TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH


A. Khismatulin

From time to time, in modern catalogues and scholarly publications we encounter a medieval book, said to be "ascribed" to such-and-such an author. This formulation implies that the authenticity of the book attributed to the author is uncertain. Sometimes, to emphasize that fact, the "title" pseudo- is added to the author's name. This problem especially concerns the texts written in the genre of medieval advice literature and ascribed to famous statesmen or outstanding Muslim scholars. Modern researchers have yet to pay more attention to what some medieval authors say about counterfeiting texts during the Islamic Middle Ages and to discuss seriously this issue. Most prefer to pass in silence the possibility that an authentic text could have been forged intentionally for selfish, ideological, and other reasons. On the one hand, one needs sufficient evidence to disclose a forgery; while on the other hand, any fake necessarily follows a recognizable and well-known pattern, which, sometimes, makes it hard to distinguish the fake from a genuine work. For example, imām al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) clearly states in his letters to the mulūk Sunniār that there were, at least, three attempts to counterfeit his writings, and one of the three was successful (see below, Letter 3). If this could happen to him within his lifetime, we may assume what could have occurred after his death. In the second part of the Naṣīḥat al-mulūk, wrongly ascribed by some scholars to al-Ghazālī, its author tells us how an educated person from ‘Irāq became bankrupt and decided to solve his financial problems by counterfeiting a letter from Yahyā b. Kālid b. Barmākī to Abū Mūsā Abī Āliya Al-Inbārī, a favorite of the caliph Hārūn Al-Rashīd [2]. Interestingly enough, the author excuses the counterfeiter. In both cases the Arabic term taswīr is used to define such action, qualified by al-Ghazālī also as taḥfīṣ ("falsification").

Muslim authors mention yet another curious issue, closely related to the art of medieval counterfeiting, which deals with bald-faced plagiarism (tasāhīj). Al-Hujwīrī (d. between 465 and 469 / 1072 and 1077) indignantly says that the only copy of his divān was brazenly plagiarized by a contemporary of his. Furthermore, there was an attempt to change Al-Hujwīrī's name for that of another person in the author's inscription to one of his divān books entitled "An Approach to the Religion" (Munshīd al-din), but fortunately, the attempt failed [3].

In order to help expose plagiarisms, the prominent Muslim scholar Jaḥīl Al-Dīn Al-Suyūtī (d. 911/1506) even wrote a treatise with the title "The Distinguisher Between a Composer and a Thief" (al-Fāriq bayna al-muṣannaf wa al-xāriq) [4].

Nevertheless, for a variety of reasons, medieval plagiarism should be treated separately from medieval counterfeiting. Therefore, the present article deals only with the latter, focusing on two outstanding cases of medieval counterfeiting: the Siyār al-mulūk (the Siyāsah-nāma), ascribed to the famous Salāḥīd waṣīr Nizām al-Mulk (killed 485/1092), and the second part of the Naṣīḥat al-mulūk, attributed to Al-Ghazālī. The first text was compiled obviously prior to the second one, but both were written in the same 6th / 12th century. Their dates are so closely entwined and so similar to each other, that they deserve to be studied and compared in one article. After due consideration of these cases, the technology of counterfeiting and the reasons for undertaking such a risky endeavour would hopefully become clear.
2. Persons

One more account of the “scribe”’s foreword also deserves more attention. For contemporary of these events, even to bring the people mentioned at the reception of the sultan into one line with Nizam al-Mulk, in my opinion, meant to set two conflicting teams at loggerheads, to reflect a clash of two groups of officials fighting on each selves for power and to show, by default, a conflict they were involved in. This is a very natural situation for any government, typical and even normal in our days too.

Tāj al-Mulk — Abū Ḥajjām Marzubān Khusraw al-Shirāzī, by the end of the wazirship of Nizam al-Mulk, had enormous power concentrated in his hands. At the same time, it began to raise very important state positions, including the position of managing the harem, the property and treasure of Malik-shah, mentioned also the position of head of the dīwān of writing and records (ḥāfiẓ al-wādī) which included the department of the state correspondence and the office of the sultan, for which reasons, Abū Sa’d Muhammad b. Maṣūm al-Khirīṣī protected the Nizam al-Mulk and held the position of wazīr mustafiy of the dīwān of property and taxes (ṣulṭān al-dīwān) and, shortly before the murder of Nizam al-Mulk he probably rescinded, paying the sultan a considerable compensation for this (100,000 dinars), but ensuring for himself a peaceful death from old age.

Majd al-Mulk — Abū al-Fadil As’al b. Muhammad al-Qummi after some time occupied the position of Sharaf al-Mulk and joined with Tāj al-Mulk against Nizam al-Mulk [18].

This team, which Tāj al-Mulk was considered to lead, as we have already said many times, kept trying until they eventually deposed the Khājja [Nizam al-Mulk], who was also getting old. The reins of the authority to run the dīwān affairs rested in the hands of Tāj al-Mulk, Majd al-Mulk and Sakh al-Mulk [19].

Thus, according to the scenario of the “scribe” of the Siyar al-mulūk, as clearly shown by Schefer’s edition and partly by Darke’s first, with his request Malik-shah pushes together two opposing parties, knowing that the report of each of the parties will be directed against the other party, and prefers the writing (kīsht) of Nizam al-Mulk. The intrigue of the situation created by such implication of the “scribe” is fleshed out by the fact that Tāj al-Mulk was the deputy of one of the leading Isma’ilis in Iran, Hasan b. al-Sabūs, and his secret agent in the government of Malik-gāh [20]. This is why, according to the plan of the script writer, Majd al-Mulk had to have approved only the text by Nizam al-Mulk, the sworn enemy of the Isma’ils generally and Hasan b. al-Sabūs personally. It is no coincidence that the year of AH 484 is indicated. In the second half of AH 483-484, Malik-gāh and his ally Tāj al-Mulk utterly consumed the mountain fortress of Alamāt and fortified it, which served as a signal for an open attack by the Isma’ils all over Iran, and laid the foundation for an independent state of the Isma’ils to arise in the form of fortress cities scattered around the mountainous regions of the country. In the Isma’ils historiography, the capture of Alamāt is considered to be the beginning of the Alamut period which continued until the Mongol invasion and the destruction of Isma’ils fortresses by the Mongols in 625 [1256].

Thus, AH 484 seems to have been the height of the Isma’ils uprising against the Saljuqs. It was probably for this reason that Malik-gāh called a state council and listened to all points of view, and not just to find out what people thought about the current rule. By AH 484, all of Malik-gāh’s sympathy was already on the side of Tāj al-Mulk, however, about whose Isma’ils devotion the scribe had probably no idea, thus, he provides no account of it. This means that any writing by Nizam al-Mulk speaking of him in such flattering terms and with an enormous number of officials.

Medieval editors of some copies of the text (or, perhaps, the “scribe” himself), in order to get around the obvious contradiction between the rise of Tāj al-Mulk and the attribution of the text to Nizam al-Mulk, transferred the time of action to AH 479, that is, a year before the birth of Malik-shah and the appearance of the main reason for the conflict between Nizam al-Mulk and Tāj al-Mulk. They also removed either the latter’s name from the list of the officials who presented at the reception (Darke’s first edition), or all the officials names with the fact of reception itself (Darke’s second edition), thus removing the anti-Isma’il tendency of the forecast that was so plain to contemporaries. Without asking why this date arose and not another, Darke takes it as the foundation to build his story of the text’s compilation, which will be discussed below.

4. Reason for the Announcement

The “scribe” subsequently explains why he is presenting this treatise. Furthermore, his explanations make it clear why he is presenting it. Although in Schefer’s edition, the reason does not look so obvious, and the addressee is completely absent, it is clear from the last sentence that some time had passed since the moment of writing.

A scribe of the depository writings ⦿ wrote this writing (kīsht) for the sake of service to the depository and presented it, if Allah so desires, it will be approved. Any
Nakhjavani's copy, used by Darke in his second edition, has the same phrase, but it is slightly revised there in a way that mislead some scholars, who prefer to consider the copy as the most reliable one and to disregard the version descending from the Urmiyyat copy of 564/1468. By the way, the latter is stated to have been transcribed by order of Alp Jamal al-Din [23], who, due to his position of the amir fahim, was a state figure. The reason for this similarity lies in the word "slave" refers to and what the present time implies in all of these excerpts:

پر دوست خود او دوست نداشته محرومان یک جمیع

Then, at present, when the truly praying, having intended to serve this hadith...
Zakhorov to conclude that the text was obviously added to, and on more than one occasion. With his first critical edition of the Siyar al-muluk, Durke tried to remove the issues raised, but could not do this completely. As a result, he left a loop-hole for vagueness and uncertainty, indicating one of the criteria by which an authentic text by Nizām al-Mulk could be singled out from the rest.

Although there is no final criterion for detecting the authenticity of the book, nevertheless, the facts that book itself gives us are more worthy of trust. Less than a considerable part of the book includes topics taken from other sources, and it is very difficult to judge their authenticity or lack of authenticity, for perhaps Muhammad the scribe or someone else added stories and tales to the book. There is no means for revealing them [32].

In his revised English translation (1978), where the Nakhjavani’s version of the text copied in AD 1274 and allegedly dedicated to Malik-shah himself was taken into consideration, he has expanded more categorically as asserting that with this version “we have a text closely descended from the author’s autograph” [33]. However, even M. Simidchikova, who has principally agreed with Durke’s point of view to the “scribe’s” story of the text’s compilation, could not in silence pass over the fact that the note of the same “scribe” exists in the foreword of the latter edition [34].

This version looks, however, similar to that being preserved at the National Library of Russia and already described by Zakhorov in the commentaries to his Russian translation (see below).

6. The Authentic Text

In my opinion, the criterion, mentioned by H. Durke, always existed and currently exists in the text of the Siyar al-muluk. It allows us to assess the scale of the forgery committed by the “scribe”, or the ordinary falsification made by him, frankly speaking, on average but not high level. Convincing the addressee that the book belongs to Nizām al-Mulk, Muhammad Maghrībī twice talked of the initial brevity of its fast-chapters, using the word “short” (mudajjāra) and the phrase “quite short / abbreviated” (ha mulūk wa muharram). According to him, it was these short fast-chapters that were approved by the sultan, after which the text became subject to change and addition. Now, if we look at the contents of the book, we can see that there are some chapters which indeed cannot be called other than “quite short”. Some of them consist literally of three to seven sentences, for example, according to the enumeration given in Schefer’s edition, February 9, 12, 14–16, 22, 25, 26, 30–32, 34 and 37 (slightly more).

Each of these brief fasts is dedicated to one of the numerous duties of the vizier. And each of them has the same general style marker, with the use of a modal verb in an impersonal form: “it should be that… it must be that…”. (mudajjāra), or a modal verb to- gether with an auxiliary verb or a simple predicate also in an impersonal form: “it should / must be done” (takrīr), “it should / must be known” (sawādī), etc. This style marker also exists in the form of the muwadā’āt which is partially included into the text of Abī al-Fādil Bahāqī (for the context of the quotation see above).

About the meaning of to what degree the amir’s son should be served and in what the respect of the slave should be observed (towards him)...

Furthermore, in these brief chapters there are no historical examples and edifying tales, just as there are no advices to the sultan or indications of his duties, let alone criticism of his actions. All of this appears in one form or another in other chapters which are sometimes spread over five to ten pages. Evidently, Maghrībī, working as a scribe in the sultan’s private depository, had access to the state documents, and perhaps made copies of them sometimes for personal use — following the example of Abī al-Fādil Bahāqī. Having at his disposal the genuine muwadā’āt of Nizām al-Mulk and using the form and structure of this legal document, he decided, so to speak, to copy its impersonal style with examples and stories, which were taken from various types of historical literature, heard during service or outside of it, and also to write to at least the last 11 chapters of the book. In my opinion, they cannot be attributed to the pen of Nizām al-Mulk to any extent, and are the work of Maghrībī from beginning to end.

If one sets the task to purge the text completely from the later additions by Maghrībī and single out the authentic text by Nizām al-Mulk, without any doubt one must remove text forward together with the afterward. Of the remaining 29 chapters, one should, evidently, remove chapters 1–8, 10, 13, 18, 35 and 38 (according to Schefer’s edition) entirely, as they discuss the duties of the sultan, not the vizier, although Maghrībī forces the number 39 on the reader, which, perhaps, reminded contemporaries of a well-known circle of duties of the grand vizier of the main chapters, all the tales and edification (in some chapters only the first paragraph will remain) should also be removed. As a result, we receive the “dry text” of the muwadā’āt of Nizām al-Mulk of the type of brief chapters described above, which consists of 15 to 20 percent of the present size of the Siyar al-muluk. On the other hand, such “purification” allows us to see a mechanism of the text’s compi- lation which, of course, differs from that of previous editions by Marta Simidchikova in a section of her study entitled “The Literary Argument” in order to prove the authorship of Nizām al-Mulk [35].

Since the Siyar al-muluk is among the earliest politi- cal works written in Persian, and which is reflected in one of the main sources in history of medieval Persian literature, the entire conclusive basis will be incomplete or may appear unsupported if Muhammad Maghrībī’s identity and what impelled him to take such a risky step be left unclear. For this one should turn to the last element of the Siyar al-muluk, that is, to the qasidas which finishes it.

7. The Qasida in Praise of the Sultan in Maliks Shah

Since the qasida is quite informative, it is necessary to prove that it is the work of the “scribe” and the first editor with Durke’s point of view to the “scribe’s” story of the text’s compilation, could not in silence pass over the fact that the note of the same “scribe” exists in the foreword of the latter edition (see above). According to the author of this book 23516 (with a reference to the Urmiyya protocol of 654/1258) held at the British Library, and which Birsi N. Chirori also notes, the author used the poem to determine the date of publication of the Siyar al-muluk and to clarify the status of Muhammad Maghrībī, but then said: “This qasida is excluded in the Russian translation as it has no connection with the work ascribed to Nizām al-Mulk, and is therefore possible later addition” [36]. Unfortunately, Zakhorov’s example was followed by other publishers, who stopped publishing the qasida together with the text of the Siyar al-muluk. It simply vanished from researchers’ view for more than one hundred years. Darke, for example, did not even mention it in both editions of his translation.

In my opinion, the qasida is “late” as the chapters added to the Siyar al-muluk. Out of 54 distiches (strophes) of the qasida, the text of this edition of the book, the following 26 are panegyrics for the sultan, the next 4 are intended to describe the poet, and the final 3 resume to praise the sultan. The verses in this edition of the book practically use the same phrasal turns which were used by Muhammad Maghrībī in the afterword on behalf of Nizām al-Mulk. As the text of the qasida will be required for a final identification of its author, it is reproduced here in full Persian original with a parallel English cliche. It has never been translated into English, and its Persian text in the edition of Schefer is difficult to find.

The Qasida in Praise of the Happy Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad b. Malik-shah

1. This book is a new, full of diverse pearls, or a garden wondrously adorned with diverse fruits.
2. A garden, if in the garden there is a place [for] calculating [the harvest],
3. Each chapter in it is like a tree [grown] from the foundation, its fruits are all wonderful, and its leaves are all choice.
4. It is a treasure full of marvels, and a full fruit of rarities, it is a scroll full of novelties, and a casket full of pearls.
5. Its roots are all united and its branches are all beneficent.
6. Its chapters all have meanings, and its interpretations all have educations.
7. There is seriousness [in] it, advice, wisdom, examples and narration, the tales in it are all safe, and the stories in it are countless.
8. Its style is flawless as and high as the Heavens, its meaning is like Venus, shining at dawn.
9. There are in it the custom, tradition and life of crown-keeping shahs, the arrangement of the kingdom and the people, the determination of good and evil.
10. You will clearly see it in description of the feast and the palace, you will find hidden in it a description of the battle and the power with aura.
11. The acquisition of property and belongings, the regulations of justice and religion, the organization of troops and the determination of time.
12. One can find in it the method of the wisher of evil and the wisher of good, the way of drawing benefit and the path of removing loss.
13. Every word and every meaning that are contained in its chapters are dearer than youth and sweeter than sugar.
14. It is free from sarcasm and innovation and purged of fancy, it is worthy as knowledge and as necessary as rain.
15. From reading it, bondmen will not overcome the reader [38], everyone will gain insight who will honour it with his sight.
16. From any speech which you recall, it has a sign, from any art whose name you mention, it has a trace.
8. The Scribe of the Private Writings of the Depository

a) From the words in the foreword and the afterward to the text, it follows that Maghrībi had the special and well-known status under Malikī, and it would not have surprised anyone if he appeared before the sulūn with a message from the grand wūzir. In other words, Maghrībi was very far from an ordinary scribe. The “private books” (‘al–‘adwa‘), or, more accurately, the “writings”, mentioned in the afterword to Nizām al-Mulk, should be understood as something like the “private correspondence” addressed directly to the sulūn; this translation of the word khamsa is confirmed by the Sulṭānī official correspondence which has already been published by many scholars [46]. Thus, on the one hand, Maghrībi had a position of the scribe of the correspondence addressed to Malikī.

b) On the other hand, the fact that the adresssee of the qazīda is the sulūn already says a lot. It is unlikely that someone “from off the street” would dare to write, and, what is more, would bring to the sulūn a panegyric knowing that there was a whole staff of the state poets in the service of the throne, especially from the verses of Mu‘īzzī, and from the work of his colleagues at court. And if this is the case, then between them there was a certain exchange of work and duties. Some sources, panegyrics exclusively in Arabic, some only written in Persian. The circle of officials praised was also supposed to be distributed among poets. Stated differently, to praise the top officials of the state in Persian, and Mu‘īzzī, as far as I know, wrote exclusively in Farsi, could and should have only been the head of the department of poets.

9. A Vanished Dot

The most interesting thing is that Mu‘īzzī did not intend to hide his name under a false name in the afterword to the Siyar al-mulākī. On the contrary, he modestly, for his addressee was the sulūn, but firmly named himself, giving his name in the afterword on behalf of Nizām al-Mulk. And the scribes of the text later made an error or a mere slip of the pen. Or there was a fateful coincidence which later influenced all future study and understanding of this forged compilation. Just one lower dot disappeared! It was blurred from two into one or was erased. This can happen. The letter ی, which in the Middle Ages was written under the influence of the norm of Arabic orthography in the final position usually with two dots (ی), turned into the combination ی (ٰ). And the upper point was always “floating”, not firmly fixed to its place. Or, encountering the combination ی, a medieval scribe did not see another choice but to put the point closer to the previous letter or exactly above it, transforming the letter ی into ی. But after centuries, a new scribe could put a dot exactly under the letter ی.
The results of comparison

a) I have corrected two bays of the qasida in the Siyar al-malik based on the text of Ma'rizi's another qasida which was written by him, according to 'Abbâs Iqbal's opinion [48], within the period from 477/1084 to 487/1094 for a son of Nizâm al-Mulk — Mu'ayyid al-Mulk (born ca. 444/1052–3 — killed 494/1100/1) [49], i.e. at least ten years before the date which the qasida in the Siyar al-malik refers to.

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|}
\hline
\text{The qasida in praise of the happy suqûn Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad b. Malik-shâh} & \\
\text{(from the Siyâsat-nâmâ / Siyar al-malik)} & \\
\hline
28 & \text{محمّد بن زهير بن علي بن المحترم المخنثي} \\
39 & \text{وزارت بر مزقت لسیم لکری} \\
52 & \text{وہ را بحب وہوا تر لویس صدر} \\
68 & \text{مکہ مکرمہ} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

Comparing the two qasidas, I here gave the 28th—29th bays of the qasida from the Siyar al-malik in the uncorrected version of Schefler, who refused to translate them because of their lack of meaning. In the panegyric written for Mu'ayyid al-Mulk, the meaning becomes clear.

b) The expression "thirty years of service" (سال سردم), used in the 48th bay of the qasida from the Siyar al-malik, is encountered again in the 44th bay of the qasida by Ma'rizi dedicated to the malik Sanjar, and is not encountered again among any poets (f), as it applies to a fact from the personal biography of Mu'irzî.

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|}
\hline
\text{The qasida in praise of the malik Sanjar} & \\
\text{(from the dwayne of Mu'irzî)} & \\
\hline
24 & \text{محمّد بن زهیر بن علي بن المحترم} \\
38 & \text{وزارت بر مزقت لسیم لکری} \\
44 & \text{تاریخ سیم بنا خان دی جو مکرمہ} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]
c) Following the proposed methodology, one surprisingly faces the fact that, in early Persian poetry, the combination of words "knowledge and bravery" (sadra e pszand) as a trait of the Shīʿa īmām ʿAlī b. ʿAbī Tālib is only used in the qāṣida from the Ṣiyār al-mulāk (in the 32nd bayāt), in a qāṣida by Muʿīzzi dedicated to the wazīrship of Shīrāz al-Dīn Saʿd b. ʿAbī Ḥaddūb. The qāṣida praises the ways of the wazīr and his court, and particularly his love for learning and knowledge.

Another piece of evidence, which, nevertheless, may seem indirect, is the Ḥanībī 23 MS from the collection of the National Library of Russia that was already mentioned above. The qāṣida by Muʿīzzi is absent from it. But, at the very beginning of the foreword, after the traditional "and thereafter" (amin ba'd) a text follows in the form of rhymed prose (figs. 1—2), praising the ṣulṭān (d. 25.01.516/05.04.1122), and in the verses of the renowned Ḥanīfī poet Nāṣir b. Khurasan, who shows the attitude of those poets to the īmām. Nāṣir b. Khurasan (394/1003—481/1088) was a slightly earlier contemporary of Muʿīzzi, but he could not have written a panegyric to the ʿalāʾi of Muʿīzzi.

**Table 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congratulatory qāṣida on the occasion of the wazīrship of Shīrāz al-Dīn Saʿd b. ʿAbī Ḥaddūb (from the divān of Muʿīzzi) [52]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 qāṣida by Muʿīzzi, which also belong to Muʿīzzi and are part of a large qāṣida included in his divān. However, the present tense of the verb in the qāṣida was replaced with the past tense in the manuscript. Perhaps by the author himself?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Table 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The qāṣida in praise of the sulṭān Mālik-shāh (from the divān of Muʿīzzi) [53]</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 qāṣida by Muʿīzzi, which also belong to Muʿīzzi and are part of a large qāṣida included in his divān. However, the present tense of the verb in the qāṣida was replaced with the past tense in the manuscript. Perhaps by the author himself?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. The shadow of the Worshipped — Mālik-shāh, the sun of the Khurasanīs [i.e., emperors].

The monarch who achieves what he desires and the pādshāh who nurses desires.

His justice in the world was a sun which does not find a sunset.

His rule in the world is a sea which does not find a limit.

Perhaps, then, in the first sentence of the first chapter of this copy, which also starts with rhymed prose (fig. 3), the word "book" should be read with the Persian yā-yi idāfā, connecting the speaker with the compiler of the book, and not with Nizām al-Mulk himself?

Then ʿaybī says:

Thus speaks the compiler (muʿallif) of the book of Nizām al-Mulk-wastiʿr... |

Zakhdher, comparing Scheffer's text with this copy, translated the phrase without yā-yi idāfā, also leaving out both "book" and "compiler", so in his translation we have: "thus speaks Nizām al-Mulk-wastiʿr..." [54]. Furthermore, following the rhymed text of the muʿallif, a bayāt is given praising the wazīr (fig. 4), which Nizām al-Mulk could not naturally have done himself.

In my opinion, these evidences are quite sufficient to rule out any doubt that the qāṣida from the Ṣiyār al-mulāk was written by Muḥammad Muʿīzzi. Thus, it was he who was the first publisher of the Ṣiyār al-mulāk and who worked on the text of the edition, trying his hand out as a prose writer, although quite illegally.

10. Date of Composition of the Qāṣida

Qāṣidas were written by medieval court poets, usually for some memorable dates, in order to record them in history, as well as the events connected with them and the participation in them by praised individuals: the receiving of a title, a birthday, reign on the throne, day of victory over the enemy, etc., which naturally did not rule out "extra-curricular" work by the court literary circle. But in our case, the date of composition of the qāṣida may be named quite unambiguously, based on the text. Judge for yourself: the 22nd bayāt, with which the praise of the sulṭān begins, talks of his victory over a certain enemy; the 36th bayāt sketches the enemy in more detail, mentioning rebels and the danger from them, which was eliminated by the sulṭān; the 43rd bayāt talks of the soul of the enemy,
A. KHUSHMATI, IN The Art of Medieval Counterfeiting

The poets did not receive any complaints [from the sovereign], but he got angry with Mu‘azz Rızâ, ordering him to be sent to Hind in 1957, because he was said to have written a poem and given copies of it to the sultan in 1956. There were two byars in this qasida: your enemies were ants, but became snakes! When a poet whose name is as quickly as you can!
Do not give them any more money and don’t waste time [in vain].
If a snake is given time, it will become a dragon!
This poor man gave excellent counsel, although he was obtrusive. Poets ought not [to behave themselves] thus with rules [56].
But under the name of a great wazir, whose status meant that he was allowed to give counsel, one could consider oneself a secret counselor to the sultan, and indulge one’s vanity. The fact that Mu‘izz was inclined to rule and advise, drawn to this from his youth, is shown by his early verses, which he wrote when he had just begun his official duties as the Commander of Poets.

For me the writing of my own rescrit is better than a own — present [157].
The second reason assumes the direct involvement of Mu‘izz in the political events of the time, when any person living at the time could be judged by one main criterion — his attitude to the rebellious Ismâ’ils. Many

In 1361/1892 in Tbriz, a reprinted edition of the Na‘fis al-mulk by al-Ghazalli came out as a part of the large publication by Jalâl al-Din Hamî [59]. The key question, which the late Hamî examined in his study of the Na‘fis al-mulk, was the authenticity of the second part of the work (hereafter N2M), i.e., the seven chapters that follow the so-called “foreword,” or the first part (hereafter N1M). To avoid unnecessary repetitions, I will only outline Hamî’s main pro and contra arguments on al-Ghazalli’s authorship of N2M with my brief comments on them [60].

Arguments pro. The only weighty arguments in favour of N2M being written by al-Ghazalli, which Hamî gives, are the mention of the composite composition of the Na‘fis al-mulk as a model of medieval literary criticism written almost a century after its author’s death, and also the appearance of its Arabic translation under the title al-Thâbit al-Nâfis al-Mulk as early as the second half of the 6th / 12th century.

Arguments contra. a) In no work by al-Ghazalli there are so many verses as in N2M, especially verses in Farsi. In the extensive Farsi text of the Khamsa-i yi sad, verses are only concentrated in the eighth and ninth parts of the second ruba “Etiquette of Sâmâ and Wajd,” and as

Iranians took their side to one degree or another, seeing, and frequently feeling the consequences of the endless interminable wars of the Sâlahû Turks in the battle for power. The court poets, in charging the sultân with an end to the interminable wars. And thanks to his military successes in the confrontation of the Ismâ’ils by Isfahân, a considerable period of time on the side of the Sâlahûs. The key role in the captivity of the fortress of Shâhîzâd was not played by the sultân himself, but by his wazir — Sa‘d al-Mulk Sa‘d b. Muhammad al-Shirazi. Al-Shirazi was evidently a gifted politician and military leader. An Iranian by birth and a šâhi-ite of the Isfahân school by belief, the wazir, despite his clear ambitions to destroy the Ismâ’ils, was falsely accused by the supreme judge of Isfahân of sympathies for them. Some time later, the sultân gave an order to hang the wazir [58]. It was in connection with the victory over the fortress of Shâhîzâd that Mu‘izz was supposed to appear before the sultân with his anti-Ismâ’ilî, and generally anti-šâhi-ite treatment.

As the second section of this article will show, to counterfeit a book during the Sâlahû era, when the battle between the Sâlahûs and the Ismâ’îls was waged with varied success on all fronts, was not an unusual practice. Nor was it unusual to draft a venerable scholar or statesman into the political bickering against his will both during his life and after his death by editing his works and notes on them with selfish, ideological, or other motives.

II. The Na‘fis al-mulk

Preamble

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Zoroastrian, pre-Islamic history of Iran. He did not need to be one. For his scholarly activity it was sufficient to know that, in addition to his traditional and the enormous body of Muslim sciences. Judge for yourself: in the entire huge text of the Riyâ' al-ulamâ‘ al-din, a specific Zoroastrian ruler, namely, Aštâr-virân, is only mentioned once (t), in the context of a meeting of a Persian wise man and a Rûm philosopher, which took place in his presence and at which he only asked both of them one question: "Who is the best of men?" In NM2, this name is encountered dozens of times, along with the names of other Zoroastrian rulers and waqfs. In the Kını-qâ-yi sa‘adet, written in Persian and for Iranians, the only Zoroastrian mentioned (t) is Buzyurji, known to the Arabs as Buzyurjum. These are definitive statistics, which can be clearly seen from the indices to the Persian editions and with which one can hardly argue.

d) In all of the stories given in NM2, the author praises the Zoroastrians and their waqfs, which does not correspond to al-Ghazâlî’s views set forth in works which he wrote after his spiritual rebirth, that is, after the month of Dîsh al-Qa‘da 488 / November 1095, when he left his position at the Bughdâd al-Nâmîma and began to wander as a darvîsh. His views on this issue are reflected in the fourth chapter from the fourth fundamental (safah) of the second pillar (rîh) of the Kını-qâ-yi sa‘adet. As far as the author of NM2 knows, the writing of Zoroastrianism and the people of the Persian laity (afghânis) is far from al-Ghazâlî’s attitude to this topic.

e) The same goes for the constant pastime of the pîydâkhân in playing backgammon and chess, wine-drinking, ball games and hunting, because it distracts him from his affairs, and every affair has its time... [61]

In other words, according to the author of NM2, this can be any other way but with the pronoun "we" (sometimes "ti"), and in the third person, using the expression "the owner of the book = author of the book" says:

1. Portrait of the author of NM2

Thus the evidences discussed above give us the following clues, as the author of NM2, which has never been singled out by Crane. To sum up: a) age — "a younger contemporary of al-Ghazâlî"; b) professional background — "not an âlam at all, still less a scholar; not a religious source, not even a political authority; an Iranian, more precisely an Iranian nationalistic"; d) confessional priorities — Zoroastrianism; e) formal religious status — "a Sunni, possibly a Hanîfî"; f) occupation — "presumably a secretary" (dâhir) [67].

To think it is needed that even if al-Ghazâlî refers to himself in the third person singular, he prefers to use one of the two forms of reference most common in medieval Muslim writings, i.e. mawâni‘, to connect his exegesis with one of the two forms of reference most common in medieval Muslim writings, i.e. mawâni‘, he uses only a few other forms of reference to himself (see below).

I have only given the main 8 of the 11 arguments by Humâ‘î against NM2 being written by al-Ghazâlî. The remaining three concern a lexical analysis of the expres-
sions far‘-y-zâdî, may-yas-râwân and two Arabic byâns.

Additional arguments contra: All these contra arguments have been stated and confirmed by P. Crane over twenty years ago, and were recently discussed by N. Pourjavady [64]. In addition to that, Crane has examined the discrepancies between the two parts in terms of the religious and ideological background of their authors in respect of: the shâr‘i (Whoever the author of NM2 may have been, he had neither professional knowledge of the shâr‘i nor a strong commitment to it), the fâte (The author of NM2 also subscribes to un-Islamic ideas in respect of fame), the fâte (The author of NM2 also subscribes to completely un-Islamic ideas in respect of fame), and the shâr‘i (The classification of women adopted in the Riyâ‘ and NM2 are different), styles and linguistic manner ("al-Ghazâlî... refers to himself twice in NM2, on both occasions to say that he has dealing with the subject at greater length else-
where..."

One can add to the last point that at the beginning of the sâde of the Kını-qâ-yi sa‘adet, the Khân and the Kını-qâ-yi sa‘adet, al-Ghazâlî always mentions the headings of the chapters and their number, while the author of NM2 does not say a single word about the religious and ideological background of their authors in respect of: the shâr‘i, the fâte, and the shâr‘i (The classification of women adopted in the Riyâ‘ and NM2 are different), styles and linguistic manner ("al-Ghazâlî... refers to himself twice in NM2, on both occasions to say that he has dealing with the subject at greater length elsewhere..."

Furthermore, if NM1 consists almost entirely of excerpts from the Kını-qâ-yi sa‘adet and the Riyâ‘, then why in the seven chapters of NM2 does the author resort to other sources? If it should be stated that al-Ghazâlî, composing brief works in the genre of risâla, at least in Farsi, did not take information from new sources, but for each subsequent tâṣîf used work that had already written, each time arranging the material differently depending on the topic announced, while Humâ‘î in his researchingles out at least eleven works which were not written by the imâm but were used by the unknown author to compile NM2 [66].

As for a weak commitment to the shâr‘i, to me it also seems impossible and superfluous similarity with, and especially al-Ghazâlî, would acquit a counterfeiter of falsifying a letter, as this was done by the author of NM2 in its fourth chapter (see the beginning of the article).

Author of NM2

In his research, Humâ‘î on several occasions refers to the Sîyâr al-mulûk as one of the main sources used in compiling NM2.

Throughout the Sîyâhî al-mulûk which consists of two parts — the foreword and seven chapters, 16 stories, pre-
cepts and counsel are taken from the Sîyâr al-mulûk. Two of them are in the first part, and the rest of them are in the second especially those given in the second part are quite obvious and clearly taken directly from the Sîyâhî al-mulûk, since in many places the expressions of the two books are identical and coincide word-for-word [72].

Since the Sîyâhî al-mulûk was written after the Sîyâr al-mulûk, Humâ‘î suggested that al-Ghazâlî used the âlûf of Nîzâm al-Mulûk for his own work, in other words, he borrowed 16 accounts from it, 14 of which were used in NM2, and even once directly referred to the Sîyâr al-mulûk [73]. As for the two accounts which oc-
cur in NM1, the first one has just a superficial similarity with the one given in the Sîyâr al-mulûk. In NM1, the narrator is "Abd Allâh b. ‘Abîr al-‘âs, a companion of the prophet, and the account includes a description of his dream in which the late caliph ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭîb. At the end of the story, the latter says that it took twelve years for him to be questioned, however he gives no rea-
son to believe that a similar story was cited by al-Ghazâlî both in the Kını-qâ-yi and in the Fâdi‘î al-bâ’jamîyâ, as well as in one of his letters (see below, letter 2), while in the Sîyâr al-mulûk, the visionary nar-
native is attributed to ‘Abd Allâh, a son of the late ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭîb. The latter explains that the reason for this delay was that hearing the story had fallen from an unpaired bridge in Baghdad [74].

The second account in NM1 deals with a deaf Chinese ruler and oc-

curs also in the Kını-qâ-yi sa‘adet. In both these books, the story is told to the unknown caliph called ‘Abîr al-‘âs, a known name whose names (the caliph al-Mansûr and Ibn al-Muhayjir) are given by al-Ghazâlî in relation to the same story in his Kını-qâ-yi sa‘adet, which confirms before the compilation of the Sîyâhî al-mulûk where the account plainly taken from the oral tradition, is reticent in de-
scribing the narrator, his addresser and the ruler’s orig-

Thus, the key points concern just the 14 accounts which are identical both in NM2 and in the Sîyâr al-mulûk.

Humâ‘î’s viewpoint on the correlation between the two texts and their authors remains the predominant one today. Although there is much doubt whether the modern understanding of borrowing is appropriate for medieval al-Ghazâlî and tsâkîfî, nevertheless such a conclusion could chronologically be seen as quite reasonable, and one could agree with it. But this case is an exception. It is impossible to imagine the argument of Islam (hâlî al-‘âs) or a mukhalif of respectable age, already known in all the corners of the Islamic world, copying excerpts from the compilation of an essentially secular work, even if this eminent figure were his fellow countryman or friend. Applied to the situation today, it would mean that a religious figure of high rank (cardinal, archbishop or imâm), already advanced in years and working on a religious work, could draw on a report / book by the prime minister of his country. This seems absurd to me. So, one should look more closely at NM1 as a work of some not unambiguously composed by al-Ghazâlî.
The historical circumstances related to the writing of NM give little information to definitely clarify the authorship of NM2. However, they do indicate several important things. When NM was written, the reason for its writing, its addresser and the location where the text may have been edited. The first three of the letters, addressed by al-Ghazālī to state religious figures of the time, gathered evidences by the author’s grandparents (al-Ghazālī did not have any sons), and published by ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abdāl ‘Azīzī, present a brief chronology of the events preceding the writing of NM1 as follows:

In 503/1110, one and a half years before his death, al-Ghazālī stopped working at the Niṣābūr’s al-Nizāmīyā, and decided to resign. He was invited there by the wāzīr al-malik Sanjar, Fakhr al-Mulk b. ‘Abdāl ‘Azīzī, with an invitation that he refused to accept any further as evidently related to the imām’s age. In 503/1110 he was only 53 years old. Al-Ghazālī and his return to public life after eleven years of wandering and seclusion began to be surrounded by intrigues, perhaps not without the hidden involvement of the Imām’s, whose teachings al-Ghazālī once spent a great deal of effort in debunking. Evidently, the situation only worsened after the murder of his patron, Fakhr al-Mulk, committed by an ‘Imāmī. A treatise, dated back to the time of al-Ghazālī’s studenthood in Niṣābūr (473/1080–478/1083), was now being criticized by his opponents. Essentially, it was a 30-year-old court. In that time, al-Ghazālī called it “The Stilted from a Note-book to the Fundamentals [al Fiqh al-Mukhtār al-Maṣbūh]” (al-Maṣbūh). At the end of it, there were two pages of blank examples from the mażhabī of Abī Ḥanīfa on issues of ritual cleansing, prayer, violence, theft, etc. selected either imām himself or intentionally added by his fierce rivals as shown below. Letter 3). These two pages were brought to the malik Sanjar, and al-Ghazālī was accused of discrediting the Sunnites in general and the Īmāmīs in particular. As a result, al-Ghazālī was summoned to a messenger to Sanjar’s headquarters. In response, the imām wrote a letter to Sanjar asking to be exempted from visiting the headquarters on account of a promise or a vow he gave on the grave of the prophet ‘Ībrahīm in Palestine not to visit any rulers, not to take anything from them, not to take part in disputes with scholars, etc.

Letter 1

May the Worshipped Most High do the maṣūl of Islam to avail himself of the low world, and then, in the Hereafter, may he be given such a Kingdom that the Kingdom on earth would seem to him contemptible and limited! For the matter of rule has an end. The Kingdom on earth is not more than from East to West, and, in most states, human life in the low world is no more than 60 years. However, that a Kingdom in the Kingdom, and Most High in the Kingdom, the Hereafter, is just a clod [of clay]. And all the earth provinces are just dust and dirt from this clod. How much do a clod and dust of a clod cost? And among the Pre-existence, Eternity and Everlasting Kingdom, what is the measure of 100 years, that it must be rejeined in? Have a high ambition, as your destiny, fortune and origin are high. Do not be content with less than the Everlasting Kingdom from God Most High. It is hard for all the laymen, but for the maṣūl of the East [76] it is easy, for the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless and greet him, says: “One day of justice from a just suflīn is worth a worship for 60 years” [77]. Since the Worshipped Most High and Glorious and High gave you such equipment and tools that you can fulfill in one day what another can do in 60 years, then what destiny and what fortune can surpass this? Consider the state of the low world as it is, so that it becomes limited in your eyes. For the great said: “If the low world was a perishable golden pitcher, and the Hereafter was a perishable golden pitcher, then a reasonable man would have preferred the perishable clay pitcher to the perishable golden pitcher. How’s that? If the low world itself is a perishable clay pitcher and the Hereafter is a perishable golden pitcher? How can anyone be reasonable if he chooses the low world?” [78] Think about this example well and constantly keep it before your eyes. For today it came to the limit when the justice of one hour is equal to a worship for 100 years.

Be merciful to the people of Jīrān, who have already suffered many deprivation. The grain spoilt due to cold and drought, the centuries-old trees died up to their roots, and every rustic has nothing left but a sheepskin with a handful of hungry and naked kids. If he gives his consent for the sheepskin to be taken off his back, so that in winter he nakedly gets into an oven (wār).[80] “Every creation makes a sayings in the language of the statues. The statues have said: ‘O al-Malik! O lustre of your eyes! O dear child! Be careful and be careful once more! For if you find out what we have come to and what horrors we have seen, then you will not go to sleep satisfied any night again, having even one hungry person among your subjects, you will never put any clothes on at your wish, having even one naked person among your subjects, and you will never find any treasury except the one that would be offered to you on the Day of Resurrection, for the counsel of the Qur’a an is as follows: “So he who has done a whitt’s weight of good shall see it, and he who has done a whitt’s weight of evil shall see it” [87]. You will once again see all your deeds whitt after whitt.”

Now I have heard that an indication has been given by the High Majlis to attend [it]. For the sake of this order I came to the mażhabī of the imām Rāfi’, and keeping the promise to Khālīf, may peace be upon him, I did not come to the headquarters. At this mażhabī I said: “O child of the Messenger [the imām Rāfi’] Be an intercessor so that in the kingdom of the low world, the Worshipped Most High do the maṣūl of Islam through the rank of his fathers, and in the Kingdom of the Hereafter, brings him to the rank of Sūlānāyīn, may peace be upon him, who was both a ruler and a prophet. Help him to maintain respect for the promise to ‘Ībrahīm-Khālīf, may peace be upon him, and not to distress the heart of the one who avowed his face from people and turned it, may God Most High exalt his deeds, towards you!” I considered this to be more worthy and acceptable for the High Majlis than to appear personally and bodily, for that official action is useless, while this one is an action which faces God Most High. If it should be worthy, then welcome [here]. If there should follow any order to oppose it, then I, if necessary, will obey this order, not taking on responsibility for breaking the promises. The tā’līf of the Mażhabī assembly is as it forces the base to bear. May the base not come to utter that which tomorrow, on the Day of Resurrection, will not cause shame, and which today will not cause weakness and break-down in Islam. Peace be with you! [81]

According to the compiler who gathered al-Ghazālī’s collection and commented on several historical events which have caused the writing of the letters, when Sanjar received this letter, he wanted to go personally to al-Ghazālī, as the distance from the sanjar’s headquarters to the mażhabī of the imām Rāfi’ was not long, and the road was easy [82]. However, invited by ill-wishers and intrigued with the exciting stories told by al-Ghazālī’s defenders at the court, he sent another messenger, ordering al-Ghazālī to come to the headquarters himself. Al-Ghazālī did so, thus breaking the promise not by his own free will, but made a speech at the reception. Sanjar asked him to write down the speech with his own handwriting (see the 1st section of the article) and give it to him. The imām returned to ‘Ībānī and fulfilled the request. Thus another letter to Sanjar appeared which essentially is a record by al-Ghazālī of his speech at the reception.

Letter 2

In the name of Allah, the All-Merciful and Gracious!

Praise to Allah, the Lord of worlds! May blessing and peace be upon His best creation, Muhammad and all his kin! “The Earth has no need of beauty except against the oppression of the Nāṣīrīs.”

Long live the maṣūl of Islam! The tradition of Muslim scholars, when they come to the maṣūl of the maṣūl of Islam, is to expound a decision consisting of four things: a prayer, compliment, council and elimination of needs.

As for the phrase (wāh), according to my mażhabī, it is preferable to raise the hands in complete solace at night and speak the true Most High in secret. For everything that happens openly is mixed with hypocrisy. But in the presence of the True Most Great and Glorious, and everything insincere and hypocritical is not acceptable.

As for the compliment (wāh), to speak it is also a distortion, as the sun has absolutely no need for one to point with one’s finger in high and low traditions: “A wāh does not need any definition.” When beauty reaches the limit of perfection, the market (for the service of a beauteous [wāh]) [85] breaks down, and the hands of the beauteous have nothing to do. The goal of compliment is to extol deeds. But how can one extol the Great Presence (Hadrat), for whom everything that is considered by somebody to be an acme, peak and superiority in the world is a gown received from one of the Īmāmīs of this Hadrat? The mażhabī is only the soul and expression of need.

As for the counsel (wāh) to the government which writes rescripts in no other way but on behalf of the Hadrat Mustafā, may the most worthy blessings and perfect greetings be upon him, he has said: “I left you two preceptors — the silent one and the articulate one. The silent one is death, the articulate one is the Qur’a an.”

Look at what our government says: “Every creation makes a saying in the language of the statues. The statues have said: ‘O al-Malik! O lustre of your eyes! O dear child! Be careful and be careful once more! For if you find out what we have come to and what horrors we have seen, then you will not go to sleep satisfied any night again, having even one hungry person among your subjects, you will never put any clothes on at your wish, having even one naked person among your subjects, and you will never find any treasury except the one that would be offered to you on the Day of Resurrection, for the counsel of the Qur’a an is as follows: “So he who has done a whitt’s weight of good shall see it, and he who has done a whitt’s weight of evil shall see it” [87]. You will once again see all your deeds whitt after whitt.”

As for the speech (wāh) and night make up twenty four hours. Every slave will be offered his deeds in the form of twenty four treasuries. One he will see filled with shining and light, and this will be the hour of his worship and obedience. His heart will attain such joy that Paradise will become limited in it. It will arise from the contentment of the True Most High. He will be offered another treasury, an empty one, and it will be the hour of his caretenseness, sleepless attandance and needs. His heart will be free of all evil and he will be offered another one, full of darkness, and this will be the hour of sin. His heart will feel such fear and horror that he will say: “It would be better that I was never created!”

A. KHMIS MATULI, The Art of Medieval Counterfeiting
As far as rationalistic knowledge is concerned, it is not surprising that someone may have objections to, since in my speeches, there are a lot of strange and difficult things to be read of everyone's understanding. However, I am alone. It is easy for me to understand everything said by me and to fulfil my obligation. But as for the story told that I have allegedly inveigled against the imām Abī Hanīfa, may Allah have mercy on him, I cannot bear this. By Allah, the Exacting, the Dominating, the Preeminent, the Eternally Living Except Whom there is no god, my persuasion is that the imām Abī Hanīfa, may Allah have mercy on him, was the most profound diver of the com- mune of Muqaddams, may Allah bless him, who tells everything else about my conviction or about what I have written or said is lying. The purpose is for these words to become known, and the purpose is for you to exempt me from teaching at Nāṣībāt and Tsū that so I would go into my cell of calm, since at the present time my speeches will not be borne. Peace be with you! [99]

Upon receiving the text of the speech, Sanjār sent the author a hunting trophy that he had haggled himself as a sign of his attention and favour. I gratefully appreciated this attention (as the hunting trophy, unlike any other presents from rulers, is considered the sharī‘a to be absolutely allowed if, of course, the hunting was carried out in the person's own territory and without the use of illegally obtained weapons, which is difficult to suspect Sanjār of doing), and composed NMI in reply. At the end of the text, he gave a brief explanation on the chronology of events connected with the treatise he wrote in his youth, al-Maṣāḥīḥ min ma‘ṣūl al-ṣalāḥ. In this exploration, he explained that Sanjār that ill-wishers tried to gain his written permission on the backs of his two Arabic works, the autobiographical “The Deliverance from Delusions” (al-Munḥiqāt min al-ṣalāḥ) and “The Niche of Light” (Mīghāl al-anwār), distorting their text beforehand and trying to make authorized copies (ṣalāḥ) with them. This “explanatory note” or “covering letter” attached to NMI can also be considered as another letter by al-Ghazālī to Sanjār.}

L e t t e r 3

It happened that in 499 [≈ 1100] the writer of these words, al-Ghazālī, after he had spent twelve years in seclusion (ṣalāḥ) and staying in his cell (ṣalāḥ), undertook to go to Nāṣībāt and to occupy himself in diffusing knowledge and propagating the sharī‘a, since languor and exhaustion have penetrated into the matter of knowledge. Then the hearts of the venerable ones among lords of the harems of the princes came to him to his aid: exhorting him and regaling him so that such a motion would be the starting-point for charities and the reason for knowledge and the sharī‘a to be revived [98].

After consent was given and teaching became lively, and knowledge seekers began moving from all over the world, envious people rose out of envy. They did find no acceptable inveigher other than to make a falsification (ṣalāḥ). They changed several phrasing and made copies of the books al-Dīn Abī Ḥādīl and the book Mīghāl al-anwār and sold them under the name of the books, and I went to court to sue them. The Worthymost Most Glorious and High by His mercy and generosity inspired me to study them and realize their falsification.

This then happened because I was overcome with fear of the Lord. Then he [= the former] went to the headquarters of the maṣāḥīḥ of Islam and loosened his tongue of inveigve, but was exhausted by this. Then he [= he looked] a notebook that I had compiled in my childhood and had written al-Maṣāḥīḥ min ma‘ṣūl al-ṣalāḥ on the back of it. Thirty years before this, some people out of envy already added it to some phrases of invective against the Imam Abī Ḥādīl.

Then some religious people said compliments to this beseeching (ṣalāḥ), explaining the situation of the maṣāḥīḥ of Islam and exaggerating it so much that the maṣāḥīḥ of Islam said: “We wish to see him, listen to him and be blessed by his prayer”. Then, according to the tradition, we immediately went to the maṣāḥīḥ of the Imām Ridā. Then the maṣāḥīḥ of Islam sent the supreme judge Mahmūd to the mahfūz, who being one of the elites of the Ḥadīḍ, and a state counsellor, was in fact a bilateral assistant (ṣalāḥ) nominally and substantially, with the message of a desire to meet. Then we had to go to the headquarters of Turāghī, to the throne of maṣāḥīḥ and pray for him. Then there was an order to confirm with our own handwriting what has happened. In compliance with the order, what has happened in fact was confirmed [97].

Thus, the place of action and the circumstances which prompted al-Ghazālī to the three letters, and also their contents, certainly show that the Nihāyat al-maṣāḥīḥ was written by the author in gratitude for the hunting trophy sent to him by Sanjār. And the addressee of the text for the three letters is his brother Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muhammad Tapār b. Malīk-Allāh. Although the latter was nominally considered the supreme ruler of the entire Sajjā state, but in fact until his death on 17 July 1194 / 24 July 1194, the Christians and the western territories with the capital in Isfahān and barely intervened in domestic problems in Kūhistan. His name appears in the forewords to Arabic translations of the work and raises additional questions.

There is another indirect piece of evidence which throws some light on the size of the text and its ad- dressers. Both in the commentaries given by the compiler of al-Ghazālī’s correspondence and in the text of NMI itself, an expression is used which does not seem to be remarkable in any way and under other circumstances would be self-evident:

Sanjār’s words transmitted by the compiler: }

As for the prin...
Now we have a request for you to write down this decision, which came from [your lips], with your own handwriting, so that it can be read to us and we can send its copy everywhere...[98]

The words of al-Ghazzali in NM1:

When the sun rises, tell someone to read this writing [book] to you and read it again every Friday until it stays in your memory [99].

Of course, there is nothing unrealistic in the fact that medieval sultans could have correspondence received read to them by third parties. But by Sanjar’s own admission in a letter published by ‘Abd al-‘Ishāq, he was absolutely illiterate, i.e., he could not read and write, which

4. Reason for the Compilation of NM2 and Its Addition to NM1

Humādi’s critical edition of the Persian text of the Naṣīrīyat al-mulkī is based on seven manuscripts, three of which contain only the first part. The Arabic translation of the work, which was also included by Humādi in his publication, does not have the second part also. The situation with the separate existence of NM1 under its current preservation in the preserved Persian NM2 under different titles in the Arabic translation along with the text of NM2 in Arabic under another title as a work of its own and the “full” version of the Naṣīrīyat al-mulkī text is complicated. The manuscript entitled al-Thar al-malākī fi Naṣīrīyat al-mulkī has already been described by Crane, and recently discussed by Pourjavadi. The fact made both of them to conclude that NM2, an originally Persian compilation, is from the manuscripts of Shamsī and this author has been added to NM1 in the second half of the sixteenth/seventeenth century. Pourjavadi is implicitly inclined to suggest that it was coincidentally made by an early medieval scribe for “such kind of complements made by scribes is also seen in the writings by other authors” [101], while Crane asserts explicitly that NM2 as “in its textual content or its intended use” was intended by a medieval forger to NM1 and attributed to al-Ghazzali within a short period of his death [102]. As this seems to be hardly possible that al-Ghazzali’s name was used coincidentally and unintentionally, her assertion is more convincing although she doesn’t explain what the word “practical” implies in the case in question.

It does not look unreasonable to suppose that the writing of NM2 was preceded by a certain historical event which ultimately prompted the author of NM2 to consider the matter worthwhile and in its context, make a general impression that an addresser of NM2 has faced a problem of choice, and NM2 tries to help him in solving the problem. Its first chapter mostly proposes behaviors of the three main center counties to be taken as a sample to follow. The second chapter shows a difference between the worthy and unworthy warriors and distinguishes the kind of Niẓām al-Mulk (12-24) as the worthiest ones to be preferred for the most [103].

The shortest third chapter, which concerns secretaries (shabīrīn) and their art, is obviously aimed to implicitly praise the author himself and his skill thus demonstrating how many things he knows and how worthy he is. The next one, filled with different stories, describes the meanings of hāmmār understood by the author as magi- nousness, liveliness and tenacity of rulers and waṣīrs and their relations with their subjects. Nobody without these qualities should take lessons from his waṣīrs and naḍīms. The fifth chapter presents quite a long list of sayings and maxims, related to the above phrase, with short ad hominem and expressions, this one seems to have no word said by the author himself. The sixth chapter deals with the subject of intelligence, which was of great importance in Islam and in the context of NM1. The seventh chapter concludes with the suggestion that everyone should take lessons from all his predecessors and other rulers in their approach to making decisions. Finally, the seven-chapter work is wholly dedicated to women. It has a remarkable concluding section with the author’s recommendations on choosing a wife and giving a daughter in marriage.

The author of NM2 thus concludes: to rule as the just Zoroastrian monarch, one needs a capable monarch, a wise and competent waṣīr, a desirable daughter, and an appointed waṣīr, to appreciate this: to be lavish in giving your servants (first of all, this author), to be a wise man, to take the precaution not to trust too much oneself, and intelligence, to act in contrast with women’s advice, “to take precautions in choosing a wife and giving a daughter in marriage, especially a grown-up daughter, and so avoid falling into disgrace and embarrassment” [104].

Two events in the later period of the Saljūq history seem to make clear the phrasing of the conclusions made by the author of NM2. In 518/1124, Sanjar was given his daughter Mahbūb Mahkūt to marry his nephew Niẓām, a son of his late brother Ghiyāḥ al-Dīn Muḥammad, and issued another order to Marād as a future successor to the throne. This was made at the insistence of Tāj al-Dīn Khānji, Sanjar’s son and Mahmūd’s grandson. A year earlier, Niẓām had killed his prime waṣīr Shams al-Mulk (Rahb al-awwal 517/ May

1123), the fifth son of Niẓām al-Mulk, by order of his powerful uncle and left himself without a prime waṣīr for 11 years [105]. Thus the story of Malik Shāh’s murder by Turkmān Khān Khān with her young son and the murder of Niẓām al-Mulk did repeat itself more or less less specific details. Hence it would be unexpected to encounter the manuscript’s one provoking all these actions and put them into effect. He is stated by historians to have been the most treacherous, villainous and greedy war throughout the whole Naṣīrīyat history [106]. His name was Qawwāl al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim Dargaznī (executed in 527/1133). It was he who ar- ranged a conspiracy to discredit Shams al-Mulk in the eyes of his brother and succeeded in have him to overthrow him and occupy his position later. It was he who several years before 518/1124 was sent by Mahmūd to Sanjar’s headquarters as an official representative or ambassador of the former with the only purpose, that is, to ensure Mahmūd’s and, of course, his own future. An Iranian by birth and an Ismā‘īlī by belief, Dargaznī always insti- officially praised by Mu‘īz al-Dīn in a quaṣṣād dedicated to the waṣīr [108]. If so, then the counterfeiting was committed by him no later than 14–15 years after the date when NM1 was submitted by al-Ghazzali to Sanjar, and the compiled text was translated into Arabic by Qawwāl al-Dīn, who was the author of NM2. On the other hand, the circumstances refe- lected in al-Ghazzali’s letters with regard to the attempts of counterfeiting some of his texts and ultimately led to the writing of NM1, presumably made by Qawwāl, or more likely his pupils, to prepare a copy from his authen- tic work, so that we now have two versions of the text.

Notes


5. This section of the article was presented in its shortened form on the EIC-6 in Vienna (September 2007) under the title “A co-author of Niẓam al-Mulk’s al-Tūsī in his famous writing the Siyyaṣat-nāma (the Siyyaṣat-al-mulk; a historical detective story)” and also contributed to the Journal of Persianate Studies under the title “To forge a book in the Medieval Ages: Niẓām al-Molk’s Siyyaṣat-nāma (Siyyaṣat-nīmā)” ed. by S. A. Armajani (Leiden, 2008), pp. 59—66.

6. See the bibliographical data for Ch. Schäfer’s, H. N. Kähler’s and H. Dürk’s editions below in the notes.

7. See, for example, Simlicheva’s article entitled “Siyyaṣat-nāma revisited: the question of authenticity”, Proceedings of the Second European Conference on Iranian Studies, ed. by B. G. Fragner et al. (Rome, 1995), pp. 657—74. There she tried to support Dürk’s point of view. To my mind, her article seems to prove the contrary, that is, the Siyyaṣat-nāma / Siyyaṣat-al-mulk was corre- lated during the same historical period as those of the books used in her comparative analysis (Ghāzna, Chaklah maqāla).

8. However, to forge anything (a banknote, a picture, etc.) necessarily implies to follow a recognizable and well-known pattern, otherwise a forgery can be easily disclosed. Therefore, even if the Siyyaṣat-nāma / Siyyaṣat-al-mulk corresponds to a literary pattern of such forgery, it does not have to prove authenticity. This point has recently been discussed in my “Kingship and legitimacy in Niẓām al-Mulk’s Siyyaṣat-nāma, fifth / eleventh century”, Writers and Readers. Perspectives on Their Relationship from Abbasid to Safavid Times, ed. by B. Grönndler, L. Marlow (Wiesbaden, 2004), pp. 97—111.


12. 13/20. The context of the quote is as follows: “And We strengthened his kingdom and gave him wisdom and decision in the appeal” (hereafter the Qur’anic texts are seen given in the translation by A. Khîmsâmahînî). In the Qur’an, this is followed by the story of Daud, who was given all of them and who settled: a dispute between two brothers.


14. Kadhîhâd - “master of the house” — an official responsible for the finances and running of the emir’s house, essentially carrying out the duties of the vizier under ruling persons.


17. Zakî/i: “The writing of a poletical treatise is an original, although somewhat delayed, way to write a Ghansâwîn muwâdîd.” Although not long before this, the scholar admitted that “it is much harder to determine the date when Nizâm-ul-Mulk wrote his muwâdîd.” Siyasa-name, Kitâb a prawâlîn, p. 307.

18. A. Iqâb, Wâdûrat dar ‘alîdul saštânîh bâzârgân âlî-Salîfîh at tâvîbîh i tâsâlîhî in sîlata si-margi salûtânîh Sanjar (432—553) (Wâdûrat During the Epoch of the Great Salûtânîh Sanjar Beginning with the Date of Formation of this Dynasty Chain till the Death of Salûtânîh Sanjar (432—552)), ed. by M. T. Dânish-Poohîl, Y. Pâhîkî (Teheran, 1338/1959), pp. 59, 54, 109 —correspondingly to the given names.


20. Iqâb with a reference to the Bi’d al-matâbîh al-aswâqîbîh gives the following quotation:

“Taj-ul-Mulk, nicknamed Manûshîn, being the ferment of apostasy and universal chaos, the deputy and ally of Ilyas-sa Sabbâh, is one of the seven people who took an oath of allegiance to him at the beginning.”

Ibid., p. 96.


25. Siyasa-name, i, p. 5. Here the phrase “to expend a division” (جابه‌ی عادل) which was characteristic for the chancery style of that era, is used again.

26. Iqâb, op. cit., pp. 51—2. These historical events are also described in detail and with an examination of different stories about the reason for the death of Malik-shîh in the work by Sad-din Al’î in Al’î’s Al-mu’âzîn al-Châhîb al-dawâlî al-Saštânîh (The Annals of Salûtânîh Saf’a), transl. from Arabic into Russian by Z. M. Biniâmutov (Moscow, 1980), pp. 72—7 (chpt. 25—26). Also available at: http://www.vostok.info.

27. Siyastân-nâmâ, ed. by Âghîz, p. 3.


29. As a result of the double murder, all military operations against the Isâf’îs were stopped. Thus, the main goal of Taj-ul-Mulk (at Hasan b. Sabbh) was achieved.


33. Ibid., pp. 665—73.

34. Siyasa-name. Kitâb a prawâlîn, p. 353 (notes).
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94. This is either a mistake, or al-Ghazālī, as in the third letter, added half a year of spiritual crisis and solitary life in Baghdad before he left this city to the eleven years of wandering and seclusion, and calculated the period according to the solar hīrām (pascha). For the reason that the letters were written in Persian. In his autobiographical al-Munawwī min al-dalāl ("The Deliverance from Delusions"), he writes about the same two events:

"...and all that Allah pleased for me to say was shown to me in a dream. I saw myself standing in a square over the head of a man. I was then 45 years old..."

Allāh Most High facilitated my movement to Nashārī to fulfill this important task in Bāḥr al-Qa‘īd 499/July 1016. And I left Baghdad in Dīn al-Qa‘īd 488 (November 1015). Thus, my seclusion had extended to eleven years.


**Illustrations**

Fig. 1. Dīn al-Qa‘īd, the beginning after the khutba. 12:71+21.0 em. 16 Safar 1267/21 December 1850. National Library of Russia, call No. MS Khan. 23, fol. 3. Courtesy of the NRL.

Fig. 2. Mu‘īzzi, two bayans from a qāyīdī. The same MS, fol. 4. Courtesy of the NRL.

Fig. 3. Dīn al-Qa‘īd, the beginning of the first fazl. The same MS. fol. 16. Courtesy of the NRL.

Fig. 4. Mu‘īzzi?, a bayān in praise of Shi‘a al-Mulk. The same MS. fol. 17. Courtesy of the NRL.

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Farād al-Dīn Aṭṭār Nishāpūrī (d. 627/1238) also describes such situation in his Aṭṭār-nāma:

(‘Aṭṭār Nishāpūrī, Aṭṭār-nāma, 19th maqāla, Dastān-3)

80. That is, al-Ghazālī wrote this letter in AH 503, when he was 53 lunar years old, one and half year before his death.

81. Al-Ghazālī, Fadā’il, pp. 3–5.

82. The headquarters of Sanjar was in the settlement of Tūrāq, which Sanjar selected for his residence, staying there for two months, and which exists today, but as Tūnāq, located seven kilometres to the south of the outskirts of modern Mashhad, named in honour of the grave of the imām Rāfi‘. According to the foreword to the two copies of NM1 used by Humā‘īn in his edition (al-Ghazālī, Nashārī, p. 291), Sanjar did this, and personally came to al-Ghazālī. However, this version, unless it is related to the second meeting between the imām and the ma‘lid, in my opinion, looks too ideal to reflect what actually happened. Besides, if we accept it, we must reject al-Ghazālī’s speech at the reception in which he had no copies of his books, or other circumstances related to this event and noted by the compiler of the correspondence.


84. The Qur‘ān, 2:189 (193).

85. That, is an aestheticism.

86. The hadith is also cited in its Persian translation in the eighth asl of the first rukh of the Kāmiyūd (ed. by Khādījīwān, i. p. 242).

87. The Qur‘ān, 99:7–8

88. An allusion to the Qur‘ān, 65:12.

89. The same image of a bird and a mellet is given both at the end of the fourth ‘umūd and the ninth asl of the second rukh of the Kāmiyūd (ed. by Khādījīwān, i. p. 115, 526).

90. This vivid image of the tree of faith together with the same image given in the Qur‘ān (14:24) inspired al-Ghazālī to compose NMI.

91. The same accounts are also given in pairs both in al-Ghazālī’s Kāmiyūd (ed. by Khādījīwān, i. p. 533) and Fadā’il (pp. 211). They are quoted in NM1 as well (idem, Nashārī, pp. 24–5). The first account, however, deals with a mangy camel here instead of a mangy sheep there.

92. An allusion to the hadith which is quoted both in the fifth asl of the second rukh of the Kāmiyūd (ed. by Khādījīwān, i. p. 430): “Who is not obstinate and does not sever a kinship will smell the scent of Paradise at a distance of five hundred years”, and in the Iylā‘ (i. p. 183):
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