



DĪNAVAR

DĪNAVAR (occasionally vocalized Daynavar), in the first centuries of Islam an important town in Jebāl, now ruined. Its site lies northeast of modern Kermānšāh, at 34° 35' N, 47° 26' E, on an upland plain (elev. 1,600 m) traversed by what the medieval traveler Abū Dolaf called the river of Dīnavar (p. 49, comm. pp. 93, 97).

Dīnavar was an important fortified point of the Sasanian empire, to which the Turkish Khazars were said to have penetrated in the early 6th century (Balādorī, *Fotūḥ*, p. 194). It was also the seat of the Syrian Christian bishopric of Mādkaī. It was founded at least as early as the Seleucid period in the heartland of ancient Media, which probably accounts for the element *māh* in Māh al-Kūfa, the early Islamic name for the region of Dīnavar, distinct from Māh al-BasĀra, which was centered on Nehāvand. Dīnavar was conquered by Arabs from BasĀra immediately after the defeat of the Persians at Nehāvand in 21/642 (Balādorī, *Fotūḥ*, p. 307) but soon afterward became the center of the region allocated to the Arabs of the Kūfa garrison.

The Arab geographers expatiated on the prosperity of Dīnavar. According to Ebn Ḥawqal (p. 362; tr. Kramers, p. 354), it was two-thirds the size of Hamadān but surpassed the latter in production of such scholars and literary men as [Ebn Qotayba](#) and [Abū Ḥanīfa Dīnavarī](#). Maqdesī (Moqaddasī, pp. 384, 395) called it the “elegant” (*zarīfa*) Dīnavar, the inhabitants of which were all adherents of the legal school of Sofyān Ṭawrī. Its fine Friday mosque had been built of stone by the local Kurdish ruler Ḥasanūya b. Ḥosayn (ca. 348-69/959-80; Ebn al-Aṭīr, VIII, p. 281). Dīnavar was, in fact, the center of the



Ḥasanuyid principality and regained its prosperity after having been sacked by the [Deylamites](#) under Mardāvīj in 319/931.

From Yāqūt's repetitious reports and his vagueness about where Dīnavar actually lay (*Boldān* II, p. 545), it appears that by the beginning of the 13th century the town had fallen into decline; it had been plundered by the Oghuz Turkmen of the Īvā tribe in 568/1172-73 (Ebn al-Aṭīr, XI, p. 177). According to *Nozhat al-qolūb* (ed. Le Strange, p. 107; tr. p. 106), in the 14th century it was still a small town in a fertile region, but it was devastated by Tīmūr at the end of the century, and only a field of ruins is now visible.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Hodūd al-'ālam, tr. Minorsky, p. 132. Le Strange, *Lands*, pp. 189-90, 227.

L. Lockhart, "Dīnawar," in *EI2* II, pp. 299-300. Schwarz, *Iran*, pp. 473-77.