

This review may be concluded with a few remarks on *minutiae*. On p. 18 a quotation from Sozomenos' *Historia ecclesiastica* has a addition about Abraham 'buried in Mamre' the status of which is not clear. Is it an addition by the author derived from Sozomenos? On p. 219 it is said that the Nea complex was "squeezed onto the slopes of the Temple Mount" which does not fit the actual archaeological remains (they are rather squeezed onto Mount Sion). On p. 228 it is said that the local population of Jerusalem spoke Syriac which is not correct. It was rather a kind of Palestinian Aramaic. On p. 232 one misses an exact reference to the year when the first memorialisation of the *theotokos* took place in Jerusalem. The date was August 15 which is said to have coincided with the 9th of Ab which cannot have been a regular feature of the calendar. Because of the importance of this event, rightly pointed out by the author, a clarification of the calendary situation would have been appropriate. On p. 236 n. 18 it is claimed that the remarkable story of the birth of Menaḥem in *Ekhah rabbati* (pp. 89–90 in Buber's edition) is in Hebrew whereas it actually is in Aramaic. On p. 252 it is, by a slip of the pen, stated that Jerome translated Eusebius' *Onomastikon* into Greek (correct on p. 255). On p. 267 f. the Jewish *pesah* celebration is discussed and reference is made to the 'four questions' raised by the child at the *seder* ceremony. Since the 'questions' originally, according to the Mishnah, are not questions at all but a commentary of why the child is questioning there is a problem here when the four statements were interpreted as such. Do we know that the custom of transforming the statements into four questions was established during this period? On p. 268 n. 118 it is further claimed that the Hebrew *pesach* [*sic*] means 'to skip'. Even if this interpretation is hinted at already in the Book of Exodus it is a secondary interpretation of a word the meaning of which in fact is unknown.

Considering the impressive gathering of sources and secondary literature used for this book remarks of this kind are few. On the whole, we have a most useful, stimulating and comprehensive picture of a dramatic period in a country of central ideological importance to this day. The conflicts emerging during the period described in this work are still with us. The author is to be congratulated for giving this all-round picture of the interactions between the three main communities in Palestine during late antiquity.

JAN RETSÖ  
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

SAFĪNEH-YE TABRĪZ: A TREASURY OF PERSIAN LITERATURE AND ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY, MYSTICISM, AND SCIENCES. By ABU'L MAJD MUHAMMAD IBN MAS'UD TABRIZI (Facsimile Edition of a manuscript compiled and copied in 721-3/1321-23). pp. xxxviii, 732. Tehran, Iran University Press, 2003.

THE TREASURY OF TABRIZ: THE GREAT IL-KHANID COMPENDIUM. By A. A. SEYED-GOHRAB AND S. MCGLINN. pp. 279. Amsterdam, The Netherlands, West Lafayette, Indiana, USA, Rozenburg Publishers and Purdue University Press, 2007.

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The acquisition in 1995 of the *Safīna-yi Tabrīz*, a miscellany of 209 disparate works in Persian and Arabic, by the library of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Tehran and the subsequent publication in 2003 of a facsimile edition by the University of Tehran has been greeted by increasing excitement and widening interest as the contents and quality of this sizable manuscript have become known. A conference in June 2004 to discuss the *Safīna* put this unique find in the public arena and finally last year Purdue University Press published in paperback format the papers which had been presented at Leiden University. The aim of this slim volume, compiled by A. A. Seyed-Gohrab and S. McGlinn, is

to provide an overview of the *Safīna* and summarise the contents of the more important of its diffuse chapters.

The many source manuscripts making up the compendium itself were collected between 1321 and 1323 by the Tabrizi notable and scholar, Abū al-Majd Tabrīzī, who also copied out the whole enormous and laborious project himself, a remarkable feat for a non-professional. He added a further three treatises in 1323, 1324, and 1335. Generally compendia of this size would have been commissioned by a ruler or for a court library but this compendium was compiled and copied for the personal use of Abū al-Majd, a remarkable and very erudite scholar whose interests ranged from literature, lexicography, codicology, and etymology to cosmology, mathematics, jurisprudence, and medicine. The *Safīna* was Abū al-Majd's personal library. What is so remarkable is that Abū al-Majd was prepared to painstakingly copy a whole reference library in what was a comparatively short time, solely to address his own academic, spiritual, and recreational needs. The result is a snapshot of the intellectual climate of the late Ilkhanate in the period of relative calm before the chaos into which Iran descended following the death of the last Ilkhanid ruler, Abū Sa'īd [d.1335]. Abū al-Majd lived in Tabriz which even when not the actual capital of the state, remained its economic and cultural hub. Though a number of the selections are from earlier periods of Persian history many of the essays included in the compendium are contemporary and some have not been seen prior to their appearance in this collection.

Another remarkable feature of the *Safīna* is the fine condition in which the manuscript has been preserved. The majority of texts in the collection are written in a very clear and legible Persian *ta'liq* though on occasion an untidy sprawl takes over. Fortunately such occurrences are rare and where lapses of the *ta'liq* script are detectable the script is usually replaced by a fine *nasta'liq* hand or even *naskh* strokes. However, for the novice at manuscript reading the *Safīna* will certainly remain a challenge until an edited version appears. The details concerning script and other minutiae pertaining to the fourteenth century manuscript itself are contained in Seyed-Gohrab and McGlinn's excellent introductory volume, the *Treasury of Tabriz: the Great Il-Khanid Compendium*. The book sets out to provide a brief but practical summary of the *Safīna* in the absence of an edited edition with page references to the original throughout.

The selection of papers from the Leiden conference have been grouped in the *Treasury of Tabriz* under the headings Persian Miscellanies, History, Literature, Sciences, and Philosophy and Mysticism. Unfortunately Abū al-Majd was not an historian and his selection of historical texts might not meet the dreams and expectations of Ilkhanid researchers though the manuscript remains a significant historical document in itself.

A. A. Seyed-Gohrab's opening essay introduces both the manuscript and its compiler. Among Abū al-Majd's relatives there are minor poets, men of letters, and government administrators though much of what is known of Abū al-Majd has been learned from his compendium. His father, Malik Mas'ūd ibn Muẓaffār (d.1343) was a clerk in the Mongol administration and wrote poetry examples of which his son reproduces. He also records the work of two other relatives. Though his father and an uncle have been referred to elsewhere as men-of-letters the *Safīna* is the first time their poetry has appeared in print. Abū al-Majd received a traditional Islamic education and he refers to his teachers as well as reproducing some of their work in the course of his compilation. Among them are such illustrious names as Shabistarī (d.1330) and Ḥājj Bulah (d.1320). If Abū al-Majd was conversant in all the disciplines that he includes in his compendium he fully deserves the appellation *jāmi' al-'ulūm* (*homo universalis*) like other mediaeval savants of his time but it is possible that he included some of the subjects and lectures for his own private study at a later date. Abū al-Majd copied out this library mainly for personal use despite not being a professional copyist but there is a suggestion that he might also have had an eye on posterity. On a number of occasions he refers to the popularity of certain works and expresses the hope that he is ensuring their preservation. By including his own work and

that of his close relatives within such a collection, he is thereby ensuring the survival for posterity of his own and his relatives' works in the literary canon.

As well as information about the compiler of the *Safīna*, Seyed-Gohrab's introductory essay details the composition of the manuscript citing those authors and works which have not appeared elsewhere, the wide variety of disciplines covered, the occurrence of *fahlawiyyāt* verse in such little known dialects as *Pahla*, and the use of Turkish and Kurdish dialects. The full contents of the *Safīna* are also listed in the order in which they appear in the manuscript. Despite the encyclopaedic scope of the manuscript it is believed that at least 119 folios have gone missing.

Iraj Afshar concentrates his attention on the physical aspects of the *Safīna* and it is his conclusion that not only are 119 folios missing but that the original order of the folios has been changed. This chapter goes into considerable technical detail in its examination of the appearance of the present manuscript and a critical assessment of the contents and the present order of the folios. The handwriting, scripts, and the date of copying also come under close scrutiny. The final introductory essay by Firuza Abdullaeva outlines the nature of *Safīnas*, a genre of literary collection popular in the Persian speaking world right up until the twentieth century. *Safīnas*, literally 'ships', are put into the context of other literary collections and miscellanies such as *jung*, *bayād*, *tadkira*, and *muraqqa'* are considered along with the *Chahār Maqāla* and the *Shāhnāma* of which it contains selections including some previously unknown *bayts*.

Despite its size and the fact that the Ilkhanid period is particularly noted for the number and quality of its historical works, the *Safīna* contains relatively little historically significant information. Sayyid Ali Al-e-Davud summarises each of the twelve historical texts and examines in detail the last, a letter from the vizier, Ghiyāth al-Dīn bin Rashīd al-Dīn, to his brother where he comments at considerable length on the accession of Arpā Khān following the death of the last Huleguid Ilkhan, Abū Sa'īd. The letter lays down the conditions under which Arpā Khān's accession to the Iranian throne would be deemed acceptable to Ghiyāth al-Dīn and his cabinet. The appearance of this letter for inclusion in the *Safīna* is significant for three particular reasons. Firstly, its date of composition circa March 1336 was a couple of months before Abū al-Majd copied it into his *Safīna* which he did two days prior to the vizier's own execution on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1336. It is the last entry into the document and occurs over ten years after the previous late entry. Significantly, Abū al-Majd had not included any writings from the intellectual giant of the age, a true Renaissance Man and architect of the Toluid state, Rashīd al-Dīn, whose execution in 1318 would have rendered him a politically sensitive figure at the time of the original compilation of the text, c.1323 even though he included a number of satirical and censorious verses about Tāj al-Dīn 'Alīshāh, Rashīd al-Dīn's rival and fellow vizier. Secondly, the fact that Abū al-Majd had access to such sensitive and restricted government documents suggests that he had more clout than might otherwise have been thought possible. Thirdly, little information about the rule and accession of Abū Sa'īd's successor, Arpā Khān, has previously been available so the appearance of this letter is extremely exciting.

Other texts outlined in this review of the historical sections of the *Safīna* include a short account of the the Prophet's life written by Abū al-Majd's teacher, the renowned Ḥājj Bulah, a history of the Caliphs written by an anonymous eye-witness of the fall of the last 'Abbasid caliph, a complete text of Bayḍāwī's popular history *Niẓām al-tawārīkh*, upon which Charles Melville devotes a chapter; also some letters and the wills of Shams al-Dīn Juwaynī (d.1282) and his son, the infamous Bahā' al-Dīn (d.1279) which attracts the attention of Nader Mottalebi Kashani in his chapter. Other historical topics covered include a piece written by Abū al-Majd concerning the life of the Prophet, a summary, probably incomplete, of the Andalusian Umayyads, a short account of the Khwārazmshāhī state, a history of Tabriz based in part on the Safarnāma of Naṣīr Khosrow, a table of dates of caliphs, prophets, philosophers, and scholars, and finally a letter composed in Arabic by Khwāja Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī for Hülegü Khan to the governors of Syria and their subsequent reply. One other essay included in this

historical review is the Amālī of Ḥājj Bulah which contains a series of lectures by the great teacher concerning literary history.

As mentioned already the *Safīna* contains a chapter on the letters of Shams al-Dīn Juwaynī and a chapter on Bayḍawī's history. Nader Mottalebi Kashani describes the eight letters of the Mongols' first prime minister in Iran and puts them and their author into context. At least one of these letters has not previously appeared and it is this one, written shortly before the vizier's tragic execution and addressed to a son or daughter, which Kashani chooses to examine in extra detail paraphrasing the pitiful contents and translating a particularly harrowing paragraph which describes the hardship and misery of Shams al-Dīn Juwaynī's final days. In addition to this letter the *Safīna* contains a previously unknown testament which records his final itemised will all of whose paragraphs were so callously disregarded after the Šāhib Dīwān's lamentable death. The letter and testament complement the *Tasliyat al-ikhvan* by his brother, 'Aṭā Malik Juwaynī (d.1281), governor of Baghdad who escaped execution by dying of natural causes. The *Tasliyat al-ikhvan* is his brother's account of his own final days and the grievances he endured as a result of the machinations of Majd al-Mulk and has been partially reproduced in Moḥammad Qazvīnī's preface to the *Tārkh-i-Jahāngushā*. The earlier half of the *Tasliyat al-ikhvan* was published by 'Abbās Māhyār in 1982.

One of the earliest manuscripts of the text of Bayḍawī's popular history of the Perso-Islamic world was used by Abū al-Majd for his *Safīna* and therefore this version comes to an abrupt end during the reign of Abaqa Khan (d.1282). Why he did not use a later recension covering Ghazan Khan's accession is open to speculation but Charles Melville does not believe any significance should be read into this. Bayḍawī's history has already been the subject of extensive research by Melville<sup>5</sup> who adds his impressions and thoughts on this latest manuscript copy of the popular history in Abū al-Majd's collection of papers. Melville was originally intrigued as to why such a seemingly brief and superficial history, described by E.G. Browne as a "dull and jejune little book . . . not worth publishing",<sup>6</sup> had attracted so much attention, had been copied so often and was found cited in so many substantial histories since its first appearance in 1275. Qāḍī Bayḍawī, a Chief Justice, was a respected theologian and his commentaries on the Qur'an had been well received. It had long been a mystery why such an august *alim* should waste his time producing a popular history and why such a history had been so widely disseminated. Melville's exhaustive research has led him to conclude that Bayḍawī's *Niẓām al-tawārkh* was a major tract of political propaganda and its hidden agenda was to place the new Ilkhanid regime firmly in the context of Iranian history. The book was deliberately designed as a 'handy pocket book', with brief summaries and dates of all the principal dynasties, to appeal to as wide an audience as possible and to serve as a practical historical reference source. Later editions were extended by Bayḍawī himself and continuations also exist possibly added by other hands. What remains important however is that someone with the authority of Bayḍawī should have donated his time, effort and reputation to produce a booklet which would place the Mongol regime firmly in the context of Iranian Islamic history and thereby grant the Ilkhanate through his endorsement, even before their official conversion to Islam in 1295, legitimacy and respectability.

Seyed-Gohrab's own contribution to the papers other than his introductory essay is an examination of the wide range of literary works found in the *Safīna*. The selection of genres and poetical forms in Arabic and Persian succeeds in representing a literary canon of Persian literature in fourteenth century Tabriz. In his essay Seyed-Gohrab provides a vivid introduction to the various expressions of literary form found in the *Safīna* and includes examples of 'Omar Khayyām's earliest quatrains. He also describes the selection of literary criticism chosen for inclusion as well as books on grammar and

<sup>5</sup> Charles Melville, 'From Adam to Abaqa: Qāḍī Baidāwī's rearrangement of history', *Studia Iranica*, Pt.I,II, 30/1 (2001), pp. 67–86, vol. 36/1 (2007), pp. 7–64.

<sup>6</sup> *Literary History*, vol. III, p. 100

even dictionaries. Nasrollah Pourjavadi presents a paper on the literary debates, popular in mediaeval Iran, the finest collection of which he believes is reproduced in the Tabriz *Safīna*. In all, Abū al-Majd selected eleven different debates, in poetry and in prose, by a variety of authors including three of his own compositions. Pourjavadi recounts some of these lively debates including the popular exchange between hashish and wine, as relevant today as it was in Abū al-Majd's time. The third paper in the literature section concerns the inclusion of a number of women poets including Mahsati in a compilation of five hundred quatrains which forms an innovative poetic work called the *Khulāsāt al-ash'ār*. Sunil Sharma emphasises the valuable contribution to the cultural history of the period that women, so often side-lined, made and how welcome their inclusion in this collection is. Also included is an invaluable appendix listing in order of their appearance all the poets and the genre under which they are grouped. Gabrielle van der Berg concludes the section on literature with a paper on wisdom literature in the *Safīna* and some notes on the *Pandnāma-yi Anūshirvān*. Counselling and moral guidelines have a long and popular tradition in Persian literature though the three works dealt with by van den Berg take up only two and a half pages of the *Safīna*. Advice ranges from the clichéd, 'Do not neglect today for tomorrow' to the shocking 'Do not mourn the death of daughters' and van den Berg places them in context and explains the organisation, tradition, and background of this literary genre preserved in the *Safīna*.

The sciences are examined by three scholars who present papers on astrology, mineralogy and the occult, and physiognomy. Sergei Tourkin tackles astronomy, a subject particularly popular during Ilkhanid rule and of the seven astronomical works included in the *Safīna* five are by Nasīr al-Dīn Tūsī, an intellectual giant of the early Ilkhanate. Tourkin details the contents of each of the seven works. Ziva Vesel's study is another subject in which the Mongols showed great interest namely the magical powers attributed to minerals. The final contribution to the section on science is provided by Marjolijn van Zutphen's commentary and translation of the anonymous *Dalā'il al-a'dā'* [*Indications for the limbs*] which is an example of physiognomy, the art of judging character from face or form. Once a common subject in Persian literature, it was considered both an ethical and medical science. In the *Safīna*, the *Dalā'il al-a'dā'* is placed between essays on ethics and then on medicine.

The final section of Seyed-Gohrab and McGlinn's collection of essays concerns philosophy and mysticism with Doufikaer Aerts analysing the philosophical questions raised by Alexander with his teacher Aristotle and placing the debate into a Persian context, and von Bernd Radtke providing a survey of the works of mysticism found in the *Safīna*.

The facsimile edition is an impressive and faithful reproduction of the fourteenth-century manuscript retaining the colour and detail of the original. Abū al-Majd used red ink to indicate chapter headings and some commentary and this would have been lost if it had not been reproduced in colour. For the novice manuscript-reader the usual problems arise namely irregular omission of dots, lack of punctuation, unpointed consonants, indistinguishable *kāfs* and *gāfs*, run together lines of verse, but it is far more manageable than many mediaeval manuscripts and Abū al-Majd's *Safīna* could certainly serve as a relatively painless introduction to manuscript reading.

Seyed-Gohrab and McGlinn's volume on the *Safīna* makes an excellent companion to the facsimile edition and its regular cross-references to the original make consulting Abū al-Majd's fourteenth-century text direct a realistic option. For serious study and research on Abū al-Majd's text Seyed-Gohrab and McGlinn's collection of papers is indispensable and it can only be hoped that the appearance of both these works will lead to further research and scholarship based on this unique Ilkhanid compendium.

GEORGE LANE

*School of Oriental and Asian Studies, University of London*