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### Research Article

## Scholarly Responses to Political and Religious Challenges: A Comparative Study of Islamic Scholars during the Invasions of Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur

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**Abstract.** This study aims to examine the responses of Islamic scholars during the invasions of Ghazan Khan in the 13th century and Amir Timur in the 15th century, focusing on how they navigated the political and religious challenges posed by these rulers. Using a comparative analytical approach, the research explores the reactions of scholars who collaborated with the Mongols, such as Qadi Ibrahim bin Ali, alongside those who opposed them, like Ibn Taymiyyah. The study also investigates responses during the Timurid invasions, focusing on scholars like Qadi Abdul Jabbar and Muhammad al-Hardi. The findings reveal that Islamic scholars displayed a range of responses, from collaboration to resistance, influenced by both political and religious factors. The research highlights the complex relationship between governance, religion, and survival during periods of conquest. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of scholars in shaping religious discourse amid political and religious upheaval.

**Keywords:** Islamic Scholars, Ghazan Khan, Amir Timur, Mongol Invasions

## INTRODUCTION

The invasions led by Ghazan Khan in the late 13th century and Amir Timur in the early 15th century were transformative events that reshaped the political, social, and intellectual landscapes of the Islamic world. Both rulers played pivotal roles in the political realignment of Central Asia and the broader Middle East, with their military conquests and subsequent political restructuring having profound consequences for the governance of the regions under their control. Moreover, these invasions influenced the religious, social, and intellectual currents of the time. Of particular significance was the impact of these rulers on the Islamic scholarly community, especially in relation to how scholars responded to the political and religious changes they introduced.

This study aims to compare the attitudes of Islamic scholars during the invasions of Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur, focusing specifically on the intellectual responses to the political, religious, and social transformations that occurred under their leadership. By examining scholarly reactions to these events, this research seeks to illuminate the complex relationship between religion and politics in Islamic society during these periods of conquest and upheaval. Additionally, it will explore the varying responses of Islamic scholars to Ghazan Khan's conversion to Islam and his religious policies, alongside Amir Timur's use of Islam as a political tool to consolidate power.

This comparison will offer insights into how Islamic scholars navigated the challenges posed by political instability, religious reform, and the necessity of social cohesion. The findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of the intellectual currents within Islam during these crucial historical moments, shedding light on the role scholars played in mediating between political and religious demands.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The scholarship on the Mongol invasions, particularly those led by Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur, has largely examined the socio-political and economic transformations that followed their reigns. Studies have explored Ghazan Khan's conversion to Islam and its impact on the Ilkhanate, particularly in governance and religious policies (Hamedani, 1994; Wassaf, 1959). His reforms, aimed at transitioning Mongol society from a nomadic to a sedentary structure, emphasized agricultural development and Islamic principles. Likewise, Timur's use of Islam as a political tool and his patronage of Islamic scholarship have been well documented, with significant attention given to his construction of a religious identity that legitimized his conquests.

However, previous scholarship has largely treated Islamic scholars as passive recipients of these reforms rather than active agents who engaged with and responded to them. While studies have examined the political consequences of Ghazan Khan and Timur's policies, the intellectual and theological discourse among

contemporary scholars remains significantly underexplored. The ways in which scholars navigated political pressure, religious reform, and their own theological convictions during these upheavals have not been systematically analyzed.

This study addresses this gap by investigating the intellectual and religious responses of Islamic scholars to the Mongol and Timurid invasions. It examines how different scholars justified, resisted, or adapted to the rulers' policies, particularly in relation to Islamic law, theology, and political authority. By foregrounding the role of Islamic scholars in shaping religious discourse under Mongol rule, this study offers a new perspective on the intersection of religion, politics, and scholarship in periods of conquest and transformation.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study will use a comparative analytical approach to examine the responses of Islamic scholars during the invasions of Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur. The primary research method involves analyzing both primary and secondary sources.

Key primary sources include *Jami al-Tawarikh* and *The Journey of Ibn Battuta*, which offer insights into the intellectual climate and reactions of scholars to the rulers' policies. These texts will be analyzed to identify how scholars viewed the political and religious changes initiated by Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur.

In addition, Al-Dhahabi's *Al-Tarikh al-Islami* will be used as an important secondary source. This biographical dictionary provides profiles of scholars who were directly impacted by the invasions. By examining these profiles, the study will assess how scholars responded to political and religious pressures.

The study will also incorporate scholarly articles and books that explore the broader social, political, and religious contexts of the invasions. These secondary sources will undergo qualitative content analysis to identify key themes regarding the scholars' views on the rulers' religious and political reforms.

By comparing the responses of scholars to the religious policies of Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur, this study aims to clarify the relationship between religion, politics, and scholarship during these historical periods.

## 2. Overview of the Invasions

The invasions of Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur (Tamerlane) were significant events in the history of the Islamic world, each shaping the political and cultural landscape of the Middle East, Central Asia, and Iran in profound ways. Ghazan Khan, as a ruler of the Ilkhanate, embraced Islam and sought to integrate with his Muslim subjects, aiming for religious and political unity through reforms and the reconstruction of society. In contrast, Amir Timur, while presenting himself as a defender of Islam, waged ruthless military campaigns across vast regions, combining religious rhetoric with brutal conquests. Both leaders left lasting impacts on the regions they ruled, altering the socio-economic and religious dynamics in their wake.

### 2.1 The Invasion of Ghazan Khan

Ghazan Khan (1271 – 1304) was born in Abaskun, within the Ilkhanate, as the son of Arghun Khan and the grandson of Abaqa Khan, tracing his lineage directly to Genghis Khan. From a young age, he was appointed Viceroy of Khorasan (1284–1295).

In 1295, after overthrowing Baydu Khan, Ghazan ascended to the throne and declared Islam as the state religion, marking a pivotal moment that established Islam as the dominant faith among the Mongols in West Asia. His official coronation on 19 October 1295 inaugurated a reign marked by religious transformation, economic reforms, and efforts to expand the Ilkhanate's influence (Rashid al-Din, 1994).

The ascension of Ghazan Khan to the throne in 1295 did more than change leadership; it heralded a profound shift in both Mongol governance and the broader Islamic world. As a direct descendant of Genghis Khan and successor to his cousin Baydu, Ghazan became the ruler of an empire that stretched across present-day Iran, Iraq, and Central Asia. His reign is most notable for transforming the Ilkhanate's religious identity, primarily through his personal conversion to Islam, which aligned the Mongol rulers more closely with their predominantly Muslim subjects (Hamedani, 1994).

Prior to Ghazan's conversion, the Mongols of the Ilkhanate largely adhered to Shamanism or Buddhism, maintaining a cultural and religious divide from their Muslim subjects. This separation often bred distrust and tension within the empire. However, influenced by prominent religious figures like Sheikh Sadruddin Ibrahim al-Hamavi, Ghazan embraced Islam, a decision with far-reaching political, social, and cultural ramifications. His conversion not only legitimized his rule in the eyes of his Muslim subjects but also encouraged the Mongol elite and their followers to adopt Islam, thus transforming the Ilkhanate into a predominantly Muslim state (Rashid al-Din, 1994).

Ghazan's embrace of Islam was not merely symbolic; it was a strategic move to bridge the divide between the Mongol rulers and their Persian subjects. His policy of religious tolerance played a crucial role in consolidating Mongol authority, reducing internal tensions, and fostering unity. Alongside religious reforms, Ghazan implemented sweeping economic measures to stabilize the Ilkhanate. These included land redistribution, agricultural support, and tax reforms, which revitalized regions devastated by years of conflict and helped restore economic stability across Iran and Iraq (Hamedani, 1994; Wassaf, 1959).

Ghazan's military campaigns complemented his religious and economic policies, further solidifying his reign. Focused on securing territorial stability, his efforts in Iraq and Iran demonstrated both strategic planning and a commitment to consolidating control over critical regions. These campaigns, coupled with his reforms, marked a turning point for the Ilkhanate, transforming it from a foreign ruling power to an integrated and culturally aligned Islamic state, laying the groundwork for future developments in the region (Hamedani, 1994; Wassaf, 1959).

## **2.2 The Invasion of Amir Timur**

Amir Timur, also known as Tamerlane, emerged as one of the most influential and formidable leaders of the 14th century, whose military conquests significantly reshaped the political landscape of Central Asia, the Middle East, and parts of South Asia. Born in the 1320s near Kesh (modern-day Shahrīsabz, Uzbekistan), Timur's rise to power was marked by his decisive military campaigns against several regional powers, including the Golden Horde, the Delhi Sultanate, the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt, the Safavids, and the Ottoman Empire (Biran, 2005). His ability to forge

strategic alliances, employ ruthless military tactics, and utilize psychological warfare enabled him to carve out one of the largest empires of the time, with territories extending from the steppes of Central Asia to Anatolia and India (Jackson, 2006).

Building on this foundation, one of Timur's most notable achievements was the creation of a vast empire that spanned regions long contested by various powers. In Central Asia, his campaigns were particularly impactful as he overthrew the Khwarezmian Empire and solidified control over the region, which had previously been a major center of power (Rachewiltz, 1993). Timur's expansion into the Middle East further transformed the region's political dynamics, especially with his conquest of Persia, which destabilized established powers and reshaped the political and social order. These conquests not only consolidated his territorial dominance but also left an enduring mark on the histories of the regions he controlled (Shahbazi, 1991).

Despite the widespread devastation caused by his campaigns, Timur sought to frame his conquests as a defense of Islam, portraying himself as a champion of the faith. His patronage of Islamic scholars, support for the construction of religious institutions, and encouragement of Islamic teachings were central to his strategy of legitimizing his rule (Deny, 2000). This religious narrative was especially evident in his campaigns against non-Muslim powers, such as the Christian Ottoman Empire, where Timur justified his actions as efforts to restore Islamic authority over contested lands (Atabaki, 1993). His blending of religious devotion with military ambition reinforced his image as both a conqueror and a defender of Islam.

Timur's legacy extended beyond his military achievements to profound cultural and intellectual impacts. His campaigns facilitated the movement of scholars, artists, and craftsmen across his empire, fostering a cultural renaissance in cities like Samarkand, which became a renowned center of Islamic learning and art during his reign (Biran, 2005). These cultural exchanges not only enriched his empire but also helped to preserve and disseminate Islamic knowledge, further solidifying his image as a patron of the arts and a promoter of intellectual growth.

Timur's reign embodied a complex interplay of military ambition, religious devotion, and cultural patronage. While his conquests were marked by brutal violence and destruction, his role as a defender of Islam and his contributions to the intellectual and cultural landscape of the Islamic world ensured his enduring influence. This duality—Timur as both a ruthless invader and a protector of Islamic civilization—continues to shape his legacy in the broader context of Islamic history (Jackson, 2006).

The invasions led by Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur, though both significant in the context of Islamic history, differed fundamentally in their approaches and impacts. Ghazan Khan's reign marked a transformative shift in the Ilkhanate as he embraced Islam, fostering unity with his Muslim subjects, and focused on stabilizing his empire through religious tolerance and economic reforms aimed at rebuilding war-torn regions (Hamedani, 1994). In contrast, Timur's conquests were driven by military ambition, seeking to expand his empire across Central Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia, while positioning himself as a defender of Islam, particularly through patronage of Islamic scholars and the establishment of religious institutions (Biran, 2005). While both rulers utilized Islam to legitimize their power, Ghazan's reign was

marked by consolidation and cultural integration, whereas Timur's was characterized by ruthless expansionism and the restoration of Islamic authority over non-Muslim states.

### **3. Attitudes of Islamic Scholars During the Mongol Invasion of Ghazan Khan**

The Mongol invasion of the 13th century, particularly during the time of Ghazan Khan, was a turbulent event that caused political, social, and religious upheaval in the Islamic world. Scholars at the time exhibited a range of responses to the invasion. Some chose to collaborate with the Mongols to retain their positions, while others resisted the unjust rule. These attitudes reflect the challenges faced in preserving Islamic principles amidst conflict and political change.

#### **3.1 The Attitude of Ibn Taymiyyah**

Ibn Taymiyyah held a firm and uncompromising stance against Ghazan Khan and the Mongols, asserting that despite their conversion to Islam, they could not be considered true Muslims. He believed that their governance by the Yassa code, rather than by Islamic Sharia, was a direct contradiction to the principles of Islam. Ghazan Khan's claim to the title "Pādishāh al-Islām" (King of Islam) was rejected by Ibn Taymiyyah, who denounced him as an infidel. Ibn Taymiyyah issued fatwas declaring the Ilkhanate and its supporters as apostates (murtadd), accusing them of living in a state of jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance) due to their preference for man-made laws over divine Islamic law (Al-Dhahabi, 1985, 22: 357)

Ibn Taymiyyah's rejection of the Mongols and their allies extended beyond just the Ilkhanate rulers to include any Muslims who supported them. He compared them to the Khawarij, a group of early Islamic rebels who opposed the rightful caliphate of Ali, emphasizing that those who allied with the Mongols were equally guilty of apostasy. In his view, Muslims who supported the Mongol armies, regardless of their outward piety, were to be considered as renegades from the faith. This theological position was a departure from traditional Islamic thought and contributed to his contentious reputation (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1998, 28: 530)

In practical terms, Ibn Taymiyyah called for a jihad against the Mongols, viewing it as both a religious obligation and a matter of defending the purity of Islam. He urged Muslims to resist the Mongol invaders with all their might, and he personally participated in military campaigns, such as the Battle of Marj al-Saffar, where he led his disciples in combat. Ibn Taymiyyah's involvement in these battles and his calls for resistance greatly enhanced his stature among the masses, despite opposition from the established clerical authorities (Ibn Kathir, 1995, 1: 7)

#### **3.2 The Attitude of Qadi Ibrahim bin Ali bin Kushnam al-Kurdi**

Ibrahim bin Ali bin Khushnam al-Kurdi al-Halabi al-Hanafi, also known as Shams al-Din, was born in Rajab 629 AH (1232 CE). He studied under prominent scholars such as Abu al-Baqa' Ya'ish al-Nahwi, Ibn Rawaha, Maki bin 'Allan, Yusuf bin Khalil, and 'Imad bin al-Nahas, alongside Ibn al-'Adim. His early career saw him appointed as the judge of Homs, but he was later removed and instead took on the role of imam of the city's grand mosque and supervisor of the Khalidiyah shrine. (Ibn Hajar, 1971, 1: 318)

His fate took a dramatic turn with the Mongol invasion of Homs in 1299 CE. Demonstrating both political acumen and pragmatism, he negotiated with Ghazan Khan, the Mongol ruler, securing his reinstatement as Qadi of Homs. However, his tenure was marred by allegations of oppressive rule and close collaboration with the Mongols, which drew widespread criticism. His appointment was particularly controversial given his family's history—his father, Shaykh al-Islam Ali bin Ibrahim, had been killed by the Mongols during their assault on Aleppo in 1259 CE (Al-Dhahabi, n.d. 5: 66)

Following his time in Homs, Ibrahim continued to serve under Mongol authority, later assuming the position of Qadi of Khilat, a post he held for six years until his death in 705 AH (1305 CE). His tenure remained a subject of debate among historians. Ibn Hajar, in *Lisan al-Mizan*, mentions his involvement with the Mongols and the criticisms against him, while Al-Dhahabi provides a more scathing assessment, stating, "He was unfit to teach or impart knowledge to others," reflecting concerns over his failure to uphold Islamic moral principles (Al-Dhahabi, n.d. 5: 66). His life and career thus illustrate the complex and often precarious role of Islamic scholars and jurists under Mongol rule.

### **3.3 The Attitude of Fakhruddin Abu al-Rabi' Sulayman bin Muhammad**

Fakhr al-Din Suleiman bin Muhammad, known as al-Sadr, was a distinguished and noble figure in Damascus during the 7th century AH (13th century CE). He was not known for narrating hadiths, but he held the prestigious position of Head of the Grand Diwan, where he oversaw administrative and financial matters of the state. His role placed him among the most respected leaders of the city, and he became known for his generosity, dignity, and benevolence. His reputation for kindness and integrity made him one of Damascus's most notable figures. He passed away in 699 AH (1299 CE) (al-Safadi, 1993, 15: 259; Ibn Taghribirdi, 1992, 6: 53-54; Ibn al-'Imad, 1992, 7: 783).

However, during the Mongol invasion of Damascus, Fakhr al-Din Suleiman's legacy became more complicated. Appointed as the Sudar, or administrator, of Damascus, he initially chose to cooperate with the Mongol forces to maintain his position of power. Despite enduring imprisonment and hardship under their rule, he eventually managed to escape. However, his decision to collaborate with the Mongols greatly tarnished his reputation. Some historians have criticized him for failing to uphold ethical principles and for not resisting the Mongol invaders, viewing his actions as a betrayal of his people and his noble standing (Al-Barzali, 1972: 459-458).

### **3.4 The Attitude of Shaykh al-Shuyukh Nizam al-Din Mahmoud bin Ali al-Shibani**

Shaykh al-Shuyukh Nizam al-Din Mahmoud bin Ali al-Shibani (exact date of death unknown) cooperated with the Mongols during their conquest of the Sham region in 1299 CE. After the Mongols captured Damascus, he showed his ambition and greed, especially by taxing the people of Damascus 600,000 dirhams, which caused great dissatisfaction among the population. His actions were condemned by Imam al-Dhahabi, who referred to him as a "Shaykh Khabeeth Tamaa" (a corrupt and greedy Muslim), and by Maqrizi, who stated that he lacked the qualities of a religious leader worthy of praise (Al-Dhahabi, 1991; Maqrizi, 1997).

### **3.5 The Attitude of Shaykh Saleh al-Ahmadi al-Rifa'i**

When the Mongol forces seized Damascus in 1299 CE, Shaykh Saleh al-Ahmadi al-Rifa'i, the leader of the Ahmadi-Rifa'i family, was one of those who received favorable treatment from the Mongols and was not harmed. When Qutlushah, the Mongol representative, arrived in Damascus, Shaykh Saleh welcomed him and received his protection. Later, in 1305 CE, Shaykh Saleh engaged in a discussion with Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah to correct misconceptions regarding the Mongols' ideology. During the debate, Shaykh Saleh admitted that his views were aligned with the Mongols, stating: "Our situation only aligns with the Tatars, but not with the Shari'ah." This statement angered the rulers and those present at the gathering, who criticized his cooperation with the Mongols (Al-Dhahabi, 1997, 52: 83).

### **3.6 The Attitude of Asil al-Din al-Tusi**

Asil al-Din al-Tusi (d. 699 AH/1300 CE) joined the Mongols after their conquest of Damascus. He played a role in collecting taxes from the people of Damascus, including substantial sums from the properties of mosques and religious institutions. His attitude was criticized by Imam al-Dhahabi, who claimed that his actions were inappropriate and driven by personal gain from collaborating with the Mongols (Al-Dhahabi, 1997, 52: 83; Dawadari, 2001, 9: 33).

### **3.7 The Attitude of Qawam al-Din Hassan bin Muhammad bin al-Tarrah**

Qawam al-Din Hassan bin Muhammad bin al-Tarrah supported the Mongol forces during their invasion in 1299 CE. He held a high position in the Mongol government and wielded significant influence in Mongol society. He was granted the authority to collect taxes from the people of Damascus. His actions were criticized for his collaboration with the Mongols in their conquest of Islamic lands and his abandonment of Islamic principles (Al-Dhahabi, 1997, 52: 83; Dawadari, 2001, 9: 33).

The attitudes of Islamic scholars during the Mongol invasion of Ghazan Khan reveal a spectrum of responses to the political, social, and religious upheaval caused by the Mongol forces. While some scholars, like Ibn Taymiyyah, rejected the Mongols' rule entirely, viewing their governance as a violation of Islamic principles, others chose to collaborate with them to maintain their positions and protect their communities. Ibn Taymiyyah's firm stance against the Mongols, whom he accused of apostasy for not adhering to Islamic law, contrasted with the more pragmatic or self-serving approaches of figures like Qadi Ibrahim bin Ali al-Kurdi and Fakhruddin Abu al-Rabi', who worked with the Mongols to retain their authority. Ultimately, these varied responses highlight the challenges faced by Islamic scholars in balancing religious integrity with the political realities of the time, offering a nuanced view of the tension between faith and power during the Mongol invasions.

## **4. Attitudes of Islamic Scholars During the Mongol Invasion of Amir Timur**

During the Mongol invasions under Amir Timur in the early 15th century, Islamic scholars found themselves at the crossroads of loyalty, survival, and religious duty. As Timur's forces ravaged cities such as Damascus, the scholars' responses to the invading Mongol forces were diverse, ranging from collaboration to resistance. The actions and attitudes of these scholars not only influenced their personal fates but also highlighted the complex ethical dilemmas faced by intellectual and religious leaders during periods of political and military upheaval.

#### **4.1 The Attitude of Ibn Khaldun**

Ibn Khaldun presents a complex stance on Timur (Tamerlane) and the Mongols in his writings. He argues that 'aṣabiyya (group solidarity) is a crucial factor in the strength of an empire, and that Timur and the Mongols achieved success through their strong 'aṣabiyya in the early stages of their expansion. Ibn Khaldun acknowledges the military prowess and the strong unification of the Mongols under the leadership of Genghis Khan and Timur, seeing them as exemplars of disciplined and organized power (Van den Bent, 2016). However, he also observes that their success was temporary, as their 'aṣabiyya began to decline after the empire expanded too far, to the point where unity could no longer be maintained.

Ibn Khaldun further describes Timur's distinctive style of governance, emphasizing his reliance on oppression and the use of violence to control vast territories. This approach made Timur a capable ruler, skilled in administration, but Ibn Khaldun also saw the limitations of Timur's empire in the long run due to the rapid expansion and the internal risks of fragmentation (Ibn Khaldun, 2010).

Although Ibn Khaldun recognizes the Mongols' ability to build a powerful empire, he believes that the consequences of their territorial expansion were unsustainable. The weakening of 'aṣabiyya led to instability within the state, which reflects his concept of the cyclical life of empires—rising, flourishing, and eventually declining (Ibn Khaldun, 2010).

#### **4.2 The Attitude of Qadi Ibrahim bin Ali bin Kushnam al-Kurdi**

When the Mongol army attacked Damascus in 803 AH (1401 CE), Qadi Ibrahim bin Ali bin Kushnam al-Kurdi, who served as the Qadi of Damascus, became involved in actions perceived as inappropriate. He was accused of exploiting the population and delivering funds to the Mongol army. However, Ibn Qadi Shuhba's accounts alleviated some of these accusations, stating that Qadi Ibrahim only oversaw the collection of money from the public without directly enforcing it on property owners. Despite criticisms of his judiciary administration, Qadi Ibrahim was praised by some for maintaining his position during such turbulent times. The accusations against him remain contentious. Furthermore, when the Mongols captured him and took him to Baghdad, he managed to escape and return to Damascus. If he had actively collaborated with the Mongols in collecting taxes and exploiting the populace, it would be difficult to explain why he was arrested and later fled. He may have voluntarily accompanied the Mongols to avoid the backlash from the discontented public who opposed collaborators after the Mongols retreated. (Ibn Hajar, 1971, 1: 318; al-Sakhawi, 1966, 7: 107; al-Nu'aymi, 1990, 2: 36–37; Ibn Qadi Shuhba, 1997, 4: 173).

#### **4.3 The Attitude of Muhammad bin Hasan bin Abi Bakr al-Yamani al-Hardi**

Muhammad bin Hasan bin Abi Bakr al-Yamani al-Hardi, a Shafi'i scholar, aligned himself with the Mongols and acquired an honorable position during Timur's rule over Damascus. During that period, he wielded influence and enjoyed significant status. However, after Timur's departure, the people of Damascus punished him severely, ultimately leading to his death. (al-Sakhawi, 1966, 7: 221).

#### **4.4 The Attitude of Qadi Mahmud bin Ahmad bin Ismail al-Hanafi**

Qadi Mahmud bin Ahmad bin Ismail al-Hanafi, also known as "Ibn al-Kashk," served the Mongols during Timur's rule over Damascus. He participated in despised

acts of violence and governance, earning him the title of "Qadi of the Kingdom" and the opportunity to deliver sermons in the grand mosque. These actions made him deeply unpopular among the people. Later, Timur discovered his betrayal, confiscated his wealth, and punished him, including detaining him. Eventually, he escaped to Tibirz and later moved to Cairo, where he lived until his death in 808 AH (1405 CE). (Ibn Hajar, 1986, 5: 348–349; al-Sakhawi, 1966, 10: 128).

#### **4.5 The Attitude of Qadi Abdul Jabbar al-Mu'tazili**

Qadi Abdul Jabbar bin al-Nu'man al-Mu'tazili accompanied Timur during his invasions of Iraq and the Levant, serving as an interpreter between Timur and the scholars he encountered. Additionally, he was responsible for drafting Timur's letters to the Mamluks and acted as Timur's imam in prayers. (Ibn al-Shihna, 1991, p. 299, 301; Ibn Arabshah, 1882, 265; al-Sirafi, 1987, 2: 89).

Abdul Jabbar's role as an attendant to Timur raises questions about whether ideological factors played a role in managing the Mongol-Mamluk conflict or if his actions were merely coincidental. Some sources indicate his dissatisfaction with Timur's actions, stating that he often assisted Muslims when dealing with Timur, expressed annoyance at accompanying him, but had no choice but to comply. (Ibn Taghribirdi, 1992, 7: 144; al-Sakhawi, 1966, 4: 35).

However, a contradictory account by Ibn Arabshah complicates the defense of Qadi Abdul Jabbar. Ibn Arabshah stated: "Abdul Jabbar was Timur's scholar and imam, and one of those who shed the blood of Muslims before him." (Ibn Arabshah, 1882, 265). This statement implies that Abdul Jabbar neither objected to nor opposed Timur's atrocities in the Levant, casting doubt on his role during this period.

During the Mongol invasion under Timur in the early 15th century, Islamic scholars faced significant ethical dilemmas. Ibn Khaldun recognized the strength of Timur's military and unity but argued that the Mongol success was temporary due to the eventual decline of 'aṣabiyya. Other scholars like Qadi Ibrahim bin Ali al-Kurdi and Muhammad bin Hasan al-Yamani initially collaborated with the Mongols for survival, but their actions led to mixed reputations. Qadi Mahmud bin Ahmad al-Hanafī and Qadi Abdul Jabbar al-Mu'tazili were also involved with the Mongol regime, with Abdul Jabbar's role in supporting Timur's actions particularly controversial. These diverse responses reflect the complex challenges scholars faced during political and military upheavals.

### **5. Comparative Analysis of the Attitudes of Islamic Scholars During the Mongol Invasions of Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur**

The Mongol invasions led by Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur elicited varied responses from Islamic scholars, shaped by religious beliefs, political considerations, and the military circumstances of their respective times. While some scholars opposed Mongol rule, others chose to cooperate with the invaders in order to maintain their social positions or personal interests. A comparative analysis of the attitudes of these scholars during the two Mongol invasions provides insight into their reactions to the invasions in both religious and political terms.

During the invasion led by Ghazan Khan (1300-1303), the famous Islamic scholar Ibn Taymiyyah was a vocal critic of Mongol rule, despite Ghazan Khan's

conversion to Islam. Ibn Taymiyyah argued that the Mongols, even after accepting Islam, continued to govern according to their traditional Mongol laws, which were not in line with Islamic Shari'ah. He viewed this as a violation of Islamic principles and opposed collaboration with Mongol rulers, seeing those who supported them as misguided and in need of resistance (Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmu' al-Fatawa*, Vol. 28, p. 530). He even issued fatwas declaring the Mongols and their supporters as apostates (murtadd), drawing on his theological position that rejected secular law as incompatible with Islam (Al-Dhahabi, 1985, 22: 357).

In contrast, some scholars chose to cooperate with Ghazan Khan, aiming to preserve their positions within society. One such figure was Qadi Ibrahim bin Ali bin Kushnam al-Kurdi, who was appointed as the qadi of Homs. He faced criticism from certain groups for collaborating with the Mongol invaders to maintain his position. This cooperation reflected a pragmatic approach in balancing religious legitimacy with political survival amidst the upheaval caused by the Mongol invasions (Al-Dhahabi, n.d., 5: 66).

Ibn Khaldun, a prominent scholar who lived during the expansion of Timur's empire, perceived the Mongol conquests as significant both socially and militarily. While acknowledging the initial effectiveness of Mongol unity, he believed that the Mongol empire was destined to decline. Ibn Khaldun argued that the empire's success was temporary due to its lack of internal cohesion, which would eventually lead to its collapse (Ibn Khaldun, 2010). This perspective highlights the temporary nature of the Mongol threat and the eventual downfall of their rule, despite their military prowess.

During the era of Amir Timur, many Islamic scholars chose to align themselves with Timur's rule. Some scholars, such as Qadi Mahmud bin Ahmad bin Ismail al-Hanafi and Qadi Abduljabbar al-Mu'tazili, took on significant administrative roles under Timur, despite criticisms for cooperating with an invading force (Ibn Hajar, 1986, 5: 348-349). Their collaboration reflected a pragmatic adaptation to the changing political landscape, as they sought to maintain their status in a new regime that had significant power over the region.

The attitudes of Islamic scholars during the Mongol invasions reveal a complex interplay between loyalty to Islam and the practical need to adapt to shifting political and social realities. While Ibn Taymiyyah remained steadfast in opposing the Mongol rulers on religious grounds, the cooperation of some scholars with the invaders reflected a compromise between religious ideals and the realities of political survival (Ibn Arabshah, 1882: 265).

**Table 1:** presenting the attitudes of Islamic scholars during the Mongol invasions under Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur:

Aspect	Ghazan Khan's Rule	Amir Timur's Rule
<b>General Attitude of Scholars</b>	Scholars were divided between opposition and cooperation, with some accepting Mongol rule for pragmatic reasons.	Scholars were often forced to cooperate with Timur, some out of necessity to preserve their positions.

<b>Response to Religious &amp; Political Changes</b>	Ibn Taymiyyah rejected Mongol governance due to its incompatibility with Shari'ah, while others cooperated to survive	Scholars aligned with Timur's regime, despite his violent conquests and interference in religious affairs
<b>Public Reaction</b>	Scholars who opposed Ghazan Khan were critical of his Mongol rule despite his conversion to Islam	Scholars cooperating with Timur faced public criticism, including figures like Muhammad ibn Hassan al-Yamani
<b>Cultural and Political Influences</b>	Ghazan Khan's integration of Islamic law with Mongol governance created some balance between scholars and rulers.	Timur's disregard for Islamic governance created tension between scholars and the political regime.
<b>Religious Beliefs in Decision-making</b>	Scholars like Ibn Taymiyyah resisted Mongol rule to preserve Islamic principles, condemning secular authority.	Scholars like Qadi Abduljabbar were caught between religious compromise and the harsh realities of Timur's rule.
<b>Outcome of Cooperation</b>	Scholars who cooperated with Ghazan Khan retained their influence within the political system.	Cooperation with Timur often led to public backlash, loss of credibility, and punishment after his death.

This comparative analysis highlights the diversity of responses from Islamic scholars to the Mongol invasions. Some upheld their religious principles by rejecting Mongol rule, while others engaged in collaboration to secure their positions and stability in a changing political environment. The varied reactions of these scholars demonstrate the challenges faced by religious figures in navigating the intersection of faith, politics, and survival during a time of profound upheaval.

## CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of Islamic scholars' responses during the invasions of Ghazan Khan and Amir Timur sheds light on the intricate relationship between political survival and religious integrity in times of foreign domination. In the early 14th century, during the Mongol invasion led by Ghazan Khan, scholars faced a complex set of choices. Some, like Qadi Ibrahim bin Ali and Sheikh Salah al-Rifa'i, chose to cooperate with the Mongols, seeking to preserve their societal positions amidst the turmoil. Their decision to collaborate with the Mongols, as discussed in works like (Rashid al-Din, 1999), was motivated by pragmatic considerations of political survival, despite the moral compromise that it entailed. These scholars sought to secure their influence within the Mongol-dominated political system, even

though their actions invited criticism from peers and subsequent generations of scholars.

In contrast, scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah took a strong stance against the Mongols' rule, even after Ghazan Khan's conversion to Islam. As highlighted in (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1998), Ibn Taymiyyah viewed the continued reliance on Mongol law as incompatible with Islamic principles, refusing to accept the Mongol rulers' authority despite their conversion. His opposition to the Mongol regime illustrates a deep tension within the Islamic scholarly community during this period. His refusal to align with the Mongols underscores the delicate balance between maintaining religious authority and negotiating with the harsh realities of foreign governance, as noted in (Jackson, 2006).

This theme of navigating loyalty to Islam and political necessity extends into the era of Amir Timur in the 15th century, where scholars' reactions were similarly multifaceted but with even more pronounced challenges. Scholars such as Qadi Ibrahim and Qadi Abdul Jabbar were accused of cooperating with Timur, much like their predecessors during Ghazan Khan's invasion. Their decisions, supported by (Biran, 2005), reflect the continuation of survival tactics, influenced by the geopolitical dynamics of Timur's expansive empire. However, this collaboration was not without consequence, as these scholars faced severe scrutiny from both their contemporaries and later generations.

Meanwhile, scholars like Muhammad al-Hardi and Qadi Mahmud, who resisted Timur's invasion, paid a high price for their opposition, as documented in (Deny, 2000). Their punishment illustrates the risks involved in resisting a ruler of Timur's power, and their fate highlights the dire consequences faced by those who opposed such a formidable empire. This division within the scholarly community further demonstrates the ethical and political dilemmas faced by intellectuals during these times.

The analysis of Ibn Khaldun, a prominent figure during the Timurid period, also provides essential context for understanding the broader sociopolitical dynamics of the time. Ibn Khaldun, in his (*Muqaddimah*, 2010), acknowledged the initial strength of the Mongol and Timurid empires but argued that such dynasties were inherently unstable, doomed to decline due to a lack of internal cohesion. This theory helps frame the scholars' decisions during the invasions within a larger historical context. Ibn Khaldun's focus on social cohesion and the internal stability of empires further emphasizes that the power of Ghazan Khan and Timur was ultimately transient, shaped by military conquest but lacking the institutional foundation necessary for long-term stability.

In conclusion, the range of responses from Islamic scholars during the Mongol and Timurid invasions reveals a complex interplay between faith, politics, and survival. Scholars navigated difficult decisions, balancing religious loyalty with the political realities of foreign rule. The cooperation, reluctant compliance, and resistance exhibited by these scholars—exemplified by figures like Ibn Taymiyyah, Qadi Ibrahim, and Muhammad al-Hardi—demonstrate the resilience and adaptability of Islamic thought in the face of conquest. Their responses offer valuable insights into the challenges of maintaining both religious and intellectual integrity

during times of political upheaval, as well as the ongoing tensions between governance and religious authority in Islamic history.

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