around his throat. Ali Sher requested poetically Sultan Husayn to annihilate him saying; "*as you have lightened the load on his head, lighten the load on his throat.*" But Sultan Husayn contended with arresting and torturing him. Khwaja's imprisonment lasted about six years. In addition, Khwaja was obliged to pay a fine with his all property⁵³⁵.

Aside from Khwaja Sanei, we will analyze three other figures who were raised to the post of vizierate during the period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. Khwaja Qiwamuddin Nizamu'l-Mulk Khwafi, Khwaja Afdhalu'd-Din Muhammad Kermani, and Khwaja Majdu'd-Din Muhammad Khwafi were the most prominent members of the vizierate ranks in this period. Each of them rose to power twice and was patronized

⁵³³ According to Khondmir, his lineage went back to Barmakids. Ghiyasuddin b. Hamamuddin Khondmir, *Dastur'ul-Vuzara*, ed. Sa'id Nafisi, Tehran, 1317, p. 397.

⁵³⁴ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 515.

⁵³⁵ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 329.

by Ali Sher Nawai but after gaining power and influence they were confronted with the hostility of Nawai and other Turkic amirs.

Mawlana Qivamuddin Nizamu'l-Mulk Khwafi was the first powerful vizier of the period and his father Mawlana Shihabuddin Isma'il had been the head of the juridical office (*qudat*) in the province of Khwaf⁵³⁶. He spent nearly thirty years of his life working in financial and administrative affairs in the Timurid bureaucracy.

The contemporary sources did not give much information about Nizamu'l-Mulk's birth date, childhood, and youth years. The first appearance of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk on the political scene was during the period of Abu'l-Qasim Babur's reign. He was assigned as vizier under the rule of Abu Sa'id Mirza and when Abu Sa'id set out for Azerbaijan in 1467 the whole important state affairs were under the control of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk⁵³⁷. After the death of Abu Sa'id, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk came to the court of Sultan Husayn and was appointed as vizier in 1472 and he was killed in 1497/1498 by the order of the Timurid sultan. His relatively long tenure as a vizier caused him to become involved in conflicts and political divisions within the Timurid governmental structure.

As stated earlier, one of the main reasons for Nizamu'l-Mulk's appointment to Husayn's vizierate was the support of Ali Sher Nawai and his hostility to Khwaja 'Alau'd-Din Sanei, one of Sultan Husayn's first and most prestigious viziers⁵³⁸. According to Khondmir, Khwaja Sanei, who was proud of his ancestry and boasted his wealth due to being from Barmakis, caused the courtiers, including Ali Sher Nawai, to be hostile to him with such behavior and actions. Another reason why Ali Sher turned against Khwaja Sanei was shown as his oppression on the subject and cruelty against other viziers⁵³⁹. Such reasons created a good opportunity for Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk to gain considerable power in the vizierate of Sultan Husayn.

On the other hand, Aqili who was patronized by Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, never

⁵³⁶ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 418.

⁵³⁷ Sayfuddin Haji bin Nezam Aqili, *Asarul-Vuzara*, ed. Mir Jalaluddin Husayni Armavi, Tehran University: Tehran, 1337, p. 354.

⁵³⁸ Khondmir, *Dastur*, 418.

⁵³⁹ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 418; Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 329.

mentioned the role of Nawai in bringing his patron to the post of vizierate. According to him Sultan Husayn elevated Nizamu'l-Mulk to vizierate due to his moral and religious perfection and reliable and honest performance in diwan affairs⁵⁴⁰.

The historical sources of the period under investigation did not clearly explain the duties and functions of the Timurid viziers. Sometimes even their appointment or dismissal dates were missing. This is perhaps because of the low status of the Iranian viziers of the Timurid period in the face of the increasing influence and power of the Turco-Mongol military elite. Manz claimed that Temür took advantage of his Turco-Mongol followers to limit the power of the Iranian bureaucracy⁵⁴¹. Since Temür utilized multiple sources of legitimacy he would not have need Iranian bureaucrats to break the influence of the tribes in his region. Thus, there was no fundamental reason for Temür to make the Iranian bureaucrats powerful.

However, the situation changed during the period of his successors. As a result of the decentralization of the Timurid political world, the Timurid princes tried to create a balance between these two classes. During this period there was a group of viziers working under the supervision of the chief vizier in the Timurid diwan. Elevating several people to the office of vizierate at the same time was a prevalent practice in the administrative structure. Khondmir mentioned that it was the custom for Sultan Husayn to appoint and dismiss viziers and bureaucrats one after the other, and to make four or five people partners in this position⁵⁴². As a matter of fact, during Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk's vizierate, Majdu'd-Din Muhammad, who would have great influence and authority in Sultan Husayn's diwan and who would soon oppose Khwaja, became his partner in this position.

One of the most important aspects of the vizierate of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk was the special attention paid to Shari'a. On this subject, Aqili was mentioning that his patron (Nizamu'l-Mulk) forbade Sultan Husayn from evil⁵⁴³, according to Babur,

⁵⁴⁰ Aqili, *Asaru'l-Vuzara*, p. 35.

⁵⁴¹ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 125.

⁵⁴² Khondmir, *Habib*, 328.

⁵⁴³ Aqili, *Asaru'l-Vuzara*, p. 355.

Sultan Husayn quit drinking alcohol for six or seven years when he first came to the throne, but then he started drinking⁵⁴⁴. The edicts on the prohibition of drinking alcohol and shaving⁵⁴⁵ at that time were probably during the vizierate of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk.

Another feature of the period of the vizierate of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk was his reforms. When Sultan Husayn came to power, he considered it necessary to make some economic reforms and tried to take some measures to improve the economic atmosphere of the region. Desiring to achieve lasting results from these measures, the sultan first ordered his officials to identify the pathology of the Khurasan economy and the destructive factors affecting economic life.

According to Aqili, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk regulated the taxes considering the prosperity of the people and on this basis, he presented a report containing twenty-one parts. After examining the dimensions of the issue through this report, Sultan issued an edict to eliminate the economic damage to Khurasan⁵⁴⁶. In this context, some measures were taken respectively. First of all, the increase in taxes, which was one of the most important factors in the deterioration of the economic situation, and even the irregularities in the collection method in some cases were taken care of. In this period, as a result of the rebellions that broke out due to the inconsistent and different amounts of taxes, taken from the people, Sultan punished those responsible and ordered the people of Herat and its surroundings to be exempted from some taxes for two years⁵⁴⁷.

It is understood from the resources of the period that Khwaja Mizamu'l-Mulk fell out with the great Turkic amirs and their allies, the Iranian bureaucrats, due to his reformist economic actions. It was probably these actions that were the cause of the conspiracies against Khwaja by the Iranian-Turkish alliance.

Another striking aspect of the Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk's vizierate was his political interference in relations within the Timurid dynasty. It did not end well for

⁵⁴⁴ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 194.

⁵⁴⁵ Bakharzi, *Munsha*, pp. 159-160, 164-165.

⁵⁴⁶ Aqili, *Asarul-Vuzara*, pp. 355-356.

⁵⁴⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 144-145, 152-154.

him. Mirkhond states that one of the main reasons for the enmity between Ali Sher Nawai and Khwaja was his divisive and provocative involvement in the family disputes between Sultan's sons, Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza and Muzaffar Husayn Mirza. Apparently, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk undermined the mediating role played by Ali Sher Nawai in the peaceful resolution of the rebellion of Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza against Sultan Husayn. But his disruptive action caused this political crisis to worsen. Although it is not clearly stated what the real purpose of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk was, he prepared conspiracies against Badi'u'z-Zaman in cooperation with Khadija Begim, the mother of Muzaffar Husayn Mirza, and was involved in the murder of Muhammad Mumin Mirza, Badi'u'z-Zaman's son. This issue caused Ali Sher and Badi'u'z-Zaman to have a strong grudge against Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk⁵⁴⁸.

Although which facts that caused the rivalry of Ali Sher with Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and when the first conflict arose between them are not accurately specified in the resources, perhaps the enmity between them may have started after this unfortunate event. On the other hand, it seems that the causes underlying this confrontation of both figures of Sultan Husayn's reign can also be found in the structural characteristics of the period. The efforts Ali Sher Nawai made for preserving his position as the second person after the sultan may have caused that he was in disagree with everyone who had power in the court of Sultan Husayn and he intended to weaken their power. Just as Ali Sher backed Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk against Khwaja Sanei⁵⁴⁹, this time he patronized Khwaja Majdu'd-Din and Khwaja Afdhal and made an alliance with some of leading figures of diwan who had been hurt by Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk to weaken his power⁵⁵⁰.

Khwaja Majdu'd-Din Muhammad belonged to a vizierate dynasty. His father, Khwaja Ghiyasuddin Pir Ahmad Khwafi held the post of vizierate during the reign of Shahrukh⁵⁵¹. Khwaja Majdu'd-Din started his career as a correspondence secretary in

⁵⁴⁸ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, pp. 144-146, 151-154.

⁵⁴⁹ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 419.

⁵⁵⁰ Khondmir, *Dastur*, pp. 429-430.

⁵⁵¹ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 353.

partnership with Mawlana Nizamu'd-Din 'Abdu'l-Hayy the munshi at the court of Sultan Abu Sa'id. At the beginning of Sultan Husayn Mirza's rule, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din became the vizier of Khichik Mirza⁵⁵². When Sultan Husayn heard about his capability and qualification, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was summoned from Khichik Mirza and was appointed to the post of sealer and chancery (*parwana u resalat*)⁵⁵³. According to Khondmir, with the amirate (*amarat*) of Ali Sher Nawai and the vicegerency (*neyabat*) of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din the affairs of the kingdom were put in order again and the serious affairs of the citizens and soldiers were reorganized⁵⁵⁴.

The date of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din's first appointment to the vizierate is unknown. But in the words of Khondmir, with "promoting him from rank to rank"⁵⁵⁵ Sultan Husayn enabled him to have great influence. Khwaja Majdu'd-Din's power increased so much that "*he was also to sit at the foot of the throne whenever the padishah sat in the diwan, to record all proceedings and litigants' words and orders issued in their regard, and to sign his awareness opposite the great imperial seal on decrees.*"⁵⁵⁶ The authority, granted to Khwaja Majdu'd-Din caused envy and jealousy among the state officials. Even one of them, Amir Hasan Shaykh Temür, who was higher in rank than most of the Turkic amirs, said to the sultan that "*it is not the custom of any sultan to have an Iranian (Tajiki) sitting in front of him while all the amirs and state officials are standing in the presence in a decent manner and trying to handle state affairs.*"⁵⁵⁷ Ali Sher, who was in the presence at that time and was the tutor of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din, replied: "*It is not necessary for the servant of the diwan to imitate the former sultans in all matters, but it is appropriate for them to show inventions in raising skilled servants in accordance with the nature of sagacity.*"

⁵⁵² His real name was Muhammad Sultan but he was known as "Kichik Mirza". He was the son of Mirza Sultan Ahmad, son of Mirza Saydi Ahmad, son of Mirza Miranshah, son of Amir Temür Küraghan. He was also son of Sultan Husayn's sister. Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 400; Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 138.

⁵⁵³ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 433; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 74.

⁵⁵⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 160.

⁵⁵⁵ Khondmir, *Dastur*, 401.

⁵⁵⁶ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 433; Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 74.

⁵⁵⁷ Khondmir, *Dastur*, 401.

During the height of his power, no one had more or less a say in financial affairs without his presence and knowledge⁵⁵⁸.

Because of his increasing influence in Sultan Husayn's administrative system, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was opposed and conspired by not only Turkic amirs but also Iranian bureaucrats. At this time, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and Khwaja Afdhal, who were partners with Khwaja Majdu'd-Din in the vizierate, made an alliance to remove Khwaja Majdu'd-Din from the vizierate. As a consequence of the incitements and slanders of both Khwajas, Sultan Husayn opened an investigation into Khwaja Majdu'd-Din. Although nothing was proven against him, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was imposed fine and obliged to pay a fee of sixty thousand *kepeki* dinars to the treasury as gratitude⁵⁵⁹. Majdu'd-Din was discharged from the most of his posts⁵⁶⁰ with the exception of *parwanachi* which he shared this post with Amir Muhammad Ali Atake Tushakchi⁵⁶¹. According to Khondmir, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din remained in this post until 1487 and then he was reinstated in favor and reached his prominence as before⁵⁶².

During the years in which Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was away from the post, Sultan Husayn attempted to reinstate him, but it was the subject of Ali Sher's opposition. Khondmir gives the reasons for this opposition as during his honorable days Khwaja spoke against Amir Ali Sher and did the opposite of what Amir said⁵⁶³. After Khwaja Majdu'd-Din had been discharged from the post, the affairs of diwan remained in the hands of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and Khwaja Afdhal.

For Sultan Husayn, the sole remedy was sending Ali Sher away from Herat. In 1487 Sultan Husayn decided to give the governorship of Astarabad to Ali Sher. At first, it was rejected by Ali Sher on the excuse that he was not inclined to imperial affairs instead he preferred to receive the divine favor but upon much insistence and impression, he was obliged to accept this post. Khondmir wrote that Sultan Husayn

⁵⁵⁸ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 402.

⁵⁵⁹ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 404.

⁵⁶⁰ "az taqallud-i sayir manasib mu'af bashad." Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 404.

⁵⁶¹ In *Dastur*, his title is written as "Bushakchi". Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 404.

⁵⁶² Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 437.

⁵⁶³ Khondmir, *Dastur*, pp. 404-405.

decided to reinstate Khwaja Majuddin to his former position only after Ali Sher was in Astarabad, far away from the royal retinue⁵⁶⁴.

In the meantime, an event created a chance for implementing the decision of the sultan. According to the account, Sultan Husayn Bayqara was in urgent need of twenty thousand *kepeki* dinars but Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and Khwaja Afdhal failed to satisfy it. Thereupon Khwaja Majdu'd-Din in privacy said to Sultan;

*If His Majesty were to need twenty million dinars [do toman kepeki], these two khwajas, each of whom appropriates huge amounts from the revenues of the diwan every year, should produce it immediately –not to mention a mere twenty thousand dinars!*⁵⁶⁵

Babur states that Majdu'd-Din Muhammad reassured the sultan that if Sultan Husayn would trust his words and strengthen his hands; he could make prosperous the treasury. The Sultan, therefore, allocated the responsibility of administrative and fiscal affairs of all Khurasan to Khwaja Majdu'd-Din⁵⁶⁶. In *Dasturu'l-Vuzara*, Khondmir stated that in 1486/1487 Khwaja Majdu'd-Din assumed all state affairs with complete independence⁵⁶⁷.

Meanwhile, Khwaja Afdhal feared that Khwaja Majdu'd-Din would take revenge on him, departed from Herat for Astarabad under cover of closing the accounts of past years and turned his steppes to Ali Sher by whom he always had received patronage⁵⁶⁸. As for Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, according to Khondmir, he remained in his post as vizier but his responsibilities and power were diminished by Majdu'd-Din. And eventually, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, his sons, and his followers were arrested and all their properties were confiscated⁵⁶⁹.

In the meantime, according to Khondmir, when Khwaja Afdhal went to Astarabad where he found again the protection of Amir Ali Sher who had always

⁵⁶⁴ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 444.

⁵⁶⁵ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 444.

⁵⁶⁶ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 211.

⁵⁶⁷ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 405.

⁵⁶⁸ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 106.

⁵⁶⁹ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 447.

shown respect and patronized Khwaja, he informed the amir about Majdu'd-Din's enormous power and his intentions against viziers. Thereupon, Amir Ali Sher sent Muhammad Dehdar under the color of an embassy to Herat for obtaining information about Majdu'd-Din's mind ordering; "By trickery, sound Khwaja Majdu'd-Din out what he is thinking of Khwaja Afdhalu'd-Din Muhammad." Amir thought in his mind that it would be possible to solve the matter with money or else think about another solution. Khwaja Dehdar brought the news that Khwaja Majdu'd-Din's intention was not about the money but he desired to annihilate Khwaja Afdhal. In the meantime, an imperial edict arrived in Astarabad ordering Khwaja Afdhal to come back to Herat⁵⁷⁰. On this news, with Amir Ali Sher's consent (istesvab) Khwaja Afdhal set out for Iraq and Azerbaijan, and Ya'qub Beg who was the ruler of those provinces, showed him great favor and assigned him as the amir of the pilgrimage caravan (1488)⁵⁷¹.

On the other hand, after the dispatching of Ali Sher, and departure of Khwaja Afdhal from the court, and the weakening of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, the power of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din rose to the pinnacle. Sultan Husayn ordered that no amir, comptroller (sadr), vizier, ichki, or intimate could offer an opinion about any fiscal or administrative affair beyond Khwaja Majdu'd-Din's knowledge (vuquf u shu'ur)⁵⁷². If anyone from amirs and viziers made an offer without the consent of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din would be seized with the chain of trouble and affliction⁵⁷³.

When Khwaja Majdu'd-Din rose to power for the second time, he had everyone who had got involved with the imperial affairs during the vizierate of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and Khwaja Afdhal arrested and their properties were confiscated. Khwaja Majdu'd-Din collected nearly twenty million *kepeki* dinars [*do hazar toman kepeki*] from viziers, officers of the diwan-i 'a'la, and other treasurers. Khondmir stated that Majdu'd-Din's "punishments were so severe that no government employee

⁵⁷⁰ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 438.

⁵⁷¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 183.

⁵⁷² "It was also decreed that the exalted khwaja's title on writs and decrees was to be *Mu'tamadu's-saltana* "Reliance of the state[kingdom]" and *Mu'tamanu'l-mamlaka* "trusted of the state". Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 444.

⁵⁷³ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 406.

had the gall to annoy a merchant in the slightest.”⁵⁷⁴

However, during three years at the height of power and authority, according to Khondmir, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din prevented the amirs and royal intimates from affording advantage⁵⁷⁵. Despite his commendable and favorable acts, the inappropriate behaviors of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din towards amirs, high state officials and ichkis, and royal intimates caused most of the amirs began to bear enmity against Majdu'd-Din and to watch for an opportunity to entrap him⁵⁷⁶. Of course, Ali Sher was at the center of those plots. According to Babur, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din gained the citizens' and the soldiers' consent and accumulated the treasury with gold, and flourished the country. But Ali Sher and a branch of Turkic amirs who cooperated with Ali Sher and all of the officeholders became hostile towards Khwaja Majdu'd-Din. Apart from Turkic amirs Iranian bureaucrats also made efforts to make Khwaja Majdu'd-Din fall out of favor⁵⁷⁷. Although those who were hostile to Khwaja during the three years tried to show his faults, they could not get the sultan to punish him. But eventually, as confusion was likely to arise due to the agreement of the amirs regarding opposition to Khwaja, the sultan had to discharge him from the affairs of the state⁵⁷⁸.

However, one of those who were exposed to Khwaja Majdu'd-Din's negative attitudes was Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk. When Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was appointed as the vizier and obtained administrative and financial power, although Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk continued to be his partner in the vizierate, he lost his prestige and power and remained in the shadow of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din. This situation caused Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk to submit a report to the sultan complaining about Khwaja Majdu'd-Din. When the sultan who had great respect and reverence for Khwaja Majdu'd-Din, informed him of this report, the opposition between the two Khwaja intensified even more. Eventually, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, his sons, relatives, and his followers were all arrested and imprisoned as a result of the damaging efforts of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din

⁵⁷⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 181.

⁵⁷⁵ Khondmir, *Dastur*, 406.

⁵⁷⁶ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 182; Khondmir, *Dastur*, 407.

⁵⁷⁷ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 211.

⁵⁷⁸ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 409.

against him. After all his and his followers' property and possessions were confiscated, they were tortured there and also the Khwaja was flogged in the marketplace of Herat to further humiliation⁵⁷⁹. When the torture exceeded the limit, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din released him.

Around that time the hostility among Turkic amirs and Iranian bureaucrats against Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was continuing and their power was too great to be underestimated. Thus, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was obliged to reach a deal with Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk. Accordingly, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din would reinstate Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk to the vizierate and hand over all the affairs of the diwan to him, in return, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk would not oppose him again and would not ally with his enemies and plot against him. And thus Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk reached the post of vizierate again⁵⁸⁰.

With the assignment of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din to the post of vizierate for the second time and possessed great power, the anger-hostility of the Turkic amirs increased and they realized that the continuation of Majdu'd-Din's power and influence could damage those of them. Thereupon, these amirs made an agreement for preventing Khwaja Majdu'd-Din from interfering anymore in administrative affairs⁵⁸¹. Amir Ali Sher Nawai seemed to be in the leading position among those Turkic amirs.

In the meantime, after having one year in Astarabad conducting administrative and fiscal affairs Ali Sher came to Herat and made a request for assigning another official to the governorship of Astarabad. But this request was rejected by the sultan and Ali Sher was resent to his dominion and remained there for another few months⁵⁸².

The two events occurred meanwhile, upset the political balance in Timurid Khurasan. The first one was the rebellion of Amir Nizamu'd-Din Darwesh Ali Kükaltash who were the governor of Balkh and brother of Amir Ali Sher Nawai. Khondmir stated that the main reason for this rebelliousness of Darwesh Ali was

⁵⁷⁹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 187; Khondmir, *Dastur*, 420.

⁵⁸⁰ Khondmir, *Habib*, 188.

⁵⁸¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 187.

⁵⁸² Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 445.

Khwaja Majdu'd-Din's hostile attitude against Amir Ali Sher Nawai. When Amir Darwesh Ali learned that Khwaja Majdu'd-Din not only weighed his brother Amir Ali Sher's words but also frustrated all the affairs with which Ali Sher dealt. Thus he was worried that if things continued at this rate, after Ali Sher's collapse it might have influenced Ali Darwesh's position and caused his dismissal⁵⁸³. In this way, Amir Darwesh Ali “*decided to warn the emperor that if he did not stop Khwaja Majdu'd-Din Muhammad from curtailing the great amirs' privileges, eventually there would be rebellion.*”⁵⁸⁴ For this purpose Darwesh Ali prepared a conspiracy to send Ibrahim Husayn Mirza, in name of whom he was ruling Balkh, to Herat through a forged writ and entered into negotiations with Mahmud Mirza, who was the son of deceased Sultan Abu Sa'id and rival of Sultan Husayn Bayqara⁵⁸⁵.

According to contemporary sources, some troublemakers reported that the disobedience of Darwesh Ali was within his brother Amir Ali Sher's knowledge. In return for such a hostile attempt, the sultan was contended with making "a little complaint" about Ali Sher. According to sources, when Ali Sher heard about the content of the rumors he became upset and felt offended. In this sense, a letter written by Ali Sher for Sultan Husayn is important in terms of indicating clearly the degree of tension between the amir and the sultan. In this letter, Ali Sher expressed his worries saying;

*The surface of the Excellency's sea-drops is covered with dust, the doors of the beneficence which is the source of the endless favors are closed for this poor [Ali Sher]. No one could better know if you had hard feelings about me or not...I do not know what I have done inappropriately to disappoint you.*⁵⁸⁶

After this event, the sultan found the salvation of the state in fact that Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was not involved in the affairs of the sultanate for a while and resigned before things got violent. He decided that he dismissed Khwaja from the posts, gave

⁵⁸³ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 188-189.

⁵⁸⁴ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 447.

⁵⁸⁵ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 189.

⁵⁸⁶ Ali Sher Nawai, “Makatib-i Tarikhi: Raq'a-yi ki Amir Ali Sher be Sultan Husayn Mirza navashta ast”, *Armaghan*, No. 11, p. 755-756.

him a hundred thousand *kepeki* dinars and dressed him in gold embroidered clothes, and made Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk fully independent in charge of the state affairs⁵⁸⁷. The fact that Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was not arrested or killed can be taken as an indication of the sultan's loyalty to him or his intention to exploit him to control the power of the courtier notables and the amirs, including Ali Sher Nawai.

The second event was Amir Haydar's spreading rumors that the sultan intended to poison his nephew, besottedly said to Sultan Husayn that Amir Ali Sher had heard that some courtiers seduced Kakuli Bakavul (taster) into poisoning him⁵⁸⁸ and Ali Sher was consequently very offended and planned to rebel against the sultan. Eventually, after the swear of Sultan Husayn that he never had such an opinion and declaration of Ali Sher that he knew nothing about the affair, Ali Sher left Astarabad for Herat and declared that "*what Amir Haydar said are a bald-faced lie and a clear slander. And such words have not reached my ears.*"⁵⁸⁹ However, after this event Amir Haydar was arrested and Sultan allowed Ali Sher Nawai to return the capital.

Subtelny states that the sending of Amir Haydar to Herat and spreading an unsubstantiated rumor was within the knowledge of Amir Ali Sher and intended to pave a way for enabling Ali Sher's return to Sultan Husayn's court⁵⁹⁰. The second possibility was that Sultan Husayn intended to annihilate Ali Sher by poisoning him. If we take the first possibility as true, it indicates that the relations between Sultan and Nawai became so critical that established a ground for such words –even a lie-. On the other hand, one of the following developments was such as to support the second possibility.

Apart from all these, another difficulty Sultan Husayn raised was that Amir Ali Sher hoped that Amir Haydar would have become the governor of Astarabad after him, but the sultan assigned Amir Moghul to this post. This attempt can be interpreted as the effort of Sultan Husayn for acting independently against Ali Sher. It is understood

⁵⁸⁷ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 116.

⁵⁸⁸ "Kakuli Bakavul ra tatmi' kardand ki ta'ami mesmum bokhorad." Khondmir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 183.

⁵⁸⁹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 183-184.

⁵⁹⁰ Subtelny, *Transition*, p. 88.

that after the chaos created by Amir Haydar, the relationship between the Sultan and Ali Sher was ruined.

According to Khondmir, after Amir Ali Sher resigned from the governorship of Astarabad and all other official duties his status increased day by day. And furthermore, he was addressed by the Sultan with such titles; "Guiding Eminence, Exalted Leader of the Lords of Religion and State, Guide to Those who Possess Power and Prominence, Founder of Charities, Promoter of Good Works, Reliance of Sultanate, Trusted of the State, Mainstay of Imperial Fortune, Intimate of the Regal Presence."⁵⁹¹

As a matter of fact, in the beginning, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din had been elevated by Ali Sher against the increasing power of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk. Although an Iranian bureaucrat was assumed as restrictive of the power of the military class (the Turkic amirs), since the power of Majdu'd-Din was efficient against the power of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, Ali Sher preferred to give support to Majdu'd-Din. But the events that occurred in the meantime put Amir Ali Sher against Majdu'd-Din.

It is clear that Khwaja Majdu'd-Din, in his three years as vizierate, closed the doors of the Turkic amirs' and intimate courtiers' benefits. According to accounts of Khondmir, everyone who had got involved with administrative affairs before Khwaja Majdu'd-Din's vizierate, was exposed to oppression and persecution (*ta'zib o shakanja*) and their properties were transferred to the state treasury. Khondmir wrote that about a hundred toman from viziers and the servants of the court was collected and even, most of the royal scribes became needy⁵⁹². Again, according to Khondmir, although in appearance Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was loyal to Amir Ali Sher Nawai when had the opportunity, he backbit behind the Amir. Furthermore, the rude behavior of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din towards the Turkic amirs and state officials caused people from numerous ranks to have it out for the Khwaja⁵⁹³. And, as result of severe opposition emerged against Majdu'd-Din and the consent of the Turkic amirs' pressures, Sultan

⁵⁹¹ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 445.

⁵⁹² Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 406-407.

⁵⁹³ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 408.

Husayn was obliged to dismiss Khwaja Majdu'd-Din from the control of administrative and fiscal affairs⁵⁹⁴ and appointed Khwaja Qiwamuddin Nizamul-mulk to that position.

But it did not end with the dismissal of Majdu'd-Din. When Khwaja Nizamul-Mulk's power and influence reached their peak he and his sons attempted to take revenge on Khwaja Majdu'd-Din. Eventually, their backbiting bore its fruits, and Sultan Husayn began to lose confidence in Khwaja Majdu'd-Din and decided to punish Khwaja. On such a development Khwaja Majdu'd-Din secretly looked for help from Barlas amirs such as Amir Shujauddin Muhammad Burunduq and Amir Jahangir Tarhan, sending them a sizeable amount of money as a bribe (*bar-sabil-i roshvat*) and gave them a promise saying that if this time he could have got out of this difficulty he would have been loyal to them. Those Barlas amirs agreed to help him and mediated between Khwaja and Sultan Husayn. The Sultan pretended to accept this intermediacy and grant their request. On the other hand, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din who did not contend with such protection and aid fell back upon Mawlana 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami⁵⁹⁵. Despite his neutrality about such events, Jami took sides with Majdu'd-Din and met with the Sultan and said that;

*Khwaja Majdu'd-Din's reinstatement in the administration would insure the flourishing of the state and happiness of the citizens and soldiers, and as a matter, of course, he should be patronized and what self-interested persons had to say about him should not be listened to*⁵⁹⁶.

Thereupon, the next day Khwaja was allowed an audience under the favor of the two Barlas amirs. But at this first confrontation, the Khwaja realized Sultan's displeasure with him. A few days later Amir Muhammad Burunduq Barlas and Amir Jahangir Barlas, the protectors of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din, were arrested and imprisoned in the Ikhtiyaruddin Fort⁵⁹⁷.

⁵⁹⁴ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 409.

⁵⁹⁵ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 410-411.

⁵⁹⁶ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 451.

⁵⁹⁷ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 412. Khondmir, in this connection, explained the event as follows; "One day one of the lieutenants came to Khwaja Majduddin Muhammad and said that tomorrow the Sultan will grant you with a robe and reinstate you to the post as before. Today he sent me to give you this good news. Give the names of some of your intimates that robes could be prepared for them." When the

As for Khwaja Majdu'd-Din, the Sultan ordered his case investigated. A group, composed of Mirza Sultan Ahmad, Amir Firozshah, Amir Ahmad Ali Barlas, Amir Wali Beg, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, and his sons, gathered in the diwan-khana and formed a court (yargu) for questioning the Khwaja⁵⁹⁸.

During the trial, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din Muhammad successfully defended himself against the accusations, made by his adversaries. In the end, Muhammad Amrabadi who was identified by Khondmir as a vile functionary in Habibu's-Siyar, sat next to Khwaja Majdu'd-Din to take his statement down. Thereon, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din objected and asked them to appoint an equal to him. Amrabadi, who took the floor, insulted him by saying; "*I am not inferior to you, in fact, my nobility is greater, for I am freeborn while your mother was an accursed slave.*" Seeing that he had no other choice, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was obliged to accept the accusations⁵⁹⁹.

By the order of the Sultan, the properties and possessions of Khwaja were confiscated, and his lieutenants and servants were tortured to confess everything he had. A considerable amount of gold, jewels, rare books, valuable goods, animal and herbal antidotes, Chinese porcelains, silk carpets, and colorful embroidered tents were seized from him⁶⁰⁰. After severe torment, the Khwaja took flight from Khurasan in a company of a group of Franks to make the pilgrimage and on the way to Mecca fell sick and died in 1494⁶⁰¹. What is interesting here is that Ali Sher Nawai was not mentioned in the whole trial process. Probably, due to the uprising prompted by the brother of the Amir and thus the displeasure of the Sultan toward him, Ali Sher could not obtain permission for attending the court meeting. In addition to this, according to Khondmir, on the Khwaja's journey to Mecca, Darwesh Ali, the brother of Ali Sher was with him. This suggests the possibility that Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was murdered

khwaja heard about those words he became pleased and gave the names of some of his close friends." Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 412.

⁵⁹⁸ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 412-413.

⁵⁹⁹ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 414.

⁶⁰⁰ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 415.

⁶⁰¹ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 417; Khondmir, *Habib*, 198.

during his journey.

The next victim of the confrontations between the Turkic amirs and Iranian viziers and of the attempts of Sultan Husayn for equilibrating both sides was Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk. As has been mentioned previously, when Khwaja Majdu'd-Din was dismissed, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk took the post of vizierate and achieving more power and influence he went beyond the vizierate and reached the post of overseer of the supreme diwan (*amarat-i diwan*). Then he was elevated to the rank of Turkic amirs and affixed the seal in the circle of great amirs (*jargah-i umara u noiyān*)⁶⁰². According to Khondmir, the power of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk overshadowed the ranks of the previous viziers and the amirs⁶⁰³.

During Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk's government, his two sons, Khwaja Kamalu'd-Din Husayn, and Khwaja Rashidu'd-Din Amidu'l-Mulk also served as intimate courtiers and *ichkis* in Sultan Husayn's court. Moreover, Kamalu'd-Din Husayn was signing most of the official documents although he was not a sealer (*parwanachi*). According to Khondmir Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, his sons and relatives controlled all the state affairs in full independence for several years⁶⁰⁴.

Although Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk had an indisputable power in his second vizierate which covered about half of Sultan Husayn's reign, eventually he shared the same fate as the viziers before him. Khondmir sees the conflict he had with Amir Ali Sher Nawai because of evil people and his own arrogance as the main reason for such an end⁶⁰⁵.

Concerning that, Khondmir narrated a story he heard from Ali Sher himself; "At that time when Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk's complaining about me to the Sultan surfaced, one day the Sultan met with me in private and asked; "Does your intimacy with me more than that of Majdu'd-Din Muhammad?" I pretended not to have heard the question. He repeated the question. Then I answered: Majdu'd-Din Muhammad did not have so much power that he could be equivalent to me. Because you issued an

⁶⁰² Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 450-451.

⁶⁰³ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 423.

⁶⁰⁴ Khondmir, *Dastur*, 424.

⁶⁰⁵ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 426.

order that the scribes of the court record my name as the intimate of the Sultan on the royal decrees. And your offspring who are the stars of the tower of the sovereignty and the door of the ladders of the caliphate, come to their feet for honoring me. But Majdu'd-Din Muhammad did not have a share in such beneficences. The exalted sultan ordered;

Although in our presence Majdu'd-Din Muhammad did not have dignity compared to you, because of his culminations I arrested Nizamu'l-Mulk and ordered that they torture him awhile. Today, I heard that he [Nizam] by relying on my favor has hostility and animosity toward you. If you are willing, I will order that right now they arrest and prison him." I said that in the fortress of the state everyone who has bad thoughts against me will get their desert and I know that Nizamu'l-Mulk will fall into trouble. But I am not willing to induce for his calamity. Today, I am asking the servants of the court not opposing against him because of me and to forgive the crimes about me which were caused by him. These words were accepted and that day the forgiver Sultan removed the burden of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk's head.⁶⁰⁶

We can draw an inference from such a conversation that the offering of Sultan Husayn about the arrest of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk indicates that not only the Sultan did not support Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk but also he gave a guarantee that he would not patronize Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and left the initiative to Ali Sher for the authority of decision about the final situation of the Iranian vizier.

By all means, other factors prepared the ground for such a situation. The most important of them was the process that had started with the rebellions of Sultan's sons who at that time served as governors in various provinces. The first mirza who rebelled against his father was Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza. In this revolt, Ali Sher was charged with persuading this rebellious prince of ceasing his revolt by advising him. Nawai went to the province of Balkh and achieved a positive result. At that time, when Ali Sher was still in Balkh Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and some other intimates who did not want the problem to be solved by Ali Sher, sent a letter to the castellan of Balkh containing a message that when Badi'u'z-Zaman left the city, the castellan would close the gates and not let him re-enter. But the latter was captured by Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza and thus,

⁶⁰⁶ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 427-428.

the peaceful solution was collapsed⁶⁰⁷.

Apart from Badi'u'z-Zaman's rebellion, other princes governing in various provinces began to oppose their fathers. They broke their obedience and discontinued sending the revenue (*filsi*) of their provinces which they had sent to Herat. For this reason, the income of the imperial treasury began to decrease. The situation became so difficult that Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk was not able to pay the salaries of soldiers and bear the necessary expenses. And during several years, he had difficulty a few times in collecting the taxes of census and slave and other renowned taxes from artisans and farmers of Herat. The noble and common people blamed him for inadequacy in this situation⁶⁰⁸.

With such a ground, Khwaja Afdhalu'd-Din Muhammad who after the rising of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din to power, had gone to Iraq and then to Hejaz, returned to Herat in 1497-1498, and by the medium of some *ichkis* he met with Sultan Husayn⁶⁰⁹. Amir Ali Sher again patronized him and made an effort for the Sultan would re-assign him as vizier. And some dignitaries and notables who had taken offense at Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk collaborated with Khwaja Afdhal against him. In consequence of all those developments, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk was dismissed and he, his two sons, his relatives, and all his adherences were arrested and their properties which had been collected within about twenty or more years were confiscated⁶¹⁰. Khondmir lists the seized goods as follows, "*...and so much gold, so many jewels, precious books, fine textiles, horses, pack animals, tents, pavilions, weavings, silk rugs, and objects from Egypt, Anatolia, Europa, and China cammuhsine to light that it would be impossible to describe them.*"⁶¹¹

⁶⁰⁷ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 457.

⁶⁰⁸ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 429.

⁶⁰⁹ In *Habibu's-Siyar* his return was storied as follows; "When he returned from that belees journey [Hejaz] he lived a life of leisure for several years in Iraq and Azerbaijan. Hearing that the emperor remembered him from time to time and was kind enough to ask about him and also that Amir Nizamu'd-Din Ali Sher was longing for his company.... Consequently, he made up his mind and set out for Khurasan." Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 462.

⁶¹⁰ Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 430-431.

⁶¹¹ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 462-463.

In the same year, the Sultan went to battle with his son Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza and gained victory. Once the enemies of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk had the opportunity, they reported to Sultan Husayn that during the battle Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk and his sons conspired with the castellan on that if Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza would win the battle they would join to the Mirza. In this way, the Sultan decided the dismissed vizier to be slaughtered. According to Khondmir, before the execution warrant, the Sultan met with Amir Ali Sher and laid his plan before him, the Amir, ostensibly, did not make opposition to this affair. In this way, within a month following, Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, his sons, and some of his relatives were murdered⁶¹².

As for Khwaja Afdhal, he was one of the most powerful viziers who served in the period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. According to sources Khwaja Afdhalu'd-Din Muhammad Kermani belonged to a family of viziers from Kerman who had served in financial affairs during the reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id⁶¹³. In 1473/1474 he was appointed as vizier by Sultan Husayn Bayqara. According to Khondmir, he remained devoted to Amir Ali Sher throughout his life⁶¹⁴. However, his power as a vizier did not last long. In 1487, he had to go to Astarabad, whose governor was Ali Sher Nawai, due to the disagreement he had with Majdu'd-Din Muhammad, the powerful vizier of Sultan Husayn. After staying under the patronage of Ali Sher in Astarabad for a few months, he went to Iraq and Azerbaijan on the offering of Ali Sher Nawai because of the threat of Khwaja Majdu'd-Din⁶¹⁵.

Khwaja Afdhal returned to Herat in 1498, probably with the invitation of Amir Ali Sher, and was reassigned to the vizierate with the patronage of the powerful amir and the approval of the Sultan⁶¹⁶. After the execution of Khwaja Nizamu'l-Mulk, he was favored by the Sultan and appointed to the post of supervisor of viziers. And then he was promoted to the post of chief of the supreme diwan and thus, he was enrolled

⁶¹² Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 431-432.

⁶¹³ Hasan-ı Rumlu, *Ahsenü't-Tevarih*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2006, Ankara, p. 536.

⁶¹⁴ Khondmir, *Dastur*, 434.

⁶¹⁵ Mirkhond, *Rawza*, p. 109.

⁶¹⁶ Khondmir, *Dastur*, pp. 436-437.

among the great amirs and respected noyans⁶¹⁷. In addition, as reported by Babur in Vaqayi, Khwaja Afdhalu'd-Din became a beg but he continued to serve in the diwan⁶¹⁸. Apart from Khwaja Afdhal, his brothers and relatives reached the rank of amirate in the retinue of some Timurid princes. His son Khwaja Ziyauddin Muhammad, for instance, obtained great power in the retinue of Muzaffar Husayn Mirza and affixed the seal in the circle of the Turkic amirs⁶¹⁹.

At the beginning of his supremacy, Khwaja Afdhal had amicable relations with the Turkic amirs. But then, because of corrupt people, in the words of Khondmir, he became enemies with Amir Mubarizu'd-Din Muhammad Wali Beg who was the closest amir to the sultan⁶²⁰. It seems that this time it was the Turkic amir, not the Iranian vizier, whose power was taken away. However, after he died in 1505, upon Amir Wali Beg's incitements, Sultan confiscated the Khwaja's property and all his sons, relatives and retainers were arrested⁶²¹.

Amir Ali Sher several times requested permission from Sultan Husayn to go to Hejaz for performing the pilgrimage but each time the Sultan refused it with various pretexts. As a matter of fact, on one occasion, when the army of the Sultan was in Marw for battling with Abu'l-Muhsin Mirza, one of his sons, Ali Sher sent a herald to the Sultan to request permission for pilgrimage on his behalf. But the Sultan did not give permission by stating sedition and strife in the provinces of Iraq and Azerbaijan as a reason⁶²². In this way, Amir Ali Sher who was immobilized eventually in 1498-1499 requested permission to become a dervish at the shrine of Khwaja 'Abdullah Ansari. In response to this Sultan Husayn said that "*As long as you reside in my realm whatever you wish will be granted.*" Barthold interpreted the reclusiveness of Ali Sher in the shrine of Khwaja Ansari as the unreliability of the Amir to Sultan Husayn and

⁶¹⁷ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 463.

⁶¹⁸ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 210.

⁶¹⁹ Khondmir, *Dastur*, 437.

⁶²⁰ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 463.

⁶²¹ "Khwaja Afdhaluddin Muhammad janabeh amarat maab ra beghayat bi ekhtiyar kard." Khondmir, *Dastur*, p. 438.

⁶²² Khondmir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 241.

attributed it to his desire of him to stay out of the imperial service⁶²³.

As is seen during Sultan Husayn's reign all Iranian viziers who have been mentioned so far, had a similar fate: the confrontation with Turkic amirs. It can be derived from the things written here that this confrontation concretized in the person of Amir Ali Sher Nawai and ended with the victory of Turkic amirs. On the other hand, in contradiction to exaggerated expressions in the sources, the relationship between Sultan Husayn and Ali Sher was not so friendly. Sultan Husayn relied upon Iranian viziers against the Turkic amirs and patronized them to the extent permitted by circumstances.

Iranian viziers and Turkic amirs were two important and decisive elements in the political-administrative structure of the Timurid polity. From this point of view, it was difficult and practically impossible for the Timurid sultans to ignore or try to weaken their positions since the Turkic amirs generally had a high position and had a lot of power and influence in the Timurid administrative apparatus. On the other hand, to keep the government afloat, the Timurid sultans needed the talent, experience, and knowledge of the Iranian bureaucrats, who were under the supervision of viziers. In such an environment, tension and conflict became inevitable considering the differences in the ideas, thoughts, and interests of these two groups. Through their rank and power, the Turkic amirs were constantly involved in the dismissal and assignment of the viziers. It was unacceptable for them to transfer the positions and privileges they had acquired as the closest group to the sultan to another element, namely Iranian viziers and other diwan officials. In addition, the political and economic privileges they obtained as a result of the decentralized structure were in conflict with the thinking and action styles of Iranian bureaucrats who adopted centralist policies. Especially after Temür, the amirs, who were trying to take advantage of the *suyurghals* accompanied by financial exemptions, seized most of the wealth resources and did not allow anyone to undermine this situation. Therefore, the power granted to the Iranian viziers by the Timurid sultans to control state affairs and the consequent increase in their positions in a short time, caused the Turkic amirs to see them as a threat to their own privileges and interests.

⁶²³ Barthold, *Four Studies*, vol. III, pp. 59-60.

The economic reforms that Sultan Husayn's talented vizier, Khwaja Majdu'd-Din, sought to implement to reduce the financial privileges of the military elements often came under opposition from the Turkic amirs. For instance, Ali Sher Nawai was able to play such a role thanks to the power and authority he had gained during the period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. Although the Timurid ruler tried to take some measures to prevent instability and imbalance emerged in the political structure, he failed to prevent the escalation of the conflict between the two civil and military groups of his government. Whenever the sultan tried to limit or destroy the power and authority of the amirs in favor of the viziers, he encountered resistance from them, and the aforementioned viziers were dismissed and killed.

The political events mentioned so far lead us to the following conclusion; the main reason for the opposition of the Turkic military class against the Iranian bureaucrats and the frequent dismissal of the viziers and the appointment of a new one in this period was that the military elements saw the Iranian bureaucrats as a threat for their own interests. Thinking that the diwanis would endanger their own interests by making financial reforms and trying to centralize resources, they would be deprived of their great savings and large fiscal exemptions, they on every occasion set against all the actions of the viziers in favor of the central treasury. Although they were successful in the short term, the rapid depletion of the Timurid government funds and the consequent increase in taxes caused public discontent, which led to the weakening of the Timurid state and eventually falling into the hands of the Uzbeks.

It was stated that granting such great authority to an Iranian vizier to whom Ali Sher Nawai did not give support, can be interpreted as an attempt to weaken the power of the Amir and his collaborators. But such an attempt resulted in the dismissal and destruction of the Iranian viziers. It indicates the omnipotence of Amir Ali Sher Nawai that everyone who became vizier in contravention of him was annihilated. The efforts of opponents for changing the viewpoint of the Sultan toward Majdu'd-Din came to naught.

Sam Mirza is the first contemporary author who showed the powerful position of Majdu'd-Din in real terms. According to him, the respect shown toward Majdu'd-Din was more than the respect toward a king (padshah). Sultan Husayn gave him a charqab which was a robe, specific to the Turkic amirs and until that time it

traditionally had not been given to Iranian bureaucrats. When Majdu'd-Din was bestowed that robe, he wore it and according to courtly custom he knelt nine times and kissed the dust⁶²⁴.

4.5. The Religious Situation During Sultan Husayn's Reign

Due to the declining political power of the Chinggisid khans and the crisis of political legitimacy among their non-Mongol successors, Islam came to the attention of the possessors of power as an alternative factor for political legitimacy. This structural transformation in the government and political conditions allowed religious movements to gradually appear on the socio-political scene.

Central Asia and Iran in the period between the thirteenth and the sixteenth century witnessed the development of various Sufi orders and mysticism. Such developments became determinative for the constitution of the religious identity of the population in those regions. In particular, from the second half of the fifteenth century which had a decentralized political atmosphere, various religious groups, especially Sufi and mystical orders acquired significant social and political power and the representatives of those structures began to play a crucial role increasingly in the economic, social and political sphere in the life of the society.

Of these Sufistic sects, the Naqshbandi order emerged in the fourteenth century within the Sufi tradition of Khwajagan in Bukhara and has survived until today. Despite the non-political approach of Khwajagan, the Naqshbandiyya took its place in the political arena during the Timurid period. Especially, the political competition created by the power vacuum that emerged after the death of Shahrukh paved the way for Ubaydullah Ahrar, who was an effective and influential Naqshbandi shaykh among the Timurids at that time, to take a more active role in politics.

The Khwajagan shaykhs, who had been operating mainly in the countryside until the reign of Bahauddin Naqshband, took a serious place in the city scene and established dynamic relationships with the religious communities of Bukhara, providing the necessary ground for the followers of Bahauddin to be actively involved

⁶²⁴ Sam Mirza, *Tuhfa-i Sami*, p. 336.

in society and politics.

The increasing popularity of those numerous orders made it necessary for the Timurids to gain the support of those various religious figures to legitimize their rule and achieve religious prestige. Thus, from the reign of Temür, all Timurid rulers patronized the representatives of various religious orders in their domain.

In particular, with the decentralized atmosphere in the Timurid dominion after Temür's death, various religious groups, in particular, Sufi orders started to obtain great public popularity and then gained socio-political power. Although most of them were Sunni such as Kubrawi, and Naqshbandi various Shi'ite orders such as Hurufiyya, Nurbakhshi, and Halwati, also gained currency among the people. As a result of the increasing popularity of those numerous orders, the Timurid rulers considered it necessary to acquire their support. In this way, in the multifaceted political atmosphere of the late fifteenth century, the charismatic leaders of Sufi orders, Sunni or Shiite, began to play a crucial role in the Timurid rulers' legitimacy and religious reputation. In return for their conferring support, those Sufi shaykhs achieved political power and respectable land grants⁶²⁵.

Just like the sedentary population he conquered, Temür himself was a Muslim and meticulous to assert his Islamic identity while establishing his legitimizing principles. On the one hand, he presented himself as a defender of Islam through his campaigns against infidels, on the other hand, he established himself in the urban Perso-Islamic cultural tradition through religious buildings such as mosques, madrasas, shrines, etc., and also patronized many Sufi and mystic orders. Through religious patronage, Temür could increase both his own and his dynasty's charisma.

One of the most contradictive matters about Temür was his sectarian belief. Because of his excessive respect for the descendants of the Prophet (ahl-i bayt and sayyids), the genealogical tree on his tombstone, taking his descent back to Ali, his attitudes during the debates with the learned men of Damascus and Aleppo, and the Shi'ite elements in his army Temür was labeled as Shi'i⁶²⁶.

⁶²⁵ Lawry and Lentz, *Princky Vision*, pp. 250-251.

⁶²⁶ *And among them [Temür's army] were Rafidhites of Khorasan.*" Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 158. In respect to this matter Arabashah quoted a story from the chronicle of Ibnul-Shahna; "And the last question of Tamarlang was: 'What do you say concerning Ali and Muavia and Yazid?' Then Qazi

However, Temür's membership in the Sunni sect was nearly unquestionable. As Manz states that "he came from a strongly Suni area" and there are many records that indicate his being Sunni. For instance, we see a report in *Zafarnama* of Shami which was commissioned by Temür himself that Temür expressed his sectarian belief as Sunnism⁶²⁷. Moreover, in Temür's rule the task of official religious counseling was held by the Hanafite scholar 'Abdul-Jabbar Khwarazmi⁶²⁸.

Briefly stated, while the personal religious life and the religious policy of Temür were identified with Sunnis Islam, his main religious loyalty, as Manz states, was to Sufism, in particular to Naqshbandi Sufi order⁶²⁹. Temür paid special attention to the construction of impressive building complex for the shrine of Ahmad Yasawi⁶³⁰, the twelfth-century shaykh in the city of Yasi. The Arabic inscription of the shrine was designed in a way to emphasize Temür's piety:

*The most glorious Amir, the Master of the necks of nations, the one under the special care of the Kings, the Merciful, Amir Timur Gurgan, may he be exalted, ...ordered the construction of this vessel for drinking on account of the mausoleum of the Shayk al-Islam, Sultan of Shaykhs in the world, Shaykh Ahmad Yasavi, may God sanctify his dear soul, in the 20th of Shawwal, [in the] year 801 [25 June 1399].*⁶³¹

However, during his reign, thanks to his strong centralist policy, Temür could keep those orders leaders under his control and did not allow them to limit his power. Although he established an affiliation with the religious orders of his time, the descendants of the Prophet (sayyids), shaykhs, Sufis, and dervishes, and presented himself as the champion of Islam through his campaigns against infidels, Temür did never take a conservative stance and even he was accused, by Ibn Arabshah, of being

Sharafuddin, who was at my side, whispered to me: 'You should know how to reply to him, for he is a Shia.'" Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 129. Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 17.

⁶²⁷ After the conquest of Herat, during his meeting with Shi'ite Khwaja Muayyad of Sabzwar Temür said: "I am a devotee of followers of Sunna (ahl-i Sunnat)". Shami, *Zafarnama*, p. 102.

⁶²⁸ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 17.

⁶²⁹ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 17.

⁶³⁰ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 468.

⁶³¹ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 29.

unjust and disrespectful against Islamic law⁶³².

In the introduction of *Zafarnama* of Shami Temür was described as the eximious at the court of heaven, shadow of God, qutb of the world, and the religion⁶³³ and was presented as a devout Muslim⁶³⁴. Moreover, according to Shami's account Temür's many campaigns were organized for the welfare of religious order and for the preservation of the Shari'a⁶³⁵.

Although Temür emerged as a nomadic commander in Chaghatai Ulus, he was grown in an atmosphere in which Islamic culture and in particular Sufistic tradition were dominant. So, Temür as a ruler and a founder of an empire, consider it necessary to patronize Sufi shaykhs and in turn gained Islamic legitimacy. In this manner, he made contact with the religious figures of his time and as Manz points out, "*cultivated the Sufis shaykhs of Transoxiana and Khorasan to bolster his standing both among his Chaghatai followers and his settled subjects*". Those men not only indicated Temür's spiritual power but also legitimated his incursion and conquest of Islamic lands⁶³⁶.

The two spiritual figures mentioned in the resources are important in terms of understanding the position of the religious figures in Temür's reign. In his childhood, Temür attached the Sufi shaykh Shamsuddin Fakhuri alias Shamsuddin Kulal, a Naqshbandi shaykh in the city of Kash who had been the spiritual adviser of Temür's father Amir Taraghai. Ibn Arabshah attributed Temür's rise in position to Shamsuddin Fakhuri⁶³⁷. After came to power he continued to patronize the religious representatives

⁶³² "He destroyed kings and all the noble and learned. And, strove to put out the light of Allah and the pure Faith. With the tenets of Jengizkhan, that wicked tyrant and unbeliever..." Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 234.

⁶³³ "bar gozida-i dargah-i yazdan ve saye-i hazrat-i rahman... qutbu'l-hakk ve'd-donya ve'd-din" Shami, *Zafarnama*, p. 9.

⁶³⁴ "...kamal-i diyanat ve fart-i i'tiqad-i pak", Shami, *Zafarnama*, p. 101.

⁶³⁵ Manz, "Symbolism", pp. 111-112. "bar niyyat-i ghazw", "azimat bar ghazw", "ba niyyat-i ghazw", "niyyat bar ghazw". Shami, *Zafarnama*, pp. 171, 172, 197, 213.

⁶³⁶ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 17.

⁶³⁷ According to story, when Temür was a just poor and powerless youth, he sold his only dress and bought a head of a goat and went to visit this shaykh. He tied one of the tips of a rob to the head and other to his own neck and came into the shaykh's presence. In this way Temür enjoyed the shaykh's blessing and after then Temür attained good fortune and his power began to rise up. Ibn Arabshah, *Aca'ibu'l-Makdur Fi Nevaib-i Timur (Bozkirdan Gelen Bela)*, ed. Ahsen Batur, İstanbul, 2012, pp. 34-35.

of his realm. Temür's main religious loyalty, as Manz states, "*belonged almost certainly to the Naqshbandi Sufi order whose power and influence was already well fixed in Transoxiana.*"⁶³⁸ One of the most important figures of Temür's rule was Mir Sayyid Baraka (d. 1403-4) who was from the sayyids of Termez and Temür chose him as his own spiritual adviser. Moreover, Temür granted some provinces of Khurasan with all revenues to the sayyids⁶³⁹. The relationship between the sayyids and Temür became so close that Temür was buried at the feet of Mir Sayyid Baraka in the Gur-i Mir, Temür's great mausoleum⁶⁴⁰. Arabshah noted that Temür said that he obtained the sovereignty and all conquered realms through the blessing of Shaykh Shamsuddin Fakhuri and the favor of Shaykh Zaynuddin Khwafi; and found the abundance solely with Sayyid Baraka⁶⁴¹. In return for his grants to those Sufi leaders and their orders, Temür achieved their public support which increased his spiritual reputation and confirmed his legitimacy as a Muslim ruler in the sight of his subjects, followers of such popular Sufi orders.

Temür's patronage of numerous religious groups consisting of the sayyids, shaykhs, Sufis, dervishes, and their followers not only served to increase his charisma and that of his dynasty but also became a model for his successors. But, although under Temür's rule, neither the ulama nor the Sufi shaykhs could gain political influence in his court, after his death, the disintegration of political power prepared the necessary social and political environment for religious groups, especially Sufistic mystical sects to gain power. During this period, apart from the Sunni sects such as Naqshbandiyya, the Shiite movements such as Hurufiyya, Nurbakhshiyya, Mushasha also gained popularity among the people. In the second half of the fifteenth century, the clear lines between orthodox Islam and Shiite began to blur as Shiite merged with Sufism. Thus,

⁶³⁸ Manz, *Tamerlane*, p. 17.

⁶³⁹ Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 15. Khondmir recorded that Temür turned over the endowments for Mecca and Medina to him throughout his life. Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 415.

⁶⁴⁰ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, pp. 28-29. According to the story narrated by Arabshah stated during the battle, took place between Temür and Tokhtamish Khan, the khan of Tatars in Dasht-i Qipchaq Sayyid Baraka came forward. Temür said; "*My pir! My army is being broken!*" *The sayyid saying "do not be afraid" and then he down from his horse and picked up a handful of sand and blew it to the face of the enemy saying "the enemy fled."* Thereupon the army of Tokhtamish fled without a backward glance. Arabshah, *Aca'ib*, p. 53.

⁶⁴¹ Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 5.

due to their growing popularity, these religious groups became support bases for the Timurid mirzas⁶⁴². The Timurids sought to leverage the religious charisma of Sufi shaykhs to bolster their dynastic claims.

Although Shahrukh took over the dynasty after a relatively long struggle against his political rivals, he also needed an ideological formula to legitimize his rule. Thus, with Shahrukh's becoming the acknowledged head of the Timurid dynasty the Islamic legitimizing principles and institutions began to be dominant⁶⁴³. Because while his father was alive, Shahrukh ruled in Khurasan, which had a strong Perso-Islamic cultural heritage, and transferred his administrative center to this region after he came to power, he based his rule mainly on Perso-Islamic tradition for political legitimacy. Under his religious observance, Shahrukh gained a reputation as a ruler who devoted himself to the religion⁶⁴⁴. Shahrukh underlined the Timurids' devotion to Islam by using "caliphate" on his coinage, the annihilation of wine shops, and publicly pouring the wine into the streets, preparing a new cover for the Ka'ba and presenting himself as "the restorer of an Islamic order. Shahrukh also used the title "Padshah-i Islam" instead of his father's title Kūragan⁶⁴⁵.

The religious policies of Shahrukh are described by Khalidov and Subtelny as a "Sunni Revival" and they explain its reason as "the need to eliminate the threat presented by the growth of extremist Shi'ite socio-religious movements and to ensure the maintenance of the political status quo."⁶⁴⁶ Indeed, when looking at his period we can see that the resources mentioned about numerous Sufi orders such as Sunni orders like Kubrawiyya and Naqshbandiyya and Shi'i orders like Musha'sha, Nurbakhshiyya,

⁶⁴² Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, pp. 247-251.

⁶⁴³ Musa Şamil Yüksel, "Şahruh'un Sünni Canlandırma Siyaseti", *Tarih Okulu*, Autumn 2009, vol. V, p. 101.

⁶⁴⁴ "With his [Shahrukh's] praiseworthy character and adherence to the Shari'at he was the one among other Sultans". Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, p. 375; Manz, *Power, Politics*, p. 13.

⁶⁴⁵ Beatrice Manz, "Mongol History Rewritten and Re-lived," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Mediterranee*, 2000, p. 144.

⁶⁴⁶ Subtelny & Khalidov, "Curriculum", p. 211. According to narration of Khondmir, in February 21, 1427 Shahrukh was exposed a knife attack by Ahmad Luri, a disciple of Mawlana Fazlullah Astarabadi, who was the founder of the Hurufiyyah movement, but Shahrukh escaped with slight injuries from this danger. Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 615.

Hurufiyya⁶⁴⁷. The most prominent Sufi shaykh of the Shahrukh period was undoubtedly Khwaja Muhammad Parsa, one of the disciples and successors (khalifas) of Bahauddin Naqshband. He supported Shahrukh in the succession struggle that emerged after Temür's death. Shahrukh, in return, re-established Khwaja Parsa in Bukhara. Thus, the relations of the Khwajagan branch of the Naqshbandiyya with the Timurid court began in this period⁶⁴⁸.

However Shahrukh's transferring the capital from Samarqand to Herat "the dome of Islam" is seen as a conscious act and interpreted as the Timurid dynasty's new tendency, aiming at replacing the nomadic ideals, kinship ties, and personal loyalties with Islamic legitimization principles and institutions⁶⁴⁹. In fact, Shahrukh's declaration that he abandoned the Chinggisid Yasa in favor of Shari'a gives us a clue about the Timurid dynasty's evolvement towards Islamic policy throughout the fifteenth century.

Shahrukh also promoted his Islamic policy by patronizing various Sufi shrines and sponsoring the building of a large number of masjids, madrasas, and khanqahs. Golombek indicates that the architectural project of Islamic institutions was the means for Shahrukh's goal. Accordingly, just as Temür's buildings represented the image of a world conqueror or creator of a new system, those of Shahrukh's rule –the construction or reconstruction of masjids, madrasas, and shrines- indicated that Shahrukh was the promoter of the Perso-Islamic tradition⁶⁵⁰. In particular, two of those building actions executed under Shahrukh's rule had importance in terms of the following periods. One of them was the restoration of the shrine of Imam Riza at Mashhad under the orders of Gawharshad Agha, Shahrukh's powerful wife, between the years of 1416 and 1418. With the construction of a glorious Friday mosque adjacent to the shrine, in the name of Gawharshad⁶⁵¹, the shrine became the site of

⁶⁴⁷ Yüksel, "Sünni Canlandırma", p. 106.

⁶⁴⁸ Maria Eva Subtelny, "The Library of Khwaja Muhammad Parsa", in *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, Edit. Devin DeWeese, Bloomington: Indian University Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2001, p.89.

⁶⁴⁹ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 77; Subtelny & Khalidov, "Curriculum", p. 211.

⁶⁵⁰ Golombek, "Discourses of an Imaginary Arts", p. 8.

⁶⁵¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 68.

pilgrimage for the Shiite population and so the city of Mashhad became the religious center of the region. In addition, near the shrine, a daru'l-siyatha and daru'l-huffaz, and a madrasa were built and Shahrukh endowed a waqf and also various gifts for the shrine⁶⁵². All such efforts to make a contact with Shiite culture can be interpreted as a desire to achieve support and legitimacy. But it should not be perceived as a change of a sect -from Sunna to Shiite- but the influence of extensive honor for the family of the Prophet. However, as a result of such importance, being attached to a shrine that was important for Shiism might have brought Shahrukh in gaining the support of the subject and the Shii shaykhs and ulama. It can be seen through various architectural projects and their inscriptions⁶⁵³.

Another important place which was defined by Subtelny as Shahrukh's ideological touchstone for his Islamicizing policies was the grave of 'Abdullah Ansari (d.1089)⁶⁵⁴, the renowned figure of the eleventh-century Hanbalite traditionalist and the saint of Herat⁶⁵⁵. With Shahrukh's order, a shrine was built for the grave (1425-1429). This shrine was used by Sultan Husayn for his legitimizing aims and in historical accounts, Sultan Husayn's success in the ruling was attributed to the saintly protection of Ansari⁶⁵⁶.

Shahrukh's Islamic policies had long-term impacts on the later Timurid policy. While those policies made the Islamic tradition and legitimizing institutions permanent for the later Timurid political milieu and provided Sufi shaykhs further representation at the Timurid court and then prepared the grounds for the emergence of the Naqshbandi order as a political and economic power. While all these Islamization policies of Shahrukh became a model for the Timurid rulers who came to power after him, they also caused Islam to become a permanent legitimation means in Timurid politics.

⁶⁵² Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture*, pp. 328-330.

⁶⁵³ Shayesteh Far, Mahnaz, *Shiah Artistic Elements in the Timurid and the Early Safavid Periods: Book Illustration and Inscriptions*, London, 1999, p. 196.

⁶⁵⁴ S. De Beaurecueil, "Al-Ansari Al-Harawi", *E.I.*, Vol. 1, pp. 515-516.

⁶⁵⁵ Subtelny & Khalidov, "Curriculum", p. 212; Yüksel, "Sünni Canlandırma", pp. 101-102. For more information, see; Subtelny, "The Cult of Abdullah Ansari".

⁶⁵⁶ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 152.

The story of Shahrukh's son Ulugh Beg revealed the growing influence of Sufism in the political sphere. After Shahrukh captured Transoxiana and appointed Ulugh Beg to the region as the ruler, it was seen that Bukhara Naqshbandi shaykhs such as Muhammad Parsa were in opposition to the Samarqand court due to the religious policies of Ulugh Beg. As a matter of fact, the difference in the religious atmosphere prevailing in the courts of Herat and Samarqand during this period was quite clear. The Herat court differed significantly from the Samarqand court of Ulugh Beg due to the intense religious policies that Shahrukh carried out with the help of muhtasibs to whom he had bestowed so much authority. While muhtasibs collected wine from the houses of the Timurid princes in Herat, the official celebrations attended by Shaykhul-Islam in Samarqand would not take place without wine and music⁶⁵⁷. Moreover, there are narratives of Ulugh Beg's humiliating behaviors towards Mawlana Nizamu'd-Din Khamush⁶⁵⁸, one of Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshband's disciples⁶⁵⁹.

Ulugh Beg had reputation for his scientific and intellectual interests and probably did not consider it necessary to establish a close relationship with ulama or Sufi orders⁶⁶⁰. As a consequence of such policies, despite his nearly forty years of rule during his father's reign, after Shahrukh died in 1447, he failed in holding the power and after two years he was killed by his own son 'Abdu'l-Latif Mirza who was supported by Muslim conservatives.

The first action 'Abdu'l-Latif did when he came to power was the abolition of

⁶⁵⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 35-36.

⁶⁵⁸ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 6.

⁶⁵⁹ Mawlana Fakhruddin 'Ali b. Husayn Va'iz Kashifi (Safi), *Rashahat-i 'Aynu'l-Hayat*, ed. by 'Ali Asghar Mu'niyan, 2. vols. Tehran, 2536/1977. vol. 2, pp. 195-196.

⁶⁶⁰ Ulugh Beg's negligence in observing Islamic law was criticized by numerous conservative ulama and sufis. One of them was Sayyid Ashiq, the muhtasib of Samarqand: For the celebration of his son's circumcision, Ulugh Beg gave a feast for the nobles and the population, in which the guests openly drank wine. Sayyid Ashiq entered and publicly reprimanded Ulugh Beg in the presence of the guests, "You have destroyed the faith of Muhammad and have introduced the customs of infidels." Ulugh Beg answered, "You have won fame through your descent from sayyids and your learning and have attained old age. Apparently you also wish to attain martyrdom and therefore utter rude words, but I shall not grant your wish." Barthold, *Four Studies*, vol.2, pp. 125-126; Khondmir, *Habib*, vol.4, p. 35.

tamgha tax⁶⁶¹, which had been opposed by the clergy due to its non-Islamic nature, but his father Ulugh Beg had never stopped collecting⁶⁶². This action of ‘Abdu'l-Latif and his efforts to establish a close relationship with the ulama after consolidating his power in Samarqand shows that he did not want to continue his father's religious policies. However, the reign of ‘Abdu'l-Latif did not last long and after six months he was killed by one of his father's followers. It was after the death of Ulugh Beg that the influence of the Naqshbandi order in political affairs under the leadership of Khwaja Ubaydullah Ahrar increased.

The period of Sultan Abu Sa'id's reign witnessed the rising of Naqshbandi Sufism politically and economically. Like Ulugh Beg's other successors, Abu Sa'id was aware of the general dissatisfaction with Ulugh Beg's religious policies. In this regard, Ubaydullah Ahrar, who was influential in the Naqshbandi community and well-known in the Tashkent region, received special attention from Abu Sa'id.

According to *Rashahat*, Ubaydullah Ahrar was born in 1404⁶⁶³, with Siddiqui's word, to “*the house of a religious scholar known for his commercial success*”⁶⁶⁴, in Tashkent⁶⁶⁵. Having a Sufi background on his family⁶⁶⁶, he embarked on a journey to join the Sufi shaykhs in Transoxiana. He spent two years with Saduddin Kashghari in Transoxiana especially with Mawlana Nizamu'd-Din Khamush in Samarqand and with ‘Alau'd-Din Ghajduvani and Mawlana Husamuddin Shashi in Bukhara⁶⁶⁷. In 1427 Ahrar went to Herat, which had become a center of science and learning at that time, and whose religious atmosphere was quite different from that in Samarqand⁶⁶⁸.

⁶⁶¹ Samarqandi, *Matla'*, pp. 670-671.

⁶⁶² Barthold, *Four Studies*, vol. 2, p. 128.

⁶⁶³ Safi, *Rashahat*, pp. 390-391.

⁶⁶⁴ Ali Gibran Siddiqui, “The Sufi Tariqa as an Exchange Network: The Ahraris in Timurid Central Asia”, unpublished Master thesis, The Ohio State University, 2012, p. 2.

⁶⁶⁵ Safi, *Rashahat*, p. 386.

⁶⁶⁶ Safi, *Rashahat*, pp. 369-370.

⁶⁶⁷ Safi, *Rashahat*, pp. 413-414, 416.

⁶⁶⁸ Safi, *Rashahat*, p. 416.

Familiar with the general cultural and political atmosphere of this city during his four years in Herat, Ahrar was probably impressed by the way the ulama and Sufis interacted with those in power. Returning from Herat to Tashkent in 1432, Ahrar, besides his success in agriculture and trade, soon found many followers and supporters as a Sufi shaykh, and this apparently caused anxiety and opposition from the other Tashkent shaykhs⁶⁶⁹.

As a Naqshbandi leader, in addition to having many supporters and followers, as the financial power of Ahrar increased, his influence began to increase as well. These conditions allowed him to influence the conflicts of the Timurid princes. While he supported Abu Sa'id in the power struggles of Shahrukhid mirzas, he consolidated both his own position and that of Naqshbandiyya in Transoxiana. Even in some resources, Abu Sa'id's success against the Shahrukhid mirzas was attributed entirely to Khwaja Ahrar. According to Safi, the writer of *Rashahat*, Khwaja Ahrar presaged that Sultan Abu Sa'id would become the ruler of Tashkent, Samarqand, and Khurasan⁶⁷⁰. After Abu Sa'id conquered Samarqand, Ahrar moved to the city from Tashkent, and with the support he received from the Samarqand court, he succeeded in increasing the influence and prestige of Naqshbandi's existence in Transoxiana. After Abu Sa'id seized control of Herat in 1459 and transferred the center of government to this city, Ahrar remained in Samarqand. Thanks to the spiritual and financial privileges, Ahrar enjoyed, he could take an active role in the political arena of Transoxiana. In exchange for his help, the Khwaja made Abu Sa'id promise for reinforcing the Sharia and providing the people a welfare life. And also, after he became the ruler of Transoxiana, Khwaja Ahrar convinced Abu Sa'id to abolish all non-Islamic taxes, such as tamgha, in his entire realm⁶⁷¹. Khwaja Ahrar also held a mediatory position between Abu Sa'id

⁶⁶⁹ Safi, *Rashahat*, p. 543.

⁶⁷⁰ Safi, *Rashahat*, p. 521. According to another account of Safi when Abu Sa'id was defeated by 'Abdullah Mirza he fled to Tashkent. On his way he had a dream that Khwaja Ahrar by command of Ahmad Yasawi prayed for Abu Sa'id. Abu Sa'id asked Ahmad Yasawi the Khwaja's name and kept his image in mind. When Abu Sa'id arrived to Tashkent and described the person in his dream, it was understood that the person was Khwaja Ubaydullah Ahrar. Thereupon Abu Sa'id asked the Khwaja for his assistance. The Khwaja accepted this request on condition that if Abu Sa'id would promise to observe the Islamic law and to enhance the people's life. After he triumphed and conquered Samarqand, Abu Sa'id asked the Khwaja to move from Tashkent to Samarqand. Safi, *Rashahat*, pp. 520-522.

⁶⁷¹ Samarqandi, *Matla'*, pp. 891-892.

and other Timurid princes⁶⁷².

It would be more correct to interpret this relationship between Abu Sa'id and Ahrar as a function of mutual interests rather than the shaykh's influence over the Timurid mirza. It should not be forgotten that the support of the sultan could bring the Naqshbandi branch under the leadership of Ahrar to a superior position in competition with other religious movements, and the survival of Ahrar's large properties in Transoxiana depended on the stability of that region. Furthermore, after transferring his capital to Khurasan, Abu Sa'id needed cooperation and support from the sect, which had influence and prestige among different classes of the people, to maintain his rule in Transoxiana.

Abu Sa'id, who decided to attack the Qaraqoyunlu lands, where turmoil broke out upon the death of Jahanshah in 1467, took action in 1468 for the expedition that would result in his own death. Before the expedition, Abu Sa'id invited the Khwaja Ahrar to the Marv camp⁶⁷³. . Probably Abu Sa'id's main goal in this meeting was to entrust the affairs of Transoxiana to Ahrar while he was on the campaign in the west. Abu Sa'id was defeated and killed in the battle with the Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan for the lands of Qaraqoyunlu. At this time, the attempts of the Turco-Mongol amirs and Shaykhul-Islam of Transoxiana, who were waiting for an opportunity to break the influence of Ahrar, and to disrupt the relations of Ahrar with Ahmad Mirza, son of Abu Sa'id and the new owner of the throne, were unsuccessful due to the patronage of the sultan⁶⁷⁴.

It seems that Ahmad Mirza, like his father, was not unaware of the position and influence of Ahrar, who was still the leader of the Khwajagan branch of Naqshbandiyya, which became stronger during this period and added important figures such as 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami and Alisher Nawai to his supporters. Therefore, Ahmad Mirza thought that continued contact with Ahrar was necessary to benefit from his influence in Herat. After Abu Sa'id's death, Ahrar played a mediating role in the

⁶⁷² Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 82.

⁶⁷³ Samarqandi, *Matla'*, pp. 963-964; Safi, *Rashahat*, p. 247; Esfizari, *Rawza*, pp. 278-279.

⁶⁷⁴ Safi, *Rashahat*, pp. 545-547.

conflicts between Ahmad Mirza with his brothers, Mahmud Mirza and Umar Shaykh Mirza⁶⁷⁵. When Ahrar died in Samarqand in 1490, he had great influence and wealth. The heritage Ahrar left to his sons provided the ground for Naqshbandiyya's continued political influence.

As a result of succession struggles, arose with the death of Mahmud Mirza, who came to power after Ahmad Mirza's death in 1494, each of the sons of Ahrar emerged as the protector of the young Timurid successors. In 1501, Shaybani Khan, the leader of the Uzbeks, captured Samarqand and killed Ahrar's son Khwaja Muhammad Yahya together with his sons, but after a while, relations between Naqshbandiyya and the government improved after Shaybani Khan realized the need to establish relations with Naqshbandi shaykhs and benefit from their influence in the conduct of affairs, and possibly due to certain developments that led the strengthening of Safavid Shiite movement.

Having patronized Khwaja Ahrar, the Naqshbandi Sufi leader, and abolished using puppet Chinggisids to assume sovereignty in his own name, Sultan Abu Sa'id gave weight to Islamic legitimacy. In this sense, it can be said that Sultan Abu Sa'id who ascended to the throne in Transoxiana, instead of Ulugh Beg, the previous ruler of Transoxiana, considered himself the successor to Shahrukh. He was the first Timurid ruler who gave political influence to Naqshbandis. Abu Sa'id's policies had an influence on the political structure of Timurid Transoxiana and considerably specified the alternatives for his successors. As a result of such growing power and influence of the Naqshbandi order, after Abu Sa'id until the end of the Timurid Empire, almost all Timurid ruling princes gave place to a member of the Naqshbandis in his court⁶⁷⁶. Through his affiliation with the Timurid princes' court Khwaja Ahrar gained a powerful position in the Naqshbandi order in Transoxiana and played influential role both in social and political affairs.

As for the period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, his reign witnessed the patronage

⁶⁷⁵ Safi, *Rashahat*, p. 531.

⁶⁷⁶ In *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, Mirza Haydar Dughlat wrote about this matter as follows: "It was the practice of all the princes of that time to employ one of the disciples of his Holiness [Khwaja Ahrar] as a medium of communication with him." Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, p. 114.

of both heterodox and orthodox religious groups. Khondmir described Sultan Husayn as a person, who reinforced the bases of the Shari'a, showed ultimate attention to patronizing sayyids, ulama, and learned men and fulfilled their requests, and granted them rewards and *soyurghals*. Moreover, it was stated that twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, Sultan Husayn convened the cadis and ulama in his assembly and conducted the affairs according to fatwa of the religious authorities. Khondmir also noted that the Sultan visited dervishes and hermits (*gusha-nishinan*), honored preachings and he considered it necessary to dignify and revere shaykhs and preachers⁶⁷⁷.

One of the most worth-mentioning events during Sultan Husayn Bayqara's reign was his extraordinary attempt of taking a step to mention the names of twelve imams in the khutbah and on the coinage. But the reaction of a group of Hanafite fanatics who, in the words of Khondmir, were highly influential and respected (*mu'tabar va muvaqqar*) in Herat at that time, dissuaded him from changing the khutbah. Khondmir said that "*the time was not appropriate to disregard this group's requests.*"⁶⁷⁸ On the other hand, Babur stated that Amir Ali Sher dissuaded the Sultan from such an action and his later acts were conformed with Sunni sect⁶⁷⁹.

Another event of the period, relevant to this matter was the discovery of the Ali b. Abu Taleb's grave. In fact, it was not an original discovery, it had been found for the first time in the Saljuqid period⁶⁸⁰. When Sultan Husayn was informed about this news he went to that place and had structures established and appointed endowments. In this way, in a short time, the tomb, being flooded by the visitors, became a circumambulation center, as Khondmir stated, just as "the threshold of Ka'ba". Apparently, after such endowments, donations, and visits that village highly flourished

⁶⁷⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 111.

⁶⁷⁸ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 136.

⁶⁷⁹ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 194.

⁶⁸⁰ According to Khondmir, the place of the grave was mentioned in a history book composed during the time of Sultan Sanjar. And during the governorship of Sultan Husayn's brother Mirza Bayqara in Balkh, in 1480 a mystic asserted that the grave of Ali b. Abu Taleb was in the village of Khwaja Hayran of Balkh. In the very place a dome including a tomb was found. Mirza Bayqara ordered the tomb dug and then a tablet was found out on which was written: "This is the tomb of God's lion, the brother of the Prophet, Ali friend of God." Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 172.

and various dishonest people emerged who claimed discovered Ali's tomb in different places of Khurasan and acquired wealth from the people. As the number of such discoverers of tombs increased, Sultan Husayn was obliged to take precautions against them⁶⁸¹.

Sultan Husayn's actions were interpreted as he was a supporter of Shi'ism and tried to establish Shi'ism as the official state religion⁶⁸². However, in fact, when it was looked at the resources of the Timurid period it can be frequently seen the members of the dynasty respect the twelve imams. Even sometimes it was so exaggerated that the possibility of being a Shi'i of those Timurid rulers was nearly certain just as for Sultan Husayn. Nevertheless, taking into account the religious flexibility among the Timurid rulers and the general respect for the descendants of the Prophet in the fifteenth-century Muslims in the Timurid dominions it should not be regarded as abandoning Sunni identity on behalf of Shi'ism.

Moreover, in his apologia, Sultan Husayn did not differentiate between Sunni and Shi'ite sects recognizing his humbleness position before dervishes and requiring their assistance⁶⁸³. Intending to present himself as a caring pious Muslim ruler, Sultan Husayn also emphasized his efforts for preserving the religion⁶⁸⁴, patronizing pious foundations.

However, it was revealed that the official state religion of the Timurids was Sunni Islam. It seems that Sultan Husayn had no special religious fanaticism and his policies regarding Shi'ism can be understood as his attempts to pay regard to the

⁶⁸¹ Mawlana Kamalu'd-Din Shaykh Husayn was charged with punishing them. He arrested most of them and had them thrashed. Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 173-174.

⁶⁸² Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 194.

⁶⁸³ "If some have been so magnificent and proud in their royal status that they disdained dervishes, He has made me humble and supplicant before that exalted group." "There are some he has adorned with the raiment of asceticism and worshipful obedience and bedcked with knowledge and erudition, but in my view He has show this way [dervishdom] to be the best in his sight, and those mighty ones to acceptable and without equal. I have prayed for assistance for their spirits with the Fatiha, and he has granted them the spiritual strength to give me victory and success." W. M. Thackston, "Sultan Husayn Mirza's 'Apologia,'" *A Century of Princes: Sources on Timurid History and Art*, Cambridge, MA, 1989. pp. 374-375.

⁶⁸⁴ In the time of some, tyrannical ministers and wrong-thinking potentates wrecked the pious foundations... The overseers[I] appointed to the foundations have repaired all the damage and gladdened the people of merit." Thackston, *A Century*, p. 375.

interests of various elements under his rule. It was such a flexible religious atmosphere which established a ground for emerging of various religious sects. Moreover, it can be said that Sultan Husayn's moderate religious policy prevented denominational struggles and even wars and thus any faction could not establish superiority over others.

However, in that period some people were not pleased with this religious tolerance of Sultan Husayn. Although during the vizierate of Khwaja Nizamulmulk, Sultan Husayn signed the pledge for a while and also published edicts about the prohibition of alcohol and shaving beard, he never gave up drinking alcohol⁶⁸⁵. This situation was seen by Babur as an ender factor for Sultan Husayn's rule by his cousin Babur. Babur criticized Sultan Husayn's manners as follows:

*When a city like Herat fell to his possession, he did nothing night and day but revel and carouse. Among his followers and retainers, no one did not indulge in revelry and carousal. He abandoned the toil and trouble of conquest and military leadership. Consequently, as time passed, his retainers and realm dwindled instead of increasing.*⁶⁸⁶

Babur also exaggerated Sultan Husayn's manners and said: "*For the nearly forty years that he was king in Khurasan not a day passed that he did not imbibe after the midday prayer, though he never had a morning draught.*" And he added: "*His sons and all his military and civilian men were addicted to drink and lived with inordinate revelry and debauchery.*"⁶⁸⁷

On the other hand, the continued influence of the Naqshbandi sect led by Khwaja Ahrar should not be forgotten. In this period, thanks to the power he gained during the reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id and his successors, the network of Khwaja Ahrar expanded from its base in Transoxiana to Khurasan. Although he was not physically present in Herat, Khwaja Ahrar was represented in Husayn Bayqara's court by two important figures; 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami and Alisher Nawai⁶⁸⁸. Historical sources

⁶⁸⁵ "He was abstinent for six or seven years when he first came to the throne, but he later took to drink." Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 194.

⁶⁸⁶ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 197.

⁶⁸⁷ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 194.

⁶⁸⁸ Siddiqui, "The Ahraris", p. 55.

mention the correspondence between Khwaja Ahrar and these two persons⁶⁸⁹.

Probably one of the most outstanding contacts of Khwaja Ahrar in Sultan Husayn's court was 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami. He had a unique position both in terms of his poetical talent and also his religious affiliations. Through acknowledging Khwaja Ahrar as the leader of the Naqshbandi order, Jami acquired a status just as the representative of the Naqshbandi order and the khalifa of Khwaja Ahrar in the court of Herat⁶⁹⁰. Therefore, through attraction of the elites and courtiers of Sultan Husayn's reign to the order, Jami was able to raise the prestige of the Naqshbandiyya.

However, the main factor by which Jami acquired an important position was his close relationship with Sultan Husayn's influential intimate, Ali Sher Nawai. With Ali Sher's joining the Naqshbandi order, through his power and economic support, the order acquired more followers and thus more power. Under Nawai's political influence at the court of Heart Khwaja Ahrar, the Naqshbandi leader in Transoxiana attained an important agent in the Timurid Khurasan. Thus the exclusive official and personal position of Nawai ensured Naqshbandi network the contact it needed at Sultan Husayn's court. Through the presence of prominent characters like Jami and Nawai in the Timurid Khurasan, the Naqshbandis achieved support outside of Transoxiana, Khwaja Ahrar's native land⁶⁹¹.

The religious loyalty among the Timurids should be read in terms of pragmatic expressions and should be considered as a manipulation for gaining transitory power. Just as the nomadic rulers before Islam benefitted from shamans for their spiritual legitimacy, the Timurid rulers enjoyed the religious leaders of their time who gained great popularity among the subjects, for the same purpose. The legitimation principles of Temür, including Chinggisid and Perso-Islamic traditions, were maintained by his successor according to the requirements of their regions and their periods. Thus, the religious tendency of the Timurid mirzas should be evaluated in terms of expedience. The Timurid world of the fifteenth century was a phase in which the mystical orders

⁶⁸⁹ Jo-Ann Gross, "Naqshbandi Appeals to the Herat Court," in Devin A. DeWeese, e.d, *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, Bloomington, Indiana: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2001, p. 114.

⁶⁹⁰ Safi, *Rashahat*, pp. 169-170.

⁶⁹¹ Siddiqui, "The Ahraris", pp. 59-60.

achieved great influence and popularity and the Timurid rulers utilized the patronage of Sufi orders as a means of affirming their Islamic loyalties. In particular, in the lack of a powerful centralist leader like Temür, the decentralized political atmosphere emerged as a result of Temür's descendents' protracted succession struggles among themselves, mystical orders of Sunni and Shi'ite sects enable to gain significant power and in particular, the Naqshbandi order under the leadership of Khwaja Ahrar derived important profit from such conditions. The enhanced popularity of the order among the population and Timurid ruling elite found an expression through political and economic patronage and then it caused the order to interfere directly or indirectly with the policy of Timurid Transoxiana and Khurasan.

4.6. The Disintegration of the Timurid Empire

4.6.1. The Uzbek Invasion

4.6.1.1. The Story of Shaybani Khan

Muhammad Shaybani Khan (1451-1510) was the son of Shah Budak Sultan son of Abukhayr Khan. On his father's death when Shaybani Khan was only an infant, his grandfather Abulkhayr Khan took care of his education and upbringing. After his grandfather, Abulkhayr Khan's death in 1468-1469 the Uzbek confederation which he had established along the Syr Darya disintegrated and the Uzbek tribes began to compete with each other for political power. According to sources, the chaotic environment of Dasht-i Qipchaq began to pose a threat to the safety of Shaybani Khan and his brother Mahmud Bahadur Sultan and they were obliged to leave Dasht-i Qipchaq.

Shaybani Khan went to the Turkistan region and there he became close to the Timurid rule. Shaybani took refuge in Amir Muhammad Mazid Tarkhan who was ruling some part of Türkistan in the name of Timurid sultan Ahmad Mirza at that time. Muhammad Mazid gave him and his entourage the province of Qaraqol as a winter quarter. Therefore, Shaybani began to enter into a close connection with the political world of Timurid Mawaraunnahr.

Türkistan was a region that was at the frontier zone between the sedentary life of Mawaraunnahr and the nomadic life of Dasht-i Qipchaq and witnessed the mutual interaction and competition among the Timurids, Mongols, and Uzbeks. Those political conflicts forced Shaybani to leave Türkistan and go to Bukhara. Thereat, Bukhara was a city in which Sufism played a significant role in the socio-political and economic life and was ruled by the Arghun amir ‘Abdul Ali Tarkhan in the name of the Timurid Sultan Ahmad Mirza. Shaybani stayed there for two years (about 1474-1475) and established close relations with the shaykhs and the ulama of the city⁶⁹². Bannai stated that Shaybani acquired Türkistan, Mawaraunnahr, and Khurasan regions through the favor of Khwaja Muhammad Parsa the descendant of Muhammad Parsa one of the prominent Naqshbandi shaykhs of Bukhara.

However, Shaybani Khan began his active political life not in Bukhara but in Turkestan. He stayed in Bukhara for a time and then returned to Turkestan where the political competition between various policies continued⁶⁹³. When he returned Turkestan, Shaybani took a part in the competition of the region and attempted to form political alliances and establish a new policy. First of all, he received support from the local governors and then Shaybani seized the significant towns and fortresses of the region.

In 1488 Timurid Ahmad Mirza requested help from Shaybani against Mahmud Khan, one of the Mongol Khans in the region. Therefore, Shaybani obtained a chance to go to Mawaraunnahr. But this time he went there not as a refugee but as an important political figure who had strengthened his hand through his supporters. When he went to Samarqand the Timurid ruler felt uncomfortable with his increased power, thus Shaybani changed his side and made an alliance with Mahmud Khan against the Timurids⁶⁹⁴.

The alliance with a Mongolian khan enabled Shaybani khan to gain significant power in Türkistan and he was joined by several Uzbek amirs/begs. Shaybani Khan

⁶⁹² Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 273.

⁶⁹³ This region was the scene of struggles among Jochids, the descendants of Timurid Abu Sa'id Mirza and their amirs and the Chaghataids.

⁶⁹⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 274.

first headed towards to Khwarazm region and there seized some important fortresses. Returning to Türkistan, Shaybani seized the rest important cities of the region and then turned his face to Mawaraunnahr.

The most important stage in the constitution of the Uzbek policy was Shaybani Khan's turning back to Timurid Mawaraunnahr. Before starting his campaign Shaybani called the surviving descendants of Abulkhayr Khan to join him. Most invitees joined Shaybani after his invitation had been already operated in the political world of Mawaraunnahr.

The Uzbek conquest started at the end of the fifteenth century completed with the conquest of Bukhara and Samarqand in 1500-1501, Farghana province in 1502-1503, Khwarazm in 1504-1505, Balkh and its quarters in 1505, and eventually Herat in 1507. Shaybani and his followers established the Uzbek Khanate the borders of which surrounded most parts of Central Asia. In the dissolution of the Timurid rule in those regions and entering the dominion of the Uzbek rule, the political situation of those regions played an important role. Most parts of them were seized not by destructive attacks but peacefully.

4.6.1.2. The Conquest of Mawaraunnahr by the Uzbeks

The first achievement of Shaybani Khan in Mawaraunnahr was took place in 1500 with the seizure of Bukhara which Shaybani had lived there for two years and forged closer ties with the dignitaries⁶⁹⁵. The main motivation for opening the city's doors to Shaybani Khan was the perception of the notables of Bukhara about authority and legitimacy. Accordingly, while Shaybani Khan was praised for his conformable acts with other Uzbek sultans and for his conformity to Qur'an, the Timurid mirzas were criticized due to their quarrels and conflicts, contradictions to the Shari'a⁶⁹⁶.

As for Samarqand, Shaybani Khan seized this city first in 1500 and it was achieved through the governor of Timurid Sultan Ali Mirza delivering it with his own hand. According to narration, Zuhra Begi agha, the mother of Sultan Ali Mirza several

⁶⁹⁵ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 276-277.

⁶⁹⁶ Nurten Kılıç, "Siyasal Kültürde değişim: Şeybani Han ve Özbek Siyasal Oluşumu (1500-1510)", Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Ankara University, 1999, p. 114.

times sent friendly messages to Shaybani Khan saying that if the khan would marry her she would have the doors of the city opened and send his son Sultan Ali Mirza to obey the khan. Upon the positive replies to those letters, Zuhra Begi Agha persuaded his son not resisting to Shaybani Khan. Consequently, Sultan Ali accepted to open the city gate to the khan. After Shaybani Khan sat on the throne of Samarqand he ordered to annihilate of Sultan Ali Mirza and Naqshbandi shaykhs⁶⁹⁷.

Therefore, Shaybani possessed Samarqand in 1500 without any struggle. However, before Shaybani another Timurid mirza, Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, another descendant of Abu Sa'id Mirza, entered the city with the support of Shaykhul-Islam Khwaja Abulmakarim. But, after six months of continued siege, because of insufficiency in his force, Babur was obliged to leave Mawaraunnahr in 1501-1502⁶⁹⁸. With the second time occupation of Samarqand, Shaybani Khan became the supreme power in most of the territories of Transoxiana. His outstanding success enabled him to gain the support of the Turco-Mongol tribes and the Chaghataids who had taken side of the Timurids.

After seizing Bukhara and Samarqand, Shaybani Khan turned his face towards Khwarazm which was ruled by Chin Sufi in the name of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. Because of this movement, the Herat government came up against the Uzbeks in avoidably. In fact, in mid-1480s Shaybani Khan started his successful raids in Khwarazm⁶⁹⁹. When the amirs of Khwarazm got into a difficult situation against Shaybani Khan, they sent letters to Sultan Husayn Bayqara for requesting aid. Thereupon, Sultan Husayn sent an army of ten thousand to Khwarazmians' assistance. In addition to this, Sultan Husayn sent another force of ten thousand men for the aid of Khwarazmians. These two armies under the leadership of Khurasani amirs united

⁶⁹⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 279.

⁶⁹⁸ During the siege, although Babur several times sent emissaries for requesting aid from the rulers of Timurid territory such as Khurasan, Moghulistan, Hisar Shadman, Qunduz and Baghlan, no assistance came from them. Thereupon, Samarqandis began to desert Babur and fled to Shaybani Khan's camp. Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 291.

⁶⁹⁹ According to Khondmir when Shaybani Khan seized the opportunity to set out for Khwarazm which was governed by Amir 'Abdul-Khaliq Firozshah on behalf of Sultan Husayn. Before Shaybani Khan reached the province Amir Firozshah had gone to Sultan Husayn's court. After laiding siege for a few days when the imperial assistance forces' arrival, Shaybani decamped and went to the city of Wazir. Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 275.

in the city of Wazir. Although the number of Uzbek soldiers was less than those of Khurasanis and Khwarazmians fell to the hands of the Uzbeks.

During all those conquests of the Uzbeks, Sultan Husayn Bayqara, the ruler of the Timurid Khurasan was not interested in saving the cities of Mawaraunnahr. His only effort was to preserve the region of Khurasan. Even, after his forces sustained a defeat in Khwarazm, in response to the request for assistance made by one of the amirs of Khwarazm, Sultan Husayn said; "Giving the annual revenue of Herat to the soldiers, I had sent them to you for help but achieved no result. Today I cannot ruin Khurasan for Ürganch."

4.6.1.3. The Conquest of Khurasan by the Uzbeks

After seizing the Mawaraunnahr region Shaybani Khan turned his attention to Khurasan. The conquest of the Khurasan region was completed in a short period. The Uzbeks seized the cities of Ürganch and Hiva in the region of Khwarazm in 1504-1505 and in 1505 they conquered Balkh and other cities of the region.

The events that took place before and during the conquest of the Timurid Khurasan present various clues about the socio-political and cultural perception of the Timurid society. The Timurid Khurasan at that time was a region in which the interaction with the Turco-Mongol ruling elite and the sedentary elements was more successful than Mawaraunnahr. It was achieved in a decentralized way. The Timurid ruler from the time of Shahrukh endeavored to legitimize their rule through land endowments and tax immunities to Turco-Mongol military elites and regional ulama and shaykhs⁷⁰⁰. The process of decentralization caused by sharing of the lands which was the basis of economic resources also created the background of the cultural and artistic florescence that appeared in Timurid Herat at the end of the fifteenth century. The political and cultural competition created by decentralized rule and the cultural and artistic patronage of the Timurid rulers which played an important role in political legitimacy made way for such a florescence.

The political power in Khurasan was mainly at the hand of Turco-Mongol and

⁷⁰⁰ Subtelny, "Socio-Economic Basis", p. 479-505.

sedentary groups who possessed great extent property, and granted lands and waqfs. Although Sultan Husayn Bayqara established close relations with regional people, he was faced with problems in the matter of sovereignty. On the one hand, he made an effort for balancing the conflicts between Turco-Mongol military elite and Perso-Islamic bureaucrats, and on the other, contended with his rebellious sons.

When Shaybani Khan completed his Mawaraunnahr conquest and proceeded to the frontier zones of Khurasan Sultan Husayn compelled his son Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza to oppose Shaybani Khan in battle. Moreover, upon the request of Amir Khusrawshah, the governor of Hisar Shadman, Khuttalan, Badakhshan, Qunduz, and Baghlan for assistance against the Uzbeks Badi'u'z-Zaman summoned his father-in-law Amir Zunnun and his sons, the governors of Qandahar and Zamin Dawar to gather their armies and come to Balkh for repelling the Uzbeks and conquering Mawaraunnahr. Finally, Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza set out from Balkh in 1502-1503 to meet Shaybani Khan in battle and also he sent his amir to Herat for requesting assistance from his father Sultan Husayn. When Badi'u'z-Zaman reached the vicinity of Termez he learned that Amir Khusrawshah broke his promises and refused to join him⁷⁰¹. Just then the emissary who had been sent to Sultan Husayn returned and reported that Sultan would not sent reinforcements. Thereupon, while Badi'u'z-Zaman returned Balkh, Amir Zunnun also withdrew. According to Khondmir, with the departure of Amir Zunnun the prestige of Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza was seriously damaged and was the reason of the rebellion of Badi'u'z-Zaman's followers⁷⁰².

In the meantime, in autumn of 1503 Shaybani Khan headed for the direction of Balkh, the appanage of Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza. Khondmir said that Shaybani first came to Andkhod at the governor of the province, Amir Muhammad Baqir Arghun's

⁷⁰¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 293-294. According to Khondmir Khusrawshah refused to act in unison with Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza because of such thoughts; "When Badi'u'z-Zaman had finished with Muhammad Khan Shaybani, he might have designs on Sultan Mahmud Mirza's kingdom and attack me." Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 498.

⁷⁰² Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 294. According to narration of Khondmir, one of the sayyids of Qipchaq Steppe named Sayyid Jafar Khwaja came from Mawaraunnahr to Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza's court, pretending that he took refuge with the mirza from the Uzbeks. Trusting this sayyid Badi'u'z-Zaman showed him great favor. The sayyid who had gained the trust of the mirza tried to persuade the mirza's amirs and

courtiers with various kinds of promises to swear allegiance to Shaybani Khan. Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 295.

invitation and then set out for Balkh⁷⁰³. Upon the movement of Khan, Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza placing his son Muhammad Zaman Mirza left the city of Balkh.

After three months of siege realizing that it was not possible to seize the city by force Shaybani Khan sued for a truce. The negotiations between Shaybani Khan and the inhabitants of Balkh reflect the perception of power and political preference in Khurasan. The discourses used and the political attitudes during the peace talks were presented in Habibu's-Siyar of Khondmir.

For the peace talks Shaybani Khan sent Amir Darwish Ali who had resigned from his duty after his brother Ali Sher Nawai's death and when Shaybani Khan came to Balkh joined him, with the message as follows:

*Since the sun of the Timurid sultans' fortune (aftab-i iqbal) was about declining and the sultanate is about to transfer from that family to the Chinggisid generation (dudman) one again, and because you were out of supplies, it would be appropriate to rely on our khanly graciousness and favor, stop being obstinate and open the gates of the city submissively.*⁷⁰⁴

In response to Shaybani Khan's message the amirs of the city sent such a message:

*For nearly a hundred fifty years we have lived generation after generation with peace of mind and welfare under the shadow of favor and protection of the descendants of Amir Temür Kūragan. Now, simply because Mirza Badi'u'z-Zaman was defeated and is not at present able to resist and fight a battle with his majesty (khan), how come we disregard the obligations due those great padishahs after so many years and like treacherous how can we give the city which had been entrusted to us to the hands of foe? Before long the emperor's imperial parasol, with all the princes and army of Khurasan, will spread its shadow of fortune over this region, and with divine help and imperial favors the enemy will be vanquished. What the khan thought that our supplies are exhausted is not true. For even if we have nothing to eat but donkey brains, we still have a one-year supply.*⁷⁰⁵

When Shaybani Khan, seizing Balkh and its quarters, headed towards Herat Sultan Husayn and his sons dispatched envoys for requesting help from Babur Mirza.

⁷⁰³ Khodnmir, *Habib*, p. 297.

⁷⁰⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 298.

⁷⁰⁵ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 298.

However, before Shaybani Khan came to Herat Sultan Husayn passed away in 1506.

The narration of Babur Mirza about his journey to Herat contains valuable information about the cultural and artistic development in Timurid Herat. Moreover, after Sultan Husayn Bayqara's death, the struggle for power among his sons and debates among Timurid amirs and the intelligentsia of Herat are highly interesting in terms of the understanding of power at that time.

According to Khondmir, upon the Uzbek devastation in Balkh and other cities of Khurasan, Sultan Husayn Bayqara decided to wage a war with Shaybani Khan and ordered his commanders to prepare their troops. Sultan Husayn set out with twelve thousand cavalries and headed for Mawaraunnahr. When the imperial train camped in Baba Ilahi village Sultan Husayn went down with an illness. When the physicians reported that the illness was incurable the Timurid amirs and the princes in the imperial camp with permission from the Sultan decided to summon Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza in case of insurrection in the army and rebellion among the Timurid brothers⁷⁰⁶.

After Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza arrived at camp, the amirs, dignitaries of the state, and imperial ladies gathered and argued about who would take Sultan Husayn's place. They regarded that before the Sultan died, for the great interest of the state, the army, and the subject, Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza and Muzaffar Husayn Mirza should take the formal oaths of unity so that other brothers remain in cooperation. In the assembly formed for this purpose, the amirs split into two groups and while some of them were summoned on Badi'u'z-Zaman's behalf, some were summoned on Muzaffar Husayn Mirza and the two princes placed their hands on the Qur'an and swore that as long as they live they would not warp on the path of unity.

On May 5, 1506, Sultan Husayn passed away and his body was taken to Herat and buried in Imperial Madrasa. After the funeral of the sultan was completed, the mirzas, amirs, and ministers debated over who should be made the sultan; either Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza should be the sultan independently or Muzaffar Husayn Mirza would be his partner in the rule. According to one group, since he was the eldest of the deceased sultan's sons and he was also guileless, generous, and beneficent, Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza should be the sultan independently and he should grant Muzaffar Husayn

⁷⁰⁶ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 316-317.

Mirza one of the provinces of Khurasan so that other mirzas who held the office of governor in different parts of the realm, would not leave the way of obedience and not intend to rule autonomously. Khondmir described this group as more reasonable and wise⁷⁰⁷. Another group which was composed of Khadija Begi Agha, the mother of Muzaffar Husayn Mirza, and some of Barlas amirs, came out against this opinion and suggested that both mirzas should rule together and the name of Muzaffar Husayn Mirza should appear in the khutbah and coinage to avoid any conflict. According to Khondmir, this group consisted of shortsighted people. After many debates, the second group won the debate and the khutbah was read in the name of both mirzas. Khondmir gave the reason for their winning as that most of the army were followers of Khadija Begi and Barlas amirs⁷⁰⁸.

The idea of partner-rulership was disapproved by Khondmir and criticized through various Qur'anic verse and proverbs such as "If there were gods besides God, verily both would be corrupted."⁷⁰⁹ "The ruler should be one as the lord of the world is one", "Chaos is two kings in one country", "Two swords cannot fit into one scabbard."⁷¹⁰

After both mirzas were made as partner sultans the administration of the quarters of the city was also divided among the mirzas. Apart from Herat all other provinces of the realm were also divided, while half was given to under the control of Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza's comptrollers, and half under Muzaffar Husayn Mirza's. Similarly, while one group from the deceased sultan's amirs and viziers joined Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza's retinue, another was attached to Muzaffar Husayn Mirza. Khondmir stated that in this way these two sultans ruled jointly the realm justly for a few months⁷¹¹.

In response to these developments the opinion of other mirzas was conveyed

⁷⁰⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 363.

⁷⁰⁸ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 364.

⁷⁰⁹ Qur'an, 21:22.

⁷¹⁰ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 531.

⁷¹¹ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 364-365.

by Khondmir as follows;

When this news reached the ears of other princes, they said, "If Sultan Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza who was superior to us in every respect, attempted to hold the post of the sultanate, we had no other choice but to follow the way of obedience and to wish him well. But we were not obliged to obey Muzaffar Husayn Mirza who was the partner and sharer with him in this post."⁷¹²

According to Khondmir, because of the objection of other mirzas, the partnership rule of Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza and Muzaffar Husayn Mirza began to collapse and each mirza proclaimed his independence through having the khutbah read in his own name in his own province.

In such a chaotic atmosphere Shaybani Khan took action for conquering Herat. For this purpose, he sent an emissary to Herat to deliver Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza and Muzaffar Husayn Mirza this message;

When untoward events have befallen, your fathers and forefathers have always had recourse to the khans of our exalted family and given them obeisance. It would be appropriate for you too to follow the good custom of your fathers. Close the gate of opposition and do not deviate or swerve from the straight path of cooperation so that your kingdom may remain flourishing and your subjects, who are your responsibility under the creator of all creatures, may not be crushed by irresistible forces⁷¹³.

Thereupon, the Timurid mirzas who realized the intention of Shaybani Khan sent emissaries to all provinces of Khurasan ordering other mirzas and soldiers to gather for confronting and fight Shaybani Khan. At the beginning of autumn of 1506, the Khurasanis headed towards Balkh. On the way, other Bayqarai mirzas such as Abulmuhsin Mirza, Ibn-i Husayn Mirza, and amirs joined them. When Khurasani forces arrived on the banks of the Marv Rud Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur also reached them⁷¹⁴.

In fact, Babur had been invited by Sultan Husayn Mirza after he had struggled with Shaybani Khan. Sultan Husayn sent an emissary to Kabul and summoned him for eliminating the enemy in unity⁷¹⁵. After solving the troubles of his brother Jahangir

⁷¹² Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 365.

⁷¹³ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 534.

⁷¹⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 368-369.

Mirza, Babur Mirza set out in 1506 and on the way the news of the Sultan Husayn's death was reached. After Babur Mirza arrived in Herat pacts and alliances were reaffirmed among the Bayqarai mirzas, amirs and Babur Mirza⁷¹⁶.

On the other hand, on April 14, 1507, Shaybani Khan set out from Samarqand to conquest the Khurasan region. On May 19, 1507, in the vicinity of Herat, a battle took place between the Uzbek forces and the Timurids and Shaybani Khan gained the victory. After being defeated while Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza fled towards Qandahar, Muzaffar Husayn Mirza returned to Herat. Although Muzaffar Husayn met with shaykh ul-Islam and other notables of the city and requested help to defend Herat, the dignitaries refused it stating that it was not possible to protect the city. Therefore, Muzaffar Husayn Mirza left Herat and headed for Astarabad⁷¹⁷.

The different narrates; the dialogs and the contents of the negotiations about the process of Herat's conquest by the Uzbeks provide us important information for gaining insight into the perception of power and legacy among the Timurid mirzas and the subjects.

The narration existed in *Badayiu'l-Vaqayi'* of Zaynuddin Vasifi about the negotiation between Muzaffar Husayn Mirza and the dignitaries of Herat presented the attitude of the ulama against the Timurids explicitly. According to Vasifi, Hadija Begi Agha, the widowed mother of Muzaffar Husayn Mirza summoned the nobles and dignitaries of Herat in the center of the city and said:

"You obtained great possessions during the rule of Sultan Husayn and lived in luxury. Today such events happened to his offspring. You should pay regard to their father's claim on you and be grateful and assume the safeguard of the city."

But Amir Sayyid, the shaykhul-islam, and other grandees replied as follows: *"You are right! But there is no hope for those mirzas. You well know how Badi'u'z-Zaman and your son Muzaffar Husayn ruled after their father's death. The subject has no expectations from them."* From those expressions, it is possible to make an

⁷¹⁵ The attainment of hopes and goals is to be had through cooperation and alliance. The padishah is as dear to me as a son or brother. In eliminating the injustice of the enemy and ridding ourselves of the abomination of the insurgent opponent it is necessary to unite and not be split asunder lest the foreigners have an opportunity to interfere in our protected realms or gain any further foothold in the provinces and town of Transoxiana." Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, pp. 534-535.

⁷¹⁶ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 369-371.

⁷¹⁷ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 374-376.

inference that there was a reaction among the people and the ulama to the succession struggles of the Timurid mirzas.

When Shaybani Khan came for subjugating Herat, the city was under the control of dignitaries and the ulama. They reached an agreement for submitting the city to Shaybani Khan and after various negotiations eventually, on May 27, 1507, the khutbah was read in Abulkhayr Khan and Shaybani Khan's name⁷¹⁸.

With the conquest of Herat by the Uzbeks, the Timurid rule came to the conclusion officially. However, after a while, in 1510 Herat was seized by Safavids under the leadership of Shah Ismail.

Conclusion

In the Timurid resources, particularly those of the late fifteenth century we began to encounter records of a decrease in military power. Immediately before the Uzbek invasion, the Timurid realm was so involved in artistic and intellectual competition and assemblies substantially that they paid no attention to the forthcoming danger to their political authority and developed culture. Their universal political legacy and delicately created cultural prestige and dynastic image were come to an end with the conquests of the Uzbek tribal polity, under the leadership of Shaybani Khan (1451-1510), a grandson of Abul-Khayr Khan. Shaybani Khan began his attacks on Transoxiana and then on to Khurasan towards the end of the fifteenth century and brought most parts of Central Asia under the control. In a short period, Shaybani swept the central Timurid territories and drove the Timurid elites out of the region. We can clearly see in contemporary writings incapable of the Timurids counteract the attacks of the Uzbeks. The Timurid princes, closing their eyes to the danger of the Uzbeks, were engaged in their dynastic conflicts rather than defending their realm. In the beginning, due to the slobbering attitude of the Timurid rulers, Shaybani Khan made great success in his invasions. With the help of Sultan Mahmud Khan of Mongolia, Shaybani could seize Bukhara and Samarqand in Mawaraunnahr, and then he was joined by numerous amirs and princes from Qipchaq Steppe⁷¹⁹.

⁷¹⁸ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 376-379.

Shaybani Khan maintained his successful incursions through alliances he formed with various Timurid elites and became the ruler of Timurid central territories. The elaborated characteristic of the Timurid dynastic power which had been created following the requirements of the day was the death of the Timurids during the Uzbek calamity. The incompatibility of Timurid princes weakened their power and rendered them ineffective against the military power of the Uzbeks. Unfortunately, neither being a member of the same dynasty, spiritual and moral values, poetry, literature, nor common cultural sense enabled enduring political unity among Timurid rulers.

Probably, one of the most important factors retained the Timurids from joining their forces and waging war against the common enemy was their way of life, in which the dynastic disunity and succession struggles created by uncertainty about the inheritance law, and its concomitant regionalization and accompanying relatively comfortable way of life destroyed their military ability gradually. Although the sedentary way of life, the Timurids had established, brought magnificent prestige to the Timurids through artistic patronage and the refined taste bereaved them of the capability of military resistance against the incursions of the Uzbeks. While initially, the Timurid rulers had utilized artistic actions as a power indicator publicly and the legitimization expressions and observer demonstrations of dynastic and royal power, all those attempts and developments brought regionalization, enhanced isolation, and relative introversion.

In 1507, the Uzbeks seized Herat after a hopeless defense by the weak Timurid army of the city. We can have a clear view of the weakness of the Timurid military might in the fifteenth century: "*...the fortress was not made fast, battle weapons were not made ready, reconnoiters and scouts were not sent to give advance information on the enemy's advance, and the army was not adequately prepared for battle should the enemy approach*"⁷²⁰ Although their peaceful lifestyle and highly developed court culture brought them artistic qualifications and the ability for writing and reading a poem in classical Persian and then in Chaghataid form, it deprived them of military characteristics and gave rise to their dropping out of not only the capital Herat but also

⁷¹⁹ Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, pp. 99-102.

⁷²⁰ Babur, *Baburnama*, pp. 432-433.

to whole Mawaraunnahr and most importantly, the cultural development of the Timurid courts. In the words of Babur;

*In himself [Sultan Husayn], his sons, his people, and his nation, vice, and debauchery were rife and rampant. It was only due to their shamefulness that of such a great house, within seven or eight years, the only trace of them left was Muhammad Zaman Mirza.*⁷²¹

The defeat of the Timurids was fast and accurate. The two sons of Sultan Husayn Bayqara had been ruling in Herat but "*Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza and Muzaffar Husayn Küragan, along with most of great amirs and soldiers, acted in accordance with the dictum, 'Flee what cannot be borne' and each fled in a rout in another direction.*"

The Timurid elites in Herat and Samarqand, subjected to the Uzbek invasion, incurred a loss. The treasury of Herat was plundered and the citizens of the city were oppressed by the Uzbek forces. With Khwandamir's words;

*"Indeed the meaning of Quranic verse, 'verily kings, when they enter a city by force, lay waste the same and abase the most powerful of the inhabitants therein,' was fully realized, the cries of many people of quality and station, reduced to misery and degradation, rise to the celestial spheres."*⁷²²

The occupation of Uzbek soldiers was also hazardous for the religious people. Although later he would reject to assume the responsibility, Shaybani Khan gave the order the leading Naqshbandi Shaykh Khwaja Yahya and his two sons, Khwaja Muhammad Zakariyya and Khaja Baqi, to be murdered during his attack in 1500-1501⁷²³. Nevertheless, Shaybani and his descendants were careful about making close contact with Naqshbandi shaykhs in displaying themselves as conservative Sunni Muslims. We can interpret those murders because of the close relationships between the Timurids and the Khwajas.

According to Babur when Shaybani Khan occupied Herat, he excruciated the

⁷²¹ Muhammad Zaman Mirza, son of Sultan Husayn's son Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza, became the last independent prince of the Bayqara line when his father fled Herat and died in exile in Anatolia of the plague. He remained in the region, struggling to carve out of a kingdom for himself, until Babur, always attentive to Timurid relatives, later appointed him as the ruler of Balkh.

⁷²² Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 540.

⁷²³ Babur, *Baburnama*, pp. 118-119.

members of the Timurid princes' families⁷²⁴. Khondmir stated that “*the delicate beauties of the inner sanctum of inviolability were taken captive and tormented by the merciless Uzbeks, and Venuses of the chambers of chastity were left by ravaging Moghuls to wander destitute in the lanes and bazaars.*”⁷²⁵

The Uzbek felt it necessary to abolish the political validity of the Timurid for establishing their own political legitimization. Although in the periods before Temür, having Chinggis Khanid lineage had been enough for political legitimization, Temür created his own cachet for his lineage by claiming a "son-in-law" status and it became valid for political justification during the fifteenth century. Just as in Temür's own situation, the Uzbeks also benefitted from the prestige of Timurid lineage by marrying Timurid princesses. For example, the daughter of Muzaffar Husayn Mirza, Mehrangaz Begim, was wedded to Ubaydullah Sultan, the brother of Shaybani Khan⁷²⁶.

⁷²⁴ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 322.

⁷²⁵ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 540.

⁷²⁶ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 378.

CHAPTER 5

THE TIMURID CULTURAL ACQUISITION

5.1. The Cultural Activities Under the Rule of Temür

As it has been mentioned before, when Temür rose to power, while he was obliged to take the Chinggisid legitimacy and power into consideration, he also could not ignore the regional preconditions for his rule. In the fourteenth century, the socio-cultural atmosphere of Central Asia differed from those of the Chinggisid periods. By the fourteenth century, Islam refined and melted into the urban Persian culture, and began appearing as another source of legitimacy among Turco-Mongol tribes in Transoxiana. Since most of the territories Temür occupied consisted of Islamic sedentary people, Temür felt obliged to affirm his Islamic identity in his legitimization model for his rule. Furthermore, although they were loyal to Chinggisid legitimacy, the majority of Temür's followers had converted to Islam for a long time, thus Temür presented himself as the champion of Islam smoothly.

Moreover, Temür himself engaged in the construction of madrasas, and mosques and showed patronage to the Sufis of the mystical orders. All those activities brought Temür in gaining public support and promoting his religious reputation. The patronage of Sufis leaders and their orders also confirmed Temür's Islamic legitimacy in the eyes of the public who were loyal to those religious orders.

Representing himself as a pious Muslim, and the champion of Islam, patronizing sayyids, ulama, and Sufis and on the other hand adhering to Chinggisid Yasa, Temür created his own model of legitimization in conformity with Turco-Mongol Central Asian tradition and Perso-Islamic custom which would provide his descendants continuity for over a hundred years.

Desirous of manifesting his own and the dynasty's power and legitimacy Temür also created a comprehensive cultural and artistic environment in Samarqand. By pursuing Perso-Islamic courtly tradition, in particular, that of Ilkhanids, Temür, in

addition to architectural patronage, personally gave special interest to artistic and literary works. In this way, his own image was further developed and consolidated.

In establishing a Timurid dynastic image through constituting a cultural and artistic climate in Samarqand Temür also paved way for subsequent developments created by his descendants⁷²⁷. Following a policy of transforming his capital into a cultural and artistic center by gathering numerous artists and craftsmen from the regions he conquered, Temür created a group of craftsmen who served for developing an artistic atmosphere in the Timurid court. The sources of the time recorded that Temür transferred a great number of craftsmen and artists from various regions to his capital Samarqand⁷²⁸. For example, according to Arabshah, "he took from Damascus learned men and craftsmen and all who excelled in any art, the most skilled weavers, tailors, gem-cutters, carpenters, makers of head-coverings, farriers, painters, bow-makers, falconers, in short craftsmen of every kind."⁷²⁹ All those artists and craftsmen became a means in the hands of Temür and his successors for creating a Timurid image and through them, the Timurids expressed their own perception of sovereignty and the royal identity⁷³⁰.

Moreover, in producing his own image and that of his dynasty for manifesting his power and right to rule, Temür utilized the production of books. In conformity with the tradition of Mongol Ilkhanids, Temür found a library (kitabkhana) for the fabrication of illustrated manuscripts. The painters and calligraphers served in this kitabkhana were responsible for producing Timurid artistic image visually to attest to the ruler's power and legitimacy⁷³¹.

The main goal in creating his own image can be seen in Temür's encouragement of history writings. In the period of Mongol Ilkhanate, various Persian histories had

⁷²⁷ Musa Şamil Yüksel, "Ortaçağlarda Beyin Göçü ve Etkileri: Timurlular Örneği", *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, Bahar, 2017, pp. 290-292.

⁷²⁸ "All his amirs and lords took an infinite multitude of lawyers, theologians, of men who knew the Koran from memory, and learned men, craftsmen, workmen, slaves, women, boys and girls." Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 161; Yüksel, "Beyin Göçü", pp. 288-289.

⁷²⁹ Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 162.

⁷³⁰ For more information about the objects created by craftsmen under the rule of Temür see: Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, pp. 45-49.

⁷³¹ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 50.

been produced such as *Tarikh-i Jahan Gusha* of Juwaini (d. 1283), *Jamiu't-Tawarikh* of Rashiduddin (d. 1318), *Tarikh* of Vassaf (fl. 1328)⁷³². After the political chaos following the death of Ilkhanid ruler Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan in 1335, history writing had been almost over. Temür revitalized this tradition and ordered the production of histories of his own reign. Ibn Arabashah, one of the contemporary authors asserted that Temür had a very special interest in Persian literature⁷³³. In *Zafarnama* of Yazdi, it was said that all actions and practices of Temür had been composed by talented Bakhshis (Uighur) and Iranian clerks of the state in Turkish and Persian languages. Under Temür's interest in history, geography, and genealogy and his own encouragement, various narratives began to be produced predominantly in the Persian language. By promoting the production of those history works Temür attempted to position himself and his descendants "as a rightful successor to previous kings in the Islamic world."⁷³⁴

One of the most significant works of Temür's time, undoubtedly, is the *Zafarnama* of Shami. With the order of Temür himself, Nizamu'd-Din Shami wrote a general history of Temür's emergence to power and his conquests which were "free from rhetorical artifice and preciousness so that it could be understood by the ordinary reader."⁷³⁵ After gathering the records and eyewitness testimonies, Shami began to compose his work and completed two volumes in 1404. He dedicated the first one to Temür and the second to Umar b. Miranshah who was appointed to the governorship of Azerbaijan⁷³⁶. Shami's *Zafarnama* was the earliest surviving history of Temür and had great importance concerning the emergence and flourishing of the Timurid historiography. *Zafarnama* also became a model for Temür's descendants and under their patronage, it was complemented and recomposed through numerous historical

⁷³² Woods, "Historiography", p. 81.

⁷³³ "He was constant in reading the annals and histories of the prophets of blessed memory and the exploits of kings and accounts of those things which had formerly happened to men abroad and all this in the Persian tongue. And when readings were repeated before him and those accounts filled his ears, he seized hold of that matter and so possessed it that it turned to habit, so that if the reader slipped, he would correct his error, for repetition makes even an ass wise." Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 299.

⁷³⁴ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 52.

⁷³⁵ Woods, "Historiography", p. 85, Shami, *Zafarnama*, p. 12.

⁷³⁶ Woods, "Historiography", p. 85.

and biographical works⁷³⁷. Unfortunately, apart from *Zafarnama* of Shami, we do not have other historical works commissioned during Temür's reign⁷³⁸.

Although Temür rose to power as a nomadic warlord he displayed his wealth and power following Persian urban culture exaggeratively. In Samarqand, he established various suburbs with the names of the cities he had conquered⁷³⁹. He displayed imperial glorification through architecture and raised various buildings, especially in Samarqand, his own capital. He also garnished his palaces with fantastic gardens containing fruit trees, flowers, and vegetable landscaping⁷⁴⁰. The origin of such gardens went back to the Persian rulers of pre-Islamic Iran. Temür also utilized his gardens as a showcase for presenting his wealth and might⁷⁴¹.

Temür's transformation of his capital Samarqand to an urban center through

⁷³⁷ At the behest of Shahrukh, Khwaja Tajuddin Salmani composed his *Shamsu'l-Husn* [The Sun of Beauty] as a continuation of the *Zafarnama* of Shami. Moreover, Hafiz Abru wrote for Shahrukh a brief continuation of Shami's *Zafarnama*. Woods, "Historiography", p. 84.

⁷³⁸ Woods mentioned some of them: "The titles of several, however, are mentioned in later sources, and the existence of others may be inferred by analyzing the remaining materials. In the first category, two other Works in Turkish, Mawlana Safi al-Din Khuttalani Samarqandi's *Zafar-name* and anonymous Uyghur *Tarikh-i Khani* [The Imperial History] may or may not have been written before 1405/807. Among the earliest lost Persian sources are Shaykh Mahmud Zangi 'Ajam Kirmani's versified chronicle *Jush u Khurush* [Raging and roaring] and its *zayl* or continuation by his son Mawlana Qutb al-Din, Mawlana Sa'd Allah Kirmani's *Futuh-at-i Miranshahi* [The conquests of Miranshah], and Mawlana Qazi Nasir al-Din Umar's *Ruz-name-yi Futuh-at-i Hindustan* [The Journal of the Conquests in India]. Woods, "Historiography", p. 83; Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 52.

⁷³⁹ "Also he founded in the country and domains of Samarkand towns, to which he gave the names of great cities and capitals such as Masr, Damascus, Baghdad, Sultania and Shiraz, which are the brides of countries." Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 310.

⁷⁴⁰ He planted at Samarkand several gardens and built splendid palaces, which were all firmly constructed in a new style with marvellous beauty and on the trees he engrafted excellent fruits. One of these gardens he called Aram, another "The Glory of the World," another "Paradise," another "The Garden of the North," and another "The Sublime Gardeil." When he had laid waste a great city, in all its gardens he built a palace and in some of these palaces he had depicted his assemblies and his own likeness... When he had gone abroad and the oppressors, had left Samarkand and the sentinels of Satan had abandoned those gardens, the citizens, rich and poor, went to walk therein and found no retreat more wonderful or beautiful than those and no resting place more agreeable and secure; and its sweetest fruits were common to all, so that even a hundred pounds' weight thereof would not sell for a grain of mustard." Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, pp. 309-310. Apart from Arabshah Temür's grand-grandson Babur who visited Samarqand in 1497-1498 described those gardens, constructed by Temür as follows: "To the east of Samarkand he [Temür] had two gardens constructed. The farther of the two is called Bagh-i Duldai and the nearer Bagh-i Dilgusha. At the foot of Kohak Hill, a garden called Naqsh-i Jahan was constructed... To the South of Samarkand near the fortress is the Bagh-i Chanar; on the lower side of Samarkand are the Bagh-i Shimal and the Bagh-i Bihisht." Babur, *Baburnama*, pp. 57-58.

⁷⁴¹ Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, p. 216.

numerous palaces, and monumental buildings and through the gathering of various scholars, artists, and craftsmen can be interpreted as a sign of transition from the nomadic tradition to a sophisticated Perso-Islamic urban culture. In addition to Chinggisid and Islamic symbols of legitimacy, Temür utilized architectural, cultural, and artistic patronage for representing his perception of authority: centralist, mighty, and urbanized.

5.2. The Cultural Activities Under the Rule of Temür's Successors

After Temür's death, because his charismatic existence disappeared and all the power of each Timurid mirzas depended on Temür's dominant authority, an immediate fragmentation took the political stage. Since Pir Muhammad bin Jahangir, Temür's heir-apparent was not able to secure his power against the rival mirzas, and because of the lack of dominant power, each of Timurid mirzas followed their own benefits. After the warlord's death, the struggles among the members of the Timurid dynasty became the determinative factors for the development of Timurid cultural and political experiences.

After the great warlord Temür, his descendants attempted to promote their dynastic legitimization. Since Temür had been able to achieve in solving the problems of Turco-Mongol political legitimization, his successors were not obliged to exert effort for it. However, they attempted to preserve and redefine their Timurid power and legacy, which Temür left behind.

Since Temür had eliminated the obstacles about the necessity of Chinggisid rule and opened the way to the throne for non-Chinggisids, his descendants did not have to rule in the name of a Chinggisid puppet khan. In addition, just as Temür followed the footsteps of Chinggis Khan in establishing his own imperial identity Temür's descendants also built and formalize their sovereignty for demonstrating their suitability in the Timurid dynasty and within the Timurid realm by utilizing Temür's identity. For the benefit of sustaining their right to rule Timurid descendants organized and flourished a "Timurid dynastic identity" by benefitting from historiography and patronage of the artistic program. Hereinafter, the lineage of Temür as Chinggis Khanids had done, constituted and consolidated the political legitimacy in Central Asia

and Iran. Each mirza formed a Timurid identity in the regions they were ruling. The requirements of each region were effective for those mirzas in developing their mode of power and legitimization.

Thus, distinct political courts of each Timurid mirzas, established in outlying cities such as Samarqand, Herat, Shiraz, Yazd, and Isfahan, became a center of cultural activities. Therefore, the widespread production of buildings, books, paintings, and various art objects became instruments for increasing the princely courts' prestige. And consequently, Timurid rival mirzas began to compete for talents among numerous architects, artists, scholars, and poets who had been gathered in Samarqand as a consequence of Temür's conquests. The prestige of a court was the essential inducement to attract artists and litterateurs from near and far. Those artistic figures, in the decentralized political atmosphere, were enabled to move among various centers ruled by the Timurid mirzas. For instance, Dawlatshah reported explicitly the competition between Baysunghur Mirza and Ibrahim Sultan, two sons of Shahrukh Mirza, for the singer Khwaja Yusuf Andigani⁷⁴². Dawlatshah also wrote about the discussion between Ulugh Beg and Baysunghur concerning their distinctive predilection about the Khamsas of Amir Khusraw and Shaykh Nizami⁷⁴³. In another place of his work, Dawlatshah also mentioned witticisms and correspondences which were exchanged among Baysunghur, Ibrahim Sultan, and Ulugh Beg⁷⁴⁴. Even such anecdotes alone doubtlessly depict the degree and the scope of the sophisticated princely patronage and the artistic productions under it.

The descendants of Temür were aware of the limitless advantages of artistic patronage as a vehicle for legitimizing their rule in the eyes of their sedentary subject through expressions harmonized with distinct segments of the society: Iranians and

⁷⁴² "It is related that during Baysunghur's time Khwaja Yusuf Andigani had no equal in all the world in recitation and singing...Sultan Ibrahim b. Shahrukh in Shiraz several times asked Baysunghur for Khwaja Yusuf, but he refused. Finally, he sent 100,000 dinars in cash for Prince Baysunghur to send him Khwaja Yusuf. In reply Sultan Baysunghur sent the line: "*We do not sell our Joseph. You keep your black silver.*" Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *Century of Princes*, p. 23.

⁷⁴³ "Prince Baysunghur preferred Khusraw's Khamsa to Nizami's, while his late highness Ulugh Beg Küragan did not agree and was a proponent of Shaykh Nizami." Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *Century of Princes*, p. 24.

⁷⁴⁴ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *Century of Princes*, p. 23.

Turco-Mongols⁷⁴⁵. The Timurid princely patronage addressed to diverse audiences of the society and reconciled the Turco-Mongol elements to the regional Perso-Islamic ones by importing artists and craftsmen from different regions and sponsoring them to produce works following their dynastic ideological perceptions. In realizing their princely imperial aims the Timurid successors synthesized the sedentary Perso-Islamic traditions and their Turco-Mongol inheritance. It culminated in the expansive production of architectural structures, historical, literary, and poetical works, paintings, bindings, and illuminated manuscripts.

Following about five years of interfamilial struggles after Temür's death, finally, in 1409, Shahrukh, the sole living son of Temür, who was the governor of Khurasan, gained victory and became the new ruler of the Timurid Empire. Unlike his father, Shahrukh favored a Perso-Islamic model in Khurasan to demonstrate his Islamic identity, just like the Ilkhanate ruler Ghazan Khan. He gave weight to the Islamic model of ruling more than his father had. Shahrukh used the caliph's name on the coinage, declared that the Shari'a replaced the Yasa, and additionally he had annihilated the wine shops and the wine poured publicly. How Temür had posed as "the restorer of Chinggisid rule", now Shahrukh expressed himself as "the restorer of an Islamic order."

After acquiring the power in 1409 Shahrukh took an action to founding the ideological bases of his rule and positioned the Timurid family in an Islamic urban framework. It required a policy that presented the religious piety and cultural achievements of the Timurid house publicly through a systematic program. Additionally, Shahrukh's assignments of the mirzas as the governors to various regions throughout the Timurid domain led to both a political decentralization and a cultural and artistic florescence. Unlike Temür, rather than concentrating patronage in the capital, the members of the Timurid dynasty began to turn their regional courts into

⁷⁴⁵ In giving the drawings of Khalil Sultan's court as example for the synthesis of the Timurid society and its hierarchical composition, Roxburgh states: "*The figures shown are from the immediate court circle and stress its political place.... Seated to the right of the enthroned ruler—who wears a turban, a symbol of learning, erudition, and piety—are the sons of amirs of Chinggisid origin, grandsons of Timur, and Turco-Mongol military commanders (amirs) standing below them... Also before Khalil Sultan, but to his right, are two lines of turbaned men, a combination of Turco-Mongols and Persians who held various bureaucratic positions in the financial offices and viziers.*" David J. Roxburgh, *The Persian Album, 1400-1600: From Dispersal to Collection*, Yale University Press, 2005, p. 27.

cultural and artistic centers. The cultural interests of the Timurid mirzas formed a link between art and Timurid dynastic ideology. Those mirzas began to commission various works to enhance their prestige and strengthen their hands against their Timurid rivals. It is possible to group the most prominent names among the Timurids of the time as follows: Shahrukh, his wife Gawharshad and Baysunghur Mirza in Herat; Iskandar Sultan (b. Umar Shaykh)⁷⁴⁶ and Ibrahim Sultan⁷⁴⁷ in Fars; and Ulugh Beg in Samarqand.

The architectural activities of the Timurid dynasty became one of the most effective instruments to propagate the dynasty's public image. Under the patronage of Shahrukh and Gawharshad numerous mosques, madrasas, khanqahs were built: Shahrukh's madrasa and khanqah in Herat, the tomb of 'Abdullah Ansari in Gazargah near Herat, Gawharshad's mosques in Mashhad and her mosque and madrasa complex in Herat, the shrine of Imam Reza in Mashhad⁷⁴⁸.

Apart from architecture, historiography also became the means for the Timurids to bolster their prestige and legacy. Just like Temür himself, his descendants also commissioned various historical narratives. However, the histories written during Temür's successors' reigns included some modifications to the Timurid legacy in conformity with the priorities of their time. The main concern of those new histories was positioning Temür and the Timurid dynasty in the general context of Islamic and Mongol history⁷⁴⁹ and implying a specific branch of the dynasty as the rightful heir to the legacy.

Under the patronage of Shahrukh several precious historical works were completed. For instance, Hafiz Abru composed various valuable chronicles under the patronage of Shahrukh such as *Zayl-i Jami'u't-Tawarikh*, the continuation of

⁷⁴⁶ During his service in the court of Iskandar Sultan, Mawlana Mu'inuddin Natanzi composed his general history for this mirza but on Iskandar's elimination by Shahrukh, Natanzi recast his work and submitted to his chronicle to Shahrukh. Woods, "Historiography", p. 89.

⁷⁴⁷ Dawlatshah praised this mirza as follows: "During his father's lifetime Prince Ibrahim was renowned the world over for his excellence and talent and for the graceful insight and subtle intellect he possessed..." Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p. 34.

⁷⁴⁸ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, pp. 84-88.

⁷⁴⁹ Woods, "Historiography", p. 99.

Rashiduddin's world history and *Zayl-i Zafarnama of Shami*, a continuation of Shami's biography in 1412, *Joghrafya-yi Tarikh-i Hafiz Abru*, a historical geography⁷⁵⁰. Those supplements of Hafiz Abru were prepared to reveal Shahrukh as a legitimate successor of the caliphs and the emperors of the past. Moreover, Mu'inuddin Natanzi prepared a universal history including parts about the life of Temür, by the name of "*Muntakhabu't-Tawarikh-i Mu'ini*" [The select chronicles of Mu'ini] in 1414. The *Ruznama-yi Ghazawat-i Hindustan* [The Journal of the Holy Wars in India] of Mawlana Ghiyasuddin Ali Yazdi was also completed in those times (around 1415)⁷⁵¹.

Furthermore, during and after the reign of Shahrukh various historical chronicles were commissioned by his offspring. Hafiz Abru composed a universal history named as *Mujmalu't-Tawarikh-i Sultani* [The Collection of Chronicles] which included four parts, the last quarter of the work is well-known as *Zubdatu't-Tawarikh-i Baysunghuri* [The Cream of Chronicles of Baysunghur]. Hafiz Abru compiled this work at the behest of Shahrukh but completed it in 147 and dedicated it to Shahrukh's son Baysunghur in 1427. In this text, the accounts were used for bolstering Timurid claims of succeeding the Mongol and the Islamic rulers⁷⁵².

Baysunghur Mirza was one of the most renowned Timurids during Shahrukh's reign. Residing in Herat usually, Baysunghur could take an active part in the cultural life of the city. The biographer Dawlatshah praised Baysunghur for his patronage:

*...in the patronage of the arts and artistic ability he was renowned throughout the world. During his time calligraphy and poetry gained currency, and artisans and literati, hearing of his reputation, entered his service from all regions and areas...[The prince] favored artists and loved poets. He strove to create opulence and rewarded his comrades and companions with exquisite objects. After Chosroes Parvez none of the sultans of the ages lived in such luxury and refinement as Baysunghur Sultan.*⁷⁵³

⁷⁵⁰ For more information about his works; F. Tauer, "Hafiz Abru", *E.I.*, vol. 3. pp. 57-58.

⁷⁵¹ Woods, "Historiography", pp. 84-85.

⁷⁵² Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 99.

⁷⁵³ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p. 22.

Through his fame as a patron, Baysunghur became a figure of attraction for artists, poets, litterateurs and calligraphers.

Apart from Baysunghur his older brother Ibrahim Sultan, the court of whom was in Shiraz, also gained a reputation for his patronage. Under the patronage of Ibrahim Sultan, Mawlana Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi prepared a compilation biography of Temür by the name of “*Zafarnama*”⁷⁵⁴. Yazdi was summoned by Ibrahim Sultan to Shiraz in 1419-1420 to prepare an emended and supplemental biography of Temür⁷⁵⁵. Yazdi stated that a group of scholars under the guidance of him began to collect all accounts of Temür’s life and finally produced *Zafarnama*⁷⁵⁶. This work includes accounts from the birth of Temür in 1336 to the Khalil Sultan's accession to the throne of Samarqand in 1405. Woods asserts that the *Zafarnama* of Yazdi is the imitated and modified form of Shami's work. However, Yazdi exaggerated the importance of his patron Ibrahim Sultan in different ways⁷⁵⁷. Furthermore, in comparison to Shami's *Zafarnama*, Yazdi omitted or altered the components in the *Zafarnama* of Shami about Temür's Chinggisid legitimacy. While minimizing the sections about Chinggisid legitimizing principles, Yazdi emphasized the Islamic elements to enhance Shahrukhids' claims against other Timurid branches⁷⁵⁸. Yazdi’s *Zafarnama* gained great popularity and was considerably utilized by the historiographers of later periods.

Those chosen works provide insight into the extent of the production of

⁷⁵⁴ Khondmir, *Habib*, vol. 1, p. 15.

⁷⁵⁵ Woods, “Historiography”, p. 85.

⁷⁵⁶ Dawlatshah reported the story of the writing of *Zafarnama* as follows: “*He [Ibrahim Sultan] be sought the Mawlana [Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi] to write a memorial volume for Timur, and Mawlana Sharaf composed that book in his old age at the prince’s request and called it Zafarnama.... It is said that it took the Mawlana four years to finish the history. Ibrahim too spent great sums. From sultans’ libraries in various countries he gathered the history that the clerks and journal keepers of the great Amir’s time had recorded and, relying on trustworthy and aged men who were in positions of authority during Timur’s days, he researched and edited and, with God’s assistance, the history was completed in all truth and trustworthiness.*” Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p. 33.

⁷⁵⁷ “For instance, Shami’s passage of over two hundred words on Timur’s appointment of Umar Shaykh to the governorship of the province of Fars in 1393 is compressed by Yazdi to less than twenty. In contrast, Shami’s seventy-word announcement of Ibrahim Sultan’s birth on 26 August 1394 is expanded twenty-five fold in Yazdi’s *Zafar-name*.” Woods, “Historiography”, pp. 103-104.

⁷⁵⁸ “Timur’s relations with the representatives of popular religion are given prominence and Yazdi makes him, his wives, relations, and children visit four times as many shrines and tombs of prophets and holy men as in Shami’s *Zafar-name*.” Woods, “Historiography”, p. 105.

histories at the courts of Shahrukhid mirzas. Along with claiming legitimacy for the Timurid dynasty, these works also emphasized the particular section of the descent. The main frame of historical works was designated for positioning the Timurids in the socio-political context in which they had emerged, preserving continuity, and promoting specific claims laid by each Timurid ruler and it was used for strengthening the legitimacy.

As for the other son of Shahrukh Ulugh Beg, although he encouraged programs suited to Perso-Islamic tradition, he was best known for his inclination, just as his grandfather Temür, to Turco-Mongol customs. In contrast, his father Shahrukh, who had abandoned Turco-Mongol political symbols mostly, Ulugh Beg continued preserving some aspects of Turco-Mongol tradition. He owned Turco-Mongol values and used his grandfather Temür's title "küragan". Ulugh Beg also expressed his adherence to Chinggisid Yasa publicly. In addition to underlying his connection with Turco-Mongol tradition, Ulugh Beg also erected a tombstone over Temür's mausoleum, the Gur-i Amir in Samarqand, on which Temür's genealogy goes back to the Mongol ancestress Alan-Qoa who had been impregnated by heavenly light in the widespread Mongol legend. But here the heavenly light transformed to "*one of the descendants of the prince of the Faithful Ali ibn Taleb.*"⁷⁵⁹ But it did not mean that he relinquished from Islam entirely. Despite he was renowned for his devotion to the Yasa, Ulugh Beg also acquired fame with that he had memorized the Quran in seven variant readings. We can witness the dilemma of Timurid identification under the rule of Ulugh Beg explicitly.

The cultural and artistic program which reinforced the Timurid dynasty's prestige in public was also utilized by Ulugh Beg Mirza. In particular, his architectural and scientific achievements were worth mentioning. His prominent construction activity was his building complex, involving a madrasa, mosque, and a khanaqah. Babur, the distant cousin of Ulugh Beg and the founder of the Baburid dynasty in India described this complex in detail⁷⁶⁰.

⁷⁵⁹ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p.15.

⁷⁶⁰ "Of Ulugh Beg Mirza's buildings inside the walls of Samarkand are a madrasa and a khanaqah. The dome over the khanaqah is huge – few domes in the world are so large. Near the madrasa and khanaqah is a beautiful bathhouse known as Mirza's Bath. It is paved in all sorts of Stone. In all of Khurasan and

Apart from his construction activities, Ulugh Beg also earned a reputation for his scientific interests. Babur praised Ulugh Beg for his contribution to astronomy science. According to him the observatory which constructed for compiling astronomical tables and Ulugh Beg used this observatory in preparing his *Zij-i Gurkani* (The Gurkanid Ephemeris) which, in the words of Babur, was used throughout the world⁷⁶¹. In addition, in another Timurid source, Tadhkira of Dawlatshah, the scholar mirza Ulugh Beg was praised for his cultural and scientific interests⁷⁶². However, despite all his scholarly and cultural achievements, Ulugh Beg was accused by the conservatives of his time of being involved in non-shar'i activities, and eventually, in 1449 he was murdered by way of a fatwa issued by the ulama.

With the death of Shahrukh and soon afterward the murder of Ulugh Beg by his patricide son 'Abdu'l-Latif (d. 1450), because of the absence of a certain power the Timurid mirzas again began fighting with each other and expanding their appanages against rivals' territories. Within fifty years after Temür's death because of the uncertainty of succession tradition, the major regions of his empire fragmented and each princely court transformed into semi-autonomous appanages⁷⁶³. Because being a

Samarkand no such bath is known to exist. To the south of the madrasa was constructed a mosque called the Muqatta' Mosque, because many little pieces of wood are carved in floral and geometric patterns." Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 58.

⁷⁶¹ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 58.

⁷⁶² "His late Highness Ulugh-Beg Küragan was a learned, just, victorious and high-minded king. He attained an exalted degree in astronomy and was quite adept at understanding poetry. During his reign scientists were given the greatest respect, and in his time the position of the learned reached exalted heights. In geometry he pointed out the subtlest things, and in cosmography he unlocked the secrets of the *Almagest*. The learned and wise are agreed that in history of Islam, nay from the time of Alexander until this moment, there has never reigned a king so wise and learned as Ulugh-Beg Küragan." Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p. 28.

⁷⁶³ After Shahrukh's death, the dynasty disintegrated into various political parts, formed around certain members of the Timurid dynasty. Khondmir described the chaotic political atmosphere of the Timurid rule as follows: "It is an amazing and strange thing that during this year throughout the regions and fortresses of Khurasan there were several effective rulers, none of whom was in obedience to another: Amir Jahanshah [Qaraqoyunlu] held from Astarabad to Sabzawar in his mighty grip; Mirza Sultan Abu Sa'id governed in Balkh; Mirza Sultan Ibrahim sat in Herat and bowed to no one else; Mawlana Ahmad Yasaul had made fast Ikhtiyaruddin Fort and took no notice of any of the sultans; Mirza Sultan Sanjar resided in Merv; Mirza Shah- Mahmud [b. Abul-Qasim Babur] dreamed of independence in Tus; Berka the Moghul held the Tiratu fortress; and Amir 'Abdullah Pirzada defended the citadel at Sarakhs; Malik Qasim son of Iskandar Qara Yusuf, along with Amir Khalil, controlled the kingdom of Seistan as far as Farah and Isfizar; Hasan Shaykh Temür was commandant of Khabushan Fort; and the fort at Tabas was under the control of Amir Uways son of Khwandshah." Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. 71.

Timurid was not enough to assure the rival princes' political situations, those Timurid mirzas were obliged to create legalizing claims to strengthen their unsafe positions.

In conformity with current conditions of the fifteenth-century Transoxiana and Khurasan which consisted of Temür's own imperial image, the ideological and cultural amalgam of Turco-Mongol and Perso-Islamic traditions and the fragmented political situation of the Timurid realm, Temür's descendants flourished a distinguished and prestigious "Timurid cultural identity". This unique cultural and political identity flourished after the death of the great conqueror Temür in 1405 and proceeded till the elimination of Timurid power by the Uzbeks in 1506-1507. That Timurid identity characterized the culture of the overall Islamic world and was imitated by other dynasties such as the Ottomans, the Safavids, and the Baburids.

5.3. The Cultural and Artistic Florescence of the Timurids Under the Rule of Sultan Husayn Bayqara

By the fifteenth century, the rule of Temür's descendants was not a nomadic steppe polity anymore. Although the power was in the hands of sedentarized Turco-Mongol figures and the military elite consisted of Turco-Mongol elements, the sedentary urban Perso-Islamic model began replacing the nomadic steppe ideals. While the Chinggisid tradition could provide political power to a certain degree since the reality of the princes and their advisors had been developed in Temür's court and the fragrance of his conquests had deeply penetrated their minds and connected them with the Turco-Mongol steppe tradition its existence was no longer binding.

The Timurids accorded themselves with the urban Perso-Islamic model of rule. After Temür's death, Shahrukh's choice to move the capital from Samarqand of Transoxiana to Herat of Khurasan, the center of Iranian culture indicated the dynasty's transformation. Although the Chinggisid and Timurid political legitimacy and military tradition continued their existence the Perso-Islamic culture grew as a main determining artistic model for rival Timurid courts and turned into a "Timurid Renaissance".

As we have mentioned before, during Temür's reign he brought a great number of artists, scholars, scientists, and poets from every part of the Islamic world by force

to his capital city Samarqand, and those people gave form Timurid artistic and intellectual life in many aspects. When he was appointed to the government of Transoxiana, Ulugh Beg emancipated Temür's hostage artisans and craftsmen in 1411. Those artisans dispersed throughout the Timurid territories and were patronized by various Timurid princes. With the liberal polity followed by Shahrukh, the empire became decentralized increasingly, and as regional governors, each rival court of Timurid princes became power stations competing for artistic patronage. The main reason lied behind such an artistic and intellectual ambition was the desire for political independence. By the way of patronizing artistic and intellectual works, those mirzas aimed at achieving their imperial ideologies⁷⁶⁴. Each ruling Timurid mirza from different branches of the dynasty pursued a patronage program consonant with the requirements of socio-political conditions of the time and of their own regions. Along with efforts for embracing the sedentary culture of Timurid territory, those Timurid mirzas also made attempts to legitimize the certain branch of the dynasty to which they belonged through ideological discourses. In particular, historical writings had an ideological function that put the Timurid dynasty in a proper place among successive dynasties of the past and then give specific Timurid branch prominence among others.

In the multi-centered Timurid world in the fifteenth century, the political authority was based less on military prowess and more on princely accomplishment for gathering the most outstanding artists, poets, craftsmen, and literati on his court. The florescence of such an exceptional artistic movement, created by political factors, characterized the imperial identity of neo-Timurids and sustained their prestige and honor for centuries. How Temür utilized the projects of monumental construction and historiography for creating a public image of power, his descendants also benefitted from such constructional fashion and artistic motifs by refining and adapting them to current regional political and social values to develop a comprehensible, adequate, and convincing image; "exalted Timurid sovereignty."⁷⁶⁵

The reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara witnessed extensive cultural and artistic fluorescence. The greatest artists, literary figures, and poets of the time gathered at his

⁷⁶⁴ Lents and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 119.

⁷⁶⁵ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 56.

court. Just like Shahrukh, although to a lesser extent, Sultan Husayn also was seen as the champion of Islam. The artistic program encouraged during his reign aimed mainly at this goal. Moreover, one of the most differential features of his time to those of previous Timurid rulers was the becoming of Turkish widespread as a literary language among the elites and the subject.

During the long reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, we can see numerous buildings erected in the city of Herat. Those architectural activities of course were held not only by the Sultan himself but the various members of his court. The major buildings of the time were composed of madrasas, khanqahs, mosques, gardens, and hospitals (*daru'sh-shifa*). Sultan Husayn himself was aware of the benefits the religious and educational architectural activities provided. He mentioned in his apologia proudly how the charitable foundations were repaired for gladdening the virtuous people and the educational institutions were restored or founded for comforting the students and the teachers or caravanserais were established for travelers to provide safety and to protect them from brigands and highway robbers⁷⁶⁶.

In fact, the most important structure built during Sultan Husayn's reign was the shrine of Ali b. Taleb in the city of Balkh and afterward, the region was begun to be called Mazar-i Sharif. It has been mentioned the rediscovery and the construction of the tomb. After the grave was rediscovered, at the behest of Sultan Husayn a dome (*qubba*) was built over the grave, and then established a market (*bazaar*) including shops and a public bath (*hammam*). This complex was endowed to the Shrine and moreover, building a canal, the Nahr-i Shahi, established a waqf for it.

Another significant structure built by Sultan Husayn was the central mosque in Ziyaratgah, the suburb of Herat, called Masjid-i Jami. According to Isfiari Ziyaratgah involved about two thousand shops and all day seven hundred Qur'an readers were charged with reciting. On solving the problem of great crowds occurring on Fridays, Sultan Husayn built a congregational mosque⁷⁶⁷.

Sultan Husayn also built a madrasa and a khanqah in Herat, in which eight

⁷⁶⁶ *Apologia*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p. 375.

⁷⁶⁷ Bernard O'Kane, *Timurid Architecture in Khurasan*, Edinburgh, 1987, p. 259.

lecturers were in charge for teaching in the madrasa⁷⁶⁸ and every morning the food was distributed to the poor in the khanqah⁷⁶⁹. In addition to the madrasa of Shahrukh, the madrasa of Gawharshad, the Ikhlasiyya madrasa, Sultan Husayn's madrasa (Madrasa-i Sultani) was one of the most significant educational institutions of the time. Apart from those above mentioned structures numerous buildings erected throughout Khurasan. In his work O'Kane gives the lists of those buildings.

During the reign of Sultan Husayn, various historiographical works were written in the Persian language. Among the most prominent figures in the field of historiography at the court of Sultan Husayn, Mirkhond, Esfizari, and Khondmir can be counted.

Mu'inuddin Muhammad Esfizari is a primarily prominent writer of the late fifteenth century. According to Khondmir, Esfizari apart from being the pillar of correspondents of his time was also interested in poetry and gained a reputation in calligraphy. Khondmir stated that besides his history of Herat, Esfizari's collection of correspondence, consisting of compositions and letters was famous⁷⁷⁰.

His monograph on the history of Herat named *Rawzatul-Jannat fi Tarkh-i Madinat-i Herat* was dedicated to Sultan Husayn and it contains the history of the city from its beginning to 1470-71. The *Rawzatul-Jannat* was divided into twenty-six *rawzas* (gardens) each of which dealt with the city of Herat, its quarters, topography and greatness. In the introduction, Esfizari began his writing with a long praise on the ruler, Sultan Husayn, during the reign of whom Herat reached the peak of grandness and magnitude⁷⁷¹, and his sons and the dignitaries of the court. After emphasizing the city's prominence since Mawlana Jami's place of residence, Esfizari detailed its congregational mosque (Masjid-i Jami) and Ikhtiyaruddin Fortress. During writing the chapters, Esfizari gave valuable information about the socio-political and cultural conditions of the time. He completed his work by praising his patron, the vizier

⁷⁶⁸ Khondmir gave the names of those instructors, taught in the madrasa of Sultan Husayn. Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 337-360.

⁷⁶⁹ O'Kane, *Timurid Architecture*, p. 339.

⁷⁷⁰ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 348.

⁷⁷¹ Esfizari, *Rawza*, vol. 2, p. 17.

Qiwamuddin Nizamulmulk, by whose request the works were written⁷⁷².

Another important figure in the historiography of Sultan Husayn's period was Muhammad b. Burhanuddin Khondshah, known as Mirkhond (d.1498). Becoming from a sayyid family of Bukhara, Mirkhond was one of the most renowned historiographers of his time. According to his grandson Khondmir, in describing Mirkhond's specialization in the discipline of history and the art of writing the words failed. As evidence for such expertness, Khondmir pointed out his work *Rawzatu's-Safa*⁷⁷³.

Mirkhond spent most of his life in Herat under the protection of his generous patron Mir Ali Sher Nawai to whom *Rawzatu's-Safa* was dedicated. *Rawzatu's-Safa* was written in seven volumes⁷⁷⁴ and the seventh one was devoted to history of his benefactor Sultan Husayn Bayqara from his birth to his death and account of his sons. This so-called seventh volume of *Rawzatu's-Safa* was continued to a date (1522-1523) in which Mirkhond was not alive. According to general consent, it was more likely to be compiled by his grandson Khondmir⁷⁷⁵.

In *Khulasatul-Akhbar* Khondmir stated that “owing to the want of authentic records of the events of Sultan Husayn’s reign, the seventh volume of the *Rawzatu's-Safa* had been left unfinished”, and added that “he hoped to be able to complete it himself at some future time, if he could obtain the necessary materials.”⁷⁷⁶

And the most prominent historiographer of the period was Ghiyasuddin b. Humamuddin Muhammad known as Khondmir (d. 1534-1535), was the grandson of

⁷⁷² Esfizari, *Rawza*, vol. 1, p. 50; Rieu, *Catalogue*, vol. I, pp. 206-207; Browne, *Literary*, vol. III, p. 430.

⁷⁷³ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 341.

⁷⁷⁴ The first one is about the history of the creation, prophets, the kings of Persia, the second one is about the life of Prophet Muhammad and the four caliphs, the third one is about the Twelve Imams and the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, the fourth is about the dynasties of Persia during the period of Abbasid caliphs, the fifth is about Chinggis Khan and the Ilkhanids of Iran, the sixth one is about Temür and his successors and eventually the seventh one is about the period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara.

⁷⁷⁵ Rieu claimed that this seventh volume agrees word of word, excepting the prologue, with that portion of the *Habibu's-Siyar* of Khondmir, which dealt with the reign of Sultan Husayn. Rieu, *Catalogue*, vol. I, p. 87-93.

⁷⁷⁶ Rieu, *Catalogue*, vol. I, p. 93.

Mirkhond by his daughter. Khondmir belonged to one of the highly educated religious families in the period of the Timurids. He began his career as a historian under the patronage of Amir Ali Sher Nawai. After his death, Khondmir joined the retinue of Badi'u'z-Zaman Mirza, the son of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. After the Uzbeks invasion and then the conquest of Safavids of Khurasan, Khondmir found patronage from Shah Ismail to whom Khondmir wrote "*Habibu's-Siyar*", until 1528 and then he moved to India to join Babur. After Babur died in 1530 Khondmir remained in India with Babur's son Humayun and died around 1535⁷⁷⁷.

Although *Habibu's-Siyar*, the most important work of Khondmir was written⁷⁷⁸ under the patronage of Shah Ismail Safavi, Khondmir compiled various works for his Timurid patrons, the primary of which as follows: "*Maqarimul-Akhlaq*" (Virtues of Ethic), an eulogy for Ali Sher Nawai⁷⁷⁹, "*Khulasatul-Akhbar*"⁷⁸⁰ (Compendium of History), a general history dedicated to Ali Sher Nawai, "*Ma'asirul-Muluk*"⁷⁸¹ (Monuments of Kings), on the institutions and charitable foundations of kings, "*Dasturul-Wuzara*"⁷⁸² (A Manual of Viziers), biographies of celebrated viziers of Islamic history and his last work "*Humayun-nama*" (Humayun's Book) or "*Qanun-i Humayun*"⁷⁸³ (Humayun's Rule), an account of Humayun's rule.

Moreover, one of the most significant works, written during the reign of Sultan Husayn was "*Tadhkiratu'sh-Shu'ara*" (Biographies of Poets) by Dawlatshah Samarqandi (d. 1494) in 1487 and dedicated to Amir Ali Sher. Apart from containing detailed accounts about the poets and notables of the period, in particular the conclusion part of the work contains valuable historical information about the rule of

⁷⁷⁷ Khwandamir, *Habibu's-Siyar*, p. IX-X.

⁷⁷⁸ Khondmir began to compile this work in 1520-1521 and completed it in 1523-1524.

⁷⁷⁹ Before Khondmir prepared a fair copy of this work, his patron Ali Sher deceased and the work was dedicated to Sultan Husayn Bayqara.

⁷⁸⁰ Completed in 1499-1500 and dedicated to Ali Sher Nawai.

⁷⁸¹ This work was also dedicated to Ali Sher Nawai.

⁷⁸² Completed in 1510 and dedicated to Sultan Husayn Bayqara.

⁷⁸³ As is understood from its name, this work was written for Humayun Padshah after the death of Babur in 1530-1531.

Sultan Husayn. In particular the information about the relationship between the artisans and their Timurid patrons helps us to clarify the structural form of the Timurid patronage⁷⁸⁴.

Just like the previous Timurid ruler, Sultan Husayn also used historical and biographical works as the ideological apparatus for strengthening his claim on Timurid sovereignty and legitimizing his rule. The histories and *tadhkirats* commissioned under Sultan Husayn's court had some modifications and were based on different claims. When we look more closely at above listed historical works we would encounter expressions that stress particularly the Umar Shaykhid branch of the Timurid dynasty.

For instance, in *Tadhkiratush-Shu'ara*, a distinct inclination toward the Umar Shaykhid line draws attention. In explaining the ending of Shahrukhid line, Dawlatshah attributed its reason to the curse of sayyids and the ulama of Isfahan whom Shahrukh had blamed for Sultan Muhammad's rebellion and put their death and said:

After eighty days Shahrukh Sultan died, and some say that when those oppressed men despaired of their lives they cursed Shahrukh Sultan and Gawharshad Begim, saying, "O Lord, as he deprives our children of hope make this line extinct! The gates of heaven were open, and those innocent injured men's prayers were answered, for that mighty padishah's line was ended and the sultanate reverted to its original locus.

In addition, in the works of Dawlatshah, we can see more accounts of the members of the Umar Shaykhid branch than in other chronicles written for Shahrukhid patrons. For example, in narrating the story of Bayqara Mirza b. Umar Shaykh, Dawlatshah glorified Umar Shaykh Mirza and showed him as the legal heir to Temür writing:

*The exalted Sultan Umar Shaykh Bahadur was the apple of Timur's eye, and none of Timur's offspring received the favor he did[when Umar Shaykh died] The Sahib-Qiran was sorely grieved by his loss reciting this quatrain to describe his state, wept bitterly: 'You have been driven before me to the arena of death, and a hundred wounds have been inflicted upon my Herat. I said: "You, who would have been my heir in any legal code, have departed and left me your heir.'*⁷⁸⁵

Although the story of Shahrukh's sons was presented under distinct titles,

⁷⁸⁴ Rieu, *Catalogue*, vol. I, p. 364; Browne, *Literary*, vol. III, pp. 436-437.

⁷⁸⁵ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p.31.

except for Iskandar Mirza and Bayqara Mirza Dawlatshah did not devote any particular place to other sons of Umar Shayk b. Temür. In his work, among the sons of Umar Shaykh, Dawlatshah attributed particular importance to Bayqara Mirza from whose line Sultan Husayn descended:

*Prince Bayqara Bahadur was unique among the sons of Umar Shaykh: he possessed a beauty that Joseph never dreamed of and a bravery of which Rustam never heard in his seven labors... He was truly generous, manly, and brave, and the learned have reported that in the Timurid House, there appeared no prince so handsome, of such good conduct or so brave as Bayqara Bahadur.*⁷⁸⁶

Moreover, the account about Sultan Husayn of Tadhkira contained special emphasis on his lineage: "*One should know that this exalted prince [Sultan Husayn] is noble in [maternal and paternal] lineage, and among the progeny of the Sahib-Qiran no one else had the honor to be descended from the great Sahib-Qiran through both father and mother.*"⁷⁸⁷ The effort for presenting the Umar Shaykhid line from which Sultan Husayn descended, as legitimate heir to the empire Temür established, can be seen in other works written for Sultan Husayn's court.

5.4. The School of Herat

One of the most important socio-political features of the fifteenth century in the Timurid domain was the weakness and decentralization of political power. In particular, after the death of Abu'l-Qasim Babur in 1457, the Timurid territory witnessed extensive struggles among Timurid elites. Zamchi Isfizari explained the chaotic atmosphere of the time (1456-1457) in Khurasan as follows:

*In that year a great disorder dominated the situation throughout Khurasan. In every corner sedition and tyranny appeared and with a dream of independence in all regions instigation and evil emerged. Because of the absence of a powerful emperor who would make effort for removing the devastation of the calamity and punishing transgressors and evildoers, plunder and usurpation, and chaos appeared around the realm. Each egoist made drums beat for him and each niggard imagined himself as a leader.*⁷⁸⁸

⁷⁸⁶ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p.32.

⁷⁸⁷ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p.51.

After Abu Sa'id's death at the hands of the Aqqoyunlu Turkmans the Timurid domain again fell into political disorder through the struggles among his successors and other Timurid contenders. After Sultan Husayn Bayqara reached the political power in Herat and consolidated his position, this city became one of the most important cultural centers of the Timurid realm. Thanks to the relatively peaceful political atmosphere and thus the economic opportunities of Sultan Husayn's reign, the city of Herat attracted the artists, scholars, and poets of the time to itself.

In fact, the origin of the school went back to the period of Shahrukh's reign⁷⁸⁹. The constituted buildings of kitabkhana, madrasa, mosque, and khanqah made the city into a scholarly, artistic, and literary center of the time. Herat was the Herat of Khurasan and the door to Anatolia. The political peace and thus the development of commercial activities enabled the wealth to flow to Herat. With the efforts of the Timurid rulers and mirzas for prosperity through establishing elegant buildings, palaces, gardens, libraries, madrasas, mosques, and khanqahs, Herat transformed into a cultural and artistic urban station.

The traditional Persian literary culture provided the Timurids with the required materials and thus Persian became the main literary language for court life. The glorious palaces of the Timurid princes and their libraries became the production centers for artistic works. For example, during the reign of Shahrukh, Bagh-i Safid was the residential place of Baysunghur b. Shahrukh. But it was also an artistic and literary gathering place for numerous poets, painters, calligraphists, bookbinders, and illuminators.

Apart from the palaces one of the main artistic and cultural production centers of Herat was the madrasas. The prominent madrasas of Herat were as follows: "Ghiyasiyya, the khanqah of Shahrukh, Nizamiyya, Khwaja Afsar, Madrasa-i Sultani, Madrasa-i Sultan Husayn Mirza Bayqara, Madrasa-i Khwaja Isma'il Hisari, Madrasa-

⁷⁸⁸ Esfizari, *Rawza*, p. 191.

⁷⁸⁹ Such a development for high culture in Herat in fact was originated from Iranian Islamic cultural tradition. The Iranian regional courts in the west Iran before the Timurids such as Jalayirids, Muzaffarids, set a model for the Timurid dynasty for their socio-cultural legitimacy. Through patronizing Persianate culture and adapting it for their best interest, the members of the Timurid dynasty validated their rule in the eyes of their sedentary subjects. Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 160.

i Jamaliyya, Madrasa-i Khwaja Jalalu'd-Din and Madrasa-i Ikhlasiiyya.”

Of course, those palaces and the madrasas had their own libraries. Differently from the present ones, which were used for keeping and research, the Timurid libraries functioned like a factory that witnessed intensive activities in various art branches. For instance, the calligraphers were responsible for copying valuable literary works, while the painters were entrusted with illustrating those works accordingly to their contents. The illuminators ornamented those manuscripts while bookbinders and others performed their own art. In this manner, under the patronage of the dilettante Timurid princes, the artists and craftsmen of the time obtained a productive working environment.

The portrayal of productive activities in the princely kitabkhanas could be found in the works of some contemporary writers. For example, in his personal recollection, the writer Ahmad ibn ‘Abdullah al-Hijazi, who was a calligrapher and a poet and began his career in 1422 in Timurid Shiraz and then moved to Ottoman Edirne in 1441-1442 but could not find any employment wrote:

*The sultans of the age too, like Ibrahim Sultan, Baysunghur, Ulugh Beg and their father Shahrukh Mirza, have taken notice of this art for "people follow their kings' religion." In the kitabkhana of each of these, there was a group of learned people without equal in the world –copyist, illuminator, illustrator, binder.*⁷⁹⁰

Throughout the fifteenth century, the Herat School was very active and attracted renowned artists of the time from far and near. In 1410 when Shahrukh constructed his madrasa and khanqah he gathered valuable books there. For instance, in the kitabkhana of Baysunghur Mirza, there were around forty calligraphers served for reproducing preeminent literary works⁷⁹¹.

Probably, one of the most important aspects of Herat school was the paintings drawn by the talented illustrators of the time. The reproduction of the traditional works such as Shahnama of Firdawsi, and the Khamsa of Nizami, decorated with paintings

⁷⁹⁰ Thackston, *Century of Princes*, p. 332.

⁷⁹¹ After the conquest of Fars and Iraq, Shahrukh brought famous *khattat* (calligrapher) Mawlana Ma'ruf of Baghdad who could write almost a thousand five hundred lines in a day, to Herat and made him his own personal clerk.

served for displaying the idealized image of the Timurid princes⁷⁹². In those paintings the princely armies were presented as victorious in the battlefields, the Timurid princes as distributives of just or as having fun in assemblies performed in grandiose gardens⁷⁹³. Such a pictorial princely world formed the most important part of the ideological programs of the Timurid princes. In other words, the works which were produced in the name of the Timurid mirzas, both in written and visual, functioned as means of image.

After the reign of Shahrukhids, although the Timurid authority was confronted with a political concussion, artistic production decreased and the artisans were in search of patronage at other courts in Iran, the court Sultan Husayn's patronage allowed the cultural activities to be flourished. After eliminating the danger of Aqqoyunlu, Sultan Husayn Bayqara made his capital Herat the most prominent cultural center of the time.

The generous patronage of the princes from the Timurid lineage brought them glory and reputation and evoked the admiration of other rival dynasties. The Timurid cultural florescence reached its apogee under the reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara (1438-1506) in the city of Herat. Of course, the political atmosphere of the time played a crucial role in it. Due to the struggles among the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmans and the Aqqoyunlu Turkmans in west Iran and between the Aqqoyunlu Turkmans and the Ottomans in east Anatolia and among the Timurid mirzas in Transoxiana, the region of Khurasan, especially the city of Herat became attraction center for artists and scholars. Thus, the peaceful and lenient environment that emerged in Herat during the reign of Sultan Husayn produced an artistic and literary florescence.

Sultan Husayn Bayqara, the last Timurid ruler of Herat, rose to fame as a result of his glorious court. He evoked admiration and made a name in the history of Iran, Central Asia, and even Anatolia using his noteworthy imperial patronage. His splendid

⁷⁹² Mentioning about the depiction of Baysunghur Mirza in the book of *Kalila wa Dimna*, Roxburgh writes as follows: "The painted frontispiece does not illustrate the text, but rather princely prerogatives and ideal courtly life. As a "portrait" of Baysunhur, it effectively projects an image of the real life prince and owner of the book onto a literary world of the Perso-islamic tradition." David J. Roxburgh, "Baysunghur's Library: Questions Related to its Chronology and Productions". *Journal of Social Affairs (Shuun Ijtimaiyah)*, vol. 18, No. 72, 2001, p. 12.

⁷⁹³ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 163.

court in Herat was the home to the most popular and most prominent artists, literati, and poets of the age such as Ali Sher Nawai (d. 1501), ‘Abdu’r-Rahman Jami (d. 1492), and the miniaturist Behzad. According to contemporary collections of biographies, Herat hosted more than three hundred poets in those days. Zamchi Isfizari, one of the contemporary geographers, wrote about the city of Herat under the rule of Sultan Husayn, as follows:

*Nowadays, the reputation and the quality of this city, which was proven all over the world, are that it is the spring of religious learning and the center of rise and development for knowledge. From all over the world, students of knowledge and truth and hunters of science and learned men turn their faces toward this point of purity. And thousands of those people in this admirable city which had all available vehicles through the prosperities of the alms and the charities of benefactors, day and night make efforts and study on researching and reviewing and achieve their goals and dispersing to the whole world, spread the base of knowledge and the Islamic law.*⁷⁹⁴

Sultan Husayn Bayqara also remarked on them in his *Apologia*. In his work, Sultan Husayn recounted the skillful people gathered at his court as follows:

*In the environ of Herat (May God protect her from catastrophe), where there come to mind and can be mentioned so many talented and discerning people, there are nearly another thousand whose job is string pearls of meaning onto the cord of poetry and to enhance gems of precision with the garb of adornment and beauty. In no other epoch have there been ten such persons out of a thousand and in no place had there been one such person out of a hundred.*⁷⁹⁵

Babur, the cousin of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, admiringly portrayed the cultural atmosphere of Herat, created during the reign of Sultan Husayn as follows; "*Sultan Husayn Mirza's time was marvelous. Khurasan, especially the city of Herat, was filled with people of talent and extraordinary persons. Everyone who had an occupation was determined to execute his job to perfection.*"⁷⁹⁶

During Sultan Husayn's reign, many court-sponsored structures were built in

⁷⁹⁴ Esfizari, *Rawza*, pp. 99-100.

⁷⁹⁵ *Apologia*, in Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, p. 376.

⁷⁹⁶ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 212.

Khurasan. The Bagh-i Jahanara (World-adorning Garden) was one of the most significant Timurid buildings in the late fifteenth century.

Apart from the production of the book, Herat also was the home of people from various fields of art. The poets who compose poems in Persian and Turkish languages gathered in the city square, the marketplace, and the khanqahs or in the madrasas and read their poems, lyrics, or eulogies to one another.

However, it is not a stretch to say that Ali Sher Nawai was the most prominent figure in cultural activities during the reign of Sultan Husayn in Herat. Through his personal patronage, inspiration, and support a great number of artists and craftsmen such as poets, painters, musicians, historians, and calligraphers appeared. Babur Mirzas expressed the cultural contributions achieved by Nawai with these words: "*No one is known ever to have been such a patron and encourager of artists as was Ali Sher Beg.*"⁷⁹⁷ Undoubtedly, Ali Sher acquired such an essential role in the cultural development in Herat under his close and relatively independent relationship with the imperial court and thus with his own sources of revenue.

Nawai's wealth enabled him to engage in various architectural activities⁷⁹⁸. Khondmir stated that Ali Sher built more than 135 structures: 52 caravanserais or ribats, 19 cisterns, 20 mosques, 14 bridges, 9 baths, 7 khanqahs and a madrasa⁷⁹⁹. Dawlatshah, Nawai's contemporary historian, stated that Ali Sher spent his wealth on charitable foundations because of preventing his properties from falling into the wrong hands of the inheritors. According to Dawlatshah, Nawai built madrasas, mosques, khanqahs, charitable foundations, and hospitals in Herat and throughout Khurasan, which cost five hundred thousand *kepeki* dinars⁸⁰⁰. Babur, the founder of the Baburid dynasty in India, counted various structures built by Ali Sher Nawai; "*Ali Sher Beg's*

⁷⁹⁷ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 203.

⁷⁹⁸ Fakhri Haravi stated that the daily income of Nawai's treasure was seventy-five thousand dinars and fifteen thousand of it were expended. Nawai, *Majalis*, p. 134. Moreover, according to vaqfiyya which was published in the introduction of *Majalis*, Nawai's main source of income was agriculture. In the same vaqfiyya, showed that Nawai had a great number of properties, houses, shops and gardens. In Herat and its quarters. Nawai, *Majalis*, Introduction.

⁷⁹⁹ Golombek and Wilber, *The Timurid Architecture*, pp. 96-97.

⁸⁰⁰ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, p. 375.

quarters, which were called Unsiyya, his tomb and Friday mosque which were called Qudsiyya his madrasa an khanqah called Khalasiyya and Ikhlasiiyya, and his bath and hospital, which were called Safa'iyya and Shifa'iyya."⁸⁰¹

However, Nawai's most remarkable architectural achievement was the Ikhlasiiyya complex, built in Herat. This educational and charitable structure was endowed by Nawai sometimes between 1476 and 1482⁸⁰². This complex included a mosque, madrasa, khanqah, bath, hospital and a place for the recitation of the Qur'an. In the vaqfiyya⁸⁰³ of the Ikhlasiiyya, Nawai gave some information about numerous activities, carried out there:

*And to the north of the mosque I built a dome for mellifluous Qur'an readers to read the Qur'an in, which became known as the dar al-huffaz. In the two iwan halls of the madrasa, east, and west, I appointed two lecturers, one to teach law and the other Hadith. In each circle of study, eleven students are to be occupied. This madrasa, since it has been built out of sincere motives, is known as Ikhlasiiyah, "Sincerity." In front of this madrasa, on the southern side, has been built the public road of a khanqah, in which, for the duration of the present government, everyday food is distributed to the poor and destitute, and a yearly pension is granted to the destitute.*⁸⁰⁴

In the same vaqfiyya, the salaries of the personnel of Ikhlasiiyya were designated. Accordingly, the annual income of each lecturer was as follows; one thousand two hundred gold coins, twenty-four-ounce grain, one-third of which would be barley and the remaining would be wheat. The students also were paid salary accordingly to their talents, success, and efforts⁸⁰⁵.

Apart from building projects Nawai also devoted a large portion of his time to literary studies. Along with engaging in the production of numerous literary works, Nawai also played a significant role in the literary and artistic atmosphere, developed

⁸⁰¹ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 231.

⁸⁰² Maria Eva Subtelny, "A Timurid Educational and Charitable Foundation: The Ikhlasiiyya Complex of Ali Shir Nava'i in 15th-Century Herat and Its Endowment", *Journal of American Oriental Society*, Vol. 111, No.1, Jan.-Mar., 1991, p. 38.

⁸⁰³ This vaqfiyya was translated and published in introduction of *Majalisu'n-Nafais*.

⁸⁰⁴ Golombek and Wilber, *The Timurid Architecture*, p. 64; Nawai, *Majalis*, Introduction.

⁸⁰⁵ Nawai, *Majalis*, Introduction.

in the court of Sultan Husayn in Herat. The florescence of cultural life in Timurid Herat of the fifteenth century occurred predominantly under Nawai's personal efforts and outstanding patronage⁸⁰⁶. Through great interest in poetry, music, calligraphy, painting and architecture, he supervised artistic and literary activities in Khurasan⁸⁰⁷. Under his unique patronage and through his financial support many scholars and artists produced valuable works such as the historians, Mirkhond, Khondmir, Dawlatshah, the poets Jami, Hilali, Hatifi, Asafi, the painters Behzad, Shah Muzaffar, the calligraphers, Mashhadi, Khandan⁸⁰⁸.

One of the most important efforts, exerted by Ali Sher Nawai was his literary productions. Apart from patronage, he also wrote numerous poems in the languages of Turkish, Persian, and Pashto and composed various prose and poetical works. His contemporaries also placed importance on his authority in the field of poetry and brought their own compositions to him for obtaining money or other valuable items⁸⁰⁹. Even, 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami, the most renowned poet of the time, according to Nawai's words, after composing his books, treatises, lyrics and eulogies, gave the drafts to Ali Sher saying "*Take these sheets and work over them! And tell whatever comes into your mind.*"⁸¹⁰

Ali Sher's pen-name for his Persian poems was Fani⁸¹¹. He composed a diwan

⁸⁰⁶ Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, p. 90.

⁸⁰⁷ Fakhri Haravi stated that the innumerable artists such as calligraphists, singers, musicians, painters, illuminators, illustrators, scribes, composers of enigma and poets were grown under Nawai's training. Nawai, *Majalis*, p. 135.

⁸⁰⁸ "No one is known ever to have been such a patron and encourager of artists as was Ali Sher Beg. Master Qul-Muhammad, Shaykhi the flutist, and Husayn the lutanist, who are tops on their instruments, gained advancement and reputation through the beg's patronage and encouragement. It was through the beg's good offices that master Bihzad and Shah Muzaffar became so famous for painting." Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 203.

⁸⁰⁹ "For forty years, whenever all the qualified writers, poets, rhetoricians of Khurasan, no matter what purpose and no matter which language Persian or Turkish, composed anything, they sent them to me or read them in my presence and asked me for refining them." "When the masters of rhetoric debated on the poems of Anwari, Suhayli, and could not persuade each other, they brought it to my presence for judging. And whichever I adjudicated they were convinced and their discussion was ended." Nawai, *Muhakama*, pp. 221-222.

⁸¹⁰ Nawai, *Muhakama*, p. 222.

⁸¹¹ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 203.

consisting of eulogium and lyrics and the number of the couplets in it were more than six thousands⁸¹². According to Babur, some of Nawai's couplets were not bad but most are flat and of low quality⁸¹³. Moreover, Ali Sher used the pen-name Nawai for his Turkish works. He was known as the founder of Chaghatai Turkish literature. He called this language as Turki but by the sixteenth century this dialect began to be called as Chaghatai. The name of Nawai's Turkish diwan is "*Khaza'inu'l-Ma'ani*", consisting of fifty-five couplets, entitled respectively "*Ghara'ibu'l-Sighar*" (Curiosities of Childhood), "*Nawadirush-Shabab*" (Marvels of Youth), "*Badayi'u'l-Vasat*" (Wonders of Middle Age) and "*Fawa'idu'l-Kibar*" (Advantages of Old Age), corresponding to the four periods of his life⁸¹⁴.

In the contemporary sources, the chronicles, tadhkiras and memoirs gave rich information about the scholarly and cultural atmosphere of Sultan Husayn Bayqara's court. Babur mentioned more than thirty talented names that got into cultural activities in Khurasan, especially the city of Herat⁸¹⁵. In the biographical part of *Habibu's-Siyar*, Khondmir also enumerated nearly ninety figures as learned men, poets and artists of the time⁸¹⁶. Moreover, in the *Tarikh-i Rashidi* of Mirza Dughlat, great numbers of learned men, poets, enigmatists, calligraphers, painters, illuminators, singers and musicians were mentioned⁸¹⁷.

Apart from the famous poets of the period, the Timurid aristocrats and intellectuals also attempted to compose poems and they were good at it. At the royal

⁸¹² Nawai, *Muhakama*, pp. 220-221.

⁸¹³ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 203.

⁸¹⁴ Nawai composed nearly thirty works in Turkish. Subtelny enumerated them as follows: *Khamsa*, comprises: "*Hayratu'l-Abrar*", "*Farhad u Shirin*", "*Layli u Majnun*", "*Sab'a-i Sayyara*", "*Sadd-i Skandari*", "*Lisanu't-Tayr*". His prose Works are: "*Majalisu'n-Nafa'is*", "*Muhakamatu'l-Lughatayn*", "*Mizanu'l-Awzan*", "*Mahbubu'l-Qulub*", "*Khamsatu'l-Mutahayyirin*", "*Nasa'imu'l-Mahabba*". Subtelny, "Nawai", p. 91. Nawai also had six eulogiums named by "*Tukhfatu'l-Afkar*", "*Nasa'imu'l-Hadi*", "*Aynu'l-Hayat*", "*Ruhu'l-Quds*", "*Minhaju'n-Najat*", "*Quwwatu'l-Qulub*". In the introduction of *Muhakama*. Ali Şir Nevayi, *Muhakemetü'l-Lugateyn: İki Dilin Muhakemesi*, Ed. F. Sema Barutçu Özönder, Ankara, 1996.

⁸¹⁵ Babur, *Baburnama*, pp. 212-219.

⁸¹⁶ Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 333-363.

⁸¹⁷ Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, pp. 88-94.

courts, the members of the Timurid elite utilized the arts as a social matter by organizing assemblies of pleasure (majlis). As such gatherings were revealed in the form of private house parties they also were in the form of courtly assemblies in which professional poets and the members of the courts matched their talents by reading poems in the form of joyful or sarcastic or dirty. The numerous gardens built by Timurid princes were the home to such delightful majlises, served as social institutions⁸¹⁸ and developed into a symbols of heyday of late Timurid rule. Even though the Timurid military power was decreasing gradually their superior cultural and social prestige began growing expeditiously and spread throughout the Islamic world⁸¹⁹. The splendent Aqqoyunlu Turkman court in Tabriz, the Ottoman court in Istanbul, and later the Baburids, the Uzbeks, and the Safavids imitated the sophisticated patronage in Timurid courts, especially that of Sultan Husayn Bayqara in Herat. The main reason underlying such expansion of the Timurid reputation as patrons of artistic works was the migration of artists, craftsmen, and poets to non-Timurid territories, particularly after the Uzbek invasion in 1506-1507. For instance, Ahmad bin ‘Abdullah al-Hejazi, came to Edirne from the Ottomans in the 1422s and began looking for a job, requesting the patronage of the Ottoman Sultan by writing a letter. Al-Hejazi reminded the Timurid rulers saying;

*...the sultans of the age, too, like Ibrahim Sultan, Ulugh Beg, and their father Shahrukh Mirza, have taken notice of this art for 'people follow their king's religion'. In the library (kitabkhana) of each one there is a group of learned people without equal in the world –copyist, illuminator, illustrator, bookbinder...*⁸²⁰

Although the Timurid artistic patronage and its concomitant, dynastic image had been produced for the benefit of dynastic authority in conformity with Turco-Mongol and Perso-Islamic customs, it would make a tremendous impact in the Islamic world and remained a permanent social, historical, and cultural heritage.

⁸¹⁸ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 165.

⁸¹⁹ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 299.

⁸²⁰ Thackston, *Century of Princes*, pp. 330-332.

5.5. Revival of Turkish as a Literature Language

The Mongol conquests, which started in the thirteenth century, transformed the tribal structure of the Central Asian nomads, and led to rapid Turkicization, in the words of some scholars, of West Asia and the Middle East by causing a great Turkic migration. The existence of a large number of Turkic nomads in the Chinggisid armies, caused the Turkic language to replace the Mongolian in those regions⁸²¹. In particular, the inclusion of large Turkic-speaking Qipchaq elements in the Qipchaq Steppes into the Jochi Ulus enabled the Turkic language to have a wide usage area, especially in this khanate⁸²². The use of Turkish as a literary language is a result of the adaptation process of Turco-Mongol elements to the settled urban culture with Islam.

Especially, thanks to the late Timurid period elites, Turkish, which reached its peak in literary terms and was called Chaghatai by modern scholars, was of Uyghur-Qarluq origin and was based on the Turkish of the Qarakhanid era. Qarakhanid literature, which started to develop in Balasaghun and Kashghar in the eleventh century, enriched its vocabulary with Arabic and Persian elements with the spread of Islam among the Turks and took its classical form in the fourteenth century in the Khwarazm region, where the Persian influence was strong, and eventually, in Samarqand, Herat and Shiraz, the main literary centers of the fifteenth century Timurid world, gave its greatest works⁸²³.

The Timurid world of the fifteenth century was the result of the Iranian-Islamic settled culture and the Turco-Mongol steppe traditions synthesized by Temür in both socio-political and cultural terms. The central authority established by Timurid remained stable under his charismatic existence, but his death forced the Timurid princes to redefine the source of legitimate authority in the political competition environment they were in. The intense interaction of Turco-Mongol nomadic steppe

⁸²¹ *Cambridge History of Inner Asia*, Intro, p. 3; Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 2017, p. 417.

⁸²² Morgan, *The Mongols*, p. 125.

⁸²³ Multiple Authors, "Chaghatai Language and Literature", *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Online Edition, Originally Published: December 15, 1991, Last Updated: October 13, 2011. This article is available in print. Vol. V, Fasc. 4, pp. 339 – 343.

traditions with the established institutions of Islamic Iran offered different alternatives for Temür's successors in a political atmosphere where power was not centered. With the end of the successful conquests in the absence of a conqueror like Temür, who had basically tied his political power to the Chinggisid ideology, the interests of the Turco-Mongol military elite turned to the Perso-Islamic urban culture. Thus, the Chinggisid heritage, which had been among the key elements of Temür's political ideology, began to lose its importance in favor of Perso-Islamic traditions.

Additionally, the distribution of the Timurid territory as a *soyurghal* since the rule of Shahrukh led to political independence and eventually to decentralization. In this fragmented competitive political atmosphere, one of the most important means used by the Timurid princes was the patronage of cultural activities and thus, the princes' courts in different regions became artistic centers. The patronage activity that caused an artistic and cultural revival, which is described as the Timurid Renaissance by scholars, included a process that started with Temür and peaked during the reign of Husayn Bayqara.

While the Timurid mirzas were building their political legitimacy, they tried to create a cultural identity that they shaped through the socio-political and cultural values of the period. The cultural legitimacy, which was tried to be created by those mirzas, who were the children of the marriage of Perso-Islamic and Turco-Mongol cultures, took its origin not from the steppe but from the city life and was influenced by the Islamic Persian literary tradition. Thus, while the fifteenth-century Timurid courts became centers where Persian literary works were produced, they also witnessed the emergence of Turkish as a literary language.

As stated before, after the death of Shahrukh and Ulugh Beg the cultural and artistic patronage of Timurid princes continued. In particular, with the emancipation of artists and craftsmen by Ulugh Beg in 1411⁸²⁴ and the emergence of princely courts, competing for renowned artists paved the way for the movement of artists among various Timurid courts. With the death of Shahrukh, the fragmentation of the Timurid power drove the Timurid mirzas to create indicative links to Temür, the founder of the dynasty for asserting their legitimacy to rule. Considering the dynasty's lack of military

⁸²⁴ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 63.

and political power, the Timurid mirzas pursued a policy for creating an image, effective for the requirements of the time.

On the other hand, the rising power of the Turkman dynasties⁸²⁵ in the west and the Uzbeks⁸²⁶ in the east obligated the Timurids to reconstruct their image by making some differences under the conditions of their dominions. One of the most noticeable characteristics of the political and cultural life in the late fifteenth-century Timurid world was the stress, laid on the Timurids' ethnic roots. Because of the dynasty's political and military deficiency, those Timurid mirzas emphasized the dynasty's magnificent past⁸²⁷. Thus, Temür himself became the one of the most important factors for legitimizing the rules of Timurids.

In fact, the emphasis on Temür's charisma began with the reign of Shahrukh. The glorification of Temür's importance became the principal base of the Timurid sovereignty. In just the same way that Temür utilized the Chinggisid political legacy to establish his power and then strengthened it through Islamic symbols of legitimacy in conformity with the requirements of the time, his descendants also followed a similar method. After Temür's death, Shahrukh, the new head of the dynasty, abrogated the Chinggisid aspect of the legacy by declaring the supremacy of Islamic Shari'a over the Chinggisid Yasa. In the chronicles, revised during his reign, Temür himself was shown as the absolute Muslim sovereign under the cover of Islamic references, and the Chinggisid puppet khans were no anymore entitled the "padshah-i Islam"⁸²⁸. Moreover, Chinggis Khan was also replaced with another Islamic symbol

⁸²⁵ Upon the turmoil created by the struggles among the Timurid mirzas, Muzaffaruddin Jahanshah, the leader of the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmans in western Iran occupied the throne of Khurasan on 28 June 1458. Khondmir, *Habib*, pp. 73-75. However, by 1460s the Aqqoyunlus, another Turkman confederation, under the leadership of Uzun Hasan, replaced the Qaraqoyunlu as the rising political power in western Iran. After gained victory over the Timurid ruler Abu Sa'id, Uzun Hasan attempted to establish himself as the legitimate successor of Shahrukh through Yadgar Muhammad, a great-grandson of Shahrukh. Woods, *The Aqqoyunlu*, p. 125.

⁸²⁶ As is known, Sultan Abu Sa'id rose to power through the assistance of the Uzbeks under the leadership of Abul-Khayr Khan. In this respect he was the first Timurid who brought the Uzbeks as military and political force. However, the Uzbeks did not form a critical problem for the Timurids until the sixteenth century when Shaybani Khan (r. 1500-1510) occupied Samarqand from the Timurids and established Uzbek authority in Transoxiana.

⁸²⁷ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 271.

⁸²⁸ Woods, "Timur's Genealogy", pp. 115-117.

of power: Ali b. Taleb, the father of all the lineal descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. After Temür's death, his descendants stressed their connection to the Prophet's lineage openly.

Probably the clearest indicator of this alteration was the gravestone of Temür's tomb. As it has been mentioned before, it was Temür's grandson, Uughbeg, the scholar Timurid mirza, who erected the tombstone over the great warlord's grave in Samarqand in 1425. The inscription on the stone took Temür's genealogy back to Alan-Qoa, who was also the ancestor of Chinggis Khan. Through this way, Temür's successors claimed sovereignty with the Chinggis Khanid on an equal basis through the same ancestor, and with the connection with the family of the Prophet they assumed the right to rule for Islamic sovereignty⁸²⁹.

After Shahrukhids, following Timurid rulers also emphasized their Timurid charisma in various ways. Although Sultan Abu Sa'id, following the policies of Shahrukh, presented himself as a pious Muslim ruler and bolstered it by associating with Naqshbandi Sufis and the ulama of Samarqand, he did not refrain from associating himself with Temür⁸³⁰. Even if Sultan Abu Sa'id eliminated puppet Chinggisid khans and assumed sovereignty in his own name through Islamic symbols of political legitimacy, just as Ulugh Beg, he adopted the title of küragan and arranged multiple marriages between his sons and Chinggisid princesses.

After Abu Sa'id, Sultan Husayn Bayqara also attached importance to associating himself with Temür. During his reign, the members of Sultan Husayn's family were inserted into the genealogies to position Sultan Husayn as the legitimate successor to the throne of Temür⁸³¹. Moreover, the reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara witnessed the revival of Turkish as a literary language among the Timurid elite, and even among the Turkic subject.

The intellectuals of the period, who produced Turkic works under the dominant influence of Persian literature, were actually the products of the cultural synthesis of

⁸²⁹ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, pp. 27-28.

⁸³⁰ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, p. 259.

⁸³¹ Lentz and Lowry, *Princely Vision*, pp. 259-262.

Turkish and Persian-speaking people that continued for centuries. However, Turkish literary works did not become widespread until the Timurid period. This new burgeoning literary language originated in the part of the Chinggisid Empire, the Ulus-Chaghatai, and although its creatures and contemporaries called it Turki, modern scholars name it Chaghataid Turkish⁸³².

Köprülü states that the literary language called Chaghatai Turkish is literary Eastern Turkish that developed under the influence of Islamic civilization after the Mongol conquests. According to him, it developed in the fourteenth century in Khwarazm and Qipchaq regions and then reached its most mature level in Transoxiana and Khurasan in the fifteenth century⁸³³. In fact, Köprülü argues that the field of Altin Orda, which completely Turkicized in the fourteenth century, was extremely influential in the formation and development of the Literary Chaghatai dialect⁸³⁴. Moreover, Caferoğlu states that Herat, which was the crossroads of Turco-Islamic countries, became a high cultural center during the Timurid period of the fifteenth century, and that the cultural elements that came here from different regions, after being painted in a new color and developed, were distributed to Turkic countries again⁸³⁵.

One of the significant aspects of the Timurid cultural revival, which culminated in the Herat court, was its bilingual -Turkish and Persian characters, which we can interpret as a result of Temür's Turco-Mongol and Perso-Islamic synthesis. And in this sense, the most remarkable personality of the period was Mir Alisher Nawai. Nawai, who was an intimate of Sultan Husayn and a representative of the Turco-Mongol military elite in the political developments of the period, played an important role in flourishing Turkish as a literary language. In addition to spending most of his wealth on the construction of public works and religious buildings, Nawai was also the

⁸³² M. Fuad Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, Ötüken Neşriyat, İstanbul, 1980, p. 275.

⁸³³ Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, p. 276, on the same subject, Ahmet Caferoğlu states that the Iranian poetry technique started to be applied to the Turkish language in the field of Khwarazm from the fourteenth century and it was developed in Samarqand and Herat in the fifteenth century. Ahmet Caferoğlu, *Türk Dili Tarihi*, vol. II, Enderun Kitabevi, İstanbul, 1984, p. 199.

⁸³⁴ Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, pp. 282-283,298-299, Caferoğlu, *Türk Dili Tarihi*, vol. II, p. 199.

⁸³⁵ Caferoğlu, *Türk Dili Tarihi*, vol. II, p. 211.

architect of the artistic splendor of Sultan Husayn's court.

Ali Sher's treatise on Turkish and Persian entitled "*Mukhakamatu'l-Lughatayn*" [Judgment of two Languages] reflected the new orientation of the Timurid Khurasan in the late fifteenth century. Ali Sher's treatise had two parts and the first of which was related to the superiority of Turkish over Persian other one contained an analysis of Ali Sher's own works. The main aim of Ali Sher in preparing such a work was not only to demonstrate the virtues of Turkish over Persian but also to reveal the cultural and ethnic preeminence of the Turks⁸³⁶ who were the members of the military elite of the Timurid dynasty. In his work Ali Sher stated;

*As is known that Turk is more intelligent, more perceptive and cleaner Herated than Sart (Persian) while Sart seems more refined, more rigorous in respect of science and more profound in respect of thought than Turk. It is also apparent from the honesty, purity, and favorableness of the Turks and from the sciences, arts, and philosophy of the Persians.*⁸³⁷

According to him speaking Persian among the Turks was more common than speaking Turkish among the Persians and it was an indicator of the clemency of the Turks⁸³⁸. Moreover Nawai asserted that Turkish surpassed the Persian in terms of wording and expression⁸³⁹ and accusing the Turkish youths who used Persian for writing poetry, of being unskillful and snob and of cutting corners⁸⁴⁰.

Furthermore, another point worth mentioning about the treatise of Nawai is the

⁸³⁶ Nawai narrated a story about the origins of the Turks, the Persians and the Indians which traced those nations' roots to the three sons of the Prophet of Noah; Yafath, Sam and Ham. Accordingly, Yafath was the ancestor of the Turks, Sam was the ancestor of the Persian and Ham was the ancestor of the Indians. Nawai asserted that according to general consent of the historians this Yafath had been the most superior and the most outstanding in respect of prophetic office among his brothers. Ali Şir Nevayi, *Muhakemetü'l-Lugateyn*, F. Sema Barutçu, p. 202.

⁸³⁷ Nawai, *Muhakama*, p. 203.

⁸³⁸ "The Turks, young and old alike and servant and lord alike, have their share of Persian language. Such that some of them can speak [Persian] in conformity with the conditions while some speak in the correct and good way. Moreover, although there are Turkish poets who create brilliant poems and beautiful statements, none of the Persians, from lower to upper classes, from illiterates to learned men, can speak and understand Turkish... There is no more striking witness for that the humanity was an innate characteristic of the Turks." Nawai, *Muhakama*, pp. 203-204.

⁸³⁹ Nawai, *Muhakama*, p. 203.

⁸⁴⁰ "Instead of their own language [Turkish], the creative people, poets and artists, emerged among this nation [Turkish], should not have shown their creativity and ability in other languages." Nawai, *Muhakama*, 213.

relation, he established between the history and the literary language. He regarded Turkish rulers, such as Toghril Beg of the Saljuqids, as Persian sultans, because of their use of Persian in writing poem. According to Nawai, the sovereignty period of the Turks had started with Hulaghu Khan, the grand-grandson of Chinggis Khan and from the time of Temür to the end of the period of Shahrukh's reign, the poets, composed poetry in Turkish language, emerged⁸⁴¹.

On the other hand, praising the endeavors made by Ali Sher Nawai for the resurrection of Turkish, Sultan Husayn Bayqara expressed, in his *Apologia*, the revival of Turkish as a literary language at his time as follows:

...but until today no one has clothed those virgins of meaning with a Turkish garb, and these musk-scented elegantes have remained veiled in their nakedness in the oblivion of poetical talent...until this auspicious time, when one of my vassals and servants, who has attained the grade of kükaltashliq (foster brotherhood) and accumulated a wealth of companionship through the path of loyal service...by whom I mean Mir Ali Sher, who is known by his nom de plume, Nawa'i, and in whose [melodious] poetry this nom de plume is implicit. He has infused life into the dead body of the Turkish language with his messianic breath. He has clothed those revived ones with embroidery and silks woven with a Turkic warp and woof⁸⁴².

The rapid revival of Turkish as a literary language, especially with the efforts of Nawai, and its spread among the ruling groups of the period, may be interpreted as the last Timurid ruler Sultan Husayn's effort to gain prestige by presenting himself as a leader of the Turco-Mongol military elite. It can also be interpreted as an attempt to develop an independent identity of Turkish-speaking elements in a Persian-dominated environment.

However, the great influences of Sultan Husayn and Nawai, who made Turkish a cultural and literary language that in no way lags behind Persian, with a fully conscious and planned effort, will show themselves in the centuries to come. The seeds that were sprinkled throughout the Turkic world during the period of Nawai will yield prosperous crops all around starting from the sixteenth century. Nawai's greatest achievement is that he has given Turkish a spiritual reputation not only among the

⁸⁴¹ Nawai, *Muhakama*, pp. 223-224.

⁸⁴² *Apologia*, in Thackston, *Century of Princes*, p. 376.

Timurids and among the Chaghatayids but also in all Turkish literary circles, from Kashghar to Kazan, Crimea, Tabriz, and Istanbul⁸⁴³.

The cultural tradition of Timurid Herat was continued during the period of the Shaybanids, who put an end to the Timurid rule, and the literary activities, carried out in the period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara were not interrupted. During the Shaybanid period, Turkish developed as both a literary and cultural language and prose and verse works were written⁸⁴⁴.

Another important representative of the Turkish literary language that emerged in this period was Babur, the founder of India's Timurid dynasty. His autobiography, Baburnama, which was written in Turkish, is very important in terms of revealing the intense impact of the socio-political and cultural transformation of the Timurid world on a Timurid prince. The fact that Babur wrote his memoirs in Turkish, not Persian, is an indication that the main audience he addressed was the Turco-Mongol military elite. This situation also reveals how much the aforementioned military elements still maintained their importance under the rule of Babur, who wanted to establish the Timurid rule in a different geography.

5.6. The Cultural Perception

The cultural and political reality of Timurid princes was developed in an atmosphere in which Perso-Islamic tradition was dominant and those princes who descended from a nomadic warlord achieved a high urban culture through the education they took. The Timurid political identity and vision manifested itself through dynastic patronage of arts and literary tradition. The adaptation of such a culture in the Iranian style which had been created by the notables of the Persian world and the adoption of its values demonstrates the Timurid shift from a nomadic shell, appreciated military accomplishment to a sedentary urban one which regarded the cultural achievements as the principle of the sovereignty. It was a purposeful cultural action, unique to the prosperous, cultivated, and civilized individual Timurid princes' courts

⁸⁴³ M. Fuad Köprülü, "Çağatay Edebiyatı", *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, İstanbul, 1945, v. III, p. 305.

⁸⁴⁴ Köprülü, "Çağatay Edebiyatı", pp. 308- 309.

for the expression of their sophistication and literateness. Such a cultural movement starting with Temür and then Shahrukh and his wife Gawharshad took its main supreme form under the reign of subsequent Timurid mirzas, grown in cultivated urban culture and governing regional independent rival courts. The existence of multiple political centers forced those Timurid princes to enter into rivalry to gain a reputation ensured through artistic and literal patronage.

Sultan Husayn Bayqara, the last Timurid ruler of Herat, rose to fame as a result of his glorious court. Although he had been a great commander in his youth, as Babur stated, with the acquisition of Herat he began living in the primrose path⁸⁴⁵. "He abandoned the toil and trouble of conquest and military leadership...For forty years he was king in Khurasan he did not pass a day without drink and lived with voluptuousness and immortal conduct."⁸⁴⁶

Sultan Husayn Bayqara and his numerous sons were not successful against the Uzbek armies. When Babur came to Herat after the death of Sultan Husayn even though he stated his great adoration for the sophisticated Timurid court culture, he was astonished by the inability, weakness, and negligence of Sultan Husayn's sons. Babur stated; "*although these mirzas were outstanding in the social graces, they were strangers to the reality of military command and the rough and tumble of battle.*"⁸⁴⁷ When those princes were prepared for the fight against the Uzbeks, the opposite side had been long increased in number and reached an irresistible power.

Temür had established a dynastic political legitimacy humbly; linking his lineage to that of Chinggis Khan had an essential part in creating legitimacy for himself and his descendants. His unquestionable military success also made it possible to aggrandize Temür's progenitors. Dawlatshah stated that "genealogists of the Turks say that Amir Temür Küragan's line and that of Chinggis Khanmet in Alan-Qoa Khatun...and from her sprang this noble family."⁸⁴⁸ The dynastic prestige, created and

⁸⁴⁵ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 343.

⁸⁴⁶ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 254.

⁸⁴⁷ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 392.

⁸⁴⁸ Dawlatshah, *Tadhkira*, in Thackston, *Century of Princes*, p. 15.

nourished by Temür himself proceeded after his death based on Temür's person. Under the reign of the Timurids Temür's person was exalted through a variety of histories. Khondmir, the historian of the Timurid period stated that "the Sahib-Qiran's person is so noble, his magnificence so great and his ambition so exalted that there is no necessity to recount his noble forefathers' excellence or to publish his mighty ancestors' virtues." Khondmir also traced Temür's lineage to the Mongol ancestor, Alan-Qoa, and to Yaphes, the son of Noah⁸⁴⁹. Thereby, just as in the case of Chinggis Khan, the lineage of Temür gained sacredness, and provided his descendants the right of sovereignty and prestige. The recognition of the political authority and dynastic legitimacy of the Timurids in a universal manner conducted opponent dynasties to establish a link between their dynasties and that of Temür, even after the Timurids had disappeared in Transoxiana and Khurasan. For example, during the rule of Shah Abbas of the Safavids (r.1588-1629) in Iran, as a result of the destruction of the Turkoman supremacy and the ascendancy of the ulama in the kingdom, the Safavid rulers had to make arrangements for their justification norms. They strengthened their political claims by utilizing the link between the Safavids and the Timurids by fabricating stories about the relations between Temür and the Safaviyya tariqa⁸⁵⁰.

In addition, by the fourteenth century, the Ottomans had begun to rise to power and assert their own political and legal claims by utilizing the religious ideology and various origin myths which manifested that the Ottoman dynasty had a charismatic genealogy. In the sixteenth century, however, the Ottoman historian and bureaucrat Mustafa Ali (1541-1600) mentioned the relatively powerful Chinggisid and Timurid authority⁸⁵¹. The way by which the Ottomans strengthened their political and genealogical claims indicates the general consent of the dynasty's lack of a charismatic lineage. Speaking of Sultan Bayezid's defeat by Temür at the battle of Ankara in 1402, Mustafa Ali stressed that the title of Sahib-Qiran (Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction)

⁸⁴⁹ Khondmir, *Habib*, p. 393.

⁸⁵⁰ According to story, Temür visited the tariqa in Ardabil where he was said to have foreseen the rise of the Safavid dynasty. Sholeh Quinn, *Historical Writing During the Reign of Shah Abbas I*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000, p. 89.

⁸⁵¹ Fleischer, *Mustafa Ali*, pp. 284-285.

Temür had received bestowed his authority a universal meaning and thus restored him a higher position than that of Bayezid. Nevertheless, Mustafa Ali dignified the Ottoman dynasty by describing them as they stemmed from the Timurid and Chinggisid line saying; "*the Timurid dynasty and Chinggisid House, those sharp-headed plunderers, have all been described in this volume, from the start of the story to its end; from this garden, like a moist blossom, bloomed those praiseworthy one who are the Ottoman House.*"⁸⁵²

On the other hand, in the Baburid Empire in India, Babur and his successors, from the beginning of the establishment of their empire, grounded and passed their imperial identity on the dynasty's Timurid lineage. They consciously acquired precious political advantage from their Timurid lineage and gained more dignity through maintaining the Timurid political and cultural institutions as a representative of the Timurid family. Emphasizing the Timurid political legacy occupied an important position in their legitimizing principles. Although the mother of the founder of the empire, Babur, was a daughter of a Mongol khan, the descendants of Temür in India never described themselves as Mughals, rather, including Babur, they identified themselves as Timurids. Even Babur emulated the lineage of Sultan Husayn Bayqara stating that Sultan Husayn was a grandson of Temür from both sides⁸⁵³. During their about two hundred and fifty years of rulership, the Baburids defined themselves as "Silsila-i Küragan" or "Gürganiyya" (the dynasty of the royal son-in-law), for their imperial dynasty in India. The Baburid rulers also adopted Temür's ceremonial title Sahib-Qiran as an imperial implication for invoking their progenitor from whom their political legitimacy derived.

In a word, in the competitive and fragmented world in the fifteenth century, after the death of Temür, the Timurid dynastic identity, and ruling ideology had become legitimizing and descriptive base for the subsequent Muslim dynasties in the Timurid political territory. In addition, the Timurid cultural and artistic patronage of historiography, miniature painting, architecture, calligraphy, etc. became a model for those dynasties who wanted to strengthen their political legitimacy as ruling dynasties.

⁸⁵² Fleischer, *Mustafa Ali*, p. 278.

⁸⁵³ Babur, *Baburnama*, p. 338.

Just as Temür had placed importance on writing history for legitimization his successors in Timurid territory also took a close interest in producing histories and chronicles as a dynastic identification. Timurid sponsorship of historians indicates that those writings had influences on the perception of Timurid elites fabricated meticulously legitimizing works, advocating, and promoting their right of personal and dynastic rule. All those writings had narratives, descriptions, and explanations addressed to Timurid cultural features, dynastic traditions, perceptions of political order, law, religion, and family.

Although the audience of those writings was not a large mass and was restricted by some boundaries such as literacy and language they were functional means for creating a public perception. The political use of artistic and literary works was a strategy that had been utilized by all Timurid generations. Each prince employed those works in local and traditional style in their pursuit of a dynastic identity that could confirm their dynasty's right to rule in an effectual style for the varied population of their realm. Timurid artistic and literary actions were invariably employed to reveal the devoutly significant imperial legitimacy of the Timurid dynasty.

Conclusion

After Temür, the Timurid princes, who could not provide the necessary legitimacy with military successes, based their prestige on cultural and artistic patronage. Thanks to the patronage of different segments of society, who have a serious income through the *soyurghals* in the political competitive environment, which was the natural result of the multi-centered structure created by the *ülüş* system.

Artistic and cultural production became a means of expression of the ideological orientations of the dynasty. The official histories of the Timurid princes emphasized that they were the legitimate rulers of both the Perso-Islamic world and the Timurid dynasty. Each Timurid mirza, belonging to a different branch of the dynasty, followed a patronage program according to the socio-political conditions of the regions they ruled.

One of the most distinctive features of this period was the emergence of Turkish as a literary language. Perhaps as a reaction to the policies carried out in favor

of Perso-Islamic urban culture, especially during the Shahrukh period, the number of literary works written in Turkish increased. The increase in the use of Turkish is important in terms of showing its target audience. This emphasis on Turkish, especially with the conscious efforts of the Nawai, enabled the ruling aristocracy to present itself as the Timurid ruler of the Turco-Mongol elements.

Although the Timurid political presence disappeared, the remaining cultural achievements were inherited both by the Uzbeks and by the Safavids who ruled the region after them. Artists who grew up in Timurid libraries migrated to Transoxiana, Iran, Turkey, and India and continued the Timurid cultural tradition in these regions.

CONCLUSION

The present study has tried to bring a new interpretation of the way political authority was perceived and exercised in the Timurid Empire by using Zeki Velidi Togan's discussion of the "ülüş system". Togan argued that in the Turco-Mongol political structure, the renewal of the state is an essential requirement of the ülüsh system. Since the country was divided among the members of the ruling family as their share (ülüsh-ulus) in the form of appanages, in four-six generations that is about 100-150 years, the shares got smaller and the powerful tribal leaders, whose service and support were vital for the candidates began to exercise de facto authority. In other words, Togan argued that all Turco-Mongol history presents periods that consist of the repetition of such a situation. The political struggles that emerged according to social and economic conditions resulted in an alteration of power between the khans and the begs. When the authority of khans or the begs deteriorated over time because of economic conditions, innovations occurred. According to Togan, the struggles between the Chinggisid khans and the noyans in the Mongol world ended with the defeat of the khans in the middle of the 14th century, but again with the victory of the khans at the beginning of the 16th century.

This thesis sought to bring a new interpretation of how political authority was perceived and exercised in the Timurid Empire, which formed the background of the cultural revival that emerged during the reign of Timurid's successors and peaked during the reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. To understand this perception of sovereignty in the empire established by Temür, who created a strong political dominance in Central Asia and Iran and established an effective model for the policies that followed, is possible by considering a multi-faceted process. For this purpose, in this study, the key elements of two political traditions –Turco-Mongol and Perso-Islamic- that had a great influence on the formation of the ideologies that played a role in both the formation process and the ongoing functioning of the Timurid political system were analyzed and the administration and management systems established by the Timurids in the regions under their rule were examined.

In this context, the period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara presents a suitable case

for understanding the forms of sovereignty, historically shaped by ideologic tensions between the Timurid dynasty and the Turco-Mongol military elite, on the one hand, and by the ethnic, cultural, and social tensions between the nomadic Turco-Mongol and settled urban Perso-Islamic elements on the other. By eliminating the power of the military aristocracy in different political structures that emerged at a time when Chinggisid authority was on the decline, Temür created his charisma by using Chinggisid and Perso-Islamic legitimacy ideology. The ideology he put forward was reinterpreted by his successors, the Turco-Mongol military aristocracy and the settled Iranian elements.

The Perso-Islamic ruling tradition that Timur used while creating her ideology took its origins from the developments after the emergence of Islam. With the conquest of the Sassanid Empire by Muslim Arab armies in the 7th century, Iranian elements became a part of the Islamic Ummah. The Perso-Islamic tradition, which emerged as a result of the interaction of the Islamic state tradition with the ancient Persian culture, was later adopted by the Turkish-Mongolian policies that dominated this region. With the Abbasid revolution, which took place largely with the support of the Iranian mawali, the Persian influence made itself feel more effective in the Islamic world. The transfer of the new dynasty's capital from Damascus to the newly founded Baghdad caused the ancient Sassanid imperial tradition to be re-established in this new capital.

Supported by the Khurasan armies in the first period of their rule, the Abbasids began to form their armies from Turkish slaves, especially from the time of the caliph al-Mutasim in the 830s. However, these Muslim military slaves, who took over the top ranks in the army over time, emerged as caliph-makers, especially during periods when succession was controversial. Especially since the second half of the ninth century, the real power in the Islamic world gradually began to pass into the hands of local rulers. The caliphate was not de facto abolished but the caliphs were used by these local rulers as a means of legitimizing their rule. In this period, when the power of the Abbasid caliphate began to decline, independent local dynasties began to emerge in many parts of the Islamic world; Persian-origin Tahirids, Saffarids, Samanids, and Buyids were replaced by Turkic-origin Qarakhanids, Ghaznawids, and Saljuqids, who emerged as the new powers in the Islamic world.

Two centuries after the Arab conquests, this period when independent policies

emerged in various parts of the Islamic world was also a process in which political ideology was transformed by these new elements. During the period of Iranian dynasties, a model consisting of a mixture of ancient Sassanid, Islamic, and Central Asian elements and used by their successors, Turkic origin dynasties, was put forward in terms of the administrative and ruling ideology. This period also witnessed the emergence of the new Persian literary language. Especially under the patronage of the Samanid rulers, valuable works were written in Persian in the field of poetry and prose. However, even though the Ghaznavids were of Turkic origin, the great Iranian writer Firdawsi wrote his *Shahnama*, perhaps one of the greatest works of Persian culture, during their rule. The Ghaznavid period also witnessed the writing of important Persian works in the field of historiography.

As for the Turkic-origin dynasties, although their administration was based on that of the Samanids, the elements of Turco-Mongol nomadic culture they brought from Central Asian steppes had a great influence on the ruling ideology. First of all, the Turco-Mongol steppe nomads, who were organized into tribes, regarded sovereignty, bestowed by Tenggri (Heaven) as the property of the ruling family. In this context, the conquered lands were divided among family members as *ülüş* (share). It allowed each member of the ruling family to claim sovereignty and ultimately caused conflicts among them. On the other hand, those dynasties, who were the heirs of this system that emerged from the reality of the nomadic steppe world, needed different administrative tools when they became rulers of settled and urbanized regions. The existing Persian bureaucracy met their need. Many practices of the Perso-Islamic tradition, of which they were a part, began to be adopted during the period of the Qarakhanids and Ghaznavids. It is possible to see the traces of the adaptation process of the nomadic Turks to the settled urban life in the work named *Qutadgu Bilig*, which was written in Turkish by Yusuf Has Hajib during the Qarakhanid period. Apart from its contributions to the political culture of the period, the flourishing process of the Turkic culture and language, whose seeds were planted with *Qutadgu Bilig* in the Qarakhanid period, would reach its peak at the end of the fifteenth century as a result of the conscious activities of Ali Sher Nawai.

The process of adaptation to the Perso-Islamic administrative tradition, which started in the Karakhanid and Ghaznavid periods, took its final form in the Saljuqid

period. In particular, the central administrative system was institutionalized in the Persian model, as the famous Iranian vizier of the Seljuqids, Nizamulmulk, embodied in his famous work, *Siyasatnama*, the Book of Government. Representing one of the most important examples of the tradition of mirrors for princes, this work was a product of pre-Islamic Persian political tradition amalgamated with Islamic one. Although the Saljuqids seized power in settled areas and the central power remained consistent during the reigns of the first three sultans, the members of the Saljuqid dynasty as a typical nomadic family claimed their ancestral heritage following the principle of the power-sharing (*ülüş*). It of course eventually caused the state to disintegrate.

By the thirteenth century, the steppes of Central Asia witnessed the rise of a new political power. The scattered nomadic Mongolian tribes in northern Asia were gathered under the authority of a leader named Temujin, the future Chinggis Khan. Temujin, who put an end to the power of the aristocratic dynasties that dominated the Central Asian steppes, was declared khan by the Mongol nobles in 1206 and officially established the great Mongolian state, which will write its name in world history.

In 1219, Chinggis Khan and his accompanying Turco-Mongol army began their conquest of Islamic lands. As a result of these conquests that lasted until 1221, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran came under the Mongol rule and the Mongols became the infidel rulers of the settled Islamic world. After Chinggis Khan died in 1227, the conquests continued during the period of his successors, and in 1258, when the Hulagu attacked Baghdad and ended the Abbasid caliphate, a new era of political ideology began in the Islamic world.

While Chinggis Khan was establishing his central empire, he radically changed the traditional understanding of authority by breaking the power of aristocratic clans in the Central Asian steppes. The biggest change he created in the dominant ideology was related to the source of legitimate authority. Attributing his power to divine authority, Chinggis broke the power of the ruling tribal leaders and chose his main supporters from among those who had served him faithfully when he attained power, unlike the steppe leaders before him, who based their support on their relatives.

In the ideology he created, the source of power was himself, and the source of both social and political status was not lineage but loyalty to Chinggis. The claim that

Tenggri had chosen Chinggis as ruler justified his elimination of the aristocratic tribal leaders and centralizing power in his own hands. His relationship with his followers and commanders (nökör and noyan) was purely personal and far from hereditary. In this interdependent relationship, the prestige and status of the nökörs were based on their loyalty and service to the khan.

In the political world established by Chinggis Khan, the members of the Chinggisid dynasty believed that the universal rulership right over the whole world was bestowed upon them by the Tenggri. Chinggis Khan registered this situation with his successful military expeditions and his successors continued this ideology with new conquests. Transforming from a war leader chosen by his relatives to a universal ruler by claiming the Heaven mandate, Chinggis limited the sovereignty with the share (ülüş) he distributed among his sons. This ruling family, known as Altan Urugh, monopolized the right of sovereignty until almost the twentieth century.

Chinggis Khan owed his political success to personal relationships with his loyal followers that went beyond traditional kinship ties. This was accomplished by reorganizing the nomadic tribesmen into decimal units to break up their kinship groupings and create new social and military units that would be more loyal to him. The decimal system was not an invention of Chinggis Khan, but until the period of Chinggis, these units were arranged according to tribal lines and led by the tribal leaders. But now, the old aristocratic households were broken up and distributed into these decimal units. Moreover, over these units, Chinggis appointed commanders (noyan (sing.)/noyad (pl.)) directly loyal to Chinggis himself. Therefore, in this system, identities were shaped according to these units, and the loyalty of individuals was not to the tribal leader as in the past, but to the commander appointed by Chinggis. Chinggis also maintained control of this chain of command by establishing a bodyguard corps (keshiq), whose core was formed by his most loyal followers.

Members of the keshiq institution, the cornerstone of the Chinggisid political system, were raised in the household of Chinggis and developed personal relations with the khan. The status of the keshiq members, who were raised for high positions in the bureaucratic structure, was determined by their loyalty to the khan. It created non-kinship supporters, replacing the kinship groups that had been the main supporters of previous khans of Central Asia. The political system created by Chinggis Khan

formed a model for the Turco-Mongol policies that emerged after him.

However, by the thirteenth century, the central policy created by Chinggis Khan had begun to crack due to the ensuing succession struggles. The lack of a determined rule for succession caused many princes from different branches of the Chinggisid dynasty to claim sovereignty by referring to Divine Mandate. Although they also claimed that they had the right to sovereignty through their appanages, the fact that only one of them could exercise authority as a ruler caused competition and rivalry among these princes. Moreover, the increase in the number of the Chinggisid princes and the insufficiency of resources to share fueled the struggles for power and property. These bloody succession struggles among the Chinggisid princes eventually led to the fragmentation of the Chinggisid Empire into four de facto independent khanates: Yuan Empire in China, Ilkhanate in Iran, Chaghatai Khanate in Transoxiana and Jochi Khanate in the western steppes.

Another important result of these power struggles in the political world of Chinggis was that the Chinggisid princes needed reliable military support to be successful against their opponents, increasing the importance of the great noyans who could provide them with this support. Thus, noyans became even stronger by obtaining many privileges in return for the support they provided in these succession struggles. Thus, the great amirs (noyans) who eventually seized de facto power became khan-makers and began using the Chinggisid princes as puppets to legitimize their power and demonstrate their loyalty to Chinggisid law (jasaq).

After the disintegration of the Chinggisid political world, the rulers who came to power in its lands tried to resist the restrictions caused by the Chinggisid legitimacy by some ideological means. Since the members of the Turco-Mongol military elite who were not from the Chinggisid dynasty could not directly maintain power in their names, they appeared to accept the validity of the dominant ideology by presenting themselves as guardians of the Chinggisid legacy. To this end, they played the role of defenders of yasaq, marrying Chinggisid princesses and taking the title of küregen (son-in-law), and reigning in the name of Chinggisid puppet khans.

On the other hand, some of the non-Chinggisid rulers who seized power in different parts of the Chinggisid realm drew on their pre-Chinggisid historical legacies to create their ideologies in response to the Chinggisid model. For example, the rulers

of the Ottoman, the Aqqoyunlu, and the Qaraqoyunlu policies established in Anatolia and Azerbaijan tried to break away from the Chinggisid tradition by linking their genealogy not with Chinggis Khan, but with Oghuz Qaghan, the mythical leader of the pre-Chinggisid Turks.

Here, Timur emerged as a regional power in such a period when Chinggis' universal empire declined and new political formations emerged. Temür rose to power within a nomadic confederation whose Turco-Mongolian tribes formed the core of his army. When he began his career in 1360, the Mongol Khanates were already fragmented and powerful amirs were controlling the affairs through puppet khans. That is, the period of Temür was one in which Chinggisids lost power while the tribal leader assumed power in the place of Mongol Khans.

Temür started his political career in a chaotic period of the Chaghatai Khanate which had been divided into two parts Transoxiana and Moghulistan. The society of the eastern part, Moghulistan, was mainly composed of the traditional Mongol nomadic elements and ruled by Chaghataiid khans, while the population of the western part, Transoxiana, was settled, urban, predominantly Muslim and ruled by the powerful amirs who had seized the supreme power through puppet khans.

Temür first obtained the leadership of his tribe, Barlas, by attracting personal followers just as the *nökers* of Chinggis Khan. After eliminating his political rivals with the help of those strong supporters Temür became the *de facto* leader of Transoxiana and claimed to revive the Mongol Empire. Like Chinggis, Temür reorganized the Chaghataiid patrimony and transformed a tribal society into an army of conquest by putting the hereditary troops of tribes under the rule of his family members and following, loyal to him. Thus, he created new military units and instituted an effective chain of command. In this way, the power of the tribal aristocracy was eliminated and the loyalties of the former tribesmen were channelized to his person. However, Temür avoid the risk that his new elite would establish centers of power and have political ambitions by directing this manpower to the war of conquest. Temür, who spent the remaining thirty-five years of his life in exceptional military campaigns, owed all these successes to the military power provided by the Turco-Mongol tribes of Chaghatai Khanate in Transoxiana.

Although creating an invincible army of conquest under the leadership of

commanders who were personally close to him, Temür confronted some ideological restrictions created by political traditions throughout his dominions. First of all, he operated in the political system created by Chinggis Khan in the twelfth century and had to comply with the requirements of the existing socio-political structure in his time. Instead of ignoring the political culture and forms of the legitimacy of the existing system in which he would act, Temür preferred to take advantage of it. Chinggisid legitimacy, which continued in Central Asia influentially, both helped and hindered Temür in coming to power and establishing his legitimacy. The main obstacle for Temür was his lack of Chinggisid lineage. According to traditions of the Turco-Mongol nomadic world, sovereignty was monopolized by the Chinggisids. Thus, Temür could not adopt the title of khan and claim supreme power for himself. He tried to express his response to the challenges posed by the Chinggisid legacy through a series of ideological methods such as an arrangement of marriages with Chinggisid princesses for himself and his sons, ruling in the name of a Chinggisid puppet khan, portraying himself as a protector and upholder of Chinggisid legacy, elaboration of genealogy to show that he had a common ancestor with Chinggis. Such practices were important in terms of providing legitimacy to the rule of Temür, especially among the Turco-Mongol nomads whose military support was crucial to him.

Conformity with Chinggisid political heritage enabled Temür to mobilize and receive the support of Turco-Mongol nomads throughout his career. Since it would have been difficult to ignore the claims of the Chinggisids, Temür used key elements of Chinggisid legitimacy to secure the loyal service of Turco-Mongol tribes until he elevated the status of his dynasty similar to the Chinggisids. Once he consolidated his power he and his descendants could claim to rule in their own right. The Chinggisid legacy served as a model for his ultimate goals.

Apart from Chinggisid legitimacy Temür also used alternative legitimacy bases which Islam could provide. After the assassination of the caliph in 1258 and the abolition of the de facto power of the Abbasid caliphate, the Islamic ideology, which lost its importance but revived to some extent with the conversions of the Chinggisid Khans, who ruled in Islamic lands, started to be used again in this period. The Islamic ideology became a strong alternative for those who could not cope with the Chinggisid ideology. Manipulating Islamic legitimacy became almost essential as Temür's

military campaigns expanded to Islamic territories. Moreover, legitimating his rule with Islamic symbols and practices served to increase his dynasty's charisma. While Temür embellished his rule and military campaigns with an Islamic aspect through religious figures, he again put forward the model of Islamic legitimacy in his struggle with the Chinggisid khans.

Timur, as a part of his Islamic ideology, also benefitted some Sufi movements that began to spread in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries with the interruption of central power in Mongolian lands and were patronized by Islamized Mongol khans. The increase in the popularity of these Sufi movements, in which not only Sunni but also Shiite traditions are dominant, encouraged the post-Mongol rulers to seek support from these groups. Thus, Sufi shaykhs, who were patronized by the rulers in return for both worldly and religious legitimacy, gained great power both socially and politically in a short time.

While Temür presented himself as a good Muslim ruler, protector, and defender of Islam, he patronized religious figures such as ulema, sufi shaykhs, and sayyids and was also busy with the construction of religious buildings like tombs, madrasa, and mosques to gain public support. Shaykh Ahmad Yasawi, Shamsuddin Kulal, Naqshbandi shaykh, and Mir Sayyid Baraka were prominent figures that Temür made use of while constructing his religious identity. Temür's patronage of religious figures increased both his own and the dynasty's charisma, while at the same time establishing a ground for Islamic patronage in the period of his successors. Utilizing multiple bases of legitimacy provided flexibility to Temür's actions, and freed him from dependence on the support of any group.

Temür's career set a model both ideologically and practically for the following non-Chinggisid rulers for their claims of sovereignty. Although Chinggisid legitimacy remained important, Temür's experiences inspired creative and functional solutions to the constraints of the Chinggisid legacy. Temür's charisma, like Chinggis's, had a significant impact on the idea of legitimacy.

After Temür died in 1405, the Timurid domain witnessed multifaceted struggles for succession in which not only his descendants but also his great amirs took part. The struggles for political power among the Timurid military elites that emerged after Temür's death were another result of the political structure created by Temür.

Following the Turco-Mongol inheritance system, Temür partitioned his territories among his sons and grandson, each was assigned an appanage to govern while he was alive just as Chinggis Khan had done. Although Temür made his offspring governors of new provinces and assigned his followers to the command of regional armies, he did not lose his control over those areas completely and did not allow these princes to create independent centers of power. The Timurid princes did not have full authority in those regions and they ruled them in the name of the central government.

Although the distribution of the territories during Temür's lifetime did not directly result in the decentralization of the empire, right after his death, the centrifugal tendencies which were returns of the *ülüş* system made it difficult to maintain the unity of the empire for Temür's successors. During his lifetime Temür had uncontested power and did not allow any appanage holder to form independent centers of power. Temür's highly centralized power had prevented the Timurid princes from forming a strong base to compete for power. In addition, the absence of a defined system to regulate the succession to the throne made the struggle after Temür death especially long and destructive. As a result of the uncertainty of the political relationship between the main actors, different interpretations of the Timurid political system emerged.

Moreover, just like in the fourteenth century Chinggis world, the Turco-Mongol amirs, who would provide reliable military support to the Timurid mirzas who wanted to gain victory against their rivals, were also included in this struggle for the throne, further intensifying the competition. The Timurid princes viewed the sovereignty and its benefits as their hereditary right while the members of the military elites, that is great amirs of Temür who had been appointed as commanders from amongst his most loyal followers desired to maintain the status which they had acquired under Temür's rule. The tension between the Timurids and their Turco-Mongol amirs protracted from the power struggles.

Although the Timurid princes enjoyed their monopoly of sovereignty and legitimacy, this monopoly was shared by other relatives who became their rivals for power. And the princes had to attract large numbers of loyal followers to their service to succeed against their rivals. Thus, the support of great amirs and their descendants and followers became crucial for candidates for sovereignty.

On the other hand, amirs acknowledged the monopoly of the Timurids, but they felt free to give support to any of the eligible Timurids. Thus, after Temür's death, it was a period in which there were many Timurid candidates, therefore, many options for the great amirs. As many candidates for the throne needed their help and support, the amirs, whose importance and power increased, demanded the continuation of such a situation.

In such an intensely competitive environment, as the outward military campaigns yielded charming booty, in Temür's time turned inward, the only means at the hand of the Timurid princes to attract the support of Turco-Mongol military elites was their appanages. Thus, the princes used land grants called *soyurghals* and various other forms of exemption and immunity to attract and maintain the support of the military elite. Temür's successors who tried to consolidate their position and strengthen their hands against their Timurid rivals began to distribute their hereditary lands. They allocated *soyurghals* not only to the members of the Turco-Mongol military elite but also to representatives of the sedentary Iranian elements, especially to religious figures to gain their support.

Thus, beginning from the period of Shahrukh who emerged victorious after four years of succession struggles, Temür's successors distributed the Timurid lands to their supporters. The *soyurghals* were exempt from taxes and free from judicial and administrative interference of the central government. Consequently, the decentralized structure strengthened and thus numerous regional political centers emerged. Such a process that witnessed the sharing of economic resources and political decentralization paved way for cultural and artistic florescence which was called by western scholars as "Timurid Renaissance".

The Timurid world of the fifteenth century witnessed ideological transformations as well as a political ones. After Temür's death, his youngest son Shahrukh achieved supremacy in the succession struggle and moved the center of the Timurid administration from Samarqand to Herat, and left his son Ulugh Beg as governor of Samarqand. From this period the distinct characteristics of these two regions had considerable influence on the interpretation of the Timurid political ideology in each area.

The claims of the Timurids to be the protector of Islam were most clearly put

forward during the Shahrukh period. Shahrukh tried to justify his rule by using Temür's charismatic authority on the one hand and Islamic ideology on the other. During his reign, Shahrukh adopted traditional Islamic legitimacy, used the title of padshah-i Islam, and officially declared that he abandoned the Turco-Mongol customary law (Jasagh). Moreover, Shahrukh did not need a Chinggisid puppet khan in whose name he would reign and did not use the title of kúregen despite he was married to a Chinggisid princess. But it did not mean replacing Sharia with Jasagh and Shahrukh's Sharia-minded policy did not cause a deviation from the Turco-Mongol political tradition. This situation was the result of Temür's effort to elevate his own family to a royal dynasty similar to the status of the Chinggisids. The political legitimacy that Temür brought to his dynasty freed Shahrukh from the necessity of using Chinggisid legitimacy symbols in his capital, Herat.

Utilized Turco-Mongol traditions to buttress his legitimacy by appointing a Chinggisid puppet khan and like his grandfather, Temür, adopting the title of kúraghan in his capital, Samarqand. As a result of such attempts, Ulugh Beg became unpopular in the eyes of conservative Muslims, especially the members of the Naqshbandi order whose influence increased in Transoxiana during the fifteenth century. The succession struggles emerged after the death of Shahrukh in 1447 Ulugh Beg was murdered by his rebellious son, 'Abdu'l-Latif in 1449. He was a cultured and scientific prince who had intellectual interests. Ulugh Beg's period was famous for its cultural and scientific achievements, especially in astronomy.

After Ulugh Beg's death, from the succession struggle Sultan Abu Sa'id, the grand-grandson of Temür's son Miranshah emerged as the winner. He occupied Herat with the support of the religious authorities of Bukhara and the military aid of Jochid Abulkhayr Khan in Moghulistan. With his assumption of sovereignty, a new ruling branch of Temür began to rule the empire: The Miranshahids replaced the Shahrukhids.

Although Sultan Abu Sa'id came to power with the support of a Chinggisid Khan, he abandoned appointing a Chinggisid puppet khan and assumed sovereignty in his name. But it did not mean that the Chinggisid legitimating authority was completely ignored by Sultan Abu Sa'id. He arranged marriages with the Chinggisid princess for his sons and himself and adopted the title of kúraghan. However, Sultan

Abu Sa'id attempted to fill the void created by his direct assumption of sovereignty with Islam-based support from the representative of the Naqshbandi order and the ulama of Transoxiana. This perhaps established a ground for his next step. In 1457 Sultan Abu Sa'id occupied Khurasan, eliminated the Shahrukhids, and transferred his capital from Samarqand to Herat. Transoxiana was apportioned among his sons.

One of the important aspects of Sultan Abu Sa'id's period was his granting political and economic influence to the Naqshbandi Sufis through the patronage of Khwaja Ubaydullah Ahrar. After Abu Sa'id died in 1469, during his sons' rule in Transoxiana Ahrar's power and prestige increased even more.

In the period of Abu Sa'id Mirza (1451-1469), the social and economic decentralized structure was strengthened, land grants such as soyurgal increased, and the representatives of local and urban life, especially Khwaja Ubaydullah Ahrar, began to play an important role in the economic and political life of the Timurid Transoxiana.

After the death of Sultan Abu Sa'id, Sultan Husayn Bayqara, descended from Temür's son Umar Shaykh, seized control of Khurasan. Thus, the existing ruling branch of the dynasty was displaced. During his reign, the Timurids were content to concentrate on their cultural life. As a result of the contention with his rebellion sons and other Timurid princes, Sultan Husayn could not extent his power beyond Khurasan. The continuous attacks from the Uzbeks in the east and that of the Aqqoyunlu Confederation in the West, caused the Timurid sovereignty to be limited to Khurasan and Transoxiana.

After consolidating his power Sultan Husayn Bayqara transformed his capital Herat into the most outstanding cultural and artistic center of the time. Because of the relatively peaceful political atmosphere and thus the economic situation during the period of Sultan Husayn enabled Herat to become the attraction center for artists, scholars, literati, illustrators, and poets.

The Timurid world of the fifteenth century witnessed a competitive political climate. It was the process of decentralization and then the disintegration of the extensive central empire created by Temür. It was shaped by succession struggles and cultural competitions among various Timurid mirzas who came from different branches of the Timurid dynasty and by the switching allegiance of their Turco-Mongol military elite. The main underlying reason for such developments was the

principle of *ülüş* (power-sharing) which imposed that all members of the ruling dynasty had the right to claim political sovereignty.

In such an intense competition environment, as the number of mirzas in the Timurid Empire increased, for being successful, the mirzas required attracting a great number of loyal followers to their service. Yet, they were destitute of opportunities to promising them charming booty as Chinggis Khan or Temür had done. The main means at the hand of Timurid mirzas for gaining the support of Turco-Mongol military elites was their hereditary possessions. Thus, those mirzas used land grants called *soyurghals* and various other forms of exemption and immunity to gain and maintain the military elite.

After his death, Temür's successors who were in need to consolidate their position and strengthen their hands against other rival Timurid mirzas began to distribute their hereditary lands. They granted *soyurghals* not only to the members of the Turco-Mongol military elite to maintain their allegiance but also to representatives of the sedentary Iranian elements of Timurid society, especially to religious classes to gain their support. Thus, beginning from the time of Shahrukh, Temür's successors such as Ulugh Beg, Abu'l-Qasim Babur, Sultan Abu Sa'id and Sultan Husayn Bayqara distributed lands to their supporters. As has been mentioned those *soyurghals* had a full exemption from taxation and were free from judicial and administrative interference of the central government. Consequently, the decentralized structure strengthened and thus numerous regional politic centers emerged. Such a process that witnessed the sharing of economic resources and political and economic decentralization paved the way for cultural and artistic florescence.

As we have mentioned before, during Temür's reign he brought a great number of artists, scholars, scientists, and poets from every part of the Islamic world by force to his capital city Samarqand, and those people gave from Timurid artistic and intellectual life in many aspects. When he was appointed to the government of Transoxiana, Ulugh Beg emancipated Temür's hostage artisans and craftsmen in 1411. Those artisans dispersed throughout the Timurid territories and were patronized by various Timurid princes. With the liberal polity followed by Shahrukh, the empire became decentralized increasingly, and as regional governors, each rival court of Timurid princes became power stations competing for artistic patronage. The main

reason lied behind such an artistic and intellectual ambition was the desire for political independence. By the way of patronizing artistic and intellectual works, those mirzas aimed at achieving their imperial ideologies. Each ruling Timurid mirza from different branches of the dynasty pursued a patronage program consonant with the requirements of the socio-political conditions of the time and their regions. Along with efforts for embracing the sedentary culture of Timurid territory, those Timurid mirzas also made attempts to legitimize the certain branch of the dynasty to which they belonged through ideological discourses. In particular, historical writings had an ideological function that put the Timurid dynasty in a proper place among successive dynasties of the past and then give specific Timurid branch prominence among others.

Contrary to Temür's centralized rule, in the decentralized atmosphere of his successors' periods, the powerful Turco-Mongol amirs, the members of the leading Turco-Mongol tribes who were granted *soyurghals* in exchange for their military service began to engage in the patronage of architectural, cultural and artistic activities.

The period of Sultan Husayn Bayqara was the peak point of such activities. During his reign, the *soyurghal* grants and other sorts of tax immunities and privileges were not only limited with high ranking amirs from Turco-Mongol military elite but also contained ulama and other regional elements. Khondmir stated that Sultan Husayn was not negligent in respecting sayyids, ulama, learned men (*fuzala*), and poets and he always ordered that their desires be bestowed and this precious group be granted *soyurghals* and favors (*soyurghalat va in'amat*). During his reign, the pious endowments and the number of those land grants and other immunities and privileges reached such a degree, as Khondmir noted, that Sultan Husayn had to appoint two or three persons as comptroller (*post of sadr*) since one person could not manage them all.

By the end of the fifteenth century, the institution of *soyurghal* encapsulated almost all lands of Khurasan and its vicinities. Consequently, by that time the decentralized economic structure and policy strengthened and the Timurid ruling elite in Khurasan began to transform into regional governors. Those figures, whose income became considerable enough as a consequence of such immunities, began to patronize building projects, and cultural and artistic activities such as poetry, miniature painting, book production, and metalwork. At this point, they were not only the members of the

Turco-Mongol military elite who were the owner of *soyurghals* through hereditary but also the other Turco-Mongol elements who were not members of the chief Turco-Mongol tribes but who had risen to the rank of amir. Apart from them, the Iranian sedentary elements of administration, viziers in particular, and the representatives of the religious classes were also recipients of *soyurghals*.

As it is seen, with the succession struggles, that emerged after Temür's death, various Timurid mirzas each of whom, according to Turco-Mongolian tradition, had an equal claim on the throne, started to use land grants to buy the support of tribal elites. Although such *soyurghal* grants were used as a political tool by those mirzas, they also paved the way for a decentralization process. While Temür's political model had always focused on centralization and Temür always kept the Timurid mirzas under his control, after his death his successors who needed the support of military elites, were forced to share their political power with their amirs. Since those mirzas had not an adequate political power to prevent the amirs from becoming too powerful, the *soyurghal* land grants consequently turned into a means for transferring political power to the amirs. Apart from Turco-Mongolian military elites the representatives of Iranian sedentary elements became involved in the process. And even during the reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara with the amirs, Sufis and the ulama, the poets and literati began to be the owner of *soyurghal*. Thus, the political power of the elements who were not members of the ruling house began to acquire power at the expense of the Timurid mirzas. While this situation caused a decentralized political atmosphere, it also established a ground for great artistic and literal flourishing.

In the multi-centered Timurid world in the fifteenth century, the political authority was based less on military prowess and more on princely accomplishment for gathering the most outstanding artists, poets, craftsmen, and literati on his court. The florescence of such a unique artistic movement, created by political factors, characterized the imperial identity of the Timurids and sustained their prestige and honor for centuries. How Temür utilized the projects of monumental construction and historiography for creating a public image of power, his descendants also benefitted from such constructional fashion and artistic motifs by refining and adapting them to current regional political and social values to develop a comprehensible, adequate, and convincing image; "exalted Timurid sovereignty."

As a result of bringing different groups and cultures together in the lands that Temür conquered, the nomadic steppe culture came into intense contact with the refined settled urban culture of Central Asia and Iran. This interaction created a culturally new language for the Timurids to express their claim to sovereignty, their religious devotion, and their achievements. Although Temür could not bequeath his military successes to his successors, the artistic developments that started in his court provided the necessary atmosphere for his sons and grandchildren after his death to express their ideology and the images they tried to create accordingly. The political, economic, and social conditions that emerged after Timur's death changed the orientation of the dynasty, and the resulting decentralized environment was also a driving force for cultural flowering. The glorious artistic and cultural patronage, conducted during the period of Temür and his descendants became a model for cultural activities in many parts of the Islamic world, from Ottoman Turkey⁸⁵⁴ to Baburid India.

Temür gathered talented craftsmen and artists from the regions he conquered in his capital, Samarqand, and patronized many poets, literators, painters, and architects in his court. He used both architecture to create his image and books to legitimize his rule. He particularly used historiography to establish himself as the legitimate successor to the former rulers of the Perso-Islamic world. The cultural activities that Temür attempted to add grandeur to his image continued to flourish in the period of his successors.

After Temür died in 1405, Shahrukh, who became the new ruler of Khurasan and Transoxiana, ruled Timurid Empire as an Islamic sultan, not as a conqueror, unlike his father. During his reign, Timurid cultural achievements reached a high-level thanks to the patronage of him, his wife his sons, Ulugh Beg in Samarqand, Baysunghur Mirza in Herat and Ibrahim Mirza in Shiraz, and other Timurid mirzas from other branches of the dynasty such as Iskandar Sultan bin Umar Shaykh Mirza bin Temür. These figures, with numerous works attributed to them, were the main architects of the Timurid artistic revival. In keeping with the religious image adopted during his reign, Shahrukh and his wife, Gawharshad, initiated a serious program of architectural patronage, ensuring the construction of numerous mausoleums, mosques, and

⁸⁵⁴ Yüksel, "Beyin Göçü", pp. 295-297.

madrasas. As a result of the political, religious, and economic policies he followed, Shahrukh created an atmosphere in which cultural activities were patronized in Khurasan. His reign, with the efforts of his sons, was a period of cultural revival, in which numerous manuscripts were copied, illustrated, and binded under the supervision of talented artists.

Shahrukh's sons, appointed by their father as rulers of different regions of the Timurid Empire, turning their courts into cultural centers, competed for the prominent artists and poets of the period who could provide prestige. The cultural prestige that the Timurid mirzas sought not only gave them power and authority but also legitimized their rule in Iranian lands. The most important expression of the legitimacy they based on Islamic principles was architecture and literature. These cultural patronage activities, directly linked to Timurid ideology, encouraged the princes to compete for artists who could create works that would earn them a high reputation while creating new standards for artistic production. This cultural development found its final expression in the court of Sultan Husain Bayqara, the last effective ruler of the Timurids.

Despite the political collapse in the Timurid world of this period, the Timurid Herat remained an important economic and commercial center until the end of the fifteenth century. Both the agricultural productivity and the vitality of commercial activities provided a serious financial resource to the elite of the period. The lands bestowed as *soyurghal* extended the boundaries of patronage, causing the decentralization of economic power along with political power. Especially needing the support of not only the Turkic military elite but also the settled Iranian people, Shahrukh deployed *soyurghals* to consolidate his political power. During the reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id, besides the Timurid family members and the Turkic military elite, large lands were granted to prominent religious figures. During the reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, the boundaries of land grants expanded to include sayyids, religious scholars, literati, and poets. Thus, by the end of the century, a large part of the Timurid lands was converted to *soyurghals*.

The lands that were divided as shares as a result of the notion of *ülüş* caused the disintegration of the political authority, but this situation also paved the way for artistic and literary patronage. The Timurid mirzas, who could not convince the Turco-

Mongol military elite with the promise of booty, that they could get military support against their rivals in the power struggles that emerged with the decline of the Timurid political power, tried to obtain this support through tax-exempt *soyurghal* lands. The elite group, which increased their wealth with the *soyurghals* and other economic privileges they obtained, expanded and patronized cultural activities. Sultan Husayn Bayqara and members of his court brought the artistic revival that started in the time of Temür to its peak by patronizing the artists, poets, and scientists of the period. Apart from the notables of the court, the Turkic military elite and the Tajiks who were the representative of the settled Iranians also joined the patron circle of the period thanks to the economic privileges they had.

Artists brought together from different geographies of the Islamic world contributed to the claim that their patrons were the legal rulers of the Perso-Islamic world with their artistic works in which the new ideological needs of the dynasty were expressed in a cultural sense. Although the Persian literary and artistic heritage was decisive in the works produced in the aforementioned period, the Turkish language began to be used in literary works, taking the Persian language as a model, as a result of the efforts of Ali Shir Nevai during the reign of Husayn Bayqara.

The desire of the Timurids to legitimize their rule was most expressed in architecture and historiography. Alongside Islamic art, they used historiography to place their dynasty in the context of Islamic history. The *Zafarnama* written by Nizamu'd-Din Shami during Temür's time formed the basis of the dynasty's official rule. Official histories of the Timurid mirzas were written to increase the prestige of their patrons, on the one hand, and to emphasize that he was the legitimate ruler of the dynasty by associating him with Temür on the other. Although the *Zafarnama*, written by Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi during the reign of Shahrukh, was largely based on the book of Shami, its content, especially the chapters on the history of Temür, was reinterpreted under the Islamic-based reign of Shahrukh. While Shahrukh was introduced as mujaddid in the book of Yazdi, there was no mention of the Chinggisid khans under whose name Temür ruled.

During the period of sultan Husayn Bayqara, the reproduced versions of both *Zafarnamas* were changed following the requirements of the period. These were changes that claimed Sultan Husayn to be Temür's legitimate heir. It also increased the

emphasis on the connection with Temür, who had become a source of legitimacy for his successors after his death, in the genealogies of the history books.

Another means of linking the current rule in the Husayn Bayqara period with the glorious past of the Timurid period was the Turkish language. Turkish literary works were created with the conscious efforts of Ali Shir Nawai, perhaps as a reaction to the fact that Persian became the official language as a result of the policies carried out in favor of Perso-Islamic urban culture, especially during the Shahrukh period. The increase in the use of Turkish is also important in terms of showing the target audience of the period. This emphasis on Turkish and the encouragement of the use of Turkish in this period indicate that the ruling aristocracy wanted to present itself as the Timurid ruler who was the leader of the Turco-Mongol elements.

On the other hand, the Timurid nobles, who used cultural patronage as the leading expression of power, with artistic productions shaped within the framework of the relationship they established with the subjects they ruled, put forward a royal model that could not be ignored for the policies established after them. However, after Temür's death, the efforts of the Timurid mirzas to gain support through the *soyurghals* distributed and to provide their legitimacy with cultural prestige rather than military successes caused the central authority to be shaken and the central treasury to be emptied in the long run. Husayn Bayqara's financial reforms using Iranian viziers were opposed by groups that benefited from this decentralized environment. And finally, the cultural achievements, which were replaced by the military successes that formed the basis of the Timurid state, could not ensure the continuation of the Timurid rule.

Although Temür owed his authority to his military successes through the nomadic aristocracy that supported him, he ruled a settled world. Being in close contact with nomadic and settled cultures enabled the Timurid institutions to be transformed by this interaction. Since those who came to power after him did not have the military genius of Temür, the efforts to establish a central authority were inconclusive, mostly due to the rebellions initiated by the military elite.

In this period, the both political and economic multicentered structure that emerged due to the concept of *ülüş* forced the Timurid Sultans to rely on diversified legitimacy tools. While creating their dynastic ideologies, the Timurid sultans tried to harmonize the Turco-Mongol political and cultural elements they brought from the

past with the political and cultural elements of the settled element that was dominant in the regions they ruled. In this sense, they tried to create a political legitimacy that included the multifaceted structure of the medieval eastern Islamic world and appealed to different levels.

The reproduction of texts such as the *Shahnama*, which includes the authority figures of pre-Islamic Persian history, and the equipping and even the depiction of the Timurid sultans with the characteristics of these figures in Timurid historiography, appear as a result of the interaction of the long-term nomadic Turkish-Mongol political ideology with the Iranian-Islamic understanding. Various understandings of legitimacy created by the competitive environment of the fifteenth-century Timurid world, and especially the actions aimed at supporting political sovereignty with spiritual authority, were also a result of the aforementioned process. Important religious, political, and ethnic support groups on the political scene during this period were also reflections of the versatility of the Timurid ideological program.

On the other hand, poetry, literary works, miniatures, and various works of art produced under the patronage of different elements of the society, who had a serious income thanks to the competitive environment that was the natural return of the multicentered structure, enabled the cities under the rule of Timurid administrators to become literary and artistic warehouses.

Cultural success became a tool to increase the political legitimacy of the Timurid mirzas, who could not provide the necessary legitimacy ground through military successes due to the cessation of military expeditions after Temür. The patronage system led by Ali Sher Nawai became the culmination of the artistic revival that western scholars call the Timurid renaissance during the reign of Husayn Bayqara.

The Empire, which lacked the political, military, and financial infrastructure to ensure the continuation of the Timurid authority, was defenseless against the attacks of the fully equipped Uzbeks in the military sense. Timurid lands were seized in 1506 by Uzbek armies led by Shaybani Khan. Although the Timurid traditions disappeared politically, the cultural elements they left behind were inherited by both the Uzbeks and the Safavids who dominated the region after them. Artists trained in Timurid libraries migrated to Maveraunnahr, Iran, Turkey, and India and continued the Timurid cultural tradition in these regions.

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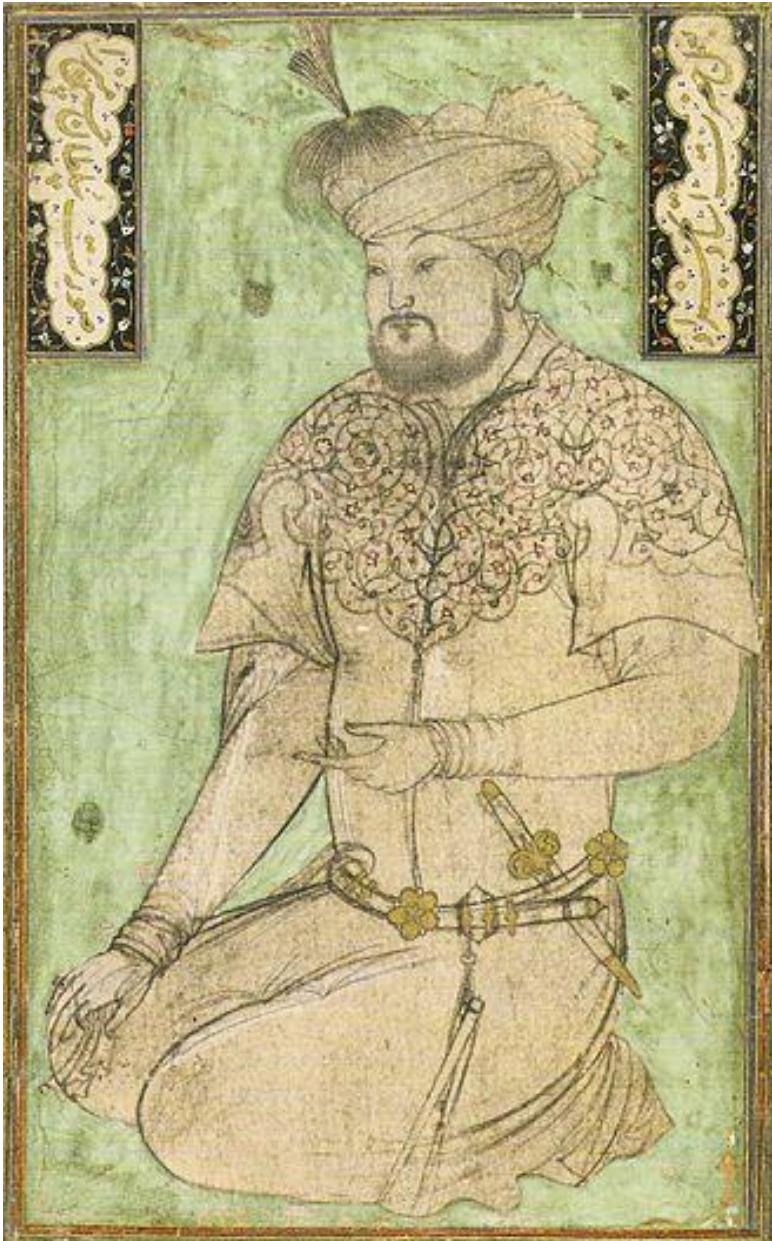
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APPENDICES

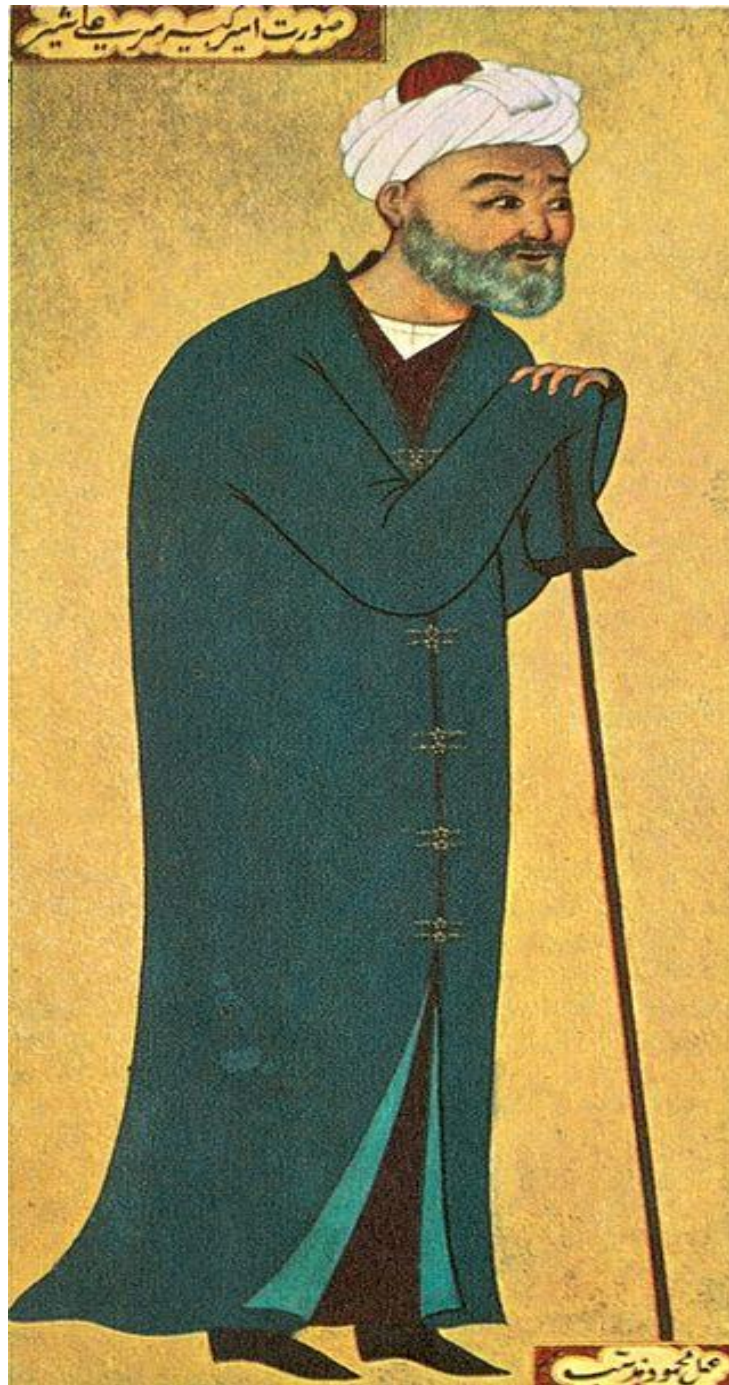
APPENDIX 1

Fig. 1. Portrait of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, painted by Behzad.



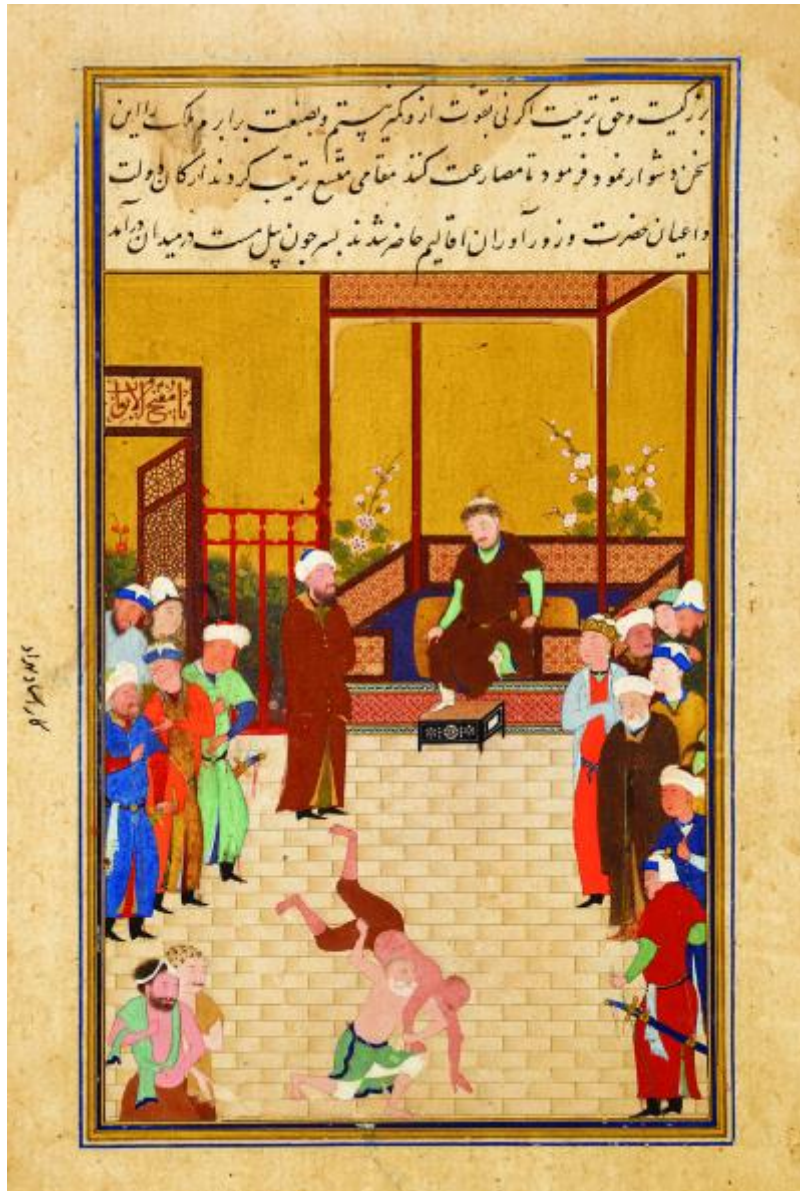
APPENDIX 2

Fig. 2. Portrait of Ali Sher Nawai



APPENDIX 3

Fig. 3. Sultan Husayn Court



APPENDIX 4

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Erdoğan, Özden
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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	Ankara University	2000
BS	Ankara University	2003

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2017-Present	Atatürk University Department of History	Research Assistant
2002 - 2017	METU Department of History	Research Assistant

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English (Advanced), Persian (Advanced), Arabic (Pre-Intermediate)

APPENDIX 5

TURKISH SUMMARY

Genel olarak siyasi parçalanmanın, kültürel gelişmenin önünde bir engel olduğu ve kültürel gelişmenin siyasi istikrar dönemlerine denk geldiği düşünülmektedir. Ancak bunun pek de doğru olmadığı söylenebilir. Bunun en çarpıcı örneklerinden biri, Batılı bilim adamlarının⁸⁵⁵ “Timurlu Rönesansı” olarak adlandırdığı 15. yüzyıl Timurlu dönemidir. Bu dönem, İslam dünyasının kültür tarihinin sanatsal ve edebi başarılarına sahne olduğu en parlak dönemlerinden biridir. Timurlu siyasasının bu istisnai kültürel gelişmesi, Timur’un merkezileşmiş imparatorluğunun dağılmasının bir sonucu olarak oldukça çekişmeli bir atmosferde gerçekleşmiştir.

Timurlu dünyasının on beşinci yüzyılı, bir takım Timurlu mirzaları (prensleri) arasında ölümcül mücadelelere tanık olmuştur. Göçebe fatih Timur’un ölümünden sonra onun soyundan gelenler, onun Orta Asya, İran ve Afganistan'daki fetihlerinin kontrolü için mücadele etmeye başlamışlardır. Hanedan içi mücadeleler dışında Timurlu mirzaları, batıda Türkmen Karakoyunlu ve Akkoyunlu hanedanlarının, kuzeyde göçebe Özbeklerin ve doğuda Moğolların baskısına maruz kaldılar. Bu iç ve dış çatışmaların bir sonucu olarak, Timur’un merkezi imparatorluğu küçük siyasi merkezlere bölündü ve böylece güç için birbirleriyle rekabet eden mirza sarayları ortaya çıktı. Farklı siyasi merkezler arasındaki bu rekabetin bir sonucu olarak Timurlu imajını ortaya koyan kültürel ve sanatsal bir canlanma meydana geldi.

Aslında, Timur’un ölümünden sonra ortaya çıkan ve “veraset mücadelesi” olarak adlandırılan tüm bu çekişmeler, Timur'un merkeziyetçi yönetiminin ortaya çıkardığı tepkileri ve Türk-Moğol unsurlarının Maveraünnehir ve Horasan'ın bölgesel ve yerleşik hayatının siyasi ve kültürel unsurlarına entegrasyon sürecinin yarattığı çelişkileri ve sorunları yansıtmaktadır. Yani 15. yüzyıl Timurlu dünyası, göçebe bozkır

⁸⁵⁵ Rene Grousset, “The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia”, Naomi Walford (Trans from the French), Rutgers University Press. 1970; Roemer, Hans Robert. “The Successors of Timur”, in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. VI: The Timurid and Safavid Periods, ed. P. Jackson & L. Lockhart, Cambridge University Press 1986, p. 142.

teşekkülünün siyasi fikir, algı ve değerlerinin tarımsal ve kentsel dünyanın unsurlarına adapte olduğu ve eklemlediği bir bölgeydi. Bu çalışmanın amaçlarından biri de bu entegrasyon sürecini ve bunun yapısal ve kültürel geçişlerini analiz etmektir. Bu uyumlanma sürecinin sonucunda ortaya çıkan tüm çelişkiler ve sorunlar, Timur'un merkeziyetçi yönetimi altında ortaya çıkmazken, onun ölümüyle birlikte bu süreç devam etmiş ve yeni bir biçim kazanmıştır. Ancak bu kez bu süreç ademi merkezi bir yol izlemiş ve yeni sosyal, kültürel ve ekonomik unsurlar yaratmıştır.

Bu çalışma, Zeki Velidi Togan'ın "ülüş sistemi" tartışmasından⁸⁵⁶ yararlanarak Timurlu Devleti'nde siyasi otoritenin algılanışına ve uygulanışına yeni bir yorum getirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Üleş kavramı, köklerini bozkır göçebeleri arasındaki köklü bir miras uygulamasından alır. Türk-Moğol toplumlarındaki geleneksel miras prensibine göre, baba mülkiyeti oğullar arasında bölünmektedir. Yaşça büyük olan oğullara babaları hayattayken erişkinliğe ulaştıklarında payları verilirken *otchigin* adı verilen en küçük oğul babasının ölümü sonrasında kalan malı alır. Bu, en küçük oğulun her şeyi aldığı manasına gelmez. Temelde baba ocağı kendisine kalır.

Aile mirası meselesi bu şekilde düzenlenmişken söz konusu aile hanedan olduğunda mirasa konu olan baba malı ele geçirilen ülke topraklarıdır. Ele geçirilen bu topraklar hanedanın ortak malı olarak kabul edilir ve hanedan üyeleri arasında bölünür. Appanage sistemi olarak bilinen bu uygulama Türk-Moğol siyasalarının tarihi boyunca sabit kalmıştır. Bu durumun en önemli açmazı hanedana ait toprakların üyeler arasında paylaşılması bir normken siyasi gücün mirasın bir parçası olarak görülmeyip mücadeleye dayandırılmasıdır. Egemen hanedandan gelen taht adayları teoride hâkimiyet üzerinde hak sahibi olarak görülürler. Pratikte de kendilerine verilen topraklar üzerinden siyasi hâkimiyet iddiasında bulunurlar. Sahip oldukları bu ortak haklar nedeniyle tahta geçmede belirli bir kural oluşmamıştır. Elbette böyle bir uygulama Türk-Moğol devlet geleneğindeki egemenliğin doğası ve kökeni konusundaki algısından da kaynaklanır. İslam öncesi bozkır imparatorluklarında hanlık ile ilgili en önemli inançlardan birisi de onu yüce hükümdar yapan kabile beylerinin hanın hâkimiyetinin Tanrı tarafından verildiğine dair inançlarıdır. Tanrının onayıyla hükümdar olduğu fikri hükümdarın soyuna da tanrısal ve karimzatik bir

⁸⁵⁶ Zeki Velidi TOGAN, *Umumi Türk Tarihine Giriş*, 2. Baskı, İstanbul: Enderun, 1970, p. 296.

nitelik kazandırmaktadır. Dolayısıyla hükümdar ailesinin her bir ferdi fiilen hükümdar olmasalar da hakimiyette hak sahibi olarak görülürler. Resmen ifade edilmese de tahta kimin geçeceği adaylar arasındaki rekabetle belirlenmektedir. Bir veraset yasaının gelişmemiş olması nedeniyle hanedanın hanlık üzerinde hak iddia etme hakkına sahip olan her bir üyesi kardeşi, oğlu, amcası, kuzeni vs. gibi bir akraba grubuna karşı mücadele etmek zorunda kalır. Bu şekilde kanlı taht mücadeleleri Türk-Moğol siyasaları için standart hale gelmiştir. Hanedan üyelerinden kim daha çok takipçi kazanıp taht mücadelesinde başarı elde ederse hükümdar o olur. Askeri başarı Tanrının seçiminin ve desteğinin bir göstergesi kabul edildiğinden mücadelede galip çıkıp tahta geçen hanedan üyesi meşru hükümdar olarak kabul görür. Kut inancına göre hükümdarlık yetkisi hana Tanrı tarafından bir bağış olarak verilir. Taht mücadelesinde zafer kazanmış aday Tanrının onayını almış sayılır. Ve onun soyu da bu kutsallığa dâhil edilir. Buradaki en önemli problem kimin nasıl belirleneceğidir⁸⁵⁷.

Togan, Türk-Moğol siyasi yapısında, devletin yenilenmesinin üleş sisteminin temel gereği olduğunu savunur. Ona göre, ülke, yönetici aile üyeleri arasında pay (üleş-ulus) olarak dört-altı kuşak yani yaklaşık 100-150 yıl içinde sürekli bölüşürüldüğü için paylar küçülür ve hizmet ve destekleri taht adayları için hayati öneme sahip olan kabile beyleri fiili otoriteyi ele geçirmeye başlarlar. Togan, tüm Türk-Moğol tarihinin böyle bir olgunun tekrarından oluşan dönemler gösterdiğini ileri sürmüştür. Sosyal ve ekonomik şartlara göre ortaya çıkan siyasi mücadeleler, hanlar ve beyler arasında güç değişimine neden olmuştur. Hanların ya da beylerin otoritesi ekonomik şartlar nedeniyle zamanla bozulunca yenilenme meydana gelir. Togan'a göre Moğol dünyasında Çinggisli hanları ile noyanlar arasındaki mücadeleler 14. yüzyılın ortalarında hanların yenilgisiyle, ancak 16. yüzyılın başlarında da hanların zaferiyle sona ermiştir. İşte Timur'un ortaya çıkışı, hanların karşısında kabile beylerinin güç kazandığı bir siyasi atmosferde meydana gelmiştir. Bu nedenle Türk-Moğol göçebe bozkır ve İran-İslam siyasi gelenekleri⁸⁵⁸ üzerine yapılacak bir analiz,

⁸⁵⁷ Joseph Fletcher, "Bloody Tanistry: Authority and Succession in the Ottoman, Indian Muslim, and Later Chinese Empires," a paper presented at the Conference on the Theory of Democracy and Popular Participation, Bellagio, Italy, in 1978; Halil İnalcık, "The Ottoman Succession and Its Relation to the Turkish Concept of Sovereignty" in *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire*, Bloomington: Indiana University, Turkish Studies and Turkish Ministry of Culture Joint Series vol.9, 1993; pp. 13, 17.

bu siyasi atmosferi anlamamız için bize yararlı bir çerçeve sağlayabilir. 14. ve 15. yüzyıllarda Türk-Moğol bozkır siyasi idealleri ve unsurları üzerine yapılacak olan bir tartışma, Timurlu devlet oluşumunun arkasındaki dinamikleri incelemek için bir fikir verebilir. Ayrıca, İran-İslam siyasi modeli, kurumları ve meşruiyet ilkeleriyle ilgili analitik bir gözlem, Timur'un ardıllarının 15. yüzyıldaki siyasi dayanaklarının açığa çıkarılmasına yardımcı olacaktır.

15. yüzyıl Orta Asya'sı, bir bölgeselleşme sürecine tanık olmuştur. Bu dönemde Çinggis Han'ın evrensel imparatorluğu parçalanmış ve yerini yeni siyasi oluşumlar ve gruplaşmalar almıştır. Bu yeni siyasalar bölgesel veya yerel karaktere sahip olmuştur. Tüm bu gelişmelerin köklerini on üçüncü yüzyıl Çinggisli dünyasında bulmak mümkündür. On üçüncü yüzyılın ilk yarısında Çinggis Han, Çin'den Akdeniz'e kadar uzanan bir imparatorluk kurmuş ve Çinggisli siyasası bu dünyanın coğrafi ve kültürel görüntüsünü değiştirerek Çin'den İran'a ve Doğu Avrupa'ya kadar uzanan göçebe bozkır ve yerleşik bölgeleri tek çatı altında toplamıştır. Çinggisli siyasası ile göçerler ve yerleşikler dünyası arasında derin bir kaynaşma ve karşılıklı etkileşim yaşanmış, coğrafi ve yaşam tarzına ilişkin farklılıklar esnekleşmiştir. Çinggisli İmparatorluğu'nun Orta Asya'da yarattığı en büyük geçiş, siyasi-kültürel alanda gerçekleşmiş ve ortaya çıkan bu yeni siyasal kültür modeli önceki algıları büyük oranda dönüşüme uğratmıştır.

Kişisel karizması ve başarılı askeri liderliğiyle Cengiz Han, geleneksel kabile sadakatlerini değiştirmiş⁸⁵⁹, Türk-Moğol savaşçılarının geleneksel gruplaşmaları

⁸⁵⁸ Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002; Abdullah Saeed, *Islamic Thought: An Introduction*, New York, 2007; Frederick S. Starr, *The Lost Enlightenment: Central Asia's Golden Age from the Arab Conquest to Tamerlane*, Princeton / Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013; N. J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, Edinburgh University Press, 1964; G.

R. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate Ad 661-750*, London: Routledge, 1986; Matthew S. Gordon, *The Rise of Islam*, Greenwood Publishing Group, U.S.A., 2005; Jonathan P. Berkey, *Formation of Islam: Religion and the Society in the Near East, 600-1800*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003; Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *Venture of Islam; The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods*, vol. 2, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1974; Roy P. Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980; Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004.

⁸⁵⁹ Bozkır göçebe sosyo-politik örgütlenmeleri için bakınız: Thomas Barfield. "The Shadow Empires: Imperial State Formation along the Chinese – Nomad Frontier," Susan E. Alcock et al., *Empires: Perspective from Archaeology and History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001; Thomas Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, Cambridge: Mass., B. Blackwell, 1989; Thomas Barfield, *The Nomadic*

yerine ondalık birimler şeklinde örgütlenmiş bir fetih ordusu kurarak bir ordu-devlet sistemi yaratmıştır⁸⁶⁰. Yasa, (*jasag*) İsenbike Togan'ın “*detribalization*”⁸⁶¹ olarak kavramsallaştırdığı bu sistemin kurallarını oluşturmuş ve “hanlık” yani egemenlik hakkı yalnızca Çinggis hanedanının üyelerine verilmiştir⁸⁶².

Çinggisli siyasi sisteminin (devlet modelinin) Orta Asya'nın yerleşik ve bozkır bölgelerinde gelişmesi ve yerleşmesinde bir başka adım da Çinggis Han'ın ordu-devletini oğulları arasında dört farklı ulus (ülüş) olarak bölüştürmesi olmuştur⁸⁶³.

Alternative, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1993; Peter B. Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples: Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia and the Middle East*, Otto Harrassowitz, 1992; Nikolay N. Kradin, “Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia”, in *Complexity of Interaction along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE*; Vfgarchpress: Bonn, Germany, 2015; Mahmut Arslan, *Step İmparatorluklarında Sosyal ve Siyasi Yapı*,

İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1984; Anatoly M. Khazanov, *Nomads And The Outside World*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994; Nikolay N. Kradin, “Nomads”, in *The Encyclopedia of Empire*, 2016; Vladimir N. Basilov, *Introduction to Nomads of Eurasia*, Los Angeles, California: 89. Natural History of Museum of Los Angeles Country, February-April 1989; R. Paul Lindner, “What was a Nomadic Tribe?”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 24, no. 4, Oct., 1982; Denis Sinor, “The Establishment and Dissolution of the Türk Empire”, *Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 1990; Nicola Di Cosmo, “Aristocratic Elites in the Xiongnu Empire as Seen From Historical and Archaeological Evidence”, *Nomad Aristocrats in a World of Empires* (Von Jurgen Paul Ed.), Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2013; Joseph Fletcher, “The Mongols: Ecological and Social Perspectives”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 1, Jun., 1986; Joseph Fletcher, “Turco-Mongolian Monarchic Tradition in the Ottoman Empire.” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Eucharisterion, Essays Presented to Omeljan Pritsak on his Sixtieth by his Colleagues and Students, Edited by Ihor Sevc, Frank E. Sysyn, 3-4, 1979/1980; Barfield, Thomas. “Tribe and State Relations: The Inner Asian Perspective”, *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, edited by Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner, 153-185. London, New York: E.B. Tauris, 1991.

⁸⁶⁰ Peter B. Golden, “‘I will give the people unto thee’: The Cinggisid Conquests and Their Aftermath in the Turkic World”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2000; İsenbike Togan, *Flexibility and Limitations in Steppe Formations; The Kerait Khanete and Chinggis Khan*, Leiden: Brill, 1998; Igor Rachewiltz, “Some Remarks on the Ideological Foundation of Chinggis Khan’s Empire,” in *Papers on Far Eastern History*, 7 March 1973; David Morgan, *The Mongols*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986; İsenbike Togan, “Evolution of the Four Ulus and the History of the Four Ulus Ascribed to Ulugh Beg,” in *Civilizations of Nomadic and Sedentary Peoples of Central Asia*, ed. Kadicha Tashbaeva, Samarkand: Bishkek, 2005; Peter Jackson, “From Ulus to Khanate: The Making of the Mongol States c. 1220-c. 1290”, *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, Reuven Amitai-Preiss, David O. Morgan (eds.), Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000; Michal Biran, *Chinggis Khan, Makers of the Muslim World Series*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2007.

⁸⁶¹ İsenbike Togan, “Retribalization in the Fourteenth Century: Flexibility and Limitation in a Steppe Formation”, International Seminar on the Unesco Program “*Interaction Between Nomadic and Sedentary Cultures on the Silk Road*”, Alma ata, Kazakh SSR, June 15-16, 1991.

⁸⁶² Abdullah Gündoğdu, Türkiye ve Türk Dünyası tarih Bilincinde Cengiz ve Halefleri Algısı, in *Cengiz Han ve Mirası*, ed. Doç. Dr. Cem Korkut, Dr. Mürsel Doğrul, Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi, Ankara 2021.

Çinggis Han'ın dört ulus şeklinde paylaştırılmış olan imparatorluğu, büyük fatihin ölümünden sonra, 13. yüzyılın ortalarından itibaren ardı ardına gelen taht mücadeleleri nedeniyle parçalanmaya başlamıştır. Veraset konusunda belirli bir kuralın olmaması, Çinggis hanedanının farklı kollarından çok sayıda prensin Tanrısal yetkiye (qut) atıfta bulunarak egemenlik iddiasında bulunmasına neden olmuştur. Her ne kadar sahip oldukları topraklar üzerinden egemenlik üzerinde hak sahibi olduklarını iddia etseler de, içlerinden sadece birinin hükümdar olarak yetki sahibi olabilmesi bu Çinggisli prensler arasındaki çekişme ve rekabete yol açmıştır. Ayrıca, Çinggisli prenslerin sayılarının artmış olmasına karşın paylaşılacak olan ekonomik kaynakların yetersizliği, iktidar mücadelelerini daha da körüklemiştir. Çinggisli prensler arasındaki bu kanlı veraset mücadeleleri, en sonunda Çinggisli İmparatorluğu'nun fiili olarak dört bağımsız hanlığa (Ulus) bölünmesine yol açmıştır: Çin'de Yu-an Hanedanı, İran'da İlhanlılar, Maveraünnehir'de Çağatay Hanlığı ve batı bozkırlarında Joçi Hanlığı.

Çinggisli siyasi dünyasındaki bu güç mücadelelerinin bir diğer önemli sonucu da Çinggisli prenslerin rakiplerine karşı başarılı olabilmeleri için güvenilir askeri desteğe ihtiyaç duymaları ve bu desteği sağlayabilecek büyük noyanların öneminin artmasıdır. Noyanlar, bu veraset mücadelelerinde verdikleri destek karşılığında pek çok imtiyaz elde ederek güçlerini artırmışlardır. Böylece, sonunda fiili iktidarı ele geçiren büyük emirler (noyanlar) han yapıcılar haline gelmişler ve Çinggisli hanları, hem iktidarlarını meşrulaştırmak ve hem de Çinggis kanunlarına (jasaq) sadakatlerini göstermek için kukla olarak kullanmaya başlamışlardır. Çinggis hanedanına mensup olmayan bu Türk-Moğol askeri seçkinleri doğrudan kendi adlarına iktidarda kalamayacakları için kendilerini Çinggis mirasının koruyucusu olarak sunup hakim ideolojinin geçerliliğini kabul ediyor gibi görünmüşlerdir. Bu amaçla Çinggisli prenseslerle yaptıkları evlilikler yoluyla küregen (damat) unvanını alıp Çinggisli kukla hanlar adına hüküm sürerek Yasak'ın savunucuları rolünü oynamışlardır⁸⁶⁴.

⁸⁶³ Thomas Allsen, "Sharing Out the Empire: Apportioned Land Under the Mongols", *Nomads in the Sedentary World*, ed. Anatoly M. Khazanov and André Wink, Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2001; Peter Jackson, "From Ulus to Khanate: The Making of the Mongol States c. 1220-c. 1290", in *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, Reuven Amitai-Preiss, David O. Morgan (eds.), Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000.

⁸⁶⁴ Timothy May, *The Mongol Empire*, The Edinburgh History of the Islamic Empires Series, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2018.

İşte Temür, Çinggis'in evrensel imparatorluğunun dağıldığı ve yeni siyasi oluşumların ortaya çıktığı bir dönemde bölgesel bir güç olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Siyasi kariyerine Maveräünnehir ve Moğolistan olarak ikiye ayrılmış Çağatay Hanlığı'nın kaotik bir döneminde başlayan Temür 1360 yılında iktidara geldiğinde, Moğol Hanlıkları zaten parçalanmışlar ve güçlü emirler (Noyan) kukla hanlar aracılığıyla idareyi ele geçirmişlerdir. Bu dönem, Çinggislilerin gücünü kaybettiği, Moğol hanları yerine kabile beylerinin iktidara geldiği bir dönemdir.

Kendisi Çinggisli olmayan ama Çinggisli egemenlik hakkına meydan okuyan Timurr, göçebe ve yerleşik dünyanın sınırında bulunan, yerleşik ve şehirli yaşamın güçlü olduğu Maveräünnehir'de Çinggisli devlet modelini gerçekleştirmiştir. Çinggis Han gibi Temür de Çağatay mirasını yeniden düzenlemiş, kabilelerin kalıtsal birliklerini kendi aile üyelerinin ve ona sadık kumandanlarının yönetimi altına alarak kabile toplumundan bir fetih ordusu yaratmıştır. Bu bağlamda yeni askeri birlikler oluşturulmuş ve etkin bir emir-komuta zinciri meydana getirilmiştir. Böylece, kabile aristokrasisinin gücü tasfiye edilmiş ve eski kabile üyelerinin sadakatleri kabile beylerinden Timur'un şahsına aktarılmıştır. Bununla birlikte Timur, bu kalabalık insan gücünü fetih savaşlarına yönlendirerek, yeni askeri seçkinlerin siyasi hırslarıyla farklı güç merkezleri oluşturması riskini de bertaraf etmiştir. Ömrünün geri kalan otuz beş yılını olağanüstü askeri seferlerde geçiren Temür, bütün bu başarılarını Çağatay Hanlığı'nın Maveräünnehir'deki Türk-Moğol kabilelerinin sağladığı askeri güce borçludur⁸⁶⁵.

Öte yanda, Temür, bizzat kendisine bağlı ve sadık komutanların önderliğinde yenilmez bir fetih ordusu oluşturmakla birlikte, hâkim olduğu her yerde mevcut siyasi geleneklerin yarattığı bazı ideolojik kısıtlamalarla karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Herşeyden önce Çinggis Han'ın yarattığı siyasi sistem içinde faaliyet göstermiş ve zamanının mevcut sosyo-politik yapısının gereklerine boyun eğmek zorunda kalmıştır. Temür, içinde hareket edeceği mevcut sistemin siyasi kültürünü ve meşruiyet biçimlerini göz ardı etmek yerine, onlardan yararlanmayı tercih etmiştir. Yerleşik ve bozkır siyasi ve kültürel yaşam tarzını, merkeziyetçi bir şemsiye altında birleştiren ve kurduğu siyasi sistemde hem yerleşik hem de göçebe kökenden farklı kesimlere yer vermiş olan

⁸⁶⁵ Beatrice F. Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989; Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane*, trans. J.H. Saunders, London, 1936.

Timurr, izlediği politikalar açısından toplumun farklı kesimlerinden destek alarak meşruiyet sorununu çözmeye çalışmış ve kendi siyasi modelini bu şekilde tesis etmiştir.

Orta Asya'da etkin bir şekilde devam eden Çinggisli meşruiyeti, Timur'un iktidara gelmesine ve kendi meşruiyetini kurmasına hem yardımcı hem de engel olmuştur. Timur'un önündeki en büyük engel Cengiz soyundan olmamasıdır⁸⁶⁶ çünkü, Türk-Moğol göçebe dünyasının geleneklerine göre, egemenlik Çinggislilerin tekelindedir. Bu nedenle Timurr, han unvanını alamamış ve kendisi adına üstün egemenlik iddiasında bulunamamıştır. Çinggisli mirasının yarattığı meydan okumalarına yanıtını, kendisi ve oğulları için Çinggisli prenseslerle evlilikler düzenleyerek küregen (damat) olmak, Çinggisli kukla bir hanın adına hüküm sürmek, kendisini Çinggis mirasının bir hamisi ve koruyucusu olarak göstermek gibi bir dizi ideolojik yöntemle ifade etmeye çalışmıştır⁸⁶⁷. Bu tür uygulamalar, özellikle askeri desteği kendisi için çok önemli olan Türk-Moğol göçebeleri arasında Temür yönetimine meşruiyet sağlaması açısından önemli olmuştur. Temür, kendi hanedanının statüsünü Çinggislilere benzer bir hale getirene kadar Türk-Moğol kabilelerinin sadık hizmetini güvence altına almak için Çinggisli meşruiyetinin temel unsurlarını kullanmak zorunda kalmıştır⁸⁶⁸.

Çinggisli meşruiyetinin yanı sıra Temür, İslam'ın sağlayabileceği alternatif meşruiyet temellerinden de istifade etmiştir. 1258 yılında Moğol fetihleriyle halifeliğin fiili gücünün ortadan kaldırılmasından sonra İslam topraklarında hüküm sürmeye başlayan Çinggisli Hanların din değiştirmeleri ile önem kazanan İslam ideolojisi, idaresi altındaki toplumun çoğunluğunun Müslümanlardan oluşmasından dolayı Temür için siyasi egemenliğini pekiştirmede önemli bir araç haline gelmiştir.

⁸⁶⁶ John E. Woods, "Timur's Genealogy," in *Intellectual Studies on Islam*, ed. by M.M. Mazzaoui and V.B. Moreen, Salt Lake City, 1990.

⁸⁶⁷ Beatrice Manz, "Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty", *Iranian Studies*, vol. XXI, no: 1-2, 1988; Beatrice F. Manz, "Temür and the Problem of a Conqueror's Legacy", *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd Series, 1 April, 1998; Sheila Blair, "Timurid Signs of Sovereignty", *Oriente Moderno*, Nuova serie, Anno 15 (76), La Civiltà Timuride Come Fenomeno Internazionale, vol. 2 n.s. 15, Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente C. A. Nallino, 1996.

⁸⁶⁸ Shami, *Zafarnama*, ed. F. Tauer, 2 vols., Prague, 1937-1956; Yazdi, Sharaf al-Din, *Zafarnama*. 2 vols. Edited by Mu ammad 'Abbasi. Tehran: Mu'assasa-yi Matbu'at-i Amir Kabir, 1336 H.sh./1956-57.

Temür, bir yandan yönetimini ve askeri seferlerini hem ideolojik söylemlerle hem de dini figürler aracılığıyla İslami bir renge büründürürken, Çinggisli hanlarla yaptığı mücadelelerde de yine İslami meşruiyet modeline dayanmıştır. Temür, kendisini iyi bir Müslüman hükümdar, İslam'ın koruyucusu ve savunucusu olarak sunarken, ulema, mutasavvıf şeyhleri, seyitler gibi dini şahsiyetleri himaye etmiş ve halkın desteğini kazanmak için türbe, medrese, cami gibi dini yapıların inşasıyla da meşgul olmuştur. Şeyh Ahmed Yesevi, Nakşibendi şeyhi Şemseddin Kulal ve Mir Seyyid Bereke, Timur'un dini kimliğini inşa ederken yararlandığı önemli şahsiyetlerdir. Timur'un dini şahsiyetleri ve kurumları himaye etmesi hem kendisinin hem de hanedanının karizmasını artırırken aynı zamanda halefleri döneminde İslami meşruiyetim baskın hale gelmesine himayesine zemin hazırlamıştır. Birden fazla meşruiyet temeli kullanmak, Timur'un eylemlerine esneklik sağlamış ve onu herhangi bir grubun desteğine bağımlı olmaktan kurtarmıştır⁸⁶⁹.

Kurduğu siyasi modelde, yerleşik ve bozkır siyasi ve kültürel yaşam tarzını merkeziyetçi bir şemsiye altında birleştirmeyi başarmış olan Temür, bir yandan Türk-Moğol askeri seçkinlere ve göçebe kabilelere, diğer yandan da yerleşik kökene sahip ulema ve meşayih gibi farklı kesimlere yer vermiş ve bunu merkeziyetçi bir biçimde gerçekleştirmiştir. Timur'un bu yönetim şekli, yerleşik ve göçebe kökenli halk ile bunların siyasi ve kültürel unsurları arasında bir denge sağlamasına karşın bahsi geçen bu denge kurumsal olmamış Timur'un şahsına ve denetimine bağlı kalmıştır. Diğer bir deyişle Timur'un yarattığı bu siyasi ortamda, ne Türk-Moğol askeri-yönetici elitler güçlerini artırabilmiş ne de yerleşik halk ve eşraf ekonomik güçlerini siyasi bir otoriteye dönüştürebilmişlerdir. Temür güçlü emirlerine etkin siyasi otorite sağlamasına rağmen, onları fetihlerle meşgul etmiş ve kendi aile üyelerini de bir kontrol mekanizması içinde tutmuştur⁸⁷⁰.

Timur'un 1405'teki ölümünden sonra Timurlu mülkü, onun soyundan

⁸⁶⁹ Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Family and Ruler in Timurid Historiography," in Devin Dewese, ed., *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, Bloomington, Indiana University, 2001.

⁸⁷⁰ H. R. Roemer, "Temür in Iran", in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 6, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986; Anne F. Broadbridge, "Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds," Cambridge University Press, 2008; istopher Markiewicz, *The Crisis of Kingship in Late Medieval Islam: Persian Emigres and the Making of Ottoman Sovereignty*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019.

gelenlerin yanı sıra güçlü Türk-Moğol emirlerin de yer aldığı çok yönlü taht mücadelelerine sahne olmuştur⁸⁷¹. Timur'un ölümünün ardından Timurlu askeri seçkinleri arasında ortaya çıkan siyasi iktidar mücadeleleri, Timur'un yarattığı siyasi yapının bir başka sonucu olmuştur. Türk-Moğol miras geleneğine göre Temür hayattayken, tıpkı Cengiz Han'ın yaptığı gibi, topraklarını oğulları ve torunları arasında paylaştırmıştır. Ancak o, soyundan gelenleri yeni eyaletlerin valileri yapmasına ve kendine bağlı emirleri bölge ordularının komutanlığına atmasına rağmen, bu bölgelerdeki kontrolünü tamamen kaybetmemiş ve bu mirzaların bağımsız güç merkezleri oluşturmasına izin vermemiştir. Timurlu mirzaları vali olarak atandıkları bu bölgelerde hiçbir zaman tam yetkiye sahip olmamışlar ve yönetimlerini merkezi hükümet adına sürdürmüşlerdir.

Timur'un hayatta olduğu dönemde, bölgesel valiler olarak görev yapan mirzalar sıkı kontrol altında tutulmuşlarsa da, büyük fatihin ölümüyle ülüş sisteminin getirisi olan merkezkaç eğilimler, Timur'un haleflerinin imparatorluğun birliğini sürdürmelerini zorlaştırmıştır. Temür yaşamı boyunca tartışılmaz bir güce sahip olmuş ve hiçbir mülk sahibinin bağımsız güç merkezleri oluşturmasına izin vermemiştir. Timur'un oldukça merkezileşmiş gücü, Timurlu mirzaların egemenlik mücadelelerinde galip gelebilmeleri için gereken güçlü bir temel oluşturmalarını engellemiştir. Ayrıca, veraseti düzenleyen belirli bir sistemin olmaması, Timur'un ölümünden sonraki mücadeleyi özellikle uzun ve yıkıcı hale getirmiştir. Ana aktörler arasındaki siyasi ilişkilerin belirsizliği Timurlu siyasi sisteminin farklı yorumlarının ortaya çıkmasıyla sonuçlanmıştır⁸⁷².

Ayrıca, tıpkı 14. yüzyıl Çinggisli dünyasında olduğu gibi, rakiplerine karşı zafer kazanmak isteyen Timurlu mirzalara güvenilir askeri destek sağlayacak olan Türk-Moğol emirlerinin de bu taht mücadelesine dâhil olması rekabeti daha da kızıştırmıştır. Timurlu mirzalar, hükümdarlığı ve onun menfaatlerini kalıtsal hakları olarak görürken, Timur'un en sadık yandaşları arasından komutan olarak atanan askeri

⁸⁷¹ Stephen Frederic Dale, *The Garden of the Eight Paradises: Babur and the Culture of Empire in Central Asia, Afghanistan and India (1483-1530)*, Leiden and Boston; E.J. Brill, 2004.

⁸⁷² Beatrice Manz, "Temür and the Early Timurids to C. 1450", in *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia: The Chinggisid Age*, ed. Nicola Di Cosmo, Allen J. Frank, and Peter B. Golden Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

seçkinler, yani büyük emirler, Timur'un yönetimi altında kazandıkları statüyü korumak istemişlerdir.

Tıpkı Çinggisli prensler gibi, Timurlu mirzalar da, egemenlik ve meşruiyet tekeline sahip olsalar da, bu durum egemenlik için rakipleri haline gelen diğer Timurlu hanedanının diğer üyeleri tarafından da paylaşılmaktaydı. Ve mirzalar rakiplerine karşı başarılı olmak için çok sayıda sadık ve güvenilir yandaşı hizmetleri altına almak zorundaydılar. Böylece, büyük emirlerin ve bunlara bağlı olan Türk-Moğol unsurların desteği taht adayları için çok önemli hale gelmiştir.

Öte yandan Türk-Moğol emirleri Timurlu mirzaların egemenlik hakkını kabul etseler de kendi çıkarlarına uyan herhangi bir Timurlu mirzayı desteklemekte özgür hissetmişlerdir. Nitekim, Timurlu tahtı için rekabet edecek olanların sayıca çok olması, emirler için seçeneklerin çok olduğu anlamına gelmekteydi. Pek çok taht adayının onların yardımına ve desteğine ihtiyacı olduğundan, önemi ve gücü artan emirler bu durumun devamını talep etmişlerdir.

Böylesine yoğun bir rekabet ortamında, Timur zamanında cazip ganimetler getiren dışa yönelik askeri seferler içeri dönmüş olduğundan, Timurlu mirzaların Türk-Moğol askeri seçkinlerinin desteğini kazanmalarının tek yolu sahip oldukları topraklar olmuştur. Bu nedenle mirzalar, askeri seçkinlerin desteğini çekmek ve sürdürmek için soyurgal adı verilen toprak hibelerini ve diğer çeşitli muafiyet ve dokunulmazlık biçimlerini kullanmışlardır. Timurlu rakiplerine karşı konumlarını sağlamlaştırmaya ve ellerini güçlendirmeye çalışan Timur'un ardılları, kendilerine miras kalan toprakları dağıtmaya başlamışlardır. Soyurgalleri sadece Türk-Moğol askeri seçkinlerine değil, aynı zamanda yerleşik İranlı unsurlarının temsilcilerine, özellikle dini şahsiyetlere, desteklerini kazanmak için tahsis etmişlerdir.

Böylece dört yıl süren veraset mücadelesinden galip çıkan Şahrüh döneminden itibaren Timur'un halefleri, sahip oldukları toprakları yandaşlarına dağıtmışlardır. Soyurgallar vergilerden ve merkezi hükümetin adli ve idari müdahalesinden muaftılar. Bu durum, ademi merkezîyetçi yapıyı güçlendirmiş ve böylece çok sayıda bölgesel siyasi merkez ortaya çıkmıştır. Ekonomik kaynakların paylaşımına ve siyasi ademi merkezîyetçiliğe tanık olan böyle bir süreç, batılı bilim adamlarının “Timurlu Rönesansı” olarak adlandırdığı kültürel ve sanatsal canlanmanın da yolunu açmıştır.

15. yüzyılın Timurlu dünyası, siyasi olduğu kadar ideolojik dönüşümlere de

tanık olmuştur. Timur'un ölümünden sonra oğlu Şahruh, veraset mücadelesinde üstünlük sağlayarak Timurlu yönetiminin merkezini Semerkant'tan Herat'a taşımış ve oğlu Uluğ Bey'i Semerkant valisi olarak bırakmıştır. Bu dönemden itibaren bu iki bölgenin farklı özellikleri, her bir bölgedeki Timurlu siyasi ideolojisinin yorumlanmış şeklinde önemli bir etkiye sahip olmuştur.

Timurluların İslam'ın hamisi olma iddiaları en açık biçimde Şahruh döneminde ortaya atılmıştır. Şahruh, bir yandan Timur'un karizmatik otoritesini, diğer yandan da İslami ideolojiyi kullanarak yönetimini meşrulaştırmaya çalışmıştır. Şahruh, hükümdarlığı sırasında geleneksel İslami meşruiyeti benimseyerek padişah-ı İslam unvanını kullanmış ve Türk-Moğol örfi hukukunu (Yasak-Jasag) terk ettiğini resmen ilan etmiştir. Ayrıca o, Çinggisli bir prensesle evli olmasına rağmen adına hükümdarlık yapacağı Çinggisli kukla bir hana ihtiyaç duymamış ve küregen unvanını da kullanmamıştır. Ancak bu, Şeriatı Yasak ile değiştirdiği anlamına gelmemiş ve Şahruh'un şeriat odaklı politikası Türk-Moğol siyasi geleneğinden sapmaya neden olmamıştır. Bu durum, Timur'un kendi ailesini Çinggislilerinkine benzer bir yönetici hanedanlığa yükseltme çabasının bir sonucuydu. Timur'un hanedanına kazandırdığı siyasi meşruiyet, Şahruh'u başkenti Herat'ta, Çinggisli meşruiyet sembollerini kullanma zorunluluğundan kurtarmıştır⁸⁷³.

Öte yandan, Şahruh'tan farklı olarak, babası adına Maveräünnehir'i yöneten Uluğ Bey, Çinggisli kukla bir han atayarak ve büyükbabası Timur gibi, başkenti Semerkant'ta küregen unvanını alarak meşruiyetini güçlendirmek için Türk-Moğol geleneklerinden faydalanmıştır. Bu tür girişimlerin bir sonucu olarak Uluğ Bey, muhafazakâr Müslümanların, özellikle de 15. yüzyılda Maveräünnehir'de, etkisi artan Nakşibendi tarikatı mensuplarının antipatisini kazanmıştır. Şahruh'un 1447'de ölümüyle başlayan veraset mücadelelerinde Uluğ Bey, 1449'da isyancı oğlu Abdüllatif tarafından öldürülmüştür. Entelektüel ilgileri olan kültürlü ve bilgin bir Timurlu prensi olan Uluğ Bey dönemi, kültürel ve bilimsel, özellikle astronomi alanındaki başarılarıyla ün kazanmıştır.

⁸⁷³ Hafiz-i Abru, Sihabu'd-Din 'Abdullah b. Lutfullah b. 'Abdu'r-Rashid al-Khwafi. *Zubdatu't-Tawarikh*, 4 vols., ed. by Sayyed Kamal Haj Sayyed Javadi, Tehran, 2001; Beatrice Forbes. *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007; Maria Eva Subtelny & Anas B. Khalidov, "The Curriculum of Islamic Higher Learning in Timurid Iran in the Light of the Sunni Revival under Shah-Rukh," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 115: 2, 1995.

Uluğ Bey'in ölümünden sonra ortaya çıkan veraset mücadelesinden, Temür'ün oğlu Miranşah'tan torunu Sultan Ebu Said galip çıkmıştır. Buhara dini otoritelerinin desteği ve Moğolistan'daki Abulhayr Han'ın askeri yardımıyla Herat'ı ele geçiren Ebu Said Çinggisli bir Han'ın desteğiyle iktidara gelmesine rağmen, Çinggisli kukla bir han kullanmamış ve kendi adına egemenlik sürmüştür. Ancak bu, Çinggisli meşruiyetinin, Sultan Ebu Said tarafından tamamen göz ardı edildiği anlamına gelmemiştir. Sultan Ebu Said, hem kendisi hem de oğulları için Çinggisli prenseslerle evlilikler düzenlemiş ve küregen unvanını kullanmıştır. O aynı zamanda, egemenliği doğrudan üstlenmesinin yarattığı boşluğu, Nakşibendi tarikatının ve Maverünnehir ulemasının İslam temelli desteğiyle doldurmaya çalışmıştır. Maverünnehir'de oluşturduğu bu güçlü destek ağı onun bir sonraki adımı için gerekli zemini oluşturmuştur. 1457'de Sultan Ebu Said Horasan'ı ele geçirmiş ve Şahrhlu mirzaları ortadan kaldırarak başkentini Semerkant'tan Herat'a nakletmiştir. Egemenlik üssünü Horasan'a kaydıran Sultan Ebu Said Maverünnehir'deki Timurlu topraklarını kendi oğulları arasında paylaşmıştır.

Sultan Ebu Said döneminin önemli yönlerinden biri de Hoca Ubeydullah Ahrar'ın himayesinde Nakşibendi mutasavvıflarına siyasi ve ekonomik nüfuz sağlamasıdır. Ebu Said'in 1469'da ölümünden sonra, oğullarının Maverünnehir'deki hükümdarlığı sırasında Ahrar'ın gücü ve prestiji daha da artmıştır. Ebu Said Mirza (1451-1469) döneminde ayrıca, siyasi ve ekonomik ademi merkezi yapı güçlenmiş, soyurgal gibi toprak bağışları artmış, başta Hoca Ubeydullah Ahrar olmak üzere yerel ve kentsel yaşamın temsilcileri Timurlu dünyasının hem siyasi hem de ekonomik hayatında önemli roller oynamaya başlamışlardır⁸⁷⁴.

Sultan Ebu Said'in ölümü üzerine Timur'un bir başka oğlu olan Ömer Şeyh'in soyundan gelen Sultan Hüseyin Baykara, Horasan'ın kontrolünü ele geçirmiştir. Böylece hanedanın mevcut yönetici kolu yerinden edilmiştir. Onun hükümdarlığı sırasında Timurlular, kültürel yaşamlarına odaklanmakla yetinmişler ve Sultan Hüseyin, isyankar oğulları ve diğer Timurlu şehzadeleri ile girdiği mücadeleler sonucunda gücünü Horasan'ın ötesine taşıyamamıştır. Doğuda Özbeklerin, batıda ise Akkoyunlu Konfederasyonu'nun sürekli saldırıları, Timurlu egemenliğinin Horasan ve

⁸⁷⁴ Kamal al-Din 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Samarqandi, Matlau's-*Sa'dayn va Majmau'l-Bahrayn*. Edited by 'Abdu'l-Husayn Nava'i, Tehran: Mu'assasa-yi Mutala'at va Tahqiqat-i Farhangi. 1372 H.sh./1993-94.

Maveraünnehir ile sınırlı kalmasına neden olmuştur.

Sultan Hüseyin Baykara, gücünü pekiştirdikten sonra başkenti Herat'ı dönemin en seçkin kültür ve sanat merkezi haline getirmiştir. Sultan Hüseyin dönemindeki nispeten barışçıl siyasi atmosfer ve dolayısıyla ekonomik durum, Herat'ın sanatçılar, bilim adamları, edebiyatçılar, çizerler ve şairler için bir cazibe merkezi olmasını sağlamıştır⁸⁷⁵.

Görüldüğü üzere, rekabetçi bir siyasi atmosfere sahip olan on beşinci yüzyıl Timurlu dünyası, Timur tarafından yaratılan geniş topraklara sahip merkezi imparatorluğun ademi merkezileşme ve nihayetinde de dağılma sürecine de sahne olmuştur. Bu dönem, Timurlu hanedanının farklı kollarından gelen çeşitli Timurlu mirzalar arasındaki veraset mücadeleleri, kültürel rekabet ve Türk-Moğol askeri seçkinlerinin değişken sadakatleri ile şekillenmiştir. Bu tür gelişmelerin altında yatan temel sebep, iktidardaki hanedanın tüm üyelerinin siyasi egemenlik talep etme hakkına sahip olduğunu inancına dayanan üleş (güç paylaşımı) ilkesiydi.

Yoğun bir askeri ve siyasi rekabet içinde bulunan Timurlu mirzaların rakipleri karşısında başarılı olabilmeleri için çok sayıda sadık yandaşı kendi yanlarına çekmeleri gerekmiştir. Ancak, Çinggis Han'ın ya da Timur'un yaptığı gibi, onlara güzel ganimetler vaat etme fırsatlarından yoksun olan mirzaların, Türk-Moğol askeri seçkinlerin desteğini kazanmak için ellerindeki temel varlık onların miras olarak aldıkları toprakları olmuştur. Bu nedenle, bu mirzalar, askeri seçkinleri kendi yanlarına çekmek ve onların bağlılıklarını sürdürmek için soyurgal adı verilen toprak hibelerini ve diğer çeşitli muafiyet ve ayrıcalık biçimlerinden yararlanmışlardır. Rakip Timurlu mirzalara karşı konumlarını sağlamlaştırmaya ve ellerini güçlendirmeye ihtiyaç duyan Timur'un halefleri, miras topraklarını sadece Türk-Moğol askeri seçkinlerine değil, aynı zamanda desteklerini kazanmak için Timurlu toplumunun yerleşik İran unsurlarının, özellikle dindar sınıfların temsilcilerine soyurgaller bahşetmişlerdir. Böylece Şahrüh zamanından itibaren Uluğ Bey, Ebulkasım Babür, Sultan Ebu Said ve Sultan Hüseyin Baykara gibi Timurlu hükümdarlar, yandaşlarına soyurgaller dağıtmışlardır. Vergiden ve merkezin idari müdahalesinden muaf olan bu

⁸⁷⁵ Dawlatshah Samarqandi, Bin Ala al-Dawla Bakhtishah al-Ghazi, *Tadhkiratu'sh-Shu'ara*. Edited by Muhammad Ramazani, Tehran, 1366; Mirza Haydar Dughlat, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, Tehran, 1383; Esfizari, Muinu'd-Din Muhammad Zamchi, *Rawzatu'l-Jannat fi Avsaf-i Madinat-i Harat*, ed. By Sayyid Muhammad Kazim Imam, 2 vols., Tehran, 1338-1339/1959-1960.

soyurgallerin cömert bir şekilde dağıtılması sonucunda ademi merkezi yapı güçlenmiş ve böylece çok sayıda bölgesel siyasi merkez ortaya çıkmıştır. Ekonomik kaynakların paylaşımına, siyasi ve ekonomik ademi merkeziyetçiliğe tanık olan böyle bir süreç, kültürel ve sanatsal gelişmenin de yolunu açmıştır.

Timur, hükümdarlığı boyunca İslam dünyasının her yerinden çok sayıda sanatçı, âlim, bilim adamı ve şairi zorla başkenti Semerkant'a getirmiş ve bu kişiler, Timurlu sanat ve fikir hayatını birçok yönden şekillendirmişlerdir. Uluğ Bey, Maveraünnehir hükümetine atandığında, 1411'de Timur tarafından zorla tutulan bu zanaatkar ve sanatçıları azat etmiştir. Bunlar Timurlu topraklarına dağılmış ve çeşitli Timurlu mirzalar tarafından himaye edilmişlerdir. Shahruh'un izlediği liberal yönetim tarzıyla imparatorluk giderek ademi merkezi bir hale gelmiş ve bölgesel valiler olarak atanan Timurlu mirzaların sarayları, sanatsal himaye için yarışan güç merkezleri haline gelmişlerdir. Bu kadar sanatsal ve entelektüel hırsın arkasında yatan temel sebep, siyasi bağımsızlık arzusu olmuştur. Bu mirzalar, sanat ve fikir eserlerini himaye ederek hükümdarlık ideolojilerini gerçekleştirmeyi amaçlamışlardır. Hanedanlığın farklı kollarından yönetici konumda olan her Timurlu mirza, döneminin ve kendi bölgelerinin sosyo-politik koşullarının gereklerine uygun bir himaye programı izlemiştir. Bu mirzalar, Timurlu topraklarının yerleşik kültürünü benimseme çabalarının yanı sıra, mensubu oldukları hanedanın belirli bir kolunu ideolojik söylemlerle meşrulaştırma girişimlerinde de bulunmuşlardır. Özellikle tarih yazımı, Timurlu hanedanını geçmişteki hanedanlar arasında uygun bir yere yerleştiren ve ayrıca Timurlu hanedanının belirli bir kolunu ön plana çıkaran ideolojik bir işleve sahip olmuştur.

Timur'un merkezi yönetiminin aksine, haleflerinin ademi merkeziyetçi siyasi atmosferinde, hizmetleri karşılığında kendilerine soyurgaller bahşedilen, güçlü Türk-Moğol emirleri ve önde gelen Türk-Moğol kabilelerinin üyeleri kültürel ve sanatsal birtakım faaliyetler himaye etmeye başlamışlardır.

Sultan Hüseyin Baykara dönemi bu tür faaliyetlerin doruk noktası olmuştur. Onun hükümdarlığı sırasında, soyurgal bağışları ve diğer tür vergi muafiyetleri ve imtiyazları, yalnızca Türk-Moğol askeri seçkinlerinden yüksek rütbeli emirlerle sınırlı olmamış, aynı zamanda ulema ve diğer bölgesel unsurları da içermiştir. Dönemin kaynaklarında, Sultan Hüseyin'in seyitlere, ulemaya, âlimlere (fuzela) ve şairlere karşı

cömert davrandığından ve her zaman onların arzularının ihsan edilmesini ve bu kıymetli zümreye soyurgallerin ve lütufların (soyurgalat ve in'amat) verilmesini emrettiğinden bahsedilmiştir. Hondmir'in belirttiği gibi, hükümdarlığı sırasında dini vakıfların, toprak hibelerinin ve diğer imtiyaz ve ayrıcalıkların sayısı öyle bir dereceye ulaşmıştır ki, Sultan Hüseyin bunların hepsini yönetmek üzere iki veya üç kişiyi sayman (sadr) olarak atamak zorunda kalmıştır.

15. yüzyılın sonunda soyurgal , Horasan'ın hemen hemen tüm topraklarını ve çevresini kapsamaktaydı. Böylece ademi merkeziyi ekonomik ve politik yapı güçlenmiş ve Horasan'daki Timurlu yönetici seçkinleri bölgesel yöneticilere dönüşmeye başlamıştır. Bu dokunulmazlıklar sonucunda gelirleri yeteri kadar artan bu kişiler, inşaat projelerini, şiir, minyatür, kitap üretimi, metal işçiliği gibi kültürel ve sanatsal faaliyetleri himaye etmeye başlamışlardır. Türk-Moğol seçkinlerinden başka, İranlı yerleşik bürokratlar, özellikle vezirler ve dinî sınıfların temsilcileri de soyurgal almaktaydılar.

Görüldüğü gibi, Timur'un ölümünden sonra aralarında çıkan veraset mücadeleleri ile Türk-Moğol geleneğine göre her biri tahtta eşit haklara sahip olan çeşitli Timurlu mirzaları, Türk-Moğol kabile seçkinlerinin desteğini kazanmak için toprak hibelerinden yararlanmaya başlamışlardır. Bu tür soyaurgal hibeleri, bu mirzalar tarafından siyasi bir araç olarak kullanılsa da, bir adem-i merkeziyetçilik sürecinin de önünü açmıştır. Timur'un siyasi modeli her zaman merkezileşmeye odaklanmış ve Timurlu mirzaları her zaman kontrol altında tutmuşken, Timur'un ölümünden sonra askeri seçkinlerin desteğine muhtaç olan halefleri, siyasi güçlerini emirleriyle paylaşmak zorunda kalmışlardır. Bu mirzalar, emirlerin aşırı güçlenmesini engelleyecek yeterli siyasi güce sahip olmadıklarından, soyurgal toprak hibeleri, sonuç olarak, siyasi gücün emirlere devredilmesi için bir araca dönüşmüştür. Türk-Moğol askeri seçkinlerinin yanı sıra, İran yerleşik unsurlarının temsilcileri de sürece dâhil olmuştur. Hatta Sultan Hüseyin Baykara döneminde emirler, mutasavvıflar ve ulema ile şairler ve edebiyatçılar da soyurgal sahibi olmaya başlamışlardır. Böylece yönetici hanedana mensup olmayan unsurların siyasi gücü Timurlu mirzaları pahasına artmaya başlamıştır. Bu durum adem-i merkezi bir siyasi atmosfere neden olurken, aynı zamanda büyük bir sanatsal ve edebi gelişmeye de zemin hazırlamıştır⁸⁷⁶.

15. yüzyıldaki çok merkezli Timurlu dünyasında, siyasi otorite, askeri hünlerden çok, en seçkin sanatçıları, şairleri, zanaatkarları ve edebiyatçıları sarayında bir araya getirme konusundaki başarıya dayanmaktadır. Siyasi faktörlerin yarattığı böylesine eşsiz ve istisnai bir sanatsal hareketin parlaklığı, Timurluların hükümdarlık kimliklerini karakterize etmiş ve prestijlerini ve şöhretlerini yüzyıllar boyunca sürdürmelerini sağlamıştır. Timur, kamusal bir iktidar imajı yaratmak için anıtsal inşaat projelerini ve tarih yazımını nasıl kullandıysa, onun soyundan gelenler de mevcut bölgesel siyasi ve sosyal değerlere uygun modellerden yararlanarak yüce bir Timurlu egemenliği imgesi geliştirmeye çalışmışlardır.

Timur'un fethettiği topraklarda farklı grup ve kültürleri bir araya getirmesi sonucunda göçebe bozkır kültürü, Orta Asya ve İran'ın rafine yerleşik kent kültürüyle yoğun bir şekilde temas geçmiştir. Bu etkileşim, Timurluların egemenlik iddialarını, dini bağlılıklarını ve bireysel başarılarını ifade etmeleri için kültürel olarak yeni bir dil yaratmalarını sağlamıştır. Timur, askeri başarılarını haleflerine miras bırakmasa da, sarayında başlayan sanatsal gelişmeler, ölümünden sonra oğullarının ve torunlarının kendi ideolojilerini ve bu doğrultuda oluşturmaya çalıştıkları imajları ifade etmeleri için gerekli ortamı sağlamıştır. Timur'un ölümünden sonra ortaya çıkan siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal koşullar, hanedanın yönelimini değiştirmiş ve bunun sonucunda ortaya çıkan ademi merkezi ortam, kültürel gelişme için de itici bir güç olmuştur. Timur ve onun soyundan gelenler döneminde gerçekleştirilen şanlı sanat ve kültür hamiliği, Osmanlı Türkiye'sinden Babürlü Hindistan'a kadar İslam dünyasının pek çok yerindeki kültürel faaliyetlere model olmuştur.

Temür, fethettiği bölgelerden yetenekli zanaatkar ve sanatçıları başkenti Semerkant'ta bir araya getirmiş ve sarayında birçok şair, edebiyatçı, ressam ve mimarı himaye etmiştir. Hem kendi imajını yaratmak için mimariyi hem de yönetimini meşrulaştırmak için kitapları kullanmıştır. Kendisini İran-İslam dünyasının eski hanedanlarının meşru halefi olarak kabul ettirmek için özellikle tarih yazımından faydalanmıştır. Timur'un kendi imajına ihtişam katmaya çalıştığı kültürel faaliyetler, halefleri döneminde gelişmeye devam etti.

Timur'un 1405'te ölümü üzerine Horasan ve Maverâünnehir'in yeni hükümdarı

⁸⁷⁶ Maria E. Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition: Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran*, Leiden: Brill, 2007.

olan Şahruh, Timur İmparatorluğu'nu babasının aksine bir fatih olarak değil, bir İslam sultanı olarak yönetmiştir. Saltanatı sırasında kendisi, eşi ve oğulları Semerkant'ta Uluğ Bey, Herat'ta Baysunghur Mirza ve Şiraz'da İbrahim Mirza ve hanedanın diğer kollarından İskender Sultan bin Ömer Şeyh Mirza b. Timur gibi Timurlu mirzaların himayesi sayesinde Timurlu kültürel başarıları üst düzeye ulaşmıştır. Kendilerine atfedilen çok sayıda eserle bu figürler, Timurlu sanatsal canlanmasının ana mimarları haline gelmişlerdir. Eşi Gevherşad Ağa ile birlikte Şahruh, hükümdarlığı sırasında benimsediği dini imaja uygun olarak, çok sayıda türbe, cami ve medrese inşa ettirerek ciddi bir mimari himaye programı başlamıştır. Oğullarının çabaları sayesinde de Şahruh saltanatı, yetenekli sanatçıların gözetiminde çok sayıda el yazma eserin kopyalandığı, resimlendiği ve ciltlendiği kültürel bir canlanma dönemi olmuştur⁸⁷⁷.

Babaları tarafından Timur İmparatorluğu'nun farklı bölgelerine hükümdar olarak atanan Şahruh'un oğulları, saraylarını kültür merkezlerine çevirerek kendilerine itibar sağlayabilecek dönemin önde gelen sanatçı ve şairleri için rekabete girişmişlerdir. Timurlu mirzalarının peşine düştükleri kültürel prestij, onlara güç ve otorite sağlamakla kalmamış, aynı zamanda İran topraklarındaki yönetimlerini de meşrulaştırmıştır. İslami esaslara dayandırdıkları meşruiyetin en önemli ifadesi mimarlık ve edebiyat olmuştur. Doğrudan Timurlu ideolojisiyle bağlantılı olan bu kültürel himaye faaliyetleri, mirzaları bir yandan kendilerine yüksek itibar kazandıracak eserler yaratabilecek sanatçılar için rekabet etmeye sevk ederken bir yandan da sanatsal üretim için yeni standartlar yaratmaya teşvik etmiştir. Bu kültürel gelişme, Timurlular'ın son etkili hükümdarı Sultan Hüseyin Baykara'nın sarayında son ifadesini bulmuştur.

Bu dönemde Timurlu dünyasındaki siyasi çöküşe rağmen Timurlu Herat'ı, on beşinci yüzyılın sonlarına kadar önemli bir ekonomik ve ticari merkez olarak kalmıştır. Hem tarımsal verimlilik hem de ticari faaliyetlerin canlılığı, dönemin seçkinlerine ciddi bir mali kaynak sağlamıştır. Soyurgal olarak bahsedilen topraklar, hamiliğin sınırlarını genişleterek, siyasi gücün yanı sıra ekonomik gücün de merkezden

⁸⁷⁷ Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century*, Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Washington DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989; Maria E. Subtelny, "Socioeconomic Bases of Cultural patronage Under the Later Timurids", in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 20, no: 4, November, 1988.

uzaklaşmasına neden olmuştur.

Sonuç olarak denilebilir ki, ülüş anlayışının bir sonucu olarak paylara bölünen topraklar, siyasî otoritenin dağılmasına neden olmuş, ancak bu durum aynı zamanda sanat ve edebî himayenin de önünü açmıştır. Elde ettikleri soyurgaller ve diğer ekonomik imtiyazlarla kişisel zenginliklerini artıran elit zümre, kültürel himaye faaliyetlerini genişletmişlerdir. Sultan Hüseyin Baykara ve maiyeti, Timur döneminde başlayan sanatsal canlanmayı, dönemin sanatçı, şair ve bilim adamlarını himaye ederek doruk noktasına ulaştırmışlardır. Saray eşrafının yanı sıra Türk askeri seçkinleri, yerleşik İranlıların temsilcisi olan Tacikler de sahip oldukları ekonomik ayrıcalıklar sayesinde dönemin hamî çemberine katılmışlardır.

İslam dünyasının farklı coğrafyalarından bir araya getirilen sanatçılar, hanedanın yeni ideolojik ihtiyaçlarının kültürel anlamda dile getirildiği sanatsal çalışmalarıyla hamilerinin İran-İslam dünyasının yasal hükümdarları olduğu iddiasına katkıda bulunmuşlardır. Sözü edilen dönemde üretilen eserlerde Fars edebî ve sanat mirası belirleyici olsa da Ali Şir Nevai'nin çabaları sonucunda Hüseyin Baykara döneminde Fars dili model alınarak edebi eserlerde Türk dilinin kullanımı artmıştır.

Daha önce de değinildiği üzere, Timurluların yönetimlerini meşrulaştırma arzusu en çok mimarlık ve tarih yazımında ifadesini bulmuştur. Tarih yazımı Timurlu hanedanını İslam tarihi bağlamına yerleştirmede en önemli ideolojik araç olmuştur. Nizamü'd-Din Şami'nin Timurr döneminde yazdığı Zafarname, hanedanın resmi yönetiminin temelini oluşturmuştur. Timurlu mirzalarının resmi tarihleri, bir yandan hamilerinin prestijini artırmak, diğer yandan da onları Timur'la ilişkilendirerek hanedanın meşru hükümdarı olduğunu vurgulamak için yazılmıştır. Şahrüh döneminde Şerefuddin Ali Yazdi tarafından yazılan Zafarname, büyük ölçüde Şami'nin kitabına dayansa da içeriği, özellikle Timur tarihini konu alan bölümler, İslami temelli Şahrüh saltanatına uygun olarak yeniden yorumlanmıştır. Yazdi'nin kitabında Şahrüh müceddid olarak tanıtılırken, Timur'un kendisi adına hüküm sürdüğü Çinggisli hanlardan söz edilmemiştir⁸⁷⁸.

⁸⁷⁸ John E. Woods, "The Rise of Timurid Historiography", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 46, 1987; Rieu, Charles. *Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the British Museum*, III vols. London: British Museum, 1879-1883; Edward Granville Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, III vols., The Tatar Dominion (1265–1502). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009; Arthur John Arberry,

Sultan Hüseyin Baykara döneminde her iki Zefarnâme'nin de nüshaları dönemin gereklerine göre değiştirilmiştir. Bunlar, Sultan Hüseyin'in Timur'un meşru varisi olduğunu iddia eden değişikliklerdir. Aynı zamanda tarih kitaplarının soy kütüklerinde, ölümünden sonra halefleri için bir meşruiyet kaynağı haline gelen Timur ile olan bağa yapılan vurgu da artırmıştır.

Hüseyin Baykara dönemindeki mevcut yönetimi Timurlular döneminin şanlı geçmişiyle ilişkilendirmenin bir başka yolu da Türk dili olmuştur. Ali Şir Nevai'nin bilinçli çabalarıyla, belki de özellikle Şahruh döneminde İran-İslam şehir kültürü lehine yürütülen politikalar sonucunda Farsça'nın resmi dil haline gelmesine bir tepki olarak Türkçe edebî eserler ortaya konmaya başlamıştır. Türkçe kullanımının artması dönemin hedef kitesinin gösterilmesi açısından da önemlidir. Türkçeye yapılan bu vurgu ve bu dönemde Türkçe kullanımının teşvik edilmesi, yönetici aristokrasinin kendisini Türk-Moğol unsurlarının lideri olan Timurlu hükümdarı olarak sunmak istediğini göstermektedir.

Tarih yazımından başka, İslam öncesi İran tarihinin otorite figürlerini içeren Şehname gibi metinlerin çoğaltılması ve Timurlu sultanların bu şahsiyetlerin özellikleriyle donatılması ve hatta onlar gibi resmedilmeleri de, İran-İslam kültürü ve Türk-Moğol ideolojisinin uzun süreli temasının bir sonucu olarak Timurlu mirzaların elindeki farklı meşruiyet anlayışlarını göstermesi açısından önemlidir.

Öte yandan, Timur'dan sonra seferlerin durması nedeniyle askeri başarılarla gerekli meşruiyet zeminini sağlayamayan Timurlu mirzaları için kültürel başarı, siyasi meşruiyetlerini artırmanın bir aracı haline gelmiştir. Ancak, Timurlu egemenliğinin devamını sağlayacak siyasi, askeri ve mali altyapıdan yoksun olan imparatorluk, askeri anlamda tam donanımlı Özbeklerin saldırılarına karşı savunmasız kalmıştır. Timur toprakları 1506 yılında Şeybani Han⁸⁷⁹ komutasındaki Özbek orduları tarafından ele geçirilmiştir. Timurlu gelenekleri siyasi olarak ortadan kalksa da geride bıraktıkları kültürel unsurlar hem Özbekler'e hem de kendilerinden sonra bölgeye hâkim olan

Classical Persian Literature, London: Curzon, 1958; Zabihullah Safa, *Tarikh-i Adabiyat dar Iran*, VI. vols., Tehran 1363.

⁸⁷⁹ Nurten Kılıç, "Siyasal Kültürde değişim: Şeybani Han ve Özbek Siyasal Oluşumu (1500-1510)", Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Ankara University, 1999, p. 114.

Safeviler'e miras kalmıştır. Timurlu kütüphanelerinde yetişen sanatçılar Maveraünnehir, İnan, Türkiye ve Hindistan'a göç ederek bu bölgelerde Timurlu kültürel geleneğini devam ettirmişlerdir.

APPENDIX 6

TEZ İZİN FORMU / THESIS PERMISSION FORM

ENSTİTÜ / INSTITUTE

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences**
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- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Marine Sciences**

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English): Conception of Political Power and The Timurid Cultural Achievements During the Reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: Yüksek Lisans / Master Doktora / PhD

1. Tezin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılacaktır. / Release the entire work immediately for access worldwide.
2. Tez iki yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olacaktır. / Secure the entire work for patent and/or proprietary purposes for a period of **two years**. *
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