



BUYIDS

BUYIDS (also Bowayhids, Buwaihids, etc.; Pers. Āl-e Būya), dynasty of Daylamite origin ruling over the south and western part of Iran and over Iraq from the middle of the 4th/10th to the middle of the 5th/11th centuries.

The political background. Since the early days of the Arab conquest of Persia the mountainous regions south of the Caspian Sea proved an awkward obstacle to the expansion of the empire of the caliphs. It was only towards the end of the 3rd/9th century that the 'Abbasids succeeded in subduing those almost inaccessible districts, and even then the caliphal rule remained rather formal. For this reason Shi'ism, skillfully propagated by some members of the Hasanid clan of the 'Alids, was able to win the sympathy of part of the population and seems to have been considered as a means of protest against the central government. During the second half of the 3rd/9th century the power of the caliphate began to crumble, and centrifugal tendencies asserted themselves all over the empire, particularly in Iran whose population still remembered its glorious past.

Mardāvīj b. Zīār, a military leader serving [Asfār b. Šīrūya](#) when in 316/928 the latter conquered Qazvīn, turned against Asfār, killed him, and eventually established his own rule in Ṭabarestān and made Ray his capital (Mas'ūdī, *Morūj*, ed. Pellat, V, pp. 265-66; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 193-98). In 319/931 he defeated the 'Abbasid governor of Jebāl (ancient Media) near Hamadān and expanded his territories to Ḥolwān, present-day Sar-e Pol-e Zohāb. The caliph had to recognize him officially as his governor and was even unable to prevent him from annexing Isfahan (Mas'ūdī, *Morūj* V, pp. 268-69; Ebn al-Aṭīr,



VIII, pp. 227-29).

It is in sources from those days that we hear of the Buyid brothers for the first time. Their father, a certain Būya b. Fannā (Panāh) Ƙosrow was a humble fisherman from Daylam in Gīlān. The authenticity of the Sasanian lineage of the Buyids found in some sources was questioned as early as 5th/11th century by Bīrūnī (*Ātār*, tr. Sachau, pp. 44-47) and is almost certainly a forgery. The Buyid brothers first entered the services of the Samanids under the Daylamite general Mākān-e Kākī (q.v.) but later on defected to Mardāvīj, who put the eldest brother, Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Būya (the future 'Emād-al-Dawla), in charge of the district of Kara to the southeast of Hamadān. 'Alī's gentle behavior and generosity attracted a large number of fellow Daylamites. This made Mardāvīj suspicious of 'Alī's real intentions, and he prepared to move against him. In defiance 'Alī marched south and occupied Isfahan, but Mardāvīj, helped by his allies, forced him to withdraw. 'Alī then marched to Arrajān in Fārs, occupied the city, and shortly afterward defeated Yāqūt, caliphal governor of Fārs, and entered Shiraz. However, he had to make peace with Mardāvīj and sent him his brother Abū 'Alī Ḥasan b. Būya (the future Rokn-al-Dawla) as hostage (Ebn Meskawayh, I, pp. 278ff., 295-99; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 268-72, 275-78, 285-87).

In 323/935 Mardāvīj was murdered by his Turkish slaves. Immediately after this event the Ziyarid empire fell apart, and only in the Caspian provinces did the dynasty survive until the mid-5th/11th century. The lion's share of the Ziyarid territories south of the Caspian mountains fell to the Buyid brothers. Ḥasan occupied almost the whole of Media, while 'Alī found himself master of Fārs. Their youngest brother, Aḥmad (the future Mo'ezz-al-Dawla), managed to gain a foothold in Kermān and later on in Ƙūzestān. Thus the most important parts of western and southern Iran were governed by the Buyids, who had already established good relations with the 'Abbasids, in contrast to their former master Mardāvīj. 'Alī, though professing Shi'ism, had approached the caliph in Šawwāl 322/September-October 934, about four months before Mardāvīj's assassination, in order to become officially recognized as governor of Fārs (Ebn Meskawayh, I, p. 300; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, p. 277).

The eastern part of the 'Abbasid empire had at that time split into three virtually independent amirates: the Ziyarids, who held the mountains south of the Caspian Sea; the Buyids, who extended their power from Media to Fārs; and the Samanids, who ruled over eastern Iran and had not yet been involved in the changing affairs of western Iran but were later on challenged by the Buyids' expansionist activities.



Internal struggle for supremacy. The Buyid empire, whose outlines had emerged in the 320s/930s, was by no means a monolithic one. Though the three brothers of course shared a strong feeling of clan solidarity, which had become apparent during their struggle against Mardāvīj, they were almost unable to concentrate their forces on common aims after they had freed themselves from their former overlord. It is for this reason that, when considering the Buyid empire, one should speak of three principalities ruled by the members of one family. None of them, however, was willing to renounce his personal advantage, although ‘Alī b. Būya seems to have exerted some sort of supremacy at the beginning. From the sources we learn that it was he who in 324/935-36 sent his younger brother Aḥmad to Kermān to secure the Buyid influence there after ‘Alī had strengthened his position in Fārs. Aḥmad did not fully come up to his elder brother’s expectations, and ‘Alī therefore looked for another country where Aḥmad could train his military and political abilities; finally his choice fell on Kūzestān (Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 324-26, 340-43).

Kūzestān had been suffering from anarchy for a long time. The Baridids, a Basrian clan of caliphal functionaries, had embarked on a policy for their own sake and had gained a footing in Ahvāz (Kūzestān) but felt that their position there was too weak. They asked ‘Alī b. Būya to support them, and he did not miss this chance to extend his influence. He ordered Aḥmad to go to Kūzestān, and thus the Buyids became immediately involved in the intricate political affairs of Iraq, where the consequences of the disintegration of the caliphate seemed to be irreversible.

Aḥmad b. Būya reached Kūzestān and encamped at ‘Askar Mokram. At that time a certain Moḥammad b. Rā’eq, the governor of Wāseṭ, had made himself master of Iraq. He had urged the destitute caliph al-Rāzī (322-29/934-40) to entrust to him the administration of the whole ‘Abbasid empire; al-Rāzī hesitated at first but finally had to accede to Ebn Rā’eq’s demand. Ebn Rā’eq also received the new honorific title of *amīr al-omarā’* (great amir; q.v.) and his name was mentioned in the sermon every Friday in addition to the caliph’s name (324/936). Ebn Meskawayh, the keen observer of the political developments of the 4th/10th century, considered the establishment of the great amirate as a fatal turning point in Islamic history, which destroyed the vizier’s office by turning over its functions to a military leader who would thus control every government affair without feeling responsible to the caliph for his actions and who would receive all the revenues of the empire and dispose



of them at his own discretion; he would even have full control over the expenses of the powerless caliph (Ebn Meskawayh, I, p. 352).

Ebn Rā'eq, however, was soon replaced as *amīr al-omarā'* in Du'l-qa'da 326/September 938 by Bajkam (Bačkem), a former Turkish *gōlām* of Mardāvīj and one of his murderers and one of the most powerful actors in the bewildering Iraqi play of intrigues (Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 346-48). Bajkam was killed while fighting a band of Kurdish brigands (329/941). More people received the title until 334/945, when it was conferred upon Aḥmad b. Būya, who, during those troublesome years, had tried to use the situation in Iraq to his own advantage. In autumn 334/945 the government of the *amīr al-omarā'* Ebn Šīrzād broke down, and Aḥmad entered Baghdad without a fight on 11 Jomādā I 334/19 December 945; the office of *amīr al-omarā'* was entrusted to him, and the caliph bestowed upon him the honorific title Mo'ezz-al-Dawla; furthermore the caliph confirmed the governorship Aḥmad's brothers were holding in their respective provinces and conferred upon them honorific titles of 'Emād-al-Dawla and Rokn-al-Dawla (Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 449-50). In the next two years Mo'ezz-al-Dawla engaged in constant fighting against the military leaders in Iraq, who were by no means willing to acknowledge his supremacy. In autumn 336/947 Mo'ezz-al-Dawla finally occupied Basra, thus securing the lines of communication with Fārs, the center of the Buyid power. Owing to the involvement in the affairs of Iraq and the crumbling 'Abbasid caliphate, the Buyid amirate from the very outset was faced with a number of almost unsolvable problems, which prevented the amirs from shaping a clear political course. On the one hand, the Buyids were Shi'ite military leaders of Iranian origin, who would aim at creating a principality independent of the caliphs and at embarking on a policy guided rather by the ancient Iranian tradition, which already Mardāvīj had tried to revive, than by the universal political ideals of Islam. On the other hand, they had to accept the heavy burden of protecting an outlived institution, a burden which would enhance the prestige of its bearer, it is true, but would cause detrimental tensions within the fabric of the Buyid amirate.

The title of *amīr al-omarā'* conferred upon Mo'ezz-al-Dawla seems to have counted for nothing in comparison to the actual military and political power of his brothers. Mo'ezz-al-Dawla was dependent on the support that 'Emād-al-Dawla 'Alī would eventually grant him. In a list of provincial governors compiled by Abū Bakr Moḥammad Šūlī (d. 335/946) 'Alī is mentioned as holding Fārs and Kūzestān, while the name of Mo'ezz-al-Dawla is still missing



(Şūlī, *Akbār*, p. 285). In fact, according to Ebn al-Aṭīr (VIII, pp. 483-84), Mo‘ezz-al-Dawla was considered only a deputy of his brothers. When Aḥmad met his brother ‘Alī near Arrajān in spring 336/948, “he kissed the ground before him” and refused to sit down in his elder brother’s presence owing to his own humble position (Busse, 1969, pp. 30ff.).

In contrast to Mo‘ezz-al-Dawla, Rokn-al-Dawla Ḥasan, the second of the three brothers, figures on Şūlī’s list as governor of Isfahan, and we must assume that Ḥasan was considered as independent of ‘Alī (Şūlī, *Akbār*, p. 284). When ‘Alī passed away in Jomādā II 338/December 949 Ḥasan became the leader of the Buyid clan, and the influence of Ḥasan’s line was still strengthened by the fact that ‘Alī, who had died childless, had appointed Rokn-al-Dawla’s son *Abū Šojā’ Fanā Ḳosrow ‘Azod-al-Dawla* as his successor in Shiraz. Thus an important change in the proportions of power had come about, and the seeds of serious conflicts were sown. For ‘Azod-al-Dawla was a very ambitious young man, and his father relied upon him without restriction. Therefore one can easily imagine that ‘Azod-al-Dawla began to dream of uniting the Buyid territories under his own rule, an aim which of course could not be attained without expelling Mo‘ezz-al-Dawla’s line from their position in Ḳūzestān and Iraq. The fratricidal war between ‘Azod-al-Dawla and ‘Ezz-al-Dawla Baḳtīār, Mo‘ezz-al-Dawla’s son, had disastrous consequences caused by the complicated and shaky balance of power within the Buyid clan and by the involvement in the affairs of the ‘Abbasid caliphate.

Attempts at unification. It is clearly borne out by evidence that the honorific title *amīr al-omarā’*, with which the caliph had invested the youngest and weakest of the three brothers, did not increase the political and military importance of its bearer. Nevertheless it soon became considered as a matter of high prestige. ‘Emād-al-Dawla ‘Alī had tried to claim it for himself, though he had had no right to it, and perhaps Rokn-al-Dawla Ḥasan had done so, too, after ‘Alī’s death. (According to Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 483-84, ‘Emād-al-Dawla received the title in his lifetime, and Rokn-al-Dawla received it after ‘Alī’s death.) In any case ‘Azod-al-Dawla corroborated his claims to the unrivaled rule over the Buyid provinces by declaring that his father had been nominated *amīr al-omarā’* by the caliph.

This, however, was a false claim. In the spring of 344/955 Mo‘ezz-al-Dawla became seriously ill and deemed it necessary to designate his son Baḳtīār as his successor (Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, p. 510). Five years later the caliph recognized him officially, granting him the title ‘Ezz-al-Dawla. Mo‘ezz-al-Dawla died on 13



Rabīʿ 355/8 April 967. During the seven years that had passed since Baḳṭiār's succession to the office of *amīr al-omarāʾ* had been sanctioned by the caliph, the young prince had ruled in Baghdad, whenever his father had led military expeditions. Baḳṭiār had gained some political and administrative experience, and the fact that he had been acting on behalf of his father Moʿezz-al-Dawla several times was another proof refuting the unjustifiable claims of his cousin ʿAzod-al-Dawla.

Baḳṭiār wisely tried to be on good terms with his uncle Rokn-al-Dawla, because he knew that he could not do without his support if he wanted to get a firm hold of his Iraḳi heritage. He even mentioned his powerful uncle's name in addition to his own on the coins he issued. This policy proved advantageous, when Baḳṭiār, fighting some unruly Turkish military leaders, suddenly found his position seriously endangered. Rokn-al-Dawla answered his nephew's cry for help by ordering ʿAzod-al-Dawla, who was residing in Shiraz, to go to his cousin's aid. But it is doubtful whether this was the sort of support Baḳṭiār had been expecting, for the relations with his cousin had not been unclouded in the past.

After a series of campaigns, during which ʿAzod-al-Dawla fought his cousin's enemies with changing energy owing to the prevailing circumstances and with regard to the strategic advantages he was reckoning upon for himself, he profited from a rebellion of the Daylamite mercenaries in Baghdad and forced his cousin Baḳṭiār to resign from the office of *amīr al-omarāʾ*. Rokn-al-Dawla did not approve of this and compelled his son to return to Shiraz (Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 648-54).

Rokn-al-Dawla, who had made Ray the capital of his principality, by no means wanted to lose his influence in Iraḳ for the benefit of ʿAzod-al-Dawla. He even tried to check the activities of his ambitious son by establishing another principality at Hamadān, which he bestowed upon Abu'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī Faḳr-al-Dawla, one of ʿAzod-al-Dawla's brothers. This arrangement, however, meant a further complication of the internal structure of the Buyid amirate.

In the following years Baḳṭiār was anxious to win allies among the different political and military leaders, who had a hand in the affairs in Iraḳ and, of course, would not readily submit to such a strong regime as ʿAzod-al-Dawla seemed to promise. But Baḳṭiār's efforts came to nothing when Rokn-al-Dawla died in Moḥarram 366/September 976. ʿAzod-al-Dawla immediately resumed the policy of extending his principality into Iraḳ and of claiming the office of



amīr al-omarā' for himself. Finally when 'Azod-al-Dawla's name was dropped from public prayer in Iraq, 'Azod-al-Dawla marched towards Kūzestān and in 11 Du'l-qa'da 366/1 July 977 won a decisive victory over Baḳtīār in a battle near Ahvāz, and in the following months he advanced to Baghdad, which he entered in December to receive the honorific title he had coveted for such a long time (Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 671-73, 689-91).

Within less than two years 'Azod-al-Dawla succeeded in pacifying northern Mesopotamia; yet he respected the independence of the Hamdanid bedouin principality, which formed a sort of buffer state against Byzantium. Furthermore he endeavored to submit the unruly districts of southern Iraq. Then, in 369/980, he decided to seize Hamadān and to oust his brother Faḳr-al-Dawla, who had made alliance with Baḳtīār against 'Azod-al-Dawla (Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, pp. 706-08). Faḳr-al-Dawla actually had asserted himself as heir of the eastern parts of the Buyid territories and had got hold of Ray too. Now he fled to the Ziyarids and later on to the Samanids and did not return to Ray until 373/984, when he was called back from Gorgān to replace his deceased brother Mo'ayyed-al-Dawla. 'Azod-al-Dawla had already died in Šawwāl 372/March 983 (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 18-22, 26-27; Kabīr, pp. 42ff.; Busse, pp. 35ff.).

Thus, in 369/980, the Buyid amirate was united for the first time under the reign of one ruler. Apparently 'Azod-al-Dawla had solved the two inconsistent tasks which had been a disastrous burden for about thirty-five years, namely re-establishing an empire recalling the Iranian traditions while saving the Islamic heritage of the caliphate from annihilation. But this state of concord and peace was not to last for long, as it was not founded on new institutions and new ideals combining the two contradictory elements, but only on 'Azod-al-Dawla's forceful personality. For this reason the political order he had enforced upon Iraq and western Iran fell to pieces when he died at the age of forty-seven.

The decades of decline. Faḳr-al-Dawla returned to his residence at Ray as the eldest member of the Buyid dynasty and dared to claim some kind of supremacy. He illustrated his claim by issuing coins mentioning him as *šāhānšāh* (Busse, 1969, p. 64), a title already used by 'Azod-al-Dawla.

'Azod-al-Dawla had not designated his successor. When he died his son Abū Kālījār Šamšām-al-Dawla Marzbān happened to be in Baghdad and was proclaimed *amīr al-omarā'*. But Abu'l-Fawāres Šaraf-al-Dawla Šīrẓīl, one of his



brothers, protested against this action, left his post in Kermān, and invaded Kūzestān and southern Iraq. In Baghdad some high functionaries thought of making Abū Naṣr Bahā'-al-Dawla Fīrūz, 'Azod-al-Dawla's third son, *amīr al-omarā'* instead of Ṣamṣām-al-Dawla. In Ṣafar 375/June 986 Ṣamṣām-al-Dawla and Ṣaraf-al-Dawla concluded a treaty: Ṣamṣām-al-Dawla, being the younger of the two, promised to obey Ṣaraf-al-Dawla in accordance with the traditional custom of the clan, retaining the greater part of Iraq, whereas Ṣaraf-al-Dawla was to rule over Fārs, Kūzestān, and Basra. Ṣaraf-al-Dawla's death in 1 Jomādā II 379/6 September 989 caused a profound change in the structure of the Buyid amirate. Bahā'-al-Dawla became his successor at the age of nineteen, and he had to defend Kūzestān against Faḡr-al-Dawla, who tried to make use of the confused situation in order to assert himself as chief of the dynasty, and shortly after he found himself at war with Ṣamṣām-al-Dawla, too. The latter conflict was ended by a treaty in which it was stipulated that both Ṣamṣām-al-Dawla and Bahā'-al-Dawla should recognize each other as enjoying equal rights and that both of them should retain their respective territories. There were now three Buyid principalities, independent of each other, with three rulers who claimed to be solely responsible for the dynasty as a whole (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 64-65, 75-76).

Faḡr-al-Dawla reigned in Ray till his death in Ša'bān 387/October-November 997. He was succeeded by his son Abū Ṭāleb Rostam, who was at that time four years old (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, p. 132). The boy, of course, was not able to rule by himself. Instead, his mother Sayyeda seized the reins of government and remained the actual ruler of the principality until her death in 405/1014. In 397/1006-07 Rostam, who had received the honorific title Majd-al-Dawla, tried with the help of his vizier Abū 'Alī b. 'Alī b. Qāsem to escape from the tutelage of his mother. But she escaped to the Kurdish Abū Najm Badr b. Ḥasanūya, who joined forces with Abū Ṭāher Šams-al-Dawla, who was holding Hamadān, and together they marched on Ray and put it under siege. Several battles were fought before the city was taken. Majd-al-Dawla was put in chains and imprisoned in the fort of Ṭabarak by his mother's orders, while Šams-al-Dawla stayed to rule in Ray. After a year of imprisonment Majd-al-Dawla was allowed to return to Ray, where he remained secluded from political affairs, and Šams-al-Dawla returned to Hamadān (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 203-04).

In the last years of her life Sayyeda had succeeded in thwarting the efforts of Šams-al-Dawla to occupy Ray, and even the Ghaznavid Sultan Maḡmūd, who had conquered Khorasan and was eager to extend his power further to the



west, had refrained from attacking Ray while she was still alive. (For an interesting story concerning Maḥmūd's intention and Sayyeda's shrewdness see *Tārīk-egozīda*, ed. Browne, pp. 428-29). But when Majd-al-Dawla Rostam had to reign on his own, the situation changed. Feeling himself menaced by his rebellious Daylamite soldiers, he asked Maḥmūd for help. Sultan Maḥmūd was pleased with this unexpected pretext allowing him to realize his ambition. He occupied Ray in Rabī' I 420/March-April 1029, and his troops sacked the city. Many people were rounded up and stoned as heretics (*bāṭenī*, *qarmaṭī*), and a large part of the great library there was burned on Maḥmūd's order (Gardīzī, ed. Ḥabībī, p. 193; Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 371-72). Majd-al-Dawla and his son were captured and treated as prisoners of high rank. Majd-al-Dawla is said to have died at Ġazna. From the end of the 4th/10th century until 420/1029 the Ray branch of the Buyid amirate had been nearly independent of the other Buyid principalities and had been involved in the fratricidal feuds of the other amirs only now and then. That Ray had become a flourishing cultural center during those three decades may to some extent be due to these circumstances.

Iraq and Fārs, however, were suffering from constant unrest since the end of the 4th/10th century. Bahā'-al-Dawla had to fight against his brother Ṣamṣām-al-Dawla, who ruled Fārs, Kermān, and 'Omān and used to challenge him once and again. In 388/998 Ṣamṣām-al-Dawla invaded Kūzestān and occupied Basra. Bahā'-al-Dawla and his allies, the Kurdish tribal chief Badr b. Ḥasanūya and Moḥaddeḡeb-al-Dawla 'Alī b. Naṣr, *marzbān* of southern Mesopotamia, reconquered Basra, but were unable to win a decisive victory over the enemy. Ṣamṣām-al-Dawla, however, was assassinated by a Buyid prince near Shiraz (Du'l-ḥejja 388/November-December 998); immediately after this his army in Kūzestān surrendered, and Bahā'-al-Dawla entered the province. Bahā'-al-Dawla advanced to Fārs and Kermān and even annexed 'Omān. He now was in possession of almost as many territories as 'Azod-al-Dawla had been in the heyday of his reign, and the Buyid emirs of Ray and Hamadān officially recognized his supremacy (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 142-43, 150-51).

Bahā'-al-Dawla's position in Mesopotamia, however, became more and more precarious since the bedouin principalities, which had sprung up on the northern and western frontiers of Iraq during the 4th/10th century, tried to join their forces against the Buyids. This meant that Baghdad was threatened by them once and again since the beginning of the 4th/11th century. In addition to that the Kurdish amir Badr b. Ḥasanūya was challenging the Buyids in Iraq. He had, for instance, seized Ḥolwān, a town controlling the im-



portant Khorasan road. To some extent these troubles in Mesopotamia may be due to the fact that the *amīr al-omarā'* no longer considered Iraq as the center of his political interest; when Şamşām-al-Dawla died, Bahā'-al-Dawla made Shiraz his residence, and he obviously did not dream of a renewal of 'Azod-al-Dawla's policy.

Bahā'-al-Dawla died on 5 Jomādā II 403/22 December 1012. His son Abū Šojā' Solţān-al-Dawla became his successor. He made his brother Abū Ṭāher Jalāl-al-Dawla his governor in Iraq and entrusted Kermān to another brother, Abu'l-Fawāres Qewām-al-Dawla. The latter held this post till his death in Ḍu'l-qa'da 419/November-December 1028. In 1018 Solţān-al-Dawla realized that he might lose Mesopotamia if he did not interfere personally. He entered Baghdad but was not able to re-establish peace and security. On the contrary the Turkish mercenaries, the strongest military force in Iraq, were opposed to the new influx of Daylamite soldiers caused by Solţān-al-Dawla's arrival. In 411/1021 they compelled him to make his youngest brother Moşarref-al-Dawla king of Iraq (*malek al-'Erāq*), a position hitherto unknown. About two years later Solţān-al-Dawla was expelled from Iraq and had to agree with Abū 'Alī Moşarref-al-Dawla Ḥasan on a treaty in which he even promised to leave Kūzestān to his youngest brother. In Iraq his name was no longer mentioned in the Friday sermons, Moşarref-al-Dawla being recognized as new *amīr al-omarā'* (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 317-19, 327).

Though supported by the Turkish mercenaries, Moşarref-al-Dawla was unable to put an end to the chaotic political situation in Iraq, and, even worse, he could not prevent the Buyid amirate from being split into two separated territories. For in 414/1023-24 'Alā'-al-Dawla Abū Ja'far Moḥammad Doşmanzīār (q.v.), a maternal cousin of Majd-al-Dawla and governor of Isfahan made himself independent of the Buyid great amir and advanced to the west, occupied Hamadān, and then tried to get hold of Ḥolwān (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 330-31). It may be due to the ascent of the Kakuyid amirate, which cut off Majd-al-Dawla's direct connections with Fārs and Mesopotamia, that he turned to the Ghaznavids for help in 419/1028, thus causing the ruin of the Buyid principality in Ray (see above).

The heritage that Moşarref-al-Dawla left to his successor in Rabī' I 416/May 1025 was a rather difficult one. Unfortunately he had no son, a fact which was to cause further trouble. Qewām-al-Dawla was in possession of Kermān, Jalāl-al-Dawla figured as governor of Basra, and Fārs was ruled by Abū Kālījār, the young son of Solţān-al-Dawla. In Baghdad Jalāl-al-Dawla was proclaimed *amīr*



al-omarā', but the military leaders supported Abū Kālījār, who was prevented from coming to Iraq by Qewām-al-Dawla, who had attacked him. Finally, in Ramaẓān 418/October 1027, Jalāl-al-Dawla entered Baghdad after he had been officially invested with the title of *amīr al-omarā'* (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 361-62). Neither Qewām-al-Dawla nor Abū Kālījār was willing to give up his claims. When Qewām-al-Dawla died in Ẓu'l-qa'da 419/October-November 1028 Abū Kālījār was free to intervene in Mesopotamia. This led to a decade of fratricidal wars between Abū Kālījār and Jalāl-al-Dawla, interrupted by a period of cooperation against Ghaznavid troops which had penetrated into Kermān in 424/1032-33 and were expelled from there three years later. In 428/1036-37 Jalāl-al-Dawla and Abū Kālījār, who was residing in Kūzestān, concluded a treaty defining their spheres of interest. After Jalāl-al-Dawla's death in Ša'bān 435/March 1044 Abū Kālījār became his successor. In the meantime the Saljuqs had penetrated western Iran, putting an end to the Kakuyid amirate and, from 437/1046, threatening Iraq. Abū Kālījār retreated to Shiraz, leaving Iraq to the Turkmen and securing his own territory by concluding an armistice with Ẓoğrel Beg, the Saljuq leader (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 455, 516, 536).

Abū Naṣr al-Malek al-Raḥīm, the eldest son of Abū Kālījār, succeeded his father in Jomādā I 440/October 1048, but he too was unable to organize an effective front against the Saljuqs. In Ramaẓān 447/December 1055 Ẓoğrel Beg, having declared that he wanted to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, entered Baghdad. The caliph ordered that his name should be mentioned in the Friday sermon in addition to that of al-Malek al-Raḥīm. About one week later al-Malek al-Raḥīm was accused of being responsible for some attacks on the Turkman occupants. He was brought to Ẓoğrel Beg and imprisoned. This was the end of the Buyid amirate in Iraq. Only Fārs remained under their control. Until 545/1062 this province was governed by Abū Maṣṣūr Pūlād Sotūn, son of Abū Kālījār, who had married a Saljuq princess. Fārs was conquered by the Šabānkāra Kurds before it fell to the Saljuqs (for further details see Kabīr, pp. 68-115; Busse, pp. 67-127),

The Buyid amirate and its neighbors. In its heyday the Buyid amirate covered a territory stretching from Ray, Isfahan, and Shiraz in the east to the desert west of the lower Euphrates. Furthermore, 'Omān was part of the amirate, so that the Buyids controlled the Persian Gulf area, which was extremely important for the Iraqi trade. In the north, Ṭabarestān remained independent of the Buyids, and Azarbaijan, too, was governed by a dynasty of its own, the



Musafirids. The area of the upper Euphrates, Dīārbakr, was held by the Arab Marwanids, who, as the vassals of the Buyids, were involved in permanent warfare with Byzantium.

The Buyids never succeeded in overthrowing the Ziyarids, the dynasty under which they had risen to military and political power. ‘Azod-al-Dawla, however, was able to occupy Ṭabarestān and Gorgān for some time, extending his territory to the southern coast of the Caspian Sea. In the beginning of the 5th/11th century the Ziyarids acknowledged the Ghaznavids as their overlords to secure their support. Thus they remained a constant threat to the Buyids’ northeastern frontier in Khorasan, where the Samanids, and later the Ghaznavids, blocked any further annexation of the Buyid territory. The relations between the Buyids and the Samanids were mostly tense. The same is true for the relations between the Buyids and the Ghaznavids, which in addition were charged with a religious antagonism, the Ghaznavids considering themselves as zealous fighters for Sunni Islam and suspecting the Shi‘ite Buyids of heterodox leanings.

Much more precarious than in the east was the Buyids’ position in Mesopotamia. There they had to cooperate or struggle with numerous quickly changing and almost incalculable political powers. To the end of the 4th/10th century the Hamdanids of Aleppo and Mosul were the most important opponents of the Buyids in northern Mesopotamia, but the victories the Byzantine armies had won since the 350s/960s had weakened the Hamdanids, and their control of the Muslim frontiers collapsed. In the eastern part of that region the bedouin amirate of the Marwanids came into being and became vassals of the Buyids. But the western part, Aleppo, remained beyond Buyid control. For this reason the Fatimid caliphs of Cairo, who had got hold of Syria, succeeded in interfering with the tribal conflicts of Mesopotamia, thus causing much unrest and eventually threatening to overthrow their ‘Abbasid rivals. In the border region of southern and middle Iraq, which separates the desert from the cultivated land, the Buyids had to check the Banū Ḳafāja, who were often quarreling with the Banū ‘Oqayl, another bedouin dynasty, governing as Buyid vassals in the Fertile Crescent. We cannot outline the conflicts between the Buyids and their bedouin vassals and enemies, but it is beyond any doubt that, when getting involved in the politics of Iraq, they obviously overrated their forces (Busse, 1969, pp. 72ff.).

The position of the Buyids in Iraq was also threatened by the Byzantine Empire, which in the second half of the 4th/10th century was able temporarily



to extend its power as far as Palestine. The Buyids were reluctant to take on the task of resisting the Byzantines (Ebn Meskawayh, II, pp. 303ff.), for they were extremely wary of the enthusiasm for holy war aroused in Khorasan by the threat from Byzantium, especially because it was supported by Sunnites (Ebn Meskawayh, II, pp. 222-28). It worked to the benefit of the caliphs that they, rather than the Buyid amirs, were prominent among the supporters of the holy war, especially as it was a struggle in which the Shi'ites could hardly participate (Ebn Jawzī, *Montaẓam* VIII, p. 55). The Fatimids at least were able to take advantage of the disintegration of the Byzantine position on Syrian and Palestinian territory at the end of the 4th/10th century (cf., e.g., Rudrāvarī, pp. 178ff.). They sought to gain influence among the bedouin shaikhs in the area west of the Euphrates and in the Fertile Crescent, who were partly subject to the Buyids. This policy succeeded now and then (cf., e.g., Ebn Jawzī, *Montaẓam* VII, p. 251), but the Fatimids obviously lacked the resources to dispense large sums of money to win the support of the bedouins for a major military action against Mesopotamia. Within the Buyid realm the Fatimids established a network of native agents and recruited a few important individuals, perhaps including the leader of the 'Alids in Baghdad, Moḥammad al-Rezā (Ebn Jawzī, *Montaẓam* VII, pp. 281ff.). Buyid Ray is also supposed to have been a citadel of the Isma'ilis (Ebn Jawzī, *Montaẓam* VIII, pp. 39ff.). The greatest success was no doubt that achieved by the agent al-Mo'ayyad fi'l-Dīn, who temporarily won the support of the Shirazi Buyid Abū Kālījār 'Emād-al-Dīn (*Dīwān al-Mo'ayyad fi'l-Dīn*, p. 27; *al-Sīra al-mo'ayyadīya*, pp. 43ff.). The defeat of the Buyids by the power of the Saljuqs nevertheless ruined Fatimid hopes of establishing a political foothold in Mesopotamia or Iran.

The inner structure of the Buyid amirate. Looking at the inner structure of the Buyid amirate one gets a similar impression. There were no sufficiently elaborated institutions to cope with the tremendous task which had fallen to the Buyids of creating a stable and reliable administration to check the steady decay and disintegration which had afflicted the 'Abbasid caliphate since the end of the 3rd/9th century. As we have seen, the ascent of the office of *amīr al-omarā'* delivered the deathblow to the central authorities. The amirs were now working on their own account, and the amount of appanage they granted to the caliph depended on their favor.

The army was by far the most important social group within the Buyid amirate. Within the social fabric of the empire of the caliphs the amirs could not develop a procedure of their own to legitimate their rule with respect to



the generally accepted religious foundations of the society, but remained dependent upon the caliphs' agreement. The caliphs on their side would grant them the honorific titles they were craving for only in consideration of their actual military power. Therefore, the amirs would strive to increase their forces at any cost in order to assert themselves against their rivals and to achieve legitimation. This meant that the measures taken in this field were no longer executed with respect to the general concern of the Muslim empire, but to the particular interest of some amir or other. The society had to suffer from a fatal fragmentation of political objectives (Kabīr, pp. 135ff.; Busse, 1969, pp. 329ff.).

Clan loyalty and personal loyalty to prominent leaders were the most effective integrating forces within the amirate, whereas the institutions of central administration were seriously weakened and easily outmaneuvered once and again. Every powerful amir would employ some officials of his own who were responsible to him and had to work for his benefit only. In the beginning the bulk of the Buyid's troops consisted of the Daylamite compatriots of the amirs. Then Mo'ezz-al-Dawla seems to have acquired Turkish slave soldiers once he had established himself in Kūzestān. Furthermore, he owned a number of Turkish slaves serving within his household. Obviously he did not rely too much on the loyalty of his fellow countrymen, whom he may have considered as insubordinate and who, perhaps, would show a certain feeling of natural solidarity which might be disadvantageous to the purposes of the amir in certain situations. The Turkish slave soldiers could be checked more easily. For this reason the influence of the Daylamite element within the Buyid armies was decreasing rapidly in favor of the Turks (Busse, 1969, pp. 36, 329ff.). In this way at the end of the Buyid reign a situation similar to the disastrous times immediately before the establishing of the office of *amīr al-omarā'* was prevailing, the amirs being dependent on the goodwill of their Turkish mercenaries and, even worse, there being now several amirs who could be played off against each other. The urban as well as the rural society was at the mercy of the amirs and their troops during the Buyid rule, and people were complaining of the inability of the caliph to protect them against injustice. Nevertheless the 'Abbasid caliphate did not disappear but retained its prestige not only with the amirs but also with the common people, though this prestige could not be translated into actual political power. It was the caliphs who nominated the *qāzīs* and who were responsible for the religious duties. If they did not appoint the judges and the preachers of the congregational mosques, the faithful would not be granted the opportunity of



fulfilling the commandments of the *Šarī'a* and would be damned to hell in the hereafter.

It has often been maintained that the religious politics of the Buyids favored the Shi'ites. Some evidence does, in fact, support this view (Busse, 1969, pp. 415ff.). Nevertheless, it cannot be established that there was a determined attack on Sunnism, at least in Iraq. It appears, rather, that the rise of the Daylamites, who were supporters of Shi'ism, though it exacerbated already existing tensions between the Shi'ites and Sunnites, was in no way the cause of them. Furthermore, as there were still contingents of Sunnite Turkish troops in Iraq a determined policy of enforcing acceptance of Shi'ism would have led to disaster (cf. the events reported in Ebn Meskawayh, II, pp. 324-41). Also, the advent of the Fatimid caliphate brought about a crisis among the Shi'a, culminating in a confrontation between the relatively passive "Twelvers" and the politically and militarily active "Seveners." Had the Buyids supported the latter group, which would first of all have required unconditional submission to the Isma'ili imams, they would have forfeited their position as an independent power. It seemed to them much better to ally themselves with the 'Abbasids.

Buyids and Iranian culture. The Buyid amirate is said to have been the most important exponent of the so-called Iranian interlude in Islamic history, which separated the period of Arab ascendancy from the ensuing times of Turkish predominance. There are in the sources a few traces of old Iranian traditions, but it is difficult to determine whether they represent survivals or renewals. For example, many Buyids had Iranian names, but it is not known whether they reflect the superficial penetration of Islam in their homeland or a more conscious adherence to older ways. The same is true of the use of the Iranian *calendar* (for examples, see Helāl Šābe', *Ta'rīk*, pp. 371, 388) and of the observance of Iranian feast days, which had never been entirely given up. To what extent did the Buyid amirs revive the ancient Iranian tradition of government and statesmanship, and how close did they keep to Islamic ideals? There is no clear answer to these two questions; however, after a careful study of the sources the conclusion seems appropriate that one should not overestimate the Iranian leanings of the Buyids. First of all they were military leaders, who took part in the struggle for power and wealth going on all over the disintegrating 'Abbasid empire, and they played their game according to the rules which were valid in those days. Of course they must have been aware of the stories praising the glorious past of Iran, and by propagating the



Iranian tradition the Buyids would enhance their prestige with their compatriots; however, since they had become involved in the troublesome affairs of Iraq, it would not have been wise to overemphasize their Iranian character, which was not very popular with the common Iraqis. Furthermore we do not have any evidence that the Buyid amirs were deliberately giving their demeanor an Iranian style. They just wanted a benefit in the field of politics from claiming descent from the Sasanian kings.

‘Alī ‘Emād-al-Dawla is reported to have been the first Buyid amir to use the title *šāhānšāh* and to wear a crown of gold. Unfortunately this is not corroborated by his coinage, which does not bear that title. But ‘Emād-al-Dawla may have made use of it in order to stress his predominant position among the members of the dynasty. Later on ‘Azod-al-Dawla did not hesitate to issue coins in Fārs depicting him as a crowned king and bearing the inscription *šāhānšāh*, as is demonstrated by a specimen dating back to 359/970. During the last period of his life he even seems to have insisted on being referred to by that title. Some of the later Buyids also had resorted to it when they wanted to underline a leading position among their rivals. There are bizarre examples of enlarged forms such as *šāhānšāh al-mo‘azzam* “exalted king of the kings,” as Abū Kālījār considered suitable for himself. His rival Jalāl-al-Dawla went still a step further claiming to be *šāhānšāh al-a‘zam* “the most exalted king of the kings” (Ebn al-Jawzī, *Montaẓam* VIII, p. 65).

Though the later Buyid amirs were anxious to secure for themselves the title *šāhānšāh* reflecting the Iranian tradition, we may infer from the sources that it cannot have been a living tradition which compelled them to do so. For, incredible as it may seem, they used to ask the ‘Abbasid caliph to grant them that title officially. This meant that in reality they considered *šāhānšāh* as comparable with Mo‘ezz-al-Dawla and all those honorific titles granted by the caliphs which had come into use in those days. The caliph on his side—or rather some of his jurisconsults—felt that from an Islamic point of view one could not comply with every bombastic form of title an ambitious amir might covet. In 422/1031 Abū Kālījār requested the title *al-solṭān al-mo‘azzam mālek al-omam* “exalted sovereign authority, possessor of the nations.” The caliph’s ambassador, Māwardī, refused to legalize these epithets because in his opinion they were suitable for the caliph only. A few years later Abū Kālījār demanded the title *šāhānšāh al-a‘zam*, and this time the caliph found himself forced to give in. But when his decision was announced during the Friday worship, the mass of the people protested violently and threw pieces of brick



at the preacher. Afterwards a committee of juriconsults considered the matter, and again it was Māwardī who objected to the title, since only God could be “king of the kings” (Ebn al-Aṭīr, IX, pp. 15, 23, 59; Ebn al-Jawzī, VII, p. 113, VIII, pp. 97ff.).

Generally speaking the Buyids were convinced that in the society of those days, which even in Iran had been permeated by Islamic ideals and values, they had to act in accordance with these ideals and values. It was due to this conviction that they asked the caliph to legitimate their reign when it had grown into a political factor of supra-regional importance. By no means could they rely exclusively on the somewhat vague Iranian tradition they did not shrink from exploiting for their benefit, to be sure, but they knew that they needed Islamic legitimation most of all. It is for this reason that ‘Azod-al-Dawla, the most powerful of the Buyid amirs, did not attempt to overthrow the ‘Abbasid caliphate; on the contrary, he married his eldest daughter (her name is variously recorded as Šāhnāz, Šāhbāz, Šāh-e Zanān) to the caliph al-Ṭā’ē in order to unite the amirate and the caliphate in the future. This plan, however, came to nothing, since al-Ṭā’ē, who was not willing to leave the caliphate to the Buyids, refused to consummate the marriage (Helāl b. Moḥassen Šābe’, *Rosūm dār al-ḳelāfa*, ed. M. ‘Awwād, Baghdad, 1383/1964, pp. 138-39).

There is no reason to define the Buyid amirate as Iranian, as opposed to Islamic in some way or other. From the historian’s point of view it marks the transitional period between the universal political structure represented by the ‘Abbasid caliphate, and the more or less independent Islamic states that were to come into being in the 5th/11th century. These states were to exist on their own authority and resources, but their rulers would be anxious to secure an Islamic legitimation for themselves. It was as early as 450/1058 that the caliph al-Qā’em was to crown the Sa1juq sultan Ṭōḡrel Beg.

See also ‘azī^wod-al-dawla; and other individual Buyids.

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