

## **The Tabrizi Qadi and the Mongol Mahdi: Ilkhanid Intellectual Networks and Religious Reform in Fourteenth Century Anatolia**

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This paper examines the role of an obscure Tabrizi Qadi by the name of Mawlana Najm al-Din Tashti in the messianic revolt of Timurtash, the Mongol governor of Rum and Mahdi claimant, in the early 1320s Anatolia. According to the Mawlawi/Mevlevi disciple Aflaki's fourteenth century hagiography of Jalal al-Din Rumi, the *Manaqib al-'arifin*, Timurtash's uprising was supported by a group of Anatolian prominent religious figures including Najm al-Din Tashti, who was executed shortly thereafter by amir Chupan for orchestrating his son's (Timurtash's) uprising.

Identifying this individual as chief Qadi of Rum/Anatolia, Muhammad b. M. b. Abi-Bakr al-Tabrizi, this paper sets out to map Najm al-Din's ties to the central religious and intellectual circles of the Ilkhanate, including such individuals as the famous Maragha polymath Qutb al-Din Shirazi, the Ilkhanid vizier Rashid al-Din, and chief Qadi of Ilkhanate during Sultan Uljaytu's reign, Nizam al-Din 'Abd al-Malik, who was known for his vocal anti-Shi'ite stance. Using Tashti's intellectual and political portrait and a number of other understudied accounts related to the revolt, in particular, the Armenian Martyrdom of Grigoris of Erzurum, which attributes to Timurtash and an unnamed Qadi the persecutions of Christian communities in Rum, this paper offers a new interpretation of Timurtash's claim to Mahdi-hood, as that of the cyclical reformer rather than the eschatological redeemer.