THE HISTORIES OF SHARAF AL-DĪN ‘ALĪ YAZDĪ: A FORMAL ANALYSIS

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This article revisits the complex oeuvre of the Timurid historian Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī. Yazdī is most famous for two chronicles that he wrote: The *Ẓafarnāma*, which mainly includes a biography of Timur, and the *Muqaddima*, a work devoted mainly to the history of Chinggis Khan and his descendants. However, recent studies have demonstrated that Yazdī left behind three other historical works or parts thereof: the *Dībācha*, the *Second Maqāla*, and the fragments of the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* found in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf*. In this article, I argue that Yazdī could not finish his historical project and all the extant works written by him are fragments of a larger historical project. I also attempt to shed light on how they are related to each other, and propose a tentative chronology for the composition of each fragment.

Key words: Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī, Timurids, Timurid historiography, Shāhrukh, Ibrāhīm-Sultān, *Ẓafarnāma*.

I. Introduction

Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī (d. 858/1454) is arguably the best-known Timurid historian throughout the Islamic world and in Europe.¹ His most famous work, which is uni-

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¹ The standard works on Yazdī’s historiography are John E. Woods (1987, pp. 99–105) and Shiro Ando (1995, pp. 219–246). The present article partially relies on the research that I conducted for my dissertation (Binbaş 2009).

versally known as the *Ẓafarnāma*, was celebrated for the beauty of its style and considered one of the pinnacles of Persian prose writing by the early modern historians, but as the literary taste shifted towards simplicity and brevity since the 19th century, it became a sample of the literary decadence in the late mediaeval and early modern periods.² By the mid-18th century, it had already been translated into Chaghatay, French, English, and possibly Ottoman Turkish. It was edited thrice, beginning in 1885 onwards.³ In 1972, Asom Urunbayev published a facsimile of a Tashkent manuscript dated to 9 Ramaẓān 840/17 March 1437, which was bound together with Yazdī's *Muqaddima* that was copied on 21 Ramaẓān 1038/14 May 1629. Most recently, Sayyid Sa'īd Mīr Muḥammad Ṣādiq and 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Navāyī published both the *Muqaddima* and the *Ẓafarnāma*.⁴

However, recent scholarship on Yazdī has demonstrated that the oeuvre of Yazdī is much more complicated than the two texts introduced above suggest. In 1939, Muḥammad Shafī' published a little text called *Dībācha* by Yazdī based on the manuscripts found in London and Oxford (Shafī' 1939).⁵ The *Dībācha* was meant to preface a chronicle entitled **Fathnāma-yi Ṣāhibqirānī*, which Yazdī apparently wanted to compose, but the project does not appear to have materialised. Unfortunately, the edition of Shafī' together with his other noteworthy contributions to the scholarship on Yazdī went unnoticed until the late Shiro Ando reintroduced the text to the scholarly world in his path breaking 1995 article on Yazdī. Ando contextualised the *Dībācha* in relation to the *Muqaddima* and the *Ẓafarnāma*, and also introduced a fourth fragment covering the period from the death of Timur in 807/1405 until 810/1407–1408, the year in which Pīr 'Alī Tāz died (Ando 1995, p. 221).⁶

Unbeknownst to Ando and other scholars working on Yazdī, several fragments in verse taken from a chronicle of Yazdī entitled **Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* are found in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf*, a manuscript which includes Yazdī's poetical works.⁷ The *Fathnāma-yi Humāyun* was also one of the titles ascribed to the *Ẓafarnāma*, but, with one

² For contemporary and near contemporary views on Yazdī's *Ẓafarnāma*, see Khunjī-Iṣfāhānī (2003, p. 92), Khvāndamīr (2001, Vol. IV, p. 15); for a modernist approach, see Browne (1920–1924, Vol. III, p. 365).

³ For the editions and translations of and the studies on the *Ẓafarnāma* published before 1972, see Storey–Bregel' (1972, pp. 804–806). For Chaghatay translations of the *Ẓafarnāma*, see Hofman (1969, Part 1, Vol. VI, 134–137). The Ottoman biographer 'Āṣīk Çelebī (d. 979/1572) reports an Ottoman Turkish translation by Ḥāfiẓ-i 'Ājam (d. 957/1550–1551), an émigré scholar from Azarbayjān in Ottoman intellectual circles, but this translation did not come down to us or is waiting to be discovered ('Āṣīk Çelebī 1971, f. 84b; Edirneli Mevdī 1852–1853, p. 451; Kātib Çelebī 1941–1943, Vol. II, col. 1120).

⁴ Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, *Muqaddima*. Published in facsimile together with the *Ẓafarnāma* in A. Urunbaev (Yazdī 1972, ff. 1b–83b; Yazdī 2008a). Otherwise indicated, references to the *Muqaddima* and the *Ẓafarnāma* refer to the latest 2008 edition.

⁵ This invaluable article was republished with a Persian translation of Shafī's Urdu introduction in a volume in which various works of Shafī' on Yazdī were collected (Shafī' 1970).

⁶ Ando was also unaware of Shafī's edition, but discovered the *Dībācha* independently in the Cambridge copy of the *Munsha'āt-i Yazdī*.

⁷ Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, *Dīvān-i Sharaf*. Istanbul Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi Ms. Revan 1015 (henceforth *YDS*).

exception, the fragments found in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf* are not found in the *Ẓafarnāma*. In brief, currently we have five fragmentary or incomplete historical works written by Yazdī:

1. The *Muqaddima* of the **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr*⁸
2. The *Dībācha* of the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*
3. The *Ẓafarnāma* or the **Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn*
4. The *Second Maqāla*
5. The fragments of the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* in verse found in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf*

The existence of these five fragments poses various interrelated questions. What did Yazdī intend to compose, and what was the timetable of his compositions? Why did he not compile his historiographical oeuvre into a single volume? Did or could Yazdī properly bring his project(s) into completion? Both Woods and Ando were aware of the inconsistencies in the picture that they were facing in terms of the structure of Yazdī's historical works. Woods suggested that the *Ẓafarnāma* was part of the "final recension" of what Yazdī had planned, but Yazdī could not bring the project to completion (Woods 1987, pp. 101–102). Ando tried to reconcile the structure and contents of four of the above-mentioned fragments (# 1, 2, 3, 4). He successfully established a chronological order for the extant fragments, but did not explain why eventually Yazdī left the *Dībācha* out or why he did not include the *Second Maqāla* in the *Ẓafarnāma* (Ando 1995, p. 234).

Since Ando's 1995 article, scholars who worked on Yazdī in particular and Timurid historiography in general have by and large avoided questions posed by the structural difficulties of Yazdī's historiographical oeuvre (Szuppe 2003, pp. 356–363; Bernardini 2003, pp. 140–141b). Most recently, Charles Melville, who edited *Persian Historiography*, a collective volume published as the tenth volume of the much celebrated *A History of Persian Literature* series, took into account the problems associated with the fragmentary nature of Yazdī's histories. Following Woods's analysis, Melville suggested that the *Ẓafarnāma* was "essentially a separate work entitled *Tārīkh-e jahāngīr*", but in another place in the same volume, he said, following Ando's analysis based on the *Dībācha*, that "the original title of the work seems to have been *Fath-nāme-ye sahib-qerānī*" (Melville 2012a, p. 71; 2012b, p. 190). There is no doubt that the confusion originated from the conflicting information that Yazdī gives about his own works, but the late Ando's holistic approach to Yazdī's historiographical oeuvre also creates the impression that Yazdī worked on a single historiographical project throughout his life, and every bit of information in his fragmentary work can be used to explain the composition processes of the other fragments.

In the following pages, I will try to answer the question of what and when exactly Yazdī composed, and how the surviving fragments are related to each other. My analysis will be strictly formal and the questions related to the contents of the texts will be addressed as long as they help us to better understand the structural pecu-

⁸ I will mark the hypothetical titles which Yazdī intended to compose with an asterisk.

liarities of Yazdī's oeuvre. I will first discuss the structure of the extant fragments in the chronological order established by Ando, and then argue that Yazdī actually never completed his project of writing a dynastic Timurid history. He simply had to abandon it. Finally, I will argue that the reason why he abandoned his project should be sought in Yazdī's intellectual travails as well as the internal political situation in the Timurid polity.⁹

II. Yazdī's Historiographical Works

II.a. *The Muqaddima of the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr*

The *Muqaddima* is a relatively long historical work covering the mytho-historical account of the period from Adam down to Chinggis Khan and his descendants. It was written, according to Yazdī, to demonstrate that the genealogy of Timur went as far back as Adam (Yazdī 2008a, pp. 21–22). In the final part of the *Muqaddima*, Yazdī emphasised the histories of the Ögeduids and Toluids of the *Ulugh Yurt* (Mongolia), the Jöchids of the *Dasht-i Qipchaq*, the Hülegüids of Iran, and the Chagataids of Central Asia.

Since the term *muqaddima* literally means 'prologue', and in some manuscripts the *Muqaddima* is found together with the *Zafarnāma*, we inevitably get the impression that the former was intended to preface the latter. However, as Woods observed earlier, these two texts are rarely found together, and the manuscripts in which they are found together are often late copies (Woods 1987, p. 101). Out of the forty-five manuscripts in which the *Muqaddima*, or a portion of the *Muqaddima*, and the *Zafarnāma* are found together, there are only three 15th-century copies, and none of them was produced during the life time of Yazdī.¹⁰ The earliest manuscript of the *Muqaddima* was copied in Muḥarram 885/March–April 1480 by Darvīsh Muḥammad b. 'Alī,

⁹ Like many other mediaeval and early modern historians, Yazdī's intellectual interests were not limited to historiography. In fact, in his own life time Yazdī was famous for his studies on *mu'ammā*, anagrammatic poetry. The complex oeuvre of Yazdī includes the following titles: *Hulal-i muṭarraz*, a work on the theory of *mu'ammā*, which also includes a lengthy introduction on the defence of lettrist ideas; *Mukhtaṣar-i Hulal-i muṭarraz*, a shorter version of the previous title; *Nikāt-i kalimāt al-tawḥīd fī al-Qur'ān*, a treatise on the concept of God's unity as it is expressed in the Qur'ān; *Kunh al-murād fī risāla-yi vaṣṣā' va a'dād*, a treatise on magic squares, its abridgement *Kitāb al-shāmil dar 'ilm al-a'dād*, and the *Sharḥ-i Qaṣīda-yi Burda*, a commentary on Buṣīrī's famous *Qaṣīdat al-Burda*. Yazdī also penned several short treatises such as *Risāla fī 'uqūd al-asābī* (also known as *Risāla-yi 'iqd-i anāmīl*), some of which are included in his *Munsha'āt* or the *Dīvān-i Sharaf*. Although there are references to a work on the astrolabe by Yazdī, it is most probably no more than a *lughaz* (riddle), which is found in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf* (YMN, 91–93; YDSh, ff. 134b–135b; Binbaş 2009, pp. 67–68; Anwari-Alhosseyni 1986, pp. 14–17; Monfared 2008, p. 540).

¹⁰ The manuscript counts in this article are based on the lists included in the *Persidskaia Literatura* and Eleanor Sims's dissertation on the Garrett manuscript of the *Zafarnāma* at the Walters Art Museum as well as my own visits to various manuscript libraries (Storey–Bregel' 1972, pp. 798–804; Sims 1973, pp. 64–67).

who also happens to be one of the translators of the *Ẓafarnāma* into Chaghatay.¹¹ This manuscript was bound together with one of the earliest, if not the earliest, manuscript of the *Ẓafarnāma*, that is, the famous 1436 *Ẓafarnāma* (Sims 1991, pp. 175–217).¹² The second earliest manuscript of the *Muqaddima* is dated to 15 Ramaẓān 891/14 September 1486, thirty-three years after the death of Yazdī.¹³ The last 15th-century manuscript of the *Muqaddima* is just a partial quotation from the *Muqaddima* at the beginning of a *Ẓafarnāma* manuscript in Mashhad.¹⁴ Therefore, the extant manuscript corpus of the *Muqaddima* would suggest that it was put together with the *Ẓafarnāma* after the death of Yazdī.

Yet, this does not change the fact that the text we have in our hands today is still a prologue to a much larger project. In various places, and most prominently in the colophon, Yazdī clearly refers to the text as a *muqaddima*.¹⁵ Although in one place he uses the term *dībācha* (preface) in the *Muqaddima*, there is no doubt that he refers to the *Muqaddima* in this instance, not to the *Dībācha*, which I will discuss below separately. Yazdī says that it was necessary to write a *dībācha* in order to explain the rise of Chinggis Khan, the first “universal ruler” to emerge in “Tūrān-zamīn.” Since the *Muqaddima* is the only place where Yazdī discusses Chinggis Khan, the term *dībācha* here must refer to the *Muqaddima* itself (Yazdī 2008a, p. 20). A cross-reference

¹¹ Darvīsh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī is probably the same person who translated the *Ẓafarnāma* as well as the *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh* into Chaghatay (Sims 1991, p. 177; Hofman 1969, Part 1, Vol. 6, pp. 134–137). He was also the copyist of a *Rawḍat al-ṣafā* manuscript (dated to 930–934/1524–1527) and a copy of the *Ḥabīb al-siyar* (dated to 928–929/1522–1523) (Tauer 1931, pp. 104–105, 113–114; Sims 1973, pp. 353–354). Sims suggested that he could be identified with Mawlānā Darvīsh ‘Abd Allāh, a native of Balkh, who was a master of *ta‘līq* and the copyist of the correspondence of Sulṭān-Husayn Bayqara and his children (Qāzī Aḥmad 1974, pp. 44–45).

¹² For further discussion on this manuscript and its current status, see the section on the *Ẓafarnāma* below.

¹³ Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Ms. Fatih 4424. Note that this manuscript is given as Ms. Fatih 4425 in Storey–Bregel’. This is a mistake, which I believe originates from Tauer’s article in which all Fatih Library manuscripts are given a call number one digit higher than their actual call number.

¹⁴ Mashhad Kitābkhāna-yi Āstāna-yi Quds-i Raẓavī Ms. 12064. This manuscript was copied in 893/1487–1488. It includes only a portion of the *Muqaddima* at the beginning of the *Ẓafarnāma*. To the best of my knowledge, this is the only manuscript which includes a fragment of the *Muqaddima*. With omissions, the fragment includes Yazdī (2008a, pp. 3–4) (until line 13 = *jalla jalīlun ṣamadun lā yazāl*) and continues from Yazdī (2008b, p. 228) (line 10 = *man yufsidu fihā*). There are two other *Muqaddima* manuscripts which were bound together with earlier 15th-century *Ẓafarnāma* manuscripts. The first one is London British Library Ms. Add. 6538. As separate pagination of the *Ẓafarnāma* in Hindi numerals demonstrates, the *Muqaddima* was bound with the *Ẓafarnāma* at a much later date. The consecutive page numbers in Arabic numerals start with the *Muqaddima* and they were most certainly added after the rebinding. The second one is the Tashkent manuscript which was published in facsimile by Urunbaev (see note 4 above). Although the text of the Tashkent *Ẓafarnāma* was copied on 9 Ramaḍān 840/17 March 1437, the copy date of the *Muqaddima* is 21 Ramaẓān 1038/14 May 1629.

¹⁵ Yazdī (2008a), p. 220 = *dar īn muqaddima ... maqṣūd-i kullī az vaṣ‘-i īn muqaddima*; p. 222 = *maqṣūd az iṣbāt va īrād-i īn qīṣaṣ ... ki muqaddima mushtamal ast*; p. 224 = *gharaḥ-i aṣlī az vaṣ‘-i īn muqaddima*. The colophon of the 1436 *Ẓafarnāma* also includes the title *muqaddima* = *Tammāt hādhihi al-Muqaddima ...* (Sims 1991, p. 195, fig. 42).

to the *Muqaddima* in the *Zafarnāma* also suggests that the *Muqaddima* was planned as a prologue. When Yazdī mentions Qachuli Bahadur in the *Zafarnāma*, he refers the reader for further discussion to the *Muqaddima*, where the story of Qachuli Bahadur is indeed told in more detail (Yazdī 2008a, pp. 64, 67, 70, 169; 2008b, p. 235).

Yazdī says that he composed the *Muqaddima* as a prologue to a chronicle entitled **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr*, which is divided into a prologue (*muqaddima*), two sections (*faṣl*), and one epilogue (*khātima*) (Yazdī 2008b, pp. 23, 42). Yazdī's plan and the title of the **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr* went unnoticed for generations of historians of the late mediaeval and early modern periods.¹⁶ The plan of the **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr* is reconstructed in the table below according to the description found in the *Muqaddima*.

Table 1. The structure of Yazdī's historiographical oeuvre as described in the *Muqaddima* (the extant part of the work is written in bold)

**Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr*

Muqaddima: On the genealogy of Timur going back to Adam

Muqaddima: On the definition of history

Faṣl: On the Creation and the nobility of Adam over other animate beings

Faṣl: On Prophets

Maqāla I: On those prophets who are given law and on those apostles whose names are clearly indicated in the Qur'ān and prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*)

Maqāla II: On those prophets whose names are found in histories and Qur'ān commentaries, and their number is forty-two.

Maqāla III: The story of the Creation and Adam

Faṣl: Not specified.

Faṣl: Not specified.

Khātima: Not specified.

¹⁶ One exception to this is perhaps Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn's reference to a biography of Timur entitled *Tārīkh-i Jahāngīrī* in 862/1457–1458 (Kātīb 1966–1967, p. 6).

Unfortunately, Yazdī does not elaborate on the contents of these sections, and, apart from the *Muqaddima*, we do not know what these two *faṣls* and the *khātima* were supposed to include according to the projected plan found in the *Muqaddima*. Woods argued that the first *faṣl* was on Timur and the second *faṣl* was on Shāhrukh (Woods 1987, p. 101). As I will discuss below, in the *Ẓafarnāma* Yazdī describes a tripartite Timurid dynastic history in three *maqālas*, each of which would be on Timur, Shāhrukh, and Ibrāhīm-Sultān b. Shāhrukh in order. Therefore, it is indeed plausible to assume that these two *faṣls* were meant to be on Timur and Shāhrukh respectively and that Yazdī possibly conceived of the third *faṣl* sometime between 822/1419–1420 and 828/1424–1425, when he composed the *Dībācha*. When discussing the Chaghatayid Qazan-Sultān b. Yasa'ur in the *Muqaddima*, Yazdī says that his story would be told in more detail in *Maqāla-yi Avval* (Yazdī 2008a, p. 219). Qazan-Sultān is indeed discussed in the *Ẓafarnāma*. This suggests that the *Maqāla-yi Avval* is indeed the *Ẓafarnāma*. However, we should note the terminological discrepancy. Yazdī refers to the *maqāla-yi avval*, not *faṣl-i avval* in the *Muqaddima*. Furthermore, equating the *faṣls* of the *Muqaddima* with the *maqālas* of the *Ẓafarnāma* would mean that when Yazdī wrote the *Muqaddima* in 822/1419–1420, he did not plan to write the third *maqāla* on Ibrāhīm-Sultān.

It is difficult to construe what Yazdī planned to write in the *khātima*. A *muqaddima* (prologue) or a *khātima* (epilogue) can be a separate historical work in its own right, and they do not have to connect directly to intermediate sections of a historical work as expected in a modern book. Yazdī's *Muqaddima* would be the best example of a prologue, that is a separate work in itself. As for the *khātima*, one can bring the example of Khvāndamīr's *Khulāṣat al-akhbār*, a concise universal history written in 905/1499–1500, in which the *khātima* is a separate treatise on the city of Harāt (Storey–Bregel' 1972, p. 380).

The organisation of the *Muqaddima* itself in a *muqaddima*, two *faṣls*, and three *maqālas* curiously resembles the organisation of the projected **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr* and **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqīrānī*. In terms of the subject that they relate, i.e. the definition of Prophecy, the three *maqālas* look like the subsections of the second *faṣl*, but this is not clearly indicated in the text (see Table 1 above). The prologue (i.e. the *muqaddima* of the *Muqaddima*) is devoted to the definition of history, and the next two *faṣls* and three *Maqālas* are devoted to concise definitions of prophecy and different types of prophets.¹⁷ *Maqāla III* is connected to the stories of ante-diluvian prophets until Japheth, son of Noah.

II.b. The *Dībācha* of the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqīrānī*

The *Dībācha-yi Tārīkh-i Amīr Tīmūr* is a short treatise in a very formulaic style and language. It came down to us in several forms and formats. Its earliest copies are

¹⁷ Yazdī (2008a), p. 23 = *muqaddima*; p. 25 = *Faṣl*; p. 30 = *Faṣl*; pp. 32–33 = *Maqāla I–III*.

found in Yazdī's *Munsha'āt*.¹⁸ The *Dībācha* is also found at the beginning of the so-called abridged version of the *Ẓafarnāma* entitled the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*.¹⁹ A substantial portion of the *Dībācha* was also quoted by 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī in his *Maṭla'-'i sa'dayn* (Samarqandī 2004–2005, Vol. II/1, pp. 365–369). None of the manuscripts of the *Ẓafarnāma* or the *Muqaddima* copied in the 15th century includes the *Dībācha*, and no copy of the *Dībācha* is found as an individual work in any manuscript library in the world.²⁰

Although the title of the *Dībācha* reads “*Dībācha-yi Tārīkh-i Amīr Tīmūr*”, the text itself suggests that it was in fact written as a preface (*dībācha*) to a chronicle entitled the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī* and dedicated to Abū al-Faṭḥ Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān in 828/1424–1425.²¹ According to the *Dībācha*, the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī* is to be divided into a *muqaddima* (Prologue) and three sections (*maqāla*). The plan of the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī* is reconstructed in the table below according to the description found in the *Dībācha* (Yazdī 2009–2010, pp. 30–31).

There are two questions to be answered regarding this formal organisation of the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*. Does the *muqaddima* mentioned in the *Dībācha* refer to the *Muqaddima* which we discussed above? And is the tripartite organisation described in the *Dībācha* the same as the one described at the beginning of the *Ẓafarnāma*, which includes the histories of Timur, Shāhrukh, and Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān? For the

¹⁸ The oldest copies of the *Munsha'āt-i Yazdī* (Istanbul Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi Ms. Revan 1019 [copied on 27 Sha'bān 867/17 May 1463] and Kütahya Vahid Paşa Kütüphanesi Ms. 621–622 [Dhī al-qa'da 868/July–August 1464]) are divided into two main sections, each one of which is devoted to Yazdī's letters and poetry as well as other fragments in verse. The late İraj Afshār recently edited these sections separately under the titles of *Manẓūmāt* and *Munsha'āt*, hence creating the impression that they were two separate works. In fact, these are just two parts of the *Munsha'āt-i Yazdī* (Yazdī 2007–2008; 2009–2010). Unless otherwise noted, my references in this article are to Afshār's edition of the *Dībācha* (Yazdī 2009–2010, pp. 20–31).

¹⁹ There are three manuscripts of this abridged *Ẓafarnāma*: London British Library Mss. India Office 190, 191, and Oxford Bodleian Library Mss. Ouseley 3–4. Shafī's edition is based on these three manuscripts (Shafī 1939, pp. 3–28; 1970, pp. 1–45; Storey–Bregel 1972, p. 806).

²⁰ There seem to be only three manuscripts, one in the British Library in London and two at the Saint Petersburg University Library (Mss. Nos. 146 and 855), which include both the *Dībācha* and the *Ẓafarnāma*. The British Library manuscript is a standard *Ẓafarnāma* with the *Dībācha* at the beginning. However, the *Dībācha* seems to have been added later to a “fairly old” manuscript of the *Ẓafarnāma* probably on 24 Sha'bān 1145/9 February 1733, when an extensive table of contents was added at the very beginning of the manuscript. See Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāma*. London British Library Ms. India Office 180 (I.O. Islamic 1315) (Ethé 1903, col. 80, No. 180). Dated to 1039/1629 and 1150/1737–1738 respectively, both Saint Petersburg manuscripts include the *Dībācha* and the *Maqāla-yi avval*, i.e. the *Ẓafarnāma* (Tagirdzhanov 1962, pp. 119–124). The Saint Petersburg manuscripts were not available to me at the time of writing this article.

²¹ Francis Richard suggested that the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī* might have been written by Qivām al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, the brother of Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī. I believe this argument relies on the fact that the *Munsha'āt* includes letters of Qivām al-Dīn Yazdī as well as Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī. Otherwise, there is no firm proof for Richard's suggestion (Richard 1996, p. 51). Richard's reference to the *Risāla dar akhlāq va siyāsat* as a work of Qivām al-Dīn Yazdī is also to be amended, as the *Risāla dar akhlāq* is a copy of Shujā's *Anīs al-nās* (Dānishpazhūh 1971–1972, p. 764).

Table 2. The structure of Yazdī's historiographical oeuvre as described in the *Dībācha***Faṭḥnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*

<i>Dībācha</i>	
	<i>On the perfection of human beings, a point on the science of history and its composition</i>
	<i>On the reason of this composition</i>
	<i>On the abovementioned prologues and the explanation of the arrangement as a result of it</i>
	<i>On the state of this composition and a notice on its author</i>
	<i>On the contents of the book</i>
<i>Muqaddima: On some prophets and sultans to whom the genealogy of the Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction is connected</i>	
<i>Maqāla I: [Not specified]</i>	
<i>Maqāla II: [Not specified]</i>	
<i>Maqāla III: [Not specified]</i>	

second question Yazdī himself presents the answer: Most probably yes, as Yazdī says that Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān himself instructed him to write his history in three sections as he was the third generation of Timurid rulers:

Since His Lordship, who is equal to heaven in excellence and who is adorned with the verification and ordering of the illustrious acts and feats of the Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction of the End of Time, is the grandson of that Lordship [Timur], and [since] in the third generation, the rightly-guiding wisdom of the lineages understood that the principal designs of this book [ought to be] established across three discourses (*sih maqāla*) [...] (Yazdī 2009–2010, p. 30)

The first question, however, is not so easy to answer. Yazdī says that he composed a *muqaddima* which would include the history of the prophets from Adam to Noah, and also the descendants of Japheth until Taraghay, father of Timur. In many respects this description concurs with the contents of the *Muqaddima* discussed above, as the last section of the *Dībācha* also bears the title *Muqaddima*. The exact

title of this very brief section is the following: “Prologue to the account of some of the prophets and sultans on which the explanation of the genealogy of Timur is established.”²² However, this section is so short – just a page and a line in the oldest manuscript – that it is hard to imagine that it constitutes the entirety of the *Muqaddima* of the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*. Here Yazdī only talks about the importance of the creation of the universe and how everything is constituted in it, and there is no existence beyond that universe. Yazdī continues that since the purpose of the history is to record the conditions and manners of the types of human beings, he would start his history with Adam (Yazdī 2009–2010, p. 31). Then the narrative stops. The existence of a separate *muqaddima* might indicate that the *Dībācha* is just the beginning of the *Muqaddima* of the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*, and an entirely separate chronicle from the **Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn*, whose first *maqāla* is the *Ẓafarnāma* as we have it today. However, in the *Ẓafarnāma* itself, Yazdī says that “the reason of the composition and the circumstances of the writing of the *Muqaddima* and its *maqālāt* were explained in the previous *dībācha*” (Yazdī 2008b, p. 247). In the *Dībācha*, we read that Yazdī decided to write a *Dībācha*, because the “original history (*aṣl-i tārikh*)” lacks one (Yazdī 2009–2010, p. 30). Therefore, this passage can be interpreted to mean that the *Dībācha* was intended to preface the *Muqaddima* and the *Ẓafarnāma* as well as the two subsequent *maqālas* on Shāhrukh and Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān.²³

Furthermore, the contents and the structure of the *Muqaddima* as we have it today correspond to what Yazdī wanted to achieve in the *muqaddima* to the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*. The *Muqaddima* starts with the creation, the story of Adam, and the definition of human categories, i.e. the prophets and the sultans, whose histories are to be narrated in the *Muqaddima*, and it tells the genealogy of Timur starting with Japheth, son of Noah.

Therefore, the structure of the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī* as it was proposed in the *Dībācha* corresponds to what is described in the *Ẓafarnāma*, and also to a certain extent to the *Muqaddima*, but for reasons that are difficult to explain, Yazdī decided to exclude the *Dībācha*, just as he excluded the *Muqaddima* from the final compilation of his historical project.

II.c. The Ẓafarnāma or the Maqāla-yi Avval of the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn

The *Ẓafarnāma* is the text that made Yazdī a celebrity among the late mediaeval and early modern Persianate historians. With twelve manuscripts copied before the death of Yazdī in 858/1454, it had already become a popular work during Yazdī’s lifetime. The number of manuscripts reaches forty-two by the end of the 15th century, and

²² Yazdī (2009–2010), p. 31 = *Muqaddima dar zikr-i ba’zī anbiyā va salāṭīn ki tabyīn-i nasab-i Ḥaẓrat-i Šāhibqirānī mawqūf ast bar ān*.

²³ Prefacing a chronicle with a separate *dībācha* and *muqaddima* is not unusual in Timurid historiography. Ḥāfiz-i Abrū’s *Jughrāfiyā* has the exact same plan, although its manuscript tradition is not simpler than that of Yazdī, as some manuscripts of the *Jughrāfiyā* do not include the *Dībācha* (Ḥāfiz-i Abrū 1996–1999, Vol. 1, pp. 45–88).

overall there are more than two-hundred copies world-wide, a number which is increasing as new copies emerge constantly in newly published catalogues or in private collections. The *Ẓafarnāma* was also often illustrated, and three of these illustrated copies are dated to the 15th century, a point which further confirms the prominent position of the *Ẓafarnāma* in Timurid historiography.²⁴

The subject matter of the *Ẓafarnāma* is the formation of the Timurid Empire from the birth of its founder in the Year of the Rat on 25 Sha‘bān 736/8 April 1336 until his death on 16 Sha‘bān 807/17 February 1405, and the ensuing succession struggle with a brief account of the enthronement of Khalīl-Sulṭān b. Mīrānshāh on 16 Ramaḍān 807/18 March 1405 (Yazdī 2008b, pp. 233, 1331–1337). In the *Ẓafarnāma*, Yazdī projects a tripartite dynastic chronicle. After a prologue (*muqaddima*) devoted to the genealogy of Timur, each of the subsequent three sections (*maqāla*) was going to be devoted to one Timurid ruler, i.e. Timur, Shāhrukh b. Timur, and Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān respectively (Yazdī 2008b, pp. 227, 240, 244, 472, 1337). According to this plan, the *Ẓafarnāma* is only the first *maqāla* of the entire project, and the internal evidence confirms this point.²⁵

Table 3. The structure of Yazdī’s historiographical oeuvre as described in the *Ẓafarnāma*

<i>*Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn</i>	
	<i>Muqaddima</i>
	<i>Maqāla I: On Timur</i>
	<i>Khātima</i>
	<i>Maqāla II: On Shāhrukh</i>
	<i>Maqāla III: On Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān</i>

The title *Ẓafarnāma* is not found anywhere in the text. Yazdī refers to his book as *fathnāma* “the book of victory” or simply *maqāla* in the text, and in the colophon of the Tashkent manuscript the title of the work is given as the **Fathnāma-yi Humā-*

²⁴ Those three illustrated manuscripts are the following: (I) *The 1436 Manuscript* or the “Dispersed *Ẓafarnāma*” (copied in 839/1436). The present whereabouts of this manuscript and its miniatures are listed in Sims (1991, pp. 196–214). (II) *The Garrett Ẓafarnāma* at the John Work Garrett Library in Baltimore (Ms. Gar. 3; formerly at Princeton University Library, Ms. Garrett 54, Shelf no. 87G), which was copied in 872/1467–1468. (III) *The Ẓafarnāma* copy at the Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi in Istanbul (Ms. 1964) was copied in 891/1486.

²⁵ Yazdī (2008b), p. 227 = *Maqāla-yi avval dar zikr-i ... Şāhibqirānī*, p. 1337 = *Khātima-yi maqāla*.

yūn (Yazdī 2008b, pp. 1273, 1337–1338; 1972, f. 494a; Woods 1987, pp. 103–105). In the *Ḥulal-i muṭarrāz*, which is Yazdī's magnum opus in the field of *mu'ammā*, Yazdī refers to a chronicle that he wrote as the **Tārīkh-i Humāyūn*.²⁶ Among the inscriptions found in the *Munsha'āt-i Yazdī*, there is one which was most probably composed by Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī himself for the envelope flap (*tabla*) of a certain generic title, i.e. the *Tārīkh-i Amīr Tīmūr*.²⁷ As mentioned above, a lavishly illustrated copy of the *Ẓafarnāma* was prepared for Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān in 839/1436, and it is possible that the box inscription in question was prepared for this manuscript. If this is correct, we may assume that the title (or one of the titles) of the work was the *Tārīkh-i Amīr Tīmūr* during Yazdī's lifetime. Shujā' says in his ethical work *Anīs al-nās* which was composed in 830/1426–1427 for Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān that Yazdī was working on a book called *Kitāb-i Faṭḥnāma-yi Sulṭānī* (Shujā' 1977, p. 387).

Whatever its original or intended title was, the title *Ẓafarnāma* must have entered into circulation very early on while Yazdī was still alive. Ibn Shihāb-i Yazdī (fl. 855/1451), a contemporary Timurid historian and a fellow townsman of Yazdī, was the first to refer to Yazdī's work as the *Ẓafarnāma* in 855/1451.²⁸ He was most probably acquainted with Yazdī personally, and was present during Mīrza Iskandar b. 'Umar-Shaykh's siege of Qum in 815/1412. Had there been any title in circulation at that time, he would probably have known it. 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī (d. 887/1482), a slightly later but well informed historian, also uses the term *Ẓafarnāma* in his *Maṭla'-i sa'dayn* which he composed after 875/1470 (Samarqandī 2004–2005, Vol. II/1, pp. 365, 403). Finally, Sulṭān-Aḥmad b. Khvānd-Shāh al-Ḥusaynī's *Ẓafarnāma*, which is one of the last specimens of Timurid historiography in the early 16th century, also uses the title *Ẓafarnāma* for Yazdī's work.²⁹ To conclude, whatever the original title or titles that Yazdī ascribed to the *Ẓafarnāma*, it was already forgotten by the end of the 15th century. Yet, the ambiguity surrounding the title reflects the fact that Yazdī could not finish his projected program of writing, and what we have today are just fragments of a bigger project.

Not only was the original title of the *Ẓafarnāma* forgotten, its initial plan as a tripartite dynastic history comprising the histories of Timur, Shāhrukh, and Ibrāhīm-

²⁶ Yazdī, *Ḥulal-i muṭarrāz*. Istanbul Süleymane Kütüphanesi Ms. Esad Efendi 1760, f. 11b (henceforth *YHul*).

²⁷ The title of the inscription reads "*Jihat-i ṭabla-yi Tārīkh-i Amīr Tīmūr*", and the inscription itself reads "*Shud zi tārikh jamm-i ṣāhibqirān * Pur zi gawhar dāman-i ākhir-zamān*". The inscription looks like a chronogram, but I was not able to extract the date implied in the inscription (Yazdī 2007–2008, p. 41). The same inscription is also found in Yazdī's *Dīvān*. See *YDSh*, f. 106b. If this envelope flap (*tabla*) was prepared for one of Yazdī's illuminated *Ẓafarnāmas*, it must have been for the 1436 *Ẓafarnāma* prepared for Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān b. Shāhrukh, as the earliest copy of the *Munsha'āt-i Yazdī*, copied on 27 Sha'bān 867/17 May 1463, predates the next two oldest illuminated *Ẓafarnāma* manuscripts prepared in the 15th century (Afshār 1978, p. 86).

²⁸ Ibn Shihāb-i Yazdī, *Jāmi' al-tavārikh-i Ḥasanī*. Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Ms. Fatih 4307, f. 411b = "*Tamma al-kitāb-i tārikh-i Ẓafarnāma az taṣnīf-i ... Sharaf ... al-Dīn Yazdī*." In fact, this is the colophon of the *Ẓafarnāma* manuscript that Shihāb-i Yazdī copied just a year after the death of Yazdī in 859/1454–1455.

²⁹ Sulṭān-Aḥmad b. Khvānd-Shāh al-Ḥusaynī, *Ẓafarnāma*. Istanbul Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Ms. Fatih 4428, f. 5a.

Sultān was also lost in the decades following the death of Yazdī. In a rare case of classification of Islamicate historiography, the Aq Qoyunlu historian Faḡl Allāh b. Rūzbihān Khunjī-Iṣfahānī (d. 926/1520) put Yazdī’s “*Tārīkh-i Ṣafarnāma-yi Tīmūrī*” under the rubric of those historical works whose purpose was to collect the accounts of a *single* ruler as opposed to others whose purpose is to narrate the history of dynasties or various social groups or individuals. According to Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, Yazdī’s work was unique with its precise description of the events and wars, unrivalled in its details of way stations, and unmatched in wealth of information regarding the names of *amīrs* and other companions of the *pādishāh* (Khunjī-Iṣfahānī 2003, p. 88; Melville 2012a, p. 71). Hence, the *Ṣafarnāma* was a biography of Timur at this point. The image of the *Ṣafarnāma* as a biography of Timur has persisted for centuries until today. Kātib Ḥelebī (d. 1067/1657), the renowned Ottoman bibliophile, put the *Ṣafarnāma* in its proper alphabetical place in his *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, and described it as a “Persian work on the events at the time of Timur” (Kātib Ḥelebī 1941–1943, Vol. II, col. 1120).

II.d. The Second Maqāla

The above survey of Yazdī’s historical oeuvre demonstrates that Yazdī had embarked upon the project of writing a tripartite Timurid dynastic chronicle, but sometime before 839/1436, he abandoned this project and turned his book into a biography of Timur. As far as we can tell, he never attempted to compile these separate fragments into a single volume. This assessment is not entirely wrong, but it lacks an important element, i.e. the *Second Maqāla* of Yazdī’s projected tripartite dynastic history.³⁰

Occasional references to the second or third *maqālas* of Yazdī appeared in secondary scholarship. For instance, Urunbaev, the editor of the Tashkent facsimile edition of the *Ṣafarnāma*, suggested that Yazdī did write the second and the third *maqālas*. Although Urunbaev’s argument was based on a misunderstanding of a passage in the *Maṭla‘-i sa‘dayn*, he nevertheless pointed in the right direction (Yazdī 1972, p. xlv).³¹ The existence of the unique manuscript of the *Second Maqāla* was first reported in the 1926 catalogue of the Āstāna-yi Quds-i Raḡavī Library in Mashhad. The brief catalogue description states that the manuscript is the “third *maqāla*” of the *Ṣafarnāma*, and that it was copied in 922/1516–1517 (*Fihrist* 1926, Faṣl 14, p. 25).

³⁰ Mashhad Kitābkhāna-yi Āstān-i Quds-i Raḡavī Ms. 4143 (henceforth *YZN/Mash*). This manuscript is currently being prepared for publication by John E. Woods of the University of Chicago and myself.

³¹ Urunbaev overlooks the fact that Samarqandī refers to Yazdī’s account of the Battle of Salmās in the introduction to his *Hulal-i muṭarraz*, not to the *Second Maqāla*. Samarqandī quotes the *Hulal* almost verbatim in this section. See *YHul*, ff. 11a–b = Samarqandī 2004–2005, Vol. II/1, p. 403 = “*ānchi az kamāl-i basālat va shajā‘at va vufūr-i dilāvarī va jalādat ... ba ray al-‘ayn dīda shud haqqan va ṣumma haqqan ki agar ‘ushr-i ‘ashīr ba ṭarīq-i naql az afvāh-i istīmā’ rafī ‘aql az qabūl-i ān albatta abā namūdī.*” Yazdī also quotes a poem from the *Ṣafarnāma* in the *Hulal-i muṭarraz* (Yazdī 2008b, p. 243). Yazdī’s two quatrains quoted in Samarqandī’s text were cited and translated in Soucek (1998, p. 34).

However, this manuscript went by and large unnoticed until Shiro Ando squarely located it in the framework of Yazdī's historical compendium.³² Ando's 1995 article is the first systematic study of the manuscript. In it, Ando used the *Second Maqāla* to reconstruct the chronology of Yazdī's historical compendium. He also compared its contents with other Timurid chronicles, most prominently with the *Shams al-ḥusn* by Tāj al-Salmānī and the *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* by Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū (Ando 1995, pp. 223–234).

With two hundred and one folios, the *Second Maqāla* is a relatively lengthy work, and it covers just three years from 807/1405 to 810/1408. It was dedicated to Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Sulṭān-Muḥammad Bahadur Khan b. Bāysunghur, a grandson of Shāhrukh. The existing manuscript was copied in the middle of Jumādā I 922/ca. 16 June 1516 by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Kātib (*YZN/Mash*, ff. 4b, 201a).³³ Yazdī's name is not mentioned in the text, but the internal evidence strongly suggests that it was written by Yazdī. First of all, the author refers to the *Ẓafarnāma* as the *Maqāla-yi avval-i Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*, or simply *Maqāla-yi avval* (*YZN/Mash*, ff. 5b, 9a, 104a). The title of the manuscript itself also follows a similar terminology, i.e. the *Maqāla-yi siyyūm az Tārīkh-i Tīmūrī* (*YZN/Mash*, f. 1b). As noted by Ando, the *Second Maqāla* also employs the kind of terminology peculiar to Yazdī, such as naming Timur's campaigns after the number of years they took to finish: *yūrish-i panj-sāla* or *yūrish-i haft-sāla* (*YZN/Mash*, f. 17b; Ando 1995, p. 223).

Unlike the *Muqaddima* or the *Dībācha*, there is no reference to the organisation of the *Second Maqāla* in its introduction. This might be because the manuscript was meant to be part of a larger historical work. Based on the prominence of Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān in the text, Ando suggested that the plan of the *Second Maqāla* was prepared at the court of Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān alongside with other historical works of Yazdī (Ando 1995, p. 228). However, as mentioned above, it was dedicated to Sulṭān-Muḥammad b. Bāysunghur.

The title of the manuscript reads *Maqāla-yi siyyūm*, i.e. the third *Maqāla*, of the *Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*, but the period covered by the work indicates that it should be the *Maqāla-yi duvvum*, i.e. the *Second Maqāla* (*YZN/Mash*, f. 1b). The projected tripartite organisation of Yazdī's historical compendium suggests that the part dealing with the reign of Shāhrukh should be the *Second Maqāla*. Why such an error occurred is impossible to say until we find another, preferably earlier, copy of the manuscript.

However, it would also be incorrect to call the *Second Maqāla* a complete history of the reign of Shāhrukh, as it is a topical, and roughly chronological exposition

³² Muḥammad Shafī' referred to the catalogue information in 1939, but there is no indication that he had access to the manuscript itself (Shafī' 1939, p. 3 [this reference is omitted in the Persian translation (Shafī' 1970, p. 12)]. Hans R. Roemer and Jean Aubin also had access to the manuscript. Roemer had a microfilm of the manuscript, but he curiously ignored it in his concise but magisterial survey of Timurid historiography in his introduction to Tāj al-Salmānī's *Shams al-ḥusn* (Tāj al-Salmānī 1956, p. 4). Aubin used Roemer's microfilm in Aubin (1956a, p. 115). He calls the manuscript a *dhayl* to the *Ẓafarnāma* of Yazdī. See also Storey–Bregel' (1972, pp. 800–801).

³³ Note that Yazdī uses the honorific *Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn* for Sulṭān-Muḥammad. The only other occurrence of this honorific for Sulṭān-Muḥammad is in Ja'farī's *Tārīkh-i Kabīr* (Bartol'd 1973, Vol. VIII, p. 565). All other Timurid sources ascribe to him the honorific *Quṭb al-Dīn*.

of the post-Timurid history between Shāhrukh’s “enthronement” in Khurāsān following the death of Timur in 807/1404–1405 until the death of Pīr ‘Alī Tāz in 810/1407–1408. This date is much earlier than the year 817/1414–1415, when Shāhrukh truly became the uncontested sovereign of the Timurid state after the defeat of Mīrza Iskandar b. ‘Umar-Shaykh and the appointment of his son Ibrāhīm-Sultān as governor of Fārs.

II.e. The Fragments Found in the Dīvān-i Sharaf

Yazdī himself was an accomplished poet and his poetic skills were recognised and appreciated by his near contemporary biographers. Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn Gāzurgāhī (fl. 908/1502–1503), one of his later biographers, even compared his style with the style of Ḥāfiẓ-i Shīrāzī (Dawlatshāh Samarqandī 2006–2007, p. 378; Gāzurgāhī 1996–1997, p. 234). However, whether Yazdī ever wrote a verse chronicle is an issue which has not been explored properly.³⁴ In fact, the fragments of a chronicle entitled **Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* are found in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf*. The *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* in verse starts with the usual praise of God and the affirmation of his unity. Similar to the *Muqaddima*, it continues with a relatively longish discussion on different taxonomies and political concepts, such as an account on writing and painting, and kingship (YDSh, ff. 27b–29a).³⁵ The next section deals with more philosophical and religious issues, such as the transformation in nature, and the absence or presence of potentiality (*qābiliyyat*) (YDSh, ff. 29a–30b).³⁶ Yazdī continues with praising Timur in a long section, which happens to be the longest surviving part of the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* (YDSh, ff. 31a–39b).³⁷ A versified letter of Timur to the Jöchid Toqtamish with whom

³⁴ Edgar Blochet attributed a verse chronicle of Timur to Yazdī, but the manuscript he referred to is rather problematic and it may very well be one of the many derivations of Yazdī’s *Ẓafarnāma*. The manuscript in question is at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Suppl. Pers. 1766 (Blochet 1905–1934, Vol. III, p. 266). Manūchihr Murtaẓavī cautiously accepted the attribution. According to Murtaẓavī, the poor style of the work suggests that it must have been written in the 15th century (Murtaẓavī 1991–1992, pp. 574–586). Yuri Bregel was also cautious about this attribution as he did not include it among the books written by Yazdī himself, but among the abridgements of the *Ẓafarnāma* (Storey–Bregel’ 1972, p. 807). Most recently, Charles Melville returned to Blochet’s argument and accepted Yazdī’s authorship (Melville 2012b, p. 197). As far as I can see, the only reference that connects Ms. Suppl. Pers. 1766 to Yazdī is a short note by a second hand on f. 1a, which reads “the Book of Victory on the history of Timur and the genealogy of Chaghatayids written by Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī who died in 850 [sic].” The poem does not include Yazdī’s penname, i.e. Sharaf, which is almost never missing in Yazdī’s poetry, and the political language of the work, such as the titles Timur Khān or *ṣāhib-qirān-i Qara Khān-nizhād* appears to reflect 16th- or 17th-century political sensitivities. Until further evidence is brought to light, this manuscript should be considered a work which Ron Sela would count among what he calls “heroic apocrypha” (Sela 2011).

³⁵ The *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* will be published together with the *Maqāla-yi duvvum*. See note 30 above.

³⁶ The issue of potentiality (*qābiliyyat*) is also discussed in the *Dīrbācha* (Yazdī 2009–2010, p. 23).

³⁷ This section is almost identical with Yazdī (2008b, pp. 230–233).

Timur had a long love-and-hate relationship in his career, is quoted in full (*YDSh*, ff. 40a–40b).³⁸ A short section in verse on the account of the childhood (*kūdakī* or *tiḡlī*) of Shāhrukh and a versified commentary on the Qur’ānic verse 4:59 precede the conclusion (*mukhtatam*) (*YDSh*, ff. 40b–47b).³⁹ The final sections of the fragmentary *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* include laudatory sections on Shāhrukh, Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān, Mīrza Pīr Budaq, who is most certainly the Qara Qoyunlu Pīr Budaq b. Jahānshāh (d. 870/1466), and a short section on ethics (*YDSh*, ff. 47b–52, 57b–58b).

After this brief description, the first question we need to ask regarding the provenance of the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* should be whether it is a separate historical composition by Yazdī, or a collection of poetry which Yazdī composed to use in his other prose chronicles. This question has also its bearing on the title of the work. As I discussed above, the title “*Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn*” is also used in the colophon of Yazdī’s *Ẓafarnāma*. The similarity of titles might suggest that what we have in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf* is nothing more than a collection of poetry extracted from the *Ẓafarnāma*, and there is evidence for this argument. For example, the long poem in the section entitled the *Tashbīb-i sukhan va ẓikr-i shamma’ī az mafākhir-i Ṣāhibqirānī* at the beginning of the *Ẓafarnāma* is also found verbatim in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf* (Yazdī 2008b, pp. 230–233; *YDSh*, ff. 31a–33b).

The poem on the childhood of Shāhrukh was probably intended for the beginning of the *Second Maqāla*. Just as the *Ẓafarnāma* includes a poem on the childhood of Timur, it is plausible to assume that the *Second Maqāla* would include a section on the childhood of Shāhrukh. Both poems evoke the same basic idea, i.e. Timur and Shāhrukh were leaders among their peers in their childhood. In fact, a close comparison of the two poems demonstrates the close relationship between the two (Yazdī 2008b, p. 238; *YDSh*, ff. 40b–41a):⁴⁰

The <i>Ẓafarnāma</i> on Timur’s childhood	The <i>*Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn</i> on Shāhrukh’s childhood
<i>Ba-bāzī agar nīzash āhang buvad</i> <i>Ḥadīṣash zi dayhīm va awrang buvad</i> <i>Ba-āyīn-i farmāndahī dāsht mayl</i> <i>Shudandī bar-ash kūdakān khayl khayl</i>	<i>Ba sinnī ki maylash ba bāzī budī</i> <i>Dar andīsha-yi sar-farāzī budī</i> <i>Shudandī bar-ash kūdakān khayl khayl</i> <i>Chu bar gird-i mah-i āsmānī suhayl</i>

However, some sections are surprisingly different. For example, the letter of Timur expressing his disappointment with Toqtamish after the latter’s second intrusion into the Caucasus in 797/1394–1395 is entirely different from what is found in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf* (Yazdī 2008b, pp. 801–802; 2007–2008, pp. 73–74; *YDSh*, ff. 40a–b). As opposed to the indirect and rather polite tone of the poem in the *Ẓafarnāma*, the second poem found in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf* has a more direct style, and one

³⁸ The same letter is also quoted in the *Munsha’āt-i Yazdī* (Yazdī 2007–2008, pp. 73–74).

³⁹ For the account of the childhood of Shāhrukh, see Yazdī (2009–2010, p. 74). The Qur’ānic verse 4:59 reads: “[O believers,] obey God and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.”

⁴⁰ The poem on Shāhrukh is also found in the *Munsha’āt-i Yazdī* (Yazdī 2007–2008, p. 74).

can also say that it is rather harsh in tone. Similarly, the pro-‘Alid discourse of the poem praising Timur in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf* is toned down in the *Ẓafarnāma* (Yazdī 2008b, p. 233; *YDS*h, f. 33b):

The <i>Ẓafarnāma</i> on Timur	The * <i>Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn</i> on Timur
<i>Murattab kunam ḥulla-yi shāhvār</i> <i>Ki akhbār-i Shāhash buvad pūd u tār</i> <i>Az avval kunam dar vilādat shurū‘</i> <i>Ki kay kard khurshīd-i shāhī ṭulū‘</i>	<i>Murattab kunam ḥulla az du‘ā</i> <i>Ba bālā-yi ān shāh-i nuṣrat-livā</i> <i>Khudāyā ba-ta‘zīm-i āl-i rasūl</i> <i>Ba awlād va aḥfād-i zawj-i batūl</i> <i>Biyāmurz ān Shāh rā jāvidān</i> <i>Ravānash ba jannat-i a‘lā rasān</i>

Other than this long introductory poem, I was not able to find any portion of the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* in the *Ẓafarnāma*. This lends support to the argument that Yazdī indeed wanted to write a verse chronicle of the Timurids presumably in the same tripartite structure. However, other than the letter to Toqtamish, the fragments we have today are not narrations of any historical events. Instead, they give the impression that they were taken from an introductory section, in which the ideological and ethical parameters of a chronicle are drawn. The section on ethics which bears the title “*Ham az Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn dar ṣifāt-i favākih mimmā yashtahūn*” (‘Also from the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* on the description of fruits that they covet’), indeed confirms that all these fragments are taken from a separate composition most probably in verse entitled the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* (*YDS*h, ff. 57b–58b).

The *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* provides little internal evidence regarding its composition. Yazdī says that many prose and verse chronicles of sultans had been written before, but no one took the burden of writing it starting from the ancient times and narrating each story one by one (*YDS*h, f. 50a).

Although many learned people before this time
Wordsmiths, that is to say creation
They recorded the conditions of the sultans
They put them both in prose and in verse
No one wrote a history starting with the ancient times
In the manner of ascertaining the stories one by one
The form of each episode became clear
Why, when, and where each happened.

The wide scope of the work described in these verses suggests that the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* was meant to be a universal chronicle, but this suggestion is purely conjectural for the time being. Frequent references to Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān in the text suggest that the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* could not have been written earlier than 822/1419–1420, when Yazdī entered the service of Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān, or later than 838/1435, when Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān died (*YDS*h, f. 50b).

It is difficult to ascertain whether the encomium to Pīr Budaq b. Jahānshāh is part of the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn*, as the extant sections of the book are certainly not

in order (YDSh, ff. 47b–48b). For example, the encomia to Pīr Budaq and Ibrāhīm-Sultān as well as the last part which is on ethics follow the conclusion (*mukhtatam*) of the *Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* (YDSh, ff. 43b–52b, 57b–58b). Therefore, it is difficult to reconstruct the exact order of the text. In its current format, the poems found in the *Dīvān-i Sharaf* appear to represent the fragments of an abandoned project entitled **Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn*.

III. A Tentative Chronology of Yazdī's Histories

The analysis of Yazdī's extant historical works presented above suggests that the *Ẓafarnāma* was the only historical work that Yazdī made publicly available. His other works (or fragments thereof) appear to have entered into much limited circulation.

In three of his works, i.e. the *Muqaddima*, *Dībācha*, and the *Ẓafarnāma*, Yazdī gives a relatively detailed account of how he embarked upon composing a chronicle. According to the account found in the *Muqaddima*, Ibrāhīm-Sultān himself was the original initiator of the entire project. In 822/1419–1420, he ordered that his scribes and ministers read aloud those accounts of Timur written by the Turkish scribes in Turkish to Yazdī, and he himself checked the reliability of each account. Based on the accounts filtered through Ibrāhīm-Sultān, Yazdī composed his history entitled the **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr* in a language and style agreeable to the taste of his age (Yazdī 2008a, pp. 21–22, 25). Yazdī must have revised the *Muqaddima* of the **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr* in 831/1427–1428. When counting the Chinggisid rulers of the Dasht-i Qipchaq, he gives the date 831/1427–1428 as the current date during the composition (Yazdī 2008a, p. 182).

The *Dībācha* contains two chronograms for the date of composition: *zāda khayruhā* and *ṣunniḡa fī Shīrāz*. Both give the date of 828/1424–1425. Based on Khvāndamīr's *Habīb al-siyar*, the second chronogram is often taken as the composition date for the *Ẓafarnāma*. However, the *Ẓafarnāma* does not include this chronogram, and Khvāndamīr's source is Samarqandī's *Maṭla'-'i sa'dayn*, in which a portion of the *Dībācha*, including the chronograms, was quoted (Yazdī 2009–2010, p. 29; Samarqandī 2004–2005, Vol. II/1, p. 368; Khvāndamīr 2001, Vol. IV, p. 16). Samarqandī explicitly says that the quote comes from the *Munsha'āt* of Yazdī, not from the *Ẓafarnāma*. Therefore, it would be erroneous to assume that this is the composition date of the *Ẓafarnāma*, as the date of 828/1424–1425 comes from the *Dībācha*, which is not part of the *Ẓafarnāma* as we know it today.

In the *Dībācha*, we do not see the drama presented in the *Muqaddima* as to how Ibrāhīm-Sultān invited Yazdī to Shīrāz to take charge of history writing in his court. In the *Dībācha*, Yazdī admits the involvement of Ibrāhīm-Sultān in the writing process, but he also tries to present himself as a more independent historian (Yazdī 2009–2010, p. 30):

This lofty composition was written ... during the exalted assemblies according to the noble dictation. Since in regard to the disposition of this author there is by no means flattery to that noble one [i.e. Ibrāhīm-Sul-

tān], just as the author of this composition in tending to these gardens (*tarshīh-i īn riyāz*) [does nothing] other than polishing and refining the style and the exordium of some stories through the [kind of] celebration that is not found in the original history (*aṣl-i tārikh*). These words were written to explain what [actually] happened and to alert [the reader] to the circumstances of the book, not with the intention of praise.

The *Ẓafarnāma* follows a similar rhetoric of cooperation between the prince and the historian. Yazdī says that he perused the Chaghatay and Persian verse chronicles which were composed according to notes written down by Timur's Uighur and Persian secretaries under Timur's close supervision. Ibrāhīm-Sultān collected all these chronicles, and those who could read these languages prepared a draft (*nuskha* 'i) and read it to him so that he could correct all the "mistakes". In case of doubt, they dispatched someone to the original place of the event and sought verification from those who witnessed the event (Yazdī 2008b, p. 247). The rest of the story is rather illuminating, for it describes the different stages of composition of the *Ẓafarnāma* in detail (Yazdī 2008b, pp. 247–248; Thackston 1989, p. 65):

Then, as commanded, it was written in a clean copy in the version that had been decided upon, and once again it was listened to in the royal assembly. It was compared with the first draft (*nivishta-yi avval*) and master copy (*nuskha-yi aṣl*), and the greatest effort was exerted to correct errors. Emendations that occurred to the royal mind were made, and since it had been ordered that whatever had been written in the first draft (*musavvada-yi ūlā*) in the royal assembly be copied exactly as it was and that absolutely no change be made in the original story, that draft was followed so that in every event all the details, such as the times of mounting and dismounting during travels, the names of stopping places and distances between places were all left as they were, and in the introduction of that which pertains to history no embroidering of expression should be made lest it grow too lengthy.

One crucial detail missing in Yazdī's account is the date when the book was written. Nowhere in the text does Yazdī provide the composition date of the *Ẓafarnāma*. We have only circumstantial evidence to determine an approximate composition date. Shujā's reference to the *Kitāb-i Fathnāma-yi Sultānī* which Yazdī was writing for Ibrāhīm-Sultān in 830/1426–1427 probably refers to the *Ẓafarnāma*. The year 832/1428–1429 seems to be a crucial date, as this is the first time when Yazdī talks about the completion of his project in a place other than his historical works. He was in Ibrāhīm-Sultān's retinue during Shāhrukh's second Azarbayjān campaign, which ended with the defeat of the Qara Qoyunlu Iskandar (d. 841/1438) in the Battle of Salmās on 18 Dhū al-Ḥijja 832/18 September 1429. Yazdī wrote a chronogram for this important event, which he included in the *Hulal-i muṭarrāz* in the place where he praised the bravery of Ibrāhīm-Sultān during the campaign. This chronogram was later copied by ʿAbd al-Razzāq Samarqandī in his *Maṭlaʿ-i saʿdayn* (YHul, ff. 11a–b; Samarqandī 2004–2005, Vol. II/1, pp. 389–400). Yazdī continues his ac-

count on this important event by quoting a poem from the **Tārīkh-i Humāyūn*, and the same poem is also found at the beginning of the *Ẓafarnāma* (YHul, f. 11b; Yazdī 2008b, p. 243). This reference can be interpreted as evidence for the argument that Yazdī had already completed the **Tārīkh-i Humāyūn*, which is most probably the *Ẓafarnāma*, or the *First Maqāla* of Yazdī's historical compendium (Soucek 1998, pp. 34–35) and it might also permit us to suggest that the title **Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn*, which is the title found in the colophon of the *Ẓafarnāma*, was the title of the project in the early 830s/1420–1430s.

Even if Yazdī completed the *Ẓafarnāma* in 832/1428–1429, the book appears to have remained unpublished or in limited circulation until 839/1436–1437, when the oldest securely dated copy of the *Ẓafarnāma* was prepared. The Wrocław *Ẓafarnāma* stands as an anomaly in this framework. It is a manuscript in 405 folios, and the extant portions of the text are identical with the standard text of the *Ẓafarnāma* as we know it today. It lacked a substantial portion of the introductory section even before World War II, and it was further damaged during the war.⁴¹ The most important aspect of this manuscript is that its colophon gives the date Shavvāl 821/October–November 1418 as the copy or composition date of the manuscript.⁴² This is even earlier than 822/1419–1420, the date found in the *Muqaddima*. If this is correct, should we then assume that Yazdī had completed the *Ẓafarnāma* before he received Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān's invitation to compose the **Tārīkh-i Jahāngūr*? This is indeed highly unlikely. We have no reference whatsoever to any relationship between Yazdī and the Shāhrukhid branch of the Timurid family before 822/1419–1420, and the text is suspiciously identical to later copies of the *Ẓafarnāma*. Furthermore, had Yazdī written a biography of Timur beyond the call of duty even before he was invited to Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān's court, this would have left its trace in the works of Yazdī. Therefore, until further evidence surfaces, we should assume that the Wrocław *Ẓafarnāma* either includes a mistaken colophon or is a cunning forgery (see Figure 1).

If we exclude the Wrocław *Ẓafarnāma*, the earliest extant copy of the *Ẓafarnāma* is the so-called 1436 *Ẓafarnāma*, a lavishly illustrated manuscript prepared for Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān in Dhū al-Ḥijja 839/June–July 1436. With its thirty-six or thirty-seven large miniatures, it is also an important masterpiece of Persianate painting.⁴³

⁴¹ Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersyteku Wrocławskiego Ms. 1495. The manuscript starts with the following words: “*tā ghāyat tarfī-i shurafāt ...*,” which corresponds to Yazdī (2008b, pp. 244–245). When the page numbers were set in Arabic letters, the manuscript had 422 folios (Brockelmann 1903, pp. 21–22; Majda 1967, p. 70, No. 94).

⁴² Wrocław Ms. 1495, f. 422a. The name of the copyist and the place where the manuscript was copied are not mentioned in the colophon.

⁴³ The text and miniatures were dispersed by Georges Demotte in the first half of the 20th century. The main text was acquired by the Kevorkian Foundation before 1948. The Kevorkian Foundation sold the manuscript on April 7, 1975. Since then the main text of the manuscript has been in the possession of various collectors or investors. Its current location is unknown to me. As for the miniatures, nine of them remained with the main text of the manuscript; three of them disappeared in the art market, and the remaining twenty-four are scattered throughout various museums and public or private collections in the world. One miniature remains unaccounted for. All the

Figure 1. The colophon of the Wrocław *Zafarnāma*

Curiously, after the 1436 *Zafarnāma* four further copies of the *Zafarnāma* were prepared in just eight months from Šafār to Ramaẓān 840 (from August 1436 to March 1437).⁴⁴ In other words, the publication of the 1436 *Zafarnāma* was akin to a ‘book launch’ in the parlance of our times. Whatever twists and turns Yazdī had in his mind before 839/1436, it was all over after the 1436 *Zafarnāma*, and the text was presented to the reading public of the 15th century as a biography Timur and a short account of the events following his death.

After a long hiatus, Yazdī dedicated the *Second Maqāla* to Sulṭān-Muḥammad b. Bāysungur. Since Yazdī entered the service of Sulṭān-Muḥammad around 847/1447–1448, the *Second Maqāla* must be dedicated to Sulṭān-Muḥammad sometime after this date and before 850/1446–1447, when the Timurid prince launched an unsuccessful rebellion against his father, in which Yazdī was also implicated and almost executed by the ailing Shāhrukh (Manz 2007, pp. 245–257; Binbaş 2009, pp. 65–70). We might be able to extend the *terminus ante quem* to 853/1449–1450, when Yazdī met with Sulṭān-Muḥammad one last time in Herāt. Ando suggests that Yazdī stayed with him until 855/1451–1452, but we have no firm evidence to support this argument. Our earliest source on their meeting, Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī Kātib’s

miniatures belong to the *Zafarnāma*, not the *Muqaddima*, in this manuscript. Eleanor Sims was the last scholar who had full access to the main text of the manuscript (Sims 1991, pp. 175–217).

⁴⁴ These four manuscripts are the following: (I) Istanbul Süleymaniye Library Ms. Kara Çelebizade Hüsameddin 275; (II) Tehran Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Islāmī (Shumāra-yi yak) Library (former Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Millī Library) Ms. 36782; (III) Tehran Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Islāmī (Shumāra-yi du) Library (former Kitābhāna-yi Majlis-i Sanā) Ms. 359; (IV) Tashkent IVAN UzSSR Ms. 4472. According to Dānīshpazhūh, the third manuscript is an autograph copy, and the title and the author’s name were written in Yazdī’s own handwriting (Dānīshpazhūh 1969–1970, p. 550).

Tārīkh-i jadīd-i Yazd which was written in 862/1457–1458, says that the Timurid prince sent him back to Yazd soon after their meeting (Ando 1995, pp. 233–234; Kātib 1966–1967, p. 259).

A summary of what we know so far would be useful to understand where we stand regarding the composition of Yazdī's historical works:

- A. Shavvāl 821/October–November 1418. The date of the *Ẓafarnāma* manuscript in the Wrocław University Library.
- B. 822/1419–1420. Yazdī was invited by Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān to Shīrāz to work on a chronicle entitled the **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr*.
- C. 828/1424–1425. Yazdī composed the *Dībācha* of the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqī-rānī*.
- D. 830/1426–1427. Shujā' reported that Yazdī was working on a chronicle entitled **Fathnāma-yi Sulṭānī*.
- E. 831/1427–1428. Yazdī revised the *Muqaddima*.
- F. 832/1428–1429. In the *Hulal-i muṭarrāz* Yazdī says that he completed the **Tārīkh-i Humāyūn*.
- G. 839/1435–1436. The date of the *1436 Ẓafarnāma*.
- H. Šafar-Ramaḍān 840/August 1436–March 1437. The *Ẓafarnāma* enjoyed a sudden popularity with some four manuscripts copied in just eighth months.
- I. ca. 847–853/1443–1450. Yazdī dedicated the *Second Maqāla* to Sulṭān-Muḥammad b. Bāysunghur.

However, we are still unable to answer one crucial question: Did Yazdī's **Tārīkh-i Humāyūn* include the *Muqaddima* and the *Dībācha* in 832/1428–1429 when he wrote the *Hulal-i muṭarrāz*? This is impossible to answer in a definitive manner due to the lack of direct evidence. The title itself does not provide any clue about the contents of the **Tārīkh-i Humāyūn*, and even if we accept this date as the completion date of the *Ẓafarnāma*, we still do not have an explanation for the hiatus between 832/1429 and 839/1436–1437, the year in which the *1436 Ẓafarnāma* was prepared. In the *Dībācha*, Yazdī refers to the “original history (*aṣl-i tārīkh*)”, which most probably refers to the draft he had in 828/1424–1425, but this does not help us answer why he eventually decided to keep the *Dībācha* separate. Moreover, he seems to have edited the *Muqaddima* in 831/1427–1428, but why did he abandon the *Muqaddima* in the end?

I have not been able to find any reference to Yazdī's historiographical activities either in his own writings or in the writings of others in his circle between 832/1428–1429 and 839/1436–1437. There might certainly be many reasons for this hiatus, and some of these reasons might be even be very simple. For example, the absence of a manuscript produced before 839/1436–1437 does not mean that a manuscript was not produced. However, given the status of Yazdī in Timurid circles by this time – he was in his sixties by now – as well as the relative abundance of textual sources compels us to think deeper in the context of the wider historical circumstances.

It appears as though Yazdī's project fell apart in or around 832/1428–1429. He either abandoned the project or just left it aside until 839/1436–1437 or a little earlier than this date, when suddenly he decided to re-launch his project. As Ando surmised, the *Second Maqāla* was probably written, albeit in a rough draft format, by 832/1428–1429, but Yazdī could not finish it. When he decided to turn his dynastic history into a biographical account in 839/1436–1437, the *Second Maqāla*'s subject matter, i.e. the history of Shāhrukh, became redundant. Yazdī put whatever pieces he had in order to present them to Sulṭān-Muḥammad b. Shāhrukh after 847/1443–1444.

The change in the titles of Yazdī's projects is also noteworthy. Ando suggested that the original title of Yazdī's work was the **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī* and the **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr* was a separate title for the *Muqaddima* (Ando 1995, pp. 233–234). However, as I discussed above, the *Muqaddima* was written as a prologue, and the **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr* was the title of a larger project. The **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr* is to be divided into a *Muqaddima*, two *faṣls*, and a *khātima*. If the two *faṣls* are dedicated to Timur and Shāhrukh, Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān was obviously excluded from the project at this stage. The **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī* amends this earlier structure and includes the third *maqāla*. However, we should keep in mind that in the *Dībācha* the contents of the *maqālas* are not specified. Ironically, the tripartite structure of Yazdī's project was revealed at the beginning of the **Fathnāma-yi Humāyūn* or the *Ẓafarnāma*, which is certainly not a dynastic history.

To summarise, in 822/1419–1420, Yazdī started to write a dynastic history entitled **Tārīkh-i Jahāngīr*, which was going to include a *muqaddima* on the prophetic and Chinggisid history, and two sections most probably on Timur and Shāhrukh. In 828/1424–1425, he revised his plan and changed the title to **Fathnāma-yi Šāhibqirānī*, which would include a *Muqaddima* and three *maqālas*. It is plausible to suggest that each *maqāla* was going to be on Timur, Shāhrukh, and Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān. He announced the completion of the project in 832/1428–1429. Unfortunately, we do not know the format and structure of the text that Yazdī completed by this date. Afterwards, he appears to have decided to put everything on hold until 839/1436–1437.

IV. Conclusion and Future Research

The discussion above suggests that the only historical work that Yazdī “published” in his own life time was the *Ẓafarnāma*, and other fragments entered into either limited circulation, or they were never intended to be seen by the reading public of the 15th century. This fact should obviously be taken into consideration when we use Yazdī's works in studying the history of the Timurid dynasty. The views, anecdotes, and references reflected in the *Muqaddima*, *Dībācha*, and the *Second Maqāla* require a qualified analysis, as we cannot assume that they created the same impact that the *Ẓafarnāma* engendered after 839/1436. In other words, these texts, “published” or “unpublished”, are not simple reflections of the world in which they were written, but they are also indications of how a 15th-century Timurid intellectual and historian tried to

deal with a crisis raging through the Timurid Empire (Spiegel 1997, pp. 83–98; Sela 2011, pp. 1–7).

There are two questions which I cannot address further due to the limited scope of this article, but I will attempt to highlight some crucial points in these concluding paragraphs. Why did Yazdī change the plan of his project, and why did he not publish the text for almost seven years? The answers to these questions should be sought in the travails of the lettrist intellectual circles of which Yazdī was part in the first half of the 15th century. In the 820s/1420s, the clash between Shāhrukh and those intellectuals who challenged the authority of Shāhrukh, such as Sayyid Nūrbakhsh, intensified and culminated during the assassination attempt on Shāhrukh's life on 23 Rabī' II 830/21 February 1427. Shāhrukh blamed the Ḥurūfīs for the attempt, and numerous Ḥurūfī sympathisers were either executed and lynched during the vigilante justice which raged through the streets of Herat. However, persecutions went beyond the Ḥurūfī circles, and numerous intellectuals who professed the science of letters (*'ilm-i ḥurūf*) as an intellectual vocation were interrogated and questioned. Yazdī had close connections with those circles. He himself was a well-known master of the *mu'ammā*, a genre in which the science of letters was implemented in a poem, and he was a close companion of Šā'in al-Dīn Turka, who vividly described the persecutions that he himself and lettrists endured throughout the 1420s and especially after the assassination attempt (Binbaş 2013). As for Yazdī, he wrote the long apologetic introduction to the *Hulal-i muṭarraz* against those who attacked him, i.e. the *'ulamā'-yi rusūm* "the conventional scholars" in order to defend himself in this grim atmosphere of 1420s, and afterward he either went into hiding or kept a low profile in the court of Ibrāhīm-Sulṭān (*YHul*, ff. 11b, 34a).

The story of Yazdī's historical oeuvre is related with how Yazdī articulated political authority in his chronicles. In one of his characteristically short but conceptually explosive remarks, Jean Aubin, the master of historical vision in Iranian studies, argued that Yazdī disguised in the hagiographical style of the *Ẓafarnāma* the political ideals of a group of intellectuals in Iṣfahān. Yazdī, as someone who had deeply entrenched loyalties with the 'Alīd families of the region, conferred an "honorary *sayyid*-ship" to the Timurid family and elevated the status of Timur to prophet-like figures, who would have God's grace and could communicate with him. In short, the *Ẓafarnāma* was an exquisite expression of the theocratic sovereignty (Aubin 1956b, Vol. I, p. 145).⁴⁵ Needless to say, of course, when the *Ẓafarnāma* was written, be it in 832/1428–1429 or later, the sovereign in question would be Shāhrukh, not the long deceased Timur. It is indeed true that Yazdī's political rhetoric is different in the *Muqaddima* and the *Dībācha*. Whereas the *Ẓafarnāma* ascribes the title *mujaddid* (the renewer of religion) to Shāhrukh, which points at the unity of the religious and political authority in the persona of the sovereign, in the *Muqaddima* and the *Dībācha* he formulates an idea of dual kingship, in which Shāhrukh would be invested only with political authority, not with religious authority (Yazdī 2008a, pp. 9, 19–20;

⁴⁵ In this article, Aubin considered that Yazdī and the intellectuals in his circle were Shī'ī, but later he revised his opinion on this matter (Aubin 1991, p. 244).

Yazdī 2009–2010, pp. 24, 27, 29). The transition from a dualistic absolutism to theological absolutism, if I may use Aubin’s terminology, occurred as a reaction, or response, to the growing political influence of those intellectuals who were either outwardly messianic, or were inspired by those philosophical and religious movements which were aligned with 15th-century messianic movements. The *Ẓafarnāma* was Shāhrukh’s historiographical response to the growing intellectual radicalism in late mediaeval Islamic history, and Yazdī’s proposal for a truce between Shāhrukh and freethinking intellectual circles based mainly in the region of Fārs.

Abbreviations

- YDSh*: Yazdī, Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī: *Dīvān-i Sharaf*. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, Ms. Revan 1015.
YHul: Yazdī, Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī: *Hulal-i muṭarrraz*. Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Ms. Esad Efendi 1760, ff. 9b–129a.
YMN: *Munsha’āt-i Yazdī*.
YZN/Mash: Yazdī, Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī: *Ẓafarnāma-Second Maqāla*. Mashhad, Kitābkhāna-yi Āstān-i Quds-i Raḡavī, Ms. 4143.

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