

*Full Length Research Paper*

# A historical reflection of the University of Rabe Rashidi, Iran

N. Behboodi<sup>1\*</sup>, A. Kiani<sup>2</sup>, A. Heydari<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Archaeology, University of Zabol, Zabol, Iran.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Geography and Urban Planning, University of Zabol, Zabol, Iran.

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Rabe Rashidi has a large collection of academics and residents in the North West of Iran which return to Mughul patriarch periods. It was built in AH 8 century by Rashid al-Din Fadlallah in the government center of Tabriz. Based on proofs, Rashidabad city consist of two separate parts: Rabe Rashidi as one part and Rashidi city as the other part. Rube Rashidi as a castle was located in the central part of the city and it has some functions such as educational, religious and therapeutic. In order to achieve the main purpose of this paper, a reflection was made on the historical University of Rashidi city in ancient Tabriz region. Therefore, in the first stage of this paper, the physical system of Rashidi city was studied. Based on the data achieved from endowment design, a schematic assumption of Rashidi city was made. The methods applied on this research are content analysis and option idea through trial and multiple hypotheses. The analysis of the water supply system in its kind which uniquely helped to form basic fields of the city is schematic. In the third stage of this paper, we drew a city plan adaption with the situation of Rashidi castle lands. Results showed that Rashidi city is formed from different sectors and important city elements like: markets, mercers, bathrooms, Mosques, and the paper and paint factory located on it. However, all of these sets and their gardens were enclosed by a large barrier (Appendix 1).

**Key words:** Physical space, Mughul Patriarch, Rube Rashidi, market, mosque.

## INTRODUCTION

Based on archeological excavations and historical documents in Tabriz in North-West of Iran, Rabe Rashidi is said to be dated back to more than 700 years ago when Khajeh Rasid-idin Fadlollah Hamedani, the minister of Ghazan Khan, the seventh ruler of the Ilkhanid dynasty (Ilkhanate), established a big academic center in this area which he named Rabe Rashidi. Khajeh Rashid was buried in this place after his death several years later and a tomb was built over his grave. This educational and scientific complex was equipped with a big paper factory, a massive library, an educational treatment center (Dar-ol-Shafa), Dar-ol Quran (Quranic Center), a big caravansary, student's quarter, residential facilities for teachers and other facilities during the Ilkhanid era. After more than seven centuries, archaeologists were

determined to uncover more secrets about this historic site which was located 6 m below the current level of Tabriz (Bausani, 1968: 286).

Rabe Rashidi is one of the many endowed organizations and culture, science and civilization centers in Ilkhanian age, which was built by Rashid al Din Fadlallah clever, minister of Ilkhanian government in Tabriz. In AH 8 century and after his death as king of this government (Abo Saeed Bah door), he is equal with sand. But Rashid al-din got up an endowment paper. The endowment paper contains the building details, organization, educational formations etc., and parts of this building were bright in it. Educational and management organizations, till now acted so many suitable researches, but still we do not have a lot of information from physical framework and urbanism visuals. Therefore, complete destruction of Rashid Abad did not find any sings from all excellent installations (Behboodi, 1998: 100). According to the deed of endowment, the barrier (raqabat) of the complex (biqa) of

\*Corresponding author. E-mail: Behboodi50@gmail.com  
+989122463826.



Figure 1. A landscape of Rashidi complex.

the religious foundation (*abwab al-birr*) comprised two areas: the one in front had ramparts (*baru*) and was built as a gateway (*dargah*) accompanied by minarets attached on its sides; the one in back had another entryway (*darvaze*) and also had *baru*. The front and back ramparts were attached to unite the two areas, and Rashid al-Din designated the whole as the *Rabe Rashidi* (Blaer, 1984: 67-90).

The masonry towers and circular fortification wall that remained there till today may well mark the site of the original settlement if not the original ramparts. When approaching the *Rabe Rashidi* from below, one must pass through the bazaar, site of the poor house (*dar al-masakin*), to a gate called the *Bab al-Abwab* (Gate of Gates) which in earlier times had given access to the garden of *Rashidabad*, but now led to a large entrance court. The words used for the latter are *dihliz* and *mamarr*, both of which convey the idea of passageway or corridor. A sixth/twelfth century Sunni polemical work, for example, described Shiism as the corridor (*dihliz*) leading to heresy.<sup>1</sup> However, while the concept is obvious, both words have several levels of architectural realization. *Dihliz* often means vestibule, as in the entrance to the Timurid shrine at *Gazur Gah* or in the entrance to the specific buildings in the *Rabe Rashidi*. Later in the deed of endowment, the word *mamarr* is used to refer to conduits and places where *qanats* flow. There is no doubt, however, that here these terms mean a court, since it was spacious enough to require eight lights and had on one side a door opening on to the lane that led to the *Salihyya* Quarters, the area where workers and their families lived. Other texts can be cited which use the word *mamarr* for court: the *Sarih almulk* is a register of

real property belonging to the shrine of *Sheykh Safi al Din* in *Ardabil*, also records a *mamarr* leading to a high *suffa*; Morton reconstructed this as a courtyard in front of arcades, an interpretation which would be confirmed by the use of the word *mamarr* in the *Rabe Rashidi* to refer to an entrance courtyard (Asasnameh, 2002: 12).

According to the deed of endowment, the entry of the court at the *Rabe Rashidi* led to a two-story, monumental portal called the exterior, or first portal (*dargah-i biruni*, *dargah-i avvalin*) flanked by minarets. A small room behind the door housed the doorkeeper. Upstairs to the north and east of the portal are several interconnecting rooms (*sarayche*, *hujre* or *ghurfe*) which accommodated distinguished visitors, "distinguished" being defined in the text as anyone with followers, servants, or disciples. This entrance block, *dargah* in Persian is here equivalent to the Arabic term *bawwaba* (Figure 1).

The combination of courts leading from the bazaar to a monumental portal flanked by minarets is also found in a contemporary Iranian architectural foundation, where the mosque in *Yazd* was built to replace the old congregational mosque that had fallen into ruins. In 725/1325 *Shams al- Din*, an important local sayyed and son-in-law of *Rashid al-Din*, bought a piece of land to the south of the old mosque and in the following years constructed the south *iwan* dome chamber, surrounding structures, and main entrance on the east adjacent to the old mosque. A long rectangular court leads from the bazaar to the tall portal with two crowning minarets.

The walls of the present court are *Qajar* constructions, but the space for them was probably allotted when the land was purchased and the monumental portal was built. On the back, the portal of the *Rabe Rashidi* overlooked

an open space called the meftah al-abwab (place for the opening of the gate). The sahn (the courtyard) was where scales were hung in fair weather to adjudicate the weight of bread distributed in Rabe Rashidi. Around this court was a two-story verandah or covered way (ghulam-gardish) which was also used to accommodate the distinguished visitors and it consisted of four suffas attached to a f-r-jab overlooking the court. Like dehliz and mamarr, suffe can mean a variety of things; it can refer to a platform or dais.

## FOUNDER AND ENDOWER OF RUBE RASHIDI

The founder and endower of Rube Rashidi complex is Khajeh Rashid al-din fadlullah Hamadani the manslayer of Ghazan Khan and Uljayto named as sultan Mohammad khudabandeh after embracing Islam. He was a man of knowledge, politics and faith, so these qualities manifested clearly in his monumental work, that is, Rube Rashidi since it is a scientific complex was founded based on virtue and religious motive (Sadeghi, 2000: 74). Furthermore, in terms of planning and the way of administration, its socio-political position was like that of highly developed society and was taken into account. Khajeh Rashid al-din attained mastery of current sciences of his time varying from Islamin sciences to medicine, agricultural, engineering and various languages including Arabic, Mongolian, Turkish, Hebrew and Chinese.

In spite of his free tight programs in bureaucratic affairs, he spent his free time associating with scholars. Various valuable works in different fields have survived from this great man (Sadeghi, 2000: 80). Among the requirements of the open mind and prudence of Khajeh Rashid al-din, we may refer to his idea about the exemption of endowments from taxation and thus, creation of better conditions towards their development and improvement. Rashid al-din formulated a detailed act for the establishment of Rashidiyya pious foundation (Hoffmann, 2007: 77-85). When he provided the deed of endowment, he was 60 years old and since he had founded several religious foundations in Yazd, Hamadan and Sultaniyya, he was quite aware of and experienced in endowment affairs.

## SERVICES AT RUBE RASHIDI

The maftah alabwab gave access to the rest of the complex; in addition to the founder's tomb are four main elements: a hospice (dar al-diyafa), a khanaqah, a hospital and a rawda. These four provided all the needs, both physical and spiritual, of visitors and residents (Hambly, 1970: 46). Other service buildings for example a bath (hammam) accompanied by a disrobing room (maslakh), storerooms and fountains were not considered

as major components, so little attention was accorded to them and consequently, little can be gleaned about their plans or locations. Of the four major parts, the hospice was closest to the entrance. It was a two-storey building with direct access off the meftah al-abwab. Nothing was mentioned or made about the court or iwan, hence we can assume that it was a closed rectangular building symmetrically planned. Its right wing was reserved for residents; its left wing for travelers; while an external vestibule (dehliz) had cells (suffa) for the two doormen. Each wing had its own vestibule (dehliz), kitchen (matbakh), cells for living and storage rooms of foodstuffs (hawa'ij-khana). Provided they were not beggars, single visitors could stay up to three days in the left wing. During the day, food was served in the right wing to the residents of the Rabe Rashidi who lived in the khanaqah and rawda. At night, the cells on the right were usually empty; therefore, the sweeper was allowed to stay there. The dar al-diyafa was probably in the first place for members of Rashid al-Din's family paying their respects, and would thus resemble in location and functions of the qaa, and adjacent rooms that formed the royal apartments in the khanaqah of Faraj b. Barquq in Cairo. The second major component of the Rabe Rashidi was the khanaqah, a place for Sufi gatherings and residence. Special séances and feasts were held in a big iwan (suffe-yi buzurg), a winter room (tabkhane, literally "hot room") or a summer room (tanabi), each of which had a shahanshahi, or place where the mutawalli could seat guests to observe the séance. (The shahanshihi, literally "royal", is probably the equivalent of a shahnishini, a royal gallery or loggia was found at Ardabil and elsewhere. A small room (hujra) in the loggia of the khanaqah winter room was called the window of life (rawznat al-hayat); it was kept locked unless the mutawalli wished to stay there himself or gave permission for someone else to stay there for a couple of days. Other places for assembly in the khanaqah included a court (sahn) with rooms (saray) and other suffas. The khanaqah also had residential quarters which like the public areas, were divided into summer and winter rooms (Boli, 2009: 24).

The shaykh, five Sufis and eight of the 24 Qur'an reciters all had different accommodations for winter and summer. One or two servants and other people lived in the empty khanaqah rooms which could be assigned at will. There were also service facilities, including a kitchen, latrines (mabraz) and storerooms. In general, the khanaqah residents ate in the hospice, and the khanaqah kitchen was used only for the preparation of large feasts when special séances were held or when the hospice kitchen was insufficient. Rashid al-Din felt that the separation of kitchen and residence was necessary because of cooking and smoke, not to mention the dirty shoes of visitors in the muddy season would sully the khanaqah. In Ottoman kulliyyes or complexes, the kitchen (imarat) becomes a completely separate building. Despite the many rooms ascribed to the khanaqah, its Plan is quite unclear, and the few extant examples from

the Ilkhanid period offered little help. In Natanz a portal dated 1306 to 1307 is all that remains of the khanaqah and it was attached to the tomb of the Suhrawardi shaykh Abd al-Samad al-Isfahani. The ruins of the khanaqah of the most famous Kubrawiyya shaykh of the period, Ala al-Dawla Simnani, in the village of Sufiabad near Simnan, are more extensive: a typical hazira arrangement of an iwan overlooking the cenotaph leads to a central domed space flanked by smaller side rooms. Despite the building's restoration, the plan has never been published. Considering this paucity of information, it is therefore worthwhile attempting to reconstruct the khanaqah, even at the risk of error in detail. Near the door that led from the khanaqah to the hospital was a *sabat*, with at least nine cells, one each for two resident trainee physicians, a pharmacist, an optometrist, and five of the twenty-four Quran reciters. A *sabat* is a vaulted passage or an arcade. In Cordova, Abd Allah constructed a *sabat* leading from his palace to the great mosque." In the Ilkhanid period, Rukn al-Din endowed a *ribat* which was a second-storey building on the *sabat* outside Isfahan near the gate of the shrine of Shaykh Ali b. Sahl. Surviving Ilkhanid architecture provided one example of a *sabat*: In the complex at Natanz, a covered street connects the four-iwan mosque with the other sections; although not specifically described in texts; this too could be a *sabat*. One entered the khanaqah at the Rabe Rashidi through a portal (*dargah*, *dar*) with the three storage rooms which the *mutawalli* could use to store equipment or foodstuffs and with space for the doorman behind the door, a typical arrangement of the entrance portals in many buildings of the time. Inside was a *dihliz* with various rooms opening it off this time the *dihliz* was probably not a courtyard, like the one outside the main portal of the Rabe Rashidi, but rather a vestibule or corridor like the one in the hospice. The kitchen was located on one side, facing (*barabar*) it on the ground level (*ashkub-i zirin*) was the shaykh's room (*saraycha*). The room above was empty and could be used for guests or storage. Since the shaykh's room was [ornately] painted (*bi-naqqashi karda*), it was forbidden to build fires there lest the smoke will dirty the decoration. Instead, in the winter when the shaykh required heat, he moved to a special room (*khana*) to the east of the iwan, and the door was bricked up so that no smoke could seep inside, the room backed on to a small garden (*baghcha*). The amount of the garden beside the room was made into a *tabkhane* by covering the space with bricks in vertical lay (*ajurr-i yak danda*) so that the basement below could bear the weight and so that the skylights (*jamat*) illustrating the iwan (*suffa*) would not be blocked. The ground alongside the *suffa* was left open and not incorporated into the *tabkhane* so that the *suffa* would be lit. The *tabkhane* was entered from the garden and hole was left in the roof to allow smoke to escape (Blair, 1984: 90). Generally, the Rashidi Township or complex may be divided into six parts in terms of the special functions of its premises:

1. Religious, educational, medical and public utility centers such as *Rawda*, Dervish moastery, guest house, hospital, medical faculty and *Dar al-masakin* (the abode of the needy) which Rashid al-din called the hole as *abwab al-birr* (the Gates of Righteousness) forming the whole center of Rashidi complex (Riahi, 1999: 50).
2. An economic and welfare complex including markets with 1500 shop, bathrooms, inns, paper producing factories, textile factories and mints.
3. Residential complex of Rabe Rashidi is divided in two parts; the upper and lower neighborhood of *Salihyya* and other residential areas involving thirty thousand magnificent houses according to Rashid al-din (Hashimzadeh, 1999: 50).
4. Agricultural complex comprising of gardens and underground water channels.
5. The main gates and castles of the township which had security protective and defensive functions.
6. Intercity paths, alleys, streets and gateways which had communication functions (Ahmmadi, 2007: 2) (Figures 2 and 3).

Similarly, the plans of the Rabe Rashidi has much in common with the fourteenth-century Ottoman buildings such as the Bursa *zawiya*-mosques built by Orhan Gazi, the *Hudavendigar Mosque* and the *Mevlevi tekke* in Manisa, all of which have a front portico that could have been used in the same way as the *sabat* of the Rabe Rashidi khanaqah. The Anatolian buildings were entered through a domed vestibule (*dihliz*) to a covered courtyard surrounded by iwans and adjacent rooms. Some of them are specifically called *tabkhane*, a term which came to mean hospice during the Ottoman period. Many had chimneys to eliminate the smoke from winter fires. In summer, lessons were given in the portico and iwans of the Ottoman buildings, a practice suggesting that the *tanabi* of the Rabe Rashidi khanaqah could have been one of the iwans. In all the Anatolian samples, the central courtyard was covered, no roof over the *sahn* was mentioned for the Rabe Rashidi khanaqah, but from the description, it was probably the one that was there. The text was repeated in each of the three cases that explained how winter quarters were extended into the garden which ran behind the iwans and rooms. Had the courtyard been open, it would have been possible to extend them on the interior. Similarly, emphasis was given to hindering these brick lean-tos from keeping the outside light from entering the iwan (Table 1).

This dependence on back lighting suggested that the iwans were dosed on the interior side. In contrast to the Rabe Rashidi khanaqah, all the Anatolian examples have their main iwan opposite the entrance, which gives them their distinctive T-plan or cross-axiality (Ami, 1993: 12). A T-plan is impossible for the Rabe Rashidi khanaqah. The kitchen was entered from both the *dihliz* and the big *suffa*, showed that the main iwan must have been either behind or beside the entrance. Many current brick

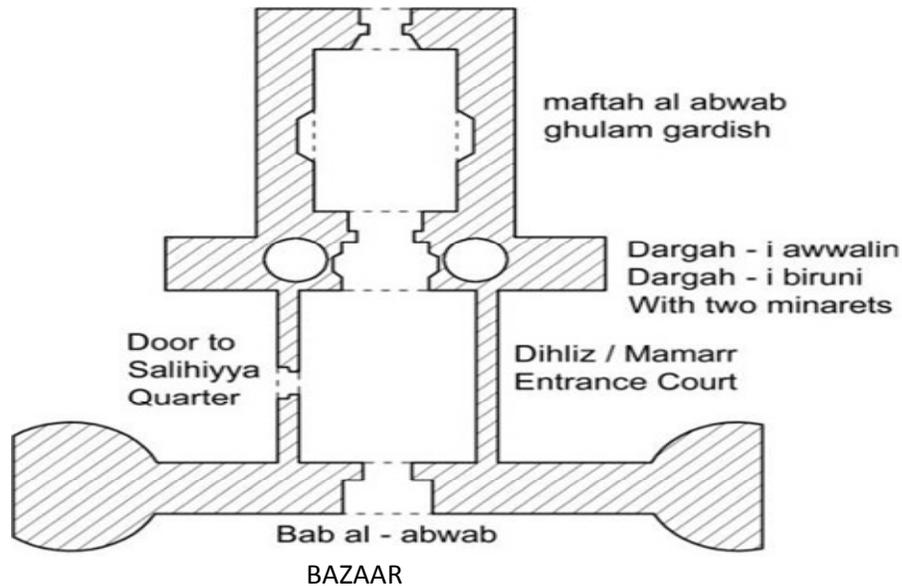


Figure 2. Schematic reconstruction of the entrance of Rabe Rashidi.

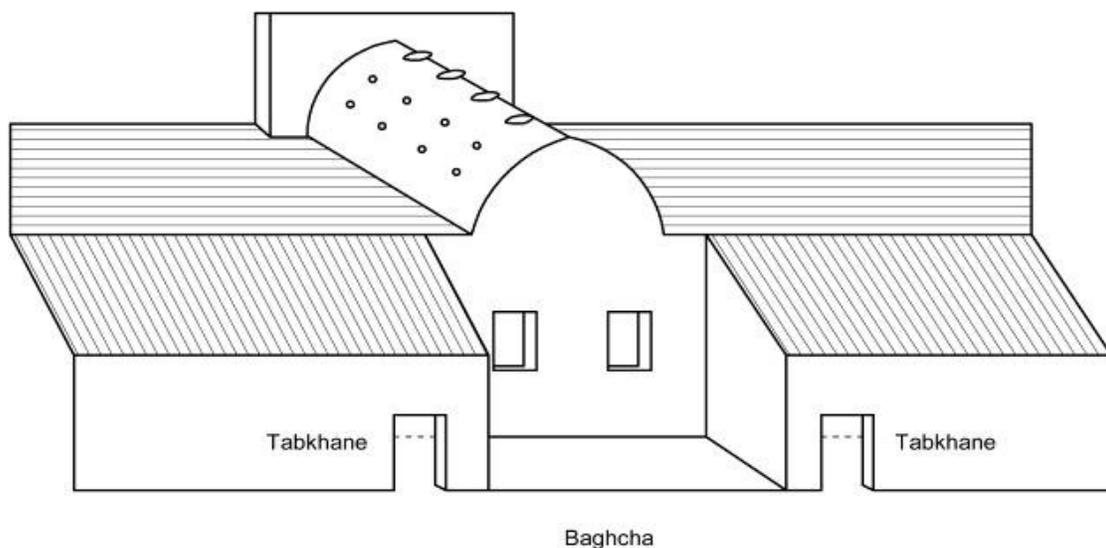


Figure 3. Schematic reconstruction of the tabkhane in the khanaqah in Rabe Rashidi (Authors based on Blair).

buildings have post holes on the exterior used to support scaffolding during the construction or lean-tos afterward." The agglomerative principle is important, for it showed that the Rabe Rashidi khanaqah exterior was irregular. Like the four-iwan mosques at Natanz or Isfahan, it must have been considered from the interior outward, in contrast to rural caravanserais and madrasas, like the ones at Ribat-i Sharaf and Khargird, whose regular and uniformly decorated exteriors suggest that they were conceived without any exterior constraint on their plans. The sabat connected the khanaqah to the hospital is another major component of the Rabe Rashidi (Bates,

1995: p50). Although its function is clear-teaching, and the housing and caring for the sick, the terminology used in describing it is often inconsistent and confusing. The most ordinary designation was a "house of remedies", (dar alshifa in Arabic or darukhana in Persian). The more complete title is dar al-shurb, sharabkhana (potion house) and makhzan-i adwiya or bayt (dispensary). The building also had a riwaq al-murattabin, an arcade for patients was used for the preparation of medicines and gruel for the sick (mazurat) and potions (adwiya wa ashriba), medical lessons and housing of some of the workers (Harrold, 1975-1989: 2). A kitchen (matbakh), rooms

**Table 1.** The contrast of Rabe Rashidi with Anatolian Iwans (Authors, 2011).

Rabe Rashidi	Anatolian
Has a main Iwan behind or beside the entrance	Have their main iwan opposite the entrance
Do not have T-Plan	T-plan or cross- axiality.
Rabe Rashidi khanaqah exterior was irregular plan	They were conceived with exterior constraint on their plans
Hospital was major component of Rabe Rashidi	Dispersal between the main constructions and their function constraints

(darkhana) and rosewater house (gulabkhana) dispensed these services. The plan of the hospital was never described, but it had a vestibule (dihliz) and to the right of the entrance was the doctor's room or residence (bayt or dar al-tabib). The sweeper lived in the same saraycha. The riwaq was probably an arcade surrounded by various rooms. The one used for storing medicines was an iwan (suffa) that was closed off by a grill (shabakat). To the south of this grill, two resident trainee physicians (muta allim) gave medical lessons in the riwaq. The iwan and arcade are compatible with the standard open courtyard of two or four-iwan plans found in Seljuq hospitals such as those in Sivas and Amasya (Benntt, 1989: 4).

The endowment of the Rabe Rashidi was clearly designed to keep the income in Rashid al-Din's family; half of it went to the overseer, Rashid al-Din and, after his death, his sons and the other half -23,705 dinars, 5 dang,3 tasu- were to support personnel and provide for the upkeep of the buildings in the complex which was meant to commemorate the family, as is clear from the key holder's high salary and honorary position, the tomb's placement behind the mihrab in the south iwan/congregational mosque and the twenty-four Qur'an recites, and ten orphaned apprentices assigned to it. Their number also noted the vastness of Rashid al-Din's wealth. Objects were inside, but the door of the wooden screen was left open so that the reciters' voices could be heard inside the tomb. At the evening prayer, the tomb sweeper lit fresh beeswax candles and placed them in candlesticks in front of the reciters, to provide a sweet smell that pervaded the tomb and perfumed the reciters' noses, he also put a little incense in a long-handled censer (mabkhara) inside the lattice. The reading of the Qur'an never stopped except on Fridays and on fifty-eight special nights (the month of Ramadan and holidays) throughout the year. On these special nights, before evening prayer the key holder, sweeper and a trusted representative of the mutawalli went to the tomb (Shafi, 2003: 51-53). The key holder unlocked the door; the sweeper cleaned the tomb, filled the four hanging lamps (qandil) with sesame oil and brought in four large candlesticks. Then all twenty-four recite's enters, read the evening prayer and sealed the Qur'an. Then the recites went out, followed by the three others, and the key holder locked the tomb. A similar procedure was followed before the communal prayer, on Fridays. The key holder unlocked the tomb, and all twenty-four reciters entered and recited until the time of prayer. Then, they all filed

out, and the three whose turn it was to recite remained near the door while the imam led Friday prayers and then sealed the Qur'an.

In addition to Qur'an reading, Rashid al-Din generated the copying of religious manuscripts such as the Quran. Every year, the mutawalli ordered for two manuscripts: one was to be a thirty-volume Qur'an in good script, vowel led and dotted, written according to one of the seven correct readings, on large Baghdadi-size sheets of paper (the same size as those of the deed of endowment itself), with gold semblances and fifth- and tenth-verse markers, bound in leather (Pope, 1954: 18). Rashid al-Din also ordered other manuscripts to be copied. Following the main text of the endowment is an addendum directing the mutawalli yearly to order for two copies (one in Arabic and the other in Persian) of most of Rashid al-Din's own works, including the Majmua al-rashidiyya and the Jami al-tawarikh. Specifications are similar to those for the Qur'an and hadith manuscripts: good Baghdadi paper, neat script, careful collation with the original in the library of the Rabe Rashidi and leather binding. However, other contemporary evidence showed that at least some manuscripts were illustrated elsewhere. Two muezzins gave the call to prayer from the two minarets at the portal. Friday prayers were held in the south iwan, with the overflow crowd standing in the court and other iwans. The professor gave religious instruction in Qur'anic commentaries and traditions in the winter and summer mosques.

By the fourteenth century Sufism had become institutionalized in the religious life of Iran, as already noted and like most contemporary shrine complexes, the Rabe Rashidi included a khanaqah with resident shaykh and Sufis. The shaykh's duty was not only to lead disciples along the path but also to fill the function of imam. Money was also allotted for special candles and food for twenty-four night-time séances to be held throughout the year, but details are not given of their program. The livelihood and protection of the endowment's slaves and employees included provision for their housing. Many of them lived in the Rabe Rashidi itself and others in the surrounding area. The daily bread ration was carefully set down: two manns per day for most laborers; up to ten for professionals with the particular types of bread carefully described (round loaves in the style of the village of Sijan, one-quarter mann "oven" (furni loaves, etc.) and conditions for its preparation were listed (not too much salt and no barley

except in times of famine) (Zulkifli, 2007:27). Every morning at sunrise the bakers sent the bread to be weighed on scales (qabban) and a balance (tarazu) of just weight which was suspended in the summer in the court of the Maftah al- Abwab and in the winter in the entry of the rawda. Deliverymen (mashsha) were assigned by the mutawalli to put the bread into big baskets and then delivered it to each eligible person. It was their responsibility to see that the bread was at all times fresh. The ingredients and procedures for cooking the rest of the food are also enumerated in detail. For breakfast, each of the thirty-five residents of the hospice was allotted two bowls of pottage (ash). The seventy bowls prepared were of three varieties: twenty of wheat and groats (halfimana); thirty-five of pickles (turshi) of dried pomegranate seeds with convolulus, sumach, vinegar, or yoghurt and meat; and fifteen of pease soup with meat (Sadeghi, 2000: 74-80).

Clothing was not provided for the Rabe Rashidi residents, but medical care was provided to them. The doctor in charge made house calls to all the sick, whether residents, visitors or workers. The hospital was open every Monday and Thursday for the distribution of a list of medicines, requiring the presence of the superintendent (khazin) and apothecary (sharab-dar). The drugstore was kept locked and sealed, and only the superintendent was allowed inside. The patients came to the door of the grille and sat in the iwan (suffa). The doctor sat near the grille and wrote a prescription, which he passed through the grille to the superintendent, who then passed the medicine back through the grille to the patient. The doctor received 180 dinars (slightly more) for teaching than for practicing (150 dinars). His two trainee assistants helped with instruction in the arcade of the hospital near the lattice on the south side. A portion of the Rabe Rashid was also devoted to public charity. Rashid al-Din underwrote a poor house (dar almasakin) in the bazaar just outside the Rabe Rashidi, where a soup kitchen served one hundred indigent people daily, each one receiving a bowl of pottage and one-half mann of bread consisting of two pieces of the type known in Tabriz as Sijani. The ways of spreading out the food was also spelt out; actually, they seem to have been done it somewhat in prison-like conditions.

At the appointed hour, the door of the poor house was opened and the first one hundred people were admitted, the door was then relocked lest anyone else sneak in. The poor sat in rows (bisaff) in the suffas (iwan arcades), and not a morsel of food was distributed until they were all seated. The row of five to the right of the door were the first to rise and approach the lattice in front of the kitchen where the cook would ladle out two standard spoonfuls of pottage and distribute two pieces of bread through the lattice. They could either eat it there or take it away and share it among their children. In the poor home, those who ate received their pottage in an earthenware bowl (kasa-yi sifalin). When those five were

served and returned to their seats, five more arose, following the same pattern until they were all served. It was the sweeper's job to ensure that the door stayed locked until everyone eating there had finished and all the bowls were returned, and to ensure that all those taking the food away had provided their own bowls, a control that suggested that earthenware bowls were a considerable expense. Another charitable function of the Rabe Rashidi was to provide accommodation for travelers, guests stayed in the portal, the rest in the left wing of the hospice. Travelers and wayfarers were common in the period, a phenomenon probably connected at least in part with the growth of the shrine complexes in Iran in the first half of the fourteenth century. Ibn al-Fuwati stayed several days in the madrasa next to the congregational mosque (Jami) in Tabriz, and received money and clothes from the mudarris, The Moroccan traveler, Ibn Battuta, spent a lifetime travelling from North Africa to China at other people's expense; and at exactly the same time, complexes like Sidi Bou Madyan developed in North Africa. In addition, visitors were allowed to stay for up to three days and to eat in the hospice where they were given the same breakfast like: half loaf of bread and two bowls of pottage. At the end of the day, they also got a bowl of stew (khwarish) that had been prepared, fruit (fawakih), dairy products (labaniyyat), pickled vegetables (mukhallalat), sweet (shiriniha) or sour (turshiha) and another half-mann of bread. Fodder for animals was not provided, but the mutawalli would supply anyone in need of shoes. Light, water and blankets were handed out at nights. The accommodation of visitors absolutely came under the heading of charitable purposes, but at the same time it also fitted in with the function of commemoration, for visitors could be counted on to offer blessings at the founder's grave, particularly because of the tomb's location behind the mihrab of the main congregational mosque. However, the three-day limit on these travelers also showed that the charitable function of the complex was subsidiary to the commemorative and religious ones (Minovi, 1938: 247-259).

## CONCLUSION

Rabe Rashidi is one of the long line of waqfs or endowments that are central to Islamic society. Waqf provided security and stability, and the complex was a place of elite learning and community charity. This educational and scientific complex was equipped with a big paper factory, a massive library, an educational treatment center (Dar-ol-Shafa), Dar-ol Quran (Quranic Center), a big caravansary, student's quarter, residential facilities for teachers and other facilities during the Ilkhanid era. After more than seven centuries, archaeologists are now determined to uncover more secrets about this historic site which is located 6 m below

the current level of Tabriz. According to the deed of endowment, the entry of the court at Rabe Rashidi led to a two-story, monumental portal called the exterior or first portal (dargah-i biruni, dargah-l avvalin) flanked by minarets. A small room behind the door housed the doorkeeper; upstairs, to the north and east of the portal are several interconnecting rooms (sarayche, hujre or ghurfe) accommodating distinguished visitors, "distinguished" being defined in the text as anyone with followers, servants or disciples. This entrance block, dargah in Persian, is equivalent to the Arabic term bawwaba. The second major component of the Rabe Rashidi was the khanaqah, a place for Sufi gatherings and residence. Special séances and feasts were held in a big iwan (suffe-yi buzurg), a winter room (tabkhane, literally "hot room") or a summer room (tanabi), each of which had a shahanshahi, or a place where the mutawalli could seat guests to observe the séance.

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