

The HISTORY OF IRAN and ISLAM

Selected texts from the authors

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ترجمه چیست ؟

در مورد تعریف ترجمه اتفاق نظر وجود ندارد. برخی از پژوهشگران ، ترجمه را هنر میدانند و بعضی دیگر آن را فن تعریف کرده اند و عده ای دیگر آن را علم می دانند .

بدیهی است که چنانچه ما به هریک از این موارد اعتقاد داشته باشیم ، نتایج خاص آنرا هم باید بپذیریم . مثلاً فردی که ترجمه را یک هنر میدانند ، باید بپذیرد که این کار تحت تاثیر ویژگی های شخصیتی یا ذاتی مترجم خواهد بود . و چنانچه ترجمه را یک فن بدانیم ، باید بپذیریم که یک مترجم در نتیجه کار مداوم ، پشتکار ، ممارست و تمرین ، به توانایی های ارزشمندی در کار ترجمه خواهد رسید . و در صورتیکه ترجمه را یک علم بدانیم آنگاه باید بپذیریم که مترجم باید صرفاً با مبانی علمی و قوانین حاکم بر ترجمه آشنا بوده و شرط یک ترجمه خوب ، تطابق روش های علمی مترجم با اصول علمی است . در عین حال برخی زبانشناسان بر این باورند که ترجمه در نتیجه هر سه مورد فوق به کمال می رسد ، یعنی چنانچه فردی هنر ترجمه را داشته باشد ، فن آنرا بکار گیرد ، و روشهای علمی را بکار بندد ، آنگاه یک مترجم توانا خواهد بود . لذا برخی بر این باورند که ترجمه صرفاً نه هنر خلاق است و نه هنر تقلیدی ، بلکه در جایی بین این دو قرار دارد .

ترجمه به هیچ وجه عملی سطحی نیست که هر کس با حداقل دانش زبانی در باره زبان دیگر بتواند آنرا انجام دهد ، بلکه یکی از مشکل ترین کارهایی است که یک فرد می تواند به عهده بگیرد.

ترجمه چیزی بیش از آشنایی صرف با دو زبان را می طلبد .

در فرهنگ های لغت از جمله فرهنگ "رندم هاوس" (Random House) در تعریف "ترجمه" چنین آمده است :

نقل یک مکتب گفتاری یا نوشتاری از یک زبان به زبان دیگر یا زبان خود .

به رغم این تعریف ساده ، تعیین هدف ترجمه به علت گسترده بودن آن امری است بس دشوار .

اگر بپذیریم که هدف از ترجمه یک متن ، رسیدن به مفهوم و دستاوردهای آن متن است ، بنابراین دو نگاه در این زمینه قابل توجه است :

۱- گروهی که معتقدند باید متن را بصورت کلمه به کلمه ترجمه کرد و معنی کلی متن را نباید فدای لفظ و کلمه کرد . این افراد معتقدند که مغشوش بودن کلام ترجمه شده را باید با امانت داری در ترجمه ، جبران کرد .

۲- گروه دیگر بر این باورند که اگر منظور از ترجمه برقراری ارتباط با مخاطب باشد ، پس چنین ارتباطی جز با زبان دلخواه آنان بطور مطلوب میسر نخواهد بود . بر این اساس یک ترجمه موفق آن است که بتواند در خواننده متن (ترجمه شده) تاثیر شناختی ، احساسی و عاطفی یکسانی با متن مبداء (و اصلی) ایجاد کند . این گروه معتقدند که ترجمه یک نوع آفرینش است .

کاربرد مفاهیم و اصول فوق در متون تاریخی مشکل تر از آن است که بتوان در چند صفحه بدان پرداخت. اما باید توجه داشت که در متون تاریخی، مهمترین نکته در "ترجمه امانتدارانه است که در عین حال بتواند معنی، احساس و درک واقعی نویسنده ی آن متن را به محقق تاریخ در زبان مقصد منتقل کند". چنین ترجمه ای (تحقیقاً اگر بدان توجه کنیم) بسیار مشکل تر از تالیف است.

بنابراین اگر بپذیریم که هدف ترجمه، انتقال معنی از زبان مبدا به زبان مقصد است، پس آنچه منتقل می شود و باید ثابت نگهداشته شود، معنا است. فرض کنید می خواهیم جمله "خوابم می آید" را به انگلیسی ترجمه کنیم. این جمله فارسی از کلمات "خواب" (اسم) و "م" (ضمیر متصل فاعلی) و "می آید" (فعل)، تشکیل شده است. همین معنی در زبان انگلیسی به دو صورت بیان می شود:

I am sleepy

I feel sleepy

در حالیکه معنای تحت الفظی جمله فارسی فوق به انگلیسی تقریباً این است:

My sleep comes

ملاحظه می کنید که هر دو زبان از شکل های مختلف انتخاب لغت و ساختار گرامری برای بیان مقصود استفاده می کنند. در فارسی از کلمات "خواب" (اسم)، "م" (ضمیر) و "می آید" (فعل) استفاده شده و در انگلیسی از ضمیر و صفت استفاده شده است.

چگونه تلفظ انگلیسی را فرا بگیریم؟ شما باید:

۱- تلفظ همه اصوات انگلیسی را به درستی فرا بگیرید. اصوات انگلیسی و علائم فونتیک بین المللی (IPA) معمولاً در ابتدای دیکشنری های معتبر و بصورت یک جدول نشان داده شده اند. (به جدول زیر توجه کنید) علائم فونتیک سیستمی برای نوشتن تلفظ کلمات انگلیسی است.

۲- تلفظ هر کلمه ای را که به کار می برید یاد بگیرید. در دیکشنری های خوب علائم فونتیک برای تمامی کلمات آورده شده است.

۳- نشانه دونقطه: باعث کشیدگی حرف می شود. به عنوان مثال: a صدای آی کشیده و: i صدای ئی کشیده می دهد.

۴- اگر قبل از حرف r، یک حرف صدادار باشد، حرف r در انگلیسی بریتانیایی تلفظ نمی شود، اما در انگلیسی آمریکایی همیشه تلفظ می شود.

در بیشتر دیکشنریهای امروزی برای نشان دادن تلفظ کلمات از سیستم IPA استفاده می‌شود. در جدول زیر همه علائم و نشانه‌های IPA آورده شده است.

حروف واکه (صدان)		
IPA	words	Voice
ʌ	cup, luck	آ کوتاه
ɑ:	am, father	آ کشیده
æ	cat, black	آ
e	met, bed	ا متوسط
ə	away, cinema	ا کوتاه
ɜ:ʀ	turn, learn	ا کشیده
ɪ	hit, sitting	ای کوتاه
i:	see, heat	ای کشیده
o	hot, rock	ا متوسط
ɔ:	door, four	ا کشیده
u	put, could	او کوتاه
u:	blue, food	او کشیده
aɪ	five, eye	آی
au	now, out	او
ou	go, no	او
eəʀ	where, air	ا
eɪ	say, eight	ای
ɪəʀ	near, here	ای
ɔɪ	boy, join	ای
uɪ	Tour, poor	ا

حروف همخوان (بی‌صدا)		
IPA	words	Voice
b	bad, lab	ب
d	did, lady	د
f	find, if	ف
g	give, flag	گ
h	how, hello	ه
j	yes, yellow	ی
k	cat, back	ک
l	leg, little	ل
m	man, lemon	م
n	no, ten	ن
ŋ	sing, finger	نگ
p	pet, map	پ
r	red, try	ر
s	sun, miss	س
ʃ	she, crash	ش
t	tea, get	ت
tʃ	check, teacher	چ
θ	think, three	ت عربی
ð	this, mother	ذ عربی
v	voice, five	و
w	wet, window	و عربی
z	zoo, lazy	ز
ʒ	pleasure, vision	ژ
dʒ	just, large	ج

برخی کلمات اختصاری :

ممکن است در متون تاریخی به زبان انگلیسی به علائم اختصاری برخورد کنید که بصورت مخفف آمده و منظور از آن عبارت خاصی است ، مانند موارد زیر:

c.f.	مقایسه کنید با
e.g.	مثلاً
i.e.	به عبارت دیگر
etc.	الی آخر ، غیره
q.v.	آنچه که بعداً می آید
cp.	مقایسه با ، در مقایسه با ..
esp.	بویژه
CE.	دوره عمومی

برخی اسامی خاص تاریخی ایران باستان:

در متون تاریخ ایران باستان به زبان انگلیسی، ممکن است نویسندگان در هنگام نوشتن نام برخی از سلاطین ایران باستان، تلفظ یونانی و یا لاتین آن کلمه را بکار ببرند که با تلفظ فارسی زبان ها متفاوت باشد، مانند :

Deioces	دیاکو
Phraortes	فرورتیش
Kashtariti	خشتریته
cyaxares	هووخشتره یا کیاکسار
Astyages	ایشتوویگو یا ایختوویگو
Artaxerxes	اردشیر
Cambyses	کمبوجیه
Cyrus	کوروش
Darius	داریوش
Xerxes	خشایار
Alexander	اسکندر
Arsacid	اشکانی

Artabanus	.....	اردوان
Phraates	.....	فرهاد
Mithradates	.....	مهرداد
Vologeses	.....	بلاش
Mesopotamia	.....	بين النهرين
Transoxiana	.....	ماوراء النهر
Arachosia	.....	رخج
Oxus	.....	جيحون
Jaxartes	.....	سيحون

THE RISE OF THE SASANIANS : R. N. FRYE.

The rise of the *Sasanian* dynasty can be understood as the successful struggle of a minor ruler of Persis (today Fars province) not only against his *Parthian* overlord, but also against a multitude of neighbouring rulers. The ruins of *Persepolis* and *Pasargadae* alone would have been a standing reminder of the past glory of the area, even if knowledge of a great empire for the most part had been forgotten. Most scholars have assumed, following the Arabic history by *Tabari*, that *Sasan* was the grandfather and *Papak* the father of *Ardashir*, founder of the Sasanian dynasty. The trilingual inscription (Greek, Parthian and Middle Persian) of *Shapur I*, on the *Ka'ba-yi Zardusht* at *Naqsh-i Rostam*, however, does not say that *Sasan* was the *father* of *Papak*. There is another version of the lineage of *Ardashir* found in a story in the Middle Persian book, the *Kar-namag* or "Book of Deeds of *Ardashir* son of *Papak*". The same version is also given by *Firdausi* in his epic the *Shah-nama*. This story tells how *Sasan* was married to the daughter of a local prince *Papak* after the latter learned that *Sasan* had royal Achaemenian blood in him. From this union *Ardashir* was born. Then *Sasan* vanishes from the story and *Papak* is considered the father of *Ardashir*. This corresponds to the inscription and other later Arabic and New Persian sources. The problem is, who was *Sasan*?

One should note that *Shapur's* inscription does not give us the answer and for lack of another course, one may choose between the version of the epic, and the statement of *Tabari* that *Sasan* was the father of *Papak*. *Tabari's* account, however, is suspect, since he reports a lengthy genealogy of *Ardashir* tracing it back to mythical, heroic kings of ancient Iran. It is more likely that *Sasan* was a remote ancestor of *Ardashir* whose name was given to the dynasty as Achaemenes was for the Achaemenids. Most plausible, however, is the epic version which may have the following interpretation: *Sasan* was the natural father of *Ardashir*, but he died shortly after the birth of his son whereupon, according to current Zoroastrian practice, *Papak* adopted *Ardashir* as his own son; or the adoption may have occurred after a certain *Shapur*, *Papak's* son, was killed. In any case, King *Papak* probably united much of Fars under his sway during the hectic time of the Parthian sovereign *Vologeses IV* (192-207). About the year 205 something happened which started a Sasanian chronology. Perhaps *Papak* overthrew a ruler of *Stakhr* at that time, or he may have decided to proclaim his independence of the Parthians at that date. There is a possibility that the Parthian king *Vologeses IV* defeated *Papak*, after the latter's revolt, and forced him to return to Parthian allegiance, at least for a time.

It is unlikely that Papak extended his rule much beyond central Fars, and most conquests even there may have been the work of *Ardashir*. The date of *Papak's* death is unknown, but before that he was succeeded by his eldest son *Shapur*, who probably was killed accidentally after a very short rule. *Ardashir*, whose relationship to *Papak* we have already mentioned, became king, probably about 216, and began to expand his realm into *Kirman* in the east and *Elymais* to the west. The overthrow of the Parthians seems to have been the result of a coalition headed by *Ardashir*. After *Ardashir* overthrew *Ardavan*, his task of conquest was not ended. The great Parthian feudal families, either submitted to *Ardashir* willingly or unwillingly, or they were in turn defeated. *Ctesiphon*, on the plains of Mesopotamia, was the main, administrative capital of the Sasanian empire, while in the summer the court moved to the cooler highlands of the Iranian plateau. *Ctesiphon* was in reality a group of towns, and they were called collectively *Mahoze* in Syriac or *al-Mada'in* in Arabic, both meaning "the cities". Most of the Sasanian kings were crowned in *Ctesiphon*, although other ceremonies also may have occurred in *Stakhr*, the home town of the dynasty in Fars province, or in Shiz, the site of the fire temple of *Adhur Gushnasp* in western *Jibal*. The extent of *Ardashir's* conquests cannot be determined with precision. Most of the Parthian domains, including vassal states, submitted to the Sasanians. According to *Tabari*, in the east the kings of the *Kushans* and of *Turan* submitted to *Ardashir*, while in the west the island and opposite coast of *Bahrain* were conquered. The main adversary of the Persians, was the Roman empire, and the ambitions of the first Sasanian ruler were soon countered by Rome. *Ardashir* besieged *Nisibis* (at present *Nusaybin* in Turkey on the Iraq frontier) in 230, and his forces raided Syria and elsewhere in the Roman east. The Romans tried to make peace with the Sasanian ruler but failed. *Alexander Severus*, after more fruitless negotiations with *Ardashir*, set out against him in 232. In any case, *Ardashir* was repulsed and *Alexander Severus* celebrated a triumph in Rome. The murder of *Alexander Severus* in 235 and the subsequent troubles in the Roman empire may have induced *Ardashir* to attack again. Towards the end of his reign, probably in 238, he took both *Carrhae* and *Nisibis*. Because of internal difficulties including the rapid change of emperors, the Romans could not move against the Persians for several years. In subduing the *Khwarazmians* and the people of *Gilan* on the Caspian Sea coast. *Carrhae* and *Nisibis* were retaken by the Romans and the Persians were defeated at a battle near *Resaina*. In 244 the two armies met in battle at *Massice*, or *Anbar*, not far from *Ctesiphon*, and *Shapur* won. After the battle, he gave a new name to the town, *Piroz-Shapur* or "victorious is *Shapur*".

The emperor Gordian either died in the battle or was murdered by his own men, and *Philip* became emperor. *Philip* paid a ransom of 500,000 gold dinars to *Shapur*, according to *Shapur's* great inscription. He also probably agreed not to aid the Armenians against *Shapur*, for the *Arsacid* king of Armenia was still a bitter enemy of the Sasanians. It seems that *Shapur* was besieging *Carrhae* and *Edessa* when the new emperor *Valerian* marched against him. The date of the battle near *Edessa*, when *Valerian* was captured by *Shapur*, is also disputed – either the end of 258, or 259, or some even suggest 260. The triumph of *Shapur* was commemorated by rock-carvings showing him on horse- back and his Roman opponent kneeling before him at *Naqsh-i Rostam* and at *Bishapur*. Probably a short time after the victory over *Valerian*, *Shapur* made some changes in his empire. A third son *Varahran*, or later *Bahram*, was king in *Gilan*, and a fourth son *Narseh* was the king of the *Sakas*, ruling over large territories in eastern Iran, including *Sind*. At the time of the capture of *Valerian*, *Shapur* must have been advanced in age, which may explain his apparent lack of reaction to the expansion of *Palmyra*. The king of kings must have been busy with internal matters, for we know he took an interest in *Mani* and in matters of culture and thought. The religious history of the reigns of *Hormizd* and the two *Bahrams* is dominated by the figure of *Kartir*, who may have been the real power behind the throne of *Bahram II*. One might speculate that the priest used his influence in securing the succession to the throne for *Bahram II*, rather than for *Narseh*. The latter seems to have followed a liberal policy towards religious minorities in the empire, much like his father, *Shapur*, whereas the *Bahrams* were more amenable to the wishes of the conservative Zoroastrian priesthood. Apart from his religious impact, *Kartir's* influence on political affairs should not be underestimated. *Bahram II* at the outset of his reign had to face a Roman invasion under the emperor *Carus* in 283. The Romans captured *Ctesiphon* and would have extended their conquests if the emperor had not died in December of the same year. Peace was made, and this permitted the Romans to regain the province of Mesopotamia, which seems to have been under Persian domination since *Shapur's* conquests. The reason for the acceptance by *Bahram II* of such onerous terms was possibly a revolt of *Hormizd*, brother of *Bahram*, in the eastern provinces. *Bahram* was able to put down the revolt, and we might surmise that he installed his son, also called *Bahram*, as the king of the *Sakas* in place of the rebel. *Bahram II* had several rock-reliefs cut at *Bishapur* and at *Naqsh-i Rostam*, possibly in honour of his victory over his rebel brother, or other conquests.

He also had reliefs carved at *Guyum* and *Barm-i Dilak*, north and south of present *Shiraz*. When *Bahram II* died in 293, his son *Bahram III* ruled for only a few months until he was deposed by his uncle *Narseh*. *Narseh*, once on the throne, determined to regain territory lost to the Romans by *Bahram II*, which mainly meant Armenia and Mesopotamia. Again events in Armenia remain unclear, but *Tiridates* was driven from his throne by *Narseh* in 296. About the beginning of 297 a Roman army under *Galerius*, the Caesar of *Diocletian* in the latter's reform of the Roman Empire, was defeated and *Narseh* recovered Mesopotamia. In the following year, however, *Narseh* lost his harem in a rout of the Sasanian army by the same *Galerius* in Armenia. The religious policy of persecution of the *Manichaeans*, changed to toleration under *Narseh*. This change may have been induced by *Narseh's* desire to secure the support of Manichaeans in the Roman Empire. Towards the end of *Narseh's* reign the king of Armenia was converted to Christianity, which changed the destiny of that country. That *Narseh* was not such an ardent supporter of orthodox Zoroastrianism is indicated by a notice in *al-Tha'alibi* that he did not visit the fire temples. *Hormizd II* ruled for seven years (302-9), a hard and strong man who none the less was just and well liked according to various Arabic sources. The events following the death of *Hormizd II* are obscure, but one of the sons of *Hormizd*, probably called *Adhurnarseh*, came to the throne. The nobility, however, took matters into their own hands, deposed the king and seized some of his brothers, although one, *Hormizd*, escaped and fled to the Romans. The crown was then given to an infant *Shapur II*. *Shapur II* was to rule from 309 to 379, the longest time-period of any Sasanian king and under his reign Iran developed greatly and expanded. The reign of *Shapur II* can be considered the culmination of the process of centralization under the early Sasanian kings. At first, as a child, he was under the sway of the nobility, but soon *Shapur* was able to bring power into his own hands with the acquiescence of the same nobility. Down to the end of the dynasty a member of the family of Sasan was the ruler, and the allegiance of the nobles and priests could rarely be won by a rebel who was not a Sasanian prince. The case of *Bahram Chobin* (see below) was unique, and he ultimately failed to secure the support of the nobility against *Khusrau II*. The belief that the farr or "mystical majesty" of kingship had descended on a prince would cause nobles to rally to one member of the royal family rather than another.

In the years of the earlier Sasanian state the ruler appointed priests and bestowed titles on them, but later, perhaps already by the time of *Shapur II*, the chief priest, the *mobaadn-mobad*, created on the analogy of the title king of kings, took over such ecclesiastical tasks as religious appointments. The *mobadan mobad* also performed the act of coronation, placing a crown on the head of the new ruler. *Firdausi* describes this frequently in the *Shah-nama*. The ruler was regarded as chosen by God with a divine right to rule, but this did not make him an unapproachable divine figure. The power of the rulers was great in the third century, but in the fourth, until *Shapur II* reached manhood, the nobility and priesthood held sway. *Khusrau I*, in the aftermath of the *Mazdakite* troubles (see below), reorganized the nobility. In the 7th century the prestige and powers of the ruler had sunk so low that the monarchs were mere puppets in the hands of the nobility.

THE RISE OF THE ARABS: *P. M. Holt, Ann K. S. Lambton, Bernard Lewis.*

Of all the factors which have shaped the history of the Arabian peninsula, geography has been the most decisive. Most of Arabia is the victim of nature maligna. The geological process is responsible for its shape and outline, a huge quadrilateral placed between two continents. Although surrounded by five seas, it has hardly any adjacent islands to diminish its inaccessibility and isolation; no good harbours with the exception of *Aden*; no hospitable coasts, but forbidding and narrow stretches; while the seas which surround it from east and west are plagued either by coral reefs as the Red Sea, or by shoals as the *Persian Gulf*. Its internal configuration is also unfortunate. In the whole of this huge land mass, with the exception of *Hajar* in the south, there is not a single river to facilitate transport and communication through the vast expanses of sunscorched deserts and steppes as those in its eastern half, or the rugged mountainous regions, especially the ancient shield of igneous rocks in the west. Water is the most decisive of all geographic determinants in the human story in Arabia, and it is the principle which divides the peninsula into two distinct parts: the rain-fed area of the outer parts, particularly the south-west; and the arid area of the centre or the inner regions. The peninsula, thus, is a land of strident contrasts which contains within its frontiers the two extremes side by side, as in the case of the fertile and luxuriant south, blessed by soil and climate, a Garden of *Eden*, and the adjacent area to the north-east, a veritable hell on earth known as the Empty Quarter, the most savage part of the arid area and the most extensive body of continuous sand in the whole world.

The economy of the south, unlike the familial and tribal one in the north, is territorially based. The south is a land of towns and cities solidly established, unlike the centers of habitation in the north, whether the portable tents of the nomad or the oases whose sedentarized nomads are liable to revert to nomadism in special circumstances. In ethnographic terms, the peninsula then is divided between the peoples of the south, who speak a *Semitic* language of their own which has its dialectal variations, and the Arabs of the arid area and the oases of its outskirts, whose language is Arabic, the *arabiyya*, which also has its own dialectal variations. In concrete topographical terms, the Semites of the south are the peoples of *Ma'in*, *Saba'*, *Qataban*. The centre of interest of Semitic history is not the peninsula but the Fertile Crescent, where the Semites develop their civilization. Arabia recedes into the background. It was the *Sabaeans* who developed a high-level material Semitic culture within the peninsula and it was they who by their enterprise gave it an important though peculiar place in the history of the ancient Near East and of international relations. The south, then, is the region of dominance in pre-Islamic Arabia, and the Arabs of the north move in the orbit of the powerful south. External factors, however, are more noticeable as they contribute to the decline and fall of southern Arabia. It was not the Semitic empires of the Fertile Crescent but the Indo-European ones that began to menace southern Arabia's existence; not so much the Persians or the Romans but the Macedonians, especially the *Ptolemies* of Egypt, who effectively challenged the power of the south. Unlike mightier but more distant empires, such as that of Rome, whose ill-starred expedition in 24 B.C. was shattered by the harsh facts of physical and human geography. Even more deadly than the *Ptolemies* were the *Abyssinians* of *Axum* who were closer to southern Arabia than the *Ptolemies*. Separated from them only by *Bab al-Mandab* and in possession of a beach-head on the Arabian mainland itself, the *Axumites* were most dangerously poised to administer a fatal blow. Such was the situation in the Red Sea area around A.D. 300. Soon after, more adverse factors become operative when a new Near East comes into being with the translation imperil from Rome to Constantinople and the conversion of Constantine. The peninsula is now surrounded by vigorous, newly rejuvenated states, and each of the two contestants for supremacy, Christian Byzantium and Zoroastrian Persia, has definite religious and economic policies which operate to the disadvantage of southern Arabia. The conversion of the *Ethiopian negus*, *Ezana*, to Christianity brings Byzantium and *Ethiopia* even closer, and closes the ring around the south. But Arabia had already been penetrated by another monotheistic religion-Judaism.

The south was naturally more disposed towards Judaism, since Christianity was associated with its two traditional enemies, *Byzantium* and *Ethiopia*. In the fifth century Judaism gained the upper hand with the judaization of the kings of the south. Clashes with Christianity were inevitable, and they culminated in the famous massacre of the Christians of *Najran*, which proved to be a turning-point in the history of the south and the peninsula. Around A.D. 520 an *Ethiopian* expedition crossed *Bab al-Mandab* with the blessings of Byzantium and the Monophysite world, destroyed the power of the last judaizing king of *Himyar*, and made the country an Ethiopian protectorate. The Ethiopian invasion ushered in a century of anarchy and political upheavals which left the south politically prostrate. The Ethiopian occupation lasted for about half a century, punctuated by the revolt of *Abraha*, an Ethiopian soldier of fortune who killed the *Himyaritic* viceroy of the *enegus*, and asserted his virtual independence. Various activities are associated with his name as the building of a famous church in *San'a'*, *al-Qalis* (*eccksia*), but more celebrated is his expedition against Mecca which. The sixth century witnessed the emergence of *Najran* as the great Christian centre in the south, a holy city, sanctified by its martyrs. In the history of the ancient world, the southern Arabians were responsible for what might be termed the commercial revolution in the Near East. They brought together the world of the Indian Ocean and that of the Mediterranean Sea by laying out a long trade-route extending from India and Somalia to the Fertile Crescent. But the history of the Arabs in the arid area of the north presents a spectacle which contrasts with that of their Semitic neighbours to the south. Unlike the fairly homogeneous society of the south, theirs is heterogeneous, divided into nomads and sedentaries. But beneath all this diversity within the Arab scene lies the ethnological fact which informs all this seeming diversity with essential unity, namely that of the Arabs as one people, who remain recognizably Arab in spite of the various forms of political, social, and cultural life which they adopt. During most of the first millennium before Christ, the Arabs had to face a Fertile Crescent united by the military might of the Assyrians, a unity which was maintained by the neo-Babylonians and the Persians. But in the second century B.C. this unity was broken, and the Crescent remained divided between hostile groups, the *Parthians* and the *Seleucids*, the *Parthians* and the Romans, and finally the *Sasanids* and the Byzantines. Economically, these Arab establishments owe their prosperity to the fact that they are stations on the vital west Arabian and Mesopotamian trade-routes.

With the decay of the power of the *Seleucids*, the Arabs deepened their penetration of Syria, which was practically possessed by Arab dynasties when the Romans appeared and annexed Syria. The dismantling of the Arab military establishment in the third century opens a new historical period in the evolution of the Arabs which lasts for some three centuries until the rise of Islam. The Arabs are surrounded by these three powerful states of the Near East (Persia, Byzantium, and *Himyar*) in whose wars they play an important part as clients and auxiliaries, the *Lakhmids* for the Persians, the *Ghassanids* for Byzantium, and *Kinda* for *Himyar*. These three Arab groups, *Kinda*, *Lakhm*, and *Ghassan*, now occupy the stage of Arab history. Their history is vividly remembered by the pre-Islamic Arab poets. In spite of their power and military efficiency, these groups remained what in fact they were, clients to the great powers, dependent upon their support, and collapsible when these decide to bring about their downfall. And so it was with the *Ghassanids* and the *Lakhmids*, whose power their Byzantine and Sasanid masters reduced towards the end of the sixth century. Simultaneously with the rise and fall of the Arab client-kingdoms, another world was coming into being, representing an entirely new departure in the evolution of Arab history.

The geographical position of *Mecca* on the spice route, half-way between Jewish *Yathrib* and Christian *Najran*, naturally exposed it to the two currents of economic and religious life which were running in western Arabia. This city, at one and the same time a caravan-station and a holy city. It was in the sixth century that this combination reached arresting dimensions, after the tribe of *Quraysh* had possessed itself of the city through the enterprise of *Qusayy* (c. 500?) undoubtedly an historical figure. It was *Qusayy* who laid the foundation for the prosperity of *Mecca* as the great 'commercial republic' of Arabia in the sixth century. The primacy of *Mecca* as well as the unity of the Arabs was reflected and promoted Annually during the Sacred Months when the Arabs would flock to Mecca and the neighbouring region, where a complex of three places and many activities were involved: *Ukaz*, the fair and scene of poetic contests; *Mecca*, the Holy City with its *Haram*, the sacred precinct, and its *Ka'ba*, the temple; and *Arafat*, the Holy Mountain of the pilgrimage. The concept of Arabia Sacra was slowly emerging in the sixth century.

THE ARAB CONQUEST OF IRAN AND ITS AFTERMATH: R. N. FRYE.

The Muslim Arabs' disastrous defeat of the *Sasanian* Empire opened a new chapter in the long history of Iran. In distant *Hijāz* in the city of Mecca, *Muhammad b. Abd-Allāh* had given to an idolatrous and strife-ridden people a new religion, which inculcated monotheism, its message coming to *Muhammad* as Revelation, conveyed to his Community later in the *Qur'ān*, and bade the Arabs to submit as people accountable to God and fearful of his wrath. Some of them were so inspired by this new teaching that they undertook the conquest of the world about them, to achieve at the same time in this holy war the reward of a share in the world to come, Paradise. *Muhammad's* death in 11/632 was followed in his successor *Abū Bakr's* time by a crisis of apostasy, the *Ridda*, which put both the religion and the government of *Medīna* in jeopardy. The end of the *Ridda* wars left the Arabs poised for Holy War for the sake of Islam, ready to challenge even Byzantium and Iran. From ancient times Iran had had contacts varying in degree of closeness and amity with the Arabs. Before the Sasanian era, Arab tribes had settled in the Tigris-Euphrates region. In *Hira* on the right or west bank of the Euphrates resided the House of *Mundhir* of the *Lakhmid* Arabs, who were generally accounted the tributaries of the Sasanians, as their rivals, the *Ghassānids*, in the desert of north Syria, were the clients and vassals of Byzantium. The *Lakhmids* frequently aided the Iranians in their contests with Byzantium. *Khusrau II Aparviz* (591-628), according to Arab tradition, found refuge with *Nu'mān Abū Qābūs*, *Nu'mān III*, King of *Hira*, when fleeing from *Bahrām Chubin*, but when restored to his throne, he ill repaid this assistance by seizing *Nu'mān*, having him thrown beneath an elephant's feet, and divesting his family of *Hira*. And *Hira* had in effect become an appanage of Iran. This was the end of *Lakhmid* power. The reason for this imprudence on *Khusrau II's* part is not clear. It is possible that his leanings towards *Nestorianism*, whose adherents had promoted a conspiracy against the shah, might have motivated *Khusrau* against him, especially since the shah had every reason to fear the influence of the Christians in his own court. But the later calamitous events between Arabs and Iranians revealed how lacking in foresight the elimination of this "puppet" *Lakhmid* house had been. The first warning was the battle known as *Dhūqār*, from the name of the place, near the present-day *Kūfa*, where it occurred. The tribes of *Bakr b. Wā'il*, of the vicinity of *Hira*, were dissatisfied with the new ruler of *Hira*, *Iyās* of *Tayy*. They began raiding across the Iranian border. Near *Dhūqār* they fell in with two parties of Iranian horse, each comprising a thousand troopers.

The episode came to be sung in Arabic legend and verse as one of the *ayyam* : the Arabs' Heroic Days. The *Bakr* tribesmen took heart from their success on this day; their raids on the Iranian frontiers increased. The first major encounter between the Muslims' and Iran occurred during the reign of the first caliph, *Abū Bakr* (11-13/632-4). The taking of *Hira* and the pillage of the Arab-inhabited areas on the banks of the Euphrates had only just been completed when *Abū Bakr's* orders reached *Khalid*, to decamp with his army for *Syria*. This departure of *Khalid* from what might be described as the "Iranian front" demonstrates that *Abū Bakr* had as yet no ready plan for the conquest of Iran; rather the Muslims' main preoccupations in those days were still associated with the aftermath of events of the last days of the Prophet's life, and were centred on the "Syrian Problem". *Umar b. al-Khattab* succeeded as caliph. *Khalid* was still engaged in Syria and against Byzantium. Apprehensive on account of news of the Arab successes against Byzantium, the Iranians also turned their attention to the Euphrates situation, and now hastened to defend that frontier against the Arabs.

This defence was entrusted to *Rustam b. Farrukhzad*, the commander of armies in *Āzarbāijān*. For a while the two armies confronted each other on the western side of the Euphrates at *Qādisiyya*. Though these figures are not free from exaggeration, there can be no doubt that the numbers of the Persians were appreciably greater. On the final day *Rustam* was killed and his army dispersed in flight. Amongst the quantities of spoils which fell into Arab hands was the banner which these victors termed the banner of *Kābiyān*. The battle's importance for the Arabs was such that it became subject to grandiose treatment in poetry and legend, a reason for treating traditions relating to it with caution. Two months later, in accordance with the caliph's orders, *Sa'd* marched towards *Madā'in* or Ctesiphon, the celebrated Sasanian capital. Before their arrival *Yazdgard* with a retinue of several thousand people and all his treasure had left Ctesiphon. Ctesiphon's gates were opened to the Arabs, and the booty, which according to the account given by *Balādhurī* consisted of carpets, dresses, arms, jewels and so forth, astonished the Bedouin soldiers. Then as is well known the caliph sent one of the Prophet's own Persian *mawālī* or clients, *Salmān Fārsī*, whose Iranian name is recorded as *Māhbeh* or *Rūzbeh* and who is said originally to have been an adherent of Christianity before his travels took him into the orbit of *Muhammad* at *Medina*, to be governor at Ctesiphon. In spite of the victory which had been gained, 'Umar did not evince any great eagerness to embark on extended conquests.

This was neither acceptable to the Iranians who had lost their capital, nor to the Arab warriors, aroused by the hope of further booty and imbued with hope of admission to Paradise, hopes not to be realized by a status quo. *Yazdgard*, who saw his throne lost, decided after *Jalūlā* once more to equip an army and make an attempt to rid Iraq of the Arabs, or at least prevent their invasion of western Iran. *Nihāvand* was considered suitable for this last stand. The engagement lasted three days, from Tuesday to Friday. *Nu'mān* was killed, but the battle was continued and the Iranian forces were defeated and fled from their last stand. With this victory of *Nihāvand*, which the Arabs called the "Victory of Victories", the Iranians' last concerted stand against the Muslims was smashed. Concerning the real cause of this collapse, there has been much debate. Certainly one of the causes was the marked difference between classes then prevalent in Iran, and the lack of co-operation between them. Another was the differences of religion which existed, for, together with a tendency towards fatalism and belief in the power of destiny, ideas which prepared the Iranian people to accept defeat. Also, the cupidity and corruption of the mobads and their interference in politics had raised hatred against them. Another factor was the weakness of a government that in the course of four years put no less than eight rulers one after the other on the throne. Further, the aimless wars of *Khusrau* II also played their part in weakening the government and its finances. Certainly the conquest of Iran, contrary to the account of *Saif b. Umar*, did not by any means reach its completion in the time of the caliphate of *'Umar b. al-Khattab*; it in fact continued into Umayyad times, the Umayyad caliphate having begun in 41/661. During the caliphate of *'Umar* and in the early years of *Uthmān*, Iraq, *Jibāl* and *Fars* came under the domination of the new conquerors in such a complete way that the revolutions of the latter part of *Uthmān's* time, and even the sanguinary civil wars in *Ali's* brief caliphate, afforded various claimants for the Sasanian throne no opportunity to rally any support or popular sympathy for a general rebellion or an attempt to restore Iranian independence. Nevertheless, the people of some provinces to whom submission to the Arabs and acceptance of their new faith were not agreeable, used every available opportunity to contend with their conquerors. Thus after the murder of *Umar b. al-Khattab* the people of the district of *Shāpūr* rose and *Kazarun* was engulfed in rebellion. In the early months of the caliphate of *Uthmān*, when *Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās* for the second time made governor of *Kūfa*, the people of *Hamadān* and *Ray* staged an insurrection against the Arabs. *Yazdgard's* last refuge was *Marv*, whose governor was the *Māhōē Sūrī* already mentioned, who seems to have belonged to the great Suren family.

The monarch required of him taxes fallen into arrears. The governor incited some Hephthalites under their ruler *Nīzak* against him, and when the unfortunate monarch learned of the plot, fleeing the city he fell the victim of a nameless assassin in a mill in 31/651. Iran's submission to Islam, moreover, was only a very gradual process. Although the majority of them by becoming Muslim gained their freedom. But it was a qualified freedom, for they became *mawālī* (clients) of the Arabs, freed slaves but still dependants who, as second-class citizens, could be exposed to illtreatment and the contumely of the Arab Muslims. When the Sasanian government fell, people who in accordance with the precepts of the *Qur'ān* were recognized as "People of the Book", that is to say the Jews and Christians, could continue in their former faith as *dhimmīs*, members of a recognized confession, on payment of the *jizya*.

Moreover Islam for them spelt liberation from forced labour and military service, which in Iran formerly they had been bound to perform. They enjoyed more liberty in the performance of their religions than had been accorded them under the regime of the Zoroastrian clergy. In return for the *jizya* Islam took them under its protection. Muslim treatment of the Zoroastrians varied in accordance with the policies of the caliphs and attitudes of different governors. After the time of *Uthmān* the *dhimmīs* in Iraq and Iran lived fairly comfortably. But the Umayyad governor *Hajjaj*, who went so far as to exact the *jizya* from monks because he was of the opinion that people became monks to avoid the tax. Muslim treatment of Magians in the Umayyad period, particularly in *Fars* and *Khurasan*, gradually became increasingly contemptuous and intolerable. It was for this reason that a group of them in order to preserve their ancient religion, by way of the Persian Gulf, there to found a colony in India.

The adherents of other Old Iranian religions, such as Manichaeism and even *Mazdakism*, found in the time of the Arab invasion more scope than they had enjoyed under the Sasanians for the practice of what had to the latter been heterodoxies, to be suppressed. With the death of *Uthmān* the centre of the caliphate moved from *Medina* to *Kūfa* in Iraq, a city which had been built near to the ancient *Hira* and half of whose inhabitants were non-Arabs. *Ali b. Abī Tālib*, the new caliph, had a considerable following in Iraq both from among the *Yemenī* Arabs and from among non-Arab Muslim elements, those who were known as *mawālī*. The caliph *Ali*, unlike *Uthmān*, was sympathetic towards the *mawālī* and treated them with respect, to the extent of arousing complaints on this score from his compatriots.

At the bottom of the *Shī'ī* reverence for the *imām* - the Prophet's successor - and the conception that the leadership of the community was a divine and extraordinary office, lay the Iranians belief that the *farr-i īzādī*, the Divine Power or *Aura*, should be an essential attribute of the exercise of sovereignty. In contrast the *Khārijites* may be said to have been a "puritan" party in Islam, entertaining extreme democratic views verging on the anarchistic. The *mawālī* habit of seeking refuge from Arab oppression in the encampments of the *Khārijites* and joining in their fighting continued until the end of Umayyad times. Similarly in the *Shī'ī* struggles against the *Umayyads*, the *mawālī* played a part. Although in the rising of *Hujar b. Adī* (51/671) and that of *Husain b. Alī* at *Taff* (61/680) the complexion was completely Arab, with the insurrection of *Mukhtar* the *mawālī* were with the *Shī'īs*; in *Mukhtar's* army, as is well attested, were twenty thousand of the *Hamra*, the *Kūfan mawālī*, all of Iranian origin. *Mukhtar's* pretext for rising against the Umayyads was to exact revenge from the slayers of *Husain b. Ali*. At the time, however, even the *Shī'īs* were doubtful of his sincerity. *Mukhtar* exhibited a special skill in gaining the support of the *mawālī*, and their numbers in his forces became so great that the movement might be accounted a movement against the Arabs of Iraq. The *Kūfan* Arabs were disconcerted by his special regard for the *mawālī* elements; the complaint gained ground that in his camp not a word of Arabic could be heard. The important result achieved by *Mukhtar's* insurrection was the emergence of the *mawālī* in Iraq as a fighting force to be reckoned with. For example, a few years later, *Zaid b. Alī*, *Husain b. Alī's* grandson, come out against the Umayyads. A short time afterwards, in the year 125/742-3, his son, *Yahyā b. Zaid*, rebelled in *Khurasan*. The Umayyads, having regard to the extraordinary way in which the realms of Islam had expanded and to the variety of elements which now composed the Muslim community, became aware that religion alone was not sufficient as a base for a great empire; some kind of national feeling was also required. They placed the caliphate on a new kind of footing, changing it into a government - an Arab government - which depended upon the protection of the Arab tribes. Nevertheless *Mu'awiya* made the caliphate like kingship, hereditary in his own family, and gradually by the introduction of various ceremonies and types of etiquette, transformed it into something much more resembling an Arab monarchy, its *raison d'etre* the defence of the Arab tribes. Enough has been said to illustrate the harsh treatment of the *mawālī* in the matter of taxation by *Umayyad* governors who tended to make no distinction between Muslim converts and the *dhimmīs*.

Indeed, during the century that had elapsed since the conquest of the *Jibal* and *Khurasan*, the Umayyads had changed the Islamic theocracy into something that could only be described as an Arab government, and the enthusiasm and idealism of Islam had been so much weakened that a rising of a group of discontented people in *Khurasan* under the title of protecting the Faith and the Family of the Prophet was sufficient to overthrow the Arab government.

After the conquest of Iran by Arabs, the *dihqans*, or landed aristocracy, of Sasanian times remained under the new Islamic dispensation as the government's representatives in rural areas. From the *dhimmīs*, besides *kharāj*, which only applied to those holding land, was also taken the *jizya*, so long as they remained non-Muslim. *Hajjāj b. Yūsuf*, the harsh governor of Iraq, returned to their villages by force those *mawālī* who fled their lands. In addition he used to extract from them the *jizya*, illegally, of course, since according to Islamic law they were exempt from this on conversion.

ABBASID CALIPHATE in Iran: C. E. Bosworth.

The aim of the present article is not to give a chronological history of Persia under Abbasid rule but to examine some of the main trends affecting the political, religious, and cultural development of Persia during the period when Abbasid rule was effective there - essentially from the middle of the 2nd / 8th century to the opening decades of the 4th /10th century. The establishment of the 'Abbasid dynasty in 132/750 was, of course, an event especially closely linked with Persia; for the 'Abbasid *da'va* or propaganda made in the name of "a member of the House of the Prophet who shall be pleasing to everyone" (*al-reza men āl Moḥammad*) had its origins and first successes in eastern Persia.

At least one of the principal agents of the revolution was a Persian, Abū Moslem *Ḳorāsānī* (q.v.). (The ethnic origin of the other great leader of the *da'va*, Abū Salama *Ḳallāl*, is obscure; but, since he was a freedman or *mawlā*, the possibility of a Persian origin for him too can not be excluded.) The town and oasis of Marv in northern Khorasan, far from the bases of Omayyad power in Syria and Iraq's garrison cities, was the epicenter of this 'Abbasid propaganda; and it was from here that the victorious forces of Abū Moslem marched westward via Ray and *Jebāl* to the plains of Iraq and the defeat of Omayyad forces there.

Thus an older generation of scholars made an apparently obvious deduction, that the 'Abbasid revolution was more than a mere change of dynasty, the replacement in the caliphate of one Meccan family, the Banū Omayya, by another related one from the common stock of Abd Manāf, the Banū Hāšem, but rather the outcome of a struggle for the whole future orientation of Islamic culture, religious policy, and intellectual development. The old Arab kingdom of the Rightly Guided caliphs and the Omayyads, with its domination of the conquered lands by a military aristocracy of free Arabs (the *moqātele*), its democratic caliph presiding over what has been called a "supertribe" of the Muslims like a Beduin *sayyed* in the Arabian desert, and its social subordination of the *mawālī* or clients from the conquered races (a good proportion of whom were Persians who had come over to the new faith), was now swept away. Under the 'Abbasids, it was the Khorasanian guards of the caliphs who had the dominant place in the army; and Persian officials and secretaries, as well as military commanders, played an increased role in shaping and guiding the state apparatus. Prominent Persian families filled the vizierate and the chief secretarial posts for long periods.

The caliphate lost its democratic character and assumed something of the nature of a despotic theocracy; access to the sovereign became more difficult, and the pomp and ceremony which we often consider a concomitant of oriental monarchy, and which the Persians had already known for over a millennium, increased. It is true that Arabic retained its prestige as the language of all Islamic literature and scholarship, while the New Persian disappeared underground, as it were, for literary purposes, until the late 3rd / 9th century. But the spirit and form of certain genres of Arabic literature, above all that of *adab* (the literature of polite society, q.v.), became clearly imbued with Persian influences. Subsequent writers of the 'Abbasid period felt something of all this. Thus in the 4th/10th century it was remarked of the second 'Abbasid caliph, Manšūr (136-58/754-75): "He was the first caliph who utilized his freedmen and slaves (*mawālīyaho wa-ḡelmānaho*) for official posts, appointing them to important offices and preferring them over the Arabs. Other, later caliphs of his line followed the example; hence the Arabs lost the chief commands, their preeminence disappeared, and their previous dignities vanished" (Mas'ūdī, *Morūj* VIII, pp. 292-93; idem, ed. Pellat, V, p. 3446). It is not surprising that Julius Wellhausen, some seventy years ago, saw the superseding of the Omayyads as the "decline and fall of the Arab kingdom."

This process Arnold Toynbee has more recently viewed as the 'Abbasid caliphate reconstituting the ancient "Syriac society," one which embraced both the Semitic peoples of the Near East and the Iranian ones; while Gaston Wiet has spoken of "new empire byzantine in form Omayyads and new empire Sasanids in form Abbasids." Indeed, in the 19th century the change of regime had even been viewed in more cosmic terms, as a victory of Aryan Iranians over Semitic Arabs. Recent research on the origins of the 'Abbasid *da'va* has not supported such dichotomies but rather has supported a more graduated picture of the evolution of early Islamic political and cultural life. The development of a divinely buttressed theocratic caliphate certainly took place under the Abbasids, and it owed much of its ethos and its trappings to Persian models. But this was perhaps a reaffirmation of the theocratic monarchy which had been common to nearly all the ancient Near East, from Egypt to Persia, with the exception of the Arabian Peninsula.

Moreover, these trends in the caliphate toward a more centralized state apparatus are already discernible in the later Omayyad period under such a forceful ruler as Hešām (105-25/724-43), and would probably have continued inexorably as tighter control over an overexpanded empire became necessary. The part of ethnic Persians in the actual revolution has also been subjected to close scrutiny by recent authorities such as M. A. Shaban. The origins of messianic Shi'ism among the Arabs of Kūfa and lower Iraq have long been recognized, and it seems too that the representatives or *noqabā* (sing. *naqīb*) of the 'Abbasid secret organization in Persia in the 740s were mainly Arabs. The revolution achieved its first successes in the Marv oasis, where many Arab tribesmen, especially those accounted Yemeni in genealogy, had settled and had intermarried with and become partly assimilated to the indigenous Persian population. (These seem to be the *Ahl-e Baytal-taqādom*, "early settlers," of Ṭabarī; 2,200 of them joined Abū Moslem in 129/747 when first he unfurled the 'Abbasid black banners in a village of the oasis settled by Arabs of Kozā'a.) Their dissatisfaction with the Omayyad regime arose from the fact of their increased identification with the economic and agrarian interests of local Khorasanian society, their reluctance to rally to the colors for arduous campaigns in places like Central Asia and Afghanistan, and their new, unfavorable fiscal position, since they were subject to the local Persian landowners, the *dehqāns*, who collected the taxation for the area as a whole. Against this discrimination (as the proud Arabs saw it), Abū Moslem, whose own early background and ethnic origins remain very obscure, emphasized the common bond of Khorasanian Muslim identity among all who supported the 'Abbasid cause, whether partly assimilated Arabs or Persian *mavālī*.

When he began assembling his forces, he registered on his *dīvān* all participants in the *da'va* by locality and not by tribe. The movement which brought the Abbasids to power may be regarded as a general, Khorasanian one, in which adherence to Islam and to the claims of the house of Abbās were the criteria for membership. (The views of those who held a differing view of Hāšemī rights, as properly centering on the house of Alī, were soon set aside by the victorious partisans of the Abbasids.) For some eighty years, the Khorasanian guards or *ḵond* of the caliphs were to be the military support of the regime from their bases in the heartland of the caliphate, Iraq, while the old Arab tribal levies fell into disuse. These forces from eastern Persia were ethnically mixed, and “Khorasanian” referred to place of origin rather than to race. Their identification with the interests of the new state was fully recognized by the ‘Abbasids, under whom they rejoiced in the designation of *abnā’ al-dawla*, “Sons of the Dynasty.” In the *Resāla fi’l-ṣaḥāba* of Ebn al-Moqaffa’, we find explicit recognition of their mixed nature, comprising imperious leaders and turbulent soldiery, accompanied by a paean to their military qualities: These soldiers [sc. The *ḵond* of the men from Khorasan] are an army whose like has never been known in Islam, and who possess such qualities that God, if he wills, can bring their usefulness to the pitch of perfection. They possess discipline and obedience, are well regarded by the populace at large, are honest and chaste, avoid evildoing and show themselves submissive to their leaders” .Their services contributed much to the victory of Ma’ mūn, who commanded the human and material resources of Persia from his governorate in Marv, over his brother Amīn in 198/813, the latter’s cause being identified with that of the Arabs of Iraq and Syria. Only when Motaṣem (218-27/833-42) expanded the recruitment of professional soldiers and slaves from the Turkish steppes and from North Africa were the Khorasanian guards eclipsed. The migration westward of Khorasanian soldiers, both Arab and Persian, as the military supporters of the ‘Abbasid regime, was paralleled by an increase in the numbers of Persians within the ranks of the administration of the caliphate. Now that the Islamic empire had in general reached the limits of its geographical expansion, a complex bureaucracy became necessary for directing the *dīvāns* or government departments of the central government and for keeping up links with local governors in the provinces; thus Manṣūr developed and expanded the *barīd* or postal and intelligence system to a new pitch of efficiency. In Iraq and Persia, the role of Persian *mavālī* was notable in this service.

Through the expanding class of secretaries (*kottāb*), many of whom were imbued with the lore of the older Sasanian *dabīrān* or secretaries, certain Persian concepts in administration (*tadbīr*) and in polite society and literature (*adab*) gradually became part of the common fabric of Islamic culture. One illustration of this assimilation is the subsequently developing literary genre of “mirrors for princes,” with its antecedents in the Persian *andarz nāmas*, books of counsel. The men whom the first Abbasids took as their chief executives naturally tended to come from the ranks of the adherents to their cause in the revolutionary period, such as the Barmakī family, or else from socially obscure personal freedmen of the caliphs, such as Manṣūr’s *mawlā* Rabī b. Yūnos.

It is now that the specific office of the vizierate develops under the explicit name of *vezāra*. Though formerly it was surmised that the institution and its name were direct borrowings from Sasanian Persian practice, under which it was believed that a chief justiciar (cf. Mid. Pers. *wizīr* “decision”) had existed, it now appears that the office has its roots in early Arabic practice; already in Koran, Hārūn or Aaron is described as the *vazīr* “helper” of Mūsā or Moses. More relevant to our present purpose is the subsequent history of the institution and its development to such a position that, when the caliph personally was a weak character, as happened frequently in the late 3rd/8th and 4th/10th centuries, the vizier might well become the real wielder of power in the state. Of the many Persian holders of the office, the Barmakids (q.v.) spring to mind first of all. Influential during the first Abbasid reigns, for seventeen years of Hārūn al-Rašīd’s reign (170-87/786-803) they held the substance of power.

They left behind, after their sudden fall, a semilegendary reputation as Maecenases and as furtherers of Persian domination within the state. The rise of the family well illustrates how participation in the events of the Abbasid revolution could give an impetus which might take a family to the highest echelons of power. From an origin in the Buddhism of Bactria or northern Afghanistan, where the family had been hereditary custodians of the Buddhist shrine and monastery at Balk, they became clients or *mavālī* of the Arab tribe of Azd. Kāled b. Barmak distinguished himself as a lieutenant of Abū Moslem and then filled various high offices in the central government and in the provinces under the first four Abbasid caliphs, thus launching his sons into commanding positions during the first part of Hārūn al-Rašīd’s reign.

After the dismissal of the Barmakids, their protégé, Faʿl b. Sahl b. Zādān farroḳ (q.v.; d. 202/818), briefly achieved a comparable role in the counsels of Maʿmūn; of clearly Persian origin, as his grandfather's name shows, he had an Iraqi *mawlā* background, but made himself so valuable to Maʿmūn after the resolution of the fratricidal war with Amīn in Maʿmūn's favor that he was awarded the title *duʿl-rīāsātayn*, that is, supreme command in both the civil and military spheres, as vizier and amir. Such recognition was perhaps not surprising; it was a time of civil warfare when the Arabic poets of Baghdad represented Maʿmūn and Faʿl as enemies of the Arabs and, by inference, of Islam itself, within which the Arabs were the nation supremely favored by God. This Persian influence exercised at the center of Abbasid power, above all in Iraq, did not mean that Persia itself was quiescent and submissive to Abbasid rule during these early centuries. In their ruthless rise to power, the Abbasids made many enemies, elbowing people aside or else using and then discarding them. There were, inevitably, Alid claimants who refused to accept the permanent exclusion of their family from the fruits of victory over the unrighteous Omayyads and from the imamate which they conceived as their own possession by a divine award. They burst out periodically into rebellions, in both the Arab and the Persian lands, which the Abbasid forces usually suppressed without much difficulty. Nevertheless, the existence of this irreconcilable core of Shiite adherents, their numbers now including various millenarian and messianic elements which also felt cheated by the removal of Abū Moslem and by the Abbasids' failure to establish a reign of justice on earth, posed a continued threat to the political and religious stability of the state. The Abbasids' inability to establish a *modus Vivendi* with the Shia (despite the conciliatory policies of various individual caliphs) must have contributed to the ultimate disintegration of their secular power. Within Persia itself, the survival of a Shii nucleus helped the formation in certain towns, such as Qom, Ray, Qazvīn, Nīšāpūr, of Shii and Sayyed communities; these were to keep Shiism moderately prosperous and alive in Persia until the triumphant Safavids, several centuries later, imposed Shiism on the Sunnite majority as the official creed of the whole land.

THE SAFAVID DYNASTY: R.M.SAVORY

In the summer of 906-7/1501, after his victory over the *Aq Quyunlu*, *Ismaʿil* entered the Turkmen capital *Tabriz*, ascended the throne and took the title of *Shah*. He thereby founded the rule of the Safavid dynasty in Iran which was to last until 1148/1736.

The historical achievement of the *Safavids* was to establish a strong, enduring state in Iran after centuries of foreign rule and a lengthy period of political fragmentation. Despite all their military and political attainments in the late 8th/14th and 9th/15th centuries — for example, the way in which they maintained their independence *vis-a-vis* such powerful neighbours as the Ottomans, the *Mamluks* and the *Timurids*, or founded new states culminating in the kingdoms of *Jahan Shah* and *Uzun Hasan* - not one of their rulers succeeded in establishing a lasting political structure. Not until the *Safavid* era did Iran witness the rise of a state similar in importance to the *Ottoman* Empire or the empire of the Egyptian *Mamluks*. For more than two centuries the *Safavid* kingdom prolonged the older political and cultural tradition of Persia and endowed the country and its peoples with a unique character of historic significance, which has in part endured even up to the present day. Its typical features include the revival of the monarchist tradition, the acquisition of historically justified territory, the creation of a new military and political structure, the spread of a *Shi'i* creed as the state religion, the Iranicisation of Persian Islam, the continued progress of modern Persian towards becoming the language of politics and administration in modern Iranian history, and the development of a specific culture which reached its peak in architecture (still visible today), but which also produced remarkable results in the intellectual life of the Persian nation. The importance of this dynasty is not confined to the national history of Persia: it was the *Safavids* who led Iran back on to the stage of world history. Who was this *Isma'il*, who made such an impact on the Persia of his time and whose influence was still felt centuries later? His personality presents difficulties to the historian which cannot be resolved adequately by reference to either his biography or his career. His father, *Shaikh Haidar*, and his grandfather *Junaid* were as notably enterprising characters and politically ambitious representatives of the *Safaviyya*, a widespread *sufi* order centred on *Ardabil* in the south-western coastal region of the Caspian Sea. The order is named after *Shaikh Safi al-Din*, whose lifespan (650-735/1252-1334) coincides almost exactly with the Persian Mongol empire of the *Il-Khans*. Round about 1300, perhaps while his spiritual leader was still alive, *Shaikh Safi* founded his own order in *Ardabil*, the *Safaviyya*. He never in fact conquered the world, but *Shaikh Zahid's* assessment of his other qualities proved accurate. After his entry into *Tabriz*, *Shah Isma'il* immediately proceeded to institute the *Shi'i* creed as the state religion. Until it is proved otherwise, we can assume that he took this decision out of religious conviction, not out of political expediency.

We must not underestimate the importance for *Isma'il's* religious beliefs of his stay in *Lahijan* which followed his escape from the soldiers of *Sultan Rustam Aq Quyunlu*. The messianic spirit which inspired *Isma'il* had its pendant in the religious mood of the people. Many seem to have had an apocalyptic awareness at this time. In the existing political and religious situation the appearance and early successes of *Isma'il* must have had extraordinary results. *Isma'il*, who ascribed to himself divine qualities as the representative of the Twelve Imams, was also the head of a theocracy. *Isma'il* was grand master (*pir, murshid, murshid-i kamil* of the *Safaviyya*.) His adherents were therefore called *murid* and *sufi* or *ghazi*. Their external appearance was again characterised by the *taj- haidari*, the turban with twelve red gores which had been introduced by *Haidar* but which had grown less popular after his death. Thereby the name *Qizilbash* became common usage. As far as can be ascertained, the overwhelming majority of *Isma'il's* militant supporters belonged to Turkmen tribes. Reports of their fanatical conduct in battle indicate that this cry truly conveyed their inner conviction, that they cared nothing for their own safety in war, either because they believed themselves to be invulnerable or because they positively longed for death as a direct access to paradise. In a relatively short period *Isma'il* had won control over both the territory of the *Aq Quyunlu* and the rest of Persia, with the exception of a few small areas. Apart from the *Uzbek khan Muhammad Shaibani*, he had not come across any truly dangerous opponent. The revolt of the Anatolian *Qizilbash* contributed substantially to a turn of events which was highly unpropitious for the rebels: under pressure from his generals *Sultan Bayezid* abdicated in favour of his son *Selim*, who ascended the throne on 7 Safar 918/24 April 1512. The new sultan was not only energetic and determined, but was also a bitter enemy of *Shah Isma'il*. He understood the true magnitude of the threat to his empire from the *Qizilbash*, for as governor of *Trebizond* he had watched from relatively close range the rise of the young *Isma'il*, the orphaned son of a religious fanatic and political adventurer, to become the invincible God-King of Persia. As soon as *Selim* I had prevailed over his brothers, he ordered a pitiless repression of the Anatolian *Qizilbash*. *Isma'il* did not avoid doing battle, although he must have known that the sultan commanded greatly superior forces. In the battle of *Chaldiran* on 2 *Rajab* 920/23 August 1514 the *shah* suffered a shattering defeat. He himself managed to escape to his capital *Tabriz* with a small band of followers, but his army was beaten and many of his generals were killed. However thorough *Isma'il's* defeat had been, the Turkish Sultan was in no position to exploit his victory properly.

He pursued the shah and captured *Tabriz*, but a week later, on 13 September, he had to withdraw again westwards after failing, despite their impressive victory, to persuade his officers to winter in *Tabriz*, let alone advance on the Iranian highlands as would have been necessary if the pursuit of the shah was to be continued. For *Shah Isma'il Chaldiran* did not mean merely the loss of a battle and of extensive tracts of land. In the eyes of his followers he had also lost the nimbus of invincibility. There existed a sharp distinction in the Safavid empire before *Shah Abbas I* (995-1038/ 1587—1629) between military posts which were reserved for the Turkish tribal leaders, and civil and religious posts which were filled by members of the native aristocracy, that is by Persians, often called *Tajik*. It can be shown that under *Isma'il* Iranian dignitaries used their influence to restrict the once well-nigh unlimited power of the Turkish amirs, something which would scarcely have been possible without the agreement or acquiescence of the ruler. The foundation of an empire whose frontiers corresponded approximately to those of present-day Persia, the political organisation of these lands, a certain internal consolidation, and protection from foreign enemies - such is *Isma'il's* incontestable achievement. The latter had lost much of his earlier self-confidence after his defeat at *Chaldiran* which deprived him of his aura of invincibility. Evidently in connection with this, there occurred a certain retreat from the theocratic system of government of the early years -and above all the attempt to circumscribe the power of the Turkmens by appointing Iranian dignitaries to the highest administrative and military posts. *Shah Tahmasp I* (930-84/15 24-76), *Isma'il's* eldest son, was only ten years old when he ascended the throne. At that age, clearly, he could not exercise any great influence on the government and to begin with other elements gained the upper hand with the result that it rapidly became evident on what weak foundations the *Safavid* Empire still rested. The internal situation was marked by immense difficulties, among them the lust for power and the unbridled tribalism of the *Qizilbash*, which was henceforth to remain the main problem of *Safavid* domestic politics for decades. Immediately after *Tahmasp's* accession, and again on successive occasions thereafter, disputes and intrigues among the *Turkmen* tribes crippled the military strength of the *Safavids* in the face of such powerful foes as the *Ottomans* in the west and the *Uzbeks* in the east. The first decade of his reign, the period from 930/1524 to 940/1533, has the appearance of an interregnum during which power was wielded not by the shah himself but by *Qizilbash* amirs. *Tahmasp* was right: his most dangerous enemies were the Ottomans, not the *Uzbeks*. Naturally, he was not to know that his opponent *Suleyman the Magnificent* (926-74/1520-66) would go down in history as the most important sultan of the Ottoman Empire.

Only with the Austrian ceasefire of 14 January 1533 and the peace treaty which quickly followed did a really serious situation arise for Persia, resulting in the first of three Turco-Persian wars waged during *Tahmasp's* reign. Nevertheless, *Tahmasp* was able to reverse all of *Suleyman's* gains as soon as the latter retreated into Mesopotamia. The repeated capture of his capital by the Turks must have demonstrated to the shah its exposed location. He therefore decided in 955/1548 to transfer his seat to *Qazvin*. Admittedly the Turkish attacks had deprived *Tahmasp* of *Baghdad* and Mesopotamia, together with the fortress of *Van*. But he had been able to prevent any further loss of territory, above all the loss of *Azarbaijan*. *Tahmasp's* death triggered off a series of dramatic events. Prince *Haidar* considered himself not without good reason as the heir appointed by *Tahmasp*, but did not even get a chance to take power:

he fell into the hands of his opponents and was immediately murdered. Thereafter the way was open for his brother to ascend the throne as *Isma'il II*. The eighteen months of his rule constituted a reign of terror unusual even by oriental standards. *Isma'il II* met his death on 13 *Ramadan* 985/24 November 1577 in an unexpected and mysterious fashion. Some of *Isma'il's* relatives had escaped the systematic elimination of the royal princes. These included his eldest brother *Muhammad Khudabanda* and four of his sons. When he moved from *Shiraz*, where he had escaped the fate of his brothers, to *Qazvin* and ascended the throne on 3 *Dhu'l-Hijja* 985/11 February 1578, the land was delivered from a harrowing tyranny, but the ten years of his reign brought little joy to his people. The principal feature of the new *shah's* whole reign was the quarrelling and intrigues of the *Qizilbash* amirs that had gone on for decades and were only quelled when a particular ruler was able to counter them either by force or by cunning. The bloody quarrels among the amirs, the murder of the queen and *Mirza Salman*, and the attempted secession in *Khurasan* were all merely symptomatic of this crisis. Since the *shah* had left the capital with the crown prince and his military retinue, *Murshid Quli Khan* ventured to ride with *Abbas* and a small escort - not more than a few hundred horsemen - to *Qazvin* in order to make his ward *shah* in place of his father. When he ascended the throne in *Qazvin* on 16 October 1587, *Abbas* became the fifth shah of the Safavid dynasty. *Muhammad Khudabanda* did not challenge the usurper even after returning to the capital. He continued to live in *Qazvin* for a time, but was then banished from court, a measure probably connected with an attempt to restore him to the throne. The most urgent problems confronting him were the same as those which had constantly recurred in previous years.

In the first place there was the internal problem of the *Turkmen* tribalism which had been fostered by the protracted weakness of the central government. Through determined and consistently applied policies *Shah Abbas* I overcame the crisis in which the country had found itself at the beginning of his reign. It took him many years and he repeatedly suffered grave setbacks. Yet his eventual success, like his personality, left a deep impression on his people. The memory of this particular shah survived in Iran for generations and even to this day it has not completely disappeared. The new shah tackled the Turkmen amirs from the outset in a relentless and uncompromising fashion. *Shah Abbas's* reign saw the beginning of the end for the *Turkmens*, the decline of their military and political influence and the eclipse of their social status. After they had been neutralised the structure of the *Safavid* Empire was fundamentally transformed. *Shah Abbas* could only achieve a lasting success by creating a counterbalance to the *Qizilbash* on the one hand and by compensating for the loss of military striking power on the other. He employed various means to this end. One was a procedure associated with the term *shahsavani* which aimed at polarizing feeling among the *Qizilbash*. *Ottoman* troops who had already invaded large areas of Persia in the reign of *Muhammad Khudabanda* — parts of *Azərbayjan* along with *Tabriz*, parts of *Georgia* and *Qarabagh*, the city of *Erivan*, *Shirvan* and *Khuzistan* — extended their conquest of Persian territory still further after the accession of the new shah. *Baghdad* was lost to them in 995/1587 and shortly afterwards they took *Ganja*. Negotiations with the Porte led to the Peace of *Istanbul* on 21 March 1590. This put an end to twelve years of hostilities between the *Ottomans* and the *Safavids*. The conditions imposed on the shah were unusually harsh. They included the loss of *Azərbayjan* and *Qarabagh* together with *Ganja*, of *Shirvan* and *Daghistan*, of the *Safavid* possessions in *Georgia*, of parts of *Kurdistan* and *Luristan*, of *Baghdad* and *Mesopotamia*. Yet the fundamentally unacceptable terms militated against a final peace settlement, and relations with the *Ottomans* were to occupy *Abbas* for the rest of his life. To begin with, however, he turned his attention to the *Uzbeks*, who had been occupying *Khurasan* for the past ten years. Disputes concerning the succession in *Transoxiana* favoured his undertaking, and in 1007/1598-9 he reconquered *Herat* and *Mashhad*, also extending his control to include *Balkh*, *Marv* and *Astarabad*. With the successes in the east the danger of a war on two fronts was checked, so that even by 1012/1603—4 the *shah* was able to risk a confrontation with the *Ottomans*.

He now reconquered *Azarbaijan*, *Nakhchivan* and *Erivan*. These had been preceded by further extensions of territory: in 1010/ 1601—2 the island of *Bahrain* had been annexed, and in 1016/1607-8 *Shirvan* had been reconquered. In 1031/1622 he succeeded - though only with the help of the English - in driving the Portuguese out of *Hurmuz*. Iran now enjoyed the greatest territorial extent it ever reached under the *Safavids*. *Isfahan*, which took the place of *Qazvin* as the new capital of the country in 1006/1598 - *Qazvin* having in its half a century as the metropolis undergone no significant development as a city - now became, as it were, the symbol of resurgence. The Iran of the end of the 10th/16th and the first quarter of the 11th/17th century: the rebirth of the Safavid state out of chaos; the emergence of a state enjoying high regard abroad among the powers of the Near East which had already begun to expand into Persian territory ; widespread revival of economic life; the development of an indigenous cultural style, accompanied by an admirable flowering of the arts - all this was the work of *Shah Abbas I*. One fateful cause of the later decline of his dynasty and its power was indeed the work of *Shah Abbas* himself, namely his neglect of the succession. The elimination of royal princes, whether by blinding them or immuring them in the harem, their exclusion from the affairs of state and from contact with the leading aristocracy of the empire and the generals, all the abuses of the princes education, which were nothing new but which became the normal practice with *Abbas* at the court of *Isfahan*, effectively put a stop to the training of competent successors, that is to say, efficient princes prepared to meet the demands of ruling as kings. The result was that from then on the princes who came to the throne had from their earliest youth been ruined by living in the women's quarters, by indulgence shown towards them by all around, by courtiers, eunuchs and concubines, and were not only quite useless in the performance of their duties but often totally uninterested. When *Shah Abbas* died at his summer palace at *Ashraf* in *Mazandaran* on 24 *Jumada I* 1038/19 January 1629 none of his brothers and none of his sons was available to take on the succession. Those who were still alive had been blinded and were thus unsuitable to rule. He had appointed his grandson *Sam Mirza*, a son of the murdered *Safi Mirza* as his successor, although in a not entirely unambiguous fashion. Three weeks before the court entourage returned, he mounted the throne in accordance with the wishes of his grandfather, adopting the royal title *Shah Safi* (I). When *Shah Safi* died unexpectedly on 12 *Safar* 1052/12 May 1642 at the early age of thirty-one, he left behind him a country whose territory was quite considerably smaller than it had been at his succession, but which still embraced all the heartlands of Persia.

More significant was the fact that at the time of his death the country was not threatened by any serious external dangers, and especially that it was no longer at risk from the Ottoman Empire. This fairly positive state of affairs, however, could hardly be credited to *Shah Safi*, but rather to various dignitaries in his empire distinguished by special competence, particularly the Grand Vizier *Saru Taqi*. In *Safi's* character we see clearly manifested some of the weak points in the structure of the *Safavid* Empire which were to play a fateful role in its decline and final demise. These were especially the lack of preparation of the crown prince for the position of ruler and the unlimited power of a despotic monarch totally orientated on himself, and - since the time of *Shah Abbas I* - further strengthened by the exclusion of the *Qizilbash* amirs and the increasing centralization of the state. A figure possessing the personal qualities of a *Shah Abbas* could exploit such a position of omnipotence to the best advantage of Iran and its people. A man as weak as *Safi* in mind and character - a man who was also physically weak - was not equal to the tasks involved in the office. *Safi's* son and successor, Prince Sultan *Muhammad Mirza*, ascended the throne on 16 Safar 1052/15 May 1642 with the name *Abbas II*. Certainly there could be no question, to begin with, of his influencing the affairs of state, since the new shah was not quite ten years old at the time. Since *Saru Taqi* remained in office as grand vizier, it was inevitable that his should be the authoritative voice in government. A dominant feature of the reign of *Abbas II* is the indefatigable concern he personally showed for the affairs of state. This did not change even when, in 1073/ at the end of 1662, he displayed the first symptoms of what was to prove a long and painful illness. At the age of thirty-three, in the autumn of 1077/1666, probably during the night of 26 *Rabi II*/25-6 October, *Abbas* passed away in *Khusrauabad*, a small mountain castle between *Damghan* and *Gurgan*. His body was brought to *Qum*, where he was buried next to his father *Safi*. Not without reason is his name often mentioned in the same breath as those of *Isma'il I* and *Abbas I* as the three outstanding ruling figures of the *Safavids*. Because he might otherwise have been just the man to prevent the downfall of the *Safavid* kingdom. *Abbas II* adhered to the traditional conception of the divine kingship and sacred status of the *Safavids* and did not hesitate to dispute the views of those theologians who argued that until the return of the departed Imam, i.e. the *Mahdi*, temporal power belonged by right not to the *Safavid* shah but to the *mujtahid* of the time. On the other hand, he was concerned to foster good relations with the *Shi'i* jurists, which explains in part why he chose his sisters husbands from amongst their number.

The desire to consolidate his own power, for decades the overriding concern of the *Safavid* monarchs, prompted *Abbas II* to have his nephews killed and his four brothers blinded. Nor was he content to follow the practice hitherto customary at the court, of rendering the cornea opaque, but ordered the actual removal of their eyeballs. A clearer image of the ruler's personality emerges when one considers his attitude towards things spiritual, intellectual and artistic. He valued the company of intellectuals and scholars as well as that of dervishes, on whom, incidentally, he lavished considerable sums. With the death of *Abbas II*, who for all his faults was a just and magnanimous - if not a liberal - monarch, Persia came once and for all to the end of a long period of peace and prosperity. Problems began to arise even on the question of the succession, for which the late shah had made no provision. Was the eldest son, the approximately nineteen- years - old *Safi Mirza* to succeed his father in accordance with the established custom of the *Safavids*, even though he had not been on particularly good terms with *Abbas*?

Or would the throne fall to his favourite son *Hamza Mirza*, a mere seven-year-old?

Despite initial support for *Hamza Mirza's* claim on the part of the Grand Vizier *Mirza Muhammad Mahdi*, the leading figures of the realm, assembled where *Abbas* had died, decided in favour of the older prince's succession, merely on the basis of representations made to them by his personal tutor and confidant, the eunuch *Mirza Aqa Mubarak*. Subsequently he ascended the throne on 1 November 1666 with the title *Safi II*. The new shah, the son of a *Circassian* slave called *Nakihat Khanum*, had been raised, according to what by now had become the firmly established custom, in the wives quarters, that is in the sole company of the ladies of the harem and eunuchs, without the slightest preparation for the throne. He lacked not only experience and observation of the practice of government but also those excellent human qualities his father had possessed, although he shared with the latter such vices as excessive drinking, cruelty, principally when under the influence of alcohol, and a tendency towards immoderate sexual indulgence. The very beginnings of *Safi II's* rule in Iran were anything but encouraging. Shortly after he came to the throne, prices soared in the capital and there were outbreaks of famine and disease in the country. Since all was not well with the ruler's health either, presumably because of the dissolute life he led, one of the physicians who were striving in vain to cure him hit on the idea that all these misfortunes - not only the shah's sickliness but all the untoward occurrences in the land - must stem from a miscalculation of the horoscope determining the date of his accession to the throne.

It did not take long to find a court astrologer who confirmed this assumption, and the leading figures of the realm together with the shah duly concluded that the remedy to the situation lay in repeating the ceremony of accession. A new horoscope indicated 20 March 1668, at nine o'clock in the morning, as the most propitious time. The second coronation, which was again observed in every ceremonial detail, was supposed to betoken a completely fresh start. Thus, on this occasion, the shah ascended the throne under a new name also, that of *Shah Sulaiman*, by which he is known in history. However, neither the renewed accession to the throne nor the adoption of a new name by the sovereign made for an improvement in the fortunes of the Safavid kingdom. The ruler was simply not a man of substance. Shah *Sulaiman* ruled for twenty-eight years, until 1105/1694. To judge from the observations of European travellers, the royal household was maintained with a pomp and splendour no less lavish than that which characterised earlier Safavid rulers. On 29 July 1694 *Shah Sulaiman* died in Isfahan at the age of forty-six. According to one version he suffered a stroke during a particularly heavy drinking bout. The brief sketch of his reign we have just drawn contains ample evidence of his failure as a ruler. The picture of *Sulaiman* the human being is no less shameful. Two instances of his insulting behavior towards his Grand Vizier *Shaikh Ali Zangana* will suffice to make the point. On one occasion, after forcing the grand vizier to imbibe intoxicating liquor, he spent hours revelling at the sight of his pathetic condition. On another occasion, after ordering the removal of the grand vizier's beard, he had the barber's hand chopped off because he had not done the job thoroughly enough. These and other still worse atrocities of which he was guilty are grotesquely incompatible with the "saint-like" and "unblemished" status to which he laid claim and which was attributed even to this shah by his subjects. *Sulaiman's* only redeeming feature might perhaps be his appreciation of art, specifically painting and the work of miniaturists. Intrigues in the harem, which had played a decisive role in so many of his political affairs, seem also to have determined the choice of *Sulaiman's* successor. He himself had failed to nominate a crown prince. Instead, he is said to have advised the dignitaries gathered around his sick-bed during his last hours that if they were concerned to maintain peace and quiet they should make his elder son, the twenty-six-year old *Sultan Husain Mirza* his successor; if, on the other hand, they wished to strengthen royal power and expand the empire they should rather appoint the latter's twenty-three-year old brother, *Abbas Mirza*.

The ruler passed away at an unforeseen moment when no-one was present. His death was discovered by his aunt, Princess *Maryam Begum*, whose sympathies lay wholly with Prince *Husain*. She informed the influential eunuchs and it is unlikely that she had any difficulty in winning their support for her favourite. His coronation on 14 *Dhu'l-Hijja* 1105/6 August 1694 meant the continuation of his father's misrule, albeit in a somewhat different key. At the same time it was the prelude to the fall of the Safavid dynasty. Sultan *Husain* had, it is true, a reign of twenty-eight years before him, but not one, however, destined to bring happiness to the empire. He and his country, which for more than two centuries had withstood serious crises within and powerful enemies without, were to suffer a catastrophe at the hands of an opponent as unforeseen as he was basically insignificant, but whom the shah and his army were powerless to repulse. In the good intentions with which he began his reign the new *shah* had the support of the *Shaikh al-Islam Muhammad Baqir Majlisi* (b. 1037/1627, d. mi/1699), a famous theologian on whom *Shah Sulaiman* had already conferred office. He was the driving force behind *Husain's* first decrees, which forbade abuses of the religious code that had become widespread, such as unbridled consumption of alcohol. Religious Politics of the *Safavid* Sultans, Late in the dynasty, had devastating consequences for *Sunni* sections of the population. If they lived near the borders, such communities reacted to the pressure of forcible conversion by developing separatist tendencies. This occurred in the *Afghan* areas of the Safavid Empire, and it was there in the region of *Zamindavar* and *Qandahar* that the storm gathered which was eventually to cause the downfall of the shah. The warlike tribe of the *Ghalzai* had penetrated into these areas, the population of which had been severely reduced during the reign of *Abbas I* with the resettlement of the *Abdalis* in *Herat*. In *Qandahar*, the young *Mahmud* — he was only eighteen years old when he seized power — was gaining the respect of his fellow tribesmen through his warlike bearing and his cunning. First in a whole series of fatal mistakes made by the shah was his decision to remain in *Isfahan* instead of mobilizing fresh troops in other parts of the country to combat the *Afghans*. His peace proposal, which probably reached the *Afghans* as they were advancing on the capital, may more than anything else have given the game away and confirmed them in their intentions. Living conditions in *Isfahan* became increasingly difficult. Supplies of food ceased, and to prevent their being resumed in future *Mahmud* ordered all crops in the area to be destroyed. The shah made every effort to obtain relief. From mid-June onwards there was famine in *Isfahan*.

All attempts to depose the shah or to persuade him to abdicate were of no avail. By the beginning of October even the shah was convinced that further resistance was pointless, and he capitulated to Mahmud. The *shah* announced his abdication and the transfer of power to *Mahmud*, as a gesture of confirmation taking from his head the bejewelled tuft of heron's feathers (*Jiqa*), the symbol of monarchy, and affixing it to *Mahmud's* turban with his own hands. Two days later *Mahmud* entered *Isfahan* in solemn triumph. *Ghalzai* supremacy was to represent only a brief interlude in the history of Persia, coming to an end as early as 1730 with the fall of *Ashraf*, Mahmud's cousin and successor. Apart from the liquidation of the already tottering *Safavid* dynasty, it was scarcely of any significance. The *Afghans* were able neither to counteract Russian and Turkish incursions into Iranian territory nor to eradicate hotbeds of unrest in various parts of the country, whether these emerged before or after the fall of the *Safavid* Empire. Least of all did they manage to restore the unity of Persia. The seventy-five years leading up to the end of the 12th/18th century have been not inaccurately described by Perry as a morass of anarchy in which three periods, those of the *Afshars*, the *Zands* and the early *Qajars*, stand out like islands. During each a strong and relatively sensible government was headed by a figure of significance: *Nadir Shah*, *Karim Khan Zand* and *Agha Muhammad Khan* respectively. The extent to which the traditions of the *Safavids* were taken over, preserved, adapted, diminished or enlarged by these rulers before they passed to the *Qajars* and were finally handed down, via the 19th century, to the modern age, is a problem for the cultural historian. When the central government in *Isfahan* came to an end the *Safavids* were by no means totally eliminated. On the contrary, individual representatives of the dynasty were still to play a certain part in the political life of the country. In foreign affairs, the greatest threat to Persia after the abdication of *Sultan Husain* came from Russian and Ottoman designs on territory in the Caspian provinces and the north-west of the country respectively. Russian troops were already present in *Darband* and other places on the shores of the Caspian Sea. The Ottomans, for their part, were not slow to act. Sending a declaration of war in 1135/1723, they marched troops into *Georgia* and - via *Kirmanshah* and *Hamadan* - into Persia itself.