



## A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF IMPORTANT PROSE WORKS WRITTEN IN MONGOL PERIOD IN IRAN

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### Abstract

Mongol period in Iran can be divided into two parts. The first part began from 1219 which came to an end in 1255 and second part began from 1255 which continued till 1335. Available data suggests that from 1219 till the arrival of Halaku Khan in Iran in 1255 promotions of Persian literary activities were not paid much attention. It is therefore that in the first part of Mongol period no remarkable books in Persian prose are found in the territories conquered by Mongols under the leadership of Chagiz Khan. In the first period of Mongol rule in Iran few prominent poets and writers are noticed but they were not in Mongol territory, before Halaku arrived in Iran. It was in 1256 that after integration of remaining forces either by force or surrender when Halaku Khan established Ilkhanate to run the conquered territory in a systematic and organized manner and brought Iranian scholars and bureaucrats in administration which created healthy atmosphere, the literary activities restarted. It is therefore, that in the second period of Mongol rule several books of high standard in prose on various topics were written. Especially, historiography became a prominent subject and many books on history were written in this period. Among them *Tarikh-e Jahangusha* by Ata Malik Juwaini, *Tarikh-e Wasaf* by Abdullah bin Wasaf, *Jame-ut Tawarikh* by Rashiduddin Fazlullah, *Tarikh-e Guzida* by Hamdullah Mustaufi and *Tarikh-e Benakati* by Fakhruddin Benakati are most famous. Likewise, *Nuzhatul Qulub* on geography, *Durratul Taj* on philosophy *Fih-e ma Fih-e* on mysticism and *Gulistan* on moral and ethics are noteworthy.

**Keywords:** Important, Iran, Mongol, Period, Prose works.

### Introduction

The Mongol period in Iran begins from 1219 and continued till 1335. However, this period in Iran can be divided into two parts. The first part began from 1219 with the campaign

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of Changez Khan against Kharzam Shahi Empire and came to an end with the arrival of Halaku Khan in Transoxiana in 1255. The second part began from 1256 and continued till the downfall of Ilkhanate in Iran in 1335. Halaku Khan who was especially deputed by his brother Mangu, the Great Khan with the special assignment to either destroy or compel to surrender the remaining forces in Iran left during the first phase of invasion. Hence, after arrival in Transoxiana in 1255, Halaku first dealt with the existing forces in Iran and after integrating them, in early 1256, turned his attention towards Nizari Ismaili state commonly known as Assassins and after destruction and subjugation of Assassins, Halaku made Maragheh his seat of power and established Ilkhanate to run the conquered territory in a systematic manner. The first phase of invasion on Iran was highly destructive and brutal in nature in which almost all the major towns and cities were destroyed and plundered, had created many social and economic problems. Among them providing stable government, maintaining law and order, peace and tranquillity among the conquered subjects, construction and rehabilitation were major problems and required immediate attention.

Before departure to Mongolia in 1222, Changez Khan had given the responsibility of looking after the daily administration of conquered areas to Chormaqan who was a famous general but soon he was sent for military operations in Caucasus and adjoining areas and the charge of Iran was left into the hands of, Chin Temur, Dayir, Nosal and Korguz respectively. It can be imagined that till the arrival of Halaku Khan in 1255 what kind of attentions towards promotion of literary activities would have been paid by them. Therefore, after establishing Ilkhanate Halaku turned his attention towards the problems required immediate attention but handling those problems successfully was not possible without participation of local Iranian bureaucrats and scholars in the administration and thus, for the first time Iranians are seen employed on high ranking posts including wazir, the gap created between Mongols and Iranians was tried to fill by bringing Iranian scholars and bureaucrats closer to Mongols and peaceful atmosphere was created for coexistence.

The efforts made by Halaku Khan to bring Iranians closer and involve Iranian scholars and bureaucrats in administration resulted in the presence of both Nasiruddin Tusi, the great scholar and author of several books and Ata Malik Juwaini who later wrote *Tarikh-e Jahangusha* on the occasion of the siege of Baghdad in 1258. Thus, after establishment of Ilkhanate by Halaku Khan in 1256, Mongols and Iranian bureaucrats came closer to each other and their involvement in administration created healthy atmosphere in which the literary activities once again started raising heads which soon got momentum and a number of high

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standard books in Persian and Arabic prose were produced and especially, historiography received tremendous rise in the period from 1256 to 1335.

### **Review of Literature**

Study of the Mongol period in Iran suggests that a lot of materials in the shape of books and articles are found on Mongol, their invasion on Iran, destruction and brutality shown by them during sieges of the towns and cities but neither sufficient material is found on prose literature produced during Mongol period in Iran nor systematic research has been done. Therefore, the topic of present research paper is new and hence, selected for the present research paper to have detailed study and put together all scattered materials.

### **Importance of the Topic**

The importance of the topic lies in the facts that though there are materials on the topic undertaken for research, they are scattered here and there and no systematic efforts have been made to gather and bring all those scattered materials together. This research paper is an effort to bring together all the scattered materials on the topic in this paper so that it will be useful for the scholars and here lies the importance of the topic.

### **Mongol Period in Iran**

Mongol period in Iran begins from 1219 and comes to an end in 1335. However, this period can be divided into two parts. The first part begins with the invasion led by Changez Khan in 1219 which continued till 1255 and the second part begins from 1255 under the leadership of Halaku Khan which continued through his successors till 1335. <sup>1</sup>The immediate cause, which provoked first Mongol invasion over Iran was the murder of Mongol merchants at the instance of the Kharzam Shahi Governor of Otrar.

Hearing the news of murder of the merchants Changez Khan dispatched an embassy to the court of Alauddin Mohammad -II Kharzam Shah (1200-1220). to protest the killing of merchants and demand surrender of the governor of Otrar. Instead of thinking over the demands, all the envoys were killed. Consequent upon the murder of envoys Changez Khan called an urgent meeting of the Qurrelatai, and took decision of invasion, over the kingdom of Kharzam Shah and thus the invasion on Kharzam Shahi kingdom of Iran began in 1219 and Mongol entered in Iran.

In 1253 Halaku's brother Mangu who had been installed as Great Khan in 1251 assigned Halaku the work with a massive Mongol army to conquer or destroy the remaining Muslim states in southwestern Asia and Halaku was assigned the especial task of subjugation of Lurs of southern Iran, the destruction of the Nizari Ismaili state (the Assassins), the

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submission or destruction of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, the submission or destruction of Ayyubid states in Syria based in Damascus and finally, the submission or destruction of the Bahri Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt.<sup>2</sup>

Two tenths of the empires fighting men were gathered for Halaku's army in 1252. Thus, the second phase of Mongol invasion over Iran began under the leadership of Halaku Khan who marched from Qaraqoram in July 1252 and reached Samarqand in September 1255. From Kish he dispatched messengers to the various Persian rulers to render assistance against assassins or suffer the consequences of their refusal or inactivity. Sa'd, the heir and successor (1226-60) of the Atabeg Muzaffaruddin of Fars, sultans of Rum, Izzuddin and Ruknuddin joined the battle against Assassins.<sup>3</sup>

In early 1256 Halaku Khan carried out a mission against the Assassins, razing their fortresses and destroying their power. the Assassins surrendered their impregnable fortress of Alamut without a fight, accepting a deal that spared the lives of their people. Ruknuddin, the leader of the Assassins was taken to Qaraqoram where he was put to death by the order of Mangu Khan. After subjugation of Assassins in early 1256 Halaku chose Azerbaijan as his power base and withdrew to Maragheh in northwest Iran, and there the Mongols settled permanently in Iran.<sup>4</sup>

### **Establishment of Ilkhanate**

It was in Maragheh in the year 1256 that Halaku Khan established Ilkhanate to run the administration of Iran. Formation of Ilkhanate was a strategic move by Halaku Khan to consolidate control over the newly conquered territories and integrate them into the broader empire. The formal establishment of Ilkhanate was marked by the appointment of Halaku Khan as the Il-khan, a title that signified his role as the Mongol ruler of Iran and surrounding regions. The term 'Il-khan' means 'subordinate Khan' and reflected the administrative hierarchy within the Mongol Empire, with the Ilkhanate being a semi-autonomous region under the authority of the Great Khan. The Ilkhanate's administrative structure was centralized, with the Il-khan serving as the supreme ruler. The central government was responsible for overseeing all aspects of governance. Halaku Khan took the title of Il-khan or subordinate Khan, the title, which passed on to his successors and gave to the dynasty the name Il-khans.

After establishment of Ilkhanate, for the first time Iranians are seen employed on high-ranking posts including wazir, the gap created between Mongols and Iranians was tried to bridge by bringing Iranian scholars and bureaucrats closer and peaceful atmosphere was created. The efforts made by Halaku Khan in regard of involving Iranian scholars and

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bureaucrats in administration bore fruit which is seen on the occasion of the siege of Baghdad in 1258 where both Nasiruddin Tusi, the great scholar and author of several books and Ata Malik Juwaini who later wrote *Tarikh-e Jahan Gusha* were present. Thus, after establishment of Ilkhanate by Halaku Khan in 1256, the literary activities once again started raising head and due to patronage of the royal court got momentum.<sup>5</sup>

The invasion of Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasid Caliphate, was one of the most remarkable events under the leadership of Halaku. The fall of Baghdad in 1258 and assassination of Caliph Al-Mustasim Billah marked the end of the Abbasid Caliphate which left profound impact on the Islamic world. According to J. Nehru 'Halaku captured Baghdad and put an end to that famous centre of art and learning, where for over 500 years treasures from all parts of the world had come and accumulated. Crowds of scholars with their books fled from Baghdad to Cario and Spain and a renaissance of art and learning took place there.'<sup>6</sup>

Halaku died in Maragheh in the year 1265 but the successors of Halaku Khan ruled over Iran till 1335. Abaqa Khan, (1265-1282) the son of Halaku Khan, succeeded his father as Il-khan in 1265 and ruled the country till his death in 1282. The remarkable events of his reign are retention of Shamsuddin Juwaini as wazir while appointing his brother, the historian, Alaaul Mulk Ata Mali Juwaini, lieutenant to the Noyan Suqunchaq, the viceroy of Iraq-e Arab and Fars. Another notable event of his reign is the surrender of Ismaili castle Gird-Kuh in 1271. For his capital Abaqa chose Tabriz in preference to Maragheh, favoured by his father.<sup>7</sup> He died in 1282 and was succeeded by Teguder (6 May 1282-10 August 1284). Teguder, a brother of Abaqa succeeded on the throne of Ilkhanate in 1282, but his reign proved to be short as he was murdered in 1284. The notable event of his reign was the Nestorian Christians, long entrenched in Northwestern Iran and Iraq, were especially favoured, and their bishop rebuilt the church at Maragheh.<sup>8</sup>

Arghun Khan (11 August 1284-12 March 1291) the son of Abaqa Khan, ascended to the throne on 11 August 1284 after the death of Teguder. He continued his father's policies and sought to strengthen the Il-khanate's position. According to Naseri Arghun did not believe in any religion but he was against the Muslims. He appointed one Sad-ud-Daula his wazir who was a Jew who killed Muslim scholars and inflicted great harms to the Islamic traditions.<sup>9</sup> One notable event of Arghun's reign is his persuasion to Juwaini to write *Tarikh-e Jahangusha*. Gaykhatu (23 July 1291-21 March 1295) ruled over Ilkhanate of Iran from 1291 to 1295. He was the son of Abaqa Khan. His first order upon taking throne was to punish several amirs including Taghachar and Tuqal. The notable events of his reign were stopping advancing army

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of Afrasiyab and campaign in Anatolia to check the advance of enemy. Issuance of paper currency in 1294 which was named 'Chao' and which did not get currency amongst traders. He was a gentleman but extravagance. His wazir Sadr-e Jahan was also intelligent. He was killed by his cousin Baydu to whom once Gaykhatu had insulted in inebriated position. Baydu (24 March 1295-4 October 1295) took the reign of Ilkhanate in 1295 but during sixth month of his reign he was killed by Ghazan.

The name of Ghazan Khan (4 October 1295-11 May 1304) in the history of Ilkhanate is most remarkable. In his reign Islam got independence, and the fear of Mongols disappeared for ever. He himself was a literate man having knowledge of many languages including English and great patron of learning. He was the first ruler who declared independence from the suzerainty of Great Khan. He renovated and decorated the tombs of Imam Husain and Imam Raza. He also led campaign against Sultan of Misr and got victory in some of the battles. He reissued the Il-khan Calendar for correct calculations with effect from 13 Rajab 701 Hijri/14 March 1302. Thus, he laid the foundation of independent Muslim state. The court at Tabriz, the capital city, was entirely Moslem and Persian in character. Good government and general prosperity were the serious concerns of the ruler. Ten thousand men guarded the main roads along, which numerous caravans passed in safety. Both Genoa and Venice had commercial envoys and colonies of merchant's residence in Tabriz. He died in 1304.<sup>10</sup>

Ghazan Khan's reign is marked by various constructions which shows his interest in constructional activities. In 1297 Ghazan Khan ordered the construction work, which had begun in a suburb of Tabriz and in a few years his twelve-sided tomb structure, crowned by a great dome, was the center of a group of buildings set within gardens. The buildings included monastery, hospital, religious schools, an observatory, library, palace or administrative building, and an academy of philosophy.

Ghazan Khan's reign is also marked for his great wazir, Rashiduddin Fazlullah, a native of Iran, a practicing physician in the reign of Abaqa and court historian and principal administrator under Ghazan Khan and Oljayetu. He wrote *Jame-ut-Tawarikh* and outside Tabriz established a suburb named 'Quarter of Rashid.' It was devoted to the arts and sciences, theologians, jurists, traditionalist, reciters of the Quran, students, and Craftsmen of every trade. Ghazan Khan, one of the most notable rulers of the Ilkhanate, is remembered for his significant reforms and efforts to integrate Mongol rulers with Persian culture.<sup>11</sup>

Mohammad Khodabanda (1304-1316) also known Oljeitu or Oljaytu was a prominent ruler of Iran. His reign is particularly notable for his efforts to consolidate and stabilize the

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country, development of observatory constructed by Nasiruddin Tusi at Maragheh and laying foundation of a new city Sultaniya near Zanzan where majestic buildings were constructed. His reign is also marked for the flourishing of Persian art and culture. He died on 6 April 1316 and was succeeded by his son Abu Saeed.<sup>12</sup>

Abu Saeed (1316 to 1335) also known as Abu Saeed Bahadur Khan was the last ruler of the line of Il-khan of Iran. Abu Saeed ascended to the throne in 1316. Initially, he was a promising ruler. His reign is remarkable for the promotion of Amir-e Choban, the chief of the Amirs and being awarded the title of Bahadur Khan and later his marriage with the sister of the king. The reign of Abu Saeed is noted for various battles and internal wars which caused the disintegration of the country after his death in 1335. In his reign two important books on history were written. One by Hamdullah Mustaufi being *Tarikh-e Guzida* and second by Fakhruddin Benakati named *Tarikh-e Benakati*. Apart from these, Hamdullah left one masnavi named *Zafar Nama* and one book in prose named *Nuzhatul Qulub* being first detailed book on geography in Persian.<sup>13</sup>

### **Brief Discussion on Prose Works**

**Fih-e ma Fih-e:** *Fih-e ma Fih-e* is a collection of seventy-one discourses given by Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-1273). These discourses were compiled after his death by his disciples. This book of Rumi provides profound insights into his teachings, spiritual philosophy, and reflections on various religious, ethical, and metaphysical subjects. The work is considered the most significant prose writings of Rumi and is often seen as an informal companion to his poetic works.<sup>14</sup> This book is written in simple words and small sentences and might have been written sometimes between 1360 and 1272.

**Maktubaat:** This work contains letters of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi which he sent to state officials. These letters, like all other works were not written by Rumi himself. He dictated them. This book contains 147 letters in Persian and was published by Feridun Nafiz Uzlukin from Istanbul in 1937. These letters were translated into Turkish by Abdul Baki Golpinarh.<sup>15</sup> These letters of Rumi are quite important as they throw light on Rumi's relations with various government officials as well as on current socio, economic and political condition of the time. This book is written in simple words and small sentences and with clarity of thoughts.

**Tarikh-e Jahangusha:** *Tarikh-e Jahangusha* is a well-known work of Ala'ul Mulk Ata Malik Juvaini (13th-14th century). This is a renowned book of history which provides a comprehensive history of the Mongol Empire, particularly focusing on the Ilkhanate and its rulers. This book starts from 1206 and comes to an end up to the events of 1256 however,

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according to Mehdi Husain Naseri this book was presented in the court in the year 1260. This book is divided into three parts. The first part of this book deals with the history of Chingiz Khan, his predecessors and successors. The second part is a general history of the Khwarazm Shahi rulers in which Qutbuddin and Jalaluddin have been especially mentioned and the third part is related to the events of Hasn bin Sabah and Ismaili Sect.<sup>16</sup>

Author was the witness of the most of the events which he has mentioned in the book. *Tarikh-e Jahangusha* is an invaluable source for understanding the history and governance of the Mongol Empire in Iran. The language of this book is quite simple however the use of Arabic word is common but it has become part of the Persian language and therefore, reader does not feel bored while reading the book but sentences are a little bit longer which sometimes create difficulty to understand the meaning.

**Gulistan:** *Gulistan* is a classic Persian literary work written by Shaikh Sadi Shirazi during 13th century. This book is renowned for its moral and ethical teachings, presented through a collection of stories and anecdotes. Sadi wrote it during the reign of Atabek Abubakr Sad bin Zangi, the ruler of Shiraz, who was an ally of Halaku Khan, the founder of the Il-khan dynasty in Iran. *Gulistan* is divided into eight chapters. The main theme of *Gulistan* is morality, ethics, humanity, love and brotherhood. It is a reflection on the virtues and vices of human behaviour.<sup>17</sup> The main reason of the popularity of this book is simplicity of both thoughts and sentences.

**Akhlaq-e Naseri:** *Akhlaq-e Naseri* a book on morale and ethics is written by Nasiruddin Mohammad bin Hasan. This book focuses on ethics, specifically the principles of moral conduct and virtuous behaviour. *Akhlaq-e Naseri* is considered an important book in Persian ethical literature though there are several books on the topic. It reflects the intellectual and moral concerns of its time and provides insights into the ethical thinking of the 13th-century Islamic world. Apart from *Akhlaq-e Naseri* the author has left *Meyarul Ashar* in grammar, *Akhlaq-e Mohtashemi*, *Tawalla wa Tabarra*, Translation of *Al-Adab al-Wajiz* *Lilwaledain* and *Tahzibul Akhlaq wa Tathirul Araq*.<sup>18</sup> *Akhlaq-e Naseri*'s language is a little bit tough due to the use of Arabic words and long sentences which makes the book archaic and tough.

**Tarikh-e Wasaf:** *Tarikh-e Wasaf* consists of five volumes. This is in fact the history of Halaku Khan and his successors i.e. from the annexation of Baghdad in 1258 till the reign of Abu Saeed. Wasaf began writing this book in 699 Hijri and in 702 Hijri first volume of this book was presented to Ghazan Khan and the remaining volumes were presented to Aljaetu

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Khoda Banda. *Tarikh-e Wasaf* provides a detailed account of the Il-khan dynasty, focusing particularly on the reign of Ghazan Khan. This book was written by Adib Shahabuddin Abdullah alias Wasaf who was born in 663 A.H. in Shiraz. The style of this book is archaic with difficult words and long sentences. Wasaf joined the court and was assigned the duty as tax administrator during the reign of Ghazan Mahmud and Oljaetu.<sup>19</sup>

**Jame ut-Tawarikh:** Jame ut-Tawarikh is a memorable work of Rashiduddin Fazlullah. This book is divided in two volumes. The first volume deals with the Mongols till the reign of Ghazan Khan. The second volume deals with Prophet Adam, Prophet Mohammad, (pbuh), Iranian emperors till the advent of Islam in Iran, Caliphate of Banu Umayyah, Abbasid, Salajeqa, Salgharia, Ismailia, Chinese, Jews, Nasrani, Hindus, even the mention of Sakya Muni (Gautam Budha) is in detail. The language of this book is simple and somehow easy to understand the meaning. Rashiduddin was commissioned by Ghazan Khan to write this book. His work Jame ut-Tawarikh reflects his deep involvement in the intellectual and administrative life of the Mongol court. Apart from Jame' ut-Tawarikh, he has also left behind in Arabic *Kitab-ul Ahya wal Aasar*, *Kitab-e Tauzihat*, *Miftahut Tafasir*, *Resala Sultania*, and *Latayeful Haqayeq*. He also left his letters. manuscripts of which are available in libraries.<sup>20</sup>

**Tarikh-e Guzida:** Tarikh-e Guzida is a significant historical work on the Mongol period, written by Hamdullah Mustaufi Qazvini (1281 – 1349). This book was written in 1330 during the reign of Abu Saeed Bahadur, the last ruler of the line of Il-khan in Iran. This book is written in simple language and apart from the history of Mongol this book also contains history of Qazvin and prominent figures of the different fields of the time. In the preface of this book author has mentioned about his *Masnavi Zafar Nama* which he finished in 1335 which has been appreciated by the European scholars in view of its historical value.<sup>21</sup>

**Nuzhatul Qulub:** Mustaufi's most prominent work is *Nuzhatul Qulub* which is virtually the only source to describe the geography and affairs of the Ilkhanate era. This book gives vital information about the government, commerce, economic life, sectarian conflicts, tax collection. and other similar topics. Before this book no work on geography in Persian was found hence Mustaufi thought that an available source in Persian will be helpful, as most Geographical sources about Iran being in Arabic. This work is also considered a substantial contribution to the ethno-national history of Iran. This book was written in 740 Hijri/1339 A.D. It contains one preface, three articles and one conclusion. This book is on Geography and one of the oldest books on Geography in Persian language.<sup>22</sup>

**Tarikh-e Benakati:** The actual name of Tarikh-e Benakati is ‘Rauza-e Ulul-Albab fi Tawarikhil Akabir wal Ansab’, This is a history book written in Persian by Fakhruddin Benakati, a historian from the Il-khan period of Iran and being contemporary of Ghazan Khan. Fakhruddin Benakati was a notable scholar and historian during the Ilkhanate. Tarikh-e Benakati is a significant historical book on Ilkhanate period. Prof. Browne has highly appreciated this book for its historical information which this book provides. The full name of Benakati is Abu Sulaiman Daud bin Mohammad Benakati. He was the contemporary of Ghazan Khan. He completed Tarikh-e Benakati in 1317 and died in 730 Hijri.<sup>23</sup>

**Durratul Taj:** Durratul Taj is a well-known book of Allama Qutbuddin Shirazi written in Persian. This book deals with various aspects of philosophy, including metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. The title of this book indicating its esteemed status in philosophical literature. Apart from this he has also left few other works in Arabic namely ‘Sharh-e Qanun ibn-e Sina in Tibb, and Sharh-e Hikmatul Ishraq’ of Shaikh Shahabuddin Saharwardi in Hikmat. Allama Qutbuddin Shirazi was a significant figure in Persian philosophy and science, was born in Shiraz in 634 Hijri, was a disciple of Mohaqqiq Tusi, Expert in Ilm-e Tibb, astronomy and music of Iran, spent his major time in Azerbaijan and learnt from the company of Khwaja Nasiruddin, and assisted him in the construction work of the Rusdgah of Maragheh. He met Rumi and went back to Tabrez where he died in the year 710 Hijri. He was expert in the game of Shatranj and played on Chang (a musical instrument). He is noted for his efforts to integrate Persian intellectual traditions with Islamic philosophy.<sup>24</sup>

**Tafsir-e Baizavi:** Tafsir-e Baizavi, written in Arabic is a comprehensive commentary on Quran. The title ‘Anwarut Tanzil wa Asrarut Tawil’ reflecting the work's focus on elucidating the meanings and interpretations of the Quranic verses. The commentary covers various aspects of Quranic exegesis, including linguistic, theological, and jurisprudential interpretations. Tafsir-e Baizavi is highly regarded for its clarity, scholarly depth, and methodological approach. Apart from this Baizavi has left ‘Tawaleul Anwar wa Mataleul Ansar’ which deals with unity of God, Minhajul Osul and Nezamut Tawarikh in Persian which is the summary of historical articles. His full name was Abul Khair Naseruddin Abdullah bin Umar. He was a native of Baiza situated in Fars Province of Iran and was performing the duties of ‘Qaziul Quzzat’ in Shiraz. He was famous as a great orator and theologian of Islamic world during the Il-khan period in Iran. He died in Tabrez in 685 Hijri.<sup>25</sup>

**Aasarul Belad wa Akhbarul Ebad:** written in Persian by Zakaria Qazvini is a historical and geographical work that provides detailed descriptions of various cities and

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regions in the Islamic world. It combines historical narratives with geographical information. This book is divided into two main parts: Aasarul Belad which deals with the physical and historical descriptions of cities and regions and Akhbarul Ebad deals with the biographies of nineteen Iranian poets. Aasarul Belad wa Akhbarul Ebad is considered an important source for understanding the geography, history, and culture of the Islamic world during the 13th century.<sup>26</sup> Imaduddin Zakaria bin Mahmud Qazvini, also known as Zakariya al-Qazvini, was a prominent Persian geographer, historian, and scholar who lived during the 13th century. He was born in the city of Qazvin, Iran, and lived during the period of the Islamic Golden Age. Qazvini is best known for his work Aasarul Belad wa Akhbarul Ebad as an encyclopaedist and his contributions to Islamic geography and history. Zakariya Qazvini died in 682 Hijri/1283. 'Aja'ib al-Makhluqat wa Gharayebul Maujudat' and Kitab al-Surat al-Arziyya are his other prominent books.<sup>27</sup>

### Conclusion

The Mongol period in Iran started from 1219 with the invasion of Chingiz Khan on Otrar. During this invasion all the major towns and cities fell in the hands of Mongol and the rule of Alaaddin Kharzam Shah was over. In 1222 Chingiz Khan left for Mongolia, assigning the management of conquered area to his commander Chormaqan. With the arrival of Halaku Khan in Transoxiana in 1255 second phase of invasion began and the first target was Nizari Ismaili state whose head Ruknuddin Khur Shah surrendered in early 1256 and all fortresses were dismantled. After integration of remaining Iranian forces either by force or surrender, Halaku settled in Maragheh and laid the foundation of Ilkhanate in 1256 to run the administration of Iran which continued by his successors till 1335. After establishment of Ilkhanate, Iranians were employed in the administration of Iran. Hereafter, scholars were patronized and encouraged. Gradually, the atmosphere changed and literary activities started which resulted in production of various prominent prose works. These prose works were not confined to a particular topic but written on the subjects like history, geography, philosophy, ethics and morale, theology, music, logic, commentary on Quran and music by the great scholars of the time however, the main theme of the prose works produced during Mongol period in Iran was history.

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