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Ph.D.
(Medieval Islamic History)

1942.

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A Thesis for the Ph.D. Degree

STUDIES ON THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF
MESOPOTAMIA IN THE 10th CENTURY

May, 1942

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PREFACE

In the economic development of medieval Mesopotamia, the 10th century is a decisive period. In addition to the process of evolution, the foreign domination of the Buwaihids opened the door to manifold changes and innovations. For the first time, the fief system was militarized; uncanonical taxes multiplied; currency depreciation was resorted to as a financial expedient; banking reached full development; an influential capitalist class came into prominence; and the Labour Movement was organized.

This branch of Arabic history has been least studied; and this work is an attempt to throw some light on a complex life in an obscure, yet important period.

I am indebted to my supervisor, Professor V. Minorsky for his invaluable advice and assistance throughout the course of my work. I wish to thank Dr. B. Lewis and Professor H.A.R. Gibb for many useful suggestions.

Cambridge,

May 1942.

List of AbbreviationsBooks

- I.A. = Ibn al-Athir : al-Kamil
- Bar Heb. = Bar Hebraeus : Chronology
- Baldh. = Baladhuri : Futuh al-Buldan
- B.M. = Lane - Poole : Coins of the
Khaleefehs in the
Brit.Mus.
- Chau Ju-kue: Chinese Arab Trade, ed. Rockhill and Hirth
- Dimashqi = al-Ishara ila Mahasin al-Tijara
by Abu'l-Fadi Dimashqi
- Dhah. = Dhahabi : Ta'rikh Duwal al-
Islam
- Eclipse = I. Miskawih.
- E.I. = Encyclopedia of Islam
- Ghazali, Streit = al-Radd 'ala 'l-Batiniyya
- H - 'A = Hudud al-Alam
- I.F. = I. Faqih (B.G.A.V.)
- I.H.(B.G.A.) = Ibn Hawkal (B.G.A.II)
- I.H. = " " ed. Krammers
- I.R. = Ibn Rusta (B.G.A.VIII)
- I.J. = Jusair : Travels
- I. Jawzi XII = Ibn al-Jawzi, Mirat al-Zaman
(Bod.Lib.Mss.)
- Jahiz-Bukh = K.al-Bukhala
- Jah = Jashiyari : Wuzara'

Khatib	= Salmon	: Introduction topographique à l'histoire de Baghdad
Lat.	= Lata'if al-Maarif	
Mas'udi	= Muruj al-Dhahab	
Maq.	= Maqdisi: Ahsan al-Taqa'im (B.G.A.III)	
M.D.	= The Coins of the Mohammedan Dyn. in the Brit. Mus. (by Lane-Poole)	
Maq.-M. Maq-K	= Maqrizi: Shudhur al-Uqud in Mayer's Edition and in Karmali (al-Nuqud)	
Maq.-Ighata	= Maqrizi: Ighathat al-Umma	
N-Kh.	= Nasiri-Khusrau-Safar Name	
Qud.	= Qudama (B.G.A.VI)	
Le Strange I	= Ibn Serapion in J.R.A.S. 1895-	
II	= Lands of the Eastern Caliphate	
Sabi	= The Historical Remains of Hilal al-Sabi	
Sabi, letters	= Selections from the Official Correspondence of al-Sabi (Abu Ishaq.)	
A-Shuja'	= Continuation of I. Miskawih - Eclipse I	
Suli	= Akhbar al-Radi wa'l-Muttaki	
" II	= Ash'ar Awlad al-Khulafa	
Tan.	= Tanukhi-Nishwar	
Tan.F.	= " Faraj	
Tab.	= Tabari: Annales	
Yaq.	= Irshad al-Arib	
Yaq-Buldan	= Mu'jam al-Buldan	
Zaydan	= Ta'rikh al-Tamaddun.	

Periodicals

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| B. I. F. D. | = Bulletin de l'Institut Français de Damas. |
| E. H. R. | = Economic History Review |
| I. C. | = Islamic Culture |
| Am. J. of Phys. Anth. | = American Journal of Physical Anthropology |
| J. A. | = Journal Asiatique |
| J. Q. R. | = Jewish Quarterly Review |
| J. R. A. S. | = Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society |
| M. G. T. B. | = Majallat Ghurfat Tijarat Baghdad |
| N. C. | = Numismatic Chronicle |
| R. A. A. | = Revue de l'Academie Arabe |
| R. N . | = Revue Numismatique |
| R. N. B. | = Revue Numismatique Belge |
| Z. D. M. G. | = Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft. |

GEOGRAPHY BEHIND HISTORY

Chapter I

"O Thou River who didst bring forth all things,
When the great Gods dug Thee out,
They set prosperity upon Thy banks."

[Address of a Sumerian]

CHAPTER I

Introductory - Synopsis

- I. The Limits of Mesopotamia
 - a) Confusion of Irak and Sawad. Definitions of both
 - b) al-Jazira
 - c) Conclusion

- II. The Nature of Mesopotamia
 - a) al-Jazira
 - b) The alluvial plain
 - c) The Batiha or marshes

- III. The Distribution of Waters in Mesopotamia
 - a) General remarks
 - b) The nature of the Two Rivers - examples of floods in the 10th century. Change of the courses - lowness of banks.
 - c) The canal system: i) Canals from the Euphrates ii) Canals from the Tigris iii) Canals from the Blind Tigris
 - d) Conclusion

IV. The Geographical Position

- a) The impact of the desert
- b) Marauds of mountaineers
- c) Commercial position

V. The Ethnological Composition of Mesopotamia

- a) General remarks
- b) The Arabs: settled and nomads
 - i) Spirit of tribalism
 - ii) The tribes living in Mesopotamia in the 10th century
 - iii) Solidarity among Arabs
- c) Dailamites and Persians
- d) Turks
- e) Nabateans and Arameans
- f) Kurds
- g) Jews
- h) Other little groups

Conclusion

I. The Limits¹ of Mesopotamia in the 10th century

Arab geographers divide Mesopotamia into two areas: al-Irak in the south and al-Jazira in the north; but their data are not definite enough to enable us to trace their frontiers with absolute accuracy. As regards Irak, much confusion results from the existence of a parallel term, al-Bawad which geographically nearly corresponds with Irak. In fact, "al-Bawad" refers to the special kind of fertile lands which constitute nearly the totality of Iraki territory. According to Ibn Khurdadhbih (272/895), Ibn Rusta (circa 332/943), Istakhri (318-21/930-3), Masudi (332/943) and Ibn Hawkal (367/977) the Bawad extended from Alth and Harba in the north, to the Persian Gulf in the south, and from Hulwan in the east to 'Udhaib by Qadisiyya in the west.² Suhrah (circa 900 A.D.) in enumerating the cantons (Tassij) of the Bawad put the limit at about 3-4 farsakhs above Alth,³ thus agreeing with the previous authorities.

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- (1) The term Hudud (limits) in Arabic geographical lit. meant not so much "frontiers" in the modern sense as "limits" in the sense of the total extent of a territory (v. Minorasky, H-A p.30). It was used by geographers to describe either the limits of a country (I. Khurdadhb. p.1: H-A, p.99 and p.101) or the limits of a district (H-A folio 7a: I H. p.209. p.210; p.235; yaqut-Buldan III, p.135.
- (2) I. Khurdadhbih, p.14; I. Rusta, pp.104-5 and p.107; Istakhri, pp.78-9; Masudi-Tanbih, p.38; I H. p.234.
- (3) Le Strange I, p.20.

The authors assign to Irak the limits of the Sawad with the exception of the north. Masudi identifies Irak with the Sawad.¹ Istakhri and Ibn Hawkal give Irak the following limits: from Tikrit in the north, to the Persian Gulf in the south, and from Hulwan in the east to Qadisiyya in the west; moreover, in the central part they describe it as extending from Wasit to al-Tib; and in the south, from Basra to Jubba.² Maqdisi (387/997) considered the line Anbar - al-Sinn as the northern limit.³ Mawardi (d.450/1058) defines the Sawad as the "green" part of Irak. Yet he commits the error of identifying the limits of Irak and the Sawad,⁴ and in this error he is followed by al-Khatib (d.463/1070)⁵ and Yaqut (d.626/1228).⁶ However, if corrected, Mawardi, considers Haditha twelve farsakhs (1.Khurd. p.93) above Sinn, as the northern limit of Irak.⁷

Al-Jazira, according to Istakhri and Ibn Hawkal was limited by a line running in the south, from Anbar to Tikrit; then northwards to Sinn, Haditha, Mosul, Jazirat Ibn Umar and Amid; then westward to Sumaisat till it met the Euphrates which constituted the western limit.⁸ Ibn Khurdadhbih⁹ includes Arzan ,

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- (1) Masudi, Tanbih, p.38
 (2) Ist., pp.78-9; I.H., p.231
 (3) Maq., p.134
 (4) Mawardi, p.166
 (5) Khatib vol.I (Cairo ed.), pp.11-12
 (6) Yaqut, Buldan, p.175
 (7) Mawardi, p.166
 (8) Ist., p.71; I.H., pp.208-9
 (9) I. Khurdadhbih, p.95

Mayyafariqin in the Jazira, and Ibn Kusta¹ places Malatiyya and Sumisat in Northern Jazira (Diyar Rabia). According to al-Maqdisi Amid is the Northern frontier-post of al-Jazira.²

The author of Hudud al-Alam roughly says that Jazira is surrounded by the Tigris and the Euphrates and on this account it is called al-Jazira (i.e. the island).³ Ibn Hawkal is more exact in stating that to the east of the Tigris and to the west of the Euphrates, there were towns and villages reckoned to Jazira, though in reality lying outside.⁴ Maqdisi remarks that the Euphrates curves around this province.⁵

To sum up: Mesopotamia as consisting of Irak and al-Jazira was limited by a line starting from Abbadan (on the P. Gulf) and running northwards to Jubba, al-Tib and Hulwan, then turning north-westwards to Tikrit al-Sinn, Haditha, Mosul Jazirat b. Umar and Arzen. Then westwards to Mayyafariqin, Amid and Malatiyya; then southwards along the Euphrates to Udhaib, then eastwards to Basra and the Persian Gulf, including the Batina in Irak.

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- (1) I. Kusta, pp. 106-7
 (2) Maq., p. 136
 (3) H-¹A., p. 140
 (4) I.H., p. 209; Ist., p. 72; see I. Jubair, p. 248
 (5) Maq., p. 137

II. The Nature of MESOPOTAMIA

The nature of the soil influences the destinies of its inhabitants: the mountaineers differ from the peasants of the plain, and these again from the nomads of the steppes. The territory of Mesopotamia rises gradually as one advances northwards. Al-Jazira, as we shall call the northern part of it, is a hilly plateau, consisting mostly of pasture lands;¹ its height varies from 200 to 1000 feet.² It has some desolate lands,³ but its pastures are more abundant and capable of supporting more cattle than those of the Sawad.⁴ In comparison with the south rain is abundant in this region; its agriculture is less dependent on the existence of costly canals.⁵ With the exception of Diyala, all the affluents of the Tigris flow in this region. The rivers flow in deep and often rocky valleys but even with smaller means water can be conducted from their tributaries to the fields.⁶ Thus water is distributed more evenly and this accounts for the number of agglomerations scattered all through the area.⁷

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- (1) Le Strange II, p.24
 - (2) Hashimi, p.34
 - (3) I.H., pp.227-9
 - (4) Hamadah, p.19
 - (5) Ibid.
 - (6) Hashimi, pp.34-5
 - (7) Hashimi, pp.34-5

The southern part of Mesopotamia, excluding al-Batihah, is a rich alluvial plain, with a height of 50-100 feet above sea-level.¹ The rains are insufficient and out of season in this region,² a fact which necessitates the construction of artificial canals. As a result the population is retained close to the river banks and the distribution of cities and villages follows this limitation.³ The pasture lands are not very abundant, and the duration of verdure on them is short; therefore the conditions for cattle breeding are not encouraging.⁴ A very important feature of this region is that the banks of the rivers are low, with the result that floods are recurrent.⁵

The marshes, Bataih (or Batita), covered a wide area between Wasit and Baara, starting at al-Katr (on the Tigris) and extending over the lower course of the Tigris and Euphrates.⁶ They are mostly overgrown with reeds; with open lagoons between them, and communications being possible only by narrow channels.⁷ The water of the Batihah was too shallow for river boats, and only skiffs propelled by poles (maradi) navigated them.⁸ The climate was hot⁹ and infected with

(1) Le Strange II, p.24; Hashimi, p.34

(2) Hamadah, p.19; Hashimi, p.34

(3) Hashimi, p.35

(4) Ibid., p.35; Qudama, p.240; Yaqut, Buldan, vol.I, p.669; I.H., p.238

(5) Yaqut, Buldan I, p.669

(6) I.Kusta, p.185; Le Strange I, p.1 and p.28

(7) I.R., p.185; Le Strange I, p.28; Maq., p.119; Hashimi, p.511

(8) I.H., p.238

(9) Maq., p.119

malaria.¹ The sparse patches of dry pieces scattered among the marshes had good soil and were cultivated and covered with villages and hamlets.²

A lagoon was called al-Hawl or al-Hawr.³ Suhrah enumerates four of them between al-Katr and N. Abi'l-Asad: Bahassa, Bakansa, Basaryatha and al-Muhammediyya. The latter was connected by a channel to Nahr Abi'l-Asad, flowing into the Blind Tigris.⁴

In the northwest, the Batiha stretched nearly to Kufa and Neffar.⁵ Ibn Hawkal speaks of the swamps of Basra.⁶ The author of H-'A refers to two Batihas in Irak: the Batiha of Kufa, and the Batiha of Basra.⁷ These indications apparently have in view only the opposite sides of the same marsh land.

It is not possible to estimate exactly the area of the marshes. Ibn Rusta says that (circa 300/912) the swamps occupied a space measuring thirty farsakhs (about 100 miles) across in every direction.⁸ Mas'udi estimated (in 332/943) their size at 50 x 50 = 2500 sq. farsakhs.⁹ Maqdisi (375/985), when

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- (1) Le Strange II, p.41; Hashimi, p.511
 - (2) Yaqut: Buldan I, p.669; Le Strange II, p.41; I, p.20.
 - (3) I. Rusta, p.185; Le Strange I, p.28
 - (4) Le Strange I, p.28
 - (5) I.H., p.238; Ist., pp.81-2
 - (6) I.H., p.238
 - (7) H-'A, p.56
 - (8) I. Rusta, p.94
 - (9) Masudi I, p.226

speaking about el-Salik (an important Batiha town) says that it stands by a lagoon, forty farsakhs (about 120 miles) in length.¹ Yaqut (d. 1229 A.D.) simply mentions that they extend from Wasit to Basra.² Le Strange who sums up the testimonies of Arab geographers, says that throughout the Middle Ages the Great Swamp (i.e. Batiha) covered an area of 50 miles across and very nearly 200 miles in length.³ In any case the area of the Batiha was not static, as it depended on the height of the floods, and the drainage enterprises of the government.⁴

(1) Maq., p.119

(2) Yaqut: Buldan I, p.669

(3) Le Strange II, p.26

(4) See: Qudama, pp.240-1; Le Strange I, p.20; Art."Batiha" in E.I.

III. The Distribution of Waters

An essential factor in the history of Mesopotamia is the existence of its two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. By their deposits they gradually formed the highly fertile region of the Sawad; from the most ancient times they stimulated herdsmen and nomads to pass to the sedentary mode of life and thus to evolve new civilizations.¹ They irrigated the country especially in the south, and the canal system depends on their courses and the height of their banks.²

From its source down to Samarra, the Tigris flows in a hilly or mountainous region; its banks are high so that there is no danger of floods, but on the other hand no possibility of building canals.³ The Euphrates, from its source down to (modern) Ramadi, flows either in a hilly country or in a desert: the river bed being low and irrigation by canals too difficult.⁴ The Tigris, after Baghdad and the Euphrates, after Ramadi flow in the fertile alluvial plain, where vast areas are frequently flooded.⁵

There are some references to floods in the 10th century. Bar Hebraeus reports that in 329 / 940 "the river Tigris flooded

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- (1) East, p.57; H. Field, Am.Journ.of Phys.Anthrop.1936, pp.51-2.
 (2) Hashimi, p.125
 (3) Hashimi, p.129
 (4) H. Field, Anthropology of Irak (1940), p.17; Hashimi, p.144
 (5) Field, Anth.of Irak, p.17; Hashimi, p.136 and p.146. Willecocks, pp.27-8

the country."¹ In 367/977 the Tigris rose high, and flooded a large part of Eastern Baghdad, and Bab al-Tih in Western Baghdad.² In 391/1000 the flood of the Euphrates destroyed the dam of Qubbin, and flooded the Sawad (plains) of Anbar and Badurya reaching as far as Muhawal.³ According to Ibn al-Athir, "the Tigris rose (in 401/1010) 21 ells and flooded a great part of Baghdad and Irak, making many openings in the dams."⁴ All Arab geographers agree that the swamps were formed by the floods of the two rivers.⁵

The rivers carry a great quantity of deposits in times of flood, and leave a part of them in their beds,⁶ which results in raising the latter. Besides, the banks are sometimes higher than the plain and a serious breach in them apart from causing an inundation usually led to a change in course of the stream.⁷ There is only one record of a change in the course of the Tigris in the 10th century. Masudi refers to it in speaking of lawsuits which it provoked between the landowners on the eastern and western banks of the river between Katrabbul and Baghdad.

(1) Bar Hebraeus, p.162

(2) I.A. vol.VIII, p.510

(3) Sabi, p.444

(4) I.A. vol.IX, p.159

(5) Baladhuri (ed. de Goeje 1866), p.292; Qud., pp.140-1; Yaqut I, p.669; Mas-muraj I, pp.223-6; Streck, art.Batiha in E.I.

(6) Wilcocks, p.XII

(7) Ibid., p.XIII; Hashimi, p.146 and 147; Le Strange II, p.20 ff; also pp.50-1; Streck, art.Waisan in E.I.

He reports that the Tigris altered its course to a seventh of a mile westward in 30 years.¹

The low banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates account for the net-like system of canals in Irak in the 10th century. The level of the water of the Euphrates between modern Falluja² and Diwaniyya is higher than that of the Tigris between Baghdad and Kut al-Imara (or Madharaya of the 10th century) and this accounts for a number of canals having been drawn in the 10th century from the Euphrates to the Tigris in this area.³

Ibn Khurdadhbih (272/885) classified the districts of the Sawad by dividing it into three irrigational areas:

- 1) the first extended to the east of the Tigris, and was irrigated by the Tigris and the Nahrawan canal from Dur in the north down to the end of Nahrawan by Madharaya;⁴
- ii) the second was irrigated by the Tigris and the Euphrates and consisted of the districts south of Madharaya, east of Batiha, and down to the Persian Gulf.

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- (1) Masudi-Muruj I, p.227. In the 10th century the Tigris flowed in the bed of modern al-Gharraf, while the great volume of the Euphrates flowed in its eastern branch, which Suhrab calls Sura 'l-A'la, and which is now known as Shatt al-Hilla. (Le Strange I, p.16 and pp.9-10).
 - (2) Falluja is near the Abbasid 'Anbar', the ruins of which are now called 'Akr'.
 - (3) See Hashimi, p.147; Willcocks, p.XIII
 - (4) I.Khurdadhbih, pp.6-7.

111) the third area, the largest and most productive of the three,¹ lied between the two rivers from Anbar-Dur in the north to the Batiha. It was irrigated by canals from the Euphrates and by the Dujail canal from the Tigris.²

The best and most detailed description of the rivers and canals of Mesopotamia, in Arabic geographical literature, is given by Ibn Serapion (or Suhrab) circa 900 A.D.;³ other geographers with the exception of Yaqut⁴ give only occasional references.⁵

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- (1) See *ibid.*, pp. 8-14
 (2) I. Khurdadbe, pp. 7-8
 (3) Suhrab; *Le Strange I*, pp. 1-76; pp. 235-315
 (4) Yaqut, *Buldan II*, pp. 551 ff.; p. 555; vol. III, p. 860 ff.; vol. IV, pp. 830-851.
 (5) I.H., pp. 235-7; pp. 242-3; I.R., p. 93-6; N-Kh., pp. 234-5; Khatib, pp. 61-71; Ya'qubi, pp. 233-54; I Jawzi, p. 18 ff.

IV. The Geographical Position of Mesopotamia

Outside the protective belt of its two mighty watercourses, Mesopotamia is surrounded by deserts and highlands. To the west lies the Syrian desert; to the south and south-west lies the Arabian desert; to the north it is bounded by the Taurus and Anti-Taurus; and to the east by the Zagros range.¹ Being rich and fertile it was always an attraction to its neighbours. The lack of natural defences rendered the country unprotected against penetration or attack.

The major phenomenon is the impact of the desert on this fertile zone. From the earliest times, down to the present day, climatic changes in the desert, growth of population, or mere urge of plunders made waves of nomads and herdsmen penetrate into Mesopotamia. The history of this country has been a series of wars and conflicts (material and cultural) between "the desert and the sown", between the nomads and the cultivators of the soil.² The Arab conquests are striking example of these periodical eruptions from the desert.³

When the central government was strong or the nomads were not in huge numbers, this impact turned into peaceful penetration,

(1) Hashimi, p.37; Fields, Arabs of cent. Irak (Anth.Mem.1935. p.77).

(2) Field, Am.J.of Phys.Anth., 1936, pp.45-56; Hashimi, pp.90-5; Jamali, p.4

(3) Becker (Cam. M. Hist.) p.331-2; East Ch.III esp. pp.56-7

or into sporadic raids for spoil only. In the 10th century there was no great wave of nomadism. Sources do not refer to migrations of new tribes from the peninsula, but some tribes came into prominence during the course of this century; a fact which indicates that those tribes had either been swollen by newcomers, or had recently arrived on the scene. But this shows that the penetration was peaceful. In 378 A.H.¹ the Muntafiq tribes became, for the first time, prominent in local affairs; while the Khafaja tribe started their active role in Irak in 402 A.H.² The movement of the Karmatians of Bahrain was a striking example, in the 10th century, of an aggressive push given to nomad tribes. They attacked and sacked Kufa,³ and Basra⁴ and caused much destruction in the Sawad as far as Anbar.⁵ Banu shaiban kept on their destructive maraudings, throughout the century till the eighties, in Jazira and in the Sawad.⁶ It was not till 369 A.H. that Adud al-Dawla was able to destroy their power and save the country from their depredations.⁷ Many other tribes like Khafaja and Bani Asad and Banu Akil did much to ruin the fertile areas and spread terror.⁸

(1) I.A. IX, p.40; I.H., p.228

(2) Ibid. IX, p.165-7

(3) Ibid. VIII, p.105

(4) Ibid. VIII, p.115

(5) Ibid. IX, p.345

(6) Ibid. VII, p.342; 320; VIII, p.67 and p.516

(7) Eclipse II, pp.398-9

(8) I.A. IX, pp.165-7; Sabi, p.472; pp.445-53; p.472

Not only Bedouins but also Kurdish tribes from the hills and mountains in the north-east burst on Mesopotamia whenever they felt able to do so. Very small numbers of Kurds settled in the plains;¹ but from their mountains they expanded (in Tishar al-Akrad) and kept raiding al-Jazira.² In the second half of the 10th century, their upheavals assumed greater proportions, and reached a climax in the establishment of the Kurdish principality by the Marwanids in Diyar Bekr (380-489/990-1096).³ However, Kurdish depredations were not so grave as those of the Bedouin Arabs.

The natural wealth of Mesopotamia attracted not only nomads, but all powers arising in the Near or Middle East. The Buwaihid invasion in 334/945 is a clear illustration of this tendency.

The commercial position of Mesopotamia is of great importance. It is a bridge between the Mediterranean world and the Middle and Far East. The historical route from Western Asia to Iran and Transoxiana passes by Baghdad.⁴ Besides, Mesopotamia is a market for the Bedouins, who came from the peninsula to exchange their goods with the people of the plain.⁵ Its shore on the Persian Gulf is the terminus of the sea routes from China,

(1) Eclipse II, p.10

(2) Ibid., p.155; III, pp.83-7; pp.144-5; pp.176-7; Suli, p.136; p.192

(3) Minorsky (art.Kurds)-E.I,II, pp.1137-8; L.Poole: M.Dynasties, p.118

(4) I. Khurdadbeh, p.18 ff.

(5) S. Afghani, p.357 ff.; Maq., p.24

India as well as from the Red Sea and Southern Arabia; and the Euphrates links it with Syria.¹

Thus by its geographical position, Mesopotamia was destined to be the centre of cultural development as well as the natural battlefield for various peoples.²

(1) I. Jawzi - mansaqib, p.4; Ya'qubi, p.234; pp.237-8
(2) H. Field, Ant. Mem. IV.1935, p.37; Ya'qubi, pp.233-4

V. Ethnological Composition of Mesopotamia

The towns were generally cosmopolitan and peoples "of different tongues, colours, temperaments, education, religions, occupations and habits" lived together,¹ while the countryside was more homogeneous. However, only permanent groups are to be considered while little foreign communities of merchants and occasional visitors are disregarded.²

First came the Arabs. They were settled in towns or on land, but a large section of them remained nomads.³ The Bedouins still despised agriculture, trade and industry; felt proud of their liberty; and had great linguistic talents; and indulged in marauding and tribal wars.⁴ In the new towns of Kufa and Basra, tribes were settled en bloc, and lived in quarters of their own.⁵ Tribal feuds still persisted in some towns like Basra, where, according to Dhehabi "Adud al-Dawla...reconciled (366 A.H.) the Rabi 'a and Mudar who were in strife for 120 years."⁶

Starting from the north, there lived in Jazira the northern tribes of Rabia, Mudar and some southern yemenites, especially

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- (1) Ikhwan Safa, 1, p.129
 - (2) See for example Ya'qubi, p.242-54
 - (3) Jahiz-managib, pp.5-6
 - (4) Ibid., p.42-3; I.A. IX, p.174-5
 - (5) Suli, p.215
 - (6) Dhehabi, folio 12a

the Kalb tribe. Some of the Rabia and Mudar settled, while others were still herdsmen.¹ Ibn Hawkal reports that in his time (358/968) new tribes of Kais 'Ailan came to Jazira and pushed aside or dominated the existing ones. Among the newcomers he mentions Bani Kushair, Bani Numair, and Bani Kilab.² It seems however that the existing tribes still held their own in some parts of the Jazira as was the case in and around the town of that name.³

Banu Shaiban lived in Jazira, and were quite turbulent in the extreme north-east (shahrzur) in the first half of the century.⁴ Banu Numair lived near Harran and spread to Mosul.⁵ Banu 'Akil grew powerful in the second half of the 10th century in central Irak and in the Jazira.⁶ Banu Taghlib lived near Mosul to the west of it.⁷

The Khafaja appeared by the end of the century and continued to play a great part in the affairs of central Irak.⁸ They spread south-west of the Euphrates from Kufa to Basra.⁹ Ibn Jubair (580 A.H.) attributed the ruin of Kufa largely to the Khafaja who lived near the town.¹⁰ Banu Asad's habitat was

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- (1) Istakhri, p.77 and p.23
 - (2) I.H., p.228. They occupied the areas around Harran, Jazir Manbij, Khabur Khanuq, Arabian, Gargisia and Bahba
 - (3) Ibid., p.144
 - (4) I.A. VIII, p.320 and p.342
 - (5) Eclipse III, p.176-7
 - (6) See Sabi, pp.445-53
 - (7) I.A. VIII, p.327
 - (8) See Sabi, p.472; I.A. IX, pp.165-7
 - (9) Sabi, p.472; I.A. IX, p.167
 - (10) I Jubair, p.211

near Kufa and 'Ain al-Tamr. According to Istakhri they occupied the area limited by Qadisiyya, Shukuk, Samawa and the desert of Basra. Beyond Shukuk lived the tribe of Tayy.¹

In 314/927 there were in Kufa 50,000 families of Rabia and Mudar; 6,000 families of yamanites, and 24,000 families of other tribes.² Suli specifies the following tribes in Kufa: Banu Asad; Banu'l-Ash'ath, the Mukayyithun and Banu Haman.³

In Basra were found the Mudar and Rabia⁴ whose feuds were notorious.⁵ Suli reports that the tribes Mahaliba, Mesami'a, Jarudiyya, Bahila and Haman were in Basra.⁶

In the desert west of Basra the most famous tribe was the Banu Tamim.⁷ In 400/1009 the Banu Dubais are mentioned in Khusistan,⁸ where their rests (Dubais) are still found.

Though the Arabs despised non-Arabs, they showed much tolerance and keenness in marrying their slave-girls.⁹ Jahis explained this fact by the seclusion of free women.¹⁰ This tendency assumed such proportions that all the Caliphs of the 10th century had slave-mothers.¹¹

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- (1) Istakhri, p.22
 - (2) Abraqi, pp.122-3
 - (3) Suli, p.215
 - (4) Dhahabi, folio 12a
 - (5) I.A. VIII, p.80; Eclipse II, pp.369-70
 - (6) Suli, p.215. They were probably branches of tribes
 - (7) Istakhri, p.22
 - (8) I.A. IX, p.157
 - (9) Mashriq [1934], p.413
 - (10) Jahis, Essays, p.274
 - (11) Mashriq [1934], pp.413-4

The Arabs began to feel that their division into sedentaries and nomads on the one hand, and into tribes on the other was a source of weakness. This led some writers, especially Jahiz, to assert that the Arabs were one single group united by the common culture, similar habits and one language; and that differences arising out of locality or tribe were insignificant and superficial.¹ Some others like Tha'ahibi and Hamadani went further by exalting the Arab nation as the noblest and its language as the best.²

The Dailamites who were Iranian mountaineers of the southern Caspian coast,³ were found in Irak even before the Buwaihid invasion (334 A.H.)⁴ after which they formed a prominent section of the army and the bulk of the landlords.⁵ Beside them, there was in Irak a community of civilized Persians, of whom some probably remained from the Sassanian times, and some others penetrated into Irak after the rise of the Abbasids and especially under Ma'mun. They were of great cultural and political importance; but they were politically eclipsed by the Turks.⁶

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- (1) Jahiz, *Manaqib*, pp.6-7
 (2) Tha'ahibi, *Fiqh* p.1; *Letters of Hamadani* (ed. Tarabulsi) Beirut 1921, pp.279-284
 (3) Minorsky, *Dailamites*, pp.2-3
 (4) *Eclipse II*, p.41
 (5) *Ibid.*, II, pp.96-7
 (6) Minorsky, *Dailamites*, pp.11-12; *Masriq*, 1934, p.409; pp.415-22; *Tab.* III, p.439; Jahiz, *Manaqib*, p.15

The Turks came to prominence under Mu'tasim' (833-42 A.D.) and continued to be the dominant power till the Buwaihid invasion.¹ Jahiz (d. 869 A.D.) wrote an eulogy of the Turks (Manaqib al-Turk) in which he praised their bravery, endurance, trustworthiness and other warlike virtues. He even called them "Bedouins of the 'Ajams" and explained that they had no love for crafts, agriculture or science.² The Buwaihid army was composed in equal parts of Dailamites infantry and Turkish cavalry.³

The "Anbat" is a term used to describe the Aramaic speaking peasants of Irak, especially of the Batiha region.⁴ Ibn al-Kalbi confirms that the Arabs called the inhabitants of Irak who were neither shepherds nor soldiers, Nabateans.⁵ Mas'udi calls the peasants of Irak either "Syrians" (Siryan) or Nabateans.⁶ He rightly thinks that the Nabateans represented the ancient population of Irak, subjugated by the Persians, but adds that after the Arab invasion some of them claimed to be Persians and contemptuously looked down upon "Nabateanism". He quotes a poet exclaiming: "and the villagers claim to be descendants of Kiera Kubadh! Then where are the Nabateans?", thus considering the

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- (1) Fakhri, p.181; Jahiz Bayan III, p.206; Sabi, p.11 ff.
 (2) Jahiz, Manaqib, p.43
 (3) Eclipse II, p.234 ff.; see Minoraky-Dailamites, pp.20-1
 (4) Maq., p.108; E.I.IV, p.802
 (5) Yaqut, Buldan III, p.634
 (6) Masudi-Tanbih, p.7 and p.37-39

villagers to be Nabateans.¹ Finally, he speaks of a Nabatean village near Samarra.²

The middle classes of the Arameans played a great role in the cultural development of Irak, and produced great doctors, astrologers, scientists and translators.³ Harren, in which the ancient Sabian astral religion was still professed, was the great centre of Aramaic culture.⁴ Christian Arameans were found in comparatively large communities in Tikrit,⁵ Hakk and near Mosul.⁶

The Kurds lived in Upper Jazira to the east and north east. They were mainly nomadic or semi-nomadic. They lived in settled conditions in villages round Mosul, and in towns like Mosul.⁷ The best known of their tribes in the 10th century in Jazira were the Humaid, Hadhbani,⁸ and Hakkari tribes. Sources are full of references to the frequent interruptions of communications caused by the Kurds.⁹ For the political role of the Kurds see: the article "Kurds" in E.I; Eclipse III, pp.83-7; 144-5; 176-7; Saigh-Tavikh al-Mawsil vol.I.

(1) Masudi-Tanbih, pp.37-8

(2) Masudi, VII, p.119

(3) Mashriq 1934, pp.425-8

(4) I.H., p.226

(5) I.H., p.226, p.228. Ist., p.77

(6) I.H., p.217

(7) Ibid.

(8) Prof. Minorsky thinks that this name is "possibly derived from the ancient province Adiabene."

(9) See Suli, p.136; p.192; i.Jubair, p.24P; Eclipse II, p.155

Irak had many Jewish communities. Baghdad, where the Exilarch resided, was their principal centre.¹ It possessed a special street called "The Jews' street" [Darb al-Yahud].² Basra too had an important Jewish colony. Jews lived also in the districts of Hulwan, Nahrawan and Nisibin. They had two famous academies at Sura and Pumpedita, each presided over by an Goan.³ In the 9th century, Jews were generally dyers, tanners, coppers and butchers; but in the 10th century some were merchants, bankers, and even administrative officials.⁴

Among the other small groups mentioned in Irak in the 10 century there were the Indian Zutt whom Hajjaj transported from Sind to Batiha. The Zutt were buffalo-breeders, and as buffaloes are not afraid of lions, it was thought that they would police the jungle of the marshes. In the 9th century, the Zutt were dispersed, but some remained settled near Khanakin.⁵

Finally, there were the so-called "Jaramiq" (probably Arameans);⁶ and the "Zanj", originary of the north-eastern coast of Africa, who supplied servile labour.⁷

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- (1) Mann, J.Q.R. n.s.VII, pp.465-6
 (2) Yaqut, Buldan IV, p.1045
 (3) Mann, op.cit., pp.463-72
 (4) Mashriq (1934), pp.429-331; Jahiz, Three Essays, p.17
 (5) Baladhuri, origins II, pp.105-111
 (6) Masudi VII, p.119
 (7) See Tab.III, p.1742; Jahiz "Essay on the merits of the Blacks compared with the Whites" (Fadl al-Sudan).

This enumeration of ethnic groups shows the complicated character of the Mesopotamian population. The groups differed not only in their origins, but in their professions as well: the townsmen Arabs were engaged in trade and liberal professions; The Nabateans were agriculturists; the nomads were cattle breeders; the Turks and Dailamites were soldiers; the Christians and Jews formed a distinct part of the intelligentsia, etc. Thus the variety of the population corresponded to a division of functions and labour and tended to organize the society into an economic whole. On the other hand, the opposition of functions still increased the antagonistic feeling, of the different races. Consequently, mutual attractions and struggles made the Mesopotamian society a living organism full of dynamic possibilities.

STUDIES ON THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF MESOPOTAMIA

IN THE 10th CENTURY

In the economic development of Medieval Mesopotamia, the 10th century is a decisive period. The foreign domination of the Buwaihids opened ^{the} door to manifold changes and innovations. For the first time, the fief system was militarized; uncanonical taxes multiplied; currency depreciation was resorted to as a financial expedient; banking reached full development; an influential capitalist class came into prominence; and the labour movement was organized.

To throw light on the different sides of economic life, I have discussed the following topics:

- I. The ethnological and geographical background to serve as an introduction.
- II. Agriculture: the existing forms of land tenure; the agricultural policy; the methods of irrigation and cultivation; and the crops.
- III. Industry: the classes of labour; the rise of a specific labour movement, seen in the movements of the 'ayyāns, the Zanj and the Caṃmathians; the formation of corporations and the beginnings of guilds; the handicrafts.
- IV. Trade: the factors affecting its development; the merchants, their classes and dealings; credit; local

markets; exports and imports; trade relations with foreign countries.

- V. Banking: the functions of the Jihbadh and the Sarrāf; the institution of a state bank; the instruments of credit, namely the Suftaja and the Ṣakk; the significance of the banking institutions to Mesopotamian economy.
- VI. Taxation in theory and practice with a special consideration of uncanonical taxes.
- VII. Currency: an introduction to Islamic currency; bimetallism and the rates of exchange; the monetary policy; the types of coins in circulation; the right of coinage.
- VIII. The standard of Living: conditions under the Buwaihids are compared with those of the preceding period; lists of prices are analyzed; and single problems are examined: the distribution of income, the social service of the state, the expenditure among the different class and the insecurity of property.

I conclude that the Buwaihid invasion lowered the standard of living of the local population.

I have used chiefly the original Arabic sources and the available European studies, in the choice of which I was helped by Professor V. Minorsky, my Supervisor.

A. A. DURI.

CHAPTER II

Agriculture - Synopsis

I. Land Tenure

a) The background

b) Kinds of holdings:

1) Caliphal Domains

2) Iqta's

1) General remarks

ii) Theoretical division:

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2) " istighlal

iii) practical divisions:

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2) Private "

3) Caliphal and princely Iqta'

4) Military Iqta': beginning and reason of militarization; rights and obligation of fief holders in theory and practice

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1) Origin: grants; reviving dead lands and reclaiming swamps; purchase of capital estates

ii) Land owners, their obligation

iii) The practice of Ilje' and its consequences

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4) Waqf lands

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- iii) Cultivation of palm-trees and fruit trees**
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- 1) The Basra region**
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- vi) The Jazira**

e) Crops and their distribution

- 1) Dates:**
 - (i) Places celebrated for palm trees**
 - (ii) varieties of dates**

- ii) Wheat and barley; estimates; locality
- iii) Rice
- iv) Sesame and other cereals
- v) Fruits: grapes, oranges and lemons; olives, figs, pomegranates, lemons, prunes, apricots...
- vi) Cotton
- vii) Sugar cane
- viii) Vegetables
- ix) Flowers

I. Land Tenure

The economy of Mesopotamia depended mainly on agriculture, land being the most important capital and a productive field of investment.

Whether in the opinions of the jurists, the Sawad was taken by force or by treaty (Sulh), the fact remains that its lands were looked upon as the common possession of the Muslim community. The wazir 'Ali b. 'Isa wrote to the governor of Silh and Mubarak that the Sawad was conquered by force; that it was not owned by the Caliph or the government, but that it was the fay' of the Muslims and was like waqf (mortmain); furthermore that its cultivators were leaseholders paying kharaaj for the tenure of the lands they cultivated.¹ Ibn Miskawaih and Istekhri confirm this view, adding that the domains around Basra were 'ushri' lands, since they were brought under cultivation after the Islamic conquest.²

Nevertheless, different kinds of tenure existed in Mesopotamia, with no distinct lines separating them; and there was much variety in the holdings of each type. The conditions of tenure usually depended upon the person of the holder; they were registered in the central diwan (bureau) in Baghdad, as

(1) Sabi, pp. 338-9; also pp. 340-3

(2) Ist., p. 80; I.H.(K), p. 239; Eclipse II, p. 127

well as in a provincial register.¹

Broadly speaking, there were five major types of holdings:

- (1) Royal domains, which belonged to a sovereign Caliph or to a Buwaidid prince
- (2) Iqta's, i.e. fiefs
- (3) Milk, i.e. private possessions
- (4) Waqf, i.e. mortmains or pious endowments
- (5) Communal lands

1). The Caliphal domains, (al-Diya' al-Sultaniyya) originated from the confiscated lands of the Umayyad Caliphs and princes.² Their number was increased by occasional confiscations of the property of disgraced or deceased officials,³ or by the practice of ilja.⁴ They were found all over Mesopotamia: in the Sawad, in the vicinity of Baghdad, Kufa, Basra and Wasit;⁵ in the zones reclaimed from the swamps,⁶ around Mosul⁷ and even in Persia and Anwar.⁸ Various names were applied to these domains (diya'): Khasa i.e. "private"; Furatiyya i.e. "Euphratean"; 'Abbasayya i.e. "'Abbasid"; Mustahdatha i.e. "newly created"; and finally murtaja'a i.e. "retaken".⁹ The latter were grants

(1) al-qashandi, vol. XIV, p. 124

(2) Qud., p. 241; Jahshiyari, p. 90

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ilja' will be explained later

(5) Eclipse I, pp. 60-1; = Qud. 241: 1-A VIII, p. 43

(6) Qud., p. 241

(7) Eclipse I, p. 405

(8) Tab. III, p. 2140; Ya'gubi, pp. 271-2; Eclipse I, p. 61

(9) Eclipse I, p. 244

revoked by the Caliph for some reasons;¹ but the appellations of the rest are not explained in contemporary sources.²

There were several bureaus (diwans) for the administration of the Caliphal Domains.³ Muktedir's mother had a special bureau to administer her estates.⁴ Each domain (daya), or a group of domains, was entrusted to a special 'amil' who either farmed the taxes himself or had a farmer by his side.⁵ Usually, Caliphal Domains were farmed out.⁶

Caliphal Domains must have been very extensive. In 'Ali b. 'Isa's list of revenue for the year 306/918, the amount of the kharaġ is given as follows:-

The <u>Khasa</u> ⁷	= 516,447	dinars
" <u>Furatiyya</u>	617,126	"
" <u>'Abbasiiyya</u> ⁸	144,760	"
" <u>Mustahdatha</u>	289,036	" 9

In Ahwaz, the Kharaġ of the Caliphal Domains, according to the statement of the 'Amil was equal to the Kharaġ of the rest of

(1) 'Arib, p. 145

(2) Zaydan suggests that al-Diya' al-Khasa were the private estates of the Caliph; al-'Abbasiiyya were the estates of the Caliph's family and relatives; that al-Furatiyya were so called because they were on the banks of the Euphrates. See vol. II, p. 132

(3) Eclipse I, p. 152

(4) Ibid. I, p. 143

(5) Tan. I, p. 102; Tab. III, p. 2224

(6) Eclipse I, p. 152; Tan. I, p. 102; I.A. VIII, p. 68

(7) Excluding those around Wasit

(8) (Same as 7)

(9) Kramer, in 'Ali b. 'Isa, p. 31

the lands.¹ But to get a fair estimate of the extent of the Caliphal Domains allowance should be made for the fact that the tax collectors passed over many dues and levied taxes at a reduced rate.² The most important, and probably the largest, section of the Caliphal Domains lay on the Euphrates (the Euratiyya).³

After 317/929 Caliphal Domains shrank rapidly, as a result of the penury of the treasury and the clamour of the soldiery for pay. A treasury crisis forced the wazir Ibn Muqla in 317/929 to sell numerous caliphal estates.⁴ During a new crisis in 319/931, the wazir al-Husain b. al-Qasim sold Caliphal estates for 500,000 dinars.⁵ This liquidation continued on a large scale under Qahir. In 320/932 Qahir commissioned Abu'l -'Abbas al-Naubakhti to proceed to a systematic sale of Caliphal Domains and on the first day, the buyers acquired estates for 500,000 dinars.⁶ In 321/933 the wazir Ibn Muqla disposed of Caliphal estates for 2,400,000 dinars.⁷ In spite of these sales after the deposition of Qahir in 322/933, there remained still numerous "Khassas"; mushahadatha: 'Abbasi' and 'Furati'... estates.⁸ The final blow to Caliphal Domains was dealt by the Buwaihid invasion.

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- (1) Cf. Tan. II, p. 144
 (2) Kremer, op. cit., p. 80
 (3) Ibid., p. 31
 (4) Eclipse I, p. 200
 (5) Ibid. I, p. 226
 (6) Ibid. I, p. 245
 (7) Ibid. I, p. 260
 (8) Ibid. I, p. 295

Muizz al-Dawla (in 334/945) seized the Caliph's lands and gave him iqta's instead.¹

II. Iqta's

The majority of cultivated lands belonged to this category. Khuwarizmi (d.387/997) defines iqta' as a grant of land to a person, entitling him to full and hereditary ownership.² Yet 'Arif reports that Muktadir, being in financial straits, revoked some iqta's previously granted by himself and instituted for them a special Diwan al-Murtaja'at.³ Theoretically, a ruler could grant iqta's only from his estates,⁴ but in practice this rule was often transgressed.⁵ Fief-holders had no special military obligations, but had to pay certain dues,⁶ and to repair the canals and bridges lying within their fiefs.⁷

At first the Caliph was the supreme grantor of fiefs; then after the advent of the Amir al-Umara (324-34/935-45), the latter granted fiefs too; finally after 334, the Buwaihid prince became the sole grantor.⁸

Theoretically iqta's were classified under two categories

- (1) Eclipse I, p.96
- (2) Khuwarizmi, p.39
- (3) 'Arif, p.145
- (4) Hawardi, p.183
- (5) Eclipse I, p.136
- (6) Calqashandi, XIII, pp.139-43
- (7) Sabi, p.257
- (8) Eclipse I, p.136; p.374

according to the right they conferred:

- 1) The iqta' Tamlik (i.e. grants) conferred on the owner a full and probably hereditary ownership. It was subject to the payment of the 'Ushr. It was usually assigned on dead lands to be revived, or on cultivated lands whose owners died heirless.¹
- ii) The iqta' iestighlal (i.e. assignment) never had a hereditary character. It was granted mainly to the army and was generally assigned on Kharaj lands.²

Practically, the type of the fief depended upon the position of the grantor and not on the right it conferred. Thus, the following classes could be distinguished:

- i) Fiefs of civil servants
- ii) Private fiefs
- iii) Caliphal fiefs
- iv) Military fiefs.

I. Civil fiefs, granted to officials in lieu of salaries, were the dominant type at the beginning of the 10th century. On assuming office, a wazir usually received fiefs, and at his dismissal, they were confiscated to the benefit of the next wazir.³ Such fiefs were usually extensive.⁴ There existed a special

(1) Khwarizmi, p.60; Mawardi, pp.186-7; Qalqashandi, pp.113-5
 (2) Mawardi, p.189; Qalq. XIII, p.115-7
 (3) Eclipse I, p.155; p.133; Tan-Faraj I, p.137; Sabi, p.23
 (4) Usually of not less than 50,000 dinars, revenue annually. See Sabi 23; Eclipse I, p.159; Yaqut Dict.V, p.278; Eclipse II, p.241.

bureau for administering vazirial fiefs, called Diwan iqta' al-wuzara'.¹

Other important officials also received fiefs. In 325/936, Ibn Ra'iq granted Bajkam, (then the revenue farmer of Ahwaz) fiefs bringing a revenue of 50,000 dinars per annum.² In 334/945) Mu'izz al-Duwha granted his courtiers large estates as fiefs.³ A fief was also granted to the treasurer.⁴ In 367/977 Adud al-Dawla confirmed the fief, of Abu Ishaq al-Sabi, secretary of the Correspondence Bureau.⁵ This type of iqta' imposed no special obligations on the holder.

II. The private iqta's were granted to individuals of merit, not officially employed, such as poets. It conferred on the holder a full, and actually hereditary ownership. An iqta' granted to the poet Buhturi was still owned by his grand daughter in the time of Radi.⁶

To the same type of iqta' belonged also grants to revive "neglected" estates. The procedure was that the grantee offered to attract peasants to cultivate the lands and to supply them with seeds and money, to clear up the canals; and to pay the treasury a fixed sum annually. In return, he received the land in full and hereditary ownership, and was exempted from any tax or official intervention.⁷

(1) 'Arib, p.135

(2) Eclipse I, p.374

(3) Eclipse II, p.96

(4) Eclipse II, p.188

(5) Yaqut-Dict.I, p.332

(6) Ten.VIII, p.28 (reprint); see Sabi, pp.163-4; pp.181-2

(7) See Muti's decrees in Qalqashendi, vol.XIII, pp.123-31; pp.139-43. "Neglected" estates were those which were deserted and fell into ruin.

III. When the Caliph was dispossessed of his domains by Muizz al-Dawla, the latter compensated him with fiefs. These iqta's resembled the civil iqta' in as much as they were given in lieu of salary, and the private iqta' in as much as they conferred full ownership on their holder. Moreover, they were under the protection of the Buwailid prince.¹ The Caliph had a secretary to administer his iqta'.²

A parallel type of iqta' was the princely iqta' referred to by Abu Shuja' [the continuator of Ibn Miskawaih]. In 380/990 Simsam al-Dawla and Baha' al-Dawla agreed that each should have iqta's in the other territories.³ This iqta' probably conferred full rights of ownership.

IV. In the 10th century iqta' went through a process of militarization in the sense that land was granted en masse to (mercenary) troops. This change was brought about by the bankruptcy of the central treasury in the late years of Muktaḍir's reign (after 317 A.H.) and under his successors; by the little administrative experience of the early Buwaihids and by the unruliness of the soldiery.⁴

The year 334/945 is a landmark in the militarization of iqtas, for in that year Muizz al-Dawla made wholesale grants of

(1) Eclipse II, p.344; I.A. vol.VIII, p.478

(2) I.A. vol.VIII, p.339

(3) Eclipse III, pp.271-2. Simsam al-Dawla was then ruler of Arrajan and Pers; Baha'al-Dawla was the ruler of 'Irak and Khuzistan

(4) I.A. vol.VIII, pp.342-3.

fiefs to his troops,¹ a practice followed by his successors. Henceforth, military fiefs increased to such an extent that civil fiefs became, comparatively, of secondary importance. The military iqta' developed at the expense of the existing forms of tenure - namely, private estates, former Caliphal domains, and estates of the public treasury.² Adud al-Dawla went even further by assigning waqf lands, as fiefs to the military.³

Military fiefs were not hereditary, and were usually for less than lifetime.⁴ They conferred no right of ownership, because the prince reserved the right to revoke the grant.⁵ Their revenue was meant to be the soldier's salary. The grant was usually accompanied by an agreement according to which the fief holder accepted to pay a certain sum of money, or its equivalent in kinds, in one or several instalments.⁶ He was also expected to keep up the irrigation works in his fief.⁷ Jurisdiction within his fief remained, theoretically, in the hands of the central authority.⁸

In practice, military fief-holders paid hardly anything to the treasury.⁹ They excluded any interference of the central authority in their affairs and dealt with the inhabitants of

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- (1) Eclipse II, p.97
 - (2) Ibid. II, p.97; III, pp.72-7; I.A. vol.VIII, pp.342-3
 - (3) Abu Shuja, p.71
 - (4) A-Shuja, p.137, p.245; Sabi, p.468
 - (5) Eclipse II, p.97; III, p.165
 - (6) Eclipse II, pp.98-99
 - (7) Ibid. II, p.98
 - (8) Ibid. II, p.99
 - (9) Ibid. II, p.98

their fiefs as they liked.¹ They usually administered their fiefs through their agents. Under Muizz al-Dawla they kept no accounts of their revenue, but they seem to have done so under 'Adud al-Dawla.²

Muizz al-Dawla started the ruinous practice of assigning the management of each district to a leading military chief of Dailamite nationality, who regarded it as a private estate for life.³ It was not till the time of Adud al-Dawla that government jurisdiction was restored in these large fiefs and the specific dues from them exacted.⁴

In some instances strategical reasons accounted for the grant of a military fief. In 377/987 Abu Nasr Khawashadha, a minister of sharaf al-Dawla, was faced with the rebellion of the Kurdish chief Badh. As he had little money to pay his troops, he granted iqta's around Harran to the Arabs in the hope that they would defend their homes against Badh. He thus created a military colony on the northern frontier of the state.⁵

The central authority never acknowledged the de facto status of the military fief-holders, and whenever possible, it intervened to curb their power.⁶

The size of some military fief will be discussed below in the chapter on "The standard of Living".

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- (1) Eclipse II, p.98-9 and p.97
 - (2) Ibid., p.98, and III, pp.47-50.
 - (3) Ibid., II, p.98
 - (4) Ibid. III, pp.47-50
 - (5) Abu Shuja', p.144
 - (6) A-shuja, p.165; pp.294-5; Sabi, p.468

III. Private Estates

Private estates were of diverse origins. Historically, their primary source was the grants of lands (or iqta's) by the rulers to some individuals or groups;¹ which Mawardi calls iqta' tamlik.² Another source of private estates were the sales of treasury domains (sawafi),³ and Caliphal estates, whenever the Caliph was in financial straits.⁴ Furthermore, revival of dead lands and reclamation of swamps were encouraged by the government.⁵ Istakhri points out that the lands around Basra were dead lands brought under cultivation in Islamic times.⁶ In the swamps region (Batiha) reclamation of dead lands was also pursued; the reclaimed lands being called 'al-Jawamid'.⁷ Such lands, revived or reclaimed from swamps, were owned in full by the individuals who brought them under cultivation.⁸

Officials and well-to-do citizens acquired private estates⁹ because they were considered a comparatively secure source of income.¹⁰ When the property of Ibn al Jassas, the merchant, was confiscated in 296/908, among the main items left to him were

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- (1) vSee Abu'Ubeids, p.61; Zaydan II, pp.35 ff.; Wellhausen pp.267-311
 (2) Mawardi, pp.186-7 (c)
 (3) I. Kusta, p.150
 (4) See "Caliphal Domains"
 (5) Eclipse II, p.88; Qud., p.241; Mawardi, p.173
 (6) Ist., p.80; I.H., p.239
 (7) Mawardi, p.173
 (8) Ibid., p.172
 (9) Eclipse I, p.253-4; 258-41; III, p.72; Tan.I, p.93
 (10) Tan-Paraj I, p.91

his vast estates.¹ A man who inherited 30,000 dinars bought estates for 10,000.² Wazirs had vast private estates,³ which often might have been scattered over a number of districts. 'Ali b. 'Isa, for example, had private estates in Diyar Rabia, Mosul, Sawad, Damascus and Egypt.⁴

Besides paying taxes, landowners had one important obligation. They had to share the expenses of repairing the canals passing by their estates.⁵

The most important landowners were the Caliph and the high officials. To some extent this situation was due to the practice of ilja' on the part of small landowners.⁶ For lack of security, such owners often placed their lands under the protection of the Caliph or a powerful official, by registering them in their names.⁷ The practice dates back to Umayyad times, as Qudama reports that in the time of Hajjaj, many landowners in the Sawad placed their lands under the protection of Prince Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malik.⁸

(1) Tan. I, p.17

(2) Ibid., p.93

(3) Sabi, p.137; p.322; Yaqut Dict.V, p.278; for details see section: "income", in the chapter "Standard of Living".

(4) Sabi, p.321 and p.304

(5) Sabi, p.257; Tabari III, p.2153

(6) See Zaydan, vol.II, p.130

(7) Khuwarizmi, p.62; I-Khaldun, Prol., p.308

(8) Qudama, p.241; see also I. Fakh, p.282, 284

With the *ilja'* the landowner undertook to pay his protector a share of the produce.¹

Istakhri refers to some estates in Fars which were registered in the names of some influential courtiers, for $\frac{1}{4}$ of the produce, although the original owners could still dispose of them as they liked.² *Ibn Miskawaih* reports that in 358/968 many landowners in Irak made their estates *malaji'* to *Ibn Shirzad* the powerful favourite of *Simsam al-Dawla*.³

Thus *Ilja'* was a device to avoid the exactions of tax collectors and governors. Besides, the name of the protector might have induced the tax collector to pass over some dues entirely.⁴ But as time went on, the protector became the virtual owner, while the original owner passed to the status of a metayer (*muzari'*).⁵

Some less known class of holdings was called *ighar*. An old glossary in *Sabi's* text defines *ighar* as a tax-free grant of land by the ruler to a person.⁶ If so, *ighar* was a very

(1) *Tamukhi* relates that a landowner complained to *Mansur* that the 'Amils maltreated him because of his weakness and offered the Caliph $\frac{1}{4}$ the revenue of his land if the latter registered it in his name. *Ten VIII*, p.76. Another from *Ahwas* offered a *wasir* of *Mansur* 100,000 dirhams annually if the *wasir* registered certain estates in his name and saved him from the exactions of tax collectors. [*Jahshiyari* 118].

(2) *Ist.*, p.158; *I.H.*, p.303

(3) *Eclipse II*, p.257

(4) *Zaydan II*, p.130

(5) See *Cud.*, p.241; *The'alibi* quotes a warning to small landowners not to have partnerships with influential men, because "when they enter a village, they spoil it." *Khasa*, p.168. *Zaydan* suggests that the great number of *Malaji'* (protected estates compelled the government to establish a special *diwan* for them called "*Diwan al-Diya*" distinct from *Diwan al-Kharaj II*, p.131

(6) *Sabi*, p.42, note ; *Lisan al-'Arab VII*, p.150 repeats the same definition.

privileged grant. Hamid b. al-'Abbas blamed Ibn al-Furat for paying no taxes on his estates under the pretext that they were ighars.¹ Qudama reports that Yaqtin received some estates in Sawad as ighar at the beginning of the Abbasid period.² Surely, even at that early date, ighar was not a new institution.

But the term ighar had also another connotation, viz. "immunity". A fief-holder, or the head of a village agreed to pay a definite annual sum of money to the central treasury on condition that no 'amil entered their estates.³ Practically, this privilege amounted to the farming of taxes and guaranteed the landowners against the exactions of unscrupulous tax-collectors.

IV. Waqf Lands

An important section of lands figured under the heading of waqfs. The term waqf usually referred to pious endowments, the revenue of which was assigned to the holy places, to the fighters for the faith, to the poor and needy, to orphans, or was used to free slaves, to build mosques and fortresses, or for the general purposes of common welfare.⁴

(1) Sabi, p.91

(2) Qudama, p.241

(3) Khuwarizmi, p.60; Lisan VII, p.150. It seems that Zaydan confused the two meanings by suggesting that the ighar holder pays a definite sum on receiving the grant.

(4) Sabi, p.286; I.A.VIII, p.182; Fakhri, p.364; Hilel al-Ra'y pp.10-12.

Waqfs were either private or official. The private waqfs were founded by pious members of the Muslim community.¹ Before his death (400/10009) the Naqib Abu Ahmed al-Musawi turned some of his possessions into a waqf for the poor.² Sometimes a waqf was instituted for the benefit of the relations; in fact it was occasionally meant to insure the right of the descendants in perpetuity.³

The initiator of the official waqf was the Caliph in his capacity of protector of the Holy places and guardian of the frontiers.⁴ On the advice of 'Ali b. 'Isa Mukhtadir set up a waqf some lands around Baghdad with an annual revenue of 13,000 dinars and some estates in Sawad with a yearly revenue of 80,000 dinars.⁵ Mukhtadir's mother had converted vast estates into waqf.⁶ In 319/931 the wazir Ibn Muqla spent 20,000 dinars on estates which he made a waqf for the Talibites.⁷

A person could set up as a waqf only the lands which he owned.⁸ But, once a land was converted into a waqf it could not be sold or confiscated.⁹ When Mukhtadir's mother wanted to dispose of some waqf lands, the Qadi Abu Ja'far b. al-Bahlul refused

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- (1) 'Arif, p. 131
 (2) Dhahabi folio 68a
 (3) Juhiz-Bukh., p. 77; see Hilal al-Ra'y pp. 38-46; Ibn Taifir p. 104
 (4) Sabi, p. 286; Fakhri, p. 317, p. 364
 (5) Sabi, p. 286; Yaqut (Diet.) V, p. 279; see 'Arif, p. 131
 (6) Eclipse I, p. 245
 (7) Ibid. I, p. 225
 (8) Cf. Sabi, p. 286; Fakhri, p. 364; 'Arif, p. 131
 (9) Hilal al-Ra'y, p. 95

to legalize her action; and the Qadi's attitude was approved by Muktadir.¹ Yet other rulers disregarded this rule. In 320/932 Qahir authorized the sale of waqfs.² The most daring measure in this respect was that of Adud al-Dawla who in 372/982 confiscated all the waqf lands in the Sawad for the benefit of the state and compensated the interested persons with pensions.³ This policy was not continued by his successors.⁴

The supervision and administration of private waqfs was entrusted to the Qadi who was required to develop waqf properties and to see that their revenue was justly collected and properly used.⁵ Theoretically the Qadi was also in charge of the official waqfs, but in practice they were administered by a special bureau called Diwan al-Birr.⁶

(1) Tan. I, pp. 119-20

(2) Eclipse I, p. 245; I.A. VIII, p. 182; Tan VIII, p. 16

(3) A-Shuja', p. 71

(4) Dhahabi, folio 68a

(5) Sabi, letters, p. 123; Mawardi, p. 67; Tan VIII, p. 16; Tan I, pp. 119-20; Jahiz-Bukh., p. 77

(6) Sabi, p. 286; Eclipse I, p. 295; Yaqt Dict. V, p. 279. The Qadi still had the power of supervision. See Tan. I, pp. 119-20; Sabi, letters, p. 123

II. The Agrarian Policy of the State

The government was fully conscious of the direct connection between agriculture and revenue. As land taxes were the main source of revenue, a flourishing agriculture meant more income; and thus aid to farmers was understood to be a productive investment.¹ On the other hand, the welfare of the cultivators was not always considered.² There was hardly a uniform agrarian policy; single measures depended on the personality of the ruler (i.e. the Caliph and later the Buwaihid prince) and on the advice he received from his councillors.

On the eve of the 10th century (in 282/895) Mu'tadid accomplished an important reform by advancing the time of the collection of Kharaġ from the (Persian) Nawruz, on April 11th to June 11th of each year and the new date became known as al-Nawruz al-Mu'tadidi. Kharaġ was usually collected at the Nawruz, but the latter occurred earlier as years passed, till by the time of the reform, taxes were levied when the corn was still green. This practice "had done a great deal of harm to the people, so that they were compelled to incur debts, and even to emigrate from their houses; they had many complaints and wrongs to recount."³

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- (1) Tan. VIII, p. 89
 - (2) Cf. Eclipse I, p. 27
 - (3) Biruni (Chronology) p. 31

The reform was to make the time of collection coincide with the ripening of the crops; it was described by Buhturi as "a memorable benefit to the people."¹

Mu'tadid gave much attention to the maintenance of the irrigation system in order. An important example was the clearing of the course of the Dujail canal from deposits.² Sabi reports an interesting case showing how closely the Caliph supervised the distribution of water. Some cultivators of the Badurya district complained to Mu'tadid that the owners of the estates irrigated from the Euphrates conspired with the government engineers to narrow the gates of the Diminna bridge (at the mouth of the Nahr'Isa) so as to increase their share of the water. The Caliph sent the wazir with some other engineers to investigate the case on the spot. The commission consulted the local landowners, and decided to enlarge the central gate of the bridge to 22 ells (dhira').³

Mu'tadid was willing to help poor cultivators financially by advancing money to them, for the acquisition of oxen and seeds.⁴

Of Muktedir's wazirs 'Ali b. 'Isa was most concerned with the welfare of the cultivators. He wrote to the governors to use justice and kindness towards the cultivators, provided they paid

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- (1) Biruni (Chronology), p.33; Tab.III, p.2143
 (2) Tab.III, p.2153
 (3) Sabi, pp.256-7
 (4) Tan.VIII, p.66

the taxes;¹ he "bade them use their best efforts to secure the prosperity of their provinces."²

To 'Ali b. 'Isa the maintenance of the irrigation system was a fundamental factor in the prosperity of the country. When (in 334 A.H.) Ma'izz al-Dawla consulted him as to the causes of the country's impoverishment, 'Ali said: "the first thing for the prince to consider is the repair of the breaches, for they are the root of evil, and the ruin of the Sawad."³ He advanced seeds to poor cultivators and then recovered the amount in the harvest time.⁴

During the period of the Amir al-Umara's (324-334/935-45) the canals were neglected and the country was ravaged by the struggling amirs and lawless soldiery. During the contest between Bajkam, and Ibn Ra'iq, the latter made in 326/937 a breach in the bank of the Nahr Diyala, so that much cultivation was destroyed and the functioning of the Nahrwan canal was affected.⁵ In 329/940 the Ruffail and Buq canals burst their banks and thus

(1) See 'Ali's circulars and letters in Sabi, pp.336-8; Eclipse I, p.27. On assuming office in 301/913 he sent a circular to the governors, saying: "I will have no laxity nor tempering with any of the rights of the commander of the Faithful, nor will I leave a single dirhem of his money unaccounted, nor will I put up with any negligence of the interests of the government; and you shall not be more anxious to earn merit in such matters than to deal justly and equitably with your subjects and remove from them unfair burdens small or great. For I shall hold you answerable for the honest administration of the Sultan's revenue and the proper guarding of his property."

Eclipse IV, pp.30-1

(2) Eclipse +I, p.27

(3) Ibid. II, p.106, note

(4) Sabi, p.338

(5) Suli, p.108

the Badurya district lay ruined for over ten years.¹ In 330/941 a breach opened in the Nahrawan canal; in Suli's words this misfortune "ruined the world, impoverished the people and caused a rise in prices, the results of which are still felt in our time,"² i.e. 334 A.H. In 333/944 the Nahr 'Issa broke through; the Amir al-Umara' Tuzun proved helpless to repair it.³ Finally in 334 A.H. a breach opened in the Khalis canal.⁴ The Caliph succeeded in repairing only the Sarat canal in 327/938.⁵ This black period closed with the Buwaihid invasion in 334/945.

When he conquered Irak, Mu'izz al-Dawla (334-56/945-66) examined the causes of the agricultural crisis; and having found that prosperity could not return before the breaches were repaired, declared: "I have vowed on coming to this country that that would be the first thing to do, even if I have to spend all my treasury on the project."⁶ He kept his word and in 334 A.H. several breaches in the Nahr Rufail, in the Rubaniyya canal in Badurya and in the Nahrawan canals were repaired.⁷ Mu'izz al-Dawla also cleared the mouth (mahawwil) of the Nahr Khalas.⁸

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- (1) Eclipse II, p.9
 - (2) Suli, p.106. and p.225
 - (3) Suli, p.278
 - (4) Eclipse II, p.96, note 1
 - (5) Suli, pp.137-8
 - (6) Eclipse II, p.106, note
 - (7) Ibid., p.165 and p.161, note 1
 - (8) Ibid., p.161 note

"Both the Nehrawanah and Badurya (districts) had been out of cultivation. When he (i.e. Mu'izz) had repaired the breaches, Baghdad became prosperous, fine bread being sold at 20 ratls a dirham."

Mu'izz al-Dawla also tried to revive the ravaged estates in the Sawad and commissioned in 334 Abu'l Faraj b. Abi Hisham with the execution of this plan.² Meanwhile he considered the question of the date of Kharaj collection. In 351/362 his wazir Muhallabi transferred the Kharaj year 350 to 351, to suit the harvest.³

Mu'izz al-Dawla's solicitude for irrigation was counter-balanced by his disastrous land policy, to which he was forced by the problem of the maintenance of his forces and the bankruptcy of the treasury. Ibn Miskawayh gives a valuable and detailed account of his measures with regard to land. In 334 A.H. "he assigned to his officers, his household and his Turks as fiefs the estates of the Sultan, the estates of the persons who had gone into hiding...and the rights of the treasury on the estates of the civilians."⁴ He also "allocated most of the districts of the Sawad in fiefs while they were out of cultivation"

(1) Eclipse II, p.165

(2) Ibid. II, p.88

(3) Ibid. II, p.189. According to Sabi (Abu Ishaq) the method followed by Muhallabi was to count 33 lunar years as 32 solar years. See the decree in Sabi's letters I, pp.209-16.

(4) Ibid. II, p.96. The rights of the treasury refer to the taxes and dues.

Through mediation and bribes to wazirs, fiefs were assigned at variable rates. "As the soldiers were only interested in their personal gain, they returned the fiefs which were not profitable." The evil increased till it became the practice for the soldiers to ruin their fiefs and take others of their own selection in exchange... The fiefs which were given back were bestowed on persons whose sole aim it was to appropriate all that they found there, and render an account only of part. They would take no step to put them into cultivation." Furthermore "the assignees did not more than put their lands under the control of their slaves and wakils (bailiffs) who devised no improvement nor methods of increasing the produce."¹

As a result of this policy "the officers of irrigation departed because the territory was no longer in the hands of the Sultan, and the business connected therewith was confined to the drawing up of estimates of what was required for irrigation, which was then portioned to the assignees who however neglected the payment of their dues."² Consequently, "the canals went to ruin, the irrigation works (masalih) got out of order, misfortune fell on the cultivators," some of whom "were content to surrender their lands to the assignee in order to escape injury from them and satisfy them. Thus, cultivation was at a standstill."³

On the other hand, the lands which were not included in fiefs, were assigned to farmers, both military and civil. These farmers

(1) Eclipse V, pp.101-2

(2) Ibid.V, p.102

(3) Ibid.V, pp.101-2; see I.A. VIII, pp.342-3

evaded official intervention; the government made no inquiry into the maltreatment of the subject population, or whether there were precautions against putting land out of cultivation.¹ Thus all over the Sawad, the development of cultivation was neglected and the cultivator was abandoned to the rapacious tax-farmers or fief holders.

To sum up, Mu'izz al-Dawla desired the improvement of the irrigation system, and the revival of neglected lands. On the other hand this policy was intended to create military cantonments by attaching Buwaihid soldiers to the soil. The result was ruin to the irrigation system and the agriculture, because of the failure of the central authority to control the army. The central authority could not assert itself till 369/979 by the advent of Adud al-Dawla.

Before dealing with this prince's policy we have to consider the Hamdanid policy in the Jazira.

In the period between 317-68/929-78 the Hamdanid followed in the Jazira and especially in Mosul, Misibin and Balad a policy intended to mobilize all the material resources of the country for the benefit of the ruler. This tendency may have been dictated by the geographical position of the Hamdanids, ensconced as they were between the Byzantines in the north-west and the unfriendly government of Baghdad in the south-east.

(1) Eclipse V. pp.103-4

Nasir al-Dawla's agrarian policy was twofold, first he strove to be "the owner as well as lord of the region."¹ He was harsh and exacting with cultivators, and brought "fictitious claims against them so as to compel them to sell"; he would then purchase their lands at very low prices. Some landowners tried to escape his oppression by emigrating; but he confiscated their lands. Consequently, by 367/977, the lands of Mosul and most of its dependencies were owned by the Hamdanids.²

Secondly, Nasir took steps to get the utmost profit out of his lands, by introducing more rentable crops. Instead of fruit gardens, he cultivated cotton, rice, sesame and wheat.³ Where he left the original cultivators on the land, he took to himself practically three fifths of the produce. This policy was followed by Nasir's successors, and according to Ibn Hawkal,⁴ brought the farmers to the brink of ruin.⁵

Consequently, in the periods of 334-368/945-78, the interests of the cultivators were ignored; the state was absorbed in satisfying its financial needs, no matter by what means. Dams and canals were neglected;⁶ floods and the drying up of some

(1) Eclipse II, p.384

(2) I-H., p.142, p.143, p.220; Suli p.131; Eclipse II, p.384

(3) I-H., p.142

(4) I-H., p.142

(5) Suli says that (in 327/938) the lands around Mosul became prosperous because of the good care of Ibn Hamdan, that were they transferred to others, they would be ruined, p.131

(6) See Eclipse II, p.406; Dhal.folio 18b; A-Shiya' pp.68-9.

canals brought about the ruin of some parts of the Sawad.¹

In 367/977 'Adud al-Dawla established himself in 'Irak. In the subsequent period (367-72/977-82) the government displayed not only good will, but also such qualities as were unknown since the time of Mu'izz al-Dawla. It restored its authority in the country; it had a better understanding of the country's needs, and the experience necessary to make its reforms practical.

Adud al-Dawla started his agricultural reconstruction in 369/979. His chief aims were to put the irrigation system in order and to improve the system of taxation. In Baghdad many canals that irrigated the town and its countryside - like N. 'Issa, N. al-Dajaj, N. Masjid al-Anbariyyin, N. al-Qallayin, N. Tebiq, N. al-Bazzazin - had got silted up; and Adud had them cleared again.² Of special importance was the repair of a breach in the Nahrwan canal near Baghdad, called the Sahliyya Breach.³ He also restored the canals that fell into ruin in the Sawad area and rebuilt many sluices and weirs. Clay, lime, and cement were provided and the inhabitants were pressed to repair and maintain the existing works. Watchmen were posted to guard them by day and night.⁴

(1) See esp. Eclipse II, pp.405-6; I.A.VIII, p.510

(2) Eclipse II, p.406; Dhah. folio 18b

(3) A-Shuja', p.69

(4) Eclipse II, pp.406-7; I.A.VIII, p.518; A-Shuja, p.69

Finally, he enlarged the Nahr Bayan, which joined the Blind Tigris and the Dujail of Ahwas.¹

A regular system of taxation was put into force; and the commencement of the collection of the Kharaġ was delayed to coincide with the ripening of the crops.² Adud al-Dawla encouraged cultivators to submit their grievances and set right their claims even against military fief holders.³

This period of peace and comparative prosperity was short lived. Immediately after Adud al-Dawla's death, struggles broke out and went among the princess of the family; no one had either time or capacity to carry on the efficient policy of their great predecessor. Yaqut reports that in 385/995 Fakhr al-Mulk repaired a breach in the Nahrawan.⁴ In 395/1004 Abu'l -'Abbas b. Wasil dug a canal between Basra and Ahwas, parallel to the Bayan canal.⁵ For the rest, only portents of desolation and impoverishment appear in the sources; and the last ten years of the 4th century witnessed two devastating floods.⁶

We may now sum up the general results of our survey. Throughout the century the efficient rulers and farsighted ministers

- (1) Dhahabi folio 60a refers to it as al-Nahr al-Adudi. Maqdisi believes that Adud al-Dawla himself cut this canal, p.419; see also J.R.A.S. (1895), p.307 and pp.308-9.
- (2) Eclipse II, p.407
- (3) Ibid.; A-Shuja' pp.47-50
- (4) Yaqut, Diet. I, p.239
- (5) Dhahabi, folio 60a; I-A. IX, p.130
- (6) See Sabi, p.444; I.A. IX, p.159

tried to keep the irrigated system in order. They endeavoured to help poor cultivators by advances in cash or in kind. They tried to set up the system of taxation on a more equitable basis, and quite particularly insisted on the collection being postponed till the harvest time. During the Buwaihid period, efficient rulers did their best to protect the cultivators from the ruthless soldiery.

Down to the advent of the Buwaihids, the prevalent type of land tenure was personal estates and not iqta'; and the dominant type of iqta' was the civil iqta'. After the Buwaihid invasion, the system of iqta' was militarized; and military fiefs swamped the existing forms of tenure.

III. The Agricultural System

a).

Village life was little affected by the progress noticeable in towns.¹ There was no change in the composition of the peasantry and in the agricultural methods. The natives of the Sawads were mainly Nabateans who became muslims, and spoke broken Arabic, but stuck to their pre-Islamic traditions.² Some bedouin Arabs settled among them, thus becoming Sawadis,³ but the peasants of the Sawad continued to be called Nabateans.⁴

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- (1) Zaydan II, p.179
 (2) Tan.VIII, p.100; Maq., p.108
 (3) Eclipse II, p.160, note 1
 (4) Ibid.II, pp.409-10

When the Arabs conquered Irak, they left the organization of villages unchanged. Each village usually had a master called dihkan; and the inhabitants worked for him. Gradually, new Arab lords appeared beside the dihkans, whose position was reduced to that of tax-collectors.¹ As a fee for this work, the dihkans levied on cultivators a special surtax (called Hakk al-Dahkana) which occasionally led to much abuse.²

In the 10th century, the dihkans played the role of notables,³ and were usually consulted on problems concerning irrigation on lands.⁴ The peasants were called akara, or fallahin.⁵

With a few exceptions, landlords lived in towns and were represented in villages by agents.⁶ Landlords were sometimes expected to attract peasants to their land and to supply them with seeds and subventions.⁷ There is, unfortunately, no information available on the share of the peasants in the produce.⁸ We shall say more on their situation in the third chapter.

(1) Khatib (Cairo ed.) I, pp.12-3

(2) Tan. P.I, p.55

(3) Zaydan II, pp.182-3; Sabi, pp.256-7; Ya'qubi, p.275

(4) Sabi, pp.256-7

(5) Tan.I, p.4; R.A.A.II, pp.290-1

(6) Sabi, p.216; Dhah. Folio 1^b (year 362 A.H.)

(7) Cf. Qalqashandi XIII, p.123 ff.; p.139 ff.

(8) According to Sabi, Ibn al-Furat wrote to his agent on an estate: "Increase the crop of Muqasama because it is for us more than for the peasant; be moderate with winter crops because it is for us and the peasant equally; and lessen the summer crop because it is more for the peasants benefit than to ours." p.216.

b. The methods of cultivation

The system of rotation was in vogue; one half of the land was cultivated and the other was left fallow.¹ The land was ploughed with primitive ploughs, pulled by oxen.² "Oxen are indispensable for the peasant" wrote Dimashqi.³ Peasants worked with shovels and spades, and used sickles for reaping.⁴

Manure played an important part in agriculture.⁵ Jahiz declared: "No kind of vegetables and greens grows well without dung and fertilizers."⁶ In his manual on husbandry, Ibn Wahshiyya suggests that the best method for manuring trees was to put the manure near their roots and then to water them.⁷ Ashes, human offal, as well as cows' and sheep's dung were in use; the latter was sold by the hamper.⁸

According to Ibn Wahshiyya, palm trees were planted either from offsets or from stones; the season from March to June being the most favourable.⁹ Impregnation was applied to them by specialized farmers.¹⁰ Fruit trees were cultivated from seeds or shoots, and to quicken their growth, Ibn Wahshiyya suggested

- (1) Hawardī, p.167
- (2) Jahiz, *Dala'il*, p.28; *I-Khwan al-Safa I*, p.217
- (3) Dimashqi, p.38
- (4) *Tha'ahibi:Khase*, p.118; *Yaqut, Dict.I*, p.85; *Ikhwan al-Safa I*, p.217
- (5) Ibn Wahshiyya, folio 72b
- (6) Jahiz: *Dala'il*, p.25
- (7) Ibn Wahshiyya, folio 5a; *Yaqut V*, p.306 confirms him.
- (8) *Yaqut, Dict.V*, p.306; Ibn Wahshiyya folios 9a off; 60 a-b.
- (9) *I. Wahshiyya*, folio 45b.
- (10) *Ibid.*, folios 47b - 48a.

dipping the seeds or the ends of the shoots in oil.¹

As an example of advanced methods in artificial growing, we can quote Tha'shibi's story of Nasir al-Dawla's daughter who went (in 366/976) on pilgrimage and took with her, on camels, pottery vases in which vegetables were grown.²

Peasants had no means to combat locusts and diseases, threatening their crops. Locusts were the major plague. They did much damage to crops in 311,³ 346,⁴ 348,⁵ 351,⁶ 393,⁷ and 401 A.H.⁸ The farmer were in a helpless state and only in 409/1018, we hear that they "drove locusts away from the crops with drums and horns."⁹ We can not say whether they tried the other, more practical method, tried out in Spain, of killing the locusts before they could fly.¹⁰

Worms were not so dangerous. In 334 A.H. they threatened the gardens and plantations, but a special kind of bird destroyed them and saved the crops.¹¹ Though Ibn Wahshiyya suggests certain remedies for tree diseases, it is doubtful whether any were effectively used.

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- (1) I. Wahshiyya, folio 5b
 - (2) Tha'shibi-Lataif, p.55
 - (3) I.A. VIII, p.106
 - (4) B-Heb., p.165
 - (5) ICA.VIII, pp.393-4
 - (6) B-Heb., p.167
 - (7) Ibid., p.183
 - (8) Ibid., p.185
 - (9) Ibid., p.185
 - (10) 'Arif b.Seid (Dozy), p.41
 - (11) I.-Jawzi XII, folio 21b.

Instead of scarecrows children were usually employed to keep birds away from the fields.¹

c. Methods of Irrigation

The government supervised the distribution of water and was primarily responsible for the construction and maintenance of canals, weirs, sluices and dams. To this effect it employed a large number of engineers.²

Cultivations were irrigated either directly or by machines. The water-machines which were widely used were the Daliya, the Na'ura and the Dulab. The Daliya was a water-wheel turned by an ox or a cow; the Na'ura was a water-wheel turned by a river;³ and the Dulab was a more complicated water-wheel drawn by a horse or an ox.⁴

Na'uras were used in the Nahrwan area,⁵ and in Western Baghdad.⁶ Dulabs were found in Western Baghdad to irrigate gardens,⁷ and in the area between Baghdad and Anbar where some were drawn by camels.⁸ The plantations of Harran were irrigated from wells,⁹ probably by Zurrugs which were simple draw-wells.¹⁰

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- (1) De Goeje, Memoirs, p.29
 (2) See Sabi, pp.256-7
 (3) Lane, Dict. B.I, pt.3, p.904
 (4) Ibid., p.902. See also Nuwairi I, p.288 and p.289; Khawarizimi, pp.70-1
 (5) I. Rusta, p.163
 (6) I. Jawzi, Tabi'a, p.204
 (7) I. Jawzi, Manaqib, p.27; Tha'shibi, Yetima II, p.12
 (8) Tan.VIII, p.139
 (9) Maq., p.141
 (10) Mez, p.451.

Natural irrigation was the dominant type in many parts of Mesopotamia. 'Adud al-Dawla opened small canals from the Khalis canal to water his gardens in Eastern Baghdad.¹ On the mouths of many canals in the Sawad, weirs were built in order to raise the level of water in the small sub-canals so as to facilitate direct irrigation. Such weirs were usually built of plaster, tar and bricks.²

In the Batiha region (the swamps), the water was shallow and convenient for rice cultivation.³ Dams of mud and reeds were built to reclaim new lands, or to stop the rising water from drowning its fields.⁴

The Basra region had a unique system of irrigation. Its net of canals received the tidal water from the sea twice in 24 hours, and automatically irrigated the gardens and fields around.⁵

Irrigation from springs was practised in the Jazira. Ra's al-'Ain had 360 springs of sweet water to irrigate its gardens.⁶ The fields and gardens of Nisibin received water from a spring situated in the neighbouring hills.⁷

Rain was very important in the agriculture of the Jazira; its season was between October and April.⁸ According to Jahiz,

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- (1) Khatib, p.59
 - (2) Eclipse II, p.407
 - (3) Maq., p.119
 - (4) Eclipse II, p.297
 - (5) Maq., p.125; Ist., p.81
 - (6) Maq., p.140
 - (7) Ist., pp.72-3
 - (8) I.A. VIII, p.282.

extensive fields on the plateaus (barari) and mountain slopes were dependent on rain, and produced abundant crops.¹ Nisibin had vast fields, watered by rain². Rain was so important that its delay in 329/940 and 377/987 resulted both times in a scarcity.³

d. Extent of the Cultivated Area

In the south, agriculture was confined to the areas stretching along the rivers and canals, and in the north, to water courses or places where rain was sufficient. Its intensity depended on the abundance of water and the facilities for using it. Therefore, the areas most intensely cultivated were those around Basra, and those between the Tigris, and the Euphrates south of Baghdad;⁴ cultivation decreased as one approached the desert.⁵

In the south, the palm groves of Basra extended from 'Abdasi to 'Abbadan, for a distance over 50 farsakhs.⁶ The gardens of the four farsakh long Ubulla canal were so extensive and beautiful that the region was considered as one of the four earthly paradises.⁷ The Ma'qil canal too had extensive gardens and fields on its banks.⁸ However, the fertile zone around Basra was narrow, for in the west

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- (1) Jahiz-Dala'il, p.17
 (2) Ist., pp.72-3
 (3) I.A. VIII, p.282; IX, p.39
 (4) Ist., p.80, p.85; I.H., p.243
 (5) Ist., p.82; I.H., p.239
 (6) Ist., p.81; I.H., p.236
 (7) Maq., p.53; Ist., p.81; N-Kh., p.235, 243 ff.
 (8) I.H., p.237.

the desert nearly reached the end of the Ubulla canal.¹

North of the Basra region, was the Batiha region, where cultivation was limited to very shallow or dry spots in the marshes. The abundance of water and the hot climate made it an ideal place for rice cultivation.² Some of the plantations of the Batiha region bordered on the countryside of Wasit, which had wide groves of date-palms, countless orchards and extensive fields.³ Ibn Jubair relates that the eastern bank of the Euphrates near Kufa was densely covered with groves.⁴ West of the Euphrates, plantations and palm groves extended down to Hira and Qadisiyya, on the edge of the desert.⁵

According to Istakhri the lands between Baghdad in the north, Kufa in the south, the Tigris in the east, and the Euphrates in the west were so thickly cultivated that it was difficult to distinguish between the separate plantations.⁶ Here stood prosperous towns and villages, of which Qasr b. Hubaira was the most important.⁷

In the countryside of Baghdad, Baduriya was the most important and best cultivated district. Here special estates were assigned to distinguished generals; wazirs and princes.⁸ It had the combined

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- (1) N.-Kh., p.235
 (2) Maq., p.119; cf. Ikhwan al-Safa II, p.137
 (3) Maq., pp.118-9; Ist., p.82
 (4) i. Jubair, pp.212-3
 (5) Ist., p.82; I.H., p.239
 (6) Ist., p.85; I.H., p.243
 (7) I.H., p.243
 (8) Tan.VIII, pp.16-17; Sabi, p.76.

advantages of fertility, good irrigation and nearness of the capital. West of Badurya, along the Euphrates, lay al-Anbar, whose name meaning "a granary" was suggestive of its fertility, although its agriculture declined in the 10th century.¹ To the east of the I Nahrwan, on the way to Daskara, cultivation decreased. Beyond Daskara, down to the Hulwan, the land was desolate² but Hulwan itself was surrounded by orchards.

There was a green belt, a few miles wide, along the eastern bank of the Tigris, between Tikrit in the north, and Wasit in the south. East of it extended grazing grounds. The area between Tikrit and Anbar was desolate, with the exception of the river banks.³

In Jazira, agriculture prospered on the two rivers and their tributaries. The region of Khabur was intensely cultivated, both around the town and along the banks of its namesake river.⁴ The orchards and fields of Ra's al-'ain spread over an area some twenty farsakhs long.⁵ Nearly all towns in the Jazira were surrounded by large plantations.⁶

Naturally, agriculture directly depended on political stability, and Ibn Hawkal laments the ruin of some areas in the Jazira, especially near the Byzantine frontier, owing to continuous wars and frontier raids.⁷

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- (1) I.H., p.227
 (2) Maq., p.123
 (3) Ist., p.85; 88; Maq., p.122; I.H., pp.246-7
 (4) Maq., p.141; Ist., p.74
 (5) I.H., p.222; Maq., p.140
 (6) Maq., p.139; p.141; I.H., p.223
 (7) I.H., p.230, p.223.

e. Crops and their distribution

Wheat, barley, dates, and rice were the most important agricultural products of the country. Other kinds of cereals and fruits were produced, but they held a secondary position in agricultural products.

Throughout Mesopotamia, the Basra region was the greatest centre of palm tree cultivation; and produced varieties of dates, that had no equal anywhere else. To Ibn Wahshiyya's remark concerning the innumerable kinds of dates in Irak,¹ Jahiz adds that his native town Basra was responsible for three hundred of them.² Palm trees were cultivated in the Sawad and extended westwards as far as Qadisiyya,³ and westwards up to Anbar and Hit.⁴ The fresh dates of Irak had a great celebrity.⁵ In the Jazira, there were no palm groves except in the neighbourhood of Sirjar.⁶

Wheat and barley were widely cultivated all over Mesopotamia. From Ibn Khunedhbih and Qaduma's lists, it seems that wheat and barley were cultivated in every district in the Sawad, except the Batiha, and that the Kharaj of the Sawad was paid mainly in wheat

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- (1) I. Wahshiyya, folio 45a
 (2) I.F., p.253
 (3) Ist., p.83; I.H., p.240
 (4) Ist., p.73
 (5) Nuwairi I. pp.369-71; Tha'ahibi-1st, p.132+ Msq., p.118

and barley.¹ Quduma states that 177,200 'Kurr'² of wheat, and 99,722 Kurr of barley were paid by the cultivators in the Sawad, by way of Kharaj.³ The district of Wasit was a great centre for barley.⁴ In the Jazira especially around Mosul the cultivation of wheat and barley was extensive too.⁵ It was the granary of Irak, and especially of Baghdad in times of need.⁶

In 322/934 the farmer of taxes of the Wasit district promised to pay 10,000 kurr of rice as part of the government due.⁷ Tanukhi refers to rice fields in the lowlands and marshes near Kufa, on the lower canals of the Euphrates such as the Sura, the Great Sarat, the Nil and even in the region of Jabbul on the Tigris. He estimated the government's share of the rice produced around Saibain, Qussin, and Jabbul at about 3,000 kurrs.⁸ Rice was also cultivated in the Batiha region;⁹ but it does not seem to have been a staple produce of any place in the Jazira.

In "Ibn Khundadhbih's list", the following districts in the Sawad paid a part of this Kharaj in rice:-

- (1) Sura and Barbisama, i.e. the lands to the south and south-west of the Kutha canal.
- (2) Furat Badakla (?)
- (3) Nistar

(1) I. Khurdadhbih, pp. 8-14; Qud., pp. 237-9
 (2) One Kurr Musaddal = approx. 330 kilograms
 (3) Kud., p. 239
 (4) Eclipse I, p. 294
 (5) Maq., p. 145; I.H., p. 218
 (6) Maq., p. 136
 (7) Eclipse I, p. 294
 (8) Tan. VIII, p. 67
 (9) Maq., p. 119; Ikh-Safa Vol. II, p. 137.

(4) Kaskar, extending east of the Tigris from the present Kut al-Amara, to its juncture with the Euphrates. The term is sometimes used as an equivalent of Maisan.¹

References to the cultivation of other cereals are scanty. Sesame grew in Mesopotamia, and Maqdisi refers to Tikrit as the home of its cultivation.² The fact that in 322 A.H., a farmer of taxes of Wasit promised to pay 400 kurr of sesame annually³ also indicates that sesame was cultivated in the Sawad. Millet, lentils, and maize were also grown.⁴

Fruit trees were found everywhere. Among the fruit grapes held a prominent position. 'Umar I found it necessary to specify the amount of Kharaaj levied on vines, owing to their abundance.⁵ There were different kinds of them:⁶ the "raziqita" grapes were introduced by the Arabs from Ta'if.⁷ Certain famous kinds were associated with particular localities, such as 'Ukbura, Dair al-'Akul, Ma'lathaya, Seruj, Hulwan,⁸ and Baghdad.⁹

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- (1) I. Khurdadhbih, pp. 8-14
 (2) Maq., p. 123
 (3) Eclipse I, p. 294
 (4) I. Khurdadhbih, p. 14; Jahiz-Dala'il, p. 19; Ikhwan al-Safa II, p. 138
 (5) Mawardi, p. 168
 (6) I.F., p. 125
 (7) Mez. p. 432
 (8) Maq., pp. 122, 125, 123; I.H., p. 230
 (9) Nuweir I, p. 371; Tha'shibi-lat, p. 133.

The orange and lemon trees appeared in Mesopotamia only in the 10th century. According to Masudi, they were brought some time after 300/912, from India to Oman, and thence imported to Basra and Irak.¹ Qahir loved orange trees and had them planted in his palace garden.² Basra was famous for its good oranges and citrons,³ yet it seems that lemons, and oranges were still rare in the 10th century.⁴

The pomegranates of Sinjar were much appreciated.⁵ Peaches were cultivated in Basra.⁶ Rahba and Sinjar were famous for their olives.⁷ An excellent kind of quince was produced in Rahba.⁸ The figs of Hulwan were proverbial.⁹ Melons and watermelons were favourite fruits; the fruit market was simply known as the "melon-house".¹⁰ Prunes, apricots, almonds, pistachio, sumach, chestnuts, also grew in Mesopotamia.¹¹

Cotton was an important product especially in the Khabur region. 'Araban exported cotton to Mosul and other parts of Mesopotamia.¹² Other important centres of cotton cultivation were

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- (1) Mas'udi II, p.438
 - (2) Ibid. VIII, p.366
 - (3) Maq., p.145; Nuwairi I, p.371; Tha'ahibi-Yatima II, pp.130-1
 - (4) Mez, pp.432-3
 - (5) I.H., pp.220-1; Tha'ahibi-lataf, p.133
 - (6) Jahiz-Bukh., p.201
 - (7) Maq., p.141; I.H., p.220-1
 - (8) Maq., p.145
 - (9) Ibid., p.123; Nuwairi I, p.371; Tha'ahibi-lat, p.133
 - (10) Eclipse III, p.51; Jahiz-Dalail, p.23; Mez, p.433
 - (11) Ikhwan-al-Safa II, pp.140-1; I.H., p.227; pp.230-1.
 - (12) Ist., p.74; I.H., p.222.

Majdal, Ra's al-'Ain¹ and Harran in Jazira, and Basra in the Sawad.² Thus cotton was cultivated in 'Irak and in Jazira.

Sugar-cane grew around Basra and in Sinjar,³ and possibly in the Batiha.⁴ According to Tha'alibi sugar-cane was plentiful in 'Irak.⁵

Ma'alathaya exported hemp. Lucerne (qath) was grown especially in Qodisiyya, being used to feed the camels and the mounts of pilgrims.⁶

Among the vegetables and greens grown in Mesopotamia we hear of marrows, cucumber,⁷ French beans,⁸ peas,⁹ carrots, subergine, cauliflower, turnips,¹⁰ and radishes.¹¹

Finally different kinds of flowers like narcissus, jasmies, sweet basil and violets were cultivated.¹²

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- (1) Ist., p.74
 (2) Maq., p.118; p.141
 (3) Mawardi, p.168; Tha'alibi-yat II, pp.130-1; Baihaqi, p.623; Maq., p.145
 (4) See I-Khwan-Safa, Vol.II, p.137
 (5) Tha'alibilat., p.107
 (6) I.H., p.240
 (7) Jahiz-Dala'il, p.23
 (8) I. Jawzi, Talbis, p.221; Tha'alibi-yat II, p.140
 (9) Jahiz-Dal., p.19
 (10) Okhwan-safa II, p.138
 (11) Jahiz-Buk., p.241
 (12) Abul-Qasim, p.89; Ya'qubi, p.264; Muwairi,I, p.371.

CHAPTER III

INDUSTRY

Synopsis.

I. Labour

a) Categories of Labourer:

- 1) Free Labourers - in towns; on land.
- ii) Slaves -
 - 1) Methods of acquiring slaves
 - 2) Fields of servile labour: domestic occupations; bodyguards and soldiers; on land. The position of the Qinns.

b) Labour Movement:

- 1) The causes: the rise of a capitalist class; concentration of labour; the new propaganda.
- ii) Early manifestations of a labour movement in the 9th century.
- iii) Labour movement in the 10th century
 - 1) The significance of the Zanj rebellion (869-83 A.D.)
 - 2) The Karmatium movement: the classes appealed to the principles preached; Hamdan's practical communism; the end of the movement in Irak.

3) Ikhwan al-Safa and their propaganda.

4) Conclusion.

c) Labour Organisations:

- i) "Esprit du corps" among labourers
- ii) Corporate life of craftsmen
- iii) Hierarchical organisation of craftsmen: the first signs; the 'ayyars and shuttars, their organisation as pioneers of the futuwwa movement
- iv) Official attitude to craftsmen.

II. Handicrafts and Industries

a) Ikhwan al-Safa's classifications of craftsmen:

- i) Order of usefulness
- ii) Kind of material used
- iii) Value of their products
- iv) Types of instruments used

b) Industries

- i) Weaving: textiles; carpets; the tiraz; tents; mats
- ii) Dying
- iii) Pottery: unglazed and glazed pottery
- iv) Glass
- v) Goldsmithery
- vi) Metal works
- vii) Carpentry
- viii) Soap, oils and scents
- ix) Tanning and leather industry
- x) Other products.

I. Labour

There were two principal categories of labourers in Mesopotamia: free labourers and slaves.

Free labourers lived either in towns or on land. In towns, they constituted the bulk of craftsmen. In practice very near to them stood the small shop-keepers and traders such as grocers, oil sellers, butchers, etc. As a class, all these people were generally called the "'amma", i.e. the commoners. No distinction was made between their ethnic origins, although a great part of them were non-Arab muslims or 'Mawali'.¹ The 'Amma' class of the metropolis was particularly motley, as it was composed of Persians, Turks, Negroes, Dailamites, Rums (Greek), Nabateans, Armenians, Georgians, Circassians, Slavs, Kurds, Berbers and Arabs; the common link being the Arabic language which they spoke.²

The peasants established on land were free in theory, but not always in practice.³ They constituted a large section of the population and spoke Aramaic beside Arabic.⁴

Socially, the craftsmen belonged to the lowest grade of free citizens.⁵ Economically, they earned their bare

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- (1) Massignon-Enquête, p.42.
 - (2) Zaydan, V, p.45.
 - (3) Cf. Eclipse, II, p.97; I-Taifur, p.73.
 - (4) Zaydan V, pp.44-5; E.I art. Nabateans.
 - (5) Dimashqi, p.43.

subsistence; a craftsman's earnings "fell short of helping him to buy an estate or to live in comfort."¹ The peasants of the Sawad were very poor,² and were considered to be "without tongue or intelligence."³

The second and still lower category of labourers consisted of slaves. It was recruited in the following ways:

a) By war. In conquering a territory, the Muslims were free to enslave its inhabitants.⁴ Besides, one of the four alternatives open to the imam in dealing with prisoners of war was to enslave them.⁵ In the 10th century the expansion of Islam was very much narrowed, and conquest as the source of slavery was practically in abeyance.⁶

b) Some governors sent slaves as a part of the revenue. For example, some Berbers were wont to give their children in lieu of the poll-tax.⁷ 'Abdullah b. Tahir, the governor of Khurasan (828-44 A.D.) used to send the Caliph 2000 Ghuzz slaves annually.⁸

c) Slaves were purchased, and this was the principal mode

(1) Dimashqi, p.43.

(2) See relative part in Ch. "Standard of living."

(3) Maqdisi, p.119.

(4) Zaydan IV, p.42.

(5) Ibid., p.43; Mez, p.166. The other alternatives were: (1) execution; (2) indemnity; (3) release.

(6) After Nu'tasim's battle of Amorium, the slaves were sold by five or six because of their large number.

(7) Zaydan IV, p.43.

(8) I. Khurdadbeh, p.39.

of acquisition. There existed an extensive trade in slaves and almost all the important towns had their own slave markets.¹ Some merchants organised special raids to obtain slaves.²

Slaves of both sexes were either black or white. Black slaves were brought from Abyssinia, and the Sudan, via Egypt,³ or from the Zanzibar by sea.⁴ H-'A describes the Sudan (i.e. the territory between the Atlantic and the Nile) as "the country from which eunuchs came.. The merchants steal their (the native's) children...castrate them, import them into Egypt and sell them."⁵

White slaves included Greeks, Georgians, and Armenians, but were mainly Slavs and Turks.⁶ Turks, especially Khazars, and some Slavs were imported via Khwarazm. Samarkand was the great market and training centre for them.⁷ One of the articles of export from Bulghar, the capital of the Volga Bulgarians, was slaves who were taken to Khwarazm and the Oxus.⁸ Expensive white slaves, valued up to 5,000 dinars per head, came from Khurasan.⁹ European slaves, mostly natives of Eastern Europe, were usually brought via Germany to Spain and thence to

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- (1) Baihaqi, p.616; Sabi letters, vol.I no. I and III; Yaqubi (p.260) describes the slave-market of Samarra built in the 9th century: "it was of a quadrangle intersected with alleys; with houses, rooms and shops for slaves."
 (2) H-'A, p.165; E.I. art. Sanj
 (3) Zaydan V, p.39; H-'A, p.169; Mez, p.157; Noldeke sketches, p.169.
 (4) Karwazi, p.54.
 (5) H-'A, p.169.
 (6) Zaydan V, p.39; I.H., p.482; Mez, p.158-9.
 (7) Zaydan V, p.39; I.H., p.482; 494.
 (8) Mez, p.159.
 (9) Zaydan V, p.139.

the Mediterranean harbours.¹

d) Children of a female slave were considered slaves if: (1) their father was a slave, (2) if he was not the owner of the mother, (3) and finally if he was the owner of the mother but did not acknowledge himself to be the father.²

Broadly speaking, slaves were employed in the following occupations:

- 1) After a certain training, they were employed in household services. Some were cooks, store-keepers, porters, boatmen, house-trainers, and even keepers of private libraries.³ Eunuchs looked after the females and served them.⁴
- 2) Many were employed in such occupations as singing, reciting poetry, memorizing and reciting the Quran and the Hadith (tradition).⁵ As the society was highly appreciative of music and poetry, artistically gifted slaves were in great demand. Thus slave-merchants made great profits by training slaves in music and poetry.⁶ Most of the professional singers in Baghdad in 306/918 were slaves.⁷
- 3) A large number of slaves were used as bodyguards or trained for the army. Muktudir had 11,000 slaves in his

(1) Ibid., Mez, p.159

(2) See Mez, add. note p.166.

(3) Baihaqi, p.613; Zaydan, selections II, p.104; Mez, p.165; Abu'l-Qasim, p.101.

(4) Baihaqi, p.609.

(5) See Zaydan IV, p.44.

(6) Aghani XII, p.43.

(7) Abu'l-Qasim, p.87; Cf. Zaydan, pp.33-8.

palace,¹ and whole regiments of slaves existed in the army.²

- 4) Slaves employed on land were of two types: first there were some real slaves possessing no rights, such as the negroes employed in the salt marshes around Basra.³ *Rabiat al-Ra'y* refers to slaves employed as land labourers, and treated like cattle.⁴ Many slaves were employed as shepherds.⁵

The Aqnan formed another category. They were slaves attached to the soil and living in villages. By their pre-Islamic origins, they were free peasants of local Nabatean stock, but their only capital was their labour. When the ownership of the land on which they worked was transferred by conquest or sale, they remained on the land. The new masters considered them as a part of the inventory, and treated them as slaves. In theory, Islam freed such proletarians, but in practice, some of the peasants of the Sawad remained slaves.⁶ The Zutt whom Hajjaj brought into the Sawad for agricultural

(1) Khatib, p.51.

(2) Sabi, p.11 ff. He mentions a regiment of blacks formed by Muwaffak and a regiment of slaves formed by Mu'tadid (p.12).

(3) Tabari III, p.1742.

(4) *Rabiat al Ra'y*, p.17.

(5) Baihaqi, p.613.

(6) Abu'l-qasim, p.106, speaks of "the Nabateans of villages and its slaves." Sharik, a jurist, said "The peasants (lit. natives) of the Sawad are slaves." Tabari, *Ikhtilaf*, p.222.

purposes, are probably to be placed in this category.¹ The 'Aqnan' and their descendants could not be sold or freed, but remained attached to the soil.²

Islam preached kindness to slaves,³ but naturally cases of maltreatment were frequent. Slaves often fled from their owners, and royal decrees stress the importance of returning runaways to their masters.⁴

The wide use of slave labour and the poverty and social degradation of craftsmen and labourers were not novel; but the 10th century saw new factors which stirred labourers more than ever before, and shook the Caliphate to its foundations.

First, a capitalist class came into being. It possessed large resources and was encouraged by the extension of the credit system and the establishment of banks.⁵ It drew its members from: a) high officials such as ministers, c-in-ch,⁵ and head secretaries whose salaries had grown higher than ever before⁶, and b) wealthy merchants like Ibn al-Jassas.⁷

Secondly, labour became more concentrated as in the case of

{1} Baladhuri, Origins II, pp.109-110.

{2} Zaydan, selections II, pp.104-5. But Ha'mun is reported to have quoted Umar I saying: "He who has a Nabatean neighbour and needs his price, should sell him." I. Taifur, p.73.

{3} Zaydan IV, p.44; Mez p.166 ff.

{4} Tabari III, p.1750; Baladhuri (Origins II, p.109) blames the runaway slaves of Bahila for inciting the Zutt to rise against Mutasim; Sabi, letters I and III.

{5} See chapter on "Banking".

{6} See chapter on "Standard of Living".

{7} See chapter on "Trade".

the negroes employed in lower Mesopotamia. Agglomerations of craftsmen in towns became more developed.¹ It is contributed to the formation of the feeling of common interest, and labourers became conscious of their strength.

Thirdly, some effective propaganda was carried on in the name of religious justice, but in point of fact laying a new stress on the improvement of material conditions. Such were the ideas behind the leader of the Zanj rising, and behind the Karmatian and "Ikhwan as-Safa" propaganda. These new slogans, added to the already existing germs of discontent among the poor classes and gave consciousness to the latter.

The signs of unrest were apparent since the 9th century. They resulted from the political decline of the state, the rising prices with no corresponding increase in wages, and the system of hoarding food supplies practised by the merchants or the wealthy.² At the beginning of the 9th century, the 'Ayyarun and Shuttar simultaneously appeared in Baghdad. Outwardly, they were corporations of thieves who made it their plan to rob shops, markets, and the houses of the wealthy. The deeper roots of the movement certainly lay in the desire of the downtrodden labourers to take their revenge on the rich. The social importance of the movement is attested by its spread:

(1) See below.

(2) See Zaydan V, p.47.

during the struggle between Amin and Ma'mun, the number of 'Ayyarun rose to 50,000 and they were distinguished by a special dress.¹

Throughout the 10th century, the 'Ayyarun and the Shuttar continued to be the scourge of Baghdad.² In 364/974 they levied taxes on the markets of Baghdad.³ In 380/990 they dominated Baghdad, pillaged its inhabitants and appointed captains in each quarter.⁴ It is significant that a large number of 'Alawids and 'Abbasids were found among the 'Ayyarun who pillaged Baghdad in 392/1001.⁵ These were the nobles reduced by the Buwaihid domination to a secondary social and economic position.⁶

Gangs of ordinary thieves also wandered about the country attacking caravans. Ibn Sayyar, a head of such a gang justified his procedure by saying: "These merchants have not paid the Zakat...and consequently their goods became forfeited... As to the thieves, they are poor and deserve that Zakat whether merchants like it or not."⁷

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- (1) See Zaydan V, pp.46-7; Selection II, p.87; Aghani VI, p.91.
 (2) I.A.VIII, p.12; p.83; p.244; IX pp.145-50; Eclipse has too many references.
 (3) I. Jawzi XII folio 84^a.
 (4) Ibid. folio 105^{a-b}
 (5) Ibid. folio 116^b-117^a.
 (6) Sabi, pp.331-2.
 (7) Tan.F.II, p.106.

Falling on such soil, the seed of the new propaganda produced two major movements: the "zanj rebellion" and the "Karmatian" movement. So far, they have been studied in their political and social aspects. Our task will be to examine their economic background, in which the roots of events lie hidden.

[The Zanj Rebellion, 869-883 A.D.]

Whatever intention the "Leader of the Zanj", said to be an 'Alid, might have had, the motives of his 'Zanj' followers were economic and social. The rebels, African slaves from the Somali coast, were employed by rich entrepreneurs in the salty plains near Basra (Furat al-Basra) to dig away the nitrous crust of the soil so as to render the land cultivable, and at the same time to exploit the saltpeter thus obtained.¹ Among the Africans, there were also some fugitive slaves from the neighbouring villages and towns.²

The number of slaves was considerable. In one place only, near the Dujail canal, there were 15,000 of them.³ They worked in groups of 1,000 - 5,000;⁴ a detail which gives the measure of the concentration of labour.

The slaves had no pay, and worked but for a miserable sub-

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- (1) Tabari III, p.1742; Noldeke-Sketches, p.144.
 (2) Tab. p.1750; Noldeke-Sketches, p.153.
 (3) Tabari, pp.1750-1.
 (4) Massignon, E.I IV, p.1212 (Art.Zanj).

sistence. Their food consisted of flour, dates and a kind of semolina (Sawiq).¹ A promise to improve their material position was therefore a great bait. Their leader (the sayyid) fully grasped the situation after making an inquiry about their "rations of flour, semolina and dates."² No ideal claims would have had any weight with these wretches, the majority of whom were Barbarians unable to understand Arabic.³ The "Sayyid" stressed purely practical issues. In 255/869, he made a speech in which he dwelt on their wretched conditions and added that "God had saved them through him, that he wished to raise their status and put them in possession of slaves, wealth and houses."⁴ Thus the sayyid aimed at a local readjustment of social conditions rather than at a general abolition of slavery. The movement appealed to a definite group of slaves. The 'Sayyid' freed the slaves whenever he could, but meanwhile enslaved muslim captives.⁵ His propaganda among the free people of Basra (in 254/868) attracted neither of its conflicting factions, al-Bihaliyya and al-Sa'diyya.⁶ Not only the entrepreneurs, but

(1) Tabari III, p.1748.

(2) Ibid. III, p.1748.

(3) Ibid. III, p.1751.

(4) Tabari III, p.1750.

(5) Ibid. III, p.1773; p.1776; p.2045.

(6) Tabari, pp.1745-6; p.1777.

even the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, promised large material rewards to captain Ramis (255/869) if he suppressed the movement and restored the slaves to obedience.¹

The slaves wanted but to free themselves and improve their own financial position without enforcing any general system of communism such as the Siyaset-Nameh would suggest.² This lack of a general programme, social and economic, possibly explains the inability of the Karmatian and the Zanj movements to combine their forces, inspite of the initiative taken by the Karmatian leader in Irak.³

[The Karmatian Movement]⁴

The systematic propaganda of the Karmatians in Irak began about 261/874, and it bore the first fruit of political unrest towards 278/891.⁵ The movement slackened after 286/899 when

(1) Ibid. III, p.1759.

(2) S.-N. p.285. "Ses doctrines étaient celles de Mazdak." Mazdak preached: "La richesse...doit être partagée entre les hommes selon leurs besoins, de manière que personne ne soit privée de subsistance et incapable de se procurer de vivres et afin qu'il y'ait égalité dans la situation de chacun." p.248.

(3) Tabari III, p.2130, relates that Hamdan Karmat met the leader of the Zanj in 279/892 and said to him: "I have a cause (madhhab) and my following is 100,000 swords strong. Let us have a conference and if we agree, I shall join you with my followers." But Hamdan found out that they would "never agree".

(4) "Karmatian" is here used in its 'strict' connotation of "rebel federations..organised in Lower Mesopotamia..and based on a system of communism into which initiation was necessary." Massignon E.I, II, p.767.

(5) See De Goeje, Memoirs, p.16, p.31.

its chief da'i (propagandist) Hamdan Karmat disappeared, and his principal lieutenant Abdan was killed, as a result of their rupture with their master Ahmad b. 'Abdallah b. Maimum. The movement was practically liquidated after the military defeat of 295/907,¹ and received its final blow in 316/928.²

Both socially and politically, the movement in Irak was coloured by the local background. The chief organiser was himself an Irakian villager who understood the grievances of his people. The significance of the Karmatian movement will be clear if we consider two questions: first, to which classes it specially appealed, and second, what principles inspired its propaganda.

The Karmatians scored successes:

a) With the uneducated and oppressed peasantry.³ When a Karmatian rising between Kufa and Basra was put down in 289/901, the commanding officer "left the rebels in peace, because they were peasants and labourers."⁴ One of the circumstances which particularly contributed to the spreading of the movement was the desolation in the Sawad of Basra, caused by the Zanj rebellion.⁵

(1) De Sacy, *Exposé*, I, pp. cc-cex.

(2) I.A.VIII, p. 137.

(3) Baghdadi, p. 141.

(4) Tabari III, p. 2206. See also De Sacy, *O.C. I.*, *Introd.* p. clxviii and p. clxxv.

(5) De Goeje, p. 26.

b) With the artisans and common people of the towns ('amma) about whom Ghazali says: "The ignorant 'ammi' thinks that the dogma and its disguise (Talbis)...are but conventions which he can optionally keep or break as befits his interest."¹

The 'ammi's lack of education lessened for him the sacrosanct value of dogmas, it rendered him less resistant to the subtle propaganda of the Karmatians.²

c) With all the tribes of Lower Mesopotamia,³ the property of the Bedouins was proverbial. When a Bedouin said: "singing is the provision of the traveller", the comment recorded by Abu'l-Qasim was: "He says so because he does not know the 'samidhi' bread, nor the roasts of Bab al-Karkh (Baghdad), nor vegetables, nor the Egyptian faludhaj (a kind of pudding)".⁴

Such were the classes chiefly affected by the propaganda though the latter appealed to every and all.⁵ One could not describe it as a Persian movement, meant to restore "the kingdom of the Persians,"⁵ for it had a following among the poor Arabs, whereas the Persian aristocracy sided with the

(1) Ghazali, *streit* p.53.

(2) Cf. Baghdadi, p.141.

(3) De Sacy I, *introd.* p.cixxv; cf. Baghdadi, p.142.

(4) Abu'l-Qasim, p.94.

(5) Baghdadi, pp.141-2.

* The philosopher poet Maarri said: "Why should not the wealthy share their wealth with the poor!", and "If I had of this earth as much as an ant, I would make it common." See Hilal, vol.46, 1938 p.919.

state.¹

Coming to the question of doctrines, the Karmatians, according to Ghazali, "condemned the sultans and the great savants of the time...and taught that the hour of deliverance was nigh".² They posed as champions of that peace and prosperity which the 'Abbasids once promised, but did not realize.³ The first Karmatian missionary to 'Iraq, Husain al-Ahwazi, on his arrival in the Sawad of Kufa in 264/877 thus explained his intentions to Hamdan Karmat: "I have received orders to water this village, to enrich its inhabitants, to deliver them and to put them in possession of the wealth of their masters."⁴ Consequently, material welfare was given primary importance.

The Karmatians went so far as to consider religion responsible for the enslavement of the masses. Abdallah b. al-Hasan al-Qairuwani, in an epistle written to Sulaiman b. al-Hasan b. Saïd al-Jannabi, analyzed the influence of Islam as follows: "Their master (i.e. Muhammad) forbade to them the enjoyment of good things and inspired into their hearts the fear of a Hidden Being who can not be grasped...Thus he soon subjugated them and reduced them to be slaves to himself during his lifetime and to his offspring after his death. Thus he arrogated to himself

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- (1) See Barthold, *Mus. culture*, pp.72-7; 100-102; Lewis, *Isl. Guilds*, E.H.R. 1937, p.22.
 (2) Ghazali, *Streit*, p.10.
 (3) De Goeje, p.24.
 (4) De Sacy I, p.clxviii, taken from Hawairi who reports it on the authority of Akhu Muhsin.

the right to enjoy their wealth for he says: [Qur'an 42:23]
 "I ask you no reward for it except friendliness to my relatives."
 His dealings with them were on a cash basis, but their dealings
 with him were on credit. He required of them an immediate ex-
 change of their lives and property for a future promise which
 would never be realized. Is Paradise aught save this world and
 its enjoyment? or hell and its torture anything but the state to
 which the observers of the law are reduced: namely weariness,
 exertion in prayers, fasting, the holy war and pilgrimage?
 Finally he declared to Sulaiman b. al-Hasan in this epistle:
 'You and your brethren are the heirs who will inherit the
 'Firdaus', and in this world you have acquired its pleasures and
 luxuries which are forbidden to the ignorant, those held in
 check by the precepts of the lawgivers. Congratulations to you
 upon the freedom from their power which you have attained.'²
 The commercial language of the period and the materialist
 attitude to life are distinct throughout the epistle.

The Karartians took the same attitude to other religions,
 since "all those who claimed the spirit of prophecy were
 jugglers, necromancers who aspired to chieftainship over the
 public, and they deceived them with incantations and enslaved

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- (1) According to Lavoix, the famous 'Abbasid da i Abu Husain
 issued dirhams with this verse on them as a declaration of
 the right of the 'Abbasids (p. xlvii). So the reference in
 this epistle is a direct challenge to the legal basis of the
 'Abbasid claim to sovereignty.
- (2) Baghdadi, pp. 281-2; (Halkin) translation II, p. 137.

them with their precepts.¹

In short, prophets and rulers, according to the Karwatians, reduced the masses to social slavery, and material misery, and it was their intention to re-establish social equality and material welfare. Hamdan tried to accomplish this purpose by establishing in the Sawad, communist colonies of his followers. His measures are reported by Nuwairi on the authority of Ibn Rizam.

After converting some Iraki villages to his doctrines, Hamdan imposed on them an ever increasing series of taxes and levies, and finally in 276/889 he "forced on them the ulfa (Union) which consisted in collecting all their property in one place in order to enjoy it in common. The dafs chose in each village a trustworthy man who was to receive all that the inhabitants of the village had by way of cattle, jewelry, furniture, etc. In return, this manager supplied clothes to the naked, and satisfied all the other needs of the people, so that there were no longer any poor people among the sectarians. Everyone worked with diligence and emulation in order to deserve high rank by his contribution to the welfare of the community. The women brought whatever they earned by weaving, and even the children gave the money they earned by frightening birds away from the crops. Nobody retained any personal property beyond

(1) Baghdadi, p.288.

his sword and arms.¹ Hamdan told his followers that they had no need of money, because the earth was theirs.²

It is clear that in Hamdan's view the core of discontent among the masses was their material misery and social inferiority, and that social equality could not be established without material equality. It was therefore necessary to abolish poverty, and for this purpose, community of property seemed the best plan. In fact Hamdan's measures found an enthusiastic response among his community. No wonder then that Nizam al-Mulk regarded the Karmatian movement as a continuation of the communist Mazdakite movement of the Sassanian time, the keynote of which was "Riches must be shared and distributed according to need."³

How long Hamdan's experiment lasted is not certain, but it can hardly have survived the Karmatian defeat of 295/907. Then, the Karmatians carried on their activities in secret till their 316/928 rebellion, when ten thousands of them gathered near Wasit, and others near 'Ain al-Tamr. Their white banners bore the inscription "And we desired to show favour unto those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them examples and to

(1) De Sacy: Exposé, I, p. clxxxix ff.; De Goeje-Carmathes p. 27 ff. This rendering in English is from B. Lewis-Origins pp. 97-8. Dr. Lewis' valuable work investigated the social significance of the Karmatian movement. This ulfa was based on an allegorical interpretation of the Qu'ran III, 98, and VIII, 64.

(2) De Sacy: O.C. I, p. clxxxix.

(3) See Lewis, Origins, pp. 96-100; 'Annan = Hakim, pp. 190-1.

make them the inheritors."¹ The rising was suppressed and the influence of the Karmatians in the Sawad melted away.²

The communist ideas survived in Bahrain, where one of Hamdan's missionaries,³ Saïd al-Jannabi established a semi-communist state which Nasir-i-Khusraw described in the 11th century.⁴ The Karmatian propoganda also continued for a considerable time.

II. The Ikhwan al-Safa

The Ikhwan al-safa (Brethren of Purity) was a secret society which began its activities at Basra or Baghdad and spread among all classes in all countries.⁵ It was in opposition to the Abbasid Caliphate, and aimed at educating the masses as an effective means to promote a politico-religious upheaval. With this object in view, the 'Brethren' composed the celebrated encyclopedia, "Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa" in 51-3 treatises comprising all the branches of knowledge which a cultured man needed in the 10th century.⁶

It is significant that their encyclopedia gave special

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- (1) Qu'ran xxviii, 5. Pickthall, p.394.
 (2) I.A. VIII, p.137,
 (3) I.H. p.295.
 (4) N-Kh. Siyahat, pp.255 ff. (transl.)
 (5) The date of its foundation is generally put in the second half of the 10th century between 334-73/946-83. Hamadani - Ikh-s, p.7; cf. Qifti, p.82.
 (6) See A. Zaki in Ikh-s I, pp.16-47; Taha Husain 3-16; E.I, art. Ikhwan al-Safa; Massignon, Der Islam IV, p.324; Siwan al-Hikma, p.21; Der Islam xx, p.210-27.

attention to labour and craftsmen, whose nobility it praised in a special treatise.¹ On the contrary, those who have learnt no handicraft are described as "either vain like sons of kings... or ascetic and occupied with the life beyond, like prophets... or lazy, dull and humble... like beggars."²

The tendency of the 'Brethren' clearly appears in their disregard of the traditional social scale based on nobility of birth. They classified the society according to economic functions and resources as follows:

- i) Artisans ('Sunna') or "those who work with their bodies and instruments" and lived by selling the products of their industry;
- ii) Merchants occupied in buying and selling; and
- iii) "The rich" who own the raw materials and buy the manufactured goods, wealthy merchants being included in this class.³

The direct allegiance of the Brethren is still obscure; and since the 'Rasa'il' constitute the only record of their doctrines, they merit a special consideration. The 'Rasa'il' are distinctly 'Alid and Shiite in character.⁴ In the Isma'ili literature of Yaman, they are given a very prominent place. Idris, a chief Dai of Yaman (d.872/1467) attributes them to a

(1) Ikh-s I, pp.210-27.

(2) Ibid. I, p.222.

(3) Ikh-s I, p.217.

(4) Der Islam XX, p.285; cf. Ikh-s IV, p.222, 406.

concealed Imam, the grandfather of al-Mahdi billah.¹ Saifi (d.1236 A.H.), another Isma'ili describes them as "the second Qur'an...the Qur'an of knowledge...the Qur'an of the Imam."² Ghulam Husain maintains, on the evidence of a historian daf, that the Rasa'il were composed by four dafs for one of the 'Alid Imams.³

Among non Ismaili writers, Ibn al-'Alusi thought that "the Rasa'il represented the Karmatian principles."⁴ Nicholson considers "al-Risala al-Jamia, which is the essence of the Rasa'il as manifestly Isma'ili in character."⁵ Ahmed Zaki,⁶ and Massignon⁷ believe that the 'Brethren' were a ramification of the Karmatians (or Isma'ilis). Hamadani, who studied the Rasa'il and Isma'ili literature, maintains that "the Imam is the central point of the mission of the Rasa'il" and that the philosophy of the Rasa'il is the same as that of the Isma'ilis.⁸

But it is noteworthy that the 'Rasa'il' are not mentioned by any of the Dafs of the Fatimids in Egypt. The revolutionary nature of the Rasa'il is unsuited for an established authority;⁹ and one is tempted to conclude that the 'Brethren' were

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- (1) Hamadani, Ikh-s, p.15; Der Islam XX, p.292.
 (2) Hamadani, o.c., p.14.
 (3) Hamadani, o.c., p.15, note 1.
 (4) Quoted by A. Zaki in Ikh-s, I, introd. pp.7-8.
 (5) Nicholson, Lit. Hist., p.371.
 (6) Ikh-s, I, introd. p.34.
 (7) Der Islam IV, p.324.
 (8) Hamadani o.c. p.23, p.26.
 (9) Ibid. XX, p.294.

not devoted followers of the Fatimids.¹ It is likely that the 'Brethren' were an offshoot of the Karmatian movement in Irak, but aimed at achieving peacefully what militant Karmatism failed to realize by force.

These social movements show that society in Irak was dynamic, that social and economic currents were stirring underneath the exuberant luxury of the wealthy classes.

The masses did not accept their wretched conditions passively, but tried to assert themselves and improve their lot violently or peacefully. Generally speaking, those who wanted quick results at any cost joined the Karmatian and the Zanj movements; others followed the more peaceful and co-operative methods of forming corporations and guilds. Grosse modo, peasants and slaves formed the bulk of the first group, while artisans formed corporative associations which we are now going to describe.

Labour Organisations

To speak of guilds in the 10th century is somewhat premature, although signs of some corporative life among craftsmen were noticeable.

1. There was an "esprit de corps" in crafts, each member feeling an attachment to his colleagues.² "Craft

(1) Cf. Taha Husain, *ikh-s I*, introd. pp.7-8.

(2) *Jahiz-Rasa'il*, pp.126-7.

(or occupation) is a relationship" was the slogan.¹ In the face of a challenge, they all made one front. For example the food-sellers fought the shoe-makers in Mosul in 307/919.²

It is significant that during the century, professional names became very common and figure side by side with the usual surnames after towns or clans. Ibn al-Jarrah (surgeon) was the surname of the wazir 'Ali b. 'Isa; Ibn al-Jassas (the plasterer) was the famous merchant; al-Jihbadh (the banker) was the attribute of Mukhtadir's banker Yusuf b. Pinhas; Tha'alibi (fur-workers) was the famous writer of the Buwaihid period; Hallaj (cotton-corder) was the celebrated mystic, etc. Among the masses, such attributions were even more common.³

This fact indicates that crafts were no longer disgraceful, and that the corporative spirit was strong among craftsmen.

II. Artisans lived a corporate life in one quarter - or had a market of their own. Among the quarters of Karkh (W. Baghdad) Khatib mentions those of Bazzazin (i.e. cloth-sellers); Ashab al-Sabun (i.e. soap manufacturers); Kallayin (i.e. meat-roasters); Kayyarin (i.e. tar-workers); Sawwakin (i.e. semolina-sellers); and Kattanin (i.e. cotton-weavers).⁴ Mosul had a market of shoe-makers.⁵ Baghdad had one of

(1) Cf. Jahiz-Bukh, p.51.

(2) I-A VIII, p.89.

(3) See Abu'l-Qasim, p.78; p.79, p.81, p.85, p.86, p.95, p.96, p.137, p.139.

(4) Khatib, pp.67-8.

(5) I.A.VIII, p.89.

copper-smiths.¹ In the newly built towns like Baghdad (8th century) and Samarra (9th century) "Each craft and merchandise was in a market."²

III. Some signs of hierarchical organisation appear among craftsmen. There were apprentices (sani') and masters (ustadh).³ Each craft had a head (ra'is) from among its members but appointed by the government.⁴ There is no record yet of any persecution of artisans by the state. Such policy probably developed later and served to further the inner cohesion of the guilds.

A very curious type of special guilds were the associations of 'Ayyarun and shuttar the forerunners of the famous futuwa movement.

Both 'Ayyarun and shuttar had a special apron (uzrah or mi'zar) wrapped around their waists.⁵ In 197/812, the 'Ayyarun, organised themselves into tens under 'Arifs, each ten 'Arifs being placed under a naqib, each ten naqibs under a qa'id and each ten qa'ids under an Amir.⁶ The term fata was already in use among the 'Ayyars. A poet sang "When one of their fatas stabbed an enemy he shouted; take it from the fata the Ayyar."⁷ This indicates the identity of the two terms and

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- (1) I. Taifur, p.179.
 (2) Ya'qubi, p.258.
 (3) Ikh-s, I, p.255.
 (4) Tan. I, p.38.
 (5) Aghani VI, p.91.
 (6) Masudi-Muruj, VI, p.452.
 (7) Ibid. VI, p.463.

shows that the 'futuwwa' began as a poor class movement and at that time lacked the high moral code which it acquired only under Nasir (604 A.H.).

This conclusion is supported by the following story in Tanukhi. An elderly fata who was kept in prison gave the following advice to a man who was robbed of 500 dinars in a boat in the Ubulla canal: "Go to a house in which there are poles and reed-mats. Each pole has a 'mi'zar' (apron) and an 'azar' (garment). Wrap yourself from the waist with the 'mi'zar' and throw the 'azar' on your back. [Other] People will come and do the same, till their number is full. Then they will bring some food; eat with them and behave like them in all they do. When they have brought wine (nabidh) drink with them a few small glasses. Then take a large cup, fill it [with wine], stand up and say: 'this is shaddi(?)¹ my uncle Abu Bakr al-Baghdash,' They will ask you 'Is he your uncle? say: 'yes'. They will stand up and drink my health and when they have finished, they will sit down. Then say: 'Yes, my uncle sends his salutations to you and says: 'fityan' (pl. of fata), by my life return to my nephew the apron which you have taken from the boat in the Ubulla canal, and they will return it to you." The man did as he was told and recovered the money.² This

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- (1) Shaddi is not clear. It apparently means: this is my initiator. [Lit. he who fastens the apron (shadda) to my waist].
- (2) Tan. F. I pp.112-4.

anecdote gives a view of the inner life of a futuwwa association. To sum up:

1) The 'fatas' mentioned in the story did not refrain from stealing. They worked and shared the profits.

2) They were on bad terms with the government and met in a secret place.

3) The toast over a cup of wine, and the reference to aprons indicates some rituals of initiation.¹

Qushairi who wrote in 438/1046 supplements Tanukhi and Mas'udi. He quotes the words of a man saying to his wife: "I went to invite a clever 'Ayyar who is the head of the 'fityan' in his town."² Thus 'Ayyarun are identified with the 'fityan' and further with the shutter.³ One can gather that in each town the 'fityan' had a chief and that the futuwwa movement was not confined to Baghdad and Basra, but spread to other towns.⁴

Qushairi quotes various definitions of the term "futuwwa" which suggests that the futuwwa movement still had no definite code, although some norms of conduct were recognized. The

(1) Cf. I. Battuta II, pp.260-5.

(2) Qushairi, pp.121-2.

(3) Ibn al-Jawzi reports that in 384/994 an "Ayyar" rose in Baghdad, and a great number of shutter followed him. xii folio 108^b.

(4) Qushairi, p.122.

"fityan" were expected to obey the shari'a; to be kind to all; to hurt no one and if some offences occurred to offer amends voluntarily or to forgive the offenders. The 'fityan' had to be generous, even unto infidels, to be honest, truthful and modest, and to keep their words.¹ Qushairi completes his definitions by appropriate examples; of a water-carrier who refused to accept money for his water from a prisoner; of a merchant foregoing the interest as being against the principles of the 'futuwa'; of kindness to animals, etc.

Qushairi gives to understand that the "futuwa" movement was spread in Irak, Syria and Persia and that it had adepts among the middle and poor classes like merchants, water-carriers, and servants.²

Prof. Tarschner divides the history of the futuwa movement into three stages: first, it began as an aristocratic chivalry; then it became a movement of the middle class in the XIIIth century, and finally it developed into a movement of the masses in the XVth century.³ This conclusion does not seem accurate. Masudi and Tabakhi suggest an inverse development: the futuwa must have started with the masses; by the end of the 10th century it had a following among the middle class,⁴ and

(1) Ibid. p.121.

(2) Ibid. pp.122-3.

(3) Tarschner, Die islamische Futuwabünde, Z.D.M.G. 1933, p.6 ff.

(4) See Qushairi, pp.122-3.

continued to be in disfavour with the government. Ibn al-Jawzi (d.597/1200) still questioned their ethical code and accused them of being thieves.¹ It was only under Nasir al-Dawla that the futuwa acquired an aristocratic and military character. Nasir endeavoured to drain the movement into his own channels, and in accordance with this placed himself at its head and sublimated its ends in his famous decree of 604/1027.² After the Mongol invasion, the population in general felt degraded under the foreign masters, and the official support was withdrawn from the futuwa, and thus the organization lost its aristocratic character.³

The government's attitude towards craftsmen was that of supervision rather than of persecution. Ta'i' 's decree of 366/976 enjoined the hisba officials "to make inquiries into the affairs of the 'awam (commoners) with regard to their crafts, their products, their markets and their dealings; to make their scales correct and their weights full. Whoever be found cheating or deceiving, should be punished severely."⁴ Another decree confirms these instructions.⁵ But as the corporations did not constitute any menace to the state, the latter did not manifest any tendency to oppress the craftsmen politically, but only to

(1) I. Jawzi, *Talbis*, p.392. He refers to their dress as Sarawil.

(2) I. Sa'i: *Jami* IX, pp.223-6 gives the decree in full.

(3) The reading of Ibn al-Fuwati leads to this conclusion. On futuwa see also: M. Jawad, *al-Futuwa wa'l-Fityan* in *Lughat al-'Arab VIII* (1930). p.242 ff.

(4) *Sabi*, letters, p.114.

(5) *Ibid.*, pp.141-2.

have their activities supervised by the police.

As regards the sources, Hawardi (d.450 A.H.), in his chapter on "Hisba" admits that craftsmen were under the supervision of the "muhtasib", but fails to explain their organization.¹ Hisba manuals cannot unfortunately be utilized for our study, because they date from the 13th century onwards.²

Handicrafts and Industries

The fullest description of crafts in the 10th century is given in the "Treatise of the Ikhwan al-Safa" which contains various classifications of trades, namely:

I. In the order of their utility:

- a) Crafts essential for society, such as husbandry, weaving and building.
- b) Secondary crafts only supplementing those of the first class: as weaving must be preceded by spinning and spinning by cotton-carding, whereas cloth needs tailoring; the processes of carding, spinning and tailoring are only subsidiary to weaving.
- c) Luxury crafts (sina'at al-zina) such as perfumery, and the fabrication of silk and brocades.³

(1) Hawardi, pp.243-9.

(2) Ibn al-Ukhuwa: Ma'alim al-urba; Ibn Bassam: Mashriq X; Levi - Provençal - Manuel de Hisba Hispanique; Ibn Timiyya: al-Hisba.

(3) Ikhwan-Safa I, pp.216-7.

II. With regard to the kind of material, the crafts are two-fold:-

- a) Spiritual crafts comprising intellectual occupations.
- b) Material crafts, comprising handicrafts. These again have two divisions:

- 1) Crafts operating with simple substances like water (water-carriers, sailors, swimmers, etc.); earth (well-diggers, canal workers, miners, etc.); fire (throwers of naphtha projectiles (naffatin) stokers; light kindlers (waqqadin), etc.); air (buglers, pipers, etc.); water and earth (potters, china manufacturers, brick makers).
- ii) Crafts operating with composite material and objects like:
 - a) Metals: blacksmiths, coppersmiths, leadsmiths, goldsmiths, etc.
 - β) Plants, namely: (i) trunks, roots and leaves, (carpenters, makers of reed-mats, etc.) (ii) the inner bark of trees (linen weavers, paper manufacturers, makers of hemp ropes, etc.) (iii) fruits or seeds (millers, oil pressers, etc.).
 - γ) Animals, namely: (i) general (hunters, shepherds, horse-trainers); (ii) animal products (cooks, shoe-makers, tanners); (iii) human

bodies (barbers, doctors, etc.)¹

iii) A third classification is based on the comparative value of products namely:

- (i) Their value; (ii) their necessity;
- (iii) their utility for the public.²

iv) Crafts are also classified according to the type of tools used.³

These tables have a considerable value for they indicate the scope of simple crafts, namely a large number of crafts which existed in the 10th century, and finally reflect the economic thought of the period.

Crafts were usually hereditary. Each craftsman preferred his profession to any other occupation. Jahiz hints at this attitude by saying: "When a weaver notices a mistake or inefficiency from a fellow weaver, he says: you cupper (Hajjam)!"⁴ However, some professions were considered degrading even by the "commoners", like those of porters, guides to disreputable places (qawwadin) and jugglers.⁵

In the 10th century, Irak was famous for its industries.⁶ Its chief products were articles of luxury destined for the use

(1) Ikhwan-Safa I, pp.213-5.

(2) Ikh-s, I, pp.219-21; Parabi:s, p.2.

(3) Ikh-s, I, p.215.

(4) Jahiz-Rasa'il, p.126

(5) Dimashqi, pp.42-3.

(6) Cf. I.H., p.234; Maq., p.33; H-'A, p.138.

of the rich classes.¹ Only a limited number of crafts served the masses as well; such were cotton-weaving, shoe-making and copper-smithery.

I.a. Weaving was the most important industry of the period,² and the clothier's art was more elaborate than any other.³ It was considered as the oldest handicraft, as the weather rendered clothing essential.⁴ Besides, furniture too consisted mainly of hangings, curtains, mats, carpets, sofas and cushions.⁵ Much attention was paid to dressing; every class of company and every definite occasion demanded a special type of dress.⁶ The wealthy vied in displaying rich clothes, and possessed large wardrobes, which contained tens or even hundreds of articles of the same class.⁷ Such demands encouraged craftsmen to improve and variate their products.⁸

The weaving industry in Irak date back to pre-Islamic times.⁹ Baghdad manufactured excellent silk textiles, silk shirts of different colours, cotton stuffs, turbans of thin

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- (1) Ikhwan-Safa I, p.217; H-'A, p.138.
 (2) Hitti, p.345. This is illustrated by the large number of references to weaving, compared to their scantiness in the case of other crafts.
 (3) Mez, p.459.
 (4) I. Khaldun - proleg., p.344; Rubaishi, p.7.
 (5) Abu'l Qasim, p.36; Khatib, p.50 and p.52.
 (6) See Washsha', p.124; where he enumerates the articles of dress for a refined gentleman and refers to dresses of singers; and of the aristocracy in their parties.
 (7) Tha'a libi: lata'if, p.72.
 (8) I. Khaldun, proleg., p.344.
 (9) Ghanima H.G.T.B. 1941, p.563; Hira, p.83.

texture and the celebrated Kasri and Buwaibi towels.¹ Its thin white cotton shirts were peerless.² Nuwairi wrote: "He who wants thin shirts should go to Irak."³ The saqlistun, a heavy figured silk stuff of a rosy colour, was chiefly produced in Baghdad.⁴ Mulhan cloth, with a silk warp and a plain woof was produced in Baghdad.⁵ The celebrated 'Attabi stuffs, made of a mixture of cotton and silk, and striped, were manufactured at the 'Attabiyya quarter in Baghdad and surnamed after it.⁶ Finally uzur⁷ were also produced in Baghdad.⁸

In Baqida, a village forty miles distant from Baghdad, a strong coarse cotton stuff was woven.⁹ Harba, on the Dujail canal manufactured and exported thick cotton stuffs.¹⁰ Hazira, not far from Baghdad, produced thick cotton cloth (thiyab kirbas safik) on a large scale.¹¹

(1) Dimashqi, p.26.

(2) I.P., p.254.

(3) Nuwairi I, p.372.

(4) Ibid. I, p.369; H-'A, p.383. It perpetuated its name in such words as Bekeriat and Eskeriat. M.G.T.B. 1941, p.568.

(5) Thak is rendered as "cloth". See Dozy vêtements, p.21 and p.113; M.G.T.B., p.567.

(6) I. Jubeir, p.226; Dozy o.c. p.110 and p.436; Maq., p.323; I.H., p.261; Abu'l-Qasim, p.35; Mitti, p.347; M.G.T.B. 1941, p.566; Survey of Persian Art III, p.1996, n.1; See Johnson's Dict. (Taby) and Dict. de la langue Française II, p.121.

(7) See Dozy, o.c., p.24 ff. The term here refers to the large cloaks in which ladies wrap themselves when they go out.

(8) Maq., p.128.

(9) Yaqut, Buldan I, p.475.

(10) Yaqut, Buldan II, p.235.

(11) Ibid., II, p.292.

Basra was famous for its Khazz and Bazz.¹ Khazz was a very soft texture made of wool and silk.² The usual size of a piece of Khazz was fifteen dhira's in length and four spans in breadth; the best type being tightly woven and heavy in weight.³ The Bazz was a valuable cotton cloth.⁴ Basra also produced aprons (futa)⁵ and linen stuffs of high quality.⁶

Kosul excelled in manufacturing the cotton textiles, called "shash", which had much celebrity and spread to Europe as "Muslin" or "mousseeline".⁷ It also produced the "masuh", a striped cloth which could be used as a garment or as a mat, as well as Khazz.⁸ Asid produced embroidered silk cloth (washy), handkerchiefs, and woolen cloaks (Tayalisa).⁹

Ibn al-Faqih remarks that "God has endowed the kufans with a special gift for making washy (embroidered silk cloth) and

(1) Maq., p.128.

(2) De Goeje, B.G.A. IV, p.224. Dozy explains (Khazz) as "filoselle"-vêtements, p.437. Zaydan, quoting an Arabic Dict. (Alif Ba') says that it is made of silk and beaver hair. See V, p.106.

(3) Dimashqi, p.26.

(4) Zaydan V, p.106.

(5) For futa see Dozy, o.c., pp.334-43. Futa meant: a) a cloth (for ladies) wrapped over the head, b) an apron, c) a cloth to spread on the back to protect it from the sun.

(6) H-A., p.139.

(7) Chanina, o.c., pp.566-7.

(8) Jahiz: Tabassur, p.347. See Dozy - vêtements, pp.405-7; Mustatraf (Cairo, 1308, II, p.66).

(9) Jahiz, o.c., p.344.

khazz.¹ Kufa produced turbans of khazz famous for their beauty.² It also manufactured silk, especially the silk kerchiefs for the head, which still go by the name kufiyya.³ Hira produced silk, woollen and linen stuffs, and Hiri shirts were celebrated in the 10th century.⁴

Ubulia manufactured thin linen, plain and embroidered.⁵ Its turbans were excellent.⁶ Nu'maniyya produced beautiful woollen garments and shirts of a pale-yellow colour.⁷ Qasr b. Hubaira was full of weavers.⁸ Maqdisi called Tikrit "the home of wool manufacturers."⁹

Socks were manufactured of silk or soft goat hair (miriz)¹⁰

I. b. Carpets. In eastern lands carpets have ever been a symbol of luxury as well as a practical necessity.¹⁰ Rich carpets were spread in Caliphal palaces to show their splendour.¹¹ When the widow of Na'man put into repair (279/892) the old Barmakid palace in Baghdad, she had woollen carpets shot with gold threads hung on the walls.¹² Musta'in's mother had a silk

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- (1) I. P., p. 255.
 (2) Maq., p. 128.
 (3) See Dozy, o. o., pp. 390-4; Hitti, p. 347.
 (4) Khatib, p. 52; Hira, p. 83 ff.
 (5) Maq., p. 128.
 (6) Huwairi I, p. 369.
 (7) Maq., p. 128.
 (8) I. Rusta, p. 121.
 (9) Maq., p. 125.
 (10) Survey of Persian Art III, p. 2271.
 (11) See Khatib, p. 52.
 (12) Levy, Baghdad Chronicle, p. 118.

carpet specially made for her. On it various animals were represented; the figures of birds, being of gold with eyes of rubies and jewels.¹

The carpet industry dates back to Babylonian times, and is still practised in Mesopotamia. The conditions of the nomadic life especially favour carpet weaving.² Wool was the most important material in the fabrication of carpets; it serves for the piles of all but the few carpets, probably of court manufacture that had silk pile.³ Cotton, and even linen were occasionally used as well.⁴

More luxurious than plain carpets were the pile fabrics, the foundation of which "consisted of a set of warp and a rather complex weft system"; the surface material was fastened into it in various slightly different ways.⁵ The more sumptuous carpets were enriched with threads of gold and silver in a flat weave.⁶

Carpets were used for different purposes. There were carpets to spread on the ground like Busut (large carpets) and Ankhakh (oblong carpets); others were hung for decoration like

- (1) The carpet cost 130,000,000 dirhams. Baydan, vol.II, p.135.
 (2) Survey of Persian Art, III, pp.2271-2.
 (3) Ibid., p.2456.
 (4) Ibid. III, p.2439, and p.2241.
 (5) Ibid. III, p.2439.
 (6) E.I.supp., p.107. See also p.108.

anmat; a special type were the carpets used for prayers (sijj adah).¹

Hira and Nu'maniyya were famous for their carpets. The Hira carpets are described as having designs of elephants, horses, camels and birds; these designs were imitated in Nu'maniyya so that the local products too were called "Hira carpets."² According to I. Faqih, the district of Maisan and Dast-Maisan were celebrated for manufacturing the best carpets and curtains.³ Wasit produced tapestry woven carpets.⁴

The curtains fabricated at Wasit were of the best,⁵ and are mentioned by Khatib among the furniture of Muktadir's palace.⁶ Mosul and Amid produced and exported good curtains.⁷ Some curtains were embroidered or woven with gold thread.⁸

Finally, quilts, pillows, and various sorts of cushions were manufactured in Mesopotamia.⁹

The sovereign had some special weaving workshops called

- (1) Khatib, p.52; Mez, p.459; E.I, supp., p.106; Abu'l-Qasim, p.36.
 (2) I.R., p.186; Hira, p.83.
 (3) I. Faqih, p.253.
 (4) Jahiz-Tabassur, p.346.
 (5) Maq., pp.128-9.
 (6) Khatib, p.52.
 (7) Jahiz-Tabassur, p.347, and p.344; Tha'a libi-Lat. p.111.
 (8) Khatib, p.52.
 (9) Abu'l-Qasim, p.36. On the Arabic terms for rugs see: H. Werrel in Ars Islamica, I, 1934, pp.219-222; II, 1935, pp.65-8.

"Tiraz houses" (Dar al-Tiraz). Tiraz originally meant embroidery,¹ and then came to mean the stuffs, ornamented with embroidered bands of writing. The inscription was placed on the border of the material and contained the name of the ruler with his title and some auspicious formulae. It was worked out in the web of the material with gold thread or bright coloured yarn which stood against the background of the material.

Dar al-Tiraz was an emblem of sovereignty: its products of carpets, robes and banners (A'alam, Bunud, Furush)² were used by him or bestowed on high officials as a kind of decoration. In the 10th century, some governors, like the Hamdanide of Mosul had their own Tiraz factories.³ Rasibi (d. 301/913), a governor of Ahwas employed eighty such factories for his own use.⁴ The most important centre was in Baghdad, and its brocades enjoyed much celebrity.⁵

Goldsmiths and weavers were employed in the Tiraz factories, under the supervision of an official called Sahib al-Tiraz.⁵

I.e. Tents and mats. The weaving of tents for the beduins was an important industry. Tents made of wool were called Khiba;

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- (1) Washa', pp.168-9, refers to dresses of slave girls with inscriptions (Tiraz) on them.
 (2) Sabi, letters, p.141.
 (3) Ibid., p.141.
 (4) I. Taghribardi, II, p.192.
 (5) Sabi, letters, p.141. See for Tiraz: E.I., IV, pp.785-93; supplement pp.248-50; I. Khaldun. Proleg. pp.222-3; Ghanima, o.c. p.568; Zaydan I, pp.124-7; Hitti, p.347.
 (* E.I. IV, p.790.

those made of goat-hair were called fustat; those of camel-hair were called bijad; those of cotton were called saradiq. Special kinds, called tiraf, were made of special leather and used by the wealthy.¹

Good mats were made at Haisan.² The reed-mats woven at Baghdad were proverbial for their excellence.³ Most of the inhabitants of 'Abbadan worked in the reed-industry; they made mats of bulrushes.⁴ Some of the 'Abbadan mats were thin, neatly woven, very soft and could be folded like cloth.⁵ Mats were made of Papyrus, reeds, palm-tree leaves and bulrushes.⁶

The decorations on cloth were varied and consisted of spots, stripes, lattices, all-over foliate designs and inscriptions.⁷

The weavers were extremely conservative and kept on using their traditional tools.⁸ But their frequent removals from one region to another contributed to the spreading of varieties and technical habits into the different parts of the muslim empire.

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- (1) Alusi III, pp.393-4; Jahiz-Bukhala' p.311 refers to tent makers in Basra.
 (2) Nuwairi I, p.370.
 (3) Tha'a libi-Mudaf, p.428.
 (4) Maq., p.118; Nuwairi I, p.370.
 (5) Abu'l-Qasim, p.36.
 (6) Qhanima, o.c., p.580.
 (7) Survey of Persian Art III, pp.2000-2001.
 (8) Alusi III, pp.405-6; I. Khaldun, Proleg. 343-4; Dimashqi p.25.
 (9) Ya'qubi, p.264; Survey of Persian Art III, p.2176.

II. Dyeing: The variety of colours in cloth necessitated a developed art of dyeing.¹ Black was the colour of the official dress; pink was used for the siqlatuni cloth;² green was the 'alawite colour; and yellow garments dyed with saffron were popular among singers. People vied in the brightness and variety of colour in their dresses for evening parties.³

With the exception of cochineal, the dyes used were vegetable. Indigo was used for all shades of blue, madder for any shade of red from the lightest rose to the deepest ruby.⁴ Wasit was the best place for dyeing in kermes (qirmiz).⁵ For yellow, the rind of the pomegranate provided a cheap, beautiful and durable dye.⁶ By combining madder with pomegranate a shade varying from a brown-reddish tone to the "date colour" was obtained. Saffron was used as a superior yellow dye.

Dyers were specialized craftsmen, some of them worked only on one dye, like madder or indigo. The compound colours were obtained through combinations of the primary colour dyes.⁷

III. Pottery is as old as the world. Earthenware was the

- (1) H. Jacoby says: "The dyers are the most important factor, after the wool in making a carpet." S.P.A. III, p.2459.
 (2) Ghanima, o.c., p.569.
 (3) Wassha', p.123.
 (4) Survey of Persian Art III, pp.2459-61.
 (5) Jahiz-Tabassur, p.339.
 (6) See also Ibid., p.342; Maq., p.97.
 (7) Survey of Persian Art III, 2459-61.

primary material before glass and metal were introduced into everyday life. In Mesopotamia, the potter's art reached its highest perfection.¹ Small and large jars for water and wine, pots, dishes, oil lamps, spouts of wells in the shape of animal heads were made of unglazed baked clay,² either plain or decorated.³

Glazed pottery was also of high quality. H-'A refers to the "glaze-ware" of Baghdad.⁴ Abu'l-qasin (circa 306 A.H.) speaks of superlative coloured china made in Baghdad.⁵ Hira fabricated jars and vessels of bright colours.⁶ When Mu'tasim founded Samarra, he brought to it glaze-ware workers from Kufa and Basra,⁷ which indicates that the latter two places excelled in this art. Nahr al-Dair, near Basra was renowned for its Ghadair i.e. porcelain.⁸

The 9th and 10th centuries form a bright period in the history of Mesopotamian pottery. In addition to felicity of design in fine ceramic ware, the knowledge and use of lustre

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- (1) E.I, Supplement, p.44.
 (2) Ibid., p.44; Jahis-Bukh., p.218; Ghanima o.c., pp.569-70.
 (3) E.I, Sup. p.44; Suli, p.127; Ghanima o.c., pp.569-70.
 (4) H-'A, p.138.
 (5) Abu'l-qasin, p.37.
 (6) Hira, p.81.
 (7) Ya'gubi, p.264. This leaves no room for Mr. Butler's contemplation that Mu'tasim brought the potters from Egypt (Butler, Islamic pottery, London, 1926).
 (8) Yagut, Buldau IV, p.839. On the meaning of Ghadair, see H-'A. p.384; Ma'alim al-urba, pp.89-90 of the Engl. Transl.

painting, both plain and colour-changing, was much advanced.¹ It "reached its highest artistic and technical achievement in Samarra."² In fact, Drs Sarre and Herzfeld, and H. Rézard believe that the art of lustre painting originated in Mesopotamia and thence spread to Syria, Egypt and Persia.³ The fragments found in the sites of Samarra show a wide range of changing colour: golden-lustre, deep red lustre, green lustre, and ruby lustre;⁴ those from Rakka were of a deep brownish purple tone.⁵

Lustrated wares were deep or flat bowls, pear shaped, globular or ovoid vases; small cups⁶ and oil lamps.⁷ The lustre decoration was usually in the shape of floral arabesques, floriated ovals or medallions, kufic inscriptions,⁸ and occasional figures.⁹

The Mesopotamian glazed tiles (qashani) were of such high quality that in 248/862 a consignment of them was dispatched from Baghdad to Kairawan for the decoration of its mosque, where the tiles can still be seen.¹⁰

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- (1) Butler, p. 39.
 - (2) Ibid., p. 37.
 - (3) Quoted in Butler, p. 37; 35.
 - (4) Butler, p. 38.
 - (5) Pier, p. 2.
 - (6) Ibid., pp. 9-10.
 - (7) Jahiz-Bukh., p. 36 and p. 37.
 - (8) Pier, p. 2.
 - (9) Sull, p. 127.
 - (10) Muqtataf, 1932, p. 459.

IV. Glass. Glass was manufactured from a special kind of sandstone.¹ The Arabs inherited this industry but they developed it and increased the proportion of sandstone in its fabrication, so that their glass is harder than the Roman type of it.²

Cups, vessels, bowls, oil-lamps and weights, were made of glass.³ Glass, artistically painted was used for windows; the fixing material being gypsum.² Arabesques and inscriptions in different colours were painted or engraved on glass wares. The colours usually used were golden; red (copper); green (copper); white (lead) and blue.² Outlines of animals and human beings, and even compositions of hunting scenes figure on bowls.⁴

Iraqi glass was popular as far as Spain, where it was known as Irage.⁵ Ibn Jubair saw in the Ka'ba five lamps of Iraqi glass with fine decorations.⁶

Baghdad excelled in glass cups and pots.⁷ Glass factories

(1) Jahiz-Dalail, p.15.

(2) I have utilized two works (in manuscript) which Mr. S. Bahjat kindly lent me. The first is an essay he wrote about the History of glass manufacture in Egypt; the second is a typed copy of a thesis on the same subject (Sina'at al-Zujaj fi Misr) (Cairo 1908) by Dr. H. D. Barudi. Both suggest that glass coins and weights were made in Egypt: the former are light green, and the latter dark green.

(3) Jahiz-Bukh, p.37; Aghani III, p.47.

(4) Aghani III, p.47. Abu Nu'as described a bowl with the figure of Kiera in the bottom and hunting scenes on the sides.

(5) Chanima o.c., p.572.

(6) I. Jubair, p.81.

(7) I.F., p.253.

existed at Basra,¹ Qadisiyya (between Harba and Samarra)² and for some time at Samarra.³

Hajaf was famous for its crystal (lustre de crystal) of which rings, some varieties of lamps and decorative utensils were made. Owing to its associations with Hajaf, this crystal became known as Durr Najaf (i.e. the pearls of Hajaf).⁴

V. The Goldsmith's art developed with the great luxury of the Caliphs. In addition to the usual ornament for ladies,⁵ utensils of gold and silver were made for the rich, artistically decorated with inscriptions⁶ and sometimes bedecked with pearls.⁷ Iraki goldsmiths achieved great celebrity. A traveller saw in the palace of the Indian prince of Lahore "gold and silver vessels...of Irak workmanship."⁸

The Caliphs naturally led the way in luxury. On the eve of his marriage, Ma'mun had a mat spread woven of gold threads.⁹ Gold and silver were even used for the decoration of halls.¹⁰ Muktadir had 400 gold and silver saddles in his stables.¹¹ The masterpiece of the age was the famous

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- (1) Ya'qubi, p.264.
 (2) Yaqut IV, p.9.
 (3) Ya'qubi, p.264.
 (4) Ghunima, o.c., p.577.
 (5) Mustatraf II, p.175 (Cairo, 1308).
 (6) Washsha, pp.188-90.
 (7) Tha'alibi-Lat. pp.73-4.
 (8) Tan.II, 61, pp.173-9.
 (9)

shajara, "i.e. tree" after which the "Shajara Palace" was sur-named. It was a tree of gold and silver; on its branches stood silver birds which whistled when the wind blew. The weight was 500,000 dirhams, and "it amazed the Byzantine envoy more than all the other things, which he saw, put together."¹

VI. Blacksmiths made iron windows, swords, coats of mail, helmets, chairs, etc.² They made geometrical instruments too.³ Coppersmiths made pots of different sizes, vessels, jars, bronze doors, hanging lamps, candlesticks, etc.⁴ "Copper, brass, bronze, iron, steel...were used for a bewildering variety of objects... The decorative technique included engraving, chiseling, damascening, and inlay, embossed and solid reliefs, open work, enamel and gilding."⁵

Mosul was famous for making tubs, chains, iron bows and knives.⁶ Harran was the centre for manufacturing astronomical and mathematical instruments of precision,⁷ of which the astrolabe was the most important. The astrolabe usually made of bronze or brass, is designed to measure the altitudes of the stars, moon or sun, and to determine various astronomical and

- (1) Ibid., p.52.
 (2) Ghanima, o.c., p.573; Khatib, p.55.
 (3) Haari, Zuhri II, pp.105-6.
 (4) I. Taifur, p.179; S.P.A.III, p.2472.
 (5) Survey of Persian Art III, p.2477.
 (6) Haq., p.145.
 (7) I.P., p.132.

topographical coordinates, without mathematical formulae or calculations.¹ Harrani scales were also famous.²

VIII. Carpentry was an important craft. Carpenters made chairs, tables, doors and roofs; sometimes with fine decorations especially of teakwood.³ The pieces of wood were either nailed or dove-tailed as well as polished so that the whole looked like one piece.⁴ Wooden cups manufactured at Dair al-Jamajim (near Kufa) were much in use.⁵ Some musical instruments were also fabricated of wood; expensive lutes ('ud) were made of ebony engraved with ivory.⁶ For the soldiers, carpenters made arrows, bows, lances and machines of war.⁷

There was much activity in shipbuilding and boatbuilding for the purposes of pleasure, travel and war. There were many wharves in Ubullā.⁸ Abu'l-Qasim mentions fourteen kinds of boats in use at Baghdad circa 306/918;⁹ while Maqdisi enumerates thirty-six kinds.¹⁰ Pleasure boats, such as the harrāqas of Amin were artistically shaped in the form of animals: lions, elephants, hawks and giraffes.¹¹

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- (1) Survey of Persian Art III, p.2530.
 (2) Maq., p.145; Tan.VIII (reprint), p.16.
 (3) I. Khaldun, Prolog., pp.342-3; Abu'l-Qasim, p.36; Khatib, p.63.
 (4) I. Khaldun, o.c., p.343.
 (5) Yaqut: Buldan II, p.652.
 (6) Abu'l-Qasim, p.55 and p.75.
 (7) I. Khaldun, o.c., p.342.
 (8) Ghanima, o.c., p.582.
 (9) Abu'l-Qasim, p.107.
 (10) Maq., pp.31-2.
 (11) Ghanima, o.c., p.582.

VIII. Soap, oils and scents: The role of soap boiling must be considered in connection with the place which baths held in social life. According to Khatib's estimate the inhabitants of Baghdad alone needed over 1,500,000 litres (ratl) of soap for the eve of the id al-Fitr, the need of each individual on that night amounting to one litre.¹ Soap was produced in solid pieces,² depilatory powder (nura) being sometimes used in its preparation.³

In Baghdad there was a special quarter of soap boilers in Karkh.⁴ But the largest centre of soap works in the 10th century was in Raqqa.⁵

Production of scents and rose water, and extraction of oils from plants and seed, were considerable both for medicine and cosmetic purposes.⁶ Among the oil extracted were olive oil, sesame oil,⁷ almonds oil,⁸ and castor oil.⁹ Harran was famous for its olive oil;¹⁰ Baghdad produced oil and sesame oils¹¹ and had a special market for perfumes.¹² Kufa and Basra distilled the essence of roses and the celebrated essence of

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- (1) Khatib, p.75.
 (2) Usaibi'a I, p.264.
 (3) Jahiz-Bukhala', p.223.
 (4) Khatib, p.67.
 (5) Haq., p.160.
 (6) Ghanima, o.c. p.580.
 (7) Ma'alim al-urba, p.228.
 (8) Usaibi'a I, p.169.
 (9) Ibid., I, p.160.
 (10) Abu'l-Qasim, p.123.
 (11) Haq., p.160; H-'A, p.138.
 (12) Usaibi'a, I, p.264.

¹
violets.

IX. Tanning and Shoe Industry: The Irakia paid much attention to shoes. Washsha' (d.325/936) mentions seven kinds of elegant shoes of different colours, red, black, red-black and yellow-black.² Shoemakers' shops "contained a bit of every kind of leather".³ Basra produced good shoes.⁴ The speciality of Baghdad were the darish (black leather) and the Luka' (red leather).⁵ For the purpose of tanning, pomegranate skins were used.⁶ The craft of tanners stood very low in people's estimation, possibly on account of the bad smell associated with this profession.⁷

X. Other products: Wine was produced; the wines of Qatrabbul enjoying a special reputation.⁸ Fruits were preserved either by drying them, as was the case with figs, raisins and pomegranate seeds;⁹ or by putting them in honey and syrup as was done with apples.¹⁰ Jazira was a great centre for dried fruits.¹¹ Among other kinds of preserved food can be mentioned jerked meat (Qadid)¹² and cheese. The latter came particularly from the

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- (1) Ist., p.153; Maq., p.128 and p.130; I.P. p.252; Usabi'a I, p.149. When Mu'tasim founded Samarra he brought specialists in extracting oil from Kufa-Ya'qubi, p.264.
 (2) Washsha', p.125.
 (3) Tha'alibi, Thimar, p.193.
 (4) H-'A, p.139.
 (5) I.P., p.253.
 (6) Jahiz, Bukh., p.237.
 (7) Abu'l-Qasim, p.3 and p.138.
 (8) Tan.II, p.174; H-'A, p.138.
 (9) Dimashqi, p.34.
 (10) Tan.II, p.174.
 (11) Maq., p.145.
 (12) Jahiz, Bukh., p.58.

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countryside of Mosul.

To wind up, we should refer to the production and the binding of books. The copying of books was one of the side branches of the booksellers' trade.²

(1) Naq., p.145.
(2) I. Khaldun, o.c., p.352.

CHAPTER IV

Trade - Synopsis

A. Introduction

I. Importance of Trade in Literature

- 1) Jahiz: "al-Tabassur"; "Essay in praise of merchants"
- 2) Geographers
- 3) Tha 'alibi
- 4) Shaibani: "al-Makharij"
- 5) Dimashqi- "al-Ishara"
- 6) Other writers.

II. Commercial Ideas

III. Factors favourable to Trade:

- 1) Geographical position of Mesopotamia
- i) State encouragement
- iii) Muslim traditions
- iv) The development of credit.

Unfavourable Factors:

- 1) Contempt for saving
- ii) Social position of merchants
- iii) Prohibition of Riba

B. Merchants

I. Career of Ibn al-Jassas as a typical merchant.

II. Types of merchants:

- i) Rakid (Travelling salesman)
- ii) Khazan (Hoarder)
- iii) Muiahhiq (supplier)

C. Credit

I. Kinds of credit:

- 1) Mudaraba
- ii) Salaf mu'ajjal
- iii) Istislah muna'ijam

II. Credit dealers:

- 1) Sarrafs
- ii) Merchants: lending to each other; lending to other people; documents of borrowing.
- iii) Complex credit: need for guarantor: the Tahwil and Suftain system.
- iv) Merchants' credit dealing with the state.

D. Markets (local)

I. Markets of Baghdad

- II. " " Basra
- III. " " Mosul
- IV. " " Kufa

V. Towns as markets for surrounding countryside.

B. Exports and Imports

- I. Exports
- II. Imports from: Iran, Transoxiana, India, Tibet, China, Syria, Arabian Peninsula, Yaman, Egypt, North Africa, Armenia, Rus.

P. Internal communications

- I. Fluvial transport
- II. Land communications; the postal service.

G. Relation with foreign countries

- I. Maritime trade:
 - a) Ships used
 - b) India - Sumatra
 - c) China - Korea
 - d) Red Sea - East Africa
 - e) Colonies
- II. Land trade:
 - a) Baghdad Khurasan Road, Samarkand; northern branch to: Khwarizm, to Bulghar, Khazar, Rus; eastern branch to: China, Tibet. Trade with India.
 - b) Trade with the south and the west: Syria, Arabia, North Africa
 - c) Colonies
- III. Currency and international trade.

TRADE

I. Literature on Trade

The number of works on trade fully testifies to the importance attached to it, especially as compared with the scantiness of literature on the other fields of economic life. Jahiz (d.255/869) was the first to treat the subject at some length. He composed a manual for merchants called "Kitab al-Tabassur bi'l Tijara" which opens with a statement on some general principles of commercial activity and then deals with gold, silver, jewels, scents, clothes and some textiles, the imports to Irak and the varieties of hunting birds.¹ Jahiz wrote also an "Essay in praise of merchants and in blame of state service."² The keen eye of the versatile writer must have recognized the rising strength of a new middle class.

The contemporary geographers: Ibn Khundadhbih, Qudama, Ibn Rusta, Ya'qubi, Ibn al-Faqih, Mas'udi, Istakhri, Ibn Hawkal, Maqdisi and the author of the Hudud al-'Alam, all have sections on the commodities produced locally and the routes connecting the trade centres.

'Abd al-Malik al-Tha'alibi (d.429/1037) collected the Qur'anic verses, the traditions and the proverbs concerning merchants.³

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- (1) The book was edited by H.H. Abd al-Wahhab Samadhi, in R.A.A. XII, pp. 321-351 (Damascus, 1932).
 (2) Jahiz, Rasa'il No.6 Cairo, 1924, A.H.
 (3) Tha'alibi: "Khass al-Khass", p.70 copied by Maqdisi in "Yawaqit", pp.27-31.

Shaibani wrote (circa 400/1009) a special manual for Iraqi merchants showing them how to evade Islamic restrictions on certain types of sale, or on interest. It is characteristic of the conflict between the new economic and social forces, and the ethics of the earlier and simpler community.¹

Dimashqi (Abu'l-Padi) wrote² his remarkable book "al-Ishara ila Mahasin al-Tijara", which dealt in detail with the categories of goods, commercial dealings and principles, merchants and their classes, etc. The work has a great importance from the point of view of political economy.

There were other more specialized works, like: Biruni's "Kitab al-Jamahir fi ma'rifat al-Jawahir", which after advancing some economic principles deals mainly with precious stones,³ Jawhari's "Jewels and their kinds" composed for the Calip Mu'tadid, and a book on "The classes of slaves" by an Egyptian author, etc., of which only the first survived.⁴

II. Some maxims and proverbs throw a side light on commercial activities. "To preserve capital is a gain." "Profits are due to good luck." These two sayings hint at the hazards of trade. "He who sells the article in demand is successful in every market." "Everything is cheap when it is plentiful;

(1) "Kitab al-Makharij wa'l-Hiyal" ed. by J. Schacht, Hanover, 1923.

(2) The date of writing is uncertain. Zaydan (Hist. of Arabic Lit. II, p.234) puts it in the Buwaihid period. 334-447 A.H. H. Ritter translated and analyzed this book in "Ein arabisches Handbuch der Handelswissenschaft", Berlin 1916.

(3) Ed. P. Krenkow, Haiderabad, 1355 A.H. (1936 A.D.)

(4) See Zaydan, Hist. of Arab. Lit. II, p.234; Mez, pp.160-1.

expensive when it is scarce and needed." "All goods that multiply have low prices;" reflect the principles of supply and demand. "A merchant was asked: how did your wealth increase? He answered: "I have never sold on credit; I never refused a profit, no matter how small it was; and never received a dirham from an operation without engaging it in another operation." From this we may conclude that credit was not quite safe but that the advantages of an interrupted chain of investments were realized. "Good management is half the art of trade." The advantages of wholesale trade are alluded to in the saying: "buy for yourself and for the sake of the market." The spirit of enterprise is reflected in the recommendation: "If you do not succeed in a trade, shift to another; if you do not flourish in a land leave it for another."¹

III. Among the factors favourable to the development of commerce, one should mention the following:

1) The geographical position of Mesopotamia made it a bridge between Persia, India, Central Asia and China on the one hand; and Arabia, Syria, Egypt and the West on the other. Thus the inhabitants were predestined to become active middlemen in the trade exchange of the civilized world.²

(1) Jahiz: Tabassur, pp. 326-7; Tha'alibi: Khass, p. 70.

(2) See Jahiz-Bukh., p. 39; Tan. F. II, p. 11.

2) The state encouraged merchants directly and indirectly. By their luxury, the Caliph and his officials raised the demand for foreign goods,¹ and moved Ibn Khaldun to call the state "the huge market for merchants."² Some Caliphs were so favourable to merchants that they exempted them from certain duties, and even made to them presents in cash.³

3) The political prestige of the country widened the scope of its commercial activities.⁴

4) The Prophet himself and the first three Caliphs, by their trading activities added to the prestige of merchants.⁵ Muslim traditions extolled merchants and trade. "Be merchants because nine tenths of subsistence (rizq) come from trade." Another Hadith goes still further while it makes an honest merchant rank with martyrs and righteous men.⁶

5) The development of the credit system and the banking institutions created a favourable atmosphere for commercial transactions.⁷

Other factors and tendencies of the time hampered the development of trade:

1) Saving was looked upon with contempt, and economy was identified with miserliness. Merchants were scoffed at for

(1) See Zaydan I, pp.67-74; pp.80-4.

(2) Prolegomena, p.239.

(3) Wathiq abolished customs on Chinese goods. See Ya'qubi, history p.590.

(4) Consider the mission of Ibn Fadlan to Bulgar (921-2 A.D.)

(5) Jahiz Bukh p.301.

(6) Maqdisi-Yawagit, p.27; see also: Torrey, The Commercial Theological Terms in the Koran, esp. pp.2-3.

(7) See "Banking." Credit will be explained later in the chapter.

amassing riches "out of habbas, dirats, danags, quarters and halves of dirhams."¹ The poet Ibn al-Rumi remarked sarcastically, "what have merchants to do with generosity? Their essence is the love of dirats."² A merchant protested by saying that "no one is called a miser unless he is rich,"³ but this protest is but another indication of the moral attitude of the majority of people towards the accumulation of capital.

2) Socially, merchants stood lower than the nobility.⁴ The noble families in general kept aloof from commercial dealings. When Yahya the Barmakid wanted to engage in trade, a merchant admonished him by saying: "You are a noble man... and commerce is not an occupation to befit you."⁵ The famous wazir Ibn al-Zayyat (Muh b. 'abd al-Malik) used to say: "The F of the F raised me from the degradation (dhul) of commerce to the honour of the vazirate."⁶ The wazir Ibn al-Furat described the great merchant of the 10th century Ibn al-Jassas as "an uncultured commoner" (raqi'anni).⁷

However, this attitude should not be unduly exaggerated. The masses honoured merchants, and even the nobility had to humour them for their wealth.⁸

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- (1) Jahis-Bukh., p.214.
 (2) Haqdisi-Yawaqit, p.27 and p.31.
 (3) Dimashqi, p.69.
 (4) I. Khaldun, prolegomena, p.331.
 (5) Jahshiyari, p. 186.
 (6) Tha'alibi, Khass, p.5.
 (7) Tanukhi I. p.263.
 (8) Dimashqi, p.61 pp.47 and 68. Tan.I, pp.18-22.

3) Islam forbade "riba",¹ which first meant "the increment on loans" and then "any unjustified increment, for which no compensation is given."² Some jurists condemned the usage of the suftaja because the sender, regarded as the creditor, gets the benefit of avoiding the cost of transport.³ Even delayed payments were admitted only in cases of difficulty.⁴

In spite of the divergences among the jurists, the prevailing view was that riba applies only to money and foodstuffs. One "must not grant credit for profit"; and "foodstuffs must be delivered and accepted simultaneously with the contract."⁵

The prohibition of Riba would have prevented the development of banking and credit, had it not been evaded by two means: first, the bankers and money changers were mainly non-Muslims. Secondly, as the social relations and needs grew more complicated, the jurists tried to devise some legal way out of the difficulty. In his book "Kitab al-Makharij wa'l Hiyal" Shaibani practically legalized the sale of goods unseen, delay in payment, transfer of debts, reduction of the amount of debts for early payments, payments by instalments, and above all the

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- (1) The prohibition is emphatic: "Allah has..forbidden riba... Allah abolishes riba." Qur'an Sura II, verses 275-80.
 (2) E.I, art Riba, III, p.1149.
 (3) See on suftaja the chapter on "Banking." See also E.I, III, pp.1150.
 (4) Qur'an, Sura IV, v 164: "If anyone is in difficulty, let there be delay, till he is able to pay; but it is better for you to remit it, if ye be wise."
 (5) Ma'alin al-urba, p.60, gives details taken from Ghazali = Ihya' II, pp.63-4.

taking of interest. To legalize interest, a "credit sale" (bay' al-'ina) was devised: If B wanted to borrow from A at an interest, he sold A some fictitious goods for a sum equal to the loan, which sum he received immediately. Then A would resell the same goods to B for a sum equal to the loan he advanced and the interest he demanded; the whole to be paid at a later date by B. Thus A received an interest on his money.¹

4) The hoarding of foodstuffs in expectation of the time of scarcity was legally forbidden.² But this restriction was often ignored, and "regrating" (ihṭikar) played an important part in commercial activities.³

It is noteworthy that monopoly, though not forbidden, was not familiar in Irak. An approach to it was the "Daman" (i.e. farming out). Suli speaks of a man who controlled the river traffic between Baghdad and Basra in 326/940.⁴ State monopolies were non-existent, except for the weaving of special textiles (Tiras) for the Caliph.⁵ Adud al-Dawla instituted the only recorded semi-monopoly for the production of silk cloth (qazz) and ice.⁶

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- (1) Shaibani, pp.6-7. He suggests other methods, but this is the most important; see Jahiz: Bukh, p.218, esp. not 5.
 (2) Ka'ahim al-qurba, pp.66-7.
 (3) Cf. Eclipse I, pp.73-5; Maqrizi attributes a number of famines in Egypt primarily to hoarding - Ighatha, pp.16-41, esp. p.17 and p.26.
 (4) Suli, p.206.
 (5) See Zaydan I, p.124 ff.
 (6) I.A IX, p.16.

B. Merchants

Though merchants traded in goods of mass consumption their main trade was in articles of luxury like carpets, jewels, slaves, etc.¹ Their chief customers were the officials and the well-to-do, and much of their gains depended on political issues.

The career of a typical merchant of this period, will be best illustrated by the story of the famous Ibn al-Jassas.

Ibn al-Jassas was an Iraqi jeweller who went to Fustat (n. Cairo) in the time of Khumarawaih (883-895). Having had some deals with this prince, he won his favour and was appointed by him his sole furnisher.² According to his own account, his rise began when one day a stewardess brought him a necklace consisting of 200 gems, which he valued at a thousand dinars each. The stewardess asked him to reduce those gems in size so as to be used on dolls. "Straightway" he said, "I collected the dealers and purchased as many gems as I could...I bought in all two hundred gems which cost me...less than 100,000 dirhams, whereas I had acquired 200,000 dinars." He then continued for a time in the prince's employment and amassed enormous riches.³

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- (1) The contents of Jahiz "Tabassur" and Dimashq's "Ishara" - show this.
- (2) Tan. I, pp. 261-2.
- (3) Ibid. I, pp. 260-1. The story is given with some variations in Fawat al-Wafayat I, pp. 177-8. Here each gem is valued at 100,000 dinars and the total at 200,000,000, dinars, though $200 \times 100,000 = 20,000,000$.

In 282/895 Khuzaruwaih gave his daughter's hand to the Caliph Mu'tadid, and asked Ibn al-Jassas to supply the dowry and accompany the bride to Baghdad. This commission too brought him immense riches.¹

From 895 to 927 A.D. Ibn al-Jassas transferred his centre to Baghdad, where he gained additional prestige and wealth. Things went on smoothly until in 296/908 he was punished by a confiscation for giving refuge to the pretender Ibn al-Mu'tazz.² At this occasion, according to his own estimate he lost 20 million dinars; the amount quoted by the historians varies between 4,000,000³ and 16,000,000 dinars,⁴ while the wazir Ibn al-Furat evaluates the total in cash and goods at 10,000,000 dinars.⁵ And yet, according to Ibn al-Jassas' own calculation, he still remained in possession of 1,200,000 dinars.⁶

By 311/923 Ibn al-Jassas had recovered his wealth and influence. The wazir Ibn al-Furat feared him and sought his ruin, but Ibn al-Jassas was too shrewd. He paid the wazir a secret visit and threatened him that if he did not accept a compromise by the morning of the following day, he would transfer to the treasury two million dinars gold and silver, and then ask the Caliph to appoint a new wazir who "would think of me as

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- (1) Tan. I, p.262.
 (2) Fawat, I, p.177; Tan. I, p.16; Eclipse I, pp.5-8.
 (3) Eclipse I, p.35.
 (4) Fawat (quoting Ibn al-Jawzi) p.177.
 (5) Sabi, p.223; cf. Eclipse I, p.239.
 (6) Tan. I, pp. 16-7.

his lord and benefactor, and be guided entirely by my advice." Being asked about the alternative, Ibn al-Jassas said to Ibn al-Furat: "Swear immediately...that you will be on my side... in small matters and great, that you will not reduce any payments due to me nor alter any of my contracts - nor otherwise injure my interests, but will on the contrary promote them and my good repute." On his part, Ibn al-Jassas had to take an oath that he would be loyal, obedient and helpful to the wazir. The following day, the wazir "ordered letters to be sent to the provincial finance ministers bidding them treat my (i. j's) agents with respect and look after my goods and estates. He also ordered the clerks of the bureau to remove all instructions which they had introduced tending to the alteration of my receipts and the increase of my charges. I was to be treated according to the original practice."¹ Thus the power of finance could subdue the wazir, and a merchant could even influence the policy of state. This was probably the last masterstroke of Ibn al-Jassas, before he died in 315/927.²

This story suggests that:

- 1) Ibn al-Jassas dealt only with articles of luxury like jewels and furniture.
- 2) He was unknown till he established his relations with Khumarawaih, and the Abbasid Caliphs at Baghdad. Consequently

(1) Tan. I, pp.18-22.

(2) Fawat I, p.176.

his best customers belonged to the highest official world.

3) At times, his profits were enormous and out of proportion to his outlay.

4) He kept a large amount of his enormous capital in cash.¹

5) His wealth gave him such prestige as to frighten the wazir himself, yet his position was insecure and his property liable to confiscation.

Merchants were the great capitalists of this century. A shopkeeper in western Baghdad had goods worth 200,000 dinars in his shop alone.² The wealth of a Basrian merchant amounted to twenty million dinars.³ A Baghdadi merchant had 80,000 dinars buried in a well.⁴

Dimashqi distinguishes three types of merchants:

1) al-Rakkad (lit. the "courrier", travelling salesman) or the merchant trading with different countries. He usually keeps a list of the prices of all goods in the country to which he intends to take goods, and another list of the tolls payable in different countries. Before buying a commodity he considers its price, adds to it the expenses and tolls to be paid till it reaches its destiny, and then compares the result with the

(1) Suli [quoted in Eclipse I, p.35 note 1] reports that when Ibn al-Jassas was confiscated in 296/908, one million dinars were found in green jars buried in his house.

(2) Tan. I, p.161.

(3) Zaydan V, p.42.

(4) Tan. VIII, p.57. Cf. Dimashqi, p.47.

price in his first list, thus making sure of his profits.¹

ii) al-khazzan (lit. "the hoarder"). His method is to buy a commodity when it is abundant, the sellers numerous, and the demand for it comparatively low. Then he waits till the conditions are reversed, i.e. till the commodity becomes scarce, owing to the difficulty or high cost of transport, or to the rise of demand. The khazzan must possess a special knowledge of the amount of goods produced and brought to the market, of their prices and the conditions of transport. He need not travel, but must be kept well informed.²

Tanukhi quotes an anecdote throwing light on this class of merchants and their commercial dealings. A Baghdadi merchant saw a messenger coming from Rakka with letters to some merchants. He got hold of the letters and found them "cramped with orders to dealers to hold on any oil which they had and sell none, for oil was getting dear and scarce." He immediately summoned his agents and told them to borrow as much money as they could from various sarrafa (bankers). When evening came, the agents had purchased oil for 3000 dinars. Then he told them to get more funds, and to go on buying. Now, 4000 dinars' worth of oil was purchased and owing to their demands the price rose by 5%. In spite of this a new consignment, for another 3,000 dinars, was acquired, until in the evening no oil to speak of was left in

(1) Dimashqi, p.54.

(2) Dimashqi, p.48.

the market. Meanwhile, the other dealers had read their correspondence and came to offer the merchant a price of 20% in excess to what he paid. After refusal they offered 30%, and after a month 50 and 60 per cent, but the merchant was adamant. Only when the suggested profit reached 100 per cent the merchant thought that it would be a mistake to escape such a bounty and sold oil for 20,000 dinars.¹

iii) al-Muhabbi [lit. "The supplier"]. This merchant does not travel, but has agents at different places to whom he sends goods to sell and who in their turn buy goods and send them to him. The agent must have commercial experience of the goods he buys or sells.² Such an agent was called wakil (representative), and the numerous references to wakils show their role in the promotion of trade for they performed the functions of the branches of modern companies.³

The class called simsar (broker) was commissioned to buy or sell goods.⁴ The simsara were well paid; a Baghdadi simsar used to get thousands of dinars from a Khurasani merchant for whom he sold goods at Baghdad during the pilgrimage season.⁵

Merchants sometimes formed partnerships, or companies, of

- (1) Tan. II, pp.161-3.
 (2) Dimashqi, p.52; Shaibani, p.11.
 (3) Tan.II, pp.161-3; Tan.F.II, p.5; Jahshiyari, p.320.
 Shaibani, p.14.
 (4) Shaibani, p.11.
 (5) Tan.F II, p.11.

which three types are on record:

1) The 'Inan partnership in which the capitals are combined and all the partners work together and share gains and losses in proportion to their contributions.

2) The partnership of Mufawada [lit. "negotiation"] in which the partners agree to share the gain or loss of their operations although they keep their capitals separate.

3) The partnership of the wajuh [lit. "dignitaries"], in which one partner lends his prestige and good will, while the other does the work.¹

C. Credit

In their operations, merchants depended a great deal on credit. According to Dimashqi, there were three general kinds of credit:

a) Kudaraba or Musarada, i.e. working with another person's capital for a share in the profits, as defined by contract. The merchant was not bound to replace any loss to the capital, as long as he did not go beyond the places agreed upon in the contract. He paid only for his lodgings, while travelling expenses were deducted from the general profit.²

b) Salaf mu'ajjal, or lending capital to be repaid at a

(1) Ghazali: *Ihya* II, pp.65-6. Ghazali considers the first type as the only legal one.

(2) Dimashqi, p.40; Shaibani, pp.27-8; Ghazali, *Ihya* II, p.65.

defined future date.

e) Is'tilaf munajjim: or lending capital to be repaid by instalments.¹

Merchants borrowed money from the sarrafa (money changers) at an interest.² Tanukhi speaks of a Baghdadi merchant who borrowed 10,000 dinars from the sarrafa.³ Some merchants had special brokers (naqid) to arrange such matters for them. A merchant from Ubulis, who needed money sent his naqid to Basra to borrow 500 dinars, which the naqid did.⁴

Merchants borrowed from each other as well. A certain cloth merchant owed a "number of traders in Baghdad" 4000 dinars. But as he disposed only of 400 dinars, his creditors agreed to his suggestion that he should open his shop and pay his debts by instalments, at the rate of 400 a year, so as to pay off in the course of ten years. This anecdote shows that borrowing was quite common among merchants, as the debtor owed 4,000 dinars to "several traders"; and secondly that the necessity and utility of credit was fully appreciated since the merchants agreed to wait ten years before being paid in full.⁵

Sometimes, merchants dealt with their customers on a credit basis. They accepted delayed payments for the sold goods.⁶ A

(1) Dimnahqi, p.40; Ritter, p.58.

(2) See Tan. I, p.204; Sali, p.231.

(3) Ibid. II, pp.161-3.

(4) Tan. P. II, p.112.

(5) See the anecdote in Tanukhi, II, an 29, pp.149-50.

(6) I. Qutaiba, 'Uyan I, p.256.

man died in Basra, owing 80,000 dirhams to a flour merchant alone.¹ They also acted as money lenders. Ibn al-Rumi complained of a merchant who oppressed people in collecting their debts.² Tanakhi speaks of a man who was in financial straits because merchants did not lend him money.³ The loans varied from "thousands of dinars" to a fraction of a dinar.⁴

At some places, credit dealers formed associations. Jahiz reports that in Basra there was a special circle of "credit dealers" (ashab al-fna) who lent money at interest.⁵

A special document called sakk was drawn up when money was borrowed or paid. It was usually endorsed by witnesses,⁶ and sealed with clay.⁷

There existed also more complicated forms of credit. Sometimes, a borrower needed a guarantor who would pay in case of default.⁸ Another method was the Tahwil or "shifting" of debts by which the clearing of accounts was effected. For example if

- (1) Jahiz-Bukh., p.240.
- (2) Maqdisi-Yawaqit, p.31.
- (3) Tan. P.II, p.5.
- (4) Jahiz-Bukh., p.221, p.224.
- (5) Jahiz-Bukh., p.218.
- (6) I. Qutaiba, 'Uyun (1925) I, p.255; Shaibani, p.20 gives the text of a "borrowing" sakk and a "payment" sakk. See also "Banking", II^B.
- (7) Jahiz-Bukh., p.236.
- (8) Shaibani, pp.17-8.

A owed B 10 dinars and C owed A 10 dinars, A could transfer the account to C thus making C owe A ten dinars.¹ This was easy when A, B and C lived in the same town, but more difficult if they lived in different towns. To meet such cases, the suftais (bill of exchange) system was applied. By means of suftais accounts could be settled between towns or countries, without having to transport money or goods for the sake of clearance.²

According to Abu Shaja", "merchants drew suftais for vast sums on their correspondents", and these suftais were accepted in other independent Muslim countries. Abu Shaja" suggests that they were accepted even in "the enemy countries."³

The credit system was usual in the dealings between merchants and the state. In times of crisis or delay in the collection of taxes, the state relied on merchants for funds. Ubaidallah b. Sulaiman (d.288/900), Wazir of Mu'tadid, advised his son and deputy to borrow from merchants in case of need.⁴ 'Ali b. 'Isa also used to borrow from merchants.⁵ The fact that he instituted a state bank does not invalidate this point because the bankers themselves were merchants, and to some extent acted as intermediaries between the state and the other merchants.⁶ The Caliph

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- (1) Ibid., p.18.
 (2) For details see chapter on Banking IIa.
 (3) Eclipse II, pp.138-9.
 (4) Sabi, p.188.
 (5) Tan.VIII, p.26.
 (6) Ibid., pp.26-7.

Radi, being in financial straits (in 322/933) complained that he did not find in his time such rich merchants as Ibn al-Jassan, "by whom the sovereign is strengthened, or whom he approaches in difficulties."¹ This statement does not mean that the Caliph ceased to deal with merchants, but only that these dealings were not as ample as before.

While borrowing, the minister usually offered a security. 'Ali b. 'Isa's practice was to offer revenue suftajas to be cashed when due.² Sometimes, the revenue of a province, or some taxes only, were allocated.³ If the merchants were maltreated or discontented, they refused to make advances to the state. They refused credit to Ibn Shirzad (332-4/943-5) who oppressed and confiscated the property of some of them.⁴

Merchants levied an interest from the state on the money they lent, or on the suftajas they discounted.⁵ 'Ali b. 'Isa paid an interest of 1 dirham per dinar (= 1/15).⁶ The governor Kalwadhani borrowed (in 319/931) 200,000 dinars at the same rate.⁷

D. Markets

A description of the markets of Mesopotamia serves two

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- (1) Suli, p.16.
 - (2) Tan. VIII, p.26.
 - (3) Sabi, p.41; Eclipse II, p.329; Tan. VIII, p.26.
 - (4) Cf. I.A. VIII, pp.336-7; Suli, pp.250-1. and p.264.
 - (5) Sabi, p.188.
 - (6) Sabi, p.85.
 - (7) Eclipse I, p.213; It is noteworthy that the interest is not defined by time, but only by quantity. Thus 'Ali b. 'Isa paid his interest monthly (Tan. VIII, p.26; Sabi. p.85), while no period is given for Kalwadhani's loan.

purposes: it illustrates the importance of commerce in the economic life of the country, and it gives an idea of the geographic distribution of the more flourishing mercantile communities.

Markets were integral and important parts of towns.¹ when the building of Baghdad (8th century) and Samarra (9th century) was planned, markets received a great consideration.² On granting Afahin lands for residential quarters in Samarra, Mu'basim told him to build "a small market with shops for merchants."³ when Mutawakkil (846-61 A.D.) built al-Ja'fariyya north of Samarra, "he founded in every quarter a market."⁴

We shall now describe the markets of single towns:

Baghdad, a meeting place for merchants since Sassanian times,⁵ was the commercial centre of the Abbasid Empire. Its geographical position made it the natural market for internal trade; the Tigris and the Euphrates connected it with the sea routes in the south and with Armenia and Syria in the north and the west; while ^{the} Baghdad-Khorasan highway rendered it a centre for Persian and Central Asian trade.⁶ Such a commercial role accounts for its numerous markets.

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- (1) See Massignon, Enquête, p.42;
 - (2) See details in Ya'qubi.
 - (3) Ya'qubi, p.259.
 - (4) Ibid., p.267.
 - (5) I. Jawali: Manaqib, pp.7-8.
 - (6) Cf. Ya'qubi, pp.257-8.

Baghdad's "great market",¹ "the cradle of merchants,"² was al-Karkh, two farsakhs long and one farsakh wide.³ It had important markets on both sides of the "Karkh Gate" street; large markets with all kinds of goods at the "Basra Gate",⁴ and other markets in the "Muhawwal Gate" street, where ships coming from the Euphrates unloaded.⁵ "Each class of merchants and merchandise occupied a special street...; each market was a block by itself."⁶ Among Karkh's single markets were: "the fruit market" (Suq al-Battikh);⁷ "the cloth merchants' market" (Suq al-Bazzazin); "the food market" (Suq al-Ta'am);⁸ "the chemists' market" (Suq al-'Attarin);⁹ "the money-changers' market" (Suq al-Sarradin);¹⁰ "the cotton market",¹¹ and "the booksellers' market" (Suq al-Sarradin) which had (circa 892) over a hundred shops.¹²

The Harbiyya quarter was the centre of foreign merchants. Its "Syrian Gate market" consisted of a central market with

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- (1) Ibid., p.246
 - (2) I.A. VIII, p.455; see Ist., p.84; I.H. (B.G.A.) p.242.
 - (3) Ya'qubi, p.246.
 - (4) Ibid., p.245.
 - (5) Khatib, p.65 ff.
 - (6) Ya'qubi, p.241 and p.246.
 - (7) Khatib, p.68; Tha'alibi; Thimar, p.411. On the history of this market see Khatib, p.22. For maps, see Le Strange, Baghdad.
 - (8) Khatib, p.67.
 - (9) I. Jawzi, o.c., pp.27-8; Ya'qubi, pp.245-6.
 - (10) I. Taifur, p.179.
 - (11) Khatib, p.36.
 - (12) Ya'qubi, p.245.

long side-streets (Darab) each called after the town whose inhabitants dwelt therein. It contained "all kinds of goods"; and its inhabitants came from Balkh, Merv, the Kuhuttal, Bukhara, Ispechab, Istakhanj, the territory of Kabulshah and Khwarizm. The natives of each town had a leader (Ka'id) and a chief (ra'is).¹

The principal commercial quarter of Eastern Baghdad was "Bah al-Faq" at the end of the central bridge.² From the "Bridge Square", two great markets branched off: "Suq al-Awakifa" (shoe and leather makers' market) and the Suq al-Tib" in which perfumes and flowers were sold.³ Beyond them lay "The Food Market" (Suq al-Ta'am) with the bakers' and butchers' shops; "The Goldsmiths' Market" (Suq al-Sagha), situated in a magnificent building, and a market of booksellers.⁴

The sheep market was situated near the Mukharram Gate, on the Batatin canal.⁵ The Suq Khudair, in which the wares (taraiif) of China were sold, stood near the Upper Bridge.⁶ Finally in the Great Rusafa market (Suq al-Rusafa) all kinds of goods were sold.⁷

To sum up: (1) in each trade merchants grouped together

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- (1) Ya'qubi, p.246 and p.248.
 - (2) See Le Strange-Baghdad, pp.178, 181, 218, 320.
 - (3) Ibid., pp.271-3.
 - (4) I. Jawzi, o.c., p.26; Ya'qubi, p.253.
 - (5) Khatib, p.69.
 - (6) Ya'qubi, p.254.
 - (7) Ibid., p.253.

in special markets; (2) western Baghdad was commercially more important than the eastern side; (3) Baghdad was the commercial capital of Mesopotamia attracting goods from all over the East.

Basra. Next in commercial importance was Basra, advantageously situated at a point marking the limit between the sea, the alluvial plains and the desert.¹ It was the gate at Irak, the emporium of eastern trade, and the meeting place of caravans from the desert.²

In praise of the enterprise and love of adventures of his countrymen, Jahiz says: "There is no town on earth, within men's reach, no vast desert and no corner of land without a Basrian."³ Similarly Ibn al-Faqih eulogizes the Basrians: "Those who travel farthest in search of gain are the Basrian and the Himyarite. He, who penetrates into the faraway Parghana or Morocco sees there either of them."⁴

The commercial fame of Basra was such that Ibn Hawkal thought unnecessary to dwell on the subject.⁵ Goods from all over the East were brought to it, so that it was described as "the emporium of the Arabs."⁶ It was no coincidence that the

- (1) Baladhuri, *Origins* II, p.60; Maq., p.117; Yaqut, *Buldan* I, p.336. Jahiz thus characterizes his native town: "He who comes to...Basra sees...deer, hunters (and fishermen); hears the chorus of sailors in a ship, and the hida' (chant) of a bedouin behind a camel - Afghani, p.353; Tha'a libi; Thimar, p.419.
- (2) H.A.A. XII, p.321. It was justly called "the eye of Irak" while Irak was "the eye of the world." Tha'ahibi, Lat.p.102.
- (3) Jahiz, *Bukh.*, p.298.
- (4) I.F., p.51.
- (5) I.H. (k), p.238.
- (6) Afghani, p.353.

first manual for merchants was written by one of its natives, al-Jahiz (d.869).¹

The centre of Basra's desert trade was "al-Marbad," by its western gate, on the edge of the desert.² Starting as a camel market,³ it developed rapidly and passed through four successive stages. (i) By the end of the period of the Orthodox Caliphs (40/660) it became a market for Bedouins, where dates, camels, arms and the spoils of war were sold. (ii) It expanded during the Umayyad period (till 132/749) and was visited by tribesmen and townsmen for trade. Meanwhile it became a literary centre where poets, like Farazdak and Jarir recited their poems, and where the tribes sent their delegations to attend literary competitions. (iii) By the end of the 3rd century A.H./ 9th A.D. al-Marbad became a real business quarter, a pleasure resort and a scene of literary activities, where grammarians and philologists met Bedouins to question them on their pure Arabic. Marbad became so flourishing that it was surnamed "the eye of Basra." (iv) The decline began in the 4th century A.H./10th A.D.,⁴ and by the time of Yaqut (1228 A.D.) it was an isolated little town lying in the desert three miles west of Basra.⁵

(1) R.A.A. XII, p.322-3.

(2) I.H(k), p.236; Yaqut, Buldan IV, p.484.

(3) Afghani, pp.357; Yaqut, Buldan, IV, p.484.

(4) Haq., p.118; I.H(k), p.237.

(5) See details in Afghani, pp.326-7; pp.356-60; Yaqut, Buldan, IV, p.484; The Maqamat of Badf al-Lam ('Abdu's ed. Beirut, 1889), pp.59-60.

The centre of Basra's sea trade was al-Ubulla, situated on the canal of the same name.¹ It possessed numerous bazars and caravan-sarais.² The Ubulla canal was always lined with boats. Great sums were spent on building stone staircases on the banks of the canal so that at the low tide it should be possible to descend to the level of the water in order to load and unload the ships.³

Basra possessed also an important sheep market.⁴ According to Nasiri-Khusraw, a "market" was held three times daily at three different places in Basra. It was held at "Suq Khuza'a" in the morning, at "Shuq Uthman", opposite Ubulla at midday, and at "Suq al-Qaddahin" in the evening.⁵

Mosul. Mosul, too, was a great commercial centre. Here the trade routes from Azerbaijan, Syria, Armenia and Irak converged.⁶ Yaqut calls it "the gate of Irak; the key to Khurasan; and the starting point for Azerbaijan."⁷ In time of scarcity, it was a granary of wheat for Irak.⁸

Ibn Hawkal who visited the town in 358/969 reports that "of all kinds of markets, it had two, three or four, each of them

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- (1) See the description of its prosperity in I.H., p.236.
 (2) N-kh (trans.), p.243; Maq., p.117.
 (3) Ibid., p.245, note.
 (4) Kresner 'Ali b. 'Isa, p.27.
 (5) N-kh., p.236.
 (6) I.H(k), p.215.
 (7) Yaqut, Buldan IV, p.683.
 (8) Maq., p.138; Eclipse II, p.91.

containing a hundred shops or more."¹ Maqdisi praised its markets, which were mostly covered, and its excellent inns (funduq).² Among the markets of Mosul, there was a "food market" (Suq al-Ta'am), a "shoemakers' market" (Suq al-Asakifa)³ and a "sheep market" (Suq al-Qhanam).⁴ Finally in the large open square within its castle, a market was held on Wednesdays (Suq al-Arba'a), to which farmers came.⁵

Kufa lay on the edge of the fertile plain and the desert. It was an important station on the pilgrim's road, and a meeting place of caravans from the desert.⁶ Maqdisi has nothing but praise for its markets.⁷ It had two commercial centres: "Dar al-Riq" and "al-Kunasa". The former, situated on the right bank of the Euphrates, began as a place where the spoils of war were collected and sold, but gradually developed into a trade centre. Its markets were covered and extended from the (Kufa) bridge to the centre of the town. Among their occupiers were sarrafs, slave dealers and sellers of animals.

Al-Kunasa lay by the western gate of the town, and was the centre of trade with the Arabian peninsula. In one of its

(1) I.H. (k), p.215.

(2) Maq., p.138.

(3) I.A. VIII, p.89.

(4) Kremer 'Ali b. 'Issa, p.27.

(5) Maq., p.138. The castle stood on the affluent called Nahr Zubaida. It had an inn in each corner. See in i.Jubair, p.235, a description of the central market in 1184 A.D.

(6) I.R. 174 ff.; Qudama, p.185.

(7) Maq., p.117.

markets, "Suq al-Baradhin" camels, mules and sheep were sold.¹ The sheep market was probably in this quarter.² In the second half of the 10th century, al-Kunasa was on the decline.³

Samarra had its heyday in the 3rd A.H./9th A.D. cent., when it was the capital; but its merchants were generally Irakia and the business transacted in it was mainly internal.⁴ In the 10th century its commercial importance declined,⁵ therefore Ya'qubi's description of its markets is out of date for our period.⁶

In general every town was a market for the surrounding countryside, a storehouse for its products, and a shopping centre for its needs. The country folk either visited ordinary markets, or attended fairs regularly held at certain days⁷. For example, a suburb of Mosul (Suq al-Ahad) held fairs at definite periods, when merchants, peasants and semi-nomad kurds met to buy or sell goods.⁸

B. Exports and Imports

1. Exports: The Hudud al-'Alam (982 A.D.) this sums up

- (1) Barraqi, pp.123-6.
- (2) Kremer, 'Ali b. 'Isa, p.27.
- (3) Maq., p.117.
- (4) Ya'qubi, p.263.
- (5) Has'udi, VII, p.131.
- (6) Ya'qubi, pp:258-63.
- (7) Cf. Maq., p.130.
- (8) I.H., p.217. See the description of a fair in I. Jubair, pp.241-2.

the data of the earlier geographers on the exports of Irak:
 "From it came dates which are exported everywhere, as well as
 various textiles and most of the implements becoming kings."¹
 In more detail, the local products of single towns were as
 follows:-

Baghdad: cotton stuffs and silk textiles, especially
 kerchiefs, aprons and turbans, crystals turned on lathes; glaze-
 ware; and various oils, potions and electuaries.²

Basra: dates in large quantities; Khazz cloth; rose water;
 essence of violets, and henna-dye.³

Uballa: Bulli kerchiefs and turbans.⁴

Mosul: curtains, mushh (striped woollen fabrics) and other
 textiles;⁵ wheat and barley;⁶ honey;⁷ and salt.⁸

Kufa: Khazz kerchiefs; dates; and essence of violets.⁹

Wasit: gilim (tapestry woven carpets), curtains and
 trouser-cords.¹⁰

Haisan: curtains, carpets, mats and cushions.¹¹

Amid: woollen overcoats (tayalisa); linen fabrics; thin
 curtains; napkins, and embroidered garments.¹²

(1) H-'A. folio 31^a. Sometimes, geographers make no distinc-
 tion between products and exports.

(2) H-'A. folio 31^a; Maq., p.128.

(3) Maq., p.128; and p.145.

(4) H-'A. folio 31^a.

(2) H-'A. folio 31^a; Maq., p.147.

(3) Maq., p.128; and p.145.

(4) H-'A. folio 31^a. p.127.

(5) Jahiz, Tabassur, p.347. district of Mosul. Qud., p.245. See

(6) Maq., p.145. p.347.

(7) Tha'alibi, Thimar, p.4 p.128.

(10) Maq., p.129.

(11) Jahiz, o.c., p.346; Tha'alibi, Lat. p.111.

(12) Maq., p.145; Jahiz, o.c., p.344.

Harran: cotton, honey, and scales.¹

Nisibin: lead, scales, drugs and glass stone of good quality.²

Jesira: dried fruits, and good horses.³

Sakka: reed-pens, oils and soap.⁴

'Abbadan: reed mats.⁵

Hulwan: condiments, and figs.⁶

2. Imports

Jahiz gives a detailed list of goods imported into Irak.⁷

We shall utilize his data with such additions as could be found in the sources. Irak imported from:

Iran: carpets of all types, thin linen shirts, embroidered and unembroidered garments, silk textiles, woollen overcoats high fur caps (qalanis), fruits (apples, peaches and raisins), fruit juices, rose water, potions, jacin oil, kohl, saffron, turquoise and sugar.⁸

(1) Maq., p.145.

(2) Jahiz, o.c., p.346; Maq., p.145; I.H. (B.O.) p.143; H-'A. folio 32a.

(3) Maq., p.145.

(4) Ibid.

(5) H.A. folio 31b.

(6) Jahiz, o.c., p.347.

(7) Jahiz, Kitab al-Tabassar bi'l-Tijara in R.A.A. XII, 1932, p.326 ff.

(8) Jahiz, o.c., pp.344-6; Maq., p.367, pp.442-3; Tha'alibi, Thimar, pp.426-8 and pp.430-1; Lata'if, pp.109-11; Ist., p.152, 190, 213; I.R., p.153; cf. Jahshiyari, pp.182-6. Ahwas supplied Irak with most of its needs for sugar; and used to send the Caliph 30,000 rats per annum as part of the Kharaj. Tha'alibi Thimar, p.426; I.Faq., pp.253-5.

Transoxiana: cotton and silk fabrics, woollen clothes; saffron; minivers; furs of steppe foxes; Turkish slaves; arms like bows and swords; and above all the samarkand paper.¹

India: spices, jewels, esp. ceylonese corundum, drugs, camphor, ambergris, Indian aloes, tiger skins, elephants, coconuts, velveted cotton cloth, bamboo and special kinds of wood like ebony and white sandal.²

Tibet: musk of the best quality and purest scent.³

Malacca: (Kedah) tin.⁴

China: silk and silk textiles, dibai, porcelain, female slaves, eunuchs, musk, aloes of champa, cinnamon, saddles, lubud (saddle-cloth), drugs, paper, ink, peacocks and locks.⁵

Syria: silk textiles, cotton and cotton stuffs, aprons (mayazir), olive oil, sugar, glass and glass wares, fruits (apples, olives and figs).⁶

Arabian Peninsula: horses, camels, tanned leather, shoes,

- (1) Jahiz, o.c., pp.342; Haq., pp.324-6; Lata'if, p.126 ff. Barthold (Turkestan), pp.326-7; Marwazi, p.18.
- (2) Jahiz, o.c., p.340; p.334; I. Khundadhibh, pp.70-1; Tha'alibi, Thimar, p.423; Birari, Jama'ir, p.45 and p.47; Ya'qubi, pp.346-7; H-'A folio 5b; I. Faqih, p.251.
- (3) Marwazi, pp.28-9; I. Faqih, p.255; Abu'l-Qasin, p.35.
- (4) I. Khundadhibh, pp.70-1.
- (5) Jahiz, o.c., p.341; Ya'qubi, p.367; I. Khundadhibh, p.70 and p.135; I. Faqih, p.251.
- (6) Haq., pp.180-1.

ostriches and "kana" (Rotang used for making lances).¹

Yaman: Yamani garments, brocades, ladies' turbans ('assaib); an expensive kind of ambergris, brocades (dibai), saffron, wura (a yellow dye), frankincense; corundum, coats of mails, swords, mules, donkeys and beads.²

Egypt: the famous linen cloth "Duk"; shirts of various kinds; woollen textiles; papyrus; emeralds, balsam oil; mules; and donkeys.³

North Africa: "Labud" (saddle cloth - H.p.417); garments (kisa'); woollen cloth; qaras (leaves of the salem mimosa, used as dye); panthers; castor ; sables; male and female slaves; swords; black falcons.⁴

Spain: The best copper; mercury; (Bass); cotton stuffs and female slaves.⁵

Armenia: carpets; mats; thin floor rugs; curtains; wool or woollen cloth; trouser-cords; and mules' saddles.⁶

Rum (Asia Minor): the celebrated Rumi "dibai" brocades; linen shirts; upper garments; byssos (bazrun); carpets; and trouser-cords.⁷

(1) Jahiz, o.c., p.341; H-'A, p.145.

(2) Jahiz, o.c., p.342; Tha'alibi: Thimar, p.425; Lata'if, p.102; I. Faqih, p.252; Maq., p.97; I. Khurdadbeh, p.71. See on dibai E.1; Dozy - Vêtements, p.113.

(3) Jahiz, o.c., p.342; Tha'alibi, Lata'if, p.97; Thimar, pp. 420-1; Maq., pp.203-4; I. Faqih, p.252. According to Tha'alibi the Caliphs had a preference for Egyptian mules and donkeys; H-'A p.251.

(4) Jahiz, o.c., p.330; p.341; I. Faqih, p.252; Maq., p.239; I. Khurdadbeh, p.153; H-'A, p.153; p.447.

(5) Dimashqi, p.29; I. Faqih, p.252; Maq., p.239.

(6) Jahiz, o.c., p.348; Tha'alibi-Thimar, p.428; See Khatib, p.52; Abu'l-Qasim, p.35. According to I.H. each trouser-cord costed 1-10 dinars [I.H.(B) p.246].

(7) I.H.(B.G.) p.246; Tha'alibi-Thimar, p.425; H-'A, p.156; I. Faqih, p.252.

F. Internal communications

Fluvial communications beside their convenience were often faster than by land.¹ The two great waterways in Mesopotamia, the Tigris and the Euphrates, connected the upper parts of the country with the Persian Gulf and linked the different towns.²

The Tigris route is more frequently referred to than the Euphrates. It was navigable in its uppermost reaches, as between Tall Fafan and Mosul.³ From Mosul to Baghdad it was used normally,⁴ and from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf, communications were easier as the Tigris grew wider, slower and the natural obstacles dwindled. When Baghdad was threatened by the Karmatians in 315/927 "many inhabitants lined the bank with boats to which they took their property and prepared to sail to Wasit."⁵

The Tigris was used for military transport too. In 379/989 the Buwaihid wasir Khuwadhshah took his army from Mosul to Baghdad by boats.⁶ The Saridis frequently used the river to transport their troops.⁷

In 394/1003 the ruler of the Batiha sent an army in a hundred boats against a rebel.⁸

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- (1) I.A. VIII, p.15.
 - (2) Ya'qubi, p.234; I.Jawzi, Manaqib, p.8; Naq., p.120.
 - (3) Tan.II, An. 95, p.205.
 - (4) I.A., VIII, p.15; Eclipse III, p.176.
 - (5) I.A. VIII, p.136.
 - (6) Eclipse III, p.176.
 - (7) Cf. I.A. VIII, p.125.
 - (8) I.A. IX, p.128.

In the opposite direction the Tigris was used as far as Mosul. Above Tikrit the stream grew strong, but people could travel at a rate of 2 farsakhs daily.¹

In Baghdad itself, boats were very much in use, in spite of the existence of three bridges. "The people in Baghdad move about and cross (the river) in boats."² On the eve of the 10th century, Baghdad had 30,000 boats, earning 9,000 dirhams daily.³

The fluvial route from Baghdad to Basra is described by Ibn Rusta. Sailing from Baghdad, boats followed the eastern bank of the Tigris passing by Mada'in, Dair al-'Akul, Jarjaraya, Jabbul, Fan al-Sulh to Wasit. Thence they proceeded to Nahrbin, al-Hawanit and al-Katr, the capital of the Batiha region. Here, the river divided into three streams; the loads were transferred into smaller boats which passed to the Batiha, where they followed alleys between the reeds until they reached a large patch of clear water, called al-Hawl. Thence they sailed to Badhaward, and through the Abu'l'asad canal and the Blind Tigris reached the mouth of the Ka'kil canal which they followed down to Basra.⁴ Maqdisi points out that water courses after Wasit were shallow, so that the boats used there were small and flat bottomed.⁵ These boats were propelled with long

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- (1) Suli, pp.122-3.
 - (2) I. Jawzi: Manaqib, p.24.
 - (3) Maq., p.124.
 - (4) I.R., pp.184-5; I. Khurdadbeh, p.59.
 - (5) Maq., p.124.

poles,¹ and were probably similar to the mashhafa which are still used in the marsh region.

On the Euphrates, boats sailed upstream to Sakka,² but on the major part of its course, the river must have been used chiefly down stream.³

Some canals too were used for communications. The Nahrwan was navigated even by large boats.⁴ Ships coming by the Euphrates sailed in the 'Isa canal to al-Muhawwal (1 farsakh west of Baghdad) where their cargoes were transferred into small boats to enable them to follow the Sarat canal (a branch of Nahr 'Isa) to Baghdad.⁵ This was the way followed by the international merchants whom Ibn Khurdadhbih calls "Radanife."⁶ In 315/927 'Ali b. 'Isa sent 300 boats from the Tigris into the Euphrates by this way. The Nil canal similarly connected the Tigris and Euphrates in Lower Irak.⁷

At certain places along this waterway, guards were stationed and tolls collected; such was the case at Hawanit.⁸ On the heights between the waterways of the Batiha, sentry houses were built of reeds in order to ensure the safety of communications.⁹

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- (1) Ist., p.281-2; I.H., p.238.
 - (2) Maq., p.124.
 - (3) Tan. II, p.205; I. Jawzi-Manaqib, p.8.
 - (4) Ya'qubi, p.269.
 - (5) Cf. Yaqut-Buldan IV, p.432; I.R.(B), p.166; J.R.A.S. 1895, p.14 and p.71; Ya'qubi, p.250.
 - (6) I. Khurdadhbih, p.154.
 - (7) Ya'qubi, p.324.
 - (8) I.R., pp. 184-5.
 - (9) Ibid., p.185.

2. Communications by land were rendered easy by the flatness of the country. Baghdad was the starting point of five major routes to all parts of the country.

- a). Eastwards to Hulwan, then to Persia and Central Asia;
- b). northward to Mosul and the Jazira;
- c). southward to Wasit and Basra;
- d). south-eastward to Kufa and ultimately to Hijaz;
- e). westward to Rakka, then to Syria and Egypt.

Mosul and Basra also stood at important crossways.¹

The roads were built and maintained by the government. When the latter was firm, the security of communications was ensured, and no tolls were levied on merchants or travellers. In his decree of investiture to Abu Taghlib (in 366/976) Muti' ordered him "to guard roads with horsemen, to watch over them day and night...to accompany caravans...to protect life and property...and levy no fees on travellers, so that roads be safe, commerce profitable and livelihood good."²

Roads were under the supervision of the Postmaster general (Sahib Diwan al-Barid) who was supposed to know them well.³ For postal services, each road was divided into stations (sikak) with relays of mules and riders situated at each 2 farsakhs.⁴

The post "functioned for the 'Abbasid Caliphs",⁵ and

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- (1) This is taken from Ibn Khurdadhbih.
 - (2) Sabi Letters, pp.134-5.
 - (3) Qud., pp.184-5.
 - (4) Maq., p.66; Khawarizmi (V), p.63.
 - (5) Masudi, VI, p.263.

beside keeping up official communications served also for the purposes of intelligence.¹ It transmitted not only letters but goods as well. Ha'mun used to get water-melons from Khwarizm by post.² In urgent cases the post served even for the conveyance of passengers.³ A messenger of 'Adud al-Dawla hired a camel in the post caravan on his way from Mosul to Baghdad.⁴

Horses, mules, and more frequently camels, were used in the postal service;⁵ fast camels were especially desired.⁶ A single post relay consisted of 1 to 40 riders.⁷ In the Buwaihid period, Muizz al-Dawla introduced express messengers (*su'at*), of whom two distinguished themselves by their great speed, each of them doing more than thirty farsakhs between sunrise and sunset.⁸

The quickest news service was by carrier-pigeons. It was utilized by the government, and occasionally by merchants.⁹

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- (1) See Zaydan, I, pp.180-3; B.I, art. "Barid."
 - (2) Tha'alibi, Lata'if, p.129.
 - (3) Baihaqi, p.429; I. Taifur, p.343.
 - (4) Eclipse III, p.63.
 - (5) Qud., pp.184-5; Tan. VIII, p.65.
 - (6) Cf. I.A., VIII, p.480.
 - (7) Zaydan, I, p.182.
 - (8) Mez, p.502; I.A. VIII, p.425.
 - (9) See details in Mez, pp.503-4; De Goeje: Memoirs... Carmathes p.207; Sabbagh: La Colombe messagère. Paris 1885.

0. Commercial Relations with Foreign Countries.

1. Maritime Trade

The great sea highway used by the Arabs was the Mediterranean the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Small ships were used for coastal navigation, and large ones for the open sea.¹ The planks of the Mediterranean ships were nailed; those of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean ships were stitched with the cords of cocoa husk, after being perforated with stakes of palm wood and saturated with fat and oil.²

The ships of Basra were white, as they were plastered with fat and lime.³ The ships which sailed to China were "very large" and high out of the water.⁴ In the 11th century they carried several hundred men, "and stored on board a year's supply of grain."⁵ For repair work these ships had black slaves who could dive with their eyes open.⁶

Among the sailors of the Indian Ocean, there were Iraklis, but the majority came from Siraf and Oman.⁷ Sailors and merchants had "charts and sailing directories which they followed with implicit confidence."⁸ Hadi Hasan maintains that these directories were of Persian origin, but all we can say is that

(1) I.R. p.196.

(2) Nails were not used for fear that the ocean might attack them or that magnet mountains would attract them. The oil was to make the wood pliable, thus ensuring a safer navigation where eddies were found. See: I. Jubair, pp.70-1. p.312; p.316; Mas'udi, I, p.365; Qazwini, p.172; Matakhar I, p.89;

(3) I.R., p.196; Masudi, VIII, p.128.

(4) Chau Ju-kua, p.9; See H. Hasan, p.97.

(5) Chau Ju-kua, p.33.

(6) Ibid., p.31-2.

(7) Maq., p.18, 79, 92, 96; Masudi, I, 381-2; III, p.6.

(8) Maq., p.10.

the nautical terminology of the Arabs contained a fair number of Persian words.¹

The compass was not known in the 10th century. Sailors steered by the sun, the moon and the stars; they used carrier-pigeons² and shore sighting birds to keep their course and send messages; and relied on the regularity of the monsoons.³ The Indian Ocean was navigable in winter only,⁴ and an expedition to China took usually two years.⁵

From Basra started two sea-routes; the one to India and China; the other, round Arabia to the Red Sea and East Africa. As the entrance to the port of Basra was shallow, lighthouses were constructed to guide ships to steer clear of the shallow places.⁶

1). Sea trade with India was active because of its nearness. Some Indian princes like the Ballahra (vallaha-*raja*) of the western coast,⁷ and the Raja of Kanauj⁸ encouraged commerce with the Arabs. The great commercial centres were: Daibal, a sea port twenty four miles to the south-west of modern Tatta,⁹ Mansura on the river Sind, and Multan.¹⁰ At Daibal, the Arabs

(1) H. Hasan, pp.127-31; see Ferrand, *Jour. As.*, 1923, pp.357 ff; 1924, pp.193 ff.

(2) Pigeon-carriers were used by sailors since time immemorial. See Sabbagh, pp.35-6.

(3) Chau-Ja-Kua, p.28; H. Hasan, p.111.

(4) I.R., pp.86-7.

(5) Harwani, p.83.

(6) The lighthouses were in the form of small huts, erected on palm-tree trunks, fifty feet above sea level. People were stationed thereon to keep a fire lighted at night. *Ist.*, p.79; Masudi, I, p.280; *Mag.*, p.12; H-Kh., p.90.

(7) Masudi I, p.382; H-A., p.238.

(8) Harwani, p.47; H-A., p.239; cf. Sulayman, p.48.

(9) Heyd, p.34; C.H. of Ind. III, p.2.

(10) Masudi I, p.378. Mansura was a few miles north-east of Bahmanabad, C.H. of Ind. III, p.8.

exchanged goods with merchants who brought commodities from the interior and the neighbouring towns.¹ Multan was an important centre for trading with the interior because it was visited by crowds of pilgrims.²

Merchants traded with Ceylon; they bought from it precious stones (esp. corundum) and spices, and took to it many articles including Iraki wine.³ Between India and China the Arabs carried on a busy traffic with Sumatra, especially with the ports of Lambri and Barus,⁴ but the trade was in danger from the Indian pirates who were lurking on the way.⁵

On the way to China, the ships sailing from Basra⁶ passed Masqat, Daibal, Quilon (Kulam Kali); then around India and across the Bay of Bengal to Langabalus (an island of the Nicobar group), to Kalahbar (Keda in Malacca); then to the Isle of Tiuna (Sumatra), to Kundranj (on the delta of the Mekong), to Sank (Cambodia), to Sundar-Fulat (Poulo Condore); then through the sea of China to Lufin (Lung-pien in Tongking), and finally to Khanfu (Canton), "the great port."⁷

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- (1) Masudi I, p.207, 239; Ist., p.20.
 (2) Masudi I, p.375; I.H. p.322; I.R., p.135; Harwazi, p.48.
 (3) I. Khurdadhbih, p.67.
 (4) H. Hasan, p.101.
 (5) Suleyman, p.37.
 (6) See I.P., p.11; Harwazi, pp.21-2.
 (7) Cf. Suleyman, p.18; I. Khurdadhbih, pp.62-7; Hasan, pp.115-8.

During the 9th century, Arabian ships visited China,¹ and Chinese ships came to Basra.² But the civil war which raged in China between 874 and 889 A.D., not only paralyzed Chinese trade for a time, but also drove foreign merchants out of Canton and Ts'uan-Chou (Zaytan) to seek refuge at Keda on the west coast of the Malay peninsula.³ In Masudi's time (circa 332/944) Muslim and Chinese merchants met at Keda to exchange goods.⁴ Thus Keda became "the limit of navigation."⁵ This is supported by the *Merveilles de l'Inde*, which reflects chiefly the state of affairs in the 10th century.⁶ However, even during this period, individuals penetrated into China proper.⁷

But direct contact with Canton and Ts'uan-Chou was revived before the end of the 10th century.⁸ The Chinese government did their best to increase foreign trade, and sent a mission abroad in order to induce "the foreign traders of the south" to come to China, and promised them special licences to import goods. Later, it took measures to regulate this trade: in 971 A.D., the maritime bureau of Canton was reorganized, and between

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- (1) Ya'qubi, p.365-6; on the treatment of merchants in China see: Chau Ju-Kua, pp.15-6; and p.9; Marwazi, pp.22-3. On early Arab-Chinese relations see: Yale: Cathay I, pp.89-92; Hasan, pp. 97-9.
- (2) Masudi I, pp.302-7.
- (3) Chau Ju-Kua, p.18; Masudi I, pp.302-7; Hasan, p.105.
- (4) Masudi I, pp.307-8.
- (5) Yaqut, Buldan III, p.452-3, (Relating to 331/941); H-'A, p.225.
- (6) Mez, p.515.
- (7) See Masudi I, p.304; Marwazi, p.155.
- (8) Chau Ju-Kua, pp.18-19. According to Hasan (p.106 ff.) on the resumption of trade relations with China, "the Po-sé (Zoroastrian Persians) were gone and the 'Ta-shi (i.e. Arabs) were all in all."

976-83 A.D. the foreign trade was declared a state monopoly. In 999 A.D. bureaus for maritime trade were opened at Hang-Chou and at Ming-Chou (present Ning Po). "At the request and for the convenience of the foreign officials."¹

Among the foreign merchants visiting China, the Arabs played a major role,² and were well received by the Chinese government.³

The articles imported by Arab merchants to China were: ivory, frankincense, genuine slavonic amber, camphor, tortoise shells, jade, and the khutu which was "the most precious freight to China."⁴ The tariff was normally 30%, but occasionally the rates were lower.⁵

Arab geographers refer to merchants visiting Korea (sila or shila),⁶ but Masudi states that no Irakian merchants went there.⁷

11). The sea route from Basra to the Red Sea was navigable at all seasons;⁸ but it was infested with pirates and for protection ships carried soldiers, especially naphtha-throwers.⁹ The most dangerous point on the way was Suqutra, the nest for Indian pirates.¹⁰ Merchants visited the coast of East Africa

(1) Chau Ju-Kua, pp.19-20.

(2) Hasan, p.106 ff., Chau Ju-Kua, p.32.

(3) Mez, pp.515-6.

(4) Chau Ju-Kua, pp.15-6; i.19; Harwazi, p.17.

(5) Chau Ju-Kua, pp.21-2 gives the minimum rate at 10%, and the maximum at 44%.

(6) I. Khurdedhbih, p.70; I.R., pp.92-3; Biruni: India I, pp.210-

1; Masudi Tanbih, p.126; Harwazi, p.27.

(7) Mas'udi I, p.346.

(8) I.R., pp.66-7.

(9) Haq., p.12.

(10) Mas'udi III, p.37; Haq., p.14.

down to Sofala (Mozambique), "the limit of their navigation."¹ They looked for gold and slaves.² The merchants did not trust the negroes of Sofala in commercial dealing, till their chiefs offer themselves as hostages. "Then the merchants gave the negroes the goods they needed, and the negroes spread over mountains and deserts to find gold and to bring it to the ships."³

iii). To strengthen and expand their commercial relations, Arab merchants established factories, where they maintained agents and kept stores. Usually these factories were peopled with unorthodox Muslims fleeing from persecution, and with native converts, and were administered by their own judges according to Muslim law.⁴

In India, the Arabs had important colonies. Mas'udi saw (916 A.D.) in the Saimur district (modern Ghul) a Muslim colony of about ten thousands, composed of newcomers from Basra, Baghdad, etc., as well as of individuals of Arab parentage (Bayasira) born in the country. Great merchants resided among them.⁵ Other colonies existed in some towns north of Saimur.⁶

Canton was the great centre for Arab merchants, among whom Iraki merchants played a prominent role.⁷ An Islamic report

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- (1) Mas'udi III, p.6; Harwasi, p.54. In 304/916 Mas'udi sailed from Zanzibar, whose rulers were Muslims to Oman. Mas'udi III, p.31.
- (2) H. A., p.165.
- (3) Biruni: al-Jamahir, p.239.
- (4) See: Harwasi, p.17; Mas'udi II, p.85 ff; Chau Ju-Kua, p.16; Suleyman, pp.38-9; Hasan, p.99.
- (5) Mas'udi II, p.85 ff.
- (6) Heyd, p.33; see Mas'udi I, pp.382-3; Suleyman, p.38.
- (7) Suleyman, pp.38-9; p.104; Chau Ju-Kua, p.16, p.17; about the early history of this colony see: Chau Ju-Kua, p.15; Hasan p.99.

(probably of the 9th century) refers to some 'Alawids who fled from Umayyad persecution and settled by Canton. They learnt Chinese and acted as middlemen between the Chinese government and the foreign merchants.¹ Other Arab settlements in China were at Ts'ün-Chou and Hang-Chou.² On the road to China, Arab colonies were found in Keda, northern Sumatra and the Nicobar islands.³

II. Land Trade

The overland trade along the eastern routes was carried with Persia, Transoxiana and Eastern Europe; and along the southern and western routes with the Arabian Peninsula, Syria, Egypt and North Africa. Camels were the principal means of transport; iswaras (swift camels) being used for fast travelling.⁴ Merchants and travellers used "books of routes", but more often they took guides, especially on hazardous roads, as across the Syrian desert or in Central Asia.⁵

Trade with Khurasan and Transoxiana was carried along the great historical "Khurasan Road" which stretched from Baghdad to Hamadan Gazwin, Rayy, Nisabur, Merv, Bukhara and Samarkand where it bifurcated: the northern branch going to Khwarizm, and the eastern to China. With Persia, trade was very active, and

(1) Harwazi, p.17 and pp.66-7.

(2) Chan Ju-Kua, p.16.

(3) Ibid., p.18; Hsuan, p.101.

(4) Eclipse III, p.62; I.A. VIII, p.364; Eclipse II, p.350.

(5) I. Khardadbeh, p.178; Eclipse III, p.62.

fruits were imported in great quantities.¹ Vice versa, Irak served not only as a market, but also as a transit centre for Persia.²

Khwarizm was an important outpost for merchants, trading with the Turks of Central Asia and with eastern Europe. Most of the Slavonic and Turkish slaves, as well as the Slavonic and Khazarian furs came via Khwarizm.³ Caravans from Khwarizm to Bulghar and in the opposite direction were continuous.⁴

Some merchants visited Bulghar⁵ via Itil, either by land or by boats up the Volga. At Bulghar, they paid a tax of 1/10 and were well received as the Bulgars were recent Muslim converts.⁶ Ibn Fadlan's report on his mission to Bulghar (921-2 A.D.) is curious as an indication how religious propaganda was linked up with commercial enterprise. From Bulghar came Russian and Bulgarian commodities,⁷ such as: sables, minivers, furs of the steppe foxes, slaves, swords, beaver furs, high fur caps (qalanis), honey, wax and fish-glué.⁸

The Khazars (between the Caucasus and the Volga) were important middlemen between the Muslim countries and eastern Europe. Their highway was the Volga and their only product was

(1) See "imports."

(2) Tan Y., II, p.11.

(3) I.R., p.465 and pp.481-2.

(4) Hamidi, II pp.15-6.

(5) Capital of the Bulgars; a people of uncertain origin, some of whom penetrated into the central course of the Volga. H.I, I, p.786 ff.

(6) I.R., pp.140-1.

(7) Heyd, p.61.

(8) Haq., pp.324-5.

fish-glue, all the other commodities being imported to them.¹

In the territories between the Khazars and the Bulghar lived a Finnish people called Murtas (Mordvo) who also exported furs; their black foxes were superlative and most expensive. Their trade was carried via Khurasan.²

References to trade relations with the Rus³ are abundant, speaking of trading Northmen⁴ whom he considers as a "class of Slavs", Ibn Khurdadhbih says that the Rus merchants came by the Don, then crossed over to the Volga, which they descended to the Caspian Sea. From the southern coast of the Caspian sea, they dispatched their goods on camels to Baghdad where they posed as Christians and paid the Jizya. They traded with beaver furs, furs of black foxes and swords; and employed Slav servants to interpret for them.⁵ Ibn Rusta who speaks of the Russians living around Novgorod says that they traded with furs of beaver, grey squirrel etc., and with slaves.⁶ Ibn Hawkal adds that Russian trade was always carried through the Khazar territory,⁷ and that Muslim merchants traded directly with Kubaya (Kiev).⁸

(1) I.H. p.394; Ist., p.218, p.221.

(2) Masudi, Tanbih, pp.62-3; Muruj I, p.14.

(3) The term "Rus", at first refers to the Northmen and then to the founders of the principality of Kiev. E.I, art. Rus, IV, p.1182.

(4) Heyd, pp.61-2.

(5) I.Khurdadhbih, p.154.

(6) I.R. p.145.

(7) Ibn Fadlan met near Bulghar Russian merchants, who were carrying slaves and furs, on their way to the Caspian Sea. Seippel, pp.90-1.

(8) I.H., p.392; 397; Ist., pp.225-6; E.I. art Rus. (I.H. adds lead and mercury to Russian exports.)

Marwazi mentions the Slavonic amber coming from the Baltic region and exported by the Muslims to China.¹

Large amounts of Abbasid coins have been found in Russia and around the Baltic. The largest finds of silver coins were in the region of the Great Russian Lakes (near Novgorod and Pskov) in central Russia and on the Volga (near Jaroslave, Vladimir and Kasan), on the northern section of the Dnieper (Vitebsk); in the provinces of the Baltic and the Gulf of Finland, and finally in the isle of Gothland (Visbyl in the Baltic).² The oldest of these coinfinds date back to the beginning of the 11th century A.D; but the largest section belongs to the period between the end of the 9th and the middle of the 10th centuries. Most of them are Samanid coins, with a considerable admixture of the Baghdad currency.³

From coinfinds one concludes: first that the peoples of Eastern Europe eagerly accepted Abbasid coins in their commercial dealings; secondly that the first half of the 10th century was the heyday/^{of} trade with Eastern Europe; and finally that most of that trade was carried via Transoxiana, with a strong participation of Iraki trade.

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- (1) Marwazi, pp.16-7; see Masudi II, pp.15-8.
 (2) Heyd, p.63 ff; cf. I.H., p.397; Ist., p.226.
 (3) See details in Vasmer, pp.32-43; Heyd, p.58 ff.

The overland trade with China was negligible if not nil. The journey was too long, and the roads leading to China were often closed by the Chinese as a precautionary measure against foreign penetration.¹ The sea-route was so much easier that some merchants came from Samarkand to Basra, "and thence took the sea-route to China."²

No Arab settlements are recorded along the overland route to China, and it is probable that whatever Muslim trade was carried that way, had to pass through the intermediary of the Central Asian Sogdians (a people of Iranian origin) whose numerous factories and colonies stretched between Samarkand and China.³

The overland route to India was long and difficult. In the 9th century, the "Redanites" went from Basra to Ahwas, to Kirman, to Sind, and India.⁴ Another road frequently followed by merchants was from Khurasan to Sind.⁵ But it seems that political conditions precluded the possibility of any considerable direct trade with the interior of India.⁶

The the west, Iraqi trade with Syria was so developed that even vegetables were occasionally brought to Irak.⁷ According

(1) Harwazi, p.19.

(2) Masudi I, pp.347-9. Masudi records as an astonishing fact that he met an old man from Balkh who travelled overland to China.

(3) See H-'A., p.225, 229, 363; Harwazi, p.18, pp.70-1; I. Khurdadbeh, p.178.

(4) I. Khurdadbeh, p.154.

(5) Mas'udi, I, p.207, 349.

(6) Biruni: India I, p.206. He states that for going to Sind one travels via Sijistan, but for Hind (i.e. India proper) one starts "from the side of Kabul."

(7) Tan. II, p.205.

to Ya'qubi, ships used to come continuously with Syrian goods and flour by the Euphrates, and via 'Isa canal to Baghdad.¹ At Kit, where the road to Syria crossed the Euphrates, the traffic was so enormous that in the year 306/918 the ferry brought the government a revenue of 80,250 dinars.²

With Arabia, commercial relations were especially strong at the season of pilgrimage.³ Iraki merchants carried on a profitable trade with the Berbers of north Africa; the main commodity they looked for was gold.⁴

Along the overland routes, Arab merchants also had maintained mercantile outposts. To the east, Samarkand had a colony of Iraki merchants.⁵ In Itil, the capital of the Khazars, there was a Muslim colony of 10,000; it had native converts as well as Muslim merchants and craftsmen.⁶ Bulghar, had a colony of Muslim merchants and even some Iraki craftsmen.⁷

In the west, Sijilmass (Morocco) had a flourishing colony of Iraki merchants from Kufa, Basra and Baghdad.⁸ There was a colony of Iraki Jews in Egypt, and some of them were commercial agents; Ya'qub b. Killis (later wazir to the Fatimid 'Aziz), was

(1) Ya'qubi, p.250.

(2) Kremer in 'Ali b. 'Isa, p.27.

(3) Maq., pp.133-4.

(4) Biruni; Jamahir, pp.237-8; I.H., p.61. Biruni suggests that they traded with the blacks of Central Africa to whom they carried fancy Basrian shirts to exchange for gold.

(5) I.H., p.498.

(6) Masudi II, pp.11-12; I.H., p.388, p.390; I.R. 140; Ist. p.221.

(7) See art. Bulghar E.I, I, p.788.

(8) I.H., p.60.

a Baghdadi Jew who began his career in Cairo as "an agent of the merchants."¹

It remains to us to mention the problem of currency in international commerce. Three methods were used in commercial transactions:-

a) Barter was adopted in dealing with the negroes of Central and East Africa;² with the Islands of the Indian Ocean;³ and sometimes with China. Marwazi states that most of the business of Muslim merchants in China was done by middlemen who used "to examine the goods, carry them to the Lord of China and then come back with their equivalents when the latter have been established."⁴

b) The system of a double transaction; the merchants accepted the local currency and then used it for buying local goods. This was sometimes done in China,⁵ and in some parts of India like the kingdom of Kanoj.⁶ This system reached its perfection in Basra, where the double operation was carried out through the sarrafa, without any money being used.⁷

c) Abbasid dirhams and dinars were sometimes accepted, as

(1) See Mann, J.G.R. N.S. X, p.39; p.325; Fischel: Jews in Med. Isl., pp.30-6, pp.46-7.

(2) Biruni: Jamshir, pp.237-9.

(3) I. Khurdadbeh, p.65; Suleyman, pp.40-1.

(4) Marwazi, p.17.

(5) Cf. Maqrizi (Ighatha, p.68), speaks of a paper-money note with a Baghdadi merchant in the 10th century. The note was made of mulberry leaves, stamped with the Royal stamp of the King of Uthay, and equal at Khan Baliq to 5 dirhams in Baghdad; see Suleyman, pp.53-4.

(6) Marwazi, p.47.

(7) See ch. on "Banking."

attested in the dealings with Eastern Europe. Abbasid dirhams were imported en masse to Bulghar.¹ The Russians took gold and silver coins for the commodities sold.²

(1) I.R., p.142.
(2) Ibid., p.145.

CHAPTER V

BANKING

Synopsis.

General remarks.

I. The Jihbadh. Definitions of different authors inadequate - confusion of the Jihbadh the clerk and the Jihbadh the banker.

a) The jihbadh as a clerk

- (1) origin
- (2) functions
- (3) Diwan al-Jahbadha.

b) The banker jihbadh

- 1) (1) the jihbadh before the 10th century
- (2) no state banker before 301 A.H.
- 11) (3) 'Ali b. 'Isa established a state bank in 301 A. H., by agreement with "the two Jewish jihbadha."
- (4) the two Jewish jihbadhs' private dealings with Ibn al-Furat.
- (5) the end of a bankers' family.
- 111) (6) private jihbadhs for wazirs and governors
- 1v) (7) the jihbadhs' sources of funds:
 - a) commercial dealings
 - b) deposits - reasons

c) farming taxes.

(8) Summary.

II. The Sarraf.

- 1) The sarraf before the 10th century
- ii) functions of the sarrafs in the 10th century - advanced money; centre of exchange; intermediaries between people and mint
- iii) the banking activities of the sarrafs. Their services to commerce, esp. in Basra
- iv) sarrafs dealt with officials and the public, mainly with the latter.
- v) sources of funds: a) deposits, b) exchange business
- vi) muslims, christians and jews were sarrafs. Summary.

III. The Suftaja

- 1) Definition and early usage
- ii) nature and wide usage in the 10th century
- iii) drawer and drawee. Time of payment. Discount
- iv) suftaja as a travellers' cheque.

IV. The Sakk

- 1) Definition and early usage
- ii) usage in the 10th century: a) by government to pay officials, b) by individuals.
- iii) sakks were drawn mostly on jibhadhs, sometimes on any individual
- iv) sakk as a promisory note.

V. Banking Institutions versus Society.

CHAPTER V

BANKING

In the 10th century banks were generally individual firms, and still in a process of development. They were encouraged by the demands of commerce, on the one hand, and the government's need for cash on the other. Their origins were twofold:-

First, the merchant who had been dealing with goods began to deal in money (Jihbadh); secondly, the money changers (Sarrafa) extended their dealings. A study of this subject covers:-

- I. The positions and functions of:
 - a) The Jihbadh
 - b) The sarrafa.
- II. The definition and usage of:
 - a) The suftaja.
 - b) The sakk.

Ia. The term Jihbadh is not new, but its meaning developed with time. To give it one static definition would be misleading. The different definitions given by different authors merely stressed the single aspects of the functions of the Jihbadh. Taj al-Arus defined Jihbadh as "A monetary expert, experienced in most intricate affairs, very well versed in matters

of cash."¹ Mez translates Jihbadh as "Banker"², Massignon as "Banquier"³; Dozy as "vérificateur" or "changeur",⁴ while Kremer calls him a "Regierungskassierer".⁵ Amedroz defined his functions as a "Treasury receiver", or a "receiving clerk",⁶ while Margoliouth calls him a "collector".⁷ The Egyptian editor of Kuwarizmi explains his function as "a monetary expert".⁸ Finally, Fischel thinks that "Banker" is justified by the actual functions of the Jihbadh.⁹

These definitions are partly correct, but they are inadequate. The cause of their inaccuracy results from two points of confusion: first the conception that sarraf and Jihbadh are the same;¹⁰ and secondly the confusion of the jihbadh as the financial clerk and the jihbadh the banker.¹¹

The jihbadh as a financial clerk was a sassanian institution said to have been initiated by Jamshid¹² and was known since the beginning of the Umayyad period, under Mu'awiya.¹³ The 'Abbasids, extended the functions of jihbadhs to the provinces: and some governors appointed Jihbadhs to collect taxes in some districts.¹⁴ One of these jihbadhs admitted that he

- (1) Taj al-'arus vol.II p.558
 (2) Mez p.477
 (3) Massignon, l'Influence in B.I.F.D., 1931, p.5.
 (4) Dozy, supplément I p.226.
 (5) Kremer, Ali b. Isa p.8, note 2.
 (6) Amedroz, Remains of Sabi, Gloss. p.58. J.R.A.s 1908, p.432.
 (7) Margoliouth, Trans. of Tanukhi.
 (8) Khuwarizmi, Cairo 1930, p.36, n.3.
 (9) Fischel, Jews in Mod. Islam, p.3, note 7.
 (10) Mez translates both sarraf and Jihbadh as "banker", p.477 and 476.
 (11) Cf. Jah. p.114 and p.28; Tan I p.57.
 (12) I Rusta p.196.
 (13) Jahshiyari p.28.
 (14) See Jah p. 114. Cummi p.149.

was poor when he was appointed as Jihbadh for some districts.¹ Qummi (d. 378/988) has preserved a decree of Mukhtadir, specifying the functions of the Jihbadh of Qumm. According to that decree, the Jihbadh was to receive the revenue from Kharaj domains and other dues. He was assisted by a secretary who gave a separate account of daily income to the 'diwan' (treasury bureau) of the Governor. The Jihbadh's accounts were to be checked by the account of his secretary and the receipts (Bara'a) he issued to those who paid in. For expenditure cheques drawn by the 'amil' are referred to. Furthermore, the Jihbadh made a monthly balance ("Khatma") and an annual balance (Khatma Jami'a). In short, his primary concern was to see that the revenue should be brought to the 'diwan' in full. For discharging his functions, the Jihbadh had a fee called "perquisite of the Jahbadha" (haqq al-Jahbadha), taken from the collected taxes and specified before his appointment.²

In the capital there was a special bureau "diwan" of Jihbadhs.³ The head of this diwan (i.e. chief Jihbadh) had to prepare at the end of each month, and year, a balance of income

(1) Cf. Jah. pp. 36-7; Eclipse I p. 158.

(2) Qummi, pp. 149-151; see Khwarizmi (V) p. 54-56. For the functions of the Jihbadh in the Mamluk period in Egypt, see Qalqashandi V p. 466; Ibn Mamati, p. 9.

(3) Tan. Faraj II, pp. 39-40; 'Arif p. 135.

and expenditure to be given to the treasury.¹ As muslims are mentioned among the financial clerks (Jihbadhs) we have to assume that the functions of the administrative Jihbadhs were not considered as banking.²

In the 10th century, merchants were appointed as Jihbadhs for provinces and this system formed a link between financial clerks and bankers. Sabi reports that the Jewish merchant Yusuf b. Pinhas, was appointed as Jihbadh of Ahwaz.³ Being in need of money to pay some of his secretaries, the wazir Ibn al-Furat asked Yusuf to advance a certain sum; and after some complaints the latter was persuaded to advance money for salaries of one month.⁴ Thus Yusuf was asked to advance money, as he had the taxes of Ahwaz as security in his hand.

References to banker Jihbadhs are to be found as early as the reign of Mansur (754 - 75 A.D.). Jahshyari relates that Khalid b. Barmak deposited his money with a Jihbadh who was a Christian.⁵ A governor of Harun al-Rashid (786-809 A.D.) had a Jihbadh as a treasurer and a depositary for his money.⁶

Tanukhi relates that under Mu'tamid and Muwaffak

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- (1) Khwarizmi (V) p.54.
 (2) I.A. IX p.147.
 (3) Cf. Eclipse I p.66; and 'Arif p.74.
 (4) Sabi p.178.
 (5) Jah. p.100.
 (6) Ibid. pp.220-1.

(256-279/870-92) the wazir Sulaiman b. Wahb and his son 'Ubaidallah had their own Jihbadh called Laith. They deposited their money with him and drew cheques on him.¹ On their dismissal the new wazir beat their Jihbadh to get their money from him. Laith showed the new wazir a well, where money was kept but when asked whose property it was, Laith answered that it was his, because he was a merchant.² Thus the Jihbadh considered himself as a merchant. So far Jihbadhs acted as depositories, and there is no mention of their advancing loans; secondly, there was no state bank yet,

Before the reign of Muktadir (295-320/908-932) the state did not borrow from Jihbadhs; and other means were resorted to, to provide money. For example, when Mu'tadid (279-289/892-902) became Caliph, he complained to his ministers that the treasury was empty and that he needed at least 7,000 dinars daily. The ministers solved the problem by farming out the taxes of a number of districts to a certain Tâ'f who was to pay 7,000 dinars daily plus 6,000 dinars monthly.³ Generally wazirs borrowed from merchants.⁴

The institution of state bankers did not take place till 301/913. Ibn al-Furat, during his first vizierate (296-299/908-911) had some dealings with the Jewish bankers Harun b. 'Imran

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- (1) Tan VIII p.56.
 (2) Ibid. p.57.
 (3) Sabi pp.10-11.
 (4) Tanukhi VIII p.24: Engl. Transl. reprint p.19.

and Yusuf b. Pinhas, but they were of a personal nature. According to Sabi, Ibn al-Furat appointed (in 296/908) Yusuf b. Pinhas and Harun b. Imran as Jihbadhs¹ and placed in their hands all the property confiscated from the supporters of Ibn al-Mu'tazz (296 A.H.). The commission had an absolute character and was "to the exclusion of the secretaries of the private and public treasuries". But he "appointed his secretary Ibn Farjun to examine their accounts, and Ibn Farjun did it without even showing any of their accounts to the diwans (bureaus)."² The private nature of this arrangement is further confirmed by Tanukhi who relates that during the disgrace following his first vizirate, Ibn al-Furat confessed to Mu'nis, the Chamberlain, that there were still 1,400,000 dirhams with the "two Jihbadhs", which amount Mu'nis ordered to be brought to the treasury.³ This, however, did not satisfy the new wazir 'Ali b. 'Isa (300-304/912-916) who had the two Jihbadhs arrested and questioned them about Ibn al-Furat's account. After some pressure, they admitted that they still had 200,000 dirhams to his credit.⁴ This clearly shows that the "two Jewish jihbadhs" were not state bankers then, but simply

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- (1) This is the first mention I have found of the association of the two Jihbadhs.
 (2) Sabi p.79.
 (3) Tan. VIII p. 24.
 (4) Ibid. pp.24-5.

private jihbadhs of Ibn al-Furat.

It was 'Ali b. 'Isa who, compelled by urgent financial needs in his first vazirate (300-304/912-916) established "the two Jewish bankers" as state bankers. He said to them: "At the commencement of every month I am in need of a sum which must be paid within six days to the infantry, amounting to 30,000 dinars." Occasionally, I have no such sum at my disposal at the first or even the second day of the month. I should like you to advance me on the first day of each month 150,000 dirhams (= 30,000 dinars), which you will recover in the course of the month out of the revenue of Ahwaz; you are the collectors of the revenue of Ahwaz which will be a permanent advance to you." The narrative adds: "This arrangement was carried on with Yusuf b. Pinhas and Harun b. 'Imran and their successors for sixteen years, and after their deaths, for they were never dismissed up to their deaths. The Caliph was unwilling to dismiss them, in order to maintain the dignity of the Jahbadha.¹

In the eyes of merchants, so that the merchants might be willing to lend money through the Jihbadh if necessary. If a Jihbadh were dismissed and another appointed instead, with whom the merchants had not dealt, the business of the Caliph would be at a standstill."²

(1) Jahbadha here means: office of state bank.

(2) Tan; VIII pp.24-6. [Translation in reprint from Islamic Culture - p.19] copied verbatim in Sabi pp.80-1.

This document suggests a new development. First, the two Jihbadhs were associated together to establish a bank, instead of the usual individual Jihbadh. Secondly, this bank continued as a state bank till 316/928; and the Caliph was keen on keeping its reputation good. Thirdly, the primary function at the bank was to advance money to the state, while keeping the revenue of Ahwas as a security. Fourthly, the Caliph wished to utilize not only funds but also the bankers' credit in view of borrowing extra funds from merchants. Finally, it throws light on the active part the government played in the development of the banking system.

Tamukhi's version of the agreement is supported by the fact that none of the authorities records any confiscations from "the two Jihbadhs". It is doubtful however that the two Jihbadhs should have retained the Jahbadha at Ahwas for 16 years, for already in 315/927 the 'Amils of Ahwas had their own Jihbadhs.¹ Besides, in 315 A.H. Abu 'Abdallah al-Baridi farmed out the taxes of Ahwas.²

Meanwhile the Jewish Jihbadhs continued their private dealings, at least with Ibn al-Furat. After 'Ali b. 'Isa's dismissal from the first vizierate (304/916) Ibn al-Furat sent a note to Harun b. 'Imran to give 'Ali 2,000 dinars to help him in

(1) Eclipse I p.158.

(2) Eclipse I p.187.

the plight of his confiscation.¹ This private capacity of the Jihbadh is further illustrated by some of the charges against Ibn al-Furat after his second fall 306/918; it was said that he ordered the 'Amils to send the 'marafiq' (douceurs) to Harun b. 'Imran, who was also in charge of the confiscated property to the exclusion of the treasury (Bait al-Mal); and that when Mukhtadir wanted some money from Ibn al-Furat, the latter denied it to him.² This case may refer to the operation of Harun as a private Jihbadh.³ After 306 A.H. the sources forget the two Jihbadhs for a while.

In 311/923, Ibn al-Furat was called to the vазinate for a third time: and the names of the Jewish Jihbadhs appear again. In that year, Ibn al-Furat sent a signed note to Harun b. 'Imran to give 'Ali b. 'Isa 2,000 dinars from the revenue of his (Ibn al-Furat's) private estate.⁴ After his third dismissal, Ibn al-Furat informed the new wasir Khakani that he left over 160,000 dinars of confiscations in the hands of Harun the

(1) Sabi p.33.

(2) Ibid. It is noteworthy in this passage that Harun and Yusuf are not associated. Apparently their partnership was made to meet state demands, and in their private affairs they carried on separately.

(3) Again in 306/918 Mukhtadir requested Ibn al-Furat to give him 300,000 dinars from the revenue of the provinces. Ibn al-Furat consulted his confidants, one of whom said: "This is easy for you to offer from your property or by borrowing from your Jihbadhs," i.e. naturally from Harun and Yusuf. See Sabi p.241.

(4) Sabi pp.36-7; Solipse I p.112.

Jihbadh and his son.¹ After the execution of Ibn al-Purat (312/924), the "Jewish Jihbadhs" are no more referred to.

Harun's family carried on the traditions of banking. But in 329/940 Bajkam (Amir al-Umara) caused 'Ali b. Harun to be arrested, extorted from him under torture 110,000 dinars and finally had him killed.² The reason for the punishment was that Ali was the Jihbadh of the wazir Ibn Shirzad (327-9/938-940).³ This 'Ali must have been very wealthy, for he had a splendid palace on the Sarat canal.⁴

Most of the wazirs had their own Jihbadhs. Hamid b. al-'Abbas had a Jihbadh called Ibrahim b. Yuhanna. The latter was tortured in 311/923 until he confessed how much Hamid had deposited with him; then he was fined a 100,000 dinars.⁵ 'Ali b. 'Isa had dealings with a Naqid (money-expert).⁶ The wazir Kha'ibi (313-4/925-6) had his Jihbadh too.⁷

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- (1) Eclipse I p.128. Ibn al-Purat did this to deprive Khakani of the credit of finding them, to prevent him from using them, and consequently to embarrass him, because the Caliph would take the money to the "private treasury".
- (2) Suli, pp.147-8.
- (3) Eclipse II p.8 n.1, where he is wrongly called Harun the Jewish Jihbadh.
- (4) Suli p.199. 'Ali is undoubtedly the son of Harun, the Jewish Jihbadh, though in Suli (p.204) he is once referred to as Ibn 'Illan, the Jewish Jihbadh. There was no Ibn'Illan but Ibn'Imran.
- (5) Sabi p.226; Eclipse I p.95.
- (6) Sabi p.224 and p.291.
- (7) Eclipse I, p.155.

Some governors as well had their own Jihbadhs. Such was the case of Ibn Abi'l-Salasil one of the two joint 'Amils of Ahwas in 315/927.¹ Abu Abdallah al-Baridi had two Jihbadhs: Isra'il b. Salih and Sahl b. Nazir,² of whom the former was the confidential Jihbadh.³

The Jihbadhs had various sources of funds. They were themselves merchants and gained vast sums from trade. The Jihbadh of Sulaiman b. Wahb and his son Ubaidallah claimed to own a trade capital of 80,000 dinars (gold).⁴ Harun b. Imran and Yusuf b. Pinhas were merchants too.⁵

The largest proportion of the Jihbadhs' funds came from deposits of high officials and wazirs. After his first dismissal from the vazirate Ibn al-Furat confessed that he left 1,447,546 dirhams with Harun b. 'Imran and Yusuf b. Pinhas, but the secretaries believed that, beside this amount, Ibn al-Furat deposited with these Jihbadhs about one million dinars, for which there was no account.⁶ Ibn al-Furat used to deposit with them all confiscated properties,⁷ as well as the marafiq (bribes).⁸ The Jihbadh Ibrahim b. Yuhanna confessed to

(1) Ibid. I p.158.

(2) Ibid. I p.349.

(3) Ibid. I p.52

(4) Tan. I p.57.

(5) Cf. 'Arif p.74 and Eclipse I p.66.

(6) Tan. VIII p.24.

(7) This was eight million and forty thousand dinars in Ibn al-Furat's third vazirate (Sabi p.227).

(8) Sabi p.33.

Ibn al-Furat (311 A.H.) that Hamid b. al-'Abbas still had 100,000 dinars on his credit.¹ These figures give an idea of the huge sums deposited with the Jihbadhs.

Various factors encouraged the depositing of money with the Jihbadhs:

(1) Among the insecurity arising from the general practice of confiscating the property of the wazirs and their officials, the Jihbadhs provided a comparatively safe place. Thus Ibn al-Furat, before his first dismissal, deposited vast sums with some merchants² whose names were not known to his successor in office; these sums were saved till he came back to office.³ But as Jihbadhs' accounts were examined when their patrons were dismissed, some officials began to deposit their money without having it registered in the Jihbadh's book.⁴

(2) It seems that Jihbadhs administered the income and estates of high officials. A passage in Sabi suggests that Harun b. Imran managed the personal estates of Ibn al-Furat.⁵ That also must have been the function of the Jihbadhs of provincial governors.⁶

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- (1) Eclipse I, p.95; see also Sabi p.290; and Tan I, pp.103-4.
 (2) This probably refers to his Jihbadhs as Ibn Miskawaih calls them merchants. Eclipse p.1, p.66.
 (3) Eclipse I, p.44.
 (4) An official deposited 10,000 dinars without having it registered in the Jihbadh's book. Tan. I pp.103-4.
 (5) Sabi, pp.306-7.
 (6) Eclipse I, p.349.

The third source from which the Jihbadhs derived funds was the commission to collect taxes in some province. In this way, the "two Jewish Jihbadhs" got some profits from Ahwaz.¹ The profit from Jahbadhs for the provinces of Mosul and the "two Zabs" amounted, at the beginning of the 10th century, to 10,000 dinars, annually.² The profit of a Jihbadh from a district of Ahwaz amounted to 30,000 dirhams.³

To sum up: the Jihbadh was primarily a merchant and then became a banker to officials. At first, he was a depository for surplus cash and was individualistic in enterprise. Then he developed the lending operations, and in order to meet greater demand established associations with his colleagues. Among the inducements which he offered to his patrons, safety was foremost.

The failure of the "Finance Bureau" to meet the state's requirements in cash resulted in the further extension of the Jihbadh's activity and in the temporary establishment of the first state bank in 913 A.D.

I. b. The second type of a banker was the sarrafi, a "money-expert" whose original function was to exchange gold for silver coins.⁴

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- (1) Sabi, pp.80-81; tan.VIII, p.26.
 - (2) Sabi, p.255.
 - (3) Jah. p.114.
 - (4) Lisan al-'Arab XI, p.92.

According to Abraki sarrafs flourished in Hira in the Sassanian period and were active in changing Sassanian silver and Byzantine gold. In the Islamic period, Hira was superseded by Kufa, where most of the sairafa houses belonged to Christians who migrated thither from Hira. "In Kufa the profession of sarrafa became very profitable as it supplied transactions and enterprises with money at profitable rates." It was from Kufa that some Baghdad firms learnt the art of sairafa in the 10th century.¹

In the period under consideration sarrafs rendered different services. They advanced money for interest. They acted as intermediaries between the public and the mint, by taking the bullion to the mint and paying their customers in coins of the same (nominal) value. They also made profits by exchanging the two precious metals in coin and bullion.²

The banking activities of the sarrafs are illustrated by an anecdote in Tanukhi. A man received a riq'a³ drawn on a sarrafa, and rode to "Darb 'Awn" to find him. The sarrafa inquired whether he was the man named in the riq'a; informed him that sarrafs deal for a profit; and declared: "our profit in such matters is one dirham in each dinar."⁴

(1) Abraki p.124.

(2) Ma'alim al-Qurba pp.68-9.

(3) Riq'a means a "signed money order".

(4) Tan. I, p.204. This took place in 331/942 when Nasir al-Dawla was Amir al-Umara. He regulated the rate of exchange as 13 dirhams for a dinar.

This anecdote shows that a money order on a sarraaf was called riq'a, that the charge for cashing it was one dirham per dinar, that the bearer had to cash the money in person, but that the money was payable on call.¹

Sarrafa rendered great services to commerce. They financed merchants and kept deposits for them; this was especially the case in the great port of Basra. According to Nasir-i-Khusraw "commercial transactions (in Basra) were done as follows: whoever had valuables, deposited them with a sarraaf who gave him a receipt. For all purchases one gives a bill (hawala) on the sarraaf, and the latter discounts it. Throughout the time of their stay, merchants used only bills which were to be cashed at the sarrafa."² Consequently, in Basra, sarrafa controlled the money market, facilitated the trade by acting as 'clearance houses' and by their cheques increased the volume of currency.

Sarrafa had dealing with the government as well as with the public.³ A certain 'Amil of Ahwas was offered bribes by the people to drop the idea of increasing the taxes. He agreed and the bribes were offered in the form of riq'as on the sarrafa.⁴

(1) Cf. Eclipse II, p.239, note I.

(2) Nasir-i-Khusraw Fr. Trans. p.236. This information is supplemented by Hafiz 'Abrou (15th cent.) who said: "The cloth merchants, the bankers and the whole-sale merchants met at the 'marché', which is held from 3 p.m. till the evening. Bankers enjoy in their affairs a monopoly which is conferred on them by the governor of Basra." N-Kh p.237, note.

(3) Abraki p.124.

(4) Tan. I, p.162.

Sources do not show that officials had private sarrafs. Officials who had no special Jihbads dealt with the sarrafs like private persons. In 330-1/941-2 Saif al-Dawla walked incognito in Baghdad. Some young men entertained him in a house of Bani Khaqan and he wrote for them a riq'a for 100 dinars to be paid by a sarrafa. The sum was cashed there and then.¹

Nasir al-Dawla was pleased with a singer in Baghdad (331 A.H.) and wrote him a riq'a of 500 dinars on a sarrafa.² Thus the sarrafa filled any gap left by the Jihbadh.

Sarrafs derived their funds mainly from deposits. Abu'Ali al-Khazin deposited 50,000 dinars with a sarrafa.³ 'Ali b. 'Isa is reported to have deposited 17,000 dinars with another.⁴ Their dealings in money (lending and exchange) brought them considerable profits as they took high interests.⁵ When Nasir al-Dawla was Amir al-Umara in Baghdad (330-1/941-2) he heard that sarrafs took excessive interest (riba). So, he personally gave them a warning, as a result of which they slightly abated their charges.⁶

The sarrafs disposed of vast funds. Ali b. Isa b. Mahan (Governor of Khurasan) sent al-Rashid 10,000,000 dirhams. Much

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- (1) Eclipse II, p.239, note 1.
 (2) Tan. I, p.203.
 (3) Eclipse II p.188.
 (4) Sabi p.291.
 (5) Cf. Tan. I, p.204.
 (6) Suli p.231.

pleased, al-Rashid remarked to Yahya al-Barmaki that when his son Fadl was governor of Khurasan he never sent such sums. To this Yahya retorted that this money was got by extortion, and added: "If you go to one of the streets of the sarrafs in Karkh (W. Baghdad) you'll find many times this amount."¹

Muslims, Christians and Jews could be found as sarrafs in the 10th century.² In Baghdad, the sarrafs had a special quarter in Karkh which was called Darb 'Awn.³

To sum up: the profession of sarrafa, as money changer and expert, dates back to Sassanian times. In the 10th century, the sarrafs dealt in credit, acted as intermediaries with the mint, as depositories for surplus cash, and as money changers. They furthered trade by serving as clearing houses and by encouraging credit dealings. They were men of a free profession, and dealt both with the government and the public, but mainly with the public.

Iia. The principal instrument in operations based on credit was the 'suftaja'. "An example of suftaja is that a person has got money which he wants to take to another town (or country), and fears bandits. So he gives it, for example, to a merchant or a

(1) Jah. p.228.

(2) Abraki p.124; Ma'alim al-Qurba pp.68-9.

(3) Eclipse I, p.247; Ibid II, p.239 note 1 and pp.188. Tan.I p.204; Tan.II (An.72) p.186 (reprint) where a man is reported to have said: "I had....promised....a cash payment to the banker (Sarrafa) Ibn'Abdan....a leading banker in 'Awn street."

person who has a debt on another in the town to which the person wants to take the money and asks him: "Give me a written order on the person who owes you money and I'll take it from him."¹ Thus suftaja was devised at first to avoid the dangers of the journey and took the form of an individual agreement.²

In the 10th century the usage of the suftaja propagated and became an integral part of the economic life. It became possible to send suftajas for any amount at any time.³ Great sums of money were transferred by this means. In 313/925 the governor of Syria and Egypt sent suftajas for 147,000 dinars.⁴ Another governor sent 80,000 dinars and a third 400,000 dinars.⁵

Suftajas were used especially by governors to send the surplus of the revenue of the provinces to Baghdad.⁶ But their usage among individuals was widespread too. Tanukhi relates that a worried wife unexpectedly received a letter from her husband enclosing a suftaja for 200 dinars.⁷ Another man died in

- (1) This definition is given by a commentator of Hariri of the 7th century A.H. De Sacy, *Séances de Hariri*, p.283.
- (2) See *Taj al-'Arus* II, p.58; *Lisan III*, p.123; *Majma al-Bahrain* p.155. According to *Taj al-'Arus* (58) it is from the Persian 'sufta'. See *Shifa* p.128-9.
- (3) Tanukhi relates that a man dug out, by chance, 7,000 dinars. He immediately "went out and got suftajas for the greater part of the money and sent them with a servant to Baghdad. *Tan-Paraj II*, p.48.
- (4) *Eclipse I*, p.146.
- (5) *Ibid.* vol.I, p.150.
- (6) *Eclipse I*, p.146; p.43; p.150; *Sabi* p.81; *Jah.* p.98.
- (7) *Tan. Paraj II* p.32.

Dainawar leaving two thirds of his property to a cousin in Baghdad. A friend of the deceased sold the two thirds, and sent the money by suftajas to Baghdad.¹ Even between towns of the same district suftajas were used. A man sent to the 'Amil of Ahwaz a suftaja of one thousand dinars, though both were in the same district of Ahwaz.²

10th

In the 10th century suftajas were drawn by one bank on another or by one merchant on another.³ Ibn al-Furat said to Mādarā'ī, governor of Egypt: "You have sent the money either by messenger or by suftajas, through merchants drawn on merchants."⁴

Tanūkhī relates that a man received a suftaja of about 700 dinars, drawn on a merchant in Karkh.⁵

Suftajas were paid at a fixed date. A Baghdadi received a suftaja due only in 40 days.⁶ Even the suftajas sent by governors had to wait till they were mature.⁷ Suftajas were cashed in full when they were mature; otherwise they paid a rate of discount. In 301/913 the wazir 'Alī b. 'Isa paid a discount of $1/60$ in each dinar⁸ ($1\frac{1}{2}$ dainag).

(1) Tan. Faraj II, p.30.

(2) Tan.I, pp.103-4.

(3) There are references to the usage of suftajas in the time of Mansur (754-775 A.D.). See Jahshiyari p.98 and pp.109-110

(4) Sabi p.93.

(5) Tan. Faraj II p.30.

(6) Ibid. II p.30.

(7) Sabi, p.81.

(8) Ibid. - each dirham = 6 dainags, each dinar then = 15 dirhams, so $\frac{1}{60}$ dirham = $1/60$ of a dinar.

A further development of the suftaja in the 10th century was its usage as a travellers' cheque. A man narrated: "I escaped at night riding an ass with two slaves and a guide and no money save suftajas for 5,000 dinars."¹ A corn chandler in Basra said: "A stranger brought me a suftaja payable after a certain date and called on me repeatedly until it was mature. He then said: "I will leave the money with you and take it in instalments. And he came to me daily and took what he required for his expenditure until the sum was exhausted."²

These anecdotes show the great security of the suftajas, a security which became proverbial.³

Another ancient instrument of credit was the sakk. It was a written order to pay someone a certain amount of money. The term is of Persian origin (originally Chak) and has survived until our days in the form of 'cheque'.⁴

There are scanty references to its usage in early Islam and during the Abbasid period. In early Islam pays and provisions were given by sakks.⁵ When Rashid agreed through Fadl's entreaties, to pay Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Imam 100,000 dirhams, Fadl "thanked him and asked him to write a sakk to that

(1) Tan. I, p.104; Eng. Trans. p.114.

(2) Tan. VIII p.131.

(3) De Sacy-Hariri p.587 says: "His letters are suftajas, i.e. as acceptable as suftajas."

(5) Lisan XII p.334; al-Uyun wa'l-Hadaik p.20 relates that Yasid b. al-Khallab bought provisions and wrote the seller a cheque.

(4) Lisan al-Arab XII p.334; Majma' al-Bahrain p.436. See Encyclopedie Arabe X, p.745; See Shifa' p.141.

effect."¹ Fadl b. yahya bought an estate for 200,000 dirhams and sent a sakk to that value to the owner.²

References to sakks became more frequent in the 10th century. In government circles sakks were used especially to pay the army.³ Abu'l-Hasan b.al-Furat, when secretary of Diwan al-Kharaj under the wazir al-'Abbas b.al-Hasan, blamed Muhammad b.Dawud for some payments to soldiers without sakks. So the wazir ordered the treasurer to give no pay without Ibn al-Furat's signature on the sakks.⁴ Sakks were used also to pay persons outside the army.⁵ These sakks were usually drawn on the Treasury.⁶

In the 10th century, the usage of sakk was widened and it was used among individuals. Ibn al-Furat, trying to help Ibn Abi'l-Baghl, wrote him a sakk of 3,000 dirhams on a certain person.⁷ Sulaiman b.al-Hasan b.Mukhallid secretary of Bait al-Mal of Mu'tamid drew in one day sakks on his steward amounting to 1,600 dinars.⁸

But most sakks were drawn on Jihbadhs. Referring to the way by which a collector of taxes in Ahwas paid for his staff's expenses, his friend said to him: "...and when the money

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- (1) Jah. p.196.
 (2) Jah. pp.214-5.
 (3) Eclipse III p.46; Sabi p.235.
 (4) Sabi pp.235-6.
 (5) Cf. Khwarizmi p.38.
 (6) See Eclipse III p.461 and Sabi pp.235-6.
 (7) Sabi p.73.
 (8) Ibid. pp.77-8.

(from taxes) comes to the Jihbadh, sakks from your 'diwans', signed by you are sent to him."¹ Baridi seized some money which Ibn Abi'l-Salasil left with his Jihbadh and requested him "to give a sakk for the sums held by the Jihbadh in payment of fictitious expenditure."²

Sakke were used for all sorts of payments, as the last anecdote suggests. They were used even for very small sums; Ibn Hiskawaih read a sakk (in 333 A.H./944 A.D.) on the Jihbadh for nine dirhams in payment for a reed-matting and naphtha.³ Sakks were generally used for payments in the same town.

Finally, the term sakk had another meaning, that of a "Promissory note". In this case it was usually certified by witnesses.⁴

Having completed our survey, we may ask ourselves whether the banking system in the 10th century met the needs of the society in which it flourished.

Two classes were particularly served by the banking system: the merchants and the officials. The sarrafs provided the merchants with the necessary funds; acted for them as clearance houses and as money changers. The amount of bills drawn on the sarrafs, not only facilitated transactions, but supplemented

(1) Tan. I, p.109.

(2) Eclipse IV, p.177.

(3) Eclipse II, p.80 (V p.84)

(4) I H. (K) p.99 and p.61; Jahiz, Bakh.p.236; Shaibani p.178. I have no confirmation for Bustani's view that sakk meant suftaja and bill, and all credit documents. See art. sakk, Encyclopédie Arabe, vol.X, p.745.

money as a medium of circulation in commercial circles. The use of suftajas on the other hand served to clear accounts as between towns and countries.

Much of the economic activity of the period, centered round the state and its officials. The creation of a state bank temporarily saved the state from financial collapse, while the multiplicity of Jihbadhs served to meet the needs of wealthy officials. The peasants benefited indirectly from the Jihbadhs, since they received subventions from the government when they were in need.

In short, the banking system had served its purpose and met numerous needs.

CHAPTER VI

TAXATION

Synopsis

- I. **Introductory: Theory and Practice in Islamic Finance.**
- II. **The Theoretical System of Taxation.**
- III. **Taxation in Practice.**
 - 1) **The Kharaj**
 - 2) **The Ushr**
 - 3) **The Revenue from the land taxes in Mesopotamia**
 - 4) **The Jizya**
 - 5) **The Sadakāt**
 - 6) **The inheritance tax**
 - 7) **Internal tolls**
 - 8) **Customs on imported goods**
 - 9) **The Mustaqhallaṭ**
 - 10) **Taxes on different commodities**
 - 11) **The income tax**
 - 12) **Taxes on pastures**
 - 13) **The Mal al-Jahbadha**
 - 14) **The methods of collection.**

Taxation

I. In Islamic finance, theory and practice differed considerably because:-

- i) The early sources of Islam, namely the Quran, and the practice of the Prophet and the Four Orthodox Caliphs had in view the simple needs of a semi-patriarchal society, and provided no adequate basis for the financial organization of a large state. The only sources of revenue which they recognized were the Zakat (poor alms), the Ghana'im (spoils of war), the fay', and the Jizya (poll-tax), none of which was clearly formulated.
- ii) Generally speaking, it was theory which followed practice in trying to systematize it and not vice versa. This explains why jurists were often in disagreement among themselves and why the early works on finance had to record individual practices (especially of Umar I) and personal comments.

A student of the system of taxation has to rely more on ^{works} history than on jurists:-

- 1) Jurists speak only of the taxes initiated by the Prophet and the Four Orthodox Caliphs and ignore the taxes introduced later, which they considered to be illegal.
- 2) They attribute to the Four Orthodox Caliphs a system of taxation which took over a century to crystallize. Historical

evidence shows that during the first forty years A.H., the system of taxation varied. When the Christian tribe of Taghlib objected to the Jizya, paid by non-muslims, as degrading, Umar I substituted a "Double Sadaka" (2/10) for it.¹ 'Amr b. al-'As, governor of Egypt under Umar I gave the following answer to the head of an Egyptian town (Akhna) about the amount of Jizya to be paid: "You are only a reserve for us. If the central government increase its demands on us, we (i.e. the governor) increase the sum imposed upon you; and when it lessens it, we lighten it on you."² 'Amr b. Sa'id, a governor of Irak under Uthman said: "The Sawad is but the garden of Quraish (the tribe of the Prophet); of which we can take or leave as we please."³ The stipulations of the important land tax, the Kharaj were not defined till the time of Umar II (99-101/717-720).⁴

3) The terminology used by the jurists is at times misleading historically. This is particularly true of the terms Kharaj (land tax) and Jizya (poll-tax), which they consider as being distinct from the beginning, whereas this was not the case. In a letter to Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, Umar I treats the "Kharaj land" as the "Jizya land".⁵ Abdullah, son of Umar I, identifies the terms Jizya and Kharaj.⁶ Some cultivators of the

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- (1) Abu Ya'li, p.139.
 (2) Zaydan, II, p.19.
 (3) Aghani, IX, p.30.
 (4) See Wellhausen, pp.270 ff.
 (5) Yahya b. Adam, p.10.
 (6) Ibid., p.39.

Sawad prayed the Umayyad Caliph Umar II to substitute the Ushr (Tithe) for the Jizya on their land.¹ Referring to the natives of the Sawad, a certain Sharik said, "The Jizya which they pay is a Kharaj, just like the Kharaj taken from a slave."² Even as late as the second half of the 9th century, the distinction between the two terms was not clear. Thus according to Jahiz (d.869) "the Arabs were not cultivators, because they considered it a degradation to pay the Jizya (meaning the land tax)."³

Only in the 10th century, a definite system of taxation and a definite terminology were fixed.⁴

II. The theoretical background

A brief summary of the theories of prominent jurists, put in the frame supplied by Suli (d.335/946), will be useful as a background to our study. Suli, a courtier of Radi and Muttaki, gave a special classification of the sources of revenue for the instruction of civil servants.⁵ His work is important not only because of the time (10th century) and place (Irak) of the author's activities, but also because the author was not a mere theorist, but had an insight in state affairs.

(1) Ibid., p.42.

(2) Tab.: Ikhtilaf, p.222.

(3) Jahiz, Manaqib (v), p.42.

(4) In preparing this section I have also used: Mawardi; Zaydan II; Van Berchem: l'Impôt; Aghnides: Muh. Theor. of Finance; Kremer: Orient; Mez; Caetani V, Sect. 810; Sadighi, p.35; Jahshiyari, pp.4-5; E.I art. Fai', Zakat, Ghanima, Ushr.

(5) Suli: Adab al-Katib, pp.198-204. He made no mention of the irregular taxes, either because he felt that to do so was against the interest of the state, or because he considered them as novel practices with no foundation.

The jurists taught that the state derived its revenue from the following sources:-

1) The Fay, i.e.: the contribution taken from infidels without fighting.¹ It came under three headings:

A. The Kharaj: i.e. a tax levied on three classes of lands:

(1) lands conquered by force and set up as a waqf of the Muslim community. Jurists agree in placing the Sawad in this category.² (2) Lands deserted by the enemy and taken over by the Muslims. Both categories were inalienable and their kharaj was considered as a rent, payable by the cultivators whether Muslims or non-Muslims.³ (3) Lands which surrendered in virtue of a treaty (Ard al-Sulh) by which the ownership of the land either passed to the Muslim community to become waqf, or rested with the cultivators; in the latter case the Kharaj ceased when the cultivators became Muslims.⁴

Some tracts in the Sawad like the countryside of Hira belonged to this class.⁵

The amount of the Kharaj was left to the discretion of the Caliph, after considering the capacity of the

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- (1) Abu Ya'li, p.120; Hawardi, p.122; Yahya b.Adam, p.6.
 (2) Abu Ya'li, pp.130-1; Tab., Ikhtilaf, pp.218-22; Hawardi, p.132; Abu Ubaid Nos.141-171; Yahya b.Adam, p.6-8; p.32.
 (3) Abu Ya'li, p.132; Tab. o.c., p.224; Hawardi, p.133; Yahya b.Adam, p.10; Abu Ubaid, Nos. 231-258.
 (4) Abu Ya'li, pp.132-3; Yahya b.Adam, p.37; Hawardi, p.133.
 (5) Yahya b.Adam, p.35, p.36.

land. It depended upon the fertility of the land, its crops; the method of irrigation, natural or artificial, and (according to some) its distance from the market. The cultivators' resources were not to be overstrained, and something more than mere subsistence was to be left to them. They were to be treated gently; and if unable to pay, given deferment.¹

The kharaj could be estimated by either of the three following methods: (1) per unit of the cultivable area, as was done by Umar I in the Sawad; (2) per unit of the area actually cultivated; and (3) by taking a share of the produce (Muqasama).²

B. The Jizya was imposed upon "The People of the Book" (i.e. Jews and Christians) as well as those who have "something like a book", such as the Magians.³ It is levied once a year from the sane, free, male adults.⁴

Jurists differ about the amount of the Jizya. Abu Hanifa classified the Jizya payers into: the rich to pay 48 dirhams, the middle class to pay 24 dirhams, and the proletarians to pay 12 dirhams. Malik leaves the estimate to the ruler; while Shafi'i puts a minimum

(1) Hawardi, pp.143-4; p.147; Abu Ya'li, 151, p.156; Abu Ubaid, nos.1410-1421, no.181; Yahya, p.56; Tab., o.c. p.232; Abu Yusuf, p.150.

(2) Hawardi, pp.144-5; Abu Ya'li, p.152; Tab., o.c., p.223.

(3) Hawardi, p.139; Tab., o.c., pp.200-203; Abu Ya'li, p.137-8, p.144.

(4) Tabari adds "well-to-do"; Abu Ya'li excludes the poor and the old. See Abu Ubaid, nos.122-7.

limit of one dinar and leaves the rest to the ruler. But both Shafi'i and Malik maintain that once the amount has been paid, it cannot be changed. The taxpayers are to be treated gently and should not be overtaxed,¹

A peculiar case of the Jizya was the Sadaka Kuda'afa or "double tithe" paid by the Christian tribe of Bani Taghlib in Mesopotamia.²

C. Taxes on non-Muslim merchants:

1) The tax paid by Dhimmi (non-Muslim subjects) merchants to the amount of 1/20 of the price of their goods. It was levied once a year, if the price of the goods exceeded 200 dirhams.³

2) The customs paid by the unbeliever merchants, coming from countries not under Muslim control. It was 1/10 of the price of the goods.⁴

2) The Khums (i.e. fifth), which was collected on:

A. Treasure troves.⁵

B. Mines. The jurists differed as to whether this tax should be 1/5 or 1/10, but the Irakīs agreed to its

(1) Mawardi, p.139; Abu Ya'li, p.139, pp.111-2; Yahya, p.27, p.53 ff; Abu Yusuf, pp.122-4; Tab., o.c., pp.209-11; Abu 'Ubaid, nos. 100-109.

(2) Yahya, p.47; Abu Ya'li, p.139; cf. Mawardi, p.138; Abu 'Ubaid, p.540 ff.

(3) Yahya, pp.10-11, p.126; Mawardi, p.122.

(4) Yahya, p.11, p.126.

(5) Abu Ya'li, pp.111-2; Mawardi, p.116.

being one fifth.¹ Jurists also disagreed on the kinds of mines subject to the khums; some referred "specially" to gold and silver mines, and some others include all kinds of minerals making no exception for liquids like oil and tar.²

C. The Ghana'im consisting of lands, movable goods, Saby (i.e. women and children led into captivity) and prisoners if they were to be enslaved.³

3) The Zakat or Sadaka was levied on goods capable of growth or increase by themselves or through exploitation. The Zakat of apparent goods (Zahira) like sheep and crops was collected by the government; that of hidden goods (Batina) like gold and silver was left to individual will.⁴

The goods subject to Zakat are divided into the following classes:

A. Mawashi (i.e. cattle): camels, cows, buffaloes and sheep. They are taxable when (1) they exceed a minimum number of heads; (2) they have been at least a year in the possession of the owner; and (3) they have been grazing in pastures. The tax is as follows:

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- (1) Suli, o.c., p.199.
 (2) Abu Ya'li, p.111; Hawardi, p.116.
 (3) Hawardi, pp.133-4, p.146; Abu Ya'li, pp.125-7 and pp.134-6.
 (4) Hawardi, p.109; Abu Ya'li, p.99.

On camels: from 5-9 camels, a 6 months lamb or one year kid; from 10-14 camels, two sheep; from 15-19 camels three sheep, etc.

On cows and buffaloes: from 30-39, one 6 months old calf; from 40-50, one year old cow; from 60, two cows, etc.

On sheep and goats: from 40-120; one 6 months lamb or a goat; from 121-199, two sheep; from 200-399, three sheep, etc.¹

- B. Fruits and Crops: the fruits included by jurists range from dates and grapes only (Shafi'i), to all kinds of fruits (Abu Hanifa). Some jurists extend the tax on vegetables, greens and seeds, while others exempt the first two. One school of jurists fixes the taxable minimum at five wasaqs (= 360 Iraki ratis), while other taxes any quantity.

The tax is 1/10 if the irrigation is natural (i.e. by rain or canal) and 1/20 if it is done by a machine. It is assessed by measuring the fruits, but some jurists (Shafi'i and Ibn Hanbal) allow an estimate while the fruits are on the trees.²

(1) Abu Ya'li, pp.101-2; Kawardi, pp.110-1; Abu Yusuf, p.132 ff.

(2) Yahya, p.81, p.84; Kawardi, pp.112-5; Abu Ya'li, pp.103-4 and pp.106-8.

- C. Gold and Silver: the taxable minimum is 200 legal dirhams of silver and 200 mithqals of gold. The tax is $1/40$.¹
- D. Goods (including slaves) of Muslim merchants, pay $1/40$ of their price.²

III. Taxation in Practice

So far we have been enumerating the legal taxes, but in addition to them there existed other levies which had arisen from new needs and played an important part in the financial policy. By the 10th century, the spoils of war came to nil, the lands of the Caliphate shrank considerably, and the Zakat was hardly paid by the rich except on cattle and crops.³ Thus the general revenue sustained considerable losses. On the other hand the administrative machinery was as vast as ever; the salaries higher than before, and the expenditure of the court very lavish.⁴ New sources of revenue had to be discovered

(1) Abu Ya'li, pp.108-10; Hawardi, p.115; Suli, o.c., p.199.

(2) Yahya, p.126; Suli, o.c., pp.199-200; See Abu'Ubaid, pp.463-531 and p.533.

(3) Cf. Tan. P.II p.106.

(4) See I. Khaldun, Proleg., p.234. Zaydan dealt with this in detail in vol.II, pp.123-179. His reasons for the insufficiency of revenue for expenditure are: 1) The decline in revenue due to: (a) the shrinking of the empire; (b) decrease of the amount of the Kharaj (tax); (c) selfishness of governors by keeping most of the revenue; (d) the recurrence of civil war and troubles; (e) the transformation of large tracts of lands into Diya' and the consequent reduction of the tax on caliphal and wazirial domains. 2) The increase in expenditure due to: (a) the great luxury of Caliphs, and the great sums spent on public celebrations and rewards; (b) the enlargement of a lazy administrative machinery; (c) increase in salaries; (d) the diversion of large sums from the treasury, by wazirs to their pockets.

and thus new levies, generally described as mukus or uncanonical taxes, came into being. Moreover, as practice varied from theory, a description of the practices of taxation is of great value.

1) Since the reign of Ma'mun (198-218/813-33) the Kharaḥ lands of the Sawad had been paying 2/5 of the produce as a tax,¹ although this rule was sometimes disregarded. Some of the inhabitants of Badurya complained to the wazir Hamid b. al-Abbas that they paid 3 dirhams for each (shihrizi) palm-tree, while its dates fetched two dirhams only.² 'Ali b. 'Isa wrote to the governor of Diyar Rabi'a in 313/925 that some landowners of D.R. brought complaints to the capital against their unjust treatment in the years 311-3 A.H.; "they/^{were} compelled to accept the assessment of the taxes on their fields by guess and estimation...and had to pay Kharaḥ according to the highest standard ('Ibra)³, and before the ripening of the crops."⁴ The wazir ordered the governor to restore the normal taxes. Again in 321-2/933-4, the cultivators of Kufa complained to Ali b. 'Isa

(1) Fakhri, p.162; Tab.III, p.1039. It seems that this took place after 204/819, and that till then the tax was $\frac{1}{2}$ (see Tab.III, p.607; Fakhri, p.162). This reduction probably accounts partly for the difference between the revenues of the Sawad in Qudama's list (204 A.H.) as 114, 457, 650 dirhams and in Ibn Khurdadhbih's list (circa 272 A.H.) as 78, 319, 340 dirhams.

(2) Tan. VIII, p.50.

(3) Ibra means a fiscal estimate, usually made by taking a medium estimate for years of prosperity and years of depression. Khuwarizmi, p.40.

(4) Sabi, pp.336-7.

(who at that time was in charge of Wasit and the "Euphrates Irrigation" areas) that their 'Amil (tax-collector) oppressed them by overestimating the price of their fruits and by collecting the Kharaj in cash. 'Ali ordered the 'Amil to take the tax by muqasama (i.e. taxing a share of the produce).¹

'Ali b. 'Isa went further in protecting the tax-payer. He ordered the governors to investigate the claims of the tax-payers arising from the harm done to their crops or fruits by natural calamities; and should the case prove right, to reduce the assessment in accordance with the results of the investigation. He also instructed his agents to exact the land-tax without favours to the strong or injustice to the weak."²

Under Muizz al-Dawla, the fiefholder, and the revenue farmers had a free hand. The government made no inquiry into the treatment of the cultivators, and no notice was taken of "taxes improperly collected, fines that were purely iniquitous, additions to the assessments according to no register..."³ This state of affairs continued till the time of 'Adud al-Dawla under whom "a sound system of taxation was imposed on the public; arbitrary additions and chicanery being abolished."⁴ At a later date, Adud arbitrarily increased by 10% the

(1) Sabi, p.359; see Bowen: 'Ali b. Isra, p.335; cf. Eclipse I, p.21.

(2) Eclipse IV, p.31.

(3) Ibid., V, pp.103-4.

(4) Ibid., II, p.407.

registered acreage, thus burdening the tax-payers again.¹

Under the Hamdanids, the Jazira suffered from heavy taxation. Nasir al-Dawla initiated a system of unfair Muqasama by taking half the produce as his share.² Moreover, as he sometimes estimated the price of the crops and gave the cultivators the estimated price of their share, the latter received "less than two fifths of the produce."³

The Kharaj was collected according to the solar year and the calendar was occasionally regulated to make time of collection come when the crops were ripe.⁴ But this rule was often transgressed. Thus in 330/941 Baridi commenced collecting the Kharaj in March and "thereby ruined the cultivators who took to flight."⁵ When Adud al-Dawla conquered Irak, he found that the Kharaj was collected before the crops were ripe.⁶ On the other hand, it was thought legitimate for ministers in urgent need of funds to collect a part of the Kharaj before the season, as an advance payment by the tax-payers.⁷

The usual procedure for levying the Kharaj was to collect

(1) Ibid. III, p.71.

(2) I.H., p.213, p.217, p.215, p.219.

(3) I.H., p.213. This was done in the area of Nisibin.

(4) The calendar was regulated by Mu'tadid, the wazir Muhallabi and finally by Adud al-Dawla who delayed the time of collection till the Nawruz Mu'tadidi (i.e. June 11th). See Chapter on Agriculture, sect.II; Eclipse II, p.407; Sabi, letters, p.213 ff.

(5) Eclipse V, p.27.

(6) Ibid. II, p.407; cf. Sabi, letters, p.110.

(7) Ibid. I, pp.42-3.

the crops, to make an estimate and then to take the government's share.¹ Sometimes, in the case of fruit trees, the latter were counted and the Kharaḥ was levied by the number of trees.²

2) The lands around Basra were 'ushri lands.³ Maqdisi⁴ considers the lands around Kufa also as 'Ushri, but Istakhri's view supported by Sabi,⁵ that they were subject to the Kharaḥ is more plausible. Ibn Khurdadhbih regards the domains called "al-Saibain" and "al-wukuf" as 'Ushri and estimates their 'Ush at 500 Kurr of wheat, 5,500 Kurr of barley and 150,000 dirhams.⁶

Though legally 'Ushri lands paid a tithe on the produce, the practice differed occasionally from the rule. In 313/925 some cultivators in Diyar Rabia complained to 'Ali b. 'Isa that for three years, they had been compelled to pay the tithe by "acreage"; thus paying more than one tenth of the crops.⁷ In Basra, the Baridis (about 330-4/941-6) levied 20 dirhams for each Jarib⁸ of wheat or barley as the 'ushr.⁹ This oppression reduced the area of cultivation but the Baridis continued to

(1) Sabi, p.209; Tan.II, pp.158-9.

(2) Tan.VIII, p.50.

(3) Ist., p.80.

(4) Maq., p.133; cf. Yahya, pp.36-7.

(5) Ist., p.80; Sabi, p.359.

(6) I. Khurdadhbih, p.11.

(7) Sabi, pp.336-7.

(8) Jarib equals 3600 sq.dhira's (ella). Khwarizmi, p.43.

(9) Eclipse V, p.131; Maq., p.133, states that Umar I put 4 dirhams on the Jarib of wheat and 2 dirhams on that of barley. See Navardi, p.143; Abu Ya'li, p.150; Abu'Ubaid, no.173. Yahya, p.56.

levy the same total; "each year, the amount due per jarib was greater than in the preceding year." Furthermore, the people of Basra, compelled by frequent sieges to sow wheat and barley under the palm-trees "were charged forty dirhams per Jarib. There was an exodus in consequence, but this only added to the burdens of those who remained."¹

When the Buwaihids conquered Basra (in 339/950) the inhabitants complained to the wazir al-Muhallabi of the heavy taxes. Muhallabi restored the older system, i.e. "that the ushr should be levied in kind without consideration of either acreage or price. He made an estimate of the difference between their payments according to this system and the current one, and advised the tithe payers to redeem the difference between the just rate and the iniquitous rate with an immediate payment... The tithe-payers assented, and the sum agreed upon by the parties amounted to 2,200,000 dirhams." Then for the benefit of the poor tithe-payers he reduced the amount by 200,000 dirhams. "He wrote to Mu'izz al-Dawla to point out that though this action involved a reduction in money, it promised future benefit and improvement in the revenue of the region." Mu'izz al-Dawla approved of this plan.²

In 386/996 the rebel Lashkareitan trying to conciliate the

(1) Eclipse V, p.131.

(2) Eclipse II, pp.128-9.

people of Basra imposed upon them a tax of one-twentieth (or half the tithe) on everything bought or sold, even on food.¹

3) 'Ali b. 'Isa made a detailed list of the revenue of the 'Abbasid territories, especially of Irak in the year 306 A.H./ 918 A.D. According to that list,² the revenue of the different districts of Mesopotamia (mainly from 'ushr and Kharaj) was as follows:

a) The Sawad

Badurya, Kalwadha and Bin canal	166, 283	dirhams.
Bahurasir, Rumkan, Ighar Yaktin, Jazir and al-Madina al-'Atika	}	75,576 dinars
al-Anbar, Katrabbul and Sadd		
Kutha and Durkit canal	25,000	"
Upper Zab and Kushtasb canal	9,526	"
Upper Falluja and the mills	16,736	"
Lower Falluja, Nahrain and 'Ain al-Tamr	13,585	"
Upper Sib, Sura, Babil, Khutar-niyya and Upper Barusma	140,259	"
Nahr al-Malik, Murja, Jaubar canal, al-Asasan and al-Malikiyyat	38,350	"
Lower Barusma	46,336	"
The Tasseujis of Kufa	110,154	"
Buk canal and Lower Dair	20,590	"

(1) Ibid., III, pp.273-4.
(2) Kremen, in 'Ali b. 'Isa, p.27 ff.

Buzurj Sabur	24,300 dinars	
al-Radhanan	30,035	"
Rustakbed	13,666	"
Upper Nahrawan and Samantay	46,480	"
Middle Nahrawan	40,327	"
Lower Nahrawan	60,532	"
al-Silh and al-Manasil (?)	159,089	"
Badurya and Baksaya	42,499	"
Wasit with the 'private', 'new' and 'Abbasid domains, after deducting the necessary expenditure	310,720	"
Basra and Kur Dijla	121,095	"

b) The Jazira

Amid after deducting expenditure	87,900	"
Arzan and Nayyafarikin (a.e.)	139,172	"
Diyar Mudar	257,225	"
Diyar Rabi'a (a.e.)	326,890	"
Hawsil, Maridin, Bahdhar and the important (rustaq) [a.e.]	510,180	"
Tarik al-Furat	96,584	"

To this is to be added the revenue from the extensive Caliphal domains which spread over the Abbasid territories even outside Irak. Their revenue, added to the waqfs amounted to

1,768,015 dinars per annum. (x)

According to Ibn Hawkal, Irak from Tikrit to Wasit was farmed out in 358/968 for thirty million dirhams, and from Wasit to Basra for twelve million dirhams.¹ He adds that the revenue of Basra, including the "tithe", the "poll-tax" and the taxes on ships, in the same year, amounted to six million dirhams.² In 358/968, the revenue of the Province of Nisibin from taxes on land was five million dirhams.³ In the other districts of Jazira, the revenue from land, for 358/968 was as follows:-

Mawsil, 3,000 dirhams from wheat and barley
 10,000 dirhams from other cereals and cotton
 2,000,000 dirhams from the private estates of
 the Hamdanids.⁴

Ba'rabaya, a Rustaq (district) near Mawsil brought
 from wheat and barley 4,000,000 dirhams.

Basabda's revenue from wheat and barley =
 1,000,000 dirhams.

Bahadra = 1,500,000 dirhams (= 100,000 dinars).

Jazirat Ibn 'Umar and the Jabal Basurin district
 = 100,000 dinars.⁵

(x) Kremer - in *Alī b. 'Īsā* p.27 ff.

(1) *I.H.*, p.247.

(2) *I.H.*, pp.238-9.

(3) *Ibid.*, p.214.

(4) *Ibid.*, pp.217-18. Each dinar then = 15 dirhams. See *Ibid.*
 p.218.

(5) *Ibid.*, pp.218-9.

Maqdisi reports that he found a register in the archives of Adud al-Dawla (338-72/949-82) which read that the price of the share in the crops of the Sawad due to Bait al-Mal (public treasury) was equal to 80,780,000 dirhams, that other sources of revenue in Sawad brought 4,008,000 dirhams, and that the Kharaj of Dijla districts (probably upper Irak) equalled 8,500,000 dirhams.¹

4) Traditions relating to the rate of the Jizya (poll-tax) that Umar I (13-23/634-44) imposed on non-Muslims in Irak vary, but their indications are important, as in this field 'Umar I was a model for the later Caliphs. Abu'Uaida quotes the following traditions: (1) that he levied 24 dirhams annually on each person, exempting women and youngsters; (2) that he levied 48 dirhams from the rich, 24 dirhams from the middle class and 12 dirhams from the poor.² Abu Yusuf confirms the second tradition.³

A Caliphal decree, dated 366/976 ordered the collectors of Jizya, to take from "the sane, adult Dhimmi males their poll-tax, considering their resources whether rich or poor." It was not to be taken from "women, children, invalids, the very old and the very poor."⁴ Priests and ministers were also

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- (1) Maq., p.133.
 (2) Abu'Ubaid, pp.39-41.
 (3) Abu Yusuf, pp.122-4.
 (4) Sabi, letters, p.140.

exempted. According to Ibn al-Batrik, 'Ali b.'Isa tried in 312/924 to levy the Jizya from priests, bishops, monks and the very poor in Upper Egypt, but Mukhtadir on hearing the complaints of the population abrogated these new charges.¹

The term Jawali is sometimes used for Jizya.² Originally, Jawali meant the Jizya paid by "Dhimmi" who left their homeland and emigrated to another, but later became merely a synonym of Jizya.³

The Jizya was levied in Muharram (1st month) of each lunar year.⁴ Ibn Khurdadhbih estimated the produce of the poll-tax of the "Dhimmi" of Baghdad at 130,000 dirhams,⁵ while in Qudama this poll-tax brought 200,000 dirhams.⁶ 'Ali b.'Isa's figure for 306/918 is 16,000 dinars (= 240,000 dirhams).⁷ The 'Dhimmi' of Misibin (in 358/968) contributed 5,000 dinars.⁸ Jizya was a conspicuous item in the revenue of Mosul and Ba'arbaya.⁹

5) The Caliphal decrees of the Buwaihid period have numerous references to Sadakat, which were collected by an 'Amil al-Sadakat (collector of poor-alms). Those decrees indicate that

(1) I. Batrik, p.517.

(2) In the Caliphal decrees, it was now called Jizya (Sabi letters, p.112), then Jawali (ibid., p.140).

(3) Khuwarizmi, p.39; Abu Yusuf, p.1, note; Sabi, letters, p.99, note.

(4) Sabi, o.c., p.112, p.214.

(5) I. Khurdadhbih, p.125.

(6) Qud., p.251.

(7) Kremer, o.c., p.27.

(8) I.H., p.214.

(9) I.H., p.218.

this official collected Zakat only on "cattle" (Mawashi), i.e. sheep, cows, buffaloes and camels.¹

6) The taxes mentioned in the Caliphal decrees drawn up by Abu Ishaq al-Sabi are: the Kharaj, the Ushr, the Sadakāt, the Jawali, the Mal al-Jahbadha, the Ahdath (police fines)², and "other kinds of levies."³ Thus the four canonical taxes are associated with novel uncanonical taxes.

The "uncanonical" taxes had two main characteristics: (1) they were indefinite in amount; (2) their collection depended on the conscience and good will of the ruler on the one hand, and on the exigencies of the moment on the other.

Of the uncanonical taxes, the "Inheritance Tax" Daribat al-Irth was very important. A jurist being asked by Badr al-Mu'tadidi (captain of the guard of Mu'tadid) about the ruling with regard to inheritance, said that in Zaid b. Thabit's view, if a man died heirless, his property goes to the public treasury; and that equally, any remainder of property after the legal shares have been paid out to the existing heirs, goes to the treasury. But on the other hand Umar I, 'Ali b. Abi Talib, and 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud would give all the property to the heirs,

(1) Sabi, o.c., pp.98-9; p.111-2; p.127; p.214.

(2) See Dozy-supplement I, p.258.

(3) Ibid., pp.98-9; p.111; p.127.

and in the case of there being no direct heirs, to the nearest relative. The jurist tried to prove at length that the second view was the right one.¹

The Inheritance Tax was first introduced in the reign of Mu'tamid (256-279/870-892).² In 283/896 Mu'tadid issued a general decree abolishing the inheritance tax and the "Inheritance Bureau" (Diwan al-Mawarith) and ordering that the inheritance should be given to direct heirs and near relatives.³ Soon, this decree must have become inoperative, because already in 300/912 Muktadir had to issue a new decree to suspend this tax, except in the cases when no heirs were left.⁴ This decree fared no better than the previous one, for in 311/923, the collectors of the inheritance tax wanted to tax the vast properties left by a certain Akhi Abi Bakhra. When the wazir Ibn al-Furat was informed about it, he reported the matter to Muktadir, condemned the practice and recommended its abolition. Accordingly, an important decree was promulgated which gave the history of the tax and the tentatives to abolish it. The decree runs thus:- "...Abu'l Hasan, 'Ali b. Muhammad (the wazir) informed me of the maltreatment sustained by the people in matters of inheritance and the injustices they received - contrary to the traditions - in their properties. And that

(1) Sabi, pp. 249-53.

(2) Ibid., p. 248.

(3) I.A., vol. VII, p. 334; Tab. III, p. 2151; Dhahabi (Hyderabad Deccan 1337 A.H.) vol. I, p. 134.

(4) Arib, p. 38.

Ubaiddullah b. Sulaiman (the wizar) reported to Mu'tadid the practices (hal) of the collectors of the inheritance tax and how the population suffered from their proceedings contrary to the rules enunciated in the "Book of God", the practice of the Prophet or the consensus of the rightly-guided Imams. So he wrote to Yusuf b. Ya'qub and 'Abd al-Hamid b. Abd al-Aziz, the then judges of Baghdad and its dependencies, and asked their views on the inheritance of 'Ahl al-Milla' (i.e. the Muslims) and 'Ahl al-Dhimma' (non-Muslims)."¹ 'Abd al-Hamid confirmed the views of 'Umar, 'Ali and Ibn 'Abbas as quoted before. Yusuf b. Ya'qub's reply was that according to the Prophet, a Muslim does not inherit after a non-Muslim, nor vice versa; and that according to the Sunna (tradition) each community inherits the property of its members who have left no heirs.² After a reference to the abolition of this tax by Mu'tadid, the decree proceeds: "...then Hamid b. al-Abbas (wazir 306-311/918-923) in his iniquity resumed that unjust practice...consequently the Prince of the Faithful decreed that inheritance be given to relatives..., that the property of those 'Ahl al-Dhimma' who died heirless be returned to their community; that all the collectors of the inheritance tax in the different provinces be dismissed; and that the inheritance be supervised by governors as was the practice before Mu'tamid... Abu'l-Hasan

(1) Sabi, pp. 246-7.

(2) Ibid., pp. 247-8.

wrote in on Thursday, 20 Rajah 311/25, Oct., 923."¹ Thus the decree clearly shows that the inheritance tax was uncanonical, that it was an innovation and that it weighed heavily on the people. How long the decree was in force is not clear, but the fact that al-Muhassin, co-wazir with his father, seized the property of Akhi Abi Bakhra in the same year indicates the little use made of the decree in the corrupt administrative machinery.²

In 351/962 a man called Da'alaj died and left 300,000 'mithqala' of gold, "which were seized by Mu'izz al-Dawla. Previously Mu'izz respected the rights of inheritance, yet in this case could not resist the temptation to seize the property of Da'alaj, although he respected the endowments (waqf) set up by him.³

Whether the inheritance tax was graded is not clear. In 390/999, Muhammad b. 'Umar al-'Alawi (head of the 'Alids) died and left a great wealth. The wazir Abu Nasr Sabur, with the consent of Baha' al-Dawla took 50,000 dinars from the inheritance and gave the rest to the heirs.⁴ Thus the inheritance tax survived throughout the 10th century, and was a profitable

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- (1) Sabi, pp. 248-9.
 (2) 'Arif, pp. 116-7.
 (3) Ibn Jawzi, Mir'at, vol. XII, folio 56a.
 (4) Sabi, pp. 377-8.

source of revenue.

7) Taxes were imposed on goods passing from one district to another by river and land. 'Ali b. 'Isa, in his first wazirate (300-304/912-916) abolished the heavy tolls of Hisn Hamdi and Nahr al-Sidra.¹ At different places, mainly on rivers, toll houses were established. A chain or rope was drawn between the banks to prevent boats from escaping the toll - this construction and sometimes the tax itself, was called Ma'asir (pl. Ma'asir).² Ibn Ra'iq, Amir al-Umara' (324-26/935-37) initiated Ma'asir in Baghdad, "a tax which had not been heard of before."³ On the way from Baghdad to Wasit, there were Ma'asir at Dair al-'Akul, on the Tigris;⁴ as well as at Wasit.⁵

In the agreement between Mu'izz al-Dawla, and Nasir al-Dawla (in 335/946) it was stipulated that Nasir would send provisions to Baghdad, but that they would enter tax-free.⁶ The governor of Basra wrote to the governor of Hisn Hamdi requesting him to let the convoy of dates from Basra pass free, to which the addressee agreed.⁷

(1) Ibid., p. 286.

(2) I. Rusta, p. 185; see term Ma'asir in "Tajal-'Arus and 'lisan al-'Arab".

(3) Eclipse I, p. 383, note.

(4) I. Rusta, p. 186.

(5) Tan. VIII, p. 94.

(6) Eclipse II, p. 108.

(7) Tan. VIII, p. 140.

It is significant that no reference to Ma'asir is found in 'Ali b. 'Isa's list of revenue. Besides, in a decree of investiture to the Hamdanid Abu Taghlib (dated 366/976), the Caliph considered internal customs taken on river (Ma'asir) or land traffic as illegal and unjust novel taxes, and ordered him to abolish them.¹

In some cases, the internal customs were heavy enough. A large boat, laden with iron, and clay jars had to pay 8,000 dirhams at Wasit.² Maqdisi (375-87/985-997), complaining of the excessiveness of these taxes wrote: "the taxes, recently introduced (on goods passing) by river and on land are heavy. In Basra, there is a troublesome search; in the Batiha region goods are estimated (probably to be taxed) and inspected. The Karmatians had a custom house (Diwan) at the gate of Basra, and the Dailamites had another, so that one sheep paid four dirhams. When the pilgrims came back, both parties taxed the loads of skin, and the Arabian camels. The same was done at Kufa and Baghdad. At Kufa and Basra, the pilgrims paid 100 dirhams for a load of bazz (cotton stuff) and 150 dirhams for a litter ('ammariyya).³

At Baghdad, tolls were collected on goods imported or exported by pilgrims. In a letter to his rebel Chamberlain

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- (1) Sabi, letters (decree III) p.138.
 (2) Tan.VIII, p.93.
 (3) Maq., pp.133-4.

Sabuktakin (363/973), Isz al-Dawla boasted of having saved the inhabitants of Baghdad from tolls on imported sheep and on goods imported by pilgrims.¹ In a proclamation (dated 367/977) following a mutiny of Turkish troops in Baghdad, Adud al-Dawla declared that illegal taxes were levied by the Turkish troops on goods brought by pilgrim merchants, such as khass and bass and promised the inhabitants to abolish them.²

8) Maritime customs were levied in Basra on sea-borne goods. This tax was called hake and the places where it was collected, Narasid.³ Muslims paid 1/40 of the price of their goods,⁴ merchants from India and China 1/10th.⁵ Russian merchants, who according to Ibn Khurdadhba, claimed to be Christians, paid the poll-tax.⁶ In 'Ali b. 'Isa's list (306 A.H.) the taxes levied on ships coming to Basra brought 22,575 dinars.⁷ In 339/95 their total was 200,000 dinars.⁸

9) Taxes were also levied on shops and markets. Mahdi (158-169/775-785) was the first to levy this tax in 167/783.⁹ Ya'qubi (d.264/897) estimated the amount of dues levied under this heading in Baghdad at 11,900,000 dirhams per annum.¹⁰

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- (1) Sabi, letters (No. XXII), p.235.
 - (2) Sabi, letters, XXIII, pp.245 ff.
 - (3) Khuwarizmi, p.39.
 - (4) Zaydan I, p.218.
 - (5) Ya'qubi, Hist., p.590.
 - (6) I. Khurdadhbih, p.154.
 - (7) Kromer-'Ali b. 'Isa, p.27.
 - (8) Eclipse II, p.129.
 - (9) I. Jawzi, manaqib, pp.13-14.
 - (10) Ya'qubi, p.254, and p.243.

In 'Ali b. 'Isa's list (306 A.H.) the revenue from the sheep markets in Baghdad, Samarra, Wasit, Basra and Kufa amounted to 16,975 dinars per annum.¹ According to Ibn Hawkal, the taxes on covered baths and shops in Fisiyin were equal to 17,000 dinars in 358/968.² This suggests that baths were also subject to taxation.

Taxes on mills seem to have been levied in the Abbasid period. In Baghdad, the famous mill called Raha'l-Batrik (the Patriarch's mill) brought a revenue of 100,000 dirhams per annum.³ In the Jazira, the Hamdanids appropriated all the mills. In Haditha only, mills brought a revenue of 50,000 dinars annually.⁴ In Basabda (Jazira) the mills accounted for a substantial revenue.⁵

One of the accusations which Abu Shuja levels against Adud al-Dawla is that "he interfered with all the mills, seized their profits and left to their owners only a fraction of them. Great complaints arose from this practice toward the end of his reign. Samsam al-Dawla abolished this tax and permitted the owners to retain their profits."⁶

An anecdote in Tarukhi suggests that there was a tax on buildings called Ujrat al'-Araza and that it brought much

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- (1) Kremer in 'Ali b. 'Isa, p.27.
 (2) I.H., p.143.
 (3) Ya'qubi, p.243.
 (4) I.H., p.219; p.220.
 (5) Ibid., p.219.
 (6) Eclipse, VI, p.71.

revenue under Mukhtadiz. He suggests that it was levied on buildings standing on government grounds.¹ The tax was probably quite important, because after the flood which occurred in 466/1073, 'Amid al-Dawla began building a wall around Mukharram (a quarter in E. Baghdad) and levied the necessary money on the house and buildings of the people.²

The term Mustaghallat was used to denote the tax on houses, shops and mills built on government grounds.³ Ibn Khurdadbih estimates the mustaghallat of Baghdad combined with the revenue of the mint, at 1,500,000 dirhams (in 272/885). The mustaghallat of Baghdad circa 300/912 was 13,000 dinars per annum.⁴

10) New taxes were sometimes imposed on sundry commodities.

On conquering Ahwas in 367/977 Adud al-Dawla proclaimed that he would relieve the population from a great burden by abolishing taxes on flour and foodstuffs, and promised to do the same in

Irak.⁵ Nasir al-Dawla (317-358/929-968) imposed taxes on the sale of sheep, beasts of burden, oxen, vegetables and fruits; in 358/968 the revenue from these sources amounted to 5,000

dinars.⁶ There existed a tax on wines in Diyar Rabia. It was abolished by 'Ali b. 'Isa,⁷ but reimposed by Nasir al-Dawla. Its importance is shown by the fact, ^{that} in 358/968 it brought

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- (1) Tan. I, pp. 74-5.
 (2) I. Jawzi, Masaqib, p. 17.
 (3) Saydan II, p. 94; I.H., p. 303.
 (4) I.A., VIII, p. 51.
 (5) Sabi, letters (XXIII), pp. 245-6.
 (6) I.H., p. 214.
 (7) Eclipse I, p. 29.

5,000 dinars.¹ Adud al-Dawla imposed duties on all sales in the markets of horses, donkeys and camels.² There seems to have existed a tax on cotton and silk textiles woven in Baghdad. In 375/985, Simsam al-Dawla restored this tax and fixed the amount at 1/10 of the price. This measure brought about riots in Baghdad, and the tax was dropped.³ In 389/998 the wazir Abu Nasr re-imposed a tithe on silk and cotton textiles woven in Baghdad. The inhabitants of the quarters of al-'Attabiyya and Bab al-Sham rose against him, but the rebellion was put down. "The tax was maintained, officers and inspectors were appointed for its collection, and an office set apart for this purpose... stamps were placed on all woven goods, cut or sold. This practice was maintained till the last days of 'Amid al-Juyush (390/999) who abolished it."⁴

In 330/941 Abu'l-Hasan al-Baridi levied a tax on olive oil and an excessive tax of seventy dirhams on each kurr of wheat.⁵

11) A proper income tax was introduced in 373/983 by the Wazir Ibn Sa'dan. Abu Shuja' relates: "Among dues instituted by him (i.e. Ibn Sa'dan) was the exaction of a tithe on all money and rations allocated to officers, clerks, and courtiers; at the

(1) I.H., p.214.

(2) Eclipse VI, p.72.

(3) I.A. IX, p.35; Dhah., exactly the same text, folio 29b; I.Jawzi, Mir'at XII, folio 101a adds: "Abu'l Fath said this tax will bring 1,000 dirhams annually."

(4) Sabi, p.368; Eclipse VI, p.361-2.

(5) Eclipse III, p.85.

end of all orders (sakke) on finance ministers there was a clause ordering the deduction of this tithe."¹

12) A tax was occasionally imposed on pastures. In a decree of investiture, Muti' requested the Hamdanid Abu Taghlib neither to levy taxes on pastures, nor to prevent the public from using them.² 'Adud al-Dawla instituted a special bureau for the collection of this tax.³ In 379/989, Baha'al-Dawla abolished the tax on the pastures of the Sawad.⁴

13) By the end of the 9th century, a new tax called "mal al-Jahbadha" appeared. 'Ali b. 'Isa described it as "a visitation" (bala') on the people.⁵ When asked why he omitted "mal al-jahbadha" in his estimate of the revenue of the districts of Mosul and the "Two Zabs", Ali said: "I know nothing about it either as an original or an additional tax. If it is the mal of the government, then its addition is like taking from the tail to mend the pocket. If it is the mal of the people, then it is unjust, and but a means for the Jihbadhs to appropriate the money of the tax-payers." To this, the vice-wazir retorted that it was an item in the revenue; that its amount for the mentioned districts was 10,000 dinars; and that the districts in question should follow the system followed in the Sawad.⁶

(1) Eclipse VI, p.86.

(2) Sabi, letters, p.138.

(3) Eclipse VI, pp.71-2.

(4) Ibid. III, p.174; I.A.IX, p.48; I.Jawzi, o.c., folio 104b.

(5) Sabi, p.255.

(6) Sabi, p.255. 'Ali was the secretary of "Diwan al-Kharaj" under the wazir Ubaidullah b. Sulaiman (d.288/900); the vice-wazir being Abu'l-'Abbas b. al-Furat.

This anecdote shows that the "mal al-jahbadha" was not negligible; that it was detrimental to the interests of the people; and that it had taken roots in the administrative practice when the pious 'Ali b. 'Iss objected to it.

Though the exact nature of the tax is not clear, a decree of Muktadir suggests that it was theoretically the fee of the Jihbadh (treasury clerk) for his services; that it was proportionate to the sums passing through the Jihbadh's hands, and that it was levied directly on the tax payers, thus leading to much extortion.¹

14) The methods adopted in collecting taxes were often violent and oppressive. The jurist Abu Zubair al-Jubba'i gave the following verdict on what was happening: "The religious principles of the present rulers (i.e. the Abbasids) are sound, but their finance is corrupt. Their system of collecting (the taxes) is fraudulent and dishonest."² This view may be exaggerated, but it contained some grains of truth.³

On the other hand, many examples show that a Caliph or a wazir tried to do justice on the tax-payers, and to save them from the exactions of corrupt officials.⁴ In his decree of investiture given to Abu Taghlib, Muti' "ordered him to free the population from what corrupt governors started by the way

(1) *Summi*, pp.159-161.

(2) *Tan. II*, p.150.

(3) Cf. *Eclipse II*, pp.262-5; *Jah.*, pp.142-3; *Rifai I*, p.316.

(4) *Sabi*, pp.236-9; pp.249-51.

of...illegal dues and unjust practices;" the governor was told not to appoint any 'amil without paying him a fee; nor to proceed to confiscate the peasants' sheep, or to requisition provisions, or to fine the population.¹

The Caliphal decrees of the Buwaihid period abound with instructions to governors to choose honest and trustworthy 'amils, to avoid injustice, and to practise kindness.² The Caliphs even advised their governors that justice brings prosperity and ultimately an increase in the revenue.³ Stiff methods were recommended, however, in dealing with disobedient tax-payers.⁴

Be it as it may, the stress so frequently put on the necessity of justice and kindness, is in itself an indication that governors often disregarded the advice of their masters and that unjust and novel impositions were recurrently resorted to.

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- (1) Sabi, letters, p.138.
(2) Sabi, letters, p.139, p.138, p.111.
(3) Ibid., p.109.
(4) Ibid., p.110.

CHAPTER VII

Currency - Synopsis

An Introduction to Islamic Currency

- I. The Basis of Currency: Bimetallism
- II. Were Coins received by Weight or by Numbers ?
- III. The Ratios of Gold and Silver Currencies, and the Causes of Fluctuation
- IV. Official Supervision of Coins
- V. The Coins in Circulation, and the secondary Currency
- VI. Good and bad Coins
- VII. The Mint and the Right of Coinage

CURRENCYIntroduction

In the beginning of Islam, the Arabs had no currency of their own, but used mainly the Sassanian silver dirhams and the Byzantine gold dinars.¹ There were three types of Sassanian dirhams in circulation: the 'Baghli' (sometimes referred to as the 'wafi')² the 'Tabari', and the 'Jawariqi';³ their weights being:

The <u>Baghli</u>	20 qirats (carats)	= 8 danaqs	= 4.66 ² / ₃ grams
The <u>Tabari</u>	10 "	= 4 "	= 2.83 ¹ / ₃ "
The <u>Jawariqi</u>	12 "	= 4 ¹ / ₂ "	= 3.40 "

Non-Sassanian dirhams were sometimes used like:

The <u>Yamanite</u>	1 danaq	= 0.708 ¹ / ₃ grams
The <u>Maqhrabi</u>	3 danaqs	= 2.25 " 5

The Arabs dealt in these dirhams by weight and not by number;⁶ and in order to calculate the amount of 'Zakat', they had to fix a weight of the legal dirham.⁷ Under Umar I

(1) Mawardi, p. 149; Maq.-M., p.2.

(2) A-'Ubaid, p.524; Maq.-K., p.3. Ibn Taghribardi makes a distinction between the two. Vol.II, p.213.

(3) Maq.-M., p.2. Tabariyya were coined in Tabaristan (Iran) and not in Tiberias of Palestine. Jawariqiyya were so called after Jawraqan, a village near Hamadan. Karmali, p.24.

(4) Maq.-M., p.2. Mawardi, p.149; R.N. 1908, p.209; A-'Ubaid, p.424; Baladhuri adds that 10 dirhams of each weighed 10, 5 and 6 mittqals successively.

(5) Mawardi, p.149; R.N. 1908, p.209. Each danaq = 0.708¹/₃ grams.

(6) R.N. 1884, p.335. Baladhuri says: "the Kuraish used to weigh silver with a weight which was called dirham; and gold with a weight which was called dinar. Ten times the weight of the dirham = 7 times the weight of the dinar."

Hitti, Origins II, p. 264.

(7) A-'Ubaid, p.524; Mawardi, p.149.

(634-44 A.D.), this weight was fixed at 6 darags = $3.96\frac{2}{3}$ grams, so that 10 legal dirhams weighed 7 mittqals'.¹ While this dirham was used for paying 'The Zakat', dirhams of varying weights were still issued.² Velasquez Queipo distinguished four types of dirhams issued up to the advent of Abd al-Malik (65 /683) :

- i) Legal dirhams of weights ranging between 3.97 - 3.27 grams
- ii) Dirhams equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ the legal dirham, weighing between 1.82- 1.90 grams. (Theoretically $1.98\frac{1}{3}$ grams).
- iii) Dirhams of 2.85 grams
- iv) Dirhams of 4.20 grams.³

Under the pressure of the new faith and statecraft, the Arabs effected gradual changes in the Sassanian and Byzantine coins, till finally the currency was arabicised by the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik.

There is a series of bilingual dinars and dirhams with inscriptions either in Arabic and Greek, or in Arabic and Pehlevi.⁴ In the year 18 /638 Umar I struck dirhams, which were similar to the Sassanian, but bore additional Muslim legends.⁵ Governors were also allowed to strike coins, and

- (1) R.N. 1908, p. 214; A-'Yali, p. 158; Mawardi, p. 149.
- (2) R.N. 1908, p. 214; Baladhuri states that legal dirhams were first issued under Ibn al-Zubair. Hitti, Origins II, p. 265; Mawardi, p. 149; Maqrizi, p. 3.
- (3) Queipo, pp. 288-99.
- (4) Cordington, p. 12; Lavoix, pp XII-XVIII; Soret, pp 62-3. Walker published a splendid volume containing the collection of Arab-Sassanian dirhams in the Brit. Museum (London 1940).
- (5) Maq.-M., p. 2.

by the end of the year 25/645 all of them had established provincial mints.¹

The first Umayyads made no change. Muawiya I (661-80 A.D.) struck dinars bearing his own likeness, with a sword in his hand. He issued dirhams, weighing 6 danaqs each; and his governor of Irak struck dirhams, of which 10 weighed 6 mithqals.² Mus-ab b. al-Zubair, when deputy to his brother in Irak, issued legal dirhams which remained in circulation till Hahhaj melted them.³

So far, currency was not Arabic. Historians agree that 'Abd al-Malik (685-705 A.D.) arabicized the currency, but differ about the date of his reform. It is dated as 74,⁴ 75,⁵ and 76 A.H.⁶ By comparing Arab and Byzantine sources with coinfinds, Lavoix came to the conclusion that Abd al-Malik's reform began about 73-4/692-3.⁷ However, coins of the old type continued to be struck for a few years.⁸

Arab historians assign unsatisfactory reasons to the

- (1) Lavoix, p.7.
 (2) Maq.-M., p.4; see De Sacy *Traité*, p.15, n.27; Taqhribaldi II, p.113.
 (3) Maq.-M., p.4; De Sacy *Traité*, pp.16-17; see *Encyclopédie Arabe* VII, p.670.
 (4) A-Ya'li, p.164; Mawardi, p.149.
 (5) Diarbekri II, p.310; Suyuti, p.145.
 (6) I.A.IV., pp.337-8; Tabari II, p.939; *Fawat al-Wafayat* II, p.19; Maq.-M., p.4; Taqhribaldi I, pp.395-6; M.G.T.B. 1941, p.126; Hitti, *Origins* II, p.265.
 (7) Lavoix, p. XXVIII and p. XX.
 (8) *Ibid.*, pp. XXVIII-XX.

new reform;¹ which was a part of the policy initiated by Abd al-Malik of arabicizing all state institutions, as well as a sign of full sovereignty. The caliph maintained the weight of the dinar at one Mithqal² but he divided it into 20 equal units (qirats),³ instead of the former 22 qirats minus one habba' according to the inconvenient Syrian system. Meanwhile the proportion of 10 dirhams to 7 mithqals was left unchanged. To avoid fraud, glass weights were used as standards for weighing gold and silver coins.⁵

Then Abd al-Malik sent dies of the sikka to Hajjaj, his viceroy of Irak and ordered him to spread the new type throughout the Empire, to forbid people from using any other currency and to induce them to bring the earlier coins to be reminted.⁶

His successors introduced no changes, but they used silver of better quality. Umar b. Hubaira, governor of Irak

- (1) Maq.-M., p. 5; Damiri I, pp. 79-81; Lavoix, p. XXV gives the explanation as "high reasons of political and financial regulation."
- (2) Decourdemanche (R.N. 1908, pp. 214-5) suggests that, leaving the legal dirham and mithqal as they were, Abd al-Malik took the Sassanian dirham wafi which weighed 15 qirats as his type for the dinar, and the silver "solique" of Constantine which weighed 10 qirats ($2.83\frac{1}{3}$ grams) as a model for his dirham.
- (3) Blanchard (R.N. 1884, pp. 336-341) believes that the weight "22 qirats minus one habba" was a fraction of a unit which was the Byzantine "sou" of 24 qirats, and that Abd al-Malik was not satisfied with it. He therefore made the mithqal equal in weight to the Byzantine "sou" and divided it into 20 equal units called qirats. He made the dinar = 20 qirats and the dirham = 14 qirats, thus maintaining the proportion of 7:10. Cf. Hitti, Origins II, p. 267; Maq.-M., p. 5.
- (4) Each qirat = 4 habbas. Maq.-M., pp. 4-6; De Sacy, *Traité*, pp. 17-18, note 34; p. 19, n. 36; Damiri, pp. 79-81.
- (5) Damiri, pp. 80-1.
- (6) Maq.-M., p. 5.

under Yazid II (A.D. 720-4) struck dirhams called al-Hubairiyya, superior to those of Hajjaj.¹ Similarly, Khalid al-Qasri, Governor of Irak under Hisham (A.D. 724-43) improved on the dirhams of Umar; while his successor in office, Yusuf b. 'Umar went still further in refining the silver and in supervising the weight. The Hubairiyya, the Khalidiyya and the Yusufiyya were the best Umayyad dirhams, and the only ones of that dynasty accepted by the Caliph Mansur for the payment of the Kharaj.²

The Umayyad Caliphs never put their names on their coins.³

The Abbasids slightly diminished the weight of dirhams and added their names to the legends. The weight of the dirhams which Saffah (A.D. 750-4) struck at Anbar was reduced first by one habba and later by two habbas.⁴ Mansur diminished it further by one habba. He also abandoned the former standard of one Syrian mithqal and struck the hashimi dinars weighing one Basri mithqal.⁵ The decrease in the weight of dirhams went further, and by 178/794 it was $3\frac{3}{4}$ habbas.⁶ During the administration of Ja'far the Barmaki, the decrease amounted (by 184/800) to one qirat and $2\frac{1}{2}$ habbas; the dirhams were accepted only by weight for their intrinsic value. Subsequently, they were suppressed altogether.⁷ After the execution of

(1) Ibid., p.7; Mawardi, p.149; A-Ya'li, p.165.

(2) Maq.-M., p.7; Mawardi, pp. 149-50; A-Ya'li, p.165. According to these authors, the Khalidiyya were issued till 120 A.H.; the Yusufiyya till 125 A.H. On Hisham's order, Khalid and Yusuf stopped minting everywhere except in Wasit.

(3) B.M. (See S Lane-Poole) I, p.viii.

(4) Maq.-K., p.48; Laveix, p. xlvii.

(5) The epithet Hashimi is taken from the town Hashimiyya (near Kufa) the temporary capital before Baghdad. Karmali, p. 47, note 1.

(6) Maq. K., p.49.

(7) Ibid, p.48.

Ja'far, the new wazir delegated the supervision of currency to al-Sindi b. Shahiq who raised the standard of gold and silver and restored dirhams to their legal weight.¹ No change in the weight of coins took place under the next Caliphs till the murder of Mutawakkil in 861 A.D.

When the Turkish slaves became masters (after 861 A.D.), the process of decline was accelerated, and the economic decay of the state found its repercussion in the depreciation of currency.²

This survey, slightly exceeding the frames of the present chapter, is essential for the understanding of the currency problems in the 10th century, especially in view of the lack of a general comprehensive study on the subject.³

I. The Basis of Currency

Throughout the 10th century, currency continued to be bimetallic based as it was on gold dinars and silver dirhams. Many facts lead to this conclusion.

1) Official transactions were carried both in dinars and dirhams.⁴ There was no legal limit to transactions in either currency, and only convenience dictated whether the money used was gold dinars or silver dirhams. The fact that 'Ali b. 'Isa

(1) Ibid., pp. 48-9; Maq.-Ighatha, pp. 60-1 says that Hashimi dinars were reduced by $\frac{1}{2}$ habba, but continued for a time to be taken for a mithqal. Full weight was soon restored.

(2) See Maqrizi's view in K., pp. 50-1.

(3) Much interesting information like the development of pious formulas and titulaires has been neglected to avoid unnecessary details.

(4) Tan. I, p. 26; Sabi, p. 11; I.H., p. 144 (B.S.A.); I.A.VIII, p. 42 and p. 77. Maqdisi, pp. 340-1; 371; Eclipse I, pp. 18-9.

gave his list of revenue for 306/918 in dinars does not prove (as von Kremer¹ and Fischel² suggest) that gold was the sole standard. When Subkuri farmed out the taxes of Pars and Kirman (in 297/892), he promised to pay the government 13,000,000 dirhams.³ 'Ali b. 'isa himself specified in dirhams the amount he wanted to borrow monthly from two Jewish Jihbadhs (in 301/913) in a contract of 16 years' duration.⁴ Adud al-Dawla's list of the revenue of the Sawad was given in dirhams.⁵ These cases invalidate the above mentioned theory of monometallism in Irak in this century.

ii) Had gold been the only standard, the number of dirhams in the dinar would have been fixed by the government. But, nothing of the kind was done; the ratio of two currencies was left undetermined and continued to fluctuate throughout the century.

iii) Some anecdotes suggest that the value of dinars and dirhams depended considerably on their purity. Ibn al-Athir reports that in 330/941 Nasir al-Dawla struck, at Baghdad, dinars called Ibrisiyya of purer and fuller weight than other dinars. So they were "sold" for 13 dirhams as compared with 10 dirhams paid for the ordinary dinars.⁶

(1) Kremer 'Ali b. 'Isa, p.6 ff.

(2) Fischel-Jews, p.3.

(3) Eclipse I, pp.18-9.

(4) Tan. VIII, p.26.

(5) Maq. p.133.

(6) I.A.VIII, pp.288-9; Eclipse II, p.31 and note 1.

iv) The value of dinars is sometimes given in dirhams, while that of dirhams was occasionally defined in dinars. So for example Ibn Hawkal gives the revenue of Barqa'id (near Mosul) as being 2,000 dinars "equal in value to 30,000 dirhams."¹ Ibn Miskawaih states that the price of a mule presented to Ibn al-'Amid was 3,000 dirhams equal to 200 dinars.² Such anecdotes also seem to suggest that both dinars and dirhams were standard currencies.

Though currency was bimetallic throughout the Abbasid period, official accounts were, at different times, given mainly in either of the two currencies. What Mansur left in Bait al-Mal is given in dirhams (900,000,000).³ Rashid's list of revenue for all provinces east of Syria and the total of the revenue of the empire are given in dirhams.⁴ Ibn Khurdadhbih's list of the revenue of Mesopotamia is calculated in dirhams too.⁵ According to Jahiz (d. 869) "the dirham is the basis of the world."⁶ On the other hand, for the same period, Jahshiyari is full of references to official accounts and transactions in dinars.⁷

But the treasury which Mu'tadid (d. 289/901) left is stated to have contained 16,000,000 dinars and 30,000,000 dirhams.⁸ His

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- (1) I.H., p. 218
 (2) Eclipse I, p. 278, see also Suli, p. 116; and Sabi, p. 284.
 (3) Jah., p. 158.
 (4) Ibid., p. 181-6.
 (5) I. Khurdadhbih, pp. 8-14.
 (6) Jahiz.-Bukh., p. 268.
 (7) Jahshiyari, p. 100, 101, 106, 154, 170, 180, 181, 182, 223.
 (8) al-'Iqd al-Farid II, p. 58.

successor Muktafi (d. 295/908) left 14,000,000 dinars only.¹

This brief survey shows that during the second half of the 9th century, the dinar tended to assume more importance in official accounts; and that it achieved this definitely by the beginning of the 10th century.

Between 908-945 A.D., most of the official accounts are given in dinars,² but during the Buwaihid period some accounts are given in dinars, but most of them are in dirhams.³

This fluctuation in the quotations of the two currencies was probably due to the amount of gold and silver available in each case and their relative importance on the market.

II. We have to consider the important question whether coins were taken by weight or by number. Single anecdotes suggest that the former was the case. When a tax-collector called on Mu'tadid for the 400 dinars which the Caliph owed, Mu'tadid asked him whether he was an expert at testing and weighing coins. "He then took out of the chest a number of gold dinars and weighed out four hundred, of which I took possession."⁴ When a man wanted to buy a slave girl, the slave

(1) Eclipse I, p. 238.

(2) Examples: Mu'tadid's list of expenditure, Sabi, pp. 11-12; 'Ali b. 'Isa's list of revenue (Kremer, p. 27 ff.); Muktafi's budget of the private treasury Eclipse I, pp. 238-41; Salaries: Sabi, p. 322; 139; 323; Eclipse II, p. 154, p. 159; Suli, p. 328; Eclipse I, p. 239, p. 110; 'Arib, p. 45.

(3) Dinars: Eclipse II, p. 242; Tan. I, p. 247; Dirhams: Adud's list of revenue for Sawad, Maq., p. 133; Eclipse II, p. 114; p. 346; A-Shuja, p. 136; p. 173; p. 348. Salaries: Eclipse II, p. 174; A-Shuja, pp. 161-6.

(4) Tan. VIII, p. 16.

dealer said: "Do not open the bag, for if the dinars are one habba less than 70, I shall not sell her." The bag was finally opened and the dinars weighed.¹ Both anecdotes do not settle the question peremptorily, because the fact that one legal dinar weighed a mithqal renders weighing easier than counting when one had to do with a large number of dinars. At any rate, speaking of Irak, Maqdisi says (372/982) that Huquduhum Bi'l-Wazn² which may suggest that their coins are taken by weight.

There is however some evidence to show that coins were taken by the number of pieces. There was a strict supervision on the weight of coins, and much stress was put on the definite weight of the dirhams and dinars.³ In normal times the government forbade the usage of worn out and clipped coins.⁴ Religious preachers banned dealings with clipped coins as a kind of riba, because were clipped coins to be considered equal in value to good ones, the dealer would acquire an unjustified benefit.⁵ Had coins been taken by weight and not by number, such restrictions would have been meaningless.

Although our sources are silent on the existence of any standard weights, such as glass weights, it remains probable that coins were sometimes weighed. This was rendered inevitable

(1) M.G.T.B. IV (1941), p. 377.

(2) Maq., p. 129, note D.

(3) Sabi, letters, p. 113; p. 141.

(4) [I. Jawzi, quoted in] M.G.T.B. IV 1941, p. 374.

(5) Ibid., p. 376.

by several circumstances. Thus for calculating the zakat, it was necessary to consider the weights of the legal dinar (one mithqal) and the legal dirham (14 qirats). In transactions between different principalities with coins of different weights, the legal weights formed a common basis for understanding.¹ Clipped and worn out coins needed to be weighed before they were accepted. In spite of all the prohibitions, the clipping of dinars was practised in Irak.² In critical times, the government itself had to condone the use of worn out coins. Suli reports that 324/935 was a year of scarcity, and the wazir "made a proclamation allowing people to use clumsy (ghalis) and worn out (mamsuh) coins out of mercy for them."³ Such cases were of course exceptional.

III. Ratios of Gold and Silver Currencies

Throughout the 10th century there was a continual fluctuation in the ratio of dirhams and dinars; there was no definite tendency in the first half of the century, but a rise in the value of dinars became accentuated in later years. The following table gives the various rates of exchange,⁴ registered in the sources:

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- (1) M.G.T.B, 1941, pp. 624-6 (by Azzawi).
 (2) I. Khallikan I, p. 632.
 (3) Suli, p. 71.
 (4) In the time of the Prophet, 1 dinar = 12 dirhams (J.A. 1879 VII, p. 527.) In 'Umar I's time, 1 dinar = 10 or 12 dirhams (A-Yusuf, p. 185). Under 'Ali (-661 A.D.) 1 dinar = 10 dirhams (Masudi-V, p. 327). Under Harun (786-809) 1 dinar = 20-22 dirhams. Jah. p. 288.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Dirhams to 1 dinar</u>	<u>Authority</u>
300/912	15	Tan. VIII, p. 26
302/914	15	Sabi, pp. 80-1
307/919	14½	Eclipse I, p. 71
310/922	11 ³ / ₄	Sabi, p. 89
circa 315/927	15	Qudama, p. 239
315/927	16	Eclipse I, p. 165.
321/933	14	Ibid. I, pp. 273-4.
327/938	10	Suli, p. 146
330/941	10	
330/941	13 [Ibrizi I.A. VIII, p. 288-9 dinar] Eclipse II, p. 31, n.	} }
332/943	15	Eclipse II, p. 54
358/968	15	I.H., p. 218.
390/999	20	Sabi, p. 395.
392/1001	25 [Sahibi]	Ibid, p. 468
393/1002	40 [Qasani]	Ibid., p. 484

Various causes influenced these fluctuations:

(a) The amount of alloy in gold and silver; and the market price of gold and silver were certainly the chief factors;¹ but as the percentage of alloy is unknown,² we cannot properly gauge the influence of this factor.

(1) Cf. I.A., VIII, pp. 288-9; Eclipse, p. 31.

(2) Qalq. considers 1/3 copper as the right proportion of alloy in dirhams (vol. III, pp. 467; 443. Ibn Mamati 3/10 p. 25.

(b) Though at times, the countries from Egypt to Persia were parts of the same body politic, they never formed one monetary bloc. Whereas currency was bimetallic in Azerbaijan, al-Jibal, Jurjan, Tabaristan,¹ Dailam and Rayy, it was monometallic in Egypt, Kirman, Bukhara and Fars. The last three provinces, belonged to the silver bloc; all commercial transactions with them being carried in dirhams, and gold considered as a merchandise.² Egypt, on the other hand, belonged to the gold bloc.³ So Irak held a position of an exchange centre for the gold bloc in the west and the silver bloc in the east, a fact which affected the ratio of its two currencies.

(c) The value of the Iraki dinar was not always equal to the Egyptian one. According to Maqrizi, in 972 A.D., the Iraki dinar of Radi was 20% less than the Egyptian dinar.⁴ Similarly the value of a dinar in dirhams differed in Irak and the Persian provinces. In 321/933, for example, a dinar was worth 14 dirhams in Irak, while it was equal to 15 dirhams in Rayy.⁵ This factor, as well as the balance of

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- (1) I.H., p. 250; p. 267; p. 273; p. 270; Ist., p. 208.
 (2) Ist., p. 168; p. 314; I.H., p. 224 (B.G.A.)
 (3) Maq., p. 204.
 (4) De Sacy, Christ.Ar.II, p. 130.
 (5) Eclipse I, p. 273-4, and p. 278.

trade, must have affected a continuous movement of gold and silver coins between Irak and its neighbours.¹ For example, in 296/908, the merchant Ibn al-Jassas received 100,000 (gold) dinars from Egypt.² Maqdisi reports that the Egyptians have much dealing in Radi dinars.³

(d) Three particular factors contributed to the quick rise in dinar under Baha'.al-Dawla (379-403/989-1012):

(1) The depreciation of the dirham by the increase of alloy.⁴

(2) In application of the law that bad coins drive good coins out of circulation, dinars were withdrawn, and their scarcity in the market contributed to their dearth.⁵

(3) The rise of the Fatimid anti-Caliphate in Egypt came to hamper the circulation of coins.⁶ Gold came chiefly from Egypt, and as Egypt's prosperity grew, more gold was used on the spot and less was available for export. The general resentment of the Caliphate against the Fatimids had also its share in the crisis. In

(1) I.A. IX, p. 308; Sauvaire, J.A., 1880, XV, p. 450; A-Shuja', pp. 60-4.

(2) 'Arib, p. 130; Eclipse I, p. 35.

(3) Maq. p. 204. Qalgashandi, though referring to a later period, is still significant in saying that the dinars circulating in Egypt were either struck in Egypt or imported from other countries. Vol. III, p. 440.

(4) Sabi, p. 402.

(5) Cf. Sabi, p. 402.

(6) A-Shuja' records the significant story of an Egyptian who refused to take a dirham (struck by Adud al-Dawla) when offered by an Iraki in Egypt. The Iraki considered that action as improper and offending, and complained to Adud about it; but the latter could do nothing, as the Fatimids were enemies. See pp. 60-4.

427/1036, the Abbasid Caliph banned the circulation of Egyptian dinars.¹

IV. The Mint was supervised by the Caliph, the Buwaihid prince and their representations including the Qadis.² For the greater part of the century, this supervision was fairly strict.³ A decree of Tai' dated 366/976) requested "the wali al-'iyar (i.e. mint-supervisor) to refine the gold and silver used for coinage, so that dirhams and dinars be struck without depreciation or fraud; and to protect the dies (sikka) from being deformed."⁴ The central mint at Baghdad had standard weights (Imam) for dirhams and dinars, to which provincial mints had to conform.⁵

Even when the revenue of the mint was farmed out, the farmer remained under the watchful eye of the government. When the farmer of the mint of Ahwas struck deficient coins, he was sentenced to death by Mu'izz al-Dawla.⁶

On the eve of the Buwaihid invasion, coins were debased (in 327/938) by the all powerful Amir al-Umara Bajkam who "struck ill shaped (wahsha) dinars with much alloy."⁷ This produced some confusion, but it did not last long for in 330/941, Nasir al-Dawla restored gold coins to their purity,

(1) I.A. IX, p. 308.

(2) The Qadi Tanukhi was a supervisor of a mint. Yaqut, Diet., vol.V, p. 302.

(3) Sabi, letters, p. 113; p. 141.

(4) Ibid., p. 141; p. 113.

(5) Ibid

(6) Tan. I, p. 72.

(7) Suli, p. 136.

with a weight comparable to that of the famous "Sindi" dinars.¹

Maqrizi believes that throughout the Buwaihid period currency was debased by heavy alloy. This is not supported by the facts for the period extending down to 379/989.² But under Baha'al-Dawla one hears of complaints and even riots against the abuses with the currency. Abu Shuja' records a Dailamite riot in 383/993, explaining that "one of their complaints was the debasement of currency."³ In 390/999 the Dailamites "complained about the deterioration of currency. Dealings then were mainly in silver. In protest they marched into the house of Abu Nasr Sabur (the wasir)."⁴ In this case the debasement affected the dirhams, and the crisis must have been acute for it coincided with the rise of the dinars to a degree unparalleled during the whole century.⁵

V. The Coins in Circulation

Multiples as well as fractions of the monetary units were in circulation. The 'Abbasids had special double dinars bearing the inscription "struck at the Hasani palace

(1) Suli, p. 229 says that Nasir had, with the Sarrafs numerous discussions regarding the standard of the dinar ('Iyar al-Dananir) which may suggest that the sarrafs favoured the increase of the alloy in the dinars. This is understandable since the Sarrafs' business was to pay dinars for the bullion offered by the public; and any increase of the alloy increased their profits.

(2) Cf. Tan. I, p. 72.

(3) A. Shuja, p. 250.

(4) Sabi, p. 402.

(5) Ibid, p. 395; p. 468; p. 484.

for the private purse (kharita)¹ of the prince of the Faithful." The Caliphs used to distribute them as gifts to singers and other favourites.² Azdi (306 A.H.) speaks of dinars weighing 100 mithqals' each.³ Yaqut relates that Nazir al-Dawla sent Sabi (Abu Ishaq) 10 of the "presents" dinars (dananir al-Sila) of 50 mithqats each.⁴ Saif al-Dawla struck "presents' dinars" of 10 mithqats each, bearing his name and effigy.⁵ Ibn al-'Amid, the celebrated Buwaihid wasir presented a poet with dirhams and dinars, each worth five times the ordinary value of the coin.⁶ Muktadir, Mu'izz al-Dawla and Adud al-Dawla struck double dirhams.⁷

Medals were also called coins. When Amir nominated his son Musa heir to the throne, he struck commemorative dinars and dirhams, tenfold the weight of the normal ones.⁸ In 325/936, Radi struck similar pieces weighing about five dirhams each.⁹

Halves and quarters of dinars and dirhams were in circulation too,¹⁰ and were frequently issued by the successive Caliphs. At one time Abu Abdallah al-Baridi had

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- (1) Kharita here means "Private Treasury". Dozy, Supplement I, p. 363; Kremer, o.c., p. 53.
 (2) Maq- ighatha, pp. 59-60; cf. Karmali, p. 164, note 1.
 (3) Abu'l-Qasim. p. 68; cf., Jah., p. 241.
 (4) Yaqut, Dict. I, p. 329.
 (5) Sa'igh I, p. 123; Tha'alibi-Yatima I, p. 12. Ja'far al-Baraaki struck dinars of 100 mithqats each. He used to distribute them as gifts at the Nawruz and the Mihrajan feasts. Maq.-K., p. 59.
 (6) Tha'alibi-Yatima II, p. 126.
 (7) Qhalib, p. 348; 346; 334; Lavoix, p. 300.
 (8) Maq.-K., pp. 49-50.
 (9) B.N. add. p. 82.
 (10) Jahiz-Bukh., pp. 133-4.

amassed as many as 20,000 half-dirhams.¹ Catalogues of coins abound in descriptions of halves and quarters of dinars and dirhams.²

The Catalogues do not mention the secondary currency, which served for small purchases, such as Qirrata, Habbas, Danaqs, Tassujis and Fals. The first three were small weights of silver,³ and the last was a copper coin, equal at one time to a quarter of a Tassuj.⁴

Even leaves of bread were sometimes used as a currency.⁵ Maqrizi quotes a certain Shaikh al-Ra'is Abu'l-Qasim b. Abi Zaid (who visited Baghdad by the end of the 4th century A.H.) who says: "People go far in thinning leaves which they use as a currency. They use them in the place of dirhams in their (daily) expenses, and verify their value in a way agreed upon among them. In doing this, they have a special law to which they refer. Thus they reject musty (mukarra) and broken leaves as they return false dirhams and dinars. They use bread to buy most of their food and savouries. They

(1) Tan. I, p. 147. He said that they weighed 10,000 normal dirhams.

(2) B.M. p. 134 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dinar); Ghalib, 223 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dirham); N.C. 1883, p. 257 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dirham); *ibid.*, p. 232 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dinar); B.M. add p. 75 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dinar); Lavoix, p. 282 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dinar); N.C. 1919, p. 198 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dinar). B.M., p. 140 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dinar); Lavoix 320 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dinar); M.D., p. 204 ($\frac{1}{2}$ dirham) etc.

(3) One danaq (silver) = $\frac{1}{6}$ dirham = $2\frac{1}{3}$ qirats (silver) = 10 habbas = 4 tassujis. See N.C. 3d. s., vol. IV, 1884, pp. 77-8; Jahiz-Bukh., pp. 58-9; p. 193; Khuwarizmi (V) pp. 62-3.

(4) *Ibid.*, p. 197; 58-9 and p. 201. I refer only to the 10th cent.

(5) *Ibid.*, p. 197.

pay with it for the entrance to the baths. It is accepted by sellers of wine and spirits, and is not refused by the small cloth sellers and druggists ... Each 60 leaves are sold for one qirat."¹ As each dinar was worth 20-40 dirhams, in the last 10 years of the century, one qirat was worth 1-2 dirhams. Consequently 60 leaves were worth 1-2 dirhams.

VI. Good and Bad Coins

Theorists classify coins into good and bad coins. The good coins were struck on a good standard and of comparatively pure gold or silver. Good dinars are described as matheqil wasina jiyad, "dinars of pure gold weighing one mithqal (each)."² Jahiz suggests that the best dinars are the red ones.³ Good dirhams are called darahim nuqra.⁴

The bad coins were subdivided into:

(a) Zuyuf, or coin, with an admixture of copper or another base metal. They were rejected by the treasury, and accepted by merchants according to their real value.⁵ Jurists insist that the receiver of such coins be informed about them, so

(1) Maqrizi: "Iqhathat al-Umma" written as an attempt to outline the history of famines in Egypt from the creation till 807/1404, pointing out the reasons for those famines, and suggesting remedies for the future. This tract contains the nucleus of his essay on coinage, "shudhur al'-uqud."

(2) Jahiz.-Bukh. p.65.
 (3) Jahiz-Tabassur, p.328.
 (4) Qalq. III, p. 443.
 (5) Karmali, p.50.

as to enable him to treat them accordingly.

The Bahraja were coins with much alloy. The term refers mainly to dinars, but sometimes to dirhams as well.¹ Jahiz says that Bahraj dinars could be detected by their weight.² The Bahraja were received by the treasury,³ but rejected by merchants. Adud al-Dawla once struck dirhams of silver mixed with copper and lead, but they were rejected by the merchants.⁴

Sometimes the terms Zuyuf and Bahraja are used as synonyms,⁵ but as the government rejected the first and accepted the second it appears that the latter were struck by the government while the former were forgeries.

(b) The Sattuqa were dirhams made of copper, and covered with a thin layer of silver. In 384/994, "Usaifir, chief of the Arabs" intercepted the pilgrims and protested that the dirhams which the government sent him in the previous year were nuqra matliyya, i.e. "silver-plated dirhams" and wanted

- (1) Maqrizi: Ighatha, pp. 57-8; Jahiz-Bukh., p.134; Jahiz-Tabassur, p.328; Lisan III, p.39.
- (2) Jahiz-Tabassur, p.328.
- (3) Jahiz-Bukh., pp.113-4; Karmali, p.50, note 1.
- (4) This is reported by the Armenian historian E.Asolik de Tarôn, llème partie, B.III, p.67. He adds that Adud al-Dawla, in anger, ordered his name to be inscribed on pieces of baked clay and copper which he gave to some persons to buy clothes and provisions with; and that nobody dared to refuse them. The fact that this story is not mentioned in Arab sources, suggests that the experiment was not carried further.
- (5) Lisan III, p.39.

a substitute for them.¹ The law did not consider the sattuqa as dirhams, because they contained more copper than silver.²

(c) "The Qurada" were clipped dinars or fractions of a dinar. Ibn Khallikan accuses the Irakīs of clipping dinars, since "they use the small fractions (of a dinar) as a currency and call it Qurada."³ Ibn Jubair also complains (580/1184) of this Irakī habit.⁴ Worn out coins mamsuh were also considered bad, because they had less real value than the new. In 315/947, the governor of Wasit complained that his deputy at Rayy sent him 40,000 dirhams which "were bad and out of circulation,"⁵ and would lose much in the exchange (sarf).

Legally, clipped or defective coins were not acceptable in paying taxes, but individuals were free to accept or reject them.⁶ Tanukhi relates how in the time of Mu'izz al-Dawla, a director of the mint in suqal-Ahwaz struck defective dinars and sent some of them to Basra to buy beasts of burden, and how they were refused by the Baridis.⁷

Bad coins were accepted only at lower rates than good coins.⁸

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- (1) I.A. IX, p. 74.
 (2) See Sauvage, J.A. VII serie, 1880 XIV, pp.456 ff.; Karmali, p.50, note 4 and p.147; Jahiz-Bukh., pp.133-4.
 (3) I.Khallikan I, p.632.
 (4) I.Jubair, p.218. Both (3) and (4) relate to the 12th century but are quoted for illustration.
 (5) Eclipse I, p.171.
 (6) Abu ya'li, p. 166.
 (7) Tan. I, p.72.
 (8) Mawardi, pp.150-1. Eclipse I, p.171.

VII. Official mint houses existed in the capital and in the important provincial centres.¹ Striking coins was considered a prerogative of the sovereign or his representatives. Abu Ya'li, quoting Ibn Hanbal states: "Coins should not be struck except at the mint and with the authority of the government; for if people are allowed to do so (on their own) they would commit great wrongs."² Mawardi suggests that only coins struck in the mint be admitted in circulation.³

On the other hand, the mint was open to all, and anybody was allowed to bring bullion and receive an equal amount of coins, in exchange.⁴ In the 10th century, merchants and sarrafs brought bullion to be coined for them, and acted as intermediaries between the mint and the public.⁵

The government charged small royalties on coining; such royalties being described as "the price of wood and the fee of the worker."⁶ Abd al-Malik fixed the amount of these royalties at 1%.⁷

This mint tax constituted one of the items of revenue in 'Ali b. 'Isa's list (306 A.H.), where the revenue of the mints of Baghdad, Samarra Basra, Wasit and Kufa amounted to

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- (1) See Zaydan II, p. 113.
 (2) A-Ya'li, p. 165.
 (3) Mawardi, pp. 150-1.
 (4) See A-Ya'li, p. 165.
 (5) Sabi, letter, p. 113, p. 141; Ma'alim al-Qurba, p. 68.
 (6) Baladhuri-K., p. 14.
 (7) Maq.-K. p. 36. Zaydan suggests that sometimes it differed in different towns, vol. I, p. 123.

60, 370 dinars, for one year.¹ Taking the fee at 1%, the value of gold and silver coins issued in 306/918 was equal to 6,037,000 dinars, in addition to the amount issued by the government. This fact confirms the great commercial activity of the period and the vast amount of coins in circulation.²

To fabricate coins outside the mint was a forgery.³ An offender of this class was placed in the pillory.⁴ Equally punishable were the acts of clipping coins, as well as of replacing some of their contents by base metal. 'Abd al-Malik had the hand of a man amputated on the charge of clipping a dirham.⁵ For the same crime, Ibban b. 'Uthman, a governor of Medina administered thirty whips to the offender and put him in the pillory.⁶

The process of striking coins was as follows: first, gold and silver were refined by melting them several times. Secondly, pieces of a definite weight were cut and hammered to take a round shape. Thirdly, the round pieces were stamped out with an iron die called al-Sikka.⁷

(1) See Zaydan II, p. 113.

(2) In this connection, the habit of hoarding gold and silver coins in the 10th century must have cut down the amount of coins in circulation considerably.

(3) Baladhuri-K., pp. 15-6; A-Ya'li, p. 167.

(4) Suli p. 148.

(5) A-Ya'li, p. 167; Baladhuri-K., p. 16. So did Ibn al-Zubair.

(6) A-Ya'li, p. 167; Baladhuri-K., pp. 16-7.

(7) Ibn-Khaldun-K., pp. 103-4; Mawardi, p. 150; Baladhuri-K., p. 14; Maq.-M., p. 7; A-Ya'li, p. 167.

CHAPTER VIII

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General Conclusions

The Standard of Living

Introduction

Our sources contain a great mass of details on court life, on the lavishness of wazirs and wealthy merchants, on the homes of high officials, etc.; but such anecdotic features give no true picture of the situation in the 10th century, because they throw light on the life of a small minority. The life of the masses who worked on land, in crafts and in small shops is just as - if not more - important. Yet sources give hardly anything about them; only some odd references scattered in the texts enable us to get an occasional glimpse of the situation.

From the economic point of view, the society was divided into three main categories:

- (1) the proletariat which consisted of paupers, peasants, workers, craftsmen and small dealers;
- (2) the middle class comprised the bulk of merchants, officials and owners of small estates;
- (3) the rich to whom belonged the Caliph and his direct relatives; high officials, like wazirs and chief secretaries; and such wealthy merchants as Ibn al-Jassas. The lines of division were neither strict nor exactly corresponding to the purely social classes of the period.

Material possessions graded as follows:

the very poor lived in mosques on alms. Next came a person owning a small house, to which a boat or a donkey would be added, if income increased. The next to get was a small estate, and then a large house with servants. If a man was engaged in trade, he would widen the field of his operations, but estates were the basic feature of well-being. A few servants were a usual distinction of the members of the middle class from the poor, while large estates and a big house distinguished the rich from the middle class.

The main items of food were limited in number and were chiefly of agricultural origin. First came wheat and barley, and their products. This is testified by the frequent reference to their prices. Dates were abundant and formed an essential element of nutrition. Rice was the ingredient of most dishes. Meat or fish was very important and available to the majority of people. These might be called the four pillars of daily diet.

II. Prices

["Price is under the sickle"]
The 'alibi - Khass, p.70]

Our sources give odd prices of different commodities.

Though these quotations are inadequate for building up a price-index, they help to form a background to the study of the standard of living and the degree of comfort accessible to the various classes of the population.

In spite of the shrinking of the empire, the 10th century witnessed an expansion of trade and a growth of the urban life and the banking institutions. These factors must have raised the standard of living, at least in towns; but the weakness of the Caliphate probably discouraged enterprise, and reduced the income of the state which was the great pillar of economic life¹.

The Buwaihid invasion in 334/945 marked a new epoch. Its consequences were far-reaching in the economic field. The Caliphal court ceased to be the centre, and model of luxury; the Buwaihid palaces did not compensate for this loss, and consequently the market for merchants was considerably reduced. The treasury was transferred from the Caliph to the Buwaihids²;

(1) I. Khaldun, Proleg., p.239.
(2) Eclipse II, p.87; p.107.

was recruited mainly among foreigners (Turks and Dailamites). The economy tended to depend more on land than on money, as it appears from the Buwaihid system of giving estates in place of salaries¹. As lands had passed into the hands of Dailamite and Turkish soldiers, the resources of the country were exploited to the advantage of these outsiders who had little connection with local economy². There are hardly any indications on the banking activities under the Buwaihids, which indicates their comparative unimportance during that period. All these considerations make the year 334 A.H. a convenient dividing line between two periods.

The prices of the most frequently quoted goods are our chief guiding thread: yet other prices are also characteristic. In the following table, they are classified according to the chronological order:

(1) Eclipse II, pp.96-100.
(2) Ibid. II, p.97-99.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Commodity - conditions</u>	<u>Price</u>	
		<u>dinar</u>	<u>dirham</u>
303 A.H.	One ell (dhira') of <u>land</u> on the Tigris, in a poor quarter in Baghdad ¹		1
350 A.H.	A good <u>mill-stone</u> from Jazira ²	50	
329 A.H.	A <u>donkey</u> ³	10	
381 A.H.	An excellent <u>horse</u> of Bajkur, a slave of Saif al-Dawla ⁴	1000	
c.1010 A.H.	A <u>camel</u> in Basra ⁵	2-3	

301 A.H.	Cloth, worn by a Qadi, a piece	100	
301 A.H.	" " " 'Ali b. 'Isa ⁶	20	
372	Saqletuni shirts of ordinary quality in Baghdad, each ⁷	5	
	Kirmani line cloth (<u>Bitana</u>) ⁸ kept in reed-tubes. Each reed-tube ⁸	2	
	An Armenian set of furniture of ten small carpets, with cushions, divans and a large carpet ⁹	5000	

c.330 A.H.	Excellent dish of Faludhaj (pudding with almonds), each ¹⁰	5	50

- (1) Suli, p.287.
 (2) I.H., p.222.
 (3) Tan. I, p.89.
 (4) Eclipse III, p.213.
 (5) N-Kh., p.222.
 (6) Sabi, p.327.
 (7) A-Shuja, p.67.
 (8) Tha'alibi-Lata'if, p.72.
 (9) Tan. F. I, p.103.
 (10) Tan. I, p.61.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Price</u>	
		<u>dinar</u>	<u>dirham</u>
345 A.H.	Lettuces in Baghdad, 20 for ¹		1
Eve of B. cc.	3-4 needles ²		1
c. 300 A.H.	A slave-girl's charge for one night ³	2	

c. 300 A.H.	An exceptionally talented singing girl ⁴		30,000
" " "	A beautiful slave-girl with big feet	5,000	
326 A.H.	A slave-girl of Jahshiyari was taken from him in exchange for a fine of ⁵	15,000	
330 ⁸ A.H.	a singing girl ⁷	3,000	
<u>Mahrs (i.e. Nuptial Gifts)</u>			
326 A.H.	Ibn Tughj - gave his bride a Mahr of	30,000	
326 A.H.	Ibn Ra'iq (c.-in-oh.) offered as a Mahr ⁶	15,000	
331 A.H.	Muttaqi's son offered Nasir al-Dawla's daughter for the Mahr ⁹ Thus a prince's gift was about three times that of his commander in-oh.	[46,000]	500,000
282 A.H.	Caliph Mu'tadid, to Khumarwahh's daughter ¹⁰		1,000,000

- (1) Tan. I, pp. 65-6.
(2) Tan. I, p. 61.
(3) Abu'l Qasim, p. 73.
(4) Ibid., p. 83.
(5) Ibid., p. 75.
(6) Suli, p. 101.
(7) Tan.-Fara'j II, p. 149.
(8) Suli, p. 101.
(9) Ibid., p. 234. Each dinar then = 13 dirhams.
(10) Ibn al-Saf, p. 73; cf. Arbilli, p. 173.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Price</u>	
		<u>dinar</u>	<u>dirham</u>
369 A.H.	Tā'ī' to Adud al-Dawla's daughter ¹	100,000	
384 A.H.	Qadir to Baha 'al-Dawla's " 2	100,000	
384 A.H.	Muhaddhid al-Dawla (ruler of the Batiha region) to Baha' al-Dawla's daughter ³	100,000	
	Baha' al-Dawla's son to Muhaddhid's daughter ³	100,000	

Dates

313 A.H.	Fresh dates were abundant in Baghdad; 8 ratis were sold for 1 habba ⁴ , or <u>24 ratis</u> for		1
331 A.H.	Abundance of dates in Baghdad. 1000 ratis for 7 dinars or <u>14 ratis</u> for ⁵		1

Rice

e. 300 A.H.	An 'Amīl pressed for money, sold his rice before harvest, each <u>kurr</u> for ⁶	7	
330-1 A.H.	The price of one <u>kurr</u> of rice in Baghdad even allowing another seven dinars profit	30	

(1) Ibn al-'Ibrī, p.299.

(2) A-Shuja', p.254.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Eclipse, I, p.146. Each dinar then = 12 dirhams; and = 36 habbas

(5) Suli, p.216. A dinar = 10 dirhams then.

(6) Tan.VIII, p.67.

(7) Ibid.VIII, p.92.

dirham

for the merchant in the first case the rise in price in 330 A.H. would be still more than twofold.

Wheat and barley

307 A.H.	Following a rise in prices, the government regulated the price of wheat per "average kurr" at 50 dinars ¹ i.e. <u>1 ratl</u> costed Bread, one ratl ² for	1 0.12
316 A.H.	The <u>standard price</u> for one kurr of wheat and one kurr of barley was 60 dinars ³ . De Goeje ⁴ calculates from this that the standard price of a kurr of wheat was 545 dirhams or $36\frac{1}{3}$ dinars and that of barley as 355 dinars or $23\frac{2}{3}$ dinars. Thus	
	<u>wheat, one ratl</u>	1.9
	<u>barley " "</u>	0.71
323 A.H.	Rise of prices in Baghdad: one <u>ratl</u> of bread ⁵ Public complaints made the wasir fix the price of <u>flour</u> at: <u>1 ratl</u> for ⁶	0.25 0.2
329 A.H.	Wholesale price of a kurr of <u>wheat</u> = 25 dinars ⁷ <u>one ratl</u>	0.5

(1) One kurr Mu'addal = 3 ordinary kurrs = 1500 ratls. Khawarizmi p.43.

(2) Eclipse I, p.75.

(3) Qud., p.239.

(4) B.G.A.VI, p.9.

(5) Suli, p.61.

(6) Suli, p.71 says: one makkuk costed 3 dirhams. Each makkuk = 15 ratls. Cf. Maq. p.129 and Khawarizmi, p.43.

(7) Ibid., p.148. 200 kurrs were sold for 5,000 dinars.

End of		<u>dirham</u>
329 A.H.	Famine in Baghdad. A kurr of wheat costed 130 dinars ¹ . <u>One ratl of wheat</u>	2.6
	Meanwhile clothes and estates became so cheap that what was worth a dinar was sold for a dirham ² .	
330 A.H.	Scarcity, then grave famine. A kurr of <u>wheat</u> costed 210 dinars. <u>One ratl</u>	4.2
	Then its price soared up to 317 dinars ³ . <u>1 ratl</u>	6.3
	<u>Barley</u> costed 120 dinars per kurr ⁴ . <u>1 ratl</u>	2.4
	<u>Flour</u> <u>per ratl</u>⁵	0.4
	<u>Bread</u> <u>" "</u>⁶	0.25
332 A.H.	Rise in prices. <u>Bran per ratl</u>	2.4
	<u>Bran bread per ratl</u> ⁷	0.4
334 A.H.	A striking contrast between normal and scarcity prices in Baghdad, at a moment when Eastern Baghdad was under siege.	
	<u>Bread</u> in West. Baghdad <u>per ratl</u>	0.2
	" " East " <u>" "</u>⁸	1.2
	<u>Wheat</u> " " " (400 dinars per kurr) ⁹ <u>per ratl</u>	12

(1) I. Jawzi XII, folio 10a.

(2) Antaki, p.97.

(3) Bar-Heb., p.162.

(4) I. Jawzi XII, folio 14a.

(5) Suli., p.225.

(6) I.A. VIII, p.293, gives the price as 4 batls for 2 qirats. 20 qirats = 1 dinar = (in 330 A.H.) 10 dirhams.

(7) Ibid VIII, p.311 gives the price of a qafiz as 60 dirhams.

(8) Ibid., VIII, p.340.

(9) Bar-Heb, p.164; I. Jawzi XII, folio 21b. Dates were sold 1 ratl for 0.9 dirhams. See Antaki, p.104.

	<u>dirhem</u>
338 A.H. Abundance	
<u>Bread per ratl</u> ¹	0.05
349 A.H. Rise in price esp. in Mosul: <u>wheat per ratl</u>	2.4
<u>barley " " 2</u>	1.6
358 A.H. Rise in prices. A kurr of wheat costed 90 dinars ³ . <u>Wheat per ratl</u>	2.7
373 A.H. Scarcity and famine.	
<u>Wheat per kurr 4080 dirhams per ratl</u>	8.16
<u>Barley " " 2040 " 4 " "</u>	4.08
376 A.H. A rise in prices, followed by a wave of emigration from Irak ⁵	
383 A.H. Scarcity in Baghdad. <u>Bread per ratl</u> ⁶	40
383 A.H. Prices still high <u>Flour " "</u>	1.08
<u>Wheat: 6600 dirhams for a kurr per ratl</u> ⁷	13.2
391 A.H. The normal price of bran was 3 muti dinars for 240 ratls. Thus <u>bran per ratl</u>	0.25
This price shows a decrease from that of 323 A.H. A month later the price rose, and became <u>per ratl</u> ⁸	0.4

(1) Bar-Heb., p.165; Eclipse II, p.125.

(2) I.A. VIII, p.397.

(3) Ibid. VIII, p.443; I. Jawzi XII, folio 70a.

(4) Bar-Heb., p.176; I. Jawzi XII, folio 97a gives the prices
of a kurr of wheat and barley respectively as 4000 and 2000
dirhams.

(5) I.A. IX, p.35. Ibn Saf adds that a countless number of
people perished. Khulafa', pp.85-6.

(6) I.A. IX, p.66.

(7) I.A. IX, p.71; Eclipse III, p.362: 1 ratl flour = 1 dirham.

(8) Sabi, pp.242-3.

dirham

The rise was followed by a famine in 332 A.A. bran was sold for a higher price,¹ yet there was no famine. This indicates that in general average prices were lower in 391 A.H. than in 332 A.H.

397 A.H. A rise in prices produced disturbances².

398 A.H. Great abundance. A kurr of wheat costed 12 dinars³. One ratl for 0.96

From the above table one concludes that:

- (1) Average prices tended to rise in the pre-Buwaihid period;
- (2) Average prices took a slow downward trend in the Buwaihid period;
- (3) Periods of scarcity recurred in 307, 323, 329-30, 332, 334, 349, 358, 373, 376, 382-3, 387, 391, but with the exception of 329-30 and 382-3 each period lasted less than a year.

The rise of prices was not in the interest of officials or wage-earners, since their salaries were fixed, but it could be to the advantage of the business people⁴. It seems that hoarding

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- (1) The depreciation of the dirham is taken into consideration. In 392 it was 1/25 dinar compared to 1/13 in 332. See Sabi, p. 468.
 - (2) I. A. IX, p. 145.
 - (3) Bar-Heb., p. 183.
 - (4) Eclipse I, pp. 74-5.

was the primary reason for scarcity¹. This was illustrated in 307 A.H. when Hamid b. al-'Abbas (the farmer of the taxes of the Sawad) delayed the sale of the crops, so that prices rose in Baghdad to an alarming degree. The Caliph saved the situation by restricting the prices and by a series of other energetic measures. He "ordered the shops and the storehouses belonging to Hamid, the queen-mother, the royal princes and the chief officers of the empire to be opened and the wheat to be sold at a reduction of 5 dinars on the kurr, and barley at a proportionate reduction; and orders were issued to merchants and retailers to adopt the same price."²

But it was difficult to overcome the resistance of hoarders. In 358/968 prices were restricted, but the scarcity became graver and the prices soared again³.

Droughts as in 329/940⁴ and the destruction of crops by locusts⁵ caused scarcity and dearth. Still more harmful were the internal wars during which canals were destroyed⁶, communications (as in 334/945) interrupted and a feeling of insecurity prevailed; all resulting in the withdrawal of

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- (1) Cf. Maqrizi, *Ighatha*, pp.13-4; pp.17-8.
 (2) Helipse I, pp.54-5.
 (3) I.A.VIII, p.443; I.Jawzi XII, folio 70a.
 (4) I. Jawzi XII, folio 10a.
 (5) Bar-Heb., p.165; p.167; p.183.
 (6) Cf. Suli, p.108; p.225; p.106.
 (7) See I.A. VIII, p.340; Antaki, p.104; Bar-Heb., p.164.

Unjust taxation and decay in the irrigation system¹ discouraged farmers from cultivation and reduced the crops².

The government had no reserve supplies to anticipate famines. The only resource it had was to bring supplies to poverty stricken areas from outside³.

III. Income

Three points are to be stressed in dealing with income:

- (1) Income was very unevenly distributed in the 10th century; there were a few possessors of vast incomes, a small middle class, and the masses with scanty incomes.
- (2) The sense of personal property and the respect due to it were not strong, a fact illustrated by the many confiscations.
- (3) The Bawaihid invasion upset the previous balance of income. Starting from above:

On the basis of an official document Ibn Miskawaih states that the amount of money received by the private treasury (Bait Mal al-Khassa) of MuktaDIR in 25 years (296-320) was 89,830,000 dinars, of which about 17,000,000 dinars were spent for official purposes, and the rest covered the palace expenditure⁴. Thus

(1) Cf. Suli, p.106; Eclipse II, p.165.
 (2) Eclipse II, pp.96-100; I.Khalidun, Proleg., p.252.
 (3) Suli, pp.225-6; Eclipse III, p.202.
 (4) Eclipse I, p.241.

for the palace would be 2,880,000 dinars a year or 240,000 dinars a month. No wonder then that the luxury of the Caliphal palace taxed the imagination of the contemporary writers.

In 334/946 Mu'izz al-Dawla took power into his hands and the Caliph became his pensioner. At first, Mu'izz assigned to the Caliph Mutf 2,000 dirhams a day¹, or 60,000 dirhams a month (= about 46,000 dinars). In the same year, after the deposition of Mutf, and the advent of Ta'i', Mu'izz al-Dawla replaced the Caliph's pension by a grant of estates², with the yearly revenue of 200,000 dinars³. Thus the Caliphal income of 296-320/908-32 was reduced after 334/945 to approximately 7%.

In wealth the wazirs were next only to the Caliphs.

<u>Date</u>		<u>dinars per annum</u>
279/892	<u>Ubaiddullah b. Sulaiman</u> , wazir of Mu'tadid received as a salary	12,000
281/893	Ubaiddullah's salary was replaced by an estate of a revenue of ⁴	200,000
d. 296/ 908	<u>Al-'Abbas b. al-Hasan</u> , wazir of Muktafi, received from his private estates ⁵	120,000
296-9/ 908-11	<u>Ibn al-Furat</u> , wazir of Muktafir, was given a special residence on the Tigris with some adjoining houses covering an area of 173,346 sq. dhira's. His income consisted of:	

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- (1) Eclipse II, p.87.
 (2) They were called *Diya' al-Khidma*, i.e. "estates for the service of the Caliph."
 (3) Eclipse II, p.108.
 (4) Sabi, p.20.
 (5) Eclipse I, p.239.

<u>Date</u>		<u>dinars, per annum</u>
	The revenue of estates granted by the Caliph	50,000
	His salary ¹	<u>60,000</u>
		<u>Total 110,000</u>
	The revenue of his private estates ²	1,000,000
	When out of office, his income from his private estates was ³	800,000
299-300/ 911-2	<u>Khagani's income</u>	
	From vazirial estates	50,000
	His salary ⁴	<u>60,000</u>
		<u>Total 110,000</u>
300-4/ 912-6	<u>'Ali b. 'Isa's office income⁵</u>	110,000
313/925	<u>Khazibi received from:</u>	
	His salary	60,000
	His vazirial estates (approx.) ⁶	<u>154,000</u>
		<u>Total 214,000</u>

(1) Sabi, p.23.

(2) His income from his private estates is variously calculated at 800,000 - 2,000,000 dinars, but 1,000,000 seems to be a reasonable estimate. See Sabi, p.139; 322-3; Arib, p.37; Eclipse I, p.69.

(3) Sabi, p.323; p.139.

(4) Ibid., pp.261-2.

(5) Sabi, p.262.

(6) Eclipse I, p.154.

<u>Date</u>	<u>'Ali b. 'Isa (2nd vazirate)</u>	<u>dinars, per annum</u>
315/927	Net revenue of vazirial estates	170,000
	Salary ¹	84,000
		<hr/>
	Total	254,000
		<hr/>
	Income from private estates ²	50,000
	When out of office, his income from his private estates was ³	50,000

In addition, vazirs' sons had special salaries.

Thus in his first viziarate,

Ibn al-Furat's three sons received ⁴	18,000
Khagani's, Khasib's, Ibn al-Furat's (311-2 A.H.) and Ali b. 'Isa's son received ⁵	24,000

Besides, vazirs received presents from various sources. When 'Ali b. 'Isa became wasir in 315/927, Muktafir sent him a present to the value of 20,000 dinars⁶. Governors and other officials also sent presents to the vazirs⁷.

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- (1) Eclipse I, p.159.
 (2) Ibid., I, p.110.
 (3) Sabi, p.322.
 (4) Ibid., p.25.
 (5) Eclipse I, p.154 and p.159.
 (6) Ibid., p.151.
 (7) Eclipse I, p.253, p.44. Sabi, p.92.

After 324/935, when military commanders (Amir al-Umara') seized power, the salaries of wasirs decreased. The secretary of Amir al-Umara' was the real administrator, and the wasir only a figurehead.

		<u>dinars p. annum</u>
331/942	<u>Ahmed b. Abdallah al-Irfahani</u> salary ¹	2,400
334/945	In the Buwaihid period wasirs received iqta's and no cash salaries. The revenue of wasirial iqta' was ²	50,000
	Thus the salary of the wasirs in the Buwaihid period decreased by 204,000 dinars (per annum) in comparison with 315/927, i.e. by 80.4%	

Secretaries of central bureaus were highly paid.

		<u>dinars p. month</u>
304-6/ 916-8	To the secretary of <u>Diwan al-Asima</u> together with his staff and the expenses of paper ³	7,000
306/918	Secretary of the "pay-bureau" <u>Diwan al-'Ata</u> ⁴	180
314/926	Secretary of <u>Diwan al-Sawid</u>	500
	Secretary of <u>Diwan al-Khasse wa'l-Mustahdatha</u> (i.e. private and new royal domains) ⁵	200

(1) Eclipse II, p.3; Antaki, p.93.

(2) In 357/968, Ibn al-Bawla appointed Shirazi as his wasir and "granted him an iqta' yielding a revenue of 50,000 dinars, as was usually the case with the wasirs". Eclipse II, p.242; cf. p.246.

(3) Sabi, p.31. Diwan al-Asima was a coordinating Diwan.

(4) Eclipse I, p.68.

(5) Sabi, p.314.

<u>Date</u>		<u>dinars p. month</u>
	In his attempt to economize, 'Ali reduced (in 315/927) the salaries of the officials by $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$. Thus:	
315/926	Secretary of <u>Diwan al-Sawad</u> received	333 $\frac{1}{3}$
	" " <u>Diwan al-Mashriq</u> (i.e. bureau of the Eastern Provinces)	100
	Secretary of <u>Diwan al-Khasas wa'l Mustahdatha</u> ¹	
319/931	Secretary of <u>Diwan al-Azim</u> with his staff ²	2700

I found no reference to the salaries of secretaries in the Buwaihid period. This is significant as the militarization of the state institutions diminished the importance of secretaries in that period, and most of the diwans were closed³.

Governors, legally and illegally, enjoyed large incomes.

<u>Date</u>		<u>dinars per year</u>
d. 301/ 913	Nasibi, governor of Jundisabur, Sus and Madharaya had an income of ⁴	1,400,000
300-10/ 912-22	Madara'i (Husain b. Ali) had a salary of	36,000
	income from private estates (approx.) ⁵	250,000

- (1) Sabi, p. 314.
- (2) Eclipse I, p. 226.
- (3) Ibid. II, pp. 97-100.
- (4) Arib, p. 25.
- (5) Sabi, pp. 320-1; the Kharaaj on his estates was 100,000 dinars annually p. 86.

<u>Date</u>		<u>dinars per annum</u>
	From misappropriation of government dues or from douceurs, up to ¹	660,000
	<u>Baridis</u>	
311/923	Income from private estates, when governors of Wasit ²	30,000
324-8/ 935-9	Income as governors of Ahwas (approx.) ³	2,285,000
306/916	A governor received from the wasir Hamid: for his table	36,000
	" " slaves' expenses ⁴	15,000
314/926	The governor of al-Jibal received as his table expenses ⁵	60,000

In the Buwaihid period, the authority of Baghdad hardly extended outside Mesopotamia, being mostly confined to Irak and Ahwas. The provinces were committed to "the powerful Dailamite favourites" or to "the farmers" of taxes whose only concern was to enrich themselves at the expense of the government and the population. "It ceased to be the fashion to present any balance sheets to the diwan."⁶ Thus the governors had a freer hand than before.

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- (1) He accumulated from the "douceurs" only 2,000,000 dinars in three years. Cf. Eclipse I, p.106; Sabi, p.86 and pp.320-1.
- (2) Eclipse I, p.110.
- (3) Ibid. I, pp.349-50.
- (4) Sabi, p.60.
- (5) Eclipse I, p.148.
- (6) Eclipse II, pp.98-9.

Adud al-Dawla was the only Buwaihid ruler to establish effective control of the provinces. In 364/974, he appointed Ibn Baqiyya governor of Wasit, Tikrit, 'Ukbura and 'Awana and granted him an iqta' of 500,000 dirhams¹. This allowance was much less than those of the governors in the pre-Buwaihid period; and suggests that when the government had the governors well under control, their salaries were less than in the pre-Buwaihid period.

Among other civil officials:

	<u>dinars a month</u>
315/927 The chief Muhtasib of Baghdad received ²	100
279-289/ The <u>judge</u> of Baghdad; his deputy; the 892-901 sons of the two, and ten jurists ³	500
350/961 The chief <u>judge</u> of Baghdad agreed to pay the Buwaihid prince ⁴	200,000
352/963 The new chief <u>judge</u> of Baghdad agreed to assume office without any salary ⁵	---
d.447/ The <u>judge</u> Tanukhi received ⁶ 1055	60

In short, salaries of civil officials went down considerably. Only the position of the Naqib al-Talibiyyin (i.e. head of the 'Alawites) improved, both politically and economically, under the Buwaihids, because of the latter's shi'ism. In

(1) Belipse II, p.346.

(2) Ibid., I, p.217.

(3) Sabi, p.21.

(4) Belipse II, p.189. Obviously he depended on the fines.

(5) Ibid II, p.196.

(6) Yaqut, Dist.V, p.302.

374/984 the revenue of his estates, situated west of Baghdad, between the Tigris and the Euphrates reached 20,000,000 dirhams¹.

The soldiery formed an important part of the official hierarchy. Their salaries were as follows:

<u>Date</u>		<u>dinars a month</u>
296-304/ 908-16	Each member of Muktedir's "mounted division" (<u>al-Firasan</u>) received ²	12.5
304/916	The above salary was reduced to	4.16
304/916	Each infantry man of Muktedir's division called al-Rajjala al-Masafiyya received ³	4.75
317/929	Each member of the "mounted division" received	41.66
"	Each infantry man received ⁴	6

Thus before 334/945, the tendency was to raise the pay of soldiers; in some cases, the soldiers succeeded in wringing, by violence, still further increase⁵. It must be remembered that the pay term of soldiers often exceeded 30 days; the cavalry was paid each 120 days.⁶

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- (1) Eclipse III, p.173. In p.136, A-shuja' says that the Kharaj on the shurif's estates was 2½ million dirhams annually.
- (2) They were 12,000 and their pay 150,000 dinars a month. 'Arif p.142; Eclipse I, p.43.
- (3) Eclipse I, p.38; p.50.
- (4) Ibid., I, p.184; 'Arif, p.142.
- (5) Eclipse I, p.36; p.182.
- (6) See Eclipse I, p.161; Sabi, p.14.

There is no information about the salaries of captains; but the commanders-in-chief had great incomes, especially between 324-334/935-45. The estates of the 'Amir al-Umara Tuzun were farmed out in 331/942 for 130,000 dinars a year¹. Bajkam had great riches².

In the Buwaihid period the soldiery received more pay.

<u>Date</u>		<u>dinar per month</u>
In 348/ 959	A Dailamite "private" (<u>ghulam</u>) received	20
" "	" " sergeant (<u>naqib</u>) " "	40 ³
c. 371/ 981	Adud al-Dawla paid Arab recruits per head	20-40 ⁴
in 387/ 997	Estates yielding the annual revenue of 100,000 dinars were divided among 500 Dailamite and 300 Kurdish soldiers ⁵ . Assuming an equal division, each received a salary of about	10

Compared to Muktedir's soldiers, the Buwaihid soldiers received about 1.4-4 times the salaries of the former⁶.

In 379/989, the captains of Fakhr al-Dawla's army complained that their iqta's in the Ray and Jibal districts (i.e. western Persia) yielded 20,000-30,000 dirhams per annum, while the iqta's of the Dailamite captains in Khuzistan yielded

(1) Eclipse II, p.45.

(2) Ibid. II, p.11.

(3) Ibid., II, p.174.

(4) Tan. I, p.247.

(5) Eclipse III, pp.294-5.

(6) The number of days in the "pay-term" of Muktedir's soldiers has been considered.

200-300 thousand dirhams a year¹. So the iqta's of the Dailamite captains in Khuzistan had a revenue 10/6 to 15/6 times superior to that of the estates belonging to Tusun.

In short, the pay of the soldiers increased considerably in the Buwaihid period, and the reduction of the salaries in the civil service can not be taken as a general tendency of the time.

With regard to the masses, only isolated anecdotes can be cited.

In 282/895 Mu'tadid engaged an ex-thief to spy on his former associates in Baghdad, and said to him: "I have set for you 10 dinars a month, to provide for your food, drink, dress, and perfume."² Thus 10 dinars a month were considered sufficient for a person to lead a decent life.

Ibn al-Jawzi relates that a certain jurist (d.252 A.H.), anxious to insure his son's future, said: "I have decided to allot to him a dinar daily for life, because that is sufficient for a middle class man and his family." Then he set aside an equal amount of money "for emergencies."³ Thus, at the beginning of the 10th century, 1 dinar daily was considered as a standard amount necessary for the upkeep of a middle class family.

(1) Eclipse III, p.165-6.

(2) Masudi VIII, p.156.

(3) I. Jawzi XII folio 19a. Cf. Haqrizi, Ighatha, p.85.

In 301 A.H./ 913 A.D., a shop-keeper went bankrupt. 'Ali b. 'Isa gave him 400 dinars, of which he paid 200 to his creditors. "I opened my shop", he said, "with two hundred dinars. When a year passed, I had 1,000 dinars."¹ Thus in 12 months his net profit was as much as 800 dinars or 400 per cent.

Tanukhi speaks about "small dealers such as confectioners and pedlars, people whose business capital is from 1 to 3 dinars," and suggests that they have very small means.² Some pedlars sat at the roadside and sold cheap articles of various kinds. A man bought a stick from a pedlar for 2 dirhams³. A green-grocer declared that he had not a 100 Fals (about 6 dirhams) in spare cash⁴.

More interesting are the facts referring to ordinary workmen. Under Harun al-Rashid (786-809 A.D.) a workman thought that 300 dirhams were sufficient for him and his wife⁵.

In the last quarter of the 9th century, Zajjaj, the grammarian said "I was employed in cutting glass with which I earned $1\frac{1}{3}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ dirham a day." This Zajjaj wanted to learn grammar from the famous Muharrad, "who did not teach gratis nor for any inadequate fee." He offered Muharrad a dirham a day

(1) I. Jawsri XII, folio 32b.

(2) Tam. I, p. 60.

(3) Tam. I, p. 208. The anecdote probably belongs to the Muwahhid period. See also p. 188.

(4) Jahiz-Bukh., p. 59.

(5) Masari' al-Ushshaq, p. 159.

"undertaking to continue the payment until death part us, whether I need the instruction or can part with it."¹ Mubarrad agreed. In usual cases, the required fee was probably two or three dirhams a day.

In the forties of the 10th century, a penniless man came to Basra and applied for a job to a shop-keeper. The latter took him as accountant and paid him a $\frac{1}{2}$ dirham a day; the food and clothes being on the charge of the employee. Later the wages in cash were raised to 1 dirham a day².

Ibn 'Ibruna, a doctor of the Buhaihid wasir al-Muhallabi, said in 352/963 that before Muhallabi took him into his service, he used to go from door to door for treatment, and received $\frac{1}{2}$ danags or $\frac{1}{2}$ dirham for each visit³.

In 397/1006 the ascetic 'Abd al-Samad offered his services to a Jew as a watchman and the Jew agreed to his request of 3 rats of bread and 2 danags of silver daily⁴.

These anecdotes are not sufficient for any conclusions, but they suggest that wages remained practically the same throughout the century.

The income of the peasant population must have been even

(1) Tan. I, p.134.

(2) Tan. I. II, p.155.

(3) Eclipse II, p.198, note.

(4) I. Jawzi XII, folio 119b. Theoretically a dirham weighed 6 danags, but considering the alloy added to the silver esp. at the end of the century, the 2 danags of silver were probably equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ dirham.

lower than that of the workers employed in shops and crafts. At any rate, the Buhaihid invasion was detrimental to their welfare, whereas the Caliph took care that the peasants were not despoiled completely¹, the Buhaihids had no experience in agriculture, and their land policy was ruinous. As a result of Muizz al-Dawla's land policy "...the canals went to ruin, the sluices got out of order, misfortune fell on the cultivators, whose circumstances were wretched, some of them migrating or exiling themselves, others patiently enduring wrong for which no redress could be obtained, while others were content to surrender their lands to the assignees in order to escape injury from them and satisfy them."² The government never made inquiries about their treatment or the excessive taxes imposed upon them³. Adud al-Dawla's period was a comparative improvement, but it was too short to produce any definite change. Thus in the Buhaihid period, peasants suffered from decay in the irrigation system and excessive taxation.

To sum up:

A comparison between the periods before and after 334/945 shows that:

a) After 334 A.H., the Caliph's income was reduced to 7% of its former amount at the beginning of the century.

(1) See chapter "Taxation".

(2) Eclipse II, p.94.

(3) Ibid. II, p.99. See "State agrarian policy".

b) The wazir's salary rose from 110,000 dinars in 299 A.H. to 254,000 dinars in 315 A.H., or by about 131%. It decreased to 50,000 dinars per annua in the Buwaihid period, i.e. to about 45% of its amount in 299 A.H., or 19.4% of its amount in 315 A.H.

c) Salaries of civil officials were reduced too.

d) In comparison with 317 A.H. the pay of soldiers increased by 40-400 per cent.

e) There was no marked change in the wages of workers, which possibly represented their "existens-minimum".

f) Peasants were in worse conditions after 334 A.H. than before, as they had to pay more taxes, under worse agricultural conditions.

IV. State Social Services

The state organized some social services for the benefit of the public and especially the poor. A special "bureau" (Diwan al-Birr) administered alms and institutions intended to help the poor.¹ Benevolence was also encouraged in official circles. Mu'tadid forgave Ibn Bustam (farmer of Taxes of Wasit) for failing to pay the government due in full, when he found out that every month b. Bustam distributed 20 kurrs of wheat among his retainers and the poor.²

Out of Mu'tadid's daily expenses, 15 dinars were given to the poor.³ He also contributed 450 dinars a month to the expenses of the Sa'idi hospital in Baghdad (for doctors, patients, foods, etc.).⁴

In 295/907 Muktadir was informed that the shops built by Muktafi in the open space of Bab al-Taq in Baghdad caused harm to the poor, who used to sell their goods in that space and pay no rent. Having found that the revenue of these shops was 1000 dinars a month, Muktadir exclaimed "what is this sum compared to the welfare of the Muslims!" and ordered those buildings to be demolished.⁵

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- (1) Eclipse I, p.151
 - (2) Tan. VIII, p.60
 - (3) Sabi, p.19
 - (4) Ibid., p.21
 - (5) Arib, p.24

In 301 A.H. 'Ali b. 'Iara assigned allowances to the imams, mu'azzins, and the poor in the mosques. He also improved the hospitals in Baghdad and ordered full supply of medicine to the patients.¹ 'Ali b. 'isa wrote to Sinan b. Thabit² in 301/913 that doctors supplied with medicaments should be sent daily to the prisons to treat any patients there, and the order was carried out.³

'Ali's benevolence extended to the rural population. In 301 A.H. he wrote to Sinan that there were no doctors to attend to the inhabitants of the Sawad; "so order that ... doctors, with stores of medicines be despatched to tour in the Sawad stopping at each place as long as is necessary to attend to the patients and then moving on to another place." When the doctors sent by Sinan arrived at Sura and Nahr al-Malik, they found that the majority of the inhabitants were Jews. Sinan inquired from 'Ali about the procedure adding that treatment in the hospital, at Baghdad was both for Muslims and non-Muslims." 'Ali answered that first Muslims should be treated, then non-Muslims, and that after human beings, animals too should receive medical attention.⁴

In 306/918 Muktadir built a new hospital in Baghdad, which became known under his name. He allotted vast sums for its

(1) I.A. VIII, p.51

(2) The doctor of the Caliph, and the director-general of hospitals

(3) Qifti, p.193

(4) Ibid., pp.193-4.

expenses.¹ In Muharrem of the same year, Sunan b.Thabit opened Bimaristan al-Sayyida (i.e. the queen-mother's hospital) and appointed its staff of doctors. The budget of the hospital ran into 600 dinars a month.²

During the famine of 329/940, the Amir al-Umara, Bajkam built in Wasit a public guest house for feeding the poor. In the same year he built a new hospital in Baghdad.³

Special hospitals for mental diseases existed in Mosul and Basra.⁴

Under the Buwaihids there is no mention of any social services before the year 369/979. Still worse was the new practice of quartering troops on the civil population. In 334/945 Mu'izz al-Dawla took up his quarters in the house of Mu'nis and for the first time lodged his troops in the houses of the inhabitants. The latter suffered very much and gradually this practice became a recognized duty for them.⁵

Adud al-Dawla's reign in Irak (369-372/979-82) was the only time of the Buwaihid period when social services prospered. In 369/979 Adud al-Dawla gave allowances to the imams and Mu'ezzins in the mosques, to the poor and weak who sheltered therein; to doctors, jurists and poets; to grammarians, to astrologers,

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- (1) I.A. VIII, p.85
 - (2) Qifti, pp.194-5
 - (3) Eclipse I, pp.419-20
 - (4) Nisaburi-'Ukala' al-Majanin, pp.139-40
 - (5) I.A. VIII, pp.337-8.

engineers and geneologists. He also assigned pensions to the poor and nobles of Medina. His benevolence extended to non-Muslims as well. He gave permission to his wazir Nasr b. Harun to rebuild Christian monasteries and to give money to the poor among the non-Muslims.¹

In the year 372/982, Adud al-Dawla rebuilt the chief hospital in Baghdad; assigned to it the revenue of many waqfs, and had medicine and instruments bought for it from everywhere.²

Moreover, at the beginning of every financial year, he set aside vast sums for alms and through the governors distributed them among local judges and notables to be spent on the poor and the needy in their districts.³

These services were of great value, but of short duration, for nearly all of them seem to have ceased under Adud's successors. In 383/993 the wazir Abu Nasr Sabur founded a "house of learning" in Baghdad and supplied it with a large number of books by the way of a waqf for the Muslims.⁴

In short, except for the years 369/72 A.H. the Buwaihid period lacked in social services. Before Adud al-Dawla, the Buwaihids lacked in culture, and after him, they were too busily engaged in their quarrels to think of any social improvements.

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- (1) Eclipse II, pp.407-8; Dsh. folios 18b-19e; I.A.VIII, p.518
 (2) A-Shuja', p.69
 (3) Ibid., p.66
 (4) I.A.IX, p.71; Dsh. (Hyderabad) vol.I, p.182

V. Expenditure

Sabi gives the details of the palace expenditure under Mu'tadid. The monthly budget of the palace amounted to 122,920 dinars,¹ and included the following items:

	<u>in dinars</u>
The Haram	3,000
Food	10,000
Salaries of the cooks	9,000
Fodder for horses in the five stables	2,000
Boon-companions and suchlike people	1,320
The sons of Mutawakkil	1,000
The sons of Wathiq, Muhtadi, Musta'in, and other princes in the palace of Umm Habib	500
The sons of Nasir	500
Oil and wax	200
Buying horses and camels	2,000
Doctors of the palace	700
Hunt-masters, birds and equipment	2,100
Boatmen of the palace	500
Chamberlains and some guards	1,000
Slaves of the private household (al-Ghilman al-Khassa)	60,000

(1) Sabi, pp.11-22

Mu'tadid was comparatively moderate. When Muktafi died (295/907) he left:

Marwazi and Khurasani shorts	63,000	
Marwazi Turbans	13,000	
Suits shot with gold thread	18,000	
Carpets	18,000	
Jewels and perfumes estimated at	20,000,000	dinars
Arms, slaves and mounts	20,000,000	" 1

Muktadir's expenditure in twenty five years amounted to 72,000,000 dinars or 2,880,000 dinars a year. His palaces were lavishly decorated.² They contained 830,000 curtains of pure silk embroidered with gold, and 120,000 carpets - all of different kinds and from different countries.³ In one section of his stables he had 500 horses with saddles decorated with gold and silver. He had 700 Chamberlains and 7,000 servants (3,000 white and 4,000 black).⁴ These figures give an idea of the amazing luxury of this Caliph.

The impoverishment of the treasury, due to Muqtadir's extravagance reduced his successors to more discretion. When Qahir ascended the throne in 321/933 the usual varieties of

(1) Tha'alibi-Lata'if, p.72

(2) See the descriptions of the Shajara Palace in Khatib, p.52; Ibn Sa'1: Khulafa, p.75

(3) Khatib, p.52

(4) Ibid., pp.52-3.

meals and sweets were served, but he thought that they were too many. When he found that the daily expenditure on fruit was 30 dinars, he brought it down to one dinar. He limited the variety of dishes to twelve kinds only, whereas his predecessors had about 30 kinds of sweets alone.¹

Under the Buwaihids the means of the Caliph left no place for lavishness. Nothing is heard of Caliphal luxury in this period, and the contemporary authors glorify the piety and simpleness of the Caliph Qadir (381-422/991-1030).

The Wazirs also lived in extraordinary opulence. Sabi describes a dinner-table of Ibn al-Furat. First, fruits were served. In the centre of the room there was a big tray containing all sorts of fruits; and before each guest a tray, a knife, and a glass-pot for the peels. After the fruit, everybody washed his hands. Then meals continued to be served for two hours. Each guest was given a clean serviette. When the repast was over, the guests moved inside, where servants were ready with clean towels and rose water for their hands.²

When the Byzantine envoy arrived in 305/917 Ibn al-Furat received him in a big hall with gilded roofs. He had spent

(1) 'Arib, p.183

(2) Sabi, p.240

30,000 dinars on curtains alone.¹ In 306/918, he bought musk and ambergris for 10,000 dinars.² His great kitchen was open to all. When he came to office, the prices of wax, ice and paper rose because he would supply these commodities free of cost to all the visitors of his residence.³ Once the poverty of traditionists and literati came to be mentioned in his presence, the wazir was moved and ordered 20,000 dinars to be given to the scribes (Kuttab), 20,000 to the poets, 20,000 to the jurists and 20,000 to the mystics.⁴

'Ali b. 'Isa's annual income was about 88,000 dinars, of which about 48,000 dinars went to the 'Alawites and 'Abbasids, the Ansar, the sons of the Muhajirin, the welfare of "the two holy places" and other charities and good deeds. The rest (about 40,000) was used for his own expenses.⁵ 'Ali b. 'Isa was the most pious wazir of the century, as Ibn al-Furat was the most extravagant.

'Hamid b. al-'Abbas used to set dinner tables for all those who entered his residence, whether officials, ordinary people or even servants; up to 40 such tables were dressed daily and all meals included bread and meat.⁶

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- (1) Koliqee I, pp.53-4
 (2) Ibid. I, p.67
 (3) Ibid. I, p.120; Fakhri, p.361
 (4) I.A. VIII, p.113
 (5) Sabi, pp.322-3
 (6) Tan. I, p.14.

Ibn Miskawaih quotes an authentic document on Khasibi's expenditure for 14 months (313-5/925-7) namely (in dinars)

permanent expenses at 2,500 dinars per month, totalling for 14 months	35,000
occasional expenses, presents, maintenance of establishment with costs of perfume and wear- ing apparel	20,000
ground added to his dwelling and building thereon	40,000
presents, for the Persian New Year's day and the autumn festival, to the Caliph and his two sons (Abu'l-'Abbas and Harun), the queen- mother, her sister, Zaidan and Muflih	35,000
mules, horses, eunuchs and slaves	10,000
for officers of the wazir's palace, such as deputy chamberlains, door-keepers, messengers, and presents to cavalry and infantry	20,000

Khasibi explained: "This is a correct account; only I have made no notes of all my expenses. Thus I had ornaments made for my children, and spent other sums which I have concealed from my secretary."¹

(1) Eclipse I, p.155

This document indicates that:

- (1) Khasibi's registered expenditure for 14 months was 155,000 dinars or $11,071\frac{2}{3}$ dinars a month,
- (2) it amounted to 62% of his income which was 250,000 dinars.¹
- (3) The share of the officials and chamberlains attached to the wazir's residence amounted to 8% of the wazir's salary.
- (4) The presents to court which, though voluntary, were demanded by custom took up 14% of the wazir's salary.

Ibn Muqla used to spend (in 317/929) 500 dinars a week on fruits alone. He had a small zoo in a section of his garden where he collected birds of all descriptions from far and near, and added to them deer, camels, ostriches and zebras.²

In 324/935, the Baridi's expenses for his table amounted to 1,000 dinars a day.³ In 331/942, Nasir al-Dawla asked for a quick meal in Baghdad. Servants brought him immediately a roast chicken, a loaf of bread, some sugar, salt, vinegar and vegetables.⁴

The well-to-do in Baghdad had private baths. Houses on the Tigris had boats on the bank of the river and mounts by their street gates.⁵ Mosquito nets were used over the beds,⁶

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- (1) Eclipse I, p.155
 - (2) Ibid., I, p.203, note
 - (3) Ibid., I, p.348, note 2
 - (4) Tan. I, p.201
 - (5) I. Jawzi, folio 14a
 - (6) Sabi, p.277.

and fans on hot days.¹

Tanukhi relates the following declaration of a middle class man who had squandered his wealth, but then inherited (apparently in the Buwaihid time) 30,000 dinars. He said: "I made a resolution not to waste, but to economise. So, I had this house rebuilt and purchased all its present contents: furniture, plates, clothing, mounts, slaves, male and female, for 5,000 dinars; five thousand more have been buried in the ground as a provision against emergencies. I have laid out ten thousand on agricultural land, producing annually enough to maintain the establishment."² His house as described by his friend had "one court with a garden covered and stuccoed,...one single spacious sitting room..., also a private room, which contained handsome furniture." "His establishment", continued his friend, "now consisted of four slaves, each of whom discharged two functions; as well as a porter and an old servant, who acted as sa'is (i.e. groom)." While entertaining his friend to lunch, "he took his seat, and the slaves came and served him with clean plates of no great value, fruits modest both in quality and quantity, and food that was sufficient and clean... This we proceeded to eat, and then some excellent date wine - was set before me, and some

(1) Suli II, p.116

(2) Tan. I, pp.91-2

date-jelly, also of good quality before him. A curtain was then drawn and we heard some pleasant singing, while the fumes of fresh aloss and of nadd (compound perfume) rose together."¹

This anecdote suggests that the essentials in that middle-class man's possessions were: his house; the servants and mounts; and the estates, on the revenue of which he lived. His meals were modest, of three courses at most. In his idea of economy, he used 1/3 of his money to buy estates and buried 1/6 as a kind of insurance for the future.

In another anecdote which belongs to the thirties of the 4th century A.H., a middle-class man who became bankrupt and then inherited 40,000 dinars relates how he made use of his new money: "I had this house rebuilt with 1,000 dinars. I bought plates, furniture, clothes and slave girls with 7,000 dinars. I gave to some trustworthy merchant 2,000 dinars to trade with for me, and buried 10,000 dinars underground for hard times. With the rest (20,000 dinars) I bought an estate which brings me more than my expense..."² His house was fairly large; the ground was paved with bricks, and it had two halls opposite one another. He had three slaves, an old servant, an old porter and a wakil (butler) to go shopping every day. When he received a guest, nice fruits were served, the main meal

(1) Tan.F.I, pp.91-3

(2) Tan.F.II, p.17

following; a curtain was then drawn and the room perfumed; and three singing girls sang behind the curtain while host and guest were drinking.¹

In this anecdote too, land occupies the first place.² The economy of both men was practically the same in all respects, except that the second invested 1/20 of his money in trade, thus showing a more enterprising spirit.

Ibn al-Jawzi relates that in 351/962 a man breakfasted with a middle class friend; a slave served the meal which consisted of an excellent Harisa (made of wheat and meat) followed by some sweets.³

The masses were not so prosperous. On a hunting expedition, Mahdi got separated from his courtiers. He approached the cottage of a Nabatean peasant and asked for some food. The peasant offered him some barley bread and a meal of small fish. Mahdi enquired whether he had some olive oil and some cress. The peasant: "Yes, and some dates too."⁴ This was probably the best of what that peasant could offer. The anecdote relates to the 8th century, yet it probably would be true of the peasants of the 10th century whose status remained unchanged.

(1) Tan. F., II, p.16

(2) Estates were the pillar of family economy. "No loss for him who owns an estate" went a saying; "an estate saves you when in trouble" went another. Maqdisi: Yawaqit, p.30

(3) I. Jawzi XII, folio 54b-55a

(4) Jah., p.146

Jahiz speaks of a miser who had one good meal in the week. On Friday, he bought beef for one dirham, onions for 1 danaq (=1/6 dirham); subergine for 1 danaq; a marrow or carrots for 1 danaq, and cooked the lot together.¹

In 306/918 Muktadir felt hungry in his boat before his meal arrived. The boatman offered his meal which consisted of a piece of choice salt fish. Muktadir exclaimed: "I had no idea that there was any one in the world, who ate food not followed by sweets." The skipper said: "our sweets are dates and squeezed olives."²

Thus one course dinners were common among the masses; and dates stood for sweets. Fish as well as beef were cheap and accessible to the poor classes; date-pudding was a dainty.³ Harisa (made of wheat and meat minced together) was, and still is, one of the popular meals with the masses of Baghdad.⁴

The flour of chick-peas was very popular in Baghdad. In 360/970 a seller is reported to have been grinding 360 kurrs of chick-peas yearly and selling all of it during the two or three months when fruits were not available. It was usually bought by

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- (1) Jahiz-Bukh., p.193
 (2) Tan. II, An. 98, p.211
 (3) See Tan. I, p.62; Jahiz-Bukh., p.193
 (4) Jahiz-Bukh., p.282; I. Jawzi, XII, folio 54b-55a.

the poor and the needy.¹ The story indicates that fruits were available even for the poor.

Even locusts were eaten by the poor, especially in hard times. In 331/942: "locusts multiplied...people caught them. The poor benefited by eating them. It was one of God's mercies."² In Tanukhi's words: "one day there passed along a man who sold locusts. Some one bought of him a few rats all of which he consumed."³ This happened in Baghdad and the buyer was not very poor.

In 381/991 Qadir asked Ibn al-Qazwimi the ascetic to send him some of his usual food; the ascetic sent him some aubergines soaked in vinegar, some broad beans, molasses and bread. Qadir sent the ascetic 200 dinars which the latter accepted. When, a few days later, Qadir asked him to send some of his food, he sent him a roast chicken, ducks and faludhaj (pudding), and when the Caliph expressed his surprise the ascetic said: "when my means were increased, I improved my conditions."⁴

The Bedouins led a hard life. A townsman asked a tribesman: "what do you eat and what do you leave?" The reply was: "we eat all that runs, except the reptile."⁵

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- (1) Khatib, p.37
 - (2) Suli, p.237
 - (3) Tan. II, an.p.86, p.198
 - (4) A-Shuja', p.205 margin
 - (5) Jahiz-Bukh., p.346.

The staple food of the tribesmen was bread, milk, dates, butter and their products; sometimes they got locusts and mushrooms. Among their favourite meals were: milk, watf, made of dates and milk, and hais, a preparation of dates with butter and curds.¹

V. Insecurity of Property

Confiscation was the major threat to private property in the 10th century. It hit the wealthy and especially the officials.

Each wazir accused his predecessor in office of mal-practices or injustices, from which he and his secretaries and retainers had to redeem themselves by a specified payment.² Neither governors³ nor judges⁴ escaped this practice; even a stewardess of the Caliph's palace once lost her property (in 334 A.H.) through confiscation.⁵

The procedure was to arrest the wazir and his retainers suddenly and to imprison them. After this, the new wazir began an inquest with the view to extract the fine by persuasion or compulsion. Sometimes, the property of a deceased official was seized after his death.⁶

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- (1) Jahiz-Bukh., p.115; p.282 and cf.p.244
 (2) See in Arib, p.39; p.65; p.66; p.74;p108-9; p.112, 113, 127, 183, 184; cf. I.Khaldun: proleg., p.235.
 (3) Eclipse I, p.32 and p.208
 (4) Ibid.I, p.14, p.16
 (5) Ibid.II, p.88
 (6) Ibid.I, p.32

Confiscations inflicted on officials were much more numerous and struck a larger number of persons before the Buwaihid invasion than after it. Ibn Miskawaih records over 30 confiscations, between 296/334 A.H.; but only about 10 between 334/381 A.H. For example, in 312/924, Ibn al-Furat,¹ his son Muhassin, Muhassin's secretary² and his wife³ and two other sons of Ibn al-Furat lost their property by confiscation, while under the Buwaihids only in 350/961 were the wazir and his chief secretary fined at the same time.⁴

Some wazirs considered confiscations as the main source of revenue, and acted accordingly.⁵ Such was Khaeibi⁶ and Abu'l Fadl al-Shirazi.⁷ There was a special bureau (Diwan al-Musadarin) to administer confiscated property.⁸

Confiscation had resulted in other undesirable practices. The high officials were forced to accumulate wealth, legally and illegally, to provide for a black day.⁹ In order to keep their property out of the new officials' reach, they used various wiles. They deposited money with some persons who were beyond suspicion; in his first vizierate, Ibn al-Furat placed some money with the

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- (1) Eclipse I, p.131
 (2) Ibid. I, p.128
 (3) Ibid. I, p.141
 (4) Ibid. II, p.186
 (5) Arif, p.185
 (6) Eclipse I, p.144 and p.153; 'Arif, p.128
 (7) Ibid. II, p.308; Tan.F. II, p.108
 (8) Ibid. I, p.21, p.154; Rifaf I, p.313; Sabi, p.310
 (9) See Rifaf I, p.313; Sabi, pp.320-1.

Qadi Abu'Umar.¹ His secretary entrusted 70,000 dinars to some other people.² Very common too was the practice of burying money underground. In 311/923 Hamid confessed having done so with 500,000 dinars;³ and after his death, 400,000 dinars were recovered from a well in his house.⁴ Bajkam buried vast amounts of gold and silver in his house and in the desert.⁵ In 350/961 Muhallabi, made a search in Abu Ali al-Khazin's house and found over 90,000 dinars; he also discovered that Abu'Ali had large deposits with some people.⁶ 30,000 dinars were found buried in the house of a secretary of Diwan al-Khara'j who died in 350 A.H.⁷

Such burying of money had unfavourable economic consequences. Much gold and silver was lost by the death of the owner.⁸ Vast sums of money were withdrawn from circulation and thus trade was impeded and the development of banking institutions hampered. The practice suggests that society did not fully appreciate the importance of engaging money in trade.

It seems that there was no definite rule regarding the proportion of the confiscations to the amount of income. Khasibi's

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- (1) Eclipse I, p.67
 - (2) Tan.VIII, p.53; see Eclipse I, p.102
 - (3) Eclipse I, p.102
 - (4) Tan.I, p.15
 - (5) Eclipse II, p.11
 - (6) See Eclipse II, pp.185-8; Yaqut-Dict.III, p.183
 - (7) Eclipse II, p.141
 - (8) I. Jawzi XII, folio 11a.

official income (313-5 A.H.) was 250,000 dinars, of which the fine equal to 40,000¹ dinars formed 16%. However, in this case the fine was moderate. Ibn al-Furat's fine in 306 A.H. was 700,000 dinars.² As he had been wazir only for 18 months and his income from his estates (1,500,000 dinars) and salary (165,000 dinars) was 1,656,000 dinars, his fine represented 42% of his income. When Hamid was fined in 311 A.H., he had even to sell his estate to pay the amount. Abu'l-Fadl al-Shirazi was wazir for less than two years (360-62/970-2) and his iqta' brought him 50,000 dinars yearly; while his fine was 100,000 dinars and exceeded his whole income.⁴

Though confiscations engendered instability in the administration, they had some beneficial effects. They prevented excessive accumulation of wealth and thus lessened the economic inequality. Secondly, by going to the state treasury, confiscated properties were redistributed among officials and even benefited the people through the channel of social services. Thirdly, to some extent, confiscation was an asset to the state and could be regarded as an income tax.

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- (1) Eclipse I, p.156
 - (2) Ibid. I, p.66
 - (3) Ibid. I, p.103
 - (4) Ibid. II, p.242.

Merchants and rich citizens also suffered from occasional confiscations;¹ but in a much lesser degree than the officials. Only in the case of the famous Ibn al-Jassas the amount taken was excessive.²

List I.

The following is a list of confiscations recorded in Ibn Miskawaih during the years 296-381/908-991.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Sum</u>	<u>Page</u>
296	Ali b. Isa	5,000 dinars	vol. I, p. 8
"	Judge Abu Umar Yusuf b. Ya'qub	100,000	" p. 14
301	Rasibi's property seized after death	500,000	" p. 240
306	Muhassin b. al-Furat	300,000	" p. 64
306	Ibn al-Furat (wazir)	700,000	" p. 66
311	Ibn al-Hawari (secretary)	700,000	" p. 93
311	Hamid's brother-in-law	260,000	" p. 93
311	Hamid's secretary	-	p. 100 n.
311	Hamid	800,000	" p. 102
311	Ali b. 'Issa	300,000	" p. 109
312	Each of two sons of Ibn al-Furat	100,000	"
312	Muhassin's secretary	200,000	" p. 128

(1) Eclipse I, p. 253; II, pp. 307-8; III, p. 282; Suli, p. 148

(2) See Chapter Trade, sect. II; also Masudi VII, p. 283; Eclipse I, p. 35.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Sum</u>	<u>Page</u>
312	Ibn al-Furat	2,000.000 dinars	p.131
312	Muhassin's wife	700.000 "	" 141
312	Khaqani (wazir)	250.000 "	" 144
312	Ja'afar b. Qasim al-Karkhi(W)	150.000 "	" 144
313	Abu Talib al Nubandajani	100.000 "	" 147
315	al-Khasibi (W)	40.000 "	" 156
-	The Baridis (governors of Wasit and Basra)	9,000.000 dirhams	" 208
315	Ibn Muqda (W)	2,007.000 dinars	" 209
319	Suleiman b. al-Hasan (W)	200.000 "	" 212
319	Musain b. al-Qasim (W)	40.000 "	
321	al-Kalwadhani (W)	200.000 "	" 246
321	Abu'l-Khattab b. al-Furat	10.000 "	" 253
321	Ali b. Yalbaq	10.000 "	" 266
	Ibn Shirzad	20.000 "	" 270
323	Qarariti (W)	5,000.000 "	" 319
323	Ali b. 'Isa	60.000 "	" 324
323	Abu Ali al-Hasan b. Herun	10.000 "	" 331
324	Ibn Muqla (W)	1,000.000 dirhams	" 337
324	Abd. al-Rahman b. 'Isa	70.000 dinars	" 338
-	Ali b. 'Isa	100.000 "	-
332	Yanis	100.000 " vol. II	" 61
333	Abu'l Furej al-Samarri	300.000 dirhams	" 80

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Sum</u>	<u>Page</u>
334	Alam, the Qahramana	40.000 dinars	p.88
350	Ali Abu Muhkallid	500.000 "	" 185
-	al-Abbas b. al-Hussain al-Shirazi	300.000 "	" 186
-	Abu'l Faraq (secretary of <u>Diwan al-Khraj</u>)	300.000 "	-
359	Abu'l Fadl al-Shirazi	3,000.000 dirhams	" 263
360	Jarjara'i Muhamad b. Ahmad	100.000 dirhams	" 313
364	Ibn al-Sarraj	100.000 "	" 358
381	Abu Nasr Sabur (W)	2,000.000 dinars	" 198 vol. III

A very interesting document discovered by Sabi and emanating from Diwan al-Maghrif, in the reign of Radi gives a full enumeration of what Muhassin b. al-Furat received (in promissory notes) from the persons whose property he and his father as wazirs confiscated in 311/923:

Bustami	7.500 dinars
Badhini, the secretary (Katib)	11.000 "
Shafif, Muh. b. Abdallah	30.000 "
Ibn Muqla, Muhammed b. 'Ali	80.000 "
Abi Tahir, Muh. b. al-Hasan	100.000 "
Hasan b. Abi 'Isa, the money-expert (Naqid)	17.000 "
Madara'f, Ibrahim b. Ahmad	20.000 "
Ibn 'Isa, Abdal-wahid	1.500 "
Ibn Hani al-Khatib	10.000 "

Ibn Idris the Jihbadh	6.000 dinars
Ibn Sahl, Muhammad	4.000 "
Ibn Masha'llah, Abd al-Wahhab	40.000 "
Badhini	200.000 dirhams
Ibn al-Harith, Muh., b. Abdallah	10.000 dinars
Ibn Hammad, Muh. b. Ahmed	250.000 "
Madaraf, Ibrahim b. Ahmed	15.000 "
Jarjaraf, Abu'Umar	100.000 dirhams
" "	3.000 dinars
al-Hawari, 'Ali b. Muhammad	700.000 dirhams
Ya'qubi, Ubaidallah b. Ahmed	100.000 "
Hamadhani, Harun b. Ahmed b. Harun	7.000 dinars
Khara'itf, Hasan b. Ibrahim	100.000 dirhams
Ibn-Nasir, Husain b. 'Ali	100.000 "
Ibn Ibrahim, Abdallah b. Zaid	2.500 dinars
" " " " "	15.000 "
Ibn al-Suman, 'Ali b. Muh	2.500 dirhams
Uskafi (secretary of Ibn al-Hawari)	60.000 dinars
Jurjani, Abu Bakr	10.000 dirhams
Muhammad b. Ahmed	1,500.000 "
Ibn Bistam, Abu'l-Hasan	3,000.000 "
Ahmed b. Muh. b. Hamed b. al-'Abbas	50.000 "
Ibn Ishaq, Yahya b. 'Abdallah	70.000 dinars
Hamid b. al-'Abbas	1,300.000 "

Wasiti, Muh. b. Hamdun	150.000 dinars
'Ali b. 'Isa	321.000 "
Ibrahim b. Yuhanna (banker of Hamid)	100.000 "
Madarsif, al-Hasan b. Ahmed	1,200.000 "
" " "	1,000.000 "
Madarsif, Muhammed b. 'Ali	1,011.000 "
Ibn Mukhallad, Sulaiman	130.000 dirhams
Total, in gold:	7, ¹ 575.680 dinars
in silver	5, 300.000 dirhams

The two items together representing in gold 8,040.000 dinars.²

(1) corrected to 6,575.680 dinars
(2) Sabi, pp.223-7.

General Conclusions

- (1) The Buwaihid invasion in 334/945 is a landmark dividing two periods. It affected agricultural economy and hampered commercial and banking institutions
- (2) Prices were probably lower in the Buwaihid period; but the periods of scarcity occurred more often under the Buwaihids
- (3) The Buwaihid invasion brought foreigners to most lucrative offices and reduced the inhabitants to the middle and lower classes
- (4) The incomes of the Caliph, the wazir, and the civil servants decreased in the Buwaihid period, while those of the army rose
- (5) The peasant population suffered more in the Buwaihid period from high taxation, the insufficient check on the officials and the decay in the irrigation system
- (6) The social services of the state decreased under the Buwaihids
- (7) Confiscations were a usual expedient, but during the Buwaihid period, they became less frequent.

I conclude by stating that the Buwaihid invasion lowered the standard of living of the local population.

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