

Muslims came too late. The Khurasani no longer could be nicely separated into Arab *mawali* ad non - Muslim Iranian, but interests of all has come together in common opposition to the 'Umayyads.

It is of importance that already in 108/726 when a Muslim army was defeated by the Turgesh Turks in *ma wara' l nahr*, and 4,000 Azdites withdrew from the battle, the sources do not identify the army as Arab, since assimilation, had proceeded apace. The long evolution of Iranian - Arab assimilation which 'Umar II had recognized, was well established by the time of Abu Muslim, when both Persian and Arabic were spoken by his soldiers, both languages by Arabs and non-Arabs. In my opinion, the legacy of the cultural assimilation of Arabs and non-Arabs promoted by the Muhallabids and Azd in the oasis of Merv lasted down to the era of al-Ma'mun, and this kind of cultural fusion was further realized in Baghdad under the Caliph al-Mansur. Thus, the identification of Arab and Islam was ended, and Islam became a world culture as well as a religion, the Iranians playing a great role in this internationalizing of Islam beyond the bedouin mores.

Notes

1. H. A. R. Gibb, **Studies on the Civilization of Islam** (Boston 1962), 3. ed. M. J. de Goeje.
2. Baladhuri, **Futüh**, 405-6. and in Bukhara in Tabari and Narshakhi.
3. Baladhuri, 324.
4. Baladhuri, 410.
5. Ibn Ath'am al-Küfi, **al-Futüh**, Istanbul MS, Ahmet III. 2956. I, p. 167.
6. Ibn Khallikan, II. 511.
7. Tabari II, 1029. Baladhuri, 429.

said that the two Mervs (al-Shāhjan and al-Rūdl) needed the presence of Yazid b. al-Muhallab for their prosperity. The number of poets as well as scholars noted in Ibn Khalikan as under the patronage of the Muhallabids indicates the real power and wealth of this Arab family. The Muhallabids, of course, represented the one threat to the power of Hajjaj, and at his death Yazid b. al-Muhallab succeeded him as governor of Iraq and Khurasan, although soon thereafter, as we have mentioned, Caliph Yazid II brought about the downfall of the Muhallabid family.

‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz wanted to remedy the situation in which the *mawali* were fighting without receiving the *‘atā* and converts to Islam were still paying the poll tax. Tabari and Baladhuri suggest that the *dihqāns* and other non-Arab officials in Khurasan under the ‘Umayyads, collaborated with Arab partners in trade, and together they prevented non-Arab converts to Islam from leaving the poll tax, putting this illegal poll tax money in their own pockets.² ‘Umar II realized that in stopping the practice he would alienate many of the settled, landed or trading Arabs, but this would have to be done in the name of Islam to save ‘Umayyad rule. The distinctions between Muslims and non-Muslims would have to be upheld in the face of other divisions in the Caliphate. ‘Umar II wanted to break up the independent tax collecting and power structure of the Merv oasis and elsewhere in Khurasan. ‘Umar had lived longer, perhaps he might have accomplished a great change in the East, but instead he roused the hopes of the *mawali* to equality with the Arabs as fellow Muslims, and when Yazid II became Caliph, he reversed ‘Umar’s policy, returning to the old policy of Hajjaj. As a result, the *mawali* joined those Arabs who had submerged their anti-Umayyad sentiments during the reign of ‘Umar II in the name of Islam. This union of dissatisfied elements provided the basis of power for Kirmānī and the Abū Muslim. The Muhallabids, and the Azd tribe in general, continued to be popular as victims of the ‘Umayyads. «Muhallabism» was a Khurasani ideology which fused with Hashimiya propaganda, and then shifted to the ‘Abbasids. The last ‘Umayyad governor of Khurasan, Nasr p. Sayyar, saw the great danger to Damascus in this anti-‘Umayyad coalition, but his attempts to revert to ‘Umar II’s policy of conciliation of Arab and non-Arab

tribal chiefs, even from Tamim (Mudar), which represented the majority of Arabs in Merv and loyalty to the 'Umayyads. As a result in 78/697 Caliph Abd-al-Malik appointed al-Hajjaj as governor of Iraq who embarked on a «totalitarian» policy against the settled Arabs in Khurasan and the conquered peoples.

A former student of mine 'Abd al-Hayy Shaaban, in his doctoral thesis, showed that by this time many of the settled Arabs in Merv had moved from the countryside into the city of Merv and had become involved in commerce and textile industry of the oasis in cooperation with local merchants and businessmen. Now the Azd had been famous for their weaving when they had lived in the highlands of 'Asir in Arabia, and later in Basra, so they naturally cooperated in the growth of the textile industry of Merv.

Hajjaj chose as his first governor of Khurasan al-Muhallab b. Abi Sufra, the leader of the Azd tribe. Under the governorship of al-Muhallab Iranian *mawali* were entered on the *diwan* lists of Khurasan, an indication of the direction of Muhallabid thinking. Qutaiba replaced al-Muhallab and he at once set about to separate the Arabs and the *mawali* segregating the latter in a separate division of the army to keep them apart from the Arab tribes to which they were clients. The result was an alienation of both *mawali*, many of whom had become assimilated with the Arabs, and the Arabs too who resented Qutaiba's interference with tribal jurisdiction. They turned to Yazid b. al-Muhallab who led the Muslim community (both Arabs and *mawali*) in a revolt against Hajjaj in 97/715, which led to the death of Qutaiba in the same year.

Caliph Yazid II reacted against the Muhallabids in 101/719 and massacred them. He supported instead the Qais tribe. The Azd, however, had their revenge when in 116/734 they joined a Tamim rebel Hârith b. Surajj against 'Umayyad authority, and later al-Kirmanî, himself an Azd, and through him Abû Muslim. The Muhallabid family in spite of persecution by Yazid II retained a strong position in Khurasan, as witnessed by praises sung of the family by such poets as Nahâr b. Tausia, al-Akhnas al-Tâi, and Thâbit Qutna al-Azdi. Ibn Khallikan quotes the poet al-Akhtal who

were made with each town or district conquered. ² In other places, such as Qazwin, the Arabs built camps, like the British cantonments in India, which later developed into suburbs of the towns. ³ In Merv, which became the most important Arab settlement in the East, because it had been a strategic Sasanian garrison city, the land and villages around the city were divided among Arab clans. Baladhuri tells us that the *murajjibat* (attractions) of Merv caused the Arabs to settle in the oasis. Al-Ahnaf b. Qais, one of the leaders of the Azd had his *qasr* in Merv and from it set on his conquest of Balkh. So at first the conquered people came to know the Arabs in their tribal organization, and became attached to Arab tribes as *mavâli*.

'Umayyad policy tried to coordinate the various Arab settlements, with their *mavâli*, under the centralized authority of Damascus. This implied a shift in authority from the tribes settled in the East to Damascus, which policy led to a reaction by the tribes. It was against this reaction that Hajjaj and Qutaiba directed their efforts. Consequently Qutaiba exploited the conquered peoples, conscripting *mavali* into the army without, however, giving them equal rights with the Arab *muqâtila*. These policies provoked unrest on the part of the Arab tribesmen as well as the *mavali*, and family of al-Muhallab took advantage of this unrest.

Under Mu'awiya 50,000 Arab families were moved from both Kufa and Basra to Merv, and the *diwân* or registry of Arab *muqâtila* was revised to include these new settlers. ⁴ But Mu'awiya named a special *'amil* to be responsible for the collection of the taxes of the province. The tribal chiefs resented this appointment since they had been accustomed to collect the taxes themselves. In order to counter the authority of the tribal chiefs, Damascus sent many non-tribal riff-raff and criminals to fight on the frontier of Islam and to settle in *ribâts*. ⁵ Many settled Arabs in Khurasan believed 'Umayyad policy was directed against themselves and consequently supported the rival caliphate of Zubair against the 'Umayyads. It was during this period of estrangement between Damascus and some of the settled Arabs in Khurasan that the Rabi'a tribes, especially Azd, embarked on an independent policy against both Damascus and al-Zubair. Their politics of non-involvement prevented the 'Umayyads from appointing a loyal governor from among th

taxes and even to conscript local troops. The relation between Arabs and conquered peoples, in my opinion, have been simplified, since the point of view of Damascus has prevailed, and much of what happened on the local level has been ignored. In this lecture I wish to discuss two points which have been neglected in the history of the Arab conquests in the East, first the role of the Azd tribe, and especially of one of their leading families the Muhallabids and second, the policy of the Umayyad Caliph Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz. I hope to show that the Muhallabid family, who traced their opposition to the Umayyads back to a pre-Islamic Azd rivalry with the Quraish of Mecca, not only maintained this opposition in Khurasan, but succeeded in forging a bridge with the conquered people in Merv, something in which the Umayyads failed. The Azd not only supported the grievances of the *mawālī* (clients) against the Umayyads, but they built a joint commercial and political establishment with the natives which, in my opinion, was important in the future development of Islamic civilization.

The reversal of previous Umayyad policy in the East, whose chief exponents were al-Hajjāj governor of Iraq, and Qutaiba b. Muslim, his appointee in Khurasan, by Umar II, in my opinion, was not impractical but highly realistic, especially in view of what happened when Caliph Yazīd II reversed Umar's policy and returned to the old theory of authoritarianism and force. The process of assimilation between Arabs and non-Arabs had proceeded apace and Umar II foresaw the future, whereas other Umayyad Caliphs did not.

It must be remembered that the Azd tribe had defected from Islam during the *ar - Ridda* wars, and a large part of it had been resettled in Basra where it provided an important source of troops and settlers for the later Arab conquests in the East. It is not surprising that this tribe reasserted its autonomy when settled in the Merv oasis, but its fusion with the *mawālī* opposition to Umayyad rule was unusual.

At first the Arab conquests in Khurasan were raids and permanent settlement was considered only after the Umayyad Caliphate had become firmly established. As soon as this was decided, in some places Arab troops were stationed in the houses of Iranians, as part of the peace treaties which

The Role of the Tribes in the Arab Conquests in Central Asia

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The history of the Arab conquests in Khurasan and *Ma wara 'l nahr* up to the fall of the 'Umayyad Caliphate has been described by many scholars primarily as an inter-tribal struggle. Western historians such as Wellhausen, Van Vloten, Gibb and Hitti have gone back to the rivalries of pre-Islamic Arabia to explain the many struggles during the 'Umayyad Caliphate among the Arabs in Khurasan. According to these historians, it was the conflict between the central authority of the 'Umayyads and the tribal confederacies of Mudar and Yemen, with their chief subdivisions of Tamim and Azd, which caused the break-up of Arab unity and led to the downfall of the 'Umayyads. According to Gibb, «the disruptive forces of tribalism» stood in the way of the 'Umayyad caliphs, which sought to unify the Islamic community.¹ This point of view may be characterized as one which regards as significant only the question of the struggle for power among the Arabs and neglects the role of the non-Arabs and of the religion of Islam. This point of view also seems to accept as synonyms «Arab» and «Islam» and to support the view that Islam was the «national culture» of the Arabs. Wellhausen's book on this subject was significantly called *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*.

It is true that Van Vloten wrote about the conquered peoples and the problems inherent in the conversion of numbers of non-Arabs to Islam, but he too did little more than stress the dissatisfaction of the non-Arab converts to Islam with the 'Umayyad government. These non-Arabs blamed the 'Umayyads for not living up to Islam, to make all members of the Islamic community equal. Not only were new converts treated as second class Muslims, but to increase their dissatisfaction they were frequently under the authority of non-Muslim *dihqāns* (in Iran), appointed by the 'Umayyad government to collec