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Abbreviations

AB  Analecta Bollandiana
AION  Annali del Istituto Orientale di Napoli
AJSLL  American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures
AKGWG  Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologische-Historische Klasse
AKM  Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
ANSMN  American Numismatic Society Museum Notes
ATR  Anglican Theological Review
BO  Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana
BSOS  Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies
BSOAS  Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, beginning with vol. 11
BGA  Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum
CRAIBL  Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres (Paris)
CSCO  Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSHB  Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae
DOP  Dumbarton Oaks Papers
EI  Encyclopaedia of Islam (1) first edition, (2) second edition
HTR  Harvard Theological Review
HUCA  Hebrew Union College Annual
IJMES  International Journal of Middle East Studies
IC  Islamic Culture
JA  Journal Asiaticque
JAOS  Journal of the American Oriental Society
JCOI  Journal of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute (Bombay)
JE  Jewish Encyclopaedia
JESHO  Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JJS  Journal of Jewish Studies
JNES  Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JNSI  Journal of the Numismatic Society of India
JPHS  Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society
JQR  Jewish Quarterly Review
JRAS  Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>JRCAS</td>
<td>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSAA</td>
<td>Journal of the Society of Archer Antiquarians</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSS</td>
<td>Journal of Semitic Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>MESAB</td>
<td>Middle East Studies Association Bulletin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPG</td>
<td>Migne, Patrologiae Cursus Completus Series Graeca</td>
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<tr>
<td>MW</td>
<td>Muslim World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC</td>
<td>Oriens Christianus</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCP</td>
<td>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</td>
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<tr>
<td>PO</td>
<td>Patrologia Orientalis</td>
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<tr>
<td>P-OC</td>
<td>Proche-Orient Chrétien</td>
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<tr>
<td>REI</td>
<td>Revue des Études Islamiques</td>
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<td>REJ</td>
<td>Revue des Études Juives</td>
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<td>RHR</td>
<td>Revue de l'Histoire des Religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSO</td>
<td>Rivista degli Studi Orientali</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBE</td>
<td>Sacred Books of the East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHAW</td>
<td>Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil. Hist. Klasse</td>
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<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>Studia Islamica</td>
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<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>Die Welt des Islams/The World of Islam/Le Monde de l'Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WZKM</td>
<td>Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kund des Morgenlandes</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZA</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</td>
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<td>ZDMG</td>
<td>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</td>
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Preface

This project began nearly fifteen years ago as a dissertation in history at the University of California, Los Angeles. It may never be finished. By now, however, most of the appropriate primary sources have been identified, although they have only begun to be exploited. Nevertheless, the following account is offered here as a kind of progress report in the interests of communication and in the hope of receiving constructive criticism.

Inspiration, training, and help have come from too many teachers and friends to mention all of them here. Muhammad Shaban first introduced me to the possibility of historical revision and of cultural assimilation. Speros Vryonis and Nikki Keddie made me an historian. I shall always be grateful for the early and continued support and encouragement of Ira Lapidus and for the assistance of Richard Frye. Thanks for helpful comments go to Richard Cooper, who read an intermediate form of the chapter on administrative theory and practice, and to Richard Bulliet and William Tucker, who took the trouble to read the completed manuscript. They will recognize where I have taken their advice; where I have not, I take the sole responsibility. Special thanks go to Mahmood Ibrahim, who was the best research assistant anyone could have; to Noël Diaz, who prepared the maps; to Patricia Wright, who helped with proofreading and indexing; and to Alice Calaprice and the editorial staff of Princeton University Press. Appreciation is also hereby expressed to all of those—family, colleagues, and friends—whose impatience made me realize that there were others, besides myself, with an interest in seeing this work completed. If this book had a dedication, it would be to the memory of Gustave E. von Grunebaum.

October 27, 1982
Acknowledgments

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IRAQ
AFTER THE MUSLIM CONQUEST
Introduction

THE QUESTION OF CONTINUITY

CONTINUITY OR CHANGE?

In the fourth decade of the seventh century A.D., Iraq was conquered by Muslim Arabs. Since this conquest turned out to be permanent and was part of the conquest of most of western Asia and northern Africa by Muslims in the seventh and eighth centuries, it eventually came to be seen as an historical watershed between the ancient and medieval histories of these regions. There is a certain convenience to this view that is based on the assumption that the Islamic conquest itself had either immediate or eventual consequences, and it is justified to the extent that changes that were taking place at the end of Late Antiquity were caught up and institutionalized in Islamic civilization. But much of the civilization of Late Antiquity either survived fairly intact or found an Islamic form. The central question is: To what extent did the civilization of these regions in the early Islamic period represent a continuation of the past, and what was new about it? Military conquest, the emergence of a new religious tradition, and political domination by a different ethnic group would all seem to be reasonable criteria for periodization. In the case of Iraq, the Islamic conquest had the immediate effect of replacing Magian (or Zoroastrian) rulers who belonged to the Sasanian Persian dynasty with Muslim Arab rulers. Yet the designation of historical periods as late Sasanian or early Islamic refers to a time boundary that may not be very meaningful because such periodization tends to minimize continuities.

Exaggerations of the difference between Islamic civilization and the civilization of Classical Antiquity are the result of overlooking Late Antiquity, the period from about A.D. 300 until 600, during which the changes taking place in western Asia made the culture of this region look more and more “Islamic.” By the sixth century, most of western Asia was divided between two imperial states: the Late Roman or Byzantine empire and the Sasanian empire. Both had experienced internal and external crises during the fifth century, and the reaction in both had led to more complete administrative centralization and absolutism in the sixth century when the rulers of both states attempted
to control their society and economy by means of a bureaucratic, hierarchic, provincial system. Both systems were paralleled by state-supported religious organizations: Christian in the Byzantine empire, Magian in the Sasanian empire. The developing connection between religious organizations and the state led to an increasing insistence on religious conformity, to a tendency to equate religious conformity with political loyalty and to equate nonconformity with treason, and to a tendency for warfare to assume a religious character. But the problems of dealing with religious diversity were handled differently. Justinian (527–57) outlawed it. The accommodation achieved by the Sasanian regime towards the members of non-Magian religious groups in Iraq foreshadowed the way Muslims dealt with their non-Muslim subjects. During this period, and especially in Iraq, these religious groups were transforming themselves into associative communal organizations with their own social institutions.

The relationship between Late Antiquity and Islamic civilization could thus be put in terms of continuity in the direction of change. This is, in fact, the first of five possible constructs for continuity posited by Gerschenkron, who identified them as (1) constancy of direction, (2) periodicity of events (i.e., continuity as cyclical repetition), (3) endogenous change (i.e., change brought about by internal factors), (4) causal regress (i.e., continuity as a chain of causally related events), and (5) stability in the rate of change.\(^1\) Apart from the fact that (2) appears to mistake the similarity of circumstances in a cyclical or repeating pattern for real continuity, the usefulness of Gerschenkron’s approach lies in the way he pointed out the problem of value judgment that is contained in viewing continuity as the gradualness of change. Continuity tends to be regarded as positive and to be identified with stability, or at least with gradual change brought about “naturally” by internal factors. Change tends to be regarded as negative and to be identified with the disruption, discontinuity, and readjustment brought about “unnaturally” by external factors. However, such value judgments represent the point of view of those who have an interest in the status quo and are the opposite for those who desire change.\(^2\)

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\(^2\) J. Wansbrough remarks with regard to the establishment of a standard of Classical Arabic and of the concept of an eternal, immutable scripture that both involved “a distinctly static notion of authority, according to which change must signify corruption and conformity betoken nostalgic satisfaction,” in *The Sectarian Milieu* (Oxford, 1978), p. 154.
The question of continuity

Such value judgments are embedded in explanations of the early formation of Islamic civilization that have tended to take one of two forms. One explanation is put in terms of the external "influence" exerted by some other, older cultural tradition through conscious, intentional cultural "borrowing" by Muslims (heterogenetic). This approach often reflects the interests of those who use it. One of the earliest examples is the way in which culturally conscious Persians in the eighth and ninth centuries tended to ascribe everything to a pre-Islamic, Sasanian origin. More recently "Roman" and western "Christian" explanations have been used by European orientalists who defined civilization in Greco-Roman terms, or whose knowledge of western Asia stopped at the eastern border of the Roman empire, and who compared Islam to Catholic or Calvinist forms of Christianity. Some of them obfuscated the issue by using value-loaded east-west terminology and by putting the matter in terms of the fate of Hellenism in the face of creeping orientalization. Partly to offset the negative implications of such an approach, others presented the matter in terms of cultural inheritance, especially the inheritance by Muslims of Hellenistic philosophy and science and of Jewish or Christian religious values and doctrines. Since the argument was often philological in nature and rested on the cultural value of loan words from other languages in Arabic, it tended to suggest that Muslims possessed a "borrowed" culture. It is no accident that this approach coincided with the height of European imperialism in Islamic countries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, since the use of Judaeo-Christian and Hellenistic explanations served to make Islamic civilization more "respectable" in European terms.

The second approach explains Islamic civilization as internally self-generated (orthogenetic). It traces all significant aspects of Islamic civilization to the religious requirements of Islam (which were probably more important for providing sanctions). This approach tends to be semiapologetic and nationalistic, and its popularity understandably coincides with the growing national independence of Muslims in the latter part of the twentieth century because it makes Islamic civilization more respectable in indigenous terms.

Heterogenetic explanations undermine Islamic originality, and orthogenetic explanations minimize historical continuity. Both approaches are often monist in nature; that is, they give one-dimensional explanations by preferring a "Roman," "Iranian," "Arab," "Christian," or "Jewish," origin for Islamic civilization in order to take
vicarious credit for its achievement. Lambton reconciled both approaches by identifying the changes that produced Islamic civilization as (1) the influence of Islamic legal theory on the development of social and economic institutions, and (2) the modification of Islamic theory by “the attitude of mind and custom prevailing in the conquered territories.”

Monist approaches have largely been abandoned in recent decades in favor of a pluralist approach that sees the formation of Islamic civilization as a cultural synthesis of many traditions of diverse origin. In this form, pluralist explanations probably go back to Masʿūdī (d. 965), who saw Islamic civilization as the heir to the cultural contributions of Persians, Chaldaeans, Greeks, Egyptians, Turks, Indians, Chinese, and Arabs. Hodgson balanced the ancient heritage against Islamic originality by proposing a cultural dialectic composed of three “moments.” In the first moment a new cultural tradition begins in a creative action, in an inventive, revelatory, or charismatic encounter. The second moment is the creation of a group of people who are committed to its importance and who perpetuate and institutionalize it. The third, rather extended, moment is one of cumulative interaction in which the new tradition maintains its vitality through debate and dialogue, contrasting interests, secondary commitments and discoveries, and conflicting sets of presuppositions about what the tradition should involve. For Hodgson, Islamic civilization was unique in spite of its pre-Islamic heritage because of “the relative weighting of different elements in the culture.”

One of the main problems with the cultural synthesis approach to Islamic civilization is the tendency to treat it as a monolithic whole. Even in Islam’s first century one finds many different and conflicting trends among Muslims. It is more productive to think in terms of what Muslims did than in terms of what Islam did, and even a dialectic treatment of issues is an oversimplification. Multidimensional explanations will be closer to reality, and creative adaptation (but then by whom?) is a better explanation than cultural “borrowing.”

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5 M.G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam* (Chicago, 1974), I, 80–83, 104. In the same vein, M. A. Cook, in “The origins of kalām,” *BSOAS* 43 (1980):43, declares his belief that “the raw materials of this culture are for the most part old and familiar, and that it is in the reshaping of these materials that the distinctiveness and interest of the phenomenon resides.”
real external "influences" have different degrees of effectiveness on people who have different backgrounds and interests.

**CULTURAL INTERACTION**

Questions of continuity and change have thus become a matter of cultural interaction. This book is a study of the emergence of a local form of Islamic society in Iraq in the seventh and early eighth centuries and of the interaction of Muslim conquerors from Arabia with the native population they found there. It is hardly sufficient to explain their influences on each other in terms of "cultural osmosis." People do not necessarily imitate their neighbors, and when they do, the reasons can usually be found. One of the main purposes for evaluating the extent of continuity and change in early Islamic Iraq is to understand the nature and process of cultural continuity and transmission. It is to discover and to demonstrate the causes and means responsible for change or continuity and how and why either occurred. This, in turn, involves understanding the circumstances, identifying the channels of transmission, and appreciating the reasons why anyone would adopt aspects of the culture of someone else or why changes were effective.

Theories of cultural transmission have been used to explain diffusion. Since diffusion involves the social or geographical spread of an element of culture, it is a matter of change for the society that receives it. But when cultural transmission is put into a temporal context as the means whereby a local culture is preserved or adapted by successive populations in the same place, it becomes an aspect of continuity. The validity of the concept of continuity through transmission depends partly on whether or not the adoption of the external aspects of a culture necessarily means the adoption of the attitudes and values of the donor. Ashtor has denied that there was a donor-receiver relationship at all between the natives of the conquered territories and the Arab conquerors. Glick identifies channels of communication as one of the elements necessary for cultural change through transmission by diffusion, although he seems to assume that otherwise culture is inherently conservative. He also uses the concept of selectivity by a recipient culture in adopting what is offered by a donor culture, and he identifies economic demands, fashion, the desire for knowledge,

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INTRODUCTION

and the existence of conflict as factors that influence selectivity. He cites Julián Ribera’s theory of imitation, which explains the exchange of cultural elements between two cultures that are in contact in terms of communication, the presence or absence of cultural barriers to communication, and the social and psychological receptivity of the recipient culture. With certain modifications these explanations also serve for continuity through transmission in the case of Iraq where the conditions for successful transmission were the survival of the former culture, contact with the newcomers, communication, and reinforcement.

Reinforcement refers to the way an apparent similarity of customs or similar, common, or shared interests makes it easier for two populations that are in contact to increase their resemblance to each other. Where such reinforcement exists, there is a tendency for similarities to increase. When reinforcement is absent, there is resistance to such acculturation. Recurring evidence that something like this was happening in early Islamic Iraq made it necessary to consider reinforcement as a factor in cultural interaction. A similar idea, usually called receptivity, has been used in diffusion theory. Rosenthal suggests that the parallel between Platonic political ideas and the Islamic concept of Muḥammad as an ideal ruler enabled Platonic ideas to enter Islamic political theory. Gibb used a form of it to explain the selectivity of Europeans in their borrowing from Islamic civilization. People on the receiving end of transmission by diffusion tend to disregard those things which conflict with their own values and accept or adopt only those things which are perceived as serving their own needs. Hodgson repeated this idea in the form that receptivity is determined by particular needs and interests. Glick gives a fairly complete statement of the importance of receptivity for transmission by diffusion:

... even if the agents of diffusion are abundantly present ... an idea may not diffuse unless it is congruent with the dominant modes of thought of the recipient culture. If incongruent (or apparently so) it must be stated in familiar terminology or placed within a rec-

10 Hodgson, Venture, I, 80.
ognized framework which makes it intelligible and renders its acceptance reasonable.¹¹

But this is still in the context of diffusion, and Parker's suggestion that the impact of Arian German Christianity on the existing Roman tradition of the union of church and state in the Germanic states of the fifth and sixth centuries was to strengthen that tradition by "inoculation from a parallel tradition of the same kind"¹² comes closer to the way reinforcement will be used here. The same is true of the way Chaney explains the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity in terms of an interpenetration of Germanic and Roman Christian religious traditions.¹³

However, in dealing with such issues at this level of abstraction, there is a tendency to hypostatize culture. Cultures do not make choices; people do. It is important to conduct this discussion in terms of the choices and behavior of individuals. At least in Iraq many competing alternatives existed at the same time within each of the ethnic and religious populations. Nor should it be assumed that cultural choices assisted by reinforcement are necessarily conscious, rational, or purposive. In fact, appealing to reinforcement to explain successful cultural transmission may raise more questions than it answers. It is much easier to say what was transmitted and how it was transmitted than it is to explain why reinforcement existed in the first place. The question of why the Muslim Arabs who arrived in Iraq in the seventh century had cultural and religious similarities to the people they found there is an important side issue that will not be treated here. That is the proper subject for a different book, and for the purpose of discussion it will be assumed here that the Qur'an is what Muslims have always said it is.

WHY IRAQ?

The Islamic conquests are often interpreted in terms of their impact on the Mediterranean world and on western Europe. In its classic form, the debate surrounding the Pirenne thesis is Eurocentric because it puts the significance of Islam in terms of what it meant or did not

¹¹ Glick, Islamic and Christian Spain, p. 273.
mean for western Europe.\textsuperscript{14} The importance of considering Iraq lies in understanding the significance of the Islamic conquest for western Asia rather than for Europe.

Any region in western Asia that came under Islamic rule in the seventh century could and ought to be examined for this purpose. But the nature, extent, and accessibility of information about Iraq in this period make the task relatively more easy compared to other regions. The availability of information reflects the importance of what was happening there. Why does Iraq seem ultimately to be more important than other conquered provinces such as Syria or Egypt in the shaping of early Islamic civilization? The answer lies partly in the ethnic and religious diversity of Iraq and partly in its location at a major economic crossroad and at the cultural crossroad where Semitic and Iranian cultural traditions came together. Iraq was a place of cultural creativity and a center for cultural diffusion. Changes that were taking place there make the region unique during late antiquity but characteristic of Islamic civilization.

As much as possible, the scope of this discussion will be confined to that part of the Tigris-Euphrates valley which was under late Sasanian rule. This region was nearly co-extensive with the western quarter of the Sasanian empire and roughly comparable to the modern state of Iraq. This book is a local case study of the development of a regional form of Islamic civilization. The problems created by treating Iraq in relative isolation from the rest of the Islamic empire are much less than the danger of generalizing too widely on the basis of local conditions in a single province. The reader is cautioned not to apply the conclusions that are reached here to other places without first verifying the similarity of their conditions.

METHOD

The approach and method of argument and presentation that will be used here have been conditioned by several problems in modern scholarship. One of them involves the temporal framework that has been used to assess the degree of continuity or change following the Islamic conquests. Historical continuity and change only exist in a temporal framework and whatever framework is used for comparison between point A and point B in time will be somewhat arbitrary.

However, the tendency has been to lump several hundred years together and to treat them as a monolithic, static unit. In particular, all of Late Antiquity from 300 until 600 and Islamic history until about 900 tend to be taken as single periods for the purpose of comparison and evaluation. But there are really no static “Sasanian” and “Islamic” models to compare. Proper account should be taken of continuing change during both periods. Immediate continuities or changes may only be evaluated by comparing conditions and institutions at the very end of Sasanian rule with those directly after the Islamic conquest. Such conditions and changes are described in the accounts of the conquest and occurred during the lifetime of a single generation. Long-term continuities or changes resulting from trends and developments that were taking place from the sixth until the eighth centuries serve to put the effects of the conquest into perspective.

For the sake of convenience, several shorter periods will be used as a framework for discussion. The late Sasanian period began with the political and economic recovery in the early sixth century during the second reign of Qubād I (498/9-531) and lasted in Iraq until the Islamic conquest in the 630s. Within this period, the reign of Khüsraw I Anūshirvān (531–79), who completed the reforms of Qubād I, contrasts with that of Khüsraw II Parviz (591–628), which saw the most extreme expressions of late Sasanian political absolutism and imperial ambition. Many of the conditions in Iraq at the time of the Islamic conquest had only arisen during the reign of Khüsraw II. Early Islamic history is most conveniently subdivided into a period immediately following the conquest in the 630s until the outbreak of the first civil war among Muslims in 657, a period between the first (657–61) and second (680–92) civil wars, and a period following the second civil war until the end of significant imperial expansion in the second and third decades of the eighth century. Since the period between the first and second civil wars virtually coincides with the reign of Mu‘āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān (661–80), who was succeeded by his son Yazīd (680–83), it is convenient to call it the Sufyānī period. This will serve to distinguish it and them from the rule of their relatives, the descendents of Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam (684–85), which lasted until the Marwānī dynasty was replaced by the ʿAbbāsī dynasty in 750. The early Marwānī period, when the Islamic empire was at its height, occupies the decades following the second civil war and the reigns of ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān (685–705) and his son al-Walīd I (705–15). In most
cases, the discussion here will begin with the late Sasanian period and go through the early Marwānī period.

A second problem, which is related to the first, is a tendency to make grand generalizations on a narrow base of evidence. In particular, there has been a tendency to generalize about Islamic history as a whole on the basis of conditions in Iraq, partly because the information about Iraq in early Arabic literature is so extensive. Standard interpretations that have been produced in this way have tended towards nationalism and have described early Islamic history as a period of “Arab domination.” Treatments of specific subjects based on a more extensive examination of Arabic literature tend to be put within the framework of this standard interpretation whether the evidence fits it or not. At most, the conclusions of such studies only revise details without challenging the larger picture.

On the other side is a tendency to take the standard interpretation as a basis for arguing more general issues, to appeal to translations of the sources and the secondary works of modern scholars without verification, and to reach conclusions based on a priori arguments and unverified assumptions. Such an approach tends to build an intellectual house of cards and dissolves in meaningless generalizations. In this respect no theory is any better than the evidence that supports it.

The converse, of course, is that the answers one gets are no better than the questions one asks. In recent decades, social and economic issues have attracted increasing interest among historians in almost all fields. It has been tempting to apply modern social science theories and methods to such questions because of assumptions about their universality. But these theories and methods have largely been derived from the study of modern, western societies, and their applicability to premodern, nonwestern societies needs to be demonstrated before putting them to use. It seems more prudent and responsible to err on the side of caution, at least at first, and to use such theories and methods only when the evidence justifies it. This issue is, in fact, related to the general historiographical conflict between assertions of uniform, general “laws” of historical processes and assertions of the specificity of time and place. Generalizations are necessarily based on bodies of specific data, and their usefulness in understanding different bodies of data needs to be balanced against the limits of their applicability.15

For instance, models that have been developed for discussing modern

15 Gerschenkron, Continuity, p. 7.
social change may be of some help. Gerth and Mills proposed treating social change under six categories: (1) what changed, (2) how it changed, (3) the direction of change, (4) the rate of change, (5) causes or conditions for change, and (6) the causal importance of individuals and ideas.16 Ginsberg gave conquest as an example for two of the eight causative factors that have been used to explain social change: (4) external influences and (7) fortuitous events.17 Change is also regarded as a result of social conflict. Conflict between societies creates larger social units, establishes or reinforces social stratification, and diffuses social and cultural innovations. Conflict between groups within a society is considered to be a major cause of innovation and change. Continuity is preserved by force or by social controls such as education. The difference in the rate of change between the rapid transformations caused by technological innovation and the slower changes in social and political institutions and in former ideologies has been called "cultural lag."18 Although such constructs may not be entirely suitable for the seventh century, a modified form of lag theory seems to be one of the best explanations for continuity.

The same reservations apply to metropolitan theories of cultural diffusion that are widely used to explain cultural history. In their simplest form they are based on the assumption that all significant cultural change or innovation occurs at political capitals around the courts of rulers whence they are diffused to other places. Even though the Sasanian imperial capital was located in Iraq, it could be argued that this was because of the economic and strategic importance of this region to the Sasanians and not vice versa. The early Islamic imperial capital was located outside of Iraq at Madina in western Arabia and then at Damascus in Syria. The importance of the developments that were taking place in Iraq in the early Islamic period was unrelated to the location of the imperial capital which eventually returned to Iraq under the 'Abbāsīs.

The object here is to strike a balance between those approaches that are all description with little or no interpretation and those that are all assertion with little evidence. The goal is to present enough evidence to justify the summaries and generalizations and to generalize without

INTRODUCTION

oversimplifying. Readers have a right to examine and evaluate the evidence on which arguments and conclusions are based so they can judge whether or not the generalizations and conclusions are justified. To this end, the method will be to present the evidence and to discuss what it means in terms of continuity or change. The arguments and conclusions derived from evidence will emerge in the course of the discussion and the reader will be allowed to share in the process of induction. However, many of the controversial issues in modern scholarship that are specific to particular subjects, often textual in nature, and only tangential to questions of continuity and change will be sidestepped unless they are directly important to the discussion. Although the argument is based on primary sources in several languages and on early Arabic literature, a rather large body of modern scholarship and some translations of sources into European languages will be cited for the convenience of the reader. Since some scholars occasionally misquote their sources, cite passages for nonexistent information, or argue on the basis of inaccurate translations, such secondary works and translations will be cited as far as possible, only if their statements have been verified in the original texts themselves. The reliability of modern works and the relative value of primary and secondary sources will be discussed in the section on Resources.

What, then, constitutes evidence? Interpretations of Sasanian and early Islamic history normally rely heavily on a rather extensive body of Arabic literature that was compiled from older materials during the ninth and tenth centuries. Whether or not the information contained in this literature is reliable for circumstances before the ninth century is the subject of a controversy that has been going on for thirty years. Although the material in these compilations has been colored by anachronism and partisanship, it would be just as arbitrary to assume that they are unusable for earlier history on the basis of their time of compilation alone, as it would to use them uncritically.

One way to deal with this material is internal: by subjecting it to extensive textual criticism to determine the probable origin and relative reliability of specific accounts. For instance, one of the major sources of information about the Sasanians is their Book of Kings, which was first compiled in the Middle Persian language during the reign of Khusraw Anūshirvān and then completed until the end of the reign of Khusraw Parvīz during the reign of Yazdagerd III (632–51). In 731 it was translated into Arabic by a Persian bureaucrat, Rūzbih/`Abdullāh ibn al-Muqaffa`, in the Islamic administration, but an
illustrated copy of the Middle Persian text still existed in the tenth century. Neither the Middle Persian text nor Ibn al-Muqaffa's translation survive today, although the latter was used and quoted by several later Arabic-writing authors whose works have survived. A close comparison of late Sasanian and early Islamic conditions in Iraq as described in Arabic literature reveals significant differences between these two periods in spite of anachronisms; and this encourages the use of Arabic literature itself for comparative purposes. The works of earlier eighth-century Arabic-writing authors such as Abū Mīkhnaf (689–775)19 and al-Madāʾinī (753–830), who were natives of Iraq, provide valuable information about conditions in early Islamic Iraq. Their works, too, survive mostly in the form of citations and quotations by later authors, so the information they provide may be identified as such. With the exception of a few crucial issues, the extensive textual criticism used to evaluate these materials will not be recorded here. The material that has been chosen for presentation reflects implicit judgments and a good deal of common sense in identifying the "most likely" accounts. If one accepts in general what is reported in Arabic literature, the emerging picture is sufficiently coherent.

The other way of dealing with this material is external. Although the information provided in Arabic literature should not be ignored, it should be weighed against the information contained in contemporary non-Arabic accounts. The best argument is one based on undeniably authentic, contemporary materials from the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. For Iraq such materials consist of coins, administrative seals and seal impressions, inscriptions, buildings, magical incantations written on bowls, letters, biographies, chronicles, and religious literature written in Persian, Aramaic, Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic. The use of all available materials makes possible a multivalent evaluation of each of them. Since Arabic literature tends to be concerned with the history of Muslims, these materials also provide information about the non-Muslim population. Above all, the information contained within the Arabic literary tradition is most convincing when it can be verified by earlier Middle Persian, Syriac, and Greek materials. For instance, the contemporary account of warfare along the Byzantine-Sasanian frontier during the sixth century, which was composed by Prokopios in Greek, contains material that was included

19 For the rehabilitation of Abū Mīkhnaf as a reliable source of information about Iraq, see U. Sezgin, Abū Mīhnaf: Ein Beitrag zur Historiography der Umayyadischen Zeit (Leiden, 1971).
in the Sasanian Book of Kings. The reader should be alerted to the importance of confirming information from Arabic literature with information from sixth and seventh-century Syriac and Greek texts.

In order to deal with the history of an entire region and all of its people, not only the Muslim Arabs, it is necessary to construct an understanding of conditions based on primary sources of diverse natures, written in different languages, and pertaining to different disciplines. One purpose for doing this is to open up several new avenues of investigation by showing how such diverse materials may be used. Even those who are familiar with early Islamic history may find some of this material unfamiliar, but the only way to make unfamiliar materials familiar is to use them.

The use of all of these materials makes a more multidimensional comparative approach possible. The comparison of two adjacent periods should be more than a mere "before and after" catalogue of similarities and differences, and it ought to avoid a thrashing-about in a sea of details. No one should impose an interpretation on the material or look for particular features; one can usually find whatever one looks for, and a predisposition to emphasize similarities or differences will have a prejudicial effect on the outcome. Principles ought to be derived from specific circumstances for each society, culture, or period before one engages in comparisons. In this case, valid comparisons of conditions in Iraq before and after the Islamic conquest depend on a proper reconstruction and understanding of those conditions, so that criteria can be established to determine what may be used as evidence for continuity or change; this evidence should form the basis for the conclusions. Static comparisons should be avoided and a concern should prevail for the dynamics of continuity and change and for the process inherent in the formation of social institutions and in the transmission of culture. The tendency to emphasize law and language in discussions of society and culture should be complemented by a concern for values and behavior, interests and attitudes, and the perspective of the people themselves.

The major advantage in such a comparative method lies in the possibility of recognizing the importance of things that may at first seem unimportant or be overlooked. The best way to begin is to consider several topical themes separately before trying to interrelate them. Recurring patterns or themes will emerge as one moves from one topic to another. The method of presentation here will be to juxtapose and to discuss several subjects separately in terms of con-
tinuity and change. The reader will be asked to absorb discrete chunks of material on different subjects which, hopefully, will be tied together by the several common interpretive themes running through them. But the use of categories to present information and to organize discussion in a topical way has its own problems. The imposition of an Aristotelian topical structure on material tends to give it an architectonic appearance, and makes circumstances appear to be more stable, ordered, and coherent than they actually were. It is important to remember, therefore, that the issues were really more complex and dynamic than they are treated here.


**SUBJECTS**

Because of the nature of the information available concerning Iraq from the sixth to the eighth centuries, the most immediately productive subjects for discussion are administrative traditions, patterns of ethnographic distribution, social and religious organization, and religious belief and practice. Whenever possible, attitudes and behavior will be taken into account. The first section will deal with administration. The remaining two sections will deal with the people of Iraq according
to the ethnolinguistic and religious categories they used to identify themselves and each other.

The section on administration will be divided into separate discussions of administrative theory and practice, taxation, and the geographical units of administration. This section will present a point-by-point comparison between the late Sasanian and early Islamic administrative systems in Iraq, including political theories and administrative ethics. The late Sasanian administrative system is not as familiar as it ought to be. It is an important example of the highly centralized absolutist traditions of Late Antiquity. Although it was similar to the contemporary Byzantine system in many ways, it was closer than the Byzantine system to the administrative traditions that developed among Muslims and were spread by them. It is generally assumed that early Islamic administration followed a Byzantine model merely because the political capital at Damascus in Syria lay in former Byzantine territory. A tendency also exists to associate the revival of Persian culture and administrative traditions with the advent of the 'Abbāsī dynasty in the mid-eighth century simply because the 'Abbāsī movement arose in the province of Khurasan in north-eastern Iran and established its imperial capital at Baghdad near the former Sasanian capital in Iraq. The section on administration is intended to demonstrate two things: that Sasanian administrative institutions, as they were adapted by Muslims during the seventh century, continued to be developed after the Islamic conquest, and that this happened in Iraq (as well as in the other eastern provinces) at least a century earlier than is usually assumed.

The fact that descriptions of the Sasanian administrative system and political theory were preserved in Arabic literature is important in itself. But because both the system and the theory continued to be developed and became increasingly rationalized and consistent under Islamic rule, the theoretical expressions assigned to the Sasanians in Arabic literature are very likely to be products of the ninth century or later. Quotations of statements by Sasanian rulers such as Ardashīr I (226–41) or Khusraw Anūshirvān, which occur in Arabic literature, need not be taken as authentic third-century or sixth-century expressions. Such statements are more important for the ideas they contain and indicate that the people who expressed them felt that they were appropriate to the Sasanian political tradition of authoritarian rule.

The second section is basically ethnographic and will deal with the people of Iraq according to ethnolinguistic categories. The major di-
visions are among those whose primary language was a form of Ar­
amaic, Persian, or Arabic. Several other groups such as Kurds, Syrians, Indians, etc. are treated in the last chapter of this section. The first concern in dealing with all of these categories is to locate them geo­
graphically and socially in Iraq in the late Sasanian period and to
discover whether or how their location changed as a result of the
conquest. However it is equally important to consider the nature and
significance of such ethnic identities because many people were poly­
lingual and there was extensive cultural interpenetration and inter­
action. There is a general tendency to orient discussions of such matters
towards the assumptions of cultural nationalism, to identify a land
with a people, to place a positive value on cultural homogeneity, and
to put the significance of language in terms of “national” identity. The
intent here is to avoid such issues and to concentrate instead on the
realities of ethnic diversity and on the cultural influences exerted by
different ethnic groups on each other. The assumption that a geo­
graphical or ecological region coincides with a cultural region is es­
sentially a projection of modern cultural nationalism. There seems to
be a feeling that geography, language, and religion ought to coincide
and that something is wrong if they do not. Cultural unity tends to
be identified with stability, and diversity is regarded as not merely
untidy but as somehow unstable, even though diversity may provide
some of the conditions for cultural creativity. Iraq may be viewed
either in terms of the survival of ancient, indigenous Mesopotamian
traditions or as a cross road of culture with no real geographical bound­
aries in cultural terms, but having different degrees of interaction and
integration with the larger cultural region in western Asia of which it
was a part.

The third section is based on religious categories and will discuss
the people of Iraq as Magians, Jews, Christians, pagans, gnostics, and
Muslims. The formation of social boundaries along religious lines in
late Sasanian and early Islamic Iraq is an undeniable fact. The question
is what it signifies. The realities of life for such religious communities
are usually understood in terms of their legal status vis-à-vis their
rulers and the degree of religious toleration they were granted. Al­
though this is an important issue, there is a tendency to overlook their
internal social organization and continuing change and development,
especially among the non-Muslim population. The treatment of these
religious communities also tends to be compartmentalized. There is a
separate scholarly literature for each religious tradition, very little
INTRODUCTION

comparative scholarship, and a tendency to forget that they were all part of the same society. As a result specialists in each religion tend to know less than they should about the others. One of the main objectives here will be to point out the common features and themes among all of them.

The use of ethnic and religious categories for the purpose of discussion has both advantages and problems. These are the categories provided by our sources and are important reflections of the contemporary outlook and of contemporary identities. Ethnographic changes were as significant for cultural change as religious conversion was for continuity (because converts preserved some of their former religious background). Glick's suggestion that the use of ethnic stereotypes is typical of societies in which different groups are competing for power\(^\text{20}\) appears to be applicable to Iraq in this period, although it might be suggested that the same is true of religious stereotypes, especially under the last Sasanians. However, Glick's model of an ethnically stratified society\(^\text{21}\) does not seem to apply to early Islamic Iraq at all, as we shall see. The main disadvantage of using ethnic and religious categories is that they emphasize ethnic and religious differences. Such a framework for discussion is not entirely satisfactory because it masks the features common to different ethnic and religious groups in the kind of mixed, pluralistic society that existed in Iraq.

TEXTUAL AIDS

The ethnic and religious diversity of Iraq in the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods is reflected in the linguistic diversity of the written materials. In the interest of precision, technical terms and proper names will normally be transliterated in the form in which they occur in the text being cited. The language to which such terms belong will be identified by abbreviations as follows:

- A. Aramaic
- Ak. Akkadian
- Ar. Arabic
- Av. Avestan
- Gr. Greek
- Heb. Hebrew
- L. Latin
- M. Mandaic
- M.P. Middle Persian
- N.P. New Persian
- Syr. Syriac


\(^{21}\) Ibid., p. 178.
This will provide clues to the strengths and weaknesses of the argument and alert the reader to the linguistic significance of such terms without unduly cluttering the text. Terms will be defined the first time they are used and any term which is used more than once is included in the glossary. Among the Iranian languages, Avestan was used for the oldest of the Magian religious writings; Middle Persian was the official administrative and main literary language under the Sasanians, who used it in their inscriptions and documents; and New Persian was the spoken language in western Iran and Iraq by the late Sasanian period. Among the Semitic languages other than Arabic and Hebrew, Syriac and Mandaic exist as forms of Aramaic. Pahlavi and Kufic refer to scripts, not to languages. Middle Persian was written in the Pahlavi script, Arabic in the Kufic script. Both the Pahlavi and Kufic scripts were derived from scripts which were used to write the Aramaic language. In transliterating Syriac names and terms, when the consonant $b$ stands for the Syriac soft $b$ it will be transliterated as $bh$ to reflect the orthography, but it should be pronounced as $v$.

The way in which loan words circulated among all of these languages is, in itself, a feature of the kind of multilingual, religiously diverse society that existed in Iraq. However, there is a tendency to rely on philology in cultural history, to look to the etymology of loanwords, and to see their significance as evidence of cultural transmission or inheritance. For instance, the fact that the term *akkar*, which is used for a sharecropper in early Arabic, is derived ultimately from the ancient Sumerian term *en gar* suggests an important aspect of continuity in indigenous Mesopotamian labor arrangements. But the main fallacy in such an approach lies in assuming that such terms have always meant the same thing and were used in the same way. This sort of approach seems to work best when such terms are accompanied by patterns of behavior, values, or institutions, which are more important than the terms themselves, after all.

Terms which circulated among several languages usually changed their form according to the rules of the language in which they were used. For instance, the Middle Persian term for a Magian priest was *magōpat*. This term occurs in Syriac texts as *mōhpaṭā*, but the New Persian form, *mōbadh*, is used in Arabic texts. Similarly, the Middle Persian word for a landlord or administrator of a rural subdistrict is *dēhkān*. Its Middle Persian plural is *dēhkānān*, but in Syriac texts it occurs as *dahqānē*, which is the Syriac plural form; in Arabic texts, it is given the form of an Arabic broken plural, as *dahāqīn*. Likewise,
the ancient Sumerian term for a bureaucratic scribe, dupsar, survived in Middle Persian as dipir, which occurs in Syriac texts as dawir. Its New Persian form is dabir, but this is usually translated by the Arabic term kātib ("one who writes") in Arabic texts, and the New Persian term for chief scribe, dabīrbadh, is translated into Arabic as ra’is al-kuttāb ("head of the scribes"). The New Persian term shomordeh is translated by the Arabic dār al-ḥisāb both of which mean "counting house." The significance of such accurate Arabic translations of Persian terms and phrases should not be overlooked. They provide some of the best evidence that the bilingual Arabs and Persians who were responsible for these translations really understood what these terms and phrases meant.

The presence of Arabic loanwords in Middle Persian texts is equally significant. For instance the term asl was used in early Arabic for the property equal to the principal that was mortgaged for a loan. This term occurs as aslik in a Magian apocalyptic text that was written in Middle Persian shortly after the conquest, in reference to property mortgaged for tax debts. Since the language of debt was already used by Persians for taxes owed to the state in the late Sasanian period, the use of an Arabic term in such a context suggests not only that Arabs brought certain economic customs and their terminology with them but also that this had an impact on Magian Persians. The similarity between Persian and Arab economic practices provided sufficient reinforcement to enable a Magian Persian who was hostile to Muslim Arab rule to apply an Arabic term for principal to tax debts. However, this is a great deal to infer from a single term and the argument does not necessarily depend on this kind of analysis. Nevertheless, the presence and use of loanwords can be significant, and in order to enable the reader to recognize them, transliterated terms will be identified by the language to which they belong regardless of the language of the text in which they occur.

Proper names are also transformed from one language to another. John is Yō hannan in Syriac and Yaḥyā in Arabic. The Arabic name of ʿAbdullāh ibn az-Zubayr, the rival caliph during the second civil war, is rendered on coins as Apdula-i Zupiran in Pahlavi script, following Middle Persian usage. Theophoric names also occur in different religious and linguistic traditions. İsho’yahbh (Isadore) means “Jesus gave” in Syriac, and Dadhisho’ means the same thing in New Persian. Both names were used by local Christians. The New Persian name,
Yazdândádh (Theodore), means “God (Ohrmazd) gave” or “the Yazatas gave” and was used by Magians.

Because the forms of place names occurring in Arabic literature generally reflect the actual pronunciation during the seventh century, these forms will be used throughout the text without the Arabic definite article (al-) or diacritical marks, except for the consonants ‘ayn (‘) and hamza (‘). The reader may wish to refer to the map in part I, chapter 3, “Administrative Geography.” The Arabic name, Mada’in (literally “the cities”), will be used for the Sasanian imperial capital instead of the name Ctesiphon because it is more descriptive of the metropolis. By the late Sasanian period, Ctesiphon was only one of several adjacent cities on both sides of the Tigris river. In discussing coins, the dates that are actually used on them will be given in the solar era of Yazdagerd III, which began in 632 and in the lunar era of the Hijra (A.H.), which began in 622.

This work is intended to be only a preliminary statement. It is not intended or expected to be definitive or to exhaust the subject. Its purpose is more to provoke discussion than to end it. Important aspects of economic, intellectual, and literary history will be mentioned only in passing or not at all. Intellectual history will be discussed only in terms of political theory and religious doctrine. There will be no treatment of science, technology, or art. This study of early Islamic Iraq is essentially an attempt at a descriptive analysis of some of the more significant aspects of continuity and change—a forest and trees approach—by establishing patterns and precedents prevalent during the century before the conquest. Against these patterns, then, the nature and extent of continuity or of the changes brought about by the conquest can be measured. Let us begin by considering administration.
Part I

ADMINISTRATION
Chapter 1  
ADMINISTRATIVE THEORY  
AND PRACTICE

THE ORGANIZATION OF ADMINISTRATION

The Late Sasanian Monarchy

The debt that Islamic government owed to Sasanian administration tends to be exaggerated. Culturally conscious Persians such as the anonymous author of the Kitāb at-tāj claimed that the rules of administration used by Muslims had been borrowed from the Sasanians.1 Arabic literature tends to heighten the impression that Islamic institutions were of Sasanian origin by anachronistically describing the Sasanians in contemporary ninth and tenth-century terms. In order to extract valid conclusions from such a mass of tendentious details, it is important to understand the nature of the Sasanian system and the theories that supported it on the eve of the Islamic conquest, as well as the process by which the principles and procedures of Sasanian statecraft were adapted by early Muslim administrators.

The Sasanian empire had achieved the greatest degree of centralization during the last century of its existence. The late Sasanian administrative bureaus at the capital at Mada’in, on the Tigris river in central Iraq, seem to have been organized in a fourfold system. Income was handled by a bureau of taxes and was used mainly to furnish the army with mounts, arms, provisions, and pay which were stored at military depots and distributed by means of a muster roll by military scribes. The scribes in the chancellery dealt with administrative and foreign correspondence and a fourth department was responsible for sealing and registering official documents.2

Imperial administration combined vertical hierarchic organization with a horizontal separation of powers at the provincial level. Under

1 Kitāb at-tāj fi akhlāq al-mulūk (Cairo, 1914), p. 23.
Khusraw Anūshirvān (531–79), the entire empire was divided into four quarters that were oriented to the points of the compass; each quarter was divided into districts, and each district was divided into subdivisitons. Under the last Sasanians, each quarter had a military governor called a spahbadh (M.P. spāhpāt) or ispahbadh (N.P.) who was served by a lieutenant called a pādhghāspān (M.P. pātkōştspān), although along the frontier the districts were under marzbāns (M.P. marzpān). There were separate officials for the collection of taxes and for financial administration, and there was usually a separate hierarchy of Magian priests who had ritual and judicial responsibilities. This picture is complicated somewhat by the use of alternative means to separate responsibilities either by dividing military, financial, and religious-legal authority among different officials in the same jurisdiction or by establishing separate military and civilian financial districts, usually as border districts and crown provinces. In the latter case, local landed notables might be given both military and financial responsibility in their districts while crown property was assigned to members of the royal family.

This system was supported by a theory of government called the “circle of power,” which amounted to a kind of paternal absolutism that operated through a strictly efficient hierarchy. An absolute monarch needs a monopoly of power and must be able to enforce his commands and defend his realm by means of an army; the army must have a regular source of income, insured by economic prosperity; prosperity depends on enlightened administrative practices, centralization, and absolute authority which must, after all, be enforced by the army. This concept of an interlocking circular balance of military force, economic prosperity, and justice, in which the failure of any one of these three components might destroy the entire system, is neatly summarized by the famous aphorism ascribed (among others) to the third century Sasanian ruler, Ardashīr I: there is “no ruler without men, no men without wealth, no wealth without prosperity, and no prosperity without justice and good administration.” One of the most

4 Ţabarī, Tā'rikh I, 1056.
significant ways this attitude was symbolized was in the image of the state as a guarded garden.\(^6\)

But late Sasanian theories went beyond mere centralization and hierarchic organization to a universalism expressed by a preference for organizing things by fours. The official fourfold Sasanian class system, administrative bureaus, and quarters of the empire were symbols of the four quarters of the universe, as were the four conjunctions of stars and crescents placed at ninety-degree angles around the circumference of late Sasanian coins. The image of the state as a throne with four legs associated with Hurmizd IV (579–90) conveys the same idea.\(^7\) The Sasanian empire was universal, and its ruler was a universal emperor in the ancient style. More than that, Sasanian absolutism was founded on the concept of an impartial, blind, indeed merciless justice that was associated with astrology and the god of Time (Zurvān) and on the relationship between fatalism and authoritarian rule.\(^8\)

In fact, the bond of the state was a concept of administrative ethics that amounted to equity. The reputation of the ruler for impartial authoritarian justice was intended to preserve the state by protecting the weak from the strong and by discouraging oppression by corrupt officials. Traditional versions of Sasanian royal policy again quote Ardashīr I: “We shall devote ourselves entirely to the maintenance of justice, to the spread of virtue and to the establishment of a lasting glory; fertility shall be restored to the earth, and our people shall be governed with benevolence. . . . My justice shall be the same for the powerful and for the weak, for the small and the great.”\(^9\)

Further, the state enforcement of religiously sanctioned law provided a theoretical basis for the interdependence between the official Magian priesthood and the Sasanian state. Once more, according to Ardashīr I: “Kingship preserves itself by religion and religion strengthens itself by kingship,”\(^10\) or religion and monarchy are twin brothers—neither


\(^8\) Zaehner, *Zurvan*, p. 58.


can do without the other. "Religion is the foundation of kingship and kingship is the protector [of religion]. For whatever lacks a foundation must perish, and whatever lacks a protector disappears."\(^{11}\)

The ruler himself was hedged about with a special sanctity. The divine glory or fortune (M.P. \textit{x\textasciitilde{a}r\textasciitilde{n}ah}), which was limited to members of the dynasty, was the supernatural source and symbol of their legitimacy. It took the form of a ram or of a radiant light around the head of the monarch, as reflected in the luster of the pearls and the symbolism of the stars in his crown or on his coins. The imagery of fire, as well as solar, lunar, and astral symbols, served both to identify the Sasanian ruler as the choice and representative of Ohrmazd, the god of light, and to announce his claim to cosmic rule. As mythic sacrificer, dragon slayer, and rainmaker, his person was sacred and his office required ritual physical perfection and ritual seclusion behind a curtain or a veil. It was a sacrilege to kill him, but blinding was enough to disqualify him as king, as was done to Hurmizd IV when he was deposed.\(^{12}\)

The prerogatives of kingship included a monopoly on the symbols of power and wealth: the crown, throne, mace, and the limitation of the right to issue coins to the reigning monarch, who guaranteed their weight and purity and who kept large cash reserves in the royal treasury as the necessary insurance to support the system. Although the usurper Bahrām Chūbīn (590–91) never took the royal title himself and only called himself the guardian of the empire, he issued his own coins and is said to have ascended a golden throne, placed the crown on his head, held audience, received taxes, paid salaries, and administered the entire kingdom according to the laws.\(^{13}\) This is a rather idealized

\(^{11}\) Mas'ūdī, \textit{Muruji\textdagree{ı}}, I, 289. The imagery of twins ties this concept to Zurvanism, and the myth which gives Ohrmazd the priesthood and Ahriman the kingship reflects the ambivalence of this relationship. See Mary Boyce, "Some Reflections on Zurvanism," \textit{BSOAS} 19 (1957): 309; and idem, \textit{The Letter of Tansar} (Rome, 1968), pp. 16, 33–34.


\(^{13}\) H. Zotenberg, \textit{Chronique de Abou-Djafar-Mo\textasciitilde{h}ammed-ben-Djarīr-ben-Yezid Ta\textasciitilde{b}ari, traduite sur la version persane d'Abou-'Ali Mo\textasciitilde{h}ammed Bel'ami} (Paris, 1938), II, 285–86.
picture of what a reigning monarch was supposed to do. Similarly, in traditional descriptions of Bûrândokht (630–31) as a reigning queen, she is said to have struck coins, built stone and wooden bridges, and remitted the arrears of taxes.14

Most of these themes are summed up in the reign of Khusrav Parviz (590–628). In a letter to the Byzantine emperor Maurice he is said to have called himself “Chosroes, King of Kings, master of those who have power, lord of peoples, prince of peace, savior of men, good and eternal man among the gods, most powerful god among men, most honored, victorious, ascended with the sun and companion of the stars.”15 He is also represented as being addressed as a god (Syr. ālābā) by his queen, Shīrin.16 A delegation of Nestorian Christians told him in 612 that “just as the sun which gladdens the entire earth by its light and warmth, your goodness spreads abundantly over all men.”17 Both his authoritarian use of fatalism and his pretensions to universal rule are symbolized by the gold stars and signs of the zodiac set in a sky of lapis lazuli along with the seven climes on the canopy over his throne, and by his depiction enthroned in heaven on the dome of the building at Ganzaca in 624.18 Universalist claims combined with opportunism and the inner economics of his absolutist policy were responsible for the predatory warfare he carried out against the Byzantines in the early seventh century. The huge size of his royal treasure (which is said to have been accumulated from the time of Firuz in the late fifth century) was legendary, and he increased it by foreign conquests and by exactions from his own subjects.19 Later Arabic tradition

14 Ţabari, Ta'rikh, I, 1064.
15 Theophylactus Simocatta, Historiae, iv. 8, p. 164.
16 I. Guidi, Chronica Minora I, CSCO, Scriptores Syri, 1 (Louvain, 1955), 28; Scr. Syri., 2 (Louvain, 1955), 24; T. Nöldke, “Die von Guidi herausgegebene syrische Chronik,” Sitzungsberichte der Philosophisch-Historischen Klasse der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften 127 (1893), 28. Since Shîrîn was an Aramaean from lower Iraq, she may actually have used such a term.
18 L'Orange, Cosmic Kingship, pp. 18–21; Tha'âlibî, Ghurar, p. 699.
19 Ţabari, Ta'rikh, I, 1041–42; Tha'âlibî, Ghurar, p. 687; Ya'qûbî, Ta'rikh, I, 195. Beginning with forty-eight million mithqâls (one mithqâl = 4.25 grams) of coins struck by Firûz and Qubâdh I, the treasure had grown to 468 million mithqâls by 607 and then 1.6 billion mithqâls in 620 (A. Christensen, L'Iran sous les Sassanides (Copenhagen, 1944), pp. 453–54; Ţabari, I, 1042, 1057). The inventory taken in 624 counted four hundred million purses of dirhams, one hundred thousand purses of dinârs, and jewels, gold and silverplate, furs, precious cloth, thousands of concubines, horses and mules, and almost one thousand elephants (E. G. Browne, “Some account of the Arabic work entitled ‘Nihâyatū’ 1-irab fi akhbari'l-Furs wa'l-'Arab,” particularly of that part which
honored his reputation for hierarchic centralization and authoritarian control by quoting from him the principle that "he who does not obey his superior is not obeyed by his subordinates."\textsuperscript{20}

The Early Islamic Amīrate

The earliest application of Sasanian theories and practices to Islamic government are not to be found primarily among the Commanders of the Faithful at Madina or Damascus but among the Muslim governors of Iraq and the east during the seventh century. Perhaps this was natural since only one seventh-century Commander of the Faithful ('Alī, 656–61) ever resided in Iraq, but it was supported by the nature of the governor's office in which the combination of military, fiscal, and religious responsibilities was remarkably and conveniently close to the Sasanian concept of monarchy. This helps to explain the introduction of royal customs by Muslim governors, the employment of hierarchic concepts, and the separation of powers at the provincial level below that of governor in his appointment of subordinate financial and judicial officials.

The Islamic governor (Ar. amīr), at least in the seventh century, was more than simply a military official. The nature of the early amīrate was the result of Muhammad's own practice as leader of the Muslim community in all of its activities, especially at Madina between 622 and 632. Immediately after the conquest of Iraq, when the local Muslim community was practically identical with the armies of occupation that settled at Basra, Kufa, Mada'in, and Mawsil, leadership of the army also meant leadership of the local community. This was expressed formally by leading public worship as the imām (Ar.), delivering the sermon (Ar. khutba), and rendering or receiving allegiance (Ar. bay'a) on behalf of the community. Likewise, the combination of financial with military responsibilities under early Muslim governors in Iraq was an extension of the authority exercised by Muhammad at Madina where he had collected the tithe and distributed it to the needy. It was also a direct result of the nature of the conquest of Iraq where the income from the Sasanian taxation system was made the permanent booty (Ar. fay') of the Muslim community, an arrangement which

\textsuperscript{20} Tha'ālibī, \textit{Gburār}, p. 690.

\textsuperscript{20} Tha'alibi, \textit{Ghurar}, p. 690.
incidentally preserved the Sasanian relationship between taxes and the support of the army.

The removal of the frontier further and further to the east during the seventh century transformed the military functions of the governors in Iraq from those of a general in the field at the time of the conquest to those of a military administrator who appointed subordinates, established an urban police force (Ar. *shurta*), and sent contingents of troops to the eastern frontier and against rebels. In addition, the *amīr* acted as paymaster for the garrisons in the cities of Iraq. Because of his appointment of officials to collect taxes and to distribute them fairly among those who were entitled to them, the Sasanian division between military and financial responsibilities survived at the level below the *amīr*. Responsibility for justice was also eventually separated from the combined responsibilities of the *amīr*, and from about 660 onwards *amīrs* appointed their own judges (Ar. sg. *qādī*). Thus, the outlook and expectations which allowed the mutual reinforcement of Sasanian and Islamic concepts of government are revealed in the report which ‘Amr ibn Ma‘dikarib is said to have made to the caliph ‘Umar I (634–44) about the administrative record of Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ at Kufa: “He divides the shares equitably, judges cases justly, and leads the bands successfully.”

By the time of Mu‘āwiya (660–80), a more developed, authoritarian political theory had emerged. The main statements of these concepts of government are associated with Ziyād ibn Abīhi, who was governor of all of Iraq and the east for Mu‘āwiya from about 669 until 673. They are contained in Ziyād’s inaugural speech (Ar. *khutba*) at Basra in 665, in the fourfold inscription in the corners of the public audience hall he built at Kufa in about 670, and in the panegyric in his praise, which was composed by Ḥāritha ibn Badr al-Ghudānī. There is also a body of aphorisms and anecdotes that may be apocryphal but conform to the general image tradition had of him.

These statements base political power on divine legitimation. Terminology ascribed to Ziyād corresponds to the usages of the Sufyānī period, and in fact, provides a good deal of the evidence for Sufyānī usage, in which the regime was called the government of God (A./Ar. *sultan Allāh*), the military forces were called the army of God (A./Ar.

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21 Balādhuri, *Futūḥ*, p. 279. The background of this report lies in the complaints made by the Kufans that Sa‘d did not perform the *salāt* (Ar. for the Muslim act of worship) well and was unjust to members of the tribe of Asad in dividing the booty (Ṭabari, *Ta‘rikh*, I, 2594; Zotenberg, *Chronique*, III, 472, 474).
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*jund Allāh*, and the treasury was no longer called the property of the Muslims (Ar. *māl al-Muslimīn*) but the property of God (Ar. *māl Allāh*). It was Ḥāritha who, in praising Ziyād, called Muʿāwiyah the Deputy of God (Ar. *khalīfat Allāh*) and Ziyād his wonderful assistant (Ar. *wazīr*). The clearest statement is in Ziyād’s *khutba*, where he told the Basrans, “We govern you with the authority (A. *sūltān*) of God which He bestowed on us and we protect you with the *fāy*’ of God which He granted us.”

The use of divine legitimation to justify Sufyānī absolutism meant that, ultimately, the most effective sanctions on a ruler’s behavior were reward or punishment by God. This is reflected in a part of Ziyād’s inscription stating, in effect, that good and evil will be rewarded in kind; this seems to paraphrase Qur’ān 10:26–27. Both in the *khutba* and in his inscription, Ziyād is given the appearance of favoring a balance in the ruler’s behavior between leniency or flexibility without weakness and forcefulness without compulsion (Ar. *jabariyya*) or harshness. We are also told that he expected both honesty and firmness from his administrative appointees.

The relationship between ruler and subject was put in terms of the reciprocal exchange of justice and protection for obedience. In 665 Ziyād told the Basrans: “You owe us obedience and we owe you justice.” He was famous for his impartial and inflexible justice, which was essentially the same kind of equity applied by the Sasanians to protect the weak from the strong and violent by insisting on a mo-

22 Ta’barī, *Ta’rīkh*, II, 78. There is also a reference to *māl Allāh* in a letter from Muʿāwiyah to Ziyād in 661 (Ta’barī, *Ta’rīkh*, II, 12) and in an administrative decision (Ar. *tawqī‘a*) ascribed to Ziyād; see Ibn ‘Abb Rabībhī, *Kitāb al-‘iqd al-farīd* (Cairo, 1363/1944), IV, 217.

23 Ta’barī, *Ta’rīkh*, II, 75. Since the rest of the *khutba* is in the first person singular, Ziyād’s lapse into the plural in this passage may be significant; but it is uncertain whether it should be taken as the royal plural, as a reference to the regime in general, or as a reference to himself and Muʿāwiyah, although in the latter case one might have expected the dual. However, pronoun agreement is not at all consistent in early Arabic.

24 Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha* (Cairo, 1378/1959), XVI, 198; Ibn Qutaybī, *Uyūn al-akhbār* (Cairo, 1964), II, 211. Likewise, when Abū Bakr recognized Muʿāwiyah’s position as deputy of God over His creation (Ar. *khilāfatu-lLāh fī khalqīhi*), the only sanction he could employ to encourage Muʿāwiyah to behave virtuously and to watch over himself and his flock was the fear of God’s future judgment (Ta’barī, *Ta’rīkh*, II, 14).


27 Ta’barī, *Ta’rīkh*, II, 75.
nopoly of force and by treating everyone alike. His rigorous insistence on the letter of the law is illustrated best by the celebrated story of the bedouin who violated the curfew at Basra in 665. In an effort to curb crime, Ziyād had made violation of the curfew a capital offense; but the bedouin, ignorant of the rule, had brought his milch camel into the city for sale the following morning. When the shurta caught him out on the street at night, he was taken to Ziyād, who believed his story but said that his execution would serve as an example to the people and had him beheaded. 28 Ḥāritha called Ziyād a just leader (Ar. imām) who was determined in the face of distractions, and praised the bounty that streamed from his hands like milk, sharing it equally with rich and poor alike so that no one complained of inequity. 29 Failure by either the ruler or his subjects to perform their duties dissolved the bond, and Ziyād is said to have told the Basrans that if he should fail to keep his word they could disobey him. 30 Ḥāritha also emphasized Ziyād’s responsibility to protect and defend his subjects. He described how, at a time of evil and fear, Ziyād arose as the sword of God among them—bright and radiant, strong, experienced, unworried, and energetic—and was victorious by God’s command. 31 Although, on the whole, Ḥāritha’s themes of generosity and protection appeal to virtues from his native Arab background, it is worth noticing that the local Nestorian Christians normally addressed the late Sasanian monarchs as “victorious.”

In fact, the way the concept of reciprocal obligations was symbolized by the image of the imām and his flock (Ar. ra’īyya) is very close to indigenous pre-Islamic traditions in Iraq. The imagery of shepherd and sheep used for political and religious authority and responsibility, which comes from ancient Mesopotamia, was employed both by the local Christian ecclesiastical leaders 32 and by the Sasanian rulers who called themselves royal shepherds. 33 In praising Ziyād, Ḥāritha says

29 Ṭabarî, Ta’rikh, II, 78. The Sasanian background of the emphasis on administrative equity is assumed by the way tradition has a native dihqān advise the governor, whom al-Ḥajjāj appointed to be in charge of upper Fallūjā at the end of the seventh century, to give the same judgment to a notable (Ar. sharif) as to a commoner so that people would trust him; see Jāḥiz, Rasā’il (Cairo, 1964), II, 32.
31 Ṭabarî, Ta’rikh, II, 78.
32 F. Nau, “Histoires d’Aḥoudemmeh et de Maroute, métropolitains jacobites de Tagrit et de l’Orient,” PO 3 (1909), 92. The use of such imagery in Syriac Christian literature is very consciously Biblical.
that when the flock (Ar. *ra'iiyya*) went astray he was not oppressive. Although Ḥāritha’s use of *ra'iiyya* to mean Muslim subjects and to express the paternalistic responsibility of the ruler coincides closely with Ziyād’s general reputation, this is one of the first times that this term appears in an Islamic political context. Likewise, the advice which Ziyād gave to his tax collectors to treat the peasants well because “as long as they are prosperous, you will be prosperous” was essentially Sasanian. We thus find a combination of Sasanian, Arab, and genuinely Islamic ideas contributing to the absolutist ideology of the Sufyānī period, at least as it was gathered around the person of Ziyād.

One result of the resemblance between Sasanian and Islamic concepts of government was that early Islamic administration in Iraq tended to preserve late Sasanian distinctions between military jurisdictions and civilian financial districts. In the first temporary settlement that was made by Khālid ibn al-Walīd along the middle Euphrates during the conquest, the agents whom he appointed to be in charge of the various agricultural subdistricts were called tax collectors while those who were left as Khālid’s lieutenants at such places as Hira, ‘Ayn Tamr, and Anbar were essentially military officers who were in charge of the frontier garrisons (Ar. *masālih*) where the Persians had had garrisons before the conquest. Under ‘Umar I both the Euphrates subdistricts and the ex-Sasanian crown province of Kaskar remained as civilian financial jurisdictions under the authority of the governor at Kuqa.

The division of military, financial, and religious responsibilities at the highest levels of Islamic provincial administration neither occurred suddenly nor was entirely complete during the seventh century. The degree of semi-autonomy or central control was determined by whether subordinate or collegiate appointments were made by the Commander of the Faithful or by the local governor. The emergence of financial

in Ancient Iran,” *Iranica Antiqua* 4 (1964): 41, 47–48. This imagery is also used in the Arabic description of how Būrāndokht behaved well towards her *ra'iiyya* (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, I, 1064). This term is used in an Islamic context in the *qiṣṣa* (Ar. “narration”) of the Khāriji Sālih ibn Musarriḥ in the 690s, where God is said to have put Umar I in charge of the Muslim flock (ra'iiyya) (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, II, 883).

34 See also Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, *Iqd*, I, 8. *Ra'iiyya* had already been used for Mu'āwiya's Muslim subjects by Abū Bakra (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, II, 14); and *sultan* and *ra'iiyya* are contrasted in a letter Ziyād supposedly wrote to al-Ḥasan ibn Fāṭima (Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd, *Nahj*, XVI, 194).


officials at the provincial level was also connected to the separate administration of crown lands. An early administrative profile is provided by the appointments that 'Umar I is said to have made for the government of Kufa in 642, when 'Ammār ibn Yāsīr was made amīr and put in charge of worship and the army; 'Abdullāh ibn Mas’ūd was appointed to give the call to worship (Ar. mu’adhdhin) as teacher (Ar. mu’allim) or judge (Ar. qādi) and put in charge of the treasury (Ar. bayt al-māl) as administrative assistant (Ar. wazīr); and 'Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf was put in charge of the measurement of the land for establishing the tax.38 In 661 under Mu‘awiya, responsibilities were divided at Kufa between al-Mughīra ibn Shu‘ba (second term, 661–69), who was governor general, and 'Abdullāh ibn Darrāj, a client (Ar. mawla) of Mu‘awiya, whom he appointed to be in charge of the taxes (Ar. kharāj) and crown property (Ar. pl. sawāfī) of Kufa.39 Financial and other responsibilities were combined under Ziyād; but in 683 the rival Commander of the Faithful, 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr at Madīna, appointed 'Abdullāh ibn Yazīd al-Ansārī as amīr over the worship, war, and border posts of Kufa and Ibrāhim ibn Ṭalḥa ibn ‘Ubaydullāh al-A’raj as amīr over the tax (Ar. kharāj) of Kufa.40 With the establishment of Marwānī authority in Iraq under ‘Abd al-Malik (685–705), however, financial and military authority were again combined in the person of al-Ḥajjāj (695–714).41

There was thus a continuing dichotomy between the late Sasanian separation of powers on the provincial level as a function of absolutist centralization and the distinctively Islamic concept of the amirate as a combination of military, financial, and religious responsibilities. Henceforth, the Sasanian tradition would be associated with the imperial centralization of the early ‘Abbāsīs and with the imperial tradition in subsequent Islamic government, while the combination of powers would be associated with greater provincial autonomy and eventually with administrative decentralization and political fragment-

39 Baladhurī, Futūḥ, pp. 290, 295; Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, II, 10–11; Ya’qūbī, Ta’rikh, II, 258.
40 Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, II, 467, 509.
41 Responsibilities continued to be divided among the subordinates of al-Ḥajjāj and, although worship (Ar. ṣalāt) and war (Ar. ḥarb) were normally combined in early Islamic government, he assigned them to two separate officials at Kufa in 705 (Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, II, 1182).
tion. Consequently, there seems to be sufficient evidence to warrant
the suggestion that in Islamic Iraq during the seventh century the
division of financial and military responsibilities was viewed as a frame
of reference; administrative arrangements often were described in these
terms in the Arabic literary tradition, while occasionally financial and
military responsibilities were actually divided between two officials at
the same time in the same place.

Early Islamic administration also duplicated the relationship be­
tween the ispahbadh and his padhghospān in the office of lieutenant
or vice governor (Ar. khalīfa) to the amīr. Although khalīfa was used
for a subordinate official before Islam and outside of Iraq, this term
appears in references to early Islamic Iraq with the meaning of a
lieutenant appointed by either his immediate superior or by the Com­
mander of the Faithful for the same jurisdiction as his superior during
the latter’s absence (usually at the capital). The best example of this
practice from the end of the Sasanian period is the case of Farrūkh­
Hurmizd, the ispahbadh of Khurasan during the reign of Azermidukht
(ca. 632). He remained at court as an unsuccessful suitor of the queen
while his son Rustam, who is said to be the same man as the famous
general of Yazdagerd III, served as his father’s khalīfa in Khurasan.42
The recall of the lieutenants of Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ from their frontier
posts in 638 and their settlement in the newly founded city of Kufa
provides a striking parallel to Sasanian practice. Each of them took
up his residence in the provincial capital, leaving his own lieutenant
(Ar. khalīfa) in charge of his post.43 Since the beginning of Islamic
rule, a khalīfa was also appointed for the governors of Basra and Kufa
during their absence.44

The Mint

The financial responsibilities of early Islamic governors included
minting coins. Governors shared this responsibility with the Com­

42 Tabari, Taʾrīkh, I, 1065; Yaʾqūbī, Taʾrīkh, I, 197. The use of this term in this
context appears to be an Arabic translation of padghospān and serves to increase
the impression of a connection between these two offices. Elsewhere the term khalīfa is
used for a viceroy in a south Arabian inscription of 543; see W. Montgomery Watt,
“God’s Caliph: Qurʾānic Interpretations and Umayyad Claims,” in Iran and Islam, ed.
C. E. Bosworth (Edinburgh, 1971), p. 567. Khalīfa is also used for the representative
of a rural official (Gk. pagarch) in an Egyptian papyrus of 643; see A. Grohmann,
From the World of Arabic Papyri (Cairo, 1952), p. 114.

43 Tabari, Taʾrīkh, I, 2497. The lieutenant whom Qaʾqāʾ ibn ʿAmr left at Hulwan
was a Persian from Khurasan called Qubādḥ.

44 Ibid., I, 2607, 3414; Yaʾqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 166.
mander of the Faithful and inherited it from the Sasanians along with the mints and coins themselves. The imitation of late Sasanian coins by the early Muslim rulers in the east is one of the clearest aspects of direct continuity both in finance administration and in royal symbolism. Although the Sasanians used both gold and silver coins, taxes were computed in the silver coins called *zūzē* in Syriac or *dirhams* in Arabic; these were derived from the Attic *drachma*, which had been introduced into the east by Alexander the Great and had been perpetuated by the Seleucids and Parthians. The Sasanian *dirham* had an average weight of 3.9 grams and was supposed to be equal in value to one twenty-fifth of a gold coin, while four *zūzē* equaled a *stater* (Syr. *estīrā*, Gk. *tetradrachma*) or Hebrew *shekel*.

Sasanian coins were a convenient means of publishing royal claims to authority along with certain aspects of Sasanian imperial ideology, and they provide contemporary evidence for the theoretical foundations of Sasanian rule. Normally Sasanian silver coins presented a portrait of the reigning monarch in profile on the obverse, each with his distinctive crown and headdress. From the beginning of the dynasty, the Magian fire altar flanked by two priests was represented on the reverse as an indication of the official status enjoyed by Magianism under the Sasanians. Of equal importance was the introduction of astral symbols on the coins of fifth-century rulers and the organization of these symbols into meaningful patterns on the coins of the last Sasanian monarchs. Yazdagerd I (399–420) was the first monarch represented with a crescent moon on the front of his crown, and the coins of both Bahrām V (420–38) and Yazdagerd II (438–57) show an upturned crescent beneath a circle representing the sun above their crowns. The coins of Firūz (459–84) marked the definite establishment of these symbols on Sasanian coins; the obverse contains a crescent in front of the crown and the crown itself is surmounted by an upturned crescent beneath a circle. Some of his coins show two outspread wings

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flanking the crown. The crescent and a five-pointed star made their first appearance on the reverse of his coins: the crescent to the right, the star to the left of the fire altar. These were also the first Sasanian coins to bear dates in the form of the regnal year of the monarch written out in Pahlavi script on the lower left side of the reverse (see fig. 1a). Subsequent Sasanian silver coins maintained the placement of these elements, and there may be a connection between the use of astral symbols and the introduction of dates. This possibility is increased by the presence, apparently for the first time, of a court astrologer in 496 and 497 in the reign of Jámarsh (496–98/9).46

The coins of Qubadh I (488–96, 498/9–531) were essentially the same as those of Firúz, but an upturned crescent was placed on each shoulder of the monarch on the obverse.47 The star and crescent were combined for the first time on the coins of Khusraw Anūshirvān (531–79), where a six-pointed star was placed between the horns of a crescent on each shoulder of the portrait on the obverse (see fig. 1b). In addition, the coins minted in the thirty-fourth year of his reign, which had a frontal portrait of the monarch on the obverse, had a six-pointed star on either side of his crown and a star inside a crescent on each side of the standing figure of the king on the reverse. His profile coins also had three crescents around the margin of the obverse at ninety-degree intervals with the crescent above his crown, which extends into the margin making the fourth. The coins from the fifth year of his reign onwards contained the name of the king with the slogan “may he prosper” (M.P. afzūn), and the coins from his thirty-fourth year had the legend “the protector and master of the world.”48 With all of this, it might be suggested that at least the placing of the crescents around the margin symbolized Khusraw’s claim to universal rule over the four quarters of the world and was connected to the division of his empire into four quarters and to the preference for organizing

46 Göbl, “Münzprägung,” pp. 67, 74–75; Paruck, Sāsānian Coins, pp. 27, 63, 83, 103; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 128–29. Paruck explained the symbolism of the crescent and star as the conjunction of Venus with the moon, which was a sign of good luck and prosperity. More recently S. Shaked has suggested that the “stars” found together with the moon on Sasanian seals are really representations of the sun and its rays; see “Jewish and Christian Seals of the Sasanian Period,” in Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet, ed. M. Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem, 1977), pp. 17–31.


48 Göbl, “Münzprägung,” pp. 57, 63; Paruck, Sāsānian Coins, pp. 65, 103–4, 106, 267–71. Compare the greeting “may the visitor prosper” given by Ziyād to al-Mughīra ibn Shu’ba when he received the latter in the audience hall of the citadel at Istakhr in 662 (Tabari, Ta’rikh, II,24).
things by fours in Zurvanism. The only important innovations on the coins of Hurmizd IV (579–90) were the placing of a five-pointed star inside a crescent in front of his crown or a six-pointed star on each side of his crown on the obverse, as well as the addition of five- or six-pointed stars to the crescents around the margin of the obverse (see fig. 1c).  

The coins of Khusraw Parviz were based on these fifth- and sixth-century precedents and set the pattern for most of the seventh century. Above the profile of the monarch on the obverse was an upturned crescent surmounting the crown and extending into the margin, where it held a star. On either side of the crown and its superstructure was an outstretched wing and there were three more six-pointed stars inside crescents at ninety-degree intervals around the margin and four stars inside crescents around the margin on the reverse. The reverse still had a star to the left and a crescent to the right of the fire altar, but a double pearl border was added around the margin of the obverse and a triple pearl border around the margin of the reverse (see. fig. 1d). According to tradition, at the end of the thirteenth (spring, 603) or the thirtieth (spring, 620) year of his reign, Khusraw Parviz ordered that new coin dies be engraved and had some two or four billion dirhams struck from the surplus in the treasuries over and above what was set aside for provisioning the army. These coins were heavier than usual; according to Miles, the highest frequency group of the dirhams of Khusraw Parviz average between 4.11 and 4.15 grams. The coins of his successors down to the end of the dynasty bore the most distinctive characteristics of his type of coin, with legends in which the name of the ruler is followed by afzūn or the slogan “may the royal fortune increase” (M.P. afzūt GDH).

After the conquest, the Islamic government in Iraq accepted the existing Sasanian coins for the payment of taxes without regard for differences in weight. Coins were minted for Yazdagerd III (probably in eastern Iran) down to the twentieth year of his reign in 651, when he died. Although the royal mints are said to have been confiscated by the Muslims at the time of the conquest, the first coins minted by the Islamic authorities in Iraq and the East were copies of the coins of Yazdagerd III and Khusraw Parviz. These Arab-Sasanian coins,

49 Paruck, Sāsānian Coins, p. 66.
50 G. C. Miles, “Dirham,” EI(2), II, 319; Paruck, Sāsānian Coins, pp. 67–68; Ta’bari, Ta’rikh, I, 1056–57. The account in Ta’bari is anachronous in calling these coins waraq (Ar. “paper-thin”) dirhams and in giving their weight as two-fifths of a mithqāl.
Fig. 1. Sasanian and Arab-Sasanian Coins.

a. Firūz (Peroz) (459–84)

b. Khusraw I, year 14
obv. HUSRUI; AFZUN
rev. BIŞ; JHRDH (?)

c. Hurmizd IV, year 12
obv. AUHRMZI; AFZUI
rev. DDPV (?) ; DVJDH

d. Khusraw II, year 35
obv. HUSRUI; AFZUTU GDH
rev. BBA; PNJSIH
e. Arab-Sasanian, year 25
obv. HUSRUI; AFZUTU GDH; bismillâh
rev. BÎŞ; PNJVIST

f. Muʿawiya, year 41
obv. MAAVIA AMIR VIRUIŞNIKAN; AFZUTU GDH; bismillâh
rev. DA; YAJHR

g. 'Abdullâh ibn az-Zubayr, year 53 (=65 H.)
obv. APDULA AMIR VIRUIŞNIKAN; AFZUTU GDH; bismillâh
rev. DA; SIPNJAH

h. Abdullâh ibn az-Zubayr, year 63
obv. APDULA I-ZUPIRAN; AFZUTU GDH; bismillâh; BPR; GDH
rev. KRMNRMAN (?) ; SIŞST (?)
which made their first appearance in the twentieth year of Yazdagerd III, were lighter than those minted by Khusraw Parvíz. They were called “full weight” (Ar. baghlī) dirhams because they were supposed to be equal to a mithqāl (Ar. 4.25 grams) in weight, but in fact their average weight of 3.98 grams brings them closer to the general Sasanian standard before the increase in weight under Khusraw Parvíz. Some individual coins were heavier, and, at 4.16 grams, two of them even outweigh those of Khusraw.51

At first the Muslims simply reproduced the style of the Sasanian coins. The Arab-Sasanian coins had the usual profile of Yazdagerd III or Khusraw Parvíz with their distinctive crowns and headdresses on the obverse, with the afzūt legend behind the head of the king and his name in front. On the reverse was the Magian fire altar flanked by two standing figures and the date beginning with twenty (M.P. vist) written in Pahlavi script on the Yazdagerd-style coin. The usual patterns of stars and crescents were in the margins on both sides. After a year the imitations of the coins of Yazdagerd III were replaced by those of Khusraw Parvíz, but they were dated in the era of Yazdagerd III beginning with the year twenty-one (see Fig. 1e).52

Several conclusions may be drawn from the striking of such coins by the Islamic government. In the first place, it is apparent that the reputation of the Sasanian monarchy survived the fall of the dynasty as a useful guarantee of the weight and purity of coins. Secondly, it is reasonable to suppose that the perpetuation of the types of coins issued by these two monarchs was due to the continued employment of the minters who knew how to make these coins. Perhaps the eventual preference for copies of the coins of Khusraw Parvíz may have been due to the rather large number of his coins that were already in circulation and to his reputation. Thirdly, the coins themselves provide the best evidence for the early use of the era of Yazdagerd as a system of dating, apparently without any break after his death, and whoever was responsible for the sequence of dates in that era, which appear on these coins as late as the year sixty-two (A.H. 74/A.D. 693), probably knew their significance. Fourth, the use of dates in the era of Yazdagerd implies an unwillingness, on the part of those who minted the coins for their new rulers, to accept the formal legitimacy of Muslim

52 Paruck, Sāsānian Coins, p. 128; Walker, Arab-Sasanian Coins, pp. xv, xxvi-vii, xxxvii. The coins of Hurmizd IV were also imitated.
rule according to Sasanian traditions of statecraft, as well as a lack of appreciation or concern on the part of the Muslims themselves at first concerning the meaning of the portrait and the date on these coins. Fifth, the very employment of the royal portrait and the Magian and astral symbols on these coins are an indication that the need to maintain their acceptability by the use of existing and easily recognizable forms outweighed any religious objections to the use of such non-Islamic symbols. Indeed, there do not seem to have been any such objections at first.

On the other hand, although the style of the previous Sasanian coins was maintained in all its details, since the beginning a legend in Kufic script, usually “in the name of God” (Ar. bismillāh), was added to the margin of the obverse on the Arab-Sasanian coins. The presence of the bismillāh is the only part of these coins that could have identified them as Islamic to a Muslim Arab, and it may have been thought that this was all that was necessary to offset the Sasanian and Magian symbolism. It is worth noticing, however, that no change was made in the internal arrangement of the design on these coins but that the bismillāh was put in the margin. The presence of the star and crescent on these coins is also noteworthy because it marks the first official use of this motif by the Islamic state. The Sasanian origin of this motif and its astral significance are equally indisputable, but the later use of the star and crescent as an Islamic emblem does not seem to have been derived from these coins. This fact in itself would indicate that the Muslims were unconcerned at first about the imagery on Sasanian coins.53

Beginning in the reign of Mu‘āwiya, several changes made in the Arab-Sasanian coins indicate a growing concern for the internal symbolism and purpose of the coins. Although coins of the earlier type continued to be minted, coins now began to appear with the date in the era of the Hijra. Also, the portrait of Khusraw Parvīz continued to be used on the obverse, but his name, on occasion, was replaced by that of the Muslim Commander of the Faithful or a governor. As early as A.H. 41/A.D. 661, coins were struck for Mu‘āwiya at Darabjird in Fars bearing that date in the era of the Hijra with the afzūt legend behind the head of Khusraw’s portrait, but in place of his name

53 Walker, Arab-Sassanian Coins, pp. clvi, 9, 10, 13. For a discussion of the meaning of these symbols and of the representation of Sasanian crowns in the mosaics on the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and the paintings at Qusayr ‘Amra as signifying the fall and subjection of the Sasanians to triumphant Islam, see O. Grabar, “The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem,” Ars Orientalis 3 (1959), 48–52, pl. 3, fig. 5.
the legend “Mu‘awiya, Commander of the Faithful” (Ar./M.P. amir-i viruishnikan) was written in Pahlavi script in front (see Fig. 1f). During the second civil war, coins which were struck in the East for the rival Commander of the Faithful, ‘Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr, bore either his name with the title amir-i virōyishnikan and dates in the era of Yazdagerd from fifty-four to sixty-three (A.D. 685-94) or his name and patronymic (Apdula-i Zupiran) with the dates from A.H. 62–69/A.D. 681–88 (see fig. 1g and h). The leader of the Azraqi Khārijī group of Muslim rebels, ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Fujā’a al-Qtarā also announced his claim to the caliphate by striking coins with his name and patronymic or the title “Commander of the Faithful” on them from 688 until 694. The last Commander of the Faithful to be represented on the Arab-Sasanian coins was ‘Abd al-Malik (685–705), whose Khusraw-style coins bore either the legend “‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān” or “‘Abd al-Malik, Commander of the Faithful.”

Coins in the Sasanian style were also struck by governors in Iraq and the East beginning with ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Āmir, who was governor of Basra for Mu‘awiya from A.H 41/A.D. 661 until A.H 45/A.D. 665 and whose Khusraw-type coins bear the name-legend Apdula-i Amiran and are dated from forty-one through forty-four, presumably in the era of the Hijra. Ziyād also struck coins of this type bearing his own name in the form of “Ziyād ibn Abī Sufyān,” which documented his formal adoption as the brother of Mu‘awiya (see fig. 2a). Ziyad is also supposed to have demanded that taxes be paid in the heavier Khusrawī coins rather than in the lighter coins struck by the Islamic government, probably in order to profit from the difference in weight by restriking them as lighter dirhams. Both Samura ibn Jundab and ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād struck coins in their own names as governors of Iraq, and ‘Ubaydullāh is said to have struck the first debased dirhams (Ar. zuyuf).

Further innovations were introduced in the Arab-Sasanian coins...
during the second civil war when ʿUmar ibn ʿUbaydullāh, who was governor of Basra for Ibn az-Zubayr in 683 and of Fars in 687, replaced the bismillāh on the margin with the phrase “Praise be to God!” (Ar. li-llāh al-hamd) on some of his coins.61 According to Baladhuri, Muṣʿab ibn az-Zubayr, who ruled Basra and the East for his brother, the rival Commander of the Faithful, struck dirhams with the words Allāh and “blessing” (Ar. baraka) at his order in 689 on the Sasanian mint. The coins of both Muṣʿab and his brother did have the bismillāh on the margin as usual. One of Muṣʿab’s coins has a Kufic legend in the margin reading “Muṣʿab, God is his sufficiency” (Ar. ḥasbuhu-llāh).62

These experiments continued after the Marwānī restoration in Iraq. The dates for A.H. 72–75/A.D. 691–94 began to be written in Kufic instead of Pahlavi characters on coins of the anonymous Khusraw type.63 The coins of Khālid ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Asīd, who was governor of Basra and its dependencies for ʿAbd al-Malik from 691 until 693, bore the usual bismillāh on the margin along with the legend “Muḥammad (is) the messenger of God.”64 According to Baladhuri, when al-Ḥajjāj became governor of Iraq in 694, he inquired about the Persian coinage, made use of the Sasanian mint, collected the minters there and sealed their hands, and had his first dirhams struck that year from bullion and from the good silver extracted from the zuyūf and counterfeit coins that he called in. He had the marginal legend “bismillāh al-Ḥajjāj” put on these coins, and in the following year he ordered similar coins struck everywhere in the territories under his authority with the legend “God is one, God is eternal” (Ar. Allāh aḥad Allāh aṣ-ṣamad). The religious leaders are said to have objected to this and nicknamed the new coins “the detested.”65 Extant examples of the Arab-Sasanian coins of al-Ḥajjāj in the style of Khusraw Parvīz actually do have his name and the bismillāh on the margin, followed by the “testimony” (Ar. shahāda) that there is only one God and Muḥammad is His messenger, or by the legend “al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf amīr.” His are the last of the Arab-Sasanian coins from Iraq and were minted as late as 702 (see fig. 2b).66

61 Tabari, Taʾrikh, II, 463–64, 580, 582.
62 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 468; Walker, Arab-Sassanian Coins, p. 102.
64 Tabari, Taʾrikh, II, 818, 834, 835; Walker, Arab-Sassanian coins, p. 109.
65 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 468–69.
66 Walker, Arab-Sassanian Coins, pp. xxv, 120.
Fig. 2. Arab-Sasanian and Post-Reform Coins and Sasanian Administrative Seals.

a. Ziyād ibn Abī Sufyān, year 55
   obv. ZIYAT I-ABU SUFAN; AFZUTU GDH; bismillāh; rabī
   rev. BJRA; PNJPNJJA

b. al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf, year 80
   obv. HAJAJ [YU]SF[AN]; AFZUTU GDH; bismillāh; rabī
   rev. BIŠ; HŠTAT

c. Post-reform dirham, Kufa, year 79 (A.D. 698–99)
   obv.
   Field: Allāh aḥad Allāh aš-ṣamad
   lam yalid wa lam yūlād wa lam yakun labu kufuwan abadun.
   (God is One, God is Eternal. He does not beget nor is he begotten
   and there is none equal to Him.)
   Qurʾān, 112.
   Margin: Muḥammad rasūl Allāh ar-
   salahu bi-l-hudā wa dīn il-ḥaqq li-
   yuzhirahu 'alā-d-dīn kullihi wa
   law kariba-l-mushrikūn. (Muḥam-
   mad is the messenger of God
   whom He sent with guidance and
   the religion of truth in order to
   make it victorious over all religion
   even though the polytheists detest
   [it].) The first four words para-
   phrase Qurʾān 9:33; the rest
   quote it.

   rev.
   Field: lā llāh illā llāh wahdahu lā
   sharikun labu. (There is only one
   single God. He has no partner.)
   This is not a Qurʾānic quotation,
   but these terms occur together in
   Qurʾān 9:31.
   Margin: bismillāh daraba hadhā dir-
   ham bi-l-Kūfati fī sanati tisʿa wa
   sabʿin. (In the name of God, this
   dirham was struck in Kufa in year
   seventy-nine.
d. glmykn W nwtrthtrkn hm'lyk
(āmārkar of Garmēkan and Nōdh-Ardashir-
akan). British Museum, 119970.

e. g'lwl 'pldl mgwh ZY hwsr(w) št kw'ty
(mōbadh of Upper Jalula' in Khusraw
Shadh Qubadh). Yale University,
James B. Nies Collection of Babylonian
Antiquities, 4498(a).

f. b'pyl mgwh wyh kw'ty (mōbadh of Bābil
in Veh-Kavat). In R. Frye,
"Sassanian Clay Sealings in the
238–39, fig. 3.

g. tyuspwn šrdsən mgw ZY hwsr wd št
dw'ty (mōbadh of Ctesiphon, shatristān
of Khusraw Shadh Qubadh). In the
possession of R. Frye.
The replacement of the Arab-Sasanian coinage with a new Arab-Islamic coinage was part of the Marwānī restoration in Iraq following the second civil war (Ar. fitna). New dirhams bearing only Arabic legends, generally without images and at first anonymous, began to be struck in 695 or 696 (see fig. 2). This change signified an increasing awareness of the importance of numismatic iconography by the Islamic regime and may have been a reaction to the way the opposition had made the marginal legends on the Arab-Sasanian coins more and more Islamic in content during the second fitna. At least the linguistic aspect of the coinage reform was related to the change in the tax records from the Persian language to the Arabic under al-Ḥajjāj at about the same time. All that Baladhurī says, however, is that the Sasanian dirhams differed in weight, and because Muslims needed a standard weight in order to pay the alms tax (Ar. zakāt), a new Arab dirham was created with the weight set at seven-tenths of a mithqāl. At a standard mint weight of 2.97 grams, these coins weighed only three-quarters of a baghlī or Arab-Sasanian dirham, and it took twenty of them to equal a dīnār in value. Like Ziyād before him, al-Ḥajjāj also required that taxes be paid in the older, heavier Khusrāwī dirhams, and Walker suggested that this was in order to melt them down for the new coins.

The Islamic coinage reform provides a remarkable example of continuity as a result of change. Apart from the bismillah that was put on the Arab-Sasanian coins from the beginning, the earliest Islamizing changes coincided with the introduction of Sasanian administrative institutions under Ziyād, as we shall see, and mark the first real awareness of the significance of numismatic iconography on the part of the Islamic regime. These changes in the introduction of Hijrī dates and the names of Commanders of the Faithful or governors imply at the same time the transmission of the reason for putting the name of the ruler and the use of a meaningful date on coins to Muslim Arabs. As


68 Baladhurī, Futūḥ, pp. 465–66; Mawardi, Aḥkām as-sulṭāniyya, p. 77.


70 Mawardi, Aḥkām as-sulṭāniyya, p. 77; Walker Arab-Sassanian Coins, p. cxlix.
the awareness of the importance of such usages and their propaganda value increased towards the end of the seventh century, the Marwānī reaction to the Islamizing tendencies on the coins of their opponents culminated in the appearance of an entirely new Arab-Islamic coinage and a more complete appreciation of symbolism (or the lack of it) on coins. Late Sasanian epigraphic administrative seals may have provided a precedent for these epigraphic coins. Epigraphic seals have two or three lines in a field surrounded by a circular marginal inscription and bear a remarkable organizational resemblance to Islamic epigraphic reform coins (see fig. 2d–g).

The Administrative Bureaucracy

*The Tax Department.* It is easier to compare Sasanian and Islamic administrative theories than it is to determine how many of the details of Sasanian administrative practice were actually employed by Muslims in Iraq. Administrative continuity was encouraged by the tendency for the same families to remain in state service over several generations, by the fact that an Arabic epistolary style for official purposes had already been worked out in the Sasanian chancellory, by the survival and employment of Sasanian scribes, and of local Arabs, by the existence of handbooks for administration in the Islamic period that described the procedures that had been followed under the Sasanians, and by the way native Arabs and Persian mawālī (Ar.) and landlords who were involved in Islamic administration expected continuity. Even so, there is very little direct evidence that administrative procedures under the Muslims were essentially what they had been under the Sasanians. More often the evidence is circumstantial. What seems to have happened was that Sasanian procedures were followed at lower levels of the administration by those officials who survived from the previous regime while they began to be followed only gradually at the highest levels. This was due to the influence of these officials and to the handbooks themselves. The process was inaugurated by a circle of bilingual Persian and Arab administrators at Basra, where the main institutional forms of Sasanian civil and military administration were adapted by the newly formed Islamic state.

Under the Sasanians, the records for income derived from taxes and for expenditures for the army and other kinds of expenses were kept separately. As Jahshiyārī described the system, there were two financial bureaus: the tax bureau (Ar. ǧīvān al-khārāj) and a department that handled gifts and the payment of troops (Ar. ǧīvān an-nafaqāt). The
latter contained registers of names, ornaments, and riding animals. Jahshiyārī states explicitly that the taxes were used to pay the army.71 'Utba ibn Ghazwān, al-Mughira ibn Shu'ba, Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿārī, the Persian Payroazh, and the other founders and organizers of Basra were responsible for the establishment of a Sasanian-type tax bureau and a military register for the Muslim army.72

In the system which is ascribed to Khusraw Anūshirvān, the record of income due from each district was based on the measurement of taxable land and was kept in a central register (M.P.? durūzan). District finance officials (Ar. 'ummal) were billed for the amounts due and returned them accompanied by a written invoice to the local “counting house” (N.P. shamarrah or shomordeh, Ar. dār al-ḥisāb), where taxes were collected before being forwarded to provincial governors and then to the capital. The official in charge of the finance bureau (Ar. šāhib al-kharāj) sent the Sasanian monarch an annual record of the amount of tax levied, the amount of expenditures, and the balance remaining in the treasury; the king then sealed and returned the report.73 This operation was run by a body of financial secretaries who kept the central records and accompanied the tax collectors in their districts to keep the local accounts.74

There is little, if any, indication of the operation of such a system in Iraq immediately after the Islamic conquest, partly because of the ways in which taxes were collected. It is natural to assume that the survey of the Sawad of Kufa by the Muslims in 642 resulted in a register listing the taxes that were due from the districts for which local notables were responsible, districts such as Hira that owed tribute, and from ownerless estates. Even so, there is no evidence for a system of bills and invoices administered by secretaries. Even the early existence of a register of taxable land is uncertain at Basra, where the responsibility for finances is described simply as “in charge of taxes” (Ar. 'alā kharāj) or “in charge of the treasury” (Ar. 'alā bayt al-māl).

The formation of a real fiscal bureaucracy at Basra is associated

71 Jahshiyārī, Wuzara', p. 3.
74 Jahshiyārī, Wuzara', p. 4. A reference is made to the secretary of the finance director or tax collector of lower Iraq (Beth Aramaye) in the early sixth century; see O. Braun, Ausgewählte Akten persischer Märtyrer (Munich, 1915), p. 191.
with Ziyād, who had already spent two decades in the finance administration at Basra when he became its governor in 665 and who ruled both Basra and Kufa and their dependencies for Mu‘āwiya from 669 until 673. Already in 658–59, when Ziyād was in charge of the kharāj and the bayt al-māl of Basra for the governor Ibn ‘Abbas (656–59), there is a description of the tax collectors (Ar. ‘ummāl) bringing the taxes of the districts of Basra to Ibn ‘Abbas, who in turn forwarded them to ‘Alī (656–61).\(^{75}\) As governor, Ziyād favored the employment of leading Persians knowledgeable in tax matters as financial secretaries (Ar. kuttāb al-kharāj), was the first to pay his ‘ummāl salaries of one thousand dirhams, and sent annual accounts to Damascus.\(^{76}\) Ziyād and his son ‘Ubaydullāh were served by men like Zādhanfarriikh, the son of Payroazh, whose family was closely involved in the transition from Sasanian to Islamic finance administration.\(^{77}\) Whether or not such people had belonged to the fiscal bureaucracy before the conquest or were only notables who knew the system, it was due to their employment in the Islamic finance bureau that the expertise and interests of the Sasanian scribes survived. At least by the time of Ziyād there was a register for income from taxes with the numbers and place-names written in Persian, and probably in the Pahlavi script,\(^{78}\) by a body of Persian bureaucrats at Basra. About the same time the register listing Sasanian crown property in Iraq was also recovered.

The bilingual abilities of these Persians made them especially important to the administration and gave them an ethnic reputation as bureaucrats.\(^{79}\) It was a Persian mawlā of the Arab tribe of the Banu Tamīm whose parents had been taken captive in eastern Iran, Śālīḥ ibn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān, who was responsible for putting the financial accounts into Arabic for al-Ḥajjāj in 697 over the objections of Zādhanfarriikh. When the latter died in 701, Śālīḥ succeeded him as head of the finance bureau (Ar. diwān al-kharāj), and the system of Arabic

\(^{75}\) Tabari, Ta‘rīkh, I, 3230, 3440, 3448.
\(^{77}\) Sprenging, “Persian to Arabic,” p. 187.
\(^{78}\) Baladhurī, Futūḥ, p. 300; Jahshīyārī, Wuzārāʾ, p. 33. Ya‘qūbī’s claim that Ziyād had cursive (Ar. naskh) script used in the books may signify a simplifying innovation in keeping administrative records. According to El-Hawary, naskh was used for ordinary handwriting in the first/seventh century and may be even older than Kufic script. See H. M. El-Hawary, “The Most Ancient Islamic Monument Known Dated A.H. 31 (A.D. 652) from the time of the third Calif ‘Uthman,” JRAS (1930), p. 329. It is also worth noting that the terms that are quoted in Arabic literature as having to be translated into Arabic are all in New Persian.
\(^{79}\) Jahshīyārī, Wuzārāʾ, p. 30.
accounts that he had introduced served as the basis for subsequent practice in Iraq.\textsuperscript{80} The family of Zāḍhānfarрукh survived for at least three generations more in government service in Iraq and Khuzistan down to the end of Marwānī rule.\textsuperscript{81}

The earliest direct evidence for the use of invoices with tax returns in Islamic Iraq is given in the well-known story of how in the early eighth century, after the language change, the Persian administrator, Ibn al-Muqaffa', delivered the tax invoices from his district to Šālih on scented parchment. Whether or not the story itself is apocryphal, it is significant because of its suggestion of how Sasanian procedures came to be used in the Islamic finance bureau and because the story assumes that both Šālih and Ibn al-Muqaffa' had some knowledge of what Sasanian practice had been. On this occasion, at least, Ibn al-Muqaffa’’s conscious and artificial revival of the preferences of Khusraw Parvīz for scented parchment was an intentional archaism.\textsuperscript{82}

\textit{The Department of the Army}. The income from regular taxes was earmarked for the support of the army in the Sasanian system and was administered by a staff of military scribes. Such officials were appointed as military advisors to generals and military governors in the late Sasanian period to see that the monarch's orders were obeyed. Military scribes were in charge of the army accounts, the inspection and payment of troops, and the division of the spoils, with the responsibility for seeing that the royal treasury got its share of the booty. They were also employed as liaison officers and envoys.\textsuperscript{83} The best example of such a military scribe in the early seventh century was Babai, the secretary of the marzbān of Hira, Rūzbī, the son of Marzūq. Babai is described as accompanying the marzbān in the chase, and it is said that it was through his assistance and counsel that the marzbān was able to contend successfully against the desert Arabs and thus “escaped the trap into which Khusraw wanted him to fall” by sending him to such a dangerous frontier.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{80} Baladhurī,\textit{ Futūh}, pp. 300–301; Jahshiyārī,\textit{ Wuzarā'}, pp. 33-34.
\textsuperscript{81} Sprengling, “Persian to Arabic,” pp. 190–91.
\textsuperscript{82} Baladhurī,\textit{ Futūh}, pp. 464–65.
\textsuperscript{83} Jahshiyārī,\textit{ Wuzarā'}, pp. 4–5; A. N. Stratos, \textit{Byzantium in the Seventh Century} (Amsterdam, 1968), I,381–82. Dinawari, in\textit{ Akhbār at-tiwāl} (pp. 57, 86, 90), assumes the existence of such an official (Ar. kātīb al-jund) in the fifth and sixth centuries. There were similar officials on the Byzantine side of the border where the emperor Anastasius appointed the Egyptian Apion as manager of finances for the army he sent against the Persians at Amid in 503, and Prokopios describes himself as such an adviser to Belisarios (\textit{Wars}, I.i. 3; viii.5).
\textsuperscript{84} J. B. Chabot, “Le Livre de la chasteté composé par Jesusdenah, évêque de Baṣra,”
A position with similar responsibilities appears very early in Islamic military administration. The assignment of persons who could write and count to divide the booty among the members of the conquering Muslim armies seems to reflect Sasanian practice, although it must be admitted that the situation demanded that someone perform the division in some way. We are told that even in the time of Muḥammad, his own share of the booty was recorded by Muʿayqib ibn Abī Fāṭima. Ziyād himself began his career this way. He had been born to a pair of Persian and Byzantine slaves at Taʾif in western Arabia, where he was raised as an Arabized mawlā of the tribe of Thaqīf and learned how to write and to count. As a young man in 635 he went along on the expedition of ʿUtba ibn Ghazwān to lower Iraq, where he was put in charge of dividing the booty which was taken at Furat. ʿUtba paid him two dirhams per day and Baladhurī describes him as a servant boy (Ar. ghulām) wearing a slave lock. In 637, after the fall of the Sasanian capital of Madaʾin, Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ appointed ʿAmr ibn ʿAmr ibn Muqarrin to collect the treasures in the White Palace, the royal residences, and the rest of the houses in the city. Another mawlā of Thaqīf, as-Sāʾib ibn al-Aqraʾ, who was with the Basran army that conquered Khuzistan, collected the booty from the fortress (Ar. qaṣr) of the Persian nobleman Hurmuzān. Later as-Sāʾib provided liaison for ʿUmar I (634–44), who, because he knew how to write and to count, sent him with the Iraqi Muslim army that defeated the Persians at Nihawand in western Iran in 642. Afterwards, he divided the booty among those who had participated in the battle and remitted one-fifth to the Commander of the Faithful.

But booty is an irregular and uncertain source of income at best and hardly suitable for the sole support of a standing army. The heart of Sasanian military administration, the means by which income from taxes was redistributed to the professional bodies of mercenary soldiers, was the muster roll listing the men capable of military service. It entitled them to be provided with horses, weapons, provisions, and pay by the state. Yaʿqūbī describes the system under Khusraw Anū-


87 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2444.
88 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwal, pp. 140, 143, 146.
shirvân as composed of three registers: one for listing those who were able to fight but needed weapons (Ar. diwân al-muqâtîla), one for stipends (Ar. diwân al-‘atâ”) listing names and riding animals presumably for the amount of pay, and the muster roll itself (Ar. diwân al-‘arâd). The official who was responsible for these registers was probably called “the one in charge of men” (N.P. mardomânbâdh). A cavalryman is said to have received up to four thousand dirhams annually.

The foundation of the first Islamic military diwân at Basra by al-Mughîra ibn Shu’ba in 637–38 with the help of the Persian nobleman Payrôazh was certainly inspired by Sasanian practice, although it was not so elaborate at first and later developed modifications to suit the realities of Arab military society. The basic principle was the same. Income from the conquered territories was distributed to the veterans of the conquest who settled in Basra by registering them in the diwân and paying them according to the roll. Traditional versions of the establishment of the military diwân in Iraq by ‘Umar I probably reflect the extension of the system to Kufa by 641–42. Veterans of the conquest received two thousand dirhams apiece per year while local notables who joined the Islamic administration and were registered in the diwân received one or two thousand dirhams apiece.

The register was kept at the government compound (Ar. dâr al-imâra) at Basra and from the beginning it was written in Arabic and staffed by Arabs or by Arabized mawâlî. Judging from references made to the records from Ziyâd’s administration, which were preserved at

89 Tha’alibi, Ghurar, p. 610; Ya’qûbî, Ta’rikh, I, 186–87. The diwân al-‘atâ’ seems to be the same as the diwân an-nafaxàt.
90 Ya’qûbî, Ta’rikh, I, 203; Zotenberg, Chronique, II, 229. Local notables are supposed to have been in charge of lists of young men from which they procured recruits for the infantry (Løkkegaard, Islamic Taxation, p. 169). Infantrymen performed garrison duty and menial tasks on campaigns, and if they were paid at all they were supposed to receive not less than one hundred dirhams.
91 Sprengling, “Persian to Arabic,” p. 186. G. R. Puin, Der Diwân von ‘Umar b. al-Haṭṭâb (Bonn, 1970) denies Sasanian influences and argues that the Muslim diwân grew out of circumstances at Madina. But it is important to distinguish between the diwân established by ‘Umar at Madina, which distributed pensions and provisions to a non-military population that included women according to how early one had converted to Islam, and the stipends paid by the military diwâns at Basra and Kufa in return for military service.
92 Ta’barî, Ta’rikh, I, 2540. Balâdhurî (Futûh, pp. 457–58) says that the Persian notables were paid one thousand dirhams, while Yahya ibn Âdam, in Kitâb al-Khârâj: Taxation in Islam (Leiden, 1958), I, 51 and Ya’qûbî in Ta’rikh, II, 176 say that they were paid two thousand dirhams.
least into the eighth century, they cannot have involved much more than the writing of proper names, numbers, and a few technical terms. 93 In theory, a Muslim military scribe was supposed to be able to calculate the proper amount of salary payments and to recognize the distinguishing marks of the animals and the emblems of the soldiers. 94 Under 'Umar I and 'Uthmān (644–56), 'Abdullāh ibn Khalaf al-Khuzā‘ī is regarded as the first director of the military register at Basra while Abū Jabīra ibn aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk al-Ansārī was in charge of the dīwān at Kufa. 95 But the career of Ziyād is a perfect example of how a divider of booty graduated to military administrator. When 'Utba left Basra in 636, Ziyād became the military scribe of al-Mughīra ibn Shu‘ba, who was governor from 636 to 638; this probably involved him directly in the foundation of the military dīwān there. 96 Al-Mughīra’s successor, Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (638–42, 643–50) “discovered” him, and the description of how during his second term Abū Mūsā entrusted his two seal rings to Ziyād, who was in charge of the affairs of the people, might suggest that Ziyād was responsible for both the treasury and the military dīwān. 97 This was certainly the case under Abū Mūsā’s successor, 'Abdullāh ibn Āmīr ibn Kurayz (650–56), who put Ziyād in charge of the dīwān and treasury—that is, over the entire financial administration, both income and expenditure. 98 Ziyād kept this position during the reign of ‘Alī (656–61) when he served Ibn 'Abbās (656–59) as secretary in charge of the tax bureau and the dīwān at Basra. 99

For two decades, in spite of the rotation of governors, Ziyād and 'Abdullāh ibn Khalaf, who was probably his subordinate, provided the same kind of continuity in the administration of the revenues and the army at Basra that Abū Jabīra did at Kufa. But after twenty years the population capable of bearing arms at Kufa had increased through settlement and the coming of age of their own and captive children.

94 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 177.
95 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 163–64, 168, 169; Jahshiyārī, Wuzara‘, pp. 14, 19; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, II, 831, 837; Tha‘alibi, Latā‘if, p. 59. 'Abdullāh ibn Khalaf was killed at the Battle of the Camel in 656, but Abū Jabīra is supposed to have kept his position until he was dismissed by 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād in the late 670s.
96 Ibn Qutayba, Ma‘arīf, p. 346; Zotenberg, Chronique, III, 445–46.
97 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṣiwāl p. 125; Ibn Sā‘d, Ṭabaqātī, VII(1), 70; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 1711.
98 Baladhuri, Futūh, p. 357.
99 Jahshiyārī, Wuzara‘, pp. 20–21; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 3230. When Ibn 'Abbās was dismissed in 659, Ziyād was left in charge of the kharāj (Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 3448).
In 657 'Ali found it necessary to have the tribal leaders at Kufa (Ar. ashrāf) register the fighting men, their sons of fighting age, the mawālī, and the slaves of their clans.¹⁰⁰

About a decade later, when he was governor, Ziyād made significant changes in the military organization, reduced the power of the ashrāf, centralized the military administration, and neutralized the tribal units by combining mutually hostile groups into new divisions of roughly equal size (five at Basra and four at Kufa) to replace the original seven divisions. The ashrāf were replaced by officials (Ar. sg. 'arīf or naqīb) who were appointed or confirmed by the governor. They were put in charge of the new divisions and were responsible for making up the lists of fighting men, distributing pensions and salaries, collecting taxes (Ar. ṣadaqa) from them, administering the property of orphans, and identifying suspects. They were also responsible for the good behavior of their units.¹⁰¹

Thus, there appear to have been at least two important differences between the Sasanian military register and the Islamic military diwān. First, there is no indication that the Sasanian register was organized along tribal lines or used to maintain order and discipline in a tribally organized military population as at Basra and Kufa. Ziyād’s use of the diwān and its officers as an instrument of social control seems to have been an original adaptation of the possibilities contained in the Sasanian system.

Secondly, the amounts of the stipends and the ratio between cavalry and infantry distributed by the Islamic diwān seem to be quite different from those quoted for the Sasanian system in Arabic literature. Theoretically, a Sasanian cavalryman could receive up to forty times as much as an infantryman, although in the divisions of booty a Muslim cavalryman was supposed to receive only twice the share of an infantryman.¹⁰² But the discrepancy between the stipends given by the Iraqi diwāns to the veterans of the early campaigns and the tribal leaders and the stipends given to later settlers and average tribesmen could be as much as eight or twelve to one and gave an economic dimension to the social distances among them. Still, the range of difference seems

¹⁰⁰ Ṭabari, Ta’rikh, I, 3371–72.
¹⁰² M. Khadduri, The Islamic Law of Nations: Shaybāni’s Siyar (Baltimore, 1966), pp. 84, 106–107. According to Abū Yūsuf (Kharāj, pp. 27, 29) a cavalryman’s share of booty should be three times that of an infantryman.
to have been less in the Islamic system. Persian notables received at most only half the theoretical Sasanian maximum, which was still in the upper range of Islamic stipends, while the Daylamī unit (probably infantry) at Kufa received a group stipend that breaks down to two hundred and fifty dirhams apiece, the same as an average Arab tribesman but still higher than the theoretical Sasanian minimum.\textsuperscript{103}

Of more significance is the impression of an overall equalization and depression of military stipends in the Islamic system compared to the Sasanians. The standing army of the late Sasanian period seems to have been composed of fairly small elite cavalry units and urban garrisons. Although the Muslims raised the tax rates and improved the collection of provisions in kind, income had to be spread over a larger total permanent military population or sent off to Madina. This resulted in generally lower stipends, which were only partly offset by monthly rations and further undermined by inflation in the garrison towns, and led to a continued interest in booty both as an additional and more equitably divided income. However, Arab tribesmen continued to be impatient with the remaining discrepancies in the stipends, which continued to be greater than in prior divisions of booty. It might also be suggested that because of the larger number of soldiers that had to be supported, the Islamic system depended more heavily and in different ways on the sources of revenue and supply than the Sasanian system had done. In spite of the Sasanian origin of the principle and operation of the military register, its application to Islamic military society in Iraq introduced subtle but significant changes, both for the native population and for the Arab Muslim settlers.

The main ceremonial occasion, during which soldiers presented themselves for the distribution of their stipends and provisions, was the military review, which symbolized and emphasized their dependence on the state’s economic support systems. The Sasanian army normally passed in review before the monarch, who was seated on a throne or dais together with the general or military scribe at the beginning of a campaign. The famous story preserved in Arabic literature about the inspection of the army of Khusraw Anūshirvān by his scribe Pāpak, son of Nahravān, is certainly tendentious but the details it

provides about the equipment of the Sasanian army, the method of inspection, and the responsibilities of the scribe as inspector and paymaster should probably be taken as authentic.\textsuperscript{104}

The earliest indications of similar procedures in Islamic Iraq are associated with Ziyād, who is said to have reviewed the Basran troops from a domed chamber (Ar. qubba) alongside one of the canals north of the city.\textsuperscript{105} The slogan of “stipends and provisions on time,” which was inscribed in one of the corners of his audience hall at Kufa, appears to reflect an attempt at a regular system of payment and provision,\textsuperscript{106} while the claim that he managed to distribute stipends to the soldiers and their descendents at Basra and Kufa in a single day\textsuperscript{107} might suggest that a military review was the device for distribution. Stipends were supposed to have been paid at the beginning of the Islamic year, in the month of Muḥarram, and the impression that members of the permanent military population usually received a single annual payment is encouraged by the account that in 691 Muṣʿab ibn az-Zubayr sought to win the support of the Basrans by giving them stipends twice a year (and by increasing the amount by one hundred dirhams).\textsuperscript{108}

However, it is difficult to reconcile this picture with more usual descriptions of how stipends and weapons were handed out when armies were reviewed before battles or campaigns. Sometimes this also involved the enrollment of volunteers. The review at the beginning of the campaign season in the spring was annual, of course, but rarely coincided with the month of Muḥarram. In fact, in the confused conditions of the second fitna, payments were fairly irregular. Scenes such as the registration and payment of the Basran reinforcements by al-Muhallab outside the city in 684 or the distribution of money and weapons by al-Mukhtar to his Kufan troops in 687 seem to be more typical.\textsuperscript{109} Al-Ḥajjāj also distributed stipends in the masjid at Kufa in

\textsuperscript{104} Dinawari, \textit{Akhbār at-tiwāl}, pp. 74-75; Ṭabari, \textit{Taʾrīkh}, I, 964. Prokopios provides a contemporary but somewhat distorted description of the Sasanian military review (\textit{Wars}, I. xviii. 52–53). Khusraw Parviz is said to have reviewed one thousand elephants and fifty thousand cavalry during a festival (\textit{Masʿūdi}, \textit{Murūj}, I, 321).

\textsuperscript{105} Baladhuri, \textit{Futuḥ}, pp. 358, 364.

\textsuperscript{106} Ibn Qutayba, \textit{ʿUyun}, II, 211. A promise that neither stipends nor rations would be held back is also included in Ziyād’s inaugural \textit{khatba} at Basra in 665 (Ibn ’Abd Rabbihi, \textit{ʿIqd}, IV, 112).

694 to those soldiers who were required to leave within three days to join al-Muhallab.\textsuperscript{110}

In fact, the earliest detailed description of a real military review (Ar. \textit{\'{a}rd}) appears to be that held by al-\Hajjaj for the combined Basran and Kufan army of forty thousand men, whom he sent to eastern Iran in 699. The soldiers were provided with their equipment and mounts, were completely armed and paid full stipends by al-\Hajjaj, and as each man passed in front of him, al-\Hajjaj ordered his muster master, \textquote{Abd ar-Rahm\=an ibn Umm al-\Hakam ath-Thaqafi, to give bonuses of five hundred and fifty \textit{dirhams} to the bravest and best equipped.\textsuperscript{111} Thus, the general practice in the second half of the seventh century seems to have been to distribute stipends and rations to armies mustered in the field before campaigns, or else to distribute them to the population subject to military service in the \textit{masjid}.

Cash surpluses for the payment of soldiers were held in central treasuries in both the Sasanian and Islamic systems. Incredibly large reserves (if reports are to be believed) were accumulated at Mada\={i}n in the late Sasanian period and cash was sent along with armies on campaign.\textsuperscript{112} Similar, but not nearly as large, amounts of cash for the payment of troops and for other expenses were kept in the treasury at the complex of government buildings in the center of Basra and Kufa. The amount grew with the size of the military population and the increasing efficiency of the administration. In 656 there were six hundred thousand \textit{dirhams} in the Basran treasury, but this was abnormally low because it had just been raided.\textsuperscript{113} In 660 there were five million \textit{dirhams} in the Kufan treasury,\textsuperscript{114} and by the 680s the reserves at Kufa had risen to nine million \textit{dirhams} and those at Basra to eight million \textit{dirhams}.\textsuperscript{115}

Provisions for the Sasanian army were collected from taxes and rents which were delivered in kind and held in storehouses until they

\textsuperscript{110} Mubarrad, \textit{al-Kitab al-K\=amil} (Leipzig, 1864), pp. 216–17, 665.

\textsuperscript{111} \c{T}abar\={i}, \textit{Ta'rikh}, II, 1043–44. It is also reported that al-\Hajjaj was the first Muslim to be seated on a dais during a battle; (see Ibn Rustah, \textit{al-A\=l\={a}q an-nafisa} (Leiden, 1891), p. 198. For the subsequent development of the military review under the \textquote{Abb\={a}sis and their successors, see C. E. Bosworth, \textquote{Recruitment, Muster and Review in Medieval Islamic Armies}, in \textit{War, Technology and Society in the Middle East}, pp. 59–77.

\textsuperscript{112} Prokopios, \textit{Wars}, II. xxx. 44–46; \c{T}abar\={i}, \textit{Ta'rikh}, I, 2436.

\textsuperscript{113} \c{T}abar\={i}, \textit{Ta'rikh}, I, 3227.

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., II, 4.

\textsuperscript{115} Bal\={a}dh\=ur\=i, \textit{Ans\=ab} (Jerusalem, 1938), IVb, 102–3; \c{T}abar\={i}, \textit{Ta'rikh}, II, 439, 634. Figures of sixteen and nineteen million \textit{dirhams} are also given for the Basran treasury in the 680s (\c{T}abar\={i}, \textit{Ta'rikh}, II, 439, 443).
were needed. Before the sixth century, the state distributed food to subjects to be prepared for the soldiers who were quartered in their houses. By the late Sasanian period, garrisons seem to have been segregated in citadels or frontier fortresses separate from urban populations and were supplied with rations by the garrison commander or by the commanding general on campaigns. An annual food supply was kept in the storehouses of Nasibin in the sixth century; but the most famous of the depots was at Anbar (Ar., “the granary”), from which the friends and supporters of their Arab protégé, an-Nu’mān ibn al-Mundhir, were supplied during the ascendency of the Banū Lakhm. Persian armies also took provisions on campaign. The army that invaded Lazica in 549 imported a large quantity of flour in linen bags loaded on mules along with cash. The armies that defended Iraq during the Islamic conquest were similarly supplied, and after the Battle of Buwayb in 634 the provisions of the Persian general Mihrān, consisting of sheep, cattle, and flour, were carried off by the Muslims.

During the early attacks on Iraq, Muslim armies usually provided for themselves by raiding, but before the Battle of Qadisiyya in 637 they were supplied with sheep and camels sent from Madina. Afterwards, the establishment of a warehouse for provisions (Ar. dār ar-rizq) at Basra and Kufa and the distribution of monthly rations completed the Muslims’ adaptation of the institutions of Sasanian military administration. The earliest references again concern Basra, where the depot was set up at Zabuqa, one of the abandoned Sasanian fortresses at the site where Basra was founded. It had a courtyard, was also called a “village of provisions” (Ar. qaryat al-arzāq), and is first mentioned in relation to the events of 656, preceding the Battle of the Camel. It is natural to suppose that Ziyād had been instrumental in setting it up but, in any case, after he became governor in 665 he rebuilt it and his son ʿUbaydullāh enlarged it in a monumental fashion.

117 Prokopios, Wars, II. xix. 20.
118 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 246; Yaqūt, Kitāb muʿjam al-buldān (Leipzig, 1866), I, 368. For the Banū Lakhm at Hira see part II, chapter 6, “Arabs: Natives.”
119 Prokopios, Wars, II. xxx. 19, 44–46.
120 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2197.
121 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 256.
122 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2378, 3123, 3127, 3129. Rizq comes from Middle Persian rōzik, “daily” rations.
to resemble a city (Ar. *madīnat ar-rizq*) with four iron gates.\textsuperscript{123} The *dār ar-rizq* at Kufa was at Shumiya on the Euphrates river opposite Buwayb and does not appear to be mentioned before the events of 695–96.\textsuperscript{124} There was a similar installation at Wasit, which was founded in the early eighth century, where three million *dirhams*, weapons, food for thirty thousand men and fodder for twenty thousand riding animals for a year were found in the storehouses (Ar. *khazā'in*) when the city fell to the 'Abbāsīs in 750.\textsuperscript{125}

Such concentrations of surplus wealth in treasuries and storehouses also provided convenient targets for resentful taxpayers or soldiers and were vulnerable to attack by deprived or greedy people.\textsuperscript{126} During the conquest, local peasants and the Muslim army helped themselves to the provisions stored at Nirsīyan after the defeat of Narsi at the Battle of Kaskar in 634.\textsuperscript{127} In 656 the supporters of Ṭalḥa and aṣ-Ṣuḥayl killed the guards at the treasury in Basra and divided its contents among themselves. After he took Basra in the same year, ‘Alī also divided what was left in the treasury equally among his own supporters at five hundred *dirhams* apiece. When supporters of al-Mukhtār occupied the provision depot in Basra in 685, they slaughtered the camels there.\textsuperscript{128} Raids on the treasury usually reflect desires to equalize and redistribute wealth or the desire of one faction to enrich itself at the expense of others.

Thus, in the decades following the conquest, the organizational arrangements arising from ad hoc solutions to practical needs were gradually coordinated with the main outlines of the Sasanian system of military administration in Iraq and with the kind of officials who ran it. The office of military scribe, the muster roll, the formal military

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\textsuperscript{124} Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, I, 2190; II, 911, 966. Shumiya is identified as the location of the *dār ar-rizq* during the events of 634, but there is no indication that it actually existed at that time.

\textsuperscript{125} Dinawari, *Akhbārat-tiwal*, p. 370.

\textsuperscript{126} Thus Ḥujr ibn ‘Adi, supported by two-thirds of the crowd in the *masjid* of Kufa, complained that al-Mughīra ibn Shuʾba was withholding their rations and stipends from them and demanded that he distribute them (Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, II, 113).

\textsuperscript{127} Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, I, 2170.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., I, 3135, 3227; II, 681.
review, and the supply depots were all adapted to Muslim use in Iraq, but with modifications that mainly reflect the tribal organization of Muslim Arab society.

The Correspondence Department. Both the tax bureau and the military department relied on written records, the former in Persian at first and the latter in Arabic from the beginning. An administrative system based on written documents requires the existence of a staff of bureaucrats with the necessary literate skills to produce and to understand them. But it is difficult to explain the survival and adaptation of Sasanian administrative institutions under Muslim rule in terms of the survival and employment of a scribal or bureaucratic "class." In the first place, administrative secretaries (Ar. *kuttāb*) are perhaps better described as the members of a semi-hereditary profession than of a class, and the image of scribes forming one of the four classes of the late Sasanian period has more to do with the theory of the state than with social realities. The employment of scribes for administrative communication and documentation put them in the service of governors, generals, tax collectors, and judges as assistants, advisors, and private secretaries. 129 Although Arabic literature describes several bodies of tax and correspondence secretaries at the Sasanian capital, there are unlikely to have been more than several dozen at a single time, and their degree of specialization may be questioned, especially since we are told that civilian secretaries also went on campaign. 130 In practice, administrative functions appear to have overlapped, and the same person might hold several offices at once. Adding to the difficulty is the fact that although there are convincing accounts of how Persian soldiers, landed notables, and captives or their children contributed to the survival and use of Sasanian institutions among Muslims, there seems to be little hard evidence that members of the central administrative bureaucracy at Mada'in either survived the conquest or were employed by the Muslims in Iraq.

Second, the employment of scribes who wrote Arabic had already begun in the Sasanian period. The sixth-century inscription at Umm al-Jimal commemorating Ulayh ibn 'Ubayda called him the secretary

129 The position of local state secretary in provincial administration, which is mentioned in 448, seems analogous to that of the military scribe; see J. Corluy, "Historia Sancti Mar Pethion Martyris," *Analecta Bollandiana* 7 (1888), 32. The term which occurs in this text is transcribed as *shahrdašīb*, but this could easily be an orthographic mistake in the Syriac script for *shahrdašir*.

130 Jahshiyārī, *Wuzarā*, p. 3.
(Ar. kāṭib) of the chieftain of the tribe of 'Amr. 131 There was nothing unusual about the employment of those who could write Arabic by early Islamic rulers, governors, or generals since it clearly reflects pre-Islamic Arab, Persian, and Byzantine practices. The Arabic literature is lavish with quotations of letters and other documents from the time of 'Umar I or even earlier, and, whether or not all of these texts are authentic, their presence reflects the general expectation that communication was normally carried out in writing. It is more important to point out that those who were employed earliest for their ability to write Arabic in Iraq were mawālī from Ta‘if (as already noted in connection with the division of booty) or local Iraqi Arabs. In 641 Bajāla ibn ‘Abda al-‘Anbari, from the vicinity of Basra, served as kāṭib for Jaz‘ ibn Mu‘āwiya, who was collecting taxes in the districts of Manadhir and Dast-i Maysan near Basra and handled the correspondence with 'Umar I concerning the treatment of local Magians. 132

At about the same time we are told that, after Ziyād, al-Ḥuṣayn ibn Abī l-Ḥurr al-‘Anbari became secretary for Abū Mūsā at Basra. 133

Third, the best explanation for the way Sasānian methods of organizing correspondence reappeared in Islamic administration lies in the employment of Arabs in the Sasānian correspondence bureau. The Sasānian chancellery was divided into departments, each of which dealt with a separate foreign power. The scribes in each department were bilingual in Persian and the language of the power with which they dealt: Greek, Turkish, Indian, etc. These foreign correspondence secretaries (Ar. kuttāb ar-rasā‘īl) were also royal translators and were expected to maintain a high standard of accuracy in both form and content in the translation of written and verbal messages for the monarch. Candidates were examined at court by the chief secretaries, who presented the names of those who passed to the monarch for possible employment at court. 134 'Adi ibn Zayd of Hira (d. ca. 590) is supposed to have been the first to write in Arabic for the Sasānian chancellery

131 Combe, Sauvaget, and Wiet, Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe (Cairo, 1931), I, 4-5.
132 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 199; Bukhārī, al-Jāmi‘ as-ṣaḥīh (Cairo, 1390/1971), V, 238.
134 Jahshiyārī, Wuzarā‘, pp. 3-4. The head of the secretarial staff was called dabīr-badh (N.P.); see Ya‘qūbī, Ta‘rikh, I, 202. The head of the correspondence bureau (Ar. ra‘īs kuttāb ar-rasā‘īl) in 628 is supposed to have been an official called Yazdān Gushnasp (Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl, p. 112). For the ultimate derivation of dabīr from the Sumerian dupsar, see Ebeling, “Frahang-i-Pahlavik,” p. 34.
at Mada'in and is described as a kind of undersecretary for Arab affairs. Two of his sons succeeded him in Sasanian service: 'Amr ibn 'Adi as translator, and Zayd ibn 'Adi as the official in charge, after his father, of Arabic correspondence. It is not surprising to find people from Hira serving as translators between Persians and Arabs at the time of the conquest.

Although early Islamic rulers and officials usually had someone to do the writing for them, there is no evidence for the existence of a Sasanian-style chancellery in Islamic administration in Iraq before the time of Ziyād. By singling out eloquent Arabs and mawālī and employing them as correspondence secretaries (Ar. kuttāb ar-rasā'il), he actually established such a bureau and began the introduction of the Sasanian Persian epistolary style into the administrative Arabic used by the Islamic government. At least two Arabs, Ziyād’s relative, Abdullāh ibn Abī Bakra, and Jubayr ibn Ḥayya were employed in his chancellery, and one of Ziyād’s Persian mawālī called Mirdās also served as his secretary. They were probably all bilingual, but the forms which they applied to the correspondence had already been worked out in the Arabic section of the Sasanian translation bureau.

*The Registry Department.* The establishment of an administrative department which used seals to register documents (Ar. diwān zimām, diwān al-khātam) completed the system. According to the tradition reported via al-Mada'īnī and Ibn al-Muqaffa’, whenever the Sasanian monarch gave an order the registrar recorded it, a separate copy was registered by his assistant, and each month’s collection of these memoranda was sealed by the king and then stored. The registrar’s copy was forwarded to the official responsible for affixing the royal seal (Ar. sāhīb az-zimām) who then sent it to the official in charge of having it drawn up and transcribed in the official form. This copy was returned to the sāhīb az-zimām who presented it to the monarch, compared its contents with what was in the memoranda, and then sealed it in the presence of the king or one of his most trusted assistants. There are several descriptions of the seals used by the Sasanian rulers, but all seem to be in general agreement on the use of four seals for strictly

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administrative purposes to cover correspondence, investiture, finance, and the royal post and which usually bore a legend or motto and often a pictorial emblem. The use of seals as a confirmation of authority is an ancient practice in western Asia and not especially remarkable. In administration, seals might be used in different departments for different purposes, but what makes the Sasanian system noteworthy are the elaborate precautions which were taken to avoid deception and the use of a separate office as an interdepartmental check to prevent abuses.

Nor is it surprising to find Muslims using seals for administrative purposes, although it is interesting to note that although they had no objection to pictorial representation on seals there was disagreement at first over whether or not Arabic legends should be inscribed on either administrative or private seals. This question seems to have arisen because Muslim officials were using their personal seals for official business. According to tradition, the caliph 'Umar forbade any inscription in Arabic on seals with the result that the seal of 'Utba ibn Farqad, who was governor of Mawsil in 641, was broken because it had “'Utba the 'āmil” written on it. For the same reason, we are told, the personal seal of Anas ibn Mālik (d. bet. 709-11) at Basra only bore the figure of a wolf, fox, or recumbent lion. Ziyād's own seal had the figure of a peacock on it, and he may have already begun to employ Sasanian procedures when he held the two seals for Abū Mūsā at Basra. As governor, Ziyād is said to have been “the first Arab to institute a ḍīwān zīmām and a seal in imitation of what the Persians used to do” for sealing official documents.

The tradition giving Mu'āwiya credit for establishing a ḍīwān al-khātām seems to mask the introduction of the system from Iraq to

140 Ibid., p. 464; Jahshiyārī, Wuzarā', p. 3; Masʿūdi, Murūj, I, 309. Masʿūdi (I, 320) also gives an elaborate description of the nine seals of Khusraw Parvīz. For Sasanian seals in general, see R. Göbl, Der sasanidische Siegelkanon: Handbücher der mittelasiatischen Numismatik, IV (Brunswick, 1973).
141 Ibn Sa'd, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 26–27. This issue is also reflected in the story that Ma'n ibn Zā'ida used a forged seal with al-khilāfā (Ar.) on it to withdraw kharāj money at Kufa (Baladhūrī, Futūḥ, p. 462). The claim that 'Umar I had documents sealed with clay finds precedents in the use of clay bullae in pre-Islamic Egypt and Sasanian Iran.
142 Ibn Sa'd, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 11. The name of Anas ibn Mālik is also attached to the story that when Muḥammad was told that the Byzantines did not read a letter unless it was sealed, he got a silver ring and inscribed “Muḥammad, the messenger of God” on it (Bukhārī, Sābīḥ, IV, 116).
143 Ibn Sa'd, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 71.
144 Baladhūrī, Futūḥ, p. 464.
Damascus. According to the story, Mu‘awiya had sent ‘Amr ibn az-Zubayr to Ziyād with a draft for one hundred thousand dirhams, but the document had been issued without being sealed, so ‘Amr changed the one hundred to two hundred. The discrepancy was noticed when Ziyād presented his accounts to Mu‘awiya, who protected himself thereafter by setting up a diwān al-khiitam and by putting a qādī in charge of it. Whenever a document was issued with the caliph’s signature, it was taken to this department where a copy was registered. The original was tied in a roll, sealed with wax, and stamped with the seal of the head of the diwān. Thus the contents of the documents were kept secret and could not be changed. 145

Although some of the same administrative practices may be found at Madina and Damascus in this period, the adoption of the full scale, integrated, fourfold Sasanian bureaucratic system for Islamic administration was accomplished at Basra and is closely associated with the career of Ziyād. Income from tribute and taxes was organized through the department of finance; expenditure was organized through what was at first a military roll; correspondence was organized by means of a separate secretarial staff; and the authentication of documents for the first three departments was organized by means of a department of registration and sealing. This system followed Sasanian patterns of administration and theories of government. First developed by early Islamic governors in Iraq, it spread to the rest of the Islamic empire and served as the basic framework around which subsequent Islamic administrative forms were built.

State Property

The administration of state property was not part of this fourfold system. The domain lands of both the Byzantines and Sasanians were administered separately by royal officials. In the Sasanian system they provided income and products for the support of the royal family, the palace institution, and members of the ruler’s retinue through patronage. This income was separate from the land tax, which was intended for support of the army and administration. Royal workshops produced luxuries for the palace and court while state lands were kept on their own register and sometimes amounted to entire administrative districts. They were either administered by a royal official (N.P. us-tāndār); were assigned to members of the royal family as appanages,

such as the grant of the crown district of Kaskar by Khusraw Parvīz to his cousin Narsī in about 624; or they were used as a form of payment to supporters of the regime, such as the land grants made to the Banū Lakhm at Hira in order to secure the desert frontier.

Some Sasanian crown land was appropriated by native landlords in the confusion following the Islamic conquest, but the Islamic state claimed the rest and called it șawāfī al-ustān. Kaskar was the first district in Iraq to be administered by a civilian financial official (Ar. 'āmil), an-Nuʿmān ibn ʿAmr ibn Muqarrin for ʿUmar I, who thus resembles an Islamic ustāndār. After the battle of Nihawand in 642, as-Sāʿīb ibn al-Aqraʿ, who was in charge of dividing the booty, was introduced to the principle of separate royal and bureaucratic-military income property by Persians who told him about treasures he would not have to divide up among the army as booty but could remit in their entirety to ʿUmar I because they were royal property.146

However, șawāfī land near Kufa was administered at first by trusted agents (Ar. awliyyāʾ) who were chosen annually from the military leaders, and the income went to the garrison at Kufa. These lands only began to be treated as state property in the Sasanian fashion in the land grants (Ar. qatāʾi) made by ʿUthmān to tribal leaders at Kufa and from undeveloped land around Basra. At Kufa these grants went to the tribal leaders who were the objects of ʿUthmān’s patronage. This had the effect of creating a new Muslim Arab landed elite, which enjoyed the income from these lands at the expense of the rest of the Kufan tribesmen. The attitude emerging in the time of ʿUthmān that property being held by the Commander of the Faithful for the Islamic community was at his disposal reflects an Islamic form of Byzantine and Sasanian concepts of domain land.

A degree of separate administration for state property was achieved under Muʿāwiya along with extensive land grants to his supporters at Basra. His mawlā, ʿAbdullāh ibn Darrāj, whom he put in charge of the kharāj at Kufa, was told by the dahāqīn that the income from șawāfī lands belonging to the Sasanian monarchs and their relatives had been reserved for them and was outside the kharāj regime. With their help, ʿAbdullāh recovered the Sasanian register of crown lands that had been left behind at Hulwan by Yazdagerd III and began to reclaim the royal property in the district of Kaskar, which had been lost to floods in 628. Separate figures for the income from crown land

146 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl, pp. 145–46.
and *kharāj* land are available from the time of Mu‘āwiya, when the concept of state property was also extended to the Hijaz, where reclaimed lands, older public lands, and endowments were identified as *sayyāfi* land. The revival of Sasanian practices is also reflected by Ziyād’s appointment of ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Tubba‘ al-Himyarī to be in charge of his land grants at Basra.147 Only by the time of ‘Abd al-Malik (685–705) and al-Walid I (705–15) was there a central department at Damascus to handle the income from state lands and urban property (Ar. *dīwān al-mustaghallāt*).148 Thus, by the end of the seventh century the treatment of the common property of the Islamic community had been increasingly approximated to the treatment of state property and crown land in late antiquity.

Such an expanded royal household system of mobilizing resources competed with the regular bureaucratic taxation system for revenues. Muslims inherited this conflict most directly from the Sasanians along with the systems themselves, although the early Islamic regime partly offset its effects by making land grants out of reclaimed land and by eventually identifying a permanent base for the land tax in the Sawad. By the eighth century, both organizational alternatives, which had their origins in ancient Babylonia, had found an Islamic form and a tentative balance.149

**COURT INSTITUTIONS AND ROYAL CUSTOMS**

The Late Sasanian Royal Court

Although the Sasanian bureaucratic system had been reconstituted at the provincial level in Iraq by the time Ziyād was governor for Mu‘āwiya, one of the most important immediate effects of the conquest was to relax the close centralization of the late Sasanian period by eclipsing its superstructure at court. The titles and offices of the Sasanian court were highly differentiated, usually hierarchic, occasionally unique, and supposedly hereditary. Some of the positions were standard for the operation of a royal household, but others headed the social, professional, bureaucratic, or religious hierarchies. The po-

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sitions of head physician, head steward, head of servants, royal warden, royal astrologer, head of the royal artisans, and grand chamberlain either disappeared with the Islamic conquest or were transformed to fit the changed circumstances. Because the early Islamic regime was more decentralized at first, the suppression or abandonment of these hierarchic titles and positions was an aspect of administrative discontinuity. The households of early Islamic rulers and governors were much less elaborately organized than the Sasanian court and not as extensively engaged in manufacturing.

No permanent position for a person in charge of all the branches of the administrative bureaucracy existed in the Sasanian system, mainly because the monarchy jealously guarded its monopoly of power. It should not even be necessary to mention the nonexistence of an office except for the extravagant claims of writers such as the Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 1092) who derived the Islamic office of wazīr from a Sasanian origin.¹⁵⁰ Such claims once muddied the waters considerably and have affected earlier discussions of the question of administrative continuity; but it is no longer necessary to demonstrate that the original meaning of wazīr in the Qur’ān or its use in early Islamic local administration was that of an administrative assistant.¹⁵¹ The question of the existence and nature of a Sasanian office resembling that of the wazīr remains, however. The fact that the later Arabic literature persistently describes several high Sasanian officials as wazīrs probably indicates no more than that at one time or another they were in charge of the administration for the monarch. In particular, if the two main passages in which the title of vazurgframādhr (M.P.) is explained as wazīr are taken in their entire context, it is clear that the comparison is intended to be descriptive rather than technical.¹⁵²

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¹⁵² Tabari, Ta’rīkh, I, 869–70; Ya’qūbī, Ta’rīkh, I, 202. However, M. L. Chaumont, in “Chiliarque et Curopalate à la cour des Sassanides,” Iranica Antiqua 10 (1973), 149–51, argues that the position of vazurgframādhr was created during the fourth century by extending the powers of the administrative official called framādhr (= Gk. epitropos) and that this office was consolidated during the late Sasanian period as a kind of grand vizier.
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147 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 353, 363.
148 Jahshiyari, Wuzarā’, p. 43.
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a permanent office, for relatives, generals, and nobles who held different titles and positions to perform the duties of a regent during the absence, minority, or preoccupation of the king. At the very end of the Sasanian period, after the death of Khusraw Parvīz in 628, conditions favored the concentration of power and influence in the hands of a small number of officials at court who were responsible for the rapid elevation and deposition of a succession of rulers, and who put themselves in charge of the administration. A cavalry officer ran the state for Shīrōē (February–September 628), and a nobleman called Khosrat Fīrūz managed affairs for the child Ardashir III (September 628–April 630) while the chief steward was in charge of raising him. The resemblance between the arrangements made for Ardashir III and Goitein’s description of the origin of the ‘Abbāsī wazīrate in the tribal custom of assigning a guardian to a young prince for his education and for the conduct of government during his minority is perhaps a natural result of circumstances arising from hereditary succession. In fact, similar situations in the Byzantine empire were handled in the same way during this period.

Muslim governors were at first more important than Commanders of the Faithful in the revival of Sasanian royal customs. This was especially true of governors such as Ziyād and al-Hajjāj who not only unified the administration of Iraq but, because of their responsibility for the eastern provinces which were subordinated to Basra and Kufa, ruled a region that nearly coincided with the former extent of the Sasanian empire. The Persians of Fars compared Ziyād to Khusraw Anūshirwān when he was their governor at the end of ‘Alī’s reign. Ziyād’s similarity to the Sasanians was heightened by the way he divided his time between Basra and Kufa. The last Sasanian monarchs normally maintained separate summer and winter residences, spending the winter in Iraq (at Mada’in or Dastagird) and the summer in the mountains of western Iran (often at Hulwan). The government of

153 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl p. 116; Tha’ālībi, Ghurar, p. 732; Ţabarı, Ta’rikh, I, 1046, 1061.
155 Ţabarı, Ta’rikh, I, 3449.
156 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 632–33; Dinawari, Akhbār at- tiwāl, pp. 80, 105; G. Hoffmann, Auszüge aus syrischen Akten persischer Märtyrer (Leipzig, 1880), p. 37; Mas‘ūdī, Murūj, II, 184; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 553; Ţabarı, Ta’rikh, I, 1041; Tha’ālībi, Ghurar, p. 641. According to Mas‘ūdī, many prominent Muslims consciously imitated this Sasanian royal custom and he quotes the verse of Abū Dulaf al-Qāsim ibn ‘Īsā al-‘Ijli: “I am a man like Kisrā; I spend the summer in al-Jibal and the winter in Iraq.”
Basra and Kufa and their dependencies were united only in the person of Ziyād, and two separate sets of bureaus continued to exist when he was governor, one in each city. Ziyād spent half of each year in either place—the summer in Kufa and the winter in Basra—while he left a vice governor in the other city during his absence.\(^{157}\) His solution seems natural and, although the circumstances of combining the two previously separate groups of provinces under his sole rule certainly required some such arrangement, it seems fair to suggest that the seasonal way Ziyād divided his time was inspired by Sasanian royal customs and that he was the first to adapt the practice of keeping separate summer and winter capitals to the needs of early Islamic administration in Iraq.

In fact, the spring and autumn festivals of Nawrūz and Mihrajān were the pivots of the Sasanian administrative and ceremonial year. Nawrūz marked the beginning of the fiscal year when appointments took effect, new coins were struck, proclamations were issued, and the fire temples were purified. Public audiences were held and gifts were presented to the monarch on both occasions.\(^{158}\) The requirement for gifts at Nawrūz and Mihrajān was revived by 'Abdullāh ibn Darrāj, perhaps in his capacity as a royal agent, who added ten million dirhams in gifts to the income from taxes.\(^{159}\) These festivals were also the occasions when winter clothing was exchanged for summer clothing in the spring and back again in the fall under the Sasanians, so it is noteworthy that those who wore unseasonal clothing were barred from Ziyād’s audience.\(^{160}\)

**Masjid and Palace**

Sasanian royal ideology also had an impact on aspects of Islamic public architecture in Iraq. In a general way, the juxtaposition of religious and administrative structures or the performance of religious rites and secular functions in or near the same building was merely an expression of the relationship between religion and the state in Late Antiquity that was shared by pre-Islamic Arabs and early Muslims in the Hijaz. Most of the common public activities of the Muslim settlers in Iraq were carried out in their place of worship (Ar. *masjid*),


\(^{158}\) Ṣādiq, *Ṭārīḵ*, p. 146; Ya’qūbi, *Ta’rikh*, I, 199.


\(^{160}\) Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *’Iqd*, I, 67; V, 12.
the government buildings, and the marketplace clustered near the center of Basra and Kufa. The nature of the amīrate as the leadership of Muslims in all of their activities, both sacred and secular, was expressed architecturally by the proximity of the masjid to the governor’s residence (Ar. dār al-imāra).

The use of the central masjid as a meeting place wherever Muslims settled finds its best immediate precedent in the way the masjid at Madina was used in the time of Muhammad. Its open courtyard construction, with a columned portico on the side towards Makka, came most directly from the domestic architecture of the Hijaz as it was applied to Muḥammad’s masjid-residence in Madina. So, although the masjid-palace complex represents an Islamic expression of the relationship between religion and the state in late antiquity, its inspiration need not have been solely Sasanian. On the other hand, it might be argued that similarities of arrangement and use eased the incorporation of architectural elements that reflect local political traditions in Iraq.

The increasing monumentality and permanence of public buildings may at first have been only a result of the success of Islamic armies and the stabilization of the political situation, but they provided occasions for the employment of local building techniques, materials, and local builders. The earliest dār al-imāra at Basra, which contained the prison and the dīwān, was built of reeds in 635, while the first masjid there was no more than an open space in the center of the city, marked out and enclosed by a fence of reeds. Both structures were replaced three years later by buildings of sun-dried brick and clay.161 At Kufa, baked bricks and marble columns that were taken from the ruins of Lakhmī and Sasanian buildings at Hira were used to build the treasury-palace complex and the adjoining portico of the masjid in 638.162 The portico was roofed over in the style of Greek churches, which led Creswell to conclude that it had a trussed gable roof of wood resting directly on the columns without the help of arcades.163 When Ziyād enlarged and rebuilt the public buildings at Basra in 665 and at Kufa in 670, baked brick and gypsum were used for the masjid of Basra. Stone drums for the porticoes of both masjids were quarried in the mountains of Khuzistan, drilled, and filled with lead and iron dowels to make four-jointed columns that supported roofs of teak.164

162 Balādhurī, Futūḥ, p. 286; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2491–92.
164 Balādhurī, Futūḥ, pp. 276–77, 347–48; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2492. In this regard,
This method of joining columns was part of Persian building techniques. In addition, Arabic literary tradition consciously associates Sasanian influences with public construction at Kufa. The *masjid*, palace, and treasury are said to have been built for Sa’d by a Persian from Hamadan called Rūzbih ibn Buzurjmihr ibn Sāsān—(possibly a disgraced member of the royal family)—who had taken advantage of the fall of the dynasty to return from exile in the Byzantine empire. He is at least a convenient figure to personify the combination of Mediterranean, Mesopotamian, and Iranian building traditions at Kufa. Ziyād is also said to have employed builders from the pre-Islamic period when he rebuilt Sa’d’s *masjid* at Kufa. One of them, who had worked for the Sasanians, gave him the technique for making columns as described above.\footnote{Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, I, 2491–92, 2494.}

The building projects of Ziyād seem to mark a turning point in the introduction of the architectural forms of authoritarian rule among Muslims in Iraq that were quite in line with Sasanian precedents. This was at least true to the extent that imposing public buildings reflect a greater control over resources. Such buildings also reflect the treatment of the Muslim populations of Basra and Kufa more as subjects than before, and Ziyād’s intention to eclipse neighborhood tribal *masjids* and tribal meeting places (Ar. sg. *majlis*) with the central congregational *masjid* and the palace of the governor. The main requirements of such buildings were magnificence and security. Threats of assassination and attacks on rulers and governors in the *masjid* provided sufficient practical reasons for the introduction of a protective chamber (Ar. *maqsūra*) in the *masjid* at Damascus by Mu‘awiya and by Ziyād at Basra and Kufa. Ziyād introduced other elements into *masjid* architecture that were associated with the need for security. At Basra, Abī Miṣā had set the pulpit (Ar. *minbar*) in the center of the *masjid*, which made it necessary for the governor to pass through the congregation on his way to the pulpit to lead Friday worship. Ziyād’s claim that it was not only dangerous but inappropriate for the *imām* to pass among the people appears to reflect pre-Islamic attitudes towards the elevation and seclusion of rulers which, in Iraq, had been most immediately associated with the Sasanians. Consequently, the *minbar* was moved to the south side of the *masjid* faced by Muslims during worship and a door was cut into its wall. The governor’s palace,
which had originally been placed on the northeast side of the masjid, was rebuilt of unbaked brick and clay against the south (qibla) wall of the masjid, and a maqsūra was built in front of the door leading to the palace to protect the governor from attack while he was worshiping. 166

In fact, the Muslims continued to use the royal buildings at Mada'in for public purposes beginning with the fall of the city of 637, when Sa'd set up a pulpit in the great Sasanian audience hall (the Īwān Kīsrā) and used it as a masjid. 167 Afterwards, we are told, the first governors of Mada'in, Salmān al-Fārisī and Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yamān, "resided" at the Īwān Kīsrā, 168 and in 661, during his brief claim to the caliphate, al-Ḥasan ibn 'Ali went to Mada'in and settled in the White Palace of the Sasanians. 169 In 696 the local governor, Muṭarrif ibn al-Mughīra, held an audience in the Īwān (see fig. 3). 170

167 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2441, 2443, 2444.
169 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl, p. 231; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2.
170 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, II, 980.
Later literary tradition made the White Palace the prototype for the palaces of Sa'd and Ziyād at Kufa.\textsuperscript{171} However, except for an anteroom connected to a domed audience chamber,\textsuperscript{172} of which a fifth-century example survives at nearby Kish (see fig. 4a), it is difficult to tell what features they were supposed to have in common. It is natural to suppose that the administrative compound composed of residence and treasury that Rūzbih built for Sa’d reproduced the local style, but the key issue was over the wooden gate and fence of reeds with which Sa’d enclosed his compound. The creation of such a barrier (Sa’d is said to have desired relief from the noise of the adjoining marketplace) made the compound a stronghold (Ar. \textit{qaṣr}) that resembled a Sasanian palace to the extent that the gate became a symbol of the conflict between security and accessibility. Disapproval of such seclusion was expressed in the famous story of how ‘Umar I sent Muḥammad ibn Maslama to burn the gate and the fence because it deprived the people of Kufa of their rights by preventing them from entering Sa’d’s presence.\textsuperscript{173} This attitude also seems to be reflected in the claims that al-Walid ibn ‘Uqba never put a gate on his compound or had a chamberlain when he was governor of Kufa (646–47) for ‘Uthmān,\textsuperscript{174} and that ‘Alī refused to settle in the \textit{qaṣr} because ‘Umar had disliked it and settled in the public square instead.\textsuperscript{175}

Although Ziyād is said to have “restored” Sa’d’s palace at Kufa, he was probably responsible for the first real citadels at Basra and Kufa that enclosed the governor’s residence, treasury, and prison behind defensible walls and a monumental gateway from which the governor’s guards could defy the unruly population. The \textit{qaṣr} at Kufa also had a public audience hall (Ar. \textit{majlis}) with inscriptions in its four corners.\textsuperscript{176} The creation of such a complex at Kufa was partly a reaction to the need for security. It might also be suggested, however, that a feature such as the audience hall may have been a competitive reaction to the use of the White Palace at Mada’in by al-Ḥasan as well as a requirement for more formal audience procedures used by

\textsuperscript{172} L’Orange, \textit{Cosmic Kingship}, pp. 23–24.
\textsuperscript{173} Balādhrī, \textit{Tutūh}, p. 278; Dīnawarī, \textit{Akhbār at-ṭiwāl}, p. 131; Ṭabarī, \textit{Taʾrikh}, I, 2493. This issue seems to be related to other complaints made by the Kufans about Sa’d. See footnote 21.
\textsuperscript{174} Ṭabarī, \textit{Taʾrikh}, I, 2812, 2846.
\textsuperscript{175} Dīnawarī, \textit{Akhbār at-ṭiwāl}, p. 162.
Fig. 4. Audience Halls.

a. Fifth-century Sasanian palace near Kish (after Watelin).

b. Seventh-century *dār al-imāra* at Kufa.
the time of Ziyād. The earliest level of the plan of the dār al-imāra excavated at Kufa included a squarish columned hall opening off the central courtyard and connecting to an adjacent domed chamber behind it (see fig. 4b). Although it has been ascribed to the time of al-Ḥājjāj, it may belong to the time of Ziyād or even earlier. The example set by Ziyād was followed by his son, 'Ubaydullāh, who built a red brick palace in Basra and culminated in the masjid-palace complex and its celestial green dome which al-Ḥājjāj built at Wasit in about 702.

Thus, it seems that the use of the Īwān Kisrā and of building materials from Hira by the Muslims immediately after the conquest had both practical and symbolic aspects. Their choices symbolized the fact that they had replaced the Sasanians as rulers, and that the property of the former dynasty was theirs to use as they pleased. By the time of Ziyād, if not earlier, Islamic governors in Iraq had also begun to identify themselves with Sasanian royal traditions by appropriating their architectural symbolism for themselves. This is indicated best by the emergence of urban citadels and by the kind of architectural complexes they were. Walls and gates controlled access to the governor and protected him from rebellious subjects while an audience hall provided the location for particular kinds of ceremonies. But, although both features responded to practical needs, they also revealed their ideological necessity as well as the growing distance between Islamic rulers and Muslim subjects in Sufyānī Iraq.

The Ḥājib

The purpose of the kind of palace and citadel architecture designed to limit and to regulate access in the interests of security is intimately connected to the office of doorkeeper or chamberlain (Ar. ḥājib). There

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177 O. Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art (New Haven and London, 1973), p. 165. 'Abd al-Malik is supposed to have held an audience at the palace of “Sa’d” in Kufa in 691 (Zotenberg, Chronique, IV, 110). The citadel at Istakhr with its reception hall where Ziyād fortified himself against Mu‘āwiya in 662 (Tabari, Ta’rikhb, II, 24) may have been one of the sources of inspiration for the dār al-imāra at Kufa. The outline of a massive, squarish, unexcavated fortification with round towers at the corners may be seen south-east of the Sasanian city of Istakhr and aligned with it. See D. Whitcomb, “The City of Istakhr and the Marvdasht Plain,” Akten des VII internationalen Kongresses für iranische Kunst & Archäologie, 7–10 Sept. 1976, pp. 364, 366–67.

does not appear to have been a single title for people who performed this duty in the Sasanian period, although the use of ḥājib and even of grand chamberlain (Ar. akbar ḥujjāb)179 in the Arabic literature that refers to the Sasanians tends to encourage the impression of a relationship between Sasanian practice and the office of ḥājib in the Islamic period.

There appear to have been three related aspects to the duties of officials who acted as doorkeepers for the Sasanians. One was protective, with an inherent military dimension since the duties of a chamberlain were often performed by an army officer who was in charge of guarding the palace gate. Another was mediation between the sovereign who was secluded by a curtain from the sight of subjects who were admitted to his presence. One of the best examples of this aspect of the office is the way the chamberlain Farrūkhān announced the arrival of the delegation of Nestorian bishops to Khusraw Parviz in 612 and then acted as go-between in their discussion with the monarch by carrying their messages back and forth.180 The chamberlain’s own access to the monarch and his duty as private message bearer for the king made him a useful diplomatic representative of the king. Yazdgushnasp, the chamberlain of Khusraw Anūshirvān, was employed for the negotiations with the Byzantine ambassador which led to the treaty of 561.181 The third dimension of this office was that of controlling access to the monarch by screening his visitors. The doorkeeper could refuse admission, or admit and announce those who were allowed to enter, whether they were great nobles and personal friends who shared the king’s table and private entertainments or whether they were petitioners from the general public who came on days of formal audience.182

Only this last aspect appears to be equivalent to the duties of the early Islamic ḥājib. Although the meaning of the Arabic root ḥjb is to conceal, shelter, or prevent, and the responsibility of ḥijāba in pagan

179 Tha’alibi, Ghurar, p. 625.
180 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 631–32. The deception practiced by Bindōē on Bahrām ibn Siyāwushān when Khusraw Parviz hid in a monastery in his flight from Bahrām Chubīn in 590 was also based on the role of the chamberlain as intermediary (Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl, pp. 92–93).
182 For a general discussion of these Sasanian practices, see Chaumont, “Chiliarque.” For Byzantine parallels, see A.E.R. Boak and J. E. Dunlap, Two Studies in Later Roman and Byzantine Administration (New York, 1924).
Makka had been the guardianship of the keys to the Ka‘ba, early Islamic ḥājibs were neither military officers nor intermediaries but basically doorkeepers who controlled the access of visitors to Commanders of the Faithful, governors, and even private people. According to traditional accounts, some form of regulated access was introduced in the time of ‘Umar I at Madina in order to avoid crowding and to expedite the conduct of business. With the introduction of more formal audience procedures in the time of Mu‘awiya, Ziyād appears to be the earliest Muslim governor who was served by ḥājibs: his mawlā Fil at Basra¹⁸³ and the more famous ‘Ajlān. Thereafter governors in Iraq and the East were normally served by a ḥājib, armed guard, gatekeeper (Ar. bawwāb) or announcer (Ar. ādhin), who was usually a person of low status.¹⁸⁴

One result was that admission to the presence of a ruler or governor became a means of recognizing existing status or of creating it. Both theory and practice reflected the tension between the ideal of general accessibility and the practical reality of selective admission. The trustworthy men who were stationed at the gate of the Sasanian palace on days of public audience at Nawrūz and Mihrājān were supposedly ordered to forbid no one to enter the king’s presence.¹⁸⁵ The ruler was at least to be kept informed of who wanted to see him. ‘Abd al-Malik is said to have described the perfect ḥājib as one who tells his master whenever a free man comes to the gate, so he can decide whether or not to admit him. Likewise, Khālid ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Qaṣrī, governor of Iraq from 724 until 738, is said to have ordered his ḥājib not to keep anyone from him (with three exceptions) when he held his audience.¹⁸⁶ Ziyād himself, in a much-quoted anecdote attributed to al-Madā‘inī, is said to have told ‘Ajlān that there were four kinds of persons who should never be kept waiting: one who announces the time for worship, one who comes at night, a messenger from a frontier governor, or the cook.¹⁸⁷

In practice, beginning in the time of Mu‘awiya, the order of ad-

¹⁸³ Balādhrū, Futūh, p. 354.
¹⁸⁴ The advice given by ‘Abd al-Malik to his brother ‘Abd al-‘Azīz assumes that the governor of Egypt was likely to have a ḥājib by the end of the seventh century if not earlier (Jāḥiz, Rasā‘īl, II, 38, 40).
¹⁸⁵ Tāj, p. 160.
¹⁸⁶ Jāḥiz, Rasā‘īl, II, 36, 38.
mission and the distance of a person’s station from the ruler was determined by status. Precedence usually went to kinsmen, in-laws, close friends, and henchmen, and then to notables and tribal leaders in order of importance. 'Ajlān is supposed to have told Ziyād that he admitted members of outstanding families (Ar. al-buyūtāt) first, then those with noble genealogies (Ar. al-ansāb), and then those with good manners. Others were kept waiting unless they had friends or relatives favored by the ruler to intercede for them, as in the case of 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Zurāra al-Kilābī, who waited at Mu'āwiya's gate at Damascus in a woolen cloak for a year until his kinsmen (Ar. aqwām) got permission for him to enter.

The effects of selective and controlled admission to those who had authority and power enlarged the circle of close relatives, favorites, and trusted mawālī who had access to the ruler or governor and who participated in his decisions, received appointments to office, shared in his largess, and served as intermediaries and patrons for those without such privileged access. This was an elite created by the need for trust. As authority was being increasingly delegated in an expanding administrative system, kinsmen who were bound by family solidarity or new men who owed their positions and fortunes to the ruler were most readily trusted. The new elite that emerged around the courts of early Islamic rulers were a combination of members of the families of Abī Sufyān and Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, who had been among the leading families of Makka, and of new men, mawālī, and protégés such as the circle of Ziyād, which may have been based, in part, on old ties between the tribe of Quraysh at Makka and the tribe of Thaqīf at Ta’if. By the time of Mu’āwiya and Ziyād, other tribal leaders were beginning to be subordinated to this elite while ordinary Arab tribesmen were even further removed from access to their leaders and were increasingly treated like the native subject population.

For those who felt that their positions of tribal leadership or noble descent were being slighted, resentment at the humiliation and scorn of being kept waiting or of not being admitted at all was directed against the ḥājib. Khusraw Anūshirvān is supposed to have required that the ḥājib for his public audiences be impolite and remote, rough in his speech, always stern, and very suspicious. In the early Islamic period a conscientious ḥājib might provoke violence, as when Nafi' ibn Jubayr broke the nose of the ḥājib who tried to prevent him from

188 Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd, Nahj, XVII, 94–95.
189 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, I, 67; V, 12.
190 Ibn Abī Ḥadīd, 'Iqd, XVII, 93.
entering Mu‘āwiya’s presence. Or he might create embarrassment, as when al-Muhallab tried to enter the presence of Muṣ‘ab ibn az-Zubayr in Basra on a day of public audience in 686 but was prevented from doing so by the ḥājib who failed to recognize him.191

Audience and Judgment

The customary Arab tribal council (Ar. *majlis*) came to resemble the ancient royal practice of holding public audiences. The relative freedom and informality of tribal councils survived in the general meetings that were held in local *masjids* and presided over by the governor, or in sessions such as the daily public *majlis* which Sa‘id ibn al-‘Āṣ held at Kufa in 654 where everyone entered, sat, and conversed.192 By the time of Ziyād and his son Ḥubaydullāh, the governor’s *majlis* was attended by the tribal leaders (Ar. *ashraf*) and was growing increasingly formal in spite of the jostling and rowdiness that sometimes occurred.193 In order to improve decorum, Ziyād is supposed to have established the precedent that those who attended court should not greet each other in the presence of the ruler. This is said to have provoked the retort from Ibn ʿAbbās: “May people not give up greeting each other in the presence of their amīrs!”194 In 669, Ziyād is said to have held audience at Basra every day except Friday. At this time he questioned the messengers of tax collectors (Ar. *ummāl*) about their districts, examined what they presented to him, and examined matters concerning wealth and expenses. Then his *ummāl* over the dār ar-rizq, the river harbor, and the market came to him and he questioned them about the shipments arriving at the dār ar-rizq, prices, news, and their personal needs.195 In the time of al-Ḥajjāj, the governor’s *majlis* was organized smoothly for admission and interviews with several petitioners in succession.196 The governor of Iraq, Yūsuf ibn ʿUmar, is described at the middle of the eighth century as holding audiences seated in the niche (Ar. *mihrāb*) in the oratory (Ar. *muṣallam*) of the citadel at Wasit, with access controlled by his ḥājib.197

Muslims considered the distinction between holding private (Ar. *al-khaṣṣa*) and public (Ar. *al-ʾamma*) sessions to be Sasanian,198 and this

195 Baladhurī, *Ansāb*, IVa, 186.
196 Ibid., V, 32–35.
practice also seems to have been introduced under Mu‘āwiya. Again, it is Ziyād who is said to have told his close relatives to choose whether they wanted to be admitted along with the general public or privately. Those who chose the public audience were not to approach him in private, and those who chose private admission were not to approach him in public.199

One of the main purposes of the governor’s majlis was the administration of ad hoc justice by deciding private disputes, hearing complaints against himself or his officials, and punishing offenders, criminals, and rebels. In a famous passage of his inaugural khutba at Basra in 665, Ziyād had promised exact retribution in the form of punishments to fit the crime. A murderer who drowned his victim would be drowned, and an arsonist would be burned to death. A burglar who broke into houses would have his heart cut out, and a grave robber would be buried alive.200 These may serve as rather extreme examples of the general attempt by the Sufyānī regime to curb private retaliation and to assert its own monopoly of force by punishing offenders and sometimes by paying the blood price itself. In these circumstances it is not surprising to find governors such as Ziyād resorting to Sasanian methods such as crucifixion,201 and in at least one instance his use of a judgment seat bears a remarkable resemblance to Sasanian practice. In 446 the Magian inquisitor, Ṭahm-Yazdagerd, who interrogated apostates from Magianism to Christianity at Kirkuk, set up a judgment seat (Syr. khɔrsiyå dhe dēnōtå) at a house of judgment (Syr. bēth dēnå) outside the city, to which he had the Christians brought.202 The scene of Ziyād’s judgment at the gate of the masjid in Kufa appears to be in this tradition. In 670, when a sedition occurred in the masjid at Kufa, Ziyād had the gates closed against the people inside, set up a judgment seat (Syr. kûrsi) at one of the gates, and had the people brought out to him, four at a time, for judgment.203 Ziyād is also described judging disputes that were brought to him during his audience at Basra with Shurayḥ, a qāḍī who had come from Kufa to

200 Ṭabarī, Ta‘rīkh, II, 74-75. In two tawqīt ascribed to Ziyād, just such sentences are passed on a burglar and a grave robber (Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, ‘Iqd, IV, 217).
201 In 615 Mihrāmushnasp was crucified in the straw market in Veh-Ardashir for apostasy from Magianism to Christianity (Chabot, “Chastete,” p. 255). In 666 Ziyād crucified Sahm ibn Ghālib al-Hujaymi at his gate in Basra (Ṭabarī, Ta‘rīkh, II, 83). Such examples could be multiplied.
202 K. Brockelmann, Syrische Grammatik (Berlin, 1899), Chrestomathie, pp. 59*, 61*.
203 Ṭabarī, Ta‘rīkh, II, 88.
join him, seated beside him. Ziyād is supposed to have told Shurayh to inform him if his judgments could be improved, but, we are told, Shurayh always agreed with him. 204

The use of the governor's majlis as a forum to obtain justice also eased the Islamic adaptation of the Sasanian appellate court for the redress of grievances (Ar. mażālim), which had originally served as a judicial check on the excesses of government officials. As a formal session apart from regular audiences, the Sasanian monarchs held special public audiences twice each year during the festivals of Nawrūz and Mihrājān, when charges of injustice might even be brought against the king himself. In such cases the grand möbadh, the chief of the scribes (N.P. dabīrbadh), and the chief director of the fire temples served as a board of judges. Once they had been assembled, the people were allowed to enter and their complaints were examined, beginning with those against the monarch, while the grand möbadh passed judgment on the charges against the king. 205 This practice was temporarily abolished by Yazdagerd II (438–57) 206 but was revived by his successors. Arabic literature claims to preserve examples of Khusraw Anûshirvān's decisions on the complaints presented to him. At least these stories fit the general pattern. Khusraw Anûshirvān is said to have sat down before the möbadh for judgment with a man who accused him of injustice; he is also said to have told a man who complained that a relative of the king had taken his property wrongfully that, if the charge were true, all the property of the guilty person would be turned over to him. Thereafter, no one is supposed to have had reason to complain about the king's relatives. 207 Khusraw Parviz is said to have held public audiences one morning each month until noon to hear requests. 208 Such practices had already been adopted by Christians in Iraq. In 424 the Synod of Dadhīshō recommended that a bishop who had been treated unjustly by his superior should wait for the annual assembly held by the metropolitan and present his complaint there. 209

204 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, V, 10.
205 Tāj, pp. 160–62.
206 Brockelmann, Syrische Grammatik, p. 56*.
207 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 223.
208 Zotenberg, Chronique, II, 341.
209 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 48, 292. In this context the sessions held by Alexander, the hēgemōn (Gk., governor) at Edessa, in 497 should also be noticed. They were held every Friday in the church of St. John the Baptist and St. Addai to settle litigations free of charge. Those who had suffered injustices were so encouraged to come, that even fifty-year-old grievances that had never been brought to the attention of the authorities were brought to him and settled; see W. Wright, The Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite (Cambridge, 1882), p. 20.
At first, Islamic rulers and governors appear to have received complaints during their general public audiences, and it was only during the Marwāni restoration that a distinct mażālim court was reconstituted. ‘Abd al-Malik is considered to be the first Commander of the Faithful to hold a mażālim court on particular days, during which his qādī presided somewhat like the Sasanian mōbadh.210 Immediately after the reoccupation of Iraq by ‘Abd al-Malik, ash-Sha’bī (640/1–721/23), who is otherwise known as a qādī at Kufa, is said to have been in charge of the mażālim court for the brother of the Commander of the Faithful, Bishr ibn Marwān, who was governor of Iraq from 690 until 693.211 Al-Ḥajjāj held public audiences in the evening for this purpose. On one such occasion, the father of Muwarriq al-‘Ijli, whose son had been imprisoned, entered along with the other petitioners in order to obtain the release of his son. His request was granted, and al-Ḥajjāj ordered his officers to “take that old man to the prison and turn his son over to him.”212

The Sasanian tradition survived in Islamic administrative theory as well. Abū Yusuf advised the Commander of the Faithful, Hārūn ar-Rashīd (786–809) to hold a mażālim court every month or two or at least annually in order to give his subjects recourse to him, and so the fear of judicial review would act as a check on oppression by his officials.213 As it was enshrined in the administrative theory of al-Māwardi in the eleventh century, the holding of a mażālim court required the presence of guards, qādis, scribes, and witnesses, and the abuses of governors, tax collectors, and scribes were to be dealt with first. Then the court was to turn its attention to arrears of pay, the return of objects which had been taken by force, the supervision of religious endowments (Ar. awqāf), and the execution of the sentences of qādis. It should also be concerned with the supervision of public order, the regulation of religious practices, and finally, the provision of arbitration in private cases.214 Thus, the theory of the mażālim court was expanded to include most of the purposes of public audiences and was probably more developed in theory than it ever was in practice.215

210 Māwardi, Ahkām as-sultāniyya, p. 74.
212 Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 157.
214 Māwardi, Ahkām as-sultāniyya, pp. 76–79.
215 For a detailed comparison of the mażālim court with Sasanian practice, see Tyan, Organization judiciaire, pp. 519–20.
CONTROL AND ENFORCEMENT

Confidential Agents and Informers

The *mazālim* court was only one way of securing central control over subordinate and distant officials and of ensuring their conformity to the policies of the regime. The use of internal administrative checks, overlapping responsibilities, parallel officials, and informers was fairly developed in the Sasanian system. Even so, such a system depended ultimately on the personal loyalty, integrity, and reliability of persons on whom the monarch could count to carry out his orders. Such persons might be entrusted with especially delicate tasks and were often personal friends of the ruler or members of his entourage. For example, we hear of royal confidantes (Syr. *šarti ṭmr khā*) in the reign of Šāpūr II (309–79),216 and a district scribe (N.P. *shahrdaवीर*) named Mihrburzin who was in charge of the execution of Mar Pethion in 448 is described as a *šarti*.217 This term is also used for the cavalry officer who informed the imprisoned head of the Christian Church (*l. cētholicos*), Mar Abā, of Khusraw Anūshirvān’s intention to have him blinded and thrown into a pit.218 A *šarti* was also involved in the execution of George of Izla/Mihrāmgushnasp in 615.219

The explanation of the Aramaic root *šrrb* by *ōstikān* (M.P. true, trustworthy) in the Middle Persian manual called the *Frahang-i Pahlavik*220 strengthens the suggestion that *thiqa* (Ar. trustworthy, reliable) and its derivatives should be regarded as Arabic renderings of this term in materials dealing with the Sasanians. The confidential officers and trustworthy men (Ar. *thiqāt*) of the Sasanian king were posted at the palace gate on days of public audience, were entrusted by Khusraw Anūshirvān to put his tax reforms into effect, and were used as spies and messengers.221 The courtiers and officials who stayed by Khusraw Parviz when everyone else defected to Bahram Chubin at Nahrawan in 590 were called *thiqāt Kisrā*.222 Prokopios, on the events of 541, speaks of those with whom Khusraw Anūshirvān alone shared his secrets and he describes one of them, a royal secretary who was sent to deliver a formal protest to Belisarios in 540, as a man of great

discretion whose real assignment was to discover what kind of general Belisarios was.  
References to such trust in early Islamic contexts emphasize the discretion of close advisors, especially in aphorisms ascribed to Mu‘āwiya and Ziyād. An amusing anecdote relates how Ziyād was deliberately misled by one of his “trustworthy” men (Ar. rajulan min thiqātihi) in a personal matter, while al-Hajjāj considered 'Urwa ibn az-Zubayr to be a thīqa of the Commander of the Faithful because of his complete lack of political self-interest.

This outlook contributed to the use of official and unofficial informers for reporting the misdeeds of officials and for detecting sedition, a practice that dates back at least to the Assyrian empire. Their degree of official status ranged from that of ordinary subjects who offered unsolicited information, to those who were encouraged to do so by the offer of rewards, to merchants, peddlers, travelers, beggars, and old women who were paid to be spies and informers, and to the professional information officers who maintained surveillance for the ruler. These traditions were represented by a body of city informers (Syr. sharrē) at Edessa in the fourth century A.D. Sasanian royal informers were required to be trustworthy and to possess all of the religious and ethical virtues that would ensure their reliability; no order was to be given in a matter without verification of the facts in the case by the informers. The information officers (Ar. aṣḥāb al-akhbār) of Shīrōē were probably such officials.

In theory, the responsibility of his confidantes to keep the monarch informed was extended to administrative ethics as a whole and it was the duty of a bureaucratic official to make the head of his department aware of what was going on (literally “letting the curtain fall from him”), to name those who slandered him, and to reveal secrets to

223 Prokopios, Wars, II. xv. 35; xxi. 1. He also describes a certain George, who arranged the surrender of a Persian garrison for Belisarios in 541, as a man of the greatest discretion with whom Belisarios shared his secrets (Wars, II. xix. 22–23).
224 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, V, 6; Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyun, I, 29.
225 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, II, 469–70; V, 45.
227 Boyce, Tansar, p. 50.
228 Tha‘alibi, Ghurar, p. 725.
him. All of this assumed and perhaps helped to create and to perpetuate an atmosphere of distrust and intrigue. There is, however, very little discussion in administrative theory of the consequences of relying on informers except for repeated cautions against the motives of those who carry false tales and the dangers of bribery. A protest against the inherent possibility of slander is contained in the answer, recorded in Arabic literature, given by Khusraw Anūshirvān to a man who during his audience handed him a note naming members of his own retinue who had evil intentions toward him. He is supposed to have written at the bottom of the note: “I rule the exterior of bodies, not intentions, and judge according to justice, not to fancy, and I inquire about actions (Ar. a’māl) not about secrets (Ar. sarā’ir).”

The use of confidential agents to gather or to verify information is described among Muslims fairly early, along with many of the same attitudes and problems. 'Uthmān is supposed to have sent Ḥumrān ibn Abān, a native of Iraq who had been taken captive during the conquest and had become 'Uthmān’s maulā, to Kufa in 647 to find out if there was any truth to the complaints of the people about their governor, al-Walīd ibn 'Uqba. Ḥumrān allowed al-Walīd to bribe him, praised al-Walīd to 'Uthmān, but told Marwān in private that the charges were serious. Marwān informed ‘Uthmān, who exiled Ḥumrān to Basra in anger for lying to him. When 'Ali was still at Madina in 656, he sent Tha'laba ibn Yazīd with one hundred horsemen to investigate the complaints of the inhabitants of the Sawad of Iraq about the abuses committed by the garrison there. Later, when 'Ali sent al-Ḥārith ibn Murra from Kufa to get information about the Khawārij, he order him to report to him properly without concealing anything. The adoption of Sasanian practice in such matters is assumed for Ziyād, who had the advantage of information from confidential officers. In a tendentious story in which Ziyād’s knowledge about his subjects is consciously put in the pattern of Ardashīr ibn Bābak (Ardashīr I), it is said that when someone appealed to Ziyād, he would learn about that person beforehand. When the man arrived and assumed that Ziyād knew nothing about him, the man would

229 Jahshiyārī, Wuzārā', p. 11.
230 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 222.
231 Baladhurī, Ansāb, V, 57–58.
232 Abū Yūṣuf, Kharāj, p. 57; Yābīya ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 43.
233 Dinawarī, Akhbār at-tuwāl, p. 220; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 3375. Al-Ḥārith was caught and killed by the Khawārij.
say: "God preserve the amīr! I am So-and-so the son of So-and-so." Ziyād would then smile and reply: "You are known to me and I know you better than you know your father. By God! I know you and I know your father and your grandfather and mother and your grandmother and I know the garment you are wearing." The man would be so amazed and terrified that he would shake and be visibly overwhelmed. 'Abd al-Malik and al-Ḥajjāj are said to have done likewise.234 Ziyād's son, 'Ubaydullāh, used his own mawlā as an undercover agent in Kufa in 680.235

To the extent that such practices were institutionalized, this one was carried out by the state post, which was also Assyrian in origin and consisted of a network of relay stations along the major routes with riding animals to transport messengers and officers on special missions. By late antiquity, Byzantine and Sasanian postal officials were military men and the system was used to convey other government officials who needed transportation, as well as foreign envoys, prelates, and personal friends of the ruler. In addition to communicating and executing orders, Byzantine agentes in rebus (L.) gathered information, spied on other officials and subjects whose loyalty was suspect, and administered the imperial estates. Sasanian postal officials seem to have been "trustworthy men," or sharīrē, who were employed to carry messages and to enforce the monarch's commands. Khusraw Anūshirvān is said to have sent light messengers on swift horses throughout all the provinces of his empire and to have used them to arrest the Monophysite bishop Abūodemmeh. They were also used to bring the Nestorian bishop, Sabhrīshō', to court for his elevation as catholicos in 596.236

The Sasanian post stations are supposed to have been appropriated by the victorious Muslims in Iraq along with the rest of the Sasanian state property, but, if so, they were not maintained or used by the Islamic state at first.237 The earliest claim for the establishment of a communication and transport service by Muslims was made for the reign of Muʿāwiya, when he reconstituted the barīd238 (which comes from the Greek form [beredous] of the Latin term [veredi] for the government postal horses). Although there are no earlier claims for

234 Tāj, p. 169.
235 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, II, 229.
238 Ibn Ṭabātabā, Fakhri, p. 106.
the existence of such a service, nor even an anachronous use of this term in events before the time of Mu‘awiya, there is little additional information on the nature, extent, or use of the system during his reign. However, incidental references tend to support its existence in Iraq at least by the time of Ziyād. Dīnawāri’s comment that Ziyād used the barīd to return from Basra to Kufa when the revolt of Ḥujr ibn ‘Adī broke out in 670 could be an anachronism, but it is the first time he used this term after the Islamic conquest. Along with this comment must be put the consistent reports that Ziyād disliked the barīd because he was afraid of the beating of the reins. Consequently, it seems reasonable to suggest that the barīd was important for communication between Ziyād’s twin capitals in Iraq and may have been established for that purpose. By 669 at the latest, the barīd seems to have operated from Basra to Khurasan. It also ran from Syria to Madina during the reign of Mu‘awiya.

The extension and regularization of the barīd is associated with ‘Abd al-Malik and the Marwānī restoration, when it was used for sending messages and information, and for transporting officials and military units. Incidental references in the time of al-Ḥajjāj suggest that the barīd ran between Syria and Iraq and Yaman.

Guards and Police

The ultimate sanction for enforcing orders, maintaining security, and preventing sedition lay in the use of force by bodies of armed guards, garrison troops, sentries, and night-watchmen. Local police functions in the Sasanian cities of Iraq were performed by infantry garrisons, and in most places the commander of the infantry (M.P. pāyγān-sālār, Syr. resh paygē) was identical to the chief of police (M.P. gezirpat, Syr. resh gezirayē). Sentries or watchmen (Ar. hurrās) were posted above the gate of the city of Nineveh. Tha‘alībī describes

239 Dīnawāri, Akhbār at-tiwal, p. 236.
240 Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī, Iqd, I, 83; II, 365; Ibn Abi l-Ḥadīd, Nahī, XVI, 199.
241 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, II, 192.
242 Ibid., p. 213.
243 Dīnawāri, Akhbār at-tiwal, p. 328; Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī, Iqd, V, 37, 47. For the later development of the barīd, see A. Sprenger, Die Post- und Reisrouten des Orients (Leipzig, 1864).
how the night-watch (hurrās) at Mada’in would call out the name of the reigning king as it passed through the streets at night, and how the replacement of the watchword “Shāhānshāh Abarwiz” by “Shāhānshāh Qubād” signaled the coup by which Khusraw Parviz was deposed and his son Shīrōē enthroned as Qubād II in 628.246

The person of the monarch was protected by a body of royal guardsmen (M.P. pushtīgānān) or palace guards (M.P. darīgān, Ar. ḥarās bābīhi l-khaṣṣa) who were an elite cavalry force which was recruited among the great nobles, escorted him everywhere, and stayed by him night and day. The commander of the royal guard (M.P. hazārabād, “commander of a thousand”; M.P. darīgād; Ar. sāhib al-ḥarās or raʿis al-ḥarās) controlled entry to the palace, admitted and presented visitors to the king as his ḥājīb, might serve as royal executioner, and as one of the monarch’s trustworthy men might be given military command or used in diplomacy. The commander of the guard for Ardashir III in 630 was responsible for opening the gates of Mada’in to the rebel Shahrbarāz. Whenever the Sasanian monarch went out to ride, his guards—equipped with armor, helmets, shields, swords, and spears—formed two ranks. When the king passed in front of them, each man laid his shield on his saddle bow and put his forehead to his shield, as if bowing. It was during this ceremony that the usurper Shahrbarāz was killed by a spear thrown by one of the guardsmen.247

Footmen were used to run before mounted officials, nobles, and the monarch himself to clear the way on official occasions. Men carrying whips kept people from crowding into Achaemenian royal processions, and this custom appears to have survived or to have been revived in the Sasanian period. Seven such “forerunners” (M.P. pīsh-asp-paygān) of Shāpūr II were in the retinue of one of his eunuchs who acted as his emissary, and in 596 footmen armed with whips or clubs were used to clear away the crowds in Mada’in for the procession that took Sābhrīshōʿ, who had been mounted on a horse provided by the monarch, from the church at Koke to the palace at Asspanpur for his royal confirmation as catholicos.248

The employment of special security forces by Muslims to protect

246 Thaʿālibi, Ghurar, p. 715.
248 Dvornik, Intelligence Services, p. 27; Hoffman, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 14; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 489.
state property and the persons of rulers and governors seems to reflect Sasanian patterns, especially as a local continuation of royal practices by governors in Iraq. In 656, during the reign of 'Ali, there was a body of forty or four hundred Indonesian (Sayābiya) treasury guards at Basra, which was commanded by Abū Sālim az-Zuṭṭi, and in 657 al-Mukhṭār was put in charge of the gates of Mada'in by his uncle who was governor.249 There is general agreement that the first real royal bodyguard (Ar. haras) was established by Mu'āwiya at Damascus in reaction to an attempt to assassinate him. However, unlike the Sasanian guards who were members of the nobility, the guard of Muslim rulers and governors beginning in the Sufyānī period was likely to include and be led by mawālī or members of minor Arab tribes or clans, as well as relatives of the ruler and members of important tribal groups.250 There seems to have been a haras guarding the citadel at Kufa in 665 and there was apparently one at Basra when Ziyād arrived as governor in the same year.251 Nevertheless, in 665 Ziyād is said to have formed his own guard (haras) of five hundred men, whom he stationed at the masjid. He was the first to have them march in front of him with spears and staffs or clubs.252 Thereafter it was normal for both caliphs and governors to be protected by guards. Al-Hajjāj had a haras at Kufa and used it to carry out executions.253 Muṭarrīf ibn al-Mughīra, who held his audience in the Īwān Kisrā, also had a haras which was commanded by a mawla of his father at Mada'in in 696.254

The general duties of urban police or night watchmen were fulfilled by a separate, larger force in the garrison cities of Iraq. Its members kept order, protected the population by suppressing crime, and prevented sedition. The establishment of a night-watch was in direct response to necessity, and precedents had been set in Madīna in the time of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. However, the earliest references to the existence of an urban police (Ar. shurta) in Iraq point to the reign of 'Uthmān, when Zarārah ibn Yazīd and 'Abd ar-Rahlān al-Asadī are said to have been in charge of the shurta at Kufa for 'Uthmān's

249 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 376; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 3366.
250 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl, p. 229; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, II, 205.
251 Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihī, Iqd, V, 7; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, II, 72.
252 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, II, 79. This custom was also adopted by the tribal leaders. Al-Ashʿath ibn Qays, shaykh of the tribe of Kinda who settled at Kufa, is said to have been the first to have men walk in front of him while he was riding (Thaʿālibī, Latāʿif, p. 17).
253 Mubarrad, Kāmil, pp. 217, 286, 665.
254 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, II, 983.
governor, Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ. There were Commanders of the shurta at both Basra and Kufa in the time of ‘Alī. Under Mu‘awiya, the shurta usually existed along with the haras at Damascus, Kufa, and Basra. Nevertheless, public order broke down and crime became rampant at Basra under ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amir in the early 660s, when insecurity became so great that wealthy people hired private watchmen. According to ash-Sha‘bī, whenever dissolute youths took hold of a woman, they would tell her to cry out three times; if someone answered her, she would be all right, but if no one answered they would not be blamed for what they did. When Ziyād arrived as governor in 665, the night was full of the cries of private watchmen and of people protecting themselves. Although he objected to the clamor, he was actually angry at the way private solutions challenged his own authority and responsibility for keeping order. In order to restore security, Ziyād established the shurta of Basra at four thousand men, both infantry and cavalry, imposed a curfew, and had everyone beheaded who was found on the streets after evening worship. On the morning after the first night, seven hundred heads were found at the gate of the citadel, fifty after the second night, one head after the third night, and none thereafter. Ziyād also established security on the roads outside of Basra by making the local chieftains of the Arab tribes of Tamīm and Bakr responsible for the sections of the roads within the boundaries that he set for them.

At Kufa in 671, Ziyād’s shurta was composed of members of the Persian military unit (Ḥamrā’) who had settled there after the conquest. They patroled the marketplace armed with staffs and were prominent in dealing with the sedition of Ḥujr ibn ‘Adī. In a confrontation between Ziyād and Ḥujr’s supporters who had come to the masjid with staffs, one of the Ḥamrā’ used his own staff to knock a member

255 W. Behrnauer, “Mémoire sur les institutions de police chez les arabes, les persans et les turcs,” Journal Asiatique 15 (1860), 466–67; Ibn Khallikan, Biographical Dictionary, IV, 391; Ibn Sā‘d, Tabaqāt, VI, 157; Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb, Kitāb al-muḥabbār (Hyderabad, 1943), p. 373; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2916; Yāqūt, Buldan, II, 921. The shurta al-khamās, which was a body of forty thousand men who were personally loyal to ‘Ali and were commanded by Qays ibn Sa‘d, was essentially a military unit that supported ‘Ali and his family in Iraq and should not be confused with other local police forces, especially because of its size (Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, II, 17).

256 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwa‘al, p. 239; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, II, 15, 28.


258 Ibn ‘Abd Rabbīhi, Iqd, V, 7.
of the crowd over the head.259 When 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād was governor in 680, the Kufan *shurta* consisted of four thousand cavalrymen. Some of them were among the two hundred tribal leaders and members of the governor’s retinue who pelted the pro-'Alid crowd, which had been stirred up by Muslim ibn 'Aqīl, with clods of earth and arrows from the wall of the citadel. In dealing with this sedition, 'Ubaydullāh relied on each 'arīf as well as on members of the *haras* and *shurta* to vouch for innocent members of the population, ordered them to gather in the *masjid*, closed the gates to the side streets, and had the *shurta* search the city house by house looking for Muslim. When he was caught, 'Ubaydullāh detailed a member of the *shurta* to execute him.260

During the turbulent 680s, it became important for contending forces to control the *shurta* at Kufa and Basra if they wished to hold these cities. The *shurta* at Kufa was at least four thousand strong in 685.261 Al-Mukhtār formed his own *shurta* from among his followers who armed themselves with wooden clubs (*Khashabiyya*). He sent eight hundred of them to Madina to protect Muḥammad ibn al-Hanāfīyya from Ibn az-Zubayr in 685. Members of his club-wielding *shurta* were also with the army that defeated and killed 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād and invaded the Jazira in 686.262

Al-Ḥajjāj himself rose to notice as a member of the *shurta* of Damascus.263 According to ash-Sha’bī, he described the ideal *shurta* commander as a man who was constantly frowning, able to sit for a long time, reliable, untreacherous, unwavering in truth, and able to resist the attempts of the *ashrāf* at intercession. When he was told that 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn 'Ubayd of the tribe of Tamīm was such a man, al-Ḥajjāj put him in charge of the *shurta* at Kufa, although 'Abd ar-Raḥmān would only accept the position provided that al-Ḥajjāj protected him from his dependents, children, and members of his retinue. As head of the *shurta*, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān acquired an impressive record for making the punishment fit the crime. He only imprisoned for debt. If a man who had stabbed others was brought to him, he drove the man’s own knife into his belly until it came out his back. He would

261 Ṭabārī, *Ta’rīkh*, II, 621.
bury a grave robber alive, cut off the hand of a man who killed with an iron weapon, burn an arsonist alive, and if a man suspected of robbery was brought to him without the stolen goods in his possession, he gave him three hundred lashes. His methods were so effective that sometimes forty nights went by without anyone being brought to him; so al-Ḥājjāj put him in charge of the shurṭa of Kufa, as well.²⁶⁴

Thus, from the time of Muʿāwiya on, the main mechanisms for control and enforcement in the Sasanian system resurfaced in an Islamic administrative context: the ḥājiḥ, public and private audiences, the mażālim court, confidential agents, a communication and transport network, bodyguards, and urban police. The fundamental conflict between security and the accessibility needed to ensure justice, which was built into these practices, came along with them. The delegation of responsibility to reliable subordinates tended to put the system at the mercy of the ruler’s judgment through his choice of those in whom to place his trust. This problem was never solved, and we have noticed more than once that misplaced confidence could result in betrayal. This problem may be illustrated and summarized best by the experience of Yūsuf ibn ʿUmar, who had put Ziyād ibn Ṣāliḥ in charge of the night-watch (Ar. ḥirāsa) and of the keys to the gates of Wasit in 750. When Ziyād deserted to the ʿAbbāsīs during the siege of the city, Yūsuf is supposed to have exclaimed: “Who can I trust today after Ziyād?” and appointed Ṭāriq ibn Qudāma to head the ḥirāsa, giving him the keys to the gates because of his trust in him.²⁶⁵

To a certain extent, the recognition of the need for an ethical dimension was institutionalized by the employment of judges who administered religiously sanctioned law as a check on other local officials, by giving them overlapping secular duties, especially in finance administration, and by giving them positions at court to advise the ruler. The Magian priesthood performed these duties under the Sasanians, as did Muslim qādīs at least from the time of Muʿāwiya. Theories of administrative ethics that were developed under Islamic rule combined the secular and religious heritage of the Sasanians with Islamic ideals and practical solutions to immediate problems. Even this contained its own difficulties, and the literature on this subject is concerned with how to deal with the anomaly of the unjust judge.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., V, 19; Ibn Qutayba, ʿUyun, I, 16. This list obviously is related to the law and order promises in Ziyād’s inaugural khutba at Basra.

²⁶⁵ Dinawarī, Akhbār at-tiwāl, pp. 368–70. Soldiers of the guard were proverbial for their treachery (Thaʿālibī, Latāʿif, p. 183).
THE PROCESS OF ADMINISTRATIVE CONTINUITY

At this point it is possible to make some suggestions about the nature of administrative continuity. In the simplest terms, direct continuities were encouraged by the people who were involved; local Persian notables, captives, and defectors, and native Arabs, all of whom expected administration to proceed as it had before and did what they were used to doing. Such influences were prolonged by hereditary tendencies in those families involved in administration and by the existence of handbooks, in Middle Persian at first, which described administrative traditions. Nevertheless, the administrative system in early Islamic Iraq was much less centralized than it had been under the last Sasanians, and most of the hierarchic structure of the royal court was eliminated. Gradually, the organizational arrangements occasioned by practical needs and problems tended to be coordinated with the main outlines of the Sasanian administrative system. There were important revivals in the time of Muʾāwiyah and again under the early Marwānīs at the turn of the century.266

In addition to the pressures of necessity and the employment of local people, one of the most effective reasons for this convergence and resurfacing of previous administrative traditions was the mutual reinforcement provided by the similarity between Islamic precedents that had been set in the Hijaz and Sasanian traditions in Iraq. The fact that both the Sasanian monarch and the Muslim amīr had military, fiscal, and judicial responsibilities eased the reconstitution of the bureaucratic system with its hierarchic principles and the adoption of certain royal customs by governors. The same may be said of the superficial resemblance between the Muslim Arab divider of booty and the Sasanian military scribe, and between the tribal council and a royal audience. To a certain extent, the very nature of these institutions and their interrelationship, the inherent problems, and the particular solutions they evoked set up a process in which the system tended to reconstitute itself once it had begun. Such pressures are most evident in the way centralized institutions in which authority devolved through a hierarchic chain of command required devices for control and security.

As a result, the administration had been centralized at the provincial level in Iraq by the time of Muʾāwiyah. The fourfold Sasanian bureaucratic system had been reestablished along with Sasanian royal

266 S. Baron, Social and Religious History of the Jews (New York, 1958), III, 120.
traditions of justice, court procedure, control, and enforcement. The extent of this administrative legacy is further indicated by the way institutions and practices were accompanied by the theories that provided their rationale and by the problems involved in their use. This is especially evident in the survival of the conflict between security and accessibility, the use of internal administrative checks, and the importance of reliability all of which reemerged in an Islamic context from the time of Mu‘awiya.

However, it would be misleading to give the impression that early Islamic administration in Iraq was a mirror image of late Sasanian practices. Apart from the use of Arabic in the military diwân and for correspondence (which had Sasanian roots), the organization of the military diwân by tribe was an original modification of that institution to suit Muslim Arab society. The social dimensions and consequences of employing the kind of administrative system they found in Iraq also contributed to important changes among the Muslims themselves. Increasing differences of status emerged as the result of using the military diwân as an instrument of social control, of the discrepancies in stipends, and of status differentials set up by patronage and by centralizing bureaucratic and court institutions. From the time of Mu‘awiya, the majority of average Arab tribesmen in the garrison cities was increasingly subjected to its own tribal leaders and government officials. The tribal leaders themselves were increasingly subordinated to a new elite of relatives, favorites, and trusted mawâlî who surrounded the governor and controlled and staffed an administrative system the expansion of which served their own interests.

Thus, although early Islamic administration in Iraq was different from Sasanian practice in many details, it was closer in the abstract principles and assumptions on which practice was based. In the fluid conditions following the conquest, the creative adaptability of the Islamic regime in employing Sasanian traditions allowed a continuing development that was based on the possibilities contained in those traditions. The real depth of administrative continuity is indicated by the way institutions and practices were accompanied by similar officials, theories, and problems. This can be demonstrated more specifically by taking a closer look at taxation.
LAND TAX

Sasanian political theory recognized the dependence of a bureaucratic administration on the taxable wealth and services of the subject population and expressed it in the principle that "the tax (Ar. kharāj) is the support of the state; nothing increases it like justice and nothing reduces it like oppression."¹ In theory, the payment of taxes was guaranteed by treating them as forms of rent or debt secured by systems of surety or collective responsibility. Attempts were made to prevent undue exploitation by using internal checking mechanisms and by favoring the employment of persons with the proper ethical virtues to collect taxes. Evidence for the survival or alteration of Sasanian traditions of taxation in early Islamic Iraq lies in the extent to which these ideals were realized, in the kinds and rates of taxes and obligations, the methods of assessment and collection, and to a certain extent, the amount of taxes collected.

Studies concentrating on the linguistic derivation, ambiguities, and inconsistencies of the technical terms used for different kinds of taxes have tended to obscure the existence and significance of separate land and poll taxes in Sasanian Iraq. Whatever terms may have been used, the available sources are unanimous in describing both an agricultural tax and a tax on persons under Sasanian rule. Up to the end of the fifth century, the land tax was taken as a portion of the yield (Ar. muqāṣama) and would amount to one-half, one-third, one-quarter, one-fifth, one-sixth, or one-tenth of the crop, depending on the amount of irrigation, the intensity of cultivation or productivity, and the distance from the nearest urban market. This system was replaced in much of lower Iraq in the early sixth century by one in which agricultural land was surveyed and a tax was levied per unit of area based on a rate schedule that took the type of crop, amount of irrigation, and productivity into account (Ar. miṣāha). The survey was begun by Qubādh I who died before it was finished, leaving it to his successor Khusraw Anūshirvān to complete the survey and implement the system. As quoted in the Arabic sources, the following tax rates were

¹ This statement is ascribed both to Ardashīr (Thaʿalibī, Ghurar, p. 484) and to Anūshirvān (Ibn Ṭabd Rabbīhi, Ḥṣd, IV, 222–23).
established for seven kinds of produce: one dirham per jarīb (Ar. 1592 square meters) of wheat; the same for barley; five-sixths of a dirham per jarīb of rice; eight dirhams per jarīb of grapevines; seven dirhams per jarīb of clover (Ar. riṭāb); for dates, one dirham per four ġarīsī (N.P.) palms and one dirham per six daqāl (A.) palms; and one dirham per six fruit trees. These taxes were collected in three installments each year, one-third every four months.  

Everything else was exempt, including fallow land and date palms standing alone outside of groves or gardens. It was also Sasanian policy to remit the costs of cultivation to landlords in case of crop failure. This practice is cited at least by way of analogy in Islamic law to justify remitting the land tax when the crops had been destroyed by a natural disaster.  

Modern scholarship, with the blessing of Islamic tradition, has tended to assert that the Sasanian taxation system in the Sawad was taken over by the Muslims in the time of 'Umar I who, with only minor changes, consciously and intentionally based the post-conquest land taxes on the existing Sasanian system. But a comparison of the above rates with those established by the Muslims in the Sawad following the conquest gives the impression of three important differences between Islamic and Sasanian agricultural taxes: the rates were raised, additional kinds of produce were taxed, and the arrangements for taking part of the tax in kind were regularized.

Sasanian subjects owed taxes, provisions, and services to the state and its officials. Løkkegaard suggests that part of the land tax was collected in kind but that cultivators were given the option of paying it in cash or of transporting produce equal in value to a state depot. Such provisions supported the Sasanian royal court and system of military supply and seem to have been taken as a fraction of the yield on crown lands even after the sixth-century reforms. The Muslim system preserved the relationship between taxes taken in kind and provisions for the army while including units of capacity in the rate system itself. According to Qudāma, “there was once a levy called al-ardāq, [M.P., provisions] imposed monthly on each of the ahl al-dhimma [Ar., protected people]: in al-Iraq fifteen sā'[A.] of wheat . . . together with the duty of billeting a Muslim soldier for three days.

2 Dinawari, Akhbar at-tiwâl, pp. 72–73; Jahshiyârî, Wuzarâ', pp. 5–6; Masûdi, Murûj, I, 309–10; Tabarî, Ta'rikh, I, 960–62; Ya'qûbî, Ta'rikh, I, 186.
But this was in the beginning, before it was superseded by the imposition of kharāj on those liable to pay it. 5 'Umar is supposed to have "increased [the tax] on every jarīb of land cultivated with wheat or barley by a qaftīṣ (Ar.) of wheat [and] up to two qaftīṣ [of barley?] and from it he provisioned the army" because he considered the Sasanian level of taxation inadequate. 6

The establishment of a regular land tax in Iraq under the Muslims was, as in so many other matters, the work of governors and other local officials that 'Umar merely approved, although in abbreviating the process 'Umar himself is sometimes credited with establishing the tax. 7 The earliest claim is made for Abī Mūsā, governor of Basra in 637–38, who is said to have established the districts of Kuwar Dijla, to have ordered a cadastral survey there, and to have levied taxes according to the degree of productivity. 8 Then, in 642, 'Umar sent a two-man commission to survey the Sawad: Ḫudhayfa ibn al-Yamān, who had written down the estimates of the date and raisin crops in the Hijaz for Muḥammad, to the land irrigated by the Tigris river and its tributaries as far as Hulwan, 9 and 'Uthmān ibn Ḫunayf to the land irrigated by the Euphrates—the Sawad of Kufa up to the Tigris river. 10

All land capable of cultivation was surveyed except for tells, reed thickets, swamps, and unirrigated land. 11 The entire cultivable area came to thirty-six million jarībs, 12 but most of this seems to have been in the Sawad of Kufa where 'Uthmān knew what he was doing. Ḫudhayfa is said to have been deceived by the people in his region, Ard Jukha, in the measurement of their land, with the result that this district never paid taxes equivalent to the Sawad of Kufa. 13

5 Qudāma ibn Ja'far, Kitāb al-Kharāj, tr. A. Ben Shemesh, Taxation in Islam (Leiden, 1965), II, 44. Abī Yūsuf (Kharāj, p. 197) says that 'Umar imposed fifteen sā' of wheat on the inhabitants of Iraq. In this period a sā' equalled a qaftīṣ and amounted to 4.2 liters.

6 Abī Yūsuf, Kharāj, pp. 59, 130, Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 962–63.

7 Abī Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 302; Māwardi, Abkām as-sulṭāniyya, p. 143; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 962–63.

8 Baladhurī, Futūḥ, p. 345.

9 Ibid., pp. 269, 272; Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, 'Iqd, IV, 161; Thaʾalibī, Laṭāʿif, p. 57.


11 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 962; Yaʾqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 174.


13 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, pp. 59–60.
It was 'Uthman ibn Hunayf who set the basic grain tax at one *dirham* and one *qafiz* of wheat per *jarīb*.\(^{14}\) This rate was convertible to cash, with the value of a *qafiz* being three *dirhams*.\(^{15}\) Thus, four *dirhams* were levied per *jarīb* of wheat while two *dirhams* per *jarīb* were levied on barley, and one *dirham* per two *jarībs* of uncultivated land. Vineyards were assessed ten *dirhams* per *jarīb*, *rutba* (pl. *ritāb*, a fodder crop) five *dirhams* per *jarīb*, and date palms variously five, eight, or ten *dirhams* per *jarīb*. Figured separately, each *fārisī* palm paid one *dirham* and each *daqal* palm one-half *dirham*. Fruit trees paid ten *dirhams* per *jarīb*. It should be noted that the Sasanian system of assessing taxes per unit of area on grainfields and vineyards was apparently applied by the Muslims to groves of palm and fruit trees, thus increasing the standardization of the system. In addition, sugar cane was assessed at six *dirhams* per *jarīb* and cotton at five *dirhams* per *jarīb*.\(^{16}\) 'Umar is then said to have instructed Abū Mūsā to introduce this system in the territory of Basra.\(^{17}\)

As far as the details of these rates are concerned, it must be concluded that the Muslims radically altered the late Sasanian situation. Not only were the rates changed but the method of assessing the tax on palm and fruit trees was changed and new crops were taxed. However, the most obvious and significant change is the great increase in tax rates: fourfold for wheat and *fārisī* date palms, and double for barley. Only the tax on *rutba* went down. The main reason for increasing the rates appears to have been the need of the new regime to wring as much as possible out of a reduced tax base for the support of the occupying forces. The agricultural districts closest to Kufa were the most immediately affected, although the tax on fallow land may have been intended to cover lands that had been abandoned by their landlords or allowed to go uncultivated during the conquest. So, although the Islamic regime used and even extended the Sasanian principle of taxing per unit of area, the greater pressure of the Muslim state on


\(^{15}\) Māwārdī, *Aḥkām as-sultāniyya*, p. 143.


\(^{17}\) Ya‘qūbī, *Ṭa‘rikh*, II, 174–75.
local economic resources seems to date from the post-conquest settle-
ment.

However, agricultural tax rates remained somewhat fluid in Iraq even after 'Umar. In his first term as governor of Kufa (642–46), al-
Mughira ibn Shu’ba is said to have assessed Indian peas, vineyards, ruṭba, and sesame at eight dirhams per jarīb while he exempted date palms. Then, when ‘Ali sent Yazīd al-Anṣārī to the Sawad in 656, the latter was instructed to assess thickly sown wheat at one-half dirham plus one sā’ of grain per jarīb, moderately sown wheat at one dirham per jarīb, thinly sown wheat at two-thirds of a dirham per jarīb, barley at half these rates, groves of palms and other trees at ten dirhams per jarīb, and grapevines over three years old and bearing fruit at ten dirhams per jarīb. Cucumbers, seed-grain, sesame, and cotton were all to be exempt, although ‘Ali did assess the reed thicket of Burs at four hundred dirhams. Apart from the measure of tax relief represented by these rates, the attempt to adjust the rate schedule to a tripartite classification based on the productivity of grain land seems to reflect the indigenous division of the quality of land into good, medium, and poor in the Babylonian Talmud.

In order to be valid, comparison of Sasanian and Islamic land taxes must also take into account the units of capacity and measurement used, since changes or local variations in units of measurement could affect the actual tax yield directly in the mišāha system. The jarīb used in the Sawad was sixty square cubits, and the cubit-measure (Ar. dhīrā’) used by Ḥudhayfa and 'Uthmān was the length of a man’s forearm and hand stretched out, called the common (later “black”) dhīrā’, and about fifty-four centimeters long. The use of this dhīrā’ would produce a smaller jarīb of about one thousand and fifty square meters and serve to increase the real tax burden by almost one-third. The restoration to use of the longer royal cubit of about sixty-six and one-half centimeters therefore represents a degree of tax relief and is associated with Ziyād, especially in later sources, who is supposed to have used it to measure the land of the Sawad. This dhīrā’ Ziyādiyya

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18 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 270.
19 Abū Yūṣuf, Kharāj, p. 133; Baladhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 271, 274.
remained in use until the fall of the Marwānī dynasty and was also called the cadastral cubit (Ar. ḍhirāʾ al-mišāha).22

The sāʾ had been used as a measure for grain among the Jews of Sasanian Iraq and at Madina at the time of Muḥammad and 'Umar I. The sāʾ of Madina was a volume of wheat (4.2 liters) weighing five and one-third ṛaṭl (Ar.), and it is reasonable to suppose that this was the sāʾ used for grain in the early Muslim levies in the Sawad. However, this measure seems to have been standardized only in the time of al-Ḥajjāj, who is said to have brought a sealed sāʾ of 'Umar from Madina, which was thereafter called the makhtūm al-Ḥajjājī (Ar.).23 But we are also told that the qaṭīz used by 'Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf in the Sawad was the native measure called a shāburnān (M.P.) which the sources equate with the makhtūm al-Ḥajjājī and the sāʾ.24 It would seem then that there was no volumetric change that would have affected the amount of the grain tax, although we are told that in 644 Abū Mūsā al-Ashtarī, as governor of Basra, had one qaṭīz for his household and another to measure rations for the local Muslims.25

On the whole, the way the Muslims dealt with the tax rates in the Sasanian mišāha system illustrates well the complexities of change and continuity. There were at least three discernible processes. As usual, the Sasanian principle of a land tax based on a rate schedule per unit of area for different kinds of crops survived. But the Islamic regime increased the regularity of the system by extending that principle to groves of palm and fruit trees and by including as part of the rate system itself the practice of taking a portion of the tax in kind as provisions for the army. Lastly, real changes were made that increased the tax burden by raising the rates and by taxing additional crops.

But the mišāha system was not the only one in use in seventh-century Iraq. Taxes proportional to the yield (muqāṣama) survived on Sasanian

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22 Hinz, Masse, pp. 58-60; Mawardi, Aḥkām as-sultāniyya, p. 138. According to the Chronicle of Si’īrt (Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II[2], 620) the system of kharāj established in the time of ‘Umar I lasted until the time of Mu’āwiyah, so Ziyād may actually have undertaken a new survey in the Sawad. However, the tale in Qalqashandi (Kitāb ṣubh al-aʾshā [Cairo, 1332/1914], III, 447) about how Ziyād averaged the length of a tall, middle-sized, and short man’s arm to get the length of his ḍhirāʾ is surely fanciful.


24 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 269; Hinz, Masse, p. 48; Khadduri, Islamic Law of Nations, pp. 269–70; Mawardi, Aḥkām as-sultāniyya pp. 151, 168. Mawardi’s remark that the shāburnān was said (Ar. qīla) to weigh thirty ṛaṭls cannot be reconciled with its equivalence to the makhtūm al-Ḥajjājī and qaṭīz.

25 Taʿbārī, Taʿrīkh, 1, 2711.
crown land even after the sixth-century reforms and are also represented by Islamic tithe land. The *miṣāha* and *muqāsama* systems were juxtaposed on different kinds of land and seem to have been associated with different forms of tenancy.

The obligation of landholders to pay agricultural taxes was expressed in terms of ancient, indigenous Mesopotamian legal concepts that applied the principles of lease and mortgage contracts to land taxes. The form of sharecropping described in the Talmud in which the tenant held a permanent, inheritable lease and turned over one-quarter to one-third of the crop to the landlord appears to be the model for the theory that most of the agricultural land in lower-central Iraq in the Middle Sasanian period was state property for which the landholders paid an annual rent-tax (*A. tasqā*) proportional to the yield. Such land was considered to be mortgaged to the state for the amount of taxes due on it each year. It reverted to the state in case of default, and the right to use the land could be sold to anyone who paid the tax on it for that year. 26 The other main form of tenancy, in which the renter paid a fixed annual value of produce or cash, appears to be related to the fixed land tax per unit of area established in the sixth-century reforms. It seems to have prevailed on the estates of the *dhāqān* but was never applied to crown lands, which remained subject to *tasqā*.

Traces of the *tasqā* system are to be found in the treatment of confiscated Sasanian crown lands (Ar.*/M.P. *sawāfī al-ustān*) by the Muslims following the conquest. ʿUthmān ibn ʿHunayf is said to have set tax rates on crown land proportional to the yield. The *tasq* varied according to the relative distance from water sources and markets, and ʿUthmān levied one-tenth of the crop on palm trees and vineyards watered by rain and one-twentieth on those irrigated artificially. 27 When land grants (Ar. *qatāʾiʿ*) began to be made from state property near Kufa by the caliph ʿUthmān, we are told that two of those who

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27 Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj*, p. 129; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 268, 271; Yabīyā ibn Ādam, *Kharāj*, p. 81. These happen to be the fractions designated by the Persian ordinal numbers that were translated into Arabic as *'ushr* (tenth) and *nisf *'ushr* (twentieth) under al-Ḥajjāj (Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 301; Løkkegaard, *Islamic Taxation*, pp. 113, 241; Māwardi, *Aḥkām as-sultāniyya*, p. 195).
received them collected one-third and one-quarter of the produce from their village estates.\textsuperscript{28} By the end of the eighth century, the principles had been established in Islamic theory that the \textit{tasq} represented the price of an annual sale or rental to the tenants on \textit{ustān} land, according to the terms of their leases and the quality of the land, and could amount to as much as one-half of the crop.\textsuperscript{29} As we have seen, the expansion of state lands through reclamation in Iraq, which began in the time of Muʿāwiya, increased the territory under this tax regime and made its revenues an important alternative source of income.

When applied to income from landed property, the tithe tax (Ar. \textit{ʿushr}) paid by Muslims was also proportional to the yield. The only significant \textit{ʿushr}-paying lands in Iraq were in the vicinity of Basra and were created in two ways. First, in contrast to the Sawad of Kuفا, where native converts or Muslims who acquired land from native landlords continued to pay \textit{kharāj} on their land, in the seventh century converts and Muslims who acquired land by gift or sale from natives around the town of Furat near Basra paid \textit{ʿushr} on it until the time of al-Ḥajjaj, who required such land to pay \textit{kharāj}.\textsuperscript{30} Second, the land reclaimed privately by Muslims around Basra paid \textit{ʿushr}.\textsuperscript{31} In the second half of the seventh century and well into the eighth century, this part of Iraq was the scene of an agricultural boom where land development extended the area under cultivation in the form of large plantation estates. The spread of crown lands and private estates through land reclamation was the most important development in the agricultural economy of lower Iraq in the early Islamic period, but neither kind of new land served to increase the amount of \textit{kharāj} collected by the state.

**POLL TAX**

Even more than in the case of land taxes, seventh-century developments concerning poll taxes fit the general trend towards regularity,

\textsuperscript{28} Abū Yūṣuf, \textit{Kharāj}, p. 93; Balāḏuri, \textit{Futūh}, p. 273.

\textsuperscript{29} Qudāma, \textit{Kharāj}, p. 38.

\textsuperscript{30} Balāḏuri, \textit{Futūh}, p. 368. Of course there was nothing new about tithe land as such in Iraq. The payment of one-tenth of the crops existed as the lowest rate in ancient Babylonia and in the Sasanian \textit{muqāsama} system. Tithes on agricultural and commercial income are known in Sumerian records in the period of Ur III and in Akkadian from the tithe (Ak. \textit{ešrū}) of the Old Babylonian period through the “tithe fields” (Ak. \textit{bit ešrū}) of the neo-Babylonian period (Ellis, \textit{Agriculture and the State}, p. 150).

uniformity, and theoretical refinement extending from the beginning of the sixth to the end of the eighth centuries; they were not merely adopted or altered from Sasanian practices. Before the sixth century, poll taxes were mainly apportioned as part of the tribute taxes on towns and assessed on the basis of the estimated population. The best evidence comes from the Talmud, which describes the Sasanian poll tax (A. kragā) on both Jews and non-Jews as a personal debt owed by the entire urban population—men, women, and children—to the state and for which their individual freedom, labor, and property were mortgaged. Those unable to pay it were obliged to work off the debt in service of whoever might pay it for them. Only the Magian priests and the attendants of the fire temples were exempt.32 Fīrūz is said to have levied a general poll tax (Syr. kṣaṭf reshā) over his entire empire at the end of the fifth century in order to ransom his son Qubādh from the Hephthalites,33 and the memory of a fixed poll tax (Ar. jizya on heads) before the reign of Anūshirvān survived in Arabic tradition.34 It was Anūshirvān, however, who imposed a regular, annual poll tax of four, six, eight, or twelve dirhams paid in three installments on the male population between the ages of twenty and fifty, according to their status. Members of the royal family, the high nobility, soldiers, hirbadhs (N.P.), bureaucrats, and others in royal service were all exempt and therefore agreed to its imposition.35 The expectation that most people paid the lowest rate is borne out by the report of the Chinese Buddhist traveler and pilgrim, Hsüen-tsang, whose journey to India began in 629 and ended in 645, that in Persia each family was subject to a tax of four silver coins per man.36 When they conquered the Sawad, the Muslims are said to have taken the “kharaj of Kisrā on the heads of men according to their possessions.”37 At first, arrangements were made with local notables based on the Sasanian rates. In the subdistricts of the Sawad of Kuša Salūba, the dihqān of Baniqya and Basma came to terms with Khalīd ibn al-Walīd for four dirhams per head, as did the dihqān of Zawabi

33 Wright, Joshua the Stylite, p. 8.
34 Ṣalāḥ, Taʿrīkh, I, 960.
35 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, pp. 72–73; Ṣalāḥ, Taʿrīkh, I, 962.
37 Ṣalāḥ, Taʿrīkh, I, 2371.
with 'Urwa ibn Zayd for his territory. After the Battle of Kaskar in 634, 'Abū 'Ubayd received four dirhams per head from two local notables: Farrūkh for the territory of Barusma and Farwandādh for the territory of Nahr Jawbar. The agreement that the Nestorian catholicos Ishō'yahbū III is claimed to have made with 'Umar also provided that the tax on the poor was not to exceed four silver coins (Syr. zūzē), while that on merchants and the wealthy was to be set at ten coins per man.

However, in the Sawad of Kufa Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yamān and 'Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf established new, higher rates comparable to their increase in land taxes. They required some five hundred thousand adult males, including artisans, to pay a graduated annual poll tax of twelve, twenty-four, or forty-eight dirhams. The threefold increase in the lowest rates and the fourfold increase in the highest rate was quite in line with the level of increase in land taxes at the same time. This schedule was maintained in 'Ali's instructions to Yazīd al-Anṣārī, in which dāhāqīn who rode a birdhawn (Syr.) and wore gold anklets on their feet were to pay forty-eight dirhams, middle income merchants were to pay twenty-four dirhams, and farmers and others were to pay twelve dirhams per year. By the time of 'Umar II in the early eighth century, the poll tax had been defined as the tax paid by farmers from their produce, by artisans from their earnings, and by merchants from their profits. Ultimately Islamic law exempted women and children, the aged, the blind, crippled, insane, or chronically ill—essentially everyone who by reason of age of infirmity was too poor to pay the poll tax.

There are thus several theoretical dimensions to the way the poll tax developed. Originally, it appears to have been a form of tribute levied on the urban population, designed to cover nonagricultural sources of income and to prevent people from escaping taxation by abandoning the land. In the smaller towns and villages, it is natural to suppose that land and poll taxes overlapped somewhat because peasants did not normally live on the land they farmed but in a nearby

38 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 251; Tabari, Taʾrikh, I, 2049, 2170.
41 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 271.
settlement. Such conditions have been used to explain why the terms used by Muslims for land and poll taxes were interchangeable and not really sorted out in Islamic usage until the eighth century—*kharāj* for land tax and *jizya* for poll tax. These conditions are also used to suggest that in dealing with the agricultural population of lower Iraq, the difference between land and poll taxes was probably made more by the government than by the people on the land who paid all their taxes as a combined assessment. 44 However, the distinction between land taxes as rent and poll taxes as tribute appears to apply to the town-dwelling population.

Eventually poll taxes also came to be considered as the contribution to be made to the state by productive noncombatants in return for military protection. From this point of view, the tendency to consider the poll tax as a levy on non-Magians appears underway by at least the fourth century when Shāpur II, in order to offset the expense of his wars and arguing that the Christians in his empire were living in peace even though their faith differed from the established one, required the bishop of Ctesiphon (Mada‘in) Shem‘ôn bar Sabbā‘ē, to collect a double poll tax (Syr. *kesaf reshā*) and land tax (Syr. *mēdātā*) from Christians. 45 This imposition is said to have evoked the retort from the bishop that “I am no tax collector, but a shepherd of the Lord’s flock.” 46 The sixth-century reform of Anūshirvān served to increase the religious dimension of the poll tax especially in Iraq, where it was mainly paid by the non-Persian, non-Magian part of the population because of the exemptions he made.

This late Sasanian tendency appears to have merged easily with the tribal Arab definition of *jizya* as the personal ransom paid by a person defeated and captured in battle, and with the Qur’ānic use of *jizya* as the collective tribute paid to Muslims following political submission by those non-Muslims with a revealed scripture. 47 The replacement of the Persians by the Muslims as rulers of Iraq and the way in which, at least initially, the Muslims maintained themselves as both a religious community and a military garrison contributed materially to a crystallization of the trend begun under the Sasanians to regard the poll


tax as exclusively imposed on the economically productive part of society whose religion happened to be different from that of the rulers, in return for military protection. In practice, tribute was imposed on all non-Arabs in Iraq regardless of religion: Jews, Christians, Magians, and pagans. These early associations between the poll tax and military protection also survived in Islamic legal traditions as in the statement of as-Sarakhsi that “the property owner has no more right to invalidate the right of collection which belongs to the imām by the authority bestowed on him by the Shari’a, than has the person who is subject to the poll tax to settle it himself to the warriors who are the beneficiaries of that tax.”

The association of the poll tax with the tribute paid by non-Muslims meant theoretically at least, that conversion to Islam ought to free a person from paying it. Actually only non-Arabs who entered the ruling class as soldiers or administrators seem to have been allowed to escape it whether they converted to Islam or not. One good example is that of a Persian convert at Basra, Arṭabān, the mawla of ʿAbdullah ibn Durra al-Muzani, who was allowed to pay the Muslim alms tax (Ar. zakāt) to ʿUmar 1. This did not apply to the agricultural population for whom little practical difference existed between land and poll taxes. However, the famous case of the forced return by al-Hajjaj of Jewish and Christian converts to Islam who had escaped to the cities of lower Iraq at the end of the seventh century has more to do with the attachment of agricultural labor to the land than with the issues of conversion and taxation. The emergence of protected (Ar. dhimmi) status and the definition of jizya as the poll tax on non-Muslim subjects appears to have been achieved only by the early eighth century. This came as a result of growing suspicions about the loyalty of the non-Muslim population during the second civil war and of the literalist interpretation of the Qurʿān by pious Muslims, including Khawārij, who insisted on adding the requirement of the possession of a revealed scripture to the other aspects of the poll tax inherited from the Sasanians.

Parallel to the increasingly religious nature of the poll tax went the development of the issue of whether or not those engaged in religious professions should be exempt. Even before the sixth-century reforms, attendants of the Magian fire temples were exempt from the kragā,

49 Aghnides, Finance, p. 300.
50 Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt, VII(1), 88.
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and Talmudic scholars were allowed to declare themselves to be attendants of the fire in order to share that privilege. The rabbis who collected the poll tax from the Jews for the state were in a position to exempt themselves. By the fourth and fifth centuries, attempts by the state to subject Christian monks to the poll tax were beginning to provoke resistance. The conflict over the taxation of monks, priests, and notables who happened to be Christian and who claimed exemptions similar to the Magian *hirbadhs* and notables was still a live issue in the late sixth and early seventh centuries.

The arguments over whether or not monks capable of working should be subject to the poll tax survived in the Islamic legal tradition. However, the leaders of the Christian community took advantage of the fluid conditions following the conquest to secure their own exemption from the poll tax locally long before it was recognized in theory. Shortly after the conquest, under 'Umar I, priests and deacons at Kaskar were required to pay the poll tax. Rabban Theodore, a teacher at Kaskar, petitioned the *ʿāmil* of the district and got an exemption for them in writing. About mid-century, the metropolitan bishop of Beth Garme (Bajarma), Sabhrīshōʿ, who had cured the two demon-possessed daughters of the governor, asked for and received a written exemption from the poll tax for monks, priests, and students (anyone who wore wool, whether tonsured or not). We are also told of a monk named Duʾan in the Sawad who, together with his village, was exempt from the poll tax. By the time of Muʿāwiya, the Muslim regime was appointing members of local communities to collect taxes, and in 676 Nestorian canon law forbade a Christian tax collector to collect the poll tax (*kesaf reshā*) from a bishop.

COLLECTION

At least three alternative mechanisms, prevailing in different districts or at different times, appear to have been used to distribute the responsibility for collecting taxes in late Sasanian and early Islamic Iraq.

52 Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj*, p. 188.
53 Scher, "Histoire nestorienne," II(2), 598–99. Nuʾmān ibn ʿAmr ibn Muqarrin was *ʿāmil* of Kaskar from about 637 until 642.
54 Ibid., pp. 632–33.
Taxes were usually assessed as a total sum for each town, village, or rural district and might be divided up by the inhabitants among themselves, paid by a local notable who stood as surety, or collected directly by officers of the state. The best description of collective responsibility comes from Talmudic references to the poll tax (kragā) levied on the Jewish population of lower central Iraq before the sixth century. Here the kragā was based on the estimated population of the towns and villages by a district official (A. resh nehara) who assessed each town or village as a unit. The total levied on the main towns included the assessment of the smaller towns in their districts, which in turn owed their tax to the main town. Local notables and community leaders then divided the total according to personal wealth among the population, which shared the expense of any exemptions they made. The collection was made by officers appointed by the government, and even Jewish tax collectors could require the inhabitants of a town to pay the share of those who had hidden to escape payment.57 This method was also applied to Christian church administration in the fifth century when a contribution was levied on each village in the territory of a chorepiscopos for his support.58 The employment of a local figure should likewise be noticed at Edessa. When that city was under Persian rule in the early seventh century, Khusraw Parviz appointed a native of the city who happened to be related to his own Monophysite physician to collect the kharāj until popular complaints brought about his removal.59

Collective responsibility appears to be derived ultimately from tribute arrangements and was intended to ensure the payment of the entire amount assessed on a town or a district. During the collection, taxpayers who had paid their taxes were identified by having lead or clay seals hung around their necks in order to distinguish them from those who had not yet paid. Among Talmudic Jews, slaves wore their master’s seal around their necks as a sign of servitude. The sealing of taxpayers thus was a form of degradation symbolizing the mortgage of their freedom to the state until the entire amount levied had been paid.60 The use of seals to identify the lower classes was also evident

59 Agapius of Manbij, Kitāb al-Unwān, PO 8 (1912), 459.
60 Newman, Agricultural Life, p. 72.
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at Edessa in A.D. 500 when the Byzantine governor put lead seals on the necks of the poor and gave them a pound of bread per day.\(^6\) Similarly, during the plague of 544 in the Sasanian empire people wrote down their names and homes on a scrap of cloth and hung it around their necks.\(^6\)

Some of the arrangements made between the native population and the Muslims at the time of the conquest conform to local traditions of collective responsibility that possibly were encouraged by similar precedents in Arabia and by the initial tendency of the Muslims to regard all payments as a form of tribute. In the cities that surrendered on terms, such as Hira, tribute was imposed as a total amount to be divided among the people of each city, not necessarily according to the rates of the poll tax, and no separate tax was levied on their land.\(^6\) However, at Khaniqin, Ḥudhayfa and ʿUthmān are said to have put seals on the necks of the dhimmīs, collected the kharāj, and instructed the dahāqīn to break the seals afterwards.\(^6\)

The best example of group taxation in early Islamic Iraq is provided by the experiences of the Christian Arabs from Najran in Yaman who were resettled in a village of the same name near Kufa. According to an agreement originally made with Muḥammad, the entire community at first paid an annual tax of two thousand robes to the Muslim state as tribute for their land. But this tax was remitted by ʿUmar I for two years when they were resettled in Iraq in 641. He also freed them from the responsibility of providing hospitality to Muslims or special support for government officials. The amount of the tax was divided among the men of the community who had not converted, even if one of them had sold his share of the land to someone outside the community. If anyone acquired land elsewhere, he was required to pay the land tax on it. But as early as the reign of ʿUthmān, the amount of the tax was decreased by two hundred robes because the local notables had forced them off their land. In 657 their bishop interceded unsuccessfully with ʿAlī to allow them to return to Yaman. Although ʿAlī refused, he did promise to respect their rights. The amount of the tax was further decreased by Muʿāwiya or Yazīd I by another two hundred robes because of dispersion, death, and conversion to Islam;

\(^6\) Wright, *Joshua the Stylite*, p. 31.
but al-Ḥajjāj raised it again to eighteen hundred embroidered robes because he accused them of siding with Ibn al-Ash'ath in his rebellion in 699. It was only in the reign of ʿUmar II (717–20), when the community had shrunk to one-tenth of its former number, that their levy was made a genuine poll tax separate from their land, the portion due from those who had died or converted was annulled, and the tax was set again at two hundred robes worth eight thousand dirhams.65

Although in theoretical discussions of the poll tax, the Najrāniyya are treated as an exception,66 an indication that the kind of group responsibility for taxes described in the Talmud had survived among the native population at least until the end of the seventh century is provided by the legal correspondence of the Nestorian catholicos Ḥanānishōʾ (686–93). The exact locations of the villages in question are unknown but were probably somewhere in upper Iraq. In one case, the brothers of a man named Pūsānōsh had died without heirs and left him all their property except what had been willed to the Church, but his fellow villagers took his inheritance by force on the pretext that it was the tax to be paid by the dead if his brothers had not been sealed. Pūsānōsh appealed to the catholicos who ordered the property returned, although he ruled that if “his brothers were not sealed . . . their tax [mēdātā] was incumbent on the village.”67 The villagers were also responsible for distributing their tax. In another case Ḥanānishōʾ ruled that “the poll tax [kēsaf reshā] which they are obliged to compute should be collected from each one according to the proportion of his property.”68

Part of a dead person’s estate could also be sold or mortgaged to pay his debts or the poll tax.69 We also hear of a jail for tax debtors at Shuqa dhē Hadhbeshabba (“Sunday Market”) in eighth century Margha,70 and the language of debt is used in a post-conquest Middle Persian apocalyptic text, which says “They have imposed taxes [ga-zīṭak, from Syriac ge’zīṭā] and distributed them upon heads [M.P. apar sarān]. They have demanded the principal [aslik, from Arabic āšl]

65 Abū Yūṣuf, Kharāj, pp. 88, 100–1, 111–13; Balādhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 66–67; Khadduri, Islamic Law of Nations, pp. 278–83. If this amount was intended to be equivalent to the poll tax rates it would mean that there were at most two thousand men in the community by that time, out of an original maximum of twenty thousand men.
67 Sachau, Rechtsbücher, II, 14–17, 184.
68 Ibid., II, 42–43.
69 Ibid., II, 18–19.
70 Thomas of Margha, Governors, II, 638.
again, a heavy impost.\(^71\) Islamic theory, however, developed at variance with these practices. According to Islamic law, the poll tax was not considered a debt, it was to be deferred in case of death, and it was not to be collected from the estate or from the heirs.\(^72\)

In general, it is reasonable to suppose that collective responsibility was used to ensure payment in towns that came to terms with the Muslims at the time of the conquest and in the villages on rural estates where the landlords had fled or where the land was state domain. In both cases there was no single surviving local authority who could be held responsible. The main alternative to this kind of arrangement was to require local notables to guarantee the payment of the tribute levied on their districts. At the time of his raid in 633–34, Khalid is said to have required the headmen of the Euphrates subdistricts to stand as surety for the *kharaj*. They collected it in fifty days and got receipts (Ar. *bara‘āt*) from his agents when it was paid.\(^73\) This principle was applied to Islamic administration at the provincial level by Mu‘awiya, who obliged ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād to stand as surety for the entire *kharaj* of Iraq (one hundred million *dirhams*) when the latter was governor. ‘Ubaydullāh attempted first to pass the pressure on to an Arab subordinate whom he made responsible for the collection of the tax by fining his tribe or clan. When this failed to bring in the required revenue, he turned to the local notables (*dahāqīn*) to collect the tax, with more satisfactory results.\(^74\)

The direct assessment and collection of taxes by the salaried officers of a centralized regime exists as a third alternative, but in the actual mechanics of turning over the taxes this method usually meshed with one of the other two. Community leaders, city elders, village headmen, and rural landed notables assisted the agents of the central administration to whom they delivered the revenues. Under the Sasanians the local revenue agent and financial secretary was called an *amārkar* (M.P.), and such officials are attested on administrative seals for Mayasan and for the combined jurisdiction of Garmekan and Nodh-Ardashirakan in upper Iraq.\(^75\) The activity and number of revenue agents


\(^{73}\) Tābārī, *Ta‘rikh*, I, 2054.

\(^{74}\) Ibid., II, 458.

appears to have been increased as a result of Anūshirvān’s tax reforms and to have peaked under Khusraw Parviz in the 620s because of his great need for income to pursue his Byzantine war. Judging by conditions at the time of the conquest a decade later, the aristocratic reaction which brought about the fall of Khusraw Parviz in 628 put much of the control of the tax collection process in the hands of the local notables again.

The employment of state officials to collect taxes was accompanied by the usual administrative checks to prevent abuses. Anūshirvān is said to have begun the practice of making three copies of the tax assessment on each district. One was kept by his own dīwān; one was sent to the tax department, which billed the district finance officials (Ar. ‘ummāl) for the amount; and one was sent to the local judge (Ar. qādī) or secretary to prevent the finance officers from collecting any more than their regulations (M.P. dustūr) required. The judge or secretary was also to see that the revenue agents remitted the tax in case of crop failure, that the poll tax was not collected from the dead or those over fifty or under twenty years old, and that the monarch was informed of the exemptions to be made so the central government could instruct the finance officers accordingly.

The Islamic government employed its own agents to assess and collect taxes and tribute in particular places from the time of the conquest. Income from the confiscated crown lands in the Sawad of Kufa was collected and distributed by the military leaders who acted as agents (Ar. sg. wālī) for the garrison settled at Kufa. In the time of ‘Umar I, the poll tax was collected from Magians in the rural districts of Manadhir and Dast-i Maysan around Basra by Jaz’ ibn Mu’āwiya with the help of a local Arab, Bajāla ibn ‘Abda al-’Anbari. As we have seen, the employment of ‘ummāl was increasing in the Sawad of Basra in the late 650s. It especially grew under Ziyād in the reign of Mu’āwiya, when the Christian Arab ‘Ibadis of Hira were employed as tax collectors by the Islamic government, and the state was making Christians responsible for the collection of both the poll tax (kesaf...
reshā) and the land tax (mēdatā). Likewise, a responsum of R. Sheshna of Sura prior to 689 indicates that government tax collectors could require Jewish communal leaders to use the sanction of ostracism to get taxes collected.

The need for some form of control over the activities of government tax collectors was largely responsible for the emergence and perhaps intensification among Muslims of the conceptual relationship between taxation and justice which had been built into the Sasanian system. At the same time the problems of applying Islamic ethical standards and expectations in the garrison cities of Iraq, especially in the fair distribution of booty, encouraged the involvement of advocates of justice in finance administration. This is reflected both in the appointment of qādis to positions of trust and in the ethical requirements made of tax collectors. ’Umar I is supposed to have appointed as collectors of the kharāj those who had been recommended to him as the most virtuous in each place, while ’Ali is said to have instructed his tax collectors in the districts of Behqubadh in the Sawad of Kufa to ask the inhabitants about the conduct of other government officials there and about illegal taxes. He also reminded them that eternal reward or punishment would depend on their behavior.

When ’Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād turned to the dahāqān to collect taxes, he appointed Arab supervisors over them to prevent oppression. The principle that a governor “should appoint as collector of the kharāj a man who must treat the inhabitants kindly and justly” survived in Islamic administrative theory.

COMMERCIAL TAXES AND SERVICES

Both the Sasanians and Muslims imposed commercial taxes and obligations in addition to the system of land and poll taxes. The local tradition seems to go back to the Old Babylonian miksu (Ak.), which Ellis describes as a general tax on increase in value through agricultural or commercial activity. It had elements of an income tax, capital gains tax, and import and customs duties and appears to have survived as

78 Abū Yūṣūf, Kharāj, p. 199; Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 225, 490; Ṭabarî, Taʾrikh, I, 2372, 2469.
80 Abū Yūṣūf, Kharāj, pp. 172, 182.
81 Ṭabarî, Taʾrikh, II, 458.
82 Khadduri, Islamic Law of Nations, pp. 283–84.
the Islamic *maks* (Ar.). As a commercial tax, the *miksu* on seafaring merchants at Ur amounted to a ten percent customs duty in the Old Babylonian period.\(^{83}\) In Sasanian Iraq ad valorem tolls were levied on the goods of merchants at bridges, and the right to collect them was sold to tax farmers.\(^{84}\) The peace treaty between the Persians and Byzantines in 561 allowed merchants on both sides to engage in commerce, provided they paid customs duty on their merchandise at the border between Nasibin and Dara.\(^{85}\)

Ubulla was the major port for the Indian trade, and although there is no evidence that the Sasanians collected customs there, it was at Ubulla that Muslim customs duties were first set. According to Ibn Sa‘d, when Anas ibn Mālik was put in charge of Basra by Ibn az-Zubayr in the spring of 685, he appointed Anas ibn Sirīn as the customs inspector (Ar. ‘āshir) for Ubulla. To guide him in his responsibilities, a document purporting to go back to the caliph ‘Umar I himself was brought forth. According to it, a Muslim was to pay two and one-half percent ad valorem on his merchandise, a protected non-Muslim (*dhimmī*) five percent, and a foreign non-Muslim ten percent.\(^{86}\) Along the former Perso-Byzantine border, Ziyād ibn Ḥudayr collected a five percent ad valorem customs tax from the Christian Arabs in the time of ‘Umar I by stretching a chain across the Euphrates and requiring them to pay the customs toll every time they went in either direction.\(^{87}\)

The Sasanian state also requisitioned labor, animals, and provisions for royal projects and whenever the court or provincial governors and their retinues passed through a district. Apart from works such as canals, dikes and bridges, such local levies appear to be related to the state communication and transport system for which animals were commandeered. Local notables were obliged to lodge government officials en route at their own expense, perhaps in lieu of other taxes.\(^{88}\)

The Muslims imposed a similar requirement to give directions and hospitality for three days to Muslim travelers on the *dāhāqīn* in the Sawad of Kufa. The right to receive such hospitality came to be re-

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\(^{83}\) Ellis, *Agriculture and the State*, p. 149.


\(^{85}\) Christensen, *Sassanides*, p. 125.


\(^{87}\) Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj*, pp. 210–11. Tyan (Organisation judiciaire, p. 79) points out that none of the authors who mention ‘Umar’s letter lived earlier than the end of the eighth century.

garded as the special heritage of those who had taken it as their permanent booty.\textsuperscript{89} This privilege began to be abused almost immediately. Muslims would enter the villages near Kufa and demand “Satisfy me!” or “Invite me!” These orders caused the villagers to complain to ‘Ali at Madina in 656. When ‘Ali sent Tha’labah ibn Yazid al-Himmānī with one hundred horsemen to investigate, the latter swore upon his return to Madina that he would never return to the Sawad because of the evil he had seen there. ‘Ali then abandoned his intention of partitioning the Sawad among the Muslim garrison with seven or nine men assigned to each village to support them. He declared he would have done so “if some of you had not struck the faces of others.”\textsuperscript{90}

AMOUNTS

Judgments about the relative efficiency of tax collection, attention to the agricultural tax base, and the socioreligious consequences of tax discrimination have been based on comparisons of the amounts of taxes raised by the Sasanians and by the Muslims in lower Iraq. Early attempts to link an apparent decline in poll taxes during the first century of Muslim rule to mass conversions to Islam\textsuperscript{91} have been effectively refuted by Dennett.\textsuperscript{92} However, land tax figures continue to be used as evidence for the contraction or at least stability of the land under cultivation, or of Muslim inefficiency in administering it.\textsuperscript{93} Such arguments tend to be based on fairly simple assumptions about the uniformity and permanence of the land tax regime and of the value of the income, and are easily misled by the figures cited in the Arabic sources. While these figures should not be taken literally, they provide relative orders of magnitude for the value of tax revenues. Any con-

\textsuperscript{89} Abū Yusuf, \textit{Kharāj}, p. 60; Tabari, \textit{Ta’rikh}, I, 2470. There appears to be a reference to the responsibility of Jews to quarter Muslim soldiers in a responsum of R. Natronai (Mann, “Responsa,” p. 123).

\textsuperscript{90} Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, \textit{Kharāj}, p. 43.

\textsuperscript{91} The earliest use of tax figures to make this point appears to be that of A. von Kremer, \textit{Culturgeschichte des Orients unter den Chalifen} (Vienna, 1875), I, 172, who was followed by T. Arnold, \textit{The Preaching of Islam} (New York, 1913), p. 81, and A. Tritton, \textit{The Caliphs and Their Non-Muslim Subjects} (London, 1930).


\textsuperscript{93} These figures were used this way by R. Adams, \textit{Land Behind Baghdad} (Chicago, 1965), pp. 84–85, which also goes back to von Kremer, \textit{Culturgeschichte}, I, 258–60.
clusions based on them can only be tentative and should take into account as many other variables as possible.

The first problem lies in the size of the revenues collected in the late Sasanian period. Qubādh I is said to have raised a total of one hundred and fifty million dirhams of the weight of a mithqāl (Ar.) in taxes from all sources in the Sawad, which would be equivalent to somewhat over two hundred and fourteen million dirhams at the ratio of ten to seven.94 Apparently the first figure is related to Māwardi’s claim that the land tax base under the unit area system in the Sawad in the sixth century was one hundred and fifty million jarībs. This would have been based on the assumption that the above amount only referred to the land tax in the Sawad and was computed in dirhams, to which the normal Sasanian tax rate of one dirham per jarīb (further assuming that all land was planted in wheat or barley) was applied to arrive at the number of jarībs. Māwardi’s account then applies the Islamic system, which he claims is Sasanian, of one dirham and one qafīz of grain per jarīb (which assumes that all land was planted in wheat) to produce a land tax alone in the Sawad of two hundred and eighty-seven million dirhams in the sixth century. The confusion is only increased by his statement that the tax on each jarīb was a dirham and a qafīz worth three dirhams of the weight of a mithqāl, which should actually give a total of almost eight hundred million dirhams.95 A check on this sort of thing is provided by the estimate of four hundred and twenty million mithqāl (six hundred million dirhams) raised by Khusraw Parviz from all kinds of revenue from his entire empire in 607, the eighteenth year of his reign.96 Taken at face value, these figures suggest that the taxes from the Sawad were slightly more than one third of all Sasanian revenues, and this underscores the economic importance of this region to the Sasanian state.

The difficulty of using these figures for comparison with the levels of Muslim revenues is increased by confusion over the area said to

94 Ibn Hawqal, Šūrat al-ard, p. 234; Ibn Khurradādhbih, Masālik, p. 14. Khusraw Anūshirvān is said to have collected the same amount of taxes in the Sawad in the first year of his reign (531), see Masʿūdi, Kitāb at-tanbih wa ‘l-ishrāf (Beirut, 1965), p. 39.
95 Māwardi, Abkām as-sultāniyya, p. 167. According to Ibn Rustah (Al-lāq, p. 104), Qubād collected 100,550,000 mithqāls of waraq (Ar. “thin”) dirhams (equal to 143,642,850 dirhams) in the Sawad.
96 Ibn Hawqal, Šūrat al-ard, p. 235; Ibn Khurradādhbih, Masālik, p. 15; Masʿūdi, Tanbih, p. 39; Ṭabari, Taʾrīkh, l, 1042. Altheim (Staat, p. 41) and, following him, Adams (Land Behind Baghdad, p. 71) mistakenly give 240 million dirhams. The claim that he later collected 600 million mithqāl (over 850 million dirhams) seems suspect since this is the same number of equivalent dirhams for the first amount of mithqāl.
TAXES

have been established as the base for the land tax under 'Umar I. The region called the Sawad in the Sasanian period in Arabic literature is either lower Iraq in general or is assumed to be identical with later 'Abbāsī definitions. As we shall see, there was no administrative unit in lower Iraq in the late Sasanian period that was exactly equivalent to what was meant by the Sawad in the century following the Muslim conquest. Consequently, the figures given for the taxes of the Sawad in both periods are not subject to direct comparison. There are a number of reasons why the land surveyed in the Sawad under 'Umar I might be expected to have been less extensive than that claimed as the base for the Sasanian land tax there. In the first place, by all accounts the initial survey done by 'Uthman ibn Hunayf and Hudhayfa ibn al-Yaman was only in the Sawad of Kufa. Therefore, the thirty-two to thirty-six million jarībs of land which they measured for the land tax included neither the Sawad of Basra nor Hulwan.97 Second, the disastrous flooding of 628 took large tracts of land in lower Iraq out of cultivation. Since much of it was in the district of Kaskar, it may have been Sasanian crown land. However, the land reclaimed by draining the swamps beginning in the time of Mu‘awiya certainly became either Muslim crown land or the private tithe land of the developer and was consequently beyond the system of the unit of area tax and was not reflected in the figures for the kharāj. Comparability might also be affected by changes in crops such as the expansion of rice-growing on land reclaimed from the swamps, which seems to have been left untaxed or at least uncounted at first. Third, although the Muslim survey covered cultivable land allowed to lie fallow, such land was taxed at a lower rate. Following the conquest, a major population shift took place in Iraq from the districts east of the middle Tigris to the middle Euphrates and Shatt al-‘Arab. This shift was accompanied by a decline in agriculture east of the Tigris and an increase in agriculture around Basra, where the newly cultivated lands were state domains, land grants to private persons, or tithe land.98 On the other hand, these factors, which tended to drive down the revenue from the land tax, were offset by the increase in rates under the Muslims and by their preference for collecting taxes in the heavier khusrawī (M.P./Ar.) coins. Consequently, the taxes raised in the Sawad of Kufa by ’Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf, including the poll tax on five hundred thousand or five

97 Abū Yusuf, Kharāj, pp. 69, 89.

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hundred and fifty thousand people, amounted to one hundred million or one hundred and twenty-eight million dirhams. At the same time, the income from confiscated Sasanian crown lands (sawāfi al-istān) amounted to only four or seven million dirhams.

A better idea of the revenues collected in all of Iraq is provided by Ya‘qūbī for the reign of Mu‘awiya, when the taxes were again set for those parts of what had been the Sasanian empire and which were under the authority of the governor of Iraq. The total amount is given as six hundred million dirhams which, significantly, is the same as the eighteenth year of Khusraw Parviz. A breakdown of the figures shows, however, that the Sawad paid one hundred and twenty million, western Jabal (Mah al-Kufa and Mah al-Basra combined) forty million, Hulwan twenty million, and Mawsil forty-five million dirhams. The total of two hundred and twenty-five million dirhams from these provinces, which reconstitute the Sasanian Quarter of the West, amounts to slightly more than the tax Qubadh I is supposed to have collected in the Sawad alone. It can therefore be suggested that the figure of two hundred and fourteen million dirhams represents the tax on the Quarter of the West rather than on the Sawad as such. This might also seem more reasonable as a proportion of the total, but this solution seems impossible because the division into quarters was accomplished after Qubadh I by Khusraw Anūshirvān. The value of the annual income from domain land reclaimed from the swamps in the Sawād of Kufa by ‘Abdullāh ibn Darrāj for Mu‘awiya is given as either five million or fifty million dirhams. Ya‘qūbī tells us that the income from all state lands in Iraq and its dependencies in the time of Mu‘awiya amounted to one hundred million dirhams in addition to the kharāj. Not only does this dramatically illustrate the extension of state property and the importance of its income since the time of ‘Umar I, but since there does not seem to have been any such domain property on the Iranian plateau and the only other important crown estates under

99 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, pp. 41, 170; Balādhurī, Futūḥ, pp. 170–71; Ibn Khurraḍādhbih, Masālik, p. 14; Ibn Rustah, A‘lāq, p. 105. According to Abū Yūsuf, the 100 million dirhams weighed a mithqāl apiece, which would total almost 150 million standard dirhams.

100 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 86; Balādhurī, Futūḥ, p. 273; Yahyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 54.

101 Ya‘qūbī, Ta‘rikh, II, 277.

102 Balādhurī, Futūḥ, p. 291.

103 Ya‘qūbī, Ta‘rikh, II, 258.

104 Ibid., p. 277.
the authority of the governor of Iraq were those developed in Bahrayn under Mu‘awiya, this figure probably reflects mainly the extension of crown land in Iraq by reclamation. This means that combined with the kharāj of the Sawad and the Kuwar Dijla, the total revenues from lower Iraq under Mu‘awiya amounted to somewhat less (allowing for the estates in Bahrayn) than two hundred and thirty million dirhams. This also compares favorably with the figure given for Qubādh I in the Sawad.

There is obviously no basis for claims that the total tax base declined in lower Iraq in the first century after the conquest because of the retraction of agriculture. There is, however, some basis for arguing that the proportion of total revenue was shifting from one kind of land to another and that the kharāj figures represent a heavier burden on the land and peasants remaining under that system than had been the case under the last Sasanians. The kharāj in the Sawad appears to have remained fairly stable in the first century of Muslim rule. Various figures of eighteen, forty or one hundred and eighteen million dirhams are given for al-Ḥajjāj, but under Ṭūmar II the amount again rose to one hundred and twenty-four million dirhams.105

Generally speaking, the immediate survival of aspects of the Sasanian taxation system in the early Islamic period was the result of agreements between Muslim generals and administrators with local notables to set tribute at the time of the conquest, of the behavior of notables and peasants who did what they had been used to doing in the actual division of responsibility for paying taxes, and of the employment of natives as tax collectors by the time of Mu‘awiya. Because of this kind of institutional inertia, indigenous traditions of agrarian organization, the computation of the land tax per unit of area, the taxing of crown lands by a rent proportional to the yield, the use of seals to keep track of those who paid, and the three alternative methods of collection (group responsibility, guarantee by a notable, or direct collection by revenue agents), were able to survive the conquest. Important changes also took place, however. These included the increase in the land and poll tax rates by two to four times the Sasanian level and the expansion of cultivation in lower Iraq, where the new lands were not subject to kharāj but were crown land, land grants, or tithe land.

In taxation, as in administration, one may observe Islamic modifi-

cations of Sasanian institutions and practices which were based on the principles underlying Sasanian usages and took the form of increased regularity, uniformity, and theoretical refinement. This was the case in the extension of the unit of area system of assessing taxes to groves of palm and fruit trees, in the definition of taxes in kind as provisions for the army, and in the extension of exemptions from the poll tax to everyone too old or infirm to pay it, or to those employed in state service, to members of the religion of the rulers, or to those following a religious profession. Thus, while the main aspects of the poll tax already existed under the Sasanians, it received its characteristic Islamic form of a tax on the economically productive parts of society whose religion was different from that of the rulers in return for military protection. This happened in Iraq because of the nature of the Muslim occupation as both a ruling religious community and a military garrison. These religious and military dimensions to the poll tax in the late Sasanian period tended to be reinforced by the Arab-Muslim concept of *jizya* and led ultimately to the Islamic distinction between land and poll taxes in both practice and theory. This kind of change, which was really a matter of the continuing development of tendencies in the late Sasanian period catalyzed by the Muslim conquest, may also be seen in the way the relationship between taxation and justice under the Sasanians was reinforced by Islamic values and by practical circumstances.

In addition to the details of tax administration, one of the most significant results of this study so far is to suggest a continuity of ideological development in administrative theory. Although principle did not necessarily correspond to practice as we have seen, theory was related to and responsible for certain institutional arrangements. However, the problems encountered in evaluating the amount of taxes collected under the Sasanians and Muslims make it necessary to define and compare the geographical administrative units under both regimes.
Chapter 3

ADMINISTRATIVE GEOGRAPHY

THE GEOGRAPHICAL FRAMEWORK

The nature of administrative continuity and change may also be examined by considering the extent to which the Muslim Arabs preserved the existing geographical structure of Sasanian administration. The impression that the basic territorial framework of Sasanian administration survived into the Islamic period with very little change has been encouraged by the existence of administrative units named mainly after late Sasanian rulers which appear to have been in use in the Islamic period. The pre-Islamic origin of these names and of the administrative units they designate is asserted by the Arabic-writing geographers, and Mas’ūdī concludes his discussion of the Sasanian organization of lower Iraq by saying that “many of these subdistricts are today as they were at that time.”

However, it seems far too simplistic and static to suggest that after the Islamic conquest the Arabs took over the territorial structure of Sasanian administration as it stood. In the first place, the later Sasanian system appears to have been constantly shifting and readjusting with the formation and reorganization of units by succeeding rulers, culminating in the reorganization by Khusraw Parviz that produced the provincial units in existence at the time of the conquest. In the second place, the Muslim conquest itself affected the shape and orientation of administrative units under the early Islamic regime. In the third place, the shift in the lower Tigris River from the fifth to the seventh century produced changes in the administrative organization of lower Iraq unrelated to the conquest although contemporary with it.

In order to compare the administrative structures of late Sasanian and early Islamic Iraq, it is necessary to combine the information provided by geographers and the incidental references to the presence or appointment of officials and their jurisdictions in historical and literary sources with the documentary evidence provided by administrative seals, seal impressions, and coins. It is also necessary to treat both the late Sasanian and early Islamic administrative systems as

1 Mas’ūdī, Tanbih, p. 40. This chapter is a condensation of the author’s article, “Continuity and Change in the Administrative Geography of Late Sasanian and Early Islamic al-‘Irāq,” Iran 20 (1982), 1–49.
dynamic rather than static and to distinguish and compare different kinds of responsibilities and officials. For the purposes of comparison, the nature of an administrative jurisdiction is as important as its existence.

The administrative division of Sasanian Mesopotamia into the three provinces of Arbayestan, Adiabene, and Asoristan lasted through the fifth century. Then, in the sixth century they were combined in a larger unit called the Quarter of the West (Khwarvaran), following the administrative reforms carried out under Khusraw Anūshirvān which divided the Sasanian state into four quarters oriented to the points of the compass. The late Sasanian Quarter of the West included as much of the Tigris-Euphrates valley above Maysan as was under Persian control, plus western Media (Jabal). In the time of Khusraw Parvīz, a military governor (N.P. spahbadh or ispabbadh), a lieutenant governor (N.P. pādhghospān), and possibly a finance official were in charge of the Quarter of the West. Part of the difficulty in determining how much of the organization of this larger unit was preserved under Muslim rule lies in the existence of two layers in the system, one imposed on the other, in the late Sasanian period. The first layer had been produced at the time of the quartering of the empire in the sixth century and involved the creation or reorganization of the districts called kuwar (Gk., sg. kūra) and their subdivisions called ṭasāśēj (M.P., sg. ṭassūj), which began under Qubād I. Khusraw Parvīz is then said to have reorganized the entire empire into some thirty-five administrative districts in the early seventh century. At that time the old subdivisions of the Quarter of the West were apparently collected into six or seven main divisions within the new system: one around Nasibin; one north and east of the upper Tigris; one east of the middle Tigris; one between the middle Tigris and the middle Euphrates; one between the lower Tigris and the lower Euphrates; and a frontier district southwest of the middle Euphrates around Hira (see fig. 5).

Two schematic descriptions of the late Sasanian provincial system lead to this conclusion. Although neither of them is entirely consistent or reliable, or possibly even complete, they seem to have been based on official lists and provide a useful starting point. The older of the two lists appears in the Armenian Geography (Ashxarhac’oy) and belongs to the period between 591 and the reorganization by Khusraw

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3 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, p. 69; Thaʿālibī, Ghurar, p. 609.
4 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, p. 68; Yaʿqūbī, Taʿrikh, I, 186.
5 Christensen, Sassanides, p. 40.
Parvīz, so it ought to reflect the reforms of the sixth century. The provinces in the Quarter of the West given in this list are probably best reconstructed as May (Mah = Media), Masptan (Masabadhan), Mihrank’atak (Mihrajanqadhaq), K’arshkar (Kaskar), Garmakan, Eran-asan-k’art-Kavat, and Not-Artashirakan. Although the location of Eran-asan-k’art-Kavat (“Qubādh has put Iran at ease”) cannot be identified otherwise, the process of elimination puts it most likely in

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a part of Iraq not occupied by the other provinces. Marquart suggested that it may have been the general designation for the group of districts created by Qubadh before the formation of the Quarter of the West: Veh-Kavat in the center of the Sawad, Shadh Qubadh around Firuz Shapur (Anbar), and the district also called Shadh Qubadh east of the Tigris between Mada'in and Hulwan. Other considerations suggest that Eran-asan-k'art-Kavat may have been located between Kaskar and Hulwan. This list also appears in a later abridged and amended form of the Armenian Geography which probably dates from shortly after the Islamic conquest. In this form, in which the Quarter of the West has been conflated with Khuzistan, the provinces are listed as Mazh, Maspan, Mihrank'artak, K'ashtar, Garmakan, Eran-astan (sic) -kart-Kavat, Not-Artashirakan, Marjin, and Srhen. It should be noted at this point that both forms of this list include western Media and Kaskar in the Quarter of the West and put Maysan in the Quarter of the South. The second description is contained in the Middle Persian catalogue of the provincial capitals of Iran, the Shatroiha-i Eranshahr, which lists Ctesiphon, (Na)sibin, Urha (Edessa), Babil, Hira, Mawsil, and cities in western Media such as Hamadan, Nihawand, Behistun, Dinawar, and Masruqan as the capitals of the provinces in the Quarter of the West. Although the present form of this text dates to no earlier than the reign of al-Manṣūr (754–75), the inclusion of Edessa, which the Persians only ruled between 610 and 628, and a reference to cities built in Syria, Yaman, and Africa by the Persian and Byzantine rulers gives this catalogue the appearance of reflecting conditions of the early seventh century, during which the conquests of Khusraw Parvīz extended the Quarter of the West into the Jazira, Syria, and Egypt.

The administrative organization of the late Sasanian period amounted to a pyramidal system in which each quarter of the state was divided into provinces, each province was divided into districts, and each

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8 Hewsen, "Armenian Historical Geography," p. 300.
9 Ibid., pp. 296, 301.
10 The text of the Shatroiha-i Eranshahr may be found in J. Jamasp Asana, Pahlavi Texts (Bombay, 1897), I, 18–24. Also see translations and commentaries by J. J. Modi, "The cities of Iran as described in the old Pahlavi Treatise of Shatroiha-i Airân," JBRRAS 20, 156–90; and J. Markwart, A Catalogue of the Provincial Capitals of Eränshahr (Rome, 1931). This text also puts "Asör the capital of Veh-Artakhshir," and Eran­asan-kart-Kavat in the Quarter of the South and lists Baghdad in the Quarter of the North. There is no clear indication of which quarter contained Maysan. Even if the city of Ashkar listed in the Quarter of the South is to be identified as Kaskar, this is hardly conclusive because other cities that were really in the Quarter of the West are listed in the Quarter of the South.
district into subdistricts. In general, the term *ustān* (M.P. *östān*) was used for a province, although it might also be used for smaller administrative units in certain contexts. Each province was divided into districts called *shahrs* (M.P.), each with its district capital or *shahrīstān* (M.P.) and governed by a *shahrīq* (M.P.) or *radh* (M.P.). In Sasanian Iraq the term employed as the equivalent of *shahr* was *kūra* (pl. *kuwar*), which is derived from the Greek *chōra* and had been introduced into Iraq in the Seleucid period. One of the problems in reconstructing this system lies in the tendency to confuse the district of the capital of the province with the province itself. At the lowest level each *shahr* or *kūra* was divided into subdistricts around small towns or villages. Such a subdivision was called a *tasōk* in Middle Persian and a *ṭassūj* (pl. *ṭasāsīj*) in Arabic, was sometimes equivalent to a *rustāq* (M.P. pl. *rasātiq*), and in lower Iraq might correspond to a canal district. *Nāhiya* (Ar.) was also used for this type of unit in some contexts, although sometimes the presence of a further subdivision at the village level was recognized by using any of these terms as the subdivision of one of the others. Under the Sasanians such a subdistrict was administered by a *dēhīq* (M.P.) called a *dihqān* (pl. *dahāqīn*) in Arabic. Subdistricts, and occasionally districts, were also called *a‘mal* (Ar.) when they served as units of fiscal administration for the collection of taxes.

**ARBAYESTAN**

The province of Arbayestan lying southwest of the upper Tigris had been reconstituted by Shāpūr II in 363 and consisted of territory con-

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15 Løkkegaard, *Islamic Taxation*, pp. 165–66. Løkkegaard (p. 164) says that a *ṭassūj* was divided into *rasātiq*, while Frye (Golden Age, pp. 10, 108) says that a *nāḥiyah/rustāq* might be divided into *ṭasāsīj*, which goes back to the account of Ḥamza cited by Ya‘qūt to the effect that each *kūra* was divided into *rasātiq*, each *rustāq* into *ṭasāsīj*, and each *ṭassūj* into a number of villages. Mas‘ūdī (*Tanbih*, p. 40) equates a *ṭassūj* with a *nāḥiyah*.

16 Christensen, *Sassanides*, p. 140.
quered from the Byzantines (see fig. 5).\textsuperscript{17} With its southern limit formed by the Jabal Sinjar, it stretched westward to the frontier city and provincial capital of Nasibin on the Byzantine border. In the late Sasanian period, this province seems to have been composed of the districts of Nasibin, Balad, Sinjar, possibly Beth 'Arbhaye, and possibly the districts of Arzon, Qardo, and Beth Zabhde along the Tigris.

In the course of the Islamic conquest this province, with Nasibin as its capital, survived fairly intact and became the basis for the region and administrative unit called the Diyar Rabi‘a by the Arabs. During the conquest this province was subject to invasion from two directions. In 638 a force under ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Ibtān went up the Tigris to (the province of) Mawsil, crossed the river to Balad, and went as far as Nasibin, which was taken peacefully and granted the same terms as the people of Raqqa in Byzantine Mesopotamia.\textsuperscript{18} A year or two later, in 639–40, ‘Iyād ibn Ghanm, then in the process of reducing the cities of Byzantine Mesopotamia, sent a force under Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī which occupied the province of Nasibin. Sinjar was garrisoned by Muslim troops, and ‘Iyād himself is said to have conquered Balad and to have reached the site of Mawsil. The settlement made by the Muslims in Byzantine Mesopotamia was then extended to the province of Nasibin where \textit{kharāj} was imposed on the lands and on the necks of the inhabitants, and a poll tax of four, five, or six \textit{dīnārs} (L.) a piece was levied in Byzantine gold coins.\textsuperscript{19} Since the Muslim army under ‘Iyād ibn Ghanm, which conquered this province, had come from the direction of Byzantine Mesopotamia, Nasibin and its districts were henceforth united administratively with the Jazira and were no longer organized as part of Iraq.\textsuperscript{20}

The Diyar Rabi‘a appears to have served as an administrative division of the Jazira from the time of the Islamic conquest. We are told that during the caliphate of ’Umar I (634–44), al-Walīd ibn ’Uqba was ‘āmil of Rabi‘a in the Jazira.\textsuperscript{21} As defined by Ibn Khurraḍādbhīh, the districts (\textit{kuwar}) of the Diyar Rabi‘a included not only those of Nasibin, Arzan, Ba‘arbaya, Balad, Sinjar, Qarda, Bazabda, and Tur


\textsuperscript{18} Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta‘rikh}, I, 2507.


\textsuperscript{20} Ibn Rustah (\textit{A’lāq}, p. 107) lists Arzan, Qarda, Bazabda, Balad, and Nasibin among the \textit{kuwar} of al-Jazira.

\textsuperscript{21} Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta‘rikh}, I, 2812.
'Abdin in former Sasanian territory but were extended to include Amid, R'as 'Ayn, Mayyafariqin, and Maridin in former Byzantine territory.\textsuperscript{22}

As the most important frontier city on the Byzantine border, Nasibin was governed by a \textit{marzbân} during the fifth and sixth centuries.\textsuperscript{23} Although an \textit{öständär} (M.P., administrator of an \textit{östân}) appears to have been at Nasibin in the reign of Hurmizd IV (579–90),\textsuperscript{24} this city was under a \textit{marzbân} in the 590s.\textsuperscript{25} Nasibin survived as the major administrative center in this part of the Jazira after the Islamic conquest. As early as 644 Nasibin was governed by an \textit{amîr},\textsuperscript{26} and during the caliphate of 'Uthmân (644–56) the governor (\textit{ämil}) of Nasibin was a subordinate of Mu'âwiya when the latter was governor of Syria.\textsuperscript{27} About 686–87, during the second \textit{fitna}, Nasibin was governed for the Marwânis by an \textit{amîr} called Ibn 'Uthmân.\textsuperscript{28} After the battle at the Khazir in 686, Ibrâhim ibn Mâlik al-Ashtar put his brother, 'Abd ar-Râhmân, in charge of Nasibin.\textsuperscript{29} The local Christian Persian physician called Mardanshâh, who helped Muhammad ibn Marwân take Nasibin in about 694, was rewarded with the administration of the city.\textsuperscript{30}

The evidence for the administration of most of the districts of this province in the early Islamic period is rather slim. The most important change involved the reorientation of the entire province, its attachment to al-Jazira, and the inclusion of several districts that had formerly been part of Byzantine Mesopotamia.

\textbf{ARD MAWSIL}

The formation of the province called the land (Ar. \textit{arḍ}) of Mawsil by the Arabs is much more complicated. It appears to have been the result of a process of consolidation during the Sasanian period and may have been based on the former primacy of the vassal kingdom of greater Adiabene (Hedhayabh) along the upper Tigris in the Par-

\textsuperscript{22} Ibn Khurradadhbih, \textit{Masâlik}, p. 95.
\textsuperscript{24} Hoffmann, \textit{Persischer Märtyrer}, pp. 94–95.
\textsuperscript{25} Scher, "Histoire nestorienne," II(2), 515.
\textsuperscript{26} Guidi, \textit{Chronica Minora I}, I, 31; II, 26; Nödeke, "Guidi," p. 34.
\textsuperscript{27} Baladhuri, \textit{Futūḥ}, p. 178.
\textsuperscript{28} A. Mingana, \textit{Sources syriaques} (Leipzig, 1908), I, 183–84.
\textsuperscript{29} Ṭabarî, \textit{Ta'rikh}, II, 716.
thian period, when it included the territory called Aturia around Nineveh on both sides of the Tigris.\textsuperscript{31} Since Adiabene proper lay east of the Tigris between the Greater and Lesser Zab rivers, it is not always possible to tell whether the references to Adiabene in administrative contexts should be understood in a restricted or expanded sense. The administrative division of Sasanian Mesopotamia into Asoristan, Adiabene, and Arbayestan in the third and fourth centuries, however, would suggest that Adiabene included that part of the region not contained in the other two. The Sasanians called this province Nodh-Ardashirakan and, according to Arabic literature, it was equivalent to that of Mawsil. Although Not-Ardashirakan and Garmekan are listed as separate provinces in the Armenian Geography,\textsuperscript{32} the existence of a combined administrative jurisdiction in the late Sasanian period is indicated by a seal inscription of the finance official of Beth Garme and Nodh-Ardashirakan (M.P. Garmēkan u Nōdh-ardashīrakan amārkar).\textsuperscript{33} This formulation suggests that these two provinces had indeed been combined into a single larger jurisdiction nearly coextensive with Ard Mawsil and at the same time tells us that there was no single term for it.

At the end of the Sasanian period the main administrative center of Nodh-Ardashirakan appears to have been located at the village of Hēza, twelve kilometers southwest of Irbil. Although the main prison, fire temple, and probably the mōhpat (M.P.) were at Irbil, the leaders of the Magians and the radh were at Hēza in the early seventh century. The radh had a judge (Syr. dayya[nā]) and soldiers commanded by an aínbadh (M.P.) under his authority. This arrangement seems to be that of a satellite military and administrative center located outside of the main town for greater efficiency, discipline, and control. It is possible that the marzbān who was captured and killed by the Muslims during the conquest of this part of Iraq was the local governor.\textsuperscript{34} As usual, the territory was named after its administrative center, and the information that “Nudh-Ardashir which is Hazza” was in Mawsil\textsuperscript{35} is best

\textsuperscript{31} Dillemann, \textit{Haute Mésopotamie orientale}, pp. 103, 112.
\textsuperscript{32} Hewsen, “Armenian Historical Geography,” p. 296.
\textsuperscript{33} Bivar, \textit{Western Asiatic Seals}, pp. 18, 117; Milik, “Natounia,” p. 57. Bivar dates it to the fourth century but Milik regards it as later. This combination seems to have existed by 446 when Sūren is called the vice-dastvar (M.P. dastvar hamdādh) of Hedhayahb and Beth Garme (Braun, \textit{Persischer Märtyrer}, p. 180).
\textsuperscript{34} A. Mingana, \textit{Sources syriaques}, I, 230.
\textsuperscript{35} Tabarl, \textit{Ta’rīkh}, I, 820.
understood as a reference to this territorial subdivision of the province of Mawsil. Ibn Hawqal speaks of Ard Hazza and its *rasātiq*.36

The only subdivisions of Adiabene proper that seem to have existed in the late Sasanian period with any degree of certainty as administrative districts and to have survived into the Islamic period are those of Haditha, Beth B'gash, and Ramin. The subdistricts of Ma'alla and Hiftun on the Greater Zab below Beth B'gash are only known from the time of the conquest onwards.

Nineveh, with fortresses on both sides of the Tigris, appears to have been a local center of some importance at the end of the Sasanian period. When 'Utba ibn Farqad came to Nineveh in 641 the people resisted him, so he took the eastern fortress by force.37 Nineveh appears to have been replaced even as a local administrative center immediately after the conquest with the foundation of Mawsil across the Tigris, and Ibn Hawqal describes it as a *rustāq* of Mawsil.38 Ba'ashiqa, east of the Tigris above Nineveh, and Hannana, west of the Tigris, appear to have been subdistricts of Nineveh at the time of the conquest and became subdistricts of the capital district of Mawsil afterwards.39

Likewise, the subdistricts of Bahudhra (Beth Nuhadhra), on the left bank of the Tigris above Nineveh, Ma'althaya, north of Bahudhra, Margha, northeast of Bahudhra and above the Greater Zab, and Dasin on the right bank of the Greater Zab above Margha all appear to have been subdistricts in the late Sasanian period that survived into the Islamic period.

The district of Garmekan or Bajarma between the Lesser Zab and the Diyala rivers and above the Jabal Hamrin40 had been combined with or subordinated to Adiabene in the late Sasanian period, as we have already seen. It survived with its capital at Kirkuk in the Islamic period as one of the districts of Ard Mawsil. Khanijar, Maha za dh Aliwan, Sinn Barimma (Beth Ramman), Karkh Juddan, and Shahrzur appear to have been the centers of subdistricts in both the Sasanian and Islamic periods.

The district of Tirhan on both sides of the Tigris below Sinn Barimma, with its capital at Takrit, may have already belonged to this

37 Baladhuri, *Futuḥ*, p. 331.
provincial configuration in the late Sasanian period. 'Abdullāh ibn Mu'tamm, who conquered Takrit in 637, was put in charge of the war and kharāj of as much of the province of "Mawsil" as had been occupied up to that time, while 'Arfaja ibn Harthama was put in charge of the kharāj of Takrit. When 'Abdullāh retired to Kufa the following year, he left Muslim ibn 'Abdullah as his lieutenant over "Mawsil."41 The administrative subordination of Takrit to Mawsil is definitely indicated by the fact that when al-Muhallab was governor of Mawsil in 687 he had an 'āmil at Takrit.42

All of these districts of Ard Mawsil continued to be organized together with Iraq immediately after the Islamic conquest because they were occupied by Muslim forces coming from that direction. Their conquest was accomplished in two campaigns. The first was that of 'Abdullāh ibn Mu'tamm, who moved up the Tigris in 637 to cover the left flank of the Muslim vanguard commanded by Hāshim ibn 'Utba, which was pursuing the Persians eastward from Mada'in, and took the town of Takrit. At the same time, forces under Hāshim ibn 'Utba moved through southern Bajarma as far as Khanijar. The following year, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Itban raided up the Tigris to (the province of) Mawsil, crossed over to Balad, and reached Nasibin.43 The second campaign was that of 'Utba ibn Farqad in 641, who raided across Bajarma, took the eastern fortress at Nineveh, crossed the Tigris, took the "opposite fortress" (Syr. Ḥesnā 'Ebhrayā, Ar. Ḥiṣn Akar) on terms which allowed the inhabitants to make peace in return for tribute (jizya). He permitted those wishing to leave to do so,44 founded the town of Mawsil at the site of some Sasanian gardens, and conquered the districts of Marj, ard Bahudhra, Ba'adhra, Hibṭun, Hanaya, Ma'alla, Ramin, the forts of the Kurds, and Ban'atha of Hazza.45 The momentum of this campaign carried 'Utba up the Greater Zab as far as western Azerbayjan, and for a while the kharāj of several districts in Azerbayjan belonged to the province of Mawsil.46

41 Tabari, Ta'rikh, I, 2477, 2481, 2485.
42 Ibid., II, 774.
43 Ibid., I, 2507.
44 Baladhuri, Futūh, pp. 249, 331–33; Scher, "Histoire nestorienne," II(1), 200–201; II(2), 628; Yaqūt, Buldān, II, 346. The earliest occurrence of the name of Mawsil appears to be in the oldest of the minor Syriac chronicles (Guidi, Chronica Minora I, I, 20; II, 23).
45 Baladhuri, Futūh, p. 332.
46 Ibid.
These campaigns essentially created the Muslim province of Ard Mawsil, which may have been preceded by a similar administrative configuration in the late Sasanian period. Although 'Utba is generally regarded as the first real governor of Ard Mawsil, Harthama ibn 'Arfaja al-Bāriqi is also said to have founded Mawsil as a provincial capital (Ar. miṣr) in 641 and settled Arabs there, after which he conquered Haditha.47

Mawsil was really only a military outpost of Kufa immediately after the conquest48 and the detachment of its administration from that of Iraq began in the caliphate of 'Uthmān (644–56) with the appointment of the governor of Mawsil by the caliph instead of by the governor of Kufa. In 654 'Uthmān appointed Ḥakim ibn Salāma al-Ḥizāmī governor there.49 Before the Battle of Siffin, 'Alī appointed Mālik al-Ashtar governor of a wide band of territory that formed his northwestern frontier with Mu‘āwiya: Mawsil, Nasibin, Dara, Sinjar, Amid, Mayyafariqin, Hit, ‘Anat, and neighboring Syrian territory. Mālik’s authority over this region was only potential, however, because he first had to contest Mu‘āwiya’s governor of this territory, ad-Dahḥāk ibn Qays al-Fihri, for it. They clashed between Raqqa and Harran and Mālik was driven back to Mawsil.50 In 671–72 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn 'Abdullāh ibn 'Uthmān ath-Thaqafi was the 'āmil of Mawsil for Mu‘āwiya,51 and the Kufan Muḥammad ibn al-Ash‘ath ibn Qays, who was governor of Mawsil in 685, had been appointed by Ibn az-Zubayr in Madina.52 The revolt of al-Mukhtar temporarily subordinated the province of Mawsil to Kufa again. In 685 al-Mukhtar appointed 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Sa‘id ibn Qays al-Hamdānī as his 'āmil of Mawsil,53 and in 686 made Ibrāhīm ibn Mālik al-Ashtar governor of Mawsil and neighboring regions.

The three-way struggle among the Marwānīs, al-Mukhtar, and Muṣ‘āb ibn az-Zubayr to control upper Mesopotamia during the

47 Ibid.; Yāqūt, Buldān, II, 222–23. This account was transmitted by Ibn al-Kalbī.
48 According to Ya‘qūbī (Ta’rikh, II, 176), Mawsil was a jund (Syr., wing of an army, used in Arabic for a military settlement) in the time of ‘Umar while Kufa and Basra were amsār (Ar., pl. for miṣr).
49 Ta’bārī, Ta’rikh, I, 2928.
50 Dinawarī, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, p. 164.
52 Ta’bārī, Ta’rikh, II, 635.
53 Dinawarī, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, p. 300; Ta’bārī, Ta’rikh, II, 635; Ya‘qūbī, Ta’rikh, II, 308.
second *fitna* resulted in the administrative unification of the Jazira and Ard Mawsil into a single large governorship, together with their extensions along the line of conquest: Armenia and Azerbayjan. After the defeat of ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād at the Khazir in 686, al-Mukhtār made Ibrāhīm ibn Mālik al-Ashtar his *wāli* for Mawsil, Armenia, and Azerbayjan. Ibrāhīm returned to Mawsil, put his brother, ‘Abd ar-Rahmān, in charge of Nasibin and then set about conquering Sinjar, Dara, and adjacent parts of Ard Jazira. He appointed governors over Amid, Mayyafariqin, Kafartutha, Qarqisiya, Harran, Ruha, and Sumaysat.⁵⁴

After the fall of al-Mukhtār in the same year, the Jazira continued to be joined to Mawsil, Armenia, and Azerbayjan in the appointments of Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubayr and in those of ‘Abd al-Malik. Under Muḥammad ibn Marwān the town of Mawsil developed into a real *miṣr*. His *sāhib shurta* (sic) paved it with stones,⁵⁵ and post-reform copper coins began to be struck there.⁵⁶

Based on the evidence so far, it would seem that administrative continuity is most evident at the district level, but that it is difficult to prove in the case of several subdistricts. At the same time, it is impossible to prove that there was no continuity when so little is known about administration at the subdistrict level.

As far as the formation of Ard Mawsil itself is concerned, we are left with conflicting possibilities. If it was really based on a late Sasanian configuration, the location of its pre-Islamic capital remains elusive. On the other hand, it is possible that it was really created by the Islamic conquest and that the impression of its existence in the late Sasanian period is only an anachronous projection of early Islamic conditions into the recent past. Perhaps it is best to think in terms of a process of consolidation extending from the late Sasanian to the early Islamic period. It is also possible at this point to note the emergence of a trend, exemplified by the provinces of Arbayestan and Ard Mawsil, both of which were separated from Iraq during the seventh century. According to this trend late Sasanian administrative divisions

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survived the conquest at the district and sometimes at the subdistrict levels but were significantly altered or reoriented at the provincial level.

ARD JUKHA

The southern border of the province of Mawsil corresponded roughly to the line between the Assyrian highlands and the Babylonian plain. Below this border the alluvial region of lower Mesopotamia was organized as the province of Asoristan under the Sasanians. This was the region and province called Assyria by the Byzantines, Beth Aramaye or Balad an-Nabat by native Christians, and Iraq or the Sawad by the Arabs. The Arabic-writing geographers describe this region as extending in length from Takrit, or the border of the province of Mawsil, to ‘Abbadan and in width from Qadisiyya to Hulwan. It was bounded in the northwest by a line from Anbar to Takrit, on the southeast by the desert of northern Arabia, and on the northeast by the Zagros mountains.57

Although this province was governed by a marzbān as late as the early sixth century,58 its districts were divided between the quarters of the West and South in the reorganization of the sixth century, and new districts were created in this region. It is important to note that there was no administrative unit corresponding to later definitions of the Sawad in the late Sasanian period.

The provinces and districts of the Sasanian quarter of the West below Ard al-Mawsil tended to follow the riverine and canal systems. The province called Ard Jukha by the Arabs, which was irrigated by water drawn from the Tigris river and its tributaries, lay east of that river and extended as far as the border of Iraq along the foothills of the Zagros mountains. According to Yāqūt, the Nahr Jukha and its kūra extended from Khaniqin as far as Khuzistan.59 This had been one of the most fertile provinces of the Sawad before the lower Tigris began to shift away from its southeastern part in the mid-fifth cen-

57 Ibn Rustah, ʿAṭāq, pp. 104–5; Iṣṭakhrī, Masālik, pp. 78–79; Masʿūdī, Tānbīh, p. 36; Qazwīni, Kitāb al-athār al-bilād (Göttingen, 1848), p. 280.
58 Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(1), 154. He was stationed at Radhan. There is also a reference to the finance director or tax collector of Beth Aramaye in the early sixth century (Braun, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 191) and to a radh and a mōbadh of Beth Aramaye in the time of Khusraw Anūshirvān (Braun, Persischer Märtyrer, pp. 200–202; Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, pp. 81, 88).
59 Yāqūt, Buldān, IV, 143.
tury. By the late Sasanian period, the administrative districts belonging to this province were reduced to those in the region of the Diyala river and the Nahrawan canal system. The evidence of seal impressions suggests the existence of a single district called Khusraw Shadh Qubadh in this part of Iraq, which had Ctesiphon as its district capital and which included Jalula’.

The subdivision of this province into districts appears to have begun in the reign of Khusraw Anūshirvān, who created a kūra called Khusrawmah in Jukha consisting of the six tasāṣīf of Tisfun or Mada’in, Jazir, Kalwadha, Nahr Buq, Jalula’, and Nahr al-Malik. With the exception of Jalula’, which became the center of its own district, and Nahr al-Malik between the Tigris and Euphrates, which does not really belong to this configuration of subdistricts, this kūra of Khusrawmah appears to be the core of the kūra of Shadh Hurmuz. The latter was probably created by Hurmizd IV (579–90) and consisted of the seven tasāṣīf of Buzurjsabur, Nahr Buq, Kalwadha and Nahr Bin, Jazir, Madina al-‘Atiqa (Ctesiphon), and Upper and Lower Radhan. The administrative center of this district appears to have been Ctesiphon, the oldest part of the Sasanian metropolis called Mada’in by the Arabs. The old royal residence called the White Palace (Ar. Qasr al-abyad) was at Ctesiphon which was called “the old city” (Ar. al-madīna al-‘Atiqa) by the Arabs. The Shatroiha-i Eranshahr lists Ctesiphon as a provincial capital, and Madina al-‘Atiqa was a mint city for post-reform dirhams. The subdistrict of Buzurjsabur, reputedly established by Shāpūr I, with ‘Ukbarā as its main town, lay on the east

60 Mas’ūdi, Murūj, I, 120; idem, Tanbih, p. 40.
61 Ibn Khurraḍādhbih, Masālik, p. 6; Ya‘qūbī, Ta‘rikh, I, 202. For the association of Jukha with the Diyala region, see Obermeyer, Die Landschaft Babylonien im Zeitalter des Talmuds und des Gaonats (Frankfurt a.M., 1929), pp. 79–81. In the middle Sasanian period, Gokha appears to have been identified with Radhan and was considered part of Beth Garme (Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 259). For the extension of Jukha to the region northeast of Kaskar and Wasit, see S. A. al-‘Ali, “Mintaqat Wāṣīt,” Sumer 27 (1971), 174–77.
62 Dinawari, Akhbar at-ṭiwāl, p. 75.
63 Ibn Khurraḍādhbih, Masālik, p. 6; Ya‘qūbī, Ta‘rikh, I, 202.
65 Markwart, Eranshahr, p. 13.
bank of the Tigris, 46 kilometers north of Baghdad. The caliph 'Alī (656–61) is said to have appointed a Thaqafi as 'āmil to collect the kharāj at 'Ukbara. Radhan was below Buzurjsabur on the east side of the Tigris between the 'Adhaym and Diyala rivers and below the Jabal Hamrin. The Arabic form, Baradan, for this subdistrict is probably derived from the Syriac Beth Radhan. Hale, the main town in Radhan, was the station of the marzbān of Beth Aramaye in the early sixth century. The people of both 'Ukbara and Baradan are said to have made peace with a Muslim raiding party sent by Khālid ibn al-Walid in 633–34, and Upper Radhan is mentioned as being in Ard Jukha in the events of 686. Although the other three subdistricts of Nahr Buq, Kalwadha and Nahr Bin, and Jazir may have existed in the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods, there does not appear to be any testimony to their use as administrative units apart from that given by the later geographers.

Khusraw Anūshirvān is also said to have created the kūra of Bazijan Khusraw along the Nahrawan canal system for the city of Veh Antiokh-i Khosraw, which he founded in the southeastern part of Mada’in for the captives taken from Antioch in Syria, whom he settled in Iraq in 540. It combined the five tasasīj of Upper, Middle, and Lower Nahrawan (including Jarjaraya), Beth Daraye (Badaraya), and Beth Kosaye (Bakusaya). At the time of the Muslim conquest, the people of Veh-Antiokh-i Khosraw, called Rumiyya by the Arabs, agreed to terms of peace with Khālid ibn 'Urfuta which allowed them to leave or to stay. Those who stayed were to give their allegiance and advice, pay the kharāj, and act as guides. Rumiyya survived at least until the middle of the eighth century, but there does not appear to be any information on its administration in the early Islamic period.

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68 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 231.
69 Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 71; Musil, Middle Euphrates, pp. 136–37; Yāqūt, Buldān, I, 553.
70 Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 73; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(1), 154.
71 Balādhurī, Futūḥ, p. 248.
72 Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, II, 932.
73 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, pp. 70–71; Ibn Khurradadhbih, Masālik, pp. 6–7; Prokopios, Wars, II. xiv; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 898, 959–60; Tha‘ālibī, Ghurar, pp. 612–13; Yāqūt, Buldān, IV, 446–47.
74 Balādhurī, Futūḥ, p. 263.
75 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, p. 376.
Although the existence of three subdivisions along the Nahrawan canal cannot be confirmed, the town of Nahrawan itself was an administrative center in the late Sasanian period.

The remainder of this province formed the *kūra* of Shadh Qubadh around the town of Jalula' between the Nahrawan canal system and Hulwan. Although the geographers list up to eight subdistricts,\(^{76}\) all that may be said with reasonable certainty with regard to the Sasanian period is that Jalula', Daskara, and Babil Mahrudh were subdistricts at the time of the Islamic conquest. At the end of the campaign of Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās who conquered this part of Iraq, Jarīr ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Bajalī was left at Jalula’ with a force of four thousand cavalry to prevent the return of the Persians.\(^{77}\) Since Yāqūt also says that Jalula’ was the *qaṣaba* (Ar. capital) of a *kūra* called Khusraw Shadh Hurmuz,\(^{78}\) the post-reform mint of Khusraw Shadh Hurmuz in the *ustān* of Shadh Qubah\(^{79}\) is likely to have been associated with Jalula’. Daskara (Dastagird) had become the royal residence under Khusraw Parvīz, and we hear of a *dīhqān* of Daskara at the time of the conquest in 637.\(^{80}\) At the same time, the *dīhqān* of Babil Mahrudh made peace for this subdistrict with Ḥāshim ibn ‘Utba,\(^{81}\) and we hear of a *dīhqān* of Babil Mahrudh called Mādhrūasb in 695.\(^{82}\)

Although parts of Mada’in had served as local administrative centers for parts of this province, one of the major changes wrought by the Islamic conquest was the transformation of the eastern half of this metropolis from the capital of the Sasanian empire to the provincial capital of Ard Jukha. Although early Muslim governors at Mada’in resided in the White Palace and used the great Sasanian audience hall (*Īwān Kisrā*), they were subordinated to governors at Kufa. The strategic importance of Mada’in in the early Islamic period lay in its control of the hinterland of Kufa and of the main road to the east. It was considered the key to Kufan territory, and the garrison stationed there was responsible for keeping watch over Ard Jukha and Ard Anbar.\(^{83}\) The districts (*kuwar*) of Ard Jukha created in the late Sasanian period do not appear to have survived as distinct administrative units in the


\(^{78}\) Yāqūt, *Buldān*, II, 442.


\(^{80}\) Baladhuri, *Futūh*, p. 265.

\(^{81}\) Tabarī, *Ta’rikh*, I, 2461; Yāqūt, *Buldān*, IV, 700.

\(^{82}\) Tabarī, *Ta’rikh*, II, 916.

\(^{83}\) Ibid., II, 929, 980, 982.
early Islamic period. The sources speak only of the subdistricts of Ard Jukha that did continue to be under native notables (dahāqīn). As the land irrigated by the Tigris, this province also formed a single jurisdiction for finance officials in early appointments by the caliph ‘Umar.

MAH OF KUFA

Immediately to the northeast of Ard Jukha were several districts which lay geographically in Media (the Jabal) and in the late Sasanian Quarter of the North, but which were included in the Quarter of the West in the time of Khusraw Parviz and continued to be associated with the administration of Iraq as a result of the Islamic conquest. The district of Hulwan in particular may have been attached fiscally to the Quarter of the West in the late Sasanian period because of the practice of the last Sasanian monarchs of spending the summer there in the mountains above the Iraqi’ plain. The district of Hulwan was called Shadh Firuz or Khusraw Shadh Firuz, and it seems reasonable to regard the subdistrict called Firuz Qubadh as that of the city of Hulwan itself. According to Mas‘ūdī, the küra of Hulwan/Shadh Firuz was attached to the küra of the Jabal after the shift in the course of the lower Tigris ruined Jukha.

After the conquest, Hulwan became an important frontier post with the commander initially under the authority of the governor at Mada‘in. After Qa‘qā’ ibn ‘Amr took Hulwan, he settled Persian defectors (the Ḥamrā‘) there with their leader, a man named Qubādh from Khurasan, in charge. Under ‘Uthmān (644–56), this position became a direct caliphal appointment and ‘Utayba ibn an-Nahhās, whom he put in charge of Hulwan in 655, was still there when the caliph died in the following year. The strategic importance of Hulwan in this period is indicated by the posting of sizable garrisons there to guard the road to the Jabal.

One of the results of the Islamic conquest was the division of several

84 Ibid., II, 770, 903, 932.
86 Ibn Khurraḍādhbih, Masālik, p. 6; Yaqūt, Buldān, II, 442.
87 Mas‘ūdī, Tawḥīd, p. 40.
88 Tabari, Ta‘rīkh, I, 2473–74.
89 Ibid., I, 2928, 3058.
of the districts in the western Jabal into two groups, one subordinate to Kufa and the other subordinate to Basra. When the pursuit of the retreating Persians was halted in 638, the territory conquered by Sa‘d’s army included the two districts of Masabadhan and Mihrajanqadhaq. Both districts appear to have existed in the late Sasanian period, and after the conquest these districts were attached to the territory governed from Kufa. In 638, when Dirār ibn al-Khaṭṭāb returned to Kufa, he left Ibn al-Hudhayl in charge of Masabadhan as one of the frontier posts of Kufa.⁹⁰ In 643 the frontier district in the western Jabal under the authority of the governor of Kufa was called Mihrajanqadhaq and its land (Ar. ard).⁹¹ After the Battle of Nihawand in the previous year, the districts of Baradhan and Nihawand were also included, forming an enclave in the western Jabal subject to Kufa (Mah of Kufa).⁹² As in the case of Hulwan, the administration of these districts appears to have been detached from Kufa in the caliphate of ‘Uthmān. When he died in 656, Mālik ibn Ḥabīb was governor of Mah (Jabal) and a certain Habish was in charge of Masabadhan.⁹³ The kharāj of Mah of Kufa was still assigned for the support of the Muslims in Kufa under Mu‘āwiya (661–80), who assigned Dinawar, which the Basrans had conquered, to the Kufans and compensated the Basrans by assigning Nihawand to them.⁹⁴ About the same time, Hulwan seems to have become the administrative center for Mah of Kufa. In the events of 677, it was called a kūra between the capital and the border of Rayy.⁹⁵ When al-Mukhtār appointed Sa‘d ibn Ḥudhayfa as governor of Hulwan in 685, he instructed his financial officers (ʿummāl) in the Jabal to turn over the revenue of their districts (kuwar) to Sa‘d.⁹⁶ The geographers knew better than to consider Hulwan as part of Iraq. Ya‘qūbī explains that it was one of the districts of the Jabal, but that its land tax (kharāj) was incorporated into that of the districts of the Sawad.⁹⁷

⁹⁰ Ibid., I, 2478.
⁹¹ Ibid., I, 2637.
⁹² Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 306; Ṭabarî, Taʾrīkh, I, 2632–34, 2647, 2672; II, 941.
⁹³ Ibid., I, 3058. According to Dinawari (Akbār at-tiwal, p. 165), Jarīr ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Bajali was ‘Uthmān’s ‘āmil in 656.
⁹⁴ Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 306.
⁹⁵ Ṭabarî, Taʾrīkh, II, 182.
⁹⁶ Ibid., II, 635. Al-Mukhtār is also said to have appointed Ibn Mālik al-Bakrāwī governor of Hulwan and Masabadhan while he appointed ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Ḥārith governor of Mahayn (Dinawar and Nihawand) and Hamadan (Dinawari, Akbār at- tiwal, p. 300).
⁹⁷ Ya‘qūbī, Les pays, p. 68.
ARD BABIL

West of the Tigris, the province irrigated by the Euphrates and by canals drawn from it was called the land (Syr. ʾethrā, Ar. ard) of Babil and may have been a subdivision of Asoristan before the provincial reorganization by Qubād. Towards the end of the sixth century, this region came under the control of the Lakhmī Arab clients of the Sasanians at Hira, with the result that Ard Babil came to be called the Sawad of Hira. When this province reverted to direct Persian rule after the fall of the Banū Lakhm at the beginning of the seventh century, a marzbān was stationed at Hira, although there is also a reference to a pādhghōspān of Babil in 628. The districts of this province were formed during the Sasanian period by detaching subdistricts belonging to the old Ard Babil and grouping them around three new districts (kuwar) in its northern part. The earliest kūra formed in this way was Veh-Artakhshatr (Beh Ardashir), created for the city of the same name founded by the Sasanian monarch Ardashīr I (226–41) west of the Tigris opposite Ctesiphon. The round, walled city of Veh-Artakhshatr was the western half of the metropolis of Madaʾin. The Sasanian mint marks WH and WYH are now believed to stand for Veh-Artakhshatr; coins with the WYH mint mark have been found there dated as late as year 38 (628) of Khusraw II (590–628). The Arabs called this city Behrasir. Although it does not appear to have been as important an administrative center after the conquest, ʿAlī appointed ʿAdī ibn al-Ḥarīth governor of Behrasir and its ustān. The city became a mint for post-reform dirhams.

101 ʿTabari, Taʿrīkh, I, 819. Ibn Khurraḍādhbihī (Masālik, p. 7) calls it the ustān of Ardashīr Babakan.
104 Ḥamza al-ʾIsfāḥānī, Taʿrīkh sinī mulūk al-ard wa-l-anbiyāʾ (Beirut, 1961), p. 43; Streck, "Madaʾin," in EI(1), III, 75; Yāqūt, Buldān, I, 768.
105 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwal, p. 163.
106 Miles, "Iconography," p. 213.
The district of Veh-Artakhshatr lay along the Nahr Malik and Kutha canals where Ardashîr I is said to have established Behrasir itself, with Rumaqan, Nahr Durqit, Kutha, and Nahr Jawbar as its subdistricts, and appointed tax collectors (ʿummâl) for them.\textsuperscript{107} Rumaqan was probably between the city of Veh-Artakhshatr and Sabat,\textsuperscript{108} but there are no details of its administration in this period. Nor is there information about the administration of Kutha in this period, although the banks of the Nahr Kutha were densely settled and Kutha was an important town in the sixth and early seventh centuries.\textsuperscript{109} There is better evidence for the existence of Nahr Jawbar and Nahr Durqit in the seventh century. After the battle of Kaskar in 634, the Persian Farwandadh came to terms with al-Muthanna ibn Ḥāritha and Abū ‘Ubayd for the subdistrict of Nahr Jawbar in return for collecting four dirhams per person there.\textsuperscript{110} Two dihqāns among those responsible for the kharāj of Nahr Durqit are mentioned in the events of 696.\textsuperscript{111} The subdistrict of Nahr Malik along the canal of the same name actually belongs to this configuration, as is suggested by a seal impression of the mūbadh of Nahr Malik in Veh-Artakhshatr.\textsuperscript{112} After the conquest, the dihqān of Nahr Malik and Kutha, Firûz ibn Yazdagerd, was granted a stipend of one or two thousand dirhams by ʿUmar in 641.\textsuperscript{113}

The evidence suggests that the district of Veh-Artakhshatr was dissolved as an immediate result of the Islamic conquest, although its subdistricts survived as administrative units, in some cases with native notables as officials, and were rejoined to Ard Babil. When ʿAli sent Yazîd ibn Abî Zayd al-Anšârî from Madina to administer the Euphrates subdistricts in 656, his jurisdiction was defined as Bihqubadhat plus the rasāṭiq of Nahr Malik, Kutha, Behrasir, Rumakan, Nahr Jawbar, and Nahr Durkit.\textsuperscript{114} It was only after ʿAli came to Kufa that the ustān of Behrasir was reconstituted as a separate administrative jurisdiction.

The second district created out of the territory of Ard Babil was formed around the city of Firuz Shapur, which was founded as a

\textsuperscript{107} Tabârî, Taʾrîkh, I, 819; Ibn Khurraḍâdhbih (p. 7) gives the same list of subdistricts.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., p. 438; M. Gibson, The City and Area of Kish (Miami, 1972), pp. 52, 57.
\textsuperscript{110} Tabârî, Taʾrîkh, I, 2170.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., II, 941.
\textsuperscript{112} Bivar, Western Asiatic Seals, p. 39.
\textsuperscript{113} Balâḏhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 265, 457–58; Yaʿqūbî, Taʾrîkh, II, 176.
\textsuperscript{114} Balâḏhuri, Futūḥ, p. 271.
military outpost at the Euphrates end of the Byzantine border by Shāpūr I (241–72) in the third century. The Arabs called Firuz Shapur Anbar (“the granary”) because of the storehouses there containing wheat, barley, fodder, and straw, used by the Sasanian monarchs to provision their supporters.\footnote{Yaqūt, \textit{Buldān}, I, 368.}

In the early sixth century, Qubād I created an \textit{ustān} called Shadh Qubadh along the course of the Euphrates between the Byzantine border and Anbar and along the Nahr Rufayl and Sarat canals. It consisted of the four subdistricts of Shadh Firuz or Firuz Shapur (containing Anbar, Hit, and 'Anat), Baduraya, Maskin, and Qatrabbul.\footnote{Dinawari, \textit{Akhbār at-tiwāl}, p. 68; Ibn Khurradādhibh, \textit{Masālik}, p. 7; Yaqūt, \textit{Buldān}, III, 227, 592.} There is no way of knowing if this configuration survived during the Lakhmī ascendency in the later sixth century when 'Amr ibn al-Mundhir administered the territory along the Euphrates from the town of Baqqa on the Euphrates between Hit and Anbar,\footnote{Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, \textit{Kitāb al-aghānī} (Bulaq, 1285/1868–69), VIII, 70.} although the friends and protégés of an-Nu‘mān ibn al-Mundhir (d. ca. 602) got their provisions from the Persian granaries at Anbar.\footnote{Baladhuri, \textit{Futūh}, p. 246} After the fall of the Banū Lakhm, Anbar reverted to direct Persian rule and had a \textit{marzbān} called Pusfarrūkh at the time of the conquest.\footnote{Dinawari, \textit{Akhbār at-tiwāl}, p. 122.}

The Arabs called the territory of Anbar the Upper Ustan (M.P./Ar. \textit{ustān al-‘ālī}). In the early Islamic period it tended to retain its nature as a military outpost on the border between Iraq and Syria. Either Mu‘āwiyah or Yazid I detached the towns of Hit and ‘Anat from the jurisdiction of Anbar and attached them to the Jazira,\footnote{Ibid., p. 68; Yaqūt, \textit{Buldān}, III, 929.} and it was this truncated Upper Ustan that Muṣ‘ab ibn az-Zubayr sent Abū Bakr ibn Mikhnaf to govern in 687.\footnote{Baladhurī, \textit{Futūh}, p. 333.} Under al-Ḥajjāj, Ibn ar-Rufayl was governor of Anbar,\footnote{Walker, \textit{Arab-Sassanian Coins}, pp. cxl–cxl.} and the Upper Ustan became a mint for post-reform \textit{dirhams}.\footnote{Ibn Rustah, \textit{Aʿlāq}, p. 104; Mas‘ūdī, \textit{Tanbih}, p. 38; Ṭabarī, \textit{Taʾrikh}, II, 916, 1099.}

The remaining subdistricts lay along the Nahr Rufayl or Dujayl and Sarat canals between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Maskin was on the Dujayl just west of the Tigris opposite ‘Ukbara below the border with Ard Mawsil.\footnote{Ibn Rustah, \textit{Aʿlāq}, p. 104; Mas‘ūdī, \textit{Tanbih}, p. 38; Ṭabarī, \textit{Taʾrikh}, II, 916, 1099.} Qatrabbul seems to have been on the middle
course of the Dujayl, southeast of Maskin and west of the Sarat branch.\textsuperscript{125} There is no information about the administration of either Maskin or Qatrabbul in the seventh century. The subdistrict of Baduraya was the territory irrigated by the eastern end of the Sarat canal from Mu­hawwal to the Tigris at Baghdad.\textsuperscript{126} Its center was probably the fort­ified town of Mahoza dh\textsuperscript{e} Badarun, with its nearby market at the village of Baghdad on the west bank of the Tigris.\textsuperscript{127} The denial by Sayf ibn Hâni in 687 that he had been given the \textit{kharaj} of Baduraya in return for his support of Muş'ab ibn az-Zubayr would indicate that Baduraya existed as an administrative jurisdiction by at least the time of the second \textit{fitna}.\textsuperscript{128}

The third district formed out of Ard Babil lay along the Zab canal system (Zawabi) parallel to the Tigris. It was included in the land irrigated by the Euphrates, although in the Sasanian period the lower part of this system appears to have been partly fed from the Tigris.\textsuperscript{129} This district seems to have been in existence by the fifth century when a certain Yazdgushnasps is called the \textit{pādhghōsbān} of Zawabi.\textsuperscript{130} Although Ibn Khurradadhbih lists three subdistricts of Upper, Middle, and Lower Zab, only two can be confirmed: the Upper Zab with its administrative center at the town of Nu’maniyya, founded by an-Nu’mān ibn al-Mundhir during the Lakhmī ascendancy in the late sixth century, and the Lower Zab (or Nahr Sabus) with its main town called Nahr Sabus located where it flowed into the Tigris.\textsuperscript{131}

Zawabi survived the conquest as an administrative district because the people there came to terms with the conquerors. After the Battle of Kaskar, Abū 'Ubayd and al-Muthannā ibn Ḥāritha gave the same terms of a tribute of four \textit{dirhams} per person to Zawabi that they had given to Nahr Jawbar.\textsuperscript{132} Peace terms were renewed following the Battle of Qadisiyya by the \textit{dihqān} of Zawabi with 'Urwa ibn Zayd


\textsuperscript{126} Yāqūt, \textit{Buldān}, III, 378; IV, 133.


\textsuperscript{128} Ţabari, \textit{Ta’rīkh}, II, 772.

\textsuperscript{129} Gibson, \textit{Kish}, p. 64; Ibn Khurradadhbih, \textit{Masālik}, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{130} Dinawari, \textit{Akhbār at-tiwāl}, p. 57.


\textsuperscript{132} Ţabari, \textit{Ta’rīkh}, I, 2170.
al-Khayl at-Tā‘ī. When ‘Ali was at Kufa, he appointed Sa‘īd ibn Mas‘ūd ath-Thaqafi governor of the ustān of Zawabi.134

The remainder of Ard Babil was organized as the district of Veh-Kavat by Qubād I in the early sixth century along the Babylon branch of the Euphrates, which was the main branch in the late Sasanian period, and its branch canals and extensions. This district is attested on late Sasanian seals as Veh-Kavat,135 and is probably the district of Kavat which the Armenian Geography describes as recently created by the Persians between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.136 The division of this district into Upper, Middle, and Lower Bihqubadh appears to have occurred in the early Islamic period, but there is considerable confusion among the Arabic geographers about the way its subdistricts were grouped. The entire group of subdistricts is often merely called Bihqubadhat, and this designation became equivalent to Ard Babil in the seventh century. ‘Ali appointed Qurt ibn Ka‘b governor of Bihqubadhat and Abū Yūsuf refers to ‘Ali’s tax collectors in these districts.137

Veh-Kavat/Bihqubadh lay below Veh-Artakhshatr and began where the Euphrates divided into two branches six farāsikh (N.P., ca. 36 km.) below the offtake of the Nahr Kutha. The main branch of the Euphrates still went past Sura, Babil, and Nippur in the late Sasanian period. In the early Islamic period, when the main stream of the Euphrates had shifted to the western branch that went by Kufa, the first stretch of the former main branch was called the Upper Nahr Sura. With its branch canals it irrigated the subdistricts of Sura, Barbisama, and Barusma.138 Although Sura was a major town, there do not appear to be any direct references to its administration in the late Sasanian

133 Baladhuri, Futūb, p. 251.
134 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwiil, p. 163.
136 Hewsen, “Armenian Historical Geography,” p. 289; Marquart, Ėrānšahr, pp. 142, 162.
137 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, pp. 172, 182; Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwiil, p. 163. There is no convincing evidence that Bihqubadhat was ever a mint designation in either the late Sasanian or early Islamic periods. See Gaube, Arabosasanidische Numismatik, p. 89.
period or at the time of the conquest. However, in 696, there is a reference to an 'āmil of Sura for al-Ḥajjāj in charge of collecting the kharāj whose treasury (Ar. dār al-kharāj) and tax collectors were located at Samarraja. The subdistricts of Baniqya and Barusma appear to have been more important at the time of the conquest, when they were both controlled by the local notable, Ṣalūbā, or by his son Buṣbuhrā. These subdistricts seem to have been west of Sura in the region between the two branches of the Euphrates. Buṣbuhrā ibn Ṣalūbā arranged peace terms for Baniqya and Barusma in 633 with Khālid or with Jarīr ibn 'Abdullāh, whom Khālid put in charge of Baniqya and Bisma. The following year Abū 'Ubayd made a local notable called Farrūkh responsible for the tribute of Barusma.

Downstream from these subdistricts, the stretch of the Euphrates called the Lower Nahr Sura in the Islamic period irrigated the subdistricts of Babil, Khutarniyya, Upper and Lower Falluja, and Nahrayn. Babil appears to have been an administrative center of some importance in the late Sasanian period. Dinawārī calls Sābūr ar-Rāzī, who was ispahbadh of the Sawad in the reign of Qubādī, the 'āmil of Babil and Khutarniyya. Later, in the reign of Khusraw Parviz, Mardānshāh is called the marzbān of Babil and Khutarniyya. There is also a seal impression of the mōbadh of Babil in Veh-Kavat. Bisṭām, the dihqān of Burs, who tied the floating bridges for Zuhra ibn al-Ḥawiyya and who received Khālid ibn 'Urfūtā hospitably when the latter was pursuing the Persians after the Battle of Qadisiyya, is probably the Bisṭām ibn Narsī who, as dihqān of Babil and Khutarniyya, was granted a stipend of one or two thousand dirhams by 'Umar I. In 697 al-Jarrāḥ ibn 'Abdullāh al-Hakmī was at Babil and al-Fallujatayn under al-Ḥajjāj.

139 Ṣtabārī, Ta'rikh, II, 955.
141 Musil, Middle Euphrates, p. 275; Streck, Landschaft Babyloniens, p. 30; Suhrbā, 'Ajā'ib al-aqālim, p. 125. Yaqūt (Buldān, II, 453) calls Khutarniyya a nābiyya of Babil.
145 Balādhūrī, Futūḥ, pp. 259, 265, 457; Ṣtabārī, Ta'rikh, I, 2421; Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh, II, 176. The canal that went by Burs at the time of the conquest was called the Nahr Bistam (Balādhūrī, Futūḥ, p. 259).
146 Balādhūrī, Ansāb al-asbāf, MS Sûleymaniye Kütüphanesi (no. 598), fol. 50b. However, this text does not actually say that al-Jarrāḥ was governor or that al-Ḥajjāj had appointed him.
Upper and Lower Falluja appear to have been along the ancient Pallacotas canal west of the Lower Nahr Sura and not far from Ba-niqa. Buṣbuhrā ibn Ṣalūbā was diḥqān of these subdistricts at the time of the conquest, when Khālid ibn al-Walīd appointed ʿAbdullāh ibn Wathima an-Naṣīrī to collect the tribute (jizya) in Upper Falluja. After the conquest, Jamīl ibn Buṣbuhrā was diḥqan of Falalij and Nahrayn. In 687 Ṭīr-Gushnasp, the diḥqān of Narsi, fled to Ḍayn Tamr with the money of Falluja. Al-Ḥajjāj appointed ʿUbaydullāh ibn Abī l-Mukhāriq governor of Upper Falluja or of the two Fallujas, and Jamīl ibn Buṣbuhrā is supposed to have given him advice. The subdistrict of Nahrayn belongs to this group along the Lower Nahr Sura and was probably the territory between two closely parallel canals. At the time of the conquest, Khālid put Bashīr ibn al-Khaṣṣaṣiyya in charge of Nahrayn. Bashīr took up his residence at a place called Kuwayfa in Banbura near Babil. Although the geographers include Nahrayn among the subdistricts of the Sawad, there does not seem to be any information on its administration after the conquest.

Although the remaining subdistricts of Veh-Kavat were in the region southeast of the Lower Nahr Sura, their exact locations are still unknown and it is impossible to identify the courses of the canals associated with them or to relate them to a single hydrographic system. This region may have originally been the downstream extension of the Babylon branch of the Euphrates and its canals before they ran into the marshes.

At the time of the conquest the subdistricts of this region, later called Lower Bihqubadh, appear to have been Furat Sirya, Hurmuzjird, Rudhmistan, and Nistar. Furat Sirya was east of Falalij and west of Hurmuzjird. Its diḥqān, Zādh ibn Buhaysh, who was called the lord (Ar. ʿāhib) of Furat Sirya, made peace with Khālid in 633 in return for tribute but led the Persian infantry at the Battle of Qadisiyya.

147 Balādhūrī, Futūḥ, p. 245; Musil, Middle Euphrates, pp. 276, 279; Suhrāb, ʿAjāʾib al-aqiṣām, pp. 124–25; Yaʿqūbī, Les pays (Cairo, 1937), p. 140.
148 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2051–52; Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 176.
149 Balādhūrī, Futūḥ, p. 457.
150 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, II, 773. The Nahr Nars, which branched off from the Lower Nahr Sura at Naresh (modern Hilla), was probably an administrative subdistrict in this period (Berliner, Geographie, p. 54; Musil, Middle Euphrates, p. 275; Obermeyer, Landschaft Babylonien, pp. 306–10; Suhrāb, ʿAjāʾib al-aqiṣām, p. 125).
152 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2052; Yaʿqūt, Buldān, I, 482.
153 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2050, 2258.
Hurmuzjird was east of Furat Sirya and between Zandaward, in the territory of Kaskar, and Ullays on the Euphrates. The people of Hurmuzjird are also said to have made peace with Khālid. Rudhmistan appears to have been near Hurmuzjird. Khālid is said to have sent Uṭṭa ibn Abī Uṭṭa to collect the tribute of Rudhmistan, where he resided near a canal called the Nahr Uṭṭa, named after him. Nistar may have been north of Furat Sirya, along the stretch of the Nahr Sura called the Great Sarat canal, below the Bridge of Qamighan. Khālid is said to have appointed Suwayd ibn Muqarrin al-Muzani over Nistar. Suwayd resided at al-'Aqr, which was called 'Aqr Suwayd after him. The tentative identification of 'Aqr Suwayd with 'Aqr Babil would place Nistar on the Great Sarat canal.

There is little evidence that this configuration of subdistricts survived for long after the conquest. Nor did Furat Sirya survive as an administrative jurisdiction. Although Hurmuzjird, Rudhmistan, and Nistar continued to be listed by the geographers as subdistricts of Lower Bihqubadh, there appears to be no evidence that they actually served as such in the form of appointments or the presence of officials after the conquest. The subdistricts of Saylahin along the Nahr Saylahun below Hira and of Furat Badaqla along the canal of the same name between Hira and Ullays are also included in lists of the subdistricts of Lower Bihqubadh, but it seems best to regard them as belonging to the immediate territory of Hira. Although Yāqūt includes Hira and Kufa among the subdistricts of Lower Bihqubadh, Hira does not seem to have been part of Veh-Kavat in the late Sasanian period. It was the center of a frontier district on the south-west border of Iraq. The inclusion of Kufa, Hira, Saylahin, and Furat Badaqla among the subdistricts of Lower Bihqubadh may reflect later conditions, when the lower end of Bihqubadh appears to have been rotated to the

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156 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2052; Yāqūt, Buldān, IV, 780.
157 Altheim and Stiehl, Asiatischer Staat, p. 150; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 1043. The Persian princes were confined at 'Aqr Babil in the early seventh century.
158 Ibn Khurradadhbih, Masālik, p. 8; Yāqūt, Buldān, I, 770. However, it is strange that Ibn Khurradadhbih would record the amount of taxes due from these subdistricts if they had not been functioning at some time.
160 Yāqūt, Buldān, I, 770.
west because of the increased importance of the region around Kufa and the shift of the main course of the Euphrates to that channel.

Sometime after the caliphate of 'Ali, Bihqubadhat was divided into the three districts (kuwar) of Upper, Middle, and Lower Bihqubadh. The earliest evidence for this division is provided in 685, when al-Mukhtār appointed Qudāma ibn Abī 'Isā to Upper Bihqubadh, Ka'b ibn Qarāza to Middle Bihqubadh, and Ḥābīb ibn Munqīdh ath-Thawrī to Lower Bihqubadh. 161

HIRA

The reduced territory of Ard Babil or Bihqubadhat was also called the Sawad of Hira. In the account of Khalīd’s settlement following his raid in Iraq, Baniqya, Basma, Nahrayn, and Rudhmistan are described as being in the Sawad of Hira. 162 Such usage was the result of Lakhmī control in the late sixth century, when the territory under an-Nuʿmān ibn al-Mundhir reached from Anbar to Bahrayn and across the Sawad to Nuʿmaniyya near the Tigris. But this was at the height of Lakhmī power. Normally the territory of the Lakhmī kingdom consisted of the region west of the middle Euphrates from Hira to Anbar, Baqqa, and Hit and including 'Ayn Tamr and Qutqutana on the edge of the desert. 163 After the execution of an-Nuʿmān ibn al-Mundhir, the last of the Banū Lakhm, by Khusraw Parvīz in about 602, the general Hurmüzān was sent to Hira but was defeated by the Banū Shaybān at Dhu Qar in about 604. Afterwards, the desert border was restored by Rūzbī ibn Marzūq, the marzbān of Hira. 164

For the rest of the Sasanian period, Hira was the administrative center of a frontier district. For seven or nine years, Hira was governed for Khusraw Parvīz by Iyās ibn Qabīṣa at-Ṭāʿī along with a finance official called Nakhrīrān. 165 At the time of Khalīd’s attack, Āzdāhbīh ibn Bāniyān ibn Mihrbundād had been marzbān of Hira for

161 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, II, 635. This text does not specify how the subdistricts were distributed among these divisions.
162 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2057.
163 Ḥamza, Taʾrīkh, p. 84; Yāqūt, Buldān, II, 379. Ḥamza says Raqqa instead of Baqqa.
165 Balāḏūrī, Futūḥ, p. 243; Ḥamza, Taʾrīkh, p. 96; Masʿudī, Murūj, II, 229; Rothstein, Lakhmiden, p. 123; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 1029, 1038, 2017; Yāqūt, Buldān, IV, 770.
seventeen years and his jurisdiction included the frontier posts and their Persian cavalry.\textsuperscript{166} Al-Ḥira remained an administrative center under the Muslims until the foundation of Kufa three miles away in 638.

It is possible to identify some of the administrative subdivisions of the territory of Hira. The \textit{rustāq} or \textit{ṭassūj} of Saylahin along the Nahr Saylahun south of Hira was granted to an-Nuʿmān ibn al-Mundhir for his support by Khusraw Parvīz and was the location of one of the Persian frontier posts (Ar. \textit{masāliḥ}). As we have seen, it was later considered to be one of the subdistricts of Lower Bihqubad.\textsuperscript{167} Sinnin, nearby, on its own canal, was the location of a Lakhmī residence, and at the time of the conquest the lord (Ar. \textit{sāhib}) of Sinnin was a member of the highest Persian aristocracy. Sinnin does not appear to have served as an administrative jurisdiction after the conquest, but the caliph ʿUthmān purchased a farm there from Ṭalḥa ibn ʿUbaydullāh.\textsuperscript{168} Furat Badaqla also belonged to this group of subdistricts near Hira. The city or fortress called Amghishiya, located where the Furat Badaqla canal reentered the Hira branch of the Euphrates, was a major defensive center in the late Sasanian period and either belonged to this configuration of subdistricts south of Hira or was at the southern end of Veh-Kavat. The town of Ullays was one of its frontier posts and the Persian general, Jābān, whom Khalīd defeated there, was called the \textit{sāhib} of Ullays. Afterwards, Khalīd destroyed Amghishiya and made peace with the people of Ullays.\textsuperscript{169}

In the late Sasanian period, the desert border south and west of Hira was protected by a highly developed system of watchtowers and garrison posts (Ar. \textit{masāliḥ}) served by one or more canal systems, which provided water and served as a barrier. What was probably a series of canal systems and oases is presented in the sources as a single moat-canal called the \textit{khandaq} (M.P.) created by Shāpūr II (309–79) and restored by Khusraw Anūshirvān (531–79). It stretched along the


\textsuperscript{168} Ṭabarī, \textit{Taʾrīkh}, I, 2232–33; Yāqūt, \textit{Buldān}, III, 430.

edge of the desert from the Euphrates near Hit, through the region of oases called Taff to the sea near the later site of Basra. This line was fortified with watchtowers and barracks for garrisons to prevent bedouin attacks on the cultivated land of Iraq and was regarded as the effective boundary between Iraq and the Najd. The remains of these fortifications may still be seen at sites such as Dab', southwest of Ukhaydir, Qasr Ruda at Wadi Burdan, and building A at Qusayr South, sixty kilometers southwest of Nasiriya, while a Sasanian watchtower called al-Qa'im survives on the Euphrates below Salhiyya. The line of oases called the 'Uyun of Taff is especially associated with the northwestern end of the khandaq. They included 'Ayn Sayd, Qutqutana, Ruhayma and 'Ayn Jamal, where the land was assigned for the use of the Arabs and Persians who defended the border. After the battle of Dhu Qar, Arabs took over part of the 'Uyun of Taff while the Persians kept the rest. The foundation of Qadisiyya just inside the khandaq by Khusraw Parvîz was part of the reestablishment of this frontier in the early seventh century. By the time of the Muslim conquest, the estates in the 'Uyun of Taff were held by members of the highest Persian aristocracy, the fortress of Qasr Muqatil, west of Qutqutana, was held for the Persians by a garrison under an-Nu'mân ibn Qabişha at-Tâ'i, and the oasis of 'Udhayb beyond the khandaq was garrisoned as a Persian border post.

There was little reason for the Muslims to maintain elaborate defenses against a desert they controlled. Thus after the conquest this line of Persian fortifications was either abandoned or put to other uses. Some of the fortresses may have survived as way-stations along the desert road between Basra and Kufa or became centers for farming in

172 Balâdhuri, Futûh, pp. 297–98; Yâqût, Buldân, III, 539–40, 549.
174 Tabârî, Ta’rikh, I, 2247.
175 Al-'Ali, “Mintaqat al-Kûfa,” pp. 246–47; Tabârî, Ta'rikh, I, 2350. For the identification of Qasr Muqatil with Ukhaydir or Tulul al-Ukhaydir, see Finster and Schmidt, Ruinen, pp. 149–50.
176 Al-'Ali, “Mintaqat al-Ḥira,” p. 20; Musil, Middle Euphrates, p. 111; Tabârî, Ta'rikh, I, 2231.
their oases. The conquest had the immediate effect of shifting the important defensive frontier of Iraq from the southwest against the Arabs in the desert to the northeast against the Persians on the plateau, and this tended to remain the case even after the conquest of Iran.

'Ayn Tamr belonged to the frontier district of Hira in the late Sasanian period and was the largest and most important of the oases at the northwest end of the line of Persian defenses. At the time of the conquest, the Persian garrison at 'Ayn Tamr was commanded by Mihrān, the son of Bahram Chūbīn, and, after defeating him, Khālid left 'Uwaym ibn al-Kāhl al-Aslamī as his lieutenant there. 'Ayn Tamr preserved its military character as a frontier post in the early Islamic period because of its location on the side of Iraq facing Syria. During the first and second fitnas, 'Ayn Tamr was garrisoned as an important defensive point against Syrian attack.

Kufa more than replaced Hira as a local administrative center because the territory administered by the Muslim governors of Kufa combined several former Sasanian provinces. The territory immediately under the authority of the Muslim governors at Kufa combined the region irrigated by the Euphrates with the frontier district of Hira. There were usually subordinate military governors with garrisons at Anbar and 'Ayn Tamr. Beginning in the caliphate of 'Umar I, the region irrigated by the Euphrates served as a single jurisdiction for tax collectors.

Beyond the Tigris, the territory of Ard Jukha was administered by officers appointed by the governor of Kufa, with their post and garrison at Mada’in. Hulwan and Mah of Kufa were under other subordinate officers, and, in 638, when the Muslim army settled at Kufa, its frontier posts were at Hulwan, Masabadhan, Qarqisiyya, and Mawsil. After the conquest of the Jazira was completed, the territory of Kufa only went as far as 'Anat on the middle Euphrates, and from the time of 'Uthmān the appointment of a governor for Mawsil tended to be made by the caliph. Consequently, the Sawad of Kufa came to be defined as the region extending from Kaskar to the Zab and from Hulwan to Qadisiyya. An indication of how the subordinate divi-

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177 Ibn Khurradādhbih, (Masālik, p. 8) and Yāqūt (Buldān, I, 770) put 'Ayn Tamr in the kūra of Upper Bihqubadh.
178 Balādhurī, Futūḥ, p. 246; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2062–63.
179 For events at 'Ayn Tamr, see al-'Ali, “Miṣṭaqat al-Kūfa,” pp. 242–44.
180 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2065.
181 Ibid., I, 2497.
182 Ibn Qutayba, al-Maʿārif, p. 566.
sions of Ard Kufa were defined in the early Islamic period is provided by the description given by 'Ammār ibn Yāsir to the caliph 'Umar I in 643 about the territory under his authority as the amīr of Kufa. He defined the region he ruled as consisting of Hira and its land (ard), Babil and its land (ard), Mada'in and its surroundings (Ar. mā ḥaw-lahā), and Miḥrajanqadhaq and its land (ard). As a practical matter, Ard Kufa was originally simply the region carved out by the conquests of the army of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās, which, in their main thrust, followed the arterial road from Hira to Mada'in to Hulwan.

**ARD KASKAR**

The territory along the lower Tigris below Fam Silh was, in the largest sense, the region of Mesene (Maysan) which had formed the kingdom of Characene in the late Parthian period. Although Maysan survived as an administrative jurisdiction under the Sasanians, the district of Kaskar was carved out of it, possibly as a crown district. Shāpūr I is credited with founding a city called Shadh Sabur in Maysan, and the kūra of Shadh Sabur is also identified as the district of Kaskar. The existence of Kaskar as an administrative jurisdiction in the middle Sasanian period is indicated by a reference to an ṭūstāndār of Kaskar in the Babylonian Talmud.

The expansion of the district of Kaskar into an important province in the quarter of the West in the late Sasanian period reflected significant changes in the hydrography of the lower Tigris and in the local irrigation system. Until the fifth century, the main course of the lower Tigris is said to have gone through Jukha from Fam Silh to Bahandaf, Badaraya, Bakusaya, Famīyya Iraq, Badhibin, Darbarib, Qarqub, Tib, Shaburzan, Darmakan, Nahr Jur, and 'Abdasi to Madhar. Beginning with floods in the time of Bahram V (420–38) the main course of the Tigris below Kut Amara began to shift to a channel that went by Kaskar without entirely abandoning its former course.

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183 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2677.
185 Ḥamza, *Taʿrīkh*, p. 45; Thaʿalibī, *Ghurar*, p. 494; Ṭabarī, *Taʿrīkh*, I, 830. The Nabāṭī name of Shadh Sabur is said to have been either Dima or Wabha.
187 *Babylonian Talmud*, B. Gittin 80b.
mediate effects were disastrous flooding below Kaskar and the spread of swamps. Flooding occurred again in the time of Qubadh I (488–96, 499–531). Masūdi claims that the cumulative result of the change in the course of the lower Tigris was to reduce the number of kuwar in the Sawad from twelve to ten and the number of tasāṣīj from sixty to forty-eight. The long-term effects were a decline in importance of the region along the former course of the lower Tigris and the use of the redirected water for extensive irrigation and agricultural development (especially the spread of rice cultivation) around Kaskar in the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods.

The work of reclamation and development was begun under Khusrav Anūshirvān, one of whose sons restored some of the flooded land to cultivation when he was governor of Kaskar. According to Dinawari, Kaskar was a small kūra when Khusrav Anūshirvān enlarged it by adding territory to it from the kuwar of Behrasir, Hurmizd Khurrah, and Maysan and divided it into the tasāṣūj of Jundisabur and the tasāṣūj of Zandaward. The formation of the enlarged province of Kaskar is also reflected in the Armenian Geography, which describes Kaskar as a province recently created by the Persians between the Tigris and the Euphrates.

Although Yaqūt’s description of the kūra of Kaskar as extending from the east side of the lower Nahrawan canal to the mouth of the Tigris estuary and including the subdistricts of Madhar, Maysan, and Dast-i Maysan makes it equivalent to the old Maysan, the late Sasanian province of Kaskar appears to have occupied only the northwestern half of that region. Kaskar was effectively bounded to the south by the swamps but appears to have extended west halfway across the Sawad to the province of Veh-Kavat.

The significance of the westward extension of Kaskar to include the region bounded more or less by Warka, Niffar, and Zawabi in the

190 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 291.
191 Masūdi, Tanbih, p. 40.
192 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 291.
193 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl, p. 75. Since Jundisabur is obviously out of place here, al-'Ali (“Minṭaqaṭ Wāṣīṭ,” pp. 153–54) has suggested that it ought to be Khusrav Sabur, which is said to have been the name of the kūra of Kaskar before al-Ḥajjāj built Wasit. Although Yaqūt (Buldān, II, 442) identifies Khusrav Sabur as a village five farāṣīkū from Wasit, it seems more likely that Khusrav Sabur was the new name of the enlarged province and that the tasāṣūj called Ustan (Ibn Khurradādhbih, Masālik, p. 7) was probably the subdistrict around Kaskar itself.
195 Yaqūt, Buldān, IV, 274–75.
late Sasanian period lies in the fact that this region was occupied by the lower end of a massive irrigation system developed in this period, with water drawn from the Babylon branch of the Euphrates. Zandaward, which lay somewhere between Kaskar and Hurmuzjird in Veh-Kavat and was a place of some importance at the time of the conquest, was probably the administrative center for this region. There are a number of impressive, fortified Sasanian sites here, such as Tell adh-Dhiba‘i, Tell Hammam, Jidr, and Ruqba Meda‘in, which are possible locations for Zandaward and indicate the existence of other administrative and military centers there.

Thus, the expanded, late Sasanian province of Kaskar combined two, essentially new, hydrographic systems: the great trunk canal drawn from the Euphrates in its western part and the lower course of the rerouted Tigris in its eastern part. Intersecting branch canals fanned out over this region from both systems. This region appears to have been developed in the interest of the Sasanian royal family as a crown province. At the time of the conquest, Kaskar had been granted as a qaṣī‘a (Ar.) to a nephew of Khusraw Parviz called Narsî. Although the great Tigris flood in 628, which inundated the ṭasṣūj of Tharthur below Kaskar, must have reduced the income from this province, Narsî was active in the defense of Kaskar and Zandaward during the conquest.

The integrity of the province of Kaskar survived the Islamic conquest. After the battle of Kaskar in 634, Abü ‘Ubayd and al-Muthannâ ibn Ḥāritha made a settlement in Kaskar at the rate of four dirhams per person. Once the victories at Qadisiyya, Mada‘in, and Jalula’ secured central Iraq for the Muslims, Sa‘d ibn Abî Waqqāṣ appointed an-Nu‘mān ibn Muqarrin to collect taxes (kharāj) in Kaskar, where he remained until 642. ‘Alî appointed Qudāma ibn ‘Ajîl governor

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196 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 242; Ṭabarî, Ta‘rîkh, I, 2166, 2170; Yâqût, Buldân, II, 951–52. Both Ibn Khurradâdhbih (Masâlik, p. 7) and Yâqût (Buldân, III, 227) include Zandaward among the subdistricts of Shadî Sabur.


199 Ṭabarî, Ta‘rîkh, I, 2170.

200 Ibid., I, 2596. See also Dinawârî, Akhbâr at-ṭiwa‘l, p. 143. Other accounts say an-Nu‘mân was appointed by the caliph ‘Umar (Abû Yûsûf, Kharāj, p. 50; Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 303; Ibn Sa‘d, Taḥaqât, VI, 11), and Ibn Sa‘d calls him an-Nu‘mân ibn ‘Amr ibn Muqarrin. This is the same period in which an-Nu‘mân is supposed to have been collecting taxes in the region irrigated by the Tigris.
of Kaskar.\textsuperscript{201} In 687 an ʿāmil and treasury (Ar. bayt māl) were at Kaskar,\textsuperscript{202} and the city became a mint for post-reform dirhams.\textsuperscript{203}

Several important changes in the province of Kaskar under al-Ḥajjāj were associated with the foundation of Wasit across the Tigris from the city of Kaskar in about 702. Al-Ḥajjāj is said to have taken the doors or gates (Ar. abwāb) from Zandaward and several other places for the citadel and congregational masjid of Wasit.\textsuperscript{204} Because of this, Zandaward is said to have been ruined by the creation of Wasit.\textsuperscript{205} However, the decline of Zandaward and of the region served by the late Sasanian canal system between Babil and Kaskar is likely to have been related to al-Ḥajjāj’s refusal to repair the breaches in the canals because he suspected that the local dāhāqīn had supported the rebellion of Ibn al-Ash’āth.\textsuperscript{206} It is also likely to be related to the digging of the Nil canal by al-Ḥajjāj, which reoriented what was left of the older irrigation system northwards towards the Tigris.\textsuperscript{207}

Although the district of Wasit was roughly equivalent to that of Kaskar as a local administrative division,\textsuperscript{208} the city of Wasit also served as the administrative capital for the territory of Kufa and Basra, which were combined to form the province of Iraq under the Marwānīs from the time of that city’s foundation by al-Ḥajjāj. Wasit was a mint city for both post-reform dirhams and bronze coins.\textsuperscript{209} In addition, since the dependencies of both Kufa and Basra in Iran and Arabia were included in the territory under the authority of al-Ḥajjāj, Wasit was actually the administrative capital of the eastern half of the Islamic empire in the early eighth century. After the foundation of Baghdad as the imperial capital by the ʿAbbāsīs, Wasit reverted to the position of local administrative center, as Kaskar had been.

There is very little to say about the subdistricts of Kaskar/Wasit. Apart from the use of administrative terminology in stray references to particular places being rasatīq or aʾmāl, there is almost no confirmation in the form of the appointment or presence of officials at the subdistrict level. Although Zandaward may have actually been a sub-

\textsuperscript{201} Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiyāwāl, p. 163.
\textsuperscript{202} Ṣabār, Taʾrīkh, II, 775.
\textsuperscript{203} Walker, Arab-Sassanian Coins, pp. cxxxiii–cxxxiv, cxli.
\textsuperscript{204} Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 290; Ṣabār, Taʾrīkh, II, 1125–26; Yāqūt, Buldān, IV, 884.
\textsuperscript{205} Yāqūt, Buldān, II, 951.
\textsuperscript{206} Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 293.
\textsuperscript{207} Ibid., p. 290; Gibson, Kish, pp. 46, 53, 57.
\textsuperscript{208} Al-ʿAlī, “Minṭaqat al-Wāsit,” (1) p. 243; (2) p. 159.
\textsuperscript{209} Lavoix, Monnaies musulmanes, pp. 69–70, 93–94, 405–6.
district and the țassūj called Ustan is likely to have been the subdistrict of the city of Kaskar itself, there appears to be no record of local officials in these subdistricts. Badhibin and Mubarak may have been subdistricts in the early Islamic period, but the rustāq of Sin probably only dates from the time of al-Ḥajjāj.

ARD MAYSAN

The remainder of the region of Mesene downstream from Kaskar formed the province called Meshan in the Sasanian period. Charax, the former capital of Characene, at the confluence of the Tigris and the Karun survived as Karkh Maysan.210 The change in the course of the lower Tigris and the spread of the swamps due to flooding that began in the late fifth century and was repeated in the early seventh century turned northern and western Maysan, respectively, into desert or swamp. It effectively reduced the remainder of Ard Maysan to the territory along the lowest part of the old course of the Tigris (the Blind Tigris), which still carried water provided by tributaries from about Madhar to the estuary.211

In the reorganization of the late Sasanian period, Maysan appears to have been included in the Quarter of the South,212 and the city of Furat may have become the provincial capital. The Arabic tradition provides the information that the city of Furat Maysan on the Tigris estuary opposite Ubula was called Bahman Ardashir, and that Furat Basra and Bahman Ardashir were also designations for the same kūra extending from Wasit to Basra and including, Maysan and Madhar.213 Although it is natural to suppose that Furat was renamed Bahman Ardashir by Ardashir I, there is no evidence so far of the use of this name before the late Sasanian period. Shadh Bahman appears to have been the real title of this kūra.214

The subdivisions of this kūra at the time of the conquest and in early Islamic administration were Bahman Ardashir or Furat, Maysan,

211 Ibn Rustah, A’lāq, p. 95. Masūdī (Tanbih, p. 52) says that the Persians called Bahmanshir the stretch of the lower Tigris from Maftah to Ubulla and ‘Abbadan.
212 Hewsen, “Armenian Historical Geography,” p. 296; Marquart, Ėrānšahr, pp. 8, 16, 40.
213 Ḥamza, Ta’rikh, p. 43; Yāqūt, Buldān, I, 770; III, 861–62.
214 Ibn Khurradādhibh, Masālik, p. 7; Yāqūt, Buldān, III, 227. This is similar to the use of Shadh Firuz for the district of which Firuz Shapur (Anbar) was the capital, since there was no Sasanian monarch called Bahman.
Dast-i Maysan, and Manadhir. The subdistrict called Bahman Ardas­­hir was the immediate territory around the city of Furat. The lord (Ar. šāhib) of Furat was taken prisoner by 'Utba ibn Ghazwān during the conquest,215 although the accounts of the conquest seem to indicate that Furat was less important at that time than Ubulla or Madhar. Under 'Umar I, al-Ḥajjāj ibn 'Atīk ath-Thaqafi was tax collector of Furat.216 By 695 Kurāz ibn Mālik as-Sulāmī combined the governor­ship of Furat with that of Ubulla, and Furat was a mint city for post-reform dirhams.217

The subdistrict called Maysan was located just upstream from Bah­­­man Ardas­­hir.218 Madhar was the most important town in Maysan at the time of the conquest and in the early Islamic period. The marzban of Madhar, who was captured and beheaded by 'Utba ibn Ghazwān during the conquest,219 may have been in charge of the entire kūra rather than a mere subdistrict.

Early Islamic administration in Maysan was more fiscal than military. An-Nu‘mān ibn ‘Adī was ‘āmil of Maysan for 'Umar I.220 Al-Huṣayn ibn Abī l-Ḥurr is said to have been ‘āmil of Maysan from the time of 'Umar I until the arrival of al-Ḥajjāj.221 Both Maysan222 and Madhar223 were mint designations for post-reform dirhams.

Although both Ibn Khurradādhbih224 and Yāqūt225 identify Dast-i

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215 Tabarî, Ta’rikh, I, 2379.
216 Balādhurî, Futūḥ, p. 385.
218 According to al-Madā‘inī there was a subdivision of Maysan also called Maysan (Balādhurî, Futūḥ, p. 344), and Ibn Rustah (ʿalāq, p. 95) speaks of the nāhiya of Maysan in ard Maysan.
219 Balādhurî, Futūḥ, p. 342; Dinawārī, Akhbār at-tiwāl, pp. 123–24; Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 3; Ya’qūbī, Les pays, p. 166; Yāqūt, Buldān, IV, 468. Yāqūt calls Madhar the qaṣaba of Maysan, and Dinawārī also tells of a marzban of Maysan defeated by Mughira ibn Shu‘ba.
220 Ya’qūbī, Ta’rikh, II, 181; Yāqūt, Buldān, IV, 714–15.
221 Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 91.
222 Lavoix, Monnaies musulmanes, pp. 69, 92; Miles, “Rare Islamic Coins,” Numismatic Notes and Monographs, no. 118 (New York, 1950), p. 27. Although Abaz­quabadh or Abarquabadh is listed as one of the four subdivisions of Maysan or Shadh Bahman (Balādhurî, Futūḥ, p. 344; Ibn Khurradādhbih, Masālik, p. 7; Yāqūt, Buldān, III, 227) and may be identical with the district which Ya’qūbī (Les pays, p. 166) calls Izquabadh near Madhar, there is no information on its administration. Abarquabadh was a mint for post-reform dirhams (G. Miles, “Abarqubaadh, a new Umayyad mint,” ANSMN 4 (1950), 115–20.
223 Walker, Arab-Sassanian Coins, pp. cxxxiii–cxxxiv, cxi.
224 Ibn Khurradādhbih, Masālik, p. 7.
225 Yāqūt, Buldān, III, 227.
Maysan as Ubulla, this subdistrict appears actually to have been located along the old course of the Tigris above Madhar and in the plain (N.P. dasht) stretching to the border of Khuzistan.\textsuperscript{226} According to Ibn Rustah, 'Abdasi, on the old Tigris above Madhar, was one of the kuwar of Dast-i Maysan.\textsuperscript{227} At the time of the conquest, Dast-i Maysan was defended by a marzbān and after defeating him 'Utba left his own lieutenant there.\textsuperscript{228} Shortly afterwards, Jaz' ibn Mu'āwiya was responsible for collecting tribute in Manadhir and Dast-i Maysan in the time of 'Umar I.\textsuperscript{229} The DShT mint mark, which occurs on Arab-Sasanian coins from 672 to 686 without any known Sasanian precedents, is likely to stand for Dasht-i Maysan since the coins were struck by Ziyād, 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād, and Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubayr.\textsuperscript{230} Dasht-i Maysan appears as a mint for post-reform dirhams only in 699–700, followed by Manadhir from 700 to 714.\textsuperscript{231} If Dast-i Maysan was really located where it seems to have been, this evidence for its administration in the first century after the conquest suggests that this region was not entirely or immediately ruined and abandoned by the shift in the course of the lower Tigris in the late Sasanian period.

This configuration of subdistricts survived in the early Islamic period as the Kura (or Kuwar) Dijla along the Blind Tigris. It is identified as the küra of Shadh Bahman by Ibn Khurradādhbih and Yāqūt. Abū Muṣā is supposed to have established the districts of Kuwar Dijla when he was governor of Basra (637–38), ordered a cadastral survey, and levied taxes there.\textsuperscript{232} Kuwar Dijla was a distinct administrative unit for listing tax returns in the caliphate of Muʿāwiya, and in 684 al-Muhallab provisioned his forces by collecting the taxes of Kuwar Dijla.\textsuperscript{233}

Ubulla, on the right bank of the Tigris estuary opposite Furat, was the major port for the Indian trade in both the Sasanian and Islamic periods, as well as the anchor for the southeastern end of the Sasanian desert frontier. In the late sixth century, Ubulla was part of the Lakhmī
ADMINISTRATION

kingdom and an-Nu’mān ibn al-Mundhir is said to have appointed Sinān ibn Mālik as its governor. Sinān is also said to have been the ‘āmil for Khusraw Parvīz\(^{234}\) who also put Qays ibn Maš‘ūd ash-Shaybānī in charge of the frontier oases there (Taff Ubulla) to keep the bedouin from raiding the Sawād.\(^{235}\) At the time of Khālid’s raid in 633, the Persian general, Hurmuz, was in command at Ubulla and over the frontier,\(^{236}\) and after defeating him Khālid is said to have divided the sawād of Ubulla among four of his subordinates.\(^{237}\) Islamic administration at Ubulla in the seventh century appears to have been more fiscal than military and was concerned with collecting the taxes on the Indian trade.

Although Basra was founded by the Muslims at the site of abandoned Persian frontier posts in about 637–39,\(^{238}\) this new city more than replaced the local administrative centers in its vicinity. In the early Islamic period, Basra was a regional capital for those parts of southern and eastern Iran conquered by the Basran army as well as for eastern Arabia. In the caliphate of Mu‘āwiya, the taxes of Ni­hawand (Mah of Basra) were also assigned to Basra.\(^{239}\) Although the Sawād of Basra included the territory around Ubulla, the Kuwar Dijlā, and Khuzistan, as a regional capital Basra was much more important than Ubulla, Furat, or Madhar had been. It is worth noting, however, that the division of lower Iraq between the Sawād of Kufa and the Sawād of Basra at the border between the kūra of Kaskar and the kūra of Maysan/Kuwar Dijlā may have preserved the former border between the late Sasanian Quarters of the West and the South.

Nevertheless, the ultimate effect of the Muslim conquest, in terms of administrative geography, was to break up the former Sasanian quarters and to reconstitute the older province of Asoristan in the form of the Islamic province of Iraq. This began in the caliphate of Mu‘āwiya, when the governorship of Basra and Kufa and their territori­ties was combined in the person of Ziyād from 669 until 673.\(^{240}\)


\(^{237}\) Ibid., I, 2057–58.


\(^{240}\) Dinawari, *Akhbār at-tiwal*, p. 238; Ṭabarī, *Ta‘rikh*, II, 86, 94, 156; Ya‘qūbī,
The unification under Ziyād was incomplete to the extent that Basra and Kufa remained twin capitals, but this combination was repeated by 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād under Yazīd I (680–83) and by Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubayr during the later years of the second fitna. The reorganization was only completed in the caliphate of 'Abd al-Mālik by the permanent detachment of Mawsil and the complete unification of Iraq as a province with Wasit as its capital. This only lasted until the end of the of the Marwānī period, however, and under the 'Abbāsîs the government of Iraq was divided among local centers.

CONCLUSIONS

On the whole, changes in the administrative structure due to the conquest were greatest at the upper levels of the hierarchy. The Sasanian Quarter of the West was dismembered and the Sasanian system of imperial quarters never served as a basis for Islamic administration. The shape of major configurations in early Islamic administration in Iraq was determined by accidents of conquest, such as the direction from which Sasanian provinces were conquered, and the extent of territory occupied by separate Muslim forces. Although Arbayestan survived as a unit with its districts, this entire province was attached to the Jazira. Eventually several districts that had formerly been part of Byzantine Mesopotamia were included in Arbayestan.

After the Battle of Nihawand in 642, the territory of Kufa and its dependencies briefly equalled the Sasanian Quarter of the West minus Arbayestan in its extent. This was the closest the Quarter of the West came to surviving in Islamic administration. By the end of the seventh century, Mawsil had been detached from it, and the older province of Asoristan had been reconstituted in the form of the Islamic province of Iraq. The territory of Basra and its dependencies combined Maysan and Khuzistan with much of the Iranian plateau that had been conquered by Basran forces, although the distinction between the Sawad of Basra and that of Kufa may have preserved the former border between the Sasanian Quarters of the South and the West.

At the other end of the scale, changes in the administrative structure related to changes in river and canal courses, flooding, and redevel-


opment were greatest at the lowest level of the hierarchy, where a subdistrict often consisted of the territory along a canal, and in the region along the lower courses of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, where such changes were the greatest in this period.

The greatest degree of continuity appears to have been at the intermediate level of the district (kūra), where the Sasanian names survived. However, the appearance of continuity at the district level is somewhat illusory because of changes in the larger units to which they belonged and in the smaller units which composed them. Some districts do not appear to have functioned immediately after the conquest, such as those in Ard Jukha or the district of Behrasir. Better evidence exists in this part of Iraq for the survival of subdistricts and their local officials. Such districts appear to have been revived or reconstituted in the early Islamic period—Behrasir by the time of 'Ali, and Shadh Qubadhl/Jalula by the late seventh century.

Continuity might also be measured in the degree to which early Islamic administration in Iraq was hierarchic. It appears, in fact, to have been highly hierarchic, especially in Ard Kufa, with many of the subordinate units inherited from the Sasanians. But the shape of this hierarchy was different, it was organized in a different way, and its subordination to Kufa instead of to Mada'in reversed the Sasanian organization.

There was also continuity in the preservation of the military nature of certain frontier districts such as Anbar and 'Ayn Tamr under the Muslims. But the emergence of Hulwan as a military center appears to be new in the Islamic period, resulting from the way the conquest shifted the important defensive frontier from southwestern Iraq against the Arabs to the northeast against the Iranian plateau. Sasanian administration appears to have been military in Maysan and Dast-i Maysan at the time of the conquest, but it was more fiscal under the Muslims. However, the administration of districts such as Kaskar seems to have been mainly fiscal under both regimes.

Administrative procedures and the geographical structure through which they operated depended largely on the people who were involved and affected by them. The counterpart to administrative geography is human geography. In order to understand the process of continuity and change more fully it is necessary to consider the geographical and social distribution of the people of Iraq.
Part II

PEOPLE
Introduction

Although population groupings ought to provide a suitable framework for the discussion of cultural continuity and change, they also present the problem of what categories to use. Several kinds of distinctions and forms of self-identification used in the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods served as equally valid ways of expressing social or cultural differences. One, essentially racial, way of identifying people was based on the distinction between those with a "red" or ruddy complexion and those with a "black" or swarthy complexion. This distinction seems to have been used to express the difference between the "natives" of lower Iraq, who saw themselves as the darker race, and "foreigners" such as Romans and Persians who were identified as the ruddy race.¹ A feeling of antagonism based on this difference may be reflected by the way Arabic tradition, when it wanted to insult an-Nu‘mān ibn al-Mundhir, described him as red, freckled, and short.²

Religious differences appear to have been equally important because of the way religion had come to provide well-defined sets of cultural and social alternatives by the late Sasanian period. However, since the issues concerning Iraq's religious communities will be treated separately, the discussion in this section will be based on a third set of terms based on ethnic categories. The advantage of approaching cultural continuity from an ethnic point of view lies mainly in the possibility of identifying cultural traits with such groups and the local regions where they predominated, in dealing with the influences each ethnic group exerted on the others, and in the inferences which may be drawn from population shifts with regard to the availability of cultural influences in particular places.

The main difficulty in an approach based on ethnic categories lies in the effects of over two millenia of syncretism in Iraq, which often makes it impossible to identify a particular cultural trait with any one ethnic group. There was a high degree of mutual assimilation brought about by the mixture of peoples and cultures in both the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods in Iraq. Although contemporaries used ethnic categories as the basis for their own cultural labels, one should question

¹ Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, II, 530; Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 151. See also I. Goldziher, Muslim Studies (Chicago, 1966), I, 243–44.
² Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrīkh, I, 242. See also Thaʿālibī, Laṭāʾīf, p. 104.
how meaningful such categories were and be careful of assumptions about the linguistic criteria for ethnic identities. Contemporaries often reduced ethnic identities to stereotypes and associated them with prejudices. It is necessary to recognize the differences between the ethnic stereotypes used by contemporaries, which are an important expression of their own attitudes, and the realities of cultural assimilation.

The effects of shifts in population on cultural discontinuity also need to be qualified by the effects of assimilation. When one group of people is replaced by another with a different way of life, the change may be minimized by the effects of cultural transmission through assimilation, that is, by the extent to which the newcomers adopt the way of life of the people they replace.
Chapter 4

ARAMAEANS

ARAMAEANS IN LATE SASANIAN IRAQ

People speaking various dialects of Aramaic were by far the most numerous linguistic group in Iraq in both periods. At least three dialects were used in Iraq. The people in northern Iraq spoke and wrote the Syriac dialect based on the spoken language of Edessa. The Aramaic dialect used in the Babylonian Talmud was spoken in central Iraq. In the southeast, the Aramaic population spoke a dialect derived from Chaldaean, which had already become the language of the Mandaic texts by the seventh century. The differences among these dialects do not seem to have been great enough to prevent or to inhibit communication and the geographical boundaries between them were not very clear. All three dialects have been found on magical incantation bowls at Nippur (Niffar) belonging to this period. The Mandaic of these bowl texts was identical to the language of the later Mandaic scripture and was already being written in its distinctive alphabet. The Talmudic dialect was written in Hebrew characters but was being influenced by spoken Mandaic. The Syriac dialect was written in an unjoined Estrangelo script which resembles early Edessene inscriptions and gives the impression of an intrusive linguistic element, reminding one of the farmers whom Khusraw Anūshirvān carried off from Callinicus in 642. It is worth noting that this was the dialect and script that served as a literary vehicle for Manichaeans, and that the Syriac dialect was also being influenced by Mandaic speech. The mixed linguistic situation in late Sasanian Nippur is also indicated by the fact that some of the same people are named as the beneficiaries of magical charms written in different dialects but probably by the same family of sorcerers.³

Arabic tradition only distinguished two forms of Aramaic: the Naḇaṭī dialect of lower Iraq and Syriac. According to Masʿūdī, the difference between them was only a matter of a few words.⁴ The general term in Arabic for Aramaeans was Anbāṭ (sg. Naḇaṭ), which identified them as a sedentary, agricultural population. Although it is clear that

the Anbāṭ were the Aramaic speaking peasants and townsmen of Iraq⁵ and were thereby usually distinguished from Persians, the primary meaning of this term appears to convey a sedentary way of life rather than a language group. By a natural extension, it also had agricultural connotations.⁶ Aramaeans were called Anbāṭ because they appear to have constituted most of the settled, agricultural population in both the Sasanian and early Islamic periods.

The Aramaic-speaking population was concentrated in the agricultural areas of Iraq, along the rivers and canals in the Sawad and along the upper Tigris and its tributaries. Aramaeans were also an important element in many of the larger towns and cities, where they mingled with Persians and Arabs. Towns such as Kutha and Sura in the heart of the Sawad were known as Aramaean centers.⁷ The general population of Mada’īn seems to have been Aramaic-speaking in the Sasanian period,⁸ and Aramaeans lived in cities such as Takrit and Nasibin. Aramaeans tended to be mixed with sedentary Arabs along the Euphrates. Their population thinned out along the foothills of the Zagros mountains in the uplands east of the Tigris, with the balance shifting in favor of Persians and Kurds at the approximate geographical limits of Iraq. The Aramaean presence east of the Tigris had been reinforced in the Sasanian period by the settlement of nine thousand deportees from Beth Zabhde at Dastagird and of ninety families from Maysan at a village near Kirkuk by Shāpūr II.⁹

Such transfers tended to increase the ethnic mixture in Sasanian Iraq, as did the settlement of imported labor on the land. In the late Sasanian period, Persian peasants from the plateau, Arabs, and Syrian and Greek captives were resettled in different parts of Iraq as agricultural labor. In such parts of Iraq, the dialect and even the language might change from one village to the next. The nature of the ethnic-religious mixture in the region between Kaskar and Khuzistan is in-

⁵ Mas‘ūdi, (Tanbīḥ, p. 36) says that the Arabs called the Suryāniyyūn Nabāṭ. Ibn an-Nadīm describes the Nabaṭī dialect spoken by villagers as an incorrectly pronounced form of Syriac; see The Fihrist of al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture, ed. and tr. Bayard Dodge (New York, 1970), I, 22.
⁶ Nabaṭī was used for Egyptian peasants in a papyrus of 710; see Grohmann, Arabic Papyri, p. 129.
⁷ Qazwīnī, Athār al-bīlād, II, 301; Yāqūt, Buldān, III, 184; IV, 318.
⁸ When Khalīl was at Hira, he had a man from Hira called Murra write a letter to the Persian notables at Mada’in, while Ṣalībā had a man named Ḥazqīl write a letter in Nabaṭī to the general population of Mada’in (Ṭabarī, Ta’rīkh, I, 2052–53).
ARAMAEANS

dicated by the proximity of towns and villages such as Atesh Gah (N.P., “place of fire”), presumably settled by Magian Persians five farāsīkh (N.P.) east of Badhibin; Tib, which was inhabited by Aramaeans, eighteen farāsīkh east of Badhibin; and Qaryat Aʿrab, a village of settled Arab bedouin, twenty-two or twenty-three farāsīkh west of Badhibin.10 However, such settlers were subject to strong Aramaicizing influences and tended to adopt Aramaic speech once they had been settled for any length of time.

On the other hand, Aramaeans who rose to positions of authority tended to become Persianized, especially if service extended over several generations. The best example in late Sasanian Iraq is the family of Yazdīn, of Syrian origin, which became assimilated with the Persian aristocracy. Yazdīn himself served as finance minister for the Quarter of the West under Khusraw Parvīz, possessed wide lands near Kirkuk and in Margha, and, like the landed Christian Persian aristocrats who were his contemporaries, extended his patronage to the Nestorians and built churches and monasteries.11 His son, Shamṭā, in retribution for his father’s dismissal, is said to have been responsible for the actual killing of Khusraw Parvīz in prison,12 and for persuading Shīrūr (Qubād II) to kill the royal princes.13 Shamṭā was eventually punished by Shahrbarāz, who crucified him at the door of the church of Beth Narqos in Margha.14 The family of Yazdīn survived the conquest, however, and maintained both its aristocratic status and its connection with the Nestorian Church. In 646/7 his descendants were in charge of the burial of the catholicos ʿĪshoʿyahb II.15

It is more natural to find Aramaean notables at the local level, away from the centers of power, and although most of the dahāqīn appear to have been of Persian origin, Aramaeans may be found among them. The most interesting is the family of ʿṢalūbā ibn Nistūnā, the lord (Ar. ṣāḥib) of Quss Natif and of most of the land between the two branches

10 Ibn Rustah, Aʿlāq, pp. 187–88; Yāqūt, Buldān, II, 566. One farsakh is ca. 6 kilometers.
11 Thomas of Margha, Governors, II, 81; Christensen, Sassanides, p. 451; Guidi, Chronica Minora I, I, 23; II, 21; Nöldeke, “Guidi,” p. 22; idem, Perser und Araber, p. 384; Stratos, Byzantium, pp. 214, 376. The possessions in Margha were at Beth Narqos and Yazdinabad.
of the Euphrates in the Sawad of Hira, who dealt directly with the Muslims for his lands at the time of the conquest. It might be suggested that from a cultural point of view, there was very little to distinguish local Aramaean notables such as Šālūbā from their Persian counterparts among the ḏahāqīn. This is confirmed by conditions at Nippur, where the evidence from the proper names on the incantation bowls suggests a mixture of Persian and Aramaean influences.

Nippur had been resettled in the Parthian period. Its inhabitants during the Sasanian period originally may have been Persians who had been Aramaicized by intermarriage with the natives of the Sawad. It is possible to identify in the bowl texts some people who were probably village notables; at least they seem to be better off than other patrons of the sorcerers and found it necessary to protect themselves from the evil eye. Mārādā and his wife Hinduithā bath Dōdāi, whose Mandaic bowl seeks protection for their mansion, barn, cattle, and household vessels seem very Aramaean. By the same token Xārō bar Mehanōsh, who seeks magical protection for his mansion, barn, and cattle—asses, bulls, goats, and swine—on a Mandaic bowl seems more Persian or Persianized. Another Mandaic text identifies a certain Shrula bar Duktanuba as a man with property, cattle, slaves, and handmaids. The mixture of names of Persian or Aramaean origin in the same family may be seen in the case of Farrukusrao bar Duktanosh, his wife Kewashizag bath Papa, their daughter Apridoe, and their grandsons Masdanaspas and Rashnenduk. It may also be seen in the family of Hormiz bar Mahlapta and his wife Ahata bath Dade, and

17 Montgomery, Incantation Texts, pp. 244–45, 252, 254; E. Yamauchi, Mandaic Incantation Texts (New Haven, 1967), pp. 257, 263, 277, 279. Xārō may be compared to Xaroē in F. Justi, Iranisches Namenbuch (Marburg, 1895), p. 171. Montgomery explains Mehanōsh as an abbreviated combination of Mithra and the Magian angel Anōsh. For the use of Anōsh in Persian names, see Justi (pp. 17–18), but here the name might also be that of one of the Mandaean angels (Anosh). The Mandaean significance of this name seems to be indicated by the popularity of names formed with Anosh in the Mandaic bowl texts (Yamauchi, Incantation Texts, pp. 163, 177, 179, 267).
18 Yamauchi, Incantation Texts, pp. 227, 229. Farrukusrao is an abbreviation of Farrūkh-Khusraw and probably corresponds to actual speech. Duktanosh may be compared to Duḥtnōsh—“maiden (given by) Anōsh” (Justi, Namenbuch, pp. 227, 229). Masdanaspas probably means steed of Mazda or of the Mazdaean religion. For Rashnan used as a proper name derived from the Magian demigod Rashnu, see Justi, Namenbuch, p. 259. Kewashizag and Apridōē appear to be Aramaic names, the latter with a Persian diminutive ending. For the possible Manichaean meaning of Kewashizag, see de Menasce, “Autour d’une texte syriaque inédit sur la religion des Mages,” BSOAS 9 (1939), 593.
in the case of Qayyoma bar Mershabor.19 A further indication of the kind of mixture existing at Nippur is provided by a Syriac bowl text that contains Judaic references but was written for a certain Mihr-Hormizd bar Mamay and his wife Bahrö bath Bath Sähde, whose mother's name is Christian and means "daughter of the martyrs."20 A similar mixture is evident in the case of a certain Timotheos bar Mamay,21

Such conditions lie behind Mas'ūdi's picture of the assimilation of the Anbāt with the Persians in the Sasanian period and the complaint he records by a "modern" poet that even villagers claimed descent from Kisrā, son of Qubādh.22 The bowl texts also indicate there was a religious dimension to assimilation between Aramaeans and Persians. Aramaeans were pagans, Mandaeans, Jews, and Christians, so it is well to remember that the religious issues and developments to be discussed under these headings largely concern this population.

ARAMAEANS IN EARLY ISLAMIC IRAQ

Since Aramaeans were the majority of the agricultural population, it was they who paid the land tax and kept up the irrigation system. Consequently, they were the people most directly affected by the rise in tax rates under the Muslims in the Sawad and by changes in the irrigation system in both periods.

Otherwise, the immediate effects of the Islamic conquest on the Aramaean population of Iraq amounted to a surface disruption during the fighting, followed by a settlement that reproduced the general situation under the Sasanians. The first Muslim raids, those of Khālid and Muthannā ibn Ħāritha, took captives from among the settled population, particularly in Maysan, and carried them off to Madīna.23 However, Ħalūrā or his son Buṣbuhrā preserved the people of Baniqya and Barusma from attack in return for the payment of one thousand dirhams, a țaylasān, (N.P., stole) and an agreement to aid the Muslims

20 Montgomery, *Incantation Texts*, pp. 231–35. For Mihr-Hormizd and Mamay, see Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 189. Bahrö is probably a diminutive form of Bahrām. Several women on these bowls have male names.
22 Mas'ūdi, *Ṭabīb*, p. 38.
instead of the Persians.\textsuperscript{24} In general, the peasants in the Sawad were left alone if they did not revolt and were eventually treated as \textit{dhimmūs}.\textsuperscript{25} Buṣbuhrā and the people of Baniqya did actually assist the Muslim Arabs in the construction of the floating bridge across the Euphrates from Marwaha on the west bank to Quss Natif on the east bank. This enabled the Muslim army under Abū 'Ubayd to cross the river prior to the Battle of the Bridge.\textsuperscript{26} At least in Baniqya and the surrounding districts, the Aramaeans seem to have been willing to aid the Muslims if only to the extent indicated by a native of the Sawad who told Muthannā the names of the places where the Persian general Mihrān camped and where he crossed the Euphrates before the Battle of Buwayb.\textsuperscript{27}

As successful raids turned into permanent occupation, the Aramaean peasantry of Iraq were included in the same general terms offered to the landed aristocrats. In addition to the release of at least some of the captives,\textsuperscript{28} those who had fled were allowed to return and received the same protection as those who had stayed and remained faithful to their original pact with the Muslims. However, in exchange for acquiring Muslim protection, those who returned were subjected to heavier taxation.\textsuperscript{29} Unfortunately, Buṣbuhrā had compromised himself by joining the Persian counterattack after the Persian victory at the Battle of the Bridge, and following the Persian defeat at Qadisiyya, he unsuccessfully attempted to defend Burs in the first of a series of rear-guard actions along the road to Mada'in. After a skirmish with part of the Muslim advance guard under Zuhra, Buṣbuhrā and his men were put to flight, and Buṣbuhrā died of his wounds at Babil.\textsuperscript{30} Nevertheless, Buṣbuhrā’s two Arabized sons, Khālid and Jamil, were among those native aristocrats allotted stipends of two thousand dirhams from the Muslim \textit{diwān} by 'Umar I.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{24} Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta'rikh}, I, 2017; Yāqūt, \textit{Buldān}, I, 484.
\textsuperscript{25} Khadduri, \textit{Islamic Law of Nations}, p. 80; Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta'rikh}, I, 2026, 2031.
\textsuperscript{26} Baladhurī, \textit{Futūḥ}, p. 251; Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta'rikh}, I, 2177; Yāqūt, \textit{Buldān}, IV, 97–98.
\textsuperscript{27} Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta'rikh}, I, 2184–85.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibn Sa'd, \textit{Tabaqāt}, VII, 92.
\textsuperscript{29} Dennett, \textit{Conversion}, p. 28; Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta'rikh}, I, 2031, 2371, 2427, 2467–69; Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, \textit{Kharāj}, pp. 26–27, 46, 52.
\textsuperscript{30} Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta'rikh}, I, 2420. In a parallel account (ibid., I, 2061), the Banū Ṣalūba, identified as the people of Hira, Kalwadh, and the villages of the Euphrates, were the only ones to conclude peace before battle. Then they acted treacherously but were afterwards called to protection (\textit{dhimma}).
\textsuperscript{31} In this context Buṣbuhrā is called the \textit{dhiqān} of the Fallujas. Baladhurī, \textit{Futūḥ}, pp. 457–58; Ya'qūbī, \textit{Ta'rikh}, II, 176.
Arabic tradition estimates that in the caliphate of 'Umar I, between five hundred and five hundred and fifty thousand men were put under seal for the head tax in the Sawad of Kufa.\(^{32}\) On this basis, the total non-Muslim population (Christians and Jews) has been estimated at about one million, five hundred thousand.\(^{33}\) Other considerations indicate that this number might serve equally well as an approximation of the Aramaean population of the Sawad of Kufa at the time of the conquest.\(^{34}\) The numerical relationship between the peasants and the Muslim occupying forces immediately after the conquest is indicated by an account in which 'Umar I is said to have considered partitioning the Sawad among the Muslims there, and it was discovered that each Muslim would receive three peasants as tenants. This plan was abandoned in favor of the assessment of a poll tax, the proceeds of which were divided among the Muslim forces.\(^{35}\) Apparently the territory of the villages that had made peace with the Muslims at the time of the conquest continued to enjoy a special status afterwards. As *qura-š-šulḥ* (Ar.), they were supposed to be free from taxation, and Muslim soldiers and merchants were not allowed to enter these villages, nor could their women or children be taken captive.\(^{36}\)

There are a number of ways in which the Aramaeans participated in the life of Islamic Iraq: by acting as spies and guides, serving in the army, giving advice on local administration, continuing to exert their ethnic influence on sedentary Arabs and in place names, and restoring and preserving the irrigation system. First of all, the accounts of the arrangements made by Khālid and Muthannā with the native population included the stipulation that they were to act as spies and guides for the Muslims against the Persians.\(^{37}\) Not only were these requirements fulfilled during the conquest, but, during the remainder of the

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\(^{33}\) L. E. Browne, *The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia* (Cambridge, 1933), p. 9; A. Mez, *Die Renaissance des Islams* (Heidelberg, 1922), p. 34. Baron's suggestion (Social and Religious History, III, 113) that the number of taxpayers should be multiplied by five to estimate the total population would produce a figure of over two million five hundred thousand.

\(^{34}\) This figure was used for the Aramaean population on the assumption that the Aramaeans were closely identified with the sedentary, agricultural population in the Sawad; they alone seem to have been subjected to having seals put around their necks when they paid their taxes.


\(^{36}\) Løkkegaard, *Islamic Taxation*, p. 83.

seventh century, the Aramaeans served Muslim forces in the same capacity. In 663 a Kufan force pursuing rebels in the Sawad relied on a man from Sabat to guide it to Daylamiyya. In 685 the 'āmil of al-Mukhtar at Mada’in sent al-Mukhtar a native Aramaean spy who informed him of what had happened in Mawsil between Yazīd ibn ‘Anas and ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād. Aḥmar ibn Saḥīṭ was guided by a Nabaṭī in his attack for al-Mukhtar on a fortified place near Madhar. Not only were the Aramaeans employed as guides and spies, but Nabaṭī was spoken on the battlefield at Siffin, and in 687 a reference is made to an Aramaean soldier in the army sent by al-Ḥārith ibn ‘Abdullāh against ‘Ubaydullāh at Anbar. The family of Ṣalūba survived in the Sawad at least until the end of the seventh century, providing a rather explicit channel for the communication of the traditions of government in the rural districts. When al-Ḥajjāj appointed ‘Ubaydullāh ibn al-Mukhārib to collect taxes in the two Fallujas, it was Jamīl ibn Buṣbuhra who advised him on how to rule.

The continued identification of the Aramaic speaking population of Iraq with the rural, agricultural population meant that, at least throughout the seventh century and well into the eighth century, those Arabs who settled down among them outside of the cities became “Nabataeanized.” This in itself was merely a continuation of the situation throughout the Fertile Crescent in antiquity in places such as Edessa, Petra, and Palmyra, where sedentary Arabs tended to become Aramaicized. The Arabic tradition itself recognized that this had happened in pre-Islamic Iraq. One of the best expressions of the way in which Arabs and Aramaeans had intermingled in Hira is to be found in part of the (surely apocryphal) conversation between Khālid and the legendary ‘Abd al-Masīḥ when that city fell to the Muslims. When Khālid asked ‘Abd al-Masīḥ whether the people of Hira were Arabs or Nabaṭ, he received the reply that, “we regarded the Arab as a Nabaṭ and the Nabaṭ as an Arab.” In general following the conquest, those Arabs who settled among the peasants in the countryside

38 Ṭabārī, Ta’rikh, II, 58.
39 Ibid., II, 649.
40 Dinawari, Akhbar at-twāl, p. 311.
41 Balādhuri, Ansāb, I, 173; Ṭabārī, Ta’rikh, II, 777.
42 Jāḥiẓ, Rasa’il, II, 32; Jahshiyārī, Wuzara’, p. 36.
44 Mas‘ūdī, Murūj, I, 118. This might also be taken to mean that bedouin became sedentary and vice versa.
were Aramaicized, and the policy of al-Ḥajjāj provides an excellent example of the strength of Aramaicizing tendencies in rural Iraq as late as the early eighth century. When, as part of the reaction to the revolt of Ibn al-Ash’ath, al-Ḥajjāj exiled the religious spokesman (Ar. fuqahā’) and the mawālī from the garrison cities of Iraq and forced them to mingle with the rural Aramaic population by marking their hands with the names of the villages to which they were assigned, they are said to have become assimilated with the Aramaeans.45 The nature of such assimilation is indicated by the existence of a form of spoken Arabic in the countryside around Kufa which Jāḥiz claims was pronounced in a Nabaṭī manner, in which “s” replaced “z” and hamza replaced ‘ayn.46

The Aramaic dialects of Iraq remained living vehicles of expression and linguistic assimilation well into the Islamic period. Syriac continued to be a heavily used literary medium in northern Iraq and the spoken form of local dialects influenced the way place names were rendered in Arabic. Many place names of Aramaic origin, or preserved through Aramaic use, survived in Islamic Iraq. Although these place names continued to be used in Syriac literature in their original forms, they preserved an orthography that often no longer corresponded to the spoken language which had begun to form contractions and drop suffixes by the sixth century. In particular, the th in compound place names formed with bēth (house, home of) had been dropped in spoken Syriac, as is indicated by the way the Greek translator of the sixth-century life of Shīrīn rendered Beth Garme as Begarmeon.47 The Arabic spelling of such constructions reflects the spoken language. Beth Garme was rendered in the Arabic script as Bajarma, Beth ‘Arbhaye as Ba’arbaya, and Beth Zabhde as Bazabda.48 The possibility that the letter ǧīm in the Arabic alphabet represents a velar pronunciation as “g” in the Yamani dialect spoken in early Islamic Iraq49 would make

45 Mubarrad, Kāmil, p. 286.
47 Devos, “Sirīn,” p. 104. But the same Greek translator rendered Beth Armaye in Greek by Betharmaes (ibid., p. 105).
48 Likewise, Beth Nuhadhra was rendered as Bahudhra, Beth Rushme as Barusma, Beth Neqya as Baniqya, Beth Deqla as Badaqla, Beth Daraye as Badaraya, and Beth Kusaye as Bakusaya.
the Arabic rendering of a place name such as Beth Garme by Bajarma (pronounced Bagarma) very close to spoken Aramaic.

Otherwise, Aramaic place names were rendered in Arabic according to the normal rules of conversion between these two languages. Corresponding to the shift from sh in Aramaic to s in Arabic, Kashkar was rendered as Kaskar, Shenna dh Beth Ramman as Sinn Barimma, and Mayshan as Maysan. According to the shift from p to f, Pellughta, Nippur, and Pèrath were rendered as Falluja, Niffar, and Furat, respectively. The replacement of th by t in Furat, Hit (Syr. Hith), and Takrit (Syr. Taghrith), however, merely reflected spoken Aramaic.

Place names also reflect the continuing involvement of the Aramaic population in the preservation and restoration of irrigation systems in early Islamic Iraq. One indication of this kind of continuity lies in a run-off channel called Bazza dh' Nahrawatha (literally “the plundering of the canals”),50 which collected excess water from the middle Euphrates system near Niffar and which was certainly in existence in the late Sasanian period.51 Not only was this place name Arabized as Bizz al-Anhar,52 but a knowledge of its purpose survived in Arabic tradition (and presumably in irrigating practice as well). Baladhuri speaks of a canal, old in his time, called Bazzaq near Wasit, and explains that in Aramaic the name means that the canal cuts off water from other canals downstream and takes it to itself, in this case taking excess water from the reed thickets of Sib and from the Euphrates river.53 Another indication of the continuing activity of native Aramaeans in the operation of the irrigation system is the sluice gate called Bathq Hiri located about three miles from Başra but named after an Aramaean from Hira who was a mawlā of Ziyād.54 The best example of all, however, is Ḥassān an-Nabāṭi who reclaimed land by draining the swamps of lower Iraq for al-Ḥajjāj in the reign of al-Walīd I and for Hishām in the early eighth century.55

51 Gregory of Kaskar built his monastery near Bazza dh' Nahrawatha in about 612 (Guidi, Chronica Minora I, I, 18; II, 17).
53 Baladhuri, Futūh, p. 291.
54 Ibid., pp. 357, 358.
55 Ibid., p. 293, 367; Ibn 'Abd Rabbīhi, 'Īqd, IV, 18; Jahshiyārī, Wuzarā', p. 29a; Mas’ūdī, Murūj, I, 121; Qudāmā, Khārajī, p. 240. He was a mawlā of the Arab clan of Banū Ḍabbā at Basra. He was employed in the diwān of Iraq and only converted from Christianity to Islam in the time of Hishām. He owned the estate of Nahr Sulayman, a place called Hawd Hassan in Basra, a watchtower called Manara Hassan and a
Finally, due account must be taken of the attitudes of Aramaeans and Arabs towards each other. On their side, the Aramaeans, as representatives of a sedentary, orderly, agricultural population, reacted somewhat unfavorably to what was felt to be an impetuosity or excitability on the part of Arabs. This attitude and the stereotype it involved is well illustrated in the case of an Arab monk from Hira named Mar Eliyyā who lived at the Nestorian monastery on Mt. Izla above Nasibin in the late sixth century. The monastic chronicler who described Rabban Eliyyā's energetic response to a crisis in the community found it necessary to explain that the possessed the "violent character of the bedouin."56 Such attitudes survived the conquest and were expressed as a feeling of superiority on the part of the Anbāṭ over Arabs because of the achievements of the Babylonians, the antiquity and spread of their civilization, the flourishing of agriculture, and their acceptance of Islam without having a prophet appear amongst them.57

For their part, Arabs tended to stereotype Aramaeans as arrogant people who identified themselves by their place of origin instead of by a tribal genealogy. Arabs looked down on them as people who had lost their power and independence first to Persian and then to Arab rulers. According to Masʿūdī, the Anbāṭ were inferior to Arabs because the latter were granted a prophet and the former were not.58 However, a better indication of the awareness by seventh-century Arabs of the difference between themselves and the Aramaeans is the description of Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ given by 'Amr ibn Maʿdikarib to the caliph ʿUmar: "In his love of dates, he is an Arab; in his collection of taxes, he is a Nabaṭī."59

The survival of a more or less intact Aramaean population in Iraq meant the continuation of pre-Islamic agricultural and irrigation practices and the transmission of these practices to Muslims through such people as Ḥassān an-Nabāṭī and the grandsons of Ṣalūbā. The continuing Aramaean ethnic vitality is demonstrated by the way in which both Persians and Arabs who settled on the land tended to be assimilated to them and to be Aramaicized and by the strength of Aramaic

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56 Scher, "Histoire nestorienne," II(2), 446. See also Thomas of Margha, Governors, I, 29; II, 54.
57 Masʿūdī, Mūrūj, II, 169–70.
58 Ibid., II, 170–71; Thaʿālibī, Laṭāʿif, p. 185.
59 Balādhrī, Futūḥ, p. 279.
linguistic influences. On the other hand, the tendency for Aramaean notables or those in government service to assimilate to their rulers carried over into the Islamic period, the only difference being that such individuals were Arabized instead of Persianized and that such Arabization was usually accompanied by conversion to Islam.
Chapter 5
PERSIANS

DISTRIBUTION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Persians have always been a minority in Iraq, but for most of classical and late antiquity they were a ruling minority. Apart from the concentration of Persians along the foothills of the Zagros mountains and the upper reaches of the tributaries of the Tigris, which was merely an extension of the Persian settlement on the Iranian plateau, the large-scale Persian immigration into the Mesopotamian plain began with the rise of the Sasanian state in the third century A.D. Drawn to the court at Mada'in, posted as administrators and garrisons to positions in the western quarter of the empire, or brought in as agricultural labor, the Persian presence in Iraq was largely the result of the military, administrative, and economic requirements of the Sasanians.1

Unfortunately, there are no reliable figures for the size and distribution of the Persian population in Sasanian Iraq, but it is possible to approach questions of demographic change by comparing settlement patterns and by noting the shifts in population that included Persians. The Sasanian policy of establishing an ethnic Persian presence in the west, implemented by transfers of population, produced a distinct demographic pattern. Persian soldiers were settled along the outer edges of southern and western Iraq as permanent frontier garrisons; the families of aristocratic Persians were settled in the major cities of Iraq; and some Persian peasants were settled in the villages of the Sawad. This movement began in the third century with the settlement of a permanent garrison at Anbar, 2 followed by the settlement of twelve thousand upper-class Persian families from Istakhr and Isfahan at Nasibin when that city was taken from the Romans in A.D. 363.3

1 The basis of this chapter is the author’s article, “The Effects of the Muslim Conquest on the Persian Population of Iraq,” Iran 14 (1976), 41–59.
2 Yāqūt, Buldān, III, 929.
3 Dīnawarī, Akhbār ʿat-tiwāl, p. 52; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 843. According to the Nihāyatulu ʿirāb twelve thousand Persians from Istakhr and four thousand from Isfahan settled at Nasibin (Browne, “Nihāyat,” p. 221). In the sixth century Nasibin was still a Persian city (Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 83) with Persian notables (Devo, “Sainte Sirin,” p. 107), and a Persian garrison (Prokopios, Wars, II, xviii). Mar Babai of Nasibin, a disciple of Abraham of Kaskar in the early seventh century, was a descendant of the Persians settled at Nasibin by Shāpjūr II (Chabot, “Chasteté,” p. 235).
In the early sixth century, Qubadh I (488–96, 499–531) is said to have settled people, brought in from other regions in villages in upper and lower Iraq. By the end of the Sasanian period, there was a belt of defensive Persian settlements in the outposts of 'Ayn Tamr, Qadisiyya, the oases called 'Uyun of Taff, and in the garrison towns of Hira, Anbar, and Sinjar. There were also significant numbers of Persians in cities such as Nasibin, Takrit, the eastern half of Mada'in, Veh-Ardashir, and Kaskar, as well as in towns such as Irbil and Kirkuk, which were located in heavily Persian districts.

The structure of Persian society in the Sasanian period may be described in two alternative ways. One of them presents the picture of an internally subdivided four-class system organized for the separate performance of military, religious, administrative, or economic responsibilities. The priesthood had its own elaborate hierarchy. Soldiers were divided into cavalry and infantry and distinguished by rank. The bureaucratic class included correspondence secretaries, accountants, court clerks, and official historians, as well as physicians, poets, and astrologers (the latter three because of their connection with the royal court). The fourth estate was made up of farmers, herdsmen, artisans, and merchants—the vast majority of the productive, tax-paying public. All classes were bound by separate codes decreed and registered by the state, which were intended to preserve the integrity and usefulness of each by preventing anyone from changing his occupation and by providing external, visual distinctions among them by the special iden-

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5 Baladhuri, Futūh, p. 246; Tabari, Ta’rikh, I, 2062.
6 Qadisiyya was garrisoned by a force sent by Khusraw II Parvīz to protect the desert frontier after the fall of the Banū Lakhm (Qazwini, Athār al-bilād, II, 159).
7 Ibn Rustah, A’lāq, pp. 107–8; Yaqūt, Buldān, II, 476; III, 539–40.
8 Before the fall of the Banū Lakhm, the Sasanians stationed a body of one thousand cavalrymen (M.P. asāwira) at Hira as reinforcements. After a year’s service, they were recalled and replaced by another troop (Kister, “Al-Hira,” p. 167). After the fall of the Banū Lakhm, a regular garrison under a marzbān was established at Hira. Persian dahāqin also lived at Hira (Horovitz, “Adi Ibn Zeyd,” p. 35) and Persian was spoken and written there (Tabari, Ta’rikh, I, 2052–53).
9 Dīnawarī, Akhbār at-tiwāl, p. 122. The descendents of the Persians settled at Anbar by Shāpūr I are supposed to have been still living there at the time of the Muslim conquest in the seventh century (Baladhuri, Futūh, p. 177).
10 Abū Yusuf, Kharāj, p. 64; Baladhuri, Futūh, p. 177.
11 Tabari, Ta’rikh, I, 2451.
12 Ibid., I, 2426, 2528.
13 Persians from Istakhr were settled at Kirkuk; a Magian woman at Lashom in the sixth century was descended from them (Fiey, Assyrie Chrétienne, II, 15; III, 15).
tificatory clothing worn by the members of each class. Movement from one class to another was supposed to be exceptional and subject to the approval of the monarch himself. Instructors and teachers were appointed to train the members of each class or subclass in their profession.\(^{14}\)

However, this structure which depends largely on Sasanian royal, religious, and legal traditions is presented in an abstract, generalized and idealized form, and it is difficult to find such a society in actual operation. Although the professions certainly existed and tended to be hereditary, this schematic division into caste-like classes arbitrarily assigned by the state hardly seems to be a valid reflection of the long-term realities of Sasanian society. Rather, it is part of the Sasanian theory of the state. The rationale behind it is provided in the salutation of a letter ascribed to Ardashir I and addressed to his subjects as follows: “To the secretaries who are in charge of the administration of affairs, to the priests who are the preservers of religion, to the cavalrymen who are the defenders of the state, to the laborers who make the state prosperous.”\(^{15}\) The success of the state depended on the performance by each class of its responsibilities, as expressed in the classic Sasanian formulation of the “circle of power,” again ascribed to Ardashir, that there is no ruler without men, no men without money, no money without prosperity, and no prosperity without justice and good administration.\(^{16}\) Consequently, this picture of Sasanian society should be regarded as a statement of policy, associated with the restoration of order after the Mazdakī risings in the late Sasanian period when there may have been a real attempt under Khosrow I Anūshirvān to freeze society in this fashion for the benefit of the state.\(^{17}\)

In practice, the official classes overlapped a good deal. Peasants also served in the army as infantry. Bureaucrats (Ar. kuttab) wore the clothing of their class in town, but when they accompanied the king on campaign they wore the clothing of soldiers.\(^{18}\) There does not seem to have been any hindrance to marriage among the members of the first three estates, with a resulting confusion over the profession of the children. The aristocratic sixth-century administrator, Babai, who

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\(^{16}\) Tha‘alībī, *Ghurar*, p. 482.


\(^{18}\) Jahshiyārī, *Wuzarā‘*, p. 3.
was ʻustāndār of Nasabin and the father of the Christian convert and martyr Mihrāmgushnasp/Giwargis (d. 615), married the daughter of a Magian priest (N.P. mōbadh). Their son, Mihrāmgushnasp, is described only as an aristocratic absentee landlord. Similarly, we find the son of another kind of Magian priest (N.P. hirbadh) engaged in the defense of the Sawad against the Muslims as a local landed aristocrat who had married into a branch of the royal family. Nor were administrative careers closed to those outside or below the scribal class. The story of the shoemaker who unsuccessfully tried to get a position as scribe for his son in the reign of Khosraw I Anūshirvān should be balanced by the case of Farrūkhzād, son of Sumayy, tax collector for Khosraw II Parviz in the 620s, who was a lower-class person (Ar. ʻilj) from the village of Khandaq in the subdistrict (M.P. tassūj) of Behrasir (Veh-Artakhshatr). His elevation was resented, to be sure (as was his extortionate and efficient collection of taxes), and it may be that in these examples, which come from the late sixth and early seventh century, we are dealing with a breakdown of the mid-sixth-century establishment which was underway after only about a generation.

The “decadence of rank” and mixing of classes, presented by the Letter of Tanzar as representing the conditions immediately preceding and as being the reason for the establishment of the four-class system, could apply equally well to the degeneration of that system (if it ever really existed) by the later sixth century. The Letter describes how unscrupulous social climbers without nobility, ancestral lands, or skill in a trade, with no respect for noble descent or for the professions, acquired fortunes by denouncing others, while the descendants of noble families abandoned their dignity and manners to support themselves as tradesmen, married beneath themselves, and produced children of mean character. This would have been an extremely fluid society, and its description serves more to delineate the antithesis of the Sasanian ideal than to provide an abstract generalization of widespread or long-term social conditions.

The general problems for the description of Persian society in the

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19 Braun, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 223, Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 95.
20 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2245. For his identification with Anōshagān, son of Gushnasp-mah, see page 186.
21 Boyce, Tansar, p. 39.
22 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 1041.
23 Boyce, Tansar, pp. 39, 44.
late Sasanian period are complicated still further when one turns to Iraq. Here there is little evidence for the presence of merchants or artisans among the Persian population. One has to deal with the employment of non-Persians and non-Magians at almost all levels of the administration and with a growing class of Christian Persian landed aristocrats and courtiers. How were such people integrated into an official class system that had meaning in a Magian, and possibly Zurvanite, context? At the same time, the religiously sanctioned social customs of Magians and the hierarchy of Magian priests were part of the Persian cultural presence in Iraq.

In the face of such difficulties it seems far more reasonable to speak of a class of landed Persian aristocrats, themselves organized in a hierarchic system of ranks and grades, which monopolized the military, administrative, and religious positions in the state. This was in fact, the second alternative provided in the Letter of Tansar, where the important distinction was between nobles and commoners. Nobles were distinguished visibly from commoners, especially artisans and tradesmen, by their clothing and symbols of rank; their trousers, headgear, and horses; the silk clothing of their women; their servants, houses, and gardens; and by the noble occupation of hunting. Intermarriage between nobles and commoners was forbidden; a noble who married a commoner was disinherited. Commoners were forbidden by buy the household possessions or estates of nobles. This difference was intensified by the fact that the members of the royal family, the high nobility, soldiers, hirbadhs, secretaries, and those in royal service were all exempt from the poll tax. The heads of the Magian priesthood, administrative and military hierarchies, landed aristocracy, and state-run enterprises were all members of the high nobility, mainly by virtue of their positions at court.

Apart from being available in such general, theoretical statements, this alternative has the added advantage that it is actually possible to find and describe a single vertical social hierarchy among Persians in late Sasanian Iraq, with the peasants at the bottom. At the top of this hierarchy was the Sasanian royal family itself, supported by their domain lands scattered throughout the Sawad. The most important branch of the royal family with lands in lower Iraq was the house of Narsi, the son of a maternal aunt of Khusraw II Parvīz. Narsi had

24 Ibid., pp. 44, 48.
25 Tabari, Ta’rīkh, I, 962.
26 Ibid., pp. 2371, 2540.
been assigned the entire crown province of Kaskar about 624 as a land grant (Ar. qaṭiʿa). The special property assigned for his support was at Nirsiyan, provided with storehouses and protected by a stronghold, which was called his preserve (Ar. himā) and is probably to be identified with the Dar Narsi in the district of Kaskar. At the time of the Islamic conquest, this stronghold was in the possession of Narsi’s daughter, Tamāhij, and her husband Anōshagān, son of Gushnasp-mah, who was Narsi’s paternal nephew. If he is to be identified with Anōshagān, son of the hirbadh, it would mean that Narsi’s own brother was a hirbadh. Bistām ibn Narsi, the dihqān of Burs at the time of the conquest, is likely to have been the son of this member of the royal family.

Directly below the royal family and sharing many of its privileges was a small number of families of very high nobility (M.P. vāspūhr, Ar. aḥl al-buyutāt) who were believed to have been descended from the vassal kings of the Parthian period. They are said to have been allowed to retain the rank of “kings” and the right to wear a crown because their ancestors had been the equals of the Sasanians. They also wore the yārqān (M.P., torque), golden belts, and armbrads. Traditionally, only seven families had these privileges, the most visible of which was the right to wear a tall, conical hat called a qalansuwwa (A. ?) worth one hundred thousand dirhams. However, Masʿūdī speaks of only three great families established by the Sasanians in the Sawad, and, in fact, only representatives of the Sūrēn, Qārēn, Mīrān, and Hurmuzān families can be found even peripherally associated with Iraq. But there were other people of the same level of nobility in Iraq at the time of the conquest, among whom were the Sasanian

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27 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 340; Justi, Namenbuch, p. 17; Paruck, Sāsānian Coins, p. 2; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2168, 2245. Justi regards the name of an-Nūshajān ibn Jusnasmā in Ṭabarī as the Arabicized form of Anōshagān-i Gushnaspmah. Anōshagān means “descendent of the house of Anōsh,” and his father’s name, which means “stallion of Media,” suggests that the family had only been in the Sawad for a generation. For Bistām ibn Narsi, see Baladhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 259, 457–58; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2421; and Yaʿqūbī, Taʿrīkh, II, 176. Bistām was also the name of a brother of Hurmizd IV who was the uncle of both Khusraw II Parviz and Narsi.

28 Løkkegaard, Islamic Taxation, p. 171; Zotenberg, Chronique, III, 448.

29 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2025. Golden rings, belts, and jewelry were symbols of great honor in sixth century Iran and royal permission was necessary to wear them (Prokopios, Wars, I, xvii).

30 Masʿūdī, Murūj, I, 327.

generals Jālinūs (Galienus?) and Jābān, both of whom were called "kings." Rustam, the Sasanian general at Qadisiyya, also seems to have belonged to this aristocratic elite because he possessed a qalansuwwa worth one hundred thousand dirhams. The participation of these representatives of the high nobility in the defense of Iraq seems to have been at least in part motivated by the fact that a number of "kings" had estates (Ar. dīyā') at Taff.

Next in rank was the class of shahrijān (M.P., Ar. shahārija), so named because the official (radh, shahrij) in charge of a province (shahr, kūra) was chosen from among them. Ispahbadhs and marzbāns, by virtue of being governors of provinces, also seem to have belonged to this level of the aristocracy, because Mas'ūdī puts them in the second rank of courtiers right after the high nobility. The best representative of this class in lower Iraq at the end of the Sasanian period is Āzādhbih, son of Bāniyān, son of Mihrbundādh of Hamadan, who was marzbān of Hira from 613 to 630 or 634. From what little is known about him, he gives the impression of a person on his way up in the Persian hierarchy. He is said to have achieved a position of "half nobility" and the right to wear a qalansuwwa worth fifty thousand dirhams, and had a close personal interest in the fate of the agricultural districts east of the Euphrates around Amghishiya. He had also been able to secure the marriage of his daughter to one of his neighbors (and social superiors), the lord (Ar. šāhib) of Sinnin, who was a member of the high nobility (one of the "kings").

At the bottom of this aristocratic hierarchy were the small landed proprietors (A. tunnā', Syr. marē qōryē). Administrators for the rural subdistricts in Sasanian Iraq were drawn from this class, and since each subdistrict was grouped around a village (M.P., N.P. dēh), the official in charge was called a dēhī or dēhīk, and the entire class was called dēkānān (Ar. dahāqīn). They are said to have been further divided into five grades, each distinguished by its clothing. Although

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32 Ţabari, Ta'rikh, I, 2341.
33 Balāḏurī, Futūh, p. 242; Ţabari, Ta'rikh, I, 2032; Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh, II, 147.
34 Ţabari, Ta'rikh, I, 2340.
35 Ibid., I, 2247.
36 Mas'ūdī, Murūj, I, 327.
37 Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh, I, 203.
38 Mas'ūdī, Murūj, I, 286.
39 Ţabari, Ta'rikh, I, 1038–39, 2037.
40 Ibid., I, 2037.
41 Ibid., I, 2233; Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh, II, 163.
42 Mas'ūdī, Murūj, I, 327.
there is no indication of what these distinctions might have involved, the *dahāqīn* as a class had the prerogative of riding the kind of horse called a *birdhawn* (*Syr.*, *destrier*) and of wearing golden rings.\textsuperscript{43} They were also included among those who could wear the *qalansuwwa*.\textsuperscript{44} Although it is impossible to identify five separate grades of *dahāqīn*, there was an important practical distinction between those who lived in towns and administered their estates as absentee landlords and those who lived on their estates in the countryside.

One of the best examples of the pattern of town residence by nobles with rural property at the end of the Sasanian period is the family of Mihrāmgushnasp/Giwrargis. His father had been *ustāndār* of Nasibin; his grandfather had been prefect of New Antioch for Khusraw Anūshirvān; and although the family possessed the village of Paqorya in Naneshtar (Nistar) in the Sawad, Mihrāmgushnasp owned a house in the capital and had put a Christian overseer in charge of his villages and other property.\textsuperscript{45} Although he was a member of the high nobility, the same pattern was followed by the *dahāqīn* who lived at Anbar\textsuperscript{46} and Hira. At the time of the conquest, the *dahāqīn* of Hira possessed estates (Ar. *dīyā") on the other side of the Euphrates in the territory of Amghishiya.\textsuperscript{47}

Outside of the towns, a lower grade of *dahāqīn* was scattered throughout the villages and rural subdistricts for which they were responsible. There are references in the context of the conquest to the “*dahāqīn* of the villages” in the countryside around Amghishiya;\textsuperscript{48} in the territory between Hira and Kaskar;\textsuperscript{49} to *dahāqīn* in Dast-i May-\paragraph{san};\textsuperscript{50} and to the Persians of Maysan and the Kuwar Dijla who were led in the defense of their lands by a notable of Abazqubadh named

\textsuperscript{43} Balāḏuри, *Futūh*, p. 271. The *dahāqīn* were also in charge of the list of young men liable for military service from which they procured recruits for the infantry (Løkkegaard, *Islamic Taxation*, p. 169). Altheim and Stiehl (*Asiatischer Staat*, pp. 134–35, 140–41) regard the establishment of the *dahāqīn* as part of the restoration under Khusraw I Anūshirvān. As landed aristocracy, they provided cavalry for the army.

\textsuperscript{44} Ṭabāri, *Tarīkh*, I, 2067. Even the Nestorian catholicos Sabhrishō\textsuperscript{7} (596–604) wore a *qalansuwwa* (Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 492, 494).


\textsuperscript{46} Ṭabāri, *Tarīkh*, I, 2203.

\textsuperscript{47} Balāḏuри, *Futūh*, p. 251.

\textsuperscript{48} Ṭabāri, *Tarīkh*, I, 2037.

\textsuperscript{49} *Ibid.*, I, 2030. The royal land grant of Nahraban was made to Abān and Bānī in the late Sasanian period, and their children were there at the time of the conquest (Yāqūt, *Buldān*, IV, 757–78).

\textsuperscript{50} Balāḏuри, *Futūh*, p. 342.
The Persian general called Andarzaghar seems representative of this class. He was one of the local landowners (A. *tunnā*) who had been born in the Sawad, and particular mention is made of the fact that he had neither been born in the capital (Mada‘īn) nor raised there. The village lords (Syr. *marē qoryē*) of upper Iraq were also largely of Persian descent. At this level, where the *dāhāqīn* appear to merge with the headmen of villages, this class was not exclusively Persian, and it is possible to find Aramaean and Arab *dāhāqīn* at the time of the conquest.

There is also evidence for the presence of Persian villagers and peasants in late Sasanian Iraq. In upper Iraq, in the heavily Persian district of Adiabene, Persian villagers were simply a part of the rest of the Persian population, as in Iran. The village of Beth Ghurbaq near Nineveh was described as stratified into nobles, *dihqāns*, and freemen in the late sixth century. In lower Iraq, peasants of Persian origin had been settled as imported labor for the agricultural development projects of the late Sasanian period. They seem to have been fairly widespread along the lower Tigris in Kaskar and Maysan, and there is a reference to an entire village located across the Euphrates from Anbar in the early seventh century, whose inhabitants were the descendents of people who were brought forcibly from Khurasan. Persian peasants also seem to have lived around the capital. Farrūkhzādī ibn Sumayy has already been noted. At the siege of Behrasir (Veh-Artakhshatr) by Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqās in 637, a large number of Persian peasants (Ar. *‘uluj li-ahli Fārs*) were rounded up in the villages and reed thickets outside the city and were only released when Shirzādh, the *dihqān* of Sabat, vouched for them.

Thus, by the end of the Sasanian period Persians were to be found concentrated along the line of the Zagros as an extension of the ethnic settlement on the plateau; in a defensive perimeter along the southwest border as garrison troops; in all of the major cities and towns as

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53 The notable called Gabriel at the village of Qosh in Beth Nuhadhra was of Persian descent; see E.A.W. Budge, *Rabban Hormizd the Persian* (London, 1902), I, 58–59, 67; II, 86–88, 99.
54 Budge, *Rabban Hormizd*, I, 135, 151; II, 201, 226.
55 The mother of Ziyād and the parents of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī were lower-class Persians and came from this part of Iraq (Balādhurī, *Futūh*, p. 344).
administrators and absentee landlords; and on estates scattered through the countryside from Anbar to Furat and from Hulwan to Hira as minor landed notables. They were organized in a graded, hierarchical class system: the royal family followed by the high nobles, the shahārija, and at least two grades of dahāqīn. At the bottom was the peasantry, some of whom were of Persian origin but who probably had been Aramaicized. At least, it is reasonable to suppose that in the early seventh century only the most recent arrivals were still Persian.

DISLOCATIONS DUE TO THE CONQUEST: DEATH AND FLIGHT

The Islamic conquest seriously altered the nature of the Persian presence in seventh-century Iraq, but a proper evaluation of its effects must be preceded by a consideration of two pre-Islamic developments. The general impression of the depopulation of the districts east of the Tigris and the formation of new urban concentrations around the garrison cities of Basra and Kufa in lower Iraq affected Persians as well as non-Persians in Iraq. But the depopulation of the districts east of the Tigris, along the Diyala river and the Nahrawan canal system, seems to have begun before the conquest and to have been the consequence of the Byzantine-Persian war in the reign of Khusraw II Parvīz. According to Robert Adams, “... a comparison of Sassanian with Early Islamic settlement makes clear that a substantial retraction occurred before the Islamic period both in the extent and density of occupation,” in this part of Iraq.58 Some fifty-eight percent of the settled part of the Diyala region was not reoccupied soon after the fall of the Sasanians, and at most the settlement in this region in the early Islamic period amounted to only sixty-four percent of what it had been before the end of the Sasanian period.59 Nor did the location of the sites in the early Islamic period necessarily correspond to late Sasanian sites in the same region. Again, according to Adams:

... terminal Sassanian and early Islamic settlements in these areas often neatly alternated with one another along the same canal branches. Since in most cases the early Islamic sites were newly settled after Sassanian times, this suggests that the Sassanian abandonment was associated with a social upheaval sufficient to break off the tradition

58 Adams, Land Behind Baghdad, p. 74.
59 Ibid., pp. 81, 99.
of residence at most of the Sassanian sites; on the other hand, the early Islamic occupation along the same watercourses, and with roughly comparable population density, suggests that the interval of disuse could not have been very long.\(^{60}\)

The "social upheaval sufficient to break off the tradition of residence" is identified by Adams with the campaign of the Byzantine Emperor Heraklios in the Tigris valley in 627 and 628.\(^{61}\) Not only agriculture but urban life declined in this part of Iraq during the seventh century as the result of pestilence, earthquakes, and famine. The village of Nahr Zawar near 'Ukbara was deserted in the reign of Shīrōē (Qubādh II, 628–29), and a presbyter in the village church named David settled in the village of Beth Daqle in Beth Garme.\(^{62}\) The second pre-Islamic development was extensive flooding in the districts below Kaskar in 628, which must have affected the fortunes of the house of Narsī as well as those of the peasants.

Immediately following these developments, the Islamic conquest was responsible for changes in the distribution of Persians in Iraq wrought by the combined effects of death, captivity, defection, and migration. One of the most important consequences of the conquest was the physical disappearance, either through death on the battlefield or by flight, of large numbers of Persian soldiers, aristocrats, and the royal family itself. Unfortunately, the figures preserved in the Arabic accounts of the conquest are thoroughly inflated and legendary and serve only to emphasize the extent of the dislocation. According to Arabic tradition, the first sweep made by Khalīd ibn al-Walīd coming up along the border of lower Iraq from the Yamama, took the lives of seventy thousand people at Ullays, most of whom were from Amghishiya. Afterwards, Amghishiya itself was razed and its remaining population scattered in the countryside.\(^{63}\) After the fall of Hira, the leader of a troop of Persian cavalry, Farrukbandādh, was killed at Baniqya and his forces fled.\(^{64}\) At 'Ayn Tamr, the main Persian force under Mihrān, son of Bahrām Chūbīn, fled after their Arab auxiliaries

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\(^{60}\) Ibid., pp. 81–82.
\(^{61}\) Ibid., p. 81; Agapius of Manbij, Kitāb al-'Unwān, p. 464; Scher, "Histoire n'estorienne," II(2), 541–42; Tabari, Ta'rikh, I, 1003–5.
\(^{62}\) Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, pp. 77–78.
\(^{63}\) Tabari, Ta'rikh, I, 2036–37. Somewhat schematically, Abū Yūsuf (Kharāj, pp. 219–20) says that Khalīd massacred the Persian garrisons at 'Udhayb and Najaf, took their women and children captive, and made peace with the people of Qadisiyya for the payment of tribute.
\(^{64}\) Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 225; Balādhuri, Futūh, p. 244.
were defeated by Khālid; when the citadel fell, all of the remaining defenders were killed.\textsuperscript{65} At Anbar, after an engagement outside the city, the soldiers of the garrison under Shīrzād were allowed to withdraw, leaving all of their possessions behind.\textsuperscript{66} Along the Syrian border, the three strongholds of Husayd, Khanafis, and Musayyakh were reduced. At Husayd, large numbers of Persians were killed, along with the two commanders Zarmihr and Rūzbih, while at Musayyakh the entire garrison under Mahbūdān was killed in a dawn attack.\textsuperscript{67} On the other hand, Anōshagān, son of Gushnaspmah, came to terms with Khālid for the people in his stronghold near Kaskar.\textsuperscript{68}

Khālid’s raid was followed by a Persian counterattack in the Sawad. Many of the temporary arrangements made by the local authorities with the Muslims were annulled (forcibly or otherwise) by the Persians, who tried to restore the border and rally their forces for the defense of the Sawad. Narsī was made personally responsible for the protection of the interests of the royal family in lower Iraq. There, along with his cousins Bindawai and Tīrāwai, the sons of of Biṣṭām the uncle of Parvīz, he attempted to raise local resistance to protect Kaskar from Muslim raids.\textsuperscript{69} The Persian riposte was crowned with success at the Battle of the Bridge, where the Muslim army under Abī ’Ubayd was decisively defeated, and Abī ’Ubayd himself was killed. Thereafter, the leadership of the Muslim forces passed to a local Arab, Muthannā ibn Hāritha, who was able to weaken the Persians by a series of raids and finally defeated them at the Battle of Buwayb. Only then were the remaining Persian border posts (Ar. \textit{manāzir}) along the desert frontier, particularly Hisn Maliqiyah and the positions at Taff, reduced.\textsuperscript{70}

The conflict in the Euphrates districts was decided by the Battle of Qadisiyya, a military disaster for the Persians in which the general, Rustam, fell on the battlefield and the army was routed. The fugitives were pursued by the Muslim captains Zuhra and Qa‘qā’, who are said to have killed them in every village, reed thicket, and river bank.\textsuperscript{71} The remnants of the Persian army gathered at Babil under Nakhīrjān, Mihrān ar-Rāzī, Hurmuzān, and Fayruzān and attempted to make a stand. Fayruzān was put in charge by the others, but they were defeated

\textsuperscript{65} Abī Ṭūsuf, \textit{Kharāj}, p. 226; Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta’rīkh}, I, 2063–64.
\textsuperscript{66} Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta’rīkh}, I, 2060.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., I, 2068–70.
\textsuperscript{68} Balādhurī, \textit{Futūḥ}, p. 340.
\textsuperscript{69} Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta’rīkh}, I, 2168–69.
\textsuperscript{70} Balādhurī, \textit{Futūḥ}, p. 254.
\textsuperscript{71} Ṭabarī, \textit{Ta’rīkh}, I, 2341.
by the Muslim vanguard under Zuhra and rescattered.72 Hurmuzān retired to Ahwaz and to his property at Mihrājanqadhaq, and Fay-rūzān went off to Nihawand, where he seized the royal treasures.73 Meanwhile Zuhra’s force pursued the Persians fleeing towards the capital, and when he drove them out of Sura, two more noblemen, Fayumān from Maysan and Farrūkhān from Ahwaz, were killed.74 At Kutha the dihqān of Bab, Shahriyār, was killed after he was abandoned by Nakhirjān, who fled to Mada’in along with Mihrān ar-Rāzī.75

As the main Muslim army under Sa’d approached the capital, the Persians attempted to make another stand. At Sabat an entire squadron of soldiers, having sworn that they would not outlive the Persian state, were cut down.76 After a brief attempt to defend Behrasir, that city was evacuated by Nakhirjān and Mihrān ar-Rāzī, who retired to the east bank of the Tigris with the garrison, cutting the floating bridge behind them.77 Across the river, the eastern half of Mada’in was subjected to a siege by Sa’d for a month and a half before the Persians again evacuated it. This time it was not only the garrison that fled, but—led by Yazdagerd III and the royal family—the aristocratic population of the city as well.78 While Farrūkhzād is said to have been left behind in charge at Mada’in,79 Mihrān and Nakhirjān were made responsible for the evacuation of the royal treasure.80 The road from Mada’in to Hulwan now became clogged with refugees and soldiers while the Muslim vanguard hovered at their rear, cutting off stragglers and collecting their weapons and other possessions as booty.81 Halfway to Hulwan, the Persian rear guard made an attempt to cover the retreat. The baggage and dependents were entrenched at Khaniqin while what must have been a major Persian force under Khurrazād, the brother of Rustam, met a Muslim force of twelve thousand under Hāshim ibn ‘Utba ibn Abī Waqqāṣ at Jalula’. The Arabic tradition

72 Ibid., I, 2420–21.
73 Ibid., I, 2521.
74 Ibid., I, 2421–22.
75 Ibid., I, 2421, 2423. At the same time, the Persian troops stationed in upper Iraq, particularly at Sinjar, were evacuated (Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 64).
76 Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, I, 2359, 2425. They appear to have been a special unit formed by Queen Būrān and were led by a man who had been one of her favorites.
77 Ibid., I, 2421, 2429.
78 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 263; Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, I, 2357–58, 2439, 2441–42; Tha‘alibi, Ghurar, p. 739; Ya‘qūbi, Ta’rikh, II, 165.
79 Tha‘alibi, Ghurar, p. 739.
80 Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, I, 2439–40.
81 Ibid., I, 2440, 2446–47.
claims that the Persians suffered one hundred thousand casualties at Jalula'. In any case, it was a second major disaster and left their dependents and property all but unprotected at Khariqin. While Hāshim stayed at Jalula', a flying column under Qa‘qā' ibn ‘Amr pursued the survivors to Khariqin, where every fighting man who could be caught, including Mihrān ar-Rāzī who had fled from Jalula', was killed. When he heard of the defeat at Jalula’ and the death of Mihrān, Yazdageurd abandoned Hulwan and headed for Rayy, leaving the troops at Hulwan under Khusrawshunūm. The last major engagement in this campaign was that fought at Qasr-i Shirin between Khusrawshunūm and Qa‘qā', in which the Persians were again defeated and Khusrawshunūm was put to flight.

About the time of Sa‘d’s campaign through central Iraq, a separate expedition under ‘Utba ibn Ghāzwan produced a similar dislocation, mainly affecting the Persian garrison troops and local nobles, in southeastern Iraq. All four thousand horsemen (M.P. uswār), with which the lord (šāhib) of Furat attacked ‘Utba at the site of Basra, are said to have been killed and the lord of Furat was taken captive. The marzbān of Dast-i Maysan was captured and killed by ‘Utba, and at Madhar a Persian force was routed with thirty thousand casualties while the marzbān and lord (šāhib) of Madhar was captured and beheaded.

DISLOCATIONS DUE TO THE CONQUEST: CAPTIVITY

The location of Persians in Iraq was also altered through the capture by Muslims of the noncombatants and dependents associated with the Persian army and administration. Peasants were generally left unharmed as long as they did not resist, because the Muslims were mainly interested in taking captive the sons of military men who knew Persian methods and procedures. There are at least two explicit examples of this practice in operation. In one case, in the course of
the conquest of upper Iraq, a *marzban* was captured and put to death while his children were spared.\(^{88}\) In the second case, in the process of quelling a rising at Nahr Tira on the border between the Sawad of Basra and Ahwaz in 644, sixty young men (Ar. sg. *ghulam*) who were the sons of *dahāqin* were taken captive. In this case, however, the young men were ransomed and the amount was divided among the Muslims.\(^{89}\)

The initial result of captivity was the physical removal of a large number of Persian women and children from Iraq, most of whom were sent off to Madina with the other booty. According to Ya‘qubī, Khalid had taken captives at Kaskar and Baniqya.\(^{90}\) At Ullays, captives are said to have been taken as never before.\(^{91}\) It was during this raid that the procession conveying the daughter of Āzādhbihīh to her new husband at Sinnin was intercepted, and she was captured along with thirty women of the *dahāqin* and one hundred attendants.\(^{92}\) At ‘Ayn Tamr, after the garrison was slaughtered, all of the noncombatants in the fortress were taken captive.\(^{93}\) After Khalid left for Syria, in the campaign that led up to the battle of the Bridge, more captives were taken at Zandaward\(^{94}\) and at Bitiq in Nahr Jawbar.\(^{95}\) Captives were also taken at Ubulla when it fell to ‘Utba ibn Ghazwān.\(^{96}\)

The longer the Muslims remained in Iraq, the less likely it was for captives to be sent back to Madina. As successful campaigns led to permanent occupation, the result of the advance of Muslim armies to the east and north was to rearrange the Persian population in Iraq. The dependents of the Persian army that was defeated at Jalula’ were taken captive at Khaniqin, including, it is said, a daughter or granddaughter of Khusraw II Parviz named Manjana. Since their captors returned to Mada’in and ultimately settled in Kufa, there is good reason to believe that at least a number of captive Persian women and children were also settled at Kufa.\(^{97}\) Some of the veterans of Qadisiyya

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\(^{88}\) Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, p. 230.
\(^{89}\) Tabari, *Ta‘rikh*, I, 2710–11.
\(^{90}\) Ya‘qubī, *Ta‘rikh*, II, 147.
\(^{93}\) Tabari, *Ta‘rikh*, I, 2063–64. These captives, who were probably the dependents of the Persian garrison, should be distinguished from the captives taken from the town of ‘Ayn Tamr, who were Arabs.
\(^{94}\) Baladhuri, *Futūḥ*, p. 251.
\(^{95}\) Tabari, *Ta‘rikh*, I, 2170.
\(^{96}\) Ibid., I, 2384–85.
also settled in Basra, so it is also reasonable to suppose that some of these captives were taken there. The many freeborn Persian women taken captive at Jalula' became a significant element in the social history of the Islamic garrison cities in Iraq, especially at Kufa. Incorporated into the households of their captors, their children grew up to be the largest group of mawālī of Persian origin at Kufa. Twenty years later their sons were of fighting age. 'Alī had eight thousand mawālī and slaves of the Arab clans registered in the military diwān at Kufa in 657, and the sons of the women captured at Jalula' fought at the battle of Siffin.98

The redistribution of the Persian population of Iraq by carrying captive women and children off to the Hijaz or by relocating them in the new Islamic garrison towns of Basra and Kufa contributed to the depopulation of the districts east of the Tigris and added to the new concentration of population in lower Iraq. This population was increased still further by those who returned from the Hijaz and by new Persian captives brought from the Iranian plateau. A number of the captives taken to the Hijaz, or their children, made their way back to Iraq. Among the captives taken in Maysan in 635 was a certain Ar-ṭābān, who converted to Islam and ultimately settled in Basra as the mawla of 'Abdullāh ibn Durra ibn Sarāq al-Muzānī in the caliphate of 'Umar I.99 The most famous example is that of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, whose father was taken captive in Maysan and brought to the Hijaz. Al-Ḥasan was born at Madina in 642 and raised in the Wadi Qurṣ north of Madina. He left in 658 when he was sixteen years old and, after a brief term in the administration of Sistan in the 660s when he was in his twenties and as secretary for the governor of Khurasan, he settled in Basra, where he spent the rest of his life.100 Likewise, most of the prisoners brought back by the Muslim armies that conquered the Iranian plateau were taken to the slave markets in Basra or Kufa and redistributed from there. This caused the initial ethnic dislocation produced by the killing or flight of large numbers of Persians in the course of the conquest to be offset by a new, forced Persian immigration to the cities of lower Iraq. The best known example of this is

99 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2387; Ibn Saʿd, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 88.
the case of Šāliḥ ibn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān, whose parents were taken captive near Zaranj in Sistan in 650–51 and were sold in the slave market in Basra.\textsuperscript{101}

**DEFECTION AND MIGRATION**

In addition to those Persians whose condition and location were affected involuntarily by the conquest, a number of Persian soldiers managed to preserve themselves by coming to terms with the conquerors. Among the first to go over to the winning side were a group of Persians called the Ḥamrāʾ (Ar. “red”), who converted to Islam and joined the Muslim army, some before the Battle of Qadisiyya, some afterwards. They were integrated into the Muslim army as allies of the Arab tribe of Tamim and participated in the division of the booty at Qadisiyya, where they received shares equal to those of the Arabs in the army.\textsuperscript{102} Afterwards, they took part in Saʿd’s campaign and formed part of the advance guard under Qaʿqāʾ after the Battle of Jalulaʾ. They were with Qaʿqāʾ at Khaniqin, where the dependents of the Persian army were taken captive. After the fall of Hulwan, Qaʿqāʾ settled the Ḥamrāʾ there as a border garrison under their leader, a man named Qubadh.\textsuperscript{103} Some of the Ḥamrāʾ were settled as far away as Saman, one of the subdistricts (M.P., N.P. rustāq) of Mah Dinar on the border of the province of Isfahān.\textsuperscript{104} But some of them returned to Kufa with the Muslim army and settled there. Among the Ḥamrāʾ who settled at Kufa were a corps of four thousand Daylamis formed by Khusraw II Parviz called the Jund Shahanshah. They accepted Islam in exchange for security at Qadisiyya, became allies (Ar. ḥālifū) of the Banu Tamīm, and as a unit received one million dirhams in stipends. They were present at the fall of Madaʾin and at Jalulaʾ, and settled in Kufa under a representative (Ar. naqīb) called Daylam where they had their own masjid.\textsuperscript{105} A village inhabited by Ḥamrāʾ Daylam existed near Kufa in the 640s.\textsuperscript{106}

During the governorship of Ziyād, the Kufan shurṭa was recruited among members of the local Ḥamrāʾ. They were armed with clubs

\textsuperscript{101} Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 300–301.
\textsuperscript{102} Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, I, 2261.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., I, 2473–74. Qubadh was a native of Khurasan.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., II, 992.
\textsuperscript{106} “Qaryatan min Ḥamrāʾ Daylām”; Yaḥyā, *Buldān*, IV, 758.
and employed to suppress the sedition of Ḥujr ibn ‘Adī in Kufa in 671. Among them were Bakr ibn ‘Ubayd and Bukayr ibn Ḥumrān al-Ahmārī, whose genealogies suggest that, thirty years after the original settlement, we are already dealing with second generation Ḥamrā’ by the 670s. Indeed, by the time of Mu‘āwiya’s caliphate, the natural increase of the Ḥamrā’ population of Kufa had begun to pose a problem and some of them were transferred to Basra, where they joined other Persians, or to Syria.

Nevertheless, nearly twenty thousand Ḥamrā’ were still at Kufa in the 680s. They were favored by al-Mukhtār, who gave them stipends and attended their assemblies (Ar. majālis). In return, they supported him and are supposed to have accounted for most of the army of twenty thousand men al-Mukhtār sent against ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād under Ḥabrāhīm ibn al-Ashtar.

Although the Daylamis are likely to have been infantry, large numbers of heavy, mailed cavalry (M.P. usvārān, Ar. asāwira) also went over to the Muslim side. The main group of Asāwira was the force under Siyāh al-Uswārī, which formed the vanguard of Yazdagerd’s army when the latter headed for Isfahan after abandoning Hulwan. Siyāh was sent on ahead from Isfahan towards Istakhr with three hundred men, seventy of whom were members of the high aristocracy and army officers. He was told to gather other soldiers along the way, and from Fars, he turned westwards into Khuzistan. Here his force settled at Kalbaniyya, probably as a defense against the Muslims at Basra. Siyāh eventually converted to Islam when Abū Mūsā al-Ashtarī was governor of Basra, and the Asāwira settled there. Their numbers were increased by other elements in the Persian army who heard of the successful accommodation they had made and came to Basra to join them, especially landless Persian soldiers who converted to Islam and settled in Basra.

Apart from the involuntary settlement of captives and the voluntary gravitation of defectors from the Persian army to Basra and Kufa, a third factor contributing to the new concentration of Persians in lower Iraq following the Islamic conquest was the way individual Persians tended to be attracted to the cities of the new rulers. This type of migration is rather difficult to document because it was generally

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107 Ṭabarī, Ta’rīkh, II, 118, 129, 148.
109 Dinawarī, Akhbār at-tiwa‘, pp. 296, 301–2, 306.
110 Baladhūrī, Futūḥ, pp. 372–74.
anonymous, but it is suggested by the accounts of several persons. Rūzbih, son of Buzurjmihr, son of Sāsān, was a native of Hamadan who had been assigned to the Byzantine border at the end of the Sasanian period but had begun to smuggle weapons across the border to the west. Fearing he was about to be discovered, he went over to the Byzantines, but after the Islamic conquest he felt it was safe again, returned to Iraq, and joined Sa'd at Kufa where he is given credit for building the citadel (qaṣr) and masjid. The inclusion of lower-class Persians in this movement is suggested by a reference to a Persian 'ilj who went to Basra sometime before 683, converted to Islam, and became associated with the Khawārij. But such migration did not always involve conversion to Islam. There were Magian butchers at Basra, and a Persian called Bar Sahde, who died in 745 at the age of ninety, is said to have migrated from Istakhr to Basra, where he received instruction in the Nestorian Christian schools and became a monk.

SURVIVAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE

These dislocations and shifts in the pattern of Persian settlement and distribution in Iraq following the conquest were balanced by the way significant portions of the Sasanian landed aristocracy managed to survive by coming to terms with and even aiding the conquerors. In Khālid's first raid through lower Iraq, he made terms with the people of Nahr Mar'a, imposed tribute on the people of Hira in return for a peace treaty, and allowed Zādh ibn Buhaysh to make terms for Furat Sirya. An annual tribute was imposed on the people of Anbar in return for peace following the departure of the garrison. During Abū 'Ubayd's follow-up campaign, the people of Ullays avoided a repetition of what had happened during Khālid's raid and exchanged tribute for peace. Following Abū 'Ubayd's victory over local forces at Kaskar in 634, several dahāqūn also made peace for their districts

\[\text{\footnotesize \begin{align*}
111 \ & \ \text{Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, I, 2494-95.} \\
112 \ & \ \text{Ibid., II, 461. See also Ibn an-Nadīm, Fihrist, I, 88.} \\
113 \ & \ \text{Chabot, "Chasteté," pp. 5, 230–31.} \\
114 \ & \ \text{Baladhuri, Futūh, pp. 340, 342.} \\
115 \ & \ \text{Ibid., p. 243; Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, I, 2017–19, 2044–45, 2350; Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 47; Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh, II, 147.} \\
116 \ & \ \text{Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, I, 2050–51.} \\
117 \ & \ \text{Yaḥūṭ, Buldān, I, 368.} \\
118 \ & \ \text{Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, I, 2019; Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 26.}
\end{align*}\]
in return for a poll tax of four dirhams per person: Farrûkh ibn Andarzaghar for Barusma, Farwandâdh for Nahr Jawbar, and the dihqân of Zawabi for this district.\(^{119}\)

But the validity of these agreements seems to have been seriously compromised in the course of the Persian counterattack, especially after the Battle of the Bridge. The Persians may have forced some of the people in lower Iraq to violate their agreements with the Muslims,\(^{120}\) but, on the whole, the dahāqîn appear to have tried to accommodate the side which seemed to be winning at the moment, and Zadh ibn Buhaysh commanded the Persian infantry at the Battle of Qadisiyya.\(^{121}\)

After the Muslim victory at Qadisiyya, the dahāqîn of the Sawad were offered the option of protection and inviolability in return for paying taxes, and they accepted. Even those who had fled were allowed to return, although they were subjected to heavier taxes. The people in the White Palace at Mada’in were allowed to pay taxes in return for protection when that city fell. These terms were extended to the rest of the population of the city who returned after the fighting was over.\(^{122}\) Similar terms were also made for the people of Takrit,\(^{123}\) Bandanikan,\(^{124}\) and at Mahrudh.\(^{125}\) In the final settlement after the Battle of Jalula’, those dahāqîn who survived were left with their lands but were made responsible to the Muslim regime for the taxes.\(^{126}\)

Consequently, apart from the new concentration of Persians in Basra and Kufa following the conquest, the Sasanian pattern of settlement in Iraq tended to be preserved by the pre-Islamic class of notables living in towns as absentee landlords or on their estates in the countryside. Although Mada’in was no longer the capital of an empire and Kufa overshadowed it in size and importance, it continued to be an important center for local administration. The real blow to the pros-

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\(^{119}\) Balâdhuri, Futûb, p. 251; Ţabarî, Ta’rikh, I, 2170.

\(^{120}\) Ţabarî, Ta’rikh, I, 2369.

\(^{121}\) Ibid., I, 2061, 2258, 2472.

\(^{122}\) Ibid., I, 2435, 2440.

\(^{123}\) Ibid., I, 2477. When Tîrhan and Takrit were conquered by ‘Utba ibn Farqad, he made peace with the people in the fortress of Takrit, the terms of which granted security for their persons and their property. According to a local shaykh, the people of Takrit had a treaty (Ar. kitâb âmân) until the raids of the Khârijî al-Jurashi, who tore it up when he laid waste to the villages of Mawsil (Balâdhuri, Futûb, p. 333).

\(^{124}\) The people of Bandanikan made peace with Hâshim b. ‘Utba for the payment of jizya and kharâj (Balâdhuri, Futûb, p. 265).

\(^{125}\) Balâdhuri, Futûb, p. 265; Ţabarî, Ta’rikh, I, 2461.

\(^{126}\) Ţabarî, Ta’rikh, I, 2467-68; Yahyâ ibn Adam, Kharâj, pp. 26–27, 52.
perity and importance of Mada'in would appear to have been the Khārījī sack of the city in 687 when men, women, and children were indiscriminately slaughtered, but which was probably restricted to the Muslim population.\textsuperscript{127} Thereafter, Mada'in survived as a small city until the foundation of the 'Abbāsī capital at Baghdad.\textsuperscript{128} Hulwan, Saymara, and Sirawan along the northeast border of Iraq continued to have Persian populations mixed with Arabs and Kurds.\textsuperscript{129} In the agricultural districts along the Nahrawan canal east of the Tigris, the town of Dayr ʿAquīl continued to be inhabited by noble landowners, although this town was smaller in the Islamic period than it had been under the Sasanians.\textsuperscript{130} Likewise Jarjaraya, the administrative seat of the lower Nahrawan district, continued to be inhabited by the descendants of Persian nobles,\textsuperscript{131} as did Madharaya on the Tigris below it.\textsuperscript{132} There were *dahāqīn* at Baghdad in 659,\textsuperscript{133} and the rural nobility continued to live in town at Kaskar even after the founding of Wasit across the river.\textsuperscript{134} In the Sawad of Kufa, the lowest grade of *dahāqīn* continued to reside in villages and estates in the countryside.\textsuperscript{135}

Persian peasants also survived into the Islamic period in Iraq, although in decreasing numbers. The small villages in the countryside around Basra continued to be inhabited by Persians,\textsuperscript{136} but they were only an extension of the Persian population of Khuzistan, because the Islamic state did not settle any new Persian peasants in the Sawad.

Those Persians who survived the conquest maintained their cultural heritage among themselves. The festivals of Nawrūz, Mihrijān, and the Kawsaj continued to be observed by Persians in Iraq. Nawrūz, which was supposed to coincide with the vernal equinox and fell on the first day of Farvārdīn, the first month of the year, had served as the beginning of the fiscal year under the Sasanians. It was the moment at which administrative appointments took effect, and a time for presenting gifts to the sovereign, minting new coins, purifying the fire temples by ceremonial ablutions and sacrifices, and issuing procla-
This festival was still honored by Persians as a time for the exchange of gifts. Mihrijān fell on the sixteenth day of the month of Mihr, corresponding to October 26. It was supposed to mark the beginning of cold weather and was also an occasion for presenting gifts to the monarch. The practice of changing carpets, utensils, and most clothing on that date was continued in Iraq after the conquest, as was the requirement of offering gifts to the ruler. The midwinter festival of the Kawsaj, on the first day of Ādhurmāh, was also celebrated by Persians in Islamic Iraq. This festival lasted several days and involved eating walnuts, garlic, fattened meat, and drinking beverages regarded as appropriate for combatting the cold. During the festival, a person called the Kawsaj traditionally would ride through the streets mounted on a mule. Cold water would be poured on him, and he would call out in Persian, “Garmā! garmā! (hot! hot!).” This practice was part of the public rejoicing, probably associated with the return of the sun after the winter solstice.

In many ways the survival of such customs amounted to a post-Sasanian cultural afterglow. There was a noticeable tendency for the Persians of early Islamic Iraq to cling to old ways of doing things while the situation was changing around them. They even attempted to impose their outlook and practices on the new set of circumstances. In fact, whether they suffered physical dislocation or not, Persians found themselves faced with significant changes in their social status and with cultural erosion, due mainly to the loss of political power. To the extent that Iranian cultural traditions were identified with Magianism, the conquest had the effect of accelerating the defection of Magians from their religion (a trend already underway in the late Sasanian period) because it had been replaced as the religion of the ruling class by Islam.

The conquest also altered the nature of the Persian social structure in Iraq. Although enough representatives of the landed aristocracy survived to be able to preserve the main outlines of their graded, class system, according to Løkkegaard the upper levels of this hierarchic society disappeared with the conquest and those members of the high aristocracy who survived tended to be demoted in rank. Although this

137 Tāj, p. 146.
138 Yaʿqūbī, Taʿrīkh, I, 199.
139 Masʿūdī, Murūj, II, 337–38; Yaʿqūbī, Taʿrīkh, II, 259.
140 Masʿūdī, Murūj, II, 343.
141 Løkkegaard, Islamic Taxation, p. 168.
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seems to be a perfectly valid judgment, adequate account must be taken of the survival of individuals belonging to the highest level of the Sasanian hierarchy. Mas’ūdī claims that descendants of the highest aristocracy (Ar. ābnā’ il-mulūk) and members of the traditional four classes continued to live in the Sawad and preserved their genealogies.\textsuperscript{142} Otherwise, the Arabic tradition insists that the Sasanian royal family was proscribed from any settlement in the Sawad, and all it admits is the survival as captives of some of the women of the royal family. This attitude seems to be tendentious, based on the need to justify the confiscation of the crown lands and royal property in the Sawad by asserting they had been abandoned by the flight of Yazdagerd III.

Actually, some members of the royal family seem to have preserved their landed interests, at least for a while, by coming to terms with the Muslims. The best example is Bīštām, son of Narsī, who was called dihqān of Burs at the time of the conquest. Immediately after Qādisiyya, he extended his hospitality to Khālid ibn ʿUrfaṭa, who was pursuing the remnants of the Persian army. Bīštām tied the floating bridges together for Zuhra, who was engaged in a similar pursuit, and informed Zuhra of the Persian force gathered at Babil. Afterwards, as dihqān of Babil and Khutarniya, his poll tax was annulled, he was allowed to keep his lands subject to kharāj, and he was granted a stipend of two thousand dirhams by ʿUmar I.\textsuperscript{143} Fīrūz, son of Yazdagerd, turns up as dihqān of Nahr Malik after the conquest with a stipend of two thousand dirhams granted by ʿUmar, and also may have been a member of the royal family, as may Rūzbih, son of Būzurjmihr, son of Sāsān.\textsuperscript{144} Other members of the high aristocracy also survived; the list of those granted two-thousand-dirham stipends by ʿUmar included Hurmuzān and the son of Nakhīrjān.\textsuperscript{145}

The Persian nobles—even members of the high aristocracy—also managed to preserve their local influence and authority by acquiring positions in the Nestorian Church organization and by putting their lands under monastic ownership. Beginning in the catholicate of Īshōʿyahbh III (647–658), who was himself a member of a family of

\textsuperscript{142} Masʿūdī, Murūj, I, 327.
\textsuperscript{143} Balādhorī, Futūḥ, pp. 259, 457–58; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2421; Yaʿqūbī, Taʿrīkh, II, 176.
\textsuperscript{144} Yaʿqūbī, Taʿrīkh, II, 176.
\textsuperscript{145} Balādhorī, Futūḥ, pp. 457–58; Yahyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 51; Yaʿqūbī, Taʿrīkh, II, 176.
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landed Persian aristocrats, Persian noblemen were appointed metropolitan bishops for Prath dh' Mayshan (Furat) and Nasibin. A certain Beraz Sūrīn became head of the monastery of Beth 'Abhe in the late seventh century, and another member of the Sūrīn family tried to use his position as metropolitan bishop of Hulwan to capture the office of catholicos in 752, but he was deposed. Rūzbihān, a descendant of the Persian nobility that settled at Nasibin, entered the monastery of Mar Awgīn on Mt. Izla above this town in the early eighth century. He went on to become superior of the monastery and then metropolitan bishop of Nasibin, and while he was metropolitan he gave one of his villages to his former monastery. This pattern is repeated by the career of Shārzādḥ, son of Mihrē. Born at Kirkuk in about 732, he, too, became a monk and rose within the Nestorian organization from the monastery of Beth Abhe to metropolitan of Elam (Khuzistan) and finally to catholicos (825–832).

In fact, the clearest illustration of the survival of the lower echelons of the Persian social hierarchy is to be found among the Christian notables of upper Iraq. Shahrijān had helped to defend Takrit at the time of the conquest, and in 641 their strongholds at Tall Shaharija and Salaq in Adiabene were taken by 'Utba ibn Farqad. But the Shahrijān kept their lands and exercised administrative authority over the lower grade of notables (dahqānē) as part of their superior social status. At Kefer 'Uzzel they even claimed the right to participate in the election of the Nestorian metropolitan of Adiabene, in spite of the fact that by the eighth century the Shahrijān of Salaq were somewhat heterodox. About 780, the dahqānē went to the bishop and accused the Shahrijān of Salaq of appropriating half the grain, wine, nuts, and poll tax. Shahrijān preserved their class status, perhaps as a kind of sect, in northern Iraq at least until the tenth century, when Ibn Ḥawqal described the town of Kefer 'Uzza (sic) in Ard Hazza (Adiabene) as a prosperous place with markets and estates (Ar. diyā') inhabited by wealthy Christian Shahārijā.

146 Thomas of Margha, Governors, II, 82, 124, 181–82.
149 Thomas of Margha, Governors, II, 332–34.
150 Balādhuri, Futūḥ, p. 332; Ṭabari, Taʻrikh, I, 2474–75.
152 Ibid., II, 311–12.
It is worth noticing that these lower levels of the Persian social hierarchy survived much longer in the region of Persian settlement in upper Iraq, among Christian Persians, than they did in the Sawad. In lower Iraq, all surviving Persian notables tended to be treated as *dahāqīn*, although the distinction between those who lived in town and those who lived in the countryside survived. Here *dahāqīn* kept their land by converting to Islam. In one account, a *dihqāna* in the subdistrict of Nahr Malik became a Muslim and was allowed to remain on her land if she paid the tax on it.\(^{154}\) 'Ali is said to have exempted a *dihqān* at 'Ayn Tamr from paying the poll tax when he converted to Islam, but he still was required to pay the land tax.\(^{155}\) In 658 there is a reference to a native of the Sawad named Zādīnfarīkh, who was a Muslim *dihqān* in the subdistrict of Niffar.\(^{156}\) At the same time, the *dahāqīn* appear to have enjoyed greater local authority and independence than ever before (or since). The combined effects of the aristocratic reaction that attended the fall of Khusraw Parvīz in 628, and the way that *dahāqīn* were able to secure recognition for their position and privileges from the Muslims at the time of the conquest, tended to increase the power and independence of this class. This was true especially in the fluid conditions immediately following the conquest, when they treated lands that had been granted to them by the Sasanian state as their own private property and even seized some of the abandoned Sasanian crown lands for themselves. The mid-seventh century was the heyday of the *dahāqīn* in the Sawad.

These circumstances had two important consequences that ultimately proved fatal to the *dahāqīn* as a class in lower Iraq. In the first place, they established ties of common interest with the Muslim Arab aristocracy in the garrison cities, but in the process some of the rural *dahāqīn* compromised their own position by selling their lands to Muslims and putting themselves under the protection (Ar. *taljr'a*) of some powerful Muslim patron. Such arrangements were symbolized for the jurists by the story of a *dihqān* who offered to sell his land to 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd, who would only agree to buy it provided the *dihqān* continued to pay *kharāj*.\(^{157}\) While this situation prevailed in the Sawad of Kufa, around Basra, where landowners near Furat became Muslims in order to keep their lands or relinquished them to

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\(^{154}\) Yahyā ibn Ādam, *Kharāj*, p. 51.
\(^{155}\) Ibid., p. 52.
\(^{156}\) Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, I, 3423, 3424.
\(^{157}\) Yahyā ibn Ādam, *Kharāj*, p. 49.
Muslim Arabs by gift or sale, the land was subject to a tithe (Ar. ‘ushr) instead of kharāj. Unfortunately for the dāhāqīn, these arrangements tied their fortunes to those of the local Muslim Arab elite in Iraq.

Secondly, the dāhāqīn made themselves indispensable in local administration. By the reign of Muʿawiya, they were serving as agents in the assessment, registration, and collection of taxes for the Muslims, and were instrumental in the recovery of the Sasanian register of crown property for the Islamic state. It was only at the end of the Sufyānī period under ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād that the practice of employing the dāhāqīn to collect taxes in the Sawad became standard. One of the landed nobility, Sārzādḥ, the lord (šāhib) of Badhibin, administered the diwan al-kharij for Muṣʿab ibn az-Zubayr. Compromised by such collaboration during the second civil war, the dāhāqīn, along with the tribal aristocracy of the garrison cities, were ruined by the failure of the revolt of Ibn al-Ashʿath in 701. Al-Ḥajjāj accused them of supporting the rebels, required the land around Furat to pay kharāj, and refused to repair the breaches in the irrigation system along the lower Tigris. Since the dāhāqīn could not afford to repair the dikes themselves, their land remained unproductive, and when Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik was put in charge of the land reclaimed from the swamps of lower Iraq by his brother, the caliph al-Walid I (705–15), many local landholders entrusted their estates to him. Victims of the centralizing policies of the Marwānī restoration, the dāhāqīn from this point on declined as a class of landed aristocrats in this part of Iraq.

Thus, the effect of the Islamic conquest on the Sasanian social system was to eliminate the highest ranks and temporarily to suppress the clothing code. Individual members of the high aristocracy, and probably even of the Sasanian royal family, maintained some status by converting to Islam and becoming part of the new ruling class. Others preserved their status and their lands by acquiring positions of leadership in the Nestorian Church. The dāhāqīn were willing to cooperate with the Muslims as a matter of survival, but by the eighth century were being displaced by a new class of Muslim Arab landlords.

158 Baladhuri, Futuḥ, p. 368.
159 Tabari, Taʾrikh, II, 458.
160 Jahshiyārī, Wuzarāʾ, p. 40.
ready, in about 670, Isaac of Nineveh described the world as a place of transition for successive generations in terms that might have been meant as an epitaph for the Persian aristocracy:

They have entered it as an inn for a night and left it as travelers on a journey over the whole earth, without thinking of return. Some of them kings, some governors, some wise, some honored. Some of them scribes, some orators, some judges, some commanders of armies. Some of them possessors of riches, some lords of goods. And now after their death there is neither the order of their degrees, nor the crowns of their government; nor their dreadful thrones, nor their lordly pleasures, nor the praise of those who honored them. . . .

The change in status and social context was even greater for Persian captives and defectors who settled in the garrison cities as the mawālī or allies (Ar. ahlāf) of Arab clans or tribes. Mawālī tended to be integrated into Arab tribal society as individuals and acquired the status of their patrons or the clan to which they were attached. Some of them were able to rise to important administrative or military positions by the Sufyānī period. The only Persians to keep a group identity in Arab society were the military units that became allies of the tribe of Tamīm: the Ḥamrāʾ at Kūfā and the Asāwira at Basra. They were valued as allies, and the argument at Basra over which Arab tribe or clan they would join produced a split among the Asāwira between Shīrōē al-Uswārī, who wanted to settle with Khālid ibn al-Muʿāmmar and the Banū Sadūs of the tribe of Bakr ibn Wāʿil, and Siyāh, who refused. Siyāh won and the Asāwira settled with the Banū Saʿd of the tribe of Tamīm. Lots were laid out for them to build homes along the canal called the Nahr al-Asawira, which was dug for them by ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĀmir, while Ziyād built the masjid of the Asāwira. Shīrōē went on to establish rather close personal relations with the family of Ziyād in Basra and married a woman named Marjāna, possibly the Sasanian princess called Manjāna who was taken captive at Khanīqīn. She had borne ʿUbaydullāh to Ziyād, and Shīrōē built

162 A. J. Wensinck, “Mystic Treatises by Isaac of Nineveh,” Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam 23 (Amsterdam, 1923), 154–55. This is clearly related to the theme of death the leveler in andarz (M.P., advice) literature where the departure of the greatness of lords, generals, and chieftains is described in similar terms. See Tarapore, Pahlavi Andarz-Navak (Bombay, 1933), pp. 16–17.
a palace with a thousand gates (*Hazardar*) for her on a canal in Basra named after Umm Ḥabib, Ziyad's daughter.¹⁶³

The *Asāwira* survived fairly intact as a military unit and community at Basra for over half a century. During the first civil war, they avoided becoming compromised by participating in the Battle of the Camel or the Battle of Siffin. Nevertheless, in 662 Muʿāwiya transferred some of the *Asāwira* from Basra and Kufa to Antioch. They only began to participate in inter-Muslim conflicts during the second civil war, when they acted in concert with the Tamīm in the rising against Masʿūd ibn ʿAmr at Basra in 683. Afterwards they fought on the side of Muṣʿab ibn az-Zubayr and then joined the revolt of Ibn al-Ashʿath, which proved their ruin. In retribution, al-Ḥajjāj destroyed their houses in Basra, reduced their stipends, and deported some of them.¹⁶⁴ Thereafter they disappeared as a separate element in Basran society, although their descendents preserved their identity as late as the ninth century.¹⁶⁵

It should be noted that the disbanding of the *Asāwira* coincided with the decline of the *dahāqīn*, the change of the language of the tax bureau from Persian to Arabic, and the coinage reform. These nearly simultaneous changes underscore the impression that most of the direct survivals from the Sasanian period lasted for about sixty years after the conquest, until about 700, before they either disappeared or were integrated into a new Islamic civilization.

**CHANNELS OF TRANSMISSION**

In the interval, captives, defectors, and *dahāqīn* provided important channels for the transmission of Persian culture to Muslim Arabs. Their very survival contributed to the effectiveness of such cultural influences.¹⁶⁶ They continued to live as Persians to the best of their ability under the changed conditions, and assumed that they should approach their new rulers in ways that had been customary with the Sasanian authorities. They were employed as scribes and tax collectors

¹⁶³ Balādhuri, *Futūḥ*, pp. 358, 373–74, Ibn al-Faqih, *Buldān*, p. 191. An alternative explanation of the name of Hazardar offered by Balādhuri (p. 359) is that a Sasanian king had settled one thousand *Asāwira* there.


¹⁶⁵ Some of them were famous religious teachers and storytellers, such as Mūsā ibn Sayyār al-Uṣwārī, who recited the Qurʾān and explained it in both Arabic and Persian (Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān wa-t-tabyīn* [Cairo/Beirut, 1388/1968], I, 368). Others were involved in the theological discussions at Basra (Ibn an-Nadim, *Fihrist*, I, 381, 390).

¹⁶⁶ Persian was spoken at both Basra and Kufa (Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, II, 454, 724).
by the Islamic state, and were part of the ethnically mixed conditions in and around the garrison towns where Persian was spoken along with Arabic and where bilingual Persians and Arabs had always been able to communicate with each other. The sons of Persian soldiers served in the Muslim army as mawālī. Persian women and children introduced Persian domestic organization into Muslim Arab households as concubines, slaves, and servants. These conditions are reflected in the way a ghulām is described as presenting Abū l-‘Āliyya (d. 708), himself a mawlā, with the gift of hard sugar (N.P. qand) in a sealed handkerchief at Basra,167 or by the scene in which the caliph ‘Alī is represented as witnessing the playing of chess (M.P., N.P. shatranj) in Kufa.168 At Basra, where Persians practiced the double sale for the purpose of getting interest, the objection voiced by Mawarriq ibn al-Mushamrij al-‘Ijlī ("I detest the resale with specification of gain ten-eleven and ten-twelve") quotes the numbers in New Persian (dah yāzdah and dah davāzdah).169 Also at Basra, Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī in 644 is supposed to have had a slave girl named ‘Aqīla who served him lunch and dinner in a bowl—something no one else was able to have.170

The importance of the dahāqīn in preserving and transmitting Persian customs is indicated by an account of two slave girls belonging to the highest grade of Persian nobility (Ar. min abnā’ il-muliik) who were taken captive at Marv. They were brought to Iraq and turned over to a dihqān who, regarding it an honor to extend his hospitality to them, spread out silken cloth for them, served them from golden dishes, and sent them back to Khurasan.171 The dahāqīn assumed that they should treat their Arab masters the same way, but were met with a good deal of initial Arab resistance to being assimilated into local society in this way. Most of the accounts of such encounters appear to be tendentious in one way or another, usually involving early definitions of piety, and perhaps egalitarian attitudes, in contradistinction to aristocratic Persian practices. What seems to have been a real cultural issue for the first century of Islam appears also to have been further complicated by shu‘ūbī and anti-shu‘ūbī tendencies in the way

167 Ibn Sa’d, Tabaqāt, VII(1), 83.
168 Ibid., VI, 156. The purpose of this story is to allow ‘Alī to express his objections to the use of images.
169 Ibid., VII(1), 157. In this case an Arab of the tribe of 'Ijl may be suspected of combining Christian objections to usury with the Qur'ānic prohibition.
170 Tabari, Ta’rikh, I, 2711.
171 Ibid., I, 3350.
the early accounts were treated. In any case, both the way the *dahāqīn* assumed that they should deal with the Arabs according to their own customs, and the immediate Arab reaction, are nicely illustrated by the following story. After the Battle of Kaskar during the conquest, two of the *dahāqīn* of the Sawad, Farrūkh and Farwandādh, presented Abū ʿUbayd with dishes of Persian food to honor him as they would a guest, but Abū ʿUbayd refused to accept them because there was not enough for his entire army.172 This issue is also reflected in a scene that describes ‘Alī refusing to accept the gifts brought to him by the *dahāqīn* at Madaʾin.173 Arab resistance to such assimilation had lessened by the time of Muʿāwiya, and the association between the attitudes of the *dahāqīn* and the practice of bringing gifts to their rulers at Nawrūz and Mihrijān is heightened by the way in which the gradual adoption of the requirement of gifts on these two occasions by the Muslim government is associated with the recovery of the register of the crown lands in his reign. ʿAbdullāh ibn Darrāj appears to have been the first to regularize the practice of receiving gifts at Nawrūz and Mihrijān in Muslim Iraq, collecting an additional ten million *dirhams* that way.174 One of the main points to be made here is that the very length of time the *dahāqīn* survived in the Sawad, as well as their contacts with the Muslim rulers, was necessary for successful cultural transmission and assimilation. By the time the *dahāqīn* began to be suppressed, they had survived long enough after the conquest to transmit their style of life to a class of Muslim Arab landlords.

Defectors and *mawāliʿ* were equally important for the preservation and transmission of Sasanian military traditions, which involved mainly heavy cavalry equipment and tactics and the techniques of siegecraft. A good early example is the knowledge of siegecraft brought to the army of Saʿd at Behrasir by Shīrzdāh, who had been forced to retire from Anbar to his own district of Sabat as a result of Khalīd’s raid. After the Battle of Qadisiyya, he came to terms with the Muslims, joined their army, and constructed twenty mangonels for Saʿd’s use against Behrasir.175 Of a similar nature is the occasion in Basra in 683 when four hundred of the *Asāwira*, led by a man called Māh Afrīdhūn, executed the Persian tactic of the five-arrow shot (N.P. *panjeqān*)

172 Ibid., I, 2170–71, 2173.
175 Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, I, 2424, 2427.
enabling them to get off a volley of two thousand arrows at a time.\textsuperscript{176} The adoption of Persian-style armor and heavy cavalry methods by Muslim armies included the use of the heavy Persian horse (Syr. birdhawn), which was more noted for its endurance than for its speed. By 657 a birdhawn market existed at Kufa, a particular breed called the Mihrāniyya was named after a mawla of 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād named Mihrān, and the ambling birdhawn was rated as one of the excellences of Basra.\textsuperscript{177} On the other hand, Muslims did not adopt the use of elephants in warfare from the Sasanians but treated elephants captured in Iraq as booty.\textsuperscript{178}

Along with such aspects of warfare, Persian military traditions influenced the use of armed servants and youths (Ar. ghulām, pl. ghilmān) as auxiliaries on the battlefield by Muslims. This was as much a social as a military institution, and the terms used for such persons usually implied some sort of social inferiority—parallel to inferior military ranks—and the performance of menial tasks. The Asāwira mainly were responsible for the introduction of this practice into early Islamic military institutions. One of them, a certain 'Abdullāh ibn al-Iṣbahānī, had four hundred such slaves (Ar. sg. mamlūk) and was in command of the right wing of the army for Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubayr in the battle ending al-Mukhtār’s revolt in Kufa in 687.\textsuperscript{179} It is no surprise, then, to hear of the armed mawālī of 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Āmir ibn Kurayz in 683, since his father was so closely associated with the Asāwira.\textsuperscript{180} However, this practice seems to have begun somewhat earlier, during the first civil war, when the oldest children of the women taken captive during the conquest were reaching late adolescence. Such mawālī were integrated into Muslim fighting forces either as individuals attached to an Arab clan or person, or they were organized as retinues in the service of some of the leading, powerful figures in the garrison cities. There were mawālī, ghilmān, and servants in both armies at Siffin in 656, such as Mihrān, the mawla of Yazīd ibn Hāni’ in the army of ‘Alī, who is called both ghulām and mamlūk and was in charge of a waterbag.\textsuperscript{181}

Afterwards, we hear of a retinue of ghilmān and mawālī of Simāk

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{176} Ibid., II, 454.
\item \textsuperscript{177} Dinawari, \textit{Akhbār at-ṭiwal}, pp. 175, 290; Ibn al-Faqih, \textit{Buldān}, p. 192.
\item \textsuperscript{178} Balādhuri, \textit{Futūḥ}, p. 288.
\item \textsuperscript{179} Ibid., p. 366.
\item \textsuperscript{180} Ta’rīkh, II, 464.
\item \textsuperscript{181} Dinawari, \textit{Akhbār at-ṭiwal}, pp. 177, 179, 188–89; Ta’rīkh, I, 3266–68.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
ibn 'Ubayd at Behrasir, who ordered them to supply the force of Ma'qil ibn Qays in 663.  

182 'Abdullah ibn 'Awf ibn al-Aḥmar at Kufa had a ghulām called Rashīd, in 671, who was one of the youths from Isfahan.  

183 Ghilmān identified during the second civil war were either more recent captives or second-generation mawālī.  

In general, such youths were employed as camp servants and messengers, and were sent to fetch water, letters, horses, and people.  

185 Ghilmān at Wāsīt in 750 carried the baggage, saddled the mounts, and served Yūsuf ibn 'Umar at his audience.  

The employment of ghilmān in such menial tasks seems to reflect a social status based more on their youth than on their social or ethnic origin; youths of Arab descent are described in the same terms.  

187 Thus, just as with the dāhāqīn, by the time the Persian military units had been disbanded, their techniques and traditions had been adopted by Muslim Arab armies.

CONCLUSION

The overall effect of the events of the seventh century on the distribution of the Persian population in Iraq was relocation. The garrisons along the southwestern frontier were removed, and much of the population from east of the Tigris behind Mada'in was reconcentrated in the form of captives, mawālī, and defectors in the new garrison cities of Basra and Kufa. The landed notables who came to terms with the Muslims continued to live as absentee landlords in the cities throughout Iraq or on their village-estates in the countryside. In spite of the elimination of the highest ranks of the Persian social structure and the temporary suppression of the clothing code, individual members of the high aristocracy, and probably even of the Sasanian royal family, maintained some status by converting to Islam and becoming part of the new ruling class. Others preserved their status and their lands by taking positions of leadership in the Nestorian Church.

182 Tabarî, Ta'rikh, II, 45.  
183 Ibid., II, 119.  
184 In 680 a ghulām named Rustam who belonged to Shamir ibn Dhi l-Jūshn was in the force that massacred al-Ḥusayn and his party at Karbalā' (ibid., II, 346). The ghulām named Zirbiyyā employed by al-Mukhtar at Kufa in 685 was a mawla of the Bajila (Dinawarî, Akhbar at-tiwal, p. 308; Tabarî, Ta'rikh, II, 599). Another Rustam is mentioned in 696 as the ghulām of Suwayd ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān the Khāriji (Tabarî, Ta'rikh, II, 990).  
185 Dinawarî, Akhbar at-tiwal, pp. 179, 241, 313; Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, V, 51.  
186 Dinawarî, Akhbar at-tiwal, pp. 369–70.  
187 Ibid., p. 253.
Where Persians survived as cohesive social groups, a noticeable tendency towards cultural preservation and institutional inertia prevailed even in the face of changing circumstances. Attempts were made to maintain existing standards and customs and impose them on the new situation. Here the main examples are the landed Persian aristocracy that continued to exist in the agricultural districts of post-Sasanian Iraq, where the administrative and taxation systems of the previous régime survived at the lowest levels, and the Persian soldiers who defected from the Sasanian armies at the time of the conquest and joined the Muslims. In both cases, Persian methods of local administration and taxation, landholding and patterns of settlement, festivals, social customs, military traditions, and the lower levels of the class system were preserved without significant change in early Islamic Iraq among those Persians who survived the conquest and preserved their heritage among themselves.

In addition, the institutional lag or overlapping represented by the survival into the early eighth century of the *dahāqīn* as a distinct class and by the *Asāwīra* as a military unit lasted long enough for them to transmit to Muslim Arabs the attitudes and lifestyle appropriate to a landed aristocracy and the equipment and military institutions associated with heavy cavalry tactics. Transmission was facilitated by the Persians’ expectation that their new lords would want to be treated in the same way as their previous masters, and by their actions in accordance with this expectation. Channels of Persian cultural transmission were also provided by the presence of captive Persian women in Muslim Arab households and by the existence of bilingual Arabs and Persians. This situation shows that Persian influences on early Islamic society did not have to occur in Iran proper; conditions in Iraq made that province seem almost more important for significant cultural interaction and assimilation. But it is equally important to realize that the Persian cultural presence in Islamic Iraq was not necessarily derived entirely from the pre-Islamic situation, because some cultural influences were just as likely to have been brought from Iran by captives or by Persians who migrated to the garrison cities after the conquest.
Chapter 6
ARABS: NATIVES

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Arabs lived in or near Iraq throughout Classical and Late Antiquity, but wherever they settled down they tended to become assimilated to the local culture of the sedentary population. Since Iraq lay along the northern edge of the Arab ethnic region, the Arab presence there resulted from the natural interpenetration along the ethnic border, from Arab involvement in the commercial and pastoral economy of Iraq, and from the varying political fortunes of Arab border states.

The contribution of the Iraqi Arab population to continuity or change in the early Islamic period was affected by several circumstances. First, it is important to emphasize that the acculturation of Arabs to native Iraqi traditions did not begin with the Islamic conquest. Arab settlement in Iraq had always resulted in assimilation with the native inhabitants. Consequently, indigenous Iraqi Arabs were especially important in the transmission of Iraqi culture to the Arabs who came as conquerors and immigrants from the peninsula in the seventh century.

Second, such cultural influences and opportunities were not restricted geographically to Iraq. The presence of Persians in Bahrayn, Uman, and Yaman and their indirect influences in the Hijaz in the late Sasanian period meant that the Arabs who came from the peninsula in the seventh century were not necessarily strangers to the culture they found in Iraq. To a certain extent, such circumstances are reflected in the use of Aramaic and Persian terms in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry.1

Third, the Arab population was not homogeneous but ranged from sedentary peasants and townsmen to seminomadic and fully nomadic pastoralists. Thus, it is logical to expect that Arabs with a sedentary, urban background would be likely to acquire the culture of other sedentary populations more easily than would pastoralists. Theoretically, Arabs with a pastoral background could be expected to move most easily into the patterns of pastoral economy they found in Iraq. Ease of assimilation could also be affected by geographical origin, since Arabs already in or near Iraq and those who came from Bahrayn,

Uman, or Yaman were more likely to have been influenced by Perso-Mesopotamian culture already.

Although descriptions of the Arab population tend to be based on tribal identities and genealogies, it is difficult to correlate geographical location, economic activity, or degree of sedentarization exactly with the tribal labels normally used to identify Arabs. By the sixth century, the subgroups of some tribes were scattered widely and interspersed with the subgroups of other tribes. Conditions ranging from completely sedentary to entirely pastoral occasionally existed within the same tribal or clan group.

Fourth, the nature of the Arab population in and near Iraq was subject to change resulting from the conquest. In order to assess these changes it is necessary to evaluate the condition, nature, and distribution of the native Arab population before and after the conquest. The contribution of native Arabs to the formation of early Islamic society in Iraq and the extent to which their participation contributed to continuity must also be evaluated. It is equally important to consider the changes brought by Arab immigrants and settlers in the seventh century and to evaluate the nature of their settlement, the degree of their assimilation to local culture, and the extent to which continuity was due to the transmission of local culture.

PASTORAL ARABS: SASANIAN IRAQ

The nature of the pre-Islamic Arab presence in Iraq resulted from penetration by successive Arab groups in the Parthian and Sasanian periods. Arab immigration and settlement in upper Mesopotamia goes back to the Parthian period when Arabs organized border states at Hatra and Edessa while pastoral Arabs who moved into the region in between these cities became involved in the caravan traffic. By the beginning of the Sasanian period in the third century, new groups of Arabs associated with the Tanûkh confederation, including the Quḍā’a, Asad, and elements of Azd, had begun to move from Yaman via Bahrayn into Iraq. Arabs of Quḍā’a occupied the winter pasture region south of the Jabal Sinjar.

This penetration was confronted by the rise of the newly powerful Sasanian state. In the process of establishing their control over Iraq, the Sasanians suppressed the Parthian vassal state system and de-

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destroyed Hatra. They also attempted to clear pastoral Arabs out of the potentially productive agricultural districts along the middle Tigris. The general effect of this was to divert the Tanūkh migration towards upper Mesopotamia and Syria. The Quḍa‘a who did not wish to remain under Persian rule were driven out of upper Iraq to the desert border, where they founded the settlement of Hira. Thereafter the Tanūkh who stayed on the border of Iraq occupied the territory west of the Euphrates, between Hira and Anbar, living as pastoralists in tents of camel and goat hair.\(^3\) The desert to the south was dominated throughout the Sasanian period by Arabs of the Ṭayyī tribe from their base on the modern Jabal Shammar.\(^4\) Syriac writers considered them to be so typical of the bedouin population that they called all pastoral Arabs Ṭayyāyē.

An indication of the nature of Arab relations with the sedentary Jewish Aramaean population in the Euphrates districts adjoining the region occupied by the Tanūkh in the third and fourth centuries is provided by the Babylonian Talmud. Many of the thieves in Nehardea were Arabs, and that town was subject to such frequent raids that R. Naḥman (d. 320) allowed local Jews to carry weapons on the Sabbath. In the early fourth century, Arabs forced people at Pumbaditha to turn over the title deeds of their landed property to them. A degree of more peaceful integration is also indicated in the case of an Arab who gave a gift of an animal sacrifice to Rav Judah (d. 299) and that of an Arab market inspector who testified about coins for R. Papa and R. Huna bar R. Joshua in the mid-fourth century.\(^5\) It was also towards the end of the fourth century that Arabs began to settle down in Beth ‘Arbhaye.\(^6\)

As earlier Arab groups were settling down, new groups of pastoralists were moving into Iraq. During the minority of Shāpūr I (309–379), tribal groups belonging to the Iyād ibn Nizār migrated from the Yamama to Mesopotamia. There they established themselves in a transhumant pattern, moving back and forth from the summer pastures in upper Mesopotamia (the Jazira) to the winter pastures in Iraq.


\(^6\) Hoffmann, *Persischer Märtyrer*, p. 22.
The Sasanians reacted to this penetration by crushing the Iyād, who were massacred, taken captive, or forced to flee to Byzantine territory. Shāpūr II forcibly settled some of the survivors at a place called Haffa. Under Shāpūr III (383–88), however, the remnant of Iyād who had taken refuge with the Byzantines returned to Iraq, joined the tribe of Rabī’a, and dominated the Sawad. Elements of Iyād held estates near Hira and occupied territory north of Hira. Some of them were settled at Takrit by Khusraw Anūshirvān in the sixth century, and Takrit became a market town for the Arab pastoralists in the region to its west.7

The last major pre-Islamic movement of Arab pastoralists towards Iraq occurred in the late fifth and early sixth centuries. This movement was associated with the northward migration of the Banu Taghlib, Namir, and elements of the Bakr ibn Wā’il tribal groups from the Yamama and Najd8 and produced the distribution of Arab tribal groups in and near Iraq at the time of the Islamic conquest. Drought and the expansion of the Kinda in central Arabia drove the first groups of Taghlib into the pasturelands north of the Euphrates, where they occupied the region from Sinjar to Nasibin in the late fifth century. They were followed in the middle of the sixth century by other groups of Taghlib who migrated from central Arabia to the region southwest of the Euphrates, which was also occupied by the Namir by that time.9 The Bakr ibn Wā’il tribes were the most important group in the Kinda confederation, and the expansion of the Kinda under al-Hārith ibn ‘Amr (d. 528) brought subgroups of the Bakr such as the Tha’labā, ‘Ijl, and Dhuhl northwards from the Yamama and Bahrayn to the border of Iraq.10

By the end of the Sasanian period, Arab pastoralists were found in a wide arc to the west and south of Iraq, from the banks of the upper Tigris to the shores of the Gulf. In the northwest region bounded by the Euphrates, Khabur, and Tigris rivers, the summer pastures between the Tur Abdin and the Jabal Sinjar in Arabistan/Beth ‘Arbhaye and the winter pastures south of Sinjar as far as the outskirts of Maskin

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8 The relationship among these groups was systematized by recognizing their common descent from Qāṣīṭ (Ibn Qutayba, Ma‘ārif, p. 95).


10 Tringham, Christianity, pp. 173, 270–73, 283.
and Qatrabbul and the Euphrates above Anbar were occupied by the Taghlib, together with elements of the Rabīʿa, Quḍāʿa, Bakr ibn Wāʿil, ʿAmr ibn Qāsîṯ, Iyād, and Namir and their camels, sheep and goats. The region to the southwest of the Euphrates and west of ʿAyn Tamr was occupied by camel-herding groups of Taghlib, Namir, and Iyād, with an encampment of Taghlib and Namir at Siffin. East of ʿAyn Tamr along the Euphrates from Anbar to Hira were the Tanūkh with their camels and goats, and the Asad. Arabs were on the outskirts of Hira and the region between Hira and Kaskar, while members of the ʿIjl and Taymallāt subgroups of Bakr and the Dubayʿa subgroup of Rabīʿa could be found in the vicinity of Ullays. The Yashkur subgroup of Bakr, the Bāhila, and the Banū ʿAnbar were along the edge of the swamps at the southeastern end of this arc in territory that had been connected to Maysan before the floods created the swamps. The Kulayb subgroup of Wāʿil occupied uncultivated land between Maysan and Khuzistan in the vicinity of Manadhīr and Nahr Tira. Beyond this band of Arab groups, but with political and economic importance for the Iraqi borderlands, were the nearest groups of camel nomads in northern Arabia: the Kalb at Dumat Hira; the Bakr who spent the summer at the oasis of Dhu Qar, especially their subgroups of Shaybān, Thaʿlabā, and Dhuhl; the Ṭayyiʿ; the Ḍabba; and the Yarbūʿ and Saʿd subgroups of Tamīm in the desert south of Hira.

The economic relationship of these pastoral Arab groups to the sedentary population of Iraq was complex and ambivalent. These pastoral groups along the border of Iraq tended to be transhumant or

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12 Dinawari, Akhbār al-tawālīh, p. 118; ʿTabari, Taʾrīkh, I, 2074, 2206; Tringham, Christianity, p. 176–78.
13 ʿTabari, Taʾrīkh, I, 822.
14 Ibid., I, 2350.
15 Ibid., I, 2030, 2032–33.
16 Ibn Rustah, Aʾlāq, p. 95. The Bāhila belonged to Qays ibn ʿAylān; see U. R. Kahhālah, Muʿjam qabāʿil al-ʿArab al-qadima wa-l-hadīth (Beirut, 1968–75), I, 60. The Banū ʿAnbar were a subgroup of either Bakr (Ibn Qutayba, Maʿārif, p. 96) or Tamīm (Kahhālah, Qabāʿil, II, 845).
17 ʿTabari, Taʾrīkh, I, 2534–35.
18 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 63.
19 ʿTabari, Taʾrīkh, I, 1030.
20 Horovitz, “ʿAdi Ibn Zeyd,” p. 40. For the identification and location of all of these groups, see F. Donner, Early Islamic Conquests (Princeton, 1980), pp. 18, 49, 220.
ARABS: NATIVES

semisedentary, kept mixed herds of camels, goats and sheep, and engaged in agriculture in their seasonal settlements. The mutual exchange of pastoral for agricultural products with local peasants tended to be offset by the fact that the same animals were raised by fully sedentary villagers. At the outskirts of towns and villages, both populations tended to compete for the same pastures. Such conditions are reflected in the legend of 'Abd al-Masih, which describes how the boys of Sinjar tended the flocks of sheep belonging to the people of that town. Although Arabs further out in the north Arabian desert relied more on camels than on other animals, giving them greater mobility, military power, and political independence, in Iraq itself camel raising was not an Arab monopoly. Nor were Arabs the only pastoralists in Iraq, since Kurdish shepherds inhabited areas east of the upper Tigris.

Pastoral Arabs also contributed to the caravan trade and held local markets. They controlled the routes along which caravans had to pass and provided pack animals, guards, and guides. The Sulaym and Hawāzin convoyed caravans of merchants from Hira across the Najd to the fair at Ukaz in the Hijaz for the Lakhmī kings. At the time of the conquest, a caravan of Syrians guarded by Arabs of the Taghlib was captured near Siffin. The Tayyi' attended the annual market at Hira; Ghassān and Kalb held an annual spring market at Dumat Jandal; and the Kalb, Bakr ibn Wā'il, and parts of Quḍā'a attended the market at Khanāfis above Anbar. But destructive Arab raids disrupted the economy. Sometimes they were conducted under the cover of warfare between the Byzantines and Persians, as when Belisarios sent his Ghassānī Arab auxiliaries to raid and plunder east of the Tigris in Assyria in 541.

In the sixth century, the Sasanians controlled southwestern Iraq and exercised a degree of indirect control over Arab pastoralists through their ally and satellite, the state of the Banū Lakhm at Hira, stiffened by Persian garrisons. The Banū Lakhm, at their height under Nu'mān III (580–602), dominated the entire desert frontier from Anbar to

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21 Donner, Conquests, pp. 49–51; Trimingham, Christianity, p. 145.
24 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2206–7.
25 Isfahānī, Aghānī, XVI, 99.
26 Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrīkh, I, 313.
27 Baladhurī, Futūḥ, p. 246; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2203.
28 Prokopios, Wars, II. xiv. 11–18.
Bahrayn. The Banū Lakhm sought to control the pastoral Arabs and to prevent their raids on caravans and the settled population by means of tribal alliances, recruiting tribesmen for their own military forces, keeping hostages, and granting property and privileges to the most powerful chieftains. The leaders of groups that were too strong to be coerced were given a set of privileges called *ridāfa* (Ar.) to secure their cooperation. The holder of *ridāfa* enjoyed precedence at the royal court of the Banū Lakhm, served as the king’s viceroy (Ar. *khalīfa*) when the latter went on campaign, and claimed a quarter of the booty. These privileges were held hereditarily by the leaders of the Yarbū‘ in the time of al-Mundhir ibn Mā‘ as-Samā‘ (506–54). Possession of the *ridāfa* was also held at different times by the Ḍabba, Taymallāt, Taghlib, and the Sadūs clan of the Shaybān.29

The suppression of the Banū Lakhm and of their state and the execution of Nu‘mān III by Khusraw II Parvīz in 602 destroyed these relationships. Following the defeat of the Sasanians and their Arab allies by the Bakr ibn Wā‘il at Dhu Qar in about 604, pastoral Arabs were briefly free to encroach on the borderland of Iraq and occupied some of the ‘Uyun of Taff.30 But in the following decade the Sasanians restored the desert frontier, subjected the former territories of the Banū Lakhm to direct rule, protected them by a line of strongholds garrisoned by Arab and Persian forces, and used their tribal allies to police the desert. It was only during the Sasanian dynastic crisis that followed the Byzantine victory and the deposition and execution of Khusraw II Parvīz in 628, when the Persians were preoccupied with succession conflicts at Mada‘in, that outlying Arab groups began to attack the settled population on the border of Iraq once again. On the eve of the Islamic conquest, elements of Shaybān, ’Ijl, and Dhuhl had begun to raid the *dahāqīn* around Hira and Ubulla, and in the vicinity of Kaskar.31

**SEDENTARY ARABS: SASANIAN IRAQ**

Arabs also formed a significant portion of the sedentary population along the desert border of Iraq in the late Sasanian period. The nature

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of their settlement ranged from seasonal encampments and agricultural villages to towns and cities adjoining the regions of pastoralist concentration. Representatives of most of the pastoralist groups could be found among the settled population. Members of Rabî'a and Taghlib had settled in the villages of Beth 'Arbhaye and at Nasibin.32 Iyād lived at Takrit, and at an Arab suburb called Mabhrakhthta near Mada'in.33 Arabs were settled in villages and towns along the Euphrates such as Haditha, Hit,34 Anbar, and Hira. Members of Namir were settled at Anbar,35 and members of Iyād and Kinda had settled together with non-Arabs at the town of Sandawda near 'Ayn Tamr.36 There were also settlements of Iyād and 'Ilj along the Euphrates.37

Hira was the political and cultural hub of this zone of Arab settlement and, in spite of the presence of Persian soldiers and *dahāqīn*, it was considered to be an Arab city.38 The Arab population of Hira was a mixture of many small groups of diverse tribal origins. Members of Tanūkh, Ṭayyi’, Tamīm, Sulaym, 'Ilj, Shaybān, Tha’labā, Asad, Azd, Kalb, and others could be found at Hira.39 The organization of late Sasanian Hira around several fortified enclosures (Ar. *qusūr*) that were identified with particular clans,40 the existence of tribal churches,41 and the political and social domination of the town by an elite of notables (Ar. *ashrāf*) belonging to the leading clans42 make Hira a good example of a late pre-Islamic Arab city as well as a prototype for tribally organized early Islamic cities such as Kufa and Basra.

The assimilation of sedentary Arabs to the local culture of late

35 Chabot, *Synodicon*, pp. 70, 321; Hoffmann, *Persischer Märtyrer*, p. 83. The bishop whom the Monophysite metropolitan Mārūthā consecrated for Anbar in about 629 was also designated bishop “of the people of the Namirayē Arabs” (Nau, “Aḥyoudem-meh,” p. 57).
Sasanian Iraq is evident in many ways. They were often bilingual or even trilingual and could speak Aramaic and Persian. They were familiar with Sasanian monarchical, military, and administrative institutions. The royal court of the Banū Lakhm at Hira was modeled after the court at Mada’īn, and Iraqi Arabs were employed by the Sasanians as soldiers, governors, and bureaucrats. Just as with the Aramaeans, Arabs who participated in the ruling group tended to resemble the Persian upper class, and Abū Yūsuf calls the Arab leader who defended ‘Ayn Tamr against Khālid at the time of the conquest an Arab dihqān. 43

Most sedentary Arabs had become Nestorian Christians, although by the end of the sixth century pastoral Arabs had become converts to Monophysite Christianity. Some of the Arabs at ‘Ayn Tamr seem to have been Jewish. Thus the position of local Arabs as representatives of Iraqi culture after the conquest was merely a continuation of their pre-Islamic involvement. The cultural syncretism of pre-Islamic Hira prefigures that of early Islamic Iraq.

However, in spite of a degree of cultural assimilation that made it difficult to distinguish sedentary Arabs from Aramaeans (since both could be called Nabat), total assimilation was prevented by the preservation of an Arabic identity, language, and tribal social organization—the main aspects of Arab distinctiveness—among sedentary Arabs in late Sasanian Iraq. By the sixth century, the Arabic language was being written in the Kufic script at Anbar, Hira, and elsewhere, thus serving as a vehicle of cultural expression and providing evidence of a self-conscious Arab identity. 44 Consequently, sedentary Arabs were beginning to transform the ethnic character of the border region in the late Sasanian period. This contrasted with earlier Arab penetration and settlement in the Hellenistic period, when Arabs had lost their identity and never wrote their own language. It is also significant to note that the Nestorian Christian Arabs of Hira, who were of diverse tribal origin, were not identified tribally but were all called ‘Ībād. But even totally assimilated individuals who entered Nestorian monasteries were still identified as Arabs by other monks. 45

So by the end of the Sasanian period, pastoral Arabs could be found

43 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 226.
along the desert border southwest of the Euphrates, in the uncultivated land in lower Iraq, and in central and upper Mesopotamia, while other Arabs had settled down in the cities and towns closest to the bedouin concentrations at 'Ayn Tamr, Nasibin, Anbar, and Hira. Such sedentary Arabs were already undergoing acculturation to the other ethnic groups present in Iraq, particularly in mixed Arabic, Persian, and Aramaean towns such as Anbar, Nasibin, and Hira. Consequently, these sedentary, partially assimilated Arabs, some of whom were urban notables and dahāqīn, proved to be an important means for the transmission of Iraqi culture to the new Muslim Arab settlers. But the fact that they had managed to preserve their own identity and had begun to write their own language is an important indication of their resistance to total assimilation.

**DISLOCATIONS DUE TO THE CONQUEST: DEATH AND CAPTIVITY**

In many ways, the immediate effects of the Islamic conquest on the native Arab population were analogous to its effects on the Persians. Those who resisted were killed and their dependents were taken captive. Those who came to terms paid tribute and those who joined the conquerors became part of the new ruling group. Some of the most bitter and destructive fighting during the conquest of Iraq took place between the native Christian Arabs, who at first remained loyal to the Persians, and the Muslim Arab invaders from the peninsula. In the early stages of the conquest, Iraqi Arabs fiercely defended their territory against their neighbors in northern Arabia who were being mobilized to raid Iraq as Muslims. Khālid is said to have collected eighteen thousand men between the Yamama and lower Iraq, including five or eight thousand Muṣar and Rabī‘a tribesmen who also served under Abū 'Ubayd. Once they arrived in Iraq, they were joined by Sa‘īd ibn Murra al-‘Ijli, who commanded one of the two sides of the ambush laid by Khālid for the Persians at Walaja in the territory of Kaskar in 633. They were also joined by Muthannā ibn Ḥāritha the Shaybānī at Hira. Donner points out that the local pastoral Arab groups that joined Khālid in Iraq only operated with him in the regions they had already begun to raid; he suggests that Khālid’s arrival gave

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these groups the advantage they needed to bring about the fall of Arab towns. However, Arabs in the region between Kaskar and Hira fought on the Persian side at Walaja, and afterwards Christian Arabs of the tribes or clans of 'Ijl, Taymallāt, and Ğubay’a rallied to the Persian general Jābān at Ullays. They were joined there by more Arabs from the vicinity of Hira and were led by a certain ‘Abd al-Aswad, who was assisted by the Taghlibī Jābir ibn Bujayr. These Arabs gave Khālid more trouble than the Persians.

The decisive clash came at ‘Ayn Tamr, where Khālid found himself opposed by the Christian Arab auxiliaries of the Persians from the tribes of Bakr, ‘Ijl, Taghlib, and Namir who were commanded by ‘Aqqa ibn Qays ibn Bishr of the tribe of Namir. The father of Jābir, Bujayr ibn al-‘Abd of the tribe of Taghlib, was in charge of ‘Aqqa’s right wing. The defeat of this force by Khālid, who captured and crucified ‘Aqqa, resulted in the flight of the Persian garrison and the fall of the fortress and town at ‘Ayn Tamr to the Muslims. Arabs of the tribes of Namir and Taghlib were taken captive, as were the women and children of the Arab dihqān (probably ‘Aqqa himself) who was killed there.

From ‘Ayn Tamr, Khālid went to the oasis of Dumat Jandal, where Arabs belonging to the tribes of Bahrā’a, Kalb, Ghassān, Tanūkh, and Ḍajā‘am were gathered outside the walls of the fortress. Here the fighting men were killed by Khālid’s force and the children were taken captive and put under the care of adults. While Khālid rested at

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50 Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, I, 2050, 2032–33.
52 Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, I, 2063, 3472.
53 Yāqūt, *Buldān*, I, 631–32. Dinawari (*Akhbār at-tiwal*, p. 118) calls him Hilāl ibn ‘Uqba; and Tabari (*Ta’rikh*, I, 2073, 2122) has a version of this account in which Khālid crucified Hilāl ibn ‘Aqqa at ‘Ayn Tamr; but this could hardly have been the case since Hilāl turned up later in charge of the garrison at Rudab.
54 Abū Yūsuf, *Kharaj*, p. 226; Dinawari, *Akhbār at-tiwal*, pp. 117–18. There are two accounts of how the children were taken captive at ‘Ayn Tamr. In one, according to Ya’qūbī (*Ta’rikh*, II, 151), after Khālid beheaded Hudhayl ibn ‘Amrān, the leader of a group of the Bani Taghlib, he took many of them captive, including forty boys captured in a synagogue (Ar. kanisat al-Yahūd). In the other account, forty boys were taken captive in a church (Ar. ‘bā’a) at ‘Ayn Tamr where they were studying the Gospels (Gk. *Injīl*). (Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, I, 2064).
55 Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, I, 2065–66. At about the same time, after the fall of ‘Ayn Tamr, Khālid sent Sa’d ibn ‘Amr al-Ansārī to Sandawda where Christian Arabs of the tribes of Kinda and Iyād had gathered. After a siege they agreed to pay tribute, and some of them converted to Islam (Abū Yūsuf, *Kharaj*, p. 226).
Dumat Jandal, the Arabs of the Jazira, angered by the death of ‘Aqqa, joined the Persian forces under Zarmihr and Rūzbih who were sent to reinforce the strongholds along the Byzantine frontier. The stronghold of Thani, to the east of Rusafa, was occupied by Rabī‘a ibn Bujayr the Taghlibi, while Hilāl ibn ‘Aqqa of the Banū Namir held Rudab. The entire garrison at Thani was slaughtered by Khālid in a night attack, although its dependents were taken captive. The Arabs of Namir were also slaughtered at the nearby fortress of Zumayl and their women were taken captive. After the fall of Zumayl, Hilāl ibn ‘Aqqa fled from Rudab as Khālid approached Firad on the Byzantine border. Hilāl seems to have rallied both Byzantine and Persian frontier forces together with thirty thousand Arabs of the tribes of Iyiād, Namir, and Taghlib. These combined forces were defeated by Khālid in a battle fought at Firad on the ides of Dhū l-Qa‘da, 633, in which the Muslims are said to have inflicted one hundred thousand casualties.

Thus, it is somewhat surprising to find that Muthannā was joined prior to the Battle of Buwayb by the Christians of Namir under Anas ibn Hilāl ibn ‘Aqqa and by Christians of Taghlib under Ibn Mirdā al-Fihr. During this battle the Persian general, Mihrān, was killed by a Christian Arab youth (Ar. ghulām) of the tribe of Taghlib, who mounted the general’s horse only to have Muthannā award the animal to his cavalry captain (Ar. sāhib al-khayl) as his booty.

As destructive as they were, the effects of Khālid’s raid were limited to the periphery of Iraq. Most of the action was along the desert border southwest of the Euphrates. It was only after the Battle of Buwayb that the really devastating raids in the Sawad and central Mesopotamia began. One reason for this is that the Battle of Buwayb marked the failure of the Persian counterattack in the Sawad and of the Persian attempt to protect the Sawad from Muslim Arab raids. After Buwayb, everything southwest of the Tigris became vulnerable. The destructiveness of these raids may also be explained partly by the general situation of the Muslim forces in the Fertile Crescent. Khālid had left for Syria where the main contest with the Byzantines was being pressed, and after the defeat and death of Ābu ‘ Ubayd at the Battle of the Bridge, few new reinforcements and no supplies were available to the force under Muthannā in Iraq. In the interval between Buwayb and

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56 Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 2067.
57 Ibid., I, 2072–73.
58 Ibid., I, 2073–74.
59 Ibid., I, 2190.
60 Ibid., I, 2192.
Qadisiyya, the Muslims were obliged to live on what they plundered, and it was in this period that the rural economy of central Iraq was seriously disrupted by the attacks of Muthannā and his lieutenants. These raids ranged from Kaskar to Hira in the south; north through the two Fallujas across the Nahr Sura to Kutha, Nahr al-Malik, and Baduraya; and west through al-ʿAli to the Jazira. Villages were pillaged around Sabat, and at Khanafis, north of Anbar, Muthannā raided a marketplace held and guarded by Rabīʿa and Quḍāʿa tribesmen, including the Kalb and Bakr ibn Wāʿil. The marketplace was plundered, destroyed, and razed to the ground, and those who escaped death were taken captive. Muthannā followed this with a raid on the fair at Baghdad, and, after returning to Anbar, he raided the encampment at Siffin of the Taghlib and Namir, who fled across the Euphrates to the Jazira, where they fortified themselves. Shortly afterwards, Muthannā attacked the camp of the Dhū r-Ruwayḥila clan of Taghlib, killing the fighting men and taking the children captive. Another series of raids was conducted by Nusayr ibn Daysam, who attacked an encampment of the Taghlib in central Mesopotamia and took booty and captives, raided villages in Maskin and Qatrabbul, and carried off camels and goats from the vicinity of Takrit.

As the conflict approached its climax before the Battle of Qadisiyya, the Muslims continued to supply themselves with fodder and food by raiding Iraq from Kaskar to Anbar, including a camel lifting at the expense of Taghlib and Namir. It was only at the siege of Takrit in 637 that the Arabs of Taghlib, Iyād, and Namir inside the walls agreed to accept Islam and helped the Muslims to take the town.

The fate of the captives taken in these campaigns and raids was similar to that of the Persian captives. Most of the Arab captives were women and children of the tribes of Namir and Taghlib and were carried off to the Hijaz as slaves or mawāli. Arabs were taken captive at ʿAyn Tamr, Dumat Jandal, Thani, Zumayl, Khanafis, and at Tagh-
libī encampments in central Mesopotamia. Abū Yūṣuf claims that Khālid took as many as five thousand captives between Hira and Damascus.70 The captives taken at ʿAyn Tamr were regarded as the first “foreign” captives (Ar. min al-ʿajam) to arrive at Madīna. Among them were Abū ʿAmra, who became the mawlā of Shabbān; Abū ʿUbayd, who became the mawlā of al-Muʿallā of the Banū Zurayq of the Anṣār; Abū ʿAbdullāh, who became the mawlā of Zahra; Khayr, who became the mawlā of Abū Dāʿūd al-Anṣārī; Yasār, the grandfather of Muḥammad ibn Ishāq, who became the mawlā of Qays ibn Makhrāmā; Aflāḥ, who became the mawlā of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī; and Ḥumrān ibn Abān, who became the mawlā of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān.71 One of the captives taken at Thani was Umm Ḥabib, the daughter of Rabiʿa ibn Bujayr the Taghlibī, who was purchased by ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭalib. By bearing him two children, ʿUmar and Ruqiyya, she became an ʿumm walad.72 Among the women taken captive at Zumayl were Bint Muʿthin an-Namari, Layla bint Khalid, and Rayhāna bint al-Hudhayl ibn Hubayra, who were all part of the fifth of the booty sent back to Madīna for Abū Bakr.73 The fact that these captives were Arabs may have made their social adjustment in the Hijāz less difficult, but they do not seem to have been treated any differently from non-Arab captives. However, it is worth noting that several of the children taken at ʿAyn Tamr and their descendants became well-known figures in early Islamic history.

Eventually, some Iraqi Arab captives or their children made their way back to Iraq, as a number of Persian captives were also able to do. Ḥumrān ibn Abān is one of the best examples. He was a Jewish child named Ṭuwayd who was taken captive by al-Musayyab ibn Najba al-Fazārī at ʿAyn Tamr and carried off to Madīna, where he was sold to ʿUthmān and became his mawlā. After ʿUthmān became caliph, he sent Ḥumrān to Kufa to investigate complaints against the governor, but when Ḥumrān gave him a false report, ʿUthmān revoked his rights of protection. Ḥumrān then settled in Basra where he is said to have held ʿAbbadan as a land grant (Ar. qaṭṭa). He was occasionally involved in local administration and married a woman of the

70 Abū Yūṣuf, Kharāj, p. 228.
71 Taʿbīrī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2077, 2122. This account is on the authority of Muḥammad ibn Ishāq, who was himself descended from one of the captives.
72 Ibid., I, 2072–73. Umm Ḥabib was one of those people with a ruddy complexion, and a variant account says that she was taken captive at ʿAyn Tamr (ibid., I, 3471–72).
73 Ibid., I, 2073.
Banū Sa‘d clan of Tamīm. If Ḫumrān is typical of the position of these former captives in early Islamic Iraq, the way other Arabs treated him is significant. The Arab captives taken at ‘Ayn Tamr had been sedentary and little differentiated them from the Aramaean population of Iraq. This merging of identities among the sedentary population is reflected in a rebuke Ḫumrān received in 690: “Oh Ibn al-Yahūdiyya! You are only a low-class Nabaṭī who was taken prisoner at ‘Ayn Tamr.”

When al-Ḥājjāj became governor of Basra in 695, he confiscated one hundred thousand dirhams from Ḫumrān, who complained to ‘Abd al-Malik. ‘Abd al-Malik ordered al-Ḥājjāj to treat Ḫumrān well and to return his wealth, saying that “Ḫumrān is the brother of those who have passed away and the uncle of those who remain.”

Another of the captives taken at ‘Ayn Tamr was Sirīn, who was first the slave and then the mawla of Anas ibn Mālik. He, too, eventually returned to Iraq and settled at Basra. He is said to have been a secretary and to have acquired land at Jarjaraya. His son, Muḥammad, became a jurisconsult and a well-known second-generation transmitter of early Islamic traditions.

In addition to death and deportation, the third way the Islamic conquest changed the distribution of Arabs in pre-Islamic Iraq was by settling the local Arabs who joined the Muslim armies and concentrating them in the new garrison cities of Basra and Kufa in southern Iraq. This had the further effect of consolidating and unifying those Iraqi tribes whose subgroups were now united and settled together.

The members of Tagḥlib, Namir, and Iyād who went over to the Muslims at Takrit were encouraged to settle with the army at Mada’in. The Arab tribes most closely associated with Hira, such as the Quḍā‘a, Tanūkh, and Kalb who joined the Muslims, did not settle in Kufa. They settled in Basra where, as a small minority, they allied themselves with the south Arabian tribe of Azd. Representatives of Ṭayyi’ also settled in Basra as allies of Azd, but most of them settled as a group under ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim in Kufa. Of the Rabī’a tribes, Bakr ibn Wā’il
was the best represented in the garrison cities. Most of them settled at Basra, where they established their own neighborhood in the city and formed their own division in the Basran army. A few settled at Kufa, at first in the suburbs, without any tribal district; but by 660 they had a residential district of their own within the city. Members of Tamīm, Asad, Taymallāt, and Taghlib settled there as well, and Christians of the tribe of 'Ijl were living in Kufa in 660.

PASTORAL ARABS: ISLAMIC IRAQ

The effect of the conquest on the rural economy and on the pastoral Arab population of Iraq should be evaluated carefully. The destructiveness of the conquest, the death in battle of many of the tribesmen and the deportation of their women and children as captives to the Hijaz, the tendency for those who joined the Muslims to abandon their pastoral way of life and to settle in the garrison cities, and the expansion of agriculture along the lower Euphrates after the conquest all give the impression of a decline in pastoralism, particularly in western and southern Iraq, at least as an immediate result of the conquest. Still, in spite of all of these factors, the geographical distribution of the major pre-Islamic Arab tribes and the pastoral economy do not seem to have been affected too seriously by the conquest. There was a sheep market in Kufa and a camel market at Basra. There were bedouin west of Kufa in the time of 'Alī, and a group of the Banū Asad were settled at the village of Ghadiryya on the Euphrates northeast of Karbala in 680, although most of them remained in north Arabia during this period. The Tayyi' were still to be found south of Iraq in the north Arabian desert; the Banū Sulaym still had their oases in the desert south of Iraq; and the Banū Tamīm dominated the land south of Basra. Elements of Bakr ibn Wā'il were to

82 Pellat, Milieu basrien, pp. 23, 24; Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, I, 3131, 3179, 3181; II, 448, 720, 857.
83 Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, I, 3174; II, 644, 701, Ya’qūbī, Les pays, p. 144.
84 Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, I, 3460.
85 Ibid., I, 2489–90, 3174.
86 Ibid., I, 3460.
87 Ibid., II, 268, 437.
88 Ibid., I, 3447.
89 Ibid., II, 368.
90 Ibid., I, 3140.
91 Ibid., I, 3140, II, 304.
92 Ibid., I, 3355.
93 Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 24.
be found in the vicinity of Basra in 656, and they occupied the open
country between Maysan and Khuzistan in the 680s.94

In central Mesopotamia, the Arabs of Namir and Taghlib who were
driven permanently north of the Euphrates by the conquest survived
in the Diyar Rabi'â. Large numbers of the Taghlib and Namir joined
'Ali's army on his way from Kufa to the Battle of Siffin in 657.95 The
Taghlib were the most important group of pastoral Arabs who re­
mained Christian by coming to terms with the Muslim Arabs. At first
the Taghlib objected to paying tribute in return for protection at the
time of the conquest because they considered it degrading. They crossed
the upper Euphrates and threatened to join the Byzantines until they
were excused from the payment of tribute, and each adult man or
woman of the tribe was allowed instead to pay double the tax paid
by Muslims. In return they agreed not to baptize their children and
not to prevent anyone in their tribe from converting to Islam. The
taxes assessed on the Taghlib were levied collectively on their camels,
sheep, cattle, and crops.96

Ziyâd ibn Hudayr of the tribe of Asad, who was sent by 'Umar to
collect customs duties between Iraq and Syria, is said to have required
the Taghlib to pay twice the customs rate collected from Muslims. He
stretched a chain across the Euphrates and collected a two and one­
half percent ad valorem customs tax from Muslims, five percent from
protected non-Muslims, and ten percent from the unprotected. At first
he required the Taghlib to pay five percent of the value of their pos­
sessions each time they traveled in either direction. When a Taghlibî
merchant complained to 'Umar, he ordered Ziyâd not to tax them
more than once each year.97 Ziyâd's activities not only suggest that
the former Byzantine-Sasanian border in upper Mesopotamia survived
the conquest as a place for collecting customs dues, but they also
indicate the continuing importance of Taghlibî merchants in the riv­
erine traffic between Iraq and Syria. The Taghlib also continued to
baptize their children and thereby, in 'Ali's opinion, forfeited their
rights to protection.98

The Islamic conquest was not, in itself, a pastoralist migration. It

94 Ṭabārī, Taʾrīkh, I, 3181; II, 448.
95 Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 218.
96 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, pp. 100, 184–85; Balādhurī, Futūḥ, pp. 181–83; Qudāma,
Kharāj, p. 42; Yahyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, pp. 29, 55–56.
97 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, pp. 185–86, 208–11; Ibn Saʿd, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 89; Yahyā ibn
Ādam, Kharāj, pp. 55–56.
98 Yahyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 55; Qudāma, Kharāj, p. 42.
did not bring new pastoralist groups into the borderland along southwestern Iraq to displace those already there. This serves to explain why pastoral Arab groups survived in approximately the same locations as before the conquest. However, the conquest did bring new pastoralist groups into the region between Syria and Iraq, starting a chain reaction that ultimately led to the movement of Arab pastoralists across the upper Tigris into Adiabene and neighboring districts. The destructiveness of the conquest along the middle Euphrates and the subsequent arrival of the Qays 'Aylān in this region, especially around Qarqisiyya (where they replaced the Taghlib and Namir), drove the Rabi‘a tribes further to the north and east. The Qays were well established by 665.\(^9\) By the late seventh century, the Qays had begun to move across the Euphrates into the Jazira, where elements of the Banū Sulaym also arrived along the Khabur river at about the same time. During the second fitna, the Qays supported the Zubayrīs and detained 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād for an entire year when Marwān sent him against the Zubayrīs in Iraq in 685.\(^10\) Both the Qays and the Sulaym expanded their hold on the western Jazira during the second fitna in tribal warfare with the Taghlib.\(^11\)

The movement of some groups across the Tigris was due largely to the dislocations among the pastoral Arabs of the Jazira during the second fitna. Pastoral Arabs first appeared east of the Tigris in Adiabene when Mar Yōhannan was head of the monastery of Sabhrishō' (675–692/3). The Arabs pitched their tents near the monastery and from the beginning relations were ambivalent and abrasive. They treated the head of the monastery with all the superstitious respect due to a saint and holy man while subjecting him to all sorts of indignities. Once, Mar Yōhannan was obliged to brave the dogs of an Arab camp to return the visits of the shaykh, and only a miraculous disaster served to dislodge an Arab shaykh from the cells of the anchorites where he had taken residence.\(^12\) Under Mar Yōhannan’s successor, Shōbhalmaran (693–729), the encroachment became even more serious. The Arabs forced the people around the monastery off their lands, and the

99 Ṭabari, Ta’rikh, II, 72.
100 Ibid., II, 643.
102 Mingana, Sources syriaques, pp. 247–48. The latter was the birth of Siamese twins to the wife of the shaykh who appealed to Mar Yōhannan to bring about the death of the “monster.” When this was accomplished by a word from the saint, the Arab immediately evacuated the cells he was occupying.
monks had to hide their books. The Arabs, however, continued to come to Shōbhalmaran for his miraculous cures. A woman blind in one eye was said to be cured by exorcism of the demon who possessed her; the concubine of an Arab was given an amulet to drive out her demon; and even an expensive ill horse of one of the Arabs was cured.\textsuperscript{103} In the early eighth century, Arabs could be found pasturing their camels in deserted parts of western Adiabene.\textsuperscript{104}

One of the best examples of encroachment is given by the career of Iyās ash-Shaybānī of the tribe of Dhūhl. He became storekeeper of the grain of the monastery of Rabban Bar 'Iltā and of all of the monastery’s property in Margha in the early eighth century. He then persuaded the monks to grant him permission to build a hostel alongside the old royal highway in fields belonging to the monastery. He went on to seize the surrounding fields, killed the steward of the monastery, and forced the head of the monastery, Rabban Joseph, to flee to Balad where he founded a new monastery.\textsuperscript{105}

In general, the dislocations among the pre-Islamic pastoral Arab population of Iraq resulting from the conquest were comparable to those experienced by the Persians: the Arab allies of the Persians who resisted the conquest suffered death or deportation, and some of the Arab captives who had been carried off to the Hijaz made their way back to Iraq and settled in the garrison cities. One of the more destructive aspects of the conquest was the disruption of the pastoral economy of central Iraq. This, combined with the settlement of the local Arabs who joined the Muslims, like the Persian defectors, in the new garrison cities after the fighting was over, contributed to a decline in pastoralism in lower Iraq. It also contributed to an intensification of urbanizing tendencies already under way among pre-Islamic Arabs and to the new concentration of population in lower Iraq. On the other hand, the distribution of the Arab tribes in the Iraqi countryside remained roughly the same as it had been under the Sasanians. The most important changes in tribal distribution were the end of the presence of Namir and Taghlib south of the Euphrates as a result of the conquest itself, the arrival of the Qays, and the movement of pastoral Arabs across the upper Tigris towards the end of the seventh century.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., pp. 250–51.
\textsuperscript{104} Thomas of Margha, \textit{Governors}, I, 130–33; II, 273–78.
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., I, 104–5, II, 231–34. For the subsequent movement of pastoral Arabs into Adiabene and the surrounding districts, see Fiey, \textit{Assyrie chrétienne}, I, 146–47, 248; II, 337; III, 36.
SEDENTARY ARABS: ISLAMIC IRAQ

The sedentary Arab population of Sasanian Iraq saved itself by coming to terms with the Muslims. The best example is at Hira. The Arab notables of the city worked out the terms of a settlement with Khalīd according to which they agreed to pay tribute and to act as spies against the Persians. They also promised not to aid the Persians or non-Muslim Arabs against the Muslims or to guide them against Islamic territory. In return, Khalīd agreed not to destroy any of their churches, synagogues, or fortresses. The sources vary on the nature and amount of the tribute. According to what seem to be the earliest accounts, Khalīd imposed on the entire city of Hira an annual tribute which the inhabitants were to apportion among themselves. Out of a total of seven thousand men in the city, one thousand with chronic illnesses were excused from payment. The amount of tribute to be divided among the remaining six thousand varies from sixty to one hundred and ninety thousand dirhams. The territory around the city, including the villages belonging to the family of Ṣalūbā on the Euphrates, was covered by this tribute, and, consequently, the people of Hira paid no separate land tax. Later accounts describe the tribute as a regular poll tax computed by applying a fixed rate to the population. This seems to be the case in the account quoted by Baladhurī on the authority of Yaḥyā ibn Ādam. According to this report, six thousand men liable to the poll tax in Hira were each assessed fourteen dirhams of the weight of five qīrāts (Ar.), producing a total tribute of eighty-four thousand dirhams of this weight, or sixty thousand dirhams of the weight of seven qīrāts apiece. Terms similar to those granted to Hira were made at Anbar, at Ṭāʾirīkh after the town was sacked, and with the Kinda and Iyād who were settled at Sandawda near Ṭāʾirīkh.

The decline of Hira is often attributed to the movement of people

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106 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, pp. 221–24; Baladhurī, Futūḥ, p. 243; Dinawārī, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, p. 117; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2017–19, 2044–45; Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 47; Yaʾqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 147. According to al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ, no specific amount was fixed per capita on the heads of the men (Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 47).


109 Ibid., 246; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2061; Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 46. The people of Anbar are said to have broken their treaty with Khalīd; but they came to terms with Jarīr ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Bajali in the time of ʿUmar and arranged to pay an annual tribute of four hundred thousand dirhams and one thousand cloaks.

110 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 226; Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, Kharāj, p. 47.

111 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 226.
to nearby Kufa shortly after its foundation. No real evidence exists for such mass settlement in the seventh century, however, and, in fact, it seems to have been discouraged unless the inhabitants converted to Islam. There was a great deal of traffic between Hira and Kufa and settlement occurred in both directions. Sawād, the son of Zayd ibn 'Adī, moved to Kufa even though he remained a Christian, and the place called Sawwariyya at Kufa was named after his son, the poet Sawwār ibn Zayd al-'Ibādī. However, Mustawrid ibn 'Ullīfa settled next to the Qasr 'Adasiyyin of Kalb at Hira when he fled from Kufa in 663. Nevertheless, the 'Ibādīs of Hira preferred not to settle in Kufa, and Hira remained a town of respectable size, inhabited by Jews and Christians at least until the end of the seventh century. In the eighth century Yūsuf ibn 'Umar found it worthwhile to establish a market called Sūq Yūsuf there. Hira was still a Christian town and larger than Hulwan in the ninth century, and according to Mas'ūdī, it declined gradually until the beginning of the reign of al-Mu'tādī (892–902).

By coming to terms with the Muslims, in early Islamic Iraq, the sedentary Arabs, like their Persian counterparts, were able to survive and found it possible to continue their own customs among themselves and transmit their way of life to the Muslim Arab immigrants. The familiarity of Iraqi Arabs with local conditions, their bilingual abilities, and their knowledge of administrative methods made them as important a factor for continuity in the life of early Islamic Iraq as other pre-Islamic groups. Native Arabs continued their activity as merchants and caravan guides and were employed as administrators. Bajāla ibn 'Abda of the Banū 'Anbar served as scribe for Jaz' ibn Mu'āwiya when the latter collected taxes in Manadhir and Dast-i Maysan in 641. Jufayna the 'Ibādī received a stipend of two thousand dirhams

112 Ibn Hawqal, Šūrat al-ard, p. 249; Ibn Khallikan, Biographical Dictionary, I, 189; Iṣṭakhrī, Masālik, p. 82; Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 230.
115 Ţabarī, Ta’rikh, II, 29.
116 Ibn Rustah, A’lāq, p. 207.
117 Ibn al-Faqih, Buldān, p. 181.
118 Horovitz, "'Adī Ibn Zeyd," p. 68; Iṣṭakhrī, Masālik, p. 87.
119 Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 230.
120 Ţabarī, Ta’rikh, II, 102.
121 Ibid., I, 3446.
122 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 119; Bukhārī, Sāḥib, V, 238; Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 94; Ibn Sallām, Amwāl, p. 44. Bajāla settled in Basra, where he was living in 689–90.
ARABS: NATIVES

from the Islamic state, as did several Persian notables.\textsuperscript{123} The 'Ibād of Hira were employed as local tax collectors and were instrumental in preserving and transmitting irrigation techniques and in developing the early public baths.\textsuperscript{124} Al-Ja‘d ibn Qays an-Namarī was in charge of the marketplace at Basra for Ziyād in 669.\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{124} Balādhurī, \textit{Futūh}, p. 281; Ibn Rustah, \textit{A‘lāq}, p. 207.
\textsuperscript{125} Balādhurī, \textit{Ansāb}, IVa, 186.
Chapter 7
ARABS: IMMIGRANTS

MILITARY MIGRATION

The single most important ethnographic change in seventh-century Iraq was the arrival of large numbers of Muslim Arabs from the Arabian peninsula and the foundation of new urban centers as garrison cities where they settled. In order to understand the nature of this change, it is important to begin with the identification and location of the peninsular tribes that entered Iraq in this period, to note their settlement patterns and the form of social organization they introduced, and to consider the extent to which they allowed themselves to become assimilated into native Iraqi society.

Khalid’s raid did not bring very many Arabs from distant parts of the peninsula into Iraq. His own force appears to have been rather small, although it included Arabs who joined him between the Yamama and Iraq, and his success was largely due to the mobilization of pastoral Arab groups that were already in or near Iraq. When Abū Bakr ordered Khalid to relieve the Muslim forces fighting in Syria in 634, Khalid divided his army and, according to one account, took half of it, amounting to between five hundred and eight hundred men, leaving Muthannā ibn Ḥāritha as his lieutenant in Iraq with the rest.1 Early in 635, ʿUmar sent Abū ʿUbayd with a force of one thousand men from the Hijaz to the Iraqi front. Abū ʿUbayd was joined by Arab bedouin along the way. After he was defeated and killed by the Persians at the Battle of the Bridge, some of the survivors joined Muthannā.2 Between the defeat at the Battle of the Bridge and the victory at Buwayb, ʿUmar was able to forward contingents of Arab tribesmen to Muthannā in Iraq. It was during this period that Arabs belonging to the tribes of Bajila, ʿAbd al-Qays, Ṭayyῑ, the clans of Banū Ḍabba, Ṭamīm, and Ḥānzala, plus one thousand additional Tamīmīs, and seven hundred men of the tribes of Kināna and Azd arrived in Iraq.3 They

1 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 110; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2109, 2111; Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 150.
2 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 250; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2164. Dīnawarī (Akhbār at-ṭiwal, pp. 118–19) says that Abū ʿUbayd had five thousand men.
3 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2187–89, 2202, 2218; Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 163. The Ṭamīmī and Ḥānzala clans of Tamīm were led by Ribʿiyya ibn Ṭamīm ibn Khalid, while an additional one thousand Tamīmīs were led by al-Ḥuṣayn ibn Maʿbad ibn Zurāra.

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were followed by an army of six thousand men under Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas from Madina, which was reinforced by a force of two thousand Yamani Arabs. Estimates of the size of the Muslim regular army at the Battle of Qadisiyya vary from about seven thousand to ten thousand;\textsuperscript{4} but judging by the casualties they are said to have suffered and by the number of veterans who settled at Kufa and Basra afterwards, bedouin auxiliaries must have increased the size of this army to at least thirty-five thousand men.\textsuperscript{5} After the fall of Mada'in in 637, this army was billeted in the houses vacated by the Persians who had fled from the city,\textsuperscript{6} but this settlement was not permanent. Contingents were sent to Jalula' and Takrit, and then, in 638, most of the army returned to the Euphrates and founded the city of Kufa.\textsuperscript{7} Those who had been assigned houses in Mada'in by Sa'd took off the doors and brought them to Kufa, where they put them on their new houses.\textsuperscript{8}

The military nature of this migration and settlement meant that it involved many more men than women and children from the peninsula, although some tribal contingents which joined the Muslim army in Iraq brought their dependents along with them. The earliest reference to dependents with the Muslim army occurs in the context of the Battle of Buwayb (probably in the fall of 635), when the women and children were left behind in the camp.\textsuperscript{9} The two thousand Yamani Arabs whom 'Umar sent to reinforce Sa'd also brought their women and children,\textsuperscript{10} and, in 636, when Sa'd began to march against Mada'in, the dependents and baggage were left behind at Atiq.\textsuperscript{11} The Bajila and the Nakha' had more women than any other groups at Qadisiyya. There were one thousand single women with the Bajila and seven hundred single women among the Nakha'. Most of them married the veterans of Qadisiyya who belonged to other tribes or clans.\textsuperscript{12}


\textsuperscript{5} According to Dinawari (\textit{Akhbār at-ṭawāl}, p. 125), Sa'd was sent to Iraq with an army of 20,000 men and was joined there by the forces of Jarir al-Bajali and Muthannā. Arabic tradition estimates the Muslim casualties at Qadisiyya at 8,500 (Tabari, \textit{Taʾrīkh}, I, 2337–38), and thirty thousand veterans of Qadisiyya settled at Kufa while another five thousand settled at Basra. M. Hinds, in “Kufan Political Alignments and Their Background in Mid-Seventh Century A.D.,” \textit{IJMES} 2 (1971), 352, estimates the maximum number of Arabs at Qadisiyya at thirty thousand.

\textsuperscript{6} Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 628; Tabari, \textit{Taʾrīkh}, I, 2451.

\textsuperscript{7} Tabari, \textit{Taʾrīkh}, I, 2451; Yaʿqūbī, \textit{Taʾrīkh}, II, 171.

\textsuperscript{8} Guidi, \textit{Chronica Minora I}, I, 31; II, 26; Tabari, \textit{Taʾrīkh}, I, 2497.

\textsuperscript{9} Tabari, \textit{Taʾrīkh}, I, 2197.

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., I, 2218.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., I, 2419.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., I, 2363–64.
Even so, there were still many more single Muslim Arab men than women in Iraq at first, with the predictable result of intermarriage and concubinage with local women by the men in the army. One of the most candid expressions of this state of affairs and of its consequences is the account given by Shuways ibn Jabbash, who had participated in the raids on Maysan in the time of ‘Umar, where, as he said:

I took a slave-girl captive and had intercourse with her for a while until we received the letter of ‘Umar, “Consider the captives of Maysan which you have and release them.” So I sent [her] back among those who returned and I do not know whether I sent her back pregnant or not. Indeed, I fear that there are men and women in Maysan descended from me.13

Since Muslim Arab men outnumbered women at Qadisiyya, the soldiers married local non-Muslim women. When they finally settled down, some of the men divorced them, but others kept their wives.14 This situation seems to have contributed to a feeling among some of them that marriage with non-Muslims ought to be discouraged. One account, which purports to go back to a mawla of Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yamān named Muslim, says that the men from Madina married Jewish and Christian women in the Sawad but did not consider such marriages lawful if the woman was a slave.15 One of the most specific objections to such intermarriage is provided by another account, which claims that Ḥudhayfa, as ‘Umar’s governor at Maḍā’in, had married a non-Muslim woman at a time when Muslim women had become numerous. ‘Umar ordered Ḥudhayfa to divorce her, saying that although foreign women are charming, paying attention to them would give them supremacy over Muslim women.16 This kind of resistance to intermarriage is also indicated by the case of Marjāna, the Persian princess in Basra who was the mother of ‘Ubaydullāh, the son of Ziyād. In spite of the fact that she was an ʿumm walad, Ziyād married her to Shīrōē the Uswārī after the Asāwira settled in Basra.17 This attitude is also expressed by ‘Alī’s reputed refusal to allow his sons to marry two women of the high Persian aristocracy (Ar. min abnāʾ il-mulāk) who

13 Ibn Saʾd, Taḥaqqāt, VII(1), 92.  
14 Tabari, Taʾrikh, I, 2375.  
15 Ibid., I, 2374.  
16 Ibid.  
17 Balāḏhuri, Futūḥ, p. 359.
were taken captive in Khurasan in 657. This attitude was eventually enshrined in the Hanafi system of Islamic law which forbade a Muslim man to marry a Magian woman.

PATTERNS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT: KUFA

The nucleus of the Muslim Arab army that conquered Iraq came from the Hijaz. Although these Arabs were organized tribally from a social point of view, they were not pastoralists. They already had been sedentary and urbanized at Makka and Madina, and the urban forms they introduced into Iraq came most immediately from the Hijaz. Following the precedents set at Hira, the foundation and development of the garrison cities of Basra and Kufa serve as important examples of the introduction of the tribally organized Arab city into Iraq.

When Sa‘d’s army returned from the occupation of Mada‘in in 638, it set up permanent camp at the site of the monastic community of ‘Aqola between Hira and the Euphrates river. The new city of Kufa founded by the army was settled by thirty thousand veterans of the Battle of Qadisiyya. Among them were the survivors of the Madinese contingent of six thousand men, which included seventy or eighty who had been with Muhammad at the Battle of Badr and three hundred who had been with him at Hudaybiya. Most of the rest of the settlers are accounted for by the estimated twelve thousand Yamanī Arabs who occupied the east side of Kufa and by the eight thousand Nizārī Arabs who settled the western side of the city.

At the center of Kufa, Sa‘d established the congregational masjid and the complex of government buildings with an open space around them in which the camels were tethered and where the marketplace was established. Certain privileged individuals, the leaders of clans or leaders of the Madinese contingent, were granted parcels of land (Ar. sg. qaṭī‘a) on which to settle. The people from Madina (the Anṣār)

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18 Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 3350.
19 Abū Yusuf, Kharaj, pp. 198, 201.
21 Ibn al-Faqīh, Buldān, p. 166; Ibn Sa‘d, Tabaqāt, VI, 4; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 2540; Ya‘qūbi, Ta‘rikh, II, 171.
22 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 276.
received allotments in the area closest to the *masjid* where they settled as a group, according to their respective clans. In many respects, both in the organization of the city and in the army the Anṣār functioned as a tribe. Members of the Quraysh also settled in Kufa, where the clan of the Banū Āmr of Makhzūm had an alley to themselves. By 680, the Makhzūm had their own *masjid* in Kufa. Several tribes that had come from the Hijaz settled near the center of Kufa next to the Anṣār. Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yamān ‘Absī received half of the empty space (Ar. ārī) near the *masjid* where the camels were kept as his allotment, and the tribe of ‘Abs settled there. By 642, the ‘Abs had their own tribal *masjid*. Similar allotments near the center of the city were granted to the leaders of the tribes or clans of Fazāra, Bajla, Awd, and Juḥayna. The Kinda, who had migrated from Hadramawt under al-Ash‘āth ibn Qays, were granted space to settle between the Juḥayna and the Awd, where Ash‘āth laid out their district and their cemetery. The district of Kinda in Kufa eventually acquired gates, its own tribal *masjid*, and, by the eighth century, its own market. The members of Ṭayyī who settled in Kufa lived in the district of the cemetery of Bishr, where ‘Adī ibn Ḥāṭim at-Ṭā‘ī had been granted a foundation concession.

The Bajila were one of the largest tribal groups to settle in Kufa. They were approximately equal in numbers to the Anṣār and are said to have formed a quarter of the army at Qadisiyya, in return for which ‘Umar allotted them one-fourth of the Sawad. They are said to have occupied their land in the Sawad for three years until, with the growing numbers of Muslims in Iraq and the establishment of the arrangement whereby the revenues from the conquered lands were to be divided equally among all the Muslim soldiers as their permanent booty (*fay‘*), ‘Umar persuaded the Bajila to restore their share of the Sawad to the state. The leader of the Bajila, Jarīr ibn ‘Abdullāh, was paid eighty *dinārs* to relinquish his claim, and the men of the Bajila were enrolled

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in the military diwān with stipends of two thousand dirhams apiece.\textsuperscript{32} Consequently, Jarīr and the Bajila received a large allotment when they settled at Kufa.\textsuperscript{33} Although Jarīr and some of his relatives left Kufa in the time of 'Alī and moved to Qarqisīyya, a force of one thousand men was raised in the district of the Bajila in 685.\textsuperscript{34}

The tribe of Azd arrived still later and found an unclaimed spot between the Kinda and the Bajila. They settled there and established their cemetery. A reference to seven hundred fighting men of the tribe of Azd in 680 provides a minimum estimation of the strength of this tribe in Kufa.\textsuperscript{35} Other latecomers, the tribes of Asad, Tamīm, and Bakr ibn Wāʿil, had to settle in the suburbs.\textsuperscript{36} An indication of the subdivision of such tribal districts along clan lines is provided for the Asad by a reference in 686 to the entrance of the street of the clan of Banī Jadhmīna ibn Mālik in the district of the tribe of Asad, and to the masjid of the Banī Jadhmīna.\textsuperscript{37} Although a foundation concession was made to ‘Umāra ibn Ruwayba of Tamīm, the Tamīm and ‘Abd al-Qays from eastern Arabia were led to the Iraqi front in 633 by Zuhra ibn al-Ḥawiyya. The ‘Abd al-Qays are also identified as the Ahl al-Hajar, who were among the last settlers to arrive in Kufa and received the lowest stipends—two hundred dirhams. By 685, the ‘Abd al-Qays had their own masjid in Kufa.\textsuperscript{38} Members of the Hamdān who began to migrate from Yaman to Iraq as early as 635 did not settle together in Kufa at first, but by 685 they seem to have had a district of their own.\textsuperscript{39} The Nakha’ also migrated to Iraq from Yaman at the time of

\textsuperscript{32} Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, pp. 49–50; Baladhurī, Futūh, pp. 253, 267–68. According to one account, the Bajila had amounted to fifteen thousand men at Hudaybiya. All fifteen thousand may not have gone to Iraq, and they must have suffered casualties during the campaign. Consequently the number that settled at Kufa must have been somewhat less than fifteen thousand; but this was still a significantly large proportion of the population in the city and in the army (Yaḥyā ibn Adam, Kharāj, pp. 42–43).

\textsuperscript{33} Ya‘qūbī, Les pays, pp. 143–44; idem, Taʾrikh, II, 173.

\textsuperscript{34} Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, pp. 171, 305.

\textsuperscript{35} Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, II, 374; Yaʿqūbī, Les pays, p. 144.

\textsuperscript{36} Yaʿqūbī, Les pays, p. 144.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibn al-Faqīh, Buldān, p. 183; Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, II, 735.

\textsuperscript{38} S.H.M. Jafri, The Origins and Early Development of Shiʿa Islam, (London and New York, 1979), p. 105; Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, I, 2413; II, 657; Yaʿqūbī, Les pays, p. 142. L. Massignon, in Salmān Pāk et les prémices spirituelles de l’Islam Iranien (Tours, 1934), p. 26, claims that Tamīm and ‘Abd al-Qays settled together in the same “seventh” district in Kufa in 638, but, as we shall see, the sevenths were divisions in the Kufan army created by Saʿd and did not parallel the settlement pattern; Tamīm and ‘Abd al-Qays belonged to different sevenths, and are only found together in one of the “fourths” of the Kufan army created by Ziyād. These did not correspond to neighborhoods, either.

\textsuperscript{39} Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, II, 605; Yaʿqūbī, Les pays, p. 144. Massignon’s claim (Salmān
the conquest and, in 685, a force of one thousand men was raised in their district in Kufa.\textsuperscript{40} By 660, Christian Arabs of the tribe of ‘Ijl were living in the district of the Bakr at Kufa.\textsuperscript{41} During the reign of Yazid I (680–83), the Murâd were able to muster four thousand cavalry and eight thousand infantry. They had their own cemetery in Kufa by 685.\textsuperscript{42}

The pattern which emerges at Kufa is that of a city divided into separate tribal districts (Ar. sg. nāḥiya or mahalla), each with its own masjid for daily worship and tribal assemblies, its own cemetery, and with gates to close off the streets going through each district. Within each district, the members of the respective tribes seem to have settled by clan along lanes or alleys adjacent to the main street of the district. From a purely descriptive point of view, it is possible to identify most of the tribal districts in seventh-century Kufa. One of the problems arising with respect to the organization of this city is how to reconcile such a description with the districts that are listed in more or less “official” catalogues. Ya’qūbī, for instance, lists the tribal cemeteries as those of ‘Azram, Bishr, Azd, Sālim, Murâd, Kinda, the Şā’idiyyīn, ‘Uthayr, Banû Yashkur, and Banû ‘Āmir.\textsuperscript{43} This list appears to reflect conditions during the 680s, since the districts of Kufa are identified in the events of 685 as being those of Bishr, Kinda, Sālim, aš-Şā’idiyyīn, and Murâd.\textsuperscript{44} Part of the explanation for this discrepancy may be found in the changes in the original settlement pattern at Kufa brought about by later immigrants (Ar. rawādīf) who crowded into the districts established by their relatives. Those groups with fewer original than later settlers moved to the outskirts and established new districts. Those in which the original settlers outnumbered the latecomers remained in their original districts, took over the spaces of those who had moved to the outskirts, or doubled up.\textsuperscript{45} It also seems that as time

\textsuperscript{40} Dinawârî, Akhbâr at-tiwiîl, p. 305.
\textsuperscript{41} Taḥârî, Ta’rikh, I, 3460.
\textsuperscript{42} Dinawârî, Akhbâr at-tiwiîl, p. 306; Mas‘ūdî, Murûj, tr. de Meynard and Courteille, (Paris, 1861–77), V, 140.
\textsuperscript{43} Ya’qūbī, Les pays, pp. 144–45. The cemetery of Sālim was named after Sālim ibn ‘Ammâr of the Bakr ibn Hawāzîn (Ibn al-Faqîh, Buldân, p. 183).
\textsuperscript{44} Taḥârî, Ta’rikh, II, 614.
\textsuperscript{45} Donner, Arab Tribes, pp. 148–50; Taḥârî, Ta’rikh, I, 2490. Taḥârî cites a schematic division of Kufa into four quarters oriented to the points of the compass, among the accounts of its foundation and settlement transmitted by Sayf. This account describes the tribes of Sulaym, Thaqîf, Bajîla, Tâymallât, and Taghlib as settled along streets extending from the north side of the courtyard (Ar. sahm). Asad, Nakha’, Kinda, and Azd were located on the south side. On the west side, Bajîla and Bajîla shared a street,
passed, subgroups within a tribal district tended to form their own neighborhoods. Such were the districts (*mahallāt*) of the Banū Shayṭān clan of Tamīm and of the Banū ‘Anz ibn Wā’il, who had their own *masjid.*\(^{46}\) By 645 the military population of Kufa had grown to forty thousand men out of a total population of eighty thousand.\(^{47}\)

Although the Kufan army was organized along tribal lines, its organization does not appear to reflect this settlement pattern in any way. The Muslim army operating in the Sawad had been divided into tenths at the time of the conquest, but these units had grown unequally. Sa’d reorganized and equalized the units in the army with the help of genealogists by dividing them into sevenths on the basis of pre-Islamic tribal alliances. However, the composition of only six of these units is given. The first consisted of the Kināna, including Quraysh, and their allies, and of the Jadila clan of the Qays ‘Aylnā, both from the Hijaz. The second was composed of the Yamanī tribes of Quṣṣâ’a, including the Bajila, Khath‘am, Kinda, Ḥadrāmawt, Ghassān, and Azd. The third was made up of another Yamanī group: the Madhāhil, Himyar, Hamdān, and their allies. The fourth consisted of the Muḍar tribes of Tamīm, Ribāb, and Hawāzin. The fifth combined mainly Nizārī tribes: the Asad, Ghaṭafān, Muḥārib, Namir, Ḍubay’ā, and Taghlib. The sixth was composed of the Istād, ‘Akk, ‘Abd al-Qays, Ahl al-Ḥajar, and the Ḥamrā’.\(^{48}\) An officer (Ar. *amīr*) was put in charge of each unit.\(^{49}\) Even these divisions were not really equal in size. The first unit was smaller than the others and the second must have been significantly larger than the rest.\(^{50}\)

These tribal units appear to have been reorganized by the time of ‘Ali, when five of the sevenths were counted among the force of twelve thousand Kufans who joined ‘Ali at Basra before the Battle of the

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\(^{47}\) Ibid., p. 165; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, I, 2805.

\(^{48}\) Jafri, *Shi’a Islam*, pp. 104–6; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, I, 2495. Jafri speculates that the last seventh consisted of the Ṭayyi’, but in fact it could have been composed of any of the groups, such as the Anṣār, which settled early in Kufa and are not included in the other six units. According to Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih (‘Iqd, IV, 162), the third unit consisted of the Tamīm, Asad, Ghaṭafān, and Hawāzin.

\(^{49}\) Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, ‘Iqd, IV, 162.

\(^{50}\) Jafri, *Shi’a Islam*, p. 104. Jafri (p. 105) estimates that the sixth unit was one of the largest.
Camel in 656. The first, composed of the Quraysh, Kināna, Asad, Tamīm, Ribāb, and Muzayna, was led by Maʿqil ibn Yasār ar-Riyāhī. The second consisted of the Qays and was led by Saʿd ibn Masʿūd ath-,Thaqafi. The Bakr ibn Wā’il and Taghlib led by Waʿila ibn Maḥdūj adh-Dhuḥli made up the third division. In the fourth division, Hujr ibn ‘Adī al-Kindī led the Madhḥij and the Ashʿarīn. The fifth consisted of the Bajīla, Anmār, Khath‘ām, and Azd and was led by Mikhnaf ibn Sulaym al-Azdi.

‘Ali’s army at the Battle of the Camel was actually a mixture of Kufan, Hijazi, and Basran forces. In Dinawari’s list it is possible to recognize some of the Kufan tribal units and their leaders among the “seven” divisions (there were actually eight) of ‘Ali’s army. The first consisted of Ḥimyar and Hamdān under Saʿid ibn Qays al-Hamdānī. The second division was composed of the Madḥīj and the Ashʿarīn led by Ziyād ibn an-Naḍr al-Ḥārithī. The Ṭayyī’ under ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim made up the third division. Saʿd ibn Masʿūd ath-Thaqafī commanded the fourth division consisting of the Qays, ‘Abs, and Dhubayān. The fifth division, composed of Kinda, Ḥadramawt, Qudā‘a, and Mahra, was led by Ḥujr ibn ‘Adī. In the sixth division Azd, Bajīla, Khath‘ām, and Khuzā‘a were led by Mikhnaf ibn Sulaym al-Azdi. The seventh consisted of the Bakr, Taghlib, and the remaining Rabi’a tribesmen and was led by (Ibn) Maḥdūj adh-Dhuḥli. The Hijazi contingent, led by ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās, was composed of the Quraysh and the Anṣār.

After the initial period of settlement, the burgeoning population of Kufa was due more to procreation than to immigration, and by the end of the 650s a new generation was reaching fighting age. In 657 ‘Ali registered fifty-seven thousand Arabs for military service at Kufa. Forty thousand of them were adult soldiers (Ar. muqāṭila), and seventeen thousand were the post-pubescent sons of Arab soldiers considered capable of bearing arms. On the same occasion, eight thousand mawālī and slaves were registered in the Kufan army.

By the time of Ziyād, about a decade later, sixty thousand Arab soldiers and eighty thousand of their dependents were on the military rolls in Kufa. Ziyād sent twenty-five thousand Kufans to settle in

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51 Other accounts give the number of Kufans who joined ‘Ali as 7,000 (Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 3181) and 9,650 (Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, p. 154).
52 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 3174.
53 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, p. 155. Jafri (Shi’a Islam, p. 107) reconciles both lists into seven Kufan divisions.
54 Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 3372.
55 Balādhuri, Futūḥ, p. 350.
Khurassan as part of the garrison and reorganized the army at Kufa, making four quarters of roughly equal size out of the original seven by recombining the various tribal units. Local officials (Ar. sg. 'arif or naqib) were put in charge of the new fourths of the army, corresponding to the chiefs of the sevenths under the previous system. The four quarters of the Kufan army created by Ziyad consisted of the Ahl al-Madina (Quraysh and Anšar); Tamim and Hamdân; Madhøj and Asad; and Rabî'a and Kinda. These divisions were still in use in 680 and 685.

At one level, it is clear that the arrival of large numbers of Arab immigrants in Iraq during and shortly after the conquest was decisive in terms of the tribal organization of a city such as Kufa and of its army. At this level, one of the most obvious immediate consequences of the conquest was the spread of Arabian forms of social and urban organization. However, it would also seem that the nature of the settlement itself, close together in a garrison city where tribal labels were used as a basis for organization, served to intensify tribal identities, especially among groups that previously had only vague and distant, even fictive, ties of kinship. It also increased the opportunity for conflict along tribal lines. Kufa was a city with a high percentage of adult males and was settled by an incredibly diverse immigrant population consisting of the fragments of an unusually large number of tribal groups from every corner of Arabia and from every conceivable background—urbanized merchants and artisans, oasis farmers, and pastoralists. The very diversity of this population was a factor in the extreme social fragmentation of early Kufa.

PATTERNS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT: BASRA

The settlement patterns and early organization of Basra were similar to that of Kufa, although Basra's population was not quite as diverse. The foundation of Basra is represented as a strategic move intended to prevent or to forestall the possibility of a Persian counterattack against Iraq from the direction of Fars, Khuzistan, and Maysan for the relief of Mada'in. The Persians had garrisoned seven frontier posts (M.P. dasākir) at the site where Basra was founded, but they had been evacuated during Khâlid's raid and were in ruins by 635. The earliest settlement at Basra was made towards the end of 635.

56 Ṭabarî, Ta‘rih, II, 131, 664, 701.
57 Dinawari, Akhbar at-šuwâl, p. 252; Ṭabarî, Ta‘rih, II, 664, 701.
58 Balādhurî, Futûh, p. 341; Ṭabarî, Ta‘rih, I, 2377-78.
after the victory at Buwayb by a party of three hundred men and a few dependents led by 'Utba ibn Ghazwân, who had been sent from Madina by 'Umar. They were joined along the way by several hundred bedouin Arabs, increasing the size of the party that settled at the site of Basra in 635 to between five and eight hundred men. This group settled at a place called Khurayba, where two of the ruined forts stood, and initially had no permanent housing. They dwelled in tents, pavilions, and under canopies.\(^59\) According to Sayf, Basra was founded when Sa‘d dispatched 'Utba from his army and sent him to southeastern Iraq after the fall of Mada’in in 637.\(^60\) Indeed, five thousand veterans of the Battle of Qadisiyya settled at Basra, but they are more likely to have been the troops under al-Mughîra ibn Shu‘ba sent by Sa‘d to reinforce the original settlers of Basra against a Persian counterattack.\(^61\) By 642 there were fifteen thousand fighting men at Basra.\(^62\)

The organization of Basra along tribal lines was similar to that of Kufa. At the center of the city, 'Utba built the masjid out of reeds and a complex of government buildings (Ar. dâr al-imâra), including the prison and the dâwân in an empty space called the mirbad (Ar.). Lots were allocated for the settlers who built houses out of reeds in their tribal districts around this nucleus. The central buildings were rebuilt by Abi Mûsâ al-Ash‘ârî with bricks.\(^63\)

Because most of the people in 'Utba’s original party came from the upper Hijaz, they were called Ahl al-‘Âliya. Most of them were Quraysh or Qays ‘Aylân but they included other Hijâzî groups such as the Mâzin, Awd, Bâhila, Luway, Sulaym, and ‘Amir.\(^64\) ‘Utba’s own clan of the Banû Mâzin had their cemetery near the center of the city and by 683 the Qays had their own masjid.\(^65\) The Hijâzîs had sixty-eight companions of Muḥammad among them.\(^66\) Ziyâd migrated to Iraq with this party and established himself in Basra, where his son,


\(^{60}\) Tabârî, Ta‘rikh, I, 2377.

\(^{61}\) Ibid., I, 2540.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., I, 2611.

\(^{63}\) Balâdhrî, Futûh, p. 346–47; Dinawarî, Akhbar at-tiwâl, pp. 124–25; Ibn al-Faqîh, Buldân, p. 188; Tabârî, Ta‘rikh, I, 2381; Ya‘qûbî, Ta‘rikh, II, 163.


\(^{65}\) Tabârî, Ta‘rikh, I, 3122; II, 452.

\(^{66}\) Ya‘qûbî, Ta‘rikh, II, 167.
'Ubaydullāh, was born and where his family had its compound (Ar. dār). Ziyād's half-brother, Abū Bakra, like him a native of Ta'if in the Hijaz, also settled in Basra. He had been a slave in Ta'if; when he accepted Islam he was freed and became a mawlā of Muḥammad. His eldest son, 'Abdullāh, was born while the party was in Bahrayn before they settled at Basra; but his second son, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, was the first child born in Basra when the group was at Khurayba. The family of Abū Bakra was among the notables of the city and especially flourished under the governorship of Ziyād when, in about 672, 'Ubaydullāh ibn Abī Bakra was Ziyād's 'āmil at Basra.

The real founders of Basra in terms of numbers were Arabs of the tribe of Tamīm who began to arrive after the fall of Ubulla. They settled around two of the ruined dasākir and provided at least ten to twelve thousand of the fighting men by 656. For much of the seventh century, the leader of the Tamīm at Basra was al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays. He first came to notice as a young man in 638, when as chieftain of the Banī Tamīm he was a member of a delegation of Basran dignitaries (Ar. ṣulahā) to 'Umar at Madina. During the first fitna, the clan of the Banū Sa'd remained loyal to him at the time of the Battle of the Camel in 656, and in 657 he led the Tamīm who fought on the side of 'Alī at the Battle of Siffin. He was still the head of the Tamīm in Basra as late as 683. The Tamīm at Basra were divided among the clans of the Banū Sa'd, Banū 'Amr, and Banū Ḥanḍala, and the clan of the Banū Ḍabba of the Zayd Manāt was attached to them.

The 'Abd al-Qays who migrated from eastern Arabia at the time Basra was founded were less numerous there than the Tamīm. Several of their leaders who had been members of the tribal delegation sent to Muḥammad had accepted Islam and returned to their tribe and

67 Taʿbari, Taʾrikh, II, 433.
68 Balādhuri, Ansāb, I, 496; Ibn Saʿd, Taḥaqāt, VII(1), 8–9, 138.
69 Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrikh, II, 276. For Abū Bakra and his sons, see Balādhuri, Ansāb, I, 489–506.
70 Balādhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 342, 350; Ibn al-Faqīh, Buldān, p. 188; Pellat, Milieu bašrīen, pp. 23–24; Taʿbari, Taʾrikh, I, 3417.
71 Ibn al-Faqīh, Buldān, p. 170; Taʿbari, Taʾrikh, I, 2544. His mother belonged to the tribe of Awd (Ibn Qutayba, Maʿārif, p. 81).
72 Taʿbari, Taʾrikh, I, 3179.
73 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, pp. 182–83.
74 Ibid., p. 295; Taʿbari, Taʾrikh, II, 461.
75 Taʿbari Taʾrikh, I, 3120, 3131, 3179, 3210.
76 Ibid., I, 3122–23, 3179.
77 Ibid., I, 3179.
78 Pellat, Milieu bašrīen, p. 24; Taʿbari, Taʾrikh, I, 3179.
settled in Basra by 641.79 Bishr al-Jārūd, who was the leader of this group, had been a Christian before his conversion to Islam but led the opposition of his tribe to the apostacy during the Ridda Wars, settled in Basra with those of the 'Abd al-Qays who remained faithful to Islam, and died there in 641.80 His sons, al-Mundhir and al-Ḥakam, were notables of Basra. Al-Mundhir was appointed governor of Istakhr by 'Alī, married his daughter to 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād, and was put in charge of the Indian border by 'Ubaydullāh, where he died in about 681 at the age of sixty.81 Malik ibn al-Mundhir commanded this tribe in the army sent by Muṣ'ab against al-Mukhtar.82 The 'Abd al-Qays had their own district in Basra by the time of 'Uthmān.83

The Bakr ibn Wā'il had fewer members at Basra than the Tamīm, although the Bakr were the main representatives of the local pastoral Arab population. They were represented in Basra by the clans of Sadūs, Dhuhl, Shaybān, Yashkur, and Ḍubay'a, as well as by the Lahāzim group of clans.84

The last major tribal group in early Basra were the Azd. The earliest representatives of this group were the Azd Sarāt, who had joined the Muslim armies of conquest and settled around two or three of the ruined dasākir in Basra.85 In 656 the mašjīd of the Ḥuddān was located in the district of the Azd.86 In that year the Azd and other Yamani Arabs in Basra joined the side of Talḥa and az-Zubayr in the civil war against 'Ali. This served both to crystallize the enmity between the Azd and Tamīm and to establish an anti-'Alid reputation for the Azd that was transformed into an alliance with the Sufyānīs in the time of Mu'āwiya. In 664 a member of the Azd was sent by Mu'āwiya to govern Basra.87 By 670 the Azd had several masājid in Basra.88 The presence of the Azd at Basra was increased at the end of the reign of

79 Ibn Sa'd, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 60–62.
80 Ibid., VII(1), 61.
81 Dinawari, Akhār at-ṭiwāl, p. 246; Ibn al-Faqīh, Buldān, p. 170; Ibn Sa'd, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 61.
82 Balādhuri, Ansāb, V, 114.
83 Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, I, 2922.
84 Dinawari, Akhār at-ṭiwāl, p. 183; Massignon, “Baṣra,” p. 160; Pellat, Milieu basrīen, p. 24; Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, II, 448. Massignon locates the district of the Bakr ibn Wā'il at Batina and Zabuqa in the northeastern part of Basra.
85 Balādhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 341, 342, 350; Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, I, 3217.
86 Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, I, 3178, 3180.
87 Dinawari, Akhār at-ṭiwāl, pp. 291–92; Pellat, Milieu basrīen, p. 24; Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, I, 3178, 3415; II, 68.
88 Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, II, 91.
Muʿāwiya and at the beginning of the reign of his son Yazīd I by the arrival of the Azd ʿUmān from southeastern Arabia under Masʿūd ibn ʿAmr in about 680. When Yazīd died in 683, only the support of the Azd and of Masʿūd enabled the pro-Sufyānī government of ʿUbaydullāh ibn Ziyād to survive for a period of ninety days. Before ʿUbaydullāh went off to Syria at the end of that time, he appointed Masʿūd his lieutenant at Basra. In the face of a revolt by the Tamīm, ʿAbd al-Qays, Khawārij, and Asāwira, the Azd were unable to hold Basra for the Sufyānīs and Masʿūd was killed while he was preaching on the minbar in the masjid. In the same year, al-Muhallab recruited eight thousand Azd in Basra to lead against the Khawārij.

Basra was also settled by a number of minor clans and by individuals without a major tribal affiliation. Two groups that lived in the vicinity of Basra should be noted here. Several members of the Banū ʿAnbar settled in Basra and were quite prominent there. Beginning in about 638, successive groups of the Banū lʿAmm came and settled in Basra.

Some indications of the early tribal organization of the Basran army are provided in the events surrounding the Battle of the Camel in 656. However, the tribal formations at that time may not be entirely typical of the organization of the Basran army that had campaigned in Iran for the previous twenty years, since the people of Basra were divided in 656 between the supporters of ʿAlī and az-Zubayr and the supporters of ʿAli. Some tribes and clans were split in their allegiance, which is reflected in the organization of both armies on that occasion. Two different lists of the tribal contingents occur in Ṭabarī, and in Dinawārī, but they can be reconciled to a certain extent. The Tamīm were divided among the Banū Saʿd who remained neutral with al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays, the Banū ʿAmr under Abū l-Jarbāʾ who was active in his support of ʿAlī and az-Zubayr, and the Banū Ḥanẓala who fought on ʿAliʾs side under Hilāl ibn Wakīʾ. The Banū Ḥabba joined

89 Baladhuri, Ansāb, IVb, 107; Pellat, Milieu basrien, p. 24; Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, II, 450.
90 Baladhuri, Ansāb, IVb, 112; Dinawārī, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, p. 295; Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, II, 455, 460–61.
91 Dinawārī, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, p. 282.
93 Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, I, 2538. The context suggests that they came from Manadhir and Nahr Tira on the border between Maysan and Khuzistan. See also Massignon, “Baṣra,” p. 160.
94 Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, I, 3178–80.
95 Dinawārī, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, p. 156.
the 'Amr on the side of the rebels in spite of the efforts of al-Minjāb ibn Rāshid to keep them neutral. Although Ka'b ibn Sūr tried to keep the Azd out of the conflict, most of the Yamanis in Basra joined the rebels. The Azd formed a separate tribal contingent in the rebel army, while those of the 'Abd al-Qays and Bakr ibn Wā'il who did not go over to 'Ali formed a single contingent. In 'Ali’s army, there were separate tribal contingents of the 'Āmir, Ghaṭafān, Qudā’a, and Bakr ibn Wā’il. The Azd who joined 'Alī were led by Ka'b ibn Sūr. Al-Khirrit ibn Rāshid, who went over to 'Alī with three hundred men of the Banū Nājiya clan, led the contingent of Muḍar tribes in 'Ali’s army. The Qays tribes of Hawāzin and Sulaym formed another contingent led by Mujāshi’ ibn Mas‘ūd of Sulaym.

Over thirty thousand Basrans fought on both sides at the Battle of the Camel and they are said to have suffered as many as seven thousand casualties, although these losses may be exaggerated.96 In the following year, 657, 'Alī registered sixty thousand fighting men in Basra, as well as their sons, slaves, and mawālî.97 By the time of Ziyād, the military population of Basra had grown to eighty thousand men with one hundred and twenty thousand dependents.98 Ziyād also sent twenty-five thousand Basrans to Khurasan in 665.99 The military organization of Basra appears to have been tightened under Mu‘āwiya by the formation of five tribal contingents for the center of the army, which consisted of the Bakr ibn Wā’il, 'Abd al-Qays, Tamīm, Azd, and Ahl al-‘Āliya.100 Although these tribal military divisions appear to parallel the settlement pattern at Basra more closely than at Kūfa, they were only identified as such in 686 in the army of Muṣ‘ab ibn az-Zubayr and did not constitute his entire army.

The immediate effect of the settlement of the victorious Muslim armies at Kūfa and Basra after the first successful wave of conquest was the concentration of the Arab population, both old and new, in cities in southern Iraq. Most of the new arrivals from the peninsula contributed to the seventh-century shift in population to southern Iraq. Even outside of these new urban centers, Muslim Arabs at first tended to concentrate in cities and towns.

96 Ibn al-Faqqīh, Buldān, p. 169; Pellat, Milieu bašrien, p. 5; Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, I, 3156, 3224, 3180.
97 Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, I, 3370.
98 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 350.
99 Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, II, 81.
100 Pellat, Milieu bašrien, p. 23; Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, II, 720.
ARAB SETTLEMENT OUTSIDE THE GARRISON CITIES

One important way in which the post-conquest Arab presence in Iraq was able to spread beyond Kufa and Basra was by the assignment of officials and garrisons to local administrative centers. In 654 'Uthman dispersed the leaders of the Arab army in Kufa by reassigning them to provincial positions in Iraq.\(^\text{101}\) There were garrisons at 'Ayn Tamr, Anbar, Mada'in, and Hulwan. Arabs replaced the Persians at Sinjar\(^\text{102}\) and became an important element in the population of Mada'in. The garrison of Mada'in was rotated from Kufa and remained in close touch with the Kufan people. The main tribal group to settle at Mada'in were the Azd, and the Arab notables at Mada'in included the tribal leaders of the Azd, ashrāf from Kufa, and leading early Muslims (Ar. buyutāt an-nās). In 695 a garrison of one thousand horsemen was at Mada'in.\(^\text{103}\) Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yamān is a good example of a Kufan notable who settled at Mada'in where his descendents continued to live.\(^\text{104}\)

Muslim Arabs from Basra and Kufa also founded, in 641, a new garrison town at Mawsil on the Tigris opposite Nineveh. Although 'Utbā ibn Farqād was responsible for the conquest of northern Iraq and for the first settlement at the site of Mawsil, he was recalled almost immediately by 'Umar. Harthama ibn 'Arfaja al-Bāriqi was given the task of “founding” this city, which he did by building a congregational masjid, laying out boundaries for the districts, and settling the Arabs in their houses.\(^\text{105}\) Towards the end of the seventh century, Azd tribesmen and people who migrated from Anbar to escape the exactions of its governor resettled the town of Haditha near Mawsil.\(^\text{106}\) The Azd also became an important element in the population of Mawsil.

The Arabs who settled in these urban centers were never confined to them. Back-and-forth movement was common, whether it was required by the state or was of a personal nature. With the conquest of Iran, Arabs also began to be sent out of Iraq on campaigns to the east and north, and then were posted as garrisons and as officials throughout Iran. The first permanent emigration organized by the state occurred in 665, when Ziyād sent twenty-five thousand men from Basra

\(^{101}\) Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, I, 2928.
\(^{103}\) Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, I, 2499; II, 504, 899, 980.
\(^{104}\) Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, VI, 8; Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, I, 3372; II, 504, 561.
\(^{106}\) Balādhurī, Futūḥ, p. 333; Fiey, Assyrie chrétienne, I, 104.
and an equal number from Kufa to Khurasan as a permanent garrison. Arabs also traveled and moved back and forth between Iraq and Syria and different parts of Arabia. In 661 Mu‘awiya exiled some of ‘Ali’s supporters from Kufa and settled some of his own supporters from Syria, the Jazira, and Basra in the houses they vacated. More Syrians came to Iraq as Marwānī occupying forces after the second fitna, and the garrison at Wasit in the early eighth century was rotated from Syria.

Although it was not extensive in the seventh century, some settlement by Arabs occurred outside of cities and towns in the agricultural countryside of Iraq. In about 640, 'Umar had transported some forty thousand non-Muslim Arabs from the town of Najran in Yaman to Iraq. Their attempt to settle in occupied villages in the Sawad was resisted by the villagers they displaced. The resistance of Magian Daylamis at a village near Kufa proved successful. After 'Umar died in 642, the Najrāniyya moved on to the village of Nahranban closer to Kaskar, where they displaced the Persian landlords. By the early eighth century, the number of the Najrāniyya was reduced to about ten thousand because of death or conversion.

The land grants of state property near Kufa made by 'Uthmān and his governor in Kufa, Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ, to leading Kufans in the 650s created a group of absentee Arab landlords who spent part of their time on their estates. A good early example is Zurāra ibn Yazīd, whose residence (Ar. manzil) was at his estate called Zurara near Jisr, close to Kufa. The village of Daylamiyaa on the west bank of the Tigris, about ten miles from Mada’in, belonged to Qudāma ibn al-‘Ajlān al-Azdi in 663. ‘Alī is reported to have settled two groups of Arabs east of Takrit at Bawazij. Arabs of the Azd tribe lived in the subdistrict of Lower Bihqubadh called Rudhmistan by the end of the seventh century. The settlement of Arab bedouin after the seventh

107 Ta‘rikh, II, 81.
108 Ibid., I, 1920. Specifically, Qa‘qa’ ibn 'Amr was exiled to Jerusalem.
109 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, pp. 110, 112; Balâdhurī, Futūḥ, pp. 66–67; Ta‘rikh, I, 2595; Yāqūt, Buldān, IV, 757–58. Both Wāqidi and Balâdhurī include Jews among the Najrāniyya, but everything else that is known about them suggests that they were all Christian.
110 Ibn al-Faqih, Buldān, p. 182; Yāqūt, Buldān, II; 921. Zurāra was in charge of the Kufan shurta for Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ, and his property at Zurara was confiscated by Mu‘awiya.
111 Ta‘rikh, II, 57–58.
113 Ibn Sa‘d, Tabaqāt, VII, 113. This text has Rudhmaysan.
century is suggested by the presence of two villages, both called A’rab; one was between Sura and Kutha and the other between Wasit and Khuzistan.114

However, it should be sufficiently clear that the main demographic consequence of the conquest was a new concentration of population in cities in southern Iraq and that most of the Muslim Arabs who settled in Iraq contributed to this change. By the end of the seventh century, Kufa and Basra had become cities of over two hundred thousand people (by a conservative estimate). By their very size, these cities constituted new mass markets for food, products, and services that reoriented the regional economy and spurred the development of agriculture and craft manufacturing.

Chapter 8

ARABS: ASSIMILATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

TRIBAL SOCIETY

One of the most apparent social consequences of the conquest was an extension of tribal social organization, especially in urban settings. This was associated with the new ruling group and was partly the result of the cohesion of tribal groups, which preserved their identities in the garrison cities and even enhanced their ties to other groups on the basis of nominal kinship. The state also helped to preserve such identities by using them as a basis for military organization. An equally powerful influence in the survival of tribal society, however, was the Qur’ân. It sanctioned many aspects of the tribal social ethic, such as the importance of group solidarity, joint responsibility, exemplary behavior, generosity, hospitality, the protection of the weak by the strong, raiding, and retaliation. Although the intention in the Qur’ân was to replace tribal identities with an Islamic identity, many tribal social values received a new religious sanction in the process.

Retaliation is a good example of the survival and reinterpretation of the tribal ethic in early Islamic Iraq. The Qur’ân sanctioned the principle of retaliation partly because it was impossible to suppress it completely and partly because the early Islamic community at Madina faced a desperate struggle for survival. But the Qur’ân also attempted to prevent an unending chain of blood vengeance by recommending charity, forgiveness, and the acceptance of a blood-price (Ar. diya) as the better way.¹

The annals of early Islamic history are full of examples of retaliation, and there is no question that it remained one of the most important responsibilities of kinship. Of greater significance are the attempts by the state to restrict and to control it. When two of Muthanna’s lieutenants drowned several members of the tribes of Taghlib and Namir at Siffin in 634 in retaliation for a pre-Islamic grievance, ‘Umar made them swear that they had done it as an example and not out of vengeance.² Under Mu‘awiya the state attempted to regulate the op-

¹ Qur’ân, 2:178; 5:45.
² Ṭabarî, Ta’rikh, I, 2207–8.
eration of the private blood-feud in Iraq by enforcing the responsibilities of the clan (Ar. ‘āqila) as a legal unit. At Basra, Ziyād held families and tribes responsible for the behavior of their members. Payment of the blood-price was assured by deducting the amount from the pay of the guilty party or from that of his tribe. If the victim was non-Muslim, half the normal blood-price went to the next of kin and the other half to the state treasury. One example of the use of tribal concepts in the process of detribalization in Iraq is the way in which Hanafi legal scholars took this practice as the precedent for extending the concept of the ʿāqila into a form of substitute kinship and applied it to the joint liability of soldiers serving in the same unit and registered in the same ḏiwān.³

In fact, the very nature of the Arab tribal groups that had settled in Iraq was being transformed in the course of the seventh century. Large numbers of non-Arabs were drawn into a tribal social framework as allies, mawālī, and slaves. The second generation in the garrison cities after the conquest tended to be of mixed parentage and were bilingual. Although the mothers of many “Arabs” were Persian women, the use of patrilineal genealogies preserved an Arab identity for a population that was in fact of mixed descent. In such circumstances, tribal identities provided an increasingly artificial framework for social organization.

SOURCES OF STRATIFICATION

From the beginning this framework was being undermined by the realities of the social stratification that cut across tribal identities. Arabs had their own status distinctions based on age, lineage (Ar. nasab), and nobility (Ar. sharaf). Status differentials in Arab society were expressed in the way different groups required a larger or smaller marriage gift (Ar. mahr) for their women, a higher or lower blood-price for their members, or equality of status (Ar. kafāʾa) for marriage between groups. These devices not only served to establish differences in status among different tribal groups but also among the clans and families within a tribal group.

Among Muslims the equality of believers sanctioned by the Qurʾān

tended to be offset by assertions of precedence (Ar. *sābiqa*) by those who converted the earliest, which the Qurʾān also sanctioned. Such precedence was institutionalized by the assignment of graduated stipends in ʿUmar’s *dīwān*, which were based on categories of priority in conversion to Islam and participation in the early military campaigns. *Muhājirūn* and *Anṣār*, who had converted in the time of Muhammad, were assigned between three thousand and five thousand *dirhams* apiece per year, depending on how early they had converted. Those who had participated only in the early conquests through the battles of Qadisiyya and Yarmuk (from 632 to 637) were assigned two thousand to three thousand *dirhams* per year. Those who joined later and settled in the garrison cities as *rawādīf* (Ar.) were divided into categories and assigned stipends of between one thousand and fifteen hundred, five hundred, three hundred, two hundred and fifty, or two hundred *dirhams*, according to the time of their arrival until 641. The lowest pay rates for the last two categories were equivalent to the rates paid to infantry.

This elaborate system of stipend differences was only temporary in Iraq because, after the Battle of Nihawand in 642, ʿUmar equalized the stipends of the latecomers with those of the veterans of the early campaigns and raised them to two thousand *dirhams*. This was only possible because of the huge amount of booty taken at Nihawand and seems to have been resented by the older veterans. In the late 640s and during the 650s, a new elite of tribal leaders began to replace the former elite of Islamic precedence, especially at Kufa.

A third source of early status differences was the unequal division of booty between cavalry and infantry. Horsemen usually received between two and three times as much booty as infantrymen. The early campaigns generated a tremendous amount of booty. At Jalula’ alone each horseman’s share of the booty was nine thousand *dirhams* plus nine riding animals. The concentration of most of the booty in the hands of cavalrymen increased greatly the advantage of those who could provide themselves with horses over those who could not. On the whole, the difference in the division of booty was probably more important in producing status differences than the stipend system was.

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4 Qurʾān, 57:10.
6 Ibid., I, 2633.
9 Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, I, 2464.
By the 650s the main social development in the garrison cities was the emergence of a new composite post-conquest elite. The stratification of society in the garrison cities was the result of varying abilities to take advantage of the opportunities for social mobility in the fluid conditions of the conquest period. Some soldiers made fortunes from booty or invested in it. ‘Amr ibn Ḥurayth, for example, pooled stipends to buy two chests of gems from the treasure of Nakhirjān. He kept one and sold the other in Hira for the price he had paid for both.10 Others exploited the market for commerce and services as merchants and entrepreneurs by investing as a source of income in public baths or in the canals that terminated at wharves and markets. A new group of Arab Muslim landlords was created by landgrants to tribal leaders around Kufa under ‘Uthmān and through land reclamation and development by the protégés of ‘Uthmān and Mu‘āwiya around Basra. The relatives and protégés of governors, including some mawāli, made fortunes in administration. This is especially true of the circle of Ziyād and Abū Bakra and their relatives at Basra. When Ziyād appointed ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Abī Bakra to destroy the fire temples in Fars and to confiscate their wealth, ‘Ubaydullāh amassed a fortune of forty million dirhams in less than a year.11 The recognition of the tribal ashrāf by the state, which gave them military and social authority over their fellow tribesmen in addition to awarding some of them landgrants, helped to establish the ashrāf as part of the new elite and to increase the social distance between them and other tribesmen. The fiscal authority of the intermediate officials (Ar. ‘urafā’) assigned to distribute stipends served to include them in the elite group as well. Ibn al-Faqīh lists the four leading households (Ar. buyūtāt) of early Kufa as those of Ḥājib ibn Zurāra among the Tamīm, Zayd among Qays, Dhū l-Juddayn among the Rabī‘a, and Qays ibn Ma‘dikarib among Yaman. The leading households of Basra were those of al-Muhallab, Muslim ibn ‘Amr al-Bahill among the Qays, Misma‘ among the Bakr ibn Wa’il, and al-Jārūd among the ‘Abd al-Qays.12 By 657 the elite of Kufa was composed of the leaders (Ar. ru‘ūs) of the people of Kufa, the leaders of the sevenths, and the leaders of the tribes.13

10 Baiadhuri, Futūḥ, p. 305; Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl, p. 146.
11 Baiadhuri, Ansāb, I, 494.
12 Ibn al-Faqīh, Buldān, pp. 172, 190. When al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Ali wrote to the leaders (Ar. ru‘ūs) of the “fifths” (Ar. akhmās) and to the ashrāf in Basra in 680, they were Mālik ibn Misma‘ al-Bakri, al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, al-Mundhir ibn al-Jārūd, Mas‘ūd ibn ‘Amr, Qays ibn al-Haytham, and ‘Umar ibn ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ma‘mar (Ṭabari, Ta‘rikh, II, 240).
13 Ṭabari, Ta‘rikh, I, 3371.
The composite nature of this elite is reflected in the different terms used for its members. They were outstanding people (Ar. *wujuh*), upright people (Ar. *sulahā*'), leaders (Ar. *ru'asā*), notables (Ar. *ashrāf*), and elders (Ar. *shuyūkh*).

The division of the Arab Muslim population of the garrison cities into an elite group (Ar. *khaṣṣa*) and the general population (Ar. *‘āmma*) was underway by the 650s and had been achieved by the time of Muʿāwiya. The governor’s *majlis* became the meeting place of the notables under Ziyād and his son ʿUbaydullāh. By the 680s, the tribal *ashrāf* had developed their own group identity and a degree of solidarity among themselves vis-à-vis the majority of their nominal kinsmen, in addition to their attitudes towards their own *mawālī* and slaves.14

**SOCIAL STATUS, MATERIAL CULTURE, AND ASSIMILATION**

The members of this emerging Arab Muslim elite found convenient symbols for their status among the traditions of the native Iraqi notables, which had survived from the Sasanian period. They were able to follow a life style comparable to that of the native notables partly because their social position was similar, partly because the high society of Hira had set the example, partly because elements of this cultural tradition that had penetrated pre-Islamic Arabia prepared them for it, and partly because they could afford to do so. They duplicated the pattern of great households run by slaves and servants and surrounded themselves with retinues of relatives and *mawālī*. Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays, himself descended from the kings of Kinda, is said to have been the first to have men walk in front of him, Persian-fashion, when he rode on horseback.15 Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ashtar is described riding to the house of al-Mukhtār with a retinue of *mawālī* and servants.16 The practice of providing noble women with a retinue or escort of women of lower status serves as a good example of the kind of customs adopted by the new Arab elite. At the time of the conquest, the daughter of Āzādhibih, the *marzbān* of Hira, was escorted to her new husband by thirty women of the *dahāqīn*.17 This custom already had been adopted by Arabs at Hira where Ḥuraqā, the daugh-

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15 Ṭaḥālībī, *Latā‘if*, p. 17.
Arabs who spent their wealth on luxuries acquired the material culture of the native upper classes. They adopted Persian dining customs and enjoyed the elegant dishes of Persian cuisine, especially luxury foods such as meat, rice, and sugar. The expensive fabrics and greater yardage used for their clothing reflected their new wealth. They wore clothing of linen and silk brocade patterned after the garments of Persian nobles. Arabs in Iraq began to wear the Persian robe (Ar. *qabār*) with long, wide sleeves, the tall, pointed hat (Ar.? *qalansuwwa*), stole (M.P. *taylasān*), and trousers (M.P. *sarāwīl*). This began on the battlefield, where victorious Arabs stripped fallen Persians of their golden, jewel-studded belts and armbands and robes of silk and gold brocade. In the garrison cities they wore *qalansuwwas,* long, decorated *taylasāns* of silk brocade (Ar. *dibāj*), and robes of black, yellow, or black and yellow-striped Yamani brocade. They dyed their beards black, or red with henna, or yellow with saffron. Some of them began to look and act like native notables. ‘Abd ar-Rahmān ibn al-Aswad at Kufa was called an Arab *dihqān* because of his clothing, and because he used perfume and rode on a *birdhawn.* When Anas ibn Malik rode a *birdhawn* in a funeral procession at Basra.

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25 In Basra, Muṭarrif ibn Abūdullāh ash-Shikhkhir (d. 705) at different times dyed his beard black, red, and blond (Ibn Sa‘d, *Tabaqāt,* VII[1], 105–6).
26 Ibid., VII[1], 15.
27 Ibid., VI, 157; VII[1], 14, 101, 109, 110, 116.
28 Ibid., VI, 202.
wearing a thin black garment with a piece of cloth over his head to protect him from the sun, he was mistaken for a *dihqān*.\(^{29}\)

However, there is no evidence that Arabs went so far as to adopt the Sasanian clothing codes as a means of distinguishing different levels in the social order, as Løkkegaard suggests.\(^{30}\) The richness of the fabric in their clothing was a reflection of relative wealth, but clothing did not serve as symbols of status in the formal, late Sasanian sense. The only example of the adoption of such Persian customs in the seventh century concerns the royal privilege of uniqueness. It is said that when Ardashir I was crowned, no one in his kingdom put a branch of sweet basil on his head in imitation, and that this privilege was claimed by certain Arab Muslims after the conquest. After Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ (d. ca. 676–77), who had been ʿUthmān’s governor at Kufa, retired to Makka, no one wore a turban when he did. When al-Ḥajjāj wore a long *qalansuwwa*, no one wore anything like it in his presence.\(^{31}\) Muslims began to employ distinctions in clothing to indicate social status or occupation only in the eighth century, when ʿUmar II forbade his Christian subjects to wear the *gabā*, silk clothing, or the turban.\(^{32}\) Eventually, Ḥanāfī law forbade *dhimmis* to wear the *ṭaylasān*,\(^{33}\) but there does not appear to be any Sasanian precedent for basing such distinctions on religious differences.

During the seventh century, clothing was worn in the garrison cities in a haphazard mixture of Arab and Persian styles. People combined or alternated Persian garments with black and white turbans worn alone or wound around a *qalansuwwa* or burnous. But the burnous, shawl (Ar. *miṭraf*), and turban could be of red or green silk.\(^{34}\)

There were practical difficulties to such sartorial acculturation. The *qalansuwwa* and *ṭaylasān* were meant to be worn in an upright, stately, dignified position and were most appropriate to a ceremonial setting. When two Azd tribesmen from Kufa tried to wear their *qalansuwwas* while fording the Euphrates on horseback in 656, they lost the headpieces and had to dismount and retrieve them.\(^{35}\) And most obviously,

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\(^{29}\) Ibid., VII(1), 10–11.


\(^{31}\) Tāj, p. 47.

\(^{32}\) Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj*, p. 196.


\(^{35}\) Ṭabarānī, *Taʾrīkh*, I, 3260.
neither article was constructed for the kind of posture Muslims take when they worship. It is therefore significant that mawāli of Persian descent solved the problem of what to do with awkward articles of clothing during Islamic worship. Abū l-‘Āliyya, who introduced the practice of wearing sarāwil indoors, put his round cap lined with fox skin in his sleeve when he worshiped.36 Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, who wore a double Kurdish taylasān, put it on his left side when he worshiped.37

Even more important than these problems, the enjoyment of luxuries was a major sociocultural issue among Muslim Arabs in the seventh century. Since many luxuries were regarded as foreign, this issue affected their attitudes towards cultural assimilation. Most of the Arabs who settled in the garrison cities of Iraq were unable to take advantage of the economic opportunities that were available to their leaders. After 642, campaigns no longer provided as much booty as before. Ordinary soldiers on stipends were affected adversely by inflation; they were treated more and more as common subjects and this led to increasing social polarization and tension under ʿUthmān and Muʿawiya. An extreme example of the straits to which individual soldiers could be reduced is provided by the story of a very ugly man of the Banū Dabba clan at Basra whom Ziyād found eating garbage. When asked how many dependents he had, the man replied that he had seven daughters, all uglier than he was, who devoured his income. Ziyād provided each of them with one hundred dirhams and a servant, and increased their rations.38

Polarization within tribal and clan groups was evident by the time of the first fitna and was reflected in the divisions among some groups over whether to avenge the death of ʿUthmān or support ʿAlī. Such divisions at Basra were revealed at the time of the Battle of the Camel in 656, when members of the same tribes fought on opposite sides. In the case of the ʿAbd al-Qays, Ṣuḥār ibn ʿAbbās, who had been a member of his tribe’s delegation to Muḥammad, was among those who sought to avenge ʿUthmān.39 But seventy ʿAbd al-Qays dissidents were killed for complaining that the Muhājirūn (Quraysh) had chosen the first four caliphs without consulting other Muslims and had monopolized the tribute (Ar. fay’). Other members of the ʿAbd al-Qays

37 Ibn Saʿd, Ṣaḥīḥ, VII(1), 117.
38 Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, Ḥadīth, I, 271. Presumably this was to enable them to marry.
and many of the Bakr ibn Wā’il, deprived of the bonuses granted them by ‘Ali, raided the treasury in Basra and then joined ‘Ali.40

These issues also seem to have motivated some Kufans to support ‘Ali. The emergence of the Shi‘ī wing of the Kinda at Kufa appears to be related to competition over the leadership (Ar. riyāsā) of Kinda between Muḥammad ibn al-Ash’ath and Ḥujr ibn ‘Adi, to ‘Ali’s support of Ḥujr, and to Ḥujr’s leadership of dissident elements at Kufa who wanted immediate payment of stipends under Mu‘āwiya.41 Increasing polarization involved impoverished tribesmen in sectarian movements and led them into confrontations with their own ashraf, such as the sedition of Muslim ibn ‘Aqil in Kufa in 680 when the Kufan mob besieged the ashraf in the citadel.42

Such conflicts seem to underlie the objections of some Muslims to the material aspects of acculturation in Iraq. They are summarized in the warning, as tradition claims, that ‘Umar gave to his appointees not to ride a birdhawn, have a doorkeeper (Ar. ḥājib), wear linen (Ar. kattān), or eat refined food (Ar. darmak).43 Resistance to abandoning Arab styles of clothing and to wearing expensive, ostentatious garments of silk was both pious and egalitarian. ‘Umar objected to ‘Utba ibn Farqad wearing a tunic (L. ṣamīs) with long sleeves,44 and the mawla Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr at Kufa disapproved of wearing a ṭaylasān of silk brocade.45 In a typical scene representing ‘Ali’s opposition to the adoption of such Persian customs, the mule of a dihqān was brought to him at Mada’in. When he put his hand on the saddle-bow, he found that it was slippery. When he asked why, he was told that it was silk brocade, so he refused to ride on it.46 There was also a feeling that the luxurious nature of the new styles and the wealth from the conquest were undermining the fighting quality of Arab soldiers. In his khutba at Basra in 683, ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād told the Basrans that “we have worn silk, the striped cloth of Yaman, and soft clothing until we and our skin have become disgusted with it. We must replace it with iron.”47 This is the same ‘Ubaydullāh whose identity was given away at the Battle of the Khazir by the odor of musk.48

40 Ṭabarī, Ta‘rīkh, I, 3127–28, 3131.
41 Dinawarī, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, pp. 236–38.
42 Ibid., p. 252.
44 Ibn Sa‘d, Tabaqāt, VI, 27.
46 Ibid., VI, 170. It is significant that all three of these examples come from Kufa.
47 Ṭabarī, Ta‘rīkh, II, 439.
48 Dinawarī, Akhbār at-ṭiwāl, p. 303.
It is difficult to separate the ethnic aspects of the cultural assimilation of Arabs in Iraq from socioeconomic issues. The only existing upper-class tradition was Sasanian high culture, and its adoption was the consequence of the socioeconomic rise of those Arabs who profited from the conquest and reaped the rewards of administration afterwards. But the adoption of this culture by Arabs did not necessarily begin with the conquest of Iraq, since some of it had penetrated Arabia in the pre-Islamic period. Arabs used henna in the pre-Islamic period and the glossy, black Hindi dye was imported to Iran and Arabia at about the same time in the sixth century. However, greater numbers of Arabs were able to enjoy the material aspects of this culture after the conquest, when luxuries appear to have been more available among a population that had not enjoyed them before. Post-conquest conditions enabled a wider distribution of goods, both socially and geographically. Sugar and silk brocade, for instance, appear to be more available after the conquest, as were newly, inexpensive fabrics such as cotton. At a time when a robe cost twenty or thirty dirhams, the mawlā Abū l-ʿĀliyya at Basra was able to make a qamīs and a turban for himself out of ten dirhams worth of Razi cotton. Persian clothing styles spread to the Hijaz, where ʿAmmār ibn Yāsīr (d. 657) wore sarāwil in Makka, and to Syria and to Egypt. Resistance to the use of certain material things was due more to their socioeconomic significance than to ethnic associations, and was more because they were luxuries than because they were Persian.

In these circumstances the degree of continuity or change through cultural transmission is explained largely by reinforcement. Cultural selections depended on mutual interest or similarity in background. Assimilation and continuation of local customs by Arab Muslims was most successful when local Iraqi culture coincided with or was reinforced by Arab or Islamic attitudes and practices. This seems also to have operated in a negative way. Arabs stopped short of formalizing emerging status differences among themselves, as the Sasanians had done, because there was nothing in their own background that corresponded to such a social order. Cultural continuity through transmission to Arab immigrants was effectively limited by their own resistance to total assimilation, especially among the first generation.

49 Masʿūdī, Murūj, I, 309; Thaʿālibī, Laṭāʿif, p. 12.
50 Ibn ʿAbd Rabbīhī, ʿIqd, V, 14–15.
51 Ibn Saʿd, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), p. 82.
52 Balāḏurī, Ansāb, I, 158.
53 Grohmann, Arabic Papyri, pp. 167–68.
Although this meant change for Iraq, it meant continuity among the immigrant Arab population itself. Again, the importance of reinforcement for cultural continuity can be seen in the way the Islamic religious sanction of tribal social ethics encouraged the preservation of aspects of tribal life in the organization of cities and armies and in individual behavior. The effect this had on the non-Arab population of Iraq also demonstrates the importance of reinforcement as a factor for successful change, since the Islamic faith provided or sanctioned the cultural alternatives introduced by the Arabs.
Chapter 9

OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS

The ethnic diversity of seventh-century Iraq was increased by the presence of several smaller groups: Kurds, Syrians, Greeks, Turks, Indians, and Africans. Except for the Kurds, these people were imported as labor or as soldiers, but they all contributed to the cultural syncretism of Iraq during this period.

KURDS

Kurds were the only smaller ethnic group native to Iraq. As with the Persians, their presence along the northeastern edge of Iraq was merely an extension of their presence in western Iran. All of the non-Persian, tribal, pastoral, Iranian groups in the foothills and mountains of the Zagros range along the eastern fringes of Iraq were called Kurds at that time.\(^1\) Their presence was usually made known through conflict, as thieves and bandits, with their neighbors or by making common cause with other rural forces against some central authority. During the conquest, the Kurds of Fars attacked Hurmuzān from the rear while he was defending Khuzistan against the Muslims in 639. But five years later, they and other local people joined the revolt of Bayrūz in Khuzistan. These rebels were met and defeated by the Basran army under Abū Mūsā between Nahr Tira and Manadhir on the border of Iraq and Khuzistan. In 658 the Kurds in the mountains of Ramhurmuz on the borders of Fars and Khuzistan joined the Khārijī revolt of al-Khirrī ibn Rāshid. All of the dissatisfied local elements formed al-Khirrī’s left flank: local people, riffraff (Ar. ‘ulūj), those who wanted to “break” the kharāj, and their Kurdish followers. In the engagement they fought against government forces, three hundred of the ‘ulūj and Kurds were killed. The Kurds of Fars also joined Ibn al-Ash’ath after he was driven out of Iraq in 702.\(^2\)

The main concentration of Kurds was further north. They lived in the mountains of western Media (the Jabal) and southern Azerbayjan and the valleys of the tributaries flowing into the Tigris, from Hulwan

\(^1\) Mas‘ūdi (Murūj, II, 251) includes Lurs among the “Kurdish” tribes of the Jibal.
\(^2\) Bosworth, Sīstān, p. 61; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 2543, 2708–9, 3432.
in the south to Margha in the north, where they mixed with Persians and Aramaeans. In 656 the governor of Hulwan suppressed Kurds who were devastating the subdistrict of Dinawar. In 696 Kurds and other local people in the vicinity of Hulwan joined the Khārijī revolt of Suwayd ibn ‘Abd ar-Rahmān and occupied the pass of Hulwan. There were also Kurds in the regions of Beth Bégash and Beth Karte­waye above Irbil in Adiabene, where they lived a partly sedentary life and raised sheep and cattle. ‘Utba ibn Farqad had taken all the forts of the Kurds when he conquered Adiabene in 641. Kurds were still settled in the subdistricts of Ard Hazza in the Islamic period, and many groups of Kurds called Dāśniyya inhabited the mountainous subdistrict of Dasin above Margha.

Developments in seventh-century Iraq also affected the Kurds. Sometime after the conquest, they located themselves within the Arab tribal genealogical system by claiming descent from Rabī’ā or Mudar of the Nizār group. By doing so they identified themselves with the pastoral Arabs closest to them in northern Iraq. Even the Shuhjān tribe around Dinawar and Hamadan regarded themselves as descendents of Rabī’ā. Khārijism also survived among the Kurds as late as the tenth century, and some of the Kurdish tribes in the mountains above Margha were Christian.

SYRIANS AND GREEKS

The largest group of truly foreign origin in late Sasanian Iraq probably consisted of the Greek and Syrian captives deported from Byzantine territory and resettled by the Sasanians as captive laborers. The first to do this on a large scale was Shāpur II, who resettled captives from upper Mesopotamia and eastern Syria in Khuzistan. When Amid fell to Qubādh I in 503 the survivors, including the notables, were carried off as slaves. But, according to Prokopios, they were released and allowed to return shortly afterwards. In about 540 Khusrāw

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3 Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 45; idem, Futūḥ, p. 326; Taḥbārī, Ta’rikh, II, 989.
5 Mas’ūdī, Murūj, II, 249, 251.
6 Ibid., I, 300–301; Thaʾalibī, Ghurar, pp. 529–30.
7 Prokopios, Wars, I.vii, 32–35. Tradition claimed much later that the captives from Amid were settled at Abarqubadh (Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwal, p. 68) or at Seleucia (Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II[1], 133).
Anūshirvān transported the entire captive population of Antioch in Syria to Iraq, where he built a new city for them southeast of Mada‘in and patterned it after Antioch. This New Antioch, or Rumiyya as the Arabs called it, was a Syrian city in the heart of Iraq, complete with public baths and a large hippodrome. It also became a place of asylum for escaped Greek slaves, and by about 580 it was a city of thirty thousand people. The appointment of a chief of artisans (M.P. qarūjbadh) to be in charge of this city suggests that the main purpose of its foundation was to be a center of manufacturing.8 Syrian captives were also used as agricultural labor, and on his return from his third invasion of Syria in 642 Khusraw Anūshirvān enslaved a great number of farmers who had taken refuge at Callinicus.9 They may have been used to develop the region between Babil and Kaskar. When Jerusalem fell to the Persians in 614, thirty-five thousand prisoners, most of whom were craftsmen, were deported to Iran.10 Later the Monophysite population of Edessa was deported and resettled mostly in eastern Iran, although some of them were settled east of Mada‘in at Dastagird and Daskara along with captives from Jerusalem and Alexandria. The presence of these captives in this part of Iraq was only temporary, however. When Heraklios took Dastagird, they were liberated or took advantage of the situation to flee.11

The people at Rumiyya survived into the Islamic period by coming to terms with Khālid ibn ‘Urfuta in 638. According to these terms, they could either leave or stay. If they chose to stay, they had to recognize the political authority of the Muslims, give them advice, pay kharāj, and act as trustworthy guides.12 There is little information about the Byzantine settlement at Rumiyya after that. Some of the people may have settled in Kufa, where a Dar ar-Rumiyyin and a Roman alley are mentioned in 680 and 685. But they may not have survived there very long since Baladhuri identifies the Dar ar-Rumiyyin as a dunghill where the Kufans threw their rubbish.13

9 Prokopios, Wars, II.xxxi, 32.
10 Stratos, Byzantium, p. 110.
12 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 263.
13 Ibid., p. 281; Tabari, Taʾrīkh, II, 257, 630, 632.
The fall of the Sasanians ended the large scale forced immigration of Syrians and Greeks into Iraq. Judging by the general lack of information about such people in Islamic Iraq their presence seems to have declined after the conquest. The only person who fits this description is 'Atīyya ibn Sa'd ibn Junāda (Gennadios?), whose mother was a Rūmī umm walad. 'Atīyya was born in Kufa when 'Alī was Commander of the Faithful, and he died in 729. The reference to a street of Iṣṭifānūs at Basra in 'Ubaydullāh’s time suggests the presence of such people there as well.

These people brought various cultural influences with them from the west, and this contributed to the general synthesis in sixth- and seventh-century Iraq. The captives who were resettled at New Antioch appear to have been responsible for introducing the custom of carrying candles and incense in funeral processions. The influence of Byzantine (and ultimately Roman) domestic architecture was also being felt in the sixth century just across the border in Nasibin. The headmaster of the Nestorian school there, Abraham of Beth Rabban, who kept his door open to anyone who wanted to see him, built an atrium at the outer door of his residence in order to keep animals from wandering in. He thereby became “the one who first made such a one, as this is the custom of the Romans, in Nisibis.”

However, the most significant result of western influences in late Sasanian Iraq was the reintroduction and spread of public baths. Baths had existed in Seleucid Iraq but appear to have gone out of use in the Parthian and Sasanian periods. Jews may have had private baths for ritual purposes under the Sasanians, and the Babylonian Talmud mentions a bathhouse named after the owner. Public baths began to spread in Byzantine and Sasanian Mesopotamia towards the end of the fifth century. In 497 Alexander the hegemon (Gr.) began construction on a public bath at Edessa which had been planned years before, but the tepidarium collapsed before it was finished. It was rebuilt and completed in 505 by Eulogius, the governor of Edessa.

In addition to such official patronage, the Christian church helped to spread baths in Mesopotamia. In 500 there was a bath underneath

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14 Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 212–13.
15 Ibn al-Faqih, Buldān, p. 191.
16 A. Vööbus, History of the School of Nisibis CSCO, Subsidia 26 (Louvain, 1965), 151.
19 Wright, Joshua the Stylite, pp. 20–22, 69.
the Church of the Apostles in Edessa, and it is no surprise to find bathhouses across the border at the Nestorian school in Nasibin. Significantly, it was Abraham of Beth Rabban who had two bathhouses built there in the sixth century: one for the use of the monks at the school, the other for the general public to provide income for the hospice.\textsuperscript{20}

Royal patronage by the Sasanians is presented as one of the main reasons for the introduction of baths. This was also a source of conflict between the monarchy and the Magian priests who objected to heating water. Vologeses (Balāsh, 484–88) seems to have been the first Sasanian ruler to provoke opposition from the Magian priests, who accused him of trying to abolish their laws because he wanted to build baths in the cities of his empire. When Qubādh I took Amid in 503, he went to its public bath himself and enjoyed it so much that he ordered such baths to be built throughout his empire. Although there is no evidence that the wishes of either monarch were ever carried out, Khusraw Anūshirvān had baths built at Rumiyya for the use of the captives from Antioch. There are remains of Sasanian baths at Kish and possibly at Mada’in, but these belonged to palace complexes and probably were not public baths.\textsuperscript{21}

The Islamic conquest removed the Magian objections to public bathing, at least in Iraq, and the second half of the seventh century saw an increase in bath building in and around the new urban centers of lower Iraq. The main incentive was economic. Baths were an attractive investment because, as with the bathhouse of the school of Nasibin, they were a lucrative source of income. The Ḥammām A‘yān was probably the oldest bath at Kufa. Before the conquest, it had belonged to an ‘Ibādī of Hira called Jābir. Afterwards, Jābir’s heirs sold the bath to a mawlā of Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ called A‘yān, after whom it was then named.\textsuperscript{22} The involvement of the household of Sa‘d in founding baths at Kufa is also indicated by the baths named after ‘Umar ibn Sa‘d called Ḥammām ‘Umar, located at the village of Bitri

\textsuperscript{20} Vööbus, \textit{School of Nisibis}, p. 146; Wright, \textit{Joshua the Styliite}, p. 33.


across the Euphrates from Kufa. ṬAmr ibn Ḥurayth seems to have invested part of his fortune in a bath named after him and it is mentioned at Kufa in 685.

The building of baths at Basra began when that city was founded. The earliest bath was built at Khurayba in the oldest part of the city. Other early baths belonged to a *mawlā* of Ziyād called Fil and to Ḥumrān ibn Abān. The third bath built in Basra belonged to Muslim ibn Abī Bakra, who claimed that it brought him a daily profit of one thousand *dirhams* and two *kurrs* of wheat. But once when he was sick, he told his brother, Ḥabd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakra, about the profits from his bath, and Ḥabd ar-Raḥmān obtained permission from the authorities to build one of his own. The word spread and several others, including Ḥubaydullāh ibn Abī Bakra, Siyāh al-Uswārī, Ḥuṣayn ibn Abī l-Ḥurr al-‘Anbarī, Rayta bint Ziyād and Lubāba bint Awfay al-Jurashi, were also given permission to build baths. The result was that when Muslim recovered from his illness, he found his profits destroyed by competition.

EAST IRANIANS AND TURKS

East Iranian and Turkic people from Central Asia were already in Iraq under the Sasanians, who transported them to the Mesopotamian frontier to lessen their pressure in the east and to stiffen the Sasanian border defenses against the Byzantines and Arabs. A group of people called Qadishāyē or Kadisēnoi had been settled in the Jabal Sinjar at the end of the Parthian period. In the fifth century they were still pagans and in the early sixth century they raided the countryside along with local Arabs. In the reign of Qubadh I they attacked Nasibin. By 578 some of the Qadishāyē in the Sasanian army were Christians. They disappeared by the end of the sixth century; but their name may have survived in the village of Beth Qadshayē in Margha, which existed in the seventh and eighth centuries. There were eight hundred He-

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24 Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, II, 656.  
phthalites in the army of Qubād I that attacked Amid in 503 and there were Huns in the Persian army that attacked Edessa in 544. According to Hishām al-Kalbī, Khusraw Parviz settled some eight thousand “Turks” from the vicinity of Herat led by Narīmān at Qadisiyya as a buffer against the Arabs. Four thousand of them are supposed to have chained themselves together and perished fighting on the Persian side under the son of Narīmān at the Battle of Qadisiyya. Afterwards, the grandchildren of Narīmān returned to Khurasan.

Basran forces operating in eastern Iran in the second half of the seventh century brought Central Asian captives back to Iraq with them. 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād is said to have taken four thousand Bukharans as his own prisoners at the towns of Paykand and Ramitin when he raided the Bukhara oasis in 673–74. They were settled in Basra as a military unit of archers attached to the clan of the Banū Sulaym and lived in their own district along the street of the Bukharans. In 683 they formed part of the force commanded by 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abdullāh ibn 'Āmir ibn Kurayz together with his armed mawālī. Al-Ḥajjāj settled many of them at Wasit.

INDIANS

Several groups of Indian origin living in late Sasanian Iran made their way to Iraq after the conquest. The largest, most typical group were the Zuṭṭi. They had been brought from India to the Gulf coast of Iran in the reign of Bahram V (420–38), where they settled into a migratory pattern, following the pasture for their water buffaloes. There they became associated with an east Indian group called Sayābija which also lived along the Gulf coast. In the same period Bahram V is said to have imported some four thousand Indian musicians to Iran. They were called black Lūris and dispersed throughout the provinces as entertainers playing the flute and lute.

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27 Prokopios, Wars, I.vii. 8; viii. 13; II.xxvi. 5–11. The eight hundred Hephthalites in Qubād’s vanguard in 503 were almost all killed by the Byzantines.
28 Qazwini, Athār al-bilād, p. 159; Yaḡūt, Budān, IV, 8–9. Hishām calls these people Khazars, but since they came from Herat they are more likely to have been Hephthalites. If the legend that Qadisiyya was named after a diḥqān of Herat called Qādis is to be believed, these people might have been Qadishāyā.
29 Baladhuri, Futūh, pp. 376, 410–11; Ibn al-Faqīh, Budān, p. 191; Narshakhi, Tārīkh Bukhārā, tr. R. Frye (Cambridge, 1954), p. 37; Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, II, 170, 464; Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrikh, II, 237; Yaḡūt, Budān, I, 522. The Bukharans are more likely to have been Sogdians than Turks.
Some Zuṭṭ and Sayābija were serving in the Sasanian army at the time of the conquest, along with another group of Indian mercenaries called Indighār located in eastern Kirman. Members of all three groups who were captured in the early campaigns converted to Islam when they heard about the Asāwira and settled in Basra when Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī was governor. At first the Zuṭṭ and Sayābija were a source of contention among the clans of Tamīm at Basra, who wanted these valuable mercenaries as allies. Eventually these Indians allied themselves with the Banū Ḥanẓala. They formed their own military unit in Basra and in 656 a guard of forty or four hundred of the Sayābija under Abū Sālim az-Zuṭṭī was in charge of the Basran treasury. When they refused to turn it over to Talḥa and az-Zubayr, they were massacred in a dawn attack led by ʿAbdullāh ibn az-Zubayr. This act forced the Zuṭṭ and Sayābija into ʿAlī’s camp, and at the Battle of the Camel they appear in the catalogue of ʿAlī’s army led by a certain Dinwar ibn ʿAlī.31

Nonmilitary Zuṭṭ and Sayābija probably migrated to lower Iraq when the mercenaries settled in Basra. Their association with ʿAlī during the first fitna probably prompted Muʿāwiya to transport some of them to the Syrian coast near Antioch. They seem to have been neutral during the second fitna but supported the revolt of Ibn al-Ashʿath along with everyone else in Basra, so al-Ḥajjāj disbanded them. However, al-Ḥajjāj patronized civilian Zuṭṭ and settled some of them with their water buffaloes in the lower parts of the district of Kaskar. The Zuṭṭ were instrumental in land reclamation there and were probably responsible for the spread of large-scale rice cultivation. They began to multiply and, according to Ibn Rustah, continued to occupy Sartaghan, Tastakhan, and ʿAqr Sayd in the middle of the swamps.32

AFRICANS

The Sasanians did not import African labor. By the end of the seventh century, however, there were black east African slaves (Zanj) in the vicinity of Basra. They were probably employed as labor on the newly developed estates. They raided the region around Furat in 689

31 Balādhuri, Ansāḥ, IVb, 106; idem, Futūḥ, pp. 373–76; Ṭabarī, Tarīkh, I, 3180–81.
32 Balādhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 375–76; Ibn Rustah, Aʾlāq, p. 95.
towards the end of the second *fitna* and rose in rebellion in 695 during the revolt of 'Abdullāh ibn al-Jārūd against al-Ḥajjāj.33

**ETHNIC DIVERSITY AND CONTINUITY**

It ought to be evident that the population of Iraq was just as diverse in the early Islamic period as it was in the late Sasanian period. It should be equally clear that ethnic differences were no barrier to cultural integration or to significant innovation and may, in fact, have encouraged both. However, assimilation was most complete for individuals who were removed from their former social contexts and integrated as individuals into a new society. The best examples of this are the children who were taken captive during the conquest and raised as Muslims. There was very little difference between them and Arabs except that they were often better Muslims. Group identities and cultural differences were preserved most effectively when groups stayed together—especially as military units—such as the *Asāwira, Ḥamrāʿ*, Bukharans, Zuṭṭ and Arab tribes and clans. In this regard, the perpetuation by the early Islamic society of the Sasanian pattern of ethnically specialized, professional military units is of importance. The intermingling of ethnic groups—an ethnic map of Iraq in this period would resemble a jigsaw puzzle—demonstrates that the preservation of an ethnic identity or group solidarity was not dependent on regional predominance.

Some change did occur in the groups that made up this ethnic mixture. There were fewer Greeks and Syrians after the conquest. There were about as many Aramaeans, Kurds, and Persians, although Persians were redistributed geographically towards the cities of lower Iraq. There were many more Arabs, and Indians and east Africans were new in Iraq as resident minorities. More important than these differences is the way the new ethnic makeup signaled changes in the importing of labor and in the uses to which it was put. A large labor force of captive origin existed in Iraq in both periods. But in the late Sasanian period, Syrian and Greek captives seem to have been employed in manufacturing, using Syrian techniques, and as agricultural labor on the estates of the *dahāqīn*. The labor employed on newly developed or reclaimed land by the state appears to have been brought from Iran. In the early Islamic period, captive Persian women and

children were employed almost entirely as domestic labor, including some cloth production, in the households of the new elite of the garrison cities. The new groups in early Islamic Iraq, the Indians and east Africans, provided labor for new agricultural enterprises that spread new crops and new techniques.
Part III

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES
Introduction

The ethnic diversity of early Islamic Iraq was matched only by its religious diversity. There were Magians (or Zoroastrians), Jews, Christians (both Nestorians and Monophysites), pagans, gnostics (including Manichaean, Marcionites, and proto-Mandaean), and Muslims. One of the most important changes taking place among most of them was the creation of social divisions along religious lines. Apart from possible Hellenistic antecedents (e.g., the politeuma), conditions in Iraq in the late Sasanian period were especially favorable for this transformation. As a result, important precedents were set that are crucial to an understanding of the nature of the associative society that emerged by the early Islamic period.

The formation of a society composed of separate religious communities is usually associated with the Muslims and marks a major change in the social organization of Iraq. This was part of the general social transformation taking place in southwestern Asia from the fourth to the ninth centuries. The change produced a society composed of religious communities, which amounted to social bodies, with their own legal institutions that sanctioned matters of personal status such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. The existence of such communities is fundamental to the formation of Islamic society and serves as the single most important distinction between Muslim and Hellenistic society. The creation of such communities involved both organization and identity. From a personal point of view, this meant replacing means of identification based on language, occupation, or geographical location with a primary identity based on membership in a religious community. But such transfers of identity were never as total or precise as they would seem to be in theory. Although religious identities often crossed ethnic boundaries, ethnic identities managed to survive, sometimes because they coincided with religious communities that gave them institutional form.1

Several criteria indicate the existence of religious communities in the late Sasanian period. The first is the spread of a primarily religious personal identity and religiously sanctioned way of life among Jews, Magians, and Christians. The religious leaders themselves drew the ordinary faithful into operating communities of law reinforced by

1 Much of what Barth says about ethnic groups applies equally well to religious communities. See F. Barth, Ethnic Groups and Boundaries (Boston, 1970), pp. 9-17.
forms of religious education that emphasized doctrinally laden liturgy, by weekly congregational worship, and by concepts of communal property.  

Second, the formation of such closely knit communities increasingly isolated the members of one group from those of another. The boundaries created between religious groups by separate bodies of law are indicative of the rising barriers to interfaith relations at the end of the Sasanian period. The defensiveness associated with this development was symbolized by a shared vocabulary of protective walls. The Magians saw the good fortune of their religion (M.P. dēn xēarrah) as a fortress-like enclosure formed by the starry band around the sky, which protected the good from the attacks of demons. Jews spoke of making a fence around the Torah, and the Nestorian synod of 554 called the canons “high walls, impregnable fortresses, protecting their guardians against all danger.”

Although social barriers based on religious identities were becoming increasingly formalized, they did not usually coincide with ethnic identities. Christians could be found among Aramaeans, Persians, Kurds, Syrians, and Arabs. Aramaeans were pagan, Jewish, Christian, Manichaean, or Muslim. The possession of a common religious identity allowed a degree of assimilation among people with different ethnic backgrounds, such as Persian converts from Magianism to Christianity who submitted to baptism and inhumation but brought traditions of Persian law with them. Conversely, the possession of a common ethnic background allowed a degree of similarity to develop among the members of different religious groups. The most evident result was the emergence of similar forms of organization within most religious communities.

Third, the structure of existing religious communities was strengthened by the official or semiofficial recognition given to them by the Sasanian state. Neusner noted that when the Sasanians occupied Iraq in the third century, they had no local constituency, no tradition for dealing with minorities, nor experience in using their connections across the border—"they had no very clear idea of what to do with minority

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2 For a set of criteria for a religious community, see R. Bulliet, Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), pp. 34-35.
3 Bailey, Zoroastrian Problems, pp. 144-47.
4 Pirgē Abhōth, ch. 1, Mishna 1.
5 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 97, 255.
peoples, but only harassed them." 6 By the late Sasanian period they had all three. The importance of Iraq for defense and revenue, combined with the presence of a large non-Persian and non-Magian population in this part of their empire (where the capital was located), led the later Sasanians to experiment with means to ensure loyalty by providing military protection and by granting a degree of religious toleration in return for the payment of taxes and assurances of good behavior. This situation is reflected in the story that Hurmizd IV (579–90) compared his state to a throne and told his hirbadhs that just as the throne needed all four legs in order to stand, the Sasanian state needed to protect its non-Magian subjects (incidentally described as the two rear legs of the throne), especially in Iraq, in order to survive.7 In practice, the religious leaders were made responsible for the behavior of the members of their own communities.

Chapter 10

MAGIANS

Magians were a ruling minority in Sasanian Iraq but they were not totally representative of the Persian population. Only Persians who were in Iraq as part of the ruling institution—as administrators, soldiers, or landlords—seem to have been Magian. The Persian notables who were settled at Nasibin by Shāpūr II in the fourth century had been Magians and their descendents were still Magians in the early sixth century.⁸ Magians inhabited the towns and villages of Adiabene and Garmekan;⁹ they formed an important community at Hale in Radhan;¹⁰ and they lived in Hira and the surrounding countryside.¹¹ From Furat to Anbar, the Persian upper classes in the towns of the Sawad and the dahāqīn in the countryside were Magians. There were Magians wherever Persian soldiers were stationed in Iraq, particularly in the fortresses along the southwestern frontier, and the Persian armies that defended Iraq during the Islamic conquest were Magian. Anōshagān, who led local forces in an unsuccessful attempt to defend part of the Sawad after the Battle of Buwayb, was the son of a hirbadh.¹² The Persians who entrenched themselves at Jalula after the fall of Mada’in swore by the fires that they would not flee.¹³ But not all Persians were Magians. By the end of the Sasanian period, a growing group of Christian Persian aristocrats emerged in Iraq. Nor were all Magians Persians. Political or social ambition could result in conversion to the religion of the ruling group.¹⁴ The general penetration of Persian culture in Arabia resulted in the conversion of some Arabs to Magianism, particularly in the tribe of Tamīm.¹⁵

¹² Ṭabārī, Ta’rikh, I, 2245.
¹³ Ibid., I, 2461.
THE PRIESTHOOD

Since Magianism was the state religion of the Sasanian empire, the priestly hierarchy paralleled its administrative system. At the apex of the hierarchy was the *magōpatan magōpat* (M.P., N.P. *mōbadhān mōbadh*), who was appointed by the king. He supervised the religious life of Magians, established doctrine, appointed and dismissed subordinate priests, and enforced Magian religious law as the supreme judge. As a member of the royal court, he helped to determine the succession to the throne and headed the semiannual court of judicial review which judged complaints against the king and had the power to pass judgment against him.16

Below the supreme *magōpat* stood a pyramid of hierarchic priestly districts, under two or three grades of priestly officials, who combined administrative, judicial, ritual, and educational responsibilities. These districts appear to have corresponded to the secular administrative system. There may have been a grade of grand *magōpat* (M.P./Syr. *mōhpaṭā rabhā*) in charge of larger or more important provinces,17 but most provinces were under a *magōpat*. In Iraq, *magōpas* were attested for Maysan,18 Beth Aramaye,19 and Adiabene.20 Subordinate priestly districts in each province were under subordinate priests, and some evidence suggests the existence of the lower levels of this system in Iraq. Syriac martyrologies assume the existence in Adiabene of two *mōhpats* of districts who were judges (Syr. *dayyanā*),21 and of a Magian of the district (Syr. *magōshā dhē ethrā*) who was a subordinate of the *archimagos* (Gk.) of Adiabene in the fourth century.22 The *mōhpat* of Hale in Radhan in the fifth century is described holding court on the

17 There was a *mōpaṭā rabhā* of Khuzistan under Khusraw I (Hoffmann, *Persischer Märtyrer*, p. 87). The *magōpatān magōpat* of Veh-Shapuhr mentioned in the *Matikan* may also represent this grade; see J.-P. de Menasce, *Feux et fondations*, p. 27.
18 E. Herzfeld, *Paikuli, Monument and Inscription of the Early History of the Sasanian Empire* (Berlin, 1924), I, 81, pl. 140, no. 9.
judgment seat (Gk. bēma) before the assembled people of the town.\textsuperscript{23} Late Sasanian seal impressions attest a lord of the Magians (M.P. magōxwatāy) at Ctesiphon in Khusraw Shadsh Qubadh, at Babil in Veh-Kavat, and at Nahr al-Malik in Veh-Artakhshat.\textsuperscript{24}

In addition to supervising the priesthood, the liturgy, the fire cult, and sacrifices in the districts under them, magōpats were also the bearers of traditions of sacred and secular learning and had important administrative duties. As representatives of the government, they were expected to enforce decrees, to act as a check on other local officials, especially with regard to taxation, to administer religious law for Magians in matters of personal status, and to use their seals to authenticate documents, ensure proper weights and measures, and certify commercial transactions. Since the administrative seals used by the priests belong to the late Sasanian period, it would seem that their local administrative responsibilities were being increased towards the end of Sasanian rule.

The overlapping of jurisdictions and authority—a typical Sasanian mechanism for administrative control—also applied to the priesthood. Although the religious authority of priests was supported by the state, this meant that they had to depend on secular officials when it was necessary to enforce their decisions. This is revealed best in cases of apostasy from the Magian religion, which was punishable by death. Although a Magian religious judge could pass a death sentence on a Magian who committed a mortal sin,\textsuperscript{25} he had no way of enforcing such a sentence and had no jurisdiction over non-Magians. The local governor (M.P. rat) normally dealt with non-Magians and was in a position to enforce his decisions. Thus, in cases of apostasy, the jurisdictions of the magōpat and the rat overlapped. This explains why the apostate St. Shīrīn was interrogated jointly by the magōpat and by the rat of Kirkuk in 558, and was condemned to death by a mixed court composed of a magōpat and the rat of Khuzistan at Dastagird early in 559.\textsuperscript{26} It should be noted that this relationship between religious legal authority and the secular enforcement of religious and other laws was eventually repeated among Muslims in the relative positions of the qādī and the maẓālim court.

\textsuperscript{23} Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 73.
\textsuperscript{24} Bivar, Western Asiatic Seals, p. 39; Frye, “Sassanian Clay Sealings,” p. 238, fig. 3; idem, “Die Legenden auf sassanidischen Siegelabdrücken,” WZKM 56 (1960), 33, 34.
\textsuperscript{26} Devos, “Sainte Sirin,” pp. 97, 105.
The Magian priesthood combined these judicial responsibilities with ritual duties such as attending to the fire cult, performing sacrifices, and reciting the scriptures. The official cult with its royal political significance was performed in fire temples. There appears to have been a hierarchy of village (Ādurān) and provincial (Varhrān) fires, and three famous temples paralleled the theoretical Magian social order: that of the Farnbag Fire, probably at Kariyan in Fars, for priests; the Gushnasp Fire at Shiz in Azerbayjan for soldiers; and the Burzen-Mihr Fire in the mountains above Nishapur in Khurasan for farmers.27 Other fires are mentioned on seals and in texts, but it should be noted that none of the major fires were located in Sasanian Iraq. In fact, only a few fire temples are said to have existed there. Fire temples were located at Irbil,28 at Mada’in,29 near Sura,30 at the village called Atesh Gah (place of fire) five farāsikh east of Badhibin,31 and one was built by Būrān at Istiniya near Baghdad.32 There also seems to have been a portable fire temple in the Persian camp on the Euphrates frontier in S773.33

Sasanian fire temples were usually square structures with an arched opening on each side and surmounted by a dome (N.P. chahār tāq). The fire altar with its flame was in the center. No evidence has been found for the presence of images in fire temples, while there are sufficient expressions of opposition to the religious use of images and of the destruction of such images by Magians to confirm the aniconic nature of the cult. The rituals consisted of feeding the fire two or three times each day, reciting liturgical texts during festivals and for the spirits of the dead, and supervising food offerings and sacrifices (see fig. 6.).34

By the late Sasanian period, fire temples were also becoming prop-

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33 Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(1), 197.
erty-controlling institutions. Fires that were established by monarchs and by private individuals were endowed with property for their support. Family trusts were also established to pay the priests for the perpetual performance of services for the dead. Although fire temples could be founded and endowed privately, they were usually part of the royal domain (M.P. ōstān). Under Khusraw Anūshirvān, their property was listed in a register of religious works (M.P. divān-i kar-takān).35

At the end of the Sasanian period, the kind of priests called hērpats (M.P., N.P. hirbadh) appear to have been in charge of the cult. The hērpat, whose title means “master of instruction,” memorized the sacred texts, recited them by murmuring (M.P. dranjishn, Ar. zamzama), and gave instruction in this liturgical tradition. They also prepared the filter for the sacred beverage (Av. haoma M.P. hōm).36 But in a passage in which a series of late Sasanian institutions are ascribed to Ardashīr I, Masʿūdī says that the mōbadhān (mōbadh)-the chief

judge who was in charge of religious matters—was the head of the hirbadhs, who were responsible for religious matters, judgment, and carrying out regulations throughout the empire. Hirbadhs are represented as the most important priests under Hurmizd IV (579–90), and Khusraw Parviz (590–628) is said to have built fire temples in which twelve thousand hirbadhs murmured. During the conquest, Muslims found hirbadhs in charge of fire temples and engaged in local administration and defense, and the eighth-century Frahang-i Pahlavi explains hirbadh as “master of the fire.” Arabic tradition describes the hirbadh as “custodian of the fire,” “servant of the fire,” and “head of the fire temple.” Although Chaumont argues that the reputation of the hirbadh as religious judge and fire-priest was the result of confusion on the part of Muslims, it might just as well reflect a temporary ascendency of the hirbadhs in the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods.

This expansion of the authority of hirbadhs underscores the importance of the liturgy in the late Sasanian cult. Later Zoroastrian tradition records that the sacred texts were organized into twenty-one divisions (M.P. nasks) and written down under Khusraw Anûshirvân, who sent sealed copies to the Magians in each of the four divisions of the empire, commanding them to study this Avesta and its commentary (Zand). Although Boyce regards this as a canonization of the Avesta, it is probably inappropriate to think of it in terms of a separate sacred book of scriptures or an authoritative closed canon.

37 Mas’ûdi, Murûj, I, 287. In the same vein, Tha’âlibî (Ghurar, p. 485) says that Ardashir I established the mûbadhs and hirbadhs to uphold regulations and to decide what was permitted and what was forbidden.
38 Tabari, Ta’rikh, I, 990–91. Hirbadhs slandered the Christians to Hurmizd IV in an unsuccessful attempt to provoke their persecution.
39 Ibid., I, 1041–42. There is also a reference to a chief of the murmurers (Ar. ra’îs al-muzamzimin) under Khusraw Parviz (ibid., I, 1060). Formulations such as hêrpat xwatây and hirbadbân hirbadh seem to belong to the late Sasanian period; see Chaumont, “Hêrbad,” pp. 177–79 and R. Frye, Sasanian Remains from Qasr-i Abu Nasr (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), p. 50.
40 Baladhuri, Futuh, p. 388; Tabari, Ta’rikh, II, 2896.
42 Ya’qubi, Ta’rikh, I, 202.
44 Mas’ûdi, Tanbih, p. 37.
As Bailey, Zaehner, and de Menasce have pointed out, written copies of the Avesta must have been rare; Avestan texts do not constitute a separate “book” but survive imbedded in their commentary; and Magians do not appear to have distinguished between Middle Persian translations of Avestan texts, and commentary on them or on texts in the Avestan language. Above all, since the Avesta is basically liturgical in nature, its texts and commentary continued to be memorized and recited, and many of them were known only by those priests who specialized in specific rituals. Only texts such as the Yashts which were used in daily private worship and recited during festivals appear to have been widely known and were even memorized and recited by children.

DOCTRINE

It is equally difficult to define a single body of authoritative doctrine in the late Sasanian period. Polytheist, dualist, and monotheist expressions coexisted at different levels of interpretation, with the choice of emphasis depending on the circumstances. Several old Iranian deities were venerated in the Sasanian period. Sasanian monarchs received their investiture from Ohrmazd, Mihr, or Anāhīt. One of the major fires, as well as the annual autumn festival of Mihrajān, was named after Mihr. Khusraw Parvīz is believed to have been a personal devotee of Anāhīt, and Varhrān was identified with the royal fires. The cult of Tir survived in the festival of Tiragan by association with the Avestan astral god Tishtrya (Sirius). Magians also venerated a number of minor beneficent supernatural beings such as the six Amashaspends who assisted Ohrmazd; Srōsh and Rashn (who judged the dead together with Mihr); Vay; Hōm; personifications of components of the material world such as the sky, earth, water, sun, and moon; and abstractions such as divine Wisdom (Dānāk) and Religion (Dēn).

These were “beings worthy of worship” (Av. yaztān). In the Sasanian period, the Middle Persian word yazdān was used for these beneficent beings as a group and for Ohrmazd himself. The motto

48 Bailey, Zoroastrian Problems, pp. 151, 163, 167; de Menasce, Dēnkart, p. 11; Zaehner, Dawn and Twilight, p. 190.
49 de Menasce, Dēnkart, p. 91; Devos, “Sainte Sirin,” p. 96.
51 Boyce, History, pp. 74–76.
52 Casartelli, Philosophy, pp. 33–42, 74–75, 79–82.
53 Bailey, Zoroastrian Problems, p. 68; Casartelli, Philosophy, pp. 19–20, 76–82.
“reliance on Mihr” is paralleled by the motto “reliance on Yazdān” found on fourth-century seals. The yazdān were worshiped with food offerings and sacrifices, and provided the divine element in theophoric names for Magians and Manichaeans. Names formed with Yazdān (sg. Yazēt, N.P. Izad) were becoming increasingly popular in the late Sasanian period, such as Yazdāndādh, a son of Khusraw Anūshirvān; Yazdānbakhsh, an official of Hurmizd IV; or Yazdagerd III himself.

Expressions of the primacy of Ohrmazd are as old as the Avestan texts themselves, where he is called the supreme Yazata. The belief in a pantheon of deities subordinated to Ohrmazd was gradually transformed by the Magian priests in the Sasanian period into a system of angelic beings emanated by Ohrmazd. This transformation was probably not complete by the end of the Sasanian period and proceeded at different rates for different people—both socially and geographically. For several Sasanian monarchs the old gods were more than mere angels. The common people were probably still polytheists who actually worshiped the sun, stars, earth, fire, and water.

More sophisticated interpretations that take the primacy of Ohrmazd in a monotheistic direction by reducing the other gods to aspects of Ohrmazd occur in apologetic contexts with monotheistic Jews and Christians. Such an expression occurred in a debate between a Magian spokesman and George of Izla (Mihrāngushnasp) at Mada’in in 612. The Magian represented his religion as monotheistic and answered the charge that Magians deified the Fire by declaring that fire was not considered to be a god but that they only worshiped God through fire, as Christians worshiped their God through the cross. George of Izla, who had been raised as a Magian, quoted the Avesta to him, which showed that there, indeed, the Fire is called a god. The Magian, caught on his own ground, changed his position to say that fire was venerated because it was of the same nature as Ohrmazd.

Dualist expressions of an ethical conflict between good and evil also

54 Bivar, Western Asiatic Seals, pp. 45–46, 80.
55 Casartelli, Philosophy, p. 87.
56 See Justi, Namenbuch, pp. 146–49.
57 Casartelli, Philosophy, p. 19; Duchesne-Guillemin, La religion de l'Iran ancien, pp. 290, 371.
58 Braun, Persischer Märtyrer, pp. 1–3, 69; Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 88.
59 Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 42.
60 Ibid., pp. 109–10. This apology is preserved by Tha’ālibī (Ghūrar, p. 258) who says that Zoroaster gave fire importance as the means to approach God, since it came from His light and was one of the principal elements.
RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

occur in Avestan texts. Such expressions are more complete in the 
\textit{Vidēvdāt}, which was composed in the Parthian period, and were elaborated in the Sasanian period in contrast with various forms of gnosticism (especially Manichaeism). Ohrmazd was represented as the god of light, goodness, and male interests, who was engaged in a cosmic struggle for control of the universe with Ahriman, the god of darkness, evil, and female interests. Human choice of good or evil would be decisive in this conflict and people would be rewarded or punished after death depending on their good or evil behavior. The sixth-century \textit{Artā Vīrāf Nāmak} details the sins that would be punished in Hell. The role of Ohrmazd as creator was put into this dualist framework, and its significance lies in contradicting the gnostic assertion that the material world was the evil creation of a malicious deity. According to Mazdaean doctrine, most of the material universe was the good creation of Ohrmazd and was intended for human use and enjoyment in the conflict with evil. Ahriman created the evil part: demons, reptiles, amphibians, insects, vermin, and the seven planets. The most thorough and systematic expressions of this dualist system are found in the Middle Persian compositions from the ninth and tenth centuries, in which the argument that a good creator could not possibly create or be responsible for evil is aimed at Muslims.\textsuperscript{61}

Mazdaean doctrine was thus subject to historical development and the question of just how dualist Mazdaean Magians were in the Sasanian period depends largely on how one chooses to date the material in the ninth-century books. Much of this material is clearly part of a current debate with Muslims, but much of it also purports to be older and contains specific references to the late Sasanian period. How much of this material actually belongs to the late Sasanian period is a matter of judgment, but the consensus among recent scholars seems to be that the doctrines found in these books existed by the late Sasanian period.

However, the Zurvānīte tendency to assert the ultimate primacy of the god of Time and Destiny appears to have been popular with the upper classes because of its authoritarian implications. The form of Zurvānīte closest to Mazdaean doctrine represented Zurvān as the

personification of Infinite Time and the father of the twin personifications of good and evil, Ohrmazd and Ahriman. It was a mythologized form of speculation on the nature of time and on how good and evil work in a temporal framework. There are traces of the Zurvanite myth in the Sasanian period, but later Mazdaean doctrine tended to subordinate Zurvan to Ohrmazd and made Zurvan the principle behind the motion of the celestial sphere after Ohrmazd had created it.62

The definition of time in terms of astral motion made Zurvanism a form of Magian astrological fatalism that was very close to Babylonian astrology and was probably influenced by it. Zurvan was a fourfold god of the starry firmament. In the sixth-century Mēnōk-i Khrat, Zurvan is explicitly identified as the foreordained, inexorable destiny (M.P. brēh) and as time (M.P. zamānak), which determine what happens in the world. As such, Zurvan was the source of the allotted fortune (M.P. bakht) of each person.63 The twelve signs of the zodiac were agents of Ohrmazd and brought good fortune; the seven planets were agents of Ahriman and brought evil fortune. Fate not only controlled welfare and adversity but also determined a person’s character.64 This mechanistic, impersonal version of astral fatalism in the Mēnōk-i Khrat tended to become personalized in later Zoroastrian literature, which regards the bright stars as the just divine beings (yazdān) of destiny that oppose and check the influence of the dark, malicious, demonic planets. But this personified version of astral fatalism may be much older, since it contains a form of the ancient Babylonian myth of the binding of the demons as planets in the heavens.65

Since fate depended on the stars, it was predictable. The desire to foretell what had been foreordained was responsible for the introduction and development of the Hellenistic tradition of scientific astrology under the Sasānians. The first-century work of Dorotheus of Sidon on casting horoscopes, as well as other Greek and Sanskrit texts,
was translated into Middle Persian in the third century. This tradition was revised in the mid-sixth century when a set of royal astronomical tables called the Zīj-i Shāhī was produced for Khusraw Anūshirvān. Sasanian astrologers developed Dorotheus’ methods for casting continual horoscopes throughout the lifetime of a client into elaborate systems and applied them to historical astrology.66 Judging by the astral symbols on private seals and on late Sasanian coins, astrology was very popular among the late Sasanian upper classes.

Belief in fate raised the question of how much of human life was controlled by destiny. The Mēnōk-i Khrat goes so far as to say that destiny can make a wise person foolish, a timid person brave, an industrious person lazy, and vice versa. Total fatalism was avoided by the concept of a divinely allotted fate (M.P. bagōbakht), which one could pray to the yazdān to change.67 In later Mazdaean literature, this developed into the idea that fate could be averted by the Creator and the yazdān.68 However, the Mazdaean assertion in the commentary to the Vidēvdāt that fortune determined material existence while action decided one’s spiritual condition is more significant. Spiritual well-being was the result of good deeds and could be undone by evil deeds. Even though a person could die only when he was fated to do so, anyone who killed him was still guilty of murder.69 In later Mazdaean literature, it becomes increasingly explicit that human action is responsible for both good deeds and sins, for which people are rewarded or punished, that otherwise reward and punishment would be unjust, and that a person to whom material wealth or happiness has been allotted will hasten its arrival by good deeds and postpone it by sin.70 Although the choice between good and evil is originally a Zoroastrian idea that occurs in the Gāthās, it is possible to regard Mazdaean assertions of human freedom (M.P. āzātih) to choose and to act as well as the Mazdaean treatment of the triangle of divine power, divine justice, and human responsibility as reactions to the ethical problems raised by astral fatalism on one side and by the challenge of monotheism on the other.71

69 Bailey, Zoroastrian Problems, pp. 34–35.
Zurvānism also tends to be associated with a form of atheistic materialism that asserted the eternity of the material universe. The Mazdaean Kartir claims to have combatted Zandiks, who denied the existence of Heaven and Hell, rewards and punishments. This denial is usually linked to a denial of creation. Later Mazdaean literature identifies materialists (Dahrīs) as atheists who deny the existence of Heaven and Hell, of Ormazd the Creator, or of anything spiritual; who believe that virtue is unrewarded and sin unpunished; who believe that Infinite Time is the first principle and that everything is material; and who do not observe religious duties and make no attempt to perform good deeds.72

Clearly there was no doctrinal unity among Magians in the Sasanian period. The Artā Virāf Nāmak speaks of many false doctrines and beliefs. Paul of Persia, at the court of Khusraw Anūshirvān, said that there were those who believed in one God and others who said that He was not the only God; those who said that God had opposing qualities and others who denied it; those who considered God to be omnipotent and others who denied that He had power over everything; those who believed that the world and everything in it was created and others who denied that everything was created; those who believed that the world had been created out of nothing and others who said it had been drawn out from preexisting matter. The lack of an ideology to unify the ruling group may well have been a disadvantage for Magians when they found themselves in conflict with the members of other religions.73 But the existence and interaction of several doctrinal positions provide evidence of an active intellectual life in the Sasanian period, which continued among Magians for several centuries after the Islamic conquest. In this respect the significance of Zurvānism lies in its affinities to Babylonian astral fatalism and in the issues it raised.

CULT AND CUSTOM

Most doctrinal differences could be accommodated as long as the cult was observed. All Iranians were expected to be Magians but Mazdaeans excluded anyone who worshiped demons. Dēv worshipers believed in the sovereignty of Ahriman and that the head of a household was his own priest. They were sorcerers who invoked the demons,

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72 De Menasce, Dēnkart, p. 225; Duchesne-Guillemin, “Religion of Ancient Iran,” p. 349; Mas’ūdi, Murūj, I, 292; Zaehner, Dawn and Twilight, pp. 185–86, 197; idem, Zurvan, pp. 38, 267; idem, “Postscript to Zurvān,” BSOAS 17 (1955), 234–35.

73 Zaehner, Dawn and Twilight, p. 191.
practiced idolatry and all sorts of other vices. Mazdaeans sought to stamp out the cult of the rival demonic idols (M.P. uzdēs) by executing sorcerers, destroying the images, and converting their shrines into fire temples. 74

Cult and custom were the most important expressions of the Magian identity. At the personal level, private and family rituals created a distinct life-style for an individual observant Magian (M.P. magōmart). Magians tried to live in a state of ritual purity and to avoid pollution through contact with dead matter or whatever left a living body. They performed ablutions by washing their hands and faces with bull’s urine (M.P. gōmēz) followed by water before worship and after acts of nature. Everyday acts were framed by ritual formulas (M.P. bāj) for protection. 75 Household worship involved ceremonies at the hearth fire five times each day when the fire was fed, just as at the fire temples. The times for worship at dawn, noon, midafternoon, sunset, and midnight were set by the position of the sun and stars. Daily worship consisted of raising the hands in invocation and reciting the appropriate hymns (Yashts) in honor of the fire, water, sun, and moon; it was closed by reciting the Ashem Vohu benediction followed by a prostration three times. A late sixth-century description tells of a noble Magian family at Kirkuk gathered around the fire altar in their home for the morning prayer. 76 Worship provided a rhythm for daily life just as seasonal festivals did throughout the year. In the late Sasanian period, the festival of Fravardīgān was observed during the five intercalary days between the end of the year and Nawrūz. During these days the spirits of the dead (M.P. fravahrs) returned to their former homes and their descendents made offerings to them and recited the Yashts. 77

74 Boyce, Tansar, pp. 9, 48; “Sacred Fires,” p. 64; Christensen, Sassanides, pp. 306-7; de Menasce, Dēnkart, pp. 169, 178-79, 204-5, 211, 251, 297-98, 333; idem, “Feux et fondations,” p. 31; Fiey, Assyrie chrétienne, III, 65; Rodkinson, Talmud, XIII, “Baba Bathra,” 203-4; Zaeher, Dawn and Twilight, pp. 122-23. There are traces of a snake cult among dēv worshipers. Christians rarely distinguished between Magians and pagans, called both heathens (Syr. hanpē), and assumed that magialis worshiped idols.


77 M. Boyce, “On the Calendar of the Zoroastrian Feasts,” BSOAS 33 (1970), 518-21; idem, History, p. 123; idem, Zoroastrians, pp. 128-29; Devos, “Sainte Sirin,” p. 96; Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 79; Tha’ālibi, Ghurar, p. 260. According to the Menok-i Khrat the fravahrs are stars which are the eternal celestial archetypes of all
Personal cult acts included liquid offerings to water and food offerings of thin, round, unleavened wheat cakes (M.P. drōn), both of which Hazarōē is said to have made in about 600. The feast given by the brother of Mahānōsh for his Magian friends in Margha in the early seventh century, in which he tried to cut a pomegranate with his knife, is probably an example of the myazd feast which followed the drōn ceremony.

Such rituals were the heritage of an ancient priestly order. One of the consequences of the establishment of Magianism under the Sasanians was the spread of priestly customs among members of the ruling group who were not priests down to the level of the dahāqīn. The fact that members of noble families wore the sacred cord (M.P. kustī) and observed the cult in their own homes is evidence of the incipient formation of a Magian community. Affinities to widespread pagan cult practices such as libations and sacrifice made it easier. It was only necessary to forgo the use of cult images and to eschew the veneration of those deities that were defined as evil by Mazdaeans. Elaborate private rituals also contributed to social differentiation for the upper classes, since observance tended to decline further down the social scale. Although the Magian cult did not include a congregational form of worship, there was popular participation in public seasonal feasts (M.P. gāhānbārs), dances, fire festivals, and in the veneration of sacred trees.

Knowledge of the cult and liturgy was provided through religious education, which included the women and children of the upper classes. The importance of giving women religious education is pointed out in the Artā Vīrāf Nāmak, which contains an instructive tale about a man who went to Heaven but whose wife was dragged down to Hell for demon worship. When she reproached him for not teaching her the duties and good works that he had practiced, he was ashamed and disgraced. Within priestly families religious knowledge was passed

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from father to son. Hirbadhs also taught children to memorize and recite the Yashts by shaking their heads in time to the rhythm. Religious training started early. By the age of seven, Mihrāmgūshnasp had been introduced to Persian literature and the Magian religion, could recite the Yashts, and knew how to hold properly the bundle of rods (M.P. barsom) used in the fire cult. Shīrīn, who was the daughter of a dihqān, was entrusted to a woman from Fars who initiated her into the Magian cult and taught her how to recite the Yashts. This incidentally indicates that it was possible even for Magian children taken captive during the conquest and raised as Muslims to remember something of their former religion.

At the end of the Sasanian period, religious education was becoming institutionalized. Education in the scribal school apparently included memorizing the Yashts, the Vidēvdāt, and other liturgical pieces, just as a hirbadh would, and listening to the Zand passage by passage. When he was crown prince, Shīrōē is said to have been sent to such a school run by a mōbadh. Priests trained as hirbadhs were supposed to return to their villages to instruct the people and to establish schools (M.P. hērpatistan), and there is a fifth-century reference to a Magian school in a village near Hulwan. Chaumont describes the hirbadhs as Magian missionaries, and it seems plausible to suggest that the importance of hirbadhs during the last decades of Sasanian rule was related to this activity. This would seem to be the period when the importance of respecting and imitating those who memorized the Avesta and Zand began to be emphasized. Magians were encouraged to follow such a spiritual guide (M.P. dastavar, N.P. dastūr) who was able to make people aware of their duty and were told to avoid Hell by attending the hērpatistan.

Although the priestly office of moghān andarzbadh (N.P., M.P. andarzpat) has been understood as a kind of teacher, it seems rather to have been that of a counselor of the Magians. This office is attested
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on late Sasanian administrative seals, but the only known example of such an official in action is that of Ṭahm-Yazdagerd, the moghān andarzbadh of Nasibin, who interrogated and executed Magian apostates to Christianity at Kirkuk in 446. This, in itself, indicates how the priests, backed by the power of the state, sought to enforce conformity and membership among Magians. It also seems that an andarzpat might be asked to give an opinion when two written statements were presented to a mōbadh as evidence in a legal case.

In fact, the administration of law by Magian priests was another factor in the formation of a communal identity in the late Sasanian period. Although the jurisdiction of Magian judges was territorial and decisions were made in accordance with royal rescripts, the body of Sasanian law was intended for Magian Persians. Although the book of laws (Dātastān Nāmak) has perished, a digest (Mātikān) containing the opinions of jurists who lived in the fifth and sixth centuries has survived. The Mātikān thus reflects Sasanian legal theory and practice as late as a rescript from the twenty-sixth year of Khusraw Parvīz (616). It is concerned with legal procedure and documents, the status of wives and slaves, marriage, divorce, adoption, and inheritance, property rights and settlements, the guardianship of trusts and the endowment of fire temples, sales, gifts, loans and debts, and penalties for personal injury, adultery, robbery, and theft. Much of the law was based on Magian ethical principles and religious requirements, so its application by the priests as local judges spread a Magian way of life among the Persian population.

Because Magian Persians were a minority in Iraq, Sasanian law functioned there as personal law for them. In legal examples, going to Asoristan amounted to leaving the country. Sasanian law was, in fact, applied in Iraq and in matters of property tended to be incorporated in the legal traditions developed there by Jews and Christians. However, to the extent that Jews and Christians produced their own legal systems, Sasanian law served to distinguish Magians from non-Magians in matters of personal status.

Certain religiously sanctioned social customs also emphasized the

89 Frye, Qasr-i Abu Nasr, pp. 48-49, 52, 61, 63.
90 K. Brockelmann, Syrische Grammatik (Berlin, 1899), Chrestomathie, p. 56*; Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, pp. 50-51.
91 Bulsara, Mātikān, pp. 22-25.
92 Ibid., pp. 64-65, 558-59.
93 Ibid., pp. 398-99, 516-17.
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difference between Magians and non-Magians. Three customs in particular—eating in ritual silence, consanguinous marriage, and exposing the deed—were identified with Magians by non-Magians and provided points of conflict. Magians ate silently (in bāj) while only “murmuring” (zamzama) in order to avoid polluting their food by spitting saliva on it.⁹⁴ Consanguinous marriage (M.P. khvêtōdāt) between a man and his mother, sister, or daughter was approved as a holy union that increased affection, solidarity, and equality within a family and preserved the purity of descent of the upper classes. It also preserved their social exclusiveness, concentrated their wealth, and provoked horror at incest from non-Magians. The best example in the late Sasanian period is the marriage of Mihrāmgushnasp to his sister Hazārōē.⁹⁵

In order to avoid defiling the earth through contact with a corpse, Magians disposed of the dead by exposing their bodies to the sun in a high, barren spot, where they would be devoured by dogs and birds of prey. The bones were then placed in an ossuary so rain water would not be defiled. Although allowing rain to fall on a corpse was a source of pollution, the Vidēvdāt contains the notion that a body that has lain in a tomb for a year ought to be rained on and devoured by birds in recompense for not being exposed to the sun. Not only did Magians resent the age-old custom of inhumation practiced by Jews, Christians, and others in Iraq, but the Magian practice was equally offensive to those whose eschatology depended on the resurrection of the body. Magians seem to have answered such objections with the argument that a Creator who had made people out of nothing in the first place should be able to do it again at the end of the world.⁹⁶

By the end of the Sasanian period Magians can be described as forming an incipient religious community in Iraq. They were united among themselves and differentiated from the members of other religions around them by an organized priesthood, a distinctive cult and liturgy, a form of religious education, law, and religiously sanctioned social customs. Although Magianism was essentially a ruling-class religion, efforts at creating a larger group identity by spreading the Magian way of life among common Persians appear to have begun in

⁹⁵ De Menasce, Dēnkart, p. 85–90, 208; idem, “Texte syriaque,” pp. 593–97, 601; Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 95; Thaʾālibī, Ghurar, pp. 259–61; Yaʾqūbī, Taʾrīkh, I, 199.
the late Sasanian period. This had probably proceeded further in Fars than in Iraq, however, where Magians were still virtually identical with the ruling elite. Three factors that may have retarded the development of a Magian religious community were doctrinal diversity, dependence on the state to enforce conformity, which both inhibited the development of completely autonomous institutions and made Magians vulnerable to the loss of political support, and the identification of Magianism with the upper classes.

CONFLICT AND CONVERSION

Magians justified their hierarchic society by an elitist social ethic that emphasized establishmentarian virtues. They placed a high value on order, stability, legality, and harmony among the functionally defined divisions of society (priests, soldiers, bureaucrats, and workers, or priests, soldiers, artisans, and farmers), so each would perform its specific duty towards the others. They emphasized the justice of rewards and punishments on the spiritual, political, and social planes, and used economic, legal, and religious sanctions to ensure the obedience of women and children. They equated material wealth with the virtue and goodness inherent in the upper classes, whose destiny or fortune (M.P. xvarrah) it was to enjoy the good creation of Ohrmazd, Naturally antiascetic, they equated poverty with the sin and evil inherent in the lower classes. 97

This kind of Magianism was challenged from one direction in the early sixth century by the Mazdaki reform movement, which proposed to share women and property as a cure for passions. This reform seems to have been aimed at breaking down the privileges of the upper classes and at creating a more popular, egalitarian form of Magianism; but it also had the effect of touching off serious social disorders. The movement was crushed by Khusraw Anūshirvān, who killed Mazdak and eighty thousand of his followers between Jazir and Nahrawan early in his reign. Mazdaki ideas survived or were revived in the Magian sect called the Khurramdīniyya, which enjoyed a degree of popularity among common people in western Iran in the early Islamic period. 98

Magians were also challenged by alienated members of their own

98 De Menasce, Dēnkart, p. 31; Masʿūdi, Murūj, II, 305; Prokopios, Wars, I. v. 1; Wright, Joshua the Stylite, pp. 13–15; Yaʿqūbi, Taʾrikh, I, 186.
society who rejected priestly authority and material values in favor of ascetic, gnostic sects, such as the Manichaeans, or Christianity. Mazdaeans normally opposed all forms of asceticism, such as fasting, because it weakened people in their struggle against evil, and celibacy because it was important for believers to have children in order to increase the forces of Ohrmazd. But there are traces of an apocalyptic asceticism in which the successive abstention from meat, milk, plants, and water would precede and might even bring about the millenium of Oshedar which was believed to be imminent in the late Sasanian period.99

Conversion to Christianity in Iraq had become a serious issue by the late Sasanian period. Well-organized and aggressively proselyting Christians directed their efforts especially at the conversion of the members of the Sasanian ruling class and royal family in their attempt to capture the state in the same fashion as they had the Roman Empire through Constantine. In the late Sasanian period, the number of Magians in Iraq was declining. By the fifth century, Christians were converting Magians at Kirkuk and Hale.100 In the sixth century, the catholicos Mar Abä (540–52), who was himself a Magian convert from Hale, converted other Magians to Christianity.101 Magians were also converted at Takrit in the 570s, including a member of the Sasanian royal family.102 Mihrämgushnasp (George) and his sister-wife Hazārōē (Mary), who were aristocratic natives of the Sawad, converted near the end of the sixth century and migrated to Nasibin, where George entered a monastery.103 Tiṯūs, the bishop of Haditha in about 600, was also a Magian convert.104 In the early seventh century, more Magians converted at the village of Qor105 in Adiabene and Bābaī the Great is said to have converted Magians when he was in charge of the monastery of Mar Abraham near Nasibin from 604 until 628.106

Many converts came from upper-class Magian families, and by the fifth and sixth centuries increasing numbers of ex-Magian Persian

100 Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 73.
103 Chabot, Synodicon, p. 626.
104 Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 473.
aristocrats, including members of the house of Sürēn, were taking positions of leadership in the church and in monasteries. The paternal grandfather of Mihrāmgushnasp and Hazāröē had been a member of the highest aristocracy (a descendent of "kings") and had been governor of New Antioch. Their father was governor of Nasibin and their maternal grandfather was a mōhpaṭ. Several high-born Persian women abandoned Magianism for Christianity in the sixth century: St. Shirīn (d. 559), the daughter of a dihqān at Kirkuk who converted at the age of eighteen; St. Golindouch (d. 591), who converted in the reign of Khusraw Anūshirvān; and Yazdōē (Christine), a native of Kirkuk who was the daughter of the marzbān of Nasibin and was married to one of the notables of Nasibin.

Most converts whose personal histories are known appear to have been fairly young members of wealthy, upper-class families who rejected Magian material values in favor of asceticism. For many such converts this meant a complete break with their families, and they often ran away to start a new life elsewhere, usually in a monastery. Sometimes they announced their conversion by a ritual profanation of the Magian cult that may have been deliberately intended to provoke retaliation (and martyrdom). Converts refused to recite the Yashts at Fravardīgān or removed the mouth mask in the presence of the fire, thereby defiling it with their breath. Mihrāmgushnasp announced his conversion by breaking the rods of the barsom and throwing them into the fire. His sister not only profaned the fire by approaching it in a state of ritual impurity, but joyfully took the fire in her hand, cast it on the ground, and trampled it underfoot.

Magians recognized the sociopolitical implications of such behavior. They regarded denying Ohrmazd and refusing to observe rituals as bad religion (M.P. ahramōkīh) and associated it with excesses, dissimulation, and antinomianism. Unrepenting apostates were disinherited to avoid the alienation of property and executed. The Māṭikān discusses a hypothetical case of a man married to a non-Persian whose only child converted to another religion during its minority; it allows neither the wife nor the child to be his heirs.
However, the Sasanian state did not initiate proceedings for apostasy. Mar Abā was denounced as an apostate by leading Magians, Shirīn by her father, Golinduch by her husband, and Mihrāṃgushnasp by his personal enemy Gabriel of Sinjar. Ishō’sabhran was denounced by his brother to the judge of a neighboring village and then by the Magians to the rad of Hazza. Apostates were turned over to the state, interrogated, imprisoned, and urged to recant for the sake of their souls. Only if they proved obstinate were they executed. Shirīn underwent a series of trials and imprisonment. At Hulwan the chief magians and court dignitaries tried to dissuade her, and she was finally strangled in prison at Mada’in in 559. Male apostates were usually crucified, as were several bishops in the time of Mar Abā. Mihrāṃgushnasp was crucified in the straw market of Veh-Artakhshatr in 615, and Ishō’sabhran was crucified in 620.

The defection of aristocratic Persians from Magianism in Iraq stands as a countertrend to the efforts to spread Magianism among the Persian population in the late Sasanian period. The measures that were taken to deal with it reveal how serious the threat was considered to be, how insecure the Magians really were in Iraq, and how important the support of the state was for their position there.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONQUEST

The fall of the Sasanian state to the conquering Muslims drastically and permanently changed Magians from rulers to subjects. The property of fire temples was confiscated in Iraq at the time of the conquest, along with the rest of the Sasanian government’s property. There is no evidence for the survival of the Magian cult, priesthood, or organization in early Islamic Iraq. Some places preserved a memory of past conditions, such as the village of Atesh Gah (“place of fire”) east of Badhibin in lower Iraq, or the village of Beth Magoshe in


114 Boyce, Tansar, p. 42; Casartelli, Philosophy, p. 175.


117 Ţābarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2371.
Margha, so called because of the “leaning which its former lords and inhabitants had to Magianism.” The picture of a ruined fire temple infested by devils in the form of black ravens that stood by a roadside in eighth-century Margha is probably typical of the fate of Magian institutions in early Islamic Iraq.

Although the Magian priesthood and property disappeared with the conquest of Iraq, individual Magians survived by paying tribute along with other non-Muslims wherever they surrendered. Magians had already been allowed to pay tribute in Yaman, Bahrayn, and Uman and, during the conquest of Iraq, Magians were included in the blanket arrangements that were made for tribute at Hira, Anbar, and Mada’in. Thomas of Margha describes a mixed village of Magians, Manichaean, and pagans at Koph in Margha, where the people worshiped the sun, idols, and an olive tree.

The treatment of Magians by Muslims was inconsistent at first. ’Umar I (634-44) is said to have refused to accept tribute from Magians and to have ordered Jaz’ ibn Mu‘awiya to break up Magian families and to forbid the zamzama in Dast-i Maysan and Manadhir in 643. Jaz’ had begun to carry out his instructions when ’Umar was convinced by ’Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf that Muḥammad had accepted tribute from the Magians of Hajar in Bahrayn. This provided a precedent, since there is no Qur’ānic basis for treating Magians as people with a revealed scripture (Ar. ahl al-kitāb). Hanafi legal scholars eventually agreed to treat Magians in the same way as other non-Muslims for the purposes of taxation, although they considered them to be polytheists with no revealed scripture. But Muslims were not to marry Magian women or to eat the meat of animals slaughtered by Magians.

The Islamic conquest had the effect of accelerating the conversion of Magians to other religions. Because Islam replaced Magianism as the religion of the rulers, members of the former Sasanian ruling elite tended to convert to Islam in order to avoid paying tribute, to keep their property and position, and to join the Muslim army and administration. The Ḥamra’ and the Asāwira who joined the Arab armies

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119 Thomas of Margha, Governors, I, 334; II, 599.
120 Ibid., I, 370; II, 634–35.
121 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 199; Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, V, 238; Ibn Sa‘d, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 94; Ibn Sallām, Amwāl, p. 44.
and settled in Kufa and Basra became Muslims. A number of *dahāqin* also became Muslims in the seventh century, and by the time of ‘Umar II (717–20) the Magians of Hira had converted to Islam.\textsuperscript{123} Magians sought to discourage such conversion by treating apostates as legally dead and by disinheriting them. It is worth noting that this principle was accepted by Ḥanafī legal scholars.\textsuperscript{124}

Since the conquest removed most of the difficulties attached to apostasy from Magianism, conversions to Christianity increased in the later seventh century. Particularly in upper Iraq, aristocratic Magian Persians sought alternative paths of advancement, avoided paying tribute, and preserved their property by becoming monks and bishops in the Nestorian Church. In this case, pre-Islamic tendencies were encouraged by the conquest, and by the early eighth century Magians were left only at a few out-of-the-way places along the northeast border of Iraq, where the population began to be entirely Persian, and along the border of Khuzistan in the southeast. The few surviving Magians continued to be the objects of efforts at conversion by Christians. When a famous family of Magians in the district of Sawa in Margha was converted by the miracles of Cyprian of Beth Magoshe in the eighth century, the most significant way Thomas of Margha could describe the social consequences of their conversion was to say that they no longer married their mothers, sisters, and daughters.\textsuperscript{125}

**THE TURN OF THE MILLENNIUM**

Magians gave an apocalyptic meaning to the events at the end of the Sasanian period, which they interpreted as signs of the end of the millennium of Zoroaster and the beginning of the millennium of Oshedar. Late Sasanian calculations appear to have set the end of the tenth millennium (the millennium of Zoroaster) in the reign of Yazdagerd I (399–420) and then progressively postponed it until 457 and then until the middle of the sixth century. Consequently, some Magians believed that the events at the end of the millennium had already begun to occur or were to begin soon, and they may have associated them with the revolt of Bahram Chūbīn and with the conquests of Khusraw


Parvīz. After the Islamic conquest, the turn of the millennium was redated to the beginning of the conquest in 634, to the death of Yazdagerd III in 652, or to about 660; but it was later identified with the beginning of the era of Yazdagerd III in 631, which was used by Magians for dating.

The centuries-long warfare between Persians and Romans in Late Antiquity contributed some of the themes of Magian eschatology. Fourth-century expressions put the ultimate victory in this conflict in a millennial context. For Romans the reign and defeat of antichrist would precede the final Roman victory over the Persians. For Persians the defeat of Rome would be followed by many wars until the remnant of the just who were besieged on a mountain would be rescued by a savior-king sent from the sun.

It is not difficult to recognize the events at the end of the Sasanian period that are included as post eventum “prophecies” in later Magian apocalyptic literature, such as the Bahman Yasht and the Jāmāsp Nāmak. The end of the millennium of Zoroaster would come after the reign of Khusraw, son of Kavad. A Turkish army would invade Khurasan and conquer Iran, a great plague would strike, and a pretender would seize power and be overthrown by foreigners. A victorious king (M.P. aparvēž xvatāy) would then arise who would conquer the world and amass great wealth, but he would gain no advantage from it. The millennium of Oshedar would begin when he died and was succeeded by child rulers with short, violent reigns. Iran would be invaded from all sides. The Romans would invade Iraq (Shuristan), but the king would stay there. A great army of Persians, Turks, and Arabs would fight the Romans on the banks of the Euphrates, after which the Romans would rule briefly until an army from India would conquer Iran, restore the Sasanians (Kayans), and reestablish the Magian religion.

After the Islamic conquest, apocalyptic expectations were retouched and extended. Magians expected the Kayan king Varhrān to come from India with an army and one thousand elephants to take revenge

on the Arabs, destroy their masjids, abolish the cult of the dēvs, re-establish fire temples, defeat the Romans and Turks, and restore the Sasanian empire. Still later, in the early eighth century, the millennium of Zoroaster was expected to end when demons wearing black clothing, and carrying black weapons and banners, would invade Iran from Khurasan. At that time Varhrān Varjavand would be born in China or India to a king of Kayan descent.¹²⁹

The formation and elaboration of Magian apocalyptic expectations thus appear to have taken place from the late sixth until the early eighth centuries. Although there would be later accretions and old themes would be reapplied to later events, the predictions of the arrival of a liberator from India or China may belong to the propaganda of Sasanian restoration attempts. The ‘Abbāsī movement in Khurasan also seems to have been given an apocalyptic significance by Magians.

These apocalypses also suggest how Magians felt about what had happened to them. The theme of a world turned upside down was used to describe conditions after the Islamic conquest when their social order and values were overturned. Nobles would be reduced to poverty and despair, separated from their families, and obliged to marry people of low status. Nobles would be slaves and slaves would be nobles and adopt the nobles’ way of life. Lowly, ignoble, wicked people would be preferred by the rulers; they would become rich, oppress and abuse their former superiors, and marry their daughters. Many fires would disappear and others would be established in secret; the hirbadhs would be ashamed of their religion, would cease to recite the Yashts, and would copy foreign customs. The treasures of the earth would be taken by foreigners. It is no wonder that Magians saw this time of injustice as a sign of the end of the millennium and of the imminent arrival of a savior who would restore political independence, law, and justice.¹³⁰

But the Sasanians were not restored and the structure built by Ma-


MAGIANS

gians in Iraq perished during the Islamic conquest. Their association with the Sasanian state was at least partially responsible for the failure of the Magians to produce a fully developed autonomous religious community. Most of the elements were present however: a distinctive cult, a system of religious law, a priesthood, and a form of religious education. The political associations of Magianism proved to be nearly fatal to the organization during and immediately after the Islamic conquest, but the Magian cult and traditions survived because more reliance had been placed on preserving them among the priestly families than in the institutions of a religious community as such. Magian families that survived in Iraq in ever-decreasing numbers preserved their own traditions among themselves. The most significant losses of Magianism were through conversion to Christianity and to Islam, but this was only a continuation of conversions that had started in the late Sasanian period and were accelerated by the changes brought by the conquest. To the extent that such converts brought their religious background with them, they were important channels of transmission for Magian ideas both to Christians and to Muslims. However, the Magian presence in early Islamic Iraq tended to be reinforced by the voluntary or forced migration of Magian Persians to the garrison cities. Throughout the century following the conquest, Magians were brought to Iraq from all over Iran as captives. So Magian ideas present in early Islamic Iraq were not necessarily a survival from the Sasanian period but were just as likely to have been brought to Iraq after the conquest.
JEWS IN IRAQI SOCIETY

The Jews were the oldest organized religious community in Iraq. As such, it was only natural that their communal attitudes and forms of organization served as prototypes for other communities in the sixth and seventh centuries and even later. Consequently, it is important to identify precedents among the Jews of Sasanian Iraq in order to determine the extent to which the institutions of such communities and religious communal barriers already existed in the late Sasanian period. This will make it possible to decide to what extent the existence of Jewish institutions in the Islamic period was a matter of continuity or change. It will also facilitate the comparison of Jewish institutions with those of other religious communities at a later period and provide at least circumstantial evidence for continuity through transmission. The main questions which must be considered, apart from the physical location of the Jews in Iraq, concern the nature of the Jewish community, the way it was organized, and its relationship to the state in both periods. Since the Jews were the best-organized subject minority, their relations with the Sasanian government are a most important precedent for dhimmi status in Islamic society. Internal developments in the Jewish community center on the change in the position of the exilarch, the rise of the gaonate, and the outbreak of Messianic movements in the seventh century.

The Jewish population of Iraq originated from a combination of resettlement and conversion. One of the most significant and least understood transformations in the history of Iraq is the way the descendants of the Judaean captives who were transported to Babylon in the sixth century B.C. ultimately displaced the local native pagan population there. This change appears to have been occurring in the late Parthian and early Sasanian periods when the last pagan temple complexes disappeared and were replaced by synagogues, and when Judaism spread among the native Aramaean population. This process was most likely the result of a demographic increase among the de-
scendants of the exiles, the conversion of their neighbors and slaves, and possibly intermarriage. Its circumstances are reflected in the concern about purity of descent among Iraqi Jews in the Sasanian period, in the Talmudic story of how Abraham broke the idols, and in the legacy of indigenous pagan demonology in Jewish magic.

By the middle of the Sasanian period, the Aramaean population in the districts of Veh-Artakhshatr and of Veh-Kavat was almost entirely Jewish. Major Jewish settlements existed at Pumbaditha, Nehardea, Mahoza (the city of Veh-Artakhshatr), Kutha, Sura, and Neresh. In the surrounding countryside the peasants were mainly Jewish.

Outside of this region where they were concentrated, small groups of Jews were to be found as resident minorities throughout the rest of Iraq. There were Jews on the periphery of this region at Hira and Nippur. Jews of mixed descent lived at a place called Harpania near Maysan and in Maysan itself. There were Jews east of the Tigris at Daskarta (Dastagird) and Jewish communities in upper Iraq at Sinjar, and a cluster of Jewish settlements around the confluence of the Greater Zab and the Tigris in Adiabene at Nineveh, Haditha, and across the river from Nineveh at the future site of Mawsil. There had been an important Jewish community at Nasibin in the first cen-

1 Pumbaditha was on the Euphrates below Anbar and within the territorial jurisdiction of Nehardea. See Berliner Geographie, p. 57; Obermeyer, Landschaft Babylonien, pp. 215–43; and A. Neubauer, La géographie du Talmud (Paris, 1868), p. 349. Le Strange (Lands, p. 54) located it at Qanatir, twenty-eight miles north of Kufa at the mouth of the Badat canal, but Newman (Agricultural Life, p. 7) located it at the mouth of the Nahr Isa.

2 Nehardea was at the mouth of the Nahr al-Malik (Obermeyer, Landschaft Babylonien, pp. 244–62).


4 Naresh was near Sura, possibly at the mouth of the Nahr Nars (Neubauer, Géographie, p. 365; Obermeyer, Landschaft Babylonien, pp. 306–10).


6 Montgomery, Incantation Texts, p. 113.

7 Obermeyer, Landschaft Babylonien, p. 201; Neubauer, Géographie, p. 352; Newman, Agricultural Life, p. 170. Obermeyer located Harpania near Wasit but Newman preferred a location further west on the Nil canal.


10 Budge, Rabban Hörmizd, I, 172; II, 261; Rodkinson, Talmud, VIII, “Taanith,” 33.


12 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, p. 332.
tury A.D. that survived into the Sasanian and Islamic periods in reduced
numbers, \(^{13}\) and there were Jews in the subdistricts of Qardo and Ba-
zabda. \(^{14}\)

In absolute terms, the size of the Jewish population of Iraq was
growing in the Parthian and early Sasanian periods, reached its peak
in about the early fifth century and then began to decline. Neusner
estimates that there were about half a million Jews in the third cen-
tury. \(^{15}\) But their numbers were still increasing through conversion. In
the second quarter of the fourth century there is a reference to a woman
convert whose brothers remained pagan, and Rabbi Judah (ca. 500)
was a former Hindu convert. \(^{16}\) The Jews of Mahoza were largely
descended from converts; the population of Nehardea was mixed with
many converts and former slaves; all of the inhabitants at Bekube near
Pumbaditha were former slaves; and the Jews of Maysan were con-
sidered to be of largely mixed descent. \(^{17}\) Consequently, Grayzel’s es-
timate of a maximum of two million Jews in Iraq \(^{18}\) may have been
approached by about 500.

Conversion to Judaism among the native population of Iraq appears
to have declined from the fifth century on, although additions through
the conversion of slaves continued through the late Sasanian period
and well into the Islamic period. Losses through conversion to Chris-
tianity began in the late Parthian period but increased at the end of
the Sasanian period, when they were probably a factor in the absolute
decline in the number of Jews. In the late sixth century, Jews were
converted to Christianity at Nineveh and Haditha and possibly at
Sinjar. \(^{19}\)

However, the decrease in numbers which began in the late Sasanian
period was slight and occurred mainly among the Jewish population
outside of or opposed to the Rabbinic community that had formed in
central Iraq. The estimate of one and one-half million non-Muslim
Aramaeans in the Sawad of Kufa in the mid-seventh century refers to

\(^{13}\) Berliner, *Geographie*, pp. 53–54; Obermeyer, *Landschaft Babylonien*, p. 129; Rod-
kinson, *Talmud*, XV, “Sanhedrin,” 100; idem, XVIII, “Abuda Zara,” 67; Voöbus,
“School of Nisibis.” p. 139.

\(^{14}\) Obermeyer, *Landschaft Babylonien*, p. 133.

\(^{15}\) Neusner, *Talmudic Judaism*, p. 95.

\(^{16}\) Newman, *Agricultural Life*, pp. 68, 121.


\(^{19}\) Corluy, “Abdu’l Masich,” p. 46; Budge, *Rabban Hôrmîzd*, I, 172; II, 261; Scher,
“Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 473.
a population that was heavily Jewish and does not include the Jews in other parts of Iraq.

Jews survived in early Islamic Iraq at approximately the same locations as in the Sasanian period. The main concentration was still between Hira and Mada'in in the Sawad of Kufa. There are early references to Jews at Falluja and Mathamasya (Mata Mehasia) near Sura in the 640s. Jews continued to live at Hira after the conquest. In 696, al-Ḥajjāj told the people of Kufa who would not fight the Khawarij to go over to Hira and live with the Jews and Christians; but, according to Abū Yūṣuf, the Jews of Hira had converted to Islam by the time of 'Umar II (717–720). Sura and Nahr al-Malik were still solidly Jewish in the tenth century. Elsewhere, Jewish communities survived in Maysan, in Adiabene, and at Nasibin. But there were also Jews at the new cities of Basra and Kufa shortly after the conquest, and at Ukbara by the early ninth century.

Linguistically and culturally, the Jews of Sasanian and early Islamic Iraq were Aramaeans. Aramaic was spoken in the Rabbinic schools and used on documents and to report the decisions in legal cases in the Talmud. Hebrew scriptures used liturgically were translated into Aramaic so the congregation would understand them. The same dialect of Aramaic occurs on incantation bowls commissioned by Jews at Nippur at the end of the Sasanian period.

Both the Talmud and the incantation bowls reveal the mixture of religious and ethnic traditions among the Aramaic-speaking population. Nippur was a mixed community of Jews, pagans, and Mandaeans. The names of the people who commissioned the bowls in Talmudic Aramaic are a mixture of Hebrew, Syriac, and Persian and suggest intermarriage between Persians and Aramaeans. A good ex-
ample of the kind of popular Judaism that existed in such a mixed society is the use of a variant of the Shema' (Deut. 6:4), “Hear, Israel, YYYY our God is one YYYY,” on the bowl of a man called Berik-Yahbêh (or Berik Yah-bê-Yah) bar Mâmê and his wife Ispandarmêd. More important than the presence of Persian names is the Magian significance of many of them. Aramaean Jews had names such as Bahmandûch and Hormizdûch; Yeziêdâd (“Theodore”), the son of Izdândûch (“Theodora”) and Merdûch; Ispandarmêd; Rashnoi; and even Sardust bath Shîrîn. The Persian concept of the primal man (Gayomarth) was applied in a Talmudic description of Adam, and may have influenced anthropomorphic tendencies in early Jewish mysticism. Jews may also have been affected by Magian demonology. The Talmud provides instructions for the proper ablutions when one has been defiled by a reptile, and the Nippur incantation texts contain a reference to demons “in the likeness of vermin and reptiles.” The Jews of Sasanian Iraq were also familiar with Persian festivals, legal traditions, and social customs, and Rabbi Papa (d. 374) found it necessary to forbid Jews to wear tight Persian trousers.

Socially, Jews were a representative cross-section of the Aramaean population in the Sasanian period. They were landlords, officials, soldiers, scholars, merchants, craftsmen, laborers, peasants, and slaves. The rich Jews of Mahoza were the aristocrats of the community. The descendants of converts with their own dialect, they were known for their luxury, laziness, selfishness, fastidiousness, drunkenness, intelligence, and charity. Their women did not work and wore more jewelry

32 Montgomery, Incantation Texts, pp. 117, 127–28. These are theophoric names. The first signifies “daughter [given by] Bahman” (Vohuman), the first of the Amas-haspentas.
33 Ibid., pp. 147–48, 152. Compare these names with Yazdândûkht and Yazdâ (Justi, Namenbuch, pp. 146, 149), and with Mitr-duxt (ibid., pp. 207–8, 213).
34 This is the New Persian form of Spenta Armaiti, one of the Amashaspends and a daughter of Ohrmazd (Justi, Namenbuch, p. 308; Montgomery, Incantation Texts, pp. 209–11). Note that a name such as this occurs in the same text as the Shema’.
35 This is a hypocoristic form of Rashn, the spirit of justice who judges the souls of the dead along with Mithra and Sraosha (Justi, Namenbuch, p. 259; Montgomery, Incantation Texts, pp. 155, 158).
36 Here Zarathustra has been turned into a feminine name (Justi, Namenbuch, p. 380; Montgomery, Incantation Texts, p. 161).
40 Montgomery, Incantation Texts, p. 148.
than other Jewish women. The Persianized Jewish notables at Nehardea wore tall hats, had retinues mounted on horses and mules, and could influence officials. Having ten servants made a man a notable, and wealthy Jews lived in mansions with columned reception halls and banquet rooms surrounded by gardens.

However, the great majority of Jews were laborers, peasants, and slaves in the towns and villages of the Sawad. They were engaged in the production, processing, and distribution of grain, wool, linen, and wine. Slaves, acquired by purchase or inheritance, appear to have been fairly common among them. Female slaves were employed as domestic labor to bake, spin, and weave and were included in a bride’s dowry. Slaves with manufacturing skills were valuable and were employed as craftsmen. There is an early fourth-century reference to a slave who was an expert perforator of pearls and to a slave who was a tailor. The slaves of a debtor could be seized by his creditor and forced to work for him.

Many Jews were of moderate means but most lived in poverty. Peasants outside of villages lived in reed huts. The reputation that the people of Paphunia, Naresh, and Nehar Peqod nearby, had for being thieves, and the estimate that most of the thieves in Pumbaditha and Nehardea were Jews is an indication of their poverty.

Beginning in about the fourth century, conditions seem to have become even more intolerable for Jewish laborers and peasants. Wealthy Jewish landlords took advantage of the problems of small farmers whose property was sold for debts to increase their own estates. In the late Sasanian period, independent small farmers in the Sawad were being replaced by estates with villages of tenant farmers or slaves. By the fourth century, investment in commerce brought a better return than agriculture for Jews of moderate means. Also by the fourth century, Jews who could not afford to pay the poll tax became debtor-slaves to the rabbis who paid the tax for them.

By the sixth century, Jewish peasants in the Sawad were the tenants of non-Jewish landlords (daḥaqīn) and may have been adversely affected by changes in crops. The absence of flax from late Sasanian and early Islamic schedules of agricultural taxes in the Sawad indicates that it was no longer a very important crop. The increase in tax rates by the Muslims after the conquest affected the Jewish Aramaean peasants and laborers directly and may have helped to provoke a Messianic rising by Jewish weavers, carpet makers, and linen bleachers at Falluja in the 640s.\(^5\)

The change in the condition of Jewish peasants in the Sawad of Kufa was eventually recognized in the late eighth century. According to the Talmud, creditors could only claim the landed property of the deceased parents of orphans. But in 787 the leaders of the community decided to allow debts to be paid out of the movable property of orphans because most of the people in the districts around Sura and Pumbaditha had no fields, although those in other places still did.\(^5\)

This seems to suggest that in this part of Iraq there was a rural population that did not own the land on which it worked. It also indicates that elsewhere Jewish peasants owned their land. Although Jews did not abandon agricultural occupations in the early Islamic period, \(\text{Jaḥiẓ,}\) in a typical stereotype, says that they tended to be dyers, tanners, barbers, butchers, and tinkers.\(^5\)

THE FORMATION OF THE RABBINIC COMMUNITY

Rabbinic Judaism took shape among this population in the Sasanian period. It was strongest in the region of concentrated settlement in central Iraq where its development reflected the social context of the local population. The religious scholars who produced the Talmud were engaged in organizing communal institutions and in spreading and enforcing a distinctive way of life based on the observance of their own system of religious law. The observance of ritual purity, weekly congregational worship, and the calendar of fasts and festivals served to reinforce a personal identity and to enhance group feeling. The communal ideal is reflected in the tradition that a scholar ought only to reside in a city where there are “five persons to execute what the court decides; a treasury of charity (which is collected by two and


\(^5\) Pellat, *Jaḥiẓ*, p. 87.
distributed by three); a prayer-house, a bath-house, lavatories, a physi­
cian, a barber, a scribe, and a teacher for children.53

In general, the council in each Jewish community in Sasanian Iraq consisted of a chairman and seven advisers in charge of the collection and distribution of alms, the synagogue, communal property, and the schools. Officers were appointed to keep order, to check weights and measures, and to act as watchmen against floods. According to the Talmud, alms had to be collected by two who formed the adminis­
trating body and had to be distributed by three. Food was to be collected every day and distributed to the poor of the city. At Pum­
baditha in the time of Rabbi Joseph in the early fourth century, each poor man received a fixed sum from charity.54

The possession of communal property also helped to create the bonds of a religious community. In each city or town the synagogue, the administrative building which was often separate from the syn­
agoge, the ritual bath, the cemetery, and the school buildings were owned by the community in common. The use of an erubh (Heb.), the legal device for converting public property such as thoroughfares and courtyards into communal property, because the latter had the advantage of being treated as private property in the application of the Sabbath law, was an effective means of excluding non-Jews from Jewish enclaves. In some places this device was extended to entire cities or districts. Erubbin are said to have been made for all of Pum­
baditha and Mahoza and by the Jews of Mabhraktha adjoining Ma­
hoza.55

The creation of social boundaries was an important part of the formation of such a religious community. The activity of the Talmudic scholars in consolidating the Rabbinic community did not include the conversion of non-Jews. The rabbis tended to discourage Persian and pagan Aramaean influences, opposed social contact and the sale of wine to non-Jews, and objected to intermarriage because the children might be lost.56 Nor was the witness of sectarians or apostates from Judaism (Heb. minnim) admitted in the Rabbinic court.

Although social isolation was increasing, it was never total. There is an example in Talmudic times of a Jew who rented and operated a

wine press jointly with a pagan at Nehardea. The town of Mata Mehasia near Sura, and a center of Rabbinic scholarship, had a mixed Jewish and pagan population in the fifth century. By the middle of the seventh century Mata Mehasia was entirely Jewish, although elsewhere Jews were still selling wine to Christians in the 670s.

One of the best descriptions of intercommunal segregation at the end of the Sasanian period occurs in the legend of 'Abd al-Masiḥ. The story is placed at Sinjar where, as a boy before his conversion to Christianity, Ashir had been put in charge of his father's sheep grazing outside the town. Every day at noon the Christian and Magian shepherd boys would gather at a certain cistern or well for the midday meal, where they sat and ate in separate groups. Ashir was forced to sit and eat alone because the Christian shepherd boys drove him away and refused to let him eat with them.

COMMUNAL CONFLICT: JEWS AND MAGIANS

Built-in sources of conflict provided by mutually offensive rituals and religiously sanctioned social customs served to increase the social distance between communal groups. The existence of such differences tended to be emphasized by religious leaders whose position depended on the recognition of such differences by their followers. Magians were offended by Jewish practices such as ritual bathing and ablutions in warm water, burial, circumcision, the ritual slaughter of clean animals, and by the way Jews normally considered snakes and other creeping things to be ritually clean. For Magians, Jews were a source of impurity and corruption in the world. Jews were apparently the first to call Magians gabrs (A.). Such conflicts did not occur between

57 Ibid., p. 125.
58 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 225, 489; Neusner, History, pp. 21, 23.
61 Ibid., XV, "Sanhedrin," 142–43.
63 De Menasce, Dēnkart, pp. 176, 206.
64 Rodkinson, Talmud, V, "Pesachim," 235. They called a fire-worshipper a Persian geber (Heb.). Gabrā was the usual Aramaic word for "man," but gabr became an abusive term for Magians used by non-Magians. Gabragān occurs in a Jewish refutation of Mazdeans from the early Islamic period; see D. N. Mackenzie, "An Early Jewish-Persian Argument," BSOAS 31 (1968), 250, 260–61.
Jews and Muslims after the conquest because customs such as circumcision, ritual slaughter, inhumation, bathing, and ritual ablutions received positive reinforcement from Islam itself.

The conflict between Jews and Magians over burial is significant because inhumation was widely practiced by non-Magians in Iraq, although Magians believed that the earth, one of the sacred elements, was thereby defiled. Jews practiced a form of indigenous burial customs in which funerals were public social events. After the death of the body, the eyes, mouth, and other bodily orifices were closed to prevent the entry of air, the body was washed and anointed, and iron vessels were placed on the belly to prevent swelling. Relatives tore their clothing and removed their shoes as signs of mourning, the death was announced publicly, and an eulogy was delivered over the deceased. Meanwhile, the lamentation and weeping for the dead was begun both by the relatives and by paid mourners and lamenting women. A shroud was prepared, and the body was laid in its coffin with spices. It was carried off to the cemetery by the procession of mourners with lamentations and the sound of fifes. Men always walked behind the coffin, women usually in front, either as far as the city gate (as at Mahoza) or to the cemetery. The grave was closed by a stone, and friends who came to console the mourners brought food for the first meal after the return from the cemetery. The custom of dining together was abolished, as was the use of expensive shrouds which the poor could not afford.65

The Talmudic requirement for the dead to be guarded from the attacks of cats and dogs66 conflicted directly with the Magian practice of exposing their dead to birds and beasts of prey. Consequently, in times of persecution, as in the late fifth century, the Sasanians left the bodies of executed Jews to be devoured by wild animals. This explains the significance of the vision of Joseph bar Rabbi Joshua, in which he heard that none of the creatures could approach those who were killed by the government because of their sanctity (a familiar theme in Christian martyrologies).67 But a different turn was given to this issue by Rabbi Nathan, who said that a deceased person would be punished after death if he was not lamented or not buried properly, if a wild

beast seized his corpse, or if rain wet the corpse while it was being taken to burial. All these things were taken as good signs because they would be done for the deceased's atonement.68

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE EXILARCH

The possible political consequences of conflict between Jews and Magians tended to be minimized by the willingness of the Sasanians to allow Jews a degree of communal autonomy and religious toleration in Iraq. The most practical reason for this arrangement was the heavy concentration of Jews in central Iraq, which made it possible to deal with them as a unit. This exilic community (Heb. golah) had been led since late Parthian times by an aristocratic family that claimed to trace its descent from David. By recognizing this exilarch (Heb. rosh golah, A. resh galutha) as the legitimate ruler and representative of the Jewish community in Iraq, the Sasanians established the basis for indirect rule in exchange for taxes, loyalty, and defense.69 Although the exilarch's position was hereditary, his succession was confirmed by the Sasanian ruler. Through his subordinate officials, the exilarch was responsible for the administration of justice, the collection of taxes for the Persians, the supervision of markets, the preservation of order, and the defense of Jewish towns. The importance of good behavior as well as a suggestion of the causes of government intervention is provided by the admonition of Rava (d. 352) to the people of Mahoza, "I pray you, see that there be concord among you, in order that you shall have peace from the government."70

The relationship between the Sasanian state and its Jewish subjects was expressed in several different ways. In one case there is a reference to a statue of the Sasanian monarch in a synagogue in a village near Nehardea where several third-century rabbis played without being accused of idolatry.71 The prohibition of selling iron to non-Jews to make weapons was abrogated in the case of the Persians because, according to Rabbi Ashi (d. ca. 427), the Persians were protecting the Jews with their weapons.72 In an eschatological context, it is said that

71 Ibid., IV, "Rosh Hashana," 47.
on the day of judgment the Persians will argue that "we have constructed many bridges, conquered many great cities, we were engaged in many wars, all for the sake of Israel to enable them to study the Law."73 Although Jews paid poll taxes in return for religious toleration and were protected by the state, they were also responsible for the defense of their own towns74 and, on occasion, were enrolled in the Sasanian army.75 This is an important difference from the Islamic period when protected minorities were not required to fight.

As far as the Jews themselves were concerned, the legitimation of the exilarch's authority lay in the belief that he was a descendant of David and would be the ancestor of the Messiah.76 Allegiance was expressed by including the exilarchs in the Aramaic prayer that blessed the leaders of the community. The development of an alliance between the scholars (Amoraim) who produced the Babylonian Talmud and the house of the exilarch enabled exilarchs to base their rule on the religious authority of Judaic law. One of the scholars in the retinue of the exilarch (A. rabbanan di-be resh galutha) acted as judge at his court (Heb. hakham, A. dayyan di baba) and advised him on ritual matters. This relationship was closest in the late fourth and early fifth centuries when the exilarch Huna bar Nathan co-opted the Rabbinic movement by accepting the decisions of Rabbi Ashi (370–427) at Mata Mehasia as authoritative, allowed him to ordain festivals and fasts, and had the annual fall festival in honor of the exilarch held at Mata Mehasia. The most practical consequence of this alliance was the employment of rabbis trained in the schools as judges, market inspectors, and poll-tax collectors in the government of the exilarch.77

In the administration of law, exilarchs and rabbis were concerned with ritual requirements, social and economic relationships, and obligations to the state. Although the exilarch’s jurisdiction over criminal cases included murder, the Sasanian authorities normally carried out death sentences. In the fourth century, the exilarch 'Uqba bar Ne-

73 Ibid., p. 2. But it is also said that on that occasion the Persians will be answered that they really did all these things for their own profit.
74 Newman, Agricultural Life, pp. 128, 186. Jews were expected to maintain the walls and gates of their towns and to form a mounted guard for their defense.
75 Neusner, History, p. 106. There were Jews in the army whom Qubādh I sent against the Byzantine army of Belisarios in 531.
76 Ibid., p. 246. Neusner (Talmudic Judaism, p. 115) suggests that self-rule had messianic implications.
hemiah established the principle that the law of the government must be respected, just as the Torah, which allowed him to employ Persian legal principles in matters of property and land law.\textsuperscript{78}

Local administration was carried out through a three-member rabbinical court (A. \textit{beth din}). One judge (A. \textit{dayyan}) was appointed by the exilarch and chose the other two. Judges were ordained by the scholars with the laying on of hands, which gave them the right to be called rabbi and to judge cases involving fines. The importance of the schools for the exilarch’s administration is indicated by the complaint of Mar Zutra I (d. 413) about “teachers who turn out ignorant men and allow them licenses to be judges.”\textsuperscript{79} These rabbinical courts were responsible for the collection and distribution of charity, the water supply, elementary education, the repair of walls, and the ransom of captives. They functioned as small-claims courts dealing with matters of personal status such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance that involved documents and transfers of property. They also dealt with commercial and land transactions and various forms of litigation. The signatures of witnesses to bills of sale, deed, or gift had to be approved by this court, which might have its own scribe to draw up documents. The absence of appeals to secular officials or of cases of state intervention in the decisions of these courts is taken by Neusner as proof that the Sasanian government gave them at least tacit backing.\textsuperscript{80}

The growing power and authority of rabbis gained from their association with the government was a potential source of resentment. As a sign of respect for the relative status of rabbis, a commoner (Heb. \textit{‘am ha’arez}) was required to stand in the presence of a scholar in the law court.\textsuperscript{81} Two rabbis who were used by the government to apprehend Jewish thieves were asked “How long will you deliver the people of the Lord for slaying?”\textsuperscript{82} The rise of the rabbinate in the Sasanian period also contained a potential for competition over religious authority and communal leadership between exilarchs and rabbis.\textsuperscript{83}

Thus, from an institutional point of view, Rabbinic Jews were or-

\textsuperscript{78} Neusner, \textit{Talmudic Judaism}, pp. 97, 105; Rodkinson, \textit{Talmud}, XIII, “Baba Bathra,” 133.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., XII, “Baba Metzia,” 211–12.
\textsuperscript{83} Neusner, \textit{Talmudic Judaism}, p. 105.
organized into the most fully developed community in Sasanian Iraq. This, plus their geographical concentration in central Iraq, made it both necessary and convenient for the Sasanians to deal with them as a group. The exilarch was officially recognized by the state as the legitimate ruler of the Jews for the Sasanians and was made responsible for the administration of justice and the collection of taxes among Jews. This meant that, in fact, the Jews were allowed to develop an operating, autonomous community complete with a system of religious law, social institutions, schools, and synagogues. The operation of communal institutions depended, in turn, on an alliance between the exilarch and the rabbis who staffed the religious courts, acted as local administrators, and collected the poll tax. This actually put the rabbinate in a position to apply the religious law to the life of the community through the courts and to enforce dietary laws as market inspectors.

THE EROSION OF THE EXILARCHATE

A radical change in the position of the exilarch and the rule of the Jewish community occurred in the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods. For reasons that remain obscure, in the late fifth century Jews were subject to unprecedented persecutions that recurred intermittently until the end of the Sasanian dynasty. In the reigns of Yazdagerd II (438–57) and Firūz (457–84), Jews were forbidden to observe the Sabbath and were made subject to Persian law. Synagogues and schools were closed; children were forced to commit apostasy and were turned over to Magians to be raised; and the exilarch and several leading rabbis were executed. 84

It is impossible to know how much of the governing structure of the Rabbinic community survived through the difficulties in the late Sasanian period. The disorders in the Sasanian empire lasted until the early sixth century. The exilarchate was restored in the reign of Khusraw Anūshirvān in the persons of Akhunai (550–60) and his son Kafnai (560–81). But Kafnai fell victim to a new persecution under Hurmizd IV in 581. When the school at Pumbaditha was closed in 588, the scholars escaped to Firuz Shapur (Anbar), which was under the Banū

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Lakhm, and established a new school there. Consequently, wealthy Jews joined the Persian aristocrats in the revolt of Bahram Chubin (590–91) against Hurmizd IV, and the schools were reopened briefly. Such collaboration compromised them and proved disastrous for wealthy Jews and the exilarchate after the restoration of Khusraw Parviz in 691. Many of them perished in the massacre of Jews at Mada'in after Khusraw returned. The exilarch Haninai (581–89) had been killed at the end of the reign of Hurmizd IV, and this office was not continued under Khusraw Parviz.

From 690 until the end of Sasanian rule in Iraq, there was no exilarch and no Jewish government. The suppression of semiautonomous Jewish administrative institutions was part of Khusraw Parviz’s antiaristocratic policy of centralization. Jews were probably again subject to Persian law as in the late fifth-century persecution. According to the letter of Rabbi Sherira, there were years of persecutions and troubles at the end of the Sasanian period when the rabbis were unable to hold sessions.

In such circumstances, the revival of the exilarchate after the Islamic conquest was part of the general relaxation of the centralization of the late Sasanian period. There was no question of applying Islamic law to the Jews. The religious and social regulations in the Qur’an did not apply to non-Muslims, and the Qur’an itself (Sura 5:43–48, 62:5) regards the Torah and the Gospels as the sources of divine law for Jews and Christians, to be used by them for judgment. Although the account is legendary, it should be noted that the question of the exilarchate was brought to the attention of the Muslim authorities by Bostanai (d. ca. 660) himself, whose position had been usurped by his guardian during his minority. Only then did the Islamic government confirm his authority to appoint judges and the heads of the schools. It was probably ‘Ali who sold Bostanai a captive Persian princess called Izdundad for fifty-two thousand dirhams.

This union provided the pretext for the break between the exilarch and the rabbis in the late seventh century. The issue depended on

87 Neusner, History, p. 127.
whether or not Bostanai had freed the Persian princess, converted her to Judaism, and married her before she bore his children. After his death, in about 660, his two sons by his Jewish wife, Hisdai and Hanina bar Adai, who succeeded him as exilarchs until 689, sought to disinherit his children by the Persian woman and to claim them as their own slaves. The rabbis insisted on the rights of Bostanai’s children by his Persian wife, but the real issue was over who had the authority to interpret and apply religious law in matters of family life and inheritance. Although the sons of Bostanai deposed the heads of the schools and appointed their own partisans, their ultimate inability to impose their will with regard to their half brothers provides the best evidence that the recognition by the Islamic government of the exilarch’s right to appoint judges and the heads of the schools did not extend to authority over the interpretation of the law. There was a second persecution from 719 to 730, when Naṭronia bar Nehemiah was head of the school at Pumabadditha and drove the rabbis opposed to the house of Bostanai to take refuge at Sura. This conflict was the origin of the antagonism between the exilarchs of the Islamic period and the religious leaders of the Jewish community. Both Sherira and Ibn Da’ūd accuse the exilarchs of acquiring their office by bribing the Muslim authorities.89

From 730 on, the dual rule of the Jewish community by the exilarchs who had secular authority and the leaders of the rabbinate (Gaonim) became established. Judges for the Rabbinic courts were appointed jointly by the exilarch and gaon and each gaon had the right of judicial review over the judges under his jurisdiction. The office of exilarch became ceremonial (what he lost in power he gained in honor), his revenues were limited to districts and towns designated by the government, and he lost his claim to religious authority and his jurisdiction over criminal cases. By the eighth century, the concept of election was beginning to undermine dynastic succession. The Gaonim held the deciding voice in the choice of a successor from among the family of the exilarch, and the investiture ceremonies institutionalized the subordination of the exilarch to the Gaonim in religious matters.90


RABBINIC AUTHORITY AND THE RISE OF THE GAONATE

The emergence of the Gaonim as the real religious leaders in the Rabbinic community grew out of the establishment of the scholarly authority of the rabbis in the Sasanian period. Rabbinic authority depended on the willingness of other Jews to obey God's revealed law as it was interpreted and applied by rabbis. The theoretical basis of their authority lay in the belief that the scholars had access to both the written Torah and the Oral Law originally revealed to Moses and preserved by tradition. Living according to the law was the only way to atone for sins, achieve redemption, and bring about the Messianic age. 91

Since rabbis did not lead public worship in the synagogue, they emphasized scholarship as a source of spiritual status. They created a distinction between the learned and the unlearned and discouraged the use of Aramaic for religious purposes because, as they said, the angels did not understand it. They made the study of scripture and observance of the law more important forms of piety and sources of holiness than asceticism or worship. Fasting was discouraged because it would decrease the ability of a scholar to work. Instead, study enabled rabbis to perform miracles and to pray for rain effectively; these were exercises of the power of the Torah. The daily behavior of the rabbis was a living example of the Oral Law and was imitated by their disciples. 92

The spread of a Rabbinic way of life throughout the Jewish population was important for atonement and redemption, so in a practical sense the extent of the Rabbinic community was determined by the degree of popular observance. The Rabbinic outlook and life style were most effectively communicated to other Jews by the students and disciples of the rabbis who went back to their home towns and villages as judges and market inspectors. 93

Centers of Rabbinic learning were located at Nehardea, Sura, Pumbeditha, Mahoza, and Hira in the early Sasanian period. By the fourth and fifth centuries these centers were developing the features of academic institutions, such as buildings, curricula, lectures, and examinations. Semiannual meetings (Heb. kallah) began to be held at Sura in the early fourth century during the months of Adar (March) and

93 Neusner, History, p. 279; Talmudic Judaism, pp. 60, 100.
Elul (September), preceding the festivals of Passover and Rosh Ha-Shanah. At these sessions a particular tractate was reviewed and discussed and the students were examined in Nisan (April) and Tishri (October). Students were also expected to attend the public lectures (A. pirqa) in the synagogue on Sabbaths and holidays which were another means of communicating the Rabbinic concept of a life ordered by religious law among common people. The schools were holy communities of scholars engaged in the interpretation of the written and oral revelation. The rules and regulations for daily life contained in the Talmud were first applied in the life of the schools by the rabbis and their students. Through the schools the rabbis sought to transform Jewish society by their teaching and example. By the fifth century the rabbis had institutionalized their authority in the schools, where they elaborated the content of the Oral Law and trained the students who applied it as judges.

The persecution and disorders in the late fifth and early sixth centuries mark the end of Amoraic scholarship. There was less point to discovering the Oral Law when Jews were subject to Persian law. In this period, when the Rabbinic community closed in on itself in order to survive, the preservation of the law was more important than its derivation. The Amoraim were followed by a generation of scholars called Saboraim ("those expressing opinions") who were responsible for the final redaction of the Talmud. They corrected mistakes in the text, arranged it by tractate, and added explanations for questions that were still undecided. Even this activity seems to have concluded by about 540, and according to Ibn Da'ūd the schools were closed for about fifty years from 540 until 589. Nevertheless, the scholarly tradition survived, carried by fugitive scholars to Anbar.

The authority of the scholars to apply the religious law to the life of the Rabbinic community also survived and became institutionalized in the gaonate. Later tradition regarded Mar Hanan of Iskiya as the first gaon at Pumbaditha in 589 and Mar ben Huna as the first gaon at Sura in 591, which coincides with the end of exilarchic rule after the restoration of Khusraw Parvīz. The interregnum in the exilarchate lasted for fifty years, from 590 until about 640, and it was during this

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95 Ibn Daud, Book of Tradition, p. 44; Neusner, History, p. 143.
period that the leadership of the Rabbinic community devolved on the heads of the schools.

Although the heads of the schools had begun the effective creation of the position of gaon in the early seventh century, it has generally been assumed that the gaonate was established at Sura and formally recognized by the Islamic state in about 658 during the reign of 'Ali.96 The problem with this assumption is that it is based on the account of Sherira that when 'Ali conquered Firuz Shapur (Anbar), Mar Yitzaq and ninety thousand Jews went out to meet him. They gave him a friendly reception and 'Ali received them in a friendly way.97 Apart from the importance of maintaining good relations with the people in the region around Kufa, this event probably had no more to do with the establishment of official relationships or recognition than a similar occasion when the people of Hira went out to greet Khâlid upon his return from a raid. On these occasions contemporary social and political etiquette was merely being observed. Even if Mar Yitzaq was the head of a school at Anbar, as it is sometimes assumed, this account says nothing about the establishment of the gaonate at Sura. According to Ibn Da’ud, when 'Ali came to Babylonia in 660, R. Yitzaq, the head of the school, went out to greet him and 'Ali honored him and revered him.98

The single most important factor in the rise of the gaonate in the early Islamic period was the absence of state support for the religious authority of the exilarch over the Jewish community. After the interregnum at the end of the Sasanian period, exilarchs were never able to reassert themselves because in the interval the heads of the schools had effectively acquired that authority for themselves. The rabbis took advantage of the lack of intervention by the Muslim government in their quarrel with the exilarch to institutionalize religious authority for themselves in the gaonate and proceeded to adjust the life of the community to the changed conditions through new gaonic decrees that abrogated and transcended Talmudic laws. The most instructive example is the joint decree by Mar Rabba at Pumbeditha and Mar Huna at Sura after 660, stating that a disobedient wife should be divorced at once (without losing her marriage settlement or waiting a year to seek a reconciliation). This not only shows the freedom of the rabbis to adjust the law on their own authority, but since the purpose of the decree was to make it unnecessary for Jewish women to get the Muslim

96 Baron, Social and Religious History, V, 14; Graetz, History of the Jews, III, 90.
97 Neusner, History, p. 130.
98 Ibn Daud, Book of Tradition, pp. 44–45.
authorities to force their husbands to grant them divorces, as they had been doing, it also indicates the way this kind of religious authority favored autonomy and the creation of communal boundaries.99

The establishment of the gaonate was the result of a long development that lasted from the late sixth until the early eighth century. After 730 the gaon of Sura achieved precedence over his colleague at Pumbeditha, probably because the rabbis opposed to the house of Bostanai had fled to Sura. Academic assemblies were still held at Sura twice each year in Adar and Elul to deliberate and decide on new interpretations and decrees and to respond to questions sent by foreign Jewish communities. Towards the middle of the eighth century, two major gaonic legal compendia were produced.100 The judge of the Rabbinic court (A. dayyan) drew his authority from both the gaon and the exilarch, but he still chose two associates from the local community himself to form the beth din, the main business of which was still to confirm valid deeds, marriage contracts, letters of divorce, and bills of sale and to act as notary.

Ultimately, the religious authority of the gaonate over the community was created by the schools themselves. The survival of the schools as institutions and of the religious court system in the early Islamic period contributed to the rise of the gaonate that had begun with the suppression of the exilarchate at the end of the Sasanian period. The Islamic conquest provided a catalyst for these pre-Islamic tendencies, not by recognizing the gaonate, but by neglecting to intervene in the conflict with the exilarchs from which the gaons emerged as the real religious authorities in the community.

MESSIANIC OPPOSITION

Exilarchs were not the only opponents of Rabbinic authority. As previously indicated, even in the Talmudic period there were objections to the way the rabbis ruled the community for the Sasanians. The rabbis' self-serving use of the courts, the exploitation of their knowledge of the law, and their collaboration with the Sasanian authorities to collect taxes and to apprehend criminals provoked strong resentment. According to R. Papa (d. 375), the activity of the Persian police chief (M.P. gezirpat) would cease when there were no Jewish judges. Although Neusner interprets this in an ethical sense, the causal relationship between Rabbinic legal administration and Sasanian oppres-

sion seems clear enough. Rabbinic authority was established at the
cost of the miraculous powers of the earlier Amoraim. Later genera-
tions were more learned but their prayers for rain were less effective
(i.e., they were less useful for the real needs of people). It was said
that the Messiah, Ben David, would not come as long as there were
Jewish judges and officials, and that when the Messiah arrived poverty
would vanish and everyone would be rich.101

Jews with a Messianic orientation expected Elijah to be sent as the
precursor of the Messiah (Mal. 4:5) "to lead aright the coming ages,"
restore the purity of families, bring peace, settle disputes and questions
of ritual, and explain difficult passages of Scripture. In the meantime,
Elijah appeared to favor pious people such as R. Beroka of Khuzistan,
to whom he appeared often in the marketplace of Jundishapur. He
also appeared disguised as an Arab of the desert. Those who were
called disciples of Elijah in the Talmud engaged in apocalyptic cal-
culations, and a Jew who had served in the Persian army is said to
have found a scroll in the Persian archives that said the end of the
world would begin in 531.102 A form of apocalyptic and antinomian
asceticism was associated with people who regarded the entire cere-
monial law as no longer obligatory after the destruction of the second
Temple, who mourned the fall of Jerusalem, and who tried to prohibit
the use of meat and wine because they had been used in the Temple
ritual. Nazarites who lived in expectation of the Messiah would only
drink wine on the Sabbath or on festivals because they believed that
the Messiah would not come then, nor would Elijah, his forerunner,
come on the eve of the Sabbath or a festival. That such expressions
were recognized as subversive is indicated by the arrest of Eliezer the
Little by the officers of the exilarch in the marketplace of Nahardea
for wearing black shoes to lament the fall of Jerusalem.103

The rabbis discouraged bringing about the Messianic age by overt
political action because of the consequences and preferred to postpone
it. They opposed apocalyptic calculations and asceticism and diverted
Messianic hopes from a political and socioeconomic level to a moral
one. According to R. Samuel (d. 254), the only difference between the
present time and that of the Messiah was that one would no longer

101 Neusner, History, pp. 261, 280; idem, Talmudic Judaism, pp. 36–37; Rodkinson,
102 Baron, Social and Religious History, II, 318; V, 360; L. Ginzberg, "Elijah," JE,
V, 122–26; Rodkinson, Talmud, VIII, "Taanith," 60; idem, XVI, "Sanhedrin," 303;
Rodkinson, XVIII "Abuda Zara," p. 16.
103 Newman, Agricultural Life, p. 71; Rodkinson, Talmud, III, "Erubin," 97–98;
idem, X "Baba Kama," 139.
be subject to the present government. Both the Roman and Persian empires were permanent and would last until the time of the Messiah. By analogy with the defeat of the Chaldaeans who had destroyed the first Temple by the Achaemenian Persians, those who had destroyed the second Temple (the Romans) would also be defeated by the Persians in the last days. But according to Rav (d. 247), the Persians would be defeated by those who had destroyed the Temple and the Messiah would only come after the Romans had dominated the entire world for nine months.104

This worked very well in the third century when such a development was very unlikely; but to Jews living in Iraq and Palestine in the early seventh century, it must have seemed that these things were actually taking place in the great war between the Sasanians and the Byzantines. Tens of thousands of Palestinian Jews joined the army of Shahrbarāz in 614 in an outpouring of Messianic enthusiasm. The eventual defeat of the Persians by the Byzantines and the execution of Khusraw Parvíz by enemies at his own court were disappointing but at the same time convincing proof that the Messiah was about to come. An apocalyptic document probably written in Palestine between 629 and 636 described Shīrōē (Qubād II) as the anti-Messiah who would kill the forerunner of the Messiah. Messianic expectations are also likely to have been encouraged among anti-Rabbinic Jews by the career of Muhammad, the Islamic conquests, and the fall of the Sasanian empire, and in about 634 the appearance of a prophet among the Saracens was discussed seriously by rabbis in Palestine.105

The earliest recorded Messianic rising after the conquest, and the only one in Iraq, broke out in the heart of the Sawad between 644 and 647. A Jew of Beth Aramaye from the village of Pellughta (Falluja) announced that the Messiah had come and gathered a force of about four hundred weavers, carpet makers, and linen bleachers. They burned three churches and killed the governor (Syr. shōltānā) of the local district before the uprising was suppressed by troops from 'Aqola (Kufa). All of the rebels were killed along with their wives and children, and their leader was crucified in his own village.106

Two subsequent movements were different in that they occurred in

western Iran away from the Rabbinic centers in Iraq, included religious reform, were syncretistic, and led to the formation of small sectarian communities. During the second civil war, probably between 685 and 692, contemporary with or shortly after the movement of al-Mukhtār at Kufa, Abū ʿĪsā al-Īsfahānī proclaimed himself to be a prophet and the forerunner of the Messiah. He recognized Jesus and Muhammad as prophets, each sent to his own people by God. He advocated the reading of the Qurʾān and the Gospels by Jews and said that Jews, Muslims, and Christians should each observe the religion they currently professed. He claimed to be the last such prophetic messenger sent to prepare for the coming of the Messiah. The miraculous proof of his claim was his ability to produce books without having been educated and even though he was an illiterate tailor. On the authority of divine revelation he prohibited the use of meat and wine, and on Biblical authority (Ps. 119:164) he prescribed seven daily prayers. He also forbade divorce “like Sadducees and Christians.” He seems to have combined the Islamic concept of successive miraculous revelation, the Christian attitude towards divorce, and the tradition of Jewish apocalyptic asceticism with an appeal to Biblical authority. He also raised an army, rebelled against the government, and was defeated and killed, although his followers claimed that he had not been killed but disappeared into a hole in a mountain. The members of his movement became a small sect that survived at Damascus as late as the tenth century. One of his followers, called Yudghān, claimed to be a prophet and the Messiah at Isfahan in the early eighth century. His followers called him “the Shepherd,” claimed that he had not died, and expected him to return. The sect he founded survived at Isfahan until the tenth century, prohibited meat and wine, regarded the Sabbath and holy days as memorial rather than obligatory observations, and observed many additional prayers and fasts.

Although the movements of Abū ʿĪsā and Yudghān seem to have included an implicit rejection of Rabbinic authority, they were not overtly directed against rabbis. Abū ʿĪsā is said to have held Rabbinic


Jews in high regard and considered them equal to the prophets. Consequently, his followers were respected by Rabbinic Jews, observed holidays in the same way, and intermarried with them.  

The most direct challenge to Rabbinic authority lay in denying the validity of the Oral Law, as the ancient Sadducees had done. The original Sadducee position was that only what was in written Scripture was obligatory, and they did not feel bound to observe mere custom. Although Sadducees ceased to exist as an identifiable group after the destruction of the Temple, the term was applied in the Talmud to those who rejected the authority of Oral Law and who were also called minnim. This position was revived and applied in the showdown between the exilarch and the gaons in the later eighth century over the authoritative control of the Rabbinic community through its law. The occasion was a dispute over the succession to the exilarchate in about 767, when the Gaonim and the leaders of the synagogues supported a younger, less learned, and more obedient member of the family of the exilarch instead of the older, more independent, and hostile brother, Anan ben David. Anan’s faction supported him as rival exilarch; but when they tried to force the issue by appealing to the caliph, al-Manṣūr, he imprisoned Anan instead. Anan was eventually allowed to emigrate with his followers and to settle at Jerusalem as the leader of his own sect. This appears to have been the first time that the Islamic government intervened actively in the internal affairs of the Jewish community in Iraq. It did so in support of the Gaonim, and afterwards the exilarchate became elective.

Anan’s claim to religious authority rested on his rejection of the Oral Law in favor of using his own discretion to derive an alternative ritual and legal system from Scripture. His requirement of observing the new moon to determine the beginning of each month and that Pentecost be held on a Sunday, which he shared with the ancient Sadducees, served to create a separate ritual calendar that distinguished his followers from Rabbinic Jews. He shared with the followers of Abū ʿĪsā and Yudghān the recognition of Jesus and Muḥammad as prophets and the prohibition of most kinds of meat to mourn the destruction of the Temple.

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Some of Anan's disciples went on to create the Karaite sect, which included most anti-Rabbinic Jews by the ninth century after they dropped Anan's more ascetic and literal requirements. Their differences in observance provided an alternative form of ritual life that served to create and preserve a communal identity. In fact, Qirqisani shows how minor differences in ritual and everyday life also distinguished Rabbinic Jews in Iraq from those in Syria. In the tenth century there were Karaite Jews at Basra and Baghdad, in Khuzistan, Fars, the Jibal, and Khurasan.\(^{112}\)

CONCLUSIONS

In general, it is possible to describe the Jews of Iraq in terms of a fully developed religious community. Jews had their own social institutions and a way of life that was given religious approval by the Talmud. They had their own burial customs and cemeteries, a court system for their religious law, schools, synagogues, dietary requirements, charity, and communal property. Furthermore, they were usually allowed to govern themselves under the exilarch and the rabbis. There are really two main considerations which point to the emergence of genuine religious communities in the late Sasanian period. The first is the way an identity and way of life were spread among the lay members of the community by the religious leaders themselves. In the case of the Jews, this is demonstrated by the way the rabbis used the office of market inspector to enforce dietary laws among the general Jewish public, by the way they used the courts to apply Talmudic law to daily life, and by the way they used the schools to spread Rabbinic Judaism through their disciples. Weekly congregational worship was also an important means for reinforcing a communal identity. The second consideration lies in the way the realization of Talmudic requirements led to the formation of closely knit communities that were increasingly isolated from the members of other religions around them. In this respect it is important to note the creation of interfaith social boundaries by the late Sasanian period.

As a result, once the loss of Jews on the fringes of the community through conversion to Christianity had been accounted for, the location and size of the Jewish community in Iraq remained remarkably stable. In effect, it survived fairly intact into the Islamic period with

\(^{112}\) Nemoy, "Qirqisani," pp. 379–81, 392–95.
its synagogues, schools, and court system, with its exilarch and its Rabbinate. Jews outside of or opposed to Rabbinic authority tended to form their own sectarian communities in the early Islamic period.

The major changes in the Jewish community in Iraq in the seventh century were the rise of the gaonate, the reduction of the exilarch's position, and the outbreak of Messianic, syncretistic reform movements. Each, in turn, was the consequence of the establishment of the scholarly authority of the rabbis, the suppression of the exilarchate in the late Sasanian period, and the encouragement given to Messianic hopes by the Islamic conquest.
Chapter 12

CHRISTIANS

CHRISTIANS AND THE STATE: SASANIAN IRAQ

Christianity was spreading in Iraq in the late Sasanian period at the expense of Magians, Jews, and pagans. The relationship of Christians to the Sasanian state tends to be put in terms of persecution or toleration, but it seems more productive to describe it in terms of political loyalty, the consequences of toleration, and the effects of factionalism among Christians. Since Christians may have been the largest single religious group in Iraq by the end of the sixth century, it is important to determine the nature of their institutions as the members of a subject religion and the extent to which Christians constituted a religious community under the Sasanians. As with the Jews, this goes to the heart of the question of whether or not such communities appeared as a consequence of Muslim rule or already existed before the conquest. Among Christians, as among Jews, this is a matter of the effectiveness of internal bonds and external boundaries and concerns both the relationship of Christians to non-Christians and the sectarian separation of Nestorian and Monophysite Christians in Iraq.

Apart from the intrinsic value of dealing with these issues, there is an additional advantage in discussing Christians. Because most of the seventh-century sources concern Christians, more is known about them than about any other group on the basis of contemporary information. Conclusions which may be reached by inference with regard to other groups may often be demonstrated explicitly in the case of Christians. Such materials thus provide a useful vehicle for discovering some of the reasons why late Sasanian conditions and policies were continued or changed in early Islamic Iraq.

To begin with the question of persecution and religious toleration, the most important opposition to toleration came from the Magian priesthood, which was concerned mainly with the defection of Persian aristocrats from the state religion and with preventing Christians from capturing the state. There seems to have been a good deal of built-in religious friction from the Magian point of view. Christians wrote books attacking the Magians. Magians in turn accused Christians of refusing to worship the Sun, Fire, and Stars, or to perform rituals; of being monotheistic and celibate, of defiling the earth by burying their
dead; of baptizing converts; and of attributing the origin of snakes and creeping things (the animal form of Magian demons) to a good God. Yazdagerd II (438–57) is even said to have considered it a sin to receive tribute from Christians. But apart from those occasions when the state was forced to intervene in ecclesiastical affairs by the factionalism of the Christians themselves, which was interpreted as persecution, the Sasanians tended to leave non-Persian Christians alone. Individual Persian converts sometimes were imprisoned and executed due to the initiative of their relatives or of the Magian priests; but in the late Sasanian period mass persecutions and executions such as had taken place in the reigns of Shapur II and Yazdagerd II in the fourth and fifth centuries no longer occurred. The persecution of Persian converts tended to coincide with periods of war with the Byzantines when their loyalty was suspect. The martyrdoms of St. Shīrīn in 559, Mihrāmgushnasp in 614, and Īshōʿsabhran in 620 occurred during wars with the Byzantines.

But there was also a degree of official toleration in the late Sasanian period. According to the terms of the treaty between the Sasanians and Byzantines in 561, Christians living under Sasanian rule were to be allowed to build churches, exercise their cult freely, and bury their dead, in return for which they were not supposed to make converts among the Magians. The high point of toleration occurred in the early part of the reign of Khusraw Parvīz after his restoration by the Byzantine army. Out of friendship to Maurice, the Byzantine emperor, Parvīz permitted Christians to build churches, sound their wooden gongs (Syr. naqqūs), celebrate Easter, and make converts among any group but the Magians. He also instructed his governors to treat them well. Evidence of his own personal patronage of Christians is to be found in the golden votive cross he dedicated to the monastery of St. Sergius at Rusafa while in exile, and the churches he built at Madaʿīn and at Qasr-i Shīrin for his two Christian wives. The earliest account

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3 Assemani, *BO*, III(2), 89; Devos, “Sainte Sirīn,” p. 102. The Chronicle of Sīʾirt (Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II[1], 125) claims that Qubād I previously had given Christians permission to build churches and monasteries.
RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

says that Khusraw was only outwardly friendly towards the Christians for the sake of Maurice and that he was really their enemy. The death of Maurice in 602 released Parviz from his obligations, and with the beginning of his Byzantine war his attitude towards the Christians changed. By the 620s, with the war beginning to go badly for him, and especially after the invasion of Heraklios in 626, Parviz began to persecute all Christians, Nestorian and Monophysite. In his thirtieth year (620), thirteen Christians were imprisoned in Adiabene for five years and then, in 625, crucified at the bridge marking the border between Beth Garme and Beth Lashpar. At about the same time Nathaniel, bishop of Shahrazur, was crucified for writing a polemic against the Magians. After the deposition and death of Parviz, according to the earliest source, the reign of Shiroe was favorable for Christians again. Two important consequences of such toleration set precedents for Christians as the members of a subject religion. One was that the church in the Sasanian empire became an agent of the state to secure the loyalty of its Christian subjects. Its extent came to be defined by the borders of the Sasanian empire. The synod held at Ctesiphon in 410 had regarded the Christians of the Sasanian empire as part of “all the Church of Christ which is in the four parts” of the world and recognized the “bishop, catholicos, archbishop, metropolitan of Seleucia and Ctesiphon” as the head of the church of Koke (Seleucia, Veh-Artakhshat) until the coming of Christ. The title of catholicos introduced in 410 seems to have had connotations of subordination, either as the deputy of Christ or of the western patriarchs. The head of the Eastern church was first called patriarch at the Synod of Dadhíshö in 424 in the context of his independence from the western patriarchs in matters of litigation against him. By the mid-sixth century the scope of the catholicos had been defined as the “supreme priesthood . . . of the Persian empire, of the east, (and) of the holy Church of the royal cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon.” The synod

10 Chabot, *Synodicon*, pp. 96, 354. According to Prokopios (*Wars*, II.xxv. 4) a priest in Persarmenia was called “catholicos” because he presided alone over the entire region.
held in 576 declared that the clergy received from their patriarch "the power and authority to be princes and governors . . . in all the churches of the territory of this sublime and glorious kingdom of our lord the victorious Khusraw, King of Kings." Likewise, in 605 the Nestorian Church was defined as the "holy churches of God of this glorious kingdom, master of empires." Such terminology survived after the conquest in a letter written in Persian to the priest and chorepiscopos Mina in Fars by the catholicos George I (659–80/1), who referred to "the universal Church of this empire of the east, that is of the land of Fars and neighboring lands."13

Sasanian hierarchic concepts were applied to the organization of the church. The catholicos or patriarch was at the top with his cathedral church at Koke in Seleucia (Veh-Artakhshat). The patriarchal see of Beth ‘Aramaye included the bishoprics of Kashkar (Kaskar), Firuz Shapur (Anbar), Zawabi, Hirta (Hira), Beth Daraye, and possibly Tirhan. Outside of the patriarchal see, the metropolitan bishoprics were organized according to the principle established at the synod of 410 that "the see ought to be honored according to the greatness of the city itself." According to the hierarchic ranking established in 410 and reaffirmed in 554, the metropolitan of Khuzistan was first, followed by the metropolitans at Nasibin for Beth Arbhaye, Perath (Furat) for Mayshan, Irbil for Adiabene, and Karkha dh Beth Selok (Kirkuk) for Beth Garme (see fig. 7). Although subordinate bishoprics came and went, the metropolitan structure survived intact at least until the eighth century. By the mid-sixth century, the ecclesiastical hierarchy of patriarch/catholicos, metropolitan, bishop, chorepiscopos, inspector, priest, and deacon had been regularized.

The synod of 585 insisted that the cursus honorum be observed and that the lower orders be subordinate to the higher ones in matters of discipline, although higher church authorities were expected to behave justly towards their subordinates. The hierarchic organization of the church was justified as being a microcosm of the celestial order governed by a hierarchy of Archangels, Powers, and Thrones. It is not
surprising, then, to find the image of the head and the body used to justify the authority of the catholicos,\(^\text{19}\) or the symbolism of shepherd and sheep to describe the lower clergy.\(^\text{20}\) Nestorian patriarchs also adopted Sasanian-style hierarchic titles patterned after the King of Kings or \(\text{M} \text{ôbadh} \text{h} \text{ân-\text{m}ôbadh}\). As early as 484, Bar Šawmā addressed the patriarch Mar Acacius as “Father of Fathers,”\(^\text{21}\) and sixth-century patriarchs called themselves “Father of Fathers,” “Shepherd of Shep-

\(^{19}\) Ibid., pp. 160, 420.  
\(^{20}\) Ibid., pp. 96, 97, 106, 353, 355, 363. Priests are called the physicians of souls (ibid., pp. 174, 434).  
\(^{21}\) Ibid., pp. 527, 534.
herds,” or “Chief of Shepherds.”22 After the Islamic conquest such titles were dropped. George I (659–80) called himself only “catholicos, patriarch of the Orient;”23 and Ḥnānîshōʾ I (686–93) only “catholicos, patriarch by the grace of God.”24 Even in the eighth century Ḥnānîshōʾ II (775–79) and Timothy I (780–823) confined themselves to the titles of catholicos and patriarch.25

The authority of church government was upheld by a theory of double sanction—ecclesiastical and secular. Beginning with the synod of 410, the church expected to have its decisions enforced by the state. The acts of this synod were guaranteed by the threat of excommunication and of punishment by the King of Kings for anyone who failed to accept them.26 The idea of double sanction is also present in a letter written by the catholicos Sabhrîshôʾ (596–604) to the monks of Bar Qaiti in 598, in which he justified his prescription of monastic rules for them “by the authority of the Church, royal permission, and the care of the Fathers.”27 In return, Christians were expected to express their loyalty to the Sasanians by praying for the monarch, and by using the terms which he used for himself. Yazdagerd I, who had allowed Christians to bury their dead and convened the synod of 410, was called “victorious” and “illustrious” by that synod.28

In a letter of 544, the catholicos Mar Aba spoke of “the kindly, merciful, benevolent Khusraw, King of Kings—may the power of his empire, the health of his body, the joy of his soul, his good will and merciful intentions be preserved, and may he be protected by divine goodness.”29 Similarly, according to the preface to the Synod of Ishôʾyahbh I in 585:

The Christian servants and subjects of his Majesty [Hurmizd IV]... pray to God for him night and day, for his power to last forever, for Him who inhabits the heavens, the Lord of kings, to be with him in everything forever, and that those who inhabit the earth and are in the universe may submit to his domination forever, according to the will of the Lord.30

22 Ibid., pp. 103, 110, 112, 196, 361, 368, 370, 456.
23 Ibid., pp. 215, 227, 480, 490.
26 Ibid., pp. 22, 30, 261, 269-70.
27 Ibid., pp. 203, 465.
28 Ibid., pp. 30, 269; Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 39.
29 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 540, 551.
30 Ibid., pp. 131, 391.
Unfortunately for Ḫosrū-yaḥb, he failed to accompany Khosrow Parviz when he fled to the Byzantine empire during the revolt of Bahram Chūbin, but he continued to pray, somewhat ambiguously, for “him who has the right to be called king.” As a result, he found himself out of favor when Khosrow Parviz returned.31

After the elevation of Sabhrīshō as catholicos in 596, the king was careful to instruct him to “pray for us always, for our realm and our lives.”32 Accordingly, under Sabhrīshō the king was called “he who is and will be protected by heavenly aid, the victorious, the strong, the merciful, the pacifier of the world, the King of Kings, Khosrow,” and “the good and merciful king, our master the victorious Khosrow, King of Kings, master for eternity.”33 The statement of faith submitted by the Nestorians to Khosrow Parviz in 612 is particularly important in this respect. This document was drawn up in Syriac by aristocratic Persian converts to Christianity and translated into Persian to be read before the king. In it the king was told that the Christians prayed to the God of the universe and asked “His omnipotent Majesty to strengthen the throne of your Majesty by the extention of your empire throughout the earth and to all the generations of the world,” and that after God “we venerate your glorious Majesty, and we return thanks to you for your most abundant charity towards us and towards all the subjects of your excellent empire. Because, just as the sun which gladdens the entire earth by its light and warmth, your goodness spreads abundantly over all men.”34 Such language disappeared with the Islamic conquest, when the official relationship between the Nestorians and their rulers was broken. It only reappeared after the establishment of the ‘Abbāsī dynasty, and when the caliph al-Mahdī permitted the election of a catholicos in 775 he was called “victorious king, loving God . . . prince of the believers.”35

The main consideration from the Sasanian point of view was to make the Nestorian Church responsible to the state for the loyalty of its Christian subjects. This aspect of the relationship may have been the work of Bar Ṣawmā himself, the bishop of Nasibin who persuaded the Sasanian monarch Firūz (461–88) that if the church in Persia was

33 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 196, 201, 456, 562–63.
34 Ibid., pp. 563, 580–81.
35 Ibid., pp. 245, 516.
“Nestorianized” there would be less reason to fear the collusion of its members with the Orthodox Byzantines. His catholicos, Acacius (484–96), either failed to understand what was at stake or resisted the subordination of the church to state interests. With the important border city of Nasibin in ecclesiastical revolt against its bishop, Bar Şawmā wrote to Acacius in 484 that “if a letter of excommunication is not sent promptly by your Fathership and the city is not pacified, I will not remain in the episcopate of Nasibin; Nasibin itself will not remain under the great empire of the Persians.”

Half a century later, when Anūshazādh, a son of Khusraw Anūshirvān, led a revolt in Jundishapur supported by its inhabitants, the Magians blamed the catholicos, Mar Aba (540–52). The king commanded the catholicos to write the Christians in the city to disassociate themselves from the revolt. Although Mar Aba objected to being made responsible for the behavior of Christians, he wrote the required excommunication that led to their desertion of Anūshazādh and the opening of the city gates to the royal army.

Prelates were also employed as spies and diplomats. Isho’yahbh of Arzon provided Hurmizd IV with information about Byzantine troop movements while he was bishop of that frontier see. As catholicos, Sabhrishō‘ arranged for an exchange of prisoners between the Byzantines and the Sasanians, and the catholicos Isho’yahbh II (628–43) was sent on an embassy to the Byzantine emperor Heraklios with several of his bishops by the queen Būrān as part of the peace negotiations.

The second main consequences of toleration was that it brought with it the requirement for royal permission to build churches and monasteries, to practice Christian burial, to promulgate monastic rules, and to elect the catholicos. Toleration was bought at the expense of interference by the state in church affairs. Normally, according to the canons set down in the sixth century, the procedure for the election of a new catholicos began with the bishop of Kaskar convening the other bishops of the patriarchal see at Mada’in, followed by the notification and invitation of the metropolitans to attend the election of a new catholicos. The election was then conducted by the clergy and lay notables of Seleucia and Ctesiphon and the bishops of the patriarchal see, with the approval of the metropolitans. The candidate was

36 Ibid., pp. 528, 535.
38 Ibid., II(2), 438, 493; Thomas of Margha, Governors, II, 61.
to be ordained in the church of Koke in Seleucia with the laying on of hands and installed on the throne of the catholicos there. However, late Sasanian rulers not only gave their permission for the election of a catholicos but often nominated their own candidates. Under the last Sasanians, the desire of the government to secure stability and loyalty through the election of its own candidates conflicted with the desire of the clergy for ecclesiastical autonomy. The involvement of aristocratic Persian laymen at court in church politics led to irregular elevations.

As early as 496, a Christian astrologer at the court of Jāmāsp obtained royal permission for the election of a new catholicos. Then in 521 a group of notables and Persian clergy consecrated Elisha as catholicos in the church next to the Īwān Kīsrā in Aspanpur instead of at Koke. After his election and consecration, a notable who was the royal physician obtained the necessary royal decree for his elevation and distributed presents to the royal officials. In opposition, the bishops of Iraq consecrated Mar Narsē as his rival according to regular usage in the cathedral church at Koke, and this caused a brief schism.

In 552, Khusraw Anūshirvān nominated as catholicos a man named Joseph who had studied medicine in the Byzantine empire and had returned and settled at Nasibin. Fifteen years later, in 567, Khusraw Anūshirvān just as arbitrarily deposed him. In 570 the bishop of Zawabi, Ezechiel, was chosen catholicos by the favor of Khusraw Anūshirvān, who formerly had sent him to Bahrayn and Yaman for pearls. After the election, the chief of physicians at court, Nawrūzī of Marv, informed the king of the outcome and asked his permission to authorize Ezechiel’s ordination. Once permission had been granted, Ezechiel was ordained by the bishops. Likewise in 582, when the assembly of clergy and laymen of Mada’īn were divided between Job, the director of the school of Mada’īn and a relative of Mar Narsē, and Ishō’yahbh, bishop of Arzon, Hurmizd IV ordered them to consecrate Ishō’yahbh because, as bishop of Arzon, he had sent reports on Byzantine troop movements. In 596 Khusraw Parviz instructed a Christian notable at court called Takhrid to assemble the other

Christian notables at court and to have them request permission to elect a new catholicos. When the synod composed of the clergy, the people of Mada'in, and the courtiers was convened at the order of the king, Parviz ordered Takhrid to present Sabhrīshō' of Lashom to them at the palace gate as his nominee. Sabhrīshō' was ordained at the church of Koke, taken back to the palace, and presented to the king.45

In 605, when Gregory I was elected catholicos by the order of Khusraw Parviz, the bishops were conveyed to court by the royal post and Gregory was elevated at Hulwan because the royal court was there at that time.46 After the death of Gregory in 608 or 609, Khusraw Parviz refused to allow the election of another catholicos, although the Nestorian delegation to the disputation in 612 took advantage of the occasion to petition him to permit it.47 It was only after the death of Khusraw Parviz in 628 that his son and successor Shīrō (Qubādh II) ordered the appointment of the bishop of Balad, Ishō'yahbh of Gadala, as catholicos (Ishō'yahbh II, 628–43).48

This state of affairs did not exist under Muslim rule until after the accession of the 'Abbāsī dynasty and the establishment of the capital at Baghdad in the second half of the eighth century. In 775 Isaac, the bishop of Kaskar, summoned the synod to elect a new patriarch and went with the metropolitans and bishops to Baghdad. Isaac presided over the assembly together with the caliphal liaison officer, Muḥṣīz ibn Ibrāhīm. The caliph, al-Mahdī (775–85), nominated a monk of Kaskar named George to the synod through Muḥṣīz; but when Isaac accepted the nomination, the metropolitans and bishops revolted. Claiming that royal nomination was an innovation, they elected the bishop of Lashom, Ḥenanīshō', catholicos without Isaac's consent.49

The involvement of aristocratic laymen in the election of the Nestorian clergy had been established formally in the late Sasanian period. The synod that elected Mar Aba catholicos in 540 included "the leaders and all the Christians engaged in the service of the king."50 At a lower level, the fourth canon of the Synod of Joseph, in 554, provided for the election of a bishop by the other bishops of the province in an

assembly of all the clergy and faithful.\textsuperscript{51} This practice survived well into the Islamic period. In 729 Mar Prancē was consecrated head of the monastery of Sabhrīshō\textsuperscript{5} “in the presence of the metropolitan and the notables of the land.”\textsuperscript{52} As late as 790 “the faithful of the cities of the catholicos” (Mada’in) were still involved in the election of the catholicos and it was still necessary to warn them not to require gifts from the candidate.\textsuperscript{53}

The position of Christians under Sasanian rule thus resembles that of the Jews in the way conflict with Magians over different religious requirements was offset by official toleration. But the difficulties faced by Christians were aggravated by their own attempts to replace Magianism as the religion of the ruling class through conversion, by their internal quarrels, and by the fact that Christianity was officially associated with the traditional enemy of the Sasanians: the Byzantine empire. Apart from the way official toleration brought royal support for the foundation of churches and monasteries at the beginning of the reign of Khusraw Parvīz, two major consequences of toleration under the Sasanians established important precedents for Christians as members of a subject religion. The first was the identification of the Nestorian Church with the Sasanian state. This meant the adoption of Sasanian-style hierarchic titles and royal imagery, the regularization of the Nestorian ecclesiastical hierarchy, and the definition of the extent of the church to coincide with the borders of the Sasanian empire. A theory of double authority, ecclesiastical and secular, was used to sanction church government. The state was expected to enforce ecclesiastical decisions, while the Nestorians, in turn, were expected to express their loyalty to the state through prayers for the monarch and by excommunicating its rebellious Christian subjects.

The second was that toleration was expressed in terms of the necessity for royal “permission” for the building of churches and monasteries, for Christian burial, for the promulgation of monastic rules, and for the election of the catholicos. This meant the nomination of the catholicos by the king, irregular elevations, the involvement of aristocratic Persian laymen at court in church politics, and the emergence of a conflict within the church that pitted the clergy who favored canonical elections against the lay aristocrats who favored a situation in which they could exercise patronage.

\textsuperscript{51} Chabot, \textit{Synodicon}, pp. 99, 357.
\textsuperscript{52} Mingana, \textit{Sources syriaques}, p. 253.
\textsuperscript{53} Chabot, \textit{Synodicon}, pp. 599, 604.
CHRISTIANS AND THE STATE: ISLAMIC IRAQ

The weight of evidence up to this point indicates that the relationship established between the Nestorian Church and the Sasanian state by the end of the Sasanian period was broken as a result of the Islamic conquest. Only gradually, and in some cases not until the 'Abbāsī period, were the main aspects of this relationship, such as the nomination of the catholicos by the ruler and the conflict between nomination and election, reconstructed vis-à-vis the Muslim government.

How, then, was the new relationship with the Muslim government forged and when was it formalized? The traditional view is that the catholicos Isho'yabh II secured some kind of official recognition from one of the early Muslim rulers at the time of the conquest. But there are several different versions of how this came about. According to one of them, he sent presents and one thousand silver staters to Muhammad at Madina through Gabriel, the bishop of Maysan. But Gabriel arrived after Muhammad's death. He thus was presented to Abu Bakr, whom he informed of affairs in the Sasanian empire, of the suffering of the Christians because of the Arab army, and of the war between the Persians and Byzantines.54 The obvious anachronism in this account is that it assumes that the first Muslim attacks on Iraq had already begun when Muhammad was still alive and when Gabriel had set out for Madina.

In a different version, Isho'yabh is said to have made an agreement with Muhammad through the mediation of the secular leader and the bishop of the Christians at Najran. According to this agreement, Christians were to be protected from attack, Arabs were not to require them to do military service or to change their faith or their laws, and Arabs were to help Christians repair ruined churches. Priests and monks were to be exempt from tribute (Syr. gezītā), the poor were to pay only four silver coins (Syr. zūzē), and merchants and the rich were to pay ten zūzē. A Christian woman in an Arab household was not to be forced to change her religion or beguiled out of the fasting, worship (Syr. s̱loṭā), or doctrine of her own faith.55 The introduction of the Christians of Najran into this version is significant because Muhammad is said to have concluded a pact with them promising that their rights and their images would not be changed, that bishops,

54 Scher, "Histoire nestorienne," II(2), 619. A stater was a tetradrachma and was worth four dirhams.
55 Assemani, BO (Rome, 1721), II, 8; III(2), 94–95. This is the text of Bar Hebraeus, Chron. Eccles., ii, col. 117.
monks, and custodians would not be tempted to neglect their duties, that they would not be held responsible for any maliciousness or bloodshed from pre-Islamic times, that they would be exempt from military service and the tithe tax, and that none of them would be held responsible for the guilt of another. In 641 'Umar moved them from Yaman to Iraq and resettled them near Kufa, and in about 644 the secular leader (Ar. 'āqib), the bishop, and the notables of the Najrāniyya are said to have presented 'Uthmān with the document containing Muḥammad’s agreement with them in order to secure their previous guarantees. The point of such stories was that the privileges of Christians had been recognized by Muḥammad himself before the conquest. “Documents” purporting to contain such agreements began to be circulated by Christians in the ninth century, and Nestorians seem to have adapted the account of the Christians of Najran to support their own claims.

Other versions tell of an agreement between Īshō’yahbh II and ‘Umar. In one version ‘Umar exempted Īshō’yahbh’s brothers, servants, and adherents (Ar. ashya‘) from jizya; in another, ‘Umar gave him a document setting the terms for the inhabitants of Mada‘in, which was subsequently confirmed by ‘Uthmān and by Mughīra ibn Shu‘ba. Although the latter looks like a Nestorian version of the terms of taxation for protection extended to the general population of the Sasanian capital when it fell to Sa‘d in 637, the reference to Mughīra may be significant. His first term as governor of Kufa, from 640 until 644, corresponds to the last years of Īshō’yahbh’s patriarchate, and a governor at Kufa is more likely to have had dealings with him than was the Commander of the Faithful in Madina. However, these stories only occur in relatively late chronicles and provide inconsistent alternatives. The main problem with all of them is that, according to the most nearly contemporary source, after the fall of Mada‘in to the Muslims, Īshō’yahbh retired to Karkh Juddan in Beth Garme, where he died and was buried in 643. So it is highly unlikely that he was

56 Baladhuri, Futūḥ, pp. 64–66. This account is ascribed to Yahyā ibn Ādam, who says that he saw copies of this document, which he thought were probably forged, in the possession of the Najrāniyya.
58 Assemani, BO, III(2), 95.
60 Güidi, Chronica Minora I, I, 31; II, 26.
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engaged in negotiations with anyone during the period required by these stories.

In fact, a close reading of the Nestorian accounts reveals that the immediate consequences of the Islamic conquest were just as disruptive and destructive for Christians as they were in other respects. In one instance a monk named Abba Yūnan, a native of Beth ‘Arbhaye, was forced to flee from the monastery of Bar Tura, which he had established near Sinjar, because of the disturbed conditions. He went with his followers to a more inaccessible monastery up-country for refuge and told his followers to bury him there; but he prophesied that after seven years peace would reappear and they would return to Bar Tura.\(^{61}\)

The personal dangers resulting from Arab raids in Adiabene were emphasized in order to claim miracles for Mar Sabhrīshō’ (d. 650), who is credited with securing the release of seven monks taken captive by an Arab raid on a monastery.\(^{62}\) The Muslims were not solely responsible for this kind of disruption. Abraham, the bishop of Pṣrath, was taken captive by the Persian Hormizdān in the fighting with Abū Mūsā.\(^{63}\)

The best evidence indicates that things only began to return to normal in the patriarchate of Mar Ammeh (644–47). He was bishop of Nineveh at the time of the conquest, and it is said that the Muslims favored him because he provided them with food.\(^{64}\) Afterwards he became metropolitan of Khuzistan and then catholicos in 644. But Mari’s claim that he received a document of some sort from the caliph ‘Alī (656–61) is chronologically impossible.\(^{65}\) However, as catholicos, Mar Ammeh was able to rebuild the burned church of the monastery of St. Sergius at the suburb of Mada’in called Mabhrakhtha. Like his predecessor, Mar Ammeh also died at Karkh Juddan but was buried in the monastery of St. Sergius outside Mada’in.\(^{66}\) It might be reasonable then, to date the return of the catholicate to Mada’in from the accession of Mar Ammeh’s successor, Īshō’yahbh III (648–58).

It should be obvious that neither during the conquest nor immediately afterwards was any kind of official understanding reached between the Islamic government and the Nestorian Church as a reli-

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\(^{63}\) Guidi, Chronica Minora I, I, 36; II, 30.

\(^{64}\) Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 630.

\(^{65}\) Assemani, BO, III(2), 95.

\(^{66}\) Guidi, Chronica Minora I, I, 32, 34; II, 27, 28.
gious community. According to Yōḥannan bar Penkayē, the friend and contemporary of the catholicos Ḥanīshō' I (686–93), the Arabs were only interested in raiding, taking captives, and levying tribute in return for which they were willing to allow their new subjects to believe anything they wished. Likewise, the assertion that the Arabs froze the sectarian situation by leaving each Christian sect in possession of the churches they were found to occupy at the time of the conquest probably means no more than that the Islamic government took no interest in such things at first, and that no sect was able to get government support or “permission” to evict its rivals for some time after the conquest. In fact, one of the things Yōḥannan bar Penkayē complained most bitterly about was the way the new rulers allowed both Nestorians and “heretics” (Monophysites) to survive the conquest. He particularly deplored the demoralizing consequences of undiscriminating toleration in the reign of Muʿāwiya, when “there was no difference between pagan and Christian; the faithful was not distinct from a Jew.” Essentially, Bar Penkayē was saying that a certain amount of persecution was necessary to maintain a group identity and he objected to the fact that the government failed to make distinctions he regarded as necessary.

**Factionalism: The Dynamics of Continuity**

Then how and when did the Muslim government begin to take official notice of the internal affairs of the Nestorian Church? The answer lies in the tendency of church leaders to behave towards their new rulers just as they had towards the old; this was aggravated by factionalism within the church, which encouraged the intervention of the civil authorities. This situation already existed in the sixth century and resulted from the way official toleration developed into patterns of patronage. The existence of factionalism at the local level and its consequences were noticed and treated in general terms at the synod held by the catholicos Joseph in 554. According to the fourth canon:

> It is also said that in certain places, at the death of a bishop, factions and coalitions spring up, each wishing to make its own opinion prevail; and carried away by human passion, they impart

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69 Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, pp. 175, 179.
the ardor of their convictions to laymen and clergy alike; and with­
out the bishops of the province, without the assembly of all the
clergy and the faithful, they elect among themselves in secret the
person whom they desire; and they also make oaths and pacts that
until death they will not abandon this person.70

The way in which such factions led to splits in local churches and to
the intervention of the authorities was dealt with in the first canon:

It is said that in a certain place there were two churches in the
same village: one called the new church and the other called the old
church. And there was a separate congregation in each of them. The
bishop wrote a letter concerning a certain matter to the priests and
the faithful of the congregation of the new church; those who be­
longed to the old church seized it, took it to the governor [rad] and
turned it over to the Persians. On the evidence of the bishop who
had called it “new,” this church was destroyed; so that the entire
congregation was reunited and the clergy were able to satisfy their
greed.71

The single most important factor ensuring continuity in the rela­
tionship between the Nestorians and first the Sasanian and then the
Islamic regime was the existence of two major factions within the
church and the way the conflict between them tended to involve the
authorities. The conflict was primarily over monastic versus lay control
of the church and generally pitted the monks and clergymen favoring
ecclesiastical autonomy against the landed Persian Christian aristoc­
racy and courtiers who favored the kind of official status and toleration
for their church in which they could exercise patronage. Other issues
tended to get caught up in the central one. On some occasions, the
Persian clergy from the Iranian plateau, in alliance with the notables,
seem to be ranged against the Aramaean clergy of Iraq. This issue also
took on an intellectual dimension, with the aristocratic laymen fa­
voring men of medicine or astrology (both effective means of prefer­
ment at the Sasanian court) against the obscurantism and dogmatism
of the monks. On the other hand, individuals of aristocratic Persian
origin (often converts) were to be found among the ranks of the monks
in growing numbers as the seventh century progressed, and the mo­

70 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 99, 357.
71 Ibid., pp. 99, 356. This, by the way, provides very good evidence of the prohibition
against the building of new churches in the Sasanian empire before 561.
nastic or clerical party was just as willing to make use of the power of the state against its rivals when it could. The family of Yazdln, who was called the “head of the believers” (Syr. Ḳeṣḥā dhē mbaymenā), is a good example of powerful Christian officials and landlords who were on the side of the clerical party in the early seventh century.⁷²

This pattern seems to emerge with the elevation of Babai to the patriarchate in 497. He was married, had served as secretary to the marzbān of Beth Aramaye, and was related to the court astrologer, Mūsā.⁷³ The factional alignments were formed in the time of Elisha (521–36), who was a native of Mada‘in but had received his medical training in the Byzantine empire. Upon his return, he found favor with the monarch and his courtiers as a physician and became influential with the Magians. He married the daughter of the current catholicos who designated him as his successor. The aristocratic faction at the capital favored Elisha’s election to the patriarchate partly because of his influence with the Magians, but his election caused a schism because the other faction elected Mar Nārsē as rival catholicos. Elisha spent his entire term in office using the power of the state in an attempt to crush his opponents: he imprisoned Mar Nārsē and many of his followers as well as those who had resisted him at Rayy and Marv; in Fars, Khuzistan and Bahrayn, he deprived his opponents of their offices; and he consecrated his own metropolitans and bishops. But Elisha was unable to force his will on Kaskar even with a royal edict and the aid of the army. When Mar Nārsē died in prison and the royal physician Bīrūn requested that Elisha be confirmed in his office, Anūshirvān instead ordered Elisha’s deposition and replaced him with Paul of Susa in 537. The members of the other faction then returned to their sees.⁷⁴ Fifteen years later, Joseph used his medical knowledge and gifts to win the favor of the marzbān Zādhānfarrūkh and obtained the royal appointment to the patriarchate. Once in office, he sought the aid of the marzbān in depriving of their sees those bishops and metropolitans who opposed him. The bishop of Anbar was imprisoned and the bishop of Zawabi was deposed and replaced by a courtier named Ḥażqiyāl who had studied medicine, knew Persian, and was in favor with the monarch. Because the party of Joseph remained recalcitrant after he was deposed in 567, Khusraw Anūshirvān forbade

⁷³ Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(1), 129.
⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 148–52.
the Nestorians to elect another catholicos until they all agreed to the deposition of Joseph.\textsuperscript{75}

The way this conflict was institutionalized at Nasibin towards the end of the sixth century made that city an important epicenter of the conflict and the place where the Islamic government eventually was induced to reapply Sasanian methods towards the Nestorians. About the same time as reformed coenobitic monasticism with strict rules was being introduced by Abraham of Kaskar to the great monastic community on Mt. Izla just above the city, the Nestorian school in Nasibin and its medical branch fell under the influence of H\textsuperscript{6}nanā of Adiabene, who was trying to work out a theological compromise with the Monophysites. The resulting debacle nearly tore the church apart and left a lasting impression upon it and upon its relations with the state.

In 582, when it was necessary to choose a new catholicos, the party of Mar Narsē was still in existence and unsuccessfully proposed one of his relatives as its candidate. Instead, the candidate of the aristocratic faction, Īshō’yahbh I, was made catholicos by royal command. This was probably the real reason why Īshō’yahbh failed to accompany Khusraw Parviz in his flight, why he found himself out of favor when Parviz returned, and why Parviz was careful, in 596, to see that a representative of the monastic faction was elevated to the patriarchate in the person of Sabhrīshō’ I against the obvious wishes of the synod. By that time, H\textsuperscript{6}nanā of Adiabene had forced his opponents out of the school of Nasibin, and the synod held by Sabhrīshō’ condemned him. Gregory of Kaskar was made metropolitan of Nasibin and began to oppose the followers of H\textsuperscript{6}nana so vigorously that the notables of the city protested to the monarch. At that point Sabhrīshō’ deserted his bishop and exiled him from his see. Gregory was imprisoned by Khusraw Parviz for a short while and then retired to a monastery. Shortly afterwards, the people of Nasibin rebelled against Khusraw Parviz and killed their marzbān. An army under Nakhirjān, accompanied by the catholicos, was sent against the city. After Sabhrīshō’ persuaded the people to open the gates to him, the city was sacked and large numbers of people were killed. Afterwards, a group of physicians from Nasibin at the royal court led by Gabriel of Sinjar began to conspire against Sabhrīshō’, and, joined by Queen Shīrīn, became Monophysites.\textsuperscript{76}

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., pp. 178, 182.

\textsuperscript{76} Chabot, \textit{Synodicon}, pp. 562, 580; Guidi, \textit{Chronica Minora I}, I, 18–19; II, 17;
Sabhrīshō died at Nasibin while Khusraw Parviz was besieging Dara in 604. When Khusraw Parviz returned to Mada'in after the fall of Dara, the synod chose Gregory of Kaskar, the metropolitan of Nasibin, as his successor. The necessary royal permission was obtained for his elevation and the royal command given for his ordination. The physicians Abraham and Yūḥannā as-Sandūrī of Nasibin, together with other Christians in royal service, feared that once Gregory of Kaskar became catholicos he would take revenge on them for what had happened at Nasibin eight years earlier. They obtained the support of Mar Abā, the physician and astrologer of Parviz, and of Shīrīn, the queen, for Gregory of Perath, a teacher in the Nestorian school at Mada'in. This Gregory was presented to the synod by Shīrīn, backed by Mar Abā, as the man whom Parviz had authorized to be consecrated. He was duly ordained in April of 605 and presented to Parviz by the physicians of Nasibin. When Gregory died four years later, Parviz refused to allow the election of a new catholicos, and for nineteen years—from 609 until 628—the church was governed by Mar Abā, who was archdeacon of the church in Mada'in.77

At this point the conflict escalated briefly into one between Nestorians and Monophysites. With the success of Parviz's campaigns against the Byzantines, especially after the fall of Edessa in 610, the Sasanians experimented with a pro-Monophysite policy to attract the people of the occupied Byzantine provinces, and Monophysites were openly patronized at court by Gabriel of Sinjar and Shīrīn. Churches and monasteries in and around the capital were turned over to the Monophysites. Opposition to this came from the monks of the monastery of Abraham of Kaskar at Nasibin led by Babai the Great and George of Izla (Mihrāngushnasp), an aristocratic Persian convert. At the disputation held at the capital in 612, they refused to compromise their creed and attacked the followers of Ḥā'nanā of Adiabene. When Gabriel of Sinjar, with the backing of Shīrīn, tried to drive the Nestorians out of the monastery of St. Sergius outside the capital so the Monophysites could commemorate the saint there, he was resisted violently by George of Izla and by Shōbhalmaran, the metropolitan of Beth Garme. Gabriel, in revenge, took advantage of George's con-

Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 119; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 498, 509–14, 515, 525; Thomas of Margha, Governors, I, 51; II, 89.
version to denounce him as an apostate from Magianism and secured his execution. Shōbhalmaran was forced into exile along with ʻIshōʻyahbh of Gadala, bishop of Balad, for refusing to allow Monophysites in his church.78

Meanwhile, the monastic party organized its opposition around Babai and Yazdin. Yōnadabh, the metropolitan of Adiabene, Gabriel of Nahr Jur, who had replaced Shōbhalmaran as metropolitan of Beth Garme (both Yōnadabh and Gabriel had attended the disputation in 612), and Cyriacus, metropolitan of Nasibin, commissioned Babai to inspect the monasteries and to root out the followers of Hēnanā. The Monophysites fell from favor after the death of Gabriel of Sinjar, and when the Persians began to suffer military reverses in the war with the Byzantines, Parviz began to persecute all sects. Yūhannā as-Sandūrī, one of the physicians of Nasibin, fell from favor because of his deception in the election of Gregory; he was restored by Širōō only in 628. When Širōō also allowed the election of a catholicos in 628, the monastic party finally captured the office in the person of ʻIshōʻyahbh of Gadala as ʻIshōʻyahbh II (628–43).79

The continuation of the conflict between the Nestorian factions increased in significance after the Islamic conquest. The Persian notables of upper Iraq managed to preserve their local influence and their lands by putting their property under monastic ownership but continued to control it by acquiring positions of leadership in the monasteries or in the church. Instead of taking advantage of the change of regime to secure real ecclesiastical autonomy, the nature of the conflict between the two Nestorian factions had the effect of recreating the conditions of the late Sasanian period. The pattern emerged first at Nasibin immediately after the conquest. The metropolitan, Cyriacus, had been involved in the triumph of the monastic-clerical faction in the elevation of ʻIshōʻyahbh II as catholicos in 628. In about 640, the enemies of Cyriacus at Nasibin brought charges against his followers to the Muslim amir, who allowed them to plunder his cell and the residence of the metropolitan.80 The aristocratic party seems to have recaptured the office of catholicos in the person of ʻIshōʻyahbh

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III (648–58), who appointed two aristocratic Persians, both named George, as metropolitan bishops of Nasibin and Perath.

Another Persian of aristocratic origin, a monk at the monastery of Beth 'Abhe and also named George, was appointed metropolitan of Adiabene. His elevation to the office of catholicos in 659 was the signal for the ecclesiastical revolt of his bishops, and George of Perath brought accusations against the catholicos before the Muslim government in about 661. It is not surprising, then, to find the synod which met under George in 676 declaring that ecclesiastical procedures such as ordination were not to conform to secular practices but to canon law. The purpose was to make it unnecessary for candidates to seek either “the support of the powers of the age in order to demand choice posts or admission to ordination or [the support of] the assembly of the faithful, and become thus worthy of being entirely rejected.”

This was only a futile attempt to reverse the prevailing state of affairs, as is indicated by the judgment of Yohannan bar Penkaye that the lack of persecution during the reign of Mu'awiya had proved disastrous for the Nestorians. Bishops were involved in public affairs, anticanonic quarrels, and civil tribunals, and they contested the rule among themselves, while other members of the clergy “only understood that they were men and that they governed men.”

Nestorian involvement in the closing phase of the second civil war in Iraq brought the first real intervention of the Islamic state into their internal affairs and completed the process by which the Nestorians themselves caused their Muslim rulers to apply Sasanian methods towards them. Although the catholicos Hanisho' (686–93) at Mada'in was under rebel rule, first that of al-Mukhtar at Kufa from 685 until 687 and then that of Mu'ab ibn az-Zubayr from 687 until 690, he seems to have been neutral. He directed church affairs by making ad hoc arrangements and appointments in lower Iraq and through his legal correspondence. Whether or not Hanisho' sided with the rebels, one of his bishops, Yohannan of Dasen, the metropolitan of Nasibin, took advantage of the situation to acquire the office of catholicos for himself. The Marwanis defeated Mu'ab in 690 and from 690 until 693 Bishr ibn Marwan, a brother of the caliph 'Abd al-Malik, was governor of Kufa. Nasibin remained in rebel hands and the bribe that Yohannan of Dasen is said to have made to Bishr to secure the

82 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 216, 220, 482, 485.
83 Mingana, Sources, pp. 176–78.
deposition of Ḥ̣nanīshô’ and to have himself made catholicos was probably contingent on Yōḥannan delivering Nasibin to the Marwānis. At any rate, for the first time under Islamic rule, Bishr deposed Ḥ̣nanīshô’ and elevated Yōḥannan of Dasen. Shortly afterwards, Yōḥannan’s partisans in Nasibin, led by an aristocratic Christian Persian physician named Mardanshâh, helped another brother of ʿAbd al-Malik, the governor of the Jazira, Muḥammad ibn Marwân, to take Nasibin. The party of Ḥ̣nanīshô’ was driven out of Nasibin, and Mardanshâh was entrusted with the administration of the city and the rest of Baʿarbaya as far as the Tigris River. This alliance only lasted until Yōḥannan died early in 695 after he had held the patriarchate for a year and ten months. Bishr had already died and had been replaced as governor by al-Ḥājjâj, who refused to allow the election of a new catholicos, marking the first time under Islamic rule that permission was necessary. The hardening of the government’s position under al-Ḥājjâj coincided with the fall of Mardanshâh at Nasibin. He and his brother were arrested, their property was confiscated, Mardanshâh’s mother and children were sold into slavery, and his brother was crucified at the Harran gate in Nasibin. Ḥ̣nanīshô’ lived until 701 in semiretirement at the monastery of Mar Yûnân near Mawsil, where he exercised a kind of shadow patriarchate. After his death, the Nestorians were without a catholicos until the death of al-Ḥājjâj in 713, when they were able to elect Șlibhâzḵhâ (713–29).84

The persistence of factional divisions into the ʿAbbâsî period ensured the continuation of government involvement once it had been established under the Marwānis. In 752, when the position of catholicos again fell vacant, a Persian aristocrat of the Sûrîn family who was metropolitan of Hulwan managed to have the Arab governor of Hulwan forcibly make him catholicos. The church fathers appealed to the first ʿAbbâsî caliph, Abû l-ʿAbbâs at Kufa, who deposed the governor and allowed the clergy to depose Sûrîn and elect a new catholicos.85

The main point of all of this is that it was the Nestorians themselves and not the Muslims who ultimately were responsible for the reapplication of Sasanian policies towards Christians in Iraq because they

continued to act towards their new rulers in the same way that they had towards the Sasanians. This was assisted by the way the conflict between the monastic and aristocratic parties over the control of the church, which centered on the election or appointment of the catholicos, was institutionalized in coenobitic monasticism and at the school of Nasibin. The problems of patronage and the factional pattern of behavior persisted in the Islamic period because the institutions and the people associated with them survived: the Nestorian Church organization with its clergy, the monasteries with the monks, the landed Persian aristocracy whose interest in the Nestorian church was increased by the conquest, and the school at Nasibin. The way the lay aristocratic party continued to provoke state intervention was the single most effective reason for the reestablishment of the conditions of the late Sasanian period under Islamic rule. In fact, there was hardly any break at all in this respect. This pattern appears as early as 640 at Nasibin immediately after the fall of the city to the Muslims. It was in full operation by the reign of Mu'awiya, and the process was completed as part of the Marwānī restoration. The refusal of al-Ḥajjāj to allow the election of a catholicos meant that government permission had again become necessary. This marks the first real intervention of the Islamic state in the internal affairs of the Nestorians. Al-Ḥajjāj did exactly what Khusraw Parviz had done for similar reasons, and the entire episode provides a further indication of the reintroduction of the principles and methods of Sasanian statecraft by the end of the seventh century.

Otherwise, the Islamic conquest removed some of the problems that had complicated the condition of Nestorians in Iraq. No longer was there any problem about baptism, burial, or the conversion of Magiān Persians to Christianity (conversion of Muslims was out of the question), nor were the Nestorians affected by the consequences of Muslim-Byzantine warfare. Indeed, it is difficult to find any example of “persecution” of Nestorians under the Muslims in the seventh century that was either not associated with the conquest itself or brought on by the internal squabbling of the Nestorians among themselves.

THE FORMATION OF THE NESTORIAN COMMUNITY: DOCTRINE AND IDENTITY

Relations between Christians and their rulers in Iraq have been discussed so far in terms of the church as an ecclesiastical organization.
To what extent did Christians constitute religious communities in Iraq? What part did the creation of Nestorian and Monophysite identities have in the development of these communities? And what effect, if any, did the Islamic conquest have? To the extent that any one person was responsible for the doctrinal position of the Eastern church, it was Theodore of Mopsuestia at Antioch in the early fifth century. The most important aspect of Theodore’s Christology was his belief in the close, inseparable union of the divine and human natures in one being or personage (Gk., *prosōpon*; Syr., *parsōpā*) of Christ. For Theodore this union was spiritual rather than physical, and for the purposes of soteriology, he accepted the doctrine of *assumptus homo*—that God had assumed a complete human nature, “not only the body but also the immortal and rational soul.” Theodore also opposed the view that people could not avoid sinning.

The Christology of Theodore was introduced to the Eastern church by a group of Persian and Aramaean students of Ibas at Edessa who translated the doctrines of Theodore for themselves and then returned to the Sasanian empire, where they took positions in the church. Led by Bar Šawmā, they held an uncanonical council at Jundishapur in 484 where they deposed the catholicos, approved the marriage of bishops, honored Theodore, and declared that his doctrines should be followed. But Bar Šawmā was excommunicated by a council held by the catholicos Acacius (485–96) in 486, which quoted the creed of the Council of Chalcedon (451) declaring Christ to be perfect God and perfect man joined in a perfect and indissoluble union, without mixture or confusion between the two natures. However, in 499 the catholicos Babai (499–515) held a council that posthumously removed Bar Šawmā’s excommunication and approved the marriage of clergymen. The doctrine of Theodore began to spread in the sixth century. The catholicos Mar Abā I (540–52) translated the liturgies of Nestorius and of Theodore into Syriac, and the synod held by him in 544 accepted the Council of Chalcedon by name and the Nicene Creed.

as expounded by Theodore. 90 The Synod of Joseph in 554 reaffirmed the Nicene Creed and quoted the Chalcedonian Creed again.91 The influence of Theodore was increasing in the late sixth century. The Synod of Ezechiel, held in 575, described Christ as the only Son of God, in two natures, God and man, who "in the envelope of his humanity" had paid the debt for human sin by his death on the cross.92

The real triumph of Theodore’s Christology came in reaction to issues raised within the church by Ḥḥanānā of Adiabene. Because of increasing Monophysite penetration in Iraq, Ḥḥanānā seems to have been trying to find some common ground between Chalcedonians and Monophysites. He rejected the exegesis of Theodore in favor of that of St. John Chrysostom, held that sin was part of human nature, and was attracted to the concept of the hypostatic union of the divine and human in Christ as presented by its supporters and adopted by the Council of Chalcedon. But he carried the concept of the hypostatic union to Monophysite conclusions, speaking of one nature and one hypostasis (Syr. qnōmā, substance) in Christ, accepted the suffering and death of God in the flesh via the communicatio idiomatum, and admitted the theotokos. Under pressure, his followers accepted the doctrine of two natures in Christ but insisted on one hypostasis.93

It was in this situation, and with more than a little factionalism involved, that Ḥḥanānā’s enemies insisted, in turn, on not only two natures but also two hypostases (Syr. qnōmē) in one prosōpon of Christ, and on the formal adoption of the exegesis of Theodore of Mopsuestia. In 585 the Synod of Ishō’yahbh I combined an apology for Theodore with an attack on both Ḥḥanānā and the Monophysites. The creeds of Nicaea and Constantinople (381) were accepted along with the doctrine that Christ acquired his divinity from the Father and his humanity from Mary, who was called "always virgin." The doctrine of assumptus homo was also accepted.94 In 595 the Synod of Sabhrishō declared that orthodoxy was founded on the doctrines of the blessed Theodore, the Interpreter, and that Christ was born spir-

90 Assemani, BO, III(1), 36; Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 545–46, 556; Vööbus, School of Nisibis, p. 168.
92 Ibid., pp. 113, 372.
94 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 132–38, 194, 393–400, 454; Vööbus, School of Nisibis, pp. 251–52.

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itually, in his divinity, from God; bodily, in his humanity from Mary; and had died in his humanity and was revived by virtue of his divinity.\textsuperscript{95} In 605 the Synod of Gregory reconfirmed the acceptability of all the commentaries and writings of Theodore as well as the doctrine of the two natures united in the single \textit{prosōpon} of the Son.\textsuperscript{96}

During the interregnum in the patriarchate, the representatives of the monastic party submitted a creed to the monarch at Mada'in in 612 which acknowledged two natures, two substances, and one person in Christ, and accepted the term “mother of Christ” for Mary instead of \textit{theotokos}. On the same occasion, these spokesmen adopted what amounted to a Monothelite position to explain the unity of Christ, saying that Christ was one not in the unity of nature and substance but in a single \textit{prosōpon} of filiation, a single power, a single will, a single economy. Afterwards, Yazdîn convened the church leaders at Karkh Juddan, where they condemned Hînana and his followers once more.\textsuperscript{97} In the same period Babai the Great reiterated the doctrine that Christ was perfect God and perfect man, with two natures and two generations—one in divinity from God and one in humanity from Mary.\textsuperscript{98}

It should be clear that the distinctive doctrinal position of the “Nestorian” Church developed in the early seventh century in reaction to the threat of a compromise with the Monophysites. Once established, this position provided a continuing basis for a separate “Nestorian” identity after the conquest, and it tended to become more rigid because compromising tendencies continued to exist within the church.

At the time of the conquest, Nestorians were preoccupied with the attempt of Heraklios to win back the eastern provinces of the Byzantine empire after the great war with the Persians by way of a doctrinal reconciliation. As part of the peace negotiations, a delegation from the Eastern church led by the catholicos, Īshô'yahbh II, met Heraklios

\textsuperscript{96} Chabot, \textit{Synodicon}, pp. 210, 474–75.
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid., pp. 565, 571, 575, 582, 591, 592; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” (2), 529–30. By about A.D. 600, the Coptic Church of Egypt had worked out the doctrine of the unity of the “acting force” in Christ (Stratos, \textit{Byzantium}, p. 288). See also Duchesne, \textit{L’Église}, pp. 408–10.
\textsuperscript{98} Babai Magni, “Liber de Unione,” CSCO, \textit{Scr. Syri}, 34 (Louvain, 1953), 39, 71, 83; \textit{Scr. Syri}, 35 (Louvain, 1953), 32, 58, 67; Chabot, “Chasteté,” pp. 260–61. This matter is complicated by Babai’s use of \textit{q̲n̲ô̂m̲é} for the three persons of the Trinity, where the term must be synonymous with \textit{parsōpā} or at least used in the same sense. When he referred to Christ, \textit{q̲n̲ô̂m̲á} meant hypostasis or substance (Babai Magni, “Liber de Unione,” CSCO, \textit{Scr. Syri} 34:6, 26; \textit{Scr. Syri} 35:5, 21).
in Syria in 630 and reached an agreement on a common confession in faith based on one will and one acting force in Christ. On that occasion, one of the members of the delegation, Bar Sahdē (Sahdōnā), defected to the Monophysites, condemned the followers of Theodore before Heraklios at Jerusalem, and after his return to Iraq wrote against the belief in two natures and two qēnōmē in a single prosōpon of Christ. Sometime between 644 and 647, Bar Sahdē was established as bishop of Mahoza dhē Ariwan in Beth Garme by Īshōʾyahbhh of A dịbene. But after the latter became catholicos as Īshōʾyahbhh III (648–58), Bar Sahdē was expelled from his see and from the church and pursued to Edessa by the controversialist monk Rabban Gabriel.

The aftereffects of the policy of Heraklios in the east had two consequences. It reinforced the Nestorian doctrine of two natures and two qēnōmē in one prosōpon of the Son, with Mary the mother of Christ, not of God. On the other hand, the agreement allowed the Nestorians to continue to think that their belief in two natures (diophysitism) made them just as orthodox as the church in the West. Both Īshōʾyahbhh III and George I believed that they shared their diophysite belief with the entire Western church. The Nestorian identity emerging by the end of the seventh century was one which derived its distinction in contrast to Monophysitism without requiring any break (from the Nestorian point of view) with the Orthodox Christians in the West.

Because this new group resulted from opposition to Monophysitism, the name of Nestorius came to be used to identify its members. Nestorians identified the conflict between Cyril and Nestorius with the conflict between Monophysites and themselves. They seem to have been recognized as “Nestorians” by the seventh century, since at the disputatio of 612 Khusraw Parviz called them “those who proclaim the name of Nestorius.” Monks from Nasibin who went to North Africa in the middle of the seventh century are called Nestorians in a Monothelite source. Rabban Hürmızd is called “our Nestorius” because he combatted local Monophysites, and Nestorius was used occasionally as a proper name. Later Nestorians preferred to believe that

THE FORMATION OF THE NESTORIAN COMMUNITY: SCHOOLS

The "Nestorian" identity became permanent because its doctrine was institutionalized in the liturgy and in the teaching of the schools. The organization and spread of schools among the Nestorians in the sixth and seventh centuries was one of the most powerful forces shaping the separate group nature of the Eastern church. This was mainly because the schools themselves imparted the doctrine and exegesis of Theodore of Mopsuestia to those trained for leadership and to the ordinary faithful. This began in the fifth century when the works of Theodore were translated into Syriac for use in the School of the Persians at Edessa. When this school was closed in 489 by the Byzantine emperor Zeno, its members in dispersion carried Theodore's exegesis across the border to Nasibin, where the school was reconstituted under the patronage of Bar Šawmā. The new school at Nasibin was provided with regulations of 496 which were renewed in the reign of Khusraw Anūshirvān (531–78). At the head of the faculty was the interpreter, commentator, or exegete (Syr. օպաշգան; Ar. mufassir) assisted by a reader or lecturer (Syr. maqreyanā), and a հագեյան (Syr.) who gave elementary instruction in reading. The curriculum included church doctrine and the Greek sciences and took three years to complete. The study of theology involved the transcription and explanation of scripture, the liturgy, hymns, responses, and the commentaries of Theodore. Science meant mainly the study of logic and of medicine at the hospital (N.P. bīmāristān) attached to the school.

From Nasibin this educational tradition spread out over Sasanian Iraq. The earliest offshoot was founded in about 521 at Irbil by Paul

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102 Assemani, BO, III(2), 76; S. Brock, "An Early Syriac Life of Maximus the Confessor," AB 91 (1973), 311, 317–18; Budge, Rabban Hörmizd, I, 57; II, 85; Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 608, 632. The Nestorian designation was also used by Shahdost in the mid-seventh century; see L. Abramowski and A. Goodman, A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 3, 31.

103 Assemani, BO, III(2), 80; Labourt, Christianisme, p. 291; Ortiz de Urbina, Patrologia Syriaca, pp. 107–8; Vööbus, School of Nisibis, pp. 14, 32.

104 Labourt, Christianisme, p. 294; Pigulevskaja, Villes, pp. 245–46.

105 Chabot, "Chasteté," pp. 9, 234; Labourt, Christianisme, p. 297; Pigulevskaja, Villes, p. 248; Scher, "Histoire nestorienne," II(1), 157, 194–95; II(2), 531; Vööbus, School of Nisibis, pp. 100–1, 283.
of Nasibin, who had been sent there by the exegete Abraham of Beth Rabban expressly to establish a school for the children of Adiabene in order to implant faith in their minds and to defend them against the aggression of the heretics and the Mšallyānē. The suspension of the school of Nasibin in about 540 during a period of Magian persecution had the effect of scattering its students all over Iraq. This led to the founding of schools at Mada’in, Hira, Kaskar, Maysan, and in villages in Adiabene and Beth Garme where the doctrinal content of the hymns and responses served as an effective means of spreading the theology of Theodore at the popular level.

Thus, the ascendancy of Hšnanā of Adiabene at the school of Nasibin in the 580s was particularly threatening because he had hundreds of students and changed the wording in the hymns and litanies to correspond to his own doctrine. A second series of regulations was promulgated for the school under Hšnanā’s direction in 590 by Simeon, the metropolitan of Nasibin. After Hšnanā’s complete victory over his opponents at the school in about 594, the students who opposed him, led by Babai the Great, seceded and founded their own schools. Some went to the monastery of Abraham of Kaskar on Mt. Izla while others joined Mark, the bishop of Balad, and convened in a new school he had built near that city. Gregory of Kaskar had already founded a school with three hundred students at Kaskar; after he was forced to leave the see of Nasibin, he founded a monastery with another school at Bazza dhē Nahrawatha. Other schools were founded in the Sawad at about the same time.

113 George of Izla (Mihramgushnas) is said to have founded a school at Babil, and Mar Theodore of Kaskar, who received his monastic habit from Babai of Nasibin (an aristocratic Persian convert, not to be confused with either Babai the Great or Babai
The schools established by the monastic faction were strongholds of diophysitism and by the middle of the seventh century the school of Nasibin had been recaptured. At the time of the conquest, village schools were spread throughout Adiabene and Beth Garme and new schools were still being founded. Apparently a school was founded at Basra sometime in the later seventh century. A Persian called Bar Sahdē, who died in 745 at the age of ninety, is said to have migrated from Istakhr to Basra, where he received instruction in the schools and became a monk.

THE FORMATION OF THE NESTORIAN COMMUNITY:
MONASTERIES

Reformed coenobitic monasticism was an equally powerful force in forging a separate Nestorian identity since the monks were both dynamic and aggressive in their partisanship for Theodore of Mopsuestia and in the expansion of their church through the conversion of Magians, pagans, and Monophysites. Eremitic and perhaps coenobitic Christian asceticism was brought to Iraq by monastic refugees during the reigns of Julian and Valens in the later fourth century. By the last quarter of the sixth century, there were monasteries near Nasibin, in Qardo, Margha, and Adiabene, and at Hira and Anbar.

According to Nestorian tradition, the impetus for the reorganization of monasticism in the later sixth century came from individual ascetics such as Abraham of Kaskar (491/2–586/8) and his contemporary, Abraham of Nethpar. They are said to have gone to Jerusalem and Egypt and brought back Pachomian coenobitic monasticism to Iraq.

the Scribe), returned to Kaskar and built a monastery with a school (Chabot, “Chasteté,” pp. 36, 42, 225, 260).

114 Chabot, “Chasteté,” pp. 39, 71, 257, 283; Labourt, Christianisme, p. 293; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 462; Thomas of Margha, Governors, I, 74–78; II, 147–53; Vööbus, Syriac and Arabic Documents, pp. 185–86. In one account of the fall of ’Ayn Tamr to Khālid, forty boys were learning the Gospels (Gk., Infl) in a church in the town (Tabari, Ta’rikh, I, 2064).


118 Labourt, Christianisme, p. 292; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(1), 172–73. Abraham was joined by a certain Rabban Ḥayā, also from Kaskar, who made his own pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Egypt during the reign of Hurmizd IV (579–90) (Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II[2], 453).
Abraham of Kaskar organized the monks on Mt. Izla, above Nasibin, into a new monastery in 571 for which he provided the first set of rules in the East.\textsuperscript{119} Both Abrahams are credited with changing the costumes and shoes of the monks and prescribing a tonsure for them which would distinguish “Nestorian” from Monophysite monks.\textsuperscript{120} The rules of Abraham of Kaskar were spread by his disciples to new monasteries founded by them in Arzon, Qardo, and near Sinn. After the death of Abraham, Babai of Nasibin built his own monastery on Mt. Izla, where he established the rules.\textsuperscript{121}

At about the same time the disciple of Abraham of Nethpar, Job (Ayyūb), a Persian from Revardashir in Fars, converted his master’s grotto in the mountains of Adiabene into a monastery. He was joined there by his own disciples from Revardashir, for whom he translated into Persian the rules of Abraham of Kaskar and the discourses of Abraham of Nethpar. One of Job’s disciples, Rabban Qūsrā, a native of Nineveh, returned to his hometown, where he converted numbers of Monophysites.\textsuperscript{122}

Dadhishō, who followed Abraham of Kaskar as head of his monastery on Mt. Izla from 588 to 604, promulgated a new set of rules in 588, requiring the monks to be literate and to accept the teaching of Theodore and Nestorius.\textsuperscript{123} In 598 the catholicos Sabhrishō I established a separate set of monastic rules for the monastery called Bar Qaiti on Mt. Sinjar.\textsuperscript{124}

Another flurry of monastic foundations in the first and second decades of the seventh century was associated with the great dispersion of monks from Mt. Izla at the height of their conflict with the followers of Ḫnanā and the Monophysites. From 604 to 627/8, the monastery of Abraham on Mt. Izla was directed by Babai the Great, a notable of Beth Zabhde, who had studied in the school and hospital of Nasibin before joining Abraham. Babai issued new rules for the monastery which were also introduced into the monastery of Job in Adiabene.\textsuperscript{125}


\textsuperscript{122} Ibid., II(1), 173–74, 199–200.


\textsuperscript{124} Chabot, \textit{Synodicon}, pp. 203, 206, 465, 469, 667.

During this period, new monasteries were founded at Beth ‘Abhe in Marga; across the Tigris from Nineveh; in Beth Nuhadhra, Adiabene, and Beth Garme; on Mt. Sinjar; near Niffar; and at Anbar.\textsuperscript{126}

Not only did the monastic communities founded in this period survive into the Islamic period as important centers, but the momentum of new foundations carried over into the second half of the seventh century. New monasteries were still being founded, shortly after the conquest, in Adiabene, Beth Garme, and in the vicinity of Hira and Anbar.\textsuperscript{127} New monasteries continued to be founded in the region around Kaskar and in Adiabene and Beth Garme throughout the seventh century until about the middle of the eighth century, when the movement began to die down.\textsuperscript{128}

The movement to spread coenobitic discipline and to found new monasteries lasted from the mid-sixth century until the mid-eighth century and created monastic institutions which were at least as important as the ecclesiastical organization in creating and preserving the Nestorian community. Monasteries ranged in size from about fifty or sixty monks to over one hundred.\textsuperscript{129} A monastic vocation served to intensify the Nestorian identity. The monasteries became the focus of local lay patronage, and they acquired property, and provided local social services. They were centers of education and training that began to provide leadership for the Nestorian Church by the late sixth century.

The growing emphasis on monastic discipline was extended to the regulation of lay orders and opposed the presence of unorganized ascetics in towns and villages. As a form of piety, the vows of chastity taken by the Sons and Daughters of the Covenant (or Resurrection) antedate the appearance of monasticism in the east and this institution was still alive in the sixth century.\textsuperscript{130} The Synod of Gregory I, held in 605, condemned clergy and monks who had no fixed places in churches,

\textsuperscript{126} Chabot, “Chasteté,” pp. 37, 41, 256, 259; Fiey, Assyr\i c chrétienne, I, 139; III, 224, 237; Guidi, Chronica Minora I, I, 18, 23–24; II, 17, 21; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 445, 463, 512–13; Thomas of Margha, Governors, I, 38, 46; II, 68–69, 79–80; Vööbus, Syriac and Arabic Documents, p. 185–86.


\textsuperscript{128} G. Awad, “Historical, Geographical Researches in the Region East of Mosul,” Sumer 17 (1961), 84; Fiey, Assyr\i c chrétienne, III, 60, 93, 170–72.

\textsuperscript{129} Budge, Rabban Hōrmizd, I, 83, 153–54; II, 123, 230–1; Chabot, “Chasteté,” pp. 37, 41, 46, 256, 259, 263; Fiey, Assyr\i c chrétienne, III, 60.

monasteries or schools, who inhabited cells in villages and towns alone or with nuns, who entered private houses, or who mixed with nuns in public.\textsuperscript{131}

By the seventh century, with the growing pressure for organization, the Sons of the Covenant were probably assimilated with the regular monks, but there seems to have been some resistance to transforming the Daughters of the Covenant into regular nuns in the sixth century. The eighth and seventeenth canons of the synod of the catholicos Mar Abä I in 544 condemned women who, under the pretext of virtuous practices or as a sign of perfection, cut their hair or wore male clothing.\textsuperscript{132}

By the late seventh century, the position of the Daughters of the Cov­enant had been regularized by making them members of the clergy. The ninth canon of the Synod of George I in 676 described them as distinguished by their vows of chastity, their clothing, and their hair style. Those who were ordained deaconesses were responsible for anointing with holy oil those women who were baptized as adults. In addition, they recited the psalms, hymns, and church offices, and chanted hymns behind the funeral procession on days of burial, on days for the commemoration of the dead, and on days of vigil. But they were not to enter the cemetery and sing the hymns there during the funeral, and they were advised to gather in one or two places in each town to live.\textsuperscript{133}

\textbf{THE FORMATION OF THE NESTORIAN COMMUNITY: LAW}

The emergence of a Nestorian identity was also encouraged by the elaboration and application of canon law. Not only was church discipline and administration organized through ecclesiastical rules and regulations; but by the extension of canon law to cover marriage, property and inheritance, the ordinary faithful were drawn into an operating community of law that distinguished them from the people around them. As early as 544, probably because of converts who brought their social habits with them, the Synod of Mar Abä I found it necessary to establish forbidden degrees of kinship for marriage. In pointed reference to the Magians, bigamy and marriage between close relatives by both blood and marriage were forbidden. To distinguish Christians from Jews, it was forbidden for a man to marry his brother's


\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., pp. 546, 548, 556, 558.

\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., pp. 221–22, 486.
wife, and both clergy and laymen who had done so were required to do penance. Likewise, Christians were to distinguish themselves from pagans by not marrying unbelievers.\textsuperscript{134}

Complications arising from the problems created by conversion and the administration of church property led to further extensions of canon law into the areas of marriage and inheritance by the Synod of Joseph in 554. According to the tenth canon of this synod, priests and deacons had married pagan women, some of whom converted to Christianity and bore them children. When the Magians found out about these women, they seized them and threw them in chains. The women would abandon their Christianity, and the priests and deacons were then dishonored by their own apostate children. For this reason, those who had married pagans or converts were forbidden to become or remain priests. The eleventh canon described a situation in which bishops and priests to whom the registers of the property of churches and monasteries had been entrusted put the property in their own names so that it could be inherited by their sons and daughters. The alienation of church property by this means was especially deplorable when pagans married the widows or daughters of clerics and through them inherited the property of churches and monasteries. In such cases, the property was “lost not only for the churches and monasteries, but even for all the Christian community (Syr. ǧwā).” Consequently this canon forbade a person who was in charge of a community to make a will without consulting the assembly of the community (Syr. khnoshayā ḏhe ǧwā). If anyone made a secret will, it was to be annulled by the ecclesiastical judge (Syr. dayyanā ʿedtanayā)\textsuperscript{135}.

The need to apply canon law followed naturally from its creation, and the office of ecclesiastical judge apparently makes its first appearance among the Nestorians in the Synod of Joseph. According to the thirteenth canon, the competency of ecclesiastical judges covered the Sons of the Covenant (Syr. bṇai ɢyamā) and the clergy up to and including bishops. From the beginning, there was an element of pious reticence about exercising judgment and those who desired to be judges were advised to begin by judging themselves before they judged those better than they.\textsuperscript{136}

The Synod of Ezechiel, in 576, established more canons concerned with church discipline and made priests officially responsible for the

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., pp. 82–84, 335–37.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., pp. 102, 359–60.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., pp. 102, 103, 361.
administration of justice within the church. The authority of the priest as judge was provided with a divine sanction by the declaration that the Holy Spirit was the author of the laws and that the judgment of the priest was the very judgment of God. This synod also had to deal with the continuing problem of the alienation of church property through inheritance in addition to taking up the question of the status of escaped slaves who had taken ecclesiastical orders. In the latter case it was decided that a slave was to receive orders only if he had a written document freeing him. Otherwise he was to be returned to his former master.\textsuperscript{137}

By the 580s, with the growing Monophysite challenge, Nestorian canon law was beginning to enclose the entire community by extending its principles to cover the laity. The twenty-seventh canon of the Synod of Îšô’yabh I, in 585, forbade the marrying of one’s son or daughter to a heretic (Monophysite) or accepting a benediction (Syr. bôraithâ) from a heretic.\textsuperscript{138} In a letter dated the same year, Îšô’yabh laid down general rules for inheritance. If a will had been made, no change was to be allowed in it except for the payment of debts. If no will had been made, the wife would inherit, and if the wife was dead, the children would inherit. If the deceased had neither a surviving wife nor children, the estate was to be divided into three parts: one for the brothers and relatives of the wife, one for the relatives of the man, and one for the house of God (Syr. beth âlahâ). If a will deprived a widow of her dowry or property acquired by their common labor, it was to be annulled.\textsuperscript{139}

By the end of the Sasanian period, the Nestorians possessed a body of canon law and the means to apply it to the entire membership of their church. In this case, the advent of Islamic rule had the effect of encouraging the operation of an autonomous system of law among Nestorians simply because the religious and social regulations in the Qur’ân could not be applied to non-Muslims. The marriage laws were reiterated by Îšô’yabh of Adiabene in the 640s and by the Synod of George I in 676, at which betrothal was given church sanction by requiring that the contract be made legal by a sacred benediction in

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[137] Ibid., pp. 115, 119, 123, 124, 275, 279 382–83.
\item[138] Ibid., pp. 158, 418.
\item[139] Ibid., pp. 181–82, 441. According to the Chronicle of Si’ırt, after the consecration of Îšô’yabh I in 582, Hurmizd IV ordered his governors to have recourse to the opinions of the bishops in making judgments and in other matters (Scher, Histoire nestorienne, II(2), 439).
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the presence of the cross.\textsuperscript{140} The Synod of George also required that litigation between Christians be judged in the church by judges chosen by the bishop with the consent of the community. Such judges were to be selected from among those priests known for their love of truth and fear of God who possessed the knowledge and understanding sufficient for such matters. No one was to take it upon himself to judge the faithful without the order of the bishop and the consent of the community unless obliged to do so by the government.\textsuperscript{141}

The best examples of how the application of church law in early Islamic Iraq contributed to a reinforcement of the Nestorian Church as a religious community are in the legal correspondence of the catholicos Ḥnänišhō’ I (686–93). A system of legal administration emerges from the correspondence in which the priest as judge was in charge of the church at the local level and shared responsibility with a civil authority (Syr. \textit{sholτanā ‘almanayā}). Both were subject to the catholicos, to whom legal decisions were appealed by unsatisfied litigants. The legal responses in such cases served as precedents upon which general statements of law were based. Written documents were regarded as the most acceptable evidence once they had been sealed by the ecclesiastical inspector. Much of Ḥnänišhō’’s correspondence dealt with complicated questions of inheritance, the freeing of slaves, the alienation of church property, and taxation.\textsuperscript{142} The church itself claimed the right to inherit the estates of those who died without heirs “in order to take responsibility for the taxes levied on them.”\textsuperscript{143}

NESTORIANS: COMMUNAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE LIMITS OF SOCIAL BARRIERS

It is thus possible to describe a Nestorian religious community already in existence in Iraq towards the end of the Sasanian period. A


\textsuperscript{141} Chabot, \textit{Synodicon}, pp. 219–20, 484–85. This provision would suggest that the Islamic government had adopted the practice of appointing judges for the Nestorians sometime prior to 676, probably when Ziyād was governor of Iraq for Mu’āwiyah. This practice found its way into Ḥanafi law, and according to Abū Ḥanīfah the appointment of a non-Muslim as a judge among the members of his own religion was valid (Tyan, \textit{Organisation judiciaire}, p. 90). This may be compared to the way the exilarch was given authority to appoint judges for the Jewish community; but, in any case, there does not seem to be a Sasanian precedent for this practice.

\textsuperscript{142} Sachau, \textit{Rechtsbücher}, II, 12–29.

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., II, 36–37.
separate Nestorian identity was provided by a distinctive body of doctrine based on Theodore of Mopsuestia. The way this theological identity developed in opposition to Monophysitism and out of internal factional problems allowed the Nestorians to consider themselves to be Orthodox. The theology and exegesis of Theodore were institutionalized in the liturgy taught in the schools. Like the Jews, the Nestorians effectively used religious education to train their own leadership and to spread the doctrine of Theodore as contained in the liturgy among the lay members of the community.

An equally powerful force for the establishment of a Nestorian community and identity was the discipline provided by reformed coenobitic monasticism by the late sixth century. The monks were aggressive partisans of Theodore, took the lead in conversion activities, and were organized by a system of monastic canons. In the late Sasanian period, monastic organization was beginning to be extended to include independent ascetics by extending monastic discipline and conformity to the Sons and Daughters of the Covenant. In the same period, the subjection of unorganized ascetics to monastic discipline was accompanied by a more general extension of canon law which began to enclose the entire community by including marriage, property, and inheritance. This, as well as the appearance of a concept of communal property, resembles the situation among the Jews. Both communities effectively included their lay members in a system of religiously sanctioned law. The Nestorian priest who acted as a local ecclesiastical judge performed the same services for his own community as the rabbi and the möbadh did for the Jewish and Magian communities.

It becomes increasingly clear that a society composed of separate religious communities had already begun to emerge in the late Sasanian period. At least in the case of the Nestorians, it is clear that this trend continued into the Islamic period with the further elaboration of canon law. All the Islamic conquest really did was to encourage the operation and development of an autonomous system of law that already existed.

The organization of a self-contained Nestorian community in the sixth and seventh centuries by means of a distinctive doctrine, schools, monasticism, and law was effectively limited by the way in which this kind of institutionalization depended on those who followed religious vocations. Total commitment only existed in the monasteries. Elsewhere the problem lay in communicating the outlook and forms of the Nestorian identity to the lay members of the community by those
whose authority and status depended on its acceptance. Concerning the limited effectiveness of the Nestorian leadership in this respect, İsho’yahbh I declared in 585 that “two things are exploited by Magianism: the small number of those who apply themselves to virtue and discipline, and the great number of those who make virtue and discipline consist of many words and elegant forms.”

In fact, the lay members of the community and some clergymen and monks tended to break down the distinctions built up by the religious leaders through their everyday relations with the members of other religions. At the same time, continuing conversion brought outside influences into the church throughout the entire period. One early indication of this may be seen in the condemnation of funeral customs of pagan origin. These customs were regarded as un-Christian by the Synod of Ezechiel in 576 because they indicated a lack of genuine faith. It was said that when someone died, the mourners grieved and became enraged, the women cut their hair and tore their clothing, lamented and wailed, used tambourines, flutes, and castanets, and plunged into deep mourning doing things “far from the spirit of Christianity.” This behavior of the women was approved by the laity “devoid of the knowledge of God.” About the same time, Bar ‘Idtä tried to prevent pagan singing at a marriage procession in Margha and wished to replace it with priests singing the Christian liturgy. But the relatives of the groom would not hear of it, and it is said that the pagan songs attracted demons who possessed the bride and were only driven out by priests and deacons singing the Psalms. The twenty-fifth canon of the Synod of İsho’yahbh I in 585 found it necessary to censure Christians who, through ignorance or imprudence, mixed with those of other religions and took part in the festivals of Jews, heretics, and pagans, or incorporated things carried over from the festivals of other religions into their own. The twenty-eighth canon of the same synod was directed against those clerics who “enter taverns and inns to eat and drink voraciously and make festival like dissolute folk.”

The religious leaders themselves were responsible for a degree of contact and collaboration with non-Christians. Both the existence of the situation and one of the reasons for condemning it may be found

145 Ibid., pp. 117, 376.
148 Ibid., pp. 159, 418.
in the case of a bishop who, prior to 544, was joined by "Jews and scoundrels" in his ecclesiastical revolt in Beth Aramaye. But contact with non-Christians was important for conversions, and Christian saints and ascetics were always the objects of appeals from non-Christians and sectarians interested in the power of the saint to effect some benefit or cure. A good example of this is the Magian woman who came to Sabhrīshōʾ (catholicos, 596–604) when he was bishop of Lashom, asking him to pray to God to give her a son. He gave her some water in which he had washed his hand twice and told her to drink it. After some misgivings, she did so. When she became pregnant and gave birth to twin sons, she was converted and baptized along with the rest of her family.

This kind of contact with non-Nestorians continued without change into the Islamic period. A pagan who had married the daughter of a heretic (Monophysite) approached the monk Mar Sabhrīshōʾ (d. 650) because the marriage was childless. Sabhrīshōʾ gave him some ḫanānā (Syr.), and as a result twin boys were born. But, according to the story, the children were baptized as Monophysites and so they died. Yōḥannan Bar Penkayē was extremely critical of such contacts, and among the "impurities" which crept into the Nestorian Church during the reign of Muʿawiyah, he included "commerce with the infidels, union with the perverse, relations with the heretics, and friendship with the Jews." The Synod of George I in 676 complained about Christians who after taking the sacrament went straight from church to Jewish taverns to drink wine. This was especially deplored since there was no lack of taverns run by Christians where they could have satisfied their desire for wine according to their own customs. The same synod condemned the pagan custom of wrapping the dead in rich and precious vestments and of making great lamentations out of cowardliness and despair, describing the "lamentations which the madwomen make in the houses of the deceased, and the great expenses which one makes

149 Ibid., pp. 77, 329.
151 ḫanānā was an amulet made of earth compacted with water or holy oil.
152 Mingana, Sources syriaques, pp. 228–30. Mar Sabhrīshōʾ was also credited with curing a Persian woman who was possessed by the Devil. The similarity between these stories is obvious. They probably belong to a common fund of themes used by the hagiographers to describe what a saint was supposed to do; but, at the very least, the fact that the hagiographers regarded such contacts as possible argues for their occurrence in real life.
for those who assemble.” All this was, again, taken as a sign of faithlessness, and Christians were forbidden to bury their dead in silk or precious cloth or to make such lamentations. The tension between the realities of everyday life in a multi-faith society and Nestorian exclusiveness was eventually incorporated into the fabric of canon law. At the end of the eighth century, the law code of the catholicos Timothy (780–823) accepted the witness of “a Muslim or another God-fearing man” in the ecclesiastical court, but made it illegal for a non-Christian to be appointed as trustee for one’s children and house if a Christian was available.

Some important qualifications of the strength of interfaith barriers in the sixth and seventh centuries may now be made. There can be no question that religious differences had become intensified and institutionalized by the late Sasanian period. Magians, Jews, and Christians effectively included their respective lay members by the use of religious education, the liturgy, and law. Among the Nestorians, restrictions were already placed on interfaith marriage because of the problems created by inheritance, and by the end of the eighth century a non-Christian could not be a trustee for a Christian’s house and children. But the greatest obstacle to the formation of completely isolated communities lay in the way they had been institutionalized. The bonds of a religious communal identity depended on those who followed religious professions, the monks and the clergy, who, like the mobadhs and rabbis, represented vested interests. The distinctions they created were broken down by the laity in their daily contacts with the members of other religions, by attending their festivals, and by patronizing Jewish taverns.

In both Sasanian and early Islamic Iraq, the strength of exclusively religious identities and institutions was effectively limited by the continuing existence of contact and commerce between Nestorian Christians and Jews, between pagans and heretics, and between Nestorian monks and Magians and Monophysites. This practical limitation to communal barriers is as important for an understanding of early Islamic society as is the existence of the formal barriers themselves. There was really never any time when intercommunal contact was limited.

154 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 225, 489.
155 Sachau, Rechtsbücher, II, 106–7. This legal principle was also known to Muslims. Ibn Abi Laylā regarded the testimony of non-Muslims as valid when no Muslims were available to witness the will of a Muslim who died on a journey. But this was rejected by Abū Ḥanīfa and his successors (Schacht, Origins, pp. 210–11).
entirely cut off, and the effectiveness of the Talmudic barriers created by the rabbis for Jews must be qualified by the fact that as late as the 670s Jews were still selling wine to Christians (most probably at Mada'in). The exclusiveness of the Nestorian identity was also broken down by the way continuing conversions meant constant contact with the members of other religions who brought their backgrounds with them. In this connection it is important to note the survival of pagan marriage and burial customs among the Nestorians.

MONOPHYSITES

Although the majority of Christians in seventh-century Iraq were Nestorians, Monophysites were also present. They were important not only for providing a foil against which the Nestorian community acquired its identity, but also because by the seventh century they came to form a community of their own as part of the Jacobite Church of Syria. Monophysites have tended to be identified with Syrians in the Sasanian empire and to be regarded as representing an intrusive "western" element there. Most such assumptions have followed Labourt's suggestion that the number of Monophysites in Iraq was increased by the Byzantine captives deported to Iraq by Khusraw Anūshirvān.156 The most extreme assertions of a "western" Greek or Syrian origin and cultural identity of Monophysites in Iraq have been made by Fiey, who makes several assumptions: that the Roman captives who were settled at 'Ukbara by Shāpūr I in the third century left Syrian influences there; that there were "probably" clergy among them that "caused" the later presence there of west Syrian Christians; and that they and "Greek" exiles from Byzantine Syria in the late fourth century "probably" were resistant to Nestorianism in the late fifth century.157

Such assertions appear to be as unfounded as they are misleading. In reality, the Monophysite population in Sasanian Iraq was created in three ways: by the arrival of Monophysite monks who were driven as refugees across the Byzantine border in the late fifth and sixth centuries (as were the first Nestorians); by a schism among native Christians in the church in the Sasanian empire in reaction to Nestorian tendencies; and by the conversion of non-Christians in Iraq by Mon-

By the end of the sixth century, the Monophysite population in Iraq was composed mainly of native Aramaeans, former Magian Persians, and former pagan Arabs.

By the end of the fifth century, Monophysite monks who followed Severus of Antioch had occupied the monastery of Qartemin on Mt. Izla. The first expulsion of Monophysite monks from Amid in 521 coincided with the deposition of John bar Cursus from his see as bishop of Tella (Constantine). After attending the ecumenical council in 533 at Constantinople, John retired to Mt. Sinjar across the Sasanian border, where he propagated Monophysitism until 537 when he was extradited by the marzbân of Nasibin. In the same year and again in 555 or 561, the Monophysite monks of Amid were expelled and fled across the border into Beth 'Arbhaye.159

The schism within the church in the Sasanian empire began in the late fifth century with resistance to the “Nestorianizing” tendencies of Bar Šawmâ by those who were not necessarily Monophysites themselves. Fiey argues that the districts where there was resistance in the late fifth century tended to become Monophysite in the course of the sixth century. Opposition came from the monks at the monastery of Mar Matta and at other places in Beth Nuhadhra and from bishop Shim‘ûn of Beth Arsham (510–25).160 The man responsible for giving the Jacobite Church in the East both its name and its organization, Jacob Baradaeus (ca. 490–578), was originally from a village near Nasibin. Between 541 and 578 he created an underground Monophysite ecclesiastical structure in the Byzantine empire and organized anti-Nestorian elements in the church in the Sasanian empire into a separate body. The monastery of Mar Matta became the center of operations in the East where Jacob Baradaeus was received by the Christians of Takrit, and by those in Beth Garme, and Adiabene. A Monophysite bishop was ordained for Seleucia, and the new organization was joined by those who had fled from the Byzantine empire in the reign of Justin.161

158 D. Oates, in Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq (London, 1968), p. 114, seems to be the only recent author to recognize that the numbers of Monophysites in Iraq increased through conversion as well as by the settlement of Syrian captives, and he also notes that Aḥudemmeh’s parents were Nestorian.


160 Assemani, BO, I, 342; Fiey, Assyrie chrétienne, II, 327, 628–29, 765; III, 18; Trimingham, Christianity, p. 169.

Among those attracted to the Jacobites was Aḥudemmeh, the son of Nestorians of Balad in Beth 'Arbhaye. In 559 Christophorus, catholicos of the Armenian Church, consecrated him bishop of Beth 'Arbhaye at the same time that Jacob Baradaeus consecrated him metropolitan of the Orient. Under the leadership of Aḥudemmeh, the Monophysites began to expand by conversion. He converted a large number of Magians at Takrit and evangelized the pastoral Arabs in the region between Takrit, Mt. Sinjar, Balad, and Nasibin (Beth 'Arbhaye), where he is said to have destroyed their temples and idols. Because of this, the Arabs at first refused to allow him to enter their encampments until he healed the demon-possessed daughter of one of the chiefs. Thereafter he was admitted to their camps where he instructed them, established a priest and a deacon in each tribe, and consecrated altars. His Arab converts are said to have taken up fasting and the ascetic life with such enthusiasm that they began Lent an entire week before everyone else. Their alms became an important source of income and were used to maintain the Monophysite monks on Mt. Sinjar and at Mar Matta. Aḥudemmeh was also credited with the conversion of the Arabs of 'Aqola (Kufa), the Tanūkh to the west of the Euphrates between Hira and Anbar, and the Ṭu‘ayē, a general term for pastoral Arabs that must have included the tribes of Bakr, 'Ijl, Namir, and Taghlib. To detach his Arab converts from the church of St. Sergius at Rusafa, to whose cult they were especially devoted, he built a new church of St. Sergius at 'Ainqenoye near Balad. Here the liturgy was performed continually, night and day. Continual fasting, vigils, and charity to the poor and strangers took place.

By the time of Aḥudemmeh's death in 575, the Jacobites had begun to imitate the Nestorians by establishing their own schools to teach Monophysite doctrine imbedded in the liturgy. The earliest village schools are said to have been at Beth Qoqa in Adiabene and at Shurzak opposite Balad in Beth Nuhadhra. The monasteries served both as centers of Monophysite scholarship and as schools. In the Monophysite enclave being created near the confluence of the Greater Zab and the Tigris, the monastery of Mar Samuel with its school and forty monks stood on a height overlooking the Tigris near Shurzaq, across the river from the monastery of St. Sergius near Balad. Nearby was

163 Ibid., pp. 11, 33–34.
also the monastery of Nardos with seventy monks and a library containing books and rolls of parchment. A church with a school had been founded next to the palace of the Sasanian monarch at Mada'in, and the director of this school, Qamīshō', was chosen to succeed Ḥudemmeh (579–609). The monastery of Mar Matta, for which Qamīshō' ordained a bishop, continued to be an important Monophysite center.165

The effects and significance of this Monophysite entrenchment in Beth Nuhadhra may best be seen in the career of Mārūthā. He was a native second-generation Monophysite, born before 565 to Jacobite parents who were notables of the village of Shurzaq. The people of the village are all said to have been Monophysites as a result of the teaching of his parents. As a young man, Mārūthā's parents sent him to study at the monastery of Mar Samuel and later brought him back to Shurzaq to continue his studies at the new school founded there after the Nestorian example. He finished his early studies at the monastery of Nardos, where he was ordained a priest and stayed for twenty years. Then, in about 593, Mārūthā went to Byzantine Mesopotamia for further study. At the monastery of Mar Zaki near Callinicus, he studied the works of the Greek fathers, especially those of Gregory Nazianzus. He lived for a while in the cells around Edessa, where he learned the art of calligraphy from a monastic scribe, and then returned and settled at the monastery of Mar Matta between 603 and 605.166

By the beginning of the seventh century, the conditions existed in Iraq for an intense and bitter struggle between Nestorians and Monophysites. This had two important consequences. The first was a surge of competitive missionary activity led by the monks on both sides, aimed not only at proselytizing from each other but at enrolling as much of the non-Christian population as possible in the conflict on either side. In general, the Nestorians were successful among the pagan Aramaeans and pagan and Magian Persians. Although the Monophysites were able to proselytize Aramaeans who were already Christian and made some converts among Magian Persians and pagan Kurds, their greatest success was among the pastoral Arab population of Sasanian Iraq.

The two sects clashed head-on over the sedentary Arab Christians ('Ībad) at Hira and elsewhere. The Arab population of Hira had been

165 Fiey, Assyrie chrétienne, II, 331–33, 769; Nau, "Ḥoudemmeh," pp. 52, 64–67, 70.
Christian since the fourth or early fifth century, and the city was a bishopric by 410, but the ruling Banû Lakhm dynasty remained pagan down to the end of the sixth century. Abraham of Kaskar had converted pagans at Hira in the early sixth century, but Monophysites began to arrive at Hira during the persecutions in the reign of Justin. They were patronized at Hira by the local notable al-Ḥajjāj ibn Qays. At the beginning of the seventh century the Jacobite bishop of the Arabs, a man named John (ca. 600–620), had his see first at ʿAqola, then at Balad, and then at Hira. The control of the church and community of ʿIbādis at Hira revolved around the conversion of the ruling family to Christianity as with Constantine. The Monophysites had gotten an early start in the mid-sixth century with the marriage of the Ghassānī princess, Hind, to the Lakhmī ruler. Her son, ʿAmr ibn al-Mundhir (554–69) was a Monophysite, but his successors remained pagan. At the end of the century, the two sisters of an-Nuʿmān ibn al-Mundhir, Hind and Mary, were Christians, probably Nestorians, although he remained a pagan. In 593, an-Nuʿmān was converted to Nestorian Christianity and baptized by the bishop of Hira, Shemʿūn, with his entire household and the leaders of his army (à la Clovis?). He is said to have expelled the Jacobites from the “rest of his provinces” after his conversion. Shortly afterwards, he seems to have had second thoughts and suffered a relapse. He was “misled” by Jacobites, possessed by a demon, and cured by the Nestorian catholicos Sabhrīshōʾ in about 596. The ʿIbādī community of Nestorian Arabs survived the end of the Banû Lakhm and Sasanian dynasties and maintained a distinctive identity within the Nestorian Church well into the Islamic period.

The second major consequence of the conflict between the two sects was a general sharpening of the distinctions between them and the real division of the Eastern church into a Nestorian majority and Monophysite minority in Iraq. This division was assisted by the way in which the Monophysites’ attraction to the Greek sciences and philosophy made them the natural allies of the aristocratic medical party within the Nestorian Church. The crucial period for the mutual separation of the two sects in Iraq was in the early seventh century, when mixed congregations and monasteries were purged by both sides. The

Jacobites at Haditha were expelled by Ṭīṭūs in about 590, for which he was made bishop by Ishōʾyahbh I. They were also expelled from the church of Balad by Ishōʾyahbh of Gadala in the second decade of the seventh century. On the other side, the Monophysites, with the aid of Gabriel of Sinjar, expelled the Nestorians from the monasteries of Mar Petθion, of Shīrīn near Hulwan, and others.\footnote{Guidi, \textit{Chronica Minora} I, I, 22; II, 20; Scher, "Histoire nestorienne," II(2), 473, 538–39, 554–55. The people at Balad were called Arians, but there are other instances in which Monophysites were called Arians by Nestorians as a term of abuse (Braun, \textit{Persischer Märtyrer}, p. 192; Chabot, \textit{Synodicon}, p. 628). For other examples of this conflict, see Budge, \textit{Rabban Hörmizd}, I, 186; II, 282; Chabot, "Jésus-Sabran," p. 498; Fiey, \textit{Assyrie chrétienne}, II, 441–42, 769.}

During this conflict, Mārūthā emerged as a leader of the Monophysites comparable to Babai the Great at Mt. Izla. In about 615 he took over the direction of the monastery founded by Shīrīn for Nestorians near the palace in Madaʾin. The monastery had later become Jacobite but the Jacobite metropolitan, Samuel (614–24) had allowed the Nestorians to continue to receive communion there. Mārūthā reformed the monastery, ended this “abuse,” and reformed the “illegal promiscuities” there.\footnote{Nau, “Aboudemmeh,” pp. 54, 75.}

The death of Gabriel ended Monophysite patronage at court. Until the end of the reign of Khusraw Parvīz in 628, the Monophysites were persecuted and monasteries near the royal court were destroyed.\footnote{Ibid., p. 56.} Mārūthā fled from Takrit with a fellow monk, Mar Āḥā, and the two took refuge in the cells of Rabban Shābūr near ‘Aqola (Kufa), where they remained until Parvīz died.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 54, 56, 78.}

The end of the Byzantine-Persian war and the death of Parvīz made it possible for the Monophysites of Sasanian Iraq to establish formal ties with the Jacobite Church in the West. In 629 a delegation of five clerics—the metropolitan of Mar Matta, the bishops of Sinjar, Beth Nuhadhra, Beth Ramman, and Shahrzur—and three monks—Mārūthā, Āitalahā, and Āḥā—went from Mar Matta to Antioch, where they concluded a formal union with the Jacobite patriarch Athanasius. After their return to Mar Matta, they held a synod with the approval of Athanasius in which the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Mar Matta was limited to the diocese of Nineveh, and Mārūthā was elected grand metropolitan of the East with his see at Takrit and with the
power to name the metropolitan of Mar Matta.\textsuperscript{173} The organization of the Jacobite Church in Iraq with twelve suffragan bishops under the grand metropolitan at Takrit provides a convenient indication of where Monophysites were to be found by that time. There were bishops for Beth 'Arbhaye, Sinjar, Ma'alta, Arzon, Gomel, Beth Ramman or Beth Waziq, Karme, Gozarta dh\textsuperscript{e} Qardo, Beth Nuhadhra, Peroz-Shabur (Anbar), Shahrzur, and for the Arabs of the Taghlib tribe (see fig. 7). Both of Mārūthā's monastic companions became bishops. Āītalahā was consecrated bishop of Gomel in Margha while Āḥā was made bishop of Peroz-Shabur "and of the people of the Namiraye Arabs."\textsuperscript{174}

Under Mārūthā, Takrit clearly became a Jacobite town and was called "the mother of the churches of the East." Mārūthā appointed Jacobite bishops for the people whom Khusraw Parviz had deported from Edessa and resettled in Sistan, Herat, and Azerbayjan. He built the strategically located monastery of Mar Sergius near 'Aingaga on the main route from Takrit to 'Aqola, its monks ensuring the spread of Jacobite Christianity in that part of Iraq. He also built a conven for women at Beth Ebhre dedicated to the Theotokos. Eventually, it was Mārūthā who surrendered the citadel of Takrit of 'Abdullāh ibn Mu'tamm in 637 to preserve the town from the suffering of war.\textsuperscript{175}

When Mārūthā died in 649, he was buried in the cathedral he had built in the citadel of Takrit and was succeeded by Den'ha I (649–59/60) as metropolitan. Although the title of maphrian was not used for the head of the Jacobite Church in the East in the seventh century, Mārūthā had, in fact, created this position, and from his time on the metropolitan resided at Takrit. Once established, the position and organization associated with it lasted well beyond the end of the seventh century.\textsuperscript{176}

Apart from the arrangements made at Takrit, Monophysites were as adversely affected as Nestorians by the immediate effects of the Islamic conquest. Many monks and ascetics are said to have been killed by the army of Sa'd along the Byzantine border, especially in


\textsuperscript{174} Nau, "Aboudemmeh," pp. 54, 57; Scher, "Histoire nestorienne," II(2), 543.


the monastery called “The Daughters of Five Churches” at Ra’s ‘Ayn.177 Because of the large number of pastoral Arabs converted by Monophysites, it is natural to suppose that the Monophysites in Iraq were particularly hurt by the conquest. The fate of Christian Arabs of the tribes of Bakr, ‘Ijl, Taghlib, Namir, Tanûkh, and Iyâd, who suffered death or enslavement or converted to Islam and went over to the Muslim side during the conquest, would support the conclusion that the number of Monophysites in Iraq declined radically as a direct result of the conquest. But there was still a Jacobite bishop of the Arabs, John (d. 649–50), after the conquest.178 Conversion seems to have taken about a generation to be effective, and as late as 660 Arab Christians of the tribe of ‘Ijl were living in the quarter of the Bakr ibn Wâ’il in Kufa.179 The see of George, Bishop of the Arabs (686–724), included the Arabs of ‘Aqola (Kufa), and the tribes of Taghlib, Tanûkh, Ṭayyî’, and Tha’laba.180 Otherwise, Jacobites continued to be strong after the conquest in Beth ‘Arbhaye, Beth Nuhadhra, Adi-abene, at Sinjar, at Takrit, and among the Kurds.181 Yôḥannan Bar Penkayê felt that the Monophysites had profited from the Muslim conquest, mainly in the West, by becoming free to make converts.182

In fact, the conflict between Nestorians and Monophysites carried over into the Islamic period. Ishô’yahbh III is said to have bribed the Islamic government in order to prevent the Jacobites from building a church of their own in Mawsil.183 It was only in 767, after the advent of the ‘Abbâsî dynasty, that the Nestorians were able to build their first church in Takrit, and the same year the Jacobites were allowed to reoccupy the church of Mar Domitius at Nasibin.184 Still, both sects tended to keep apart once the division was created. Villages were usually entirely Nestorian or entirely Jacobite with occasionally a Magian, Jewish, or pagan family. Where a “heretic” was present in an “orthodox” community, it was usually a case similar to that of the Jacobite stylite who occupied a pillar-shaped limestone tower in a

177 A. Barsaum, Chronicon Anonymum ad annum 819 pertinens, CSCO, Scr. Syri 36 (Louvain, 1920), 245; tr. J. B. Chabot, CSCO, Scr. Syri 56 (Louvain, 1937), 192.
178 Chabot, Chronique, p. 7.
179 Ṭabarî, Ta’rikh, I, 3460.
180 Nau, “Ahoudemmeh,” p. 28; W. Wright, A Short History of Syriac Literature (London, 1894), pp. 156–57. One of his contemporaries was Daniel, the Arab priest of the tribe of Ṭayyî’ (ibid., p. 159).
181 Masûdî, Murûj, II, 50, 251.
182 Mingana, Sources syriaques, pp. 175–76.
183 Bar Hebraeus, Chronicon Ecclesiasticum (Paris and Louvain, 1877), III, 127.
184 Wright, History, pp. 189–90.
Conclusions

The period between 590 and 630 thus emerges as particularly important for the formation of the characteristic relationships between Christians and their rulers and of the distinctive institutions of the Christian communities of Iraq. By the end of the Sasanian period, both Nestorians and Monophysites were organized as religious communities with their own separate ecclesiastical organizations, churches, monasteries, schools, and doctrine embedded in the liturgy. The Nestorians, in addition, had begun to extend canon law to cover the entire community and had their own ecclesiastical judges. The final separation of the Eastern church into Nestorian and Monophysite sects occurred in this period, and the consequences of the bitter conflict between them resulted in competitive conversions and the permanent separation of the two sects in Iraq, contributing to an increasing self-isolation on all sides.

Such exclusive religious identification, however, must be balanced

186 Mingana, Sources Syriaces, pp. 172–73. Compare Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr’s (d. 712) contemporary accusation that Dharr ibn ‘Abdullâh invented a new religion every day; see M. A. Cook, Early Muslim Dogma (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 80–81.
187 Isaac of Nineveh, “Mystic Treatises,” p. 34.
188 Ibid., p. 39.
against the way communal bonds tended to be broken down by the laity in their daily relations with the members of other religions. For the Nestorians this was partly because the enforcement of a communal identity depended on those who followed religious professions and partly because conversion meant the continual need to assimilate converts who brought non-Christian attitudes and customs with them.

It was also among the Nestorians in the late Sasanian period that the main aspects of the policy of official toleration in return for taxes and loyalty were applied to Christians in Iraq. This arrangement had several important consequences. It meant that toleration was expressed in terms of the requirement for permission for the building of churches and monasteries, for Christian burial, and for the election of a catholicos. It also meant that the extent of the Nestorian Church coincided with that of the Sasanian empire, and it meant the adoption of hierarchic principles, titles, and royal symbolism by the Nestorians. Loyalty was expressed formally by prayers for the head of state, and the entire arrangement was based on a theory of double sanction. The Nestorians expected the state to enforce their ecclesiastical decisions, and the Sasanian state expected the Nestorians to provide excommunications against Christian rebels. An equally important consequence of toleration was the development of a conflict between the desire of the government for stability and loyalty through the nomination of its own candidate as catholicos, and the desire of the clergy for ecclesiastical autonomy through the canonical election of the catholicos. This was aggravated by the exercise of patronage by aristocratic Christians and by the emergence of two factions within the church in the Sasanian period. On one side were the aristocrats who favored official toleration because of the opportunities for patronage that afforded them and who were briefly allied with the Monophysites, the physicians from the medical school at Nasibin, and the followers of Hēnanā. On the other side were the monks and clergymen who hoped to be able to control an autonomous church.

One of the major points to be made here is that with a few exceptions the relationships and institutions of the religious communities in Iraq were ignored by the early Islamic regime. The weight of evidence indicates that there was no official recognition of the Nestorians as a community at the time of the conquest. Christians, as such, were not treated as protected people during the conquest. Both Monophysite and Nestorian monasteries were raided. Monks were killed, taken prisoner, or driven to take refuge elsewhere. Large numbers of Mon-
ophysite Arabs were killed, enslaved, or converted to Islam. The surrender of the citadel of Takrit to the Muslims in 637 was only an ad hoc arrangement by Mārūthā, preserved only the people and churches of Takrit, and did not include the rest of the Monophysite community in Iraq.

On the Nestorian side, Mar Ammeh’s collaboration with the Muslims at Nineveh at the time of the conquest was similar. Since he was not even catholicos at the time, whatever advantage he gained for himself by collaboration did not extend to the rest of the Nestorian community. In practice, the Muslims made no distinction among the members of other religions at first. The adherents of all of the religions present in Iraq were treated merely as subjects liable to the tribute tax. This was especially true in mixed cities such as Hira or Mada’īn, where the tribute was imposed on the entire population without regard for religious differences. Consequently, at first, there was no intervention by the Muslim government in the internal affairs of the religious communities they found in Iraq and this, in itself, tended to favor the operation and further development of autonomous systems of law, at least among Jews and Nestorians.

This lack of interest and intervention allowed the Nestorian and Monophysite institutions to survive in Iraq after the temporary disruptions of the conquest. The ecclesiastical structure, schools, churches, and monasteries of both communities continued to exist in early Islamic Iraq as direct survivals from the Sasanian period. The Monophysite organization even survived among Arab bedouin in Iraq. Essentially, the momentum created by both groups simply extended into the Islamic period with the continued building of new monasteries and the continued conversion of Magians and pagans. Nestorian canon law merely continued its pre-Islamic development. The problem of communal as opposed to private property continued to plague the church. Priests continued to serve as ecclesiastical judges. Lay notables continued to be involved in the election of the clergy, as under the Sasanians. Even the hostilities generated in the late Sasanian period survived the conquest. If anything, the conflict between Nestorians and Monophysites tended to produce more rigid distinctions between them than before. The factions in the Nestorian Church survived because they had been institutionalized and continued to operate in the Islamic period partly because the institutions themselves survived.

In fact, the reestablishment of the conditions of the late Sasanian period with regard to church-state relations was due more to the
continuation of the conflict between these factions than to any other single factor. Because the Nestorian Church leaders and aristocratic laymen insisted on acting towards their new rulers as they had towards the Sasanians, they invited state intervention by involving the Islamic government in their internal quarrels. This pattern appeared as early as 640 at Nasibin; the problem was beginning to become serious again by the reign of Muʿāwiya; and by the end of the second civil war, the Islamic government had been drawn into the internal affairs of the Nestorian Church by deposing and enthroning catholicoi of its choice and by withholding permission for the election of a catholicos. Finally, after the advent of the ʿAbbāsīs, the conflict between royal nomination and canonical election was revived.
Chapter 13

PAGANS AND GNOSTICS

PAGANS IN SASANIAN IRAQ

Although paganism was declining in Sasanian Iraq, ancient indigenous Mesopotamian religious traditions survived in several important ways. Since the great temple complexes of the neo-Babylonian, Hellenistic, and Parthian periods had virtually disappeared by the end of Sasanian rule, it is impossible to describe any regular cult or priesthood. But the old gods and demons were remembered in private sacrifice, magic, and folklore. Pagan demonology and magic also survived among Jews and Christians. Chaldaean astrology was caught up, via syncretism, in the fabric of Magianism and in local syncretistic gnostic sects.

Long-haired, idol-worshiping, animal-sacrificing pagans were still to be found all over Iraq in the late Sasanian period. There were pagan Aramaeans in the towns and villages of the Sawad and in upper Iraq.¹ The pastoral Arabs in upper Mesopotamia and along the southwestern border of Iraq remained pagan until the middle of the sixth century when Monophysites began to convert them.² The Banû Lakhm who ruled Hira were pagans until the conversion of an-Nu‘mān ibn al-Mundhir in 593. Dēv-worshiping Persian peasants were settled in Iraq in the sixth century. Sun-worshipping Kurds lived in the mountains of northern Iraq in the fifth century,³ and early seventh-century references describe the worship of the sun and the sacrifice of an ox at the village of Beth Kartewaye in Adiabene and Kurds who sacrificed to demons in Beth Nuhadhra.⁴ It is important to note that there were mixed villages, where pagans lived with Magians, Jews, or Christians.

Some type of shrine with images seems to have survived until the late Sasanian period, but it was no longer the monumental institution of antiquity. The temples of Ba‘al-Shamen at Hatra, of Inanna at Nippur, or of Ishtar at Babil did not survive the Parthian period. There may have been temples of Bel at Babel and of Nabu at Burs as late

³ Hoffmann, *Persischer Märtyrer*, p. 75.
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as the third century. There are references to pagan temples with idols in the late sixth and early seventh centuries in Beth 'Arbhaye, Arzon, Margha, Adiabene, Beth Garme, Kaskar, and Maysan.

The pagan cult consisted of libations and animal sacrifices to idols, celebrations with music and dancing, and the veneration of sacred trees. White cocks were the most typical sacrificial victims, although accusations of human sacrifice still were made occasionally. By the fourth century, pagans were already beginning to celebrate their festivals in secret. Such a festival was held in honor of Nabu at his altar in a mountain village near 'Anat and included dancing, raillery, and the playing of the lyre and drums. The best descriptions of paganism in the late Sasanian period come from the villages of the Sawad that were being invaded by Christian monks in search of converts by the early seventh century. There was a village of snake-worshippers in the region between Kaskar and Niffar (Nippur) whose cult apparently consisted of the village priest (Ar. kāhin) feeding the sacred snakes. Although this sort of paganism seems to be thoroughly indigenous, another village at 'Ayn Namir was inhabited by pagans who had been brought from Khurasan as captives by the Persians. These people worshiped palms and other trees and idols in human form. Their greatest idol was called Nahrdan and was served by priests and a chief priest called Marzūq.

Among pagan Arabs, the cult amounted to sacrificing animals and occasionally humans, circling sacred objects, and venerating special stones. The legend of 'Abd al-Masih tells of a red stone in the Sinjar region which was worshiped by local Arabs because of its healing qualities and its ability to help locate stray camels. There were soothsayers (Ar. kāhins) at Hira who sacrificed to idols and, according to Prokopios, the pagan Arabs of the town observed a sacred season

5 Berliner, Geographie, p. 10; Neubauer, Géographie, pp. 345–47; Rodkinson, Talmud, XVIII, “Abuda Zara,” 20.
7 Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 31.
8 Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 512.
9 Ibid., II(2), 587–88. 'Ayn Namir was in the vicinity of Hira at or near Biram or Payram on the southwest bank of the Euphrates opposite Anbar (Obermeyer, Landschaft Babylonien, pp. 99, 23–25; Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II[1], 144; Trimingham, Christianity, pp. 194–95). These people may have been resettled there in order to populate the frontier. One of the marzbāns of Hira in the early seventh century was called Růzbī ibn Marzūq (Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II[2], 546, 549).
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during the two months following the vernal equinox when raiding
was forbidden (Gk. anathēma).10

Several ancient native deities were still venerated in late Sasanian
Iraq. Shamash (the sun), Sin (the moon), Bel (the planet Jupiter), Nanai,
and Nergal (the planet Mars) are all invoked as benevolent powers
on a Syriac incantation bowl from Nippur.11 Bel and Nabu (the planet
Mercury) were associated with Babil and were objects of sacrifice at
the court of Shāpūr II.12 A virgin goddess called 'Ishshār-Bēl (Joy of
Bel) was known at Hatra in the third century and survived until the
fourth century as Sharbel, the patroness of Irbil.13 The great goddess
of Mesopotamia had several names during the Sasanian period, but
she was also still known by her original name of Nanai (from the
Sumerian Inanna), “the great goddess of the entire earth.”14 The cult
of Nanai was originally associated with the regions of Maysan and
Babylonia. She was worshiped in Beth Garme in the fourth and fifth
centuries because of the resettlement of ninety families from Maysan
at a village near Kirkuk by Shāpūr II, who had brought the cult of
Nanai along with them. She was also venerated in Beth ‘Arbhaye and
at the court of Shāpūr II.15 This goddess of procreation and destruction,
of war and of love was also worshiped as the Babylonian Ishtar, and
as such was popular both as goddess and as demon on the Nippur
incantation bowls.16 In the fifth century, she was worshiped with li-
bations and sacrifices as Bēdukt at the town of Dumma below Kal-
wadha and in nearby Radhan.17 Through syncretism she was identified
with the Iranian goddess, Anāhīt, who may have been worshiped as
Mammi in the Diyala region in the fifth century.18 She was also
identified with the planet Venus as Dlibat Ishtar, and “Dlibat the

10 Mas‘ūdī, Murrūj, I, 118; Prokopios, Wars, II. xvi. 18; xix. 33–34; Scher, “Histoire
nestorienne,” II(2), 468; Trimingham, Christianity, pp. 242, 248.
12 Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 29.
13 W. Ismail, “The Worship of Allat at Hatra,” Sumer 32 (1976), 179; J. T. Milik,
Dédicaces faites par des dieux (Palmyre, Hatra, Tyr) et des thiases sémitiques à l’époque
argues that Joy of Bel and virgin (‘ṣrbl btlh) were epithets of Allāt whose representation
at Hatra was assimilated to that of Athena, and who seems to have been served and
venerated by women.
14 Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 29.
15 Ibid., pp. 29, 49, 131.
16 Neusner, History, p. 231; Yamauchi, Incantation Texts, pp. 165, 169, 205, 207,
229, 273, 277; Peeters, “Passionaire d’Adiabene,” p. 277.
17 Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, pp. 72, 74, 128–30.
18 Ibid., pp. 74, 139.
passionate” occurs on one of the Jewish Aramaic incantation bowls from Nippur. This epithet evokes the Babylonian ezzu (Ak.) used for Ishtar as the raging goddess, of war or of love, which became the Arabic name, al-'Uzzā, for the planet Venus (az-Zuhra). As al-'Uzzā, “the strong” or “the powerful,” Venus was venerated by the Banū Lakhm at Hira in the sixth century. She was called “sovereign deity, dwelling in the sky,” was served by a kāhin, and was the object of human sacrifice.

Several deities of foreign origin were imported mainly because of their correspondence with native planetary gods. Among the gods worshiped at Hale or invoked on a Nippur incantation bowl were Zeus, who was identified with Bel as the planet Jupiter; Kronos as the planet Saturn; and Hermes, who was identified with Nabu and Tîr as the planet Mercury. Apollo, Protagonos, Okeanos, and perhaps the Aeons were also named. The Iranian deity Bagdana (Abugdana) also occurs in the Nippur incantations “with seventy exalted priests.” But he is also described in the incantations as the ruler of demons and Liliths, and the gods in general are called Bagdānī.

A tendency to relegate the gods of the old religion to the position of demons was already evident in the Nippur incantations. In the case of planetary deities, this was encouraged by the belief in the evil or harmful aspects of planets according to the astral paganism of late antiquity. In both the Jewish Aramaic and the Mandaic incantation bowls from Nippur, the “idols and Ishtars” are treated as demons to be exorcised. This change is also illustrated by a picture of the head of a demon in the shape of a ziggurat on an Aramaic magical bowl. However, a genuinely ancient, local demon still survived in the Lilith who was descended from the Sumerian and Akkadian līlītu. The Lilith of the incantation bowls was a succubus blamed for nocturnal emissions who, out of jealousy for the husband or father, also preyed upon

20 Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(1), 133; II(2), 468, 479. Mundhir IV sacrificed four hundred captive nuns to her after the fall of Antioch in 640; see F. Buhl, “al-'Uzza,” EI(1), IV, 1069. An Arab called 'Abd al-'Uzzā is mentioned at the time of the conquest (Tabari, Ta'rikh, I, 2070–71). The gods al-Lāt and as-Sabad are also mentioned in connection with Hira (Horovitz, “'Adi Ibn Zeyd,” pp. 37, 39).
women at critical times, such as childbirth, and on children. In this aspect, the Aramaic and Mandaic Lilith inherited her hostility towards children from the Akkadian Labartu, a female demon whose wild and disheveled appearance corresponds to the pictures of Lilith on the incantation bowls. 25

Demons lurked in deserts and graveyards and haunted the thresholds, corners, beams, and roofs of houses. 26 They caused accidents, misfortunes, sickness, and poverty. However, they could be controlled and their maliciousness could be directed against a particular victim by the curse or spell of an envious person. The demons could be set in motion by the evil eye, incantations, or by even numbers; by knocking, spitting, or tying knots to bind the curse; by egg charms to separate a woman from her husband; and by melting the wax figurine of a living person. 27

This kind of magic was an expression of social hostility among relatives (especially in-laws), over the division of inheritance, and between employees and employers who cheated them of their wages. 28 The incantation bowls testify to the social conflicts and fears among the villagers of the central Sawad in the sixth and seventh centuries. There was also an element of resentment towards the increasing male domination of the new religious order taking shape in the Sasanian period. The Magian priests, Jewish rabbis, and Christian clergymen and monks were all men, venerated a male deity, and regarded women as evil, the source of evil, or spiritually inferior to men. There were no priestesses in the new order, no female figures approaching the power, authority, and appeal of the ancient goddesses, and there was a significant rise in the importance of female demons. For Magians, the demon Jēh, the childbearer, was the ally of Ahriman. Ahriman

26 Gordon, “Magical Bowls,” p. 324; Neusner, History, pp. 219, 229; Yamauchi, Incantation Texts, p. 22.
instilled in her a desire for men and defiled her with menstruation by his kiss so that she would defile women who in turn would defile men and divert them from good works. 29 Satan appeared to Christians in female form. 30 It is no wonder that women preferred to honor the old religion through the practice of magic, as the Talmudic cliché of “more women, more witchcraft” suggests. 31 One of the incantation bowls describes women making curses in the name of Ishtar and crawling on their backsides. 32

At one level, women preserved pagan traditions of magic as part of a system in which they had enjoyed greater religious status. At another level, changes in the social nature of religious authority made magic more important for women as a source of status, as a means of exerting social control, and as a way to secure specific aims. In paganism more than in other religious traditions, women seem to be more prominent as sorceresses (and more equal to sorcerers), as the clients of magicians, and as those who could cure witchcraft. 33 The conflict over authority and control that was involved may be seen in the Talmudic story about a woman who successfully cursed Rava. 34 This is paralleled by a story about how the sister-in-law of the deacon Emmanuel at the village of Beth Ghurbaq in the early seventh century anointed his body with oil she had obtained from sorcerers in order to make him desire her. When “the fire of love for her spread in him like the fire of a blazing furnace,” Rabban Bar ‘Idtā anointed him with holy oil as an antidote. 35

Magic was thus thwarted by magic. Demons and the curses of their human allies were turned back by amulets, iron talismans, and countercharms in the name of more powerful beings that tied their hands and feet. One of the incantation bowls contains the picture of a demon with its wrists and ankles bound (see fig. 8). 36 The sorcerers themselves wrote the countercharms on the incantation bowls to avert real or potential harm to their clients, who then imprisoned the demons by

29 Zaehner, Dawn and Twilight, p. 233. Zaehner (pp. 227, 230–31) also argues that Åz, the demon of greed, was considered to be female by Magians because Manichaeans called her the mother of demons.

30 Hoffmann, Persischer Märtyrer, p. 76. This may have been of Magian origin.

31 Rodkinson, Talmud, IX, “Aboth,” 60.

32 Yamauchi, Incantation Texts, pp. 165, 169.


34 Rodkinson, Talmud, XIV, “Baba Bathra,” 345.


a. Bowl from Tell Abu Sarifa with the figure of a sorcerer in the center.

b. Detail of the sorcerer with a star-covered robe on the bowl from Tell Abu Sarifa.

c. Detail of a sorcerer with arms bent upwards at the elbows and fingers outspread, Nippur. Univ. of Chicago, Oriental Institute, no. A33963.
d. Bearded figure with long hair on Aramaic incantation bowl, Nippur. Univ. of Chicago, Oriental Institute, no. 2.

e. Male demon, Nippur. Univ. of Chicago, Oriental Institute, no. 1.

f. Demon with ankles bound, Nippur. Univ. of Chicago, Oriental Institute, Nippur 10 N 4, Museum no. A33964.
placing the bowls upside down on the threshold or inside the walls of their houses. Sorcerers were the most typical practitioners of paganism by the late Sasanian period. They mumbled incantations, chanted the liturgy of demons, calling on them by name, and smeared themselves with excrement. The style of the exorcism, in which a sorcerer claimed he had authority from one of the gods to expel demons, came ultimately from the white-robed āšipu (Ak.) priests of ancient Babylonia. Sorcerers are depicted on incantation bowls as human figures with long hair, wearing star-covered robes, and standing with their arms outstretched or raised at the elbows, with fingers spread out, in an attitude of invocation or exorcism (see fig. 8). The activity of sorcerers tended to shade over into producing illusions, performing tricks, and telling fortunes. 37

Sorcerers also used magic to invoke or to exorcise the influence of the planetary deities or demons. The ancient Babylonian myth of the binding of the planets and their release by Marduk (Bel) survived in a magical formula which refers to the seal that charmed the seven stars and the twelve signs of the zodiac, and to charming a demon until the great day of judgment and its redemption. 38 Babil had a reputation as the place where the planet Mercury (Nabu or Tīr) was bound and as the earthly location of the “houses” of the planets and the signs of the zodiac. 39 The Babylonian day of destinies on the first of Nisan (April), when the fate of the coming year was decided, also survived as an auspicious day for expelling demons. 40

Next to magic, astrological fatalism was the most important expression of pagan traditions. It was also the most intellectualized and scientific expression and had been combined with Hellenistic and Persian traditions. The current Babylonian mechanistic, astrological tradition explained events on earth according to the doctrine of correspondence. The inexorable turning of the planets in their spheres in conjunction with the signs of the zodiac determined events on earth, including the material and spiritual fate of people. This was interpreted as the result of either the malevolent operation of planetary and earthly demons or as the impersonal and mechanical operation of a blind fate. The latter interpretation came close to a concept of laws of nature

38 Montgomery, Incantation Texts, pp. 113, 137.
40 Montgomery, Incantation Texts, p. 55.
which determine whatever happens, and it was this kind of materialistic fatalism that passed for science in the sixth and seventh centuries. Astrological fatalism was so typical of Babylonia that it was called *chaldītā* (Syr.) and its practitioners Chaldaeans.  

Pagan Arabs shared the belief in destiny in the form of the impersonal operation of the course of time (M.P. *dahr, zaman*). This was the force that determined human existence and was the inescapable cause of whatever good or evil fortune befell a person. There is really very little difference between this and *chaldītā* or fatalistic Zurvanism, and Arabs may have acquired this concept of destiny from Chaldaeans because of the popularity of Zurvanism among the Sasanian ruling class. The pagan merchants of Makka who opposed Muhammad asserted the eternity of time and matter; claimed that events on earth were caused naturally by the turning of the spheres; sought to escape responsibility for their actions; and denied that God created the world or provided for it. They also denied the impending end of the world, judgment, and rewards and punishments by saying that “there is only our worldly life; we die and we live, and it is only *dahr* that destroys us.”

However, there may have been an ethical dimension to destiny that associated the Babylonian version of original sin, the evilness of human nature, with the belief that the children of unbelievers or sinners shared the fate of their parents. In Judaeo-Arab circles this seems to have taken the form of an argument over the fate of the children of Korah (Num. 16). Although the Biblical account says explicitly that the children of Korah were not killed (Num. 26:11), which implies that they did not share in the sin of their father nor were they punished for it, the Talmud contains a curious story about an Arab merchant who told one of the rabbis about the wheel of the sky which revolved daily; in the same context he said that the children of Korah were roasted in Gehenna.

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44 This, in turn, went back to the Sumerian notion as expressed in the poem of the righteous sufferer, that “never has a sinless child been born to its mother”; see S. Kramer, *The Sumerians* (Chicago & London, 1963), p. 128.
45 Rodkinson, *Talmud*, XIII, “Baba Bathra,” 205–6. That Korah’s sin was manifestly political in challenging Moses’ authority (“all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them,” Num. 16:3) was not lost on the Nestorian catholicos George I (659–80), who compared his rival for the position of catholicos to Korah in
By the end of the Sasanian period, paganism in Iraq was characterized by sacrifice, magic, and astrology. The ancient native deities survived and were venerated mainly because of their association with the planets in astrology and with imported Hellenistic and Iranian gods. But even among pagans, the old gods were being relegated to the position of demons. This was probably due to the influence of gnosticism, which emphasized the harmful aspect of the planets in astral paganism. Conditions in the early seventh century are summarized by Jāḥīz, who tells how Musaylima toured the marketplaces of Ubulla, Anbar, and Hira, where Arabs and Persians met to buy and sell their goods. In these places he learned magic, sleight of hand, and the tricks of astrologers, of false prophets, of the keepers of idol temples, of soothsayers who practiced ornithomancy and geomancy, of fortunetellers, of magicians, and of those who claimed to be inspired by jinn (Ar.).

But pagan temple institutions had been destroyed except for local or secret shrines, and pagans were joining the organized faiths of the new order in increasing numbers. Magians opposed the pagan cult, broke idols, expelled the dēvs, and converted their shrines into fire temples. Magians were also hostile to sorcery, which they identified with demon worship and linked with Judaism as a source of corruption in the world. They regarded sorcery by a wife as grounds for divorce, and executed sorcerers such as the Jewish magician Hurnim bar Lilith. Jews were more receptive to magic but hostile to idolatry. The consequences for paganism in Jewish districts seem to be reflected in a Talmudic story about Abraham. He had been imprisoned at Kutha by his father or by Nimrod for abandoning idolatry (Rashi explains that he broke the idols) and was thrown into a fiery furnace by Nimrod; but the angel Gabriel wanted to make the furnace cold.

about 660 (Thomas of Margha, Governors, I, 84; II, 185–86). When ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Hārith ibn Nawfal was governor of Basra early in 685, he is said to have taught an edifying story in the masjid about the intrigues of Qārūn (Korah) against Moses and how the earth swallowed him, his companions, and his palace (Ṭabari, Ta’rikh, I, 524–26).

46 Pellat, Jāḥīz, p. 162.
of this story that occurs several times in the Qurʾān says that Abraham broke all except one of the idols and that his enemies consequently prepared a building with a red-hot fire for him; but it was made cool, and he was rescued with Lot.52

Towards the end of the Sasanian period, the number of pagans declined rapidly due to conversion to Christianity. The sites of pagan temples or shrines were appropriated for churches and monasteries. The breaking of idols, destruction of temples, and the building of churches and monasteries in their place is a recurring theme in contemporary Christian hagiography. One cannot always be certain whether real pagans were involved or whether the monk or saint in question was being described in terms of what was expected of him. In any case, these stories reflect one of the major transformations of this period. As early as the fourth century, Ithalāhā, a priest of Sharbel at Irbil, converted to Christianity and undertook the conversion of the pagans of Adiabene.53 In the sixth century, the Nestorians were busy converting Kurds in Margha and pagans in Adiabene and Arzon, where a temple of idols is said to have been converted into a monastery during the reign of Hurmizd IV.54 At about the same time, two villages of idolaters in Beth Garme were converted by Sabhrishō’ (catholicos 596–604) of Lashom, the temples were destroyed, and churches were built in their places.55 Likewise, in the early seventh century, the monastery of Beth ‘Abhe is said to have been built on a site previously occupied by a temple of idols.56 In lower Iraq, Gregory of Kaskar converted pagans in Maysan and Kaskar when he was bishop of Kaskar before 596. With typical vigor he smashed idols and converted temples into churches; this provoked a resistance that was sometimes so violent that he was prevented from entering a village. After he was exiled from Nasibin following his brief tenure as metropolitan in 596, he returned to the countryside around Kaskar and was successful in converting the village of snake-worshipers noted above. Their conversion was accomplished by the “miraculous” death of the snakes, which was discovered by the village priest when he went to feed them.57

56 Chabot, “Chasteté,” pp. 22, 244.
57 Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 508, 512. Gregory may be suspected of having a hand in this “miracle.”
The pagans at ‘Ayn Namir were converted by Mar ‘Abdā ibn Hanīf in the seventh century, beginning with the chief priest, Marzūq, who helped to break the idols, destroy the temples, and build churches.\(^{58}\)

On the Monophysite side, the convent dedicated to the Theotokos which Mārūthā built at Beth Ebhre was said to be on a site that previously had been occupied by a temple of idols, where demons were worshiped, and which had been a place of “lewd, debauched, and base deeds.”\(^{59}\) The sanctity of such places was preserved by the Christians who captured it for themselves.

In Arabia, pagan Arabs abandoned idolatry en masse to become Muslims in the third and fourth decades of the seventh century. Christians were destroying some of the last pagan shrines in Iraq when Muḥammad cleared the Ka’ba of its images and made it an Islamic shrine in 630. Muslims also destroyed the shrines of the Daughters of Allāh outside of Makka and at Ta’if, and the Qurʾān (Sūra 5:60) puts people who serve idols among the worst of unbelievers. The few remaining pagan Arabs in or near Iraq were attracted to the Islamic movement even before the conquest. Ukaydir, the lord of the oasis of Dumat Jandal southwest of Iraq, is said to have accepted Islam and to have forsaken idols and objects of worship in the time of Muḥammad.\(^{60}\) Labīd ibn Jarīr and ‘Abd al-‘Uzza are said to have gone from Hira to Madina, where they became Muslims in the time of Abī Bakr (632–34), who gave them letters confirming that they were Muslims. But during Khalid’s raid on Iraq, they were found at the stronghold of Musayyakh, and since no one could read the letters, the men were killed.\(^{61}\)

**PAGANS IN ISLAMIC IRAQ**

Otherwise the Islamic conquest had little immediate effect on the condition of paganism in Iraq. Most of the Arabs there were already Christians, and Islamic iconoclasm would seem to have been forestalled by the fact that there were few idols left to break. Pagans survived the conquest of Iraq without being distinguished from the rest of the tributary population, although an exception was made for sorcerers. Muslims continued the Magian penalty of death for sorcery,

\(^{58}\) Ibid., II(2), 587–88.


\(^{60}\) Baliidhurr, Futūh, p. 61.

\(^{61}\) Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2070–71.
beginning with 'Umar’s instructions to Jaz’ ibn Mu’āwiya in Dasti-i Maysan in 643 to kill every magician and sorceress there. As a result three of them were killed. However, the actual state of affairs is illustrated best by the famous story of Jundab and the sorcerer at Kufa in 647, when al-Walid ibn 'Uqba was governor. A sorcerer called Bārūū of Kufa entered the courtyard of the masjid with a female camel, where he collected a crowd that followed him out of the courtyard and watched him work wonders. Jundab ibn Ka'b of the tribe of Azd took it upon himself to kill the sorcerer. Al-Walid intended to behead Jundab for this act but imprisoned him instead because the tribe of Azd objected to his execution. Jundab spent the entire night praying, and in the morning the jailer let him go. Jundab’s attack on the sorcerer thus seems to have been provoked by his own pious indignation, although the governor regarded it as murder, which implies that he considered the sorcerer to be a protected subject.

Pagan traditions and practices were still very much alive in Iraq in the early Islamic period. According to Ishoyahb III (648–58), there were more pagans than Christians in Beth Aramaye. Yōhannah bar Penkayē says that there were still people who worshiped the sun, moon, and stars, the demon Ba’al-Shamen, Ba’alzebub, Tammuz, or a Babylonian sea monster, and sacrificed to idols. Chaldaeans worshiped the stars; some of them said that the world was created and set in motion by angels, although others believed that the world moved by itself as determined by fate, the signs of zodiac, and horoscopes.

Two rather sensational charges of human sacrifice by “Manichaean” at the village of Shatru in Bihqubadh in the 640s are made in a contemporary, seventh-century Syriac chronicle. People at Shatru were arrested for shutting a man underground, sacrificing him, and using his head for divination and spells. The possibility of such a thing happening seems to be confirmed by a skull with a magical text inscribed on it which was found among the incantation bowls at nearby Nippur. The possibility is increased by a nearly exact parallel reported by al-Kindī about the pagan Ṣabians at Harran who put a man who looked like the planetary deity Mercury in a solution of oil and borax.

62 Ibn Sallām, Amwāl, p. 44; Ibn Sa’d Ţabaqāt, VII(1), 94.
63 Ya’qūbī, Ta’rikh, II, 190. For a somewhat different version, see Ţabarī, Ta’rikh, I, 2845–46. The question of whether or not a dhimmī should be allowed to practice magic was discussed in hadith, and Muhammad was said not to have killed a dhimmī magician who bewitched him (Bukhārī, Šahīb, V, 250).
64 Fiey, Assyrie chrétienne, III, 78.
RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

and took out his head each year when Mercury was at its height, at which time his soul spoke and answered questions. Mas‘üdi adds that the Šabians of Harran practiced their cult and kept the images of their gods in underground chambers. It is worth remembering in this context that the planet Mercury, as Nabu, was associated with Babil.

The people of Shatru were also accused of cooking the child of a virgin, mixing its flesh with wheat-flour in a mortar, and making cakes out of it. Again, there is a striking parallel among the Šabians of Harran who are said to have sacrificed an infant boy when they pressed new wine for their gods each August, boiled him, kneaded his flesh with flour, saffron, spikenard, cloves, and oil, and made small cakes which they baked in a new clay oven. Whether “Manichaeans” was simply a term of abuse or whether there was a recognition of the gnostic affinities that Šabians had with Manichaeans, there is no question that the “Manichaeans” who were accused of performing human sacrifice on the outskirts of Harran in 765 were Šabians. At the very least, reports of human sacrifice survived well into the Islamic period.

At the same time pagan customs were increasingly relegated to the level of folklore. Bastomagh, the father of İshö’yahbh III (648–58), owned several small estates in Adiabene. On the way to inspect one of them, he is reported to have seen “sorceresses” washing clothes near a bridge and singing the songs of devils. He heard a fragment of the refrain, and everything around the women seemed to dance as they sang. Another source tells of a similar instance in which children were singing “immoral” songs on summer nights at a threshing floor belonging to the monastery of Sabhrishö in the time of Sõbhalmaran (693–729), who drove them away and forbade them to sing similar songs near the monastery in the future.

Pagans could still be found in remote, rural parts of Iraq in the eighth century and later. In Margha, Cyprian of Beth Magoshe had trouble with a pagan who tried to take figs from the garden of his

66 Guidi, Chronica Minora I, I, 33; II, 28; Ibn an-Nadim, Fihrist, II, 751, 753–54; Mas‘üdi, Marüji, II, 392; Montgomery, Incantation Texts, pp. 256–57. It is almost impossible to see how this Syriac chronicle could have influenced the accounts of al-Kindi or Mas‘üdi.


68 Assemani, BO, II, 112.

69 Thomas of Margha, Governors, I, 48; II, 84. Devils are also said to have tried to make Rabban Hûrmîzd an abode for their songs (Budge, Rabban Hûrmîzd, I, 30; II, 45).

70 Mingana, Sources Syriques, p. 252.
monastery. A widow who served devils in the village of Niram tried to destroy Cyprian’s successor, Rabban Gabriel, with magic, and pagans in the villages around the monastery cut down its trees. The village of Koph was still inhabited by Magians, Manichaeans, and pagans who were “mad and drunk with the worship of idols and other things” and worshiped an olive tree until the fire temple was destroyed, and a church was built in its place. Sometime in the early eighth century, a great old tree called the “king of the forest” stood at Beth Sharonaye, the home village of Thomas of Margha. The pagans of the surrounding villages used to burn incense to it, and worship before it, and a devil is said to have appeared in it. Pagan usages also survived in popular customs in lower Iraq. These included the “wonders” worked by the poor people of the village of Fam Dibal, situated on one of the branches of the Tigris near Wasit, who swallowed snakes and walked through fire.

Pagan traditions of magic were preserved and perhaps even developed. Magicians were said to venerate Bīdūkht, whose throne was on the water, with offerings of human and animal sacrifices because she would fulfill the wishes of those who did her bidding. Ibn an-Nadīm tells of a magician who composed works entitled The Untied, The Tied, The Knots, and The Twistings. Among the writings of Ibn Waḥshiyyah al-Kaldāní of Qussin near Kufa were works called Expulsion of the Devils and Doctrines of the Chaldaeans about Idols.

The Sasanian tradition of mathematical astrology was still alive in the seventh century and was employed in the eighth century by Māšāʾ- allāh ibn Atharī, a Jewish astrologer from Basra, who used Middle Persian works to cast horoscopes, compute the positions of planets, and to compose his astrological history. With Māšāʾ- allāh, the Dorothean tradition began its elaboration in the Arabic language. Some Muslims learned to identify astrology with sorcery, and among the ḥadīth (Ar.) that discuss the “special knowledge” of sorcerers is one which goes “He who learns knowledge from the stars learns a branch of sorcery; the more of one, the more of the other.”

The pagan presence in early Islamic Iraq was as impressive as it was
unexpected. Paganism survived directly among people who continued to be pagans and who venerated the old gods and demons and sacrificed to them. Chaldaeans in particular preserved a well-developed, literate, magical, and astrological tradition. Pagan practices also survived in folklore and in popular custom.

GNOSTICS

The second major way paganism survived was as an element of syncretistic sects formed under gnostic influences, which came to be organized as religious communities. Gnostics had affinities to some of the oldest religious traditions in Iraq. The Babylonian Creation Epic tells how Tiamat, the primeval sea, was incited by a group of rebellious gods to avenge the death of her consort Apsu, and how she created a band of eleven monstrous demons and made an evil attack on the other gods. She was defeated and killed by Marduk (Bel) who captured the rebel gods and bound the demons. Marduk divided the body of Tiamat, used the upper one-half of it to form the sky, and posted guards there to prevent her waters from escaping. He made the earth by heaping up a mountain over the lower part of Tiamat’s body. He established stations for the great gods in the heavens and fixed their astral likenesses as constellations. Kingu, the rebel god who was accused of inciting Tiamat, was sacrificed so Marduk could make humans out of his blood to serve the gods. This myth contains two ideas central to the gnostic view of the world and of human nature. First, the material universe is the body of an evil, rebellious monster. Second, humans are made out of the substance of the guilty Kingu as punishment and for service, which implies that human nature is evil. But since Kingu was a god, a divine element, albeit perverted, also exists in human nature.76

Gnostics divided existence between the good, spiritual light, and the evil, material darkness. The universe was created by sexual generation, and the material world was organized out of a chaos of darkness by a malevolent demiurge and was ruled by demons. In elaborate myths, gnostics explained how part of the world of light and spirit became mixed with darkness and was trapped in the evil world of matter. Demons tried to keep it imprisoned there by tempting people with worldly pleasures. The material world, including the human body, was

sinful and corrupt and anything that perpetuated material existence, such as human procreation, was perverted. Gnostics worked to overcome the material world, to release the particle of spiritual light caught in the human body, and to reunite it with the world of light. They were told how to do it by a messenger sent from the realm of light who informed the soul of its origin and revealed the secret knowledge (Gk. gnosis) it would need to get past the demonic planets in its ascent.

Not everyone was capable of profiting from the message. Gnostics tended to be elitist and divided humanity into categories according to the amount of divine light people had in them by accident or by fate at birth; those born with the most light could be saved, and gnostics included both women and men among the elect. Those with less light could improve their fate through good works and might hope to be reborn as one of the elect. Those with little or no light in them belonged to this world and had no hope of escape.

Early gnostics in the Hellenistic period were organized as mystery communities with redemptive sacraments, baptism, and sacred meals to purify the soul. They also performed feats of asceticism and magic as proof of their liberation from the world. This could also lead into an amoral libertinism that was a radical, antinomian form of dualism. To the extent that law was part of this temporal world, it, too, was either inferior or evil. The imagery of light and darkness probably came from the cult of Mithra, the only mystery religion that was frankly dualist and was probably also the source for gnostic imagery of cosmic warfare between good and evil. Since an evil world could not have been created by a good deity, gnostics in Jewish and Christian circles identified the god of the Bible as a malicious demiurge. Gnostic ideas had a deep impact on early Christianity and influenced neo-Platonism.

The greatest vogue of gnostic themes occurred in the second and third centuries during the crisis at the end of antiquity and emerged in the three major movements of the third century: Mithraism, Manichaeism, and neo-Platonism. The popularity of such a world-denying outlook was an expression of widespread alienation and the desire to escape from an evil world. As society reconstructed itself from the fourth century on, world-affirming ideologies tended to be employed by the representatives of authority in the new order: Mazdaean priests,

rabbis, and to a lesser extent the Christian clergy (in their opposition to the antisocial aspects of Manichaean asceticism).

Meanwhile, gnostic ideas survived because they were attached to sects that were organized during the crisis. The main representative and vehicle of Christian gnosticism was the Marcionite Church, which was formed in the middle of the second century and lasted until at least the tenth century. Judging from the polemics of Ephrem Syrus in the fourth century, Marcionites believed that the world was created by a God of Justice who rewarded the righteous and punished the evil; but he was not able to bring relief to the just in this world because he was balanced and opposed by an Alien Force that favored the wicked and oppressed the good. They also believed in a more powerful God of Goodness who purchased human souls from the God of Justice and sent a Stranger who brought earthly promises to the simpleminded and a spiritual message to the elite. The distinction between the elite and the simpleminded was reflected in the organization of the Marcionite Church. Baptized Marcionites were a spiritual elite who remained pure through celibacy, continual fasting, and excessive prayer—acts not required of the average Marcionite. They also tended to be antinomian in their rejection of the God of Justice and used the rhetoric of divine healing for their Redeemer who “abrogated the former laws and healed injured organs.” Their hostility to the God of the Bible took a strangely inverted form in which they regarded Biblical villains as heroes. Marcionite sub-sects honored Cain and Seth and even the Serpent who had tried to give Adam and Eve the knowledge denied to them by the Creator. Marcionites could thus integrate easily with snake-worshiping pagans in Iraq.

Marcionites were common in Armenia and upper Mesopotamia in the fourth and fifth centuries and could be found in Iraq in the sixth and early seventh centuries. There were Marcionites at the ordination procession of the Nestorian catholicos Sabhrishō at Mada’in in 596. A reference to a Marcionite priest and sorcerer (Ar. sāḥīr) around the turn of the century suggests that they still had some sort of organization. Marcionites were also present at the Nestorian “disputation”

at Mada'in in 612. Nestorians accused Marcionites of sorcery and of using idols to drive out demons, which may mean only that they used images in an apotropaic way in their own form of holy magic.

Bardaišan of Edessa was a Christian dualist with Mazdaean affinities. He is said to have taught that the universe was composed of five elements that had existed in primeval harmony: Fire in the east, Wind in the west, Water in the north, and Light in the South, with God in the height above and Darkness, their enemy and the fifth element, in the depth below. On one occasion, Darkness had noticed the other elements and tried to capture them, but God sent his Word to separate the Darkness from the other elements. The Word cast Darkness back into the depths, returned the other elements to their places, and made the world out of the remaining mixture of elements. The human soul was the divine or semidivine Light caught in this mixture. It would rejoin the element of Light at death if it followed orders. Bardaišan opposed asceticism so that more souls could be embodied through birth to rejoin the Light and return the universe to its original harmony. Bardaišan and his disciples also taught that the stars determined material existence, but that the soul was unaffected by fate and decided its own spiritual destiny. They studied geography and foreign customs, especially Indian customs, in order to disprove astral fatalism by showing that people in the same clime might have different characteristics. These ideas were only partly gnostic. Bardaišan and his followers believed that the world was not made by a demiurge but by a Redeemer. They were opposed to asceticism and moral fatalism and were not necessarily elitist. The only really gnostic idea was the redemption of Light from a world mixed with Darkness. Their belief in the eternity of the elements made them materialists, and their denial of moral fatalism was shared with the Mazdaeans.

There is no trace of a Dāišanite organization. His disciples and followers preserved, spread, and developed his ideas more as an intellectual tradition than as a sect. White-robed Dāišanites, carrying a

79 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 567, 568; Scher, "Histoire nestorienne," II(2), 489, 495; Trimingham, Christianity, p. 54.
81 O. Braun, Das Buch der Synodos (Stuttgart and Vienna, 1900), pp. 136–37; H.J.W. Drijvers, Bardaišan of Edessa (Assen, 1966), pp. 17, 173; Runciman, Manichee, pp. 11–12.
tradition of “scientific” astrology and proclaiming the power of the planets and the zodiac, found their way to the swamps of lower Iraq possibly as early as the third century. The presence of Daišanites or their influence at Nippur is suggested by the use of Bardesā as a feminine name on a Mandaic incantation bowl. They still existed in the seventh century when the Monophysite Severus Sebokht obtained information from them for the treatise he wrote on the zodiac in 660. George, the Monophysite bishop of the Arabs (d. 724), stated in a letter that the information on the conjunction of the planets with the signs of the zodiac, which he was sending to his correspondent, came from the Daišanites via Severus. Daišanites no longer lived in the swamps of Iraq by the tenth century, but groups were scattered in Khurasan and in China.

**MANICHAEAENS**

Manichaeans originated in Iraq as an ecumenical syncretism of pagan, gnostic, Magian, Judaeo-Christian, and Indian traditions. In a temple at Ctesiphon, Mani’s father, Futtuq, is said to have heard a voice commanding him to abstain from meat, wine, and marriage. Thereupon he joined a group that practiced ablutions (Mughtasila) in Dast-i Maysan. Mani (ca. 216–77) grew up in this sect but left it. He is said to have been influenced by Daišanites and eventually found preferment at the court of Shāpūr I (241–72). He taught that there was a single religious truth and that successive messengers had brought increasingly perfect versions of it to different places: Hermes to Egypt, Plato to Greece, Jesus to Judaea. He regarded himself as the bearer of the last, complete, and universal message; this may have coincided with the universal ambitions of Shāpūr I. In its attempt to overarch multiple religious traditions and to combine them into a single universal religion, Manichaeism was the last great syncretistic religion of the Hellenistic period. Its failure to succeed on its own terms by the end of the third century marked a turning point in the history of religion. The new order of Late Antiquity was divided politically and


religiously among separate competing faiths, and Manichaeism survived as one of them.

Mani’s message was the usual gnostic dualism of Good and Evil, Light and Darkness, originally separate and opposed, which had become mixed in the world through the aggression of the evil principle. In an elaborate myth of cosmic conflict between good beings of light and evil beings of darkness, Mani explained how the sky and the earth had been made from the dismembered parts of the evil Archons, as in the Babylonian Creation Myth. The human soul was a particle of light which was trapped in an evil material body. The Manichaean mechanism, whereby the pure souls of the dead were drawn up from earth to pass through the sun and the moon by means of a revolving wheel with twelve jars, was adapted from the Chaldaean belief that the soul ascended through the signs of the zodiac. 86

Manichaeans were antinomian, elitist, and ascetic. From Christian gnosticism and possibly from Magians they acquired the attitude that Judaism was created by the Lord of Darkness (they called him Ahriman) and that Moses (the lawgiver) and the prophets were devils. 87 Because human procreation ensured the continued entrapment of Light in the material world, men and women initiates who were filled with Light (the Elect) were required to suppress physical desires by extreme forms of asceticism. They could not eat meat or drink wine, be married, work, own property, or injure any living thing. Although such forms of asceticism were not unknown in the Hellenistic period and are easily justified by the gnostic outlook, this combination of celibacy, vegetarianism, poverty, and indigence seems to have been a form of Indian asceticism that was introduced into western Asia by the Manichaeans.

The division of Manichaeans into the Elect and the Hearers came from the Marcionites. The Hearers could marry and own property, but were expected to devote themselves to righteous works, pray at night, and fast on Sundays; desist from idolatry, magic, lying, avarice, killing, adultery, and theft; and support the Elect by their charity. Hearers expected to be reincarnated according to their works. Manichaean worship was preceded by an ablution with water and consisted

87 Neusner, Talmudic Judaism, p. 147.
of twelve prostrations in the direction of the sun or the moon. The Elect worshiped seven times, the Hearers four times each day—at noon, between noon and sunset, just after sunset, and three hours after sunset. In the fourth century, Mārūthā of Maypherkat described them as people who considered marriage and food to be unclean and who worshiped the sun and moon; who believed in the power of the planets, the zodiac, lucky stars, and fate; and who were “totally zealous” about Chaldaean arts.”

They also engaged in group singing of hymns and followed a calendar of fasts, including one thirty-day fast ending with a feast in memory of Mani’s ascension. Under Mani’s successors a hierarchic organization of teachers, bishops, and elders was centered in Babylonia.

The challenge of Manichaeism was mainly in its social implications—in its rejection of material values, work, and violence. The Manichaean potential for bringing about the end of the world through racial suicide was an extreme expression of alienation and escape and provoked a reaction from Mazdaeans. The Zandiks, whom the Mazdaean priest, Kartir, claimed to suppress at the end of the third century, were Manichaens who put their own meaning into the Avestan texts through esoteric interpretation (M.P., zand). Zandiks are equated with sorcerers in the Mātikān and identified in the Dēnkart as people who believe that the body and soul are of different substances, and that at the end of the world Darkness will be separated from Light again. The nature of the threat is clear in the contrast made in the Dēnkart between Mazdaean and Manichaen positions. Whereas the Mazdaeans would drive the evil Lie (M.P., dru) from the body in order to make it a dwelling place for the yazdān, Mani considered the body as dru and the yazdān as imprisoned in it. Whereas Mazdaeans would achieve justice through the proper legal procedures of complaint and defense, Mani would do away with legal procedures, justice, and judges. Whereas Mazdaeans would marry their own female relatives, Mani declared that it was a sin for the Elect to marry any woman in order to have children. Whereas Mazdaeans would not accumulate wealth out of avarice, Mani would destroy the source of wealth, nour-


90 De Menasce, Dēnkart, pp. 117, 273; idem, “Problems” p. 222.
ishment, and subsistence by forbidding agriculture, but he would accumulate the souls of the Hearers out of avarice.91

Beginning in the late third century, Mazdaeans used the power of the state against Manichaeans whenever they could. Persecution drove Manichaeans eastward to central Asia and westward into the Byzantine empire, but they probably were never entirely suppressed in Iraq. There were Manichaeans at Kaskar in the fourth century and at Kirkuk in the fifth century. Manichaeans, or Manichaean influences, may have existed among the people at Nippur in about 600, and they were present at the Nestorian “disputation” at Mada’in in 612.92 There may also have been Manichaeans among the Arabs. ‘Amr ibn ‘Adī (ca. 270–300), the first amīr of the Banū Lakhm, protected and patronized them at Hira. It was rumored widely that there were Manichaeans among the members of the tribe of Quraysh at Makka who acquired their beliefs at Hira.93

Manichaeans began to return to Iraq after the conquest, probably during the second fitna. But a schism developed during the reign of al-Walīd (705–15) when Muslim armies were conquering central Asia and Manichaeans called the Dinawāriyya refused to recognize the authority of the leader in Iraq. A wealthy man called Zādh-Hurmizd, who had given up his possessions to become one of the Elect, was patronized by an official of al-Ḥajjāj at Mada’in who built a place of worship for him there. But Zādh-Hurmizd could not get the Dinawāriyya to obey him (their excuse was that he was not actually at Babil) until, on his deathbed, he appointed Miqlāṣ as his successor, when Khālid al-Qaṣrī was governor. However, Khālid al-Qaṣrī seems to have given another leader called Mihr some sort of recognition by bringing him to him on a mule, and by giving him a silver seal and embroidered garments. Manichaeans divided more or less permanently between the followers of Mihr, who defended tradition, and the followers of Miqlāṣ, who had a reputation for innovation and for relying on the patronage of rulers.94

93 Ibn Rustah, A’laq, p. 258; Maqdisī, al-Bad’ wa-t-ta’rikh, IV, 31; Tāj, p. 84; Tha’ālibī, Latā’if, p. 102; Tringham, Christianity, pp. 157–58; Widengren, Mani and Manichaeism, p. 119.
Manichaeans, along with other Zindiqs, began to be persecuted by Islamic authorities toward the end of the Marwânî period. Khâlid al-Qâšrî executed a Manichaean himself in 742 and a fullscale persecution followed in the early ‘Abbâsî period under al-Mahdi (775–85). Although other issues were involved in the eighth century, Islamic rulers seem to have applied the same sanctions for the same reasons against Manichaeans that had been applied by the Sasanians.  

GNOSTICS AND PAGANS

Marcionites and Daišanites brought gnostic dualism to Iraq, and Manichaeans helped to spread it. To a certain extent, gnostic ideas were compatible with the local form of paganism and local pagans who were inspired by gnostics began to form sects of their own. The presence of gnostic influences in and around Mada’in is shown by the formation of several minor sects there. Janji al-Jîikhâni, who is said to have worshiped idols and beat the gong in a temple of idols, abandoned paganism and started his own sect called the Janjayûn. He taught that something existed before Light and Darkness, that male and female forms were in the Darkness, and that when the female caught sight of the Light she rose up, like a worm, and was clothed with Light. She stole the Light with which she had been clothed, returned to her former place, and created the material world with it. To Janji’s followers, Fire was the queen of the world. Khusraw of Rumaqan came from a village on the Nahrawan canal in Jukha and said that while Light was asleep, Darkness came and took some Light. The Light created a being called the Son of the Living (Ibn al-Alâyâ) and sent him to retrieve the Light. The Son of the Living struck the Darkness, causing the creation of male and female beings and the material world. Khusraw required his followers to wear distinctive clothing, and he cursed and belittled Jesus. Although he produced no book, his words were used liturgically by his followers, who chanted them rhythmically. Their liturgy claimed that they had dug a channel in the world and had stolen a great treasure from it. Other sects such as the Máriyûn and Dashtiyûn drew on dualist doctrines but allowed sacrificial slaughter. A wealthy man called Arîdî, who lived at Mada’in, is said to have tricked a Jew into transcribing the books of the prophets and wise men for him. He founded a sect called the People Who Fear

95 Ibid., II, 803; B. Spuler, Iran in früh-islamischer Zeit (Wiesbaden, 1952), p. 207.
PAGANS AND GNOSTICS

Heaven and its members could still be found around Mada‘in in the tenth century.\textsuperscript{96}

Chaldaean groups that closely resembled the older pagans lived in lower Iraq and generally were designated as “Ṣābian” by Arabic writers. The Mughtasila were called the Ṣābians of the swamps and were numerous in the swamps and in the region of Dast-i Maysan. They were supposed to have been there before the Manichaeans and were still in the region in the tenth century. They were called Mughtasila because they performed ablutions and washed everything they ate. In the tenth century they were still venerating the stars and possessed idols. They also shared the Manichaean belief in two forms of existence but construed them as male and female principles and produced a Judaizing subsect.\textsuperscript{97} Mas‘ūdī tells of a Ṣābian sect called Kīmāriyyūn, which was located between Wasit and Basra on the edge of the swamps and practiced astrology, and of Chaldaeans who lived in villages in the swamps between Wasit and Basra.\textsuperscript{98}

Pagans in Iraq had definite affinities in matters of sacrifice and astrology to the great cult center at Harran in Byzantine Mesopotamia. Harran was the only major pagan cult center to survive the changes during Late Antiquity and existed well into the Islamic period with its temples, priests, and pagan rituals. The pagans at Harran exerted important religious and intellectual influences, and there is some indication that those influences were being felt in Iraq in the seventh century. The people at Shatru in Behqubadh in the 640s performed similar sacrifices. How such influences were exerted may be seen in a story about a Christian scholar called Ishāq from Peroz Shapur in Beth Nuhadhra. He went to Harran during the reign of Khusraw Parviz and then returned to his home town, where he became an interpreter (Ar. mufassir) in the local school. Although he maintained outward Christian appearances, he sacrificed to demons in secret.\textsuperscript{99}

The long-haired, white-robed pagans of Harran were famous for their observance of the planetary cult and for their practice of astrology. In the Islamic period, they worshiped the planetary gods in

\textsuperscript{96} Ibn an-Nadim, Fihrist, II, 808–15. The myth of Janjī al-Jukhānī has definite affinities to what is reported about the Valentinians (see Irenaeus, Contra Haereses, I, 5 in J.-P. Migne, Patrologiae Graecae, VII, cols. 493–96).

\textsuperscript{97} Ibn an-Nadim, Fihrist, II, 774, 811-12; Pedersen, “Ṣābians,” pp. 383–84.

\textsuperscript{98} Mas‘ūdī, Tanbih, p. 161; idem, Mur‘aj, I, 263. Pedersen (“Ṣābians” p. 390) suggests that Ṣābian was used in the sense of “gnostic” but Ya‘qūbī (Ta‘rikh, I, 179) used Ṣābian expressly for the astral cult.

geometrically shaped temples and kept their images in human form in underground chambers where they performed their rituals. Masʿūdī describes how they impressed their children by having hidden attendants make the idols "speak" through acoustic tubes. They worshiped three times daily after purifying themselves by performing multiple prostrations. They burned incense and made animal sacrifices of cattle, sheep, goats, and birds (mostly of cocks) to each of the planetary gods on its day of the week, and they observed a liturgical calendar of sacrifices, fasts, and feasts throughout the year. They observed the ancient New Year on the first of Nisan (April) with sacrifices; women wept for Tammuz in mid-July; and they fasted for twenty-one days in November, nine days in December, seven days in February, and thirty days in March, ending with the New Year celebration. They broke their fasts at night and ended them with feasts. A book of instructions taught them incantations and how to make knots and amulets.

They seem to have survived by adapting themselves to changing conditions. They provided their cult with a more intellectualized neo-Platonic overlay by recognizing and worshiping the First Cause as a supreme being. They also established a priestly hierarchy which corresponded to the nine spheres, and seem to have conformed to the general trend toward communal organization. It is probably significant that the list of their headmen begins in 693 with Thābit ibn Aḥūsā (693–717) during the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik, just after the end of the second fitna. But they did not call themselves Šābians until the ninth century.

MANDAEANS

The seventh century also saw the formation of the Mandaean sect in lower central Iraq, which emerged out of a combination of native pagan and gnostic traditions. The Mandaic dialect of eastern Aramaic was being written down in its own alphabet in about 600 on incantation bowls that have been found at Nippur, Bismaya, and Khuabir,


102 Masʿūdī, Murūj, II, 391.

103 Ibid., I, 109; idem, Tanbih, p. 162.

104 Ibn an-Nadim, Fihrist, II, 768.
although some of the bowls may have been produced after the con­quest. Although the bowl texts from Nippur are rather weak in the
gnostic content of the Mandaean religion, those from Kuabir are
more Mandaean.\textsuperscript{105} Nevertheless the Mandaean scripture, the \textit{Ginzâ Rbâ} (the “great treasure”), which contains accounts of creation, leg­
ends, and prayers, was written down in this dialect and script based
on older materials soon after the conquest.\textsuperscript{106}

Many of the Mandaic incantation texts seem to have been written
by people for themselves, and sorcerers are not very prominent in
them. Occasional pictures of a magician with his arms raised in in­
vocation or exorcism appear on some bowls.\textsuperscript{107} These texts contain
the usual contemporary magic in which the exorcist is a “physician”
who heals his clients by casting out the demons of disease or by
releasing the patient from curses. The exorcism in the Mandaic texts
is directed against the evil eye and the “bewitching female Liliths which
cause hateful dreams . . . to appear to the sons of man, dirtying them
and soiling them.”\textsuperscript{108} It is also directed against Abugdana, the king of
devils and the ruler of the Liliths, and against the demon Buznai who
separates men and women in a family.\textsuperscript{109} Male and female Liliths are
bound with the seal-ring of Solomon.\textsuperscript{110} Ishtar is called “the queen”
but is associated with the Liliths. Women make curses in her name;
she has three hundred and sixty amulet-spirits (days of the year, degrees
of the zodiac, or both); and there are eighty Ishtars and sixty male
temple spirits among the demons.\textsuperscript{111}

The planetary gods sometimes appear in these texts as demons, such
as Nergal of the wasp. They also appear in a Mandaean version of
the defeat of the planets, in which Shamish is called the Blind One
who is in charge of the spheres. However, all seven planets—Shamish
“in his brilliance” (the sun), Bel (Jupiter), Nergal (Mars), Kewan (Sat­
urn), Sin (the moon), Dlibat (Venus), and Nebo (Mercury)—are in­
voked on one bowl as friendly deities to strengthen the protective

2–4. Kuabir is on the right bank of the Euphrates about thirty miles above Musayyib.
\textsuperscript{106} M. Lidzbarski, \textit{Ginzä der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer} (Göttingen,
1925), p. 407. The claim that Kārtīr suppressed Mandaeans in the late third century
depends on identifying them as Nasoraeans (Boyce, \textit{Zoroastrians}, p. 111; Lidzbarski,
\textsuperscript{107} Yamauchi, \textit{Incantation Texts}, pp. 5, 15.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., pp. 16–18, 20, 175, 179, 213, 269.
\textsuperscript{110} Yamauchi, \textit{Incantation Texts}, pp. 233, 261.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., pp. 165, 169, 229, 275, 277.
spell.\textsuperscript{112} Myrtle, which was used for bridal wreaths, is mentioned in one of the rare positive appearances of Ishtar on a Mandaic bowl from Khuabir, on which she is invoked by saying, “You will come with this wine and perfume and myrtle.”\textsuperscript{113}

In addition to these old indigenous religious traditions, gnostic influences were beginning to be felt by the end of the Sasanian period by the people who used Mandaic. Except for the innovation “In the name of Life!” which is also used to begin sections of the Ginzä, there is not much Mandaean gnostic content in the incantation texts from Nippur.\textsuperscript{114} It is probably significant that the incantation which is the most Mandaean in content appears on one of the Syriac bowls from Nippur, which invokes the “Word of God” (ālahā) and the “mystery of heaven of the assembled waters and of earth.” Mandaeans used the Word of God to designate their supreme God, the King of Light, and the “mystery of heaven” is compared by Montgomery to the Mandaean Great Mystery who helped the angel (Uthra) Hibil-Ziwa in his descent to Hell in the Ginzä.\textsuperscript{115}

There is much more Mandaean content in the texts from Khuabir and on bowls of unknown provenance but from the same period. These texts contain references to Mandaean beings who occur in the cosmology of the Ginzä. The Great Jordan of Life, who was emanated from the King of Light, is mentioned. “The great, sublime Life,” who appears in the Ginzä as the “First Life,” is invoked in these texts; he was also emanated from the King of Light and was the deity that governed the world and the chief object of worship. Abatur, the “Third Life” in the chain of emanations and the being who weighs the souls of the dead in his scales against that of the Uthra Shitil, is also invoked, as is “Ptahil who built the house,” the Mandaean demiurge. There are references to the three hundred and sixty-six Uthrás, the Mandaean angels, and to specific Uthrás such as Hibil Uthra and Ziwar Uthra, “Son of Light.” Manda d-Hiia, the incarnation of the three Uthrás, Hibil, Shitil, and Anosh (Abel, Seth, and Enoch), is also invoked.\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., pp. 243, 253, 277.
\textsuperscript{114} Montgomery, \textit{Incantation Texts}, pp. 39, 252.
Because of this gnostic overlay, the seven planets and the twelve signs of the zodiac were considered to be demonic, and Mandaean versions of the defeat of the planets appear on the bowls from Khubair. One text describes four beings (Uthras?) who stand guard at the four corners of the universe, grasp the demons (planets) by the legs, and cast them into the black infernal depths. This image resembles the Qur’ānic description (Sūra 55:41) of how, on the day of judgment, sinners will be taken by their forelocks and feet and cast into Hell.\textsuperscript{117} This resemblance is due most probably to a common fund of expression, but the similarity is heightened by the recurring theme in the Mandaic texts that tells how six angels seized the raging, cursing women by their hair, broke their high horns, and bound them by their tresses to make them dissolve their curses. This might be compared to Qur’ān 96:15–18: “Nay, but if he cease not, We will seize him by the forelock—the lying, sinful forelock—then let him call upon his henchmen! We will call the guards of Hell.”\textsuperscript{118} There is another version of the defeat of the planets in these texts which describes how Nbat, the great primeval offspring, was sent by Life from the seven firmaments of brilliance and light to turn back the mysteries and to overthrow the buildings of the seven masters of the House (the planets). They are forced to accept the name of Nbat “because of the brilliance of the three Uthras who dwell on the Great Jordan.”\textsuperscript{119}

Although many of the names on the incantation bowls are Persian and have a Magian significance, there is not much Persian religious content in the magic texts themselves. There are demons of Iranian origin such as Abugdana, and a vague dualism is suggested in the formula “turn back the light on the darkness,” which was used to reverse a curse on a bowl from Khubair and might merely be gnostic. Personified Knowledge (\textit{gnosis}) is invoked under its Persian name of “Danish,” which recalls one of the Mazdaean \textit{yazdān} but is more likely to be gnostic.\textsuperscript{120}

There does not appear to be any evidence of gnostic hostility toward Judaism in these magic texts. Instead, the names of Jewish angels are as important for the removal of curses as are the Uthras. Some of the Uthras have Biblical names, and the angel Adonai, the head of all the temple spirits and leader of all the great chariots of darkness, is used in a positive way to remove curses. \textit{Amen} and \textit{selah} and the legal

\textsuperscript{117} Yamauchi, \textit{Incantation Texts}, pp. 40, 189, 193.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., pp. 173, 177, 183, 223, 267.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., pp. 187, 189, 191.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., pp. 38, 64, 205, 253.
terminology of the Jewish divorce formula that is used to drive off the Lilith occur in the Mandaic texts. However, the absence of Biblical quotations on Mandaic bowls, although such quotations occur on the Jewish Aramaic bowls from Nippur, seems to indicate that in a mixed town such as late Sasanian Nippur some sort of communal boundary existed between Jews and the people who were becoming Mandaeans. Sometime in the seventh century this passed over into a formal denunciation of other religions in the *Ginzā*.

The doctrines and liturgy in the *Ginzā* seem to have been written down shortly after the conquest. The *Ginzā* contains a list of Sasanian rulers that ends with  in 628, and in an apocalyptic context, it contains the “prophecy” that Arab kings would follow the Persian kings and rule for seventy-one years. Mandaeans, like Messianic Jews, associated the events at the end of the Sasanian period with the end of the world. They believed a great flood would occur on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and the land of Babel and Gawkai (Jukha) would be laid waste for fifty years. Babel would be invaded from the west and the east and twelve thousand captives would be taken from Gawkai. A false Messiah would come and rule the entire world. Sea water would spread inland. This apocalypse “predicts” the breakdown and overturning of the social order in the last days in terms resembling Magian apocalyptic literature. Fathers would have no authority over their sons, mothers over their daughters, or masters over their servants; the master would become a servant and the servant would become noble; the rich would become poor and the poor rich; temples would be destroyed; houses would become fields and fields would become houses.

However, the *Ginzā* is mostly liturgy and doctrine. Creation is a matter of successive emanations of beings of light, except that the planets and the signs of the zodiac are created by incestuous sexual generation. Humans contain a particle of divine light in their material bodies; salvation is *gnosis* of its celestial origin, and redemption is its escape at death to rejoin the world of light. The planetary deities survived among Mandaeans as forces governing the days of the week.

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121 Ibid., pp. 46–47, 64, 155, 295.
122 Ibid., pp. 33–34, 45.
125 For the modern Mandaeans signs of the zodiac and qualities of the planets, see Drower, *Mandaeans*, pp. 74–81.
The sorcerers became white-robed, hereditary, sacrament-administering priests.¹²⁶ The Ginza describes a ceremony that involved entering the house of Tammûz, sitting there for twenty-eight days while slaughtering sheep, mixing ingredients in bowls, offering cakes, and mourning in the house of Dlibat.¹²⁷ The images of their gods with their hands folded close to their bodies were hidden in underground chambers.

Mandaean sects lived along the edges of the swamps and at some point seem to have merged with the Mughtasila or a similar group that had a tradition of ritual ablutions. The many aspects of Mandaean ritual that seem to be of Magian origin were probably acquired from Magians around Basra and the borders of southeastern Iraq.¹²⁸ The combined evidence of the incantation bowls and the Ginza suggests that the Mandaean sect was formed during the seventh century among Chaldaeans who used the Mandaic dialect by combining gnostic ideas with pagan traditions and by writing down their doctrines in the local language.

So pagans survived by becoming gnostics and by forming their own communities. All of these groups had incorporated some form of gnostic dualism which emphasized the negative, evil aspect of the power of the planets at the same time that it preserved the belief in it. Gnosticism may have been attractive as an escape from fatalism to those who believed in fatalism the most. The appeal of gnosticism may also be a measure of alienation among a declining pagan population. But in this way the astral cult, idols (out of sight), and sacrifice were preserved.

PAGAN SURVIVALS IN NON-PAGAN RELIGIONS

In addition to surviving among pagans and gnostics the third major way in which pagan ideas and practices survived was within non-pagan religious traditions. This usually took the form of a continuing belief in demons, and of resorting to magic to deal with them. Magians, Jews, and Christians all believed that demons were real. One of the Jewish magical texts from Nippur seeks protection against the Liliths which appear in dreams at night or in sleep by day, and the rabbis held that it was unwise to have sexual relations in the daytime because

¹²⁶ Ibid., pp. xxiii, 146, 152, 165–66; Yamauchi, Incantation Texts, p. 16.
¹²⁷ Lidzbarski, Ginza, p. 447.
it might attract demons.¹²⁹ Such fears were increased by the celibacy of Christian monks. According to current theories, the reason for night-long vigils lay in the danger of dreams in which the demons would incite the sleeping monks—the chaste to lust, the fasting to eat. In an apotropaic fashion, the recitation of the Psalms during the monks’ nightly vigils was believed to turn back the attacks of demons. The only safe time of day was between dawn and sunrise and between sunset and darkness, when the demons were occupied with their own business. The practice by Christian monks of fasting all day long and of only eating in the evening after sunset was related to the popular belief that the first hour of the night was the time when the demons performed their own worship and ceased to do evil and harm to people.¹³⁰ Magians also relied on the apotropaic effect of rituals, such as the Gāhānbār and Myazd feasts, and of consanguinous marriage to prevent the demon of anger from causing evil.¹³¹ There seems to be a similar attitude in Qurʾān 29:45 that “worship preserves from lewdness and iniquity.”

There is ample evidence that many Christians simply continued to do pagan things. The fifth-century Rules of Rabbūla, bishop of Edessa (411/12–35) for the Bnai Qeyāmā, specified that diviners, wizards, those who wrote charms and anointed men and women, and those who went about under the pretense of practicing medicine should be expelled from places controlled by Christians.¹³² The twenty-third canon of the Synod of Mar Aba in 544 sought to outlaw auguries, divination, spells, tied charms, amulets, incantations and the cult of the demons—“all things which constitute the service of the devil and . . . which appertain to paganism.”¹³³ The reference was obviously to cryptopagans within the Nestorian Church, as was recognized in 554 by the nineteenth canon of the Synod of Joseph, which was directed against Christians who “devote themselves willingly to diabolic works, strange speech [pagan incantations], tied charms, amulets, auguries, and divinations, or say that there are destinies, fates and horoscopes, or observe the time and moments to perform their actions.”¹³⁴ Like-

¹³² Voobus, *Syriac and Arabic Documents*, p. 40.
¹³⁴ Ibid., pp. 107, 363–64.
wise, the third canon of the Synod of Ezechiel in 576 spoke of Christians who sought out magicians or fortunetellers for divination, brought them into their houses, and did strange things under the pretext of purification. They made libations of water according to the cult of the demons as those who served the demons had taught them; they carried amulets, tied charms, and talismans on themselves; and they dared to go straight from demonic rituals to the church to serve or to partake of the eucharist. In 585 the fourteenth canon of the Synod of Isho'yahbh I condemned Christians who “devote themselves to the error of divination, auguries, incantations, magic knots, and amulets, or who devote themselves to some occult mystery or who watch the movements of bodies and the cries of birds.” In 588 the Rules of Dadhisho' treated a monk who went to soothsayers or charmers the same as one who consorted with heretics. Both were to be expelled. In Beth Nuhadhra in the 620s, Rabban Hûrmûzd found it necessary to forbid the use of iron talismans, especially for women in childbirth; the use of the cross as an ornament for children; and even the use of pellets of earth mixed with holy water or oil called ḫnana (Syr.).

Although these pronouncements are rather polemic in nature, there is no question that pagan attitudes and practices survived among Nestorians in the late Sasanian period. This was, after all, one of the consequences of rapid conversion. They even included pagan sacrifice. Ishâq of Peroz-Shapur has already been noted. In about 596 a deacon at Nasibin was caught sacrificing a white cock outside the city. This situation also led to accusations of secret idolatry. Abraham of Beth Rabban, who performed his devotions before an image of Christ and a sign of the cross, provoked opposition from those who suspected that an idol was hidden behind the cross. Nestorians accused Monophysites of keeping a brass idol with striped beryls for eyes underneath a shrine at the monastery of Mar Mattai.

Such practices survived among Nestorians after the conquest. With his usual exaggeration, Yōhannan bar Penkayē claimed that sorcery was more widespread in his own time than it ever had been in ancient

135 Ibid., pp. 116, 375–76.
136 Ibid., pp. 150, 411. The same canon was also directed against those who used the bones of saints as amulets.
137 Vööbus, Syriac and Arabic Documents, p. 168.
139 Guidi, Chronica Minora, I, 18; II, 17.
140 Vööbus, School of Nisibis, pp. 150–51.
141 Budge, Rabban Hûrmûzd, I, 81; II, 120.
Egypt, and that augurs and wizards were more numerous among con­temporary Christians than they had been in Babylonia. At the end of the eighth century, Nestorian legislation against sorcerers, who were called devil-worshipers, described contemporary practices. People were still going to sorcerers to cure illness in the family. A man would go to a sorcerer to get the permission of a girl’s parents for marriage, and both men and women would give themselves to demons. A priest, deacon, or layman who was a sorcerer, soothsayer, or exorcist would write an amulet and mumble a devilish sorcery incantation over it. Both astronomy and astrology were included in this catalogue.

In most cases the acceptability of magic depended on whether it was performed in the name of demons or in the name of God. Christian saints combatted demons and sorcery by dispensing ḫenana and holy oil. Jewish rabbis possessed supernatural powers which they exercised through prayer because of their knowledge of the Torah and their personal regimen. They had the power of the evil eye, they could bless and curse, they could interpret dreams, and they could force demons to obey them by the power of the Torah, such as the demon who fetched water from the river for Rabbi Papa. Jews utilized necklace charms, amulets containing letters of the Holy Name and passages of scripture, and the seal of Solomon, and they invoked the angels to drive out or to ward off demons.

THERAPEUTIC MAGIC AND REDEMPTIVE HEALING

The belief that demons caused evil and sickness belonged to the most ancient indigenous religious traditions in Iraq and was associated with Sumerian and Babylonian ideas of redemptive healing and revelation. These concepts go back to the cult of the Sumerian god Ea (later identified as Marduk) “the Physician,” who redeemed people who were tormented by the demons of sickness. His cult included the use of ablutions and “the Oil of Life” to rescue the sick from the power of demons and to heal them. His worshipers hoped to achieve immortality by eating the herb of life or the fruit of the tree of life.

142 Mingana, Sources syriques, p. 179.
143 Sachau, Rechtsbücher, II, 130–33.
144 Neusner, History, pp. 175, 183, 186–88; idem, Talmudic Judaism, p. 58; Rodkin­son, Talmud, XII, “Baba Metzia,” 213.
As it was used in this cult, the story of Adapa's rise to Heaven, where he was served the food and water of life, anointed with oil, and dressed in splendid robes—all rites performed at the coronation of Sumerian kings—gave ordinary people the hope of sharing such royal honors.  

This theme survived as the gnostic ascent of the soul, which contributed materially to the Manichaean theme of the investiture of the prophet in Heaven. The idea that release from a curse heals the soul appears on Mandaic incantation bowls, where its immediate inspiration was probably gnostic.

Ideas about redemptive, therapeutic magic were shared by Magians in a highly developed form. Ahriman used disease as one of his weapons to corrupt the creation of Ohrmazd; therefore sickness and health were equated with evil and righteous prosperity, respectively, and had cosmic significance. In the Yashts, prayers and spells secured victory, healing, and good fortune, and many of the Avestan deities and beings were called “healer.” In the Vidēvdāt, holy words performed a healing magic against disease, death, sorceresses, and sorcerers; this was the highest form of healing because it cured a righteous person on the inside (the Middle Persian commentary states, “even if it does no good, it does no harm”). In the later literature, such as the Dēnkart, the “physician of the soul” was a virtuous, intelligent teacher who memorized the Avesta, studied the Zand, meditated on the yazdān, and was able to heal the souls of people from sin and their bodies from sickness, and could cure the world through Dēn.

The demonic theory of illness as well as the means to deal with it were available to Jews through the Bible, but in Iraq this was probably reinforced by local pagan tradition. The Talmud supports the practice of therapeutic magic with Biblical quotations such as Eccles. 10:11, “If the serpent bites because no one uttered a charm,” and refers to the practice of mumbling the verse, “I will put none of those diseases upon you, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I the Lord am your physician” (Exod. 15:26) over a wound. Rabbi Ashi (d. ca. 427) spoke of a spirit (Heb. rūah) or demon of leprosy, and a difference of opinion existed between Rav (d. 247) who claimed that sickness was caused by the evil eye and Samuel (d. 254) who said that

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146 Widengren, Mani, pp. 14–15.
147 Yamauchi, Incantation Texts, pp. 175, 179, 269.
sickness and death came from the air, i.e. that they were due to "natural" causes. The legendary Rabbi Joshua bar Peraḥia, who was also called Jesus the Healer, was considered to be a potent source for charms to be used against demons. His power is explained on one of the Syriac incantation bowls from Nippur by an ascent and investiture in Heaven in which he "passed over from this world and climbed above you [the demons] to the height [of Heaven] and learned all counter-charms, a ruin to destruction." Considering the popularity of therapeutic magic among Jews, it is not surprising to find Thaʿalībī referring to "a Jew who lived by practicing medicine as well as sorcery."

Concepts of redemptive healing were also current among Christians in Iraq, although, again, the image of Christ as healer was already available in the Gospels. But the conversion of pagans in the late Sasanian period reinforced this picture of Christ and gave it a more Mesopotamian flavor. In a letter written in 585, Ḫishōʾyahbh I speaks of "Jesus our vivifier, the heavenly physician who has healed the wounds and sores of our race free of charge by the remedies of his mercy."

In much the same terms Thomas of Margha describes Cyprian of Beth Magoshe as a wise physician able to heal people of their sicknesses without payment. The recurring theme in Christian hagiography, whereby monks and saints perform miracles of healing by casting out the offending demons, testifies to the survival of these ideas among Christians.

Similar concepts were known to Muslims. The Qurʾān records Muhammad's vision of a great revelation at the boundary of the Garden (Sūra 53:13–18), which Muslims came to interpret as an ascension (Ar. miʿrāj), and Sūra 17:82 says, "We reveal of the Qurʾān that which is a healing and a mercy for believers." This redemptive emphasis is retained in a declaration ascribed to the Kufan Ḥārījī Ḥayyān ibn Ţabyān at Rayy in 662 that God heals the hearts of believers by

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150 Neusner, History, p. 12; Rodkinson, Talmud, XII, "Baba Metzia," 285.
152 Thaʿalībī, Gharar, p. 626.
153 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 191, 450.
154 Thomas of Margha, Governors, II, 593. It is worth noting that the Syriac term for physician (āsyā) comes from the Akkadian asū, which is a loanword from Sumerian azu; see R. Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom; a Study in early Syriac tradition (London, 1975), p. 199.
means of right guidance. Muslims practiced their own kind of therapeutic magic sanctioned by *hadith*, which declared that there was no harm in a spell used for healing as long as it was not polytheistic.

Obviously the belief that demons caused sickness and evil was widely held. Consequently the practice of redemptive, therapeutic magic was equally widespread. This belief also had an ethical dimension because of the equation of sickness with sin. Demons personified the evil element in human nature and were the cause of the evil committed by people. Jews disapproved of irate behavior because it was caused by the misleader, and if you allowed the misleader to dwell in your heart it could lead you to idolatry. The Talmud also contains the concept of an evil angel hidden in the heart of a person who tempts him in this world and bears witness against him in the next. In the terms of this thought-world, redemption was a matter of expelling the demon who caused a person to sin, and the Mazdaean Aturpat spoke of driving the *druj* from the body to make it a habitation for the *yazdān*.

Similar ideas can be found among Christians. Although Aphrahat held that people were not entirely sinful by nature, but that Adam had set a bad example by his sin, he saw grace as an indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in a believer through baptism. The presence of the Spirit preserved a believer from the attack of Satan, increased a believer’s ethical awareness, and motivated him to achieve righteousness. If the Spirit was disappointed, it would leave and rejoin Christ and accuse the person in whom it had dwelt. Theodore of Mopsuestia opposed original sin and argued that Adam had been created mortal but that by his fall he increased the human inclination to sin. People were therefore mortal but were not born as sinners, and sinned through acts of will. Thus the Spirit increased its operation in believers but would depart from a sinner. Theodore’s doctrines were taken to Nasibin by Narsai in the 470s and were incorporated into Nestorian liturgy in the sixth century. According to Nestorian doctrine, baptism removed past sins but not the human inclination to sin; sacraments were therefore still necessary, and the full grace of the Spirit was

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156 Guillaume, *Traditions*, p. 119.
postponed until resurrection.161 There were others who were not willing to wait that long. Montanists in Phrygia from the second until the eighth century and Adoptionists at Antioch from the third until the fifth century claimed that inspiration by the Holy Spirit or the Word of God made their leaders a kind of Christ. Women were prominent in both of these movements.162

The operation of the Holy Spirit was combined with a demonic explanation of evil by the Meššallyānē ("those who pray") or Euchites who appeared among the monks of Mesopotamia and Lesser Armenia in the late fourth century. They were generally gnostic with Manichaean ascetic overtones, but at the root of their doctrine was the belief in an indwelling demon which each person inherited from his parents at birth and which drove him to sin. The demon could only be exorcised by unceasing prayer assisted by extreme asceticism. When the struggle became violent "they were seen to make gestures as though shooting arrows, or to jump into the air with enormous leaps, sometimes even beginning to dance."163 Once a person was freed from his demon, its place was taken by the Holy Spirit whose presence liberated the body from slavery to passions. Those who had been freed regarded themselves as beyond the need for sacraments, underwent an inner progress towards spiritual perfection, experienced visions, and called themselves Christ, a patriarch, or an angel. In such a state it was impossible for them to sin and they could do as they liked. According to Isaac of Nineveh, the Meššallyānē said that the perfect were "exempt from varying states and that they stay in one class, without liability of deviation and without the impulse of the affections."164 He also records their claim that the perfect were able to pray a spiritual prayer when the mind passed from the psychic into the spiritual state, where the soul was the image of the godhead through unification with the incomprehensible, and dwelt in ecstasy.165

The antinomian rejection by the Meššallyānē of fasting, prayer, and

162 Runciman, Manichee, pp. 18–20.
163 L. Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church from its Foundation to the End of the Fifth Century (New York, 1912–1924), II, 461.
164 Isaac of Nineveh, "Mystic Treatises," p. 333.
the sacraments of the church was basically a reaction to authority. It served the same purpose among sixth and seventh-century Nestorian monks as the Messianic movements did among the Jews. They rejected baptism because it only removed past sins but did nothing about the demon that was the cause of sin. The Synod of Ezechiel accused the Meṣallyānē in 576 of denying justice, of saying that there was no reward for good or punishment for evil, and of opposing the Holy Spirit, the author of the laws. For the Meṣallyānē, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit meant that they were a law unto themselves. The seriousness of their challenge to church authority lay in the fact that it was made at the very time that the Nestorians were attempting to exert church discipline over monks and laity through canon law and monastic regulations. The Meṣallyānē wandered about from place to place with no possessions, living on alms and refusing any labor because their occupation was prayer. They attracted women and broke up marriages. Men and women lived and slept together in the open or in monasteries and practiced spiritual marriage. The eighth canon of the Synod of Ḫishoʿyahhh I described them in 585 as men who wandered about without a monastery, entered cities and towns, and rejected fasting, prayer, and the sacraments; they were described as men who went about with their wives in religious garb or as men and women who lived together in a monastery.

By the last quarter of the sixth century, the Meṣallyānē in Iraq were becoming a problem serious enough to be noticed by Nestorian synods. They were in Adiabene in 585 and on Mt. Sinjar in 596. They are even said to have accompanied Gregory of Kaskar in his missionary work among the villages of Kaskar and Maysan. Babai the Great was commissioned by the bishops of Nasibin, Adiabene, and Kirkuk to inspect the monasteries and to expel the Meṣallyānē. He also wrote a tract against them and called them diabolic sorcerers whose prayer was a demonic operation and was an association and mixing with demons. Nestorian monks continued to be accused of being Meṣallyānē through the seventh century. For this reason, Aphni-Māran was expelled from the monastery of Beth ‘Abhe in about 660. When

166 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 115, 375.
167 Ibid., pp. 144, 406.
168 Ibid., pp. 146, 407; Guidi, Chronica Minora I, I, 18; II, 17.
169 Vööbus, School of Nisibis, p. 209.
Hōnanīshō was in retirement at the monastery of Mar Yūnān across the Tigris from Mawsil from 693 until 701, three excessively ascetic monks at the monastery of Rabban Ślibhā were accused of being Mšallyānē. As late as 790 the fourth canon of the Synod of Timothy required that a bishop, monk, or layman who was accused of being one of the Mšallyānē should not be allowed to participate in the mass until he had anathematized their beliefs in writing.

ASTRAL FATALISM

The belief that divine spirits and demons caused or encouraged people to be good or evil tended to reduce a person’s responsibility for his or her own deeds almost as much as the astral fatalism to which it was closely related. In its most straightforward form, the central ethical premise of contemporary chaldiotā was that a person’s character was determined by his horoscope at birth and throughout his life, that people were destined to be good or evil. This kind of fatalism was popular with the upper classes in the late Sasanian period. Successful, powerful people used it to justify their status. Wretched people sought a way to escape fate through magic or gnosis. In general, fatalism favored the status quo and the social and political power structure by justifying success and excusing failure. But it also raised the issue of human responsibility and historical causation. Because of the reactions it provoked, it is impossible to overestimate the impact of astral fatalism on contemporary thought.

Among the Magians this issue took the form of a controversy between Zurvanites and Mazdaeans. The former were close to contemporary Chaldaean fatalism and emphasized the impersonal, blind justice of the God of Time. There was almost certainly a connection between the submission to fate favored by Zurvanites and royal absolutism at the end of the Sasanian period. In opposition to them, Mazdaeans stressed the goodness of Ohrmazd and the responsibility of individuals to choose between good and evil, as well as the appropriate reward or punishment. They would admit only that fate determined the vicissitudes of material existence and insisted that a person’s spiritual fate was in his own hands.

Gnostics provided the same sort of dualist explanation for good and evil and tended to accept the stars’ control over material existence.

The Dasišanite position was exactly the same as the Mazdaean, and the spiritual elitism of Marcionites and Manichaeans suggests that whether or not a person could be saved was determined by fate at birth. Mārūthā of Maypherkat treated Manichaeans as astral fatalists and accused Dasišanites of denying the Creator the power to rule the world.

In opposition to Chaldaeans, Magians, and gnostics, Jews and Christians emphasized the kind of ethical monotheism that made only one God responsible for creating, sustaining, and judging people. They insisted that God was not only omnipotent but also good and just. Consequently it was necessary to reconcile these attributes of God with enough human ability to act, so that God’s justice in meting out rewards and punishments could be preserved. The connection between fatalism and this combination of ideas is explicit in a series of hymns composed in the fourth century by Ephrēm Syrus in opposition to astrology and in imitation of Barqaisan. In these hymns fatalism, horoscopes, and Chaldaean astrology are associated with a denial of the human freedom to act in a responsible way, whereby fate can be used to excuse murder and adultery. Against the power of fate, Ephrēm emphasized that one God is responsible for both good and evil, that God is not evil because of that, and that justice is important.173 Against Marcion, who had divided the cosmic responsibility for good, evil, and justice and had identified the Judaeo-Christian God with the Just One who rewarded righteousness and punished evil, Ephrēm stressed the mercy and bounty of God towards everyone in this world, even towards the ungrateful Marcionites.174 Elsewhere Ephrēm argued that sin was not inherent in human nature, that children were innocent at birth, that sin resulted from free acts of will, and that it was overcome by the power granted to the will by the grace of God.175 The possibility that Jews were concerned with some of the same issues is suggested by the language of the prayer given by the exilarch Mar Zuṭra I at the house of Rabbi Ashi in the early fifth century after Rabbi Ashi had suffered a bereavement: “God of truth, true judge, who judges in righteousness and takes away injustice, who rules over his world to do as he pleases in it, for all his ways are justice.”176

Judging by the number of polemic tracts in the list of ‘Abhd Ḫishō’,

173 Assemani, BO, I, 122–27.
176 Neusner, Talmudic Judaism, p. 67.
these issues were important among Christians in the Sasanian empire in the sixth century. Gabriel, bishop of Hurmuz, wrote against the Manichaecs and Chaldaecs in about 540; Daniel (ca. 550) wrote against Marcionites, Manichaecs, and Chaldaecs; Būd Periodeutes (ca. 570), the translator of Kalīla wa Dimna, wrote against Manichaecs and Marcionites; a certain Ara wrote against the Magians and Bardaiṣan; Bar Qūṣīn (ca. 570) wrote two books against the Chaldaecs; and Aḥudemmeh composed two orations on whether the will has power in (its) nature. The Synod of Ezechiel in 596 expressed its detestation and rejection of the “diabolic fictions” of the followers of Mani, Marcion, and Bardaiṣan. The terminology used by the catholicos Isho’yabhh I in a letter written in 585, in which he calls God the “good governor,” the “just judge,” and the “wise provider for this world and the future world,” appears to be aimed at the Marcionites.

Nestorian objections to astral fatalism seem to parallel those of the Magians. Both opposed the fatalistic denial of the human ability to act in a way making people truly responsible for their actions. In addition, this issue was related to the internal factional politics of the Nestorian Church, where the monks and clerics who were writing the tracts against fatalism were ranged against aristocratic Christian Persian laymen who favored astrology and were themselves court astrologers and physicians. In about 596 Gabriel bar Rufina was expelled from Nasibin because he knew too much about the course of the stars and the zodiac. The storm broke out over Ḥnana of Adiabene who was director of the school at Nasibin from about 571 until his death in 610. He was allied to the Persian aristocrats in the church and favored the position on original sin which became normal for most Christians. The Synod of Sabhrīshōʿ in 596, in pointed reference to Ḥnana, excommunicated those who believed that Adam had been created immortal, that human nature was sinful, and that people did not sin of their own free will. Babai the Great was commissioned to purge the monasteries of the followers of Ḥnana along with the

178 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 114, 373.
179 Ibid., pp. 193, 453.
181 Vööbus, “Theological Anthropology,” pp. 122. But Ḥnana is also quoted as saying that God is responsible for the virtues of people but they are responsible for their own sins; see A. Scher, “Traites d’Iṣaï le docteur et de Ḥnana d’Adiabene,” PO 7 (1911), 81.
Maṣallyānē in the second decade of the seventh century. Babai accused Ḥēnanā of chaldiōtā and claimed that he had said that “destiny and fate are the cause of everything and that everything is guided by the stars”; that a person’s horoscope (Syr. bēth mawlideh) determined whether he fornicated or committed adultery; that he denied judgment, punishment, and the resurrection of the body; and that he said that only the soul is saved. Whether or not Ḥēnanā actually said such things, it is significant that Babai expressed the threat he posed in these terms for the purposes of polemic. Ḥēnanā did employ an allegorical interpretation of scripture to explain its spiritual meaning that was dangerously close to the double truth of the Marcionites and to the esoteric interpretation of the Zandiks.

Qur’ānic assertions of the omnipotence and providence of God and of human responsibility were directed against a similar kind of fatalism among pagan Arabs. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that in this respect Muslims originally participated in a generally contemporary reaction against the belief in fate at the end of the Sasanian period. The Qur’ān insists on the power (Ar. qadar) of God to determine events on earth, on His sustenance (M.P. rizq) of His creatures, and on His justice in meting out rewards and punishments. There is a special point to the way the Qur’ān accuses Korah (Qārūn) of sinning by exulting in his wealth and claiming that it had been given to him because of knowledge that he possessed. The point is clear that it is God, not people or fate, who causes whatever success or failure is experienced on earth and that God’s omnipotence, not impersonal fate or any “special knowledge,” determines events. God is the Lord of Sirius (Sūra 53:49) and magic only works if He permits it (Sūra 2:102). Sūra 5:63–64 emphasizes God’s omnipotence against rabbis and priests who excuse their evil-doing by saying that God’s hand is tied. The Qur’ān goes so far as to assert the complete power of God even to predetermine unhappiness and misery:

No disaster occurs on earth or to yourselves that is not in a Book before We bring it about. Behold! that is easy for God—so that you should not grieve for the sake of that which has escaped you, nor


\[183\] Vööbus, School of Nisibis, pp. 243–44.

\[184\] Qur’ān, 28:76–82. Tha’ālibī (Laṭā’if, p. 9) explains that his knowledge was the study of alchemy.
exult because of that which has been given. God does not love proud boasters.\textsuperscript{185}

In the Qur'ān, divine omnipotence is reconciled with human responsibility and ability to act by the concepts of guidance and misguidance. Both are the consequence of human choice; divine guidance or misguidance follows human acts of belief or unbelief. But according to the choice, God sets his seal on the hearts of people and destines them for reward or punishment. Except for unwilled offenses, people are rewarded or punished for the good or evil that they perform.\textsuperscript{186} Thus God does not punish people unjustly. It is said of the great sinners of the Qur'ān—the tribes of A'ād and Thamūd, Korah, Pharaoh, and Haman—that “it was not God who wronged them but they wronged themselves.”\textsuperscript{187} Misguidance is further removed from the direct responsibility of God by making it the work of a demon: “And he whose sight is dim to the remembrance of the Beneficent, We assign to him a devil who becomes his comrade. And Behold! They surely turn them from the way of God and yet they think that they are rightly guided.”\textsuperscript{188}

This is so close to the indwelling demon of the Mšallyānē that it must belong to the same thought-world. But it should be noted that according to the Qur'ān it is God who has the ultimate responsibility for assigning the demon as a consequence of unbelief. This demon is not inherited from a person's parents at birth.

But, in fact, the concepts of guidance and misguidance tend to circumscribe the ability of a person to act as a free moral agent and to reduce personal responsibility to the choice between good and evil. These concepts were well developed among Magians and Christians in the form of a conflict between yazdān and dēvs or angels and demons in the world who concentrated on protecting or misleading individual people. Nestorian monks were preserved from the attacks of demons by a guardian angel described by Isaac of Nineveh as “the intelligible power which constantly covers a man and broods over him, removing from him any injury or accident that threatens to approach his body

\textsuperscript{185} Qur'ān, 57:22–23. The idea that the course of events on earth corresponded to and was determined by the preexisting record in a heavenly book goes back ultimately to the Babylonian tablets of destiny, which were read each New Year and gave the fates for the year.

\textsuperscript{186} Ibid., 53:31–32. See also Montgomery Watt, \textit{Free Will}, pp. 12–16.

\textsuperscript{187} Qur'ān, 29:40. There is a similar idea in Isaac of Nineveh, who says “may we be deemed worthy of life everlasting before we appear before the King, and He puts His seal on the book” (Isaac of Nineveh, “Mystic Treatises,” p. 294).

\textsuperscript{188} Qur'ān, 43:36–37.
or soul.’”\(^{189}\) Dadhīshō' Qatrāyā speaks of “the holy angel who accompanies you and guards you by the order of God, during all the time you are in your cell . . . and the demon that accompanies you and troubles you.”\(^{190}\) The angel transmitted the will of God to the monk in his cell while the demon stood outside the cell. Elsewhere, he says, “Look also in your mind at the angel who is at your right hand and at the demon who is standing at your left hand.”\(^{191}\) The ability of a person to act and, therefore, to be responsible for his actions in a way that would preserve the justice of God in rewarding or punishing him for his actions was really confronted and compromised by two different systems. One was the nontheistic, impersonal, mechanistic fatalism associated with the Chaldaeans, Zurvanites, and pre-Islamic dahr. The other was an array of personified forces—angels, devils, and ultimately the divine power (qadar) of God—to determine events.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus pagan beliefs and customs survived as an element in other religious traditions. By the end of the Sasanian period, the pagan legacy among Jews and Christians consisted mainly of therapeutic magic based on the demonic theory of illness and concepts of redemptive healing. The way these beliefs and practices were sanctioned by what was already in the Bible should be recognized as an example of the importance of reinforcement for continuity through transmission. Pagan traditions also survived because a great many pagans became Christians in the sixth and seventh centuries. This was one of the most significant changes during this period, but the appropriation of the sites of pagan temples and shrines for churches and monasteries ensured a continuity of sacred locations. The rapid conversion of pagans to Christianity also meant that pagan concepts of demonology, redemptive healing, astrology, the use of amulets, secret sacrifice, libations, and incantations survived among cryptopagans who were nominal Christians. In a different way, astral paganism continued to be a powerful intellectual force because of the reactions it provoked.

The second major way paganism survived was by organizing sects of its own under gnostic influences. Apart from the importance of

\(^{189}\) Isaac of Nineveh, “Mystic Treatises,” p. 262.

\(^{190}\) Mingana, Woodbrooke Studies, VII, 126, 236–37.

\(^{191}\) Ibid., VII, 139, 245.
gnosticism and syncretism in the formation of these sects, the pagan component within them allowed the survival of some of Iraq’s most ancient religious traditions.

The third way was the survival of pagan traditions of magic and astrology in their own right among the people who remained pagan. In general, the most important legacies of paganism in post-Sasanian Iraq were its demonic theories of illness and causation, therapeutic magic, and astral fatalism. Otherwise, among unorganized pagans who survived into the Islamic period, the old religious traditions were receding to the level of folklore. The gods were transformed into demons, and what remained of the old cult survived in folksongs and the veneration of sacred trees.
The major religious change in Iraq in the seventh century was the arrival of Muslims who replaced Magians as the ruling minority. Muslims brought with them the foundations of their own religious law and doctrine, a form of congregational worship, and a place for worship (the masjid). The continuing development of their own vocations of religious leadership, education, legal administration, and forms of piety combined their own background with local patterns of organization and practice. Muslims also brought with them the concept of a religious community, replacing the bonds of kinship with a bond of faith.

Every first-generation Muslim was a former pagan, Magian, Jew, or Christian. Because of the mixed composition of the Muslim population, it was inevitable that the ideas and attitudes brought by converts from their former religious traditions would affect the way they dealt with religious issues as Muslims. At first the Muslim population was virtually identical with the army and its dependents who settled in the garrison towns. It consisted of Arabs who had migrated from the peninsula; local Iraqi Arabs who had been attracted to the army by prospects of booty and a desire to be on the winning side, especially after the Battle of Qadisiyya; Persian soldiers such as the Hamrāʾ and the Asāwīra, who joined the Muslims in Iraq after the early victories; captive Arab and Persian children who were raised as mawālī; and members of the native landed aristocracy. As a society of converts, Muslims were encouraged to establish their own identity and discouraged by the Qurʾān itself (Sūra 5:56) from having friendly relationships with Jews and Christians. Nor could Muslims inherit from non-Muslims. When the aunt of al-Ashʿath ibn Qays, Warāʾa bint Maʿdīkarib, who had married a Jew, died without children, ʿUmar I is said to have refused to let al-Ashʿath inherit from her, saying “There is no inheritance between people of two different faiths.”

Communal solidarity was expressed publicly in daily or weekly

1 Ibn Rustah, Aʾlāq, p. 205.
congregational worship. The *masjid* tended to replace the tribal *majlis* as the center of group life. The tribal and congregational *masjids* of the garrison cities were places of worship, political assembly and debate, commerce, judgment, and education. Originally they were not sanctified buildings in the same sense that pagan temples, Magian fire-temples, or Christian churches were, but were more like Jewish synagogues. They were only established at places where Muslims settled in Iraq. Because Muslims at first tended to cluster in newly founded settlements, there was no immediate continuity of sacred location. Existing shrines were not appropriated for Islamic worship. At Kufa, for instance, the monastic buildings of *ʿAqola* either survived with their former occupants or were put to secular use.

There is only one example of veneration by Muslims at an existing shrine at the time of the conquest. This incident is important because it strengthens the impression that at first Muslims only accepted things that were supported or justified by the Qurʾān. In this case, reinforcement was provided by the affinity between the Qurʾānic and Talmudic accounts of how Abraham had abandoned or broken the idols and was thrown into a fiery furnace at Kutha. During the conquest of Iraq, when the Muslims were pursuing the Sasanian army to Madaʾin after the Battle of Qadisiyya, Saʿd ibn ʿAbī Waqqāṣ is said to have taken time to stop at Kutha. There he found people who proclaimed Abraham, went to the place where Abraham was supposed to have sat, saw the house where Abraham had been imprisoned, and prayed there for Muḥammad, Abraham, and the prophets. This tendency is indicated in a negative way by the story that ʿAlī refrained from praying near the mound at Babil. The unholy reputation of this site for Muslims came most immediately from the Qurʾānic reference to Hārūt and Mārūt, two angels in Babil who revealed magic to the Jews.

The first congregational *masjid* established in Iraq was at Madaʾin after that city fell to the Muslims in 637. Saʿd set up a pulpit (Ar. *minbar*) in the great Sasanian audience hall (the ʿĪwān Kīsrā), and no one objected to the presence of plaster images of men and horses found there. One reason for using the ʿĪwān as a place of worship was that

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2 Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh,* I, 2424.
3 Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt,* VI, 169; Qurʾān 2:102. Jews and Christians at Babil held festivals during the year at a well of Daniel, also called the well of Hārūt and Mārūt (Qazwīnī, *Athār al-bilād,* II, 202).
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it was the only building large enough for the purpose, but it also symbolized how Muslims had replaced the Sasanians as rulers. Ḥūdhayfa ibn al-Yaman (d. 656), who is credited with "enlarging" the *masjid* "built" by Sa'd at Mada'in, probably built the first separate *masjid* there.\(^5\)

Apart from the congregational and tribal *masjids* at Basra and Kufa, other early *masjids* existed at Anbar, Takrit, and Mawsil, and one was built at Haditha in the time of al-Ḥajjāj.\(^6\) Al-Ḥajjāj also built a *masjid* at Wasit in 702–3. Congregational *masjids* became increasingly monumental structures during the course of the seventh century and acquired features such as the *maqsūra* and minaret, which emphasized both the responsibility of Muslim rulers for public worship and their claims to religious leadership and authority. There does not appear to be any precedent for this in pre-Islamic Iraq, nor for the way the early Muslim governor led public worship at noon on Fridays as the local *imām* and head of the Muslim community in his province.

COMPANIONS AND FOLLOWERS

However, the natural religious leaders of the community were a group of first- and second-generation Muslims, the Companions (Ar. *aṣḥāb, saḥāba*) of Muḥammad who were his contemporaries and early converts, and the Followers (Ar. *tābiʿūn*), whose authority was based on their ability to remember and interpret the Qurʾān and the practices of Muḥammad.\(^7\) At first, as long as ʿUmar I followed a policy of Islamic priority in his appointments, no difference existed between religious and secular leaders. Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī was both a Companion and governor of Basra from 639 until 649. But the reassertion of aristocratic tribal and merchant leadership under ʿUthmān restricted such people to an unofficial or at best semiofficial interpretation and development of Islamic requirements for the benefit of converts, although Ziyād employed several Companions as governors and judges.\(^8\)

Companions and Followers memorized and recited the Qurʾān and provided early religious leadership as popular preachers, storytellers,

\(^6\) Ibid., pp. 290, 332–33; J. H. Kramers, "Takrit," *EI*(1), IV, 632.
\(^7\) For the definition and development of criteria for *saḥāba* see M. Muranyi, *Die Prophetengenossen in der frühislamischen Geschichte* (Bonn, 1973), pp. 12–48.
\(^8\) Ṭabārī, *Taʾrikh*, II, 79.
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and teachers who gave instruction in morals and demonstrated the performance of religious rituals. They followed the practices and procedures of Muḥammad in their own lives, and by their own behavior they set examples for others to follow. An example of this was the way in which 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā (d. 701) is reported to have declined the opportunity to dry his hands after performing the ritual ablution (Ar. wudū') at Kufa.9 The use of exemplary precedent as the basis for Islamic custom came most directly from the concept of sunna (Ar.) among tribal Arabs. It came from the way tribal leaders intentionally set binding precedents that their relatives and descendents were to follow. Such sunna was specific to each group, expressed its values, and regulated the details of its life. The concept of sunna also contained a feeling of social responsibility for an act that set a precedent; a person was held accountable for acts imitated by others. Everything done by Muḥammad, from his specific administrative-juridical decisions to his way of life (Ar. sīra), set examples for Muslims to follow. So did the sīra of his Companions and early political successors, to the extent that it was based on Qur'ānic principles and therefore was considered to be what Muḥammad would have done.10 There was not very much difference between this and the way the leaders of other religious communities used exemplary precedent to spread conformity. Muslims with a Magian background could appreciate the resemblance between the Companions and dāštūrs; Muslims with a Jewish background could appreciate their resemblance to rabbis.

There were a number of prominent Companions at Basra. Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī said that 'Umar I had sent him to teach the Qurʾān to the people of Basra. Anas ibn Malik (d. bet. 709 and 711), 'Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣayn (d. 672), 'Uthmān ibn Abī l-Āṣ, and Sufyān ibn Mālik are also said to have been sent by 'Umar to teach the Qurʾān to converts at Basra. The Companions at Basra also included Samura ibn Jundab (d. ca. 679), Nāfīʿ ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Kalada, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Samura (d. ca. 670), Abū Bakra (d. ca. 671). Maʿqīl ibn Yasār (d. 679), Abū Barza al-Aslamī (d. 681–83), and 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mughaffal (d. 678–79).11

9 Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqat, VI, 75.
10 Bravmann, Spiritual Background, pp. 123–98; Muranyi, Prophetengenossen, pp. 25–33, 100, 105–6.
The position of these Companions was inherited by the next generation of Muslims who carried on their work of applying the precepts of religion to government (usually in the form of criticism) and to daily life and who passed on their traditions. Ibn Sa’d enumerates some eighty-three such Followers (tābi‘ūn) at Basra alone who knew the Companions who had settled there, and it is significant that they were beginning to include mawāli.\(^{12}\)

The situation at Kufa was comparable. Three hundred Companions who had been with Muḥammad at Hudaybiya and seventy who had been at the Battle of Badr settled there.\(^ {13}\) ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd (d. 652–53) was one of the most prominent Companions in early Kufa. He settled there in 642 as the administrative assistant (Ar. wazīr) of ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, for whom he was in charge of the treasury (Ar. bayt al-māl) and of rendering judgment (Ar. ‘alā l-qaḍā’), but he was also a teacher (Ar. mu’allim) and preached on Thursdays.\(^ {14}\) There were also important Followers at Kufa such as Shurayh ibn al-Ḥārith al-Kindi (d. bet. 695 and 699); ‘Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Abī Laylā al-Kindī (d. 701), who transmitted traditions from ‘Alī and other Companions; and Abū ‘Amr ash-Sha’bī ibn Sharāḥīl (640/47–721/23), who claimed to have heard traditions from over five hundred Companions and was the teacher of Abū Ḥanīfa.\(^ {15}\)

**Vocations of Leadership**

Qārī\(^ 2\)

Memorizing and reciting the Qur’ān was one of the religious vocations of these people. Qur’ān means recitation, and the revelations received by Muḥammad were delivered orally and used liturgically in worship. Those who specialized in remembering, reciting, and teaching the Qur’ān to others were interested in applying Qur’ānic ideals and requirements to government and daily life. To a certain extent, their own status depended on getting other Muslims to observe Qur’ānic principles, but they could not expect to be successful unless they lived up to the ideals of the Qur’ān themselves. Sūra 2:44 asks, “Do you enjoin people to be righteous and forget it yourselves although you

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\(^{12}\) Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 82–85.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., VI, 4.

\(^{14}\) Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 56; Balādhuri, Ansāb, I, 163; idem, Futūh, p. 269; Dinawari, Akhābār at-tiwal, p. 136; Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 3; Ṭabarī, Ta’rikh, I, 2637, 2645, 2647. Ibn al-Faqīh (Buldān, pp. 165, 171) adds that he was the mu’adhdbin.

\(^{15}\) Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 35, 90–100.
Religious communities are reciting the Book (Ar. *tālūna l-kitāb*)? Have you no sense?’ Companions at Basra and Kufa produced local variant systems for vocalizing the words of the Qur’ān when they recited it, and sometimes they made a copy (Ar. *muṣḥaf*) of their version. Points of law and interpretation were embedded in these local systems of vocalization, and this contributed to the development of local systems of Islamic religious tradition (*sunna*). The system of vocalization most closely associated with Baṣra was that identified with Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī whose *muṣḥaf* was the basis for the teaching of the Qur’ān there. His system was preserved by his disciples even after ‘Uthmān’s attempt to standardize the Qur’ānic text. One of his disciples was Ḥittān ibn ‘Abdullāh ar-Raqāši (d. after 689), who had his own *muṣḥaf* based on that of Abū Mūsā, which he taught to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Anas ibn Malik, who copied down the *maṣāḥif* of Basra, had his own version of the Qur’ān, and the Follower, Abū l-‘Alīyya, also transmitted a system of vocalization.16

Similar traditions developed at Kufa, where ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā transmitted ‘Ali’s way of reciting the Qur’ān to al-Kisā‘ī. But the predominant vocalization system at Kufa was that of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd, whose *muṣḥaf* contributed to the development of the local *sunna* at Kufa as the basis for the law allowing a divorced woman full maintenance during the legal period of separation (Ar. *‘idda*).17 The importance of these reciters of the Qur’ān as bearers of a sacred liturgical tradition resembles that of the *hirbadhs* among Magians.

Because the status of local leaders rested on their knowledge of the Qur’ān and of precedent, they resented ‘Uthmān’s attempt to standardize the Qur’ānic text and to suppress the local variants. They also resented ‘Uthmān’s abandonment of ‘Umar’s policy of Islamic priority in political appointments. They were able to find a religious justification for opposition to the Islamic regime by accusing ‘Uthmān of violating precedent. During the century after the conquest, it was common to include a reputation for reciting the Qur’ān as an attribute of critics and opponents of the government. Nevertheless, when al-Ḥajjāj had difficulty establishing a vocalized text of the Qur’ān, he is

said to have released a reciter (Ar. qārī') from prison to help him with it.\(^\text{18}\)

Qāṣṣ

Companions and Followers also engaged in a kind of informal and unofficial popular religious education as preachers or storytellers (Ar. quṣṣās, sg. qāṣṣ) who gave an Islamic form to the practices of pre-Islamic poets who incited fervor before battle and used rhymed prose (Ar. saj'). They used Bible stories and legends to explain the Qur'ān, gave moral exhortations in their sermons, and improved the Arabic of non-Arab converts. 'Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣayn (d. 672) is described as teaching stories about Muḥammad to a circle of listeners at a pillar in the masjid of Basra. Quṣṣās seem to have appeared first during the civil strife (Ar. fitna) in the time of 'Uṭmān and 'Alī, and 'Alī found it necessary to exclude them from masjids.\(^\text{19}\) As the leaders of popular religious opinions, they threatened the authority of the state in the late seventh century, and both Mu)=='awiya and 'Abd al-Malik tried to control them by recognizing their position in the masjid. For the same reason, al-Walīd I (705–15), with the approval of al-Ḥasan al-Basrī and ash-Sha'bi, began to pay Qur'ān reciters, although there were others who refused to be compromised by accepting fees for their religious activities.\(^\text{20}\)

Qāḍī

Being the local judge (Ar. qāḍī) for Muslims was the third major vocation of these early religious leaders. The position of qāḍī emerged during the seventh century as a result of the reallocation of the powers of the governor. The early Muslim amīr, as leader of the local community in all its activities, was also responsible for the administration of justice. In this respect he resembled the Sasanian military judge (M.P. spāb-dātavar).\(^\text{21}\) 'Umar is said to have appointed Abū Mūsā al-Asḥārī as both qāḍī and governor of Basra; after 'Uṭmān dismissed him he became qāḍī at Kufa, where he was also governor from 654 until 656. He was succeeded as qāḍī at Kufa by his son Abū Burda

\(^{18}\) Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, V, 36.

\(^{19}\) N. Abbott, Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri (Chicago and London, 1967), II, 15; Diez, “Masdjīd,” pp. 329, 351; Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 5; D. B. Macdonald, “Kīṣṣa,” EI(1), II, 1042–43. However, 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr (d. 687–88) is said to have been the first qāṣṣ in the time of 'Umar I at Makka (Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, V, 341–42).

\(^{20}\) Abbott, Literary Papyri, II, 15, 228.

\(^{21}\) Christensen, Sassanides, p. 300.
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(d. 721–22). His grandson, Bilāl ibn Abī Burda, was both amīr and qādī of Basra in the early eighth century. 22 Salmān ibn Rabī‘a al-Bāhilī (d. bet. 650 and 655) is supposed to have been qādī at Mada‘in and then at Kufa and received a stipend of five hundred dirhams per month from ‘Umar. 23 Abū Qurra al-Kindi is supposed to have been qādī at Kufa in 637 and 638. 24 In 639 ‘Umar appointed Shurayḥ ibn al-Ḥārith qādī of Kufa with a stipend of one hundred dirhams per month. Shurayḥ is said to have been qādī at Kufa for seventy-five years (except for three years during the second fitna), but no mention is made of him in the account describing how, when Salmān ibn Rabī‘a was dismissed in 642, ‘Umar appointed Ziyād ibn Hanṣala as interim qādī at Kufa until the arrival of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd from Hims. All the same, Shurayḥ is supposed to have been qādī of Kufa in 642 and 646. 25

The early situation at Basra is also uncertain. Al-Aswad ibn Sari‘ of the tribe of Tamīm is supposed to have been the first to judge cases in the masjid constructed of reeds, which he built there in 635. 26 Abū Maryam al-Ḥanafī, who succeeded ‘Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣayn as qādī in 638, is interesting because he had been a follower of Musaylima in the Yamama, had repented afterwards, and then migrated to Baṣra. 27 Ka‘b ibn Sūr (d. 657) of the tribe of Azd and a convert from Christianity was sent by ‘Umar as qādī for the people of Basra in 639 and is mentioned as its qādī in 644. 28 ‘Amīra ibn Yathribī of the Banū Dabba is also considered to have been an early qādī at Basra, either before or after Ka‘b. 29

The official status of most, if not all, of these qādīs is doubtful. Some of them may have been judges for their tribes or were engaged

23 Ibn Rustah, A‘lāq, p. 195; Ibn Sa‘d, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 90; Tyan, Organisation judiciaire, pp. 23, 25.
24 Ibn Rustah, A‘lāq, p. 195; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 2426, 2481, 2570; Tyan, Organisation judiciaire, p. 76.
25 Ibn Khallikan, Biographical Dictionary, I, 620; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 2578, 26–37, 2647, 2798; Tha‘alibī, Latā‘if, p. 140; Tyan, Organisation judiciaire, p. 75.
26 Balādurī, Futūh, p. 346.
27 Ibn Sa‘d, Ṭabaqāt, VI(1), 64; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 2570.
29 Ibn Sa‘d, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 108; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 3212, 3448.
as informal arbiters. It is reported on the authority of none other than Mālik ibn Anas that according to Ibn Shihāb neither Abū Bakr nor 'Umar had a qāḍī which probably means that they did not delegate their own judicial responsibilities in Madina to anyone else. This also makes it less likely that provincial amīrs were appointing their own judicial subordinates or had them appointed for themselves under 'Umar. An early example of the emergence of the qāḍī as a separate office from the combined responsibilities of the amīr may be found in the position of 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd as administrative assistant (ważīr) to 'Ammār ibn Yāsir at Kufa in 642, when he was qāḍī, treasurer, and teacher and received a stipend of one hundred dirhams per month. The separation had been completed by 658, when 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās, who was governor of Basra for 'Alī, divided his judicial and financial responsibilities between Abū l-Aswad ad-Du’ālī and Ziyād, respectively. At the same time, the story that 'Alī raised Shurayh’s stipend to five hundred dirhams per month may cloak the point at which his activity as an arbiter was formally recognized by the government.

The position of the qāḍī had been established by the time of Mu’āwiya (660–680). Local governors in Iraq, particularly from Ziyād onward, regularly appointed qāḍīs, especially to deal with claims of less than two hundred dirhams. At Kufa, Shurayh was qāḍī for Mu’āwiya from 662 until 680 when, with the death of Mu’āwiya and the outbreak of the second civil war, he is said to have refused to be a judge during civil strife (Ar. fītna). Consequently, in 683 Sa’d ibn Nimrān al-Hamdānī became judge for Ibn az-Zubayr, and in 685 al-Mukhtar made 'Abdullāh ibn Mālik at-Ṭā‘ī qāḍī of Kufa. After the fall of al-Mukhtar to Muṣ‘ab ibn az-Zubayr, the latter was served by 'Abdullāh ibn 'Utba ibn Mas‘ūd as qāḍī of Kufa in 686 and 687. In 688 Shurayh was qāḍī of Kufa again, but in 691 ‘Ubaydullāh ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Utba ibn Mas‘ūd was judge. From 692 until 697, Shurayh held his last term as judge and was succeeded by Abū Burda ibn Abī Mūsā.

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30 Ṭabarī, Ta’rīkh, I, 2798.
31 Ibn Sa’d, Tabaqāt, VI(1), 70; Ṭabarī, Ta’rīkh, I, 3414, 3448; Tyan, Organisation judiciaire, p. 103.
32 Ibn Sa’d, Tabaqāt, VII(1), 70; Ṭabarī, Ta’rīkh, I, 3414, 3448.
33 Ibn Sa’d, Tabaqāt, VI, 96.
34 Coulson, Islamic Law, pp. 28–29; Tyan, Organisation judiciaire, p. 104.
from 698 until 700 and then by ash-Sha'bī.35 Sa'd ibn Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yamān was qāḍī at Mada'in in the late seventh century.36

At Basra, the brothers 'Amr in 662 and 'Amīra/Umayr ibn Yathribī in 663 served as qāḍīs for Mu‘āwiya. Among others, Ziyād was served by 'Imrān ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Khuza‘ī, by Shurayh for a year, and by 'Umayr ibn Yathribī in 671. In 674 Zurāra ibn Awfāī and Ibn Udhayna al-'Abdī were judges of Basra for 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād. Then, from 678 until 693, Hishām ibn Hubayra of the Banū Dabba was qāḍī of Basra. He was followed by Zurāra ibn Awfāī in 694 and 695, by Mūsā ibn Anas from 697 until 699, and by 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Udhayna in 700.37

In their arbitration of private disputes, these early qāḍīs continued the role of the arbiter (Ar. ḥakam) among pre-Islamic Arabs. Muslim Arabs who settled in Iraq brought the custom of appealing to arbitration with them, and it already existed among the tribal Arabs there. Its use was sanctioned and reinforced by the way the Qurʾān encouraged Muslims to submit their disputes to Mūḥammad for arbitration. Apart from the famous arbitration between 'Alī and Mu‘āwiya, there are numerous other examples indicating that arbitration was a normal part of an informal and unofficial set of legal practices in early Islamic Iraq. In 657, Ka'b ibn Sūr was killed by an arrow while he was trying to arbitrate at the Battle of the Camel at Basra. When Yazīd I died in 683, An-Nu‘mān ibn Šuḥbān ar-Rāsībī arbitrated between the Muḍar and Rabī‘a tribes at Basra. The Christian Arab poet al-Akhtal arbitrated a dispute between two Muslim Arabs of the tribe of Bakr in the masjid at Kufa. Almost everything that is known about Shurayḥ’s activities as a qāḍī indicates that he was the same kind of arbiter. He is described helping some people make a division of property. Al-Ash’ath ibn Qays appealed a case to him, and when 'Alī was caliph, he took his case with a non-Muslim to Shurayh to judge. Shurayh seems to have had some sort of official position as a judge by the time of 'Alī, but, according to Bukhārī, he never touched his stipend but

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took a remuneration for each case he judged. The survival of the nonofficial aspect of the qāḍī as ḥakam may be seen in the claims that Masrūq ibn al-Ajda‘ (d. 683) was qāḍī in Kufa but accepted no pay and that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī took no payment for his judgments. All the same, it was the activity of these judges, whether official or not, that established matters of procedure in early Islamic law, as may be seen in Shurayḥ’s scrupulous refusal to be both judge and witness in the same case.\(^\text{38}\)

The location of judgment in the masjid was natural since it served as a community center for Muslims. But this may have been influenced by the practice in pre-Islamic Makka of administering justice at the place called the Dar Nadwa beside the Ka‘ba and may have been encouraged by the practices of the other communities in Iraq. The famous case of ‘Alī’s judgment from the minbar of the masjid in Madina may provide a precedent. At Kufa, Shurayḥ gave judgment in the masjid, but if it was rainy or cloudy he judged cases at home. ‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥabib as-Sulamī (d. bet. 690 and 693) gave judgment at his own place of worship. In the early eighth century, Abū ‘Amr ibn Sharāhīl ash-Sha‘bī gave judgment in the corner of the masjid at Kufa near the elephant gate (Ar. bāb al-fīl).\(^\text{39}\)

The position of the qāḍī as administrator of the religious law for the Islamic community fits the general pattern of religious justice which already existed in Iraq in the late Sasanian period. The prototype might be said to be a combination of the pre-Islamic ḥakam with the Magian priest, the rabbi, or the bishop, but the only conscious comparison Muslims made themselves was to the Magian priest. This may have been because Magians and Muslims both held political power, and the Magian priest and the qāḍī were both in a closer official relationship to the state than the judges of other communities. But this comparison also reflects a growing recognition of the primarily religious jurisdiction of the qāḍī. Muslim ibn Yasār said that if Abū Qilāba of Basra (d. 722-23) were Persian, he would be mōbadh mōbadhān, that is qāḍī al-qadāt, and a qāḍī in Egypt was compared to a birbadh. When the qāḍī of Baghdad became supreme judge (qāḍī al-qadāt)
under the early ʿAbbāsīs, both the form of the title and the concept of the office were patterned after the Sasanian mōbadh mōbadhān.40

The nature of religious leadership in early Islamic Iraq was important for the development of the Islamic community. The position of the Companions and Followers was based on their possession and development of the religious traditions of the community and was expressed in the vocations of qāriʿ, qass, and qāḍī. Because these forms of leadership combined pre-Islamic Arab with local Iraqi traditions, the communal institutions of Muslims came to resemble older Iraqi patterns. Muslims used liturgy, education, and law to strengthen a communal identity in ways similar to those of Magians, Jews, and Christians. The activity of these leaders was crucial for the early formation of a local variety of Islamic sunna in Iraq. Because their status came from their knowledge of the Qurʾān and of proper behavior, they had a vested interest in communicating the principles upon which their status depended to other Muslims. Their own ability to set precedent disguised the continuation of local customs and attitudes among Muslims, and the set of usages which developed in early Islamic Iraq was ultimately enshrined in the Ḥanafī system of religious law.

Because Muslims were rulers, the leadership of the community had a political dimension. Companions and Followers were the collective conscience of the community and the leaders of popular opinion who could provide a religious justification for supporting or opposing caliphs and governors. Although some of them were employed as qāḍīs and gave either active or tacit support to Islamic rulers, beginning in the time of ʿUthmān they were increasingly opposed to the political leaders of the state. Especially after the second fitna, they denied the claim of Marwānī caliphs to religious legitimacy as the heads of the community, emphasized the secular aspects of Marwānī rule, and created the division between religious and secular leadership in the Islamic community.

COMMUNAL BOUNDARIES

Apostasy as Treason

Membership in the Islamic community was equally political. Political submission and the profession of Islam were expressed in a single

verb (Ar. *aslama*) and continuing membership was put in terms of political allegiance. It was normal for communities to apply sanctions to discourage the defection of their members. Jews used social ostracism and excluded apostates from their religious courts. Christians used excommunication, and Magians executed and disinherited unrepentant apostates. At first, Muslims seem to have applied moral sanctions to renegades. A believer who was forced to recant because of persecution but was still a believer at heart was excused. Otherwise the Qurʾān says that a genuine renegade (Ar. *man yartadid*) who withdraws his recognition of God’s messenger after declaring his belief will suffer the wrath of God, forfeits God’s guidance in this world, will not have his repentance accepted, will have his face blackened on the Day of Judgment, and will be punished in Hell.\(^{41}\) God will forgive some hypocrites and punish others in Hell, but a hypocrite who returns to open opposition (without having been a genuine convert) is to be killed.\(^{42}\)

At Hudaybiya, Muḥammad himself agreed in principle that any Muslim who wished to return to Makka could do so. After Muḥammad died and the community at Madina was faced with a struggle for its very survival, Arabs who withdrew their allegiance and opposed Islamic rule were defined as apostates and fought until they surrendered or were killed in order to reconstruct and to extend Madinan domination over Arabia.

The first really serious case of apostasy in Iraq was that of the Banī Nājiya clan of the tribe of ʾIjl. They were converts from Christianity who had become disillusioned by the fighting among Muslims during the first *fitna*, who returned to Christianity, and joined the Khawārij under al-Khirrīt ibn Rāshid in Fars in 658. In this context, ʿAlī is supposed to have issued a decree concerning Christians who converted to Islam and then became Christians again in which he declared “Do not listen to them, do not excuse them, do not accept repentance from them, do not summon them to repentance … behead them as soon as they are seized.”\(^{43}\) There are two versions of what happened to the Banī Nājiya. According to one account they were given the choice of reconversion or death, and all of them reconverted except Mustawrid al-ʾIjlī, whom ʿAlī had executed and whose possessions were divided among his Muslim heirs. The children were ransomed and freed by


\(^{42}\) Ibid., 4:89; 9:66–68.

\(^{43}\) Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, I, 3434.
Maṣqala ibn Hubayra for one or two thousand dirhams. In the other account, the Christians who were taken captive with al-Khirrit were to be punished as an example to other protected non-Muslims to pay the poll tax and not to kill Muslims. But some five hundred men, women, and children of the Banū Nājiya were ransomed by Maṣqala for one million dirhams.44 It must be recognized that insofar as the Islamic law of apostasy was based on this incident in the later legal tradition, the people who were involved had been taken in armed revolt against the state, which equated apostasy with treason. This situation did not correspond exactly to late Sasanian practice but did provide the occasion for introducing the principle of death for unrepenting apostasy in Iraq.

However, Islamic legal tradition in Iraq developed along the lines of Sasanian practice. Abū Yūsuf relates a story about how Muʿādh found a Jew with Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī at Basra who had converted to Islam and then apostatized. For two months they had attempted, without success, to get him to change his mind. Upon hearing that, Muʿādh exclaimed that he would not rest until the apostate had been beheaded “according to the decision of God and that of his messenger.”45 This is certainly a reflection of Sasanian practice, but as Abū Yūsuf derived the law of apostasy from the incident of ʿAli and the Banū Najiya, both Arabs and non-Arabs were to be treated as Arab idolaters and were to be given the choice of reconversion or death. Their women and children were to be enslaved and they were to be given no option of paying the poll tax.46 The opinion of Abū Ḥanīfa that a female apostate should not be executed but should be imprisoned indefinitely until she returns to Islam seems to be based on the actual experience of Shirin and Golinduch, as is Abū Yūsuf’s opinion that a female apostate is liable to be executed unless she returns to Islam.47 Likewise the Magian principle of disinheriting an apostate was accepted by Abū Ḥanīfa for Magian converts to Islam. According to Abū Ḥanīfa, a Magian boy who converted to Islam before attaining puberty could not inherit from a Magian father nor could his parents inherit from him.48

45 Abū Yūsuf, Kharāj, p. 278.
46 Ibid., p. 101.
48 Ibid., pp. 226–27
Ritual and Identity

Muslims reinforced their identity and established communal boundaries in other ways. Because their ritual practices had affinities to virtually every other contemporary religious tradition, it became supremely important to perform them in ways which were distinctively Islamic. They shared animal sacrifice with pagans and Magians and ritual slaughter with Jews; doing these in the name of God (Ar. bismillah) made it Islamic (Sūra 6:119, 122). They shared circumcision with Jews and the Christian Arabs of Hira, and similarly to the Jewish and Christian traditions, they institutionalized charity. Like the Jews, they covered their heads during worship, but their vocal, public call to worship (Ar. adhān) was unique and shared with no other religious group. Specifically the adhān differed from the wooden gongs (Syr. naqqūs) used by Nestorians. Muslims observed a ritual calendar that included a month-long fast followed by a festival like that of many other groups. But their use of a lunar calendar without intercalation meant that Islamic observances were taken out of the seasonal, agricultural cycle and normally coincided with the observances of no other group.

Muslims also practiced ritual ablutions for purification as done by Magians and some pagans, but the details of performing them made them distinctly Islamic. The Qur‘ān specifies that before worship Muslims should wash their faces, their hands, and their arms up to the elbows, rub their heads lightly, and wash their feet up to the ankles. It also prescribes purification after pollution, illness, a journey, elimination, and sexual relations, and says that if no water is available clean earth may be used (Sūra, 4:43; 5:6). At Basra, ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Abī Bakrā is said to have been the first to purify himself with water after defecating, and al-Mughīra ibn Shu‘ba washed himself after committing adultery with Umm Jamil. It has already been noted how Ibn Abī Laylā refused to dry his hands after performing his ablution at Kufrā. The similarity of these practices to those of other religious groups, which were based on a common appreciation of ritual purity, made it easier for Muslims to come to resemble them. Muslims were probably closest to Magians in matters of ritual purity, although their practices were not so extreme. However, the opinion which developed

49 Abbott, Literary Papyri, II, 204.
51 Balādḥurī, Ansāb, I, 491.
among Muslims that the impurity of a menstruating woman in the presence of a worshiper nullified the effectiveness of worship recalls the behavior of Hazārōē and is likely to be of Magian origin.  

The form of ritual worship (A. ṣalāt) performed by Muslims was similar to widespread contemporary practices. The term itself was an Arabic loanword from Aramaic stōthā which means bowing or stretching and which was used for worship in several Aramaic dialects. The gesture of spreading or raising both hands in invocation or exorcism was used by pagan sorcerers in Iraq. But this gesture is also described in the Bible (Isa. 1:15), so it was acceptable to both Jews and Christians. The Nestorian catholicos Īshōʿyahbh I was accused of spreading his hands and praying for the usurper Bahrām Chubīn; Isaac of Nineveh, who quotes Isaiah, speaks of a monk who remained in a state of mystic ecstasy for four days “while he stood in prayer with outspread hands.” At first some Muslims objected to beginning their ṣalāt with such a gesture because of its pagan connotations; but the normal practice came to be to raise both hands with the fingers kept together beside the head and the elbows bent, which was somewhat different from other usages.

Repeated acts of prostration were part of Magian, Šābian, and Christian monastic worship, but only among Christians was prostration part of a set of practices that included nocturnal vigils and the recitation of scripture. Biblical references to prostration and vigils made both practices acceptable to Jews and Christians. By the sixth century, however, they were most typical of Christian monastic piety, and Jews had replaced them with study at night. In performing his prostration, the Christian monk first put his hands on the floor or ground, then his knees, and then his head. In private exercises, the number and frequency of prostrations varied and one hears of prostrations repeated for up to thirty or forty times (monks were not called “athletes” without reason). The connection between these individual exercises and the congregational nature of the Islamic ṣalāt can probably be found among the Monophysites. Monophysite monks at Amid in the sixth century were described as performing nightly vigils while

52 Abbott, Literary Papyri, II, 200, 203.
prostrate on their faces in tearful prayer or while arranged in rows, supported by standing posts or tied to the walls or to the ceiling to keep them on their feet all night.\textsuperscript{54}

The earliest devotional exercises among Muslim converts at Makka resembled these practices. \textit{Sūra} 25:64 speaks of “those who spend the night before their Lord, prostrate and standing.” Some of them were said to keep themselves awake by tying themselves to a fixed object with a rope.\textsuperscript{55} While Muḥammad was still at Makka, times for worship were established between sunset and dark, during nightly vigils, and at dawn with the recitation of the Qurʿān. This worship served as a good work that would annul evil deeds. Muhammad was told to be neither loud-voiced nor silent in worship, but in between.\textsuperscript{56} At Madina the times for private worship were set at dawn, noon, and night, with public congregational worship at noon on Fridays announced by a call to worship.\textsuperscript{57} Ritual worship consisted of a series of prostrations in which worshipers knelt and put their hands and then their foreheads on the ground.

Muslims shared repeated daily worship with several other contemporary traditions. Magians worshiped five times each day, Manichaean Hearers four times, and Șabians three times. The five daily times of worship, which very soon became standard for Muslims, are usually traced to a Magian source. This is likely to be the case, since Muslims saw to it that daytime worship did not coincide exactly with the stations of the sun.\textsuperscript{58} Two points should be made here. First, in spite of the similarity of Islamic ritual worship to widespread current practices, Muslims appear to have made minor variations intentionally in order to distinguish their form of worship from that of non-Muslims. Second, just as in several other contemporary religious communities, recurring times of worship throughout each day provided an order and rhythm to daily life for Muslims.

\textsuperscript{55} Abbott, \textit{Literary Papyri}, II, 265.
\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Qurʿān}, 11:114; 17:78; 73:2–4, 6.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 2:37, 125; 4:102–3; 24:58; 62:9.
PATTERNS OF PIETY

Muslims brought this form of communal and private worship with them to Iraq. Worship led by the governor or his representative in the congregational *masjid* at noon on Fridays was an expression of obedience, devotion, and submission to God, a public act announcing one’s membership in the community, and an act of political allegiance to the leaders of the community. But Muslims in Iraq also performed private devotions, especially prostrations combined with nocturnal vigils and the recitation of the Qur’ān, which were partly a continuation of the early practices of overly pious people at Makka and partly an adaptation of local practices in Iraq, most probably from Christians.

Some of the best descriptions of Christian devotional piety in Iraq in the later seventh century are provided by Isaac of Nineveh. He advised that one “honor the works of vigils, then thou wilt find consolation in thyself. Be constantly occupied with recitations in solitude, then thou wilt be drawn towards ecstasy at all times.”59 He declared that the correct posture of the truly pious should be either to be prostrate day and night on one’s face before the cross or to kneel with hands spread out or stretched towards heaven while facing the cross. He summarized the exercises of piety as “the work of hunger, of reciting, waking during the night, according to everyone’s strength; frequent prostrations, several times in the day and often during the night.”60 Such constant communion with God made one similar to Him and gave one power over nature.61

Similar forms of piety appeared among Muslims in the century after the conquest. It is said that when Masrūq ibn al-Ajda’ of Kufa performed the pilgrimage (Ar. *ḥajj*), he only slept prostrated on his face.62 Al-Aswad ibn Yazīd (d. 694), also of Kufa, would recite the Qur’ān at night during the month-long fast of Ramadān, completing it every two nights, while he slept between worship at sunset and evening.63 The testimony of the *maulā* and *tābi‘ī* Abū-‘Āliyya (d. 709) at Basra reveals the existence of such practices among *mawālī*, while it also shows how the authority of the Companions was exerted in such matters. As Abū 1-‘Āliyya described the situation:

60 Ibid., pp. 40, 88.
61 Ibid., p. 103.
63 Ibid., VI, 49.
We were owned slaves. Some of us performed duties and some of us had responsibilities to carry out, and some of us served their households. We used to recite the entire Qur’ān once each night, but that was a hardship for us so we completed it once every two nights, but that was a hardship for us so we completed it once every three nights, but that was a hardship for us so we complained to each other. So we met with the Companions [aṣḥāb] of the messenger of God and they instructed us to complete the recitation every Friday (or every seven nights). So we prayed and slept and it was not a hardship for us.\(^{64}\)

Likewise, Abū Rajāʾ al-ʿUṭāridi (d. bet. 717 and 720), who was imām at his tribal masjid in Basra for forty years, completed the recitation of the Qur’ān once every ten nights during Ramaḍān.\(^{65}\) Pious exercises were also associated with worship at dawn. After Ṭabd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā (d. 701) worshiped at dawn, he would open his muṣḥaf and recite until sunrise.\(^{66}\) When Rābiʿa, the eighth century woman mystic at Basra, was a slave, she would stand all night in worship and only allowed herself a light sleep between dawn and sunrise.\(^{67}\) The objective of this kind of liturgical worship was to lead one to nearness to God and came to Muslims from Christian sources along with the exercises themselves. The attitude that one proceeded from one state of prayer to another in an increasing concentration on God and that one remained in that state even after ceasing to worship already appeared in early Islamic piety.\(^ {68}\)

The state of solitude sought by Christian monks during devotions was also favored by pious Muslims. The Qur’ānic sanction of privacy at the time of individual worship reinforced the adoption of this local usage in Iraq. At Kufa, Shurayḥ would worship at home with his door locked for about half a day after public worship; and at Basra, Ṭabdullāh ibn ʿAwn ibn Arṭābān maintained a place in his home for household worship. Because of Ṭabdullāh’s ancestry and because he reportedly never entered the public bath and perfumed himself according to sunna, it is natural to suspect a Magian origin for household

\(^{64}\) Ibid., VI, 81.
\(^{65}\) Ibid., VII(1), 101.
\(^{66}\) Ibid., VI, 75.
\(^{67}\) M. Smith, Rābiʿa the Mystic and Her Fellow-Saints in Islam (Cambridge, 1928), pp. 7, 28.
\(^{68}\) M. Smith, Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East (London, 1931), p. 163.
worship. Christians also influenced pious seclusion. The ultimate source for this practice is to be found in the isolated huts of the monks in the Egyptian desert; but the best precedent is the case of St. Pelagia the Harlot at Jerusalem in the fifth century, who isolated herself in a cell closed on all sides except for a small shuttered window through which she communicated with her visitors. This practice was introduced at Basra by the Christian convert and reputed qādī, Ka‘b ibn Sūr. In order to disassociate (Ar. i‘tazala) himself from the sedition of Talḥa, az-Zubayr, and ‘Ā‘ishah, he shut himself up in a hut coated with clay, leaving only a window through which he was given food and drink. This kind of isolation was given its original religious purpose by the Basran Muslim ascetic, Muḥriz al-Māzinī (d. 693–94), who isolated himself in a hut where he worshiped. Older forms of pious isolation in a religious structure seem to have been adopted first at Kufa, where Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr (d. 712), who was a mawlā of the Banū Wāliba clan of the tribe of Asad and a reciter of the Qur’an (qāri’) who completed its recitation every two nights during Ramaḍān from 680 on, lived in seclusion in the tribal masjid.

Along with pious isolation, Muslims inherited from Christians the argument over passive and active piety, between silent meditation detached from the world and responsible intervention to change the world. Several monks and church leaders were engaged in evangelism and in disputes with non-Christians in the sixth and seventh centuries. The consequences of this activity were rivalry between Nestorians and Monophysites, state intervention, and the problem of pagan practices brought by converts. The quietism of Isaac of Nineveh was largely a reaction to these consequences and a liberation of the spirit from temporal authority. He writes:

Compare not all powers and signs that are worked in the whole world with a man’s consciously sitting in solitude. Love the ease of solitude rather than satisfying the hunger of the world and the converting of the multitude of heathen peoples from error unto adoring God.

69 Ibn Sa‘d, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 98; VII(2), 26.  
72 Ibid., VII(1), 107–8; Pellat, Milieu baṣrīen p. 97.  
73 Ibn Sa‘d, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 181–83.  
74 Isaac of Nineveh “Mystic Treatises,” p. 32.
During the second *fitna*, Shurayḥ is said to have refused to communicate with anyone for nine years to show his disapproval of the sedition of ‘Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr. But among Muslims the tendency towards pious silence was countered by the Qur’ānic injunction to intervene actively in society by commanding what is good and forbidding what is evil, by the feeling that it was better to exhort people to abandon sin and to live virtuously, and by the belief that speech which glorified God was better than silence. The fact that active piety outweighed passive piety among Muslims is one of the best explanations for the shift of religious dynamism from Christians to Muslims in this period.

Weeping was part of worship. As an expiatory exercise it may be derived ultimately from the weeping of the neo-Babylonian king in atonement for the sins of the year, but in Late Antiquity it was most immediately of Manichaean origin. The Middle Iranian and Soghdian texts require prayer, weeping, and sadness because of sin, and compare the Manichaean Elect to white-feathered doves who wail, lament, and are full of sorrow. The same attitude is present in Ephrēm Syrus, who speaks of pouring tears in prayer to purify the body of guilt. Jewish rabbis tended to resist such practices, and the Talmud cautions that blindness may result from too much weeping. But some such practice probably existed among the ascetic mourners for Zion (hence the Rabbinic opposition). A suggestion of Jewish influence on Christian weeping can be found in a list of heretics from the end of the Sasanian period which describes monks who put particular emphasis on fasting, mourning, and weeping as *nazīrē*. Abraham Qīdōnayā (d. 637) was such a weeper, and it is said that “every hour he poured his soul in prayer, and every hour he troubled his eyes in weeping.” Isaac of Nineveh considered tears to be a sign of grace that opened the eyes to true perception and a mourner (*Syr. ābhīlā*) to be one who spent his time in hope of heaven. But the older idea of expiation is still valid.

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75 Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, VI, 97.
82 Ibid., p. II, 58.
quite strong in Simon of Taibûtheh, who said “Woe unto the man who does not weep, is not assailed by affliction, and does not wipe off his sins while there is yet time for repentance, as in the next world he will have to wipe them off forcibly with the billows of fire.”

Qur'anic sanction reinforced local usage in the practice of weeping as a pious exercise by Muslims in Iraq. Weeping is specifically associated with prostration in the Qur'an, as it was in Christian piety. In early Islamic piety, ascetics who included tears as part of their pious activities were called weepers (Ar. bakkâ'ûn). The weepers at Basra and Kufa included al-Hasan al-Baṣrî (who wept until the tears flowed onto his beard), Ibn Sîrîn, and Mâlik ibn Dînâr. The seven sons of Muqarrin at Kufa were bakkâ'ûn. In Islamic piety the ability to weep was also considered a sign of divine grace and a mark of true religious fervor. Tears were part of the liturgical exercises and accompanied the hearing of hadith and sermons, the sâlih, the recitation of the Qur'an, and nocturnal vigils in meditation on those passages in the Qur'an concerning the punishment of sinners. The primary motive for weeping, as among Christians, was fear—fear of God, of the Day of Judgment, of the fires of Hell—because of a deep awareness of sin, of the impossibility of being certain of God’s verdict on the Day of Judgment, and of the impossibility of achieving salvation through one’s own efforts. It is significant to notice here how the Rabbinic objection and the monastic justification of weeping survived in the argument over this practice among Muslims. When Sha‘wâna was warned that too much weeping could cause blindness, she is said to have answered that blindness in this world from weeping was better than eternal blindness in the next world through the fires of Hell.

The main motive for piety was fear. The contemporary Christian attitude was justified by Proverbs 1:17, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” but concentrated on the imminent end of the world, God’s judgment, and the torments of Hell. A typical expression of this attitude in the sixth-century Life of Susan is worth quoting here because it juxtaposes the torments of Hell with their denial. At the end of her life, the saint deplored how

84 Mingâna, Woodbrooke Studies, VII, 21–22, 290.
86 Ibn Sa‘d, Ţabaqât, VI, 12; VII(1), 127; F. Meier, “Bakkâ’,” El(2), I, 959–60.
87 Von Grunebaum, Medieval Islam, p. 126.
... the thought of the rapidly approaching terrible hour of the dissolution of this world does not rise in men's hearts, and that they are about to stand before the terrible judgment seat of God, saying, "It is a great absurdity that we hear of the pit of fire, and the abysses of flame, and the darkness, and the rest of the torments." And we do not lay it to heart and ask mercy while we have the opportunity as a means of escaping from these things.89

The most famous exponent of this attitude in Islamic piety was al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (642–728), the son of Christian Persians who were captured in Iraq. He was famous for his fear of God and of Hell, his self-mortification, and his sadness. He was strict in his ritual observances and avoided laughter; although he believed that both fear and hope were necessary motivations for piety, he felt that fear had to be greater than hope in order to be successful.90

The configuration of devotional practices which appeared among pious Muslims in Iraq combined the salāt with nightly vigils, liturgical recitation, weeping, and seclusion. These practices were sanctioned by the Qur'ān and by early piety at Makka, and in combination were closest to the practices of contemporary Christian monks in Iraq. There is some evidence that Muslim converts with a Christian or Magian background were responsible for introducing or elaborating the local forms of such practices in an Islamic context, which may have been eased by their basic similarity. In the process, the arguments against and the justification for some of these practices continued among Muslims.

BURIAL

The same is true of Islamic burial, which tended to combine certain Arab customs that were sanctioned by Islam with local customs being practiced in Iraq. Much of the evidence for the adoption of local customs occurs in the objections they provoked, and Muslims provided distinctive details to identify their form of burial as Islamic. For instance there was nothing new about washing a corpse, but Muslims did it in an Islamic manner. One of the most explicit descriptions of

the procedure is given in the account of the burial of 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mughaffal (d. 678–79) in Basra. This account was probably intended to be exemplary because several of the Companions of Muḥammad who were living in Basra acted as undertakers. On this occasion they only rolled up the sleeves of their tunics and tucked the ends in their waistbands, and after washing him they only performed the ritual ablution (Ar. ḫuḍū').91 After the body had been washed, it was enshrouded. Someone usually prayed over it, as was the custom at Makka in the time of Muḥammad, and repeated the formula “God is most great” (Ar. Allāhu akbār).92

While the body was being prepared for burial, the women in the household performed the ancient custom of formal wailing or lamentation for the dead,93 a custom which was also practiced at Makka in the time of Muḥammad.94 It was adapted to express the feelings of supporters of the family of 'Alī after the tragic death of al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī at Karbala in 680, when “the women of Kufa went out crying and weeping,” although this was probably no more than the usual lamentation for the dead.95 There seems to have been a change by 683, however, when the men of the tribe of Hamdān, girded with swords, surrounded the minbar of the masjid in Kufa to voice their objection to the choice of 'Amr ibn Saʿīd as leader of the people at Kufa after the death of Yazid I, while their women wept for al-Ḥusayn.96 The next year, when Sulaymān ibn Ṣurad led a rising at Kufa and sought vengeance for al-Ḥusayn, one of the first acts performed by him and his followers was to weep over the grave of al-Ḥusayn.97

When a body had been prepared for burial, it was carried from the house to the cemetery in a funeral procession. This custom, too, was as old as civilization in Mesopotamia, and the Muslim Arabs were introduced to it by local Christians and Jews. However, in the sixth and early seventh centuries, Syrian Christians introduced the practice of walking slowly, following the corpse with candles and incense. This is first mentioned in Iraq at the death of Khusraw Anūshirvān in 579. The people whom he had taken captive at Antioch in Syria and resettled at New Antioch assembled and honored his corpse according to Chris-

91 Ibn Saʿīd, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 7–8, 129, 150.
92 Ibid., VI, 46; VII(1), 11, 16; Qurān, 9:84; Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 252.
93 Horovitz, “Adī Ibn Zeyd,” p. 46; Ibn Saʿīd, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 68, 69, 204.
95 Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrīkh, II, 291.
96 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, II, 459.
97 Ibid, II, 538, 546.
Muslims: The Community

tian custom, walking around him with censers and candles or lamps to the place where he was “buried.” A similar procession took place in 622 in the town of Tella on the Euphrates, to which the body of Jacob Baradaeus was taken. When the bishop, clergy, and people heard about it “they went to meet it with lights and incense and songs of praise and carried it round the whole city, accompanying it with spiritual odes and chants of the Holy Spirit.”

The change experienced by Muslim Arabs in Iraq was not in having funeral processions but in the way they were performed. According to Ibn Rustah, pre-Islamic Arabs had trotted about (on riding animals), following a body which was being taken to be buried. As Muslims, however, they walked slowly in procession for the first time at the funeral of 'Uthmân ibn Abî l-'Âs. The Jews of Khaybar walked in a funeral procession in the time of Muḥammad. It is possible to observe how this came to be done by Muslims in Kufa in 660, when the Christian Arabs of the tribe of 'Ijl who had settled there buried their shaykh, Abjar ibn Jâbir. Although Abjar had died a Christian, his son, Hajjâr, became a Muslim. As the funeral procession, which was composed of Christians and priests reciting the Gospels, passed through the streets of Kufa, Hajjâr and some of his friends among the ashrâf walked along beside it. When the procession went past the district of the Bakr ibn Wā'il, this scene provoked the following mocking verses from Ibn Muljam:

If Hajjâr ibn Abjar were a Muslim
He would not be associated with the funeral procession of Abjar
And if Hajjâr were an unbeliever
Then graves such as this would not be detestable.

People such as 'Amr ibn Shuraḥbîl at Kufa adopted the practice of walking behind the corpse in the funeral procession as an expression

98 Scher, “Histoire nestorienne,” II(2), 197. Large-scale, nighttime illuminations with candles or lamps were introduced as a new custom for the last, great pagan festival at Edessa in 495 (Wright, Joshua the Stylite, pp. 18–21).
100 Ibn Rustah, A'lâq, p. 193.
102 Dinawari, Akhbâr at-tiwâl, p. 228; Tabari, Ta'rîkh, I, 3460. The point of thiscouplet is a play on words between kâfîr (Ar., unbeliever) and kufûr (Ar., graves).
of piety, and when ‘Amr died (ca. 678) his companions did the same for him out of respect. 103 Abū Burda ibn Abī Mūsa at Kufa even walked behind the body at the funeral of a mawlā, giving him precedence over the living. 104

It became a matter of piety and an individual honor to lead the prayer over the funeral procession. The custom of praying over the dead and of standing by the grave was already known in the Hijaz (Sūra 9:84). Al-Ḥārith al-A‘war, who was the imām for his tribe in Kufa, used to lead the prayer over their funeral processions, 105 and al-Ḥasan al- Başrī led the prayer over the funeral procession of Raja’ al-‘Uṭārī while he was mounted on his donkey. 106 By the same token, the funeral of ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mughaffal in Basra in 678–79 provided an opportunity to insult ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād. When the latter turned up at the door of the dead man’s house with his retinue, he was told by the Companions in charge of the funeral that Ibn al-Mughaffal had left explicit instructions that Ibn Ziyād was not to lead the prayer over him. 107

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mughaffal also objected to the use of illumination and asked that no one follow him with fire when he died. 108 ‘Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣayn (d. 672), also at Basra, wanted his pallbearers to carry him out walking quickly when he died, and he especially requested them not to walk slowly, as the Jews and Christians did, or to follow him with fire or make an outcry. He also forbade his umm walads to lament for him. 109 The survival of pre-Islamic Arab customs in the garrison towns is shown by Abū Bakra, who rode his mule in a funeral procession at Basra 110 and by Shurayḥ, who by riding in the funeral procession of ‘Amr ibn Shurāḥbil at Kufa was probably intentionally expressing his disapproval of the adoption of such local customs. 111 Shurayḥ was also seen praying in a burnous and walking in front of a funeral procession instead of behind it. In his own instructions about his burial, he asked that his death not be announced, that he be taken to the cemetery quickly without any outcry, and that prayers should

103 Ibn Sa‘d, Tabaqāt, VI, 74.
104 Ibid., VI, 187.
105 Ibid., VI, 116.
106 Ibid., VII(1), 101.
107 Ibid., VII(1), 8.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid., VII(1), 6.
110 Ibid., VII(1), 8.
111 Ibid., VI, 74.
be recited over him there.\textsuperscript{112} Ibrāhīm an-Nakha‘ī’s request that there be no illumination at his funeral caused his friends to bury him fearfully at night in a dark cemetery.\textsuperscript{113}

When the procession reached the cemetery, the body was placed in a grave, which was usually shored up with baked or unbaked brick or wood,\textsuperscript{114} with the dead person’s mattress at the foot. The outer clothing was then removed from the corpse and placed at the foot with the mattress (this was done with both men and women), revealing the scented powder which had been placed on the shroud, and finally the perfume basket was removed.\textsuperscript{115} After the grave had been refilled, a white cloth or garment was placed over it to mark it.\textsuperscript{116} Again, the objections to certain practices provide some of the best evidence of their prevalence as well as of the resistance to their adoption. The burial instructions of Suwayd ibn Ghafala (d. 700–701) at Kufa were, “When I die let no one announce it, bring no plaster, baked brick or wood near my grave, let no women escort me, and enshroud me in nothing but my own clothing.”\textsuperscript{117} Neither al-Aswād ibn Yazīd (d. 694) nor Ibrāhīm an-Nakha‘ī (d. 715) wanted brick in their graves,\textsuperscript{118} and Shurayḥ wanted no garment to mark his grave.\textsuperscript{119} It must be noted, however, that to the extent that resistance to these practices was generated by attitudes of piety, the Muslim Arabs whose objections are recorded were merely adopting the position of the local Christian ascetics.

After the interment the funeral party usually returned to the house of the deceased for the funeral feast. Since the funeral feast was also an Arab custom, local Iraqi and traditional Arab practices reinforced each other. The only example in this regard that needs to be mentioned is ʿImrān ibn al-Ḥušayn, who died at Basra in 672, whose instructions were, “When I die, fasten my bed to me with a turban and when you return, slaughter and eat.”\textsuperscript{120}

Muslims were buried more or less in the way people had been buried in Iraq for millenia. The body was prepared, provided with spices,
lamented, carried in procession to the cemetery, and laid in a grave that was shored up with brick or wood and was marked by a white cloth; the mourners then returned for the funeral feast. The adoption of these customs was eased by the fact that pre-Islamic Arabs had already engaged in some form of lamentations, processions, and funeral feasts. It is possible to identify Christian Iraqi Arab converts to Islam as being responsible for introducing the local way of performing these rituals to the new settlers. To a certain extent, resistance by Arab Muslims to the adoption of some of these customs was a matter of their own linear continuity—a preference for maintaining bedouin or Hijazi traditions in burial as in costume. But there were also objections for reasons of piety. In the case of illumination, it was the rejection of a recently imported custom that was openly associated with another religion. On the other hand, the objections of pious Muslims to ostentatious funerals received reinforcement from similar Christian objections because of the pagan connotations of some of the practices. Even so, they were not suppressed. So the burial of Muslims was made distinctly Islamic by washing the body in an Islamic manner, by reciting Allahu akbar, and by praying over the body, following Muḥammad's own practice.

ASCETICISM

The issues raised in the early development of distinctive forms of Islamic piety in matters of worship and burial were also raised by asceticism. The argument over asceticism was common to Magians, Jews, Christians, and Muslims and involved Indian practices that were spread by Manichaeans combined with gnostic and neo-Platonic traditions. This kind of asceticism was an antimaterialistic rejection of one's own body and of the evil, material, worldly things which cause sin through self-mortification: by denying the body food, sleep, sex, or anything else it enjoyed. As a symbol of alienation, asceticism was related to issues of authority and social conflict.

For Magians, the material world was created for their enjoyment by the good deity, Ohrmazd. They equated wealth with the virtue and goodness inherent in the upper classes and poverty with the sin and evil inherent in the lower classes. Since they were encouraged to have as many children as possible, they were naturally antiascetic. But alienated members of their own society who rejected the authority of the priests and the values of material success tended to be attracted
to Manichaeism or to Christian monasticism. The significance of Manichaeism as a form of social revolt lies in its use of extreme forms of asceticism such as indigence, celibacy, and vegetarianism to release the spirit trapped in its evil, material body.

Manichaeism had a deep impact on the more extreme forms of Christian asceticism, whose frank antimaterialism often betrayed its gnostic and Manichaean origins. Ascetic exercises freed the spirit from the body and led to mystic experiences. Isaac of Nineveh identified wine, women, wealth, and bodily health as the causes of sin. Asceticism freed a monk from such worldly distractions because “as long as the seals of fasting are on a man’s mouth, his mind meditates on the soul’s penitence.”\textsuperscript{121} But even monastic leaders drew the line at the extreme forms of ascetic poverty and indigence practiced by the M\=\text{\text{\text{"}ah\}}}\text{"\text{\text{"}ally\}}}\text{"\text{"}an\}}}\text{"\text{"}e\}}} (especially castration), since they represented a form of revolt against church authority.

Jewish piety included chastity but not celibacy, although sexual relations in the daytime were discouraged lest it attract demons. Ritual fasting on the ninth of Ab was practiced by the Rabbinic community in Iraq, but abstinence was not to endanger health. The Talmud records the opinion of Rabbi Jeremiah bar Abba that “it is not lawful for a scholar to fast, because by fasting he diminishes the work in the heavenly cause.”\textsuperscript{122} These attitudes conflicted with the semiascetic prohibition of meat and wine by Mourners for Zion, whose antinomian, Messianic opposition to the authoritarian legal rule of the community by the rabbis was based on the argument that the entire ceremonial law was no longer obligatory after the destruction of the second Temple.

The conflict between asceticism and positive material values surfaced among Muslims in the seventh and eighth centuries. In his letter to \text{\text{"}Umar II}, al-\text{\text{"}Hasan al-Ba\}}}\text{"\text{"}r1 compared the world to a snake: it is smooth to the touch, but its venom is deadly.\textsuperscript{123} The rejection of celibacy in the Qur’\text{"}an (\text{\text{"}Sura 57:27}) is aimed at Christian monasticism, and the Qur’\text{"}anic exhortation for single Muslims to marry but for those who cannot find a mate to remain chaste (\text{\text{"}Sura 24:32–33}) resembles the Rabbinic attitude. Otherwise, the major reason for ob-

\textsuperscript{121} Isaac of Nineveh “Mystic Treatises,” pp. 42, 159, 161; Vööbus, \text{\text{"}Asceticism}, II, 312.

\textsuperscript{122} Rodkinson, \text{\text{"}Talmud VIII(4)}, “\text{\text{"}Taanith},” 28.

\textsuperscript{123} H. Ritter, “\text{\text{"}Studien zur Geschichte der islamischen Frömmigkeit: I. \text{\text{"}Hasan al-Ba\}}}\text{"\text{"}r1},” \text{\text{"}Der Islam} 21 (1933), 21–22.
jecting to asceticism among Muslims lay in their recognition of the Manichaean implications of celibacy, indigence, and vegetarianism.

The Qurʾān does, however, prescribe fasting for Muslims, and the form of ritual fasting brought by Muslims to Iraq shared many features with local attitudes and practices. The Qurʾān specifies that the month-long fast of Ramaḍān involved abstinence from food, drink, and sex during daylight, that its purpose was to ward off evil, and that it was not intended to be a hardship.124 Muslims began to celebrate the end of Ramaḍān with a feast (Ar. ʿīd al-ṭīr) very early.125 They shared abstinence in the daytime with Jews and Christian monks, and they shared the pattern of a month-long fast broken at night and ending with a festival with Manichaeans and the pagans of Harran. The Qurʾānic device of comparing black and white threads to tell when it is officially night or day resembles the Talmudic instruction to read the morning prayer of the Shemaʾ when a blue thread can be distinguished from a white one. The Qurʾānic provision that a Muslim who is ill or on a journey at the time of the fast may later make up the amount of time he missed resembles similar provisions regarding Passover in the Bible.126

Asceticism emerged as an issue among Muslims during the caliphate of ʿUthmān (644–56). One of the first Muslim ascetics (Ar. zuḥḥād) was ʿĀmir ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbd al-Qays al-ʿAnbarī, who lived at Basra. He was of local Iraqi origin and was famous for his pious dejection, for his justice towards non-Muslims who had been treated unjustly, and for doing everything privately. He also rejected the authority of ʿUthmān and was recognized as subversive by ʿUthmān’s agent and mawla at Basra, Ḥumrān ibn Abān, who was of Iraqi Jewish background. In 653 Ḥumrān denounced ʿĀmir to ʿUthmān for not being married, not eating meat, and not attending public worship on Fridays. He was interrogated by the governor of Basra, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿĀmir (650–56), and deported to Syria where Muʿāwiya questioned him. ʿĀmir is reported to have explained the first charge by saying, “I know that when I have a wife I may have a son and when I have

124 Qurʾān, 2:183–87.
125 Thaʿālibī, Latif, p. 18.
a son this world will distract me and I would like to avoid that.”127 With regard to the second charge, he replied that he did not get his meat from butchers ever since he saw a butcher in Basra slaughtering sheep while he was saying “good business” instead of bismillāh (or because all the butchers in Basra were Magians). He answered the third charge by explaining that he attended Friday worship at the back of the masjid and was among the first to leave, so no one saw him there.128 A perfect example of the kind of compromise reached with regard to asceticism is the way ʿĪbrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī (d. 714), whose clan had migrated from northern Yaman to Kufa at the time of the conquest, fasted and ate on alternate days.129

Renunciation of the world was also expressed by pious indigence. Work was rejected either because it was defiling and materialistic or because it did not show true trust in God to provide food, shelter, and clothing for oneself. The first reason is definitely Manichaean because the Manichaean Elect depended on the charity of the Hearers in order to avoid the dangers, such as greed, inherent in acquiring material things for themselves and in being defiled by their possession. Among Christians, extreme forms of ascetic poverty were probably due to Manichaean influences. Ephrēm Syrus describes the wild ascetics of upper Mesopotamia who lived in mountains, deserts, and caves clothed only in their long hair and a garment of dirt and who grazed like animals or scavenged like birds for whatever God provided.130 The Mešallyānē came from among these ascetics, and in spite of his opposition to their special theories of prayer, Isaac of Nineveh accepted the concept of religious poverty as a demonstration of trust in God. To neglect one’s body by not providing clothing, food, or shelter in order to concentrate on religious exercises was true trust in divine providence. Privation and indigence would free a person from the desire for material comforts.131

This resembles the Islamic attitude of confidence (Ar. tawakkul) in God. The Qur’ān emphasizes human dependence on divine providence

127 Ibn Saʿd, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 77.
128 Baladhuri, Ansāb, V, 57; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, ʿIqd, II, 414; Ibn Saʿd, Ṭabaqāt, VII(1), 73-80; Tabarī, Taʾrīkh, I, 2924-25.
129 Ibn Saʿd, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 192.
131 Isaac of Nineveh, “Mystic Treatises,” pp. 53, 158; Smith, Early Mysticism, p. 129. Suppression of the body for spiritual benefit was also shared by Jewish ascetics who said “The righteous in their death are called living.” (Epstein, Talmud, I, p. 109 = B. Ber. 18a).
against the self-sufficiency of the wealthy Makkan merchants, and there were some early Muslim ascetics who refused to work at all because they trusted in God (Ar. *mutawakkilūn*). Other Muslims objected to indigence because of its Manichaean implications and reinterpreted tawakkul to mean earning no more than one needed each day in order to survive and allowing God to decide how much that was. In *hadith* they related how Muhammad had rebuked a man who spent all his time in worship and depended on others to provide him with food and to look after his camel by telling him to “trust in God but tie your camel.” Al-Ḥasan al-BAṣrī was considered to be an ascetic who rejected money, but nevertheless he is said to have purchased a half *dirham*’s worth of meat every day. One of al-Ḥasan’s disciples was Mālik ibn Dīnār (d. 748–49), a *mawlā* of Persian origin and a native of Basra. He was famous for his piety, self-mortification, devout resignation, and learning, and he circulated stories about pious Israelites. But he never ate anything that he had not purchased with what he was paid in return for making copies of the Qur’ān.

Self-mortification was not limited to denying material comforts to the body but also meant degradation in the opinion of other people. At one level, self-degradation involved a liberation from human opinion because the opinion of God was all that mattered. But to the extent that ascetics sought public dishonor in order to be honored by God, self-degradation could be used to sanction antisocial behavior. Such ideas were known to Jews and available in the Talmud where it says that “one who degrades himself for the sake of the Law, and eats decayed dates, and dresses in worn-out clothes, and is watching at the door of the sages, the passersby call him an idiot, but be sure that in the end it will be found that he is full of knowledge.” Isaac of Nineveh advocated not only accepting but seeking dishonor and ill repute as a part of ascetic humility and told of ascetics who “lest they should be praised on account of wonderful deeds performed in secret, have assumed the habits of lunatics, though they were in the full possession of their wits and their serenity.” In the most complete expression of this attitude he said:


134 Isaac of Nineveh, “Mystic Treatises,” pp. 52, 58.
If thou art truly humble, be not troubled if thou art oppressed. And do not excuse thyself in any point, but actually take upon thee the wrong laid to thy charge, without being anxious to persuade people that the matter is otherwise. On the contrary pray that thou mayest obtain forgiveness. Some have taken upon them the evil name of fornication and others have taken upon them deeds of adultery for which they were too pious, and the fruit of a sin which they had not committed they made appear serious by bewailing it as if it were their own. And they implored forgiveness for sins which they had not committed from their oppressor with tears, while their soul was crowned with the full purity of chastity.135

This type of self-degrading humility was represented among Muslims by people called *ahl malāma* (Ar., people of blame), who considered disdain as honor and would not deny even the wrongful accusation of faults or crimes. An early example of this may be found in the practices of Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, Anas ibn Mālik, and Hafsa at Basra. They performed their devotions at the “distaffs of shame” in Sīrīn’s house where no one, not even a child, would enter136 because of the degradation associated with spinning as woman’s work.

Christian ascetics typically mortified the flesh by wearing wool, and nuns were instructed not to wear cotton garments.137 This practice was adopted as an exterior mark of distinction by some early Muslim ascetics who were therefore called *ṣūfīs* (Ar., wearers of wool) but brought with it objections to the kind of external, ostentatious humility which could too easily become hypocritical. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, himself an ascetic, accused the *ṣūfīs* of concealing pride in their hearts, of being *ṣūfīs* only in their clothing, and of being more vain of their clothing than the owner of an embroidered silken shawl.138 Abū ʿĀliyya (d. 708), a *mawlā* of Persian origin at Basra, objected to the wearing of wool as un-Islamic. It is said that when Ṭabd al-Karīm Abū Umayya visited him while wearing woolen clothing, he rebuked him by saying, “This is the clothing of monks. When Muslims visit each other they adorn themselves.”139

135 Ibid., p. 58.
139 Ibid., VII(1), 83.
MYSTICISM

But Christian piety was undergoing a major transformation itself among Nestorians in Iraq in the late seventh and early eighth centuries. Probably in reaction to insecurity, sectarian strife, and internal quarrels, a group of Nestorian ascetics and mystics, including Isaac of Nineveh, 'Abhdîshô Ḥazzâyâ, and Joseph Ḥazzâyâ, shifted the emphasis from ascetic mysticism propelled by fear and induced by extreme forms of self-denial to an ecstatic mysticism based on the love of God.

Isaac of Nineveh seems to have been a casualty of the factional conflicts among Nestorians under the catholicos George I (659–80). Isaac was a native of Qatar. He became bishop of Nineveh under George I but resigned after only five months in office and retired to the mountains of Khuzistan and the monastery of Rabban Shâbûr, where he spent the next forty-nine years. Familiar with the theories of the Meṣâlîyânî, Isaac was an important transition figure, coordinating nearly the entire set of ideas associated with love-mysticism. He contradicted al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrî by considering love to be twice as strong as fear as a motivation for piety. He described the achievement of mystical union with God as a journey from one stage to next, or as a voyage from one island to the next. The interrelationship of pious attitudes toward each other was expressed by the formula that “repentance is the ship, fear is her governor, love is the divine port . . . When we have reached love, we have reached God.”

'Abhdîshô speaks of a state of mystic perfection “in which neither sacrifices nor prayers are offered, but the mysteries and the revelations of the next world are made manifest to the spiritual mind,” which bears a suspicious resemblance to the “spiritual prayer” of the Meṣâlîyânî. Both Isaac and 'Abhdîshô applied the imagery of drunkeness to the mystic experience, which they compared to intoxication with living wine—the wine of Paradise that causes a never-ending drunkenness in the delight of love. The imagery of madness and the fire of love also found their way into the mysticism of these men leading

142 Mingana, Woodbrooke Studies, VII, 150.
Isaac to replace the burning torments of Hell with suffering for those who had sinned against love and separated themselves from God. As he expressed it, “Love works with its force in a double way. It tortures those who have sinned, as happens also in the world between friends. And it gives delight to those who have kept its decrees. Thus it is also in Hell. I say that the hard tortures are grief for love.”

This was expressed in early Islamic piety by weeping out of a longing for God and out of grief in being separate from Him. Anas ibn Mālik at Basra is reported to have said, “there has been no night in which I have not seen my Beloved,” and then he wept. The eighth-century mystic ʿAbd al-Wāḥid ibn Zayd (d. 793) asked, “O brethren, will ye not weep in desire for God? Shall he who weeps in longing for his Lord be denied the Vision of Him?”

But this change also took the form of weeping for joy. ʿAbdīshōʿ Ḥazzāyā spoke of a mystic weeping “not from grief or sorrow for his sins, but rather from his joy and happiness and from his ecstasy in the creating power, the grace and the providence of God for all.”

According to Joseph Ḥazzāyā, who linked love of God to love of one’s neighbor, “The first emotion of prayer is accompanied by love, and by a heat of the thoughts which burns in the heart like fire; . . . its sign is penitence of the soul, with tears of joy, and the love of God that burns in your heart.”

Although the incorporation of these ideas into Islamic mysticism (Ṣūfism) really only began in the eighth century, their early expression in Islamic piety may be found in the report that Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʿī (d. 714) at Kufa, who used to sit in fear on the two festivals and on Fridays, also wept with joy.

CONCLUSIONS

Almost everything of a religious nature that was available in pre-Islamic Iraq and among non-Muslims turned up among Muslims in some form in the century after the conquest. This was a period when

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145 Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt, VII(1), 12.
146 Smith, Early Mysticism, p. 157.
147 Mingana, Woodbrooke Studies, VII, 164.
148 Ibid., VII, 166, 178, 183.
149 Ibn Saʿd, Tabaqāt, VI, 193, 195. The two festivals are the ʿid al-kabīr (Ar., “the great festival”) on the tenth of Dhū l-Ḥijja, when the pilgrims perform their sacrifices at Makka, and the ʿid as-ṣaghīr (Ar., “the lesser festival), which marks the end of the month-long fast of Ramaḍān. Both are occasions of joy.
Muslims sorted out among themselves which practices and attitudes would be acceptable and which would not. The various religious backgrounds of the converts were responsible for the controversies, and converts continued those practices which could be supported by the Qur’ān or by early Islamic usage in the Hijaz. Muslim Arab immigrants to Iraq were able to adopt such practices for the same reasons. Such reinforcement was not available for the more extreme forms of Manichaean and Christian asceticism, which were never acceptable to most Muslims.

Converts to Islam continued to argue over old practices even after they became Muslims. As a result, the conflict between Magians and Manichaeans, between Rabbinic Jews and the Mourners for Zion, and between Christian monks and the lay leadership of the Nestorian community survived among Muslims in the form of a continuing tension between this-worldly practicality in religion and the super-pious ascetic or mystic renunciation of the world.
Chapter 15

MUSLIMS: DOCTRINES OF AUTHORITY AND REBELLION

THE POLITICS OF PIETY

Piety had political significance. Styles of piety expressed different values and interests in the conflicts over authority and leadership among Magians, Jews, and Christians. But they seem to have been more overtly political among Muslims, for whom the degree of one's piety or asceticism was associated with the degree of one's opposition to or support for the government. For some Muslims personal piety was an expression of alienation and a way to escape from the conflicts among other Muslims; pious seclusion seems to coincide with periods of fitna. For other Muslims who refused to worship behind any imām, piety was an expression of disapproval and a form of passive resistance. Abū Dharr and ʿĀmir ibn ʿAbdullāh al-ʿAnbarī were both critics of ʿUthmān and were noted for their piety and asceticism. But for a significant number of Muslims, piety was also linked to active, armed opposition to authority. ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā was killed fighting against al-Ḥajjāj on the side of Ibn al-Ashʿath in 701.1 Saʿīd ibn Jubayr came out of seclusion to serve as secretary to the Kufan qādis ʿUbaydullāh ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿUtba ibn Masʿūd and Abū Burda ibn Abī Mūsā in the 690s. But he was among the reciters of the Qurʾān who joined the revolt of Ibn al-Ashʿath. He was present at the Battle of Dayr al-Jamājīm in 701. After the revolt was crushed, he fled to Makka; but Khālid al-Qaṣrī, the governor of Makka for al-Walīd, extradited him to al-Ḥajjāj, who executed him in 712.2 The Khawārijī had a reputation for piety and virtue and those who went out of Kufa to Harura in 657 were called people of fasting and worship. Shurayḥ ibn Abī Awfā al-ʿAbsī, who was in charge of the left wing of the Khārijī army at Nahrawān in 658, was one of their ascetics (Ar. nussāk).3 The Khārijī poet ʿat-Ṭirimmaḥ spoke of night vigils, sighs, weeping, grief, and of a fear that almost bursts the breast.

In the sociopolitical conflicts among Muslims in the century after

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1 Ibn Saʿīd, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 77.
2 Ibid., VI, 183–85; Thaʿālibī, Laṭāʾif, pp. 60–61.
3 Dinawārī, Akhbār ʿat-Ṭiwāl, p. 223.
the conquest, especially during the two *fitnas* of 656–61 and 680–92, the antagonists tended to define each other as unbelievers so that armed opposition would be justified. These conflicts forced Muslims to make judgments and to take action, to take stands on the issues and to justify the stands which they took. Because these issues were expressed in religious terms, these conflicts contributed to the post-Qur'anic development of Islamic doctrine. Distinct groups and positions had formed by the time of ‘Abd al-Malik (686–705), and although sectarian forms of Islam tended to be defined in terms of political opposition, it is important to recognize the reality of religious convictions in spite of their political dimensions.

There seem to have been three central issues that cut across sectarian divisions. The first issue was the nature of leadership and authority, which was an Islamic form of the ancient conflict between divine kingship (as it was expressed in royal absolutism) and forms of group government. Among Muslims this took the form of a conflict between the authority of an infallible, divinely appointed, rightly guided leader and the authority of an equally infallible community of righteous believers through the consensus (Ar. *ijma*) of its spokesmen.

The second issue involved different concepts of human nature. On one side were those who believed that human nature was similar to divine nature, or that there was a divine element in human nature which enabled believers to enjoy private contact with God and to achieve perfection. On the other side were those who asserted that human and divine natures were totally different, that God was absolutely perfect and infinitely distant, and that humans were inferior, dependent, subject creatures whose very works were derived from God.

The third issue was the definition of the meaning of religious faith. For some, belief (Ar. *imān*) alone was sufficient, although others insisted that the sincerity of belief had to be demonstrated by living according to the Qur’ān and *sunna*. Faith tended to be defined more rigorously by alienated pious Muslims who were prepared to take up arms and more generously by those with vested interests who preferred to avoid conflict.

**THE KHAWĀRIJ**

The Khārijī movement developed out of religiously justified opposition to the growing socioeconomic polarization in the garrison cities of Iraq. Dissident elements at Basra and Kufa resented the effect of
the land grants made by 'Uthmān and his governors to reduce the main source of their own military stipends. In addition, many of the opponents of 'Uthmān were Qur’ān reciters and people of piety. These elements at Basra and Kufa supported and joined in the revolt that ended in the assassination of 'Uthmān in 656, which they regarded as justifiable tyrannicide.4 Afterwards the same elements at Basra and Kufa tended to oppose those who sought revenge for the death of 'Uthmān and at first they supported 'Ali. A purge of those implicated in 'Uthmān’s death was conducted at Basra in 656 by Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr, but Ḥurqūṣ ibn Zuhayr of the Banū Sa’d clan of Tamīm managed to escape the purge because he was protected by his clan.5

At the Battle of Siffin in July of 657, these same elements forced 'Ali to accept the appeal to the Qur’ān made by Mu‘awiya’s army and to end the fighting and enter into negotiations because they expected that a judgment according to the principles of the Qur’ān would vindicate them. But when 'Ali agreed to submit the dispute between himself and Mu‘awiya to arbitration based on the Qur’ān and human judgment, they raised a great cry of “Judgment belongs only to God” (Ar. lā ḥukma illā li-llāhi) and abandoned 'Ali.6 Refusing to return to Kufa with 'Ali, some twelve thousand of them camped at the village of Harura just outside of Kufa. They put Shabath ibn Rib‘ī at-Tamīmī in charge of fighting and 'Abdullāh ibn al-Kawwā’ al-Yashkūrī, who had favored judgment according to the Qur’ān at Siffin, in charge of worship. The program of the Ḥarūrī’s was threefold: they wanted a council (Ar. shūra) to be held after victory; they would in the meantime give their allegiance to God; and they insisted on applying the Qur’ānic ethic of commanding the good and forbidding the evil.7

'Alī was able to persuade the Ḥarūrī’s to return to Kufa. However, after the arbitration ended disastrously for 'Alī in the spring of 658, Hurqūṣ ibn Zuhayr turned up as a spokesman of the Ḥarūrī’s at Kufa,8 and they withdrew again under 'Abdullāh ibn Wahb. They were joined by large numbers of Qur’ān reciters whose exodus from Kufa on that occasion gave the movement its designation of Khawārij (seceders). Mis‘ar ibn Fadakī at-Tamīmī, who had led the Basran Qur’ān reciters at Siffin and had favored judgment according to the Qur’ān, joined

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4 Baladhuri, Anṣāb, V, 59.
5 Tabari, Ta’rikh, I, 3131.
7 Dinawari, Akhbar at-tiwāl, p. 204; Tabari, Ta’rikh, I, 3349.
8 Tabari, Ta’rikh, 1, 3360.
Ibn Wahb with about five hundred Basrans east of Mada'in at Nahrawan. On their way to Nahrawan, the followers of Ibn Wahb are said to have killed any Muslim they found who supported the arbitration. ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Kawwā and the ascetic Shurayḥ ibn Abī Awfā were among the Khārīji leaders at Nahrawan, and Ḥurqūṣ ibn Zuhayr led the infantry, but Shabath ibn Rib‘ī was in charge of the left wing of ‘Ālī’s army. Out of about six thousand Khawārij at Nahrawan, some twenty-eight hundred were killed in battle with ‘Ālī’s army in July. The rest scattered throughout Iraq and western Iran and returned to Kufa after ‘Ālī died.

The Battle of Nahrawan marked the break between ‘Ālī and the religious opposition in Iraq. Thereafter it became increasingly obvious that the Khawārij were less interested in the claims of either ‘Ālī or Mu‘āwiyah than they were in providing a vehicle for protest and armed revolt against whoever happened to represent the establishment in Iraq. The first Khārīji rising to attract dissidents from outside the original group was that of al-Khirrit ibn Rashid and the Banū Nājiya. They had originally been at Basra and had joined ‘Ālī just before the Battle of the Camel in 656. Afterwards they settled at Kufa and fought on ‘Ālī’s side at Siffin and Nahrawan. But they broke with him in 658, refused to pay the Islamic tithe tax, left Kufa, and raided across the Sawad toward Fars. By calling for vengeance for the death of ‘Uthmān and for the abolition of taxes, al-Khirrit gathered various other dissident elements around him, including some of the ‘Abd al-Qays and local Christians and Kurds in Fars.

In opposition to the new elite of the garrison cities, the early Khawārij stood for the original Islam of equality and brotherhood, including women, and for a community based on faith instead of kinship. They were also loyal to the sunna of God and of Muḥammad and they insisted on the application of Qur’anic principles, as their rallying cry of “Judgment belongs only to God” signified. They were famous for their vigils, excessive prostration in worship, fasting, recitation of

9 Dinawarī, Akhbār at-tiwāl, p. 204; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 3367.
11 Ibid., pp. 222–23.
12 E. Salem, The Political Theory and Institutions of the Khawarij (Baltimore, 1956), p. 17; Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 3367–68; II, 17–19. According to Dinawarī (Akhbār at-tiwāl p. 224) five hundred men under Farwa ibn Nawfal al-Ashja’i left Nahrawan before the battle, others returned to Kufa, and one thousand men took safety at ‘Ālī’s banner, leaving ‘Abdullāh ibn Wahb with less than four thousand men, all of whom were killed.
13 Ṭabarī, Ta‘rikh, I, 3433.
the Qurʾān, and fear of Hell. They said a prayer to exorcise evil spirits before reciting the Qurʾān and they gave the pagan Arab themes of bravery and heroism an Islamic, ascetic expression in their poetry. They stood for fiscal justice for all Muslims in the division of booty and the payment of stipends and were the first to appeal to equality between mawālī and Arab Muslims. The first band of non-Arab mawālī became Khawārij at Kufa when al-Mughira ibn Shuʿba was governor (661–70) for Muʿawiya. They were also the first to really respect the dhimmī status of non-Muslims and to apply Qurʾānic requirements toward them. Although they had a scrupulous regard for the rights of non-Muslims, they regarded Muslims who disagreed with them as unbelievers. Both attitudes are excellently illustrated by the famous story of how the Nājī Khawārij dealt with two natives of the Sawad whom they found near Niffar. One of them was a Persian Muslim dihqān called Zādhānfarrūkh. When he told them that he approved of ʿAlī and regarded him as the Commander of the Faithful, they killed him as an unbeliever (Ar. kāfir). But when his companion told them that he was a dhimmī, they let him go because, as they said, they had “no pretext against him.” Some Khawārij are said to have regarded as equal to Muslims those Jews and Christians who would testify to the oneness of God with the qualification that “Muḥammad is the messenger of God to the Arabs and not to us.”

In the process of justifying the assassination of ʿUthmān, the Khawārij were responsible for beginning the post-Qurʾānic development of the Islamic doctrine of sin and of the question of the position of a sinner in the Islamic community. They said that ʿUthmān had sinned by violating his oath to follow the practice (Ar. sīra) of Muḥammad, Abū Bakr, and ʿUmar, and by failing to apply the prescribed Qurʾānic punishment for drunkenness to al-Walīd ibn ʿUqba, the governor of Kufa from 645 until 647. To the proponents of the literal interpretation and application of the Qurʾān, that was a sufficient pretext to disqualify ʿUthmān from being the leader of the community. They also considered ʿAlī to be wrong in his failure to support them totally and generalized this to include any Muslim who sinned, especially by dis-

15 Salem, Khawarij, p. 14; Yaʿqūbī, Taʾrikh, II, 262.
16 Taḥbīrī, Taʾrikh, I, 3423. This phrase seems to echo Qurʾān, 4:90.
agreeing with them, as an apostate (Ar. *murtadd*) or unbeliever. Such people, they felt, must forfeit their membership in the community and ought to be killed. They were militant, fundamentalist, self-righteous, homicidal, and suicidal; they were likely to raise the *taḥkīm* (Ar.) in a crowded *masjid* and be instantly torn to pieces by the panicked crowd.

The Khawārij continued to serve as a vehicle for opposition under Mu‘āwiya. Sixteen risings took place at Basra and Kufa during his reign, beginning with the five hundred Ḥarūrī’s at Shahrazūr under Farwa ibn Nawfal al-Ashja’ī who had escaped from Nahrawan, transferred their opposition to ‘Alī to opposition to Mu‘āwiya, and returned to Kufa.19 Ziyād and his son ‘Ubaydullāh are said to have killed thirteen thousand Khawārij between them, and ‘Ubaydullāh alone is said to have imprisoned four thousand.20 By the end of Mu‘āwiya’s reign, the Khawārij had abandoned Kufa and centered their activities at Basra, where the Ḥarūrī’s had their own *masjid*.21 Suppression by Mu‘āwiya’s governors in Iraq led some Khawārij at Basra to abandon armed opposition in order to survive and to conceal their true beliefs because it was too dangerous to reveal them.22 This was the origin of the argument over whether an unrighteous regime might be tolerated if there was no hope of overthrowing it or whether a true Muslim was required to oppose such a regime by force, no matter what the cost. The quietist attitude of Mirdās ibn Udayya (d. 680–81) of the tribe of Tamīm at Basra was inherited by the Ṣufriyya sect of the Khawārij. But Mirdās was imprisoned by ‘Ubaydullāh, his brother was killed, and in 679 he was finally provoked into leading a Khārijī revolt against the excesses of government suppression. With a small group of only forty men he left Basra for Khuzistan, where they collected their own stipends.23

These opposing tendencies within the Khārijī movement were crystallized during the second *fitna* and its aftermath, which served as a catalyst for so many developments in the seventh century. About twenty

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21 Baladhurī, *Ansāb*, IVb, 94.  
22 This kind of dissimulation (Ar. *taqiyya*) was sanctioned by *Qurʾān* 4:101.  
Basran Khawārij, including Nāfi' ibn al-Azraq and Najda ibn ‘Āmir, both of the Banū Ḥanifa, joined Ibn az-Zubayr in the Hijaz in order to fight the Syrians and participated in the first siege of Makka in 683. They were divided over whether or not to recognize Ibn az-Zubayr as the Commander of the Faithful. When they discovered that he disagreed with them concerning 'Uthmān and 'Alī, they returned to Basra where they split among themselves. Nāfi' declared those Khawārij who had not taken up arms to be unbelievers, but Najda did not agree. After they returned to Basra, 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād is said to have imprisoned about one hundred and forty Khawārij.24

When Yazīd I died in 683, the number of Khawārij in Basra increased. As soon as 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād had turned over authority to his lieutenant Mas'ūd ibn 'Amr of the tribe of Azd, the Khawārij broke out of prison, allied themselves with the tribes of Tamīm and 'Abd al-Qays, rebelled against Mas'ūd, and killed him in the spring of 684. Afterwards the Khawārij withdrew to the Nahr al-Asāwira but were driven away from there by the men of Azd.25 The final division between the moderate and extremist Khawārij occurred in 684 when Ibn az-Zubayr sent his own governor to Basra to take over the government from Nāfi'. At that point, Nāfi' and his followers, who were called Azāriqa, decided to fight and withdrew to Khuṣtān. Nāfi' was a typical militant ascetic who favored zuhd (Ar.), opposed the love of this world as well as its government, and incited his companions to jihād (Ar.). The Azāriqa considered any Muslim who did not agree with them and join them to be an apostate (Ar. murtadd) who should be killed, together with his wives and children. Their depredations were terrible. In 685 and 686 they burned, looted, and killed in the region between Basra and Khuṣtān, and in 687 they sacked Mada'in and massacred its Muslim population. At Sabat they killed a woman of the tribe of Azd while she was reciting the Qur'ān. On the other hand, they protected Jews, Christians, and Magians.26

The Khawārij regarded themselves as the only true Muslims. Muslims who sinned were guilty of unbelief (Ar. kufr) or polytheism (Ar. shirk) and forfeited their membership in the community. More extreme groups such as the Azāriqa and the Yazīdiyya expelled a Muslim for

24 Balādhuri, Ansāb, IVb, 96, 101–2; Salem, Khawārij, p. 28.
25 Balādhuri, Ansāb, IVb, 112; Dīnawārī, Akhbār at-tiwal, p. 279; Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, II, 461.
any sin. Najda and his followers, who were called Najdiyya, controlled central Arabia during the later years of the second fitna and were somewhat more moderate. They felt that Muslims who failed to support them actively were merely hypocrites rather than unbelievers and only defined persistence in sin, such as theft and adultery, as shirk. The Şufriyya equated the neglect of worship and fasting with unbelief because unbelief could result from such laxity.27

It is impossible to ascribe all of this to Arab tribal attitudes even when they had been enshrined in the Islamic concept of jihād, which justified raids against unbelievers.28 It is equally difficult to explain Khārijī activity exclusively in terms of tribal identities. Khawārij at Kufa in the time of ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiya seem to have come mainly from the Kinda, the Ṣayyi‘a, the Sula‘yim, and the Ta‘yim ar-Ribāb clan of Tamīm. At Basra one hundred and fifty men of the ‘Abd al-Qays were among the rebels who had gone to Madina and participated in the killing of ‘Uthmān.29 Afterwards some of the ‘Abd al-Qays were attracted to the uprising of al-Khirrit ibn Rāshid. Thereafter Khawārij at Basra seem to have come mainly from the Banū Sa‘d clan of Tamīm and from the Yāshkur. Some of these groups were latecomers to the garrison cities and suffered economic discrimination; others were becoming internally polarized. It is important to note that none of these groups joined the Khawārij en masse; this was done only by individual members, and the Khawārij themselves seem to have been unconcerned with tribal affiliations.30 Arabs who participated in the movement seem to have been obscure otherwise or younger rather than being members of the ashrāf. One of the best examples of the difference between generations is Ṭarafa ibn ‘Adī, who left Kufa in 657 to join ‘Abdullāh ibn Wahb in spite of the objections of his father, ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim at-Ṭā‘ī.31

Many Khawārij were not Arabs at all. Most of the two hundred followers of Abū Maryam as-Sa‘dī of Tamīm who rebelled in January 659 were mawāli.32 There were slaves and mawāli among the Khawārij

27 Salem, Khawārij, pp. 34, 73; Montgomery Watt, Formative Period, p. 24.
28 Montgomery Watt, Formative Period, p. 20. The bedouin explanation seems to go back to Ibn Khaldūn.
29 Baladhuri, Ansāb, V, 59.
32 Ibn al-Athīr, Ta‘rikh, III, 373.
at Basra when 'Ubaydullah ibn Ziyād was governor. A lower-class Persian (Ar. 'ilj) named Muslim who settled in Basra, converted to Islam, and joined the Khawārij is said to have been the one who shot and killed Mas‘ūd ibn ‘Amr in 683. The three descendents of Māḥūz at Basra were active among the Azāriqa. Nāfī‘ ibn al-Azraq himself is said to have been the son of a freed blacksmith of Greek origin; after he was killed, the ascetic 'Abdullāh ibn Māḥūz led the Azāriqa.

The Christian background or connections of some of the Khawārij may have contributed to the way their ideas developed and were expressed. There were Christians among the 'Abd al-Qays before they became Muslims and local Christians sometimes joined Khārijī uprisings or collaborated with them. Al-Khaṭṭār an-Namiri, who had been a Christian (probably Monophysite) before becoming a Muslim, led a Khārijī uprising in Radhan in the late 690s.

The militant asceticism and exclusiveness of the Azāriqa and other Khawārij seem to reflect contemporary patterns among the other religious communities in Iraq. Jews used social ostracism, and Christians practiced excommunication. The penalty of death for apostasy was of Magian origin and was used against the Khawārij by the Islamic authorities. Aside from their homicidal behavior, the issues raised by the Khawārij seem rather close to those concerning the position of a monk in a monastic community, especially among Nestorians in the early seventh century, as reflected in the monastic canons. The Khārijī definition of sin in terms of polytheism has close parallels among Jews and Christians, who could have supplied the terms for these Khārijī statements as well as the attitude that lies behind them. In the Talmud, arrogance is made equivalent to idolatry and it is said that evil thoughts and behavior will lead to idolatry. In a letter written to one of his bishops in 585, the Nestorian catholicos Ḥisho'yahbh I referred to usury and cupidity as true idolatry.

This impression is increased by the career and teaching of the Khārijī Šāliḥ ibn Musarriḥ of the tribe of Tamīm. In 695 he and his followers were at Dara, and in Ard Mawsil, and in the Jazira in the midst of Christian monasteries, and in the part of Mesopotamia where the

33 Baladhuri, Ansāb, IVb, 90, 94.
34 Ṭabari, Ta’rikh, II, 461.
35 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl, pp. 279, 284; Rubinacci, “Azariqa,” p. 810.
36 Baladhuri, Ansāb, fol. 51b.
38 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 180, 439.
Arabs who had been converted to Monophysite Christianity in the sixth century had been so attracted to asceticism. Šāliḥ was ascetic (Ar. nāsik), humble, pale-faced, and devout (Ar. saḥib 'ibāda). He taught his companions to recite the Qurʿān, instructed them, and narrated to them (Ar. yaqūṣṣu). His teaching, as it survived among his followers, exhorted them to:

... the fear of God and abstinence in this world and desire for the hereafter, much remembrance of death, separation from sinners, and love for the faithful because abstinence in this world makes the servant desire the things of God and frees his body for obedience to God, and much remembrance of death fills the servant with fear of his Lord so that he prays fervently to Him and submits to Him... and going out from the abode of annihilation to the abode of permanence and joining our truly faithful brethren who sell this world for the next and spend their wealth as a request for God’s approval on the last day.39

In addition to this conformity to contemporary patterns of piety and the reinforcement of the relationship between monastic piety and early Islamic piety, two additional aspects might be noted here. First, the Khawārij called themselves “vendors” (Ar. shurat) of their souls and of their substance for the cause of God in return for the assurance of Paradise. This concept was based most directly on Sūra 9:111, where the purchase by God of the lives and property of those who fight for His cause and are slain is put in the terms of a covenant. The idea of spending one’s worldly goods in return for salvation was also current in Christian piety and was part of the rejection of material values.40 Second, this concentration on death may be related to pre-Islamic Arab attitudes of resignation in battle and to the Islamic concept of martyrdom in battle, but the connection between asceticism and death had already been made in Jewish piety and in Christian monasticism. Ephrem Syrus regarded monks as dead to the material world; in monastic rules a monk was disinherit ed as though he were dead; and Isaac of Nineveh expressed this connection in a rhetorical fashion that echoes the Khawārij:

Better for us is death in the war for God, than a life of shame and baseness. If thou wilt begin with one of the works of God, make thy testament beforehand as one who has no further life in this world and as one prepared for death.\textsuperscript{41}

In Christian piety this had already taken the form of preparing provisions for the next world.\textsuperscript{42}

But Isaac's war was spiritual. Şāliḥ led an armed revolt against Marwānī rule which ended in his own death in 695. The remnants of his following gathered around Shabīb ibn Yazid ash-Shaybānī, who led the movement for two more years until he, too, was killed in the spring of 697. His forces were composed of small bands of several hundred horsemen and operated along the upper Tigris from the region around Mawsil to Nasibin and Mardin, but they also raided as far south as Mada’in and Kufa. They were on good terms with the local Christians, and Shabīb the Ḥarūrī\' was one of the few figures of early Islamic history to be noticed by Christian chroniclers. His program was still essentially political and rooted in grievances that went back to the reign of 'Uthmān. His envoy is reported to have told the governor of Mada‘in, “That for which we seek revenge on behalf of our people are the monopolization of the \textit{fay}', the failure to enforce the prescribed punishments (Ar. \textit{ḥudūd}), and government by compulsion (Ar. \textit{jabariyya}).”\textsuperscript{43}

Those Khawārij who had decided to stay in Basra in 684, who accepted or supported Mus‘ab ibn az-Zubayr, and who accepted Marwānī rule at the end of the \textit{fitna} had to justify their inaction in some way and needed to adjust to the realities of non-Khariji rule. By the 690s, moderate groups of Şufrī and Ibāḍī Khawārij existed at Basra. They practiced dissimulation and admitted that other Muslims were at least monotheists. The Ibāḍiyya allowed intermarriage and inheritance with other Muslims, and the Şufrīyya refused to say whether or not an adulterer was still a believer. Others (called Wāqifiyya) suspended judgment on other Muslims because, as humans, they were

\textsuperscript{41} Vööbus, “Ephrem,” p. 103; Isaac of Nineveh, “Mystic Treatises,” p. 65.
\textsuperscript{42} Mingana, \textit{Woodbrooke Studies}, VII, 190–91; Isaac of Nineveh, “Mystic Treatises,” p. 156.
unable to judge. They felt that sinners should be punished by the authorities but not excluded from the community.44

NEUTRALISTS

Such Khawārij were very close to the neutralists who disassociated (Ar. i'tazala) themselves from both sides in the conflict during the first two fitnas. Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī was such a neutralist at Kufa during the first fitna and he tried to dissuade others from participating.45 Such neutralists were opposed to Muslims fighting each other and may have felt that both sides were wrong. Immediately after the first fitna, al-Mughīra ibn Shu’ba is said to have followed such a neutralist policy as governor of Kufa for Mu‘awiya in 622. Hishām ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi relates from Abū Mikhnaf that al-Mughīra told Kufans who accused each other of Shi‘i or Khariji sympathies, “God has decided that you will continued to disagree. And God will judge among His creatures concerning that in which they disagree.”46 Disassociation was one way of dealing with differences of opinion, sometimes in order to concentrate on more important issues. The Basran Khawārij did not really support the claims of Ibn az-Zubayr, so those who joined him at Makka in 683 in order to fight the Syrians are said to have treated him with disassociation.47

Neutrality was also expressed by suspending or postponing judgment (Ar. irjā’) between the cause of ‘Uthmān and that of Ali. This murjiá’ (Ar.) attitude could also take the form of postponing the decision between ‘Ali and ‘Uthmān in order to combat the oppression and injustice of subsequent rulers.48 Otherwise irjā’ was used to deny a religious sanction for revolt against the government in order to avoid conflict among Muslims. Those who took this position believed, like the Khawārij, that God would judge sinners, but they did not presume to know what that judgment would be. Whether a Muslim who sinned would go to Paradise or Hell could not be answered by humans but must be left to the decision of God on the Day of Judgment. Muslims who sinned should be punished according to the Qur’ān, but they

45 Dinawari, Akhbār at-tiwāl, pp. 154, 205–6.
46 Tabari, Ta’rikh, II, 20, This seems to be a paraphrase of Qur’ān 42:10.
47 Baladhuri, Ansāb, IVb, 96.
remained Muslims and there was hope that God would pardon them. Such people held a concept of a community based more on self-ascription (public profession of faith) than on behavior.

The use of *irjā'* to oppose revolt seems to have emerged at Basra in association with the revolts of Ibn al-Ash'ath from 699 until 701 and of Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab in 720. The *irjā'* of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī lay in his refusal to support either of these rebels or the Commander of the Faithful. When he was asked to join the revolt of Ibn al-Ash'ath, he is said to have paraphrased *Sūra* 7:87: “Have patience until God judges and He is the best of judges.” Al-Ḥasan is said to have only hated the Ḥarūrī’s, but Ibrāhīm an-Nakha’ī at Kufa said that he feared the Murji’ā more than the Azāriqa because of their numbers and that he hated the Murji’ā even more than non-Muslims (Ar. *ahl al-kitāb*).

These different attitudes toward sin seem to come from the different stands taken by Muslims on political issues in the late seventh and early eighth centuries, and from the way they used Qur’ānic principles to justify those stands. The term *irjā'* came from *Sūra* 9:106, which speaks of those who await God’s decree, whether He will punish them or forgive them. The declaration that “In whatsoever you differ, the verdict therein belongs to God” (*Sūra* 42:10) was an original and integral part of the program of the Khawārij. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī’s use of *Sūra* 7:87 is also important and needs to be put into its context. This quotation comes from the dispute between Shu‘ayb and the Midianites, in which Shu‘ayb tells them that “if there is a party of you which believes in that with which I have been sent, and there is a party of you which believes not, then have patience until God judges between us. He is the best of all who deal in judgment.”

However, this may have been a matter of Qur’ānic justification for the use of concepts already existing among local non-Muslims. Postponing judgment in order to justify accepting existing authority was also known to Nestorians. The Synod of Dadhīshā’ in 424 had established that bishops had no right to take their complaints about their patriarch to the western patriarchs. Everything that could not be resolved in his presence was to be reserved for the judgment of Christ. The contrast between the militant exclusiveness of the Khawārij and the more tolerant attitude of *irjā'* is paralleled by the situation

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at the Nestorian monastery on Mt. Izla in about 600. At a time of increasing hostility towards Monophysites and of danger from the M'sallyānē, some of the monks living in cells isolated from the main monastery had taken women in to live with them and were only exposed when their children gave them away. The Arab monk Mar Eliyyā, who had discovered them, roused the entire community by sounding the wooden gongs (Syr. naqqūs). After an investigation, not only were the offending monks expelled from the monastery, but when it was discovered that Mar Yaʾqūb had known about them without denouncing them, he, too, was expelled. Mar Yaʾqūb went off to Adiabene, where he refounded the monastery of Beth 'Abhe. The traditions of that monastery preserved the opinion of some of the monks that Mar Yaʾqūb had acted properly in sheltering the sinners and leaving them to the Divine examination, even though he had seen their wickedness.\(^{52}\) This entire episode and the attitudes it reveals among Nestorian monks at the beginning of the seventh century seems to foreshadow the way in which the position of the sinner in the Muslim community was discussed in the later seventh century, even to the Khāriji insistence that those who withheld judgment were unbelievers.

AUTHORITY AND DESTINY

Irjā' was also used to sanction support for the regime against rebels. This kind of irjā' was associated with the 'Uthmāniyya whose pursuit of revenge for the death of 'Uthmān was transformed into loyalty to the Sufyānīs and then to the Marwānīs.\(^{53}\) However, the ideology used by these regimes justified their authority in a more direct way. They presented themselves as the legitimate leaders of the Islamic community in religious as well as secular matters. From Muʾāwiya to the last Marwānī, Muslim rulers called themselves the Servant of God ('Abdullāh) and saw themselves as the representatives or agents of God on earth. In the aftermath of the second fitna, the early Marwānīs began to make three additional claims to increase their religious legitimacy. They claimed to rule according to the Qurʾān and sunna. They allowed themselves to be represented as the source of religious guidance and leadership; Farazdaq called 'Abd al-Malik "the Imam

\(^{52}\) Thomas of Margha, Governors, I, 29–33, 35; II, 53–60, 62.

who has been granted the gift of prophecy."  

Under ʿAbd al-Malik, the ruler and his officials also seem to have claimed to be the agents or instruments of divine destiny (Ar. qadar). Such a claim could be abused, and al-Ḥasan al- Başrī accused local officials in the time of ʿAbd al-Malik of appealing to the qadar of God to excuse their own misdeeds. They interpreted the Qurʾān to mean that qadar determined the physical and spiritual destiny of a person, that people were rewarded for acts they could not avoid doing and were punished for those they were unable to prevent, and that deeds were performed through people, not by them.  

The implication was that the rulers were not responsible for their actions in a way which would give a religious sanction to revolt. There may have been more than a semantic connection between determinism (Ar. jabriyya) and tyranny (Ar. jabariyya).

The concept of Time (usually M. P. zamān) as fate survived among Muslims and non-Muslims in early Islamic Iraq. It was used to explain unpredictable misfortunes or accidents. However, Muslims tended to subsume this concept of fate in the destiny decreed by God. Resignation and dependence on God were expressions of ascetic piety that asserted the omnipotence of a personal God instead of an impersonal fate. ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd was quoted by Zayd ibn Wahb al-Juhānī (d. 703 or 714), who also lived at Kufa, as saying that everyone has a book in which an angel writes God’s decision about the sex, provision, term of life, and destiny for Heaven or Hell of the embryo when it is still in the womb. He was also among those who are supposed to have said that one’s spiritual destiny was inescapable, that no matter how you spend your life you will finally be overtaken by your book and your last acts will justify whether God rewards or punishes you.

56 A search of contemporary poetry for such expressions will be more productive than looking for them in hadith.
57 Muranyi, Prophetengenossen, pp. 133–40; Montgomery Watt, Formative Period, pp. 105, 113. This was turned into an hadith in the eighth century.
58 Montgomery Watt, Free Will, pp. 18–19; idem, Formative Period, p. 105; Wensinck, Muslim Creed, p. 55.
The Khawārij also affirmed the qadar of God. Some of them accepted the concept that a person's last acts justified his spiritual fate and asserted that God created both good and evil. Associations between fatalism and the damnation of children also resurfaced among the Khawārij. The Azāriqa justified killing the children of unbelievers by saying that the children of believers and of unbelievers went to Heaven or Hell, respectively. But 'Abd al-Karīm ibn 'Ajarrad, in the early eighth century, who refused to make God responsible for evil, said that the children of unbelievers would share their parents' fate but that the children of believers should be treated with "disassociation" (Ar. barā'a) until they had reached an age of accountability and had been given the opportunity to profess Islam for themselves. One of his followers went so far as to say that one should be neutral toward the children of believers and of unbelievers alike until they had been summoned to Islam and decided for themselves.59

This shift of attitude is important because it contains an awareness that personal choice is necessary at the very least in order to preserve God’s justice and human responsibility. It seems to coincide with the use of divine determinism to justify the regime of 'Abd al-Malik and may have been in reaction to it. To those who began to use such arguments in the 690s, the supporters of the regime were capable of being either good or evil by their own choice, they were responsible for their sins, unworthy of rule, and they ought to be opposed by conscientious Muslims.

In a letter he wrote to 'Abd al-Malik between 695 and 700, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī stated his opposition, for both political and ethical reasons, to making God responsible for evil. Al-Ḥasan asserted God’s control and determination of material existence, His providence for His creatures, and His guidance of those who choose to acknowledge Him. But he denied that oppression and tyranny were decreed by God. Guidance came from God but error was one’s own doing and God was not responsible if people did what he forbade. Al-Ḥasan emphasized God’s justice and argued that He would not make people do what He had ordered them not to do; nor would He require them to do things they were incapable of doing. God gave people the capability (Ar. qudra) to believe, to do good or evil, and consequently to deserve Heaven or Hell. Although he admitted that God had an eternal foreknowledge of what people would choose, people still could choose

59 Salem, Khawarij, pp. 40–41; Montgomery Watt, Free Will, pp. 37–40, 56; idem, Formative Period, pp. 34, 96.
freely. This assertion of divine qadar by al-Hasan was as much a denial of the impersonal mechanistic operation of fate as was the Qur'anic opposition to dahr, and al-Hasan based his arguments on the Qur'an. But his position that material existence is determined by divine destiny while one's spiritual destiny is in one's own hands is so close to the Mazdaean position vis-à-vis the Zurvanites that one may legitimately suspect some assistance in its formulation from that direction.

Islamic advocates of human ability to choose and act (called Qadariyya) emerged at Basra among the followers of al-Hasan al-Baṣrī in the last decade of the seventh century. They represent a continuation among Muslims of the arguments between Zurvanites and Mazdaeans and between Marcionites and Nestorians. The concepts contained in those controversies were most likely to have been made available by Muslim converts from Magianism and Christianity. In a letter written in 680, the Nestorian catholicos George I refers to the “free choice and nobility of the will of all reasoning and intellectual beings.” The eighth-century Nestorian Mar Sergius of Azerbayjan says that the splendor of reason is that it may examine and choose of its own will and not by force and that “freedom itself is the child of power.” According to some, a member of the Asāwira at Basra called Abū Yūnus al-Uswari was the first Muslim to discuss destiny and disassociation (Ar. i'tizāl). According to others, it was an Iraqi Christian convert to Islam called Süṣan who afterwards became a Christian again. Süṣan is said to have influenced Ma'bad al-Juḥanī, the first real Qadarī at Basra, who was a close associate of al-Hasan al-Baṣrī and the teacher of Ghaylān of Damascus. Ma'bad joined the revolt of Ibn al-Ash'ath and was executed afterwards.

By the early eighth century, several groups of Qadārīs and some Khawārij refused to make God responsible for evil. The Shabibiyya denied that God's foreknowledge had a determining effect, and explained human responsibility by the concept of delegation (Ar. taʿfuṣūḍ)


61 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 231, 495.

62 Budge, Rabban Hormizd, II, 319. Mar Sergius also had affinities to Magianism (ibid.).

63 Ibn an-Nadim, Fihrist, I, 381; Obermann, “Political Theology,” p. 153; Montgomery Watt, Formative Period, pp. 85, 95, 99; idem, Free Will, pp. 53, 59; Wensinck, Muslim Creed, p. 53.
and said that God delegated to people the ability to direct their own affairs. Others held the position of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī that good actions came from God but sin came from themselves. Still others applied the Khāriji concept of delegation and claimed that God had made them responsible for themselves and had given them the power (Ar. quwwa) to perform good acts without further help or guidance from God. The difficulties that beset the Qadariyya and their doctrinal descendents, the upholders of God’s justice and unity (Muʿtazila), were largely due to this overreaction to fatalism which tended to compromise the omnipotence of God and to say that God was forced to be just.

THE SHĪʿA

An entirely different set of issues, which eventually produced the Shiʿi form of Islam, surrounded the factional support for ʿAlī and his family in Iraq. Although the Shiʿi alternative is an important part of the history of Islam, the main concern here is what this partisanship meant in terms of continuity and change in Iraq. At one level this involved Arab tribal concepts of leadership and the custom of choosing the leader of a tribe from the same family or clan (Ar. ahl al-bayt). In this respect, ʿAlī’s political claims were based on kinship—on the fact that he was Muḥammad’s cousin and son-in-law, and that when Muḥammad died in 632, ʿAlī’s two sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, were Muḥammad’s only living male descendents. At another level, it involved the pre-Islamic reputation of Muḥammad’s family as caretakers of the Kaʾba. ʿAlī’s own religious status was based on his early conversion to Islam.

However, the earliest supporters of ʿAlī were a group of his own protégés. Several of them were early converts of humble origin who counted on the opportunities for advancement provided by the socioeconomic equality of the early Islamic community in Madina. For that reason they also resisted the reimposition of control by the Makkan merchant elite, many of whom were late converts to Islam. Some of ʿAlī’s supporters came to Iraq soon after the conquest. Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yaman and Salman al-Parisl were involved in the early admin-

64 Salem, Khawarij, pp. 41–42; J. van Ess, “Umar II,” p. 21; Montgomery Watt, Formative Period, pp. 94, 97.
istration of Mada'in, and both of them settled there.66 'Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf collected taxes in the Euphrates districts, and 'Ammār ibn Yāsir was governor of Kufa briefly under 'Umar I.

Although some of 'Alī's protégés, such as 'Ammār ibn Yāsir and Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, were active opponents of 'Uthmān, the opposition to 'Uthmān that developed in Iraq in the 650s had nothing to do with support for 'Alī. It was a consequence of the rise of the postconquest elite in the garrison cities of Iraq and its growing domination of economic resources and leadership. The dissidents included future partisans of 'Alī as well as future Khawārij. Mālik al-Ashtar, Sulaymān ibn Šurad al-Khuzaʿī, Saʿṣaʿa ibn Ṣūḥān, and Ḥujr ibn 'Adī al-Kindī were among those who protested the policy of Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀs at Kufa. Mālik al-Ashtar led the rebellion at Kufa in 656, took two hundred Kufans to Madīna, participated in the assassination of 'Uthmān, and afterwards acclaimed 'Alī as Commander of the Faithful.67 When 'Alī came to Iraq, the dissident elements there supported him to the extent that he supported their interests. 'Alī is generally reported to have restored the policies of 'Umar I in Iraq. Dissident members of polarized tribal groups gravitated to his camp. Such were the members of the 'Abd al-Qays at Basra who joined him at the Battle of the Camel. At Kufa, Ḥujr ibn 'Adī's contest with the family of al-Asḥ’ath ibn Qays for the leadership (Ar. riyāsa) of Kinda led him to support 'Alī in return for the latter's patronage. When al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī and 'Ammār came to Kufa to get support before the Battle of the Camel, Ḥujr is said to have turned the tide of opinion in the debate in the masjid in favor of joining 'Alī.68

'Alī's real supporters in Iraq were only identified at the Battle of Siffin. Sulaymān ibn Šurad was in charge of the infantry on 'Alī's right wing. Mālik al-Ashtar, Ḥujr ibn 'Adī, and 'Amr ibn al-Ḥamīq al-Khuzaʿī all fought at Siffin, where Ḥujr was wounded. But 'Alī's followers split over the issue of arbitration. Those who became Khawārij realized that 'Alī did not really support their interests. Those who stood by 'Alī expected that his leadership would advance their personal interests. Sulaymān ibn Šurad protested the arbitration agreement to 'Alī but did not join the Khawārij. Ḥujr ibn 'Adī and 'Amr

66 Balādhurī, Futūḥ, p. 289; Ibn Sa’d, Ṭabaqāt, VI, 8–9, VII(2), 64–65; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, I, 2374, 2645; Yaʿqūbī, Les pays, pp. 162–63.
67 Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 59; Jafri, Shiʿa Islam, p. 82.
68 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwaal, pp. 154, 238.
ibn al-Ḥāmiq witnessed the arbitration agreement, and Ḥujr was in charge of ‘Alī’s right wing at the Battle of Nahrawan.⁶⁹

Those who stayed with ‘Alī closed ranks around him against both Muʿāwiya and the Khawārij. In 658 they swore to be “friends of those whom he befriended and enemies of those to whom he was hostile.”⁷⁰ They tended to justify their support by insisting that ‘Alī was right in whatever he did. ‘Alī’s legitimacy was based on the claim that he was the heir (Ar. wārith) and executor (Ar. waṣi) of Muḥammad, and his relationship to Muḥammad was compared to the relationship between Ḥārūn (Aaron) and Mūsā (Moses) in the Qurʾān. The concept of ‘Alī as the waṣi occurs in poetry associated with the Battles of the Camel and of Siffin and in the poetry of ‘Alī’s Basran protégé, Abū l-Aswad ad-Duʿali, along with the comparison to Ḥārūn and rather fulsome praise.⁷¹ The description of ‘Alī as Muḥammad’s waṣi may go back to the issues surrounding the disposal of Muḥammad’s property at Fadak, but it also had obvious implications for hereditary political succession. Some of ‘Alī’s followers said that he had inherited more than just property and leadership. Abū Dharr is supposed to have claimed in Madīna that Muḥammad had inherited Adam’s knowledge and that ‘Alī was the waṣi of Muḥammad and the inheritor of his knowledge. In 656 Mālik al-Ashtar is said to have called ‘Alī waṣi al-awṣiyā and the heir of the knowledge possessed by the prophets.⁷² It is worth noting that when Muʿāwiya took up the leadership of those who demanded revenge for the death of ‘Uthmān after the defeat and death of Talḥa and az-Zubayr at Basra, he did so as the nearest and oldest adult male relative of ‘Uthmān and claimed to be ‘Uthman’s wali (Ar.).⁷³ It would seem that appeals to kinship were made by both sides in the first fitna but in different ways.

When ‘Alī was assassinated by a Khārīji at Kufa in January of 661, his son al-Ḥasan briefly attempted to succeed him. But he had no real support among the Iraqi ashrāf, and the partisans of ‘Alī were no match on their own for the forces of Muʿāwiya. The general opinion favored an end to the fighting, so al-Ḥasan recognized Muʿāwiya and returned to the Hijaz in order to prevent further bloodshed. ‘Alī’s partisans in Iraq now found themselves out of favor. Ḥujr ibn ‘Adī,

⁷⁰ Montgomery Watt, Formative Period, p. 40.
⁷¹ Jafri, Shi‘a Islam, p. 93.
who lost his hopes for the *riyāsa* of Kinda to Muḥammad ibn al-Ashʿath, tried unsuccessfully to provoke al-Ḥasan and then al-Ḥusayn to revolt, led agitation for the payment of stipends at Kufa, and drove al-Mughīra ibn Shuʿba, Muʿāwiya’s governor of Kufa, from the *minbar* by pelting him with pebbles. After al-Ḥasan died in 669, Ḥujr led a rising in 670 of about a dozen men in the *masjid* against ʿAmr ibn Ḥurayth, Ziyād’s lieutenant at Kufa, and drove him from the *masjid* by throwing gravel at him. Ḥujr is said to have cursed Muʿāwiya, praised Abī Turāb (ʿAlī), and claimed that ʿAlī was blameless and that the leadership of the community belonged to his family. Ziyād had them arrested and sent them to Muʿāwiya, who executed Ḥujr and six others when they refused to curse ʿAlī. Ḥujr is considered to be a Shīʿī martyr, but his own personal interests had at least as much to do with his opposition to Ziyād and Muʿāwiya as did his loyalty to ʿAlī and his family. The fact that his was the only rising in the name of ʿAlī during the reign of Muʿāwiya, compared to about sixteen Khārījī risings in the same period, indicates that support for ʿAlī at Kufa was quite weak and that it was a relatively insignificant vehicle to express discontent.

By the end of Muʿāwiya’s reign the situation had changed. For reasons which have yet to be explained satisfactorily, during the 670s the main focus of Khārījī activity shifted to Basra, leaving support for the family of ʿAlī as the main vehicle to express opposition to the regime at Kufa. When Muʿāwiya died in 680, a group of Kufan notables gathered at the house of Sulaymān ibn ʿSurad and sent for al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAli. The *ashrāf* and *ruʾasāʾ* of Kufa who sent letters to al-Ḥusayn included Shabath ibn Ribʿī at-Tamīmī, Ḥajjār ibn Abjar al-ʿIjli, Yazid ibn al-Ḥārith, Yazid ibn Ruwayn, ʿUrwa ibn Qays, ʿAmr ibn al-Ḥajjāj, and Muhammad ibn ʿUmayr at-Tamīmī. According to Abū Mikhnaf’s account (Ar. *qiṣṣa*) of Muslim ibn ʿAqīl, in his reply to the Kufan notables al-Ḥusayn reminded them that they had said that they had no *imām*, had asked him to come and promised to unite and follow him according to guidance and truth (Ar. *ʿalā l-hudā wa l-ḥaqq*). He agreed to come if their request was truly sincere. He told them that the only *imām* was one who followed the Book (of God), behaved fairly, judged according to the truth, and devoted himself to the affairs of God. In a letter to the notables of Basra in which

74 Ibid., pp. 233–36.
he sought their support as well, al-Ḥusayn said that God had honored Muḥammad by making him His prophet and chose him as His messenger. He said that he and his father, ʿAli, were Muḥammad’s relatives, his awliyā’, executors (Ar. awṣiyā‘), and heirs (Ar. waraθat), and therefore had the most right to assume his position as leader of the community. He summoned them to the Book of God and the sunna of His prophet because the sunna had perished and innovation (Ar. bid’ā) was thriving. If they would listen to him and obey his command, he offered to guide them on the right path (Ar. ahdikum sabīla r-rashād).

As his agent to Kufa, al-Ḥusayn sent Muslim ibn ʿAqīl, who stayed at the house of al-Mukhtar. He is said to have taken an oath of allegiance (Ar. bay’a) to al-Ḥusayn from eighteen thousand Kufans who were going to join al-Ḥusayn in the Hijaz. ʿUbaydullāh ibn Ziyād moved to head off their sedition. The arrest of Hāniʾ ibn Urwa, one of the conspirators, precipitated a premature demonstration by a mob of Kufans at the gate of the citadel when the ashrāf were inside attending the majlis of ʿUbaydullāh. Shabath ibn Ribʿī and Ḥajjār ibn Abjar were both caught in the citadel along with the other ashrāf, such as Kathīr ibn Shihāb, Muḥammad ibn al-Ashʿath, al-Qaʿqāʾ ibn Shawr, and Shimr ibn Dhī l-Jawshan. As the demonstration turned into a siege of the governor, his guard, and the ashrāf in the citadel by the Kufan mob, the ashrāf, especially ʿAmr ibn al-Ḥajjāj, tried to calm and to disperse the crowd because they feared the consequences of a fitna. By the end of the day, only thirty men were left with Muslim, so he hid in a house of a woman of the Kinda, where he was arrested. He was executed above the gate of the citadel on September 28, 680. The collapse of this movement led one of the ashrāf, ʿUbaydullāh ibn al-Ḥurr al-Juʿfī, to leave Kufa and camp at Qasr Bani Muqatil.76

ʿUbaydullāh ibn Ziyād also prevented Kufans from joining al-Ḥusayn. He sent ʿUmar ibn Saʿd to prevent al-Ḥusayn from coming to Kufa and forced the Kufan ashrāf to collaborate with him. He required members of the Kufan ashrāf, including such supporters of al-Ḥusayn as Ḥajjār ibn Abjar and Shabath ibn Ribʿī, to join ʿUmar ibn Saʿd at Karbala, where al-Ḥusayn’s party was massacred on October 10, 680. Afterwards ʿUbaydullāh ibn al-Ḥurr went to the Jabal in anger

at 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād, and destitute people from Kufa went to join him there.\(^77\)

When Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya died in 683, the Sufyānī regime collapsed and 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād fled to Syria. In the following year, Sulaymān ibn Ṣurad led a rising of the old partisans of 'Ali at Kufa to revenge the death of al-Ḥusayn. Since they had encouraged him to come to Kufa, they felt guilty for not supporting him and felt indirectly responsible for his death. They called themselves Penitents (Ar. tawwābūn) and set out to atone for their sin by killing those who had murdered al-Ḥusayn and by sacrificing themselves if necessary. But members of the Kufan ashrāf had participated at Karbala, and in order to avoid the consequences of social conflict in Kufa, Sulaymān and his followers headed for Syria. On the way they stopped and wept over the grave of al-Ḥusayn at Karbala. In his prayers, Sulaymān called al-Ḥusayn the martyr (Ar. shahīd) son of the martyr, the mahdī (Ar.) son of the mahdī, and the upright (Ar. šidīq) son of the upright. He testified that they belonged to his religion (Ar. dīn) and way (Ar. sābīl), and that they were the enemies of those who killed them, and the friends (Ar. awlīyā') of those who loved them. They were joined by Sa‘d ibn Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yamān and a group of one hundred and seventy partisans (Shī‘a) from Kufa who had settled at Mada‘in, and by al-Muthannā ibn Mukharriba of the ‘Abd al-Qays, who came with three hundred Basrans. Most of Sulaymān’s force of three or four thousand men was slaughtered by a Syrian army under 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād at ‘Ayn Warda in January of 685.\(^78\)

The social tensions at Kufa broke into open conflict in the rebellion of al-Mukhtar later that year. Al-Mukhtar himself was a member of the new elite. His father (Abī 'Ubayd) had been killed during the conquest of Iraq. He had grown up at Madina but owned property at Khutarniyya, and was put in charge of the walls of Mada‘in by his uncle, Sa‘d ibn Mas‘ūd, in the time of 'Alī. After 'Alī’s death, he had been with al-Ḥasan at Mada‘in and had been involved in the sedition of Muslim ibn 'Aqīl in 680. After brief opposition, the Kufan notables recognized his authority, hoping to preserve their own interests and to restore Kufan leadership over the empire, or at least over part of it. At first al-Mukhtar gave them important posts. But dissident tribesmen, mawālī, and slaves participated en masse in his

\(^77\) Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, pp. 265–72.

rising, and this coalition was only held together by the immediate danger from the army of 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād, which was advancing through the Jazira. The very fact that the revolt was proclaimed in the name of 'Ali's son, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya, and sought revenge for the death of al-Ḥusayn compromised the ashrāf and gave the Kufan dissidents a pretext to move against them. In order to increase the fighting ability of the Kufan forces and perhaps to create a body of armed supporters personally loyal to himself, al-Mukhtar promised to free slaves who joined him and equipped and provisioned everyone who followed him. He put a mawlä of the Bajila called Abī 'Amra Kaysān in charge of his shurṭa. The ashrāf began to complain that their own mawālī were given riding animals and that their slaves disobeyed them.79

The ashrāf took advantage of the departure of the Kufan army under Ibrāhīm ibn Mālik al-Ashtar, which marched against 'Ubaydullāh in July of 686, to attempt to overthrow al-Mukhtar. Most of the leading notables of Kufa were involved in this revolt: Bāshīr ibn Jarīr ibn 'Abdullāh al-Bajāli, Shimr ibn Dhī l-Jawshan, Shabath ibn Ribʿī at-Tamīmī, and Ḥājjār ibn Abjar al-'Ijli. Al-Mukhtar recalled Ibrāhīm, suppressed the rebellion, and purged Kufa of those who had participated in killing al-Ḥusayn. Shimr ibn Dhī l-Jawshan and 'Umar ibn Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ. were among those who were killed. Those who could escape from Kufa fled to Basra. Some ten thousand Kufan refugees are said to have joined Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubayr at Basra, where the spokesmen of the ashrāf, such as Shabath ibn Ribʿī and Muḥammad ibn al-Asḥ'ath, incited Muṣ'ab against al-Mukhtar.80 Ibrāhīm was sent back against 'Ubaydullāh and defeated and killed him at the Battle of the Khazir in August 686. But the army which al-Mukhtar sent against Muṣ'ab was defeated at Madhar. After this Muṣ'ab marched on Kufa, defeated the forces of al-Mukhtar, killed him, and massacred six thousand of his followers in April 687.81

The movement of al-Mukhtar was important because of the ideas associated with it and because it involved significant numbers of non-Arabs for the first time. There was not necessarily any connection

79 Baladhuri, Ansāb, V, 229, 267; Dixon, Umayyad Caliphate, pp. 45–50, 60; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, II, 634, 649–50.
80 Baladhuri, Ansāb, V, 231–32; Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, pp. 300, 307, 310, 315; Dixon, Umayyad Caliphate, pp. 61–64, 70; Ṭabarī, Taʾrīkh, II, 651–52.
between the two. Al-Mukhtar claimed to be acting on behalf of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya, whom he called the Mahdī, the son of the waṣī, and said that he had been appointed to be his trusted agent (Ar. amīn) and helper (ważīr). He called himself the helper of the family of Muḥammad (Ar. ważīr al Muḥammad), proclaimed the Book of God and the summa of Muḥammad, vengeance for his family, war against their enemies, and defense of the weak.\(^{82}\) When his army marched out of Kufa against 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād in 686, it was joined by some of al-Mukhtar's followers led by Ḥawshab al-Bursumī of the Hamdān. He had covered a chair (Syr. kursī), which was supposed to have belonged to ʿAlī, with silk and brocade, set it on a gray mule, and walked around it. Ḥawshab prayed, “Oh Lord, command us to follow you and make us victorious over the adversaries. Remember us and do not forget us and protect us,” while his companions were saying “Amen, Amen.”\(^{83}\) They used it as a kind of Ark of the Covenant (Ar. tābūt), with seven men on each side at the Battle of the Khazir.\(^{84}\) Al-Mukhtar himself claimed to be a prophet with a revelation brought to him by Gabriel in rhymed prose (Ar. saj'). It was claimed that angels with white faces on horses of flame fought on his side in the battle in which the Kufan ashraf were defeated.\(^{85}\)

These ideas were associated with al-Mukhtar's personal followers who were called Khashabiyā because they were armed with wooden staffs or clubs like the shrūtā of Ziyād, or Kaysāniyya after their leader, Abū ʿAmrā Kaysān.\(^{86}\) Some of them survived the fall of al-Mukhtar as a small sect. They continued to recognize Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya, believing that he possessed secret knowledge about souls and the celestial spheres that he had received from al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. When Muḥammad died in 700, some of them recognized his son, Abū Hāshim, as the heir of his secret knowledge. Others said that he had not died but was concealed on Mt. Radwa, east of Madina, and would return. The Kaysānī poet, Kuthayyir ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-Khuzaʿī

\(^{82}\) Balāḍhuri, Ansāb, V, 207–8, 228; Dixon, Umayyad Caliphate, pp. 35–36, 45; Ṭabari, Taʾrīkh, II, 351–52, 569, 633.
\(^{83}\) Ṭabari, Taʾrīkh, II, 701.
\(^{85}\) Balāḍhuri, Ansāb, V, 234; Dinawarī, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, p. 309; Dixon, Umayyad Caliphate, p. 64; Ibn al-Faqih, Buldān, p. 185; G. Levi Della Vida, “Mukhtar,” El(1), III, 715–16; Ṭabari, Taʾrīkh, II, 663.
\(^{86}\) Balāḍhuri, Ansāb, V, 231, 237–53; Dinawarī, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, p. 297; Dixon, Umayyad Caliphate, pp. 78–79.
(d. 723), who usually lived in Madina, expected Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyā to return (Ar. ʿrajʿa) from his concealment as the Mahdī who would fill the earth with justice, possibly through the transmigration (Ar. tanāsukh) of his soul. Ḥāmza ibn ʿUmāra, who also lived in Madina, held similar views and had followers at Kufa.⁸⁷

Many of the ideas associated with the early supporters of ʿAlī and his family have an Arabian background and were brought by Arabs to Iraq. This is understandable since almost no non-Arabs were involved until 685. Tribal Arab concepts of leadership contributed to the concept of the abaʿl al-bayt and to hopes for the return of the leader. The importance of inheritance, the responsibilities of the wasī, revenge for the death of al-Husayn, and the protection of the weak by the strong emerged from an Arabian social background. The religious status of the caretaker (Ar. sādīn) of a shrine and the practice of tawwāf (Ar.) had a pagan Arab religious origin. However, the tawwāf of the companions of the chair is unique and this was not typical of later Shiʿism.

This is not to say that the origins of Shiʿism can be explained by the Arab background of these ideas. The vast majority of Arabs in the seventh century who shared this background did not follow ʿAlī or his family. Why, then, did some Arabs follow ʿAlī while others did not? One explanation is that they were former pastoralists who had trouble adjusting to sedentary life.⁸⁸ But this is also true of many Khawārij, and this explanation, if applicable to anyone, would be most applicable to them. Such blanket explanations do not work very well, however. They are based on a general tendency to assume that most Arabs had been pastoral and on a broad disregard for identifying the actual economic background of each tribe or clan. The main argument against such an explanation, however, is that the Arabs who suppressed these risings and supported the regime were often of pastoral background themselves.

Another explanation for Arab support of ʿAlī has been offered in terms of tribal genealogy. Arabs who belonged to genealogically “southern” tribes are supposed to have been more likely to support ʿAlī and his family because of Yamānī traditions of hereditary holy

⁸⁸ Montgomery Watt, Formative Period, pp. 41–42.
kingship.\(^{89}\) There are several problems with this explanation. One is its association of a regional culture with a genealogical identity. Many of the genealogically “southern” tribal groups that settled in Kufa had migrated to northern Arabia and Mesopotamia centuries earlier. In order for such an argument to be effective, the “southern” Arabs who were already in or near Iraq at the time of the conquest should be distinguished from those Arabs who actually migrated from Yaman to Iraq. A more serious objection is the fact that “southern” Arabs at Basra (such as the Azd), in Syria (such as the Kalb), or in Egypt showed no more inclination to support 'Ali’s family than the majority of Arabs who stayed in southern Arabia. Nor does such an explanation work for Kufa, where support came from both “northern” and “southern” groups. The followers of Hujr ibn 'Adi and of Sulaymān ibn Ṣuraḍ were divided almost equally between “northern” and “southern” Arabs.\(^{90}\) Individuals who supported al-Mukhtār came from nearly all the tribes in Kufa, including members of the Quraysh and Anṣār. The minor Yamanī clans of Shibām, Nahd, Khārīf, and Shākir were more solid in their support, and since they were the ones who accompanied 'Ali’s chair and performed the \textit{ta'awwāf} around it, it is legitimate to trace this part of the ceremony to southern Arabia.\(^{91}\)

It is difficult to explain the support for 'Ali’s family in tribal terms. As with the Khawārij, only some individuals from a wide variety of tribal groups were usually involved. The tribes themselves were divided internally, as is shown clearly in the revolt of the \textit{ashrāf} against al-Mukhtār in July of 686. On that occasion the \textit{ashrāf} and their followers among the Hamdān, Kinda, Bajila, Tamīm, 'Ijl, Azd, Nakha', Khath'am, Qays, and Taym ar-Rībāb were ranged against some of their own kinsmen who supported al-Mukhtār. 'Abd al-Mu'min, the son of Shabath ibn Rib‘i of Tamīm, fought on al-Mukhtār’s side against his own father.\(^{92}\) Afterwards Arabs of Madhīj, Kinda, Asad, Tamīm, and Hamdān joined the army of Ibrāhīm ibn Mālik al-Ashtar which marched against 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād.\(^{93}\)

It seems better to explain matters in terms of specific local social, economic, and historic circumstances at Kufa. There were at least two


\(^{91}\) Dixon, \textit{Umayyad Caliphate}, pp. 46, 68–69, 72, 75.

\(^{92}\) Ibid., pp. 61, 63.

\(^{93}\) Ibid., p. 65.
aspects to the use of support for ‘Ali’s family as an expression of discontent. One was the attempt by some notables, such as Hujr ibn ‘Adi, Mālik al-Ashtar, or al-Mukhtār, whose position was threatened or in decline because of the rise of the new elite, to rescue their position by attaching themselves to the fortunes of ‘Ali’s family and hoping for the best. The other aspect was polarization within tribal groups and within the population as a whole, which led some Arabs to see ‘Ali’s family as the symbol of their hopes for restoring social and economic justice. Both kinds of supporters were briefly allied in the movement of al-Mukhtār. When the Kufan citadel fell to them in 685, they divided among themselves the five million dirhams they found in the treasury, each man receiving five hundred dirhams. Six thousand men who joined al-Mukhtār later were given two hundred dirhams each.94

Some of the ideas associated with the early supporters of ‘Ali’s family have an Islamic background and were brought to Iraq by Muslims. They made the same appeal as the Khawārij and other serious Muslims to equality among believers, to the Book of God, and to the sunna of Muḥammad. They made the same claims as other Companions for status within the community based on early conversion. But asceticism was not as typical of them as it was of the Khawārij, and they preferred to emphasize prophetic authority. Those who stayed by ‘Ali after Siffin had to justify their continued support in spite of his unpopular (some would say unwise) decisions. It was not very far from asserting that ‘Ali was in the right to asserting that he could not be wrong, or from arguing that he was not to blame for the fitna to arguing that he was sinless. Rightness was put in terms of the inheritance of prophetic knowledge, the continuation of Muḥammad’s mission, and of the continuation of prophetic authority within the family of ‘Alī. Al-Mukhtār surrounded himself with prophetic symbolism that evoked comparisons with Muḥammad. He delivered predictions in rhymed prose (Ar. saj’) which imitated the Qur‘ān, called his followers Anṣār, and encouraged the belief that angels fought on his side as they had for Muḥammad.95 The authoritative example of righteous people was widely regarded as a source of guidance for other Muslims in the seventh century and ever since. But as most other Muslims abandoned ‘Ali’s political leadership and failed to support the claims made for his family, those who did support them restricted the pro-

94 Baladhuri, Ansāb, V, 228; Ṭabari, Ta’rikh, II, 634.
95 Dixon, Umayyad Caliphate, p. 38; Thomson, “Early Islamic Sects,” p. 92.
vision of guidance to them. The claim to provide proper guidance and thereby justice occurs already in letters ascribed to al-Ḥusayn, and Sulaymān ibn Ṣurad apparently regarded both al-Ḥusayn and his father, ‘Ali, as “rightly guided” (Ar. mahdī). Al-Mukhtar’s identification of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya as mahdī should be understood in this original meaning of this term.96 The ideas associated with the movement of al-Mukhtar seem to have been more prophetic than Messianic in an eschatological sense and do not seem to have included an expectation of the imminent end of the world. The apocalyptic significance acquired by the Mahdī later should not be read back into his use of this term. Nor were such ideas unique to the supporters of ‘Ali’s family. Claims of right guidance and prophecy were also made for the early Marwānīs, and the idea of continuing revelation can be found among the Khawārij. Supporters of ‘Ali’s family did not necessarily subscribe to all of these ideas or support al-Mukhtar at Kufa. ‘Ubaydullāh ibn al-Hurr al-Juʿfī opposed al-Mukhtar and joined the army of Muṣʿab that overthrew him.97

The prophetic claims made for the family of ‘Ali led to the Judaic affinities in the Qur’ān. The significance of comparing ‘Ali to Hārūn lay in the Qur’ānic description of Hārūn as the wazīr of the prophet Mūsā, implying that ‘Ali was the wazīr of Muḥammad (Sūra 25:35). By calling himself the wazīr of the family of Muḥammad, al-Mukhtar evoked the same kind of Mosaic prophetic implications. ‘Ali’s chair (kursī) seems to have had the same kind of significance for the followers of al-Mukhtar who escorted it in battle. They compared it consciously to the Ark of the Covenant (tābūt) of the Banū Isrā‘îl, which contained a remnant of things left behind by the families of Mūsā and Hārūn (Sūra 2:248). It is worth noting that the verse of the Qur’ān quoted by them also says that the Ark with the sakīna (Heb. Shekina) was given to Saul (Ṭalūt) as a token of sovereignty and was borne by angels, and that the Shekina is associated with God’s judgment seat in the Talmud.98 It is natural to look for a Yamanī Jewish background among those clans which accompanied the kursī. Their leader, Ḥawshab al-Bursumī, belonged to the tribe of Ḥamdān, for which a Jewish

96 Cf. Qur’ān, 17:97: “And whomever God guides, he is the rightly guided” (Ar. al-muḥtadi).
97 Baladhuri, Ansāb, V, 260–61; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, II, 733–34.
98 Rodkinson, Talmud, XVI, “Sanhedrin,” 371; Ṭabarī, Taʿrīkh, II, 703–4. It might also be noted that Elijah, as the forerunner of the Messiah, was identified with the angel of the covenant (Mal. 3:1).
background is often suggested. Hamdānīs were also among the Penitents and their combination of guilt, repentance, and atonement through self-sacrifice seems very Jewish. The Jewish background of some Arab tribes probably provided only incidental reinforcement for these ideas, however. The Kinda had been Jewish before Islam. The father of al-Ash’ath, Qays ibn Ma’dikarib, was Jewish, and al-Ash’ath’s aunt had married a Jew. Ḥujr ibn ‘Adi is said to have prayed successfully for rain. But the family of al-Ash’ath was never attracted to such ideas and his son Muḥammad actively opposed al-Mukhtar. Nor do such ideas seem to be associated with Ḥujr. All one can say is that some members of Kinda were attracted to extremist Shi’ī groups in the eighth century. In fact, related ideas can be found among contemporary non-Jews. In a letter he wrote in 680 discussing Psalms 2, 45, and 110, the Nestorian catholicos George I spoke of David as king and prophet.

It is also common to explain these ideas in terms of the involvement of non-Arabs, especially Persian and Aramaean converts in Iraq. But there is hardly any evidence for the presence of Aramaean converts at Kufa in the seventh century, or of the involvement of non-Arabs before the rising of al-Mukhtar. Dinawari’s claim that the core of support for al-Mukhtar came from the Hamdān and the descendents of Persians (Ḥamrā’) living in Kufa is an oversimplification but contributed to the popular view that early support for the family of ‘Alī at Kufa was a matter for Yamanī Arabs and Persians. There is no question that al-Mukhtar was followed by large numbers of Ḥamrā’ (who should not be called mawālī) and mawālī of Persian origin at Kufa. Out of thirty-two hundred men who took part at the beginning of al-Mukhtar’s rising in October of 685, five hundred were mawālī, and four thousand of the six thousand followers of al-Mukhtar who surrendered in the citadel of Kufa and were executed by Muṣ’ab were Persians, while two thousand were Arabs. Theoretically, such Persians could have easily coordinated Arab concepts of the ahl al-bayt and claims based on inheritance with their own ideas

100 Chabot, Synodicon, pp. 232–33, 497–98.
102 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, pp. 296, 306; Jafri, Shi’a Islam, p. 117.
103 Baladhuri, Ansāb, V, 254; Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, II, 724.
104 Dinawari, Akhbār at-ṭiwal, p. 315; Dixon, Umayyad Caliphate, pp. 44–45.
of dynastic legitimacy. There is no evidence that those who followed al-Mukhtār did so, although he seems to have been aware of the possibility.105 In fact, none of the ideas associated with al-Mukhtār seem to have come from his Persian supporters. But one of his wives, 'Amra bint an-Nu’mān al-Anṣārī, was executed by Muṣ‘ab for insisting that al-Mukhtār was a prophet.106 Apart from the lack of evidence, one of the main problems with the “Persian explanation” is that there were as many Persians at Basra as at Kufa, and those at Basra do not seem to have supported the claims of 'Ali’s family. Non-Arabs made a greater contribution to Khārijism in the seventh century because they were more involved.

THE GHULĀT

Up until the end of the seventh century, support for the family of 'Ali in Iraq was expressed in terms that Muslim Arabs brought with them. From about the turn of the century, new ideas began to appear among small groups of extremists (Ar. ghulāt) belonging to the Kay- sāniyya. The belief by some of the followers of Muhammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya that he would return was based most directly on the pre-Islamic Arab concept of the Arthurian return (Ar. raj’a) of the hero.107 A similar claim may have been made for 'Alī after he was killed, but the idea of return was not limited to Shi‘ī circles. ‘Umar I is said to have refused to believe that Muhammad was dead and expected him to return as Moses had.108 This was most easily coordinated with Christian Messianic ideas, but in this period the idea of return was not necessarily eschatological. More important expressions of eschatological expectations occur in non-Shi‘ī contexts and concern the arrival of a future savior who has not been here yet but who will come in the last days. The south Arabian savior called the Qaḥṭānī was such a figure, and 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Asrāth claimed to be the Qaḥṭānī when he rebelled against al-Ḥajjāj. The Magian figure of the Saoshyant who will be both priest and king and will bring about a perfect society by uniting royalty with the good religion in his person109 resembled the later Shi‘ī concept of the Imām-Mahdi.

105 Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 223.
106 Dixon, Umayyad Caliphate, p. 75.
107 Bravmann, Spiritual Background, p. 265.
108 Ṭabari, Ta‘rikh, I, 1815–16.
RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

But his arrival would not be a return either, and contemporary Magian apocalyptic literature was more concerned with the arrival of the warrior Bahram Varjavand. Nor can the arrival of the Jewish Messiah be considered a return. The figure of the Sunni Mahdi in the eschatological hadith, which began to circulate about this time, was much closer to the Magian and Jewish concepts than was the Shi'i figure. Some contemporaries saw the caliph 'Umar II (717–20) as the Mahdi whose arrival in the year 100 of the Hijra (A.D. 718–19) would spread justice throughout the earth.110

However, the idea that the Messiah was already on earth but in hiding had been current among some Jews since the second century. For those who identified Elijah as the precursor of the Messiah, his arrival could be considered a return. Elijah was also said to be the interpreter of the law in the next world when his relationship to Moses would be the same as Aaron’s had been. These similarities suggest that Elijah may have been a prototype for the later development of the Shi'i concept of the Imam-Mahdi. The Islamic tradition that Elijah will appear at the end of the world and that he or one of his descendants will await the Mahdi inside a mountain seems to be related to the occultation of Muhammad ibn al-Ḥanafisyya.111 The contemporary claim that the Jewish Messianic rebel, 'Abū ʿIsa of Isfahan, had gone into hiding may have been related. Together they suggest that ideas about occultation and return date from about the turn of the century.

By the early eighth century, Kufa and Mada'in were the main Shi'i centers in Iraq. Small, extremist (ghulat) subgroups of the Kaysaniyya were formed at both places during the eighth century and began to use ideas of a generally gnostic nature which were current in Iraq. There were at least five such groups at Kufa: the followers of Bayān ibn Sam'ān (d. 737), of Mughīra ibn Sa'id al-'Ijli (d. 737), and of Abū Ṭāhir al-'Ijli (d. 742); the Janāḥiyya who followed 'Abdullāh ibn Mu'āwiya (d. 747); and the circle of Abū l-Khaṭṭāb (d. 755) in the entourage of Ja'far ash-Sādiq. There were two groups at Mada'in: the followers of 'Abdullāh ibn al-Ḥārith, who may have been a branch of the Janāḥiyya, and the followers of Ishāq ibn Muḥammad an-Nakha'i (called Ishāq al-Almar). Bayān probably belonged to the Yamaṇī clan of Nahd which had supported al-Mukhtar. When he and Mughīra rebelled against Khālid al-Qašrī in 737, they were followed

by less than two dozen men: Arabs from the tribes of Bajila, 'Ijl, and Kinda, and mawâlii. Those who rebelled were executed, but others among their followers survived. The followers of Abû Manşûr were also Arabs from these three tribes and mawâlii. All of these groups were small and they are more important for their ideas than for their impact on events.

One of their main beliefs was the continuation of revelation and prophetic inspiration and authority, which they claimed for a descendant of 'Alî or for themselves. Bayân said that Abû Hâshim ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafîyya had the gift of prophecy and claimed to be Abû Hâshim's designated successor as prophet. Mughîra also claimed to be a prophet but recognized Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullâh an-Nafs az-Zakiyya (the Pure Soul), a descendent of al-Ḥasan, as the Mahdi. Abû Manşûr claimed to have ascended to heaven, where he was touched by the hand of God who spoke to him in Syriac, called him “my son”, and told him to go and preach. Abû Manşûr's son succeeded him as the prophetic leader of his followers. The followers of Abû l-Khaṭṭâb held that each believer received a personal revelation for their own guidance.

These groups sometimes split or disintegrated when the prophetic leader died. Some members would expect him to return in a truly Messianic fashion. Bayân belonged to a subdivision of the Kaysâniyya which expected Abû Hâshim to return as the Mahdi. When Muḥammad the Pure Soul died in 762, some of the Mughirîyya said that he was not really dead but was hidden in the mountains of Radwa and would return as the Mahdi, conquer the earth, and establish a reign of justice. Likewise, when Ibn Mu'âwiya died, some of the

Janāḥiyya expected him to return as the Mahdī from the mountains of Isfahan.\textsuperscript{119}

One way of transferring prophetic authority was by the designation (Ar. \textit{naṣṣ}) of a successor. Bayān claimed that Abū Hāshim had designated him as his successor, and after 762 some of the Mughāriyya said that Mughīra had been designated by Muḥammad al-Bāqir (d. 735). In fact, succession by designation was claimed by Muḥammad al-Bāqir himself and was developed into a doctrine by his son Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq.\textsuperscript{120}

Another way of transferring prophetic authority was through the incarnation of the Divine spirit in these prophetic figures, with spiritual succession occurring through its reincarnation (Ar. \textit{tanāsukh}) in subsequent figures. Bayān claimed that the spirit of God had entered the prophets and passed from ʿAlī to Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya, to Abū Hāshim, and then to himself.\textsuperscript{121} The Janāḥiyya claimed that the spirit of God had dwelt in Adam and then passed to the prophets, ʿAlī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya, Abū Hāshim, and Ibn Muʿawiya. They also declared that the spirits of Muḥammad’s Companions (Ar. \textit{ṣahāba}) dwelt in themselves through transmigration, and used the names of Companions for themselves, but said that the spirits of sinners passed into lower forms of existence.\textsuperscript{122} According to Nawbakhtī, the Ḥārithiyya also believed in reincarnation, and Ishāq al-Aḥmar claimed that ʿAlī was God, and that He appeared in every age. He was the one sent to Muḥammad, He was al-Ḥasan, and He was al-Husayn.\textsuperscript{123}

Some of them carried incarnation and continuing revelation to antinomian conclusions. The rules and ritual requirements of former revelations did not apply to those in whom the Divine spirit dwelt or who had access to their own inspired prophet. The followers of Mughīra believed that they could behave as they liked if they were devoted to and suffered for the cause of ʿAlī’s family. The Janāḥiyya and Ḥārithiyya claimed that those who knew the Imām could do as they liked. The Janāḥiyya were not required to perform religious rituals and permitted themselves to do things prohibited by the Qur’an. The

\textsuperscript{119} Tucker, “Ibn Muʿawiya,” p. 54.
\textsuperscript{121} Tucker, “Bayān,” p. 251.
\textsuperscript{122} Tucker, “Ibn Muʿawiya,” pp. 52–53.
\textsuperscript{123} Baghdādī, \textit{Ta’rīkh}, VI, 380; Nawbakhtī, \textit{Firaq ash-Shī’ā}, pp. 22, 34.
private revelations received by the Khaṭṭābiyya were inherently antinomian.\textsuperscript{124}

They freed themselves from the literal meaning of the Qur’ānic text by finding the hidden truths behind it. Bayān, Mughīra, Abū Manṣūr, Abū l-Khaṭṭāb, the Janāḥiyya, and Iṣḥāq al-Aḥmar all engaged in the symbolic or allegorical interpretation of the Qur’ān. Abū Manṣūr probably introduced the allegorical interpretation of ritual requirements, and Iṣḥāq al-Aḥmar gave an esoteric meaning to the \textit{salāt}. Abū l-Khaṭṭāb used the numerical value of the letters of the Arabic alphabet to find hidden meanings in the Qur’ān, and Mughīra said that parts of God’s body resembled letters of the alphabet.\textsuperscript{125}

There is a generally gnostic background to the ideas of incarnation, transmigration of souls, and antinomianism, to the esoteric interpretation of scripture, and to the special significance of the alphabet. The combination of these concepts—the conjunction of such claims and beliefs—is more important than the separate items. Reincarnation might ultimately be Indian or Platonic, but in eighth-century Iraq this idea is most likely to have come from Manichaeans at Mada’in. The identification of the Janāḥiyya with individual Companions resembles the claims of the Muṣḥallyānē. Bayān’s belief that there was one God in Heaven and another on earth and that the one in Heaven was greater than the one on earth seems Marcionite.\textsuperscript{126} Not only were the Mughīriyya elitist, but Mughīra described God as a man of light with a crown of light. He related an elaborate creation myth based on a dualism of good light and evil darkness; it described the creation of the world from primeval seas by a demiurge. He declared that people were created either good or evil, and represented Muḥammad as a gnostic redeemer. Tucker has pointed out the resemblance of Mughīra’s ideas to ancient Mesopotamian, gnostic, Manichaean, and Mandaean concepts.\textsuperscript{127} Among these groups the gnostic traditions associated with Mada’in found an Islamic form and were continued by the \textit{ghulāt} with a vocabulary that was barely Islamic.

The gnostic affinities of the \textit{ghulāt} included magic similar to that on the incantation bowls. Both Bayān and Mughīra claimed to know

\textsuperscript{126} Tucker, “Bayān,” p. 248.
\textsuperscript{127} Tucker, “al-Muḡīra,” pp. 36, 39, 40–43, 46.
the “Greatest Name” of God. Bayân is said to have used it to get a response from the planet Venus. Mughîra may have been one of the first Muslim sorcerers. He is said to have learned magic from a Jewish woman, claimed that he could use his knowledge of the “Greatest Name” to raise the dead, and frequented cemeteries where he muttered incantations over graves.128

The combination of gnosticism with revolt in order to bring about the millenium seems to be a new development. When the risings of Mughîra and Abû Mansûr failed, the followers who survived them turned to terrorism by assassinating their opponents. The Mansûriyya stoned or strangled their victims and took their property. The fact that they justified these murders as a meritorious act is an index of their alienation.129

CONCLUSIONS

Questions of continuity and change among Muslims in Iraq may be organized around a few central themes. The Muslim Arab conquerors, like the people who survived the conquest in Iraq, continued to act and to believe in ways that were familiar to them, that is, they experienced linear continuity among themselves in the form of direct survivals they had brought with them from their own pre-Islamic past. But in some cases this meant a real change for the rest of the people in Iraq. The strength of pre-Islamic Arabian customs in early Islamic Iraq is explained best by the Qur’ân’s tendency to sanction and reinforce some of the tribal attitudes and practices. The Companions and Followers preserved and developed a regional form of customary precedents (sunna) in the same way that shaykhs set and preserved tribal sunna before Islam. The vocations of qârî, qasî, and qadî to a certain extent were Islamic forms of the pre-Islamic storyteller, poet, and arbiter. The masjid was brought to Iraq as an Islamic form of the tribal majlis and served as the center of the Islamic community for worship and political life. Consequently, it was not originally a sacred building in the same sense as a fire temple, synagogue, or church.

Because Muslims tended to cluster in newly founded settlements, there was no continuity of sacred location at first. Muslims did not appropriate existing holy sites or buildings for use as masjids in Iraq, and at first there were no objections to images in a place of worship. The tribal Arab concepts of a leading family (ahl al-bayt), inheritance, the responsibilities of a wasi, revenge, the protection of the weak by the strong, and the religious status of a sâdîn contributed to the earliest political claims made on behalf of the family of 'Ali.

As Muslims they brought their own forms of religious law, doctrine, worship, and a new, distinctly Islamic role for rulers in public worship. Islamic concepts of equality and of the authority of the Book of God and of the sunna of Muḥammad contributed a justifying ideology to the political opposition of both the Khawārij and the supporters of 'Ali's family. The latter also extended the example of Muḥammad into claims of continuing revelation and prophetic authority.

The incorporation of local forms of religious belief and practice among Muslims was most successful when they were reinforced by identical or similar beliefs and practices contained in the Qur'ān or known to the early Islamic community in the Hijaz. The currents of other religious traditions were institutionalized in a distinctly Islamic way because Muslims arrived in Iraq with built-in affinities to local ritual and piety, which were provided by the pagan, Jewish, and Christian affinities in the Qur'ān. At the same time, it is evident that Iraqi converts to Islam brought their own religious background with them, and the situation among Muslims was comparable to that created by conversions from paganism among Nestorians. In particular, Magian attitudes and practices were made available by Persian converts, and Monophysite forms of Christian asceticism were brought by the pastoral Arabs of Iraq who settled in Basra and Kufa. As Muslims, such converts continued to do those things which could be supported by the Qur'ān or by early Islamic practices in the Hijaz.

This process may be observed in the configuration of attitudes and practices surrounding ritual worship as an act of personal piety. The performance of the salāt combined with nocturnal vigils, liturgical recitation, and weeping, in solitude or with others, and motivated by fear of the last judgment and of the torments of Hell, came most directly from contemporary Christian monasticism and had already been introduced among Muslims in the Hijaz. The development of such private pious practices was eased by their basic similarity to the local forms of such practices already existing in Iraq. In much the
same way, local Christian practices of religious poverty based on trust in God were reinforced by the Qurʾanic assertion of divine providence and found an Islamic expression in *tawakkul*. The pious Khārijī attitude of spending one's worldly goods to advance the cause of God and to gain salvation was a combination of Qurʾanic and ascetic Christian ideas, as was the tolerant postponement of judgment for sinners by leaving them to God on the Day of Judgment. The Islamic solutions to the problem of resolving divine omnipotence with human responsibility by the concepts of divine guidance and demonic misguidance, divine providence which determines material existence, and the reduction of human responsibility to the initial choice between good and evil combined Qurʾanic, Christian, and Magian objections to the operation of a mechanistic, impersonal fate. The relationship of prophetic claims made for the family of 'Alī to Judaic affinities in the Qurʾān may have been reinforced by the Jewish background of some Arab tribes and by current ideas about Elijah. The concept of the return of the hero seems to have been coordinated with expectations of a Messianic return. Conversely, since extreme forms of Manichaean and Christian asceticism such as celibacy, vegetarianism, and self-degradation did not receive such reinforcement, they were not acceptable to most Muslims. The same may be said of gnostic ideas about incarnation, the transmigration of souls, elitist antinomianism, dualism, and the esoteric interpretation of scripture which came from the local Marcionite, Manichaean, and Mandaean background.

To a certain extent, doctrines that were used to support authority or rebellion among other groups were also used by Muslims for the same purpose. Political and religious authority tended to be based on appeals to divine legitimation and destiny, public observance of ritual, communal solidarity, and conformity. Alienation and opposition tended to be expressed in terms of private piety and asceticism, which among Muslims were linked to armed revolt. Some claims, such as prophetic religious authority, were made by both sides. It is also important to realize that although almost everything that was current in other religious traditions can be found among Muslims in some form in the century after the conquest, the Khawārij and the supporters of 'Alī and his family, especially the extremists, did not constitute a majority of the Muslims in Iraq.

The depth of continuity through transmission may be measured by the fact that not only were many details of local religious belief and custom adopted by Muslims, but that the arguments associated with
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them also survived. There are three outstanding examples. The first concerns the arguments over ritual practices such as weeping and the argument over silence or speech that was part of a larger conflict between active and passive piety. The developments of the seventh century introduced the conflict between asceticism and positive material values among Muslims who inherited the older conflict over this issue existing between Magians and Manichaeans, Rabbinic Jews and the mourners for Zion, the Nestorian lay aristocracy and Christian monks. This contributed to a continuing tension between this-worldly practicality in religion and the super-pious ascetic or mystic renunciation of the world. Second, the old conflict between royal absolutism expressed in terms of divine kingship and representative forms of government survived among Muslims in the conflict between the infallibility of a prophetic leader and the infallibility of a community of believers. Third, the conflict between fatalism and human responsibility among Muslims was a continuation of old arguments between Zurvanites and Mazdeans, and Marcionites and Nestorians; it was made available by converts and reinforced by the Qur'ān. In this case, Islam originated partly as an ethical monotheistic denial of the impersonal mechanistic concept of fate popular in the late Sasanian period, and it was part of a general reaction to the use of fatalism to support absolutist policies. Fatalism had political as well as religious uses; its reappearance as part of the Marwānī restoration after the second fitna and the Qadarī objections to it parallel conditions at the beginning of the seventh century and signify the continuation of this issue among Muslims.

It is also possible to describe the formation and development of an Islamic religious community in Iraq that came to resemble existing local patterns of organization and identity. Muslims used congregational worship, education, and law to strengthen a communal identity and prevent apostasy by force. Reciters of the Qur'ān were the bearers of a sacred liturgical tradition like the hirbadhs, and qādis combined the arbitration of a hakam with the administration of religious law by a mōbadh, rabbi, or priest. Religious education was much less formal among Muslims in this period than it was among the other communities; but, as in other groups, exemplary behavior was used to spread conformity among the members, and this served as a source of status for the exemplars. But as a society of converts, Muslims were concerned with the establishment of a separate identity for themselves. In spite of the affinities their forms of worship, fasting,
and burial shared with the practices of other communities in Iraq, differences in details made them distinctly Islamic. Muslims created their own form of religious community in Iraq that resembled the others in many ways but had its own unique identity.

Muslims were distinct from the members of other, older religions because of the way elements of religious organization, ritual, piety, and belief were recombined in accordance with original Islamic assumptions in Iraq. Their uniqueness was due primarily to the way their origin and early development responded to a specific set of circumstances at a particular time. The extent of the contribution of non-Muslim traditions to this development is indicated by the fact that the arguments over ritual forms, attitudes and practices of piety, and doctrinal concepts were found together with these beliefs and practices among Muslims in the seventh century. This is central to the question of continuity through transmission to Muslims of non-Muslim religious ideas and practices. Although Muslim Arabs showed a noticeable resistance to accepting these ideas and practices at first, such transmission was most effective when it could be justified by what was already contained in the Qur'ān.
Conclusion

THE NATURE OF CONTINUITY

It is now possible to gather together the major themes which have emerged in this discussion of late Sasanian and early Islamic Iraq and to make some general statements concerning the nature of cultural continuity and change. In a situation where changes resulted from dislocations caused by flooding, conquest, invasion, immigration, and religious conversion, there were two major forms of continuity: direct survivals from the period before the conquest, and continuity through transmission to the conquerors. Change likewise falls into two categories: the immediate short-term results of the conquest, and the more permanent changes introduced by the way certain aspects of life in pre-Islamic Arabia were institutionalized in Islam and brought by Muslim Arab conquerors to Iraq. Continuity and change are combined by the way certain developments and trends that began in the late Sasanian period extended across the entire period but were intensified and crystallized by the Islamic conquest.

LINEAR CONTINUITY

Linear continuity is the simplest kind. It means the direct survival of attitudes and behavior because of the physical survival of people. To a certain extent, this was a matter of cultural or institutional inertia. There was a remarkable tendency for people to continue to do things in familiar patterns even while the situation was changing around them. The survival of the Aramaean peasantry meant that agriculture and irrigation were conducted in the same way and that their continuing linguistic vitality left its mark on local place names. As a result, the tendency for those who settled on the land to be Aramaicized continued into the Islamic period.

The Persian population survived in the towns and on the land by coming to terms with the Muslims. Persian patterns of settlement in Iraq were preserved by the *dahāqīn* who continued to live in towns as absentee landlords or on their estates in the countryside, where they were responsible for the survival of the Sasanian administrative and
taxation systems at the lowest levels. Enough representatives of the landed aristocracy of the late Sasanian period survived to preserve the main outlines of their graded class system among themselves, although members of the high aristocracy saved themselves and their lands by joining the Muslims or by seeking positions of leadership in the Nestorian Church. This also ensured the survival of Persian festivals and social customs among Persians in Iraq. Other Persians, such as the Ḥamrāʾ and the Asāwira, saved themselves by joining the Muslims during the conquest and settled at Basra and Kufa, where they survived as military units and preserved the Sasanian military traditions of heavy cavalry equipment and tactics, siegecraft, and the use of military slaves.

Likewise, the sedentary Arab population of Iraq at Hira and Anbar survived by coming to terms with the Muslims and paying tribute. Hira remained a sizable town inhabited by non-Muslims into the eighth century. Greater disruption occurred during the conquest among the pre-Islamic Arab pastoralist population of Iraq; but in spite of death, captivity, and the settlement of those pastoralists who joined the Muslims at Kufa and Basra, the distribution of the pastoral tribes, with only two exceptions, remained roughly the same after the conquest. The pre-Islamic tribes of Taghlib and Namir survived in the Diyar Rabiʿa. The Banū Taghlib even remained Christian and continued to engage in trade between Iraq and Syria. As far as smaller ethnic groups are concerned, there was no appreciable change in the location or behavior of the Kurds, and Turks and Indians were employed as mercenaries under both regimes. But the replacement of Syrians by Indians and east Africans as a captive labor force was related to changes in the agrarian regime.

Pre-Islamic religious traditions and institutions also survived the conquest in Iraq. Magians were included in the payment of tribute which, in spite of the destruction of the Magian priestly organization, allowed the Magian cult and identity to survive among upper class families because of the largely private nature of the cult. The Jewish community survived intact with its synagogues, schools, religious law and court system, rabbis, and exilarch.

The Nestorians survived as a community with their distinctive doctrine and with their religious schools and monasteries. The canon law continued to be developed, and aristocratic laymen continued to be involved in the election of the clergy. In fact, the momentum built up by the Nestorians in the formation of their community in the late
Sasanian period extended into the Islamic period with the building of new monasteries and the continuing conversion of Magians and pagans. The survival of Nestorian institutions allowed the survival of the factions within the church: the monks and clergymen who favored ecclesiastical autonomy, and the landed Persian aristocrats and courtiers who favored the kind of toleration and official status for their church in which they could exercise patronage. This conflict, which centered on the election or appointment of the catholicos, was already in full operation in the late Sasanian period and survived the conquest partly because the two factions were institutionalized by coenobitic monasticism and the medical school at Nasibin. Monophysites, even among pastoral Arabs, also survived the conquest in Iraq with their schools and their ecclesiastical organization. Consequently the conflict between Nestorians and Monophysites simply continued into the Islamic period. Lastly, there were still pagans in late Sasanian Iraq, and, although they were rapidly declining in numbers through conversion to Christianity, some pagans survived the conquest because they were included with everyone else under the terms of tribute. As a result, pagan religious traditions survived in magic, astrology, and folklore and in gnostic sects such as the Mandaeans. In particular, the ancient Mesopotamian deities and their function in astrology, demonology, the theory and practice of therapeutic magic, and fatalism survived.

CHANNELS OF TRANSMISSION

The survival of these people and their way of life was crucial for the formation of early Islamic society and institutions in Iraq. They provided indispensable channels of transmission to Muslim Arab immigrants. In some important cases, such direct survivals from the Sasanian period as the *dahāqīn*, the *Asāwira*, the presence of unconverted Jews and Magians at Hira, the use of Sasanian-style coins, and the employment of the Persian language for the bureau of the land tax only lasted for about sixty years after the conquest, until about 700. This kind of cultural lag, or institutional inertia, provided one of the necessary conditions for successful continuity through transmission by allowing time for it. From this point of view it is possible to identify some of the more important means whereby pre-Islamic practices were introduced among Muslims. Iraqi captives, both Arab and Persian, brought local practices into Muslim households. Some of the captives who were carried off to the Hijaz, or their children,
eventually made their way back to Iraq as members of a Muslim society.

Pre-Islamic influences on the development of Islamic administrative institutions in Iraq were assured by Muslim employment of some of the same persons who had served the Sasanians, by hereditary tendencies among administrators, and by the existence of handbooks which described administrative traditions. The Muslims continued to employ the minters who knew how to make Sasanian coins. Because the Sasanians had employed Arabic-writing scribes in their own translation bureau, the Muslims found local Arabs in Iraq whom they could employ in administration. The landed aristocracy, which served as agents in the assessment, registration, and collection of taxes for the Muslims, not only continued Sasanian practices at the local level, but also assisted in the organization of the Muslim taxation system and in the recovery of the Sasanian register of crown property. In this case, the *dahāqīn* survived long enough to transmit their knowledge of Sasanian procedures and their own style of life to a similar class of Muslim Arab landlords. In the same way, the survival of the *Asāwīra* made the transmission of Sasanian military traditions to the Muslims possible.

Such influences were often, but not always, encouraged by converts to Islam who brought their backgrounds along with them. However, one of the most important requirements for such transmission was the ability of people who were bilingual or possibly tri-lingual to communicate with each other. In this respect, the situation at Hira before the conquest, where Persians and Arabs were mixed and where some people could speak and write both languages, made the local Arabs of Iraq as important as intermediaries as the Persians were in the transmission of the culture of Iraq to the new Arab settlers from the peninsula. Communication was facilitated by the existence of bilingual Muslims such as Ziyād and al-Mughīra ibn Shu‘ba, but it should be noted that it was a Persian who finally put the tax accounts into Arabic for al-Ḥajjāj.

CONTACT

Along with survival and the ability to communicate, the transmission of pre-Islamic customs and practices depended on actual contact with the new rulers by the natives of Iraq. It is important to realize that it was the Iraqis themselves who often took the initiative in introducing the Muslim immigrants to local customs and procedures, which some
Muslims tended to resist at first. Essentially the people of Iraq continued to act toward their new rulers just as they had behaved toward the Sasanians and expected that the Muslims would want them to do so. In this way Muslim Arabs were introduced to Persian rituals of hospitality, table manners, commercial practices, and the game of chess. It was the Jews themselves who brought the exilarchate to the attention of the Muslim authorities because of their own internal quarrel. This process is clearest, however, in the effect of the continuing conflict between the Nestorian factions to recreate the conditions of the late Sasanian period because they appealed to state intervention. They allowed scarcely any break at all in the pattern, which appeared as early as 640 at Nasibin, was in full operation by the reign of Muʿāwiya, and had more or less forced the Islamic government to apply Sasanian methods toward them by the end of the second civil war.

One of the major consequences of all of this was the incorporation of the main institutional forms of Sasanian civil and military administration into early Islamic government. The survival of the Sasanian personnel and administrative units at the lower levels meant that Sasanian administrative practices survived there directly. Sasanian officials who survived into the Islamic period gradually introduced Sasanian practices at the higher levels. The weight of evidence suggests that a group of Persian and Arab administrators were responsible for this process, which began at Basra when Ziyād was administrative assistant to Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī with the organization of the Islamic military ḍūwān. Consequently the Muslims maintained the Sasanian system of military supply in cash and kind. Provisions for the army were kept in storehouses, and cash payments were organized through a muster-roll by means of inspections or reviews of the troops. The office of military scribe was maintained by the Muslims because it was associated with this institution, and the Muslims also continued the Sasanian office of vice governor (M.P. pādhghōspān, Ar. khalīfa). Muslims recognized the difference between military and nonmilitary administrative districts, and the distinction between civilian and military officials survived at first at the level below the amīr. Along with these aspects of military administration, the Muslims adopted the use of Sasanian military equipment and tactics, the use of military slaves and mercenaries, and the use of garrison troops as a local guard or police force of the Sasanian kind. Muslims also revived the Sasanian use of confidential officers and informers which was institutionalized in the state post (L. barīd).
In fiscal administration, the land tax continued to be based on a rate schedule per unit of area for different kinds of crops and collected in three installments each year, although the rates were raised, and new crops were taxed. Taxes on state or crown lands remained proportional to the yield and were considered to be rent; by the reign of Mu‘awiya, the Sasanian office in charge of crown property had been revived. The terms of peace made at the time of the conquest were based on the Sasanian method of assessing taxes as a total sum for each town, village, or rural district. As under the Sasanians, the tribute tax was divided up among the inhabitants themselves while the landed notables guaranteed the taxes for their rural districts. The use of tax registers and of local treasury buildings where the registers were kept and where taxes were gathered to be forwarded to provincial capitals was also maintained under the Muslims. At first the Muslim regime not only accepted the existing Sasanian coins for the payment of taxes but even reproduced the form, style, and iconography of late Sasanian coins for their own use.

Sasanian methods and forms of organization began to be introduced at the provincial level during the reign of Mu‘awiya, when Ziyād was viceroy for Iraq and the East. Ziyād is given credit for the establishment of a department to register and seal documents (Ar. ḏūwān zimām) in imitation of the Sasanians, for staffing the finance bureau at Basra with non-Arabs who were familiar with the tax system, and for introducing the epistolary style which had been used in the Sasanian chancellery in his correspondence bureau, although the forms of an Arabic epistolary and administrative style already existed and had been worked out in the late Sasanian chancellery. As a result, the fourfold administrative system of the Sasanians, in which income was handled by a department of finance, expenditure was organized through a military roll, correspondence was carried out by the chancellery, and documents were authenticated for the first three departments by a registry and sealing department, was reconstituted first by provincial governors in Iraq, spread to imperial administration under the Marwānīs, and served as the basic framework around which subsequent Islamic administrative forms were built.

REINFORCEMENT

The survival of the pre-Islamic population and its continued employment by the Islamic regime is sufficient to explain the incorpo-
ration by Muslims of details of administrative, military, and social practices from the Sasanian period, and even of the forms of organization and institutions connected with them. But even though the cultural overlapping that made this possible was important, it does not answer the question of whether or not Muslim Arabs preserved the attitudes and values that were associated with them. This is best explained in terms of reinforcement. Continuity through the transmission of local Iraqi culture to the Muslim conquerors was most effective where local customs could be matched with or compared to the customs and outlook brought by the Muslims.

The importance of reinforcement for transmission is demonstrated in several ways. Sasanian principles of statecraft could be applied to Islamic forms of government by Muslim governors in Iraq because the Sasanian concept of monarchy involved a combination of economic, legal-religious, and military responsibilities, similar to the Muslim amīr who led the Islamic community in Iraq in all of its activities. This was especially true of Muslim viceroys who had total power, such as Ziyād and al-Ḥajjāj. As a result, Sasanian royal traditions of justice, court procedure, control, and enforcement survived among Muslims. Sasanian royal customs such as the semiannual change of residence, the use of bodyguards and runners, isolation from contact with the public except at formal audiences, and the employment of a chamberlain (Ar. ḥājib) on such occasions were all revived by early Islamic governors. The understanding of the principles of Sasanian statecraft indicated by these practices was responsible for the changes in the Arab-Sasanian coinage which added the names of caliphs and governors, the use of Hijrī dates, and more Islamic inscriptions. This culminated in the reform at the end of the seventh century which produced a new Arab-Islamic coinage. This reform coincided with the revival of the Sasanian appellate court for the redress of grievances (Ar. maẓālim) and with the first real intervention by the Islamic government in the affairs of the Nestorian Church. The latter included the deposition and arbitrary elevation of a catholicos—exactly as the late Sasanian monarchs had done. The real extent of administrative continuity was indicated by the way in which institutions and practices were accompanied by the theories which justified them and by the problems contained in their use. The result was that the conflict between security and accessibility, the use of internal administrative checks, and the importance of reliability all survived in Islamic administration.

A similar kind of reinforcement was at work in the replacement of
Magianism by Islam as the religion of the rulers, with the result that the Magians’ official relationship to the state was perpetuated among Muslims. The Islamic qādī, as administrator of religious law for the Islamic community, was consciously compared to the Magian mōbadh or hirbadh, and the relationship between the qādī and the mażālim court preserved conditions from the Sasanian period.

Reinforcement also assisted the adoption of certain social customs by Muslims in Iraq. Tribal concepts of noble descent, encouraged by the example of Arab notables at Hira, helped the new rulers approximate themselves to the local landed aristocracy. The burial customs practiced by Muslims in Iraq were a combination of Arab customs, reinforced by Islam, and local pre-Islamic customs. Even the resistance to local burial customs by some Muslims was a combination of their preference for Arab ways and local Christian objections to ostentatious funerals.

The transmission of religious influences through conversion was also aided by reinforcement. Here it is important to note the consequences of the rapid conversion of pagans to Nestorian Christianity in the sixth and early seventh centuries, which meant the survival of pagan funeral customs, demonology, and therapeutic magic among Christians, and the appropriation of the sites of pagan shrines for churches and monasteries. Not only were pagan ideas of redemptive healing reinforced by the Bible, but the background pagan converts brought with them left a permanent legacy among Nestorian Christians and ought to provide an indication of the strength of religious ideas and practices brought by converts to Islam. In fact, a great deal more reinforcement existed in the case of Islam because Muslims arrived in Iraq with affinities to local ritual, piety, and belief inherent in their own religion.

The extent of continuity through transmission where reinforcement was available is also indicated by the fact that arguments associated with details of belief and practice among non-Muslims appeared among Muslims. The conflict between asceticism and this-worldly religious practicality survived among Muslims. Muslims inherited the ancient issue between royal absolutism and representative forms of government in the form of the conflict between an infallible, charismatic, Messianic leader, and an infallible community of religious scholars. The argument over fatalism and human responsibility, complete with the political uses and implications of both, also carried over into the Islamic period and resurfaced among Muslims.
Reinforcement was equally important for effective change. The Arab Muslim conquerors who came from the peninsula showed a remarkable resistance to assimilation for at least a generation, and although this meant a high degree of linear continuity among themselves, it also changed the situation in Iraq. This involved the introduction of new tribal influences which were intensified by their association with the rulers and by the way some aspects of tribal life were sanctioned in the Qur'an. This meant that the process of detribalization for those Arabs who settled in the garrison cities was drawn out longer than it might have been otherwise. It meant the arrival of a new tribal aristocracy, the tribal organization of the army, the persistence of tribal politics, and the association of tribal traditions of leadership with the clan of Muhammad, which was the starting point for the Shi'a. It found expression in resistance to intermarriage and in the survival of bedouin costume in Iraqi cities. It also meant a basic change in the form of urban organization, assisted by the replacement of the tribal *majlis* by the tribal *masjid*. This produced cities organized around a central *masjid* and divided into tribal districts, each with its own tribal *masjid* and cemetery. Since *masjids* were only built where Muslims settled, no immediate continuity of sacred location occurred, and Muslims tended to avoid local shrines unless there was a Qur'anic sanction.

Muslim vocations of religious leadership also tended to preserve pre-Islamic professions. The tribal poet found an Islamic form in the *qaṣṣ*, the popular preacher and storyteller engaged in exhortation and in religious education in the *masjid*. The professional reciter of poetry (Ar. *rāwīn*) became the reciter of the Qur'an (Ar. *qārī*) and transmitter of *ḥadīth*. The unofficial arbiter (Ar. *ḥakam*) became the earliest Muslim *qādī*, and the tribal law of retaliation and the practice of arbitration survived among Muslims because they were sanctioned by the Qur'an.

Because the Islamic community in Iraq was, at first, a garrison, the conquest had the effect of increasing urbanization, especially among Arabs, and caused a shift in population to southern Iraq. The conquest itself removed the Persian population along the southwestern frontier of Iraq and much of the population in the districts east of the Tigris. It disrupted the pastoral economy of Iraq and reconcentrated its population in the form of captives, *mawālī*, and defectors in the new garrison cities of Basra and Kufa, together with the Arabs from the peninsula. The Iraqi Arabs who joined the Muslims simply added to
the tribal nature of these new cities; but the Persians found themselves integrated into the tribal system either as allies, such as the Ḥamrāʾ and Asāwira, or as mawāli. This demographic change in southern Iraq meant an increase in agriculture at the expense of pastoralism. But the only important changes in the tribal distribution in Iraq during the seventh century were the permanent displacement of the tribes of Namir and Taghlib north of the Euphrates and the movement of pastoral Arabs across the Tigris in upper Iraq towards the end of the century. However, the consequences of the flooding and plague in 628, along with the conquest, also contributed to demographic and economic changes.

Because the conquest replaced Magian rulers with Muslims, it also removed the friction between Magians and Jews and Christians over inhumation, bathing, and ablutions. Islam actually gave a positive sanction to these practices with the result that the public bath became a part of Islamic society. By the same token, the conquest removed the difficulties of conversion from Magianism to Christianity.

The conquest also had the effect of suppressing the hierarchic society, ranking system, and administrative organization and practice of the late Sasanian period at the upper levels. With the sole exception of the ḥājib, the hierarchic structure of the royal court disappeared along with the clothing code. To the extent that the conquest brought a breakdown of the late Sasanian centralization, it restored some aspects of the situation prior to the Sasanian reorganization in the sixth century. The organizational arrangements originally brought about for practical reasons were only gradually coordinated with the main outlines of the Sasanian administrative system, with important revivals under Muʿāwiya and the early Marwānīs. Ultimately the old province of Beth Aramaye reappeared as the Islamic province of Iraq.

Thus, there is an element of continuity in some of the changes introduced by the conquest. Although the defensive frontier in Iraq was shifted from the southwest to the north and northeast toward Iran, and the new provincial capitals founded by the Muslims at Basra, Kufa, Mawsil, and Wasit were all situated with the Tigris or Euphrates rivers between them and Iran, they were also placed close to previous Sasanian administrative centers. Kufa was about three miles from Hira; Basra was across from Parth; Mawsil was across from Nineveh; and Wasit was across from Kaskar.

Although at first, Arabs did not adopt the principle behind the clothing code for themselves, with the possible exception of the lim-
itation of the turban to Muslim soldiers, they did adopt articles of Persian clothing such as the *qalansuwwa* and *taylasan*. Continuity in change is also suggested by the fact that the reintroduction of the principles of Sasanian statecraft under al-Ḥajjāj actually meant the suppression of the *dahāqīn*, and by the fact that the awareness of the symbolism and purpose of the Sasanian coins resulted in Islamizing the Arab-Sasanian coins and culminated in the production of a reformed Arab-Islamic coinage.

**CONTINUING CHANGE**

Several trends extending from the sixth until the eighth century actually involved a more or less continuing development for which the Islamic conquest, in some cases, provided a catalyst. Such continuing trends are exemplified by the sedentarizing forces that were already at work among Iraqi Arabs in the late Sasanian period and were intensified by the conquest, and by the cultural amalgam in pre-Islamic Hira that prefigured the syncretism of early Islamic Iraq. Similarly, the decline of paganism, mainly through conversion to Christianity, was a development of the late Sasanian period that extended through the early Islamic period and relegated the old cult to the level of folklore. The Islamic conquest actually accelerated the decline in the number of Magians in Iraq by destroying their organization and by removing the difficulty of conversion to another religion, but this only completed the tendencies of the late Sasanian period. There was also continuity in the direction of change in the development of political institutions and theories and in the organization of society along religious communal lines.

The creative adaptability of the Islamic regime in employing Sasanian traditions allowed a continuing development based on the possibilities those traditions contained. Muslims made the Sasanian system more regular and uniform and continued the ideological development of administrative theory. Sasanian methods of administration tended to be elaborated and were more developed in Islamic legal and administrative theory than they ever were in practice. Islamic law increased the exemptions from the poll tax and the competence of the *mazālim* court. However, the development of land and poll taxes under Islamic rule also reflected developments in agriculture and society. The use of preferential taxes to encourage agriculture on newly developed land eventually made it necessary to identify *kharāj* on land that was
already cultivated as a stable tax base. Similarly the religious dimension added by Muslims to the poll tax was related to the formation of religious-social identities.

One of the most important of such trends was the formation of a society composed of religious communities, which was already well under way by the late sixth century with the strengthening of internal bonds and external boundaries. Magians, Jews, and Christians had their own distinctive forms of ritual, liturgical calendars, leadership, places of worship, systems of religious law, and forms of religious education. With regard to Magians and Jews, it is evident that even ancient and perennial beliefs and customs could acquire an enhanced significance in particular circumstances. Personal ritual observance became a source of identity and a symbol of conformity in a multifaith society. In addition, Jews had their own urban institutions and a recognized head of their community in the exilarch, just as the Christian communities relied on coenobitic monasticism for discipline and the Nestorian catholicos was recognized by the state. The position of such communal leaders was strengthened by recognition allowing the communities to serve as vehicles for indirect rule. Military protection and religious toleration were exchanged for loyalty and taxes. Both Christians and Jews were establishing communal boundaries by extending the principles of a communal life ordered by religious law among themselves, especially in matters of personal status such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. Communal barriers, to say nothing of open hostilities between Nestorians and Monophysites, were rising on all sides in the late Sasanian period.

The effects of the Islamic conquest on this development were contradictory. There was no official recognition by the Muslim rulers of either the Jews or Christians as a religious community at the time of the conquest in the same sense that they had constituted communities in the Sasanian period. Officially, Muslims made no distinctions among the members of other religions; all non-Muslims were treated as subjects liable to taxation. Consequently the relationship between the Nestorians and their rulers that had emerged by the end of the Sasanian period was broken by the conquest and reconstituted over the following century and one-half by the initiative of the Nestorians themselves. On the other hand, the Muslims expected Jews and Christians to live according to their own religious laws, so the conquest had the effect of encouraging the operation and continuing development of autonomous systems of religious law simply because there was little inter-
vention by the Muslim rulers. In the case of the Jews, this absence of state support for the religious authority of the exilarch indirectly provided the conditions enabling the gaons to complete their capture of the rule of the community through the Rabbinic schools which had, in fact, started by the sixth century. At the same time the increasing authority of the rabbinate had provoked a Messianic opposition which was encouraged by the Islamic conquest and finally ended in the Karaite schism. The conquest was little more than an incident in the internal development of the Jewish community in Iraq.

The emergence of religious communities was paralleled by the development of the poll tax which extended from the sixth until the early eighth century. By the late Sasanian period, it had become the contribution which productive noncombatants were required to make in return for military protection. It acquired its typical Islamic form in Iraq because there it was paid primarily by the non-Persian, non-Magian part of the population under the Sasanians. The trend begun in the Sasanian period continued in the direction of greater regularity, uniformity and theoretical refinement under the Islamic regime because Muslims in Iraq were both a ruling religious community and a military garrison at first. In return for military protection, the economically productive part of society whose religion differed from that of the rulers continued to pay the poll tax, but the Muslims elaborated the exemptions to include everyone too old or too infirm to pay. The Muslims also added the requirement of possessing a revealed scripture in order to be eligible to purchase toleration.

The formation of the Islamic community was itself a part of these developments, and in the seventh century the Muslims in Iraq were creating the bonds of a religious community in the same way as the people around them. They brought their own religious law, a form of congregational worship, and the masjid with them to Iraq, where they developed vocations of religious leadership, education, and legal administration which combined their own background with local patterns of organization. Because communal solidarity was usually expressed in congregational worship, the emergence of the religious community as a type of socioreligious organization may be symbolized by the differences between a temple or shrine, the architecture of which reflects the presence of a deity and the performance of sacrifice, and buildings designed for congregational worship. The architecture of churches combined both functions, but the synagogue and masjid were more completely congregational.
However, the bonds of a religious communal identity were effectively limited by their dependence on those who followed religious professions and by their dependence on the communication of the outlook and forms of a religious identity to the other members of the community by those leaders whose authority and status depended on their acceptance. The distinctions built up by religious leaders tended to be broken down by the ordinary faithful in their everyday relations with the members of other religions, especially through commerce and participation in each other’s religious festivals. The tendency for the leadership of religious communities to develop in terms of male domination signifies important social changes.

None of these religious communities should be viewed as monolithic or static either in size or in social composition. The appearance of solidarity and doctrinal and social conformity was shattered by factionalism, political quarrels over authority and leadership, and the formation of sectarian subdivisions. The major communal categories—Magians, Jews, Christians, Muslims, and Manichaean—all contained subgroups distinguished from each other by details of doctrine and ritual. The historic dynamic of communal formation seems to have involved two consecutive processes: the formation of major communal identities and institutions, followed by the separation of dissenting subgroups. Once the communal pattern was established, internal conflicts tended to produce fragmentation which led to the formation of subgroups as new communities. Although the timetables were different in each case, the sectarian fragmentation of society in Iraq had less to do with Islamic definitions and requirements than with the maturation of internal conflicts.

At the risk of being overly schematic, the combined processes of continuity and change might be summarized as cultural lag or overlapping, transmission assisted by contact, communication, and reinforcement, and changes brought by the conquerors because some aspects of their own tribal background received an Islamic sanction. Some of the changes were permanent: the Islamic faith, and the eventual predominance of the Arabic language. In other respects, the conquest only interrupted developments which were taking place in the late Sasanian period. It seems almost paradoxical that as time passed the situation in Islamic Iraq came to approximate more and more the situation under the last Sasanians, and that the changes which were wrought by the second *fitna* and the Marwānī restoration actually marked the integration of an entire set of administrative and religious
traditions from the Sasanian past into the fabric of Islamic society. Thus, the Marwānī restoration, was a more important hinge between Sasanian and Islamic civilization than the conquest itself, and it can be argued that Islamic civilization was the result of changes that began under the last Sasanians.

IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

What is the significance of these conclusions? Do they have any implications beyond the intrinsic value of helping to understand conditions in Iraq during a particular period of time? Do they raise additional questions or have a wider application? How should the claims of historical specificity be balanced against those of universal applicability? On one side, it could be argued that the conditions in Iraq on which these conclusions are based are historically and geographically specific, and that it would be as inappropriate to project them onto other places and other times as it is to project modern European circumstances onto premodern, non-European societies. What, then, would be the point of all of this? On the other side, it could be argued that human experiences and societies are at least potentially comparable when social circumstances are similar because of the similarity of human nature. For instance, these conclusions might be expected to have some applicability to subjects such as the nature and consequences of religious conversion, the formation of associative bonds and group identities, or authoritarian political systems. The best solution is probably a compromise between both positions so long as two principles are observed. One is that the applicability of such conclusions is directly proportional to the degree of similarity in circumstances. The other is that matters should not be reduced to a level of abstraction that makes comparisons meaningless.

With this in mind, and without claiming too much, it is possible to take the conclusions which have been reached here in several directions. They might be used to understand the subsequent development of Islamic society in later centuries. They might provide a basis for comparison with other regions during the same period, which would enhance the understanding of the transition from antiquity to “medieval” civilizations. They might be applied to other similar circumstances. And they might be used to understand the nature of historical continuity and change.

With regard to the first possibility, a high degree of ethnic and
religious diversity seems to have been normal in Iraq in pre-modern times. Although Muslims eventually became a virtual majority of the Iraqi population (probably by the ninth century), significant religious and ethnic minorities survived, and Muslims themselves came to be divided along ethnic (Kurds) and sectarian (Shi‘ī) lines. The evidence of expansion through competitive conversion efforts by Nestorian and Monophysite Christians might prove to be applicable to the mass conversions to Islam during the ninth and tenth centuries that may have been related, in part, to sectarian conflicts among Muslims. The behavior and survival of the native population of Iraq in the first century of Islamic rule and their consequences for continuity might bear comparison to the behavior of Muslim Persians under Mongol rule in the thirteenth century.

In the second case, these conclusions might contribute to an understanding of Late Antiquity as a period of change and suggest the importance of what was happening just to the east of the Byzantine empire. How should the incipient formation of socioreligious communal organizations in this period be understood? Do they reflect a reaction to social disorder, conflict, and change which produced a new kind of religiously sanctioned social order? Beginning with the massive crisis during the third century, the fourth and fifth centuries seem to have been an extended period of economic retraction. The regimes which sought to stabilize the economy and society became hierarchic, function-oriented, and religiously intolerant. Religious communal organization may have represented an alternative, locally generated source of stability. At one level, the religious pluralism institutionalized by these communities reflects the realities of social fragmentation. At another level, there was a degree of practical necessity in learning to live with pluralism. The unique degree of acceptance of religious pluralism in late Sasanian Iraq may have been a feature of an expanding economy. The economic expansion that began in Sasanian territories, especially in Iraq and Khuzistan, and on the Arabian peninsula in the sixth century, produced new political, economic, social, and religious circumstances. Among them were a degree of religious toleration and social and economic mobility. It could be argued that an expanding economy needed labor and could afford a degree of toleration.

However that may be, the nature of these religious communities has implications for two other issues. The tendency to explain the emergence of the personality of law in the early middle ages by relating it to Germanic tribalism in western Europe appears to be undermined
by the developments in Iraq in Late Antiquity, where personality of law developed on a religious basis, in a nontribal society, and before Islam. Secondly, the natural assumptions about the historical development of male dominance which relate it to warfare, violence, and patrilineal tribal societies appear to be undermined by the change in the social nature of religious authority associated with the formation of religious communities. At least in Iraqi society, the male religious leaders who created these communities used their monopoly of ritual and their manipulation of law to exercise social control from Late Antiquity onwards.

Third, these conclusions might be applicable to several generally similar circumstances. One of them concerns the nature and exercise of political, religious, and social authority. For instance, the examples of late Sasanian and early Islamic absolutist political systems might help in understanding the objectives and problems of such systems. One of the most interesting and significant discoveries in this regard is the tension between mechanistic and personalized solutions for making the exercise of authority effective. One kind of solution lies in constructing elaborate, automatic, administrative checking mechanisms and overlapping devices. The alternative appears to be to rely on trustworthy subordinates. In any case, no system is any better than the people who run it.

A relationship and similarity between political and religious authority had already been established by Late Antiquity. It is possible to notice a general tendency for authority to be based on appeals to Divine legitimation and destiny and to require the public observance of ritual, communal solidarity, and social conformity as forms of recognition. Escape from such authority, expressions of disapproval, and active opposition tend to take the form of private piety and asceticism. In this regard, it is worth suggesting that styles of piety can have political and social significance as symbols of internal conflict and that religious values and sacred texts may be applied selectively in order to justify the interests of those who appeal to them.

Iraq also provides an important example of a premodern pluralistic society. In this respect, it is obvious that ethnic and religious diversity was no barrier to cultural integration or to significant innovation and may have encouraged both because ethnic and religious identities did not necessarily coincide. A common religious identity allowed a degree of assimilation among people with different ethnic backgrounds, while a common ethnic background allowed a degree of similarity to exist
among the members of different religious groups. In this kind of society, group identities and cultural differences were preserved most effectively when people kept together socially, such as the military units of the Ḥamrāʾ and Asāwira, the Arab clans, the Bukhārans, and the Zuṭṭ. Contrary to the assumptions of cultural nationalism, the preservation of an ethnic identity or group solidarity did not depend on regional predominance but on cultural or social density. Groups with a high cultural density, such as the Aramaean Jews of the central Sawad or the Muslim Arabs of the garrison cities, were able to assimilate outsiders as individuals. Linguistic, ethnic, and religious boundaries were all crossed by converts and captives as individuals. Cultural assimilation was most complete for such individuals who were removed from their former social contexts and integrated as individuals into a new society. The best examples of this are provided by the children who were taken captive during the conquest or afterwards and were raised as Arabized Muslims.

Religious pluralism survived because it was institutionalized in the religious communities themselves, as they worked out their relationships to their rulers. The communities which were forming in late Sasanian and early Islamic Iraq may be regarded as establishing a type for the sectarian communities developed among Muslims in later centuries and bear comparison to denominationalism in modern American society. They also provide suggestions about the nature of such communities. Ritual observance serves to individualize and internalize a communal identity and assists in social differentiation either by marking differences in relative status among members or by symbolizing the differences between different religious groups. Even minor details of ritual can serve to establish such identities. Recurring group worship and public festivals in a ritual calendar serve to reinforce a personal identity and to enhance group feeling. The position of religious leaders depends on the recognition of such distinctions by their followers; in a multifaith society, a degree of tension between the realities of everyday life and the social exclusiveness preferred by the leaders would seem to be normal. Such a community is created, preserved, and perpetuated through law and education. The use of law to create social boundaries for marriage and inheritance serves to keep children (and other members) and property within the community and enables the leaders to secure a permanent following and an economic base for themselves. It would be inappropriate to represent either ethnic differences or religious-communal cleavages as amounting to stratifica-
tion. The members of such communities tend to be stratified internally according to relative differences in wealth and power.

There seem to be three main modes of social organization or differentiation in such a society: stratification, religious communal identities, and kinship. All three are equally real. Although they normally govern different aspects of life they sometimes conflict or overlap. As an historical social process, kinship, at least at the tribal or clan level, tends to be replaced or minimized by other associative bonds in this kind of society. This may be assisted by forms of substitute kinship and by providing the social ethics of kinship with a religious sanction. It is also possible for religious and tribal leaders to emphasize religious and tribal identities in their own interest, which serves to divert attention from socioeconomic identities, interests, and stratification. In addition, it is worth suggesting that ethnic and religious categories provide relatively stable alternatives for personal identity in an economically fluid society compared to identities based on socioeconomic stratification which are apt to change due to socioeconomic mobility.

Finally some comments concerning the social nature of historical continuity and change are in order. Cultural continuity, diffusion, and change are intimately connected to the survival and migration of people, to their location in relation to people of different cultures, and to the degree of sociocultural density and intermingling. Cultural density contributes to linear continuity, increases stability, and minimizes change. Cultural intermingling in the form of ethnic, linguistic, and religious pluralism provides greater opportunity for syncretism, interpenetration, and mutual influences by different kinds of people on one another. Continuity through transmission should not be represented as a static borrowing or adoption by people of one culture from those of another, but should be understood in terms of creative adaptation and continuing development. When transmission (or diffusion) is assisted by reinforcement, the reasons for the existence of reinforcement should be sought. It is accidental? Is it to be explained by some universal quality such as human nature? Is it a matter of similar development, background, or common interests? In the case of Iraq, the evidence points to extensive contact between Sasanian territories and Arabia during the sixth century. It is a mistake to think of Arabia as being culturally isolated or as being only on the receiving end of cultural diffusion. Parts of eastern and southern Arabia were under direct or indirect Sasanian rule and economic ties were increasing. The conquests of Khusraw Parvīz in the early seventh century are symptomatic
of the growing regional unity of western Asia, which was actually consummated by the Muslim Arabs who created the Islamic empire rather than by the Sasanians.

Should the new cultural forms that emerged following the Islamic conquest be defined in religious terms as Islamic or in regional terms as the premodern civilization of western Asia? They are very nearly the same; what we call Islamic civilization was, in fact, the regional culture of western Asia. The general significance, then, of the late Sasanian-early Islamic period in Iraq is as a bridge between antiquity and "medieval" history. Although Muslims helped to build this bridge, the significance of Islam may be neither that it was cause or consequence but that it was the most successful crystallization of the direction of change during Late Antiquity.
Glossary

TRANSLITERATED terms have been defined in the text at least the first time they occur. Those terms which occur more than once are included here. The languages to which they belong are abbreviated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Language</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Aramaic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ak.</td>
<td>Akkadian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ar.</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
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<td>Av.</td>
<td>Avestan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gr.</td>
<td>Greek</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heb.</td>
<td>Hebrew</td>
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<td>L.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
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<td>M.</td>
<td>Mandaic</td>
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<tr>
<td>M.P.</td>
<td>Middle Persian</td>
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<tr>
<td>N.P.</td>
<td>New Persian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syr.</td>
<td>Syriac</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In a multilingual society many words circulate in several languages, changing their form from one to another. Thus, loanwords are not always easy to recognize and there are differences of opinion over etymologies. Older works such as S. Fränkel, *Die aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen* (Leiden, 1886), and A. Shīr, *Kitāb al-alfāz al-fārisiyya al-mu’arraba* (Beirut, 1908) contain a wealth of suggestive information which is not restricted to the languages in their titles and are worth consulting, even though some of their derivations are out of date. The same applies to A. Schall, *Studien über griechische Fremdwörter im Syrischen* (Darmstadt, 1960). Treatments of the process of sound changes in loanwords may be found in A. Siddiqi, *Studien über die persischen Fremdwörter im klassischen Arabisch* (Göttingen, 1919); M. Kamil, “Persian words in ancient Arabic,” *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts (Majallah Kulliyat al-Adab)* (Cairo University), 19 (1957): 55–67; and S. Brock, “Some Aspects of Greek Words in Syriac,” in A. Dietrich, ed., *Synkretismus im syrisch-persischen Kulturgebiet* (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 80–108. The notes to Brock's contribution also identify recent literature on this subject. Both D. N. Mackenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary* (London, 1971) and H. S. Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi, Part II: Glossary* (Wiesbaden, 1974) distinguish between the Middle Persian and New Persian form of words. Nyberg also provides the Aramaic logograms with which Middle Persian words were sometimes written and he notes which Middle Persian words were used in Arabic.

`afzūn` (M.P.): “may he prosper,” a slogan used on late Sasanian coins.

`afzūt` (M.P.): “may he live long,” a slogan used on the coins of Khusraw Parvīz and his successors and on Arab-Sasanian coins.
GLOSSARY

ālahā (Syr.): god, used for God by Christians, cognate with Allāh (Ar.).
a’māl (Ar. pl.): units of fiscal administration for collecting taxes.
‘āmil (Ar.): an agent, sometimes a civilian financial official. The plural ‘ummal means tax collectors.
amīr (Ar.): “commander,” the Islamic military governor.
amīr-i vīrōyishnikan (M.P.): a rendering of the Arabic phrase amīr al-mu’minīn, “commander of the faithful,” which occurs on some Arab-Sasanian coins. It is worth noting that the Aramaic ideogram HYMNN that is used in Pahlavi orthography for this word comes from the root ’mn, which is cognate with Arabic ’amana (faithful), and that mehaymenā (Syr., believer) is cognate with mu’min (Ar.).
‘amma (Ar.): common, public, general.
andarzpat or handarzpat (M.P.): chancellor, chief judge, head of a provincial treasury, administrator of property.
ansāb (Ar. pl.): genealogies, sg. nusab.
arād (Ar.): “land,” used in the sense of an administrative territory.
‘arād (Ar.): “presentation,” a military review.
‘arīf (Ar., pl. ’urafā‘): “one who knows,” an official in charge of a military division at Basra and Kufa in the time of Ziyād.
asāwira (M.P.): heavy mailed cavalry, a loanword in Arabic from M.P. usvārān, sg. uswār in Arabic.
asūrāb: see ṣāhib.
ashrāf: see sharīf.
‘ātā (Ar.): stipend.
bāj (M.P., N.P.): tribute or tax; Magian state of purity framed by ritual.
baraka (Ar.): “blessing.”
barīd (L.): the state communication and transport system, loanword in Arabic from veredus (L.) via beredos (Gr.).
barsom (M.P.): the sacred bundle of twigs used by Magians in the Yasna ceremony.
bay’a (Ar.): the political allegiance rendered by Muslims to their leaders; also the act of rendering allegiance by clasping right hands.
bayt al-māl (Ar.): “house of wealth,” the Islamic treasury.
beth din (A.): the rabbinic court in the Jewish community.
birdhaun (A.): destrier, the heavy Persian warhorse, a loanword in Arabic from bardōnā (A.), “pack animal” or “beast of burden.” It also occurs in Greek as bourdōn.
**GLOSSARY**

*bismillāh* (Ar.): “In the name of God.”

*buyūṭāt* (Ar. pl.): outstanding or leading families.

*catholicos* (Gr): the title of the ecclesiastical head of the Christian Church in the Sasanian empire, then of the Nestorian Church from the sixth century onward.

*chaldiōtā* (Syr.): “Chaldaean” astrology.

*dabīrbadh* (N.P.), *dipīrpat* (M.P.): the Sasanian chief of scribes, translated into Arabic as *raʿis al-kutṭāb*.


*daqal* (A.): a kind of low quality date palm native to Iraq, a loanword in Arabic from *daqlā* (A.). Its name appears to be related to the local name for the Tigris river: Dījla, Deql, Deqlā.

*dār al-imāra* (Ar.): “house of government,” the Islamic administrative compound in cities such as Basra and Kufa. The buildings included the governor’s residence, prison, and treasury and housed the administrative departments.

*dār ar-rizq* (Ar./M.P.): “house of provisions,” a military depot established to supply the Muslim army. *Rizq* is a loanword in Arabic from *rōziq* (M.P.), “daily” bread, sustenance.

*dastkart* (M.P.), *dastgerd* (N.P.): a landed estate, often with a fortified mansion. It is a loanword in Aramaic as *dastakert* and in Arabic as *daskarat*. The Arabic broken plural *dasākir* is used for frontier posts as the equivalent of *masāliḥ* (Ar.).

*dastwar* or *dastavar* (M.P.), *dastūr* (N.P.): true religious doctrine, regulations; an authority, religious expert.

*dēhkān* or *dabīgān* (M.P., pl. *dēhkānān*), *dihqān* (N.P.): villager, landlord, a member of the local class of Persian landlords in Iraq who administered subdistricts. The Syriac plural is *dahqānē*; the Arabic plural is *dahqāgin*.

*dēv* (M.P., N.P.): “demon.”

*dhimmī* (Ar.): a “protected” non-Muslim under Muslim rule.

*dhirāʾ* (Ar.): a cubit varying from 54 cm. to 66.5 cm.

*dihqān:* see *dēhkān*.

*dīn* (Ar.): “judgment,” religion, cognate with Syriac *dēnā* and *dēnōtā*, which also mean judgment.

*dīnār* (L.): a gold coin, a loanword in Arabic from *denarius* (L.) via *dēnarion* (Gr.).

*dirham* (Gr.): a silver coin, from *drachma* (Gr.), called a *zūzā* in Syriac.

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diwān (M.P.?): a list or register, by extension the administrative department in charge of such a register, also the collected works of a poet.

diwān al-khātam (Ar.): the department of the seal. See diwān zimām.

diwān al-mustaghallāt (Ar.): the department in charge of income from state property under the early Marwānīs at Damascus.

diwān zimām (Ar.): the registry department for documents.

diyā’ (Ar.): a landed estate.

fārisī (N.P.): “Persian,” form used in Arabic; a kind of high quality date palm.

farsakh (N.P.): a distance of about 6 km. This form is a loanword in Arabic from farsang (N.P.), frasang (M.P.). The broken plural in Arabic is farāsīkh.

fay’ (Ar.): “permanent booty,” tribute, and taxes which were identified as the common property of the early Islamic community and then as the property of the state.

fitna (Ar.): “temptation,” civil strife among Muslims. There were two periods of fitna in the seventh century, from 656 until 661 and from 680 until 692.

fravahr (M.P.): heavenly, immortal counterpart of earthly beings, tutelary genius; immortal soul of Magians, guardian angel during one’s lifetime.

gāhānbār (M.P.), gāhanbār (N.P.): five-day festival celebrated by Magians at the end of each of the six divisions of the year.

gaon, ge’ōn (Heb., pl. ge’ōnim): term of honor used for the heads of the Rabbinic schools at Sura and Pumbeditha from the end of the sixth century, contracted from their title resh metivtā, ge’ōn Ya’aqōb (head of the academy, pride of Jacob).

ghulām (Ar., pl. ghilmān): a young man, often a slave.

ghulāt (Ar. pl., sg. ghālin): extremists.

ḥadith (Ar.): an account of what Muḥammad did or said, which serves as a precedent for Muslims to follow.

ḥājib (Ar.): a chamberlain.

ḥakam (Ar.): an arbiter.

ḥaras (Ar.): the bodyguard of an Islamic ruler or governor.

bēgemōn (Gr.): a high Byzantine official, sometimes used for a local governor.

ḥnānā (Syr.): pellets of earth mixed with holy water or oil used as amulets by Nestorians.
GLOSSARY

herpat (M.P.), birbad (N.P.): a Magian priest responsible for instruction in the liturgy, loanword in Arabic as birbadh.

hōm (M.P.): haoma, the sacred plant and beverage used in the Magian cult.

hurrās (Ar.): watchmen or the nightwatch in cities, or sentries who guarded walls and gates.

‘ilj (Ar., pl. ‘ulūj): a person of low social status.

imām (Ar.): the “leader” of Islamic public worship, also used for Muslim rulers.

imān (Ar.): religious belief or faith.

irjā’ (Ar.): suspending or postponing judgment.

jabariyya (Ar.): “compulsion,” tyranny.

jarīb (Ar.): a unit of area equal to sixty square cubits (Ar. dhirā’a) which varied according to the length of the cubit. The jarīb based on the royal cubit of about 66.6 cm. was 1592 square meters.

jihād (Ar.): making an effort on behalf of God; religiously sanctioned warfare by Muslims against unbelievers.

jizya (Ar.): tribute or ransom, came to be used for poll tax paid by non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic state. It is probably cognate with gāzītā (A.) which was used as a term for the land tax and went into Middle Persian as gazītak.

jund (Syr.?): army, possibly a loanword in Arabic from gūdā (Syr.), “band,” “group,” “Wing of the army.”

kāfir (Ar.): an unbeliever from the Muslim point view.

kāhin (Ar.): a pagan soothsayer or priest, also used for Christian priests in Arabic.

kātib (Ar., pl. kuttāb): an administrative secretary.

khalīfa (Ar.): deputy or lieutenant.

kharāj (A.): taxes. This term seems to be a loanword in Arabic from kārāgā (A.) but was assimilated to the Arabic root kh-r-j. There is a difference of opinion over whether it should be derived ultimately from chorēgia (Gr.) or ilku (Ak.).

khāṣṣa (Ar.): special, elite, private; opposite of ‘āmma (Ar.), public, common, general.

khvētōdāt (M.P.): consanguineous marriage as practiced by Magians.

khwštba (Ar.): the sermon or speech usually given by the Islamic ruler or governor, often at public worship.

kērāgā (A.): the term for poll tax in Sasanian Iraq.

kufr (Ar.): unbelief.
kūra (Gr.): “rural,” loanword in Arabic (pl. kuwar) from chōra (Gr.), used for an administrative district.
kursī (Syr.?): judgment seat or throne, possibly a loanword in Arabic from khōrsiyā (Syr.).
maḥalla (Ar.): neighborhood or district.
maḥdī (Ar.): “guided” by God.
majlis (Ar.): an assembly or council for the discussion of matters of interest or concern; by extension, the building where such an assembly is held; an audience hall, a ruler’s audience; a tribal council.
māl (Ar.): “wealth.”
mamlūk (Ar.): “owned,” a slave soldier.
maqsūra (Ar.): a protective chamber in the masjid for the Islamic ruler or governor during public worship.
marzpān (M.P.), marzbān (N.P.): the military governor of a late Sasanian frontier district, a loanword in Syriac as marzbānā and in Arabic as marzubān.
masāliḥ (Ar. pl.): garrisoned frontier posts.
masjid (Ar., pl. masājid): an Islamic place of worship.
mawla (Ar., pl. mawali): a client or protégé, usually the former slave of his patron.
maẓālim (Ar. pl.): “injustices,” especially the appellate court for the redress of grievances.
mēdātā (Syr.): land tax.
mihrāb (Ar.): the niche in the qibla wall of a masjid.
Mihrajān (N.P.): the Magian fall festival at the autumnal equinox.
minbar (Ar.): the pulpit in a masjid from which the khutba is delivered.
minnim (Heb. pl.): Jewish sectarian or apostates from the Rabbinic point of view.
miṣāha (Ar.): “measured,” land tax levied per unit of area based on a rate schedule that took the type of crop, amount of irrigation, and productivity into account.
miṣr (Ar., pl. amšār): a garrison city and administrative capital.
mithqāl (Ar.): a unit of weight equal to 4.25 grams and supposed to be 10/7 of the weight of a dirham.
mōbadh (N.P.): a Magian priest. This is the form that occurs in Arabic from mōbad (N.P.), which comes from mōvpat or magōpat (M.P.). The latter occurs in Syriac as mōhpaṭā. Magōkwatai (M.P.) is used on Sasanian seals.
mög-mart (M.P.): a Magian, written with the Aramaic logogram GBRA. The Arabic form, majüs, is derived from Syriac mgōshā, derived in turn from Old Persian magush.

muʻadhdhin (Ar.): the person who gives the public Islamic call to worship.

muʻallim (Ar.): teacher.

muqāsama (Ar.): “divided,” land tax taken as a portion of the yield of crops.

muqātila (Ar. pl.): “killers,” soldiers.

murtadd (Ar.): an apostate.

muşhaf (Ar., pl. maşāḥif): a copy of a text, especially a copy of the Qur’ān.

nāhiya (Ar.): “neighborhood,” sometimes used for an administrative subdistrict equivalent to a tassūj or a rustāq.

naqīb (Ar.): a person responsible to the government for the group of which he is a member, an official in charge of a military division at Basra and Kuﬁa in the time of Ziyād. See ḍarīf.

naqqūs (Syr.): the wooden gong used by Christians in Iraq, a loanword in Arabic from napōshā (Syr.).

nāsik (Ar., pl. nussāk): an ascetic, or person of great piety.

Nawrūz (N.P.): the Magian spring festival at the vernal equinox, supposed to be on the first of Farvardin. But in the late Sasanian period the first of Farvardin fell in July, when it marked the beginning of the secular year, so the religious Nawrūz was celebrated on the first of Adur to coincide with the equinox.

pādhghōspān (M.P.): the deputy or lieutenant of a spāḥbadh in late Sasanian administration, a loanword in Arabic from pātkōspān (M.P.). See khalīfa.

prosōpon (Gr.): being or personage, a loanword in Syriac as parsōpā.

qadar (Ar.): God’s “power” to determine events, divine destiny.

qāḍī (Ar., pl. qudāt): the Islamic religious judge.

qafiz (Ar.): a unit of volume (4.2 liters) equal to a sā‘.

qalansuwa (A.?): a tall, conical hat. This term is probably a loanword in Arabic, but its linguistic origin is uncertain. None of the derivations which have been offered from Latin, Persian, or Greek through Aramaic are very convincing.

qamīs (L.?): tunic, possibly a loanword in Arabic from camīsa (L.).

qārī (Ar., pl. qurrā’): a “reciter” of the Qur’ān.

qāsr (L.?): a fortified residence or citadel, possibly a loanword in Arabic from castra (L.), used to translate dastkār (M.P.).
GLOSSARY

qaṣṣ (Ar., pl. quṣṣās): a Muslim popular preacher and storyteller.
qaṭṭāʾa (Ar., pl. qaṭṭāʾi): a land grant.
qʷnōmā (Syr., pl. qʷnōmē): substance; hypostasis referring to the nature of Christ.
qibla (Ar.): the direction towards the Kaʿba in Makka faced by Muslims when they worship. However, in early Islamic Iraq the qibla was to the south.
qīrāt (Gr.): ⅓ mithqāl weighing .2232 grams. It appears to be a loanword in Arabic from keration (Gr.) via qīrṭā (Syr.).
qiṣṣa (Ar.): a popular story, connected narrative, or piece of propaganda.
qubba (Syr.): a domed structure, probably a loanword in Arabic from qobḥtā (Syr.).
rad (N.P.), rat (M.P.): “learned,” a high Magian priest, master, a Sasanian governor, occurs in Arabic as radh.
raʾīs (Ar., pls. ruʿāsā, ruʿūs): “leader.”
raʾīyya (Ar.): “flock,” used for subjects.
rajʾa (Ar.): “return.”
rawādīf (Ar. pl.): latecomers to the garrison cities after the conquest.
ridāfa (Ar.): a set of privileges granted by the Banū Lakhm to the leaders of powerful pastoral Arab groups.
riyāsa (Ar.): “leadership.”
rizq (M.P.): provision, providence, a loanword in Arabic (pl. arzāq) from rōzik (M.P.), “daily” rations or payment.
rōstāk (M.P.): riverbed, district, province, a rural subdistrict in late Sasanian administration, used as a loanword in Arabic as rustāq (pl. rasāṭīq), sometimes equivalent to a tassūj or a nāḥiya.
šā (A.): a measure of volume (4.2 liters of wheat) weighing 5/13 raṭl (1 raṭl = 1.5 kg.).
šadaqa (Ar.): the tax paid by Muslims, probably cognate with šedāqā (Heb.).
sādīn (Ar.): the caretaker of a shrine.
šāḥīb (Ar.): “master,” companion, comrade, used for the official in charge of an office or administrative jurisdiction. The plurals ašḥāb and šahāba mean companions, especially the contemporaries of Muḥammad.
šalāt (Syr.): Islamic ritual worship which consists of a series of prostrations, probably a loanword in Arabic from sīlōthā (Syr.).
sawāfī (Ar.): state or crown property, uncultivated land.

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shahāda (Ar.): “witness,” the formula in which Muslims declare that there is only one God and Muḥammad is His messenger.

shahr (N. P.), shatr (M. P.): kingdom, city, district of which a city was the administrative center, equivalent to a kūra.

shahrij (N. P.), shatrīk (M. P.): the governor of a shahr.

Shahrijān (N. P. pl.): an intermediate class of Persian aristocrats, used in Arabic in a broken plural, Shahārijā.

shahrīstān (N. P.), shatristān (M. P.): the capital city of an administrative district, also the citadel or administrative center in a city.

sharīf (Ar., pl. ashrāf): a person of high status in Arab society, especially the leader of a tribe or clan.

sharīrā (Syr., pl. sharīrē): a confidante, informer, or trusted agent, probably a cognate of sarāʿīr (Ar. pl.) “secrets.”

shirk (Ar.): “association,” the Islamic term for polytheism.

shurta (Ar.): the Islamic urban police force.

sīra (Ar.): practice or way of life, considered to be exemplary.


špāḥbadh or ispāḥbadh (M. P.): the military governor of one of the four quarters of the late Sasanian empire, general, used in Arabic from spāḥpat (M. P.). The New Persian form is sipāḥbad.

šulaḥā (Ar. pl.): “upright” people, notables, people with high status based on personal moral qualities.

sultān (Syr.): political authority, government, a loanword in Arabic from shōltānā (Syr.).

sunna (Ar.): exemplary precedent, especially examples set for Muslims by Muḥammad.

tābiʿī (Ar., pl. tābiʿūn): “followers,” especially second-generation Muslim religious authorities.

tanāšukh (Ar.): transmigration, reincarnation.

ṭasqā (A.): an annual rent tax on agricultural land proportional to the yield, used as a loanword in Arabic as ṭasq.

ṭassūj (M. P.): a “division” or “quarter,” loanword in Arabic (pl. ṭasūsīj) used for an administrative subdistrict from tasūk (M. P.), probably via tassūgā (Syr.), sometimes equivalent to a rustāq or a nāḥiya.

tawakkul (Ar.): confidence in God among Muslims.

tawqīʿa (Ar., pl. tawqīʿāt): the instructions or decisions of a ruler or official written at the bottom of a petition presented to him.

tawwāf (Ar.): circumambulation as a religious ritual.
GLOSSARY

tāylasān (M.P.?): a stole, used as a loanword in Arabic from tālashān (M.P. or N.P.) and in Aramaic as tālshanā.

thiqa (Ar., pl. thiqāt): trustworthy, reliable.

tunna' (A.?): local landowners, probably a loanword in Arabic (sg. tāni').

umm walad (Ar.): “mother of a child,” a slave concubine who acquires a special status by bearing children to her master.

'ummāl: see 'āmil.

'ūshr (Ar.): the tithe tax paid by Muslims.

ustān (M.P.): Sasanian royal property, the form of ōstān (M.P.) used in Arabic.

ustāndār (M.P.): a Sasanian official in charge of royal property or a crown province, from ōstāndār (M.P.).

vāspuhrakān (M.P., sg. vāspuhr): “distinguished,” “prominent,” royal princes and members of the Sasanian high nobility.

wāfi (Ar.): “full weight,” used for dirhams, supposed to be equal to a mithqāl but actually lighter, also called baghī.".

wāli (Ar.): an agent, sometimes used for a governor.

waqf (Ar.): property endowed for a religious institution, charity, or the family of the founder.

wārith (Ar., pl. warathbāt): “heir,” one of the earliest terms used to describe ‘Ali’s relationship to Muḥammad.

waṣī’ (Ar., pl. awṣiyā’): “executor,” one of the earliest terms used to describe ‘Ali’s relationship to Muḥammad.

wazīr (Ar.): an administrative assistant.

wuḍū’ (Ar.): the ritual ablution performed by Muslims.

xvarnah or xarrah (M.P.), farr (N.P.): the divine glory or fortune attached to the Sasanian dynasty, from xvarṇah (Av.).

yazēt (M.P., pl. yazdān), īzad (N.P.): god, a being worthy of worship, used for Ohrmazd by Magians, from yazata (Av.).

zāhid (Ar., pl. zuhbād): a Muslim ascetic.

zakāt (Ar.): the Islamic alms tax.

zamān (M.P., N.P.): “time,” often in the sense of “fate,” occurs as a loanword in both Aramaic and Arabic.

zuhd (Ar.): asceticism.

zuyūf (Ar. pl.): debased coins.

zūzē (Syr., pl.): silver coins equivalent to dirhams.
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MATERIALS

Problems andPossibilities

When this project was begun over ten years ago there were no guides to follow. The first problem was to identify the usable materials. With few exceptions modern scholarship tends to be confined by dynastic, religious, and linguistic boundaries. For specialists in the Sasanian period, early Islamic history is a Fortleben; for students of Islamic history, the period just before Islam is a preparatio. The only contemporary scholar with substantial publications on both Sasanian and Islamic Iran is Richard Frye; no one has published extensively on both Sasanian and Islamic Iraq. Those who have studied more than one religious tradition have usually done so for comparative purposes; they have used the similarities they discovered to argue for the "influence" of one tradition on another, generally without showing how it occurred.

What follows is a discussion showing how one can penetrate the materials used for this study and how to put them to other uses. The discussion is not intended to be exhaustive. Virtually everything pertaining to the period under study is evidence of either continuity or change. But some materials are more useful and some subjects more significant than others. Much more can be done with these materials than has been done here, and in this respect this study only represents a beginning. These materials can be used for subjects other than continuity and change. Materials that often are concerned primarily with other or broader regions have also been used for what they have to say about Iraq. For instance, because Iraq was part of the Sasanian empire, much of the literature on Sasanian Iran is a good source of information, especially since much of the evidence used for generalizations about the Sasanian period pertains to Iraq. At the same time it is important to remember that conditions in Sasanian Iraq were not necessarily the same as those on the Iranian plateau.

Bibliographies

Nevertheless, one can start with works such as J. D. Pearson’s A Bibliography of Pre-Islamic Persia (London, 1975), which lists articles as well as books concerning Sasanians, Magians, Manichaean, and
comparative religions. Although it contains only minimal citations of the literature on Christians under the Sasanians, it cites excavations that include sites in Iraq. A great part of the surviving literature which was composed in Iraq in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries was written in Syriac, and one can use surveys such as W. Wright’s *A Short History of Syriac Literature* (London, 1894) and A. Baumstark’s more updated authoritative *Geschichte der syrischen Literature* (Bonn, 1922) to identify the major Syriac-writing authors whose works should be consulted. These works also put their authors into an historical context. More specifically, many of the thirty-four east Syrian authors identified and discussed by A. Scher in his “Étude supplémentaire sur les écrivains Syriens orientaux,” *ROC* 11 (1906): 1–33, are sixth, seventh, and eighth-century writers. A more detailed guide is provided by I. Ortiz de Urbina’s *Patrologia Syriaca* (Rome, 1958; superseded by the 2nd ed., 1965), in which pages 45 to 201 contain a bibliography of east Syrian Christian authors with references to manuscripts, editions of texts, and studies regarding them. This is brought up to date and narrowed down to the seventh century by S. P. Brock’s “Syriac Sources for Seventh-Century History,” in *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 2 (1976), pp. 17–36, which provides an indispensable description of editions and translations of texts. Brock’s “Syriac Studies 1960–1970: A Classified Bibliography,” *Parole de l'Orient* 4 (1973): 393–465, is an equally useful guide to published books and articles, including editions and translations of texts.

Arabic-writing authors have a great deal to say about the sixth and seventh centuries; therefore Arabic literature is second only to Syriac for an understanding of Iraq in this period. From the eighth century onward, Arabic literature becomes predominant. Early Arabic literary sources can be identified in C. Brockelmann’s monumental two volume *Geschichte der arabischen Literature* (Weimar, 1898–1902). Although Brockelmann is still worth consulting, F. Sezgin’s equally monumental *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (Leiden, 1967–79) is more up to date and easier to use. References to early Arabic-writing historians and to quotations of their work in Arabic literature, as well as the location of fragments, manuscripts, editions, and translations, are found in the section on “Geschichtsschreibung” in vol. I (Leiden, 1967), pp. 235–389. Christian Arabic-writing authors are surveyed and discussed in the second volume of P. Kawerau’s *Christlich-Arabische Christostomathie aus historischen Schriftstellern des Mittelalters*, CSCO, *Subsidia*, 53, (Louvain, 1977). R. Blachère’s *Histoire de la littérature arabe*
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(Paris, 1952–65) puts authors into an historical context and is a convenient place to identify poets. An indispensable guide to articles is J. D. Pearson’s Index Islamicus, 1906–1955: A Catalogue of Articles on Islamic Subjects in Periodicals and Other Collective Publications (Cambridge, 1958), with supplements at five-year intervals thereafter until 1977, when it was succeeded by the Quarterly Index Islamicus. C. Cahen’s Jean Sauvaget’s Introduction to the History of the Muslim East (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1965) is a critical bibliography which is organized both topically and chronologically and is still a good guide to the older literature. A more extensive introduction to the literature on Islam is provided by C. L. Geddes in An Analytical Guide to the Bibliographies on Islam, Muhammad, and the Qur’an (Denver, 1973). The bibliography by R. M. Savory and G. M. Wickens called Persia in Islamic Times (Toronto, 1964) covers a much longer chronological period and is somewhat peripheral to this study but includes references to works on early Islamic Iran.

Cultural Legacies

Compared to the frequency of the phrase “continuity and change” in the titles of modern works, little theoretical consideration has been given to the nature of either. A useful and suggestive theoretical discussion is provided by A. Gerschenkron’s essay, “On the Concept of Continuity in History,” in his Continuity in History and Other Essays (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), pp. 11–39, even though his comments were generated by the modern argument over whether industrialization was a gradual or abrupt historical phenomenon.

Questions of cultural transmission pertaining to Islamic civilization have tended to be concerned more with details of cultural content than with theoretical explanations for diffusion. They have also concentrated on two issues: what “older” civilizations “contributed” to Islamic civilization, and what Islamic civilization “contributed” to western Europe. There is an immense literature on the latter question, but much of it tends to be apologetic in nature. Within this literature, two works stand out for their use of the idea of receptivity in diffusion theory, similar to the use of reinforcement for continuity in this study. One is H.A.R. Gibb’s “The Influence of Islamic Culture on Western Europe,” Bulletin of the John Ryland’s Library 38 (1955–56): 82–98. The other is T. Glick’s Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages (Princeton, 1979). Although Glick’s theoretical discussion is impressive, he has a much better command of the literature and
issues concerning Christian Spain than for Muslim Spain. Consequently, the validity of his comparative conclusions suffers from the use of secondary sources for his material on Islamic Spain.

Nevertheless, no treatment of the Islamic east or of the former question of cultural legacies in early Islamic civilization compares to that of Glick. A. von Kremer’s *Culturgeschichte des Orients unter den Chalifen* (Vienna, vol. I, 1875; vol. II, 1877; Eng. tr. S. Khuda Buksh, *The Orient under the Caliphs*, Calcutta, 1920) is the fountainhead for the modern discussion of such matters. Although it has been considered premature, it has cast a long shadow. For most modern scholars, von Kremer is the source of the theory that the ‘Abbāṣis were responsible for an Iranian cultural revival. The arguments of C. Becker in favor of Hellenistic influences in the formation of Islamic civilization may be found in the articles collected in the first volume of his *Islamstudien* (Leipzig, 1924–32). The view of Islamic civilization as an Hellenistic cultural revival was also elaborated by A. Mez in *Die Renaissance des Islams* (Heidelberg, 1922; Eng. tr. S. Khuda Buksh, *The Renaissance of Islam*, London, 1937, repr. 1968). But R. Levy’s “Persia and the Arabs,” in *The Legacy of Persia*, ed. A. J. Arberry (Oxford, 1963) is simplistic and disappointing, being little more than a summary of the ideas of others. The survival of pagan traditions in Islamic culture was discussed in terms of the mythic background of certain Qur’ānic figures (such as Dhū l-Qarnayn), Muslim appropriation of ancient gods and heroes, and their survival in local cults and in place names in C. E. Dubler’s sixteen-page published lecture, *Das Weiterleben des alten Orients in Islam* (Zürich, 1958). His article, “Survivances de l’ancien Orient dans l’Islam (Considérations générales),” *SI* 7 (1957): 47–75, is more substantial and has a bibliography. J. Kraemer’s *Das Problem der islamischen Kulturgeschichte* (Tübingen, 1959) treats the transition from pre-Islamic to Islamic culture and balances the “Hellenic” nature of that culture against other elements. More recently, and from the point of view of survivals from late antiquity is the disparate collection of articles assembled by R. Stiehl, ed., in *Festschrift Franz Altheim, Beiträge zur alten Geschichte und deren Nachleben* (Berlin, 1970). The realization that the culture of the western part of the Sasanian empire was not solely Iranian is reflected in the contributions of Widengren, Brock, Drijvers, and others to a symposium held at Göttingen in 1971 and published by A. Dietrich, ed., as *Synkretismus im syrisch-persischen Kulturgebiet* (Göttingen, 1975).

In one way or another, these works help to identify the main in-
Interpretive themes which have been emphasized with regard to the cultural history of western Asia during Late Antiquity and in early Islamic history. Since much of their content pertains directly to Iraq, they are also useful sources for bibliography.

Surveys and General Works

The same can be said of a number of general works which provide an interpretive outline and structure for understanding Iraq in this period. Although this study was not concerned primarily with survivals from ancient Iraq, some aspects of indigenous administrative and religious tradition proved to be of great antiquity or were worth comparing with ancient native precedents. A convenient introduction to the earliest literate culture in Iraq with translations of some of its literature is provided by S. N. Kramer’s The Sumerians: Their History, Culture and Character (Chicago & London, 1963). Ancient Iraq (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1964) by G. Roux is still a useful survey down to the Neo-Babylonians (or Chaldaeans) and has a bibliography by chapters. L. Oppenheim’s Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization (Chicago and London, 1964) is also considered to be a good introduction with a rather critical interpretation.

There is no literature on the Sasanian period which deals with Iraq as such. Cultural uniformity throughout the Sasanian empire during its entire four-hundred-year existence appears to be assumed by most scholars; so the available information on Iraq is put into a general Sasanian context. The classic treatment of the Sasanian period is A. Christensen’s L’Iran sous les Sassanides (Copenhagen, 1944). After thirty-five years of subsequent research it is now badly out of date. Unfortunately no single work of comparable status has replaced it and it continues to be treated as authoritative (including Christensen’s own mistakes and the French misspelling of Sasanid). The value of F. Altheim and R. Stiehl’s Ein asiatischer Staat, Feudalismus unter den Sassaniden und ihren Nachbarn (Wiesbaden, 1954) is compromised by Altheim’s obsession with feudalism, but it must be consulted. It is balanced by N. Pigulevskaja’s Les villes de l’état iranien aux époques parthe et sassanide (Paris, 1963) whose main thesis, put in a Marxist framework, is that Sasanian Iran had a slave rather than a feudal economy (she may be right, but her evidence is slim). R. N. Frye’s The Heritage of Persia (London, 1962) is a survey of the pre-Islamic history of Iran to A.D. 640. Although the book is mostly concerned with ancient dynasties, pages 207 to 255 cover the Sasanians and the
early Islamic period. The contributions to a conference held in Rome in 1970 and published as *Atti del Convegno Internazionale sul Tema: La Persia nel Medioevo* (Rome, 1971) are uneven but more up to date. Most recently B. Brentjes’s *Das alte Persien: Die iranische Welt vor Mohammed* (Vienna, 1978) is a survey of ancient history which covers the Sasanians from pages 213 to 264, but it should be used critically. The standard starting point for identifying material remains from the Sasanian period is part V (the entire second volume) of A. U. Pope’s monumental *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present* (London, 1938–39; repr. 1964–65), which includes Iraqi monuments and artifacts. The entire eighth volume of *Ars Islamica* (1941) is devoted to reviews of the contributions to Pope’s *Survey*. Of the two articles which deal specifically with the end of the Sasanian period, J. C. Coyajee’s “The House of Sasan: The Last Phase,” *JCOI 35* (1942): 43–51, tends to be nationalistic and apologetic, while B. Faravashi’s “Les causes de la chute des Sassanides,” in *La Persia nel Medioevo*, pp. 477–84, is uncritical and imaginative.

Since the region of the upper-middle Tigris and the eastern Jazira was included in this study, works on the eastern part of the Byzantine empire, especially on Byzantine Mesopotamia and the Byzantine-Sasanian frontier, proved to be useful. However, the only general treatment of this region during Late Antiquity is J. B. Segal’s “The Mesopotamian Communities from Julian to the Rise of Islam,” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 41 (1955): 109–39, but it suffers from having been put into a Cold War context. A good introduction to Byzantine history in the Sasanian period is *The Later Roman Empire 284–602* (Norman, 1964) by A.H.M. Jones. *The Persian War of the Emperor Maurice (582–602)* (Washington, 1939) by M. J. Higgins, affords entrée to Sasanian political history of the late sixth century. The indispensable survey for the seventh century is the multivolume study, *To Byzantion ston hebdomon aiona* (Athens, 1965 onwards), by A. N. Stratos, which reached its fifth volume and the year A.D. 685 by 1974. The first two volumes, which cover the years from 602 until 634, have been translated into English as volume 1 by M. Ogilvie-Grant (Amsterdam, 1968) and identify all the primary sources for the Byzantine-Persian war in the early seventh century. The third volume, from 634 until 641, which covers the Muslim conquest of Syria and Egypt, has been translated into English as volume 2 by H. T. Hionides (Amsterdam, 1972).

Recent treatments of the circumstances and consequences of the

The subsequent history of Iraq under Muslim rule tends to be organized along dynastic lines and reflects the assumption that the replacement of the Marwānī (Umawī) dynasty by the ʿAbbāsī dynasty in the middle of the eighth century marked a significant historical change. C. H. Becker's "Studien zur Omajjadengeschichte," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie* 15 (1900): 1–36, is an influential study which helped to define this "period." L. Caetani's *Chronografia Islamica* (Paris, 1912) was intended as a continuation of his *Annali dell' Islam* in five volumes down to A.H. 132 (A.D. 750), but his selection and evaluation of information was based on questionable judgments about the reliability or unreliability of Arabic transmitters. It can be used to identify some of the passages concerning particular events but should not be used as a source of information itself. J. Wellhausen's *Das arabische Reich und sein Sturz* (Berlin, 1902), translated into English by M. G. Weir as *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall* (Calcutta, 1927; repr. Totowa, N.J., 1973) is the classic presentation of the Umawī dynasty as an Arab state. His assertion that tribal conflict among the Arabs led to the fall of the dynasty became part of the standard interpretation. This was elaborated by H. Lammens in a series of articles which emphasized the secular, worldly aspects of the Umawī regime and were published in his "Études sur le règne du calife omayyade Mo'awia I", *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 1–3 (Beirut 1906–1908) and *Études sur le siècle des Omayyades* (Beirut, 1930). Together the works of Wellhausen and Lammens represented the standard interpretation of the Umawī "period" for almost forty years (and still do in some quarters). Although aspects of his interpretation remain controversial, the first scholar to challenge Wellhausen systematically and to really argue for assimilation between Arabs and non-Arabs before the advent of the ʿAbbāsī dynasty was M. A. Shaban in his *Islamic History A.D. 600–750* (A.H. 631–754/939–1331), volume I, *The First Age of Islamic History* (Princeton, 1961; repr. 1982).
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132): A New Interpretation (Cambridge, 1971). 'A. A. Dixon's study of the reign of 'Abd al-Malik and the last years of the second fitna called The Umayyad Caliphate: 65–86/684–705 (A Political Study) (London, 1971) is revisionist in its argument that 'Abd al-Malik was a serious Muslim. It contains an extensive bibliography of Arabic sources and has been translated into Arabic as al-Khilāfah al-umawiyah: dirāsah siyāsiyyah (Beirut, 1973). M.G.S. Hodgson's The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization (Chicago, 1974) is also revisionist in tone but much broader in scope. The first volume, The Classical Age of Islam, includes the Sasanian background. But Hodgson's choice of terminology and emphasis has been charitably described as idiosyncratic and his discussion of matters is at the level of high culture in spite of his own denials. One should consult the reviews such as those by C. Geertz in The New York Review of Books 22, no. 20 (Dec. 11, 1975): 18–26, or E. Burke III, "Islamic History as World History: Marshall Hodgson 'The Venture of Islam'," IJMES 10 (1979): 241–64.

Since some of the most crucial developments in the first century of Islamic history took place in Iraq, all of these works pay some attention to that region. For more closely focused treatments of early Islamic Iraq, see A. H. al-Kharbutli, Ta’rīkh al-’Iraq fī ẓill al-ḥukm al-Umawī (Cairo, 1959); M. an-Najjār, ad-Dawla al-Umawiyya fi-sh-sharq (Cairo, 1962); and T. I. ar-Rawi, al-’Iraq fī l-‘Asr al-Umawī (Baghdad, 1965). All of these studies discuss matters in the framework of the standard interpretation.

For the reasons given above, and because Iraqi Muslim forces campaigned in Iran in the seventh and eighth centuries, works on early Islamic Iran reflect conditions in Iraq. This applies to B. Spuler's Iran in frühislamischer Zeit (Wiesbaden, 1952), especially pages 5 to 34; 'A. H. Zarrīnkūb's Dō qarn sokūt (Teheran, 1344); and even C. E. Bosworth's Sīstān under the Arabs, from the Islamic Conquest to the Rise of the Ṣaffārids (30–250/651–864) (Rome, 1968). The best treatment of early Islamic Iran in the previous decade is R. N. Frye's The Golden Age of Persia: The Arabs in the East (London, 1975), which has an instructive introductory chapter on Sasanian Iran.

Middle Persian Inscriptions

Monumental Sasanian inscriptions appear to be confined to the early Sasanian period and are found outside of Iraq, but they are indispensable sources of information about early Sasanian history and admin-

Seals

Seals and seal impressions (bullae) are more important than inscriptions as artifacts and primary sources for thelate Sasanian period. Private seals contain images and symbolic devices, sometimes with the owner’s name; administrative seals contain inscriptions which identify officials with their administrative jurisdictions. As historical evidence, bullae are more significant than the seals themselves because they are proof that those seals were used and give some indication of how they were used. The images on seals are important for Sasanian art history, although the significance of certain images is still debated. The inscriptions are invaluable contemporary evidence for the development of Pahlavi orthography and usage, especially in the late Sasanian period. The local background for the use of seals and a basis for comparison are provided by M. Gibson and R. D. Biggs in SEALS AND SEALING IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST (MALIBU, 1977).

A great many Sasanian seals in museums and private collections have been published in illustrated catalogues. P. Horn’s “SASANIDISCHE GEMMEN AUS DEM BRITISH MUSEUM,” ZDMG 44 (1890): 650–78, gives a brief description of 149 seals, their motifs, and the personal names inscribed on them. The seals in the Berlin Museum were published by P. Horn and G. Steindorff in SASSANIDISCHE SIEGELSTEINE (KÖNGLICHE
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The tendency has been to categorize seals according to motif in order to discuss the significance of their images. See N. C. Debevoise, “The essential characteristics of Parthian and Sasanian Glyptic Art,” *Berytus* 1 (1934): 12–18. P. Ackerman’s “Sāsānian Seals,” in Pope’s *Survey*, part V, pp. 784–815, organizes seals by motifs or symbols and argues for their astrological meaning. J. M. Unvala’s “Sassanian seals and Sasanian monograms,” in *M. P. Khareghat Memorial Volume* (1953), I: 44–74, is similar. The most ambitious attempt to categorize Sasanian seals by motif is that by R. Göbl, *Der sāsānische Siegelkanon: Handbücher der mittelasiatischen Numismatik*, IV (Brunswick, 1973), who proposed a typology of eleven basic motifs. For a criticism of Göbl’s categorization of certain motifs, see the review by J. Lerner, *IJMES* 7 (1976): 313–15.

Inscriptions on seals amount to contemporary primary sources. They are especially valuable because of the absence of other kinds of inscriptions in Middle Persian in the late Sasanian period generally or in Iraq in particular. Inscribed seals that provide evidence for the religious significance of Iranian names and for the administrative structure of the Sasanians and of the Magian priesthood have been found in Iraq. Administrative seals are included along with all the others in the catalogues noted above. Among early studies one should consult P. Casanova’s “Sceaux Sassanides,” *Revue d’Assyriologie* 22 (1925): 135–40, and E. Herzfeld’s “Notes on the Achaemenid Coinage and Some Sasanian Mint-names,” in *Transactions of the International Numismatic Congress, 1936*, J. Allan and H. Mattingly, eds. (London, 1938), pp. 413–26. Unfortunately C. Torrey’s readings in “Pehlevi Seal Inscriptions from Yale Collections,” *JAOS* 52 (1932): 201–7, tend to be unreliable, but the plates are good and the seals at Yale are identified. Two of the administrative seals pertain to Iraq, as do two of the excellently illustrated seals in A. Maricq’s “Classica et Orientalia. 10. Cachet administratif sassanide,” *Syria* 39 (1962): 104–5. The importance of such seals for Sasanian history is discussed by J. Harmatta in “Die sasanidischen Siegelinschriften als geschichtliche Quellen,” *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 12 (1964): 217–30.

Seals and seal impressions have a great deal of information to offer on art history, religious symbolism, naming patterns, and administration for the late Sasanian period. Unfortunately, they contain no information about where and when they were made and must be used in conjunction with coins.

Coins

Coins are at least as important as seals as primary sources. In the first place, since late Sasanian coins are dated by year of a ruler’s reign, the orthography of their inscriptions helps to date inscribed seals. In the second place although Sasanian seals were used by Muslims who sometimes put Arabic inscriptions on them, early Islamic seals have not been studied enough to enable one to make valid comparisons, and early Muslim administrators do not seem to have used or made administrative seals of the Sasanian type. In contrast, continuities and changes in coins are clearly and easily traceable from the late Sasanian to the early Islamic period on coins struck in Iraq. Coins thus provide the only “hard” contemporary, datable evidence for the nature of continuity and change in early Muslim Iraq, and what is learned from them may be applied usefully to other kinds of materials.

Silver coins from the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods are fairly common, and the typologies by year and mint location for each ruler are fairly complete. The standard listing is F.D.J. Paruck’s Sasanian Coins (Bombay, 1924), which may be supplemented by R. Vasmer’s “Sassanian Coins in the Hermitage,” Numismatic Chronicle (1928), pp. 297–308, and by N. Nakshabandi and F. Rashid’s “The Sasanian Dirhems in the Iraq Museum (ad-Darāḥim as-Sasāniyya min al-matḥaf al-‘Irāqī),” Sumer 2 (1955): 155–76. The most important recent work on Sasanian coins has been done by R. Göbl, who contributed a substantial chapter called “Aufbau der Münzprägung” to Altheim and Stiehl’s Asiatischer Staat, pp. 51–128, and a notice on “Die Münzen der Sasaniden im königlichen Münzkabinett, Haag, par P. Naster,” to Iranica Antiqua 3 (1963): 82-84. Göbl’s Sasanidische Numismatik (Brunswick, 1971) is the most up-to-date general study of all aspects of Sasanian coinage. W. al-Qazzāz, “A Rare Sassanid Dinar in the Iraq Museum (Dīnār Sāsānī nādir fi-l-matḥaf al-‘Irāqī),”
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Coins can supply many kinds of information. The images on coins provide evidence for official symbolism as shown by V. G. Loukonin's "Monnaie d'Ardachir I et l'art officiel sassanide," Iranica Antiqua 8 (1968): 106–17. Discussions of the astrological significance of the stars and crescents on Sasanian coins go back at least to E. Drouin's "Les symbols astrologiques sur les monnaies de la Perse, "La Gazette numismatique 5 (Brussels, 1901): 71–74, 87–91. The inscriptions on coins are official expressions of political and religious ideology, as shown by O. Klíma's "Über zwei Aufschriften auf den Münzen des sassanidischen Königs Chosroes I," in Festschrift für Franz Altheim, I: 140–42. The metallic content of coins can suggest possible sources of ore and provide evidence of debasement applicable to economic history. Comparisons between the metallic content of Sasanian and Islamic dirhams have been made on the basis of the percentage of gold that occurs naturally in silver ore by J. Bacharach and A. Gordus in "Studies on the Fineness of Silver Coins," JESHO 11 (1968): 298–317, and by A. Gordus in "Non-Destructive Analysis of Parthian, Sasanian, and Umayyad Silver Coins," in D. Koumjian, ed., Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles (Beirut, 1974), pp. 141–62. Greater precision with the same technique was achieved by P. Meyers et al., "Major and Trace Elements in Sasanian Silver," in Archaeological Chemistry, Advances in Chemistry Series 138 (Washington, D.C., 1974), pp. 22–33, by using trace elements that occur in silver only in parts per million or per billion.

Mint-marks occur on Sasanian coins in the form of abbreviations consisting of two or three consonants which are believed to stand for the administrative centers where the coins were struck. The problem has always been how to identify the mint-marks. Since post-reform Islamic coins have their mint location written out in Kufic script, it has been assumed that, because of administrative continuity, Sasanian mint-marks could be identified with known Islamic mints. One of the first to do this was O. Blau in "Istandara de Meschon. Ein Beitrag zur Münztopographie der Sassaniden," Numismatische Zeitschrift 9 (1877): 273–83. This procedure was also sanctioned by Herzfeld. The first reasonable listing and proposed identification of Sasanian mint-marks
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is F.D.J. Paruck’s “Mint-marks on Sasanian and Arab-Sasanian coins,” JNSI 6 (1944): 79–151. A. R. Bellinger may have been the first to suggest the existence of a mint at Veh-Ardashir in “A Note on the Sasanian Mint monograms,” Numismatic Review 3 (1946): 48, while J. T. Milik argued for a mint for Adiabene in “A propos d’un atelier monétaire d’Adiabène: Natounia,” Revue Numismatique 4 (1962): 51–58. A.D.H. Bivar included a study of Sasanian mint-marks in “A Sasanian Hoard from Hilla,” Numismatic Chronicle (1963), pp. 157–68. R. Göbl has discussed several such theoretical issues concerning the interpretation of Sasanian coins in “Der Sasanidische Miinzfund von Seleukia (Veh-Ardašer) 1967,” Mesopotamia 8–9 (1973–1974): 229–60. M. I. Mochiri’s Études de numismatique Iranienne sous les Sassanides (Teheran, 1972) speculates on the identification of several mint-marks. Substantial disagreement still exists over the identification of a significant number of mint-marks. For the time being it is probably best to follow Göbl’s suggestion (which was originally pointed out by Herzfeld) that the abbreviations on coins are most likely to correspond to the administrative jurisdictions which are written out fully in the Pahlavi script in the Middle Persian language on contemporary Sasanian administrative seals. Obviously the coins and administrative seals need to be used together.

However, there is sufficient agreement on the identification of enough mint-marks to justify drawing tentative conclusions about how far the coins found in hoards and at archeological sites had traveled. At the same time, we cannot assume that coins traveled in a straight line from where they were struck to where they were found or that they traveled no further. Sasanian coins are found together with Islamic coins in hoards and at sites; the maximum difference in dates among coins found together indicates that silver coins could circulate for a century or more. So excavation coins and hoards provide suggestions about the distance, direction, and length of circulation of coins. In addition to the hoard from Hilla published by Bivar and the coins for Veh-Ardashir published by Göbl, a hoard of coins struck in the twelfth year of Khusraw II (602) has been published by P. J. Seaby in “A ‘Year 12’ Hoard of Khusrau II, Sassanid King of Iran,” Seaby’s Coin and Medal Bulletin (1971, no. 11), pp. 397–400, and W. B. Warden, Jr. in “Supplementary Hoard of ‘Year 12’ Drachms of Xusro II, Sassanian King of Iran,” Seaby’s Coin and Medal Bulletin (1973, no. 2), pp. 50–52. Excavation coins were published by J. Walker in “Some Early Arab and Byzantine-Sassanian Coins from Susa,” in Archaeo-
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The Arab-Sasanian coins struck by the Muslims in the Sasanian style following the conquest provide unique contemporary evidence for the complexities of continuity and change. Serious scholarship appears to begin with J. Walker’s “Notes on Arab-Sasanian Coins,” Numismatic Chronicle (1934) and J. M. Unvala’s “Quelques monnaies arabes à légendes pehlevies et quelques autres monnaies bilingues pehlevia-arabes,” Numismatic Chronicle (1937), pp. 280–96. However, the classic presentation of such coins is J. Walker’s A Catalogue of the Arab-Sassanian Coins (London, 1941) for coins in the British Museum. A. Guillou’s Les monnayages pehlevi-arabes (Paris, 1953) does the same for such coins in the Cabinet des Médailles of the Bibliothèque Nationale, but it was reviewed unfavorably by G. Miles in Ars Orientalia 2 (1957): 591. More up-to-date general treatments are provided by N. Naqshabandi in ad-Dirham al-islâmi, al-Čuz’ al-awwal: ad-Dirham al-islâmî al-madrûb ‘alâ t-tirâz as-sâsânî (Baghdad, 1389/1969), and H. Gaube’s Arabosasanidische Numismatik (Brunswick, 1973).


The information which may be extracted from these coins has not yet been used as extensively or as effectively as it might be. The most important works based on the evidence from coins are G. Miles, “The Iconography of Umayyad Coinage,” *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959): 207–13, and P. Grierson, “The Monetary Reforms of ‘Abd al-Malik,” *JESHO* 3 (1960): 241–64. The Arabic inscriptions on epigraphic Islamic coins are an unmined source for political and religious ideology. Several hundred such slogans and the coins on which they are found are listed by M. al-Husayni in “Dirāsa ihšā’iyya li-sh-shi‘ārāt ‘alā-n-nuqūd fi-l-‘aṣr al-islāmi,” *al-Maskukat* 6 (1975): 102–41. The best introduction to this field and its issues and problems is the state-of-the-art article by M. Bates called “Islamic Numismatics,” *MESAB* 12, no. 2 (1978): 1–16; 12, no. 3 (1978): 2–18; 13, no. 1 (1979): 3–21; 13, no. 2 (1979): 1–9. It is impossible to understand the transition from Sasanian to Islamic rule in Iraq without reference to the coins. They not only bear their own burden of information but they are indispensable for dating the contexts in which they are found.

**Archaeology and Monuments**

Physical evidence of past material culture abounds in Iraq but the hundreds of sites datable to Late Antiquity and the Islamic period have barely been touched. Since the remains from these periods lie on or near the surface, there is a great deal that could be done with a minimum of effort compared to earlier periods. That which has been done has contributed to our knowledge of architecture, art, domestic life, and material culture. Pottery, glass, and jewelry contain clues about technology, manufacturing, and changing styles that are important for economic and social history. Animal and vegetable remains tell us about diet and rural products; human remains tell us about burial customs and diseases. Above all, isolated objects out of context do not reveal as much as the juxtaposition of objects at a particular site.

Why do these materials remain relatively unexploited compared to what has been done for ancient Iraq? The answer lies partly in priorities, in the prestige accorded to “spectacular” finds, to objects with intrinsic artistic merit, to great antiquity, and to larger, denser urban sites. Formerly post-antique materials nearer the surface were merely removed, sometimes with bulldozers, as an undesirable “overburden’
in order to get to more valuable, older levels below. When later materials were collected, they were the last to be studied or published. Much that has been done remains unpublished or has been published very slowly and in obscure places. In some places the more recent levels are so close to the surface that they have eroded away. Recently priorities have been determined by development projects which threaten sites, making "salvage" archaeology necessary.

What has been done so far is extremely valuable. But since these excavations represent such a small fraction of what remains in the ground, conclusions based on them can only be tentative. The excavations at Hira were reported by D. Talbot Rice with a map in "Hira," JRAS 19 (1932): 254–68, with plans and photographs in "The Oxford Excavations at Hira, 1931," Antiquity 6 (1932): 276–91, together with G. Reitlinger in "Oxford Excavations at Hira," JRAS 2 (1932): 245–69, and in "The Oxford Excavations at Hira," Ars Islamica 1 (1934): 51–73. Two fifth-century Sasanian palaces were published by S. Langdon and D. B. Harden in "Excavations at Kish and Barguthiat 1933," Iraq, 1 (1934): 113–36. D. and J. Oates, "Nimrud 1957: The Hellenistic settlement," Iraq 20 (1958): 114–57, is important here mainly for what the authors have to say about the destruction of surface materials.

The vicinity of the Sasanian imperial capital at Mada'in has received relatively greater attention than other sites. The first real archaeology on the Sasanian remains was reported by O. Reuther in "The German Excavations at Ctesiphon," Antiquity 3 (1929): 434–51; by E. Kühnel and F. Wachsmuth in Die Ausgrabungen der zweiten Ktesiphon-Expedition (Winter 1931/32) (Berlin, 1933); by J. Upton in "The Expedition to Ctesiphon 1931–32," The Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art 27 (1932): 188–97; and by J. Schmidt in "L'Expedition de Ctesiphon 1931–32," Syria 15 (1934): 1–23. Since Tell Umar had already been identified as the site of the Seleucid and Parthian city of Seleucia, the round walled city was identified as Ctesiphon. Ş. Shakrî discussed some of the Sasanian remains east of the Tigris around the Iwān Kīrā in "A Sassanian Canal at al-Madain (Sāqiyya sāsāniyya fil-Madā'in)," Sumer 11 (1955): 209–11. More thorough excavations have been undertaken by an Italian team beginning in the fall of 1964. Early results were published by G. Gullini in "First Report of the Results of the First Excavation Campaign at Seleucia and Ctesiphon (1st October - 17th December 1964)," Sumer 20 (1964): 63–65, and in his "First Preliminary Report of Excavations at Seleucia and Cte-


Archaeology also provides information about site occupation, which has implications for demographic and ecological changes. “Tell Abū Sarīfa, a Sassanian-Islamic Ceramic Sequence from South Central Iraq,” *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970): 87–119, by R. Adams records the results of
the only excavation of a village site spanning the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods. It was done in order to establish a diagnostic ceramic sequence to date sherds collected from the surface over a larger region. One of the main contributions by Adams has been to develop techniques of inference from surface materials for regional surveys. His survey of the Diyala plains was published in *Land Behind Baghdad* (Chicago, 1965); surveys of lower central Iraq were published by Adams and H. Nissen in *The Uruk Countryside: The Natural Setting of Urban Societies* (Chicago and London, 1972), and by Adams in *Heartland of Cities: Surveys of Ancient Settlement and Land Use on the Central Floodplain of the Euphrates* (Chicago and London, 1981). See also M. Gibson, *The City and Area of Kish* (Miami, 1972), and H. Nissen, "Südbabylonien in parthischer und sasanidischer Zeit," *Baghdader Mitteilungen* 6 (1973): 79-86. To their credit, Adams and his colleagues included everything from the prehistoric to the Ottoman periods, so their results proved very useful for this study. In the process of developing diagnostic tools, they have defined the difference between "Sasanian" and "Islamic" pottery and differences in the size and weight of bricks and in the composition of mortar. However, there is no way of showing that these changes occurred abruptly at the moment of conquest, although they tend to be interpreted that way. In particular, where or when the distinctive blue or blue-green glazed "Islamic" pottery originated or how it spread is still unknown. One must remember that such pottery was arbitrarily dubbed "Islamic" by modern scholars and that this designation has influenced the dating of the sites where it was found. Worse still, in recent cases even reputable scholars have assumed that the presence of such pottery on a site meant that the former inhabitants had been Muslims.

The best presentation to date of typologies of "Sasanian" and "Islamic" pottery by shape, composition and decoration for lower central Iraq is that by Adams in "Tel Abî Sarîfa." The gradual shift that he indicates from very diverse, high-quality locally made wares to standardized, wheel-made, imported wares during this period has important implications for economic history. Earlier publications of pottery include D. Harden, in "Excavations at Kish and Barguthiat 1933," pp. 124–30, and R. Ettinghausen, "Parthian and Säsänian Pottery," in Pope’s *Survey*, II: 646–80. F. Day’s "Mesopotamian Pottery: Parthian, Sassanian, and Early Islamic" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Michigan, 1940) remains unpublished but is still cited. More recently R. Venco Ricciardi has published "Pottery from Choche," *Mesopotamia* 2 (1967): 93–


For examples of fifth-century Sasanian palaces in lower-central Iraq, see L. Watelin, “The Sasanian Buildings near Kish,” in Pope’s *Survey*, II: 584–92. The White Palace of the Sasanians at Mada’in was destroyed to build an ‘Abbāsī palace in the ninth century, but remains of the palaces built by Khusraw II at Dastagerd and Qasr-i Shirin survive, as does an impressive part of the Iwan Kisra at Mada’in. The mound called the Zindan which is surrounded by remains of half-round towers at Dastagerd is discussed in Sarre and Herzfeld, II: 76–93. For the palace at Qasr-i Shirin, see O. Reuther, “Sāsānian Archi-
tecture, A. History,” in Pope’s Survey II: 539–43. This section also has a plan of the Iwan Kisra (Ṭāq-i Kisrā), pp. 543–45. One should also compare the remains at Istakhr in D. Whitcomb, “The City of Istakhr and the Marvdasht Plain,” in Akten des VIII Internationalen Kongresses für Iranische Kunst & Archäologie, 7–10 Sept. 1976, pp. 363–70.

Although the rock carving at Taq-i Bustan, located approximately 10 km. northeast of Kirmanshah, is not in Iraq, it is the only such monument attributed to Khusraw II which, along with its differences from early Sasanian reliefs, makes it particularly important. The indispensable early discussions are those in E. Herzfeld’s Am Tor von Asien (Berlin, 1920), pp. 57–103; K. Erdmann’s “Das Datum des Taqi Bustan,” Ars Islamica 4 (1937): 79–97, where the monument is attributed to Peroz (Fīrūz, A.D. 457–83); and Herzfeld’s “Khosraw Parwiz und der Taqi Vastan,” Archeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran 9 (1933): 91–158, whose attribution of the monument to Khusraw II tends to hold the field. For recent discussions and interpretations of this monument, see P. Soucek, “Farhād and Ṭaq-i Būstān: The Growth of a Legend,” in Studies in Honor of R. Ettinghausen, ed. P. J. Chelkowski (New York, 1974), pp. 27–58, and M. C. Mackintosh, “Taqi Bustan and Byzantine Art: A Case for Early Byzantine Influence on the Reliefs of Taq-i Bustan, Iranica Antiqua 13 (1978): 149–77.


discussed in O. Grabar’s “The Architecture of Power: Palaces, Citadels and Fortifications,” in *Architecture of the Islamic World*, ed. C. Mitchell (London, 1978), pp. 48–79. Impressed by the number of fortified rural palaces from the early Islamic period, Grabar argues that urban citadels developed later. If so, the Kufan citadel is an important exception.

The field of art history has so far made the most extensive use of material remains. In addition to Pope’s Survey, one can consult K. Erdmann’s *Die Kunst Irans zur Zeit der Sasaniden* (Berlin, 1943) and R. Girshman’s *Persian Art: The Parthian and Sassanid Dynasties, 249 B.C.–A.D. 651*, tr. S. Gilbert and J. Emmons (New York, 1962). Specialized studies include J. Schmidt’s “Figürlich sasanidische Stuckdekorationen aus Ktesiphon,” *Ars Islamica* 4 (1937): 175–84; R. Venco Ricciardi’s “Note sull’arte tessile sasanide,” *Mesopotamia* 3–4 (1968–69): 385–415; and especially C. Bier’s comments on “Textiles” in P. Harper’s *Royal Hunter: Art of the Sassanian Empire* (New York, 1978), pp. 119–40. P. M. Costa, “The Mosaic from Tell Khwāris in the Iraq Museum,” *Iraq* 33 (1971): 119–24, concerning a late Sasanian or very early Islamic floor mosaic from the region of the lower Zab, should be compared with M. Taha’s “A Mural Painting from Kufa,” *Sumer* 27 (1971): 77–79, which reveals important continuities in decoration. Of all the vast literature on Islamic art, the most important for a study such as this are R. Ettinghausen’s *From Byzantium to Sassanian Iran and the Islamic World: Three Modes of Artistic Influences* (Leiden, 1972), and O. Grabar’s *The Formation of Islamic Art* (New Haven, 1973). Fortunately, in their concern for how objects were made, art historians have led the way in recent years in discovering the techniques of artisanal production.

Arabic Inscriptions and Documents

It is no secret that the Arabic language began to be written in the Kufic script in the sixth century. The earliest inscriptions appear to be those at Zebed (A.D. 512) and at Harran (A.D. 568). There are contemporary written sources in Arabic from the seventh and eighth centuries in the form of inscriptions on buildings, tombstones, coins, seals, and weights, and on papyri which contain doctrinal, chronological, administrative, paleographic, and onomastic information. N. Abbott pioneered the interpretation and use of these materials in *The Rise of the North-Arabic Script and Its Kur’ānic Development* (Chicago, 1939). For an early criticism of her position and counter-

Arabic papyri are indispensable documents for understanding the administration and social and economic life of early Islamic Egypt. They are proof in themselves of the use of written Arabic in early Islamic administration and provide examples of what administrative communications were like. They thus serve as a control on the letters and other documents from early Islamic Iraq that are quoted in later Arabic literature. The best survey and introduction to the papyri in English is still A. Grohmann’s *From the World of Arabic Papyri* (Cairo, 1952), which has an extensive guide to collections of papyri and a

Chronicles

For the most part, a sense of the succession of events in a temporal framework rests on a series of overlapping chronicles. Although the Sasanian royal annals do not survive in their original form, contemporary Byzantine chronicles serve as part of the basis for reconstructing Sasanian political history. Since they are primarily concerned with Byzantine matters, they tend to provide information about the Sasanians only when they were involved with them. Byzantine chroniclers tend to be better informed about the border region and western parts of the Sasanian empire than about eastern Iran; this makes the chronicles somewhat useful in studying Iraq. The *Rerum gestarum libri qui supersunt* of Ammianus Marcellinus covers the years from 284 until 376. Since he participated in Julian's invasion of Iraq, his eyewitness account is a primary source for conditions existing on the middle Euphrates in the fourth century. The Latin text was published with an English translation by J. Rolfe in the Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass., 1935–39). The Syriac chronicle of Joshua the Stylite to the end of A.D. 506 contains the only contemporary account of the Mazdakī movement as well as an account of the campaigns of Qubadh I in Byzantine Mesopotamia. It survives in the chronicle of Dionysius of Tell Mahre, from which it was extracted and published by W. Wright (Cambridge, 1882). Prokopios (Procopius) of Caesarea was also an eyewitness and participant in the campaigns of Belisarios against the Persians under Justinian. The first two books of his *History of the Wars* cover the Persian wars from 408 until 549 and are full of gossip

Two Syriac chronicles cover local events in northern Iraq in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries. The History of Karkâ dhê Bêth Sêlhôk is a local history of fifth-century Kirkuk composed in the sixth century and is mostly an account of Christian martyrs; but it contains important information about Sasanian administration. The text, edited from a seventh- or eighth-century manuscript, was published by G. Moesinger in *Monumenta syriaca ex Romanis codicibus collecta* (Innsbruck, 1878), II: 63–75; in P. Bedjan’s *Acta martyrum et sanctorum* (Leipzig, 1891), II: 507–37; and in the Chrestomathie of K. Brockelmann’s *Syrische Grammatik* (Berlin, 1899). It is translated in G. Hoffmann’s *Auszüge aus syrischen Akten persischer Märtyrer* (Leipzig, 1880), pp. 43–60. For a positive evaluation of this text, see J. M. Fiey, “Vers la rehabilitation de l’histoire de Karka d’îêt Sîłòh,” *AB* 82 (1964): 189–222. Mêshiha-Zêkha’s ecclesiastical history of Adiabene (the Chronicle of Arbela) was composed in about the middle of the sixth century. It has been published with a French translation by A. Mingana as “Histoire de l’église d’Adiabene sous les Parthes et les Sassanides,” *Sources syriaques*, I (Leipzig, 1908), and by F. Zorelli as “Chronica Ecclesiae Arbelensis,” *Orientalia Christiana* Num. 31, vol. 8, no. 4 (1927): 145–204. The argument over the reliability of this text concerns the flagrant anachronisms in its account of early Christianity during the Parthian period. There does not seem to be such a problem with its account of late Sasanian conditions and the anonymous continuation added in about 820 provides useful information about the monastery of Beth Qoqa in the seventh and eighth centuries (Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, I: 171–267).

A contemporary account of the reign of the Byzantine emperor Maurice (582–602) was provided by the Egyptian Theophylactus Simocatta. His Greek text in eight books is a good source of information for events in the western part of the Sasanian empire, especially the revolt of Bahrâm Chûbîn and the flight and restoration of Khusraw
II. It was published with a Latin translation as Historiarum, CSHB 12 (Bonn, 1834). The Greek text alone was published by C. De Boor as Historiae (Stuttgart, 1972). By far the best local contemporary source for Iraq in the early seventh century is a chronicle compiled or redacted by an anonymous Nestorian monk in the 670s (the so-called Khuzistan chronicle), which covers the reigns of Hurmizd IV and Khusrav II and the period of the Muslim conquest through the 640s. The text was published by I. Guidi as Chronica Minora I, CSCO, Scr. Syri, 1 (Louvain, 1955): 16–39, with a Latin translation in CSCO, Scr. Syri, 2 (Louvain, 1955): 13–32, from a modern copy of a fourteenth-century manuscript. T. Nöldeke’s annotated German translation, “Die von Guidi herausgegebene syrische Chronik,” Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse (Vienna, 1893), 128: 1–48, is utterly reliable. This period is also covered up to 661 by the history of Heraclius in Armenian, ascribed to Sebeos. It was edited and translated by F. Macler in Histoire d’Héraclius par l’évêque Sébès (Paris, 1904); but since its main concern is Armenian ecclesiastical matters, it is only peripheral to Iraq. A contemporary account of events in the late seventh century from northern Mesopotamia is given by the Nestorian monk and native of Beth Zabdeh, Yohannan bar Penkayē. His Ketab̲hā dhī Resh Mellē is a summary of world history until 686 and was composed in the 690s. The last two books (XIV and XV) cover the seventh century but are highly partisan and prone to exaggeration. This text was published in A. Mingana’s Sources syriaques (Leipzig, 1907), I: 1*–171*, with a French translation of book XV (pp. 172*–97*). An account of books XIII–XV is given by A. Scher in “Notice sur la vie et les oeuvres de Yohannan bar Penkaye,” JA, 10th ser., 10 (1907): 161–78. See also P. G. Sfair, “Il nome e l’epoca d’un antico scrittore siriaco,” Bessarione 31 (1915): 135–58, and “Degli scritti e della dottrina di Bar Pinkaie,” ibid., pp. 290–309. For a more recent discussion, see T. Jansma’s “Projet d’édition du Ketaba de Resh Mellé de Jean bar Penkayē,” L’Orient Syrien 8 (1963): 87–106.

Several later Syriac minor chronicles and fragments of chronicles cover the seventh and eighth centuries. They consist mostly of lists of events by year or of lists of rulers and are identified in Brock’s “Syriac Sources,” pp. 18–22. An anonymous chronicle of world history from creation until 774 was compiled in northern Mesopotamia in about 775 and has been falsely attributed to Dionysius of Tell Mahre. Part 4 which begins with the death of Justin II, was edited, with a French

Although portions of the *X'atày-nâmak* may survive as separate Middle Persian works, none of these deal with the late Sasanians. J. C. Tavadia identified such works in *Die Mittelpersische Sprache und Literatur der Zarathustrier* (Leipzig, 1956), pp. 135–38. There is also a Middle Persian summary of Sasanian history which probably came from the *X'atày-nâmak* in the *Bundahishn* (T. D. Anklesaria, Bombay, 1908), pp. 214–16.

The Sasanian royal annals were translated into Arabic by 'Abdullâh ibn al-Muqaffa' (723–59), a Persian bureaucrat employed in Muslim administration in Iraq. His translation survived at least until the eleventh century but is no longer extant. However, his surviving shorter works and fragments were collected and published in *Athâr Ibn al-Muqaffa'* (Beirut, 1966), and are worth consulting. Ibn al-Muqaffa' also translated *Kalîla wa-Dûmna*, ed. 'A. 'Azzâm (Beirut, 1973) from Middle Persian into Arabic. For his life and works see E. Ross, "'Ibn Muqaffa' and the Burzoe Legend," *JRAS* (1926); F. Gabrieli, "L’opera di Ibn al-Muqaffa'," RSO 13 (1931–32): 197–247; P. Kraus, "Zu Ibn al-Muqaffa'," RSO 14 (1934): 14–20; D. Sourdel, "La biographie d’Ibn al-Muqaffa' d’après les sources anciennes," *Arabica* 1 (1954): 307–23; J. Ghurayyib, 'Abdullâh ibn al-Muqaffa' (Beirut, n.d.); and 'A. Hamzah, *Ibn al-Muqaffa'* (Cairo, 1965). Whether derived from the Middle Persian text directly or from the translation by Ibn al-Muqaffa', material from the annals was used by those Arabic-writing universal chroniclers who covered the Sasanians and are noted below.
This material also appears in the anonymous *Nihāyat al-arab fī akhbār al-Furs wa-l-‘Arab* (Mss. Cambridge Qq 225, Cairo Taʾrikh 4505), which is summarized by E. G. Browne in “Some Account of the Arabic Work entitled ‘Nihāyatu’ l-irab [sic] fī akhbārīl-Furs wa-l-‘Arab,’ particularly of that part which treats of the Persian Empire,” *JRAS* (1900), 195–259. It is also the basis of the *Ghurār akhbār mulūk al-Furs wa siyāruhum* by Abū Manṣūr ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad ath-Thaʿālibī (350/961–429/1038), which was edited with a reliable French translation by H. Zotenberg as *Histoire des rois des Perses* (Paris, 1900).

The earliest surviving Arabic chronicle is the *Taʾrikh* of Khalīfa ibn Khayyāt (d. 240/854–55), which has been edited by A. al-ʿUmārī in two volumes (Najaf, 1386/1967) and covers Islamic history until 232/846–47. For an evaluation see J. Schacht, “The Kitāb al-Tāriḵ of Ḥalīfa b. Hayyāt,” *Arabica* 16 (1969): 79–81. The earliest surviving Arabic account of the Muslim conquests is the *Kitāb futūḥ al-buldān* of Aḥmad ibn Yahya ibn Ṣābir al-Baladhurī (d. 279/892), ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1866). The conquest of Iraq is treated on pages 110 to 113 and 241 to 289 of this text, which is translated into English by P. K. Hitti as *The Origins of the Islamic State* (New York, 1916; repr. Beirut, 1966). The *Kitāb al-akhir āt-ṭiwāl* (Leiden, 1912) of Abū Ḥanīfa Aḥmad ibn Daʿūd ad-Dinawarī (d. 281/894) and the *Taʾrikh* (Leiden, 1883) of Aḥmad ibn Abī Yaʿqūb ibn Wādīḥ al-Yaʿqūbī (d. 284/897) are the earliest surviving connected narrative “universal” histories in Arabic. Al-Yaʿqūbī covers Sasanian history less extensively than Dinawarī, although the obvious anachronisms in Dinawarī’s account of the Sasanians must be balanced against the fact that he is clearly well informed about the local history of his region of origin in western Iran.

The massive, three-part *Taʾrikh ar-rusul wa l-mulūk* of Abū Jaʿfar Muhammad ibn Jarir at-Ṭabarī (224/839–310/923) is probably the single most important Arabic source for early Islamic history. It was edited in fifteen volumes by M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1879) and by M. Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1960). Universal in form and scope, it includes a section on Sasanian history derived from the lost royal annals and was reliably translated into German by T. Nöldeke as *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden* (Leiden, 1879). Although this is a connected narrative, Ṭabarī’s account of Islamic history is not; it is composed of quotations and excerpts of varying lengths from works of earlier authors. In Ṭabarī one finds the accounts of early Islamic
history by eighth-century Arabic-writing authors such as the Kufan Abū Mīkhnāf Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā al-Azdī (d. 157/774) and Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Madāʾinī (135/752–235/850), who was born in Basra, lived in Madaʾin, and died in Baghdad. Such authors are also cited by Dīnawarī and Yaʿqūbī, but not nearly so extensively. The Persian summary, prepared by Abū Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāh Balʿamī in about 352/963 and translated into French by H. Zotenberg as *Chronique de Abou-Djafar-Moʿhammed-ben-Djarrīr-ben-Yezid Ta­barī, traduite sur la version persane d'Abou-'Ali Moʿhammed Belʾami* (Paris, 1938) in four volumes, is full of tenth-century anachronisms and is no substitute for Taʾbarī’s Arabic text.

The *Kitāb al-Futūḥ* (Ms. Topkapisaray, Ahmet III, no. 2956), composed in 819 by Aḥmad ibn ʿUthmān ibn Aʾtham al-Kūfī (d. 314/926), is not as authoritative as Baladhurī but should be consulted. There is a Persian translation by M. al-Mustawfī al-Harawī (Bombay, 1300/1882), but so far the only published Arabic edition consists of an inferior text with gaps filled in by the Persian translation (Haydarabad, 1975).

Arabic universal histories continued to cover the Sasanians along with Islamic history in the tenth century. The *Taʾrīkh sinī mulūk al-arḍ wa-l-anbiyyāʾ* (Beirut, 1961) of Ḥamza ibn al-Ḥasan al-Īṣfāḥānī (fl. 904–61) contains some unique details about the end of the Sasanian period, as well as descriptions of the physical appearance of Sasanian monarchs that appear to come from portraits. This text was also edited by J. Gottwaldt in two volumes as *Tawārīkh sinī mulūk al-arḍ wa-l-anbiyyāʾ* (Leipzig, 1844, 1848). The *Kitāb al-ʿUmwān*, written before 945 by the Christian Agapius of Manbij, took the Syriac tradition of universal history into Arabic. This text was published by S. J. Cheiko as *Agapius Episcopus Mabbugensis, Historia Universalis, CSCO, Scr. Arabici* 10 (Louvain, 1954), and with a French translation by A. A. Vasiliev in *PO*, V:4; VII:4; VIII:3 (Paris, 1909-12).

Among the major Arabic-writing historians, Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Masʿūdī, a native of Baghdād who died in Egypt in 345/956, is second only to Taʾbarī in importance. His *Kitāb murūj adh­dahab wa-maʿādin al-jawhar*, written in about 943, is a major universal chronicle. His section on the Sasanians has been used widely along with Taʾbarī in modern interpretations of Sasanian history. An English translation was published in three volumes by A. Sprenger as *El-Masʿūdī’s Historical Encyclopaedia, Entitled “Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems”* (*Murūj al-Dhahab*) (London, 1841). An edition
of this text with a French translation was published in nine volumes by C. Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille as *Les prairies d'or* (Paris, 1861–77). Unfortunately this edition was based on only five manuscripts in Paris and Leiden, and the French translation tends to be rather free and imaginative, sometimes ignoring entire phrases and clauses of the Arabic text. Consequently the use of this French translation by non-Arabists interested in the Sasanian period from Christenssen onward, has resulted in some strange interpretations of Sasanian history and in the emergence of pseudo-issues. Many more manuscripts of this text are now known; but when C. Pellat undertook to do a revised edition and translation in the 1960's he claimed that a quick survey convinced him that these manuscripts were not worth the effort for either the text or the translation so he collated only two additional manuscripts. Pellat's revised translation was published first in five volumes (Paris, 1965–74), but he did little more than "modernize" the French of the previous translation. All seven volumes of his revised text were published in Beirut by 1979, but he was concerned mainly with correcting the form of foreign names. Consequently Pellat's edition and translation represent little significant improvement, and there is still no real edition of this text based on all known manuscripts. In order to discourage the use of either of these editions or translations, Y. Dāghir's four-volume Beirut (1965–66) edition has been cited here.


The *Opus Chronologicum* of Elias of Nasibin (Elias bar Shīnāyā, 975–ca. 1049) is a bilingual, interlinear Arabic and Syriac text with events for each year and calendrical tables until 1018; it survives in an autograph manuscript dated 1019 (BM Add. 7197). The text was published by E. W. Brooks and J. B. Chabot in CSCO, *Scr. Syri*, 21, 22 (Louvain, 1954), with a Latin translation in CSCO, *Scr. Syri*, 23, 24 (Louvain, 1954). The chronological part contains important details concerning upper Iraq and Mesopotamia in the early Marwānī period; the Islamic section has been published with a German translation by
F. Baethgen as *Fragmente syrischer und arabischer Historiker* (Leipzig, 1884).

The anonymous chronicle of Si’irt is a tenth- or eleventh-century Arabic translation of a lost, earlier Syriac chronicle. There is no agreement among scholars on which one it is, but the second part covers the years from 484 until 650 and parallels the so-called Khuzistan chronicle very closely. The second part was published as “Histoire nestorienne” with a French translation by A. Scher in *PO*, VII:2 (1950) and XIII:4 (1919).

The main value of the chronicle of Michael the Syrian (1166–99) is that his account of the sixth through eighth centuries is based on otherwise lost earlier sources. This text was edited in four volumes with a French translation by J. B. Chabot as the *Chronique de Michel le Syrien* (Paris, 1899–1910; repr. Brussels, 1963).

The summary of political theory and Islamic history through the fall of Baghdad to the Mongols in 1258 by Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Ṭabāṭabā (or Ibn ʿTiqtqa, b. ca. 1262), called al-Kitāb al-fakhri fī l-ādab as-sulṭāniyya wa-d-duwal al-islāmiyya (Paris, 1895; Beirut, 1386/1966), is worth consulting only because it appears to contain some unique details about early Islamic history. There is an annotated French translation by E. Amar called *Histoire des dynasties musulmanes depuis la mort de Mahomet jusqu'à la chute du Khalifat 'abīsides de Baghdad* (Paris, 1910), and an English translation by C.E.J. Whitting called *al-Fakhri: On the Systems of Government and the Moslem Dynasties* (London, 1947).

Without question, the most important thirteenth-century Arabic universal history is the fourteen-volume *al-Kāmil fi-t-ta’rikh* (Leiden, 1866–71; Beirut, 1385/1965) by ‘Izz ad-Dīn ibn al-Athīr (1160–1233). The most important universal history in Syriac is the chronicle of Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286). The first part of it, called the *Chronicon syriacum*, covers secular history but relies heavily on the chronicle of Michael the Syrian. The best edition of this part is P. Bedjan’s *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon Syriacum* (Paris, 1890). There is an English translation by E.A.W. Budge called the *Chronography of Gregory Abū ’l Faraj . . . Known as Bar Hebraeus* (Oxford, 1932). The second part is an ecclesiastical history of both the Jacobite and Nestorian churches and is based on earlier sources. It was edited in two volumes with a Latin translation by J. B. Abbeloo and T. J. Lamy as *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon Ecclesiasticum* (Louvain, 1872, 1877). Both Ibn al-Athīr and Bar Hebraeus include information from earlier sources.
which were available to them but which no longer survive; this of course means that there is no way to verify such information, which is complicated in the case of Bar Hebraeus by his inclusion of material which is highly partisan or clearly legendary. These thirteenth-century chronicles thus represent the point of diminishing returns in the search for vestiges of earlier chronicles covering the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods.

Because Muslim armies based in Iraq conquered Iran in the seventh century, local histories in the New Persian language contain information bearing on conditions in Iraq. They are either later Persian translations of earlier Arabic compositions or made use of earlier materials referring to the seventh and eighth centuries which no longer survive. The Fārs Nāmeh of Ibn al-Balkhī was completed before 1116 and is edited by G. Le Strange and R. A. Nicholson (London, 1921). The Maḥāsin Isfahān (Teheran, 1949) of Muḥammad ibn Sa’d al-Ma-farrūkhī was written in Arabic in 421/1030 and survives in a Persian translation of 729/1321. The Tārīkh-i Qumm was originally written in Arabic by Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan Qummi in 378/988–89 and translated into Persian by Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Abd al-Malik Qummi in 804/1402–3. The surviving Persian translation was edited by S. Tehrānī (Teheran, 1313/1934). The contents are discussed in A.K.S. Lambton’s “An Account of the Tārīkh Qumm,” BSOAS 12 (1948): 587–96. The Tārīkh-i Nishābūr of Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥākim an-Nisābūrī (321/933–405/1014) survives in an epitome edited by B. Karīmī (Teheran, 1339/1960) and by R. Frye as The Histories of Nishapur (Cambridge, Mass., 1965). The Tārīkh-i Ṭabaristan, ed. ‘A. Iqbal (Teherān, 1942) of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Isfandiyār was compiled in about 613/1216 and was translated into English by E. G. Browne as An Abridged Translation of the History of Ṭabaristan (Leiden and London, 1905). The anonymous Tārīkh-i Sīstān, ed. M. S. Bihār (Teheran, 1314/1935) covers the period of conquest on pages 80 to 127 and is particularly useful. The Tārīkh-i Bukhārā, ed. Razavi (Teheran, 1938) of Abū Bakr Muḥammad Nar-shakī covers the conquest on pages 8 to 12 and 45 to 73 and is available in a French translation by C. Schefer, Description topographique et historique de Boukhara, avant et pendant la conquête par les Arabes par Mohammad Nerchaky, 943 (332 H.) (Paris, 1892; repr. 1975), and in an English translation by R. Frye, The History of Bukhārā (Cambridge, Mass., 1954). All of these local histories contain some information about Iranian captives and booty that were taken to Iraq
or Arabia and about Muslim emigration from Iraq to Iran in the early Islamic period.

Adab

A great deal of information about the past is preserved in works of Arabic literature which were intended to serve as references for bureaucrats and scholars. Letters, documents, and speeches are quoted in this literature as examples of style to be emulated by scribes; as sources of historical, genealogical, and biographical information for allusions and comparisons; and as guides to practical ethics and rules of conduct for standards of behavior.

Such information is organized and classified by topic in these works in an encyclopaedic fashion for ease of reference. The earliest is Adab al-kabir wa-l-adab as-saghir of Ibn al-Muqaffa (Beirut, 1956). The works of 'Amr ibn Bahr al-Jahiz (ca. 160/776–77–255/868–69) are dominated by stylistic expression, but his Kitab al-bayan wa-tabyin (Cairo, 1948–49, Beirut, 1388/1968) is worth consulting. A sampling of the range of subjects he covered is given in C. Pellat’s The Life and Works of Jahiz: Translations of Selected Texts, tr. D. M. Hawke (Berkeley, 1969), which includes selections from unpublished manuscripts along with the major works of Jahiz. His younger contemporary 'Abdullah ibn Muslim ibn Qutayba (828–889?) produced two such works: the ten-part Kitab 'uyun al-akhbâr, published in four volumes (Cairo, 1964) and a one-volume manual called the Kitab al-ma'ârif (Cairo, 1969). For modern introductions to his work and evaluations thereof, see I. Huseini, The Life and Works of Ibn Qutayba (Beirut, 1950), and G. Lecompte, Ibn Qutayba, l'homme, son oeuvre, ses idées (Damascus, 1965). The Kitab al-kamil (Leipzig, 1864–92) of Muhammad ibn Yazid al-Mubarrad (d. 898) is a useful historical encyclopedia, with topics arranged in a general chronological framework; on the other hand, the Kitab al-muhabbar (Haydarabad, 1943) of Muhammad ibn Habib (d. 860) organizes historical and genealogical information by categories of people with particular attributes in the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods. The first part of the Kitab akhbâr az-zaman has been attributed to al-Mas'udi. There is an edition by 'A. aš-Sawi (Cairo, 1357/1938), as well as a French translation by B. Carra de Vaux called L'abrégé des merveilles (Paris, 1898).

One of the major works of this type from the tenth century is the multivolume Kitab al-'iqd al-farid (Cairo, 1367–72/1948–53) of Abu Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abd Rabihi al-Andalusi (246/860–328/
940), who compiled his encyclopedia from eastern sources which were available in Spain. The reliability of his information is questionable, but he appears to have preserved much of what would otherwise have been lost. The same applies to the *Kitāb al-bad' wa-t-ta'rikh* of al-Muţahhar ibn Ţāhir al-Maqdisī (fl. ca. 355/966), which was edited with a French translation in six volumes by C. Huart (Paris, 1899–1919). The *Kitāb al-fihrist* of Abū l-Faraj Muḥammad ibn ʻIshāq ibn Muhammad ibn ʻIshāq an-Nadīm (d. 380/990–91) presents authors and their works organized by subject. It is an invaluable source for identifying some of the early works that have not survived, especially those by sectarian Muslims and by non-Muslims. The canonical edition is that by G. Flügel (Leipzig, 1871–72). A two-volume English translation by B. Dodge is called *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture* (New York, 1970).

Miscellaneous information can also be found in eleventh-century compilations such as the *Laţā'if al-ma‘ārif* of ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Muḥammad ath-Tha‘ālibī. This text was edited by I. al-Abyārī and H. K. aş-Şayrafi (Cairo, 1960) and it has been translated into English by C. E. Bosworth as *The Book of Curious and Entertaining Information* (Edinburgh, 1968).

Poetry and Poets

Arabic poetry is potentially a primary source for information on the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. The poems ascribed to poets who are said to have lived in these centuries purport to commemorate events, express feelings, and allude to current customs. However, because of the problems of transmission and interpretation and charges of false attribution, it is not wise to take poetry at face value. Nor is it wise to ignore it entirely, since the fragments of poetry embedded in the narrative historical tradition may, in fact, be authentic. For instance, the *Diwān* (Baghdad, 1965), or collected poems, of ʻAdī ibn Zayd al-ʻIbādī would be invaluable primary material if it could be verified that they were an authentic expression of a Christian Arab poet of late pre-Islamic Hira. If the poems are only a representation of what later poets and compilers circulated under his name, then we at least know what kind of poetry was thought to be attributable to him. We appear to be on surer ground with the poets of the Marwānī period whose expressions probably tell us what their audiences wanted to hear. The poems by ʻUbaydullāh ibn Qays ar-Ruqayyāt (d. ca. 85/704) in praise of Muş‘ab ibn az-Zubayr were edited by N. Rhodo-
kanakis as *Der Diwān des ‘Ubaid-Allāh Ibn Kais ar-Rukajjāt* (Vienna, 1902). The poems of the Christian Ghayath ibn Ghawth al-Akhṭāl (d. 92/710) in praise of contemporary rulers were edited by Houtsma as *Encomium Omayyadarum* (Leiden, 1878), and his *Diwān* was edited by A. Šāhānī et al. (Beirut, 1891). The *Diwān* (Beirut, 1960) of Jarīr ibn ‘Aṭiyya al-Khaṭafā (d. 114/732) and that of Ḥammām ibn Ghālib ibn Saʿṣaʿa al-Farazdaq (641–728) contain references to events and circumstances in Iraq which supplement the prose accounts and express a point of view. The text of al-Farazdaq’s *diwān* was published with a French translation by R. Boucher as *Divan de Férazdak* (Paris, 1870). J. Hell’s *Divan des Farazdaq* (Munich, 1900) is a facsimile of the Istanbul manuscript. ‘A. ʿaṣ-Ṣāwī’s *Sharḥ diwān al-Farazdaq* (Cairo, 1354/1936) is a useful aid. The scurrilous poetic competition between the latter two poets was published by A. Bevan as *The Nakāʿid of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq* (Leiden, 1905–12) and contains informative prose passages as well as variants of the poems in the *diwān*. The *Naqaʿid* alone were translated into English by A. Wormhoudt (Os-kaloosa, Iowa, 1974). F. Krenkow’s edition and translation of *The Poems of ʿUf al-Ghanawī and ʿaf-Tirimmāḥ ibn Ḥākim al-Ṭāʾyī* (London, 1927) is also worth consulting. There are many more, but the single most efficient introduction to them is through the *Kitāb al-aghānī* of Abū l-Farāj al-Iṣbahānī (al-Iṣfahānī, 284/897–360/967). The twenty-volume Bulāq (1285/168–69) edition of this text is the classic one, but there have been many more since then. This work contains biographical information about pre-Islamic and early Islamic poets, samples of their poetry and incidental historical references in anecdotal form, which means that such information should be weighed critically against everything else.

**Historiographical Problems**

There is a difference between being critical and being skeptical. The authenticity of the entire Arabic literary corpus, when it deals with matters concerning the first one and one-half centuries of Islamic history, has been undermined by the skepticism of Western scholars based on its internal contradictions, on the partisan biases of the transmitters, on the anachronous retrojections of later issues and legal theories back on to an earlier period, on the fictional and legendary qualities of its anecdotal elements, and on assumptions about the nature of oral composition and transmission. Such criticism has led to views that Islamic historical composition originated in commentaries on the Qur’ān or

Meanwhile, a countertrend of revisionist historiography opposing this tradition of hypercritical skepticism has emerged over the last three decades. This includes a more serious consideration of accounts concerning early Islamic history in Arabic literature, based partly on the internal evidence for the early existence and use of written texts. The arguments of N. Abbott in “Early Islamic Historiography,” in Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri, Historical Texts (Chicago, 1957), I: 5–31; of A. A. Duri in “Al-Zuhri: A Study on the Beginnings of History Writing in Islam,” BSOAS 19 (1957): 1–12, and “The Iraq School of History to the Ninth Century—A Sketch,” in Historians of the Middle East, ed. B. Lewis and P. Holt (London, 1962); of C. Cahen in “Considerations sur l’utilisation des ouvrages de droit musulman par l’historien,” in Atti del Terzio Congresso di Studi arabi ed islamici (Naples, 1967); of U. Sezgin in Abū MihnaF: Ein Beitrag zur Historiographie der umaiyadischen Zeit (Leiden, 1971), and others have sought to restore confidence in the usability of the Arabic literary sources, and have pushed back the beginnings of historical composition to the eighth or ninth decades of the first century of the Hijra. Noth is commonly and easily criticized for failing to recognize that stereotyped formulas and topoi can be used to describe separate but similar real events. But to be fair, he should be given credit for arguing that there is something fundamentally authentic behind these literary accounts and that those with an ad hoc character can be used to reconstruct the arrangements between Muslims and non-Muslims at the time of the conquest; see “Die literarische überlieferten Verträge der

The rehabilitation of these sources argues mainly for their authenticity. However, for two reasons even authentic material may not necessarily be reliable. In the first place, even genuine original accounts by eyewitnesses possess a subjective partisan quality and present a point of view often intended to justify or to condemn. In the second place, authentic early accounts have been transmitted selectively, sometimes in a way reflecting the biases of the transmitters, so the surviving accounts are not necessarily complete. In general, the problems of interpreting early Islamic history have less to do with the lack of authentic information than with its partisan nature.

Non-Arabic literature and non-Muslim literature in Arabic is useful for three reasons. Its major importance lies in the vantage point it provides: an outlook on events that reveals the reactions of the native populations and their internal problems. Second, such material alone makes it possible to go beyond matters affecting the Muslim, Arab ruling elite. Third, it contains additional information about political history and incidental references to social and economic conditions. J. B. Segal was too discouraging about the general usefulness of Syriac chronicles in “Syriac Chronicles As Source Material for the History of Islamic Peoples,” in Historians of the Middle East, ed. B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (London, 1964), pp. 246–58. The communal orientation of these materials, including Muslim Arabic literature, reflects a major contemporary trend in itself; but they all contain information useful for social, economic, and intellectual history, and must be consulted if we are to understand this period as a whole rather than only one of the ruling or subject communities within it. However, there is no use pretending that by appealing to Syriac, Greek, or Hebrew literature, one can escape the problems of Arabic literature. Non-Arabic literatures present the same problems of partisanship and anachronism, and whatever standards of criticism are applied to Arabic literature should be applied to the others as well.

But a sensitive and perceptive researcher can turn the subjective quality of all of these materials into an advantage. Multiple versions of an event can be used to identify attitudes, gauge feelings, and chart the development of issues in a way which would be impossible with truly objective sources. Arabic literature will yield to sophisticated
techniques such as *isnād* criticism in order to identify the time when and place where an account was probably circulated and to relate its content to contemporary issues, as has been shown by E. L. Petersen in *ʿAlī and Muʿawiyah in Early Arabic Tradition* (Copenhagen, 1964; Odense, 1974), and by M. Muranye in *Die Prophetengenossen in der frühislamische Geschichte* (Bonn, 1973). The very size of the literary corpus makes extensive collation possible so that biases in different accounts of the same event can be identified and the underlying facts on which they all agree can be discovered, as has been done by M. Hinds in “The Siffin Arbitration Agreement,” *JSS* 17 (1972): 93–129, and by W. Schmucker in *Untersuchungen zu einigen wichtigen bodenrechtlichen Konsequenzen der islamischen Eroberungsbewegung* (Bonn, 1972).

Such methods open up a huge body of literature which may be used for the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. It is possible to deal with all of the old questions more effectively; but, what is more important, new questions asked of even the standard Arabic literary sources will yield important answers about social and economic history and historical anthropology. The materials that have been discussed thus far, as well as the incantation bowls and geographical and biographical literature that will be discussed below, contain information about multiple topics. In the following chapter-by-chapter treatment of resources pertaining more specifically to particular subjects, it should not be necessary to repeat that “all of the above” can be applied to most of these subjects.

SUBJECTS

Administrative Theory and Practice


For Sasanian political ethics, one should see J. de Menasce’s “Le protecteur des pauvres dans l’Iran Sassanide,” Mélanges offerts à Henri Massé (Teheran, 1963), pp. 282–87, which relies on primary materials. Otherwise, traditional statements of practical ethics survive in Middle Persian andarz literature. Two such works were published by P. B. Sanjana in Ganjeshayagan Andarze Atrepat Maraspandan Madigane Chattrang and Andarze Khusroe Kavatan (Bombay, 1885). The Andarz-i Khûsrû i Kavâtân was also published by Casartelli in “Two Discourses of Chosroes the Immortal-Souled,” Babylonian and Oriental Record 1 (1887): 97–101. The andarz of Aturpat-i Mahraspandan was discussed by F. Müller in Beiträge zur Textkritik und Erklärung des Andarz i Aturpat i Mahraspandan (Vienna, 1897). The text of the Pand-Nâmak was published with a German translation by A. Freimann, Pand-Nâmak i Zaratušt. Der Pahlavitext mit Übersetzung, Kritischen und Erläuterungsnote (Vienna, 1906). Six such texts were published with English translations in J. Tarapore’s Pahlavi Andarz-Nâmak (Bombay, 1933). There is a survey of Middle Persian andarz literature in J. Tavadia’s Die Mittelpersische Sprache und Literatur der Zara-thustrier (Leipzig, 1956), pp. 103–11. Examples still in manuscript form are noted by M. Grignaschi in “Quelques spécimens de la littérature sassanide conservés dans les bibliothèques d’Istanbul,” JA (1966), pp. 1–142. See also the comments of J. Asmussen in “Einige Bemerkungen zur sasanidischen Handarz-Literature,” La Persia nel Medioevo, pp. 269–76.

Other vestiges of Sasanian political literature have survived. The Middle Persian text published with an English translation by J. Tavadia as “Sûr Saxvan, or Dinner Speech in Middle Persian,” JCOI 29 (1935): 1–99 contains a list of titles of major Sasanian officials. A lost Book of the Crown (Tâj nâmak) may be the basis of the anonymous Arabic
Kitab at-tāj fi akhlāq al-mulūk (Cairo, 1322/1914), falsely attributed to Jāḥiẓ, which describes the customs of Sasanian kings. A French translation of this text was published by C. Pellat as Le livre de la couronne (Paris, 1954). Concerning this text, one should now see G. Schoeler’s, “Verfasser und Titel des Ġāḥiẓ zugeschriebener sog. Kitāb at-Tāg,” ZDMG 130 (1980): 217–25.

Whether the Sasanian state was administered in a feudal or bureaucratic fashion has been something of a live issue. On the profeudal side are J. Wolski, “L’aristocratie parthe et les commencements du féodalism en Iran,” Iranica Antiqua 7 (1967): 134–44, and G. Wiedengren, Der Feudalismus im alten Iran (Köln and Opladen, 1969), who finds the origins of feudalism in pre-Islamic Iran in a combination of ancient Mesopotamian and Indo-Iranian traditions. The problem with “feudal” interpretations is that they fail to come to terms with centralizing administrative changes in the late Sasanian period. There is an attempt to deal with this in F. Altheim and R. Stiehls’ “Staats­haushalt der Sasaniden,” La Nouvelle Clio 5 (1953): 267–321, which was also published as a chapter in their Asiatischer Staat. M. Hossain’s “The Civil Administrative Set-up in Persia on the Eve of the Muslim Conquest,” The Dacca University Studies 8 (1956): 36–51, puts matters in bureaucratic terms but is only a compilation from the works of earlier modern scholars.

There is also a difference of opinion over whether the centralizing administrative changes of the late Sasanian period were inspired by contemporary Byzantine practices or were indigenous. Since the specific arguments concern taxation, such works will be noted in that section. But in order to make comparisons, it is a good idea to know what Byzantine administration was like in the sixth century. Both D. Claude’s “Die byzantinische Stadt im 6. Jahrhundert,” Byzantinisches Archiv 13 (1969): 107–61, and T. Carney’s Bureaucracy in Traditional Society (Lawrence, Kansas, 1971), which is about sixth-century Byzantium, are such works. It is also a good idea to know what the indigenous precedents may have been; this information can be gained in part from works such as J. Brinkman’s “Provincial Administration in Babylonia under the Second Dynasty of Isin,” JESHO 6 (1963): 233–43. A proper understanding of what the available Byzantine and Sasanian administrative precedents were by the seventh century can also serve as an antidote to such simplistic approaches as G. Wiet’s “L’empire néo-byzantin des Omeyyades et l’empire néo­sassanide des Abbassides,” Cahiers d’histoire mondiale 1 (1953–54): 577
63–71, whose point of departure was merely that the imperial capital of one dynasty lay in former Byzantine territory while that of the other lay in former Sasanian territory. His conclusions seem to have gone unchallenged ever since.

Islamic political theory was a mixture of Arab ideas of leadership and responsibility, Islamic doctrine, and Sasanian tradition combined in different proportions by different people. The earliest systematic expression of Islamic statecraft from the point of view of Ḥanafi law was probably the political section of the Kitāb as-siyar al-kabīr of the Iraqi scholar Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan ash-Shaybānī (132/750–189/804) who was born at Wasit and raised in Kufa. This work survives embedded in its commentary by the later Ḥanafi scholar Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Sahl as-Sarakhsi (d. 483/1090) called Sharḥ kitāb as-siyar al-kabīr li-sh-Shaybānī (Cairo, 171–72). Shaybānī’s work has been extracted and translated into English by M. Khadduri as the Islamic Law of Nations: Shaybānī’s Siyar (Baltimore, 1966). The first book (Kitāb as-sultān) of Ibn Qutayba’s ʿUyūn al-akhbār concerns political theory and administrative principles. So does the anonymous Kitāb al-imāma wa-s-siyāsa (Cairo, 1937, 1967), which is sometimes falsely ascribed to Ibn Qutayba. The first book of Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi’s ʿIqd al-farīd is also about politics and administration.

Unfortunately early modern scholarship comparing Sasanian and Islamic political institutions has tended to pass over these earlier works and to concentrate on two eleventh-century works. Al-Aḥkām as-sultāniyya wa-l-wilāyat ad-dīniyya (Cairo, 1966, 1971) by ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥabib al-Māwardi (974?–1058) is a summary and abstraction of four hundred years of Islamic political theory and administrative practice from a legal point of view. It also seems to have been part of the propaganda of the ʿAbbāsī Commander of the Faithful during the collapse of the Buwayhī principalities, for which Māwardī drew on historical precedents. There are two French translations of this work, one by L. Ostrorog, El-Akhām Es-Soulthāniyyā Traité de droit public musulman d’Abou ʿl-Hassan Alī ibn Mohammad ibn Ḥabīb El-Māwerdi (Paris, 1901, 1906) and the other by E. Fagnan, Les statuts gouvernementaux ou règles de droit public et administratif (Algiers, 1915). The ideas are available in Q. Khan’s al-Mawardi’s Theory of the State (Lahore, n.d.) and J. Mikhail’s “Mawardi, a Study in Islamic Political Thought” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard Univ., 1968). Māwardī has been used widely by orientalists seeking a touchstone and a single version for Islamic political theory and institutions. Much of
this literature, especially for comparative purposes, has been based on the French translations without consulting the Arabic text, so it presents the usual problems. More seriously, beginning with von Kremer, Māwardī's abstract legal constructs have been treated as having been in operation throughout the previous four centuries and have been used as “descriptions” of Islamic political institutions in the seventh and eighth centuries. Although Māwardī is not the best source for early Islamic statecraft, he does provide an important statement of political theory in the eleventh century and belongs in any discussion of the intellectual history of the eleventh century.

The same applies to the Siyāsat Nāmeh, which was composed in New Persian for the Saljūq Sulṭān Malikshāh by the Nizām al-Mulk (1018–1092) in 479/1086. This is an early and influential example of the Islamic genre of “mirrors for princes” and includes instructive anecdotes about Sasanian monarchs which should not be taken literally. The text is edited by J. Shi‘ar as Siyāsatnamah; siyar al-mulūk (Teheran, 1348/1969). It was also edited with a French translation by C. Schefer as Siassetnamah, traité de gouvernement, composé pour le Sultan Melik-Châh, par le vizir Nizam oul-Moulk (Paris, 1891–97). There is a German translation by F. von Schowingen, Siyasatnama, Gedanken und Geschichten (Freiburg, 1960), and an English translation by H. Darke, The Book of Government or Rules for Kings (London, 1960). As with Māwardī, these translations have been used widely, even for Sasanian institutions.

Modern studies of Islamic statecraft tend to concentrate on law, religious theory, and abstract structure. Less attention is given to historical change within that tradition, the development of these theories in the context of an imperial state, or the theories to which Muslim rulers themselves actually appealed. They also tend to present Islamic statecraft as a monolithic tradition and differ mainly over which “influences” were most important for that tradition. An important early statement defining Islamic statecraft in terms of precedents set by Muhammad is H. Sherwani’s Studies in Muslim Political Thought and Administration (Lahore, 1945), which is based on several of his earlier articles. A classic definition of Islamic statecraft in terms of law is E. Tyan’s Institutions du droit public musulman, vol. I, Le califat (Paris, 1954); vol. II, Sultanat et califat (Paris, 1957). E.I.J. Rosenthal emphasized the Hellenistic tradition of political theory as elaborated by Muslim philosophers in Political Thought in Medieval Islam (Cambridge, 1958). R. Walzer’s “Aspects of Islamic Political Thought,”
Orients 16 (1963): 40–60, is no more than that and is along the same lines as Rosenthal. W. Montgomery Watt’s Islamic Political Thought: The Basic Concepts (Edinburgh, 1968; repr. 1980) is a textbook survey which includes several traditions of political theory among Muslims but still tends to de-emphasize the pragmatic tradition. A. ’Uthmān’s an-Nizām as-siyāsī fi-l-Īlām (Beirut, 1388/1968) is organized around an abstract structure, while M. ‘Azīz Aḥmad’s The Nature of Islamic Political Theory (Karachi, 1975) derives general principles from early Islamic precedents, but with an obvious modern interest. The many articles of A.K.S. Lambton on Perso-Islamic political ideas are collected in her Theory and Practice in Medieval Persian Government (London, 1980). One should also consult her State and Government in Medieval Islam. An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory: The Jurists (Leiden, 1981).

A major subtheme in this literature has been an argument over the meaning of khalīfa when used for the early Islamic head of state. Considerable intellectual acrobatics have gone into arguing that the phrase khalīfah-Allāh when applied to the head of state meant something other than its literal meaning would suggest. This tendency seems to go back to antiabsolutist circles in early Islamic society whose interpretation appears to have triumphed in the area of theory. Modern discussions have taken place in the shadow of I. Goldziher’s “Du sens propre des expressions Ombre de Dieu, Khalife de Dieu pour désigner les chefs dans l’Islam,” RHR 35 (1897). For a different view, see A. Abel, “Le Khalife, présence sacrée,” SI 7 (1957): 29–45. R. Paret argues for the meaning of “successor” in his “Signification coranique de ḥalīfa et d’autres dérivés de la racine ḥalafa,” SI 31 (1970): 211–17. The first real use of the poetry from the Marwānī period to suggest what the rulers may have wanted to hear is published in W. Thomson’s “The Character of Early Islamic Sects” in the Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume (Budapest, 1948), I:89–116, followed by W. Montgomery Watt’s “God’s Caliph. Qur’anic interpretation and Umayyad Claims,” in Iran and Islam, Minorsky Memorial Volume, ed. C. E. Bosworth (Edinburgh, 1971), pp. 565–74. The thrust of the argument on either side tends to overshadow the importance of other terms used by early Muslim rulers for themselves, while the use of khalīfa for a subordinate official in provincial administration appears to have gone unnoticed.

Considerations of early Islamic provincial administration should start with the definitions in A. A. Duri’s short articles on “ʿĀmil,”
RESOURCES


Studies of the early Islamic diwān system have concentrated on its origins in terms of etymology and “influence.” They tend to confuse 'Umar’s institution that paid graduated stipends based on Islamic priority to noncombatants at Madina with the military diwān. M. Moosa’s “The Dīwān of 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb,” Studies in Islam 2 (1965): 67–78, is a fairly simple description. G. Puin argues for the influence of circumstances at Madina in Der Dīwān von 'Umar b. al-Hattāb (Bonn, 1970). Both assume that they are also talking about the Muslim military diwān. No one seems to have tried to pin down exactly what happened to 'Umar’s diwān at Madina after 'Umar, or how long it lasted. Nor have the operations of the early Muslim military diwān or the places such diwāns existed at first really been investigated. A. Tritton’s “Notes on the Muslim System of Pensions,” BSOAS 16 (1954): 170–72, is a small mass of undigested information. C. Cahen’s article on “'Aṭā’,” EI(2), I: 729–30, concerns mostly the stipends of the soldiers and the problems in the ‘Abbāsī period. For the general bureaucratic structure of the Muslim diwān system, see A. A. Duri et al., “Dīwān,” EI(2) II: 323–37.


The main document from the Sasanian bureaucratic tradition is a reference work for administrative secretaries called the *Frahang-i Pahlavik*, which lists Aramaic logograms with their Middle Persian equivalents. The form of this text which survives is probably from the early eighth century. This text was edited by H. Junker as *The Frahang i Pahlavik* (Heidelberg, 1912); he also published a German translation, *Das Frahang i Pahlavik in zeichengemässer Anordnung* (Leipzig, 1955). There is also a German translation with suggested Akkadian etymologies for the Aramaic terms published by E. Ebeling as “Das Aramäisch-Mittel-Persische Glossar Frahang-i-Pahlavik im Lichte der Assyriologischen Forschung,” *Mitteilungen der Altorientalischen Gesellschaft* 14 (1941): 1–114.

Arabic literature on bureaucrats and their duties is fairly extensive. The essay of al-Jāḥīz concerning the responsibilities of bureaucrats, “Dhamma al-kuttāb,” is translated into French by C. Pellat in “Une charge contre les secrétaires d’État, attribuée à Ǧāḥīz,” *Hespéris* 43 (1956): 29–50. Ibn Qutayba’s *Adab al-kātib* (Cairo, 1300/1882, 1963; Leiden, 1900; Tanta, 1328/1910) is a handbook of major importance. There is also a section on secretariatship and official correspondence in vol. IV, pp. 155ff. of Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi’s *al-Iqd al-farīd* (Cairo, 1367–68/1948–49). The *Kitāb al-wuzarāʾ wa-l-kuttāb* of Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdūs al-Jahshiyārī (d. 942) is a chronological account of officials who served as secretaries during the reign of each Muslim ruler and is very useful for the early period. It is published in facsimile by H. von
Mżík in Bibliothek arabischer Historiker und Geographen, I (Leipzig, 1926). The first part is translated into German by J. Latz as Das Buch der Wezire und Staatssekretäre von Ibn ʿAbdūs al-Ḡahšiyārī. Anfänge und Umayyenzeit (Bonn, 1958). The encyclopedia of sciences called Mafātīḥ al-ʿulūm (Leiden, 1895; Cairo, 1342/1923-24), completed in about 977 by Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn Ahmad al-Khwārizmī (d. 387/997) who was employed in the Sāmānī administration in Bukhara, contains a section on bureaucratic terminology that has been translated by C. E. Bosworth in “Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Khwārazmī on the Technical Terms of the Secretary’s Art,” JESHO 12 (1969): 113–64.

Some of the circumstances and issues concerning early Islamic bureaucratic administration are treated in M. Sprengling’s vitriolic article, “From Persian to Arabic,” AJSL 56 (1939): 175–224, 325–36. M. Muʿīd Khan’s “The Literary and Social Role of the Arab Amanuenses,” IC 26 (1952): 180–203, deals with the mechanics of the early correspondence department, the development of Arabic literary style, and technical terms; but the details are somewhat misleading and he tends to be apologetic. Lists of individuals who held various administrative posts can be found in D. Biddle’s, “The Development of the Bureaucracy of the Islamic Empire during the Late Umayyad and Early Abbasid Period” (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Texas, 1972). The best treatments to date of the emergence and nature of the position of wāẓīr are those of S. D. Goitein, “The Origin of the Vizierate and Its True Character,” IC 16 (1942): 255–62, 380–92, and “On the Origin of the Term vizier,” JAOS 81 (1961): 425–26, both of which are reprinted in his Studies in Islamic History and Institutions (Leiden, 1968), pp. 168–96, and of D. Sourdel in Le vizirat ʿabbāside de 749 à 936 (Damascus, 1959–60).

The best treatment of the Sasanian office of chamberlain based on Middle Persian inscriptions is M. Chaumont’s “Chiliarque et Curo-palate a la cour des Sassanides,” Iranica Antiqua 10 (1973): 139–65. For proper comparisons one must know how Sasanian and Byzantine chamberlains differed; this may be discovered in A. Boak and J. Dunlap’s Two Studies in Later Roman and Byzantine Administration (New York, 1924), which is about the Master of Offices and the Grand Chamberlain. For chamberlains at Islamic courts, see D. Sourdel, et al., “Ḥādjib,” EI(2), III: 45–49. The Kitāb al-Ḥujjāb of al-Jāḥīz lists persons who held this position and describes their duties; it is included in the Rasāʾīl al-Jāḥīz, ed. Harun (Cairo, 1964), II: 29–85. The later
The literature on enforcement, surveillance, and communication is rather scattered. A list of the heads of the *shuṭra* from the time of 'Uthmān to al-Mutawakkil can be found in Ibn Ḥabīb’s *Kitāb al-Muḥabbār*, pp. 373–77. W. Behrnauer’s early “Mémoire sur les institutions de police chez les arabs, les persans, et les turcs,” *JA*, 5th ser. 15 (1860): 461–508; 16 (1860): 114–190, 347–92; 17 (1861): 5–76, is still worth consulting. So is C. Fries, “Zur babylonischen Feuerpost,” *Klio* 4 (1904): 117–21. For city informers in sixth-century Edessa, see F. Burkitt’s *Euphemia and the Goth* (London, 1913). F. Dvornik’s *Origins of Intelligence Services: The Ancient Near East, Persia, Greece, Rome, Byzantium, the Arab Muslim Empires* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1974) is a survey, based mostly on secondary modern scholarship, which includes the Achaemenids but overlooks the Sasanians. For proper comparison and contrast one must consult specialist works on how early Byzantine agents were employed, such as A. Audollent’s “Les Veredarii émissaires imperiaux sous les Bas Empire,” *Mélanges d’archéologie et d’histoire* 9 (1889): 249–78, and O. Hirschfeld’s “Die agentes in rebus,” in *Akademie der Wissenschaften, Sitzungsberichte* (Berlin, 1893), pp. 421–41. A. Sprenger’s pioneering work on the Islamic *barīd* called *Die Post- und Reiserouten des Orients* (Leipzig, 1864) is still cited, but there is a more modern treatment by N. Sa’dāwī, *Nizām al-barīd fi-d-dawla al-Islāmiyya* (Cairo, 1953).

Taxes

Early Islamic taxation tends to attract perennial attention. A wealth of detailed information collected in easily accessible administrative legal handbooks promises to reveal the nature of the state’s fiscal system, the impact of the system on subject, non-Muslim populations, and land tenure relationships, and promises to provide quantifiable data for economic history. These promises have been only partly fulfilled because of the legal orientation of the materials themselves and because of the kinds of questions that have been asked of them. Even though most of this material pertains to Iraq, there are pitfalls in using it for direct comparisons with late Sasanian taxation.

One should gain some sort of perspective at the beginning con-
cerning possible relationships between the control of resources by rulers and the persons and property of their subjects. Possibilities native to Iraq are identified by J. Postgate in *Taxation and Conscription in the Assyrian Empire* (Rome, 1974), and by M. Ellis in *Agriculture and the State in Ancient Mesopotamia: An Introduction to the Problems of Land Tenure* (Philadelphia, 1976).

Most of the detailed information on late Sasanian taxation survives only in Arabic literature and raises questions of anachronism. There is a full discussion of Sasanian taxation in Altheim and Stiehl’s *Asiatischer Staat*, pp. 3–11, 38–46, and in their *Finanzgeschichte der Spätantike* (Frankfurt a. M., 1957). But Altheim’s obsession with feudalism appears to have affected M. Grignaschi’s judgment of the value of the Arabic material in “La riform tributaria di Ḥosrō I e il feudalesimo sassanide,” in *La Persia nel Medioevo*, pp. 87–147. He provides a good survey of most of the pertinent, schematic Arabic material on this subject but seems to argue that since the Sasanian system was “feudal” it must have been incompatible with the central fiscal bureaucracy which existed, according to Arabic literature, in the sixth and early seventh centuries.

Among those who take the existence of a bureaucracy seriously there is an argument over whether the Sasanian fiscal bureaucracy was inspired by Byzantine practices or developed independently. N. Piggulevskaya emphasized the relationship between the late Sasanian and contemporary Byzantine systems in “K vosposu o potatnoi reforme Chosroa Anushervana,” *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii* 1 (1937): 141–53 (French summary, p. 154), while I. Hahn argued for an independent development of the two systems in “Sassanidische und spätrömische Besteuerung,” *Acta Antiqua* 7 (1959): 149–60.

Muslim Arabic legal literature from the early ‘Abbāsī period cites numerous circumstances from earlier Islamic history as precedents on which to base fiscal theory. One of the earliest such treatises is the *Kitāb al-kharāj* of the Ḥanafi qādī and disciple of Abū Ḥanīfa, Abū Yūsuf Ya’qūb ibn Ibrāhīm (113/732–182/798). The third edition (Cairo, 1382/1962) was used for this study, but E. Fagnan’s French translation, *Livre de l’impôt foncier* (*Kitāb el-Kharadj*) (Paris, 1921) has been cited here for convenience after comparing it with the Arabic text. The *Kitāb al-amwāl* (Cairo, 1969) of Abū ‘Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (154/770–224/838) is an equally important early work. Yahyā ibn Ādam ibn Sulaymān’s *Kitāb al-Kharāj* is translated into English by A. Ben Shemesh as the first volume of his *Taxation in Islam* (Leiden,
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1958, 1967). The Kitāb al-kharāj of Qudāma ibn Jaʿfar was edited by M. J. de Goeje in BGA 6 (Leiden, 1889), and part seven is translated into English as the second volume of A. Ben Shemesh's Taxation in Islam (Leiden, 1965). In spite of their titles, these works are not confined to the land tax alone. For the various etymologies proposed for the word kharāj, see W. Henning's “Arabisch ḥarāǧ,” Orientalia 4 (1935): 291–293; T. Juynboll, “Kharāḏj,” EI(1), II: 902–3; and C. Cahen, “Kharāḏj,” EI(2), IV: 1030–34.


The retrojection of later legal constructs continues to be a problem. One issue concerns Shafiʿi's theory which justified attaching peasants to the land they worked, as if they were slaves included as part of an endowment. This served as the basis of M. Van Berchem's La propriété territoriale et l'impôt foncier sous les premiers califes: Étude sur l'impôt du kharāǧ (Geneva, 1886), which has enjoyed widespread influence and was revived by P. Forand in “The Status of the Land and the Inhabitants of the Sawād during the First Two Centuries of Islām,” JESHO 14 (1971): 25–37. However, circumstances which Van Berchem explained in terms of endowment (Ar. waqf) are explained by W. Schmucker in terms of permanent booty (Ar. fay') in Untersuchungen zu einigen wichtigen bodenrechtlichen Konsequenzen der Islamischen Eroberungsbewegung (Bonn, 1972). Schmucker also argues that the legal distinction for purposes of taxation between territory taken by force and that taken by treaty developed somewhat later than the earliest conquests. A. Noth seems to agree with this view in his “Zum Verhältnis von kalifaler Zentralgewalt und Provinzen in umayyadischer Zeit: Die ‘Ṣulḥ’-‘Anwa’-Traditionen für Ägypten und den Iraq,” WI 14 (1973): 150–62.

For a general study of Islamic taxation, one can start with the definitions provided by A. Grohmann, "'Ushr," EI(1), IV: 1050–52, and J. Schacht, “Zakāt,” EI(1), IV: 1202–5. N. Aghnides’s Moham-
medan Theories of Finance (New York, 1916) has the advantage of distinguishing between theory and practice and is still a good place to identify some of the most important sources. But M. Fateh’s “Taxation in Persia,” BSOAS 4 (1926–28): 723–43, which covers the Sasanians on pages 729–32 and early Islam through the Marwānīs on pages 732–37, puts matters into a simplistic interpretive framework and is well out of date now. F. Løkkegaard’s Islamic Taxation in the Classic Period with Special Reference to Circumstances in Iraq (Copenhagen, 1950), although poorly organized, is detailed, ranges widely, and has become a standard reference. Løkkegaard was one of the first to point out that much of the content of Islamic Arabic literature on early Islamic taxation pertained to Iraq and that it was unwise to generalize much further. H.A.R. Gibb’s “The Fiscal Rescript of ‘Umar II,” Ar­abica 2 (1955): 1–16 is also worth consulting. A. A. Duri identifies precedents set in the Hijaz in his “Notes on Taxation in Early Islam,” JESHO 17 (1974): 136–44.

The poll tax tends to have a literature of its own. D. Goodblatt’s “The Poll Tax in Sasanian Babylonia: The Talmudic Evidence,” JESHO 22 (1979): 233–95 is a closely argued text-critical study of all the Talmudic references. It has the incomparable advantage of being based on a primary source for the Sasanian period, but the references in the Babylonian Talmud belong to the third and fourth centuries. Unique outside corroboration from the very end of the Sasanian period is provided by a comment made by the Chinese Buddhist traveler Hsiian-tsang (Tripitaka) who passed through Afghanistan between 629 and 648. His account was translated into French by M. Julien as Mémoires sur les contrées occidentales (Paris, 1857) and into English by S. Beal, Buddhist Records of the Western World (London, 1884), and A. Yu, The Journey to the West (Chicago, 1977).

Discussions of the poll tax under Muslim rule are invariably linked to matters concerning the status of the non-Muslim subject population. A. S. Tritton’s The Caliphs and Their Non-Muslim Subjects (London, 1930) presents it this way but has been out of date for a long time. D. Dennett’s Conversion and the Poll Tax in Early Islam (Cambridge, Mass., 1950) marked an important turning point by effectively refuting the older view that there were early mass conversions to Islam by non-Arab native subjects so they could escape paying the poll tax.

The origin and meaning of the term jizya has also been the subject of debate. On the use of this term in the Qur’ań see pages 68 to 72 of F. Rosenthal’s contribution to the Conference on Jewish Relations:
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_The Joshua Starr Memorial Volume_ (New York, 1953) called “Some Minor Problems in the Qur‘ān,” pp. 67–84. M. Khan’s “Jizyah and Kharaj (A clarification of the meaning of the terms as they were used in the 1st century H.),” _JPHS_ 4 (1956): 27–35 contains a survey of the literature on this subject. Although Khan tends to follow Dennett, he argues that terms such as _jizya_ and _kharāj_ should be understood from the context in which they occur. C. Cahen dealt with Qur’ānic usage in his notes on “Coran IX-29: Ḥattā yu’tā l-ġizyata ‘an yadin wa hum ṣāğirūna,” _Arabica_ 9 (1962): 76–79, and more generally in his article on “Djizya,” _EI_(2), II: 559–62. M. M. Bravmann argued that the pre-Islamic Arabs used _jizya_ to mean ransom in “The Ancient Arab Background of the Qur’ānic Concept al-ġizyatu ‘an yadin,” in _The Spiritual Background of Early Islam_ (Leiden, 1972), pp. 199–212. A. Abel’s “La djizya: tribut ou rançon?” _SI_ 32 (1970): 5–19, is an important restatement of these issues, while Schmucker (Untersuchungen) relates _jizya_ to other terms signifying the degradation of non-Muslim subjects in the early eighth century. A. Noth’s article on “Die literarische überlieferten Verträge der Eroberungszeit als historische Quellen für die Behandlungen der unterworfenen Nicht-Muslimen durch ihre neuen muslimischen Oberherren,” in T. Nagel et al., _Studien zum Minderheitenproblem im Islam_ (Bonn, 1973) I: 282–314, is actually about references to _jizya_ and _kharāj_ in the Arabic accounts of the early conquests. Noth’s argument that from the point of view of the Muslim conquerors both terms signified tribute at first and only came to have distinct meanings later as the result of centralization and integration with Byzantine and Sasanian fiscal traditions has much to recommend it.

For definitions of weights and measures pertaining to Islamic taxation, J. Decourdemanche’s _Traité pratique des poids et mesures des peuples anciens et des Arabes_ (Paris, 1909) has been effectively superseded by W. Hinz, _Islamische Masse und Gewichte, Handbuch der Orientalistik_ (Leiden and Cologne, 1970), I: 1–66.

Administrative Geography

A knowledge of historical geography—the locations, distances, and directions of places in respect to one another—is indispensable in studying the past. Places sometimes change their names and place-names sometimes shift their locations over time. In Iraq settlements have come and gone, and the lower riverine and canal courses have shifted so that the modern topography in some places hardly resembles...
that of the past at all. Historical events must be understood in their proper physical setting lest one commit blunders in understanding the course of those events. Incidental geographical references in all sorts of historical sources should be noted and used to reconstruct the contemporary setting. For Iraq we are blessed, and cursed, with an extensive descriptive geographical literature. We are blessed because this literature includes demographic, social, and economic information not only for the major political centers, but for towns and villages throughout the countryside, making it a major kind of historical source. We are cursed because the very schematic presentation and circumstantial detail in this literature makes it too convenient to rely on it alone, and to forget that information accumulates in such a literary tradition so that what an author records may not belong to the period in which he wrote. Fortunately incidental references in a chronological setting provide a useful control.

The geographical literature itself encourages belief in a high degree of continuity, if not stability, in administrative geography. Although Arabic-writing geographers have considerable information about Sasanian administrative geography, it is best to start with what is left of a contemporary description of the structure of the late Sasanian empire. In its oldest surviving form, from around A.D. 600, this description is incorporated into the Armenian Geography once falsely ascribed to Moses of Chorene. The section listing the provinces in each of the four quarters of the late Sasanian empire was published with an extensive topographical and historical commentary by J. Marquardt as “Erânsahr nach der Geographie des Ps. Moses Xorenač’i,” AKGWG, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, 2nd ser., III, no. 2 (1899-1901): 1-358. It is included and translated into English in R. Hewsen’s four-volume “Introduction to the Study of Armenian Historical Geography” (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown Univ., 1967). A Middle-Persian text called the Shatrōiḥā-i-Ērān listing the capital cities of the provinces in the quarters of the Sasanian empire survives in its present form from about the middle of the eighth century. It was published by J. Jamasp Asana in Pahlavi Texts (Bombay, 1897), 1: 18-24, and by J. J. Modi in “The Cities of Irān as Described in the Old Pahlavi Treatise of Shatrōiḥā-i Airān,” in his Asiatic Papers, Bombay 1905, pp. 147-82. It was also published with an English translation and notes by J. Markwart as A Catalogue of the Provincial Capitals of Eränsahr (Rome, 1931), and the text is included in the reading selections of H. Nyberg’s A Manual of Pahlavi (Wiesbaden, 1964), I: 113-17.
Arabic geographical literature includes Iraq along with the rest of the world known to Muslims. The *Kitāb ṣūrat al-arḍ* (Leipzig, 1926; Baghdad, 1962, *BGA*, III) of Muhammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī (fl. ca. 825) appears to be the earliest such work. The *Kitāb al-buldān* (Leiden, 1891, *BGA*, VII) of Ahmad ibn Abī Ya‘qūb ibn Wādīḥ (called Ya‘qūbī, 224/839–310/925) was written in 276/889 and is a good source for ninth-century Iraq. There is a French translation by G. Wiet called *Les pays* (Cairo, 1937). The *Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik* (Leiden, 1889; *BGA*, VI) of Abū l-Qāsim ʿUbaydullāh ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Khurradādhbih (205/820 or 211/825–300/911), who was head of the barīd under al-Muʿtamid, is a “road book” which gives the distances from one place to the next along each route. It also lists the administrative districts in Iraq and the taxes assessed on them. The *Kitāb al-buldān* of Ibn al-Faqih al-Hamadānī, completed in about 903, was used by al-Muqaddasī and served as one of the main sources for Yāqūt. These later quotations are important because they include information which would not have survived otherwise since Ibn al-Faqih’s work is only preserved in an eleventh-century abridgement called the *Mukhtasar kitāb al-buldān* (Leiden, 1885; *BGA*, III).

By the tenth century, Arabic geography was becoming scientific, ethnographic, and historical. Aḥmad ibn ʿUmar ibn Rustah’s *al-Aʾlāq an-nafisa* (Leiden, 1891; *BGA*, VII) combines geographical and historical information going back to the Sasanians. There is a French translation by G. Wiet called *Les Atours précieux* (Cairo, 1955). The key to reconstructing the riverine and canal system of lower Iraq is in the hydrography section of the *Kitāb ʿajā’ib al-aqālīm as-sabʿa* (Leipzig, 1930), composed between 289/902 and 334/945 by Suhrāb ibn Sarābiyūn and based on al-Khwārizmī. The text of this section is also published with an English translation by G. Le Strange as “Description of Mesopotamia and Baghdad Written about A.D. 900 by Ibn Seraphion,” *JRAS* (1895), pp. 1–76, 255–315. Masʿūdī’s *Kitāb at-tanbih wa-l-ishrāf* (Leiden, 1894; *BGA*, VIII; Beirut, 1965) combines geography with history and ethnography. It was translated into French by B. Carra de Vaux as *Le livre de l’avertissement et de la revision* (Paris, 1896).

The *Kitāb masālik al-mamālik* (Leiden, 1927; *BGA*, I) of Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Iṣṭakhri, which was composed in about the mid-tenth century, is another road book. It was extensively plagiarized by Abū l-Qāsim ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥawqal an-Naṣībī for his *Kitāb ṣūrat al-arḍ* which was finished in about 378/988. The de Goeje edition
of this text (Leiden, 1873; BGA, II) has been superseded by J. Kramers’s edition (Leiden, 1938). It is available in a French translation by J. Kramers and G. Wiet, Configuration de la terre (Beirut, 1965). The Ahsan at-taqāṣīm fī ma‘rifat al-aqālīm (Leiden, 1885, 1906; BGA, III) of Shams ad-Dīn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abī Bakr al-Muqaddasī (ca. 946–1000) is contemporary but independent. It was translated into English by G. Ranking and R. Azoo (Calcutta, 1897–1901).

The Mu‘jam mā ista‘jam of Abū ‘Ubaydullāh ibn ‘Abd al-Azīz al-Bakrī al-Andalūsī (d. 487/1094) explains geographical and tribal references in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry and in hadīth. Although it mostly concerns the Arabian peninsula, it contains important information about Arabs in pre-Islamic Iraq and the geography of the Iraqi-Arabian border region. It was edited by F. Wüstenfeld as Das geographische Wörterbuch (Göttingen, 1876–77), and published in four volumes by Saqqā’ (Cairo, 1945–51).

The geographical dictionary of Yāqūt ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥamawī (575/1179–626/1229) called the Kitāb mu‘jam al-buldān (Leipzig, 1866) was completed in 1228. Its alphabetical organization makes it very convenient to use once the place-names are known. The longer entries include historical information going back to the Sasanians and the Muslim conquest. The Kitāb ‘ajā‘ib al-makhlūqāt, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Kosmographie, I (Göttingen, 1849) of Zakariyyā’ ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd (ca. 600/1203–682/1283) is scientific cosmography. His Kitāb athār al-buldān, Kosmographie, II (Göttingen, 1848) is historical geography.

Reconstructions of the historical geography of Iraq in Sasanian and early Islamic times go back to A. Neubauer’s La géographie du Talmud (Paris, 1868), which covers Iraq on pages 320 to 368, and A. Berliner’s Beiträge zur Geographie und Ethnographie babyloniens im Talmud und Midrasch (Berlin, 1883). The classic survey based on Arabic geographical literature is The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate (Cambridge, 1890; repr. Barnes & Noble, 1966) of G. Le Strange. The second and third chapters (pp. 24–85) deal with Iraq. Although Le Strange’s maps are useful, they are overly schematic and need badly to be brought up to date. M. Streck’s two-volume Die alte Landschaft Babylonien nach den arabischen Geographen (Leiden, 1900–1901) and J. Obermeyer’s Die Landschaft Babylonien im Zeitalter des Talmuds und des Gaonats (Fränkfurt a.M., 1929) used Arabic geographical literature to identify and locate places in Sasanian Iraq. A bibliography of modern Arabic works on the historical geography of Iraq is provided by G. Awad’s
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Information on Baghdad in the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods may be found in the opening pages of the *Ta’rīkh Baghdād* (Cairo, 1931) of Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (1002–71). Early descriptions of the Mada‘in region are given by M. Streck in “Seleucia und Ktesiphon,” *Der Alte Orient* 16 (1917); in his article on “al-Mada‘in,” *EI*(1), III: 75–81; and in E. Meyer’s “Seleukia und Ktesiphon,” *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient Gesellschaft* 67 (April, 1929): 1–27. Although the actual site of Vologesias has never been found, A. Mariq argued for an identification with Sabat (Balash-Abad) in “Vologesias, l’emporium de Ctésiphon,” *Syria* 36 (1959): 264–76, which was also published in his *Classica et Orientalia* (1965), pp. 113–25. Most of what can be said about Mada‘in on the basis of literature is in the articles of S. El-‘Alī, “al-Mada‘in

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A. Musil’s *The Middle Euphrates* (New York, 1927) is a pioneering work which includes remarks on the geography of this part of Iraq in early Islamic times. Musil’s attempt to identify historical place names with modern sites is suggestive but subject to revision. For this region in the Sasanian period, see L. Dillemann, “Ammien Marcellin et les pays de l’Euphrate et du Tigre,” *Syria* 38 (1961): 87–158, which has a map. S. El-ʿAli exploited Arabic literature fairly thoroughly to describe the environs of Hira and Kufa in “Miṣṭaqat al-Ḥira,” *Jamʿat Baghdad Kuliyat al-Adab, Majallat* 5 (1962), 17–44, and “Miṣṭaqat al-Kūfa,” *Sumer* 21 (1965): 229–53.


Aramaeans

Arabic-writing geographers have a great deal to say about ethnography but have been unevenly exploited. When populations are not treated according to religious categories in modern scholarship, they
tend to be treated as nationalities. For instance, I. Lichtenstader's "From Particularism to Unity: Race, Nationality and Minorities in the Early Islamic Empire," IC 23 (1949): 251–80, suffers from retrojecting modern nationalist issues of race and minorities onto early Islamic history. A. Miquel's La géographie humaine du monde musulman jusqu'à milieu du 11e siècle: Géographie et géographie humaine dans la littérature arabe des origines à 1050 (Paris, 1967) covers a broader region than Iraq over a longer period of time.

Virtually no literature is devoted to the Aramaic-speaking population in Iraq as such, although this population is covered extensively in the literature on Jews, Christians, and Mandaeans. Otherwise there is scholarship on the languages themselves. T. Noldeke's, "Die Namen der aramäischen Nation und Sprache," ZDMG 25 (1871): 113–31, has served to define this subject for over a century. F. Nau's "L'Aramaéen chrétien (syriaque). Les traductions faits du grec en syriaque du VIIe siècle," RHR 99 (1929): 232–87, notes one of the uses to which Syriac was being put in the seventh century. J. M. Fiey's "Les communautés syriques en Iran des premiers siècles à 1552," Acta Iranica 3 (1974): 279–97, reprinted as Communautés syriques en Iran et Irak des origines à 1552 (London, 1979), is a brief survey which tends to concentrate on Syriac-speakers as an intrusive "western" element rather than as part of the native population. For the possibility that the Arabic orthography of place-names may reflect contemporary Aramaic pronunciation, see A. Martinet, "La palatalisation 'spontanée' de G en arabe," Bull. de la Soc. de Ling. 54 (1959): 90–102. For an argument against such influences on pronunciation, see W. Cowan, "Sound Change in Central Asian Arabic," Der Islam 43 (1967): 34–38.

Persians

Literature specifically on Iranians in Iraq is as sparse as that on Aramaeans. The chapter on Persians is based on the author's article on "The Effects of the Muslim Conquest on the Persian Population of Iraq," Iran 14 (1976): 41–59. The best treatment of the linguistic situation is that of G. Lazard, La langue des plus anciens monuments de la prose persane (Paris, 1963), and his "Pahlavi, Pârsi, Dari: Les langues de l'Iran d'après Ibn al-Muqaffa,'" in Iran and Islam, ed. C. E. Bosworth (Edinburgh, 1971), pp. 361–91. The standard reference for Iranian names is still F. Justi's Iranisches Namenbuch (Marburg, 1895), but it should be supplemented by reference to articles


Arabs: Natives

Compared with Aramaeans and Persians, there is a fairly extensive literature on Arabs in Iraq. The best place to start is M. Rodinson’s updated article, “A Critical Survey of Modern Studies on Muhammad,” in M. Swartz, tr. and ed., Studies on Islam (New York, 1981), which reviews the literature on pre-Islamic Arabia on pages 29 to 39. A convenient early Arabic survey is provided by the anonymous Ta’rikh al-‘Arab qabl al-Islām, ed. M. H. Āl Yāsīn (Baghdad, 1379/1959), ascribed to al-Asma’ī. The Kitāb al-ishtiqāq, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Göttingen, 1854) of Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan (837–934) is a compendium of information about Arab tribes. The first volume of S. El-‘Ali’s Muḥādārat fi ta’rikh al-‘Arab (Baghdad, 1959) covers the pre-Islamic Arabian states and bedouin life. ’U. Kaḥḥālah’s Mu’jam qabā’il al-‘Arab (Damascus, 1949; Beirut, 1968–75) is a handy alphabetical guide to ancient and modern Arab tribes but should be used critically. J. ’Alī’s eight-volume Ta’rikh al-‘Arab qabl al-Islām (Baghdad, 1950–60), republished in ten volumes as al-Mufassal fī ta’rikh al-‘Arab qabl al-Islām (Beirut, 1971), is a major reference work which compiles the information from Arabic literature and presents it topically but with almost no interpretation. F. Altheim and R. Stiehl’s Die Araber in der alten Welt (Berlin, 1964–69) is based on both classical and Arabic sources, but their emphases tend to be controversial. J. Trimingham’s Christianity among the Arabs in pre-Islamic
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"Times" (London, 1979) is a recent survey which takes account of political history and tribal migrations along with religious issues.


For the pre-Islamic Arab kingdoms themselves, one can consult the ansāb al-‘Arab section of Ibn Qutayba’s *Kitāb al-ma‘ārif*. His account of the kings of Hira was published on pages 178 to 203 of J. Eichhorn’s *Monumenta Antiquissimae Historiae Arabum* (Gotha, 1775). The standard account of the Banū Lakhm is still G. Rothstein’s *Die Dynastie der Lahmiden in al-Ḥīra* (Berlin, 1899), but additional information on social conditions in Hira can be found in J. Horovitz, “’Adi Ibn Zeyd—The Poet of Hira,” *ICA* 4 (1930): 31–69; Y. R. Ghanima, al-Ḥīra, al-madīna wa’l-mamlaka al-‘arabiyya (Baghdad, 1936); M. ‘Alī, “Tanqibāt fi-l-Ḥīra,” *Sumer* 2 (1946): 29–32; M. J. Kister, “Al-Ḥīra: Some Notes on Its Relations with Arabia,” *Arabica* 15


Arabs: Immigrants

Arabic biographical and genealogical literature is a rich and extensive source of information which remains virtually unmined for early Islamic social history. One type of work consists of collections of individual biographies arranged by generation or in roughly chronological order according to the date when the subject died. Two such works are particularly useful for early Islamic Iraq. One is the Kitāb at-Ṭabaqāt, ed. S. Zakkar (Damascus, 1966), ed. A. al-ʿUmari (Baghdad, 1967), of AbūʿAmr Khalīfa ibn al-Khayyār al-ʿUṣfūrī (d. 240/854), which contains biographies of Muslims who lived in early Basra and Kufa. The other is the Kitāb at-Ṭabaqāt (Leiden, 1904–40) of Muhammad ibn Saʿd (ca. 168/784–230/845), of which volume VI (1909) concerns Kufa and volume VII (1918) concerns Basra. Discussions of the origin and significance of this type of literature are available in O. Loth’s “Ursprung und Bedeutung der Tabaqāt, vornehmlich der des Ibn Saʿd,” ZDMG 23 (1869): 593–614, and I. Hafsi’s “Recherches sur le genre Ṭabaqāt dans la littérature arabe,” Arabica 24 (1977): 1–41, 150–86.

A second type of literature is organized according to a genealogical framework, but the content tends to be biographical and sometimes historical in nature. The earliest surviving such work seems to be the Jamharat an-nasab of the Kufan Hishām ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī (ca. 120/737–204/819 or 206/821), which has been published by W. Caskel as Ğamharat an-Nasab. Das genealogische Werk des Hišām ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī (Leiden, 1966). For an evaluation of the author
and his works, see H. Samarrâ‘î, “Hishâm ibn Mu‘hammad al-Kalbî,” Majalat Kuliyyat ash-sharî‘a (Baghdad, 1966), pp. 1–48. By far the most important work of this type, and a major source for early Islamic history, is the monumental Ansâb al-ashrâf of Aḥmad ibn Yaḥya al-Balâdhuri (d. 279/892). Those parts of it which have been published are based on the Asir Efendi manuscripts, nos. 597–598, in the Suleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Istanbul, although other manuscripts are now known to exist. The following volumes have been published to date: I, ed. M. Hamîdullah (Cairo, 1959); II, ed. M. B. al-Maḥmûdi (Beirut, 1394/1974); III, ed. ‘A. ‘A. Dûrî (Beirut, 1398/1978); IVa, ed. M. Schloessinger and M. Kister (Jerusalem, 1971); IVb, ed. M. Schloessinger (Jerusalem, 1938); V, ed. S. D. Goitein (Jerusalem, 1936); and XI, as Anonyme arabische Chronik, ed. W. Ahlwardt (Griefswald, 1883). An Italian translation of volume IVa concerning Mu‘âwiya by G. Levi Della Vida and O. Pinto is called Il Califfo Mu‘âwiya secondo il “Kitâb Ansâb al-Ashrâf” (Rome, 1938). The Jamhârat ansâb al-‘Arab (Cairo, 1971) of Abû Mu‘ammad ‘Alî ibn Aḥmad ibn Sa‘îd ibn 󰏁âzîm al-Andalûsî (384/994–456/1064) is a third work of this type worth consulting.

A third kind of biographical literature is represented as local history. For eighth-century Iraq one can consult Baghdâd fi ta‘rîkh al-khilāfa al-‘Abbâsiyya of Aḥmad ibn Abî Ṭâhir Ṭâyîr (819 or 820–893), which has been edited with a German translation by H. Keller as Das Kitâb Baghdâd (Leipzig, 1908); the Ta‘rîkh Wâsît (Baghdâd, 1967) of Aslam ibn Sahl ar-Razzâz al-Wâsîtî (Bahşhal); and the Ta‘rîkh al-Mauṣîl (Cairo, 1967) of Abû Zakariyyâ‘ Yazîd ibn Mu‘hammad ibn ìyâs ibn al-Qâsim al-Azdî (d. 334/945–46), the surviving part of which starts in 101/719–20 with the governor Yaḥyâ ibn Yaḥyâ al-Ghassânî.

The most important works among the later biographical literature are the Usd al-ghâba fi ma‘rifat aṣ-ṣâhâba (Cairo, 1964) of ‘Izz ad-Dîn ibn al-Athîr (1160–1233) and the Kitâb wafayât al-a‘yân wa anbâ‘ abnâ‘ az-zaman (Cairo, 1881; Beirut, 1968–72), which was completed in 672/1274 by Aḥmad ibn Mu‘hammad ibn Khallîkân (d. 681/1282). There is a four-volume English translation of the latter by M. de Slane called Ibn Khallikan’s Biographical Dictionary (Paris and London, 1843–71; repr. New York and London, 1961). These works are worth consulting mainly for details obtained by their authors from sources which have since been lost.

The best recent treatments of Arab settlement in early Islamic Iraq are those by F. Donner, “The Arab Tribes in the Muslim Conquest
of Iraq” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Univ., 1975), and J. Jūdah, al-‘Arab wa-l-ard fī-l-‘Irāq fī ṣadri-l-Islām (Amman, 1979). Studies of Arab settlement in Iraq following the Muslim conquest tend naturally to be focused on their major concentrations in the garrison cities they founded. However, many of the issues of urban topography, social organization, and migration were defined in three early articles by L. Massignon, one on al-Mada’in called “Salmān Pāk et les prémices spirituelles de l’Islam iranien,” Soc. études iraniennes, no. 7 (Paris, 1934); one on Kūfa called “Explication du plan de Kūfa (Irak),” in Mélanges Maspero 3 (1940): 337–61, and in his Opera Minora (Beirut, 1963), III: 35–60; and one on Basra called “Explication du plan de Baṣra (Irak),” in Westöstliche Abhandlungen: Rudolf Tschudi zum 70. Geburtstag, ed. F. Meier (Wiesbaden, 1954), pp. 154–74. Unfortunately all three articles are unreliable, diffuse, and imaginative. Massignon’s claims are unsupported by the passages he cites—which sometimes have nothing to do with the subject at hand or contain contrary information—more often than charity would allow. These articles should not be used without checking Massignon’s references.


Arabs: Assimilation and Social Change

One of the first to argue for mutual assimilation between Arab conquerors and the native population instead of the replacement of one population by the other was A. Poliak in “L’Arabisation de l’orient sémitique,” REI 12 (1938): 35–63. This issue is put in terms of the

Other Ethnic Groups

Since scholars and historians tend to overlook the ethnic diversity of late Sasanian and early Islamic Iraq, it is not surprising that very little literature is devoted to the smaller ethnic populations. For Kurds one can consult B. Nikitene’s “Les Kurds et le Christianisme,” RHR 85 (1922): 147–56; V. Minorsky, “Kurds,” EI(1), II: 1132–55; and pages 20 to 47 of W. Jwaideh’s “The Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development” (Ph.D. diss., Syracuse Univ., 1960) on early history and religion. T. Bois, “Bulletin raisonné d’études Kurdes,” Mashriq 58 (1964): 529–70, is a topical bibliography and survey of literature and issues which includes early history. W. Behn’s bibliography called The Kurds in Iran (London, 1977) identifies work on the Kurdish language, literature, and society. Although its emphasis is heavily modern, there are some works which cover the early history of Kurds. Some idea of Byzantine cultural influences in Sasanian Iran via commerce is provided by N. Pigulevskaja’s Vizantīā na putīakh v Indīā (Moscow, 1951), which is translated into German as Byzanz auf dem Wege nach Indien (Berlin, 1969), and by J. Duneau’s “Quelques aspects de la pénétration de l’hellénisme dans l’empire perse sassanide,” in Mélanges offerts à René Crozet (Poitiers, 1966). Concerning the Qadishayē, see T. Nöldeke’s “Zwei Völker Vorderasiens,” ZDMG 33 (1879): 157–65; for Indians and Indonesians, see G. Ferraud, “Sayābiga,” EI(1), IV: 208–9.

Magians

There is almost no theoretical literature on the sociology of ascriptive, communal social formations during Late Antiquity and in early
Islamic history. There are, however, separate bodies of literature on specific religious communities which often contain implicit if not explicit explanations of the formation, structure, and function of such communities without attempting much comparative analysis. One of the most useful and suggestive theoretical statements about ascriptive social groups is in the introduction (pp. 9–38) of F. Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference* (Bergen-Oslo, London, 1969, 1970). R. Bulliet identifies a set of features for religious communities specifically for Late Antiquity and as precedents for Islamic society in *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979). The new kind of religious leadership around which such communities coalesced is discussed by P. Brown in “The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 80–101, while the importance of ritual for establishing boundaries in a close, authoritarian, conformist community is treated in a theoretical way by M. Douglas in *Natural Symbols* (London, 1970).

Non-Muslim populations are almost always treated in terms of “status” compared to Muslims and in terms of their treatment by Muslim rulers. Two of the most useful studies from this point of view are S. D. Goitein’s “Minority Selfrule and Government Control in Islam,” *SI* 31 (1970): 101–116, and T. Nagel et al., *Studien zum Minderheiten-Problem im Islam* (Bonn, 1973).

Magians are almost always treated in terms of a fairly uniform set of religious beliefs and practices, partly because their literature has been widely used for comparative religion, which seems to need static models. The result has been to minimize historical change among them, and this has been used in applying the information from later Magian literature to the reconstruction of Sasanian conditions. L. C. Casartelli made fairly judicious use of this literature for a schematic presentation of Mazdaean doctrine in *La philosophie religieuse du Mazdaïsme sous les Sassanides* (Paris, 1884), which was translated into English by F. J. Jamasp Asa as *The Philosophy of the Mazdayasian Religion under the Sassanids* (Bombay, 1889). A. Christensen’s *Études sur le Zoroastrisme de la Perse antique* (Copenhagen, 1928) attempts to come to terms with some of these problems, but M. Molé dealt with them more effectively in *Culte mythe et cosmologie dans l’Iran ancien: Le problème zoroastrien et la tradition mazdéenne* (Paris, 1963). The best surveys of Magianism under the Sasanians are those by J. Duchesne-Guillemain in his *La religion de l’Iran ancien* (Paris, 1962); “The Re-

Since surviving Zoroastrian literature is dominated by the Mazdaean point of view, one must turn to the accounts by non-Zoroastrians for non-Mazdaean forms of Magianism during the period examined here. Although these accounts have the advantage of being contemporary, they have the disadvantage of being second-hand, and often of being hostile or polemic in nature. Such materials for the Sasanian period are identified and collected by C. Clemen in *Fontes historiae religionis persicae* (Bonn, 1920), and *Die griechische und lateinischen Nachrichten über persische Religion* (Giessen, 1920). E. Benveniste offers a synthesis in *The Persian Religion According to the Chief Greek Texts* (Paris, 1929). For similar material during the Islamic period, see Benveniste’s “Le témoignage de Théodore bar Kônay sur le Zoroastrisme,” *Le Monde Oriental* 20 (1932): 170–215, and H. S. Nyberg’s “Sassanid Mazdaism According to Moslem Sources,” *JCOI* 39 (1958): 1–63, which is a commentary on a passage by ath-Tha‘alibī.

In many ways H. W. Bailey’s *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth-Century Books: Ratanbai Kattrak Lectures* (Oxford, 1943; repr. 1971) represents a watershed in the text-criticism of early Zoroastrian literature in Middle Persian and is still the best starting point. J. C. Tavadia’s *Die mittelpersische Sprache und Literatur der Zarathustrer* (Leipzig, 1956) is a useful survey of the main texts, while J. de Menasce reviewed the contents of the major works and their place in intellectual history in “Zoroastrian Literature after the Muslim Conquest,” in *The Cambridge History of Iran* (Cambridge, 1975), IV: 543–65. Many of these texts are available in J. M. Jamaspasana’s *Pahlavi Texts* (Bombay, 1913; repr. Teheran, 1969) with English translations by E. W. West in *Sacred Books of the East*, ed. F. M. Müller, vols. 5, 18, 24, 37, 47 (Oxford, 1880–97); vols. 11, 12 (New York, 1892-1901). English translations of texts from the Sasanian and Islamic periods
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Avestan literature itself is the subject of extensive modern scholarship. Since most of this scholarship concerns Old Iranian philology and arguments over the nature of Zoroaster’s original message, there is no point in citing it here. There are, however, three important observations to be made concerning Avestan literature in the Sasanian period. First, the Sasanian Avesta was oral liturgical literature which had been composed over several centuries before the Sasanians had come to power. Second, no matter when it was composed, its content was available for reference through recitation and Middle Persian commentary during the Sasanian period. Third, not all of the Sasanian Avesta survived the fall of the Sasanians. A survey of those sections of the Avesta which survived in the ninth century can be found in Book VIII of the *Dēnkart*, while Book IX of the *Dēnkart* contains Middle Persian translations of lost Avestan passages that illustrated the doctrines of the Gāthas through myth.

There has been a major argument over when the Avesta was written down. F. Nau, in “Étude historique sur la transmission de l’Avesta et l’époque probable de sa dernière rédaction,” *RHR* 95 (1927): 149–99, argued against the existence of a written text during the Sasanian period on the basis of references to recitation of the Avesta in late Sasanian Syriac literature. He suggested that it was written down only at the time of the Muslim conquest to enable Magians to have a sacred “book.” But the recitation of a sacred text is not in itself incompatible with the existence of a written text. From Bailey to Boyce it is considered possible for a written Avesta to have existed by the middle of the sixth century. However, putting a text in writing does not itself guarantee that it is “fixed.”

Magian tradition credits Āturfarnbag-i Farrukhzātān, the leading mōbadh of Fars in the early ninth century, with collecting the dispersed Avestan texts. What survives of the Avesta with its Middle Persian commentary (*Zand*) was published by K. Geldner, *Avesta, the Sacred Books of the Parsis* (Stuttgart, 1896), and translated into English by J. Darmsteter, as *The Zend-Avesta* (*SBE, Oxford*), vols. 4 (1880), 23 (1883), 31 (1887); (New York, 1898) vol. 3. The Middle Persian translation and explanation of the *Yashts* was published by B. N. Dhabhar, *Zand-i- Khūrtak Avistāk* (Bombay, 1927) with an English translation, *Avesta* (Bombay, 1963). For the oldest parts of the Avesta composed by Zoroaster, see H. Humbach’s edition with a German
translation, Die Gathas des Zarathustra (Heidelberg, 1959); S. Insler's The Gathas of Zarathustra (Leiden, 1975); and I. Gershevitch's edition with an English translation, The Avestan Hymn to Mithra (Cambridge, 1959; repr. 1967). The latest part of the Avesta, called the Vidēvdāt, concerns rules and rituals for personal purity. The Middle Persian rendition of this text was published by D. Sanjana as The Zand i Javīt shēda dād or the Pahlavi Version of the Avesta Vendīdād (Bombay, 1895). Part of it is available with an English translation in D. Bishop's "Form and Content in the Videvdād: A Study of Change and Continuity in the Zoroastrian Tradition" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia Univ., 1974).

Virtually all surviving Middle Persian Magian texts appear to have undergone a process of editing and reediting after the Muslim conquest. In spite of this, there are at least two such texts which appear to have been composed under the Sasanians. One of them is the edifying account of visits to heaven and hell by the Just Virāf called the Ardā-Virāf Nāmak, which provokes the usual comparison with Dante. It was probably composed in the sixth century, but the form in which it survives seems to come from the ninth century. This Middle Persian text was edited with an English translation by M. Haug and E. W. West as The Book of Ardā Virāf (Bombay and London, 1872) and reedited with Gujarati and Persian verse translations by J. Jamasp Asa as Ardā Virāf Nāmeh (Bombay, 1902). It was also edited with a French translation by M. A. Barthélemy as Artā Virāf-Namak ou livre d’Ardā Virāf (Paris, 1887). For comparisons with Dante, see J. J. Modi, Dante Papers: Virāf, Adamnan, and Dante and other Papers (Bombay, 1914).

The other text from the Sasanian period is a doctrinal work on fate, time, Ohrmazd, and the problem of evil, the Dātastan i Mēnōk i Xrat, which seems to be of priestly origin but was designed for lay aristocrats. This text, too, was probably composed in the sixth century. It was edited with an English translation by E. W. West as The Book of Mainyō-i Khard (Stuttgart and London, 1871), and was also published in SBE 24 (Oxford, 1885): 1–113, and 12 (New York, 1901): 1–113. There are later editions of this text by D. Sanjana, Dīna i Mainu i Khrat, or the Religious Decisions of the Spirit of Wisdom (Bombay, 1895), and by T. D. Anklesaria, Dānāk-u Mainyō-i Khard (Bombay, 1913).

The compilation of Magian myth and cosmology called the Bundahishn was made sometime between the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods in its surviving form, although some of its contents
appear to be very old. It was edited with a German translation by F. Justi as Der Bundahish (Leipzig, 1868), while T. D. Anklesaria published a facsimile of manuscript number 2 in the library of Ervad Tahmuras as The Bündahishn (Bombay, 1908). There are English translations by E. W. West, in SBE 5 (Oxford, 1880): 1–151; 11 (New York, 1901): 1–151; and by B. T. Anklesaria, Zand-Ākāsīh, Iranian or Greater Bundahiśn (Bombay, 1956).

Magian literature composed in the early Islamic period which still survives is almost entirely Mazdaean and comes mostly from southern Iran. In general it is the sort of didactic, defensive, and polemic literature created by religious leaders to preserve the community. In addition to collecting the Avestan texts, Āturfarnbag-i Farrukhzātan composed an Advēn nāmak (Book IV of the Dēnkart) on Mazdaean cosmogony and doctrine which cites decrees by Sasanian rulers. His apologetic defense of Mazdaean doctrine in a disputation in the presence of the Commander of the Faithful al-Ma’mūn (813–33) was edited with a French translation by A. Barthélémy as Mātigān-i-gujastak Abālish (Paris, 1887), and with an English translation by H. F. Chachia as Gajastak Abālish (Bombay, 1936). There is also a modern Persian translation by Ș. Hedāyat (Teheran, 1318/1940). The epistles called The Pahlavi Rivāyāt of Aturfarnbag and Farnbag-srōs (Bombay, 1969) were edited with an English translation by B. T. Anklesaria.

Two works are ascribed to a descendant of Āturfarnbag called Manuščihr-i Gōşn-Yam, who was the leading mōbadh of Fars and Kirman in the second half of the ninth century. One of them consists of three letters he wrote opposing his brother Zātsprām’s relaxation of ritual requirements. This was edited by B. N. Dhabhar as Nāmakihā i Mānušchihār: The Epistles of Mānušchihār (Bombay, 1912), and translated into English by West, SBE 18 (Oxford, 1882): 277–366; 11 (New York, 1901): 279–336. He also composed a treatise in the form of answers to 92 questions concerning personal perfection, death and resurrection, ritual, relations with non-Magians, and other socio-legal issues that is called the Dātistān-i dēnīk. The first 40 questions were edited by T. D. Anklesaria (Bombay, 1911); questions 41 to 92 were edited by P. K. Anklesaria (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of London, 1958). The English translation was done by West, SBE 11 (New York, 1901): 3–276. Question 1 is also treated by M. F. Kanga in “Dātistān i Dēnīk: Pursišn I,” in Indo-Iranica. Mélanges présentés à George Morgenstierne (Wiesbaden, 1964). There is also a more “popular” anonymous compilation of ritual, cosmology, eschatology, ethics, and folklore
which has been seen as a Mazdaean socioeconomic compromise with the Mazdakī reformist challenge. This was edited by B. N. Dhabhar as *The Pahlavi Rivāyat Accompanying the Dādistān i Dīnīk* (Bombay, 1913), with an English translation by J. C. Tavadia in “A Pahlavi Text on Communism,” in *Dr. Modi Memorial Volume* (Bombay, 1930).

Zatspram produced his own account of Mazdaean cosmology, the life of Zarathustra, and eschatology which is said to have a Zurvanite tendency. This text was edited by B. T. Anklesaria as *Vichitakiha i Zatsparam* (Bombay, 1964), and translated into English and published posthumously by K. M. Jamasp-Asa. It was also translated into English by West, *SBE* 5 (Oxford, 1880): 153-87; 11 (New York, 1901): 155–87.

The most systematic treatment of Mazdaean doctrine and ethics is to be found in the *Dēnkart* that was compiled during the course of the ninth century from contemporary materials and from literature going back to the Sasanian period. The standard edition of this text is D. M. Madan’s *The Complete Text of the Pahlavi Dinkart* (Bombay, 1911). A facsimile of the manuscript at the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute in Bombay has been published by M. Dresden as *Dēnkart, A Pahlavi Text* (Wiesbaden, 1966). On this text, see also P. J. de Menasce, *Une encyclopédie mazdéenne: Le Dēnkart* (Paris, 1958). The first two books of the *Dēnkart* have not survived. According to de Menasce, Book III was compiled in the mid-tenth century by Āturpāt-i Ėmētān, a mōbadh in southern Iran, in the form of apologetic and polemical answers to questions. There is a French translation of Book III by de Menasce called *Le troisième livre du Dēnkart* (Paris, 1973). Books IV and V contain summaries and selections from earlier works. Book VI has been edited and translated into English by S. Shaked as *The Wisdom of the Sasanian Sages* (Boulder, Colo., 1979). Book VII concerns cosmology, while Books VIII and IX are about the Avesta.

The *Śkand-Gumānīk Vičār* of Martān-Farrukh-i Ohrmazd-dātān is a ninth- or tenth-century Mazdaean defense against all religious rivals. It is worth noting that the arguments of both Āturpāt in Book III of the *Dēnkart* and those of Martān-Farrukh against Jews, Christians, and Manichaeans could go back to the Sasanian period. This text was edited by H. J. Jamasp-Asana as *Shikand-Gūmānīk Viṭār* (Bombay, 1887), with an English translation by West, *SBE* 24 (Oxford, 1885): 115-251; 12 (New York, 1901): 117–251. There is also a French version by P. J. de Menasce called *Une apologétique mazdéenne du*
IXe siècle, škand-gumānīk vicār, la solution décisive des doutes (Fribourg, Switz., 1945).

The Rivayat of Ėmēt i Ashavahishtān was composed by a nephew of Manuščihr who was a mōbādḥ in southern Iran in the first half of the tenth century. It, too, is in the form of answers to questions concerning the problems faced by Mazdaeans under Muslim rule, especially apostasy. P. J. de Menasce discussed the significance of this text, cited editions, and provided a partial French translation in “La ‘rivayat’ d’Ēmēt i Ašavahištān,” RHR 162 (1962): 69–88. An English translation of part of this text has been published by K. M. Jamasp-Asa, “Ēmēt I Āšavahištān: 39–41,” in Kuruš Memorial Volume (Bombay, 1974), pp. 167–79. There is also a compilation of dos and don’ts for Magians from this period called Shāyast-nē-shāyast, which was published with an English translation by West, SBE 5 (Oxford, 1880): 237–406; 11 (New York, 1901): 239–406, and with an English translation by J. C. Tavadia as Šāyast-nē-šāyast: A Pahlavi Text on Religious Customs (Hamburg, 1930). F. Kotwal’s The Supplementary Texts to the šāyest nē-šāyest (Copenhagen, 1969) includes an English translation. Although this does not exhaust the list of surviving Mazdaean works, these ninth- and tenth-century compilations and compositions are the most likely to contain material from the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries.


A bibliography of the older literature on Sasanian law is available in A. Christensen’s “Introduction bibliographique à l’histoire du droit de l’Iran ancien,” *Archives d’histoire du droit oriental* 2 (1937): 243–
57, with a supplement by A. Pagliaro in RSO 24 (1949): 120–22. The main text for late Sasanian law is the digest called the Mātīkān ī Hazār Dātistān. Until recently the standard edition of this text was The Social Code of the Parsees in Sasanian Times, or the Mādīgān-i-hazār Dātistān, pt. I (Bombay, 1901), pt. II (Bombay, 1912) of T. D. Anklesaria. The most important scholarship on this text is still in the articles of C. Bartholomae, “Über ein sassanidischen Rechtsbuch,” SHAW 1 (1910), Abh. 11, and “Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Sassanidischen Rechts,” WZKM 27 (1913): 347–74. His series called “Zum sassanidischen Recht,” SHAW pts. I and II, 9 (1918); pt. III, 11 (1920); pt. IV, 13 (1922), pt. V (1923) contains the text of passages on selected subjects in Pahlavi script with Latin transcription, German translations, and notes. S. J. Bulsara’s The Law of the Ancient Persians as Found in the “Mātīkān Ī Hazār Dātastān” or “The Digest of a Thousand Points of Law” (Bombay, A.Y. 1305/A.D. 1937) has a Latin transcription of Anklesaria’s text with an English translation containing a fairly obvious apologetic. This has now been superseded by A. G. Perikhanian’s Sassanidskii Sydevnik, “Kniga Tisiachi Sydevnikh Reshenii” (Mātakdān Ī Hazār Dātastān) (Erevan, 1973), which has the Middle Persian text in Latin transcription with a Russian translation and glossary.

The issue of consanguinous marriage has generated a literature of its own. The modern Parsi apologetic goes back to D. Sanjana’s Next-of-Kin Marriages in Old Iran (London, 1888) and tends to argue that the references in Middle Persian texts should be understood in terms of first-cousin marriage as practiced by Zoroastrians in Islamic and modern times. Western orientalist scholarship has tended to argue for a literal interpretation based on the context of passages in Middle Persian literature that refer to the practice, starting with the articles by H. Hübschmann, “Über die persische Verwandtenheirath,” ZDMG 43 (1889): 308–12, with a note by E. Kuhn, p. 618; and E. W. West, “The Meaning of khvētū-das or khvētūdād,” SBE 11 (New York, 1901): 389–430. In La famille iranienne aux temps anté-islamiques (Paris, 1938), A.-A. Mazahéri argued that consanguineous marriage had been abandoned before the Muslim conquest. This issue was subsequently picked up by anthropologists such as J. S. Slotkin, “On a Possible Lack of Incest Regulations in Old Iran,” American Anthropologist 49 (1947): 612–17, based on orientalist literature, while W. H. Goodenough countered with arguments from the Parsi apologetic in “Comments on the Question of Incestuous Marriage in Old Iran,” American Anthropologist 51 (1949): 326–28. For Slotkin’s


The best source for the phenomenon of apostasy from Magianism and how Magians dealt with it is the extensive literature in Syriac and Greek on Christian martyrs under the Sasanians. The Syriac text of the lives of Persian martyrs under Shāpār II in the fourth century was published with a Latin translation by S. Assemanus (Assemanni) in *Acta sanctorum martyrum orientalium et occidentalium* (Rome, 1748), pp. 1–258. The standard edition of the Syriac texts of the lives of Christian martyrs and saints in the Sasanian period is P. Bedjan’s seven-volume *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum* (Leipzig and Paris, 1890–97), especially volumes I, II, and IV. There is a two-volume Arabic translation by A. Scher called *Sīrat shuhadhāʾ al-mashriq* (Mawsil, 1900–1907), and there are German translations by G. Hoffmann, *Auszüge aus syrischen Akten persischer Märtyrer* (Leipzig, 1880; repr. 1966) and O. Braun, *Ausgewählte Akten persischer Märtyrer* (Munich, 1915). For the Greek account of fourth-century martyrs, see H. Delehaye, “Les versions grecques des actes des martyrs persans sous Sapor II (grec. et latin),” *PO* 2 (1907): 401–560.

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25; and G. Wiesner’s *Untersuchungen zur syrischen Literaturgeschichte, I. Zur Märtyrerüberlieferung aus der Christenverfolg Schapurs II* (Göttingen, 1967).

There are also separate editions, translations, and studies of particular texts, such as the History of Karkhā dhē Beth Sēlōk noted above; J. Corluy’s “Historia Sancti Mar Pethion Martyris,” *AB* 7 (1888): 5–44; and P. Bedjan’s *S. Martyrii, Qui et Sahdona quae supersunt omnia* (Leipzig, 1902). For the female martyrs of the sixth century, see P. Peeters, “Une légende syriaque de S. Iazdozid,” *AB* 49 (1931): 5–21, and “Sainte Golindouch, Martyre Perse,” *AB* 63 (1944): 74–125, and P. Devos, “Sainte Sirin martyre sous Khosrau Ier Anosarvan,” *AB* 64 (1946): 87–131, which is a Greek translation of a Syriac text probably composed in Antioch between 593 and 602.

There are three important lives of martyrs from the early seventh century. The life of Mihrāmgushnasp/Giwarğis (d. 614) was composed by his contemporary Mar Babai the Great. The text was edited by P. Bedjan in *Histoire de Mar Jabalaha* (1895), pp. 416–571, and is summarized in Chabot’s *Synodicon Orientale*, pp. 625–34, and Hoffmann’s *Auszüge*, pp. 91–92. The life of İshośabran was composed in about 630 by İsho’yahbh of Adiabene (d. 658). This text was published by J. B. Chabot as “Histoire de Jésus-Sabran,” *Nouvelles archives des missions scientifiques et littéraires* 7 (Paris, 1897): 503–84. Chabot’s French translation on pages 485–502 is not entirely reliable and should not be used in place of the Syriac text. The Greek “Life and Policy of St. Anastasios the Martyr in Persia” (d. 628) was composed by George Pisides and published by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameos in *Analekta Hierosolymitikēs staukologias* 4 (Petropoli/St. Petersburg, 1897): 126–48, with corrections in vol. 5 (1898), pp. 391–92, and in *MPG* 92 (Paris, 1903). A. Pertusi’s “L’encomio di S. Anastasio martire persiano,” *AB* 76 (1958): 5–63, also has the Greek text on pages 32 to 63 with a discussion. There is no translation, but Pertusi gives a summary of the life of Anastasios in “Fonti Bizantine,” pp. 622–26.

There are also more legendary lives, such as J. B. Abbeloos, “Acta Mar Қardaghi,” *AB* 9 (1890): 5–105, and J. B. Chabot’s *La legende de Mar Bassus, martyr persan* (Paris, 1893), which are difficult to date or to use except as examples of pious fiction. Of course the lives of Christian martyrs and saints are also important sources for the Christian population, Sasanian administration, and social history.

The best survey of the condition of Magians under Muslim rule is
RESOURCES


Jews

The Jewish community in Iraq (Babylonia) is the subject of its own extensive literature, especially because it was one of the points of origin
RESOURCES


The main primary source of information about the Jews of Sasanian Iraq from the third to the fifth century is the Babylonian Talmud. The standard edition is by L. Goldschmidt (Leipzig, Berlin, and The Hague, 1906–1935) in nine volumes, but the editorial choices may favor particular interpretations and, according to Goodblatt, manuscript variants can be important. There are two English translations: M. Rodkinson, The Babylonian Talmud (Boston, 1918), and I. Epstein, Babylonian Talmud (London, 1935–48). Both were used for this study, but Rodkinson’s translation was usually cited for convenience. It is impossible to use the Talmud as an historical source without some idea of the approximate dates of the lives of the authorities who are cited therein, which can be gained from K. Kahan’s edition with a German translation of the Seder Tannaim we-Amoraim (Frankfurt a. M., 1935) which was probably composed in A.D. 885, and S. Schechter’s edition of the Abot de R. Nathan (Vienna, 1887), with English translations by J. Golden, The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan (New Haven, 1955), and by A. Saldarini with the same title (Leiden, 1975).


The most important source for the early Islamic period is the body of gaonic responses which begin in the late seventh century. Early editions and studies are available by Harkavy, Responsen der Geonim
RESOURCES


Two later synthetic accounts of the history of the Iraqi Jewish community in the Sasanian and early Islamic periods survive in Hebrew. One is the local *Iggeret* (Letter) of Sherira Gaon of Pumbaditha (968–98). This text is published in A. Neubauer’s *Medieval Jewish Chronicles* (Oxford, 1887–95), I: 1–46, but the best edition is B. Lewin’s *Iggeret R. Sherira Gaon* (Haifa, 1921), which gives the versions from both Spain and France. The other is in Abraham ibn Daud’s symbolic chronology composed in twelfth-century Spain called *Sefer ha-Qabbalah*. This has been edited with an English translation by G. Cohen as *The Book of Tradition (Sefer ha-Qabbalah)* (Philadelphia and London, 1967).

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For the gaonate, consult A. Eckstein and W. Bacher, “Gaon,” JE,
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I. Friedländer more or less disposed of the older “explanation” by Graetz that the Messianic movements which arose among Jews after the Muslim conquest were due to the deportation of anti-Talmudic Jews from Arabia to Syria and Iraq in “The Jews of Arabia and the Gaonate,” JQR, n.s. 1 (1910–11): 249–52, in which he argued that they were not anti-Talmudic and that they continued to live in Arabia. His alternative explanation, that sectarian forms of Judaism which emerged in the early Islamic period were shaped by Shi‘i Muslim “influences” in Iran, is presented in his “Jewish-Arabic Studies,” pt. 1, JQR, n.s. 1 (1910–11): 183–215; pt. 2, JQR, n.s. 2 (1911–12): 481–516, and is based on a list of similarities which are somewhat anachronous as far as the earliest Jewish Messianic movements are concerned.

The main source for these early movements and sects is still the Kitāb al-anwār wa-l-marāqib of Ya‘qūb al-Qirqisānī, which was edited in five volumes by L. Nemoy (New York, 1936–43). An English translation of the section pertaining to the movements in the seventh and eighth centuries has been published by Nemoy in “Al Qirqisani’s Account of the Jewish Sects,” HUCA 7 (1930): 317–97. Nemoy’s “Anan ben David: A Reappraisal of the Historical Data,” in Semitic Studies in Memory of Immanuel Loew (Budapest, 1947), pp. 239–49, is an extremely skeptical piece of text criticism. See also A. Harkavy’s “Anan Ben David,” JE, I: 553–56.

For an internalist explanation of the Karaite movement, see Z. Cahn’s Rise of the Karaite Sect: A New Light on the Halakah and Origin of the Karaites (New York, ca. 1937). Otherwise there have been two major issues regarding the emergence of the Karaite sect in the early Islamic period. R. Mahler argued for socioeconomic conflicts among Jews as the main cause of this movement in Karaimer, a yidische geuleh-bavegung in Mittalter (New York, 1947; Hebrew translation, Merhavya, 1949). Nemoy offers a critique of Mahler and a review of the issues in “Early Karaism (The Need for a New Approach),” JQR 40 (1949–50): 307–15. He also translated Karaite sources into English in Karaite Anthology (New Haven, 1952). More recently the “Sad-
ducee” and gnostic affinities of Karaism have been related to the ancient Qumran texts by N. Wieder, *The Judean Scrolls and Karaism* (London, 1962) and A. Paul, *Ecrits de Qumran et sects juives aux premiers siècles de l'Islam: Recherches sur l'origin du Qaraism* (Paris, 1969). But even if someone did discover one of these texts in the ninth century, it is difficult to see how that could have influenced those Karaites who stayed in Iraq and Iran. On related issues, see G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York, 1954), especially the chapter on “Merkabah Mysticism and Jewish Gnosticism,” pp. 40–79.


**Christians**

The largest single body of source material composed in sixth- and seventh-century Iraq is the Christian Syriac literature of the Nestorians and Jacobites (Monophysites). Modern scholarship on these materials is immense but deals almost entirely with issues of church history and religious life and thought, with very little attention given to how these materials could be used for comparative religion, social and economic history, or wider issues in intellectual history. The major Syriac chronicles and lives of Christian martyrs have already been cited. Published collections of texts begin with J. S. Assemanus (G. S. Assemani), *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana* (Rome, 1719–28), in three volumes with Latin translation. Volume 2 (Rome, 1721) contains Monophysite texts; volume 3, part I (Rome, 1725) and part II (Rome, 1728), contains Nestorian texts. There is a German translation in two volumes by A. Pfeiffer called *Joseph Simonius Assemanns orientalische Bibliothek; oder Nachrichten von syrischen Schriftstellern* (Erlangen, 1776–77). Texts are also collected in J.P.N. Land’s four-volume *Anec­dota Syriaca* (Leiden, 1862–75), and in R. Graffin, ed., *Patrologia Syriaca*, vol. I. (Paris, 1894); II (Paris, 1907); III (Paris, 1926). The verse catalogue of ‘Abhd-İsho’ (Ebedjesu), ca. 1300, surveys authors and many works which no longer survive, so it gives a better idea of what kind of works were being written. This text is in Assemani, *BO*, III: 1–362. Selections from Syriac texts are translated into English in W. G. Young’s *Handbook of Source Materials for Students of Church History* (Serampore, 1969).
The second part of the *Ecclesiastical History* of Barḥadbeshabbā ʿArbaia, who was head of the Nestorian school at Nasibin at the end of the sixth century, is an account of the “Nestorianization” of the church in the Sasanian empire in the fifth and sixth centuries until 569. It is published with a French translation by F. Nau in “Barḥadbešabbā ʿArbaia, Histoire ecclésiastique (2nd Part),” PO 9 (1913): 489–631. This period is also covered by the *Ecclesiastical History* of John of Ephesus, the Syriac text of which is published in Land’s *Anecdota*, II (Leiden, 1868) and as *Historiae Ecclesiasticae, Pars Tertia*, CSCO, *Scr. Syri*, 54; CSCO, *Scr. Syri*, 55. There is also a later chronicle of Nestorian patriarchs published with a Latin translation by G. L. Assemani, as *De catholici seu patriarchis Chaldaeorum et Nestorianorum, commentarius Historico-chronologicus* (Rome, 1775), which goes well into the Islamic period. The Arabic texts of Nestorian church history by Marī, ʿAmr, and Sliba called the *Liber Turris* are published by H. Gismondi as *Maris, Amri et Slibae, De Patriarchis nestorianorum commentaria* (Rome, 1896–99).


There is also an extensive body of biography dealing with the lives of church leaders, monks, and other saints. Much of it can be found in the volumes of the *Analecta Bollandiana* and in P. Peeters, *Bibliotheca hagiographica orientalis* (Brussels, 1910; repr. 1954). The sixth-century biographies in E. W. Brooks, “John of Ephesus, Lives


Some biographies are more legendary than others. One of the most important for this period is the Syriac life of ‘Abd al-Masīḥ which


The main primary source for the ecclesiastical structure of the Christian Church in Iraq in Sasanian and early Islamic times is the Synodicon Orientale (Paris, 1902), which contains lists of bishops who signed the church synods from the early fifth century until the late eighth century. The Syriac text of two of the synods of Timothy I was published with German translations by O. Braun in “Zwei Synoden des Katholikos Timotheos I,” OC 2 (1902): 283-311. This material was used in G. Wiessner’s “Zu den Subskriptionslisten der ältesten christ­ lichen Synoden in Iran,” in Festschrift für Wilhelm Eilers (Wiesbaden, 1967), pp. 288-98.

The hierarchic nature of church organization is treated by D. H. Marot in “Une example de centralisation ecclésiastique: L’ancienne église chaldéene,” Irénikon 28 (1955): 176-85. But by far the most extensive work on the history of the ecclesiastical structure, bishoprics, and monasteries in Iraq has been by J. M. Fiey in Mossoul chrétienne (Beirut, 1959), “Proto-Histoire chrétienne du Hakkari Turc,” L’Ori­ ent Syrien 9 (1964): 443-72, Assyrie chrétienne (Beirut, 1965-68) in three volumes, and Nisibe, métropole syriaque orientale et ses suffra­ gants des origins à nos jours, CSCO, Subsidia 54 (Louvain, 1977). R. Murray’s treatment of the imagery used for the church before the fifth-century schisms in Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition (London, 1975) mainly concerns a shared sym­ bolism of apostolic functions according to Ephrem and Aphrahat, but the imagery of shepherd and flock is treated on pages 187 to 191 and that of spiritual physician on pages 199 to 203. For the remains of


Since the doctrinal positions of the Nestorians came mostly from Theodore of Mopsuestia, they were also responsible for preserving his writings. What Theodore had to say may be found in his tract against the Macedonians on pages 633 to 677 of F. Nau's "Barḥadbešabbā 'Arbaía histoire ecclésiastique," PO 9 (1913); in his commentaries on the Nicene Creed and on the Faith of the Three Hundred and Eighteen published with English translations in the fifth volume of A. Mingana's Woodbrooke Studies (Cambridge, 1932); and in his commentary on the Psalms published by R. Devreese with a French translation as Le


The Nestorian statement of faith at the Sasanian court in 612 is presented and analyzed by E. Bratke in “Das sogenannte Religions Gespräch am Hof der Sasaniden,” Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur, n.s. 4/3 (1899): 1–305. Two Syriac versions are also published by S. Giamil in “Symbolum Nestorianum anni p. Ch. n. 612,” OC 1 (1901): 61–79, who was concerned to show how “orthodox” they were. But the most important formulation of Nestorian doctrine in the early seventh century is the Book of Union of the monk Babai the Great (ca. 550–628). This text is published with a Latin translation by A. Vaschalde as Babai Magni, Liber de Unione, CSCO, Scr. Syri, 34; CSCO, Scr. Syri, 35 (Louvain, 1953). An introduction to Babai’s ideas is provided by V. Grumel’s “Un théologien nestorien: Babai le Grand (VIe–VIIe s.),” Échos d’Orient 22 (1932): 153–81, 257–80; 23 (1924): 9–34, 162–78, 257–75, 395–400; and by the articles of P. Krüger, “Zum theologischen Menschenbild des Babai d. Gr.” OC 44 (1960): 46–74, “Das Problem des

The major doctrinal issue among Nestorians at the time of the conquest concerned the Monothelete controversy and the defection of Sahdona. The classic study on Sahdona is H. Goussen’s Martyrios-Sahdona’s Leben und Werke (Leipzig, 1897). The most important subsequent treatment is in the articles of A. de Halleux on “La christologie de Martyr Sahdona dans l’évolution du nestorianisme,” OCP 23 (1957): 5–32, and “Mar (ou Martyr) Sahdona, La vie mouvementée d’un ‘herétique’ de l’église nestorienne,” OCP 24 (1958): 93–128. L. Abramowski and A. E. Goodman have edited A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts (Cambridge, 1972) in two volumes with an English translation. This collection was made sometime between the seventh and thirteenth centuries, but they argue for the time of Timothy I (d. 823). Although the nature of Christ was an important issue between Nestorians and their rivals, it is important to remember that Nestorian doctrine was not confined to Christology.


The main primary source on the place of religious education in the formation of a Nestorian community is the sixth-century tract by Bar Ḥadbeshabbā ‘Arbayā on the reasons for founding schools. This has been edited with a French translation by A. Scher as “Barḥadbešabbā, Cause de la fondation des écoles,” PO 4 (1908): 317–404. The Nestorian school at Nasibin has received the most attention. Early studies include J. B. Chabot’s articles on “L’école de Nisibe, son histoire, ses
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The foundations of Nestorian canon law are collected with a French translation by J. B. Chabot in *Synodicon Orientale* (Paris, 1902), which includes the canons established by church synods from the early fifth to the late eighth century. Chabot also included several letters by church leaders. There is a German translation by O. Braun called *Das Buch der Synhodos* (Stuttgart and Vienna, 1900). The second major collection of Nestorian canons, rules, and legal correspondence is C. E. Sachau’s three-volume *Syrische Rechtsbücher* (Berlin, 1907–1914), with a German translation and extensive notes. This material is also discussed by Sachau in his article "Von der rechtlichen Verhältnissen der Christen im Sasanidenreich," *Mitteilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen, westasiatische Studien* 10 (1907): 69–95. O. Braun’s "Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der persischen Gotteslehre," *ZDMG* 58 (1903): 562–65, is a discussion of Mār Abhā’s (539–52) "Interpretation of the Laws Concerning Sexual Intercourse and Marriage" (text in Sachau, *Rechtsbücher*, III: 258–85). The legal correspondence of Henanishō from the end of the seventh century is in Sachau, II: 2–51; the canons of Simeon of Rev-Ardashir, metropolitan of Fars, dated to either the mid-seventh or late eighth century, are in Sachau, III: 203–53, and were published separately by A. Rücker as *Die canones des Simeon von Rewardašir* (Leipzig, 1908). The digest of Ishṓbokht, metropolitan of Fars (ca. 775–79), which is based on the Mātikān, is in Sachau, III: 1–201, and discussed by N. Pigulevskaya in "Die Sammlung der syrischen Rechtsurkunden des Ischobocht und des Mātikan," *Akten des XXIV Intern. Orientalisten Kongresses* (Wiesbaden, 1959), pp. 219–21. The canons of Timothy I (780–823) may be found in Chabot’s *Synodicon*, pp. 597–608; Sachau, *Rechtsbücher*, II: 57–117; and O. Braun, “Der Katholikos Timotheos I und seine Briefe,” *OC* 2 (1902): 283–311. See also G. Graf, “Das Rechts-werk des Nestorianers Gabriel, Bischofs von Basra, in arabischer Bearbeitung,” *OCP* 6 (1940): 517–22. Because this legal literature identifies many social issues, it is also an important source for social history. Although N. Edelby’s "L’autonomie legislative des Chrétiens en terre d’Islam,"
Archives d'histoire du droit oriental 5 (1950–51): 307–51, continues to be widely cited, it is now largely out of date.


By the late sixth century, Christian ascetics from Iraq were going to Egypt and bringing cenobitic monasticism back with them. The lives and sayings of Egyptian ascetics were so important to them that in the mid-seventh century the monk ‘Anān-Īshō’ at the monastery of Bēth ‘Ābhē in Margha compiled the accounts by Palladius and other Egyptians and translated them into Syriac. The entire seventh volume of P. Bedjan’s Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum (Leipzig, 1897) is occupied by this text. It was also edited with an English translation
by E. A. Wallis Budge as The Book of Paradise (London, 1904), and his English translation was published separately as The Paradise of the Holy Fathers (London, 1907). Selections have been translated into English by H. Waddell in The Desert Fathers (Ann Arbor, 1966). As important as this text is for early Egyptian asceticism, it is equally important for Christian asceticism in Iraq in the seventh and eighth centuries and later because of the ideas it contains and because it served as an important model for the monastic life and for writing about the lives of monks.

The development of the main themes of ascetic mysticism from the sixth to the eighth century may be followed in the lives and works of these monks. The Syriac text of the life of Abraham Qidunaya is edited by T. J. Lamy in “Acta Beati Abrahae Kidunaeae monachi,” AB 10 (1891): 5–49. Attention should also be paid to the Nestorian monk Gregory of Cyprus, by origin a Persian merchant who started and ended his monastic career at Mt. Izla in the sixth and seventh centuries. His sermons are edited with a Latin translation by I. Hausherr in Gregorius monachus Cypri de Theoria sancta (Rome, 1937). See also Hausherr’s “Aux origines de la mystique syrienne: Gregory de Chypre ou Jean de Lycopolis?,” OCP 4 (1938): 497–520. For Abraham of Nethpar who returned from Egypt to spend thirty years in solitude in Adiabene in the early seventh century, see the article of R. Tonneau, “Abraham de Nethpar,” RSO 32 (1957): 415–31. From the mid-seventh century the letters of Sahdona and what survives of his work on the monastic life were edited by P. Bedjan, S. Martyrii, qui et Sahdona, quae supersunt omnia (Paris, 1902); his Book of Perfection is published with a French translation by A. de Halleux as Oeuvres spirituelles, CSCO, Scr. Syri, 86, 90, 91, 110, 111 (Louvain, 1960–65); and his letters and maxims in CSCO, Scr. Syri, 112, 113 (Louvain, 1965).

The major figure in terms of production and influence in the late seventh century is Isaac of Nineveh. The main editions of his works are by J. B. Chabot, De Isaaci Ninivitae vita, scriptis, et doctrina (Paris, 1892) and P. Bedjan, Mar Isaacus Ninivita. De perfectione religiosa (Paris and Leipzig, 1909). A Greek text of sayings ascribed to Isaac was published by M. Besson in “Un recueil de sentences attribué à Isaac le Syrien,” OC 1 (1901): 46–60, 288–98. Isaac’s ideas are accessible in an English translation by A. J. Wensinck, Mystic Treatises by Isaac of Niniveh (Amsterdam, 1923), but the authenticity of the last part of this text is questionable. The “Treatise on Solitude and

Nestorians were not the only Christians in Iraq. By the sixth century, Monophysites predominated from Armenia to Ethiopia along the Byzantine cultural frontier. In Syria and Iraq, Monophysites were organized in the Jacobite Church, so Monophysites in Iraq need to be understood in this broader context. On this subject one can consult works as early as H. G. Kleyn’s Jacobus Baradaeus de stichter der syrische monophysietische Kerk (Leiden, 1882) and as recent as W.H.C. Frend’s The Rise of the Monophysite Movement (Cambridge, 1972). P. Kawerau’s Die jakobitische Kirche im Zeitalter der syrischen Renaissance, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1960) is a useful introduction, while W. Hage’s Die syrisch-jakobitische Kirche in frühislamischer Zeit nach orientalischer Quellen (Wiesbaden, 1966) has a survey of Syriac sources for this period.

Jacobites turned out to be a small minority among the Christians of Iraq, and the literature on Iraqi Jacobites is not nearly as extensive as that on Syrian Jacobites. Resistance to Nestorians in the east in the early sixth century is recorded in the letters of Simeon of Beth Arsham, edited by Assemani, BO, 1: 364–79; Bedjan, Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum, I: 372–97; and Land, Anecdota Syriaca, III: 235–42. The formation of a Jacobite community in Iraq in the late sixth and early seventh centuries is described in two contemporary biographies published with a French translation by F. Nau as “Histoires d’Aḥoud-


Pagans and Gnostics

There is hardly any literature on pagans in late Sasanian and early Islamic Iraq. This is partly because no one thought there were any and partly because traditions with pagan origins or import survived intertwined in other religious and intellectual traditions. There is of course an immense literature on religion in ancient Iraq which it is neither necessary nor appropriate to survey here since the main concern is with the conditions of paganism at the time of the Muslim conquest. Although the affinities between paganism at that time and the ancient indigenous religious traditions of Iraq are sometimes pointed out, there seems to have been very little interest in how these traditions survived and developed locally after the fall of the Chaldaean state or how they

There happens to be much more on the religion of pagan Arabs because of the background it provides for the rise of Islam in Arabia. There is also an early Arabic account of paganism by Hishām ibn al-Kalbī (d. 819 or 821) called the Kitāb al-aṣnām (Cairo, 1914; 2nd ed., 1924; repr. 1965) which has been translated into English by N. A. Faris as *The Book of Idols* (Princeton, 1952). One of the earliest studies of Arabian paganism is L. von Krehl's *Über die Religion der vorislamischen Araber* (Leipzig, 1863; repr. Amsterdam, 1972); one of the latest is T. Fahd's *Le panthéon de l'Arabie central à la veille de l'hégire* (Paris, 1968). For Arab paganism in Iraq, see F. Buhl, "al-‘Uzza," *El*(1), IV: 1069–70, and W. Ismail, "The Worship of Allat at Hatra," *Sumer* 32 (1976): 177–79.

Astrology not only originated in Iraq, it survived there. For ancient astrology, see F. Cumont’s *Le mysticisme astral dans l'antiquité* (Brussels, 1909) and R. Gledow, *The Origin of the Zodiac* (London, 1968). Cumont’s *Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans* (New York, 1912) deals with the spread and influence of Chaldaean ideas. The translation of the astrological work of Vettius Valens into Middle Persian is treated by C. A. Nallino in "Tracce di opere greche guinte agli Arabi per trafila pehlevica," in *A Volume of Oriental Studies Presented to Professor E. G. Browne* (Cambridge, 1922), pp. 345–63, which is also published in *Raccolta di scritti editi e inediti* 6 (Rome, 1948): 285–303. The astronomical work of the seventh-century Monophysite bishop and native of Nasibin, Severus Sebokht (d. 666/7) is

For ancient connections between astral fatalism, destiny, and the reactions they provoked, see D. Amand, Fatalisme et liberté dans l’antiquité grecque (Louvain, 1945) and F. Notscher, “Himmlische Bücher und Schicksals Glaube in Qumran,” Revue de Qumran 1 (1958–59): 405–11. The main studies of the belief in destiny among pre-Islamic Arabs are those by W. L. Schrameier, Über den Fatalismus der vorislamischen Araber (Bonn, 1881); W. Caskel, Das Schicksal in der altarabischer Poesie (Leipzig, 1926); and H. Ringgren, Studies in Arabian Fatalism (Uppsala, 1955).

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The main primary source on the decline of paganism in the sixth century and which survives in a sixth- or seventh-century manuscript was edited with a French translation by M. Martin as “Discours de Jacques de Saroug sur la chute des idoles,” *ZDMG* 29 (1875): 107–47. The consequences have been treated by J. Wellhausen in *Reste arabischen Heidentums* (Berlin, 1897) and by E. Westermarck in *Pagan Survivals in Mohammedan Civilization* (London, 1933; repr. Leiden, 1973). For possible survivals in popular local customs, see N. L. Corkill’s “Snake Specialists in Iraq,” *Iraq* 6 (1939): 45–52, which gives modern descriptions with some historical references.


Much of the information about gnostics and other dualists in Late Antiquity comes from hostile sources. For the gnostic Valentine see Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereticus*, MPG, VII, cols. 445, 493–96. From


The literature on Šābians generally lies outside the scope of this study, but one should at least consult D. Chwolson’s classic work on Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus (St. Petersburg, 1856; Amsterdam, 1965); J. Pederson’s “The Šābians,” in A Volume of Oriental Studies presented to Edward G. Browne, ed. T. W. Arnold and R. A. Nicholson (Cambridge, 1922), pp. 383–91; and J. Hjärpe’s Analyse critique des traditions arabes sur les Sabéens ħarraniens (Uppsala, 1972).

Mandaeans are far more important in the religious history of Iraq in this period. They have also been the subject of extensive scholarly literature. S. A. Pallis surveyed the state of this field in 1919 in Mandaean Studies (London and Copenhagen, 1919) and reviewed the earlier literature in his Essay on Mandaean Bibliography, 1560–1930 (London, 1933; repr. Amsterdam, 1974). The state of this field was brought up to date by E. Yamauchi in “The Present Status of Mandaean Studies,” JNES 25 (1966): 88–96.

Incantation bowls in the Mandaic language and script belong to that most important group of contemporary sources for magic, religion, and social history in seventh-century Iraq. The earliest collection of such texts is H. Pognon’s Inscriptions mandaïtes des coupes de Khouabir (Paris, 1898). There are five in M. Lidzbarski’s Emphemeris für semitische Epigraphik (Giessen, 1902), I: 89–106; one in G. R. Driver’s “A Magic Bowl,” Revue d’Assyrologie 27 (1930): 61–64; and ten more in C. Gordon’s articles in Archiv Orientální 9 (1937):
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Incantations in the Mandaic language are not necessarily Mandaean in their religious content. The source for Mandaean religion is the literature produced in the early Islamic period. M. Lidzbarski published the most important texts, with German translations: Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer. Einleitung, Übersetzung, Kommentar (Gießen, 1915; Berlin, 1966); Mandäische Liturgien. Mitgeteilt übersetzt und erklärt (Berlin, 1920); and the Ginza; Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer (Göttingen, 1925). In addition E. S. Drower translated The Book of the Zodiac (Sfar Malwašia) (London, 1949). It is customary to transcribe Mandaic with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. A useful reference grammar is R. Macuch’s Handbook of Classical and Modern Mandaic (Berlin, 1965).

Mandaean scholarship since Pallis includes H. Leitzmann’s Ein Beitrag zur Mandäerfrage (Berlin, 1930), which argues for a Nestorian origin for Mandaean ritual; and E. S. Drower’s The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran (Oxford, 1937), which is mostly a modern description with historical background, and her Water into Wine (London, 1956), which is a comparative study of modern Mandaean ritual. Since then the most important work has been by K. Rudolph whose Die Mandäer, I, Prolegomena: Das Mandäerproblem (Göttingen, 1960) examines the various possibilities for the origins of Mandaens, while II, Der Kult (Göttingen, 1961) presents a typology of Mandaean ritual. There are bibliographies in both volumes. His Theogonie, Kosmogonie und Anthropogonie in den mandäischen Schriften. Eine literarkritische und traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung (Göttingen, 1965) is a study of Mandaean doctrines of light and darkness, emanationist cosmogony, and human nature; it also contains a bibliography. Rudolph’s later publications include “Problems of a History of the Development of the Mandaean Religion,” in History of Religions 8 (1969): 210–35, “Die Religion der Mandäer,” in Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer, ed. H. Gese et al. (Stuttgart, 1970), pp. 407–69,


Muslims: The Formation of the Community

The Qur’an stands as the earliest Islamic expression. Its text is available with accompanying English translations by A. Yusuf ‘Ali, The Holy Qur’ān, Text, Translation and Commentary, 3rd ed. (Lahore, 1938), and by M. Z. Khan, The Quran, Arabic Text with English Translation, 2nd rev. ed. (London, 1975). Modern historical studies of the Qur’ān have been concerned mainly with the relationship of its content to Muḥammad’s career and to other religious traditions, when it was written down, variant readings, and the establishment of a standardized text. The standard Western interpretation is represented by W. Montgomery Watt’s Bell’s Introduction to the Qur’ān (Edinburgh, 1970), and by the forty-eight articles from 1921 to 1970 on the interpretation of the Qur’ān, Christian and Jewish influences, predestination, etc. by R. Paret republished in his Der Koran (Darmstadt, 1975). The question of the establishment of a standardized text of the Qur’ān tends to be sidetracked by imposing mainly Christian notions of a scriptural “canon” on it, as in the case of the Avesta. Rarely have teacher and student taken such diametrically opposed positions as J. Wansbrough, who argues that the Qur’an as we know it did not exist before the ninth century in his Qur’ānic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation (London, 1977), and J. Burton, who argues that it existed as such before Muḥammad died in The Collection of the Qur’ān (Cambridge, 1977).
The question of variant readings is more important for the form of the Qur'ān in Iraq. On this subject, see G. Bergsträsser, “Die Koran­lesung des Hasan von Baṣra,” Islamica 2 (1926): 11–57; A. Jeffery’s Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur’ān: The “Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif” of Ibn Abī Dāwūd (Leiden, 1939); and E. Beck, “Der Üt­manische Kodex in der Koranlesung des zweiten Jahrhunderts,” Orientalis 14 (1945): 355–73, and “Die Kodizesvarianten der Amṣār,” Orientalis 16 (1947): 353–76. But applying the Qur’ān to an understand­ing of early Islamic history ought to be less a matter of what its form was than of how Muslims used it. Although there does not appear to be any modern scholarship on the early history of the way Muslims used the Qur’ān, it would seem that it functioned as revealed liturgy, and that its text remained somewhat flexible for about a century. It was recited during public and private worship; and it was quoted or paraphrased in inscriptions and on coins and in letters, poetry, and conversation to claim a divine sanction for a position or point of view, or to provide an ethical emphasis. The earliest surviving commentary on the Qur’ān is the Tafsīr (Cairo, 1969) of Muqāṭil ibn Sulaymān (d. 150/767), who used other verses of the text itself to explain it.

Reports about Muḥammad served as examples and precedents for Muslims to follow and as a source of social authority for those who knew about them. As such reports took on the form of hadīth, whether or not such hadīth was authentic is less important than how, by whom, and for what purpose it was used. Of the six standard collections of hadīth compiled during the ninth and tenth centuries, the Jāmiʿ aṣ-ṣaḥīḥ of Muḥammad ibn Ismaʿīl al-Bukhārī (810–70) is used most often. The four-volume edition published by L. Krehl and T. W. Juynboll as Le recueil des traditions mahométans par Abou Abdallah Mohammed ibn Ismail el-Bokhari (Leiden, 1862–1908) was translated into French by O. Houdas and W. Marçais as Les traditions islamiques (Paris, 1903–14). Both the text and translation were indexed by O. Rescher in Sachindex zu Bokhari (Stuttgart, 1923). There is also a more recent Cairo edition (1390/1971) and an edition with an Eng­lish translation by M. Muḥsin Khān called Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (Gujran­walla, 1971). Selected hadīth were translated into English by A. Guil­laume in The Traditions of Islam (Oxford, 1924).

Among the older works that have been influential in interpretations of early Islam are I. Goldziher’s Muslim Studies, tr. C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern, I (Chicago, 1968); II (Chicago and New York, 1971); D. B. Macdonald’s Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence,


The best idea of the legal issues and alternatives in Iraq in the century after the conquest and before the establishment of the major legal systems is provided in the literature on the differences of opinion among early jurists. The most useful of these are Abū Yūṣuf’s Ikhtilāf Abī Ḥanīfa wa-Ibn Abī Laylā (Cairo, 1357/1938–9); the “Kitāb ikhtilāf al-ʿIrāqiyīn” in vol. VII of Shāfiʿī’s Kitāb al-umm, pp. 87–150; and Ṭabarī’s Kitāb ikhtilāf al-ʾuqahā, ed. J. Schacht (Leiden, 1933).

One of the first modern works on the early history of Islamic law is E. Sachau’s Zur ältesten Geschichte des muhemedanischen Rechts
(Vienna, 1870). There are important suggestions in W. Heffening's "Zum Aufbau der islamischen Rechtswerke," in Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des nahen und fernen Ostens, ed. Heffening and W. Kirfel (Leiden, 1935), pp. 101–18. E. Tyan's Histoire de l'organisation judiciaire en pays d'Islam (Paris, 1938; Leiden, 1960) was a major attempt at a synthesis and provoked a lengthy review article from M. Gaufroy-Demombynes, "Notes sur l'Histoire de l'organisation judiciaire en pays d'Islam," REI (Paris, 1939), pp. 109–47. Interest in origins and comparative law led to theories about the "influence" of other, older legal traditions on Islamic law. J. Schacht suggested an ancient Babylonian background for certain Islamic legal formulas and principles based on their circumstantial similarity without showing how they might have survived until Islamic times in "Vom babylonischen zum islamischen Recht," Orientalistische Literaturzeitung 30 (1927): 664–69. A stronger case has been made for Roman law, as in M. Hamidullah's Influence of Roman Law on Muslim Law, Journal of the Hyderabad Academy, Studies, no. 6 (Madras, 1943). Counterarguments advanced by S. G. Vesey-Fitzgerald in "The Alleged Debt of Islamic to Roman Law," Law Quarterly Review 67 (1951): 81–102, were answered by J. Schacht in "Droit byzantine et droit musulman," in XII Convegno "Volta" (Rome, 1957), pp. 197–230, although the evidence is circumstantial at best and it remains to be shown how Roman law might have affected the development of Islamic law in the Hijaz or Iraq.

The standard studies on early Islamic law are J. Schacht's The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence (Oxford, 1953) and An Introduction to Islamic Law (Oxford, 1964), but he tended to define Islamic law in terms of the Shāfi‘i system. The most important work since Schacht has been done by N. J. Coulson in "Doctrine and Practice in Islamic Law: One Aspect of the Problem," BSOAS 18 (1956): 211–26, A History of Islamic Law (Edinburgh, 1964), and Conflicts and Tensions in Islamic Jurisprudence (Chicago, 1969).

The most direct sources on early Islamic piety and religious life are works on asceticism, such as the Kitāb az-zuhd wa-l-raqā‘i‘q, ed. al-A‘zamī (Haydarabad, 1966) of 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181/797), and the Kitāb az-zuhd, ed. R. G. Khoury (Wiesbaden, 1976) of Asad ibn Mūsā al-Umawī (749/50–827). Similar expressions in the poetry of Abū l-‘Atā‘iyya Ismā‘il ibn al-Qāsim (747/8–ca. 826) have been translated into German by O. Rescher in Der Dīwān des Abū l-Atā‘iyya, vol. I, Die zuhdijjāt (Stuttgart, 1928). Early malāmatī be-
behavior has received almost no attention except for R. Hartmann's article on "As-Sulami's Risālat al-Malamātīja," Der Islam 8 (1918): 157-203, but Sulami lived at Nishapur from 941 to 1021. The lives of pious Muslims who lived in the seventh and eighth centuries, which are recounted in the first volume of Abū Nu‘aym al-Iṣfahānī's Ḥilyat al-awliyā' wa ṭabaqāt al-aṣfiyā' (Cairo, 1932; Beirut, 1967), are colored by an eleventh-century Ṣūfī perspective and should be used with caution.


The best work on early Muslim mysticism relating it to contemporary Christian attitudes is M. Smith’s Rābi‘a the Mystic and Her Fellow-Saints in Islam (Cambridge, 1928) and her Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East (London, 1931), which has been republished as The Way of the Mystics: The Early Christian Mystics and the Rise of the Sufis (London, 1976). The most recent general study of Islamic mysticism is A. Schimmel's The Mystical Dimensions of Islam (Chapel Hill, 1975).

Muslims: Doctrines of Authority and Rebellion

Modern Western treatments of the early history of Islamic doctrines have tended to treat them as a monolithic body of ideas, to allow later Sunnī doctrines to determine the issues in a teleological way, to apply Christian terms and definitions to them, to regard them as a form of intellectual history with no social or political context, to see their starting point in logical contradictions contained in the Qur’ān, and to assign their inspiration to ideas coming from other religious traditions through debate between Muslims and non-Muslims. The main
argument has been between “externalists” and “internalists.” To a certain extent these issues derive from A. J. Wensinck’s _The Muslim Creed: Its Genesis and Historical development_ (Cambridge, 1932; London, 1965), which puts matters in terms of a body of coherent doctrine, argues for external influences, and imposes a Christian understanding of doctrine onto it. Apart from modern Muslim cultural nationalists who derive everything from abstract Islamic requirements, the significance of the work of W. Montgomery Watt lies partly in his attempt to show that post-Qur’ānic doctrine developed out of early issues and conflicts among Muslims. The summary of his position in _Islamic Philosophy and Theology_ (Edinburgh, 1962) is developed and expanded in _The Formative Period of Islamic Thought_ (Edinburgh, 1973), where he eventually recognized the possibility that ideas might have been provided by converts to Islam.

The most important current work on early Islamic doctrinal history is being done by J. van Ess, who also tends to be an internalist. His suggestion that Islamic methods of dialectic argument were self-generated is outlined in “The Beginnings of Islamic Theology,” in _The Cultural Context of Medieval Learning_, ed. J. E. Murdoch and E. D. Sylla (Dordrecht and Boston, 1975), pp. 87–111, and “Disputationspraxis in der islamischen Theologie,” _REI_ 44 (1976): 23–60. But the current debate between van Ess and Wansbrough, which may be followed in their reviews of each other in _BSOAS_ 43 (1980), concerns the acceptability of the attributions of the authors (and their dates) of the texts on which van Ess has based his argument. Wansbrough’s criticism is based on (1) a radical skepticism of the texts born of text-bound criticism that tends to throw out the baby with the bath water, and (2) a reductionist emphasis on scriptural authority as an issue. Whether one is convinced by either side depends on the confidence one has in their methods. Neither puts the argument into any kind of social context and barely into a political context and both treat continued assertions as proof. As usual, reality probably lies somewhere in between, and if van Ess asserts too much, Wansbrough admits too little. There is a better critique of van Ess in M. A. Cook’s mistitled article on “The Origins of _kalām_,” _BSOAS_ 43 (1980): 32–43 (it should have been “A possible origin . . .”), which has the value of offering dialectic methods of argument by contemporary sectarian Christians as a positive alternative, but does not explain the circumstances that led some Muslims to use such methods also. Cook’s _Early Muslim Dogma: A Source-critical Study_ (Cambridge, 1981) is equally misti-
tled; if “dogma” is religious doctrine formally declared by a recognized authority, it is inappropriate in an Islamic context. Nevertheless his book is an extensive closely argued critique of van Ess and something of a model of critical analysis and questions the attribution of various sectarian doctrinal tracts from the Marwānī period. However, the possibility that a tract might have been a pseudograph does not in itself constitute proof any more than mere attribution does.

That there is an argument over these tracts at all is an improvement over the tendency of scholars to work backwards from accounts about sectarians in later Arabic literature, since the tracts purport to be contemporary refutations and in some of them the sectarians speak for themselves. The schematic presentation of differences (Ar. firāq) among Muslims that developed as a literary genre is probably too convenient and lends itself to static comparisons. Early examples, such as the Maqālāt al-islāmiyyīn wa ikhtilāf al-muṣallīn of Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ismā‘īl al-ʿAshʿarī (ca. 873–935), edited by H. Ritter as Die Dogmatischen Lehren der Anhänger des Islam (Wiesbaden, 1963), are important nevertheless. The major classifications from a Sunni point of view are the Kitāb al-faṣl fi-l-milal wa-l-ḥawa‘a wa-n-nihāl (Cairo, 1903, 1965; Beirut, 1975) of the Andalusian ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥazm (994–1064); al-Farq bayn al-firaq (Cairo, 1910) of ‘Abd al-Qāhir ibn Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī (d. 1037), translated as Moslem Schisms and Sects, vol. I by K. Seelye (New York, 1920, 1966) and vol. II by A. Halkin (Tel Aviv, 1935); and the Kitāb al-milal wa-n-nihāl (Leipzig, 1923; Cairo, 1961, 1968) of Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm ash-Shahrastānī (ca. 1086–1153). See also H. Laoust, “La classification des sects dans le Farq d’al-Baghdadi,” REI 29 (1961): 19–59.


Most interpretations trace the origins of early Muslim sectarian movements to the consequences of 'Uthmān’s policies and to the factions that arose during the first *fitna*. In addition to the chronicles one should see the *Waq'at al-jamal. Riwayat Muhammad ibn Yahyā ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn al-'Abbās as-Sūlī* (Baghdad, 1970) of Muhammad ibn Zakariyā al-Ghalābī (d. 910/11) and Naṣr ibn Mužāhim’s (d. 212/827) *Waq'at Šiffin* (Cairo, 1945/46, 1962/3). One social dimension of this conflict is examined by R. Veselý in “Die Anšār im ersten Bürgerkriege,” *Archiv Orientalni* 26 (1958): 36–58, while M. Hinds studied accounts of the event which triggered the Khārījī movement in “The Siffin Arbitration Agreement,” *JSS* 17 (1972): 93–129.

The poetry ascribed to early Khārījī poets is a potential source of information for Khārījī themes and attitudes which has never been exploited the way it should. Khārījī poetry was anthologized as early as the time of Ibn an-Nadīm, who cites 'Umar ibn Subba’s *Kitāb ash'ār ash-shurāt*. Although this collection does not appear to have survived, this subject is treated by F. Gabrieli in “La poesia hārigita nel Secolo degli Omayyadi,” *RSO* 20 (1943): 331–72. Modern anthologies have been compiled, such as those of I. 'Abbas, *Shīr al-Khawārij* (Beirut, 1963) and S. al-Qalamāwī, *Adab al-Khawārij fi-l-'āsr al-umawī* (Cairo, 1954). The poetry of Ṭufayl and at-Ṭirimmāh has been edited and translated into English by F. Krenkow in *The Poems of Ṭufail ibn 'Auf al-Ghanawī and at-Ṭirimmāh ibn Ḥakīm at-Ṭā'yī* (London, 1927). For expressions in prose, the “Questions of Na'hī ibn al-Azraq” are in 'Abd al-Baqi’s *Mu'jam gharīb al-Qur'ān* (Cairo, 1950), pp. 234–92. There is an introduction to Ibādī materials by J. van Ess in his “Untersuchungen zu einigen ibādītischen Handschriften,” *ZDMG* 126 (1976): 25–63; “Nachträge,” *ZDMG* 127 (1977): *1*–*4*. The accounts of Khārījī movements and risings in the time of Mu'āwiya based on monographs by Abū Mikhnaf may be found in al-Baladhurī's *Ansāb* (Jerusalem, 1971), IVa: 138–63. Al-Mubarrad’s section on the Khawārij has been translated into German by O. Rescher in *Die Kharidschitenkapitel aus dem Kāmil* (Stuttgart, 1922), and Shahristānī’s section has been translated into English by


The issue of *qadar* has tended to be discussed by modern Western scholars with borrowed Calvinist terminology that goes back to comparisons made in the seventeenth century. This trend seems to have been picked up in A. Guillaume’s “Free Will and Predestination in Islam,” *JRAS* (1924): 42–63; D. B. Macdonald’s “Kadariya,” *EI*(1), II: 605–6; and W. Thomson’s “The Conception of Human Destiny in Islam,” *MW* 35 (1945): 281–99. W. Montgomery Watt took issue with the explanation by Wensinck (and others) of this question in terms of “outside influences” in *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam* (London, 1948), where he argued for its internal Islamic generation. More recently this issue has been treated in philosophical terms by L. Gardet in *Dieu et la destinée de l’homme* (Paris, 1967). New dimensions to this subject relating it to the Marwānī period were introduced by J. van Ess in “Les Qadarites et la Gailānīya de Yazid III,” *SI* 31 (1970): 269–86; in his article on the proto-Qadari “Ma’bad al-Ｇuhani,” in *Islamwissenschaftliche Abhandlungen: Fritz Meier zum sechzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. R. Gramlich (Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 49–
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and in his Zwischen Hadit und Theologie. Studien zum Entstehen prädestinationischer Überlieferung (Berlin, 1975). See also his “Ka­

Authentic early Shi'i expressions are hard to find but one can start with poetry. The diwân attributed to 'Ali's Basran protégé Abû l-Aswad ad-Du'âli (d. 69/688–89), which is full of praise of 'Ali, is published on pages 5 to 51 of M. H. Âl Yâsîn's Nawâdir al-makhûtât, II (Baghdad, 1373/1954). For a brief biography see J. W. Füch, “Abu 'l-Aswad al-Du'âli,” EI(2), I: 106–7. We are on firmer ground with the Hâshimiyyât of al-Kumayt ibn Zayd al-Asadî (d. 126/743), which was edited and translated by J. Horovitz (Leiden, 1904). There is also a Cairo edition (1950). K. Müller has studied some seventy passages attributed to Kumayt which are not included in the Hâshimiyyât in her Kritische Untersuchungen zum Diwan des Kumait b. Zaid (Frei­
burg im Briesgau, 1979). For this period see also C. van Arendonk, “Kuthaiyir,” EI(1), II: 1170.

Kumayt's ideas were also expressed in prose in his Rawdah al­
mukhtarah, ed. Š. 'A. aș-Sâlih (Beirut, 1392/1972). Abû Mikhnaf's Maqṭal al-Husayn was translated into German by F. Wüstenfeld as Der Tod des Husein Ben 'Ali und die Rache (Göttingen, 1883). Among other works attributed to Abû Mikhnaf are a Kitâb sîrat al-Mukhtâr (Chester Beatty Ms. no. 5274) and a Kitâb Akhbâr al-Mukhtâr wa Ibn Ziyâd (Tübingen, Or. Sprenger Ms. no. 160). Speeches and letters attributed to 'Ali appear to have been preserved and collected in the eighth century and were edited by the Sharîf ar-Radî as the Nahj al­balâgha in about 403/1012–13. This work survives embedded in the multivolume Sharh Nahj al-balâgha (Cairo, 1959–64) of Ibn Abî l­Hâdîd (d. 1257–58), which purports to contain "documents" relating to everyone—relative, friend, and foe—concerned with 'Ali. This ma­
terial deserves a critical sifting; except for J. Sultan's Étude sur Nahj al-balâgha (Paris, 1940), this remains to be done. For sources relating to early Shi'i law see F. Sezgin, Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums, I: 524–85.

For the rest we appear to be left with the firaq literature. One of

Most of the issues in modern scholarship concerning early Shi‘ism go back to G. Van Vloten’s *Recherches sur la domination arabe, le chiitisme, les croyances messianiques sous la khalifat des Omayyades* (Amsterdam, 1894), which has been translated into Arabic by H. I. Ḥasan as *as-Siyāda al-arabiyya wa-sh-shī‘a wa-l-isra‘iliyyāt fi ahd Banī Umayyā* (Cairo, 1933). Discussion has been dominated by the “Persian” thesis of the origins and success of Shi‘ism and the teleological tendency toward cultural nationalism. Two of the most influential treatments in this regard have been L. Massignon’s *Salmān Pāk et les prémices spirituelles de l’Islam Iranien* (Tours, 1934) and S. Moscati’s “Per una storia dell’antica Šī‘a,” *RSO* 30 (1955): 251–67, according to whom Arabs were responsible for the political dimensions of early Shi‘ism and Persians were responsible for the religious dimensions. M. Hodgson’s “How Did the Early Šī‘a Become Sectarian?” *JAOS* 75 (1955): 1–13, makes better sense of the social issues. W. Montgomery Watt introduced the “South Arabian” explanation (which is also somewhat teleological in view of later Zaydi success in Yaman) in “Shī‘ism under the Umayyads,” *JRAS* (1960), pp. 158–72, while R. Serjeant’s “Ḥaram and Hawṭah, the Sacred Enclave in Arabia,” in *Mélanges Taha Husain*, ed. A. Badawi (Cairo, 1962), pp. 41–58, is the source of most recent arguments based on the religious status of Muḥammad’s family in pre-Islamic Makka. S. M. Jafri argues that what became the Twelver Shi‘i position represented the mainstream from the beginning in *The Origins and Early Development of Shi‘a Islam* (London and New York, 1979).

However that may be, extremist Shi‘is have received more scholarly attention because they created more trouble. For the enigmatic eponym of the Saba‘īyya, see I. Friedländer’s “‘Abdallāh b. Sabā, der Begründer


The study of early Islamic eschatological expectations goes back to M. Steinschneider’s “Apocalypsen mit polemischer Tendenz,” ZDMG
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There are many more sources and scholarly works on all of these subjects than have been cited here. But anyone who consults these will find the rest. The literature on each subject opens out onto different issues and vantage points. Each is worth pursuing and on each a great deal remains to be done.
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