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ʿERĀQ-E ʿAJAM(Ī)

ʿERĀQ-EʿAJAM(Ī) "Persian Iraq," the name given in medieval times to the largely mountainous, western portion of modern Persia. The geographers (Eṣṭaḵrī, p. 195; Ebn Ḥawqal, pp. 357-58, tr. Kramers and Wiet, pp. 349-50; Moqaddasī, pp. 384-86; *Ḥodūd al-ʿālam*, tr. Minorsky, p. 131; Yāqūt, *Boldān* [Beirut], II, p. 99) describe it as bounded by Fārs and Ḵūzestān on the south, Mesopotamia (i.e., Iraq proper) on the west, Azarbaijan, Deylam and Qūmes on the north and the Kūh-e Kargas and Great Desert on the east. It thus corresponds to the ancient Persian Media (Ar. Māḏa), at the outset of Islam comprising Māh al-Kūfa, based on Dīnavar, and Māh al-Baṣra, based on Nehāvand.

Because of the mountainous configuration of the province (which included much of modern Kurdistan and Luristan), the early Islamic geographers called it Jebāl "the mountains." But this name fell out of use during Saljuq times (5th-6th/11th-12th centuries), and the misnomer ʿErāq was applied to it with the qualification ʿAjam(ī) "Persian." Yāqūt (loc. cit.) explains the process whereby this had happened: The Saljuq sultans came to rule over both Iraq proper and the region of Jebāl, hence were styled *solṭān al-ʿErāq*, but since their capital came normally to be at Hamadān in Jebāl, the latter province became known as ʿErāq. The two regions came in fact to be distinguished as ʿErāq-e ʿArab and ʿErāq-e ʿAjam. Certainly, the name Jebāl became obsolete after the Mongol invasions of the 7th/13th century. In the next century, Mostawfī (*Nozhat al-qolūb*, pp. 47 ff., tr. Le Strange, pp. 54 ff.) knew it only as ʿErāq-e ʿAjamī, and described the greater part of the region as *sardsīr*, having

cold and snowy winters, and as falling within the fourth clime. The name ʿErāq persisted in use over the centuries, and in recent times has still been applied to the district south-west of Tehran, one of its notable towns being Arāk (q.v).

The province was directly controlled by the caliphs till the early 4th/10th century, but with a tendency for local lines of governors, e.g., the Dolafids of Karaj, to appear in the 3rd/9th century, a process encouraged by the disturbed state of Jebāl at that time, including revolts of the Ḵorramdīnān or Ḵorramīya. At this time, the great cities of Jebāl were Qermīsīn, the later Kermānšāh, Hamadān, Qom, Isfahan, and Ray, with Ray normally being the provincial governor's capital, given the great strategic importance of this city for control of the Baghdad-Khorasan highway. The historical and geographical sources usually give the revenues from the four "quarters" of the province separately rather than en bloc. Thus in the list of annual tax receipts in the time of Hārūn al-Rašīd (170-93/786-809) preserved in Jahšīārī (pp. 281-88; cf. Levy, pp. 318-19), Ray yielded 12 million dirhams, Isfahan 11 million, Hamadān 11,800,000 and the two *māh*s of Kūfa and Baṣra 20,700,000, all plus small amounts of taxation in kind.

In the later 4th/10th and earlier 5th/11th centuries, Ray was the flourishing capital of an amirate of the Buyids (q.v.), with Hamadān at times the seat of a subordinate line, and then the more southerly parts came under the control of the Deylamī Kakuyids. The first Saljuq, Ṭoḡrïl Beg, made Isfahan briefly his capital in 442/1050; Isfahan remained the capital of the Great Saljuqs until it was replaced by Hamadān, especially in the summer months. In the year 735/1335 under the later Il-khanids, Persian Iraq comprised nine *tūmān*s, i.e., districts originally meant to support 10,000 men each for the Mongol armies, containing forty cities, and yielded 350,000 dinars in annual taxation (Mostawfī, *Nozhat al-qolūb*, tr. Le Strange, p. 54), a steep decline from the tax yield of ʿAbbasid times (see above) but explicable by the devastations and economic decline of the Mongol period.

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