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Investigating the Development of State Economy under the Ilkhanid Dynasty by Employing John Hicks' Theory of "Economic History"

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Abstract

The examination of the economy under the Ilkhanid Dynasty encounters certain limitations when relying on economic theories and archaeological data simultaneously. By considering the perspectives of the adherents of the "Historical School" in general and John Hicks' theory of "Economic History" in particular, this study categorizes the economy of historical period and the Mongols into three general phases: the "customary economy", the "military economy," and the "command economy." This categorization is further explored through a descriptive-analytical approach and the utilization of a library method to address the following inquiries: What political-military events of the Ilkhanid period coincide with the aforementioned phases? And how do these stages manifest in various aspects of this period? The findings of this research reveal the presence of all stages of this theory during the establishment of the Ilkhanid economy, and their alignment with political and economic developments. In the customary economy, population growth and the emergence of social classes disrupt the natural order and equilibrium. The military economy phase (615–658 AH, 1218–1260 AD) was characterized by a distinct lack of political aims in the creation of new administrations in conquered lands, an incapacity to enforce tribal ways of life, and the prevalence of autocracy at the pinnacle of the power hierarchy. During the period of the feudalistic command economy (658–694 AH, 1259–1294 AD), a notable aspect was the Mongols' positive outlook on urban lifestyle, despite their significant regard for the Ilkhanate-style horde. Additionally, this era witnessed the emergence of commercial activities alongside a stagnant agricultural sector. During the bureaucratic command economy phase (694–736 AH, 1259–1335 AD), economic concerns took precedence over military considerations. This was evident through the emphasis placed on the development of economy-related architecture and the formation of economic unions among Genghis's Uluses. The impact of the bureaucratic command economy can be seen in the architectural styles, coinage, and artistic creations of this particular period.

Keywords: Mongol, Ilkhanid Dynasty, History of Economy, John Hicks, Custom, Command.

Introduction

Although the field of economics as a formal discipline has only emerged in the past two centuries, a deeper examination of the history of economic ideas reveals their ancient origins, dating back to the times of Plato and Aristotle in ancient Greece (Plato 2022: 114). However, it is crucial to recognize the inherent challenge and intricacy involved in distinguishing economic issues from political matters and historical events related to past centuries. Our knowledge regarding the economic conditions of cities and life during the 7th and 8th centuries AH (Hijri year) is quite limited. It is often clouded by vague and biased perceptions influenced by the Mongols' invasion and its aftermath. Nevertheless, by employing "analytical philosophy of history" and incorporating "theoretical philosophy", we can mitigate these biases and gain valuable insights from diverse and sometimes conflicting sources. The predominant approach in the philosophy of history has traditionally been "theoretical philosophy", which views history as "a series of events". However, in recent years, "the critical philosophy of history", which treats "history as a narrative", has gained prominence and often complements or replaces the former approach (Razavi 2012: 114). The critical philosophy of history aligns closely with the postmodernist perspective, which posits that truth is a subjective concept and relative (Sokolowski 2019: 48–68). This perspective not only represents a philosophical standpoint but also serves as a research method employed in various disciplines, including humanities and social sciences, utilizing descriptive, interpretive, and social approaches (Ghaffari Nasab 2019: 1–4).

The early Mongols were exposed to commercial activities through interactions with Muslim merchants in the steppe regions, although their nomadic lifestyle limited their understanding of agriculture and urban life (Barthold 1997: 151). Following the consolidation of power and the unification of tribes under Genghis (Temüjin), more opportunities for trade development emerged, with the establishment of new fields and roads to facilitate caravan passage (Ibn Ibrī 1985: 301–302). Genghis Khan's outreach to Khwarezmshah aimed at initiating trade relations and securing the opening of trade routes for merchants, as detailed by Nasawi (1986: 213). The Mongol conquests left a trail of destruction in their wake, particularly impacting the agricultural economy in the eastern parts of Iran. The aftermath of these attacks witnessed a decline and destruction of the agricultural sector. However, a period of relative peace, known as the "Mongolian peace," emerged, allowing for the establishment of direct contacts between Europe and Asia. This newfound connection between the

two continents resulted in a surge in travel across Eurasia, an expansion of trade exchanges, and the integration of various technological, industrial, and artistic practices (Turnbull 2017: 117). Similarly, in Iran, the Mongols played a pivotal role in the advancement and modernization of the country's economic landscape. They achieved this by adopting Persian approaches, assimilating tribal traditions, embracing Islamic political thoughts, and even incorporating Chinese customs.

In the theory of Economic History, John Hicks has proposed a classification for the economies of various societies prior to the emergence of European mercantilism that thrived from 1500 to 1750. Hicks categorizes these pre-modern societies into three distinct periods, two of which are primary and one that serves as an intermediary phase. The initial stage, referred to as the "customary economy," exists between the stages of a "military economy" or "looting" and a subsequent "command economy." The command economy is further divided into two subdivisions: feudalistic and bureaucratic. The customary economy, also known as the tribal economy, represents a military system characterized by a stagnant state and governed by an unconscious order. Due to insufficient resources, fluctuations in climate, and population pressure, the customary economy will experience turmoil, which Hicks identifies as an interim phase within the military economy. Conflict, plunder, disorder, and confusion are common in a military economy. Once the needs of the conquerors are met or if the looting and conquests can no longer be sustained, and the power structure stabilizes its political and administrative situation to some extent, the foundation for the emergence of the command economy is gradually laid. Hicks categorizes the command economy into two segments: "feudalistic" where the "custom" aspect is dominant, and "bureaucratic," where the "order" element holds more sway (Hicks 1976: 1–31). The theory proposed by Hicks is of a broad nature, enabling its generalization to various historical societies (Razavi 2011: 79). It shares notable similarities with the theories of economic history put forth by the "German Historical School". Hence, the objective of this research is to analyze the diverse economic, political, social, and artistic expressions of this theory during the Ilkhanid Period using the divisions established within this theoretical framework (Razavi 2012). The authors posit that, despite the limited historical window available to the Ilkhanid Mongols, they managed to progress rapidly by assimilating the advancements of more sophisticated societies. The authors contend that Hicks' economic history theory can be effectively applied to the economic and political

transformations of Ilkhanid society. This study aims to explore how the various stages in John Hicks' Theory of Economic History manifest in the economy of the Ilkhanid era. In doing so, it seeks to address the following inquiries: What are the ways to identify the instances of the various phases of John Hicks' "Theory of Economic History" within the economy of the Ilkhanid Period? Which political events correspond with each phases of the Hicks' scheme? Which stages in Hicks' economic model are associated with the "natural" and "monetary" economy? Despite previous debates and categorizations regarding the economy of the Ilkhanid Period, researchers have not thoroughly examined the manifestations of different stages of Hicks theory across various aspects of the Ilkhanid era in a detailed and analytical manner.

Research Background

The historical records related to the Mongols predominantly center on their military exploits and conquests, with relatively little exploration of their societal and economic organization. These investigations are largely theoretical and have been influenced by the Mongols' actions during their military campaigns. Within Mongol historical sources, despite the plethora of available material, discrepancies and contradictions exist, necessitating careful consideration by historians. To avoid falling prey to false information, historians must exercise caution and employ various methods of historical understanding, such as "Historical Verstehending," as well as critical methods. They should also compare texts with other sources of data, including archaeological findings. In the context of the Ilkhanid period, the book "Nuzhat al-Qulūb" serves as the primary historical source concerning its economy. Numerous authors, including Petrushevsky, have cited this work and drawn conclusions from it. It provides crucial information about the amount of taxes and facilitates a comparison between the taxes of the Ilkhanid and Seljuk periods (Mustawfi 1983). Another significant work is "Tajzīyeh al-Amsār va Tazjīyah al-A'sār," also known as "Tārīkh-e Wassāf," written by Wassāf-e Shirazi in 712 AH (1312 AD). This text gains importance due to its detailed account of the history and organization of Fars during the Ilkhanid Period, with the support of Khwaja Rashīd al-Dīn Fazlullāh Hamadānī and his son Ghiyāth al-Din Muhammad (Wassaf 1959). The book "Tārīkh-e Mukhtasar Al-Duwal" stands out as an additional source that has been translated from Syriac to Arabic. It offers valuable and at times contrasting information in relation to the themes addressed by Rashīd al-Dīn and Atā-Malek Juvaynī. This

particular text plays a crucial role in uncovering essential data concerning the customary economy of the Ilkhanid Period (Ibn Ibri 1985).

Barthold, a celebrated Russian Mongol scholar in the work “History of the Turks in Central Asia” (Barthold 1997), and Vladimirtsov, another Russian scholar in the book “Le régime social des Mongols” (Vladimirtsov 1986), meticulously examined the political and military history of Iran during this time period by consulting historical sources and making connections to the social and economic conditions of the Mongols. René Grousset in “L’empire des steppes” (Grousset 1989), Spuler in “History of the Mongols” (Spuler 1989), and David Morgan in the book “The Mongols” (Morgan 1992) have extensively examined the Mongols’ conquests and campaigns while occasionally alluding to their economic state as well. In his book “City, Politics and Economy in the Age of Ilkhans,” Seyyed Abulfazl Razavi explores the topics of markets, taxes, and merchants during this era. He highlights how, following the devastating attacks of the Mongols, there was a period of relative calm and peace in trade and urban life in Iran. Razavi’s work is significant as he builds upon John Hicks’ theory, which suggests that the emergence of Genghis Khan led to a shift from a traditional economy to a military-focused one. By applying Hicks’ theory to the entire period of the Ilkhanid Mongols, Razavi offers a fresh perspective on this historical period (Razavi, 2011). He examined the urban economy of the Ilkhanids and analyzed their economic process in three distinct phases. However, he failed to provide a clear delineation of these stages.

The current article aims to explore the theory of economic history proposed by John Hicks and its application in various fields such as economics, agriculture, industry, and economy-related architecture during the Ilkhanid Period. By utilizing the adaptations and explanations derived from Hicks’ research, this study seeks to identify and analyze the manifestations and examples of this theory. Consequently, the economics of the Ilkhanid Period will be examined and evaluated in four distinct stages. In a related article titled “The Status of Bazaar during the Ilkhanid Period,” Razavi delves into the significance of markets in the urban life of this period. Furthermore, the author delves into a comprehensive analysis of the commercial endeavors undertaken by the Ortoghs (Razavi 2009). In addition to what has been mentioned, Petrushevsky’s book, “Agriculture and Land Relations in Iran during Mongol Era,” provides valuable insights into the developments of this era, although it is not without its limitations (Petrushevsky 1978). The author has made a sweeping generalization

by attributing the decline of the agricultural economy this time period to the entire economy of Ilkhanid society, leading to inaccurate results and figures in the field of the economy during that time. In the analysis of tax computations for the given period, the author utilized the figures provided in “Nuzhat al-Qulūb” to compare the tax revenue between the Seljuk and Ilkhanate eras. The primary objective was to demonstrate the economic decline experienced during the Ilkhanid Period. Notably, the author neglected to give due consideration to the income generated from agricultural activities, trade, and similar sources. Furthermore, he failed to acknowledge that, during this period, a portion of the taxes were collected in the form of goods, in accordance with the Mongol’s traditions and the needs of time. Additionally, the tax revenues from Khorasan, Mazandaran, Tabarestan, Gorgan, and Siestan were not accounted for in the Central Court’s income, nor were they mentioned in Hamdallāh Mustawfi’s calculations. Consequently, the Petrushevsky overlooked the economic growth that transpired during this particular period.

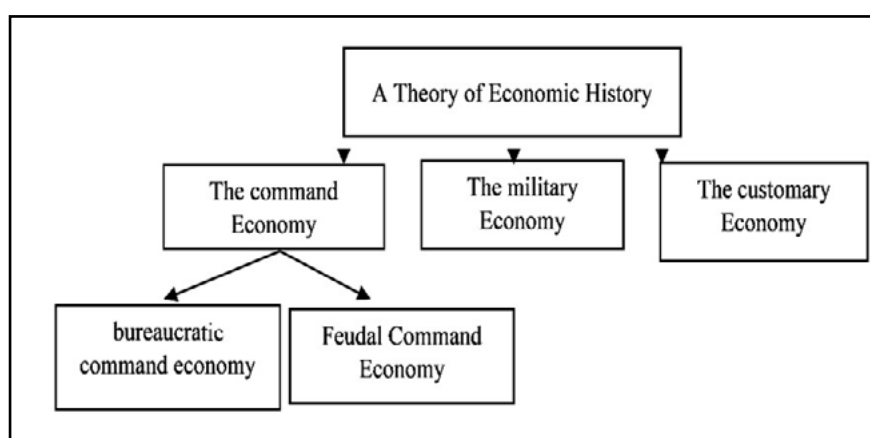
John Hicks’ Theory of Economic History

John Hicks (1904–1989) dedicated years of study and reflection to develop the theory of economic history, which he first presented in a lecture at the University of Wales in 1967 under the title “Theory of Economic History.” This theory was subsequently elaborated in a book. Hicks classifies the economic history of societies before the mercantilism era into two distinct stages and one interim phase as follows: customary economy, military economy, and command economy, while the military economy is the interim phase. The command economy is further segmented into customary and military economies, characterized by a uniform state and governed by an unconscious order based on customs, habits, and traditions (Razavi 2011: 70). The continuity of the traditional economy is contingent upon the ability of tribal communities to sustain their livelihood using traditional methods. However, when faced with resource scarcity, climate-related challenges, and population pressures leading to encroachment on neighboring territories, conflicts and disruptions in the economic system ensue. John Hicks characterizes this period of disorder and chaos as an interim phase, as it is unsustainable in the long term and requires reorganization. In what Hicks terms as a “military economy,” an autocratic regime typically assumes the apex of the power hierarchy, with power being wielded within a rigidly hierarchical and militaristic framework. It is a common occurrence to witness looting, unrest, and disorder within

the military economy. Once the invading population's primary needs have been fulfilled or when the looting and conquests become unsustainable, and the power structure stabilizes its political and administrative situation to a certain extent, the groundwork for the emergence of the "command economy" stage is gradually laid. Hicks classifies the command economy into two distinct categories, namely "feudalistic" where the customs are more pronounced, and "bureaucratic" where the element of command holds greater significance. In a customary economy, the organization is structured from the bottom up, whereas in a command economy, the organization is established from the top down. During the command economy phase, particularly, the central government employs the bureaucratic system for the governance of state affairs. Agriculture emerges as a prominent feature of the economy with the extensive involvement of the government (Hicks 1976: 1–31). Hicks classifies early civilizations as adhering to a customary economy. He categorizes the period of disorder in the traditional economy within the Bantu communities in Africa, the ascension of Chuka, and the Genghis Khan's conquests into military economy (Ibid, 20). Additionally, he underscores the bureaucratic systems of ancient Egypt, the Chinese Empire, and the Mughal Empire of India as successful instances of a command economy (Ibid, 27–28).

Adapting the aforementioned theory to the economic growth of the Mongols initially and the Ilkhanid Dynasty subsequently, while taking into account the intricacies and uncertainties in the economic and social history of the Middle Ages in Iran, may offer solutions to certain issues. These stages align with the concepts put forth by the proponents of the "German historical school" regarding the phases of economic progress. The scholars of the historical school emphasize examining economics through a historical lens, emphasizing the interconnectedness of economic, social, and political aspects (Tafazzoli 2019: 246). A significant theory within the historical school concerning this subject is Frederick Smith's "economic evolution of nations" theory. Smith categorizes the economic advancement of nations into 5 stages, with the 4th and 5th stages pertaining to the post-medieval era, or the era of mercantilism. These stages include: 1. Savagery, 2. Pastoralism stage, 3. Agricultural stage, 4. Agricultural and industrial stage, 5. Agricultural, industrial, and commercial stage (List 2000: 355–379). Various historical approaches have been proposed to analyze the different stages of economic growth. Walt Whitman Rostow, for instance, categorized human societies into five stages based on historical events, economic progress, and social changes. These stages include "traditional

society,” “pre-economic leap,” “economic leap,” “maturity stage,” and “mass production and high consumption” (Rostow 1961: 2–16). Similarly, Ibn Khaldūn explored the social and economic advancements of societies in his work “Kitāb al-‘Ibar,” introducing the theory of “ups and downs of civilizations” (Ibn Khaldun 2003: Vol. 1/ 64–76). It is important to note that not all societies follow a linear progression through these stages, as some may still be in early phases while others might have experienced decline and collapse. Nevertheless, the stages outlined in these historical theories can be applied to various societies, considering the unique historical contexts of each.



◀ Fig. 1: John Hicks' theory of economic history (Authors, 2024, taken from Hicks 1976).

Discussion: Formation and development of Ilkhanid Economy

- The early period: manifestations of customary economy

The early period referred to in this research pertains to the time before the Mongol tribes were unified under the leadership of Genghis Khan. However, there exists a divergence of opinions among scholars regarding the ancestral homeland of the Mongols. Based on Chinese sources, a significant number of researchers argue that the initial location of the Mongols was in the regions of Siberia and Manchuria (Bayani 2018b: 9). Conversely, some scholars propose that the grasslands situated between western Mongolia and the Hungarian plain served as the primary territory of the Mongols (Morgan 1994: 40). Based on their economic activities, primitive Mongols were broadly categorized as either forest hunters or steppe shepherds (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 1/20–117). The political, economic, and social structure of the steppe peoples in Central Asia was characterized by simplicity due to harsh climatic and natural conditions. This, coupled with their high mobility and its specific needs, hindered the establishment of centralized settlements and the accumulation of population (Razavi 2011:

59). Currently, Mongolia's arable land accounts for only 1% of its total lands, with 8% covered by forests, while the rest is comprised of pasture, desert, and frozen lands (Turnbull 2017: 14). Despite climate change, the weather in Mongolia today is not expected to differ significantly from that of the 6th century AH. The primitive Mongols sustained themselves through hunting, animal husbandry, and even consuming plant roots during harsh times (Juvaynī 1991: Vol. 1 / 10). Trade and industry in this era were characterized by simplicity and primitiveness among the Mongols (Ibid 15). In the early stages, Mongol tribes lived communally in harmony with nature (Razavi 2011: 61), and according to Ibn Khaldūn and John Hicks, their society maintained an unconscious equilibrium (Ibn Khaldun 1985: Vol. 1/ 44–236; Hicks 1976: 1–33). From the late 5th century to the early 6th century AH, significant transformations occurred within Mongol society. These changes led to the fragmentation of existing tribes and the emergence of new groups. However, the period of division was short-lived as the tribal community quickly began to coalesce and foster a sense of unity and solidarity. Certain tribal chiefs exerted greater influence and successfully united multiple tribes under a single banner. This trend ultimately led to the unification of all clans under the authority of Genghis Khan, resulting in the integration of the entire steppe region under a unified identity (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 1/ 57–58). As the size of these larger groups grew, a more complex social order became necessary, with a small group of aristocratic tribal leaders occupying the highest positions within the social structure (Turnbull 2017: 23). Loyalty among the elite class towards their leaders is primarily rooted in personal and individual relationships rather than an abstract notion of loyalty. The harsh climatic conditions in Mongolia, such as drought in the southern areas and frost in the north, posed challenges to agricultural activities. Consequently, the Mongols turned to trade early on, acquiring trade skills through interactions with Chinese and Muslim merchants. Although there is a lack of sources on this subject, it is likely that pastoralist groups needed to possess market knowledge to sell their livestock and animal products to meet their various needs. As long as these groups could sustain their traditional way of life by providing sufficient goods to support their livelihood, the traditional economy would endure. Nonetheless, the encroachment on neighboring lands due to limited resources resulted in the collapse of the established order within the customary economy (Hicks 1976: 21). This disruption can be attributed to the amalgamation of various tribes under the leadership of Genghis Khan, the subsequent population surge, the emergence of

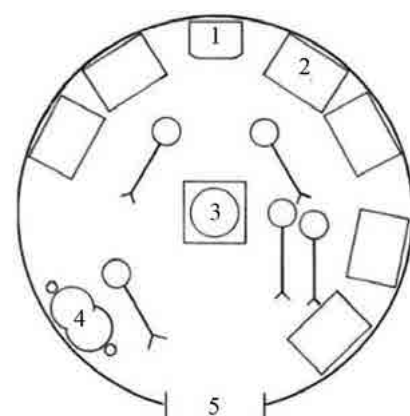
social hierarchies, and the aspiration to familiarize oneself with the diverse products of settled societies. In his book “Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion,” Barthold, -with citing “The Secret History of the Mongols,”- sheds light on ten court-related positions primarily associated with military affairs, which gained prominence from 604 AH onwards. Furthermore, Barthold mentions the great Kurultai and the election of Genghis as the supreme khan of khans (Barthold 1997: 173). The disruption in the customary economy, coupled with the failure to address the subsistence needs of the united tribes and Genghis’ imperative to maintain the loyalty of the nobles, effectively facilitated the transition towards a military economy.

The strategic placement of the Mongols in the steppes along the east and west trade routes provided them with a significant advantage in terms of sustenance and trade opportunities. Leveraging the expertise and cultural richness of the Uyghur people, who had acquired a refined culture through interactions with Iranians, Chinese, and Indians, enabled the Mongols to effectively navigate the existing circumstances (Eqbal Ashtiani 2010: 30). Chinese historical accounts mention the involvement of Muslim traders in Mongolia dating back to 302 AH (Kashghari 2005: 150–151), underscoring the economic interactions between Muslims and Chinese. Despite the limited productivity of the steppe inhabitants, they supplied merchants with essential raw materials sourced from animal husbandry and hunting, thereby fulfilling their basic requirements and playing a modest role in the East and West trade.

- Manifestations of customary economy in archaeological data

In the early era, the Mongols dedicated their days to the steppes, an environment that provided ideal conditions for raising livestock such as cows, sheep, and goats (Pelliot et al., 2018: 49). Their lifestyle revolved around constant movement, as they tirelessly searched for new and fertile pastures. They spared no effort in raiding unexplored regions, always seeking to expand their territories. The Mongols possessed the remarkable ability to swiftly set up their tents in any location, allowing them to promptly relocate as needed. When embarking on a journey, they efficiently packed up their tents and utilized specialized carts to transport their belongings, alongside their animals (Marco Polo, 1971: 87) (Figs. 1 & 2).

Analyzing the economic history of the Mongols through the lens of John Hicks’ theory reveals a transformation from a traditional, primitive, and



▲ Fig. 1: Structural elements of a Mongolian yurt (original source: Herbert Harold 1962, citing from Moradi 2013); 1. praying room and the sacred place for keeping Mongolian idols; 2. Location of wooden chests for storing clothes; 3. fireplace; 4. waterskin; 5. entry.

customary economic system to a more centralized and organized structure under Genghis Khan's rule. The challenges posed by high population density, scarcity of resources, harsh climate, social class disparities, and the allure of luxury goods from outside regions highlighted the limitations of the customary economy in satisfying the needs of Genghis Khan's allied tribes. Consequently, the transition towards a "military economy" became inevitable with the initiation of invasions into neighboring territories.

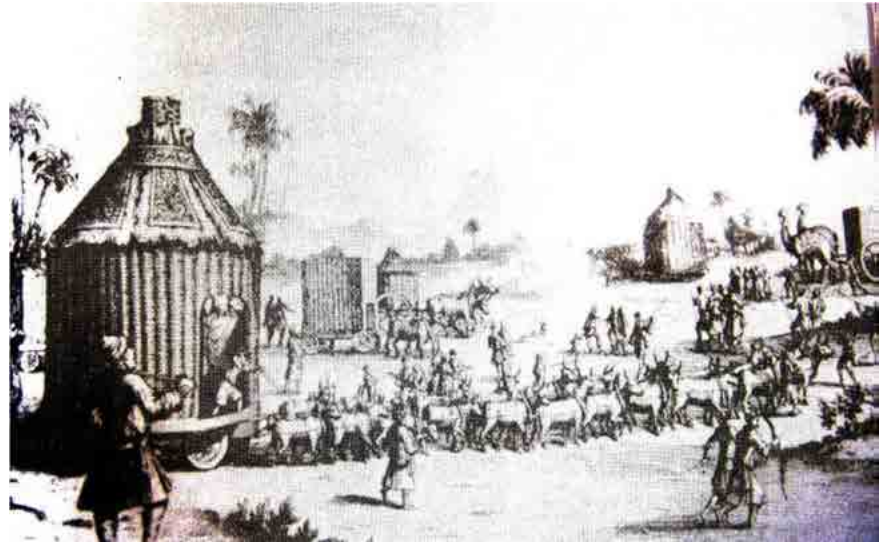


Fig. 2: A Mongolian yurt, a chiaroscuro engraving of the original drawings made by William Rubruck in 1253 AD (Bawden 1968: 45). ►

The Interim Phase (Military Economy) - Genghis Khan's conquests; First stage of military economy (looting)

At the onset of Genghis Khan's conquests, trade played a crucial role within his court. Historical sources suggest that Genghis Khan's domain ensured the safety of trade caravans and had guards protecting the trade routes. The Mongols had a particular fondness for textiles and weapons, a fact that can be gleaned from the accounts of Ibn Ibri's travels. Nevertheless, agriculture and settled life did not hold much appeal for them (Ibn Ibri 1985: 301–302). After establishing a regional government in Central Asia, the Mongols made their initial foray into regional politics and economy, capitalizing on their victories and securing a share of the global trade routes, thus entering the Asian trade network, which though nascent, held promising prospects (Bayani 2018b: 22). Upon the establishment of a regional government in Central Asia, the Mongols embarked on their foray into regional politics and economics by tasting victory, securing vital trade routes, and becoming integrated into the Asian trade network, which displayed promise for future development (Bayani 2018b: 22). The military campaigns orchestrated by Genghis Khan's administration were driven by

the imperative to achieve economic objectives, with the massacre of 500 of Genghis Khan's emissaries in Otrār acting as a precursor to subsequent military endeavors. However, it can be argued that the Mongol conquests of new territories were not solely motivated by the pursuit of material gains, but rather a fusion of economic and political ambitions, as during the era under consideration, the dichotomy between economics and politics was practically non-existent. The newly established government under Genghis Khan resorted to limited attacks at the regional level, primarily aimed at looting resources and bolstering the military, as well as gaining the support of the aristocracy. Nevertheless, it was the subsequent endeavors to construct infrastructure such as bridges, roads, and warehouses in Central Asia that marked the initial signs of a more structured and organized governance. However, due to the uncertainty surrounding the transfer of power in Iran to Genghis Khan's uluses, the process was delayed until Hülegü Khan's expedition to the west. Nonetheless, the territorial expansions under the rule of Ögedei Khan in Russia and Eastern Europe were primarily driven by political and economic motives.

- Manifestations of military (looting) economy

In a military economy, the highest position of authority is typically held by an autocratic leader, and the wielding of power is confined to an authoritarian structure that strictly follows military ranking. Turmoil, plunder, chaos, and confusion are prevalent in such an economy. Nevertheless, once the demands of the conquerors are met or if the ability to plunder and conquer wanes, social order and structure emerge (Hicks 1976: 21). The state of the military economy during the invasions of Iran by Genghis Khan and later Hülegü Khan can be depicted as follows:

1. The absence of distinct political aims for the government during the initial stages of the conquests is notable: The motivation behind Genghis Khan's incursions into Central Asia and Khorasan was primarily rooted in his desire for vengeance against Sultan Muhammad Khwārezm-Shāh. Nevertheless, the inherent military and aristocratic characteristics of Genghis Khan's new empire also played a significant role in shaping the course of these attacks. Historical evidence suggests that Genghis Khan's initial objective was to amass wealth through these military campaigns, rather than establishing permanent control over the conquered territories. The cities of Bukhara and Samarkand, pivotal centers of trade along the Silk Road, fell to Genghis Khan's forces in 617 AH (1220 AD) after brutal sieges. Accounts by Juvaynī detail the plundering and destruction of these

cities, including the sacrilegious acts committed against religious sites such as mosques and Qurans (Juvaynī 1991: Vol. 1 / 75–76).

Based on our knowledge of Genghis Khan's character, these actions, which provoked the people's animosity, were executed without any intention of establishing a governing system in those regions. Genghis Khan himself was likely aware that such deeds would deprive the conquered people of a legitimate government. Additionally, the relentless pursuit of Sultan Muhammad Khwārezm-Shāh from east to west and the conquest of cities along the way in western Iran serve as evidence of Genghis Khan's disinterest in assimilating western territories into his central government. Historical accounts indicate that Genghis' soldiers were solely focused on eliminating Sultan Khwārezm-Shāh and pillaging the cities along the route (Nasavi 1986: 68; Juvaynī 1991: Vol. 1/ 83).

2. Dispatching letters to the leaders of the urban centers, urging them to comply with the demand for tribute payment and surrender: From the outset, the Mongol armies engaged in diplomatic efforts by sending letters to local rulers, giving them the opportunity to surrender. Those who acquiesced were spared from destruction and violence. For example, following Sultan Mohammad's escape from Hamedan, the city surrendered and was consequently saved from being ruined (Juvaynī 1991: Vol. 1/ 115). Ray also chose to surrender voluntarily (Ibn Athir 2004: Vol.. 12/ 244). Cities such as Urkand, Zarnūgh, Badakhshān, Havalī, and Tirmidh survived by agreeing to pay tribute. Tolui, emulating Genghis Khan's approach, treated cities that accepted the Ulus' terms with leniency (Heravi 1973: 52). It is evident that during this period, the Mongols emphasized the collection of ransom and tribute in their conquests, allowing rulers who accepted the Ulus' demands and paid tribute to maintain their rule (Ibid).

3. The position of Iran in the division of Genghis Khan's four uluses is shrouded in ambiguity: The invasions of Iran during Genghis Khan's rule were driven by the dual objectives of acquiring plunder and exacting revenge upon Sultan Khwārezm-Shāh. Consequently, the division of Iran within Genghis Khan's quadripartite system remained indeterminate following his demise. This state of ambiguity persisted throughout the reigns of Ögedei and Güyük. Initially, Ögedei delegated authority over eastern Iran to Jin Timūr, and subsequently to Korgöz (Spuler 2018: 41–42). In accordance with the newly enacted tax laws, the Mongol rulers periodically remitted the revenues and taxes collected to the central treasury, employing diverse designations for these remittances (Bayani 2018b: 101). Amir Arghūn, who resided in Tabriz, was responsible for maintaining order and peace

in the region, as well as overseeing the collection of taxes and tributes in western Iran (Juvaynī 1991: Vol. 2/ 244). Noteworthy events during this time included sporadic attacks from the Bādghis garrison, plundering in eastern Iran, quelling of uprisings, and the gathering of spoils and taxes in the period between Genghis Khan's departure and the rise of the Ilkhanids (Ibid 222). The dynamics shifted with the dispatch of Hülegü to the West and Kublai to China.

- Sending Hülegü to West Asia; The second stage of military economy (looting)

The failure of the Mongol princes and armies to sustain their conquests and accumulate spoils, which served as the cornerstone of the Mongol military economy, resulted in the dispatch of Hülegü towards the Western territories. Sorghaghtani Beki emerges as a renowned figure from the Mongol era. She was the spouse of Tolui and the mother of Hülegü, Möngke, Kubilai, and Ariq Böke (Juvaynī 1991: Vol. 3/4). All historical sources unanimously lauded her significance, intellect, and merit. Influenced by Chinese institutions (Turnbull 2017: 65), she provided her sons with the essential training for governing settled communities, and subsequently, the rule of three out of her four sons in different regions of the Mongol Empire represented one of the most splendid periods in the empire's history. The woman is lauded by Mirkhvānd for her role in imparting literary and cultural knowledge to her children, all the while ensuring a harmonious environment devoid of conflicts (Mirkhvānd 1983: Vol. 4/ 167). In return, the boys exhibited profound respect for her authority and dutifully followed her commands (Bayani 2018a: 143). Nevertheless, despite the primary objective of Hülegü's mission being the eradication of the Nizari Isma'ilism and the overthrow of the Abbasid caliphate, his extensive training in governance since childhood proved invaluable. The meticulous preparations made for his military offensives serve as a testament to his capabilities. Hülegü's mission was executed with utmost precision, as evidenced by the provision of military escorts by the Qara Khitai community, the restoration of vital infrastructure such as roads and bridges spanning from Qara Qorūm to Jayhūn, and the procurement of substantial quantities of flour and wine. These measures starkly contrasted with previous incursions, highlighting the meticulousness and thoroughness of Hülegü's strategic approach. Undoubtedly, it is indisputable that the attack carried out did not have any economic objectives. As stated by Ibn Ibri, Möngke Khan, "...orchestrated the destruction of the western cities alongside his brother, intending to

utilize the acquired properties for the benefit of the state treasury” (Ibn Ibrī 1985: 338). Nevertheless, the available evidence suggests that the Hülegü attack on the West encompassed more than just a punitive measure against the rebels and the establishment of a military stronghold for tax collection purposes. Consequently, alongside the economic motives, the establishment of a political entity in a prosperous region, which had not been explicitly addressed in Genghis Khan’s uluses, was implicitly acknowledged by Hülegü and his brother Möngke.

Möngke Khan dispatched a decree that encompassed both occupied and non-occupied regions, spanning from Turkestan to Khorasan and from Khorasan to Rome. This decree delineated the precise route that Hülegü was to undertake, as documented by Bayani (2018b: 104). This decision not only facilitated Hülegü’s preparations for warfare but also served as a form of recognition for potential future territories. It is evident that these grandiose plans were not merely aimed at acquiring spoils or establishing a temporary presence. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, Hülegü ascended the throne in Dhu’l-Hijjah of 653 AH (1255 AD) in the Shaburghān meadow. During a ceremonial gathering, he officially declared war on in the name of the future ruler of Iran and made ready to embark on this military campaign (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2 / 687–689). It is important to consider that Sorghaghtani Beki and her children believed that the younger son, Tolui, had the rightful claim to the throne after Genghis Khan, in accordance with Mongolian laws. Hülegü, therefore, sought to establish his family’s authority in West Asia. Following the conquest of the Ismaili castles, Hülegü distributed the spoils among his troops and initiated a widespread campaign of looting and destruction (Ibid Vol. 1/ 189–192; Mirkhvānd 1983: Vol. 3/ 231–232). Notably, Hülegü’s inclination towards a new political vision is evident in his acceptance of prominent figures such as Nasir al-Din al-Tūsi and Atā-Malek Juvaynī, as well as his interest in the scientific books of the Ismailis. During this period, China was completely subjugated, leading to the relocation of the empire’s center from Karakorum to Beijing. With the conquest of Baghdad, the Silk Road would connect Beijing to various cities including Samarkand, Herat, Neishabur, Damghan, Hamadan, Baghdad, and Damascus. This marked the first time in history that such a vast region came under the rule of a centralized power. Following the acquisition of the immense treasures from the Ismaili forts, Hülegü Khan launched an attack on Baghdad through Hamedan in 654 AH or 1256 AD (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2 / 697). The city was plundered for a week, with Juzjani noting that “the extent

of the looted treasures was so vast that it cannot be adequately described, leaving people astonished” (Juzjani 1984: Vol. 2/ 198). The center of the empire received the most superior and prized spoils. The conquest of the wealth of Baghdad, the ancient capital of the Abbasid caliphs, represented the zenith of plundering and military expansion during the era of the Ilkhanid Mongols. Upon designating Marāgheh as the new capital, Hülegü decreed the melting of all the treasury’s currency, which was then stored in a fortified fortress in Selmas (Banakati 1969: 419). Simultaneously, he launched a large-scale invasion of Syria and Egypt, advancing towards Damascus. However, the Mongols suffered a defeat at the hands of the Mamluks in Ain Jalut, Syria, thwarting their further conquests (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 3/ 65). This decisive battle shattered the myth of Mongol invincibility and deeply impacted the superstitious Mongols, who attributed their successes to the eternal blue sky. George Lane posits that had Hülegü succeeded in subjugating the Syrians and Egyptians, the issue of settling in the northwest of Iran might not have been raised. In such a scenario, it is plausible that the capital of the Ilkhanids would have been established either in the vast Beqaa Valley or in the hills of northern Mesopotamia (Lane 2011: 119). However, despite numerous conflicts and wars that followed, the Euphrates River, which has historically served as Iran’s western border, continued to demarcate the western boundaries of the Ilkhanate state. Consequently, the Mongols were unable to fulfill their aspiration of reaching the Mediterranean Sea. As the era of extensive conquests drew to a close and further territorial gain proved elusive, the economy of the Mongol Empire underwent a transition from a predominate looting-based system, which had propelled Genghis Khan’s ascent to power, to a feudalistic economy. Although warfare and plundering persisted, other economic sectors, such as foreign and domestic trade as well as industry, experienced substantial growth. However, the agricultural economy remained stagnant due to ongoing attacks and invasions.

Late Era (Manifestations of Command Economy) - From the end of the reign of Hülegü to the beginning of the reign of Ghazan; Feudalistic Command Economy

Ibn Ibri suggests that the primary motive behind Möngke’s dispatch of Hülegü to West Asia was economic, aiming to secure economic benefits (Ibn Ibri 1985: 338). Conversely, Rashīd al-Dīn Fazlullāh claims that the Khan endeavored to enlarge the Ilkhanate territory and ensure economic gains by sending him (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2/ 687). However,

according to Razavi, the impasse in further Ilkhanid conquests in the Levant and their continuous conflicts in the east and northeast territories quickly alerted the Ilkhanid leaders to the impracticality of long-term economic sustenance through warfare. Despite the significant roles of political and military factors in this new approach, economically determinative factors steered towards novel re-organization (Razavi 2011: 199). It is imperative to consider that the economic and political structures of past societies were closely interconnected. Furthermore, it should be noted that the presence of a well-functioning state was essential for the prosperity of dynamic economies. By exerting control over the excesses of the Mongols and incorporating the administrative techniques and methods of governance from Iran, adjustments were made to the economic orientations, resulting in a more orderly conduct by the rulers. Khwaja Nasir al-Din Tūsi and the Juvaynī house were prominent figures who served the Mongols and played a significant role in influencing their behavior. Khwaja Nasir, despite following the political philosophy of renowned thinkers like Fārābi and Miskawayh al-Rāzī, challenged them and placed Sharia law on an equal or even higher footing than reason (Pouladi 2019: 90). However, despite these intellectual debates, the Mongols' religious tolerance meant that there was no substantial transformation in practice. According to Hicks, the economic structure can be categorized into two main types: the feudalistic command, where "custom" plays a significant role, and the bureaucratic command, where "order and command" are of utmost importance. In this particular context, the Mongols' approach to urban life and their emphasis on the Ilkhans' army, along with noble men and women (Mongol elites), highlights the prevalence of custom over commerce in this specific economic system.

Following the establishment of the state and the selection of Azerbaijan as the capital, the Mongols, known for their expertise in trade, witnessed the emergence of the first signs of a command economy. Upon the conquest of Baghdad, merchants were granted immunity from murder and plundering (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2/ 710). Hülegü promptly initiated trade relations with the rulers of Armenia and Antioch (Abolfada 1970: 271). The thriving commercial activity in the Black Sea region and key ports like Trabzon and Constantinople held significant appeal for Hülegü (Runciman 2014: Vol. 3/ 425). The involvement of Venetian and Genoese traders in Iran during the era of Hülegü Khan serves as further proof of the economic advancements towards the conclusion of his rule. The surge in commerce and manufacturing during this period is documented in the text *Athar al-*

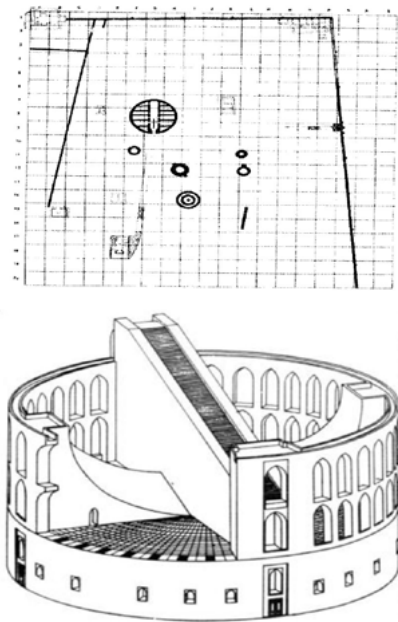
Bilad by Qazvini, penned shortly after the reign of Hülegü Khan (Qazvini 1987). Commercial operations, manufacturing hubs, and industrial zones thrived under the rule of Abaqa Khan (1267–1281 AD). Marco Polo's travelogue vividly describes the export of goods from various regions of the Ilkhanate, highlighting its economic prosperity (Marco Polo 1971: 36). Arghun (1284–1291 AD) displayed a keen interest in urban development and was credited with founding cities like Soltaniyeh and Shanb Ghazan. Throughout this era, the strategy of fostering closer ties with European nations and engaging in conflicts with the Mamluks was primarily driven by economic and commercial considerations, spearheaded by the Jewish Minister Sa'd al-Dawla. Notably, trade connections with India and the Kipchak Plain (Cumania) experienced significant growth during this time (Javadi 1999: 98–99). Prior to Ghazan Khan's reign, there was a lack of a coherent agricultural policy, leading to a period of agricultural decline in the pre-Ghazan Ilkhanid era. Nevertheless, there are indications of agricultural resurgence with the involvement and backing of local governors. Atamelak Juvaynī established 150 settlements along the river's coastline, extending from the Euphrates to Kufa and Najaf (Juvaynī 1991: Vol. 1/ 29), suggesting Abagakhan's inclination towards agriculture, as mentioned by Kashani (1969: 107). The agricultural economy faced a decline due to multiple factors, including the devastation caused by the Mongol invasion and prolonged periods of drought. Wassaf's records indicate a severe three-year drought and subsequent famine in Fars between 1284 and 1286 AD (Awliya Allah 1969: 204). Yet, in certain regions like Yazd, agricultural investments were made, leading to the cultivation of crops and fruits such as cotton and pomegranate (Mustawfi 1983: 74). In his analysis, Petrushevsky examined the village counts in different areas of Iran both before and after the Mongol invasion. His research revealed a significant decline in village numbers, with the exception of Isfahan (Petrushvsky 1978: 496–497). It appears that he failed to take into account the potential development of new settlement patterns during the Ilkhanid period. It is plausible that new settlement patterns emerged during this time as settled populations sought enhanced security by dispersing themselves across agricultural fields. It should be noted that even amidst the reign of the feudalistic command economy in Ilkhanid society, the presence of custom and militarism remained prominent alongside the command economy. Consequently, the lack of emphasis on agriculture can be attributed to this coexistence. However, a transformative period ensued after Ghazan Khan's ascension to the throne and the subsequent implementation of his

reforms. This marked the initiation of a new stage, commonly referred to as the “bureaucratic command economy” within the scope of this study.

Manifestations of the Feudalistic Command Economy in Archaeological Data

The Mongols’ architectural and artistic achievements in Iran gained significance after the period highlighted in this study, which aligns with the economic disparities discussed. The Mongols turned their attention to northwestern Iran and the city of Marāgheh during this era. While information on Islamic architecture, particularly the Ilkhanid structures in Marāgheh, is scarce, it is evident that the city, chosen as the capital by Hülegü Khan, emerged as a pivotal and progressive urban center in Iran (Pakzad 2013: 339). With the decline of the Abbasid Caliphate and the shift in political ideologies in the Islamic world, the establishment of Marāgheh and its observatory can be interpreted as a move to distance from the Abbasid Sunni realm and embrace the new circumstances brought by the Mongol conquests and their religious tolerance. The broad range of subjects taught in Marāgheh’s educational institutions and observatory, along with the revival of observatories, indicate that these advancements were essentially reflections of the emerging feudalistic command economy manifested through architectural designs (Fig. 3).

Throughout the reign of Abaqa Khan, the architectural style of this period remained faithful to the same principles and objectives that were observed at Takht-e Soleyman. The selection of this specific site for the construction of the palace, which had previously served as the ceremonial grounds for the Sasanian kings, was a deliberate move by the Ilkhans to establish their connection to the ancient rulers of Iran. Consequently, Abaqa Khan’s primary political motive for erecting his palace in this region was to gain legitimacy and showcase his power by associating himself with the pre-Islamic rulers of Iran. The presence of vivid verses and images from Ferdowsi’s *Shahnameh*, intricately portrayed on the palace’s finest tiles, serves as compelling evidence that supports the Ilkhan’s propaganda and substantiates their claims of allegiance to the pre-Islamic rulers of Iran. Due to the brevity of Abaqa Khan’s reign, it is probable that Takht-e Soleyman functioned primarily as a summer palace in the Ilkhanid period, albeit for a short duration (Grabar et al., 2010: 227). The inclusion of tiles illustrating tales from the *Shahnameh* in the palace indicates that the Ilkhans strategically utilized this form of decoration to link themselves to the Sasanian rulers, seeking to legitimize their rule by establishing a connection to the Sasanian emperors.



▲ Fig. 3: Plan (right) (Varjavand 1987: 169) and reconstruction plan of the Marāgheh Observatory’s Great Tower (left) (Shekari Nayyeri 2016: 95).



▲ Fig. 4: The tiles found in the Ilkhanid palace of Takht-e Soleyman showcase narrative motifs and themes that are intricately connected to the stories found in Shahnameh (Shekarpour 2013: 65).

During the rule of Hülegü and Abaqa, the coins minted during what we call “the feudalistic command economy” featured specific religious inscriptions. The most common phrases found on these coins were “La ilah-a ill-allah, wahdah-u la sharik-a lah, Muhammad rasul Allah”¹ and the text from verse 26 of Surat Al-Imran which includes “Qul Allahuma malik al-mulk t’oti al-mulk man tisha’u wa tazeu’ al-mulk mimman tisha’u wa ta’izzu man tisha’u wa tadhil-u man tisha’u biyadak al-khayr inkka ala kulli shay’in qadir²”. These inscriptions held significant religious meanings and were carefully chosen to reflect the beliefs of the time (Torabi Tabatabaee 1968: 18–19; Sarfaraz & Avarzamani 2009: 215–217). The true purpose behind these gestures was to legitimize the Ilkhans’ rule in Iran. Jenkins (2015: 46–50) argues that the national or political identity holds utmost importance as a collective social identity, with territory, government, and nation being integral components (Alam 2019: 136–148). Establishing a state and securing national and international acceptance necessitates harmonizing these elements to transition power into legitimate authority. The Mongol Ilkhans undertook substantial reforms, including modifications in coinage, which served as a means of communication, to enhance their legitimacy (Fig. 5).



◀ Fig. 5: The front and back of a coin issued during Hülegü Khan’s reign, as well as a visual representation (<http://ilkkans.altaycoins.com>).

- From the reforms of Ghazan Khan to the extinction of the Ilkhanid government; bureaucratic command economy

After the disintegration of the Abbasid Caliphate and the subsequent relaxation of religious practices among the Mongols, a sense of void

permeated the Iranian religious community. This void persisted until Ghazan ascended to power and embraced Islam, thereby bestowing official legitimacy upon the sultans. The Ilkhanate Muslim Khans could then be referred to as sultan-caliphs. This state of affairs endured until the Safavid era, which witnessed the formalization of the Shiite branch of Islam (Tabatabaee 2016: 80). Kwaja Rashīd al-Dīn Fazlullāh Hamadānī, a key intellectual figure during Ghazan Khan's reign, synthesized Iranian ideas with Islamic traditions, playing a pivotal role in Ghazan Khan's reforms. It is also important to note that Ghazan himself actively participated in the implementation of these reforms. According to Jāmi al-Tavārīkh, he addressed the Mongol commanders with the intention of appeasing them regarding economic and social reforms. He expressed the following sentiments: "I harbor no fondness for the Tazi (Arab) people. Should the situation call for it, we shall plunder all. I am more adept at this than anyone else. Together, we will raid them. Yet, if even after the looting, you continue to ask for supplies and yearly tributes and plead for them, I will hold you accountable; for you must also ponder what you will do if we are too severe on the people and consume all their cattle, eggs, and herds." (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2/ 1044).

The reforms implemented by Ghazan Khan marked a significant turning point in the history of the Ilkhanid government. These reforms aimed to address the economic, social, cultural, and political challenges faced by the Ilkhanid territory, resulting in a substantial transformation of the situation. Notably, the reforms initiated by Ghazan Khan were carried forward during the reigns of Öljaitü and Abu Sa'id. Even on his deathbed, Ghazan Khan emphasized the importance of continuing these reforms to the nobility and rulers, highlighting their enduring significance (Wassaf 1959: 457–458; Kashani 1969: 12–14). The manifestations of the bureaucratic command economy after Ghazan's reforms are as follows:

- Within a command economy, a top-down approach is implemented to organize and make decisions. The bureaucratic command economy, on the other hand, is characterized by the central government's utilization of a bureaucratic system to administer governmental affairs, rather than resorting to traditional methods or exploiting subjugated populations. Notably, government involvement in trade, agriculture, and industry are prominent aspects of the command economy (Hicks 1976: 1–31). Ghazan's decrees, as suggested by Lambton and Carl Jahn, can be interpreted as an endeavor to reconcile Genghis Khan's legal framework with Islamic jurisprudence. The inclination to establish compatibility between Mongolian law and

Islamic jurisprudence was a prominent aspect of Ghazan's domestic politics (Boyle 2018: Vol. 5/ 188–193; Petrushevsky et al., 2015: 60).

- Forming a cultural unity: Ghazan initiated the process of eliminating cultural diversity within society by embracing Islam and imposing restrictions on non-monotheistic religions in the Ilkhanate realm. This measure was put into effect at the beginning of his reign in the month of Sha'ban in the year 604 AH (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2 / 900–904). By doing so, Ghazan established a sense of cultural unity between himself as the ruler and the general populace. This period also witnessed the abolition of the caliphate, paving the way for the intertwining of religion and politics. The interplay between religion and politics is evident in the utilization of the waqf (endowment) system as a religious command, coupled with governmental endorsement of it as a political decree (command). Following the Ghazan period, endowment complexes were founded with the patronage of the sultan and the royal family, serving diverse functions encompassing religious, scientific, economic, social, and political realms, all geared towards achieving political aims (Karimian & Mehdizadeh 2017: 155–165). These initiatives have had a notable impact on the physical structure and appearance of cities, leading to the decline of numerous urban classes and fostering a closer relationship between the ruler and the ruled, as well as among different social strata.

- Conveying the benefits of reforms to the nobility: Ghazan Khan made it clear to the Mongol tribes that his reforms were not intended to benefit the Iranians but rather to ensure the continuity of Mongol rule. He stressed the significance of agriculture and regular tax collection as essential for maintaining governance. By cautioning against the plundering of farmers, he underscored the negative consequences on agriculture and the state's finances. This strategy appeared to resonate with many Mongol rulers, leading to widespread adoption of these reforms (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2/ 1039). Furthermore, Ghazan motivated the Mongols by granting them unproductive lands for cultivation (Ibid 1106).

- Organizing the tax collection system: Prior to Ghazan Khan, farmers and peasants were burdened with the Qabchūr and tribute taxes, which were imposed on them up to twenty times a year (Ibid 1024–1028). However, Ghazan Khan implemented significant reforms in the tax collection system, including the consolidation of taxes, the establishment of a single annual payment, and setting deadlines for payment. Additionally, he introduced a new calendar system based on solar calculations to determine the time for tax collection (Birashk 1997: 201). In certain regions, Ghazan Khan

abolished the Qabchūr tax and replaced it with the Tamghā tax (Mustawfi 1983: 603–604). Furthermore, he eliminated the practice of paying taxes in the form of Hirz and Moqāyeseh, which involved contributing a specific portion of the agricultural yield as a tax (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2 / 1035–1043).

- Revitalization of agricultural infrastructure and restructuring of land ownership regulations: Prior to Ghazan’s reign, numerous farmers had abandoned their homeland and sought refuge in the surrounding regions. However, with the implementation of a new law, property owners were obligated to repatriate fugitive individuals and villagers back to their respective provinces and lands (Ibid 1107). As part of Ghazan’s reforms, a portion of the tax revenue generated from each province was designated to cover the expenses associated with acquiring seeds and necessary capital for agricultural purposes. This initiative aimed to revive agricultural activities and foster development within the provinces (Ibid 1101–1102). Ghazan and his successors undertook extensive measures to restore irrigation networks and establish a multitude of streams and canals, further enhancing the agricultural landscape. Among these streams (canals) were two large ones in the Mesopotamia region that carried Euphrates water to the Karbala region. Rashīd al-Dīn Fazlullāh also built streams, canals, villages, and settled farmers in them (Ibid 157–158; 244–245). In addition, some other agents and Ilkhanate government officials each took their own development measures in this regard (Yazdi 1961: 81–83). Ghazan divided the royal arid lands into several categories and handed over each of them under special conditions to those who were able to revive and develop it (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2 / 1105–1107; Spuler 2018: 319). Ghazan subsequently established the “organization of net revenues” with the purpose of overseeing the administration of these territories and focusing on matters pertaining to them (Ibid 1107–1108). A considerable number of such measures persisted unchanged during the time of Öljaitü and Abu Sa’id, subsequent to Ghazan’s rule.

- Market regulation: In order to foster a thriving trade environment both domestically and internationally, various measures were implemented. These included addressing the market situation, ensuring uniformity and standardization of weights and units of measurement, overseeing the organization of artisans and guilds, curbing the ambitions of government officials, regulating the operations of guilds and commercial enterprises, closely monitoring the issuance of government permits (yārliq), maintaining order in postal affairs, attending to the state of roads and their maintenance,

and combating the proliferation of usury. Through these concerted efforts, trade flourished on both local and global scales (Wassaf 1959: 345).

- Aiding for architectural projects, urban development, and road construction: Numerous architectural works from the Ilkhanid era are associated with the period following the Ilkhanid adoption of Islam. The establishment of settlements like Ghāzānīyeh, Rab'-e Rashīdī, Ojan, and Soltānīyeh exemplifies this trend. The development of caravanserais near urban centers, along with the provision of amenities like baths for merchants prior to entering cities, contributed significantly to the prosperity and renown of centers such as Tabriz and Soltānīyeh (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 1 and 2 / 995–996). Apart from serving religious, political, scientific, and social purposes, the architectural ensembles of this era also fulfilled economic roles. Notably, several complexes were constructed solely for economic purposes, including the Ghiyāthīyeh, Dameshqīyeh, and Sahibiyeh complexes in Tabriz, as well as hospitals (Dar al-Shifā) and Ribāts in Kerman, and architectural complexes in Yazd. The complexes were primarily situated within urban areas and were financially backed by donations from nearby villages, impacting the economy of the region (Karimian & Mehdizadeh 2017: 159). Despite Ghāzānīyeh having its own tower and rampart, it was constructed and expanded beyond the main fortifications of Tabriz. Ghazan Khan personally oversaw the development of the Ādelīyeh garden and pavilion (kūshk) as well as the town's gardens. Under Ghazan's directive, various fruit trees, fragrant flowers, and legumes that were not native to Tabriz were brought to the region and cultivated in Tabriz and Shanb-e Ghāzān (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2/ 116; 131; 160; 174). The decision to establish a new town in the western pastures of Tabriz reflects the impact of Mongol laws, which favored a lifestyle closer to nomadic traditions and away from urban centers. It is apparent that the western part of Tabriz, particularly with its entrance and exit to the west, was deemed the most appropriate location for this purpose. According to Marco Polo, merchants arriving from Byzantium and Europe were mandated to unload and engage in trade solely in the markets of Shanb-e Ghāzān (Polo 1971: 10–20). The impact of Ghāzānīyeh on international trade is undeniable. It is plausible that the commercial routes connecting Ghāzānīyeh to the West fostered the exchange of various customs, techniques, and artistic practices. The construction of a settlement outside the city fortifications, accompanied by the establishment of gardens and orchards in its vicinity, can be interpreted as an attempt to recreate and embody the nomadic lifestyle prevalent in the western region of Tabriz.

This deliberate embrace of “customs” despite the prevailing dominance of the “command” element exemplifies Ghazan’s dedication to upholding cultural traditions.

- Prioritizing trade issues in relations with countries: Ghazan Khan, in a letter, encouraged the Mamluk sultan to swear loyalty to him, highlighting the importance of commercial ties and articulating his wish for trade to remain unaffected by political disputes (Wassaf 1959: 372). Alongside economic motivations, endeavors to establish partnerships with European authorities often included the recruitment of envoys from merchant backgrounds. An illustration of this approach is the assignment of “Buscarello,” a Genoese entrepreneur, to engage with European courts (Javadi 1999: 94). The marriage of Ghazan to the daughter of Andronikos II, the Byzantine emperor, facilitated the Ilkhanids in capitalizing on the commercial interests of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 2/ 951). Furthermore, trade links with China and India were established, resulting in a notable expansion of trade and maritime routes (Spuler 2018: 271). During the reigns of Öljaitü and Abu Sa’id, the focus of their interactions with the Mamluks and neighboring regions shifted towards economic interests. Öljaitü, at the onset of his rule, dispatched messengers to Egypt with a message of peace and friendship. However, alongside this amicable gesture, he also made a demand for the opening of trade routes and the provision of support for his kingdom (Wassaf 1959: 472). During this period, the coalition of the Uluses led to a system where merchants were granted the privilege of unrestricted movement and transportation of goods without the burden of taxes or obligatory fees (Ibid, 475–454). Additionally, there were established trade connections with European authorities, particularly with Genoese and Venetian traders (Javadi 1999: 112–113), marking the pinnacle of the command economy in that era.

Petrushevsky posits that the economic structure during the Ilkhanid era was inherently linked to the diminishing urban life due to Mongol influence. He supports his argument by pointing out that the government’s taxation in the form of goods aligns with this natural system (Petrushevsky 1978: 211). Nevertheless, Petrushevsky fails to consider the taxes collected as goods in both the Ilkhanid and pre-Mongol periods when analyzing the tax revenue received by the Ilkhanid Central Court. In his work *Nozhat al-Qulūb*, Hamdallāh Mustawfi presented an estimation of the total tax revenue received by the Central Court prior to the Mongol invasions, which amounted to approximately one hundred million dinars. Following

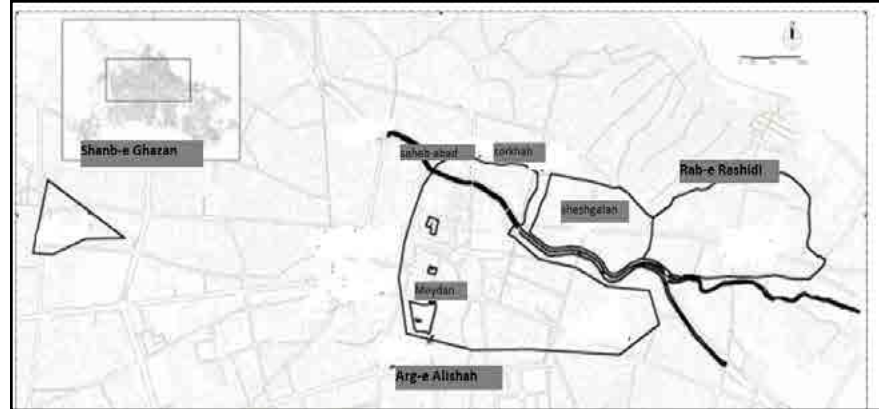
the Mongol conquests, this figure dwindled to about twenty million dinars. It is worth noting that Mustawfi's calculations excluded the tax revenues from regions like Sistan, Ghohestan, Khorasan, Gorgan, and Mazandaran, as these areas operated under local budgets and did not contribute to the Central Court's finances. Consequently, Mustawfi's analysis did not encompass these territories due to the lack of available data (Mustawfi 1983: 147). Furthermore, taxes collected in the form of goods played a significant role in financing military and state expenditures, especially during the military economy era, a factor that was not considered in Petrushevsky's findings. For instance, as per Nakhjavāni, the Khuzeṣtān region's tribute was collected in goods during Ghazan's reign (Nakhjavani 1964: Vol. 1/ 199). Therefore, Petrushevsky's perspective on the Ilkhanate economy's natural state resulting from the agricultural economy's decline is relevant only during the "military economy" era and not for all periods and regions. Subsequent to the devastation of infrastructure and economic foundations caused by the Mongol invasion, the central court of the Ilkhanid dynasty witnessed a significant increase in growth and attained a certain level of prosperity under the feudalistic and bureaucratic command economy systems. Nonetheless, overall revenue generated was noted to be lower compared to the pre-Mongol era, particularly when contrasted with the Seljuk period.

Manifestations of bureaucratic command economy in archaeological data

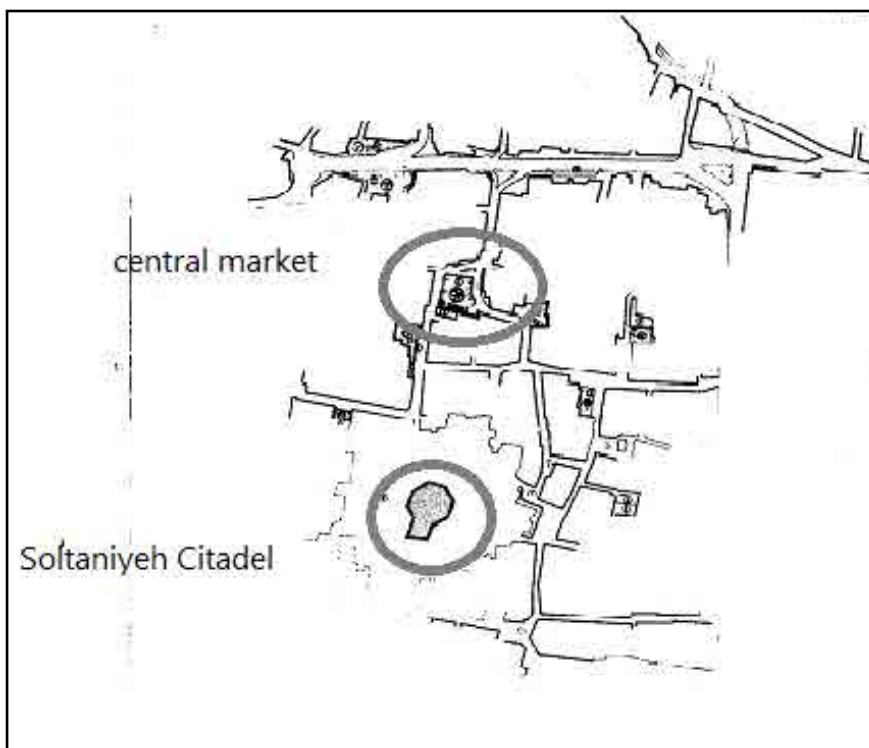
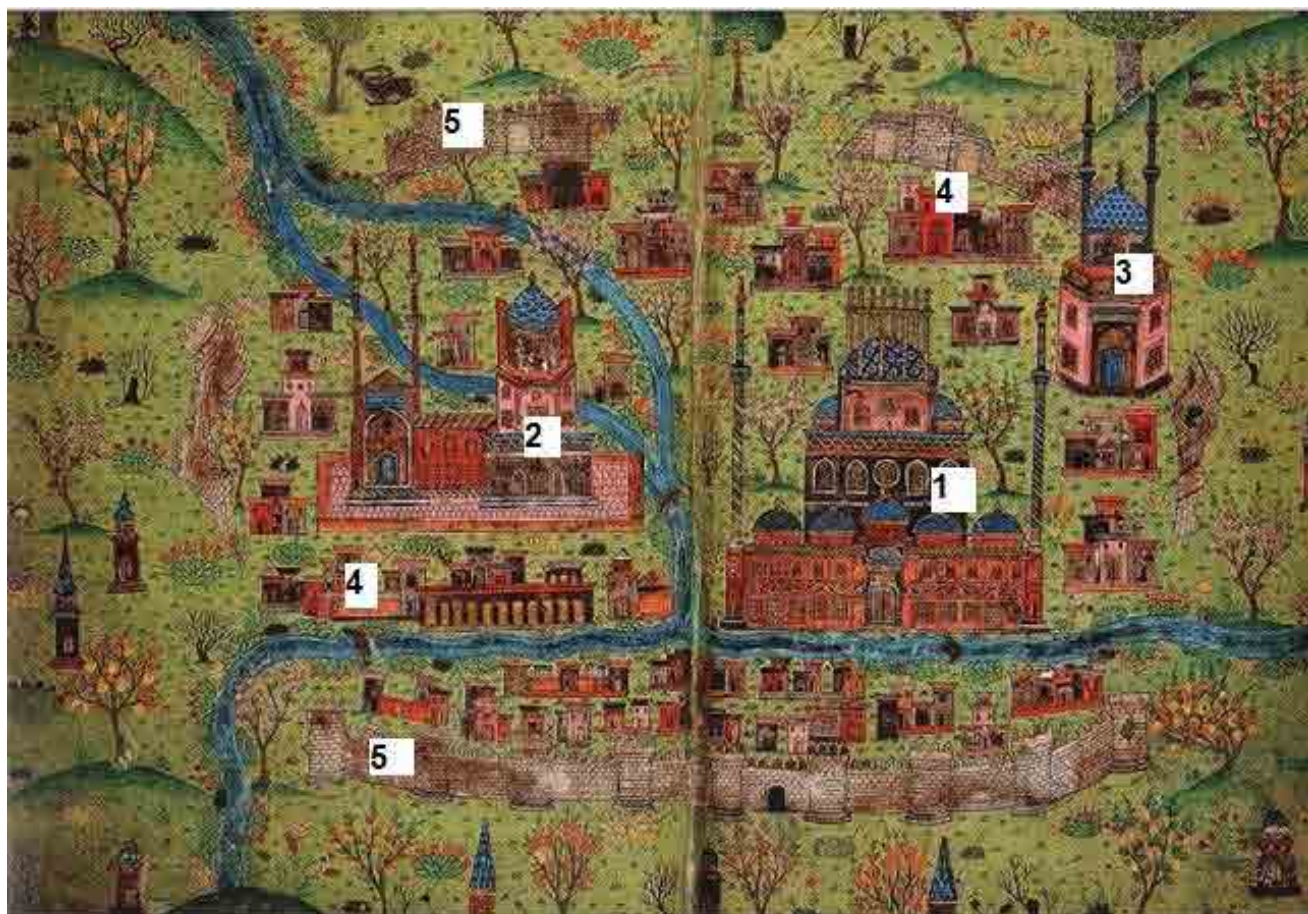
The architecture and currency of the Ilkhanids underwent significant transformations after their conversion to Islam, signifying a departure from the preceding era. These changes align with our expectations of a "bureaucratic command economy" during this period. Among the notable complexes from this time are Shanb-e Ghāzān, Rab-e Rashīdī, Arg-e Alishāh, and Soltāniyeh Dome. These architectural marvels exemplify the Sultan's authority, encompassing political, economic, and religious realms. Shanb-e Ghāzān, for instance, incorporates various elements such as the congregational mosque (Jāmi Masjīd), educational institutions for the Shafi'i and Hanafi schools of thought, the law house or Beit al-Qānūn (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 4/ 1378), and other components that pertain to the religious aspect. Additionally, the positioning of the Sultan's tomb at the center (Boroushaki 1986: 41–65) signifies its paramount importance. This exemplifies Ghazan Khan's endeavor to consolidate and centralize political power and religion within the government apparatus and his own persona, following the decline of the Abbasid caliphate and the Sunni worldview. The urban complexes of Shanb-e Ghāzān and Rab-e Rashīdī showcase the

influence of power-maker elements and the new political thought of the Ilkhanid society (Fig. 6). Towards the end of this period, the juxtaposition of elements associated with political power alongside examples of religious and economic power became fully apparent in Arg-e Alishāh and Soltāniyeh Dome. Arg-e Alishāh, for instance, showcases a harmonious coexistence of various power-maker elements, each representing different facets of power. These include mosques and monasteries (symbolizing religious power), governmental buildings and palaces (political power), and markets (signifying economic power) (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: Vol. 4/ 117, 997, 1173, 1373). This amalgamation of power is a testament to the overall structure of the citadel. The locus of power lies within the patriarchal government, and the strategic arrangement of these power symbols within the spatial organization of the Soltāniyeh Citadel further reinforces this notion. The presence of the palace and the royal court, the establishment of schools aimed at promoting the Shi'i branch, the influential figure of Allāmeḥ Hellī, the Chalabioghlu Mausoleum, and the rerouting of commercial highways all reflect the prevailing discourse of the society in this period. These elements are deeply rooted in the architectural principles and urban planning of the Ilkhanid period (Fig. 7 & 8).

Fig. 6: Reconstruction of the spatial location of the Shanb-e Ghāzān, Rab-e Rashīdī, and Arg-e Alishāh complexes and their relationship with other historical complexes in the city of Tabriz during the Ilkhanid period (Authors 2024; the location of Shanb-e Ghāzān is measured based on Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: 117, 997, 1173, 1373; Rab-e Rashīdī, based on Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1977: 21-32; Arg-e Alishāh based on Mustawfi 1983: 87; Ibn Battūta 1980: 233; Mirkhvānd 2001: vol. 4: 600-610; Contarini & Zeno Caterino 2002: 383). ►



Following his acceptance of Islam, Ghazan Khan's era saw the use of Quranic verses on coins for religious purposes. The coins also displayed motifs inspired by Iranian customs, such as "King Ghazan the Just," "King of Islam," "Supreme Emperor," and the representation of the rising sun. Moreover, the coins bore inscriptions in Uyghur script "Taghriin Gojundor" and Chinese script "Sultan" on their obverse and reverse sides, respectively (Alaeddini 2016: 25; Shamsi et al., 2018: 114; Torabi Tabatabaee 1972: 47-50; Sharafi 2017: 124). Indeed, under the guidance of Rashīd al-Dīn Fazlullāh, Ghazan not only sought to legitimize his rule through religious means, but also recognized the significance of meritocracy and Iranian



▲ Fig. 7: The miniature of Soltānīyeh Citadel by Matrāqchī; 1. Soltānīyeh Dome; 2. Congregational Mosque; 3. Building associated with Khwaja Rashid al-Din; 4. Marketplaces? 5. Citadel towers (left side) (Topkapi Palace Museum, İstanbul, highlighted sections by the authors).

◀ Fig. 8: Roads leading to the center of Soltānīyeh from all corners of the empire (Mehryar et al., 1985: 261).

policies. By doing so, he actively worked towards fortifying the very core of his monarchy on a global scale. The presence of Islamic phrases alongside Iranian customs on the coins is a tangible manifestation of the harmonious coexistence of these two dimensions within the society of that era. The use of terms like “bazar” underscores the economic significance of markets during this era. While it is probable that Ghazan genuinely embraced Islam and held a specific interest in Shi’ism (Fazlullāh Hamadānī 1983: 900–904), his coins do not contain any motifs promoting a particular religion. On the other hand, the coins of Öljaitü include phrases associated with both Sunni and Shia Islam, such as “Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Umar al-Faruq, Uthman Dhu’l-Nurayn, and Ali Abu’l-Sebatayn, peace be upon them all” and “La ilaha illallah, Muhammad rasul Allah, Ali wali Allah.” In a similar vein, the coins of Abu Sa’id feature inscriptions such as “Allah, La ilaha illallah, Muhammad rasul Allah, wa sallam” and “Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali” (Fig. 9). Furthermore, during the third period, Uyghur concepts and Iranian traditions frequently coexisted with Islamic concepts. It is worth noting that the Mongol khans not only gained full legitimacy among the Iranian people, but also within the Islamic world and among the Mamluks of Egypt during this period, particularly in its later stages (Eqbal Ashtiani, 2010: 355). Moreover, with the adoption of the Iranian bureaucracy (Spuler, 2018: 315), the society transitioned into the “command” stage, as defined by John Hicks’s theory of economic history.

Fig. 9: The left and right sides of a Ghazan Khan coin and its drawing (<http://ilkkans.altaycoins.com>). ►



Following the aforementioned elucidations, to provide a concise overview of the discussion, the development of the Ilkhanid economy can be effectively summarized through the lens of John Hicks’ theory of “economic history.” The various stages of this theory are exemplified in different spheres, as delineated in Table 1.

Conclusion

Despite the plethora of available sources, discussions regarding Mongol rule in general and the Ilkhanid Dynasty in particular have consistently been marked by ambiguity and contention. The complexities of the economic dynamics during this time exceeded those of earlier periods,

Table 1: Manifestations of different stages of John Hicks' theory of economic history during the Ilkhanid period (Authors, 2024). ▼

Type of economy	Time span	Manifestations
Customary economy	The emergence of the Mongols in Mongolia until the unification of the tribes by Temujin	<p>Life as a commune and based on natural order Society has a state of unconscious balance. Tribal decentralization because of climatic conditions Economy based on hunting and animal husbandry Limited acquaintance with the concepts of trade through Muslim and Chinese merchants Division of tribes and the emergence of new tribes because of extra-tribal marriages Emergence of social classes and the necessity for tribal unity Population growth and aristocracy inclination as a result of familiarity with the luxury products of Muslims and the Chinese Lack of resources and lack of response to the needs of the united tribes and the inevitability of attacks on neighboring areas</p>
Military economy	From about 1218 AD and Genghis Khan's invasion on Iran until 1259 AD and the first great defeat of the Mongols in Ain Jalut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authoritarianism at the top of the pyramid and the rise of the Mongol aristocracy's power and the necessity of continuously supporting the aristocracy by Genghis Khan - Invasion on the rich cities of Central Asia and East Iran - Lack of political goals to establish a government in new territories at the beginning of the attacks and being satisfied in looting cities such as Bukhara, Samarkand and Neishabour - Sending letters to city governors requesting tribal admission and paying tribute - Uncertainty about the situation of Iran in the division of Genghis Khan - Sending Hülegü to the west and conquering and accumulating the wealth of the Ismaili crowd and Baghdad - Recognizing the impossibility of continuing conquests in West Asia after the first great defeat of the Mongols in Ain Jalut and changing the formulation of power in West Asia with the presence of the Mamluks
Feudalistic Command economy	From 1259 AD and the establishment of Hülegü's power in Marāgheh to the beginning of Ghazan's reign in 1294 AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deadlock in conquests in the Levant and clashes in the north with <i>Altin Urdu</i> and northeast with <i>Ulus Jajgataei</i> - Employing Iranian bureaucrats such as Khwaja Nasir al-Din Tūsi and the Juvayni family - The positive attitude of the Mongols to urban life - The choice of Azerbaijan as the capital and the development of science and culture in Marāgheh, the capital of Hülegü - Opening of trade relations with the kings of Armenia and Antioch and the Europeans in the time of Hülegü, Abaq Khan and their successors - Continued recession in the agricultural economy despite the relative improvement of the commercial economy - Continuing the wars and looting, especially on the western borders, with no significant results for the Mongols
Bureaucratic command economy	From the beginning of Ghazan's reforms in 1294 AD and the Significant role of Khwaja Rashīd al-Din Fazlullāh to the extinction of the Mongol dynasty in 1335 AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating cultural unity as a result of Ghazan Khan's tendency to Islam; From this time on, Khans can be called sultan-caliphs. - Efforts to bring politics and religion closer to each other by Khans and ministers such as Khwaja Rashīd al-Din Fazlullāh and Tāj al-Din Jilāni with the support of the <i>Waqf</i> Foundation; These two made significant efforts to bring the government and politics and religious elements closer together. Architectural complexes called <i>Abwab al-Barr</i> are examples of such efforts. - Creating compatibility between the Mongol law and Islamic jurisprudence - Ghazan Khan's efforts to make the Mongol nobility aware that the reforms were beneficial - Reviving the agricultural economy by helping to rebuild irrigation networks and reorganizing the land ownership laws - Organizing the tax collection system - Regulating the market situation and establishing order in the affairs of artisans and different guilds - Support for architecture, urban planning and road construction - Prioritizing economic interests over military issues in relations with the countries of Egypt, especially in the time of Oljāitū and Abu Sa'd, based on the approaches of the Khans and the contents of the exchanged letters - Establishment of an economic coalition between the uluses to facilitate trade and transportation of various goods from China to Anatolia

largely due to the epistemological challenges faced by researchers in this field. Examining the Mongols' economic evolution from its inception to its zenith during their reign in Iran, this study draws upon John Hicks' theory of "economic history" and the various manifestations of this theory in the economic framework of that era, which often intersected with the principles of the "Historical school of Germany". Embracing these ideas, John Hicks divides the economic history of societies prior to the era of mercantilism into three distinct periods: the "customary economy", the "military economy", and the "command economy", each with its own subcategories as mentioned earlier. Notably, the Mongol Empire and the Ilkhanid government rapidly progressed through these stages of growth and development, assimilating the knowledge and achievements of civilized nations and attaining remarkable levels of culture, industry, and more in their newly acquired territories.

The economic progress and development during this era can also be observed through an analysis of the existing documents and data. The traditional economy of this time period revolved around tribal life centered on hunting, animal husbandry, and fishing, starting from its inception in Mongolia up to the consolidation of the tribes under Temujin. During this period, there existed an inherent and organic order that regulated relationships, leading to a stagnant economy. The shift towards a military or plundering economy was triggered by the militaristic and aristocratic nature of Genghis Khan's rule, population pressures, and limited resources, which served as justification for the Mongol merchants' retaliation following the massacre in Otrār. This phase endured until 1260 AD, marked by the first significant defeat at Ain Jālūt, which shattered the Mongols' aura of invincibility.

The presence of military economy is apparent through various means, including the exploitation and plundering of the countries that have been conquered. Moreover, the absence of clear political objectives in establishing a government in the occupied territories at the onset of invasions, the uncertain situation of Iran within the Mongol political divisions, and the retention of local governors as long as tribute payments are received all serve as indications of this phenomenon. Following the Mongols' defeat at Ain Jālūt, the halt in conquests necessitated the establishment of civil order and organization in the vast conquered territories. This circumstance compelled the Mongols to adopt centralization strategies and a combination of Iranized (Irānshahrī) and Islamic Shari'a political concepts. The economic developments during this era can be traced

back to the rise of Hülegü's authority in Marāgheh and the initiatives of Khwaja Rashīd al-Dīn in 658 AH, persisting until the commencement of Ghazan's reign. During this particular era, which coincides with Hicks' "feudalistic command economy," the presence of both custom and plunder persists alongside the element of command. However, it is the commercial economy that emerges as the primary economic source for the government. The bureaucratic command economy, on the other hand, spans from the initiation of Ghazan's reforms in 1294 AD and the appointment of the vizier Khwaja Rashīd al-Dīn Fazlullāh until the downfall of the Ilkhanid dynasty and a bit thereafter. Throughout this period, the element of command surpasses the influence of custom, which is evident in the flourishing agricultural sector, the rise in agricultural land prices, the cultivation of diverse crops, the growth of domestic and foreign trade (both over land and sea), the establishment and restoration of trade routes, and the construction of architectural complexes with economic purposes. Additionally, there were tax and monetary reforms implemented, resulting in an increase in treasury revenues and the development of a monetary economy. The manifestation of custom in an authoritarian society (with the dominance of command economy) can be observed through various elements at this particular stage. These elements include the establishment of out-of-town settlements or hills, the creation of gardens and parks surrounding them, the depiction of Uyghur themes on coins like Tagrin Gujundor, and the concentration of foreign trade in markets located outside the cities, such as the market of Shanb-e Ghāzān.

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Observation Contribution

The contribution of the authors is the same.

Conflict of Interest

Authors declared no conflict of interest.

Endnote

1. Meaning: there is only one God, Allah which is singular with no associates and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.

2. Meaning: "Say, 'O Allah, Master of all sovereignty! You give sovereignty to whomever You wish, and strip of sovereignty whomever You wish; You make mighty whomever You wish, and You degrade whomever You wish; all choice is in Your hand. Indeed You have power over all things.

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چکیده

مطالعه اقتصاد ایلیخانان مغول با تکیه بر نظریات اقتصادی و بهره‌گیری توأم از داده‌های باستان‌شناختی با کاستی روبه‌رو است. این پژوهش با نظر به دیدگاه پیروان «مکتب تاریخی» به طور عام و نظریه «تاریخ اقتصادی» «جان هیکس» به طور خاص، اقتصاد جوامع تاریخی و نیز مغول‌ها را به سه مرحله کلی «اقتصاد عرفی»، «اقتصاد نظامی» و «اقتصاد امری» تقسیم می‌کند. پژوهش زیر با رویکرد توصیفی-تحلیلی و با استفاده از روش کتابخانه‌ای درصدد پاسخ‌دهی به این پرسش‌ها است که این مراحل با کدام تحولات سیاسی-نظامی دوره ایلیخانان مغول هم‌پوشانی دارد و نموده‌های آن در عرصه‌های مختلف این دوره به چه صورت بوده است؟ نتایج پژوهش نشانگر ظهور تمام مراحل این نظریه در تکوین اقتصاد ایلیخانان و تطابق آن با تحولات سیاسی و اقتصادی است. در اقتصاد عرفی افزایش جمعیت و بروز طبقات اجتماعی نظم و تعادل طبیعی را به هم می‌زند. از نموده‌های اقتصاد نظامی (۶۱۵ تا ۶۵۸ ه.ق.) نبود اهداف سیاسی برای تأسیس حکومت در سرزمین‌های جدید، درخواست پذیرش ایلی و خودکامگی در رأس هرم قدرت است. وجه تمایز اقتصاد امری فتوئدالی (۶۵۸-۶۹۴ ه.ق.) نسبت به گذشته رویکرد مثبت مغول‌ها به زندگی شهری با وجود اهمیت بالای اردوی ایلیخان و رشد اقتصاد تجاری در سایه رکود اقتصاد کشاورزی است. در اولویت قرارگرفتن مسائل اقتصادی بر نظامی از قبیل رواج معماری اقتصادی و ایجاد نوعی اتحادیه اقتصادی بین اولوس‌های چنگیزی از مشخصات اقتصاد امری دیوان‌سالاری (۶۹۴-۷۳۶ ه.ق.) در دوره ایلیخانی می‌باشد. مظاهر اقتصاد امری دیوان‌سالاری معماری، سکه‌ها و سایر هنرهای این دوره مشهود است.

کلیدواژگان: مغول، ایلیخانی، تاریخ اقتصاد، جان هیکس، عرف، امر.

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