

THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF XĀJEH RASHID-ED-DIN FAZL-OL-LĀH

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The Mongols were a daring and fearless nomadic people and were thus able to undermine the power of the Xarazmshahi's in a short time, break down the resistance of the Persians and occupy the major part of Iran during Gengis Xān's lifetime. During their second invasion, which began with a military expedition led by Holāku, they occupied two further important centres of power—Baqqād, the Abbasid capital and Alamut, the seat of the Isma'ilis and founded the Ilxani dynasty.

The Ilxāni were a desert people, unacquainted with urban life and the administration of government affairs, so Holāku Xān appointed Xājeh Shams-ed-Din Mohammad Juvayni, the first of a series of Persian *vazīrs* in the Ilxani court, to take care of government affairs while he himself concentrated on the completion of the task of occupying the remaining territories. Xājeh Shams-ed-Din also served Holāku's successors, Abāqa Xān and Sultan Ahmad Tagudar in the same capacity while his brother Atā Malek Juvayni author of the famous history of the Mongols, *Jahān goshā* served at the same time as the governor of Baqqād. After Xājeh Shams-ed-Din a number of other Persians served under the Ilxāns until, in the year 697 A.H. (1297 A.D.) after the assassination of Sadr-ed-Din Zanjāni, Xājeh Rashid-ed-Din Fazl-ol-lah, the subject of our article, was appointed joint *Vazīr* with Sa'd-ed-Din Savuji under Qazan Xān. After the assassination of Xājeh Sadr-ed-Din Savuji he served together with Tāj-ed-Din 'Alishāh Gilāni under Sultan Mohammad Oljaytu until he himself was murdered on the orders of Sultan Abu Sa'id, Sultan Mohammad's successor.

Although these *Vazīrs* helped the Ilxāns to carry out

their royal functions, theirs was a hazardous post and all except Taj-ed-Din 'Alishāh, who died a natural death, were murdered by the Mongols. But despite the dangers involved, the post of *Vazīr* and *Sāheb-dīvān* was highly prized and a great deal of intrigue was undertaken to obtain it. The only explanation that can be found for this eagerness is that this position was considered to be a means of amassing great wealth and property. For example, it is said that Xā-jeh Shams-ed-Din Mohammad had a daily income of 1,000 dinars (138 thousand tomans in today's currency) from his estates. Amir Buqā the *Vazīr* and general factotum of Arqun Xān acquired great wealth in an extremely short period¹ and Sa'd ol-Dowleh Yahud (the Jew) turned the governorship of all the provinces over to his brothers and cousins and thus took virtual control of the states. Sadr-e Jahān Zanjāni, who was *Vazīr* in the reign of Geixatu, the leisure-loving and spendthrift Ilxān, spent the major part of the country's income on himself and virtually emptied the governments' treasury.

It was only in the time of Qāzān Xān that the country's revenue and expenditure was strictly controlled and measures were taken to prevent ministers from acquiring wealth by illegal means. During the reign of Sultan Mohammad, since the *Veẓārat* was held jointly by two, generally antagonistic persons, both had to be honest in the performance of their duties, although rivalry still did not prevent them from gathering wealth and property. In general, as soon as the *Vazīrs* had satiated their greed in all possible ways and had become rich, they became the target of jealous informers and consequently of the Ilxāns who would murder them and sieze their wealth. An example of this is the slander of Majid ol-Molk Yazdi which brought the wrath of Abaqā Xān and Sultan Ahmed Tagudar upon Xā-jeh Shams-ed-Din Mohammad Juvayni, and his brother Ata Malek, causing their death and ruin.

Xā-jeh Rashid-ed-Din Fazl-ol-lah was born in the year 648 A.H. (1250 A.D.) in Hamadan. He learned the practice of medicine from his father and attained an advanced level of knowledge in many other sciences. During the reign of Abaqā Xān he entered the royal court and later became the trusted advisor of Arqun Xān.² Qāzān Xān then sent him as the Ilxāns' envoy to India and on this journey he reached Dehar province, situated in Malveh in the west of India where he was met by the representatives of Sultan 'Alā ed-Din Mohammad Xalaji the

King of Delhi (695 - 715 A.H. / 1295-1315 A.D.) and from where he returned through Kābul and Xorāsān to the capital, Tabriz.³ The writer of *Assār ol-vozarā* indicates that his accession to the post of *Vazīr* occurred in the reign of Geixātu Xān (690-694 A.H./1290-1294 A.D.) when he says that due to his literary and intellectual talent Xājeh attained a high rank and undertook the administration of government affairs. In addition the writer of *Nesā'em ol-ashar* states that the reason for Xājeh's promotion was his being physician and companion to the Ilxān. However, in opposition to these two sources Xānd Mir states that Geixātu wanted to appoint him as *Vazīr*, but, Xājeh when he had considered all the circumstances, refused the offer.⁴ What we know for certain is that at the beginning of Qāzān Xān's reign Xājeh Rashid-ed-Din was put in charge of important state affairs, that he was in the royal suite, and trusted by the Ilxāns. We also know that he was envied by Xājeh Sadr-ed-Din Xāledi Zanjāni, *Sāheb-dīvān*, who looked upon him as a rival and made plans to get rid of him. These plans were, however, foiled by Xājeh-Sadr-ed-Din's own murder in 967 A.H. (1297 A.D.) upon which Qāzān Xān appointed Xājeh Rashid-ed-Din Fazl-ol-lah as *Vazīr*, a post which he retained during the reign of Sultan Mohammad Xodābandeh Oljaytu. Under the next Ilxān-Abu Sa'id - informers created enmity between Sultan and *Vazīr* and Xājeh-Rashid-ed-Din resigned his post and left Sultanieh for Tabriz. But as, during his absence, government affairs fell into disorder he was persuaded to return. Tāj-ed-Din Gilāni who originally held the position of *Vazīr* jointly with Rashid-ed-Din and, with the latter's resignation become sole occupier of that position, resented his re-appointment and plotted against him. To do this he accused Xājeh Rashid-ed-Din of the murder of Sultan Mohammad Oljaytu and, by spending large sums of money, succeeded in creating enough suspicion between Xājeh and Amir Chupan for the Amir to order Xājeh's death in the year 718 A.H. (1318 A.D.).

During the twenty-one years he spent as *Vazīr* (697-718 A.H./1297-1318 A.D.) Xājeh Rashid-ed-Din acquired immense wealth. In a will he addressed to Moulānā Sadr-ed-Din Mohammad during a possibly fatal illness, he listed his properties as follows:

A. Cultivated lands: 12,550 feddan situated in various parts of the empire. If we assume one feddan to be the

equivalent of seven hectares in contemporary measures this area would be equal to 87,850 hectares.⁵

1. Irāq 3,200 feddan
 2. Asia Minor 1,590 feddan
 3. The province of Shahr-e zur 300 feddan
 4. The provinces of Diar Bekr and Diar Bey'e 500 feddan
 5. Georgia, Vān, Satān, Āvnik, Bidlis, Axlāt, Sa'rat, Hassan Keyfā, Arzan etc. 300 feddan
 6. Arak (from Sultanieh to Polzereh, including Hamadān, Qazvin and the provinces of Shara, Farāhān and all the rural districts of Isfahān. 400 feddan
 7. The provinces of Qom, Kāshān, Sāveh, Rey, Damāvānd, Jorjān, Āveh, Dameqān, Semnān, Xar, Bastān, Ardakan, Gandoman and Simrom. 940 feddan
 8. Āzarbayjān 1,040 feddan
 9. The provinces of Bavānāt, Harāt, Marvak and Sarjahān 200 feddan
 10. Yazd, Tabas, and Jandaq 50 feddan
 11. The provinces of Abarquh, Aqlid, Sarmaq and the Sard-sir of Shirāz 100 feddan
 12. The provinces of Shirāz (excluding Sarmaq and Eqlid) and the province of Shabankareh 600 feddan
 13. Kerman 500 feddan
 14. Xuzestān 50 feddan
 15. Xorāsān 1,000 feddan
 16. Sajestān, Qazney, Kābul, Zābul, Qandhār and Lahore 400 feddan
 17. The provinces of Owqān 100 feddan
 18. Jabal Jilvieh, Zatian, Ramez (Ram Hormoz) and Dowraq 200 feddan
 19. The provinces of Qāzādāsī in Asia Minor and the provinces of Jimajāl, Kalān and Kalin 500 feddan
- B. 39,000 palm trees situated in various parts of the country especially Iraq, and the tropical areas around Shiraz, Kerman, and Xorasan.
- C. Innumerable gardens and orchards.
- D. 31,000 horses and full-blooded stabled horses in Asia-Minor, Diar Bakr, Tabriz and Shiraz.
- E. 10,000 camels kept by the Xafājeh, Rabi'eh and Xalaj

tribes.

- F. 250,000 sheep in Asia-Minor, Baqḍād, Diar Bekr, Shirāz, Tabriz, Isfahan, Mazanderan, Xorasan and other places.
- G. 11,000 cows and bulls.
- H. 40,000 hens, geese, and ducks kept by the peasants and farmers of Tabriz, Sultanieh, Hamadān and Maraḡeh.
- I. 1,000 donkeys.
- J. 250 strings of mules.
- K. 720,000 *carvārs* or about 240,000 tons of cereals.

Xājah-Rashid-ed-Din also possessed cash to the value of 250 Qazani toman (each toman was equal to 1,000 dinars and contained three mesqāls of gold) which it is said that he used to provide capital for merchants engaged in business. The equivalent of this amount in contemporary currency would be 345 million toman or about 46 million dollars.⁶

In addition he endowed 1,000 copies of the Koran and 60,000 other volumes to the Robe' Rashidi library. Since the Korans, which had been collected from Iran, Egypt, Turan, Morocco, Asia Minor, China and India, were mostly gilded and written by famous calligraphers they were, without any doubt, priceless. Rob'e Rashidi also contained priceless furniture and household articles which had been gathered over the course of the years, the list of which constitutes a good indication of the wealth of Xājah Rashid-ed-Din.

How Xājah Rashid-ed-Din acquired this wealth

1. By purchase. Rashid-ed-Din bought some of his estates and these were his legal private property. Thus, when he sent Xājah Saraj-ed-Din Dezfūli to Xuzestan he informed the people of this province in a letter that most of the estates above the dam had been transferred to him legally. In the same letter he named twelve villages, pointing out that as the dues received from them were too little, he had

instructed Xājah Saraj-ed-Din to demand a statement of account from the *mobāshers* (overseers) for the past years.⁷ Similarly, he wrote to Sonqor Bavarchi the governor of Basrah, and recommended the development of his estates located around that city which he had purchased with his own money.⁸ A letter to his son Amir Mahmud, governor of Kerman, shows that Kerman had been his private property from the time of King Qazan and that, since then, all its peasants and citizens had been in his service.⁹ And in another letter he refers to the fact that five large estates in the province of Dasht-ābād had been transferred to him, and were known as the Jalali areas.¹⁰

2. The restoration of waste-land. Some of the lands were acquired through the restoration of waste-lands. Thus letter 33 of *Mokātebāt-e rashidi* states that Ahwaz (in Xuzestan) had, before falling into ruins, been a vast province, and that he had spent 70 tomans (about 96 million tomans in today's currency) for its restoration and development. The letter adds that most of the villages of that province came into his possession and that some had been purchased and others, which had been entirely in ruins, had been revived and recultivated by him.¹¹ In another case, Xājah Rashid-ed Din, had, with the help of Xājah Zaki-ed-Din Ma'sud dug a canal north of Mosul on the Tigris and built 12 villages around it in his own and his childrens' name. In a letter he instructs Xājah Zaki-ed-Din Mas'ud to gather his subjects from all parts of Diar Bakr, Diar Biyeh, and greater and lesser Armenia, give them seeds, farm implements and food and have them engage in the cultivation of these villages. He also ordered him to pay the wages of the workers who were digging the canal (and who numbered some twenty thousand) on a daily basis.¹² In a letter No.33 of *Mokātebāt-e rashidi* to Xājah Shams-ed-Din Damqani, he instructs him to improve and develop the province and induce the nomadic people of the area such as the Lurs, Kurds and Arabs to plant date palms and other trees.¹³

3. Some of the land and property was granted to Xājah Rashid-ed-Din by the rulers of neighbouring countries. Once, when he was sent as envoy to the court of 'Alā-ed-Din Mohamad Xalaji, King of Delhi he warned the king of the evils of alcohol and when the King realized that Xājah had been the

cause of him regaining his good reputation, he granted him four prosperous villages as a permanent *soyurqāl* and a permanent endowment (*vaqf-e moabbad*) for his children. He also arranged for go-betweens to collect the product of these villages each year and deliver them to Xājeh Rashid-ed Din's representatives in Basrah. In addition, he allocated a sum of 5,000 mesqals of gold (one mesqāl equals five grams) to be paid from the provinces of Gujarat to the same representatives annually. Moreover, at the time of Xājeh's return from India, the King gave him large quantities of presents including gold, silver, ambergris, musk, clothing, food etc. ¹⁵ Letter number 43 of *Moqātebāt-e rashīdī* shows that, in the year 708 A.H. (1308 A.D.) Xājeh Rashid-ed-Din sent Mahmud Savoji to India to collect the fixed pension granted to him by the rulers of India. Also, according to letter No.47, Malek 'Alā-ed-Din replied to a letter of Xājeh's and with it sent a magnificent present of jewelry, gold and an assortment of other articles. Besides India, Rashid-ed-Din had estates in Transoxania, some of which had been purchased for him by his lawyers and some of which were *soyurqāl* (fief) granted to him by the Transoxanian rulers. In addition to these he also owned land in Damascus and the Yemen, some of it private and some of it *soyurqāl* granted by Malek Nāsser, King of Egypt. As these estates were located in remote places and were thus difficult to administer, he turned the ones in Transoxania over to the local notables against a specified surety and endowed those in Damascus and the Yemen to the Ka'ba and Medina. ¹⁶

4. Part of Rashid-ed-Din's properties were acquired by confiscating estates of the country's notables for the *Divān*. For example, in 713 A.H. (1313 A.D.) after the death of Sharaf ed-Din Mozaffar, he ordered the latter's estates, which were situated around Yazd, to be turned over to the *Divān*.

According to Abolqāsem 'Abdol-lah ibn 'Ali ibn Mohammad Kāshāni, writer of the *Zobdeh ol-tavarīx ol-jāyту*, Xājeh Rashid-ed-Din Fazl-ol-lah had also the following sources of revenue:

i) *haq-ol-tahrir* ("writing fees") a tax at the disposal of the *Vazir*.

ii) The *haq-al-towlieh* of the *ouqāf qāzāni*: that is a

right to a portion of the proceeds of Qāzān Xān's charitable endowments which were scattered over various parts of the country and which consisted of schools, mosques and other public places. The most important of the *ouqaf* was Qazan Xān's burial place at Shanab Qāzān in Tabriz, the annual product of which according to the writer of *Tāriḫ-e vassūf* was over 100 gold tomans (138 million tomans in today's currency). In order to collect these funds he granted this *ouqaf* as a *tuyūl* to Xājah Rashid-ed-Din.¹⁸

iii) Xājah received a 50 toman prize for the writing of *Jāme' ol-tavāriḫ* although Kashani tells us that this book was his own work and that it had been arranged that he should receive half the prize. However, Xājah dedicated the book in his own name to Qazan Xān and received the whole prize in the form of estates from which he received an annual income of 8 tomans.

iv) One-third of the revenues of the cities of Baqdād and Tabriz.

v)&(vi) Income from the city of Yazd and the Mongolian noblewomen of the court. No explanation of these two sources of income is given by Kashani but apparently Rashid-ed-Din had a share in the revenues of the city of Yazd and also received a fee for collecting the incomes of Mongolian noblewomen.

vii) Another important source of income according to Kashani was the daily bribes he received from peasants and functionaries. He adds that during the conflict between Xājah Rashid-ed-Din and Xājah Tāj ed-Din 'Alishāh Gilāni, Sulṭān Mohammad Oljaytu discovered that almost a quarter of the country's revenue was regularly pocketed by him.

How Xājah Rashid-ed-Din's income was spent

Most of the income from Rashid-ed-Din's estates was in kind and the greater part of his crops such as cereals and fruits were consumed by his family servants and *mobashers* (overseers). In letter No.34 of *Mokātebāt-e rashidi* for

example, he orders his winter requirements to be provided from his estates in Irān, Transoxania, India, Byzantium, Egypt and Damascus. The goods he required were as follows:

1. About twenty-nine or more kinds of material all in all consisting of 34,960 rolls, 557 yards, 9,200 sheets, 3,800 pieces and 1,200 lats.

2. 7,720 pairs of *giveh* (hand-woven shoes)

3. 1,000 *kopang* (sleeveless jackets)

4. 1,000 pieces of buckram

5. 14,260 fur coats (of various types)

6. 1,980 pieces of other types of clothing

7. 720 girdles and kerchiefs

8. Perfumes

i) 10,350 kilograms of aloes wood etc.

ii) 39,000 mesqals of ambergis, musk, saffron and camphor

iii) 200 *qarureh* of spirits

9. Fruits - 212 thousand *man* of pomegranates, apples, grapes and pears; 550 *xarvār* of dates; 265 *xarvār* of melons, and water melons, 235 thousand pieces of citrus fruits.

10. Acidic materials and juices such as orange and lemon juice, barberry, sumac, tamarind, sour grape-juice, dried sour grapes, vinegar etc.

This list shows very well the range and quantity of goods received from Xajeh Rashid-ed-Din's estates each year.

A second source of expense was the money he invested for the development and improvement of his vast estates. He was constantly recommending his sons, who governed the provinces, to encourage the peasants to develop and cultivate their lands, provide them with work implements, and exempt them from any government duties and taxes that might

cause the ruin of their lands. At one point he had a copper tablet engraved for his son Amir Shahab ed-Din the governor of Tastar and Ahvāz. On this tablet he wrote the names of some of the villages of Tastar and specified the share of the crop that should be collected from the peasants. He entirely exempted the farmers of Xuzestān from certain taxes, and he set the tribute of the villages to one-tenth to be paid in kind in order to avoid their impoverishment. He also reduced the *divān*'s share in its own lands from ten to six *xarvār* allowing the remaining four *xarvār* to be used by the peasant as *haq al herasat* (agricultural rights.) In another letter he ordered Saraj ed-Din Dezfuli to inspect his estates in Xuzestān and see to it that his share was collected from the peasants only at the harvest time. Here he also gives orders to prevent the tribes from grazing their cattle on the lands of the Mashkuk and Dobandar plains during the winter to avoid trampling the crops; instructions about the repair of the Dezful bridge; instructions that the peasants should be induced to cultivate and develop the area; orders to plant 5,000 date palms on his five plots of land and to bring ten persons from Havizeh for the planting and watering of the trees. These latter were to settle and each was to be given 100 dinars per year plus 1 *man* (3 kilograms) of bread per day until the trees bore fruit. Later each was to receive a yearly stipend of 1 *xarvār* (300 kilograms) of wheat and 1 *xarvār* of barley and a cash commission of dinars from every 10 dinars profit and three out of every ten *mans* (9 out of every 30 kilograms) produced.¹⁹

In letter No.5 Xajeh Rashid-ed-Din warns his son Amir Mahmud governor of Kerman against the wronging the inhabitants of Bam and he orders him to exempt the peasants from various taxes and dues (*taklifāt-e divāni*, *qubchur*, miscellaneous taxes and troop levies) for a period of three years. In doing this he was trying to encourage the people to return to the dwellings they had abandoned in order to recultivate their lands.²⁰ In a letter to Sonqor Bavarchi, the Governor of Basrah he instructs him to be kind to the peasants and farmers.²¹ Writing to his son Sa'd-ed-Din governor of Antioch Tarsus, Susa, Qansarin and the shores of the Euphrates, he tells him to collect only those taxes specified in the old laws and to abolish new legislation, to give alms from his own estate to residents and strangers; and to repair schools;

monuments and other facilities situated in that province.²² To his son Jalāl ed-Din, governor of Byzantium he writes that the people should be protected and that in this way famine can be avoided and also orders that he give alms from his legal wealth to beggars, strangers, scholars, the needy and the pious; that he clear the roads of robbers in order to allow safe passage to travellers, to repair schools, mosques, temples and monuments made in ancient times; to renovate roads and to construct new ones together with inns and water resevoirs on their way.²³

Speaking to Tanxatāx, Governor of Fars, he warns him not to be unjust in his dealings with the citizens and threatens to prosecute him if he does so. In addition, he sent his son, Ebrāhim, to Shirāz to attend to the claims of the people, settle any accounts that were in arrears, ensure the comfort of the needy and the widowed, and to restore to the people anything unjustly taken from them.²⁴

A third source of expense for Xājeh Rashid-ed-Din, who was a philanthropic person, was the maintenance of buildings he had erected for the public welfare, for which he allocated fixed amounts in cash and kind to be paid annually from his estates. The greatest and most important of these projects was the town of Robe' Rashidi which was built in the year 699 A.H. at Valian Kuh north-east of Tabriz. This town contained 24 caravanserais, 1,500 shops, 30,000 houses as well as several public bath houses, weaving looms, paper making and dying mills, a hospital and a mint. The inhabitants were brought from various parts of the country and each group, well versed in a certain trade, industry or profession was settled in a certain street or quarter of the town. In a street named *kuche 'ulamā* 400 scholars, jurists and moslem preachers were settled and in the *mahall-e talabeh* (the students quarter) he lodged, 1000 students of science which he divided into several groups each taught by a learned person. From India, China, Egypt and the provinces he brought 50 skilled physicians to serve in his hospital and issued instructions that each physician in addition to his work in the hospital should teach medical science to 10 students, and each oculist and surgeon should be accompanied by five assistants to be taught the arts of surgery and and ophthalmology. This group was lodged behind the Rob'e Rashidi hospital near the Rashidābād garden in a street he

called *Kucheh-ye moalejān* (healers row). Similarly each group of artisans and other professionals brought from other countries were settled in a separate row. Apart from these he also lodged 6,000 *tāleb-e 'elm* (students) in the royal seat at Tabriz and ordered that each of these be paid a regular pension out of the incomes he derived from Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Constantinople and India and that students showing aptitude for different sciences should be classified into separate groups and taught the science of their interest.²⁵

To provide for the expense of running this great city, Xājah Rashid-ed-Din Faz'lo'l'lah endowed the product of some of his estates including those at Bovanat, Harat, Marvak and Sarjahān which altogether constituted 200 feddan of land, some 5,000 date palms in Xabis and 1,000 in Tabas, and arranged that every year some 748 *man* of bread (about 2,244 kilograms) and 320 *man* of meat (about 960 thousand kilograms) be given to the pensioners there out of the products of his countless vineyards and orchards in the various provinces. The ghee, wool and dried whey of 250,000 sheep were endowed to Robe' Rashidi to be used for charitable deeds and 20 thousand chickens entrusted to the peasants and farmers of the villages in Tabriz and Hamadān were endowed to the hospitals at Robe' Rashidi, Sultānieh and the hospital at Hamadān to be used for the sick. One thousand oxen and one thousand donkeys were entrusted to the farmers of the villages of Mehranrud and the gardeners of Fathābad and Rashidabad and these were to be used for carrying the fruits, garbage and stones of Robe' Rashidi.

The two libraries of Robe' Rashidi contained books which had been collected by Xājah Rashid-ed-Din in Iran, Transoxania, Egypt, West Byzantine, China and India. Of these three hundred volumes were in gilded writing, the works of outstanding calligraphers another 548 were outstanding examples of calligraphy, and some 60 thousand volumes were copies of scientific works collected from far and wide. But the library was not all, Robe' Rashidi was full of countless treasures in the form of furniture, chandeliers, chinese lanterns, candle-stands, benches, cooking utensils, vessels at the guest houses and surgical instruments at the hospital. Among these latter were one thousand vats of sherbert which had been brought from China and upon which has been written the name of each sherbert as well as the titles of Xājah

Rashid-ed-Din. Near to the city our benefactor had created two massive gardens named Fathabad and Rashidabad. To maintain these he engaged 1,200 servants (500 male servants and 500 female servants at the Fathabad garden and 100 male servants and 100 female servants at Rashidabad). Five new villages were also created in the neighbourhood of the town to which were brought 20 male and 20 female slaves of various races from Zanzibar, Georgia, Abyssinia and Qeravan (in Tunisia). He had also asked his son, Xājah Jalal, governor of Byzantium to send forty male and female slaves to Tabriz to be settled in the fifth of these villages.²⁶ It is reported that these gardens were so vast and pleasant that Rashid-ed Din invited Shervan Shah to visit Fathabad.²⁷

When Sultān Moḥammad Oljaytu ordered the construction of the city of Sultānieh near Zanjan as his capital each of the nobles erected some buildings there. Xājah Rashid-ed Din Fazl-ol-lah contributed a residential quarter containing a thousand houses as well as a school, a hospital and a monastery and endowed considerable property to each.²⁸ In his home town of Hamadan he built a hospital and to meet its expenses ordered that about 50 *xarvars* of wheat (about 17 tons) and 2,000 *aqcheh* dinars (coined gold) to be given to the chief physician as a fixed pension so that he may arrange the preparation of syrups and drugs, visit sick patients, engage assistants and attendants and cooks and purchase rare drugs.²⁹ Here too he built a guest house and ordered that the ghee and dried whey of his 50,000 head of sheep in Xuzestān each year be sent to Hamadan to be given to the poor, pilgrims and passers-by and that the wool of these sheep be sent to Shiraz for weaving *zi'lu* (coarse rugs) for the convents of Hamadan, Sultānieh and the school at Arzanjan which he had set up from his own private budget.³⁰ For this latter he instructed his son Xājah Jalāl ed-Dīn governor of Byzantium to send a mule load of 1,000 Arzanjani *aqcheh* dinars, some 100 *xarvars* of wheat (about 33 tons) and a fur coat as the pension of the *modaress* and a woollen cloak, a lambskin fur coat, 2 *xarvar* of wheat (about 600 kilograms) and 100 *aqcheh* dinars to be given annually to each of the twenty students.³¹

The Atābaks of Fārs had built a hospital near the Salom gate of Shiraz which had to be closed down for lack of equipment and physicians so Xājah Rashid-ed-Din appointed Moulana Mahmud ibn Eliās, a skilful physician and author of the book

Latāyef ā-rashidi as head of the hospital and administrator of its endowed properties. In addition he instructed that the following items be given to the moulānā every year as a pension: about 200 *xarvār* of cereals (including 60 *xarvār* of wheat, 100 *xarvār* of barley and 40 *xarvār* of rice), 1,000 dinars in cash, one horse and saddle, one fur coat and one suit of clothes from Yazd.

He instructed his son, the governor of Byzantium to build a bath house and some shops in the town of Sivās and to provide running water (through subterranean channels) and endow the proceeds of these projects to the maintenance of Qāzāni house for Seyyeds which was located in the same town and which had fallen into a state of ruin.³³ There were also charity houses in other parts of the country for which he endowed the products of some of his estates, such as the hospitals and lodging houses of Basrah, and the Rashidiyeh and another school in Yazd for the support of which he endowed gardens, fields and the irrigation fees of the surrounding lands.³⁵

Besides these many public buildings Xājah Rashid-ed-Din, being himself a learned man and a person who honoured scholars and religious leaders, paid many of them an annual pension from his properties. A good example of such *aid* is the list of money and other gifts sent to Moulānā Sadr-ed-Din Mohammad Turkeh for having written a book in his name: 1,000 dinars in *āqcheh rokni* (each dinar was worth 3 *mesqāl*s in gold and therefore 1,000 dinars equals 138 million rials in today's currency if we assume the price of one *mesqāl* to be 460 rials); 50 pieces of Eskanderani fabrics; 5 pieces of tailored clothing including a shirt, turban, fur cloak and girdle; one mule and one horse, both with saddles; 1,100 *xarvār* of wheat, barley and rice; 1 thousand *man* of sugar from Lurestān and 200 *man* of crystallized sugar from Lurestān.³⁶ Another is the list of gifts sent to a religious leader in Ardebil, Sheix Safi-ed-Din Ardebili, as a donation to his convent (*xaqān*). Out of the proceeds of the Qazāni and Rashidi estates in Xalxāl Shāhrud, Dariq, Āstara, Gilān, Sarāb, Pishgin and Ardebil the following items were donated: 150 *xarvār* of wheat, 300 *xarvār* of rice, 130 head of sheep, 30 cows, 400 *man* of ghee (fat), 800 *man* of honey, 200 *man* of kashk, 600 poultry and 190 ducks. In addition the following items were sent from his store-house in Tabriz: 400 *man* of

sugar, 100 *man* of sugar candy, 30 demijohns of rose-water, 1 thousand *man* of syrup of grapes, 200 *man* of labub, 50 *mesqāls* of ambergris, 50 *mesqāls* of musk, 100 *mesqāls* of aloes-wood and 10,000 dinars in cash.³⁷

In a letter he sent to his son Amir 'Ali, governor of Baqḍād he tells him to respect religious scholars and men of letters and remarks that because he had been so occupied with the conquest of Egypt and Damascus he had not been able to help the scholars living in various cities there. Thus, as a present he sent to each scholar 1,000 dinars in cash, a sheepskin cloak and one horse together with saddle. In conclusion he tells his son that he considers himself to be a servant of intellectuals and learned men and that, as promised, he has issued instructions for the payment of the annual pension and salaries of members of various professions living between the borders of Ab-e Amuyeh and the furthest reaches of Egypt and in Byzantium, as was customary in the past, so that they could in all security serve the people and pursue their scholarly interests.³⁸

Rashid-ed-Din also awarded pensions to the notables of the land and those who had rendered him any services. Thus he instructed Moulana Shams-ed-Din Mohammad Abarquhi governor of Baqḍād to pay the yearly needs of Sharaf-ed-Din Hossein Mohammad Tayyebi with the following goods: flour, rice, peas, ghee, honey, sugar, sugar candy, sheep, cows, poultry, ducks etc. and 5,000 dinars in cash.³⁹ He also instructed his son Amir Mahmud, governor of Kermān to pay an annual pension to Xājah Mahmud Savoḗi who had been assigned to collect and bring to Iran the annual pension offered by the rulers and kings of India to Xājah Rashid-ed-Din.⁴⁰

This account shows the real extent of the wealth of Xājah Rashid-ed-Din Fazl-ol-lah Hamadāni. In conclusion we must remark that he was the greatest *Vazīr* of the Ilxāni period, that during the long reigns of these Ilxāns he virtually ruled over the whole of Iran with the help of his fourteen sons. Despite his wealth and power he was a scholarly, just and generous man who spent a great deal of his energy on protecting the property and rights of the citizens against the encroachments and usurption of the Mongolian invaders. In effect, he was a major factor in civilizing his masters. The reforms made in fiscal, commercial, judicial, military, social

and family affairs during the reign of Qāzān Xān are said to be due to his guidance. These resulted in much greater security and therefore more prosperity for the common people and to some extent protected them from the extractions of tax collectors. In addition he stimulated trade by clearing the roads of thieves and, by paying a pension for life to both army officers and ordinary troopers he was able to create more discipline in the army.

However, despite the services he rendered to the Mongol rulers he finally became the victim of the jealousy of rivals and was murdered. His enemies took possession of all his belongings and those of his children. They even confiscated the properties he had devoted to good works and plundered the town of Robe' Rashidi.

Notes

1. See *Tarix-e vassāf* p. 209.
2. Seif ed-Din Haji ben Nezām 'Aqili, *Assār ol-vozarā* p.284
3. *Mokātebāt-e rashidi*, Letter no. 29 p.160.
4. *Nesā'em ol-ashār*, p.12.
5. *Dastur ol-vozarā*, p.316.
6. A feddan is an area of land ploughed by one yoke of oxen in one season.
7. In today's currency one mesqāl of gold is worth 46 to-mans. The reader should note that, in the *Mokātebāt-e rashidi* on page 227 the money wealth of Xājeḥ Rashid-ed Din is put at 250 tomans but, on the next page, in the account of how this sum was divided between Sultan Mahmud Oljāytu, his children, haram etc. a figure of 2,500 tomans was mentioned. But such a figure is overawing and almost impossible, so we chose to take the former as correct.
8. *Mokātebāt-e rashidi*, letter no.33, p.180.
9. *Ibid.*, letter no.6, p.12.
10. *Ibid.*, letter no.9, p.19.
11. *Ibid.*, letter no.33, p.182.
12. *Ibid.*, letter no.33, p.181.
13. *Ibid.*, letter no.38, p.244.
14. *Ibid.*, letter no.33, p.179.
15. *Ibid.*, letter no.29, p.160.

16. *Ibid.*, letter no.36, pp.220.
17. *Mavaheb elahi* p.48, *Tarix āl mozaffar 'urtabi*, p.7, A. K.S. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant in Persia*, (London, 1953) p.78.
18. *Tarix-e vassāf*, p.284.
19. *Mokātebāt-e rashidi*, letter no.33, p.175.
20. *Ibid.*, letter no.5, p.11.
21. *Ibid.*, letter no.6, p.12.
22. *Ibid.*, letter no.10, p.22.
23. *Ibid.*, letter no.21, p.78.
24. *Ibid.*, letter no.30, p.168.
25. *Ibid.*, letter no.15, p.315.
26. *Ibid.*, letter no.17, p.52.
27. *Ibid.*, letter no.32, p.104.
28. *Jāme' ol-tavārix*, p.10.
29. *Mokātebāt-e rashidi*, letter no.32, p.256.
30. *Ibid.*, letter no.33, p.175.
31. *Ibid.*, letter no.31, p.172.
32. *Ibid.*, letter no.41, p.252.
33. *Ibid.*, letter no.28, p.156.
34. *Ibid.*, letter no.6, p.12.
35. *Tarix-e jadid-e Yazd*, p.94.
36. *Mokātebāt-e rashidi*, letter no.37, p.240.
37. *Ibid.*, letter no.45, p.265.
38. *Ibid.*, letter no.19, p.56.
39. *Ibid.*, letter no.50, p.312.
40. *Ibid.*, letter no.43, p.257.