

## Urmia Lake with the names of Shaha-va-Tele and Shah-Tele

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Urmia Lake National Park is a permanent hypersaline lake located in the Northwest of Iran and is one of the most valuable aquatic ecosystems having rich biodiversity including Archaeobacteria and bacteria, microfungus, phytoplankton, plants, animals and several fossils (Asem *et al.*, 2014, 2016). This lake was called in different names over divergent historical periods i.e. *Matianus* (ماتیانه), *Spauta* (اسپوتا), *Kabodan* (کبودان), *Shahi* (شاهی), *Chichest* (چیچست), *Tela* (تِلا) and *Rezaeyeh* (رضائییه) etc (Emadi, 1991).

Recently, we have received a unique manuscript written by Estakhri (d. 951/957 AD, 10<sup>th</sup> C. استخری/اصطخری) in Persian language, *Al-Masalik wa Al-Mamalik* (Roads and Kingdoms, الممالک و المسالک), and kept in the British Library (IO Islamic 1026). In this codex, Urmia Lake was named *Shaha-va-Tele* Sea (دریای شها و تله) in the map of *Armenia, Arran and Azerbaijan* (Fig. 1). Additionally, it named as *Shah-Tele* (شاه تله) in the same map of other transcription of *Al-Masalik wa Al-Mamalik* available in the Austrian National Library (for more information see Afshar, 1994, p. 578).

Urmia Lake was written *Ormiye* (ارمییه) in the body text of reviewed codices of *Al-Masalik wa Al-Mamalik* (The British Library, IO Islamic 1026; The National Library of France, No. 355; Central Library of Astan Quds Razavi, No. 5623; Library, Museum and Document Center of Iran Parliament, No. 7152; Iran Bastan Museum, No. 3515; The Bodleian Library, No. 373) with the exception of a manuscript existing in the National Library of France (No. 1570) which was called as *Orumiye* (ارومییه). *Shaha-va-Tele* (شها و تله) and *Shah-Tele* (شاه تله) can be attributed to composition of *Shahi* (شاهی) and *Tela* (تِلا), which are two other names of Urmia Lake.

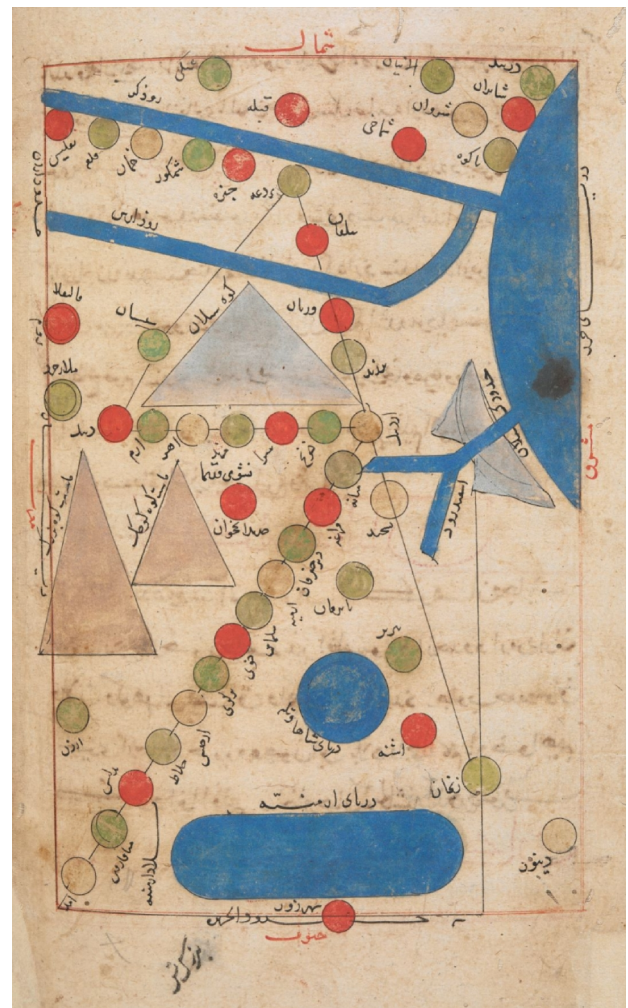


Fig. 1: f49v of *al-Masalik wa'l-Mamluk* (© The British Library IO Islamic 1026; 13 May 2014). Two lakes in the map, Urmia Lake (the smaller lake, here named *Daryaye Shaha-va-Tele*) and Lake Van (here named *Daryaye Arminiya*) are shown near each other (For more information see Galichian, 2007).

In conclusion, based on the information in the maps of *Armenia, Arran and Azerbaijan* in *Al-Masalik wa Al-Mamalik*, existing in the British Library (IO Islamic 1026) and Austrian National Library (No. 344); *Shaha-va-Tele* (شاهها و تله) and *Shah-Tele* (شاه تله) should be added to the ancient names of Urmia Lake.

### Acknowledgment

Our thanks goes back to the British Library for giving us permission to use the image of *Al-Masalik wa Al-Mamalik* (IO Islamic 1026 f51v) in this article.

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