



## QOFS

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**QOFS**, the Arabised form of Kufiči, lit. “mountain dweller,” the name of a people of southeastern Iran found in the Islamic historians and geographers of the 10th-11th centuries (on the etymology of their name, see Bosworth, 1976, p. 9). They are frequently linked in these sources with the Baluch, as the Qofš wa Baluṣ or Kuč o Baluč, but must have been ethnically and probably linguistically a distinct group from the Baluch, whose migrations southeastwards towards what is now Baluchistan from northern or northwestern Persia across the Central Desert, probably spread over a long period (see [BALUCHISTAN. iii. Baluchi language and Literature](#), p. 634), even though these are only first mentioned in the Islamic history of Kermān province in the 10th century (see Dames, 1904, pp. 7-16; idem, 1913, pp. 627-29; Frye 1961, pp. 44-50; but see Bosworth, 1976, pp. 10-11). The Arabic and Persian geographers place the Qofš in the mountainous region between the Jabal Bārez and the Gulf of Oman; thus the *Ḥodud al-‘ālam* (tr. pp. 65, 124; commentary pp. 201, 374-75) describes the Kuh-e Kufij as a chain of seven mountains running from Jiroft to the sea, with seven tribes, each with its own chief, and being “professional looters” (see Bosworth, 1976, pp. 11-12). Regarding their language, Moqaddasi, p. 470, says that the language of the Qofš and Baluṣ was unintelligible and resembled the language of Sind, but Moqaddasi can hardly be taken seriously here as an authority on their speech; rather, it seems, by inference from the later, known linguistic complexion of the region, that the language of the Kufičis was, like that of the Baluch, an Iranian one (Bosworth, 1976, p. 13).



The Qofş only emerge into the light of history during Saffarid and Buyid times, linked with the Baluĉ as barbarians, imperfectly Islamized if Islamized at all, who terrorized the great central deserts of Persia by their raids and preyed upon travelers and caravans there (see the characterization of them by Moqaddasi, pp. 488-90, tr. in Bosworth, 1976, p. 14, cf. Le Strange, *Lands*, pp. 323-24). The Ilyasid amir in Kermān in the middle years of the 10th century, Moḥammad b. Elyās, a nominal vassal of the Samanids (see [ĀL-E ELYĀS](#)), seems to have had an understanding with the Qofş, thereby helping him maintain his quasi-independent position. Hence the Moḥammad b. Elyās's enemies the Buyid amirs Mo'ezz-al-Dawla and 'Azod-al-Dawla took draconian measures against these mountain people; the Arabic poet Motanabbi praises his patron for making the Qofş "like yesterday, which has passed away totally." Campaigns by land and sea of 360-61/970-72 extended Buyid authority as far as the coastlands of western [Makrān](#), but these expeditions reduced rather than suppressed the depredations of the Qofş. It seems to have been the establishment of a strong amirate in Kermān by the Saljuq Qāvurd b. Čaġrı Beg Dāwud in 440/1048 which curbed their activities by military action into the Jabal Bārez (Bosworth, 1976, pp. 15-17). Thereafter, the Qofş fall from mention, though it seems unlikely that they were completely subdued; certainly, the Jabal Bārez continued to be a notorious haunt of robbers till the early 20th century (Sykes, 1906, p. 433).

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