

Mawlana's Relationship with and Influence on the Seljuk Sultans

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ROR ID: <https://ror.org/03a1crh56>

Abstract

Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi was a Sufi scholar and mystic who engaged in Islamic education and teaching during the reigns of the Seljuks of Rum, namely Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw II, Izz al-Din Kaykawus II, and Rukn al-Din Kilij Arslan IV. After beginning his spiritual guidance activities, he communicated directly and indirectly with Seljuk state officials. In his conversations and letters, he admonished sultans and statesmen, advising them to base their actions on mercy, justice, and goodness, and to work for the benefit of the people and the state. This article aims to draw attention to research on Mawlana's relations with the Seljuk sultans, raise awareness, provide insights, and offer a new perspective on the subject. It is significant for highlighting some lesser-known aspects of Mawlana and for explaining how he interacted with Seljuk rulers. In addition to offering a fresh interpretation of previous studies, the article is original in its focus on the fundamental philosophy of Mawlana's relations with the Seljuk sultans and his influence on them. This study seeks to reveal how Mawlana's advice, warnings, and recommendations were reflected in the actions of the Seljuk rulers.



Keywords

Mawlana, Seljuk, Ruler, Izz al-Din Kaykawus II, Rukn al-Din Kilij Arslan IV, Anatolia

Citation

Kaya, Selim. Mawlana's Relationship with and Influence on the Seljuk Sultans. *Journal of Seljuk Studies (Special Issue on Rūmī)*, (December 2025), 23-44.

<https://doi.org/10.23897/usad.1680597>

Date of Submission	20.02.2025
Date of Acceptance	25.11.2025
Date of Publication	10.12.2025
Peer-Review	Double anonymized - Two External * This article is based on the content of the paper titled “Mawlana's Relationship with and Influence on the Seljuk Sultans”, which was presented orally at the “Mevlânâ's Seljuk World - A Mevlana Prosopography” Symposium held in Konya between December 12-14, 2024, but whose full text has not been published. It has been developed and partially modified.
Ethical Statement	It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.
Plagiarism Checks	Yes - Turnitin
Conflicts of Interest	The author(s) has no conflict of interest to declare.
Complaints	usad@selcuk.edu.tr
Grant Support	The author(s) acknowledge that they received no external funding in support of this research.
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Mevlânâ'nın Selçuklu Sultanlarıyla İlişkisi ve Etkisi

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Öz

Mevlânâ Celâleddin-i Rûmî, Türkiye Selçuklu Sultanları II. Gıyâseddin Keyhüsrev, II. İzzeddin Keykâvus ve IV. Rükneddin Kılıç Arslan dönemlerinde İslam eğitim ve öğretim faaliyetlerinde bulunmuş mutasavvıf âlim ve âriftir. İrşat faaliyetlerine başladıktan sonra Selçuklu devlet yöneticileri ile doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak muhatap olmuştur. Sohbetlerinde ve mektuplarında sultanlara ve devlet adamlarına uyarılarda bulunmuş, icraatlarında merhameti, adaleti ve iyiliği esas almalarını, halkın ve devletin menfaati için çalışmalarını öğütlemiştir. Bu makale ile Mevlânâ'nın Selçuklu sultanları ile ilişkileri hakkında yapılan araştırmalara dikkat çekmek, farkındalık oluşturarak konu ile ilgili fikir edinilmesini sağlamak ve yeni bir perspektif ortaya konulmak amaçlanmıştır. Makale, tarihi süreçte Mevlânâ'nın az bilinen bazı yönlerinin ifadesi ve Selçuklu devlet başkanları ile nasıl muhatap olduğunun ifadesi bakımından önemlidir. Makale daha önce yapılmış çalışmalara yeni bir bakış açısı ve yorum katacak olmasının yanında Mevlânâ'nın Selçuklu sultanları ile ilişkilerinin temel felsefesine ve onlar üzerindeki etkisine odaklanmış olması sebebiyle özgündür. Bu çalışmada Mevlânâ Celâleddin-i Rûmî'nin Selçuklu sultanları ile ilişki, uyarı, tavsiye ve telkinlerinin icraatlarına olan yansımaları ortaya konulmaya çalışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Mevlana, Selçuklu, Hükümdar, II. İzzeddin Keykavus, IV. Rükneddin Kılıç Arslan, Anadolu

Atıf Bilgisi

Kaya, Selim. Mevlânâ'nın Selçuklu Sultanlarıyla İlişkisi ve Etkisi. *Selçuklu Araştırmaları Dergisi* (Mevlânâ Özel Sayısı), (Aralık 2025), 23-44.

<https://doi.org/10.23897/usad.1680597>

Geliş Tarihi	20.02.2025
Kabul Tarihi	25.11.2025
Yayın Tarihi	10.12.2025
Değerlendirme	İki Dış Hakem / Çift Taraflı Körleme * Bu makale, 12-14 Aralık 2024 tarihleri arasında Konya'da düzenlenen "Mevlânâ'nın Selçuklu Dünyası - Bir Mevlana Prosopografisi" Sempozyumu'nda sözlü olarak sunulan ancak tam metni yayımlanmayan "Mevlânâ'nın Selçuklu Sultanlarıyla İlişkisi ve Etkisi" adlı tebliğin içeriği geliştirilerek ve kısmen değiştirilerek üretilmiş hâlidir.
Etik Beyan	Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.
Benzerlik Taraması	Yapıldı – Turnitin
Etik Bildirim	usad@selcuk.edu.tr
Çıkar Çatışması	Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir.
Finansman	Bu araştırmayı desteklemek için dış fon kullanılmamıştır.
Telif Hakkı & Lisans	Yazarlar dergide yayınlanan çalışmalarının telif hakkına sahiptirler ve çalışmaları CC BY-NC 4.0 lisansı altında yayımlanmaktadır.

Introduction

In Turkish history, contact and relationships between rulers and Sufis first appear during the Great Seljuk period. It is known that Tughrul Bey established ties with Baba Tahir-i Uryan-i Hamadani, a famous sheikh of the 11th century, and, together with his brother Chaghri Bey, with Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abu'l-Khayr, seeking to benefit from their support, power, and influence. It is believed that this connection stemmed not only from personal interest, affection, and respect, but also from the aim of gaining public acceptance through them and gaining political legitimacy by establishing a religious basis for their rule (Râvendî, 1999, I, 97; Köymen, 1976, 21; Ocak, 1996, 18).

As a Sufi and scholar who lived in 13th-century Anatolia, Mawlana developed his own syncretism by analyzing the political and social developments of his time. Mawlana was neither solely a poet nor merely a philosopher or thinker. He was certainly not an opportunist who relied on the Seljuk aristocracy or Mongol authorities. From his childhood, Mawlana studied under the most renowned scholars of his time, rising to the rank of professor (Ocak, 1989, 78-79), and used poetry as a tool to express his ideas. His father, Bahâ al-Din Walad, was the first person influential in the formation and development of his intellectual world. The Seljuk sultan and state officials also benefited from the spiritual guidance activities of Bahâ al-Din Walad, the Sultan of Scholars, who came to Konya upon the invitation of Ala al-Din Keykubâd I. After Bahâ al-Din Walad's death, following two years of teaching at the Konya Altınapa (Altun-aba) Madrasa, Mawlana became a student of Seyyid Burhaneddin Muhakkık-ı Tirmidhi his father's disciple (Şahinoğlu, 1991, 461; Öngören, 2004, 442; Küçük, 2007, 41; Ceyhan, 2010, 512).

After receiving instruction from Bahâ al-Din Walad and Burhan al-din Tirmidhi, Mawlana returned to Konya after further studying in Aleppo and Damascus, achieving a high level of scholarly and spiritual understanding (Sipehsâlâr, 1977, 83-84; Gölpınarlı, 1952, 44-45). Five years after Sayyid Burhan al-din's death (in 1246), Mawlana met Shams-i Tabrizi, also known as "the Kamil of Tabriz" or "Shams-i Perende" (Flying Shams), for a second time in Konya. Immersed in conversations about the divine knowledge of God (marifetullah), Mawlana neglected his lessons and spiritual guidance at the madrasa and began spending all his time with Shams. Mawlana's eldest son, Sultan Walad likens the relationship between Mawlana and Shams to that of Moses and Khidr. Sultan Walad states that just as Moses, despite being a prophet, sought Khidr, Mawlana, despite his exalted spiritual rank, sought Shams (Sultan Veled, 2014, 50).

Shams-i Tabrizi was a significant turning point in Mawlana's life. Before Shams, "his love was hidden in his piety," while after Shams, "his piety became hidden in his love." Shams-i Tabrizi virtually demolished the dam before the raging river and added his own, timeless Sufi understanding to it. During this period, the *Divan-i Kebir*, a collection of poems sung with a Sufi lyricism, was written as an expression of Mawlana's spiritual cries. During

the subsequent period of tranquility, the didactic *Masnavi* (*Masnavi-i Mevlevi* or *Masnavi-i Manevi* or *Masnavi-i Sharif*) was written with the aim of inculcating and disseminating the principles of Sufism. *Fîhi mâ Fîh* was created by compiling Mawlana's conversations recorded during his lifetime after his death. Subsequently, *Mecâlis-i Seb'a*, consisting of Mawlana's speeches from his sermons and talks, and *Mektûbât*, consisting of Mawlana's letters, were written (Köprülü, 1980, 127; Ocak, 1989, 79; Öngören, 2004, 445-447; Özbek, 2001, 43). With the contribution of the works written by Mawlavi authors in later years, it is possible to learn about the people around Mawlana, his interlocutors his advice and his world of thought.

1. Research Conducted on the Subject

Mawlana Jalaluddin-i Rumi's relations with the Seljuk sultans and statesmen have been explored by various researchers at different times. In 1983, Ahmet Sevgi wrote an article titled "Mevlânâ'nın İdarecilere Tavsiyeleri". In 1993, Ahmet Yaşar Ocak presented a paper titled "Türkiye Tarihinde Merkezi İktidar ve Mevlevîler (XIII-XVIII. Yüzyıllar) Meselesine Kısa Bir Bakış". In 2002, Ahmet Aksit wrote an article titled "Eflaki'nin Alaeddin Keykubâd Hakkındaki Rivayetlerine Dair". In 2004, Murat Erten prepared a master's thesis titled "Mevlânâ'da Siyaset Felsefesi Problemleri". In 2006, Selim Kaya presented a paper titled "Mevlânâ'nın Siyasî Faaliyetleri (Mevlânâ'nın Selçuklu Devlet Erkânı Üzerindeki Etkisinin Siyasî Boyutları)". In 2007, Kazım Paydaş presented a paper titled "Mevlânâ Celâleddin'in Anadolu Selçukluları ile olan Münasebetleri". In 2007, Osman Nuri Küçük wrote a book titled "Mevlâna ve İktidar". In 2012, Ridvan Çolak prepared a master's thesis titled "Selçuklular Döneminde Mevlana Ailesinin Devlet Bürokratları ile İlişkileri". In 2013, Selim Kaya presented a paper titled "Mevlânâ'nın Selçuklu Devlet Erkânı ile İlişkilerin Siyasi ve Sosyal Boyutu". In 2013, A.C.S. Peacock wrote a book chapter titled "Sufis and the Seljuk Court: Politics and Patronage in the Works of Jalal al-Din Rumi and Sultan Walad". In 2014, Nimetullah Akay prepared a doctoral thesis titled "Başlangıcından XVIII. yüzyılın Sonuna Kadar Mevlevilik-Devlet İlişkisi." In 2014, Mehmet Ali Hacıgökmen wrote an article titled "Mevlâna Celaledin-i Rumî'nin Selçuklu Sultanları ile İlişkileri". In 2014, Veyis Değirmençay wrote an article titled "Sultan Veled'in Anadolu Selçuklu Devlet Adamları ve Diğer İleri Gelenleri Methi." In 2015, Devriş Küçükyıldırım prepared a master's thesis titled "Mevlâna'nın Pervâne Mu'inü'd-Dîn Süleyman ile İlişkileri". In 2015, Nevzat Erdoğan and Ümit Işık presented a paper titled "Mevlâna'dan II. İzzeddin Keykâvûs'a Yönetme Öğütleri". In 2019, Sedat Sayın wrote an article titled "Türkiye Selçuklu Sultanı IV. Rükneddin Kılıçarslan ile Eşi Gumaç Hatun'un Mevlânâ Celâleddîn-i Rûmî ile Münasebeti". In 2019, Büşra Büyükbektaş prepared a master's thesis titled "Anadolu Selçukluları Döneminde Mevlevilerin Sultanlar, Devlet Adamları, Beylikler, Ahiler ve Diğer Zümrelerle Olan Münasebetleri". In 2023, Sinan Cereyan presented a paper titled "Mevlânâ'nın Mektubât Adlı Eserinde Devlet Büyüklerine Nasihatler". Apart from these, there are also studies on the influence of Mawlana on his era and the following eras, his influence on the Ottoman Empire or the effects of Mevlevism on state administrators after Mawlana. For example; In

2023, Tayfur Topal wrote a book chapter titled "Siyaset-Tarikat İlişkileri Bağlamında Mevlevilik". Furthermore, while the titles of some studies evoke the Seljuk period, they actually address the Ottoman period. For example, İsmet Kayaoğlu's paper, "Sultan-Mevlevî İlişkilerine Genel Bir Bakış", examined the Ottoman Sultans' policies toward the Mevlevîs. Such studies, with general titles but post-Seljuk content, were not considered because they were not relevant to the subject of our research.

2. The Impact of Bahâ al-Din Walad, the Father of Mawlana, on Sultan Ala al-Din Keykubâd I.

When Sultânü'l-Ulemâ Bahâ al-Din Walad came to Larende (Karaman) in 1221, Mawlana was a fourteen-year-old boy. Bahâ al-Din Walad taught at Emîr Musa Madrasah for seven years, preaching and advising the people. He married his son Mawlana, who was seventeen or eighteen years old, to Gevher Hatun, the daughter of Hodja Sheref al-Din Lâlâ-yı Samarkandî. Mawlana's sons Walad and Ala al-Din were born from this marriage (Abdurrahmân Câmî, 1995, 632; Füzûzanfer, 1997, 111-112; Özbek, 2001, 43; Hacıgökmen, 2014, 119-120; Ürkmez, 2020, 165).

According to Sultan Walad (2014, 252) and Aflaki (1986, I, 27), Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I welcomed Bahâ al-Din Walad, who came to Konya upon his invitation, with a ceremony and became his disciple after listening to his advice. Ahmet Akşit (2002, 248) and M. Ali Hacıgökmen (2014, 120-121) believe that Baha al-din Walad's migration to Konya was not solely due to an invitation. Hacıgökmen believes that the conquest of Larende and the Ermenek region by Çaşniğir Mübârez al-din Çavlı and Mübârez al-din Ertokuş in 1228, and the beginning of the Karamanid settlement in the region, also influenced Bahâ al-Din Walad's migration to the safety of Konya, where he sought peace. However, could the change of ruler of Larende and the settlement of the Karamanids in the region have disturbed Baha al-din Walad, who aimed to spread Islamic Sufi life and guide the people? Wouldn't it have been a valuable service to provide Islamic education to the newly arrived Karamanids? Could Baha al-din Walad have wanted to leave Larende because of Emir Çavlı and Emir Ertokuş? Ibn Bibi (1996, I, 119, 319) describes Emir Çavlı as a "senior, respected, and special slave" and Emir Ertokuş as a "skilled, knowledgeable, and skillful special slave". It seems unlikely that these emirs, who were promoted due to their good qualities and earned the sultan's love and trust, or the Karamanids themselves, would have disturbed Baha al-din Walad. Therefore, we believe that it is unlikely that Baha al-din Walad was displeased with these emirs or the Karamanids due to his mission. However, Baha al-din Walad's departure for Konya may have been influenced by his hurt feelings at the hands of the Belhians and his resentment of Khwarazmshah, as well as by the hadith he recounted before his death: "People are of the religion of their rulers" (Sultan Veled, 2014, 251-253). If people follow the religion of their rulers, the ruler's Islamic life and adherence to religious rules and regulations are crucial. Therefore, he may have considered going to the capital to encourage the ruler to live a life consistent with Islam and to engage in charitable and beneficial activities. We believe that Baha al-din Walad, who deemed his residence in

Larende sufficient, accepted the invitation of Ala al-Din Keykubâd I and thought of encouraging the sultan and the umera to perform good deeds in accordance with Islamic rules and continuing his guidance activities in the capital. The sultan's invitation and Baha al-din Walad's aim and goal came together and thus the migration to Konya took place.

According to Aflākî, as was customary among the umaras and scholars of the time, Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I sent Bahâ al-din Walad a variety of gifts. However, Bahâ al-din Walad refused to accept the sultan's gifts, saying, "Your wealth is tainted with forbidden things and is suspect. I have enough clothing for myself, and I still have the wealth our ancestors acquired through holy war" His self-sufficiency and piety were admired by the sultan, the statesmen, and the people (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 26; Küçük, 2007, 40; Akay, 2014, 58).

Aflākî states that Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I, after stating that he valued Bahâ al-Din Walad very much, asked him to come and look at Konya Castle after its construction was completed. Bahâ al-din Walad, who saw the castle, said;

"You have built a strong and beautiful fortress to protect against floods and enemies, but what can you do against the arrows of prayer of the oppressed? Prayer pierces castle walls, bastions, and bodies. Therefore, work hard to build fortresses of justice and kindness and soldiers of good prayers. For these are more important to you than thousands of material fortresses, and they are the basis of the safety of the people and the security of the world" said (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 55; Küçük, 2007, 39).

Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I, deeply affected by this statement, strived to uphold justice and generosity in his actions, striving to receive prayers, not curses. Bahâ al-din Walad succinctly stated that justice was the foundation of the state, prayer was the expression of people's satisfaction with their rulers, and that material measures alone were insufficient for the state.

According to Aflākî, Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I saw in a dream one night that his head was made of gold, his chest was made of silver, his lower belly was made of bronze, his hips were made of lead, and his two feet were made of tin. Bahâ al-Din Walad interpreted this dream as follows:

"As long as you are in this world, people will live in comfort and purity and will be as precious as gold. In your son's time, they will be reduced to the level of silver, and in your son's (grandson's) time, they will be reduced to the level of bronze, and vile and greedy people will rule. When the sultanate reaches its third generation, chaos will reign everywhere, and honesty, loyalty, and compassion will disappear among the people. When it reaches its fourth and fifth generation, Anatolia will be completely devastated, and all countries will be filled with evil and cruel people. The Seljuk dynasty will decline, the world order will be disrupted, despicable people will occupy high positions, important affairs will be left in the hands of unqualified, lowly people, ... rebellions will break out, and the Mongol invasion will devastate the entire

world" he said (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 45-46; Küçük, 2007, 40). Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I was surprised and saddened by what he heard.

In his account of Bahâ al-din Walad's assistance to Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I before the Battle of Yassıçimen, Aflâkî recounts how the sultan and his men disguised themselves and went as close as the army of Khwarezmâh to obtain information and develop a strategy. When Jalaluddin Khwarezmâh, thinking that these men might be spies, acted in accordance with the saying, "Doubt is a precaution," Bahâ al-din Walad told Alâ al-Din Keykubâd in a dream that night, "Get up, mount your horse, is it time to sleep?" Alâ al-Din Keykubâd woke up and continued to sleep, striking him with his staff to wake him up, asking, "Why are you sleeping?" (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 138-139), thus saving him from a dangerous situation by forcing him to leave his position.

According to Aflâkî, Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I would go to Bahâ al-din Walad's tomb after his death and ask for his help whenever an important event occurred. He did so before the battle at Yassı Çimen (Yassıçemen) near Erzincan on August 10, 1230. After distributing gratuities before the battle, Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I told his soldiers, *"With God's help and Bahâ al-din Walad's help, we are stronger and will be victorious"* On the fifth day of the battle with the army under the command of Jalal al-din Khwarazmshah, *a wind of help and victory suddenly blew from the prayers of God's beloved servants. It lifted the dust from the Seljuk army into the air and scattered it over Jalal al-din Khwarazmshah's soldiers.* Thus, the Seljuk army won the battle (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 139).

From the accounts of Sultan Walad (death 1312) and Aflâkî (death 1360), it is clear that Mawlana's father, Bahâ al-Din Walad, had a significant influence on Sultan Alâ al-din Keykubâd I. Sultan Alâ al-din Keykubâd I heeded Bahâ al-Din Walad's warnings and advice and sought his guidance in important events in his life. This also greatly benefited the state policy of the Anatolian Seljuks.

The meeting of Bahâ al-din Walad and his son Mawlana with Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I took place through Emir Bedr al-din Gühertaş (death 1262) (Hacıgökmen, 2014, 122-123). Aflâkî stated that Bedr al-din Gühertaş, while the warden of Karahisar-ı Devle (Afyonkarahisar) Castle, circumcised Bahâ al-din Walad (Sultan Walad) and his brother Alâ al-Din in 1233. Sultan Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I also attended the circumcision ceremony and showed great respect and reverence to Mawlana (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 331; Hacıgökmen, 2011, 125).

However, Aydın Taneri's assessment of Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I's excessively kind behavior toward a sheikh and his attendance at Bahâ al-din Walad's sermons as a sign of his being a disciple carries the possibility that this is merely the product of the fantasies of contemporary hagiographic writers. The claim that Alâ al-Din Keykubâd I's love, respect, and reverence for a religious leader are indicators of his membership in the religious order should be viewed with caution (Taneri, 1978, 27-28).

3. Mawlana's View of the Relationship Between Statesmen (Umara) and Scholars (Ulama)

Mawlana begins his work, *Fihî Ma Fih*, with the following hadith from the Prophet Muhammad: "The worst of scholars (ulama) is the one who visits the statesmen (umara), and the best of the umara visits the ulama. But how good is the emîr who visits the poor, and how bad is the poor who visit the emîrs." According to Mawlana, people mistakenly interpret this hadith to mean that a scholar should avoid visiting the ruler to avoid becoming the worst of scholars. However, this is not the meaning of the hadith. The ruler is the one who acquires knowledge and wisdom. A true scholar is like the sun; he needs no other person to radiate warmth and light. Therefore, the true meaning of the hadith must be that the worst of scholars is the one who receives support from rulers. In other words, the worst of scholars is the one who gains power and strength by improving his situation through state administrators. If a scholar goes to visit a ruler, he is apparently in the position of a visitor, but in reality he is the one being visited (Mevlânâ, 1974, 3-4).

Mawlana interpreted the meaning of the hadith in a manner similar to that of al-Ghazali (d. 1111), one of the prominent Islamic political thinkers who lived about one hundred and sixty years earlier; A scholar who is greedy for worldly gain and does not act upon his knowledge is a bad scholar, and rulers should avoid these scholars, as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) explained in a similar way: "He who goes to the ruler's door falls into discord" (Gazzâlî, 2002, I, 175-176; Gazzâlî, 2011, 31; Bağdatlı, 2016, 188). Based on this hadith, Mawlana states that scholars may visit the umara (public servants) not for worldly gain but to warn, counsel, and show them the right path. He clarifies the attitude a true scholar should adopt in relations with the umara. He expresses the fundamental philosophy of scholar-umara relationships and how and in what form they should be. When we examine Mawlana's life and works, we see that he lived in accordance with this stated meaning throughout his life.

In his work titled *Masnavi-i Ma'nevi*, Mawlana explains the reason sufis met with rulers by saying,

"If you remember, you must have heard this: Sultans had a custom: The brave men stand on their left side, because the heart is attached to the left. The treasurers and the scribes stand on their right side, because the knowledge of writing and recording belongs to the right hand. They give a seat to the Sufis opposite them, because they are the mirror of the soul, better than a mirror." (Mawlana, 2015, 145)

He stated that Sufis served as mirrors for the ruler, and that the mirror of the soul was more valuable and important than the mirror of the body. While a person can detect and remove dirt from the body themselves, it is very difficult to detect and remove dirt from the soul. For this reason, he said, rulers should meet with and benefit from Sufi masters. Therefore, Mawlana's contact with the Seljuk sultans should be evaluated in this context as well.

According to a narration recorded by Aflakî, one day, Muin al-din Süleyman Pervâne came to visit Mawlana with the leading emirs, but they could not find him and waited for a long time for him to come. Meanwhile, for the sake of Pervane, the just orders of the religious elders and the sheikhs of close knowledge

"Holding them dear and respected would be a life force and a source of help for them, and thanks to this, the emirs would find a way to guide the people and lead them to the right path. I wonder what was the reason for Rumi's avoidance of such emirs and kings? Yet, the sheikhs and scholars of the time longed for the favors of the emirs and were dying for it. As for Rumi, he thought to himself, "He is avoiding us like a paradise dweller fleeing from hell or a flying bird fleeing from a trap." At this point, Rumi suddenly left the meeting place of the madrasa and told the following story: One day, Sultan Mahmud Sebük Tegin (Mahmud-ı Ghaznavi) got up and went to visit Sheikh Abu'l Hasani'l Horkani. The viziers and the leading figures of the state ran ahead and informed the sheikh that the Sultan of Islam was coming to visit him. The sheikh paid no attention. The sultan and his men went to the garden of the hanigah. He came to his door. One of the disciples, Hasan-i Maymendi, came and said to the sheikh, "For the sake of God, the disciples' benefit, and the sultan's sake, take the trouble to come to the door so that the honor and dignity of the sultanate are not violated." The sheikh did not move. When the sultan arrived at the door of the sheikh's room, the vizier ran forward and said to the sheikh, "O people of religion, have you not read the verse in the Quran: Obey God, His Messenger, and those in authority among you?" Showing respect to those in authority and hosting them is among the obligatory duties. Especially for a ruler with such a saintly character, he said, "We have become so immersed in obedience to God that we have not even begun to obey His Messenger, let alone command those in authority." Thereupon, the sultan bowed his head and became a sincere disciple." (Eflaki, 1986, I, 275-277) says.

In this narration by Aflâkî, Mawlana illustrates the attitude that scholars and intellectuals should adopt when facing the ruler and high-ranking statesmen with an example. He not only answers the question that came to Muin al-din Süleyman Pervâne's mind but also concisely states that it is natural for those with authority to await knowledge.

In his work titled *Mesnevî-i Ma'nevî*, Mawlana says,

"The character of the heads of state settles in the people; the green sky makes the soil green. Think of the king as a pool, and his entourage as pipes. Water flows into the lakes through pipes. Since all of them come from a pristine pool, each one pours out a pleasant, sweet water. If the water in the pool is salty and dirty, the same water flows from each pipe. Because the pipe is connected to the pool. Think carefully about the meaning of this saying."

He also stated one of the reasons for his strong relationship with the Seljuk sultans with the words, Knowing that a ruler's temperament, morality, and behavior would have a direct impact on the people, he strived to maintain good relations with the Seljuk sultans and maintain good relations. He acted with the belief that positive guidance given to the ruler and encouragement of good and virtue would also be reflected in the people. This must have been one reason for his efforts to maintain this connection.

Mawlana also gave the following reason for working to ensure good relations between the umara and the scholars/mystics:

"If great people (saints) desire high ranks and positions (in this world), it is because these people do not have the eyes to see (they cannot comprehend) their greatness. Their aim is to prey on the people of this world with this material and worldly trap. They want this so that they can find the path to the afterlife. For example, Prophet Muhammad Mustafa did not conquer Mecca and other cities because he needed them; perhaps he conquered them to grant life to everyone and to enlighten everyone's hearts. As it is stated in the hadith, "This hand is accustomed to giving, not to taking," they (saints) deceive people in order to donate to the people, not to take anything from them" (Mevlana, 1974, 40-41).

These statements of Mawlana should not be seen as an attempt to justify the association of Sufi saints with administrators (Peacock, 2017, 177), but rather as an effort to ensure that administrators and the people are psychologically, sociologically and pedagogically good and do not become immersed in this world and forget the afterlife.

4. Relations Between Mawlana and Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw II.

Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw II (1237–1246) is depicted as a man fond of worldly pleasures and entertainment, who spent his time with ignorant people, spoke carelessly, behaved childishly, and lacked the ability to rule (Akay, 2014, 65; Demir, 2022, 320). It is possible, but rare, that someone with this character would have established close relationships with, and participated in, conversations with, the scholars, spiritual guides, and Sufis of his time. However, such information is absent from the sources. Therefore, it seems impossible to believe that Kaykhusraw II met with Rumi (Akay, 2014, 65; Hacıgökmen, 2014, 126). However, his wife, Princess Thamara (Gürcü Hatun), the daughter of the Georgian Queen Rusudan, had a relationship with Rumi. It is not known exactly when this relationship began. Gürcü Hatun married Kaykhusraw II in 1238, a year after he became the Seljuk Sultan of Turkey in 1237. Rumi began to guide him after the death of his teacher, Seyyid Burhaneddin Muhakkık-ı Tirmidhi, in 1241. Meeting Shams-i Tabrizi in October-November 1244, Rumi began to spend all his time with Shams in order to better comprehend divine love, ecstasy, and truths. Although there was a brief separation, this relationship continued until Shams-i Tabrizi's death in 1247. Meanwhile, II Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw died in 1246, and his wife, Gürcü Hatun, married Muin al-din Süleyman Pervâne in 1247. Given such a high level of influence within both Gürcü Hatun's and

Mawlana's circles, it seems unlikely that they ever met. The contact and friendship between Gürcü Hatun and Mawlana likely occurred after 1247, which coincides with the reign of Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw II., Ömer Subaşı's (2016, 399) statement that Gürcü Hatun became Muslim under the influence of Rumi, whom she met through her marriage to Pervâne, also supports our view. Kaykhusraw II, who had no personal interest in religion or scholarship, could not have guided his wife in this matter.

5. Relations Between Mawlana and Sultan Izz al-din Kaykawus II.

Sultan Izz al-din Kaykawus II (1246-1262) became acquainted with Rumi through the Vizier Shams al-din İsfahani (d. 1249). According to Aflaki, during the early years of his reign, Kaykawus II was unaware of Mawlana's knowledge, blinded by the pride of his throne. One day, he asked his vizier, who visited Mawlana at every opportunity, "Why do you constantly return to Mawlana's service? Why do you show him so much respect and love, yet turn away from other great figures? What qualities have you seen in him that are not found in contemporary sheikhs? What is his superiority over other learned and poor people?" Shams al-din İsfahani then described Mawlana's virtues and miracles, describing him as a great and important person. Under the influence of what he heard, Sultan Kaykawus II developed a love for Mawlana and wanted to visit him (Eflâkî, 1968, II, 123-124; Taneri, 1978, 26; Küçük, 2007, 68; Füzûzanfer, 1997, 339; Akay, 2014, 69-70; Kaya, 2015, 182).

Mawlana did not act in accordance with the wishes and desires of the Seljuk sultans and even closed his door to them from time to time and did not meet with them (Kaya, 2015, 183). One day, while Mawlana was walking in the hall of his madrasah, he told those around him, "Close the door of the madrasah thoroughly." Immediately afterwards, Sultan Izz al-din Kaykawus II came to visit Mawlana with his viziers, emirs and vice-regents. Ordering his disciples to reply, "They should not bother him," Mawlana went into a cell and hid, not meeting with the sultan and the state officials next to him (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 278; Küçük, 2007, 69; Hacıgökmen, 2014, 127). Mawlana, who had initially tried to establish a close relationship with the sultan but later distanced himself, must have acted this way to teach Kaykawus II a lesson and warn him.

On one occasion, Mawlana showed no interest, paid no compliments, and even ignored Sultan Izz al-din Kaykawus II, who had promised to give up his bad habits but broke his promise and indulged in alcohol and entertainment. In this incident, which probably took place after being defeated by the Mongols in the Battle of Sultanhanı (1256), Kaykawus II waited for a while and then said, "May Allah be pleased with him, give me some advice." Upon this, Mawlana, with a stern look and a frowning face, said to Sultan Kaykawus II, "What advice can I give you? They ordered you to be a shepherd, but you act like a wolf. They ordered you to be a watchman, but you steal. God made you a sultan, but you act according to the words of the devil." Shaken by the weight of the words he had heard, Sultan Kaykawus II, went out crying and promised to do good deeds from now on (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 480; Taneri, 1978, 26; Hacıgökmen, 2014, 127-128). Rumi's criticism of Kaykawus II

shows that he was not trying to get close to the sultans, but rather that the sultans were trying to get close to Mawlana (Kaya, 2015, 183).

There are nine letters that Mawlana sent to Sultan Izz al-din Kaykawus II (Mevlana 1963; Öztürk, 1986, 88; Erdoğan & Işık, 2016, 262). Two of the letters, addressed as "son", were letters of complaint. One of them was about the oppression committed by the Konya governor, the other was about the excessive taxes collected by the Sivas tax officer and requested that it be prevented. Two of the letters were letters of request. One of them requested that the crimes of two people be forgiven and that they be reinstated, the other requested that a man named Hüsameddin be reconciled with his men with whom he had problems. One of the letters congratulated the sultan on his attainment of the sultanate and his marriage, another expressed sadness for not being able to visit, and another expressed the pain of separation and longing for the sultan. Two letters of were written as a response to the sultan. In his letter of consolation to Sultan Izz al-din Kaykawus II, Mawlana likened the situation of himself and the sultan to that of the Prophet Jacob and the Prophet Joseph (Mevlana 1963; Öztürk, 1986, 89; Lewis, 2010, 333; Hacıgökmen, 2014, 129; Erdoğan & Işık, 2015, 262; Paydaş, 2007, 27).

Mawlana's eldest son, Sultan Walad (death 1312), wrote a poem addressed to Sultan Mesud II, noting that, through Mawlana's intercession, the sultan's father, Izz al-din Kaykawus II, had abolished taxes on some people (fourteen people who were Mawlana's devotees), and reminding them of the donations he had made, her urged them to be as generous as like his father.¹

Inspired by the letters, researcher Peacock views Mawlana as the pivot of the system, which granted his followers protection and privileged treatment from the political elite, even for worldly gains such as tax breaks and positions in the palace (Peacock, 2023, 113). However, this perspective is problematic. Mawlana's minor requests for some Mevlevi from the rulers of the period should not be interpreted as privileges or special treatment.

6. Relations Between Mawlana and Sultan Rukn al-Din Kilij Arslan IV.

Mawlana did not send a letter to Sultan Rukn al-Din Kilij Arslan IV (1249–1254 and 1257–1266). As Hacıgökmen (2014, 129) notes, the reason Rumi—who wrote to Izz al-Din

¹ Our wish and request of you is that you fulfill the promises made by your family.
It was decreed that your ancestors and fathers would grant us donations; it befits such a son to multiply them a hundredfold.
And fourteen of Mawlana's devotees were exempt and privileged thanks to that exceedingly generous king.
Oh Sultan! It must be so in your time, too, that each one may fully benefit from your generosity.
.....
Samagar (Noyan) especially wrote a decree regarding this need and cleared his heart of the rust.
For his sake and for your own father's sake, grant us back the (tax) taken from us.
(Sultan Veled Divani, 2016, 526; Peacock, 2017, 174–175; Peacock, 2023, 113).

Kaykawus II, located far from the Seljuk heartland—did not correspond with Kilij Arslan IV is that Muinüddin Süleyman Pervâne effectively controlled the state. Kilij Arslan IV held the title of sultan but lacked real authority, whereas Süleyman Pervâne, formally a vizier, exercised powers akin to a sovereign. Mawlana was fully aware of this political reality.

On one occasion, when Pervâne, to whom Mawlana had sent a letter with a request, remarked, "The matter concerns the Divan," Mawlana replied, "The state is under the rule of Süleyman Pervâne; Süleyman is not under the rule of the state." Pervâne was reportedly pleased with this acknowledgment (Taneri, 1978, 35–36). Recognizing that Pervâne was the de facto ruler during Kilij Arslan IV's reign, Mawlana met with him directly and sent a total of twenty-five letters (Mevlânâ, 1963; Öztürk, 1986, 88). The sheer number of letters is striking, highlighting both the nature of Seljuk administrative structures and the considerable influence Pervâne wielded in state affairs (Hacıgökmen, 2014, 129).

During the reign of Pervane, Mawlana did not neglect the sultan, but established a connection with him and maintained communication. Sultan Rukn al-Din Kilij Arslan IV also tried to establish good relations with Mawlana and the Turkmen ancestors. According to Aflaki, one day Kilij Arslan IV sent five purses of "sim-i sultani." Hoca Mecidiyeddin took the money and brought it to Mawlana. However, Mawlana refused to accept the five purses of gold sent by the sultan, asking, "What is a dead dog doing in al-Aqsa Mosque?" and shouted to the person who brought it, "Throw it away, let whoever wants take it." The bags filled with gifts from the Seljuk sultan were thrown outside, but no one took them, and finally Mawlana ordered that the bags be thrown into the castle moat, which was carried out (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 420–421; Taneri, 1978, 29; Akay, 2014, 72).

During the reign of Sultan Rukn al-din Kilij Arslan IV, he was initially attached to Mawlana, but after a while, he separated from him and took other sheikhs besides Mawlana. Kilij Arslan IV, who gave banquets and organized conversations in his palace, once said that he had "taken the Turkmen sheikh Baba Merendi (Buzağı Baba) as a father" for himself; Mawlana also said; He left there saying, "If you have found a father for yourself, we will find a child for you" and thus a coldness arose between them (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 157–158; Füzûzanfer, 1997, 339–340; Turan, 1993, 531; Turan, 1990, 516; Paydaş, 2007, 27; Kaya, 2015, 183–184; Sayın, 2019, 243). Kilij Arslan IV, was very upset by this situation and fell into a psychological void, did not know what to do and could not escape the trap prepared by his enemies.

Sultan Rukn al-din Kilij Arslan IV apologized for the deterioration of his relations with Mawlana through his vizier, Muin al-din Suleiman Pervâne. Shortly thereafter, both Mawlana and one of his leading disciples, Hüsam al-din Sultan, saw Kilij Arslan IV headless on the throne. Coming to Mawlaan, Kilij Arslan IV said, "The emirs invited us, they showed an alliance, they summoned us to Aksaray to consult on ending the Mongol domination." Mawlana, however, did not approve of his going and replied, "It would be better if you do not go." However, as news of the invitations arrived one after another, Kilij Arslan IV felt

compelled to go. When he arrived in Aksaray, he was ambushed and killed (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 158; Fürüzanfer, 1997, 340; Kaya, 2015, 184). Mawlana, who was performing the sema at that time, sang the following ghazal;

"He said, "Didn't I tell you not to go there, as you know me? I am the fountain of life in this mirage of nothingness. Didn't I tell you not to go there, they will bring you trouble? They are very long-handed strong people, they will tie your feet" (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 158-159; Fürüzanfer, 1997, 341; Akay, 2014, 73; Sayın, 2019, 242-243).

After the sema ended, Mawlana said, "Let's perform the funeral prayer," and recited the takbir. Those present submitted to Mawlana. After the funeral prayer in absentia, Mawlana said, "They strangled poor Rukn al-din. This was God's will, and this is what happened." He then added, "But Rukn al-din will be in a better position in the afterlife" (Eflaki, 1986, I, 159). By stating that the reason for Kilij Arslan IV's death was Mawlana's turning away from him, Aflaki implies that the continuation of his life and reign was possible through prayer and spiritual support (Kaya, 2015, 184). However, it is understood from the narrations that although Mawlana was upset with the sultan from time to time, he prayed for him and advised him to be in a good mood and to do good deeds as a ruler, and he never severed his spiritual bond with him.

Just as Pervâne had previously dethroned Izz al-din Kaykawus II, he also orchestrated the same fate for his brother, Rukn al-din Kilij Arslan IV. He convinced the Mongols that Kilij Arslan IV was preparing for a rebellion by collaborating with the Mamluks and obtained permission for his execution. Invited to Aksaray under the pretext of discussing the Mongols' new rule, Kilij Arslan IV, unaware of the trap set for him, was first poisoned and then executed with a bowstring (İbn Bîbî, 1996, II, 169; Aksarayî, 2000, 64-65; Cahen, 1979, 277; Yılmaz, 2024, 100).

Mawlana took care of and established good relations not only with Sultan Rukn al-din Kilij Arslan IV but also with his family members. Eflâkî also mentions Gumaç Hatun, the wife of Kilij Arslan IV, as one of Mawlana's disciples (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 369; Sayın, 2019, 244-245; Öngören, 2004, 445). Mawlana maintained his contact with women in the ruling circle mostly through Fatıma Hatun, the wife of his eldest son, Sultan Walad. Fatıma Hatun played an active role in guiding the daughters of Gürcü Hatun, Gumaç Hatun, and Pervâne from the families of the rulers and ensured that they were in contact with her father-in-law Mawlana (Eflaki, 1986, II, 136; Ürkmez, 2020, 200).

One day, while Gumaç Hatun was chatting with her female relatives and friends in an old palace, Mawlana suddenly entered and told them to leave immediately. After everyone ran out, the arch of the hall collapsed (Eflâkî, 1986, I, 369). This incident is also an important indicator of Mawlana's spiritual bond with Gumaç Hatun.

With his qualities as a spiritual guide and leader, Mawlana influenced the society's thought and philosophy of life. He not only earned the love and respect of the people but

also of the Seljuk sultans and high-ranking officials, influencing their thinking and lifestyle. Avoiding political conflicts and rivalries between would-be rulers and state officials, he maintained an even-handed and impartial attitude towards all, advising them to avoid wrong decisions as much as possible and encouraging them to pursue good deeds. He worked to ensure that the people were loyal to their state and that administrators pursued policies that prioritized the people. This position made him a virtual ombudsman in relations between the people and public administration. However, it is understood from Mevlevi sources that Mawlana met with Seljuk sultans and rulers less than other scholars and sheikhs of the period, and that the sultans and rulers visited other Sufis more than Mawlana (Küçük, 2007, 41; Küçük, 2016, 57; Ergül, 2015, 183; Öngören, 2004, 445).

Aflakî, who extensively covers the relations between the Seljuk Sultans of Anatolia and Mawlana in his work, seems to have attempted to portray almost all sultans and high-ranking officials, especially Izz al-din Keykavus II and Kilij Arslan IV, and even Sultan Mahmud of the Ghaznavid State (997-1030), as members of the order (Taneri, 1978, 23). This may be true, or it may simply reflect the expectations and assumptions of the order's members.

Mawlana sometimes criticized the Seljuk sultans and sometimes expressed their good and bad qualities through examples and analogies. With his words, "Its name is beylik, viziership, sultanate, but secretly it is death, affliction, and the giving of life. Be a servant, walk freely on earth like a horse; do not be like a corpse carried on shoulders" (Rumi, 2015, 786; Sevgi, 1983, 159), he satirized those who lacked any value or merit, who lived off the people, and especially rulers and administrators who were a burden to the people, portraying them as the living dead.

In his *Masnavi-i Ma'nevi*, Rumi recalls the reign of Prophet Solomon, saying, "He saw hundreds of dangers in his reign. He saw that worldly sovereignty was, even by an iota, a fear for the head. Fear of the head, along with fear of secrets and religion. There is no test like this for us." He then added, "Despite all the power and might he possessed, the wave of that sovereignty took his breath away. When the dust of this sorrow settled on him, he felt sorry for all the sultans in the world" (Rumi, 2015, 126; Sevgi, 1983, 160). He stated that rulership was very difficult, and that the burden of sultanate sometimes took the breath away even from a prophet like Prophet Solomon, thus practically advising against such a difficult task.

Conclusion

The extraordinary political, military, economic, and social developments experienced in Anatolia in the 13th century were a significant factor in the turning of the public, rulers, and state officials to Mawlana. Adopting a simpler understanding of "People's Islam" beyond the high Islamic framework of a madrasa education, Mawlana worked to preserve political unity and social harmony, influencing and enlightening both the Seljuk sultans, state administrators, and the public with his ideas.

Working to maintain Turkish sovereignty in Anatolia and preserve Islam by purifying it of heterodox currents, Mawlana did not share the same intellectual stance with the Seljuk sultans. While Mawlana was neither too close to the Seljuk sultans nor too distant from them, he maintained a certain level of relationship. This was because Mawlana, as a spiritual guide, had the duty to guide the rulers toward goodness and beauty and ensure that the people's demands reached them.

Mawlana acted with the awareness that a ruler's morality would be reflected in his actions, and that actions would be reflected in his actions on the people. Believing that positive guidance and encouragement of good and beauty would also be reflected in the people, he established connections and met with the Seljuk sultans of Turkiye to warn and counsel them to prioritize the public interest in their actions. Taking into account the political, military, economic, and social developments of the country, Mawlana engaged with the Seljuk sultans and state officials with a mission that prioritized the state's survival and the public's well-being. Mawlana's relationship with the Seljuk sultans should be considered and evaluated as part of his mission to encourage rulers to prioritize the interests of the state and the nation in their actions and to contribute to peace and tranquility.

He did not completely isolate himself from the Seljuk sultans, so as to be able to offer them warnings, cautions, and advice. Nor did he make any effort to maintain closeness to the rulers or exert influence over them. Depending on the time and place, his relationship with the Seljuk sultans was sometimes "father-son," sometimes "sheikh-disciple," sometimes "teacher-student," and sometimes "friendship." His relationship with the Seljuk sultans was based on admonishing, counseling, and guidance for the establishment of justice, the establishment of merit, the survival of the state, and the welfare of the nation. In fact, Mawlana's relationship with the Seljuk sultans was a requirement of his historical mission.

Mawlana maintained the dignity of knowledge while meeting with the Seljuk sultans of Mawana. He never sought to please the rulers or gain personal advantage from them, nor did he seek financial support. He did not gain power or influence by improving his position through state officials. However, he occasionally made requests from the Seljuk sultans for the resolution and elimination of a problem, all for the benefit of society. Nevertheless, he always expressed the truth in all clarity, upholding God's precedence. His response to Sultan Izz al-din Keykâvus II, who sought his advice, was, "They ordered you to be a guard, but you are stealing. God made you a sultan, but you are acting on the devil's words," and his criticism of him for "not guarding, but stealing" and "acting on the devil's words," clearly demonstrates that he did not act with the intention of gaining closeness to the sultans.

Mawlana did not act according to the Seljuk sultans' wishes and desires, sometimes keeping them waiting for long periods and sometimes closing his door to them, refusing to

meet with them. Although the Seljuk sultans were sometimes irritated by Mawlaan's warnings and criticisms, and sometimes disregarded his advice or heeded his advice, they showed him respect and reverence, striving to be close to Mawlana.

In his relations with the Seljuk sultans, Mawlana laid out the fundamental philosophy of the relationship between scholars and Sufis and the umara. He demonstrated in practice how and what form a relationship should be between individuals who work for religion and the worldly, possessing both spiritual influence and material power. The fundamental philosophy of Mawlana's relationship with the Seljuk sultans was to ensure that they uphold the rights of God and the people. He stated that true scholars radiate warmth and light like the sun, and that Sufis are the mirrors of the soul to rulers. He emphasized that scholars and Sufis should interact with rulers and statesmen not to gain material power, influence, or advantage from them, but to give them something, visiting and meeting with them to remove the impurity in their inner worlds. Thus, he clarified the attitude of a true scholar and Sufi in their relations with the umara. He laid out the fundamental philosophy of relationships between scholars and umerā, and how they should be. When we examine Mawlana's life and works, we see that he lived by this philosophy throughout his life.

Mawlana advised the Seljuk sultans to prioritize qualifications and merit when appointing umara, to be merciful and forgiving, to prioritize goodness, justice, and the state's interests, and to work for the welfare of the people. He used his spiritual influence to guide those with material power (political, administrative, economic and military) toward good and virtue. For all these reasons, it can be said that, despite the mistakes and missteps of the Seljuk sultan and state officials, Mawlana played a significant role in delaying the collapse of the Türkiye Seljuk State and in maintaining the people's loyalty to the Seljuk dynasty.

Mawlana was one of the most important and influential factors in the Seljuk sultans' commitment to a policy that prioritized the people. As a spiritual guide and leader, he influenced the people's philosophies of life, as well as the Seljuk sultans' thinking, mission, vision, and actions.

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