



'ARAB II. ARAB CONQUEST OF IRAN

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During the first two centuries of the Muslim era (7th-8th centuries A.D.) the Sasanian state and much of the east Iranian region in Central Asia were conquered by the mostly Arab armies of the early Islamic state. The accounts of this conquest are often contradictory, the exact course of events unclear, precise dates for even major events elusive, and the size of the armies difficult to determine. Persian forces appear to have outnumbered Muslim armies at key battles such as Qādesiyya and Nehāvand; they fought bravely, contested the Muslim advance fiercely, and attempted to throw off tribute arrangements afterwards. The fall of the Sasanians has been attributed to the class and religious strife in their society, the absence of popular support for an elitist regime, conflict among the nobles, dynastic instability, and the cost of the recent, long, and unsuccessful war with the Byzantines. The ultimate success of the Muslims has also been explained by their organization and determination, the effect of their faith on their morale, their ability to recruit and co-opt forces as they expanded, and their greater mobility.

The Sasanian position in the Arabian peninsula had been based on a system of military colonies and tribal alliances in the Yemen, 'Omān, and Bahrain; it



collapsed when their defeat by the Byzantines left them unable to support their garrisons and Arab protégés. The death of Kōsrow II, June, 628 coincided with the treaty of Ḥodaybīa between Moḥammad and the Meccans, which was followed by a four-year succession crisis that enabled the Muslims to build up their own alliances. Persian agents in the peninsula, abandoned by the Sasanians and challenged by local rivals, were attracted to the rising Islamic state at Medina, especially after Mecca fell to Moḥammad in 8/630. The Persian governor at Ṣaṇ‘ā’ became a Muslim and acknowledged Moḥammad, who confirmed him as his agent in the Yemen. The *marzbān* at Haḡar in Bahrain also converted to Islam and recognized Moḥammad, as did the Arab protégés of the Sasanians in Bahrain and ‘Omān. Zoroastrians in these two areas were allowed to pay tribute.

When Moḥammad died in 10/632 the Persians (*abnā*) of Ṣaṇ‘ā’ remained loyal but faced two local Arab opposition movements. Their leader, Fīrūz was appointed Muslim agent there after they helped kill al-Aswad, but Qays b. Makšūḡ drove them out of Ṣaṇ‘ā’. A Muslim army sent by Caliph Abu Bakr defeated Qays, pacified the Yemen, and proceeded to Ḥaḡramawt, leaving Fīrūz to hold Ṣaṇ‘ā’. At the same time, the Zoroastrians of Bahrain withheld tribute, joined the local Arab movement in support of the Lakhmid ruler there, and besieged the pro-Muslim Arabs of the ‘Abd-al-Qays. An army sent by Abū Bakr under al-‘Alā’ al-Ḥaḡramī defeated this movement and began the real conquest of Bahrain; about the same time the rebels were defeated in ‘Omān.

After the defeat and death of Mosaylema in the Yamāma in Rabī‘a I, 12/May-June, 633, Kāled b. al-Walīd marched north through eastern Arabia to join forces with Muslim elements of the Banū ‘Ejl and Šaybān who were raiding the Sawād of Iraq. At the battle of Dāt al-Salāsel between Bahrain and Obolla, Kāled’s army met and defeated Sasanian frontier forces under Hormoz. This victory enabled Kāled to penetrate the lower line of Sasanian frontier defenses near the coast and invade Maysān, where he defeated the survivors of Hormoz’s army and reinforcements from al-Madā’en at the battle of Maḡār in Šafar, 12/March-April, 633. Kāled then turned west, going to the north of the swamps to Walaja in the territory of Kaskar, where he was joined by some of the local ‘Ejl and ambushed and defeated a combined Persian and Arab army. Continuing west to Zandavard and Hormozjerd, he reached the Euphrates at Ollays, where he defeated local Persians and Christian Arabs under Jābān.

Kāled’s maneuver through lower Iraq brought him to the vicinity of Ḥīra behind the line of Sasanian defensive positions along the middle Euphrates.



Defeating the cavalry of the *marzbān* of Ḥīra, Kāled joined forces with al-Moṭannā b. Ḥāreṭ of the Šaybān and invested Ḥīra. After the *marzbān* fled to al-Madā'en, the notables of Ḥīra arranged terms of tribute with Kāled in the summer of 12/633. Kāled is also said to have imposed an annual tribute on Anbār after the Persian garrison evacuated. When he defeated a force of the Sasanians' Christian Arab auxiliaries from the tribes of Bakr, 'Ejl, Taḡleb, and Namer at 'Ayn al-Tamr, the Persian garrison evacuated, and the town and its fortress fell to the Muslims. But while Kāled was occupied with the conquest of Dūmat al-Jandal, Persian forces joined by Arabs of Taḡleb and Namer reinforced the line of strongholds west of 'Ayn al-Tamr south of the Euphrates. Kāled's forces took these positions in detail from east to west, slaughtered the Persian and Arab garrisons, captured their dependents, and finished by defeating a combined force of Persians and Arabs of Eyād, Namer, and Taḡleb at the end of this line at Ferāz on 15 Du'l-qa'da 12/21 January 634. Kāled then returned to Ḥīra, made tribute arrangements for much of the central Sawād, and left for Syria in the spring of 13/634 after placing al-Moṭannā in charge of Ḥīra.

Kāled's raid on Iraq in 12/633 destroyed most of the Sasanian fortifications along the desert border, crippled their Arab allies, and triggered a major Sasanian effort to recover the Sawād and restore its border. In 10/632 the enthronement of a youthful (aged sixteen or twenty-one) grandson of Kōsrow II as Yazdegerd III ended the succession crisis, but the defense of the Sawād was largely undertaken by other members of the royal family, such as Narsī, and members of the Persian high nobility to protect their own property. Rostam organized the Sasanian recovery of the Sawād and coordinated the activities of Narsī and Jābān, who raised local resistance in the provinces of Kaskar and Beh-Qobāḍ. After the death of Abū Bakr in 13/634 the local arrangements made with the Muslims were terminated all along the Euphrates; the Muslims were driven out, and al-Moṭannā withdrew to Kaḡfān.

'Omar's first concern was to deal with the Byzantine counterattack in Syria, but he sent Abū 'Obayd with 1,000 men to reinforce al-Moṭannā and take command of the Iraqi front. Abū 'Obayd invaded the Sawād and defeated local Persian forces under Jābān at Namāreq, under Narsī below Kaskar, and under Jālīnūs in Bārūsmā, but he retreated across the Euphrates to Marwaḥa before a relief force with elephants under Bahman Jāḍūya from Babel. Ambushing Abū 'Obayd from the opposite bank of the Euphrates, the Persians inflicted a disastrous defeat on the Muslim forces at the Battle of the Bridge in Ša'bān,



13/October, 634. The Persians were prevented from following up this victory by factional strife at al-Madāʾen. About the same time, al-ʿAlāʾ b. al-Ḥaḏramī completed the conquest of Bahrain.

After the Battle of the Bridge, ʿOmar sent contingents from several Arab tribes under Jarīr b. ʿAbdallāh al-Baḡalī to reinforce al-Moṭannā, who was also joined by local Christian Arabs of Namer and Taḡleb. Mehrān, son of Mehrbandād of Hamadān, who was sent to Ḥīra to deal with this buildup of Arab forces on the Iraqī frontier, crossed the Euphrates on a bridge of boats and attacked their camp at Noḡayla on the Bowayb canal, most likely in the fall of 14/635. Al-Moṭannā and Jarīr defeated the Persians, and inflicted heavy casualties, Mehrān among them. The victory at Noḡayla/Bowayb left the Sawād virtually undefended; the remaining Persian border posts along the desert frontier were taken, and Muslim raiding parties fanned out over the Sawād. Destructive raids by al-Moṭannā and his lieutenants pillaged villages, markets, and encampments from Kaskar to Anbār.

To prevent the Persians from sending aid or mounting a counterattack from the direction of Maysān and Kūzestān ʿOmar sent ʿOtba b. Ġazwān with a few hundred men to create a diversion in lower Iraq toward the end of 14/635. From his camp at the deserted frontier post of Korayba, in the spring of 15/636, ʿOtba’s force attacked and conquered al-Obolla, Forāt, Abar-Qobād, and Dast-e Maysān, defeating and killing the *marzbān* at the battle of Maḏār. As success attracted Arab tribesmen to this front, the encampment at Korayba grew into the garrison city of al-Baṣra.

In 15/636 ʿOmar sent Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ to Iraq with an army of between 6,000 and 10,000 men. Al-Moṭannā died shortly after his arrival, and Saʿd took command of all the forces on the Euphrates front. He was met by a major Persian force with thirty elephants under Rostam, who advanced across the Euphrates and camped at Qādesīya behind the defensive line of the Nahr al-ʿAtīqa. The Muslim forces in the Sawād fell back and regrouped under Saʿd at the fortress of ʿOḡayb and the nearby village of Qādes to await reinforcements from Syria. After the two armies had faced each other for four months, the Persians were defeated in a fierce three-day battle, with heavy casualties on both sides, probably in Jomādā I, 16/June, 637. The battle of Qādesīya, which was decided by the arrival of the Syrian reinforcements and the death of Rostam, was a decisive victory for the Muslims and a military disaster for the Persians. The Persians were totally routed, and fugitive Persian soldiers were pursued and killed in the villages, reed thickets, and river banks. Some 4,000



Iranian soldiers (the Ḥamrā') joined the Muslim army at Qādesīya, shared equally in the booty, and participated in the subsequent campaign; the fate of the Sawād was settled. As the survivors of Qādesīya headed for al-Madā'en, the Sasanian garrisons in the eastern Jazīra were evacuated. Contingents in advance of the main Muslim army spread out across the Sawād in systematic pursuit of the remnants of the Persian army, which they prevented from regrouping. Local notables, such as Bestām, the *dehqān* of Bors, assisted the victors. The Persians tried to gather their forces and make a stand at Bābel but were defeated and rescattered by the Muslim vanguard under Zohra b. 'Abdallāh b. Qatāda, who also drove them out of Sūra and Kūṭa. During this march Muslim soldiers began to equip themselves with the weapons, armor, and horses of the fallen Persians.

As Sa'd approached al-Madā'en, the garrison at Sābāt was slaughtered, although Šīrzād, who joined Sa'd there, built twenty mangonels for his use at the siege of Vēh-Ardašīr. The Muslims besieged al-Madā'en for two or three months or for over a year. After an attempt to defend Vēh-Ardašīr the Sasanian garrison evacuated it, crossed to the east bank of the Tigris, and cut the floating bridge behind them. The Muslims surprised the Sasanians by fording the Tigris and besieged the eastern half of al-Madā'en. At the fall of Vēh-Ardašīr Yazdegerd III lost his nerve, sent his dependents to Ḥolwān, left Mehrān of Ray and Naḵīrjān to evacuate the royal treasure, and fled from al-Madā'en with his courtiers. Persian soldiers and nobles began to escape from the city, and in the confusion thousands of Persian horsemen are said to have been captured. Sa'd entered the nearly deserted city, captured most of the royal treasure, accepted the surrender of the people in the White Palace and at Rūmīya in return for tribute, and quartered the Muslim army there.

Toward the end of 16/635 two Muslim columns advanced north and east from al-Madā'en. One moved up the Tigris under 'Abdallāh b. Mo'tamm and took Takrīt with the help of Arabs of Namer and 'Ejl in the town who went over to the Muslim side during the siege. The other, under Hāšem b. 'Otba, pursued the Persian refugees and soldiers along the road to Ḥolwān with a vanguard of 12,000 men, including the Ḥamrā'. The Sasanian rearguard under Ḳorrazād, Rostam's brother, entrenched their baggage and dependents at Kāneqīn and attempted to cover the retreat, but Hāšem defeated them with heavy losses at Jalūlā'. A flying column including Ḥamrā' under Qa'qā' b. 'Amr pursued the survivors to Kāneqīn, where every fighting man who could be caught was killed, and their women, children, and property were captured. When he



heard of the defeat at Jalūlā’ and the death of Mehrān of Ray at Kāneqīn, Yazdegerd abandoned Ḥolwān and headed for Ray, leaving a holding force at Ḥolwān under Kōsrowšonūm. In the last major engagement of this campaign Qa’qā’ routed the forces of Kōsrowšonūm at Qaṣr-e Šīrīn and occupied Ḥolwān, which he garrisoned with some of the Ḥamrā’. Soon afterward the Persians who had fled from al-Madā’en were allowed to return upon agreeing to pay tribute, and the Muslim army evacuated and settled at Kūfa. By 17/638 Kufan forces had conquered Māsabādān and Mehrajanqadāq in the western Jebāl.

The fall of Iraq had serious consequences for the subsequent conflict because it had been the most important part of the Sasanian empire. The capital at al-Madā’en had been the apex of their administrative system, and Iraq had provided about one-third of their annual tax revenues. In addition, they lost the royal treasure, substantial military forces that perished defending Iraq, and the leadership of many high-ranking nobles. The Muslims now held these resources and were assisted by former members of the Sasanian army and administration who had defected. By 20/641 the organization of the military *dīvān* at Baṣra and Kūfa provided regular support for Muslim soldiers; by the 640s, Muslim armies based in Iraq were as well organized, provisioned, and equipped as the Sasanians themselves.

The next phase of the conflict opened in Kūzestān, where Hormozān organized an active defense, raiding Dast-e Maysān and Maysān, but was driven out in 18/639 by forces from Baṣra and Kūfa and had to deal with risings by Arab Bedouins on the border of Kūzestān and by the Kurds of Fārs. Yazdegerd sent his vanguard of several hundred heavy cavalymen (*asvārān*, *asāwera*) under Sīāh al-Oswārī from Isfahan towards Eṣṭaḳr. Increasing his force along the way Sīāh turned westward from Fārs into Kūzestān and reinforced the garrisons there. Against stiff resistance the conquest of Kūzestān was undertaken by Basran forces under Abū Mūsā al-Aš‘arī. Hormozān’s troops were garrisoned separately in the fortified cities of Kūzestān, and Abū Mūsā besieged them one at a time. Hormozān was driven out of Sūq al-Ahvāz and fled to Šūštar, where Abū Mūsā besieged him for eighteen months to two years with Kufan reinforcements, while Rām-Hormoz surrendered on terms. In 19/644, al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥaṣramī attacked Fārs by sea from Bahrain; he reached Eṣṭaḳr but was beaten back to the coast by the *marzbān* of Fārs. Šūštar fell to Abū Mūsā in 21/642 with the help of a Persian, who arranged to open the gates in return for his own security. Hormozān held out for a while in the citadel but finally surrendered and was sent to Medina. Afterward, Sūs and



Jondīšāpūr were besieged and fell, and Basran forces entered the southern Jebāl. Sīāh and his *asāwera* surrendered, joined the Muslims, and settled in Baṣra. In 20/641, Kufan forces under ‘Otba b. Farqad marched up the Tigris, took Nineveh on terms, founded Mosul across the river, and conquered the districts along the Tigris and Greater Zāb as far as western Azarbaijan.

By 21/642 Yazdegerd had raised a major army in the Jebāl and sent it to Nehāvand to block any Muslim advance from that direction and possibly to retake Iraq. The threat that this army seemed to pose to Muslim positions in Iraq led ‘Omar to combine the Kufan and Basran forces under al-No‘mān b. ‘Amr b. Moqarren al-Mozanī and to send them against the Persians with reinforcements from Syria and ‘Omān. The course of the battle fought at Nehāvand in the summer of 21/642 is difficult to reconstruct in tactical terms. As usual, it is said to have lasted several days, to have resulted in heavy casualties on both sides, including al-No‘mān and the Persian general Mardānšāh, son of Hormoz, and to have been decided by a ruse or by the arrival of the Muslim reinforcements.

The Muslim victory at Nehāvand was a second military disaster for the Sasanians; it secured Iraq and Kūzestān for the Muslims, ended any concerted resistance in the Jebāl, and opened the Iranian plateau to the Muslims. Yazdegerd fled to Isfahan and then to Eṣṭaḡr. During 22-23/643-44 Kufan and Basran forces broke up and fanned out over western Iran to deal with local resistance. Several places in the Jebāl were claimed as conquests by both the Kufans and the Basrans before and after Nehāvand. Some places, such as Hamadān and Ray, were taken and retaken several times. Ḥoḍayfa b. al-Yamān accepted the surrender of the town and district of Nehāvand from its lord, called Dīnār, who was captured during a sortie; he arranged to pay tribute in return for protection for the walls, property, and houses of the people there. One Kufan force took Hamadān on similar terms and headed for Ray. The territory of Ray was taken from the *marzbān*, possibly with the help of a local notable called Farroḡān, on terms similar to Nehāvand. A tribute of 500,000 dirhams was imposed on Ray and Qūmes; in return the fire temples were not to be destroyed nor the people killed or enslaved. Another Kufan force took Qazvīn in 24/644, and from there Ḥoḍayfa b. al-Yamān marched west to Azarbaijan, where he defeated the *marzbān*, took the capital of Ardabīl, and imposed a tribute of 100,000 dirhams. According to the terms made by Ḥoḍayfa, the people were not to be killed or taken captive; they would be protected from the Kurds, and their fire temples would not be



destroyed. The people of Šīz were allowed to keep their fire temple and to perform their dances at religious festivals.

Meanwhile Basran forces under the general command of Abū Mūsā conquered and garrisoned Dīnavar and may have taken Māsabādān and Mehraǰānqadāq. In 23/644 one Basran force conquered the urban centers of Jayy and Yahūdīya at Isfahan, where the defense organized by the *ostāndār* failed due to internal divisions among the garrison and people. The terms arranged by the *pādǧōspān* provided for the usual payment of tribute in return for security for lives and possessions. A number of Persian notables became Muslims, while others emigrated to Kermān. Other Basran units took Kāšān by force, captured and garrisoned a village at Qom, raided the two towns of Ṭabasayn in Qūhestān that controlled the approach to Khorasan, and raided Šīrǰān and Bam in the territory of Kermān.

The other main thrust of Basran forces after Nehāvand was southeastward from Kūzestān into Fārs, initially to deal with resistance organized among the Persians and Kurds of Kūzestān by Fīrūz. Abū Mūsā himself defeated these forces at Bayrūd in 23/643-44, pacified the countryside, and invaded Fārs to support ‘Oṭmān b. Abī’l-‘Āṣ, who had crossed from Bahrain. ‘Oṭmān established a base at Tawwaǰ, and he or his brother, al-Ḥakam, defeated and killed the governor of Fārs near Rīšahr. Tribute was imposed on Eṣṭakr, Arraǰān, Dārābīerd, and Fasā, and al-Ḥakam was left in charge.

After the death of ‘Omar in 23/644, many of the places in Azarbaijan, the Jebāl, and Fārs that had been conquered in the two years after Nehāvand withheld tribute and had to be retaken. The second wave of Muslim expansion under ‘Oṭmān (24-35/644-56) secured strategic control and tribute to support the military establishment in Iraq, provided booty to satisfy latecomers to the garrison cities, and served to occupy and direct the energies of the Muslim soldiers. A new tribute of 100,000 dirhams was imposed on Hamadān, while the former urban centers at Isfahan and Ray were destroyed, and Muslim garrisons and *masǰeds* were established in new settlements at both places. A garrison of 500 men supported by land grants was settled at Qazvīn, for defense against the Daylamīs. Beginning in 25/645-46 Kufan forces under al-Walīd b. ‘Oqba campaigned in the two frontier districts (*toǧūr*) of Ray and Azarbaijan. Each year, one-quarter of the 40,000 soldiers in Kūfa campaigned, 4,000 in Ray and 6,000 in Azarbaijan. Al-Walīd raised the tribute of Azarbaijan to 800,000 dirhams per year and sent advance forces to raid Mūqān, Ṭalešān, and Armenia for booty and captives. From about 30/650, when Sa’īd b. al-‘Āṣ



was governor of Kūfa, the northern frontier was stabilized. Al-Aṣʿaṭ b. Qays al-Kendī completed the pacification of Azarbaijan; a Muslim garrison and *masʿed* were established at Ardabīl, and raids were made against the Daylamīs in Gilān, Gorgān, and Ṭabarestān, but little new territory was occupied.

The main concerns of the Muslims in the Jebāl and Azarbaijan were strategic security and tribute. Direct control was exercised by garrisons at a few key former Sasanian urban administrative centers. The original arrangements of tribute in return for security for the inhabitants and their children and property tend to be schematized in Arabic literature but probably reflect the general circumstances. Tribute is represented as tax in this literature and tended to be raised after rebellions. The countryside was controlled indirectly, if at all, through local authorities who were willing to collaborate. The Muslim advance in the north does not seem to have gone beyond former Sasanian territory, and by the 650s there was a permanent frontier there, from which the Muslim forces engaged in raids and defense against Kurds, Daylamīs, and Khazars.

Yazdegerd had made his way to Eṣṭaḡr and tried to organize a base for resistance in the province of Fārs, where tribute was withheld after the death of ʿOmar. The real conquest of Fārs and the remainder of the Sasanian empire to the east was undertaken by ʿAbdallāh b. ʿĀmer b. Korayz, the governor of Baṣra (29-45/649-55). The Basran army was composed mainly of Arabs of the tribe of Tamīm and the Banū Solaym clan of the ʿAbd-al-Qays. The 1,000 *asāwera* who had settled at Baṣra and become allies of Tamīm fought in the vanguard. In a single, hard-fought, and sometimes destructive campaign, Persian resistance in Fārs was crushed by 30/650. Dārābīerd was surrendered by its *herbad*, but Eṣṭaḡr put up stiff resistance, although Yazdegerd had moved to Gūr (Fīrūzābād). The walls of Eṣṭaḡr were destroyed by mangonels, and some 40,000 defenders are said to have perished in the fighting, which left Eṣṭaḡr ruined and eliminated the last significant Sasanian military force and many noble families. Afterward Gūr fell quickly; Kāzerūn and Sīrāf were occupied, and Yazdegerd fled to Kermān, pursued by a Basran force that perished in a snowstorm at Bīmand.

Impecunious and arrogant, with a large retinue to support, Yazdegerd alienated the *marzbān* of Kermān and left for Sīstān just ahead of another Basran force, which defeated and killed the *marzbān* in heavy fighting. Having lost the support of the governor of Sīstān by demanding tax arrears, Yazdegerd headed for Marv. Nevertheless, in 30/650-51 or 31/651-52 ʿAbdallāh



b. ‘Āmer sent force to Sīstān under Rabī‘ b. Zīād al-Ḥāretī, who took Zāleq, Karkūya, Haysūn, and Nāšrūd on terms and besieged Zarang, where the *marzbān*, notables, and Zoroastrian chief priest, surrendered after heavy fighting outside the town. Rabī‘ imposed an annual tribute of 1,000 slave boys bearing 1,000 golden vessels and garrisoned Zarang with his force. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Āmer headed for Khorasan with the main Basran force and sent Moǧāse‘ b. Mas‘ūd to complete the conquest of Kermān. The fall of the main towns of Sīrjān, Jīroft, Bam, and Hormūz caused considerable disruption in Kermān, and many people fled to the mountains or Makrān where they were aided by the Kōfīčīs/Qofš, or to Sīstān, Khorasan, or overseas. Their abandoned houses and lands were divided among the Arabs, who settled there and paid tithes (‘ošr) on them.

The struggle for Khorasan in 31/651 involved attempts by local officials and notables to secure autonomy, complicated by the intervention of the Hephthalites of Bādǧīs and Herat and by the Muslims. Māhūya, the *marzbān* of Marv, resented Yazdegerd’s financial demands and allied with Nēzak Ṭarḳān, the Hephthalite ruler of Bādǧīs, who helped him defeat Yazdegerd’s followers. Yazdegerd was killed by a miller as he fled from Marv, and his son Pērōz took refuge in China. About the same time ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Āmer sent his vanguard under al-Aḥnaf b. Qays with Tamīmī Arabs and 1,000 *asāwera* via Ṭabasayn, where he reestablished peace terms, conquered Kūhestān (whose people were aided by Hephthalites from Herat), and imposed a tribute of 600,000 dirhams on the province. Ebn ‘Āmer and his lieutenants conquered the districts in the territory of Nīšāpūr, defeated Hephthalites from Herat who came to aid the Iranians, and besieged the capital at Abaršahr for a month. Let into the city by the commander of one of its quarters, the Muslims besieged the *marzbān* in the citadel until he agreed to a tribute of 700,000 or one million dirhams for the entire province. Afterward local notables arranged terms at Nasā for 300,000 dirhams and at Abīvard for 400,000 dirhams, while Saraḳs was taken by force. The *kanārang* or *marzbān* of Ṭūs arranged to pay a tribute of 600,000 dirhams.

Ebn ‘Āmer dealt with the Hephthalites next, sending a force against Herat, where the ruler agreed to a tribute of one million dirhams for Herat, Bādǧīs, and Pūšang. Māhūya at Marv then secured peace for a tribute of one million dirhams or one million dirhams and 100,000 *ǧarīb*-measures of wheat and barley and the quartering of Muslims in local houses. From Marv Ebn ‘Āmer sent al-Aḥnaf b. Qays with 5,000 men to invade Ṭokārestān in 32/652. His force



of 4,000 Arabs and 1,000 Iranian Muslims accepted terms of 300,000 dirhams for the district of Marv-al-rūd from the garrison in the fortress but besieged the town, where the fighting was bloody until the *marzbān* arranged a tribute of 60,000 or 600,000 dirhams and a mutual defense agreement. With heavy fighting and many casualties, al-Aḥnaf then repelled a force of 30,000 men from Gūzgān, Ṭālaqān, and Fāryāb, plus people from Čāgānīān, defeated the survivors, and conquered Gūzgān. Taking Ṭālaqān peacefully and Fāryāb by force, he reached the capital at Balk, where the people made peace for 400,000 or 700,000 dirhams; he raided K̲v̲ārazm unsuccessfully and rejoined Ebn ‘Āmer. In the winter of 32/653 Ebn ‘Āmer returned to Baṣra, leaving 4,000 men to hold Marv.

Ebn ‘Āmer’s campaign brought the border to the Oxus river and imposed tribute in eastern Iran, but he left only small holding forces at Nīšāpūr, Marv, and Zarang. Local officials and notables regarded tribute as a temporary expedient to secure their own positions, sometimes, against local rivals, with Muslim military backing and may have tried to play off the Muslims against the Hephthalites. Led by Qāren and an army of 40,000 men, who were supported by the people of Kūhestān, Herat, and Bādġīs, they took advantage of Ebn ‘Āmer’s departure with most of his army to withhold tribute. The Muslims were driven out of Nīšāpūr, and Nēzak took Balk. The garrison at Marv survived until 33/653-54, when Ebn ‘Āmer sent Ebn K̲āzem, who defeated and killed or captured Qāren. The same year the people of Zarang expelled the Muslim garrison, and Ebn ‘Āmer sent ‘Abd-al-Raḥmān b. Samora, who besieged the *marzbān*, doubled the tribute, and campaigned eastward with a force of 6,000 men, taking the region from Roḳḳāj to Zamīndāvar, Bost, and Zābol by 35/656.

While the Muslims were preoccupied with their own conduct during the first civil war (35-41/656-61), most of Iran slipped out of their control, and there may have been restoration attempts by members of the Sasanian royal family in Ṭoḳārestān and Nīšāpūr. With tribute turning into taxes, the reestablishment of Muslim control combined reconquest with the suppression of revolt against the governors and protégés of the Islamic state. The Hephthalites of Bādġīs, Herat, and Pūšang withheld tribute, as did Nīšāpūr; the people of Zarang overthrew their Muslim garrison, while Arab Bedouins raided the towns of Sīstān on their own. ‘Alī’s instructions for local notables to turn over their tribute to Māhūya at Marv in 36/656-57 provoked a rebellion against the latter in eastern Khorasan that was not suppressed until after ‘Alī’s



death. After Şeffīn, when ‘Alī was busy with Kharijite revolts in Iraq and Fārs, widespread tax revolt broke out in the Jebāl, Fārs, and Kermān in 39/659; the tax collectors were driven out, and Zīād b. Abīhi was sent to suppress it. The rebels at Eṣṭakr were crushed, and Zīād pacified Fārs and Kermān. ‘Alī also managed to send a force that retook Nišāpūr.

Eastern Iran was reconquered under Mo‘āwīa. Campaigns reopened in 41/661 when Ebn ‘Āmer again became governor of Baṣra and its eastern dependencies and sent ‘Abd-al-Raḥmān b. Samora, who reconquered Sīstān, retook Zarang, and attacked the Zonbīl, or king, of Zābolestān, retaking Bost and al-Rokḡaḡ and entering Kabul after a siege. Al-Mohallab attacked the Qofīčīs and marched through Baluchistan toward Sind. But after Ebn Samora was dismissed in 44/664, the Zonbīl resisted Muslim control until about 53/673, when he agreed to pay a tribute of one million dirhams. Ebn ‘Āmer’s lieutenants also pacified eastern Khorasan, destroyed the Buddhist temple of Nawbahār at Balk and retook that city, and collected tribute from Herat, Pūšang, and Bādġīs again in 43/663. Zīād, who succeeded Ebn ‘Āmer at Baṣra in 45/665, reorganized and consolidated Muslim government in Khorasan; in 47/667 his governor raided Ġūr, taking captives and booty. In 51/671 Zīād settled a permanent garrison of 50,000 Arabs of Tamīm and Bakr from Baṣra and Kūfa at Marv, which became the main center for defense and expansion on the northeastern frontier. Āmol was raided in 53/673, but an attack on Ṭabarestān was turned back with heavy Muslim losses. Raids across the Oxus began in 54/674, when ‘Obaydallāh b. Zīād, governor of Khorasan, devastated the Bukhara oasis, took Rāmetīn and Paykand, defeated a Turkish relieving army, and imposed a tribute of one million dirhams on Bukhara. The next governor of Khorasan, Sa‘īd b. ‘Oṭmān, crossed the Oxus in 56/676, defeated an army of Soghdians, Turks, and people from Keš and Nasaf, entered Bukhara and raided Samarkand with Bukharan allies. The citadel of Samarkand surrendered after a hard-fought three-day siege. Sa‘īd imposed a tribute of 700,000 dirhams, took forty or eighty noble youths as hostages, and then took Termed peacefully. Salm b. Zīād also campaigned beyond the Oxus under Yazīd I (61-64/680-83), when several thousand more Arabs of Azd were settled at Marv. Salm is said to have returned to Bukhara and Samarkand, fought the Soghdians, and imposed a tribute of 400,000 dirhams on K̲v̲ārazm. But the army his brother Yazīd led against the Zonbīl from Sīstān in 61/681 was defeated with heavy losses.

The outbreak of the second Muslim civil war at Mo‘āwīa’s death in 61/680



ended expansion in the east for twenty-five years, and after the death of Yazīd in 64/683 order collapsed in Khorasan and Sīstān. Arab tribes fought among themselves; Mūsā b. ‘Abdallāh b. Kāzem established a rebel Arab enclave at Termed, the rulers of Central Asia withheld tribute, Hephthalites raided Khorasan, and the Zonbīl attacked Sīstān but was defeated and killed in 661/685. From 72/691 the governors of ‘Abd-al-Malek (65-86/685-705) reestablished order in Khorasan and Sīstān, but the new Zonbīl turned back one Muslim army in 74/693-94 and massacred another in 78/697. In 79/699 Ebn al-Aṣʿat mounted a systematic campaign to occupy the Zonbīl’s territory with a network of garrisons, officials, and communications but was provoked by al-Ḥajjāj’s impatience with his slow progress to rebel and march back with his army to Iraq where he was defeated. Raids across the Oxus were resumed under al-Mohallab (d. 82/702) with little success, although Mūsā was defeated and killed at Termed by 85/704.

Muslim expansion to the east of the Sasanian territory, where they faced local Hephthalite, Soghdian, and Turkish forces, was more difficult. After the collapse of the western Turkish state in the mid-7th century this region was politically fragmented among many small states jealous of their independence, with entrenched local interests, military traditions, and nominal Chinese backing. Rulers such as Nēzak and the Zonbīl defended themselves effectively, paid tribute when forced, and took advantage of Muslim conflicts. Muslim forces were relatively small at first and likely to be outnumbered by local coalitions; although able to impose tribute on separate cities, by leaving the native elite intact they faced communal rebellions. As conditions of a semi-permanent frontier developed in the later 7th century, fighting grew increasingly bitter and destructive, raids produced little more than booty and slaves, while growing Muslim forces concentrated in the east suffered from increasing tribal and factional conflicts. Under al-Walīd I (86-96/705-15), Qotayba b. Moslem, al-Ḥajjāj’s governor of Khorasan, began the mass recruitment of local non-Arabs to swell the size of armies for conquest and to offset tribal Arabs in the army, and coopted the fighting ability of native rulers’ forces as allies. Beginning in 86/705 Qotayba made annual campaigns across the Oxus with a Muslim army enlarged with conscripts and *mawālī* from Khorasan, Nēzak’s forces from Bādġīs, and the *dahāqīn* of Balk. Qotayba took Paykand in 87/706, took Rāmetīn and defeated a Soghdian and Turkish force relieving Bukhara in 88/707, and took Bukhara itself in 90/709; there he imposed a tribute of 200,000 dirhams, quartered a Muslim garrison in the city, and installed Ṭoġšāda, son of the *kātūn* of Bukhara as a Muslim protégé. That



winter Nēzak led the princes of Țokārestān in rebellion but was defeated, captured, and killed in 91/710. Qotayba forced the Zonbīl to pay tribute in 92/711, took and garrisoned K̇vārazm in 93/712, and used levies from K̇vārazm and Bukhara and a unit of noble Bukharan archers to attack Samarkand, where Ġūrak surrendered after his Soghdian and Turkish allies were defeated. A Muslim garrison was left in the citadel to collect the tribute. To eliminate the Soghdians and Turks Qotayba took Šāš, invaded Farġāna, and reached Esfījāb by 95/714 but was killed in an army mutiny in Farġāna after the death of al-Walīd in 96/715.

Qotayba’s method of using local levies and installing garrisons secured Central Asia for about ten years. His successor, Yazīd b. al-Mohallab conquered Gorgān with Khorasanian recruits in 98/717 but was unsuccessful in Țabarestān. Muslim control in the east began to relax again under ‘Omar II (99-101/717-20), when the Zonbīl stopped paying tribute, because of factional and tribal conflict among the Muslim ruling elite, the collection of *jezya* from converts complicated by the presence of large numbers of non-Arabs in the army, the desire of the Soghdian princes to avoid paying tribute, and the rise of the powerful Torgeš state among the Turks in the Ili basin in 98/716. In the 720s the Torgeš intervened on behalf of the Soghdians and led a counteroffensive against the Muslims. By 103/722 Sa‘īd b. ‘Amr al-Ḥarašī had restored control over Soġd, but in 106/724 Moslem b. Sa‘īd was defeated disastrously by the Torgeš in Farġāna when the Arabs of Azd in his army deserted, and in 108/726 the Zonbīl annihilated a Muslim army from Sīstān. Asad b. ‘Abdallāh al-Qašrī was more successful raiding Ġarċestān and Ġūr in 107/725-26. From 110/728 to 113/731 the Torgeš allied with the Soghdian princes and a descendant of Yazdegerd III called K̇osrow to drive the Muslims out of Central Asia. The fighting was fierce but indecisive, and the Muslims managed to hold Samarkand. In 113/723 Hešām settled a new garrison of 20,000 Iraqīs at Marv and posted the former garrison to defensive posts on the frontier. In 116/734 the garrison of 4,000 men in Gūzgān rebelled under al-Ḥāreṭ b. Sorayj of Tamīm; they were joined by the Arab garrison at Marv-al-rūd and by Hephthalites at Gūzgān, Fāryāb, and Țālaqān but were defeated by the new garrison from Marv, so al-Ḥāreṭ went to join the Torgeš. In 119/737 the Torgeš defeated the Muslims north of the Oxus, crossed the Oxus, and invaded Khorasan but were defeated by the Arabs and Hephthalites at Kārestān. The Torgeš state collapsed after the death of the khan in 120/738, and by 123/741 Našr b. Sayyār, the governor of Khorasan, had reconquered Central Asia as far as Šāš and Farġāna with an army that included 20,000



Soghdian conscripts. Control of Central Asia was finally secured by the Muslim victory over the Chinese on the Talas river in 133/751.

The Muslim conquest of Iran meant the eclipse of Iranian monarchic traditions except to the extent that these were adopted by Muslim Arab rulers and the loss of political support for Zoroastrians. However, Sasanian soldiers and local notables who defected to the Muslims, possibly as a consequence of local conflicts, secured a position in the new regime. Notables who survived by virtue of agreements they made for tribute during the conquest collected it in their own districts. In the east such tribute arrangements had the effect of establishing protectorates but had to be constantly reimposed. Only the major centers were occupied, and some regions, such as Gīlān, Ṭabarestān, Ġūr, Zābolestān, Baluchistan, and Makrān, were never permanently controlled. Ṭabarestān was finally conquered under al-Manṣūr by 144/761. The conquest had the effect of driving west Iranians eastward as refugees or of bringing them there as part of the Muslim forces, thus establishing the roots of Persian culture in eastern Iran. East Iranians were taken west as captives to Iraq, Syria, and Arabia, and as Muslims Iranians dispersed throughout the Islamic Empire as far as North Africa.

The conquest also brought Muslim Arab settlers to Iran, initially as garrisons to ensure the payment of tribute, and tended to concentrate them in frontier regions. Because the conquest of most of Iran turned out to be permanent, Islam eventually spread among Iranians, and Arabic became the language of religion, literature, and science in Iran. In this respect the Muslim Arab conquest marks a major turning point in the history of Iran.

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