

court circles of his period—he was a talented poet, educated, well-versed in the occult sciences, follower of various doctrines and instigator of several previous risings (notably in Baḥrayn and at Baṣra), and he succeeded in stirring up the greatest servile insurrection in the history of the Islamic world.

Four reasons underlie his success and the long duration of his revolt. These were, first, the extreme misery of these bands of slaves. The rebels were employed, according to our main source, al-Ṭabarī, iii, 1742-87, 1835-2103, Eng. tr. D. Waines, *The History of al-Ṭabarī. An annotated translation. XXXVI. The revolt of the Zanj*, Albany 1992, 29-67, 108-207, tr. P.M. Field, XXXVII. *The 'Abbāsīd recovery*, Albany 1987, 1-43, as workers on the soil, *kassāhīn*, cultivating the earth of Lower Mesopotamia, removing the nitrous topsoil (*sibākht*) and putting it into small piles in order to render cultivable the ground of the *Shatṭ al-'Arab* [*q.v.*] region; in the words of Massignon, *ET* art. *Zandj*, "they were penned up in working gangs of 500 to 5,000 men, and dumped there permanently with only a few handfuls of meal, semolina and dates". Second, the region was suitable for guerilla warfare [see AL-BAṬĪḤA]. Third, there was the precarious nature of the central authority in Baghdād at this time (anarchy in the central lands, and severe problems in more distant provinces). Fourth, there were the personal qualities—as organiser, warrior and politician—of 'Alī b. Muḥammad.

Two periods of the revolt can be clearly distinguished. The first (255-66/869-79) was one of expansion and success for the rebels; the central power was unable, for internal and external reasons, to combat them efficaciously. The rebels organised themselves, procured arms and fortified themselves within camps in inaccessible places, from where they launched their raids. After many ambushes and battles that went in their favour (for the "army" of the rebels was continually being strengthened by freed slaves), they seized temporary control of the main cities of Lower 'Irāq and Khūzistān (al-Ubulla, 'Abbādān, Baṣra, Wāsit, Ḍjubbā, Ahwāz, etc.). The 'Abbāsīd forces reoccupied, without great difficulty, the towns that the Zandj had taken, sacked and abandoned, but were unable to extinguish the outbreak or to inflict a decisive defeat on an enemy everywhere and nowhere. Also, since the government in Baghdād had other more urgent problems to solve, for several years the rebellion of the Zandj was relegated to the second rank of importance. During this time, the "Master of the Zandj" was solidly installed in the canal region, where he had his "capital" [see AL-MUKHTĀRA], minting his own coins, organising his "state" and attempting, with varying degrees of success, to establish links with other anti-caliphal movements of the time (e.g. those of Ḥamdān Ḳarṣat [see ḲARMAṬ] and of Ya'qūb b. al-Layṭh [*q.v.*]).

The second period (266-70/879-83) was just a drawn-out agony before the final crushing of the movement. The suppression of the Zandj now became the prime consideration for the caliphate, which moved methodically, cleansing the territories before it and driving the Zandj to take refuge in the canal region, where they were subjected to a methodical siege directed by the regent al-Muwaffaq [*q.v.*] and his son Abu 'l-'Abbās (the future caliph al-Mu'taḍid [*q.v.*]). Finally, 'Alī b. Muḥammad was killed and his close companions and commanders taken as prisoners to Baghdād, where they were beheaded two years later, whilst some members of his family ended their days in prison.

One may conclude by saying that the Zandj revolt was both a political one, in its aim at securing power,

and also a social one, aiming at relieving the harsh living conditions of one class of the population; but several important points involved in this remarkable episode merit an extended consideration (the personality of the revolt's leader, his alleged genealogy, his credo and ideology, the political and social organisation of the new "state", and its relations with the various classes of the population and with other movements of the time) which cannot be gone into here. One may nevertheless stress one essential aspect, sc. that if the movement has a unique place amongst various insurrections in the history of mediaeval Islam, it is because it put paid to a unique attempt, in the Islamic world, at transforming domestic slavery into a colonial-type slavery.

*Bibliography* (in addition to references given in the article): Th. Nöldeke, *A servile war in the East*, in *Sketches from eastern history*, London and Edinburgh 1892, 146-75; 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dūrī, *Dirāsāt fi 'l-'usūr al-'abbāsiyya al-muta'akhhīra*, Baghdād 1945, 75-106; Fayṣal al-Sāmīr, *Thawrat al-Zandj*, Baghdād 1954, 21971; Aḥmad S. Olabi, *Thawrat al-Zandj*, Beirut 1961; H. Halm, *Die Traditionen über den Aufstand 'Alī Ibn Muḥammads, des "Herrn der Zandj"*, eine quellenkritische Untersuchung, diss. Bonn 1967; A. Popovic, *La révolte des esclaves en Iraq au III<sup>e</sup>/IX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris 1976, Eng. tr. *The revolt of African slaves in Iraq in the 3rd/9th century*, Princeton 1998, with detailed and updated bibl.

(A. POPOVIC)

**ZANDJĀN**, a town of northwestern Persia, situated on the Zandjān Rūd, a right-bank affluent of the Safīd Rūd [*q.v.*]. It lies on the highway from Tehran and Ḳazwīn to Tabrīz at a distance of 314 km/195 miles from Tehran and 302 km/188 miles from Tabrīz, and at an altitude of 1,625 m/5,330 feet (lat. 36° 40' N., long. 48° 30' E.).

The mediaeval geographers mostly placed Zandjān in Ḍjibāl province, usually linking it with Abhar [*q.v.*] or Awhar some 80 km/50 miles to its south-east, but they usually stated that it was on the frontier with 'Adḥarbāyḍjān, and some authorities attributed it to Daylam or to Rayy. According to legend, it had been founded, as *Shahīn*, by the first Sāsānid Ardashīr b. Pāpākān (Mustawfī, *Nuzha*, 61, tr. 67). It was conquered 'anwal<sup>m</sup> in 24/645 by Arabs led by al-Barrā' b. 'Azīb after Abhar and Ḳazwīn, and al-Balāḍhūrī further narrates that, in the late 2nd/early 9th century, the people of Zandjān, weary of the depredations of bandits (*sa'āṭik* [see ṣū'ūṭik] and the oppression of local governors, placed themselves under the protection of the governor of northern Persia, Ḥārūn al-Rashīd's son al-Ḳāsim so that Zandjān and its region became part of the caliphal estates (*al-ḍiyā' al-khāṣṣā*) (*Futūḥ*, 322-3). In the 4th/10th century, it came within the sphere of local Daylamī dynasties like the Musāfirīds [*q.v.*]. The Arab traveller Abū Dulaf [*q.v.*] visited it, noting mines of iron sulphate, borax and alum in the adjacent mountains; the manuscript of his *Second Risāla* records the name as spelt with initial *zh*, sc. *Zhandjān* (*Abū-Dulaf Miṣ'ar ibn Muḥalḥil's travels in Iran (circa A.D. 750)*, ed. and tr. Minorsky, Cairo 1955, § 11, tr. 34, comm. 71).

In the early 7th/13th century, Zandjān was held by the Kh'ārazm-Shāh's son Ḍjalāl al-Dīn (Ḍjuwaynī-Boyle, ii, 702), but then devastated by the Mongols and its extensive walls demolished. For the Mongols, the upland pastures between the region of Zandjān and Tabrīz were favoured grazing grounds, and the name of the district Ūryād preserves the name of the Oyrat Mongols. Not far south of Zandjān was the Il-Khānīd capital Sulṭāniyya [*q.v.*], and the Il-Khān

Arghun was buried at nearby Sudjās (the *koruk-i Arghūn*, Mustawfī, 64, tr. 69). Zandjān shared in the general prosperity of northwestern Persia at this time, and Mustawfī fixed its revenues at 12,000 dinārs plus another 8,000 from the hundred or so villages around it, and also stated that the inhabitants spoke "pure Pahlawī", i.e. a Median or northern form of Persian (*Nūzha*, 61-2, tr. 67).

In later times, fighting between the Ottomans and the Šafāwids and their successors extended as far as Zandjān, but the town became best known in the 19th century as a centre of the Bābīs [*q.v.*], being the birthplace of one of the Bāb's leading supporters, Mullā Muḥammad 'Alī Ḥudjdjat al-Islām Zandjānī. The Zandjān rising of 1266/1850 by the Bābīs of the town, numbering only a few hundreds, caused a crisis for the Kādjar state, since government troops were for several months unable to quell the rebels, and the resistance of Zandjān may have influenced the decision to execute the Bāb himself in Sha'bān 1266/July 1850 (see E.G. Browne, *Personal reminiscences of the Bābī insurrection at Zanjan in 1850* . . ., in *JRAS* [1897], 761-827; Abbas Amanat, *Resurrection and renewal. The making of the Babi movement in Iran, 1844-1850*, Ithaca and London 1989, 101-2, 397 and index; J. Walbridge, *The Babi rising in Zanjan: causes and issues*, in *Iranian Studies*, xxix/3-4 [1996], 339-62). Despite the bloody suppression of the outbreak, Zandjān continued to produce some of the leading Bābī and Bahā'ī figures (see Browne, *Materials for the study of the Bābī religion*, Cambridge 1918, 36).

Zandjān was formerly the chef-lieu of a *shahrestān* of the same name in the province of Gilān, but is now the *markaz* of an independent province of Zandjān. In the late 1930s it became a station on the Tehran-Tabriz railway. Its population in ca. 1950 was 48,000, which had risen by the 1996 census to 286,295. Although somewhat detached geographically from the main Azeri speech area, the population of Zandjān is ethnically Turkish and essentially Turkish-speaking.

*Bibliography*: See also the older bibl. in Minorsky, *Et* art. s.v.; Le Strange, *The lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, 221-2; Schwarz, *Iran im Mittelalter*, 729-31; Razmārā (ed.), *Farhang-i djuḡhrāfiyā-yi Irān-zamīn*, ii, 140-1; Sayyid Mūsawī Zandjānī, *Tārīkh-i Zandjān*, Tehran 1351/1972; L.W. Adamec (ed.), *Historical gazetteer of Iran. i. Tehran and northwestern Iran*, Graz 1976, 709-10; D. Krawulsky, *Irān—das Reich der Ilhāne. Eine topographisch-historische Studie*, Wiesbaden 1978, 325-6. (C.E. BOSWORTH)

AL-ZANDJĀNĪ [see Suppl.].

ZANDJIBĀR (or AL-ZANDJABĀR), officially spelt ZANZIBAR, is an island in lat. 6° S., with a capital of the same name. It is about 53 miles in length and 24 miles at its broadest. The area is about 640 sq miles. A channel about 20 miles wide separates it from the Tanzanian mainland. Its history and economy are bound up with the prevailing winds, the south-west and north-east monsoons, which set in with clockwork regularity. The south-west monsoon begins in March, bringing the *Masika*, or Long Rains, which last with decreasing vigour for about three months. The *Mwili*, or Short Rains, fall in October and November. Until the coming of the steamship, the whole economy of eastern Africa depended on these monsoons.

Although linked with the mainland United Republic of Tanzania, Zanzibar is a self-governing territory, together with the island of Pemba [*q.v.*] and some small islands of trifling importance. Except for Tumbatu [*q.v.*], they are uninhabited, and visited only by fishermen and tourists.

1. The island and town of Zanzibar up to 1890.

(a) *In Antiquity and prehistoric times*

Before the coming of Islam to eastern Africa, certainly up to the 8th century A.D., there are only some scattered and casual allusions in Greek and Roman writers, for which see ZANDJ. One major source, *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, refers to it in ca. A.D. 50. It is an account of trading voyages down the eastern African coasts, along southern Arabia and as far as India, if not to China. It has links with Egypt and the western Indian Ocean. Scholars have disputed endlessly whether its reference to a single island, Menu-thias, off the eastern African coast, is to Pemba or to Zanzibar or to Mafia. Ptolemy even thought the island to be Madagascar. Menuthias is said to have numerous rivers: Zanzibar has one only; Pemba has some streams, but also numerous deep inlets which, seen from the sea, resemble estuaries. It is low and wooded. Pemba reaches a maximum of 150 m above sea level, Zanzibar 100 m. Again, Pemba's deep inlets with hilly sides give the impression of a hilly island when seen from the sea, whereas Zanzibar is more uniformly level. Both islands are wooded. The inhabitants are said to be fishermen who employ fish traps, dug-outs and also "sewn boats", that is, with their timbers sewn together with coconut coir. The "sewn boats" are no longer constructed but the other practices survive. The balance of probability could swing either way.

Two of the sites so far excavated have pre-Islamic occupation levels, Fukuchani in the north and Unguja Ukuu in the south of the island. From these are imported sherds from the Persian Gulf and from Roman North Africa, at occupation levels dating probably from the 5th to 8th centuries A.D. The most recent excavations at Unguja Ukuu (1999) show that it was a major exporter of ivory to Egypt, whence to Constantinople and through the Mediterranean, via Pelusium. The evidence is based on the existence of sherds of Byzantine pottery and on carbon dating. In Unguja Ukuu there are found in middens of the same period bones of *rattus rattus*, the black rat, which is not indigenous of Africa but whose fleas are the vectors of bubonic plague. The first recorded outbreak of the Great Plague of 541-7, in which more than a quarter of a million people died in Constantinople alone, was at Pelusium, which makes it logical to ascribe the source to Zanzibar. Local pottery suggests that the inhabitants belonged to the Early Iron Age communities of East Africa, whose working of shells and iron formed part of the economy of the time.

(b) *Before the Portuguese*

Pending further investigation it can be said that the claims of W.H. Ingrams (*Zanzibar*, London 1931) and others, of the existence of a "Heliolithic Culture", or of the presence of Sumerians, Assyrians, Akkadians, Chaldaeans, Medes, Persians, Ancient Egyptians or Phoenicians, rest on no historical or archaeological foundation. There are Palaeolithic remains at Kilwa [*q.v.*] and of the Early Iron Age in Mafia [*q.v.*].

The Swahili *History of Pate* [see PATE] whose redaction in its present state cannot be dated before 1810, claims that the fifth Umayyad caliph, 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (695-705), heard of East Africa "and that his soul desired to found a new kingdom". He sent Syrians, who founded "the cities of Pate, Malindi, Zanzibar, Mombasa, Lamu and Kilwa". Other towns are mentioned in oral traditions, from Mogadishu as far as the Comoros.

Next, Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 786-801 [*q.v.*]) is alleged to have founded many coastal towns, but not in Pemba