



DĪVĀN II. GOVERNMENT OFFICE

ii. GOVERNMENT OFFICE

The origins of the *dīvān* lie in the earliest years of the Arab caliphate in Medina, when the caliph 'Omar b. Kaṭṭāb is said to have instituted a register (*dīvān*) in which were recorded tax payments, as well as the names of Arab warriors entitled to stipends (*'aṭā'*) and the appropriate rates (Ṭabarī, I, p. 2412). In the Arabic sources, this innovation was in imitation of fiscal and administrative practice in Byzantine Syria and Sasanian Persia, the latter associated with the name of a Persian secretary in Sasanian Iraq, Fayrūzān (Pērōzān; Jahšīārī, p. 11; Balāḍorī, *Fotūḥ*, pp. 450-61; Ṭabarī, I, pp. 2749-50; Sprengling, pp. 177-81; Kennedy, pp. 68-69).

By the beginning of the Omayyad period (41-132/661-750) the central administration in Damascus had to be more specialized than the single *dīvān* of the first four caliphs in Medina and Kūfa. The central *dīvān*, called *dīvān al-ḵarāj*, was concerned with assessments and receipts, as well as taxation in the conquered lands. It was backed by a *dīwān al-rasā'el* for official correspondence; a *dīwān al-kātam* for sealing these documents and checking on possible forgeries; and a *dīwān al-jond* responsible for military affairs and keeping up to date the payrolls for Arab warriors. In addition, there were *dīvāns* responsible for collection of the poor tax (*ṣadaqa*), administration of revenues from state domains, manufacture of the *ṭerāz* (official textiles), and



running the postal and courier services (*barīd*). The caliph Mo'āwīa (41-64/661-80) seems to have been the guiding hand in the formation of these new organs.

It is difficult to assess the degree of continuity, with the previous Sasanian administration, though it must have been extensive in Iraq and Persia itself, where most official personnel there under Arab provincial governors were undoubtedly either Persianized Arameans or ethnic Persians; certainly Persian remained the language of official business in the eastern provinces of the caliphate until the adoption of Arabic toward the end of the 7th century. The sources bearing on this process are confused and contradictory, but it was almost certainly gradual, rather than abrupt, as implied by those authors who attribute the decisive influence to Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf, governor of Iraq under 'Abd-al-Malek (65-86/685-705). Mo'āwīa's earlier viceroy there, Zīād b. Abīhi, seems to have first employed the Persian Zādān-Farroḳ in his *dīwān al-ḳarāj*, and others of the same family followed him there. His son Mardānšāh is supposed to have opposed the process of arabization, but Ḥajjāj resolved to carry it through in 78/697, following the advice and with the technical assistance of another Persian, Sāleḥ b. 'Abd-al-Raḥmān Sīstānī, who had been a subordinate official of Zādān-Farroḳ (Jahšīārī, p. 23; Balāḍorī, *Fotūḥ*, pp. 300-01; Sprengling, pp. 183-201; Zarrīnkūb, pp. 45-48). In the farther provinces like Khorasan, however, the change from Persian did not take place until almost the end of the Omayyad period (Hawting, pp. 63-64).

The 'Abbasids (after 132/750) established their capital in Iraq, eventually at Baghdad. A shift in orientation toward the east is discernible, encouraged by increased receptiveness to Persian cultural influence and the roots of the 'Abbasid revolution in Khorasan (Kennedy, pp. 134-37). The 'Abbasid central administration became increasingly complex; the financial administration in particular was subdivided into departments responsible for financial control and accounting (*dīwān al-zemām/al-azemma*), the caliphs' personal domains (*dīwān al-zīā' al-ḳāṣṣa*), confiscation of the estates of fallen officials (*dīwān al-moṣādara*), and so on. The military department retained a special importance (see Hoernerbach, pp. 257-90), but there was further specialization there too, under its chief ('*arez*); for example, the *dīwān al-mawālī wa'l-ḡelmān* was responsible for the new, professional slave army that increasingly replaced traditional Arab troops during the 9th century, and the *dīwān al-jond wa'l-šakeriya*, responsible, according to M. A. Shaban (pp. 64-65) for personal retainers brought into the 'Abbasid army by Persian and Turkish magnates



from Central Asia (on the 'Abbasid *dīvāns* in general, see Levy, pp. 305-07, 322-27; Dūri).

It was on from these caliphal institutions that the administrations of the successor states in Persia were formed after the relaxation of the caliphal grip on outlying provinces from the 9th century on. Such provincial capitals as Shiraz, Marāḡa, and Marv and later Nīšāpūr, Zarang, and Sīrjān must already have had local *dīvāns* for collection of the provincial revenues and employees responsible to the chief tax collectors (*āmel* or *bondār*); virtually nothing is known, however, about the working of these officials or their subordinates.

All that is known of the administration of the Taherid governors in Nīšāpūr, for example, is that the treasuries of the last of them, Moḡammad b. Ṭāher (II) b. 'Abd-Allāh, were plundered by the Saffarid Ya'qūb b. Layṭ when he captured the city in 259/873 (Gardīzī, ed. Ḥabībī, p. 140); presumably they were part of a financial *dīvān*. At that time the *dīvān* of Khorasan was situated in the center of the city, but in the 10th and early 11th centuries it was located in the more salubrious suburb of Šādyāḡ (Bosworth, *Ghaznavids*, pp. 160-61). A little more is known about the administration of the Saffarids, founded by Ya'qūb (r. 253-65/867-79), who had a *dīwān al-'arż*, in which his soldiers and their pay allotments were registered; it and other offices were located in the *dār al-emāra*, or government building, at Zarang (Bosworth, 1968, p. 549). His successor, 'Amr b. Layṭ (r. 265-88/879-901) had three separate treasuries, which suggests a degree of specialization; the second, responsible for the *māl-e kāṣṣā*, corresponds to the 'Abbasid *dīwān al-żīā' al-kāṣṣa*. The chief secretary must have presided over a *dīvān al-rasā'el/al-enšā'*, though its precise name is unrecorded in the sources (for Saffarid administration, see Bosworth, 1992, ch. VII).

The Buyids took control of lands in northern, western, and southern Persia that had been administered directly by the caliphate, so that an appreciable amount of administrative continuity was to be expected, not only in Baghdad, which Mo'ezz-al-Dawla Aḡmad took over in 334/945, but also in the capitals of other members of the Buyid confederacy: Isfahan, Ray, and Shiraz. Nevertheless, the very nature of this family's rule implied a certain degree of decentralization, compared with the 'Abbasid bureaucracy. At the head of the Buyid system were the three great departments: the *dīwān al-wazīr* for finance, the *dīwān al-rasā'el* for correspondence, and the *dīwān al-jayš* for military affairs. Several other *dīvāns* were directly continued from their 'Abbasid predecessors, for example, those of the *barīd*, the *zemām*, and the *al-*



ẓīā' al-kāṣṣa. A *dīvān al-ḳelāfa* controlled what remained of the puppet 'Abbasid caliphs' executive powers in Baghdad and oversaw liaison between them and the Buyid amirs. In the time of 'Azod-al-Dawla (367-72/978-83) the special section of the central financial department responsible for revenues from the rich Mesopotamian agricultural plains, the *dīwān ḳarāj al-savād*, was transferred to Shiraz, the capital of southern and western Persia (Busse, pp. 310-17). As the Buyid confederation was essentially the military domination of a Deylamite-Turkish elite, the department of military affairs was of premier importance, and the sources for the period include much information about the activities of its chief (*'ārez al-jayš*). At the zenith of the dynasty's fortunes, under 'Azod-al-Dawla and his son Bahā'-al-Dawla (379-403/989-1012) there were actually two separate *'ārezes*, one for the Deylamite troops and one for the Turks, Arabs, and Kurds, hence the term *dīwān al-jayšayn* (department of the two armies; Bosworth, 1965-66, pp. 162 ff.; Busse, pp. 339 ff.).

Information about the structure of the Samanid central at Bukhara is available from Naršaḳī's listing of the various *dīvāns* there in the time of the amir Naṣr b. Aḥmad (303-31/913-43) and from material on their procedures and techniques given by Ḳvārazmī. Naršaḳī mentioned the *dīvāns* of the *wazīr*, the chief secretary (*'amīd al-molk*), the treasurer and accountant (*mostawfi*), the commander of the guard (*ṣāḥeb-e šoratĀ*), the postmaster and intelligence chief (*ṣāḥeb-e barīd*), the controller and inspector of finances (*mošref*), the intendant (*ṣāḥeb*) of the amir's personal domains (*mamlaka-ye ḳāṣṣ*), the market inspector and custodian of public morals (*moḥtaseb*), the comptroller of pious endowments (*awqāf*), and the judiciary (*qazā*; Naršaḳī, p. 31; tr. Frye, p. 26; Barthold, *Turkestan*3, pp. 229-32). The reliance on the 'Abbasid model is apparent, reflecting a distinct sophistication, as is further apparent in the material provided by Ḳvārazmī, apparently himself a secretary in the administration at Bukhara. Naršaḳī did not mention the office for military affairs (unless he subsumed it under the *dīvān-eṣāḥeb-e šoratĀ*), but Ḳvārazmī devoted special sections to the *dīwān al-jayš* and its procedures, including the use of the black register (*al-jarīda al-sawdā'*), the master register of troops, their fighting skills, equipment, pay entitlements, and so on (Ḳvārazmī, pp. 56, 64-66; Bosworth, 1969).

As the Ghaznavids arose from the slave guard of the Samanids, it was likely that the administration in their capital, Ġazna, would follow in essentials that of Bukhara, especially as there was some continuity of personnel between the two centers. Five central *dīvāns* served the sultan: those of the vizier, the chief



secretary (*dīvān-e rasā'el*), the army (*dīvān-e 'arż*), the internal spy and police system (*dīvān-e šoġl-e ešrāf-e mamlakat*), and the official (*wakīl-e kāššá*) responsible for operation and supply of the royal palaces and gardens. Similar organs existed on a reduced scale in the provincial centers of the extensive Ghaznavid empire, like Nīšāpūr and Lahore. Remarkable insight into the workings of the Ghaznavid bureaucracy, with a detail unparalleled in medieval Persian history, can be gained from the history of Abu'l-Faẓl Bayhaqī (see Nāẓim, pp. 130-50; Bosworth, *Ghaznavids*, pp. 48-97, 122-26, 137-38; idem, *Later Ghaznavids*, pp. 33-35, 69-74).

In Transoxania the Turkish Qarakhanids succeeded the Samanids; the predominance of this nomadic steppe group meant a lightening of administrative and fiscal burdens in Transoxania, and it must be assumed that the requirements for a Qarakhanid bureaucracy were much reduced and that much of the complex Samanid government machinery fell into disuse. Unfortunately, no direct information is available on the administrative arrangements of the Qarakhanids, though, as Reşat Genç has pointed out (pp. 254-62), Yūsuf Kāšş Hājeb's didactic poem *Qutadgu bilig* (comp. 461/1069), permits inference of the existence at least of organs corresponding to a great *dīvān* and a *dīvān-e enšā'*. The same process of simplification in both central and local administration is observable, though on a less drastic scale, in the lands south of the Oxus, where the Saljuqs replaced the Ghaznavids and Buyids (Klausner, pp. 9-13).

The Saljuqs were also originally nomadic pastoralists, and the Great Saljuq sultans tended to maintain a somewhat peripatetic existence, with their capital shifting among various Persian cities, like Nīšāpūr, Ray, Isfahan, Hamadān, and also, in the 12th century, Baghdad. The sultan was, moreover, often absent on long military campaigns. The Saljuq administration was directed from a supreme *dīvān* (*dīvān-e a'lā*) presided over by the vizier, who, at least at first, played a greater role in the state than previously, exercising civil, military, and religious responsibilities; the careers of statesmen like Abū Naşr Kondorī and K̄vāja Neẓām-al-Molk illustrate this change. The raising of funds for the sultan was naturally one of the vizier's prime duties, but he also directed a secretariat (*dīvān-al-enšā' wa'l-toġrā*), an accounting department (*dīvān al-zemām wa'l-estifā'*), and a department concerned with financial control and oversight of provincial officials (*dīvān-e ešrāf*). From the end of the 11th century the *mostawfī* might on occasion wield an influence in the state comparable with that of the vizier, whose authority would then be



correspondingly restricted. There are also references in the sources to *dīvāns* concerned with redress of grievances (*mazālem*), the sultans' private domains (*kāššá*), the *awqāf*, land grants (*eqṭā*), and confiscations (*mošādarāt*), though they may not all have functioned continuously. The military department, led by the *'arez*, retained its importance, and this office was often a stepping stone to the vizierate itself. Only the earlier *dīvān-e barīd* was allowed to fall into disuse (Neẓām al-Molk, ch. X). Most government departments must have remained in the capital of the time, but the vizier normally accompanied the sultan on his progresses and military expeditions, and it is probable that the privy treasury, kept in the *dīvān al-kāšš*, also went with the ruler. The pattern of central administration was partly repeated in the provinces, as at Marv under Sultan Sanjar (511-52/1118-57; Horst, pp. 25-60; Lambton, *Camb. Hist. Iran*, pp. 247 ff.; idem, 1988, pp. 28-48; idem, in *EI2*; Klausner, pp. 15-21).

Not much is known about the administrative arrangements of the *Kvārazmšāhs*, but they appear to have followed the lines of those of the Great Saljuqs, normally headed by a vizier in his *dīvān-e a'lā*. In 615/1218 'Alā'-al-Dīn Moḥammad replaced his vizier with a body of six high officials (*wakīldārs*), one of whom is described as head of the chancery (*dīvān-e enšā*); whether there was any shared responsibility among these officials is unclear (Horst, p. 25).

The Mongol invasion, however disastrous for Persia in regard to population, land use, and economic life, did not entail a traumatic break in the remarkably resilient Persian administrative tradition. In the decades immediately after the establishment of the Il-khanids in the mid-13th century members of minority groups were employed as officials, for example, the Jewish Sa'd-al-Dawla under *Argūn Khan* (683-90/1284-91). But, as usually happened, incoming rulers eventually turned to Muslim Persians to run the financial and administrative system, even though there was a certain simplification of the latter, compared even with Saljuq practice; once the Il-khans themselves became Muslims at the end of the 13th century, there was a distinct revival of the Persian Islamic bureaucratic ethos. The *dīvān-e a'lā* remained necessary, and the chief minister was still the vizier, though occasionally known as the deputy (*ra'īs*) of the ruler, but there was a tendency for the supervision of financial affairs to pass to the *šāḥeb-e dīvān*, whose power might at times equal or surpass that of the vizier. For example, for several years toward the end of the 13th century the vizier 'Aṭā-Malek Jovaynī shared power with the *mošref al-mamālek* Majd-al-Molk Yazdī; and, when in 699/1299-1300 Rašīd-al-Dīn Faẓl-Allāh became



ṣāheb-e dīvān for Ġāzān Khan (694-703/1295-1304), he was entrusted with the general supervision of the Il-khanid realm, including finance, administration of crown domains, appointment of subordinate officials, operation of the postal and courier service (*yām*; Morgan, pp. 105-07), and general promotion of the development and prosperity of the empire (Tārīkò-e Waṣṣāf, p. 347, cited in Lambton, EI2).

The Il-khanid financial departments operated under the direction of a group of senior secretaries, the *uluḡ bitikčīs*; they included the *dīvān-e estīfā'* or *dīvān-e ešrāf* and a bureau for overseeing the Il-khans' private domains, *īnjū* or, tautologically, *īnjū-ye kāṣṣa*. The Mongol chancery was inaugurated by the body of Chinese, Uighur, Nestorian Christian, and Muslim *bitikčīs* whom Čengīz Khan and the first Il-khanids had employed. The diplomacy of the Il-khanids was far-flung, and there was always a need to communicate, not only with the unconquered rulers of the Muslim world, particularly the Mamluks, but also with the Frankish Christians, the Byzantines, the Il-khanids' pagan kindred in Inner Asia, and the Chinese. The Il-khanid secretaries thus not only performed such routine duties as affixing to documents the khans' seals (*āl tamḡā* and *altūn tamḡā*) and preparing and issuing tablets of authority (*pāyza*, Mong. *gerege*) but also the inditing of correspondence in a formidable array of languages and scripts. Jovaynī mentioned that the chancery had secretaries specifically for issuing decrees in Persian, Uighur Turkish, North Chinese (*ketā'ī*), Tibetan, Tangut, and so on (ed. Qazvīnī, III, p. 89; tr. Boyle, II, pp. 606-07).

The absence, at least initially, of a specific military department is, however, noteworthy, reflecting the fact that the original Mongol army was coterminous with the free, adult, male nation, thus differing fundamentally from the armies of earlier rulers in Persia. Only during Ġāzān Khan's reign were new recruitment and pay arrangements, including allocation of *eqtā's*, introduced, bringing the Mongol army more in line with earlier Persian armies; eventually, at an unspecified date, a *dīvān-e 'arż* appeared. The Il-khanids themselves followed a seminomadic or transhumant way of life similar to that of the Saljuq sultans. Although Oljāytū, for example, built a capital at Solṭānīya in northwestern Persia between 705/1305 and 713/1313, he often moved his military camp (*ordū*) between winter and summer quarters and was accompanied by a mobile administration, as well as the army; this administration usually included the vizier and at least some chancery officials (*monšīs* or *bitikčīs/bakšīs*, *mošrefs*, and *mostawfīs*), but their spheres of duty



are somewhat imprecise in the sources (Melville, pp. 55, 60-61; for the Il-khanid administration, see Spuler, *Mongolen*1 pp. 282 ff.; Uzunçarşılı, pp. 198-241; Lambton, in *EI2*; idem, 1988, pp. 50-67).

Under the Il-khans there had been in practice an administrative division between military (Mongol and Turkish) and the civilian (Persian) populations, which remained under the Timurids. In the time of Tīmūr himself (771-807/1370-1405) the *dīvān-e a'lā* assessed and collected tribute (*māl-e amān*) from the conquered provinces and towns and was also responsible for collection of taxes, though the ruler himself might well modify the assessments. The title borne by the head of the supreme *dīvān* is uncertain. The official historian of Tīmūr's reign, Neẓām-al-Dīn Šāmī, seldom mentioned the term *wazīr* and then only in the plural, as the term for a group of leading state dignitaries (*omarā' wa wozarā' wa arkān-e dawlat*); he also mentioned a *dīvān-e kāṣṣ*. This paucity of reference indicates that under Tīmūr the chief of the *dīvān-e kāṣṣ* had only limited authority and was closely supervised by the khan (Manz, pp. 200-02). A century later, under Solṭān-Ḥosayn Bayqarā, the administrative-ethnic division still persisted below the level of the *dīvān-e a'lā*, which was responsible for both civil and military, Turkish and Persian spheres of affairs. Subordinate to it, first, was the organ charged with Turkish and military matters, the *dīvān-e bozorg-e amārat*, led by a *dīvānbeḡī*, with a staff of *bitikčīs/baḡšīs*; the *tavajī dīvānī* "department of the army inspector" (i.e., of an official corresponding to the 'ārez as muster master) was probably a subdivision of this *dīvān*. Second, the *dīvān-e 'ālī* or Sart (Mong. and Turk. "Persian, Tajik") *dīvānī* was responsible for affairs of the Persian population and was staffed by secretaries (*nevīsandagān-e tājīk*); the *dīvān-e māl* must have been a subdivision of this *dīvān* (Hinz, cited in Morvārīd, comm., p. 169).

The Turkmen dynasties that succeeded the Il-khanid state in western Persia and Iraq, the Jalayerids, the Qara Qoyunlū, and the Āq Qoyunlū, probably inherited the administrative institutions of the Il-khanids, though little specific is known about the workings of the individual *dīvāns*. It seems that Moḡammad b. Hendūšāh Naḡjavānī, author of *Dastūr al-kāteb*, worked in the chanceries of both the Il-khanid Abū Sa'īd (717-36/1316-35) and the Jalāyerid Šayḡ Oways (757-76/1356-74; Storey, III, pp. 5-9, 246-47). The civil administration of the Qara Qoyunlū, as well as of the Āq Qoyunlū, was headed by a supreme *dīvān-e a'lā/a'zam*, with a vizier who oversaw central and provincial administration in general. Under the Āq Qoyunlū there was also a secretarial department, the *dīvān-e parvānačī*, corresponding to the older



dīvān-e rasā'el/enšā', where official documents (*parvāna*) were drawn up and sealed. The revenue department of the Āq Qoyunlū was presided over by the *ṣāḥeb(-e) dīvān*, whose Persian title *k̄vāja* could be traced back to the Samanids; the *dīvān-e ṣadārat*, directed by the *ṣadr*, or head of the religious institution, seems to have originated under the Timurids (Savory, 1961, p. 103). In the military sphere the term *dīvān* appeared in the title of the Āq Qoyunlū *amīr-e dīvān*, a soldier who functioned as viceroy or deputy for the sultan; virtually nothing is known, however, about his duties or his supporting staff. The equivalent of the earlier *dīvān-e 'arż* was the *dīvān* of the *tavajīs*, a group of senior military officers (for the term, see Deny, pp. 160-61) who possibly constituted in a sort of "general staff" (Minorsky, 1939, p. 163); the duties of this *dīvān* included keeping a register (*daftar*, q.v.) of the names and qualifications of the troops (on administrative arrangements of the Turkmen dynasties, see Uzun-çarşılı, pp. 286-308; Minorsky, 1939, pp. 162-63, 169-71; idem, 1957, pp. 28, 101).

Documentation for the Safavid administration is much more comprehensive than that for the preceding periods in Persia, though one of the most detailed and important sources, the *Tazkerat al-molūk* of Mīrzā Samī'ā, was not compiled until around 1137/1725, at the very end of effective Safavid rule. The elucidation of this material nevertheless poses problems that are inherent in the nature and evolution of the Safavid state. First, there was from the beginning a mingling of a Turkmen-dominated secular monarchy not very dissimilar from the Āq Qoyunlū and the Timurids with a theocratic kingship, messianic and Shi'ite, in which the shah was spiritual director (*moršed-e kāmēl*) of the Ṣafawīya Sufi order. Second, it is not easy to demarcate the various spheres of competence of the *dīvān-e a'lā*, which functioned both as royal court (*dargāh*) and as central government; equally, the functions of civil, military, and religious officials are frequently difficult to distinguish. Third, the Safavid state evolved considerably over the two and a quarter centuries of its existence; Roger Savory (*Camb. Hist. Iran*, pp. 351-72) has distinguished three phases: the formative phase (907-96/1501-88), during which spheres of authority were not yet clearly defined and clashes and changes could occur; inauguration of a new system by Shah 'Abbās I (996-1038/1588-1629); and "gradual sclerosis and consequent decline" (1038-1135/1629-1722).

At first, under Shah Esmā'il I (907-30/1591-24) and Shah Ṭahmāsb I (930-84/1524-76), the head of the *dīvān-e a'lā* was also the shah's chief deputy (*wakīl*) for both civil and military affairs. The vizier was of little importance at



that time; only toward the end of Ṭahmāsb's reign did his power increase as he became *wazīr-e a'zam* or *wazīr-e mostaqell* (Savory, 1960, pp. 93-99, 102); in the 17th century he acquired the official title *e'temād-al-dawla*. All financial transactions, both civil and military, were supervised by the *dīvān-e a'lā*, and subordinate viziers were responsible for overseeing various groups connected with the court, eunuchs, falconers, and the like. The military responsibilities of the *dīvān* obviously included payment of the professional troops, commanded initially by the *amīr al-omarā'* but increasingly by the *qūrčī-bāšī*, commander-in-chief of the Turkmen tribal cavalry (Savory, 1960, pp. 99-101; idem, 1961, pp. 77-79). The *dīvān* itself had two important divisions: the *dīvān-e mamālek* under the *mostawfi'l-mamālek*, concerned with taxation and general administration of the Safavid empire and those provinces and districts administered directly by governors; and the *dīvān-e kāšša* under the *nāẓer-e boyūtāt* (lit., "superintendent of the royal workshops"). As the operations of the latter, which included supervision of the crown domains, were so close to the shah, the *nāẓer* was a powerful figure, whose authority at times encroached on that of the grand vizier.

The Safavid chancery (*dār al-enšā'*) also evolved during the three periods distinguished by Savory. It was originally under the *monšī'l-mamālek* but subsequently became more complex, as new types of registers and documents were issued in greater numbers, especially those concerning grants of taxation (*barāt*) and land (*soyūrḡāl, tīūl*). Under Shah 'Abbās the *majlesnevīs* or *wāqe'anevīs* expanded his duties to include issuing of diplomas for provincial governors and amirs, court officials, and the like, while the *monšī'l-mamālek* receded into the background and was reduced to issuing diplomas for minor provincial officials; hence in the 17th and early 18th centuries there were both an "old chancery" and a "new chancery," the latter predominant; because of its chief's closeness to the shah he even rivaled the grand vizier.

It should be further noted that, according to *Tadkerat al-molūk* (tr. Minorsky, p. 44, comm. pp. 113-14; cf. Savory, in *Camb. Hist. Iran*, pp. 353-54), there was a state advisory council, also called *dīvān* and later *jānqī* (a Mongol term suggesting an Il-khanid or Timurid origin for the institution), to which in later Safavid times certain members of the *dīvān-e a'lā* also belonged; they included the grand vizier; the *dīvānbeḡī*, or chief justiciar; and the *majlesnevīs* or chief secretary. This council was outside the normal pattern of central administration.

Provinces like Khorasan and Azarbaijan were governed through regional



administrations. In the 16th century a centrally nominated official with the title *wazīr-e koll* (general vizier) administered each province, and, in the absence of specific information, it seems reasonable to assume that he had his own *dīvān*, staffed by revenue officials and secretaries. The *wazīr-e koll* oversaw the finances of the province, including those of any *kāšša* lands situated there, ensuring a regular flow of collected taxes to the central treasury; an important additional part of his duties was to act as a check on the activities of the *beglerbegī*, or provincial governor.

From this sketch of the functioning of *dīvāns* in the Safavid period, it is clear that, though there is considerable information on some aspects, it is patchy, making it extremely difficult to perceive an orderly pattern and to distinguish the functions of officials known by frequently changing or evolving titles (Savory, *Camb. Hist. Iran*, pp. 351-72; Lambton, *EI2*; Rohrborn, 1966; idem, 1979, pp. 17-57; Savory, 1987, arts. IV-VII; Taḍkerat al-molūk, ed. Minorsky, comm.).

For the administrative systems of the Zands and Qajars, see [ADMINISTRATION i](#).

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