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By 1360, Sultan Shaykh Uvays had taken control of Azarbayjan, the first step in consolidating Jalayirid rule over the lands of the western Ilkhanate. In addition to this military conquest, and the consolidation of authority as described in the previous chapter, the ideological foundations of the Jalayirid sultanate were elaborated during the reign of Shaykh Uvays. In this period, the servants and supporters of Shaykh Uvays created a complex narrative and official image of the Jalayirid dynasty as the rightful successors to the Ilkhanids. Unlike previous Chubanid amirs like Malik Ashraf, as well as Shaykh Hasan Jalayir, who had ruled in the name of figurehead khans, Shaykh Uvays claimed a number of royal titles for himself, including sultan, khan and šāhib-qirān (lord of the auspicious conjunction). This ideological programme was created by individuals who relied on the Jalayirid court for their livelihood, and had also served the Ilkhanids and had a professional interest in the continuation of the Ilkhanid political order. They stood to benefit from a royal patron who ruled from the wealthy province of Azarbayjan and who patronised the urban literate religious and administrative culture in Tabriz. This chapter explores some of the major aspects of Mongol imperial, Ilkhanid and Perso-Islamic ideologies of legitimate rulership that came to be incorporated into works of history, administrative protocol, poetry, architecture and art during the reign of Shaykh Uvays. What we find is an ideology of legitimate rulership that looked to the Ilkhanid past while at the same time acknowledging the unique nature of the Jalayirid sultan’s identity as the ideal upholder of the values of the steppe, justice and Islam.

Shaykh Uvays as Heir to the Ilkhanate

An important aspect of the political identity of Shaykh Uvays as presented by individuals in the service of the Jalayirid court was the close connection of his family to the Ilkhans. An attempt to present Shaykh Uvays as the legitimate heir to the Ilkhanid dynastic tradition is found in the only
surviving work of history written for and about the Jalayirid dynasty, the *Tārīkh-i Shaykh Uvays*, completed around 761/1360 by Abū Bakr al-Quṭbī al-Ahrī. This work is a universal history, from the beginning of the world down to the accession of Ahrī’s patron Shaykh Uvays. Ahrī depends for much of his information on the monumental universal history of the Ilkhan vizier Rashid al-Dīn (d. 718/1318). However, the final section of the work is valuable for its account of the post-Ilkhan political situation from a Jalayirid perspective.

Ahrī’s organisation of his account of the post-Abū Sa‘īd period is significant. The history is arranged by the reigns of the Ilkhans. For the years after the death of Abū Sa‘īd, Ahrī continued to present a linear succession of sultans, and organised his information under the reigns of the Chinggisid protégés installed by the amirs who held actual power. Thus, while the Chinggisid puppet khans installed by Shaykh Ḥasan Jalayir are given headings, Shaykh Ḥasan himself is not recognised as a legitimate ruler. It was Shaykh Uvays, whose reign is given the heading ‘the sultanate of the supreme Ruler, lord of the necks of the populace (sāltanat-i pādishāh-i aʿẓam mālik-i riqāb-i umam) Shaykh Uvays Bahādur Khan’, who was recognised by Ahrī as the first legitimate Jalayirid sovereign.\(^1\)

Thus, Ahrī’s work is not a history of a Jalayirid dynasty per se, with Shaykh Uvays as the climax of a noble ruling family. Although Shaykh Uvays’s father and grandfather are given great respect, it is the Chinggisid ruling family that provides the basis for Ahrī’s presentation of his universal history. Shaykh Uvays is of course the pinnacle and culmination of his narrative; however, it is a narrative that conforms to a notion of the privileged place of Chinggisid lineage, even when those who held power could not claim this lineage for themselves.

Although Shaykh Uvays was not a Chinggisid though the lineage of his father, Ahrī emphasised his genealogical ties to female members of the Ilkhanid royal house. The final section of his *Tārīkh* is dedicated to Shaykh Uvays’s ‘noble lineage’ (*naṣab-i sharīfash*).\(^2\) Here Ahrī points out that Shaykh Uvays’s mother Dilshād Khātūn’s own mother was descended from the Ilkhan Ahmad Tegüder. He also reminds his reader that Shaykh Uvays’s paternal grandmother was Öljetey Sultan, the daughter of Arghun, another former Ilkhan ruler.\(^3\) Thus, Shaykh Uvays could claim a place in the noble Ilkhanid family tree through two female lines, relationships not commonly considered sufficient to make one a legitimate Chinggisid prince. Ahrī had to be careful to situate Shaykh Uvays into a narrative which recognised the Chinggisid legitimising principle, despite the fact that he was not only not a Chinggisid, but also did not claim to rule in the name of a protégé or puppet khan as his father Shaykh Ḥasan
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had done. The ambivalence this created among those who served him and helped to cultivate his imperial image is reflected in Ahrī’s work. Ahrī and others who were patronised by the Jalayirid court attempted to accommodate the non-Chinggisid Jalayirid dynasty as continuators of the Chinggisid and, more specifically, the Ilkhanid tradition.

In addition to his genealogical ties to the Ilkhanids, attempts were also made to present Shaykh Uvays as the logical successor to the last Ilkhan, Abū Saʿīd, despite the fact that Shaykh Uvays was not a direct descendant of Abū Saʿīd. The author of the manual of court protocol written for Shaykh Uvays, Dastūr al-Kātib fī Taʿyīn al-Marātib, Muḥammad b. Hindūshāh Nakhjivānī, devoted a portion of his dedication in this work to the praise and memory of the last Ilkhan ruler Abū Saʿīd and his grand vizier Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad. Here Nakhjivānī describes how he was commissioned to write his book:

In the days of the reign (dawlat) of the late fortunate sultan (sultān-i saʿīd) and pious praiseworthy ruler (khāqān-i ḥamīd-i mabrūr) ‘Alāʾ al-Dunyā wa-al-Dīn Abū Saʿīd . . . the late august martyr (ṣāḥib-i saʿīd-i shahīd-i maghfūr) Khwāja Ghiyāth al-Haq wa-al-Dīn Muḥammad Rashīdī, may God cool his grave, and the other pillars of state and assistants of His Majesty repeatedly sent the order for the compilation of such a book. Here Nakhjivānī clearly acknowledges the prominence of the Ilkhanate and its last ruler Abū Saʿīd. Although he dedicated his work to Shaykh Uvays, he sought to connect the Jalayirid sultan’s current rule directly to the former authority of Abū Saʿīd, with the suggestion that Shaykh Uvays was the inheritor of the Ilkhanid charisma which Abū Saʿīd had possessed. The rhetorical appeal to the recent Ilkhanid past illustrates the conservative impulse found among individuals like Nakhjivānī whose privileged social positions had been ensured by the Ilkhanid political order. A desire for the continuation of this order is found in Nakhjivānī’s Dastūr al-Kātib.

A similar rhetorical project is at work in another work, written and dedicated to Shaykh Uvays in the early part of his reign. The Ghāzān-nāma, composed by Khwāja Nūr al-Dīn Azhdarī around the year 1361, is a poetic work in the style of the Shāh-nāma about the reign of the Ilkhan Ghāzān Khan. Azhdarī achieved notoriety as a physician after curing Shaykh Uvays of an illness that none of the other royal doctors had been able to treat. He dedicated his work about Ghāzān Khan to Shaykh Uvays.
in an opening section ‘in praise of the pādishāh-i islām Shaykh Uvays’. This title given to Shaykh Uvays, in a work on the first Ilkhanid pādishāh-i islām, suggests the connection and continuity between Ghāzān Khan and Azhdarī’s Jalayirid patron.

Expression of the Jalayirid imperial image during the reign of Shaykh Uvays was also found on coins struck in his name. The formulas found on these coins, similar to the organisation of Ahrī’s history, suggest that Shaykh Uvays was able to assert his political authority in his own right in a way that his father had not. Shaykh Ḥasan Jalayir had struck some of his coins in the name of his Chinggisid protégés, and others without the name of a sovereign at all. These coins included only the Muslim declaration of faith (shahāda) or other religious formula and the names of the first four caliphs. However, Shaykh Uvays’s coins bear several variations with his own name and titles. These include the formula ‘the greatest [or, most just] sultan Shaykh Uvays Bahādur [Khan], may God preserve his rule and his sultanate’ (al-sultān [al-a’ẓam or al-‘ādil] shaykh uvays bahādur [khān] khallada [allāh] mulkahu [wa salṭanatahu]). The formulas found on the coins echo those used by the later Ilkhans, particularly Abū Saʿīd. A typical coin struck in Azarbayjan during Abū Saʿīd’s reign includes the formula:

struck in [ḍuriba fī]
the reign of the greatest sultan [dawlat al-sultān al-a’ẓam]
the great Ilkhan Abū [īlkhān al-‘ālam abū]
Saʿīd, may God preserve his rule [saʿīd khallada allāh mulkahu]

Another example, struck in Anatolia, uses the title ‘master of the necks of the populace’, which was also used by Ahrī to refer to Shaykh Uvays. The formula on this Anatolian coin was:

Struck in the reign of the greatest sultan [ḍuriba fī dawlat al-sultān al-a’ẓam]
Master of the necks of the populace [mālik riqāb al-umam]
Ilkhan of the world Abū Saʿīd [īlkhān al-ʿālam abū saʿīd]
May God preserve his rule [khallada allāh mulkahu]

Although the names and formulas on most of Shaykh Uvays’s coins reflect an Islamic religious tradition expressed in Arabic script, some coins were also struck using Mongol (Uyghur) script. Such a measure surely reinforced the Mongol heritage of the Jalayirid court.

A final example of an attempt to identify Shaykh Uvays as the heir to the Ilkhanids, and even as an Ilkhanid himself, is an inscription on a copper water bowl made for the Jalayirid sultan. The inscription on the vessel reads:
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Made on the order of the greatest sultan [al-sultān al-‘zam]
The great Ilkhan, the most just and noble khāqān [al-īlkhān al-mu‘azzam al-khāqān al-a‘dal al-akram]
Master of the necks of the populace [mālik riqāb al-umam]
Shadow of God on Earth [zill allāh fī al-‘ālam]
Strengthener of the world and religion [mu‘izz al-dunyā wa-al-dīn]
Shaykh Uvays, may God preserve his realm and his power

Here, Shaykh Uvays is referred to as ‘the great Ilkhan’, a clear illustration that in official circles within the Jalayirid court at Tabriz, an attempt was being made to portray Sultan Shaykh Uvays as the rightful heir to Abū Sa‘īd.

Shaykh Uvays and the Legacy of Chinggis Qan

The historian Ahrī, the administrator Nakhjivānī, the poet Azhdarī and the anonymous creator of the copper water bowl all produced works that presented their patron, the Jalayirid sultan Shaykh Uvays, as the rightful successor to the line of the Ilkhans. In addition to these references to the descendants of Hülegū, other examples of official Jalayirid propaganda emphasise Shaykh Uvays’s connections to the more distant Mongol imperial past. In official literature and public displays, the Jalayirids sought to invoke the memory of Chinggis Qan and to suggest a link between themselves and the Mongol conqueror.

In the dedication to the Dastūr al-Kātib, Nakhjivānī refers to Shaykh Uvays as ‘the reviver of the customs of Chinggis Qanid fortune’ (muḥyī-yi marāsim-i dawlat-i jinkiz khānī) and ‘the refuge of the noble magnanimity of the qans’ (panāh-i ukrūma-yi makrama-yi qā‘ānī). Both of these references seem designed to suggest Shaykh Uvays’s connections to the former glories of the Mongol empire, ruled by the great qans of Qaraqorum. Nakhjivānī’s use of the word ‘reviver’ (muḥyī) in the first reference suggests not only that the fortune of rulership had passed to Shaykh Uvays, but also that the ‘customs’ (or ‘rites’; marāsim) of Chinggisid authority had lapsed, presumably following the death of Abū Sa‘īd. The second reference suggests that Shaykh Uvays had inherited the legacy of Turko-Mongol (qā‘ānī) rulership. Nakhjivānī’s language suggests that the memory of Chinggis Qan remained an important aspect of Jalayirid authority, despite the fact that Shaykh Uvays himself was not a patrilineal descendant of Chinggis Qan.

A similar presentation of Shaykh Uvays as carrying on the legacy of Chinggis Qan can be found in an inscription in the Mirjāniyya madrasa in Baghdad. The madrasa was built by the Jalayirid governor of Baghdad
Khwāja Mirjān (d. 775/1374) and funded by an endowment from the mother of Shaykh Hasan, Öljetey Sultan. Khwāja Mirjān was discussed in the previous chapter in the context of his rebellion against Shaykh Uvays in Baghdad in 765/1363. Earlier in his life Khwāja Mirjān had been a slave at the court of the Ilkhan ruler Öljeytū (r. 703/1304–716/1316), and was assigned to the governorate of Baghdad by Shaykh Hasan Jalayir in 755/1354. He began the construction of his madrasa during Shaykh Hasan’s lifetime, although it was completed after his death, and so features inscriptions dedicated to Shaykh Hasan as well as to his son Shaykh Uvays. One of these inscriptions describes Shaykh Uvays as ‘the adorner of the emblem of the Chinggis Qanid fortune’ (muzayyin shi’ār al-dawla al-jinkiz khānīyā). Here we find an echo of Nakhjivānī’s panegyric. The similarity in the language suggests that this was a standard theme in Jalayirid ideological rhetoric. Shaykh Uvays and those who served him attempted to present a link between the current sultan and the unquestioned authority of Chinggis Qan. The fact that we find this language on a public building as well as in a book written for court officials suggests the interests of the dynasty in making their ideological message available to large numbers of religious as well as administrative elites throughout the realm.

**Shaykh Uvays as the Ideal Muslim Ruler**

In addition to these references to the Jalayirid sultan as the rightful heir to the Ilkhanate and ‘Chinggis Qanid fortune’, the role of Shaykh Uvays as a Muslim ruler who upholds and defends the faith is also emphasised in the official literature. If we return to the work of Nakhjivānī, we find reference to Shaykh Uvays as the ‘raiser of the banners of prophetic law’ (bar afrāzanda-yi rāyāt-i sharʿ-i nabawī) and the ‘lighter of the candle of the chosen religion [or, the religion of Muḥammad]’ (bar afrūzanda-yi shamʿ-ī din-ī mustaʿfawī), as well as ‘strengthened by the assistance of God, lord of the two worlds’ (muʿayyad bi-taʾyīd allāh rabb al-ʿālamīn). Such titles emphasise the role of Shaykh Uvays as an Islamic ruler whose authority is derived from God and who defends the religion of the Prophet. Since the period of Ghazan Khan, the Ilkhans had been not just khans in the image of Chinggis Qan, but Muslim rulers as well. They were sultans, pādishāhs of Islam.

The Jalayirid sultan’s role as a ruler who upholds right religion is also expressed in the Anīs al-ʿUshshāq, a treatise on poetics written by Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad Rāmī Tabrīzī in the early years of Shaykh Uvays’s reign. Rāmī dedicated his work to Shaykh Uvays, whom he described in
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his dedication as a defender and supporter of religion (ḥāfīz-i bilād allāh; nāṣir-i ‘ibād allāh; mu’ayyad min al-samā’).23 Such epithets do not necessarily connect the Jalayirids to the Ilkhanids, but they do suggest that Shaykh Uvays’s identity as a Muslim ruler was another important aspect of the official legitimising ideology of the post-Ilkhanid period.

Among the inscriptions of the Mirjāniyya madrasa in Baghdad, we find an expression of Shaykh Uvays’s role as protector of the Muslim community as well. Thus, in the entrance inscription, Shaykh Uvays is ‘he who aids the world and religion, the helper of Islam and the Muslims’ (ghiyāth al-dunyā wa-al-dīn mughīth al-islām wa-al-muslimīn),24 and in the miḥrāb inscription he is ‘the renewer of the customs of the Muslims’ (muḥyī marāsim al-milal al-muṣtafwiyya).25 These inscriptions, alongside the references to ‘Chinggis Qanid fortune’ as discussed above, reveal that Jalayirid authority was understood as derived from the dynasty’s identity as both Mongol and Muslim.

Shaykh Uvays and the Ideal of Royal Justice

Finally, those who served and wrote in honour of Shaykh Uvays also worked to construct an image of their ruler as an eminently just monarch. The Jalayirid sultan was the perfect ruler because of his attention to matters of justice and the balancing of the interests and needs of all of his subjects. Shaykh Uvays’s adherence to justice is expressed by Nakhjivānī when he refers to him as ‘diffuser of the standards of equity’ (nāshir-i alwiya-yi nasfat),26 ‘most just of the greatest of sultans’ (a’dal-i a’aẓīm al-salāṭīn), and ‘custodian of approved action’ (vālī-yi vilāyat-i pasandīda-kirdarī).27 Alongside these are several descriptions in the Dastūr al-Kātib of the mercy and benevolence Shaykh Uvays shows to his subjects. He is the ‘spreader of the carpet of mercy’ (bāsiṭ-i bisāṭ-ī raḥmat), the ‘dissolver of the difficulties of worldly creatures’ (hallāl-i mushkīlat-i jahānīyānī), ‘succor of the distressed’ (ghiyāth-ī malhūfīn), ‘aider of the oppressed’ (mughīth al-maẓlūmīn), and the ‘fortifier of the weak and the poor’ (muqawwī al-żu’afā’ wa-al-masākīn).28 The Mongols were heirs to both Islamic and pre-Islamic notions of justice in Iran and Mesopotamia. Their predecessors the Abbasids had looked to both sacred law and royal law as part of their political ideology. In their articulation of this ideology, the caliphs had drawn on much older roots, in pre-Islamic Iranian and Hellenic traditions whereby the ruler served as dispenser and upholder of the law. Said Amir Arjomand has described this aspect of Abbasid ideology as ‘Sasanian patrimonialism’, which emphasised ‘protection of the weak from the strong, removal of oppression, and administration of

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punishment for wrongdoing and for contraventions of customary norms of fairness’. It is this vision of justice upheld by the ruler that is expressed in these examples from Nakhjivānī.

The Jalayirid sultan is praised for his justice in other examples as well. In his Anīs al-‘Ushshāq, Rāmī describes Shaykh Uvays as a spreader of security, justice and beneficence (bāsiṭ al-amn wa-al-amān; nāshir al-‘adl wa-al-iḥsān), and the shadow of God on Earth (ẓill allāh fī al-arḍ). The musician ʿAbd al-Qādir Marāghī, who was a renowned fixture at Jalayirid and Timurid courts, began his career in the service of Shaykh Uvays. In his autobiography, Marāghī referred to Shaykh Uvays as the ṣāḥib-qirān, and a pādishāh who dispenses justice, beneficence and generosity to the world. The Mirjāniyya madrasa also displays expressions similar to those found in the works of Nakhjivānī, Rāmī and Marāghī. On the madrasa’s entrance inscription is a testament to Shaykh Uvays’s role as the ‘spreader of justice in the world’ (nāshir al-‘adl fī al-‘ālam). On the left side of the miḥrāb is another inscription which characterises Shaykh Uvays as ‘he who draws the hem of mercy upon the Arabs and the Turks’ (sāḥib dhayl al-raḥma ‘alā al-ārāb wa-al-ātrāk). Such a specific reference to both of these groups was not only poetically elegant but also reflective of the diversity of the ethnic and linguistic population in Baghdad. This was a city that was home to a largely Arabic-speaking population, alongside the mostly Turkish amirs, a situation that had existed since the early Abbasid period.

Synthesis of Ideological Traditions: The Panegyric Poetry of Salmān Sāvajī

The aspects of the political ideology developed by the supporters and servants of Shaykh Uvays dealt with above were part of an attempt to present the Jalayirid sultan as the heir to the legacy of the Ilkhanate, through his connections to the Ilkhanid royal house, who upheld Islam and justice in his realm. All of these aspects are brought together in the work of the poet Salmān Sāvajī, who composed many verses praising the Jalayirids. In the section that follows, the life and work of Salmān Sāvajī are briefly examined in order to illustrate the way in which all of the ideological traditions discussed above were included in the writings of a single individual who received the patronage of the Jalayirids for helping to construct an image of legitimate rulership through elegant language.

Salmān Sāvajī was born around the year 709/1309–10 in Sāvah in Persian Iraq, to a family that had served the Ilkhan viziers in the business of accounting (istīfāʾ). In his entry for Salmān, the biographer of poets
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Dawlatshāh Samarqandī wrote that his family was always honoured by the sultans. The career of Salmān’s father benefited from the fact that it coincided with that of the most prominent native of Sāvah of the period, Saʿd al-Dīn Sāvājī, who served as vizier with Rashīd al-Dīn during the reigns of Ghazan and Öljeytü. Salmān himself was trained in the business of the dīvān and chancery script (‘ilm-i siyāq va qūfī), but also began to gain notoriety as a poet at the end of Abū Saʿīd’s reign. His patron was the vizier Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad, for whom he composed a qaṣīda known as Badāʾiʿ al-Asḥār (or Abḥār).

After Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad was killed in his conflict with ‘Alī Pādshāh and the Oyrats in 736/1336, Salmān sought the patronage of Shaykh Hasan and his newly appointed vizier Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Zakarīyā. After Shaykh Hasan was forced to abandon Azarbayjan in 740/1340 and settle permanently in Baghdad, Salmān followed him there, and soon became poet laureate (malik al-shuʿārāʿ) of the Jalayirid court. According to Dawlatshāh, Salmān was discovered by Shaykh Hasan Jalayir while the poet was making his way to Baghdad from his home town of Sāvah. Salmān composed a spontaneous verse about the amir and his slave who was fetching the arrows that he was shooting. Pleased with his work, Shaykh Hasan promoted Salmān, who became the darling (qurrat al-ʿayn) of the Jalayirid family, and whose prestige reached the highest level during the reign of Shaykh Uvays.

The vast majority of Salmān’s odes (qaṣāʾid, sing. qaṣīda) that survive are dedicated to prominent members of the Jalayirid dynasty and their ministers. In the following discussion of these qaṣīdas, attention has been paid to the attributes, titles and qualities ascribed specifically to the sultan, while less emphasis has been placed on the literary qualities of the odes. In other words, what is considered here are aspects of the official image and persona of Shaykh Uvays as expressed by the Jalayirid court poet, as a way of understanding what elements went into the creation of the Jalayirid dynastic image. Aspects relating to the artistic qualities of Salmān’s work are not of primary concern here.

The panegyric of Salmān was probably not intended for a wide public audience; it is assumed here that his work was intended for the ears of the sultan and his entourage. However, it is likely that Salmān’s odes were recited aloud in the restricted public forum of the royal court, which included members of the royal family, administrative officials, religious figures, and foreign travellers and envoys. What is suggested here is that given the dearth of narrative historical sources representing an official Jalayirid view of their own place in history and their relationship to the Ilkhanid past, the poetry written for the Jalayirid court, about the sultan,
might help us to gauge more accurately what the Jalayirid view of their relationship to the Mongol political past might have been.

One of the most prevalent images in Salmān’s qaṣīdas dedicated to Shaykh Uvays is that of the sun. The sultan is commonly referred to as the ‘sun of the sultanate’ (āftāb-i salṭanat), or a similar variation, such as ‘sun of the sky of the sultanate/power/rule’ (āftāb-i āsmān-i salṭanat or āftāb-i āsmān-i mulk). Salmān employs other variations on this solar imagery, referring to Shaykh Uvays as ‘lord of the sun of (royal) glory’ (dāvar-i khūrshīd-ī farr) and the ‘noble sun’ (khūrshīd-i karam). The sultan is also called the ‘sun of justice protection’ (āftāb-i ‘adl-parvar), suggesting that his ability to dispense and enforce justice spread like the rays of the sun throughout the kingdom. More will be said about Shaykh Uvays and the issue of justice in Salmān’s qaṣīdas below.

Another major theme in Salmān’s praise of Shaykh Uvays is frequent comparison to the historical and legendary pre-Islamic kings of Iran. In these comparisons, Salmān claims that Shaykh Uvays is equal to or surpasses these great rulers in whatever attribute they are most famous for. For example, Shaykh Uvays is likened to Anūshirvān in justice, Ardashīr in bravery, and Jamshīd in glory.

Justice is a third major theme in Salmān’s odes to Shaykh Uvays. The role of the ruler as a just and disinterested arbiter of the various competing interests in society was central to the concept of legitimate political authority in many pre-modern societies. Shaykh Uvays was not a lawgiver, in that he did not introduce a new code of justice as part of his political programme. Instead, he sought to uphold the Ilkhanid legal tradition, which had come to involve a combination of Islamic (sharī’ā) and Mongol dynastic law (yāsā). The Islamic legal tradition involved more than just the theological debates and rulings of religious scholars and jurists. The tradition of dynastic decree or arbitration, often referred to as maẓālim, was also part of the legal tradition in Islamic societies in the region ruled by the Ilkhanids.

Another common theme in Salmān’s praise and characterisation of Shaykh Uvays is the sultan as the ‘shadow of God’ (sāya-yi khudā, sāya-yi ḥaqq, zill-i ḥaqq, sāya-yi parvardagār). This was a common title used by Islamic rulers since the time of the early Abbasid caliphs. It placed Shaykh Uvays well within the caliphal tradition, as a ruler whose right to rule depended on his role as a representative of God’s will on earth. Variations on this title included ‘shadow of God’s grace’ (sāya-yi lutf-i khudāvand or sāya-yi lutf-i ilahī) and ‘divine shadow’ (sāya-yi khudā’ī).

In his verse in praise of Shaykh Uvays, Salmān made reference to
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Shaykh Uvays’s role as defender and supporter of Islam. These references range from the general ‘upholder of religion’ (bar-dārā-yi dīn) and ‘religion-protecting king’ (shāh-i dīn-parvar) to more specific references to Islamic tradition, such as ‘supporter of the religion of the Prophet’ (nāṣir-i dīn-i nabī). In one instance, Salmān suggests that Shaykh Uvays draws upon both Shi’i and Sunni religious heritage to support his rule. Thus, he is the ‘knower of the knowledge of ‘Alī’ (‘ālim-i ‘ilm-i ‘alī) and ‘equal in justice to [Caliph] ‘Umar’ (‘adīl-i ‘adl-i ‘umar). This reference to ‘Alī among the attributes of the sultan illustrates the significance of Shi’i and ‘Alid loyalties in the eighth/fourteenth century, particularly in the Jalayirids’ domains in Arab Iraq. Shaykh Uvays’s inheritance from his father included the cities of Najaf and Karbala, important centres of Shi’i veneration as the sites of the tombs of ‘Alī and his son Husayn. Shaykh Uvays’s father and mother were both buried in Najaf, perhaps suggesting a personal devotion to ‘Alī on the part of Shaykh Ḥasan and Dilshād Khātūn. In addition, the eighth/fourteenth century saw the rise of a number of Sufi ṭarīqas demonstrating allegiance with, or at least sympathy for, the family of ‘Alī and the Shi’i imamate. One of these was the Ḫūrūfiyya, whose founder, Fażl Allāh Astarābādī, discussed briefly in the previous chapter, claimed descent from the seventh Shi’i imam, Mūsā al-Kāẓim. The Şafaviyya of Ardabil, although active in the mid-eighth/fourteenth century under Shaykh Ṣadr al-Dīn, had not yet taken on the overtly Shi’i aspects it would display in the ninth/fifteenth century.

The cultivation of an identity for Shaykh Uvays as a supporter and defender of Islam was not unique, but part of a general trend in the eighth/fourteenth century throughout the regions that had been conquered by the Mongols. In the Jochid ulūs, or Golden Horde, as well as in the Chaghatayid central Asia (the Ulus Chaghatay and Moghulistan), the political elite had converted to Islam by the mid-fourteenth century. Only in China did the Mongol rulers not become Muslims, but instead Sons of Heaven in the model of previous Chinese dynasties. The specifically Islamic symbols and language of authority found in the post-Ilkhanid period in Iran were thus part of a more general pattern of the Islamisation of Mongol khanates across Eurasia in the fourteenth century.

In addition to verses dedicated to Shaykh Uvays, Salmān also praised Shaykh Uvays’s father, Shaykh Ḥasan, as well as his mother, Dilshād Khātūn (or Dilshād Shāh). An examination of Salmān’s qaṣīdas in praise of these other two Jalayirid patrons, the parents of Shaykh Uvays, reveals similar language that combines claims to universal rule, references to famous Iranian kings of the historical and mythical past, and emphasis on the religious aspect of Jalayirid rule in Arab Iraq.
Shaykh Hasan is praised, like his son, as a conqueror (khidiv-i jahān-gushā) and lord of the age (dārā-yi ‘ahd, dārā-yi zamān, khudāvand-i zamān, sulṭān-i zamān). As with Shaykh Uvays, Salmān employs imagery of the sun, describing Shaykh Hasan as āftāb-i mulk, āftāb-i salṭanat and shāh-i khurshīd-maḥall. Salmān also evokes the image of the person of Shaykh Hasan at the centre of the ‘circle of kingship’ (nuqta-yi dā’ira-yi pādishāhī) and at the centre of the turning circle of heaven. In addition, Shaykh Hasan is compared to the great kings of the past. He exhibits the ‘traces of Jamshīd’ (jamshīd-ā), and is a ‘lord of the lineage of Farīdūn’ (dārā-yi afrīdūn-nasab) and ‘Jamshīd worthy of Alexander’ (jamshīd-i iskandar-ḥasab). Such rhetoric placed Shaykh Hasan and his family in the tradition of the kings and heroes of the Shāh-nāma.

The pre-Islamic past is blended with the religious obligations of a Muslim ruler, who embodies all the best qualities of the Abrahamic-Quranic tradition. Thus, Shaykh Hasan is a ruler with the heart of Ḥaydar (‘Alī) (ḥaydar-dil), the sunna of the most praised (Muhammad) (aḥmad-sunan), the blood of Jesus (‘īsā-dam) and the manner of Joseph (yū suf-shiyam). Here we see a blend of Shi‘i and Sunni references, along with the pre-Islamic prophets Jesus and Joseph. Salmān seems to stress Shaykh Hasan’s Shi‘i leanings in one characterisation of the amir as ‘a lord Ḥasan by name, Ḥusaynī by lineage and origin’ (dārā-yi ḥasan-nām ḥusaynī-yi nasab va aṣl). Such a line evokes not only the Jalayirid family lineage (Shaykh Hasan and his father Amīr Ḥusayn), but also the names of the two sons of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the second and third Shi‘i imams, Ḥasan and Husayn. Perhaps this allusion appealed to elements among the Shi‘i ‘ulamā’ present at the court in Baghdad. Salmān’s play on these names connected the Jalayirid ruling family with Shi‘i religious tradition as they found themselves ruling over two of the most important Shi‘i holy sites of Najaf and Karbala.

In addition to his praise of Shaykh Uvays and Shaykh Hasan, Salmān also wrote in honour of Dilshād Khātūn, the wife of Shaykh Hasan and mother of Shaykh Uvays. She was a descendant of the Chubanid amir Dimashq Khwāja, son of Amīr Chūpān and Tūrsun Khātūn, the grand-daughter of Ahmad Tegüder Khan. As such, Dilshād represented the Ilkhanid royal house, as well as the Chubanid Sulduz family that had ruled the state de facto under Amīr Chūpān in the first years of Abū Sa‘īd’s reign. The union of Shaykh Hasan and Dilshād Khātūn produced Shaykh Uvays, progeny of all three major political families of the later Ilkhanate: the Jalayirids, Chubanids and Hülegüids. However, it was not just Dilshād’s role as the mother of a future sultan that made her an important
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political figure. She also took an active role in the administration of the government in Baghdad.76

The image of Dilshād as a political leader, and not just the wife of Shaykh Ḥasan, is reflected in Salmān Sāvajī’s qaṣīdas dedicated to her. She is the ‘head and chief of the kings of the world’ (sar va sarvar-i shāhān-i jahān;77 also sar-i salāfīn78) and ‘lord of the sultans of the sea and plain’ (khudāygān-i salāfīn-i baḥr va barr).79 Salmān even casts Dilshād in the role of a conqueror, praising ‘Dilshād Shāh, a ruler veiled by the glory of the king, seized the kingdom of Sanjar and broke the crown of Heraclius’ (dilshād shāh shāhī k’az farr-i Malik muqanna’ bi-girift mulk-i sanjar bi-shikast tāj-i hirqil).80 In addition, just as Shaykh Uveys and Shaykh Ḥasan are compared to the great pre-Islamic kings of Iran, so Dilshād is compared to former queens, including Bilqīs, the Queen of Sheba, Qaydāfa, Queen of Barda, and Dārāb, the eldest daughter of Bahman in the Shāh-nāma.81

Finally, like her husband and son, Dilshād Khātūn is portrayed by Salmān as a supporter and defender of Islam. Thus, she is the ‘supporter of prophetic law’ (nāṣir-i shar‘-i payambar) and ‘guardian of the world and religion’ (‘iṣmat-i dunyā va dīn).82 Salmān also describes Dilshād as the ‘ka’ba of the men of the state, [and] qibla of the lords of religion’ (ka’ba-yi arkān-i dawlat qibla-yi arbāb-i dīn).83 Here, as with Shaykh Ḥasan, the axis around which the heavens and circle of kingship turn, Dilshād too is imagined as a fixed central focus (ka’ba) around which turn the affairs of both the state and religion.

Salmān Sāvajī personally benefited from his close association with the Jalayirids, and acquired a vast amount of land and property from Dilshād Khātūn and Shaykh Uveys. However, Salmān’s undoing was his unwillingness to continue his loyalty to the Jalayirids after Shaykh Uveys’s son and successor, Sulṭān Ḥusayn, was driven out of Tabriz by the Muzaffarid prince Shāh Shujā’ in 776/1375. Although Muzaffarid occupation in Tabriz was short-lived, Salmān’s qaṣīdas in praise of Shāh Shujā’ earned him the ire of Sulṭān Ḥusayn when he returned and restored Azarbayjan to Jalayirid control.

The preceding overview of the relationship of Salmān Sāvajī to the Jalayirid ruling family is intended to help understand the ideological foundations of their rule in the former Ilkhanid domains in the period after Abū Sa‘īd, and especially during the reign of Shaykh Uveys. Praise for Shaykh Uveys and his parents, Shaykh Ḥasan and Dilshād Khātūn, emphasised the new dynasty’s image as conquerors, world rulers and preservers of past traditions of both pre-Islamic Iranian kingship and Islam. The Jalayirids patronised Salmān not only for his talents as a poet, but also for the ways

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in which his verse reinforced the notion of Shaykh Uvays as a ruler very much in line with the legacy of Abū Saʿīd and the Ilkhanid state. While Salmān’s verse was not necessarily for public consumption, its more narrow focus on the ruler and his court was designed to establish a political identity for the Jalayirids among the ruling class, and perhaps also among the literary and administrative elites who had served the Ilkhans, and could now hope to continue their livelihoods in the service of rulers who sought to present themselves as the rightful heirs to the Ilkhanid regime.

The preceding discussion has been an attempt to identify and analyse the ways in which legitimate political authority was conceived and expressed in the post-Ilkhanid Islamic world in the eighth/fourteenth century through an examination of the literary and material production of the court of the Jalayirid sultan Shaykh Uvays. The Jalayirid dynasty was descended from a Mongol tribal group that established itself among the ruling elite of the Ilkhanate from the earliest days of that state’s existence. Although they were not patrilineal descendants of Chinggis Qan, their privileged place within the Ilkhan state, along with their matrilineal descent from two Ilkhanid rulers, seems to have allowed Shaykh Uvays to claim to uphold, if not the direct Chinggisid bloodline, then at least a more general notion of Mongol heritage. At the same time, an image of Shaykh Uvays as the dispenser and defender of justice in the name of Islam was also cultivated by those who produced literature at his court in Tabriz. Such an image had a long history in the Islamic world, and was one taken up by the Ilkhans, particularly Ghazan and Abū Saʿīd. The continuation of the rhetoric of a ruler who upheld Islamic and Chinggisid traditions indicates a conscious attempt on the part of the Jalayirid court, particularly after the re-conquest of the Ilkhanid heartland of Azarbayjan, to re-establish the Ilkhanate, albeit only in its western provinces and without a true prince of the blood. In an age when the symbolic authority of both the caliph and Chinggis Qan’s family were no longer viable bases on which to arrange the political order, the expressions of the Jalayirid court under Shaykh Uvays represent an ongoing attempt to reformulate the meaning of legitimate authority among a ruling class which drew on both the glories of the conquests of Chinggis Qan and the expectations of the Muslim community to fashion its image and maintain its position.

The reign of Shaykh Uvays represented the height of royal authority in the years after Abū Saʿīd’s death. The Jalayirid sultan seemed to have successfully established a dynastic state, founded on the principles upheld by the Ilkhans. The survival of this state would be challenged in the years following the death of Shaykh Uvays, first by a succession struggle among his sons, and then by the Chaghatayid amir and conqueror Timūr. As will
be discussed in the following chapter, these challenges weakened the Jalayirid hold over Azarbayjan, Diyarbakr and Arab Iraq, and eventually led to the end of the dynasty in the early ninth/fifteenth century, as well as the end of the Ilkhanate as a compelling political concept.

Notes
1. Ahrī/TSU, (Persian text), 182; (English translation), 81.
2. Ahrī/TSU, (Persian text), 184; (English translation), 83.
3. Ahrī/TSU, (Persian text), 184; (English translation), 83.
7. Nakhjivānī was a member of the Ilkhanid financial administration in the mid-eighth/fourteenth century. He was a close associate of the grand vizier Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad, who urged him to write a book of composition and correspondence protocol (inshā‘) during the reign of Abū Sa’īd. However, he did not complete his Dastūr al-Ḵāṭib until many years after Abū Sa’īd’s death, during the reign of Shaykh Uvays. See Nakhjivānī/Dastūr, ix, xi, 24–5.
9. During the reign of Shaykh Uvays, coins were struck in his name throughout the Jalayirid sultanate, in provinces that were directly under his rule (Baghdad, Wasit, Khuy, Tabriz, Ardabil, Nakhjivan, Shirvan), as well as in Persian Iraq and Fars (Kashan, Isfahan, Shiraz). See Shīrīn Bayānī, Tārīkh-i Āl-i Jalāyir (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tihrān, 1962), 49.
15. Ilkhanid coins, and those struck after 736/1335, would often exhibit the name of the ruler in Uyghur script. For example, coins struck in the name of the Chubanid puppet Sulaymān Khan, as well as those struck in the name of Shaykh Uvays, gave the ruler’s name in this form. See Rabino, ‘Coins of the Jalā’īr’, 105; Norman D. Nicol, Raafat el-Nabarawy and Jere L. Bacharach, Catalog of the Islamic Coins, Glass Weights, Dies and Medals in the Egyptian National Library, Cairo (Malibu, CA: Undena, 1982), no. 4,712. There are also examples of coins struck in the name of Ghazan in which this
pattern is reversed, that is, the ruler’s name is written in Arabic script, while the formula is in Uyghur script. See Blair, ‘The Coins of the Later Ilkhanids’, 296.

34. Sāvajī/Kulliyāt (Vafā’i’s introduction), vi–vii.
35. Dawlatshāh/Tazkīra, 286.
36. Sāvajī/Kulliyāt (Vafā’i’s introduction), viii.
37. Dawlatshāh/Tazkīra, 286.
38. Sāvajī/Kulliyāt (Vafā’i’s introduction), xi.
39. Sāvajī/Kulliyāt (Vafā’i’s introduction), xii.
40. Dawlatshāh/Tazkīra, 287.
41. Sāvajī/Kulliyāt, 89, 92, 198.
42. Sāvajī/Kulliyāt, 174.
43. Sāvajī/Kulliyāt, 176.
44. Sāvajī/Kulliyāt, 63.
45. Sāvajī/Kulliyāt, 84.
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46. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 105.
47. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 111.
49. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 46.
50. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 82.
51. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 105.
52. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 145.
53. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 111.
54. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 21, 203.
55. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 77.
56. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 119.
57. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 40.
58. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 40.
59. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 10.
60. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 10, 86.
61. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 49.
62. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 49.
63. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 79.
64. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 10.
65. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 130.
68. ‘The turning of heaven is like a circle round his grace’ (kih hast gardan-i gardān z’bar-i minnatash chūn chanbarī): Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 205.
69. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 107.
70. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 153.
71. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 153.
72. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 153.
73. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 79.
74. Shaykh Hasan’s supposed ‘Alid loyalties have been noted by Roemer, due to the fact that he was buried in Najaf, site of the tomb of ‘Alī. See H. R. Roemer, ‘The Jalayirids, Muzaffarids and Sarbadārs’, in Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart (eds), The Cambridge History of Iran, Volume 6: The Timurid and Safavid Periods (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 6, 9.
75. Sheila Blair has interpreted Shaykh Uvays’s repair of the shrine of ‘Alī in Najaf as both a memorial to his father, who was buried there, and an affirmation of his ‘Alid loyalties. See Sheila Blair, ‘Artists and Patronage in Late Fourteenth-Century Iran in the Light of Two Catalogues of Islamic Metalwork’, BSOAS 48:1 (1985): 55.
76. See Ṣafadī/A’yān, 2:355.
77. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 30.
78. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 116.
79. Sāvajī/Kullīyāt, 36, 165.
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80. Sāvaji/Kullīyāt, 137. The references here are to the Saljūq sultan Sanjar (d. 552/1157) and the Byzantine emperor Heraclius (d. 20/641).
81. Sāvaji/Kullīyāt, 6.
82. Sāvaji/Kullīyāt, 6.
83. Sāvaji/Kullīyāt, 6. In another example, Dilshād Khātūn is ‘that lofty ka’ba and that qibla of excellence’ (ān kā‘ba-yi a‘ālī v‘ān qibla-yi ma‘ālī). See Sāvaji/Kullīyāt, 137.