

# The Origins and Rhetorical Evolution of the Term Qizilbāsh in Persianate Literature

*Shahzad Bashir*  
Stanford University  
*sbashir@stanford.edu*

## Abstract

This essay traces the use of the term Qizilbāsh in select literature in Persian produced during the approximate period 1490-1700. The survey indicates that the term became the standard name given to devotee-soldiers of the Ṣafavid dynasty only gradually over the sixteenth century. Moreover, the term acquired symbolic meanings and direct connection to the time of Shaykh Ḥaydar (d. 1488) and Shāh Ismāʿīl (d. 1524) only in the seventeenth century. The material presented here argues for reading Persian chronicles and other sources with careful attention to their rhetorical qualities and the contexts in which they were produced.

## Keywords

Qizilbāsh – Ṣafavid – historiography – religion – headgear

The story of how the Ṣafavid family metamorphosed from being the head of a Sufi community to a dynasty in Iran in 1501 has been the subject of a number of detailed academic studies. It is generally accepted that this transformation owed a particular debt to a collective of Turkic groups that were, simultane-

---

\* An early assessment of the material discussed in this essay was presented at the conference “The Alevi-Bektashi Communities in the Ottoman Geography: Historiography, Sources and Paradigms” at Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, in December 2011. I am grateful to the organizers (Cemal Kafadar, Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, Arzu Öztürkmen, and Derin Terzioğlu) for the invitation to the conference and helpful remarks. The essay has also benefited immensely from comments by the three anonymous scholars who peer reviewed it for *JESHO*.

ously, disciples of the Şafavid shaykhs and elite soldiers in the new empire. The intensity of these soldiers' military commitment is usually attributed to their religious affiliation with the Şafavid house, underlining the presumption that, as devotees, they were willing to go beyond ordinary bravery. Conversely, this same presumption regarding a combination of religious and political loyalty formed the basis for the intense and often brutal suppression meted out to populations in the Ottoman empire that were suspected of harboring Şafavid sympathies.<sup>1</sup>

During the past three decades, an array of scholarly works has advanced our understanding of the Şafavids, with particular emphasis on political, social, and economic history.<sup>2</sup> Cultural, literary, and artistic aspects of the Şafavid era have also received some attention, although much remains to be done in these arenas.<sup>3</sup> With respect to the history of religion, a majority of scholarship so far has dealt with two issues: the transformation of the Şafavid Sufi order into a royal lineage at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and the establishment

- 
- 1 For the most recent, detailed assessment of the Ottoman side of the story see A. Karakaya-Stump, "Subjects of the Sultan, Disciples of the Shah: Formation and Transformation of the Kizilbash/Alevi Communities in Ottoman Anatolia." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2008. Scholarly literature pertaining to Iranian history is discussed throughout this article.
  - 2 Important works in these areas, which contain references to the larger relevant literature, include: J. Aubin, "L'avènement des Safavides reconsidéré." *Moyen Orient & Océan Indien* 5 (1988): 1-130; S. A. Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); M. Haneda, *Le Chah et les Qizilbaş* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1987); A. Newman, *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008); R. Mathee, *The Politics of Trade in Safavid Iran: Silk for Silver, 1600-1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); R. Mathee, *Persia in Crisis: Safavid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011); B. Rahimi, *Theater State and the Formation of Early Modern Public Sphere in Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2011). A general sense for the current state of the field can be had also from the three edited volumes to come out of round-table conferences on Şafavid studies: *Etudes Safavides*, ed. J. Calmard (Paris: Institut français de recherche en Iran, 1993); *Safavid Persia*, ed. C. Melville (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996); A. Newman, *Society and Culture in the Early Modern Middle East: Studies on Iran in the Safavid Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).
  - 3 See, for example, P. Losensky, *Welcoming Fighani: Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal* (Costa Mesa: Mazda, 1998); S. Quinn, *Historical Writing during the Reign of Shah 'Abbas* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000); K. Rizvi, *The Safavid Dynastic Shrine: Architecture, Religion and Power in Early Modern Iran* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011); C. Mitchell, *The Practice of Politics in Safavid Iran: Power, Religion and Rhetoric* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011); S. Babaie, *Isfahan and its Palaces: Statecraft, Shi'ism and the Architecture of Conviviality in Early Modern Iran* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008).

of Twelver Shī'ism as the official religion of the land under Ṣafavid tutelage.<sup>4</sup> A fully satisfactory understanding of the religious ideas and practices of the Ṣafavids' dedicated soldiers is hampered by the fact that we possess very little in the way of confessional literature penned by authors who would have considered themselves a part of the group. Consequently, the most detailed expositions on the topic offered to date have been works that are based either on materials produced before the rise of the new empire (Mazzaoui), or on polemical works and chronicles and other literature penned by the court literati of the Ṣafavid period (Babayan, Arjomand). In this essay, I aim to add to our understanding of Ṣafavid religious history by tracking the use of a critical term across literature in Persian produced during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of the Common Era. My emphasis is on substantiating a significant change in the religious sphere that I believe occurred during the course of Ṣafavid history.

My argument stems from observing a seeming terminological disjunction between primary sources and secondary scholarship with respect to the use of the epithet "Qizilbāsh" to designate devotee-soldiers committed to the Ṣafavid dynasty. Let me begin by spelling this out, starting with modern scholarship. With the sole exception of Michel Mazzaoui's important work *Origins of the Ṣafavids* (published in 1972), the existing scholarly literature identifies the early zealot supporters of the Ṣafavid house as the "Qizilbāsh".<sup>5</sup> The most important in-depth study in this regard is Kathryn Babayan's extensive portrayal of the Ṣafavid period in her work *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs*. She locates the origins of the Qizilbāsh in pre-Islamic Iranian religious patterns that are then said to have continued throughout the Islamic period of Iranian history. Her account of the Qizilbāsh portrays them as the explicit manifestation of a *longue durée* religious orientation that can be seen as a permanent, although at times latent, feature of the Iranian world from the beginnings of the Common Era to the fifteenth century. Babayan's work is a very fine example

4 Representative works that include references to further literature are: M. Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Ṣafavids: Šī'ism, Ṣūfism, and the Ġulat* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1972); K. Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs* (Cambridge: Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 2003); Arjomand, *Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam*; R. Abisaab, *Converting Persia: Religion and Power in the Safavid Empire* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004); D. Stewart, "Notes on the Migration of 'Amili Scholars to Safavid Iran." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 55, no. 2 (1996): 81-104.

5 Emblematic cases for this are Roger Savory's article "Qizilbash" in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* and Rudi Matthee's entry "Safavid Dynasty" in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. In both cases, the term Qizilbāsh is applied to Ṣafavid soldier-devotees across the board and with the presumption that the term meant the same thing throughout Ṣafavid history.

of historiographical reconstruction, undertaken on the basis of a vast corpus of literary and other materials. Given the lengthy time-scale of her argument, it makes sense that her work privileges continuities over discontinuities in the record of Iranian religious history. In her perspective, the stability attributable to the religious worldview she describes was such that Şafavid soldier-devotees switched their allegiance away from the Şafavid monarch to another group (the Nuqţavīs) when they considered the king to be veering away from the ideological commitment that initially brought the dynasty to power.<sup>6</sup>

In accounts by Babayan and others, the Qizilbāshs' military power and political influence in the Şafavid polity declined over the course of the sixteenth century as the kings attempted to exert their power and new groups, such as Twelver Shī'ī scholars, gained in stature. This eventually led to the Qizilbāsh being eclipsed by other power brokers, such as Georgian slaves (*ghulāms*), during the second century of Şafavid rule.<sup>7</sup> Concurrent with the group's political decline, the Qizilbāshs' religious ideology also underwent a process of gradual marginalization, eventually being overshadowed entirely by the Twelver Shī'ī clerical establishment.<sup>8</sup> From existing scholarly accounts, we get the impression that the group to whom the term "Qizilbāsh" is applied possessed a singular religious ideology that persisted continuously over time, although the group's political fortunes underwent significant changes over the course of Şafavid history.

With this summary in mind, let us now turn to original sources that report on the Şafavids' devotee-followers. Proceeding from the secondary literature, we would expect that we would find here the "Qizilbāsh" represented as an important group with definable features. This would seem all the more probable given that the term Qizilbāsh is supposed to refer to a distinctive red head-gear that marked the group as Şafavid devotees and soldiers. However, this turns out not to be the case, irrespective of whether we examine sources inimical toward the Şafavids or those written under their own patronage or that of their allies. To be sure, all sources affirm that Şafavid soldiers were bound to the dynasty through religious as well as political ties. But only some sources refer

6 Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs*: xxviii-xxxviii. My purpose in this essay is not to oppose the view presented by Babayan but to subject the relevant literature to a different analysis for the sake of illuminating historical developments within a shorter time scale.

7 For the details of these processes see Matthee, *Persia in Crisis*, and S. Babaie, K. Babayan, and I. B. McCabe, *Slaves of the Shah: New Elites of Safavid Iran* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004).

8 Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs*: 349-402. For the transformation of religious discourse in this period see also Ata Anzali, "Şafavid Shi'ism, the Eclipse of Sufism and the Emergence of 'Irfan." Ph.D. dissertation, Rice University, 2012.

to these men as the Qizilbāsh, while others use more generic terms such as *ṣūfī*, *ghāzī*, and *Turkomān*. In other words, the original sources do not bear out the expectation of standardized nomenclature for the Ṣafavid devotee-soldiers that we see cited prominently in the secondary literature.<sup>9</sup>

A further significant point in this regard is that, according to my survey, only one sixteenth-century author writing in Persian who uses the term Qizilbāsh provides a very brief symbolic or ideological reasoning for it. It then seems that, in the first century of Ṣafavid rule, the red headgear that marked the group functioned primarily as a kind of identifying signature with purely social, or extrinsic, rather than symbolic, or religiously intrinsic, meaning. A comparable example would be the use of “bearskin” tall fur hat for ceremonial purposes by certain members of European and other armies to this day. The bearskin confers a particular identity, with historical resonances, on the soldiers who wear it, but it is not given a detailed symbolic meaning pertaining to its constituent parts or its conferral on a group of people by superhuman forces. Both the Ṣafavids’ red headgear during the sixteenth century and the bearskin are elements of attire that signify allegiance and social significance by virtue of outward distinction, and not because they are objects endowed with extraordinary properties in and of themselves.

In the case of the Ṣafavids, it is crucial that the term Qizilbāsh and the red headgear to which it refers did acquire detailed symbolic explanations in works penned in the seventeenth century. In these later sources, written more than a century after the events they purport to describe, the term and the object both become tied emphatically to early Ṣafavid history and Twelver Shī‘ism. We find authors providing accounts that depict the hat as an emblem given to early Ṣafavid leaders by ‘Alī and other Shī‘ī Imāms. Moreover, we also now find discussions of the symbolism inherent in the red headgear as a physical object that has intrinsic power and confers a special religious identity and responsibility on those who wear it. In secondary scholarship, as I have discussed above, these late accounts of the meaning of the headgear (and consequently the term Qizilbāsh) have been taken to apply to the whole of Ṣafavid history. However, I believe the difference between the early and late sources in question is neither incidental nor trivial. Rather, paying attention to the changing use of the term over the course of Ṣafavid history allows us to see a fundamental transformation in the religious sphere that can be placed around the beginning of the seventeenth century CE. The transformation in question can

9 In parallel with my investigation in this essay, Masashi Haneda’s assessment of military matters has shown that critical terms such as *qūrchī* underwent evolution over the course of Ṣafavid history (Haneda, *Le Chah et les Qizilbaš*: 144-202).

be correlated with changes in the Ṣafavid political sphere that have been discussed by other scholars. My effort, then, is geared toward adding nuances to our understanding of the religious and intellectual side of Ṣafavid history, utilizing a method that has hitherto not been applied to the materials under consideration. The overall argument I am presenting here is related also to my previous work on Ṣafavid religious history where I have tried to emphasize the fact of change over permanency in the way we understand this period of Iranian history.<sup>10</sup>

In the following discussion, I survey details for the use of the term Qizilbāsh for the followers of the Ṣafavids in Persian literature composed between approximately 1490 and 1700. I aim to exploit the disjunction between primary and secondary literature I have described above to suggest conclusions that will, I hope, add to a textured understanding of the religious history of the Ṣafavid era. First, the survey indicates that the term Qizilbāsh did not have a stable referent through the course of Ṣafavid history and should be understood as an object of political, social, and religious negotiation. Second, tracking the term provides a sense for the evolution of the Ṣafavid religious sphere as a whole, where the passage of time seems to have led to a greater interest in symbolic interpretation of objects and acts. And third, the symbolic weight ascribed to the term Qizilbāsh seems to have increased in tandem with a decline in the actual political power wielded by those who have been referred to as the Qizilbāsh. The last observation is counterintuitive and provides the opportunity to reflect on how we correlate religious ideas with sociohistorical developments, whether in the Ṣafavid case or elsewhere.

The method I employ in this essay requires me to register certain caveats at the outset of the discussion. My survey of sources covers a significant number of voluminous works produced over the course of two centuries (see Table).<sup>11</sup> Very far from being exhaustive, it is impossible here even to represent adequately the complexities of the source base in question. To manage the task, I focus in particular on the way the sources describe the period in which Shaykh Ḥaydar (d. 1488) and Shāh Ismā'īl (d. 1524) were the leaders of the

10 S. Bashir, "Shah Isma'īl and the Qizilbash: Cannibalism in the Religious History of Early Safavid Iran." *History of Religions* 45, no. 3 (February 2006): 234-56; idem., "The World as a Hat: Symbolism and Materiality in Safavid Iran." In *Unity in Diversity: Mysticism, Messianism and the Construction of Religious Authority in Islam*, ed. O. Mir-Kasimov (Leiden: Brill, 2013): 343-365.

11 The table contains more works than the ones I will discuss in the narrative of the essay. The works not invoked directly track closely with the ones that are discussed; I have omitted commenting on each and every source in the interest of avoiding repetition and keeping the narrative readable.

TABLE Usage of the Term *Qizilbāsh* in Selected Persianate Sources (with approximate dates of composition)

Timeline	Sources	term used
1488: death of Shaykh Ḥaydar	Khunji-İşfahānī, <i>Ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī</i> [1491]	no
1501: rise of Ismāʿīl I	Nīmdihī, <i>Ṭabaqāt-i Maḥmūd Shāhī</i> [1501-02]	no
	Khunji-İşfahānī, <i>Mihmānnāma-yi Bukhārā</i> [1509]	no
	Khunji-İşfahānī, <i>Sulūk al-mulūk</i> [1514]	no
1510: capture of Herat	Lāhījī, <i>Tārīkh-i Khānī</i> [1516]	no
1524: death of Ismāʿīl I	Khwāndamīr, <i>Ḥabīb al-siyar</i> [1524]	yes
1530: death of Bābur	Amīn Hiravī, <i>Futūḥāt-i shāhī</i> [1530]	no
	Bābur, <i>Bāburnāma</i> [1530]	yes
	Qāsimī Gunābādī, <i>Shāh Ismāʿīl-nāma</i> [1533]	no
	Zayn ad-Dīn Vāşifī, <i>Badāyīʿ al-vaqāyīʿ</i> [1538]	yes
	Ḥusaynī, <i>Tārīkh-i ilchī-yi Nizām Shāh</i> [1545]	yes
1544-45: Humāyūn in Şafavid domains	Mīrzā Ḥaydar Dūghlāt, <i>Tārīkh-i Rashīdī</i> [1546]	yes
	Amīr Maḥmūd, <i>Tārīkh-i Shāh Ismāʿīl va Shāh Tahmāsp</i> [1550]	yes
1556: death of Humāyūn	Sayyid Yaḥyā Qazvīnī, <i>Lubb al-tavārikh</i> [1555]	no
	Shāh Tahmāsp, <i>Tazkira</i> [1561]	yes
	Ghifārī Qazvīnī, <i>Tārīkh-i Jahānārā</i> [1563-64]	yes
	Ibn al-Karbalāʿī, <i>Rawzāt al-jinān va jannāt al-janān</i> [1567]	yes
	Navīdī Shīrāzī, <i>Takmilat al-akhbār</i> [1570]	yes
1576: death of Tahmāsp	Būdāq Munshī Qazvīnī, <i>Javāhir al-akhbār</i> [1576]	yes
	Ḥasan Beg Rūmlū, <i>Aḥsan al-tavārikh</i> [1577]	yes
	Gulbadan Bēgum, <i>Humāyūnnāma</i> [1570s]	no
	Jawhar Aftābchī, <i>Tazkirat al-vāqīʿāt</i> [1580]	no
1587: ʿAbbās I begins reign	Bāyazīd Bayāt, <i>Tārīkh-i Humāyūn</i> [1590]	yes
	Qāzī Aḥmad Qummī, <i>Khulāṣat al-tavārikh</i> [1590]	yes
	ʿAbd al-Qādir Badāʿūnī, <i>Muntakhab al-tavārikh</i> [1595]	yes
	Afūstah-i Naṭanzī, <i>Nuqāvat al-āṣār</i> [1598]	yes
	Anonymous, <i>Tārīkh-i Qizilbāshān</i> [1600]	yes
	Muḥammad Yār b. ʿArab Qatḡhān, <i>Musakhkhar al-bilād</i> [1600]	yes

TABLE (Cont.)

Timeline	Sources	term used
1605: Death of Akbar	Nūrullāh Shushtarī, <i>Majālis al-mu'minīn</i> [1602] Iskandar Munshī, <i>Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī</i> [1616]	no yes
1629: death of 'Abbās I	Mīrzā Bēg Junābadī, <i>Rawzat al-Şafaviyya</i> [1626]	yes
1666: death of Şafi II	Muḥammad Yūsuf Vālah Işfahānī, <i>Khuld-i barīn</i> [1667] Valī Qulī Shāmlū, <i>Qişaş al-khāqānī</i> [1674] Anonymous, <i>'Ālam-ārā-yi Shāh Ismā'īl/Şafavī</i> [1680] Bijan, <i>Tārīkh-i jahāngushā-yi khāqān</i> [1680]	yes yes yes yes
1694: death of Sulaymān I		

Şafavid movement. This period has indexical value because it is during these years that the Şafavids transformed from being a politically active Sufi group to a ruling dynasty. This is also the period whose representation underwent dramatic shifts in Şafavid historiography between the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Tracking the use of the term in this context thus provides the best venue for registering contextual and chronological variation.

I also wish to note that my purpose here is not to provide a full-fledged history of the red headgear used by the Şafavids. That endeavor would have to include a review of Ottoman and European-language sources on Şafavid history as well, which are not directly relevant for my present purpose. My focus is on only those materials in Persian that constitute particularly useful examples for understanding the use of the term Qizilbāsh. By this token, my survey of sources is also not meant to be exhaustive. On the question of coverage, my claim would be that collating materials from thirty-five very substantial works enables one to suggest some general conclusions even if one has not commented on every piece of surviving literature. My ultimate subject here, then, is not the red headgear itself or a comprehensive account of the available literature. Rather, I present a representative survey of the material to substantiate the suggestion that the meaning of the term Qizilbāsh underwent significant change over the course of nearly two centuries and that this fact allows us to refine our understanding of Şafavid religious history. Moreover, the



case under review emphasizes the value of historicizing methods for the study of religious ideologies.

### The Vicissitudes of Naming

As in all acts of naming, the use of the term Qizilbāsh for the followers of the Ṣafavids reflects on both the position of particular authors and the term's currency at the time a work was produced. This is all the more so in the case of a politically potent group whose activities were central to the shape of events in the context in which it was active. In surveying the use of the term, therefore, it is critical to distinguish between accounts by those inside and outside the movement, as well as authors' generally sympathetic, neutral, and antagonistic stances toward the Ṣafavids. During the sixteenth century, evidence from sources produced by those outside the Ṣafavid realm indicates that the term came into wide use a few years after the establishment of the dynasty. Among Ṣafavids' enemies, it was used as a way to mark a condemnable group, while among their allies it represented a neutral identifier for the group.

The earliest extensive account of the activities of the Ṣafavids in the period that concerns me occurs in the Āqqūyūnlū history *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī* by Faẓlallāh b. Rūzbihān Khunjī-Iṣfahānī (d. 1519). I will present this work in some detail because of its early date and the fact that it is foundational for the identification of the red headgear with the Ṣafavids. In this work, Khunjī-Iṣfahānī is hostile toward the Ṣafavids and does not employ the term Qizilbāsh. The work was produced when the author was in the employ of Sulṭān Ya'qūb (d. 1490) and discusses the Ṣafavids in its narration of the year 893 AH (1488 CE), when Āqqūyūnlū forces carried out a punitive mission against Shaykh Ḥaydar's followers that led to the Ṣafavid leader's death. The author is highly censorious of the Ṣafavids, accusing them of wallowing in grave religious error that is portrayed as a symbiosis between the arrogance of Shaykh Ḥaydar and his father Shaykh Junayd and the mindless sycophancy of their followers.

Khunjī-Iṣfahānī's ultimate commitment is to portray Sulṭān Ya'qūb as the epitome of divinely ordained rule whose benevolent intentions are interrupted by the activities of corrupt groups such as the Ṣafavids. The account for the year 893 begins by declaring that anyone who causes sedition (*fitna*) in the realm would lose his head, and it ends with the affirmation that the world is a paradise-like garden once again under Ya'qūb's just rule following Ḥaydar's

elimination.<sup>12</sup> Within this frame, Khunji-İşfahānī describes the Şafavids as a noble Sufi group gone astray under its latter-day leaders. His condemnation hinges on two critiques: first, that while Shaykh Şafī al-Dīn (d. 1334), the Şafavids' eponym, and his early descendants were respected by their contemporary political powers because they confined themselves to religious authority, Junayd and Ḥaydar encroached on political and military matters; and second, that their followers—particularly those based in Anatolia (Rūm), Ṭālish, and Siyāhkūh—regarded them as divine, thereby making the movement akin to Christianity and a long list of heretics like the Khurramīs and Bābakīs. Although he refers to Şafavid soldiers as Sufis throughout the narrative, this is in itself a mark of censure since he inserts Ḥafīz's poetic critiques of hypocritical and worldly Sufis into the account.<sup>13</sup>

While Khunji-İşfahānī never uses the term Qizilbāsh in the *Tarīkh-i 'ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*, his account does indicate that, under Ḥaydar, the Şafavids had a red hat as their distinguishing mark. When describing Ḥaydar's attack against the Shīrvānshāh in Shamākhī in 1488, he utilizes a double-entendre referring to the sun and Shaykh Ḥaydar simultaneously:

The next day in the morning, the blue-wearing Sufi put the red hat (*kulāh*) on his head and opened up his hand to the exercise of the sword from horizon to horizon.

In the morning, as the rooster of sky made its appearance,  
once more, it pecked away at the stars spread on the dish of heaven.

The barren plain of the horizon became a white flower-filled field,  
and the sky's master acquired its (daily) turban (*dastār*) (of rays).

Following the custom of kings, the Shaykh arrived with an abundant army of Sufis. Instead of colorful patched frocks they had warriors' suits of chain mail on their bodies, and instead of the Şafavī crown (*tāj*), they had Pahlavi warrior headgear on their heads. Mounted on wild steeds

12 Fażlallah b. Rūzbihān Khunji-İşfahānī, *Tarīkh-i 'ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*, ed. Muḥammad Akbar 'Āshiq (Tehran: Mīrās Maktūb, 2003): 251, 297. Reflecting the general acceptance of the term, Vladimir Minorsky's abridged translation of Khunji-İşfahānī's work refers to Şafavid soldiers as the Qizilbāsh despite the fact that the accompanying original text makes no reference to the term (Fadlullah b. Ruzbihan Khunji-İsfahani, *Tarīkh-i 'ālam-ara-yi Amīnī*, Persian text edited by John E. Woods with an abridged English translation by Vladimir Minorsky, revised and augmented by John E. Woods [London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1992]: 53).

13 Khunji-İşfahānī, *Tarīkh-i 'ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*: 267.

capable of the speed of wind, they arrived in the battlefield wielding swords of fire.<sup>14</sup>

Unable to defend himself, the Shīrvānshāh asked for Ya'qūb's help, leading eventually to a battle in which Ḥaydar was killed.<sup>15</sup>

Khunjī-Iṣfahānī was a young man at the time of his employment under the Āqqūyūnlū. As fate would have it, he lived to see Ḥaydar's son Ismā'īl declare himself king in Iran in 1501, an event that led to his own exile from his native land. He spent the last two decades of his life in Central Asia, patronized by the Uzbeks. His work *Mihmānnāma-yi Bukhārā*, completed in 1509 and dedicated to Shībānī Khān (d. 1510), reaffirms the idea that Shah Ismā'īl's followers wore red headgear but, interestingly, he refers to them with the Turkish terms *kızıl-kalpak* and *kızıl-börk*, and the Persian *surkh-kulāh* rather than as Qizilbāsh.<sup>16</sup> His last work was a mirror for princes entitled *Sulūk al-mulūk*, written for the Uzbek 'Ubaydullāh Khān (d. 1539) after he had defeated the future Mughal emperor Bābur (d. 1530) and expelled him from Samarqand in 1512. Bābur was an ally of Shah Ismā'īl at this time, which allowed Khunjī-Iṣfahānī to continue his invective against the Ṣafavids. In this work, written around 1514, he refers to Ṣafavid soldiers as red-hat wearing apostates (*mulḥidān-i ṭāqīya-yi surkh*) or simply red-hatted ones (*ṭāqīya surkhān*), accusing them of spreading corruption in Transoxiana.<sup>17</sup> The evidence from Khunjī-Iṣfahānī's three works indicates that although the red headgear was a clear distinguishing mark of the followers of the Ṣafavids, the term Qizilbāsh was not the standard way to refer to them at least as late as the first decade of the sixteenth century.<sup>18</sup>

14 Ibid.: 275-76.

15 Ibid.: 294-95.

16 Fażlallāh b. Rūzbihān Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Mihmānnāma-yi Bukhārā*, ed. Manuchihhr Sutūda (Tehran: Intishārāt-i 'Ilmī va Farhangī, 2006): 44-45, 105-106, 346.

17 Fażlallāh b. Rūzbihān Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Sulūk al-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī Muvahḥhid (Tehran: Khvārazmī, 1984): 50, 52.

18 My conclusion here is based on a review of the Persian sources, the major literary language in the area over which the Ṣafavids had become rulers. More evidence that indicates the same is available from Ottoman sources (cf. Irène Mélikoff, "Le problème Kızılbaş." In *Sur les traces du Soufisme turc: Recherches sur l'Islam populaire en Anatolie* [Istanbul: Éditions Isis, 1992]: 37). Mélikoff cites an Ottoman *fatvā* of condemnation from 1512 as the first instance that names Ismā'īl's followers as the Qizilbāsh. She also mentions Ismā'īl's Turkic poetry as evidence for the early use of the term. I regard this as insubstantial evidence given the difficulty of authenticating and dating the large corpus of poetry attributed to the first Ṣafavid king, which was, moreover, used for ritual purposes in later periods.

To continue with works produced under Uzbek patronage, the term Qizilbāsh appears with a dramatic negative flourish in Zayn al-Dīn Vāṣifi's *Badāyi' al-vaqāyi'*, completed in 1538. Vāṣifi's work is a personal memoir of his life in the world surrounding the court of Husayn Bayqara (d. 1506), the last significant Timūrid ruler of Herat, and his travels through Central Asia as an exile following the Ṣafavid conquest of Herat in 1510. Although it begins with an account of the takeover of Herat, I would emphasize that the work was composed much later, in the Uzbek milieu. From my perspective, reading it as an eyewitness account of the events of 1510 is problematic since that fails to acknowledge the work's very strong rhetorical positioning within the context of its production among and for Uzbek rulers, more than two decades after the conquest. Vāṣifi describes the Ṣafavid arrival in Herat as a calamity of the highest order that he correlates to the meaning of the term Qizilbāsh in the following way:

[Recalling the time when] in the domain of Khurāsān—may God protect it from calamities and accidents—the swelling sea of sedition was raging with waves touching the peaks of heaven, and hoard-like cloudbanks of misfortune and inquisition had darkened away the warming sun of peace and security. Blood was pouring out from people's brimming eyes like red wine pours from flasks, and inverted fortune, fallen from the sky, was driving their wretched heads low with sorrow and grief. The Qizilbāshes' bloodletting and the visible parts of their red crowns cast a pall to make the sky at the time of evening prayer turn the color of a field of tulips rather than pansy-like purple. Fate's pen was imprinting upon the page of times the interpretation of the verse "he will cause corruption in it and spill blood" [Quran, 2:30].

Every beautiful piece of land where the Qizilbāsh have taken over,  
has been turned into something like a field of tulips by time.<sup>19</sup>

Vāṣifi mentions the Qizilbāsh again in the work as well in highly opprobrious terms. While he does give the term Qizilbāsh a symbolic gloss in this section, this is a case of poetic rhetoric on the part of an individual author rather than an indicator of wide social usage.<sup>20</sup>

The term Qizilbāsh occurs in accounts by those writing in a neutral way as well. As noted above, the faction within the Timūrids that was led by Bābur

19 Zayn al-Dīn Vāṣifi, *Badāyi' al-vaqāyi'*, ed. A. N. Boldyrev, second edition, 2 vols. (Tehran: Bunyād-i Farhang-i Irān, 1970-72): 3-4.

20 Ibid.: 112.

and eventually turned into the Mughal dynasty in India acted as an ally of the Şafavids against the Uzbeks in Central Asia. Bābur himself employs the term Qizilbāsh in his Chaghatay memoirs, although the surviving text of the work is missing the years in which he was a direct ally of the Şafavids while trying to establish himself in Samarqand. His uses of the term occurs in the accounts of conflicts between Qizilbāsh soldiers and their opponents, in the context of reports on Shāh Tahmāsp's victory over the Uzbeks in 935/1528, and when mentioning Iranian ambassadors at his court in Agra and Lahore.<sup>21</sup>

As in the case of Bābur's memoirs, in later Mughal sources too the term Qizilbāsh appears as a synonym for Şafavid Iranian soldiers. In his *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, completed in 1546, Bābur's cousin Mīrzā Ḥaydar Dūghlāt (d. 1551) states that when Bābur undertook the conquest of Samarqand with Shah Ismā'īl's help, he was required to accept Shī'ism and put on the dress of the Qizilbāsh.<sup>22</sup> Humāyūn (d. 1556), Bābur's son and successor, was compelled to imitate his father in seeking Şafavid help after his defeat by Shēr Shāh Sūrī in 1539 and spent the year 951 (1544-45) in Şafavid domains. Humāyūn's interactions with Shāh Tahmāsp are described in three works that were composed decades after the events in question. The earliest of these, perhaps written in the 1570s, is the *Humāyūnnāma* of his sister Gulbadan Bēgum that does not use the term Qizilbāsh and generally portrays Shāh Tahmāsp (d. 1576) as willing to aid Humāyūn out of his great respect for the Mughal family.<sup>23</sup> In the remaining two accounts, Humāyūn's sojourn in Iran is represented as involving a more contentious set of negotiations that eventually led to Tahmāsp's support. In his *Tazkirat al-vāqī'āt*, composed around 1580, Jawhar Aftābchī describes Tahmāsp asking Humāyūn to wear the distinctive Şafavid crown, which Humāyūn accepts. But according to him, Humāyūn was also asked to accept Shī'ism as his religion and refused emphatically. This author thus affirms the Şafavids' distinctive attire but does not use the term Qizilbāsh to describe them.<sup>24</sup>

21 Babur, *Bāburnāma: Chaghatay Turkish Text with Abdul-Rahim Khankhanan's Persian Translation*, tr. Wheeler M. Thackston, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 1993): 2:348, 3:646, 3:738, 3:746 3:750-54, 3:804. I am grateful to Evrim Binbaş for help in identifying these references.

22 Mīrzā Ḥaydar Dūghlāt, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, ed. 'Abbāsqli Ghaffārfard (Tehran: Mīrās Maktūb, 2004): 374-78.

23 *Three Memoirs of Humayun*, ed. and tr. W. Thackston (Costa Mesa: Mazda, 2009): 49-51 (Persian text). For a general assessment of Persian writing in India that comments on the Şafavids see J. Calmard, "Şafavid Persia in Indo-Persian Sources and in Timurid-Mughal Perception." In *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies*, ed. M. Alam, F. 'Nalini' Delvoe and M. Gaborieau (Delhi: Manohar, 2000): 351-391.

24 Thackston, *Three Memoirs of Humayun*: 141-42 (Persian text).

The last work to be mentioned in this context is Bāyazīd Bayāt's *Tārīkh-i Humāyūn*. Composed around 1590, this work refers to the Šafavid army as the Qizilbāsh when commenting on the fate of Qandahār during Humāyūn's journey back from Iran and toward eventually recapturing the throne.<sup>25</sup>

We now move to works composed under Šafavid patronage. Among the earliest sources to comment on the life of Shaykh Ḥaydar and Shāh Ismā'īl, Amīnī Hiravī's *Futūḥāt-i Shāhī* (1530) and Qāsimī Gunābādī's versified *Shāh Ismā'īlnāma* (1533) do not mention the term Qizilbāsh at all and utilize particular clan names when referring to Turkomān commanders among the Šafavid elite.<sup>26</sup> In Khwāndamīr's *Ḥabīb al-siyar* (1524), Shaykh Ḥaydar's troops are referred to as the Qizilbāsh during the description of the attack on the Shīrvānshāh without an explanation of the term.<sup>27</sup> On its own, the lack of explication is obviously immaterial since a chronicler is not obligated to define every term he utilizes. This observation is significant for my purposes only because much later sources do insert detailed explanations for the invention of the red hat while describing Ḥaydar's troops. Presenting a similarly checkered picture for a slightly later period, the term is not used in Sayyid Yaḥyā Qazvīnī's *Lubb al-tavārīkh* (1555), but it occurs, without explanation, in Amīr Maḥmūd b. Khwāndamīr's *Tārīkh-i Shāh Ismā'īl va Shāh Tahmāsp* (1550).<sup>28</sup>

Khūrshāh b. Qubād al-Ḥusaynī's *Tārīkh-i ilchī-yi Niẓām Shāh* is a particularly interesting work because the author was a Shī'ī native of Iran employed by Burhān Niẓām Shāh of Aḥmadnagar, India, who had been sent over to the Šafavid court of Shāh Tahmāsp as an emissary. During his time at the court (1545-47), he was an honored guest with access to the king and others but

25 Ibid.: 23-24, 96 (Persian text).

26 For these authors' descriptions of Shaykh Ḥaydar's activities see: Šadr al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Amīnī Hiravī, *Futūḥāt-i Shāhī*, ed. Muḥammad Rizā Nāširī (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āšār va Mafākhar-i Farhangī, 2004): 46-59; Qāsimī Ḥusaynī Gunābādī, *Shāh Ismā'īlnāma*, ed. Ja'far Shujā' Kayhānī (Tehran: Farhangistān-i Zabān va Adab-i Fārsī, 2009): 176-81.

27 Ghiyāš al-Dīn Khwāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-siyar*, ed. Muḥammad Dabīr Siyāqī, 4 vols. (Tehran: Kitābforūshī-yi Khayyām, 1984): 4:433. Hiravī and Khwāndamīr were scholars based in Herat who were, in a sense, 'inherited' by the Šafavids from the earlier Tīmūrid administration. Khwāndamīr's work was undertaken largely under the patronage of the Šafavid vizier Khwāja Ḥabībullāh Sāvajī (hence the work's name), the first version being completed in Herat in 1524. He later migrated to India, completing a second redaction of the work in Agra in 1529.

28 Sayyid Yaḥyā Qazvīnī, *Lubb al-tavārīkh*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddiṣ (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āšār va Mafākhar-i Farhangī, 2008): 266-72; Amīr Maḥmūd Khwāndamīr, *Tārīkh-i Shāh Ismā'īl va Shāh Tahmāsb-i Šafavī (Zayl-i tārikh-i Ḥabīb al-siyar)*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī Jarrāhī (Tehran: Nashr-i Gustara, 1991): 31 (and frequently later).

nevertheless retained an outsider's perspective to some degree. In his work, completed around 1557, he does not use the term Qizilbāsh to refer to Shaykh Ḥaydar's followers and his initial references to elite cadres of Shāh Ismā'īl's army are by their clan names. He first introduces the term Qizilbāsh when describing Ismā'īl's conquest of Iraq and the war with Sultān Murād Āqqūyūnlū in 1508, stating simply that they were known by the name because they "wear a crown made of red cloth on their heads."<sup>29</sup> After this explanation, Ḥusayni uses the term abundantly while referring to Ṣafavid troops.

In works produced in the second half of Shāh Tahmāsp's reign (circa 1555-74), the term appears consistently, most often without explanation.<sup>30</sup> For the very first time, however, we do have a source that provides a short symbolic gloss for the headgear. Būdāq Munshī Qazvīnī writes in his *Javāhir al-akhbār* (completed 1576) that after Shāh Ismā'īl installed himself as the king in Tabriz, "it was decreed that they assemble a blazing crown from red woolen cloth (*saqirlāt-i qirmizī*) with twelve gores to signify the twelve Imāms. An old crown maker sewed it for the first time and it was instituted as attire among the Ghizilbāsh."<sup>31</sup> This short description is significant both in its own right and as the predecessor for amplified descriptions of the headgear discussed later in the essay. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the object's symbolic content is limited to the issue of Shāh Ismā'īl's well-known recourse to Twelver Shī'ism.

29 Khūrshāh b. Qubād al-Ḥusayni, *Tārīkh-i ilchī-yi Niẓām Shāh*, ed. Muḥammad Rizā Naṣīrī and Koichi Haneda (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āṣār va Mafākhar-i Farhangī, 2000): 19.

30 Prominent examples include: Ḥasan Bēg Rūmlū, *Aḥsan al-tavārikh*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā'ī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Bābak, 1978); Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ghifārī Qazvīnī, *Tārīkh-i Jahānārā*, ed. Muḥtabā Mīnuvī (Tehran: Kitābfurūshi-yi Ḥāfiz, 1964); 'Abdī Bēg Navidī Shīrāzī, *Takmilat al-akhbār*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā'ī (Tehran: Nashr-i Nay, 1990); Qāzī Aḥmad Qummī, *Khulāṣat al-tavārikh*, ed. Iḥsān Ishrāqī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh, 2005).

31 Būdāq Munshī Qazvīnī, *Javāhir al-akhbār*, ed. Muḥsin Bahrām-nizhād (Tehran: Mīrās Maktūb, 2000): 119. This work survives in a single manuscript (possibly an autograph), which has the peculiarity that the name is spelled "ghizilbāsh" rather than "qizilbāsh" throughout the text. The early date of the manuscript is confirmed by the presence of a *vaqf* statement, according to which it was donated to the Ṣafavid shrine at Ardabil by Shāh 'Abbās in 1018/1609-10 (49, 52). Based on the limited available evidence, the orthographic oddity seems either to be a copyist's idiosyncrasy or an error in transcription on the part of the editor. The idea presented here that Shāh Ismā'īl had the Ṣafavid red headgear reconfigured upon declaring himself king is reported in an Italian traveler's account from 1542 as well (cf. Michele Membré, *Mission to Lord Sophy of Persia (1539-1542)*, tr. A. H. Morton [London: Gibb Memorial Trust, 1999], 26).

In addition to Munshī's work, sources from the second half of the sixteenth century include an anonymous and undated work that has come to be referred to as the *Tārīkh-i Qizilbāshān* because it consists of a listing of clans that are together presented as the bulwark of Ṣafavid power. The Qizilbāsh here are described as those who are "graced and exalted by the blazing royal crown and are appointed to awe-inspiring positions of ruling the lands of Iran on account of dedicating their lives to the exalted Ṣafavid family."<sup>32</sup> Subsequent to this declaration, this work consists of a listing of Turkoman clans (including Āqqüyünlü elements absorbed by the Ṣafavid movement) with notes on members who are said to have distinguished themselves on the basis of bravery in warfare or by becoming rulers, viziers, and other high ranking officials. The work makes no comment on the meaning of the term Qizilbāsh in terms of its historical origin or religious symbolism.

I would like to end this section of the essay by noting the presence of the term in the memoir of the Ṣafavid king Shāh Tahmāsp. Although Tahmāsp reigned from 1524 to his death in 1576, his memoir ends in the year 1562. He uses the word Qizilbāsh largely when reporting speech by others regarding the activities of Ṣafavid soldiers. This provides good reason to believe that, by this time, Ṣafavid devotee-soldiers self-identified as the Qizilbāsh and were referred to as such by outsiders. However, once again, the red hat seems to have been a marker of loyalty, like a uniform, rather than an object of deep religious symbolism. This comes across in Tahmāsp's report on the activities of his rebel brother Alqāsp, who had gone to the Ottomans in 1547-48: "[When in Istanbul, Alqāsp said]: "All the Qizilbāsh are in agreement with me, are my acolytes, and desire me." The truth is that the Qizilbāsh would rather give up their heads than part with the crown."<sup>33</sup> The significance of the name as a marker of intense loyalty to the king is clear here, corresponding with what we see throughout the literature surveyed so far. However, Tahmāsp neither ties the headgear to the story of Ṣafavid origins nor endows it with a symbolic gloss.

This assembling of information from literature produced during the sixteenth century suggests that the term Qizilbāsh came to be used for Ṣafavid troops only after the dynastic proclamation. It gained greater frequency over the course of the century, becoming the standard term to refer to Ṣafavid

32 Anonymous, *Tārīkh-i Qizilbāshān*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddiṣ (Tehran: Bihnam, 1982): 8.

33 Shāh Tahmāsp, *Tazkira-yi Shāh Tahmāsp*, ed. Karīm Fayḏi (Qum: Matbū'at-i Dinī, 2005): 110. For other places where the term is used see pages 57, 65, 72, 86, 93, 111, 132. Tahmāsp's memoir is discussed in detail in Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs*: 295-348. The historical episode in question here is discussed in extensive detail in W. Posch, *Osmanisch-safavidische Beziehungen 1545-1550: Der Fall Alqās Mirzā* (Vienna: VÖAW Publishers, 2013).



troops by about mid-century. In the second half of the sixteenth century, we get a short symbolic description of the headgear concerned with a redesign that places its origins at the dynastic declaration in 1501. In a majority of sources composed during the sixteenth century, the term comes across as a linguistic marker derived from a distinguishing item of dress. This last aspect of the story underwent a dramatic change in subsequent narrations of Şafavid history.

### Intervention of a Tradition

The accession of Shah ‘Abbās to the throne in 1587, on the eve of the first Islamic millennium in 1591, was a watershed moment in Şafavid history since it led to greater political stability and the generation of a new imperial culture.<sup>34</sup> In conjunction with other developments, ‘Abbās’s long reign (1587-1629) was host to modification in the historiographical tradition that “signaled a change in political outlook at the time of writing. Much of the historical rewriting that took place reflected changing legitimizing forces.”<sup>35</sup> Evidence regarding the use of the term Qizilbāsh indicates that the new dispensation included a break in the way the Şafavids’ red headgear was to be understood.

Following the chronological trail, it is both a surprise and a point of clarification to come to the description of Shaykh Ḥaydar’s raid in the Caucasus in Iskandar Bēg Munshī’s *Tārīkh-i ‘ālam-ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī*. This is because, on the one hand, Munshī’s work presents a perspective absent from any previous major source. And on the other hand, this work’s influence has been such that much of modern scholarly literature has taken its representations as fact rather than a novel intervention that came to the fore around the beginning of the seventeenth century. The way Munshī’s work has had a defining influence on the academic study of the Şafavid world would then seem to be connected directly to the discrepancy that I have discussed in the beginning of this essay. Munshī writes:

In a veridical dream experienced by Ḥaydar, he was ordered by messengers from the unseen world to construct a hat with twelve gores from red cloth that would be the marker of belonging to Twelver Shī‘ism. This

34 For details of the new imperial culture in the Persianate world see Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs*, and A. A. Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

35 Quinn, *Historical Writing During the Reign of Shah ‘Abbas*: 142.

would be the headgear to grace the heads of his followers. Upon seeing this auspicious dream concerned with the headgear, the Sulṭān abandoned his ordinary Turkomān hat, customary in those days, in favor of the blazing, twelve-gored crown of Ḥaydar. His noble followers, those affiliated with the family, then followed his example to become distinguished from all other people. This is how this illustrious group came to be known as the Qizilbāsh.<sup>36</sup>

This description follows the pattern found in the earlier report by Būdāq Munshī in describing a connection between the twelve-gore hat and the twelve Imāms. There are, however, two major differences worthy of note: first, the origins of the headgear have been pushed back in time, to the period of Ḥaydar rather than being coincidental with the establishment of the dynasty by Ismāʿīl; and second, the headgear is justified through the authority of the unseen world rather than being an earthly imperial decree. Dreams as such were a major component of Ṣafavid legitimacy throughout the dynasty's rule. For example, Sholeh Quinn has traced changes in narratives of dreams attributed to Shaykh Ṣafī al-Dīn Ardabīlī in the Ṣafavid historiographical tradition to understand the development of Ṣafavid ideology.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, Kathryn Babayan has shown dreams to be a central component of Shāh Tahmāsp's self-narrative in his memoirs.<sup>38</sup> The attribution of the invention of headgear to a dream then seems to be the further historiographical deployment of an accepted trick of the trade that has a long history in Islamic narratives.<sup>39</sup>

36 Iskandar Bēg Munshī, *Tārīkh-i ʿālam-ārā-yi ʿAbbāsī*, ed. Muḥammad Ismāʿīl Rizvānī, 3 vols. (Tehran: Dunyā-yi Kitāb, 1999): 1:33. Munshī's report is repeated in two other major chronicles, completed in 1667 and 1674 respectively (cf. Muḥammad Yūsuf Vālah Iṣfahānī, *Khuld-i barīn*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddiṣ [Tehran: Bunyād-i Mawqūfāt-i Duktur Maḥmūd Afshār, 1993]: 53; Valī Qulī Shāmlū, *Qīṣaṣ al-khāqānī*, ed. Sayyid Ḥasan Sādāt Nāshirī, 2 vols. [Tehran: Sāzmān-i Chāp va Intishārāt, 1993]: 33).

37 S. Quinn, "The Dreams of Shaykh Safi al-Din and Safavid Historical Writing." *Iranian Studies* 29 (1996): 127-42.

38 Cf. Babayan, *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs*.

39 As I have argued elsewhere, the way dream narratives works within the Islamic religious context requires establishment of motives from genre and immediate rhetorical purpose. In other words, the function of dreams cannot be determined as an Islamic universal. In this context, then, we have to situate the author's intended purpose and possible social meaning by parsing the text itself and citing Ṣafavid precedents (cf. S. Bashir, "Narrating Sight: Dreaming as Visual Training in Persianate Sufi Hagiography." In *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*, ed. A. Knysh and Ö. Felek (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012): 233-247).

The entwining of dreams and sectarian religious identity into the justification of the headgear works to provide the object and the term *Qizilbāsh* with greater symbolic depth. Rather than being a straightforward distinctive uniform as it comes across in most earlier chronicles, the hat now becomes an object that signifies sanctification from otherworldly authority as well as a doctrinal commitment. I believe it is particularly important to note that the hat and the associated term are now claimed to have come about at a precise historical moment that holds a critical place in the *Şafavid* dynasty's understanding of its own origins. The term's stronger relationship with a defined rather than vague past heightens its rhetorical effect and sociopolitical field of operation. Moreover, the farther the dynasty gets from its origins, the more significant becomes the period of origins for the purposes of legitimation. In this instance, I believe it is not persuasive to argue that the story we find in *Munshī* is the release of a hitherto suppressed cultural memory since that requires bracketing representations found in a century worth of literature. Rather, I suggest that we should regard the story's placement seriously as part of the evolution of the way the term *Qizilbāsh* was understood.

The new interpretation of the term *Qizilbāsh* that we see in *Munshī* is not an isolated incident but part of a wider pattern observable throughout the literature produced in the seventeenth century. In fact, chronological progression tracks with even further symbolical elaboration. *Mīrzā Bēg Junābadī's* work *Rawzat al-Şafaviyya*, completed in 1626, states that after *Ismā'īl* had defeated the *Shīrvānshāh* and *Alvand Āqqūyūnlū* in 1501 (in effect, reversing the balance of power from the time of his father), when crossing a river, he was accosted and encircled by a cloud-like group of figures wearing unusual clothes and white turbans such that he disappeared from the sight of his companions. The most distinguished person among them—who had ruddy facial hair, medium height, a grander physical presence than the rest, and had a luminous (*nūrānī*) protuberance sticking out from the middle of his white turban—took him in his embrace and whispered advice into his ear. Then the rest of them did the same one by one and finally disappeared so that *Ismā'īl* returned to his natural presence amidst his entourage.

*Junābadī* continues that while *Ismā'īl* did not relate this experience to anyone, it led to a change in the customary *Qizilbāsh* headgear that, until that time, had been the red hat devised by *Shaykh Ḥaydar*:

After this incident, the thought began to germinate in the devout king's mind that the attire of the *ghāzī* warriors and pious *Sufis* may be fashioned on the pattern of a white turban with a brilliant protuberance

sticking out of its middle, the way he had observed. This is the special form that is today known as the crown. When Tabriz acquired a status similar to that of the highest heaven upon being chosen as the capital after [Ismā'īl's] accession, the devotee of the family who was in-charge of the bazaar was called up and asked to order the maker of headgear to craft one for the ghāzī warriors in this special form. It is a miracle of this family and their truthful Imāmī religion that, even before the battle with and defeat of Prince Alvand, that man had seen the Imām 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib in a dream where he had taught him how to make this crown. He had manufactured this blazing crown in the special form and kept it hidden, until the great king arrived in Tabriz and asked for the man. Before he [Ismā'īl] could even describe the form of the attire, that pious man produced the sewn headgear, taking it from being a form in his [Ismā'īl's] noble mind to the apparent realm . . . From that time until now, affiliates of this Ka'ba-like court have been distinguished by the wearing of this blazing crown, thereby being known by the name Qizilbāsh.<sup>40</sup>

This description is a further development of the themes introduced in the accounts by Būdāq Munshī and Iskandar Bēg Munshī that I have discussed above. Now the headgear's origins remain with Ḥaydar and we are provided a radical remaking at the hands of Ismā'īl. We also get greater details of the workings of the supernatural world since 'Alī is shown as a master orchestrator, commanding Ismā'īl by example as well as word and instructing the craftsman regarding the object's proper form. Overall, then, the author provides the object and the name with even greater symbolic depth, which is tied to particular moments in time as well as the universal, timeless authority of the Imāms.

This pattern of greater encoding of meaning continues further in a class of anonymous works produced in the late seventeenth century that are generally described as myth-laden accounts of Shah Ismā'īl's career. In one such work, given the name *Ālam-ārā-yi Shāh Ismā'īl* in the published version, the author places the origins of the headgear and the name in Shaykh Ḥaydar's time but introduces a premonition regarding the future success of Shāh Ismā'īl. In Ḥaydar's dream,

40 Mirzā Bēg Junābadī, *Rawzat al-Ṣafaviyya*, ed. Ghulām Rizā Ṭabāṭabā'ī Majd (Tehran: Majma'-yi Intishārāt-i Adabī va Tārikhī, 2000): 157.

[‘Alī] said, “My child, soon a child from your loins will be born who will go forth and overturn the entirety of unbelief from the world. But you must make a twelve-gore crown for the Sufis who are your disciples.” Then he instructed him how to make the crown. When he awakened, he called the Sufis and ordered that they all make the crowns and put them on their heads. That crown was named the Tāj-i Ḥaydarī and they were given the sobriquet Qizilbāsh.<sup>41</sup>

To take matters further, another work of a similar nature by an author identifiable as Bījan repeats this explanation nearly verbatim and then continues with an elaboration not found in other works:

When this news reached [Ūzūn] Ḥasan Pādshāh, he sent someone to Sulṭān Ḥaydar to say, “send to me this crown that you have made.” Sulṭān Ḥaydar sent one of the crowns to Ḥasan Pādshāh and when he saw it, he welcomed it, took it in his hands and kissed it, and put it on his head. He then told his children to put it on their heads too, but his son Ya‘qūb refused to do it despite his father’s insistence. Enmity against Sulṭān Junayd had become so permanent [among some of them] that when Ḥasan Pādshāh left kingship and first his son Sulṭān Khalīl and then Sulṭān Ya‘qūb became kings, they exercised the ill will in their hearts and told people that woe on anyone who puts Sulṭān Ḥaydar’s crown on his head. They became enemies to the children of Shaykh Ṣafī and ordered that other disciples of Shaykh Ṣafī not put the crown on their heads.<sup>42</sup>

This description combines legitimacy deriving from Twelver Shī‘ism together with purported sanction by Ūzūn Ḥasan, the best-known king of the Āqqūyūnlū dynasty, who was also Ḥaydar’s father-in-law.

41 Anonymous, *Ālam-ārā-yi Shāh Ismā‘īl*, ed. Aṣghar Muntazār Ṣāhib (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i ‘Ilmī va Farhangī, 2006): 26. For another similar account see Anonymous, *Ālam-ārā-yi Ṣafavī*, ed. Yadallāh Shukrī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Iṭṭilā‘āt, 1984): 30.

42 Anonymous, *Jahāngushā-yi Khāqān: Tārīkh-i Shāh Ismā‘īl*, ed. Allāh Dittā Muẓtarr (Islamabad: Markaz-i Taḥqīqāt-i Fārsī-yi Irān va Pākistān, 1984): 42-43. This work used to be referred to as “Ross Anonymous” but its provenance has been established since the publication of this edition (cf. A. H. Morton, “The Date and Attribution of the Ross Anonymous: Notes on a Persian History of Shah Isma‘il I.” In *Pembroke Papers I: Persian and Islamic Studies in Honour of P. W. Avery*, ed. C. Melville [Cambridge: University of Cambridge, Centre of Middle Eastern Studies, 1990]: 179-212). Bījan’s account includes the re-invention of the hat by Shah Ismā‘īl as well.

By the time of the writing of these last mentioned works, the identification between Şafavid forces and the term Qizilbāsh was complete, leading to the representations we find in much of modern scholarly literature. However, as I have shown, the final identity was the result of quite a long process. This review also suggests that it may be better to see the late, seemingly mythological, accounts of Shāh Ismāʿīl as aspects of the development of the Şafavid historiographical tradition rather than as aberrations. The view of Shāh Ismāʿīl we see here follows from the perspective inaugurated by authors such as Iskandar Bēg Munshī and would seem to have a close connection to the overall transformation of the image of the early Şafavid period in the second century after the dynasty's inauguration.<sup>43</sup>

### Conclusion: The Significance of Words

Variance in the understanding and use of the term Qizilbāsh that I have traced elucidates the very considerable fluidity of cultural and identitarian self-projections in the two centuries that constitute the majority of the Şafavid period. The survey I have presented leads to the visibility of a historical process that can be divided into three phases. In the first phase of the process, the use of the red headgear in the beginning of Şafavid history was a way to consolidate a subset within Turkomans around the Şafavid house. Evidence from the fifteenth century indicates the headgear to have been in use as a matter of uniform prior to the wide promulgation of the term Qizilbāsh. This phase reflects the process of transition between the Āqqūyūnlū and the Şafavids, which was gradual and extended in time rather than occurring suddenly in 1501.

In the second phase, the headgear acquired greater political signification after the proclamation of the dynasty. This also led to the consolidation (if not the very generation) of the term Qizilbāsh, which is reflected in the progressively greater use of the term with the passage of time. The fact that the term is not present universally across all sources reveals aspects of on-going negotiations surrounding identity and literary projection by various authors. In particular, it is significant that some of the earliest court historians do not use the term (Hiravī, Gunābādī), and it is absent from a work finished as late as 1555 (Qazvīnī). By the last quarter of the sixteenth century, however, it is present in all chronicles.

---

43 For the most recent comprehensive academic assessment of the late sources see Barry Wood, "The Shāhnāma-yi Ismāʿīl: Art and Cultural Memory in Sixteenth Century Iran." Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2002.

In the third phase, the term went from being a surface signifier to a symbol endowed with religio-historical weight. Also in this phase, we see it become connected emphatically to the story of the dynasty's origins, which became ever more legendary and ideologically significant with the passage of time. Additionally, the term itself and the headgear also become associated closely with promulgation of Twelver Shī'ism as state religion, which was a major part of the dynasty's identity. The fact that works produced during the last phase of this history (such as Iskandar Bēg Munshī) have greatly influenced modern research in Ṣafavid history explains why it is common to see late stories about the origins of the headgear and the term Qizilbāsh attributed to the period of Ṣafavid origins without problematization.

The increasing tendency toward symbolic interpretation of the headgear and the term Qizilbāsh that I have highlighted through the delineation of the three phases can be correlated with a larger sociointellectual trend that I have attempted to substantiate in another recent essay and can mention here in brief.<sup>44</sup> My main object of analysis there is a rare work entitled *Ṭarīq al-irshād* that contains an extensive and elaborate symbolic decoding of the Ṣafavid headgear, with historical, cosmological, and sociological facets that connect it to both the Ṣafavids' history as a Ṣūfī lineage and Twelver Shī'ism.<sup>45</sup> In my estimation, it is best to date this work to the second half of the seventeenth century, when we see a general increase in the level of symbolic interpretation associated with Ṣafavid origins and the distinctive attire supposed to have been invented by leaders such as Shaykh Ḥaydar and Shāh Ismā'īl. Although singularly focused on the distinctive red headgear, this work has the remarkable feature that it never invokes the term Qizilbāsh. The omission of the term in this case has led me to suggest that the work may have been penned by an author opposed to the social group identified as the Qizilbāsh. Its emphasis on the headgear itself may then be seen as the effort to wrest the right of interpretation of a socially charged object out of the hands of those known as the Qizilbāsh to the benefit of Twelver Shī'ī scholars. While I do not have the space here to rehearse all the evidence that leads me to these conclusions, it is significant to mention the *Ṭarīq al-irshād* in order to demarcate the larger field of religious contestation within which all symbolic interpretations of the headgear, and the term Qizilbāsh, operated during the Ṣafavid period.

44 Bashir, "The World as a Hat."

45 Cf. Hāshim b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī Najafī, *Ṭarīq al-irshād*, ms. Petermann II, 665, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin: 1b-52b.

In the most general terms, the argument I have presented in this essay emphasizes the fact that literary sources that represent pasts must be understood with reference to the times in which they were produced rather than being seen as simple carriers of 'traditions' that had come together in earlier times. All deployment of language constitutes rhetoric by definition and narrative sources are always inherently inflected by political arrangements as well as ideological and literary patterns that undergo continual reworking in new circumstances. Following the impetus of this understanding, the chroniclers I have surveyed were all bound to their times, producing rather than passively conducting the dead past in the process of addressing their patrons and audiences. The presences and absences of elements in their works are equally critical, and the significance of such presences and absences becomes visible only when we put the sources in a comparative perspective. Since all understandings of pasts have exigencies of presents encoded in them, works produced in the sixteenth century vary in terms of their use of the term, indicating a partially settled story regarding the origins of the dynasty and its supporting groups. Conversely, seventeenth-century works increasingly correlate the term *Qizilbāsh* with the origins of the dynasty in seamless terms, reflecting a new atmosphere in the present in which they were produced.

The survey of materials I have presented brings into relief the counterintuitive fact that we have little in the way of clear definition or symbolic elaboration of the term *Qizilbāsh*, or the red headgear itself, from the sixteenth century, when men known as the *Qizilbāsh* were major holders of actual power in the *Šafavid* realm. Conversely, the decline in their power in the seventeenth century is concurrent with an increase in symbolic weight and the narration of ever more elaborate stories regarding matters such as the invention of the headgear, its intimate connection to the naming of the group, and the attribution of inherent power to the material object. This observation underscores the fact that sociointellectual elements that we identify as ideologies and cultural and religious identities usually acquire solidity only in perspectives that look back from presents to imagined pasts. When assigning religious meaning to social groups, then, we are best advised to look beyond the surface contentions found in texts to the complex sociohistorical settings within which all texts take their shapes. Being attentive to the use of terms within specific contexts, while also always keeping the larger picture in view, can allow us to discern movement and change in social and intellectual perspectives. The fact of continual change itself is, I believe, something that we must presuppose on the basis of expecting human life to be heterogeneous in a given setting as well as over the course of time.



## Bibliography

- Abisaab, Rula. 2004. *Converting Persia: Religion and Power in the Safavid Empire*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Anonymous. 1982. *Tārīkh-i Qizilbāshān*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddiṣ. Tehran: Bihnam.
- . 1984. *Jahāngushā-yi Khāqān: Tārīkh-i Shāh Ismāʿīl*, ed. Allāh Dittā Muẓtarr. Islamabad: Markaz-i Taḥqīqāt-i Fārsī-yi Irān va Pākistān.
- . 1984. *Ālam-ārā-yi Ṣafāvī*, ed. Yadallāh Shukrī. Tehran: Intishārāt-i Iṭṭilāʿāt.
- . 2006. *Ālam-ārā-yi Shāh Ismāʿīl*, ed. Aṣghar Muntazar Ṣāhib. Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i ʿIlmī va Farhangī.
- Anzali, Ata. 2012. *Safavid Shiʿism, the Eclipse of Sufism and the Emergence of ʿIrfan*. Ph.D. diss. Rice University.
- Arjomand, Said A. 1984. *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Aubin, Jean. 1998. L'avènement des Safavides reconsidéré. *Moyen Orient & Océan Indien* 5: 1-130.
- Babaie, Sussan. 2008. *Isfahan and its Palaces: Statecraft, Shiʿism and the Architecture of Conviviality in Early Modern Iran*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Babaie, Sussan, Kathryn Babayan, and Ina B. McCabe. 2004. *Slaves of the Shah: New Elites of Safavid Iran*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Babayan, Kathryn. 2003. *Mystics, Monarchs and Messiahs*. Cambridge: Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies.
- Babur. 1993. *Bâburnâma: Chaghatay Turkish Text with Abdul-Rahim Khankhanan's Persian Translation*, tr. Wheeler M. Thackston, 3 vols. Cambridge: Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University.
- Bashir, Shahzad. 2006. Shah Ismaʿil and the Qizilbash: Cannibalism in the Religious History of Early Safavid Iran. *History of Religions* 45, no. 3: 234-56.
- . 2012. Narrating Sight: Dreaming as Visual Training in Persianate Sufi Hagiography. In *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies*, ed. Alexander Knysch and Özgen Felek. Albany: SUNY Press.
- . 2013. The World as a Hat: Symbolism and Materiality in Safavid Iran. In *Unity in Diversity: Mysticism, Messianism and the Construction of Religious Authority in Islam*, ed. Orkhan Mir-Kasimov. Leiden: Brill: 343-365.
- Calmard, Jean, ed., 1993. *Etudes Safavides*. Paris: Institut français de recherche en Iran.
- . 2000. Safavid Persia in Indo-Persian Sources and in Timurid-Mughal Perception. In *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture: Indian and French Studies*, ed. Muzaffar Alam, Françoise 'Nalini' Delvoye and Marc Gaborieau. Delhi: Manohar.
- Dūghlāt, Mīrzā Ḥaydar. 2004. *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, ed. ʿAbbāsqulī Ghaffārfard. Tehran: Mīrās Maktūb.

- Gunābādī, Qāsimī Ḥusaynī. 2009. *Shāh Ismāʿīlnāma*, ed. Jaʿfar Shujāʿ Kayhānī. Tehran: Farhangistān-i Zabān va Adab-i Fārsī.
- Haneda, Masashi. 1987. *Le Chah et les Qizilbaş*. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz.
- Hiravī, Ṣadr al-Dīn Ibrāhīm Aminī. 2004. *Futūḥāt-i Shāhī*, ed. Muḥammad Rizā Naṣīrī. Tehran: Anjuman-i Āṣār va Mafākhar-i Farhangī.
- Ḥusaynī, Khūrshāh b. Qubād. 2000. *Tārīkh-i ilchī-yi Niẓām Shāh*, ed. Muḥammad Rizā Naṣīrī and Koichi Haneda. Tehran: Anjuman-i Āṣār va Mafākhar-i Farhangī.
- Junābadī, Mīrzā Bēg. 2000. *Rawzat al-Ṣafaviyya*, ed. Ghulām Rizā Ṭabāṭabāʾī Majd. Tehran: Majmaʿ-yi Intishārāt-i Adabī va Tārīkhī.
- Karakaya-Stump, Ayfer. 2008. "Subjects of the Sultan, Disciples of the Shah: Formation and Transformation of the Kizilbash/Alevi Communities in Ottoman Anatolia." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2008.
- Khunji-İşfahānī, Fazlallāh b. Rūzbihān. 1984. *Sulūk al-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAlī Muvaḥḥid. Tehran: Khvārazmī.
- Khunji-İsfahani, Fadlullah b. Ruzbihan. 1992. *Tārīkh-i ʿalam-ara-yi Amīni*, Persian text edited by John E. Woods with an abridged English translation by Vladimir Minorsky, revised and augmented by John E. Woods. London: Royal Asiatic Society.
- Khunji-İşfahānī, Fazlallāh b. Rūzbihān. 2003. *Tārīkh-i ʿālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*, ed. Muḥammad Akbar ʿAshīq. Tehran: Mīrās Maktūb.
- . 2006. *Mīhmānnāma-yi Bukhārā*, ed. Manuchihr Sutūda. Tehran: Intishārāt-i ʿilmī va Farhangī.
- Khwāndamīr, Amīr Maḥmūd. 1991. *Tārīkh-i Shāh Ismāʿīl va Shāh Tahmāsb-i Ṣafavī (Zayl-i tārīkh-i Ḥabīb al-siyar)*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAlī Jarrāhī. Tehran: Nashr-i Gustara.
- Khwāndamīr, Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn. 1984. *Ḥabīb al-siyar*, ed. Muḥammad Dabīr Siyāqī, 4 vols. Tehran: Kitābforūshī-yi Khayyām.
- Losensky, Paul. 1998. *Welcoming Fighani: Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal*. Costa Mesa: Mazda.
- Matthee, Rudi. 2006. *The Politics of Trade in Safavid Iran: Silk for Silver, 1600-1730*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2011. *Persia in Crisis: Safavid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Mazzaoui, Michel. 1972. *The Origins of the Ṣafawids: Šīʿism, Ṣūfism, and the Ġulat*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Mélikoff, Irène. 1992. Le problème Qizilbāsh. In *Sur les traces du Soufisme turc: Recherches sur l'islam populaire en Anatolie*. Istanbul: Éditions Isis.
- Melville, Charles, ed. 1996. *Safavid Persia*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Membre, Michele. 1999. *Mission to Lord Sophy of Persia (1539-1542)*, tr. A. H. Morton. London: Gibb Memorial Trust.
- Mitchell, Colin. 2011. *The Practice of Politics in Safavid Iran: Power, Religion and Rhetoric*. London: I. B. Tauris.

- Moin, A. Azfar. 2012. *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Morton, A. H. 1990. The Date and Attribution of the Ross Anonymous: Notes on a Persian History of Shah Isma'īl I. In *Pembroke Papers I: Persian and Islamic Studies in Honour of P. W. Avery*, ed. Charles Melville. Cambridge: University of Cambridge, Centre of Middle Eastern Studies: 179-212.
- Munshī, Iskandar Bēg. 1999. *Tārīkh-i 'ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*, ed. Muḥammad Ismā'īl Rizvānī, 3 vols. Tehran: Dunyā-yi Kitāb.
- Najafī, Hāshim b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī. n.d. *Ṭarīq al-irshād*. MS. Petermann II, 665, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin: 1b-52b.
- Newman, Andrew. 2003. *Society and Culture in the Early Modern Middle East: Studies on Iran in the Safavid Period*. Leiden: Brill.
- . 2008. *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Posch, Walter. 2013. *Osmanisch-safavidische Beziehungen 1545-1550: Der Fall Alḳās Mīrzā*. Vienna: vÖAW Publishers.
- Qazvīnī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ghifārī. 1964. *Tārīkh-i Jahānārā*, ed. Muḥtabā Mīnuvī. Tehran: Kitābforūshi-yi Ḥāfīz.
- Qazvīnī, Būdāq Munshī. 2000. *Javāhir al-akhbār*, ed. Muḥsin Bahrām-nizhād. Tehran: Mirāṣ Maktūb.
- Qazvīnī, Sayyid Yaḥyā. 2008. *Lubb al-tavārikh*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddīṣ. Tehran: Anjuman-i Āṣār va Mafākhar-i Farhangī.
- Quinn, Sholeh. 1996. The Dreams of Shaykh Safi al-Din and Safavid Historical Writing. *Iranian Studies* 29: 127-42.
- . 2000. *Historical Writing during the Reign of Shah 'Abbas*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.
- Qummī, Qāzī Aḥmad. 2005. *Khulāṣat al-tavārikh*, ed. Iḥsān Ishrāqī, 2 vols. Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh.
- Rahimi, Babak. 2011. *Theater State and the Formation of Early Modern Public Sphere in Iran*. Leiden: Brill.
- Rizvi, Kishwar. 2011. *The Safavid Dynastic Shrine: Architecture, Religion and Power in Early Modern Iran*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Rūmlū, Ḥasan Bēg. 1978. *Aḥsan al-tavārikh*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā'ī. Tehran: Intishārāt-i Bābak.
- Shāmlū, Valī Qulī. 1993. *Qīṣaṣ al-khāqānī*, ed. Sayyid Ḥasan Sādāt Nāṣirī, 2 vols. Tehran: Sāzmān-i Chāp va Intishārāt.
- Shīrāzī, 'Abdī Bēg Navīdī. 1990. *Takmilat al-akhbār*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā'ī. Tehran: Nashr-i Nay.
- Stewart, Devin. 1996. Notes on the Migration of 'Āmīlī Scholars to Safavid Iran. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 55, no. 2: 81-104.

- Tahmāsp. 2005. *Tazkira-yi Shāh Tahmāsp*, ed. Karīm Fayzī. Qum: Matbū'āt-i Dīnī.
- Thackston, William, ed. and tr. 2009. *Three Memoirs of Humayun*. Costa Mesa: Mazda.
- Vālah Iṣfahānī, Muḥammad Yūsuf. 1993. *Khuld-i barīn*, ed. Mīr Hāshim Muḥaddiṣ. Tehran: Bunyād-i Mawqūfāt-i Duktur Maḥmūd Afshār.
- Vāṣifi, Zayn al-Dīn. 1970-72. *Badāyi' al-vaqāyi'*, ed. A. N. Boldyrev, second edition, 2 vols. Tehran: Bunyād-i Farhang-i Īrān.
- Wood, Barry. 2002. *The Shāhnāma-yi Ismā'īl: Art and Cultural Memory in Sixteenth Century Iran*. Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University.