AN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF IRAN

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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY
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siderable number of followers; \(^{103}\) the Muslim population, according to Khanikoff, is noted for its fanaticism.\(^{104}\) According to other reports, the population is relatively tolerant and moderate, perhaps as a result of its proximity to the gabrs; the explosion of fanaticism, whose victims in 1891 became the Bábís, was deliberately provoked by the government.\(^{105}\) The present town is surrounded by ruins; from among the existing buildings the most ancient—the so-called Mosque of Amir Chaqmaq—was built, as an inscription on one of its walls shows, in 699/1299-1300 by the amir Sunqu.\(^{106}\) There is a plan of Yazd in Khanikoff's book.\(^{107}\)

\(^{103}\) According to Jackson, *Persia Past and Present*, pp. 354, 425, there were 8,000 gabrs in Yazd, and 11,000 in all of Persia; according to Sykes, *Ten Thousand Miles*, p. 423, there are 7,000 gabrs in Yazd, of whom only 1,000 "live in the actual city." For their rituals, Jackson, *Persia Past and Present*, p. 366: "Upon reaching the temple I found it to be a simple unpretentious building . . . Mohammedanism allows no rivals to its beautiful mosques with turquoise domes, arabesques, arches, and slender tessellated minarets." [E. G. Browne, during his stay in Iran 1887-1888, had much contact with the Zoroastrian and Bahá'í communities of Yazd, and records of the former that "though less liable to molestation now than in former times, they often meet with ill-treatment and insult at the hands of the Muhammadans, by whom they are regarded as pagans, not equal even to Christians, Jews, and other 'people of the book,'" and mentions some of the violence and persecution that they had to suffer (1 *Year amongst the Persians*, 2nd ed., pp. 404-56). The surviving Zoroastrian communities of the Yazd region, now shrinking under relentless pressures from the surrounding Muslim environment, have been recently studied at firsthand by Mary Boyce; see her "The Zoroastrian Houses of Yazd," *Iran and Islam. In Memory of the Late Vladimir Minorsky*, pp. 125-47, and *A Persian Stronghold of Zoroastranism. Based on the Ratanbhai Kattrak Lectures 1976* (London, 1977).]


\(^{105}\) Zhukovskii, "Nedavnue kazni.

\(^{106}\) Cf. Jackson, *Persia Past and Present*, p. 350; Sykes, *Ten Thousand Miles*, pp. 420-21; the mosque was built by 'Alá’ al-Dawlá Garsháp in 513/1121; it was rebuilt by Sayyid Rúkín al-Dín in 777/1375, on the mosque there is the date of 877/1472; in that year Mir Chaqmaq "covered it with beautiful designs." The fortress was built in 532/1137 "by Abú Jafar Sultan, Alá-u-Dín, Kanjár" (Sykes, *Ten Thousand Miles*, p. 491). A fourteenth-century observatory in Yazd, according to Sykes (ibid.); same source for Chaqmaq. Qal‘át al-Majús five farsaks from Yazd, on the road to Abarquh (Istakhr, p. 130). Yazd as being "extremely cold" in Maqdisi, p. 437; Cf. Jackson, *Persia Past and Present*, p. 349. In Le Strange, *The Lands*, p. 258, quotation from Mustawfi, who says that "Yazd is built with unfired bricks, which are here as durable as fired bricks in other places, for it almost never rains in Yazd." [Chapter X]


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**CHAPTER X**

İsfahān, Kāšān, and Qum

The center of Fārs is connected by several roads with the large towns of northern Persia. In the Middle Ages, the road from Shīrāz to İsfahān did not pass through İstakhr, as it does now; the shorter route through the town of Māyín was considered the main road. This road joined, it would seem, the present-day one near the town of Yazdikhwāst, situated on a cliff in the middle of a valley; this town, despite its ancient name, is not mentioned in the tenth-century itineraries. It is the fourteenth-century itinerary by Hamd Allāh Mustawfī Qazwīnī that mentions the chief towns along this route, Qūmīsh and Yazdikhwāst;\(^{1}\) the route from Yazdikhwāst to Shīrāz through Māyín was called the "summer [route]" (rāh-i tābis-tānī) and the present-day detour the "winter [route]" (rāh-i zimis-tānī).\(^{2}\)

The town of İsfahān is mentioned by the classical geographers as 'Aomağāva, but it had no importance in those days.\(^{3}\) In Sāsānīd times, there was here the town of Jāy.\(^{4}\) Its founding was attributed to Alexander of Macedonia, and the name of this town is frequently encountered even on the coins of the Arab period. There exists a work about İsfahān by the fourteenth-century historian Īsäyīn b. Muhammad al-‘Alawī, its name is Ta‘rīkh aḥwāl İsfahān; the English orientalist E. G. Browne has analyzed this work in a special study.\(^{5}\)

\(^{1}\) Nuzhat al-qulūb, University ms. 171, fol. 245a [ed. Le Strange, p. 185, tr. idem, p. 170].

\(^{2}\) According to Le Strange (*The Lands*, p. 283), Yazdikhwāst is mentioned for the first time in the Fāns-nāma; in Maqdisi, pp. 437, 458, in the form Ikkās. The border between Fārs and İsfahān now passed to the north of Yazdikhwāst (Sykes, *Ten Thousand Miles*, p. 331); for the external appearance of Yazdikhwāst, see ibid., p. 330.


\(^{4}\) There is also a settlement called Jāy one farsakh from Tehran, on the road from Karaj (Berezin, *Puteshestvie*, pt. 2, p. 141). (For the etymology of the name Jāy, Old Iranian *Gaba*—transmitted in Greek as Γαβάς, Middle Persian Gay, Parthian Gāb, see Henning, *Gabae,* Asia Major, n.s., II (1952), p. 144.)

\(^{5}\) ("Account of a Rare Manuscript History of İsfahān," *JRAS* (1901), pp. 411-46, 661-704. For the Arabic original of this work see Barthold, *Iran*, Soc. VII, 288; for the editions of the Arabic text and Persian translation see Spuler, *Iran in früh-
summer palace with a citadel, and had dreamed of restoring the city under the name of Sultānābād; some three hundred families lived in it at the time. After the Russo-Persian war of 1826-1828, however, Fath 'Ali's plan was abandoned. At present Sultānīyā is remarkable only for its ruins of buildings from the fourteenth century, in particular those of the two large mosques. In the great mosque, which was seriously damaged by an earthquake early in the nineteenth century, is the tomb of Sultān Öljeýtū, who is better known by his Muslim name of Khudābānda.22 The building, according to Mustawfi, stood within the citadel. Of the latter, as one can see from illustrations in Ker Porter's book,23 only an insignificant part of the wall with a tower on the northwestern side remains. The dimensions of the citadel are indicated by a square ditch: each side measures 300 yards or 900 feet, so that the circumference of the citadel would thus be just under one verst, a size that approximately corresponds to that given by Mustawfi of 2,000 paces.24 Best preserved is the so-called "outer mosque" with a 120-foot-high dome, four minarets, and two entrance arches. Historical sources also mention a madrasa, with sixteen teachers and two hundred students, built by Khudābānda alongside the large mosque, as well as numerous buildings by the sultan's vizier 'Ali Shāh.25 To the east of Sultānīyā was a district with a settlement that even today bears the half-Mongol name Sāyīn Qal'ā (sāyīn means "good" in Mongolian); the pre-Mongol name of this village was Qūhūd.26 The road from Sultānīyā to Zanjān passes along the valley of the Zanjān Rūd, an affluent of the Isfīd Rūd (now Šāfīd Rūd), a river that was of considerable length but not navigable; alongside this Persian name mentioned even by the Arab geographers, the Šāfīd Rūd also bears the Turco-Mongol name of Qızıl Uzun.27 To the south of Sultānīyā and of this valley stretched the mountains of Sūjās, where in 1991 was buried one of the Mongol rulers of Persia, Arghūn.28

The town of Zanjān had little importance in the Middle Ages; at present its population may reach some 20,000 souls. In the nineteenth century, it attracted attention as one of the bases of the Bābīs; in 1850 it was stormed by government troops and the Bābī uprising was crushed after fierce resistance. Just as in the time of the tenth-century geographers and during the Mongol period, two roads led from Zanjān to Azerbaijan; one northeastward across the Šafīd Rūd to Ardabil, the other to Tabriz and Marāgha.29

22 Verse about Khudâbânda in Browne, A Year amongst the Persians, p. 75:
Ay Shâh Khudâbânda,
Zâin kunanda,
Hâi jauq bîr kanda!
[Browne's translation:
Oh Shâh Khudâbânda,
Practiser of tyranny,
Two fowls to one village!]30
The height of Khudâbânda's tomb, according to Dieulafoy, La Perse, p. 91, is 51 meters above the platform of the parvis. Cf. Sykes, A History of Persia, II, 235, about the dome: "84 feet in diameter, 'the largest in Persia'; the whole mausoleum was "certainly the first building of this kind erected under the Mongols"; according to Barbaro, Viaggi, the dome was larger than that of San Joann Paolo in Venice; it was built ostensibly for a translation of the remains of 'All and Husayn from Najaf and Karbala'. Data in C.F.M. Texier, Description de l'Arménie, la Perse et la Mésopotamie (Paris, 1839-1852), pt. 2, pp. 76-77: an octagon, 26 meters in diameter inside, the inner height to the cornice equals the diameter; a round gallery of 24 arches to the height of 15 meters; from among its eight minarets, only one has been preserved. It is the only building in which the inner, spherical, dome is not covered by an egg-shaped external one; all the other large mosques of Persia, which are also later, have a double dome. The other, more recent travelers in their description always mean the large mosque and not the "outer" one. (For the history and monuments of Sultâniya, see also Minorsky, EI, art. "Sultâniya"; Sarvâry of Persian Art, II, V; Wilber, The Architecture of Islamic Iran. The Il Khanid Period (Princeton, 1955).)

26 Mustawfi, Nuzhat al-qulâb, extracts in Schefer's ed., p. 186 [ed. Le Strange, p. 64, tr. idem, p. 69; Mustawfi says that, according to Mongol custom, the area around the grave was made into a qurğuh or sanctuary.]
27 On Zanjān (which Abu Dulaf. Travels in Iran, tr. p. 34, #11, comm. p. 71 archaically spells Zhanān), see Browne, A Year amongst the Persians, 2nd ed., pp. 79-81; Le Strange, The Lands, p. 222. The population in «ca. 1950 was approximately 48,000 (Farkhang, II, 141)» [and in 1976 was 99,967 (Le monde et ironien et l'Islam, IV [1976-1977], p. 242)].
as many high and beautiful buildings as Tabriz. After the fall of the
Mongol dynasty of Persia, the city became the capital of the
dynasty of the Jalayirids, then of the Turkmans of the Black Sheep
(Qara Qoyunlu), and finally of those of the White Sheep (Aq
Qoyunlu), and it retained its importance in the fifteenth century
despite the calamities that befell it at the end of the fourteenth
century. In 1385 Toqtamish plundered it, and in 1386 Timur. How
quickly the city managed to recover is seen from the report of
Clavijo, who passed through it in 1404. Tabriz made on him the
impression of an enormous and rich city with 200,000 inhabitants;
a vast amount of goods passed through it every day. He describes
the huge house built by Sultán Uways (1356-1374) of the Jalayirid
dynasty: it comprised 20,000 rooms and had the name of Dowlat-
khâna. The city had no walls at the time. 34

To the fifteenth century, namely, to the time of Jahânsîhân, khan
of the Qara Qoyunlu Turkmans (1437-1467), pertains the best of
those buildings of Tabriz, the remains of which are preserved
to this day, namely, the so-called “blue mosque,” Masjîd-i Kabûd,
which received its name from the color of the magnificent glazed
tiles that had once adorned it. An illustration of the ruins of this
mosque is to be found in Curzon’s book. 35 The building suffered
a great deal from the earthquakes that frequently afflict Tabriz. 36
Mustawfi asserts 37 that after the earthquake of 434/1042, 38 mea-
ures were taken during the reconstruction of the city, upon the

34 Clavijo, tr. Srezenevskii, pp. 167-70; tr. Le Strange, pp. 153-54.
35 Perri, i, 520.
36 “The blue mosque” is in a still more westerly location than the citadel. The
mosque is a Sunni one, with a Sunni cemetery nearby. The plan and description
appear in Texier, Description, II, 48-50. Chardin, Voyages, ed. 1811, I, 390 ff., atlas,
pl. XI, and Tavernier, Les six voyages, I, 58-59, saw the building in its entirety; it
suffered from the earthquake of 1776. The colors are blue, white, gold, black,
and green. Texier, Description, about the simplicity and at the same time impressiveness
of the plan; the entrance arch was 15 meters high, the first hall 16 meters square,
the second 11 meters square; the extent base of the minaret is 2 meters 66 centi-
meters in diameter, the cupola some 30 meters high (estimate). The Masjîd-i Kabûd
is also in Dubeux, La Perse, p. 25; Jackson, Persia Past and Present, p. 42. (For the
date of the mosque’s construction, see Minorsky, “Geographical Factors in Persian
Art,” BSOS, IX (1938), 633.) [Also in Iranica, Twenty Articles, p. 50 n. 1. For earth-
quakes in the district, see C. Melville, “Historical Monuments and Earthquakes in
Tabriz,” Iran, JBIPS, XX (1981), 159-77.]

37 Nuzhat al-qulub, extr. in Schefer, p. 204 [ed. Le Strange, pp. 75-76, tr. idem, p.
79].
38 The earthquake of 434 is also mentioned in Nâšir-i Khusraw (Thursday, Rabî‘
I/14 November 1042); one part of the town was destroyed, the other did not suffer;
up to 40,000 people perished.